

WARHAMMER®

# FANTASY ROLEPLAY™



## THE ENEMY WITHIN™

A CAMPAIGN FOR WARHAMMER FANTASY ROLEPLAY



## WARHAMMER FANTASY ROLEPLAY

### DESIGN TEAM

Jay Little with Daniel Lovat Clark, Michael Hurley, and Tim Uren

### LEAD DESIGNERS

Daniel Lovat Clark and Chris Gerber

### WRITING AND DEVELOPMENT

Dave Allen, Daniel Lovat Clark, Graeme Davis,  
Chris Gerber, and Mark Warren

### EDITING AND PROOFREADING

Dylan Owen and Mark Pollard

### GRAPHIC DESIGN

Maxwell Forbes and WiL Springer

### LAYOUT

Chris Gerber

### COVER ART

Daarken

### INTERIOR & COMPONENT ART

Cristi Balanescu, Yoann Boissonnet, Vincent Devault,  
Lino Drieghe, David Griffith, Ilich Henriquez, Taylor  
Ingvarsson, Lukasz Jaskolski, Jacob Murray, Mike Nash,  
Andrew Olson, the Games Workshop art archives, and  
the artists of the Warhammer: Invasion LCG

### MANAGING ART DIRECTOR

Andrew Navaro

### ART DIRECTION

Mike Linnemann and Zoë Robinson

## PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT

Eric Knight

### PRODUCER

Chris Gerber

### EXECUTIVE GAME DESIGNER

Corey Konieczka

### EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Michael Hurley

### PUBLISHER

Christian T. Petersen

### LICENSING & DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR

Deb Beck

### PLAYTESTING & ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE

Dan Defigio, Matthew Grimm, Mack Martin, Patrick  
Mullen, Charlie Pate, Adam Sadler, Brady Sadler,  
Sam Stewart, Mark Warren, and David Woods

## GAMES WORKSHOP

### LICENSING MANAGER

Owen Rees

### HEAD OF LICENSING

Jon Gillard

### HEAD OF LICENSING, LEGAL AND

### STRATEGIC PROJECTS

Andy Jones

### HEAD OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Alan Merrett



FANTASY  
FLIGHT  
GAMES

Fantasy Flight Games  
1975 West County Road B2  
Roseville, MN 55113  
USA

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# THE ENEMY WITHIN™

## A CAMPAIGN FOR WARHAMMER FANTASY ROLEPLAY

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## CORE PRODUCT

Throughout *The Enemy Within*, reference will be made to the *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay Core Product*. This refers to either the books within the *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay Box Set* (*Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay Rulebook*, *Tome of Adventure*, *Tome of Blessings*, *Tome of Mysteries*) or the Guides (*Player's Guide*, *Game Master's Guide*, *The Creature Guide*).

## HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

*The Enemy Within* can be played using only the *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay Core Product*, although it is strongly recommended that you also have a copy of *Hero's Call* to take full advantage of the optional epic epilogue.

In addition, for the best possible play experience, it is recommended that you also have a copy of *The Winds of Magic*, *Signs of Faith*, *Omens of War*, and *Lure of Power*. While all necessary rules and components have been reprinted for this campaign, these products will provide additional options and enhanced rules.

## CORRUPTION/MUTATION

Throughout *The Enemy Within*, reference will be made to corruption and mutation. The complete rules for corruption and mutation can be found in *The Winds of Magic* or the *Game Master's Guide*, available separately. If you are not using the rules for corruption and mutation, then when an effect calls for a target to suffer corruption, the target should suffer an equal amount of fatigue and stress instead.

## DISEASE

Throughout *The Enemy Within*, reference will be made to disease. The complete rules for disease can be found in *Signs of Faith* or the *Game Master's Guide*, available separately. If you are not using the rules for disease, then when an effect calls for a target to make a Disease check, the target should instead make a Resilience (To) check with a difficulty equal to the rating of the Disease check. On a failure, the target suffers 1 fatigue that he cannot recover from until he has a chance for a full night's sleep somewhere clean.

## USING THE INCLUDED MATERIALS

*The Enemy Within* includes a variety of new cards, sheets, and components for the game master and his players.

### NEW CARDS

The action, location, item, and condition cards can be added to the other cards of those types.

### CREATURE CARDS

*The Enemy Within* includes 29 creature cards. Full rules for creature cards can be found in *The Creature Guide* and abbreviated rules can be found in the Appendix on page 182.

### PUNCHBOARD

The punchboard components should be carefully removed from the frames. The pieces can be added to your existing supply of tokens and standups for *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay*.

### MAPS AND HANDOUTS

*The Enemy Within* includes several maps and handouts for the GM to share with the players over the course of the campaign.

## EPIC THREAT SHEET

*Hero's Call* introduced a number of epic threat sheets that can be used to increase the threat of many of the creatures and NPCs within *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay*. *The Enemy Within* introduces a new unique epic threat sheet – the Black Cowl. Condensed rules for using the Black Cowl epic threat sheet can be found in the Appendix on page 189.



## BACKGROUND CARDS

*The Enemy Within* presents several optional character background cards to aid with character creation and to help tie the PCs to the action of the plot, creating pre-existing connections between player characters and important non-player characters. Rules for using this type of card can be found in the Introduction, on page 7.



## CLUE CARDS

*The Enemy Within* includes several clue cards to help smooth the process of unravelling the overall mystery presented in the campaign. These clue cards each present a piece of the puzzle, and can be handed to the PCs when they figure out or notice something going on. Rules for using this type of card can be found in the Introduction, on page 18.



## SET ICON

The cards and sheets included with *The Enemy Within* are noted with a special set icon. This allows you to quickly identify the supplement materials when sorting, adding, or removing cards from your game.





# INTRODUCTION

*The Enemy Within* was first released in 1986 for *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay* 1st Edition. A slim volume consisting of equal parts background information, game-mastering advice, and an included adventure, it formed the introduction to a six-part series that was developed and released over the following three years. Nothing like *The Enemy Within* had ever been seen before, and the campaign has been widely hailed as the most influential and important adventure series for any fantasy roleplaying game.

The contents of this book couldn't have existed without that original campaign, but this is not a new edition of that classic adventure. Within these pages are no remakes of *Shadows Over Bögenhafen* or *The Empire in Flames*. This is a complete re-imagining, a brand new campaign more faithful in spirit than in particulars. Your level of familiarity with the 1986 adventures, whether a little or a lot, shouldn't have any effect on how much fun you have with this book.

Join us now as we re-examine the themes of corruption and betrayal and embark on a grand new adventure. And always remember that mankind's greatest enemy is the Enemy Within...

## ABOUT THIS BOOK

This book is divided into six sections.

- + This introduction and overview establishes context for what is to follow, introduces the major players, and explains the nature of the Conspiracy and the principal villain, the Black Cowl.
- + Book One is a complete adventure, set within the city of Averheim and its environs.
- + Book Two is a second complete adventure, following on the events of Book One and taking the PCs to the city of Middenheim.
- + Book Three is a third complete adventure, culminating the plots and schemes of Books One and Two in the city of Altdorf, the capital of the Empire.
- + Book Four is a brief, but challenging, epilogue to Book Three.
- + Finally, there is an Appendix with a bestiary, new rules, an Empire map, and other material for the game master.

## HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book is for the game master's eyes only! If you are planning to play in a campaign of *The Enemy Within*, stop reading now! There are various handouts and other information the GM may wish to share with the players, but too much knowledge will spoil the fun.

## A BRIEF OVERVIEW

Two years ago, the Elector of Averland, Marius Leitdorf, was slain in the Third Battle of Black Fire Pass. Although he died a hero, Leitdorf had been known in his lifetime as the Mad Count and was as renowned for his melancholy, mania, and black rages as for his brilliance, wit, and skill with a sword. Furthermore, he left no clear successor, and so this is an uncertain time for Averland.

A sinister figure stands poised to take advantage of this period of uncertainty. Conspiring with the enemies of the Empire, he intends to manipulate the succession for his own advantage. Already, this man holds the underworld of Averheim, Averland's largest city, in his grip. Meanwhile, a group of mutant assassins prey on the poor and dispossessed, and an expedition returns from the far-off Southlands. And all proceeds according to the design of the sinister Black Cowl.

Into the midst of this conspiracy steps a small group of heroes. Their adventures will take them far to the north and into the heart of the Empire. They will be both catspaw and foil. They will be embroiled in politics and war. And they alone will save the Empire from its greatest enemy: the Enemy Within.

## THREE IMPORTANT CHARACTERS

The span of the campaign touches again and again on three important characters, who are described in detail beginning on page 10. These three characters are Graf Friedrich von Kaufman, Captain Marcus Baerfaust, and Luminary Konrad Mauer. Ultimately, the PCs may discover that one of these three characters is the worst sort of traitor and the blackest villain imaginable; but which one?

## THE CONSPIRACY

Many of the events of Books One through Three happen due to the actions of a nefarious group of villains, referred to herein as the Conspiracy. The nature and goals of the Conspiracy are discussed in more detail starting on page 15.

## BOOK ONE: THE ENEMY BELOW

A series of disappearances in and around the docks district of Averheim is linked to a mysterious theft of an exotic treasure from a noble's collection. The criminal underworld of Averheim is turned on its head as a new power seizes control. A vile enemy is revealed. The PCs are introduced to von Kaufman, Baerfaust, and Mauer during the course of these events.

## BOOK TWO: THE ENEMY WITHOUT

The Empire is at war! News reaches Averheim of an invasion from the north, touching off a flurry of activity. Von Kaufman, Baerfaust, and Mauer each have duties they must attend to in light of these events, and each asks the PCs to accomplish an important task for him in Middenheim. Unknown to the PCs, some or all of these tasks have been influenced by the Conspiracy, and the player characters have become unwitting pawns.

## BOOK THREE: THE ENEMY WITHIN

Disaster has struck the Empire, and Emperor Karl Franz lies wounded. Von Kaufman, Baerfaust, and Mauer have each risen to become important and powerful men. The player characters travel to Altdorf, where they become embroiled in the escalating schemes of the Conspiracy. The plot culminates with an attempt to deploy an evil and Chaotic weapon at the Holy Temple of Sigmar, during a prayer service for the injured emperor.

## BOOK FOUR: THE ENEMY BEYOND

The Black Cowl stands revealed, but he has fled (or been abducted) to the Chaos Wastes, far from the reach of Imperial justice. It falls to the PCs to track him through the strange half-real world of the Wastes and ensure that his perfidy never again threatens the Empire. An optional epilogue for parties of high-rank characters.

## USING THE ENEMY WITHIN IN YOUR CAMPAIGN

*The Enemy Within* is written to be a complete campaign in its own right, beginning with new player characters created expressly for the campaign. Several character backgrounds are presented to aid with character creation and to help tie the PCs to the action of the plot and to create pre-existing connections between player characters and important non-player characters.



The text of the adventure will occasionally indicate that a given PC background connects to the plot or events of the moment. However, as there is no guarantee that a given PC background will be used by a given group, such connections are not critical to the plot. It is even possible to disregard all of these PC backgrounds, or to import existing WFRP characters from your ongoing game. Some suggestions for doing so follow the PC backgrounds.

## THE PC BACKGROUNDS

Before or during character creation, the GM is encouraged to distribute the PC background cards to the players. This should be done at the same time as careers are selected. The PC backgrounds can be drawn randomly, or the players or GM can choose a background that matches the race and career selected for each PC. If the random method is chosen, be aware that not every background is appropriate for every race; in this case players may wish to draw their backgrounds first and then make all of their race and career selections to match the background.

### GENTLY-BORN

**Traits:** Bureaucrat, Noble, Religion, Social, Urban

You grew up alongside the nobility of Averland and are familiar with their names, families, connections, and influence. With no lands or titles of your own, you must find a patron if you're going to stay in high society.

- + Your father had a business arrangement with Graf Friedrich von Kaufman. What was it?
- + Someone in your family proposed marriage to Gravin Clothilde von Alptraum (she declined). Who?
- + You don't stand to inherit any land or titles. Why not? Are you not nobility, or is someone else in your family going to inherit instead?
- + It seems likely that either the Leitdorf family or the von Alptraum family will hold the Elector's seat in Averland, to replace Marius Leitdorf. Which family do you favour?
- + A spot of financial trouble recently saw you sell something to a woman on the docks named Mathilda Durbein. Now you'd like to buy it back. What was it? Does Mathilda still have it?
- + It seems like every time you visit the Journey's End coaching inn, you see a gaggle of scholars including the Academic character. What's your opinion of this group?
- + You've heard rumours that the Outcast character was exiled for dallying with a nobleman's daughter. Do you believe the gossip?

### CRIMINAL

**Traits:** Menial, Rogue, Rural, Urban

You were arrested for a crime, but were acquitted of the charges. Since this almost never happens in the Empire, you are a minor celebrity amongst the criminals and underclass of Averheim. You seldom have to buy your own drinks at the Upright Pig and the White Horse, two taverns on the docks.

- + You were arrested a few years ago by a soldier named Marcus Baerfaust. What was the crime you were accused of? Did you do it?

## CHOOSING A BACKGROUND; CHOOSING A CAREER

In order to ensure that players generate characters that have a strong narrative connection between their PC background and their race, career, and other mechanical effects, GMs should consider putting aside the typical "draw 3, keep 1" rules for career selection. Consider one of the alternate methods below:

- + Choose or draw background. Then, draw until 3 careers with traits matching the recommended traits are generated (discarding careers with no matching traits). Choose 1.
- + Choose or draw background. Then, the GM selects 3 careers that are the best narrative fit for the background. The player chooses 1.
- + Choose or draw background. Then, choose a career with at least 1 trait matching the recommended traits for that background.
- + Generate career normally. Then, choose a background that fits the career.

Remember that PC backgrounds are optional. Even if some members of the group opt to select a background, other players may choose to go without – no one should be forced to play a background he doesn't want to, or to have his PC background force him to play a character he has no interest in playing.

- + You were acquitted of the crime based in part on the testimony of Frederick Grosz. What did Grosz say? Did he lie for you?
- + Two docker gangs are at each others' throats. The Wharf Rats blame the Fish for the disappearance of Rolf Haller, a Wharf Rat. How do you feel about the possibility of a waterfront gang war? Do you favour one gang over the other?
- + The criminals in Averheim are starting to bow down to a new boss, the "man in the black hood." People who won't comply with the new order are starting to turn up dead. Has anyone you know been killed? Do you have an opinion on "the man in the black hood"?
- + You know something the Gently-Born character wishes you didn't, but you've agreed to keep quiet...for now. What is it?
- + You got into a fight (verbal or physical) with the Battle-Scarred character once. What was it over?

### BATTLE-SCARRED

**Traits:** Devoted, Combat, Military, Rural, Specialist

Approximately two years ago, you fought in the Third Battle of Black Fire Pass against a massive orc and goblin horde. It was at this battle that the Mad Count Marius Leitdorf, the Elector of Averland, was slain by the orc warboss Vorgaz Ironjaw.



- + You were injured at Third Black Fire. What injuries did you sustain? How long did it take you to recover?
- + You are no longer a member of the army of Averland. Why not? Were you only ever a mercenary or an ally?
- + During the battle, you fought alongside Marcus Baerfaust. Some people say he was a hero, keeping the Averheim Greatswords in the fight. Others say he could have saved the Mad Count, if he'd wanted to. What do you say?
- + After your injury, you spent some time in a Shallyan temple hospice, where you met Gravin Clothilde von Alptraum, a noblewoman of Averland who was donating her time and money to the hospice. What is your opinion of Gravin Clothilde?
- + Someone you knew from the war has gone missing. He or she was last seen near the Averheim docks. Who is it?
- + You heard a rumour that the Outcast character abandoned his or her comrades in battle. What do you think of that?
- + You spent all of a week acting as a guard in the service of the Gently-Born character's father. Why did you leave?

## ACADEMIC

**Traits:** Academic, Arcane, Specialist, Urban

You are a member of the Sun Society, a small group of academics that meets regularly at the Journey's End coaching inn in Averheim. It's probably the most prestigious and erudite academic society in Averheim, which sadly isn't saying very much.

- + One of the regulars at the Sun Society is a Light Wizard named Konrad Mauer. He read the most recent paper you are considering submitting to the Society. What was the paper about? What was Mauer's opinion of it?
- + Graf Friedrich von Kaufman is a patron of the Sun Society and the natural sciences. The expedition he funded to the Southlands, led by Johann Templemann, is due back soon. What are you most looking forward to when the expedition returns? Is it an artefact, a creature, a person?
- + The Sun Society Notes recently published a paper by Robertus von Oppenheim, a scholar from Middenheim. The paper was titled "The Power of the Gods: How the Gods Affect the Winds of Magic." What did you think of it?
- + Rambrecht Delfholt, an agitator on the docks, has been asking the Sun Society to publish his ill-researched screed against nobility. You've been asked to gently tell him no. Why you? Do you think Delfholt's pamphlet deserves mention in the Notes?
- + You are eager to speak with the Foreign Messenger player. Why? Is his or her master an expert in your field?
- + One day down by the docks, you realised you were missing your bag, that contained several pages of your research notes and a sizeable amount of money. You can't prove it, but you think the Criminal character might be involved in its disappearance. Why?

## FOREIGN MESSENGER

**Traits:** Noble, Social, Urban, Elf, Dwarf, or foreign human PC

You have come to Averheim bearing messages from your master for several people within the city. You are to deliver the messages, then wait for replies (if any) and make yourself useful to your master's correspondents.

- + Who is your master, and what is your relationship to him or her?
- + One of your messages is for Graf Friedrich von Kaufman or Gravin Clothilde von Alptraum. Which? How does he or she know your master?
- + Another of your messages is for the head priest at the temple of Shallya, Sigmar, or Verena in Averheim. Which? How does he or she know your master?
- + Another of your messages is for Captain Marcus Baerfaust or the wizard Luminary Konrad Mauer. Which? How does he know your master?
- + You also have a message for another player character. Who? Do you know him or her personally?

## OUTCAST

**Traits:** Menial, Noble, Rogue, Rural, Elf, Dwarf, or foreign human PC

You have been cast out of your home due to a scandal or crime. Your wanderings have brought you to Averheim, where you hope you can earn enough money or glory to allow you to return home.

- + Why were you cast out of your home? Were you wrongfully accused?

- ✦ In your travels since your exile, you've come across a criminal, racketeer, and sometime smuggler named Frederick Grosz. Did he help you, or hinder you?
- ✦ One night you nearly drowned in a storm, but were rescued by a fisherman named Jurgen Klinski. Now Jurgen's wife Olga is asking for help finding her missing husband. Do you feel any compulsion to help her?
- ✦ Luminary Konrad Mauer, a Light Wizard, is in Averheim. He has been referred to you as someone who may be able to help reverse your exile. Why? How?
- ✦ The very first person you met in Averheim was another player character. Who was it? What did you think of him or her? Was he or she helpful?
- ✦ Are you and the Foreign Messenger from the same homeland? Did his or her master play a role in the events that led to your exile?

## OTHER PLAYER CHARACTERS

Player characters with none of the above backgrounds may still participate fully in the events of *The Enemy Within*. Where characters are not created expressly for this campaign, it may still be possible to devise a background and history for the character that ties him or her into some of the events of the plot. Use the above backgrounds for some ideas, and create your own background to suit your needs. Ideally, each member of the party will have a pre-existing connection to one of Marcus Baerfaust, Friedrich von Kaufman, or Luminary Mauer. Each member of the party will also, hopefully, have some reason to visit the docks – perhaps he knows someone who has gone missing, or is owed money by Beatrice Knox, or has business to do with Frederick Grosz.

## PARTY HOOKS

GMs may also be in search of adventure hooks for an entire party, pre-existing or not. Here are some suggestions.

### CRIMINAL, INFAMOUS

A gang of thugs or criminals is certain to be interested in the gang war that has been occurring in Averheim's underworld for the past few weeks. The conflict between the docker gangs may be of personal interest to the party or their friends, as may the disappearances. Underworld PCs may be asked to speak with Frederick Grosz about the long-term implications of Averheim's changing criminal element, in regards to their employer's interests in another city.

### REPUTABLE, IDEALISTIC

A noble or cult-affiliated patron may offer the PCs an introduction at the temple of Verena or to Graf Friedrich von Kaufman, either of whom may request the PCs to investigate the disappearances at the docks. Truly selfless PCs may be motivated to investigate the docks by the Wharf Rats bulletin or the pleas of Olga Klinski.

### MERCENARY, ADVENTURERS

Mercenary or adventurous parties may feature one or more veterans of Third Black Fire, who may be familiar with Marcus Baerfaust. In any case, rumours or reports of Averheim's unsettled posi-

tion may sound like an opportunity to such people, who may seek work from von Kaufman or from Baerfaust, either of whom may ask the PCs to investigate the disappearances on the docks.

## SOCIAL

Social PCs may have connections with the nobility, specifically Clothilde von Alptraum and Friedrich von Kaufman. They may have a more than passing interest in the political situation in Averheim after the death of Marius Leitdorf. GMs may wish to shift some of the timing of the events of Book One, perhaps by opening with the events of Clothilde's ride and having her ask the PCs to look into the matter at the docks.

## PRIOR ADVENTURES

Parties that already have prior experience with published *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay* adventures may find some suitable connections to the events of *The Enemy Within* that could serve as adventure hooks or simply further enriching detail. Some of these possible connections are discussed below.

### AN EYE FOR AN EYE, EDGE OF NIGHT, MIRROR OF DESIRE

These three adventures all feature in a greater or lesser role Lord Rickard Aschaffenberg or other noble families of Ubersreik. If the PCs have made a favourable impression on Lord Rickard or any of the other worthies of Ubersreik, they may be asked to carry a message or business proposition to Graf Friedrich von Kaufman.

### THE WITCH'S SONG

Matthias Krieger certainly knows Adele Ketzenblum, by reputation if not in person. Depending on the PCs' relationship with Krieger, his opinion of Ketzenblum (which is not high) may influence their interactions with her. Krieger may also be familiar with Luminary Mauer; he has a generally positive impression of the Light Wizard. The impoverished von Stauffers may ask the PCs to bring a business proposition or request to Graf Friedrich von Kaufman, hoping to reverse the fortunes of their town and their family. If so, then doing a few services for von Kaufman and impressing him would go a long way towards securing aid for the von Stauffers.

### HORROR OF HUGELDAL

Agnetha von Jungfreud is well acquainted with Clothilde von Alptraum, and has carried on a long correspondence despite their geographical isolation. Before her... troubles, Agnetha was equally concerned with the plight of the poor, the betterment of Imperial society, and other such matters as Clothilde. If Agnetha von Jungfreud can be convinced of the error of her ways, she may send the PCs on to Clothilde as a sort of penance; if not, the PCs may be asked to use her friendship with Clothilde to help her recover – perhaps even going so far as escorting Agnetha to the Shallyan temple in Averheim.

### THE GATHERING STORM

Depending on the final fate of Stromdorf, Graf Friedrich von Kaufman may have a vested interest in the fate of the Thunderwater Brewery and the Thunderwater Ale brewed there. Niklas Schulmann may have been acquainted with Luminary Konrad Mauer – the two were not close friends – and may have some notes or letters from Mauer in his effects.

## THE BLACK COWL

Throughout this book you will find sidebars like this one. These sidebars provide some suggestions for how to modify the adventure if a specific NPC is the Black Cowl. The sidebar will be marked with a symbol to identify which NPC is indicated, so if you see a Black Cowl sidebar with a Captain Marcus Baerfaust symbol on it, that means that it contains details to use if Baerfaust is the Black Cowl. If von Kaufman or Mauer are the Black Cowl, you can ignore the sidebar, or read it to get some ideas. If the sidebar has no symbol on it (like this one), then it applies no matter who is the Black Cowl.

The symbols are:



**Captain Marcus Baerfaust**



**Luminary Konrad Mauer**



**Graf Friedrich von Kaufman**

## CRIMSON RAIN

Willi Ziege and Marcus Baerfaust have fought side-by-side in the past. PCs in possession of the cursed spear may be advised to seek out Luminary Mauer for advice on how to dispose of it. The spear could even take over for the cursed bell clapper in the plot with some relatively minor modifications.

Crimson Rain may also make a suitable interlude adventure, during or after Book Two – the PCs may travel from Middenheim to Neues Emskrank and be caught up in the marauder raid (which would be a part of the larger war against Chaos invaders, in this version).

## DRAMATIS PERSONAE

There are several important characters who appear in more than one part of this campaign. Those important characters are described here. Each book of the campaign will have its own descriptions of characters who are relevant within the scope of that book.

## THREE IMPORTANT CHARACTERS

These three important characters are major players in all three parts of the campaign. The GM should strive to ensure that they make it to Book Three alive, or the adventure will require very significant alterations! Note that the player character backgrounds also contain some connections to each of these characters. The GM and players should work together to establish the details of those connections, if desired.

The most obvious way in which one of these characters is important is that one of them is the traitorous Black Cowl. Precisely which character is the traitor is up to you, the game master. All of them have motive, and all of them have the resources and influence necessary to enact the Cowl's nefarious schemes. The adventure is

written with deliberate ambiguity, to allow you to modify details as necessary and plant clues implicating or exonerating these three characters.

The Black Cowl (aka “the man in the black hood”) is the main villain of *The Enemy Within*. He and the Conspiracy, his web of powerful allies throughout the Empire, have very sinister plans for the Empire and for the PCs! The Black Cowl and the Conspiracy are described in more detail beginning on page 15.

## CAPTAIN MARCUS BAERFAUST

Captain Baerfaust is a grizzled veteran of the Averheim garrison, barracked in the city. He is a lugubrious man with a haunted look who seems to be forever grumbling and muttering. He is powerful and stocky. His grey hair is cropped short and his long moustache is kept brushed down, accentuating his already morose expression. It would surprise many to learn that he is 38 – he looks at least a decade older, despite being physically in excellent condition. His black and yellow uniform is impressive and flashy, adorned with many honours and badges, though when he isn't wearing it he prefers simple clothes and neutral colours.

When Marcus is leading a regiment of his men on the parade ground or the battlefield, he is a different man. He is a born warrior, and amongst other soldiers he is a natural commander. His haunted mien becomes one of fierce confidence. His mutter becomes a veritable roar.

Marcus joined the army of Averland alongside his brother, Karl, about twenty years ago. Their early career was marred by the events of the Halfling Rebellion and the infamously brutal suppression of Mootlanders by the Averland army at the command of Elector Count Marius Leitdorf. Baerfaust was praised by his superiors for his discipline and his willingness to follow orders, but the Halfling



Rebellion and its aftermath have since become synonymous with the excessive use of force against a civilian uprising. The Halfling Rebellion marked a low point for Leitdorf's tenure as Elector Count. The situation gradually improved under the influence of the Emperor Karl Franz and his champion, Ludwig Schwarzhelm, but several other military misadventures followed and the Baerfaust brothers were present at all of them. Ultimately, Karl lost his life in a border skirmish. After his brother's death, Marcus became dour and given to brooding, admitting to his associates that he thought soldiers had been thrown away in an ill-planned raid that was part of an idiotic campaign.

Despite his grumbling, Baerfaust remained with the Averland army. He was present at the Third Battle of Black Fire Pass, where he fought with the Averheim Greatswords. During that battle, Marius Leitdorf was slain by the orc chieftain, Vorgaz Ironjaw, as was the commander of the Averheim Greatswords regiment. It was largely due to the actions of Marcus Baerfaust, who fought like a daemon and roared like a dragon, that the Averheim Greatswords stayed in the fight.

Ultimately, the Empire was victorious and Baerfaust was lauded by his superiors. Some of the common soldiers, however, whispered that Baerfaust could have saved Leitdorf's life, but chose not to. Since that day, Baerfaust has not been able to shake the rumours that his resentment over the Halfling Rebellion and his brother's death made him disloyal to the Mad Count. It's not at all helpful that some of those who repeat the rumours do so with Baerfaust in the role of hero, seizing the moment to cast down the Mad Count once and for all, that no Averland soldiers need ever again die in military misadventure. When the tale is told in this light, it casts Baerfaust as the common man, opposed to the tyrannical rule of the nobility.

Baerfaust has been made Captain of the Averheim Greatswords and de facto commander of the Averheim garrison forces, in the absence of an Elector Count. The controversial officer has found himself thrust front-and-centre into the midst of Averheim politics, as he attempts to keep order amongst his soldiers and in the city he now, for better or for worse, controls in practice if not in name.

## THE COWL'S MOTIVATIONS



In the wake of the brutal slaughter of halflings and other civilians during the Halfling Rebellion, something broke inside Marcus Baerfaust. He began to doubt the validity of the rule of nobility, not just of the Mad Count but of the entire Imperial system. When his brother Karl was killed, Baerfaust went over wholly to the Conspiracy, cultivating contacts throughout the armies of the Empire (especially Averland) who were sick of dying at the behest of some noble in a pointless conflict.

At Third Black Fire, Baerfaust ensured that his unit, the Averheim Greatswords were just slightly out of position to protect the Count. He also engineered the death of his superior officer and a few other enemies at the hands of the orcs. The rumours of his malfesance at Third Black Fire persist because they're true, and because although he died a hero, Marius Leitdorf was sufficiently controversial to allow the rumours to serve as a recruiting tool for the Conspiracy.



INTRODUCTION

## LUMINARY KONRAD MAUER

Luminary Mauer is a short, slightly built man of 39. His dazzling white Light Wizard's robes compensate somewhat for his lack of physical stature and he never goes abroad without a white miter that adds several inches to his apparent height. Although he is not an old man, Luminary Mauer's neatly trimmed goatee is as white as new snow. Due to his long usage of light magic, Mauer's eyes seemed washed out and somewhat insubstantial. In darkness, they shine faintly like stars. When he is using magic, they gleam with bright light. He prefers to be referred to as "Herr Luminary," or "Luminary Mauer."

Luminary Mauer is a wizard of the Light Order, of sufficient rank and skill that he may essentially go where he wishes and do as he pleases. It is rare that a light wizard would be so far from Altdorf for an extended period of time, unless he were actively hunting a Chaos enemy or artefact, but Mauer has been residing in Averheim for several years now, where he mostly keeps to himself, pursues some magical research, meets regularly with other scholars at the Journey's Rest Coaching Inn on the Plenzerplatz, and lends his expertise to the nobility of Averheim when required.

The Luminary has a chequered past, which if it were widely known might make the citizens of Averheim much less sanguine about his presence in their midst. He is from a magical family, a clan of witches who lived in the shadow of the Black Mountains. Witch Hunters, led by a fierce war-horse named Gregor Helstrum, eventually discovered them and burned the Luminary's parents upon the pyre. The boy was deemed young and uncorrupted. He also showed some potential for magical ability, and so he was spared the fire and apprenticed to the Light College.

## THE COWL'S MOTIVATIONS



The forces of Chaos whisper in the back of every man's mind, tempting them to give in to their base nature and embrace the power they offer. Wizards, in particular, grapple with the temptation daily. But Konrad Mauer has never particularly had to worry about the temptations of Chaos. He has been focused on a single purpose for thirty years, ever since his family was consigned to the flames by Witch Hunters.

Konrad Mauer, as the Black Cowl, has reunited with his sister and wants revenge on the Empire that damned his family for no crime that he could see. He has learned his magic, gained status and power, and played the part of the loyal wizard, all while harbouring the hatred of a child. To sell his soul to the Ruinous Powers is a cost that Mauer will pay willingly, but only when the time is right. Only when doing so will put a stake in the heart of the corrupt system he despises.

Young Konrad proved a capable student, not merely of magic but also in regards to history and the arts. He became a noted expert on Chaos, witchcraft, and the spellcasting traditions of other races and nations. Luminary Mauer was feted by authorities in the Cult of Sigmar for his assistance in tracking down and destroying followers of Chaos operating in the Reikland.

As such it came as some surprise when Luminary Mauer moved to Averheim in 2517. Averheim isn't regarded as a good location for those who seek to investigate the wiles of Chaos or partake in intellectual pursuits. Mauer has put forward a story about studying the early magical traditions of man during the Time of Sigmar, although this story does not appear to explain why he has remained in Averheim, in particular. Unbeknownst to his associates the Luminary has an older sister, Katrina, who is not recorded as being amongst those members of his family slain by the Witch Hunters. He has come to Averheim in the hopes that some word of her might reach him, although no one, perhaps not even Konrad himself, knows what he would do if he found her.

## GRAF FRIEDRICH VON KAUFMAN

Friedrich von Kaufman is slightly over average height and well built. He is 36, though looks a little younger. He has sharply chiselled handsome features and wears a closely trimmed beard, cropped brown hair and a face-spanning handlebar moustache.

Von Kaufman always wears the latest fashions in perfectly tailored satin. As a patriotic Averlander, he ensures that much of his wardrobe is cut from cloth in the province's colours of yellow and black. Prominently worn around his neck is a chunky silver chain attached to a golden badge decorated in enamel with the von Kaufman coat of arms. This depicts a black Imperial cross on a yellow field. The cross is encircled by a stylised red corona, as if it eclipses the sun.

Von Kaufman is a minor aristocrat with a small estate in Averland and an impressive townhouse within Averheim. Whilst he isn't a particularly influential noble, and would never be considered a serious contender for the Electoral seat, Friedrich is nevertheless respected and has a number of influential friends in Averheim. His

business interests give him many friends amongst the merchants, his birth gives him recognition amongst the nobility, and a brief and unremarkable term of service with the Pistolkorps has given von Kaufman contacts amongst the military as well.

Von Kaufman has a significant stake in a number of business ventures and a noted talent for commerce. His concerns include warehouses and stockyards in Averheim's waterfront district, and he also has a share in the running of the Red Arrow coaching house. He can be a hard taskmaster, expecting his workers to perform consistently well over time before offering them much in the way of remuneration or promotion.

As a result of his business acumen and connections, von Kaufman is quite wealthy – far more so than his rank would otherwise suggest. However, von Kaufman has the gift of being rich without being obnoxious, and enthusiastically spends his wealth on what he considers to be worthy causes. He has made sizable (and quite public) donations to the cults of Sigmar, Shallya, and Verena in Averheim. He allows the academic community in Averheim to meet in one of his taverns, and even occasionally attends their meetings, making him a sort of silent patron to all the scholars in the city. He has even funded major trade missions and expeditions to far-off points around the globe.

Recently, von Kaufman's expedition to the Southlands has returned to the Empire via the port of Marienburg. This expedition, which was headed by the explorer Johann Templemann, spent most of a year operating in the small imperial enclave of Sudenberg, on a tropical, jungle-clad coast far to the south of Araby. From there they made many journeys into the jungle, recovering golden artefacts from stepped temples guarded by reptilian warriors, exotic beasts from the depths of the forests, and primitive works of "art" from the savage orc tribes. Templemann himself did not return, for



## THE COWL'S MOTIVATIONS



Graf Friedrich's frustrated ambitions are a major facet of his character regardless of whether or not he is the Black Cowl. If he is, however, then the frustrated ambitions have poisoned him against the Empire. Under normal circumstances, von Kaufman would be an excellent candidate for recruitment into the Conspiracy and would likely share many of their goals and values; it is simply the degree of his devotion to the cause that tilts von Kaufman from a loyal citizen of the Empire to an outright villain. So his ambition has blossomed into hubris, and he now assumes that the worship of Tzeentch can facilitate his rise to power.

Von Kaufman's motivations to be the Black Cowl are extremely banal, but also very believable. He already has great wealth, but the Conspiracy can give him great power, as well. Not to mention more wealth, because that's never a bad thing.

reasons that von Kaufman is curiously vague about. (Templemann has run afoul of agents of the Conspiracy; his true fate will probably never be known by anyone in Averland.)

Von Kaufman's wealth now far outstrips his social status, and he is beginning to chafe at the stagnation of Averheim's political system. After all, he is clever, competent, and very rich – why should he have to bow and scrape to lords with less money and skill than him, just because of an accident of birth? He is using his wealth and his connections to find a way past the limitations of his current title. If he can secure an advantageous marriage, or attach himself to the next Elector of Averland, then he will have advanced his position and that of his heirs. The return of his Southlands expedition is one chance for von Kaufman to impress his peers and gain favour. The outbreak of the war in Book Two is another opportunity for von Kaufman, and one that extends beyond Averland alone.

As far as von Kaufman is concerned, the PCs are potential allies in his quest for greater status. If they aid him, he will reward them amply – after all, if he's successful, he'll be well able to afford it.

## OTHER NOTABLE NPCs

There are several other NPCs who may appear in multiple instalments of the campaign. These NPCs are less important than those listed above only because they are not the Black Cowl (and because they are not presumed to be friendly to the PCs). They are described here.

As with the others, these NPCs may appear in PC Backgrounds.

## GRAVIN CLOTHILDE VON ALPTRAUM

Gravin Clothilde is a minor member of one of Averland's pre-eminent noble families, the von Alptraums. Unusually for a woman of her birth, standing, and age, she is unmarried, and holds her title in her own right, not through a husband. Like Graf Friedrich, Clothilde von Alptraum wields political influence outside the scope of what would be expected of her birth and status, but in Clothilde's case this is due to her extensive familial and social connections, charm, and easy wit rather than her money. She has been subjected

to many, many proposals of marriage, all of which she has skillfully evaded. Amongst her suitors have been both Graf Friedrich von Kaufman and Theodosios von Tuchtenhagen.

Clothilde is a vision of radiant beauty in her late twenties. She has an attractive and friendly face, a curvaceous hourglass figure (rendered even more so by her well-tailored corsets and bustle) and long curly auburn hair piled high and held in place by a wrought-iron tiara decorated with owl feathers and the Imperial cross. Clothilde is bright, cultured, curious and down to earth, and genuinely motivated by what's best for the people of Averland. While not extensively trained in the arts of war, she has demonstrated her courage on many occasions, including when she volunteered at a Shallyan hospice not far from the front lines during Third Black Fire. Indeed, barring her strange reluctance to marry, Clothilde von Alptraum is everything an Imperial noblewoman should be.

Clothilde is particularly concerned with matters pertaining to the Cults of Shallya and Verena, saying that she finds the greatest threats to the Empire to be privation and ignorance. Perhaps this is a little hypocritical of her – the strings of pearls and large diamond-set ring she wears could fetch a price that would see the destitute of Averheim fed and housed for a decade.

Clothilde is not herself in line for the Elector's seat, and claims to find the matter of the succession very tiresome. She protests only that she wants the next Count (or Countess) to be the most fit to rule, and less prone to dangerous excesses than the previous – perhaps suggesting that the Leitdorf family may all be as mad as their famous cousin Marius. The cynical may note that Clothilde remains conveniently unmarried as the struggle to fill the Elector's seat continues – if the Gravin cannot be the Elector herself, might she settle for being the next Elector's wife?

## A COWL OF A DIFFERENT COLOUR

Although *The Enemy Within* is written and designed to support one of Captain Baerfaust, Luminary Mauer, or Graf Friedrich as the Black Cowl, those are not the only options. You could use one of the characters here, if you prefer (Clothilde is probably the best choice), or an NPC from your own game if you are bringing characters in from an existing campaign. If you played through *The Edge of Night*, perhaps Graf Siegfried von Saponatheim would make a suitable candidate, or Matthias Krieger from *The Witch's Song*.

The best choice for the Black Cowl is someone the PCs have good reason to like and trust. That will make the betrayal, when revealed, all the more poignant. In any case, deviating from one of Captain Baerfaust, Luminary Mauer, or Graf Friedrich as the Black Cowl will likely require extensive improvisation or re-writing of the adventure as presented here.

## ADELE KETZENBLUM

Adele Ketzenblum is a Witch Hunter with over a decade of experience in hunting and killing the enemies of the Empire. She is a stern and striking woman in her early thirties, physically fit, and hardened by experience. She wears brown leather breeches and a large black coat. She wears the tall, heavy leather hat that is common to most Witch Hunters, and around her neck she wears a chunky silver hammer pendant, a symbol of the Order of the Silver Hammer, to which she belongs. Adele's left forearm has been amputated as the result of an injury sustained in the line of duty. She wears a prosthetic steel hook in place of her missing hand.

Early in her career, Ketzenblum worked closely with a senior Witch Hunter named Gregor Helstrum. About six years ago, Ketzenblum and Helstrum – with a few other associates – were captured by Chaos cultists (a cell of the Red Crown – see page 17) and subjected to extensive tortures. They were eventually rescued thanks to the efforts of a friendly road warden, who roused a local garrison and led a regiment of Averland halberdiers, including Marcus Baerfaust, to destroy the cult. Ketzenblum lost her hand due to the ordeal, and Helstrum suffered injuries near as grave.

After that fateful day, Helstrum went into retirement, returning to his home in Middenheim, where he advises other Witch Hunters and performs light duties when called upon by the Order. Ketzenblum remained an active Witch Hunter, operating mostly out of Middenheim. However, her mind was shattered by the experiences of her captivity, and over the following months Adele Ketzenblum fell to the Ruinous Powers. Seeking to replicate the extreme experiences of her captivity brought Ketzenblum into contact with the Jade Sceptre, a Chaos Cult devoted to Slaanesh (see page 84). She is now a cultist and, technically, a mutant (she is unnaturally bald).

Despite her new allegiance, Ketzenblum has remained an effective and fearsome Witch Hunter. Aside from members of her own cult, she has no interest in allowing the guilty to escape her painful, fiery retribution. Indeed, she arguably enjoys her work rather too much now, and has certainly sent more than the usual number of the innocent to the pyre along with the guilty.

In the course of performing her duties as a Witch Hunter, Ketzenblum has uncovered the barest hint of the existence of the Conspiracy. She has found some evidence of corruption in von Kaufman's Southlands expedition – in particular, she desires to speak to Johann Templemann. She has testimony from several criminals and corrupt officials, since put to the fire, suggesting the existence of the Black Cowl. She also has reason to believe that the Black Cowl is linked to the Red Crown, the very cult that took her hand. Ironically, the greatest threat to the Conspiracy, and the best chance for the PCs to learn more about it, is a traitor to the Empire and slave to darkness.

Ketzenblum has recently come to Averheim with the intention of speaking with Templemann (and indulging herself by burning him alive). She is not pleased to discover that he never returned from Sudenburg.

## FREDERICK GROSZ

Frederick Grosz is a career criminal, a sometimes-thief, sometimes-smuggler, often-racketeer with many connections throughout Averheim's underworld. A man of middling height in his early thirties, he has weathered features and a magnificent handlebar moustache. He is muscular, but carries it under a layer of thick, lower-class clothing.

Grosz grew up hard on the rivers and wharfs of the Empire, moving from riverboat to riverboat as crew, and running afoul of bandits, docker gangs, and officers of the law. He developed a cheerfully amoral outlook on life, recognizing the value of working as part of a crew (afloat or ashore), but also the primacy of self-interest in the criminal life. Grosz is quite friendly as a general rule, happy to meet new people and willing to make small sacrifices in the name of friendship. However, Grosz is utterly ruthless in pursuing his own interests and won't let "friendship" stand in the way if pressed. Only those who have known Grosz for a long time, or who have had the misfortune to be on his bad side, truly understand his ruthlessness.

Grosz is much concerned with the rise of the Black Cowl in the Averheim underworld, in particular inasmuch as it affects him, Frederick Grosz. He is reasonably loyal to his old criminal bosses, as this is a good virtue to be known to have, but is privately wondering whether he should change teams. To Grosz, the most important consideration is who will win the struggle, and how can Grosz come out ahead with minimal risk to himself. Ultimately, he will decide to make the switch and throw in with the Black Cowl. When he does, his connections and talent for smuggling will be of great use to the Conspiracy in setting up the events of Book Three.

# THE BLACK COWL AND THE CONSPIRACY

The central villain of *The Enemy Within* is a mysterious figure of uncertain identity. He leads a double life – respectable citizen of the Empire by day, nefarious criminal and plotter of treason by night. When engaging in his wicked plots, he wears a mask and a heavy black hood, so his compatriots in villainy know him only as “the man in the black hood” or “the Black Cowl.”

The Black Cowl is a central figure of a network of blackmail, treachery, bribery, and corruption that spreads throughout the Empire. Many of its agents are completely unaware of the scope or ambitions of these vile collaborators, but those in the know, who share a common purpose, may be considered one (extremely decentralised) organisation. Within the pages of this book, we call this group the Conspiracy.

Discovering that the Black Cowl exists is a minor goal of Book One. Discovering that the Black Cowl is a threat will hopefully happen over the course of Book Two. Discovering the Black Cowl’s identity should be a goal of the PCs during Book Three. The PCs may or may not ever deduce that there is a larger Conspiracy at work.

## THE BLACK COWL

The Black Cowl is the primary villain of *The Enemy Within*. While pretending to be friendly to the PCs and the other important NPCs of the story, the Black Cowl will manipulate events to work in his favour, using others as his catspaws as he plots to bring down the Empire from within. The PCs may well be duped into doing some of the Black Cowl’s dirty work for him. If so, all the better – it will make the Cowl’s betrayal that much more moving.

The Black Cowl is a man of considerable intelligence and skill. He wears a mask and a black hood to hide his true identity, but in so doing he has created an alternate persona – “the man in the black hood,” or “the Black Cowl.” The Black Cowl carries a sword and wears fine clothes in black silk – is he a noble? Or a high-ranking soldier? He always seems to know just what to do and just what to say – is he a wizard? In truth, he may be any of these things. As written, the Black Cowl may be either Captain Marcus Baerfaust, Graf Friedrich von Kaufman, or Luminary Konrad Mauer. It is up to the GM to decide which of these three men is the traitorous Black Cowl, and to run the campaign appropriately.

## A HIDDEN IDENTITY

It may seem obvious that the GM must choose which of the three possible NPCs is the Black Cowl before beginning the first session – possibly after or during the creation of the character backgrounds and establishing their connections to the other PCs and NPCs. This is certainly an excellent time to make the decision, so that he can begin weaving clues into the story as early as possible.

It is not, however, the only valid time to make such a decision. And if the decision is made at this time, there’s no law that prevents the GM from changing his mind later!

Another valid strategy to use when selecting the traitor is to wait until the PCs have met him and formed an opinion. Enterprising GMs can choose one the PCs already suspect, so they can have the

thrill of being “proved right” in Book Three. Dastardly GMs can choose the NPC the PCs like the most, to make the betrayal even more shocking.

In any case, the GM should have a strong idea of which NPC to use as the traitor by partway through Book Two, to ensure that he’s sprinkling the right clues. However, even if the GM has chosen one NPC and given the PCs several clues as to his identity, it’s still possible that the hero players may draw the “wrong” conclusion, either because they refuse to abandon preconceptions or because the evidence is, on reflection, actually ambiguous and open to multiple interpretations. In this case, the GM is presented with another opportunity to change his mind and choose to make the Black Cowl’s identity conform to the hero players’ suspicions.

Ultimately, there’s no wrong way to proceed. If the ultimate revelation of the traitor is satisfying to the play group, then it’s been done well – even if the GM changed his mind at the last second and swapped out one traitor for another.

## THE CONSPIRACY

The mysterious villain(s) behind the events of *The Enemy Within* are referred to in the text as the Conspiracy. The Conspiracy is not a cult, or even a secret society, per se. In fact, to call them “villainous” is to miss the mark; some members of the Conspiracy are men and women of principle and think of themselves as patriots. The Conspiracy is simply a group of men and women who share certain goals, and are able to assist one another in achieving them.



At their core, the goals of the Conspiracy are banal and not even particularly nefarious. They include:

- ✦ A weaker Imperial government, with more power shifted to the Provinces and the Electors.
- ✦ Fewer tariffs and restrictions on trade.
- ✦ An appeasement foreign policy stance, so that fewer wars will put demands on regional coffers and interrupt trade.
- ✦ Less interference in daily life from the Cult of Sigmar and the other Imperial Cults.

In essence, the members of the Conspiracy are motivated by greed. They want less stringent and powerful central control, so that they can put more money into their own coffers, send fewer soldiers to die in wars, and foster (and profit from) trade within and without the Empire.

What makes the Conspiracy so dangerous and evil is the methods they are willing to employ to bring about these goals. For the Conspiracy, the best possible result is a puppet Emperor who is unable to force the Provinces to pay taxes or levy soldiers for the Imperial defence, with several Electors in their pocket to keep the status quo. The fact that such a result may well damn the Empire to destruction from the forces of Chaos is considered alarmist nonsense by most members of the Conspiracy. To others, a return to the Age of Wars of the Empire's second millennium seems desirable; after all, the Electors had more freedom during that time than at any other in the Empire's history!

The Conspiracy will (and does) use blackmail, extortion, murder, and treason as tools in their quest for more freedom for its members. They'll use magic if it seems like it will work, criminal catspaws with alarming regularity, and when they're feeling really underhanded, they'll stoop to politics.

## THE BLACK COWL'S ROLE

The Black Cowl is just a single member of the Conspiracy, albeit one with a great deal of intelligence and influence. He is the mastermind behind most of the plots that this adventure concerns itself with, and a major player behind the scenes throughout Averland. Whatever his identity, he has enough blackmail material and allies throughout Averland's criminal, noble, and mercantile classes to dare to imagine that he could choose Averland's next Elector. And of course, if the Elector of Averland is a Conspiracy pawn, that means that the Conspiracy is that much closer to being able to choose the next Emperor.

## THE SHORT-TERM GOALS OF THE CONSPIRACY

The many plots, schemes, and goals of the Conspiracy aren't entirely relevant to the span of this adventure. They are mentioned above primarily to give a sense of the character of the Conspiracy, and as a basis for improvisation should it become necessary. What are relevant are the short-term goals and schemes the Black Cowl either already has in motion or is intending to set in motion as the curtain rises on the adventure.



### CONSOLIDATE CONTROL OF THE CRIMINAL UNDERWORLD IN AVERHEIM

This plan is nearly complete when the PCs become involved. Quite apart from it being useful to control the underworld in a given city (with the access to thieves, murderers, and smugglers that it provides), the Black Cowl is seizing control for two reasons. One is that he can divert a substantial portion of the money generated by Averheim's criminals to fund the bribes and other expenses necessary for his plan. The other is that he can arrange for certain items – such as the gunpowder mentioned in Book One – to “go missing” and turn up where they will be more useful to the Conspiracy.

### ELIMINATE CLOTHILDE VON ALPTRAUM

The Black Cowl – even if he is von Kaufman – has no ambition to sit in the Elector's Seat himself. But he does want to install an Elector he can control. And Clothilde von Alptraum cannot be controlled, nor is she likely to countenance any attempt to install an Elector she deems weak or unsuitable. In short, Clothilde is a rival and she must be removed.

The Cowl doesn't much care how this is accomplished. He's already made several blackmail attempts and even some veiled threats (all through intermediaries, of course). He even attempted to marry her off to a Kislevite nobleman, which would remove her from play. Since all of these attempts have failed, the Cowl has now progressed towards murder. The plot to blow up the Temple of Drama Theatre described in Book Three represents one such attempt.

### DISCREDIT THE CULT OF SIGMAR

The Cult of Sigmar, and especially the Witch Hunters, represent a real threat to the Black Cowl personally and the Conspiracy in general. The Cowl therefore has a vested interest in exposing

corruption within the Cult or, failing that, creating the false impression of such corruption. To this end, he has devised a scheme to manufacture a bell for a Sigmarrite temple, and to taint that bell with a corrupt warpstone clapper. The goal is to drive mad or even mutate members of the Sigmarrite clergy and congregation, creating a scandal on which the Conspiracy can capitalize.

### **HUMILIATE THE EMPEROR**

Although the Black Cowl certainly wouldn't mind a shot at killing the Emperor, he doesn't dare try – the Conspiracy isn't that powerful; not yet. Still, by manipulating the Red Crown and various northern border lords, the Conspiracy hopes to create a moment of military weakness for the Empire and blame it on Karl Franz. When the invasion occurs during Book Two, it's an opportunity the Conspiracy can't help exploiting, and so they arrange for the Emperor and his army to be ambushed by beastmen – then attempt to create the impression that it was Karl Franz's ineptitude that resulted in the humiliating defeat.

### **A NEW PLAN!**

It is this last plan, to humiliate the Emperor, that sparks the frenetic events of Book Three. The plan works much better than expected – the Emperor is not just defeated, he is badly injured! Suddenly, the Conspiracy – and the Cowl, in particular – stand to gain a great deal more. They must revise their plans to accommodate this unexpected good fortune.

### **KEEP THE EMPEROR SIDELINED**

As long as the Emperor is recovering, he's not out leading the armies, soothing fractious Electors, or otherwise resisting the Conspiracy's attempts to undermine his power. In many ways, a sick Emperor is better for the Conspiracy than a dead Emperor. With the Emperor dead, a new Emperor would have to be chosen, and the Conspiracy doesn't (yet) have control of the Electors.

### **SEIZE THE ELECTORS**

The Emperor's illness gives the Conspiracy another opportunity, in that several Electors and other high-ranking nobles will place themselves in Altdorf during the crisis. With a little carefully-applied murder and mayhem, the Conspiracy could have a shot not just at the Electorship of Averland, but of Wissenland, Stirland, the Moot, and others depending on how the war progresses! Controlling even one Elector would give the Conspiracy enough power to weaken the Emperor the next time one is chosen; controlling three would be incredible.

To this end, the Black Cowl revises his plan involving the tainted bell clapper. He will no longer use it on a temple in Averland. He will use it in Altdorf, in the Great Temple, and attempt to eliminate as many Electors or members of their court as possible – and deal a crippling blow to the Cult of Sigmar at the same time.

### **THE BELL OF THE GREAT TEMPLE**

The main bell of the Holy Temple of Sigmar cracked eighteen months ago during a particularly zealous service in response to plague. This was widely considered an ill omen at the time, but the plague burnt itself out (with generous assistance from the Cult of Sigmar and actual fire), so the incident is not widely remembered. The belfry of the Holy Temple features a set of smaller bells that usually ring in concert with the main bell, so the main bell's loss has not been felt too keenly except by the most devout congregationalists and some of the priests. Unfortunately, replacing the

main bell is very expensive, and low-ranking Cult functionaries in the pay of (or labouring under blackmail threats from) the Conspiracy have arranged to deny funding for the bell. This creates the opportunity for the Black Cowl, who swoops in with money redirected from the Averheim underworld and pays to have the bell re-cast and re-consecrated – and the tainted clapper installed.

### **CLEAN HOUSE**

With matters coming to a head, the Black Cowl will need to be extra careful that proof of his malfeasance – and especially his consorting with the enemies of the Empire in the form of the skaven and the Red Crown – is covered up. So a number of key murders, potentially including those of the player characters, will have to be perpetrated.

### **A LARGER CONSPIRACY!**

When the adventure is over and the Black Cowl has been revealed and (hopefully) defeated, the PCs may well conclude that the danger has passed and the Enemy Within lies dead. If you so wish, this can be a fine place to lower the curtain on the campaign and end the story.

But of course, the Enemy Within can never be defeated. The Black Cowl was just one man, just one part of the greater Conspiracy. The Conspiracy will look at the ruin of its plans, eliminate any points of contact between the Cowl and the Conspiracy at large, and resume their plotting as if nothing had happened. They are patient; and anyway there's no central governing body to destroy. Such further plots are excellent fodder for further adventures.

### **THE RED CROWN**

The Red Crown is a Chaos cult that is widespread throughout the Empire, and was once extremely powerful. Now it is only a shadow of its former strength and size, and has been largely co-opted by the Conspiracy. While the rank-and-file of the Red Crown are devoted to tearing down the order of the Empire and creating a new utopia where human and mutant alike can live in peace and harmony (or indulge in their murderous, blasphemous excesses, as suits the individual cell or cult member), its leadership considers the cult a disposable asset.

The Red Crown's most distinctive trait is the large number of mutants, mostly living hidden in the forests of the Empire, that are connected to the cult. Through those mutants, the Red Crown even manages to exert some small influence on the beastman herds of the Drakwald and Forest of Shadows. It is via the Red Crown that the Conspiracy and the Black Cowl send word of Karl Franz's army to the beastmen during Book Two. Once this is accomplished, the Conspiracy is happy to "clean house" by exposing and/or murdering groups of Red Crown cultists, severing any connection between the cult and the Conspiracy.

The mutants in Book One are affiliated with the Red Crown, and doing the bidding of the Black Cowl.

The Red Crown will likely play a minor role in Book Two, one of the three competing Chaos cults in Middenheim. The Black Cowl will be happy to manipulate the PCs into destroying as much of the Red Crown as they can during this time.

During Book Three, a surviving group of Red Crown cultists will attempt to take revenge on the Black Cowl for the purge, and may help or hinder the PCs.

## TAKE NOTE!

*The Enemy Within* is uncommonly large and complex as adventures go. It's entirely possible that you've never played anything quite like it before, and the same is true of your hero players. It can be extremely valuable to take good notes during and after each game session, for both the hero players and the GM. If possible, set aside a special notebook to be the campaign diary, and have one player assigned to annotate the proceedings. You can begin each session with a brief reading of what happened last time, and this will go a long way towards helping the group remember the details of the plot (not to mention things like the names of major NPCs!).

## CLUES

Clues are an essential part of any mystery. It is important to give the audience some clues to keep them committed to the story and engaged with the plot. And it is the audience who needs clues, not necessarily the characters in the story.

One of the best possible results in a work of mystery fiction is that the audience will be surprised by the solution of the mystery, but in retrospect will see all the clues that were presented that pointed to that correct conclusion. This can be accomplished by making the mystery complex, or by hiding the clues in the "background noise" of the details of the story. Neither of these strategies are especially effective in an interactive mystery like *The Enemy Within*, and the "best result" of an interactive mystery is not necessarily the same.

The audience of a roleplaying game is the play group. A satisfying mystery for a roleplaying game will have the audience – and by extension, probably, the protagonists – figure out the mystery just before it's too late to do anything about it. They don't need to get all the fine details; just the broad strokes of the solution are sufficient. This rewards the players with the satisfaction of a job well done while still challenging them. Unlike a mystery novel, it is possible that an interactive mystery can stall if the protagonists (the PCs) don't find the right clues or the right solutions. Hopefully this won't be a problem in *The Enemy Within* – if the PCs don't figure out the Black Cowl's plot, he simply succeeds and the story advances regardless of what the PCs do or fail to do. However, it's still more fun to have the PCs figure it all out just in time (or just too late; either is dramatic!). What isn't fun is to have the villain succeed at his evil plan, and then gloat at all the "obvious" clues and hints the PCs missed that allowed him to succeed.

Remember that hero players have three major barriers blocking their way at each clue. First, they may not find the clue. Second, they may not realize that the clue is important. And third, they may not draw the correct conclusions from the clue. There's not a lot that a GM can do about the third point, without explaining the solution himself, but the first two are entirely in the power of the game master.

## CLUE CARDS

*The Enemy Within* includes several clue cards to help smooth the process of unravelling the mystery. These clue cards each present a piece of the puzzle, and can be handed to the PCs when they figure out or notice something going on. Sometimes the PCs will discover these clues on their own – such as the spilled and spoilt gunpowder in Book One. Other times, the GM can have an NPC deliver the clue to the PCs – for example, if the PCs miss the spoilt gunpowder in Book One, Captain Baerfaust or Graf Friedrich can complain about the gunpowder thefts. Handing the clue card describing the stolen gunpowder to the PCs at that point clearly indicates that it is an important clue. When the hero players have a handful of these critical clues, then the mystery becomes a puzzle – they try to figure out how the clues fit, and hopefully want to discover the few remaining clues, the missing pieces of the puzzles. The GM can leave the as-yet-undiscovered clue cards on the table (face down!) as further motivation, if desired.

The clue cards also make the GM's job easier; finding a way to impart the clues to the PCs is part of the goal of each part of the campaign. By having the clues reduced to physical objects, the GM can use the cards as reminders to himself, touchstones towards which he should attempt to guide the plot. And by handing the clues over, the GM can complete his task and signal to the hero players that they have just received an important piece of information.

GMs should also feel free to invent their own clue cards to add to the mix, either to increase the significance of some subplots or to reflect wholesale changes to the course of the adventure. In particular, clues pointing towards the identity of the Black Cowl (if decided beforehand) may be valuable.



## TRAVELLING

Over the course of this campaign, the PCs will travel from Averheim, in the southern province of Averland, to Middenheim, in the north-central province of Middenland, and then to Altdorf, the capital of the Empire.

These rules, coupled with specific encounter lists found within the main adventure (or improvised encounters suitable for your campaign), can be used to resolve long journeys swiftly without simply skipping over the travelling. Their use is optional, and GMs should feel free to resolve journeys as abstractly or concretely as desired.

## LEGS OF THE JOURNEY

Each journey should be broken down into one or more legs between major landmarks. In many cases (such as described in Book Two and Book Three), the major landmarks will represent encounters or episodes that are fixed or semi-fixed. There is no need for each leg of the journey to be of roughly equal length, so long as the breaks make narrative sense. (For example, the group may ride a riverboat for several hundred miles down the Reik, then disembark and take a coach fifty miles to their destination. The riverboat ride may be one leg of the journey, and the coach ride may be a second leg, with a fixed encounter in the town where they change to a coach.)

## TRAVELLING SKILLS

To resolve each leg of the journey, the party will make a single skill check. The skill used (and the active character for the check) may vary based on the mode of travel. For example, if the party is travelling by coach, then the check would be a Ride (Ag) check made by the coachman. The exact skill used is up to the GM, but here is a short list of common modes of travel and the associated skill for each:

- ✦ **On Foot:** Resilience (To)
- ✦ **By Coach:** Ride (Ag)
- ✦ **On Horseback:** Ride (Ag)
- ✦ **By Boat:** Coordination (Ag)
- ✦ **Navigating Untamed Wilderness:** Nature Lore (Int)

Only one skill check will be made for the entire party. Often, the character who should make the check is obvious (the coachman, the helmsman, the guide). However, in some cases there is not a single character clearly responsible for the success or failure of the journey. In this case, the group can choose someone to “set the pace” and make the check on behalf of them all.

## A DIFFICULT ROAD

Each leg of the journey will have a difficulty score that represents the danger, length, and difficulty of the route and the journey. In general, for a journey of a few days and moderate difficulty, the leg should be of Average (2d) difficulty.

As always, the GM may add fortune or misfortune dice to represent favourable or unfavourable circumstances.

## MAKING THE JOURNEY

For each leg of the journey, the active character should assemble a dice pool based on the relevant skill and the difficulty of that leg. While assembling this pool, the group should decide whether to proceed with all due care and consideration, or to set a breakneck pace and damn the risk. The active character should adjust his stance to reflect the decision and modify his dice pool accordingly.

Then, make the check, and interpret the results as follows:

- ✦ Any net success means that this leg of the journey is completed.
- ✗ Any net failure means that the check should be rolled again for this leg of the journey, after all random encounters have been resolved.
- ⚔ A net balance of banes indicates one combat or unfriendly encounter that must be resolved before the PCs reach the next landmark.
- ✦ A net balance of boons indicates one friendly encounter that is resolved before the PCs reach the next landmark.
- ✦ Adds an additional combat or unfriendly encounter.
- ✦ Adds an additional friendly encounter.
- ⌚ Delays are added to ✗ failures when determining net success.
- ⚡ Exertion results indicate a tiring journey. Each PC suffers 1 fatigue at the beginning of each encounter on this leg of the journey, and again when reaching the next landmark. (In other words, they will begin every encounter with some fatigue, and won't be able to fully rest up until reaching the next landmark and resolving any fixed encounter there.)

The friendly and unfriendly or combat encounters for each leg may be drawn from the list of suggested encounters specified for the given journey, or may be invented by the GM. In the context of *The Enemy Within*, the journey from Averheim to Middenheim and the journey from Middenheim to Altdorf are presented with detailed suggested encounter lists, as well as a selection of news and rumours which the PCs will hopefully encounter on their travels. GMs can use these as models when devising their own journeys, or modifying existing journeys.

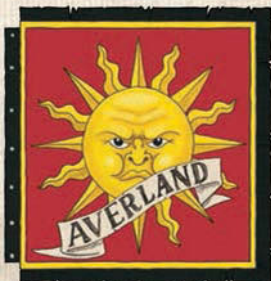




## BOOK ONE

# THE ENEMY BELOW

The adventure begins in the city of Averheim, the capital of the Grand County of Averland. The death two years ago of Count Marius Leitdorf has left Averland without an Elector, and Averheim is an unsettled city. The nobles squabble over the succession, struggling to ally themselves with the eventual winner or delay the resolution as long as possible. The city bureaucrats and officials stagnate and, with no clear leadership, drift into political graft and corruption. In short, Averheim is a city under a shadow...and the PCs, whether they know it or not, are about to be caught up in events that may shake the Empire to its core.



**Part One, Shadows Over Averheim**, introduces the PCs to the busy (and very smelly) docks of Averheim. It seems that a new crime lord is making his presence felt in the area, and people including petty criminals, penniless debtors, and upright merchants alike are being made to suffer. Whilst looking into a rash of disappearances, the PCs will come to know of three important individuals; Captain Baerfaust of the Averheim garrison, local aristocrat Graf Friedrich von Kaufman, and Luminary Mauer of the Light Order.

**Part Two, A Day at the Menagerie**, finds the PCs invited to a prestigious event held in order to celebrate Graf von Kaufman's return from his adventures in the Southlands. A chance to hobnob with Averland's great and good is thrown into disarray by a mysterious assailant. A strange, and apparently dangerous, artefact is stolen and the PCs are recruited to recover it.

**Part Three, Taking on the Triad**, sees the PCs gather information about the assailant at the menagerie party. Clues point to the activities of the skaven, a foe many in Averheim assert doesn't even exist. The PCs confront the ratmen in their lair and make some strange discoveries.

# WELCOME TO AVERHEIM

Averheim, the capital of the Grand County of Averland, is one of the largest and wealthiest cities in the Empire. It is also amongst the oldest. Averheim was an important settlement for the Brigundians, with a founding that dates back to the time before Sigmar. The city centre is positioned on a rocky bluff that overlooks the River Aver. This elevated seat gives the Averburg Palace a commanding view, and protects most of the city from floods when the Aver bursts its banks (as it regularly does after protracted rain). The outskirts of the city have spread beyond the bluff in recent times, and there is even a small outlying district of Averheim on the north bank of the river.

Next to the palace is the Plenzerplatz, a large market square that often hosts fetes and festivals. Most of these are small affairs, markets and exhibitions catering to the locals, though Averheim's annual wine festival attracts connoisseurs and vintners from all over the Empire.

Averheim's economy hinges on the cattle trade. It has an extensive dockland area from which leather goods, hides, and preserved meats are distributed throughout the Empire and the lands beyond. The town is infamous for its noisy slaughterhouses and stinking tanneries, and its many butchers' stalls are usually well stocked with cheap fresh meat. In addition to cattle, Averheim does brisk trade in horses, and controls the lucrative trade route through Black Fire Pass. These elements have conspired to make Averland in general, and Averheim in particular, extremely rich.

## AN OVERVIEW OF AVERHEIM'S POLITICAL SITUATION

The Electorship of the Grand County of Averland remains in dispute following the death of the previous Elector, Grand Count Marius Leitdorf, who was killed whilst campaigning in Black Fire Pass in 2520. Most Averheimers still regard the Leitdorfs as the most important noble family in Averland, and expect them to decide on the next Elector. Unfortunately, the Leitdorfs are a deeply eccentric and fractious dynasty, even by the generally dubious standards of Imperial nobility. Marius himself was famed for his frenzied black rages, and was widely known as the 'Mad Count of Averland.' The Leitdorfs have made little progress in reaching a consensus as to which of them would make a good claimant. Political pundits suggest that Baron Kastor Leitdorf is the man to watch, though most people are hedging their bets.

Part of the reason for such caution is down to the fact that the von Alpraum family, who ruled Averland prior to the rise of Marius, are still very much a force to be reckoned with. The von Alpraums own large estates in the country surrounding Averheim, and have heavily invested in the city's cattle trade. The current head of the family is Marlene von Alpraum. Her habit of accompanying her cattle drovers, and even assisting them in repelling greenskin raiders on one occasion, has won her great regard amongst the common folk, and she is proud to have earned the affectionate nickname of 'Iron Countess.'

For the time being the situation seems to be one of interminable political deadlock. The Leitdorfs remain the most powerful faction, but are divided as to which of their number would be best to put

forward as a new ruler. The von Alpraums are not powerful enough to mount an effective coup, either politically or militarily, but Marlene's growing popularity marks her as a contender to watch. In the meantime other nobles throughout Averland scheme to take advantage of the situation and play the various actors off against one another. Averheim has also become a hotbed of political radicals who want to see new forms of government arise from the ashes of the old regime.

## THE AVERBURG GROUNDS AND PLENZERPLATZ AREA

The intrigues that the PCs become involved in during this section of the adventure centre around the Averheim docks, and these are described in detail at the start of Chapter 1.

However, some of the action takes place in and around the grounds of the Averburg and the Plenzerplatz, and the PCs may well wish to visit the centre of the city to buy provisions, escape the docks for a while, or just to see the famous square in all its glory. As such, a description of the main features of the area is given here.

### THE PLENZERPLATZ

The Plenzerplatz is a large cobbled market square at the centre of which is the famed Pillar of Skulls (see page 22). Whilst much of the city is as densely populated and crowded as any other in the Empire, Averheim is nevertheless noted for its many open spaces and market squares, and the Plenzerplatz is the largest and busiest in the city.



## RED ARROW COACHES

The preeminent coaching line in Averland, Red Arrow runs regular passenger coaches from Grenzstadt at the edge of Black Fire Pass, as far north as Talabheim, and as far west as Altdorf. Fares are modest and aimed at the silver economic tier; even a long journey is less than half a gold crown. As a broad rule of thumb, a seat on a Red Arrow coach costs 5s per day of travel, and the coach will stop at a Red Arrow-owned or affiliated coaching inn, which will feed and house the travellers overnight for another 3-5s.

Some popular destinations and their fares (originating in Averheim):

- + **Altdorf:** 30s
- + **Grenzstadt:** 10s
- + **The Moot:** 45s – this route is heavily tariffed
- + **Nuln:** 20s
- + **Talabheim:** 46s20b – the route travels along several toll roads, hence the odd fare
- + **Ubersreik:** 36s
- + **Wurtbad:** 23s16b – the route travels along several toll roads, hence the odd fare

All prices will at least double in Book Two, when the war begins.

Red Arrow also maintains a substantial haulage fleet, transporting valuable cargo along the roads using the same roads and routes as its passenger fleet.

On most days there are dozens of market stalls erected here, selling hot pies, cured meats, pots and pans, cutlery, candles, clothing, old books, and new boots. All the miscellaneous items from the Economy and Equipment chapter of the *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay Core Product* or *Player's Guide* are available here, pitched at the brass or silver tier economies. This is not a good place to go shopping for weapons or armour, though stalls catering to hunters and trappers sell arrows, bolts, nets, lassos, and leather jackets.

The market is particularly busy every Markttag, and the increased competition amongst the stall holders means that the cost of goods is effectively driven down to 75% of the usual asking price. Each Festag, most of the traders take a day off, and those few who make the effort to turn up usually charge 25% extra for their wares. Most of the market stalls are owned and staffed by native Averheimers, though some are transients such as farmers from the wilds of Averland and the occasional Strigany pedlar. With the exception of a few brave pie merchants who carry their wares with them (and avoid the city watch), halflings are not permitted to set up stalls on the Plenzerplatz.

## THE PILLAR OF SKULLS

This towering, twisting column is constructed from the sun-bleached skulls of hundreds of orcs. It commemorates the battle of 1707 when Averheimers bloodily repulsed the besieging forces of the notorious orc warlord Gorbard Ironclaw. The base of the pillar is

crowded with candles, strips of parchment, and other mementos and offerings left by local Averheimers to memorialize loved ones killed by orcs or as prayers for safety against marauding greenskins. Soldiers campaigning against the orcs, or headed into the mountains on patrol, commonly visit the pillar to touch it for luck.

## THE JOURNEY'S END COACHING INN AND RED ARROW OFFICE

The coaching inn is a large two-storey building with wide mulioned windows, on the south corner of the square across from the Averburg. The Journey's End is one of the most sumptuous and well-appointed taverns in the Empire. It features a comfortable bar that serves a wide array of expertly cooked dishes prepared by experienced halfling chefs, strong ales imported directly from dwarf breweries, and fine wines sourced from renowned vintners in Averheim and Wurtbad. The inn provides the hub of the Red Arrow coaching network, and the owners of the coaching house pay handsomely to see that the Journey's End is always staffed with trained professionals and equipped with a surplus of everything it needs to run smoothly. Few inns or boarding houses in the Empire provide such lavish accommodation to their guests.

Every two weeks, a small group of Averheim intellectuals and scholars meets in a private room in the Journey's End. This group includes Luminary Konrad Mauer, Unterlector Viktor Glottz of the Temple of Verena, and (nominally, although he seldom attends) Graf Friedrich von Kaufman. They call themselves the Sun Society, and Glottz publishes a journal four times a year titled the Sun Society Notes.

To one side of the inn is a large coach house and stables. On the other side is an office building used by Red Arrow to store their accounts and hold private meetings. Red Arrow coaches pull up and leave from the coach house throughout the day. On account of an Imperial charter, Red Arrow is the foremost coaching house that operates within Averland.

## THE SUN OF SOLLAND THEATRE

This is Averheim's largest and most luxuriously appointed theatre, a huge building with an elegant façade covered in sculptures of the gods and heroes of antiquity, located directly across from the Averburg on the southwestern edge of the square. Patrons of the theatre tend to refer to it as the 'Sulky Sun.' This is partly a comment on the theatre's usual bill of morose tragedy, and partly as comment on the large bronze sculpture of a glowering sun that decorates the front of the theatre. The Sun of Solland is currently enjoying a very successful run of Jacopo Tarradasch's cross-dressing comedy *Hexenachtabend*.

Tickets to the Sun of Solland are available at the gold, silver, and brass economic tiers. Gold-tier seats are private boxes on the upper levels, beginning at a gold coin per box per night. Most of these boxes are leased via subscription for the entire season to noble or wealthy families who wish to be seen as patrons of the arts. Three to ten silver shillings will purchase a seat with a poor to excellent view of the stage, shoulder to shoulder with other patrons. The groundlings pay three brass pennies (two pennies on Festag) to stand on the floor, close enough to fling offal and rotting vegetables if the play fails to please them.

## THE TEMPLES

There are three large temples in the vicinity of the Plenzerplatz.

The largest of these is the temple of Sigmar, built along the eastern corner adjacent to the Averborg Palace. It is built in much the same style as the Averborg Palace, replete with arches, spires, and a cacophony of religious statues and bas relief carvings. The temple's grounds and precincts are patrolled at all times by members of the Knightly Order of Sigmar's Blood. A white marble statue in front of the temple depicts Sigmar in furs and armour, holding Ghal Maraz aloft. A second figure is positioned just behind Sigmar, standing proud in the war panoply of a charioteer. This is Siggurd, King of the Brigundians, the ancient tribe that modern Averlanders regard as their forebears. Visitors to the temple of Sigmar are likely to be greeted by Disciple Kurgan, a broad, soft-spoken man with a fierce beard. He has taken a dwarf name in honour of the friendship between Sigmar and the dwarfs, and will be especially polite to dwarfs.

The local temple-hospice of Shallya is a wide building adorned with a somewhat incongruous tall tower, built on the southern corner of the Plenzerplatz across the street from the Journey's End. It surrounds a small square courtyard, set around a pool of clear water and furnished with many benches allowing patients to 'take the air.' Why the engineers of the temple-hospice deemed it necessary to build a tall and slender tower is not quite known. The cult authorities insist that it is there to provide the Shallyans with a quiet, isolated place in which to meditate. Sceptics point out that other temple-hospices tend not to have such structures. They proffer alternative theories, ranging from it being a folly built to compete with the palace and the temple of Sigmar, to darker rumours about it being used to house dangerous lunatics, the mutant relatives of rich patrons, or worse. Visitors to the temple are likely to be greeted by the formidable Mother Henriette, a tall, heavysset woman in her forties. She has a habit of clucking in disapproval, and this, plus her voluminous white robes and the blood-red mantle she wears, have earned her the nickname "Mother Hen" from her gaggle of initiates and the temple laity.

The third temple is dedicated to the worship of Verena, situated in the northern corner of the square directly adjacent to the Averborg and opposite the temple of Sigmar. It is a square building with a façade of tall columns in the Tilean style. The temple of Verena boasts an impressive library and a museum area. This displays exhibits and demonstrations themed around the Battle of Black Fire Pass, the most famous victory of Sigmar, which happened on the edges of what is now Averland. Visitors to the temple are likely to be greeted by Unterlector Viktor Glottz, a rail-thin wisp of a man of uncertain age. Unterlector Glottz's insistence on hearing "both sides" of every issue or debate has earned him no friends in the Cult of Sigmar or amongst the Witch Hunters.

With the exception of Ranald, shrines to all the other major deities of the Old World pantheon can be found throughout the city. The worship of Sigmar is particularly important to Averheimers, due mainly to their proximity to Black Fire Pass, the scene of his greatest victory. As well as the temple on the Plenzerplatz, a further two shrines exist, one in the outlying district on the northern bank of the Aver and another in the southern district of Averheim.

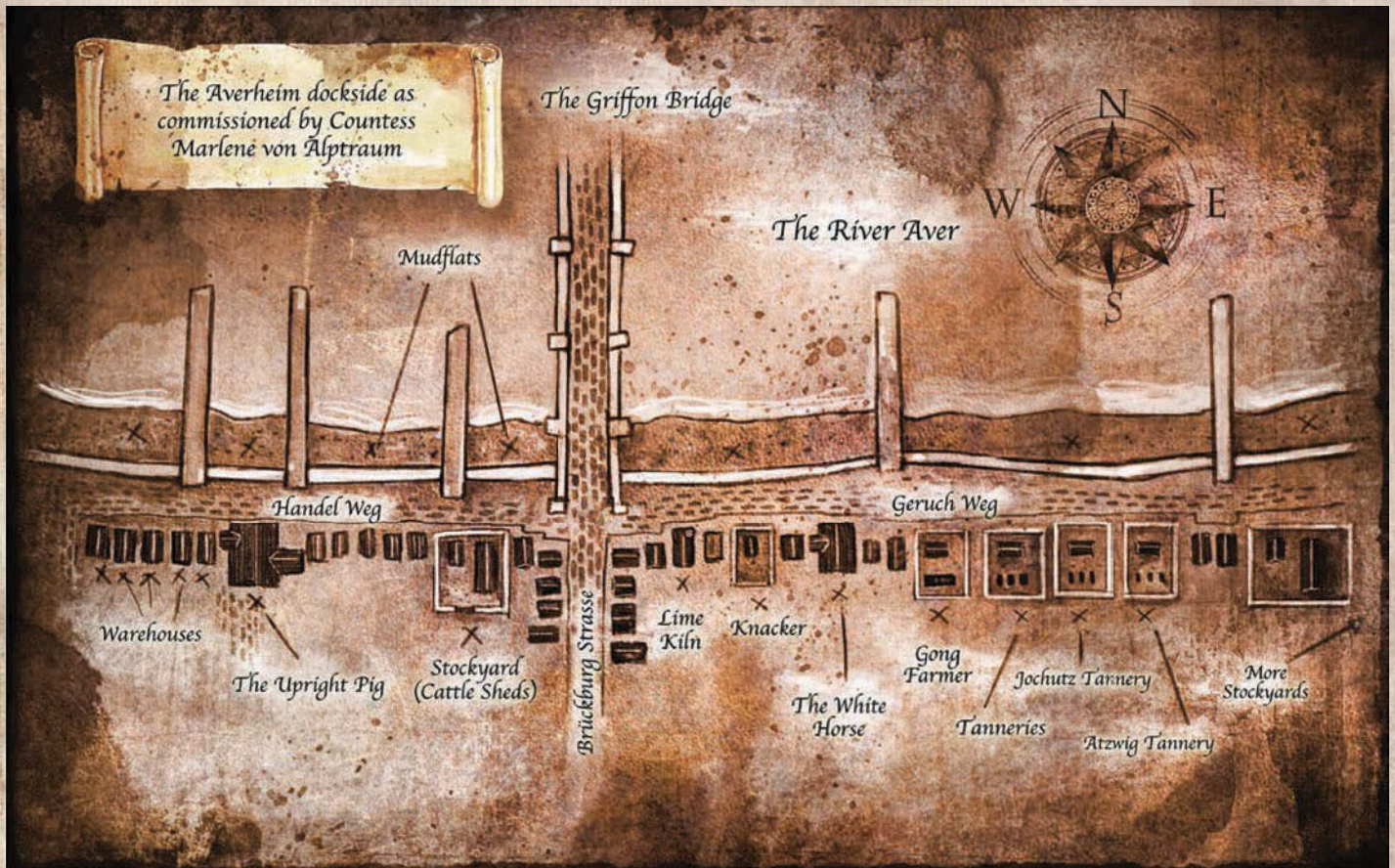
## THE AVERBURG PALACE

The Averborg Palace, said to have been founded by King Siggurd himself at the dawn of the Empire, is an imposing fortress within extensive grounds. Its gates front on the northeastern edge of the Plenzerplatz, and its outermost wall runs the entire width of the square and then some. In recent years the palace has been renovated, with the addition of a number of tall round towers topped with impressive conical turrets. On a clear day the lofty towers of the citadel can be seen by travellers to Averheim for many miles before they reach the city. Despite the impractical nature of such new features, the Averborg is still an imposing fortress, apparently capable of withstanding a determined siege even if it wasn't protected by the walled city that surrounds it.

The Averborg is the traditional seat of the Elector of Averland. Since that post remains unfilled at the moment, the Averborg technically has no master. A rotating roster of Leitdorfs and von Alptrauts (the families of the last two Elector Counts) takes rooms in the palace, but none stay for long and in practice the Averborg is run by its steward, a long-suffering man named Dagobert Tochfel, and the commander of its garrison, Captain Marcus Baerfaust.

The palace grounds consist of an extensive park and gardens, guarded by greatsword-wielding soldiers at all times. The garden was much manicured during the reign of Marius Leitdorf, with well-tended flowerbeds, smooth lawns, and impressive displays of topiary. Since then it has become somewhat neglected, though occasionally one of the Leitdorfs will spur the gardeners into a frenzy of planting, pruning, and weeding.





There is a menagerie within the palace grounds that has won a certain amount of acclaim. Scholars of Bestiaria pronounce it to be the finest collection of exotic animals in the Empire, with the obvious exception of the Imperial Zoo in Altdorf. Regrettably the menagerie has also suffered from a lack of interest and funds since the death of Marius, and could benefit from a few fresh exhibits.

## DOCKSIDE LOCATIONS

The Empire's mighty river system provides arterial routes for travelling people and traders, and so, like most cities in the Empire, Averheim boasts a lively and thriving dockside community. The action in Chapters 1 and 3 of this book takes place on a stretch of the docks.

## THE RIVER AVER

Whilst the Aver might seem narrow in the eyes of those who are used to the broad and majestic River Reik, it is still a significant waterway. The River Aver regularly bursts its banks near Averheim, and so a wall has been built to protect the dockside from flooding when the river is swollen.

## THE MUDFLATS

Between the dockside wall and the natural banks of the Aver is a narrow strip of mudflats. Most days this area is a stinking morass of sticky mud. Sewage outlets and sluice pipes empty their loads of waste onto the area. During the day, mudlarks comb the flats, looking for salvageable items that may have been dropped by boatmen or dockworkers. After heavy rains the Aver rises and covers the flats with a new layer of sediment.

## HANDEL WEG

The waterfront to the west of the Griffon Bridge is well known as the commercial hub of Averheim, populated by merchants, dockers, and criminals.

## WAREHOUSES AND PONTOONS

Most of the buildings on the west side of the waterfront are warehouses belonging to the merchant families and guilds that do business in Averheim. The warehouses are largely given over to stocking the end products of cattle farming, mostly leathers, hides, and preserved meat. The barges that are moored on the nearby pontoons then distribute these goods throughout the Empire, and at all times of the day a veritable army of dockers shifts boxes and barrels from the barges to the warehouses and back again.

## THE UPRIGHT PIG TAVERN

The Upright Pig is built to fairly typical Empire standards, though it has an unusually large and soundproof cellar often used to host meetings between crime lords and racketeers. Until recently, this inn was used as a meeting place for members of Averheim's criminal underworld. In recent weeks, the Black Cowl has been flexing his own hired muscle in the area and established members of Averheim's underworld have found themselves joining the new order or being forced to move on. Regulars of the Upright Pig are only too aware of how nasty life can be for squealers – so they are tight-lipped and cautious when talking to strangers. The Upright Pig serves food and drink aimed at the brass and silver economic tiers. Whilst the inn has a number of bedrooms, they are rarely available for guests to hire. Most of them are kept by important local criminals to use as meeting rooms or bolt-holes.

## THE GRIFFON BRIDGE

The oldest crossing over the River Aver is the Griffon Bridge. Some Averheimers say it was originally built in the time of Sigmar, though it has certainly been refurbished since then. It is now a large stone structure reinforced by a number of tall towers that rise from the Aver's muddy bed.

## BRUCKBERG STRASSE

A broad avenue leads from the docks to the Plenzerplatz and the Averborg Palace in the centre of the city. The Red Arrow coaches that cross the Griffon Bridge always pass quickly through the dirty, crime-ridden docks and do not stop here for anyone.

## GERUCH WEG

The waterfront to the east of the Griffon Bridge is given over to 'odiferous businesses.' These are usually associated with Averheim's thriving cattle trade and tanning industry. There are other smelly businesses on the Geruch Weg: lime kilns, dyers, dung collectors and so on. The area is generally avoided and reviled. Indeed, many of Averheim's elite feel that the whole district should be levelled and rebuilt on the north bank of the Aver.

## LIME KILN

The lime kiln caters to the local tanneries by producing quicklime. Throughout the day, kiln workers heat limestone at tremendous temperature until it crumbles down into quicklime powder. Tanners buy sacks of the powder in order to make caustic solutions used in the tanning process, and labourers also purchase great quantities to use in building projects.

## KNACKER'S YARD

It can be a difficult and dangerous task to kill large animals like horses and cattle. It takes a skilled professional to slaughter such beasts whilst minimising the risk of accident or injury. Although most of the local stockyards kill their own livestock, there is still enough demand for cheap and efficient slaughter to keep Hans Muller, the local knacker, in brisk business. Hans can be found here throughout the day, killing and butchering horses. The yard is covered in sawdust and many sturdy hitching posts are erected there. Hans lives in a small shack stood to one side of the yard.

## THE WHITE HORSE INN

Another dockside tavern is the White Horse, which isn't as well appointed as the Upright Pig. The White Horse caters to the dockside poor, and food, drink, and board here can be bought for a few brass pennies. The bar is run on a tight budget, though the landlord, Bernhardt Kurtz, tries his hardest to keep things respectable. The floors are regularly swept and the beds, whilst threadbare, are kept free of vermin. Pomanders in the bar are kept charged with fresh lavender, which doesn't quite manage to disguise the stench of horse manure and lime from the nearby stockyards and tanneries. Despite the efforts to keep it clean the building is somewhat dilapidated, leading locals to refer to the inn as "The Knackered Horse."

## GONG YARD

Gong farming is a euphemism for the collection of urine, manure and human ordure. This waste is kept in covered pits at the rear of the property. The gong farmers cater to much the same customers as the quicklime sellers, as the muck is used by both tanners and builders.

## TANNERIES AND STOCKYARDS AREA

To the east of the waterfront is a stretch of dockside property given over to businesses involved in the cattle trade. Many of these are tanneries, though there are also some large fenced-off enclosures used for the confinement and slaughter of livestock. These businesses are placed near the waterfront due to the copious amounts of chemical and animal waste they produce. Their dockside location means they are far from the more respectable parts of town and there is a convenient source of water nearby to sluice the accumulated filth produced by the keeping of animals or the tanning of their hides.

The whole area reeks of blood, offal, manure, and quicklime. Two of the tanneries adjoin properties belonging to Jochutz and Atzweg (see page 31). The wooden buildings show signs of water damage and rot, and have been closed this past fortnight whilst refurbishments take place. The other tanneries are busy places where tanners haul cow hides from vats of noxious stew and perform the hard task of scraping the loosened hair and fat from the hides.

## THE REST OF AVERHEIM

While not as large and cosmopolitan as Altdorf or Nuln, Averheim remains the largest and most sophisticated city in Averland. While describing every district and facet of Averheim is outside the scope of *The Enemy Within*, there are some general statements that can be made about the city.

The heart of the city lies on a rocky bluff overlooking the River Aver. The Averborg palace and the Plenzerplatz are both located on this bluff, as well as the bulk of the more affluent residences, businesses, and establishments. The bluff is divided roughly evenly between areas of the silver and gold economic tiers, with some mixing at places (such as the Plenzerplatz). There are many merchants and artisans located on the bluff, and most buildings are multiple stories and fashioned of brick. To outsiders, the "silver" tier of Averheim seems surprisingly well-off and affluent. Gold ornaments are common, luxuries are readily available, and even the watchmen have gold trim on their shining breastplates or helms. The gold tier is even more ostentatious with its wealth, although not, perhaps predictably, with its generosity.

The affluence does not appear to extend to the brass tier districts of Averheim; indeed, the gulf between the very rich and very poor in Averheim may seem even wider than in other great cities – the rich seem even richer, but the poor – many of them desperate Stirland immigrants – are no less poor. Below the bluff, on the shores of the river, is primarily brass tier. The docks district around the Griffon Bridge described above is a good model of most of brass tier Averheim. Further from the river are some modest homes and businesses attempting to transition from the brass to silver tiers, but those who are truly successful simply migrate out of the shadow of the bluff and move up to the bluff itself. On the edges of the city are stockyards, enormous pastures and paddocks for the management of cattle. It's said that during the high season, there are thirteen cows for every human being in Averheim. This may be exaggeration, but all year round Averheim sings with the lowing of cattle.

Across the river on the north bank are additional docks and warehouses, mostly for goods that are shipped up or down the river. Local law does not consider goods on the north bank to have entered the city for tax purposes, so merchants that don't intend

to sell their goods in Averheim itself favour the north bank for loading, unloading, and processing their shipments. In the absence of an Elector to properly govern the city, a thriving grey market has sprung up on the north bank dealing in these untaxed goods. The situation cannot be expected to last, but in the meantime the trade continues. Characters wishing to shop in the grey market may make the trip across the Griffon Bridge and try their luck; treat all goods as one step more rare, but 10% cheaper.

Further up and down the bank, and removed from the bank in the surrounding grasslands, are a series of regal estates maintained by Averland gentry. These quickly give way to farmland, pasturage, and wilderness, often with little distinction between the three.

The Old Dwarf Road runs through the city north to south. It crosses the River Aver at the Griffon Bridge and then continues down Bruckburg Strasse to the bluff before continuing down the other side and south towards Black Fire Pass.

## LIFE IN AVERHEIM

Averheim, as the largest city in Averland, is a prosperous and bustling metropolis. Averland itself is a county of rolling grasslands and low hills, without the choking and perilous forests common to most of the rest of the Empire. As a result, it is one of the safer places in the Empire and to an outsider Averlanders may seem spoilt and complacent. Still, the threat of goblins and worse things descending from the Black Mountains and World's Edge Mountains is a constant menace to life in Averland, and the Electors of Averland must remain vigilant in patrolling their mountainous borders. In the two years since the last great invasion by greenskins, the border guards have been kept busy stamping out the remnants of Ironjaw's horde, but Averheim itself has been untouched by war for quite some time. In Averheim, local concerns revolve primarily around the Elector's seat, and how much profit can be wrung from the situation before it is resolved. While the authorities remain vigilant against threats from within Averland itself, the efforts of the Black Cowl and the prolonged absence of a strong leader have left Averheim relatively exposed to the threat of the enemy within... as the PCs will soon learn, unfortunately for them.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Ordinarily, Averheim is governed by the Elector Count or a burgomeister appointed by the Elector. A town council, made up of representatives of local guilds, the city garrison, and other interests, serves in an advisory capacity and may occasionally have bureaucratic duties delegated to them by the steward. Since the death of Marius Leitdorf, Averheim has been ruled by the long-suffering steward of the Averburg, Dagobert Tochfel, but nearly all of Tochfel's time is consumed with matters pertaining to the succession. The town council has been in disarray attempting to curry favour with the various claimants for the Elector's seat.

All of which means that Averheim is a city that has been continuing on pure inertia for the past two years. Tax collectors still collect their taxes and pass them on to the city treasury, with no clear idea of who will decide how they're spent. The city bursar still distributes funds to the various city bureaus and officials at the funding levels last set by Marius Leitdorf, regardless of the changing realities of the city. Unsurprisingly, corruption, embezzlement, and inefficiency are rife.



Because no one else seems willing to shoulder the burden, Captain Marcus Baerfaust, the commander of the city garrison, has taken it upon himself to attempt to police the worst of the corruption. His soldiers shoulder more and more of the burden of the city watch. If Averheim has a ruler at the moment, it's Baerfaust.

## LAW, ORDER, AND DEFENCE

Averheim is patrolled by soldiers of the city garrison, who enforce public order and provide for the common defence. With no Elector to appoint new magistrates, two years of attrition has left the city's judicial system short-handed and (since there's no Elector to remove sitting magistrates, either) rather corrupt. As a consequence, the city patrols increasingly dispense summary justice, levying fines or administering corporal punishment more or less as the whim suits them. Only the most egregious offenses now result in incarceration and trial.

During the day, patrols consist of pairs of Averheim soldiers, wearing yellow uniforms with black accents. The soldiers are armed with halberds and armoured with breastplates, but otherwise use Soldier characteristics. At night, patrols are doubled to four-man groups, led by an officer with a sword and a war horn made from a cow's horn, with which he can sound the alarm or call for assistance.

## THE ECONOMY

Cattle are the lifeblood of Averland, and Averheim is the heart of the cattle trade. Live beasts come into the city in droves, where they are butchered and skinned, their meat and hides sold throughout the Empire and to the dwarfs of the World's Edge Mountains. Leather goods are easily found in Averheim and the overall quality of the leatherwork is extremely high. Live cattle are also bought

and sold in Averheim, either for breeding purposes to improve the quality of a herd or as a simple means of preserving the meat over a long journey. The cattle trade is at its heaviest during the late summer and early autumn, and the influx of cattle and cattle men during this time is an economic boon to the city.

In game terms, anything made primarily of leather is one step more common in Averheim than anywhere else, and Superior leather goods cost only eight times normal instead of ten times.

Second to the cattle in raw economic terms, but an equal source of pride to the province and the city, are the horses of Averland. Many fine horse breeders and trainers make their homes in the province and much of the trade comes through Averheim. The cattle paddocks that ring the city do double-duty for horses during the spring, and discriminating horse buyers from throughout the Empire descend on the city during the spring months as breeders show off their finest specimens.

In game terms, all types of horses are ten percent less expensive in Averheim than usual.

Averheim also has its fair share of artisans, merchants, and metalworkers who work outside the livestock trade. Iron, tin, and silver come into the city from the mountains and are worked into fine examples of weapons, armour, tools, and ornaments. Merchants also travel back and forth between Averheim and the nearest dwarf holds, bringing leather, meat, and grain to the dwarfs and returning with dwarf-made metalwork, weapons, armour, gold, and spirits. Trade with the dwarf holds, and trade through Black Fire Pass with the Border Princes and Tilea, have conspired to make Averheim extremely wealthy.

The sizable halfling population and agreeable climate conspire to make Averheim a city of fine food as well. In particular, the local vintners make excellent wines, and the Elector Count has historically sponsored a wine-tasting festival every year in Averheim.

With no university, college of engineers, or similar institution in the city, Averheim is not renowned as a source of firearms and artillery. Black powder weapons and black powder itself are primarily imported, mostly from Nuln. Recently, the price of black powder has spiked as the supply has dropped for reasons unknown. Black powder weapons and shot are ten percent more expensive than normal in Averheim.

## NON-HUMANS IN AVERHEIM

As with all Empire cities outside the Mootland, the vast majority of the inhabitants of Averheim are human. With the exception of halflings and to a lesser extent dwarfs, non-humans are an unusual sight on the streets of Averheim and will draw attention – perhaps unwelcome attention – wherever they go.

There is a sizable halfling minority population living in Averheim, and indeed throughout Averland. Halfling pie merchants are a common sight on many street corners, and it is fashionable for wealthy merchants or nobles in the city to employ a halfling chef, as do many of the better inns and taverns. However, the halflings of Averheim still live in the shadow of the infamous Halfling Rebellion of 2502 and the bloodshed that followed at the command of the Mad Count, Marius Leitdorf. Halflings are a permanent underclass in Averland, forbidden by custom and in some cases law from ever holding important positions or titles or becoming too successful. Halflings

are tolerated and welcomed so long as they “know their place,” but a halfling of wealth who “puts on airs” or wishes to be treated with respect is subject to ridicule and harassment.

Dwarfs are relatively few in Averheim, and what dwarfs are present are mostly merchants en route to or from the mountains. Most Averlanders treat dwarfs with respect by default, as it is well understood that the greenskin menace is the greatest threat to Averland and dwarfs are famous adversaries of the greenskins.

In the two years since the Third Battle of Black Fire Pass, a small number of ogre mercenaries have drifted into Averheim, many of them veterans of that battle (on one side or the other). Since Averheim has an abundance of good beef to feed them and paranoid or ambitious nobles to employ them as bodyguards, some of these ogres have become permanent or semi-permanent residents. While an ogre on the street still draws quite a bit of attention in Averheim, they are no longer greeted with abject fear.

Far from both the sea and any great forests of note, both wood elves and high elves are almost entirely unheard of in Averheim. They can expect to be met with suspicion, fear, and wonder on the part of the local populace.

## THE STORY THUS FAR

In addition to the general political and historical events that define Averheim at this time (most importantly the death of Marius Leitdorf and the Third Battle of Black Fire Pass), there are a few recent developments of direct interest to the plot of this adventure.

## THE BLACK COWL RISING

Averheim’s criminal underworld is in upheaval. A new criminal boss, known only as “the man in the black hood” or sometimes the more fanciful “the Black Cowl,” has been seizing power over the past few weeks. Former crime lords have been found murdered in the most improbable places – clearly the Black Cowl has access to an assassin of unusual cunning and skill.

The underworld coup is nearly complete as the curtain rises on the adventure, and the last few holdouts will acquiesce, die, or leave the city over the course of this first story. Soon, the Black Cowl will be both taking a cut of all the illicit deals in Averheim (which creates a large pool of untraceable cash for his evil plans) and directing his underlings on certain raids and schemes.

## CRIME AND CORRUPTION

Crime and corruption are both on the rise in Averheim, thanks partly to the lack of an Elector and partly due to the influence of the Black Cowl. Burglaries and smuggling are at an all-time high, but most disturbingly banditry on the roads outside Averheim is climbing. Embezzlement and political graft have resulted in several interruptions in pay for Averland soldiers, and some have deserted or decided to supplement their income by selling state supplies on the black market.

Recently, several barrels of black powder have gone missing from an Averheim armoury. Furthermore, shipments of black powder from Nuln have been disproportionately targeted by bandits. Most of these shipments have been under the aegis of the Red Arrow coaching line, and Graf Friedrich is on the lookout for a likely agent to investigate the thefts for him.



## THE SKAVEN TRIAD

Three skaven of Clan Eshin, the assassin Skrabb, the sorcerer Krasskulk, and the mutant Grott (see page 56), have moved into the docks district and hidden themselves in tanneries belonging to Dieter Jochutz and Linus Atzwig. These skaven operate as a team and make a practice out of hiring themselves to humans as assassins, using Krasskulk's magic to disguise themselves when necessary. This allows them unprecedented freedom to spy on the humans of the Empire and to destabilise human cities, potentially making them ripe targets for a skaven invasion. Or at least, that's the theory – like most “brilliant plans” hatched by skaven, it hasn't borne much fruit.

Agents of the Conspiracy made contact with the skaven triad over six months ago in the city of Nuln. Knowing that the Southlands expedition was due back soon with a warpstone effigy, the Black Cowl has since requested that the skaven relocate to Averheim to perform duties for him. The (rather overstated) promise of warpstone was enough for the skaven, and they have served dutifully, if not loyally, in aiding the Black Cowl's ascent in the criminal underworld.

In addition to their services as assassins, the Cowl has commissioned the creation of a profane artefact with a portion of the warpstone from the effigy (with the understanding that the skaven will be permitted to keep the excess). The artefact is a bell clapper; the Black Cowl got the idea from texts detailing the skaven Screaming Bell, a terrifying magical implement of war and destruction. Not having any understanding of the different skaven clans, the Cowl simply assumed that making a Screaming Bell was within the abilities of the triad. It is not, but Krasskulk is a brilliant and inventive sorcerer (or at least, he thinks he is) and Skrabb is an experienced assassin who has spied on (or at least seen from a distance) both the

Warlock Engineers of Clan Skyre and the mystical Grey Seers in the past, so the triad have cobbled together their own version of the ritual. In typical skaven fashion, they are certain it will work. (And it will, to an extent. Well, an evil and profane mystical bell clapper will be constructed – it just won't be the same as those used in Screaming Bells.)

Because the number thirteen is sacred to the skaven, and because they firmly believe that anything worth doing is worth killing humans over, the triad's ritual requires thirteen human hearts. They have begun collecting them, abducting and murdering humans no one will miss on nights after a heavy rain, when the River Aver runs high. This is an important factor, as the high Aver obliterates the tracks that Skrabb would otherwise make carrying a corpse into the skaven lair beneath the shut-up tanneries. (Skrabb and Krasskulk can still come and go at other times along other routes; it's carrying a body that requires him to use the drain pipe entrance.)

The skaven maintain the secrecy of their lair by making regular payments to Herrs Jochutz and Atzwig via the simple expedience of Averheim's mail service. The skaven have been making the payments out of a supply of silver coins given to them by the Black Cowl as payment for their services. The coins have no value to the triad, and they have radically underestimated their value to the humans – Herrs Jochutz and Atzwig have been very thoroughly bribed.

## THE SOUTHLANDS EXPEDITION

Not long after the Third Battle of Black Fire Pass, an expedition funded largely by Graf Friedrich von Kaufman departed from Marienburg for the exotic jungles of the Southlands. Operating out of the Imperial enclave of Sudenburg on the Gulf of Medes, the expedition spent nearly two years exploring the ruins and jungles of the Southlands, contending with savage beasts, savage orcs, and savage manlike lizard-creatures, before returning with a treasure trove of artefacts, gold, exotic animals (both live and preserved), maps, and other assorted bric-a-brac of interest to scholars and practically no one else. They made landfall in Marienburg about two months ago and the choicer pieces of the collection have finally reached Averheim in the past two weeks.

The expedition was led by a boisterous, amiable, and energetic man named Johann Templemann. Templemann claimed to be a noble's third son from Nordland, a veteran of numerous campaigns against Norscan and Beastman raiders, and an expert seaman. Of those claims, only the bit about being an expert seaman were true – Templemann was in fact a pirate, mercenary, and adventurer motivated solely by a desire for money and glory. He found a scrap of an ancient journal and a map, pointing towards a great treasure of gold and “a darke power most foule,” which he figured must be worth some money to the right people. He was right, and the Black Cowl arranged for Templemann to be introduced in Averheim as a great explorer.

Unfortunately for Templemann, once he had secured the “darke power” and the rest of the treasure, he was murdered in the jungle by another agent of the Black Cowl.

Although the expedition was planned and funded primarily by Graf Friedrich von Kaufman, all three of the principal NPCs were involved. Captain Baerfaust was consulted on the matter of security for the expedition, and mercenaries were hired based largely on the strength of his recommendation (he suggested men he had served with in the past). As a leading member of Averheim's intellectual society, Luminary Mauer was consulted on many aspects of

## THE BLACK COWL



If Graf Friedrich von Kaufman is not the Black Cowl, it's possible that he was a member of the Southlands expedition himself rather than just its financial backer. Since he wasn't in the city during the time the Black Cowl consolidated most of his control of the criminal underworld, it seems impossible that Graf Friedrich could be the Black Cowl in this case. Instead, he was probably manipulated into that expedition by the true Cowl, both to remove him from Averheim and to acquire the warpstone for the Cowl's true plan.

the expedition, especially pertaining to where it should go and what sorts of things it should look for. All three men had the opportunity to insert their own agents into the expedition and steer its course; any of them might be the Black Cowl.

