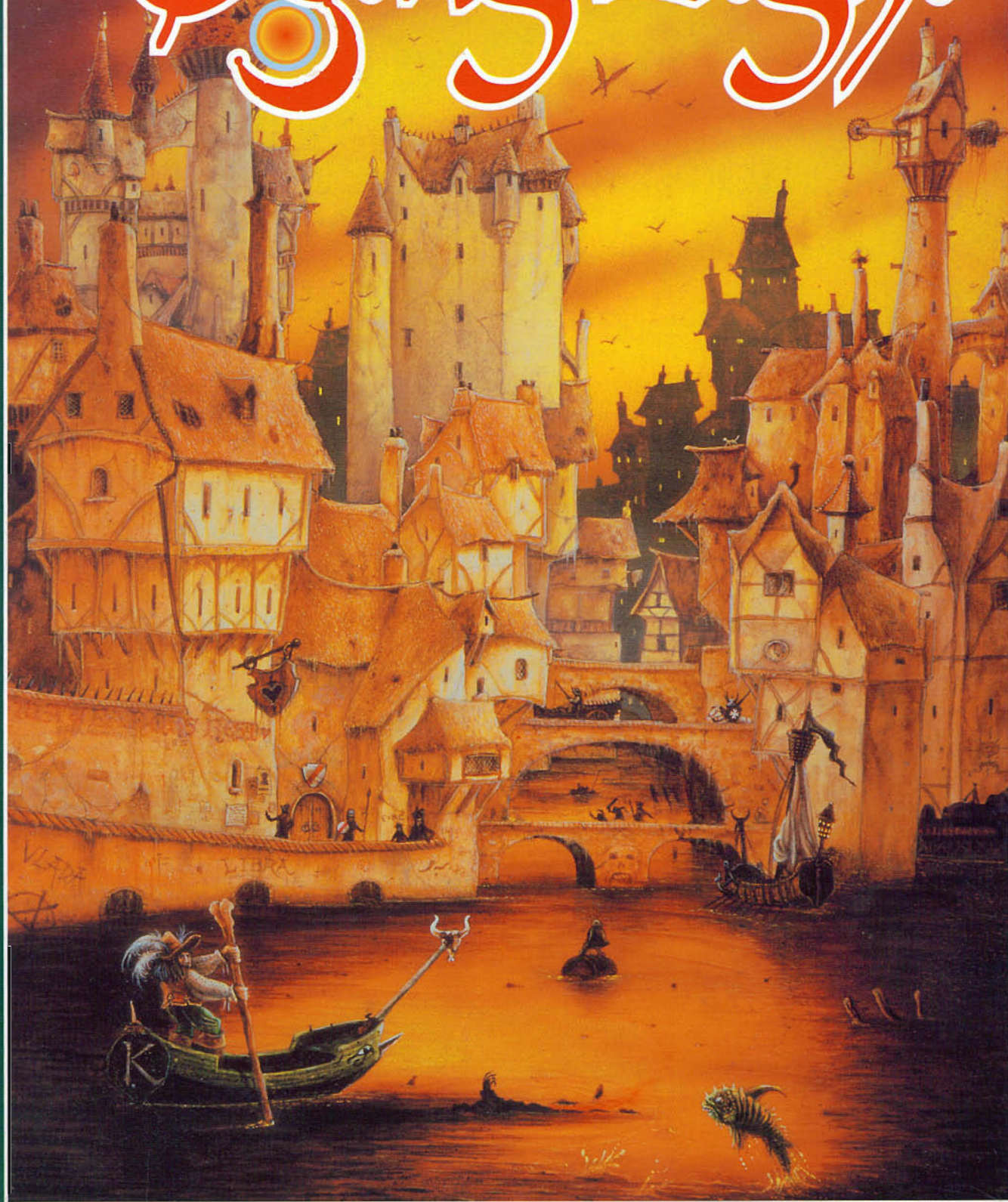


The Dying of the Light™



Beware the Chaos Moon, Beware the Eclipse,
and Beware Those who Scheme in Darkness

An adventure for
WARHAMMER
FANTASY
ROLE-PLAY

DYING OF THE LIGHT

By Several Distinguished Authors

Being a Faithful and Complete Description of the Search for a Most Unholy Artefact by Several Parties through the Wastelands & to the Great City of Marienburg itself and of the many Trials, Straits & Difficulties encountered on their Journey.

Containing within its Pages many Insights into the Customs of the Wastelanders & Comments on the Foul Monsters & Mutants of Chaos that Dwell in those Places, together with Essays by Learned Scholars on the Blasphemous ways of Demons & their Kind, and a Full & Accurate Description of the Calamitous Events that occurred during the Recent Eclipse of the Sun by Morrslieb the Chaos Moon.

With many Diverting & Original Descriptions & Illustrations of the Locations, Events and Protagonists, Executed in a Most Skilful & Pleasing Fashion.



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Readers are advised that this book is published supplementary to the existing text 'Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay', available from the same publisher, and their enjoyment of the stirring tale herein will be greatly enhanced by reference to the parent work.

DYING OF THE LIGHT

An adventure for Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay

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Contents

Introduction	4
Prologue: Error of the Moon <i>by Andrew Rilstone and James Wallis</i>	7
Chapter One: A Watery Grave <i>by Ken and Jo Walton</i>	25
Chapter Two: Wherever You May Be <i>by Phil Masters</i>	31
Chapter Three: Burn Them! Burn Them! <i>by Sandy Mitchell</i>	39
Chapter Four: Back To The Egg <i>by Andrew Rilstone</i>	47
Chapter Five: The Place Of Testing <i>by Chris Pramas</i>	57
Chapter Six: The Colony <i>by Anthony Ragan</i>	69
Chapter Seven: Transformation Moon <i>by Lea Crowe</i>	79
Chapter Eight: Trial And Error <i>by Lief Eriksson and Stefan Karlsson</i>	91
Chapter Nine: When Darkness Falls <i>by Andrew Rilstone</i>	101
Appendices: Beings, Organizations and Artefacts	114
Ready-to-play characters	119
Player hand-outs	125
The authors	128

Touching the Chaos Moon, there is this to say. In my boyhood, I saw the Eclipse of the Sun, when at noon the face of Morrslieb cast darkness and chaos over the land. The World fell silent and held its breath, and all doubted if we would live another day. For only on a day when Morrslieb's shadow covers the ground can Zahnarzt the Bodiless come again to earth.

But the darkness passed and Zahnarzt did not return. Strange and erratic is the motion of Morrslieb around the earth, which I have studied ceaselessly since that day. I fear that his twisting, turning path has twisted and turned my mind, and still I do not know on which day the Eclipse will come again. Pray to Sigmar that it will not be in your lifetime.

But if my book should survive the centuries, then heed my warning: beware the Eclipse, beware the Chaos Moon, and beware, above all things, the coming again of Zahnarzt.

Now, concerning the privy parts of Serpents ...

from 'A Theory of Chaos' by Ludwig Mandlebrote

Introduction

Welcome!

Dying of the Light is Hogshead Publishing's first original adventure for **Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay**. It combines elements of intrigue, conflict, suspense, the supernatural, Chaos, and a race against time to provide a thrilling and involving story which will keep you entertained for weeks of game-play.

The adventure is intended for adventurers in their second or third careers, and works best if at least one of them is a Student or Academic; at least one must be able to read. The six pre-generated player characters provided are ideally suited. If you want to use your own PCs, it may be necessary to make minor alterations to the opening encounters.

Dying of the Light is divided up into a prologue and several chapters. Each of these represents a separate scenario – a distinct problem or incident for the PCs to deal with. However, clues and linking elements make each chapter part of the overall story. GMs should read through the whole book and understand the overall plotline and the roles of the various NPC factions before starting to run the adventure. Players shouldn't read any further than the end of this line. If you're reading this, you've gone too far.

The adventure is not tamper-proof: GMs are welcome to add more chapters for a longer saga, or remove or rewrite some of the existing ones. However, each part of the adventure contains important plot elements and characters, and you should take care that these links are still introduced somewhere in the adventure if you decide to remove their original setting.

Running The Adventure

Dying Of The Light is a race against time – but the exact times and dates have actually been kept vague. Role-playing should always about creating an exciting story: not just problem-solving or beating the clock. Trying to stick closely to a fixed timetable would mean that in all likelihood the characters would either arrive back in Marienburg early, in which case the climax would fall completely flat, or they wouldn't get back to the city in time to save it.

If the GM can impress on the players that there is no time to waste, and then create a persistent and mounting sense of urgency without actually keeping track of the exact number of days until the eclipse, the adventure will stay exciting and tense. Fortunately, the key event involves the subtly unpredictable motions of the Chaos Moon, so there are plenty of excuses for vagueness.

Times taken for the essential journey across the Wasteland will depend to some extent on the competence and luck of the party, but the outward trip should require about ten days, or

maybe a little less. The PCs should hope to make better time on the return journey on the main road, but unfortunately hostile conditions and the machinations of their various enemies will conspire to delay them – forcing them to take just over a week.

They should start out believing that they have three weeks, or maybe a day or two more. If they do especially well, forging ahead despite everything, then they may get home in time to prevent one or two problems actually developing; if they allow themselves to be delayed repeatedly, then they should enter Marienburg with a tearing sense of urgency; they can still win through, but they cannot rest or re-arm. You should only think of staging the return of Zahnarzt before the characters get back if they have done appallingly badly during the adventure, and if you really want to run your **WFRP** campaign in a world where Marienburg no longer exists.

Atmosphere

Creating the right atmosphere for play during **Dying Of The Light** is very important. Notes are given in several chapters on the right tone for that segment, and how best to create it, but GMs should try to instil an overall tone for the adventure; a tone of Suffering For The Greater Good, which is something that more FRP heroes should be more familiar with.

The PCs are going to start out thinking this adventure is going to be a piece of cake: getting an old book from an old scholar in Marienburg. They are going to be proved wrong, over and over again. They will get rained on; they will get muddy and cold; they will face enigmatic NPCs, strange cults, former allies turned bad or mad, and hideous monsters. They may have to rethink their ideas about Chaos and mutants. And worst of all, they are going to have to spend a lot of time with (probably) one of the most unpleasant NPCs ever created for **WFRP**. And they are doing this not for glory or money, but because they are heroes. Of course, this is the Old World, a grim world of perilous adventure, and nobody is going to take any notice at all ... but then that's all part of being a hero.

Players may feel their characters are being 'railroaded'; forced from encounter to encounter with little choice in the matter; but you should make them feel that this is because Fate has forced them into this path, not the adventure writers or the GM's style of refereeing. The best way to do that is to let them digress, meander or pause if they want to. Remind them that they are up against a time limit, and failure could mean disaster, but never force them to do anything, particularly if they appear unwilling. Then throw the next encounter at them when they're not expecting it.

Experience Awards

It is left to the GM when and how generously to award Experience Points during this adventure. Awarding them after the end of each chapter is simplest and probably fairest; but GMs may wish to give out points more often, in smaller amounts. This is a tough adventure, with a number of fights and other opportunities for trouble; so players may appreciate the opportunity to improve their characters as they go along.

Experience awards should follow the standard guidelines (WFRP, p.90-91). Some chapters have little combat, and what there is may be deliberately designed to be easy for the PCs, while in others, it is far smarter and more efficient for the characters to avoid fights; in places, the PCs may have to run away. Experience should be awarded just as generously for good role-playing, clever tactics, ingenious use of skills and protecting innocent bystanders, as for butchering monsters.

Pre-Generated Characters

The adventure includes a ready-to-use band of PC adventurers, of the right level of skill and experience, to be used if the players do not already have a suitable set of characters. Alternatively, if a new adventurer-type character is needed in a hurry (say, for use by a player whose regular PC is lost, killed or injured, or as an ally NPC when the PCs need help somehow) then the GM can select one from this list.

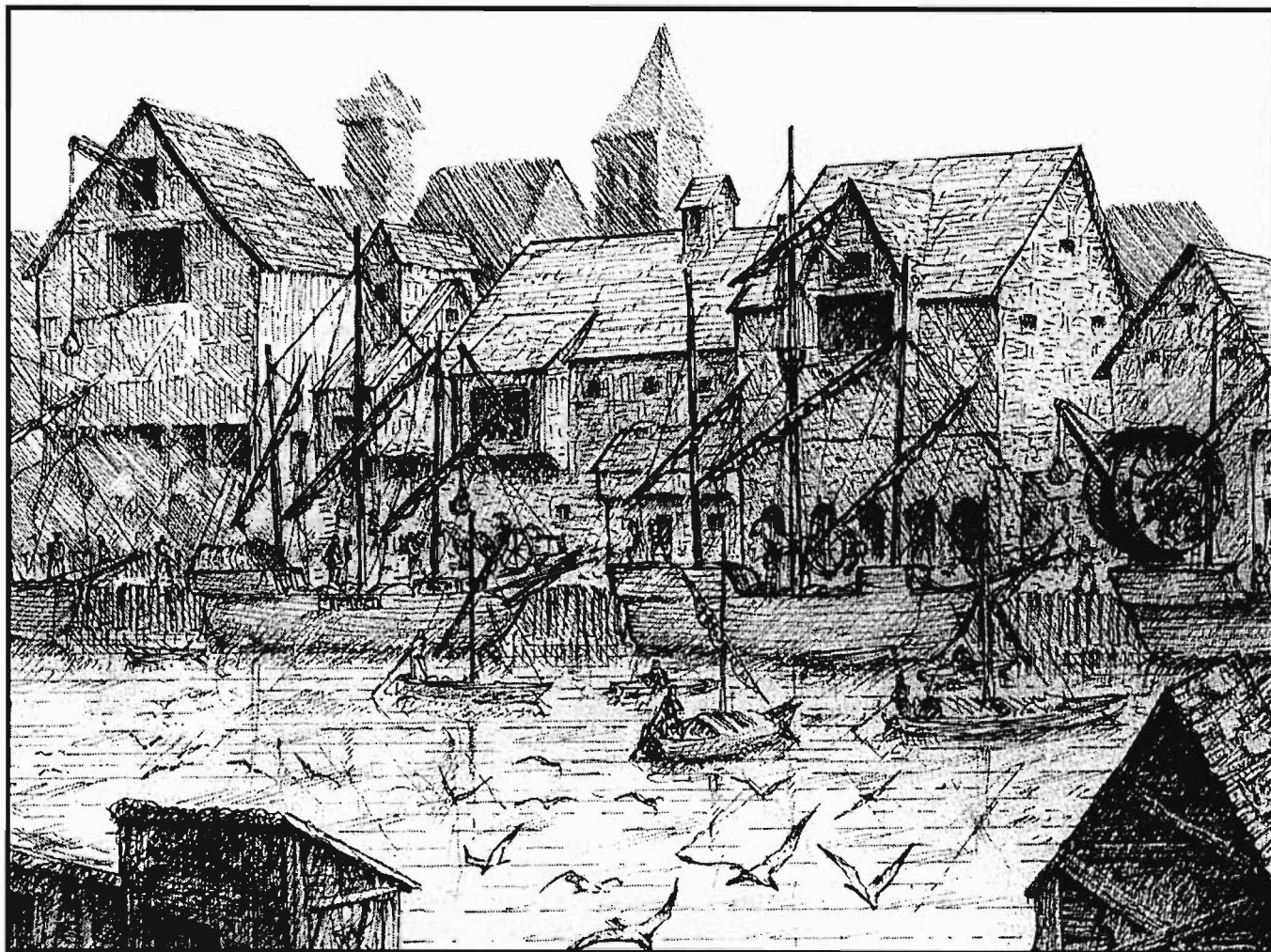
Marienburg and the Wasteland

The Wasteland exists as an independent nation to the west of the Empire. It lives up to its name: the land is a low-lying, marshy, windswept area extending from the borders of the Reikwald Forest in the east to the foothills of the Pale Sisters in the west, from the marshes of Grootmoers to the sea. It has a population of about 150,000, of whom around 90% live in Marienburg, the greatest port in the Old World. The rest are scattered across the marshes and scrub forests, trying to eke a living by farming the poor soil.

Most of the Wasteland is barren, deserted, and thoroughly inhospitable. It is rumoured to be home to tribes of orcs, goblins, beast-men, mutants and Fimir, and apart from the two major roads that pass through it (one to Gisoreux, the other to Middenheim) and the traffic on the River Reik, few people ever venture there.

Marienburg, by contrast, is a bustling, cosmopolitan port, built on a collection of large and small islands connected by bridges, at the estuary where the river Reik flows into the Sea of Claws. It is unlike most other cities in the Old World: space is at a premium and so buildings have grown upwards instead of outwards.

There are few parks and open areas because land is so valuable: even the bridges are crowded with houses and shops, and there are huge floating rafts of linked boats tethered between the islands, used as warehouses or dwelling places. Buildings



overhang the narrow streets, and it is rumoured that networks of tunnels exist under the city, built by those who needed more space but would prefer their business to remain unseen.

History

There has been a city here for many thousands of years. Even before the rise of the human race, the elves had built a town called 'The Fortress of the Star Gem on the Sandy Coast' on this site. The elves were driven out of the city during the Elf-Dwarf wars, and for centuries it lay abandoned. Legends say that the city was rebuilt at the time of Sigmar Heldenhammer by a great warrior chief named Marius. After he had subdued the monsters that inhabited the swamps and marshes around the city, he built his capital among the elven ruins and called it Marienburg, the city of Marius.

In the centuries that followed, what was then known as the Barony of Westerland flourished as a port. In 2150, the Sea Elves returned to their old capital, and Baron Matteus van Hoogmans gave them permission to rebuild their old fortress. To this day, a few hundred sea elves still inhabit this town-within-a-town.

In 2302 the last Baron of Westerland perished during the Incursion of Chaos, and the line became extinct. Rather than give the title to one of the noble houses and thus show favouritism and create ill feeling, Magnus the Pious granted that the town should henceforth be governed by a council made up of the leaders of the great merchant houses of the city.

In the following decades, the council gradually extended its power, collecting its own taxes and raising its own armies. It remained a province of the Empire only in name until 2429, when it formally seceded from the empire, and the new emperor, Wilhelm, who had inherited empty coffers from his predecessor, could do little to stop it. Wilhelm had contemptuously called the Westerlands 'the Wasteland', but was now forced to recognize the area as an independent nation.

Today Marienburg is the largest port in the Old World, with its position making it a natural meeting and trading point for merchants from the Empire, Bretonnia, Norsca and Kislev, and even Estalia, Araby and Albion. It is well connected to its neighbouring kingdoms by road, sea and river (see **Death On The Reik**, the second part of *The Enemy Within* campaign, for more information on river traffic and trading in the Old World).

Representatives of every nation and race can be found there, and it is rumoured that if something exists, no matter how rare, a trader with money will either find it in Marienburg, find someone who knows where it is, or be swindled into buying something that looks just like it.

City Life

Marienburgers are sharp, practical people with a down-to-earth view of life, and see their city as being on the cutting edge of a new revolution – one that will come through commerce, not through war. Fashion is very important to them, but flair is always more important than flamboyance.

They are more impressed by style than by money: flash a lot of coin about, and the only attention it will attract is from people speculating how to separate it from you. Marienburgers look down on their countrymen in the Wasteland as country bumpkins, usually beneath their contempt.

The city is governed by a central council, elected from the city's wards, guilds and temples. Its executive board is made up from Marienburg's wealthiest families. It is headed by the

Staadtholder, Luitpold van Raemerswijk, but everyone knows that he and the Council are largely figureheads and the true power within the city lies within the Wasteland Export-Import Exchange, the stock and commodity market, which is where the real decisions are made.

The City Council's edicts are carried out by a large and utterly corrupt bureaucracy, which also attends to matters such as customs, tax collection, law enforcement, public health, maintaining the city's canals and flood-walls, and running the Wasteland's army and fleet.

Marienburg's defences are as good as any major city: its walls stand twenty feet high, and the city guard is a constant, if unobtrusive, presence. Law enforcement is haphazard, but a few guilders in the right place can ensure that the city guard will keep a careful eye on your business – or discreetly ignore it, if that's what you would prefer.

The official currency is the Guilder, which is made of the same amount of gold as an Imperial Gold Crown, and is worth the same amount – in Marienburg, anyway. Almost any type of coinage will be accepted within the city. The primary language of the Wasteland is Reikspiel, but it is spoken with a pronounced accent, flat yet staccato. Major gods worshipped in the area include Manann, particularly in his aspect as Rijkstrum, god of the lower Reik, Sigmar, and Handrich, the god of merchants and commerce.

The city's reputation as a centre of trade is justified: most goods there are 5% cheaper than the prices given in the **WFRP** rulebook (except agricultural produce – the Wasteland is not famed for its farming) and all commodities are a step more plentiful than their rulebook listings too, so *common* goods become *plentiful*, and nothing is *very rare* unless the GM decides that it should be.

The Sea Elves are just one example of many communities that exist within the city; there are many other enclaves and ghettos within the city walls, representing microcosms of cultures and races from all over the world. All languages are spoken here, and it is easy for fugitives and exiles to find a home away from home somewhere among Marienburg's diverse cultures. It also makes the city an unfriendly place to explore, particularly after dark: some of the communities put a high value on their privacy.

Running The City

You won't find a map of Marienburg in this book, nor descriptions of the entire city. The adventure has been written so that it doesn't require them. Zealous fans can consult the articles which appeared intermittently in *White Dwarf* magazine (issues 118-135); others may prefer to wait for the arrival of the Marienburg sourcebook, which is currently under development.

For the moment, assume that almost any resource the PCs may want can be found somewhere in Marienburg: there are temples to all the gods, houses for almost every guild, plus shops, businesses, hostels, inns and entertainments of all sizes and kinds. Cults such as the Purple Hand (from *The Enemy Within* campaign) and any other groups encountered in previous adventures will have members in the city, if you want to distract the PCs that way.

Feel free to improvise new encounters within Marienburg, or throw in characters or bits of local colour on the spur of the moment – you'll find that the more background detail you add to a scene, the more your players will react to it and make it a part of the game.

Prologue:

Error of the Moon

This chapter sets up the events which trigger the rest of the adventure. It introduces the main themes that run through the plot: the imminent eclipse; the return of Zahnarzt; the secret library, and the coming of Muuthauwg, the Quiet Herald. If you are intending to play a character in this adventure then you know you shouldn't be reading this far into the book, so stop.

Before playing this chapter, GMs should read through the entire adventure, and familiarize themselves with the descriptions of the major NPCs, Zahnarzt and Muuthauwg, the Order of Illuminated Readers and the Brotherhood of the Forgotten One in the Appendix. Not all this information will be immediately relevant, but it will let you create the right atmosphere in your descriptions of settings and playing of NPCs, and will let you foreshadow later parts of the adventure. However, you should beware of giving too much information to your adventurers too early.

You are encouraged to improvise random events and 'red herrings' throughout. Perhaps the adventurers have their pockets picked, or find themselves challenged to a drinking competition by some Bretonnian merchant? The more feeling that you can convey to the players that Marienburg is a real town, the more enjoyable this chapter will be.

Starting The Adventure

As the adventure opens, the adventurers are on their way to Marienburg to visit an elderly scholar named Kunz Vogelgesang.

If you are using the pre-generated characters in this book, or a party with a student or scholar in it, then this is easy to arrange. Suldrek (or your own scholar) has recently been reunited with one of their old tutors, Veit Pogner of Nuln (or wherever). If you are the sort of GM who likes to read sections of text out loud, then you can read the following to your players:

Late autumn, and the hoofs of the horses pulling the carriage make a sound like distant waves as they trot through the thick drifts of fallen leaves that lie across the road to Marienburg as it passes through the Drak Wald forest. It is not the most exciting journey you've ever taken, but it is one of the easiest, and the prospect of spending the winter amidst the warmth and hospitality of Marienburg seems better than freezing your bones in some forest, or on a boat, or deep underground.

It was (Suldrek) who put you onto this one – or rather his former tutor Veit Pogner. You ran into the old man in (Nuln), where he is trying to finish the book that is his

life's work. He desperately needs one particular, extremely rare text to complete his researches, 'A True and Honest Account of the Land of Lustria' by Karl Sergent, and he believes that the book can be acquired by a contact of his, Kunz Vogelgesang, who is studying matters of astronomy in Marienburg.

But the old scholar is crippled with arthritis, and asked (Suldrek) and the rest of you to undertake this simple errand for him. In exchange he will give (Suldrek) a letter of introduction to an important Altdorf scholar who may turn out to be a useful patron for all of you, and he will pay each of you fifty gold crowns; on delivery of the book. It's not a lot of money, but he is not a rich man, and the job ought to be simple. You know where Vogelgesang lives, you have a letter of introduction addressed to him from Pogner, and you can almost smell the sea and taste the fine Marienburg beers. Winter in the old city is something to look forward to: a bit of comfort, civilization and decent living at last.

The carriage's wheel hits a rock, and the baby opposite starts crying again. You catch your companions' eyes and sigh. It's not far now. The good times will begin just around the next corner.

If you'd prefer to role-play the scene with Veit Pogner as a prelude to the main adventure, then portray the old scholar as a fiery, deeply motivated man: a brilliant mind in a body bent double and in constant pain, wheeled about the town in a primitive wheel-chair propelled by his long-suffering student Andreas. He will start by talking about his researches, and he describes how much he needs information on the yard-long tailfeather of a legendary Lustrian bird, the quetzalli, said to be a potent magical charm. Make sure the PCs get the idea that Pogner is about to send them off on a voyage half-way round the world, and watch them get excited or start to make excuses as to why they don't want to go to Lustria just now.

In fact, Pogner doesn't need them to go further than Marienburg: what he needs is information on the feather, not the feather itself – although he'd pay an extra 500 GCs if by some miracle the PCs could provide him with one. The book he needs is around six hundred years old and has long been regarded as 'lost' in the Empire, but: 'If anyone has a copy, Kunz Vogelgesang does – or he can get hold of one. It may take him a while, and I have no idea how he does it, but he hasn't failed me yet.' Pogner explains that the two of them studied together at the great university at Altdorf, 'more years ago than I care to

remember.' Although they were great friends in their youth, they have not seen each other for many years. 'Kunz was a talented boy. A little strange, but undeniably talented. They threw him out of the university for suggesting that the world goes round the sun, not the other way around. Then he wrote a brilliant book about the motions of the planets that didn't find favour in Altdorf, which is why he's outside the Empire these days.' Pogner gives them Vogelgesang's address in Marienburg, and a sealed letter of introduction to show to his old friend.

If there are no students or academics in the party, it may take a little more ingenuity to get the PCs involved in this adventure. If they are a group of adventurers who are down on their luck then Pogner or some other academic could approach them and offer them a reasonable fee to go to Marienburg and pick up a valuable book that Vogelgesang has procured for them. Perhaps one of the party becomes ill or cursed, and is told that the only book listing the ingredients for the cure is 'lost', but that it might – just might – be in Vogelgesang's collection.

Alternatively, if the adventurers are natives of Marienburg – or perhaps a sea-faring group who have docked there – then they will witness the rising panic about the eclipse first-hand. During the panic, they may overhear references to the reclusive astronomical genius Kunz Vogelgesang. If they are at all like any other party of adventurers, their curiosity will get the better of them, and they may go and investigate. Failing that, if they have a reasonable reputation as heroic adventurers, perhaps Vogelgesang may contact them and ask them to protect him from the Order, or Goffman may come looking for them.

Going To Marienburg

One way or another, the PCs will probably start the adventure travelling in a coach from the Empire to Marienburg, along the main road through the Drak Wald forest. The coachman is named Heinrich, a sullen fellow who talks of little but timetables and the dangers of highwaymen. The only other passenger is Maria Ortel, a lady in her late thirties who is travelling with her children: a baby, a girl of nine and a boy of thirteen.

She says that her husband is a merchant who has recently returned from Araby, and she talks incessantly about the treasures of the east that he will have brought back for her. If any PCs reveal that they have been to any large cities in the Empire recently, she will quiz them about the latest fashions, what the nobility were wearing, and so on. The children become restless within three hours of getting into the carriage, and by the end of the trip the PCs should be thoroughly sick of coaches, children and fashion.

On the last day of the journey, there is more and more traffic on the road, mostly moving away from Marienburg. Maria Ortel immediately decides that there must be some sort of plague, and insists that the driver turns back for the last inn. If either Heinrich or the PCs disagree, she will give a little cry and say that while *they* may want to contract Nurgle's Rot, she cares about preserving the lives of her little ones.

Heinrich says that they can get out here and now, but he isn't turning the coach round. Maria says that she can hardly be left on the open road, and tries to shame one of the PCs into staying with her 'to guard her from all those terrible beastmen in the Wasteland'.

If the PCs ask any of the people who are leaving the city what the trouble is, they will get a variety of different replies. Apart from the few who are just travelling on business or for pleasure, the answers are muddled:

◆ 'They do say, sir, that sun is going to fall from the sky and burn up the whole city. A judgement from the gods, sir, against the wickedness of the town. It's true, the City Council has said so themselves.'

◆ 'If you trust what the wise people are saying, and I'm not saying that I do, you understand, then we are due for another major incursion of Chaos. Which is why I am heading for Altdorf to ... to warn the Emperor. Yes, that's right.'

◆ 'The whole town has gone crazy. Happens from time to time. Some fool starts a panic and the plebeians turn nasty. Old chum of mine had his house broken into twice last night. When he finally tracked down a watchmen, they told him they had better things to worry about. I'm staying well away until things calm down in a week or so.'

A State Of Tension

When the PCs finally reach Marienburg, around mid-afternoon, it is clear that something is amiss. The city is not in uproar, but there is a state of tension and apprehension in the air. Many shops are closed, and some are boarded up. Trade seems to be at a low ebb, and there are a religious zealots and doom-sayers standing on street corners prophesying the end of the world, the vengeance of Ulric, death by fire and other vague catastrophes. There is also a large number of watchmen and city guards around, and they appear nervous.

Questioning people in the street or in taverns will bring a variety of replies. Everybody knows that there have been riots and disturbances for the last couple of nights, and the militia has been brought onto the streets to curb any further violence. A curfew has also been imposed from nine at night until six in the morning. Most of the trouble has been in the docks and the

Watchmen and City Guards

4	41	25	4	3	7	40	1	29	29	29	29	29	29
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Skills: Strike Mighty Blow; Strike to Stun; Specialist Weapon – Double Handed

Trappings: (Watchmen) Leather Jerkin; Halberd or Club; Dagger; Lantern and Pole (night only; one per group); Helmet; Whistle: (City Guard) Mail Shirt; Sword or Mace; Dagger; Lantern and Pole (night only; one per squad); Helmet

Watchmen patrol in groups of two or four; the City Guard travel in squads of four or ten. Larger groups will be accompanied by a sergeant (see below). Watchmen and City Guards will both hit first and ask questions later, but the City Guard will usually hit harder and ask less questions afterwards. Watch patrols can summon assistance by blowing their whistles: 2D4 Watchmen will arrive in 1D4 minutes, and further whistling will bring more help.

Watch/Guard Sergeant

4	45	35	4	3	8	40	2	29	39	29	29	29	29
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Skills: Disarm; Dodge Blow; Strike Mighty Blow; Strike to Stun
Trappings: Sleeved Mail Shirt; Helmet; Sword; Dagger

slums – which is traditional – but there are reports that the temple district has had problems as well, and the council hall has been the scene of agitation.

Less well understood is the reason for the rioting. Everyone has an opinion and no two people will agree: people blame a new tax on imported alcohol; rumours of corruption within the city council; a Chaos army storming out of the Wasteland; a fleet of Dark Elves sighted at sea; a conspiracy of Skaven or mutants or Chaos worshippers scheming within the city. Two or three people will, if given the chance, make reference to a string of grisly murders that has happened over the last year: four people have been found with their throats slit and their tongues cut out. Someone might mention they've heard about a forthcoming 'eclipse', when the Chaos Moon Morrslieb will devour the sun, and the city will fall into the sea. Or something. Right now, talking about the subject in a tavern is more likely to start a fight than produce any answers.

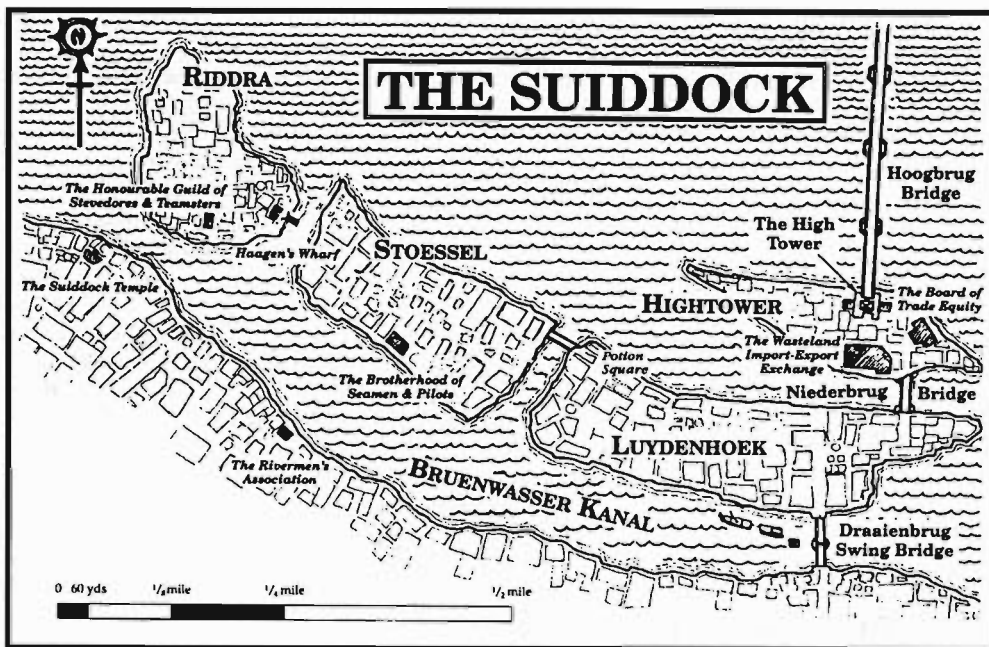
The city guards and watchmen are even less help: all they know is that they've been ordered onto the streets to keep order, and will be brusque with anyone who is asking too many questions. If the PCs think to ask someone who might know more, they can find a well-informed scholar, merchant or shopkeeper who knows the score: a few days ago a report was made to the City Council that the Chaos Moon would eclipse the sun within the next month, and this would trigger some kind of prophecy about disaster and a demon. The City Council has delayed a decision until other experts could be consulted, and a second meeting will be held this very evening.

It was meant to be kept a secret, but word has leaked out, and panic has ensued – why keep it a secret if there wasn't some truth to it? And apparently the report came from an astrologer who's gone into hiding because he fears for his life, and the man must know what he's talking about because (this is said in a whisper) he fled from the Empire, where he is still wanted for Chaos-worship. This is close enough to what the PCs know of Vogelgesang that they may begin to realize that they're involved in a part of what's going on.

Loose Ends And Dead Ends

The PCs are sure to find this all very interesting but they have a job to do: finding Vogelgesang. The address that Pogner gave them leads them to Luydenhoek, the largest island in the network of docks, wharves, quays and warehouses collectively known as the Suiddock. It's a low-income area, and the signs of recent rioting are visible: incoherent graffiti, broken shutters on windows, boarded-up shops and one or two newly burnt-out buildings.

Vogelgesang's address, Halsdorph Street, is just off Graf Anders Square, known locally as 'Potion Square'. The riots do not seem to have reached this far, but the door of Vogelgesang's house is very battered, the window-shutters are closed, and symbols of



Manann and Sigmar have been painted on them recently. Knocking on the door will get no reply; hammering on it or trying to break it down will cause a head to appear from an upper window of the next house: 'He's not there! Hasn't been there for a year! Shove off or I'll call the watch!'

Demands for assistance will get nowhere, but a polite enquiry will draw the owner of the head down to her front door. She is Helena Dorstadt, a rotund woman in her forties, and although she did not know Vogelgesang well, she did know his housekeeper, Jemima Sheepfoot, a Halfling. According to Helena, Vogelgesang was a strange one – 'always up on the roof with that weird contraption of his, looking at the sky' – and suddenly moved away just over a year ago. She has no idea where he went, only that he let Jemima go at the time, and the poor Halfling was very upset. She can provide an address for Jemima. As for Vogelgesang, all she knows is that he used to work in the city's Records Office.

The reason Helena was initially so hostile is that, as she will tell the PCs, for the last two days people have been banging on Vogelgesang's former door and demanding that he come out, blessing the place at all hours of the day or night, and even trying to break in. Apparently he had something to do with causing the recent troubles in the city, although Helena is very surprised by this: he used to be a quiet man, 'but it's the quiet ones you have to watch'. If the PCs insist on seeing inside his house, they can break in (with a 50% chance of being spotted and 2-6 watchmen being called, if they're unsubtle about it) but the building is bare.

Following the trail to Jemima's address will take the PCs into a Halfling enclave in a slum area at the other end of the Suiddock, a few hundred yards from an ancient and decrepit temple dedicated to Manann. The inhabitants of these streets do not take kindly to big intruders asking questions, and tact and diplomacy are called for. If the PCs start any kind of argument, trouble or fight then doors will slam, window-shutters will clatter closed, and the street will suddenly be deserted.

The address turns out to be a leather-worker's shop owned by Cristan Roundfoot, a cousin of Jemima's who will, if given the chance, be very garrulous about her. Oh yes, Jemima came to live with them about a year ago, and found work in a nearby

inn. Then a month or so ago she moved away, saying her old master had come back and needed her to look after him. Oh no, he doesn't know where she is: she's been very secretive about it. But he did see her in the market the other day, buying fresh oysters, and she seemed worried about something, told him to leave the city for the next month because something terrible was going to happen. Oh, something about the Chaos Moon covering the sun and eating it whole, and bringing trouble down on all of us. Oh yes, she seemed quite certain about it: said her master told her so. Oh, he hasn't gone because he couldn't leave the business, oh no, but he has told all his friends and relations, and they've told theirs. And, oh, would you like to buy some of the finest leather goods in Marienburg, sirs?

Nobody else in the area knows where Jemima is, and if the PCs ask anyone else about Vogelgesang, the name will get no recognition. If they mention that they're trying to track someone down, low-class characters will have no idea how to help, while those with some learning or status will suggest that they check with the City Records Office, opposite the Council Hall.

The Story So Far

Since all roads seem to be leading to the Council Hall, it's time to fill in some holes in the background.

Kunz Vogelgesang, a brilliant astronomer (see p.17), has been living and studying in Marienburg for the last twenty-five years, spending his days working in the City Council Records Office and his nights observing the skies above the city with the aid of a powerful telescope of his own design. For much of that time he has been a Lay Reader of the Ancient Order of Illuminated Readers (see p.118), using books from the Unseen Library to aid his research into the movement of astral bodies.

A year ago he was invited to become a full member of the Order and did so willingly, moving himself and his telescope to Foyles Rock. Searching the library's disorderly stock, he finally found one of the books he was after: 'A Theory of Chaos' by the ancient scholar Ludwig Mandlebrote. Although damaged, the book gave him enough information to predict the Chaotic orbit of the Chaos Moon – and according to this new chart, Morrslieb was only a few weeks away from eclipsing the sun, an event that might only be expected once every thousand years or so. The book also gave a detailed description of what would happen during the eclipse: a renegade demon would somehow attempt to take on corporeal form. Unfortunately, the details were missing because the book had been deliberately mutilated: a hole had been cut into its pages, and a large tooth-like object wrapped in a scrap of paper had been concealed in it.

Vogelgesang was terrified. He presented his discovery to Father Faber, head of the Order, showing him not only Mandlebrote's book but also the Tooth that had been hidden inside it. Faber was not interested, dismissing it as one more ancient prophecy of no importance; and besides the Order's business is collecting information, not acting on it.

Instead of calming Vogelgesang's nerves, this frightened him even more and so, with his trusty telescope and an armful of stolen books, he stole a boat and rowed back to the city under cover of darkness. He hired a dilapidated house near the waterfront, close to the Draaienbrug swing bridge leading to Luydenhoek, hired back his former housekeeper Jemima to look after it and him, and took his discoveries to another Lay Reader of the Order, one Ernst Goffman (see p.21), a scholar of the ways of Chaos.

Although he knew that they were both courting terrible retribution from the Order, Goffman was fascinated. He immediately realized what the book was referring to: the imminent return of the demon Zahnarzt the Bodiless (see p.114). Using his own access to the Unseen Library, he has done as much research into Zahnarzt as he can, and with Vogelgesang's assistance he prepared a paper to be presented before the City Council, outlining the imminent danger. It had to be presented anonymously, for fear of revealing the existence of the Order, so Vogelgesang asked an old friend of his, Gustav Andersen who is the chief clerk of the City Records Office, to submit it. The paper was duly presented under Andersen's name, and the Council then delayed its decision for a few days until various experts could be called to give their opinions.

Unfortunately the initial presentation and discussion was done with members of the public present, and word got out that a disaster is imminent. That, coupled with Jemima's gossiping about the forthcoming eclipse, has created the current atmosphere of worry and trouble in the city. News travels quickly in Marienburg. A day after the Council meeting, someone had clearly put that story together with Jemima's prophecies, since Vogelgesang's name was being whispered in certain dark corners of the city. Doom merchants were setting up their stalls outside the temple of Manann, preaching that the imminent end of the world could be averted only if everyone redoubled their piety and made substantial cash donations to Manann's chosen representatives: themselves. The panic and unrest spread quickly enough that, by the next morning, many of the wealthier inhabitants of the city were boarding up their homes and preparing to spend the winter in Middenheim.

Meanwhile, other forces in the city are taking in an interest in the prediction of the eclipse:

The Ancient Order of Illuminated Readers: Father Faber, head of the Order, is furious: Vogelgesang has not only absconded from the Unseen Library with a number of irreplaceable tomes, his paper about the eclipse (who else could have authored it?) has endangered the future of the Order itself. Four of the younger Readers who have studied the theory of combat and the history of pugilism have been dispatched into Marienburg to reclaim the book and punish Vogelgesang for his treachery.

The Brotherhood of the Forgotten One: The Brotherhood (p.115) has also realized the importance of the eclipse: it means that their lord and master, Zahnarzt the Bodiless, is on the point of becoming incarnate once again. They know, because the demon prince has told them, that somewhere in the Old World there is a Chaos-marked child who is the chosen vessel for Zahnarzt's soul. However, the demon won't tell them where it is, and without the Demon's Tooth they have no way of finding it. They are therefore engaged in a series of Chaotic ceremonies, so indescribably hideous that they're not described here, which will (they hope) tell them where the Egg is hidden.

Checking The Records

The PCs' next destination is likely to be the main square of the city: either to try to get into the City Council meeting, or to visit the City Records Office to try to find some more information on Vogelgesang or Jemima.

The main square is one of the few open spaces in the city: a wide plaza dotted with some modern and controversial examples of Tilean statues – a young nude Sigmar, a busty woman

with no arms, that sort of thing. On the north side is the Council Hall: an imposing building of several storeys surmounted by a dome. It takes up the north side of the large square, with the other sides surrounded by offices. The city's militia and guards have their bases here, as do the customs officials, the tax office, and the City Records Office which occupies the south side of the square: a large, two-storey red-brick building of unremarkable design. To the east is a temple of Manann, with a bell-tower. Although the tower has no clock, the bell is rung every hour, and can be heard across the city. It is also rung to signal the start and end of the curfew.

The Records Office is open from ten until five every day, staffed by overworked bureaucrats. There is always a queue, and PCs may have to wait half an hour to be seen. Any request for information on Vogelgesang is greeted with amusement: 'Kunz Vogelgesang? Blimey, there's fate! He used to work here, up to a year or so back.' It will take about five minutes to check the archives, then: 'No, sorry, it's a blank. Not a sausage in the records since last year. It's like he disappeared off the face of the world, innit?'

As the PCs are about to leave, a voice calls out and a short, bald man in a skullcap comes up to them. He introduces himself, slightly nervously and nerdishly, as Gustav Andersen, chief clerk of the City Records Office (see p.13), and asks what the party's interest in Vogelgesang might be. If they can prove that they are friendly, Andersen will take them aside into an empty office, sit down behind an desk, and reveal that he knew the scholar well: although he did not share Vogelgesang's interest in astronomy, the two had been friends. Vogelgesang did disappear a year ago but has recently arrived back in town: Gustav saw him for a couple of hours a few days ago, and will give the PCs his new address in the docks.