Highlights of the recovered treasures are discussed on page 52.

## THE WARPSTONE EFFIGY

One of the treasures recovered by the expedition is a sinister effigy from a Southlander tomb that seems to be carved of smoky jade. The effigy is fashioned into a representation of a strange, leering face, and might even serve as a mask. On the journey back across the water it acquired a sinister reputation amongst the crew of the expedition in the wake of a few mysterious deaths, troubled dreams, and at least one case of madness during the voyage.

The effigy is in fact carved from a chunk of impure warpstone, the stuff of pure Chaos given solid form. Prolonged exposure to the effigy can cause madness, death, or even mutation. This is precisely what the Black Cowl is looking for. He will arrange for the skaven to steal it, as soon as he knows its exact location.

## DISAPPEARANCES ON THE DOCKS

The skaven have been abducting and murdering people in the area of the Averheim docks for the past few weeks. Hopefully one or more of the PCs will have connections to people who have vanished, which will make it easier to get them interested in the events at the docks. Jorgen Klinski and Rolf Haller both have people actively seeking for someone to help find them. Jorgen's wife Olga can't offer much in the way of a reward, but she loves him very much. The Wharf Rats, Rolf Haller's docker gang, suspect that their rival gang the Fish have done for Rolf. They're willing to pay good silver for either Rolf, or evidence that the Fish are responsible for his disappearance.



# PART ONE — SHADOWS OVER AVERHEIM

This chapter describes a busy week in and around the city of Averheim. The docks are always a hive of activity, but this week proves a particularly busy one. Each day a number of events occur that the PCs can get involved in and which may well lead them to conclude that something major is occurring in the Averheim underworld.

## GETTING STARTED

This chapter is written with the assumption that the PCs will begin by investigating the disappearances at the docks. Several of them may have compelling reasons to be interested in the reports of missing persons – perhaps someone they know is among the missing. If they're not self-motivated, then there are a number of other reasons that the party may elect to pursue the disappearances, including:

- ✦ The Wharf Rats have put the word out that they'll pay up to 30 shillings for information pointing to the fate of Rolf Haller. They've even had a (badly-spelled) pamphlet printed.
- ✦ Graf Friedrich asks the PCs to intervene in the looming dock war, and offers to double the Wharf Rats' reward if the PCs can prevent one.
- ✦ Captain Baerfaust lacks the manpower to follow up on the missing persons reports, and enlists the PCs' aid.
- ✦ Luminary Mauer, as a ruse to hide his search for his sister, places the PCs in contact with a docks information broker such as Ute the Busker or Matilda the Fence.
- ✦ The PCs are caught in a brawl between Wharf Rats and Fish. Werner Klebb, the Wharf Rats leader, or Gerd Knakk, the Fish leader, thanks the PCs for their help and offers the 30s reward if they can clear up the matter of Rolf Haller's fate. This possible event is detailed below as **Dockland Scuffle**.

If the PCs still aren't interested in the docks disappearances, the GM can use the Day Three event **A Commission from Red Arrow** on page 39 to place them in Graf Friedrich's employ, and rearrange the other events slightly to suit. (But the various abductions should still continue on schedule.)

## DOCKLAND SCUFFLE

This event can be used as an introduction if desired, or rearranged and used later in the adventure or not at all. It serves three main purposes. First, it can give new players a chance to get familiar with the basics of the system in a low-stakes fight, and provide a little action to spice things up. Second, it provides an introduction to the docks disappearances, the tensions running through the underworld, and some principal characters. Third, if the PCs handle themselves well they can acquire a reputation that might make them of interest to von Kaufman, Baerfaust, or Mauer.

Presuming that the PCs are making their way to the Upright Pig to find rooms for the night, either as a group or separately, read or paraphrase the following aloud:

As you approach the door of the squat, homely tavern, you notice a small throng of idling dockworkers splitting their attention between throwing dirty looks at each other and looking nonchalant. Suddenly, the door of the tavern bursts open and two burly men come tumbling through. One of them, with white hair and a red face, squeezes the other by the throat, shouting “That’s for Rolf, you bastard!” The other, bald with a long leather coat, knees the first man in the gut and shoves him off, sending him staggering right into you.

Suddenly the throng of idling dockers are rushing towards you. You have just enough time to notice that, although they are all carrying knives or cudgels, they have left their weapons at their belts before a melee of punching and pummeling surrounds you.

Two rival docker gangs, the Wharf Rats and the Fish, are brawling with bare fists, with the PCs caught in the middle. The dockers, mostly drunk and all bad-tempered, do not generally bother to distinguish between rivals and bystanders and are happy to lash out at anyone.

There are a number of dockers from each gang equal to the number of PCs, plus the two gang-leaders (Gerd Knakk, the bald leader of the Fish, and Werner Klebb, the white-haired leader of the Wharf Rats) who will mostly attack each other. All the dockers use the characteristics of Townsfolk. They fight only with their bare fists (DR3, CR4), although they each carry a dagger, and will fight until they suffer 4 or more wounds or a single critical wound.

At the beginning of the brawl, Werner Klebb will be clinging to one of the PCs as he tries to regain his breath. Based on how the PCs treat him on their first actions, the other dockers will assume that the PCs are either with the Rats (if they are at all sympathetic to Klebb) or with the Fish (if they are at all hostile to Klebb). The opposite gang will then attack the PCs with gusto.

To the dockers, this is a brawl, not a fight in earnest. They will not draw weapons, hit anyone who gives in (unless he gives in without getting hit first – what a pansy!), or try to inflict lasting harm. If the PCs draw weapons, the dockers will give them a wide berth. If the PCs draw weapons and attack a docker, the dockers will draw their knives (DR4, CR3) and fight back. If the PCs use magic, the dockers will run for it as fast as they can, shrieking for the Watch.

Presumably, whichever gang the PCs “help” will win the brawl. When the fight is over, that docker gang’s leader offers to buy them a round in the Upright Pig and explain the situation with Rolf Haller. Even though Haller is a Wharf Rat, the Fish leader

### DOCKER ON DOCKER VIOLENCE

There’s no point in rolling when one docker attacks another; simply assume that he inflicts one wound and move on. If the PCs don’t intervene, two dockers will simply wrestle and punch each other for three or four rounds until one gives up.

Gerd Knakk will be just as keen to have the PCs investigate his disappearance as Wharf Rat Werner Klebb. Knakk knows that his boys didn’t do it, and he’s got little interest in a waterfront war (not until this business with the man in the black hood is settled, anyway). Clever PCs might even be able to get Knakk to match Klebb’s reward. Depending on how things progress, the brawl may transition directly to **Talking to Gerd Knakk or Werner Klebb** on page 33.

## RUNNING THE WEEK

Presented below is a series of events that represent one possible way that this portion of the adventure may unfold. The events are associated with particular days of the Imperial week (see page 192), but for the most part they can be easily rearranged to occur in a different order.

### THE ABDUCTIONS

The notable exception is that the pattern of the abductions is linked to the weather – the Skaven only strike when the river runs high enough to hide Skrabb’s tracks as he carries another victim to their lair. This means that they only strike during or after a period of heavy rain. If the GM follows the recommended weather patterns for each day, then he shouldn’t reschedule the abductions. If he reschedules the abductions, he should adjust the weather patterns to match. If the PCs foil an abduction (which they can do simply by being near the intended target during the time of the abduction), Skrabb will simply choose a different target and murder someone else.

The PCs may conclude that there is a pattern to the abductions that are taking place on the docks, or that skaven are in some way involved with the various crimes occurring in the area. Because it is not anticipated that the PCs will start seriously pursuing such lines of enquiry until Part Three, these subjects are discussed in that section of the book, beginning on page 55. However, the GM should be aware of them from the start just in case the PCs start to make enquiries along such lines earlier than anticipated.

### DAY OF REST

During the week described, Festag and Aubentag are left relatively free of incident in order to provide the GM with some flexibility. If the players make quick progress, to the extent that they are either at risk of becoming bored or uncovering the skaven on the docks ahead of schedule, then the GM can shift events that happen later in the week to occur earlier. On the other hand if the players are making slow progress, these days can be used to provide them with some thinking space, and GMs may even like to add in more time and events, red herrings and side quests of their own. After all, a lot more is feasibly happening on the docks, and throughout Averheim, than the events described in this adventure.

### THE WEATHER

The pattern of clear days and rainy days is important to the plot. The GM should strive to mention the weather whenever it is appropriate to do so, and to award bonuses and penalties in the form of fortune and misfortune dice where relevant. In order to bring the weather more into focus, the GM should consider modifying rolls he would not otherwise, such as adding a  to a Charm check because “it’s a nice sunny day out, and everyone’s in a pretty good mood.”

## DOCKSIDE REGULARS

During the day the docks are teeming with all manner of human life. Boatmen, merchants, stevedores, pickpockets, and errand boys throng the busy dockside streets. Other common sights are pedlars, cattle drovers, buskers, and somewhat harassed-looking watch patrols.

Below are listed some of the individuals who can be found in the docks area. Some of these characters feature explicitly in the events of the adventure, whilst others might help provide the PCs with useful information if they are properly solicited. A couple of these characters have no perceivable impact on the adventure, but are described in order to give a little local colour.

Should any of these NPCs become involved in a fight, use the characteristics for the Townsfolk NPC to represent them unless otherwise noted. Each of these NPCs is marked with a letter; these letters are referenced in the Rumours section immediately following.

### A) UTE HERZ – BUSKER

A mousey waif of a girl in her late teens. Ute is friendly and open with a sharp memory and quick wits. She spends most of her day in front of the White Horse tavern. Her time is spent tuning her hurdy-gurdy and then playing beautiful pastoral music for about five minutes before her instrument loses its tune. She then creates a sound like a yowling fox jumping on broken bagpipes for half an hour before getting fed up and re-tuning it. Her prominent position means she sees a lot of what goes on around the docks, and most local folk know that she does a nice sideline in selling information.

### B) DIETER JOCHUTZ AND C) LINUS ATZWIG – ‘RESTING’ TANNERS

Burly and balding middle-aged men who give off a subtle and unpleasant odour of quicklime and ordure. They own neighbouring tanneries on the east side of the docks, but are currently not working. Just over a fortnight ago they were served with a notice telling them that their properties show signs of significant water damage and that they are to shut up until further notice. Dieter and Linus have been well compensated for the inconvenience, so neither is complaining. They spend their days in a snug within the White Horse busily drinking away their windfall.

### D) KURT GUTH – BEGGAR

Kurt is a wild looking man with a long auburn beard and matted brown hair. He is in his twenties, though it's difficult to discern his age underneath the matted hair and copious layers of filthy rags he wears. He lives on the waterfront, sleeping in a tumbledown shack he has constructed from barrels and boxes. Kurt can be charismatic and humorous, though he is also given to histrionic rages where he curses fate and the gods and himself. Most of his time is spent begging for change from passersby and avoiding watch patrols. Any surplus money he makes soon gets spent in the White Horse.

### E) RAMBRECHT DELFHOLT – AGITATOR

A slim and spry fifty-year-old man with long matted blonde hair and a short goatee beard. Rambrecht is a devotee of the philosophy of the late Professor Brustellin of Altdorf University, who famously likened the nobility of the Empire to a life-sapping cancer. Whilst erudite and big-hearted, Rambrecht has very little time for those he finds fools, and will subject determined opponents to a tirade of

## RAMBRECHT'S PAMPHLET

Whether or not the PCs agree with Rambrecht's political views, his pamphlet does provide an acerbic guide to Averheim's great and good. The following is an accurate summary of the main points of the pamphlet, though be aware that the pamphlet itself is rather biased.

**The Leitdorfs** – The pamphlet gives many examples of the madness that has afflicted this noble family for generations. It gives an account of the late Elector, Marius Leitdorf, his frequent black rages and military blunders – culminating in his disastrous attempt to subjugate the Mootland and his demise in Black Fire Pass. Rambrecht claims that hereditary problems are rife within the nobility due to their obsession with marrying within restricted bloodlines.

**The von Alpraums** – The pamphlet makes mention of the brutal suppression of Streissen during a bread riot. The town had previously won the right to elect its own ruler from the Elector of Averland, then the young Grand Countess Ludmilla von Alpraum. However, during unrest caused by food shortages, the town council appealed to the Countess to send troops to help maintain order. She did so, but on provision that government of the town return to her. The resulting bloodbath is better regarded as a spiteful act of revenge on Streissen's people rather than responsible restoration of order.

**The von Tuchtenhagens** – The pamphlet includes a litany of complaints about the boorish and wasteful excesses of Theodosius von Tuchtenhagen, mentioning how the taxes he has imposed upon the town of Grenzstadt are crippling the town's economy. The von Tuchtenhagen family were merchants who bought their way into the nobility about 100 years ago. Rambrecht points out that whatever business savvy the family once possessed clearly wasn't included as part of Theodosius' inheritance.

**The von Kaufmans** – Rambrecht bemoans that Friedrich von Kaufman has made a great deal of money by exploiting the workers of Averheim, and then squandering his wealth on a "pointless adventure in the Southlands." He suggests, with some cynicism, that whilst Red Arrow Coaches might provide a useful service for people, von Kaufman would squander it all if he thought it would buy him influence with his so-called social peers.

**Rambrecht's Proposal** – That Averheim be run as Streissen used to be – with a ruling council elected by the town's citizens once every decade. He also suggests inheritance be capped at 1,000 gold crowns, with the remainder being added to the town treasury.

abuse rather than trying to convert the unconvertible. He is currently promoting a tract he has authored entitled “Why Averlanders should rule Averland – An argument against an Elector,” available for three pennies. Most residents of the docks find Rambrecht’s politics too naïve and hot-headed, though he is liked well enough.

### F) MATHILDA DURBEIN – FENCE

A portly woman in her forties with flaxen hair and a strikingly beautiful face. She dresses in loudly patterned clothing and wears a number of trinkets and bangles. Mathilda is witty but cynical, and rarely believes anything without a good argument. She is a sociable woman with an extensive array of criminal contacts in Averheim, Nuln, and Wurtbad. Whilst Mathilda only very rarely commits anything that could be considered a crime, she is well known for being able to put criminals in contact with one another, or to advise those in possession of contraband where best to sell it. Mathilda has been clever enough to ingratiate herself with the new criminal class rising in Averheim without losing her ability to operate independently... so far.

### G) VICTOR KELLER – CATTLE DROVER

A short and slight man in his mid-thirties with long fair hair, sunburned features and a broad country accent. Victor has just made a delivery of cattle to one of the stockyards on the waterfront. He now plans to spend a couple of days resting and spending his earnings in the White Horse before returning to his farm near the Wissenland border. Any visitor to the White Horse is likely to be accosted by an inebriated Victor and asked to make friends and share stories. He is friendly and talkative, but knows little of life outside rural Averland. On Festag he sobers up and begins his journey home.

### H) GOTTFRIED HANSON – GONG FARMER

A spry, though gout-ridden, man in his late sixties. He has dark hair, though it is streaked with grey. His grey eyes are bright and piercing. Gottfried caters to the needs of the local tanners by collecting manure from the local stockyards and night soil from the local taverns and residences. He can be seen throughout the day wheeling a barrow around to collect ordure, depositing it in his yard, or taking a load to a nearby tannery. He spends his evenings in the White Horse. Gottfried is a pleasant enough fellow, though in conversation he is something of a bore. He talks about little other than his job, and aside from a few scatological anecdotes, his job is pretty tedious.

### I) ADOLPHUS STARK – MERCHANT

A tall and imposing man in his late thirties, with a large, long nose and a shock of black hair. Adolphus is intelligent and witty, though he can be stuffy and officious when dealing with business. He and his wife Frida run a small but exclusive business, selling fine Cathayan silks to up-market tailors, and they are currently in Averheim waiting on a delivery. Adolphus and his family are staying on a large, expensive barge, which is moored near the Upright Pig. Frida is a pretty fair-haired woman in her late twenties. Their children, Bertha and Gertrude, are twins of eleven. They look identical apart from their hair – Bertha is dark and Gertrude is fair.

### J) FREDERICK GROSZ – RACKETEER

Frederick is described in detail on page 14. At this time, he mostly bides his time at the Upright Pig, doing his best to assess whether he should throw in with the new criminal order or not.

### K) BEATRICE KNOX – GAMBLER

A pretty blonde-haired woman in her late twenties with huge, watery blue eyes and a taste for tomboyish, ragamuffin dress. She is a rash and quick-tempered individual who tends to make friends quickly, but loses them even faster. Beatrice is a poor dockside resident who has taken to trying her luck gambling in the taverns that line the waterfront. Unfortunately, her luck has not been good and she has ended up owing money to local moneylenders. Her natural charm had enabled her to convince her old creditors to provide her with some leeway. Unfortunately, the new criminal boss is not being so amenable.

See page 145 for an example of one of the gambling games, Cheater’s Bones, that Beatrice frequently plays.

### L) HANS MULLER – KNACKER

A tall and lugubrious fellow in his late thirties. He has a long, morose face reminiscent of the horses he slaughters for a living. Hans’ work is hard and dangerous, as horses that aren’t killed cleanly can lash out with force. He has been left missing all his incisors and walking with a painful limp from a poorly healed smashed knee. Hans owns a small slaughterhouse near the docks and does a little butchery of horseflesh on the side. Despite his grim demeanour, Hans is modestly philanthropic, and he regularly sells off cuts of meat to dockside down-and-outs at a much-reduced price.

### M) FRITZ FLINK – THIEF

A young man of seventeen with long curly black hair, the wispy beginnings of a beard, and a deceptively innocent expression. Fritz is an accomplished pickpocket who has just been forced to join the new criminal network that is muscling in on the docks under the guidance of the Black Cowl. Whilst Fritz has only met subordinates of the subordinates of the new crime boss, he has nevertheless had it made clear to him that if he doesn’t pay a tithe of 20 shillings a week, he’ll find himself taking a swim in the Aver. Fritz drinks in the Upright Pig when he has spare time and money.

### N) OLGA KLINSKI – FISHWIFE

A stout, red-faced woman in her mid-thirties. Olga works on the docks running a small stall. She buys fish from fishermen and boatmen, guts and fillets them, and sells the various products from her stall. Olga used to work alongside her husband, Jurgen, who fished upon the Aver. He went missing a few days ago during a storm. Olga is normally gregarious and confident, a natural saleswoman with a number of close friends. However, she is currently worried and distant, obsessively trying to track down her husband.

## OTHER REGULARS

There are, of course, dozens and dozens of others throughout the docks. Some of them are relevant to the plot, but not described here – they are described during the scenes in which they appear. Gerd Knakk and Werner Klebb, the dockerman gang leaders, are described on page 33.

## DOCKSIDE RUMOURS (AND THE PEOPLE WHO SPREAD THEM)

Like many city dwelling folk in the Empire, Averheimers love to gossip and speculate, often to the extent of wild conspiracy theory. Of course, seeing as there is an actual conspiracy at work, some of these rumours might prove pertinent.

The letters given after each rumour refer to the characters mentioned above. If the letter is upper case, the rumour is known by the relevant NPC and they are convinced of its veracity, if it is given in lower case the NPC has heard the rumour, but is dismissive of it.

For example, a number of NPCs are aware that folk have gone missing from the docklands area. But whilst Ute (A) and Rambrecht (E) are concerned about this and will probably voice their worries to PCs in conversation, Linus (c) and Mathilda (f) aren't that bothered by it. They only comment on the story if asked directly about it and may well seek to excuse it, e.g.: "They've probably just gone to Nuln to look for work."

Three topics of conversation are currently hot gossip. The first is a series of disappearances.

- ✦ People have been going missing from the Averheim docks. There is the case of the dockworker, Rolf Haller. Franz the beggar hasn't been seen since last Bezahltag, and poor Olga Klinski is in a right panic about what might have become of her husband. (A, E, H, J, L, N, c, f, m)
- ✦ Hopefully, the recent disappearances have got nothing to do with warring dockers. Different gangs of dockers are often engaged in violent competition in Altdorf or Marienburg. We don't need that sort of thing in Averheim. (E, H, L, a, c)
- ✦ The disappearances must surely be linked to the fact that there is a new kingpin in town. (A, J, f, m)

The second is the rise of new criminal organisation in Averheim.

- ✦ Something's really shaking up the thugs, thieves and weirdroot dealers around here. There's a new boss on the make, I reckon, and he's not shy about making his presence felt. Old debts are being settled, pretty harshly in some cases. (A, F, J, K, M)
- ✦ Who is he? I don't know. These big crime lords don't usually blow their own cover do they? (A, K)
- ✦ I don't know who this new boss might be, but some of the more established criminals around here have started mentioning, by way of excuse, that they have "orders from the man in the black hood." (J, M, f)

The third is that there are some odd people about these days.

- ✦ There's this woman who's been hanging about the White Horse lately. She looks like she's been through the wars. Some folk say she works for the Holy Order of the Templars of Sigmar, so watch what you say in case she's listening in. (A, B, C, F, G, H)
- ✦ I've seen a strange man on the dockside late at night. He's all dressed up in a black cloak and he walks weird, like he's all twisted and crippled. If you see him about keep an eye on him, I reckon he's a mutant or a leper. (A, D, f, g)
- ✦ A bunch of folk in Averland who have returned from foreign parts. No need to be alarmed, they aren't really foreign, they've just spent time there. They were helping out some noble on an expedition. (A, B, C, E, H)

In addition, there are other rumours doing the rounds as there always are in the cities of the Empire.

- ✦ There has been a spate of highway robberies on the Averland roads. The gang is pretty well organised and brutal by all accounts. (A, B, C, E, H, J, L, f, k)
- ✦ News from the northern provinces is pretty worrying these days – apparently a great many raids by beastmen and goblins is occurring in places throughout the Drakwald and the Forest of Shadows. Thank Sigmar we live in the sunny South, eh? (A, B, E, H, L, N, c, f)
- ✦ Word has it that the High King of the dwarfs believes he has cause to resent the Empire. Can't see how that could be true given all the help we've offered dwarfs over the years. (A, C, J, M, N, b, e, f, g, l)
- ✦ Awful weather we're having recently, eh? It's like we're living on the coast of Nordland. Still, provided the Aver doesn't flood, it'll be good news for us – Averland's exports always do nicely when harvests fail elsewhere. (A, C, E, F, I, L, N)


## DAY ONE — BACKERTAG — TROUBLE ON THE DOCKS

**The Weather:** It is a gloomy and overcast day, but apart from a light drizzle in the mid-afternoon it remains dry.

### TALKING TO GERD KNAKK OR WERNER KLEBB

The Wharf Rats operate in the east end of the docks. Werner can be found there most days, sitting in front of a warehouse. He is a white-haired and talkative man in his mid-fifties. He is a somewhat lonely individual who loves to have a captive audience so that he can subject them to his many banal optimistic philosophies and boring anecdotes. As such he is very happy to talk to the PCs, though he does not have anything of substance to say. He'll reiterate the bad blood between the Rats and the Fish, call the Fish "dirty Marienburgers" even though they are overwhelmingly Averlanders, and mention that the last time he saw Rolf Haller alive was Bezahltag evening, six nights ago. The last thing he remembers saying to Rolf is "keep dry!" because it had been raining hard all day. The PCs may be able to convince him that the Fish had nothing to do with Haller's disappearance (with a successful **Average (2d) Charm (Fel) check**), in which case he'll implore the PCs to find out what really happened – and withhold the promised reward until they're successful.

The Averheim chapter of the Fish mostly work around the Griffon Bridge and Gerd can be found there during the day acting as an overseer. He often decamps to the Upright Pig to enjoy a few drinks and strike deals with smugglers and fugitives. He is a tall and powerful man dressed in all weather in a long black leather coat decorated in embroidered fish designs. He shaves his head and wears a brass earring and a cheerful but threatening expression. If he is spoken to about the disappearance of Rolf, he hotly denies having anything to do with it, and turns the subject to a litany of complaints about other dockers. "Everyone thinks everything bad that happens on the docks is down to us Fish! What about the time Ferd has his nose broken by a gang of drunken Hooks? What about all the smuggling that goes on in the Chain's area of the docks? What about the time Bernhardt fell into the Aver and a gang of Chain boys just watched him drown?" He will admit to arguing with Haller last Bezahltag over Haller splashing mud on Knakk's



coat. PCs may make a **Hard (3d) Intuition (Int) check** to discern Knakk's intentions. Pass or fail, they'll conclude he's telling the truth (since he is).

In short, neither man has any pertinent information about Rolf's disappearance, and will just waste the PCs time with a bunch of partisan opinions about how their own fraternity is under-appreciated and misunderstood.

## THEIR BUSINESS IS TO KNOW

For the most part the various NPCs going about their business in the docklands are happy to let the PCs be, provided the PCs do the same for them. However, two dockland residents make it their business to know all there is to know about who is who and what they are up to.

The first of these, Ute the busker (see page 31), is quite open about this. The first time the PCs pass her preferred position in front of the White Horse tavern, they notice on a **Daunting (4d) Observation (Int) check** that she is scrutinising them. If they visit the pub for any length of time, or a number of times in the same week, she introduces herself.

"Hello sirs, I've seen you about the place a few times lately. It's not so often I see a face I don't recognise around the Knackered Horse. I'm Ute. Who might you be, if I may be so bold?"

Ute knows pretty much all there is to know about dockside life, and if asked she could tell the PCs about the other NPCs in the area (apart from the skaven) and most of the rumours going round (on which Ute is more informed than most). Her habit is to begin by asking if the PCs have heard any interesting news recently and to

suggest that she has plenty to talk about should anyone be interested. She then follows up with an anecdote or two before she starts to expect something in return, which could be more information, or a drink, or for a few pennies dropped in her hurdy-gurdy case. If the PCs aren't interested it doesn't bother Ute, who is generally just happy to make acquaintances and keep up with the latest gossip.

Mathilda the fence (see page 32) is also interested in anyone new on the waterfront. She notices the PCs if they spend much time in the area around the Upright Pig (and they will notice her noticing them on a **Daunting (4d) Observation check**). Once she has noticed them, Mathilda visits Ute to see what she knows about them.

Mathilda will not bother the PCs unless she comes to suspect that they are involved in any illicit activity. If she thinks they might be involved in criminal activity, she introduces herself and tells them something along the lines of "if you need any help with anything just let me know."

If any of the PCs have the Gently-Born or Criminal backgrounds, then Mathilda will know them already and will approach them casually as an acquaintance...and ask to be introduced to the PC's friends.

## LIGHT FINGERS

Fritz Flink (see page 32) is on the lookout for likely marks, and tries to steal from the PCs unless they are taking extreme pains to be on the lookout for pickpockets. Fritz is desperately trying to make ends meet and save enough to pay his weekly tithe.

Up until four o'clock in the afternoon, Fritz only strikes if the PCs are in a crowded area, such as a tavern bar or the main waterfront thoroughfare. Fritz chooses either the richest or most vulnerable PC and attempts to cut his purse.

The chosen PC should make an **Observation (Int) check** opposed to Fritz's Skulduggery (Ag) of 3. If the test is failed the character loses his purse. If not refer to the following chart.

☞ Fritz doesn't find the opportunity to attempt to cut the purse, and abandons the attempt for the time being. The PC passing the test will notice that Fritz was looking at him, but will not be able to discern anything regarding his motives.

☞☞ The character spots Fritz sizing him up and fingering a small knife before apparently thinking better of it and skulking off.

☞☞☞ Fritz does not realise he has been spotted and advances holding his small knife – his intention to rob the character is quite clear.

☞☞☞ If the check is failed, the PC notices Fritz vanishing through the crowd just as he realises his purse has been lightened.

If he steals anything, Fritz visits the Upright Pig. He banks a third of his ill-gotten gains, spends a third on drink, and saves a third for himself.

In the evening Fritz tries to rob the PCs again, but this time he is more desperate and a little drunk, so the test to spot him becomes an **Easy (1d) Observation check**.

If Fritz is spotted, he tries to escape by running to the Upright Pig, where all the regulars will help him find somewhere to hide and deny that they have seen him to anyone who questions them.

If he is caught before he enters the Upright Pig, Fritz apologises profusely, crying piteously and spinning a story about being an orphaned son of a soldier and a poor Shallyan sister, and that he desperately needs the money to pay protection to racketeers who was once foolish enough to borrow money from. If the PCs persist in wishing to see him punished, he threatens them in return, saying that he knows Black Cowl. "I got friends I have, the man in the black hood, heard of him have you? New boss around here he is. He'll have your guts for garters if you lay a finger on me!"

However, if the PCs persist in demanding restitution from Fritz, he relents. He doesn't have anything tangible to threaten them with. He will pay back what he can, plus an additional shilling in order to buy the PCs' silence. If pumped for more information about Black Cowl, Fritz admits he doesn't know the man, all the information he has on Black Cowl is given in the rumours section.

If the PCs are heartless enough to do away with Fritz, they will find it easy enough. He has no real friends and the local watch won't care. However, Averheim's criminal class does look after its own, even whilst undergoing an underworld war, and so may take revenge if it becomes known that the PCs killed a pickpocket.

Note that Fritz later becomes a victim of Skrabb. If the PCs have gotten rid of Fritz another young dockside pickpocket can take his place. This shouldn't be a problem for the skaven. After all, there are plenty of cutpurses at work on the waterfront.

## A FISHWIFE IN NEED

This event occurs when the PCs pass Olga's stall. With the help of Rambrecht, she has had a number of fliers printed and waves one at the PCs as they pass.

Olga explains that she spent her only spare money on the fliers and is now trying to raise more. She says the fliers are already out of date, as it is now eight days ago, last Backertag, that Jurgen went missing. She has a collection tin with a few pennies in it and needs to raise 5 shillings before the local print shop will make her a new set of fliers.

Most local folk know Olga and like her well enough, though having given what money they could towards her first batch of fliers they are unwilling to give more. Behind her back they also take a certain grim amusement in her description of her husband, who they will describe as "crooked, balding, and toothless with a large brown wart upon his left cheek."

## THE BODY

There is a dead body on the waterfront. Exactly where it is and how it is discovered is left up to the GM. The PCs should come across the body during their day when they are in a secluded place. Perhaps they are chasing Fritz down an alleyway, or they could spot the body stuffed into a discarded box as they talk to Kurt. Any time the PCs' attention is focussed somewhere that a body might have feasibly escaped the notice of other passers-by is a good time to point it out to them.

The body is of a heavily built man in his late thirties. He has a bruiser's face with a broken nose, close-cropped hair, and a number of ugly-looking scars.

The dead man has wounds to the back and front. Those to his back are small shallow holes, clearly not serious enough to disable such a hefty brute. Those to his front are more substantial, long slashes made with some sort of blade.

- ✦ A PC who examines the body and passes an **Average (2d) First Aid** or **Education** check notices that the wounds are a little strange. The flesh surrounding the injuries has turned grey and soft, the consistency of warm cheese rather than cold meat.
- ✦ A PC who passes an **Easy (1d) Medicine** check concludes the same thing, but will not be able to link such pathology to any commonly used weapon or poison. However, he judges that the injuries, whilst nasty, should not have led to sudden death, and that therefore whatever caused the odd condition of the flesh probably killed the man.

## Have You Seen Jurgen Klinkski?

Jurgen Klinkski went missing five days ago from the Averheim docks. He is a tall and handsome man with brown hair and hazel eyes and a red felt cap. His wife and son miss him very much. It was late in the evening and we had run out of firewood and he went out into the wind and rain to see if he could get more and he never came home.

Perhaps you have seen Jurgen or have heard about what became of him? If you have please speak to the local watch and to his wife Olga who keeps the fish stall at the end of the Bruckberg Strasse.

Sweet Shallya bless those so kind as to heed this notice.

✦ A PC who passes a **Hard (3d) Magical Sight check** notices a very faint trace of Dark Magic that lingers around the injuries.

If the PCs bring the body to the attention of anyone else, they discover that the man is well known around the docks. Pretty much everyone on the docks knows that he was Klaus Keller and he used to run one of the local protection rackets. Many of the dockside residents who aren't criminals will have fallen afoul of Klaus and his racketeers in the past, and so they don't mourn his passing. On the other hand, Klaus provided some of the local criminals with employment and genuine protection. Frederick Grosz in particular is upset to hear of his demise. If the PCs inquire, they can learn that Keller was one of those who refused to knuckle under to the man in the black hood, and that he and his crew refused to pay any of the criminal bosses for protection or the rights to work their turf. Some find a bitter humour in this. Keller was last seen last night, drinking at the Upright Pig, and seemed a bit unsteady when he left.

About an hour after its discovery, a pair of black-clad initiates of Morr arrive with a barrow and haul the body away. They take it to Averheim's extensive Garden of Morr which is found to the south of the city.

## DAY TWO — BEZAHLTAG — A MERCHANT IN TROUBLE

**The Weather:** The weather today is pretty miserable. In the morning it is foggy and overcast. A light rain begins shortly after noon and grows increasingly heavy as the day progresses. By nightfall it is a proverbial deluge that only lets up shortly after midnight.

### A GAMBLER IN TROUBLE

PCs passing the Upright Pig notice on an **Average (2d) Observation check** that there is a girl in a narrow alley next to the tavern hiding her head in her hands and sobbing. This is Beatrice Knox. If the PCs console her and attempt to talk to her about why she is upset, she admits to them that she is in trouble with moneylenders.

"Oh excuse me sirs, I don't mean to make a fuss. I ran up a few debts and it's just getting worse and worse. The moneylenders say I've got until Aubentag to settle my accounts or they'll do for me, but I've only a few shillings to my name. Sweet Shallya, but I don't know what to do!"

If asked about the moneylenders she says it isn't worth her life talking about them. However she says she owes them 95 shillings.

"They are tough folk with dozens of thugs on their books. They watch every gate in the city for people trying to flee town, and I've got my two little girls to think about. These days they're more ruthless than usual. Rumour has it that even tougher men are leaning on them."

Beatrice listens attentively to any suggestions the PCs might have and makes a genuine effort to earn money if they suggest any opportunities. She is also hugely appreciative of any money the PCs can give or lend to her. However, each time Beatrice is given money the GM should roll  and consult the following:

✗ Beatrice gambles the money and loses it all.

✦ Beatrice resists the urge to gamble, or breaks even.

✦✦ Beatrice gambles and doubles her money.

☠☠ Whatever the result of this test, Beatrice loses half her money as the result of additional debts, unwise spending, or having her purse stolen.

PCs who realise that Beatrice is a compulsive gambler might try to talk her into being more careful. A successful Charm or Intimidate check could set her straight for a week or so.

Note that in reality Beatrice has ten shillings to her name, owes 73 shillings, and has no children.

### A MERCHANT IN TROUBLE

This event occurs at a point that the PCs are walking along the waterfront at a time when most NPCs are busy elsewhere, such as early in the morning. If the PCs are not about on the docks in the early morning this event can be left until the evening, after people have left their work but before the rains begin to become torrential. There is a loud 'WHUMPH!' noise and a blaze of light emanating from one of the barges moored up to a pier near the Upright Pig.

PCs will notice three things:

1. The barge is on fire. Flames have spread quickly across the deck and screams can be heard coming from the boat.
2. Two men are running from the fire, down the pier and turning towards the west end of the docks.
3. Another man is running from the direction of the White Horse. He is shouting oaths to the gods. This is Adolphus Stark, the owner of the barge.



Assemble a progress tracker nine spaces long with event markers on the first and ninth spaces. Place two tokens on the fourth space. One token represents the spread of the fire. The other represents the men who are running from the scene, and how far away from any pursuing PCs. Place another token on the first space and use it to track the passage of time (advancing it at the end of each round).

### PUTTING OUT THE FIRE

The fire is spreading quickly. At the end of each round, the flames spread farther. Advance the fire tracking token on the progress tracker by a space at the end of each round.

PCs can attempt to control the flames by smothering them with wet clothes or throwing water onto the barge. In order to effectively bail water from the river, a PC has to fetch a bucket or equivalent container. Most of the businesses and taverns along the waterfront have buckets, though it may take a while for the owners to locate one. A discarded wooden box or similar item can be located on the mudflats or the waterfront by a character passing a **Hard (3d) Observation (Int) check**.

Adolphus runs up to the barge and soaks his coat in the river before using it to try and beat out the flames. If characters attempt to help him out in similar fashion then they should make **Average (2d) Coordination (Ag) checks**. For every two such checks that are passed, move the fire tracking token a space down the progress tracker. If any such test fails and generates at least one ✨, the flames will be fanned rather than smothered, and the progress tracker should advance a step instead.

A PC employing a bucket or box to scoop up river water and throw it on the barge should make an **Average (2d) Coordination (Ag) check**. For each such check passed, move the fire tracking token a space down the progress tracker. If any such test fails and generates at least one ✨, the character loses his grip on the bucket and it ends up in the river or on the burning deck.

Of course, the PCs may well come up with other methods of fire-fighting that prove more efficacious than buckets or wet clothes. GMs should be generous in rewarding good ideas for fire fighting.

PCs could try to board the boat in order to save the passengers. This is possible, but dangerous – refer to the Burning Barge location card.

Adolphus' wife and young family are trapped on the barge. If the actions of the PCs and Adolphus move the fire tracking token to the first space of the progress tracker, they have extinguished the flames. If the PCs control the blaze for ten rounds, other dockside residents notice the flames and join in the effort, effectively dousing the fire.

If the fire tracking token reaches the ninth space on the progress tracker, the fire spreads to flammable parts of the barge, such as the rigging, sails and cargo, and it begins to burn fiercely. Frida, Bertha, and Gertrude try to abandon the barge at this point. Make a **Hard (3d) Athletics (St) check** for each one (they each have Strength of 3 plus any □ you feel they deserve as the result of assistance from the PCs). Those who pass the test make it onto the pier with just a few bruises and first degree burns. However, if any of them fail the test, they tumble into the Aver and require rescuing in order to avoid further tragedy. Judicious use of First Aid or Medicine could earn the PCs some regard here, even if they fail to stop the blaze.

### CHASING THE ARSONISTS

Hopefully, the PCs will do the decent thing and help Adolphus and his family. It may be that they decide to chase the arsonists instead, or that they split up to try and deal with both problems. The arsonists are fleeing towards the Upright Pig. PCs who are chasing them should make an **Athletics (St) check** opposed to the arsonists' Strength of 3, with the following results:

✘ The arsonists break away from their pursuers. Move the tracking token representing the arsonists up one space.

♠ The PCs keep pace with the arsonists.

♠♠ The PCs gain on the arsonists. Move the tracking token representing the arsonists down one space.

♠♠ The testing PC clumsily jostles a passing docker. The resultant brouhaha (apologies, curses, threats) adds ■ to the PC's next Athletics check to chase the arsonists.

If several PCs chase the arsonists and get different results on this test, the GM may find it simpler to treat the best result as applying to the group. Simply assume that the successful PC has pulled ahead of his slower comrades and that they are running along just behind him.

After two rounds the arsonists enter the Upright Pig tavern. They run straight through the bar and out of the open back door, heading into the rookery that lies behind the west end of the docks. Patrons of the Upright Pig know not to obstruct such occurrences, and won't snitch on fellow criminals if asked.

Because of this, any chasing PCs entering the bar are met by a wall of blank faces. If they charge straight through the tavern, no one will prevent them, but if they look around for the arsonists, or explore the inn, they will lose time. Move the tracking token up two spaces each turn the PCs spend in the inn. PCs who pass a **Hard (3d) Intuition (Int) check** notice patrons taking furtive glances towards the back door. However, talking to the patrons gets them nowhere. They will just receive lies and prevarications in response. The exception is a PC with the Criminal background, who will have the route pointed out to him if he makes a quick fraternal appeal and passes an **Average (2d) Charm check**.

If the chase lasts for longer than nine turns, or if the tracking token representing the arsonists reaches event space nine, the PCs lose sight of the criminals. The fire starters disappear into the alleyways of the rookery. The PCs catch up with the arsonists if the tracking token reaches space one before nine turns are up. If caught, the arsonists claim that they are "working for the man in the black hood" and that the PCs should "just walk away if they don't want any trouble." If the PCs press the issue, the arsonists draw knives and fight. Their crime is serious so they will fight to the end rather than face justice (which would likely end in their deaths anyway). Use the characteristics for Townsfolk NPCs for the arsonists. They carry nothing aside from knives and purses with a handful of pennies and two silver shillings each. The two arsonists – Bram and Kristof – are low-ranking foot-soldiers in the Black Cowl's criminal empire. Both are relatively new to the docks, taking over Klaus Keller's territory after his murder. Only Frederick Grosz or Mathilda Durbein are likely to know even that much about them.

## IN THE AFTERMATH

Adolphus is very grateful to the PCs if they helped extinguish the fire or rescued a member of his family. He is less impressed if they chased the arsonists and abandoned his boat to the flames, though provided he isn't bereaved, he extends his grudging thanks and offers to take them for a drink. "I'm rather strapped for cash at the moment, but I might be able to do you a good turn of my own. Let me get you a pint in the Knackered Horse and we can talk." If Adolphus heads off with the PCs, Frida gives him a rather poisonous look for leaving her to deal with the mess on the barge and the crying twins.

In the bar, Adolphus explains to the PCs that he wants them to keep a secret from his wife. He says he used to pay protection money to a man named Klaus Keller, but that when he arrived in Averheim a week ago, he was approached by a new gang of racketeers for money. He thought his credit with Klaus was still good, but seeing as Klaus is dead, he assumes there must be a new protection racket looking for money, and that must be why his barge was targeted.

He claims he would have paid these new fellows too, only a big delivery of Cathayan silks he was expecting has been delayed and he can't do much business until it arrives. At this Adolphus becomes quite morose and introverted, and getting further conversation out of him is nearly impossible.

Adolphus perks up again when the PCs take their leave. He apologises for his poor mood, explaining that he has a lot of problems at the moment, but that he is really grateful towards the PCs and may be able to put some work their way. He won't be drawn on the matter any further.

## DAY THREE — KONIGSTAG — AN ABDUCTION AND A COMMISSION

**The Weather:** Whilst the morning is shrouded in heavy fog this soon clears and the rest of the day is warm and sunny. The Aver is swollen following the previous night's rain. The water covers the mudflats and laps up against the waterfront wall.

### UTE IS ABDUCTED

Last night as Ute was travelling home, she was snatched off the streets by the Clan Eshin Triad and her body was stowed in the Atzweg tannery. Ute was a popular and well-known member of the waterfront community, so it does not take long for people to notice that she is not at her usual pitch in front of the White Horse. By midday, acquaintances of Ute have visited her home and found it empty. It quickly becomes common knowledge that Ute has gone missing. If the PCs haven't noticed themselves, they are soon asked by other dockside residents if they know anything about what became of her.

### LIGHT FINGERS REVISITED

If Fritz wasn't caught by the PCs on Backertag, he attempts to rob them again today. This event is handled in exactly the same way as the 'Light Fingers' event on Day 1 (see page 34).

## ANOTHER BODY

Another body has been discovered along the waterfront – not by the PCs this time – and a crowd has gathered to stare. If the sight of the crowd doesn't arouse their curiosity, the PCs may also witness the arrival of a wizard – Luminary Konrad Mauer, who parts the crowd by virtue of his impressive robes and hat.

If the PCs discovered and reported the first body, Mauer will shortly send a runner for them; otherwise they will have to shoulder through the crowd to the front to get any more information. If they do, they find Mauer, a pot-bellied officer of the city garrison named Gunther, and three soldiers doing their best to keep the crowd back. Mauer is examining a corpse with clinical detachment. Gunther does his best not to look at the body. The soldiers do their best not to look at Gunther.

The body's appearances and circumstances are very much like that of Klaus Keller. The corpse is that of Hermann Halheimer, another notorious dockside racketeer. He also has a number of small puncture wounds to his back, and longer slashes to his face and torso. His flesh has also discoloured and corrupted.

Mauer will ask the PCs everything they discerned about the first killing, and answers any sensible questions the PCs put to him. He has come to examine the body as a favour to Captain Baerfaust, since reports of "unsavoury" corpses have begun to reach the Averburg. Mauer will be reluctant to mention dark magic or any of his more unpleasant suspicions in the street, but if the PCs seem to be knowledgeable or competent sorts (or if he knows any of them, such as a PC with the Academic background) he will have no objection to adjourning to the White Horse and discussing the matter in relative privacy.

Sadly, Mauer has little of value to add as yet. He can tell that the wounds were affected by an unusually vile poison, and suspects that the poison may be magical (or Chaotic) in nature. He has no idea what the motives behind such a killing might be, nor will he speculate as to the identity of the killer. However, if the PCs can confirm for him that the body they found bore the same marks as the one he found, he will cautiously suggest that they were killed either by the same person or by the same small group, and confirm that other, similar bodies have appeared throughout the city from time to time. If a PC suggests that the disappearances (of Ute, Klinski, or Haller) may be linked to the murders, Mauer will point out that there's no evidence that the two are related.

### THE BLACK COWL



If Mauer is, in fact, the Black Cowl, then he knows full well who killed these men and why. He will dutifully play the part of the investigator and perhaps dangle enough clues in front of the PCs to allow them to find and dispose of the skaven eventually. He will also subtly suggest that the motivations behind the killings are financial, in an attempt to deflect suspicion towards Graf Friedrich von Kaufman, should the PCs start asking questions about the "man in the black hood."

## CURD WEISS

Curd Weiss is a tall and officious man in his early forties. He has dark hair which he keeps neat and short. Curd dresses at all times in the livery of the von Kaufman family, a yellow tabard decorated with their coat of arms. He has a slim and handsome face, though his cold and unfriendly nature is written in his haughty expression. He is a natural bureaucrat, with a fine head for numbers and management, but he is humourless and unfeeling.

Curd may have been referred to the PCs by one of the NPCs they have met and impressed in recent days. In particular, Adolphus the merchant does dealings with Red Arrow and can pass their details on to Curd. If the PCs didn't feasibly impress Adolphus, Curd can have heard about their other exploits from Luminary Mauer or Mathilda Durbein or just as a result of general word of mouth.

Curd approaches the PCs on the docks and invites them to join him for a drink. Once settled he gives the following introduction:

"It seems you have made quite a name for yourselves here. I am currently on the lookout for people to help me look into some problems that are affecting my business. I would be prepared to offer good wages for the work. It does not require intensive labour, merely a couple of days a week to help escort coaches or look into lost deliveries."

If the PCs are interested then Curd asks them to present themselves at the Red Arrow office by the Plenzerplatz tomorrow morning. If the PCs have any objections, Curd asks why they aren't interested, and reasserts that he is prepared to offer them a good wage. Depending on their objections he provides the following arguments:

If the PCs mention that they are busy with investigations of their own, Curd asks them what their business is and if there is any way he can help. If they go on to mention that they are looking into disappearances or a new crime lord, Curd points out that these crimes and disappearances have occurred along the same sort of time frame as the problems afflicting Red Arrow, and that they could well be linked. He also mentions the fact that he is offering good money, and only asking for a few days out of their week, and generally won't take no for an answer. Ideally the PCs will agree to meet with Curd on the following day; if not then the following events may be skipped. The GM may wish to use Gravin Clothilde herself as another attempt to get the PCs "on track" to attend the garden party in Part Two; she may invite the PCs to be her bodyguards for her journey without the intervention of Graf Friedrich.

## THE BLACK COWL

If von Kaufman is the Black Cowl, Curd will be in on the conspiracy. If this is the case, Curd is not interested in the PCs for the reasons he states, but rather to size them up as useful patsies to get rid of the Cowl's skaven 'allies.' He, or von Kaufman in a future interview, may make additional references to the "unnatural" nature of the killings and, if and when it is uncovered, the link to the city garrison, in order to deflect suspicion to Luminary Mauer and Captain Baerfaust.

Once he feels he's learned everything of value from the PCs, Mauer will return to his apartment on the Plenzerplatz and ask the PCs to notify him if they find anything pertinent to the investigation.

As the PCs are leaving the area, they notice on an **Average (2d) Observation (Int) check** that Frederick Grosz is in the crowd. He looks pale and ill, and is wiping beads of sweat from his brow with a handkerchief. He is now seriously worried about his own life and is not willing to speak to anyone.

Other NPCs react to Hermann's death as they did to that of Klaus. No one on the docks knows much about Luminary Mauer, and most find him (and all wizards) frightening. Mathilda has heard that he is a wizard of the Light Order who moved to Averheim about 18 months ago. Around that time he visited the docks asking if anyone knew of a Katrina Mauer (no one did). If she likes the PCs, Mathilda gives them this anecdote for the price of a pint of ale. If not she is still willing to sell the information for ten brass pennies.

## A COMMISSION FROM RED ARROW

In the afternoon, Curd Weiss visits the docks on the lookout for the PCs. He is Friedrich von Kaufman's right hand man and responsible for looking after the noble's interests. He is currently concerned about a few issues affecting the coaching house. Highway robberies have been on the increase recently and Curd is looking for some capable investigators to look into this recent rash of criminal activity.

## DAY FOUR — ANGESTAG — A TRIP OUT

**The Weather:** It remains fine throughout the day.

### AT THE RED ARROW OFFICE

Curd Weiss meets the PCs in the offices of Red Arrow coaches and, after making some polite enquiries as to their well-being, explains that he wishes the PCs to walk from Averheim to the Welcome Rest coaching inn. Curd explains that a Red Arrow owned cart hauling goods from Nuln was reported to have stopped at the inn last Marktag, but still hasn't reached Averheim.

Curd wants the PCs to keep an eye out for any sign of what might have happened to the cart. He pays them 5 shillings each and provides them with a note to the effect that they are to be given a bed and a meal when they reach the Welcome Rest. The inn is only about a dozen miles from Averheim, so the party should easily be able to make it before dark even by foot.

If the PCs ask Curd what the cart was carrying, he says it contained a few crates of wine from the northern provinces and chemical preparations to be used in industrial processes. He mentions that the cart carried a crate of luxurious silks that originated from far Cathay, easily the most valuable item on the cart. (Of course, this crate is destined for Adolphus Stark; if it is not recovered Red Arrow will be liable for its cost, although the money will come through too late for poor Stark.) If the PCs are able to recover the silks he will award them a bonus.

It is a fine day, though the road is muddy in many places due to the recent rains. It winds through farmland and orchards. The road near Averheim is very busy, mostly farmers either driving cattle towards Averheim or returning to their homesteads with goods from the city. About an hour after they leave the city, a Strigany pedlar passes the PCs in a garishly decorated wagon, and offers to sell them wares. If the PCs explain their mission to him, the pedlar can mention that he noticed what looked like a track made by a cart leaving the road a few miles back. After that, the farmland gives way to wilderness and ranchland, rolling hills, rocky plains, and occasional clumps of trees. Few people travel the road.

### THE MUTANT BAND

As Curd feared, the cart has been waylaid. A band of mutants affiliated with the Red Crown (see page 17) bushwhacked the drivers and dragged the cart from the road shortly after it left the Welcome Rest. The mutants secured the cargo they were asked to pass on to their masters, a number of barrels of gunpowder, which was picked up by a Red Crown agent who had been following the cart.

Since then the mutants have stayed in the area. One of the band was wounded in the attack so they have decided to stay put, consuming their victims and edible items from the cart's load whilst he recuperates.

The band consists of five mutants. Their mutations are relatively minor and cosmetic, so they use the characteristics and abilities for Townsfolk NPCs rather than those for Cult Mutants. The mutants have hand weapons and Fritz and Werner also carry bows and arrows.

- + **Hans** – Hans' ears are long, hairy, and pointed like those of a donkey, he is covered in fur, and has long, sharp incisors like a rat. Hans suffers from the Intoxicated condition for the duration of this encounter.
- + **Gerta** – Gerta's skin is covered with hundreds of tiny pale warty protrusions.
- + **Fritz** – The bottom half of Fritz' face dissolves into pendulous red wattles like those of a cockerel. Fritz suffers from the Intoxicated condition for the duration of this encounter.
- + **Werner** – Lurid blue feathers grow in mangy patches all over Werner's body.
- + **Hein** – A large and twisted horn grows from the top of Hein's head and his skin has a sickly green tinge. He has been injured and only has five wounds remaining, and also suffers from the Wrenched Back critical wound. Hein suffers from the Intoxicated condition for the duration of this encounter.

The mutants are holed up in a large spinney about nine miles from Averheim. They have dragged the cart there. This has left a fairly clear trail as the wheels have cut into the muddy earth. The PCs will notice this by passing an **Easy (1d) Observation (Int) check**. If they follow this trail, it leads them to the spinney and gives them the opportunity to surprise the mutant band. Provided the PCs do not make any undue noise approaching the spinney, they find the mutants unprepared and do not attract missile fire on their way.

PCs following the tracks left by the cart also find a further clue as to what has happened here. One of the smaller kegs of gunpowder fell off the cart as it was dragged through the rough ground. The



PCs come across the keg, broken, in a puddle of black sludge (the gunpowder which has leaked out and been soaked in the rain, rendering it useless).

If the PCs continue to follow the road to the Welcome Rest, they draw parallel to the spinney and notice a column of smoke rising from within the trees, as well as hearing a drunken cry of pain from the injured Hein. However, in turn the PCs are noticed by Gerta who has been posted on watch, and the mutants react to the PCs. Fritz and Werner gather up their bows and arrows and fire upon the PCs if they approach.

### THE MUTANTS' CAMP

The spinney is a circle of trees around a clearing into which the mutants have dragged the cart. In the centre of the clearing are a campfire, a scattering of bones and empty wine bottles, and a roughly constructed trellis upon which strips of meat are being dried. The butchered carcasses of an ox and two carters have been dragged away from the clearing (leaving an easily followed bloody trail).

The cart contained a few crates of the famed Rohrhausen Riesling wine, and the mutants have been helping themselves. By the time the PCs reach the spinney, Hans, Fritz, and Hein will all be rather drunk.

If the PCs surprise them, the mutants will wail and howl and leap rather clumsily to the attack. Hans and Hein will waste their first actions grabbing their weapons and climbing to their feet. If the mutants know the PCs are coming, they will shoot at them with bows and hope that drives them off; if not they will charge to attack the PCs as soon as they enter the spinney. In either case, the mutants neither offer nor expect any quarter. Hans and Hein are in no condition to travel, but if the fight goes badly (three or more mutants disabled) Gerta, Fritz, and Werner will flee.

The cart has been thoroughly ransacked. However, the bolts of silk that Curd mentioned are still wrapped up and stowed in a crate, completely unmolested. Obviously most of the wine has been consumed and the 'chemicals' have gone missing.

If any of the mutants are captured and interrogated as to what they were up to, they initially refuse to answer questions but, under repeated questioning, spill a cover story they prepared at the start of their venture. Any such mutant will claim that they are in cahoots with a band of Strigany smugglers who work the Nuln-Averheim road, and that they passed the stolen goods onto them in return for future tip-offs about vulnerable travellers. The mutants admit the goods they passed on were barrels containing a black powder.

A PC who passes an **Intuition (Int) check** opposed to the Mutants' Guile (Fel) of 3, or who employs some other lie detection, such as certain Verenean blessings, will work out that they are not telling the truth. Under continued duress, a mutant finally admits that they have a contact in Averheim affiliated with a group called the Red Crown. This is a mysterious individual with a whispery voice who always wears a big black hooded cloak to hide his features. The mutants know very little about the Red Crown except that the group works to end discrimination against mutants throughout the Empire, and that they have cells in other major cities such as Altdorf and Middenheim.

### THE WELCOME REST INN

Once they have dealt with the mutants, it is up to the PCs whether or not they wish to continue to the Welcome Rest or turn back to Averheim. If they carry on, they find that the Welcome Rest is a large and well-appointed coaching inn that shares its grounds with a small Shallyan institution dedicated to the treatment of leprosy. The Shallyan sisters there are happy to try and treat any wounds the party have received free of charge (though they will proffer their collection box in expectation). The sisters have an Intelligence of 3 and one rank of training in First Aid; one of them has Medicine acquired (but not trained).

If the PCs show their letter from Curd to the inn's proprietor, a thick-bodied man named Niklaus with only a few wisps of red hair left on his head, they are given a fine meal and offered a modest but comfortable room for the night.

### DAY FIVE — FESTAG — A DAY OFF

**The Weather:** A light fog descends on Averheim during the morning, but lifts around noon. The good weather doesn't last. Clouds gather throughout the afternoon and a heavy rain lashes Averheim all night long.

### A DAY OFF

Each Festag, many Averheimers enjoy a day away from their places of business. Even the docks are quieter than at other times. The lime kilns, tanneries and warehouses along the waterfront close and the stockyards run on a skeleton staff. The taverns remain open for business, though they are tightly packed with tanners and dockers enjoying their free time.

The day is kept relatively free for the PCs to continue to get to know people and pursue their investigations. Whilst nothing much is occurring that advances the plot, there are still plenty of pick-pockets at work on the docks, and scuffles breaking out between drunken dockers.

### MORE LIGHT FINGERS

If Fritz wasn't caught by the PCs earlier, he attempts to rob them again today. This event is handled in exactly the same way as the 'Light Fingers' event on Day 1.

### AT THE RED ARROW OFFICE

Despite the fact that many people are having a holiday, Curd is at the offices of Red Arrow Coaches all day. He is waiting for the PCs in order to get their report into what happened on the road. He pays them an additional 5 shillings each for the work plus 20 shillings for the Cathayan silk and a further 10 shillings if they make a fuss about having had to deal with mutants.

Curd explains that he has another job for the PCs tomorrow, and asks if they could be at the Red Arrow Office at 9 o' clock in the morning.

### FENCING LOST PROPERTY

The PCs may decide they can get a better deal for the Cathayan silk by selling it to Mathilda the Fence. She examines the silk and gives an opening offer of 15 shillings, though she could be bargained up

as high as 45 shillings. If a PC wishes to bargain Mathilda up, have him make an **Average (2d) Charm (Fel) check**. Every net success or boon generated by the check will add an additional 10 shillings to a maximum of 45. On a ✱, Mathilda may take offence and refuse to deal further with the PCs, unless they've treated her very well in the past. Dealing with Mathilda in this way does somewhat incriminate the PCs. If the PCs use Mathilda in this manner and she later finds herself in trouble, she has no qualms in mentioning that they can vouch for her good character in return for her silence concerning the silks they sold her.

If a PC has the Gently-Born background, Mathilda may exchange the silks for the family heirloom he sold her.

## A MEETING WITH CAPTAIN BAERFAUST

Having heard some of the PCs' exploits from Luminary Mauer and Curd Weiss (presuming there are any such exploits to hear of), Captain Marcus Baerfaust would like to meet the PCs. He may also have pre-existing connections to the PCs based on their character backgrounds (in particular a character with the Battle-Scarred or Criminal backgrounds may be of interest to him), and want to check in or check up on them. His principal goal is to determine whether they might be helpful or harmful to the general law and order of Averheim.

Baerfaust, in company of the pot-bellied officer Gunther, travels to the docks to find the PCs in the evening. He arrives in armour and full uniform, although he appears to have left his greatsword behind (and contented himself with a longsword at his hip). As soon as he finds the PCs, he dismisses Gunther.

Baerfaust is distant but polite. He begins with introductions and invites the PCs to join him for a drink at the Sword of Sigismund, a respectable tavern with a halfling chef not far from the docks. He orders an Averlander wine for everyone, and doesn't appear to care about the vintage. As soon as the pleasantries are disposed of and the wine has arrived, he efficiently and directly debriefs the PCs regarding the mutant warband: How many were there? How were they armed? How close to the city? Did they have accomplices?

Baerfaust is well aware that the looted cart contained black powder, and he will ask about its eventual fate. If the PCs tell him about the spoilt barrel, but confirm that there was no black powder recovered at the campsite, a dark look will settle over Baerfaust. If the PCs pry, he'll reveal that this is not the first time black powder has gone missing, even from the garrison's own stores. If the PCs had no idea about the black powder, the GM can use Baerfaust to reveal this information. (This may be a good time to reveal the **Missing Gunpowder** clue card.)

If the conversation turns to the deaths at the docks, Baerfaust grumbles. He opines that he has enough to worry about without trying to protect criminal scum from one another, and only the "unusual" nature of the wounds is any real cause for concern. He refers to it as "damned wizard business," and appears to have a low opinion of Luminary Mauer.

Once he has the information he desires, Baerfaust excuses himself and leaves. If the PCs have given him reason to disapprove of their actions, he gives them a warning to keep out of trouble in his city.

Baerfaust's visit to the docks results in a small flurry of dockside regulars asking the PCs what that was all about. Mathilda Durbein, of course, will pump them for any information she can find, Frederick Grosz wonders if this means the watch are about to crack

## THE BLACK COWL



If Captain Baerfaust is the Black Cowl, then the meeting is intended largely to gauge the PCs' level of knowledge about his activities. In particular, he wants to know if they've uncovered the Red Crown connection, any suspicion of skaven, or have any suspicions concerning the ultimate fate of the black powder. He will not mention that black powder has gone missing in this case, seeing no reason to draw additional attention to that fact.

down on the dock, and Rambrecht the agitator is eager to discuss Baerfaust's less than exemplary service record, calling him "a tool of the noble class" and an "enemy of the working man."

## DAY SIX — WELLENTAG — A NOBLE CLIENT

**The Weather:** It is still drizzling in the morning, though the clouds break up soon after sunrise. The rest of the day is warm and sunny. The Aver is very swollen.

## AT THE RED ARROW OFFICES

When the PCs arrive at the offices of Red Arrow coaches, Curd presents them with a set of liveries to wear and generally fusses over their appearance and presentation. The liveries take the form of heavy cloth tabards, decorated with two devices. On the right breast they display an embroidered Red Arrow logo of the coaching line, and on the left breast a silver badge displaying the von Kaufman coat of arms. If they don't go, Curd sends a runner to find them and makes one last plea for their aid, reminding them that he is willing to pay.

Curd explains to the PCs that whilst they wear the liveries they will be recognised as being in the employ of Red Arrow and representing the von Kaufman family. As such he expects them to behave with dignity and respect, especially in light of the fact that they will be spending the day in the company of a very important individual.

"We have a noble friend who has bravely volunteered to help the von Kaufmans and Red Arrow. She is the Gravin Clothilde von Alptraum. You are to accompany her on a quick coach journey to her manor at Heinzstadt, some distance down the road towards Heideck. The trip there and back will take up most of the day. Normally nobles prefer to travel in secrecy, but with the Gravin's gracious permission, we have been rather overt about this journey, parading our best coach and encouraging gossip amongst the common folk with whom the Gravin is most popular. Hopefully, word will reach the ear of the bandits and you will be able to make a report of their activity. You are to travel with the Gravin but remain hidden. The highway robber bands are usually strong enough to cope with a bodyguard and coachmen, but with you on board they aren't likely to press an attack."

Gravin Clothilde is described in detail on page 13; it is possible that the PCs will have a pre-existing connection to her based on their character background. Otherwise, an **Average (2d) Education (Int) check** or **Hard (3d) Folklore (Int) check** is sufficient to recognize the name and identify her by reputation.

Curd leaves the PCs alone whilst he goes to check that the coach is prepared. After five minutes he fetches them and introduces them to the other passengers – Clothilde, her bodyguard Giselbert Kuhn, and the coachman, Werther.

### GISELBERT KUHN – CLOTHILDE’S BODYGUARD

Giselbert has served the von Alptraum family for almost 40 years. Whilst he is now in his sixties, and crumbling rapidly, he still gives off an impression of considerable power and confidence. Giselbert has a close-cut white beard and hair. He is dressed in the von Alptraum livery and wears a sword and pistol. Giselbert uses the characteristics of a Soldier NPC.

### WERTHER – THE COACHMAN

Werther is a crusty, creaky, weatherbeaten man with thirty years experience as a coachman and horse-doctor. He seems withdrawn and quiet; this is because his usual topics of conversation are wine and women, neither of which he feels comfortable discussing in the presence of Gravin Clothilde. His rheumatism makes him of little use in a fight, although he will be able to keep the horses under control in virtually any circumstances. Werther uses the characteristics of a Townsfolk NPC.

Once on the road, Clothilde is very interested in the PCs, and will quiz them as to their adventures and the goings on in the docks. If asked what she has been up to she states that life has been pretty dull of late, but that she is looking forward to an upcoming garden party at the Averborg palace to mark the return of Friedrich von Kaufman’s expedition from the Southlands. She may go on to mention that she is planning an extended holiday to Altdorf to catch the new shows of the upcoming theatrical season.

She claims to be uninterested in politics or the Electoral succession. If asked why she’s helping Graf Friedrich, or taking a personal risk to lure out bandits, if not to gain political capital, Gravin Clothilde insists that it is her duty as a noblewoman to do what she can for the Grand County of Averland. PCs may get the impression that for an apolitical creature, Gravin Clothilde is surprisingly cunning – which is entirely true.

### A COACH TRIP

From the Red Arrow offices, the coach parades around the Plenzertplatz a couple of times, allowing Clothilde to wave serenely at passers-by. It then heads towards the east gate. The coach journeys along the same road the PCs travelled a few days ago, but soon turns off and travels down a side road to the south that passes by acre after acre of orchards and the occasional vineyard.

After about half an hour’s journey along the road, the coach is drawn to a halt. The coachman announces that there are fallen branches across the road and he and Giselbert involve themselves in clearing them up.

PCs may announce that they are going to help, though Clothilde reminds them that their job is to remain unnoticed unless someone attacks the coach. PCs who announce that they are keeping an eye on their surroundings notice movement behind a hedge to the left of the road on a **Daunting (4d) Observation (Int) check**. Anyone

examining the fallen branches will notice that they have been hacked apart with an axe. (Although neither would admit it, both Giselbert’s and Werther’s eyesight are failing, and they won’t notice either the movement or the axe-marks.)

Anyone who goes to investigate the nearby hedge discovers that there is a narrow lane behind it. There are many tracks on the lane, both human and animal. If PCs cast their eyes about, or look for the freshest tracks, they notice a set of footprints leading a short way north and then disappearing near a large bush on a **Hard (3d) Observation (Int) check**.

Beneath the bush hides a young lady in servant’s clothing. She carries a bulging backpack and a dagger. She feigns terror of the PCs, seeming to assume that they are robbers and begging for mercy. She claims she is a local farm girl who is merely out collecting apples.

If her backpack is investigated, it contains a number of apples and a broad but compact hunting horn. Gertie is part of a gang of highway robbers and her job is to look for coaches in the area and signal to the nearby gang. She sticks to her story unless put under considerable duress, claiming that she found the horn – “A huntsman must have dropped it.” Clothilde objects to anyone threatening to hurt or kill Gertie.

### HIGHWAY ROBBERY

The coach sets on its way again and continues southwards. If Gertie is still in possession of her horn, characters should be asked to make an **Average (2d) Observation (Int) check**. If they pass, they hear a horn being blown in the distance behind them about a minute after the coach moved off. The horn signal rouses a group



of mounted bandits who are camped further down the road. On hearing the horn, they saddle up, chase the coach and attempt to rob Clothilde.

The highway robbers have been told (by agents in the pay of the Black Cowl) that rich pickings, in the form of Clothilde's diamond ring, are to be had on the road to the von Alptraum country house. They are expecting to encounter some resistance, as most coaches carrying noble passengers are guarded by a pair of coachmen and a bodyguard or two. Their strategy depends on how the PCs handled the encounter with Gertie.

- ✦ If the PCs spoke to Gertie, or exited the coach earlier to clear the road, she signals to the gang that there are additional guards within the coach (a double blow on the horn). The highway robbers will approach the coach with guns drawn. Two of them cover the doors of the coach as they make their demands. If the PCs attempt to exit the coach whilst the highway robbers have the doors covered, the robbers discharge their pistols before the PCs can make any manoeuvres of their own. In this situation, the GM can keep the action in story mode right up until the first shots are fired, then rolling for initiative and proceeding in encounter mode from there.
- ✦ If the PCs stayed within the coach when it stopped at the broken branches, and didn't make their presence known to Gertie, she assumes the coachman and Giselbert are the only threat. The highway robbers ride round to the front of the coach in order to tackle the coachman first. When the PCs appear, the highway robbers are surprised and suffer from the Rattled condition.
- ✦ If the PCs silenced Gertie, or took her horn, she will not be able to signal to the highway robbers. They notice the coach themselves, but have to make quick preparations to catch it. This has two effects. The highway robbers suffer from the Rattled condition, and also have not had time to charge their pistols. They brandish the guns as if they were loaded, but if attacked they discard their useless firearms and draw swords.

Whatever strategy the highway robbers adopt, they ride hard after the coach, catching up with it about two minutes after Gertie's signal. The robbers ride round the left side of the coach and then draw to a halt in a group on the road ahead. One of the band then calls out:

"Hold please! We have reason to believe that the von Alptraum diamond is travelling within. Just drop it out of the window and we will be glad to let you on your way."

At this Clothilde twists her large diamond ring in her fingers and looks imploringly at the PCs. Giselbert quietly draws his pistol and smiles grimly.

The number of robbers is equal to the number of PCs +1. They use the characteristics for Soldier NPCs, though they have Ride, Weapon Skill, and Ballistic Skill trained. They each have a hand weapon and are on horseback. Half of them have pistols. They are dressed in tattered, hard-wearing clothes with leather coats, and use a mixture of scraps of cloth, broad-brimmed hats, and high collars to hide their faces. Their leader, a big man named Hektor, is a deserter from the Averland state army (he deserted just before Third Black Fire) who recruits other deserters when possible. He's been a professional highwayman for nearly two years now and has recently begun taking orders from "the man in the black hood."

Whilst the robbers are a fearsome bunch, the PCs can rely on the help of Giselbert and Werther. Werther has a blunderbuss and will be able to discharge one shot, then will have to spend an entire turn reloading (his rheumatism does him no favours here). Clothilde eschews violence herself, though certainly cheers the PCs on. However, if the fight is brought to her she will defend herself with a jewelled dagger that she carries within her petticoats.

The robbers are not particularly brave or determined. Once they have taken a couple of casualties they attempt to break off and ride back the way they came, reasoning that the coach will continue towards its destination rather than chase them.

If Clothilde or any of her travelling companions are in serious danger of permanent injury or death, Clothilde will step forward and surrender her diamond. She won't be happy about it, but she does value human life more highly than wealth – especially when she was involved in putting that life in danger in the first place.

If the PCs subsequently come up with a plan for the ring's return, they should be given ample opportunity to track the robbers back to their camp (see below), or back to Averheim. Clothilde will certainly be delighted to get the ring back.

However, if the highway robbers make it back to Averheim, they will effectively vanish into the city's rookery. The following day they will pass the von Alptraum ring to agents of Black Cowl.

## THE AFTERMATH

Clothilde is very upset if anyone is badly hurt, and wants to get them to her country estate as soon as possible so that a healer in the service of the von Alptrauts can attend to any injuries. If the fight went very badly for the PCs, she will be very self-critical, blaming herself for being "so stupid as to have agreed to such a foolhardy plan." On the other hand Giselbert will be clearly annoyed at the PCs if their performance during the combat was cowardly or inept.

If the PCs show any interest in the bodies or trappings of robbers they have slain, they make a startling discovery. One of the robbers, underneath his leather coat, is wearing the black and yellow uniform of an Averland state trooper. It is also apparent that the pistols used by the robbers are marked with a stamp depicting a sun with a gloomy expression. Any PC seeing the device realises on an **Average (2d) Education (Int) check** that it is common for weapons belonging to the Averheim garrison to be marked like this. (A character with the Battle-Scarred background knows this automatically.) The robbers also have a few silver coins each.

If the PCs do not show any interest in the bodies, Giselbert notices the dead state trooper, and points him out, though he does not see the device on the guns.

If all the robbers have been killed, Hektor has a small iron key on a string about his neck.

Clothilde is keen to carry on to her country house, and brooks no disagreement from the PCs. After another hour in the coach, the road twists and climbs up a series of steep hills, clumped with small, scrubby trees. Twenty minutes later, the coach comes to a stop before her manor, from which there is a truly stellar view of the Averland lowlands spread out down below. The house is a large and luxurious fortified manor looked after by a large full-time staff. A physician in the von Alptraum's employ tends to any injuries, and the PCs are fed a slap up meal before being placed on the coach and

sent back to Averheim in the late afternoon. Unless she has good reason to be angry with them, Clothilde sees to it that each PC is given a tip of 20 shillings.

## RETURN JOURNEY

It takes just over three hours for the coach to make the return journey.

Any PC who mentions specifically that he is keeping an eye out for sign of the robbers on the return journey should make a **Hard (3d) Observation (Int) check** to notice that they pass a spot where a great many hoof prints leave the road.

If the PCs leave the coach and follow the trail they enter an orchard, at the centre of which is a cleared area in which the robbers had made their camp. What is left of the camp depends on how the PCs dealt with the robbers.

If the PCs did not slay all the robbers, then the survivors came back to the camp, collected their belongings, and rode back to Averheim. The PCs find a smouldering campfire and various bits of detritus and rubbish. On a **Daunting (4d) Observation (Int) check** they find a discarded, broken pistol, marked with the glowering sun as described earlier.

If all the robbers were slain, they won't have been able to clear their camp. The campfire and pistol will be there as described above. In addition, a ring of simple canvas tents surround the fire. One of these tents contains a small wooden chest that can be unlocked with an iron key worn by one of the robbers, picked (**Hard (3d) Skulduggery (Ag) check**), or smashed open. The chest contains 35 shillings and a pearl necklace that can be sold for up to 50 shillings. If the box is smashed open, the necklace is ruined and can only be sold for 25 shillings.

## GERTIE AGAIN

It may be the case that Gertie has returned to the camp and that the PCs find her there. However, this only occurs under the following circumstances:

- ✦ Gertie is alive.
- ✦ The PCs wiped the robbers out (if they did not, the robbers collect Gertie on their way).
- ✦ The PCs specified that they were following the trail of hoof prints quietly and all passed **Average (2d) Stealth checks** (if not, Gertie hears their approach and flees).

If these criteria are met, Gertie can be found resting inside one of the tents in the camp. She will stick to her earlier story about being a simple farm girl out collecting apples and claims that she just crept in the tent to catch a quick nap. "This isn't your tent, is it sir? I am ever so sorry if that's the case! I just wanted a quick nap out of the hot sun."

PCs may discern that Gertie seems pretty guilty on a successful **Intuition (Int) check** opposed to Gertie's Guile (Fel) of 3. If the PCs say that they suspect her of being in league with robbers, and that they have killed them all, Gertie still protests her innocence unless a PC passes an **Intimidate (St) check** opposed to Gertie's Discipline (WP) of 3, or exposes her guilt in some other fashion.

Under such duress, Gertie breaks down and admits her complicity with the highway robbers. She knows very little about the organisation of the gang, but can give the following information:

- ✦ As far as she is aware the gang has only been operating recently, within the last few weeks.
- ✦ If she is questioned as to why she joined the gang, she claims at first that she was pressed into it. A PC passing an Intuition check opposed to her Guile of 3 will realise this is untrue. Her real motives are a combination of desire for adventure and greed.
- ✦ She says the leader of the gang, Hektor, mentioned that he was being fed news about good opportunities by a contact he referred to as "the hooded man." She says the hooded man also helped them fence their loot.
- ✦ Gertie never met the hooded man herself.
- ✦ Gertie says that two members of the gang were deserters from the Averheim garrison, and that they had stolen the guns used by the gang from the city's armoury.

The rest of the journey back to Averheim is uneventful.

## FRITZ AND KURT ARE ABDUCTED

Now that they are hobnobbing with nobles and businessmen, particularly mercenary PCs may no longer care about the travails of the dockland poor, but if they aren't so cynical they may well head back there to continue their investigations.

During the night, Fritz and Kurt were taken by the skaven. Unlike Ute, neither of these men was particularly popular, and thieves and beggars are more likely to move on to new pastures anyway.

The only dockside residents likely to care about the disappearances are those who are already concerned about them. These are Rambrecht the agitator, Gottfried the gong farmer, Frederick the racketeer, and Hans the knacker.

## DAY SEVEN — AUBENTAG — AUDIENCE WITH VON KAUFMANN

**The Weather:** It is fine all day.

## MEETING WITH VON KAUFMAN

During the evening, Curd Weiss tracks the PCs down and explains that they have earned the thanks of Red Arrow's various owners due to the good job they performed in keeping Clothilde safe.

He invites the PCs to the Journey's End for a celebration meal, at Red Arrow's expense. Towards the end of the meal, Friedrich von Kaufman (see page 12) enters the bar and approaches the PCs.

Von Kaufman thanks the PCs for their part in protecting Clothilde, whom he describes as an old friend. He also mentions that he has heard that some of the men in the robber gangs that have been plaguing the local area seem to be associated with the garrison. He shows a lot of interest in anything the PCs have to say about this.

Von Kaufman explains that his expedition has recently returned from the Southlands and that he is planning a small fête in the Averborg gardens to celebrate and show off some of the wonders the expedition brought back. He had planned on using the city garrison to provide security, but in light of the rumours of corruption and crime, he's no longer certain that this is a wise idea. Some of his guests are very important people, and he doesn't want the military to be the only providers of armed protection at the event. As such, he asks the PCs if they would come along to act as his household watchmen and generally keep an eye on proceedings. Provided they perform this duty to a decent standard, he promises to pay them 30 shillings each for a day's work.

The event is a garden party and exhibition to take place at the menagerie in the Averborg Palace grounds. Von Kaufman asks the PCs to arrive at ten o'clock in the morning, which should give him enough time to properly brief them and ensure they get familiarised with the menagerie area.

## THE DEATH OF BEATRICE KNOX

By Aubentag, Beatrice Knox will have only managed to collect 18 of the 73 shillings she owes. Unless the PCs have helped her find more money, she is killed by moneylenders and her body is thrown into the Aver.

If Beatrice is killed in this manner, Rambrecht, Gottfried, Frederick, and Hans assume that she is amongst those who have disappeared. If the PCs have been asking around about people who have gone missing, or do so later on in the adventure, these characters will mention Beatrice to them. This may confuse matters somewhat, as her disappearance will not fit the pattern of abductions following rain.

## OOPS!

If the PCs spend some time on the docks they are jostled outside the White Horse. Berni Gabb, the offender, is an inebriated docker but friendly enough. He claps the PC he bumped into on the shoulder and slurs out:

"Sorry there friend, no harm meant. Got to look out for one another in times like these have we not? They say Morr himself walks these docks at night, do you know that? Well, that's what they say."

## ADD HERRING TO TASTE

The death of Beatrice Knox, failing to correspond to either the abductions or the gangland murders, is a bit of a red herring. Red herrings can be useful to mysteries, confusing things and distracting the audience from what's really going on. On the other hand, if the story is driven by the audience (as with an RPG), red herrings can waste a lot of time and take the story in unexpected or undesirable directions.

The GM should know his group, and add or remove red herrings as he finds appropriate. Beatrice Knox, for example, could well be murdered by Skrabb at the request of the Black Cowl (if her debts are owned by him), to keep her death tied to the plot. Or other red herrings could be added, if the hero players are too close to uncovering everything for the GM's taste.

# PART TWO — A DAY AT THE MENAGERIE

In contrast to the previous section, this part of the adventure deals in detail with one very busy Marktag morning. The purpose of this section is to provide the PCs with an introduction to a number of important NPCs in the Averborg area, and throw some confusion on to who might be behind the mysterious goings on down by the waterfront. In particular, a noble named Theodosius von Tuchtenhagen might well earn the enmity of the PCs for his terrible manners and apparent megalomania, though he is entirely innocent of any actual crime. (Well, he's not the Black Cowl, anyway.)

This event is also the first time that the three main NPCs will be on hand in the same place, and each of them might well earn the suspicion of the PCs due to their behaviour at the party. Captain Baerfaust heads off with a strange woman. Luminary Mauer falls out with the host and leaves the party shortly before a terrible accident occurs. Von Kaufman defends his decision to display a disturbing artefact despite the qualms of some of his guests.

Skaven activity also features in the chapter, as Skrabb endangers the guests by releasing a dangerous monster into the hedge maze (see page 53) and steals the warpstone artefact in the resulting confusion, in order to further his plot detailed on page 62. If the PCs conclude that skaven are behind the events and share their qualms with the other guests, refer to the details given on page 57 regarding people's attitudes to such rumours.

The pace of this chapter is intended to be initially rather genteel and sedate, with the PCs engaged in getting to know the various NPCs and taking note of some apparently innocuous clues and interactions between NPCs. This is then juxtaposed against the violent climax of the section, in which the PCs race against time to confront a monster in a maze before it wreaks too much havoc. If the PCs perform well, they will have impressed a number of Averborg notables and ensure continued good relations with von Kaufman and his friends.

**The Weather:** It is a fine day, and strong sunshine bathes the Averborg grounds during the event at the menagerie. During the afternoon, clouds begin to gather and by the evening it is very overcast. It rains heavily after dark.

## LAYOUT OF THE MENAGERIE AND EXHIBITS

The menagerie grounds are in the far corner of the Averborg's gardens from the front gate, accessible by a footpath of crushed gravel. A large green lawn is ringed on one side by a series of cages and along another by the edge of a large hedge maze. In the centre of the lawn is a large marquee, striped in the Averborg colours of black and yellow (which just so happen to be the von Kaufman colours, as well). Beneath the marquee is a small collection of tables, benches, and chairs, artfully arranged to enable socializing and discussion. There is also a large glass-fronted cabinet, containing many artefacts from the Southlands (it is currently covered by a heavy cloth). On the far side of the marquee is a small duck pond, only about three feet deep at its deepest but choked with duckweed

and greenery, so the water is quite opaque. Opposite the duck pond, a small stand is erected where von Kaufman's falconer attends to his birds. The entire lawn is ringed by a hedge.

There are ten enclosures in the menagerie, most of which contain some sort of animal. The enclosures come in three designs.

Aviaries (A) are sturdy wooden huts, about ten feet square. They are accessed by a door at the rear. The roof and fourth wall of the aviaries are partially made of sturdy metal mesh in order to see the animal inside.

Birdcages (B) are large circular enclosures made from bars of black wrought iron, about fourteen feet across at the widest point and sixteen feet high. The tops of the enclosures are impressive domes, decorated with gilded cast iron laurels and comets. They are accessed by a sturdy metal door set into the side of the structure which is kept secure by a large padlocked bolt.

Cages (C) are large rectangular enclosures made from bars of black wrought iron. They are about twenty-five feet wide, twenty feet deep and fifteen feet high. Each is accessed by a sturdy metal door set into the side of the structure which is kept secure by a large padlocked bolt.

In front of each enclosure is a small sign giving the (not always accurate) name of the exhibit. The enclosures are designed so as to show off the animal inside, rather than provide it with any sort of comfortable environment, so they are only sparsely furnished with the occasional boulder, log, or shrub.

- ✦ **Enclosure 1 – A – “Cockatrice.”** The cockatrice is a strange combination of reptile and bird with electric blue feathers, an impressive red wattle and a long green serpent's tail. Obviously keeping a cockatrice as an exhibit is fraught with dangers. This one has been rendered relatively harmless through the cruel expedient of having had its eyes put out; it's also a rather small specimen, barely longer than a man is tall.
- ✦ **Enclosure 2 – C – Empty.** Nothing here apart from a pile of straw.
- ✦ **Enclosure 3 – C – “Gigantic Spider.”** The cage is bedecked in sticky strings of web. The spider is about eight feet long. It is a deep and iridescent red with dramatic black markings.
- ✦ **Enclosure 4 – B – “Southland Carnivorous Snapper.”** This enclosure is erected around a circular pond of dirty brown water in which rests a sickly crocodilian. The snapper is about eleven feet long from snout to tail, and is a bilious green colour.
- ✦ **Enclosure 5 – B – Empty.** Used to store sticks and sacks of feed.
- ✦ **Enclosure 6 – B – “Southland Flightless Griffon.”** This creature is a demigryph, a rare form of griffon which lacks wings. This specimen is a juvenile, yet to acquire the length and bulk of a fully-grown demigryph. It is still an imposing animal as large as a horse. It has the body and hindquarters of a lion, but its head is that of a gigantic eagle, and its forelimbs are also like the legs of a predatory bird.

In between enclosures 6 and 7 is an area of lawn. A wooden rail has been erected here on which perch a large gyrfalcon, a kestrel, and a sparrowhawk. Albrun Falk, von Kaufmann's falconer (see page 50), will be stationed here to attend to his birds and provide a demonstration of his art.

- ✦ **Enclosure 7 – C – “Norscan White Bear.”** A huge white bear passes the time in here by repeatedly pacing back and forth.
- ✦ **Enclosure 8 – C – “Sabretusked Cat.”** The sabretusk is from the Mountains of Mourn, many thousands of miles to the east of the Empire. It is a heavily built big cat with striped fur and massively enlarged canines. The sabretusk is suffering in Averheim's climate, which is far too hot and humid for it, and it spends its time lying about and panting heavily.
- ✦ **Enclosure 9 – A – “Giant Owl.”** The giant owl is like a barn owl in appearance, though it stands almost five feet tall. The owl seems quite content to perch on a log and regard the goings on around it with massive, intelligent-looking eyes.
- ✦ **Enclosure 10 – C – “Hairless Southland Rhinoc.”** A large male rhino, about twelve feet long with two horns on its snout, naps on a bed of dried grass, snoring loudly. It has a warty, dark-grey hide.

## HEDGE MAZE

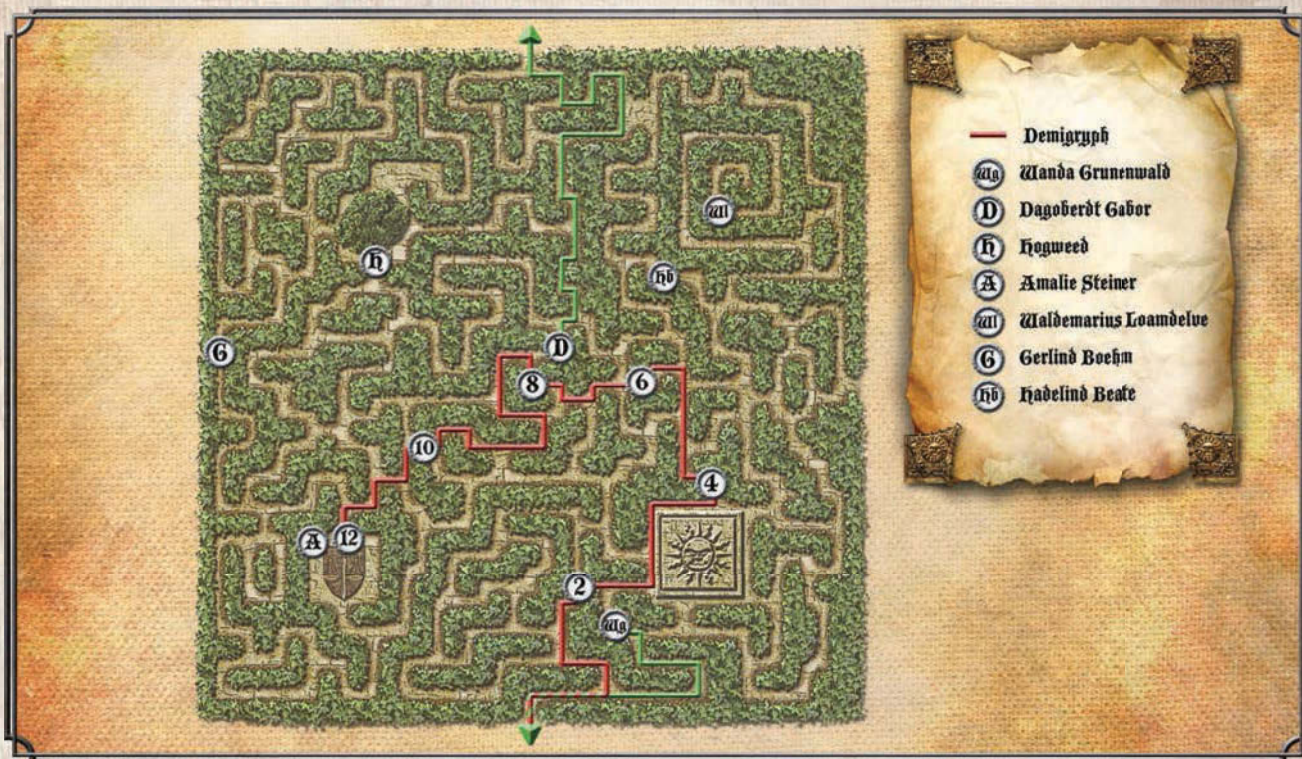
The hedge maze is large and somewhat overgrown. It is not very difficult to find your way around the hedge maze, as it was designed to provide an interesting and novel walk rather than being fiendishly difficult. Nevertheless, some people do get lost and panic, so the steward of the Averburg Palace keeps a map of the maze and has given a plan of it to Friedrich von Kaufman.

The maze is mostly constructed from corridors of densely planted evergreens grown around a well-worn path of flagstones. The hedge is about fifteen feet in height, though some treetops are higher. The hedge has not been well-tended, and the evergreens have grown somewhat wild. Protruding branches, loose flagstones, and patches of bramble have not been dealt with, and can scratch, trip, or entangle careless visitors.

There are three features within the maze, placed to provide some novelty and help lost visitors find their bearings. At one junction is a large mosaic depicting a sun with a frowning face – this heraldic device is associated with the old province of Solland and the Leitdorf family. At another is a white marble statue of the goddess Verena in a long and billowing cloak. She is depicted wielding a sword and a shield decorated with the motif of a balanced set of scales. At a third junction is an old and twisted oak, its sagging branches held up by stout wooden props.

## NAVIGATING THE HEDGE MAZE

As a rule of thumb it takes one manoeuvre to reach a corner or junction from any other corner or junction in the hedge maze. Basically a character can use a manoeuvre to reach any point within line of sight, though the GM may wish to rule that some of the longer corridors, such as those towards the outside edge of the maze, take two manoeuvres to travel down. Bear in mind that the map of the maze does not accurately represent it in its overgrown state, so some shorter distances may be harder to traverse due to loose flagstones or straggly bits of bramble.



The path is wide enough for two people to comfortably walk along side by side. Refer to the Hedge Maze location card whilst in the hedge maze.

Although the PCs are given a map, they may still lose their way if they don't follow it correctly or if they run around the maze without consulting it. Characters who get lost within the maze can try and get an idea of their whereabouts by making an **Average (2d) Observation check**, with the following results:

☞ The character can see the top of the old oak tree within the maze, and judge how far away it is.

☞☞ In addition the character works out what quadrant of the maze he is in.

☠ Suffer one stress.

Of course, PCs are likely to use all manner of tricks to help them navigate the maze, from climbing trees to using magically enhanced senses, or even flight. GMs should award bonuses for such ideas, though bear in mind that the abundant bramble provides plenty of opportunities to inflict minor damage on characters who attempt something risky and go on to fail their tests.

## GUEST LIST (AND SOME UNINVITED GUESTS)

The following NPCs are present at, or around, the event:

- ☞ **Friedrich von Kaufman** – Averland Noble and Host (see page 12). His goal is to show off his collection, increase his influence amongst the nobility of Averheim, and gain a little more information regarding the state of the succession.
- ☞ **Curd Weiss** – von Kaufman's right-hand man (see page 39). Not a guest, per se, but Curd is on hand to ensure the event runs smoothly and oversee the servants.
- ☞ **Captain Marcus Baerfaust** – Captain of the Averheim Greatswords (see page 10). His goal is to "get all this nonsense over with." He resents having to provide security for the nobility and resents even more that the honour of his soldiers has been called into question.
- ☞ **Arta Schaffer, Waldtraut Machholt, and Walfried Wirtz** – These three soldiers are under Baerfaust's command. Due to the captain's disagreement with von Kaufmann, they will not be stationed in the menagerie grounds. However, they spend their time patrolling around the Averburg palace grounds nearby and keeping a watchful eye on proceedings. Machholt and Wirtz wear polished steel breastplates, black and yellow uniforms with puffy and pleated sleeves, and wide black felt caps decorated with red feathers. Arta Schaffer is Captain Baerfaust's right-hand. She is an elite soldier from the army of Averheim

and a loyal companion to Captain Baerfaust. She is armed with a double-handed sword, a pistol, and a suit of full plate armour. In the event of a disturbance or attack of some kind, Schaffer will run for help from the palace, while Machholt and Wirtz make directly for the trouble. All three soldiers only wish to provide security for the event, although none of them expect that they will be needed.

- ✦ **Luminary Konrad Mauer** – A Light Wizard (see page 11). Mauer is genuinely curious about the items in the exhibition as well as the strange beasts in the menagerie.
- ✦ **Clothilde von Alptraum** – Averheim Noblewoman (see page 13). Her goal is to uphold the honour and dignity of the von Alptraum family, especially in contrast to the Leitdorf family.
- ✦ **Giselbert Kuhn** – Clothilde's Bodyguard (see page 43). Kuhn will be present even if badly injured by the robbers earlier; his pride will tolerate nothing less.
- ✦ **Theodosius von Tuchtenhagen** – Obnoxious Minor Averland Noble. Theodosius is a tall and lean man of thirty, with fiery red hair and long whiskers. He dresses in sumptuous robes decorated with a veritable treasure trove of gemstones – though they are mostly just costume jewellery. Theodosius has been made the temporary liege lord of Grenzstadt, the fortress town guarding the approach to the Black Fire Pass, whilst the other noble families contest the Electorship. He speaks with a distinct lisp as an affectation and often breaks into irritating gales of high-pitched laughter. Theo's family was elevated to the status of nobility a century ago by Emperor Matthias IV and strives to obscure the memory of the merchants they had been. When his elder brother Volker was slain in a duel, Theodosius' mother died from grief and the young nobleman found himself the head of the family. Such a position has left Theo insecure in his position, yet possessed of an unshakable sense of entitlement. Theodosius lacks the experience and upbringing to understand the nuances of Averheim's political situation. His goal is to show off how wealthy and dignified he is; unfortunately his boorish behaviour undermines this.
- ✦ **Dagobert Gabor** – Theodosius' Pet Wizard. A leering corpulent man in his forties. Dagobert is dressed in gaudy jewellery and dazzling golden robes. He is a member of the Gold Order, though it has been a long time since he attended the Gold College in Altdorf. Instead Dagobert is now a full time member of Theodosius' retinue, amusing his liege with magical displays and pursuing their mutual interest in theories concerning the alchemical production of gold. Dagobert is mildly curious about the artefacts at the exhibition, but is mostly attending the party to stay in Theodosius's good graces and to leer at the members of the fairer sex in attendance.
- ✦ **Hogweed** – Theodosius' Imbecilic Jester. A twisted and palsied figure, with the slight frame of someone who suffered chronic malnourishment as a child. Hogweed is a young man of nineteen. He is an imbecilic and bitter individual, whose cruel japes are aimed at anyone other than Theodosius and Dagobert. Hogweed is subject to violent shaking fits, which Theodosius finds even more amusing than his jokes.
- ✦ **Ferdinand Leitdorf** – Averheim Noble. A tall and elegant man in his mid-thirties. Ferdinand is both a nephew of the late Marius and cousin to the current (albeit disputed) head of the family, Baron Kastor Leitdorf. Like his deceased uncle, Ferdi-

nand has a shock of long, curly grey hair and a somewhat supercilious expression, which gives way to a mask of pure red-faced fury when he is frustrated or frightened. Ferdinand is richly dressed in satin and silk with many expensive jewels. He wears an elegant rapier and claims to be "nearly as good a swordsman as my uncle, Marius." His goal at the garden party is to demonstrate the obvious superiority of the Leitdorf family and remind everyone that his uncle was the Elector Count.

- ✦ **Claudia Leitdorf** – A slightly built and pale woman in her early twenties. Claudia is a cousin to both Kastor and Ferdinand Leitdorf. She is also the latter's wife. Like her husband, Claudia is haughty and unstable, and her dark curly hair is already heavily streaked with grey. Unlike her husband, Claudia has no particular loyalty to the Leitdorf family name and is sizing up the other nobles for potential advantage for her and her husband in the succession battle. Whilst she does not display the eccentric and unstable behavior of her famous relatives, Claudia suffers from chronic pain which often leaves her stressed and melancholy. She keeps her opinions to herself and speaks very rarely, and when she does so her voice is small and quavering.
- ✦ **Waldemarius Loamdelve** – Representative of Averheim's Halfling Community. Averheim is close to the border between Averland and the Mootland, and the city has a relatively large halfling community. Waldemarius (Waldo to his friends) is the patriarch of the influential Loamdelve clan. He is a youthful 78, though his dark brown hair is beginning to grey at the temples. Like many halfling elders, he dresses in flamboyant style, with billowing green and yellow silks and puffy tailoring around his shoulders, elbows, hips, and knees. He is a rather self-important and snobbish fellow, and given to taking offence at any perceived insult. He is also somewhat given to gluttony and sloth. His goal is to force the "big folk" to treat halflings with respect.
- ✦ **Amalie Steiner, Fausta Herzog, Gerlind Boehm, Hadelind Beate and Wanda Grunenwald** – Ladies-in-Waiting. These young women are minor members of noble families invited to the party in order to look stunning and behave in a generally charming manner. Amalie and Fausta are members of the von Kaufman court, Gerlind and Hadelind are members of the Leitdorf court, and Wanda is part of the von Tuchtenhagen retinue.

On the whole the ladies in waiting are cultured, professional and good humoured. They are true social butterflies, mingling with all the guests at the party so as not to let anyone feel left

## THE BLACK COWL



If Marcus Baerfaust is the Black Cowl, then the soldiers at the event are hand-picked by him to be deaf, dumb, and blind when it comes to Skrabb's infiltration and theft. They'll be of no help at all to the PCs, just happening to be too far away.

out, but giving each of the guests enough attention to leave them feeling as if they shared a significant moment of intimacy. The ladies are beautiful, and know how to bat their eyelashes and flutter their fans in a coquettish but ladylike manner. They are also learned and love to discuss art, theatre, and all sorts of matters pertaining to (a rose tinted view of) the Empire. They will laugh at good-natured jokes but will eschew any coarseness.

The exception is Wanda, a Grenzstadt barmaid elevated to a lady-in-waiting because Theodosius fancies his chances. She's a sweet girl with canny wits but no formal education and feels dreadfully out of her depth in these circumstances. Wanda is coy and withdrawn, terrified of being thought stupid. In contrast to the other ladies-in-waiting, she would actively appreciate it if someone were to be moderately earthy and straightforward in conversation with her.

- ✦ **Albrun Falk** – Falconer. A minor member of von Kaufmann's retinue. Albrun is here to provide a demonstration of falconry shortly after the guests have gathered. He is a handsome and athletic young man with close-cropped blonde hair, and is dressed in the von Kaufman livery. Albrun is enthusiastic about his birds and fascinated by the demigryph and cockatrice in the menagerie.
- ✦ **Adele Ketzenblum** – Witch Hunter (see page 14). Adele has come to the party in search of Johann Templemann, or anyone else who was on the Southlands expedition. She has suspicions that the expedition in general, and Templemann in particular, are involved in heresy.
- ✦ **Skrabb** – Clan Eshin Assassin (see page 56).

## ACT ONE — PREPARING FOR THE EVENT

Von Kaufman has told the guards at the gate of the Averburg Palace to expect the PCs and escort them to the menagerie grounds. The guards lead them through the palace precincts and the gardens that surround them, which look somewhat neglected and overgrown.

At the entrance to the menagerie are three men dressed in the black and yellow uniforms of Averland state troopers. They are equipped with brightly polished steel armour and huge double-handed greatswords. These are Arta, Waldtraut, and Walfried, soldiers under the command of Captain Baerfaust. Due to the current distrust between Baerfaust and Friedrich von Kaufman, they have not been permitted to enter the menagerie grounds, and have been ordered to patrol the perimeter whilst the party is underway.

### INSIDE THE MENAGERIE GROUNDS

Von Kaufman is overseeing the final preparations for the event. Servants and maids lay out food in the marquee and tighten guy ropes. Amalie and Fausta sit within the marquee, fanning themselves theatrically. At the other end of the menagerie, Albrun Falk attends to his birds, making sure they are settled upon their perches.

Standing on his own by the duck pond is Captain Marcus Baerfaust, dressed in his Averheim garrison captain's uniform. He has just been arguing with von Kaufman about the deployment of his men and is apparently humiliated that the PCs have been asked to act as guards for the day in their stead. He brushes the PCs off if they seek to speak to him, and von Kaufman won't mention the

matter, though Amalie and Fausta admit that the captain and noble were engaged in a "heated debate" if they are asked about the Baerfaust's attitude.

Von Kaufman notices the PCs approach and acknowledges them.

"Good, you have arrived. My thanks. There in the tent you will find tabards decorated in the coat of arms of my house and respectable hats. If you require a sword, let Curd know. Please wear them throughout the day. Once you have found a tabard that fits, I would like you to spend half an hour or so familiarising yourself with the grounds here. I obtained a plan of the hedge maze from the Averburg steward for you just in case some idiot ends up getting lost."

The tabards that von Kaufman wishes the PCs to wear are on a bench in the marquee. The tabards are golden yellow and decorated with the von Kaufman arms of an Imperial cross blazoned onto a golden sun with red flames embroidered in red and black. Three wide felt hats decorated with red plumes are also laid out for the PCs.

Give the players the map of the hedge maze. The PCs can then spend some time viewing the exhibits and exploring the maze. Once the PCs have spent some time getting used to the menagerie, von Kaufman approaches them again and, after asking if they have had any problems, gives them their next set of instructions.

"The first guests should be arriving shortly. I want you to guard the tent and the exhibits whilst I welcome them. We will then head down to the falconry exhibit for a quick show before letting everyone mingle. For the time being, I would appreciate it if you remain quiet and professional, but keep your eye out for any trouble and let me know if you see or hear anything odd. But please be discreet about it; I don't want to cause any unnecessary fuss."

If he is pressed as to why he feels like this, von Kaufman admits that the situation regarding the empty Electoral seat has led to some understandable tensions between various Averheim nobles, and that he just wants to get some early warning if it looks like an argument is brewing.

## THE GUESTS ARRIVE

Shortly after eleven the first guests arrive. Clothilde and Giselbert are the first to enter the menagerie grounds. Clothilde is keen to catch up with the PCs, finding out what they have been up to since Wellentag. She is looking particularly radiant in a lemon yellow dress and draws envious glances from the ladies-in-waiting.

Clothilde is followed by Luminary Mauer, who seems more interested in the animal exhibits than his fellow guests. After greeting those already there in a most perfunctory manner, he takes himself off on a walk around the menagerie.

The Leitdorf party then arrives, a group that consists of Ferdinand and Claudia, as well as Gerlind and Hadelind the ladies-in-waiting. Ferdinand introduces himself in a good-humoured, somewhat theatrical fashion. Claudia complains of a splitting headache and sits in the shade of the marquee with a damp handkerchief pressed to her temple.

Waldemarius is the next guest to arrive. He is expecting the party to be a somewhat more formal occasion than it actually is and will assume that the PCs are acting in the capacity of heralds. He walks up to the nearest PC and shrilly states:

“You, sir, may have the honour of announcing to the assembly that Waldemarius Loamdelve, elder and elected representative of Averheim’s halfling community, has arrived at last!”

If the chosen PC takes this in good humour and proclaims the arrival of Waldemarius, he regards the PC and his companions with fondness (especially as he quickly realises his mistake).

If the PC does not announce Waldemarius, or treats him with rudeness or mockery, the halfling is humiliated and will openly resent the PCs.

The last guests to arrive are the von Tuchtenhagen retinue. This rather motley group includes a young, buxom girl who is clearly uncomfortable in her pomp and finery, a fat and leering man bedecked in jewellery and robes of shimmering golden thread, a capering and twisted youth dressed in jester’s motley, and von Tuchtenhagen himself. The nobleman has Wanda introduce them, and titters at her rather nervous and uncultured efforts.

## GETTING THE PARTY STARTED

Once the guests are gathered and initial introductions have been made, von Kaufman announces that a falconry show is about to begin and asks the guests and PCs to make their way from the marquee to the other side of the menagerie grounds.

### A SHOW OF FALCONRY

Once the guests are assembled by his pitch, Albrun provides a short demonstration of falconry. He spins a small piece of meat on the end of long string and releases each bird to catch the meat in turn. Albrun releases the kestrel first, then retrieves it and repeat the process with the sparrowhawk and finally the gyrfalcon. There are appreciative gasps of awe from the ladies, though Waldemarius looks pretty uncomfortable when the large gyrfalcon is let loose, and Claudia Leitdorf looks pained throughout the whole show.

### A BAD SMELL

PCs watching the falconry exhibition notice a strange smell on a **Daunting (4d) Observation (Int) check**. If the test is passed, they catch a fleeting whiff of a strong caustic smell. The smell is Skrabb, who has been smeared with caustic gunk and quicklime during his time at the Atzwing tannery. He is currently scouting the perimeter hedge of the menagerie, but has not come so close to the PCs as to risk giving away his position.

If the PCs mention the smell to the other guests, not one of them perceives anything. Hogweed points out that the PCs are probably suffering from the effects of Clothilde’s perfume, at which Theodosius von Tuchtenhagen bursts into a gale of high-pitched laughter. Clothilde fans herself as if to clear the stench, though she also gives the jester a warning glance. Albrun suggests a more likely source of the smell – the guano in the cage containing the demigryph. If the PCs approach the cage they discover it does produce a faintly acrid smell. However, a PC who discerned the smell of quicklime is able to tell that the guano is not quite the same on a **Hard (3d) Observation check**.

## MINGLING WITH THE GUESTS

Von Kaufman now announces that the guests are invited to peruse the exhibits in the menagerie for a while whilst he prepares his exhibition of Southland artefacts. He takes the PCs aside and asks if they can patrol the menagerie grounds, keeping their eyes and ears open for anything odd, and then help gather everyone to the marquee when he announces he is ready to unveil his exhibits.

### A SICK GUEST

Claudia Leitdorf continues to look rather green around the gills, and soon excuses herself and heads back towards the Averburg palace. Ferdinand seems exasperated by his wife’s departure, and sits fuming in the marquee whilst his ladies in waiting coo and mollycoddle him in an effort to improve his mood.

### A COMPLAINT

This event occurs if the PCs noticed and mentioned the smell earlier. If so Amalie approaches them and say that she was “assailed by a dreadful stench whilst watching the bear.” Alternatively if the PCs spend much time near the cage with the bear, they notice the smell themselves on an **Average (2d) Observation check**.

PCs who investigate the area and pass an **Average (2d) Observation check** are able to work out that it emanates from the hedge behind the cage. Those investigating the hedge should make a **Hard (3d) Observation check**. Anyone passing this check discovers a space within the hedge, inside which a man could feasibly sit. They also notice that several of the shrubby trunks bordering the space are smeared with a dollop of foul-smelling pale-brown goo (a smear of quicklime paste mixed with dung). Skrabb had been hiding here and used the foliage to clean the worst of the filth from him. He has since moved on.

If informed of this, von Kaufman insists that it is unimportant and asks that the PCs get back to keeping their eyes on the guests.

### THE JOKE

At some point a PC in the marquee notices Hogweed approach Waldemarius. The jester nudges the halfling sharply in the ribs and tells the following joke:

“Three fat Mootlanders went down Black Fire Pass and were waylaid by goblins. Two of the halflings were bound up in ropes and the third was boiled in a pot. The greenies ate him with a side of endives and chopped garlic. Watching this grisly spectacle, the captives quailed and wept. ‘Oh, Sweet Esmerelda!’ one said, ‘Such a horrible sight!’ His companion agreed. ‘It’s a bloody travesty! Garlic should be crushed!’”

Waldemarius is so offended he nearly drops his plate of food. He marches over to Theodosius and demands that he discipline his jester. Theo takes clear delight in having Waldemarius repeat every detail of his humiliation and bursts into a gale of high-pitched laughter at the punch line. The halfling loudly and shrilly declares he doesn’t care much for this company, and it takes a fair bit of mollycoddling from Hadelind to convince him to stay.

### THE WITCH HUNTRESS

As the weather sours in the afternoon, a woman in a tall leather hat sweeps past the patrolling guards without a second glance: Adele Ketzenblum. Unless a PC intercepts her, she stops first at Captain

Baerfaust, who greets her as warmly as he greets anyone (which is to say, not especially). They exchange pleasantries. He hopes that it is not her business that brings her to Averheim; she allows that it is.

Next Adele visits briefly with Luminary Mauer, essentially just to rattle his cage. (Her mentor was the man who condemned Mauer's family to the pyre.) She asks what he's doing here; Mauer insists that, as he was involved in planning the expedition, he has every right to be here to see its fruits for himself. Adele finds that interesting.

Finally, she rounds on von Kaufman and demands to know the whereabouts of Johann Templemann. Von Kaufman explains that Templemann died in the Southlands, which Adele calls "convenient" with a sneer. She then whispers urgently at him, growing more and more hostile as he continues to rebuff her. A PC who wishes to eavesdrop must pass a **Hard (3d) Observation (Int) check** to listen from a distance, or an **Average (2d) Stealth (Ag) check** to creep up undetected behind the hedge near where they are talking. If successful, the PC can hear Adele say "I know what's really going on, Graf Friedrich. I know about the man in the black hood." The Graf protests that he has no idea what Fräulein Ketzenblum is talking about, which causes her to suggest that Graf Friedrich, himself, is "the man in the black hood." This continues for a few minutes until Friedrich insists that she either support her spurious accusations or leave.

Adele then storms out, catching Captain Baerfaust's eye as she does so. He follows her a ways down the path, where she briefly shares her suspicions with Baerfaust, informing him of the existence of the "man in the black hood," and that everyone involved in that expedition is suspect. Baerfaust points out that he was involved in that expedition himself, and she leaves. PCs who wish to be privy to this exchange must pass Observation or Stealth checks as above.

Baerfaust doesn't return immediately, taking a walk around the perimeter to check in with his men and mull her accusations over in his mind. He does not return until the party is over.

If asked about his opinion of these events, von Kaufman admits to being somewhat annoyed that Captain Baerfaust has left his post, but does not permit anyone to follow him. That said, he will not hear a bad word about the woman or the Witch Hunters in general.

## THE BLACK COWL

Adele's arrival and interest in the expedition arouses the suspicion of the Black Cowl, who will be forced to gauge the level of danger she poses to his operation and eliminate her. Fortunately, the PCs will make likely catspaws for this during Book Two, and all the Cowl has to do is plant a seed of doubt in Marcus Baerfaust that Adele may be a traitor.

## THE EXHIBITS UNVEILED

At this juncture, Graf Friedrich announces that he is about to unveil the exhibits and the guests assemble in the marquee. With a flourish, Friedrich whips the cover from the cabinet, allowing the exhibits to be viewed.

On top of the cabinet is the star attraction, a leering effigy that appears to be crafted of smoky jade. Carved with a sinister face, this piece catches the eye and dramatically overshadows the rest of the collection. When it's revealed, there is a low gasp that runs through the collected guests. Unnoticed in the back of the crowd, Hogweed quietly collapses into one of his fits, during which he makes no noise but a strangled moan and foams at the mouth. Dagobert and von Tuchtenhagen are completely distracted by a large golden plaque on the next shelf down, but no one else can tear their gaze away from the jade carving – especially Luminary Mauer.

The other exhibits are mostly carvings made from ivory, depicting savage figures and strange gods, and funerary goods from Southlands tombs. One strange object is constructed from wood and hair. It is a rough carving of a large head, with mad staring eyes and long, sharp teeth. The aforementioned golden plaque is the second-most-compelling artefact to be found, engraved with a dizzying array of primitive glyphs and sigils.

Von Kaufman, excited and proud of his collection, begins to rattle off the provenance of each item in turn, describing how this fetish was recovered after the expedition was beset by orcs, or that canopic jar was found in a crypt where the jungle gave way to the endless sands of Araby. The golden plaque was found in a tall, tiered pyramid inhabited by strange, scaly creatures of nearly-human intellect, and so on. Finally, he reaches the jade mask, and begins:

"And this striking piece is—"

"Evil," interrupts Luminary Mauer. "It is an evil thing, and you should surrender it to me immediately."

"I will do nothing of the kind," objects von Kaufman. "It is the pride of my collection! You will have an opportunity to study it in time, Herr—"

"I do not wish to study it," says Mauer. "I want it destroyed."

"Destroyed? The pride of my collection? I won't hear of it!"

Von Kaufman and Mauer exchange more heated words until Gravin Clothilde (or a PC) interjects. Clothilde points out that Mauer is not the only wizard in attendance, and invites Dagobert Gabor to offer his opinion. Dagobert, who has been completely enraptured by the sight of that much gold in one place and hasn't glanced up from the golden plaque, quickly moves to support von Kaufman lest it look like he's not been paying attention.

If a PC wizard wishes, he can use Magical Sight by passing a **Daunting (4d) Magical Sight (Int) check** to detect the presence of magic surrounding the effigy. If he rolls any boons on the check, he has a vague sense of unease and despair that he can tie to the effigy (and he may conclude that the magic is dark magic). If he rolls banes, he won't be able to determine which of the artefacts has the magical aura. Even if a PC wizard throws his voice in with Luminary Mauer, von Kaufman won't be swayed (since he has Dagobert's support, he considers the matter closed).

## THE BLACK COWL



If Luminary Mauer is the Black Cowl, he won't want to arouse suspicion about the warpstone effigy. The entire dramatic exchange and argument can be omitted, and Luminary Mauer will simply excuse himself before Skrabb makes his move, citing a headache. Of course, if a competent wizard is present (i.e., a PC, as Mauer has a low opinion of Dagoberdt), Mauer will want to put on a show of being the good wizard and things will still play out as described here.

Luminary Mauer storms off, returning to his home on the Plenzerplatz, and the whole exchange puts rather a sour mood on the gathering.

## A GAME IS PROPOSED

At this juncture Amalie, hoping to diffuse the tension, proposes a game. She claims that within the hedge maze is a statue of the goddess Verena. She knows where it is and says she will make her way there and don a blindfold, in honour of the goddess. Anyone else who wants to play must wait five minutes and then try to find her by the statue. She declares that the first person to do so will be lauded as the winner and have many honours heaped upon them.

Dagoberdt, Hogweed, Waldemarius, Hadelind, Gerlind, and Wanda announce their intent to compete, though the other guests either admit that they know the location of the statue or are too old, tired, or dignified for such a game. PCs who wish to compete are told by von Kaufmann, in no uncertain terms, that they are there to do their jobs rather than have fun. Amalie disappears into the maze and the rest follow a short while later.

The other guests make friendly wagers on the likely winner and the mood lightens. Unfortunately, shortly after the guests set off on their search, an inhuman shriek and a cry of dismay spoil everything again. The demigryph is loose.

## ACT TWO – A HUNT IN THE HEDGE MAZE

It is at this point that Skrabb launches his operation. Whilst the party have their attentions on the exhibition in the marquee, he sneaks up to the door of the enclosure containing the demigryph and picks the padlock. He then goads it from the enclosure by wounding it slightly with a well-aimed throwing star. Whilst Albrun Falk is close to the enclosure, he is so wrapped up in his birds that he fails to notice the assassin at work, and becomes the first victim of the rampaging beast. The demigryph rushes from its cage and delivers a terrific blow to Albrun, whose cries of alarm trigger the beginning of Act Two. During the rally step, the demigryph heads towards the nearest area of dense vegetation – which happens to be the hedge maze. If the PCs don't immediately leap to investigate, von Kaufmann orders them to do so. Roll initiative for the PCs, the demigryph, and Skrabb and transition to encounter mode at this point.

The prone form of Albrun Falk is left next to the empty cage of the demigryph. Albrun has suffered a dreadful blow to the head and is bleeding profusely. He will soon die unless a PC passes a **Daunting (4d) First Aid (Int) check** or treats him with healing spells or blessings. A character could also send for help from the nearby temple-hospice of Shallya, though it will not arrive in time to save Albrun or any other NPCs wounded during the ensuing events.

Assemble a progress tracker twelve spaces long, with events on every second space. Advance the progress tracker one space per turn.

### EVENT SPACE 2

The demigryph reaches the point marked 2 on the map. Wanda, who is at the point marked W, spots the creature and gives a loud scream. She runs towards the southern exit of the maze.

### EVENT SPACE 4

The demigryph reaches the point marked 4 on the map. Wanda exits the hedge maze and spots the wounded body of Albrun. She screams again and faints.

### EVENT SPACE 6

The demigryph reaches the point marked 6 on the map. At this point there is the noise of a small explosion that comes from the direction of the marquee. Some sounds of alarm come from the tent. Refer to **Theft and Murder** on page 54 for details of what is happening in the marquee.



## EVENT SPACE 8

The demigryph reaches the point marked 8 on the map. Smoke can be seen rising from the marquee. Dagobert, who is at the point marked D, spots the demigryph and begins to prepare a spell, but then thinks better of it and flees towards the northern exit of the maze. Skrabb stabs Giselbert. Unless a PC has successfully seen to his injuries, Albrun Falk dies at this point.

## EVENT SPACE 10

The demigryph reaches the point marked 10 on the map. The stressful situation becomes too much for Hogweed, who is at the point marked H on the map. He suffers from a fit and falls to the ground frothing, shaking, and screaming. His loud yells can be heard throughout the hedge maze and may well mislead the PCs.

## EVENT SPACE 12

The demigryph discovers Amalie at the point marked 12 on the map. Blindfolded and singing to herself, Amalie has no idea that she is in danger. Unless the PCs have caught up with it, the demigryph kills her and begins to consume the body. If a PC is present, all he has to do to save Amalie's life is shout a warning or attract the demigryph's attention. The demigryph remains here until found and dealt with.

If the PCs manage to save Amalie's life, she will find the skaven throwing star lying on the ground near the statue of Verena, where it fell from the creature's rump. Otherwise, a **Daunting (4d) Observation (Int) check** will be required to notice the small object in the confusion of the hedge maze. An **Average (2d) First Aid (Int)** or **Medicine (Int) check** will confirm that the wound on the demigryph's rump is discoloured and poisoned the same way the bodies on the docks were.

By this point one of von Kaufman's servants at the marquee will have run and fetched Baerfaust's men from the Averborg grounds. They enter the menagerie area and go to where they are most needed. If the PCs are still in the maze, the troops try to manage the situation at the marquee (though they won't enter the tent whilst the smoke clears). If the PCs have abandoned the maze in order to investigate the explosion, the troops enter it and hunt down the monster. Left to their own devices, the soldiers surround and kill the demigryph, taking only light injuries themselves.

## TRACKING THE DEMIGRYPH

The demigryph leaves a trail of bloody footprints and broken branches in its wake, and also makes a fair amount of noise as it moves about the maze. If the PCs cannot see the demigryph, or have not come across its trail, they can listen out for it. If they do so and pass a **Hard (3d) Observation (Int) check**, they hear it moving about and can discern what general direction the noises are coming from.

If the PCs come across the trail of the demigryph at any point, have them make an **Average (2d) Observation (Int) check**. If they succeed, they notice the trail for what it is: a sign that a large creature has passed by, and where it has gone. Two or more boons on any of these checks grant a (cumulative)  bonus on future Observation checks to locate the demigryph as the character becomes more familiar with the maze and the marks the creature leaves in its wake.

## THEFT AND MURDER

Whilst the party is focused on events in the hedge maze, Skrabb the assassin creeps round to the marquee and lets off a foul-smelling smoke bomb. Those few guests who are still in the marquee at this point are driven out by the choking fog, with the exception of Giselbert, who remains by the exhibits and tries to work out what is going on. PCs who wish to stay and assist Giselbert will need to pass a **Hard (3d) Resilience (To) check** or stagger choking out of the tent (suffering 1 fatigue and 1 stress) as well. Each PC who passes and remains in the tent gains the Blinded condition. Such PCs won't be able to do much to stop Skrabb, but will be quickly on hand to aid Giselbert and may save his life.

Skrabb proceeds to stab Giselbert and then steals the golden plaque and the effigy. He then cuts a hole in the rear of the marquee and slips through it into the Averborg grounds and then on towards his hiding place in the docks by way of the city's sewer system.

Giselbert lies mortally wounded in the marquee, and it takes some time for the smoke to clear. PCs can enter the marquee if they pass a **Hard (3d) Resilience (To) check**. If they fail, they choke and stagger out as described above.

After Skrabb makes his escape, the smoke clears enough for anyone inside to make out his surroundings and find Giselbert. PCs will also see the hole in the back of the marquee.

Giselbert is near to death. A **Daunting (4d) First Aid (Int) check**, or healing magic or blessings sufficient to heal a severity 4 critical wound, will be required to save his life. Whether or not his life is saved, Giselbert croaks out one desperate warning before lapsing into unconsciousness or death:

"There was a figure, COFF! COFF! ... a little figure all in black, couldn't see his face ... under his hood, but ... COFF ... great stinking big yellow fangs! ... GAKK!"

Giselbert has a couple of deep stab wounds to his back. The flesh around the wounds has discoloured and befouled in a way familiar to any PCs who saw the bodies by the docks.

Clothilde is, of course, hugely distraught by the death (or maiming) of Giselbert, though not everyone is so upset. The PC nearest to Theodosius von Tuchtenhagen hears him whisper to Dagobert, "Oh well, what's bad for the Alptroums is good for the rest of us."

Skrabb has left very few clues, and the smoke and stench given off by his bomb effectively covers his tracks. However, PCs who specify they are trying to catch a whiff of the chemical smell they caught earlier will notice a faint aroma of it hanging in the air on a **Daunting (4d) Observation (Int) check**. If PCs search around the back of the marquee, near the hole, they may also notice a footprint on a **Hard (3d) Observation (Int) check**. The footprint is somewhat smaller than that of an adult human and judging from the marks the toes seem to be tipped with lengthy claws.

Within a short while, the smoke clears and people are able to take stock of what happened. If the PCs have not noticed it for themselves, Graf von Kaufman notices that the items from the exhibit are missing, though he will not be so boorish as to make a fuss about it whilst other people are having to deal with injuries or bereavement. He will certainly bring the theft to the attention of the PCs.

## ACT THREE — THE PARTY'S OVER

Von Kaufman keeps the PCs on hand whilst he deals with the carnage resulting from his party. He is clearly highly upset by the resulting death and injury, though he seems as angry about the loss of his prize exhibit as he is about casualties amongst his guests. His attitude towards the PCs depends on their performance. If they made a good report of events leading up to the accident, saved lives, or managed to subdue the monster without killing it, he seems pleased by their efforts, though still upset by the recent events. If they performed badly he has no qualms about yelling angrily at them for being amateurs.

Ferdinand Leitdorf and a tearful Clothilde offer Friedrich their consolations regarding Albrun and, if appropriate, Amalie, and take their leave. Von Tuchtenhagen gathers his retinue and loudly and obnoxiously thanks everyone involved for “a most entertaining day.” The other guests offer their assistance, but soon excuse themselves. Members of the local Cults of Shallya and Morr arrive to look after the injured and the dead respectively. The steward of the Averburg and other palace staff arrive to take stock of the situation and may ask the PCs about their experiences.

Captain Baerfaust's soldiers continue to guard the menagerie until Baerfaust returns after his talk with Adele. There is then a loud row between Baerfaust and von Kaufman, the former complaining that the accidents would have been dealt with had he been allowed to position his men on the site, the latter claiming that Baerfaust should never have abandoned his post to “fraternise with some strange woman!” Baerfaust and his soldiers leave, clearly rather annoyed at the nobleman. Graf Friedrich asks the PCs to meet

### THE BLACK COWL

The menagerie party has gone well for the Black Cowl. His skaven agent stole the warpstone effigy, just as he instructed, and even now is surely constructing the cursed bell clapper he plans to use to corrupt members of the cult of Sigmar. He didn't instruct the skaven to steal the gold plaque, too, but on reflection that was a boon: it may serve to hide the Cowl's true intentions.

The nagging concern is the presence of the Witch Hunter, Adele Ketzenblum, who might suspect something of import. There are also the PCs to consider, and the fact that the skaven may be irate that the warpstone effigy is far less pure than he'd led them to believe (which will leave them with far less warpstone left for themselves than they had hoped).

The Black Cowl will hope to wrap up these various loose ends by pitting the PCs against the skaven and Adele Ketzenblum. With any luck, they'll all kill each other.

Furthermore, the behaviour of the representatives of the Leitdorf, von Tuchtenhagen, and von Alptraum families have clarified something for the Black Cowl: a von Alptraum Elector Count would not be good for the Conspiracy. He will resolve to eliminate Clothilde von Alptraum during Book Three in an effort to weaken the von Alptraum family in general.

him in the Journey's End tavern at noon tomorrow for lunch and to discuss events. Provided he gets their agreement, he gives them their fee of 20 shillings, apologises if he lost his temper, and dismisses them.

To make matters even worse and fray tempers even more, it begins to rain.

## BACK ON THE DOCKS A RACKETEER IS IN TROUBLE

This event occurs late, once it is getting dark. Frederick Grosz approaches the PCs in the street or at the place they are staying and asks if he can have a quiet word. If they agree, he tells them that he has decided to get out of Averheim before he suffers the same fate as Hermann and Klaus. He simply wants the PCs to escort him to the west gate of the city and keep a look out for potential footpads or assassins, for which he will pay them 10 shillings. He intends to travel to Nuln and start a new life there.

If the PCs agree, they make it to the gate without incident. Frederick pays them and walks towards the west, explaining that his criminal days are behind him. If they don't agree, he makes his own way from the city.

In fact, by this point, Frederick has thrown in with the new order. The previous night he spoke with the Black Cowl and offered his services. In an effort to keep himself from being murdered, he slightly oversold his skill as a smuggler and criminal, and the Cowl appears to have believed the genial Grosz. He instructed Grosz to meet with his agent (Krasskulk in disguise) shortly after the menagerie party, make some deliveries (gold payoffs for the tanners), and then travel to Altdorf and await further instructions. He wants it to be known that he has left town, and he wants to create the impression that he isn't working for the Black Cowl, thus his ruse with the PCs. He will continue past Nuln to Altdorf, where the PCs will meet him again in Book Three.

## PART THREE — TAKING ON THE TRIAD

The final section of Book One deals with the PCs finally piecing together the various clues they have acquired regarding the murders or the abductions, and tracking the skaven culprits down to their lair.

Unlike the previous chapters, no concrete time frame is provided for this section of the adventure. The final investigations into the events troubling the waterfront should only take a day or two.

There is nothing to prevent the PCs from putting the evidence together quickly of their own volition and tracking the skaven down to the tannery area of the waterfront. Indeed, if the PCs do make their own way to the skaven lair, it is probably best to let them do so and ignore a number of the optional encounters and events that follow.

On the other hand, if the PCs have a hard time assembling the clues put before them, or seem lost as to which course of action to take, it will make little difference. If it does take them a few days of following false leads, or if it requires the use of all the various optional encounters to set them on the right path, then they will still come across the skaven as described once they finally hit upon the right answers.

## GROTT — MUTANT

Grott is a dangerous and unstable mutant created by Clan Moulder and sold to Clan Eshin some years ago. Grott is nearly seven feet tall, heavily muscled, and has a third arm and the stinging tail of a scorpion. He is also a frothing lunatic. Krasskulk has designed him a special magical shard of warpstone that keeps him docile most of the time, but can send him into a frenzy when a particular phrase is spoken in queekish, the shrill skaven language. The shard is implanted into Grott's chest.

## ON SKAVEN

Skaven are a race of rat-like creatures of vile disposition and cruel intellect. They are divided into many distinct clans and spend nearly as much time plotting to conquer the whole world as they do scheming against one another. Collectively, skaven refer to their civilisation as the Under-Empire, which stretches from the great city of Skavenblight in the Blighted Marshes south of the Empire and through cracks, chasms, and tunnels beneath the earth throughout the world. There are skaven lurking in warrens and lairs beneath many of the Empire's greatest cities, and several dwarf holds, most famously Karak Eight-Peaks, have fallen to a combined assault of skaven from below and goblins from above.

For reasons that may seem too incredible to believe, most citizens of the Empire have either never heard of skaven or do not believe that they exist.

## SKAVEN DENIALISM

Those who have suffered from the depredations of the skaven, or who have made a serious study of the evidence, are often bemused and frustrated at the number of people in the Empire who stubbornly refuse to accept the existence of ratmen. Dwarfs in particular are regularly driven to fury when conversing with a man who dismisses the skaven, responsible as they are for the loss of many holds, as "a few ratlike beastmen that live in Tilean sewers."

Why is skaven denial so prevalent in the Empire? The biggest reason is wishful thinking. What with all the overt threats that assail their borders, many folk find it hard to accept that beneath their feet swarms an enemy faction that arguably constitutes their greatest threat.

The skaven themselves take great pains to avoid discovery, as every time they have openly assaulted the Empire they have been defeated. Some of the Triad Eshin agents are tattooed with mystic glyphs that, in the event of the skaven's death, swiftly putrefy the remains, reducing even the bones to a foul-smelling sludge. Humans who loudly proclaim the existence of skaven have a way of being murdered and found in compromising positions, undermining their credibility. Books describing skaven sometimes vanish, or libraries containing them burn down. Some even suspect that the skaven have bought allies within the Imperial bureaucracy, who either knowingly or unknowingly suppress knowledge of skaven.

Arguments against the existence of a skaven threat tend to boil down to one or more of the following:

- ✦ Chaos beastmen take many forms. That occasionally a beastman is found in the form of a rat does not indicate that there is an entire race of such beings.

## THE TRIAD

The triad are three skaven of Clan Eshin, a clan renowned for its stealthy spies, assassins, and scouts. Their history and goals are described in more detail on page 28.

## SKRABB — ASSASSIN

The most senior member of the trio is an assassin named Skrabb. As such he is the nominal leader, and the contact with Black Cowl, though he usually defers to Krasskulk in regards to planning strategy. Skrabb is a talented and professional assassin who leaves very few clues. Skrabb is large for a skaven and covered in coarse grey-brown fur. He wears a billowing black hooded cloak and covers his face in a grey scarf.

Although he would never admit it, Skrabb is suffering greatly from his prolonged time in the tannery. His superlative sense of smell is all but shut down under the acrid stench, and to his shame Skrabb frequently doesn't notice when he carries the vile odour with him. Clearly, any failures on his part due to the smell are Krasskulk's fault for suggesting their lair in the tannery.

## KRASSKULK — SORCERER

By order of the Grey Seers, according to their interpretation of the 169 commandments of the Horned Rat, the only skaven permitted to learn magic are...the Grey Seers. In practice there are other spellcasters operating within Clans Pestilens, Skryre, and Eshin, though they are barely tolerated. Krasskulk is one such magic user, a Clan Eshin sorcerer who uses magical effects to accentuate the ways of stealth. He has shaggy reddish-brown fur with white patches and wears black robes covered in crude parchment depicting skaven runes.

- ✦ Count Mandred Skavenslayer drove the rat-men from the Empire in 1124 IC. They have not been seen since.
- ✦ Even if such beings exist, it is a well-known fact that beastmen are scarcely more than animals. They do not make cities or build machines or organize themselves into an empire. Any rat-like beastmen that exist are little more than isolated packs, and no threat to the Empire.
- ✦ It is impossible for a massive and sophisticated enemy force to exist beneath the cities of the Empire without being detected. If the “Under-Empire” existed, we would know about it. We do not know about it, therefore it does not exist.

## ATTITUDES OF NPCs TOWARDS SKAVEN

If the PCs begin to ask around regarding rumours of skaven and generally upholding the fact of their existence, they are likely to draw various opinions from those they talk to. Some NPCs are relieved to meet other folk who believe in the ratmen, whilst others regard the rumours of skaven as an irritating conspiracy theory and may be annoyed to hear from proponents.

**Captain Baerfaust:** He’s never seen one himself, but has spoken to veterans and dwarfs who have, and therefore is inclined to believe that the legend has some basis in truth.

**Luminary Mauer:** Firmly believes they exist and can pull a book off his shelf detailing some of their more nefarious war machines and tendencies. (The book will open to a page showing a terrifying and massive bell. The book is frequently inaccurate and full of speculation and as much misinformation as truth.) Has never seen one himself, and is tired of being dismissed as a crackpot whenever he brings them up.

**Friedrich von Kaufman:** A denialist. Finds it amusing that so many otherwise learned men – such as Luminary Mauer – believe in fairy stories like the skaven. Clearly if they existed they would have brought the Empire to its knees by now. Time and money wasted hunting skaven would be better spent elsewhere.

**Curd Weiss, Clothilde von Alptraum, other Averheim notables:** Most rich Averheimers are of the opinion that subterranean gangs of beastmen and mutants almost certainly exist, but that such gangs are few in number and highly disorganised. As such they feel stories of the skaven have a basis in fact, but are wildly exaggerated.

**Dockside Residents:** These folk are convinced that the skaven are a myth perpetrated by greedy nobles who are always looking for a new excuse to impose taxes. Rambrecht has a number of fairly wild conspiracy theories regarding why the skaven are mythical. He reckons the rumours are spread to justify greater military expenditure by scaring people with ‘boogiemen.’ As such he reckons the military are in on it, and even goes so far as to suggest the whole thing is cooked up by a secret club of taxidermists, who get regular commissions from corrupt lords and army captains for sewing the heads of giant rats onto the bodies of beastmen.

**Mathilda Durbein:** Mathilda has never seen one herself, but is a believer in skaven. She has contacts in Nuln who survived the “tragedy” of 2499, which was officially blamed on earthquakes and fires but, according to her sources, actually the result of skaven forces emerging from the sewers and attacking the city from within. She’s heard enough different reports from different sources to be a believer.

## THE BLACK COWL

Of course, the Black Cowl knows there are skaven, having hired them. If one of the NPCs listed in the **Attitudes of NPCs Towards Skaven** section is the Black Cowl then his opinion in regards to skaven will be a front for his real belief in the ratmen.

## ANOTHER BACKERTAG MORNING ON THE DOCKS

It is still drizzling after last night’s heavy rain and the Aver is very swollen. The river’s waters lap up over the mudflats and the PCs will have to skirt large puddles if they don’t want to get their boots wet.

A rather irate man waits outside the knacker’s yard with a lame and aged nag. As the PCs pass by, he asks them if they have seen the “lazy, no good knacker” this morning. The man states that he had arranged to meet Hans Muller early this morning in order to get his horse killed before returning to his farm. However, Hans is nowhere to be seen. This is because he was abducted during the night, the latest (and hopefully last) victim of the skaven triad.

## TAKING ACCOUNT OF THE ABDUCTED

In total thirteen people have been taken from the docks. This is a sacred number to the skaven, and they believe that in order to properly consecrate the magical bell clapper they are making, they require thirteen victims.

In order to cover their tracks, the skaven have only been taking victims on rainy nights when the river is swollen. If the PCs have been vigilant, they should know about six of the victims already.

- ✦ Backertag (today): Hans Muller was taken from the docks. He is not yet numbered amongst those who have gone missing, though by the evening it will have become common knowledge on the waterfront that he has disappeared.
- ✦ Wellentag (three days ago): Fritz the cutpurse and Kurt the beggar were abducted early on Wellentag morning. See page 45 for details.
- ✦ Konigstag (six days ago): Ute the busker was abducted at some point during the night before Konigstag. See page 38 for details.
- ✦ Bezahltag (one week and seven days ago): Rolf the dockworker was abducted. See page 29 for details.
- ✦ Backertag (two weeks ago): Jurgen Klinski was abducted. See page 35 for details.

There are seven other victims, who, unless one of them is tied into a PC background, the PCs have no reason to know about. (The GM should feel free to change this list to match PC backgrounds, if desired.) They are:

- ✦ **Backertag (today):** Sabrina Horst, a young Stirland farmer's wife visiting Averheim in order to buy produce from the Plenzerplatz. She was taken as she crossed the Griffon Bridge. It will be days before her family report to anyone in Averheim that she has gone missing. Sigmund Hoch, an elderly resident of the east side of the docks, was also abducted.
- ✦ **Konigstag (six days ago):** Walter Meyer and Hannes Gropius, a pair of boatmen, were abducted from their barge early Konigstag morning, which was then cut loose by Skrabb.
- ✦ **Bezahltag (seven days ago):** Hermann Endal, a middle-aged transient who had not been in Averheim for long before he was abducted. Few people knew him well enough to realise he has gone missing.
- ✦ **Bezahltag (one week and seven days ago):** Franz Schlemmer, another homeless Averheimer who lived on the west end of the docks. A few of the dockside residents will realise that they haven't seen Franz about for a while if asked about missing persons.
- ✦ **Backertag (two weeks ago):** Kurt Bauer, a young farm hand from Stirland. Kurt had come to Averheim with his barrow to sell produce at the Plenzerplatz when he was abducted. His father is currently in Averheim to see if the watch can help him locate his boy.

### RAINY DAYS

The abductions all took place late at night, either following or during heavy rain. If the PCs are interested in the weather and put together a list of the days when it rained heavily they will find out that it did so on the days preceding the abductions.

### BEATRICE KNOX

Note also that if she has been killed by her creditors, Beatrice Knox may well be counted amongst the disappeared by some people on the waterfront. See page 46 for more information.

### MEETING WITH VON KAUFMAN

Von Kaufman arrives at the Journey's End tavern at noon and buys the PCs whatever they want for lunch and a round of ales as well. He asks them to divulge any information they gathered at the menagerie and also shows interest in their investigations on the docks, reasoning that the recent upheaval in Averheim's criminal community might have something to do with the goings on at the menagerie.

Von Kaufman has the following things to say regarding likely topics of conversation and lines of enquiry:

### VON TUCHTENHAGEN AND HIS RUDENESS

"Theodosius is 'new money' and the entire von Tuchtenhagen clan have no proper appreciation of what it is to be numbered amongst the aristocracy. I felt I had to invite him to the party to appear even handed, but I now quite regret it."

### THE BEHAVIOUR OF CAPTAIN BAERFAUST

"Captain Baerfaust has a lot on his mind. No doubt he resents me hiring you as additional guards and the implication that his men are not to be trusted. Still, he did absent himself shortly before he was most needed. If I were a suspicious man, I would find that curious. As it is, I put it down to coincidence."

### ARGUMENT WITH LUMINARY MAUER

"The Luminary rubs me the wrong way, I'll admit it. I never attended a fancy college of magic or the University in Altdorf, so he treats me like an uneducated country yokel – it's maddening. Still, in retrospect, he may have been right about that effigy. If only he hadn't vanished just before the thief struck."

### SKAVEN

"Oh please, not you, too. I've already heard this from Luminary Mauer. Talk to him if you want to discuss fairy stories."

### THE BLACK COWL

"I had no idea what that Witch Hunter was talking about and I'm afraid I still don't. What have you heard?"

### CRIME AND CORRUPTION

"It's been bad since the Mad Count died, but I'm afraid that over the past few months it's grown quite a bit worse. My business is suffering throughout Averland; shipments missing, merchandise stolen, even my usual bribes and protection money aren't enough. It's like there's a new criminal in charge."

### MISSING PEOPLE

"I hadn't heard; how dreadful. Still, if people can die at my garden party I suppose they can die anywhere."

### FUTURE JOB OPPORTUNITIES

"As it happens, I'd be willing to pay good money for the return of my stolen artefacts and to see Albrun's murderer brought to justice. Shall we say, a gold crown for each artefact and another for the murderer?" (The gold plaque is clearly worth at least ten gold crowns on weight alone; von Kaufman can be talked up to 20 crowns total.)

### THE WITCH HUNTER

"I shan't let her bother me. I hear you have to be crazy to be a Witch Hunter; judging by her behaviour that may be true."

### MEETING WITH LUMINARY MAUER

Luminary Mauer is at his Plenzerplatz townhouse all day, and will be happy to discuss matters with the PCs. He mentions from the start of their conversation that he is greatly concerned about what might have become of the effigy.

### FIGHT WITH VON KAUFMAN

"I am sorry I lost my temper with Graf Friedrich, and derive no pleasure from being proved right by the events that transpired since I left the party."

## THE EFFIGY

"I'm afraid that the thing is made of a rare and dangerous substance. I'll say no more about it except this: should you find it, do not touch it. Place it in a thick box or sack and bring it directly to me; the safe disposal of such things is best left to wizards!"

## SKAVEN

If presented with the slightest bit of evidence that the assassin might be a skaven – such as a paw-print track, or the throwing star recovered by Amalie or a PC – Mauer has a eureka moment. "Aha! This confirms my suspicions; I no longer have any reasonable doubt. The vile poison in the wounds of the bodies from the waterfront is the work of what is called a 'crying sword' in some texts. It is a skaven weapon. Vile ratmen; I've never seen one myself. Many do not even believe they exist." Mauer is then happy to give the PCs as much (frequently inaccurate or incomplete) information about skaven as they require. Aside from an association with places where humans rarely go, such as sewers, and that the ratmen find the number 13 sacred, he has no further suggestions for the PCs to help them find the assassin.

## THE BLACK COWL

"I'm afraid you've lost me. Black hoods are, of course, worn by priests of Morr and many amethyst wizards, as well as innumerable Chaos cultists, the bloodthirsty elves of Naggaroth, necromancers – I could go on for some time. Oh, and skaven, of course."

## THE RED CROWN

"A Chaos cult, I believe. Close associations with mutants and even beastmen. Destroyed a decade ago, thankfully. Ah...why bring them up? Is there something I should know?"

## THE WITCH HUNTER

"A most unpleasant woman. I'd prefer not to discuss her."

## MEETING WITH CAPTAIN BAERFAUST

Captain Baerfaust is in a bad mood, still, after the events of the menagerie party. He will be unwilling to speak with the PCs, as he is a very busy man, but persistent, charming, or lucky PCs may be able to talk their way past his lieutenant Schaffer and see him.

## ARGUMENT WITH VON KAUFMAN

"I've little interest in Graf Friedrich's opinion of me. He's an empty-headed dilettante and I, apparently, have a city to run because no one else will step up and do it."

## LUMINARY MAUER

"As maddening as all wizards."

## THE STOLEN EFFIGY

"Oh? And I suppose finding it will be my job, too? Go away."

## SKAVEN

"I prefer to focus on enemies I can see rather than speculate about enemies who may or may not exist."

## THE WITCH HUNTER

"Her name is Adele Ketzenblum, an old friend of mine. She went through a spot of trouble a few years back that I helped her out of; we've kept in touch since. She's put more heretics on the pyre than I even knew existed."

## MURDERS ON THE DOCKS

"Luminary Mauer was supposed to weigh in with his expert opinion and clear that matter up, but of course he hasn't done anything useful. My men are stretched thin enough, I don't know what else you want me to do."

## DISAPPEARANCES

"What do you expect me to do about it? Is there some pattern? Some thread linking these poor unfortunates? Come back when you have a lead I can follow and I'll administer the Emperor's justice. Until then, go away."

## THE BLACK COWL / THE MAN IN THE BLACK HOOD

"How did you hear about that? Never mind. Fräulein Ketzenblum mentioned that name to me; he is a person of interest in her investigation. I don't know anything more than that."

## CRIME AND CORRUPTION

"The resources available to the city watch are pitiful. It's a wonder they patrol at all. I trust only my own men and lately I'm not certain about them, after this business with the black powder. The situation is only going to get worse until an Elector is installed in the Averbürg."

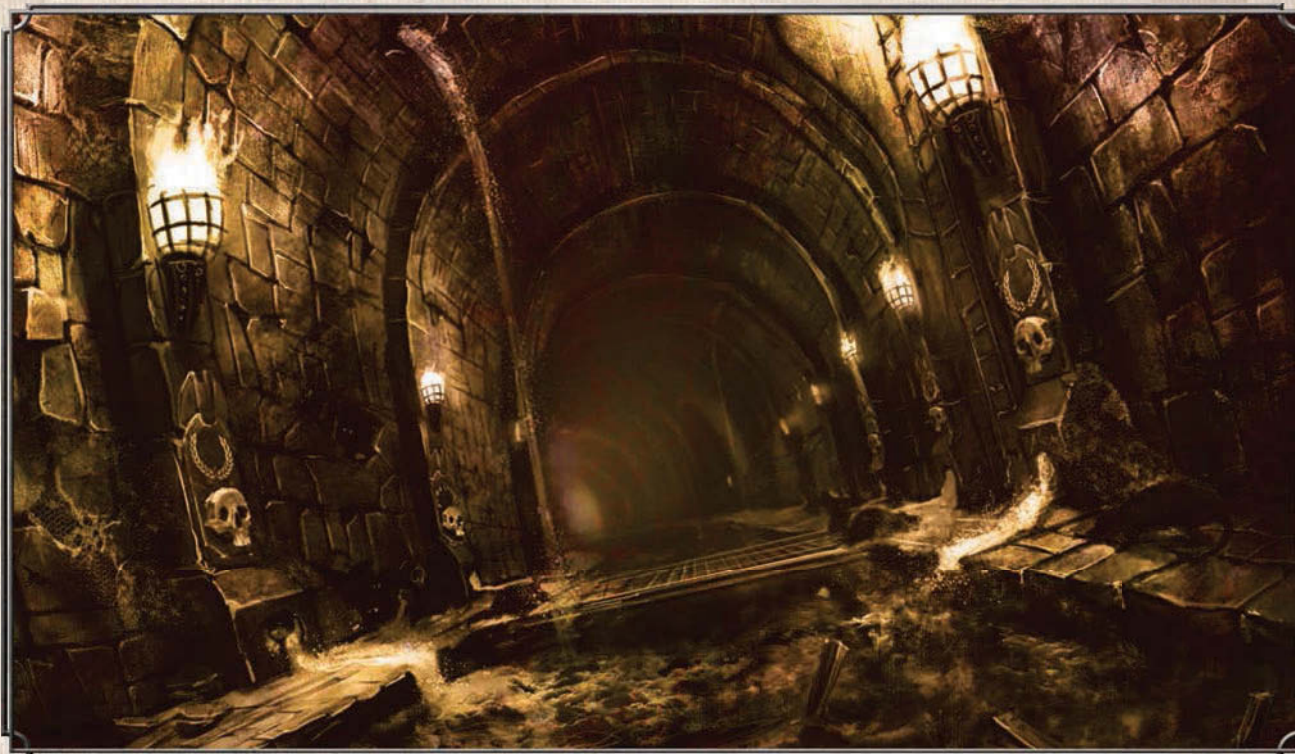
## INQUIRING AT THE TEMPLE OF SHALLYA

If the PCs visit the temple of Shallya to ask if anyone there knows about disappearances in the docklands area, Mother Henriette refers them to a young initiate called Pieter Harkon. Pieter regularly mans a stall that dispenses soup to the poor and homeless near the docks. He has noticed that a few of his regular customers have not been using the service recently. He says that he hasn't seen Franz Schlemmer for over a week and that the last time he saw Kurt Guth was on Angestag. He remembers hoping they were safely out of the rain.

## TALKING TO THE DOCK WATCH

The dock watch is far more concerned with keeping the peace and ensuring that smugglers are kept in check than worrying about the disappearance of a few criminals and derelicts. However, if the watchmen are asked about any further disappearances, they can inform the PCs that they had to deal with a loose barge last Konigstag, and that the two boatmen who owned the boat have not yet appeared to collect it.

However, if the PCs go to the dockside watch station to make enquiries, they meet Lorenz Bauer. He is a Stirland farmer who has come to Averbürg in order to see if anyone knows what happened to his son Kurt, who visited the city a fortnight ago to sell produce at the Plenzerplatz. He was due to begin his return journey Backertag before last, but has not returned home. Bauer is a sturdy-looking man, his dark hair greying at his temples, and he's been in Averbürg nearly a week. He has amassed a nearly complete list of missing persons and can be an asset to the GM if the PCs are floundering in their investigation.



## MATHILDA DURBEIN

The fence may be a great source of assistance to the PCs at this point. Firstly she is a proponent as to the existence of the skaven. She is also the only NPC who makes the connection between heavy rain and the fact that the rising Aver covers the mudflats at such times.

However, there is something more pressing that bothers the fence, and she is seeking to talk to the PCs about another matter. Recently Linus Atzwig came to her looking to find out how he could go about selling some small chunks of gold. Wondering how a tanner might come about such items, Mathilda asked him and he told her that Frederick Grosz had given him the hunks.

Mathilda took one of the gold chunks from Linus and has told him she will look for a buyer. The gold chunk is a small rectangular chip that looks as if it was sheared off of a larger item. Mathilda thinks it is quite pure and values it at 60 shillings, but she is sure she would be able to get a much better price for the item it was cut from and hates to think of such a thing being chopped into component parts. She is therefore interested in talking to the PCs to see if they know what became of Frederick, and will be forthcoming as to why.

The PCs may well guess that the chunk came from the stolen plaque. If they question Mathilda about her sources, she will take them to see Linus, who explains that he was being paid compensation for having to keep his tannery closed for repairs. Dieter Jochutz was also given one of the chunks as payment. The tanners say they were paid the week before with 20 shillings, but that this week they received the gold chunks. They even say they were told by Frederick that the PCs might be able to help if they had any trouble with the payment. Apparently Frederick gave the tanners their payment shortly before contacting the PCs about being escorted

from Averheim. If either of the tanners is asked why they took gold from a known racketeer rather than from a respectable authority figure such as a councillor, they look bashful and claim that “it’s hard to tell the difference at times, especially these days.”

## SEWER CRAWL

PCs who know something about the methods of operation of skaven may well decide to search about in Averheim’s sewer system in the hope of locating the ratmen. However, the Eshin do not make regular use of the sewers (precisely because they know the sewer system is the first place aspiring skaven hunters are likely to look for them).

However, Skrabb does use the sewers to move about Averheim unseen. So some evidence of the skaven can be found there even if the skaven themselves cannot.

## CLUES

- ✦ The PCs come across a set of strange footprints in the muck. The prints seem to be too long and narrow to be made by a human foot. The tracks run towards the docks.
- ✦ The PCs come to a junction in the sewer system. Skrabb stopped here recently to clean himself by rubbing his filthy fur against a supporting pillar. The pillar is smeared with the same quicklime paste the PCs may have smelled at the menagerie.
- ✦ One of Skrabb’s warpstone throwing stars has dropped from his belt and fallen into the sewage. A PC can grab the star by passing an **Average (2d) Coordination (Int) check**. See the Warpstone Throwing Star item card.

## TRACKING THE SMELL OF QUICKLIME

PCs may follow their noses in the hope that it will take them to the skaven. However, the smell of quicklime pervades the entire east end of the docks. It is strongest by the lime kiln, which has not even been visited by the skaven. However, it is also strong throughout the tannery area, and this may well help the PCs track down the ratmen.

A PC who makes an **Average (2d) Observation (Int) check** whilst in the tannery area feels pretty confident that the acrid aroma, the particular brew of manure and quicklime, is highly reminiscent of the smell at the menagerie.

## EXAMINING THE MUDFLATS

The PCs may search the waterfront area for physical clues. Skrabb is careful not to leave obvious physical evidence of his work just lying about, with a couple of exceptions. These include the smears of quicklime paste he left in the menagerie and Ute's hurdy gurdy, which fell from her hands and into the river when she was abducted.

The instrument floated downriver a short while until it drifted into one of the pontoons near the Upright Pig tavern. When the waters recede it will be dumped onto the mudflats.

PCs searching for clues near the Upright Pig spot the hurdy gurdy, or hear mudlarks excitedly trying to salvage it, on an **Average (2d) Observation (Int) check**. PCs may realise that Ute's abduction must have occurred upriver from the Upright Pig in order for the instrument to have ended up here. If the PCs don't work this out for themselves, Mathilda (who considered Ute a friend) will do it for them. In fact, at this point she will start to badger the PCs and give them no rest until they find the skaven. (The GM can use her as a mouthpiece to steer the heroes towards the triad.)

A number of large pipes and sewer outlets disgorge their loads of effluent onto the mudflats. In particular, a sluice drain that runs from the tannery district seeps a trail of quicklime and manure paste. Pawlike prints and claw marks inside the drain can be spotted on a **Hard (3d) Observation (Int) check** – the river didn't rise as high last time as Skrabb expected.

## PCs STUCK?

It may be that despite all the clues leading them to the Atzwig Tannery and the sluice drain, the PCs have trouble putting all the evidence together and tracking down the skaven.

On the second day of the PCs' investigations (if they continue to last that long), all the dockside residents begin spreading rumours about there being a strange figure on the docks, like a hunched and scuttling man with a bent back all wrapped up in black rags and wearing a big hood. Some of the dockside residents, such as Olga Klinski, have even seen the figure on the waterfront late at night near the White Horse tavern.

If the PCs' investigations last a third day, Dieter Jochutz attempts to enter the grounds of his tannery and is slain by the skaven. By the afternoon, his disappearance has become common knowledge and plenty of people wonder aloud if his disappearance had anything to do with his recently stated conviction that he was tired of

spending all day lounging about in the tavern and wanted to get back to work. What's more, the lack of heavy rain has meant that Skrabb has left a number of noticeable tracks by the entrance to the sluice drain.

Finally, if the PCs really are stuck for more than a couple of days, an urchin can call their attention to the tracks. Also Linus Atzwig, concerned as to the disappearance of Dieter, can get in touch with the PCs and hire them (with gold taken from the plaque) to accompany him in a search of his premises.

## THE SLUICE DRAIN

One of the large pipes that empties its load into the Aver is the end of a large sluice drain that winds between a number of stockyards and tanneries on the east side of the docks. The sluice drain carries toxic waste and slurry from these businesses. The skaven have made their lair within the sluice drain and they drag their abducted victims into the pipe in order to ritually slay them.

This is the reason that the skaven abduct people following heavy rains, as the water rises to cover the mudflats surrounding the end of the pipe, allowing the skaven to drag their victims within without leaving any noticeable tracks.

If the PCs gather that there is something in the drain, they can enter it from the pipe, which requires a hard and dirty trudge over the mudflats, but is fairly accessible nevertheless.

The sluice drain is a cramped and filthy environment (refer to the Sluice Drain location card). Any PCs who enter the sluice drain should also suffer from the Filthy condition.



The skaven are inside the sluice drain. Unless the PCs specify that they are approaching quietly and pass a **Stealth (Ag) check** opposed by Skrabb's Observation (Int), the skaven hear them entering the drain and make the following preparations:

- ✦ Krasskulk chants the queekish phrase that activates Grott's amulet. He then channels the power needed to cast Skitterleap, which he uses to escape into the sewers and flee from the city.
- ✦ Skrabb prepares his weeping blade and a warpstone throwing star. He is ready to throw the star as soon as a PC comes into close range.

If the skaven are surprised by the party, they have not had any time to make such preparations and Skrabb draws his weeping blade and charges into combat. Krasskulk's priority is still to activate Grott's amulet before making his escape.

Whether or not his amulet is active, Grott attacks the PCs and will not relent until he is killed. Skrabb also fights bravely, but he is a skaven and attempts to escape if it becomes obvious that he is fighting a losing battle. The GM should ensure that Krasskulk escapes with the use of his Skitterleap spell, as he features again later in the adventure.

Like many Clan Eshin agents, Skrabb and Grott have had a number of strange tattoos scratched into their hides with warpstone infused ink. When they are slain, these tattoos begin to glow with a greenish light. Their bodies then undergo a massively accelerated putrefaction. Within thirty seconds their bodies have degenerated into a pool of foul-smelling liquid swimming with bits of fur and writhing maggots. The sight of this ritually induced rot causes Fear 2.

## IN THE ATZWIG TANNERY

Both the Atzweg and Jochutz tanneries are adjacent to the sluice drain. PCs in the drain will notice that the drain opens up into an area between the two back yards of these establishments and is clearly designed to take the run-off from the pits of noxious chemicals that are found there. The Jochutz tannery has been left untouched by the skaven. However, they have used the Atzweg tannery to perform their rituals and as a makeshift workshop.

The bodies of the thirteen victims of the skaven have been stuffed into one of the pits behind the Atzweg tannery. They have each suffered blunt traumas to the head and their hearts have been ripped out. The bodies have been showered with quicklime powder and some of the older ones have deteriorated beyond recognition. PCs will likely recognize Ute the busker and Hans Muller, and can identify Rolf Haller's corpse by the Wharf Rat tattoo on his chest.

Inside the tannery, hides are draped over wooden stands and the floor is littered with tools such as metal scrapers and buckets of fat, manure, and quicklime. A long wooden trestle table is in the centre of the workshop. On the table is the golden plaque. It has had a chunk removed from one side, and this has been clipped apart into smaller golden chunks. Six of these chunks are on the table. By weight, there are about 10 gold crowns worth of gold on the table. An iron brazier containing the charred remains of thirteen hearts is placed next to the table.

The warpstone effigy has been smelted down by Krasskulk to remove and purify the warpstone contained within. A small chunk about the size of a fingertip, recognizable as the nose, is the only trace remaining, probably overlooked by the skaven. Most of the warpstone was consumed in the creation of the bell clapper, which

rests on the table by the golden plaque. The clapper seems to be fashioned of tarnished silver, and has the same eye-catching feeling of wrongness as the warpstone effigy. A **Daunting (4d) Magical Sight (Int) check** reveals a faint nimbus of dark magic around the clapper.

## FENCING THE PLAQUE

Certain disreputable PCs may decide not to return the remains of the plaque to von Kaufman, but try to sell it on the black market instead. A fence such as Mathilda Durbein would be willing to take such an item from them. Mathilda's initial estimate would be 5 gold crowns. She could be bargained up as high as 15 gold crowns. If a PC wishes to bargain Mathilda up have him make a **Hard (3d) Charm (Fel) check**. Every net success or boon generated by the check will add an additional 5 Crowns to a maximum of 15.

## THE DISAPPEARANCES SOLVED

Once the PCs make their discoveries known, members from the local watch and the Cult of Morr arrive to catalogue and dispose of the corpses.

The PCs' tales of ratmen are met with derision. The two tanners are accused of the killings and are hauled away by the watch to undertake trials conducted by the Cult of Verena to establish their guilt.

Luminary Mauer contacts the PCs in order to collect any pertinent information. He asks to be shown around the scene of the ritual and is able to spot anything the PCs may have missed. If he is not the Black Cowl, he tells any interested PCs about what he is able to garner about the ritual, though if he is the Black Cowl, he is somewhat more guarded. He takes the clapper into safekeeping. Refer to Book Two to get a better idea of what Luminary Mauer makes of the clapper and the information he is able to give to the PCs at this point.

The Wharf Rats will not recognise the body of Rolf Haller (which, to be fair to them, is in a terrible state), claiming that it could be anyone with a rat tattoo on his chest, and will not part with their promised reward unless the PCs intimidate them into it.

## WHAT'S NEXT?

With the disappearances, murders, and theft all solved, this part of the adventure is concluded. Take as long as is necessary to clean up loose ends, spend ill-gotten gains, and perhaps (if the GM is feeling merciful) recover from wounds before moving on to Book Two.





## BOOK TWO

# THE ENEMY WITHOUT

The events of Book Two begin a few days after the conclusion of Book One; exactly how long is up to the GM. Word reaches Averheim of a fresh and massive conflict erupting in the north of the Empire as northmen under the thrall of the Ruinous Powers break across the border and rampage through Ostland in numbers not seen in many years. Despite their own troubles, the Averlanders are a proud people and they will muster their armies to do their part for the Empire. The news of war changes everything, and many of the principal NPCs are caught up in preparations for battle.

The PCs will be asked to travel to Middenheim, there to undertake a series of tasks on the part of Captain Baerfaust, Luminary Mauer, and Graf Friedrich.

This book is divided into two parts.

**Part One, Chaos Strikes**, brings news of a fresh incursion across the Empire's borders. The three influential men they met in Averheim – Captain Marcus Baerfaust, Graf Friedrich von Kaufman, and Luminary Konrad Mauer – are called away to various duties as the Empire prepares for war, and leave the PCs with instructions to complete various urgent tasks on their behalf. The PCs must make their way to Middenheim through a land overshadowed by this new Chaos threat. This section also includes a partial description of Middenheim, the City of the White Wolf.

**Part Two, Something Rotten in Middenheim**, finds the PCs trying to carry out various errands in the city of Middenheim, and finding things a lot more difficult than they hoped. Followers of Chaos are after the tainted clapper, the investigation of a nobleman points to both innocence and guilt, and the priests of Ulric prove hard to convince about letting the PCs conduct a vital ritual in their temple. Meanwhile, news from the front and from Altdorf paints a worrying picture for the Empire's future.

In Part Two, the PCs attempt to accomplish three tasks, none of which is as simple as they appear. The **Captain's Task**, at the request of Captain Baerfaust, is to get more information about the Black Cowl from the Witch Hunter Adele Ketzenblum. Things go wrong when Adele assumes that the PCs are agents of the Black Cowl, and attempts to kill them. The **Nobleman's Task**, at the request of Graf Friedrich, is to investigate allegations of treason and heresy on the part of one of Graf Friedrich's rivals, Wolfgang von Aschenbeck. This task is complicated by the true traitor, von Aschenbeck's steward and right-hand-man. The **Wizard's Task**, at the request of Luminary Mauer, is to purify the tainted bell clapper recovered in Book One. Unfortunately, securing the aid of the local priests will prove more difficult than expected. (And even more unfortunately, the person who is responsible for purifying the clapper is an unwitting pawn to followers of Chaos.)

## RECENT EVENTS

In addition to the events of Book One: The Enemy Below, there are some recent events in the Empire that may be valuable to setting the context of what follows.

### THE WAR IN THE NORTH

Six months ago, a mighty warlord named Surtha Lenk consolidated control over several Kurgan and Norscan tribes in the Chaos Wastes. He immediately struck out south, guided by dreams or visions of conquest and glory, the realms of mankind brought to their knees, and him, Surtha Lenk, sitting upon a golden throne in the green lands of the south.

Two months ago his armies broke through the armies of Kislev. Nothing now stood between Surtha Lenk's host and the Empire.

Four weeks ago, his host crossed the border and entered Ostland. Ostland's state army had been mustered in response to reports from Kislev, and was prepared to meet Surtha Lenk's army as he crossed the border. It was caught unprepared from behind by a second Chaos host, this one of Norscans who had sailed the Sea of Claws and marched inland in great secrecy. The greater part of Ostland's strength was destroyed in three hard days of fighting. Elector Valmir von Raukov dispatched messengers to Nordland, Middenland, Ostermark, and Altdorf, requesting aid. Surtha Lenk unleashed his marauders throughout the countryside to intercept the messengers. Many were caught and killed.

Three weeks ago the northman horde smashed through Smallhof and then pressed into the Forest of Shadows, en route for Wolfenburg, the capital of Ostland. Fortunately for the Ostlanders, the Forest of Shadows is not significantly safer for northmen than it is for Ostlanders, and going has been slow. The horde has only recently reached Wolfenburg, and now must pause to construct siege engines to break through that city's walls.

A week ago von Raukov's message finally reached Altdorf. The messenger died of his wounds before he could deliver more than the broadest details of the situation in Ostland, so Emperor Karl Franz has elected to assume the worst. He has mustered the Reiksguard and soldiers from Altdorf and the Reikland, and dispatched calls for aid to Averland, Wissenland, and Stirland. He has also instructed the Electors of Talabecland, Hochland, and Middenland to muster their own armies and prepare to repel the invaders.

### THE WAR IN THE SOUTH

As the adventure begins, Karl Franz's call for aid has just reached Averheim. With no Elector, support for the Emperor's army will be at the whim of local lords, but perhaps surprisingly the great and good of Averheim are almost unanimously in support of the war effort. The Averheim Garrison will eagerly muster and march for Altdorf in a matter of days, under the command of Captain Baerfaust. The Garrison will be supported by household troops of every local noble house, including Leitdorf and von Alptraum. Graf Friedrich von Kaufman pledges a large sum to the war effort and other local nobles and merchants follow suit, resulting in a surprisingly well-supplied fighting force (except for the suspicious undersupply of black powder) marching north. After all, war is a wonderful opportunity to one-up other contenders for the Electoral seat.



### THE BELL CLAPPER

Luminary Konrad Mauer has become a noted expert on Chaos, dark magic, and corruption, even by the standards of the Light College. In the course of his studies, Luminary Mauer has cultivated contacts with other scholars and experts in the field from throughout the Empire. Many of these contacts are via correspondence – letters, publications, and second-hand reports – as is common in the Empire. Travel can be quite dangerous and it interrupts the ability of scholars to engage in their studies. As a consequence, Konrad Mauer has many “acquaintances” he has never actually met. One such acquaintance is Professor Robertus von Oppenheim of the Collegium Theologica in Middenheim. Von Oppenheim is a lay scholar of religion and what he refers to as “divine magic,” the miraculous blessings wrought by some members of the clergy. He is particularly interested in the ability of “divine magic” to combat the forces of Chaos and corruption.

At the close of Book One, the PCs presumably recovered a sinister bell clapper created by the skaven triad. They then also, presumably, delivered the bell clapper to Luminary Mauer. If they didn't recover the bell clapper (because they didn't bother to search the skaven lair, or because they never actually found the skaven lair!), then assume that it has made its way to Luminary Mauer's hands, either via the Black Cowl or due to Mauer's own investigation into the skaven. If they gave the bell clapper to someone else, then odds are good that person gave it to Mauer. (Or it was stolen from that person.)

If the PCs have the bell clapper but have not surrendered it to Mauer, it will be necessary to modify the events described in Part One to suit. Rather than giving them the clapper and asking them to take it to Middenheim, Mauer will approach the PCs, inform them that he is aware they have a powerful dark artefact, and ask them to take it to Middenheim to have it purged, for which service he will both pay them and not tell the Witch Hunters.

In any case, once Mauer becomes aware of the bell clapper, he will think of his correspondence with Professor von Oppenheim and discussions the two have had on the safe disposal of warpstone. It is von Oppenheim's theory that a “sufficiently powerful holy power” – meaning primarily the Sacred Flame at the Temple of Ulric in Middenheim – can safely purge the corruptive taint of warpstone. Since the Light College has developed no sure-fire way to dispose of the worst of tainted artefacts (indeed, they have vaults full of such things, and they have been raided by the Ruinous Powers before), Mauer thinks this theory of von Oppenheimer's is worth exploring.

Unfortunately, what Mauer does not know is that von Oppenheimer is an unwitting pawn of the Red Crown and has been for many years. In fact, von Oppenheimer and Mauer “met” through the influence of the Conspiracy and the Black Cowl. His ritual will not purge the warpstone clapper. It will either, the cult believes, taint and destroy the Sacred Flame (a win for the cult) or mask the taint of the bell clapper, so that it appears holy and purged (also a win for the cult).

## GRAF WOLFGANG VON ASCHENBECK

Although the two men could almost not be further removed geographically, Graf Wolfgang von Aschenbeck and Graf Friedrich von Kaufman have long been rivals. Von Aschenbeck, a minor noble with lands in Middenland, is much like von Kaufman in many ways. Both are of comparatively humble birth. Both are exceedingly clever. And both have built significant mercantile empires, including major stakes in large and important coaching houses, as well as other carriage and haulage concerns.

They have met several times in the past, usually in Altdorf or Nuln, and it’s fair to say that they hate each other. The principal source of their friction as rivals is in these cities, where both Graf Friedrich and Graf Wolfgang’s business interests collide. Each wishes to expand his business into the Nuln and Altdorf markets, and each wishes to prevent his rival from doing so.

In general, although the two are bitter rivals and undermine each other at every turn, they do so within the bounds of the law. Or at least within the bounds of good taste. Well, they’re careful not to get caught, anyway.

In light of the recent interruptions of black powder flowing from Nuln to Averheim, Graf Friedrich is concerned that Graf Wolfgang may be involved. Each has been known to deliberately buy up product the other was seeking, block efforts to have carriages or wagons repaired, and even buy up property strictly to evict business interests belonging to his rival. Is it such a stretch to believe that von Aschenbeck may now be using bandits to raid Red Arrow shipments?

Graf Friedrich will ask the PCs to travel to Middenheim and look into the matter for him. What Graf Friedrich doesn’t know is that by the time the PCs arrive, Graf Wolfgang von Aschenbeck will be on trial for his life, accused as a traitor and a heretic. The evidence against him has been manufactured by von Aschenbeck’s business manager, Werner Markheim, who hopes to inherit complete control of the von Aschenbeck business empire.

## THE BLACK COWL



If Luminary Mauer is the Black Cowl, then he is fully aware of the true purpose of the ritual and of the influence of the Red Crown. And he is furthermore fully aware of the origin, purpose, and design of the bell clapper.

## THE BLACK COWL



If Friedrich von Kaufman is the Black Cowl, then he and Werner Markheim are conspiring together to remove von Aschenbeck and place his business empire in the control of the Conspiracy. Markheim is unaware of the Black Cowl’s identity. In this case, von Kaufman has sent the PCs to provide more “evidence” against von Aschenbeck, to wit that he is suspected of malfeasance beyond Middenheim, and by none other than the worthy Graf Friedrich von Kaufman. PCs who interrogate Markheim may be able to learn that he is taking orders from “the man in the black hood.”

## ADELE KETZENBLUM

After her appearance at Graf Friedrich’s menagerie party, Adele Ketzenblum took rooms at the White Horse and spent the next several days attempting to follow up on her lead on the Southlands expedition. She has become convinced that a traitor and heretic is responsible for the expedition, and has narrowed her list of suspects to three: Graf Friedrich von Kaufman, Luminary Konrad Mauer, and Captain Marcus Baerfaust.

Adele is, herself, a traitor and heretic and also quite mad. She has good reason to distrust and dislike Luminary Mauer, as it was her mentor Gregor Helstrum who burned that wizard’s family as witches. (Helstrum, of course, is also responsible for sparing Mauer from the pyre and passing him on to the Colleges of Magic for tutelage. But Adele is mad, and inclined to look for excuses to torture and burn everyone, not reasons they can be trusted.) Graf Friedrich von Kaufman financed the expedition, so he seems an obvious suspect, and he also stood up to her threats at the menagerie, which she doesn’t care for. Captain Baerfaust is someone that Adele Ketzenblum considers a friend. The possibility that he might be the traitor, and she might have to torture him to death, confuses and excites her in a way that any sane person would find deeply troubling.

Her investigations into the Black Cowl and the expedition may have uncovered some of the following clues (depending on which of the three suspects actually is the Black Cowl, and also how much information the GM wishes to funnel towards the PCs over the course of Book Two):

- ✦ Templemann was last seen alive in the company of two of the expedition’s sellswords, both veterans of Third Black Fire and formerly under the command of Marcus Baerfaust.
- ✦ Templemann had three separate warrants for his arrest in Marienburg, Altdorf, and Carroburg. Von Kaufman used his influence to bury all three.
- ✦ One of Ketzenblum’s agents was able to recover a map and a scrap of journal that apparently indicates where to find a “darke power most foule” in the Southlands. There are annotations in Luminary Mauer’s own handwriting.
- ✦ The Southlands expedition employed a high elf pilot. In the weeks after the expedition, this high elf has started asking questions about a particular piece of cargo brought back: a strange jade effigy or idol.

## THE BLACK COWL



If Captain Baerfaust is the Black Cowl, he has identified Adele Ketzenblum as a threat to him. He may also have decided that the PCs are a threat, depending on their activities during Book One. So, he decides to kill two birds with one stone and dispatch the PCs after Adele. He is well aware of her paranoid and suspicious nature, and reasons that if the PCs approach her to learn more of the Black Cowl, her response will be to attempt to kill them, assuming that they've been sent by the Cowl to learn what she knows and eliminate her. To ensure this, Baerfaust will plant a few seeds of doubt in the PCs, suggesting that Adele herself may be untrustworthy. Perhaps he'll wonder what a Witch Hunter from Middenheim is doing in Averheim, and suggest that she's on the run from her superiors, or he'll mention that he's heard rumours that her "missing hand" is actually a mutation. (Neither is true, although the second gets closer to the truth than Adele is comfortable with and even mentioning the rumour to her will be enough to make her resolve to murder the PCs.)

- ✦ The Black Cowl has consolidated his control over the Averheim underworld. The last notable criminal to flip was Frederick Grosz, according to testimony from a minor thief and errand runner Adele interrogated in Averheim.
- ✦ Grosz was involved in paying off the tanners Dieter Jochutz and Linus Atzwig, which means that the Black Cowl was behind the skaven plot in Averheim. (Adele privately believes skaven probably exist.)
- ✦ The Black Cowl is behind the missing gunpowder. The gunpowder has since left the city, headed towards Altdorf or points north. This means his reach is further than she suspected, and Adele herself may be in danger.

Shortly before the rumours of war reach Averheim, Adele returns to Middenheim, taking a Castle Rock coach from the Old City through Talabheim and then on to Middenheim. She is concerned about the possibility of being assassinated and conflicted about how far to press her investigation into the Black Cowl.

## SO WE'RE OFF TO WAR, THEN!

When the war erupts, the PCs may conclude that they should join the army and march to the front in search of adventure. That may be a fine adventure in its own right, but it's not *The Enemy Within*. Each of the principal NPCs will have a task for the PCs that keeps them away from the front, so the GM can use those tasks to pre-empt any attempt to join the army. If the PCs insist that they wish to help the war effort, Captain Baerfaust can point out that by attending to the problems within the Empire, they are helping the war effort. (By now, he is genuinely concerned about Adele's accusations of the "Black Cowl," and doesn't want to leave that issue unresolved as he goes to war. If he is the Black Cowl, then he just doesn't want the PCs at the front where they might derail his plans.)

## PART ONE — CHAOS STRIKES

The purpose of this section is to accomplish three goals. Firstly, the PCs should receive their instructions for the various tasks that make up Part Two of this adventure. Secondly, the PCs should receive word of the mustering, the war, and the hostilities in the north. Thirdly, the PCs should travel to Middenheim, where Part Two takes place.

This section is presented as a number of scenes with encounters that can be played out in most any order, depending on the actions of the PCs. Some are critical to the plot (notably the meetings with Luminary Mauer, Captain Baerfaust, and Graf Friedrich); others are included primarily for colour.

## SCENE ONE — THE EMPIRE AT WAR

Between goblins and beastmen in the forests, orcs descending from the mountains or attacking from the badlands, the unquiet dead, Chaos-worshipping raiders from the north, uppity foreigners to the south, and the nearly constant internecine strife that plagues the nobility, it is almost never accurate to say that the Empire is at peace. Scarcely a day goes by without some army, somewhere, doing battle within the Empire or abroad under an Imperial banner. Even in the bitterest winter, the armies of the Empire are often compelled to march and to fight, for their enemies never sleep.

Still, it is relatively rare for a war to erupt that mobilises the armies of the entire nation. Most conflicts are resolved by armies and soldiers from the affected province – this is, after all, the duty of the Elector and the nobility of each province. So when troubles in far-northern Ostland cause armies in far-southern Averland to muster, it is an event of some note.

When word of the war reaches Averheim, the city transforms almost instantaneously. The exact timing of this event is up to the GM. It may happen as soon as the PCs hand over the bell clapper to Luminary Mauer, or after some other portentous event that superstitious characters may view as a bad omen. However or whenever it occurs, it begins with a bell ringing. Others quickly join in until the whole of Averheim is filled with sound. Crowds begin to gather in the streets, congregating in front of the temples and public buildings where the bells are ringing. On steps and on street corners, people spread the news: the forces of Chaos have burst across the Empire's northern border!

As the news spreads, the streets of Averheim fill with crowds of different types. Groups of young men, filled with bravado and drink, swagger about yelling to anyone who will listen that they're off to war in the morning, and woe betide anyone who denies them food, drink, female companionship, or anything else they want. Hysterical mobs turn on their neighbours as long-held grudges and suspicions boil over into panic and accusations fly. Anyone could be a secret agent of Chaos – especially anyone who is not well liked among the community.

The GM can use any or all of the following encounters as the PCs make their way through the city.

## THE SOLDIER

If the PCs go anywhere near the Averburg (page 21) they will see a frenzy of activity taking place. Soldiers and support staff hurry to turn a motley array of commandeered carts and coaches into something resembling a baggage train, loading equipment and supplies under the unforgiving gaze of shouting sergeants. The Plenzerplatz has been commandeered as a muster-yard. At the heart of the activity is Captain Baerfaust, striding from cart to cart and bellowing orders at the top of his voice. He pauses for a moment when the PCs catch his eye.

“Lieutenant Schaffer, take over!” yells Captain Marcus Baerfaust, striding over to you. “You heard the news? Good. The garrison’s been called up to the front, so I have to leave immediately. I won’t lie – I’d rather fight Northmen than spend another day dealing with bureaucrats and nobles more interested in the succession than their responsibilities.”

“While I’m gone, there’s something you can do for me. Go to the White Horse inn on the docks and ask for Adele Ketzenblum. You may remember her; she’s the Witch Hunter who came to Graf Friedrich’s menagerie party. Ask her about the Black Cowl. Find out everything she knows about his identity. When you’ve done that, I’ll want a report in person – not a letter, you understand? Letters can be intercepted. I imagine that if you travel to Altdorf someone there can help you find me. With any luck, we’ll have crushed the northmen by then and I’ll even meet you there.”

The captain can spare very little time to answer the PCs’ questions about Adele or the Black Cowl. He knows very little about the Cowl, only that he appears to be an Averheim crime lord with broad influence and possibly traitorous connections (for example, to the skaven, if Baerfaust has been convinced that skaven exist). Unless Baerfaust regards the PCs quite favourably, he will not share Adele’s suspicions that the Cowl might be himself, Graf Friedrich, or Luminary Mauer. If the PCs bring up the matter of payment, Captain Baerfaust is brusque – surely, with a war on, the PCs are eager to do their duty as loyal citizens (or allies) of the Empire? However, he’d be able to offer up to ten silver shillings each for what promises to be a very simple task.

Once the conversation is concluded, the captain strides away to continue supervising the preparations for the garrison’s departure.

If the PCs do not go to the garrison barracks by themselves, Baerfaust will send a trooper to find them and bring them there before he has to leave.

If the PCs go immediately to the White Horse to locate Adele, refer to page 69, **The Witch Hunter**.

## THE NOBLE

The PCs come across a scene of confusion at the Red Arrow coach depot. A rough guard made up of coachmen and depot staff is in a standoff with a detachment of soldiers from the garrison and a small but rowdy group of young nobles armed for war. Both groups want to commandeer the line’s coaches to take them to the front, and the depot staff is holding them off with whatever weapons they can find.

The PCs can try to step in and calm the situation if they wish, but things are tense. A couple of minutes after they arrive on the scene, they are met by Graf Friedrich, who strolls up to the depot surrounded by a half-dozen of Averheim’s biggest and toughest-looking bodyguards, including a moustachioed ogre named Berk (whose presence goes a long way towards calming things down). The officer in charge of the garrison detachment recognises him, as does the leader of the rowdy young nobles, and the level of tension drops perceptibly. The depot staff remains ready for a fight, looking to the Graf expectantly.

“Ah,” Graf Friedrich says to you, “there you are.” He seems no more put out by the news of invasion than he would be by a cloud crossing the sun. “Give me a moment to deal with this, and we’ll go inside together.”

The Graf approaches the garrison officer and hands him a parchment scroll with an official-looking seal. After reading it for a moment, the officer rolls it up, stows it inside his breastplate, and leads his troops away. Meanwhile, the Graf has turned his attention to the group of young nobles, exchanging bantering words with a few of them until they disperse, laughing and whooping with excitement. Finally he turns back to you.

“Shall we?” he asks with a sardonic smile.

If the PCs are agreeable, his bodyguards form up around him and the PCs, and the defensive line of depot staff parts respectfully to let him in. He keeps up a constant monologue as the group proceeds to the depot.



If the PCs want more information about von Aschenbeck, Graf Friedrich shakes his head. "I'd rather you not pre-judge him. I only have my own suspicions to go on; you must form your own conclusions." If the PCs ask about payment, Graf Friedrich tosses a shiny gold coin at them, saying "That's for now, and you'll get more when we meet again in Altdorf."

As before, if the PCs do not go close to the depot of their own accord, a messenger will arrive from Graf Friedrich asking him to meet them there. When they arrive, they will come upon the scene described above.

Werther, the coachman from Book One (see page 43), will be placed at the PCs' disposal and immediately sets about preparing a coach-and-four for the journey. Conveniently, he will not be ready to go until the PCs have met with and received instructions from Captain Baerfaust and Luminary Mauer, and followed up on the Witch Hunter at the White Horse (see page 69).

## THE LUMINARY

Shortly after acquiring the tainted bell clapper (or if the PCs have kept it, after the news of war reaches him), Luminary Mauer sends a messenger to find the PCs and ask them to pay him a visit at his lodgings on the Plenzerplatz. When the PCs arrive, they find that his modest flat is a confusion of parchment, scrolls, books, and bizarre-looking magical paraphernalia. The Luminary is evidently in the midst of packing, with a large trunk lying open in the centre of the room as Mauer adds and removes books from it seemingly at random. Along the transom above the door, and along every window sill, as well as along the top of every bookcase (and there are a lot of bookcases) are ranks of wax candles that burn with a clear white light.

"An interesting day, don't you agree? Those young tearaways will wait in the nearest alehouse for my word that coaches are ready for them. That word will never come, of course, but by the time they realise that, they'll be too drunk to do anything. And the garrison has plenty of other people to steal carts and coaches from – people who didn't have the foresight to get an Imperial warrant for just such an occasion. I'm taking the whole Red Arrow fleet to Altdorf and placing it at the Emperor's disposal. Carrying dispatches and staff officers to and from the front should be a lot easier on the coachwork than a group of young drunkards or a gang of filthy troopers."

"Now," he says once you are inside the depot, "I have a job for you. One of my other informants has come across some interesting facts about one Graf Wolfgang von Aschenbeck. He's a minor noble in Middenheim, and I'll admit that he and I have run afoul of one another's ambition before, in Nuln and Altdorf. Now, you may be aware that some of my shipments from Nuln – particularly of black powder – have fallen prey to bandits. Von Aschenbeck has agents in Nuln, and tipping off bandit gangs when my shipments leave the city is exactly the sort of underhanded business I'd expect from him. Given that they've been targeting black powder shipments in particular, I'm struck by the sudden thought that stealing black powder just as a massive war breaks out is more than simply underhanded. I'd call it treasonous."

"I want you to go to Middenheim and look into the matter. Set out as soon as possible – I'll have a coach ready for you – and be careful. Quite apart from the journey, you'll find that von Aschenbeck is clever, determined, and capable of anything. I'll be in Altdorf overseeing some contracts I have for supplying the army in time of war. Meet me there once you have what we need."

"Ah, good, you've arrived," he says after you enter. "I'm afraid I must return to Altdorf at once. I believe it is likely that the Patriarch of my college will wish to dispatch the Luminark to the front and they'll need someone who understands how the thing works – well, never mind, that's quite outside the scope. Hand me that one, will you?"

Mauer points to a random PC and an apparently random book lying open on a desk near that PC. If the PC examines it, the book appears to be open to a page with a drawing of a strange carriage or wagon that carries an enormous bell and numerous notes written in a strange language. (A **Hard (3d) Education (Int) check** can decipher enough in a quick glance to learn that it is a description of a possibly hypothetical skaven weapon called a "Screaming Bell.") As soon as he has the book, Mauer closes it and places it in his trunk.



“This bell clapper. Well, I assume you realise that it is a tainted artefact. Far too many of the things are made and they all wind up stored in the – never mind where they’re stored. The point is that it has long been the goal – one of the goals – of my order to discover a means of not just storing these things safely, but destroying their taint entirely. I believe that this bell clapper is a suitable candidate to test a method proposed by Professor Robertus von Oppenheim of Middenheim.

I’d attend to the matter myself, but duty calls. And of course if all goes well in the north, we are likely to return to Altdorf with a whole host of new terrifying tainted artefacts in tow, which makes testing this theory of Professor von Oppenheim’s even more important. And I happen to know that Graf Friedrich is asking you to go to Middenheim, in any event, so it’s not even out of your way.” With that he hands you a heavy box engraved with what appear to be mystic sigils of his order, and an envelope sealed with a drop of pure-white wax.

Give the hero players the Lead-Lined Box item card. Both the box and the envelope are magically sealed by Mauer; only their intended recipient, Professor von Oppenheim, can open them without powerful magic.

Luminary Mauer is happy to answer questions as long as he is still packing, and as long as the PCs are willing to hand him things that he points at. If asked about the specifics of von Oppenheim’s ritual, he launches into an extremely technical discussion about the winds of magic, the nature of *dhar*, and Herr Strauss’s Theory of Transcendent Thought before looking at the character with the lowest Int score, coughing, and saying “we’re going to try holding the thing in the Sacred Flame and see if that burns out the taint.” If asked about payment, Mauer offers 20 shillings each; 10 now and 10 when the clapper (whatever the results of the ritual) is delivered to him in Altdorf. If asked about the safety of transporting a tainted artefact, Mauer explains that so long as the bell clapper is in the box, the PCs will be perfectly safe. “And there are several magical wards on that box, so I don’t expect anyone can remove the clapper without my say-so anyway.”

As the interview is concluded, ask one PC to make a **Daunting (4d) Observation (Int) check**. Krasskulk (or another skaven, if Krasskulk was slain in Book One) has been listening outside the window, and he now Skitterleaps away. This makes an odd sound that a PC may recognise if they have heard it before (which they may have done in Book One) and if he passes the Observation check. If he rolls boons on the check, he gets the distinct impression that someone has been watching. At least one skaven now knows about the bell clapper, where it’s going, and who has it.

## THE WITCH HUNTER

If the PCs enquire after Adele Ketzenblum at the White Horse, they’ll be met by blank stares – no one at the inn has ever heard of any woman by that name. If the PCs describe Adele, however, or mention that she is a Witch Hunter, comprehension dawns. Ketzenblum has been using an assumed name (Hanne Schmidt) during her stay at the White Horse.

The proprietor and frequenters of the White Horse will not be inclined to speak of Ketzenblum/Schmidt, due to a long-standing habit of denying all knowledge when debt collectors and magistrate’s men come looking. The PCs will have to make a **Hard (3d) Charm or Guile (Fel) check** to loosen tongues and learn anything useful. If the PCs have a good pre-existing relationship with the



inhabitants of the White Horse, either due to PC backgrounds or due to their actions in Book One, this check is Average (2d) instead.

A successful check yields the following information:

♣ **Basic Information:** “That Witch Hunter? You just missed her. She left this morning, an’ took all her stuff with her. Didn’t say where she was going.”

♣♣ **Further Information:** As above, and “I know the lads who came for her luggage. One of them’s my cousin’s boy. Works for Castle Rock coaches. They only run one route out of here: Talabheim and then Middenheim. Course, she could be getting off anywhere along the way.”

♣♣♣ **Interesting Aside:** “She’s an odd one, no mistake. Using a false name, well, that’s not so strange, but if she didn’t want people to know her why’d she never once take that hat off? Anyone could tell she were a Witch Hunter, hat like that, and in this heat.”

♣♣♣♣ **Interesting Aside:** “You’re not the first to ask after her, neither. Couple boys was round last night, big lads, take orders from the man in the black hood. Might be why she left town, I reckon.”

♣♣♣♣♣ **False Lead:** “I figger it’s about this war, innit. Notice her hand? Got a hook there, covering it up. Now we’re at war with forces of Chaos and she scarpers? Bet she’s got like a mouth or an eyeball under there. She’ll have gone to join the Enemy she will.”

## THE TROLL SLAYER

Amid the excitement, the PCs see a lone figure heading towards the north gate. With his hair stiffened and dyed orange-red, and his beard braided with outlandish trinkets, the figure is unmistakably a Troll Slayer. His calm and purposeful gait makes a strange contrast with the confused, milling crowds around him.

The Troll Slayer is not willing to stop and talk, but a fellow dwarf might be able to get his attention, or he might be willing to talk to anyone who matches his pace and walks alongside him. The Troll Slayer has only the same rumours as everyone else, but puts his own spin on them:

“Northmen, worshippers of the dark gods. They’ve crossed the border in force, and if the manlings of these southern lands are all bothered it might be a mighty force indeed. I thought to find my death amongst the greenskins near Black Fire, but this, I think, will be a worthy end.”

With that he resumes his course, and will not speak further. If anyone gets in his way, he will first try to push them aside, but he will not hesitate to use his axe if that fails.

### BAD NEIGHBOURS

The fear of Chaos is boiling over into hysteria at the news of the incursion. The PCs come across a gang of 6-8 thugs beating up a helpless burgher and preparing to burn him at a makeshift stake. They claim that he is in league with the forces of Chaos, but can offer no evidence.

An **Average (2d) Folklore (Int) check** by anyone with knowledge of the city (especially a PC with the Criminal background) will reveal that the gang’s victim is in fact a local moneylender named Hans. The kindling at the foot of the stake includes his account-books listing those who owe him money; the names in the books include several of the more vocal members of the gang. The GM can decide whether the gang uses the game statistics for Townsfolk NPCs or Ruffian NPCs (if the GM has access to *The Creature Guide*).

If the PCs try to rescue the man, assemble a 5-space Progress Tracker with an event marker on the fifth space. Place a Calm token on the first space and an Anger token on the third space. The PCs can use Charm, Guile, Intimidate, or other clever ideas to calm the crowd down, advancing the Calm token. (Most of these checks will be of Average (2d) difficulty.) Each time they roll ✨, or on a failed Intimidate check or a failed Guile check with banes (or any other event that would anger the crowd), advance the Anger token. If the Calm token reaches the event space first, the crowd disperses and the PCs can safely untie the burgher. If the Anger token reaches the event space, the crowd attacks!

Re-use the Progress Tracker to track the crowd’s morale; place a tracking token on the first space. Advance the token 2 spaces for each member of the gang killed or disabled, or 1 space for each successful use of Intimidate by the PCs and for any other effects or roleplaying ideas that would erode the gang’s morale. When the token reaches the event space at the end of the track, the gang’s morale breaks. Members who are not engaged will flee, and the others keep fighting but add ■■ to all their checks. At the GM’s option, any roll of ✨ by the PCs leads to a patrol of 6-8 watchmen coming upon the scene and trying to arrest everyone involved.



If the PCs fail to learn that Adele has left the city, further enquiries – perhaps at local coaching lines or with Captain Baerfaust – should reveal that she headed out of town on a Castle Rock coach bound for Talabheim, with Middenheim as her final destination.

If and when the PCs report this news to Captain Baerfaust, he’ll ask the PCs to follow up with Ketzenblum in Middenheim, “since I understand you’re headed that way anyway.”

## RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

The following random encounters convey more of the mood in Averoheim since the news arrived of the Chaos incursion. The GM can use them as desired.

### THE FLAGELLANT

Passing the Temple of Sigmar, the PCs see a ragged flagellant standing on the steps along with a knot of zealots. He is haranguing a crowd of onlookers in a voice even louder than the pealing bells.

“The time of reckoning has come!” he screams. “Let all the faithful flock to the blessed banner of Sigmar and cast out the foulness of Chaos from our borders! Are you faithful? Will you lay down your life for Sigmar’s realm? Or will you hesitate, and let your neighbours know that you harbour the taint of Chaos within your cowardly breast? For make no mistake, whoever fails to take up arms this day is a follower of the Ruinous Powers! They work their will within your breast and fill you with fear so you will not fight! Resist that fear, brothers and sisters! Do not let Chaos turn your heart from the path of righteousness! We leave from the north gate in an hour! Go home, collect what you need, and join us there! For the glory of Sigmar!”

Some members of the crowd are carried away by his enthusiasm, raising their fists in the air and howling agreement with each of his pronouncements. Others simply look stunned, either skulking away or standing in shock. If the PCs question anyone in the crowd, they will learn the following: “It’s the northmen – they’ve crossed the border! They’re inside the Empire!”

That is all any informant knows at this point, although it seems clear that the Emperor and the Elector Counts will be raising armies to fight back this newest incursion.

## RACIAL TENSIONS

Unless the party consists entirely of humans from the Empire, they may suddenly find themselves confronted by a hysterical mob consisting of two Townsfolk NPCs per PC, armed with clubs and other makeshift weapons.

“Get ‘em!” one of the mob cries, “Them foreigners is spies!”

Unless they are gifted with quick wits and silver tongues, the PCs are soon fighting for their lives.

As in *Bad Neighbours*, use a 5-space Progress Tracker to keep track of the mob’s morale. The GM may also appropriate the *Calm/Anger* tracker from *Bad Neighbours* if he desires.

## THE ENEMY WITHOUT (A CLUE)

Spurred on by the news, a cell of the Red Crown in the city has made the fantastically ill-judged decision to mount an attack from within. The Chaos force consists of a cult leader and two cult mutants, plus a total of two cultists per PC. (Unless the PCs include more than one strong fighter, these cultists should be henchmen.) The PCs just happen to be walking by a building or sewer opening when the minions of Chaos spring forth, bent on death and destruction.

Once again, as in *Bad Neighbours*, use a 5-space Progress Tracker. At the GM’s option, any roll of **44** sees one burgher (a Townsfolk NPC), armed with a club or other improvised weapon, join the fray on the PCs’ side. A roll of **2** leads to a patrol of 6-8 watchmen coming to their aid.

If the PCs care to interrogate the Red Crown cultists, the GM can use them to establish that the mutant band encountered in *Book One* is loyal to the Red Crown (these cultists occasionally smuggled them food or supplies), and that Red Crown agents can be found throughout the Empire. This particular cell, however, is not trusted with any sensitive information (for obvious reasons).

## DEAL OF A LIFETIME

If the PCs decide to do any shopping, especially for anything that could conceivably be of use to a soldier, they may have the misfortune to run into this encounter. The merchant, a man with a pointy grey beard and a gap-toothed smile, exchanges a placard declaring the price of whatever item the PC is reaching for with a new placard, showing a price half again as high. If the PC asks what’s going on, the man says with a grin “Special rate! I’ve cut all prices to help our boys with the war.” If anyone points out that this new price is, in fact, higher than the previous price, the merchant simply says “No it isn’t; this is a special rate, see?” and “I think I know my own prices” and other drivel to that effect.

If haggling continues for any notable length of time, the man’s wife approaches, whispers in her husband’s ear, and scurries off. He nods, scribbles something on the old price placard in charcoal, and replaces the placard again. Now the price is fully double the original price. Repeat until the PCs become disgusted, Intimidate or Guile the old man into his original price (the reprehensible old man is immune to Charm), or find a new shop.

Even in shops with less morally bankrupt proprietors, the news of the war has caused a general spike in prices throughout Averheim. The difficulty of any haggling tests is increased by 1d.

## SCENE TWO – PACKING UP

Once the PCs have met with Baerfaust, Mauer, and von Kaufman, and determined that Adele Ketzenblum has left the city, Werther will have completed his preparations and a coach and four will be ready for the journey. The PCs may be notified by runner, or simply drop by the Red Arrow offices when they’re ready.

Graf Friedrich has equipped Werther with a small purse to pay for feed and lodging for the horses and himself on the journey, as it will go beyond the usual range of Red Arrow coaches. This purse contains 50 silver shillings. Werther also has a letter of credit from Graf Friedrich explaining his business, which he can use to cover other unexpected expenses (provided he can find a moneylender or coaching inn willing to accept the letter of credit).

The coach is a large, well-appointed affair, big enough to seat the PCs comfortably. (If there is an ogre PC in the party, the ogre will have to ride on the backboard, and there will be six horses rather than four hitched to the coach. If there’s more than one ogre, the PCs are walking to Middenheim.)

Curd Weiss (see page 39) meets the PCs at the Red Arrow coaching office and escorts them to Werther’s coach when the PCs are ready. Curd will explain any details of the journey to the PCs if they ask. The journey is expected to take about two weeks, and Red Arrow will pay for food and lodging at each overnight stop. The coach will travel through Stirlant to Wurtbad, then from Wurtbad through Talabecland to Talabheim and from Talabheim to Middenheim. Once the PCs arrive in Middenheim, they will be on their own. Graf Friedrich expects them to pay their own way from Middenheim to Altdorf.

When everyone is ready, Werther cracks the reins and the coach sets off across the Plenzerplatz, picking its way carefully past the mustering soldiers, then down off the bluff, across the River Aver and north along the Old Dwarf Road. The PCs are on their way to Middenheim!

The PCs may start to wonder what to expect in Middenheim, and what sort of city it is. Middenheim is described beginning on page 77.

### WHY PLAY IT OUT?

Given that the adventure proper doesn’t resume until the PCs reach Middenheim, why bother with any play at all during the journey? There’s nothing wrong with briefly describing the journey and moving directly on to “the good stuff” if that’s what works best for your group, but this interlude section does fulfil two useful roles. The first is that it allows the GM to pad out the game a little if he wants to insert some of his own adventures in between parts of *The Enemy Within* or wishes to give the PCs a chance to gain a few more experience points. The second is that it creates a strong impression of the passage of time and the progress and ambush of Karl Franz’s army.

Still, if the GM feels that his campaign can do without these elements or has an idea for an alternate means to get the same ideas across, Scene Three can be glossed over or skipped.

## SCENE THREE — THE JOURNEY TO MIDDENHEIM

### AVERHEIM TO WURTBAD

#### RUMOURS

- + “The war will be over by midwinter, you mark my words. The Emperor’s going to kick their warty behinds all the way back to the Wastes! There’s naught can stand before our Karl Franz and his griffon, Deathclaw. I saw the beast in Altdorf you know; a right fearsome creature – I was glad it were on our side!”
- + “War in the north, eh? As if Stirland didn’t have enough to worry about, what with Sylvania and with Averland all unsettled, and I think them halflings in the Moot is up to something.”
- + “It’s not just one northman host, you know – it’s two. They’ve split, half marching on Middenheim and the other half coming straight here!”
- + “It’ll all come to disaster, you mark my words. Our soldiers may be the bravest in the world, but that counts for nothing when their leaders are divided. Averland doesn’t even have an Elector! It’s all crime and corruption down there. We can fight as many wars as we like, but that’s no way to defeat the enemy within.”

#### NEWS

- + “The Emperor set out from Altdorf a few days ago at the head of the Reiksguard and a vast army, ready to do battle with the forces of Chaos. The Grand Theogonist accompanied him leading a powerful contingent of Sigmarite priests, flagellants, and zealots.”
- + “The Elector Counts are stirring, and armies from Nuln, Talabheim, and Stirland have set out to join the Emperor.”
- + “The Emperor’s army joined up with forces from Middenheim in Talabecland, including a strong contingent of Knights of the White Wolf and Ar-Ulric himself. It won’t be long now before they face the enemy.”
- + “This is the largest army assembled in the Empire since Third Black Fire.”

The journey from Averheim to Middenheim covers over 600 miles and takes two to three weeks, depending on road conditions. The most direct route is by road, by way of Wurtbad and Talabheim (see page 190 for a map of the Empire), and so it is presumed that the PCs will travel that way. The river route is much longer, as the PCs must travel down the Aver to Nuln, join the Reik at Kemperbad, and go up the Talabec at Altdorf. Even then, they will still have to finish their journey by road from Talabheim.

This scene can be resolved using the travelling rules found on page 19. The journey is divided into three legs: Averheim to Wurtbad, Wurtbad to Talabheim, and Talabheim to Middenheim. The governing check for this journey by coach is Ride (Ag). Werther is a Townsfolk NPC with an Agility of 3; he uses 2 of his Aggression budget on each check to complete legs of the journey, giving him a final dice pool of  $\blacklozenge\blacklozenge\blacklozenge\blacksquare\blacksquare$ . Werther can adopt a Conservative or Reckless stance at the request of the PCs. There’s room for one PC to ride up in front with Werther; if a PC does so, Werther adds a further  $\blacksquare$  to his dice pool as the PC assists. Alternately, a PC can take the reins from Werther and use his own Ride skill; in this case Werther assists and adds  $\blacksquare$  to the PC’s check.

### THE FIRST LEG — AVERHEIM TO WURTBAD

After crossing the River Aver, the route follows the Old Dwarf Road and runs north for approximately 150 miles to Wurtbad. The route passes through the southern plains of Stirland, which to an Averlander look somewhat scrubby and grey by comparison to Averland’s golden-green grasses. On the second day, the road and the coach climb into the hills of central Stirland, themselves desolate and harsh, home only to occasional flocks of sheep. Finally, the road passes under the eaves of the Great Forest as it approaches Wurtbad on the shores of the River Stir.

Checks for this leg of the journey are **Average (2d)**. See Travelling on page 19.

#### FRIENDLY ENCOUNTERS

When a travelling check results in one or more friendly encounters, the GM can choose one from this list or invent one of his own. Most of these encounters deliver a Rumour or piece of News. News is distinct from Rumours in that it is usually true or comes from a person of more authority.

**Traders:** The PCs meet with a small caravan of ox-carts, laden with goods and accompanied by a dozen mercenary guards (they use the Soldier NPC profile). In charge of the caravan is a merchant (using the Specialist NPC profile), who will stop and talk to the PCs if they wish. He will be able to give them the next rumour on the Rumours list. The merchant has a cargo of unprocessed wool, some woollen goods, and timber bound for Averheim.

**Roadwardens:** The PCs meet with a patrol of four mounted roadwardens (using the Soldier NPC profile). On a successful **Average (2d) Charm (Fel) check**, they will be able to learn the next piece of news on the News list, and also get a report on road conditions ahead that is worth  $\blacksquare\blacksquare$  on their next travelling check. The road

wardens each wear chain shirts and carry crossbows and swords. Their captain wears a pistol at his hip and an extravagant green feather in his cap.

**Militia:** The PCs come upon a group of 12 militia (using the Townsfolk NPC profile) in hard-wearing peasant's clothes. Their only concession to uniform is that each man has a yellow cloth tied around his left arm and a green cloth tied around his right arm. Each of them has a longbow in fine working order and looks competent in its use. They will be happy to stop and talk on an **Easy (1d) Charm (Fel) check**, and will give the PCs the next rumour from the Rumours list. They explain with some pride that they have been called up by their lord to serve alongside the Stirland state troops, and boast about the legendary deadly accuracy of Stirland archery.

**Strigany:** The PCs overtake a small Strigany caravan of brightly painted wagons. Strigany are a nomadic folk with a mixed reputation in the Empire; they are distrusted as thieves and vagabonds, with their own customs and language that make them seem like foreigners, but also valued as pedlars, tinkers, and entertainers. The Strigany are happy to chat with the PCs, offer their wares for sale (mainly pots, pans, knives, leather goods, and the like), and a toothless old grandmother offers to tell one PCs' fortune. If a PC gives her a silver shilling and lets her examine his palm, she smacks her gums and mutters "I see a man in a hood behind you and before you; he wears a mask because his face is known to you." She cannot be pressed for any more than this, but the Strigany will share a Rumour if the PCs ask.

## HOSTILE ENCOUNTERS

When a travelling check results in one or more hostile encounters, the GM can choose one from this list or invent one of his own. These encounters include a battle or the potential for a battle.

**Giant Wolves:** Four giant wolves burst from the foliage at the roadside, running alongside the PCs' coach and snapping at the horses. Until at least one PC gets out of the coach to fight them, the wolves concentrate on the horses, forcing the coachman to make a **Hard (3d) Ride (Ag) check** each round to keep them under control. A ✨ result indicates that the coach has rolled onto its side, trapping the horses in the traces and requiring everyone in or on the coach to make a successful **Hard (2d) Coordination (Ag) check** or suffer 1 wound. The wolves fight until three of them are dead or critically wounded, then run off. A PC who passes an **Average (2d) Folklore (Int) check** or **Piety (WP) check** will know that wearing the pelt of a wolf slain by one's own blade is a mark of honour to Ulricans, and may be useful in Middenheim. An **Average (2d) Tradecraft (Int) check** or **Nature Lore (Int) check** is required to successfully skin and prepare a wolf pelt; this process takes about a day.

**Undead:** A coach lies on its side across the road ahead, its horses dead in its traces and a number of corpses scattered around the road nearby. The wreckage will have to be moved if the PCs are to advance. As the PCs approach the coach, the corpses shamble to their feet with a moan, and a strange hunched creature leaps to the top of the fallen coach to shriek at them! The PCs are surrounded by zombies equal to them in number, plus one crypt ghoul for every two PCs (round up). The zombies appear to have once been the coachman and his passengers. After the undead creatures are defeated, Werther competently unhitches his horses and uses them to drag the fallen coach out of the way, muttering about "cursed Sylvania" and glancing to the east as he does so.

**Mutants:** A strange man stands in the middle of the road, directly in the path of the coach, wearing a tattered, hooded cloak. He staggers slightly, as if ill or injured. If the coach comes to a stop (which it will do unless the PCs convince the driver otherwise), the strange man throws back his cloak and grabs the lead horse with one tentacle – he is a horrifying Chaos mutant! This causes Fear 2. A number of additional mutants equal in number to the PCs pull themselves up from hiding places, moaning and roaring. This is more scary than dangerous – unless the lead mutant retains control of the horses, the PCs can simply ride off in the coach. Otherwise, the mutants fight until half of them are dead, then flee.

## ENCOUNTER ONE — NIGHT OF THE RATMEN (OUTSIDE WURTBAD)

This encounter takes place while the PCs are stopped for the night at a coaching inn outside Wurtbad.

The inn is a typical example of its kind, consisting of a main building, a stable block, and a small forge enclosed by a wall about 15 feet high. There are a half-dozen or so rooms capable of sleeping up to four people each, and a common room that can hold another twenty together. The inn is run by a stout, red-haired woman named Gerte Holtz, who tyrannically presides over a staff of six that appears to consist of her long-suffering husband, sons, and two daughters-in-law. As the PCs settle in for the night, Gerte shares at least one (and possibly more) Rumour. A roadwarden stopping in to water his horse shares a piece of News.

While the PCs are asleep, a lone skaven gutter runner infiltrates the inn and tries to steal the bell clapper. It uses the **Quick-Kill, Kill-Kill! Action** to disable anyone who may be on watch. Then it intends to kill the rest of the PCs as they sleep and recover the clapper. However, it has not reckoned on the magics of Luminary Mauer, and it will be unable to open the box.

Any sounds of fighting will wake everyone in the room. Sleeping characters gain ♦ to all checks for a number of rounds equal to 5 minus Willpower (minimum 1) after being woken.

If the fight is going against the skaven it will try to grab the box containing the clapper and escape. Unfortunately, the box has a magical alarm set in place to prevent exactly this; as soon as the gutter runner carries the box out of sight of the PCs, the alarm activates. The whole of the inn is shaken by a din like the ringing of a huge temple bell: everyone in the inn is woken immediately, and everyone in the same room as the box suffers ■ to physical actions and ■■ to all other actions because of the noise. The noise only stops when the skaven is no longer touching the box.

If the gutter runner manages to escape with the box, it will try to climb over the wall and vanish into the woods. However, the task of vanishing is made problematic by the continuing peal of the magical bell, and pursuers gain □□ on all checks. However, two more gutter runners are waiting in the woods to slow pursuit.

Ultimately, the gutter runners will abandon the alarmed box and attempt to escape with their lives. The PCs should be able to find the box and continue with their journey.

## THE SECOND LEG — WURTBAD TO TALABHEIM

### WURTBAD TO TALABHEIM

#### RUMOURS

- + “Must be big trouble if the Sigmarites from Altdorf and Ulricans from Middenheim are working together so well. I reckon those lot would tear each other apart as soon as fight the enemy.”
- + “Beastmen been acting funny all through the forest, I hear. My cousin was burning charcoal out Stratenheim way and says he saw a whole mob of ‘em moving north. Swore they’d kill and eat him, he said, but they just passed him right by.”
- + “I heard the Emperor’s got the armies from five provinces formed up with him now! Who ever heard of such a thing? Why it must be the largest army since Magnus the Pious.”
- + “Careful on the roads. Them northmen sent out scouts and reavers ahead of their host; could be anywhere in the forest by now.”