At this moment the temple bell sounds the hour, and Gustav jumps to his feet. 'Is that the time? Oh dear, I must be going: I have to attend the City Council meeting about the eclipse. It was I who presented the first report to them, you see, so I'm the star performer ... although public speaking isn't really my forte.'

Some PC will probably comment that Gustav said he wasn't interested in astronomy. The clerk will stare for a moment, put a hand to his brow and sit down again. 'Well, I'm not ... that is, I wasn't ... I mean ... Oh dear.' He gets up, checks the door is firmly closed, sits down again, and blurts out his tale: that Vogelgesang and Goffman asked him to present the report of the forthcoming eclipse to the Council under his own name, for reasons they couldn't divulge.

Gustav had no idea the paper was going to cause all this fuss, but he suspected something strange might be going on: Goffman had done all the talking, while Vogelgesang stayed completely silent, jotting notes and showing them to Goffman. Gustav, by now very agitated, will make his excuses and leave, heading across the square to the Council Hall. If the PCs follow him, they will notice he enters it by a small back door, well away from the main square itself. This may be important later.

Outside The Council Hall

If the characters try to go to the Council meeting, it will have started by the time they get to the Council Hall, even if they are following Gustav. By this time a large crowd has gathered outside the Hall, and is being held back from the steps by the City Guard. The square is very crowded: perhaps three thousand

people have packed in. Some are here to hear the Council's verdict, others are plying their trades: selling foodstuffs, trinkets or religious icons, busking or performing, prophesying doom, making political orations, or offering observers a quick good time in a nearby alley; while a number of pickpockets and con-men are using the impromptu gathering as an opportunity to practise their chosen careers. Some of the more pious folk are gathered in and around the temple of Manann, praying for the protection of the city's patron deity.

From time to time, the figure of a late-arriving expert or member of the Council will push through the throng to the steps of the Hall and, after a brief talk to the guards, will proceed inside. Nobody comes out through the massive door; this is because they have the sense to leave through the much smaller and less conspicuous door at the back.

Anybody exploring the area around the Hall will find this door, guarded by two watchmen armed with polearms, and surrounded by a much smaller crowd of around fifteen people, mostly agitators and minor politicians trying to get in. A character waiting around these doors will have the chance to question some of the experts as they leave: see 'Expert Opinions', below.

Characters who remain in the main square will see two city folk drag a farmer into the area, calling for justice and retribution. The farmer, who looks like a typical Wasteland peasant, is protesting wildly. The crowd forms a circle around them as the men loudly assert that the farmer had sold them a Chaos-tainted hen earlier that day. The farmer denies this vehemently. One of the men holds him down while the other explains how the hen laid an egg which had a double yolk in it – and surely that would have yielded a two-headed chick, a mutant of Chaos! This is greeted with gasps, boos, and cries of 'Chaos-lover!' and 'Burn him!' The crowd's mood is ugly, like the crowd, and they show every sign of wanting to lynch the man on the spot. The City Guards make no move to intervene.

The PCs should be given an opportunity to decide if they want to help or rescue the farmer before there is another intervention: a witch-hunter enters the circle, saying that if the farmer is going to be lynched, he should be lynched in an orderly fashion. The crowd quiets a little, but it is obvious to the PCs that they still want to see the farmer killed. If the PCs intervene on the farmer's behalf, they will be heckled as Chaos-lovers, and there is a 1% chance that any Marienburger they talk to later will recognize them as 'the ones who tried to save that mutant farmer from the cleansing flames'.

Also present in the crowd around this scene is Ernst Goffman. Although Vogelgesang has warned him to keep a low profile, he could not resist the urge to find out whether the Council had taken their report seriously. If the PCs do not intervene on the farmer's behalf, Goffman will do so, striding forward and calling for a proper trial. The witch-hunter knows Goffman and accuses him of being a sympathizer with the forces of Chaos, citing the example of how he defended 'that witch-sister and mutant-lover Astrid'. Goffman, heeding Vogelgesang's advice about being inconspicuous, will melt back into the crowds and disappear, making his way home.

If the PCs defend the farmer then Goffman will not draw attention to himself, but when he meets them again he will remember that they were prepared to put themselves on the line to help a (probably) innocent man. One way or the other, either the adventurers will know who Goffman is, or Goffman will know who they are, although they are unlikely to meet at this point.



Expert Opinions

However much the PCs try, they will not gain access to the Council meeting: the guards will turn them away unless they can produce the right paperwork. However, a quick *bribe*, *blather* or *charm* will yield the information about the back door, and although they cannot get in that way either, they may be able to grab a few words with some of the departing expert witnesses.

The four who will emerge from this door are, in order: Rosal Krantz (15 minutes after the PCs reach the square); Boris Bludenheim (20 minutes later); Gustav Andersen (20 minutes after Boris); and Johan Tynus (10 minutes after Gustav).

Rosal Krantz

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	Int	A	Dex	Id	Int	Cl	WP	Rel
3	40	30	3	3	6	39	1	29	39	60	39	29	69

Skills: Astronomy, Blather, Public Speaking, Seduction, Story Telling, Wit, Etiquette, Bribery, Sixth Sense

Trappings: Various expensive and arcane-looking tomes about the stars (most he hasn't read and one he wrote himself); Scrolls with detailed horoscopes which he sells for horrible amounts of money; Expensive black cloak with stars and planets woven into it; Bright pink shirt from Bretonnia; Matching hat.

Krantz is a renowned astrologer, aged about thirty five. He formerly served in the court of the Emperor, but decided to emigrate to Marienburg after a prediction about the outcome of a particular battle failed to come true. Krantz's knowledge of astronomy and native wit mean that he can usually improvise plausible predictions based on what the stars are doing, even though

he has no powers of divination whatsoever. Over the years, however, he has convinced himself that his predictions are, indeed, to be trusted.

Krantz is annoyed that such an important event as an eclipse failed to show up on his horoscopes, but he is doing his best not show this. He has reassured the City Council that an eclipse of the sun is not dangerous, but does signify that it is an excellent time for people born under the sign of the Anvil to get into pig farming – and will tell any PCs the same thing. He believes that he was not given a fair hearing, and as soon as he leaves the Hall he will enter the main square and begin haranguing the Council as charlatans and know-nothings. The crowd takes this as an indication that the rumours of disaster are true, and their movements become agitated.

If the PCs do not quieten him down, then a member of the City Guard will do so, forcefully if need be. Anyone who watches Krantz arrive and makes an *Int* roll at -15 can work out where he must have come from: the Hall's back door. Anyone who talks to Krantz will find him personable and convincing, and if they fail a *WP* test will feel the need to buy a worthless horoscope (4 guilders), or if they failed by more than 20, to book an appointment for a more detailed reading next day (10 guilders).

Boris Bludenheim

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	Int	A	Dex	Id	Int	Cl	WP	Rel
3	36	30	2	3	7	48	1	32	30	48	40	35	39

Skills: Excellent Vision, Ride Horse, Arcane Language (Magick), Read/Write, Secret Language (Classical), Consume Alcohol, Astronomy.

Trappings: Pocket Telescope; Scroll with star-map on it.

Boris is the head of the city's small Astronomers' Guild, and is quite well known. He is heavily built, in his early forties, with a receding hairline and ears that stick out alarmingly. Being an astronomer, not an astrologer, he regards the prophecy of demons as superstitious bunkum, but has had to (reluctantly) admit to the Council that the predictions sound likely, and there probably will be an eclipse quite soon. However, he has reassured them that there is absolutely no danger whatsoever, and cannot be persuaded otherwise.

Boris knew Vogelgesang when he first arrived in the city, but has not seen him since he disappeared, and has heard reports that the scholar had gone mad. If the PCs tell him they believe Vogelgesang was behind the report of the eclipse, Boris will be surprised and dismissive. He doesn't know where the scholar might be, but suggests that they ask Gustav Andersen in the City Records Office or 'that fellow ... mousy chap, interested in demons, freind of Vogelgesang's, probably the one behind all this nonsense ... Hoffman, that's him. Ernst Hoffman.'

Gustav Andersen

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
3	25	26	2	2	5	34	1	27	29	45	16	35	29

Skills: Read/Write; Secret Language (Classical); Evaluate; Scroll Lore; History; Blather

Trappings: Skullcap; Large notebook and pencil; Walking-stick.

Gustav was introduced in the section 'Checking the Records', above. If the PCs encounter him for the first time as he leaves the Hall he will be exhausted and upset: he has just answered a barrage of questions from the Council and has been forced to admit that he did not write the original report he put to it. However, he has managed to keep from saying who did. As a result, while the Council accepts that there will be an eclipse shortly, it does not believe any of Goffman's predictions about the return of Zahnarzt.

Gustav will be friendly to anyone asking friendly questions. He will admit that he did not write the report, but will refuse to name those who did. Vogelgesang is the main thing on his mind and if anyone mentions the name to him, he will jump visibly and try to get away. Only explaining the situation to him will calm him down. He will assume that anyone who asks about Vogelgesang and the eclipse together already knows what's going on, and will freely volunteer what he knows – which is a lot, particularly about population trends in Marienburg, but almost none of it is of any use to the PCs. However, he does have Vogelgesang's current address, and will give it if asked very nicely or shown Pogner's letter.

Johan Tynus

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Int	Cl	WP	Fel	
4	39	30	4	3	6	40	1	39	29	40	32	29	32

Skills: Read/write; Arcane Language (Old Slann); Demon Lore; Ride; Cryptography; Theology; Public Speaking; Blather; Story Telling; Flee!

Trappings: Knife; Strange star-shaped object he keeps in his pocket, and brings out when threatened by anything that might be supernatural

Johan Tynus is a tall young man with good looks and a striking smile. He is a brilliant student of the ways of Chaos, but unfortunately so much learning in such a young mind has added his

thoughts and he sees the tentacles of Chaos and conspiracies everywhere. He starts conversations calmly and sensibly, but slowly parts of his theories will start to creep in. He is convinced that the coming eclipse means not only the return of Zahnarzt but the unleashing of a greater evil: the beast that cries at the heart of the world, the tentacled sleeper will awaken, the clockwork child will roll across the Wasteland, and ... well, you get the idea.

Johan will emerge from the Council Hall just as the PCs are about to get some useful information out of Gustav, and will try to sneak away inconspicuously: he's a little embarrassed that the Council refused to take him seriously. Being as tall as he is, he will be spotted by the party – who are likely to abandon their source of useful information and chase after him instead. If he realizes he is being chased, he will flee towards the Suddock, where he lives. If he cannot lose the PCs along the way, he will finally reach his building, rush inside and bar the door. If they can convince him to come out, they will probably waste the rest of the evening listening to his plausible, convincing, excellently told and very scary stories of Chaos, none of which are true or relevant to what they're doing.

A Decision!

Half an hour after Johan leaves the building, the Clerk of the Council (the young and charismatic Ulric Van-Den-Bogaerde) emerges from the front entrance. The crowd falls silent as he announces that: 'The City Council and I have consulted with sky-watchers and wise men. And I can tell you, absolutely, that although in a few weeks Morrslieb will completely obscure the sun –'

At this the crowd erupts into frenzy, drowning out the rest of his speech (' – this is a natural phenomenon and there is absolutely nothing to worry about'). Women faint, children scream, fruit is thrown, windows are smashed and arms are broken off the statues that still have them. It's a fairly small riot, as these things go in Marienburg. The City Guard takes this as an opportunity to wade in with blunt instruments, and numerous scores are settled all round. The wisest thing for the adventurers to do at this point is to retire from the scene. Perhaps they can find a decent tavern, away from all the excitement?

The Time Is Right

At some point during their stay in Marienburg the PCs are bound to go into a tavern, either for a meal, to find rooms, to try and find out some news, or to meet someone. The following important encounter can take place in any inn or tavern in the city, some time one evening.

There is a small stage at one end of the room, and after a while a lone musician steps up there, sits down on a stool, draws a small pipe out from his garments, and begins to play. If anyone asks later, none of the tavern staff will remember speaking to the musician about this, but taverns in Marienburg tend to be fairly relaxed about such arrangements, provided that they get their cut at the end of the evening. If the PCs decide not to enter a tavern, the piper may start to play in a lodging-house or even on a street corner.

This is Muuthauwg (see p.116) but that shouldn't be obvious; he just looks like a young and unremarkable human troubadour. PCs who ask how he is dressed can be told about his eccentric clothes, but the GM should not over-emphasize this.

Similarly, if they ask, the adventurers may note that he hasn't put down a hat for people to give him money – but perhaps he'll take a collection later. The PCs may even conclude that he is inexperienced and hopelessly optimistic: a single small pipe can hardly be expected to carry over the shouting and laughter in a busy tavern.

But as he plays, the musician proves this assessment wrong. His pipe isn't loud – in fact, its tone is soft and rather mellow – but somehow it commands attention. Gradually, every conversation in the tavern falls silent. PCs with *Musicianship* who make an **Int** roll will note that, although his tunes sound simple, they actually incorporate a lot of subtlety, with complex shifting rhythms. Characters who know how to play wind instruments may also note that the piper appears to have unlimited breath in his lungs.

In fact, Muuthauwg is slowly taking control of a few members of the audience. These will mostly be weak-willed heavy drinkers, but it is possible for a PC or two to become caught up; the GM should make three **WP** rolls for each PC, with the standard penalties for drinks consumed (see **WFRP**, p.84), and anyone who fails all three will join in the dance. Anyone who fails their first roll but succeeds on the second or third may realize that something weird is going on; roll vs. **Int** at -30% to puzzle it out, again applying penalties for drinks consumed.

Muuthauwg will continue playing, but he rises to his feet, and begins to dance. At first he simply steps back and forth in time to the music, but then he throws in a few short, graceful jigs. Seven or eight members of the audience – those he controls – follow him. This is the point when PCs who have made the relevant rolls may guess that magic is involved; others should simply be told that the musician is producing a remarkably effective dance tune.

If anyone tries to intervene violently at this point, things could get complicated. Muuthauwg can place controlled dancers between himself and any assailant; and some of the bar staff – including two burly bouncers (use the profile for Watchmen on p.8) – may think that the PCs are trying to make trouble for a pleasant entertainer, and react accordingly. And anyone who enters a Marienburg tavern with a full load of weapons will be treated with wary suspicion to start with.

Whatever happens, Muuthauwg soon steps down from the stage, and his mostly drunken victims join him as he dances round the room. He leads them to the door, and they follow him out of the tavern and into the night. He is, in fact, newly arrived in the town; he's setting out to explore the place and see if he can sniff out either Zahnarzt or the Demon's Tooth, and he wants to take some unwitting helpers with him; if he runs into his adversary's followers, the dancers will provide him with some protection. He's also enjoying himself, causing mischief and trouble.

If the PCs try to follow, they can keep up with the dancers easily enough, but they should test vs. **WP** every ten minutes that they remain within earshot of Muuthauwg's pipes to avoid being enchanted by the music themselves. If they keep their distance, they can reduce this risk (+30% to **WP**), but at some risk of losing track of the dance (roll vs. **Int** to keep on their trail).

Eventually a patrol of four of Night-Watchmen will arrive on the scene: this will be about fifteen minutes after the PCs started to follow the dancers, or just after any combat with Muuthauwg is initiated. Since the dancers and the PCs are clearly breaking the curfew, the Watch will intervene, firstly to break up the fight and secondly to arrest everyone involved. Naturally they must

make **WP** tests as well, but if more than half are not drawn into the dance, the demon will decide that discretion is the better part of busking and, making sure that the dancers get in the way of any attempt to stop him, will try to get away. A small but confused riot will probably ensue. GMs wishing to complicate matters further can throw in an agitator trying to take advantage of this 'popular uprising', thieves trying to pick gawping by-standers' pockets, or whatever.

If PCs or Watchmen try to stop the dancers, just before anyone can get a clear strike or shot at him, Muuthauwg will disappear around a corner into a narrow alley-way. When the first pursuer follows him, they will find a dead end with no one in sight – just a rustling of rats diving into piles of rubbish. Actually, most of the rats are actually Muuthauwg making his get-away, but there's no way for anyone to know that. If any PCs get paranoid and start trying to kill these creatures, the Watchmen will caution them bluntly (or with blunt instruments) not to.

Meanwhile, there are a number of confused and rather tired dancers, most of them more or less drunk, staggering around the street. PCs can try to interrogate or examine them but there is little to find out; all that anyone can say is that the music was irresistible and they just couldn't keep from dancing, and once they were moving, dancing into the path of PCs and such just seemed the natural thing to do. Magical examination will find no enchantments on them now, and no hint of a taint of Chaos.

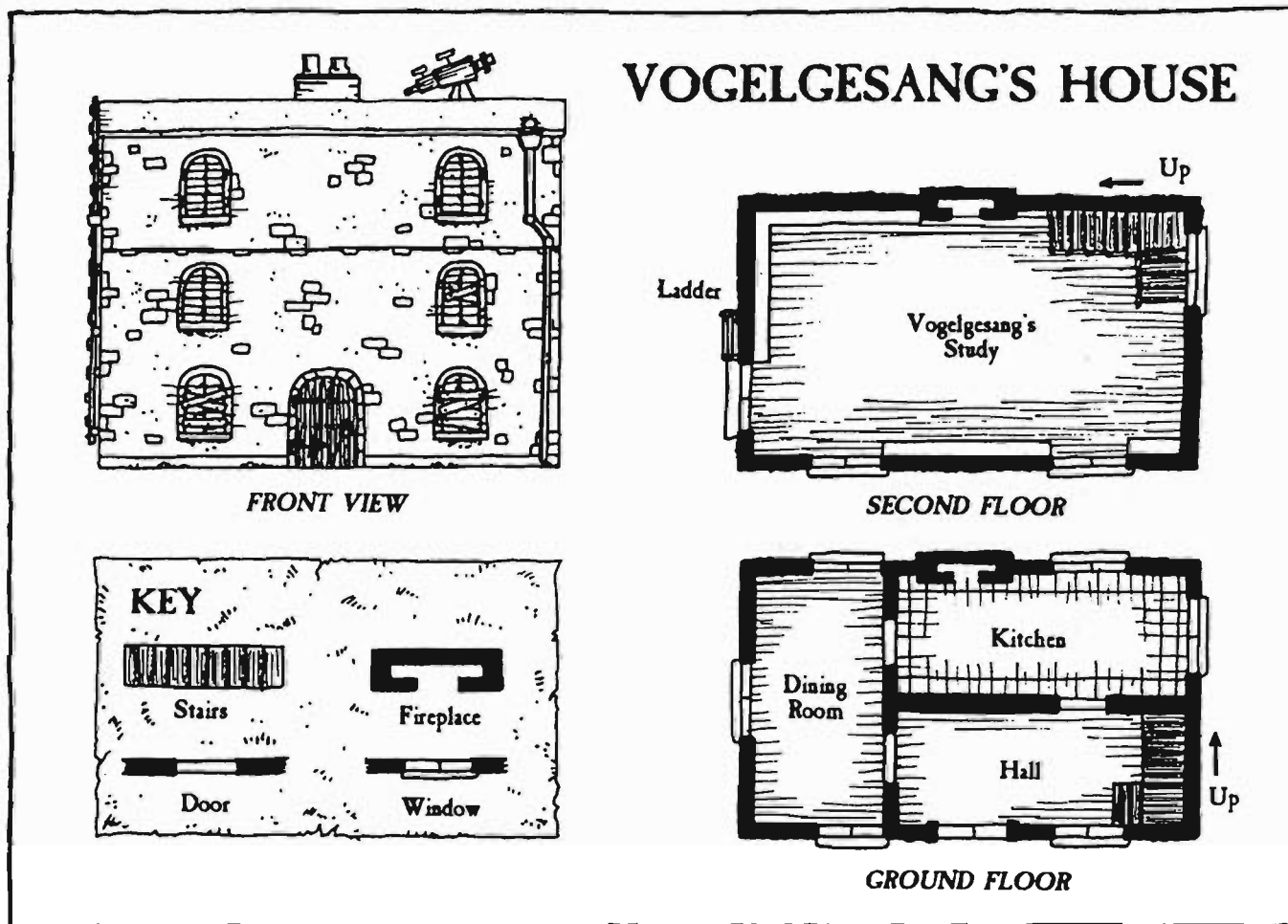
It is possible for the PCs to evade the Watchmen, but they will be pursued through the streets by 2-8 whistle-blowers for half an hour or until they find somewhere to hide. If they agree to come quietly then unless they pay a *bribe* of 4 guilders each, they are taken to the local Watch-house, where they are locked in cold cells for the rest of the night with the rest of Muuthauwg's revellers and a drunken dwarf for company. In the morning they are hauled in front of a local magistrate who fines them each 10 guilders for breaking the curfew, and tells them not to do it again. At that point they're free to go.

Vogelgesang Is Not Seeing Anyone

By this point, the PCs should be aware that the man they are here to contact, Kunz Vogelgesang, is responsible for creating the current panic in the city, and they should have been able to get his address from Gustav Andersen. If they haven't done so, then there are a few other ways that the GM can feed them the information:

- ◆ Acting on the tip from Boris Bludenheim, they may be able to make enquiries about 'Ernst Hoffman', Vogelgesang's friend, and will eventually get Goffman's address either from one of Vogelgesang's old neighbours, Jemima's cousin, any major guild of scholars, or even the City Records Office. The name 'Hoffman' will not be enough: they'll have to remember that he is studying demons for their source of information to work out who they mean. Those who know of Goffman usually mention his name with slight mistrust: anybody interested in the ways of Chaos is suspect, particularly someone who has been known to support mutant-lovers (Sister Astrid), but Goffman's legal training has kept him out of trouble so far.

- ◆ Jemima, being a halfling, hasn't been exactly tight-lipped about her current situation. Although her cousin doesn't know where she is, the PCs could bump into one of her many friends in the market place, or be overheard by a stall-holder who delivers fruit and vegetables to her new abode, or they might even run into Jemima herself.



◆ If the PCs met Goffman outside the Council Hall or during the riots, and mention Vogelgesang to him then he will be able to direct them to the scholar's home, although he will advise them not to go because 'Kunz isn't receiving visitors at the moment'. Alternatively, Goffman is actively looking for a group of adventurers to retrieve the Demon's Egg for him, and you could skip straight to section 'Visiting Goffman' on p.19.

◆ If your players are being particularly dense about this whole thing, then as a last resort you can let them notice four shadowy figures acting in a most suspicious way and heading down towards the docks. These are the four assassins sent by the Order to punish Vogelgesang for keeping overdue library books, and they will be going straight to his house.

Vogelgesang's Home

Vogelgesang's residence is a dilapidated building near the waterfront, close to the Draaienbrug swing bridge leading to Luydenhoek. This is an old area of town where the houses are built very close together and overhang the streets, which are darkened by heavy shadows. The house stands three storeys high, but only the top floor seems to be in use. As they approach, observant PCs may notice a telescope on a tripod on the flat roof (anyone scanning the building must make an I test to spot it), and a ladder leading up to it from a window. At night, the occasional glint of a candle-flame shines through the upper windows, which are boarded up or shuttered; otherwise, it would be easy to suppose that the building was abandoned.

The lower floors of Vogelgesang's house are the typical living areas of a run-down house in this part of town. They are unfurnished and in poor repair, the windows are shuttered, and it is dark and musty: Vogelgesang hardly ever comes down here. The one area that is kept clean is the kitchen, where Jemima lives, sleeps, and goes out of her way to produce good food, which Vogelgesang sometimes remembers to eat. The main entrance door is bolted, as are all the doors inside the house.

The top floor is where Vogelgesang spends almost all of his time. Two walls are taken up with books – there are recent copies of all the standard works about astronomy here, as well as three extremely old texts. If anyone checks, these older books are marked on the flyleaf with the symbol of the Unseen Library (see p.118) – although at this stage the PCs will have no idea what the symbol means. There is no copy of Karl Sergent's book on Lustria, nor any other book on that subject, nor Ludwig Mandlebrote's 'A Theory Of Chaos'. Pinned to the walls are large maps of the sky, across which Vogelgesang has attempted to trace the path of the Chaos Moon.

The house has a flat roof, and installed here is a large telescope. Vogelgesang spends most nights using it. There is a ladder leading up here from his study window, but this ladder also leads to the ground and will serve Vogelgesang as an escape route should he be discovered by any of his enemies.

If the adventurers knock on the door, then they are ignored. If they persist, Jemima will appear at the entrance, tell them politely that Vogelgesang is not taking visitors, and then close, lock and bar the door. If they persist, a head sticks out of an

upper window. It is wearing a hat and cloak (odd indoors) and anyone with *Excellent Vision* will notice that it is wearing an eye-patch. It hurls a piece of parchment wrapped around a rock down at them, before slamming and bolting the window. The parchment reads: 'Kindly go away and leave an old man to pursue his innocent studies in peace'.

Any further knocking, shouting or disturbance will be met by Vogelgesang pointing a cannon-like blunderbuss out of the window. If they do not back off or shout a short message that contains the word 'Pogner' *immediately*, he will fire at them. The weapon is considerably more dangerous to him than it is to anyone he is pointing it at, and will attract the attention of everybody for streets around, including two Watchmen. Even though it is obvious that the PCs did not fire the gun, the Watchmen will ask awkward questions and mention the word 'prison' several times. After a couple of minutes it should be clear that they are asking for a bribe. Anything more than two guilders will make them go away.

(If by some fluke the PCs did manage to mention Pogner before Vogelgesang fired at them, he will look startled for a second, then slam the window shut. A minute or so later he will appear at the front door, arms open, and holding a slate

with the words 'Come in! Come in!' chalked on it. Go to 'An Interrupted Interview', below.)

If the PCs take much interest in the building without attracting Vogelgesang's attention, an elderly woman passing by with a basket of chickens asks if they have come to see the wizard. 'You won't be having much luck if you have,' she says. 'He don't see nobody. Not been out of that house no more than twice since he came here, and that was at night. Nobody never answers that door neither.' If questioned, she gives her name as Elsa Loyen, and it becomes clear that she is a local gossip who spends most of her time washing sailors' clothes and watching people coming and going.

If the PCs question her, she will say that she knows that Vogelgesang must be a wizard because when he moved in, he brought a large number of books and some 'strange magical equipment'. She thinks he's a dirty old man because he never does any washing, and she's sure he uses that thing on the roof to spy on her and her neighbours; however, she knows and likes Jemima because they share an interest in tittle-tattle, and she can tell the PCs about the halfling's regular late-afternoon trip to the market. If the PCs are friendly to Elsa, she may become a useful source of information later on in the adventure.

Kunz Vogelgesang

Male human scholar, age 50

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	29	32	4	2	6	40	1	31	29	65	42	30	37

Skills: Read/write; Arcane Language; Astronomy; Secret Language (Classical); History; Cartography; Flee!; Scale Sheer Surfaces; Identify Plant; Linguistics; Numismatics; Rune Law; Speak Additional Language (Arabic)
Trappings: Library of books; Telescope; Gun (Blunderbuss: Range 24/48/250/3, 3 rounds to load, 1 round to fire); slate and chalk.



Kunz Vogelgesang is a member of the Ancient Order of Illuminated Readers, and a scholar of independent wealth inherited from distant relatives. Although he has studied a number of astronomical subjects in his long life, over the last seven years he has become obsessed with the erratic movements of Morrslieb, studying the Chaos Moon every night. Every time he added a new cog or new wheel to his astrolabe, the moon shot off at some strange new angle and frustrated his work. He has begun to suspect that it was doing it deliberately, to irritate him. Even now its Chaotic orbit is too complex to predict more than a few weeks in advance.

The years of looking at the Chaos Moon through a telescope has exacted a terrible price; his right eye has mutated into that of a giant insect, and he wears an eye-patch over it at all times except when studying the skies. Since

this mutation started, about a year ago, he has become a recluse, initially among the Order which is used to eccentricities of dress. Now he lives in perpetual fear that he will be discovered and killed before his work is complete.

Although he cares very little for the Order's mysticism, he needs access to its library and was willing to make what he regarded as a 'mumbo-jumbo' promise and lose his tongue in order to gain access to the greatest collection of books in the world.

Jemima Sheepfoot

Halfling cook, age 34

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	26	17	2	1	6	58	1	41	36	30	18	46	47

Skills: Cook, Herb Lore, Read/Write, Animal Care

Trappings: Apron, pots, saucepans, baking tins, and a collection of obscure spices that you can only find in the Moot.

Jemima, an 82-year-old halfling, has been Vogelgesang's housekeeper since he left college. Sometimes they seem like an old married couple; at other times, one would think that Jemima was Vogelgesang's mother. Although she knows that she is in danger since his return, she cannot bear the thought of abandoning the eccentric old man. She is well known in the markets of Marienburg, and is adept at collecting and spreading rumours and gossip.

Jemima was distraught when Vogelgesang first moved to Foyle's Rock, but is much happier now that he's back. She does not know where he went, except that she doesn't think it was far. She knows he has a problem with one of his eyes, but is unaware that he is mutating.

Watching Me Watching You

The PCs are not the only people who are watching Vogelgesang's house. The four Librarian-Assassins from the Ancient Order of Illuminated Readers (see p. 19) are also closing in on the scholar. The theft of a book from the Unseen Library is an unspeakable crime, and Father Faber (see p. 108) has ordered the four initiates to go and extract revenge and reclaim the stolen copy of 'A Theory Of Chaos'. Vogelgesang has, by this point, had the sense to give the book to Goffman.

For every hour that the PCs spend within sight of Goffman's building, let one random member of the party make an I test. If they succeed, they glimpse the sinister figure of a librarian-assassin prowling around the area. If pursued, the figure will disappear into the shadows (using *Concealment Urban*).

Demanding An Audience

The PCs have a number of ways of getting into the house, ranging from smashing down the door and charging upstairs – hardly subtle, and certain to draw the attention of the Watch – to picking the lock, breaking through one of the shuttered windows, or climbing the ladder fixed to the wall and entering Vogelgesang's study that way. None of these are particularly subtle, and are guaranteed to terrify Vogelgesang, who will be convinced that they are the Watch, the witch-hunters or the forces of the Library that he has feared for so long. He will give Jemima the blunderbuss, set her to cover his exit, and sneak out either through a ground-floor window or down the ladder. He will then flee to Goffman's house and stay there for the rest of the day, returning early the following morning to move his books, notes and telescope to a new location.

If Vogelgesang is escaping, Jemima will threaten the PCs with the gun, but she will have to be extremely frightened before she actually uses this fearsome weapon. The PCs will have a few minutes to search Vogelgesang's house before the four librarian-assassins arrive, and will find nothing of use except a copy of the paper presented to the City Council and a letter from Goffman to Vogelgesang, offering the old man sanctuary and bearing Goffman's address. The assassins will have no interest in the PCs or Jemima, and will not harm them unless they get between them and Vogelgesang's books. They will search through the book collection, take the three oldest volumes and leave, making it obvious that they have not found what they came for.

Alternatively, there are ways of actually getting to speak to Vogelgesang on friendly terms. There are three keys to this: Jemima Sheepfoot; Pogner's letter; and Goffman.

Jemima, being a halfling, goes for fresh supplies of food and gossip in the Suiddock market every afternoon, returning as night is falling, and she can be intercepted as she enters and leaves the house. She will be on her guard if approached by strangers who know her name, but any mention of Goffman or her cousin will calm her down. While she will not invite the PCs inside, she will agree to mention their request to Vogelgesang when she gets back from her shopping.

Perhaps predictably, Vogelgesang will not be convinced by the request of a bunch of miscreants, even if they claim to know an old friend of his, and will tell Jemima to send them away if they can do no better. If the PCs think to ask Jemima to give Vogelgesang their letter of introduction from Pogner, a few minutes later Vogelgesang himself will appear at the door, holding up a slate bearing the hastily chalked words: 'Dear friends! Do

come in. So sorry about shooting at you; I thought you were someone else.'

They will be invited in, shown up to Vogelgesang's study, and offered hospitality from Jemima's ample kitchen while they talk to the scholar.

Any other way that the PCs can think of getting Pogner's letter to Vogelgesang will also work, although the response might not be so immediate. The important point is that the PCs shouldn't enter the house until night is beginning to fall.

An Interrupted Interview

If they play their cards right, the PCs will end up in Vogelgesang's study, in conversation with the scholar himself. It's likely to be early evening, since that is the only time Jemima will agree to give Pogner's letter to her patron. The conversation is a one-sided affair, as he listens intently to what the PCs say or ask, and then scribbles his response in spidery writing on a slate, holding it up for them to read. For added effect, GMs might like to play out the conversation that way: although it takes time, it adds to the effect.

First business first: Vogelgesang does not have the book about Lustria in his collection, but writes that he believes he can get it, given time. 'I wouldn't do this for anyone but Veit Pogner – I am in enough trouble with them already.' He shows the PCs the slate, then looks at it, rubs out everything after 'trouble' and shows it to them again. Any questions about 'them', the reason for his fear, where he gets the books from or anything similar will not be answered, and he will try to change the subject to talk of Pogner, Nuln and the party's journey.

Brought onto the subject of the eclipse, Vogelgesang will noticeably relax. He will confirm that he has measured the movements of the moon, and that a total eclipse is imminent. Furthermore, it would seem that Marienburg will be at the very centre of the shadow cast by the Chaos Moon.

'Although,' he confides, word by scribbled word, 'It might not happen. She is wild and contrary, is Morrslieb. A good woman, but not reliable. She says she will leap across the face of the moon – and look at her path,' he gestures at the sky-charts on the wall of the study, 'it takes her right across it. But who is to say that she won't change her mind at the last minute?'

If he is asked for information about the demon that people have mentioned, or the mysterious piper that the PCs may have encountered by now, he will shake his head and start to write: characters must make an Int test to read: 'Goffman's area, not mine. My unfortunate brush with Chaos is entirely acciden – ' He stops, looks at what he's written so far, and rubs it out, replacing it with a simple 'You'd better talk to Goffman.'

Intruder Window

A suitable time after they arrive, the conversation will be interrupted by the arrival of four assassins. They have climbed up the outside ladder under cover of darkness, and will smash open the shutters to launch their attack, hurling their throwing knives at Vogelgesang; then leaping in. Their stealth means that they will automatically surprise the PCs, and gain a tactical advantage. Their first priority is to ensure that Vogelgesang is fatally wounded, then the leader will search the book collection while the others try to hold off the adventurers – preferably by simply telling them to 'back off – this isn't your problem'. They regard the party (at this point) as simply a nuisance, and have no wish



to fight them. Once they realize that the copy of 'A Theory Of Chaos' is not there, they will try to torture the information out of the dying Vogelgesang (who will not reveal anything), and leave with the Library's three books.

If Vogelgesang survives two rounds of combat, he will make his way to the ladder and scuttle down it with surprising agility, pursued by two of the assassins. He will try to flee to Goffman's house, but will be caught by the assassins on the way. His body will be found floating in the river the next morning.

Assuming he is still alive after the attack, and the PCs are still there, with his dying moments he will tell them (writing on the floor in his own blood if necessary) to 'warn Goffman ... They wanted Mandlebrote's book. He was right ...'

Post Mortem

It's possible that the PCs may delay their visit to Vogelgesang's house for a ridiculously long time, or may leave him in good health and try to return later on. If this happens, then the assassins will have got there before them and they will find Vogelgesang murdered on the floor of his study. Beside him is his slate, with a message addressed on it: 'Ernst - they wanted Mandlebrote's book. You were right.' The Watch will turn up while the PCs are there, and they will become the obvious suspects for the murder. If Vogelgesang is subsequently revealed to be a mutant, it is possible that the Watch will perceive them as heroes, but will warn them about taking matters into their own hands. There will be no sign of Jemima.

No Smoke Without Tobacco

If anyone thinks to chase the assassins after they leave Vogelgesang's house, remind them that it is after the curfew. The assassins are adept at moving from shadow to shadow, but unless the PCs have similar skills then each character must make a Dex check or alert the attention of a patrol of Watchmen, who will give pursuit through the dark streets - with the same penalties as the night before if they are caught.

The assassins take a roundabout route right across Marienburg, eventually ending up not too far from where they started. The figures will go into a small tobacco-seller's shop near the river-front: although it is late there is a light in the

Librarian Assassins

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
5	68	68	3	3	6	30	1	35	30	30	30	30	15

Skills: Acrobatics, Concealment Rural, Concealment Urban, Scale Sheer Surface, Shadowing, Silent Move Rural and Urban, Specialist Weapons - *either* Blowpipe or Throwing Weapons, Sixth Sense

Trappings: Two of: Crossbow, Blowpipe, Swords, Throwing Knives.

The four 'assassins' are would-be warriors who have sworn loyalty to the Order for the duration of their apprenticeships in order to study forbidden Nipponese tomes about the art of war. It therefore falls to them to 'defend' the island when things start coming down. Vogelgesang's thievery gives them a rare chance to put their study of the martial arts to practical use. The four have excellent stealth skills and high combat stats, but their tactics may leave something to be desired as they have seen little real combat before now. They should be played as gung-ho martial arts freaks with startling levels of genuine skill.

Their orders are to kill Vogelgesang and take back the books that he stole from the Unseen Library. If prevented from completing their mission they will try to return to the Library as soon as possible; if captured they will resist questioning and torture for as long as they can. They wear the monastic robes of the Order of Illuminated Readers, with the symbol of the Order on the back. The leader has a large silver key hidden in his weapons pouch. He is the only Reader in the group: the others are Lay-Readers and still have their tongues.

window. It is possible to watch the back of the shop from the next street across, but nobody will be seen to leave all night long. If anyone knocks on the door, there is no response but it swings slightly open.

If the PCs enter the shop after curfew but before midnight, Johan Harupz will bustle down the stairs from the rooms above. When he sees that they are not members of the Order he will

Johan Harupz

Human tobacco-seller, age 47

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	28	19	3	3	7	30	1	27	19	23	30	31	32

Skills: Blather, Bribery, Night Vision, Language - Lip Reading

Johan Harupz is a Lay-Reader of the Order of Illuminated Readers, and their 'ears' in Marienburg. He is also profoundly deaf, which is a perfect disguise for his line of work: he has perfected the art of lip reading, which means that he can generally communicate with those members of the Order who have taken their final vows, and can also be witness to the most intimate discussions without anyone realizing he can understand every word.

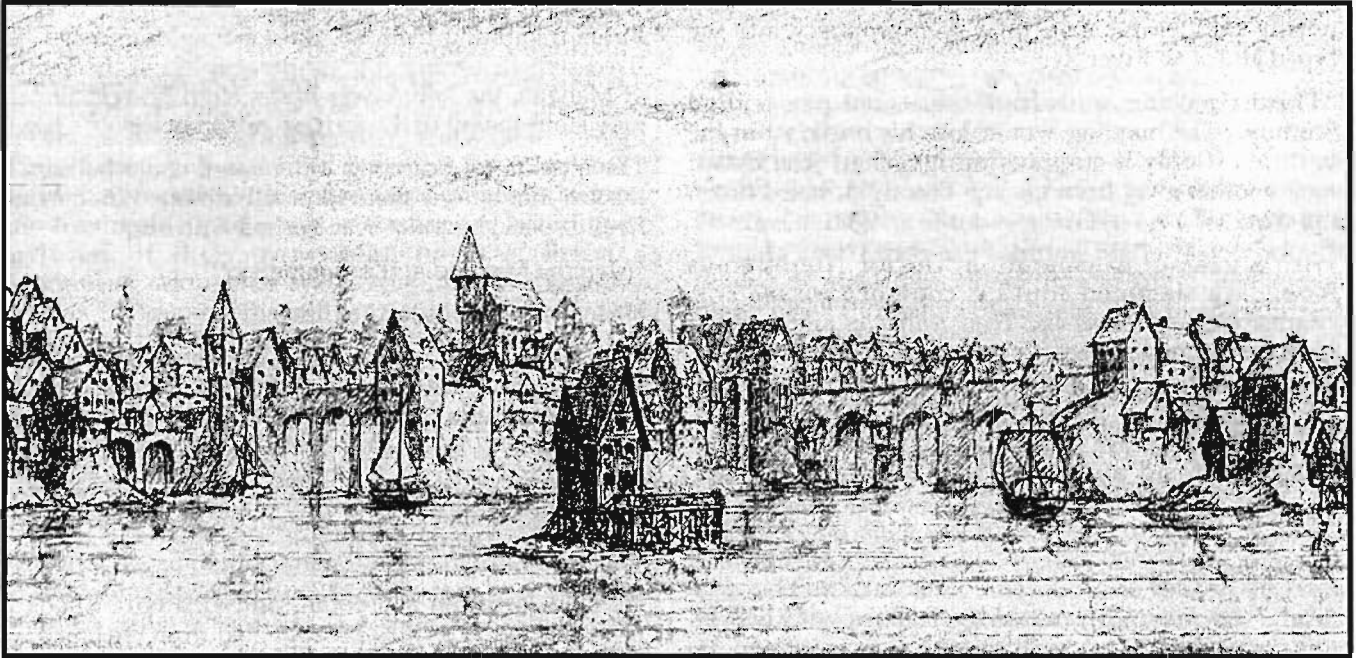
He isn't a scholar, but he likes to read and learn. He is exceptionally skilled in the art of lying, and will totally deny

any knowledge of anyone having come into his house that evening. However, Harupz is not a particularly brave man and will cave into most forms of intimidation. He is not above using his deafness to, er, play dumb. ('Tell us how to get to the island!' 'Certainly, sir, would you like flaked or rolled?') He doesn't like intruders, and has a couple of guard dogs to drive the message home.

Harupz's well-stocked shop is much frequented by sailors and other seafaring folk, and he will vehemently deny that his shop deals in anything other than tobacco, such as the stronger substances which might have found their way into Marienburg from Araby and such places. They're kept hidden in the cellar.

Guard Dogs

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
6	41	10	3	3	7	30	1	43	14	43	43	47	23



ask them to leave. If they do not, he will try to call for the Watch, who will respond in 1D6+4 minutes. After midnight, Harupz is tucked up in bed with a good book from the Library, and the lights will be off. The shop is open from ten until eight each day, and Johan will be more hospitable then.

The shop and the two dwelling-rooms above it are unremarkable, and there is no sign of the assassins, nor any way they could have left. A quick search will reveal not only several books marked with the same symbol that the assassins were wearing, but also a trap-door behind the shop counter. Unfortunately it only leads to the cellar, which is used as a stock-room. However, any search of the cellar will find a concealed trapdoor with a complex lock. It reveals a long flight of clammy steps leading into a tunnel, dripping with salt water. This leads directly to Foyles Rock, and is the method by which members of the Order can travel to and from the Library undetected. Few Lay-Readers of the Order know about this tunnel: they generally sail or row out to the island under cover of darkness, or while pretending to be devout followers of Solkan.

Anybody who knows anything about locks can tell that trying to pick this lock is more likely to jam it closed than open it. Harupz does not have a key to the trapdoor but the leader of the assassins does, so it is possible that the PCs will get their hands on it. This key can be extremely useful to the PCs later on in the adventure, so the GM may wish either to make it easier for them to get it – by, say, deciding that even a wounded assassin will drop his weapons pouch, or a lucky blow may have cut it loose from his clothing. If the PCs have the key, then the trapdoor is open. If they do not have it, then it is locked.

In the event that the PCs have obtained the key to the tunnel from the leader of the assassins, it is possible that they will try to follow the tunnel to Foyles Rock. Try to dissuade them from doing this right now (perhaps by having the Watch turn up in Harupz's shop, or some customers, or having the PCs meet more of the Readers in the tunnel – the first lot should have given them a hard fight, and the party doesn't know that they're not all that tough) as the most likely result of finding the Library at this stage is injury or death at the hands of the Order, and it will certainly gain the party enemies for life.

If you prefer not to reveal too much about Harupz as a part of this drama yet (and there are more clues in the final chapter which will point to him), it may be enough to have the PCs lose track of the assassins, or arrested by the Watch, outside the tobacco-seller's shop.

Visiting Goffman

By the time they find their way to the home of Ernst Goffman, the PCs should be both intrigued and frightened about what is going on in Marienburg. Their 'simple' errand to collect an old book has already become more dangerous than they expected.

Goffman lives in a better area of town than Vogelgesang: his large town-house is in a wide tree-lined street a few hundred yards away from the central Court and Judiciary, itself no more than a stone's throw from the Council Hall. Goffman's assistant will admit the PCs immediately if they can give a reason for their visit – that they met Goffman in the city square, that they have bad news about Vogelgesang, or a warning from him, or even that they are interested in demons and eclipses. Almost any reason will do, since Klaus knows that Goffman is looking for a party of adventurers to run an errand for him.