#### NEWS

- + “Wolfenbug is besieged; it might even have fallen by now. The Emperor would have to ride hard to get there in time.”
- + “With Count Helmut missing, no one’s willing to muster Talabecland’s armies for anything other than defending their own border. If the horde turns south, Talabheim will be relying on the Emperor for its defence.”
- + “It’s surprising considering they’ve got no Elector, but the Averlanders are pulling their weight. I hear their Captain knows his business.”
- + “The Colleges of Magic sent a dozen wizards with the Emperor’s armies. They’ve even got some great big preposterous wagon with magical gewgaws all over it, presided over by some Averlander wizard in white robes.”

Wurtbad proves to be an attractive, whitewashed city clustering close against the banks of the River Stir, as if huddling for safety in the midst of the Great Forest. The coach rattles along its cobbled streets down to the river, and then takes a ferry across the Stir into Talabecland, where it seems the trees loom even taller and more impressive. Werther dismounts from the coach during the ferry ride and tosses a brass penny into the water as a prayer to “Old Fishbeard” (Manann), and five minutes after entering Talabecland he stops and dismounts from the coach again, this time to cut a sprig of holly from beside the road and tie it to the front of the coach “so Taal will keep us safe in the wood.” The rest of the ride along the Old Dwarf Road, all approximately 200 miles of it, passes under the eaves of the Great Forest. The trees march right up to the edge of the road, where they are kept in check only with great difficulty, and in places their branches blot out the sun overhead, as if the coach travels through a tunnel. The road is less smooth than through Stirland, and the going is somewhat rougher.

Checks for this leg of the journey are **Hard (3d)**.

#### FRIENDLY ENCOUNTERS

The second leg repeats some possible encounters and includes some new ones.

**Traders:** As in the first leg, but this merchant carries a shipment of wine and some dwarf-made ironmongery from Wurtbad to Talabheim.

**Roadwardens:** As in the first leg, but the captain’s feather is yellow and his hat crimson. One of the roadwardens is injured; a band of beastmen ambushed them on the road.

**Hunters:** A group of five hunters, three large, hairy men and two slightly smaller, slightly less hairy women, are paused by the side of the road, standing next to a large stack of furs and hides and beneath the corpse of an enormous stag, strung up to drain from the boughs of a large tree. The hunters are waiting for their partner who stays in town to arrive with a cart to carry their furs and meat away. They will gladly share a Rumour in between making disparaging remarks about any of the PCs who look “soft” and “city-bred.”

**Imperial Courier:** An Imperial courier (a Soldier NPC) is thundering along the road on horseback, carrying an important message from the front. He will draw up short as the PCs approach and ask if there are any dangers he should be aware of behind them on the road. If the PCs are polite or helpful, he will share a piece of News with them.

#### HOSTILE ENCOUNTERS

The second leg repeats some possible encounters and includes some new ones.

**Giant Wolves:** As in the first leg.

**Giant Spider:** The PCs’ coach is passing through a particularly dark and overhanging patch of forest when a giant spider drops down onto the roof of the coach. It immediately attacks either the coachman or a randomly chosen PC on the roof of the coach using its Inescapable Power action. At any time during the ensuing combat when the spider is not engaged with any other characters and its victim suffers the Exposed condition, it will try to drag its victim off into the forest, opening the range increment by one step. The spider fights until slain.

**Beastmen:** A fallen log blocks the road ahead. A force of beastmen comes out of the forest beside the road and attacks the PCs as soon as the coach comes to a halt. The band is led by a single gor warrior, and includes two ungors for each PC. If the PCs successfully question any captives (opposing Intimidate versus Discipline) they will learn that the band was recently sought out by a “turnskin” human who told them of the impending invasion and urged them to rise up and support it, shortly before they ate him. The beastman leader has a pewter medallion nailed to his harness, with an enamelled red crown crest.

**Forest Goblins:** Six forest goblins perch in the lower boughs of several of the trees, armed with short bows. They fire off volleys at the coach as it passes, and each goblin has a CR of 2. They have enough time to fire three times each before the coach is out of range. These goblins are bored and spiteful, not bloodthirsty. If anyone larger than a halfling dismounts from the coach and moves towards the goblins, they fire one last volley and then panic and run away.

## ENCOUNTER TWO — THE EMPIRE NEEDS YOU (OUTSIDE TALABHEIM)

As the road passes through the tiny village of Alterbaum (use the Rural Settlement location card) about a half-day’s ride from Talabheim, the PCs see a disturbance taking place. Under the watchful eye of a haughty-looking noble, a band of soldiers is dragging villagers from their homes. As the women and children huddle together screaming and weeping, the men are lined up in front of the noble and beaten savagely if they resist.

If the PCs investigate, they will find that the soldiers are a press gang, recruiting for the noble’s militia by force. There are three soldiers for each PC. The noble is Baron Hector Kurtz, thirtyish, balding, with stylish riding cape, hose, and voluminous slashed sleeves in scarlet and gold with a cream sash. Should anyone attempt to interfere, Kurtz flicks a finger and two thirds of the soldiers attack while the others form up around Kurtz to defend him.

**This is wrong! Fight:** The odds are against the PCs if they try to take on the soldiers (Soldier NPCs) by themselves, and the locals (Townfolk NPCs) are all suffering from the Demoralised condition. There are six men and six women, plus a number of non-combatant children. If the PCs can inspire them to resist using their Mob Justice action, the soldiers can be scattered easily. If the PCs gain the upper hand in the battle, Baron Hector mounts his horse and rides off for his manor house, two miles down a muddy trail. His bodyguard sprints after him.

However, the PCs cannot stay around to protect the village, and the soldiers will return with a vengeance. The GM may like to face the PCs with a moral dilemma after the fight as the villagers plead with them to stay. Perhaps on the way back from Middenheim in Book Three, the PCs will pass through the same village to find it burned to the ground, with corpses dangling from nearby trees. They may take some comfort in the thought that they have been helping to save the whole Empire instead of one little village.

**This is wrong! Persuade:** A safer solution for all concerned would be for the PCs to persuade Kurtz (a Noble NPC) to leave the villagers alone and seek recruits elsewhere. All related checks will receive ■, however, as the noble is smarting from the news that his neighbour and great rival just sent a force to the Emperor that is twice as strong as he himself can muster.

**We don’t have time for this:** The PCs may decide that they have more important things to do than involving themselves in a local matter, especially when they run the risk of making an enemy of a nobleman. If so, the GM has two options: let them walk away, or force them to become involved. If the PCs ignore the situation despite the villagers’ cries for help, the GM may want to increase the party’s tension if they have a trait such as Idealistic, or give individual PCs a point or two of stress, especially if they are devout followers of gods like Verena, the defender of justice, Shallya, the lady of mercy, or Ranald, the protector of the poor. Alternatively, the soldiers may decide to press the PCs into service as well, giving them no choice but to fight for their own freedom as well as that of the villagers.

After passing through Alterbaum, the PCs ride for nearly an hour under the shadow of Talabheim’s crater wall. Werther points out the gun towers built atop the stony ridge and mentions that Talabheim is one of the most heavily fortified cities in the Empire. “Doubt them northmen will be cracking open Taal’s Wall!” he jokes. Finally, the coach rolls into the port town of Talagaad, itself ringed by a stone wall (this one man-made) and heavily defended. A road climbs up from Talagaad and passes through a fortified tunnel in the crater wall, but the gate is closed and Werther takes the coach to an inn close to the River Talabec called the Green Eye. The proprietor of the Green Eye is a peg-legged man named Wilhelm who would rather swap old war stories with a small group of Talabheim soldiers in crimson-and-cream uniforms than serve the PCs anything. The soldiers are fairly well informed, and can share a Rumour and a piece of News if the PCs are curious.

If the PCs ask about getting into Talabheim, the soldiers shake their heads. “With the Count missing and the war on in the north, don’t think the city council will be opening their gates to outsiders anytime soon. You got business to do, you do it here in Talagaad.”



## THE THIRD LEG: TALABHEIM TO MIDDENHEIM

### TALABHEIM TO MIDDENHEIM

#### RUMOURS

- + “We’ve lost! The Empire is doomed, and all that’s left is to choose the manner of our deaths. The Emperor and all his army have been destroyed!”
- + “You heard what happened to the Ostland army? Attacked from behind – betrayed from within, I don’t doubt. It’ll happen again, mark my words. The followers of the dark gods are a deceitful lot. Ulric protect us all.”
- + “Nordland is burning. Norscan raiders all along the coast. We’ll be getting no help from that quarter.”
- + “Every Chaos monster in the forest is heading north and east. Horned goat-men and other Chaos spawn, all headed straight for the war.”
- + “He’s dead! The Emperor is dead and the Counts all gone to war over who will be Emperor now. Who will fight the forces of Chaos, I ask you? Or is one of the great lords and generals in league with the Enemy?”

#### NEWS

- + “The Emperor’s army was ambushed by a massive beastman horde. I don’t know more than that, but clearly the news isn’t good.”
- + “The Emperor was injured by dark magic. He’s been evacuated back to Altdorf and Reiksmarshal Kurt Helborg now has command.”
- + “There’s no way the army will reach Wolfenburg in time, now. Unless von Raukov gets aid from Kislev or the dwarfs, I’m afraid the city is lost.”
- + “The Emperor was knocked from his griffon. A troop of Averlanders and a white wizard got to his side first and defended him from a fierce enemy assault and then he was spirited away in a Red Arrow coach like you’re riding in now. I’ll be buying a drink for the next Averlander I meet; we’ve the Empire to thank them for.”
- + “The situation is grave, but not hopeless. The Reiksguard turned back the beastman ambush and reinforcements may be on the way from Hochland. Losing the Emperor at the front is a blow, but Helborg is as good a general and he has a mighty army at his command. Never count Empire men out!”
- + “How could the army blunder right into that trap? I fear there may be a traitor’s hand at work.”

The final leg of the journey begins with another ferry ride, this time from Talagaad across the River Talabec into Hochland. Werther repeats his prayer to “Old Fishbeard” as the coach crosses the river. In Hochland the road passes through another long swathe of lightly peopled and perilous forest. On the third day, it climbs up through steep, forested hills, switching back and forth around tight corners, then descends towards Middenland and the Drakwald. The latter half of the journey is through the monster-haunted Drakwald, even darker and more perilous than the Great Forest. The few times that the road twists and allows the PCs a view of the sky or horizon, the Middle Mountains loom to the north, grey and impressive. All told, this final leg of the journey is approximately 300 miles.

The road remains difficult and treacherous, and this leg of the journey is **Hard (3d)**.

#### FRIENDLY ENCOUNTERS

The third leg repeats some possible encounters and includes some new ones.

**Traders:** As in the first leg, but this merchant carries iron from the Middle Mountains, worked silver from Middenheim, and salt cod from Nordland.

**Roadwardens:** As in the first leg, but the captain wears a blue coat with a white wolf-fur ruff (and no cap). There are only two roadwardens in this group, and they both have a haunted look.

**Hunters:** As in the second leg.

**Imperial Courier:** As in the second leg.

**Knights of the White Wolf:** Five Knights of the White Wolf in red enamelled armour with impressive white wolfskin cloaks come thundering up towards the PCs, then fall in alongside the coach to shout boasts and requests for news for a spell. The leader, a huge man with a salt-and-pepper beard, has the enormous head of a bull-like beast (a minotaur) slung across the back of his saddle. Two other knights who look enough alike to be twins have what the PCs are likely to recognise as “Southlands Flightless Griffon” heads slung from their saddles (demigryphs). These knights were off hunting monsters in the Drakwald when news of the war reached them, and they are currently trying to locate Middenheim’s army to join the fight. A sixth horse carries a shrouded corpse – not all of them were successful in the monster hunt. The knights only have Rumours and tales of their exploits to share, but if the PCs have any questions about Middenheim or the Sacred Flame, the knights are happy to answer in brief.

**Pilgrims:** The coach overtakes a band of about twenty pilgrims, travelling on foot towards Middenheim. The pilgrims are all devout Ulricans, mostly from Hochland and the Ostermark, and they are eager to see Middenheim and hope to be permitted a glimpse of the Sacred Flame. Although every pilgrim is armed with a spear, bow, or sword and several of them have crossbows, it’s clear that the journey they’re making is extremely hazardous. The pilgrims are happy to share a Rumour. Should the PCs slow their own pace to help defend the pilgrims on their journey, add one fortune point to the party fortune pool, and then one more for each hostile encounter the PCs defend the pilgrims from. The next time the PCs make a travelling check, the pilgrims stay behind – they’ve reached a way

shrine, temple, or other stop on their pilgrimage and have several religious observances to make. The Pilgrims are all Townsfolk NPCs.

## HOSTILE ENCOUNTERS

The third leg repeats some possible encounters and includes some new ones.

**Giant Wolves:** As in the first leg. If in Middenland, these may be massive white wolves – increase their Aggression by 4 and wound threshold by 1 each.

**Giant Spider:** As in the second leg.

**Beastmen:** As in the second leg. These beastmen may include a second gor warrior, if the PCs are up to the challenge.

**Marauders:** A group of Chaos Marauders equal in number to the PCs burst from the trees mounted on shaggy barbarian horses and ride, screaming and whooping, after the coach. They are expert horsemen and can easily catch up to and keep pace with the coach, where they will hurl themselves from horseback onto the coach itself. They seem to have no fear for their own lives and will fight until more than half of them are slain, at which point they will break off pursuit. If the PCs include one or more powerful warriors, the Marauders may be led by a Chaos Warrior, who is an equally skilled horseman. These Chaos worshippers are members of Surtha Lenk's host, sent ahead to sow fear and disrupt communications between the cities and provinces of the Empire. If captured and interrogated, they can share a piece of News (filtered through the lens of an enemy of the Empire, of course).

**Monster:** The Drakwald is haunted by all manner of monsters. Practically anything found in the core product or *The Creature Guide* – or a demiglyph, as in Book One – could burst from the treeline and threaten to knock the coach over at any time. The prudent course of action in such circumstances might be to fight the creature off long enough to run away.

## WELCOME TO MIDDENHEIM

Middenheim, the City of the White Wolf, is one of the oldest, grandest, and most important cities in the Empire. It stands atop a sheer-sided pinnacle of white rock called the Ulricsberg, which stands like the fang of a great wolf in the midst of the surrounding forest. Four great stone viaducts carry wide highways from the forest floor up to the city, where wooden drawbridges span the dizzying drop from the peak of the Ulricsberg to the ground below. A confusion of cranes, chairlifts, and rope ladders dangle from the edges of the city, used to haul up goods and sometimes people. Even more so than Talabheim, Middenheim seems utterly impregnable.

Presumably, none of the PCs will ever have been to Middenheim before. The hero players may ask what they know about Middenheim. Here is some basic information about the city, as seen from the Averland point of view. Everyone knows the information given below as Common Knowledge. For the rest, make an **Easy (1d) Folklore (Int) check**.

## MIDDENHEIM: COMMON KNOWLEDGE

Middenheim is the capital of Middenland, a province in the north of the Empire. It stands on top of a high rock called the Ulricsberg, and is the centre of the cult of Ulric. Middenlanders are known for their grim, stoic outlook on life, the abruptness of their speech, and their ferocity in battle. They seem to regard all other folk – especially Reiklanders – as soft and untrustworthy. One of the most famous of the Empire's Knightly Orders, the Knights of the White Wolf, calls Middenheim its home. The armies of Middenland generally dress in blue and white.

## MIDDENHEIM: DEEPER KNOWLEDGE

♣ **Basic Information:** The Elector Count of Middenland is Graf Boris Todbringer. The Ulricsberg rises out of the Drakwald, and its forces have mounted many campaigns against beastmen and other threats in the huge forest. Middenheim is the only one of the Empire's great cities that does not stand on a river. It is much larger than Averheim; only Altdorf and Nuln are larger. Its fortifications are said to be impregnable. Middenheim is home to Ar-Ulric, the high priest of the Cult of Ulric. Ar-Ulric is an Elector; the Cult of Ulric is the only Imperial Cult aside from the Cult of Sigmar to have Electoral votes.

♣♣ **Further Information:** As above, and political tension between the cults of Ulric and Sigmar has always existed. It came to a head after the civil wars of 400-200 years ago when Emperor Magnus the Pious visited the city and entered the Sacred Flame of Ulric to prove that his devotion to Sigmar was not blasphemy. Magnus emerged from the flame unscathed, and the two cults have lived in an uneasy peace ever since. Although there is a temple to Sigmar in the city, it is somewhat smaller than the great Temple of Ulric.

♣♣♣ **Obscure Information:** As above, and it is rumoured that the Ulricsberg is honeycombed with tunnels, some of them dating back to a time before humans. The forces of Chaos have been known to attack the city through these tunnels – some accounts mention the skaven ratmen, although they are not generally believed – and the Undercity, as it is called, was sealed with dwarfen aid several centuries ago. Middenheim is still a city where dwarfs are welcome.

♣ **Interesting Aside:** The Middenlanders are descended from the Teutogens, an ancient warrior tribe that fought many battles with Sigmar's own tribe, the Unberogens. Some scholars believe that the ancient rivalry between these two tribes lives on in the religious and political differences between Middenland and Reikland. It has been said that an Elector Count must win and keep the respect of the people of Middenland if he wishes to keep his position (and his head); Middenlanders respect ability and courage more than rank and titles, and Middenheim has been attacked more than once by rebels from within its own province when an Elector Count has proven weak or corrupt.



## A MIDDENHEIM GAZETTEER

Middenheim is a huge and sprawling city, much larger than Averheim, and describing all of it is considerably beyond the scope of this adventure. Still, what follows should give the GM enough information to go on and may serve as inspiration for future adventures.

### NORDGARTEN — GRAFSMUND

A rich, respectable quarter of the city not far from either the Graf's palace complex or the Temple of Ulric, Nordgarten – Grafsmund is popular with wealthy visitors and local nobles. The neighbourhood of Grafsmund, closer to the Graf's palace, is wealthier and mostly consists of large and ostentatious houses belonging to noble families. Nordgarten caters to wealthy merchants and successful burghers, and of course is looked down upon by those living in Grafsmund. Both Nordgarten and Grafsmund are squarely gold tier.

#### NOBLE RANK

Noble Rank is discussed in detail in *Lure of Power* and not described here. If you do not have access to *Lure of Power*, simply assume that any PC not obviously of the gold tier suffers the ■ penalty at the Prospect.

### THE PROSPECT

The Prospect is a lavish inn catering to the well-born and wealthy. The owners of the Prospect, Rudolf and Sigrid Buffer, are scrupulous in their gentility and instil a similar attitude in all their staff. Business is conducted with a level of civility that could not be faulted by the most cross-grained of dowager duchesses, and class is everything.

As soon as the PCs enter, those who are not of noble birth will immediately feel out of place, an impression that will be reinforced by the attitudes of the inn's staff and the few patrons who are in the foyer and lounge. All Fellowship checks by a character without a Noble Rank gain ■. The staff are quite immune to bribery and intimidation and are masters of the art of being unfailingly polite and lethally insulting simultaneously.

Inquiries at Castle Rock coaches and around the city will suggest that Adele Ketzenblum is staying here. The Prospect staff will confirm this but under no account comment on her whereabouts or permit anyone to go to her room. Adele is, in actuality, using the Prospect as a front. She sneaks in and out of her ground floor window to throw off anyone looking for her.

### VON ASCHENBECK MANOR

Wolfgang von Aschenbeck maintains a manor house in the city and spends far more time in Middenheim than at his ancestral lands. The von Aschenbeck manor is well appointed and handsome, but of modest size, property being at a premium on the Ulricsburg. A small garden fronts the property behind a stone wall and wrought-iron gate, all decorated with Ulrican insignia and the skulls of several honoured ancestors. The house itself is three storeys of grey

stone; the Graf's personal bedchambers and guest rooms take up the first floor, whereas the kitchens, sitting room, dining room, withdrawing room, and a small library occupy the ground floor. The second floor is given over to servant's quarters and storage.

PCs calling any time during the day may find Graf Wolfgang at home, either attending to business matters with the aid of his assistant Werner Markheim or enjoying the company of his daughter, Margarete. During the evenings, Graf Wolfgang is typically out of the house and engaged socially. In any case, PCs will be met at the door by Graf Wolfgang's steward, a tall, broad-shouldered man with a spade-shaped beard named Rodrik. Rodrik was a member of the von Aschenbeck Bravos in his youth, before injury forced him into a more sedate profession. He uses the characteristics of a Soldier NPC with three additional Cunning dice.

Graf Wolfgang, Margarete, and Werner Markheim are described in detail beginning on page 97. The von Aschenbeck Bravos are described on page 86.

## THE GRAF'S REPOSE

A sizeable, neatly kept boarding house set on a quiet street in a genteel neighbourhood. The Graf's Repose is run by Rolf and Ulrike Steinmeyer, an affable couple in their middle years who, in lieu of children of their own, treat their boarders as family. There is a large common room on the ground floor with many comfortable chairs, a roaring fireplace, and decidedly rustic decor, where the residents may receive visitors and pass the time. The largest, most comfortable chair, closest to the fire, is often occupied by Gregor Helstrum, a retired Witch Hunter.

## GREGOR HELSTRUM

In his younger years, Gregor Helstrum was a fearsome enemy of Chaos in all its forms. Although his zeal was unquestionable and his tenacity legendary, Helstrum had the rare gift among Witch Hunters of making himself loved by the common people. He had a reputation for fairness and even-handedness that earned him a great deal of respect, along with enough shrewd quick wits to turn that respect into a weapon when necessary. Amongst the notable events of his past, Helstrum was responsible for condemning the family of Konrad Mauer to the pyre as witches. He also served as mentor to Adele Ketzenblum during the first part of her career, and was captured and tortured by the Red Crown at the same time as her. After that ordeal, Helstrum gracefully retired, and now lives on a small stipend from the Order of the Silver Hammer and a modest personal fortune from familial connections.

Somewhat past sixty years old, Helstrum is broad of shoulder and prodigious of gut. He was once a tall, strong, and even handsome man, but age and a sedentary lifestyle over the past years have taken their toll. He is now rather fat, with a long snow-white beard that gives him a grandfatherly look. Although retired, Helstrum likes to "keep a hand in," sending and receiving letters every day with correspondents throughout the Empire and consulting on difficult cases with younger Witch Hunters.

PCs may think to contact Gregor Helstrum and ask him about Adele Ketzenblum. If so, he will express surprise that she is in the city (he thought she had gone to Averheim), and admit that she visits him far less than she used to. He has only praise for Ketzenblum's character and performance prior to the "regrettable incident" of their mutual incarceration (see page 14). Since that time, he confesses, Adele has seemed more withdrawn, less trusting, and more inclined to "immolate first, ask questions later."

If Adele Ketzenblum is unable to officiate over the trial of Wolfgang von Aschenbeck for any reason, Gregor Helstrum will be asked to step in. This is a blessing for von Aschenbeck, as Helstrum is much, much more fair-minded than Ketzenblum. If presented with clear evidence of Chaos or heresy, Gregor retains contacts with the Knights of the White Wolf and city watch and can have a den of iniquity raided and burned to the ground in a little more than an hour.

## ULRICSMUND

The Ulricsmund district is centred around the great Temple of Ulric from which it takes its name. It is a silver-tier district, modestly prosperous without being tawdry or pretentious. The wide avenues and public squares of the district are frequently thronged with pilgrims, although the outbreak of the war has reduced this somewhat.

## TEMPLE OF ULRIC

The Temple of Ulric has been rebuilt and enlarged many times. The current building is a blend of castle and cathedral, capable of accommodating over a thousand worshippers beneath a vaulted roof over 120 feet high. The Sacred Flame burns on a spot before the high altar where an ancient high priest of Ulric had a vision of the god. A statue of Ulric, almost 20 feet high, dominates the far end of the cavernous space.

Off the main temple are two side-chapels used by the Knights Panther and the Order of the White Wolf. These are decorated with reliefs and memorial slabs commemorating their most famous actions, and are home to some of their standards and battle honours in peacetime; currently, of course, the standards are in the field along with the fighting strength of the two orders.



The rest of the temple complex provides accommodation for the priesthood along with the administrative offices required by the centre of a powerful religious organisation. Most notable are the Star Chamber where the Cult of Ulric conducts its own trials for heresy and other religious crimes – a bone of contention with the Witch Hunters of Sigmar, who regard it as an infringement on their own rights – and the Lehrehaus, a great library of religious manuscripts.

Visiting the temple, and the priests PCs are likely to encounter, is covered in more detail on page 89.

## TEMPLE OF VERENA

On the northern edge of the Ulricsmund district stands the domed Temple of Verena, with its grey marble statue of the goddess at the entrance. A huge gilded owl, fully twelve feet high, spreads its wings over the main altar. The temple has two annexes added on, both tall rectangular structures more utilitarian than grand. The western annexe contains the temple's great library – there is a fierce debate between Vereneans and the Collegium Theologica over whose library is superior. The eastern annexe contains several administrative offices and a sizeable chamber that is frequently used as a courtroom for trials of law.

Visitors to the temple are greeted by Lector Helena, a stern, well-preserved woman in her 50s who came to the priesthood late in life. She uses the glare perfected on her six children to enforce discipline in the Temple of Verena, punishing those who speak above a whisper, move faster than a slow walk, touch anything at all, or break any of her other numerous but unwritten rules.

## KOCH'S

A two-storey half-timbered building on the edge of the Ulricsmund district, Koch's is marked only by a shingle painted with a stylised plate, spoon, and knife. Within, visitors find a large common room that takes up most of the ground floor, with small, private tables carefully arranged throughout the space. A taproom, pantry, and kitchen complete the ground floor.

Koch's is run by a thick-set, balding man named Boris Koch, who has a proud, bristling moustache. The tavern is kept clean and serves excellent, hearty northern food, priced from two to seven silver a plate for dinner (beer included; wine extra). The clientele is mostly burghers, merchants, and well-to-do pilgrims, which means that at any given time the common room may be bustling with discussion of the economy or travel throughout the Empire. This is an excellent place to pick up any Rumours the PCs may have missed on the journey to Middenheim.

**Secret:** Koch's is a favoured meeting place of the Jade Sceptre cult. Careful examination of the wine cellar beneath the taproom reveals that it is about half as big as the footprint of the building; moving one of the racks of wine exposes the cult lair that takes up the other half of the cellar. Koch himself is not a cultist. The cult blackmails Koch to let them use his cellar and turn a blind eye to their affairs, using a long-ago murder Koch was never punished for as leverage. The cult hopes one day to recruit Koch, but he has proven thus far resistant. For more on the Jade Sceptre, see page 84.

## THE BROWN OWL

An almost remarkably unremarkable inn, hard on the border between Ulricsmund and the Freiburg, The Brown Owl inn has a small stable attached, a courtyard with a stone fountain (currently

dry, and has been for some time), and a bland, clapboard exterior. The innkeeper, a long-faced fellow with a retreating hairline, gives his name as Rupert and says as little else as possible.

Rupert will absolutely not reveal anything about anyone who may or may not be staying in his establishment. As a consequence, smugglers, Witch Hunters, heretics, and others who wish to remain anonymous frequently make use of the Brown Owl and then studiously pretend not to notice or recognise one another when they pass in the hall.

Adele Ketzenblum has taken a room here, as she often does when she is in Middenheim, and it is here that she is actually staying. She feels secure at the Brown Owl and even occasionally meets with other members of the Jade Sceptre in her room or in the common room.

## THE FREIBURG

Not far from the Great Temple of Ulric, the Freiburg is a sleepy district of wide streets, modest residences, and quietly prosperous businesses... or at least, it tries to be. Close to poorer, more disreputable districts to the east and south, suspicious characters such as foreigners, halflings, and the poor have been slowly moving into the fringes of the district, especially as a few ill-fated investments in Neus Emskrank have left some parts of the Freiburg uninhabited and ripe for squatters. Still, the Freiburg is home to most of the scholars and educated gentlemen in the city and remains largely a silver tier district.

## COLLEGIUM THEOLOGICA

The Collegium was founded in 1762. As its name suggests, it was originally a theological college whose main purpose was to train young people for the priesthood of Ulric and promote the publication and study of the cult's religious writings. Although these remain an important part of the Collegium's activities, its interests have broadened out into almost every field of study and research.

Unlike the great universities of Altdorf and Nuln, the Collegium Theologica does not have an Imperial charter granting it the formal status of a university. This is why it retains its ancient name instead of calling itself the University of Middenheim. The lack of a charter is a source of friction in some quarters, seen as another example of the Imperial authorities favouring Sigmarite Altdorf over the City of the White Wolf. However, the Collegium considers itself the equal of any university in the land, and is generally regarded as being a university in all but name.

The Collegium consists of a small but rambling campus of ancient dormitories, cloisters, and chapels, with occasional "gardens" meant to create the illusion of northern pine forests as places for quiet reflection. The campus is usually dotted with students hurrying to or from a class or on some errand for one of their instructors, students loafing about, and grey wolfskin-wearing wulpherolds (Collegium doorkeepers, groundskeepers, and footmen) with stout sticks terrorising both. For most people, particularly outsiders, the "Collegium" proper refers to the campus's main building, known as the Priest Wulcan Building or simply "Wulcan's." Professor Robertus von Oppenheim's offices are on the second storey in Wulcan's, a fact that is indicated by a faded, hard-to-read sign in the entrance hall. Finding the office is not easy, even knowing where to look. An **Average (2d) Intuition (Intelligence) check** is required. Failure indicates the character becomes quite lost and must pay a few brass pennies to a passing student or wulpherold.

The Collegium has an excellent library appended to the Vulcan building. Outsiders are not permitted to use it, although PCs who impress Professor von Oppenheim may be granted limited, supervised access.

Visiting Professor Robertus von Oppenheim is covered in more detail on page 87.

## TEMPLE OF SIGMAR

Despite long-standing friction between the Cults of Ulric and Sigmar, the Middenheim Temple of Sigmar is a large and impressive building, decorated with friezes of Sigmar's heroic and martial exploits. Even in the heart of Ulrican territory, the Temple of Sigmar is fairly well attended by congregants, such is the polytheistic nature of the Empire – most worshippers see no contradiction between praying to Ulric and Sigmar.

Visitors to the temple are likely to meet Peter Gospodin, a fiery warrior priest of Kislevite descent. Peter has bushy red eyebrows and a persistent shadow of a beard that won't go away no matter how often he shaves. Peter also has one leg, walks with a crutch, and is outraged that he has been left behind in a time of war to guard the temple. He will take his bad temper out on the PCs, but if given an opportunity to dole out Sigmar's righteous justice (say, because the PCs have discovered the lair of a Chaos cult), he will instantly become their friend for life.

## THE SCHOLAR'S

This inn is one of the most popular in the Freiburg, and if the PCs ask for advice on where to stay in the city, they will be directed here. It is convenient both to the Collegium Theologica (and is therefore a favourite watering hole of students and professors both) and the Temple of Ulric. As well as offering food and drink and a place to spend the day debating any topic under the sun, the Scholar's has a well-kept stable and sixteen rooms for the use of visiting scholars and other travellers.

The Scholar's is owned by Hugo and Petra Schmidt, and is packed with antiques and curios that Hugo has accumulated over the years, giving it a somewhat eccentric character that many scholars and wizards find to their liking. Hugo is particularly proud of his collection of chess sets that he leaves out for the use of his patrons. It includes ivory examples from as far afield as Cathay and Ind, as well as antique sets from all over the Old World. Hugo himself is an excellent chess player, and well disposed towards anyone who can offer him a challenging game. (Competitive Intelligence check; Hugo rolls **◆◆◆◆**. If anyone beats Hugo in chess, add 1 fortune point to the party pool.)

The Scholar's is a silver-tier establishment; it's three silver coins per night for a bed in a double room, five for a single. Dinner costs between one and three silver, and beer is five brass pennies per mug or a silver shilling for a small keg. The Scholar's also offers a particularly tasty Nordland mead for a silver shilling per mug.

## ASCHENBECK WAREHOUSE

Wolfgang von Aschenbeck's business concerns include many warehouses and stable-yards throughout the city, and even ownership or joint-ownership in several shops and a few inns and taverns. This squat, broad building of grey-brown brick is a warehouse with a sandy open space around back for wagons and coaches to stand while loading and unloading. There's also an attached stable, which

normally contains a team of draught oxen and occasionally is host to visiting horses. The muster yard has at least one covered wagon in it at all times.

Despite having all the visible trappings of an active place of business, this particular von Aschenbeck warehouse is little-used.

**Secret:** Werner Markheim ensures that this warehouse sees little use. He also keeps the single covered wagon constantly in the yard, strategically placed to block views of the cellar door from the street. In truth, the warehouse is used primarily as a meeting place for the members of the Purple Hand Chaos cult. Anyone visiting the cellar (the door is locked; **Hard (3d) Skulduggery (Ag)** to open or **Hard (3d) Athletics (St)** to break with an appropriate tool) will find that it has been made up as a strange and sinister chapel, with lush purple silk curtains hanging from the walls and decorated with leering masks hung on velvet ropes.

Investigating the warehouse's office will find logbooks and accounts of business dealings throughout von Aschenbeck's commercial empire, all kept by Markheim. These accounts will not agree with von Aschenbeck's official accounts, and make it clear that Markheim has been embezzling heavily for years.

## HALFWAY HOUSE

Also called "the Cockerel," this tavern is joyously, enthusiastically squalid, dirty, close, and loud. Its dingy sign depicts the Fighting Cockerel crest of the Mootland, with the words "Halfway House" written underneath apparently as an afterthought. Grease-stained parchment windows spill yellow light out into the street at all hours, and visitors will have to walk down several steps to enter the House's front door. Once inside, humans will find a too-low ceiling, too-crowded common room, and far-too-loud rambunctious crowd of halflings. (Dwarfs will find the ceiling fine, but everything else deplorable. For elves, this must be hell.)

The landlord is a rotund, spry halfling with curly dirty blonde hair named Otho Greenfields. He likes puns and thinks that the name of his establishment is incredibly clever.

Halfway House serves a bang-up dinner for only three brass pennies (five for humans because "they're bigger, so they eat more," which as anyone familiar with the halfling appetite knows is patently false). The price is fixed, but the menu changes every night. To anyone with a palate acclimated to Averheim's food, the Halfway House is likely to be the best meal they've eaten in weeks. Due to the close quarters, anyone larger than a dwarf suffers **■** to any physical action while in the Halfway House.

## CASTLE ROCK COACHES

Castle Rock is one of the largest coaching companies in the Empire, and the Middenheim depot is large and busy. It consists of a small office building across from a tall and somewhat pretentiously decorated hotel, with a stable running between the two. Coaches pull up in the central yard several times a day, coming in from as far afield as Averheim.

The depot boss is a big-bellied Middenlander named Gunther. He is brusque to anyone he believes is wasting his time, and obsequious to anyone he believes has the potential to make him and his depot a great deal of money.

The Castle Rock hotel provides roomy, comfortable, accommodations with a great deal of privacy. A bed in a single room is six silver shillings per night, or twenty for a week. There are also double- and triple-rooms, which are four silver shillings per night per bed (twelve for a week). Castle Rock does not have a kitchen, but does have a standing deal with Halfway House to order in meals for hungry travellers for a shilling. The staff will recommend the Scholar's, Halfway House, or Koch's to anyone who asks in regards to food.

## THE REST OF MIDDENHEIM

Surrounded as it is by the perilous Drakwald, the city of Middenheim stops rather abruptly at the edge of the Ulricsberg. The four great viaducts that lift the roads up to the city's gates pass over untamed and neglected wilderness, haunted by beastmen and worse monsters. The city's poor and dispossessed occasionally throw up a shanty-town in the shadow of the great rock or attempt to squat in the tunnels that honeycomb the Ulricsberg, but such attempts seldom last long before the inhabitants are dragged screaming into the darkness by some vile predator. With such a sharply limited area to work with, space in Middenheim is at a premium. Two and three-storey buildings are common, and many structures are slowly built up over centuries as more materials are brought up from the forest floor. Although the richer segments of the city still maintain broad avenues and the occasional park, the poor quarters are nightmarish warrens of tight alleys and ramshackle buildings leaning drunkenly against one another for support.

The Ulricsberg is ringed by a white stone wall, as much to keep people from wandering over the cliff as to keep enemies out. There are four main gates to the north, south, east, and west, each leading to one of the great viaducts, imaginatively named Nordgate, Sudgate, Ostgate, and Westgate. There's also a fifth gate, Morrsgate, where those too poor to afford cemetery space (extremely dear in the city) are brought to the edge of the rock and then ceremoniously hurled off the cliff.

Beneath the city, the Ulricsberg is riddled with tunnels that, rumour says, run all the way to the forest floor and beneath the earth. The Middenheim sewer network is connected to these tunnels, and some of the seedier elements of the city use the tunnels to travel without being detected by the city watch.

The deeper parts of the tunnels are overrun with vermin, creatures of Chaos, and strange rat-like beastmen. Middenheim's sewerjacks and ratcatchers are better paid, better trained, and better equipped than most in the Empire and battle fiercely to keep the city safe from below – and to keep the citizens of Middenheim from wandering down where it is not safe. During times of war, as now, the sewerjacks systematically seal off many tunnels. From time to time, the Graf or other nobles commission adventurers to descend into the Ulricsberg and see what secrets lie within. Rumours that a dwarf hold once lay within the Ulricsberg fuel some of these expeditions, as such a hold must be overflowing with gold and wealth.

## LIFE IN MIDDENHEIM

Middenheim is both the largest city in Middenland and the provincial capital. In times past, it has served as the seat of Emperors (or at least, pretender Emperors in open rebellion to the Sigmarite elected Emperor), and it is one of the most powerful and important cities in the entire Empire. Middenheimers are fiercely proud of their history, their heritage, their faith, and their city. Although



Sigmar is worshipped and respected in Middenheim, it is a proudly Ulrican community and the Cult of Sigmar has far less political power and influence in Middenheim than in the south.

As one of the largest cities in the Empire, Middenheim is commonly bustling with trade and the business of administration for the province and the Cult of Ulric. Tight quarters and fierce tempers make Middenheim a fairly raucous city as well. Brawls aren't uncommon, but it's rare that fisticuffs escalate to anything worse except among the criminal element.

Middenlanders are an infamously stubborn and fractious people, slow to accept change and prone to argue – sometimes violently – when change is forced upon them. They are proud of their heritage and disdainful of southerners, particularly Reiklanders. The men usually wear beards and often wear their hair long. Wolf pelts, worn in the Ulrican tradition, are a common adornment among the menfolk, and both men and women often wear blue, sometimes with white fur trim. Men and women commonly go armed in the streets, with a large knife or sword (or more rarely battle-axe) worn at the hip. Although it's rare that they ever use these weapons in anger within the city walls, life in the Drakwald encourages all Middenlanders to carry weapons and be proficient in their use “just in case.”

With most of Middenheim's sizeable standing army out of the city due to the war, the normally crowded city may seem slightly empty, especially in districts that heavily serve the soldiery. As time goes on this feeling goes away – the soldiers are replaced with refugees, mostly from Ostland and Hochland, fleeing the advancing Chaos horde.

## RELIGION

Middenheim is the holiest city in the Ulrican faith, and the city is staunchly Ulrican. Other Imperial cults are represented, with one or more temples for every major faith except for Manann (no river or other body of water), Myrmidia (too new and foreign), and Ranald (or at least, no publicly acknowledged temple of Ranald). Ulrican pilgrims come to the city from far and wide, and prayers and observances to Ulric are expected of all residents of the city.

Because of the Ulrican influence, wearing a wolfskin in accordance with Ulrican tradition (that is, the pelt of a wolf slain by one's own hand) is a mark of distinction and worthy of respect. Characters bearing a wolfskin gain  $\square$  to all Fellowship checks in Middenheim, even if they themselves are not devout Ulricans. Wearing a wolfskin in a manner not consistent with Ulrican tradition is considered disrespectful and worth  $\blacksquare$  to all such checks.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Middenheim is ruled directly by the Elector of Middenland, which is currently Graf Boris Todbringer. In the Graf's absence, his appointed steward (often a family member) speaks with his voice. Assisting the Graf in his rule of the city is a bewildering array of commissions, livery guilds, councils, and other administrata, most dating back centuries and several with no clearly defined duties, or areas of responsibility made obsolete by later events. Still, in a city as stubborn and tradition-bound as Middenheim, they persist.

## LAW, ORDER, AND DEFENCE

Law and order are normally provided by the city garrison. Patrols of blue-and-white uniformed soldiers walk the streets in two-to-four man teams (depending on district), armed with halberds and wearing mail shirts. Summary justice is common, but compared to Averheim corruption is low.

At the moment, the remaining Middenheim garrison is bolstered by the Aschenbeck Bravos, a mercenary company in the employ of Wolfgang von Aschenbeck. The Bravos wear the brook-and-tree livery of the von Aschenbeck family, and many city garrison patrols are accompanied by two Bravos. For more on the Aschenbeck Bravos, see page 86.

## THE ECONOMY

With no particular natural resources of its own to call upon, Middenheim is supported almost entirely by trade. Silver and iron flows into the city from mines in the Middle Mountains, wool from Nordland and Middenland, timber from the Drakwald, and food from all directions. Middenheim's craftsmen take these raw materials and convert them into finished goods that are sold throughout the province and beyond. Middenheim's weapons and armour are particularly excellent and well regarded. The phrase "Middenheim steel" means something or someone tested and reliable throughout the north of the Empire.

Another major source of income for Middenheim is a steady stream of pilgrims. Most come to visit the Temple of Ulric and the Sacred Flame, although there are Ulrican holy sites throughout the city (and the city itself is holy to Ulricans). The city's coaching lines, inns, taverns, and merchants all prosper when the roads are clear and the pilgrims come in droves; when the roads are especially unsafe and the pilgrims stay home, the city suffers.

Ordinarily, superior-quality hand weapons, great weapons, spears, halberds, daggers, flails, morning stars, and sabres are only eight times the normal price in Middenheim, rather than ten. The same is true of superior-quality mail shirts, chainmail, breastplate, and full plate armour. However, with the threat of war looming large in everyone's mind at the moment, anything that could conceivably be of use to a soldier on campaign (certainly including all weapons and armour) is 10% more expensive than usual.

## NON-HUMANS IN MIDDENHEIM

Even though Middenheim is a huge and cosmopolitan city by the standards of the Empire (only Nuln and Altdorf are larger), its relatively remote location means that it seldom plays host to foreigners of any description, including those who are non-human. The largest non-Imperial population is Kislevite, as befits a northern city.

The largest non-human population, as is common in the Empire, is halflings. While not as actively discriminated against as in Averheim, halflings remain a minority and an underclass in the north as well. There are few halfling-owned businesses and even halfling chefs are less popular in the north than elsewhere (some feel that a halfling chef is "soft" and a mark of southern frippery and elitism). The halfling community centres around a small number of halfling establishments, such as Halfway House (described on page 81). Halflings always have a reputation as thieves, but in Middenheim, with fewer other opportunities and with the convenient tunnel system for those of diminutive stature, it is more true than elsewhere.

There's almost no permanent dwarf presence in Middenheim. Those dwarfs who pass through the city are usually merchants or adventurers looking to explore the Middle Mountains in search of dwarf ruins or other evidence of dwarf settlements there in times gone by. The rumours of a dwarf hold in the depths of the Ulricsberg draw some dwarf adventurers, too.

High elves are very seldom seen in Middenheim and are treated with awe and suspicion by the lower classes. Wood elves are seen even more rarely, as wood elven distaste for cities is rather magnified for crowded, squalid ones like Middenheim. However, rumours of fey spirits that haunt the forests and hunt beastmen are endemic throughout Middenland and Nordland, many centring around the Laurelorn Forest in the northwest. Some Middenheimers may make the connection that these myths are about wood elves, and treat wood elf travellers with a respectful fear that borders on reverence. Everyone in Middenland has a family member who was killed by monsters in the forest. The question that Middenlanders try to answer by observing wood elves is this: are wood elves another monster of the forest, or an ally against them?

Ogres are a rare but welcome sight to Middenheimers, who are always looking for a strong arm against the beastmen and monsters of the Drakwald. The ogres seldom stay in the city long, as the nobles and wealthy soon hire them and send them off to fight against threats outside the city walls.

Tragically, von Oppenheim's divine ritual is, in fact, a creation of the Red Crown, and von Oppenheim is an unwitting pawn of the cult. Members of the Red Crown will be surreptitiously watching the PCs from the time they meet with von Oppenheim (several wulfherolds at the Collegium report to the cult) until they leave the city. If the PCs are ever in danger of losing the bell clapper or being unable to complete the ritual, the Red Crown cultists may well interfere on their behalf. Having sinister, masked figures come to their aid may well be a bizarre experience for the PCs, and cause them to doubt the validity of the ritual.

## THE JADE SCEPTRE

Taking its name from one of the magical treasures of Slaanesh, the Cult of the Jade Sceptre got its foothold in the city among the pleasure-seeking children of the local nobility. Its members can be found wherever the wealthy, bored, and fashionable meet.

The history of the Jade Sceptre is a patchy one. At one time it was the most powerful cult of Slaanesh in the Empire, but a series of reverses and mishaps – arising from ill-judged magical experiments as much as from the vigilance of Witch Hunters – has reduced its numbers sharply. The existing cell in Middenheim is one of the larger ones, numbering between twenty and thirty members.

The Jade Sceptre's agenda is less aggressive than those of the more ambitious Tzeentchian cults. Its members are mainly interested in pushing the limits of personal pleasure and indulgence rather than in ensuring the spread of Chaos. However, the Jade Sceptre's activities have been known to result in the accidental summoning of daemons and other destructive events.

The most notable member of the Jade Sceptre in the context of this adventure is Adele Ketzenblum. She counts amongst her closest allies within the cult several members who share her enthusiasm for inflicting pain on others. While the larger cult may be more inclined to lay low, quietly recruit those who may share their tastes, and simply indulge themselves, Ketzenblum and her allies are more driven. It helps that their idea of "indulging themselves" includes kidnapping out-of-towners in the night, dragging them to one of the cult's hidden lairs, and torturing them to death over several days.

## THE PURPLE HAND

Some twenty years ago, the Purple Hand was the most powerful cult of Tzeentch in Middenheim, and perhaps throughout the Empire. Its leadership in the city was decimated by a group of adventurers in a series of events that shook the city to its core. The Purple Hand survives as scattered remnants, including one cell in Middenheim. The Middenheim cell, perhaps due to the influence of Werner Markheim, strives to gain power and dominance over the Empire via economic means. In addition to the traditional acts of human sacrifice and dabbling in Chaos magic, the Purple Hand attempts to "steer the markets" and manipulate the Empire's economy by creating artificial shortages and surpluses of goods. In practice this means that the Purple Hand mostly just tries to acquire as much wealth, power, and influence as possible, all in service of a grand plan that none of its members truly understand.

The presence of the bell clapper in Middenheim is not known to the Purple Hand, but if they discover it they will be as interested in acquiring it as any other cult, and more than willing to kill to get it.

## CHAOS CULTS IN MIDDENHEIM

Three major Chaos cults operate in Middenheim, and each plays a role in the events of this adventure.

### THE RED CROWN

These followers of Tzeentch are responsible for the present emergency. Through their efforts, the beastmen and other horrors that lurk in the Drakwald have become united into a serious threat to the Empire, even as a larger Chaos force moves down from the north. The Red Crown and the Conspiracy are using each other for their own ends, each thinking it has the upper hand.

The Black Cowl sees the Chaos uprising fomented by the Red Crown as nothing more than a useful diversion as the Conspiracy's plans go forward. But the Red Crown sees an opportunity to regain its former glory and raise itself up in the favour of the Changer of the Ways. The members of the Red Crown plan to use the disruption caused by the Conspiracy's Chaos-tainted bell as the signal for fresh attacks from both inside and outside the Empire, overwhelming this human realm and establishing a permanent base at the heart of the Old World.

In Middenheim, the Red Crown have a modestly powerful and influential cell. Red Crown members have infiltrated the city garrison, the Collegium Theologica, the most important Middenheim coaching lines, and even the Middenland roadwardens. The tunnels beneath Middenheim provide the cult with plenty of places to hide their more mutated members, and the Drakwald is full of the beastmen and monsters the cult reveres.

## PART TWO — SOMETHING ROTTEN IN MIDDENHEIM

In this section, the PCs arrive in Middenheim and set about the various tasks assigned them by the three major NPCs.

For the sake of clarity, each task is presented here as an individual scene. However, the scenes need not be played out in any particular order and the PCs do not need to complete one task before proceeding to the next. In fact, it is preferable to run the scenes simultaneously, with each encounter taking place as the PCs find themselves in the right place. This section comes to an end once the PCs are ready to leave for Altdorf, which hopefully will not be until they have completed at least the Wizard's Task.

- ✦ **The Wizard's Task** follows the main thread of this adventure. The PCs must consult with Professor Robertus von Oppenheim at the Collegium Theologica and persuade the remaining priests at the Temple of Ulric to permit his ritual to go ahead. This scene begins on page 87.
- ✦ **The Captain's Task** is to find and consult the Witch Hunter Adele Ketzenblum, discovering what she knows about the Black Cowl. What the PCs do not know is that she is secretly a worshipper of Slaanesh and a member of the Cult of the Jade Sceptre, and she will try to kill them in order to keep her secret. This scene begins on page 93.
- ✦ **The Noble's Task** is to investigate Wolfgang von Aschenbeck, a Middenheim businessman and rival of Graf Friedrich von Kaufman. Initially they will uncover convincing evidence that he too is a follower of Chaos, but this has been manufactured by his business manager Werner Markheim, who is himself a member of the Tzeentchian Cult of the Purple Hand. This scene begins on page 97.

## CONSTANT THREAT

This part of the adventure consists mainly of investigation and talking to NPCs, and there may be times when the excitement begins to flag, especially for a group that is fond of action. In order to maintain tension, follow the pulp writer's maxim and "have a guy with a gun (or in this case, sword) kick in the door."

From the moment they arrive in Middenheim, the PCs will have plenty of opportunities to make enemies, so there should be no shortage of potential attackers. Here are a few examples:

### THE SKAVEN

Skaven have been beneath Middenheim since its earliest days, and it is unlikely that the presence of a warpstone artefact in the city could escape their notice. Every Grey Seer and would-be sorcerer among the Ratmen will be mad with lust for the object. Clan Eshin gutter runners will be hired to bring back the clapper and kill anyone who tries to prevent them. Krasskulk may even have kept pace with the PCs on their journey north, arriving in the city soon after the PCs do.

The details of a Skaven attack are left to the GM. Typically there will be one to two skaven for each PC, and they will approach using stealth rather than mounting a frontal assault. Another common skaven tactic is to have one or more gutter runners watch the PCs secretly, ready to dart in when they are distracted by another enemy.

### THE JADE SCEPTRE

If the PCs have already fallen foul of Adele Ketzenblum, she can arrange to have them attacked by Jade Sceptre cultists at any time. Even without Adele's involvement, the cult will be as eager as the skaven to gain possession of the warpstone alloy bell clapper.

The cult takes its name from one of the magical treasures most commonly associated with the Prince of Pleasure. Despite its name, the mythical sceptre is said to be carved from solid warpstone. The clapper is certainly shaped something like a sceptre, and it would take very little for a rumour to spread among the gossip-loving devotees of Slaanesh that their deity's greatest relic has suddenly appeared in their midst.

While they can be as deadly a foe as the Chaos warriors of Khorne, the followers of Slaanesh favour a subtle approach. They prefer manipulation and deception over outright violence, although they are certainly capable of violence if the mood takes them.

An attack by followers of Slaanesh would most likely follow after a carefully planned attempt to distract or disable the PCs using drink, drugs, or other pleasures. The perfect plan would render the PCs unconscious so that the clapper can be recovered and the PCs themselves kidnapped for sacrifice in the obscene rites of the Dark Prince.

### THE PURPLE HAND

If the PCs have made an enemy of Werner Markheim, he can order Purple Hand cultists to attack them at any time. Otherwise they too will want to get their hands (or claws, or tentacles) on the clapper. They are ignorant of the Conspiracy's plans, and even if they did know of them they probably would not care. A Chaos artefact of such potential power will blind them to anything but their own ambition.

A Purple Hand attack will involve at least two cultists for each PC, led by a cult leader who also has the powers of a specialist wizard using spells with the traits Chaos and/or Tzeentch. For a tougher encounter, the group might include one or more cult mutants. The attack will rely largely on magic to subdue the PCs so that the cult leader can lay hands on the clapper.

If the PCs get into trouble in this encounter, a group of Red Crown cultists might step in to help them, having been secretly watching to make sure that everything goes according to plan. The spectacle of two cults of Tzeentch fighting each other is bound to confuse and unsettle the players, perhaps sowing seeds of doubt about the ritual.

### THE CITY WATCH

The PCs have several opportunities to fall foul of Middenheim's authorities during this chapter. Both Adele Ketzenblum and Werner Markheim are respected individuals so long as their secret Chaos affiliations remain unknown, and either one could try to frame the PCs as Chaos worshippers if they become a threat – or in Adele's case, once they are no longer interesting or useful.

A force from the city watch will consist of one or two watchmen for each PC, led by an officer. Especially if it has been sent by Markheim, the group may consist of a mixture of watchmen and Aschenbeck Bravos led by a watch officer. All members of the group have the Soldier NPC profile, while the officer has Weapon Skill trained.

## MIDDENHEIM

While they linger in Middenheim, the PCs may still be interested in hearing news or rumours from the front.

### RUMOURS

- + “Were an Averlander that saved the Emperor’s life I hear, a big bear of a captain. He must want to be Elector of Averland something fierce!”
- + “They say the Emperor’s only alive because a white wizard used his magic on him. Gives me the chills – they oughtn’t let a wizard do magic to our Emperor. Who knows what he’s really doing?”
- + “The Reiksguard have smashed the Chaos host! The Empire is saved!”
- + “No one’s seen the Emperor since he was wounded. Just his champion, Schwarzhelm. Some say his injury’s worse than we thought, but I know the truth: he’s been mutated. Our own Emperor, a mutant! Dark days. Dark days!”
- + “The Averlanders are the toast of Altdorf, and they’ve risen high in the Emperor’s favour, too. Even got Averland troops defending the Emperor’s palace! Too bad it weren’t a Middenland captain who reached his side first when he fell.”

### NEWS

- + “The Emperor is secure in Altdorf and recovering from his wounds. He is guarded vigilantly by his Champion, Ludwig Schwarzhelm, and Captain Marcus Baerfaust of Averheim, the man who fought to his side during the battle.”
- + “That white wizard, I think his name is Mauer, has taken over as the Emperor’s personal physician. I’m not sure why. His healing magiks did save the Emperor’s life, I hear, but still – a wizard?”
- + “Reiksmarshall Helborg is pressing the Chaos host hard. Wolfenburg was sacked but the northmen had no time to even get warm in the ruins before the army was on them.”
- + “Graf Boris Todbringer has been given command of the Grand Army’s rearguard. He’s detached from the main host and is stamping out beastmen in the Drakwald. Always send a Middenlander on a beastman hunt, eh?”
- + “I think we have to face a hard truth. Someone betrayed the army to the Enemy; that’s how the ambush occurred. How the Emperor was injured. That’s why those three Averlanders are so high in favour right now; they saved his life, so they can be trusted when no one else can. At least, I hope they can be trusted.”

Assuming that the city watch patrol that attacks the PCs is not corrupt or co-opted by one of the PCs’ enemies, they will attempt to bring the PCs in alive. Once captured, the PCs will be stripped of weapons and armour, incarcerated in a dark, dank cell for weeks, and dragged out for a perfunctory trial where, unless one of their allies intervenes on their behalf, they will almost certainly be found guilty of something and then hurled over the edge of the Ulricsberg. Escape, perhaps through the tunnels beneath the city, may be an adventure in its own right!

## THE ASCHENBECK BRAVOS

This force of retired soldiers, hired out by von Aschenbeck as guards and messengers, amounts to a private army under his command. In practice, however, it is Werner Markheim who commands the Bravos, as von Aschenbeck has delegated responsibilities concerning payroll and personnel to Markheim. While he has been careful so far not to use the Bravos in any way that would cause the authorities concern, Markheim will not hesitate to send groups of Bravos after the PCs if he sees them as a threat, or even an annoyance. One such encounter is described under **Investigating Again** on page 100.

The Bravos normally wear leather armour and are armed with swords and kite shields. They wear red doublets with the von Aschenbeck family crest, a brook and a tree, embroidered on the breast. It is also a tradition amongst the bravos to bear a badge or crest of their former army regiment somewhere in their kit, which often takes the form of a small patch stitched onto one shoulder or simply some coloured scarves tied around one arm. Aschenbeck Bravos have Soldier NPC profiles with 2 extra Expertise and their officers have Weapon Skill trained.

Most Aschenbeck Bravos, although perfectly willing to kill at Markheim’s command, are not Chaos cultists and have no idea that their boss is a heretic. A small number of the Bravos, including several of the officers, are also members of the Purple Hand.



## ARRIVING IN MIDDENHEIM

When the PCs reach Middenheim, it is worth taking some time to describe the city. It is unique in the Empire and has a personality all its own. The GM can read or paraphrase the following to the players:

Your first sight of Middenheim comes long before you reach the city. Rising out of the Drakwald Forest like a mighty tower, the Ulricsberg is visible above the trees for miles. As the hours pass, you begin to appreciate the sheer size of the city. You keep getting closer, and it keeps looking bigger, but you still have not arrived. Taal's beard, just how big is the place?

As you approach the foot of the rock, craning your necks to stare at the city walls hundreds of feet above you, you pass through a broad, fortified gatehouse. Immediately, the road begins to rise, climbing up and up, above the height of the trees, until you are riding along with a sheer drop on either side of the broad thoroughfare. The forest floor – indeed, the crown of the great trees – is far below you. The road is crowded with traffic, carts and coaches flowing into and out of the city. Many of the carts carry red flags or badges bearing the sign of a tree with a brook running past its roots.

It is almost half an hour before your coach passes through the massive East Gate and enters the City of the White Wolf. Once inside, you drive along a wide, paved street between well-appointed shops and inns, catching a glimpse of the comfortable homes that line the streets behind. Through another archway, you find yourself at the depot of Castle Rock coaches.

The staff of the depot leaps into action as your coach pulls into the depot. Bowing flunkies open the doors with a flourish before glancing up at you with ill-disguised surprise and a little disappointment.

“They thought you’d be Graf Friedrich himself,” says Werther. “Not many take a coach off-schedule like this.”

Werther then climbs out of the coach and pulls a packet of papers from under his seat. Depot staff set about unloading the luggage and tending to the horses as Werther walks into the depot building, giving the PCs an opportunity to take in their surroundings (just on the edge of the Freiburg) and notice the number of places Graf Wolfgang von Aschenbeck's personal crest appears (quite a few).

In a few moments, the manager emerges, a big-bellied Middenlander with an unruly beard, a receding hairline, and long hair spilling over the wolf-fur ruff he wears at his shoulders.

“Welcome to Middenheim,” he says with an ingratiating smile. “I see you’re on business for Graf Friedrich von Kaufmann of Averheim. You can rely on me for anything you need while you’re here. Should I send your bags across to the hotel?”

Following his gesture, you see that one side of the courtyard is occupied by a coaching inn, also called The Castle Rock.

The manager leads you over to the inn, talking happily. “This is the second surprise we’ve had from Averheim in as many days,” he says. “Yesterday one of our own coaches brought us a Witch Hunter about some important business. Not that I pry, you understand. Our customers’ business is their own, I always say.”

## THE BLACK COWL

Of the three major NPCs, only Luminary Mauer has sent the PCs to Middenheim on a mission that concerns the clapper directly. In some ways, this makes him a perfect candidate for being the Black Cowl, but it makes him just as perfect as a red herring.

If Mauer is the Black Cowl, he knows the truth about the ritual, and von Oppenheim is one of his underlings in the Conspiracy.

If the Black Cowl is Captain Baerfaust or Graf Friedrich, then Luminary Mauer has been manipulated by the Black Cowl just like so many others. Using his interest in Chaos, the Black Cowl encouraged a growing correspondence between the Luminary and von Oppenheim, which led to Mauer learning about von Oppenheim's supposed cleansing ritual.

This is an opening for the PCs to ask about Adele Ketzenblum. See **The Captain's Task** on page 93. Should the PCs elect not to stay at the Castle Rock inn, the manager – Gunther – becomes much less friendly.

## THE WIZARD'S TASK

The main thread of the adventure revolves around the bell-clapper that the PCs acquired in Book One. They have a letter of introduction from Luminary Mauer to Professor Robertus von Oppenheim at Middenheim's Collegium Theologica, and must persuade the priests at the Temple of Ulric to permit them to conduct a ritual following von Oppenheim's specifications, which is intended to remove the object's Chaos taint.

## PROFESSOR ROBERTUS VON OPPENHEIM

Robertus von Oppenheim is a slender man of medium height with dark, wavy hair and blue eyes. His narrow face wears a slightly distracted expression, as though his thoughts are elsewhere. As a professor at the Collegium Theologica, he wears (somewhat dusty) grey scholar's robes and a fur mantle. A pair of half-moon spectacles perches on his nose and he often misplaces them, or forgets he is wearing them, to somewhat comic effect.

His family sent him to the Collegium as a student, with the intention that he should enter the priesthood of Ulric. However, as his studies progressed, the young von Oppenheim discovered other interests. His teachers were initially worried by his interest in the powers of Chaos, but his doctoral thesis on the application of divine magic to detect and counteract Chaotic corruption was well received and some of his methods have become standard weapons in the Witch Hunter's arsenal. He turned down offers from both Altdorf and Nuln to stay on at the Collegium as a professor and to continue his research.

Perhaps as a result of his studies into the Great Enemy, Professor von Oppenheim is just a touch eccentric... or mad. He has a reverence for old books, scrolls, and the written word that, after prolonged exposure, is unsettling. When he speaks, he reaches out

and touches his texts as he references each one – and it is seldom that he speaks without referencing or quoting something that he has read. He is more comfortable reading and writing than he is speaking face to face, and writes many letters with other scholars throughout the Empire (including Luminary Mauer and several agents of the Conspiracy). In general, he is inclined to believe anything he reads to be true.

## THE AWFUL TRUTH

Professor Robertus von Oppenheim, although well meaning, is terribly and deliberately misguided in his research. It is possible that his theories have merit, but the details of his ritual have been hopelessly corrupted by the efforts of the Red Crown cult, who believe that the bell clapper can be used to create more mutants. Von Oppenheim's eccentric bibliophilia created the opening the Red Crown needed – in short, von Oppenheim would believe anything if the book he read it in was old and respectable enough. The Red Crown introduced two books into von Oppenheim's library: an ancient and wholly unmodified copy of the *Mysterie Moste Devine*, a theological text proposing that faith and faith alone is the true weapon against Chaos; and a faded and heavily edited (by the Red Crown) tome by Institoris Kramer titled *Hammer of the Gods*. Von Oppenheim is very protective of his books, but if the PCs are able to convince him to share them he will reluctantly allow the PCs to read them in his presence. A **Daunting (4d) Education (Int) check** after a few hours study will lead a PC to believe that the edition of *Hammer of the Gods* von Oppenheim has in his library is not accurate to its original text. Unfortunately, it's the only copy in Middenheim, so pinpointing the exact discrepancies will be impossible over the near term.

Instead of removing the taint of Chaos from the clapper, his ritual will simply mask it. The Black Cowl knows this, and intends to use it to bring the Empire to its knees.

## MEETING THE PROFESSOR

The Collegium Theologica is located at the edge of the Freiburg district, close to the Temple of Sigmar. The PCs will have no trouble asking directions. They will also be able to pick up some common knowledge about this great Middenheim institution. See the Collegium Theologica description on page 80.

When the PCs reach von Oppenheim's office, he pops up from behind a towering drift of books and papers like a rabbit emerging from its hole. He takes their letter of introduction from the Luminary, opens it (with annoying ease, if the PCs have already tried and failed to open it themselves), and reads for a minute. Then he looks back at the PCs and smiles.

“Good!” he says, “I’ve been expecting you. Max! More chairs in here! And fetch some tea and cakes!” A harried-looking graduate student pops up from behind another heap of paper and hurries to comply.

While the chairs, tea, and cake are on their way, von Oppenheim makes conversation, asking the PCs about their journey and their impressions of Middenheim so far. When everyone is seated and served, von Oppenheim pulls a bottle of brandy from a desk drawer and offers it around.

“Anyone care to indulge?” he asks. “I find a little in my tea sharpens the thinking. Well, let us get to business. You have the item that the Luminary mentioned to me?”

If the PCs have the clapper with them, von Oppenheim offers to take it, although he will not be unduly troubled if they decline. “There is no lock that cannot be opened; no vault that cannot be breached; only the heart of a faithful man is inviolate,” he says, touching a faded old book with the symbol of Ulric picked out on it in gold. “It will be as safe with you as with anyone, I am certain.”

During their interview, von Oppenheim is happy to answer any questions the PCs may have, curious as to how the PCs have acquired this mysterious artefact, and eager to hear any news about his friend Konrad Mauer.

Von Oppenheim has the following things to say on the following subjects (almost always citing a source or quoting a learned scholar, caressing the spine of each book as he does so).

### THE WAR

“The holy texts say: ‘Not strength nor swords nor armies wins wars; only the will of the gods.’ Ulric’s blessings on our Emperor and his brave soldiers; may they always be triumphant.”

### THE EMPEROR’S INJURY

“Is the Emperor wounded? I... hadn’t heard. It’s not in any of my books.”

### LUMINARY MAUER

“I believe the poet says ‘Knowledge is the light of reason,’ although I confess to not understanding quite what he means by that. But certainly, Herr Luminary Mauer, as a Light Wizard, must be very knowledgeable. I look forward to his letters very much.”

### SKAVEN

“Ah, yes, the ratmen. Defeated by Count Mandred the Rat-Slayer in 1124 IC. Herod Hemmler’s treatise on the war is definitive, and very nearly contemporary. Curious creatures; I can find no record of their existence before that time, or since.”

### THE BLACK COWL

“Who? He’s... not in any of my books.”

## THE BLACK COWL

If the PCs interrogate von Oppenheim in detail about how he came up with his ritual, he will ultimately implicate a member of the Conspiracy, although neither he nor the PCs are likely to know that’s what he’s done. Von Oppenheim’s copy of the *Mysterie Moste Devine* comes to him by way of the Black Cowl, either as a gift from Luminary Mauer, or as a book “seized” by Captain Baerfaust and then passed on to Adele Ketzenblum (who, having no interest in it, gave it to the Collegium). It was this book that placed von Oppenheim on the path that led him to seek out a copy of *Hammer of the Gods* and ultimately to develop his tragically flawed ritual.

Perhaps if the PCs examine the book, the inside front cover is inscribed with a brief note describing its origins.

## THE BELL CLAPPER

"It's not often I get to apply my research to a living, breathing – ah, this is neither. Anyway. A real specimen. I'm quite keen to see how it all works. Oh, not to worry, though, we'll be quite safe; the shielding properties of lead are well established dating back to *Bones of the Earth*, the foundation of Imperial metallurgy in the seventh century. Or seventeenth. Hmm, let me check."

## THE RITUAL

"Oh! Yes, well, not to worry, I didn't just make this up you know. I got the idea from the *Mysterie Moste Devine*, that faith and the divine are the strongest weapons against corruption. Now, divine weaponry – that line of research lead me to the *Hammer of the Gods* which had some clear notes on the potency of holy power and the inability of Chaos to stand before it. Now, applying Herr Strauss's theory of Transcendent Thought – oh, but I'm sure Luminary Mauer must have explained this."

## THE SACRED FLAME

"A most remarkable sight. Fleiderschmitt's description is quite the best, of course – 'Ulric's holy fang, flashing in the night' – but what am I saying? We are in Middenheim; we can simply go and see it for ourselves, if the priests will allow it. I have read that the flame is the result of an underground reservoir of a flammable gas of some sort, but most scholars agree that the flame is a pure manifestation of Ulric's will. It's difficult to find anything in the Empire more holy than that."

## "DIVINE MAGIC"

"Oh, my theory! Yes, well, it's still rather controversial, although I believe there's some corroborating evidence in the *Mysterie Moste Devine* and a few other places. In essence I propose that holy miracles are derived from the same proximate source as a wizard's spells – that is to say, the Winds of Magic – and that the will of the gods and the prayers of the faithful are manifested through the action of those Winds. It's, ah, not as widely accepted as I would like, but I'm sure that once my book is finished people will come around. And no one will want to burn me at the stake anymore. This ritual could help prove my theory!"

## THE PRIESTS OF ULRIC

"We'll need the permission of a senior priest of Ulric to attempt the ritual. I've written letters of inquiry, and, well, the whole affair is proceeding rather slowly. With Ar-Ulric and several of the other senior High Priests away or busy, my consultation of the cult rolls leads me to believe that our best chance lies with either High Priest Weiss, who is in overall command at the moment, or Priest Frost, who administers pilgrimage access to the Sacred Flame."

## GRAF WOLFGANG VON ASCHENBECK

"Von Aschenbeck – minor family from out towards Nordland, I believe. Todmeister's *Genealogy* records them as far back as the sixteenth century, although I believe the family name was Eschenbach at the time. Ah. I'm afraid I haven't read any of the recent texts on Middenland's nobility, so I can't tell you more than that."

## ADELE KETZENBLUM

"Who? She's not in any of my books."

Ultimately, von Oppenheim's goal in the conversation is to enlist the PCs' aid to gain access to the Sacred Flame. Von Oppenheim suffers from a severe disadvantage in getting the priests of Ulric to do anything, in that he is only comfortable interacting by letter and the priests are not terribly fond of the reading or writing. He will beg the PCs to gain him access to the Sacred Flame, and even offer to match Luminary Mauer's reward for success if the PCs are recalcitrant. He suggests speaking to High Priest Weiss and/or Priest Frost, as either can grant access to the Flame.

## THE TEMPLE OF ULRIC

After meeting with von Oppenheim, the PCs will presumably wish to visit the Temple of Ulric and meet with Weiss or Frost and convince one of them to allow them to perform their ritual. In order for the adventure to proceed as it is written, they should ultimately be successful in this task. It does not, however, have to be easy.

Although the Cult of Ulric is comparatively no-nonsense and brusque as bureaucracies go in the *Warhammer* world, it is still a large and complex organisation. Paperwork gets lost. Petty, greedy, or lazy officials may refuse requests, demand bribes, or simply not be bothered to help in any way. In order to even gain access to High Priest Weiss or Priest Frost, the PCs will have to brave a gauntlet of petty functionaries and minor bureaucrats.

In general, the PCs will have to make a Charm (Fel) or Leadership (Fel) check to convince the array of bureaucrats to let them see anyone of importance. This check is Average (2d), and may be modified as follows:

- + The group's Party Sheet has the Reputable trait:
- + The group's Party Sheet has the Infamous trait:
- + For each PC who is a follower of Ulric:
- + For each PC whose career has the Religion trait:
- + For each PC whose career has the Priest trait:
- + For each PC whose career has the Bureaucrat trait:
- + For each PC who is an obvious Sigmarite:
- + The PCs are wearing wolfskins:
- + The PCs wish to see High Priest Weiss:

If the PCs succeed, they are granted a brief audience with Priest Frost. (Weiss is harder to get, as noted above.) This audience is long enough to make one argument in favour of allowing the ritual – probably another Charm check, although good arguments can be made for Leadership (for Weiss), Education (for Frost), or Guile (if the PCs want to risk lying to a priest). If the argument successfully influences the priest, he'll tell the PCs that he'll think about their request and ask them to come back tomorrow. Three such successful interviews are enough to grant permission for the ritual. Using one of the "strong" arguments listed for that NPC should grant either a bonus to the check or two successful influence results on a success, GM's choice. Any successful interviews grant the PCs  on future attempts to get an audience.

Failure on a check means the functionary tells the PCs everyone is busy, and asks them to come back tomorrow.

## WHY DELAY

Why bother with the frustrating bureaucracy at all? GMs are certainly free to streamline this process, perhaps condensing it all to a single meeting with Weiss (and if that fails, a meeting with Frost). However, the red tape serves two purposes. First of all, it keeps the PCs in Middenheim long enough (hopefully), to resolve the other two tasks. Second of all, it helps reinforce the idea that the Empire is flawed, and even that the PCs are flawed – after all, if they go through quite a lot of trouble to purify the bell clapper and then discover that they have not purified it at all, they may begin to doubt other decisions they've made in the past. Like who they've decided to trust. Or if they can trust anyone.

### PRIEST ALBRECHT

The first line of defence against visitors, time-wasters, foreigners, and Sigmarites is Priest Albrecht. A fat man with a stringy beard, a grey wolf-skin cloak, and stained and faded blue robe, Albrecht would much rather finish his lunch than help the PCs in any way – and it doesn't seem to matter what time of day they call upon him, Albrecht is just finishing his lunch. Albrecht is just one of many minor priests and lay officials that people the Temple of Ulric; most of them are just as awful as he is.

### HIGH PRIEST WEISS

High Priest Weiss is a former member of the Teutogen Guard, the personal bodyguard of Ar-Ulric, and looks the part. He is a large man in his early sixties, with steely blue eyes and a long, white beard. Even when performing administrative duties in the temple, he wears chain mail, a heavy white wolf-skin cloak, and keeps a massive two-handed hammer close at hand. He is gruff and laconic in his speech, and has no time for fools. Weiss somewhat resents the fact that he has been left behind by the army, and is not currently smiting the forces of Chaos. High Priest Weiss is currently the priest in overall command of the Temple of Ulric in Middenheim, and most of his day is taken up with frustrating paperwork, meetings with temple staff, mollicoddling important cult donors and allies, and various ceremonial duties.

Strong arguments that may win Weiss over include:

- ✦ If the ritual works, it will be a resounding blow against the forces of Chaos.
- ✦ Every precaution that can possibly be taken has been taken; Luminary Mauer and Professor von Oppenheim are experts and have decades of experience with this sort of thing.
- ✦ This is a chance for Weiss to help the army at the front: Luminary Mauer would be here to do it himself, but he is currently fighting in the war.
- ✦ The PCs are also resentful that they were passed over for service at the front.
- ✦ The PCs are brave or strong warriors, or devout Ulricans, or both.

### PRIEST FROST

Priest Frost is a young but rising member of the Temple hierarchy. A star student at the Collegium Theologica, he is fiercely intelligent but physically clumsy, and had the misfortune to lose a foot in a "training accident" which has permanently excused him from military duties. (He lost his foot during his initiation, when he hunted and killed a wolf with only a knife.) His wooden prosthetic foot works well and is invisible beneath his blue-and-grey robes (with wolf-skin mantle, of course), but he still walks with a slight limp and a noticeable clopping sound. Priest Frost has broad responsibility for the pilgrims who come to Middenheim, monitoring when various holy sites are available for pilgrims to visit, ensuring the upkeep of the holy sites, smoothing over any tensions that may arise between pilgrims and local Middenheimers, and collecting a tithe from the pilgrims.

Strong arguments that may win Frost over include:

- ✦ The ritual is founded on sound theological principles.
- ✦ Von Oppenheim is a professor at the Collegium Theologica.
- ✦ If the ritual works, Priest Frost's status may improve as he receives a reputation for good judgement.
- ✦ Von Oppenheim and Mauer (and possibly the PCs) may be valuable political allies for Priest Frost (especially if it is now known that Mauer has risen high in the Emperor's favour).
- ✦ With the elder priests otherwise occupied by the war, this is a chance for Priest Frost to demonstrate his leadership potential.

## THE RITUAL

Once permission has been gained, the PCs will schedule a time one evening (after the temple is closed for normal business) to bring the bell clapper and Professor von Oppenheim in and perform the ritual. Priest Frost, a curious scholar in his own right, will also attend. (High Priest Weiss may attend if he feels that its required; otherwise he has other things to do.)

### A FEW PRELIMINARIES

Before the ritual can actually take place, of course, there are any number of tasks the PCs may need to accomplish, or complications they must deal with. The GM should feel free to use as many or as few of the following as desired (or make up his own):

- ✦ The PCs must acquire wolf skins for the ritual, which requires a trip to the Drakwald, luring a wolf pack, and killing and skinning as many wolves as there are PCs. For extra challenge, von Oppenheim must come and kill a wolf himself. (Von Oppenheim is comically inept; arranging for him to successfully kill a wolf is the real challenge.)
- ✦ The PCs must receive a blessing from each of their patron deities to be permitted to take part in the ritual. PCs whose patron priests can't be found in Middenheim (such as dwarf or elf PCs, or Myrmidians) must either take command of their own spiritual welfare, lie to the priests of Ulric, or sit out the ritual.
- ✦ A rare or expensive ingredient must be secured (griffon teeth, for example). This may require a trip to the Drakwald. A halfling merchant offers to supply the ingredient for a discount price – but can it be trusted? Is it stolen or counterfeit?

- ✦ The PCs are accosted by Chaos cultists, perhaps the Jade Sceptre, who want the bell clapper for themselves. As things seem desperate, a group of Red Crown cultists leap to the PCs' defence, then flee.
- ✦ Scheduling is proving to be a real nightmare. The PCs must persuade either a trio of knights-aspirant planning to stand vigil or a group of wealthy pilgrims from Carroburg to give up their scheduled time with the Sacred Flame. Otherwise the PCs will have to wait a week.
- ✦ The goal of these preliminaries is to sow a seed of doubt about the ritual. Ideally, the PCs will cut a corner or fail at one of these tasks (kill von Oppenheim's wolf for him; buy the griffon teeth from the halfling merchant). Then, when the ritual goes terribly wrong later on, they will wonder if it was their fault. (It isn't, of course. The Red Crown's ritual was never going to "work" properly.)

### THE RITUAL BEGINS

When the PCs arrive at the Temple of Ulric with von Oppenheim and the box containing the clapper, the ritual can begin. Read or paraphrase the following to the players:

The Sacred Flame casts an eerie, shifting light over the darkened interior of the temple. Entering the cavernous space, you see Priest Frost standing by the Flame, talking to a junior priest while three initiates draw strange symbols on the floor with chalk. Everyone looks up as you make your way towards the Flame, holding the box with the strange object inside.

"Very well," says Frost when you reach the Flame. "Everything is ready. Professor?" Von Oppenheim steps forward, pulling a sheaf of notes out of his jacket.

At this point, von Oppenheim instructs the PCs on their role in the ritual. Their exact roles will depend on the number of PCs and the whim of the GM; a few examples are given below.

No matter how well or how badly the PCs perform in their various tasks, the ritual will appear to be a success. The goal is to give the PCs something to do so that the PCs do not feel reduced to the role of spectators at what is, after all, the climax of this chapter, and also to create opportunities for the GM to face the players with challenges that will keep the tension high – and later, when it is discovered that the ritual did not do exactly what the PCs expected it would, to give the players something to wonder and worry about: is it somehow their fault?

The ritual can be enacted over 3 rounds. Each PC performing a sub-task has three chances to mess it up.

### THE GRAND HOWL

"The sanctity of this space must be maintained throughout the ritual," says von Oppenheim. "One of you must stand in the foyer by the main doors, dressed only in a wolfskin, and howl like a wolf the whole time. This will draw down the power of Ulric to the spot and repel any hostile magic or other power aimed into the Temple."

Howling continuously is harder work than it may seem. The first round of howling is an **Easy (1d) Resilience (To) check**. Each subsequent round increases the difficulty by 1, Average (2d) and

then Hard (3d). Failure means that the character needs to pause for a few seconds and catch his or her breath before taking up the howl again.

Any net ☠ or ✨ may represent a complication the PC must overcome, such as:

- ✦ An inebriated warrior priest or Knight of the White Wolf comes by, finds the PC howling like a madman, and joins in. His comradely back-slapping, friendly presence, and persistent offers of a drink from his wineskin add □■● to the next check.
- ✦ A young initiate, knowing nothing of the ritual, comes across the PC howling by the doors and assumes that he or she is ill or in pain. His well-meaning attempts to help can provide an interesting roleplaying opportunity as the player attempts to answer his concerned questions without stopping the howl.

### THE FLAME PROCESSION

Von Oppenheim lights a taper from the Sacred Flame, sets it into a lantern, and hands it to another of the PCs.

"Take this on a circuit of the chambers around the Temple, to trace out a line of divine protection around us."

"I've had the path marked out," adds Priest Frost. "Follow the chalk marks on the floor."

Following the trail in the dim light is an **Easy (1d) Observation (Int) check**. Failure means the flame has gone out. It can easily be re-lit from any nearby candle or lantern, but the PC may wonder whether it must be re-lit from the Sacred Flame.



During the 2nd round, the PC comes across a locked door. He must make an **Average (2d) Athletics (St) check** to break it down, or a **Skulduggery (Ag) check** to pick the lock. Failing that, he can find a layperson with a key to unlock it for him, but then he will have to hurry during the 3rd round to make up for lost time – that will make the Observation (Int) check Hard (3d).

### THE GUARDIAN OF THE FLAME

Motioning one of the PCs towards the Sacred Flame, von Oppenheim cautions him or her sternly to “not let the Flame go out.” He does not explain further, beyond repeating “just stand there, and make sure the Flame doesn’t go out,” becoming impatient if the character questions him further.

Unlike the previous two tasks, this role does not have any associated checks. The Sacred Flame has burned in the Temple for millennia, and will not go out during the ritual unless something truly catastrophic happens. However, the GM should feel free to worry the character’s player with asides about the flame appearing to dim a little (as the character’s eyes grow used to staring at it) or flickering in a sudden draft.

### THE STONE CHALICE

One of the Temple’s treasures, the Stone Chalice is a large goblet carved from solid rock. Local legend claims that it belonged to the ancient Teutogen chiefs, and in some versions it was given to them by Ulric himself.

The Stone Chalice must be filled with wine and held aloft for the duration of the ritual. As the ritual goes on, though, it seems to grow heavier and heavier. This is an **Easy (1d) Athletics (St) check**. Failure means that the character has spilled a little of the wine, drawing warning glares from von Oppenheim and the priests.

During the 3rd round, von Oppenheim gestures frantically to the PC, indicating his own mouth, then points at the three initiates standing by. Von Oppenheim can’t interrupt his chanting, but he wants the PC to let the initiates drink from the chalice. If the player is stumped, the PC can make an **Average (2d) Intelligence check** to figure out what von Oppenheim wants.



### THE BOX

One PC is assigned to hold the box containing the bell clapper. Priest Frost stands with that PC, observing. The PC is instructed to deliver the clapper to von Oppenheim when he asks for it.

During round 1, Priest Frost asks the PC if he knows how to open the box, or if it is perhaps warded against being opened by the wizard who made it. This is, of course, true, and the PC may well have no idea how to open the box or whether he can.

As it happens, he cannot. All attempts to open the box (and the PC may make one during Round 1 and another during Round 2) will fail, even if the PCs have successfully opened the box in the past. Von Oppenheim can’t interrupt his chanting; he will simply look annoyed at the PC as he struggles with the box.

During Round 3, von Oppenheim will gesture at the PC with the box, requesting the clapper. The box will now open easily with no fuss at all.

### THE RITUAL CONTINUES

When the ritual is ready to begin, the three initiates stand to one side of the Sacred Flame and begin a chant in the ancient Teutogen language.

After a few minutes of chanting, von Oppenheim steps inside the circle of chalk symbols and approaches the Flame, also chanting. His voice is too low to hear over the chant of the junior priests, but anyone present can see that his lips are moving.

He raises his arms and approaches the Sacred Flame, tracing mystical patterns in the air as he slowly walks once around it. As he reaches each cardinal point, he pauses long enough to take out a handful of sand-coloured powder from a jar tied to his belt and throw it into the flame. As he completes his circuit, the Flame flares brightly once, and then subsides to its former level – but instead of bright orange, it is now a purplish blue in colour.

While maintaining his chant, von Oppenheim turns to the PC who is holding the box and holds out his hand for the clapper. When he has the clapper, he holds it in both hands and reaches into the Sacred Flame.

At first, the Flame seems to draw back from the Chaos-tainted object. Von Oppenheim steps back, still chanting, and advances to try again. The flames lap around his arms and hands, but despite a wince of pain that crosses his face his skin and clothing is not burned.

The clapper remains in the Sacred Flame for what seems like an eternity. Slowly it begins to glow with the same purple-blue light. After a few minutes, it starts to emit a high-pitched ringing sound, like the echoes of a bell that has been struck but at the very limits of human hearing. The sound grows in volume and intensity until it fills the Temple, echoing off the walls and ceiling.

As the sound grows, von Oppenheim’s body begins to shake. His face contorts in pain, his jaw clenches, and his lips draw back from his teeth. His eyes widen with fear and he seems to be trying to move away from the Flame – but some power is holding him in place. He is lifted slowly off his feet and drawn into the midst of the Sacred Flame, turning slowly as the whine of power and the glow of the clapper both increase to an almost unbearable level.

Suddenly, there is a blinding flash of light. It takes a few moments for the PCs' vision to return, but when it does they see the crumpled form of von Oppenheim lying just outside the Sacred Flame, his hair and clothing on fire. Near him lies the clapper, its warpstone-tainted metal transformed into something that shines more brightly than polished silver. The Flame has resumed its normal colour, and burns as if nothing has happened.

Von Oppenheim is dead. Although the Sacred Flame did not seem to touch him during the ritual, now his body is blackened almost beyond recognition and the air is filled with the stench of burned flesh.

Frost looks down at the burned corpse and mutters a prayer of benediction. Reverently, Frost picks up the clapper and places it back in the box.

Once closed, the box again cannot be opened.

"Ulric grant that his ritual worked," he says, softly, "for he paid a high price for it – higher than I think he knew. "But if this man has truly done what he claims, then he dies a hero. You people must take this safely to Altdorf, or dishonor his memory." Go now – we will see him safely into the arms of Morr."

## THE CAPTAIN'S TASK

Captain Marcus Baerfaust has asked the PCs to liaise with a Witch Hunter of his acquaintance, Adele Ketzenblum. The PCs may remember Adele from her appearance at the garden party in Book One. At that party, she shared with Baerfaust her suspicions that a man known as the Black Cowl is a traitor and a heretic. Unfortunately, Baerfaust's behaviour at that party has convinced Ketzenblum that he may be the Black Cowl himself.

Baerfaust wishes for the PCs to follow up with Ketzenblum and to learn everything she knows about the Black Cowl. Hopefully the PCs, Ketzenblum, and Baerfaust working together can uncover his identity and put an end to his treason.

## THE AWFUL TRUTH

Adele Ketzenblum is actually a heretic and traitor herself, a member of the Jade Sceptre Chaos cult, and a paranoid delusional madwoman besides. There's almost no way the PCs can meet with Ketzenblum, attract her attention, and walk away safely. Either they're agents of the Black Cowl sent to kill her, or they're meddling snoops who are in danger of discovering her true allegiance. Either way, they must die.

### THE BLACK COWL

If Marcus Baerfaust is the Black Cowl, then he obviously has no interest in exposing himself. Rather, his goal will be for either Ketzenblum to kill the PCs, or the PCs to kill Ketzenblum. Both would be even better!

## FINDING ADELE

The best place to start asking after Adele is the Castle Rock coach depot, as that is where she entered the city. Asking about Adele at the coach depot elicits the following information from Gunther, the depot boss:

"Oh, yes, I remember her all right. Every inch a Witch Hunter, and they stick in the mind. That hook, too. Came in just the day before you, like you said. Had her luggage sent on to...let me see here...yes, the Prospect. Very nice. Wish I could afford to stay in a place like that."

The PCs may also wish to check the Temple of Sigmar or Ulric, or perhaps some of the local taverns for rumours of Witch Hunters. As it happens, the best-known Witch Hunter in the city is not Ketzenblum, but Gregor Helstrum (page 79), and asking around in any of these places will point the PCs towards him.

## AT THE PROSPECT

The Prospect is a lavish inn catering to the well born and wealthy; see page 78 for more details. Bribery is of no use here, and a successful opposed Charm check vs a Willpower of 3 (adding at least ■ to this check) is necessary to find out anything about Adele.

Success will yield the following information: if the GM has a talent for voices, the cultured and unflappable tones of an English butler would be quite appropriate.

♣ **Basic Information:** "We do not give out information about our guests, as I'm sure you will understand. However, I can reveal that we do have a Lady Ketzenblum staying with us at present. Would you care to leave a message?"

♣♣ **Further Information:** As above, and "I regret that she is not presently in her room, although if you would care to wait she may return."

♣♣♣ **Obscure Information:** As above, and "Forgive me, but I could not possibly discuss her business with you. She has alluded to dealings of an official nature, but it would not be proper to say more."

♣ **Interesting Aside:** "The lady is undoubtedly busy. We rarely see her dine in the hotel and she spends much of her time in the town. I regret I could not say where she goes, though. Quite apart from the impropriety of disclosing personal information about a guest, my duties here keep me too occupied to follow any guest's activities while off the premises."

✧ **False Rumour:** "Far be it from me to speculate, but there have been whispers in the town of an impending trial. Names are bandied about with a distressing disregard for propriety, and I shall not repeat any. However, it is generally agreed that a family of considerable rank is under investigation."

## FIND THE LADY

The PCs can try to find Adele in Middenheim, or wait at the hotel for her to return. However, it should quickly become obvious that trying to find one person in a city the size of Middenheim will be next to impossible without some kind of plan.

## THE TRIAL OF VON ASCHENBECK

Adele Ketzenblum is also a principal character in the Noble's Task, presiding over the trial of Wolfgang von Aschenbeck. It is very likely that the PCs will overlap some of the events of these two threads. Pay careful attention to that plot thread as well when resolving the Captain's Task; the current status of Adele Ketzenblum, as well as her relationship with the PCs, may have significant repercussions on its resolution.

If the PCs are interested in the potential of a trial, they may ask after Ketzenblum at the Temple of Verena or the courts of law in the Ulricsmund District. This will likely lead them into the pending trial of Wolfgang von Aschenbeck, which Adele is, in fact, presiding over. See the Noble's Task beginning on page 97 for more information about this trial.

Whether the PCs leave a message at the Prospect, catch up with her at the trial, or find her using some other clever means, Adele Ketzenblum will consent to meet with them... but not now. "All right, but not here. Meet me at Halfway House in the Freiburg tonight at eight. Ask for Frau Haken."

By now, the PCs may be suspicious of Adele and decide to watch her before making their approach. If they do so, they will see her return to her room at the Prospect late at night and then leave again secretly by way of a back window. From there, they can follow her to a modest inn on the edge of the Freiburg called the Brown Owl (see page 80 and 95 for more info on the inn). Watching this location gives them the impression that this is her real lodgings and her booking at the Prospect is a front.

## MEETING AT HALFWAY HOUSE

Ketzenblum has chosen to meet at Halfway House for two reasons. The first is that Otho Greenfields is perfectly willing to accept her bribes to assist in little things like conveniently forgetting he ever saw her, or disposing of the corpses of nosy adventurers. The second is that the tight quarters will give her a chance to escape if the PCs should prove violent.

Arriving at the Halfway House and asking for Frau Haken, the PCs are shown into a small private room. Adele is within, and invites everyone to take a seat at the single round table in the centre of the room. Adele sits by the only door. In between ordering food, she asks them why they wanted to see her. The following paragraphs give her responses to the PCs' most likely questions; the GM should feel free to improvise answers to any others. Her goal is to figure out whether or not the PCs are here to kill her, whether or not Baerfaust is on to her as a Chaos cultist, and who the Black Cowl is. She will generally be evasive and suspicious.

### THE BLACK COWL

"I discussed this with Captain Baerfaust. What did he tell you?"

### THE BLACK COWL — AFTER SUCCESSFULLY INFLUENCING ADELE

"I have some evidence that von Kaufman's Southlands expedition was compromised by an agent of the Dark Gods. I was able to confirm two separate references to the 'man in the black hood' before I... ah... lost touch with my contacts. Whoever he is, he must be someone of great power and influence to plant an agent in that expedition. Surely you must have suspicions of your own? Who do you think is under that hood?"

### THE BLACK COWL — AFTER SUCCESSFULLY INFLUENCING ADELE A SECOND TIME

"It must be von Kaufman — he had the most access to the expedition. Unless it was Mauer — he had a great deal of influence over where the expedition went and what it brought back. But it could be Baerfaust — the expedition was full of his people, for defence against the perils of the Southlands. But Templemann conveniently never came back."

### THE SOUTHLANDS EXPEDITION

"Do you know what came back with the expedition? People have already died due to that cursed thing. But you knew about that, didn't you? Why are you interested in the expedition?"

### CAPTAIN MARCUS BAERFAUST

"Marcus Baerfaust saved my life once, years ago. Did he mention that? What did he tell you about me? Why did he send you to talk to me?"

### GRAF FRIEDRICH VON KAUFMAN

"He's a weasel. He paid for that Southlands expedition, and look how that turned out. Don't trust him; I saw that you work for him. Did he mention me? What did he say about me?"

### LUMINARY KONRAD MAUER

"His whole family was condemned to the pyre as witches, did you know that? It was when he was just a boy. Does he ever mention that? Helstrum spared Konrad, but it's only a matter of time before he winds up tied to a stake. Hopefully my stake."

### WOLFGANG VON ASHENBECK

"Interested in that investigation, are you? Why? Who sent you? Are you a friend of his? Frequent some of the same... meetings?"

This conversation is also a good opportunity to let Adele share any of the evidence she's collected, if the PCs are clever and the GM would find it helpful. She may also be used to impart any Clue cards that the PCs have missed thus far, if appropriate.

If the players do not pick up on the fact that almost every answer Adele gives contains at least one question, allow the PCs to make an Intuition (Int) check opposed by Adele's Fellowship of 4. If the PCs win, they realise that she is giving them far more questions than answers.

When the conversation starts to flag, or earlier if Adele realises that the PCs are becoming uncomfortable and suspicious, she ends the meeting. She makes sure to do so before the PCs have finished eating, so they will have an incentive not to follow her.

“Well,” she says, rising from the table, “You’ll have to excuse me. I have another meeting set up with an informant who’s proved very useful so far. If you find out anything else, or if I can help in any way, just leave a message for me at the Prospect.”

## AT THE BROWN OWL

If the PCs watch Adele – either before or after the meeting at the Halfway House – they must make a successful Stealth check opposed by Adele’s Intelligence of 4 to avoid being noticed. If she notices the PCs watching her, she will decide that they are more of a threat than she first supposed, and take action against them. See **Assassination** on page 96.

With the successful use of Stealth and Skulduggery, or perhaps Guile to convince the landlord to let them in, the PCs will be able to sneak in and search her room. The lock on the door is of average quality, and the inn is not especially busy.

At first glance, there is nothing exceptional about Adele’s room. A few clothes and other belongings are set out, and two chests stand against one wall. One chest contains clothing and personal items, while the other contains Sigmarite texts, law books, and other tools of the Witch Hunter’s trade. There is a small vanity against the opposite wall with a silver mirror. Resting on the vanity are three silvered skulls on wooden posts; on each skull is a lady’s wig (one blonde, one brunette, one a powdered noblewoman’s up-do).

A leather-bound case, about the size of a large book, stands open on a bedside table: it contains a gavel, a fork, a dagger, and a few other implements, each with an oddly shaped end. There is also a space for a hook, which is not in the case at present. A successful **Average (2d) Intelligence check** (with  if the PC has Tradecraft: Metalworking or Engineering skill) leads to the conclusion that these tools were made to be switched in and out of the metal cap binding Adele’s stump.

No letters, notes, or other documents are to be found anywhere. However, any PC looking closely at the equipment chest may make a **Hard (3d) Observation (Int) check** to discover that it has a false bottom. In a secret compartment the PCs will discover a set of robes in purple and green silk and three books.

The robes are the ritual garb of a cult priest of Slaanesh. PCs with a current or past career as a Witch Hunter will recognise them immediately. Others must make a **Hard (3d) Folklore (Int) check** to recognise the design and symbols. At the GM’s option, PCs who have encountered Slaanesh cultists before add  to their dice pool. If the PCs bring the robes to either Gregor Helstrum or Robertus von Oppenheim, either can correctly identify them for what they are.

The books consist of two texts, *De Magister Voluptatis* and *Liber Ecstatica*, which deal with the worship of Slaanesh, and a handwritten journal detailing the deeds of a cult called the Jade Sceptre. Any character reading any of the books will quickly realise that they concern the worship of Slaanesh, and immediately gains one stress. The journal lists a number of members, all under code names: Shifting Blade, All-Seeing Eye, Hidden Truth, and so on.

Having made the discovery that Adele Ketzenblum, a respected Witch Hunter, is secretly a priestess in a Chaos cult, the PCs have a number of options. The more obvious courses of action are listed below, along with their likely consequences. If the PCs do anything else, the GM should determine the likely outcome and react accordingly.

## DO NOTHING

The PCs may decide not to take any action – at least not immediately. The discovery is a shocking one, and the evidence may not be as conclusive as they think, and they may decide to take some time to decide what to do about it. This is a perfectly viable course of action, provided Adele does not realise that they have searched her room. See **Putting Everything Back** below.

## PUTTING EVERYTHING BACK

Adele will immediately realise that her room has been searched unless the PCs take great care to make sure that everything looks undisturbed. To do so requires a **Skulduggery (Int) check** opposed by Adele’s Intelligence of 4. (Note that, unlike most Skulduggery checks, this one uses Intelligence.)

## EXPOSE THE GUILTY!

The PCs’ first impulse may be to go to the authorities with the evidence of Adele’s guilt, but this will not be as easy as they might expect. As a Witch Hunter, Adele is respected by the authorities and feared by many, while there are always doubts about the honesty of a roving band of adventurers. The obvious places to bring their evidence are Gregor Helstrum, or the authorities at the Temple of Sigmar, Temple of Verena, or Temple of Ulric. In any case, Adele has a defence ready. If the PCs bring the books and robes to someone in authority, Adele will challenge them to prove that they were found on property belonging to her, and suggest that the more likely explanation is that the PCs, themselves, are the guilty parties: after all, they have the blasphemous items in their possession! If the PCs bring someone to Adele’s property and demonstrate the items are there, she’ll claim they are part of an ongoing investigation that the PCs have now ruined. If the PCs



claim the items are there such that Ketzenblum could conceivably have any advance warning, the items will mysteriously not be found (she'll have moved them to the cult's lair at Koch's).

It will be a **Daunting (4d) Fellowship (Charm or Guile) check** to convince anyone in authority that the PCs' accusation is well founded. Intimidate won't work, and will serve only to draw unwelcome attention to the PCs. The GM should assign ■ and □ according to how the PCs go about alerting the authorities. Their social standing should also be taken into account. They will gain □ if the party has the *Reputable* trait, and one more for each character with a *Bureaucrat*, *Noble*, or *Religion* character trait, set against one ■ for every character with a *Rogue* or *Menial* career trait. For this roll, ➤ and ✨ cancel each other out, in the same way as ♣ and ♠ or ♠ and ✨. Results of the check will be as follows:

♣ The PCs convince a reluctant bureaucrat to begin investigating Adele. However, she quickly becomes aware of the investigation, and if she has not already decided to get rid of the PCs she takes immediate steps to do so.

♣♣ The authorities are somewhat convinced, but since Adele is a Witch Hunter it is decided that she can only be investigated by another Witch Hunter. Word is sent to Altdorf to send a Witch Hunter to Middenheim to conduct the investigation, but it will take two to three weeks for the message to reach the capital and for a Witch Hunter to arrive in Middenheim. Gregor Helstrum, if invited to run the investigation, excuses himself.

➤ If there is a net result of one or more ➤, all other results are ignored. The PCs are given a written warrant authorising them to investigate Adele for themselves. Showing this parchment to any city watchman or other person in authority in Middenheim ensures their instant cooperation.

✨ The PCs are dismissed, and any evidence they may have presented is confiscated. Although they are not charged with anything, the authorities have become suspicious of them and they gain ■ to all dealings with the city's authorities for the rest of the adventure. This includes attempts to avoid official notice or elude officers of the watch.

♠ One PC per ♠ is accused of slander and false reporting, and is fined 5 gold crowns each. If he cannot or will not pay, he is whipped (2 wounds) and placed in the stocks for a day and a night (2 fatigue and 2 stress, not to mention lost time).

✨ If there is a net result of one or more ✨, all other results are ignored. The PCs' accusations are swept aside and they are accused of being agents of Chaos. If they have the cult paraphernalia in their possession it becomes evidence against them, otherwise, they are charged with planting it in Adele's room. Ketzenblum is granted authority to prosecute and persecute the PCs as she sees fit. The PCs now have the city garrison, the Aschenbeck Bravos, and the Jade Sceptre hunting them, and if they go to the authorities they will simply be arrested and surrendered to Ketzenblum. (Adele does not want them to actually stand trial, however, as then she might be obligated to prove their guilt; she will arrange for them to "escape" and then try to kill them as "fugitives.")

### DESTROY THE UNCLEAN THINGS!

Any PC with the character traits *Fanatic* and *Religion* is likely to want to destroy the cult paraphernalia immediately. This will put Adele on the PCs' trail right away.

### BLACKMAIL

Impetuous PCs may decide that they have found just the evidence they need to blackmail Adele into cooperating with them. This is extremely unwise. The GM should handle any negotiations according to what the PCs do, but any blackmail attempt will convince Adele to destroy the party, if she has not already decided to do so.

### TRACK DOWN THE CULT

The players may decide to track down the cult of the Jade Sceptre, thinking that this is the point of the adventure. The main thrust of this adventure revolves around the bell clapper, but the GM is free to expand this section as much as he and the play group desire. Perhaps the journal's constant references to fine food bring suspicion on Koch's, and the PCs discover the Jade Sceptre lair there. Perhaps the code names suggest a whole web of connected NPCs who are cult members or cult patsies (drawing from the proprietors of local businesses described in this chapter). Or perhaps as soon as the PCs begin their investigation, Ketzenblum launches her assassination attempt and the matter is resolved.

Of course, the players would be very surprised if the GM lets them track down and destroy a cult base, only to find when they emerge victorious that they are under arrest as suspected Chaos worshippers themselves, thanks to the efforts of Werner Markheim!

### ASSASSINATION

As soon as Adele becomes convinced that the PCs are a risk to her, she will take action against them. While they are asleep, she and four agents of the Jade Sceptre will break into their lodgings and try to murder them (use more or fewer cultists if the PCs are especially good or poor fighters). For the attack, Adele is armed with a cross-bow pistol in her right hand and a dagger affixed to the stump of her left. The cultists wear rough street clothes and masks.



Ketzenblum uses her authority as a Witch Hunter to gain access to wherever the PCs are staying, then stands outside the door while one of the cultists opens the lock. Each PC may make an **Observation (Int) check** opposed by the cultist's Agility in order to hear him working on the lock and wake up. Any PCs who are not awake when the assassins enter the PCs' lodgings may not attack during the first round of combat. (They may perform other actions, so long as they don't target enemies.)

Assemble a 5-space Progress Tracker with an event marker as the fifth space at the end of the track. Place a tracking token on the first space. Advance the token 2 spaces for each assassin killed or disabled, and 1 space for each successful use of Intimidate by the PCs and for any other effects or roleplaying ideas that would erode the enemy's morale. When the token reaches the event space at the end of the track, or if Adele is killed or disabled before then, the assassins' morale breaks. Assassins who are not engaged will flee, and the others keep fighting but add ■■ to all their checks. Adele stays and fights until all of her allies are dead or gone, then she turns and runs, too.

## CLEANING UP

If Adele escapes after failing to kill the PCs, the GM has various options. There is not room to present them all in detail here, but the GM should feel free to improvise according to the PCs' actions.

## THE HUNTER HUNTED

Realising that she has been compromised, Adele flees to Altdorf. The PCs may have additional tasks to complete in Middenheim that prevent them from pursuing her immediately. Adele's first goal is to kill Baerfaust, whom she blames for sending the PCs after her, and then to recruit the Cult of the Jade Sceptre in the capital to find out what she can about the Conspiracy and destroy it. This means that she will probably cross the PCs' path in Altdorf.

## FRAMED!

Adele uses her cult contacts and her position as a Witch Hunter to plant evidence in the PCs' lodgings that incriminates them as followers of Chaos.

The PCs may decide that their task is not complete until they have exposed and destroyed the Jade Sceptre in Middenheim and brought Adele to justice. In this case, refer to the notes under **Track Down the Cult** on page 96.

## THE NOBLE'S TASK

As Graf Friedrich explained in Averheim, there exists a longstanding rivalry between the von Aschenbecks and von Kaufmans. Recently, Graf Friedrich has become concerned that von Aschenbeck may be overstepping the bounds of rivalry and descending into heresy or treason. He has asked the PCs to look into the matter and determine whether von Aschenbeck has any connection to the nefarious events that have plagued von Kaufman's business empire.

When the PCs arrive in Middenheim, they will swiftly learn that Graf Wolfgang von Aschenbeck is under investigation for heresy and treason. If the PCs do nothing, he will be found guilty and burned at the stake. As far as Graf Friedrich is concerned, this is a bit of a big win – his chief rival, dead! – so the PCs are not actually obligated to engage with the events of this plot very much at all. Simply witnessing the trial and reporting back to Graf Friedrich would constitute success, of a sort.

However, if Graf Wolfgang dies, any connection between him and the Black Cowl dies with him. The PCs may wish to investigate on that basis alone.

## GRAF WOLFGANG VON ASCHENBECK

Graf Wolfgang is a little under average height, but solidly built. His long dark hair is salted with a touch of grey and his stylishly shaped beard has a dramatic white stripe originating from his chin. He has a very pronounced widow's peak which is fighting a losing battle against his receding hairline. He normally wears sturdy clothes in Middenheim fashions, including tall leather boots and a crushed velvet doublet of crimson, embroidered with the brook and tree of his house crest. His cloak is trimmed with white fur.

Much like Graf Friedrich, Graf Wolfgang is a minor aristocrat whose wealth exceeds his rank. His business acumen has allowed him to turn his small family fortune into a large family fortune. A bit of a wastrel in his early years, Graf Wolfgang cut short his (not at all promising) military career after the unexpected death of his elder brother. He married his brother's widow, another Middenland noble of higher birth than the von Aschenbecks, and applied himself with gradually increasing diligence to the task of running his estate. All who know him agree that his reckless and dissolute ways changed with the birth of his daughter, Margarete, on whom he dotes extremely. Now he is a model citizen, generous to the Cults of Ulric and Shallya and Middenheim's poor.

With his wide-reaching business interests, considerable largesse, and capitalist's instinct, Graf Wolfgang may remind the PCs very strongly of Graf Friedrich von Kaufman. In truth, the two men are far too alike to ever get along, and much of their professional rivalry stems from this personal dislike.

Graf Wolfgang has absolutely no connection to the Conspiracy, the Black Cowl, or the worship of the Ruinous Powers. He uses the characteristics of a Noble NPC.

## LADY MARGARETE VON ASCHENBECK

Graf Wolfgang's daughter Margarete is eighteen years old, rich, and lovely, with her father's dark hair arranged in curls around her face. She has had all the education expected of a young lady of Middenland, including singing, dancing, the harpsichord, riding, hunting, and a cursory knowledge of the classics. Predictably, these factors conspire to bring Margarete no shortage of suitors, none of whom has caught her eye thus far.

In truth, Margarete would rather remain unmarried. Despite her father's insistence that she "needn't worry" about business concerns, and her studied ability to pass herself off as a pretty, empty-headed girl, she has a keen head for numbers and is convinced she could excel if left to manage the von Aschenbeck family fortune and enterprises.

Lady Margarete also has no connection to the Conspiracy, the Black Cowl, or the Ruinous Powers. She quietly despises Werner Markheim, and when her father is accused of heresy she will become convinced (rightly, but with no evidence) that he is somehow involved. She uses the characteristics of a Noble NPC.

## WERNER MARKHEIM

To all appearances, Werner Markheim looks like the noble that Graf Wolfgang wishes he could be. Tall, youthful, with cropped blonde hair and an easy smile, Markheim is handsome, well

dressed, and well spoken. He is not, however, a noble – he’s a merchant’s son from Nordland whose business acumen allowed him to rise in von Aschenbeck’s employ (especially in the dark times following the death of von Aschenbeck’s wife) and shoulder more and more responsibilities.

Markheim is, in fact, tangentially connected to the Conspiracy, although he’s never met the Black Cowl. He has willingly accepted bribes to tip off various criminal elements under the Conspiracy’s control to von Aschenbeck shipments and other opportunities. The Purple Hand is not involved in these transactions. Markheim uses the characteristics of a Cult Leader.

## THE AWFUL TRUTH

Wolfgang von Aschenbeck is innocent. The true villain of the piece is von Aschenbeck’s business manager, Werner Markheim. A member of a small cult of Tzeentch worshippers called the Purple Hand, he has plotted for years to remove his employer, marry von Aschenbeck’s daughter, and take over his business empire; in fact, it was his agents who raised Graf Friedrich’s suspicions about von Aschenbeck in the first place. As soon as he becomes aware of the PCs’ investigation, Markheim will make certain that they discover enough fabricated evidence to ensure that Wolfgang von Aschenbeck is tried for heresy and burned as a follower of Chaos.

As they carry out their investigation, though, the PCs may begin to suspect that everything is not quite as it seems. The following encounters cover their attempts to learn the truth and bring Markheim to justice (or not; after all, their patron is unlikely to weep if von Aschenbeck is convicted and his business empire weakened).

## INITIAL INVESTIGATIONS

Wolfgang von Aschenbeck is a well-known local fixture in Middenheim, and inquiries around the city can swiftly learn some basic facts about him. What follows are some likely places PCs may inquire about Graf Wolfgang, and some key facts they may learn there. The information is presented as the results of a check; in most cases this check would be an **Average (2d) Charm (Fel) check**, but other skills may apply at the GM’s discretion (Education at the Temple of Verena, for example).

### CASTLE ROCK COACHES

♣ **Basic Information:** “Graf Wolfgang does a lot of business with Castle Rock. He has a home here in the city, I believe.”

♣♣♣ **Further Information:** As above, and “I believe he has business interests throughout the north and as far south as Altdorf and Nuln. Look for the brook and tree crest on a cart or wagon; that’s his mark.”

♣ **Interesting Aside:** “I believe he has a warehouse here in the Freiburg, although I don’t imagine he visits it much personally.”

✧ **False Rumour:** “Business hasn’t been great for him of late, I hear. Red Arrow coaches securing so many of the war contracts must be a blow.”

### THE PROSPECT

♣ **Basic Information:** “The von Aschenbecks are a well-known and quite respectable family, and it is my understanding that they have extensive business interests both within the city and across the Empire. His family arms, the tree and brook, can be seen fly-

ing over many of the city’s most prominent businesses, and of course his Bravos wear it on their livery. They are former soldiers for the most part, whom he offers to his customers as guards and messengers.”

♣♣ **Further Information:** As above, and “Graf Wolfgang was a frequent visitor in his younger days. It was his custom, along with several of his friends, to spend some time in our saloon bar before embarking on an evening’s... entertainment in the city. Since the birth of his daughter, though, his business interests have taken up more of his time and these evenings have become less frequent – and, I must observe, more dignified.”

♣♣♣ **Obscure Information:** As above, and “It would scarcely be proper for me to repeat the prurient rumours one sometimes hears about His Lordship. I am certain that these slanderous tales are the products of idle tongues and envious natures.”

♣ **Interesting Aside:** “Although Graf Wolfgang is wide-ranging in his commercial interests, it would not be proper for a gentleman of his rank to engage in business directly. I am reliably informed that such matters pass through the hands of his business manager, a Mr. Werner Markheim.”

✧ **False Rumour:** “Some of those who would slander His Lordship maintain that he is currently under investigation, and will shortly be tried on charges of consorting with agents of the Ruinous Powers. I, of course, give these lurid tales no credence whatsoever. Such things simply do not occur in Middenheim.”

### TEMPLE OF ULRIC

♣ **Basic Information:** “He’s a devout Ulrican, and was a soldier in his younger days.”

♣♣♣ **Further Information:** As above, and “The Graf has given many sizeable donations to the Cult of Ulric over the years on behalf of his family.”

♣ **Interesting Aside:** “He and his daughter attend services regularly when they are in the city.”

✧ **False Rumour:** “Lately he’s been spending more of his time in the south. That’s Sigmarite territory.”

### TEMPLE OF VERENA

♣ **Basic Information:** “Von Aschenbeck occasionally calls upon a Priest of Verena to witness and bless a contract or business deal. And he’s always properly grateful to the Cult when he does so.”

♣♣♣ **Further Information:** As above, and “Most of his day-to-day business affairs are handled by Werner Markheim, who is not a regular visitor to this temple.”

♣ **Interesting Aside:** “I believe that due to the laws of inheritance that govern his home estate, it is Graf Wolfgang’s daughter who stands to inherit everything. The poor girl is beset by suitors.”

Unless the PCs find themselves talking to one of Markheim’s cronies, no one will have any evidence to share that von Aschenbeck is involved in any criminal or illicit behaviour.

If any of these checks generates one or more ♣, then Markheim will learn of the PCs’ interest in Graf Wolfgang and decide to use them as a tool against his rival.

Enquiring practically anywhere can get the PCs directions to his manor, where they can secure a meeting with Markheim with ease. Getting in to see Graf Wolfgang is harder; at least a **Hard (3d) Charm (Fel) check**, and if the PCs mention Graf Friedrich's name it becomes Daunting (4d). Visiting the manor will tip Markheim off whether or not they meet with him.

## A BRUTAL MURDER

If Markheim is aware of the PCs' interest, he may set up an encounter like this one. To begin with, he ensures that the PCs learn that another Averlander, a man named Brenner, has been making similar inquiries into von Aschenbeck, focusing on criminal and traitorous dealings. (He may even forge a note from Brenner, delivered to the PCs lodgings, and inviting them to compare notes on "that blackguard, von Aschenbeck.") Brenner does not exist. He is an invention of Markheim's, to lure the PCs to the "evidence" against von Aschenbeck.

Brenner is "staying" at the Draken, a somewhat seedy inn in the bad part of the Freiburg. Observant PCs (**Average (2d) Observation (Int) check**) may notice the von Aschenbeck crest emblazoned outside the front door, indicating that it is owned by Graf Wolfgang.

The landlady, a mousy woman who has survived a brush with the pox judging by the scars across her face, confirms that she has rented a room to a gentleman from Averland. "Mr. Brenner, yes, a very nice man. I can't say whether he's in at the moment," she says. "He comes and goes at all hours, but he's very quiet, so I don't say anything. Is he expecting you?" The PCs will have no trouble persuading her to show them to his room.

The landlady opens the door for the PCs, and then starts back in horror. Furniture is scattered about, and the room appears to have been searched. On one wall is daubed a strange skull-like design in blue paint. The man himself is nowhere to be seen. The landlady staggers downstairs in apparent shock, leaving the PCs to investigate the room. A dagger lies thrust into the mattress on the bed.

This whole scene has been fabricated by Markheim's agents for the PCs' benefit. The landlady is in his pay, and her shock and horror are feigned. Even a cursory search of the room will uncover a tattered journal, a book containing the results of "Brenner's" research thus far. It includes sketches of blasphemous symbols and artefacts, letters describing cult activity purportedly in von Aschenbeck's own handwriting, and a litany of crimes Brenner alleges von Aschenbeck has committed, ranging from fraud to racketeering to murder and heresy.

There are several other clues the PCs may find in this room, though they all serve to weaken the case against von Aschenbeck, not strengthen it.

- ✦ The landlady is just a little too ready to allow them access to her guest's room without any proof that they are who they say they are. **Average (2d) Intuition (Int) check**.
- ✦ The landlady's shock on discovering the state of the room was feigned. Opposed check between the PCs' Intuition (Int) and her Fellowship of 3.
- ✦ Although the furniture has been scattered about the room, none of it is broken and there is no sign of actual violence.



- ✦ An **Average (2d) Folklore or Education (Int) check** identifies the symbol on the wall as the Mark of Khorne, the Blood God. It's unusual that followers of Khorne would leave a mark behind in blue paint, however – they would ordinarily paint such a sigil in blood.
- ✦ As the PCs may already have discovered, there is no sign of spilled blood anywhere in the room, which is unthinkable for a place that was attacked by followers of Khorne.

Just as the PCs find the book, a watch patrol thunders up the stairs, with the landlady sobbing behind them. The patrol consists of four Aschenbeck Bravos (see page 86) led by a watch officer. Like the room itself, the patrol's arrival has been staged by Markheim to make sure that the book falls into the hands of the authorities before the PCs have a chance to examine it in detail.

Brooking no argument from the PCs, the patrol takes the book away. After a brief scan of the book and several expressions of dismay and disgust (genuine, for he is the only one not in on the plan), the officer asks where the PCs are staying and cautions them not to leave the city, because they will be required to give evidence.

## THE TRIAL BEGINS

Short after the PCs discover the book, von Aschenbeck is arrested and a trial convened against him. Because von Aschenbeck is a noble, he is able to have the affair held in the Temple of Verena. Because it is a trial for heresy and consorting with the Ruinous Powers, a Witch Hunter serves as the prosecution and judge: Adele Ketzenblum.

The PCs may attend the trial if they wish. It is mostly very boring, consisting of prayers from priests of Verena, Ulric, and Sigmar, followed by a statement by Ketzenblum, a reading of the charges, and

## ADELE KETZENBLUM — THE CAPTAIN'S TASK

The trial of Wolfgang von Aschenbeck may be heavily affected by the events of the Captain's Task, in particular whether or not Adele Ketzenblum remains the presiding Witch Hunter. If she is removed for any reason, Gregor Helstrum (page 79) will take over. Helstrum is much more fair-minded and will actually allow Graf Wolfgang to live if the evidence against him is overturned or called into serious question. Be sure to keep both plot threads in mind when resolving the trial.

then a report from the watch officer who confiscated the book from the PCs. The PCs will be invited to give a statement at the trial as well and asked to explain why they were looking into the matter in the first place. If they mention that Graf Friedrich had suspicions against Graf Wolfgang, then this will be considered further evidence against von Aschenbeck.

The trial takes three days. The case against von Aschenbeck is built on the following key evidence:

- ✦ “Brenner’s” book, describing his heresy.
- ✦ The testimony of three members of the Aschenbeck Bravos, who tearfully describe helping Graf Wolfgang perpetrate nefarious crimes, unaware of what they were doing. This testimony largely serves to corroborate the stories in the book.
- ✦ The testimony of Werner Markheim, who describes mysteriously missing funds, secret lairs kept “off the books” and other evidence that he claims “only makes sense now, in the light of these terrifying truths.” Choking up, Markheim explains that just last week, von Aschenbeck had attempted to recruit him into a vile cult, then threatened to murder him when he refused.
- ✦ A set of cloth-of-gold robes embroidered with a purple hand and a symbol of Chaos found within Graf Wolfgang’s chambers during his arrest (planted there by Markheim).
- ✦ The fact that Graf Friedrich von Kaufman suspected him of malfeasance (if the PCs testify to this effect).

Obviously, this is a pretty shaky case, a fact which Herrs Rangel and Schpinn, Graf Wolfgang’s teetering, decrepit lawyers attempt to point out at the trial. Unfortunately for von Aschenbeck, Ketzenblum doesn’t care one whit about fairness. She made up her mind to burn him as soon as he was presented as a suspect. If the PCs do nothing, three days after he is arrested, Graf Wolfgang will be condemned to die.

## A PLEA FOR HELP

After the first day of the trial, Lady Margarete will attempt to find the PCs, presumably by visiting their lodgings in the company of Rodrik, her father’s steward. When she locates them, she begs them for help, explaining that it’s impossible that her father could be a Chaos worshipper, and that she just knows that that vile man Markheim is behind it all.

Margarete will be eager to tell the PCs anything they want to know if they show the slightest inclination to believe her. She’s pinned her hopes on the PCs because she’s heard that they are “investigators” from “out of town,” and therefore perhaps Markheim doesn’t own them. She’ll be sure to share the fact that she believes Markheim has manufactured the whole incident in an attempt to force her to marry him.

Lady Margarete is prepared to be quite generous if the PCs can keep her father from being executed. If the PCs agree to try, she’ll press a purse containing 100 silver shillings on them “for expenses,” and promise up to 10 gold crowns more if they are successful. (Realistically, the PCs can haggle her offer up as high as they like – she’s desperate and fairly rich. But without access to her father’s finances, she can’t deliver more than ten crowns.)

## INVESTIGATING AGAIN

Now the PCs may wish to resume their investigations, this time focusing on Markheim or on clearing von Aschenbeck’s name. The following are brief encounters that may occur during this investigation, some as the result of the PCs visiting specific places and others may visit the PCs.

### THE DRAKEN

Returning to the Draken will reveal that the room has been cleaned up and rented out to a down-on-his-luck Kislevite gambler. The pox-scarred landlady is nowhere to be seen, and inquiries after her will hit a stone wall: no one who works there can ever remember seeing her, and the current landlord (built like a keg of beer and with a hooked nose like a tap) explains that he was asked to close down for the day while his premises were swept for vermin on the day that the PCs discovered the book. He even has an official-looking document to prove it. A **Hard (3d) Observation (Int) check** will find some suspicious facts about the official-looking document, namely that its wax seal has the Middenheim wolf facing the wrong way. Boons on this check suggest that the handwriting looks very like the handwriting in Brenner’s journal.

The landlord has never heard of anyone named Brenner and certainly never had anyone by that name staying with him.

### THE ASCHENBECK BRAVOS

The three Aschenbeck Bravos who are testifying against Graf Wolfgang may look familiar to the PCs... they were present when the book was found. If the PCs make any inquiries into the Bravos, especially the three testifying against Graf Wolfgang, then Markheim will instruct them to send the PCs a message.

## LET HIM BURN

If the PCs are unmoved by Lady Margarete’s pleas, they may wish to simply wash their hands of the whole affair and move on. Although Graf Friedrich will be disappointed that they never confirmed whether or not von Aschenbeck was connected to the missing black powder, he won’t be displeased with the results. Helping Graf Friedrich’s business rival isn’t what he hired them to do, after all! The PCs can safely let von Aschenbeck burn without noticeably affecting the plot of Book Three.

In a quiet, narrow street, the PCs find their way blocked by four tough-looking men in Bravos livery. Four more move quietly to block the PCs' escape. All eight are armed with clubs. An **Easy (1d) Observation (Int) check** will tell the PCs that they have encountered four of the men already: they were with the watch officer who appeared when the PCs found the book.

Assemble a 5-space Progress Tracker with an event marker as the fifth space at the end of the track. Place a tracking token on the first space. Advance the token 2 spaces for each Bravo killed or disabled, and 1 space for each successful use of Intimidate by the PCs and for any other effects or roleplaying ideas that would erode the enemy's morale. When the token reaches the event space at the end of the track, the Bravos' morale breaks. Enemies who are not engaged will flee, and the others keep fighting but add ■■ to all their checks.

If the PCs roll ☞ or ✨ at any time while fighting the Bravos, a cult mutant joins the fray, dropping down from a nearby roof. This only occurs the once. This is both a good thing and a bad thing: a bad thing, because the PCs have another enemy to fight, but a good thing because its presence is a clue. All the Bravos who are not engaged automatically flee when it appears.

The mutant ignores the Bravos and attacks the PCs. It is a hideous creature with tentacles and multiple, jointed legs, and on its chest it bears a sinister, sinuous tattoo: success on a **Hard (3d) Folklore or Education (Int) check** will identify this as the Mark of Tzeentch.

If the PCs capture and interrogate any of the Bravos, they will learn that they were handpicked by Markheim to dispose of the PCs.

### TAILING MARKHEIM

If the PCs elect to follow Werner Markheim, they can pick up his trail easily enough at the von Aschenbeck manor, where he will have a loud argument with Lady Margarete in the front garden. She is shocked and affronted he would dare show his face at her home; he is apologetic about her father and slyly insinuates that the damage to her reputation must be considerable. Rodrik, Graf Wolfgang's steward, intervenes and "invites" Markheim to leave.

Following Markheim from there without being detected is an **Average (2d) Stealth (Ag) check**. If Markheim is unaware he is being followed, he proceeds directly to the Aschenbeck Warehouse in the Freiburg, where he goes to the cult lair in the cellar. If the PCs confront him there, he yells for help and two Cult Mutants plus cultists equal in number to the PCs rush to defend him while Markheim runs away. If Markheim detects his tail, he proceeds to Koch's, enjoys a fine dinner over the course of about an hour, then sets out again (a new Stealth check to tail him) for the cult lair. If he detects a tail this time, he proceeds to the Prospect and takes a room there, then sends a message to the Bravos to kill the PCs (see **The Ashenbeck Bravos** on page 86).

### TALKING TO VON ASCHENBECK

Von Aschenbeck is held in a clean but secure cell beneath the Temple of Verena during the trial. Access is restricted, but Charming, Guileful, or Intimidating PCs may be able to convince the priests to let them see him, especially if they claim to be working for his defence.

Von Aschenbeck is dejected and has very little of use to say, except to insist that he is completely innocent. He'll beg the PCs to do what they can for his daughter, and wonder how he could have been so blind to Markheim's treachery.



BOOK TWO  
THE ENEMY WITHOUT

Von Aschenbeck genuinely has no idea of the existence of the Conspiracy or the Black Cowl. The PCs should be able to satisfy themselves of this fact with only a few minutes of conversation. If they do so, they will have done precisely as von Kaufman asked, regardless of whether von Aschenbeck lives or dies.

### THE FORGER

Dogged investigation in the seedier parts of town (perhaps beginning at Halfway House) may yield an identity for the pox-marked lady: Ilse, a forger and confidence artist of some local repute. She appears to have come into some money lately, according to gossip in Halfway House, and has settled several of her debts.

Ilse has a house on the edge of the Freiburg. If the PCs go looking for it, or if the GM is feeling generous and they happen to just be walking through the city minding their own business, they will hear a cry of "Fire!" and find the house aflame. Ilse herself cries out from the first floor.

The PCs will have to act quickly to save Ilse or any evidence from the flames. Athletics and/or Coordination checks would be appropriate to gain access to the burning house, and Resilience checks to brave the smoke and flames. Finding anything is at least a **Hard (3d) Observation (Int) check**, and getting Ilse out alive is at least a **Hard (3d) Athletics (St) check**. If the PCs are successful at any of this, they may find...

- ✦ A few tattered, burned pages from a book that look familiar and mention the name von Aschenbeck. In fact, these pages are from a first draft of "Brenner's" journal.
- ✦ A (still glowing-hot) bronze seal of Middenheim with the wolf facing the wrong way.
- ✦ Ilse herself, who will testify that she took Markheim's money to stage the whole affair.

## THE PURPLE HAND

If Markheim believes the PCs are onto him and he is in grave danger, he will arrange for members of the Purple Hand to attack the PCs. Before the battle, the cultists will ingest several mind-altering drugs and whip themselves into a frenzy, so their attack will be brazen, sudden, and with no concern for the welfare of the cultists.

There are nine cultists in total, including a cult leader and as many mutants as are necessary to make the battle challenging for the PCs. (For a three-PC group with one good fighter, a cult leader, two mutants, and two three-man henchman groups of cult followers is recommended.) They fight to the death and are immune to Fear, Terror, and stress. The drugs they have consumed are also a slow-acting poison; none will survive to be interrogated. The cultists are wearing purple-and-gold robes embroidered with prominent symbols of Chaos and the Purple Hand sigil. Each of them has his left hand dyed purple.

The PCs should have relatively little trouble getting the city garrison to intervene on their behalf, as they are clearly being attacked by worshippers of the Ruinous Powers. Any city watch patrol that does intervene is conspicuously absent any support from the Aschenbeck Bravos.

At the same time as the attack on the PCs, Markheim flees the city in a shuttered coach from the Castle Rock coaching depot. He is escorted by every Aschenbeck Bravo he could muster (about fifty men, all on horseback). The Bravos have been told that they are escorting a member of the Emperor's family who has been targeted for assassination by Chaos sympathisers and mutants; they have orders to cut down anyone who attempts to stand in their way.

## THE TRIAL REVISITED

If the PCs present the evidence they have collected, implicating Markheim and exonerating von Aschenbeck, what happens next depends entirely on the judge.

If Adele Ketzenblum is still presiding over the trial, she will accept even fairly tenuous evidence of Markheim's guilt, order him seized on the spot, and fold his prosecution into the existing trial. She will not, however, release von Aschenbeck, reasoning "the evidence is clear that one of these men is a traitor and a heretic, but we have no way of being certain which one. Better to burn an innocent man than let a guilty one go free." No amount of evidence or persuasion will cause Ketzenblum to let von Aschenbeck go; she is quite insane and very much wants to burn him.

If Gregor Helstrum has taken over, he will consider the evidence on its merits. The PCs may make a Charm, Piety, or Education check to influence his decision, opposed to Helstrum's Willpower of 4. (The GM should modify the check based on the strength of the evidence presented.) Success means that Helstrum orders von Aschenbeck set free. Boons mean that he orders Markheim seized and the trial extended for further investigation.

If von Aschenbeck is set free, both he and Lady Margarete are enthusiastically grateful. The PCs have made an ally for life, and von Aschenbeck will gladly pay (almost) any reward that Margarete promised them. He will also insist on paying for their journey to Altdorf at the beginning of Book Three. If von Aschenbeck learns that the PCs were ever in von Kaufman's employ, he will cool towards them somewhat, but Margarete's ardour is unlikely to ever die.

## WRAPPING UP

In order for the plot of *The Enemy Within* to continue uninterrupted, the PCs should successfully complete the Wizard's Task before leaving Middenheim, but acquiring the cleansed bell clapper is the only thing they must accomplish before they go.

Once the PCs have the bell clapper, they can take as long as they want wrapping up loose ends. When they are ready to move on to Altdorf, they can secure a coach at Castle Rock and move on to Book Three. If the GM wishes to move things along, a letter from Friedrich von Kaufman can arrive, asking on behalf of himself and Luminary Mauer if the PCs are quite finished and requesting their presence in Altdorf as soon as is practical.

Furthermore, if the PCs linger in Middenheim, they can be subject to gradually increasing attacks upon them from the Jade Sceptre, the Red Crown, and the Skaven, all seeking to claim the bell clapper. (Luminary Mauer's anti-theft precautions are still in effect, however.) These constant attacks will eventually attract the attention of the city authorities, and a city garrison officer will locate the PCs and inform them that the time has come to leave the city – "We don't want any troublemakers in Middenheim; not during wartime, no sir."

The final fate of Adele Ketzenblum is important to note during this time; if she is still alive she may make an appearance in Book Three.





## BOOK THREE

# THE ENEMY WITHIN

The events of Book Three begin shortly after the conclusion of the events in Book Two, when the PCs elect to leave Middenheim and head for Altdorf. Their initial goal during Book Three is to journey to Altdorf and deliver their reports (and the purified bell clapper) back to Luminary Mauer, Graf Friedrich, and Captain Baerfaust. Once in Altdorf, however, the PCs will swiftly find themselves embroiled in a plot that could change the fate of the Empire forever.

This book is divided into three parts.

**Part One, Journey to Altdorf**, sees the PCs journey from Middenheim to Altdorf. Scattered remnants of the forces of Chaos may provide challenges on the road, and in the riverside town of Delberz, the skaven make a last ditch attempt to recover the clapper. Provided the PCs negotiate these hazards, they will find themselves welcomed to Altdorf and given a place to stay on the notorious Street of a Hundred Taverns.

**Part Two, A Farce in the Fog**, deals with a number of plots instigated by the Conspiracy. They seek to blow up a member of Averheim's aristocracy as she visits the theatre, to abduct a high elf, and to rid themselves of the party too. However, in executing their plans the Conspiracy have earned the enmity of the Altdorf cell of their Red Crown allies, which means the PCs find themselves assisted by some unusual friends.

**Part Three, Chaos at the Holy Temple**, explores the last and most audacious of the acts carried out by the Conspiracy. They have arranged for a gathering to take place in the High Temple of Sigmar at which they plan to employ their magical bell. If the Conspiracy are left to carry out their plot, the bell's malefic properties could end up wreaking widespread destruction, mutation, and death throughout Altdorf, leaving the way clear for the Black Cowl and his agents to take over the city, if not the Empire itself.

## RECENT EVENTS

While the PCs have been busily navigating the various treacheries of Middenheim, events in the rest of the Empire have been continuing apace. Many characters important to the PCs and the events of the story have been up to no good!

## THE WAR EFFORT

As the PCs likely learned via rumour and news during the previous chapter, the war has not been an unqualified success for the Empire. Karl Franz's great host, combining soldiers from Altdorf, Averland, Middenheim, Nuln, Stirland, and Talabheim, was ambushed by an enormous beastman army as they marched north to relieve Wolfenburg. Early in the battle, Karl Franz's griffon Deathclaw was badly injured by Chaos magic. Both Deathclaw and Karl Franz fell from the sky and landed in the midst of the embattled armies. Had it not been for the swift action of the Averheim Greatswords under the command of Captain Marcus Baerfaust and the timely arrival of Luminary Konrad Mauer and his healing magic, the Emperor would likely have died.

The injured Emperor was swiftly spirited away from the battlefield by Red Arrow coaches, escorted by his Champion, Ludwig Schwarzhelm, Captain Baerfaust, and Luminary Mauer. Reiksmarshal Kurt Helborg assumed command of the united Imperial forces (over the strong objections of Graf Boris Todbringer and a few other worthies who believed they'd be better suited for the job) and over the course of the next five days broke through the beastman horde. The army then pressed on towards Wolfenburg. The Middenland contingent, with assistance from local Hochlander

soldiers, acted as rearguard and Middenland's Elector, Graf Boris Todbringer, was tasked with hunting down the remnants of the beastman host.

In recent days and weeks, Surtha Lenk's host finally breached the walls of Wolfenburg and sacked the town. Casualties were high but before the populace could be completely exterminated, the Grand Army's cavalry, led by Reiksguard and Knights of the White Wolf, fell on the Chaos host from behind. A pitched battle followed, during which the Empire van was thrown back, causing the undisciplined northmen to pursue into the teeth of the Empire's guns. Currently, both armies have split into multiple hosts and are fighting a series of battles throughout Ostland and the Middle Mountains. The Empire's victory seems likely, but the ultimate fate of the conflict in the north is not relevant to *The Enemy Within*.

Unbeknownst to any of Karl Franz's senior generals and advisors, the beastman ambush was orchestrated by the Conspiracy, working through their pawns in the Red Crown. It was, in fact, the actions of the Black Cowl on that fateful day that allowed the attack to be so successful.

- ✦ If Marcus Baerfaust is the Black Cowl, then it was his Averheim contingent that was responsible for patrolling the flank on which the beastmen appeared. Baerfaust assigned his least competent and most disposable soldiers to the key positions, and then murdered most of them with poisoned wine for good measure.
- ✦ If Graf Friedrich von Kaufman is the Black Cowl, then he has been having his agents read and transcribe all reports and correspondence from the front for weeks. This intelligence has then travelled through the Conspiracy's channels (sometimes involving magic) to be funnelled to the Red Crown, the beastmen, and Surtha Lenk. The enemy has always known precisely where the Empire's forces are and where they are heading.
- ✦ If Luminary Mauer is the Black Cowl, he used magic to veil the beastman advance from the Empire's forces. Such magic is not normally within the purview of the Light College – the Light Wind is the magic of truth and revelation, after all. Mauer had to delve into forbidden magics to do so, and he also had to quietly murder and then dispose of a Hochlander celestial wizard who had attached herself to the army before her divinations exposed him.
- ✦ Baerfaust and Mauer reached the Emperor's side at almost exactly the same instant. If one of them is the Black Cowl, it may be impossible to know whether he intended to murder the Emperor on the spot or not.

## THE EMPEROR'S CONDITION

The Emperor is now safely returned to Altdorf and resting in his bedchamber in the Imperial Palace – actually, he is resting in a guest room on the third floor, as his Champion and bodyguard Ludwig Schwarzhelm thought it prudent to move him in case an assassin seeks to finish the job. Schwarzhelm is a naturally suspicious and paranoid sort, and to him, at least, it seems obvious that there is a traitor who wants the Emperor dead. The Emperor is attended only by Schwarzhelm, Captain Marcus Baerfaust, Luminary Mauer (who has taken over as the Emperor's physician), and his long-serving manservant Philip Ulrich. Schwarzhelm believes that these



## THE BLACK COWL

If Baerfaust or Mauer are the Black Cowl, of course they just slip the Emperor a small amount of a drug in his food or medicine every day. If von Kaufman is the traitor, however, then he has actually been blackmailing and bribing Philip Ulrich (the Emperor's valet, see page 119) for some time for just such an occasion. Philip Ulrich has been assured (rightly, as it happens), that the "medicine" he feeds the Emperor won't kill him, but is still torn up with guilt and self-recrimination over his treason. It's only a matter of time before he breaks down and confesses everything to Schwarzhelm...so the Conspiracy must act fast.

four people, and only these four people, can be trusted with the Emperor's life. He will allow entry to the bedchamber to absolutely no one else until the Emperor is recovered.

The Emperor, however, is not recovering. He wakes very seldom, and his dreams are troubled. His wounds have healed, but his strength has not returned and when he does wake, his wits seem addled. His "physician," Luminary Mauer, is concerned that some lingering effect of the Chaos magic that brought him out of the sky has damaged his mind. But the truth is far more mundane: the Emperor is being poisoned, a low dose every day of an amalgam of black lotus, schlaf, and mansbane. The mixture of soporific and hallucinogenic effects makes it seem as if he's merely gripped by a fever that won't go away, but the dose is low enough that it won't kill him... not until the Conspiracy controls the Electoral College, and can choose their own Emperor. (The two likely successors, Graf Boris Todbringer of Middenland or Karl Franz's own son, Luitpold, are both not suitable to the Conspiracy's aims.)

## CAPTAIN MARCUS BAERFAUST

After his heroic actions in the Battle of Griffon's Fall (as some have started calling it), Captain Marcus Baerfaust has risen in the world. While still bearing the rank and title of Captain, Baerfaust and his surviving greatswords are now installed in the Imperial Palace, providing security for the Emperor himself. It's well expected that when the Emperor recovers fully from his wounds, Baerfaust will be ennobled and given prime lands in either Reikland or Averland, then assigned the rank of General. He may even be invited to join the Reiksguard.

Baerfaust considers the whole affair a bunch of nonsense. He cannot fathom why people seem to think that he should be happy with this turn of events, cannot abide most of the people who come up to him wishing to be his new friend, and cannot wait to be out of Altdorf and back to Averheim where things are simpler. Perhaps it is the shame of Count Marius's fate at Third Black Fire that makes Baerfaust incapable of enjoying his good fortune, or perhaps the captain really is just a curmudgeon.

## LUMINARY KONRAD MAUER

Luminary Mauer, while well respected both within the Light College and by those beyond it, is not an especially high-ranking wizard. He's no Wizard Lord and no one expects him to ever become Patriarch. But now he's the most celebrated and lauded Light Wizard in the Empire, thanks to his timely intervention in

the Emperor's favour. Predictably, while Luminary Mauer is of course willing to assist the Emperor and serve as his physician until the crisis has passed, he is quite vexed to be pulled away from his research and mostly finds the extra attention bothersome.

There's one piece of news that Mauer is especially confused about: his eldest sister, Katrina, has contacted him by letter. He only suspected that she survived the Witch Hunters' flames when he was a child; to hear that she is alive is a shock. And knowing that she is, in all probability, a witch, now Mauer must struggle with the decision of whether or not to turn his own sister over to the Witch Hunters.

If Mauer isn't the Black Cowl, his sister's sudden appearance makes him a tempting target for recruitment by the Conspiracy...

## GRAF FRIEDRICH VON KAUFMAN

While not the hero of the hour the way his two associates from Averheim are, Graf Friedrich has been considerably advantaged by recent events. Not only did his aggressive negotiations and quick planning secure him a host of lucrative contracts and charters throughout the Empire during and after the war, but it was his planning and foresight that got the Emperor safely back to Altdorf. Graf Friedrich may not be the name on the lips of the commoners in their taverns, but, as he puts it "the right people know I was involved."

Graf Friedrich now keeps rooms near the Kaiserplatz, where he routinely meets with the absolutely most important (but hardly ever famous or celebrated) bureaucrats, functionaries, and administrators in Altdorf. Perhaps surprisingly, he has not managed to turn this situation to massive financial gain. It's true that he's secured extensive contracts and promises, but for the most part he has done so partially by offering extremely competitive rates. No, Graf Friedrich is arranging things now such that he will make staggering amounts of money later. In doing so, he avoids looking greedy and cements his newly elevated social status.

On the whole, Graf Friedrich is extremely happy with how recent events have unfolded.

## FREDERICK GROSZ

After leaving Averheim, Frederick Grosz travelled to Nuln, where he connected with agents of the Conspiracy there and masterminded a smuggling operation to steal and then transport several kegs of black powder to Altdorf. Now he's taken up residence in Altdorf and is proving to be one of the Black Cowl's more effective and reliable "odd jobs" men, thanks in no small part to his contacts with the Altdorf chapter of the Fish docker gang (which PCs may remember from Averheim).

Frederick Grosz remains genial and friendly on the face, but he's had cause to indulge his ruthless streak more and more recently, and the violence is closer to the surface than in the past. Grosz is well paid by the Conspiracy and as committed and loyal to their cause as an utterly amoral rogue like him can ever be.

## THE SKAVEN

Krasskulk – assuming he survived – has been trailing the PCs since Averheim. His agents may have struck against the PCs in Middenheim, depending on how events unfolded there, but he himself has remained hidden. As a sorcerer, Krasskulk is aware that the PCs did something to the tainted bell clapper he made, and is consumed



with curiosity to find out what. Unfortunately, he doesn't dare launch a major raid on the PCs in Middenheim – he has too many enemies amongst the skaven there, skaven he wouldn't want knowing about the bell clapper.

Krasskulk is still on the PCs' tail, and will catch up with them during this book.

If Krasskulk is dead, the GM can either ignore the skaven events in this section (the PCs' reward for a job well done, although they'll never know it), or simply assume that another Eshin sorcerer, an associate of Krasskulk's, picked up their trail in Middenheim when word of Krasskulk's death reached him.

## EOTHLIR VALANDAR — “THE SEA STRIDER”

Born in Lothorn, Eothlir has not set foot on Ulthuan in nearly two centuries. Like many elves of Eataine, Eothlir is a mariner and he has made many voyages far from the lands of the elves. At around the time of the Great War against Chaos, Eothlir had a falling-out with his family back on Ulthuan and hasn't returned since.

For the last century, Eothlir has dawdled in the great human port-city of Marienburg, hiring himself out as a pilot, navigator, or captain on human vessels for expeditions to far-off or dangerous places. He finds humans boorish, smelly, and tiresome, but his estrangement from his homeland leaves him few options. (Although if he has to put up with another few decades of human manners, food, and “art,” he just might swallow his pride, apologise, and go home.)

One of the voyages that Eothlir Valandar hired himself on to was Graf Friedrich's Southlands expedition. He spent relatively little time ashore during the expedition, but he couldn't fail to notice the warpstone effigy as it made its journey to Marienburg on his ship. As a high elf, Eothlir is not as superstitious and ignorant as the humans he serves with, but even he found that sinister idol troubling. When he got home, he started a correspondence with an acquaintance back in Ulthuan with more expertise in such matters, and now realises that the effigy was fashioned of warpstone and its mere presence could be corrupting and dangerous. He has made it his mission to find Graf Friedrich and explain the situation to him, to acquire the effigy and then – horror of horrors – go home to Ulthuan, where the Archmages there will know what to do with it.

Naturally, the Black Cowl wants him quietly murdered somewhere no one will think to look for him. First, however, Eothlir will have to spill his guts about everything he knows and everyone he's told about it. Frederick Grosz has received the assignment to deal with Eothlir; the details of the plot can be found in Part Two.

## CLOTHILDE VON ALPTRAUM

In the weeks since she has last seen the PCs, Clothilde has been busy in the way that only the idle rich can. Her entire household has moved from Heinzstadt outside Averheim to a townhouse in Altdorf for the season, which required much organising, packing, arranging, and then travelling, followed by more organising and arranging and unpacking and quite a bit of work and fuss getting everything just so. Of course the Gravin has also been doing charitable work at one of the nicer Altdorf Shallyan temple-hospices, and her attention to the injured Averlander soldiers that returned from the front with Captain Baerfaust has made her very popular with them. In the evenings, the Gravin alternates between dinner parties, balls, and the theatre, visiting frequently with other Averlander nobility and Reikland nobles left in the lurch by the sudden departure of many of the great and good for the north.

Which is to say that Gravin Clothilde von Alptraum has been very busily politicking, quietly building a case for a member of the von Alptraum family to be selected as Elector Count. A strong, vibrant, loyal von Alptraum. Maybe even one named Clothilde. Obviously, the Conspiracy can't allow her to live anymore.

Clothilde has been in Altdorf for a few weeks by the time the PCs arrive.

### HOOFING IT

The PCs may decide – for some reason – to walk to Altdorf. This is not wise, as it will necessitate sleeping rough in the Drakwald many nights and make the party much more exposed to dangers they cannot outrun. If the PCs walk, then the travelling checks are **Daunting (4d) Resilience (To) checks**. The journey will also take about twice as long, assuming they don't run into trouble.

# PART ONE — JOURNEY TO ALTDORF

Presumably, this part of the adventure begins with the PCs deciding to leave for Altdorf, so all that they need to do in Middenheim is secure transport.

The most logical way to get from Middenheim to Altdorf is to take a coach south on the Altdorf-Middenheim road to the town of Delberz. From Delberz, travellers can either continue by coach on the road or change to a river barge to sail downstream. (The coach is somewhat faster; the barge is somewhat cheaper.)

The PCs can easily catch a coach from the Castle Rock depot. Ten silver shillings buys passage to Delberz. From Delberz, 15s will pay for a coach to Altdorf, or the PCs can secure a berth on a barge for 5s. (All prices are per person.)

If the PCs have managed to save Graf Wolfgang from the fire, he'll charter a Castle Rock coach to drive them straight to Altdorf. This coach will be at their disposal and travel according to their schedule; it will also be somewhat more comfortable than usual. (In fact, Graf Wolfgang will go out of his way to ensure that their travelling accommodations are better than those provided by Graf Friedrich.) If the PCs managed to secure Werther's letter of credit from Graf Friedrich somehow, then paying for the coach would be a suitable use of that letter. (Presuming they haven't already squandered all of Graf Friedrich's credit and goodwill in Middenheim.)

Once the PCs have secured their transport, they find themselves one grey Middenheim morning loading into a coach driven by a boisterous crooked-toothed man named Hans. Hans uses the same stats as Werther, despite being more than two decades younger.

## THE FIRST LEG — MIDDENHEIM TO DELBERZ

Leaving Middenheim through the south gate, the coach clatters along the massive viaduct and slowly descends to the forest floor. Soon the road twists and winds through the lightless Drakwald, making poor time and encountering only infrequent settlements of any size. It's not much past 100 miles from Middenheim to Delberz as the crow flies, but the coach travels nearly twice that as the road struggles to find a safe path through the forest. On the last day, the road straightens somewhat and rolls down a long and gentle slope. The Drakwald even pulls back from the edge of the road and the modest town of Delberz can be seen crowded against the shores of the River Delb. On the far side of the river, the Howling Hills can be seen marching onwards and upwards into the distance.

This leg is a **Hard (3d) Ride (Ag) check**. (See page 19 for complete rules for travelling.)

### FRIENDLY ENCOUNTERS

Some of these encounters are repeats from Book Two; others are new. As always, the GM should feel free to invent his own.

**Traders:** As in Book Two, page 72. These merchants are carrying a load of Middenheim steel (swords, halberds, and breastplates) to Altdorf, along with two caskets of Nordland honey and several kegs of beer.

**Imperial Courier:** As in Book Two, page 74.

**Dwarfs:** A sturdily built cart drawn by a sturdily built pony trundles north on the road. The driver is a young dwarf with a black beard, who keeps a loaded crossbow balanced casually in his lap. If the PCs stop to chat, he shouts into the back of the cart, at which point his grey-bearded uncle climbs out and sits next to the driver. The uncle explains that he and his nephew are stonemasons, and are driving north to find a "manling" town in need of rebuilding after the war. They hope to eventually make enough gold practicing their trade to return home to their karak and find brides. The dwarfs can share a rumour from Altdorf. If the PCs share that they have heard that Wolfenburg may need masons, the dwarfs will be grateful.

**Funeral Procession:** Two Knights Panther, with leopard-skin cloaks and black cloths hung over their shields, ride south. Behind them is a third horse carrying a swaddled corpse, which they will explain belonged to their Preceptor Niklaus von Berkhartd. They're escorting his remains to his family's lands south of Carroburg in Reikland. If the PCs are respectful and offer condolences for their fallen comrade, the knights (Viktor and Wendel) will agree to ride with them as far as Delberz. The knights use Soldier characteristics, but have a Strength of 4, DR 5, and Weapon Skill trained.

### HOSTILE ENCOUNTERS

In the wake of the battles to the north, the Drakwald is thick with the scattered and broken remnants of both Imperial and Chaos regiments.

**Giant Spider:** As in Book Two, page 74.

**Chaos Marauders:** As in Book Two, page 77.

**Beastman Herd:** A tree abruptly topples over ahead, nearly crushing the horses and effectively blocking the road. A wargor and two to three gors (depending on the number and strength of the PCs) immediately leap from hiding, half on each side of the road, while two henchmen groups of ungors emerge behind the coach at long range. The wargor and gors fight to the death, crazed with bloodlust. The ungors flee as soon as the wargor and gors are defeated.

**Wandering Champion:** A single Chaos Warrior in sinister black armour stands in the centre of the road and challenges anyone who approaches. He insists on fighting a duel with the strongest warrior in any travelling party. If anyone steps forward to fight him, he fights to the death, then (if he wins) allows the rest of the travelling party to go by unmolested, waiting for the next group. He will not be drawn out on why he is doing this, and limits his dialogue to statements like "None shall pass," or "Who among you will face me and die?" If the PCs elect to simply ride past him, the warrior attempts to kill or disable one horse as they go by. He makes a **Daunting (4d) Weapon Skill (St) check**, spending one point of his expertise. If successful, he critically injures or kills the first horse to pass, whether that belongs to a rider or the coach, and commences battle with its rider or driver.

**Wrecked Cart:** A cart travelling along the Middenheim-Altdorf road has been waylaid by bandits, who have killed the drivers and taken the draft animals and cargo for themselves. A band of three crypt ghouls have been drawn to the area by the smell of rotting human flesh and, as the PCs' coach draws near, they have begun to feast on the corpses of the drivers. The approach of the cart startles the ghouls, who crouch down in the rear of the cart hoping it will just pass them by. The PCs can confront the ghouls if they wish. The ghouls will fight until slain, or until they kill someone (at which point they will drag their victim into the trees to feast).

## MIDDENHEIM TO DELBERZ

### RUMOURS

- + “The Emperor hasn’t been seen since he returned to Altdorf. His wounds must be much worse than reported.”
- + “It’s Kurt Helborg who’s winning the war for the Empire, but all anyone can talk about in Altdorf is the Averlanders! I swear, I’ll never understand those who gossip.”
- + “Crime’s getting worse. Always does in wartime, I suppose.”
- + “I heard a man burned to death in the Sacred Flame in Middenheim! I bet he was a heretic or a traitor; that’s Ulric’s judgement on him.”
- + “If you’re headed to Altdorf, you should give the Temple of Drama theatre a look. Their sets and costumes – I’ve never seen anything so convincing and realistic.”

### NEWS

- + “Norscans, beastmen, and Surtha Lenk’s host – it’s a fair lot of enemies Helborg has to deal with in the north, but he’s acquitting himself well. The war will be over in a month.”
- + “Wolfenburg has fallen, but the northmen have been broken and scattered. Hunting them down will be a chore, but for us in the south that threat has ended.”
- + “Everyone talks about ‘the war’ and ‘the invasion,’ as if it were the only conflict our soldiers are fighting! As we speak, there are Norscan raiders all along the Nordland coast, the unquiet dead assaulting Swartzhafen, orcs stirring in the Grey Mountains, and elves, of all things, killing other elves on the edges of the Laurelorn forest. So yes, I’ll be happy when the ‘war’ is over, if only because I’ll be able to focus on threats a little closer to home.”

Everything of value has been stripped from the cart by the bandits. However, on an **Average (2d) Search (Int) check**, the PCs will find a couple of broken crossbow bolts with red shafts nearby.

Note that the bandits responsible for the attack are long gone, though there are a number of bounty hunters on their trail and the PCs may meet one of these later on (see page 110).

**Monster:** The Drakwald is still full of monsters of every description. Trolls, giants, demigryphs, Chaos Spawn – any of these could attack the coach.

## ENCOUNTER ONE — A DISTURBANCE IN DELBERZ

Krasskulk’s pursuit of the PCs continues. Thanks to the winding route the Altdorf-Middenheim road is forced to take through the Drakwald, the skaven has been able to keep pace with the coach and actually arrived in Delberz somewhat before them. He will continue to shadow them as they proceed to Altdorf, and the Delberz encounter is largely to provide foreshadowing for the skaven attack later.

## THE TOWN OF DELBERZ

Delberz is situated on the River Delb along the Altdorf-Middenheim road. The town is a prosperous trading post famed for the quality of its wines, its wooden palisade cheerily whitewashed and several grey slate roofs extending above the walls, visible from quite some distance away. Many inhabitants of the town are involved in wine making or in the logging business, taking timber from the outskirts of the surrounding Drakwald Forest. Several inns can be found in the town, including coaching inns catering to the travellers along the road or river. Delberz is a chartered free town that owes taxes to the ruler of Middenland in return for rights to self-govern.

Unbeknownst to the inhabitants of Delberz, they live above a thriving skaven lair. The ratmen are careful to hide their presence from the humans who live in the town, emerging only to surreptitiously raid supplies and eavesdrop on travellers, gaining valuable intelligence for their endless schemes.

## THE BLACK DOG TAVERN

The Black Dog is a large coaching and boating inn nestled between the west bank of the River Delb and the Altdorf-Middenheim road. The inn is a large stone building incorporating a fortified tower, which served as part of the town’s defences in ages past. A picture of a large and shaggy black wolf, eyes aglow with pale fire, adorns the sign in front of the inn.

The inn is quite busy, though it has a number of small rooms set aside for travellers, and the PCs will be able to find lodging there for the night. Meals, drinks, and accommodation are pitched at the Silver economic tier – four silvers per bed per night, and two silver shillings for dinner.

## FINDING TRANSPORT TO ALTDORF

The PCs can continue down the Altdorf/Middenheim road on the coach they came in on, although the coachman needs to rest the horses for the night, or look for a berth on a riverboat (as noted on page 109). The boat is significantly cheaper, and with a successful **Average (2d) Charm (Fel) check**, the PCs can knock 2s off the price by agreeing to help with minding the cargo.

In any case, the PCs won’t be able to get transport out of Delberz the evening they arrive, so they will have to stay the night.

## AND SO, TO BED...

The PCs will probably end up staying the night in one or more of the small cell-like rooms in the Black Dog. Each of these rooms contains a wooden chest and a mattress that two people can sleep on. The rooms are kept clean, but they certainly aren't luxurious.

At night the inn will be infiltrated by members of Clan Eshin. Krasskulk is still reluctant to make his humiliation in Averheim public knowledge, so he still relies on only small bands of Eshin skaven rather than attempting to rouse the might of all of Under-Delberz. Krasskulk's team consists of himself, three Clan Eshin gutter runners, and a rather sickly mutant rat.

Thanks to a hastily performed divining ritual, Krasskulk knows that the clapper is somewhere in the vicinity of the Black Dog, though he isn't sure where exactly. The members of his team are too few to attack the inn head on, or to show themselves during the day. As such, he requires the PCs to show themselves after dark so that he can identify that it is indeed them and make further plans.

## THE ATTACK OF THE MUTANT RAT

Shortly after retiring to bed, the PCs are awoken by shrill screams echoing throughout the inn. Should they investigate, they can easily follow the shrieks to the scullery. Some of the other visitors to the inn are also roused by the yelling, but most are too frightened or inebriated to investigate themselves. If the PCs make moves to investigate, a couple of guests will tentatively follow them.

In the scullery, one of the inn's staff, a freckled serving maid, is stood upon a teetering three-legged stool brandishing a broom in the direction of a monstrous rat. The rat is the size of a small dog and bears signs of mutation: long bony spines grow from its back and it has three tails that it whips about angrily. The rat is close to death, as the girl has inflicted a number of damaging blows to its spine with her broom handle. Any willing PC with a weapon can dispatch it with ease (If the PCs are for some reason sluggish to respond or uncertain of what to do, the rat lunges at the closest PC, making a basic melee attack with Strength 2□, DR 3).

The serving girl, whose name is Frida, is very grateful to have been 'rescued' by the PCs. She collects herself and disposes of the rat by taking it outside and throwing it in the Delb. She apologises profusely to the inn's guests about disturbing their sleep.

PCs who accompany the girl as she goes to dispose the rat, or who keep an eye on the windows of the inn during this episode, spot a fleeting shadowy shape on a **Hard (3d) Observation (Int) check**. This is one of the gutter runners that Krasskulk has set to watch the inn and report on where the PCs are staying.

On this occasion, Krasskulk decides not to assault the PCs, reasoning that there are too many people in the inn to risk attacking the PCs tonight. Instead he and his team prepare to shadow them as they travel towards Altdorf, hoping that a better opportunity awaits them.

## MOVING ON

The next day, the PCs will have to decide whether to proceed via coach or riverboat. How the second leg of the journey unfolds depends on this decision.

## THE SECOND LEG — THE RIVER ROUTE

If the PCs proceed by boat, they are given berths on a broad and tidy barge that does not appear to have a name, but does have a stylised leaping fish statue affixed to its bow. The bargemen are a father-son team, forty-odd year-old Yan with only three fingers on his left hand and skin brown and wrinkly from the sun, and his strapping eighteen-year-old son Also Yan. In addition to the two crew and the PCs, the barge carries several casks of salt pork, a large supply of lumber, three crates of Delberz wine, and several dozen luxurious pelts from Hochland.

The river route runs down the River Delb as it winds its way through the edge of the Howling Hills, which rise up tall and forbidding off the west bank. The Drakwald still crowds against the shore on the east bank, although as the barge moves further and further south the trees thin out somewhat. The river is dotted with the occasional fishing village and small port town, as well as old and crumbling watchtowers and even one decrepit-looking castle overlooking the river on a bluff. The later half of the journey leaves the Howling Hills behind. The Delb widens and becomes a slow-moving stream with many submerged hazards and still pools, black beneath the ever-present boughs of the forest.

Two days before reaching Altdorf, the Delb joins the River Talabec and becomes one of the truly great riverways of the Empire, so wide it almost seems to be a lake. The Talabec is crowded with boat traffic and its shores have much more regular settlements than the Delb, although somewhat upstream of where the Delb and Talabec merge is a column of smoke, as if one of these settlements is burning... even in the heart of the Empire, it's not always safe!

Yan and Also Yan work as a team to keep the barge moving. They use the Townsfolk characteristics, but both of them working together means that the pilot (usually Yan) gains □ to his checks.

Piloting the riverboat down the Delb to Altdorf is an **Average (2d) Coordination (Ag) check**.

## FRIENDLY ENCOUNTERS

Any of the previous friendly encounters could be repurposed for this section, adapting for the fact that the PCs are on a river, not a road.

**Showboat:** The PCs pass by a large boat bedecked with colourful bunting and a banner reading "THE KELD ABELL PLAYERS PRESENT THE MERRY COMEDY OF THE SEVEN DRUNKEN KNIGHTS." The boat provides a troupe of travelling players with a home as well as a vehicle. There are twenty people on the boat, a mixture of boatmen, actors and musicians (all using the Townsfolk NPC profile). In charge of the caravan is Keld Abell, the eponymous manager (a Specialist NPC), who hails the PCs and asks them what news they have about the settlements they have passed. If the PCs provide him with useful or interesting information, he gives them a piece of news and a rumour in return.

**Strigany Pedlar:** The PCs pass a brightly coloured barge crewed by a family of strigany folk (each with the Townsfolk NPC profile). One of the travellers hails the PCs, calling out, "Could you good men make any use of my wares?" He has a number of items such as pots, pans, cutlery, boxes, pins, and so on. Whether or not the PCs buy anything, his wife pipes up and offers to read their palms for

## DELBERZ TO ALTDORF

### RUMOURS

- + “There’s no fancy physician or barber-surgeon can set the Emperor aright. It’ll take prayer, real heart-felt prayer, to deliver us in our darkest hours. Will you pray with me?”
- + “Now that the forces of Chaos have exposed the weakness of our armies, other enemies of the Empire will fall upon us like wolves. The Badlands seethe with greenskins who are eager to settle their ancient grudges, still sore to them since the time of Sigmar. But for my part it’s the filthy Bretonnians I’m most worried about. Our southern provinces should invest heavily in caltrops!”
- + “Blackguards throughout the Empire have been so seditious as to suggest that the reason the Emperor has been confined to the palace is down to him being corrupted by Chaos. You don’t believe that sort of rot do you?”
- + “Watch yourselves on this river. All sorts of unmentionable beasts have been whipped up and excited by the war and upheavals we’ve had to suffer through. My cousin used to be a fisherman on the Talabec until he was eaten by a lunkerfish that was, as Verena is my witness, this big.”

### NEWS

- + “The word is that the Emperor’s wounds are healing, but he is still not fit to perform his duties. Sigmar protect him.”
- + “Watch out for ne’er-do-wells if you’re going to the capital. The annual dicing league on the Street of a Hundred Taverns is due to start soon, and all manner of card sharps and rogues will be making their way to Altdorf to win some money, by fair means or by foul.”
- + “Many of the city’s usual noblemen are currently afield with the army, which makes for a great many unaccompanied ladies in Altdorf. Still, the season is in full swing, with the theatres and music halls crammed every night.”
- + “There are calls to the Cult of Sigmar to provide more leadership in light of the Emperor’s illness. The Grand Theogonist is apparently deliberating over the wisdom of holding some sort of event to petition Sigmar to bestow his grace upon the Empire in this time of need.”
- + “Schwarzhelm – you know, the Emperor’s Champion – he won’t let anyone in to see the Emperor except for those Averlanders who saved his life. Why would he do that? He must suspect treachery.”

a silver shilling. If they accept, she shares a couple of rumours with them whilst uttering platitudes about going on a long journey, meeting the object of their desire, struggling to overcome challenges, and needing to beware the wiles of Chaos.

**Fishermen:** Close to a riverside inn or village, the PCs pass a small fishing boat crewed by a pair of fishermen (with the Townsfolk NPC profile). If spoken to they will make some small talk with the PCs. On a successful **Average (2d) Charm (Fel) check**, they will be able to give them the next rumour and piece of news on the list.

**Soldiers:** Close to a settlement, or in the bar of a riverside inn, the PCs encounter a squad of four soldiers (using the Soldier NPC profile) in the red and blue of Altdorf headed back from the front. If the PCs ask for news and make a successful **Average (2d) Charm (Fel) check**, they will hear the next piece of news from the list. Some of the soldiers bear serious injuries, and if the PCs help treat them, they will earn the gratitude of the soldiers without a Charm check.

**Bounty Hunter:** Karl Gutzkow, a rough-looking man riding a heavily laden horse, guides his steed down the path by the side of the river. He wears a distressed and weather-beaten suit of studded leather and is armed with a sword and a crossbow. He calls out to the PCs’ barge as he approaches. “Ahoy the boat! I am looking for a dangerous fugitive from the Emperor’s justice, have you seen this man?” He waves a bill poster at them. If the PCs agree to stop and talk to Karl, he shows them a poster that informs them that the burghers of the city of Talabheim are offering 25 gold crowns for the capture of Theodor Bruckner, known to some as ‘Keeneye’ or ‘Redshot.’ An engraving of a rangy man with long dark hair and a missing nose is also shown. If Karl is asked about Theodor’s methods, he says that he is a notorious highway robber who wields a customised repeating crossbow and ambushes vulnerable travellers. He shoots to kill his victims without mercy using distinctive red-hafted bolts before making off with their valuables.

The PCs may have encountered Bruckner’s handiwork on their road south from Middenheim. If they remember, and mention this to Gutzkow, he is grateful and talks more openly, providing them with a piece of news or a rumour. Karl uses the Soldier NPC profile.

### HOSTILE ENCOUNTERS

The fact that the PCs are on a river makes them comparatively safer than a road; many of their most common foes can’t swim or don’t swim well. But the river has its own dangers.

**Forest Goblins:** A group of five forest goblins are crouched by the river. As the barge passes, they let off a spiteful hail of arrows in hope of hurting one of the passengers. If the PCs try to attack the goblins, the greenskins let off more arrows and then run into the forest, hoping to draw the PCs after them so that they can whittle away at them with bow fire. If the PCs make a landing and a determined pursuit, the forest goblins will do all they can to escape – they aren’t looking for a proper fight, merely seeking to indulge in spiteful mischief. The forest goblins even seek to lead pursuers into a trap, the den of an irascible boar, so that they can make a proper escape. The forest goblins are much the same as normal goblins, though they wear no armour and are armed with knives and bows. They are ornamented with bright body paint, feathers, and bones.

**River Pirates:** The barge approaches an obstruction in the water, a large mass of vegetation and flotsam that has gathered around a fallen tree. As the boatman navigates his vessel around the hazard, another boat comes into view, a long narrow vessel propelled by ranks of oars. There are a number of bandits on the vessel, mas-

quering as members of a river patrol. As the PCs' barge drifts down the river the bandits row in pursuit. The bandit chief stands on the prow of his vessel and shouts: "Do not be alarmed, we are members of the Elector Count's river patrol, authorised by authority of the Elector Count to ensure that smugglers are kept from his waterways. Pull up your boat and we will perform a swift routine search and then let you on your way!" The PCs may well notice, on an **Average (2d) Observation (Int) check**, that the uniforms worn by the patrol are ill-fitting and piecemeal. However, the barge has no chance of outrunning the fast patrol boat. If the bandits fool the PCs, they board the barge, take up careful positions and "confiscate" everything on the barge that looks valuable (including the wine and furs, as well as anything valuable looking the PCs haven't bothered to hide, perhaps including the box with the bell clapper), attacking only if the PCs or boatmen put up any resistance. Otherwise the bandits will fight a boarding action. There are two bandits for each PC, including the chief. The bandits use the profiles for Soldier NPCs and are armed with hand weapons. The chief carries two pistols and is trained in Ballistic Skill.

**River Troll:** As the barge passes a lonely stretch of the river, there is a loud roar from an overgrown area of scrub near the bank. A green and stinking river troll lives in the area and begins to wade out to the barge in the hope of easy pickings. Seeing the danger, the boatmen work away at the sails, trying to give the barge the speed needed to outpace the troll. Yan will succeed in his plan if he passes a **Hard (3d) Coordination (Ag) check**. If not, the troll reaches the barge and will have to be fought off. The troll will retreat in search of easier prey if it takes ten or more wounds. Alternatively, if the PCs sacrifice something large, tasty, and edible (such as a cask of salted pork), the troll will drag its prize to the bank and eat it sooner than continue to attack the barge. The boatmen won't be happy to have their cargo used in such a cavalier manner, but considering the alternative the PCs shouldn't have too much difficulty placating them.

**The Drowning Thief:** Carolina Neuber is a young woman who lives in a small riverside village. She is also an accomplished cutpurse with an unusual method. Just upriver from her house is a tight bend in the river. Carolina watches for vessels approaching from one side of the bend, then rushes to the other side and throws herself in the water, pretending to drown. Usually the crews of passing boats rescue the girl and then she robs them whilst their guard is down. As the PCs' barge approaches the bend, PCs on deck may spot Carolina on a **Daunting (4d) Observation (Int) check**. Those who pass see a slim and nervous young woman in a peasant's smock running from the bank into the woods nearby. The barge then navigates a very tight bend in the river. Once the barge passes the bend, Caroline can be clearly seen floundering about in the water and crying for help. If Caroline is not rescued, she recovers her composure and swims ashore. If she is rescued, she will be very grateful, and shares a piece of news and a rumour with the PCs once she has dried out a bit. She explains that her village is just a short distance further down the river and then tries to pick the pockets of the PCs. This is handled in the same way as the pickpocket Fritz Flink in Book One, Act One, Page 34. However, Caroline makes her attempts at cutting purses with an effective Agility of 4 and a rank of training in Skulduggery, to represent her superior skill and cunning ruse.



## THE SECOND LEG — THE ROAD ROUTE

Should the PCs elect to continue by road, they will find the terrain for this leg of the journey quite similar to the first leg. The Drakwald still crowds against the edge of the road and still does its best to blot out the sun. The road still twists and turns to struggle through the forest.

After a few days travelling, the forest changes in character, becoming slightly less dark and dense. The closer the coach gets to Altdorf, the more tamed and civilised the landscape becomes. The forest breaks periodically and reveals a swathe of farmland or an orchard, often surrounded by a low stone wall and patrolled by farmers with crossbows. The coaching inns often form the centre of a small village, with blacksmith, market, and a shrine to Taal, Ulric, or Sigmar (or sometimes all three), rather than being a lone fortified building in the wilderness.

Traffic on the road also becomes more pronounced as the PCs get closer and closer. The check to travel on this leg is still Hard (3d). However, after the second failed check the difficulty is reduced to Average (2d), as the PCs move into the somewhat tamer south of Middenland.

### FRIENDLY ENCOUNTERS

Once again, some of these are repeats of prior events.

**Roadwardens:** As in Book Two, page 72. The captain wears an ornately decorated and ruffled long coat and a pair of flamboyant feathers in his cap in red and blue. He is armed with a repeater pistol. If the PCs have already encountered the highwaymen described on the next page and there were survivors, then one of the bandits rides behind the roadwardens, shackled hand and foot.

**Militia:** The PCs overtake a group of twenty militiamen on foot. These men appear to be mainly farmers and lumbermen. Their only armour are thick wool coats and some of them lack shoes. They are armed with a mixed collection of axes, second-hand swords, cudgels, and spears. If asked, the men explain that they have been levied by their lord and dispatched to a muster at Weismund. The men have no idea why they are going to Weismund or what enemy, if any, they can expect to fight when they get there. They'll gladly share a rumour with the PCs as they walk.

**Pilgrims:** As in Book Two, page 76. These pilgrims are Sigmarites, headed south for Altdorf to pray for the Emperor's health and safety.

**Bounty Hunter:** As in the River Route encounter, but Gutzkow passes the PCs on the road, headed north towards Middenheim.

**Imperial Courier:** As in Book Two, page 74.

## HOSTILE ENCOUNTERS

These encounters are somewhat more dangerous than the river route.

**Greenskins:** The coach hits a heavy bump and comes screeching to a stop; it's just fallen into a shallow trench dug across the road and covered with leaves and broken an axle. As the coachman climbs down to study the damage, there is a loud roar and a band of greenskins burst from the trees to attack! There are as many orcs as PCs in this band of greenskins, and two henchman groups of goblins. The lead orc is a massive brute with a scar running through his left eye; he has +4 to his wound threshold and one additional expertise. The greenskins wear rough, tarnished mail armour and wield huge axe-like choppas. Assemble a five-space progress tracker with an event space in the fifth space and place a tracking token in the first space. Each time an orc or a henchman group is defeated, or the PCs use some other effect to erode morale, advance the tracking token one space. When it reaches the event space the greenskins turn and flee.

As unbelievable as it sounds, the scar-eyed orc and some of his followers are veterans of Third Black Fire, scattered remnants of the Waaagh! that have been on the run ever since. If any of the PCs are also veterans of that battle, they may remember the orc – and he may remember them! (Maybe one of the PCs gave him that scar? Perhaps this orc is the one who injured the Battle-Scarred PC?)

**Giant Spider:** As in Book Two, page 74.

**Highwaymen:** A gang of bandits equal in number to the PCs, plus a bandit leader with training in Coordination, Ride, Weapon Skill, and Ballistic Skill and a Wound Threshold of 18, rides up alongside the coach, demanding the driver halt and the passengers surrender their valuables. The bandits are mounted on riding horses and clad in hard-wearing leathers with red scarves tied around their faces as masks. The bandits use Cutthroat characteristics (except for the leader, as noted above). Half of the bandits have crossbows; they stay at close range and shoot anyone who resists or emerges from the coach. The other half make **Average (2d) Coordination (Ag) checks** to move from their horses to the coach and attack the passengers. The leader has a pistol and a sword; he fires and then climbs aboard the coach. If the PCs have already encountered the roadwardens described above, the bandit leader is wearing the roadwarden captain's (blood-stained) coat.



## ENCOUNTER TWO — DEATH ON THE DELB (OUTSIDE ALTDORF)

Travelling by river or by road, the PCs come to the settlement of Krankendorf, where the coach and/or barge comes to a stop for the evening. Krankendorf is a smaller settlement than Delberz, a collection of thatch-roofed homes and warehouses surrounding a three storey inn with a roof of red clay tiles and a large attached stable. Krankendorf's stone wall has a large breach on the north stretch. Workmen can be seen erecting a wooden palisade to fill the gap, but they're only about half done as evening falls. (If anyone asks, the townsfolk explain that a monster from the Drakwald smashed down the wall and struck six strong men deaf, dumb, and blind with a glance when they came to chase it off. No two people can agree what it looked like, but everyone is glad it's gone and that no one died.) Krasskulk and his skaven creep in and out of the town through the breach in the wall.

If on the barge, Yan and Also Yan invite the PCs to spend the night in the local coaching inn while they set about having the barge unloaded and reloaded, a noisy and lengthy procedure. If travelling by coach, Hans pulls into the coaching inn without being asked and makes arrangements to stable his horses there.

## THE RED EMPRESSES

The sole inn in Krankendorf is a three-storey half-timbered affair with a red clay tile roof. The sign hanging in the courtyard depicts three stern and noble women in somewhat faded paint. PCs with Education may recognise them as three infamous ladies of the Empire's history: Ottilia of Talabecland, Magritta of Marienburg, and Beatrice the Cruel.

The proprietor of the Red Empresses proves to be a wispy-voiced man with a harelip named Adelbrand Hemmler. He greets the PCs as they enter, offers them a room or rooms for the night (35 brass pennies each), and explains that dinner will be ready in a few minutes, so the PCs should have time to take their things upstairs and freshen up.

## A ROUGH MEAL

When the PCs come down for dinner, they find the common room crowded with labourers and travellers enjoying a rough bean soup and rough brown bread. Amongst the crowd are a thick-necked, bald-headed man wearing a too-tight vest and nothing else above the waist, named Kaspar. Kaspar is a dockworker, head of the dominant (that is to say, only) Krankendorf docker's gang (which is too small to have a name). He is also a violent, vicious thug who enjoys picking fights and causing trouble, largely because there's no one in Krankendorf big and strong enough to realistically fight back. Kaspar uses the characteristics of a Soldier, but he is Strength 4 and has the Mighty Blow action. His friends, also dockworkers, use the normal Soldier characteristics. (They all have a soak value of 0, because they're not wearing any armour.)

About an hour ago, Krasskulk disguised himself as a "man-thing" and approached Kaspar at the docks. He gave him the last remaining bit of gold from the plaque in Averheim and promised more if Kaspar would rough up the PCs, who he described and explained how and when they would be arriving. Kaspar's two favourite things in the world are gold and hitting people, so he eagerly made the jump from dockworker to professional thug. Now he's lurking in the Red Empresses common room waiting for the PCs to make an appearance so he can pick a fight.

As soon as the PCs settle in for their meal, Kaspar approaches and sits down uninvited. He proceeds to be extremely rude to them, asking inappropriate questions, boasting about his own prowess, and belittling anything he can discern about the PCs or that they might share about themselves. Examples might include:

- + "Where's your beard? Are you a man or a fairy?"
- + "Averland, eh? I should have known right off from your dim wits and addled behaviour; everyone knows Averlanders are all sun-struck and stupid."
- + "You know how to use that sword or is it just for playing dress-up like you do with your dollies?"

Kaspar's goal is to get them to throw the first punch. If the GM feels it's appropriate, he can set up a progress tracker and turn this into a social encounter. Set up a progress tracker (seven spaces should do it) and place a token for each PC and one for Kaspar on the first space. Kaspar uses Intimidate, opposed by a PCs' Discipline, to rile them up. Each time he influences his target, move that PCs' token one space. Each time he rolls ✨, or a PC successfully uses Guile or Intimidate (or other suitable skills or actions) to rile him up, move Kaspar's token one space. PCs can use Charm on one another, opposed by Kaspar's Fellowship, or on Kaspar, opposed by his Willpower, to move their target's token **back** one space. The character whose token first moves into a space higher than his Willpower score (the 4th space for a character with WP 3, for example) loses his cool and throws the first punch. If Kaspar's token is successfully moved back off the front of the tracker (i.e. to the 0th space), then

he gives up and sulks off. (Obviously, the PCs can lose their cool and attack Kaspar at any time, regardless of what the dice say, if they choose to.)

## FIGHT! FIGHT! FIGHT!

Assuming a fight breaks out, the crowd clears the area with a speed and efficiency that suggests this sort of thing happens a lot. If the PCs throw the first punch, a number of dockworkers equal in number to them leap to their feet and rush to assist Kaspar. If Kaspar throws the first punch, half that many dockers come to aid him. As in Book One (page 29), this is a fistfight; no one is trying to actually kill anyone else.

As soon as more than two people are lying bleeding on his floor, Adelbrand fires a rusty old pistol (with powder, no ball) into the air and points another one unsteadily in the direction of the combatants, ordering them out of his establishment. The PC who threw the first punch will be included in Adelbrand's decree unless the group can talk him down. (The exiled PC is met at the door by Adelbrand's portly wife Helga, who brings him to the stable and provides him with a blanket and a bowl of soup).

If the PCs best Kaspar, he becomes a truly pathetic craven wretch, begging for mercy. If the PCs press him, he'll tell them anything they want to know. Due to Krasskulk's Eshin magics, he cannot remember what the person who hired him to hurt the PCs looked like, although he's fairly certain he was male. He'll even part with the sliver of gold if the PCs demand it; the PCs may realise it looks like the gold bits Frederick Grosz paid off the tanners with in Averheim.

## MEANWHILE...

As Kaspar is doing his level best to distract the PCs and draw them into a brawl, Krasskulk and his agents break into the PCs' room and search for the bell clapper. Krasskulk has two Gutter Runners with him, and although neither is as adept as Skrabb, they're both adequate to the task of gaining entry to the PCs' room undetected.

## OCCUPIED!

If any PCs are still in their room during the brawl with Kaspar, the skaven will have to adjust their plan. If there is only one PC in the room, they will proceed to break in and attempt to overpower him or her, binding and gagging (but not killing) as they proceed with their search. If they can't find the bell clapper, they will threaten the PC with death, unbind his or her mouth, and ask where the bell clapper is. If they get a satisfactory answer or if the PC screams for help, they'll slit the PCs' throat (inflicting an automatic critical wound, plus 5 additional wounds).

If there are two or more PCs in the room, they'll abort their mission. The PCs should make **Daunting (4d) Observation (Int) checks**; if successful they see Krasskulk slinking away from the window and over the roof of the stable. The skaven will come back when the PCs are asleep.

If the skaven find the box containing the bell clapper, they leave it where it is and Krasskulk attempts to remove the magical wards protecting it (which he knows about due to the unfortunate events of Book Two as the PCs travelled to Middenheim). He will succeed in this task at the precise instant that a PC returns to the room from downstairs, shrieking with delight as the box opens. As soon as that PC opens the door, both Gutter Runners leap to attack him and Krasskulk gleefully removes the bell clapper from the box.

His joy is short-lived, however, as he holds the clapper in his hands and sniffs it, bites it, and examines it from every angle (all while the Gutter Runners fight and, perhaps, die to protect him). “No!” he shrieks. “Is bad-wrong! All ruined-wrecked! You die-die, man-things!” Krasskulk hurls the “ruined” bell clapper (with its taint of warpstone removed) to the floor and leaps to attack the PCs during the second round of combat. At this point, he fights to the death. The Gutter Runners flee as soon as Krasskulk dies. (Their corpses decompose into sludge, just like the skaven in Averheim.)

If the skaven don’t find the bell-clapper in its box, they will come back for a night-time raid. The PCs will have to pass an **Average (2d) Observation (Int) check** to notice they were ever in the room. (If the check succeeds with boons, they find a pawprint or tuft of fur suggesting skaven were in the room a short time ago.)

### THE NIGHT RAID

If the skaven still haven’t found the bell clapper, they return in the dead of night, after the PCs have gone to sleep. They creep into the room through the window, carefully removing a pane of glass and unlatching the window from the inside if it is locked. Sleeping PCs will have to pass a **Hard (3d) Observation (Int) check** to notice the skaven as they enter. A PC on watch makes the check at Easy (1d) difficulty, presuming he is in the room. The skaven then search all the PCs’ belongings thoroughly – this is an **Average (2d) Observation (Int) check** from sleepers and automatic on the part of anyone on watch to notice.

If no one wakes up and the skaven eventually find the bell clapper, they will be awakened by Krasskulk’s dismayed speech and subsequent attack with intent to kill, as noted above. If the skaven don’t find the bell clapper, they grab one PC, clap a hand over his or her mouth, and put a knife to his or her throat, then ask where the box is.

One way or another, the PCs should be done with Krasskulk after tonight, and they may have some closure in regards to the bell clapper – the skaven no longer want it, so it must be safe. (Luminary Mauer will be especially interested to hear about Krasskulk’s reaction to the clapper if the PCs mention it.)

The next morning, the PCs can again board their coach or barge and proceed to Altdorf, where many more dangers await them...



## WELCOME TO ALTDORF

Altdorf, the Imperial capital, is the largest, grandest, and most important city in the Empire. If the citizens of Altdorf are to be believed, it is the largest, grandest, and most important city in the entire world. It is the home to the Colleges of Magic, the famed University of Altdorf, grand temples to every god in the pantheon, and has been the seat of the Emperor for generations. As wealthy as Marienburg, as sophisticated as Nuln, and as strong as Middenheim, Altdorf is the most impressive and amazing city any of the PCs are likely to ever see.

As before, the common knowledge all PCs are likely to know is summarised below. To gain deeper knowledge, the PCs must make an **Easy (1d) Folklore (Int) check**.

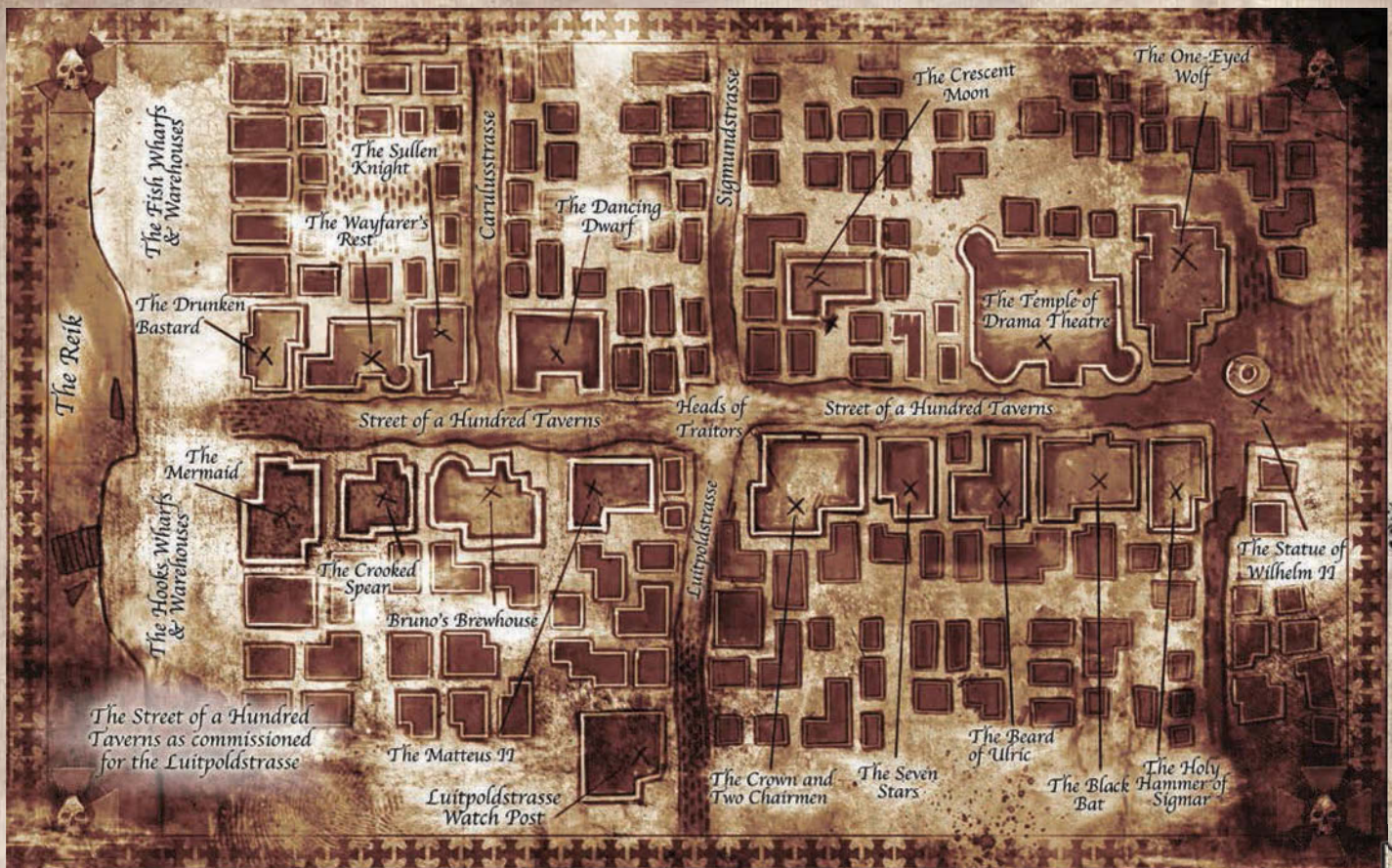
### ALTDORF: COMMON KNOWLEDGE

Altdorf is the capital of the Reikland. It is situated at the confluence of the Reik and the Talabec. Where the waters meet and mix sediment forms extensive mudflats and small islands upon which much of the city stands. The city is renowned as the centre of religious and secular power in the Empire, being the site of both the Imperial Palace and the Holy Temple of Sigmar. The Emperor, the Grand Theogonist, the Supreme Patriarch, and a number of other important authorities live in the city. Altdorf is a centre of learning, home to the College of Engineers, the University of Altdorf, and the Colleges of Magic. The city is well defended, surrounded by tall white walls topped with roofs of red slate. The city has a large garrison and is home to a number of knightly orders, as well as the famous Reiksguard Knights. A great many wizards live in Altdorf, and are tolerated here more readily than elsewhere in the Empire due to the presence of the Colleges of magic. The army of Altdorf wears a uniform of blue and red.

### ALTDORF: DEEPER KNOWLEDGE

☛ **Basic Information:** The city was once known as Reikdorf and was the seat of the Unberogen chieftains, including Sigmar himself. Altdorf has been the Imperial capital since the ascension of Wilhelm III in 2429 IC. It is known for the many bridges that span the waterways between the various islands upon which the city is stood. Many of these bridges are designed with ingenious mechanisms invented by the engineers of the city that raise and lower the bridges to allow tall ships to pass. The city is also a renowned cultural centre, home to a number of theatres and the celebrated playwright Detlef Sierck. The Imperial zoo is another infamous institution, by turns alarming to the common folk and amusing to the nobility, and is an altogether superior collection to the Averheim menagerie.

☛☛ **Further Information:** As above, and the city is an important trade nexus, producing few goods of its own but making considerable profits from the storage and distribution of products from other areas. Merchants from all over the Old World come to the city to buy and sell wares. The largest marketplace in the city is a square called the Konigplatz from which coaches and carts depart to all corners of the Empire. The most prosperous coach company in the city is the Four Seasons line. The docks of Altdorf are busier and larger than any other city in the Empire, rivalling those of Marienburg. Two stevedore gangs, the Hooks and the Fish, control the docks and wield considerable influence. The city is also home to the Reiksport, which hosts the Imperial navy.



\*\*\* **Obscure Information:** As above, and the social centre of the city is arguably the Street of a Hundred Taverns, a long thoroughfare that runs from the Konigplatz to the docks. Many of the bridges over the river that have been designed by the city's engineers are rather temperamental in operation, a fact the Emperor himself is well aware of since his infamous dunking in 2518. Insurrection is not unknown in Altdorf. Radical ideas are sometimes proposed by scholars or agitators. The last widespread revolt was the Great Fog Riots, which occurred over a decade ago in response to the widely loathed Thumb Tax. The revolt was put down and since then Altdorfers have been apparently satisfied with their lot, though their reputation for sedition remains.

\* **Interesting Aside:** All sorts of dark rumours are told about the underworld of Altdorf. Proponents of the existence of skaven assert that a great lair of the ratmen exists beneath the city, and the rat catchers of Altdorf regularly attest to seeing strange scuttling figures and huge mutated rats within the sewers. Witch Hunters also congregate in Altdorf. The headquarters of their order is based there and rumours persist of many unlicensed magic users at large within the city, as well as numerous secret organisations dedicated to the worship of proscribed gods.

## AN ALTDORF GAZETEER

Altdorf is the largest city in the Empire, much larger than Averheim and even larger than Middenheim. Describing all of it is considerably beyond the scope of this adventure. Still, what follows should give the GM enough information to be going on with and may serve as inspiration for future adventures.

## THE STREET OF A HUNDRED TAVERNS

The Street of a Hundred Taverns is found on the east bank of the Reik, running from docks at the the river's edge to the Konigplatz.

There is a heady atmosphere on the street throughout the day and the evening. It is lit with lanterns and the air is pungent with smells of fine ales and tasty dishes. The thoroughfare is crammed with revellers, rakes slumming it amongst the common folk, women of ill repute looking to earn their keep, pickpockets, musicians, students, bunko artists, and drunks, lots and lots of drunks.

As the name suggests, the street is home to a great many hostelries, drinking houses, gin palaces, and taverns. Many of the premises licensed to serve drinks along the street are mere humble residences whose owners set aside a room and a keg for their friends, though there are also a large number of purpose-built taverns on the street. Despite the name, there are rather less than one hundred taverns on the street.

### THE CROOKED SPEAR, THE CRESCENT MOON, THE HOLY HAMMER OF SIGMAR

These small taverns cater to a clientele drawn from small, artistic sections of society. Strangers aren't normally made welcome in these taverns and dark rumours are spread about them. That said, these taverns can provide a place where drinkers who might face prejudice in more typical taverns and clubs can get away from it all. For example, The Crescent Moon is one of the few places in town were strigany visitors are afforded respect. The Holy Hammer of Sigmar

is also currently occupied by a number of Conspiracy agents, a band of ruffians and assassins under the orders of the Black Cowl's personal lieutenant (see page 143 for more information).

### THE DRUNKEN BASTARD, THE SULLEN KNIGHT, THE BEARD OF ULRIC

These taverns are moribund and impoverished establishments which only manage to attract the most destitute and desperate drinkers. Unsmiling bar staff take orders without a word and any attempt to lighten the mood is met with resentful glares. The very air in such places reeks of depression and vomit. These inns aren't even good places to go for a quiet word, as any conversation breaks the silence and attracts suspicion. Bad food and strong but tasteless ale can be bought for a few pennies.

### THE MERMAID, THE DANCING DWARF, BRUNO'S BREWHOUSE, THE BLACK BAT, THE MATTHEUS II, THE WAYFARER'S REST, THE ONE-EYED WOLF

These taverns are typical of inns throughout the Old World. They are violent and boisterous places that provide opportunities for petty criminals to meet and carry out their dealings. They are also hubs for the local community, and provide forums for gossip and relaxation as well as diversions such as musicians and bar games. These inns cater to the brass economic tier, but may serve a few more expensive drinks and dishes to add a little variety to their bills of fare.

### THE SEVEN STARS, THE CROWN AND TWO CHAIRMEN

These two inns are exclusive and expensive establishments in which guests must dress to impress and pay an exorbitant fee just to step inside. Once inside, guests find that they can enjoy spacious private snugs, personal service from attractive and well-trained bar staff, and an array of some of the best beverages to be found in the Old World.

### THE TEMPLE OF DRAMA THEATRE

Most of the theatres in Altdorf can be found in the vicinity of the Konigplatz, Altdorf's busy market district. The famous Anselmo's is the largest of Altdorf's theatres, though the smaller Vargr Breughel playhouse is well regarded due to the presence of actor-manager Detlef Sierck – said to be the Empire's greatest contemporary dramatist. The Temple of Drama lacks the critical cache of these establishments, but still does a brisk trade in knockabout farce and lurid melodrama. The theatre is a large and tall red brick building signposted with two large hanging masks, golden and grinning comedy alongside silver, gurning tragedy. A billboard above the main entrance announces: 'THE MIRACULOUS MUMMERS OF MIRAGLIANO ARE PROUD TO PRESENT THE SPINE-CHILLING MELODRAMA 'COBWEB CASTLE (THE DISEMBOWELMENT OF DIDRICK).' A small blackboard in front of the theatre reads: 'We regret to announce that performances are postponed until further notice.'

### THE DOCKS

To the end of the Street of a Hundred Taverns is a busy dockland area. The docks in this part of Altdorf are run by two large and competitive Stevedore gangs, the Hooks and the Fish. Both of these gangs have their headquarters in Altdorf, but smaller chapters of the gangs can be found in a number of towns and cities throughout the Empire. The Fish even have a chapter in Averheim, which the PCs may remember. The two gangs have a reputation for violent feuding and undertaking criminal activity when it suits them.

### THE LUITPOLDSTRASSE WATCH POST

Altdorf's watchmen are rather better organised than the guards and garrisons in other cities of the Empire. They have a large administrative headquarters in the north of the city called Empire House, and fortified watch posts throughout the city. The nearest watch post to the Street of a Hundred Taverns is on the nearby Luitpoldstrasse, and is home to the infamous Altdorf dock watch. The dock watch are considered by many to be little better than the Hooks and the Fish, though the dock watch bear the crest of House Holswig-Schliestein on their tabards rather than tatty gang emblems. Members of the dock watch often have a thuggish look, with muscular arms from swinging clubs and soft bellies from swilling ale. The reputation that the dock watch have for corruption is bad, and the back room of the Luitpoldstrasse station is rumoured to contain a treasure trove of pilfered goods that are divvied up between the watchmen on a weekly basis. When serious questions about the state of law and order on the docks are asked of the captains of the dock watch, the response is invariably a curt, "We're undermanned!"

### THE HEADS OF TRAITORS

On the intersection of Luitpoldstrasse and Sigmundstrasse within the Street of a Hundred Taverns is a set of wrought iron railings that surround a mound of earth into which five long and ornate pikes have been set. The pikes are used to display the heads of those deemed enemies of the Empire. Two of the heads are old and rotten, little more than dirty skulls. Another two are apparently fresh. The first is the head of an old grey-haired woman and bears a placard reading 'Witch.' The second bears a placard reading 'Consort of Daemons.' This is a mutant, Johan Boeck of the Red Crown, who is described later (page 126).

### STATUE OF WILHELM II

Towards the Konigplatz end of the Street of a Hundred Taverns is a large bronze statue of Wilhelm II, the first Emperor of House Holswig-Schliestein and ancestor of Karl Franz. The statue depicts the man in full plate armour, with the visor raised to reveal his bearded face. Wilhelm holds a warhammer aloft in his right hand whilst resting his left on the pommel of a Runefang sword. The statue is a popular meeting place and is plastered with bill posters and graffiti.

### A NOTE ON THE CHARACTER OF THE ALTDORF DOCKLANDS

The Street of a Hundred Taverns opens out onto the waterfront, and whilst most of the events that occur in this chapter take place on the street itself, it is worthwhile considering what the Altdorf docks are like, and how they contrast with those of Averheim.

Altdorf is the richest city of the Empire, and this wealth derives from trade. Of all the cities in the Old World, only Marienburg rivals Altdorf for the import, warehousing and dissemination of goods. The Fish and the Hooks, the two docker gangs that work shifting the bags, crates and pallets that arrive at Altdorf's wharfs on a flotilla of barges, are competitive and professional. The gangs might have reputations for violence and feuding, but they also ensure that there are always eyes and ears open on the waterfront area, so professional criminals do not proliferate on the waterfront in the same way that they do in Marienburg or Averheim.

Averheim's docklands nestle next to a noxious odiferous district as a result of the city's heavy reliance on the cattle trade. In contrast, Altdorf's docklands are kept relatively clean and clear. Relatively. There are still plenty of odious and filthy sights and smells, but nothing to compare with Averheim's extensive tanneries and stockyards.

If anything characterises Altdorf's docklands, it is the procession of an overwhelming variety of goods that passes from barge to warehouse, and then either on to different barges or out to the many shops, taverns and market squares throughout the great city. Carts piled high with produce stream along the Street of a Hundred Taverns, and the air is filled with the cries of dockers and teamsters, haggling merchants and braying mules struggling to shift their loads.

Towards the evening, this hurly-burly dies down, though the street doesn't become any less busy. Students, rakes and dockers flock to the many hostelries along the street. Merchants talk business over a glass of wine, struggling to make themselves heard over the hubbub of revelry and drunken brawls.

## LAW AND ORDER ON THE STREET OF A HUNDRED TAVERNS

Altdorf is the centre of civilisation in the Empire, if not the Old World. Whilst it is a lively, violent, and relatively cosmopolitan place, the PCs simply will not be able to walk around waving weapons and shouting accusations.

Due to the nature of the Street of a Hundred Taverns, fights are very common. The dock watch do not really bother to get to the bottom of why fights break out, who started it, or what might have provoked them. They are simply interested in seeing that as few fights as possible break out, and that those that do are quickly brought to a stop. It would simply be impractical for the dock watch to manacle every brawler they come across and haul them away to the cells under the Luitpoldstrasse Station. Instead they have an infamous reputation for administering a 'street sentence,' which is local parlance for a swift crack on the head with a wooden club and a warning to "play nice from now on unless you want more of the same."

Persistent violators of the peace, or those who inflict critical injury to other brawlers, are arrested and detained if they are caught by the dock watch. However the Watch are so thoroughly corrupt that most violent criminals with a bit of largesse are able to arrange for their own release in short order.

Thanks to the shocking record of incompetence and corruption within the ranks of the dock watch, many of the locals organise their own informal vigilante groups. Racketeering elements within the ranks of the Hooks and the Fish provide brutal but effective protection to those who are willing to donate, so anyone who indulges in property damage or thievery on the street will soon find themselves dealt with by local thugs rather than members of the dock watch.

## THE KONIGPLATZ

A large square linking the Street of a Hundred Taverns and Konigstrasse, the Konigplatz is a thriving market centre, one of the largest in Altdorf. Between the ever-changing rotation of market stalls that throw up brightly coloured awnings in the platz itself

every day and the many shops and boutiques that line the square, it is likely that the PCs will be able to purchase anything they wish without leaving the Konigplatz.

At the eastern edge of the Konigplatz is a raised platform where public executions – from witch-burnings to hangings – are occasionally held. At any given time there are usually one or two people here in stocks, where they are periodically pelted with rotten vegetables and ordure by bored Altdorfers.

The Konigplatz is convenient to many important Altdorf landmarks, including the University campus, the Great Library, and the Gold College. Northbound stagecoaches arrive and depart from the Konigplatz.

## THE PALAST DISTRICT

Across the river from the Konigplatz, accessible via Karl Franz Bridge, lies the Palast District, the part of Altdorf surrounding the Imperial Palace. The Palast District is the heart of Imperial power, full of grand old structures in better repair than most of the rest of Altdorf. Noble manors crowd up against administrative buildings and barracks for Reiksguard and other soldiers. Knightly order chapter houses sit across well-kept squares from grand temples, and the few businesses, hostels, and markets that survive in the district are firmly gold tier.

The Palast District is the most heavily patrolled and guarded area in the whole of the Empire, as the City Watch, Altdorf soldiers, and Reiksguard knights all make their presence felt. Crime – or at least, burglary, theft, and violence – is very low. Corruption and graft, on the other hand, is just as prevalent as elsewhere in the Empire, if rather more genteel and discreet.

The PCs can move freely throughout the Palast District, but they will be denied entry to almost all of the places of interest within, including the bulk of the administrative offices, the Reiksguard barracks, and the Imperial Palace itself. Some places the PCs may actually wish to visit are detailed below.

## THE OLD HORSE TOWER

A round drum-tower of grey-black stone, the Old Horse Tower began its life as Maison du Breton, the Bretonnian Embassy in Altdorf. Eventually, a diplomatic incident caused the Bretonnians to be ejected from their tower and it was given over to other purposes. Now named for the impressive statue of Gilles le Breton that used to be set into a niche above the front door (the statue has since been removed, leaving only the statue's leaping horse behind), Old Horse Tower is a series of cramped halls and offices piled one atop the other.

Graf Friedrich von Kaufman can be found on the second floor in a well-appointed office with a fine view of the Imperial Palace. No one seems to be entirely sure how he secured the office, but he spends most of his time here, reading reports, signing paperwork, and arguing in low tones with bureaucrats and noblemen. Curd Weiss has the office next to Graf Friedrich, although he is often out on errands.

## THE LAUREL'S REST

One of Altdorf's finest inns, the Laurel's Rest is a rambling boarding-house that seems to be two or three old houses stitched together by time and Imperial ingenuity. Frequented by very important persons who have short- or medium-term business in

The roof of the main hall soars twenty yards into the air. Great marble arches connect to pillars that line the hall. On each side of the hall there are a dozen arches and each one houses a statue of a hero of the Sigmarite cult, Grand Theogonists and famed warrior priests from the history of the Empire. Large stained-glass windows allow light into the hall and are decorated with scenes from the life of Sigmar. Those along the east side of the hall depict his rise to power, whilst those along the west side of the hall depict the consolidation of the Empire and Sigmar's latter years.

At the top of the hall, the crossing point of the T, is a large dome with a number of small windows about its base. The dome is decorated with a mosaic depicting the apotheosis of Sigmar, ascending into the skies. Beyond the dome, on the wall of the Holy Temple opposite the main entrance, is a large stained glass window depicting the Battle of Black Fire Pass. Sigmar, his warriors and their dwarf allies are shown cutting a swathe through a horde of hideous, twisted greenskins. The twin-tailed comet is seen streaking through the sky above the battlefield.

Before the window, underneath the dome, is the High Altar of Sigmar. This is the holiest place of the Sigmarite cult and is decorated with a 20-foot tall statue of Sigmar cradling his warhammer. The statue is a gift from the dwarfs of the World's Edge Mountains and is a magnificent work of art.

Each of the arms of the T end in a mighty tower. The arms themselves are divided by pillars and bays into over a dozen small shrines, each equipped with a small altar for private worship. A narrow aisle travels between the shrines towards a door which leads into a tower. The eastern tower is the bell tower.

The Holy Temple is open to the public for prayer and reflection. The temple complex buildings behind the Holy Temple proper, which consist of dormitories, offices, storerooms, and other necessities for the centre of the Cult of Sigmar, are not. The Holy Temple is guarded day and night by Knights Griffon, a Sigmarite templar order with a chapter house nearby, although incidents requiring the intervention of the knights are vanishingly rare.

## THE IMPERIAL PALACE

The Imperial Palace is a large and sprawling complex. The closest the general public is permitted is the Kaiserplatz, a large open square between the palace and the Holy Temple of Sigmar, where the Emperor occasionally inspects his troops and the Reiksguard regularly conduct marching drills (part training, part reminder to the populace of the strength and power of the Emperor's personal guard). The gate leading from the Kaiserplatz to the temple complex proper is kept shut and guarded by a pair of Reiksguard in shining silver armour, wielding fantastically ornate sword and shields. A small contingent of runners are kept on hand at the gate, so those with actual business in the palace can send messages to their contacts within.

Surrounding the Kaiserplatz are barracks for the Reiksguard. Currently, Captain Marcus Baerfaust and thirty-seven of his surviving Averheim Greatswords are installed in these barracks (there's plenty of room, with many of the Reiksguard fighting in the north). Baerfaust spends his time either tending to his regiment, liaising with Reiksguard officers, or standing guard over the Emperor so Ludwig Schwarzhelm can sleep. If Baerfaust is not available, his lieutenant Arta Schaffer will offer her assistance to the PCs.

the capital, the Laurel's Rest has over a dozen well-appointed flats hidden away in its labyrinthine layout, as well as a modest common room, a private dining room, and a sensational kitchen. The inn is run by Else van der Groot, a stern-faced woman with the bearing of a countess, with the assistance of two of her daughters, a son-in-law, and three grandchildren. The kitchen is overseen by Sam Foote and his wife Lily, halflings of better-than-average cleanliness and talent. (Lily Foote is also a somewhat-reformed thief, a fact the Black Cowl will use to his advantage later. See **The Theft** on page 125 for more details). The Laurel's Rest is firmly gold tier and rents its apartments by the week. The most affordable is ten gold crowns per week, the most luxurious is over fifty.

Luminary Konrad Mauer has taken rooms at the Laurel's Rest; his flat is accessible via a somewhat rickety wooden staircase that wraps around the outside of the building up to the first floor. Within are two rooms, both crowded with books, notes, jars of unmentionable things, and the other detritus that seems to follow the wizard wherever he goes. When not attending to College business in the city or at the Emperor's bedside monitoring his condition, Luminary Mauer can be found here poring through some ancient text or scribbling out a quick letter.

## THE HOLY TEMPLE OF SIGMAR

The Holy Temple, centre of the Sigmarite cult, is the largest temple in the city. The temple consists mainly of a large hall, T-shaped to represent the shape of a warhammer. Two tall spires stand at either side of the imposing main entrance. This main door is flanked by huge statues of Sigmarite warriors and the door itself is carved with an engraving of a twin-tailed comet. A statue of Sigmar himself, waving Ghal Maraz aloft, stands in a nave above the door.

It is possible, but unlikely, that the PCs can persuade Baerfaust to take them into the palace to see the Emperor. If so, he will lead them to the Prince's Palace, an ancient adjunct to the grandiose palace proper that only seems small by comparison. The Prince's Palace predates Altdorf's status as the Imperial Capitol, and is a residence of the Prince of Altdorf (who happens to also be the Emperor). He can lead the PCs to the Emperor's bedchamber, but only Ludwig Schwarzhelm can grant them entry.

In the unlikely event that the PCs gain access to the Emperor, a **Hard (3d) Medicine (Int) check** or **Daunting (4d) First Aid (Int) check** will be sufficient to determine that he has been poisoned.

### THE EMPEROR KARL FRANZ VON HOLSWIG-SCHLIESTEIN, PRINCE OF ALTDORF AND COUNT OF REIKLAND

The incumbent Emperor is Karl Franz, Prince of Altdorf and Elector Count of Reikland. Karl Franz is said to be the greatest statesman the Old World has ever seen. He is also a military genius and a valiant general. If he has an eccentricity or flaw, it is that he is rather more fascinated by strange and exotic beasts than his forebears, devoting a significant amount of time and money to the large and impressive Imperial Zoo.

Although a tall, strong, and handsome man at his best, Karl Franz is currently much reduced by his injury. He wakes seldom and sleeps fitfully.

Unbeknownst to everyone but the Black Cowl, Karl Franz is being kept in his infirmity by a constant low dose of poison. See **The Emperor's Condition** on page 104 for more details.