The interior of the house is well decorated and clean. Goffman receives his visitors in the dining room, where the large table is spread with books, papers, parchment, quills and nutshells. He has the air of a university professor: rather quiet, slightly self-righteous, patient, but not quite able to believe in the ignorance of young people today. His young student, Klaus, hangs on his every word. Goffman invites them to sit down, sends Klaus to fetch some tea and cakes, offers them a nut, and asks them to explain the reason for their visit.

Goffman will seem friendly and open, and will encourage the PCs to talk about anything that they think may be important, or to ask any questions they want. His answers will make the situation sound as doom-laden as he can: he is trying to worry them so much that they will have to agree to find the Egg for him. Here are some of Goffman's responses; if the PCs ask about anything else, improvise something suitably ominous.

◆ **Vogelgesang's death.** Any news of the attack on Vogelgesang confirms Goffman's worst fears about the Order: they are dangerous fanatics who would kill an old man over a book. If the adventurers ask him what he knows about the assassins, he says, 'There are some things that it is better not ask about. Vogelgesang and I are members of a secret order; one in which saying too much can cost you your life – as poor Kunz found out. We thought that making a few promises was an easy path to knowledge. But of course, there is no easy path to knowledge, or to anything else worth having.' He will not be forced on this question.

◆ **The book the assassins were after.** If he is asked about the book Vogelgesang referred to, or that the assassins seemed to be looking for, he will indicate a large book titled 'A Theory Of Chaos', lying on the table unopened. 'This is what *they* want back. It tells of a terrible catastrophe that is about to befall this town, and hints of the deed that must be done to prevent it. I do not believe *they* want to aid the catastrophe, or work to prevent it: *they* simply want their property back – which is why *they* killed Kunz for a book he no longer had.'

◆ **The eclipse, the riots, the council meeting, or Vogelgesang's report.** Goffman looks extremely grave. 'According to Kunz's calculations, Morrslieb will eclipse the sun in three to four weeks. We – all of us in this city, perhaps the whole of the Empire – are in the most terrible danger. It is a danger which only comes perhaps once a millennium, and each time it has come up to now, it has been avoided. But the time comes again.'

'Have you ever heard of Zahnarzt? No. I'm not surprised. Even his own followers call him "The Forgotten One". He is a demon of potentially terrible power, a minion of the Blood God exiled to this world, and according to this book,' he taps the copy of 'A Theory Of Chaos', on the table, 'the only time he can take on corporeal form comes when Morrslieb eclipses the sun.'

But it also says the demon's manifestation is bound up with an object called "The Egg of the Moon". This is what concerns me.

'Zahnarzt has his followers, who are doubtless making their preparations. But since Kunz brought the eclipse to my attention, I have been researching the subject and I am convinced there is a way to stop the demon's return ... but for that I would need the Egg of the Moon. As soon as possible.'

◆ **'A True And Honest Account Of The Lands Of Lustria'.** 'Ah. *That* book,' says Goffman, as if he knows it, which he doesn't. 'I don't have a copy. I could get one for you, but that would involve putting myself at the same sort of risk as poor Kunz. And ... well, for a risk like that, you would have to be prepared to take a risk for me in return.'

◆ **The mysterious piper.** Goffman looks momentarily shocked: he was not expecting this. 'A *piper*?' He will scurry to a bookshelf, pulls down a dusty volume bound in black leather, leafs through it while muttering under his breath; and reads:

'Here we are, I knew it, yes. *In those days, the passage of the darkness was foretold by multitudinous portents ... lots of stuff about rains of newts and self-immolating confectionery, just literary convention most of it. Here we go: the Shadow that Foul Darkness cast before it walked the land, and its outline was that of a low, scurvy, vulgar rogue mihstrel ... cultural snobbery, but one can read past that ... But the nature of Foul Chaos is ever to betray itself ...* Then there's a mangled transcription, useless some of those monks, then we get the important part: *the Shadow, Muuthauwg, Herald to the Foul Demon, came upon the servants of darkness, and laughed ...* The next passage is corrupt, but there's something about the piper *dancing as the servants slept*. He seems to have been around when the demon was defeated or driven off, but by and large, people who get mixed up in battles with demons don't tell much of a coherent story afterwards, you know.'

Ernst Goffman

Male human scholar, age 60

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
3	30	29	3	3	6	32	1	35	33	76	40	66	43

Skills: Ambidextrous; Cryptography; Cure Illness; Demonology; Supernumerate; Arcane Language; Magic; Read/Write; Secret Language (Classical); History; Astronomy; Cartography; Identify Plants; Numismatics; Magical Sense; Law; Languages (Lustrian, Bretonnian, Arabic, Slaan).

Trappings: Lots of books, writing equipment, a large pot always full of lukewarm herbal tea.

Like his friend Vogelgesang, Goffman is a member of the Order of Illuminated Readers, and wealthy enough to study what he likes, having been a successful lawyer until a few years ago. But while Vogelgesang is a fanatical seeker after new truths, pursuing things that man was not meant to know, Goffman is an archetypal liberal artist, quietly reading the books of great sages and scholars of the past, feeding upon their wisdom. He has never made a new discovery and will probably never write a book of his own, but if you ask him about a particular type of Arabyan fig tree, he will not only be



able to refer you to the standard work on the subject, but can list the three areas in which that work has now been superseded.

One of Goffman's areas of expertise is the law, and although he no longer practices, he has been known to use his knowledge when he sees the opportunity of undoing an injustice. Some years ago, he attempted to take up the case of one Sister Astrid, who was unjustly accused of being a Chaos agent because she did not hate mutants sufficiently; this case and the subsequent scandal forced him into retirement, and sparked an interest in demonology and Chaos.

Although he is not a demonologist nor a follower of Chaos himself, the subject fascinates him. As co-author of Vogelgesang's report to the City Council, he knows a lot about Zahnarzt, and believes that there is a way to stop his return. Goffman is also coming to recognize how cold-blooded and fanatical the Order really is, and how little regard they have for human life.

He has a young student (Klaus): not a particularly bright young man, but Goffman feels that it is his duty to pass as much knowledge around as possible.

If the adventurers ask what all this means, Goffman will shake his head. 'Muuthauwg is an obscure figure. Clearly, the piper in the legend was a harbinger of trouble – but whether he was the same as this strange fellow you encountered, I wouldn't like to guess. But he's definitely stated to be a herald. If he's reappeared, it's a sure sign that Zahnarzt's return is imminent, and we have no time to waste.'

The Demon's Tooth

By this point the PCs should be restless, or at least worried. If they ask what the Egg is, Goffman will admit he has no idea. If they enquire how it can be found, Goffman will open the copy of 'A Theory Of Chaos'. Inside, a cavity has been cut into the pages, and an object rests within, wrapped in paper. He takes it out, carefully unfolds the paper, and shows the contents around. It is a large fang, about three and a half inches long (see p.115). He marks a spot on the tablecloth and puts the fang on it. 'That,' he says with slight awe in his voice, 'is the sole material remains of the demon that threatens us. Now watch this.'

Goffman chants a few words and the Tooth starts to twist and turn, as if it were a living thing. Then it starts to crawl across the table. He mutters the words again, and the Tooth is still. He frowns, and marks the path taken by the Tooth with a pencil grabbed from somewhere, then produces a compass from a drawer in the table, squints at it and the tablecloth, and carefully notes something down on a scrap of paper.

Then he turns to Klaus. 'You see? Just as I told you. It is irresistibly drawn toward the Moon's Egg. All you need to do is follow that direction – across the Wasteland, I would think – and bring the Egg back here. But do be careful with it.' He smiles at his own attempt at humour. 'This is one Egg we *don't* want to make into an omelette.'

Klaus is turning slightly white. 'Wouldn't it be better for me to stay here?'

'Not at all, my boy. All my researches here will be futile unless you can bring me the Egg.'

'But ... Aren't there supposed to be chaos beasts and monsters out there...?'

'Oh, don't worry my boy, these good people will take care of you. They look as if they are quite used to danger.'

If the PCs protest, Goffman will look shocked. 'You aren't going to send this poor boy across the Wasteland all by himself, are you? In Manann's name, you heard him say how dangerous it could be out there.' If they still refuse, he will say, 'Dear oh dear. Ah well. When Zahnarzt returns, the city is destroyed and the Empire falls, I suppose it won't matter whether you get your precious book or not ...'

Convincing Talk

Goffman believes – rightly – that it is essential that the party take this job, and he will work very hard to ensure that they do. Unfortunately, he is a little hazy as to what is involved. He doesn't know what the Moon's Egg *is*, although his texts imply that it is portable; nor is he sure yet what should be done with it, although the books appear to contain spells that will destroy the link between it and Zahnarzt.

The GM should adapt things as required to convince the PCs to agree. For example, if they have always been dedicated mercenaries who won't get out of bed for less than a shilling, Goffman is not a poor man (as his house shows) and he is willing to pay them: he will begin by offering to pay their expenses,

Important Note: Something Goffman has failed to notice is that the paper wrapping around the Tooth is actually the missing part of one of the holed pages from the copy of 'A Theory Of Chaos'. While the adventurers trek off to find the Egg, Goffman is going to discover that a crucial part of the information he needs has gone with them. The PCs need to be discouraged from throwing the paper away, but it shouldn't be made too obvious to them that it is important – not until they've left Marienburg, anyway.

then 10 guilders a day each, then 20, up to a maximum of 50 guilders – payable, he will insist, only after they have returned with the Egg.

If, for some reason, the PCs steadfastly refuse to take the job on even after being offered money, it is time for the GM to become unpleasantly personal. Most experienced PCs have some enemies or dark secrets in their pasts; use them. Have their old foes appear in Marienburg – for example, the Cult of the Purple Hand from *The Enemy Within* campaign – and drop heavy hints that they are connected to the Brotherhood of the Forgotten One.

Frame them for crimes that they may or may not have committed (the murder of Vogelgesang is perfect); and since Goffman is the only person they know who understands Marienburg's legal system, they will be in no position to argue with his request. Have a passing bard sing songs of heroes gaining glory, while cowards go to ignominious deaths.

In the worst case, the PCs' gods can send them prophetic dreams of Marienburg in flames and demons slaughtering their friends and favourite inn staff. Muuthauwg may appear in their dreams too, beckoning them into the Wastelands – or he may reappear during their waking hours. Coarse graffiti begins to appear on walls proclaiming that 'The Demon Prince Will Rule Again – Blood for the Blood God!'

And if there is *nothing* that can convince the PCs to take the job, they have clearly abandoned all human feelings, which implies that they have turned to Chaos. In which case, the Brotherhood of the Forgotten One will approach them, saying that they are discernible – to those with Chaotic intuition – as fellow spirits, and would they like to choose between taking a little job (finding the Egg) and being granted a couple of Chaotic physical alterations, which they so nobly deserve?

Of Teeth And Eggs

The party's mission – when they have decided to accept it – is simple: travel with Klaus in the direction indicated by the Tooth, find the Egg and bring it back. Unfortunately, the Tooth shows direction but not distance; Goffman believes that it will react strongly to the *close* proximity of the Egg, but essentially the adventurers are going to have to travel into the Wasteland in a straight line, disregarding all obstacles. Goffman has some difficulty believing that such a simple task could prove difficult: 'I'd do it myself if I didn't have to stay here and finish researching these spells.'

He points out that the Tooth can be used at any time to confirm the direction of travel, or to check that the Egg is correctly identified. He will teach the activating chant to anyone who asks – and will insist on teaching it to at least one PC. But he will add a warning: 'Do be very careful. This is a piece of a Chaos-being, a potent artefact. Use it as little as possible: it could

create strange effects around you. The closer you are to this Egg, the more unpredictable I'd expect the results to be. And each time it is activated, it might attract the attention of the demon's followers – or even Zahnarzt himself.'

The exact effects of using the Tooth are detailed on p.115. Goffman will also provide the party with an ordinary magnetic compass.

Goffman knows from Vogelgesang's data that the eclipse is about two or three weeks away; however, he has no clear idea how far the party will have to travel to find the Egg. Therefore, he will be very anxious that they not delay in setting out, and will stress that there is not a moment to lose. He will help the adventurers obtain anything that they might reasonably suggest, but he will be a constant, nagging voice calling for swift departure. Fortunately, Marienburg is a mercantile town, and most goods are available there for cash in hand. On the other hand, information and ideas relevant to this task may be harder to obtain.

If any of the PCs question whether bringing such a thing as the Egg into the heart of a populous city is entirely wise, Goffman will sigh. 'That is a point, of course. But whatever needs to be done, the resources will more likely be found here than anywhere else, you see. Apart from any equipment one might need, this place is full of libraries, and scholars, and wizards, and such. Ships too, in case of an emergency. And even if Zahnarzt has to manifest near to the Egg, I'm sure he will bring himself to the city soon enough. Demons are like that, you know.'

There is one other point that Goffman will make forcefully: 'Whatever this "Egg" proves to be, *bring it here to me*. Don't think you'll accomplish anything by merely destroying it. The book is very clear; only certain special techniques will bar Zahnarzt from the material world, and they *must* be performed during the eclipse itself. Whatever we do, we must do it then. I will continue the researches into the necessary rituals. Trust me: I have access to hidden resources.'

Into The Wasteland

The party may try to turn up a few maps of the Wasteland, and Goffman can lend them one, if and only if they ask for it (see hand-out on p.127). However, maps in the Old World are much like medieval maps from our own world; accurate scale and proportion is unknown, precise compass directions are impossible, and a lot of what is shown will be out of date, misplaced, or just plain artistic licence – the various contradictory maps of the Warhammer World will show you what we mean.

Merchants and coachmen usually use simple 'road guides', which are fine (and quite accurate) for people who are travelling by road – but the Tooth is clearly directing the party to strike out cross-country, into territory which is unlikely to have ever been properly mapped. Maps are also hand-drawn, and very expensive.

The adventurers may contemplate taking horses, but a glance at the map should convince them that this would be a waste of

Klaus

Goffman's Student, aged 19

4	31	24	2	3	6	33	1	29	33	46	30	36	31
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Skills: Blather; Dodge Blow; Heraldry; Law; Read/Write; Secret Language: Classical

Trappings: Travelling cloak, Backpack, Knife, Handkerchief, Needle and thread, Blank book, Lead pencil

Klaus is originally from Middenheim, and will moan incessantly that he wishes he was still there.

cash. Too much of the Wasteland is rough scrub, rocky hills or treacherous swamps, and the path that they must follow looks like it might run into all of these. They will just have to hope that the Egg – whatever it may be – is not too heavy to carry in a backpack. A baggage-mule might actually be a better idea, but even that would probably be more trouble than it would be worth.

And so, preferably no more than a day after Goffman has convinced them to take the job, the party – laden with backpacks, weapons, armour, and travellers' staves – meets Goffman and Klaus outside one of the city's lesser gates. Goffman produces the Tooth, takes a compass bearing from its movements (227 degrees, or almost exactly south-west), and then hands the paper-wrapped artefact over to Klaus. He wishes them luck and re-enters the city. The party should take their bearings and, to the huge amusement of the guards on the gate, promptly leave the road and strike out across open fields into the Wasteland. The adventure has begun – quietly, the party might think.

But They Think Wrong

Unfortunately, there is one thing that the party doesn't know yet. The Brotherhood of the Forgotten One (p.115) is very anxious to get its hands on the Egg – and, since the Tooth is the only way of finding it, that too. Goffman's two recent uses of the Tooth have alerted them to its presence and owner. Knowing that Goffman is a Lay-Reader of the Order of Illuminated Readers, which they have begun to infiltrate, they do not want to antagonize the Order by killing its agents in front of its eyes.

Therefore they have watched the party of adventurers equipping for the journey, and are still watching as Goffman bids farewell to the group and hands over the Tooth to Klaus. One agent has been selected to follow the PCs into the Wasteland and either sabotage their mission if she can, gain the Tooth from them, or summon help once the party has found the Egg. She is equipped and ready, and will leave Marienburg twenty minutes after they do. This particular agent, who is more Chaotic than many of her fellows, does not believe in hanging about, as the next chapter will show.



Chapter 1:

A Watery Grave

The adventurers set out fully equipped, well fed, and with a clear direction. Unfortunately, they also have an unenthusiastic travelling companion, and no real idea of what they are looking for. Goffman's compass bearing leads across rough wilderness. The skies are heavy with clouds, and there is a constant cold wind blowing rain in their faces. They struggle through a series of ridges and valleys covered with thorn trees and thick undergrowth. The valleys cut at right angles to their path, making it easy to lose the track they want to travel. There are no signs of civilization at all, except for an occasional abandoned farm, not even providing shelter from the incessant rain.

This first scenario will demonstrate to the PCs the drawback of having to travel in a straight line, as their path takes them through a startling piece of engineering history. This is not a safe place; in fact they will lose a party member along the way. Of course, the fact that they already have enemies on their trail doesn't help.

Scene-Setting

Travel through the Wasteland is mostly boring; there is a reason the area has that name. The GM should skip over any long patches of trudging across open land to the next encounter, although updates on the changing terrain, changing weather and anything of interest they pass (mostly geographical features such as rivers, woods, swamps and hills, but also cairns, ancient ruins, abandoned crofts, old tracks and small shelters used by farmers) can spice up the trip and add atmosphere to the game.

Try to make the PCs feel that this is all taking a long time, without actually spending a long time doing it; there is no need to fill every hour of the journey with description. Do not, for any reason, feel tempted to roll on any 'random encounter' or 'wandering monster' tables.

The weather for most of the outward trip will be late autumn rains, with the occasional frost. A watery sun will appear from time to time, only to be covered almost immediately by more threatening clouds. Emphasize how dirty and bedraggled the PCs are becoming: they are unlikely to have brought a change of clothes, and the chance of finding somewhere to have a bath is remote. If they get muddy, they will stay muddy for some time.

Also important is the behaviour of Morrslieb. As the party leaves Marienburg it is appearing in the night sky as a crescent moon, its characteristic face barely visible. It waxes during the outward journey, and by the time they reach the Gunzenhauser farm it will be full – and will stay that way for the rest of the adventure.

After they have recovered the Egg it will begin to appear during the day as well, and characters should feel that it is watching them with interest, and even grinning. Towards the end of the adventure, it will begin to affect the world around them, but that will be described later on.

Trust

The first day of the journey is uneventful: once the PCs have tramped across fields and been shouted at by peasant farmers, their course takes them across open moorland and the going is reasonably easy. As night falls and the party makes camp, Klaus will approach one of the PCs; either the evident leader, or whoever seems to be the bravest and most confident. 'Er ... you know this Tooth thing? Would you mind looking after it for me? It's just that, well, I might lose it or something. I mean, I lost my spectacles the other week, and this morning it took me nearly an hour to find my left boot. Besides, carrying a demon's tooth around gives me the creeps.' If the PC refuses, Klaus will approach the other PCs in turn, becoming more and more insistent. If nobody agrees then he will reluctantly keep it, complaining intermittently about it for most of the next day.

Across The Hills

After their second day of straight-line travel, the PCs are tired and dishevelled. Then, a couple of hours before sunset, they come upon a valley which is actually heading in the direction they want to go.

Any dwarven engineers (or anyone with an interest in dwarven engineering or local history) will know that somewhere in this direction is a great dwarven dam and mining settlement built 300-600 years ago, and, as far as they know, a thriving and hospitable village. Other inhabitants of Marienburg may know of dwarven mines 'up in the hills', but no more than that.

Fear Death By Water

The party follows the valley for some distance, beside a rushing stream, through gnarled trees. It's the most pleasant travelling they've had for some time, although the rain continues to soak them. The sides of the valley become steeper and craggier, until they are walking in a deep gorge, with thin woodland around them. After a while they hear a roaring noise, as of a waterfall. They come out of a stand of trees to see a terrifying sight. A few hundred yards ahead of them is a huge dam, at least a hundred feet high. Water spills over its cracked and crumbling top, and spurts through numerous holes in the side. As the PCs watch, there is a sharp report and a huge block of stone crumbles from

the top of the dam, crashing to the ground some distance from them. The flow of water becomes heavier, and the flat gorge begins to flood.

Anyone making a successful *Observe* test will notice a cloaked figure standing on the north side of the gorge, about fifty yards down from the dam – out of range of any spells or missile weapons. It pockets something (actually a wand) and moves away, out of sight. This is the Chaos cultist who has been assigned to watch the party, and who has interpreted ‘watch’ as ‘weaken’: she intends to tire them out before finishing them off later that day, thus obtaining the Tooth and the glory for herself. She has got ahead of the party through a combination of luck, determination, and prior knowledge of the area.

Here Comes The Flood

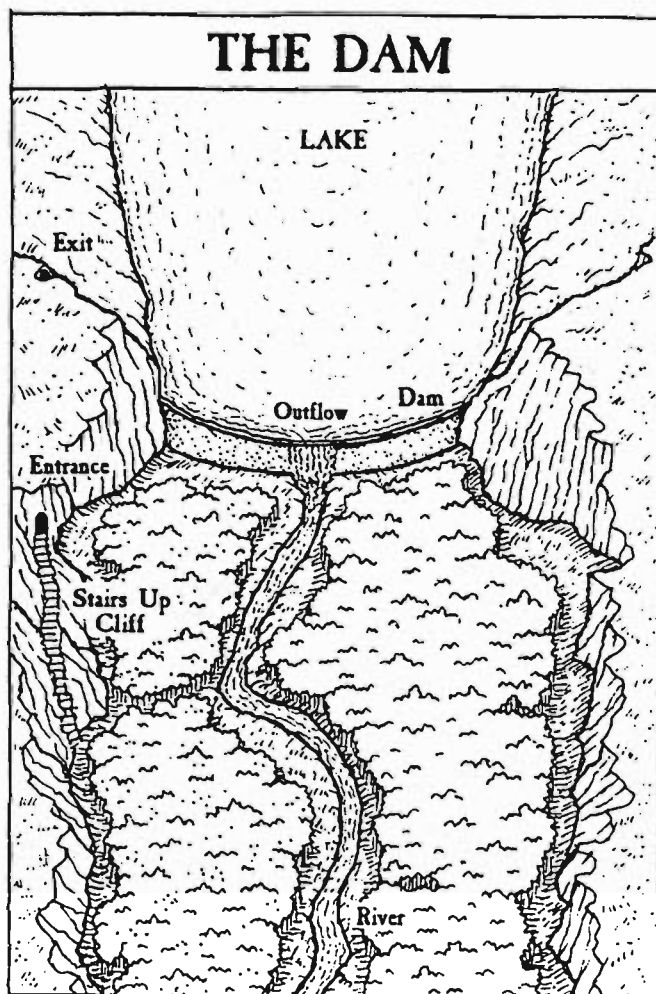
The PCs must get out of the valley before the dam bursts. The rocky walls are too steep for anyone without the proper skills to climb, but there is a staircase cut in the rock wall on the north side of the valley, which slopes up toward the edge of the dam. A successful *Observe* test is required to spot this staircase, at -10 because it is old and overgrown. If none of the PCs spot it first round, another large chunk of the dam collapses off and a waist-high wave of water surges up the valley, knocking the PCs off their feet if they don’t make a standard *Strength* test. They must cling to the trees to avoid being washed away.

Eventually someone should spot the staircase, and the party can make their way toward it. The staircase is only a foot wide, and the steps are very worn, overgrown with grass, and slippery with the rain. There is no way a horse could get up it; a mule will take it slowly and with reluctance and irritation. Everyone must make a standard *Risk* test to get up this stairway, with +20% for those with *Scale Sheer Surface* skill – those who fail will fall from the stairs, taking D3 points of damage. They must make a *Dexterity* check to grab one of the trees growing from the cliff 2D10 feet below the steps, and will have to be pulled up by the others. It helps if they remembered to bring a rope. Anyone failing will fall into the waters below: they are only a couple of feet deep but are flowing swiftly.

The stairs lead up the side of the valley and plunge into a dark tunnel in the rock, close to the edge of the dam but about ten feet below it. Water is pouring through many gaps in the dam wall now, drenching the PCs with spray, and the sound of the torrent and the groaning masonry is deafening. There is no light in the tunnel, but a rhythmic hammering and grinding noise comes from within. The roof is only five feet high, obviously built for (and by) dwarves, and water drips from it constantly. There appears to be no other way to go, unless the party want to try scaling another thirty feet of sheer, wet cliff-face to reach the top of the valley.

Welcome To The Machine

The tunnel leads for about fifty yards, and the right wall vibrates with the thundering of the water. Soon it opens into a huge cavern, and the noise of hammering and machinery is deafening. The tunnel leads onto a narrow iron-meshwork catwalk. The catwalk is two feet wide, with a handrail on the left, and is very rusty; groaning and creaking as anyone steps onto it. It will hold the weight of half the party, but if any more step on it at one time, it will begin to shake and bend alarmingly. At the far end of the catwalk is a ledge, four feet wide and with a stone handrail. An entrance leads into the rock, with a dim patch of



daylight at the far end, and a staircase leads down from the ledge to the floor of the cavern. Water drips from the ceiling and streams down the walls of the cavern – particularly the right-hand wall.

Below the catwalk, the party’s lights throw giant shadows over an amazing sight. Huge machines are grinding away – vast pistons and levers rise and fall, cogwheels of all sizes turn and grind together, and water cascades from numerous openings, turning enormous water-wheels. Far below on the floor of the vast cavern, row upon row of deserted forges can just be seen in the darkness. Their fires are dead, but the rotted remains of their automatic bellows still pump, and huge hammers still ring on gigantic anvils. Much of the machinery is broken, and in places huge rods flail uselessly in the air, and gears with broken teeth grind together, creating a horrible screeching noise. Numerous tunnels lead out of the lower chamber, but where they go is impossible to tell (they actually lead to abandoned dwarven living quarters and workshops, but the party aren’t going to get the chance to find that out). The floor below seems to be a foot deep in water.

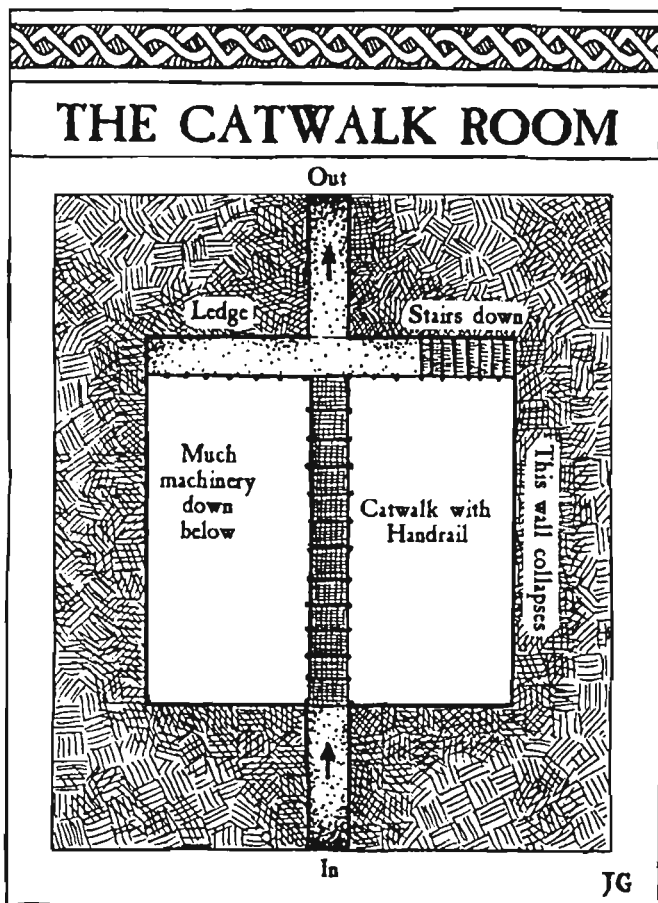
Catwalking

As the first of the PCs begin to cross the catwalk, there is a shuddering crash, a huge hole appears in the right-hand wall of the chamber and a massive jet of water pours through, almost knocking the PCs over. Anyone on the catwalk who fails a *Risk* test is knocked to their knees and almost falls over the edge (modifiers

if the characters take some kind of special precautions – or are particularly rash – are at the GM's discretion), and *everyone* on the catwalk takes D3 Wounds from flying stonework. The weight of water falling on them is immense, and they must make successful *Strength* tests to stand up – it is easier to crawl on hands and knees. A *Cool* test may be needed to continue without encouragement – the catwalk is swaying ominously, and the grinding and crashing of the gears below increases in volume as several of the water-wheels are washed away.

Eventually the flow of water slows down enough to allow characters who have frozen in place to drag themselves the rest of the way across, and more PCs can set out across the catwalk. But as the last of them gets about half-way, there is an even more terrific rumbling and the entire right-hand wall of the cavern collapses. A further wave of water crashes in, requiring another *Risk* roll (as above). For a few seconds, the machinery grinds and clanks in the water churning about it, then the whole floor below caves in, and the machinery disappears into a maelstrom of tumbling water – the dam outside has totally collapsed, and is taking half the valley side with it.

The catwalk lurches alarmingly to the right; make *Intelligence* rolls to stay on – failure means the PC ends up hanging over the edge of the catwalk, until they either make an *Strength* roll to drag themselves up, or another PC comes to their aid. As the PCs try to get to the far side, there is a screech of rending metal, and the catwalk begins to come loose behind them. Suddenly it falls, and is hanging only by one end, swaying at an angle of forty-five degrees above the watery void. A *Cool* check is required at this point. The PCs must climb laboriously up the dangling ruin of the walkway (*Risk* rolls at the GM's discretion) or be rescued by their companions.



Eventually, the PCs should all be safe on the far ledge. The GM is not encouraged to force so many checks that anyone – except possibly Klaus – ends up dead. If anyone does fall into the darkness below, they can make a final check against *Will Power*: if they make it then their unconscious body is left high in a tree in the valley outside as the waters recede, with zero Wounds. If they don't make it then they still end up in the tree but with zero everything else as well, plus a new career: crow-food. Any PC who feels their grip on the catwalk slipping would be advised to spend a Fate Point quickly.

The staircase now leads down into open space, so the only safe way out is to go toward the faint light at the end of the tunnel.

A Roof For The Night

Passing along the tunnel, the PCs find themselves coming out of an archway set in a rocky wall. The last light of dusk is in the sky, and beneath it, they can see a dismal sight. A long lake stretches ahead of them, grey and uninviting beneath a sky still filled with rain-clouds. The lake is surrounded by low, rain-swept hills, and reaches as far as the eye can see, turning gently north-east at the end and disappearing around a spur of the hills. Their compass points unerringly across the lake.

The sound of rushing water can be heard from behind the PCs to their right, where the water of the lake is spilling over into the valley below, and already the level of water in the lake is falling, revealing a thick and reeking mud.

The PCs will no doubt want to get out of the rain, but will not want to stay too close to the dam. Aftershocks are still occurring as more of the dam crumbles and falls. If the PCs seem determined to hang around in the entrance to the tunnel, sheltering from the rain, have the ground shake and a few stones fall from the ceiling. However, just visible in the fading light, are a few tumble-down stone cottages about half a mile away, on the shore of the lake. One of them still has at least part of its roof, and would be a better place to spend the night than out in the open.

By the time the PCs get to the cottages, it is dark. Only a very good *Observe* test (at -20, and only if the players declare that they are checking their surroundings) will allow the characters to spot the occasional sucker mark on the walls of the cottages.

Village Of The Damp

This was once the village of Leiderburg, where humans and dwarves lived peacefully beside the lake. The humans were the descendants of those displaced from their homes when the valley was flooded by the dwarves. The last dwarves left forty years ago, when the vein of ore they were mining ran out. The humans stayed on, living a poor and meagre life, fishing in the lake, and trying to raise a few scrawny sheep in the hills.

About five years ago the disappearances began. First it was sheep, then children. Unknown to the villagers, a young bog octopus had been washed into the lake from upstream, and had grown tired of a diet of trout and pike. The last five villagers fled to Marienburg about a year ago (and are now fleeing from Marienburg again, but that's another story!)

The only house with a roof, a one-roomed cottage, is somewhat damp but still drier than staying outside. The door is slightly rotted and hanging open, but is reasonably sound. There is one window, shuttered and facing the lake; the shutters are

in the same rotten condition as the door, but closed. There is a stack of peat by the fireplace, and PCs could make a fire and dry off if they wanted to. The single room contains a bed with ripped and mildewed bedding, a couple of chairs, a cracked chamber pot, and a small shrine to Shallya in one corner. There is a hole in the thatched roof above the bed, making it useless for sleeping in, since the rain is pouring in.

The most anomalous thing in the room is that on one of the chairs there is an open package of sandwiches (beef and mustard), with one bite taken, and a skin of rough red wine. These are obviously fresh. A dry blanket is hidden under the sodden bed, along with a handful of papers. These prove to be pages torn from a book entitled *Travels in the Wasteland*, by August Grotz. The paper is a little musty, and is *not* marked with the Librarians' symbol. If a PC spends five minutes flipping through them, they will find the page shown in the handout on p.125. The rest relates to areas of the Wasteland the party will not be visiting, and is thoroughly out-of-date.

Leading from the chair to the door are strange slithering marks, but these will only be spotted on a successful *Observe* test, by someone specifically searching the cottage. The marks lead out of the door and there is a single large slimy sucker imprint, about three inches across, on the left side of the door. Any further tracks outside have been washed away by the rain.

The PCs should be made to feel nervous here. Should they stay in the house or continue? They'll actually be safer in the house, since the bog octopus cannot get through the door, but must feel around with its tentacles. The creature fears fire, so

having a fire will help, but the PCs may not be sure what they're up against, and are probably expecting some nasty Chaos spawn or cultists.

Gonna Git You, Sucker

The Brotherhood's agent had made camp in the ruined village, but has moved inland so she can ambush the PCs after they have settled in for the night. Sadly for her, she has not noticed the tracks of the bog octopus; and equally sadly, it has noticed hers. And it's hungry.

After the PCs have been in the village for about an hour and night has fallen, anyone on guard or outside will see a bright flash about half a mile away, further down the lake shore. It is followed by the sound of an explosion a couple of seconds later. Other sharp flashes follow, then suddenly stop.

Anyone who investigates will find the badly wounded body of the Chaos cultist, lying in the mud at the edge of the receding water-line. Nearby there has been some kind of explosion, and chunks of mangled and charred flesh lie around. The air is filled with a strangely appetizing smell of roasting.

A trail leads from the cultist away towards the water, made by something extremely large: anyone who has previously encountered a bog octopus or who has the *River Lore* skill can roll against *Intelligence* to try to identify it.

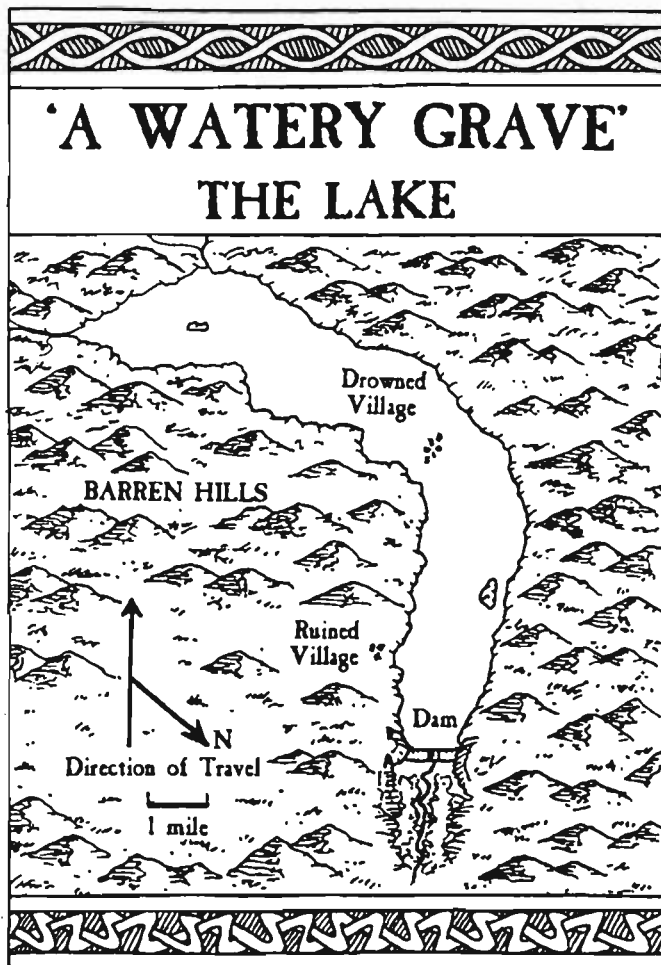
The cultist is still just conscious, and as the PCs approach, she – a large woman in her late twenties, wearing a travelling cloak – produces a wand and brandishes it at them. 'The Tooth is ours,' she snarls through gritted teeth, aims the wand at them, and tries to trigger it. Nothing happens. She slumps back into the mud, apparently unconscious or dead from her wounds. However, anyone coming close will be able to tell that her lips are still moving as she mutters a faint chant: unless she is stopped, she will chant for about a minute and then collapse, dead; the last of her energies gone.

Although there is no way for the PCs to know it, she has just cast *The Summoning of the Brotherhood*: a spell unique to the Brotherhood of the Forgotten One and described on p.116. Her casting has little power and no visible effect, but anyone aligned with Chaos will feel disturbed for the next few minutes, as if someone or something was trying to attract their attention. Any Chaos worshippers in a radius of thirty miles will feel the effect; and a few will know what it means. More importantly, the spell will be heard by both Zahnarzt and Muuthauw, who will shortly make their presences felt.

The cultist carries almost nothing: most of her equipment is in the ruined cottage. The wand is made of jade, and although all the spells it contains have been used up, a high-level wizard or alchemist will pay 200 GCs for it. The cultist's only identifying mark is a strange twisted symbol tattooed over her heart: any priest or anyone with a knowledge of Chaos will recognize it as a variant on the Mark of Khorne, but in reality it is the Brotherhood's secret symbol.

Night Of The Tentacles

Sometime after midnight, the wounded bog octopus will return. If someone is on watch, they will hear a sinister slithering from the direction of the lake, and dimly see a huge rounded bulk heaving itself toward the house; otherwise . The octopus is typical of its species (*WFRP* p.233): extremely strong, and with very long tentacles; unfortunately after the confrontation with the cultist it only has six left, and only 12 Wounds.



If the cottage door is not barricaded, or if it is already open or missing, the monster can break it down, and will try to get into the house, heaving its bulk against the opening and sending tentacles into the room to search for victims. If the door is blocked, its tentacles will enter through the hole in the roof, and it will break the window-shutters and send tentacles in that way. As soon as it has one or more victims in its grasp it will begin retreating to the lake, which will take five rounds. It will also retreat if it fails a *fear* test against fire.

This fight should be played for terror rather than havoc: it is night, and for the first few rounds the PCs should have no idea what they are fighting. Have them dealing with a couple of tentacles trying to grab them through the window, only to find another two coming through the roof when they're not expecting it. Emphasize the vast bulk in the darkness, and the way the house shakes as the creature throws itself at the door. It should be unclear to the PCs exactly what's out there, and how many there are. Klaus will add to the atmosphere by screaming and flailing about, before hiding under the bed.

The octopus will also attack if the party has decided to leave the house and carry on by the shore of the lake, or is sleeping in the open. Here they will have more trouble since there will be nowhere to hide, and no chance of lighting a fire due to the incessant rain. Eventually the octopus, if not killed, will retreat into the lake. It will also retreat if it is reduced to 5 Wounds, or if three or more tentacles are severed. On a culinary note, most halfling cooks know that bog-octopus tentacles are especially nice sliced, fried and served with an onion sauce.

Gone, And Never Called Me Muddy

Sometime during the night, Klaus will slip out of the cottage and begin to trek back to Marienburg: he's had enough. He leaves most of his pack and supplies behind, including the Tooth if he was still carrying it, and the compass. If the party has set a guard roster, Klaus will offer to be on it, and will then scarper at the beginning of his shift, giving him a head start of 2-3 hours – and allowing the bog octopus to attack without warning.

If Klaus is not allowed to guard, two hours after the night attack he will get up and leave the camp, claiming that he is off to relieve his upset stomach – 'All this excitement has played havoc with my digestion.' If the guard insists on coming with him, Klaus will go behind a bush, and then make a run for it. It will be impossible to track him at night, and in the morning the PCs must make the decision whether to follow him and waste valuable time, or press on without him. They should decide to go on without much difficulty; if the GM has been playing him right, Klaus should have been nothing but a pain in the neck.

Mud Of Ages

The next morning, when the sun rises, a disgusting sight meets the party's eyes. The rain has eased off a little, but the lake is now a vast expanse of grey, oozing mud, stretching up the valley. It is littered with dead and dying fish (and possibly a mutilated bog octopus) and patches of stinking water weed. A sluggish river flows through its centre. And the compass-bearing points diagonally across this disgusting morass!

The PCs may decide to follow the shore of the lake for a while, hoping to pass round the far end of it. Unfortunately, it soon becomes apparent that the shore is bending slightly *away* from their travelling direction, and in the distance there are

worrying glimpses of towering cliffs and jagged gorges through which flow the rivers that fed the lake. The only option is to cross the lake-bed.

The mud is fairly shallow at first (though rather smelly), but as they go further into the lake-bed it becomes deeper, until it is well above the knees of an average human, and even more trouble to a dwarf or a halfling. The mud splashes everywhere, and any equipment not waterproofed will soon be caked with the stuff. Going is hard but slow, and the party will be forced to move at half its normal Movement Rate.

As the PCs continue across the lake-bed, they will occasionally come across low, crumbling walls, like the walls around fields, and it will become obvious that there was a settlement here before the valley was drowned. The rain of the early morning turns slowly to a dense drizzle, and then a thick mist, cutting visibility down to about ten yards. All sounds are lost in the fog, and it will be very easy for the PCs to lose each other if they do not stay close together.

Some areas of the mud are deeper than others, and unless the lead character is probing ahead with a stick or staff, sooner or later they will fall into a sink-hole. There will be a sudden 'Gloop!' and the lead character will disappear almost completely. The PC must make a S test every round to struggle to the surface, modified by -1 for every point of Armour carried. A character can survive for a number of rounds equal to their T. After that they will start losing 1 Wound per round. Characters reduced to zero Wounds are dead unless given immediate aid, either first or magical. Characters who can draw breath recover 1 Wound every two rounds.

If the sinking character is thrown a rope, they must make a Dex-20 roll to hold it, then the person pulling must make three successive S rolls to heave them out. If more than one character is pulling, add their Ss and make one roll against the total. Any failure will result in the person slipping back under, but someone pulled partly out can at least draw breath.

There are a number (D6, or GM's discretion) of these deep mud-holes in the lake bed. After the first one, PCs should be looking out for them; if they carry on regardless, have someone fall in another.

Where The Dead Men Lost Their Bones

When the PCs are about half-way across the lake-bed, they slowly become aware of dark walls looming out of the mist on every side. The compass points right though the middle of them. This is a human village which was drowned by the dwarves when they built the dam. Either the dwarves did not know about the village, or neglected to tell the villagers of the coming danger, or perhaps a small group of villagers refused to leave when the valley was flooded, choosing instead to die in the rising waters. The circumstances cannot have been normal ones, because the former inhabitants have become Wights, and guard the ruins of their village against any and all comers.

There are nine Wights in the village: six adults and three children. Make sure you read the special rules for Wights (WFRP, p.253) before running any combat. You should also be familiar with the *Instability* rules (WFRP, p.215). Note that these Wights have no treasure that the PCs would want – their treasure is the village, which was the only thing of any value to them when alive. Remember also that the PCs will be moving at half their normal Movement Rate, due to the thick mud.

As the PCs enter the village, they should get the feeling that they are being watched. The buildings are mostly tumble-down,



and covered in mud, but the windows and doors are dark holes from which the PCs seem to feel presences watching them. As they get deeper among the buildings, anyone making a successful *Observe* test will notice a group of dark figures standing silent and still at the door of a building – a man, woman and child. They say nothing. Slowly the PCs become aware that figures are appearing at other doorways, standing in small groups. They slowly seem to take on a light of their own; a strange, pale, eerie glow.

If the PCs go toward any of the groups, they will see that the people are in fact ancient and withered, their skin the same colour as the mud around them, dressed in the rotten remains of peasant clothing. Their eyes burn with a fierce hatred. When

the PCs see the nature of the figures, they immediately become subject to the Wights' ability to cause *fear*. The Wights will move forward to attack.