### LUDWIG SCHWARZHELM, THE EMPEROR'S CHAMPION

Ludwig Schwarzhelm is the champion of Karl Franz and the bearer of the Emperor's personal standard. Ludwig is a towering figure of a man, renowned throughout the Empire for his impressive physique, stern expression, and deadly martial skill. The Emperor's champion is said to have never smiled in his life. His role is to uphold the Emperor's justice during trials of combat, which is are the judicial right of high-ranking nobles accused of breaking one of the Emperor's laws. He is also Karl Franz's principal bodyguard, a role that he is fulfilling now that the Emperor lies wounded by ensuring that only those he personally approves may see the Emperor. To date, that list includes only himself, Baerfaust, Mauer, and Philip Ulrich.

Schwarzhelm wears full plate mail, even in the heart of the Imperial Palace, and carries the mystical Sword of Judgement at his side. A laurel crest indicating the Emperor's favour adorns his dark helm. Aside from his immense stature, his most notable feature is a large and well-groomed beard. Schwarzhelm is an Averlander, but attempts to butter him up with fond reminiscences of home are doomed to failure – Schwarzhelm turned his back on his homeland in disgust long ago.

### PHILIP ULRICH, THE EMPEROR'S VALET

A neat and unassuming man in his middle years, Philip Ulrich has mastered the art of being completely unmemorable. He wears fine clothes of modest but very fashionable cut, but does so with such delicacy he can as easily pass for a burgher as a noble; as a consequence he is seldom noticed at all.

Ulrich has served the Emperor loyally for nearly five years, since the Emperor's previous valet was dismissed on suspicion of being too friendly with the court ladies. He was plucked from relative obscurity by the Emperor himself and given the most prestigious post available for a servant in the entire Empire. His loyalty is understandably fierce.

## THE REST OF ALTDORF

Altdorf is an enormous and bustling city, thronged with people from all corners of the Empire and all walks of life. It is an ancient city, predating the time of Sigmar (local legend claims that Sigmar was born in Altdorf, although various other Reikland cities such as Ubersreik make the same claim). Within its tall, dwarf-made walls the city is in a constant state of renewal, ancient crumbling buildings undergoing repair and renovation, a delirious hybrid of the very old and the brand new. Half-blind scribes labour at writing desks as, across the street, ingenious new printing presses are assembled to make the scribes obsolete. Nobles of ancient title with bloodlines going back two thousand years do business with wealthy merchants whose blood is as common as mud. It's a city of contradictions, the best and most noble of the Empire and its darkest, most corrupt secrets.

The city itself sprawls across the confluence of the Reik and Talabec rivers, extending across the rivers and islands large and small. Outside the walls large slum districts have sprung up in direct contradiction to local by-laws. The tall spires of the Imperial Palace, the Holy Temple, and a few other large buildings such as the University and the Colleges of Magic form the major landmarks that Altdorfers use to navigate their sprawling, chaotic mess of a city.

On the edge of the city proper is the Reiksport, a massive and fortified complex where huge ocean-going vessels (including many of the Imperial Navy) dock and offload their cargos. Downstream of the Reiksport the Reik is wide and deep enough to allow even the largest of ships to sail upon it. The number of ships that can

### THE BLACK COWL

If Graf Friedrich von Kaufman is the Black Cowl, then Philip Ulrich is not as loyal as he appears. He is, in fact, the victim of blackmail on the part of the Black Cowl, who has some of Philip's letters from an indiscreet dalliance in his youth. The Black Cowl has used this influence to induce Ulrich to slip a low dose of "medicine" to the Emperor every day.

Ulrich feels devastated by the guilt of his betrayal, but trapped by it as well: after all, what he's doing to the Emperor is certainly worse than the indiscretions of his youth. If a PC offers him a way to redeem himself, it won't be hard to convince him to betray the Black Cowl – add ■■ to any attempts to influence Ulrich that allow him to do the right thing in regards to his Emperor.

No matter the Black Cowl's influence, Ulrich would never do anything he believed could permanently harm or kill the Emperor. He would literally rather die.



navigate the Reik and Talabec upstream of Altdorf is much smaller, partly due to the shifting sandbars that surround Altdorf itself. The Reiksport is also home to the Imperial Zoo, which contains exotic creatures and curiosities from all across the Empire and lands beyond. It is rumoured that the Zoo even includes a mighty dragon that the Emperor sometimes rides to war.

## LIFE IN ALTDORF

Altdorfers are the most cosmopolitan people in the Empire, as any Altdorfer is happy to explain. Merchants and ambassadors from far-flung lands such as Araby and even the elven kingdoms of Ulthuan visit Altdorf, so the locals are quite inured to the sight of the exotic and unusual. For that matter, as the site of the Colleges of Magic, Altdorf is the only Imperial city where one is in actual danger of bumping into a wizard in the street.

To Averlanders, Altdorfers may seem rude and abrupt, speaking very quickly and with many demonstrative – some might say “fop-pish” – hand gestures. Their daily concerns are with wealth and social status, which may seem remarkably short sighted given how many times in Altdorf’s history it has been besieged by powerful enemies of the Empire. Still, under the benevolent rulership of Karl Franz, Altdorf has enjoyed many years of peace and prosperity. It’s easy to forget how close all of the Empire is to complete ruination in Altdorf... although events will soon remind everyone of this fact.

## RELIGION

Each of the major – and dozens of minor – cults of the Empire has a presence in Altdorf. The Holy Temple of Sigmar near the Kaiserplatz is, of course, the centre of the Cult of Sigmar, but there are a dozen other Sigmarite shrines and temples elsewhere in the city or just outside. The Temple of Morr is nearly as large and impressive, and

the Shallyans maintain their largest temple-hospice in Reikland not far from the Konigplatz. Even Manann has a sizeable temple on the shores of the river, overlooking the hundreds of boats that throng the waterways.

The only cults without enormous and impressive presences in Altdorf are the Cult of Ulric, whose temple is smaller and poorer than they would like (just another point of friction between Ulric and Sigmar’s cults) and the Cult of Taal, whose worship is stronger in rural parts of the Empire. The Cult of Ranald, of course, doesn’t have any central authority or temples... unless you know where and when to look.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Altdorf is ruled directly by Karl Franz as Prince of Altdorf. In practice, his duties as Emperor take up the vast majority of Karl Franz’s time and he leaves the running of Altdorf to trusted peers and delegates. The result is, unfortunately, a diverse and occasionally corrupt oligarchy of wealthy nobles and wealthy merchants whose decisions are founded primarily on filling their own purses.

## LAW, ORDER AND DEFENCE

As might be expected, Altdorf is the heart of the Imperial war machine. It is defended at all times by a large and well-equipped standing army of soldiers in Altdorf red and blue, supplemented when necessary by soldiers loyal to the many nobles who make Altdorf their home. The Reiksguard, the Emperor’s personal army, also reside in the city and garrison the Imperial Palace. These elite knights are the pride of the Empire and are as well trained and well equipped as any soldiers in the world. Every conceivable weapon or asset in the Empire’s arsenal is available in Altdorf, although many of them are currently in the north with Kurt Helborg.

The Altdorf city watch vary very widely in competence and corruption based on where in the city their area of chief responsibility lies. While some areas of the city, such as the Palast District, are safe, there are other areas where even the city watch dares not tread for fear of a dagger in the back. Most city watch patrols are four men in breastplate armour carrying spears or halberds and heavy brass bells to ring when they must call for help. They use Soldier characteristics. Occasionally these patrols are lead by an officer with a greatsword and pistol.

## THE ECONOMY

Altdorf is the wealthiest city in the Empire, but also its most impoverished. More wealth flows into and through Altdorf than any city in the Old World, except possibly for Marienburg, but it flows very unequally. In the poorer sections of Altdorf, those too young, old, sick, unlucky or unskilled to find work routinely starve to death – if they’re not murdered by their fellows for a crust of bread first. In the wealthier sections of Altdorf the finest luxuries and most exotic foods and goods are commonplace.

Altdorf has a booming middle class, burghers and merchants making a modest living off the flow of silver and gold through their city. These citizens are surprisingly well educated (many families scrape and save to send their children to the University for at least a few terms) and cosmopolitan. Although not nobles, they’re not quite commoners either and they are beginning to flex their newfound political and economic power.

Altdorf has a reputation as a hotbed of radicalism and dangerously liberal thought, which isn't surprising given how starkly defined the social and economic classes are and how comparatively well educated the lower classes can become. Riots and attempted revolutions are a real concern to Altdorf's city officials in a way that would be shocking to anyone from outside Reikland, even large and prosperous cities like Middenheim.

All characters gain  $\square$  to all checks to find any item in Altdorf, so huge and diverse are the city's markets. However, anyone attempting to interact outside his obvious social tier suffers  $\blacksquare$  to all Fellowship checks (over and above any normal penalties for social tier differences).

## NON-HUMANS IN ALTDORF

Of all the cities in the Empire, Altdorf is the least concerned by the presence of non-humans in their midst. Halflings are of course a common sight and, like Averheim, talented halfling chefs are in high demand. The discrimination against halflings is less overt than Averheim and less pervasive than Middenheim, but still widely present. For their part, the halflings of Altdorf seem bound and determined to live up to every stereotype as fat, sticky-fingered gutter rats that they possibly can.

Dwarfs visit the city often and many practice their trades as stonemasons and metalworkers within the city's walls, where their artistry is in high demand. No dwarf would ever settle permanently in a human city, of course, but dwarfen standards of "permanently" are very different from humans and some have been known to set up shop in Altdorf for fifty years or more before returning to their karaks laden with human gold. Altdorfers therefore assume that any given dwarf they meet is a metalworker or stonemason, a skilled tradesman, and treat them accordingly. Rumours that some disgraced dwarf engineers find homes with the College of Engineering in Altdorf are quietly hushed up by Imperial engineers.

High elves, while not precisely common in Altdorf, do occasionally sail into the Reiksport and mingle briefly in the city. Some whisper that the Phoenix King in Ulthuan maintains a permanent embassy in the city, but no one seems to know where it is or who the ambassador might be. In any case, high elves are treated with respect by Altdorfers, if only because they're almost always rich potential customers.

Wood elves are sufficiently rare that most Altdorfers are likely to mistake them for "poor high elves," which wood elves are sure to find infuriating.

Any city with as much wealth, crime, and corruption as Altdorf attracts its fair share of mercenaries and ogre man eaters are no exception. Most find employment as bodyguards for important nobles or merchants, or legbreakers for important crime lords. Others put their prodigious strength to work as dock workers, carrying heavy loads and terrorising rival docker gangs. Altdorfers keep a wary distance from ogres, since they're never sure if they're the bodyguard type or the legbreaker type.

For many Altdorfers, it's a point of pride that they are not in any way discomfited or upset by non-humans. After all, isn't Altdorf the cosmopolitan heart of the Old World? The higher the rank, the more important it is to seem blasé about the ogre, elf, or dwarf. (Halflings are scum, of course; everyone knows that.)

## ARRIVING IN ALTDORF

As the PCs approach Altdorf, read or paraphrase the following aloud:

Altdorf's tall spires are visible from miles away, glittering in the morning sun. As you draw closer, you can make out the gleaming white walls of the city, spreading on both sides of the river. Banners flutter from gatehouse towers, bearing the crown, hammer, and griffon's head of the imperial capitol on a red-and-blue field. As you pass through the walls, you see that they are tall, strong, and topped by gigantic cannons and mortars, as well as patrolled by liveried soldiers.

Inside the walls the city is a riot of ancient buildings crowded around irregularly shaped squares. The streets seem to run in no particular or logical order, and everywhere you look they are crowded with people, horses, oxen, wagons, carts, coaches, and sedan chairs. The river is no less crowded, swarming with small skiffs, lumbering barges, and enormous ocean-going ships.

Finally your conveyance comes to a stop and you disembark... and find yourself confronted with a familiar face! Curd Weiss, Graf Friedrich's right-hand-man, has been waiting for you.

"Excellent," he says, "you've arrived. I trust the journey was uneventful?" Without waiting for you to answer he turns to study a distant clock-tower, visible above the confusion of buildings in this part of Altdorf. "Graf Friedrich would be pleased to receive you at Old Horse Tower near the Kaiserplatz in one hour. Why don't you take the time to find yourself lodgings? We are very near the Street of a Hundred Taverns, and it shouldn't be hard to find a place suitable to your tastes. I am led to believe that the Mermaid, right on the river, will serve admirably."

If the PCs have arrived via barge, they've been let off in the Hooks part of the docks near the Street of a Hundred Taverns. If they have arrived via coach, then they find themselves in the Konigplatz.

The PCs now have an opportunity to explore the city somewhat, secure lodgings, and visit with Graf Friedrich as well as Luminary Mauer and Captain Baerfaust. It is common enough knowledge in Altdorf that Luminary Mauer and Captain Baerfaust played an important role during the recent conflict, and that without their efforts on the battlefield the Emperor may well have met with disaster, that if the PCs ask after either of these men, it doesn't take long to find out where they can be found in the city.

## A MEETING WITH GRAF FRIEDRICH

Graf Friedrich will be pleased to see the PCs if they arrive on time and grumpy with them if they are early or late. He is dressed down, as his office is rather stuffy, in a flowing undershirt, his doublet hanging from the back of his chair. (If there are ladies amongst the PCs, Graf Friedrich will immediately dress himself properly while apologising for his appearance.) Von Kaufman begins with polite greetings, inquiries about their journey and health, and then proceeds to the business of Graf Wolfgang von Aschenbeck in Middenheim.

## THE LITTLE BETRAYAL

Part of the theme of *The Enemy Within* is that people are flawed. Some, like the Black Cowl, are just rotten to the core, but even good people can betray one another for all the wrong reasons. During their meetings with von Kaufman, Baerfaust, and Mauer, the PCs may be “betrayed” in small ways several times. Even if these men aren’t the Black Cowl, they each have their reasons to fail the PCs in their quest to discover the traitor. Baerfaust trusts Adele Ketzenblum, and her relationship with the PCs may cause him to distrust them and freeze them out of his investigation (which will fail without their help). Graf Friedrich is caught up in his own affairs and will be happy to help... later. (Too late.) Luminary Mauer may get word that his sister is alive and allow that to distract him from the threat of the Conspiracy. And so on.

Of course, it’s also possible that the PCs don’t much care about the investigation into the Black Cowl, in which case they’re unlikely to notice these small betrayals either. That’s okay! They don’t have to go looking for the Black Cowl; the adventure will come to them in Part Two.

Although Graf Friedrich will be somewhat pleased if the von Aschenbeck commercial empire has been ruined by the events in Middenheim, he is not quite so mercenary as to be delighted by von Aschenbeck’s grisly fate, if he was burned at the stake – especially if the PCs are convinced he was innocent of heresy. His main area of interest, however, is whether or not von Aschenbeck was involved in the missing black powder shipments. Anything the PCs can report on that subject will be welcome news to him, and if he’s satisfied that they did due diligence in investigating the matter (even if they didn’t bring back any useful intelligence), he will gladly pay them two gold crowns each. If the PCs have come back with tales of how their intervention was key in saving the life of Graf Wolfgang, Graf Friedrich will be conflicted, saying something like “As long as justice was done, I suppose.”

Graf Friedrich will also sound out the PCs at this time about their opinions of Marcus Baerfaust and Luminary Mauer – he has his own suspicions about their loyalty – and of him, to see if it’s worth trying to continue employing the PCs.

He will have the following things to say on the following subjects.

### THE EMPEROR’S CONDITION

“I’m pleased to report that he appears to be improving, at least according to Luminary Mauer. Obviously what happened is terrible but I think you’ll agree that it could have been worse. Thank Sigmar that Baerfaust and Mauer got to him in time.”

### GRAF FRIEDRICH’S SITUATION

“Oh, I know, it looks very impressive, an office overlooking the palace and all. But privately, between us, I’m haemorrhaging money as long as this war continues. I’m happy to help, of course; I don’t have extensive lands to levy or a large household guard to contribute to the war effort, so this is what I can do. But I’ll be glad when this is over and I can recoup my losses and put some of the new contacts and contracts I’ve developed to good use.”

### CAPTAIN BAERFAUST

“How fortunate that the good captain was positioned near where the Emperor fell. I wonder if he feels that he’s redeemed himself for his failure to protect Count Marius at Third Black Fire? I certainly don’t believe the whispers that suggest he’s somehow responsible for both tragedies. If I were Elector of Averland I’d ennoble him on the spot. Perhaps the Emperor will do the same when he awakes, but I’m not certain ‘Graf Marcus’ would enjoy being a Reiklander.”

### LUMINARY MAUER

“Luminary Mauer has come a long way from his little scholar’s club in Averheim. I hear he has rooms at the Laurel’s Rest, which let me tell you are not cheap. I wonder if the Light College is paying for it? They must be over the moon to have one of their own in the Emperor’s inner circle. As for myself, I get uncomfortable whenever wizards start playing at politics. Let us all pray that the Emperor recovers swiftly and things get a little more normal.”

### CLOTHILDE VON ALPTRAUM

“I believe she is in the city. Tell me where you’re staying; I’m certain she’ll wish to contact you.”

### FREDERICK GROSZ

“Should I know that name?”

### THE BELL CLAPPER

“What in the name of – this sounds very much like wizard business. Take it to Herr Luminary.”

## THE BLACK COWL



If Graf Friedrich is the Black Cowl, then he is quietly frustrated that the PCs have returned at all. His course of action depends on who, if anyone, the PCs suspect of being the Black Cowl. If the PCs seem to suspect another NPC, then Graf Friedrich will encourage this suspicion and may even hire them to investigate further. If it seems possible, he may go so far as to have Curd Weiss manufacture some evidence against that NPC. If these steps don’t seem to be enough to keep them off his tracks, Graf Friedrich will steal a personal item from a PC – ideally an arrow, dagger, or crossbow bolt. He will then murder one of the other major NPCs (preferably using that personal item), and arrange for the PCs to be discovered standing over the corpse just before the service at the Holy Temple. The PCs will be hard-pressed to escape or persuade the watch of their innocence, and it’s possible that without their intervention at the Holy Temple that the Black Cowl’s plan will come to its awful fruition!

If the PCs require an additional clue, one of the papers on Graf Friedrich’s desk is an estimate for the repair of the temple bell. A **Hard (3d) Observation (Int) check** is sufficient to notice this, although its significance won’t be immediately obvious.

## THE MISSING BLACK POWDER

“Well if Graf Wolfgang was a dead end then I have precious few leads. Perhaps someone in the Averheim underworld... ah, don't take this the wrong way when I say that I think that's more your bailiwick than mine. At least it doesn't seem to have directly impacted the war one way or the other. Why don't we meet again in a few days and we can talk about investigating the matter more? I'll have Curd make some inquiries.”

### THE BLACK COWL

“So if I understand this correctly, there's some mysterious figure – the ‘man in the black cowl’ – who is the villain behind all the dire events plaguing Averheim? Let us assume for the moment that this is true. Is there any reason to believe this person has left Averheim? You don't mean to suggest he's in Altdorf now, do you?”

Successfully convincing Graf Friedrich of the threat of the Black Cowl won't be easy, but if the PCs have thus far impressed him with their intelligence and professionalism he will seriously entertain their arguments. Gaining von Kaufman as an ally could be a major coup for the PCs, but he is likely to underestimate the Cowl and may attempt to confront him in person in an effort to trick him into confessing. If this happens, the Cowl will simply murder him and dispose of the body or frame the PCs.

### THE PRAYER SERVICE FOR THE EMPEROR

“How did you hear about –? Oh, never mind, it's the worst-kept secret in Altdorf. Yes, the Grand Theogonist has approved a special prayer service for the Emperor tomorrow night at the Holy Temple of Sigmar. The service in the temple proper is invitation-only; it will likely be a who's-who list of important nobility and influential people. I'm afraid you'll have to pray outside in the square with the commoners, unless I can pull some strings.”

## A MEETING WITH CAPTAIN BAERFAUST

Depending on when the PCs catch up with him, Captain Baerfaust will either be in full dress armour (suitable for standing guard over the Emperor's bedside) or dressed casually in a padded yellow vest over a simple white shirt with black trousers. If anything, Baerfaust seems even more harried and worn ragged than he did in Averheim.

The conversation with Baerfaust is likely to unfold very differently depending on what the PCs have discovered about Adele Ketzenblum in Book Two, and what she has shared (and what they believe) about the Black Cowl.

If the PCs suspect nothing about Adele's true allegiance (or choose to keep it secret from Baerfaust) then he will listen intently to everything they have to say about the Black Cowl. This is an opportunity for the GM to shape the PCs' thinking in regards to the Black Cowl, either adding additional information from Baerfaust or red herrings and misinformation from his own suspicions and investigations in the PCs' absence.

If the PCs inform Baerfaust that Ketzenblum was a Chaos worshipper (or at least that she tried to kill them) he will be perplexed, then suspicious. He's known Adele longer than he's known the PCs (with the possible exception of a PC with the Battle-Scarred background), and so he's inclined to believe that if she attacked them she had a good reason. He might even excuse himself for a moment

## THE BLACK COWL



If Captain Baerfaust is the Black Cowl, then his fervent hope was that the PCs and Adele Ketzenblum would kill one another, and he'll be somewhat disappointed to see all the PCs alive (although if anyone failed to come back from Middenheim, or came back badly hurt, he'll take some solace from that). If the PCs came back from Middenheim full of probing questions about the Black Cowl, then it will quickly become obvious to Baerfaust that they have to die. The “Death to the PCs” thread in “Farce in the Fog” should be enhanced appropriately, with heavily armed and armoured assassins in Baerfaust's employ coming for the PCs. Baerfaust won't bother trying to frame the PCs for anything – he'll simply approach his friends and allies amongst the Reiksguard, Knights Griffon, or Altdorf City Watch and explain that the PCs are nefarious evil-doers who use treachery and deceit to get their way (even killing a Witch Hunter in Middenheim!), and since Baerfaust is the hero of the hour evidence won't be required.

If the PCs need a further clue that Baerfaust is the Black Cowl, perhaps during their interview there is a small flask or vial of the poison used on the Emperor close at hand. A **Hard (3d) Medicine or Nature Lore (Int) check** should be enough to determine that it contains schlaf and other drugs. (If the PCs have played through *An Eye for An Eye* or *The Gathering Storm*, they may recognise schlaf!)

to ask his soldiers to stand outside the door and load a pistol, just in case the PCs start any trouble. The PCs will have to convince Baerfaust that what they're saying is true to get him to seriously entertain any further discussion of the Black Cowl. (“If she tried to kill you, she must have thought you were in league with the traitor. How do I know you're not?”)

If the PCs press him for payment for completing his errand, Baerfaust will grow cold, then shout for Schaffer to bring him a purse. He'll pay the PCs 20s each.

Aside from Adele and the Black Cowl, Baerfaust has the following things to say about the following subjects.

### THE EMPEROR'S CONDITION

“I've seen far worse wounds, but he just won't wake up. I hate this; I don't know anything about magic. I have no idea how bad his condition truly is. I only know that anyone who wishes him further harm must get past me and Ludwig Schwarzhelm.”

### CAPTAIN BAERFAUST'S SITUATION

“For a few brief and brilliant weeks I was a soldier again, with nothing to concern myself with but my men and the enemy. Now that's gone and I'm trapped in this damn city with a thousand lordlings and sycophants who would be my friend. The sooner the Emperor recovers the better; I want to go home.”

## GRAF FRIEDRICH

"I'll admit, I thought the man craven when he stayed behind while the army marched – not that the nobility of Averland were well-represented on the front lines. But Graf Friedrich has proven a far better asset to the army sitting in his office and pushing papers around than playing at toy soldiers like most noble's sons. And better him than me."

## LUMINARY MAUER

"I have been forced to revise my opinion of Luminary Mauer upwards over the past few weeks. He's no soldier, but the man came to the front with no complaints, served according to his talents, and saved the Emperor's life when I could not. Who could ask for anything more? I still don't trust wizards, but as wizards go Mauer is better than most. If you're looking for him, check the Laurel's Rest boarding house across the square."

## CLOTHILDE VON ALPTRAUM

"As fine a lady as it has ever been my pleasure to meet. She has been very kind to my lads, the injured ones who came back with me. I believe she even tried to get Arta – Lieutenant Schaffer – into a dress, which takes more courage than I have."

## FREDERICK GROSZ

"A smuggler and racketeer from Averheim – yes, I was well-acquainted with the man's name, although I understand he's left that city. I haven't concerned myself with anything but the war and threats to the Emperor in Altdorf; do you have reason to believe he's here?"

## THE BELL CLAPPER

"Take this to Luminary Mauer. Magical artefacts are more his area of expertise than mine."

## THE MISSING BLACK POWDER

"My own men were undersupplied when we left Averheim, but Graf Tobias of Nuln was generous enough to dip into his personal stores for us when we reached the front. We should still do everything in our power to find and destroy these thieves, but no harm appears to have been done."

## THE WAR

"The ambush... it was brutal. You weren't there. I've never fought a foe like that before. Orcs are savage and vicious monsters, but the beast-kin... their very blood is rotten. I killed one, a bull-headed creature, the size of an ogre, its flesh like overlapping plates of stone. When it died its blood spilled out, and everywhere its blood touched the rich earth became dry dust, plants withered and died... It shames me to say so, but I'm glad to be away from there. Helborg and the others, may Myrmidia guide them and Sigmar protect them, for they face a foe more frightening than any I've seen."

## THE PRAYER SERVICE FOR THE EMPEROR

"Yes, it's tomorrow evening. I can inquire about getting you an invitation to the temple if you'd like to do your part and show your devotion. Otherwise you can pray with the commons in the square."

## A MEETING WITH LUMINARY MAUER

Luminary Mauer can most likely be found in his flat at the Laurel's Rest. In his home, his mitre resting on a table and his outermost dress robes hanging from a peg, he seems smaller and younger. He'll be happy to see the PCs in his somewhat puzzled and befuddled way, as he's just been reading something terribly interesting. However, he'll soon bring his mind back to the situation at hand and eagerly demand the PCs tell him everything to do with the ritual to cleanse the tainted bell clapper and his good friend Robertus von Oppenheim.

Mauer will be distraught to learn that von Oppenheim is dead. After a moment of speechlessness, his next question will be: "Do you have his notes?" Not a generally sentimental man, Mauer will focus on the productive questions: was the ritual a success? What do you remember about it? Where is the bell clapper? Can I see it? Have there been any side-effects or after-effects of the ritual that you've noticed?

If Mauer is reminded that he promised the PCs payment, he will seem startled, then exclaim "Of course!" and go in search of his purse. If he has reason to be impressed with how the PCs have handled themselves, he will pay them noticeably more than the 10s he promised them, up to 50s each. (Evidently he has recently come into a large sum of money.)

Luminary Mauer's only goal in this conversation is to get the bell clapper from the PCs so that he can examine it at his leisure. If the PCs are unwilling to surrender the clapper for some reason, Mauer

## THE BLACK COWL



By now the Black Cowl has revised his plan for the bell clapper. He won't be using it at the temple in Averheim, but at the Holy Temple of Sigmar during the prayer service for the Emperor. The potential rewards are much greater, and securing the bell clapper immediately is of paramount importance. If Luminary Mauer is the Cowl, he will want to secure the clapper for himself and eliminate any suspicions the PCs might have about how it will be used. If they seem distrustful themselves, he will refrain from handling it in their presence and make a point of taking all due precautions to show that he shares their concerns. He will also want to sound out the PCs on what they know or suspect about the Black Cowl. If the PCs reveal that Adele Ketzenblum is one of their primary sources of information about the Black Cowl, then Mauer becomes dismissive, encouraging the PCs to ignore everything she says, claiming (rightly, as it turns out) that she'll say anything that lets her burn someone at the stake. Perhaps the PCs can use that opening to get Mauer to open up about his family's fate, inadvertently revealing his motive for treason...

If the PCs need an additional clue, then as they leave the room one of them notices, on a **Hard (3d) Observation (Int) check**, that Luminary Mauer removes the bell clapper from its box and places it in a pocket inside his robes. He seems to be preparing for an immediate journey.

## CLAPPED

If the PCs really and resolutely will not give up the bell clapper, the Black Cowl can steal it, or use a hastily built poor facsimile. If he has to use a facsimile, the Black Cowl and his lieutenant will also have to murder some key personnel (Sigmarite priests) who would otherwise detect the tainted thing as it is installed in the bell tower. This should make it somewhat easier for the PCs to notice that something evil is afoot in the belltower, and perhaps allow them to intercept and foil the plot before the bell is even rung.

will be confused, then offer more money, remind them of the grave importance of his research, and ultimately point out that there is at this point no certainty that the ritual worked and that the clapper might actually still be dangerous, so the PCs had best turn it over to the Light College or the Cult of Sigmar for safekeeping. (In either case, the clapper will quickly make its way to Mauer and/or the Black Cowl.)

Luminary Mauer has the following things to say about the following subjects:

### THE EMPEROR'S CONDITION

"I'm doing my best, but I think he would benefit from a proper physician. Not that the Emperor's Champion would let one near his bedside unless he were Magnus the Pious himself. Still, the Emperor doesn't appear to be in any serious danger at this point, and I think that with just a little more rest he'll make a full recovery."

### LUMINARY MAUER'S SITUATION

"Well, the lodgings are an improvement over my flat in Averheim I suppose, and certainly much improved over the last time I lived in Altdorf. But it will be good to be able to move someplace closer to the library when this business is done with."

### GRAF FRIEDRICH

"We've come a long way from our disagreement at his garden party. I'm glad that the horrible effigy our expedition brought back has apparently been rendered harmless – it makes the deaths have meaning somehow. I also appreciated the rapid transport back from the front lines in his Red Arrow coach. I suppose I must admit that beneath his foppish and mercenary exterior, Graf Friedrich does have a clever mind."

### CAPTAIN BAERFAUST

"I'll say this about Captain Baerfaust: for the love of Shallya do not make him angry. Many men shake with fear when confronted with the abominations of Chaos. Not Baerfaust. He... kills with an efficiency that is both admirable and extremely useful. Neither the Emperor nor myself would be alive today if not for him."

### CLOTHILDE VON ALPTRAUM

"Von Alptraum – I judge she is an Averlander by the – oh! I remember now. She was at the garden party, no? It was her bodyguard murdered by that skaven. A shame."

### FREDERICK GROSZ

"The name's not familiar to me."

## THE BELL CLAPPER

"On a cursory and casual examination it seems utterly cleansed of its taint, which is very encouraging. I'll examine it thoroughly, then share it with senior members of my order and get their opinions as well. If Verena is willing then perhaps we've found a reliable way to destroy the taint of Chaos!"

## THE MISSING BLACK POWDER

"Oh, how ominous! No, I haven't heard anything about it."

## THE WAR

"I was happy to do my part. It was not... entirely pleasant. I'd rather not discuss it any further."

## ADELE KETZENBLUM - CHAOS CULTIST

"She what? Oh, hahahahahaha! I'm sorry, I know, one of the Empire's feared protectors – hahaha! – being a slave to darkness is no laughing matter, I know, I know. But the irony –! And she had the temerity to accuse me, just because my family and sister – oh, hahaha! Ahh. Very well. I am – heehee – I am composed. How terrible. Hmmmrrphhhahahahaha!"

## THE PRAYER SERVICE FOR THE EMPEROR

"Yes, I believe Professor von Oppenheim would have approved. What is prayer but a focused effort of will? He would theorise that collective and focused belief would, in fact, have a positive effect on the Emperor's condition. A priest will tell you that only the gods have that power, but isn't prayer an effort to cause the gods to intervene? And if they do, is it because of the prayer? That makes the power – I am boring you right to sleep, aren't I. It's tomorrow night. I'll try to get you an invitation, if you want to come."

## THE THEFT

After the PCs leave the bell clapper with Luminary Mauer, he removes it from its box and spends a little time examining it using some spells and tools he has at his disposal in his chambers. After about an hour of investigation and scribbling notes, he will rise, don his outer robe and hat, and then leave to visit with his colleagues at the Colleges of Magic. The bell clapper will be left in its box, and the box left unlocked on his desk.

A few minutes later, Lily Foote sneaks into the room through a servant's entrance and pilfers the bell clapper, slipping it into her apron and returning to the kitchen. That evening the Laurel's Rest takes

## KILLING THE COWL

It's possible that the PCs will, either through deduction or intuition, find and kill the Black Cowl. Even at this stage! This is not necessarily the kiss of death to the adventure. There are two broad tacks to take from here. In the first, the Black Cowl escapes via magic as described on page 156, to continue his schemes from behind the scenes and receive his punishment/reward from the Chaos god Tzeentch. In the second, with a dying croak of "You're too late..." the Black Cowl expires. However, his various plans are all already in motion, and his lieutenant can see them through to completion – with the exception of the Book Four epilogue, the adventure continues roughly as written.

delivery of a few kegs of Pilsach Peculiar and Lily hands the clapper, now wrapped in rags, off to the delivery man, who passes it on to the Black Cowl's lieutenant, who sees it installed in the bell in the Holy Temple. When Luminary Mauer discovers the theft, he will be both distraught and utterly embarrassed. He will mention it to the PCs the next time they cross paths – see page 146.

## AN INVITATION

One of the three principal NPCs will invite the PCs to attend the prayer service at the Holy Temple of Sigmar. This invitation may be in person, in which case the NPC will also make a point to mention all the other dignitaries who will be present (The Elector of Wissenland, the Grand Theogonist, the Supreme Patriarch of the Colleges of Magic, and so on). Or it may come in the form of a note or letter to their lodgings on the morning of the service.

It is possible, of course, that the PCs have managed to offend all of the principal NPCs, in which case none of them would tender such an invitation. (And the Black Cowl wouldn't do so either, as he wouldn't want to risk the PCs foiling his plan. Unless he's confident the PCs are bumbling nincompoops, and instead can be just another group of victims.) In this case, either Clothilde von Alptraum can offer such an invitation, or another NPC of their acquaintance. It is important that the PCs attend the prayer service, as that's where the climax of Book Three occurs!

## PART TWO – A FARCE IN THE FOG

This chapter deals with events that occur within a short time frame in and around Altdorf's infamous Street of a Hundred Taverns. Most of these events are initiated in some way by the activities of the Conspiracy, and the PCs may well be able to figure out what the Conspiracy is up to and how to confront them. However, some of these events are irrelevant, and may even lead the PCs on a wild goose chase.

Now that the PCs have returned the clapper and eliminated some of their loose ends or rivals, the Conspiracy has no further use for them, and now seeks to eliminate them. At the same time the Conspiracy is also looking to bring a few other plans to fruition.

Firstly they seek to murder Clothilde von Alptraum. The Conspiracy has always planned to assassinate her (and hopefully other important dignitaries aside) when she went to take in some plays at the Temple of Drama theatre during her holiday to Altdorf. In doing so, the members of the Conspiracy hope to cause additional instability amongst those vying for power in Averheim. Whilst their ambitions in Averheim have taken something of a back seat whilst they attempt to capitalise on the Emperor's injury, they are still keen to see this plot unfold. It can only increase the Conspiracy's chances of placing its people within positions of power in Altdorf if it has influential backers in Averheim.

Secondly the Black Cowl is looking to kidnap an elven expatriate, arriving in Altdorf today. Eothlir Valandar, who also goes by the name of 'The Sea Strider,' is a mariner who signed on with Graf Friedrich's Southlands expedition. He is aware that the effigy brought back by the expedition contains warpstone, and he's trying to find Graf Friedrich von Kaufman and warn him. Obviously, this could both spoil the Black Cowl's plot with the bell and potentially lead to his exposure as a traitor – so Eothlir must be eliminated.

Thirdly, and most importantly, the Conspiracy has arranged for the magical clapper to be installed in a great bell within the Holy Temple of Sigmar. It has also arranged for a gathering to be held in the Holy Temple, an evening of prayer and devotion to Sigmar. A large number of Altdorfers, from humble townfolk to some of the most important men and women in the Empire, plan to attend in order to petition their god in the hope that he will bless his people and their ailing Emperor in these troubled times.

## THE REMNANTS OF THE RED CROWN

The Red Crown has been used in a cynical and callous manner by the Conspiracy. Many members of the Red Crown risked, and indeed lost, their lives in order to marshal the forces of Chaos against the Empire. They were led to believe that they would receive more support from their allies in the Conspiracy, and that the armies of the Empire would not be able to mount as stout a defence as they did.

Whilst most of the Red Crown cultists have either died or disbanded, a small cell still exists in Altdorf.

**Bertolt Bassermann** is the head of the Altdorf cell. He is a dedicated worshipper of Tzeentch and a witch. Bertolt believes that the human race should return to a state of nature, leading simple lives close to nature, as farmers and hunter-gatherers. As such he wishes to see the beastmen and mutants of the forests tear down the cities of the Empire. Bertolt's desires for a more simple life are not wholly compatible with the way of Tzeentch, though the Great Mutator has seen fit to provide Bertolt with magical powers and uncanny prescience in return for his devotion and service. Bertolt thought that the Conspiracy would assist him in destroying the Empire, but now realises that they merely wanted to create a power vacuum they could exploit, changing what Bertolt sees as one tyrant with another. Bertolt feels betrayed, and seeks revenge against his old allies. Bertolt is slightly built man with shoulder length brown hair.

**Klaus Ekhof** and **Klaus Ackermann** are Bertolt's minders. They are dedicated to the cult but are not ardent worshippers of Tzeentch, being merely brutish and gullible enough to work for Bertolt as messengers and leg breakers. The two Klauses are large and muscular men with dark curly hair. Klaus Ackermann has pale blue eyes, whilst Klaus Ekhof's are brown.

**Johan Boeck** is a strange mutant creature employed by Bertolt as a spy. Once Johan was a strapping young lad, but as he aged, his torso and limbs atrophied and withered away, leaving him little more than a head attached to a tiny vestigial torso. The unholy powers of Chaos compensated for the loss of his limbs and organs, so he is able to eat, breathe and speak despite being little more than an animated head. Nor is Johan defenceless, as his tongue has grown long, sharp and prehensile, a razor-tipped tentacle. (Oddly, this improbable tongue has not impeded Johan's ability to speak at all; in fact he can now pitch his voice to carry only to his intended recipient from up to ten feet away.) The Red Crown employ Johan as a spy. They have placed him on top of one of the pikes in the centre of the Street of a Hundred Taverns in order to keep watch on the comings and goings around the docks. Johan's long matted hair covers his withered body and the wooden rest that props him up. Anyone looking at him would notice little to distinguish him from the heads of the decapitated criminals he has for company.

Should the PCs track down the remnants of the Red Crown during the adventure then they use the following profiles. Bertolt uses the profile of a Wizard NPC. The two Klauses use the profiles of cult followers. Johan uses the profile of a cult mutant though he is armed with a whip (to represent his tentacle tongue), and he only has 5 wounds due to his small size.

If the GM has access to the rules for witchcraft from *The Witch's Song*, he may prefer to use them in order to determine Bertolt's abilities.

## BERTOLT'S PLANS

Bertolt knows about a couple of the Conspiracy's plans and hopes he can manipulate the PCs into foiling them for him. This way he can wreak his revenge against the Conspiracy without actually implicating himself or his cultists in the act.

- ✦ He knows that the elven mariner Eothlir is hidden in a barge.
- ✦ He does not know the name of the barge or its whereabouts on the docks.
- ✦ He knows that the elf is shortly to be taken from Altdorf to Carroburg.
- ✦ He knows that Frederick Grosz, a racketeer that the PCs may remember from Averheim, is responsible for abducting the elf.
- ✦ He knows that an 'accident' is being arranged to take care of the PCs.
- ✦ He knows that an important henchman of the Black Cowl's is staying in a tavern on the street (see page 142).
- ✦ He knows nothing of the plot to use the clapper in the Holy Temple of Sigmar.
- ✦ He knows nothing of the plot to blow up Temple of Drama theatre.

Based on what he does know, Bertolt plans to set the PCs on the trail of Frederick Grosz, hoping to see the racketeer killed and the plot to spirit Eothlir to Carroburg foiled. Provided the PCs deal with Frederick and rescue Eothlir, Bertolt will try and set them onto the Black Cowl's henchman and the assassins that the Conspiracy have hired to kill them. He suspects, rightly, that it will only be a matter of time before the Conspiracy turn their assassins and hired thugs against the Red Crown. If his plan works, Bertolt will then consider whether he should kill the PCs himself. His decision depends on whether the PCs have discovered the other plots (in which case Bertolt will leave them be in the hope that they continue to ruin the Black Cowl's plans) or whether or not they have realised that they are being manipulated by Bertolt and his cell.

Bertolt and the two Klauses spend most of their time in the public bar of the Dancing Dwarf. Every ninety minutes, one of the Klauses leaves the bar and loiters underneath Johan's pike, smoking a clay pipe. Johan whispers his update into the cultist's ear.

## THE FOG

Altdorf is notorious for the thick fogs that envelop it, rising from the waters of the Reik or descending from the Grey Mountains in the east. During the chapter, a thick fog descends on the city,



restricting sight and confusing those who are new to the city. The fog is particularly thick near the river and down the Street of a Hundred Taverns.

As a result of the fog add ■ to all Observation checks that rely on the use of sight. Also add ■ to any Ballistic Skill checks with targets at long range, and ■■ to Ballistic Skill checks with targets at extreme range.

## TRACKING PROGRESS OF THE THREADS

The rest of this chapter details a number of events that occur on or near the Street of a Hundred Taverns over the next 24 hours. Some of these events are optional encounters designed to help the GM complicate matters and add some local colour to the goings-on. However, three sets of different encounters are interlinked, and occur in chronological order. They deal with the Conspiracy's attempts to kill the PCs (the **Death to the PCs** thread), kidnap Eothlir (the **Kidnapped Elf** thread) and assassinate Clothilde von Alptraum (the **Black Powder Plot** thread).

Because the Conspiracy has managed to arrange for these nefarious activities to take place within a short space of time, the PCs will have to be very efficient in dealing with the events in order to discover the various plots, solve them and protect themselves.

For these reasons, a Progress Tracker must be set up to determine to what degree the Conspiracy manages to complete its plans. The PCs will of course be involved in the attempt on their lives whether they investigate it or not, but the plot threads that deal with Eothlir and Clothilde will depend on the tracker. If the PCs waste too much time on other things, the events will reach their tragic conclusions. These two threads will be referred to as 'tracked threads.'

The two tracked threads progress over a particularly busy day on the Street of a Hundred Taverns. Build a Progress Tracker nine spaces long with event markers on the seventh and ninth spaces. Place two tracking tokens on the first space. One of these represents the fate of Eothlir, and the other the plot to blow up Clothilde at the theatre.

During the following day, the PCs will undertake various tasks. At the end of each task there is a note on how to move the tracking tokens. At event space seven, an event will occur that provides the PCs with a last chance to involve themselves in investigating the thread. However, if a tracking token reaches the ninth space, the PCs are too late, and Eothlir is taken on to Carroburg or the audience at Temple of Drama theatre, including Clothilde, are blown up.

As well as events related to the threads, some other events that aren't directly relevant are also available for the GM to use during the course of the day. Some of these events are merely short encounters, others are more significant and will also affect the Progress Tracker as described.

It may be that the PCs spend the day engaged in activities that aren't covered by the following events, such as shopping or trying to get into contact with other NPCs. If they do so, the GM should advance both trackers a step up the Progress Tracker for every hour or so the PCs spend away from the Street of a Hundred Taverns.

## THE NIGHT BEFORE

In order to introduce the PCs to the two threads without giving anything away, the following set of events should occur during the evening in which they book themselves into the inn where they are staying.

The inn is quite busy, though it has plenty of spare beds for the PCs to stay the night. Apparently there will be a number of distractions taking place in the public bar later on, including a Tilean performer billed as 'The Great Oozelli.' The bill posters advertising his act boast that he is able to produce music with his bowels and a number of the inn's guests are gossiping enthusiastically about how entertaining his performances are.

At one point during the evening, a veiled lady enters the inn, escorted by a bodyguard and a couple of maidservants. This small party goes into a private back room. After a short while, one of the maidservants enters the bar again and orders some food and drink. She then approaches the PCs and invites them on behalf of her mistress to come to the private room for "a quiet word."

The maidservant, Karla, is a member of the von Alptraum affinity, and has their coat of arms embroidered on her shift. A PC who passes an **Average (2d) Education check** will recognise the heraldry.

## THE NATURE OF CLOTHILDE'S DISAPPOINTMENT

The occupant of the room is Clothilde von Alptraum. On seeing the PCs, she gestures to the vacant chairs by her table and says:

"Ah good, I thought it was you. Graf Friedrich informed me I could find you here. Would you care for a glass of Pritzstock Reisling?"

Clothilde offers the PCs a glass of fine wine. If they fancy something else to drink, she sends her maid to the bar again.

"I have had some disappointing news," she resumes. "I had hoped to see a performance of Cobweb Castle at the Temple of Drama theatre this afternoon, only to be informed that the production was to be indefinitely postponed. I spoke to the director, a very charming fellow from Tilea, and he informed me he was having numerous problems regarding some missing props. As far as I understand it, you fellows have some experience in this sort of arena, investigating mysteries and helping people, so I was wondering if you could call in on him tomorrow and see if you couldn't get to the bottom of the matter. I'd be ever so grateful."

If the PCs refuse, Clothilde looks crestfallen, but takes it in good grace. She makes a little small talk, asking them what they got up to in Middenheim, and then excuses herself and leaves, together with her servants and bodyguard.

If the PCs accept, Clothilde is visibly delighted, and suggests that they call on Filipi Remastri as soon as decently possible in the morning. She will indulge in a little more small talk before leaving.

If the PCs haggle for a reward, Clothilde will be a little crestfallen, as it is within her nature to under-promise and over-deliver on such matters, but she says that she would consider a gold crown fair payment for a job well done.

## A FRESH KEG

After their meeting with the noblewoman, the PCs notice that the public bar is beginning to fill with excited people looking forward to the performance. A couple of warm-up acts are entertaining the crowd, a juggler followed by a man with a dancing dog. Most of the audience consist of dockers, though a few braying young aristocrats stand to one side, and to the rear of the room is a rather aloof elf who eschews all company. This is Eothlir, who has just had a rather disappointing day trying to locate Graf Friedrich von Kaufman. Should the PCs try to talk to him, he rebuffs them, even if they are fellow elves. "If you don't mind, I am here tonight to relax and take in the distractions, not to make friends or engage in idle chatter!" He is a haughty fellow.

At this point the tavern staff run out of Pilsach Peculiar, a rich brown ale brewed in Averland. They fetch a fresh keg from their cellar and tap it at the bar, working quickly to satisfy the increasingly impatient queue of drinkers. However, when they try to draw ale from the barrel they find it is not filled with liquid. A shower of black powder flows into the waiting stein. The staff are puzzled by the sight, though any PC with experience of gunpowder will be able to identify the substance. If the PCs don't show any interest, one of the dockers at the bar raises the alarm. The staff are relieved that there was no explosion, and check the remaining barrels, none of which contain powder.

If the PCs ask where the ale came from, the inn staff say they last took a delivery from a cart, part of the haulage division of Four Seasons who handle the ale's import into Altdorf. If the PCs ask for more information, anyone can tell them that Four Seasons have their main office on the Konigplatz, at a coaching inn called the Cat and Fiddle.

PCs who examine the keg notice a small red 'X' stamped on the bottom.

## THE GREAT OOZELLI

Once the furore over the gunpowder has died down, the Great Oozelli takes to the stage. He is a small, perspiring man in his thirties, with a neat black goatee and spiky handlebar moustache. He positions a strange instrument, akin to a bronze ear trumpet but much larger, near his rear end and proceeds to fart his way through well-known songs such as "The Reik is Wide," "A Bandit Bold," and "The Drakwald Lament."

The effect is actually surprisingly tuneful. However, after a minute of trumpeting, Eothlir pushes his wine to one side and makes his way to the exit, stating loudly, "So this is what passes for entertainment to the boors in Altdorf these days is it? How childish!" The crowd boo and jeer at the departing elf, and, as Eothlir slips out into the street, a burly dockerman by the door sarcastically states, "I suppose you're used to flattery of a much finer timbre in Loth-ern's shining silver taverns."

Oozelli restores order himself by announcing his 'second movement,' and no further upsets occur. At the end of his show, the bar staff announce last orders and the onlookers disperse.

If the PCs spend time gossiping to people in the bar, they may well hear the following items of gossip:

### RUMOURS

- + "Shame they ran out of the Peculiar brew, s'meant to be good stuff that. S'only since the last month or so that they've been importing it from Averland."
- + "Don't tell it to anyone that I told you will you, but a friend of a friend tells me if you ever want to talk to someone about seeing someone dealt a mischief you've only got to find a man who drinks at the Holy Hammer of Sigmar. The place is like a veritable assassins' guild, so he says."
- + "You don't know anyone who's going to this shindig at the Holy Temple tomorrow night do you? You do? Proper exclusive guest list at that, isn't it?"
- + "I hear there's a noblewoman from Averheim staying near here. She must be in the city to petition the Emperor about the Elector's seat down in Averland. She'd best watch herself, there'll be blood before that's settled."
- + "Weird folk around these parts at the moment. I blame the staff of the Crescent Moon letting all those strigany drink there. I'm not biased against strigany folk, but they are a bunch of crooks. Watch yourself around them if you know what's what."
- + "About time we rounded up all these refugees and sent them back to their farms. Hardly got room to breathe in here tonight. I'm sorry for their troubles and all, but Altdorf's fit to burst. You're from Averheim? Oh well excuse me, I'm just drunk is all."



## WAKING UP

The events of this section and Part Three, **Chaos at the Holy Temple**, all happen over the course of the same day. So from the moment when they wake up on the morning of the grand prayer service until the events at the temple are resolved, the PCs will have scarcely a moment to rest. It's all high-paced hijinks, dizzyingly complex plots, and the occasional dash of mortal peril.

The day dawns foggy and bleak. And then the landlord delivers a letter to the PCs. (See **A Letter for the PCs** on page 131.)

## THREAD ONE — THE KIDNAPPED ELF

Eothlir Valandar is in Altdorf for what he assumed was a brief stop-over on his way to Averheim to locate Graf Friedrich von Kaufman. Upon his arrival yesterday, however, he discovered that the Graf is in Altdorf as a result of the recent war. His efforts to secure an immediate meeting with the Graf have not met with success, and he gets brutally clouted into unconsciousness whilst he is wandering down the Street of a Hundred Taverns and wakes in the morning to find himself gagged, bound and thrown into the cargo hold of a large barge.

The Black Cowl has gotten wind of Eothlir's inquiries, and so dispatched his agent Frederick Grosz to abduct him. Grosz's orders are to sit on him until after the ceremony at the Holy Temple, then deliver him to the Black Cowl at a manse on the banks of the Reik. (The Cowl intends to torture information out of Eothlir concerning who he's told about his suspicions and what he knows about the Black Cowl.) Frederick will attempt to do just that, although he's not above just slitting the elf's throat and throwing him into the water if need be.

That Eothlir is an elf of Ulthuan is quite apparent from his appearance. He is six foot in height and willowy in terms of build. His hair is shoulder-length, straight, and strawberry-blond. His almond-shaped eyes are cerulean blue. Eothlir's ship-borne life has left him a little weather-beaten, so by elven standards he is somewhat tanned with noticeable lines around his eyes and mouth, though to most human eyes his complexion seems fair and ageless. He habitually wears loose robes of grey and turquoise.

Like Adele Ketzenblum, Eothlir Valandar is an opportunity for the GM to share as much or as little information with the PCs concerning the Black Cowl as seems appropriate. He could have drawn many of the same conclusions as Adele regarding the Southstone expedition, and he understands (roughly) what the warpstone effigy was and how dangerous it still is. He can furthermore impart the following startling revelation to the PCs, if the GM wills it: the ritual to purge the warpstone did not work; it could not have worked, as even the highest archmages of Saphery are unable to remove the taint from warpstone.

## RUNNING THIS THREAD

This is the most straightforward of the various threads, but it does involve quite a bit of wandering around on the Street of Hundred Taverns. If the PCs proceed directly into investigating this thread and stick with it to the end then they should solve it quite rapidly.

With this in mind, if the PCs pursue each of the episodes in this thread one after the other then the GM should introduce one of the encounters from the **Death to the PCs** thread (see page 140), as well as at least one of the encounters from the **Optional Encounters** list (see page 144).

## KIDNAPPED ELF THREAD EPISODE ONE — A LETTER FOR THE PCs

Bertolt's first move is to contact the PCs by leaving a letter at their place of residence. Klaus Ekhof left the letter at the tavern in the early hours of the morning. The letter will be addressed to the PC who has been the most vocal and forthcoming throughout the adventure.

No one at the tavern saw Klaus deliver the note. It was discovered by the front door by the staff when they got up this morning.

**Effect on Progress Tracker:** None.

## KIDNAPPED ELF THREAD EPISODE TWO — ENQUIRING AT THE BLACK BAT

Enquiring at the Black Bat will reveal that no one of the name Frederick Grosz is staying at the tavern. If the PCs can recall what Frederick looks like (middling height, weathered features, handlebar moustache) the tavern staff look uncomfortable, but say nothing. (Place the Frederick Grosz character card, with its art side showing, someplace the hero players can see it so they can describe him.) A bribe or successful **Hard (3d) Charm (Fel)** or **Intimidate (St) check** will loosen their tongues. They will admit that a man calling himself Karl Meisl fits such a description.

Furthermore they can tell the PCs that Karl spent quite a lot of time in the bar fraternising with members of the Fish gang. They also recall that a couple of nights ago a 'man in a big black hood' came to the tavern, and that he and Karl spent a while engaged in discussion in Karl's room.

**Effect on Progress Tracker:** Move the marker for the Black Powder Plot Thread up one space whilst the PCs enquire at the Black Bat.

## KIDNAPPED ELF THREAD EPISODE THREE — ENQUIRING AT THE FISH DOCKS

The Fish gang members working on the docks have all been briefed about Eothlir's kidnap. Most of them know that the elf is currently stowed away in the hold of a barge, the *Restless Spirit*, which is moored up on one of their pontoons alongside a great many other boats. The *Restless Spirit* is set to sail to Carroburg at dusk. (Actually, it will sail to a manse outside the city to unload Eothlir, then continue on to Carroburg.)

### *Dear Snoops*

*It may shake you out of your apathy to discover that your old acquaintance Frederick Grosz is in town at the moment. Apparently he is staying at the Black Bat tavern. Perhaps you would like to catch up with him in order to discuss your time in Aoverheim together and the work he has been doing for the hooded fellow?*

*I understand he's planning to do something very unpleasant to some poor elf on a boat. Personally I don't care for the pointy-eared immortal snobs, but what he's going to do isn't nice at all. In fact it would shame a Bretonnian, to be frank with you.*

*No need to thank me or know who I am.*

Members of the Fish are not expecting to be questioned about their part in the kidnap, and they know that the main man organising the caper, one Karl Meisl, has a number of associates in Altdorf. This is fortunate for the PCs, because if they enquire after Karl on the docks, the Fish will assume they are 'in on the plan' unless given reason not to.

There are many Fish gang members on their area of the docks at all times, either shifting cargo or idling about in between jobs. The PCs can easily approach one of the gang members and ask after Frederick. What information can be gathered is determined by a **Hard (3d) Charm (Fel) check** (though if the PCs take a harder approach the GM may decide a **Daunting (4d) Intimidate (St) check** is more appropriate).

If the PCs ask after 'Frederick Grosz' they will not get anywhere. Frederick has been using his alias during his dealings in Altdorf.

If the PCs mention 'a man in a black hood' or similar add  to the pool, as the Fish know that 'Karl' has an associate he refers to in this manner.

Add **■■■■** to the test if any of the party questioning the docker are elves.

✦ Any net success means that the Fish admit that they know 'Karl' and that he will be back later. He is having a drink in the Seven Stars with a friend of his before setting off.

✗ Any net failure means that the Fish are ambiguous as to whether or not they know Karl. The PCs can make further enquiries, but with an additional penalty of **■■■■** to any Charm or Intimidate checks. A second failed test meets with stonewalling and suggestions that the PCs make themselves scarce.

✦ A Fish docker also says, "Are you guys helping out with this elf business, eh?" However, he becomes tight-lipped on the subject if pressed.

✧ Negotiations with the Fish break down, and a brawl threatens to break out if the PCs continue to question the Fish. See Book One, page 29 for how to handle brawls with dockers.

The dockers know not to give out any more information regarding Frederick. However, if the initial conversation between the PCs and the dockers goes very well and the PCs follow up with a query like, "Which one of these barges belongs to Karl again?" the dockers give the name *Restless Spirit* if the PC passes a **Guile (Fel) check** opposed to the docker's Discipline of 3.

**Effect on Progress Tracker:** Move the marker for the Black Powder Plot Thread up one space whilst the PCs enquire at docks. Move both markers up one additional space if any number of **✧** are rolled whilst interviewing Fish gang members.

## KIDNAPPED ELF THREAD EPISODE FOUR — FREDERICK SPOTTED, A CHASE

**Note:** If the tracking token representing the progress of this thread reaches space seven, this event will occur automatically the next time the PCs are wandering down the Street of a Hundred Taverns.

If the PCs are on the lookout for Frederick, or making their way to see if they can find him at the Seven Stars, they will spot him automatically.

If they come to this event as a result of the Progress Tracker and aren't particularly looking out for Frederick, they will spot him on an **Average (2d) Observation (Int) check** (remember the fog as described on page 127).

If the PCs simply flag Frederick down or invite him to chat, Grosz will talk with them amiably enough. He'll spin a falsehood about how he made his way to Nuln after he left the PCs in Averheim, then got a job crewing a barge which is currently in dock here in Altdorf. His insistence that he's "keeping his nose clean" and "I've gone straight, honest" are probably the clearest indicators that he is lying. If any PC has the Criminal background (and therefore a pre-existing relationship with Grosz), he'll share a conspiratorial wink with that PC, as if to say "Look, chum, do me a favour and keep out of my scam or you'll ruin it." Frederick will also insist that he has to get back to his barge now, as it will be casting off very soon and he doesn't want to be left behind.

If the PCs mention the Black Cowl or the missing elf, or if they make any move to detain him, attack him, or even move towards him aggressively, Frederick bolts. If he was mid-conversation with the PCs at the time, he uses the closest PC as a springboard, pushing off and running for it (which means he also shoves that PC into his companions and buys himself a few crucial seconds head start).

The chase is handled in several parts. At each stage, PCs must pass a check in order to keep pace with Frederick. If a PC fails his check, he counts as falling behind. This means that he must add an additional **■** to future checks to keep pace. A PC who fails two such checks in a row loses sight of Frederick in the fog, and only catches up later if another PC manages to capture the racketeer.

### 1. THE ALLEYWAY

Frederick scampers down a narrow alleyway between two of the hostleries on the Street of a Hundred Taverns. The cobbles here are in bad need of repair – many of them are loose and the middle of the alley is one long mucky puddle.

In order to keep pace with Frederick, the PCs must pass an **Average (2d) Athletics (St) check**. Those who fail will fall behind. Those who fail and generate a **✧** will fall behind and also slip up in the mucky puddle, coating themselves in a layer of sticky black mud. Any PC who falls down should suffer from the Filthy condition until he cleans himself up.

### 2. THE BUSKER

Frederick jinks to his right and runs down the Street of a Hundred Taverns towards the docks. He sprints towards a small crowd who are watching a man playing 'The Reik is Wide' on a dulcimer. As Frederick passes, he kicks the musician's plate of change. Brass pennies scatter in all directions and people in the crowd stoop to gather up the money.

In order to keep pace with Frederick, the PCs must pass an **Average (2d) Athletics (St) check** to force a path through the crowd, or an **Easy (1d) Coordination (Ag) check** to slip through it. Those who fail will fall behind. Those who fail and generate a **✧** will fall behind and also barge into a member of the crowd who is scurrying about for loose change. The PC have to make a quick apology if they want to avoid a fight.

### 3. THE CHICKEN CRATES

Frederick runs across the Street of a Hundred Taverns. At the end of the road, a number of large wooden crates have been piled up in front of the Mermaid Tavern. Frederick leaps over a crate and turns left onto the waterfront.

In order to keep pace with Frederick, the PCs must pass a **Hard (3d) Athletics (St) check** to leap over the crates or an **Average (2d) Folklore (Int) check** to remember a shortcut. Those who fail will fall behind. Those who fail and generate a ✨ will fall behind and furthermore they upset one of the crates as they try to negotiate the hazard. The crate bursts open and a couple of frightened hens flap and squawk in the street. The chickens will have to be caught and secured if the PCs want to avoid trouble with the proprietor of the Mermaid.

### 4. THE STINKING SLICK OF FISH GUTS

Frederick careers up the waterfront. He passes a group of fishwives who are sat in front of one of the warehouses, slicing open the bellies of fish and throwing their entrails into a large copper basin. As Frederick passes, he kicks the basin, sending a slick of red and stinking fish innards spilling across the thoroughfare.

In order to keep pace with Frederick, the PCs must pass a **Hard (3d) Athletics (St) check** to jump the slick, or a **Hard (3d) Coordination (Ag) check** to keep their footing. Those who fail will fall behind. Those who fail and generate a ✨ will fall behind and also slip up in the slick, covering themselves in fishy blood and innards. Any PC who falls down suffers from the Filthy condition until he cleans himself up.

If all the PCs have fallen behind or suffered mishaps of one sort or another by this point, Frederick slips away, vanishing into the fog. If at least one PC has passed every check, Frederick is caught now.

### 5. ONTO THE WATER

Frederick sprints down one of the rickety wooden docks protruding out into the water, then leaps from that dock to a nearby barge, from that barge to a small skiff, and clambers from that skiff up onto an adjoining dock on the far side of a canal. Most of the boats in this area belong to or are affiliated with the Fish, so no one moves to stop him as he goes.

In order to keep pace with Grosz, the PCs must pass a **Hard (3d) Athletics (St) check** to make the series of jumps and shove past annoyed dockworkers, or a **Hard (3d) Charm (Fel) check** to convince a nearby boatman to simply row them the twenty feet or so across the canal. Anyone who fails and generates ✨ falls into the river or the canal and will have to spend some time finding a place they can pull themselves out.

Grosz stops to catch his breath after this. If any of the PCs are still in the chase at this point, he groans unhappily as they catch up.

### CATCHING FREDERICK

Whether the PCs catch him in part 4 or part 5 above, Grosz is quite close at hand to a number of loitering Fish dockworkers. With no more chance to escape, Grosz shouts for aid from the Fish and attacks.

Frederick is aided by a number of Fish equal to the number of PCs who have kept in the chase, less one. This is a docker's brawl similar to that in Book One (no weapons, dockers fight only until hurt,

see page 29). The dockers will attempt to hurl anyone close to the river or canal into the water (**Athletics (St) vs. Athletics (St) checks**), effectively removing them from the fight.

Each PC who has not fallen behind (received a ■) is present from the first round of the battle. PCs who have fallen behind arrive at medium range from the scrum one round later for each ■ they have acquired during the chase (so a PC who failed to keep up once, and has one ■, arrives on round 2). Use a progress tracker to keep track of this.

As soon as Frederick Grosz suffers a critical wound or 8 normal wounds, he surrenders and agrees to tell them whatever they want to know. He still tries to keep information to himself though, so he will only provide answers to satisfy direct questions, and tries to lie and bargain wherever possible.

- ✦ He knows that the elf Eothlir is hidden on the *Restless Spirit*.
- ✦ He knows that an 'accident' is being arranged to take care of the PCs.
- ✦ He knows that an important henchman of the Black Cowl's is staying at the Holy Hammer of Sigmar inn.
- ✦ He does not know the identity of the Black Cowl, but he does know his height and build. If asked about his voice he will say he speaks in cultured tones, but has a slight Averland accent.
- ✦ He knows nothing of the Red Crown.
- ✦ He knows nothing of the plot to use the clapper in the High Temple of Sigmar.
- ✦ He knows that black powder was smuggled into Altdorf in barrels of Pilsach Peculiar (but not what its intended use is or where it ended up).

Note that the PCs may well get into trouble if they kill someone in apparent cold blood in view of people on the docks, so they may find dealing with Frederick tricky. The best option to take would be to have him confess his part in the kidnap to members of the dock watch. If this is done a patrol of six watchmen will accompany the PCs to the docks on their way to rescue Eothlir.

**Effect on Progress Tracker:** Move the marker for the Black Powder Plot Thread up one space as the PCs chase Frederick.

## KIDNAPPED ELF THREAD EPISODE FIVE — DEPARTURE OF THE RESTLESS SPIRIT

This event takes place when the tracking token representing this thread reaches the ninth space on the Progress Tracker.

If Frederick is still at large, he and four associates will meet at the Fish docks, board the *Restless Spirit* and sail to Carroburg. Frederick's associates are burly looking thugs, hardened racketeers and cutthroats from Averheim and Altdorf. Unless the PCs are actually in the area at the moment this occurs, they miss their last chance to confront Eothlir's kidnapers before they make their way downriver — the thread is complete.

If Frederick has been taken out of the equation by the PCs, then his four associates spend about twenty minutes waiting for him before assuming the racketeer met with a bad end and going on without him.

**Effect on Progress Tracker:** None.

## KIDNAPPED ELF THREAD EPISODE SIX — RESCUING EOTHLIR

If the PCs decide to make their way onto the *Restless Spirit* they will have to fight their way on board. The boat is guarded by two boatmen (use the Townsfolk NPC profile) and as soon as it is attacked Frederick's four associates (use the Soldier NPC profile) will run to reinforce their co-conspirators. In addition, every second turn a Fish docker (use the Townsfolk NPC profile) will join the fight unless the PCs are proving a frightening prospect (by setting off dangerous spells or blessings, or carving a red ruin of their opponents in combat).

The fight will last ten turns before a six-man dock watch patrol (use the Soldier NPC profile – the dock watch are armed with halberds) arrives to break up the fight. They side with the Fish initially, but if the PCs insist that the barge contains a captive elf, they will investigate, liberate Eothlir, and arrest his captors.

If the PCs came to rescue Eothlir in the company of a watch patrol, the boatmen will give up without a fight, and Frederick's associates will quietly slip away.

Eothlir is grateful but not gracious to the PCs if they rescue him, with many snide comments about the “barbarism” of the “hairless monkeys” of the Empire. If there is an elf PC, he latches on to him or her with an almost pathetic devotion, speaking Elven and doing his best to explain his predicament.


A conversation with Eothlir is another opportunity for the GM to share any information he desires with the PCs, especially concerning the Black Cowl and the various plots. Eothlir doesn't know who the Black Cowl is, but he might have any of the information that Adele Ketzenblum had discovered in Book Two and can serve to corroborate it or introduce it to the PCs. He can also share his (relatively untutored) knowledge of warpstone should the PCs desire. If the bell clapper is already safely in the hands of the Conspiracy, Eothlir can share another shocking revelation: any attempt to purge the warpstone taint from an item made with warpstone is doomed to failure – not even the archmages of Saphery are capable of such magic.

**Effect on Progress Tracker:** Move the marker for the Black Powder Plot Thread up one space whilst the PCs rescue Eothlir. If the PCs spend a long time interrogating or commiserating with Eothlir, advance the Black Powder Plot Thread marker an additional space.

## THREAD TWO — THE BLACK POWDER PLOT

This thread is more complex than the previous one, and the PCs will have to keep their eyes open to the fact that there are connections between the mysterious delivery of gunpowder to the tavern and the plans to blow up the theatre. The Conspiracy has been very careful about its operation here and if the PCs do not show some genuine curiosity to the few clues the Conspiracy has left, then Clothilde von Alpraum, a troupe of Tilean mummerys and their enraptured audience will meet with a fiery death.

Unbeknownst to the Conspiracy, the Tilean mummerys have thrown its plans into disarray through illicit actions of their own. Desperate to create a stunning set for their production of *Cobweb Castle* (also known as *The Disembowelment of Didrick*), the



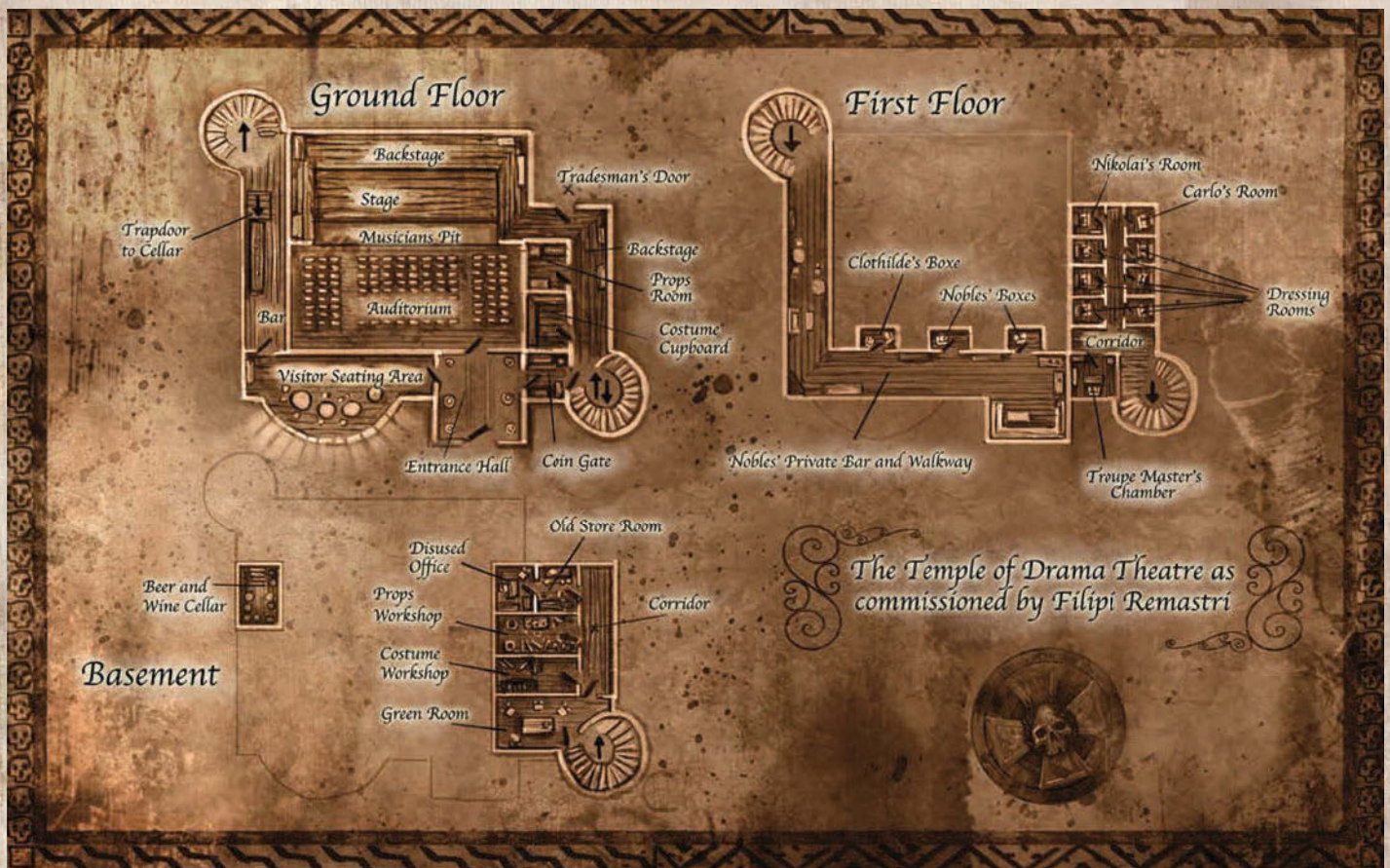
mummerys have secretly smuggled a giant spider into the theatre and allowed it to spin its web over the scenery – to stunning effect it must be said.

However, a jealous understudy has used the presence of the creature to provide cover to murder one of the leading actors. Knowing that they will get into trouble with the authorities for their use of the spider, the managers of the mummerys are looking for some intrepid freelance types to help them find and recapture the wayward beast. However, if the PCs do not help the mummerys, other assistance will arrive in the form of Conspiracy agents and the show will go on.

What if the PCs aren't interested in doing a favour for Clothilde? It may be that they regard the noblewoman's request as somewhat frivolous – they have bigger fish to fry than to ensure that a silly melodrama goes ahead after all. This is reasonable enough, but some other clues can be found in the 'Death to the PCs' thread that may enlighten them to the fact that there is more going on here than a postponed production.

Many of the episodes in this thread occur depending on whereabouts the PCs search in the theatre. A map of the theatre is provided in order to track the PCs' movements. If the PCs insist on searching parts of the theatre that aren't detailed in the text, they may, of course, but bear in mind that they will not find any clues there and that the Progress Tracker will move on if the PCs waste too much time.

Note that although the various encounters in this thread are presented as “Episode One,” “Episode Two,” and so on, they do not necessarily have to be encountered in this order and several of them are not required to resolve the thread successfully.



## THE MIRACULOUS MUMMERS OF MIRAGLIANO

The troupe currently inhabiting the Temple of Drama are known as the Miraculous Mummies of Miragliano. Unlike some exotic travelling troupes that ply their trade in the Empire, most of the Miraculous Mummies are in fact foreigners. The mummies use the characteristics of Townsfolk NPCs except as noted below. The principle mummies are:

**Filipi Remastri** is the director of Cobweb Castle and the leader of the Miraculous Mummies. His Reikspeil is excellent, but accented by his Tilean homeland. He wears outlandish Tilean fashions including a pronounced ruffle at his collar. He is past 40 and fighting a losing battle with the bulge around his middle. Filipi firmly believes the show must go on... because his livelihood depends on it! Filipi is a Specialist NPC.

**Leonardo Catrazan** is Filipi's stage manager and right-hand man. He is balding and stocky, and wears slightly less ornate and ostentatious clothes in the Tilean style. Catrazan is devoted to Filipi and has primary responsibility for the giant spider.

**Nikolai di Fortessi** is the leading man of Miraculous Mummies. A handsome man and a fairly talented actor, di Fortessi was popular with the crowd. He was murdered recently by his understudy, Carlo Spinezzi. Nikolai was a Specialist NPC with Fellowship 4, although now he's a corpse.

**Carlo Spinezzi** is Nikolai di Fortessi's understudy. He assists in many odd tasks throughout the theatre, including tending to the giant spider. Less handsome, less talented, and less tall than Nikolai, Carlo has been embittered by years of second billing and verbal abuse. The only thing he wants in the world is to enjoy a single performance as the star.

**Gio, Lorenzo, Mariella, Ofelia, Pietro, and Sandro** are actors with the Mummies. They are predominantly Tilean and principally concerned with putting on their show. If asked about Nikolai, they admit they are concerned about his disappearance. They were all fond of Nikolai, and not very fond of Carlo Spinezzi, who they describe as a "prima donna." Mariella, the leading lady, is especially distraught and begs the PCs for their assistance in finding him.

**Jakob Ayrer** is a member of the Temple of Drama staff, not a Mummer. He is a thick-necked man prone to turning red in the face when becomes angry. Jakob is a penny-pincher and a money-counter; his concerns in regards to the playhouse are strictly financial. (Every day it's closed, it's not making money.)

**Jochen Mell** and **Nina Poll** are Temple of Drama staff (Jochen works the coin gate and Nina serves at the private bar). Both are agents in the employ of the Conspiracy. Jochen is a small man who must stand on a stool to take tickets. Nina is a fresh-faced blonde from rural Reikland who dreams of someday being an actress. Neither Jochen nor Nina know much about the Conspiracy or its larger plan; they simply know that some important people, with the ability to make them rich and/or famous, have jobs for them to do. They visit the Holy Hammer of Sigmar once a fortnight to receive instructions, and can describe the Black Cowl's lieutenant if placed under duress.

## BLACK POWDER THREAD EPISODE ONE — TALKING TO FOUR SEASONS

The Konigplatz is a short walk from the Street of a Hundred Taverns, at least it is as the crow flies. During the day, the roads to the Konigplatz are tightly thronged with carts and teeming pedestrians, and it can take a long time to navigate through the crowd to the Cat and Fiddle.

At the Cat and Fiddle, the PCs can enter the Four Seasons office and talk to the secretary, a tall, slim and pallid man with oily dark hair by the name of Fritz Unruh. He does not know of any deliveries of gunpowder. If asked about what deliveries of Pilsach Peculiar ale the company have made to the Street of a Hundred Taverns in the past few days, the secretary refuses to share such information. Attempts to charm Fritz will not work, and intimidating him will see him calling loudly for assistance from seven ruffians who are drinking in the bar (use the Cutthroat NPC profile). He does like bribes though, a fact he will suggest by placing a silver coin on the countertop, tapping it, and coughing suggestively.

If the PCs offer Fritz at least ten silver shillings, or beat up his ruffians, he will give them the following details of recent deliveries:

Pilsach Peculiar Deliveries

- + Mermaid – 5 kegs.
- + Temple of Drama – 30 kegs.
- + Mattheus II – 10 kegs.
- + Holy Hammer of Sigmar – 25 kegs.
- + One-Eyed Wolf – 5 kegs.
- + Bruno's Brewhouse – 5 kegs.

If Fritz is asked if any of these orders are unusual, he says that he is somewhat surprised at the size of both the Holy Hammer of Sigmar's order as well as the Temple of Drama Theatre's order. They must be filling their cellars.

**Effect on Progress Tracker:** Move the markers for the two tracked threads up two spaces as the PCs make their way to and from the Cat and Fiddle. If the PCs do something sensible to speed their progress (running down back alleys, hailing a coach, using a magical solution) then move the tokens only one space.

## BLACK POWDER THREAD EPISODE TWO — THE MIRACULOUS MUMMERS OF MIRAGLIANO

If the PCs visit the Temple of Drama theatre, they are asked by the doormen what they want. If the PCs ask to be taken to Filipi, they are led upstairs to the first floor and past several dressing rooms before being shown into the troupe master's chamber.

Filipi Remastri is the director of Cobweb Castle, and Leonardo Catrazan is his stage manager. They receive the party in the office and ask what they want. If the PCs mention they are there by request of Clothilde von Alptraum, or to look into the problem at the theatre, the two men introduce each other and offer the PCs a glass of fine white wine from Remas. They have been told by Clothilde that she will try and get them some practised investigators to deal with their

difficulties. Once the PCs have accepted or refused the wine, Filipi discusses the matter at hand. He speaks Reikspiel very well, though he has a pronounced Tilean accent and pauses on occasion when about to attempt more flowery language.

“As you may now know we of the Miragliano Mummers are renowned throughout the Old World for the extreme, ahhh, verisimilitude of our fabulous sets. Usually we use only natural substances for our props and scenery, not the wood and canvas panels and cloths so beloved of set designers in the Empire. At our Miragliano playhouse we have spared no expense for the stage of our production of ‘The Disembowelment of Didrick.’ Tonnes of dressed stone upon which real moss is encouraged to grow. Real rivulets of water. The expense is, ahhh, phenomenal.

“In coming to Altdorf we have been required to seriously compromise on our artistic integrity in order to stage performances more fitting to the, ahhh, expedience expected of dramaticists in the city. To protect our reputation we had to take certain measures, you see?

“So we employed a particular aid to enhance our set designs. Arachnidis Titanicus, or as you may know it a, ahhh, giant spider. Only a small one, not five foot from mandible to spinneret. I, ah, regret to admit that we have mislaid the creature as of this morning. I would very much like to see it returned. Our coffers are far from full, but I could make this preliminary payment with the promise that more will be forthcoming should the creature find its way back into its box and no mention of its existence is made to the, ahhh, authorities.”

He passes the PCs a purse containing 6 shillings per PC and asks if they have any further questions.

### WHERE WAS THE SPIDER KEPT?

“In a large and well-ventilated wooden crate kept in our dedicated props room. Each morning it was taken out and left to spin its web over the stage set.”

### WHAT DID IT EAT?

“It was fed a diet of pork.”

### WHEN WAS IT LAST SEEN?

“It was goaded back into its box after spinning web yesterday morning. The box was securely locked and the spider bound in lengths of twine.”

### WHO LOCKS THE BOX AND BINDS THE SPIDER?

“Leonardo Catrazan.”

### HOW DID IT ESCAPE?

“It seems one of the sides of the box was not securely nailed shut. The spider was somehow able to burst its bonds, lever it open, and escape.”

### DO YOU REALLY NEED IT BACK?

“Our set is not entirely complete, so we would be very grateful to get it back in one piece. We will provide a generous bonus if it is returned unharmed. However, we understand this may not be possible, and can compromise on the set as a favour to your noble

patron. It is imperative that the spider is dealt with, as we cannot run the show with it loose in the building, but if it must be killed then so be it.”

### HAS THERE BEEN ANYTHING ELSE ODD HAPPENING IN THE THEATRE LATELY?

“Well, Nikolai di Fortessi, our leading man, is missing.”

### TELL US ABOUT THE MISSING ACTOR.

“Nikolai di Fortessi is our finest actor. He was playing the lead character, Didrick.”

### DOES NIKOLAI’S DISAPPEARANCE WORRY YOU?

“Of course, though we are convinced that his understudy, Carlo Spinezzi, will ably perform the role.”

### WHEN WAS NIKOLAI LAST SEEN?

“Not sure, he was definitely about yesterday, but no one has seen him today.”

### WHERE WAS NIKOLAI STAYING?

“The actors have dressing rooms at the theatre that they use for bedrooms.”

If the party ask Leonardo about his role they find that he is very taciturn, he does not speak good Reikspiel and is shy. He can produce the key to the crate if asked for it. Asked if anyone helps him check the box or goad the spider, he admits he gets Carlo to assist. As an understudy, he is considered expendable. Carlo apparently knows a lot about the spider and is very helpful.

**Effect on Progress Tracker:** Move the markers for the two tracked threads up one space as the PCs discuss matters with Filipi.

## BLACK POWDER THREAD EPISODE THREE — SEARCHING NIKOLAI’S DRESSING ROOM

The dressing room is small and has a large mirror positioned by a desk. The desk is covered with many pots containing powder and face paint. A script also rests on the table, written in Tilean with annotations in Reikspiel. In a corner of the room is a rolled up bedroll. There is also a large wardrobe in the room, containing sumptuous costumes.

Looking in the wardrobe will probably reveal Nikolai’s corpse. Characters with night vision or who pass an **Average (2d) Observation (Int) check** will spot a large grey bundle in the corner. Nikolai is stuffed there – he has been wrapped up in coils of cobweb. Anyone who declares that they are searching the wardrobe finds the corpse without needing to take a test.

Brought out into the light, the cobweb bundle can be unravelled to reveal the remains of a once-handsome man with two puncture wounds in his neck. His face is bloated and livid and his swollen tongue lolls from his mouth.

If a character examines the body and passes an **Average (2d) Nature Lore (Int) check** he notices something strange about the shroud of web that surrounds the corpse. It seems to be made of strips of torn cobweb, rather than a single continuous rope of silk as one might expect. A character who examines Nikolai’s wounds and

passes an **Average (2d) First Aid (Int) or Medicine (Int) check** will notice that his injuries resemble stab wounds rather than bite marks.

Such characters may well conclude, correctly, that Nikolai is not the victim of a spider, but was murdered.

**Effect on Progress Tracker:** Move the marker for the Kidnapped Elf Thread up one space if the PCs search this room.

## BLACK POWDER THREAD EPISODE FOUR — CARLO’S DRESSING ROOM

This room is much the same as Nikolai’s, though it does not contain a wardrobe. There is a backpack resting next to the desk which contains a packed lunch, two vials of liquid (venom that was milked from the spider), a key (which unlocks a padlock to the disused basement office in which Carlo has stowed the spider) and a stiletto. On the desk rests a claw hammer (used to prise open the spider’s crate) and a pair of heavy-duty pliers (used to break the padlock of the room in the basement). In the corner of the room, nestled next to the bedroll, is a length of wood with a penknife lashed to one end (a makeshift goad).

Carlo is in here, desperately rehearsing Didrick’s lines. If interrupted, he places the lines in his backpack. Carlo is a deeply disturbed young man who was envious of Nikolai’s popularity and contemptuous of his acting ability. Shortly before dawn he opened the crate containing the spider and ensured that it was securely bound in twine. He placed the spider on a sack and used a trolley to move it down into the basement and hid it in the bowels of the theatre. He then milked its venom and stabbed Nikolai as he slept. He wrapped the body in lengths of cobweb that he tore from the set and hid it in the wardrobe.

Carlo only speaks Tilean and broken Reikspiel, and if interviewed he will make for sullen conversation. If he feels that he is about to be accused of Nikolai’s murder, he toys with his backpack, hugging it to him. He slides the stiletto in the backpack into a jar of venom and, once armed, tries to grab a PC and negotiate in the hope of being allowed to escape. If pressed, he becomes violent, madly reasoning that he may be able to kill the PCs and continue with his plans.

Carlo’s overriding motive is to enjoy a night as the star of the show, and if clever PCs work out that this is what he wants, they will have a powerful negotiating tool. Carlo may even agree to lead them to the spider if he can be convinced that they mean to let him act in the evening’s performance.

Carlo uses the characteristics and abilities of a Townsfolk NPC. He is armed with a dagger which has the Poison ability (if he inflicts a critical wound with the dagger, his victim suffers fatigue equal to that wound’s severity).

**Effect on Progress Tracker:** Move the marker for the Kidnapped Elf Thread up one space if the PCs search this room.

## BLACK POWDER THREAD EPISODE FIVE — THE PROPS ROOM

The room used by the Tileans to store their props is one of the four large areas adjacent to the stage. There are eight flats stored here (large panels painted and decorated to look like castle walls). Six of these flats are covered in copious quantities of web, to eerie and

impressive effect. If the PCs examine them they will notice that a couple of rats are wrapped up in the web. On an **Average (2d) Observation (Int) check**, they see that some areas seem to have been damaged and torn, and that strips of web are missing here and there.

Other items in the room include prop weapons (count as improvised if used in anger), a goad, a table and stout wooden chairs, a few coils of rope in different thicknesses, and a doorway in a frame that can be moved independently of a wall.

Also in the room is a large wooden box, about five foot square. The box has many air holes and gives off an evil dank stink. The lid of the box is secured by a hefty padlock. The inside is coated in cobwebs, dark pellets of excrement, some loose ends of twine and a few pig bones. The far side of the box has come loose. Stresses in the wood suggest it has been worked free by repeated pushing and pulling. However, any PC who passes a **Hard (3d) Observation (Int) check** whilst examining the box finds some marks left by a crowbar or hammer along the right side. (A character with training in any sort of engineering will notice this automatically if he examines the box.)

Searching for tracks does not reveal any, but drag marks can be spotted and followed if anyone announces that they are searching for tracks (no need to make a test, they are quite apparent). The trail leads through a corridor, down some stairs to the basement, into the green room, down another corridor, through an old store-room and into a disused office.

**Effect on Progress Tracker:** Move the marker for the Kidnapped Elf Thread up one space if the PCs search this room.

## BLACK POWDER THREAD EPISODE SIX — THE GREEN ROOM

This large, and indeed green, room is where actors come to rest in between scenes. It is below the auditorium and the acoustics are such that speech and activity on the stage can be heard quite audibly here. There are a number of chairs, a table with some jugs of water and a plate of inexpensive pastries upon it. A battered but playable lute is propped up in one corner.

Gio and Lorenzo, two members of the Mummers, are sitting in the green room. Gio is involved in a lengthy morale-boosting rant about whether Lorenzo is a much finer actor than another member of the company. If asked about Nikolai, they admit they are worried about him. They say he was a popular member of the cast and a good actor. The two actors are not so fond of Carlo, finding him an odd fellow and something of a prima donna.

At the GMs discretion, the rest of the actors (except Carlo) can be found here as well, going over lines.

**Effect on Progress Tracker:** None.

## BLACK POWDER THREAD EPISODE SEVEN — THE OLD STORE ROOM

This is a small room filled with clutter, including:

- ✦ A bookcase piled high with plays, including a number of very old folios.
- ✦ Boxes filled with paperwork regarding the running of the theatre, and old accounts.
- ✦ Playbills and posters.
- ✦ A large wardrobe filled with costumes.
- ✦ A broken viol da gamba (a sort of stringed instrument like a bass or cello) and a dented but serviceable trumpet.
- ✦ A coil of rope.
- ✦ Three barrels. They are filled with gunpowder, copious quantities of it. They have had identifying labels stripped from them and dusted with flour to make them appear as if they have been in the room for a long time. Small red X's are to be found on the underside of the barrels if the PCs look for them.

There is a clear path on the floor where something heavy has been dragged through the papers and other detritus. The path ends at the door which is secured by an iron padlock. The padlock is newly bought. The old padlock has been broken open and is left on the floor, near the barrels. It can be found on an **Easy (1d) Observation (Int) check**.

As soon as any noise is made near the door, mention that noises can be heard from within, scurrying and rattling. This gets louder and more insistent as time goes on. The lock can be opened using the key in Carlo's rucksack, or it can be picked on an **Average (2d) Skulduggery (Ag) check**.

**Effect on Progress Tracker:** Move the marker for the Kidnapped Elf Thread up one space if the PCs search this room.



## OTHER AREAS OF THE THEATRE

The PCs may well explore other areas of the theatre. These are not detailed in the main plot as they don't contain any pertinent information, but they are outlined here to give the GM assistance if the PCs insist on exploring them.

### BASEMENT FLOOR

- + **Beer and Wine Cellar, Green Room, Old Store Room, Disused Office** – As described in main text.
- + **Costume Workshop** – An area where the seamstresses employed by the theatre create and alter costumes. The room is full of racks of costumes from old productions as well as bolts of cloth and dressmaking equipment.
- + **Props Workshop** – An area for the construction of scenery and props. Lots of wood and woodworking equipment, pails of paint and old backdrops.

### GROUND FLOOR

- + **Props Room, Bar** – As described in main text.
- + **Entrance Hall** – A lavishly decorated and carpeted entrance hall bedecked with gilded marble columns and an impressive chandelier.
- + **Coin Gate** – Home to the administrative staff and under the direction of Ludwig Anzengruber, the formidable managing director of Temple of Drama. The room is filled with filing cabinets stuffed with paperwork and accounts and also houses a large iron safe (Hard (3d) lock) for keeping the takings secure. The box office and all the areas accessed through the box office are staff only areas.
- + **Backstage and Wings** – The area used by the stage crew and actors to move about in during the performance. There are lots of stage furniture, hanging curtains and other dark crannies in which a spider might hide in this area. The stage and musicians' pit are accessed from here.
- + **Costume Cupboard** – All the costumes being used in the current production are held here (apart from those used by the leading actors, which are kept in their dressing rooms).
- + **Visitor Seating Area** – Some round tables sat by impressive bay windows. Audience members can relax here.
- + **Auditorium** – With seats for 500.
- + **Stage** – Hung with black curtains and massive cobwebs.
- + **Musician's Pit** – A lowered area with enough space for a small orchestra.

### FIRST FLOOR

- + **Troupe Master's Chamber, Dressing Rooms** – As described in main text.
- + **Noble's Boxes** – Lavishly decorated boxes equipped with embroidered drapes, comfortable armchairs and opera glasses. They could feasibly seat about six people without compromising on the luxury.
- + **Noble's Private Bar and Walkway** – This large corridor is decorated with a number of paintings depicting theatrical subjects, famous actors, a bust of Tarradasch, scenes from some of Tarradasch's greatest works and a gigantic map of the Known World. There is a seating area by some picture windows above the main entrance, and a small bar where nobles can order drinks.

## BLACK POWDER THREAD EPISODE EIGHT — DISUSED OFFICE

This small room was once used as an office by the theatre management. In recent years they have moved to a less claustrophobic and stuffy office in an upper story of the building. The room contains a table and chairs, and shelves piled with more copies of plays and files of paperwork. There is also a giant spider in the room.

The giant spider has been securely bound and placed in a sack. It has worked its four forelimbs free and can pull itself about a bit. It uses the characteristics of a giant spider, but it suffers from the Entangled condition.

The giant spider can be disabled without killing it if each of its four free legs is pinned or bound, which requires either beating it in an opposed **Athletics (St) vs. Athletics (St) check**, or acquiring some rope and beating it in a **Coordination (Ag) vs. Coordination (Ag) check**. In both cases, one character can pin two legs at once by increasing the difficulty of the check by 1d. A ✨ on the check result in the PC suffering 2 wounds and gaining the Weakened condition until the end of the act.

**Effect on Progress Tracker:** Move the marker for the Kidnapped Elf Thread up one space if the PCs roll any number of 3 whilst restraining or killing the spider.

## BLACK POWDER THREAD EPISODE NINE — A SECOND MEETING WITH FILIPI

If Filipi is told of the murder and if Carlo has been killed, captured, or escaped, he will assume the role of Didrick. He is a bit fat and old to take the part of the romantic lead, but he does know all the lines and stage directions. The Mummies and the theatre staff will prefer to administer justice to Carlo themselves, as getting the authorities involved could delay or even cancel their performance. If the giant spider is returned to its box alive and the party keep silent about it to the authorities, Filipi promises them three gold crowns for their trouble. If they killed the spider and agree to keep silent about it he will offer them a single gold crown. In both cases, the promised money will be available “after the performance tonight,” as Filipi needs to make some money on tickets before he can afford to pay the PCs anything!

**Effect on Progress Tracker:** None.

## BLACK POWDER THREAD EPISODE TEN — VISITING THE CELLAR

If the PCs visit the theatre’s cellar during their exploration they will be able to take a look at the contents and discern if any of the barrels there contain gunpowder. The cellar is accessed from a bar which is kept by Jakob Ayrer, a member of Temple of Drama staff. He will not just let anyone enter the cellar, and the PCs will have to get Filipi to talk to the man, or otherwise charm, intimidate or bribe him.

In the cellar, the PCs can find 24 barrels of Pilsach Peculiar. None of them have red X’s on their bases and none of them contain gunpowder. That leaves six barrels unaccounted for.

If the PCs notice and bring up the discrepancy in the number kegs to Jakob, he becomes agitated and does a quick count himself. As he does so, he explains that one is in the bar and contains ale, one has been tapped and emptied already and sold off to a local rag and bone man along with other junk, and one was wrongly delivered to another

tavern (the keg the PCs saw opened the night before) and he is expecting a replacement within the week. But as he finishes his count, his face turns dour, admitting that three whole barrels have indeed gone missing (these are the three moved to the old storeroom by Jochen Mell and Nina Poll and contain black powder). Jakob informs the PCs that he himself confirmed the delivery and he performs an inventory check each night. The three casks must have been stolen since last night. Wherever the barrels are, they can’t have gone far. Depending on his attitude towards the PCs, he may even accuse them of the theft.

Note that if the PCs start opening casks of ale, they will almost certainly be apprehended by Jakob, who will require restitution for any losses unless the PCs want to talk to the dock watch. If made aware of this, Filipi will pay Jakob (deduct 50 silver shillings from any reward he offers the PCs as a result).

**Effect on Progress Tracker:** Move the marker for the Kidnapped Elf Thread up one space if the PCs search this room.

## BLACK POWDER THREAD EPISODE ELEVEN — THE RIVALS

**Note:** if the tracking token representing the progress of this thread reaches space seven, this event occurs automatically the next time the PCs are wandering down the Street of a Hundred Taverns.

The Black Cowl’s henchman in the Holy Hammer of Sigmar has received word that the postponement of the play presents a problem, and that he or she should send a group of capable and combat-ready men to sort it out.

If the PCs have not been to the theatre, or did not manage to find the spider, they will see a group of four armed men, dressed in a motley uniform of black leather and dark cloaks, marching down the Street of a Hundred Taverns towards Temple of Drama. The PCs may well be able to discern that the men have just left the Holy Hammer of Sigmar. These men are Linhart, Herman, Jorg, and Wolfgang, all experienced killers, thugs, and mercenaries. Linhart is their leader, a narrow-faced, slender man with large ears and a fringe of brown hair. (These men use the Cutthroat NPC profile, should it become relevant.)

The men walk up to the front of the theatre and ask to see Filipi. If the PCs do not intervene, they enter the theatre and deal with the escaped spider. With the help of a couple of Conspiracy agents in the theatre, they find the spider, at which point Herman and Jorg put crossbow bolts into it until it dies. About twenty minutes after the men entered the theatre, they leave.

**Effect on Progress Tracker:** Move the markers for both tracked threads up one space if the PCs spend much time either interacting with the men or waiting to see what happens.

## BLACK POWDER THREAD EPISODE TWELVE — REOPENING

This event occurs shortly after the previous event, or shortly after the PCs deal with the escaped spider. A Tilean actor from the Miraculous Mummies of Miragliano leaves the theatre and clears the blackboard away. He then produces a bell and begins to ring it, shouting, “Hear me! Hear me! The Miraculous Mummies of Miragliano are proud to announce the reopening of our melodrama! Our first performance takes place this afternoon! Tell one! Tell all! Come to the Temple of Drama for the most explosive dramatic event of the season!”

**Effect on Progress Tracker:** None.

## BLACK POWDER THREAD EPISODE THIRTEEN — BANG

This event takes place when the tracking token representing the progress of this thread reaches event space nine. By this time the spider will have been recaptured, either by the PCs, or the hired thugs from the Holy Hammer of Sigmar, or by a last minute effort by a team assembled from desperate mummies and theatre staff.

The Temple of Drama opens its doors for the premiere performance of Cobweb Castle. Amongst the crowds flocking to see the play are a very happy Clothilde von Alptraum and her retinue. If she spots the PCs in the vicinity of the theatre, she will hail them and announce how excited she is to be finally seeing the show. If the PCs helped Filipi deal with his problems, Clothilde will mention to them that she is very grateful, and that once she and they are back in Averheim she really must go about seeing that they are properly promoted to a station where their talents will gain proper reward and recognition. This is the PCs' last chance to save Clothilde... sort of. If they can convince her that the theatre is unsafe and that she must not attend the show, Clothilde will become very concerned. However, being Clothilde, she will demonstrate that concern by pushing to the front of the crowd and demanding to speak to the troupe master. If Jochen (who mans the coin gate) hears her use the words "black powder," "kegs," or any other language that suggests she knows what's going on, he will let her in, usher her up to the nobles balcony, and then he and Nina will fall upon her with knives, shove her corpse into a private box, and flee the theatre forever.

### FOILING THE BLACK POWDER PLOT

Resolving the spider issue at the Temple of Drama should be a trivial task for the PCs at this point in their career. The hard part is noticing the presence of the black powder, deducing that it might be put to nefarious purposes, and somehow preventing this from occurring. (While also resolving the other threads of the Farce in the Fog.) It might seem likely that Clothilde is doomed! However, there are some clues that clever PCs may notice and the GM may elect to emphasise to make it more likely the black powder plot is foiled.

- + The Pilsach Peculiar barrel from "the Night Before."
- + Rumours surrounding Clothilde von Alptraum, indicating that she should be concerned for her safety.
- + The number of barrels of Pilsach Peculiar delivered to the Temple of Drama doesn't agree with the number of barrels currently in inventory. Four barrels are unaccounted for. If the PCs don't notice this, Jakob Ayer can complain about it in their hearing.
- + Barrels in the storeroom have been dusted with flour, presumably in an attempt to make them look old and dusty. They are Pilsach Peculiar barrels, and have the same red X on the base that the barrel from "the Night Before" had. At the GMs discretion, there could be a half-empty sack of flour stuffed into the corner of the box office that Jochen mans.
- + Clothilde always attends the theatre season at the Temple of Drama in Altdorf, every year.

Presuming the PCs don't interfere, people take their seats. Clothilde and her retinue occupy one of the balconies. The show begins.

Provided that the barrels of gunpowder in the old storeroom are still there, Jochen and Nina collect them. They move them up the stairs and leave them by the door to Clothilde's box. They then light a three minute fuse and leave the theatre. The explosion will kill Clothilde and her retinue instantly. It will bring down a section of the theatre's roof. A great many members of the audience will be killed or maimed by falling masonry, and shrapnel from the blast will cut a swathe through some of Tilea's finest actors. If the PCs happen to be inside, they will likely be caught in the blast and may be killed as well. Anyone near Clothilde must pass a **Daunting (4d) Resilience (To) check** or die instantly. If they pass, they merely suffer a critical wound and 5 normal wounds. Anyone elsewhere in the theatre must make a **Hard (3d) Coordination (Ag) check** to avoid being struck by falling debris. If they fail, they suffer a critical wound and 5 normal wounds as well.

If the gunpowder has been disposed of and Jochen and Nina have not been pinned with the crime, they won't know what to do next. If Clothilde seems lightly guarded, they may attempt to murder her with knives. Otherwise, Jochen rushes to the Holy Hammer of Sigmar to speak with the Black Cowl's lieutenant there. During intermission, Linhart and his thugs (or different thugs, if the PCs have already killed Linhart) return, wheeling a cart with three barrels of "Pilsach Peculiar" (actually gunpowder). Jochen takes delivery at the back door. Any PCs observing are likely to find this extremely suspicious, as Linhart and company look nothing like deliverymen, and there's still plenty of Pilsach Peculiar being sold and consumed in the theatre. If the PCs don't intervene, Jochen and Nina place the barrels of gunpowder during the second act as indicated above.

## THREAD THREE — DEATH TO THE PCs

This thread deals with the efforts made by the Conspiracy to silence the PCs once and for all. The Black Cowl has despatched his most trusted lieutenant to the Holy Hammer of Sigmar in order to direct the efforts of a gang of hired assassins to kill the PCs. The exact identity of this lieutenant will vary depending on who the Black Cowl is. More information on the Black Cowl's lieutenant can be found beginning on page 143.

Unlike the other threads this one is not tracked. It is up to the GM to decide when these events occur, either when he feels it is appropriate to introduce them or as the result of the actions of the PCs. However, the GM should ensure that this thread does not conclude until late in the afternoon. It is best to wait until at least midday before introducing any elements from this thread and to ensure that the PCs only start to look into matters at the Holy Hammer of Sigmar late in the day.

## DEATH TO THE PCs THREAD EPISODE ONE — THE WATCHER

This event occurs at some point when the PCs are travelling along the Street of a Hundred Taverns in order to get from one place to another. On a **Hard (3d) Observation (Int) check** they will spot someone watching them from the side of the road, a skinny man with soiled finery and a layer of dirt on his face that suggests he was once wealthy, but isn't anymore.

The watcher is a henchman of the Black Cowl's lieutenant. He is keeping a close eye on the PCs, but averts his gaze and walks into the nearest tavern as soon as he realises that the PCs have seen him.

If the PCs follow the man into the tavern and interrogate him, he will say he mistook them for someone else and is embarrassed to have drawn their attention. Unless they directly ask after the Black Cowl's lieutenant (see page 143), the man will plausibly deny anything they accuse him of. He has been merely hired by the Black Cowl's lieutenant to watch the PCs and knows nothing of the Conspiracy or the various plots. This man is Harald Peterssen, a down-on-his-luck gambler.

**Effect on Progress Tracker:** None.

## DEATH TO THE PCs THREAD EPISODE TWO — A MESSAGE

The remnants of the Red Crown are keeping an eye on the comings and goings on the street by gathering reports from their mutant spy. Based on some extra information they have gathered, the Red Crown sends Klaus Ekhof to send a message to the PCs. Because this episode could potentially lead the PCs to the climax of this thread, it should not occur until late in the afternoon.

Klaus procures the service of a local urchin to deliver the message. A mousey girl called Carolina Neuber will approach the PCs as they wander down the street. "Excuse me sires. A big man told me to tell you about some things."

If the PCs are interested in what Carolina has to say, she gives them the following information:

- ✦ The man says he hopes you are getting on well in finding your friend. (Klaus means to remind them if Frederick is still at large)
- ✦ He wonders if it would surprise them to learn that someone called either "Cheese Curds" or "Art Shaver" or "Kitty-Kat" Mauer (depending on who is the Black Cowl, see page 143) is in town, and do they know that he or she is in cahoots with a man with a black cow? (Klaus seeks to let them know that the Black Cowl's lieutenant is about, but Carolina has trouble remembering the details)
- ✦ He or she was seen walking up the Street of a Hundred Taverns, heading in the direction of the Temple of Drama. (The lieutenant was spotted by Johan, but he/she vanished into the fog before Johan could see him/her enter the Holy Hammer of Sigmar)
- ✦ He says to tell you that you are a good bunch of snoops, but to watch your backs.

If asked about the man who gave her the message, Carolina tells the PCs that he was big and strong looking, with curly black hair. If the PCs asked where this took place, she tells them he found her in the alleyway between Bruno's Brewhouse and the Mattheus II.

**Effect on Progress Tracker:** If the PCs spend more than ten minutes talking to Carolina then move a tracking token of your choice up one space.

## GOING BACK TO FIND THE MAN THEY SAW WATCHING THEM IN THE PREVIOUS ENCOUNTER AND ASKING AFTER CURD/ARTER/KATRINA...

Ah! Clever – if the PCs are this good they should be able to charm, bribe or intimidate the fact that, yes, such a person is known to the watcher and is currently staying at the Holy Hammer of Sigmar, and if they go straight there they can avoid the assassins described below.

## DEATH TO THE PCs THREAD EPISODE THREE — THE ASSASSINS

This event occurs at some point in the late afternoon. As the PCs are walking down the street, they are jostled by a man who overtly steals an item from them, such as a hat or dangling purse, and runs down the nearest alley.

Set this up as a chase, but as soon as the PCs enter the alleyway, they are set upon by hired killers (use the Cutthroat NPC profile). There is one cutthroat for each PC plus an additional cutthroat for good measure (the 'pickpocket'). These men are Linhart, Herman, Jorg, and Wolfgang again (from the Black Powder Plot thread), plus as many extra thugs as are necessary. They are armed with swords and half of them have crossbows.

The cutthroats fight valiantly. If the PCs gain the upper hand, they try and break off and escape. The cutthroats are professional killers and do not give the names of their employers. They know death is preferable to the punishment their guild masters will mete out to them if they confess any trade secrets. Linhart, the leader, hangs back with his crossbow and attempts to escape if things look bad for his men. He's quite experienced at slipping away when things get dicey.



BOOK THREE  
THE ENEMY WITHIN

If somehow compelled to give up their information by magical means or some other talent, the cutthroats give the name of the Black Cowl's lieutenant and admit that they were hired at the Holy Hammer of Sigmar.

If the fight lasts longer than ten rounds, a patrol of dock watch arrive and the hired killers attempt to flee.

If the hired killers do make a clean break for it, they may well try to track the PCs and assail them again later in the day.

If the PCs ask around for where one might go in order to contract a hired killer, they may discover that most regulars on the Street of a Hundred Taverns regard it as an open secret that the Holy Hammer of Sigmar provides a meeting place for all manner of cutthroats and assassins. If the dock watch are informed of this they will be dismissive. "Tell you what, sir, why don't you take your silly conspiracies to some other part of town where they won't upset the local proprietors?" The dock watch are very well bribed.

**Effect on Progress Tracker:** If the PCs spend more than ten rounds fighting or chasing cutthroats then move a tracking token of your choice up one space.

## DEATH TO THE PCs THREAD EPISODE FOUR — AT THE HOLY HAMMER OF SIGMAR

As mentioned earlier, some of the hostelrys on the Street of a Hundred Taverns cater to rather exclusive clientele, and the Holy Hammer of Sigmar is one of these. It is an underworld bar of a particular sort, as its staff and proprietor are apparently happy to overlook that amongst their customers are a number of hired killers and assassins. Unlike the other taverns along the street, the Holy Hammer of Sigmar has no public bar, rather it consists of a number of private rooms that seat no more than half a dozen people in comfort. The staff take their customers' orders and fetch food and drink from the kitchen. In the main the staff are exceedingly discreet, paid well to ignore the talk of poisons and contracts that they might overhear in the course of their duties.

In recent weeks a wing of the tavern has been hired by agents of the Conspiracy. They are not the only unsavoury characters at the tavern, but they comprise a larger group than the other guests at the tavern put together.

### FIGHTS IN THE HOLY HAMMER OF SIGMAR

The PCs may be somewhat intimidated by taking on a den of contract killers and hired thugs, but in fact they may find that violently confronting the denizens of the tavern is not as hard as it might seem.

Firstly the staff of the tavern are actually rather used to fights breaking out in their inn. Many times, rival gangs of assassins and cutthroats have fought one another, and gangs of armed vigilantes sometimes gatecrash the tavern looking to exact vengeance on one of the occupants. So outbreaks of violence are regarded as an occupational hazard.

The staff also keep out of these fights themselves. They have to tread a careful line of not being seen to favour one gang of violent thugs to another, and also not being seen to thwart the efforts of contract killers, even when taking on one of their own. As such, all the various gangs and assassins who use the inn do so in the knowledge that if trouble finds them in the Holy Hammer of Sigmar, it

is up to them to look after themselves. Usually the tight bonds of mutual distrust between assassins means that an uneasy peace reigns despite the violent lifestyles of the tavern's clientele.

The one thing that might well motivate the staff and the other guests at the tavern to join in a fight on behalf of a group staying at the tavern is if those attacking identify themselves as authority figures. The sort of people who stay at the tavern have a long list of grievances against watchmen, Witch Hunters, priests of Verena and Sigmar, and so on. The staff and clientele are also deeply resentful of the followers of Ranald, whose strictures against murder do not sit well with these rogues.

Clever PCs may even consider that, if the tavern is a hotbed of hired killers as people say, some of the guests might be willing to help the PCs take on the Black Cowl's lieutenant and his henchmen for money. Exactly who is available for hiring, how much they cost and how easy it is to procure their services is left up to the GM. A typical idea of the sort of folk who use the tavern might break down as:

**12 Ruffians:** Two gangs of lowlife scum who are willing to act as leg-breakers for a budget price. Each gang numbers six men – they are either hired as a group or not at all. They will be willing to back the PCs up in a fight for the price of 20 shillings each (more than their usual rate, but anyone coming in to the Holy Hammer to hire killers for a job RIGHT NOW must be desperate). Use the Cutthroat NPC profile. The ruffians are armed with hand weapons.

**4 Duellists:** A small gang of Tileans dressed in black cloaks and wearing long rapiers and conspicuous bandoliers of daggers. The duellists can be hired for a price of 40 shillings. Use the Soldier NPC profile, but each Duellist has Weapon Skill trained.



## CONTENTS OF THE TAVERN'S CELLAR

Twenty-five kegs of Pilsach Peculiar were delivered to the Holy Hammer of Sigmar according to the delivery schedule the PCs might have obtained from Four Seasons. If the PCs enter the cellar of the tavern, they will be able to find nineteen barrels of the stuff left.

Two barrels of the ale have been consumed by guests at the tavern. The four other barrels unaccounted for were filled with gunpowder. These have been taken by agents of the Conspiracy and will be employed at the muster at the Holy Temple of Sigmar.

If the PCs ask members of the tavern staff what became of the barrels they will admit that they helped load the barrels onto a flatbed cart that arrived at the tavern in the morning. They don't know where the cart was bound, but they do know that the person who ordered the cart is the occupant of room 23.

There is a trapdoor in the cellar which opens out into the sewers. The PCs may assume that there is something sinister about this, and there is, but it doesn't have anything directly to do with the plot of the adventure. As mentioned earlier, the staff of the Holy Hammer of Sigmar take a stance of looking the other way when fights occur on their premises. As a result they sometimes have to dispose of bodies. They have an understanding with a local group of grave robbers who use this trapdoor to smuggle corpses out of the tavern without raising the alarm.

## ENTERING THE HOLY HAMMER OF SIGMAR

If the PCs make their way to the tavern and start asking awkward questions about there being someone they know in residence, or claiming that the tavern is home to someone who has been organising attacks on them, they will arouse the attention of the Black Cowl's lieutenant and his or her minions. The lieutenant is based on the first floor of the tavern and the PCs will have to climb a set of stairs in order to confront him or her. The henchmen in the employ of the Black Cowl's lieutenant will spot the PCs on the stairs and try to attack them there.

Linhart and his thugs (Herman, Jorg, and Wolfgang - cutthroats armed with swords and, in the case of Herman and Jorg, crossbows) will also be loitering in the room below the lieutenant's stairs, unless they're otherwise engaged or have already been dealt with.

The identity of the Black Cowl's lieutenant, the sort of minions he or she will command, and the sort of tactics they employ depends on the identity of the Black Cowl.

## ARTA SCHAFFER AS LIEUTENANT

If Captain Baerfaust is the Black Cowl, the lieutenant is Arta Schaffer, who the PCs may remember briefly meeting at the menagerie party in Book One. Arta is an elite soldier from the army of Averheim and a loyal companion to Captain Baerfaust. She is armed with a double-handed sword, a pistol and a suit of full plate armour. She has dark hair and a distinctive scar on one cheek. Schaffer splits her time between attending to Captain Baerfaust on the Kaiserplatz and overseeing business on the Street of a Hundred Taverns.

The minions under Arta's command are six soldiers (use the Soldier NPC profile) armed with hand weapons, shields and wearing chain mail armour. Two of the soldiers are elite Greatswords like Schaffer - they wear full plate armour, have a Strength of 4, and wield greatswords.

Arta's tactical preferences are simple and head on. She will discharge her pistol at the nearest PC, and then she and her men will seek to engage the PCs in close combat and fight recklessly but bravely. Arta and her men are devoted to the idea of a no-nonsense military man gaining a position of influence within the Empire. They see Baerfaust as an antidote to stuffy and out of touch aristocrats, agenda-driven priests and doddering academic authorities. This ideological hope, whilst misguided, has effectively rendered them fanatically loyal to his cause, to the extent of laying down their own lives if need be.

## CURD WEISS AS LIEUTENANT

If Graf von Kauffman is the Black Cowl, the lieutenant will be Curd Weiss.

The minions under Curd's command will be five bodyguards from the von Kauffman household. They use the profile of Soldier NPCs and are armed with hand weapons and pistols.

Curd's tactics will be to keep the PCs at a distance. His bodyguards are well trained in providing cover for one another to reload and fire. If the PCs make headway, Curd will change tack, offering them great wealth if they will only lay down their arms and quietly return to Averheim. If the PCs continue to press their attack then Curd and his men will fight to the death.

## KATRINA MAUER AS LIEUTENANT

If Luminary Mauer is the Black Cowl, the lieutenant will be his sister Katrina. Katrina is an accomplished witch, about ten years older than her brother with stringy brown hair and the sweet, unassuming face and dress of a village matron.

The minions under Katrina's command include a daemonic familiar (use the characteristics and abilities of an imp) and five cutthroats with hand weapons (using the Cutthroat NPC profile). Their tactics will be to delay the PCs whilst Katrina attacks them with magic.

## THE LIEUTENANT'S ROOM

If the PCs search the rooms used by the gang, they will not find much of worth. Looting bodies and searching clothes could net the party a large collection of small change (each member of the gang carries the equivalent of 6 schillings). Within the room used by the Black Cowl's lieutenant, there is also a bill from Adolphus Junk, a local bronzesmith, for 30 shillings. The bill reads "Rpr 1 lg bronze bell; cstm engr."

**A Note:** If the PCs have not gone to see Filipi at Anselmo's by this point, the Black Cowl will have sent a note to his lieutenant about the issue. If this is the case the note can be found at the scene:

Our plans with the playhouse have hit a snag. Get done with the snoops and then go and speak to Filipi, the Tilean in charge of the troupe. Apparently he needs 'something' looked into before reopening the show. Do whatever it takes and damn the cost. Clothilde must attend her premiere!

Once the fireworks are over meet me at the Holy Temple.

## CLUES TO THE IDENTITY OF BLACK COWL

By now the PCs should have sufficient clues as to the identity of Black Cowl and be highly motivated to prevent him from wreaking havoc at the Holy Temple of Sigmar. However, if they are still struggling to realise who he might be, some loose ends can be examined at this juncture in order to discover his true identity.

**Interrogating the Lieutenant and Cutthroats:** Any members of the Conspiracy located in the Holy Hammer of Sigmar will know the identity of Black Cowl. If they are interrogated, they will give up such information if the a PC passes a **Daunting (4d) Intimidate (St) check**. If the lieutenant has been killed, add  to any such test.

**A Mislaid Item:** As well as the note, Black Cowl has left another clue or two in his lieutenant's room.

- ✦ **Luminary Mauer:** The lead-lined box in which the bell clapper was stored (currently empty), and/or a leatherbound tome with the sigil of the Light College emblazoned on its cover.
- ✦ **Captain Baerfaust:** A sash on which are pinned a series of decorations and badges, honours earned in a long and distinguished military career. A few of the more recognisable badges indicate the bearer is a Veteran of Third Black Fire, has a Ten Years Service with Averland seal – in essence the decorations are a history of Marcus Baerfaust's military career. (Or a small portrait painted on a piece of wood of a proud young soldier; the portrait is labeled "Karl Baerfaust; To Morr's House in Sigmar's Name.")
- ✦ **Graf Friedrich:** A rough carving of a snarling head in wood and hair, which the PCs may remember as being an artefact from von Kaufman's Southlands expedition. Von Kaufman's distinctive gold medallion with his house crest emblazoned upon it may also be resting on a nearby desk.

## ADOLPHUS JUNK

If the PCs decide to look for the bronzesmith whose bill they found in the Holy Hammer of Sigmar, they will be able to find his shop on Luitpoldstrasse, not far from the watch barracks. Junk proves to be a grey haired man with fading vision who wears inadequate spectacles. Adolphus will be able to confirm that a couple of people came to him earlier with a broken bell and that he was able to fix it. Asked for their description, Adolphus will give that of the Black Cowl and his lieutenant. If asked about the bell he waxes poetic over the piece's great beauty, saying that it was engraved with icons of Sigmar and was a work of great artistry. He can also describe the custom engraving he did on the interior of the bell, which he says was a series of "queer words, like, only they wasn't words in any language I know, and strange symbols besides." Junk is disappointed he never got to hear his repaired bell ring, as it did not include a bell clapper.

**Effect on Progress Tracker:** Move both markers up one space if any number of 3 are rolled whilst tackling the Conspiracy agents in the Holy Hammer of Sigmar, or if the PCs make a side trip to speak with Adolphus Junk.

## SOME OPTIONAL ENCOUNTERS

Some optional encounters are given in order to deal with the PCs investigating into the remnants of the Red Crown and other incidental episodes that occur on the Street of a Hundred Taverns.

### THE CROW KILLER

Johan is very well placed amongst the heads of traitors. He is hidden in plain view and can keep a watch over the comings and goings on the street. There is one problem though, every now and again a carrion bird mistakes him for a decapitated head and tries to eat his eyes. Johan's only recourse is to slay the bird with his mutated tongue. It's a risk to his cover, but he prefers that to blindness.

Keep a track of the PCs as they move up and down the street. Every time they pass Johan's position, his need to protect himself from birds might give him away.

- ✦ **First time:** Nothing.
- ✦ **Second time:** A dead crow can be spotted on the ground near the heads by a PC passing a **Daunting (4d) Observation (Int) check**.
- ✦ **Third time:** Two dead crows can be seen by a PC passing a **Hard (2d) Observation (Int) check**.
- ✦ **Fourth time:** A rook hovers near Johan as the PCs approach the heads. He whips it with his tongue and it falls from the sky, landing in front of one of the PCs. If the PCs say they are making a study of the heads as a result of this, they might spot Johan withdrawing his tongue on a **Hard (3d) Observation (Int) check**.

The PCs could climb up to get Johan if they fetch a ladder. On the other hand, they could tear the pike down to reach him. He will fight to the death rather than reveal the identities of his associates. As an obvious mutant, he has nothing to lose. Unfortunately for Johan, his shrivelled useless body means he can barely move at all, so escape is not an option.

If the PCs decide to stake Johan out, sooner or later Klaus Ekhoof will arrive to gather the latest intelligence. If the PCs attack Klaus they will rouse the rest of the Red Crown, who will run from the Drunken Dwarf to help their comrades. Alternatively the PCs might trace the cultists back to their hiding place in the Drunken Dwarf and attack them there.

If the PCs confront the cultists, Bertolt will attempt to bargain with them. He'll reveal that he is the unknown hand responsible for writing them helpful notes, and encourage them to continue their investigations into the Black Cowl. If the PCs accuse Bertolt and company of being Chaos cultists, they will share an uneasy glance, then attack. The cultists will fight to escape, knowing that they will face certain death should the authorities catch them.

**Effect on Progress Tracker:** Move the markers for the two tracked threads up a space if the PCs spend more than half an hour staking out the heads or fighting the cultists.

### THE GAMBLER

The annual dicing league is in full swing. Gamblers representing each of the taverns on the street are in hot competition, and dice players from all over the Empire have come to the street to join in the fun.

The league games take place in the evening, but during the day dozens of gamblers will be looking for people to play against in order to hone their skills and earn a little cash.



If at any point the PCs take a break to discuss the events on the street over a pint of ale in one of the taverns, they are likely to be accosted by a gambler looking to take them on in a game of a chance. Most of the gamblers on the Street play for brass or silver, but a few are willing to risk gold.

### CHEATER'S BONES

Made popular by infamous scalawag Markus Warren in Nuln, Cheater's Bones is currently the favoured dicing game amongst the Street of a Hundred Taverns' gamblers. It is popular because it is normally played in groups and its complex rules allow for alliances to be made and broken at the table. It requires a collection of multi-faceted dice carved with symbols (usually religious symbols of the Empire) in different arrangements. The version of Cheater's Bones described here uses the *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay* mechanics and rewards characters with a high Guile skill; the actual game is much more complicated and is almost always played as a drinking game.

Cheater's Bones is normally played in a group of 4 to 6 players. Each player "buys in" to the game for a sum of coins that has been pre-arranged before hand. This sum of coins is always an even number, and is usually 4 brass pennies, 6 silver shillings, or 4 gold crowns, depending on the tier of the players.

Once the players have bought in, they each assemble a dice pool for a competitive **Guile (Fel) check** performed in the neutral stance. (Players may spend fortune points or Cunning, but only one point per round.)

After initial dice pools have been assembled, the players (beginning with the "dealer" and proceeding clockwise around the table) may each buy additional dice by adding coins to the pot. They may spend a number of coins equal to the initial buy-in, but no more. The costs and dice types are summarised here.

- + ◻ cost equal to the buy-in
- + ◻ cost equal to half the buy-in
- + ◆ cost equal to the buy-in
- + ■ cost equal to half the buy-in

These dice may be added to any player's pool, not just the player buying the dice. Many players operate in gangs, collectively throwing bad dice at a single rival to force him out of the game.

Once all players have had a chance to buy dice (or pass, called "riding"), all players roll their dice pools. Results are as follows:

- ♣ The player is still in and may continue to the next round.
- ♣♣ The player gains ◻ to his dice pool for the next round.
- ♣♣♣ Counts as a ♣ and the player gains ◻ to his dice pool for the next round.
- ✕ If the player fails, he has been eliminated and his money is all lost.
- ♣♣♣♣ The player adds ■ to his dice pool for the next round.
- ♣♣♣♣♣ Counts as a ✕ and the player adds ■ to his dice pool for the next round.

Each player whose check is failed is eliminated and must step away from the table, forfeiting all the money he has spent thus far. Each player whose check is a success may continue: beginning with the dealer each player elects to continue (paying the buy-in again) or to concede. A player who concedes claims money equal to half the buy-in and then steps away. If only one player elects to continue or only one player succeeded at the check, he wins all the money remaining in the pot. If no players succeeded at the check, it is called a "push" and all players may buy-in for another round or concede.

At the beginning of the second and each subsequent round, each player reassembles his dice pool again and may adjust his stance one step in either direction. Dice added to the dice pool during the purchase step of previous round are not preserved. Additionally, ◆ is added to each dice pool. This is cumulative, so in the third round each player will roll at least ◆◆, in the fourth round ◆◆◆ and so on.

Once dice pools are assembled, the player to the left of the previous dealer becomes the new dealer and a new round of dice purchasing ensues, followed by a new roll of the dice, and so on. Play proceeds in this way until only one player remains.

**Cheating:** Players may cheat by making a **Skulduggery (Ag) check vs. the highest enemy Observation (Int)**. If they are successful, they may reroll any one die in their own pool. If they fail, they do not find a chance to cheat. If they roll ✕ they are accused of cheating and ejected from the game, forfeiting all their money.

**Effect on Progress Tracker:** Move both markers up one space if the PCs decide to play more than three games of dice with gamblers.

## LUMINARY MAUER

This is an optional encounter that is to be used only if Luminary Mauer is not the Black Cowl and if the PCs delivered the clapper to him.

The best way to introduce Luminary Mauer into the chapter is to interject him between two other encounters. He should not intervene in the PCs' search of the theatre or in their efforts to confront the agents of the Conspiracy in the Holy Hammer of Sigmar. However, if the PCs are sore pressed in a fight with dockers or assassins in the street, the GM may think it apt to have Luminary Mauer find them there and help them see off their assailants.

Luminary Mauer looks anxious and tired. He asks the PCs to join him in the Crown and Two Chairmen for a couple of minutes. Once ensconced in a private snug in the tavern, he takes a minute to compose himself.

I, ah, don't suppose word has reached you about the clapper has it?

If the PCs say no he sighs and continues.

This is really stupid of me. Yes, wizards can be stupid too, you know. It didn't cross my mind that the Kaiserplatz was a place you had to keep your belongings under lock and key. I spent some time yesterday examining the bell clapper after you delivered it to me – still hopeful by the way – and then left to check on the Emperor and visit with other members of my order. I left the clapper in its box on the table. When I returned, the clapper had gone. Yes, I thought you'd probably see that bit coming. Stupid of me, as I said.

I have no strong notions as to the reasons anyone would want it. As a result of your work in Middenheim, the clapper's magical qualities seem much diminished, but still somewhat suspect. It is not a desirable item as far as I can tell. All I can ask you to do is keep your ears to the ground and inform me of anything you might hear, rumours of malefic magic, or stolen goods, or ratmen. Just let me know as soon as you possibly can.

Now I really must get back. I'll be interrogating the hostel staff and asking at the local watch house. Not that I imagine anyone will be able to get anything done during the preparations for the service at the Holy Temple. Perhaps we can reconvene after that and come up with further plans.

Luminary Mauer will linger with the PCs long enough to answer a few questions. Such as:

### CAN'T YOU FIND THE CLAPPER WITH MAGIC?

I used my magic immediately upon discovering the theft. It detected the box, sitting empty on my desk five feet from me. I'm afraid I never thought to place a tracking ward on the clapper itself.

### HOW DID THE THIEF GET THE BOX OPEN?

Well, the two likely probabilities are that the thief is a wizard, or that I forgot to lock the box. I'm afraid the latter is rather more likely than the former. I really can't emphasise enough how embarrassing this whole ordeal is.



## BIGOTRY

Tensions are high in Altdorf at the moment. The Emperor is unwell, the army has been mauled, and the city is swollen with refugees. As tempers fray some of the inhabitants of the Street of a Hundred Taverns may well subject vulnerable targets to verbal abuse, particularly after a few ales.

- ✦ As the PCs pass the alleyway leading to the Crescent Moon, they see a gang of urchins haranguing a pair of strigany who are making their way to the inn. The urchins call them all manner of names, and one of them even stoops to scoop up a handful of roadside muck to throw at the pair.
- ✦ As the PCs pass a poor boarding house they see a landlord and his bouncers roughly ejecting a family of farmers. "The Chaos beasts are all gone now!" He shouts, "So get back to your farm and leave us in peace! There's decent folk able to raise a prompt rent in need of these rooms!"
- ✦ A PC such as an elf, wizard or academic draws unwelcome attention from a group of drunken dockers. "Hoi woodling! Woodling! I happen to like your lot much less than the dwarfs. What you got to say to that, eh?" "Hey you with the beard, show us a trick or we'll call the Witch Hunters!" "Oi inky! Give my love to your sister!" That sort of boorish thing.

**Effect on Progress Tracker:** None.

## COULD IT BE THE SKAVEN?

I suppose, but I don't see how or why – especially in light of your encounter with them on the road south.

## COULD IT BE THE BLACK COWL?

The Averheim crime lord? For what conceivable purpose? I suppose it doesn't matter – he's a villain and if he has it we want it back.

## WHAT IF THE BELL CLAPPER WERE PUT IN THE BELLS AT THE HOLY TEMPLE?

Ah, hmm. Well. I'd be inclined to say "nothing would happen," but that's...presuming the ritual in Middenheim worked. If it didn't, if it only, say, masked the warpstone's taint...and if the bell were perhaps itself enchanted with dark magiks...it could be very bad indeed. Hypothetically. Do you have some reason to suspect that might happen?

## NO CLAPPER?

If the PCs lost or got rid of the clapper then it can't have been stolen from the wizard's office. However, the Luminary had made extensive notes on the clapper's construction and these will have been taken in place of the item itself. If this is the case the Luminary will still track down the PCs and give them the relevant information. If he argued with the PCs about their losing the clapper the day before, he offers an apology along the lines of, "You were obviously right to have qualms about this artefact after all."

**Effect on Progress Tracker:** None, unless the PCs spend an unusually long time conversing with Luminary Mauer.

## PATRIOTIC HAWKER

The PCs approach a woman bearing a tray that is filled with tiny tin medallions, each decorated with a design of a heart framed by dove's wings. As the PCs pass the woman loudly and shrilly yells: "Bring Shallya's beneficent protection back to the holy land of Sigmar! Her sacred symbol is here inscribed on these finely crafted medallions, available today for the bargain price of three shillings! Those with the wisdom of Verena are sure to want one. Those with the valour of Ulric are sure to want two! Together we can help save our brave Emperor and restore glory and honour to our great nation!"

If the PCs purchase a medallion, the woman will curtsy and mutter a quick "Shallya keep and bless you!" before resuming her sales pitch to other passers-by.

If the PCs ignore her, she aims a stream of invective at their backs: "Just think if all citizens were as ignorant and cowardly as you we'd be overrun by goatmen and snotlings within a month! Morr take all of you, you blackguards, turncoats and cowards!"

**Effect on Progress Tracker:** None.

## SOME ADVICE ON RUNNING THIS SECTION

As can be plainly seen there is a lot that goes on in Part Two of this chapter and it can be quite confusing keeping track of it all. Squeezing all the events into one day on the Street of a Hundred Taverns is nigh on impossible, and that's the way it's meant to be. However, if GMs are feeling a little lost as to how to organise this section, here are some ideas and a little discussion about what Part Two is trying to achieve:

- ✦ The only thread that needs to be seen through from start to finish in order to keep the plot moving forward is the one dealing with the Conspiracy's attempt to assassinate the PCs. If the PCs are getting too involved in the other aspects of the chapter to put this thread into effect, the GM should fix it so that the other lines of enquiry come to a close and events from the thread start to impose themselves.
- ✦ Be ruthless – only the most efficient investigators should be able to solve both the Black Powder Plot and Kidnapped Elf threads. If the PCs do not follow clues, remember details, pass tests or chase leads, the GM should be quite willing to bring events to tragic conclusions. Failing to prevent a disaster at this stage will juxtapose nicely with Part Three, in which the PCs can redeem themselves by preventing a much greater catastrophe. Furthermore, if the Conspiracy is successful in eliminating Clothilde, the PCs are likely to feel a personal stake in locating and destroying the Black Cowl.
- ✦ Push the thread that the PCs take the first steps towards solving. If they initially go after Frederick, don't worry about forcing the Black Powder Plot on them. If they go after the gunpowder, or look into matters at the theatre, don't worry too much about reminding them about Frederick and the elf.
- ✦ If the PCs really are stuck and in need of extra prompts, use the Cult of the Red Crown. Provided the Red Crown cultists are still at large, they can continue to pass messages to the PCs, either through notes or by giving a message to an urchin. Of course, if the PCs track the cultists down and kill them, they will lose their informants.
- ✦ This section is avowedly farcical. Keep the pace quick and deal with most encounters with a light touch. Humorous scenes such as chases, or dealing with messengers with poor memories, or fighting a giant spider in a sack, should be pushed to the fore. Genuinely sad scenes such as discovering a murdered actor, or realising that an explosion has killed Clothilde von Alptraum, can add a bit of tragedy to the proceedings.
- ✦ Didn't get to use a bit you were looking forward to using? PCs didn't investigate the theatre, nor chase Frederick? Shame, but save such bits up and use them as a basis of a future scenario.
- ✦ Alternatively, if you just want to ignore this advice and have the PCs go through each of the encounters in Part Two, then an option would be to stretch the timeframe out to a couple of days and arrange the events on a less hectic schedule. Provided that the PCs only find out clues linking the Black Cowl to the event at the Holy Temple with little time to spare before the ceremony begins, this chapter could be played out over two or three days.
- ✦ Keep the PCs busy with figuring out the various things going on in this section until late in the evening. They should not have much time left in between resolving Part Two and having to make their way to the Holy Temple of Sigmar in time for the midnight muster.

## SUMMARY OF THREADS AND EPISODES IN PART TWO

Seeing as there are a lot of different episodes and potentially confusing details in this section, a table is provided on the next page to help summarise their most important aspects and help GMs keep track of which ones they have addressed.

EPISODE NUMBER	EPISODE NAME	SUMMARY OF MAIN POINTS	PAGE
<b>Thread One – The Kidnapped Elf</b>			
One	A Letter for the PCs	PCs receive a note from the Red Crown alerting them to Frederick Grosz's presence in Altdorf	130
Two	Enquiring at the Black Bat	Follow up to lead given in note – PCs may be able to discover more about Frederick if they make careful enquiries.	130
Three	Enquiring at the Fish Docks	If clues linking Frederick to the Fish gang are investigated they may lead to enquiries here, where further information can be uncovered.	130
Four	Frederick Spotted, A Chase	The PCs catch sight of Frederick, either as a result of the Progress Tracker or their own enquiries, and a chase ensues. Intended as some light relief. Notes on questioning Frederick are given.	131
Five	Departure of the Restless Spirit	The consequences of failing to solve the thread are given.	132
Six	Rescuing Eothlir	What happens if the PCs get to the bottom of Frederick's plan and try to save the elf?	133
<b>Thread Two – The Black Powder Plot</b>			
One	Talking to Four Seasons	Dealing with the PCs if they follow a lead regarding a mix up of ale deliveries and apparently smuggled gunpowder.	135
Two – Ten	Miraculous Mummies of Miragliano	A sequence of episodes that deal with a missing giant spider in Temple of Drama theatre, and what the PCs might come across if they accept the job of finding it.	135-139
Eleven	The Rivals	If the PCs do not accept the job, hired thugs contracted by agents of the Conspiracy will attempt to solve the issue. This episode deals with such an eventuality.	139
Twelve	Reopening	Once the problems with the spider are resolved, the theatre will reopen.	139
Thirteen	Bang	If the PCs have not discovered the gunpowder hidden in the theatre by the time of the debut performance of Cobweb Castle, the consequences will be dire.	140
<b>Thread Three – Death to the PCs</b>			
One	The Watcher	A mysterious individual is spotted keeping a close eye on the PCs	140
Two	A Message	Once more the Red Crown attempt to fill the PCs in on some pertinent information, via an urchin girl with a rather poor memory.	141
Three	The Assassins	The PCs are waylaid by violent cutthroats hired by agents of the Conspiracy.	141
Four	At the Holy Hammer of Sigmar	A variety of leads clue the PCs into the fact that the lieutenant of the Black Cowl is based in the Holy Hammer of Sigmar tavern.	142
<b>Optional Encounters</b>			
NA	The Crow Killer	A discussion of the clues which might lead the PCs to the remaining members of the Red Crown if they are found and followed.	144
NA	The Gambler	Lots of people are about to take part in the Street of a Hundred Taverns dicing league. Quick gambling rules included.	144
NA	Bigotry	Some brief encounters with unpleasant locals.	146
NA	Luminary Mauer	The Luminary will want to pass on a message if he is not the Black Cowl.	146
NA	Patriotic Hawker	A seller of charms is less than charming.	147

# PART THREE — CHAOS AT THE HOLY TEMPLE

This section concerns the grand service at the Holy Temple of Sigmar and the unveiling of the Black Cowl's most sinister plot yet: corrupting, mutating, or killing many of the great and good of the Empire by means of a tainted bell rung during the service.

## THE INTRICACIES OF THE BELL-CLAPPER PLOT

The Black Cowl initially devised the bell-clapper plot as a means to discredit the Cult of Sigmar in Averland, weakening their influence over the selection of an Elector and increasing the Conspiracy's chances of naming the next Elector of Averland. He hired the skaven triad in Averheim to steal the warpstone effigy from the Southlands expedition collection and construct a bell-clapper while other agents of the Conspiracy embedded in the Red Crown devised a system of dark sigils to inscribe upon the bell itself.

When Karl Franz was injured in the north, the Black Cowl decided to repurpose his bell-clapper plot to a far grander design. The bell of the Holy Temple of Sigmar had been out of commission for months; it is a perfect opportunity. Flush with his newfound fame and influence, as well as money redirected from the Averheim criminal element, the Black Cowl arranged to pay for the repairs of the Holy Temple's bell, a request eagerly granted by the Cult of Sigmar, who had been flummoxed by their inability to get funding to repair the bell. (The Conspiracy had been using its agents to frustrate these attempts.)

Once the bell was surrendered to the Black Cowl he brought it to Adolphous Junk, a bronzesmith on Luitpoldstrasse with the right amount of gullibility to perform the alterations the Black Cowl required. Junk's poor vision meant that he never questioned the writing and sigils the Cowl had him inscribe on the interior of the bell – dark words of power in service to Tzeentch, the Lord of Change.

Meanwhile, the Conspiracy's agents worked on securing the bell clapper. If Luminary Mauer is the Black Cowl, obviously acquiring the clapper was simplicity itself. Otherwise, the Conspiracy arranged for Mauer to be installed in the Laurel's Rest hostel near the Kaiserplatz, where they had leverage over mostly reformed halfling thief Lily Foote (in the form of a warrant for her arrest currently being suppressed by the Conspiracy). Lily stole the bell clapper and handed it off to a Conspiracy courier, who ultimately delivered it to the Black Cowl.

Once Junk had finished the bell, agents of the Conspiracy took it from his shop and transferred it to a secure location where the bell clapper was affixed. Then, the Conspiracy delivered it to the Holy Temple with just enough time to get the bell installed in the belfry, but not quite enough for a high-ranking or dutiful priest to examine it in great detail. Not that a bell delivered by a hero of the Empire and his associates would require any scrutiny!

No one, least of all the Black Cowl, knows precisely what will happen when the bell is rung. Between the dark words of power and the warpstone-tainted bell clapper, they presume that ringing the bell will wreak some sort of malevolent horror on the crowd in the Holy Temple, perhaps mutating, corrupting, or killing those within. If one or more of the Electors who will surely be present is

killed or mutated, so much the better. Even if not, however, such a shocking event deep in the heart of the Empire's strength and power will weaken the Emperor and the Cult of Sigmar politically and foster the Conspiracy's long-term goal of greater provincial independence.

## THE BLACK COWL'S GOALS

The Black Cowl has, by this point, fallen into the thrall of Tzeentch. By creating the bell and ruminating often on the words of power inscribed thereon, he has – knowingly or not – committed his soul to the Ruinous Powers and no longer fully understands his own motivations. Whatever they once were, the Black Cowl now wishes to see the Empire fall to pieces, and doesn't much care whether or not he survives the aftermath. His goal is to ensure the bell keeps ringing.

Just before the service begins, the Black Cowl excuses himself and steps into the belltower. He opens a side door and silently murders the knight standing guard there, then ushers a number of strong, fanatical followers into the tower with him. As the bell begins to ring, they climb up to the top of the tower to ensure it keeps ringing, cutting down any priests or laity they come across on the way. Eventually, even the Black Cowl's followers and the Black Cowl himself will be destroyed by the bell... a small price to pay for the destruction it will cause.

In addition to this mayhem, as the bell begins to ring a cart of "Pilsach Peculiar" is wheeled into place before the Holy Temple's doors. In fact the cart is full of barrels of black powder, which are then detonated, collapsing part of the Holy Temple and trapping the congregants inside.

## A WHO'S WHO OF ALTDORF

As the saying goes, "anyone who's anyone" will be attending the prayer service for the Emperor at the Holy Temple. Those important enough to warrant an invitation will be permitted inside the Holy Temple itself, but there will also be throngs of commoners and burghers filling the streets and squares nearby.

The following list of attendees is not exhaustive, but should cover the faces the PCs are most likely to interact with over the course of the ceremony.

**Cornelius Ayrenhoff – Sigmarite Firebrand Zealot:** A man with a slim build apart from a somewhat pendulous belly. Cornelius is wild-eyed and his ginger hair is patchy, sticking out from his ravaged head at all angles. Cornelius has mortified himself, scratching a number of long but shallow gouges in his flesh. Around his neck is a spiked collar, and in his left hand he swings a large hand bell. A long chain is wrapped around Cornelius' body. Nine small wooden boxes are hung from the chain; each one has a devotional prayer pinned to its lid.

Cornelius stands apart from the other zealots in the congregation. He rocks back and forth and whispers to himself. If any of the PCs try to talk to him, he seems to look right through them. He mutters devotions and genuflects but says nothing particularly intelligible. If one of the PCs listens to his babble, they will discern that he is making constant references to "my god" and "holy master" and other such non-denominational devotions. He never actually mentions the word "Sigmar" once. If a PC makes any note of this, he should be allowed an **Average (2d) Intuition (Int) check**. If passed, the GM should confirm the PCs suspicion that Cornelius never utters

the cult. Whilst there are many members of the Shallyan cult in Altdorf, only a couple of the goddesses' priests and priestesses have attended the muster at the Holy Temple. The others either attend to their duties in the local temple-hospice or continue to work their miracles for the wounded Emperor.

Gertrude has no real effect on the plot, though it might be helpful for the PCs to meet a priestess of Shallya at this juncture, perhaps to heal some wounds they may be suffering. She will be willing to conduct a blessing or two before dramatic events in the Holy Temple begin to unfold. Gertrude uses the characteristics of a Priest NPC and has access to the Calming Touch and Cure Wounds actions.

**Preceptor Joachim Brecht:** A preceptor of the inner circle of the Knights Griffon, Brecht moves through the crowd only half listening to whomever he is speaking to at any given moment. Preceptor Joachim is the highest ranking Knight Griffon in attendance at the temple tonight and is attempting to ensure that security for the event is well in hand. Brecht wears blue-steel full plate armour with a griffon pelt slung over one shoulder. The feathers in his helm are black and yellow, acknowledging the foundation of his order in Nuln two centuries ago. Brecht has a neatly trimmed brown beard and moustache and a blocky, unhandsome face. There are two dozen other Knights Griffon in attendance. All of them (including Preceptor Joachim) use Soldier characteristics with a Strength of 4, full plate armour, and swords. Preceptor Joachim has Weapon Skill and Leadership trained.

**Graf Friedrich von Kaufman**

**Captain Marcus Baerfaust** and a half-dozen Averheim Greatswords.

**Luminary Konrad Mauer**

**Supreme Patriarch Balthazar Gelt:** As the head of the Gold College and the overall high authority over all wizards in the Empire, Balthazar Gelt is one of the most powerful human beings alive. He wears robes of shimmering gold and a resplendent golden mask that hides his face. It is rumoured that Gelt's face was somehow injured in an accident in his laboratory as a younger wizard. The mask makes him appear utterly dispassionate and totally calm; his voice and manner only contribute to the effect.

**Grand Theonist Volkmar the Grim:** Volkmar the Grim is the head of the Cult of Sigmar and the most powerful religious authority in the Empire. He is a pious and foreboding man who is utterly devoted to the destruction of Chaos in all its forms. He sports an impressive white mustache and wears a large gleaming talisman of glowing jade in the shape of a griffon, one of the symbols of his office. As Grand Theonist, Volkmar is also an Elector.

**Countess Emmanuelle von Liebwitz – the Elector of**

**Wissenland:** The most eligible bachelorette in the Empire, Countess Emmanuelle is a famously beautiful woman of uncertain age. She holds court in Nuln, and has made a trip to Altdorf specifically to show her support for the Emperor (and perhaps to take advantage of the political opportunities his illness offers). Countess Emmanuelle is stylish in a gown of black satin with a collar of cloth-of-gold. Golden scales, representing both her personal coat of arms and the goddess Verena, hang from her belt, along with the skulls of two honoured ancestors. She also wears a long, somewhat old-

the name Sigmar and seems to be going to some effort to avoid speaking it. Likewise, whilst there are many trappings of devotion and zealotry upon him, none of the sigils and symbols he bears are Sigmarite. They are just secular symbols of the Empire, such as the iron cross, heraldries of the provinces, or the initials of Emperor Karl Franz. If any PC mentions that they are looking to see if there is something odd about Cornelius (beyond the obvious), they will notice this discrepancy on a **Hard (3d) Observation check**.

In fact Cornelius Ayrenhoff is not a Sigmarite at all, or even a human. He is the Changeling, a servant of Tzeentch here to make sure that Black Cowl's plans go ahead in a manner pleasing to the Great Mutator. The Changeling will be quite happy to interact with the PCs unless one of them is a member of the Cult of Verena. If so he will politely excuse himself and make his way through the crowd in the direction of other zealots and flagellants. He is wary of Vereanean blessings that pierce illusions.

Should a character with Magical Sight examine Cornelius and pass a **Hard (3d) Magical Sight check**, they will notice swirling clouds of Dark Magic all around him and emanating from the boxes on his chain.

If the Changeling is somehow revealed prior to schedule, he will manifest in his more usual daemonic form and release the Horrors he holds in his boxes. This will confuse matters somewhat for the other followers of Chaos in the Holy Temple, and throw their plans awry. Refer to **All Hell Breaks Loose** on page 153, except the explosion in this case will happen on event space five and the bell will begin to ring on event space three.

**Gertrude Eysoldt – Priestess of Shallya:** A short and dumpy thirty year old with greying black hair tied back in a tight bun. Gertrude is a priestess of Shallya and dresses in the white robes of

fashioned sword in a lavishly decorated scabbard at her hip. This is her runefang, the dwarf-made sword that is the badge of office of every Elector Count.

**Arch Lector Kaslain:** The Arch Lector of Nuln is cut from much the same cloth as Volkmar the Grim. His Sigmarite regalia is made of blackened steel and he carries a black iron warhammer as a badge of office. He has come to Altdorf in the company of Countess Emmanuelle. Kaslain is also an Elector.

**Theodosius von Tuchtenhagen:** For once not accompanied by his fool and pet wizard, although he is attended by the long-suffering **Wanda Grunenwald**, who is becoming increasingly tired of his attentions. See page 49 for more information about Theodosius and Wanda.

**Diverse nobles of the Reikland**, possibly including members of the Aschaffenberg, von Bruner, von Jungfreud, von Saponathem, and von Walfen families.

**Anyone else** the GM deems fit to include.

## DASH TO THE TEMPLE

If everything is proceeding perfectly, then the PCs will have discovered the identity of the Black Cowl at the climax of *A Farce in the Fog*, leaving them barely enough time to rush across town and make it to the Holy Temple of Sigmar as the ceremony begins. There are two major ways this can go wrong.

## FIGURING IT OUT EARLY

If the PCs figure the whole plot out too early, they could make it to the temple in plenty of time to locate the cursed bell and remove it, or even convince someone to cancel the prayer service (not bloody likely unless the evidence they can provide is ironclad). Obviously that's not ideal either from the Black Cowl's perspective or for the adventure, so the Black Cowl will have to take steps to delay them. Here are some ideas:

- ✦ **Frame them for murder.** The first NPC the PCs go to for help when they figure it all out is found dead in his office/home/wherever the PCs go to find him. The city watch and/or Reiksguard arrive just as the PCs discover the body, meaning they're caught red-handed. The resultant arrest/escape, fight, or lengthy deliberations delay the PCs.
- ✦ **More assassins!** Another half-dozen thugs and/or Chaos cultists accost the PCs, causing a delay.
- ✦ **A friend in peril!** The Black Cowl places someone the PCs like (Gravin Clothilde, or one of the other principal NPCs) in grave peril and lets the PCs know about it. The PCs will have to make a side-trip to rescue their friend.
- ✦ **Adele again.** If Adele Ketzenblum is still alive, the Black Cowl may arrange for another meeting between her and the PCs. This may or may not involve violence, but could easily delay the PCs either way (especially if Adele shows up in the company of other Witch Hunters). Adele could even "arrest" the PCs and bring them to the temple!

## NOT GOING AT ALL

The PCs may decide not to go to the temple. Perhaps they haven't figured out that anything sinister is about to happen there, or they have and decided they'd rather be someplace safe! The first reason is relatively easily fixed. An NPC, such as Eothlir Vanadar, Clothilde von Alptraum, or Luminary Konrad Mauer, can talk the PCs through the clues they've gathered so far and help them reach the correct conclusions. In extreme cases perhaps a member of the Red Crown can discover the PCs and gloat about the whole situation, glorying in the delicious irony that his divine master will destroy the Black Cowl along with everyone else!

PCs who simply want nothing to do with the situation might need additional motivation. Placing someone the PCs like and value in the line of fire as a congregant at the Holy Temple may be sufficient. Offering a sizeable reward for their intervention may also be appropriate. If the carrot isn't working, however, the stick may also serve. Perhaps the PCs have wound up implicated in some of the Black Cowl's crimes and they'll need to bring the Black Cowl to justice to clear their names!

## CHAOS AT THE HOLY TEMPLE ACT ONE — THE CEREMONY

Once the PCs arrive at the temple, they'll have little difficulty getting inside. Baerfaust, Mauer, or von Kaufman has arranged for them to be on the guest list, and the knights standing guard at the main doors let them pass. Once inside, read or paraphrase the following aloud:

Once inside the main doors of the temple you are brought up short by what seems to be a wall of sound, and an even more impenetrable wall of human bodies. There must be a thousand people crammed into the Holy Temple – grim-faced warrior priests with warhammers tightly grasped in their fists; garrulous nobles bedecked with finery, jewels, and a simply astounding number of feathers; wizards from the Colleges of Magic; soldiers from the Reiksguard and Averheim. You can dimly make out the Grand Theogonist, Volkmar, at the altar, as he discusses something with a colleague. Not far from him you see a wizard in robes of gold, his face hidden behind a golden mask – that must be Balthazar Gelt, the Supreme Patriarch of the Colleges of Magic. But it's not all leading lights of the Empire. Not far from you stands an unwashed flagellant adorned with chains and High-ranking knights rub shoulders with wealthy merchants, filthy zealots shriek their prayers while nobles share their gossip, and over against one wall you would swear you saw someone wearing the personal arms of the Elector of Wissenland, Emmanuelle von Liebwitz.

Above you soars an impressive vaulted ceiling adorned with a painting of the apotheosis of Sigmar. Stained glass windows show important moments in Sigmar's life, and statues lining the walls depict mighty heroes of the Empire and the Cult of Sigmar. The temple appears to be laid out in the approximate shape of a warhammer or the letter "T," and at either end of the cross-bar, on the far side of the throng, you can see doorways that seem to lead to the two great towers of the Holy Temple.

It seems as if the Grand Theogonist is wrapping up his conversation. You probably have only a few minutes before the service begins.

## KILL 'EM ALL!

As written in this adventure, the principle important characters of the Empire – such as the Emperor, Supreme Patriarch Balthazar Gelt, and Elector Countess Emmanuelle von Liebwitz of Nuln – all survive, un-corrupted and un-mutated. In fact, the main reason Balthazar Gelt is at the grand temple is so that he can save plot-critical characters during the chaos. But that doesn't have to be true in every campaign of *The Enemy Within*. Depending on the GM's plans for the future of the campaign, the body count could be very high. Perhaps enough high-ranking worthies will die that the PCs will be required to step into their shoes! Emperor Friedrich von Kaufman, Count of Averland? A player character Emperor's Champion? A player character Supreme Patriarch of the Colleges of Magic, or Ar-Ulric of the Cult of Ulric?

In your campaign of *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay*, anything is possible!

What happens next depends on the PCs. Presumably they will try to find someone with the authority or expertise to shut down the ceremony. This will be extremely difficult, as the crowd is dense and it's hard to hear anyone in the hubbub. The first time the PCs try to locate anyone in particular in the temple, they should make a **Daunting (4d) Observation (Int) check**. (Clever PCs may attempt other skills, like Guile, Charm, or Intimidate to reflect navigating through the crowd. Let them!) Each subsequent attempt becomes one step easier, until eventually the PCs find who they're looking for (unless he's not present, of course).

Each time the PCs fail to find their target, they find one of the following people instead.

**First failure:** Cornelius Ayrenhoff, mumbling and chanting to himself. If the PCs attempt to speak to him or do anything but simply turn away and move on, he lurches towards the closest PC, grips him by the shoulders, and bellows "REPENT! The gods condemn us for our sins! A dark day; the darkest day!" He continues in this vein until the PCs manage to pry themselves free and move on. Inquiries as to who let Ayrenhoff in to the temple are met with blank stares. (No one can remember.)

**Second failure:** Gertrude Eysolt sweetly greets the PCs and offers to pray with them for Shallya's mercy upon the Emperor and themselves. If the PCs are visibly wounded, Gertrude may attempt to heal them. Gertrude also offers assistance finding who the PCs are looking for, pointing them in the right direction (worth  on the next check).

**Third failure:** Preceptor Joachim Brecht bumps into one of the PCs and excuses himself, scanning the crowd vigilantly. If the PCs think to explain the situation to Brecht and try to recruit his help, it will be a **Hard (3d) check** of whichever skill the GM deems appropriate. If Brecht is convinced, he moves to the edge of the hall to speak with one of his knights, then circles the room speaking to each knight in turn. One of the knights steps outside and speaks to the guards outside the temple. As a consequence of this forewarning, two members of the Knights Griffon will spot the cart of black powder and intercept it, preventing it from damaging the Holy

Temple and saving dozens of lives. (Tragically, the knights themselves will die in the explosion.) Furthermore, the knights will respond quickly and efficiently when the Changeling reveals himself, and two knights may accompany the PCs into the belltower if the PCs request it.

**Fourth failure:** The Grand Theogonist raises his hands for silence and everyone takes their seats. The ceremony begins.

## FINDING THE BLACK COWL

Although he is present as the crowd gathers, shortly before the ceremony begins (or in other words, immediately after the PCs arrive) the Black Cowl slips out to begin his nefarious plans. Asking around with others, all will agree that the Black Cowl "was here just a moment ago, I think I saw him over by the altar" or "did you check against the south wall? I thought I saw him there." It's important that the PCs not find the Black Cowl until the bell begins to ring for the scene to proceed as planned, so if the PCs are focusing their attentions exclusively on finding the Cowl, the GM should consider letting them find the evidence of his handiwork – the open door, the dead guard, a dead priest, sprinting after him and arriving just after the bell begins to ring. If the PCs do rush to find the Black Cowl, they should have to endure many fewer rounds of the bell ringing as a reward for their persistence.

Enlisting the aid of an NPC in the search for the Black Cowl will have similar results.

## FINDING SOMEONE ELSE

Presumably the character the PCs most wish to speak with is one of the three principal NPCs. (All of the following assume the character is not the Black Cowl.)

### CAPTAIN BAERFAUST

If the PCs find Captain Baerfaust and convince him of the danger, he immediately flags down Preceptor Joachim and spreads the words to the knights as noted above. He also sends a runner to the barracks to muster the Averheim Greatswords (although they will arrive too late).

If forewarned of the danger, Captain Baerfaust should be able to help the PCs in a significant way during the ensuing battle. Perhaps he challenges the Changeling in single combat, or kills several daemons himself, or even locates and removes Adele Ketzenblum.

### GRAF FRIEDRICH VON KAUFMAN

If the PCs find Graf Friedrich and convince him of the danger, the graf excuses himself and speaks briefly with a tall man in coal-black armour who turns out to be Countess Emmanuelle's bodyguard. Quickly and efficiently, Graf Friedrich evacuates several high-value targets while remaining behind himself to oversee things. He thanks the PCs for bringing the matter to his attention and is able to tell them exactly when and where the Black Cowl was last seen... slipping out a side door towards the bell tower.

### LUMINARY MAUER

If the PCs find Luminary Mauer and convince him of the danger, he takes immediate steps to magically fortify the congregants against the bell, tearing a hymnal into strips and burning the sacred words in one of his candles in lieu of incense as he invokes his spell. When the bell begins to ring, everyone receives  to resist its effects.

Mauer should also be able to unleash some spectacular magiks against the daemons when they appear, if he's given reason to be alert.

## ADELE KETZENBLUM

If the PCs didn't kill her in Middenheim, Adele Ketzenblum is present in the crowd. She will certainly notice the PCs, but she has exchanged her Witch-Hunter's hat for a red wig, which makes a surprisingly effective disguise. Presumably the PCs will not be looking for her. If they are, then a **Daunting (4d) Observation (Int) check** will reveal her presence, staring fixedly at the PCs through the crowd before darting away. Otherwise, if a PC rolls a **20** on an Observation check while in the temple (presumably to locate some other NPC he likes more than Adele), he also spots Adele.

Depending on who she hates more and whether or not she's spotted, Adele will do one of two things. She will either sneak through the crowd and stab a PC with a poisoned dagger (or rather, her knife-hand; an attack using the **Knife in the Crowd** action, which may allow her to strike at the PC and then fade back into the crowd), or she will sneak into the tower opposite the belfry and wait for a chance to shoot the Black Cowl with her crossbow. If Adele is in the tower during the final confrontation, then on every other round she pops up above the balustrade and shoots someone (she's not real particular as to who). Since Adele has only one hand, it takes her an entire turn to reload her crossbow.

## THE GRAND THEOGONIST, COUNTESS EMMANUELLE, BALTHAZAR GELT, ETC.

The PCs will not be permitted to speak to NPCs of such rarefied heights of power; minor functionaries and sycophants will block their every approach. If the PCs persist, one of the principal NPCs approaches them to ask what the trouble is.

## THE CEREMONY BEGINS

After the PCs have had just a short time to manoeuvre through the crowds in the Holy Temple, the Grand Theogonist calls for silence. He raises his hands as the hubbub slowly dies and begins to preach in a strong, rough voice.

"Brave men of the Empire!" (Apparently the Grand Theogonist is blind to those in his audience who are female, foreign, or non-human.) "We are gathered here in Sigmar's sight to pray for our Emperor, Karl Franz, that he might take again Sigmar's holy hammer in his hand and smite the foes of our Empire. Let us bow our heads in solemn prayer."

This brief preamble serves mainly as a way to let everyone know the service is starting so they can get to their seats. According to the plan, the bell would then ring 12 times – for the 12 original provinces of the Empire – while the congregation settled down into a respectful silence. Then the choir would begin the first hymn, followed by an extended homily on the perils of Chaos and the valour of Karl Franz and the Empire's armies.

Of course, that is not what happens. As soon as the bell begins to ring, all hell breaks loose.

## CHAOS AT THE HOLY TEMPLE ACT TWO – ALL HELL BREAKS LOOSE

As everyone takes their seats, the throng thins out greatly. Gentlemen remove their hats, and a sea of feathers and crests vanishes, allowing everyone to see easily across the temple. And so everyone can see the filthy, self-flagellating zealot Cornelius Ayrenhoff as he staggers down the aisle towards the altar. The Grand Theogonist continues his sermon, unconcerned with the odd behaviour of one of his congregants.

When the bell begins to ring, read or paraphrase the following aloud:

The first peal of the bell sends an almost visible ripple through the congregation and a spasm of pain and fatigue through your bodies. Gasps of surprise, pain, and fear erupt into the sudden silence that follows in the bell's wake. As you're still struggling to your feet, the zealot shrieks in despair and rushes towards the altar, his body and the boxes suspended from his chains trailing dense purple and blue smoke, so dark it's almost black, as he does so.

As a second peal of the bell nearly drives you to your knees, the zealot vanishes behind what is now a pillar of smoke. His despairing shriek seems to have become mocking laughter, and flickering lights and flames dance within the smoke. As the bell peals a third time, the crowd screams with panic.



## THE BELL

The bell rings until the PCs manage to interrupt it. At the beginning of each round, the bell rings and all characters should make Terror checks. The magnitude of the terror check is equal to the number of rounds the bell has been ringing (i.e. Terror 1 on the first round, Terror 2 on the second, and so on). On the fifth and all future rounds, it remains a Terror 4 check, but checks to resist gain  $\square$  per round.

Furthermore, each round the GM should roll dice to determine the other effects of the bell. On the first round, he rolls  $\square$ . On the second round, he rolls  $\diamond$ . On the third round, he rolls  $\square$   $\diamond$ , and so on. Characters may suffer corruption, wounds, or other ill effects based on the results of these rolls.

✘ Each character who can hear the bell suffers 1 corruption for each 2 ✘ rolled (round down; minimum 1).

☠ Each character who can hear the bell suffers 1 wound for each 2 ☠ rolled (round down; minimum 1).

\* A member of the congregation transforms into a Chaos Spawn and lashes out. The Chaos Spawn appears at close range from the PCs.

All of the effects of the bell are based on sound. Characters who cover their ears or otherwise block the sound may add  $\blacksquare$   $\blacksquare$  to all checks to resist the bell's effects. Daemons and anyone with the Mark of Tzeentch (including the Black Cowl and his henchmen) suffer no obvious ill effects from the bell. The daemons are Inspired and Invigorated for as long as the bell rings.

If the ringing of the bell is interrupted, but later resumes, the effects begin at the lowest level and slowly build up again. Use a second tracking token to mark the bell's magnitude if this happens (as it will no longer simply be equal to the number of rounds that have passed).

Build a progress tracker 10 spaces long with event spaces on the third, fifth, and seventh spaces, to keep track of the bell. Place a tracking token on the first space and advance it one space at the end of each round. Roll initiative for the Changeling, the Black Cowl, the Black Cowl's henchmen, and two groups of daemons (horrors and flammers), as well as all the PCs. NPCs who are not enemies will act at the end of each round; there is no need to roll initiative for them.

In the first round, one of the boxes on chains comes bursting out of the smoke and lands on the floor near the PCs. (Eight other boxes do the same elsewhere in the temple.) Each box rattles briefly on the floor, spewing thick smoke, then erupts as nine Pink Horror daemons and a single Flamer erupts from it. All the daemons are horrifying amalgams of flesh, bone, horn, beak, and flickering fire. The daemons immediately begin capering and prancing and attacking the crowd. Meanwhile, the pillar of smoke clears and reveals the erratic, spindly form of the Changeling beneath its blue-and-purple cloak. The empty skin of Cornelius Ayrenhof lies discarded on the ground near the daemon's feet, along with the zealot's chains and holy sigils.

In future rounds, knights, great lords, wizards, Witch Hunters, warrior priests, and others in the congregation bravely bring the battle to the enemy. Others flee in terror, or fall to their knees, ravaged by the tolling of the great bell. Aside from a bit of colour or an excuse to spend  $\#$  and  $\rightarrow$  (as NPCs leap to the aid of the PCs), none of the NPCs are especially relevant to what the PCs do next.

Realising the danger the bell poses, Balthazar Gelt turns nearby people to gold to protect them from its influence, beginning with Countess Emmanuelle. Luminary Mauer demonstrates why the Light College is feared by the servants of Chaos by banishing daemon after daemon back to the Realm of Chaos in a flash of white light. Marcus Baerfaust draws his sword and bravely charges into the thick of the fighting. Other soldiers and warriors follow, inspired by his example. Graf Friedrich directs nearby congregants into fashioning a makeshift barricade from the pews and then, calling on skills he hasn't had any reason to use since he was a pistolier, defends as many innocents as he can with sword and pistol. Arch Lector Kaslain swings his heavy iron warhammer and leaps to attack the Changeling, standing between the daemon and the prostrate form of Volkmar the Grim (the Grand Theonist must have been incapacitated by the smoke or the bell). Theodosius von Tuchtenhagen hurls nearby people towards the daemons in his haste to get to the doors, where he is killed by the subsequent explosion. A dozen other tiny dramas of heroism and cowardice unfold throughout the temple over the course of the crisis.

**When the progress tracker reaches the third event space**, a massive explosion rocks the front entrance to the Holy Temple. A cart laden down with "Pilsach Peculiar" has been wheeled into place by agents of the Black Cowl and set afire. Of course, the barrels were actually full of black powder. Dozens are killed and the entrance is blocked by rubble. (If there are any PCs in the vicinity, treat this explosion like the one that destroys the Temple of Drama on page 140.) The panic in the temple worsens.

**When the progress tracker reaches the fifth event space**, the number of daemons in the Holy Temple has been reduced to a more manageable number. The PCs should be able to move freely as

## THE THRONGS

While the crowd screams and panics in the Holy Temple, the PCs will have to struggle to get anywhere. They count as being engaged with multiple NPCs at all times, and moving from medium to long range or vice versa costs an additional manoeuvre.

## THAT'S A LOT OF DAEMONS

Note that all told there are 91 daemons in the Holy Temple. This is clearly far too many to manage every daemon individually, and the GM should not attempt to do so. In any given round of this encounter, the daemons near the PCs should get two opportunities to act – once for horrors and once for flammers, or two separate groups of horrors, depending on which daemons are nearby. The GM is encouraged to be judicious in splitting the daemons near the PCs into two useful groups each round. Any daemons not close enough to threaten the PCs are happily murdering congregants in the crowd and can be ignored. Even the Changeling can be skipped each round unless the PCs choose to engage it. Likewise, NPCs such as Balthazar Gelt and even Baerfaust, Mauer, and von Kaufman can be safely handled narratively, with no need to roll dice unless their actions are likely to impact the PCs directly.

Knights Griffon and other temple defenders move to engage the remaining daemons. Luminary Mauer, if he is alive and not the Black Cowl, engages the Changeling with all the might of a Light Wizard who specialises in combating the forces of Chaos. The resulting mystical duel is brief and results in the Changeling exploding in a burst of white light. (Otherwise Arch Lector Kaslain and Volkmar the Grim, revived by healing magic, smite the Changeling back into oblivion.)

**When the progress tracker reaches the seventh event space,** the Holy Temple begins to collapse under the stress of the bell. A bronze statue of Kurgan Ironbeard topples from its niche high above and crashes to the ground near the PCs, possibly striking and killing someone nearby. It should be obvious that unless the PCs move quickly the bell will destroy the whole temple. Ignore this event if the bell is no longer ringing for any reason; if the bell stops and then resumes use the bell tracker token to mark this event.

**When the progress tracker advances off the end of the track,** the Holy Temple collapses under the strain and nearly everyone inside is killed (probably including the PCs; treat it like being caught in the explosion at the Temple of Drama on page 140). Ignore this event if the bell is no longer ringing for any reason; if the bell stops and then resumes use the bell tracker token to mark this event.

## INTO THE BELL TOWER

Hopefully at some point the PCs will choose to climb the bell tower and stop the Black Cowl and his cronies from ringing the bell. If this doesn't occur to any of them, there are certainly dozens of NPCs about who might suggest the idea. The bell tower is a tall structure. To reach the tower from the main hall requires travelling down the aisle between the private shrines (count as moving from long range to engaged) and then clambering up a spiral staircase (it takes six manoeuvres in total to climb the stairs).

When the PCs reach the top of the bell tower they find the Black Cowl and six of his henchmen waiting for them. The henchmen are either Averheim greatswords, von Kaufman household guards, or burly cutthroats sworn to Tzeentch, as appropriate to the Black Cowl. In any case, they use Soldier characteristics, and all of them

have the Mark of Tzeentch. Half of the henchmen have some form of ranged weapon – crossbows for cutthroats, handguns for Averheimers, or pistols for von Kaufman's household guard.

If you haven't already, be sure to place the creature card for the appropriate NPC onto the Black Cowl epic threat sheet at this point. Epic threat sheets were introduced in *Hero's Call* but condensed rules can be found on page 189.

Reaching the top of the tower triggers a Rally step as the traitor is revealed. During the Rally step the Black Cowl uses the Villainous Monologue action and gives a speech somewhat like this one:

"So, you made it here after all. I should have killed you in Averheim when I had the chance, but then I did need someone gullible to prepare my bell clapper for me. Oh, you didn't think it was 'purified,' did you? Of course not! The power of Chaos is not so easily destroyed; the ritual merely served to mask the taint, that we might sneak the bell into the temple more easily. This has all been planned, from the very beginning!"

## CHAOS AT THE HOLY TEMPLE ACT THREE – THE BELL TOLLS

The Black Cowl is happy to monologue and explain his entire nefarious plan, his motivations, and his goals to the PCs. The longer they stay and listen the worse the bell's effects become, after all! But if the PCs press to attack, the Black Cowl orders his henchmen forward with a shriek, and joins the battle himself.

One of the henchmen stays with the bell at all times, and if he is killed or knocked aside another henchman struggles to get into position to take over ringing duties.



Neither the Black Cowl nor his henchmen will surrender or give any quarter. This is a fight to the death!

When the Black Cowl is defeated, the GM has two options, depending on whether or not he intends to use the included high-level epilogue:

## OPTION ONE — EPILOGUE

At the instant the Black Cowl's plan is undone, the sky above turns dark with foul clouds. A bolt of blue lightning strikes the belltower, throwing everyone to their knees, and then a sickening tearing sound rips through the sky. A wound in the world opens just to one side of the Black Cowl, then tendrils of flickering light wrap around him, pulling him shrieking into the Realm of Chaos. A voice rings in the ears of everyone in the bell tower: "You have served well, but you have failed. Now be reborn in a form more pleasing to the master. You will find the process...excruciating."

If Luminary Mauer or another expert on Chaos is consulted on the matter, he will proffer the theory that a daemon (probably of Tzeentch) has spirited the traitor away to the Realm of Chaos, where he will be transformed into a powerful daemon himself. Locating and retrieving the Black Cowl at this point could prevent him from becoming an even more deadly enemy of the Empire, although it may also "rescue" him from a terrible punishment worse than any mortal man could conceive.

The nature of the portal and the fate of the Black Cowl are explained in more detail in Book Four: The Enemy Beyond.

## OPTION TWO — NO EPILOGUE

Screaming in pain, the Black Cowl plummets over the edge of the belltower, his body lost in the sea of people below. Later, during the cleanup, his body is not found. But he must be dead... right?

## AFTERMATH

If everything has gone according to script, the day is saved and the PCs are the heroes of the hour. With the Black Cowl gone, the Emperor recovers swiftly from his illness. The PCs, and potentially Captain Baerfaust, Luminary Mauer, and/or Graf Friedrich, are lauded by the Emperor personally, along with other heroes of the incident at the Holy Temple.

Publicly, the matter is considered concluded and the day is declared a great triumph over the forces of Chaos. There is some unrest as the death toll is over one hundred and the Witch Hunters are kept busy tracking down those who were mutated by the bell's effects.

Privately, the far-reaching influence of the Conspiracy and the presence of the daemoniac wound in the world in the bell tower (if the epilogue is being used) are of grave concern to the Emperor, Ludwig Schwarzhelm, and other knowledgeable and powerful people. The PCs may well be the ideal candidates to look into these matters, with Captain Baerfaust or Graf Friedrich acting as their liaison to the Imperial Palace. These events are discussed in Book Four.

If Gravin Clothilde is still alive, she is certainly grateful to the PCs for their assistance and eager to help them in any way she can. She may be a source of future employment for the PCs, and will happily introduce them to other influential nobility in Altdorf and Averland.

If Frederick Grosz is still alive, he may try to use any existing influence he has with the PCs to escape punishment for his crimes. Failing that, he'll make it his goal to eliminate them before they implicate him in this whole business. He'll also seize control of what remains of the Black Cowl's criminal empire.

If Eothlir Valandar is still alive, he returns home to Ulthuan in disgust.

If Adele Ketzenblum has survived all of this, she'll be back...some day...when the PCs least expect it.

The Conspiracy is now very aware of the existence of the PCs. They must be either recruited or destroyed. Even if the next adventure the PCs undertake is in no way related to the Conspiracy, they will be watching, moving behind the scenes, and generally up to no good.

The matter of the succession of Averland is still up for contention, and the PCs may have made themselves of vital interest to parties concerned with that matter. Graf Friedrich and Gravin Clothilde, if both are still alive, may well attempt to use the PCs to their advantage as each vies to influence the selection of the next Elector. (Both are unmarried and perhaps both wish to secure their futures with a marriage alliance into the Elector's household.)

In short, the PCs are likely to be blessed with a wide variety of powerful friends...and potentially a wide variety of dangerous enemies.

The GM should also refer to the Epilogue section in Book Four for hints and advice about wrapping up the campaign.





## BOOK FOUR

# THE ENEMY BEYOND

If the Black Cowl escaped at the end of Book Three, the players may think that this is the end of the adventure. However, the GM can allow the PCs to pursue the Black Cowl to a final showdown in the very heart of Chaos.

The book is divided into an introduction and three parts. The introduction sets up the PCs' passage through the portal and includes some rules for adventuring in the Chaos Wastes, along with guidelines on constructing random encounters there. The rest of the book continues the story of *The Enemy Within*:

**Part One, The Trail of the Cowl**, sees the PCs follow the Black Cowl into the Chaos Wastes, and experience something of their strange and horrific nature.

**Part Two, The Castle of Secrets**, details a stronghold ruled by Tzeentch, the Changer of the Ways, and faces the PCs with a dilemma when they finally catch up with the Black Cowl.

**Part Three, The Road Home**, covers the PCs' journey back to the Empire, and shows them that Chaos does not give up easily those it has claimed.

## USING THIS EPILOGUE

Over the course of this book, the PCs will travel through a daemonic portal from the heart of Altdorf to deep in the Chaos Wastes, where the barrier between the mortal realm and the daemon realm is all but nonexistent. They will face threats ranging from irate furniture to greater daemons, and may well be badly corrupted by their ordeals, emerging ruined, insane, and mutated from the Wastes.

To say that this portion of the adventure is dangerous is an understatement. It is expected that, in order to play **The Enemy Beyond**, the GM and hero players have access to *Hero's Call*, the high level play expansion for *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay*. The four Ruinous Power expansions (*Winds of Magic*, *Signs of Faith*, *Omens of War*, and *Lure of Power*) will also be an asset, especially *Winds of Magic* (for detailed rules for corruption and mutation) and *Signs of Faith* (for detailed rules for disease).

Player characters who are not at least Rank 4 when they embark on this journey should not expect to survive!

## ONCE MORE, INTO THE BREACH, DEAR FRIENDS!

Perhaps the PCs leapt in immediately. Brave of them! Foolish, but brave. In this case, the GM will likely have to intervene to save their lives. Perhaps a friendly NPC, such as Arch Lector Kaslain, Luminary Mauer, or Gertrude Eysolt, will come through the portal with them. Whether this NPC accompanies them on their journey, or merely bestows some magical healing and volunteers to “stay here and keep the portal open for you” is up to the GM, but anyone who transitions directly from the Chaos at the High Temple episode to this is doomed to failure.

If, at the conclusion of Book Three, the GM wishes to use this epilogue but feels that the PCs are not yet equal to the challenges contained within, never fear. The GM has three options at this point (and may combine them):

- ✦ Reduce the threat and difficulty of the challenges contained within this section, by exchanging lethal enemies for less lethal substitutes, reducing the difficulties of checks, and reducing the ill effects of various hazards and threats encountered over this adventure.
- ✦ Increase the capabilities of the PCs by giving them a larger-than-usual experience reward at the conclusion of Book Three, as well as bestowing upon them gifts (magical or otherwise) on behalf of those whose lives they have just saved.
- ✦ Embark on a separate adventure in the interim between Book Three and Book Four, returning to Altdorf for the epilogue when the PCs are ready. This adventure could be pre-published, such as *Winds of Change* (from *Winds of Magic*) or *The Art of Waaagh!* (from *Hero's Call*) or *The Witch's Song*. Alternately, it could be custom-made for the group, perhaps cleaning up some loose ends from the end of Book Three.

If the GM elects not to use the epilogue, this option is detailed in Book Three. (However, this section, particularly the **Wrapping Up** discussion at the end, is still worth reading.)

## WAIT, ISN'T HE THE BLACK COWL?

This section is written with the assumption that Luminary Mauer is not the Black Cowl. If he is, then the request for a meeting will come from either Graf Friedrich or Captain Baerfaust, and the briefing will be delivered by Master Wizard Abram von Lichtenstein. Von Lichtenstein is a slim man of middle height and uncertain age. He seems almost washed out, his hair snowy white, his eyes so blue they are almost colorless. He seems to have not so much aged as faded. He speaks slowly and deliberately and it can be difficult to tell whether or not he's paying attention, although his mind is as sharp as ever. Von Lichtenstein uses the same characteristics as Luminary Mauer (minus the Black Cowl enhancements).

## THE WOUND IN THE WORLD

At the climax of Book Three, the Black Cowl was spirited away via a disturbing and dangerous portal. Afterwards, the portal remained, a pulsing, disturbing wound in the world.

Presuming the PCs don't immediately set off through the portal, then it remains a source of some concern to the authorities in Altdorf over the following weeks. The area where the portal appeared (probably the bell tower) is walled off from the common folk, and the wizards of the Light College examine the portal and seal it away. However, their examinations lead them to a few worrisome conclusions. First of all, they cannot seal it entirely while someone from the Altdorf side of the portal remains on the far side. Secondly, they believe that anything that has traveled through the portal once can not only return, but open it enough to allow others through. In short, as long as the Black Cowl remains unaccounted for, the Light Wizards fear that he could lead a horde of daemons into the heart of the Empire at any time. (And if the PCs share the cryptic dialogue they heard on top of the belltower, the wizards are likely to get even more anxious.)

The answer, of course, is that someone must go through the portal, find the Black Cowl, and bring him back to face the Emperor's Justice (or kill him, at the least). And the PCs are the obvious candidates, as they know him well, have proven their mettle in the face of the forces of Chaos, and most importantly are expendable.

## A MEETING WITH A WIZARD

When it is time to proceed with Book Four, Luminary Mauer sends a message to the PCs and requests that they attend him in Altdorf. Mauer arranges the meeting in a private room at the Crown and Two Chairmen, as to not arouse any suspicion by inviting the PCs to the palace or the Light College. Graf Friedrich or Marcus Baerfaust may also be in attendance.

Mauer is presumably pleased to see the PCs, but as is his manner he plows through the pleasantries and gets straight to the matter that interests him: the fascinating nature of the portal and its implications. When reminded of the reason that he called the meeting by Baerfaust or von Kaufman, he remembers himself and focuses on the subject at hand.

Mauer explains as clearly as he can the dangers the portal poses, and asks the PCs – on behalf of the Emperor Karl Franz and the Supreme Patriarch of the Colleges of magic – to risk themselves on a dangerous mission through the portal. The goal of the mission is to locate and retrieve the Black Cowl, or failing that to kill him.

“I wouldn't send you in without support, of course,” he says, and places a familiar-looking box on the table. Opening it, he removes a fist-sized purple gemstone wrapped in white cloth. “This gem should help protect you against the worst of the energies of the wastes, so long as you stay close to it. It will also allow you to come back.” Give the **Blessed Gemstone** item card to the players.

“It scarcely need saying that you will be rewarded for your service,” puts in Mauer's companion.

Mauer and his companion will be happy to speak to the PCs as long as they wish and do everything they can think of to convince the PCs to undertake the mission. (Graf Friedrich, for example, is not

above a little creative application of political pressure – that is to say blackmail – if they have done anything illegal while in his service, or implying that the disaster at the Holy Temple was their fault in the first place.) Some answers to questions the PCs might have are noted below. At the very least, Mauer will want to explain the **How do we get home** section.

### WHAT CAN WE EXPECT ON THE OTHER SIDE?

“I’m a noted expert on the subject and all I can tell you is to expect nothing. Take nothing for granted. Mistrust your senses and your emotions and rely only on your good judgement and reason. You may be met by savage foes intending to tear you limb from limb. But it’s equally likely that you will find a garden of luscious fruits and spun-sugar flowers. Both may be equally dangerous.”

### HOW WILL WE FIND THE BLACK COWL?

“I don’t believe that will be a problem. In this, at least, you may be aided by the nature of the Realm of Chaos. It is place that is at least partially responsive to the will and desires of its residents, and that will include you. When you arrive you will do so with your goal clearly in your minds. The Realm of Chaos will respond to that, and with a little magical assistance from myself via the gem, I believe your target will be revealed to you.”

### WHY DON’T YOU COME WITH US?

The question Luminary Mauer has been dreading! Of course he has no desire whatsoever to leap into a portal into the Chaos Wastes and risk his life, sanity, and soul to hunt down the Black Cowl. The other major NPCs aren’t precisely eager, either. Mauer will make it clear that a large party multiplies the risk of attracting attention from very powerful servants of Chaos, not to mention that the more people who are with the group, the more who could fall to Chaos. And of course he has his duties in Altdorf...

Still, the PCs may be able to convince him to accompany them. (This may be a good way for the GM to augment the PCs if he feels they’re a little below the level necessary.) He is, after all, a Light Wizard and this is arguably one of his duties to the Empire. Captain Baerfaust is not eager to go either, as he remembers fighting the beastmen at Griffon’s Fall and expects this to be even worse (rightly, as it happens). But he is a soldier, and brave, and willing to do his duty if the PCs can persuade him.

Graf Friedrich will, under no circumstances, pass through the portal. If accused of cowardice, Graf Friedrich will explain it as “merely an accurate assessment of the degree to which my presence would be of benefit to the expedition.” He will volunteer two members of his household guard if pressed (both use Soldier characteristics, and both are likely to die screaming in the Chaos Wastes).

None of these characters will just acquiesce automatically. The PCs will have to use their skills and social actions to convince them.

### WHEN WE FIND THE BLACK COWL, WHAT SHOULD WE DO WITH HIM?

“The most certain solution is to bring him – dead or alive, frankly – back to Altdorf. Failing that, I believe that killing him will weaken the link between that place and this one enough to allow us to seal the portal. Err, by the same token – if any of you are captured, I’m afraid you’ll have to find a way to kill yourselves. Otherwise we’re right back where we started.”

### HOW DO WE GET HOME?

“Yes, that’s an important step, as it’s the presence of a living soul with ties to Altdorf that we believe prevents us from sealing the portal. The gem will be your key; simply hold it in your hand and touch each person you wish to bring back with you, all joining hands together. Then say ‘heimkommen.’ You... may want to write that down.”

### WHAT WILL THE GEM DO FOR US?

“It should protect you from the worst of the taint and madness of the Chaos Wastes, although I daresay that even with its protection you will find the journey quite taxing. It will also be your route home. Please don’t lose it.”

### WHY IN THE NAME OF SIGMAR WOULD WE EVEN CONTEMPLATE UNDERTAKING SUCH AN OBVIOUSLY DANGEROUS AND FOOLHARDY TASK?

“The need is great and, simply put, you’re the only people in the Empire we can trust with such a mission. You have already demonstrated your clear-headedness and good judgement, you have a personal connection to the target, and you have the skills and abilities necessary to give you a good chance of success. My friends, I truly don’t believe this is a suicide mission. It is dangerous, I’ll grant you, but if anyone can complete it and return alive, it’s you. Ah, and the rewards will be commensurate with the risks.”

For more discussion as to rewards, see the **Epilogue** section beginning on page 178.

Hopefully, the PCs will eventually consent to undertake the mission. They should have some time to prepare, and Mauer and company will do their best to furnish them with anything they request that has a realistic chance of increasing their odds of success. When they’re ready, proceed to Part One: The Trail of the Cowl.

### NO WAY!

There’s no guarantee that every PC group will simply accept the dangerous mission, no matter the offered rewards and assurances that success is achievable. Additional incentive may be available in the form of threats, blackmail, and by raising the stakes.

- + The PCs find that their established contacts and alliances evaporate as word spreads that they were responsible for the crisis at the Holy Temple. They may even be arrested and threatened by Ludwig Schwarzhelm himself if they don’t undertake the mission.
- + While visiting Altdorf, the PCs witness a brief but frightening manifestation of Chaos daemons – and are informed that this will continue until the portal can be sealed.
- + Daemons and Chaos cultists begin to track and attack the PCs personally, occasionally bringing personal messages from the Black Cowl.
- + Someone the PCs know and like (such as Gravin Clothilde, Luminary Mauer, or Gregor Helstrum), but who is completely unequal to the task, volunteers for the mission in their stead.

# PART ONE — THE TRAIL OF THE COWL

Luminary Mauer and a small choir of Light College acolytes will lead the PCs to the location of the portal (presumably the top of the bell tower). The acolytes sing what sounds like a hymn in some arcane language, burning candles and swinging censers of incense. Anyone might be confused about whether this is some sort of magical ritual or a religious ceremony. Mauer unlocks any doors or gates leading to the portal. The Reiksguard knights standing guard let him pass with no comment.

When they reach the portal, it proves to be little more than a pinprick, a small hole in the world that shines with unearthly light. Mauer turns to the PCs and asks if they are all ready. He's happy to answer any final questions, then turns to his acolytes and nods. He joins them in song, lifting his hands and gathering the Winds of Magic to him. The portal expands as the wizards un-do their attempts to seal it off until it is large enough for the PCs to step comfortably through.

## THROUGH THE PORTAL

Read or paraphrase the following to the players as their characters step through the portal:

You step into – no, you step through – the glowing rectangle of multicoloured light, and experience a moment of dizziness and panic as though you have just missed the top step of a flight of stairs and are on the verge of falling. The world slides sideways – as far as you can tell, since you can't see anything but the shifting, variegated clouds. It feels unpleasantly like being drunk.

For an instant, a howling, multicoloured wind snatches at your hair and clothes, and then you feel solid ground under your feet. As you look around, it is clear that you are no longer in Altdorf.

You are standing beneath a lead-grey sky whose clouds roil like the inverted surface of a stormy ocean. Lightning – or something like it, if lightning were coloured red, purple, and green – splits the clouds from time to time, but instead of thunder you hear sounds like the screams of the damned.

The ground all around you is littered with gigantic rocks of a strangely glistening black stone. The stumps of shattered mountains reach upward like broken teeth, leaning at drunken angles. Your blood chills as you see monstrous, unnatural shapes moving between them.

Your attention is drawn to what seems to be a castle in the distance. At least, it looks like a castle, if a castle were built by a blind madman and hung in the sky with no visible means of support. As you stare, trying to understand the incomprehensible sight, the architecture ripples and changes. For an instant it becomes a face you recognise, twisted in a silent scream of pain – the Black Cowl! Then it is only a castle again.

A winged shape breaks through the clouds and descends to land atop one of the castle battlements. As it climbs into the castle, you can see that it has some aspects of both bird and man in its shape, and judge that it must be huge.

So now all you have to do is find some way to the castle in the sky and defeat the Black Cowl's monstrous captor.

The winged creature is a Lord of Change, a greater daemon of Tzeentch. A **Daunting (4d) Folklore (Int) check** or **Hard (3d) Education (Int) check** is needed to identify it unless the PCs have seen one before. Even if the PCs do not know what the creature is, though, its size and power are evident.

If the PCs decide to give up on the Black Cowl and try to use the gem to get back to Altdorf, skip to Part Three (see page 173). They may be able to get home eventually, but they will find that it is not so easy to escape the Realm of Chaos. (They'll also have failed in their mission, leaving Altdorf just as vulnerable to the daemons of Chaos as it was before they left.)

If the PCs decide to follow the Black Cowl into the floating castle, carry on with Part One.

## RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

Part One consists of three set encounters that take place as the PCs make their way across the Chaos Wastes towards the floating castle. If the GM wishes, these can be interspersed with random encounters with denizens of the Chaos Wastes.

Most encounters are resolved in a similar way: the enemies keep fighting until the PCs inflict enough casualties to erode their morale so that they flee. Assemble a five-space progress tracker with an event space in the fifth space and place a tracking token in the first space. Each time an enemy or a henchman group is defeated, or the PCs use some other effect to erode morale, advance the tracking token one space. When it reaches the event space, the enemies turn and flee (or disincorporate in the case of daemons).

Although the *Tome of Adventure* covers a range of creatures and followers of Chaos, GMs who have access to accessories like *The Creature Guide* and expansions such as *The Winds of Magic*, *Signs of Faith*, *Omens of War*, and *Lure of Power* will have more options.

## FIXED ENCOUNTERS

The following fixed encounters can be run in any order, excepting that the castle should come last. They are presented here in the reverse of the order that the PCs will be misled by Chaos in Part Three, so the GM may wish to preserve this order out of a sense of symmetry.

### THE UNFRIENDLY SKIES

Part One is written with the assumption that the PCs have no spells, abilities, or magic items that enable them to simply fly to the castle. It is not impossible that one or two PCs can fly, but most parties will not be able to move the whole group by air.

If the PCs can fly the whole party to the castle, then Part One can largely be skipped. This might be fine for some groups. For others, the GM can have flying daemons and other airborne foes attack as soon as the PCs take to the air. Sorcerers of Tzeentch riding flying disks can have all kinds of magical abilities, including spells capable of knocking out the PCs' means of aerial transport. Other foes can simply attack in waves until the PCs are forced to take cover on the ground and advance cautiously using rocks and other cover to escape notice. The skies may be free of obstacles, but they are also dangerously exposed.

## YOU CALL THAT SCARY?

Throughout their experience in the Chaos Wastes, the PCs are likely to encounter increasingly terrifying sights and monsters with alarming regularity (nearly every daemon, for example, causes Fear or Terror). After a certain point, they will simply become inured to such things.

Assemble a progress tracker four spaces long and keep a two sided token close at hand. One side of the token is used to track Fear checks, the other to track Terror checks. When the PCs make a Fear or Terror check, place the token on the track on the space matching the magnitude of the check, with its appropriate side facing up. From then on, each time the PCs make a Fear or Terror check, they can ignore it if they have already faced a check of greater magnitude. Each time they face a Fear or Terror check of greater magnitude, advance the token appropriately. (Treat Terror checks as worse than Fear checks of the same magnitude.) For example, if the PCs make a Terror 1 check, the token is placed Terror-side up on the first space and they can ignore all Fear 1 checks for the remainder of the adventure. If they later make a Fear 2 check, the token is flipped to its Fear side and moved up to the 2nd space. From then on, they can ignore all Fear 1 and Terror 1 checks.

Each encounter depicts a portion of the Chaos Wastes that is controlled by one of the capricious Chaos deities and their daemons. Mortal creatures may also be dwelling in these places, but even mortals who spend any time here are tainted by Chaos to such a degree that the distinction between a mortal being and a daemon may not be clear.

## ENCOUNTER ONE — THE RIVERS OF BLOOD

The PCs come upon an area controlled by Khorne, the Blood God. Put the Realm of Khorne location card into play and then read or paraphrase the following to the players:

The broken ground levels out into what looks like a pale, rocky plain. As you get closer, you can see that the rocks and stones are in fact broken bones and skulls. The sand between them is bone that has been ground to a powder by some incalculable force.

After a few hours' travel, you come across a series of braided streams. Instead of water, though, it is blood that flows across the landscape.

A successful **Hard (3d) Folklore (Int) check** or **Average (2d) Education (Int) check** informs the PCs that bones and blood are closely associated with Khorne, the Blood God. Khorne represents the primal fury of Chaos and his followers are the most violent of all the minions of Chaos.

The rivers are too wide to jump across and too deep to wade; any PC who tries to swim will be exposed to a major source of corruption (**Daunting (4d) Resilience check** or suffer 4 corruption). The rivers appear to flow from a great monolith that rises from a mound in the distance. This monolith is depicted on the Khorne Monolith

## THE CHAOS WASTES

The Chaos Wastes are a strange and improbable place where the laws of reality begin to bend or break outright. The distinction between the physical world and the Realm of Chaos is very vague here, and mortals and daemons can both exist in this space. It is possible to reach the Chaos Wastes simply by walking north past the limits of human civilisation, through the blasted waste of Troll Country, and beyond. Walking back again may or may not be possible according to the whim of Chaos, and even if a traveller does return he may discover that many years have passed for the outside world. The landscape of the Wastes is unpredictable and malleable according to the whims of its residents. The floating castle in the sky is unlikely to top the list of strangest and least possible things the PCs see during their stay!

The Chaos Wastes are an area where arcane magic is strong but unpredictable, divine blessings are weak, and corruption is rife.

Add both  and  to all dice pools when casting arcane spells, using magical items where a roll is involved, and making Channelling checks.

Add  to dice pools for Magical Sight checks.

Arcane spells are automatically cast in the Reckless stance unless the caster makes a **Hard (3d) Discipline (WP) check**. This doesn't affect the stance of the caster; simply use the Reckless side of the action card.

Wizards who have power less than their equilibrium gain 2 power, not 1, during their end of turn phase. When a wizard must suffer a stress to maintain extra power (i.e. power above double his Willpower), he also suffers a fatigue.

Arcane miscasts are treated as having one extra .

Add  to all dice pools for tasks that use divine blessings.

Divine blessings are automatically cast in the Conservative stance unless the caster makes a **Hard (3d) Discipline (WP) check**. This doesn't affect the stance of the caster; simply use the Conservative side of the action card.

Priests have their equilibrium scores reduced by 1.

At every Rally Step and at the end of each encounter, each of the PCs must check vs. a minor source of corruption (**Average (2d) Resilience check** or suffer 2 corruption).

It is not possible to lose corruption in the Chaos Wastes except by GM invocation or by manifesting an insanity or mutation.

hand-out. There appear to be signs of construction or habitation on the mound, and what might be bridges across the rivers of blood.

The area around the mound of skulls is quiet, although as the PCs draw closer they see signs of recent worship there – most noticeably the piles of bodies that lay scattered across the top of the mound. Six rivers of blood flow out of it in all directions, through steep ravines in the body of the mound whose smooth sides are made of fused and twisted bone.

## CREATIVE THINKING

This encounter has been designed with the intention that the PCs will enter the complex within the mound, bring down the monolith, and block the flow of the rivers so that they can cross them and carry on to the floating castle. However, this need not be the only solution to the situation.

Players are creative by nature, and can come up with surprising responses to even the most straightforward of situations. The GM should be prepared to deal with whatever the PCs try, rewarding ingenuity and good play. Here are a few possible approaches the PCs might take, along with a few notes on how to handle them.

The PCs may decide to try to block the flow of the rivers using the materials around them: bones and bone dust. Alternatively, they may try throwing bones into the rivers of blood until they have created a series of stepping stones. A dam would take a very long time to construct, even if the PCs happened to have shovels and other tools with them. The rivers are both deep and wide, and they flow swiftly enough to carry away most of the finer particles of bone dust. Creating stepping stones will be even harder, since each stepping stone is effectively a smaller dam with smaller base, and thus even more likely to be swept away.

One of the PCs may think of swimming across – braving the corruption of the tainted blood – and carry a rope to the other side which the others can use to cross. Quite apart from the risk of insanity or mutation, the PCs will have to consider exactly what they are going to do with a rope once they have it stretched across the river. The plain of bones is flat and (apart from the monolith and mound) almost featureless; there are no trees or rocks to tie a rope onto, even if they happen to have one long enough to stretch all the way across the river. The PCs may be able to construct a pole of some sort out of longer pieces of bone, but any ✱ results on checks to scramble across the rope over the river will result in the bone breaking and someone getting wet.

Even in these fairly simple circumstances, there is almost endless scope for the PCs to come up with other ideas: lashing bones together to build a makeshift raft (which will probably sink unless it has some kind of skin), somehow capturing attacking furies or other flying creatures and forcing them to carry the PCs across the river (they are more likely to carry the PCs to a great height, drop them, and feast on their mangled remains), and so on. As always, the GM should reward creative thinking while making sure the PCs suffer the consequences of any flaws in their plans.

## THE SOURCE

Climbing the mound, the PCs see that it is more of an embankment, enclosing a space in the shape of the skull-like Mark of Khorne. The inner walls are steep and smooth – a **Hard (3d) Athletics (St) check** to climb – and from the patterns in their surface, they appear to be made of fused bone. They are about 30 feet high, and the only way out is via two flights of steps on one side, the side the PCs approach from.

The passages within the enclosure converge on a pool of blood from which six rivers flow. The monolith is suspended above the centre of the pool by twelve supports, one on either side of each of the six rivers. The supports are made of a strange, organic-looking substance that a **Hard (3d) Education (Int), Medicine (Int), or First Aid check** will identify as bone and sinew twisted together.

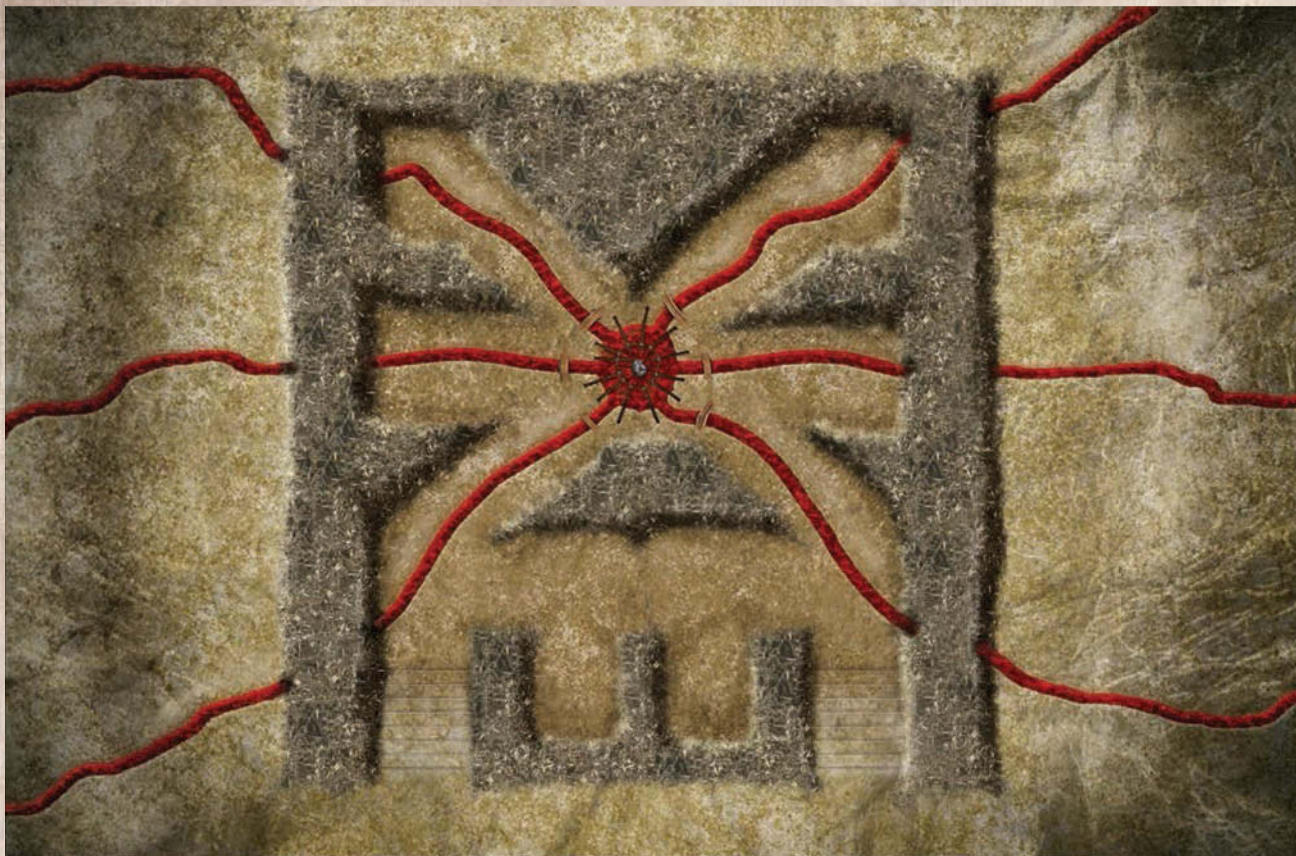
A fountain of blood spouts from the pool, and washes over the monolith's base. The monolith is patterned with pulsing red veins, as though it is drawing some kind of power from the blood. At the edge of the pool, a small bridge crosses each of the rivers. It is just wide enough for one character to cross at a time. A fall into the pool results in the same risk of corruption as crossing the rivers.

The PCs may simply cross the rivers at one of the bridges and then climb over the wall to be on their way. Scaling the 30 foot wall without the aid of a rope or other climbing tools requires a successful **Hard (3d) Athletics (St) check** (this can be lowered to Average (2d) with proper gear). However, they may also destroy the monolith, weakening Khorne's grasp on this part of the Chaos Wastes.

## ATTACKING THE STONE

Bereft of magic in the realm of Khorne, the PCs may be hard pressed to destroy the stone – especially without exposing themselves to the corrupted blood in the pool. However, destroying the supports that hold it in place will cause it to drop, perhaps plugging the unholy spring that feeds the six rivers. If the players do not come up with this idea themselves, the GM can allow an **Average (2d) Intelligence check** to suggest it.





Each of the twelve supports has a Defence value of 1, with Toughness 3, Soak 3, and a wound threshold of 15. Every time a support is destroyed, roll a number of **◆** equal to the number of supports destroyed so far: The first time there is at least one **✧** in the results, the monolith begins to heave and shift. The next result with at least one **✧** means that the monolith falls into the lake: see **The Monolith Drops**. The Monolith also collapses automatically when the last support is destroyed.

## THE STONE'S DEFENDERS

The enclosure is empty when the PCs first arrive. As the PCs begin to attack the monolith's supports, the stone hums with an angry life, its red veins pulsing brighter and brighter. In response, two Flesh Hounds materialise in the two empty bays at the southern side of the enclosure. They move to attack the PCs immediately. In addition, at the end of every round, the GM should roll a number of **◆** equal to the number of PCs. Roll an additional die for each PC who has been wounded during the round – their spilled blood makes the Blood God's influence stronger.

Every **✧** result indicates that a follower of Khorne has appeared on top of the embankment, and moves to attack the PCs. To determine the type, roll another **◆** and consult the following table (if you have access to *Omens of War*, feel free to substitute any of the creatures listed on the table with Juggernauts or Chaos Warriors of Khorne):

**Blank:** Daemon; Bloodletter

✕ Beastman; Ungor

✕✕ Beastman; Gor

☠ Beastman; Wargor

☠☠ Chaos Warrior

✧ Daemon; Flesh Hound

Alternately, the GM can simply pick. All new arrivals must make their way down the steps and across any bridges between them and the PCs.

The PCs may think they are facing overwhelming odds that can only get worse, particularly since every wound they suffer adds to the chances of more attackers appearing. However, if they keep their heads and defend the narrow bridges, they can make sure that the odds are always in their favour during any particular round of combat.

## THE MONOLITH DROPS

When the remaining supports can no longer support its weight, the monolith drops straight down onto the blood spring. Blood sprays everywhere as it crashes into the pool, and every PC must make a successful **Hard (3d) Coordination (Ag) check** or be splashed for a minor exposure to corruption (**Average (2d) Resilience check** or suffer 2 corruption).

At the same time, the veins on the monolith darken and turn into cracks. As the monolith falls apart, all monsters within the complex – and all across the plain of bones – crumble into dust. No longer sustained by the unholy spring, the rivers of blood slow and run dry; after several minutes have passed, each river is low enough for the PCs to pick their way across.

## ENCOUNTER TWO — THE PLAGUE SWAMP

The PCs see the edge of a forest on the horizon. As they get closer, the ground underfoot becomes soft and they see that the trees are hung with moss and creepers. A mild breeze wafts a fetid stench in their direction, and clouds of mosquitoes hover around the edge of the forest.

A successful **Hard (3d) Folklore (Int) check** or **Average (2d) Education (Int) check** informs the PCs that the area ahead is under the influence of Nurgle, the Plaguefather. As his name suggests, Nurgle is associated with disease and decay, and presents the entropic face of Chaos as compared to the violence of Khorne, the decadence of Slaanesh, and the mutability of Tzeentch.

### A STRANGE RECEPTION

As the PCs enter the swamp, replace the Realm of Khorne location card with the Realm of Nurgle location card and read or paraphrase the following to the players:

Above the unceasing drone of insects, you can hear the splashing of footsteps in the trees to either side, and even catch an occasional glimpse of something that is not quite human moving between the trees. After a few dozen yards, you glance over your shoulders and see that the creatures are behind you as well. They follow at a distance, but make no move to attack.

Some of them are human – or were once. Now, bloated and pocked by who knows what kinds of disease, they limp and shamle along. Every so often you also see something different. While humanoid in form, the single eye and forehead horn marks these creatures as something else. Capering at their feet are small, pustulent, round creatures with savage grins; occasionally one of them darts out to sniff at your heels before running back into the cover of the trees with a phlegm-wet giggle.

### THE GIFTS OF NURGLE

The longer the PCs linger in Nurgle's foetid swamp, the more likely they are to acquire one or more "gifts" in the form of a disease. The PCs should make a Disease 2 check as they approach the Great Unclean One and another Disease 2 check as they leave and walk to the edge of the swamp. For each two subjects of conversation the PCs address with Virulens, they should make another Disease 2 check. Any disease with the *Filth* or *Miasma* traits would be suitable candidates.

If not using the disease rules from *Signs of Faith*, simply make **Average (2d) Resilience (To) checks** instead of Disease 2 checks. On a failure, PCs suffer 1 fatigue that they cannot recover from until they have a chance for a full night's sleep someplace clean and safe (i.e. not the Chaos Wastes).

Of course, should the PCs be so foolish as to partake of offered food or drink while in Nurgle's realm...a Disease 4 check would be the least they could expect!

The PCs are being trailed by a mixture of Nurgle-worshipping marauders, Plaguebearers, and Nurglings. A **Hard (3d) Folklore (Int)** or **Education (Int) check** permits the PCs to recognise them. They will not attack, and will try to evade any attacks from the PCs. They are merely curious to see the visitors.

### THE LORD OF DECAY

No matter what route the PCs may choose to take once entering Nurgle's realm, they will draw ever closer to the Great Unclean One who rules over it, such is the fickle nature of the Chaos Wastes. After about a mile, the PCs find themselves entering a clearing. Read or paraphrase the following to the players:

The ground begins to rise, although strangely it does not seem to be getting much drier. It quakes and trembles under your feet as though it is sodden, but at least it's not trying to suck your boots off any more.

The creatures still follow you, but keep their distance. As you climb the quaking hill, the trees thin out and you find yourselves in a clearing. At its centre, on the very top of the hill, squats a monstrous creature. As you look at it, you are overcome with the desire to run far, far away and take the longest, hottest, soapiest bath of your entire lives.

If a toad sat upright, and if it were as big as a house, and if its natural warts were supplemented by sores and pustules of every conceivable shape, size, and colour, and if it sported a set of broken and filthy horns, it might look something like this creature once it had died and decayed for a few months. Next to the smell that comes off the thing, the swamp's miasma seems like the scent of a rain-fresh meadow.

The creatures that followed you through the swamp spread out into a loose ring, almost herding you into the abomination's presence even though they still show no aggression. The smallest creatures gambol up to the thing and suck on its more accessible lesions with cries of obscene satisfaction, and it reaches down with a kindly expression to pet one on the head. Then it picks the creature up and pops it in its mouth. You can hear bones crunch as it chews.

"Welcome," the creature's voice is like the bubbling of fetid mud and the moaning of plague victims. It speaks in a language you can all understand. "I trust my underlings did not trouble you unduly. They have instructions to escort any visitors here, and they know better than to disappoint me."

A successful **Hard (3d) Folklore (Int)** or **Education (Int) check** identifies the creature as a Great Unclean One, the most powerful of Nurgle's daemonic followers. Scoring at least **##** on the check adds the information that such creatures are very powerful indeed and that to attack or even provoke it would be unwise. For now, it seems content merely to talk, and the best course for the PCs is probably to listen – or appear to listen – as politely as possible, while trying to think of a way out of their situation.

Throughout the conversation the Great Unclean One, which prefers to be known by mortals as Virulens, is unfailingly polite and genial. It is honestly pleased to see the PCs, happy to chat with them as long as they like, eager to share any information it may have on the Chaos Wastes in general and the immediate area in particular, and as helpful as the creature knows how to be. Its most devout hope is that the PCs will tarry a while in its "garden" and then

return safely to their homes in the Empire... thereby delivering a host of new plagues and diseases they may have acquired while visiting with Virulens.