It is unlikely that the PCs will be able to do much to combat the Wights, unless they are equipped with magical weapons. If they have any sense, they will run away instead. Any PC who has *S* drained is unlikely to stay around and fight in the face of overwhelming numbers of Wights. The GM should, again, play this scene for its scary potential rather than as a straight fight, with the PCs slogging through the looming ruins, and Wights gliding out of the dark doorways toward them.

The Wights' main aim is to get the PCs away from the village. It is entirely possible that the characters will be separated as they flee among the ruins. Once the PCs get to the edge of the village, the Wights, if they continue chasing them, will become *subject to instability*.

Six Adult Wights

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	33	0	3	4	17	30	1	18	18	18	18	18	-

The adult Wights start with 7 Magic Points each, which they use up at 2 points per round when in combat.

Three Child Wights

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	33	0	1	4	17	30	1	18	18	18	18	18	-

The child Wights start with 3 Magic Points each.

Out Of The Valley Of Death

Once outside the village, the PCs should be able to regroup. From then on, the rest of the journey across the lake should be uneventful. Only a very sadistic GM would drop the PCs in any more muddy holes! Once on the far shore, the PCs can rest and get dry in an old shepherd's hut by the edge of the lake. The mist lifts, and the sun comes out. The compass points up into the hills and away from the awful valley. As the PCs head up into the hills, a skylark rises and begins to sing above them in the blue sky. The nightmare is over – for now.



Chapter 2:

Wherever You May Be

By now, the PCs are muddy and battered, and they have lost their young companion. In short, they should have realized – if they hadn't guessed before – that this mission is not going to be a picnic, and that there are people who will happily see them dead before they succeed. But they have escaped floods, bogs, monsters and undead; they may be feeling that they can handle anything that they might face. On the other hand, a few elements in the seemingly peaceful landscape around them somehow suggest that things are about to get a little – strange.

This chapter reintroduces Muuthauwg, the mysterious piping figure the adventurers first encountered in Marienburg. Although it may well lead to conflict between the adventurers and the Quiet Herald, it is not designed as a simple fight scene; rather, the problem is to puzzle out a part of what is going on and how it relates to their mission. At the same time, it gives the party the chance to make either an uneasy ally or a tricky enemy of a being of considerable – if unreliable – power.

Foreshadowings

A Flight of Falcons

The day after crossing the lake, the PCs are travelling across an area of scrub woodland. The going is hard, with brambles and roots to avoid. As they reach an clear area, a flock of birds passes high overhead. Suddenly the flock turns as one in the air, and swoops down over the PCs – too far above their heads for a missile shot, if any of the party are inclined to shoot anything that moves. However, the flock is just near enough that someone – probably several of the PCs – will realize that they are birds of prey (peregrine falcons, to be pedantic). Any ranger, or any character with experience of falconry, will realize that this is odd; falcons don't fly in flocks: they are solitary hunters. Just to complete the oddity, the birds then all settle in a distant tree for a few minutes, apparently watching the PCs, before flying on. And they ignore *any* magic cast at them.

In fact, the flock *is* Muuthauwg, in the form he has adopted for travel. He is specifically looking for the Egg, and is making slow progress towards it, but he is also interested in recruiting the help of any characters who might side with him in the coming struggle. The *Summoning of the Brotherhood* spell cast in the last chapter has attracted his attention, his instincts have drawn him towards the party, and he is surveying the area and deciding what to do next. He is reasonably sure the PCs are not aligned with Zahnarzt and may be of use to him, but he does not yet know that they have the Tooth. For now, he has either decided that they are nothing for him to worry about, or he wants some protection around before investigating further.

The Deserted Village

On the afternoon of the next day, the PCs' path takes them to within a hundred yards of a small village, barely more than a

hamlet: the first sign of human habitation they have seen in the Wasteland. However, as they draw closer, they should begin to notice that even though a column of smoke is visible – usually a sure sign of habitation – there is nobody to be seen. When they actually reach the cluster of cottages and the small inn, they will find that the place is utterly deserted, although there is nothing apparently wrong with the buildings.

Muuthauwg has come through here in human form, and taken the inhabitants dancing after him, partly to provide himself with assistance with whatever problems he might encounter, and partly because he enjoys it. The PCs will meet him soon enough, but for now, they have a puzzle.

Ideally, this scene should be played with tension slowly building up through a series of false climaxes and a mounting sense of strangeness. The village has been abandoned suddenly. A few farm-workers' tools lie about on the street; unlatched doors bang in the light wind; a plate of stew, cold but still edible, sits on a kitchen table. The kitchens generally seem adequately stocked, although one or two open cupboards have been hastily plundered: Muuthauwg's spell was complex enough to leave the villagers able to pick up a few supplies.

One or two pigs can still be found in bolted farm buildings, but there are fewer animals than there should be, as Muuthauwg can and does make animals as well as people dance after him. The source of the smoke is the still-smouldering embers of half a cottage, but there are no bodies; smart characters may be able to deduce that a candle, left burning, toppled over and no one was around to put out the ensuing fire. Then the PCs come upon one barn where the door has been smashed open from the inside. This looks dark and sinister – but on investigation, it proves to be another false alarm. (A farm horse was enchanted by the piper's music, and kicked its way out to follow him.)

All of this should get the PCs interested and worried, but the GM should not let them waste too much time. Once they've determined the basic situation, any further searching just finds more of the same, and there are neither people to help nor much to plunder (although if the PCs need to re-supply, they can do so without paying, and a really determined search will find a few of the villagers' paltry savings). The GM should occasionally drop broad hints, reminding the players that the PCs' mission is urgent; if they test with the Tooth, it doesn't show any special reactions, continuing to point them onwards. If they won't leave without more idea of what happened, the GM



should pretend to make a hidden **Int** roll for one of the PCs, then remind them that a number of refugees fled Marienburg at the rumour of the coming of Chaos; perhaps the villagers heard some garbled stories with the danger of the situation exaggerated, and fled in terror?

In any case, the PCs must move on eventually – and at least, now, their bearing takes them along a fairly good road.

One Who Was Lame

A couple of hours down this road, the PCs will find a middle-aged woman in peasant garb lying slumped by the side of the road. As they gather round her, she regains consciousness for a moment, and mumbles under her breath:

'The rats ... the rats ...'

Benja's Story

Unless they are completely lacking in curiosity, the PCs will probably wish to help the woman and discover what happened to her. The first part is not unduly difficult: with an **Int** roll, with +10% each for *Cure Disease* and *Heal Wounds* skills, any character can identify that she has two separate problems. To begin with, she has a weak leg that has recently been over-stressed, leaving her with a twisted ankle. However, the reason she is not fully conscious is that she hasn't eaten or – more important – drunk anything for hours or days. Even without a diagnosis, giving her a drink of any sort will bring her round; characters with *Heal Wounds* skill who bandage and bind her ankle will make her a lot more comfortable and able to talk more clearly. Her name, it turns out, is Benja. She is still rather faint, and may ramble a little or have to be prompted for key facts, but she can eventually tell the PCs a lot.

As she regains her senses, she looks around and says, 'We danced for miles, didn't we?' It should become clear that she knows this area slightly, as she is a native of the deserted village. The adventurers will no doubt ask what happened there.

'It started with the rats,' she says. 'I woke up and heard a chittering and scuttling under the floorboards. Well, my husband and me jumped up, and then three or four big fat rats – nasty pests they are, sir – comes running out from behind the furniture and the crack in the wall that I keep tellin' my husband to patch. And they all runs around a-squeaking, and paying no attention when I swiped at 'em with me broom.'

'But then my man went to fetch his shovel to flatten 'em, and they all ran out, quick as blinking. And when we looked out of the door, we see all the rats from the house and barn and our neighbours' places and all, a-scuttling out and a-running off towards the village green, with a dozen dogs and cats among 'em – with nary a squabble or a fight!'

'Well this was strange, to be sure, and then we heard the music. Yes, sirs, there was this dance, on the green, of all the odd things to see of a morning. There was a dozen or so folk – looked like city people, most of 'em – all jigging about. But along with them, there were the animals. And not just rats, though there was hundreds of them. I saw Sturvheid's horse with my own eyes, trying to dance. Best as a horse can, anyhow. And in the middle of it all was this piper, all dressed in green rags, dancing a merry jig, as he tootled away.

'Well, we just stood and gawped, sir, like everyone else who'd come running. But after a while I couldn't help but join in – oh, it was a merry, lilting tune, sir, and no mistake. I felt my feet began to move – and I've never been much for dancing, sirs,

not since my accident. But I wasn't the only one. The whole village joined in, and we danced in and out of the houses, and off down the road, all in a merry band, with horses and pigs and dogs and cats – and rats – all among us.

'But my old bad leg isn't any better now than it ever was, sirs, not even since I paid that travellin' barber fourpence for that salve he said'd heal it. And eventually, I fell behind. I wanted to keep up, sirs – the music called me – but in the end, I just sheer fainted with the trouble and weariness of it all, and that's how you found me. And my old man didn't stay behind for me, sirs. But then, I reckon with that music, he couldn't.'

The PCs can question her further if they wish, but this is as much as she knows. If they extract a detailed description of the piper from her, it will match what they saw of Muuthauwg in Marienburg. None of the dancers who arrived in the village with him will sound familiar; they were a stray bunch of refugees, mostly citizens of Marienburg, who Muuthauwg found fleeing the rumours of disaster.

At this point, the PCs will have to decide what to do next. Benja will have little constructive to offer in the way of suggestions, beyond saying that she thinks that the piper ought to be stopped. 'Tisn't right, sirs, and that's the truth. Leading folks a-dancing away from their homes and all.'

What to do with Benja?

The PCs may also worry about what should be done with Benja herself. She recovers rapidly with a little food and drink (the term is 'sturdy peasant stock'), but her weak leg makes her unable to keep up with any travelling group for long. Fortunately, she knows of a cottage not far from here – the home of a woodsman and his family. It lies far enough from the road that the inhabitants are unlikely to have been caught up by the piper's dance, and the family are regarded as decent folk, doubtless willing to give temporary shelter to someone in need until she can get a ride to take her home.

She is willing to make the short walk there on her own, although she will find a stick or crutch makes the attempt much easier; she'll give her blessing to any PC who cuts her something suitable from a convenient tree. (This blessing has no actual game effect, unless the GM wishes to make a point of rewarding virtue, but this is all solid role-playing for Good-aligned PCs, and may give characters a warm glow.) If any characters insist on escorting her, the cottage is less than half an hour's walk away. The woodsman and his wife are stolid, middle-aged folk, with a couple of teenage daughters; he will indeed shelter someone in obvious need, but has no interest in 'charging around the countryside after folk who've chosen to go a-dancin', of all the daft things.'

Whenever she does part company with the PCs, Benja will wish them luck, and say that she hopes that 'good stout folk' like them can indeed deal with the piper. 'Tisn't right, sirs, truly it ain't ...'

Next Moves

The PCs now have a decision to make, because Muuthauwg is ahead of them. They may decide to skirt around the dancers, reckoning that they can get back on the correct track easily enough, and the Egg is unlikely to be in this immediate area. Alternatively, they may just decide to lag behind for a while, wasting a little time but avoiding trouble until Muuthauwg's path takes him off their compass-bearing.

Unfortunately, however, this won't work. Muuthauwg is aware of the party, even at this distance, and he will soon begin to close in on them. He can probably catch PCs who are following or skirting round him by surprise; even if the characters manage to get ahead of him, he will follow as quickly as he can, accompanied by the quicker and healthier human dancers under his sway – and although the dancers may not be as fast as the PCs, the pursuit will be persistent, and Muuthauwg himself is tireless, and can usually take control of more animals and stray peasants in an area as he closes in.

GMs may want to make a baffling and eerie chase of this: the PCs will catch a few notes of pipe-music on the wind and will move away from it, only to hear the music coming from a different direction a minute later. Ultimately, confrontation will be unavoidable: just as the PCs think themselves safe, they will round a corner to find the piper and his band of around forty followers (half human, the other half animals) just ahead of them.

Dealing With Muuthauwg

At this point, the PCs have a number of options. They can flee or scatter, but that will probably destroy their chance of accomplishing their mission. They can fight, although there are obvious problems with that. Or they can talk.

Fleeing

If Muuthauwg starts moving towards the PCs, and they realize this and try to evade him, they *will* be forced away from the path and their vital compass-bearing. Muuthauwg and his troupe of dancers will continue after them for at least two or three days, at the equivalent of a fast walking pace, making it hard for them to manoeuvre round the countryside.

Note that even if they have somehow managed to obtain horses at this point, travel across the desolate Wasteland on horseback may be, if anything, slower than on foot. Furthermore, Muuthauwg's music affects horses just as well as it does human beings – and horses tend to have less Will Power. If they come into earshot of the piper, however briefly, mounted PCs are likely to be obliged to dismount.

Fleeing PCs can either stick together or scatter. In the former case, Muuthauwg should have no difficulty following their trail; it is hard for a mixed group to cover their tracks for long. If, on the other hand, they split up, Muuthauwg will follow the group

that has the Tooth. He cannot sense it directly, but he does know that there must be something rather important demanding his attention. Muuthauwg is in large part a creature of intuition, but it is a potent and reliable intuition.

If the PCs continue to evade him for long enough, Muuthauwg may eventually lose interest in them and will begin to head back towards Marienburg, to learn the Brotherhood's plans. However, any use of the Tooth to put the PCs back on course will attract his attention and he will pursue them again; possibly without a group of followers this time – he will assume that if they are using the Tooth then they are members of the Brotherhood, which could get interesting. Using the Tooth will also attract Zahnarzt's attention, and the closer the PCs are to the Egg, the faster he will arrive, and begin to watch and even try to influence the party members.

This could turn into a lengthy and nerve-racking game of cat and mouse; sufficiently ingenious PCs *can* evade Muuthauwg indefinitely, and even get past him, but it will take much effort, lose them a lot of time, and probably leave them tired and ill-prepared for the next chapter in their adventure. Some kind of confrontation is probably a better option, in the long run.

Combat

It is possible for the PCs to tackle Muuthauwg head-on and violently, and even to win. However, victory will demand not only combat skills, tactical ingenuity, and preparation; it may well also require brutal ruthlessness. Muuthauwg is no combat monster, but he is currently surrounded by a mob of animal and human dancers, and as is described on p.117, he can use these to shield himself from opponents' attacks. He is not actually cruel or heartless, but he does have an inhuman, and inhumanly absolute, system of priorities and objectives – and his own survival is required for him to accomplish his role in the world. However, he is mindful of the terms of his curse, and while he will place dancers between himself and his attackers, he will not use them as a suicidal barrier.

A successful head-on assault will probably mean cutting through a lot of innocents. There are now enough of these that GMs can emphasize the chance of hitting them accidentally, as swords skewer aged peasants on the backswing and ricochets go everywhere. If the PCs attempt to attack, and start making headway, Muuthauwg may release a number of armed refugees and burly villagers from his control just as they cross the PCs' paths.

In these circumstances, the newly freed NPCs will probably fight the PCs on reflex, as they see what has happened to anyone else who got in the attackers' way. They are not especially talented fighters (use the second set of characteristics given for the dancers), and they may also be tired from lengthy dancing (how badly this affects them is left to the GM), but they could put up something of a fight: although they are unlikely to fight to the death, they are outside Muuthauwg's control and their deaths are now irrelevant to him. GMs wishing to complicate matters yet further could decide that Muuthauwg's dancers include some stray goblins, or even a wild boar, which could give the PCs significant worries in combat. If the going gets tough, he will release all the dancers from his control and let the attackers deal with the confused mob, while he transforms and flees.

However, the biggest threat to the adventurers remains Muuthauwg's piping: they must make a **WP** test as the combat begins, and every five rounds thereafter. Even with earplugs or magical countermeasures, there is no perfect defence against

Normal Dancers

4	31	25	3	3	6	30	1	29	29	29	29	29	29
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Skills: Animal Care; 25% chance of Street Fighter.

Trappings: The clothes they stand up in.

Burly Dancers

4	40	25	4	4	7	30	1	29	29	29	29	29	29
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Skills: Animal Care; 50% chance of Street Fighter; 25% of Very Strong.

Trappings: The clothes they stand up in; 25% of knife, dagger or club.



this – and the better their protection, the harder it will be for PCs to communicate among themselves. If all the PCs are wearing earplugs, for example, the GM could reasonably ban the players from talking to each other throughout the fight.

One possibility might be a sneak attack. This could be carried off, especially at night, when most of the dancers will be sleeping, but note that Muuthauwg has the senses of a wild animal, supernatural intuition, and a superhuman ability to absorb damage. An attack is more or less certain to change into a simple fight very quickly. However, even a brief, temporary surprise could give the PCs a worthwhile advantage – if the problems of fighting in darkness don't outweigh it altogether.

If, in the end, the PCs do break through or bypass the dancers and begin to threaten Muuthauwg, and especially if they inflict more than a point or two of damage on him, he will eventually give up on this fight: it is probably not critical to his 'mission', so far as he knows. At this point he will stop piping – releasing the rest of the dancers from his control – and transform into a flock of flying creatures: falcons if it is daytime, bats if it is night. Alternatively, if he is near to a river or large stream, he might leap into it, transforming into a shoal of fish as he does so. This may well surprise the PCs, unless they know he has this ability and have declared themselves ready for it; any character in a position to respond should roll against CI or stand gawping for 1-3 rounds, in which time Muuthauwg will be able to escape. In any case, it is probably impossible for the adven-

turers to kill all the transformed animals, or even a significant number of them; Muuthauwg will live to return later, if the GM needs him.

Diplomacy

The best solution to the whole problem is for the PCs to talk to the piper – although getting through to him without being entrapped by his music may be a problem. Muuthauwg suspects that the PCs either know or own something that will be useful to him, but he will want to tire them by making them dance first, so they can offer less resistance to him. Strong-willed characters with additional protection might approach the dancing mob, call out an offer to talk later, then flee; alternatively, a fast-moving character might get ahead of the dancers and leave a written message somewhere visible – say, fixed to a road-side tree with a dagger. Perhaps the best chance is to approach Muuthauwg stealthily by night, while the dancers mostly sleep and he sits playing simple tunes which keep the sleepers under his sway, but which will not entrap anyone else.

The GM must decide Muuthauwg's reaction to any approach, based on the attitude and previous behaviour of the PCs (for example, whether they have attacked him in Marienburg or on the road; or the number of times they have used the Tooth). He does want to talk to them: although he needs no assistance at the moment, his scheme to thwart Zahnarzt may require powerful characters to help him, and he is interested to find out if

the PCs might aid him. He should be depicted as cautious and slightly nervous – he knows that if the PCs kill him then Zahnarzt will have a clear run at reincarnation – but basically wise and confident in his own power. He trusts his instincts, and they will only cause him to distrust the party if the PCs are actually planning treachery.

Questioning Muuthauwg

If and when the PCs get talking to Muuthauwg, it will be possible for them to put questions to him, and he is generally willing to answer. He doesn't worry about normal concepts of politeness, and will tolerate almost any tone of voice or phrasing.

Remember Muuthauwg is *not* human and he doesn't think like a human; he tends to display a very non-human mind-set. His answers will seem like a weird mixture of the frustratingly cryptic and the tiresomely blunt (usually in the negative). He has no compunction to tell the truth; nor to reveal the full extent of what is going on. He also has an annoying habit of asking the same question back at the questioner. Some typical questions that PCs might ask, and the answers that Muuthauwg will give, include the following:

Who are you? 'Only one knows that, and he placed me here. As for now, I am all that you see here, and no more.' This is a reference to the fact that only Khorne knows his true name.

What are you? 'A poor player in a game of two halves, which has lasted millennia and may last many more.'

Are you Zahnarzt? 'Once I might have been. Now I am all he is not. I am South to his North; I am tails to his heads; the other side of the same coin. Where he goes, I go; what he does I undo.'

Are you helping the demon? 'No.'

Are you Muuthauwg? 'Men have named me so.'

If the PCs accuse him of inhumanity, ruthlessness, heartlessness, or whatever, in regard to his treatment of the dancers who follow him or human beings in general, Muuthauwg will say: 'I survive to do that which is necessary, and I do all that is necessary to survive.'

Are you looking for Zahnarzt? 'How can one seek a shadow? I seek that which he will become.'

What are you doing? 'Smelling the air, watching the leaves turn, feeling the frost coming, observing the moon and waiting for the next move.'

Why are you making people dance? 'Since I was banished here, the blood-pleasures have been denied me. The pipes quicken the dancers' blood, and it lets me remember.'

So you're with Khorne? 'No longer. A poor piper I, and no more.'

Where will you go next? 'I follow the movements of the others.'

Are you after the Moon's Egg? 'I mean it no harm, but I would not see it hatch.'

Can we help you? 'If you are willing, then I may call upon you in the days to come.'

Will you help us? 'I have helped you for more thousands of years than I care to count, insect!' The piper's voice deepens and for a moment his face darkens, becoming very sinister. Then he lapses back into his former personality, and smiles.

The GM should improvise any other responses along similar lines. Muuthauwg himself will not say much unprompted. He never shows signs of impatience, although he might, after a

long and fruitless exchange, become bored and cease answering with more than cryptic smiles and monosyllables.

The PCs may be able to get a fuller explanation from Muuthauwg, but only if they are absolutely able to convince him of their sincerity, and agree to help him. The piper will explain that he is in the world to thwart Zahnarzt's schemes and eventually to destroy the demon – although he will not mention Khorne, Chaos, or the fact that he used to be Zahnarzt's comrade.

He will tell them that over a thousand years ago Zahnarzt swore an oath to only manifest in one vessel; and that he, Muuthauwg, exiled that vessel to the Chaos Moon before it could be used. 'But he has brought it back, it seems, and if the vessel is broken then so is the oath, and the demon could possess what he wills.' He will say no more on the subject, merely shaking his head at further questions. He will, however, mention the Brotherhood and warn the PCs that they are everywhere.

Release for the Dancers

Adventurers may feel obliged to ensure that Muuthauwg's victims are released from his dancing-charm – especially if any other PCs have been caught up! In fact, Muuthauwg will (probably) release (most of) them sooner or later anyway; he has enchanted them mostly to use them as shields in case the PCs turned out to be violent (as PCs so often are). Anyway, he will eventually decide, intuitively, that he is needed elsewhere, and that he must shift to flock-of-birds form to get there – and he cannot take dancers along with him then.

However, the party will probably not want to wait on Muuthauwg's whims in this matter. If they attack him and succeed in driving him off (or even destroying him) by raw force, the dancers will stop in their tracks, or stagger to a halt, and look around themselves in bemusement. They are not actually waking up; they have been conscious, but they have not had control of their own limbs, voices or emotions. It will take them a few minutes to get their bearings, in which time any animals (or goblins or suchlike) among them will slip away into the countryside; the PCs might possibly decide to do the same, to avoid wasting time and maybe the anger of those who got in their way while they were trying to reach the piper.

The situation will be similar if Muuthauwg is persuaded to leave at a time of his own choosing, although he might depart while the dancers are asleep, or leave them relatively calm and less likely to trip over each other in the initial confusion.

Good-aligned PCs may wish to stay around to ensure that the dancers are as safe and healthy as possible – although the GM should discourage overmuch lingering, reminding the players of the urgency of their characters' mission. If the party was evidently responsible for their release from Muuthauwg's power, most of these folk will be politely grateful. They can't offer much practical assistance, but they do know the local countryside well, and they can tell the PCs of good resting or hiding places, or about what lies in the direction they are travelling. Of course, this may just depress the adventurers. ('What do you want to go that way for? There's nothing but a swamp full of demons. No one ever gets out of there!')

Disaster Recovery

If the players mishandle this part of the adventure badly, the GM may wish to provide them with opportunities to recover the situation. They are unlikely to be killed or maimed, but they

may be very badly placed to complete the adventure, lacking useful information or a powerful ally.

If they have become scattered around the countryside, they should be able to pull back together eventually. However, they will have lost a lot of time, and the GM should be merciless about reminding the players of this. The adventurers should feel obliged to travel fast and hard, with a minimum of sleep or rest; meanwhile, other agents of the Brotherhood of the Forgotten One will have had a chance to catch up with them. The adventurers could be helped by some 'friendly' passers-by who are in fact agents of Chaos, taking the opportunity to infiltrate the group and study them, maybe sabotage their mission, or even steal the Tooth. Later, the days of hard travel should take their toll; how severe this problem should be is left to the GM's judgement and sadism, but -2% on all abilities for every day of inadequate rest, maybe halved by a roll against *Toughness* on each day, might be a reasonable rule.

If any PCs have actually been caught up in Muuthauwg's dance, and not freed by their fellows, their problems are similar but worse. Muuthauwg will lead them miles out of their way, meandering in the general direction of the Egg, before eventually deciding that this band of dancers are slowing him down more than they might ever help him. However, healthy adventurers are likely to look to him like useful puppets to keep around!

How far the PCs might end up dancing is left to the GM's (and Muuthauwg's) whim. Muuthauwg will become aware of any continual proximity of the Tooth, and if he controls the PC carrying it, he will make them empty their pockets sooner or later, and take the Tooth himself. He will be able to use it against any manifestation of Zahnarzt, and thus *probably* to destroy the demon if necessary – but remember that Muuthauwg is also a demon, and if he destroys Zahnarzt then Marienburg and the Wasteland will still have a major problem.

If Muuthauwg does get the Tooth, the party will probably be forced to negotiate with him, as discussed above – and it will take some hard and careful talking to get the Tooth back. Alternatively, the GM might bring in the Fimir due to appear in the next chapter, and who are also after the Tooth. Confronted by such an enemy, Muuthauwg will release any competent-looking combatants from among his dancers to use their skills to full effect. How PCs use such freedom is up to them – but they *will* have the Fimir as well as Muuthauwg to worry about. Of course, Muuthauwg may then flee a lost battle in bird form – carrying the Tooth with him.

Lastly, if the party lose the Tooth, their mission is not hopeless; they still have a compass-bearing, and the name of the thing they are looking for. However, they have no way of checking things. *Orientation* skill, or possibly *Astronomy*, or just competent use of compasses, could help ensure that they remain on the right track, and the Egg is going to be found in a rather distinctive location – but there is still a lot of opportunity for error.

Long-Term Considerations

The PCs are unlikely to kill Muuthauwg, so it is possible that they will encounter him again later. If they have given him reason to trust their competence then he will stay out of their way, wandering around the Wasteland and waiting to see who else is after the Egg. He would like to see it moved to Marienburg by either the Brotherhood or the PCs (he has more chance of finding forces to combat its power in the city) but will not interfere with it himself.

The most likely time for his reappearance is the climax of the adventure, but GMs may decide to reintroduce him at any point, especially if a *deus ex machina* is needed to save a situation or bring the plot back on track. He might approach them briefly as the adventure comes to a climax, offering advice and cryptic wisdom (a useful way for the GM to manipulate the plot), or he might distract strong enemy groups with a band of enchanted dancers. If he is irritated with the party, on the other hand, *they* are likely to be the distraction.

On the other hand, if he fought the party and was driven off by violence, he will not trust them in future and will have no compunction about using them as cannon-fodder in apocalyptic battles with Zahnarzt. However, he works on the principle that 'the enemy of my enemy is somebody I can manipulate' and so long as they are doing what his plans require, he will not interfere. However, the PCs are likely to hear stories of a green-clad piper with strange powers further along their route: the demon is still active.

One other point for GM and PCs to consider; once they have seen Muuthauwg pull his transformation trick, the adventurers are likely to view flocks of birds and packs of rats with immense suspicion. This can be both entertaining, atmospheric, and useful for the GM; a flock of starlings swirling over an important site, or a hundred glittering eyes peering out of the shadows, can be a very effective element in any scene – whether or not Muuthauwg is actually around.





Chapter 3:

Burn Them! Burn Them!

At length, by force or guile, the adventurers escape the strange power of the supernatural piper. Unfortunately, as they leave him behind, they also leave behind the reasonably secure and inhabited lands wherein they had found him. Ahead of them lie swamps – although the word is that these can be crossed without danger, if the traveller is wise and swift, and keeps a hand on the hilt of their sword.

The party's path will now take them into more explicitly dangerous country. Fortunately, as it may seem, they find allies against the dangers there. Less fortunately, their new 'friends' turn out to be the kind of fanatics who make Law almost as frightening as Chaos – and this makes for a tricky and dangerous three-way interaction.

The adventurers should have had the chance to discuss their direction of travel with someone local – probably one of Muuthauwg's recently released victims. If that wasn't possible, the GM can introduce a random passing peasant or woodsman, or a small farming community. They will learn that their path takes them across an area of marshland and swamp, towards the village of Grimpengratz.

Following their dead straight line would mean trying to cross lethal bogs and pot-holes, but a helpful yokel can tell them that their path will intercept an old road which follows their compass-bearing as closely as makes no difference. Even if they think that the slight detour is undesirable, they don't have much choice; any locals they meet will emphasize the perils of leaving the track. Pathways meander, or peter out altogether; wanderers die in these swamps at the best of times; and there are rumours of 'things' abroad in the marshes.

The First Whisper

The night after their encounter with Muuthauwg, while the party is sleeping, they will be visited by Zahnarzt. He has been attracted by the *Summoning of the Brotherhood* spell, and more recently by the presence of Muuthauwg – plus any uses of the Tooth itself. He knows where the Egg is, and will have a fair idea of what the PCs intend doing to it. While he cannot affect them directly, he can try to persuade them to help him, or at least not to interfere.

The night is clear and cold, and the Chaos Moon rides high in the sky. If anyone is guarding while the others sleep, have them make one or more *Observe* rolls around midnight. Mention that there are modifiers. No matter how good the roll, the PC will not see anything *because there is nothing to see*, but you should let them know that something is making them feel uneasy – two failed *Observe* rolls usually do the trick anyway. Any guards with *Sixth Sense* will have a really unpleasant time: they know there's something close by, but they can't see it.

If any of the characters are aligned with Chaos then Zahnarzt will go to them; otherwise he will pick a magic-using character in preference to anyone else. A few minutes later the PC will wake up with a jolt from a particularly vivid and unpleasant dream. They were in a twisted, unnatural place, walking through an avenue of deformed trees towards a strange house. A small child with golden hair appeared at the door, saw them and smiled. At that moment the trees began to move, crowding together and reaching out with their branches: the character tried to run but suddenly the child was in front of them. She smiled again – and her mouth kept opening wider and wider, revealing hundreds of razor-sharp fangs, dripping with spittle, each one the image of the Demon's Tooth. The dream leaves the character with a feeling of dread, and they will get no more sleep that night.

This is one of Zahnarzt's whispers: he is trying to scare the PCs away from the farm where the Egg is; and he may try to affect their course several more times during the rest of the adventure. His messages will always be directed to the more Chaos-oriented party members, and will be geared towards the situation: they will normally be dreams or allegories if the target is asleep; but if the situation is more urgent and the party are awake or semi-conscious, then he will whisper direct messages. If the target PC fails a *WP* roll then they will believe that the thought comes from within their own mind (see p.114).

Zahnarzt does not want the Egg to come to any harm, and would be happiest if it was left on the farm, where he can reincarnate without interference. Failing that, he would like it – and the Tooth – to be in the possession of members of the Brotherhood. Although the destruction of the Egg would mean that he could manifest in any body he chose, the Egg has been prepared for him and is, he knows, his best chance for reincarnation. He will do whatever he can to avoid harm coming to it.

Death In The Morning

The next day's travel will be uneventful, but becomes slower as the terrain becomes more difficult: the land is low-lying and damp, with occasional patches of wet ground. A couple of hours before dusk they hit the promised roadway – little more than a wide pathway, but obviously in use since recent hoofmarks and wheel-tracks can be seen in the soft earth, also heading south-

west. As the sun begins to set, the party crests a small hill and can see the promised bog-land stretching ahead of them, with the track just visible between tussocks and stagnant pools. Assuming that they set out around first light the next day, they should be able to get across the swamp to Grimpengratz well before nightfall. Anyone they have spoken to will have been emphatic about not getting caught in the marshes after dark; that's when 'they' are most active, even if no one's quite sure who or what 'they' are.

The start of the crossing is uneventful. The track is easy to follow and heading in the right direction, although there are no other travellers abroad, and the party makes good time. The weather, however, is once again overcast, with just enough drizzle to keep everyone feeling cold, damp and irritable. The landscape is bleak and depressing, the occasional stunted bush the only thing to rise above the patches of mud and grass interspersed with brackish pools of foul-smelling water. Everything stinks of decay. Thin tendrils of mist blow across the pathway, eddy for a moment, then clear; this, together with the drizzle, restricts visibility.

After a couple of hours, the lead adventurer sees something on the road ahead. At first it looks like a boulder, or another half-visible bush, but as the party gets closer it turns out to be a dead horse. Well, most of one; it seems to have been partially eaten. Several sets of teeth-marks are visible on the carcass; anyone examining them will be unable to identify what made them, although characters with the appropriate knowledge or experience will be able to eliminate the obvious suspects: orcs or beastmen. Further examination, if anyone wants to hang around, will show that the horse was killed by cutting weapons and blunt trauma; in other words someone or something hacked and bludgeoned it to death before feeding. The mud is too churned up for any tracks to be discerned.

The horse's rider is a little further along the trail, hacked and bludgeoned like his mount, although the corpse hasn't been eaten. He still has a little money in his purse (fourteen shillings and some copper), although his weapons, if he had any, are gone. He is wearing the livery of one of the minor merchant guilds of Marienburg, from which the PCs might deduce that he was a refugee fleeing the city.

A mile or so further on is the rest of his party, all dead, along with their horses. All the bodies show similar wounds to their fellows and all have been looted, although their money has been left. There are three more young men in the same livery as their fellow down the road; their purses contain five, twelve and seventeen shillings respectively. One is also carrying a letter from a merchant, Johannes van der Groot, to his brother-in-law in Parravon, asking him to take care of his daughter Mirabelle; things are going from bad to worse in Marienburg, and he fears for her safety. Of Mirabelle there is no obvious sign.

Beyond the dead servants is a wrecked coach, already half-submerged in the swamp. Getting to it will be tricky; anyone failing a *Jump* test will fall in the mud, and will be in real danger of sinking unless the rest of the party pulls them out. Mirabelle's body is inside, her throat cut, but otherwise unmarked. Her right hand still holds a dagger, and it should be obvious to anyone with medical training (including magical healing), or sufficient combat experience to be familiar with the pathology of wounds, that she committed suicide.

If the characters waste too much time poking around, remind them that they're still less than half-way to Grimpengratz, and it gets dark early this time of year. Priests can say prayers over the bodies, but decent burial is not feasible.

As morning gives way to afternoon, the mist begins to thicken. Shapes seem to form in it, melting away if the characters look at them directly. If the players aren't getting completely paranoid by now, scare them some more. By the time the next encounter comes around the characters should be jumping at their own shadows, more than half inclined to shoot first and ask questions later.

Guerrillas in the Mist

Eventually, one of the shadows in the mist doesn't dissolve away. It solidifies slowly, into the form of a man on a horse. He says nothing as the party approaches, but makes no overtly threatening moves either. If one of the party hails him he will relax visibly, taking his right hand from inside his cloak, and raising it in greeting. If no one speaks first he will wait until the PCs are close enough to make out in detail, then introduce himself as Otto von Lufthanser.

Lufthanser's manner will be friendly, but he won't be very forthcoming about his own business. On hearing that the party is heading for Grimpengratz (as if there was anywhere else they might be going) he'll simply suggest they make all the speed they can. As he speaks, he'll turn and ride alongside the party. If the characters ask him about the dead travellers he'll express regret; he told them to turn back, it was too late to cross the marsh before dark, but they wouldn't listen.

From this, astute players can deduce that he's been there all night, and most of the previous day – no rolls, let them work it out for themselves. He'll ask if there was any sign of the girl, and react with a mixture of anger and relief to the news of her suicide. He won't elaborate on the reason, but will urge any female members of the party to do the same if necessary; before they can press him for details another voice calls his name from up ahead, and the outline of a donkey cart looms up out of the mist.

The cart is driven by a dwarf, who Lufthanser introduces as Dr Balthazar, from the University of Nuln. Any academics in the party will recognize the name on a successful *Int* test, identifying him as the author of *A Treatise on the Element of Earth*, a ground-breaking pamphlet in the field of alchemy. An alchemist who makes the roll will know enough of the paper to ask some reasonably intelligent questions about it.

Balthazar is taciturn to the point of rudeness, and will take being addressed by anything other than 'Doctor' as an insult; Lufthanser is the only person in the world he will tolerate addressing him by name. He is, however, susceptible to flattery, and any academics in the party who show the respect due to his genuinely prodigious intellect and erudition will find him eager to talk shop. The cart is loaded with the paraphernalia of his alchemical studies, and Lufthanser's witch-hunting equipment; carefully crated glassware and bottles of chemicals, assorted semi-magical items, a stuffed alligator, a large pair of scales and a duck, that sort of thing. He reacts to the news of the massacre down the road by spitting into the swamp, and saying 'Told 'em so.' His only response on being told of Mirabelle's suicide is 'Best thing'.

Lufthanser will urge the party to hurry on to Grimpengratz before the light fades; if they suggest travelling together he'll point out that the cart will slow everyone down, and he can't leave Balthazar. Astute PCs will realize that he's prevaricating, and has business of his own to take care of. As they set off, they hear Balthazar say, 'Hope they have better luck than the last lot.'

2	37	25	4	5	11	60	2	44	69	67	69	69	24
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At this point the party is jumped by a Fimir warband (see **WFRP** p.218). Keep the exact number vague; there are actually only two more than the PCs, but they keep fading in and out of the mist, so it's hard to be sure. One is a Dirach magician, two are Fimm warriors and the rest are Shearl. Any character who is an ex-Soldier or can speak *Battle Tongue* (showing a military background) can make an **Int** roll to work out quickly that the Dirach is heading for the character with the Tooth, while the

4	63	55	6	5	15	60	3	49	59	49	59	69	49
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Appearance: Lufthanser is in his early forties, stands 5'11" tall, and weighs about 200 lbs. A stern-looking, barrel-chested figure with a pencil-thin moustache, his black hair is receding and greying at the temples. He was handsome, but a lifetime of battling the spawn of Chaos has left its mark. Now he is best described as good-looking, the deeper lines and a few faint scars on his face lending him an air of wisdom and authority. He has cold, grey eyes, and the intensity of his stare can be profoundly disturbing. When not facing probable combat, he still wears his old regimental coat and cavalry boots beneath his black cloak, and his black hat still bears a tattered plume in the regimental colours.

other Fimir are there to keep the other PCs out of the way. This is the case: the Meargh Rakka (see chapter 5) has learned that the Tooth is somewhere in the area, and has sent bands of warriors out to seize it. The Dirach can sense the power of the Tooth from a range of a few feet, and will zero in on it. The Fimir will fight all the males in the party to the death, but will attempt to take any females present alive for breeding purposes; this reluctance to kill women may handicap them against competent female fighters.

Just when things are getting serious, Lufthanser bursts through the mist, shouts, 'Shield your eyes!' and throws something onto the ground: a crude but powerful magnesium flare, constructed by Balthazar for just such an emergency. The bright light completely unnerves the Fimir; they all test for *Stupidity* at -20 (it's far brighter than the level of daylight which is normally sufficient to disorientate them). Any PCs who failed an I test when Lufthanser shouted his warning will be dazzled for 1D6 rounds, fighting at -10 to WS until the effect has worn off.

After that, the surviving Fimir should be easy meat. Lufthanser will concentrate on the Dirach; if it has managed to seize the Tooth, or if the PC carrying it is making obvious efforts to defend it, this will be the natural moment for it to come to his attention.

Once the Fimir have been seen off, Lufthanser and Balthazar will no longer be reluctant to accompany the PCs; in fact Lufthanser will be eager to press on to Grimpengratz and organize a search party to track them back to their lair. As creatures of Chaos, and users of demonological magic, they must be exterminated. If anyone is tactless enough to point out that this sounds like a suicide mission, the witch-hunter will simply assert that Solkan looks after the virtuous.

If the PCs don't press on without them, Lufthanser and Balthazar will pump them for information about their mission and what the Fimir were after all the way to Grimpengratz. If the PCs go on ahead, citing Lufthanser's own arguments of earlier in the afternoon back at him, they'll find him amenable to the idea, waving them off with a cheerful 'See you later.'

Fimir Warband

Shearl

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Inf	Cl	WP	Fel
4	33	9	4	3	11	20	1	18	18	14	18	18	14

Trappings: Fimir Mace (counts as a two-handed weapon).

Fimm

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Inf	Cl	WP	Fel
4	44	9	4	4	14	30	2	26	30	22	28	28	20

Special Powers: Can make a tail attack to the side or rear at normal *Strength*.

Trappings: Fimir Mace (counts as a two-handed weapon), Mail Shirt (1 AP on body).

Dirach

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Inf	Cl	WP	Fel
4	28	18	4	5	13	30	1	25	35	50	45	50	25

Magic points: 10

Spells: Strength of Combat; Steal Mind; Cause Panic

At the Muddy Mule

The party will arrive in Grimpengratz just before nightfall, cold, tired, and muddy. The settlement is surrounded by a wall, patrolled by armed watchmen, and the gate looks comfortably solid. (The GM should convey the impression of an armed frontier community.) After their adventures so far, the party are probably looking forward to a peaceful night of relative comfort and safety.

Finding an inn isn't difficult; there's only one in the whole village, the Muddy Mule, in the middle of the main street. It's run by Inigo Lightfoot, a middle-aged halfling, who views good food and ale, and the other creature comforts of life, as basic necessities. Accordingly, the Muddy Mule is surprisingly large and comfortable for such a backwater, with real feather mattresses on the beds. Inigo will greet the PCs warmly, and generally go out of his way to be accommodating.

He is assisted in running the inn by his daughter Lilith, who serves the guests and collects the money, leaving him free to spend more time in the kitchen. Lilith is a gold-mine of gossip, and will flirt outrageously with any reasonably good-looking members of the party, paying particular attention to other halflings and whoever has the highest *Fellowship*.

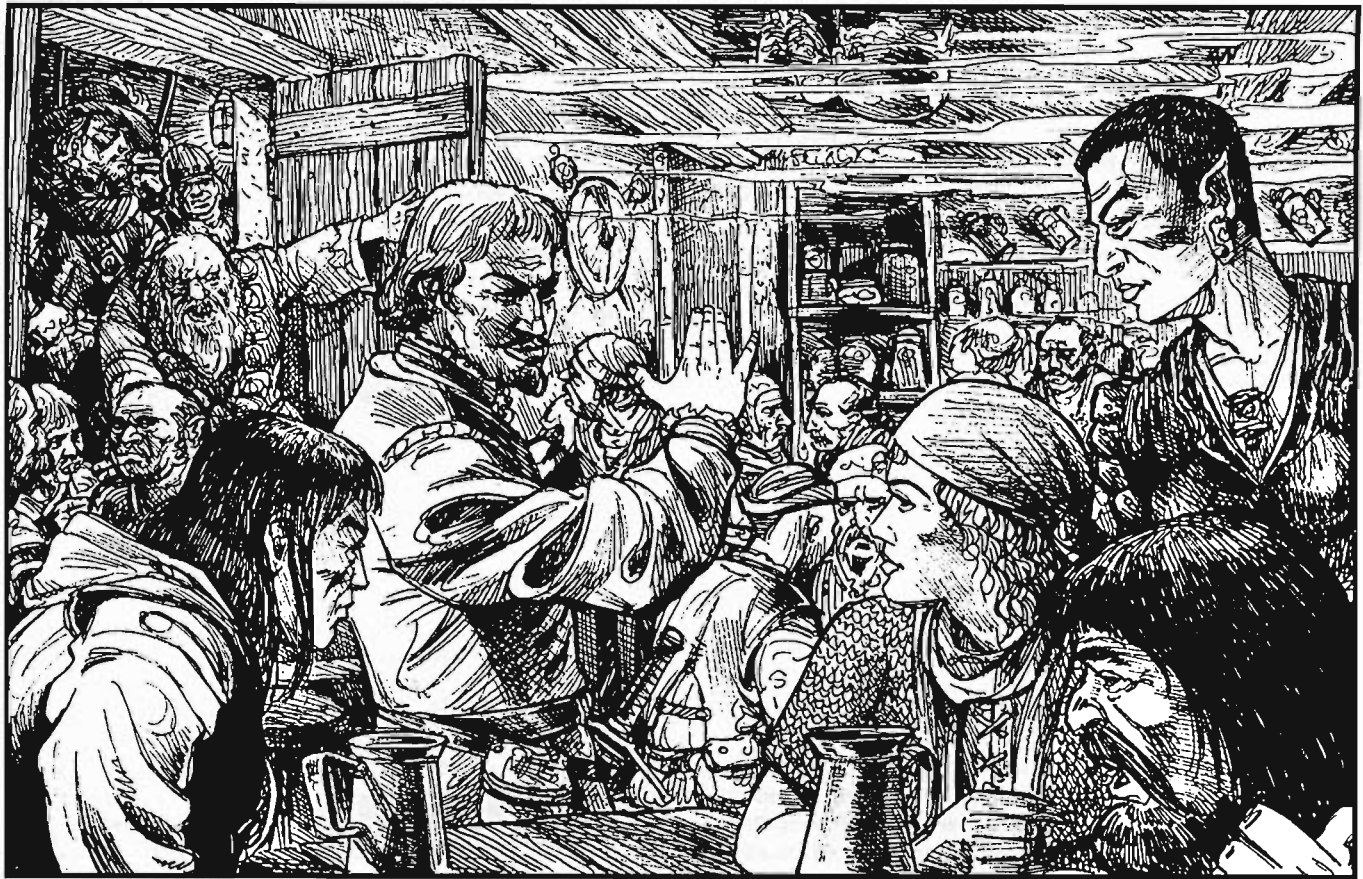
If the PCs left Lufthanser and Balthazar in the middle of the swamp, the first thing they see on entering the taproom is the pair of them already comfortably settled in front of the remains of a meal. Lufthanser will greet them cordially, if a trifle smugly, and invite them to join him. Anyone asking Lilith or any of the other locals will be told that he's been staying there for several weeks, and knows the swamp well enough by now to use the hidden short-cuts safely; but if they want to assume magical assistance, or something more sinister, let them.