Some likely subjects of conversation and Virulens' thoughts on those subjects are summarised below:

### WHO ARE YOU?

"Of course, of course, please forgive me. How impolite not to begin with introductions. I am known by many names, and I believe you would have some difficulty pronouncing my favourite with your particularly, undecayed throats. So let us agree that you will know me as Virulens. It has a pleasing ring to it, I feel. And you are...?"

### WHY DID YOU LET US JUST WALK IN HERE? WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WITH US?

"Do with you? Nothing at all, dear child. I wish you nothing but good fortune and a safe journey home. If I can be of any service to you as your host, please do not hesitate to let me know. Perhaps some refreshment? Shall my children dance for your amusement?"

### THE OTHER CHAOS GODS

"There's no love lost there, I assure you. I can smell Khorne's blood on you, so you are already familiar with his simple-minded followers and their disagreeable taste for violence. And Slaanesh - pah! So judgmental. So selfish. So hedonistic. And Tzeentch; relentlessly scheming, must always change things...no, you mortals may paint us all with the same brush but our gods hate each other at least as much as your mortal nations despise one another."

### CAN YOU TELL US ANYTHING ABOUT THE CASTLE IN THE SKY?

"Oh, don't go there. It's quite dangerous for your kind. The place is the personal domain of one of the daemons of Tzeentch, a Lord of Change. It can change at a whim, and if it looks like a castle today that is just because the daemon wills it so. Still, if your hearts are set on it, I will offer you what aid I can. You may have noticed by now that this place is somewhat mutable. It can even respond to your will, in small ways, if you wish it. You would travel to that castle? Will it so and it will be possible. But do not think to set your will against the master of that place; his is stronger by far and the castle is his."

### ARE THERE ANY OTHER DANGERS BETWEEN US AND THE CASTLE?

"I believe it is likely that you will be invited to dance by the Masque of Slaanesh. Refuse as politely as you know how and press on. The daemons that attend that tiresome creature may become violent."

### CAN WE LEAVE?

"Of course! I am not holding you here against your will. If you feel rested and prepared to face the challenges yet before you, go with my good wishes. I shall set one of my children to guide you safely from my domain."

### MOVING ON

The conversation with the Great Unclean One lasts as long as it is interesting. The PCs are free to leave whenever they wish, and the daemon will offer them guides to take them out of the swamp when

the conversation begins to flag. Three Plaguebearers will guide them to the other side, and they can continue their journey towards the floating castle.

## ENCOUNTER THREE — THE GLADE OF DELIGHTS

As they continue on their way towards the floating castle, the PCs see a shaft of golden sunlight piercing the gloom ahead of them, shining down on a tree-strewn meadow. As they get closer, they see that it is peopled by the most beautiful creatures, of the species and gender of their preference, they have ever seen. A mild breeze wafts a most delightful perfume in the PCs' direction, along with snatches of enchanting music and happy laughter.

A successful **Hard (3d) Folklore (Int) check** or **Average (2d) Education (Int) check** suggests to the PCs that the area ahead is under the influence of Slaanesh, the Lord of Pleasure. Commonly associated with decadent, pleasure-seeking cults in the Empire, Slaanesh is the face of Chaos that represents the breaking of all laws and social taboos in the single-minded pursuit of one's own desires. As the PCs enter the glade, replace the Realm of Nurgle location card with the Realm of Slaanesh location card, and read or paraphrase the following to the players:

You are almost overwhelmed by a sense of well-being as you set foot on the soft grass. The beautiful beings gather around you with smiles, offering cups of wine and tempting morsels of food. Your pain and fatigue seem to wash away.

At this point, all the PCs must make a **Hard (3d) Intuition (Int) check**. Anyone forewarned by the Great Unclean One in the prior encounter gains  to the check. Those who fail will see a pleasing



BOOK FOUR  
THE ENEMY BEYOND

illusion: all their wounds and other afflictions are miraculously healed, and they feel as fresh and happy as if they had just awoken from the best night's sleep of their lives. This is only an illusion, however, and the PCs' wounds, stress, and fatigue status do not change. Those who succeed are not fooled by the illusion, and see a very different sight. The glade is peopled by Daemonettes of Slaanesh: feminine-looking demons whose arms end in curved blades or cruel-lobster-like claws. Instead of flowing silk robes, they are clad in weirdly patterned armour, and their eyes glow with an unnatural fervour. In the centre of the glade dances a taller creature with a savage-looking, horned head and a fierce expression. Its skin is a pale blue, and its legs end in heavy black claws. A third arm, tipped with a huge claw, grows from its right side.

Murmuring soft endearments, the creatures lead you towards the centre of the glade, where their leader dances with enchanting grace. This being is so beautiful that it is impossible to tell whether it is male or female. It extends a languid hand to you.

"Come," it says, in a voice that is almost music. "You have travelled far, and suffered much. It is time to rest now, and be happy. Dance with us."

## THE MASQUE OF SLAANESH

The PCs have encountered the Masque of Slaanesh, once one of the Lord of Pleasure's most favoured daemonettes. Fallen from grace, she is now cursed to dance forever. The Masque's dancing has a hypnotic effect that causes all who see it to be drawn in, dancing until they die from exhaustion. Even then, the lifeless bodies of his victims continue to dance long after their hearts have stopped beating.

At the Masque's invitation, the PCs must each make a **Discipline (WP) check**. For characters who see her true nature, this is an **Average (2d) check**; for others this is a **Daunting (4d) check**. Those who fail the check are drawn into the dance. Those in the Masque's thrall do nothing but dance on their turn. They suffer 1 fatigue per turn, but also receive new Discipline checks to shake off the Masque's influence and new Intuition checks each round to see through the illusion. As the dance continues, these PCs gradually accumulate more  to checks to see through the illusion, beginning with one  on the second turn of the dance.

PCs who have resisted the Masque's invitation have various options. They can try to pull their ensorcelled companions out of the dance (granting  to checks to resist), attack the Masque in an attempt to break the spell, or abandon their fellows and try to escape.

## ATTACKING THE MASQUE

Without breaking the pattern of her dance, the Masque will attack any PC who attacks her. A ✱ result on any of the PC's combat rolls means that another Daemonette moves to engage the PC and fights to the death.

## RUNNING AWAY

Unaffected PCs who try to flee the glade will be intercepted by Daemonettes who attempt to coax them to indulge in sweets and refreshments, and to return to the dance. The PCs can attempt to use Social actions, Charm, Guile, or Intimidate checks to convince the Daemonettes to let them pass, or may attack them. There is one Daemonette per PC who is free of the Masque's spell. As new PCs shake off the Masque's dance, new Daemonettes approach.

The Masque herself makes no move to attack the PCs unless they insult, mock, or threaten him.

## ESCAPE

The encounter ends when all the PCs (or at least, those unaffected by the Masque's enchantment) have left the glade (extreme range from the Masque). The Daemonettes won't pursue past the limits of the glade, but go back to their frenzied dancing.

# PART TWO – THE CASTLE OF SECRETS

Once the PCs have passed through all three set encounters from Part One, they make their way to the floating castle. Replace the Realm of Slaanesh location card with the Realm of Tzeentch location card and read or paraphrase the following to the players:

At last you stand beneath the floating castle. Looking up as it drifts slowly about in a seemingly random pattern, you can see that the rock on which it stands is shaped like a distorted letter 'S' – long and sinuous. You can hear what sounds like the muttering of a thousand birds, and occasionally a leathery-winged form flutters out for a brief flight from the lower reaches of the flying rock. There is no obvious way to get up there.

By now the PCs are likely to recognise the shape as one they've seen before on the regalia of the Cult of the Purple Hand or Cult of the Red Crown – the sigil of Tzeentch.

## DEATH IN THE WASTES

It is quite possible that one or more of the PCs may be killed during this part of the adventure. In the normal course of a game, a replacement PC can be created fairly quickly and simply, but in the Chaos Wastes there is no pool of potential replacements. The GM risks being faced with one or more characters forced to sit out the session while the party becomes progressively weaker, perhaps to the point where the adventure cannot be completed. The GM should use discretion in handling PC death in the Wastes; here are a few ideas:

### YOU'RE DEAD BUT YOU WON'T LIE DOWN

The dead PC stands back up. He's not any less dead than he was a moment ago, but evidently that doesn't matter to the Chaos Wastes. The PC recovers wounds equal to his Toughness during each Rally step and at the end of each encounter, but no healing magiks or other effects can help him. If and when the PC is returned to Altdorf, he is found cold and stiff.

### UNQUIET SOULS

The nature of the Chaos Wastes means that the dead PC's spirit cannot enter Morr's realm. If the GM has a copy of *The Creature Guide*, treat the PC as a spirit (pp. 49 and 101); otherwise, the PC's St, To, and Ag all drop to zero but other statistics, skills, and knowledge remain the same. Wounds are based on Willpower rather than Toughness, and are at maximum. The PC cannot touch or be touched by anything material but is still vulnerable to magical attacks, and is treated as unarmoured against them. The PC remains a spirit upon returning to the Old World; the GM should decide whether the spirit is dragged immediately into Morr's realm or whether a funeral service or exorcism is necessary to ease the spirit's passing. It might even be possible, with a lot of research and some expert help, to resurrect the dead PC magically, giving the party an objective that could last over several adventures. If a ghostly PC is killed in the Chaos Wastes, death is permanent.

### THANK SIGMAR YOU FOUND ME!

The PCs happen to find a mortal character who has been lost in the Chaos Wastes, either wandering through the madness or held as a prisoner in the castle or elsewhere. If the character is a prisoner, weapons and equipment may be stored elsewhere in the place where he or she is found. The replacement PC is generated normally, but will have mutations or insanities arising from his or her previous experiences. Draw one mutation and one insanity and apply them to the character at the end of character creation.

### AN UNEXPECTED ALLY

The PCs are approached by a Chaos Warrior, Sorcerer, or other servant of the Ruinous Powers, who offers to help them in their mission for inscrutable reasons of his own. This enemy becomes the new PC...but can they ever truly trust him?

## SCENE ONE — REACHING THE CASTLE

The first problem the PCs face is to find a way of getting up to the castle. It floats about two hundred feet in the air, and there is no ladder, rope, or other obvious way to climb up to it. To make matters worse, the lower regions of the rock on which the castle floats are infested with furies, winged daemons of no particular intelligence or affiliation. The PCs will have to use their ingenuity, but here are a few approaches they might try. The GM will have to judge other ideas on their merits and determine success or failure accordingly.

### FLYING

If the PCs have some form of magic or other ability that allows flying, then they'll have little difficulty reaching the castle. Of course they may have to contend with a handful of furies who make a small rookery of the castle's lower reaches, but no one said the Chaos Wastes would be safe.

### FURY-BAIT

The PCs may notice that the furies occasionally flutter down to eye them suspiciously. It won't be hard for a PC to make of himself a tempting target and induce the fury into swooping down and scooping the PC up to bring back to its lair and eat. Once this is accomplished, the PC "just" has to kill the fury and climb up to the castle proper.

## AN ACT OF WILL AND/OR DESPERATION

As the Great Unclean One and Konrad Mauer may have suggested to the PCs, sometimes things in the Chaos Wastes change to suit its residents. The PCs can use this to their advantage as they search for a way to reach the castle. If they look for a high pinnacle of rock to climb to get closer to the castle, they will find one. If they hope that the castle will drift close enough for a brave PC to leap across, it will do so. After all, the castle's master isn't actively trying to keep the PCs out.

## SCENE TWO — THE CASTLE OF MADNESS

The castle is a tangle of walls, turrets, and spires, put together seemingly at random. Its walls are constructed of a strange stone whose surface is dotted with faces and projecting limbs, as though hundreds of damned souls were trapped inside the stone. Its gates seem to be made of a smooth metal whose colours shift constantly. The gates appear solid, but the PCs will find that they are insubstantial; they can pass through the coruscating metal as though it were nothing more than mist. Once inside, they find themselves in an ever-changing environment.

### INSIDE THE CASTLE

Change is the very essence of Tzeentch's nature, and the layout of the castle is not constant. The castle consists of five layers which are not encountered in any set order.

When the PCs first enter the castle, and whenever they move from one area to another, the GM should roll one **◆** and refer to the Castle Location table to determine the nature of the area they have entered. (Alternately, the GM can simply have the PCs move through the rooms in any order he prefers.)

### CASTLE LOCATION TABLE

**Blank:** The PCs re-enter the area that they just left.

- ✘ The keep
- ✘✘ The laboratory
- ♣ The heraldic gallery
- ♣♣ The library

✧ If the PCs have not yet visited every other location, roll again (or the GM can choose another location). If they have, they go to the torture chamber

Whenever the PCs re-enter an area they have seen before, nothing has changed since they left: all enemies they killed there are still dead, and everything is as they left it.

If the PCs roll a location they have already visited twice, they go to the torture chamber despite the roll.

### NO WAY BACK

In each room of the castle, the PCs will quickly find that the door they came in through vanishes behind them. The only way out is forward.

### THE KEEP

The PCs pass through a veil of multicoloured mist to find themselves on top of a tall, round tower. Once they are on the tower, the mist dissipates and it is impossible to find the way by which they entered.

Looking over the battlements, they see nothing but empty air around and beneath the tower. If any PC falls off the tower, the fall causes 5 wounds and takes the character to a new area determined by rolling one **◆** and referring to the Castle Location table. When the other PCs leave the keep (by whatever means) they automatically go to the same place.

At the centre of the tower's battlements is a flagpole flying a huge banner bearing the symbol of Tzeentch. Beside it is a stout wooden trapdoor.

The banner has the effect of summoning a random servant of Tzeentch every turn, starting when the PCs enter the area. At the start of each turn, roll one **◆** and consult the following table:

**Blank:** 1 Horror

- ✘ 1 Flamer
- ✘✘ 1 Screamer
- ♣ 1 Marauder
- ♣♣ 1 Wargor
- ✧ 1 Chaos Warrior

Summoned servants drop from the pattern of the flag like drips of water, taking form instantly as they hit the flagstones. They immediately attack the nearest PC.

The only way to stop the flow of enemies is to destroy the banner. The flagpole and banner are treated as a single entity with a Toughness of 7 and 15 Wounds. When the banner is destroyed, it dissipates in an explosion of magical energy that strikes every PC within close range for 10 damage ignoring armour.

There are two ways out of this area: falling (see above) and opening the trapdoor. The trapdoor is bolted shut from the other side, and has Toughness 5 and 10 Wounds. Tearing the trapdoor open is a **Daunting (4d) Athletics (St) check**. Opening the trapdoor reveals a set of stone steps leading down into the misty darkness.

If the PCs flee while the banner is still flying, they are not pursued and the enemies currently manifested vanish.

## THE LABORATORY

This large, low-ceilinged room is crowded with benches and cabinets of magical and alchemical equipment. The cluttered surroundings add one manoeuvre to the cost of changing range increments for the PCs only. The animated objects are immune to this effect, and also to any area effects created by their own attacks.

As soon as the PCs enter, the magical and alchemical equipment animate and attack. Each piece of equipment is immune to critical damage and acts at the end of each round.

**Furnace:** This is built into the wall opposite the door through which the PCs enter (long range). Each turn, the furnace belches forth a sheet of blue flame out to medium range. Every character within the blast must make a **Daunting (4d) Coordination (Ag) check** or suffer 2 wounds. The furnace has Toughness 8 and ceases to function after suffering 15 wounds. The furnace can also be doused by hurling a large quantity of liquid or sand into it. A **Hard (3d) Observation (Int) check** will locate a barrel of water in the clutter of the laboratory; an **Average (2d) Athletics (St) check** will successfully hurl it into the furnace.

**Shattered Retorts:** Several long-necked glass vessels sit on metal stands above burners. When the PCs enter, the retorts animate and begin to fly around the room, shattering upon impact with walls and other objects and creating an environmental hazard. Whenever a PC in the room rolls ✨ on any check, they are deeply cut by one of the glass shards, suffering a critical wound, in addition to the normal Chaos Star effects.

**Stuffed Crocodile:** A stuffed crocodile hangs from the ceiling of the laboratory, dropping to the ground at medium range as soon as the PCs enter. It can make 2 move manoeuvres on its turn and still attack with a single Strength 5 bite which has a DR of 5. The Crocodile has Toughness 5 and 15 Wounds and is immune to the flames of the furnace, as it is so low to the ground.

**Skeleton:** A human skeleton hangs on a stand in a far corner of the room (long range). As soon as the PCs enter, it detaches itself from its stand, picks up a red-hot iron poker (hand weapon, +3 damage from the intense heat), and attacks. It uses the normal characteristics of a skeleton, except the damage of any attack against it is reduced to 1 wound. It is immune to the flames of the furnace.

**Broom:** When the PCs enter, a magically animated broom is sweeping the floor at medium range. It attacks immediately, flying through the air and beating the PCs with its handle. Use the stats of a Horror. When the broom is destroyed for the first time, it splits into two identical brooms and each continues to attack. Thereafter, roll ■ every time a broom is destroyed; a ✨ result indicates that it has split into two more brooms, while any other result indicates that that particular broom is truly destroyed.

**Beaker:** A crucible of purplish-grey liquid bubbles on a stand over a spirit burner at long range from the door through which the PCs enter. It immediately begins to pour out a cloud of vapour that fills the room. From the end of first round until the crucible is destroyed (it has Toughness 4, Wounds 4), the entire laboratory is covered in choking toxic smoke. Each PC gains the Blinded and Sluggish condition for as long as they are caught in the vapours. All of the animated equipment is immune to this smoke. The liquid in the beaker is not enough to douse the furnace, but if the PCs hurl the

beaker into the furnace (**Average (2d) Athletics (St) check**) the furnace sputters and does not burn anyone this round, and the beaker shatters, its contents evaporating over the next round.

The only exit from the laboratory is through a hidden door behind the furnace. It is a **Hard (3d) Observation (Int) check** to find the hidden catch for the first time: add ■■ if the furnace has not yet been put out of action. When the catch is released the furnace slides aside, revealing a low, narrow passage that stretches away into darkness. If all the animated objects are destroyed (except for the shattered retorts), the PCs can find the exit automatically as they have the luxury of time in which to search.

## THE HERALDIC GALLERY

This long, broad hall is lined with mannequins – over a hundred in all. Some are dressed in ornate, weirdly patterned armour while others wear robes embroidered with equally strange designs. Above them on the walls are shields painted with a wide array of arcane symbols. There is a doorway at the far end of the hall.

The display includes the armour and heraldry of several dozen cults and warbands of Tzeentch, showing the symbols and designs that they commonly use. The PCs might recognise the Purple Hand and the Red Crown among the symbols if they have previously encountered either cult. Any PC who has been through this gallery gains □□ to recognise any cult symbols or heraldry of Tzeentch in the future.

As soon as the PCs see the gallery, the players will likely be waiting for the mannequins to animate and attack. However, they are simply a distraction to keep the PCs from noticing the true danger here.



## ETHEREAL

Ethereal creatures can pass through solid objects and against non-magical or non-divine effects, their soak value is increased by their Willpower rating. Their attacks ignore the Defence rating of the target's armour.

It takes six movement manoeuvres to walk the length of the gallery; one end is at extreme range from the other. Each turn, when a PC performs at least one movement manoeuvre, he must make a **Hard (3d) Observation (Int) check** to spot any traps around him. If he is successful he may suffer 1 fatigue to avoid the trap. If the PCs remain together in a group, then only one of them should make this test (presumably the one with the best Observation) while the others assist (□ for each assistant), and all pass or fail together.

Although the traps are non-magical in themselves, they are in the realm of Tzeentch, so their positions are not fixed. The PCs must repeat the checks even if they have been through this area before. Each turn, the GM rolls one ♦ in plain view of the PCs to determine the nature of the trap that is currently in the area the PC is crossing:

**Blank: Nothing** – There is a hidden trigger mechanism here, but it is not connected to anything and there is no way to disarm it. It is here purely to worry the PCs. However, if the PCs have already encountered three or more traps or encounter Nothing for a third time, refer to the Never Trust Chaos section.

✕ **Oiled Pit Trap** – A pressure plate causes an entire section of the floor to give way. The PC needs to make a **Hard (3d) Coordination (Ag) check** to avoid dropping 15 feet into a smooth oil-slicked pit. The fall causes 8 base damage with another 2 damage per ☠ and +1 critical for each ✨. Attempts to climb out of the pit (which are Hard) suffer ■■ because the sides are covered in slippery oil.

✕✕ **Dart Trap** – A fine wire stretched across the hallway causes a spread of darts to fire across the entire passage when any PC walks into it. Every character in the room rolls ■■; he suffers 1 wound per ✕ and 1 fatigue per ☠.

☠ **Poisoned Spear Trap** – A pressure plate in the floor causes four long spears to spring out from a wall. The PC, and any characters within close range of him, must make a successful **Hard (3d) Coordination (Ag) check** or suffer 8 damage and gain the Weakened condition while in the heraldic gallery and the next room he visits. Each ✨ rolled adds +1 critical.

☠☠ **Falling Block** – A pressure plate in the floor causes a stone block to fall from the ceiling. The PC, and any characters engaged with him, must make an **Average (2d) Coordination (Ag) check** or he is hit on the head for 10 damage and gains the Perplexed condition while in the heraldic gallery and the next room he visits.

✨ **Clashing Blocks** – A tripwire causes stone blocks to slide out from either wall, potentially crushing anyone caught between them. The PC, and any characters engaged with him, must make a **Hard (3d) Coordination (Ag) check** to avoid being crushed for 12 damage.

## NEVER TRUST CHAOS

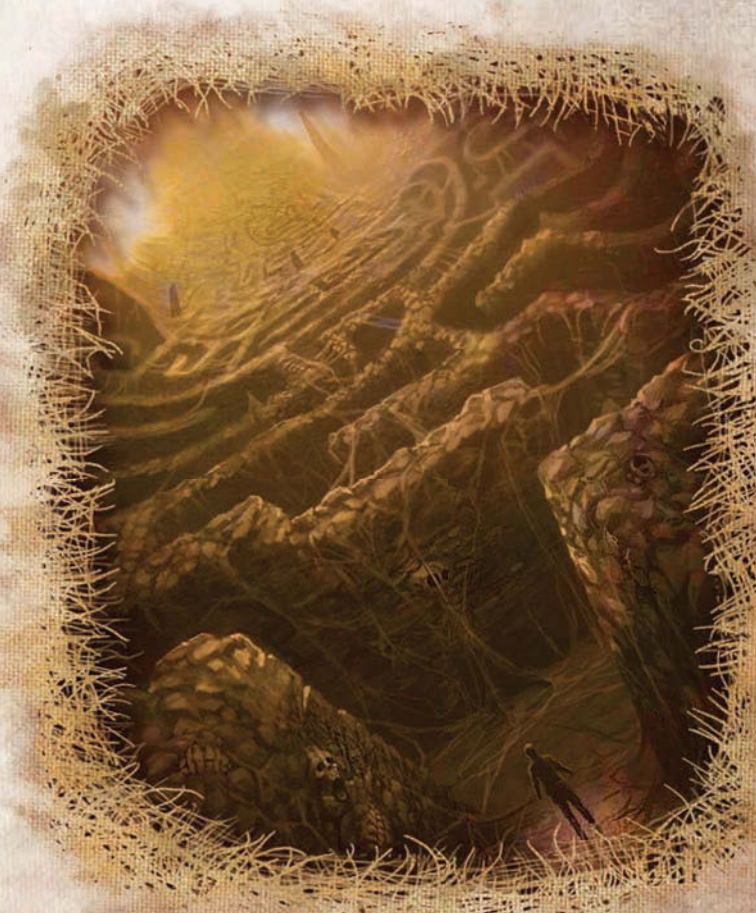
It was stated above that the heraldic display was set up to distract the PCs from the task of searching for mechanical traps. That is true – at first. The third time a Nothing result is rolled to determine what trap a PC encounters, or if a Nothing result is rolled and the PCs have already encountered three or more traps, that changes. Change is in the nature of Chaos, after all, and Tzeentch is the Changer of the Ways.

When this event occurs, one mannequin animates for each of the PCs. Each is within medium range of the PC it emulates. For each wizard or priest in the party, a robed mannequin animates with the statistics and spells of a Sorcerer of Tzeentch; for all others, an armoured mannequin animates with the statistics of a Chaos Warrior. The mannequins are immune to critical damage, but are otherwise identical to their living counterparts.

In addition, this gallery is an exception to the general rule that when the PCs re-enter an area, it is always as they left it. Whenever the PCs re-enter the heraldic gallery, it is always as though they are encountering it for the first time.

## THE LIBRARY

This room is lined with floor-to-ceiling bookshelves filled with ethereal books. In the middle of the room stands a long table with eight chairs ranged around it. A large physical book lays open on the table. There is a door directly across the room from where the PCs entered.



As the PCs enter, they see a misty figure floating about, replacing armful of books on various shelves. It looks like an elderly woman, though her lower body vanishes into mist. She turns to look as the PCs enter, as if disapproving of their noise. Then her face distorts in a savage snarl and she attacks.

If the GM has access to *The Creature Guide*, the librarian is a Cairn Wraith. If not, she has the profile of a Crypt Ghoul, without any of the corresponding special abilities. Instead, she has the Ethereal ability in addition to the standard Undead traits.

As the librarian attacks, the ghostly books in the library become animated, flying off the shelves in a storm of hazy missiles and hurling themselves straight into and through the PCs. Each PC must make a **Hard (3d) Discipline (WP) check** at the start of each round to withstand the forbidden and corrupting knowledge that the tomes force directly into his mind. Failure means that the PCs suffer 1 stress. If the check results in one or more ✖, the PC suffers a *Chaos*, *Supernatural*, or *Trauma* temporary insanity. If the librarian is defeated, the books flutter back to their shelves.

The door on the other side of the library opens to reveal the library again (with the PCs looking at the backs of their own heads as they peer through the door). The true exit is hidden behind a bookcase that swings open to reveal a passage leading away into the darkness. Finding the hidden exit is a **Daunting (4d) Observation (Int) check** while the librarian is still alive, or an **Average (2d) Observation (Int) check** if the librarian has been killed (if this check is failed, the PCs find the exit eventually, but it takes so long they must test against corruption again).

The book on the desk is a copy of the forbidden *Liber Mutandum*, a holy text of Tzeentch. Reading the book takes five hours and gives the reader ■ to all Folklore and Education checks concerning Tzeentch and his followers. However, anyone reading the book must make a **Hard (3d) Discipline (WP) check** for each hour of study or suffer one point each of stress and corruption. Reading the book while still in the Chaos Wastes is unwise, of course (the delay will result in more tests against corruption), but there's no reason the PCs can't bring the book with them to read later.

## THE TORTURE CHAMBER

This is the final encounter in the Castle of Madness. Here, the PCs finally catch up with the Black Cowl for what they are likely expecting will be the final showdown.

The PCs enter a dark, dank room with walls of rough stone. The only light comes from a brazier that stands in the middle of the room, the flames casting weird shadows across the chamber.

The Black Cowl lies strapped to a table. Around him, a crowd of Pink and Blue Horrors caper in sadistic glee, torturing him with hot irons, sharp blades, and their own claws and teeth. His screams of agony ring off the stone walls and ceiling, almost drowning out the booming, disembodied voice that keeps up an endless litany of blame.

"You sought to use the servants of Tzeentch to your own ends," it says. "Puny, foolish mortal – do you think yourself superior to the Ruinous Powers? Your plots are feeble and childlike in their simplicity. You are a mere insect by comparison to the glory of Tzeentch. You are nothing. Be reborn and remade in the image of his glory!" And so it goes on.



The Horrors are intent on their enjoyment in torturing the Black Cowl, and ignore the PCs until they are attacked. However, they will turn on the PCs as one at the first aggressive action, including any attempt to free the Cowl. There is one Blue Horror and one Pink Horror for each of the PCs.

Anyone who examines the Black Cowl carefully can see that the Horrors are steadily cutting away portions of his flesh and then allowing them to regrow (which seems to happen almost instantaneously). They are also sculpting and moulding his flesh as they go. The Black Cowl's features are already distorted by more than just pain and fear. His nose and mouth have been joined, forming a beak-like aspect, and it seems his skull has been elongated. His fingers and arms have been stretched out longer than the PCs will remember, and it seems as if patches of feathers are protruding through his torn clothes.

In fact, although there's no particular way for the PCs to know this, the Black Cowl is being slowly transformed into a Lord of Change, a greater daemon of Tzeentch.

The PCs have two broad options at this point: free the Black Cowl or slay him. Attempting to do either will arouse the ire of the horrors overseeing his torturous transformation. As the PCs may soon discover, the Black Cowl's flesh mends itself too quickly for them to kill him while he remains strapped to the table. In fact, if the PCs attack the Cowl the daemons cackle and clap their hands with glee as his flesh knits itself back together from any wounds the PCs inflict. The daemons will happily step back and let the PCs have a turn "torturing" the Black Cowl if that appears to be their intention. (Eventually, however, the daemons will get bored or suspicious.)



### BATTLE IS JOINED

If the PCs make any attempt to free the Black Cowl or attack any of the daemons, then battle is joined! The daemons fight to the death.

### FREEING THE COWL

The PCs may conclude that the Black Cowl cannot be slain while he is strapped to the table (or simply that he cannot be slain at all). Thus, the only way to complete their mission is to bring him back to Altdorf. Cutting him loose and lifting him from the table is a trivial task – if there aren't any horrors engaged with the table preventing it!

Once the PCs have lifted the Black Cowl from the table, he collapses, too weak to stand. (He can also be killed now, should the PCs desire it.) The castle shakes, the surviving daemons (if any) shriek in dismay, and the stones of the castle fly about, rearranging themselves into a larger space of otherworldly aspect. This triggers a rally step, during which a massive and terrifying shape hauls itself through a newly created window and shrieks like a dozen screaming birds of prey. The creature is vaguely in the shape of a man, but massive in size and covered in feathers of no fixed colour. Two enormous wings spring from its back and at the end of its long and sinuous neck rests a beaked face like a vulture or bird of prey. This is a Lord of Change, and undoubtedly the master of the castle.

### THE CASTLE'S RULER

The appearance of the castle's ruler signifies the beginning of a mighty struggle that will bring this section to an end. The daemons all fight to the death, and while their goal is to recapture (rather than kill) the Black Cowl, they have no compunctions about killing the PCs. Fleeing the torture chamber is an option, but the PCs will find that the castle rearranges itself as they run, entrances appear-

ing and disappearing at a whim, staircases shifting, and gravity pointing in no fixed direction. The daemons have no difficulties navigating these hazards and will pursue the PCs wherever they go.

If the GM is concerned that the castle's ruler is too dangerous for the PCs, he has several options to tone the challenge down somewhat without giving them a free ride.

- ✦ Rather than a Lord of Change, the castle's ruler could be a less dangerous opponent such as a Daemon Prince of Tzeentch, a powerful sorcerer of Tzeentch (perhaps upgraded via the Black Cowl elite threat sheet), or even the Changeling.
- ✦ The laborious effort of maintaining the flying castle reduces the A/C/E budget of the castle's ruler by a substantial amount.
- ✦ This particular Lord of Change is stunted or ill in some manner unique to daemons, and its characteristics are all one or two points lower than would be expected.

### HEIMKOMEN!

The PCs may think to join hands and use the mystic gemstone to escape once they have the Black Cowl (or once he is dead). This is excellent thinking! If they do this, transition directly to Part Three. Note that the daemons will have no way to know what the gem is capable of, and so no particular reason to prevent the PCs from doing this.

### VICTORY!

If the PCs are able to kill the master of the castle, his death throes are protracted and impressive, with much flashing of coloured, magical light spewing from his wounds. Unfortunately, his death also means the death of the castle, which comes apart around the PCs like an angry god were putting away its toys. Each brick detaches from the rest of the castle, then streaks up into the sky to vanish from sight. Soon the rock on which the castle stood crumbles away in the same manner, until there is nothing left to support the PCs and they fall. They should have plenty of time to gather together and use their mystical gem, which is when things truly get strange. The PCs are suddenly engulfed in a corona of purple light, then awaken to find themselves lying scattered in the square in front of the Holy Temple of Sigmar in Altdorf. Transition to Part Three: the Road Home.



# PART THREE — THE ROAD HOME

This final section takes the PCs through the heart of Chaos as they try to find their way back to Altdorf and safety. It consists of the following scenes:

**Scene One, Pomp and Circumstance**, brings the PCs to an apparently triumphant return to Altdorf, but this turns out to be an illusion created by the twisted mind of Tzeentch.

**Scene Two, The Rewards of Valour**, sees them in another version of their return, this time brought forth by Slaanesh.

**Scene Three, A Well-Deserved Rest**, inflicts Nurgle's vision upon them.

**Scene Four, A Fight to the Finish**, shows Khorne's plans for Altdorf.

If the PCs travelled through the Chaos Wastes in the expected route described in Part Two, then the order of these scenes represents a "travelling backwards" experience, with each false Altdorf vision corresponding to the portion of the Chaos Wastes they travelled through in reverse order.

The Epilogue discusses the GM's options for dealing with the lasting effects of the campaign upon the PCs' minds, bodies, and reputations.

## SCENE ONE — POMP AND CIRCUMSTANCE

The PCs appear to have landed back in Altdorf, but in fact they are caught within an elaborate illusion created by Tzeentch. The Changer of the Ways has not finished with them, and they must confront the weaknesses of mortal nature through which Tzeentch most commonly finds his way into the world: pride and ambition.

### ENCOUNTER ONE — ARRIVAL

The PCs clamber to their feet, feeling bruised and sore. The body of the Black Cowl lies nearby. He is unconscious but still breathing. (Unless they've killed him, of course, in which case he's quite dead.)

As the PCs are dusting themselves off, a crowd begins to gather. A junior priest comes out to investigate: his eyes widen as he recognises the PCs, and he ducks back inside. A few moments later, the surviving major NPCs come out, greeting the PCs enthusiastically and telling the crowd that these brave adventurers have saved the Empire from the evil schemes of Chaos.

The crowd begins to cheer, and the PCs find themselves being carried shoulder-high through the streets. Flowers are thrown at them, bottles of wine are pressed into their hands, and in one touching incident a little girl gives one of the PCs a crude doll made of sacking and fabric scraps, saying, "Her name is Ilse and I love her very much, but I've nothing else to thank you with. Whenever I think of her now I'll think of you, and I'll remember to be good and brave and never let the Bad Ones get me."

The cheering procession carries the PCs to the palace, where the two surviving major NPCs usher them inside. Two Reiksguard Knights haul the Black Cowl off, promising to deliver him to the Witch Hunters. After a long walk through gorgeously appointed corridors, the PCs find themselves in the Imperial bedchamber.

### ENCOUNTER TWO — A TEMPTING OFFER

Karl Franz lies in bed, pale and barely moving. His servants are dismissed so the PCs can make their report, but he seems to drift in and out of consciousness. It is far from certain whether he hears anything the PCs say. If the PCs express surprise, as the Emperor had recovered before they left for the wastes, they are met with the grave shake of the head. "He's relapsed."

The two NPCs look down sadly at the Emperor after the PCs have finished speaking. Then they draw them aside and make them a staggering offer. The GM should read or paraphrase the following speeches to the players, according to which of the three major NPCs are present.

**Baerfaust:** "He can't hold on for much longer. Neither the doctors nor the wizards nor the whole Cult of Shallya have been able to do anything for him. We need a new Emperor, but an election could tear the Empire apart. We can't afford that in the middle of this war. You've already saved the Empire once – will you do so again? The nobles may balk, but I can promise you the support of the army."

**Mauer:** "He's fading fast. Nothing has been working. The nobles are already gathering like vultures ready for an election, but it would be folly to hold one at this time. The threat from Chaos is simply too great. However, you've become heroes. The people would be with you once they know what you've done – and I can make sure that happens. The wizards are with you. We can give you godlike powers to defend the Empire and drive out this pestilence of Chaos. No one deserves to rule more than you do."

**Von Kaufman:** "Don't worry about the nobility – they'll listen to me. You can be elected as a ruling council. Keep the Emperor as a figurehead or dispose of him, it's your choice. He's in no position to resist."

The PCs may not be able to believe their ears. Are they really being offered the rulership of the Empire on a silver platter? It's almost inconceivable. Almost, but not quite: they did go to hell and back – literally, according to some theologies – to save the Empire from a deadly threat. Surely if anyone deserves to rule, it's them.

While these thoughts may be chasing each other through the players' heads, the PCs may notice some subtle clues that this scene is not real. Each clue requires a **Hard (3d) Observation (Int) check** unless stated otherwise.

- ✦ There are no symbols of Sigmar anywhere: no hammers, no twin-tailed comets. There would surely be some in the palace of an Emperor who claims to rule as Sigmar's heir. Come to think of it, there wasn't even a symbol of Sigmar on the cathedral outside where the PCs woke up. (Devout Sigmarites gain  to notice this.)
- ✦ Images of the Imperial crown are red rather than gold. The Emperor's crown is often seen in heraldry of Altdorf and Reikland, as well as the Emperor's personal arms, and it is normally depicted in gold. Of course, one of the cults they confronted in this adventure was called the Red Crown. (PCs with a noble rank gain  to checks to notice this.)

- ✦ Arcane magic and blessings are still affected as they were in the Chaos Wastes. Any attempt to use magic or blessings will reveal this immediately, otherwise **Hard (3d) Channelling (WP)**, **Magical Sight (Int)**, or **Piety (WP)** checks will do the same.
- ✦ A **Hard (3d) Intuition (Int)** check suggests that there is something vaguely 'off' about the NPCs. They aren't quite themselves. They may also flinch slightly whenever the name of Sigmar or any of the other gods is mentioned.

### AMBITION'S REPROOF

If the PCs decide to accept the rulership of the Empire, they have fallen for the wiles of Tzeentch. Each character who accepted the offer of the false NPCs (really daemons of Tzeentch in disguise) is exposed to a major source of corruption. They must also make **Hard (3d) Discipline (WP)** checks. If they fail, they have fallen into the thrall of Tzeentch and, unless they can be freed by their companions (see **Saving the Fallen** below), are lost forever as slaves to darkness. If they pass, they recognise that something is amiss, and the illusion shatters for them as described in **The Reward of Virtue** below.

### THE REWARD OF VIRTUE

If the PCs all reject the daemons' offer, the illusion shatters and they find themselves in a rough building made either of stone or the fused souls of the damned (it's hard to tell). All the NPCs are revealed as horrors of Tzeentch, who shriek with frustration and attack! If the PCs flee from the "palace" or defeat all the daemons, they are hurled through the void again and land in the next scene.

### SAVING THE FALLEN

If some PCs fall under Tzeentch's thrall but others do not, those who reject the daemons' offer see the illusion shatter as described above. They also see their enthralled compatriots sink to their knees with a glassy-eyed stare – they cannot see the world around them any longer. Free PCs can drag their enthralled compatriots from the palace and to safety, or drag them with them across the void if the daemons are all slain.

## SCENE TWO – THE REWARDS OF VALOUR

Once again, the PCs appear to be in Altdorf, but they have passed out of the realm of Tzeentch and into that of Slaanesh. Once again they will be tempted by an elaborate illusion, and must overcome some of the mortal weaknesses by which the Ruinous Powers gain their foothold in the world. This time, they will be tempted with the luxury and self-indulgence that are the favoured tools of Slaanesh.

### LOOKS FAMILIAR

Having already been through one Chaotic illusion, the PCs may be more suspicious this time. If they uncovered certain clues that led them to see through the deceptions of Tzeentch, they will probably be looking out for them now. All the flaws in the Tzeentch illusion noted in **Pomp and Circumstance** are still present, unless the PCs have already found them, in which case Slaanesh had made some changes to make them harder to spot. Here are some notes on how the GM can deal with their suspicions:

- ✦ Symbols of Sigmar: If the PCs look for symbols of Sigmar, they will see them everywhere they expect them to be. However, it will take a **Daunting (4d) Observation (Int)** check to reveal that the symbols have been very subtly corrupted. All the symbols of Sigmar the PCs see are elaborate – as might be expected, indeed, from works of art furnishing an Imperial palace – but their intricate designs hide minor but significant errors: the twin-tailed comet incorporates decorative additions that turn it into a symbol of Slaanesh, while the Hammer of Sigmar has swirling designs on its haft that conceal suggestive figures in attitudes of wanton excess.
- ✦ The Imperial Crown is gold, as the PCs will expect, but once again a **Daunting (4d) Observation (Int)** check reveals that the design has been subtly altered to incorporate hidden symbols of Slaanesh.
- ✦ Magic: Arcane magic and divine blessings are still unpredictable.
- ✦ NPC Behaviour: A **Daunting (4d) Intuition (Int)** check is required to tell that the NPCs aren't quite themselves. Being versed in the arts of seduction, the daemons of Slaanesh are better actors than those of Tzeentch.

## ENCOUNTER ONE – ARRIVAL

The scene from the previous illusion repeats itself in every detail, right down to the little girl with the doll – except that the doll's name is Emmi rather than Ilse. Instead of being taken to the Imperial bedchamber, though, the PCs find Karl Franz waiting for them in the palace courtyard.

Read or paraphrase the following to the players:

Your hearts lift as you see the Emperor waiting to greet you. He looks in perfect health: none the worse for his ordeal, and more handsome than you expected. Gorgeously dressed Reiksguard Knights stand at rigid attention to either side of him, while his legendary griffon Deathclaw stands behind, spreading its magnificent wings and giving a shrill cry as you enter the courtyard.

Your companions bow as the Emperor approaches, and nudge you to do the same.

Incredibly, the Emperor bows back. Such a thing has never been heard of.

"It's only fitting that I should bow to you," he says with a beaming smile. "My good friends, [here he names the remaining major NPCs], have told me much about the plot you helped to uncover and defeat. The Empire is greatly in your debt. So, I suspect, is the whole of the Old World, although I doubt we'll ever get the Bretonnians to acknowledge that!" He laughs at his own joke.

"How can I reward such outstanding service? Not adequately, I'm sure, though I have a few ideas. It hasn't escaped my notice that the Averland could do with an Elector Count, and I've had my chamberlain draw up a list of other honours and titles that are currently vacant. But come inside – there will be plenty of time to discuss such matters over dinner. I'm sure you are looking forward to a hot bath followed by good food and wine."



than they have ever seen it; Graf Friedrich has always been handsome and impeccably dressed, but now he looks almost divine. Perhaps Countess Emmanuelle is present and seems ten years younger than the last time the PCs saw her, or Gravin Clothilde's dress is far more revealing than her typical attire. Of course, everyone wants to look their best for a dinner in the Emperor's presence, but that scar...?

- ✦ A **Hard (3d) Observation (Int) check** is necessary to realise that the food and drink are also, somehow, just too good. Perhaps a PC is served something they normally hate, only to find that it is the most delicious thing they have ever tasted. Perhaps the Imperial cooks know how to make even cabbage taste good. A hard-to-find liquor or delicacy is produced instantly on demand, in unlimited quantities. Everything stays the perfect temperature no matter how long it is left out.
- ✦ The feast never seems to end; the food is never exhausted, the PCs never become overfull or exhausted, and nothing becomes dirty or soiled. Everything has an eerie timeless quality to it; a PC will have to pass an **Average (2d) Intuition (Int) check** to accurately gauge how much time he has spent at the feast.

### THE FRUITS OF LUXURY

If the PCs accept anything that they are offered – be it food, drink, or the embraces of a server – they suffer minor, moderate, or major corruption depending on how deeply they partake. Any PC who sits down to the feast will have to pass a **Hard (3d) Discipline (WP) check** to leave it. Even if their companions are in a fight for their lives with daemons (who will still appear to be humans to those under the spell of the feast), PCs who are still enjoying the feast will have to struggle to do anything but enjoy themselves.

### VIRTUE'S REWARD

A PC who turns down every delight offered to him penetrates the illusion, which seems to evaporate around him. Rather than the Imperial palace, he finds himself in a “building” that appears to be constructed of nude human forms sinuously intertwined; they move very slowly against one another as they form the walls, floors, ceiling, and furniture. The NPCs are all revealed as daemones of Slaanesh, and attack.

As before, if the PCs flee from the “palace” or defeat all the daemons, they are hurled across the void into Scene 3.

## SCENE THREE – A WELL-DESERVED REST

Having escaped the trap set by Slaanesh, the PCs pass into a third illusion – this time created by Nurgle the Plaguefather. This is the most subtle illusion of all, because it does not feature any mention of disease.

Nurgle knows all too well how easily that aspect of his power can be recognised. Instead, this illusion is based upon the less obvious aspects of his nature that he uses to seduce those whose natural revulsion to disease and decay cannot be overcome: the subtle call of entropy to the vices of sloth and the passive acceptance of unpleasant realities.

## ENCOUNTER TWO – THE GOOD LIFE

The PCs are ushered into the palace while the final preparations are made for a great feast in their honour. As the Emperor promised, they are given hot baths and fresh clothes of the finest quality and taste. Then the feast begins.

The PCs are seated at the Emperor's own table, along with the major NPCs. They are served by the most beautiful scions of the Empire's finest families, whose eyes shine with adoration and unspoken promise. The food is the best they have ever tasted, and the wine is heady and warming. As talk turns to titles, lands, and incomes, the PCs are told that they will never have to risk their lives again: they can do whatever they want now, protected by wealth and position.

The GM should feel free to add embellishments according to their personal histories: a free pardon for past crimes, a former enemy brought low by the Emperor's disfavour, the object of an unrequited love returned and determined to make up for his or her former coldness. Truly, the PCs have not a single care in the world.

In addition to the clues mentioned in the boxed text above, there are other subtle indications that all is not what it might seem:

- ✦ No one seems to notice any mutations that the PCs have picked up in the Chaos Wastes. In fact, the PCs have no trouble concealing them, and may even forget that they are there. Has Sigmar favoured them by removing the taint they gained in his service?
- ✦ A **Hard (3d) Observation (Int) check** indicates that the major NPCs – and indeed the other PCs – somehow look just too good. A small scar that marred Captain Baerfaust's face is gone; Mauer's beard is more neatly trimmed and carefully brushed

## SUSPICIOUS MINDS

By now, the PCs are probably actively looking for clues that this is yet another illusion. Having realised that the last two illusions were created by Tzeentch and Slaanesh, they are probably looking particularly hard for signs of Nurgle or Khorne. The clues in the last scene (see page 174) are still there, but Nurgle has taken extra care to make them less obvious, meaning that all checks to spot them are at least **Daunting (4d)** and possibly even **Heroic (5d)**. Other clues are covered below.

### ENCOUNTER ONE — ARRIVAL

The PCs' arrival in Altdorf is just as it has been the last two times, except that the little girl's doll is named Hanna and is missing one of its button eyes. The streets are convincingly grubby – in fact, the PCs may realise that in hindsight, Altdorf appeared somewhat too clean before – and among the crowds that gather they will see a couple of people with scars, missing limbs, and other deformities.

The surviving major NPCs look convincingly like themselves. Baerfaust has brought back a couple of fresh scars from the front, Mauer's fingernails are a little dirty, and Graf Friedrich has a slight cough. Paranoid PCs may take these details to be a sign of Nurgle's influence, but there is nothing that would make them suspicious in the real world.

As in the first illusion, the PCs are ushered into the Imperial bedchamber and the doctors are dismissed.

### ENCOUNTER TWO — A KIND RELEASE

Karl Franz lies in bed, barely moving. His body is swollen and his face congested: his breathing is ragged. The smell in the chamber is almost overpowering. The NPCs look down sadly at the Emperor after the PCs have delivered their report. Then they draw them aside and make an incredible suggestion. The GM should read or paraphrase the following speeches to the players, according to which of the three major NPCs is present.

**Baerfaust:** “This is what our Emperor has come to. His wound has become badly infected, but that's not the worst of it. Underneath those covers he's barely human any more. Schwarzhelm and Helborg have been doing their best to keep word from leaking out, but you can imagine what it would do to the Empire if the people learned that their Emperor is a plague-ridden mutant. It's treason, and I know it, but it has to be said. Someone should put him out of his misery. Better he should die now and be buried as a hero than that the people should see him as... this.”

**Mauer:** “This is Nurgle's work: a mere initiate could see that. The strange thing is that it seems to be actually keeping him alive. But why? As some kind of plague vessel? Is he undergoing a transformation into...? No, that's too horrible to contemplate. This cannot be concealed for much longer: the people have been clamouring for weeks to see their Emperor, but how can we show them this? I wish he could die. It would be an end to his suffering and an end to whatever danger he might pose to everyone around him.”

**Von Kaufmann:** “If word of this leaked out there would be panic, possibly even civil war. Some ambitious noble is bound to make a bid for the throne – or for the independence of his province – on the claim that the Emperor was a mutant all along. I'm as loyal as the next man, but the Emperor's condition has made him a danger to the



Empire itself. He needs to go, quickly and quietly. He needs to be buried and mourned as the hero he was. Then we need to elect a new Emperor who can defend the Empire and hold it together.”

Are the PCs really being asked to commit regicide? The NPCs' arguments have merit, that cannot be denied – but this could be some kind of trap. Already made suspicious by their experiences at the hands of Tzeentch and Slaanesh, the PCs may look for clues that this, too, is an illusion. Apart from those covered above, there are none.

### A FALSE KINDNESS

If the PCs help to murder the stricken Emperor or stand by while an NPC does so, they have played into Nurgle's hands, giving in to sloth, despair, and helplessness. Read or paraphrase the following to the players:

The knife goes into the Emperor's twisted body with a soft pop like the puncturing of a grape skin. He twitches once, then lies still.

A heavy silence falls over the room. The others exchange stricken looks with you – and then begin to laugh. The sound of their laughter is joined by another voice – a booming, almost deafening laugh of triumph that seems to shake the walls.

A huge, disgusting shape rises from the bed, sloughing off the Emperor's skin like a tattered overcoat. It towers above you, slime and pus oozing from countless pustules across its bloated surface. You look to the others – and see that they have transformed into daemons – still humanoid, but each with a single red eye and a single horn erupting from their foreheads. At the same time, you find red, seeping pustules starting to break out all over your skin.

As in the Tzeentch illusion, each PC faces a major source of corruption. The Emperor has been replaced by a Great Unclean One (not the same daemon the PCs met earlier), and each of the other NPCs with a plaguebearer. The daemons make no immediate move to attack the PCs, simply mocking them with their laughter and then offering their hands in friendship. The longer the PCs stay in the “palace” (now a ramshackle structure of rotting wooden beams and crumbling stone choking with lichen), the more corruption and disease checks they must make.

If the PCs attack the daemons, they fight to the death. When the daemons are defeated, the PCs are hurled through the void to the next scene. If the PCs flee the palace, the daemons make no move to pursue, and once again the PCs are hurled through the void.

### VIRTUE’S REWARD

If the NPCs are prevented from murdering the Emperor, they reveal themselves as plaguebearers and attack. The illusion is shattered as described above and the PCs may escape as described above. The Emperor does not manifest as a Great Unclean One.

## SCENE FOUR — A FIGHT TO THE FINISH

Brass-throned Khorne despises illusion and other magical tricks, so this time the PCs are cast into the real Altdorf – but after everything they have experienced they are unlikely to believe it. They must defend the Emperor from an onslaught of Khorne’s followers.

### ENCOUNTER ONE — ARRIVAL

This time the PCs arrive with no particular pomp or circumstance. It is shortly before dawn as they find themselves in the plaza before the Holy Temple of Sigmar. An iron-clad knight (perhaps Preceptor Joachim) approaches them with his sword half-drawn from its scabbard, shouting a challenge. If the PCs explain who they are, he calls out towards the temple and a junior priest scurries forward with a lantern and proclaims that they are, indeed, who they claim to be.

The knight then sheathes his sword and offers the PCs a salute. “It would be my privilege to escort you to the palace. I’m certain the Emperor’s Champion would wish to hear of your return.” The priest volunteers to run and fetch anyone else the PCs wish to report to (such as Luminary Mauer or von Lichtenstein).

The knight confers briefly with his colleagues guarding the Holy Temple, then leads the PCs on the short walk to the Imperial Palace. A small crowd gathers as the PCs go – bakers wiping flour from their hands, dairymen with carts full of milk, colliers with their faces blackened by coal dust, night watchmen coming off-shift, and other early risers.

Since this is really and truly Altdorf (although the PCs may have a hard time believing that), it will reflect the events prior to the PCs leaving through the portal – the Emperor will be recovered (or not), Graf Friedrich, Captain Baerfaust, and/or Luminary Mauer will have risen or fallen in society as appropriate, and other friends, allies, and adversaries from their adventures may be present. When the PCs are greeted by Ludwig Schwarzhelm, he will be cordial or cold as suits his relationship with them. (If this is the first time the PCs have met Schwarzhelm, he will be gruff but appreciative.)

Schwarzhelm receives the PCs in the Kaiserplatz. If the Emperor is sufficiently recovered, he may be present as well. Mindful of the crowd, Schwarzhelm moves to swiftly proclaim their heroism, welcome them back to Altdorf, and then spirit them away into the palace for a more private debriefing. Before he can get more than a few words out, however, the attack begins.

### ENCOUNTER TWO — ATTACK!

Read or paraphrase the following (editing to account for the status, presence, or absence of the Emperor as appropriate):

Schwarzhelm begins with stiff formality: “In the Empire’s darkest hour, these people stepped forward to defend their Emperor and his people. We welcome these heroes back to Altdorf in—” The rest of his speech goes unsaid as a horn blares an alarm.

The Reiksguard Knights close ranks to screen the Emperor from the unseen threat. Two burly servants lift the Emperor up – chair and all – and carry him back into the palace. Between you and the knights, the air shimmers briefly, taking on a slight reddish hue. Suddenly, it seems to become almost solid, then, in an instant, a pack of daemons rips through it as though tearing through a fleshy membrane that separates different worlds. The semi-solid mist hangs in bloody tatters, dripping blood onto the ground. Red-skinned and goat-legged, the daemons clutch massive, bloody blades in their clawed hands. Their heads are elongated and crowned with horns, and their fanged mouths pour forth a hissing cry of hatred.

### SO ABOUT THAT EXTRA HEAD...

It’s possible that the PCs have returned from the Chaos Wastes with a few mutations, even with the protection of Mauer’s gem. If they’ve already taken precautions to hide their mutations (or if they’re not immediately obvious), then all may be well. If the PCs arrive with obvious mutations, however, they are in grave danger. The Cult of Sigmar has a zero-tolerance policy for mutants, regardless of their great deeds. The best that can be hoped for in terms of mercy from the Cult or the Witch Hunters is a quick, clean death (rather than the more typical burning alive).

So it might seem surprising to the PCs that, if they have any obvious mutations the junior priest arrives with a cloak and helps hide them with no comment. The reason is simple: the Cult is also aware of the dangers of scandal. The Cult’s goal (and the Emperor’s) is to receive a detailed debriefing from the PCs, then dispose of any mutants with private dignity, and finally to celebrate the survivors. The official story will be that any mutated PCs died in the Chaos Wastes – and died as heroes. If the mutated PCs accept their fate with dignity, the Emperor will ensure that their next of kin are amply rewarded. (And such next of kin may make suitable replacement PCs.)

Of course, the afflicted PCs may also escape in the interim!

## NOT EPIC ENOUGH FOR YOU?

Fighting twenty bloodletters in a carnage-filled battle royale as the Emperor's Champion looks on might not be enough for all groups of players, not for the final act of an epic campaign. There's no reason it can't be scaled up. Twenty bloodletters? Try two thousand! All throughout the city! With flesh hounds and juggernauts and worse things, too!

Let the PCs fight a desperate running battle through the Aلدorf streets to locate Luminary Mauer and get him to the portal. Daemon princes leap to attack the PCs, only to be blown away by the crew of a steam tank desperately trying to buy the PCs time. The mightiest heroes in the Empire do battle with Khorne's most dangerous minions with the PCs at the centre of it all. Let a Bloodthirster of Khorne emerge from the portal just as the PCs arrive.

As epic as you can imagine!

The shock of the daemons' sudden appearance, and the grisly manner of their entrance, requires a Terror 3 check. The PCs will probably believe that this scene is an illusion like the three before it, and that they are being challenged to resist a particular vice associated with Khorne – probably rage. They may even decide not to fight. However, Khorne is not a subtle being: this is a straightforward attack and the PCs must fight to defend themselves and those around them. If there is a moral lesson to be learned here, it is that mortals must always struggle to resist Chaos.

There are twenty Bloodletters and twenty Reiksguard Knights. At the end of each round, the GM should roll a single pool of attack dice for the knights, and again for the bloodletters. For each net success the knights generate, a bloodletter is slain. For each net success the bloodletters generate, a knight is slain. When there are no knights left, Ludwig Schwarzhelm fights alone and bloodletter successes simply deal wounds to him. (Ludwig remains at the gates to the Imperial Palace and fights a grim defence; no bloodletter will get past him while he lives, but he has no material impact on the battle aside from that.)

The knights' dice pool is: ●◆◆◆□◆◆

The bloodletters' dice pool is: ●◆◆◆◆◆□◆◆◆

Additionally, one bloodletter leaps to attack each PC. Until all twenty bloodletters are defeated, one daemon per PC continually pursues the PC group, being replaced by a fresh bloodletter from the pool of twenty when one is slain by the PCs. Again, Khorne isn't subtle: this is simply a fight to the death. When all twenty bloodletters are slain, Luminary Mauer (or von Lichtenstein) approaches, out of breath, and announces that the portal has been closed and there should be no more daemons for the foreseeable future.

## WRAPPING UP

When the last Bloodletter falls, the PCs will probably expect to be hurled across dimensions again, perhaps for the last time. Having dealt with challenges from all four of the Ruinous Powers, they may expect – or at least hope – to be sent home. But they are already there.

This experience should leave a mark on the PCs. They have been through things that no mortal has ever survived with mind and body perfectly intact. The players should always have a worry in the back of their minds: is this truly the same world they left to pursue the Black Cowl, or are they stuck for ever in some Chaotic illusion?

But for now, they are heroes, and deserve a hero's welcome.

## REWARDS FOR SERVICE

Great heroes deserve great rewards. In keeping with the spirit of the Warhammer world, though, these rewards may be double-edged. They should also give the GM ways to hook the PCs into further adventures. For example:

A military character may be promoted to the rank of captain or even general, but given command of a lost outpost. The PC must raise troops at his or her own expense, find the location of the outpost, recover it from whatever greenskins or other creatures are currently in residence, and defend it against regular attacks.

A wizard may be promoted by Imperial decree to the rank of Wizard Lord, leapfrogging the Order's conventional hierarchy and gaining a number of powerful enemies. If the politics of the nobility are vicious and complex, those of the wizards are doubly so – and the character will never be able to completely shake off the suspicion that he or she is secretly an agent of Chaos.

A priest may end up in a similar position, or may become the preferred troubleshooter for his or her faith, being sent to deal with terrifying manifestations of evil in the most dangerous places.

A noble character may be given exalted titles and extensive lands, but these may be in dangerous places such as the vampire-haunted province of Sylvania. In addition to winning back these lands, the character will be expected to raise taxes from them for the Imperial treasury, and to start paying them right away.

A rogue character may be given an Imperial pardon, but cannot look for much else in the way of rewards. However, he or she will be sought out regularly for dangerous secret missions that require criminal skills. Of course, the PC's patrons will deny everything if things go wrong, and meanwhile former underworld friends will become suspicious of the character's involvement with the higher-ups.

## PC BACKGROUNDS

Some rewards may be tied into the PCs' backgrounds. For example:

A **Gently-Born** PC may be granted a prestigious title in Averland or Reikland, making him the equal of Graf Friedrich and Gravin Clothilde in one stroke of a pen. If his lands are in Averland, he may be pulled into the intrigue surrounding the matter of the succession.

A **Criminal** PC may be pardoned for past crimes (if any) and given a sizeable amount of money. Enough to pay off any outstanding debts...or finance a new scheme.

A **Battle-Scarred** PC is invited to join a prestigious military unit (such as the Averheim Greatswords, or even the Reiksguard!) in an honorary capacity. Alternately, he may be awarded a command of his own.

An **Academic** PC secures a patron (possibly Graf Friedrich or Gravin Clothilde) willing to pay his tuition at any academic institution of his choice. With the Imperial favour and a wealthy patron, he becomes an influential scholar almost overnight and no avenue of research or academia is closed to him.

The **Foreign Messenger** PC has now far exceeded his original mandate. He returns home with accolades, wealth, and replies to all his messages, and is invited to return and stay in the Empire as an ambassador of his people.

An **Outcast** PC is rewarded with all the wealth and glory he could desire. If it is within the Emperor's power to pardon the Outcast for his crime, then he is pardoned. If not, then he brings with him the Emperor's favour and influence when he returns home – which may be sufficient to expunge his shame.

## OTHER EVENTS

Refer to the **Aftermath** section in Book Three, on page 156, for a selection of other events and outcomes of the adventures thus far. The events of Book Four, taking place primarily in the Chaos Wastes, are unlikely to have affected any of the events described there.

## FURTHER ADVENTURES

The most obvious avenues to explore for further adventures are the schemes and plans of the Conspiracy, but any loose ends from *The Enemy Within* may prove the foundation of another adventure. Frederick Grosz may still be out there and now positioned as an enemy of the PCs. The Averland succession may be an entirely suitable subject for a high-level campaign, with characters newly elevated to high status by their heroics in Altdorf. The Averland succession may also feature further intrigues by the Conspiracy, and perhaps elements within Averland want to use the threat of greenskins in the mountains to weaken their enemies and strengthen their own position.

Perhaps the PCs have been rewarded with ennoblement and a title for their deeds. One of them may be granted the Schluesselschloss in Grey Lady Pass, which leads them nicely into the adventure **The Art of Waaagh!** in *Hero's Call*.

The PCs may wish to invest their newfound wealth, and Neues Emskrank seems promising! This could lead them directly into **Crimson Rain** in *Omens of War*.

Whatever the PCs do next, their view of the Empire will likely never be the same...not after they've stared into the eyes of the Enemy Within.





# APPENDIX

## NOTABLE PERSONALITIES & ADVERSARIES

The following section details the stats and special abilities of many of the NPCs and adversaries that the PCs may encounter over the course of the campaign.

The following entries have been organised into alphabetical order.

Suggested actions that are found in expansions beyond the Core Product have been identified with the set icon of where they can be acquired. These actions are merely suggestions and are not required to enjoy *The Enemy Within*.

- ☒ *Adventure's Toolkit*
- ☞ *Winds of Magic*
- ♣ *Signs of Faith*
- ☞ *Creature Vault*
- ☞ *Witch's Song*
- ☞ *Omens of War*
- ☞ *Lure of Power*
- ☞ *Hero's Call*
- ☞ *Enemy Within*

### ADELE KETZENBLUM ☞☞☞☞

Adele Ketzenblum is described on page 14.

**Prosthetic Weapon:** Adele Ketzenblum has both a custom hook (DR3, CR3, Defensive) and a custom dagger (DR 5, CR4, Pierce 2) prosthetic. She may only have one attached to her arm at a time.

**Training:** Adele Ketzenblum has 2 ranks of training in Discipline, Folklore, Intimidate, Intuition, Observation, and Weapon Skill.

**Suggested Actions:** Knife in the Crowd (☞), Fear Me! (☒).

### ARTA SCHAFFER ☞☞☞

Arta Schaffer is described on page 48.

**Straightforward:** Whenever Arta Schaffer performs a *Basic* action, she adds ☐ to the dice pool and ☞ to the results pool of the check.

**Training:** Arta Schaffer has 2 ranks of training in Athletics, Intimidate, Resilience, and Weapon Skill.

**Suggested Actions:** Corps-a-Corps (☞), Coup-de-Grace (☞).

## BLOODLETTERS ☠☠☠

According to the *Liber Malefic*, tales are told of how mortal servants of Khorne who please their master are rewarded by being given a place within his daemonic legions. The Bloodletters make up the rank and file of Khorne's legions. Their bodies are lithe curves of taut muscle with scaled hides the vibrant hue of gore. Their elongated heads bare a pair of sharp twisted horns, and slaving tongues worm their way past the jagged teeth of their skull-like visages. Whether the stories of them once being mortal followers of the Blood God are true or not, it is certain that each Bloodletter is a superb warrior, able to make a red ruin of most opponents with their wicked Hellblades.

**Hellblade:** Each Bloodletter carries a jagged blade of black steel known as a Hellblade. In truth the weapons are not objects in and of themselves, but a portion of the daemon's own essence objectified in the form of the sword. Hellblades are wicked weapons, their razor sharp and jagged edges would inflict horrible wounds even were it not for the baleful runes etched into them.

A Hellblade counts as a hand weapon with the Pierce 1 Quality and a Critical Rating (CR) of 2. As part of the Bloodletter's essence it may never be dropped or knocked from the daemon's grasp. If the daemon is banished or killed the blade simply fades into the aethyr.

Another aspect of the horrifying power of the Hellblade is that as a Bloodletter slays its opponents the blade feeds it energy and strength. A Bloodletter benefits from the Invigorated condition whenever it wounds an opponent with a Hellblade.

**Terrifying:** Bloodletters cause Terror 1.

**Suggested Action:** Hellblade Slash (☠)

## THE CHANGELING ☠☠☠☠☠

Perhaps the greatest of Tzeentch's mysteries is the true identity of the meddlesome daemon known as The Changeling. Able to assume any form and flawlessly impersonate the voice and traits of anyone it chooses, keeping track of The Changeling's whereabouts is an impossible task. Even the Flesh Hounds of Khorne have failed to track the mischievous troublemaker down, despite hunting it many times. Only Tzeentch himself, it seems, knows of The Changeling's whereabouts at any given time, but is happy to let his pet get up to its usual mischief, revelling in the discord that follows in its wake.

Should The Changeling ever assume its normal form, if it truly has one, it will certainly be to suit its own ends. Shrouded in an all-encompassing cloak, it stands shoulder height to a man, though such a state would likely be temporary at best, as The Changeling bores very quickly, and rarely maintains even its own form for long. Should the Changeling become involved in the schemes of others, anything will be possible, and neither side can be sure of who, if any, will benefit from (or even be aware of) its capricious involvement until it has left to seek further amusement elsewhere.

**Terrifying to Behold:** The Changeling causes Terror 3.

**Unfathomable Power:** All actions and skill checks targeting the Changeling gain ♦.

**Master of Deception:** The Changeling has 2 ranks of training in Charm, Coordination, Guile, Intuition, and Stealth.

**Master of Mischief:** After an action is successfully performed against the Changeling, add one additional recharge token to the action. After an action fails against the Changeling, add two recharge tokens to the action.

**Suggested Actions:** Grand Deception (★), Arcane Blast (☠), Me First (☠), Find Weakness, Enchanting Visage (☠).

## CLOTHILDE VON ALPTRAUM (GRAVIN) ☠☠

Gravin Clothilde von Alptraum is described on page 13.

**Averlander:** While in Averland, Gravin Clothilde von Alptraum adds □□ to all *Social* actions.

**Aristocratic:** Gravin Clothilde von Alptraum has the Make a Stand and Do You Know Who I Am? actions.

**Suggested Action:** Steely Gaze.

## CURD WEISS ☠☠☠

Curd Weiss is described on page 39.

**Natural Bureaucrat:** Whenever Curd Weiss suffers stress, reduce the amount of stress he suffers by 1 to a minimum of 0.

**Training:** Curd Weiss has 2 ranks of training in Ballistic Skill, Charm, Discipline, and Guile.

**Suggested Action:** Sniper Shot.

## CUTTHROAT ☠☠☠

Cutthroats are hardened criminals who against all odds have survived long enough to gain a skillset that sets them above common ruffians. These ruthless and murderous individuals are commonly recruited by criminal organisations to serve as lieutenants, although only so long as it suits their ambitions. Cutthroats are formidable foes, and will use whatever dirty tricks and underhanded tactics ensure they survive (and hopefully profit).

**Murderer:** Cutthroats have the Cut Throat action.

**Criminal:** Cutthroats have Coordination and Skulduggery trained.

**Suggested Action:** Backstab.

## DAEMONETTE ☠☠☠☠

Daemonettes are the most numerous of Slaanesh's daemons, and they attend to his every need and whim. He keeps a vast harem for his own unholy pleasures and these courtesans and handmaidens also act as his personal guard. When in the mortal realm, daemonettes carry messages to cults and lead rituals to glorify their blasphemous master. Daemonettes are great temptresses and those who cannot see through their alluring mask will be eternally damned, their souls despoiled, used, and deposited at the feet of a new, vile master. These potent seductresses are all but irresistible; even the strong of mind, those who can see the foul beast beneath the exterior mask, have been known to enter the fatal embrace of a daemonette.

The bewitching, opal eyes of these creatures and their alluring, carnal features are always considered the height of beauty by the beholder. Like many of Slaanesh's daemons, however, to give in to this sensory overload is to risk destruction, for the slender arms of a daemonette end with chitinous claws filled with razor sharp barbs and edges that are capable of severing limbs, ripping through

## ANATOMY OF A CREATURE CARD

Creature cards put all the information a GM needs to manage creatures during an encounter right at his fingertips. The important statistics and game information are organised on one side, with art the GM can show the players on the other side.

In addition to the convenience of managing creatures during a session, the card format makes it easier for GMs to prepare between sessions. The creature cards can be combined with action cards to create a limitless variety of encounters to challenge the players.

Some creatures have icons appearing on the side of their card indicating a number of action cards, by type, that the GM can select to help customise the creature, making these opponents more diverse and challenging.

The GM can select any action cards of the appropriate type for which the creature meets the requirements listed on the card. This is in addition to the basic actions to which all NPCs and creatures have access, so long as they meet the card's specific requirements.



- 1 **Threat Rating.** The creature's threat rating.
- 2 **Creature Name.** Name of the creature shown on the card
- 3 **Category.** The NPC/Adversary group it belongs to.
- 4 **Wound Threshold.** The creature's wound threshold. Once it has suffered more wounds than its threshold, the creature is defeated.
- 5 **Characteristics.** The creature's six characteristics, including any fortune dice associated with its characteristics.
- 6 **Stance.** The creature's default stance, which the GM can adjust, if desired, by spending dice from the creature's Cunning budget.
- 7 **A/C/E Budget.** The Aggression, Cunning, and Expertise dice budget for the creature.
- 8 **Damage Rating.** The damage of the creature's attacks, reflecting its innate or default capacity for carnage. This value may be swapped with a different rating if the creature is equipped with specific weapons or effects.



- 9 **Soak Value.** The Soak Value of the creature, reflecting its innate or default resistance to damage. This value may be swapped with a different rating if the creature is equipped with specific armour or effects.
- 10 **Defence Value.** The Defence Value of the creature, reflecting its innate or default ability to avoid or deflect attacks. This value may be swapped with a different rating if the creature is equipped with specific armour or effects.
- 11 **Action Card Options.** The number and type of actions the creature may be supplemented with by the GM in addition to their standard abilities.
- 12 **Special Rule Summary.** A brief list of the creature's special abilities or rules. Refer to the specific creature entry for full details.
- 13 **Set Icon.** Each card is marked with a set icon to quickly identify which product the card is from.

armour, and tearing flesh from bone. Legions of these creatures are a sight to behold; historical texts tell of hundreds of daemonettes dancing and singing in perfect unison like a choreographed killing machine.

**Frightening:** Daemonettes cause Fear 2.

**Aesthetic Beauty:** The magnificent aura of a daemonette is hard to behold. The distraction adds ■ to all actions targeting the daemonette.

**Suggested Action:** Swift Severity (☛).

### FLAMER OF TZEENTCH ☠☠☠☠

Flamers are abominable amalgams of daemonic flesh and tooth-filled maws, bounding in huge leaps towards their victims before engulfing them in waves of multicoloured, magical flame that erupt from the cavernous apertures at the end of their two, long arms. Hunched, and tubular in shape, a Flamer can tower over a man if it rears up to its full height, though they can vary in shape and size as one might expect from a daemon of the Changer of Ways.

Their mewling jaws shriek with delight as they ignite the very fabric of reality itself, searing flesh and armour alike, the burning residue melding into semi-aware, mocking parodies of their surroundings for a few brief seconds before slowly dissipating. In a similar vein to Horrors of Tzeentch, Flamers are quite instinctive creatures and require the leadership of a more powerful daemon to heed any but the most rudimentary instinct.

**Frightening:** Flamers of Tzeentch cause Fear 2.

**Arcane Physiology:** Flamers of Tzeentch do not suffer critical wounds. Critical wounds inflicted are treated as normal wounds.

**Suggested Action:** Scorching Flames (☛).

### FREDERICK GROSZ ☠☠☠

Frederick Grosz is described on page 14.

**Ruthless:** Anytime Frederick Grosz rolls ↘ on a Guile check against an engaged target, he may immediately perform a **Melee Strike** against the target using a hidden dagger. This attack gains Pierce 2.

**Training:** Frederick Grosz has Athletics, Guile, and Skulduggery trained.

**Suggested Actions:** Cut & Run, Pilfering Strike (☛), Fake Out.

### FRIEDRICH VON KAUFMAN (GRAF) ☠☠☠

Graf Friedrich von Kaufman is described on page 12.

**Suave:** All of Graf Friedrich von Kaufman's Fellowship checks and Social actions gain:

☛☛ Add ☛ to the results pool

**Training:** Graf Friedrich von Kaufman has 2 ranks of training in Charm, Discipline, and Intuition.

**Suggested Actions:** Formal Diplomacy, Big City Bravado, Insulting Blow (☛).

## GREAT UNCLEAN ONE ☠☠☠☠☠☠☠☠

A Great Unclean One is a gigantic hulk of corpulent flesh, its greenish hide slick with pus. Organs spill from its ruptured belly, flapping wetly as it moves. Between the folds of its flab, infestations of nurglings jabber and squeal. Rotten horns branch from its skull, and a prehensile tongue, fat and pink, worms from its grinning maw. It wields a massive rusted blade and a flail of daemonic skulls. A Great Unclean One behaves at all times with noisy enthusiasm, even in the thick of battle, guffawing as the flesh of its foes bursts with contagion, and encouraging its minions with booming mirth.

These monstrous daemons occasionally materialise in the mortal world, leading a cancerous host of lesser daemons to spread their master's diseases. They enjoy competing amongst themselves to see who can reap the most plague-dead.

**Hideous:** Great Unclean Ones add ♦♦ to Charm checks they make (except versus followers of Nurgle).

**Nurgle's Rot:** If a character acquires a disease from a Great Unclean One, roll ♦. If the result is a ✱ the character also gains the Nurgle's Rot condition.

**Terrifying to Behold:** A Great Unclean One causes Terror 3.

**Unfathomable Power:** All actions and skill checks targeting a Great Unclean One gain ♦.

**Plaguefather:** A Great Unclean One has 2 ranks of training in Spellcraft and Resilience Mastery. It favours spells with the *Nurgle* or *Chaos* traits and does not need to channel or spend power to fuel its spells.

**Vile Progeny:** A Great Unclean One's actions gain:

✱ A henchmen group of Nurglings bursts from the Great Unclean One's pustules and appear engaged with the daemon

**Suggested Actions:** Stream of Bile (☛), Bubonic Assault (☛☛), and any *Nurgle* spells.

### GROTT ☠☠☠☠

Grott is described on page 56.

**Frightening:** Grott causes Fear 2.

**Mutations:** Grott gains □ to checks where an extra arm is relevant.

His melee attacks gain:

↘ The target suffers 1 fatigue and 1 stress

**Amulet of Rage:** Grott remains in a neutral stance (using the reckless side of action cards) until Krasskulk activates the amulet. All of Grott's Characteristic dice become Reckless dice while the amulet is active.

**Suggested Action:** Boneripper.



## HORROR OF TZEENTCH ☠☠☠

Cackling incoherently with demented glee, searing daemonic flame erupting from outstretched fingers, Horrors of Tzeentch are truly chaotic in form. Scarcely taller than a goblin, they are swirling blurs of mercurial daemonic energy coalescing and dissipating on a whim, never maintaining a discernable form for more than a heartbeat.

The only constant, if such a word can be used to describe such an unorthodox creature, is in a Horror's luminescent skin tones, varying from shades of bright pink to those of a sea blue. Hardened warriors that have fought them and lived to tell of it claim that Horrors are usually pink in colour at first, but should their mortal shell be wounded, they are not destroyed, but appear to split into two smaller and more vicious replicas that are blue in colour.

These new, malicious daemons attack with renewed vigour, lashing out at those that harmed their previous form with flickering bolts of magical fire. Only once the two blue Horrors are destroyed can one be sure that the daemon has been truly banished.

**Frightening:** Horrors of Tzeentch cause Fear 2.

**Malicious Division:** When a standard Horror of Tzeentch is defeated, it is replaced the following round by two Horror of Tzeentch henchmen.

**Suggested Action:** Horrific Assault (\*).

## JUVENILE DEMIGRYPH ☠☠☠☠

A Juvenile Demigryph is described on page 47.

**Frightening:** A Juvenile Demigryph causes Fear 2.

**Instinctive:** A Juvenile Demigryph may use Willpower instead of Intelligence when attempting Observation checks.

**Easily Distracted:** Whenever a Juvenile Demigryph generates at least one ✨ when making any check, it cannot perform any manoeuvres during its next turn.

**Suggested Action:** Mauling Strike (\*).

## JADE SCEPTRE CULTIST ☠☠☠

The cult of the Jade Sceptre is described on page 84.

**Mark of Slaanesh:** Jade Sceptre Cultists each possess a Mark of Slaanesh upon their flesh which gives them the following abilities:

Attacks targeting a Jade Sceptre Cultist gain:

✨ Gain the Sluggish condition for 2 rounds

Jade Sceptre Cultists gain ■ to all Guile, Charm, or Intimidate checks.

Jade Sceptre Cultists are immune to Fear and Terror and can never gain the Frightened condition.

**Fast Talker:** Jade Sceptre Cultists have Charm and Guile trained.

**Suggested Action:** Velvet Parlance (♣).

## KARL FRANZ (EMPEROR) ☠☠☠☠☠☠

The incumbent Emperor is Karl Franz, Prince of Altdorf and Elector Count of Reikland. Karl Franz is said to be the greatest statesman the Old World has ever seen. He is also a military genius and a valiant general. The Emperor frequently takes personal command of his soldiers, wielding Ghal Maraz, the fabled hammer of Sigmar, like the warrior god of old, smiting enemies of the Empire with every blow.

**Emperor's Wargear:** All attacks targeting Emperor Karl Franz gain ♦. All attacks made by him ignore the target's soak value, have CR2, and have the Vicious quality.

**Training:** Emperor Karl Franz has 2 ranks of training in Discipline, Resilience, and Weapon Skill and Mastery in Charm, Intimidate, and Leadership.

**Suggested Actions:** Imperator Rex (\*), Not Done Yet (♣), Do It Now! (♣), Lead From the Front (♣), Ride Down (♣).

## KATRINA MAUER ☠☠☠☠

Katrina Mauer is described on page 143.

**Warlock:** Katrina Mauer has the Channel Power action. She can only cast Rank 1 spells, but can do so from all eight College orders.

Before Katrina rolls any dice to cast a spell, she may voluntarily choose to add ✨ to the results in order to add ■ to the check required to cast the spell.

**Suggested Actions:** Feral Fire (♣), Breath of Aramar (♣), Unmake (♣), Shemtek's Fortune (♣), or any Rank 1 spells from any College.

## KONRAD MAUER (LUMINARY) ☠☠☠☠

Luminary Konrad Mauer is described on page 11.

**Luminary:** Konrad Mauer is a Rank 4 *Light Order* wizard. He has access to all *Petty Magic* and *Light Order* spell actions and has 2 ranks of training in Channelling, Education, Magical Sight, and Spellcraft.

**Suggested Actions:** Improved Counterspell (♠), any *Light Order* spells.

### KRASSKULK ☠☠☠

Krasskulk is described on page 56.

**Keen Senses:** Krasskulk has a well-developed sense of smell. He adds ■ to Observation checks where the sense of smell provides an advantage.

**Speedy Skaven:** Krasskulk has the Improved Dodge action card.

**Eshin Sorcerer:** Krasskulk has the Skitterleap and Death Frenzy actions. He has enough power to cast one spell per turn.

**Suggested Actions:** Skitterleap (★), Death Frenzy (★).

### LORD OF CHANGE ☠☠☠☠☠☠☠☠

The most powerful servants of Tzeentch are the avian Lords of Change. Commanders of Tzeentch's legions on the battlefield and architects of his great plan, these mighty creatures are spellcasters beyond compare. Suffused with raw chaotic energy, a Lord of Change commands the winds of magic with an aptitude that only one born of the Master of Sorcery could hope to achieve. Lords of Change are hyper-intelligent, independent, and often have their own agenda, interpreting their master's will to suit their own individual designs. It seems that such improvisation is encouraged, as Tzeentch himself is ever open to the endless possibilities of change.

First amongst these fell daemons is Kairos, the right hand of Tzeentch, known to mortals as Fateweaver. Kairos survived being hurled into the Well of Eternity, but somehow emerged after spend-

ing an age within its fathomless depths with twin heads, able to see the past and the future as readily as others see the present. Kairos is truly the master of destiny, the preternatural abilities and limitless knowledge granted by his time in the Well securing his place as the greatest and most favoured of the daemons of Tzeentch.

As might be expected from one of Tzeentch's greatest daemons, a Lord of Change can alter its shape or colour at will, taking whichever form suits it at that moment in time, but will usually take the shape of an enormous bird-like figure. They have multi-coloured, feathered wings and a beaked head like a bird of prey, but stand at least twice the height of a man on long legs ending in sharp, diamond-hard talons. They lean hunched over an ornate staff, grasped in similarly clawed hands, though to underestimate its relatively slight physique is to invite a swift and certain death.

**Terrifying to Behold:** A Lord of Change causes Terror 3.

**Unfathomable Power:** All actions and skill checks targeting a Lord of Change gain ◆.

**Master of the Arcane:** A Lord of Change has 3 ranks of training in Education, Guile, Intuition, Observation and Spellcraft. It does not need to channel power to fuel its spells.

**Suggested Actions:** Masters of Fate (★), Arcane Blast (♠♠), Fluster, and any *Tzeentch* spells.

### LUDWIG SCHWARZHELM ☠☠☠☠☠☠☠

Ludwig Schwarzhelm is the champion of Karl Franz and the bearer of the Emperor's personal standard. Ludwig is a towering figure of a man, renowned throughout the Empire for his mighty physique, stern expression and deadly martial skill. The Emperor's champion is said to have never smiled in his life and this reputation as an uncompromising, incorruptible warrior is one Ludwig has consciously cultivated over the years. His role is to uphold the Emperor's justice during trials of combat, which are the judicial right of high-ranking nobles accused of breaking one of the Emperor's laws. Such is Ludwig's deadly reputation that many a noble so accused has confessed their guilt before a sword has even been lifted. Ludwig is also Karl Franz's principal bodyguard and his mere presence has so far proven enough to discourage any attempts on the Emperor's life.

**Sword of Justice:** Ludwig Schwarzhelm's *Melee Attacks* gain CR2 and Pierce 3.

**Training:** Ludwig Schwarzhelm has 2 ranks of training in Discipline, Leadership, and Resilience and Mastery in Intimidate and Weapon Skill.

**Suggested Actions:** Patron's Champion (♠), Final Strike (♠), Bodyguard (♠), Challenge (♠).

### MARCUS BAERFAUST (CAPTAIN) ☠☠☠☠

Captain Marcus Baerfaust is described on page 10.

**Fierce Confidence:** Captain Marcus Baerfaust adds a number of   to the dice pool of his *Social* actions and Leadership checks equal to his depth in the Reckless stance.

**Training:** Captain Marcus Baerfaust has 2 ranks of training in Leadership, Resilience, and Weapon Skill.

**Suggested Actions:** Mine's Bigger (♠), Mighty Swing (♠), Ironclad & Unstoppable (♠).



## MASQUE OF SLAANESH ☠☠☠☠

The Masque was once a daemonette, perhaps even the most favoured of them all. Her sensuous movements enraptured her audience, captivating them beyond distraction. Kings and emperors long past were said to be willing to give away their lands in exchange for a single dance, and even the other Chaos Gods were struck by her prowess. There was good reason for this; her dancing and beauty were unrivalled, even amongst the followers of Slaanesh.

The Masque once danced for her lord Slaanesh, thinking to ease his mood, but this so displeased him that he cursed the Masque for eternity, forbidding her to ever again know rest. Movement wracks her limbs at all times but she can never stop her dance. Driven insane by the perpetual music that plays within her mind, and her mind alone, she dances, cackling, throughout the Realm of Chaos. When it pleases Slaanesh to unleash his pet, her captivating steps carry her into mortal lands.

The Masque is drawn to excess and often appears at banquets, theatres, or operas, dancing for the attendees. All observers are immediately drawn into the pantomime, dancing in time with the Masque until their bones break, limbs and muscle rip, and their brains rupture under the strain. The Masque then dances ever onwards, leaving behind the wrecked minds and corpses of her victims, still twitching to her silent tune long after their hearts have stopped beating. To fight the Masque is to face a creature of intense seduction; any adventurer, male or female, will likely be drawn to the endless dance, unwilling to fight the creature.

**Frightening:** The Masque of Slaanesh causes Fear 2.

**Grotesque Majesty:** As a result of her distracting presence, add ■■ to the dice pool of all actions targeting the Masque.

**Eternal Dance:** A character starting his turn within close range of the Masque of Slaanesh suffers 1 fatigue.

**Unnatural Reflexes:** The Masque of Slaanesh is a dancer of unequalled skill. She has 3 ranks of training in Coordination. She is also **Swift**, and may perform 1 movement manoeuvre per turn for free.

**Suggested Action:** Dance of Dreaming/Chanson of Caging (\*).

## NURGLING ☠

When milk sours, crops wither, and fever sweeps the villages, peasants often blame the mischief on the nurglings. These diseased imps have tiny, putrescent bodies, sharp horns and teeth, and exude a foul-smelling slime from every orifice. They spawn from boils festering in the flabby folds of a Great Unclean One's skin, where they chatter, play, squabble, or suckle on ichor from his ulcers. Their 'father' fondles them like favoured pets – though he often pops one or two into his maw for a quick snack.

Sometimes Nurgle sends his Great Unclean Ones to the mortal plane to spread his delicious plagues. While the greater daemon ravages the world, some of his nurglings might fall from him and find themselves stranded among mortals. This is a great opportunity for fun and frolics, and they giggle incessantly as they spread infection. Woe betide anyone who tries to stop their mischief – nurglings will swarm over their enemy, scratching and gnawing. Though rarely fatal, it marks the beginning of a long, disease-ridden demise.

A Great Unclean One often leaves a trail of pus in its wake, pregnant with nurgling spores. This slime can enter a person's body by contact with the skin, and the spores will gestate within his bowels. When the nurgling ripens, it struggles its way out into the world through the nearest orifice. The nurgling will have great affection for its 'parent' and bestow upon him generous gifts of poxes.

**Hideous:** Nurglings add ◆◆ to Charm checks they make.

**Nurgle's Rot:** If a character acquires a disease from a Nurgling, roll ◆. If the result is a ✨ the character also gains the Nurgle's Rot condition.

**Suggested Action:** Festering Strike (\*).

## PLAGUEBEARER ☠☠☠☠

On nights when Morrslieb hangs bloated in a starless sky, Empire folk bolt their doors and windows, and hang sprigs of fragrant herbs by the fireplace to ward away the Tainted Ones. If a person should die of illness on such a night, it is whispered that daemons will take his soul. Indeed, in some remote villages, the mortally sick are left outside to perish lest the plaguebearers infect the healthy when they come for them.

A plaguebearer is a loathsome man-sized daemon, its pallid, sore-infested flesh stinking of rot, its entrails spilling from its belly like maggots spill from decaying fruit. It lopes on wasted limbs, poison drooling from its fangs, a twisted horn jutting from its forehead. Its single eye, weeping pus, darts about searching for new victims to infect with its plaguesword. The plaguebearers have almost forgotten the sensation of pain, yet a dull memory of suffering endures; each of these daemons once had a mortal soul. When a person cursed with Nurgle's Rot dies, their soul becomes resurrected as a plaguebearer, forever condemned to afflict others with the Plague Lord's contagions, and to keep tally of the diseases afflicting the mortal world.

**Hideous:** Plaguebearers add ◆◆ to Charm checks they make.

**Nurgle's Rot:** If a character acquires a disease from a Plaguebearer, roll ◆. If the result is a ✨ the character also gains the Nurgle's Rot condition.

**Revolting Features:** Plaguebearers cause Terror 1 when first encountered.

**Nurgle's Gift:** When a Plaguebearer inflicts a critical wound, the target must make a Disease 2 check.

**Suggested Action:** Leprous Blow (\*).

## SCREAMERS OF TZEENTCH ☠☠☠☠

With a wing span well over two meters, the Screammers of Tzeentch gracefully glide through the sky like otherworldly mantas, seeking their next victim to devour. With a merciless, predatory instinct that belies their elegant exterior, Screammers gather in schools, soaring and drifting upon the winds of magic, before swooping down upon their hapless prey, ripping them to shreds with razor-sharp teeth and horns, or eviscerating them with the vicious spines on their tails.

Despite the seemingly fragile nature of their slender frames, their daemonic resilience affords them moderate protection against incoming blows, but it is the difficulty of hitting such swift, air-borne creatures in the first place that makes Screamers so hard to fight effectively.

**Frightening:** Screamers of Tzeentch cause Fear 2.

**Flight:** Screamers of Tzeentch does not need to perform a manoeuvre to disengage from opponents before moving. Screamers can move away from engaged opponents as if not engaged unless the opponent can also fly.

**Chaos Steed:** A rider mounted on a Screamer of Tzeentch can move with the mount for free, and gains  $\square$  and +1 damage on *Melee Attacks* against targets who are not mounted.

**Suggested Actions:** Overrun (\*).

### SKRABB ☠☠☠☠

Skrabb is described on page 56.

**Assassin:** Skrabb is equipped with a Weeping Blade and several Warpstone Throwing Stars.

**Speedy Skaven:** Skrabb has the Improved Dodge action card.

**Leave No Trace:** Add ■■ to all Observation checks to spot or track Skrabb.

**Suggested Action:** Warpstone Throwing Star (\*), Cheap Shot.

### SORCERER OF TZEENTCH ☠☠☠☠

Masters of the darkest magic, Chaos Sorcerers are rightly feared. To face one in battle is to know that your very soul is in jeopardy, but it is those that have dedicated themselves to Tzeentch that wield the greatest power. Champions as they are of the Master of Magic, the Sorcerers of Tzeentch have the deepest knowledge of the dark arts, and possess the necessary skills to perform the greatest acts of daemonic summoning.

Often found in an advisory position to powerful champions of the Gods seeking their gift of foresight, the scheming and manipulative nature of Sorcerers of Tzeentch will usually leave little doubt who wields the true power behind the scenes, though their supposed masters usually remain oblivious to that fact.

A Sorcerer of Tzeentch will traditionally be garbed in robes of deep blue, and will almost certainly bear signs of mutation, such as an avian head, tentacles, or hands and feet that end in razor-sharp talons. Some Sorcerers wear lavishly detailed belts and shoulder pads of jewel-studded gold, whilst others wear baroque suits of skull-emblazoned Chaos Armour and ornate helmets.

All will carry a magic staff that blazes with evil power, engraved with runes of hate and disharmony that are an anathema to the witch-sight of their rivals in magic. Particularly favoured Sorcerers may receive the gift of a daemonic Disc of Tzeentch to carry them into battle, offering them unrivalled speed and manoeuvrability - a superb platform from which to unleash their devastating spells.

**Gift of Sorcery:** Sorcerers of Tzeentch have Education, Magical Sight, and Spellcraft trained. They favour spells with the *Tzeentch* or *Chaos* traits and do not need to channel or spend power to fuel their spells.



**Mastering Change:** Sorcerers of Tzeentch may spend Cunning dice from their budget to convert additional characteristic dice into stance dice. For each Cunning die spent, the GM may choose to convert a  $\blacklozenge$  characteristic die into either a  $\bullet$  reckless or  $\bullet$  conservative die - they do not have to be spent on the same die type.

**Suggested Actions:** Arcane Explosion (@), and any *Tzeentch* spells.

## SKILL MASTERY

Ordinarily, characters may only train a maximum of 3 ranks in a given skill, adding up to 3 expertise dice to the dice pool. Characters of at least Rank 4 may train a fourth rank in a skill, but this rank does not add an additional expertise die. No character may ever add more than 3 expertise dice to a dice pool from skill training (additional expertise dice may still be added from other effects). Rather, the fourth rank of skill training is referred to as **Mastery** in that skill. A character that has Mastered a skill gains the following benefits to checks using that skill (in addition to the 3 expertise dice added by his prior 3 ranks of training):

- ✦ The character is not obligated to roll for **Simple (0d)** or **Easy (1d)** checks unless those checks target an enemy character. Should the character opt not to roll, assume the results are a single success with no other effects.
- ✦ The character may choose to remove all of his expertise dice from the pool before the roll and replace them with a single Sigmar's Comet result - he can simply place one of the dice on the table showing its comet face. (If the character has already removed 1 or more expertise dice - for example to use an **Enhance** - he must still have at least 1 expertise die in the pool to remove to trigger this ability of Mastery.)

CREATURE	ST	TO	AG	INT	WP	FEL	A/C/E	WOUNDS	STANCE
ADELE KETZENBLUM	5 (6)	4■ (2)	3 (2)	4■	4	4	4/4/4	16	R3
ARTA SCHAFFER	4■ (7)	4■ (5)	3 (1)	3	4	3	5/1/2	16	R3
BLOODLETTER	6■ (5)	4 (2)	3 (1)	3	3	2	6/2/1	12	R1
THE CHANGELING	4 (5)	5 (2)	5 (2)	8	6	9	4/10/6	30	ANY
CLOTHILDE VON ALPTRAUM	2 (4)	3 (1)	3 (3)	4■	4	5■	2/4/3	12	C2
CURD WEISS	3 (5)	3 (2)	4■ (1)	4	4	4■	3/4/2	14	C3
CUTTHROAT	3■ (5)	3■ (2)	4 (1)	3	3	3	4/3/1	15	R2
DAEMONETTE	4 (5)	4 (1)	5■ (1)	3	3	5	4/3/1	14	C1
FLAMER OF TZEENTCH	4 (5)	5 (1)	6 (2)	3	4	2	6/2/2	16	R2
FREDERICK GROSZ	4■ (5)	4 (2)	3 (3)	3	3	4■	2/6/2	16	C2
FRIEDRICH VON KAUFMAN	3 (5)	4■ (2)	3 (1)	5	4■	5■	3/5/2	14	C3
GREAT UNCLEAN ONE	7 (3)	10 (6)	5 (4)	6	8	6	10/6/8	40	C4
GROTT	6■ (5)	4■ (2)	3 (1)	2	4	1	6/0/2	12	Special
HORROR OF TZEENTCH	4 (5)	4 (2)	4 (1)	2	3	2	5/2/1	14	R1
JUVENILE DEMIGRYPH	5■ (5)	5■ (3)	4 (1)	2	4	1	4/3/2	16	R2
JADE SCEPTRE CULTIST	3 (5)	3 (1)	4■ (2)	3	3	4■	2/3/2	11	C2
KARL FRANZ	5■ (8)	5■ (6)	4 (2)	5	6■	7■	4/8/5	20	C3/R3
KATRINA MAUER	3 (4)	4■ (1)	3 (3)	4	4■	2	4/3/2	14	R3
KONRAD MAUER	3 (4)	3 (1)	4 (2)	5■	5■	4	3/5/4	14	C3
KRASSKULK	3 (5)	3 (2)	5■ (2)	4■	4■	3	3/4/3	10	R2
LORD OF CHANGE	7 (8)	8 (2)	7 (4)	10	8	6	9/9/9	36	C2+R2
LUDWIG SCHWARZHELM	6■ (7)	6 (5)	4 (2)	4	5	5■	8/2/4	18	C4
MARCUS BAERFAUST	5■ (7)	5 (5)	3 (1)	3	4■	3	6/1/2	17	R3
MASQUE OF SLAANESH	4 (6)	4 (5)	7■ (2)	4	4	6■	4/7/4	18	C2/R2
NURGLING	3 (3)	3■ (2)	3■ (2)	3■	3	3	2/5/1	7	R1
PLAGUEBEARER	5 (5)	5 (4)	2 (1)	3	4	2	5/2/1	18	C1
SCREAMER OF TZEENTCH	4 (6)	6 (2)	4 (1)	3	5	2	4/2/1	20	C1+R1
SKRABB	5 (5)	4 (2)	6■ (3)	4■	4	3	3/5/3	11	C2
SORCERER OF TZEENTCH	3 (4)	3 (1)	3 (1)	6	5	3	2/6/2	12	C1+R1

## EPIC THREAT SHEET

- 1 **Creature Card.** The creature card you would like to 'upgrade' is socketed here.
- 2 **Wound Threshold.** The socketed creature's wound threshold is increased by this amount.
- 3 **Threat Rating.** The socketed creature's threat rating is increased by this amount.
- 4 **Characteristics.** The creature's six characteristics are increased by the amount shown. Fortune dice associated with characteristics are added to the fortune dice listed on the creature card, if any.
- 5 **Damage Rating, Soak Value, and Defence Value.** Each of the creature cards ratings are increased by the corresponding amount listed on the epic threat sheet.
- 6 **Stance.** The creature's default stance is increased by this amount. Creature's with special stance ratings have both stance ratings increased by this amount.
- 7 **Action Card Options.** Additional actions the socketed creature may be supplemented with.
- 8 **A/C/E Budget.** The creature's Aggression, Cunning, and Expertise dice budgets are increased by this amount.
- 9 **Special Rule Summary.** Additional special abilities that the socketed creature gains.
- 10 **Name.** Name of the epic threat sheet. A socketed creature card gains this name as an additional trait.
- 11 **Set Icon.** Each sheet is marked with a set icon to quickly identify which product the sheet is from.

## EPIC THREAT SHEETS

*Hero's Call* introduced a number of epic threat sheets that can be used to increase the threat of many of the creatures and NPCs within *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay*. In order to 'upgrade' a creature or NPC, simply socket the desired creature card onto the epic threat sheet (see diagram). During an encounter, simply add all corresponding granted bonuses provided by the epic threat sheet to the creature or NPC's normal statistics and game information listed on the creature card to arrive at its final new statistics and abilities.

*The Enemy Within* introduces a new unique epic threat sheet – the Black Cowl. When the Black Cowl finally reveals himself (or is uncovered), and the PCs must face his full might, place the appropriate NPC creature card onto the Black Cowl epic threat sheet to arrive his final statistics and abilities.

For more information about choosing the identity of the Black Cowl, see page 15.

## INHERENT DIFFICULTY

Some action cards have an additional difficulty modifier in the form of results symbols, rather than dice. These results symbols are simply added directly into the results pool, as if they had been rolled on dice. For example, an action card might have a modifier of  $\blacklozenge \blacksquare \otimes \bullet$ ; this means that  $\blacklozenge \blacksquare$  is added to the dice pool, and that  $\otimes \bullet$  is added to the results pool after dice are rolled. (It can be helpful, but is not necessary, to add dice showing the relevant challenge and bane symbols to the pool after the dice are rolled as a reminder when resolving the check. If you do, it is important to remember that these results symbols are not actually present on any die, they cannot be "rerolled" by any effect that would ordinarily allow it, nor can they be ignored by effects that allow dice to be ignored.)

- KEY**
-  Large City
  -  City or Town
  -  Knightly Order Chapter House
  -  Battle Site
  -  Castle or Tower
  -  Place of Interest
  -  Road
  -  Political Border



# THE EMPIRE

During the reign of Karl Franz, 2522



APPENDIX

# THE IMPERIAL CALENDAR

## HEXENSTAG – NEW YEAR'S DAY

NACHEXEN					
Wellentag	1	9	17	25	–
Aubentag	2	10	18	26	–
Markttag	3	11	19	27	–
Backertag	4	12	20	28	–
Bezahltag	5	13	21	29	–
Konistag	6	14	22	30	–
Angestag	7	15	23	31	–
Festag	8	16	24	32	–

SOMMERZEIT					
Wellentag	–	6	14	22	30
Aubentag	–	7	15	23	31
Markttag	–	8	16	24	32
Backertag	1	9	17	25	33
Bezahltag	2	10	18	26	–
Konistag	3	11	19	27	–
Angestag	4	12	20	28	–
Festag	5	13	21	29	–

## MITTHERBST – AUTUMN EQUINOX

BRAUZEIT					
Wellentag	–	3	11	19	27
Aubentag	–	4	12	20	28
Markttag	–	5	13	21	29
Backertag	–	6	14	22	30
Bezahltag	–	7	15	23	31
Konistag	–	8	16	24	32
Angestag	1	9	17	25	33
Festag	2	10	18	26	–

JAHRDRUNG					
Wellentag	1	9	17	25	33
Aubentag	2	10	18	26	–
Markttag	3	11	19	27	–
Backertag	4	12	20	28	–
Bezahltag	5	13	21	29	–
Konistag	6	14	22	30	–
Angestag	7	15	23	31	–
Festag	8	16	24	32	–

## SONNSTILL – SUMMER SOLSTICE

VORGEHEIM					
Wellentag	–	5	13	21	29
Aubentag	–	6	14	22	30
Markttag	–	7	15	23	31
Backertag	–	8	16	24	32
Bezahltag	1	9	17	25	33
Konistag	2	10	18	26	–
Angestag	3	11	19	27	–
Festag	4	12	20	28	–

KALDEZEIT					
Wellentag	–	2	10	18	26
Aubentag	–	3	11	19	27
Markttag	–	4	12	20	28
Backertag	–	5	13	21	29
Bezahltag	–	6	14	22	30
Konistag	–	7	15	23	31
Angestag	–	8	16	24	32
Festag	1	9	17	25	33

## MITTERFRUHL – SPRING EQUINOX

PFLUGZEIT					
Wellentag	–	8	16	24	32
Aubentag	1	9	17	25	33
Markttag	2	10	18	26	–
Backertag	3	11	19	27	–
Bezahltag	4	12	20	28	–
Konistag	5	13	21	29	–
Angestag	6	14	22	30	–
Festag	7	15	23	31	–

## GEHEIMNISTAG – DAY OF MYSTERY

NACHGEHEIM					
Wellentag	–	4	12	20	28
Aubentag	–	5	13	21	29
Markttag	–	6	14	22	30
Backertag	–	7	15	23	31
Bezahltag	–	8	16	24	32
Konistag	1	9	17	25	–
Angestag	2	10	18	26	–
Festag	3	11	19	27	–

ULRICZEIT					
Wellentag	1	9	17	25	33
Aubentag	2	10	18	26	–
Markttag	3	11	19	27	–
Backertag	4	12	20	28	–
Bezahltag	5	13	21	29	–
Konistag	6	14	22	30	–
Angestag	7	15	23	31	–
Festag	8	16	24	32	–

SIGMARZEIT					
Wellentag	–	7	15	23	31
Aubentag	–	8	16	24	32
Markttag	1	9	17	25	33
Backertag	2	10	18	26	–
Bezahltag	3	11	19	27	–
Konistag	4	12	20	28	–
Angestag	5	13	21	29	–
Festag	6	14	22	30	–

## MONDSTILLE – WINTER SOLSTICE

ERNTENZEIT					
Wellentag	–	4	12	20	28
Aubentag	–	5	13	21	29
Markttag	–	6	14	22	30
Backertag	–	7	15	23	31
Bezahltag	–	8	16	24	32
Konistag	1	9	17	25	33
Angestag	2	10	18	26	–
Festag	3	11	19	27	–

VORHEXEN					
Wellentag	–	8	16	24	32
Aubentag	1	9	17	25	33
Markttag	2	10	18	26	–
Backertag	3	11	19	27	–
Bezahltag	4	12	20	28	–
Konistag	5	13	21	29	–
Angestag	6	14	22	30	–
Festag	7	15	23	31	–





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