Lufthanser's questions to the party will seem general enough; he won't be trying to force confessions of Chaos-worship from them. However, the GM should be trying to get the party to mention the Demon's Tooth or, failing that, to make some reference to it; possibly by mentioning that they are being guided to this Chaotic artefact by a specific device or object. That will be enough to kindle suspicions in the witch-hunter's mind, although he will let the subject drop for the moment.

How things go after this point will depend on how open the party decide to be with Lufthanser. If they explain simply that they're on a mission for some Lawful group, and the Tooth is on loan, he will react very positively, once he's asked a few questions to verify that they're telling the truth. He'll even offer any assistance he can, if they only tell him a little of what the job entails. He won't join them on their journey, though; he is sworn to battle Chaos head-on, and just now he wants to deal with this Fimir infestation.

If the PCs mention Goffman by name, however, Lufthanser will be more openly dubious: he knows the story of how the lawyer defended the mutant-loving Sister Astrid before she was banished into the Wasteland. He won't go so far as to denounce Goffman (and, by extension the PCs) as heretics, but he will ask questions which will make it obvious that he knows of Goffman, and considers him unreliable. If this starts to make the party suspect that their employer may have a hidden agenda, so much the better.

Beyond that, Lufthanser knows a little of the Order of Illuminated Readers. If the PCs make any references to rare books and people with their tongues cut out, he may be able to give them some basic information about the Readers and the Unseen Library: the fact that they're worshippers of Verena, have



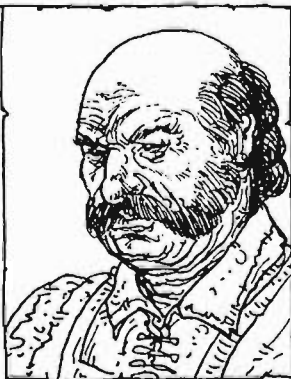
Inigo Lightfoot, Halfling Innkeeper

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
3	32	35	2	2	7	50	1	32	20	35	25	46	65

Skills: Brewing, Consume Alcohol, Cook, Haggle, Herb Lore, Numismatics, Read/Write, Silent Move Urban, Specialist Weapon: Meat Cleaver, Wrestling
Possessions: The Muddy Mule, and all its contents

Inigo has been running the Muddy Mule for as long as anyone can remember. A devout Esmaraldaist, he sees providing food and lodging as more than just a livelihood; it's a vocation, and he takes huge pride in it. He likes to think his food and ale are the finest in the Wasteland, at least outside Marienburg, and he is probably correct. Insulting his hospitality is not a good idea.

He appears cheerful and accommodating almost all the time; the only exception to this is when something happens to interrupt him while he's cooking, when he becomes very short-tempered. While he's in the kitchen, Lilith effectively runs the inn.



Lilith Lightfoot Halfling Barmaid

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
3	25	32	2	2	6	50	1	35	15	25	25	52	65

Skills: Charm, Consume Alcohol, Cook, Haggle, Herb Lore, Palm Object, Read/Write, Seduction.

Possessions: Tasteless costume jewellery, collection of stuffed animals (in bedroom).



Lilith is a young (27-year-old) halfling girl, uncommonly attractive and well aware of the fact; any halflings in the party find her quite stunning, and all other races think she's cute. She's lived in Grimpengratz all her life, and has no desire to leave, but loves talking to the travellers passing through about the faraway places they've seen; as a result she's surprisingly well informed about the geography, politics, and history of the Empire, and many of the lands beyond. Her understanding of what she knows is rather more limited, however.

Like most halflings Lilith is a natural hedonist, taking full advantage of whatever pleasures life has to offer.

full Readers and Lay-Readers, and are supposed to have a huge repository of hidden, possibly blasphemous learning.

The party may also mention Muuthauwg. How Lufthanser views this depends what he's told: he's never heard of the Herald before, is intrigued, and if he can determine that the piper is Chaotic, will pump them for information. In short, he should be played as what he is; a fanatic, apparently open and reasonable, actually suspicious to the point of paranoia, but warm to those he sees as righteous. However, a wrong word can reinforce Lufthanser's original doubts to potentially fatal levels.

If the PCs are simply evasive, Lufthanser will probably jump to the conclusion that they're either dupes or agents of Chaos. However, he won't do anything about it for now, on the grounds that he knows where they are for at least one more night, he has a search party to organize, and if he keeps an eye on them they may lead him to more dangerous heretics.

Watching The Watchmen

After a while Lufthanser will excuse himself, and go to join a man who has just come in. This is Kurt Rorschach, captain of the local watch. Their discussion grows slowly in volume, and PCs will be able to overhear enough to get the gist: Rorschach is refusing outright to lead his men into the swamp on a Fimir hunt. After a while Lufthanser and Balthazar leave, with relatively good grace, and he comes over to talk with the PCs.

Rorschach is a competent military man, with an easy-going manner which belies the steel beneath. He orders drinks for the party, and questions them closely about their skirmish with the Fimir. He is perturbed that the creatures would attack anyone during the daytime, which is atypical, and asks if anyone has any idea why they would behave so uncharacteristically. Anyone stupid enough to tell him deserves all they get.

If the party have the sense to ask him about Lufthanser, Rorschach will be happy to gossip. He'll confirm that the witch-hunter has been in the district for some time, following up rumours about increased Fimir activity, which he seems to think is connected in some way to the forthcoming eclipse. Rorschach likes and respects Lufthanser, and is willing to trust his judgement, but not so far as to commit his men to an expedition into the swamp: their job is to guard the village and he intends to stick to this. Balthazar he can't make out at all. Before he leaves, Rorschach mentions he is sufficiently worried by the incident that afternoon to double the guard on the walls.

Lilith is far less informed about the details of Lufthanser's business, but she knows he punishes bad people, which she's in favour of, and she thinks he's quite handsome. According to her, Balthazar is terribly clever, shouts a lot but doesn't really mean it, and is quite sweet beneath his irascible exterior. She's been into the makeshift laboratory he's set up in the stables, delivering his meals when he's too busy to break off work, but she doesn't understand anything she's seen in there.

Tooth Or Consequences

Later that evening Lufthanser will approach the PCs, asking them to allow Balthazar to examine the Demon's Tooth. (Alternatively, if they have not revealed its existence to him, at Lufthanser's request Balthazar will have examined them from a distance using a combination of *Magical Awareness* and *Magical Sense*, and will have picked up the strong magic and taint of Chaos that the Tooth bears.) What happens next depends on their response, and the impression they've already made on him.

Kurt Rorschach

Watch Captain

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	52	45	4	4	10	45	2	40	38	42	36	40	35

Skills: Animal Care, Disarm, Dodge Blow, Ride, Secret Language (Battle Tongue), Street Fighting, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Stun, Specialist Weapons (Crossbow; Pole-arms).

Trappings: Crossbow, Halberd, Mail Armour.



Rorschach is a 37-year-old ex-soldier who arrived in Grimpengratz eight years ago, on his way from Marienburg to nowhere in particular, and never left. The villagers needed someone to organize the guards, and he needed a job. Since then, his leadership and military expertise has kept the village safe from Fimir incursions, and he takes a quiet pride in the quality of his troops.

Village Guards/Watchmen

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	45	35	3	3	9	35	1	35	30	30	30	30	30

Skills: Strike to Stun, Specialist weapon: Pole-arms.

Possessions: Club, Halberd, Leather Jack.

If they refuse, and he is already suspicious of them, things turn ugly. Lufthanser will suddenly accuse them of witchcraft, in the middle of the taproom, which by now is quite crowded. The locals, already fairly paranoid, will rally behind the witch-hunter with little urging. Just to make things really interesting, Balthazar will burst into the room at this point, with Rorschach and a group of his Watchmen, ready to back up the lynch mob.

If the party attempts to fight, they will be overpowered and disarmed quite easily; moreover, if any locals are killed or seriously injured in the brawl, it will take all of Lufthanser's skill at demagoguery to prevent the PCs from being strung up on the spot. At his insistence, however, they will be locked in the cellar, so that the matter can be 'investigated properly' in the morning. As they're led away, Balthazar will take the Tooth.

If Lufthanser is well disposed to the party and they refuse his request, he will respect their decision, but express regret. Later that night, Balthazar will sneak into the room of the PC carrying the Tooth, and attempt to take it. If he can get close enough he'll cast a *Sleep* spell on the PC, and anyone else he has to pass to get to them, to ensure that he gets away easily. Any of the party in earshot may be roused in time if they pass a *Listen* test before he has a chance to enchant them.

If caught, Balthazar will stand on his dignity, insisting (truthfully) that he only intended to borrow the Tooth, and would have returned it. The chance to examine so powerful an artefact, and perhaps find a new weapon to use against Chaos, is just too great to throw aside lightly. He'll all but accuse the party of being Chaotics themselves, for obstructing his great work. And so on. At length. Loudly. If the party don't agree to let him



examine the Tooth, thus shutting him up, the noise will eventually wake Lufthanser (along with everyone else in the inn) who will calm him down and lead him away to bed.

If the party agree to the Tooth being examined, they'll rise in Lufthanser's estimation. If he likes and trusts them already he'll consider them allies in his battle against Chaos and help them all he can. The downside of this is that if he ever has cause to believe that he was mistaken, or that his trust has been betrayed, he will become an implacable enemy. If he was suspicious or distrustful of the party before, he'll take their co-operation as evidence of good faith, and assume that, at worst, they're only dupes or pawns of Chaos, rather than active agents.

Balthazar has set up a makeshift laboratory in the stables, and will examine the Tooth there. He won't be able to tell very much from it, but will confirm that it has a powerful aura which some demonologists and creatures of Chaos may be able to sense when close to it.

The Nightcomers

Later that night, the Fimir attack the village in force, in an attempt to seize the Tooth. The exact number of them is unimportant, unless you're playing out the engagement on the tabletop using the *Warhammer Fantasy Battle* system; in which case use the appropriate army lists to determine the forces on both sides. From the PCs' point of view the battle will simply consist of a lot of running and shouting, with Fimir warriors and Dirach leaping out of the shadows at them.

If they've been arrested, the first thing they become aware of is a lot of noise outside, then heavy footsteps, shouting and

screaming, and the clash of arms in the taproom upstairs. Then the door bursts off its hinges, and a Fimir charges into the cellar. This may be somewhat problematic for unarmed prisoners, but generous GMs can assume that the creature is so battle-crazed that it will take a few seconds to smash up some unfortunate wooden bench, giving the PCs time to get away behind it – or even that it will fall for the old chamber-pot-to-the-head-from-behind tactic. Shearl are not noted for their intelligence.

If the party can disable or avoid the Fimir, and get upstairs to the inn proper, they will find themselves in the middle of a pitched battle. Whether or not their equipment is still where they left it depends on how mean the GM is feeling, but in any case they won't have too much trouble picking up weapons from some of the casualties.

If they're asleep in their rooms, and Balthazar has 'borrowed' the Tooth without their knowledge, things go much the same way; they're woken by the commotion, and just have time to grab their kit before the battle is upon them. At this point they may well discover the Tooth is missing. Guessing where it has gone should not be too difficult, given Balthazar's demonstrated attitudes. If they are too slow, they will have to deal with a Fimir Dirach, sniffing its way towards its goal.

In either case, their priority is clear; recover the Tooth from Balthazar's makeshift laboratory, and get away from Grimpengratz and the Fimir as fast as they can. If they still have the Tooth, things are a little easier, but they still have to fight their way out of town. Unfortunately, every Dirach in the raiding party will be looking for them, and each one can recognize the power of the Tooth when within a few feet of it.

The overriding impression the PCs should have is one of terror, uncertainty and mortal danger. Keep the descriptions short and terse, and throw additional problems at them as they go; a hard-pressed group of watchmen in need of assistance; an abducted townswoman, possibly Lilith, to be rescued; that sort of thing. Remember that this can work both ways; if the party gets into too much trouble on the way out, have the watchmen or the witch-hunters come to their rescue instead. The important thing is to keep them off-balance.

Astute PCs may realize that the Fimir will follow them if they leave town, and will use that information to convince Lufthanser to let them draw the creatures away. This strategy will only work, of course, if they can get a decent head start. If the party thinks of this on their own, and they then leave the battle without consulting anyone, they may face accusations of cowardice, Chaos-worship or horse-theft later on.

Whether or not the PCs flee the battle, being harassed by the Fimir until daylight, the townsfolk eventually gain the upper hand. Living on the edge of the swamp, they know their enemy's vulnerability to bright lights, so carry torches and light fires to disorientate them. Balthazar has several more flares, and the two witch-hunters will pitch into the battle against the creatures with great enthusiasm.

Aftermath

The PCs can end this chapter of the adventure in one of two ways; heroes, or on the run. If they stood and fought in the final battle, and avoided any serious conflict with Lufthanser, they have gained two potentially useful allies; but the witch-hunter's fanaticism makes him an unreliable friend. If they fled, especially after having been accused of witchcraft, they have acquired some dangerous enemies – not to mention a reputation for cowardice, which may also come back to haunt them.





Chapter 4:

Back to the Egg

Whether fleeing for their lives or walking with heads held high as heroes, the PCs have emerged from the swamps into something more like normal country. In fact, despite the fact that they are passing through moderately dense woodland, there are signs of a farming community in the area; a few of the trees have been cut back, the road shows signs of occasional maintenance, and sharp ears may catch the distant sound of dogs barking. On the other hand, there is something not quite right about this woodland; the trees are, without exception, twisted and almost deformed, and there is a strange absence of bird-song. Sensitive souls may find it all rather worrying.

At last, the adventurers will finally discover the mysterious Egg – living, in complete (if not entirely blissful) ignorance of her chaotic destiny, with her foster parents, in a small farm shunned by Wastelanders and besieged by both Skaven and other, stranger mutants. The Egg's foster-parents realize that the Egg has a destiny to fulfil, and are willing to hand her over to the adventurers. However, the Egg herself has other ideas, and her strange blessings make it difficult to take her away against her will.

Siege Mentality

The adventurers have left Grimpengratz, possibly pursued by the witch-hunters and the mob, or by Fimir. The compass-bearing, and the Tooth (if they have activated it lately) will lead them onwards. They travel all day without coming to a village or other sign of habitation; and all the next day as well. After their recent encounters, they are probably tired, depressed, injured and generally not enjoying themselves very much. As GM, you should do your best to increase this feeling: the land around them is bleak moorland with the occasional bog; it's raining; and winter is making its presence felt with cold winds and frosts.

They should also be allowed to feel increasingly paranoid on this leg of the journey; let them get the impression that they are being followed. (This may be true; the Brotherhood knows of them, and has a number of agents and allies out looking.) It is coming towards evening of the third day when the adventurers see signs of habitation ahead of them.

The Village

As the PCs approach, this looks much like any other small farming community they have encountered along the way: a cluster of small huts, centred around piece of common ground on which a few bedraggled sheep and thin cows try to graze. A character might guess the population to be between eighty and a hundred.

This is the village where the Wastelanders who fled from the Gunzenhausers' farm (p.50) have ended up; it is far enough away from the hill that there is some chance of growing crops and giving birth to children who are not mutants. The land here is poor, and the village is so remote and so recently founded

that it has no name: the locals only refer to it as 'the village'. The inhabitants of this area are occasionally raided by the pig-creatures from the farm (see p.52).

The villagers, under the leadership of Frederiech, have organized some defences to provide some basic protection from the mutant pigs. To this end, they have set up the following protections around the area:

1: **Traps.** The inhabitants have surrounded the village with a number of primitive pit traps: six feet deep and covered with branches and leaves. If characters stay on the track they will be safe enough, but anyone wandering off and failing both a Dex and an *Observation* roll will stumble into one.

2: **Dogs.** The villagers have a number of semi-trained guard dogs, which wander the area and attack anyone whose scent they do not recognize, making a lot of barking in the process, which will alert the village to the intruders. Roll 1D6: on a 1-3 a frenzied barking starts as they draw close to the village; on 4-5 the barking is accompanied by 1D3 dogs trying to attack the party; on a 6 the militia are drawn by the barking, and 1D3 dogs attack them by mistake. Someone with *Animal Control* skill ought to be able to quieten the dogs.

Guard Dogs

HP	MP	SP	ST	AG	IN	DE	LU	CL	VP	FE			
6	41	0	3	3	7	30	1	-	14	43	43	47	-

3: **Militia.** Three hunters (Frederiech, Hans and Kurt – see next page) are patrolling the land around the village. There is only a small chance (5% per party member) that the adventurers will encounter them; if they are using *Concealment – Rural* or *Silent Movement*, this becomes zero. However, if they make any undue noise – setting the dogs off or falling down a pit, for example – the hunters will come after them.

If the adventurers are discovered, it will be immediately obvious to Hans that they are travellers lost in the Wasteland, and equally obvious to Kurt that they are Chaos agents. Both of them will do what Frederiech tells them, and he will order them to attack the adventurers if they show any resistance or hostility. Assuming that they do not resist the patrol, they will be asked to go to the shrine – the largest building in the village, it doubles as a meeting-hall – and explain their presence to the elders.

Village Militia

Frederiech

Male Human Hunter, age 32

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Id	Int	Cl	WP	Rel
5	35	55	4	3	7	40	1	30	30	30	30	40	30

Skills: Drive Cart, Ride House, Concealment Rural, Follow Trail, Game Hunting, Secret Language (Ranger), Secret Sign (Woodsman), Silent Move Rural.

Trappings: Sword.

The 'leader' of the patrol is Frederiech, who has lived in the village ever since he led the mob to the Gunzenhauser farm, and he lost his right arm. He is in charge of the defences. Many of the inhabitants think that he is a little over-zealous, and a few even doubt the existence of the swine creatures. He can become very angry, even violent, if these doubts are ever voiced in his presence. More than anything, he would like to raise another posse and make another, decisive attack on the evil farm – but the village leaders will not consider this.

His two sidekicks on this patrol are:

Hans

Male Human Hunter, age 40

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Id	Int	Cl	WP	Rel
5	29	51	2	2	5	32	1	32	25	34	30	8	32

Skills: Concealment Rural, Follow Trail, Game Hunting, Secret Language (Ranger), Secret Sign (Woodsman), Silent Move Rural, Animal Control.

Trappings: Sword, Crossbow.

A middle-aged man, once reckoned to be the best huntsman in the area, but far more used to tracking wild boar than 'swine things' or other monsters. He treats Frederiech with gentle, avuncular humour.

Kurt

Male Human Hunter, age 19

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Id	Int	Cl	WP	Rel
5	24	30	4	4	5	35	1	26	28	37	34	39	36

Skills: Concealment Rural, Follow Trail, Game Hunting, Secret Language (Ranger), Secret Sign (Woodsman), Silent Move Rural, Animal Control.

Trappings: Sword, Crossbow.

Kurt is a young man who would dearly like to slay a Chaos Beast, or almost anything else that moves. He is far more interested in impressing Hans than in protecting the village.

Kurt is keen to make the elders think that they captured the adventurers, and that the adventurers are, therefore, dreadful agents of Chaos. If they were doing anything suspicious (talking to the Tooth, being chased by witch-hunters, fighting the dogs, etc.) then this will be used against them. However Wilhelm Dore, the village headman, a still sprightly greybeard whose wife Margi hovers around him like a concerned parent, is a tolerant and sensible individual. Unless positive evidence of wrong-

doing can be brought against the adventurers, he will accept Hans's version: that they are simply a group of travellers. Once this is established, the PCs will be allowed to stay in the village for as long as they want to; Wilhelm will actively try to stop them from leaving – ostensibly because to journey further towards the hill would be to court death and damnation. In reality, he wants to keep the adventurers in the village because the presence of a group of warriors would make it much more secure against the forces of Chaos.

'You are very fortunate that you came here in time,' he will say. 'Had you been outside after dark ...' He shakes his head.

The locals will try to dissuade the adventurers from travelling onwards, and especially to convince them not to do so at night. The village has no tavern but if the party ask for somewhere to stay they will be offered the shrine (the only stone building in the village); and Wilhelm will invite them to sup with him, along with Frederiech. Give the PCs an hour to wander the village and experience its squalor and deprivation for themselves. They can talk to the locals but most of the villagers will be tongue-tied by the presence of strangers, and few have anything useful to say anyway. After an hour or so an urchin will run up to them and bids them to the headman's table.

Simple Men

The headman's hut is a crude, thatched affair with barely enough room for everyone to sit down, but Wilhelm's wife has prepared a thick stew from mutton, pearl barley and vegetables, and Frederiech opens one of the skins of elderflower wine he has been fermenting. The atmosphere is friendly but the conversation has a businesslike tone. Both Wilhelm and Frederiech want to know what the PCs are doing here, and if they can be persuaded to stay. Their questions will be guarded and they make no demands, but they will both play up the village's need for assistance against the things on the hill.

If he discovers that they are warriors, Frederiech will try to get the characters to become involved in the defence of the community. Failing that, he suggests that they spend a few days with them and teach the villagers how to defend themselves better against the creatures. Although the adventurers may be tempted to do this, their deadline for getting to the city should be uppermost in their minds – if they do waste time here, make them suffer for it later.

If the adventurers mention their destination, it will soon become obvious that their path takes them straight through the farm which is the focus of such horror. Wilhelm will sigh and try to persuade them to turn aside, or to stay on in the village for a while, but is interrupted by Frederiech, who claims that they must be sent from Taal as saviours. The PCs should be curious about the source of such fear. Frederiech drains his mug and pushes back his stool.

'We reckon it started seven years back,' he says, 'on the night the thing fell from the Moon. Lit up the sky, it did, and landed to the south-west, the way you're going. Some of us looked for it but there was no sign of nothing at all. It was like the earth had swallowed it up, and it had tainted the earth, made it go bad. The spring after, the lambs – well, I don't like to think about the lambs. Bad, they were. And the crops were bad too: withered, blighted, covered with fungus and crawling with insects. And the year after that, things were worse.

'That winter, things that looked like pigs started to raid the barns, and then the houses. They'd take anything – dogs, cows, horses, even people. They took Ingrid too.' Frederiech pauses,



and pours himself some more wine. The PCs can ask a few questions at this point, answered mostly by Wilhelm. Nobody will say who Ingrid was; they seem almost embarrassed by the question, and Margi leaves the hut. After a couple of queries, Frederiech holds up his hand, and continues.

'It took us a while but we worked out that, whatever was happening, it seemed like the Gunzenhausers' Farm was the centre of it all. Things were baddest round that way, and nobody had seen Werther and Eva for months. It must have been about two years after things started going bad, Kundri – he's the priest, who lived in the forest in those days – he visited the farm. No one knows exactly what happened to him there, and he isn't saying, but he went to one of the villages for protection from the "terrible things" on the farm, and never went to his shrine in the forest.

A short time after he came back, I led a band of strong, brave people, the best from the local villages, up to the hill. We were armed with swords, axes, pitchforks, torches – whatever we could find. About forty of us, all told. And ... as we passed the ... the gate of the farm, we ...' He stops. Wilhelm picks up the story.

'They were greeted by a small girl, blonde, about three years old, who came out to meet them and asked politely what they wanted. "To burn this cursed place to the ground," Frederiech answered, raising his sword.

Although the day had been clear, the sky went instantly dark and there was a terrible clap of thunder. The tree that Frederiech was standing under was struck by lightning; it leaped from the tree to his sword, and his arm – well, you can see his arm. The others took fright, and fled.

Kundri

Male Human Druidic Priest (level 1), age 62

M	WS	BS	S	T	V	IK	A	De	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
3	47	42	4	4	6	48	1	28	39	40	44	40	31

Skills: Ambidextrous, Luck, Sixth Sense, Excellent Vision, Animal Care, Dowsing, Follow Trail, Identify Plants, Secret Sign (Druid), Arcane Language (Druidic), Cast Spells (Druid) level 1, Heal Wounds.

Spells: Walk on Water, Animal Mastery, Cure Poison
Magic Points: 13



Kundri is a priest of the Old Religion – a worshipper and follower of the Earth Mother. He is also one of a few druids who makes shrines and invocations to Muuthauwg, and thus about the only person who the PCs are likely to meet who knows something about the Quiet Herald. He is an elderly man, and apt to be forgetful: he will tend to drift from one subject to another, and forget what time of his life he is in. He has an initiate, to whom he is teaching the ways of the Old Religion. Since his encounter on the hill, his mind has not been as good as it was, and he has not been as much use to Stefan as he would have liked to be.

'Since that day, the Gunzenhauser farm and the area round it has been shunned by all who know it. The villages closest to the hill are abandoned: we moved back to here, where the crops will still grow. The pig-things still raid us, and sometimes we hear things in the night, but this is our land and we won't leave it. But there are terrible things on Gunzenhauser Hill. Listen to what we've told you: don't go near the place.'

Rise And Shrine

There is one other person here who may be of use to the party: Kundri. Frederiech has already mentioned him, but if the PCs fail to take the hint that the old man might know something, they are liable to meet him next morning, as he and his student Stefan come to the shrine to say their dawn blessings.

The villagers regard Kundri as a priest, but he is in fact a druid. However, after his experiences on the hill he is happy to stay within the village and tend to the spiritual needs of the locals. The shrine was built at his suggestion and is less than five years old: it is dedicated to Taal, although anyone with *Theology* can make an Int test to realize that there are overtones of the Old Faith in its decoration and on its simple stone altar. The building can hold about a hundred people, and could be used as a last-ditch defence if the village was overrun.

Kundri will, if coaxed, describe to the adventurers how he somehow felt that there was a great evil on the hill – something that was going to be used against the Earth Mother – and went to investigate it. He briefly saw Werther and Eva in their mutated forms, and the ensuing fear has seriously injured his mind. He is convinced that Werther and Eva are dead, and there is a child in the hill being held captive by some sort of demon. He will refer to this only in a very oblique fashion. 'The child spoke softly to me,' he says. 'But she is held by terrible things – creatures of Chaos – mutants – foul things. The poor child.'

If anyone mentions Muuthauwg to him or in his presence, his eyes will light up, as if at the mention of an old friend. 'I know of the piper. They say he is a friend of the Earth Mother, and does her bidding. No one knows him, of course, but some of us – I mean, the druids – make shrines to him just the same,' and then, more grimly, 'But if he is walking abroad, then things are as bad as they can possibly be.'

Stefan

Male Human Herdsman, age 17

M	WS	BS	S	T	V	IK	A	De	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
5	33	50	5	6	7	13	1	27	39	29	29	29	30

Skills: Prepare Poisons, Ride, Very Resilient, Animal Care, Charm Animal, Musician, Herb Lore.

Stefan still wants, more than anything else, to be a druid like Kundri. Even though the old man is no longer any use as a teacher, Stefan remains true to him and will take care of him until he dies. The two of them live in a small hut on the outskirts of the village.

Stefan has woodsman/ranger skills that might be useful to the adventurers; Kundri is a healer. Kundri may be prepared to 'lend' Stefan to the adventurers if they really need him, e.g. to find a way through the unnatural forest on the hill.

Kundri will also be able to tell them who Ingrid was: she was the daughter of Wilhelm and Margi, and Frederiech's sweetheart. Although not betrothed, it was generally known that they would be married eventually. Her disappearance kindled a terrible flame in Frederiech's heart, and the loss of his arm quenched it more totally than a bucket will drown an ember. For all his attitude, Frederiech is a man so broken that he can never be mended.

The Farm

What actually happened is this: seven years ago, the being who is destined to be Zahnarzt's mortal vessel (p.54 & 155) fell to earth in a meteor made of pure Warpstone. Eva and Werther Gunzenhauser, a childless couple who eked out a poor living on a small farm at the edge of the forest, thought that this was the answer to their prayers. They adopted the little girl and brought her up as their own. Realizing that a large lump of luminous rock would be noticed by their neighbours, and wanting to avoid difficult questions about the girl's origins, they hid the meteor in the cellar of their cottage.

The proximity of this 'Eggshell' (as they call it) means that for the past seven years Werther and Eva have been slowly but surely turning into Chaos Mutants. The little girl is totally unaffected by the Warpstone's malignant power. Since her parents are practically the only human beings she has ever met, and certainly the only people who have ever been kind to her, she

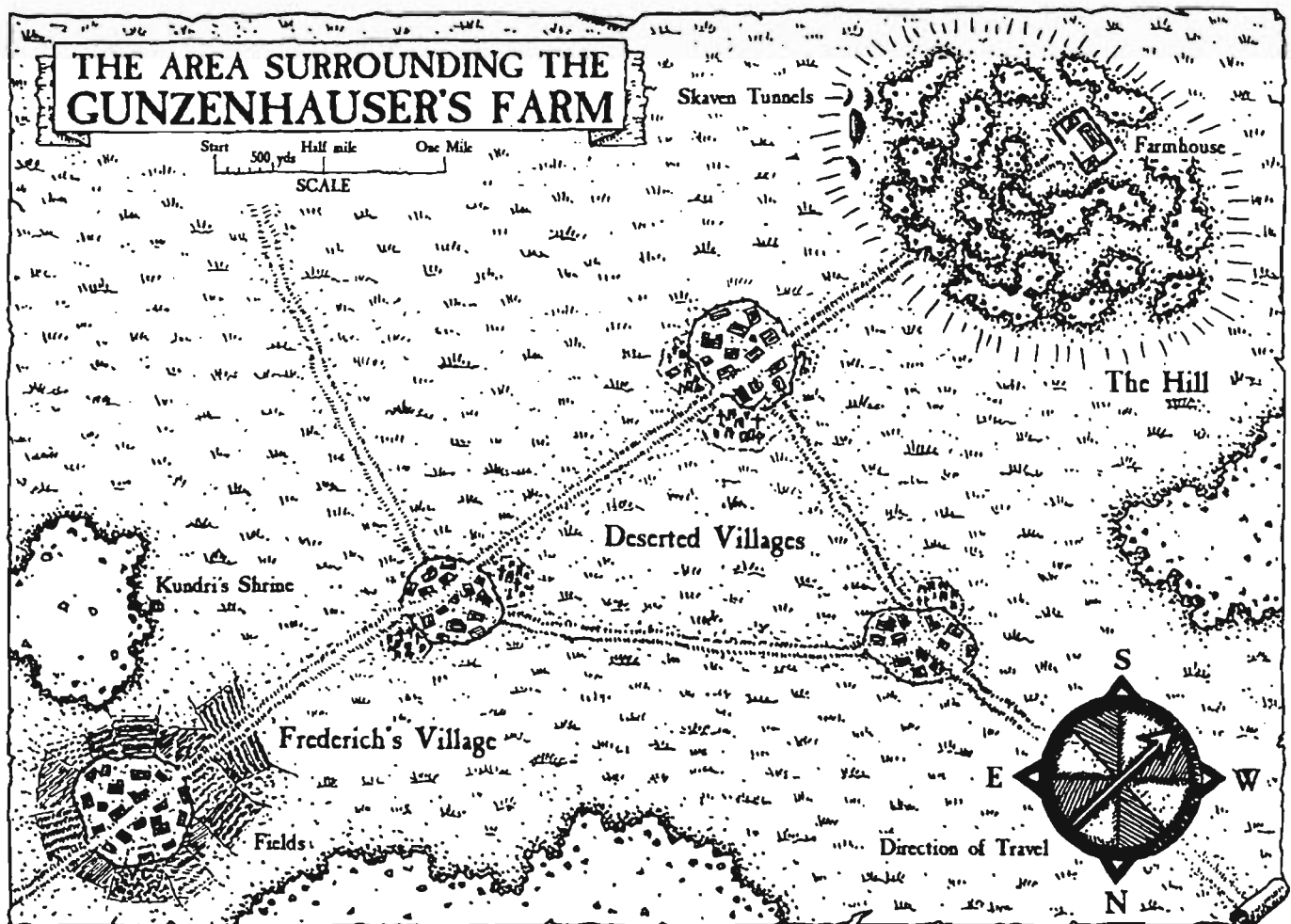
regards their hideous forms as perfectly normal: in fact, she is a little frightened of people with ordinary faces. She is, however, absolutely terrified of what she calls 'the thing in the cellar' – the Warpstone in which she was originally found.

The Effect of the Warpstone

The huge lump of pure Chaos in the Gunzenhauser's cellar affects both the crops and the animals on their farm. The trees and vegetation have started to grow in strange, unnatural ways, so that the entire hill is covered by dense, twisted forest. Most of their livestock died; some of it mutated. The influence of Chaos spread out to the farms around the hill: it affected them less, but, since the meteor fell, there have been a succession of bad harvests, and a disturbing number of children were born with mutations. (Some of these will have found their way into Sister Astrid's colony in Chapter 6.) For the last few years the mutant farm animals from the Gunzenhausers' farm have been raiding the nearby villages for food, driving back the local population.

The Hill

Eventually, the adventurers are bound to leave the village and travel on to the hill which everybody appears to be so frightened of. They will pass through at least two deserted communities along the way: a few of the houses have fallen down but





most are still standing. Both communities have large graveyards, and bones are strewn about in them, bleached white and chewed. Fields on the way to the hill are overgrown, their crops flattened and rotted by autumn rains. There is a distinct lack of animal life: no birdsong; no rustling in the bushes.

Goffman's compass-bearing and the Tooth's reactions will both lead directly to the hill; in fact, as near as the adventurers can estimate, their path will take them through the gate and directly through the farm house. If the Tooth is activated, observant PCs may, at the GM's option, decide that it is reacting with particular strength.

The hill does not look too foreboding as the adventurers approach it. It rises a hundred feet above the surrounding area and is overgrown with strange trees, meaning that progress will be relatively slow as they climb it, but it does look not particularly steep or treacherous. Any buildings are hidden by the trees. If not for the dreadful warnings of Frederiech and Kundri, and the deserted villages around it, they might be tempted to think that there was nothing to worry about.

At this point the GM should mention to the character who had the Zahnarzt-inspired dream (see p.39) that they are having a strange sense of *déjà vu* – but don't tell them why. The sense will get stronger as they near the cottage at the top of the hill.

The Skaven Tunnel

If the adventurers spend time searching or examining the base of the hill, they will notice that there have been recent excavations – a tunnel has been dug into it, starting roughly half a mile from the summit. Whoever has been tunnelling has not met with a great deal of success. There are rough struts here and there, and places where the entire thing has fallen down and been started again, with evidence that this has happened several times. Anyone with *Follow Trail* can see tracks in the bare earth: they look like the footprints of giant rats, and if the PC can make a successful roll against *Int*, they can be followed to the second, hidden tunnel (see below).

The tunnel has been created by a group of Skaven (WFRP p.226): such a large concentration of Warpstone in one place was bound, sooner or later, to be sniffed out by the rat-creatures. Although the network of Skaven tunnels which crisscrosses the Old World has few spurs in the Wasteland, a scout party of the creatures has come up from the Marienburg sewers, following the magical 'smell' of Warpstone to Gunzenhauser Hill.

The Skavens' attempts to get their paws on the Warpstone have not met with unalloyed success. Their first attempt – a frontal assault on the farmhouse – was offset by the Egg's powers of bringing disaster on those who threaten it, and the rest of the warband was forced to retreat by an attack in the rear from the pig-things. Two more attempts to get into the cottage met with similar ill fortune, The Skaven have realized that the place is under some sort of curse, and have spent the last several weeks working on an alternative approach; digging a tunnel directly into the cellar, under the farmhouse. The night before the PCs arrived they finally broke through and found the Warpstone in the cellar; they have left it there and are sleeping in a second tunnel nearby, waiting for nightfall before they grab their prize and leave.

If the PCs search the area then anyone who makes an *Observe* roll at -25% (-15% for Rangers; no modifier for anyone with *Excellent Vision*) will spot a second tunnel, concealed

Ten Skaven

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Rel
5	33	25	3	3	7	40	1	24	24	24	18	29	14

Trappings: 50% long knife; 50% knife on long pole; 30% shield (1 AP); 20% enough armour for 1 AP on body and arms

under a wooden framework covered with sods of turf, which probably doubles as a door. This tunnel is only thirty feet deep, and is where the Skaven are waiting for nightfall. Anyone moving the door will wake the two guards just inside, who will leap to the attack. The other eight Skaven will be roused by the noise, and will join in at the rate of three each round: as soon as every member of the party is engaged in combat, the remaining Skaven will try to get to the main tunnel, and then make a run for it with the Warpstone.

The smaller tunnel smells of rat-droppings, and the taint of Chaos will make PCs' flesh crawl. At the small chamber at the far end, among the straw and leaves the rodents have used as bedding, are 6 Guilders and 3 GCs.

If the PCs investigate the main tunnel it is several hundred yards long, and they have to crouch to get through parts of it. At the far end, it emerges into a very different chamber: stone-lined and with a high ceiling. This is the cellar under the farmhouse. It is a bare room, with only a few sacks of grain and empty barrels in it, and PCs will also notice a ladder going up to a trapdoor in the ceiling (which leads to the cottage itself). In the middle of the room, glowing slightly, is a round lump of Warpstone about as large as a full-grown sheep. Anyone examining it will see that there is a hairline crack running around it; the top can be lifted off and the interior is hollow, shaped a little like a curled-up, sleeping child. The whole mass can be lifted by two people – though why they'd want to is a mystery.

Any noise at all will disturb the inhabitants of the house, and after a minute the trapdoor will open and Werther will look down to see what is going on. His immediate reaction will be surprise, and if the PCs appear hostile (as well they may) he will bolt the trapdoor shut and put heavy weights over it, to protect his house. If the adventurers show the slightest hostility to Werther – trying to smash the trapdoor open, for example – then the Egg's bad luck power (p.54) will start to affect them: swords will break at inappropriate moments; magicians will fumble spells, and so on.

If the PCs watch the area outside the tunnels then as darkness falls a group of ten Skaven will appear from their concealed burrow, disappear into the main tunnel and reappear a few minutes later, carrying the huge lump of Warpstone. Again, referees may wish to encourage the adventurers to think that this glowing rock must be the Egg that they are searching for. If the adventurers do not attack the Skaven and try to take the Eggshell, then the Skaven will head into the Wasteland to the east; about twenty miles away is the entrance to a Skaven tunnel which will take them back to Marienburg. If the PCs have stayed for long in the farmhouse then they may encounter the Skaven as they are leaving.

If the PCs ignore the tunnels altogether then the Skaven will take the Warpstone and return to Marienburg unhindered.

If the PCs succeed in taking the Eggshell from the Skaven, they may decide that *this* is the 'Egg' and their quest is completed, and head back to Marienburg without going near the

farm. Of course, activating the Tooth would show them their mistake – but if they have taken Goffman's warning to heart, and especially if they have already had to activate it several times, they may not wish to risk the test. In this case, when the Eclipse comes, Zahnarzt will possess the Egg's body in her own cottage, slay her parents and ravage Frederiech's village before beginning his plans to rule the old world. The PCs will be in Marienburg with a conspicuous and dangerous lump of rock, and will be completely unable to do anything about it. While some GMs may find this amusing, it is not a recommended way of ending the scenario: a small *deus ex machina* is called for. The following suggestions are offered:

1: Agents of the Brotherhood who have been tracking our heroes decide that it is time to make their move. The PCs are ambushed by the assassins who will demand that they hand 'him'

or 'her' over. Hand who over? 'Why, the child! The person you have come all this way to take from us! Don't try to pull the wool over our eyes, you sanctimonious filth. Zahnarzt will come again! Hail Khorne!'

2: One or more PCs might just become suspicious – or at least, decide that a double-check is essential, despite Goffman's advice. The GM should not discourage them too much from activating the Tooth – although it might be fun to suggest that they should be a mile or two from the farm when doing so, for safety.

3: If this fails, a less subtle approach may be called for. On their way back to the road, someone from Frederiech's village calls to them. Kundri has had a vision of momentous import, and must pass onto them what he has been told. It turns out that Muuthauwg has appeared to Kundri and told him that the 'precious Egg sits in the cottage' and that 'the fools upon the quest do not recognize her'.

Mutant Pigs

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	L	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
7	35	25	3	3	11	30	1	25	10	20	14	14	14

Weapons: 40% chance of Dagger; otherwise they use improvised clubs and sharpened sticks (Dam -1)

Most of the mutants created by the Warpstone on the farm have long since died. However, there are still a number of mutant pigs – the 'swine-things' of the villagers' stories.

Since they live in such close proximity to the Warpstone, the swine are continuing to mutate. The creatures that preyed

on the villages five years ago looked like giant wild boars with huge horns and razor-sharp teeth. Since then the creatures have changed even further: they walk erect, have mastered primitive tool use, and have acquired a savage, sub-human intelligence.

They have a dim 'race memory' of being farmed and slaughtered by humans, and take great pleasure in terrorizing the human population around 'their' farm. They would like to be able to destroy the Gunzenhauser farm itself, but the Egg's protection has – so far – made that impossible.





Approaching the Cottage

The adventurers may, on the other hand, ignore (or never find) the Skaven tunnel, and follow their compass- or Tooth-bearing exactly. This will lead them straight up the hill. Although it is quite overgrown, and the trees form strange, unnatural shapes, the going is not difficult and there is no danger of getting lost. At the top of the hill is an open area, in which stands a small farmhouse surrounded by a rough wooden fence. Both are falling down from ill-repair.

The hill is the home of a band of pig-men, mutated by the effects of the Warpstone in the farmhouse cellar. Unless the PCs take precautions, the pig-creatures will hear and see them coming, and will treat them as another attack on 'their' farm.

The pigs know the woodland and the farm well, and will use concealed movement to try to ambush the PCs: 2D4 of them will attack with *Surprise* as the PCs near the top of the hill. They will be content with driving the intruders off their land, but they are hungry too, and may pursue the party if it looks like one of the PCs is badly wounded enough to turn into lunch.

The characters should have had enough warning, by this stage, that the pig-creatures come from this farm, so they should be taking reasonable precautions. It is probably better to run this sequence as a tense chase through the wood, rather than a big fight scene.

If the PCs chose to be more cautious, and observe the forest before blundering into it, then each hour they watch will yield one of the following pieces of information.

- 1: The pigs who lurk on the hill are not the shambling animals that Frederiech described; they seem to be a species of porcine beastmen.
- 2: At any one time, several of these beastmen are watching the tumbled-down cottage on the top of the hill. However, they never make any moves to enter it or attack it.
- 3: In the middle of the afternoon, a small girl comes out of the cottage that stands at the top of the hill. The minute that any pig-creatures see her, they retreat, as if afraid. She giggles at this. She spends several minutes picking fruit and roots from the forest, and then returns to the house.

Any PC with *Herb Lore* or *Identify Plant* skills will know that the trees in this wood are extremely unusual, and even a skilled herbalist would be hard-pressed to tell which fruit are likely to be poisonous.

This is the child and the setting that one of the PCs saw in their recent dream, and they must make a *Fear* check or faint with terror. This will probably make them the object of their companions' ridicule – 'Faints at a little girl! Hah!' – which is mostly the point of it.

If the PCs want to take this opportunity to talk to the girl, or even try to carry her off, they can do so. However, if she feels threatened, she will do her best to run back to the farmhouse, leaving the adventurers to deal with any porcine attack.

The Unbelievable Truth

Whatever way the adventurers gain entrance to the farm-cottage, they will be greeted in a friendly manner by Eva and Werther. It doesn't matter whether they smash the door down, climb in through the windows, slide down the chimney, or use the Skaven's entrance tunnel – the inhabitants of the cottage

will be completely unfazed. They have had long enough to come to accept their daughter's powers.

Apart from the fact the Eva and Werther are hideously deformed mutants, the scene that confronts the PCs is surprisingly normal. Eva is cooking; Werther is mending a hole in the wall. The little girl has her back to them, and is playing with two simple dolls. On closer inspection, adventurers will notice that one of the dolls is a poor representation of a Skaven, and the little girl is pretending that the other one is killing it. (The dolls themselves are not of any significance, but the girl's hatred of the rats is.)

The PCs' initial reaction to the mutants is liable to be a bad one, involving weapons, spells, war-cries and other typical PC things. This will not work; remember what happened to the Skaven who tried it (p.51) and the characters are liable to find themselves outside the front door, their clothing torn and their weapons bent, without any real understanding of how they got there.

On the other hand, if the PCs make a friendly approach to the mutants, then Eva will look up from her fire, where she is cooking a stew consisting of the strange vegetables that the child was collecting in the forest. 'Come in! Come in and welcome! We've been expecting you; you're just in time for the little one's party.'

The PCs will be treated in a very friendly manner, Werther will show them to seats around the scrubbed kitchen table, and Eva will offer them a bowl of soup each. (The substance that she serves up will look and taste utterly disgusting, but is actually safe and nutritious.) Only the Egg will appear displeased with the guests, crying and hiding behind the chair. Eva will scold her, very gently: 'Now, now, dear, you mustn't be afraid of these people just because they look a little strange.'

If the PCs are in the cottage for more than an hour, or while the day is ending, the Skaven will arrive in the cellar and start to make off with the Egg-Shell. Observant PCs will hear scratching and movement from below. If this happens, Werther will go to open the trapdoor to see what is going on, but the Egg will look frightened. There is something in the cellar that she doesn't like: 'Daddy, you *mustn't* open that door.' Werther will look uncertain, but does as he is told. The PCs, however, can investigate: if they wait more than four minutes then the Skaven will have gone, and the Warpstone with them.

Assuming the PCs have calmed down and are being reasonably cordial to the mutants, Eva will explain that it is their daughter's seventh birthday today, and that was how they knew the party was coming. She will look sad, and say that she always knew that they would come; after all, when they took the girl in, they knew their time with her was limited, and she has brought them greater happiness than anything else on the good earth. 'You will look after the Egg won't you? She is very precious to us.'

The man will turn to the little girl, and scoop up the dolls. 'Egg.'

'Yes, father?'

'You must go with these nice people. Promise to be a good girl.'

'But I want to stay here with you.'

Although her foster-parents are quite willing to hand the girl over to the adventurers' care, the Egg herself is completely unwilling to move. It is up to the players what approach they use to try to persuade her to come. It will be hard work to persuade her to come by offering her treats, gifts or birthday presents, or by trying to befriend her or win her trust, but a

The Moon's Egg

Human child, age 7

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Der	Ld	Int	C	WP	Rel
3	16	14	2	1	4	22	1	22	22	22	22	22	22

Trappings: Homespun dress, Two dolls.

The 'Moon's Egg' is a little girl of seven, with classic good looks: blonde, blue eyes, a complexion that would sell soap, and a winning smile. The only thing that looks remotely unusual about her is her clothes: she and her parents have been isolated from rest of the world for so long that they have had to improvise dress from animal skin, home-spun and hand-woven cloth. A person seeing her for the first time might think that she was a savage or a feral child, although she is so clean and well-spoken that this is obviously not the case. She is also precocious, arrogant, demanding, self-willed and spoiled rotten.

If the Egg ever had a real name, it has been forgotten for almost a thousand years. Her doting adoptive parents have called her 'The Moon's Egg', 'The Egg', or simply 'Egg'.

The Egg occasionally experiences flashbacks to the time she spent on the Chaos Moon. She may occasionally mention, in conversation with someone who she trusts, that before she knew her foster parents, she had 'floated in the sky' in the company of 'a funny man with a flute'. She occasionally has nightmares about the day of the last eclipse, and will babble about the moon, glowing stones and sleeping for a long, long time.

Because she associates Warpstone with her long imprisonment, she is absolutely terrified of the substance, or of anything that resembles it. This may give adventurers the idea that she is in some way vulnerable to the stuff; in fact, she is completely immune to its effects – otherwise she would have turned into a mutant long ago. If she encounters Muuthauwg, she will burst into tears and try to run away, screaming, 'Don't want to go back in the sky!'

The Egg has three supernatural powers, as a result of the blessings that were given to her when she was a baby. None of these powers are 'spells' as such – they are simply the ways in which Chaotic forces defend their chosen one. The Egg does not consciously control these powers.

- ◆ She is immune to all diseases or poisons, even those caused by Warpstone or other Chaotic powers.
- ◆ Misfortune befalls anyone who tries to harm her.
- ◆ Good fortune and magical protection comes to people who are kind to her.

The power of misfortune is tied to the Egg's state of mind, and thus depends on the Egg's perceptions, not the character's intent. Someone who speaks softly to the Egg and gives her the odd cake will suffer no ill-effects, even if they are intending to lead her into a dragon's cave and leave her there. (The dragon would have problems, though.)

More information on the Egg's origins and history, and her significance within the plot, is on pp114-115.

GMs should use their imagination to decide how characters who mistreat the Egg suffer, using these guidelines:

Refuses Egg a treat: Apple falls on their head the next time they pass a tree.

Scolds Egg: Rotten apple falls on their head.

Yells at Egg: Heavy branch falls on head.

Smacks Egg or verbally threatens Egg's life: Tree falls on head.

Ties Egg up: Tree is struck by lightning.

Physically threatens Egg's life: Tree struck by lightning and bursts into flame, causing forest fire.

People trying to cause the Egg serious harm will also find that bad luck prevents them from doing so: someone trying to shoot the Egg with an arrow would find that their bow-string kept snapping, for example.

The third power – good fortune – works in roughly the same way as the Egg's personal protection, except it applies to anyone she likes. Once someone has befriended the Egg and won her trust – not easy to do – then that person will become extremely difficult to harm while in her presence. This, like her other power, works by good and bad luck rather than overt magical pyrotechnics. When the adventurers arrive, there will be a very strong 'circle of blessing' around her adoptive parents and their cottage, explaining why the mob of farmers, the Skaven or the pig-men have never got close enough to harm them.

Zahnarzt himself is, of course, immune from this power, and his Tooth retains some of this ability: it was supposed to remain in the hands of Zahnarzt's closest followers. This means that the Egg's powers will disappear for 2D6 minutes if anyone within 20 feet of her uses the chant to 'activate' the Tooth, and she becomes a normal, vulnerable child. The chant alone is not enough to do it.





patient character might carry it off. On the other hand, any threats, let alone physical manhandling, will bring down the Egg's wrath on the PCs – with all that entails! A simple approach (such as suggesting that her doll wants to go out and play, or 'daring' her to go and look at or walk through the forest) will probably work best.

Although Werther and Eva will be happy to answer questions about the Egg ('We don't get many visitors these days'), they know almost nothing about their adopted daughter's true origins or history. Eva will tell how one night a voice told her that the child she had always dreamed of would be sent to her; Werther will describe the falling of the Egg-Shell, and how he hid it in the cellar. They know the Egg is frightened of the Chaos Moon and of Skaven, but they do not understand her powers, and being nice to her has become such second-nature that they no longer think about it. More than that, they don't know anything. Werther will be more interested in talking about the fortunes of his farm – which, he will admit, have not been as good as they used to be.

If the PCs chant to activate the Tooth in order to make sure that what they have found really is the Moon's Egg, then the Tooth will leap up in the air, spin around, and do a little bow to the Egg until the PCs switch it off. At that moment, all the Egg's powers will fade away for several minutes (see p.115). This makes it much easier for the PCs to take her away from the cottage, but introduces a whole new set of problems.

The Egg and the Tooth

If the Tooth is activated near to the Egg, the child's powers will temporarily vanish (see above). The protection surrounding the house and the farm will suddenly not be there any more, giving the mutant pigs their chance to attack. If the adventurers are in the cottage when they activate the Tooth, then, about thirty seconds later, four pig-men will burst in, seeking vengeance for their years of pain. Other less brave mutants will skulk around the perimeter of the farm, waiting for anyone to come out.

If they have left the house, much the same will happen. The adventurers will see the pig-creatures attacking the house, bearing down to kill their oppressors. Unless a PC acts quickly to make sure she doesn't see it, the Egg will witness it too, and

will immediately demand that the adventurers go and rescue her parents.

If they do not, she will be obstinate and unco-operative for the entire journey back to Marienburg. As the PCs leave the area, they will be attacked by 1D4 + 1 pigs, and if the fight lasts more than five rounds, another 1D4 will be attracted by the noise. The pigs will not pursue them for more than a mile.

Aftermath

A number of questions may need answering at the end of this incident:

What happens to the farm, and to Werther and Eva?

With the Egg gone, her foster parents are no longer under her supernatural protection. If the PCs do not rescue them from the attack of the pig-creatures, they will certainly be killed, probably not long after the PCs leave. In fact, now that their little girl is gone, they will probably welcome death. They open the doors of the cottage, and hold one another's hands ('We had happiness at the very end of our lives – what more could we ask?')

If the PCs rescue them, then the Gunzenhausers will probably go and live in one of the deserted villages around their old home, since they are not going to be welcome in the human community. It is possible that they will end up as part of a Beastman community in the forest. Alternatively, they might eventually find their way to Sister Astrid's hospice (see chapter 6), if it still exists.

What happens to the Skaven, and to the Egg-Shell?

Unless the PCs physically stop them – either by wiping them out, or by taking the Egg-Shell themselves – the Skaven will take this huge piece of Warpstone back to their community in the sewers of Marienburg. Although it is a large piece of stone, it is not going to significantly change the balance of power in the city.

If the PCs have taken the Egg-Shell, then the Skaven will follow them all the way back to Marienburg, seeking the best moment to attack and take their treasure back. Note also that it will be hard to hide the Warpstone from the Egg, and she is

Werther Gunzenhauser

Male Human (Mutant) Farmer, age 56

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
3	25	34	2	4	7	27	1	34	38	21	29	24	33

Mutations: Tail, Scaly skin.

Formerly a prosperous pig-farmer, Werther's life was changed by the arrival of the Egg seven years ago. Like his wife, his happiness at the arrival of a daughter has caused him to ignore – purposefully blocking out – all the terrible things that have happened to him over the last few years. Subconsciously he knows that he has turned into a reptilian monster, that his farm has become overgrown, and that strange creatures have on more than one occasion tried to get into his home. But, 'for the sake of the little girl', he and his wife carry on as normal.

Werther had hoped to put enough money aside from his pig farm to retire, possibly to the big city. He still hopes to do so eventually, although he will admit that the farm is not paying as well as it used to.

Eva Gunzenhauser

Female Human (Mutant) Farmer, age 57

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
5	29	19	3	3	6	38	1	24	24	25	37	31	22

Mutations: Re-arranged face, Scorpion's tail.

Like her husband, Eva pretends not to have noticed the terrible things that are happening to her, and is making the most of having a daughter to look after. However, unlike Werther, she knows and accepts that on the girl's seventh birthday (today), she will have to give her up.

utterly terrified of it. And, of course, a cradle-sized lump of Warpstone is hard to hide or disguise, and will attract the attention of witch-hunters, wizards, Chaos cultists and knowledgeable legal authorities.

Why not kill the Egg?

It is quite likely that once they have identified the Egg, the PCs will guess precisely what Zahnarzt's use for her is. This may, in turn, lead them to contemplate a simple solution to the problem; killing the Egg. Actually, they will probably be considering this within a day or two anyway, but that's another matter.

The first thing to say about this idea is that it isn't that easy. The Egg's Chaotic blessing protects her against all forms of harm; daggers will stick in their sheaths, anyone trying to strangle her will suffer a brief epileptic fit (much to her amusement) or be struck by lightning in a sudden storm, and she gulps down poison with tiresome enthusiasm. However, the party *may* have discovered the one effective method for disabling this power; activating the Tooth. In that case, the GM may have to dissuade them from this course of action.

Fortunately, both Goffman and Muuthauwg have warned them specifically that destroying the Egg wouldn't accomplish anything, and would probably make things worse. If the adventurers think that they know better, they may need to be given a few more reasons to doubt. (If it keeps people happy, the GM can fake a hidden *Int* check for some member of the party, and say that they have just thought of something.) For example, they don't *know* that the Egg will be the vessel for Zahnarzt; it could well be that she is merely an ideal human sacrifice for some Chaotic ceremony – after all, sacrificing children is pretty Chaotic. Or perhaps Zahnarzt would desperately take control of her body now, ahead of the eclipse, if she died; he'd be much

reduced in power, but do the PCs really want to confront a half-power demon lord with a grudge against them?

If these arguments do no good and the party makes a serious attempt to kill the Egg, non-Evil characters will have to make *Terror* checks at the idea of killing an innocent child. And if the Egg does die now, then Zahnarzt is released from his vow, and can contemplate possessing *anyone*. Admittedly, there are few vessels able to contain him; but there *are* some Fimir seeking to resolve that problem (see the next chapter). Alternatively, Zahnarzt might be able to shift all those Chaotic blessings to the nearest living mortal – *the Egg's murderer*. This would have a certain vicious justice; suddenly, one of the PCs is invulnerable, the subject of quests by Law and Chaos, and faced with permanent demonic possession in just over a week's time.

Detours?

Less seriously, the party might feel that they should not take the Egg to a major population centre such as Marienburg. This is very responsible of them, but again they must be reminded of Goffman's warnings – and again, there is a clear problem in deciding what else to do. There are few places to go for advice on preventing major demonic incursions, and most of them are also pretty urbanized – and, in the end, if Zahnarzt does manifest, he's going to find some convenient city anyway, and start killing.

If the PCs have any old NPC friends who they think might be able to help, the GM should act to discourage them: there isn't time to find them before the eclipse. At the simplest, this can mean saying that so-and-so was last heard of taking ship for a new life in Lustria. Anyway, such characters tend to be remote, unreliable, and often difficult to deal with. Marienburg really looks like the only option.





Chapter 5:

The Place of Testing

The adventurers have the Egg; now they can begin their homeward trek. With witch-hunters, Fimir, swamps and broken dams behind them, they should decide to take a different route back to Marienburg. Good roads are faster than simple straight lines. At first, this seems like a very safe plan – even if the more alert of the party can't shake off the sense of being followed. The countryside they cross seems pleasant – but only by contrast with what has come before. For example, the first village they come to doesn't have walls, or paranoid guards. On the other hand, it doesn't as many people as it perhaps should, either.

The party has already run afoul of the Fimir sent by the Meargh Rakka in Chapter 3. Her plan to summon and bind Zahnarzt into one of her warriors would be greatly facilitated by possession of the Demon's Tooth, and this is why she dispatched a war party to attack them. She still intends to attempt the ritual, although she realizes it will be much more difficult than she had hoped. The arrival of the party in her territory is a stroke of luck beyond all expectation. When the characters arrive, demon-possessed Fimir will be rampaging around the swamp, while Rakka waits at the Place of Testing. But first, the party must visit the decaying village of Halsdorph.

The Journey Home

If the players try to pull any 'So we hurry back to Marienburg, and go straight to Goffman's house' tricks, don't let them: the return journey will be even more fraught than the outward trip, as plot-threads set in motion in the first half become intertwined and thoroughly tangled.

While the outward trip was designed to irritate the PCs and give them a sense of something being wrong, the GM should use the return trip to instil a feeling of impending doom, claustrophobia and even fear among the party: something dark is closing in on them. You can emphasize this subtly by using the world around the PCs to reinforce the right emotions: it is late in the year; the leaves have fallen and the bare branches of the trees are silhouetted against a bleak, flat horizon. The days are short and growing shorter; the nights are longer and colder. Frosts cover the ground, and the sky is filled with the dark grey of snow-clouds which hide the sun.

A cold wind blows almost constantly from the north: not only is this against the direction the PCs are travelling, so they are constantly heading into it, but a local NPC will remind them that this is the wind that blows from the Chaos Wastes, spreading corruption out across the world. The Chaos Moon is now full, and is not waning as it should. It is also appearing during daylight, and even though the sun is hidden, Morrslieb's shape and grinning face can be made out. It will seem to be growing bigger as the party gets closer to Marienburg.

Zahnarzt will also be at work: now the PCs have taken the Egg from the safety of the farm, he will want to persuade them to give her over to the Brotherhood. This may be done through

dreams trying to persuade them that members of the Brotherhood are their friends, or if that is not working then by more direct influence: whispering in the minds of those who will most easily be influenced (lowest WP). However, he is far from omniscient and may well lose track of the party.

Halsdorph

Logic tells the party that a good road would give them a faster and safer route back to Marienburg than the straight line they followed out. Any advice they may have gained from the villagers near the Egg's home, and any maps they have studied will agree; the major road between Marienburg and Gisoreux is only a few days away, and from there it is about a week to the city.

Between it and them, and about a day's travel away, lies Halsdorph, which maps and villagers will describe as a small but thriving town. The route to it is clear enough, but as the party gets close the ground begins to sink and become swampy. A thin mist covers the ground, although visibility is still good. Eventually, around late afternoon, the village appears.

Halsdorph is slowly dying. Ever since the swamp destroyed its road and swallowed its best farmland, it has been in decline. As the adventurers approach, they can see that the village was once much larger. Derelict buildings surround what's left, and even the inhabited buildings seem to be in ill-repair. While most villages are overrun with screaming children, the streets of Halsdorph are quiet.

In the centre of the village is an inn that seems much too large for a community of this size. A swinging sign reads 'The Horn of Plenty' beneath a faded depiction of a cornucopia. Since the streets are empty, the party will most likely head to the inn for food, baths and information. If they decide to continue straight to the swamp, skip the following section (and exact any penalties you like for exhaustion and stress).

As they approach the inn, the party will become aware of a figure standing on a corner further down the street. He wears a loose cloak, and has a wide-brimmed hat pulled down over his face. Anyone making an *Observe* test will see that he is watching them; if they make the test by at least 25 then they will also notice that he only has one arm. As soon as he is noticed, he will disappear into a side-street; the PCs may try to follow him but his head start, the drifting mist and his knowledge of the village makes pursuit impossible.



The Horn of Plenty

The Horn of Plenty was built when Halsdorph was in its prime. In its day, it could house two full caravans and still have room for the regulars. Now its cavernous interior only serves to remind the locals of better times. It has been many years since there were many strangers in Halsdorph, and when the party enters the inn, all conversation will stop. Inside the bar are a half-dozen people, most of them men. Behind the bar is a middle-aged man with dark hair and homespun clothes. He says, 'Welcome to the Horn of Plenty. My name is Jurgen, how can I help you?'

If the PCs simply want food and rest, it is easily obtained. Jurgen has plenty of rooms to choose from, and simple but filling food available (a vegetable stew, cheese, and bread). He will accept coins, but prefers barter since money is of limited use in Halsdorph. There are no baths available: Jurgen will recommend the horse-trough in the stable-yard, although he warns that there may be ice on it at this time of year.

The presence of the Egg may attract some attention among the inn's patrons, although she's still a little overwhelmed by the world beyond her home, and hence quieter than she will ever be again. If any villager notices her, they may loudly disapprove of the idea of taking a child through the Demon Swamp, but most of these folk are frankly too apathetic to do much about it.

If the characters are looking for information on the area, Jurgen will tell them, 'Oh, you want to talk to Matteus. He knows more than anyone about ... those things. That's him over there.' Jurgen points to an old man sitting in a corner, nursing a beer. He looks haggard, and must be approaching seventy.

Matteus is old enough to remember the village in slightly better times. He knows virtually everything there is to know about Halsdorph and its environs. When the PCs approach, he says, 'I suppose you want me to tell you about the swamp. They all do. The only people that come through here any more are those that want to cross the Demon Swamp.'

If the PCs answer in the affirmative, Matteus will begin. 'In my great-grandfather's day, Halsdorph was a booming town. There was a road that lead straight to Marienburg and dozens of farms in the countryside. But one night, the earth split open and buried most of that farmland under so much water it became a swamp. No one really knows why. Some say that Sigmar was angry with us, others that he was testing our devotion. Despite it all, we kept planting and tilling, all the while hoping that Sigmar would have pity on us. Then folks just started to disappear, mostly women. We never knew what was stealing our folk. Never, until twenty-five years ago ...'

Matteus pauses, his hands shaking. He takes a long pull from his beer and continues. 'The demons came. Flying awful things, like you've never seen. They came at night and broke into every house. A lot of people got killed that night, but we couldn't stop them. By morning, almost every one of our womenfolk was gone. A lot of men lost their wives that day ...' He trails off, eyes filling with tears.

At this point, the PCs can ask him questions. Here are answers to some likely ones:

Is there a way through the swamp? 'The old road still exists, and if you're lucky you can follow it through. Look for the milestones.'

Has anyone crossed the swamp lately? 'I've sent other people through the swamp, but none of 'em have ever come back to tell me if they made it or not.'

Are there Fimir in the swamp? 'Are there what in the swamp? Fimir? No, only demons – and the bog-man.' (Note that no one in town has any knowledge of the Fimir. Rakka has been careful to keep the existence of her people a secret.)

Who's the bog-man? 'Some say a ghost, some say a mutant, others a weird thing or a fairy. Fairy tale, more like.'

Is there a quick way around the swamp? 'Oh, no. It'd take you a week to get around the swamp and back to the main road.'

When the party are done asking him questions, Matteus shifts his attention back to his beer. The party can question other villagers, but they won't get any more information: the locals are taciturn and wary of strangers. However, anyone listening to the conversation will overhear that the 'bog-man' was seen this afternoon, and the mist will not clear until he has left the area – this is a local superstition which has grown around Bors (see p.62), from his habit of following the Fimir. If anyone interrupts or asks questions about the bog-man, they will get only stony silence in return.

Unless they want to travel at night (and the GM should persuade players against this, stressing the dangers of dark swamps), the party should spend the night in the inn. During the night a thicker fog rolls in to cover the village, and strange noises occasionally pierce the silence. Despite these ominous signs, nothing out of the ordinary occurs. Anyone sharing a room with the Egg is kept awake by her sobs; the child has never been away from her parents before, and is terribly homesick.

The next morning, the party can easily find the remains of the old road, which leads directly out of the village and into the swamp. Following the road is difficult; sometimes it is completely submerged. Without the road, however, the travellers would quickly become lost amongst the stagnant pools. Although they cannot see, the adventurers can hear a great deal: the squawking of strange birds, the splashes of swamp creatures, and the bubbling pop of swamp gas. Occasionally, these noises are drowned out by inhuman howls.

What's In The Swamp?

The story begins a hundred and fifty years ago, with a Fimir named Kezra, Meargh of Grat Moshka. This settlement was small by Fimir standards, and the swamp it was situated in was surrounded by human farms, and the community of Halsdorph. Originally a village, Halsdorph had been steadily growing for years.

When copper was found in the Grey Mountains a few days journey away, and a road was built from the mines to the main road between Marienburg and Gisoreux, passing through the fledgling town, its future seemed assured. Unfortunately for the locals, Kezra had other plans.

Kezra was an accomplished sorceress, even by Fimir standards. She spent years pursuing magical research, consulting demons, and investigating prophecy. In the end, she came up with a plan that would not only destroy the village, but also catapult Grat Moshka to the head of Fimir society.

The first part of the plan called for a complex ritual. After months of preparation, she travelled by night to a hill in the midst of the human farms. There, she magically ripped an obelisk out of the heart of the hill, carved it with runes of power, and dedicated it to her demonic patron. Then she sacrificed a dozen human prisoners and used their blood to paint complex formulae on the monolith and the surrounding rocks. Finally, she invoked her patron.



The farmers awoke to find the earth rocking beneath their feet. As they fled from their homes, great cracks appeared in the land and water gushed out. The whole region sank and the once fertile farmland became a stagnant swamp. Kezra stood atop the hill, delighting in her triumph. Her joy, however, proved short-lived.

She had incorrectly translated a part of the ritual, and her request for demonic aid had in fact been a demand. Her patron was infuriated by her insolence. He granted only part of her demand: Halsdorph itself was not flooded, although the land through which the road had passed was. Then, furious at his servant, the demon lord destroyed Kezra's body and imprisoned her spirit in the monolith she had created.

Luckily for the Fimir of Grat Moshka, Kezra had already trained a successor. The new Meargh, Rakka, quickly stepped in and took over the leadership. None of the Fimir really knew what had happened, but since their swamp had been expanded many times over, they treated Kezra as a hero and martyr, and began to offer sacrifices to her monolith, unaware that she was trapped inside.

A New Meargh, An Old Prophecy

Rakka studied Kezra's notes and books of prophecy, and pursued investigations of her own. Unlike most Meargh apprentices, she had travelled to many Fimir holds when she was in training and, using the knowledge she had gained to supplement Kezra's books, she came to a startling conclusion.

According to her learning, the fulfilment of an ancient Fimir prophecy was coming, and she was in a position to play a crucial role. In just over a century, the latest cycle of Zahnarzt's imprisonment would end. According to Fimir prophecy, He Who Goes By Darkness could be forced to return at the bidding of a powerful Meargh to inhabit the body of the mightiest Fimm warrior. This Fimm-Demon would then lead the Fimir in a great and cataclysmic war against the humans.

Rakka was determined to be ready, and she has spent the last hundred and forty years preparing her people and her lands for the return of Zahnarzt. She oversaw the expansion of the Fimir into the new swampland and their numbers have multiplied. Although Halsdorph had not been destroyed, it had been smashed as an economic centre and now posed no threat, especially after the copper mines closed.

She has periodically raided the town with demonic servants to gain human females to use as breeders. The latest and largest raid was twenty-five years ago, and now the swamp is teeming with Fimir ready to go to war. Rakka has also instituted a yearly martial contest at the monolith to hone the skills of her warriors. The Fimir now refer to the monolith and its surrounding environs as Tazrak Pelko, the Place of Testing, although only Rakka truly knows why.

Unbeknownst to the warriors, this year's contest was more than a traditional ritual: Rakka needed to be sure that the chosen Fimir had the strength to survive possession by a major demon. The contest was held as usual, and the top four warriors were honoured in the traditional fashion.

Rakka then sent everyone away but her bodyguard, her most faithful Dirach, two Shearl servants, and the four winners. Then she summoned powerful demons and bound one into each of the warriors. The possessed Fimir were let loose into the swamp to wrestle with their possessors, which are trying to break free. The one who survives the ordeal best will be the receptacle for Zahnarzt.

In the midst of these preparations, Rakka sensed that an artefact of Zahnarzt, the Demon's Tooth, was nearby. Using it in her rituals would give her a greater chance of succeeding, and so she sent several teams of warriors and Dirach into the swamps to recover it. She knows that the Egg exists and that it is a small child, but has had no idea that it has been under her nose for seven years.

Demons!

Rakka does not want to be disturbed. To protect her plans, she has had her Dirach summon and bind four packs of Swamp Demons (long-time servants and allies of the Fimir) to guard the borders of the swamp. After the party have been in the swamp for three or four hours, they will meet one of these packs.

The ambush happens when the travellers are on a narrow stretch of road with bogs on either side. There are four demons hiding underwater, and unless one of the party has *Sixth Sense*, the PCs have no chance to detect them. On the round when the demons attack, each character should make an I check. Those that make it are alert enough to attempt to dodge the monsters as they spring out of the water.

Swamp Demons

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Rel
6	50	0	4	4	7	60	2	89	89	89	89	89	13

Alignment: Evil

Special Rules: Swamp Demons usually try to surprise, overbear, and drown their victims. If a Demon is attacking an opponent adjacent to water, and if both of its attacks in the first round of combat hit, it has successfully knocked its victim into the water. Its claws do normal damage that round, and the victim is forced under. Each round thereafter, the Demon and its victim both make S tests. If the victim makes a test and the Demon fails, the victim will break free. Characters underwater for three rounds or more will drown, losing 1 Wound per round. The Demons will release its victim if attacked by someone else. If they can't drown an opponent, they just use claws and teeth. Their scales count as 1 AP on their body, arms, and head.

Swamp Demons cause *Fear*, and are immune to psychological effects except those caused by Greater Demons and gods.

The demons will hold their attack until the party is on the narrowest stretch of road. The player characters will hear a great splash and see dark shapes suddenly flying at them from out of the fog. Due to the mud that covers the demons, not to mention the fog, the adventurers should have no idea what is attacking them. The narrow road restricts the PCs' ability to fight: there is nowhere to retreat or swing a weapon, and missile weapons are almost useless. Anyone who steps off the track will find the ground sodden and marshy; and will have a (70 minus Dex)% chance each round of sinking waist-deep into the bog.

Eventually, the PCs will get a good look at what they are fighting. It's not pleasant. Swamp demons are roughly human-sized, with heavily muscled legs similar to frogs. Their upper bodies are covered in scales, and long claws extend from their fingers. Their faces are draconic, and their wide mouths do a poor job of hiding multiple rows of razor-sharp teeth. Mud covers them from head to toe, making it difficult to break their grip.



Note that, if anyone has managed to befriend the Egg by this point (which isn't easy), her power may act to protect them; it will certainly protect her. The sight of a Swamp Demon tripping over its own feet, besides being amusing, may be an interesting clue for the PCs about the nature of the Egg's abilities.

It's A ...

After beating off the Swamp Demons, the party should continue to follow the old road. Eventually night falls, and after a little searching, they can find a campsite: a patch of high ground that is relatively dry. There is even enough wood for a small fire. The night itself is uneventful, although strange roars and howls continue periodically. In the morning, the party are awoken by ungodly screaming and the sound of splintering wood. The ruckus is coming from only a few hundred yards away. As the adventurers push forward to investigate, the noises stop.

Ahead, they can see a large shape lying motionless on the road. As they approach, they can see that a number of trees have been uprooted and torn apart. The shape continues to lie still. It is the body of a Fimir that could not control the demon which possessed it. The body of the former warrior has been twisted beyond recognition by an extreme series of mutations. By the time the PCs examine it, it will not be possible to identify this as a Fimir. It is essentially a pile of mutated flesh. In the pile are arms, legs, tentacles, hooves, claws, scales, fur, and at least five eyes of varying sizes. As they examine it, the body begins to decay at a rapid pace.

Anyone examining the ground around the body may notice (*Observe* test) shoe-prints leading away down the road. They look human and have been made within the last few minutes; the imprints are only just beginning to fill with swamp-water.

Demonomaniac

Pressing on, the party continues through the swamp; following the road is difficult, and much time is wasted. Early in the afternoon, any PC who successfully makes a *Sixth Sense* check gets the feeling they are being watched. No one can be seen, and searching would use up travelling time and, given the nature of the swamp, might be dangerous. Eventually, the party tops a hillock covered in twisted vegetation. Ahead is a grisly sight.

A giant creature stands just down the slope, its axe lying at its feet. It is at least ten feet tall, and looks like it was once a Fimir. Now, however, one of its hands has been replaced with a scythe, and the other has sprouted long claws. As the party watch, the creature gouges its own face with its claws. As it turns towards them, they can see that it has clawed away half of its face and its skull lies exposed. Claw marks cover its whole body and worms now ooze from these fetid gashes. It makes guttural noises of agony.

The monster now becomes aware of the party. It picks up its axe and stares at them with its single eye. A large spiked tail waves menacingly from side to side. As soon as anybody moves, it will shoot off a hail of spikes from its tail. Then it screams and charges, axe and scythe spinning in a deadly web.



Fimir Demonomaniac

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dev	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	65	40	5	6	20	40	3&1	45	45	30	45	45	15

Alignment: Too confused for that at the moment.

Special Rules: Can make one tail attack per round to side or rear. Tail can shoot spikes once in the combat. The spikes can hit up to three targets as long as they are close together. Each hit is at S 4. Fimir weapons count as two-handed (I-10, D+2). A Demonomaniac causes *Fear*, and is immune to psychological effects except those caused by Greater Demons and gods.

Combat ensues. The possessed Fimir is an extremely tough opponent and should give the party a good fight. In fact, it should seem as if the Fimir is unaware of all but the mightiest blows and spells. (The Egg will be terrified, but her abilities can protect one PC at most.) The adventurers should definitely be worried. Once they have taken some hard hits, and delivered a few themselves, they will receive help from a surprising quarter. This should be timed for maximum dramatic effect.

Suddenly, a piercing bolt of blue energy streaks out of the fog and smashes into the back of the creature. It staggers forward, hurt and disoriented. The following round the bolt again crashes into the creature. This, combined with the PCs' attacks, should finish it off. The body falls to the ground with a thud. When it impacts, it bursts apart and hooked worms fly in all directions. Any character standing near the creature when it died (i.e. those in melee with it) need to make an I test. Those that fail end up with worms under their clothes or in their boots. Until the worm-ridden characters delouse, they will be at -10 to WS, BS, and I. Any character who fails their I test by more than 50 (or rolls a 97-100 in any case) may, at the GM's option, be caught with their mouth open, and swallow one or more worms. Any long-term effects of this are up to the GM, but should not be pleasant. Like its predecessor, the Fimir's corpse begins to decompose within minutes.

A Sorcerer of Malal

After the creature dies, a voice will come out of the fog: 'Are you all right? Did the beast harm any of you?'

The party will no doubt be curious to find out who their mysterious benefactor is: the voice is cultured, and has a trace of an Altdorf accent. Any questions or demands will be answered only one way; he says:

'My name is Heinrich Bors, and I have urgent news for you. I know that not being able to see me may make you uncomfortable, but I have my reasons. I only ask that you listen to what I have to say, and afterwards I will reveal myself.'

Assuming that the party agree, he will continue: 'There is a terrible mind at work in this swamp. Her name is Rakka, and she is the Meargh, the Witch-Queen, of the Fimir here. She knows of the coming eclipse, as do you, and she has plans for Zahnarzt. She means to summon him, and bind him into the body of her mightiest warrior. The Fimm-demon she has created will lead the Fimir in a great war against humanity: this has been written in Fimir prophecy. Even now, she is planning her rituals. She has summoned and bound demons into her best warriors, to find out which has sufficient strength of will to host He Who Goes By Darkness. The creature you just fought was once a Fimir warrior.'

The party will want to ask a few questions, and Bors' answers to the most likely are listed below. If PCs ask anything else, assume that Bors has reasonable knowledge of all goings-on in the swamp. He is working for a god, after all – and has been torturing information out of Chaos wizards for years. He has also recently had a visit from Muuthauwg, of whom he knows a little, and who warned him that the PCs were coming with the Tooth. He does not know that they have the Egg, and will react badly if he finds out.

Where is this Rakka? 'She is at what the Fimir call the Place of Testing. If you continue to follow this road, you will find it.'

Why did the Fimir attack us before? 'Rakka knew you had the Demon's Tooth. Zahnarzt's worshippers have a spell of communication they call the "Summoning of the Brotherhood", and for those who can hear it, they have been spreading word of you. Rakka listened. Possession of the Tooth would make her ritual to summon Zahnarzt much easier, and even without it, she still has a chance. She must be stopped.'

Is there no way around the Place of Testing? 'I have been in this swamp for ten years, and I have yet to find one. It may exist, but you are more likely to drown like dogs in a ditch.'

Tell us about Rakka. 'She is evil and cunning. A mighty sorceress, she leads her people in all things. Now, however, she is weak, having summoned many demons to test her warriors. We must strike now, before she regains her strength.'

What is the Place of Testing? 'A magical site of great power, used by the Fimir in their rituals. Their warriors compete there every year. I have avoided it up to now, and know little else about it, save that it is tied up in the history of the Grats Moshka.'

Have you been following us? 'Yes; I confess it. There are many forces looking for you and what you have with you. It is my intention to stop them, as much as I can. I was warned of your coming by one you have met; the green piper, the brother and adversary of the one you seek to destroy.'

As soon as he is reasonably confident that the PCs will trust him, Bors will emerge from the fog. He is dressed like a noble and walks with grace, although his travel-stained clothes are rugged enough for the outdoors. His cloak is finely cut but cannot hide that his left arm is missing. His right hand holds a rapier with a skull-faced guard at the ready. He no longer wears the hat he was wearing the day before, and as he comes nearer, his secret is revealed. He has not two, but four eyes.

'I know my appearance is hideous,' he says, 'but stay your swords. I was once like you, and, although I know I can never be human again, I seek revenge on those who did this to me.'

Before the PCs can react, the Egg will run to Bors: she likes the way he looks. He will find this first startling, then mildly pleasant, then deeply saddening – having small children smile at him is something he has long since left behind. However, if he discovers her true nature – if anyone calls her 'Egg' – he will realize what she is, and will be cold towards her. Although he will not tell the party, he will be plotting ways to destroy her.

If Bors is attacked, he will try to flee. If cornered, he will defend himself. If given the chance, he will tell his story.

'I am a sorcerer, and I learned magic at the great college in Altdorf. My teachers seemed so stingy to me then. They would never teach me the secrets fast enough. Eventually, I left and sought new teachers. I found one in Tzeentch, Chaos god of magic. At first, I served willingly, and greedily learned all Tzeentch would teach me, but soon I began to pay the price. First, I was gifted with these eyes. Then my arm was altered,

becoming one which could spout a jet of flame. I had to flee the city, and I realized I had made a great mistake. I repented, but I knew that Law wouldn't have me. There was only one choice: Malal, the Chaos god who fights to destroy Chaos. He became my new patron. I hacked off my infected arm to cleanse myself of Tzeentch. Malal accepted my sacrifice and stopped the mutations. In return, I pledged to do his work. Malal brought me here, where I have been for the past ten years, and Malal compels me to join you to fight this threat. Will you have me?"

If the characters agree, Bors will join them, thanking them for their tolerance. If they send him away, he will follow them from a distance and try to help them. Obsessed with redemption, he will not allow Rakka to complete her plan.

Heinrich Bors

Sorcerer of Malal

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Rel
5	45	37	4	5	10	50	2	35	40	60	55	65	23

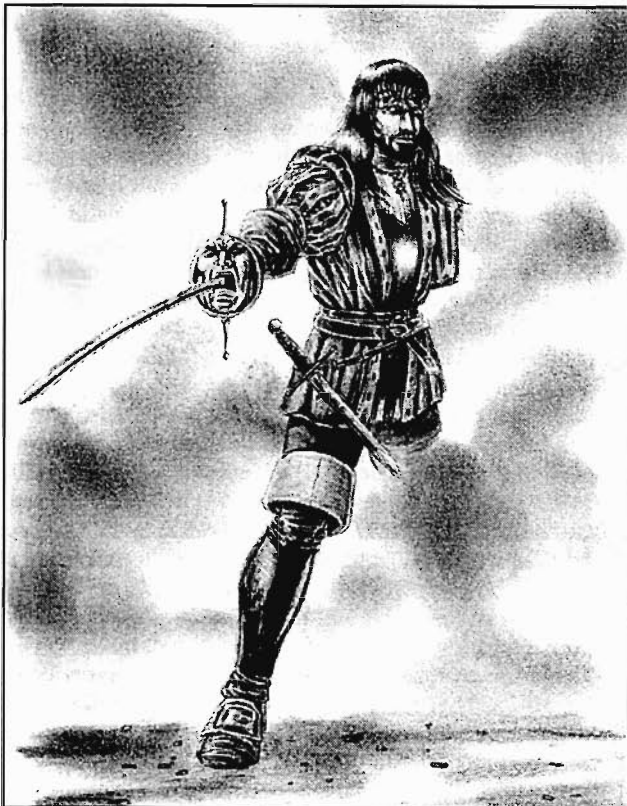
30 Magic Points

Alignment: Disaffected Chaos

Skills: Arcane Language: Magick, Cast Spells (Petty, and Battle levels 1-3), Etiquette, Evaluate, History, Identify Undead, Identify Magical Artefact, Magical Awareness, Magic Sense, Manufacture Scrolls, Meditation, Rune Lore, Read/Write, Very Resilient.

Spells: Open, Sleep, Zone of Silence, Aura of Resistance, Cure Light Injury, Fireball, Aura of Protection, Mystic Mist, Smash, Cleansing Fire of Malal, Dispel Aura.

Trappings: Grinning Skull Rapier, Ring of Toughness (+1 T), Spellbook, Backpack, Travelling Clothes, Dagger, 50 GC, Assorted Jewellery.



At the Place of Testing

Another few hours of travelling brings the PCs to a strange sight. Cutting across the road, and stretching as far as the eye can see, is a wall of fog so thick it looks solid. Despite the wind, it does not move. Characters who use *Magic Sense* will find that it reeks of magic. Although exceptionally thick, it can be moved through without hindrance.

Once the party enters the fog, they will be enveloped in a magical silence and cannot communicate at all until the fog is exited, and if the PCs do not take precautions (holding hands, or tying the party together with rope), they may get separated. Characters not touching or attached to others must make WP

Heinrich Bors will tell the party his personal history when they first meet him. Once, he was an outgoing, curious scholar, but now he has learned to be a ruthless warrior, and he alternates between slightly excessive explanations and grim silences. He truly deserves the title 'Doomed One'; he doesn't *want* to die, but he is convinced that he is going to, soon, and he is determined to send a lot of servants of Chaos ahead of him. He is obsessed with redemption, and will attempt any deed if he thinks it will atone for his sins; this includes helping the weak, but he is much better at slaughtering evil.

Bors still dresses as the minor nobleman he once was, in an attempt to maintain his humanity. He is about 5'6", and has brown hair and four green eyes. His age is hard to judge: he could be in his late twenties or early forties. He has only one arm, and usually carries a rapier.

If the party is having a tough time, and Bors starts taking serious damage, the GM can treat him as having up to six Fate Points as a blessing from Malal. Of course, he can only use these for himself – but they enable him to take exceptional risks to help the PCs. He does not recognize the Egg for what she is, and thinks she is an ordinary child, although he will be curious about why she is with the party.

If he discovers her true nature, his attitude to her will change totally: she is a vessel of Chaos and must be destroyed – although the Fimir threat is more important at the moment. If he does find out, it may be necessary to have him fatally wounded in the final battle so that he cannot kill the Egg himself, but as he dies he will plead with the PCs to destroy her.

New Spell: Cleansing Fire of Malal

Spell Level: 3

Magic Points: 4

Range: 48 yards

Duration: Instantaneous

Ingredients: Hoof of a Beastman

This spell is only used by sorcerers of Malal, and is a gift from the god himself. A bolt of blue energy flies from the caster's hands (or hand in Bors's case) and hits one target automatically. Each bolt does 1D3 hits that each inflict 1D10 Wounds at Strength 4 (irrespective of armour). Against creatures of Chaos (demons, Beastmen, Chaos Warriors, etc.), the Cleansing Fire has a Strength of 7. This attack is a *magic missile*, and victims may test against I to take half damage.



tests. Those who fail will lose the rest of the party and emerge in a different part of the Place of Testing.

The walk through the fog is unearthly. Wrapped in silence and effectively blind, the PCs cease to have any conception of time. After what seems like an eternity, they emerge in the Place of Testing. Directly in front of them is an enormous Fimir with an equally enormous axe. Standing over twelve feet tall, he looms over them and screams in a guttural voice, 'This place is not for you! Flee or be destroyed!' Every PC must make a *terror* test. Those who fail run back into the fog unless stopped, and also gain one Insanity Point. Treat such characters as those who became lost in the fog; they will reappear in a different part of the Place of Testing.

Although it appears solid, the Fimir is in fact an ethereal Spectre. It is one of Kezra's bodyguards, doomed to continue serving her until she can break free. Normal weapons just pass through its body. Magic weapons and spells work as normal.

Fimir Spectre

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	Int	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	45	0	0	4	21	30	3	0	19	19	19	19	19

As with a normal Spectre, any character it hits is paralysed for 2D6 minutes unless a successful WP test is made.

Bors is immune to the Spectre's *terror* (he's seen much worse). He will be slow to use magic on it at first, as he wants to conserve his power, but if the party is having trouble (probably due to lack of magical attacks), he will suddenly cry out: 'These people bring that which is prophesied; stand aside, in the name of Kezra!' At this, the Spectre will become uncertain, confused, and *subject to instability*.

If anyone asks Bors about his invocation, he will shrug, saying, 'A moment of inspiration: the truth is a weapon, and sometimes a partial truth is the deadliest weapon of all. Kezra was the former Meargh, destroyed by the demon she tried to command. The monolith in the centre of the Place of Testing is hers.' If this cryptic exchange worries the PCs, that should help the atmosphere of paranoia.

About the Place of Testing

The spirit of Kezra has become more powerful as the years have passed. Each warrior who died, each sacrifice made, gave her strength. Originally confined to the Monolith itself, she now controls the Place of Testing in its entirety. In a sense, Kezra is the Place of Testing. She works towards the day that she can break free from her prison and be reborn as a demon lord.

Tazrak Pelko is a place of strong magic. Demons and undead within its confines do not (generally) need to check for instability. Wizards (but not Clerics) find that it is easier to cast spells here. All spells cast by wizards in the Place of Testing cost one less Magic Point. Spells also become more potent; add +1 to any dice rolls for spells. For example, add +1 to the damage of any magic missile type spell, or to the number of demons summoned by *Summon Lesser Demons*.

There are five areas in the Place of Testing (see the map on the next page). Characters who became lost in the fog must roll a D6 to determine where they emerge:

- 1-2 Forest of Corpses
- 3-4 Stones of Sacrifice
- 5-6 Pools of Obedience

The sky is completely blotted out by the same fog that the party passed through. Inside, however, all of Tazrak Pelko is lit by a soft green light and the outline of the hill and the monolith can be seen from any part. Separated characters will most likely head for the Monolith. Co-ordination of character groups is up to the GM and should be dramatically appropriate.

As soon as the PCs entered Tazrak Pelko, Rakka became aware of them. Her magical alarms sounded, and she began preparing to defend herself. The longer it takes the party to arrive on the scene, the better prepared she will be. The fastest route is to walk over the Plain of Glass to the Monolith. Missing characters and the Fimir Spectre may complicate things.

It is roughly a mile, or fifteen minutes, from the edge of the Wall of Fog to the Monolith. Rakka will spend this time gathering together all her people and casting *Aura of Protection* on herself. Rakka's minions include Zago, her most faithful Dirach; Tarbaz, her Fimm bodyguard; and two ordinary Shearl servants, whose tongues have been cut out: PCs may find this eerily familiar if they get a chance to examine the corpses. Zago will cast *Aura of Resistance* on himself during this time. At this point, Rakka has 23 Magic Points and Zago 14.

For each five-minute delay, Rakka will do one of the following. Be sure to note her new Magic Point total before the combat begins.

1. Rakka casts *Summon Energy*. Assuming she successfully controls it, she will gain 14 Magic Points. Her new total is 35.
2. Rakka casts *Summon Magical Aid* and takes *Cause Frenzy* if successful. She now has 32 Magic Points.
3. Rakka casts *Cause Frenzy* on Tarbaz and the two Shearl. It will last for 12 rounds. She now has 29 Magic Points.
4. Rakka casts *Summon Great Power*. She now has 24 Magic Points.

The Plain of Glass

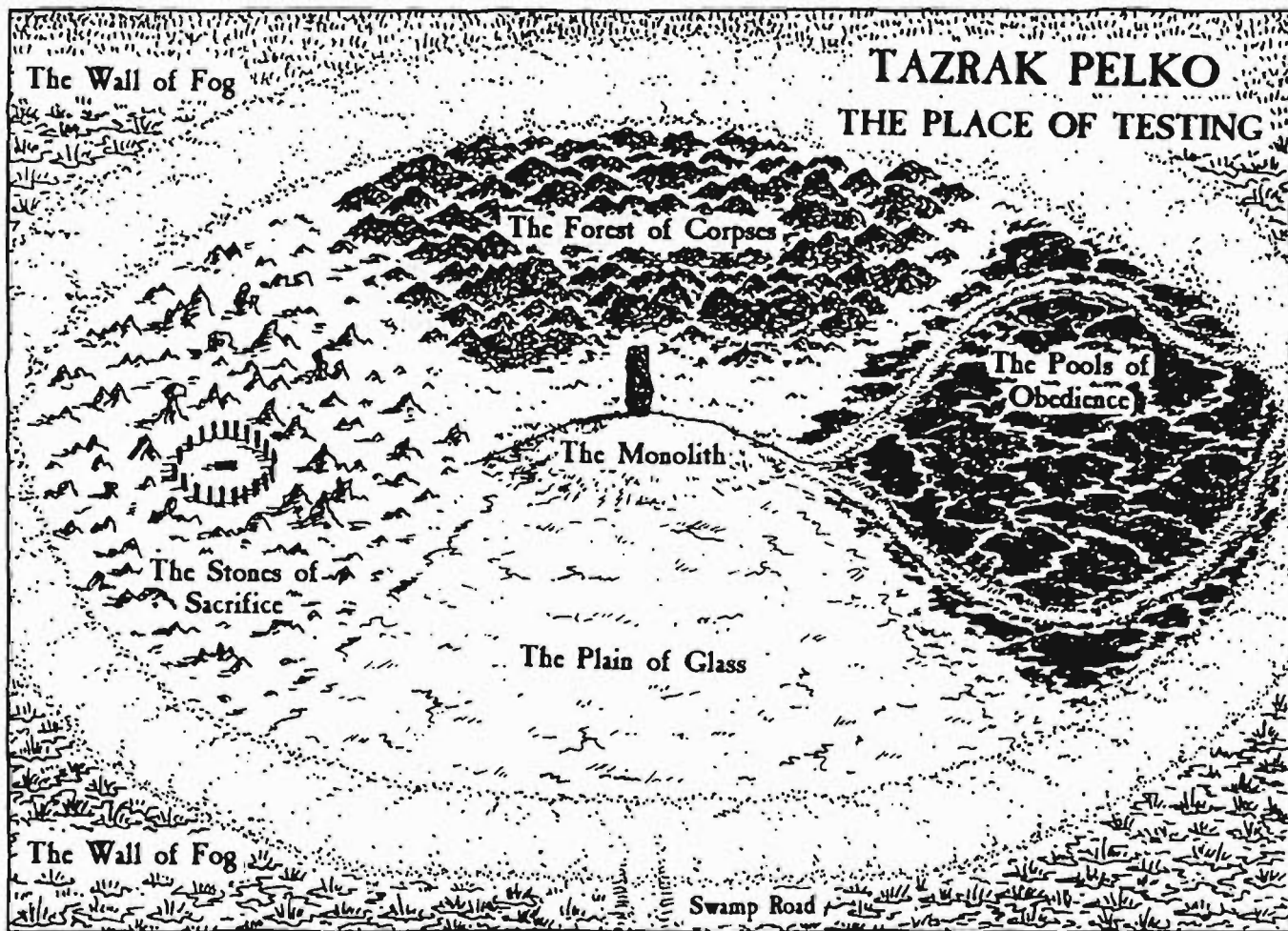
The Plain of Glass is where the Fimir warriors fight in their yearly contest. Moving forward, the party will soon notice that the ground is perfectly flat and very smooth. It looks almost transparent, although it is hard to tell due to the fog and the strange green light. Further on is the Fimir battleground proper. Broken weapons and bloodstains cover the ground.

As the party start to walk through the battleground, their eyes are drawn down towards the glassy ground. Leering up at them are dozens of Fimir faces. Beneath the Plain of Glass are the bodies of all the warriors who have been defeated here. The hacked bodies of dead Fimir are piled at impossible angles. Those who were not killed outright still live, trapped like flies in amber. The eyes of the imprisoned dart back and forth. Those who meet their gaze stare into madness. The PCs must all make CI tests. Those who fail gain 1 Insanity Point.

The Plain of Glass extends right up to the hill with the Monolith. In all probability, the battle with Rakka will take place here. The characters therefore risk sharing the fate of the defeated Fimir warriors. Combat on the Plain of Glass is fought with the following rules:

1. Due to the slickness of the plain, everyone fights with a -10 to their WS and Dex.
2. Characters who collapse to the ground risk being pulled underground. Dead characters fail automatically, but wounded PCs get a WP test to resist the effect. Each Magic Point spent will increase the character's chance by 10%. Those who fail will join the Fimir under the Plain of Glass unless they spend a Fate Point.





The Forest of Corpses

Behind the Monolith is the Forest of Corpses. This is where the Fimir have been dumping the bodies of the sacrificial victims for the last hundred and forty years. Something about the area prevents the bodies from decomposing. So many victims of all races have been sacrificed over the years that this area has become like a maze. Bodies lie strewn about, with throats cut and hearts missing. Fear and horror are forever etched on the faces of the victims. Rakka has been busy.

Navigating through the corpses is distasteful and time consuming. It takes an extra twenty minutes to find a path through the bodies. Characters who take this route must make a CI test or gain 1 Insanity Point. It is also possible to simply climb over the mounds of corpses and make a straight line for the Monolith. Characters who do this will cut ten minutes off their arrival time but must make a CI test at -10 or gain D4-1 Insanity Points.

The Stones of Sacrifice

This area contains bizarre rock formations. Most of these are accidents of nature, but there is one that is obviously the work of an intelligent mind: a huge circle of jagged obsidian pillars at the centre of the area. There are at least twenty pillars, all evenly separated in a circle, with a diameter of 30 feet. In the centre of the circle is a rough stone altar. This circle is where Dirach are initiated and where they perform sacrifices.

Characters who bypass the circle will arrive at the Monolith only five minutes late. Those who venture into the circle will be attacked by its guardian demon, which appears in a blast of harmless but impressive fire. This demon will *not* leave the circle, so characters can simply flee to safety.

Guardian Demon

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Inr	Cl	WP	Fel
5	35	0	4	4	6	30	1	0	0	10	50	30	0

Special Rules: Causes *fear*, and is immune to psychological effects except those caused by Greater Demons and gods. Armour gives 2 AP on all locations.

This demon looks like an animated suit of jet-black plate armour. It moves with alarming speed, however, and uses a halberd to good effect. While not a particularly tough opponent, the guardian may cause a crucial delay.

The Pools of Obedience

This region is full of congealing pools of blood, some up to twenty feet deep. Fimir warriors are initiated here, with a series of obedience tests that include immersion in these pools. Again, the PCs must choose their route. There is a path around the outside of the pools that leads to the Monolith, but characters who take this route will arrive fifteen minutes late. It is quicker

(only five minutes late) to weave a path between the pools, but the experience is disgusting: the pools smell horrible, the congealing blood sticks to everything, and PCs must make a CI test or gain 1 Insanity Point. They must also make a Dex roll to avoid slipping and falling into the blood. This is vile beyond description: by the time they emerge, they will be covered from head to foot in stale, stinking blood, and will have gained 1D4 Insanity Points. They must also make a Disease test, or every Wound they have may gain a Wound Infection (WFRP, p.83)

The Monolith

On top of a low hill there is a monolith covered in runes: the site of the ritual that turned Halsdorph's farmland to swamp. Thrown to one side are the bodies of five captured peasants, recently sacrificed. A sixth lies bound at the base of the monolith. Behind it are a few tents.

Most of the adventurers will probably be coming over the Plain of Glass. If this is the case, Rakka will send Tarbaz and the two Shearl down to the plain to meet them. Meanwhile, she and Zago will stay atop the hill and cast spells. PCs who arrive late from another direction will have a chance to get around the Fimir warriors and attack Rakka directly. As the party approach, Rakka will recognize the Egg: the Meargh has read an ancient description of Zahnarzt's last attempt to manifest. The presence of Zahnarzt's intended vessel changes her game-plan: she knows she must destroy this child before the demon will manifest in one of her warriors. She also knows of Bors: they have tangled in the past. Rakka will stand and address the group:

'Humans, you have been brought to this place by powers and fates you cannot hope to understand. If you are wise, you will hand over the Demon's Tooth and the child which is known

as the Moon's Egg to me. If you do, I will be merciful and let you live. Otherwise you will join the ranks of the defeated beneath the Plain of Glass. What is your answer?'

If Bors has not yet realized that the child is the Moon's Egg, he will do so now, and will be momentarily gob-smacked. If none of the PCs speak up immediately, he will recover enough composure to answer, firmly but a little shakily: 'You think that you can master a demon lord, Meargh? As ever, the blessing of Malal is to save fools from the worst of their folly. Awake from your dreams, Fimir, and let us pass!' This will merely annoy Rakka, but it *may* have the advantage, from the PCs' point of view, of making her concentrate on Bors later in the fight.

Zago is behind Rakka, a sacrificial dagger in his hand. He is preparing to cast *Summon Lesser Demons*, and already has five of the six hearts he needs. If the party attack, he will sacrifice the human on the first round of combat. Unless he is stopped, he will cut the heart out on the second round and cast the spell on the third, summoning D6+1 demons (due to the magic of Tazrak Pelko). Use the stats for Swamp Demons on p.59.

Rakka will concentrate first on trying to destroy the Egg. When she realizes this is impossible, even in the Place of Testing, she will attack Bors: he has been a thorn in her side for long enough. Due to the somewhat limited nature of Demonologist spells, Rakka will most likely make heavy use of *Lightning Bolt* and *Steal Mind*. After summoning the demons, Zago will most likely use *Fireball* and maybe *Summon Magical Aid*.

Balancing Things Out

Bors will hold his own during the battle, but he should not be allowed to dominate it unless things are going badly wrong for the PCs. If events continue to go seriously against the party, the GM can introduce a couple of balancing factors. Bors' magic is one; the other is the Egg, who might become sufficiently worried that her powers, amplified by the nature of the Testing Ground, start acting to bias things in favour of the party.

If all else fails, have Bors cry out: 'The monolith! That's it – the old Meargh was caught *in the stone!*' He will then start throwing magical attacks directly at the monolith. This will not have any immediate effect, but it should give the PCs the idea. A *Lightning Bolt*, a heavy hammer blow or two, or a *Smash* spell will cause the stone to crack, at which point a wave of mental energy will sweep across the area, and a voice will echo through everyone's minds, saying *I RULE GRAT MOSHKA!*

This will cause *everyone* to cease attacking for one round. But it is clear that Rakka is affected worst; from then on she will merely stand, apparently paralysed, until someone cuts her down – giving the PCs a significant advantage.

Later, if he lives, Bors will explain. Having seen the monolith, he finally understood the significance of a certain demonology text about the area. 'The monolith was referred to as being Kezra, and I assumed it meant a monument to her. But the runes on it have nothing to do with that, and the way the power flowed around the site ... She's still trapped – it'd take more than us to free her – but we woke her up, and disrupted the bonds a little. She'll have fought Rakka mind-to-mind ... I wonder who would have won, if we'd left them?'

The Problem With Bors

It's possible that Bors may survive the fight, but GMs may like to ensure that he doesn't; mostly so that he can't attempt to destroy the Egg. He knows that with Rakka killed and the Fimir





The Fimir Leaders

Rakka

Fimir Meargh

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	44	19	5	5	15	40	2	35	65	66	58	65	34

45 Magic Points

Skills: Arcane Language (Demonology and Magick), Astronomy, Cast Spells (Petty, Battle level 1-2 and Demonic level 1-4), Demon Lore, History, Identify Undead, Identify Magical Artefact, Magical Awareness, Magic Sense, Manufacture Potions, Manufacture Scrolls, Meditation, Read/Write, Rune Lore, Speak (Fimir and Reikspiel).

Spells: Curse, Gift of Tongues, Magic Alarm, Marsh Lights, Zone of Silence, Cure Light Injury, Steal Mind, Lightning Bolt, Aura of Protection, Bind Demon, Dispel Demon, Zone of Demonic Protection, Stop Demonic Instability, Summon Energy, Summon Lesser Demons, Summon Magical Aid, Zone of Demonic Nullification, Dispel Demon Horde, Summon Demon Horde, Summon Great Power, Dispel Greater Demon, Summon Greater Demon.

Trappings: Staff with Demonic Bronze Head (counts as a two-handed weapon, I-10, D+2); Spell Jewel with Cure Serious Wounds; Warding Ring vs. Fireballs; Necklace of Shrunk Heads (makes the wearer immune to spells that affect the mind, only usable by Evil or Chaotic spell-casters); Sacrificial Dagger (counts as a hand weapon).

Rakka is the iron-fisted ruler of the Fimir of Grat Moshka. She is convinced that she has a great destiny, and that Zahnarzt will reward her when he returns. If anything, she is too confident. She thinks that she knows what the old Fimir prophecy means, although the fallacy of this kind of thinking has been shown repeatedly in the past.

She cannot stand the idea of a human child being the receptacle for the mighty Zahnarzt. He is surely a warrior demon, and deserves both a true warrior's body and a cunning councillor.

Zago, Fimir Dirach

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	28	18	4	5	13	30	1	25	35	50	45	50	25

15 Magic Points

Skills: Arcane Language (Demonology and Magick), Cast Spells (Petty, Battle level 1, Demonic level 1-2), Demon Lore, Magic Sense, Meditation, Read/Write, Speak (Fimir/Reikspiel), Very Resilient.

Spells: Magic Alarm, Sleep, Open, Aura of Resistance, Fireball, Hammerhand, Dispel Lesser Demon, Summon Guardian, Summon Lesser Demons, Summon Magical Aid.

Trappings: Amulet of Thrice Blessed Copper; Fimir Dagger (counts as Hand Weapon); bronze statue of a Meargh (a depiction of Kezra).

Zago is Rakka's most trusted Dirach. He has proved his loyalty and intelligence many times over the years. He is ready to sacrifice his life for Rakka. He wears bright red clothing that a human slave made for him.

Tarbaz, Fimm Bodyguard of Rakka

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	53	9	5	5	14	40	3&1	28	30	25	40	35	27

Skills: Ambidextrous, Disarm, Dodge Blow, Excellent Vision, Sixth Sense, Street Fighting, Strike to Injure, Specialist Weapon: Fist Weapons.

Special Powers: Can make a tail attack to the side or rear at normal *Strength*.

Trappings: Fimir Sword and Mace (count as two-handed weapons); Mail Shirt and Coif, Breastplate and Helm (2 AP on body and head); Garnet-studded Brooch (a gift from Rakka) worth 50 GC.

Trabaz has been Rakka's bodyguard for close to a hundred years, and is very good at it. Rakka values him so highly that she forbade him from competing in this year's martial contests. He now understands why.

threat removed, Zahnarzt would have trouble preparing another vessel in the short time before the eclipse; and to him the death of a child is a small price to pay for that.

The most dramatic solution is to arrange for Bors to be fatally wounded: GMs with a sense of irony might have the monolith fall on him, so he can explain its true nature from underneath it. Giving him a death-scene lets him beg the PCs to destroy the Egg, since he is not able to do it himself; and his death adds emotional force to his plea. This should put the party into a moral quandary, not to mention confusion: they know the Egg is a thing of Chaos, yet Goffman (supposedly Lawful) wants them to save her; while Bors (follower of a Lord of Chaos) wants them to destroy it.

The choice is left to the GM. If alive, Bors can make a useful NPC if the party needs to be saved in the next couple of adventures; but his death here is convenient and dramatic.

After The Battle

When the battle is over, the adventurers can look around the hill. The monolith itself is impressive: standing fifteen feet tall,

it is carved with runes of power. Characters with *Rune Lore* can decipher them, and from that can work out what happened to the local area. Anyone examining the cracks in the stone caused by the battle will see that they are very slowly closing up.

There are a few tents pitched behind the monolith, but there is little of interest in most of them: Fimir-sized armour and weapons, and repellent food. One, Rakka's, contains 200 GC of garnets and a book, written in Fimir script, with the ritual she has worked out to summon Zahnarzt and notes on her plan. If translated, it would be a wealth of information on the Fimir and their magic, and will be worth at least 200 GC to the right person. Alternatively, the Order of Illuminated Readers would consider it a rare and valuable donation.

The Place of Testing still has its eerie radiance and is surrounded by a wall of fog; none of that will have changed. If the PCs spend half an hour hunting for it, they can pick up the track of the old road, and will be able to follow it out of the area of continual fog. There should still be a couple of hours of daylight, and they are likely to want to put as much distance between them and the scene of this particular battle as they can before nightfall.





Chapter 6:

The Colony

As the heroes flee the carnage of the Place of Testing, they follow a faded track that Bors said will take them back to the main road. They travel over a ridge that bounds the swamps, and then down again through woodland. The trees here once again have a diseased, twisted look to them: the trunks are blotchy, their leaves bent and distorted. At last their journey takes them out of the woods and onto a moor, but they see before them wood frame biers bearing corpses. Unfortunately the path, their only route to the road, takes them right through this macabre cemetery.

This chapter is designed as a role-playing challenge, in which the characters will confront hideous mutants who behave better and act with more good will than the majority of their 'untainted' brethren. Here, in the midst of the Wasteland, is a community in tune with principles to which the civilized world only pays lip-service; a settlement run by the eccentric but formidable Sister Astrid von Nimlsheim.

But all is not sweetness and light in this peaceable kingdom, for the adventurers have arrived at a moment of crisis. The colony is threatened by enemies without, and possibly a traitor within. While the party is enjoying safety and the hospitality of the mutants, an old acquaintance of theirs, Otto von Lufthanser, arrives, intent on arresting Sister Astrid for heresy, and killing all the mutants. Characters must decide whether to abandon the mutants to their fate and flee with the Egg, risking pursuit, or stay and try to save the Colony. If they do stay, Sister Astrid will make them forswear violence while in her service. The players will need some creative thinking to succeed.

After they leave the Place of Testing, the party will reach the edge of the swamp in a few hours. It is late afternoon, and there is a band of forest standing dark and ominous on the horizon.

If the party do not make camp before entering the forest, then they can just reach the Colony before nightfall. If they do make camp, then they will reach the Colony in early afternoon. Weak-willed PCs will be visited in the night by Zahnarzt-inspired dreams of the Egg killing them all while they sleep. Now the Fimir are gone, the demon would prefer his chosen vessel to be in the hands of someone who does not know its true nature, and a suitable candidate will intercept the PCs' path shortly.

The Sickly Wood

Long ago, the wood between the Place of Testing and the Colony was a normal forest, but, during the last IncurSION of Chaos a taint spread here; and it has never been burned out. The Sickly Wood has a fearful reputation among the villages and farmsteads nearby. People speak of it only in whispers and threaten their children with the monsters everyone knows live there. It's not quite as terrible as the Gunzenhauser farm, but it's larger.

The Sickly Wood became a place of Chaos, and things of Chaos were drawn to it. Occasionally they would raid settlements thereabouts, and occasionally the farmers would make

forays to cut the Wood back, but all was in a general stalemate till Sister Astrid came. Steadily and surely, she gathered the mutants of the Sickly Wood to her and taught them the ways of peace and hope. No longer did they go raiding, but rather kept to themselves. But the black name of the Wood remained.

The Spiteful Trees

While travelling along the path from the Place of Testing, the adventurers will begin to hear voices, whispers at first, saying 'get out', 'we hate you', and 'you'll feed our roots!' If they look around they will see nothing, but a successful **Int** test will note that some of the face-like burls may have changed expression slightly; anyone who has heard Zahnarzt's whispers will know immediately that this is a very different sort of voice.

No examination of the trees nor even poking them will reveal anything not already obvious. Soon after they resume their journey, the heroes will again hear the voices, this time louder and more angry. The life in the trees will be obvious now, the angry burl-faces shouting curses at them. The trees will hurl dead branches at the party, with 1D6 striking random party members (but never the Egg) for 1D6-2 wounds.

Fighting the trees is fruitless, for there are so many of them and their bark is preternaturally tough. Their best course is flight, and running along the path will take them to safety in 1D3 rounds.

Boilswort

Among all the bizarre plant life of Sickly Wood the adventurers will notice a bulbous fungus about the size of a man's head, growing from the roots of a tree. It is a wet, dirty pink in colour and covered in splotches that look like angry bruises. It pulses rhythmically, as if breathing. Should a character touch it, the fungus will burst and spray them with a choking cloud of spores.

The character must make a **T** test, with a +2 bonus if they made a successful **I** test at the time of explosion to dodge some of the spores. Success means the hero suffers nothing; failure means that they have been infected by the boilswort's spores. Within 24 hours, great buboes resembling the boilswort will burst from their flesh, and these may also rupture and infect those nearby. The adventurer has been touched by Nurgle, bears the taint of Chaos, and also gains one Insanity Point. Possible cures are left up to the GM, though a Shallyan miracle may well be in order should the party save the Colony.

The Place of Cleansing

As the party nears the edge of the Sickly Wood, the trees begin to thin and look more natural as the forest gives way to a barren moorland. Fog travels in clumps like curdled milk, sometimes so thick that it's impossible to see more than a few feet ahead, other times thin enough to make out vague shapes at a distance. Careful listeners will hear a faint clattering noise on the breeze, like crude chimes of wood, or perhaps bone. There is the sickly sweet odour of decay in the air.

This is the mutants' graveyard, their 'place of cleansing'. Rather than bury their dead in the ground, which would only taint the land further, Sister Astrid has taught them to place their dead upon wooden frames, exposed to the sky. Here, as the corrupt bodies rot, their souls are under Shallya's gaze and are set free. The biers line the path the party must take through the moors, stretching as far as they can see into the fog. From each hang wood and bone clappers that clatter against each other in the wind. The corpses are in varying states of decay, ranging from fresh to scattered bones. Large crows can be seen fluttering among the biers, picking at the bodies. As the heroes advance, just as they reach the first corpse, the crows take off as a flock and fly down the path.

Though under the healing eye of Shallya, this is still a place of Chaos and odd things happen. Ten biers line the path at irregular intervals. If the party stop to look at any of them, the GM can choose which bodies they see, from the following list:

- ◆ A sign says these are the remains of Henri du Couronne. His body is quite fresh, perhaps no more than a day or two old. From his armour the heroes can see he was once a warrior, though he has been horribly changed by the touch of Chaos. His head bears the face of a beast, while his exposed skin shows scales akin to those of a snake. Incongruous details strike PCs who study the corpse: his sword is broken and dulled, and his shield is painted white. While they watch, the dead flesh begins to bleed, the blood falling like drops of rain onto the vivid green grass beneath the wooden frame.

- ◆ Plain white homespun decorates the rotted remains of this mutant. The three eyes are gone, the flesh is ragged and mouldy, picked by the birds. A crude sign in Reikspiel says this was once Hetta Zeevoort, seamstress. The odour is particularly thick here: the PCs must make a T test, with failure meaning incapacitation due to nausea for 1D6 minutes.

- ◆ Bare, scattered bones on a rickety frame. Some have fallen through to the grass. Small carved wooden plates are scattered among them, once having been tied to the frame with twine. An *Int* test will suggest that they are some sort of warding symbol, but what they ward against is unidentifiable. What might have been written on the nameplate is unreadable.

- ◆ This frame hold a body in a patched white dress. Worms and maggots crawl through the rotting flesh. Small stuffed toys surround the corpse of the little girl, their skins torn by the elements and the stuffing falling out. Each is a stuffed rat-doll, the heads of which look remarkably similar to the face of the mutant. As the party watches, the toys begin to move about, as if guided by a child's hand. Soft at first, then quite clearly, the party will hear a girl singing to herself a tuneless song. Her voice sometimes stutters and chitters, like that of the Skaven: 'Someday I go home-home, my mutti loves-loves me.' The sign on her bier names her 'Lotti'.

- ◆ The broken remains of a long-dead soldier. Though the flesh has mostly fallen from his bones, those who examine the corpse

will note the sharp-fanged maw in the middle of his chest. His left arm has been changed to solid bronze with the fist forming a great mace-head. It too is corroded and covered with a green patina. A fragment of wood is nailed to the frame. It reads, 'This Horst. He say he sorry.'

The other bodies are of a mould-covered bird-man; a bizarre skeleton that looks like two men fused into one; and the rest are too decomposed to be recognizable. None carries anything of worth.

The Happy Mourners

After the heroes have had time to explore the cemetery, they will hear a cacophony of shrieks and hoots, drawing nearer from the direction they were headed. After a few moments, they will see a weird procession rounding a rocky mound: a band of six mutants, all dressed in white and capering wildly. Five play musical instruments – bone flutes, skin drums, and wood clappers, making a random racket. Their leader reads loudly from a book, though what he is saying is unintelligible. They also bear weapons: the adventurers will see swords, clubs, and staves. These are mutants from the colony coming to mourn their recent dead (Henri and Lotti), although they may be mistaken as some kind of ambush or welcoming committee.

Roll an I test for the band of mutants as they round the hill. Success means they notice the party that first round; failure means they notice them in 1D3 rounds, unless the party attacks them first. When they do, they will stop and jabber at the party, gesturing and shouting. This is their welcome to those

The Mourners

All the mourners have the statistics given in the section 'Other Village Mutants', on p.74. Seeing Reinald, Nils, Gilda or Jacques clearly causes *Fear* for everyone except the Egg, who will jump up and down with excitement.

Reinald, the leader, has the face of a daemon, red and horned. His tongue is forked and he speaks with a wet, slurred speech. He carries a Shallyan prayer book.

Nils' body is flame, but it does not burn his clothes, nor does it harm any around him.

Doña Maria de la Tartessa is egg-shaped, and can do no more than take tiny waddling steps. Her ears are pointed like a bat's and sprout red fur. She has 3 AP on all locations.

Karl, the potter, has elastic limbs, and his arms grow and contract wildly while he whirls and sings. His skin has turned bright orange. He attempts to wrestle and pin anyone who attacks him. (S 5)

Gilda, once a barmaid in Marienburg, has mutated into a beastwoman with cloven hoofs and the head of a goat. Foam flecks from her mouth as she screams and howls. Especially devoted to Shallya, she has been blessed with the ability to dodge, with a skill of 70%, every melee attack aimed at her in a round.

Jacques, once Governor of a small town in Bretonnia, has no face and dances silently, though he still has perfect senses. His hands form sharp metal-nailed claws. The bones in his hands are made of bronze, and do 1D6+S3 wounds, stunning only.



they think are new colony residents, though the PCs may not realize this. After a moment, they will move towards the party, wanting them to join the mourning.

Adventurers who show restraint and try to talk to the mutants will gather that they mean no harm and are happy to meet more 'kindred'. No amount of gainsaying will convince them that the PCs do not belong there, for they can sense the Chaos associated with the Egg. They are especially adamant if any PC is showing signs of infection from the boilswort. They will urge the party to come with them and 'Meet Sister. Sister make clean!'

Should the party attack them, the mutants will seem unsure of how to react, and will only parry, dodge, and strike to stun. None will deliberately hurt a PC. One will flee at the outset to get Sister Astrid, who will arrive in D6+6 minutes. The remainder will shout words of peace to get the PCs to stop fighting.

Meeting Sister Astrid

Eventually Sister Astrid arrives. If a fight still rages, she intervenes in a commanding voice and orders it to stop. After it's over, she tends to any and all wounds, all the while berating the party for reacting with unthinking bigotry. 'They were once like you, and you could later be like them. They are Shallya's children and under her protection – put that knife away!'

In any event, it's clear that the mutants regard her with love and awe, doing anything she says. It is also clear that she has no

fear of them and cares deeply for their welfare. She welcomes the adventurers to the 'Colony of the Lady's Tears, Shallya's hospice in the Waste', and will invite the PCs to stay there that night and enjoy their hospitality.

She will also offer to treat any wounds remaining from the party's battle with the Fimir. If the party demurs, she mentions that not all the Wood's creatures have come under her care, and that they would be safer inside her walls than outside. If the party still refuses, the Egg says she likes these people, they remind her of home, and that she wants to stay tonight. The mutants easily accept her.

While walking to the compound, Sister Astrid will freely answer any questions the party may have about the colony, the mutants, her history, and the Wood. Regarding their mission, she knows nothing other than that the Egg is clearly touched by Chaos, yet her destiny does not lie in the colony. She knows nothing of Muuthauwg and has not seen the strange piper. She *does* remember Goffman, and his past efforts on her behalf, and will react very positively to his name: she regards him as a friend, and a genuinely good man.

If one of the heroes is showing signs of boilswort infestation, Sister Astrid sighs and says she knows of no cure; but the new mutant is welcome to spend the remainder of their days at the hospice and then have his body laid out for cleansing on a bier. Surely this is better than returning to Marienburg and facing hanging or burning, or perhaps infecting others?

Sister Astrid von Nimlsheim

Level 3 Priestess of Shallya, Heretic and Excommunicate (ex-Noble, ex-Physician's Student, ex-Initiate), age 45

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
5	32	31	4	4	11	51	1	47	52	53	53	62	54

Skills: Arcane Language (Magick), Blather, Cast Spells (Shallyan levels 1-3), Charm, Cure Disease, Disarm, Etiquette, Heal Wounds, Heraldry, Herb Lore, Identify Undead, Immunity to Disease, Luck, Magical Awareness, Magical Sense, Manufacture Drugs, Manufacture Scrolls, Meditate, Musicianship (Mandolin), Prepare Poison, Public Speaking, Read/Write, Ride, Scroll Lore, Secret Language (Classical), Sing, Sixth Sense, Strike to Stun, Surgery, Wit, Specialist Weapon – Fencing Sword.

Spells: Aura of Protection, Aura of Resistance, Cure Insanity, Cure Light Injury, Cure Poison, Heal Injury, Treat Illness

Trappings: Standard Shallyan robes and wimple, Staff, Shoulder-bag with medicines and surgical kit, Shallyan prayer book, Folded bull of excommunication, Small wood-carving of a dove.



Sister Astrid von Nimlsheim was born to a wealthy Carroburg family. She showed considerable intellectual gifts and strong religious leanings and, having no interest in the arranged marriages common to women of her class, convinced her parents to let her attend the University of Altdorf. Realizing

there that the male-dominated society would never let her become a physician, she entered the priesthood of Shallya both to find spiritual peace and follow her calling. Sent to the Shallyan hospital in Marienburg, she worked there for several years.

But she was appalled at the treatment of those afflicted with mutation: instead of being cared for in the hope of a cure, they were cast out and denied the sanctuary of the Shallyan hospice. She began to have dreams that Shallya wanted these people cared for, and that this was her duty. Her repeated arguments with her superiors and her public preaching eventually brought her to the attention of the City Council, which ordered her arrest. A final dream warned her to seek her destiny in the Wasteland and she fled just ahead of the witch-hunters.

After weeks of aimless travel, she stumbled across the moor and the mutants living there. She became their leader and ministered to them as Shallya wanted. She is fanatical in her zeal, convinced that she has a divine charge. She is also deeply caring and sympathetic, and will sacrifice herself if necessary to save her charges.

GM's Note: It need not be entirely certain whether Astrid really does have Shallya's personal blessing, in which case her dreams and suchlike are authentically divine, or whether she is a little bit crazy, but with good intuition that she rationalizes to herself as 'dreams' and 'sendings'. The PCs can be left wondering – although if they receive a Shallyan miracle that cures them of mutation, they could decide that the question has been settled.

Description: A still-handsome woman, 5' 4" tall, whose blonde hair is turning to grey. Lacking any affectations of make-up or jewellery, her features betray her years of working with the poor and living in the Wasteland.

The Colony

Sister Astrid founded the colony eight years ago when, in flight from persecution in Marienburg, she stumbled upon a small group of mutants hiding on a remote moor. Instead of the loathing and fear they had been accustomed to, the mutants found in her someone who cared and gave them hope of eventual

Mikhail Bostrup

Poet, Actor, Mutant (ex-Entertainer, ex-Minstrel)

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
5	41	43	3	3	9	49	1	51	40	39	33	26	45

Skills: Acting, Acute Hearing, Charm, Comedian, Etiquette, Mimic, Musicianship (Lute), Public Speaking, Seduction, Silent Move Rural/Urban, Sing, Storytelling, Wit.

Trappings: Kislevan Hand Axe, Lute, Sheet Music, Chest with stylish and fancy Marienburger clothes, Sling Bag with 1D6 small animals as snacks, Three well-read Books: 'Moussillon Muse: Erotic Bretonian verse', 'Saga Kisleva: 100 Kislevans who died gloriously', and 'A Thousand-and-One Norscan Jokes'.

Mutation: Headless: his face is part of his chest. His clothes are open to the waist to allow him to see.

Mutation: Eyestalks: his eyes protrude from his face on crab-like stalks. 10% of all hits to the chest will sever an eyestalk, which regenerates in one day.

Mutation: Cannibal dependency: he must eat a meal of small live animals thrice a day. (Ferret is his favourite.)

Mutation: Variable brightly coloured skin: at dawn each day, Mikhail's skin turns a new pastel hue. (-10 to all *Hide* tests, unless he is an earth tone.)

Once a Kislevan member of a travelling actors' troupe, Bostrup fell in with a crowd of Slaaneshi orgiasts while performing in Altdorf. His involvement led to his mutation and, horrified at the changes and filled with remorse, Mikhail fled into the wilderness and begged Shallya for mercy and healing. Eventually, he found his way to the colony where he was taken in by Sister Astrid. He has embraced the ways of Shallya and now only eats small living creatures, such as mice and squirrels. His fondest hope is to die in peace and let his soul be cleansed upon a bier. In the meantime, he intends to live life in the Colony to the fullest and can often be found romancing Marta. Bostrup has become Sister Astrid's trusted lieutenant and the *de facto* spokesman for the mutants. With his talent for poetry, he has also become the camp's minstrel and keeper of its oral history.

Description: Mikhail is 5' 8" tall, and weighs 140 pounds. He is slender, with a pot belly. He normally wears rough homespun, but will don his Marienburg-tailored minstrel's clothes for a special occasion. He speaks with a slight Kislevan accent, which gets very heavy when he's excited.



salvation, even if only after death. Rather than kill her, they became her followers and joined the cult of Shallya. There on the moor they laid out their new community, which has become a refuge for any mutant seeking salvation.

Sister Astrid has created a community that attempts to bring peace to the mutants' souls by giving them a semblance of the lives they once knew. Each has a job like the one held in their prior life; if that isn't possible, Sister Astrid assigns one that best fits the community's needs and the mutant's capabilities. The Colony runs on strict, if heretical, Shallyan principles: never take a sentient life, for any reason; one must even spare a follower of Nurgle, should he come seeking healing; never refuse healing or mercy to any in need, even one's worst enemy. Weapons and armour may be carried, but blades must be dulled and may be used only to parry, disarm or, as a last resort, to stun.

Sister Astrid, who firmly believes that each resident has been brought to her by divine guidance, holds services twice a day for the community; once at the morning meal and again at supper. These are joyous affairs with the mutants listening raptly to her sermons, hooting their agreement, singing songs and praying.

Among themselves, the mutants have evolved a hierarchy with the more intelligent and self-controlled guiding those with ravaged wits and bestial natures. Under Sister Astrid's guidance, they have created a village with crafts, agriculture, even tutors and a theatre. Almost all wear simple homespun adapted to their changed forms, adorned with crude tokens of Shallya. Their generally acknowledged spokesmen are Vinkee and Bostrup, though in the last couple of years Bostrup has taken prominence while Vinkee has become more sullen and withdrawn.

Sister Astrid is the source of their reform. Should she be killed or in some way removed, most of the mutants would revert to their former ways, which are not exactly Chaotic but are certainly disorganized, and the Colony would break up.

Village of the Saved

The colony itself is a ten-minute walk from the Place of Cleansing. As the party walks with Sister Astrid and the mutant Shallyans, they see sights that remind them of any village of their homeland, were it not for the twisted folk performing these chores. With every new sight, the Egg grows more excited and declares that she wants to stay here for ever and ever. The PCs can barter her down to one night, but she is a stubborn brat and arguing too strongly with her can be dangerous.

Beyond the colony's stockade a shepherd and her dog herd a small flock of sheep. The shepherd is Brunhild, a bat-winged woman with the face of a gargoyle who follows her flock with flying hops, shrieking foul curses at the animals. Her dog is Heinz, a dog-headed boy. He scampers after the sheep, barking at them with glee.

Near to the village gate they see a large vegetable garden. A pipe-smoking farmer guides a plough over the furrows. The farmer, Jörg, is quite normal other than having zebra-striped skin and hair made of worms. His plough horse, 'Ox', is a mutant with a tremendous body (S 7, T 8) and a head the size of an apple (Int 11, subject to *Stupidity* and *Frenzy*).

As the party approaches the gate, it swings open and the 'Welcome Wagon' comes forth. Led by Mikhail Bostrup and Willi/Jaan Vinkee, who introduce themselves as 'co-burgomeisters', the deputation of mutants bears gifts of flowers and food to the heroes. Alas, the flowers are twisted blooms from the Sickly Wood ('Very pretty! An' it talks, too, m'lord!') and some of the food isn't quite dead yet.



Mikhail will attach himself to the adventurer with the highest Fel, questioning a male about his adventures, or bragging of his own to a female. In the course of the conversation, he will offer his companion a live field-mouse. Presuming the adventurer declines, Bostrup will pop it into his own mouth and munch with relish.

Willi will escort the PC with the highest Int score and direct Jaan to slip his arm through the hero's. ('He always does what I tell him – such a good boy.') He questions the adventurer about affairs in Marienburg, especially news of Count Hendryk's College. ('Is that idiot van Meeren still chair of the navigation department?') The mannequin's eyes dart about, always taking in the whole scene, while his lower half merely drools. Willi plays up his role in the Colony: 'The good sister couldn't run things without me ... er ... us' and 'Mikhail – he's all show and no substance. How can you trust someone with no head?' Any character who fares well in this conversation will be invited to play chess that evening.

Once they arrive at the village, Sister Astrid will ask them to stay the night in the Hospice, invite the PCs to a festival later that evening, and will then leave them to their own devices. If they wish, Bostrup will be happy to show them around. The party are free to wander as they wish about the colony, which they will discover has many of the same basic services as any village they have ever seen. Below are a few of the sights they may see – the GM is invited to improvise more as needed.

The Happy Couple: Among the crude huts of the mutants, one place near the gate stands out – a shack decorated with dried wild flowers and homespun curtains. This is the home of Agder and Gertrude Mannburg, who were married by the Sister. Agder has great spiralling horns growing from his head, and is a hunchback. He serves as the village carpenter. Gertrude has transparent flesh and muscles – blood can be seen flowing in her veins, and her bones and organs are visible. They are sitting by the door rocking the cradle that holds their babe, a perfectly normal, happy new-born named Peter. He shows no fear of mutants, but strangers (like the PCs) may scare him.

The Tannery: Towards the rear of the compound is the small village tannery. Great bellowing cries can be heard within, as if some beast is being shredded alive. Entering the stall, the party will see a mutant with the upper torso and head of a mantis using two of its four forelegs to slice great slices of leathery integument off the body of a huge mutant ogre who is chained between two poles. The bellowing comes from the ogre as each slice is taken.

The tanner is Gerd, a pacifist who has so adopted Shallyan principles that he cannot even kill an animal to ply his trade. The ogre, Krambomm (S 8), is cursed with flesh that perpetually grows huge calluses. If it weren't removed weekly, he would suffocate. Each provides the other what he needs, and the colony makes its leather goods from Krambomm's cut-offs. The ogre must be chained, though, for he suffers from berserker rage. Both are gentlemen and, should the party show them respect, they will invite the PCs to tea.

The Hospice: In the centre of the village is a long building with a steeple at one end. This is the village hospital, with a combination church and schoolroom attached. It is meant for the treatment of sickness and injury, but of course many mutations are eventually fatal to the victim, and here they can spend their last days, comforted by Sister Astrid and their friends. There is currently one resident, Dieter, who lays dying while his body rots into a noisome mess.

Willi (and Jaan) Vinkee

Wee Scholar (ex-Student, ex-Marine)

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
3	44	44	4	5	9	61	2	36	39	61	43	60	48

Skills: Acute Hearing, Ambidextrous, Arcane Language (Magick), Astronomy, Cartography, Concealment Rural, Consume Alcohol, Disarm, Dodge Blow, History, Identify Plants, Luck, Magical Sense, Numismatics, Read/Write, Row, Rune Lore, Secret Language (Battle Tongue), Speak Additional Language (Tar Eltharin), Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Stun, Swim.



Trappings: Crossbow, doctorate from Count Hendryk's College of Navigation and Sea Magicks of Marienburg, Grapnel and Rope, Shield, Short Sword, Sleeveless Mail Shirt, Travelling Chess Set, Writing Kit.

Mutation: Mannequin: A perfect torso, head and arms sprout from Jaan's head – this is Willi. Jaan's face has atrophied till only the mouth and beard remain. When attached, Willi is in control. He may separate from Jaan when Jaan is asleep or in a drunken stupor, leaving a gaping hole in Jaan's cranium (M 2 when separated). While Jaan is an alcoholic, that has no effect on Willi, other than difficulty in controlling Jaan's movements. 25% of all head hits, when joined, strike Willi, who has one Wound. Jaan would not survive the death of Willi.

Mutation: Blood substitution: leeches. Any wound to Willi/Jaan causes a stream of leeches to spew forth. The attacker must make an I test to avoid them. On a failed test, the victim suffers a S1 hit on 4-6 on 1D6, repeated each round. On a 1, the leeches are sated. The victim can stop the leeches' attacks by stripping off all armour and clothing, and applying fire or similar to the creatures.

Jaan Vinkee is a native Wastelander who, after serving a tour as a Marienburg marine, enrolled as a student at Count Hendryk's College to fill his desire for knowledge. There, he showed great promise as a scholar and garnered a rare appointment to the General Faculty.

All his life, Jaan had heard voices, as if someone was living inside him. Soon after his appointment, Jaan conducted a ritual from a forbidden tome intended to set this part of him free. But instead grew a body from his head, while his own features withered. As Jaan's mind crumbled, Willi took control, caring for himself and his 'brother'.

Jaan/Willi were forced to flee into the Wasteland to avoid discovery, and found Sister Astrid's colony. Though he joined it, Willi has never felt at home, as if fate would betray him yet again. He has become jealous of the influence wielded by Mikhail Bostrup, and now hears a voice himself. In fact, his history makes him susceptible to Chaotic influences (perhaps even Zahnarzt), or he may be simply schizophrenic – but now this voice encourages him to betray the Colony.

The other room serves as both temple and school. There is an altar with a wood-carving of Shallya on it, tears streaming from her eyes as she holds out her hands in blessing. On the walls are crude drawings of Shallya among the mutants. In some, she herself shows mutation. When the PCs arrive, Willi Vinkee is conducting a class in reading for some of the mutants: they pass a parchment among themselves and try to read aloud. Willi

is a stern master and corrects them abruptly. Should Bostrup be with them, characters succeeding an *Int* test will note the furtive glare Vinkee gives him: there is clearly no love lost between the two.

Fight! Fight!

Some time while exploring the village, the party will see a fight erupt between two mutants, recent arrivals. A man with an inverted face and goat's hoofs is wrestling another mutant with the head and paws of a bear over a haunch of meat. Should the characters intervene with words of peace and invoke the names of Shallya or Sister Astrid, the two will stop fighting and grudgingly agree to split the meat. If not, after a few rounds the mechanoid ex-prostitute Marta (see below) will break up the fight, upbraiding them both roundly.

Festival

Sister Astrid has planned a festival that night to celebrate the naming of the new infant, Peter, and the PCs have been invited to join as the mutants' guests. It is a happy time held under the bright light of both moons. All the mutants are there, save Dieter who is too ill, Heinz who is on watch at the gate, and Willi who has been listening to the voice in his head and is sulking. The remainder dance about the bonfire and sing, though it may remind the characters of some gibbering ceremony out of a nightmare. The mutants will invite them to join in.

Tug'o'War: A rope is laid across a muddy patch in the village commons. On one side are Ox and Krambomm, while the other comprises five or six mutants and a couple of the stronger PCs. There is a 50% chance of winning, with every strength point in favour of the stronger side giving it an extra +5%. The loser is dragged through the mud, and the villagers douse them in buckets of water to clean them off.

Morality Play: On a small wooden stage at the end of the green-sward, the mutants led by Bostrup and Marta stage an impromptu play. Marta is the poor, misunderstood mutant put on trial by witch-hunters, while Bostrup is her Shallyan lawyer. The



Other Village Mutants

Marta, a former high-class Marienburger prostitute, is now a mechanical being (4 AP on all locations, and S 4, T 4 – but only W 4, due to vulnerable internal mechanisms). She is eager for gossip about city life.

Heinz, a boy from the Empire, has the head of a dog. He is anxious to please, although very hard to understand, and is reliable and good at taking orders.

Jean-Baptiste is a Bretonnian soldier with blades of razor-sharp chitin in place of arms. A vegetarian, he must be fed by the other mutants.

Durak, a dwarf from Altdorf, is blessed by Nurgle; his flesh rots from his body, even as it regenerates. Quiet and thoughtful, he is Willi's most frequent chess partner.

Minor Mutant Villagers

Use the following average stats for the mutant villagers, and choose 1D3 mutations from the list below, adjusting their statistics as necessary.

Characteristics

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
3	33	31	3	3	7	31	1	28	29	30	32	27	30

Skills: Dodge Blow, Flee!, Strike to Stun.

Trappings: Hand weapon (dulled), Shallyan prayer beads.

Other Mutations

1. Beaked face.
2. Carapace (2 APs, all locations).
3. Stumpy legs (Move reduced to 1).
4. Thoroughly covered in warts.
5. Brightly coloured.
6. Horrid stench (reduce opponent's WS and BS on a failed T test by -10).
7. Rooster's crest and wattles.
8. Extra-long limbs.
9. Arms and legs reversed.
10. Flethy crown of eyes (360-degree vision, can't be surprised if foe can be seen).



characters are invited to take the part of the witch-hunter judges. The play is given as a melodramatic comedy, with the mutant audience booing the judges, cheering the heroes and laughing uproariously as Bostrup makes the PCs look like fools – all in good fun. In the end, he tricks the judges into arresting each other while he and Marta escape.

The Main Event

After the play, the mutants enjoy good food and drink, including a fine barley beer reserved for special occasions. Mikhail is in high spirits, walking arm-in-arm with Marta while enjoying a ferret he caught that morning.

After a while, Agder and Gertrude stand proudly before the crowd with their new son. In a quiet ceremony, Sister Astrid leads the group in a prayer for the new-born, that he may know the peace and happiness that all have found in the Colony. At the close, each of the mutants walks by and touches Peter, conferring a blessing on him. The party is expected to join in. The Egg will hang back, remembering another ceremony a thousand years ago, and will start to cry: 'No! Don't touch the baby! The green man will come and send him into the sky! Don't!'

At the moment the ceremony ends, there is a loud barking from the gate mixed with shouts of 'Torches' and 'Soldiers!' Heinz barrels into the midst of the partyers and gasps out that an armed band is approaching the colony. Sister Astrid, Mikhail, and the mutants rush to the gates. Presuming the PCs follow, they will see their old acquaintance Otto von Lufthanser (see p.41), leading a force of around forty armed villagers across the moor towards the Colony. In the distance, flames rise from the Place of Cleansing.

A few nights ago, a voice whispered in Lufthanser's head of a place in the Wasteland where mutants gather. Zahnarzt, having witnessed the actions of the PCs, has decided they are the wrong people to be accompanying the Egg. Various members of the Brotherhood are on their way, but for the moment the demon believes that the Egg would be safer in the hands of the witch-hunter, who knows nothing of its nature and who would never harm a little girl. The PCs' path was leading them to the Colony, so Zahnarzt has arranged a little interception.

Besieged!

To the unskilled rat-a-tat-tat of a drum, the witch-hunter and his men march to just beyond a bow-shot from the Colony's only gate, and spread out in a line. Lufthanser unrolls a scroll and reads aloud:

'Astrid von Nimlsheim, formerly a Priestess of Shallya, I accuse you and arrest you on the charge of heresy and consorting with Chaos. Surrender now, and let justice take its course with the festering abominations within these walls! Surrender, or die where you stand!'

Lufthanser has no intention of storming the stockade, save as a last resort. He has no idea that the mutants are all pacifists and can't really defend themselves, but he doesn't care. His goal is to bully Astrid into surrendering, take everyone prisoner, and slaughter the mutants at his leisure.

Should he learn of the presence of the PCs within the stockade, his reactions will depend a great deal on his past encounter with them; if he previously liked them and thought them good servants of Law, he will be outraged and sickened, while nursing a small hope that they were somehow tricked or captured, or that they are 'planning something'. Otherwise, he will

Sister Astrid will not fight, and neither will the mutants while she lives. She is at a loss for a course of action: while she would be willing to tell Lufthanser to 'naff off' were she alone, she feels she must give up if it might save her charges.

That leaves the PCs with the problem of repulsing or dissuading the besiegers. The GM should encourage the players to use their ingenuity here: they have the rest of the night to make plans, and there are a number of options, all of which

The PCs will be quartered in the school-room of the Hospice: if they are planning, this lets them draw diagrams on the



blackboard. Anyone awake or recently gone to bed as Willi leaves will hear a splash from the direction of the tannery: investigation will show nothing except a possible way out of the village, and the noise could have come from the animal pen a little upstream – unlikely, as all the animals (pigs; the cows are kept in the barn) can be seen asleep. The rest of the Colony is quiet, although Heinz, Jean-Baptiste and Mikhail are all patrolling the area.

Half an hour later, Willi will return by the same way; lying in the stream until he is sure nobody is watching, and then climbing out. Anyone still outside will notice him walking across the Colony; make an *Observation* roll to notice he is dripping wet. He goes to the front gate, checks that nobody is around, and then unbolts it, but leaves it closed. He then retires to his hut. Any PC who passes close to the gate before dawn will notice it is unbolted, but no NPC will spot this.

If the PCs are so blissfully unaware of danger that they haven't even posted guards, and thus don't spot Willi, it may be necessary to prod them into action. Mikhail comes into the hospice fifteen minutes later: he spotted Willi's return, and is worried. Willi can be roused from his bed and will vigorously deny everything; a search of his hut will reveal the wet clothes, but only the presence of Sister Astrid will make him confess everything, from the voice in his head to his betrayal of the Colony and the unlocked gate.

Dawn Attack

A few minutes after dawn, Lufthanser and ten men will sneak into the Colony through the open gate. The witch-hunter and two men will go directly to Sister Astrid's hut; the rest go to the Hospice (Willi gave them directions), and they will attempt to capture and gag the allies of Chaos within as quietly as possible. The rest of the force waits outside the gate, either to stop any mutants fleeing, or to storm in as reinforcements if an alarm is given. If not, the advance force will set fires in the barns, the Hospice and any other large buildings, and will then retreat outside, to slaughter any mutant who runs out. Astrid and the PCs will be bound, gagged, loaded into a cart and set out for Marienburg for trial, accompanied by Lufthanser and the Egg.

Any alarm or unexpected loud noise while this is going on will rouse the entire Colony within a minute (six rounds), and if they are being attacked or Sister Astrid is being harmed, the mutants will fight back. There are thirty in all. GMs may want to play out the fight using **Warhammer Fantasy Battle**, or prefer to give the PCs the impression of mass combat, fire and mayhem. If they leave by the front gate they will be attacked by ten men (the others are busy with other escaping mutants); if they go over the wall or out by the stream then they will get away.

Alternatively they can stop the conflict by capturing Lufthanser and threatening him: he is outside the Colony with the captured Sister Astrid, watching the fun. The witch-hunter will bluster and threaten, but the bottom line is that he values his life more than he hates Chaos, and will agree to any terms, including ordering his men to withdraw – planning, of course, to pursue the party the moment he is free.

If the gate has been re-bolted, the invading force will not enter. Instead, Sister Astrid will leave an hour after dawn. She will be bound and loaded into a cart, and then the besiegers

The Besieging Rabble

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
3	28	33	4	4	7	32	1	29	25	29	30	29	29

Skills: Consume Alcohol, Scale Sheer Surface, Street Fighter.

Trappings: Hand weapons, Improvised weapons, Bottles of booze, Leather armour (0/1 AP), Scaling ladders, One week's worth of food, Bows, Arrows, and Pitch.

will encircle the Colony's stockade and set fire to it. They will then wait outside the main gate, as before. Their intention is to kill every mutant, capture the PCs and save the little girl that Willi told Lufthanser about.

Loose ends

This chapter can end in several ways. Having the PCs tied up in a cart going back to Marienburg is not the disaster it may seem. If they really can't work out a way of breaking their bonds and escaping, Lufthanser will take the same route as the PCs would have done. In Lehmberg (see chapter eight) he will encounter Keine, decide to hold the trial right there, will fail to appear as a witness, and after Keine has made his getaway, his body will be found concealed under his bed, with his throat slit.

It is possible that from the moment they see the Colony, the party will decide it is a hideous Chaos-infested place, and should be cleansed. They should be dissuaded from this (they are massively outnumbered); it is preferable to have them avoid the Colony entirely than attack it. Failing that, if one of them has been infected with boilswort, what better place to get treatment than from a priestess who knows about mutations?

Player characters who enter the Colony but who are then cowardly enough to abandon the mutants in their time of need, or who decide to throw in their lot with Lufthanser, will have to deal with their own tortured consciences. Award each one Insanity Point for the knowledge that, though they may have accomplished their mission, the Shallyans who welcomed them into their midst were all destroyed.

If Lufthanser survives the siege, is at liberty, and still of a mind to arrest the party, he may pursue the heroes all the way to Marienburg, either harassing them (appearing as a surprise witness in chapter eight?) or complicating their efforts to save the city. Other surviving besiegers will return to their villages, though they may spread tales of the adventurers' allegiance to Chaos: the PCs should be careful about setting foot in the Wasteland again. If the heroes save the Colony, they will have made friends for life and have a refuge in time of need. If the party abandoned them, then any surviving mutants will seek revenge for their betrayal.

And what of any adventurer who mutated, either as a result of boilswort or some other cause? If, and only if, they save the Colony, a miracle will occur – probably in response to Sister Astrid's fervent prayers. Shallya will reward those who so aided her devout priestess by curing them of all mutations and other injuries – probably with lots of white doves, shining lights, and other appropriate special effects.





Chapter 7:

Transformation Moon

The road at last! The party can finally hope for reasonably easy travel back to Marienburg and the conclusion of their mission. There are decent inns on this road, too. Even the weather seems to have improved ... a little, anyway. And there are other folk on the road – good company, some of them. What can possibly go wrong now?

This chapter covers the period from when the party join the Marienburg road, a few hours' march from Sister Astrid's Colony, until they come within a day's travel of the city; a journey of six days. GMs can be fairly flexible in handling these events. For example, the journey might take a little longer, allowing more time to develop the characters and story of Braten's theatrical troupe, or things can be played out in more detail, menacing the party with the horrors of the road – or the whole plot could be compressed into three or four days of frenetic activity, with the troupe giving performances at lunch-time as well as during the evening.

Behind The Scenes

With the approach of the eclipse, Chaos is on the rise, and the closer the final day, the more extreme the situation becomes. Paulus Sternheimer, one of the travelling players, is a member of the Brotherhood of the Forgotten One, and his devotions, coupled with the Egg's presence, focus the power of the Chaos Moon onto the travelling party, making the semblance of their plays become briefly solid. What was fake – a stuffed bird, a painted apple, an actor playing a role – becomes real. The actors are quite unaware of this; Sternheimer himself isn't doing it consciously. However, he *is* generally aware that Chaos is burgeoning around him, and he loves it.

GMs can and should improvise around this theme. The world around the travellers is having its laws mercilessly scrambled, while the travellers themselves are suffering worst of all. There is no need for logic, no explanation – no one will ever find out how that tree came to grow eight varieties of fruit at once, or why the sides of the road are littered with dead dogs. This is Chaos; use it! Don't be afraid to improvise.

The story-line of this section can be played in various styles. If the players want to battle through a red mist of blood, you can throw in random attacks by bandits, monsters, Chaos cultists, manifestations of Chaos, Chaos-hunting villagers, pursuing witch-hunters or even Fimir. If they are more interested in the extraordinary people and events around them, GMs should devote their energy to those, adding more vignettes to colour both the journey and the troupe of players. They can take an active part in the theatre company and its plays, or just watch as events unfold around them.

The Highway

The path north across the moors is straight and easy, and the party, with the Egg, will hit the main road between Marienburg and Gisoreux a mere matter of hours after leaving Sister Astrid's Colony. They are maybe a week's journey from Marienburg, and they should feel that they are on schedule, or perhaps a little behind. The weather is erratic: bright, burning sunlight is punctuated by squalls of lashing rain or blizzards of stinging hail. Morrslieb, full, rides high in the sky.

The road itself is wide and, despite being one of the Old World's principal highways, is in a bad way: deep in mud, and covered with pot-holes. The party have joined it around thirty miles before it enters the Gisoreux Pass through the Grey Mountains, and are closer to Gisoreux than they are to Marienburg. There is a fair amount of traffic on the road, but almost all of it is travelling west, away from the Wasteland and into Bretonnia.

The party soon encounters a band of refugees heading west, some riding, some walking. They tell tales of bandits, some sporting bizarre deformities and mutations, and monsters that defy description; trees bearing unnatural fruit, even though it is winter, some carrying hundreds of different varieties on their twisting, spindly branches. They speak of slow, quiet rivers unexpectedly boiling into impassable rapids, or battering themselves against their banks as if seeking to drown travellers. Most of this is hysterical nonsense: rumours, travellers' tales, and mob hysteria are clearly getting out of hand.

If the adventurers were hoping to obtain horses from somewhere, now they are on a road – they are out of luck. All these refugees have bought up anything that will take a saddle, and in any case, the road is so poor in places that foot-travel is quite likely to be pretty well as fast as riding. This should be yet another incentive for the party to join up with the actors and their wagons.

A Meeting on the Road

A couple of hours after they join the road, a group of just under twenty people rides up from behind them, and they are hailed by its leader, Steffan Braten. He introduces himself and his troupe, the Rosae Theatrum from Gisoreux, and expresses polite surprise that anybody else should be travelling 'into the Heart of the Eclipse'. The adventurers may be equally surprised

to meet up with another group travelling *towards* Marienburg and, perhaps suspecting Chaos cultists, may refuse to explain themselves, but Braten is not bothered. He proposes that the two groups travel together for protection: the troupe has retained five men-at-arms, but they could always do with more, and no doubt the adventurers would welcome the assistance of almost half-a-dozen trained fighters should trouble arise.

The adventurers probably have one important question for Braten at this point: why are he and his band going to Marienburg?

'My dear fellows!' he replies. 'We are players, and we have an opportunity unparalleled in the history of the thespian art! Like every artist worthy of the Muses' patronage, we seek ceaselessly to perfect our art! And what better place to take on our most perfect roles, to wear our most perfect costumes, to act out our most consummate drama, than under the Transformation Moon itself? When the Chaos Moon eclipses the sun, we shall bring on our stage lights, illuminate the darkness, and transform ourselves utterly!'

Braten brushes aside the threat of danger. He has a higher duty, he says, to his Art. Should a bard refuse to sing of injustice because the authorities threaten? Should a historian deny truths inconvenient to the government of the moment? Should an actor refuse his greatest role because of risk? No, sir! If perfection can only be achieved at the cost of his life, it will have come cheaply, and he for one will regard it as a bargain well made.

The party will no doubt conclude that Braten is mad. He himself prefers the term 'visionary'. Some characters may fear that he is some sort of Chaos cultist with an especially weak cover story, but he is quite genuine: perhaps spying characters might overhear a discussion amongst the troupe over which play they should perform in Marienburg, or whether they have enough greasepaint. Braten *is* outrageously camp, but many people think all actors are like that. He also has enough charisma to have convinced his colleagues to join him on this strange errand.

Still, he is at least harmlessly mad, and he is willing to extend the protection of his men-at-arms to the party. The troupe has good wagons, and are well provisioned, so they won't slow the party down; in fact, the chance to load the Egg onto a wagon for a while may be welcome. Braten requires nothing from the party save their company – after all, they are both travelling the same road – though, he remarks offhandedly, they can always use stage-hands, and they pay well: ten shillings a day.

If the party suspects a trap and refuses to accompany the troupe, Braten is disappointed. His group will stay very close to the party – close enough that the PCs may suspect he is planning something, though in fact all he has in mind is keeping these well-armed adventurers within shouting distance in case of bandits. And of course, it would be just like the Egg to notice that her 'guardians' don't want to go with Uncle Steffan, and immediately kick up a fuss ...

Assuming that the PCs are willing to travel with the troupe, Braten claps his hands enthusiastically and says, 'That's settled. So I simply must introduce you to my fellow artists. Never before in all the Old World have you met such a shining collection of thespian talent! Never again will you thrill to such performances as the ones you will soon witness! My friends, let us go to meet the actors whose names shall outlive the Empire itself! Oh, and by the way, what are your names?'

Whatever names the characters tell him, he promptly forgets. He will spend the next week referring to adventurers as 'my good man' or 'the tall gentlewoman', or just 'er ...'

He introduces the party to each of the actors, waxing effusive over their talents and accomplishments, and to Louis de Montalban, the leader of the hired guards. The actors are, for the most part, as vague and unworldly as Braten himself, though Lorenzo the Dwarf seems almost professionally taciturn. De Montalban is unabashedly relieved to meet the party, and when Braten is out of earshot will confide that he is concerned for the troupe's safety – and that of his men. 'You know how it is – sometimes, you can *smell* death on folk. And I'm smelling it on this lot.'

The Bloody Chamber

The rest of that day's travelling will be uneventful.

That night, the group stops at a coaching inn on the outskirts of a small village. It is packed with some of the more affluent of Marienburg's refugees: merchants, lawyers, politicians, and so on. They are angry and irritable, unused to the rigours of travel. Braten, sizing up the audience, commandeers the common room to perform Will Pikewaver's famous tragedy *The Bloody Chamber*, a lurid tale of adulterous liaisons, villainous conspiracies and murderous intrigue.

The adventurers may be surprised to see that the performance largely lives up to Braten's boasting; the rather ineffectual actors seem truly to become the passionate, powerful, driven creatures of Pikewaver's script. The foppish Braten, in the role of the irresistible but fiendish de Courtney, parades a malevolent sexual charisma that persuades a couple of husbands to shoo their wives out of the room. Gianessa, as the ambitious but haunted matron of the d'Arbalon clan, surveys audience and fellow actors alike with a killer's predatory gaze. And no one would guess from Lorenzo's comic interruptions that an hour ago he was complaining grumpily about not getting a room to himself.

The play lasts for some two hours, getting increasingly intense, before it finally resolves itself with Madame d'Arbalon's repentant soliloquy and suicide. The audience are captivated, and the troupe's hat is soon filled with coins. A couple of unescorted women offer Braten the hospitality of their chambers; he politely rejects them. The men in the audience, on the other hand, seem nervously eager to get out of Gianessa's way as she apologetically stumbles through the crowd to her room. The actors gather to count the take and to tell each other how good the performance was; the adventurers will overhear Braten observing to Gianessa that the steady improvement in their fortunes proves that Sternheimer's suggestion of going to Marienburg for the eclipse was well-founded – truly, the Transformation Moon is the friend of Art.

Whether the PCs are working as stage-hands or are in the audience, the impression they get is of professionalism and skill: the acting troupe may be eccentric, but it is also extremely good. The only disturbance during the play is a halfling pick-pocket working the audience. Any PC watching the audience (e.g. from back-stage) can make an *Observe* test to spot him; if confronted he will attempt to flee into the night and hide rather than fight. If the PCs catch the thief with discretion then after the play ends Braten will be grateful; if they make a lot of noise in trying to apprehend the villain then he will be scathing: 'We spend an hour creating a perfect environment, and you ruin it with a single action. Who cares if a few fat burghers are lightened of a few guilders, if they have witnessed true Art?' If the crook is caught, the village constable will lock him up, ready for the visiting magistrate who is due in a few days.



The Rosae Theatrum Players

The Rosae Theatrum is a theatre company consisting of around a dozen actors and stage-hands, plus five men-at-arms hired for this journey. They are from Gisoreux in Bretonnia, where they occupy a purpose-built theatre, and this is the first time they have gone on the road for several years – the eclipse is not the only reason for this; takings have been very poor recently (only Gianessa will volunteer this information). The trip to Marienburg is partly an expression of their art, and partly a publicity stunt.

Although the members of the company may appear to be fops or 'luvvies', they are all very professional when it comes to business, and will not tolerate amateurism. All have a wide repertoire of plays and parts memorized, and the actors are so tight-knit and know each other so well that little rehearsal is needed.

At the start of the adventure, there is little visible tension between any of the troupe's members. They also exude a sense of real enthusiasm for what they are doing; they love the theatre and everything about it, and seem to believe that drama really can change the world.

Steffan Braten Troupe Leader

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
5	30	30	3	3	6	35	1	35	65	65	45	65	75

Skills: Acting, Blather, Charm, Etiquette, Luck, Public Speaking, Read/Write, Secret Language (Classical), Seduction, Storytelling, Wit.

Trappings: Books, Costumes.

Braten is a tall, striking fellow, his enthusiastic face peering out from under a mop of bright red hair. His most noticeable characteristic is his constant exaggeration: he never walks anywhere, only strides; he never talks, only declaims. An outrageously and unabashedly homosexual fop, he is fond of dramatic gestures, and conversations with him are most safely conducted from outside hand-waving range. He is a brilliant actor, utterly transformed when on stage; all of the affectation and excess are gone, replaced by a complete immersion in the role and action. His clothing, like everything else about him, tends towards the frilly. He is blessed with a boyishly charming and infectious grin.

Although nominally the leader of the Rosae Theatrum, his love is acting itself, not the logistics of running a theatre company. In these matters he will defer to the judgement of the stage manager Paulus Sternheimer, and consults him frequently in secret; neither of them would ever reveal whose hands really hold the reins of power within the troupe.



Paulus Sternheimer Stage Manager

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	30	30	4	4	8	40	1	40	35	50	50	50	30

16 Magic Points

Skills: Acting, Cast Spells, Demon Lore, Mimic, Read/Write, Ride, Secret Language (Classical).

Trappings: Dagger, Tattoos of Zahnarzt, Books, Costumes, Spell Components (but *not* the ones for *Summon Guardian*).

Spells: Curse, Magic Alarm, Sleep, Fire Ball, Steal Mind, Summon Guardian, Summon Steed, Summoning Of The Brotherhood.

Note: Sternheimer has previously summoned a Guardian and a Steed, so he can resummon them more easily.



Paulus Sternheimer is – or seems to be – a blandly professional actor, free of both Braten's naiveté and Haufmann's moodiness, a little too dull for lead roles, but with a capricious wit and an eye for the unusual. He doubles as stage manager, helping Braten's productions run smoothly and throwing in directorial suggestions. He is also a member of the Brotherhood of the Forgotten One and a sometime black magician, and it is he who really makes the crucial decisions that determine the fate of the Rosae Theatrum.

Most of the actors love the theatre for the beauty and terror and pleasure that it can offer; Sternheimer (secretly) loves it because it is all about change and unreality. The child of respectable farmers, he ran away from home to join an acting troupe, where his taste for fiction made him a useful bit-part player. However, his fascination with stories and untruths led him into strange company, and six years ago he was initiated into the Brotherhood. He has heard the *Summonings of the Brotherhood* and knows a little of what is going on: someone has the Egg and is travelling back to Marienburg with it. He persuaded the company to leave Gisoreux, and is watching everyone on the road for signs that they might be the ones he's looking for.

Sternheimer values his anonymity, as he doesn't want to attract attention, and he generally keeps quiet unless he is spoken to (though he is careful not to appear *too* taciturn or reclusive). He is tall and blond, with a haughty demeanour which he struggles to control.

Confronting Sternheimer: It is possible that the adventurers will come to suspect Sternheimer of some association with Chaos, or simply that they will insist on closely investigating everybody. Sternheimer is reasonably careful to conceal his allegiance, and if he knows he is being watched he will be doubly cautious. He keeps his magical paraphernalia in a props box, and will shrug them off as 'some old junk' if anyone finds

and enquires about them. But ultimately it is likely that his true nature will be uncovered – unless he gets away with the Egg first – and he will have to fight the party or flee. He will try desperately to avoid direct combat, for he is an actor, not a warrior, but he will call upon whatever magical powers and creatures of Chaos he can to defend himself.

It is important to the plot that Sternheimer casts his *Summoning of the Brotherhood* at some stage. Even if he is attacked and cut down by the PCs with total surprise, he will gurgle out some 'strange, mystical-sounding words' as he dies, actually powering the call with his own departing life-force. In this case, 'Franz Van Mehern' will still join the party later, but will attempt to snatch the Egg on his own.

Curtis Lorenzo Depressive Dwarf Jester

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	45	15	4	4	8	20	1	35	50	35	50	55	15

Skills: Acting, Comedian, Haggle, Jest, Ventriloquist, Wit.
Trappings: Knife, Make-up, Costumes, Bladder on Stick.

Born into a circus, Lorenzo ran away at an early age, determined that he would not be a freakish clown all his life. Insanely embittered, he is easy to bait, and his anger is pathetically ineffectual. (However, he has always been a friend to Haufmann, and Haufmann's anger is anything but ineffectual.) He is equally apt in both comic and serious roles, but the Rosae Theatrum needs a jester, and Lorenzo fits the bill. Although he is glad of the opportunity to appear on stage, he secretly despises the comic roles he takes. Off stage, he is miserable and irritable, resenting the fact that people refuse to take him seriously.



Gianessa Antoniola Doomed Actress

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
5	30	30	3	3	6	30	1	55	50	50	30	50	70

Skills: Acting, Charm, Dance, History, Musicianship, Public Speaking, Read/Write, Ride, Secret Language (Classical), Seduction.
Trappings: Knife, Books, Costumes.

Gianessa is the troupe's leading lady, specializing in romantic and melodramatic roles. Raised by Tilean parents in Gisoreux, she is a dark-skinned and black-haired



beauty, and her appearances – especially in some of the more torrid romances – sometimes attract an audience more interested in baser pleasures than art. She is of only medium height and slight build, though she has a commanding presence. Her face is slim and relaxed, her eyes large and expressive. She prefers loose, dark clothing. She shares Braten's ideals, and is impressed by his devotion to his art, but her heart secretly belongs to the brooding Haufmann. For all her smouldering sexuality on stage, she is quite discriminating in real life, taking lovers only when her needs overwhelm her judgement.

Adam Haufmann Innocent Knife-Wielder

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
5	35	35	4	3	6	30	2	35	35	35	30	35	30

Skills: Acting, Read/Write, Ride, Secret Language (Classical), Sing.
Trappings: Sword, Costumes.

Dark and muscular, Haufmann is a striking contrast to the rangy Braten. His dark eyes shine with passion, but it is more sinister and uncontrollable than Braten's naive enthusiasm. Quick to anger, and gifted with a withering sarcasm, he is a good and loyal friend to anyone who can tolerate his moods (as anyone who mocks Lorenzo will find to their cost). Haufmann maintains a pleasant demeanour, and channels his intensity into tragic, violent, often doomed roles. He is captivated by Braten's visionary ideas. He lusts after Gianessa, though he does not love her; and he is too proud to sleep with anyone for whom he has only base lusts, whether they love him or not. (Braten has no idea how close to the mark he was when he cast Adam as Sternhaus in *The Infernal Machinery of Desire*.)



Other Members of the Rosae Theatrum

Braten, Gianessa, Haufmann and Lorenzo are the leading lights of the troupe, but they have a significant supporting cast. GMs can develop these people as required, and add or subtract characters as may seem necessary.

- ◆ **Maria di Faloca**, a stout, dark woman, is ageing gracefully and cheerfully. She laments her lack of children to anyone who will listen, and tries to mother and pamper anyone who will let her. The Egg dislikes her almost immediately.
- ◆ **Erik von Franzen** is a blond he-man: rippling flesh to melt the heart of the ladies, with the mind of a particularly affectionate puppy. He is easy-going and good-natured, except where Katharina is concerned: he gets jealous if anyone looks at her. He tends to play roles that don't involve too many lines. Or clothes.
- ◆ **Katharina Guidermann** is a tiny, innocent slip of a girl, with soft brown hair, a smiling face and big, welcoming, blue eyes. She and Erik are chastely, joyously in love, and they are trying to save up enough to settle down and marry.



The Knights at the Circus

The troupe rises early in the morning, and, after a hearty breakfast, sets out once more. The weather continues to be unpredictable, and any characters who have travelled this road before may be puzzled that some landmarks are missing, or seem to have moved. (GMs should make – or fake – **Int** tests for characters to notice this.) Clouds seemingly shape themselves into mocking images of warped animals, and drench the travellers in acrid, stinking rain, and unexpected deep troughs of mud mislead the wagon-horses' footing. Still, for every hazard there is a patch of good going, and for every mound of scree there is a gentle slope.

The Egg swiftly tires of the uncomfortable journey. Braten can quieten her temporarily by dipping into an apparently inexhaustible supply of sweetmeats, and he seems amused by her outbursts and tantrums, even going so far as to call her a 'dear little girl' on one occasion. Although PCs may come to suspect that it is their young charge who is in some way responsible for the Chaotic effects, they would be wrong: in fact it is Sternheimer and the general fanaticism of the troupe that is causing it. It is neither conscious nor deliberate; simply an effect of the oncoming eclipse. Whether it would happen without the Egg's presence is debatable; none of this adventure would be happening without the Egg.

Sometime in the middle of the afternoon, the party will come upon a group of refugees, one of whom accosts them, begging for money, food and water. The beggar is persistent, and continues to hold them up with thanks and praise even if they give him something. While he delays them, other refugees move to encircle the group. Once they are ready, the beggar gives a signal, and the 'refugees' pull out swords and attack.

These are common bandits, who have been making a living preying on tired, weak and unarmed refugees, but who have been attracted by the prospect of a richer prize. There are twelve of them – enough to give the party alone a hard time, but with the help of de Montalban and his men it will be fairly easy to see them off. The bandits are cowardly enough that they will break and run if too many of them are injured or killed, or if they feel that this isn't going to be an easy victory. If the party decided to travel alone, they will find themselves hard pressed until the men-at-arms from the Rosae Theatrum arrive to give them a hand a few minutes later: the troupe has, as mentioned, been staying close to the adventurers, and Braten will encourage de Montalban to help out. This should encourage the PCs to travel with the actors from now on.

That night's performance, held on a impromptu stage in an inn's courtyard, under the unwavering gaze of the Chaos Moon, is a classical comedy, Aristides' *The Knights at the Circus* (or *Acharniazusoi*, as Braten pompously insists on calling it). It is a farcical misadventure of mistaken identity, bawdiness and the low habits of high citizens. Lorenzo's dwarvish professional romancer is splendidly ludicrous and utterly convincing, and Gianessa's lewd pillow-talk and carefully arranged

déshabillé prompts one large and irate lady to accost her later and denounce her as a harlot and a disgrace. A bitter argument ensues, with Gianessa reminding the woman that while she may have been a harlot for the evening, at least she won't be an ugly, raddled old fool in the morning – until Lorenzo, unexpectedly and quite uncharacteristically, hops up onto a table next to the lady, kisses her firmly on the mouth and promises to attend her in her chamber later. The astonished lady retires to bed early; Lorenzo looks flustered and despondent, perhaps worried that he may have to fulfil his promise, and hurries away.

The inn is old, and its walls are thin. At least some of the PCs are placed in a room next to Gianessa, and will be woken shortly after midnight by the sound of faint sobbing from her chamber. If interrupted, she will be embarrassed and say only that it is a personal matter. A female character, if left alone with her, may get her to unburden her worries: she does not understand why Braten abandoned his theatre in Gisoreux for such a foolhardy mission, and is scared by the prospect of travelling to Marienburg. Neither Braten nor Sternheimer will talk to her, and the attack by bandits has badly shaken her nerve. Other than calming her down, there is little the PCs can do for her.

Louis de Montalban

Man at Arms

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	45	30	4	4	7	35	2	40	45	35	40	35	30

Skills: Heal Wounds, Specialist Weapon: Double-Handed Sword.

Trappings: Bastard Sword, Crossbow, Sleeved Mail Coat.

De Montalban is a short, swarthy, muscular fellow with an aristocratic bearing. His flowing black hair, penetrating gaze, well-groomed features and colourful clothing make him stand out from the rest of the guards, but his men like him well enough, and he prefers to spend his time with them rather than with the actors. For all his dash, de Montalban is a sensible, down-to-earth soldier, who takes his duties very seriously and carries them out efficiently. He is a good judge of men, and only recruits those he trusts. He doesn't care to speculate about the wisdom of Braten's expedition, though privately he considers it a fool's errand – but he has a job to do, and he intends to carry it through.

The Guards

De Montalban commands four men-at-arms, John, Jules, Louis and Markos. They were hired by de Montalban specifically for this journey, and know little of the Rosae Theatrum except that they pay well. They double up as stage-hands and porters, assisting with props and scenery at the evening performances. They are stout, honourable fellows, easily led by those they respect but impressively dedicated to the basic mercenary virtue of standing by a contract.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	35	30	3	3	6	25	1	35	25	25	30	25	25

Skills: Heal Wounds, Specialist Weapon: Double-Handed Sword.

Trappings: Bastard Swords, Full Leather Armour.

Bandits

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	35	30	3	3	6	25	1	35	25	25	30	25	25

Skills: Street Fighter

Trappings: Swords, Leather Jacks; Two have Crossbows

The Wise Children

Next morning, Lorenzo looks particularly sullen, and rudely declines breakfast, preferring instead to take an extended bath in the nearest stream. Braten seems vaguely put out when Lorenzo's ablutions delay departure, but refrains from comment in favour of haughty sniffing.

Unless the GM wants to introduce any chance encounters – monsters, more bandits, or refugees of particular interest – the day passes uneventfully. However, the odd weather and general sense of unease continue. The party should be encouraged to think that Chaos is warping the whole world – although in fact, the effect is much more localized than that, being focused on Paulus.

In the evening, the travellers find another inn. It is in a small village, not a usual stopping place for coaches, and is less crowded than the last two, but the guests are richer; people who had more to lose in Marienburg, so they held off leaving for longer. The actors perform a modern play called *The Wise Children*, by Johann Bart, in which the children of an important noble family depose their ineffectual parents and adopt a uniquely childish attitude to local political struggles. Adventurers making an *Observe* test will notice that the actors playing the children seem to lose as much as six inches in height during the play – but, then, posture can be a deceptive thing.

This inn has thicker walls than the last one, but late that night the characters will hear raised voices coming from Gianessa's room: it is the actress, and a man (a normal *Listen* test will identify it as Sternheimer). She is upset; he is angry; his voice is the louder and any listeners will only catch part of his side of the conversation: 'I won't let ... believe me, that fey fool

will listen to me, not to you ... mawkish sentimentality has no place in what we ... is far bigger ... more important than you can realize.' If interrupted, Sternheimer will brush out of the room past the PCs, murmuring, 'Sorry to wake you; just a lovers' tiff,' although anyone who has been watching Gianessa will know this is highly unlikely. If asked, the actress cannot be persuaded to say what the conversation was about.

The Infernal Machinery of Desire

The next day dawns cold, wet and oppressive. Leaving the inn, the travellers trudge through a grey, muffled world of mist and drizzle. Their voices are disconcertingly dampened by the thick fog – even Braten's rich, exaggerated baritone sounds weak and distant. Before an hour is up, everyone's clothes are wet through. Gianessa is sullen and complains of the ruin that is being done to her costumes, and Haufmann replies with rude and bitter sarcasm in a voice turned to a thin whine. The Egg's voice is a constant, annoying screech. As the day passes, the weather gets worse, with squalls of rain and sleet. Melodramatic GMs might throw in a bonus shower of warped and deformed news.

In the late afternoon, the weather miraculously lifts. In less than a quarter of an hour the sun burns away the mist, the temperature improves to a fine winter's day, and the travellers begin to dry out. The actors' spirits improve just as quickly, the hardships of the day utterly forgotten. As the day grows late, the road passes through a small market town, Klessen. Braten judges that today would be ideal for the last dress-rehearsal of the play they will perform in Marienburg, and begins looking





for an opportune place to perform. He soon finds a crowded inn, full of people who are prevented by their commercial and political interests from travelling *too* far from Marienburg, and he orders the rest of the company to set about arranging seating and staging in the courtyard.

Patrons of the inn and members of the local community gather to watch as the makeshift stage is put together: the venue is not ideal by any means. Anyone who looks for Braten or Sternheimer during this (and the GM might want to introduce a suitable reason) will find them in a small private room inside the inn, deep in discussion. If it is possible to eavesdrop on them, their talk is of Gianessa: Sternheimer says she wants to leave; Braten says she should follow her head; Sternheimer says she must not. It is clear from the tone that Sternheimer has the upper hand. As night falls, the light from the Chaos Moon casts a strangely bright light over the town and the open-air stage; as the play begins, its malign ambience will seem eerily appropriate to the tone of the drama.

Will Pikewaver's *The Infernal Machinery of Desire, or, Love* was his last play, and many say his greatest. Set in Marienburg, it is a potent mixture of political rhetoric, romantic tragedy and family passions. Unusually for the Rosae Theatrum, Adam Haufmann plays the lead role, Dieter Sternhaus, a young noble trapped between loyalty to family, friends and political allies. Sternhaus is tricked by the oily manipulator Philippe (Braten) into becoming involved with the beautiful Elizabeth (Gianessa), the naïve daughter of a guildsman. Elizabeth, consumed by a jealous, adolescent passion for Sternhaus, convinces him that she is carrying his child; in panic he turns to Philippe, who tells him that if it is discovered that he has been wooing the daughter of a tradesman, he and his family will be humiliated, while if she bears the child out of wedlock then her father, a man of fearsome temper, will surely cast her out onto the streets.

Philippe persuades Sternhaus, to whom Elizabeth is little more than a disposable pleasure, to kill her. But the murder is observed by Elizabeth's mother, Charis (di Faloca). A desperate Sternhaus once again turns to Philippe for advice, only to learn that Philippe seduced Charis years ago; and that she and Philippe have been conspiring to have him remove the product of that guilty liaison, and at the same time to make him their pawn. Sternhaus' famous closing soliloquy, in which he stands on a riverbank contemplating suicide, remains an enigma: his decision is not portrayed, and opinion is divided as to whether this was deliberate, or whether Pikewaver died before completing the play.

Performance

Tonight's audience see *The Infernal Machinery of Desire* performed with a verisimilitude unparalleled in the history of theatre. Never before has a play been performed with such swift, smooth changes of scenery and costume. Pikewaver seemed to imagine that a castle could be transformed into a garden in a matter of seconds: tonight, it happens. No one sees the stage-hands – or men-at-arms, in their day jobs – put anything other than a throne, a couple of pillars and a grey backdrop on stage for the castle scenes; but somehow there seems, out of the corner of the spectator's eye, to be much more there. Haufmann leaves the stage dishevelled and sweating one moment to return after the brief scene change in fresh clothing, perfectly coiffured and composed.

Shrewd PCs may be becoming suspicious by now, and may be preparing for trouble. The GM should encourage a feeling

of disquiet, but without giving the characters anything specific to pin it on. Anyone watching from the audience will hear NPCs who clearly know something of the theatre commenting to each other that this is an impressive performance, but they've seen better – albeit not often. They may also catch hints of other interesting discussions – concerning, say, the eclipse, or academic politics in Marienburg – which don't amount to much in the end, but which might seem more important than the play. And Sternheimer, who the PCs may already be worrying about, is for once in the audience, not back-stage.

Trouble begins in Act Two when a drunk young bravo in the audience gets jealous of Sternhaus and jumps onto the stage, offering to duel with him for Elizabeth's favours. Haufmann barely breaks stride, improvising seamlessly, and bodily throwing the drunkard back into the seats with a graceful strength of which Sternhaus would have been proud. (Well, no one said that actors had to be feeble.)

Then Haufmann and Gianessa take the stage for the murder scene. Elizabeth, tender but passionate, gazes up into Sternhaus' eyes, whispering an affirmation of her love. Sternhaus replies with bland platitudes tinged with uncertainty. They kiss, and release. Their eyes meet. And Sternhaus, almost gently, slides his dagger into her heart.

Gianessa's look of pained perplexity as she slides dead to the ground is utterly convincing. As well it might be, for Haufmann has killed her. He stares in horror at the dagger, and at Gianessa's body, and at the bloody stain spreading across her breast. There is dead silence, broken only by Haufmann's ragged breathing.

After a few moments, the audience begins to whisper, assuming that Gianessa is only pretending to be dead, but wondering if Haufmann has forgotten his lines. As the susurrations grow louder, Braten's voice echoes from the 'wings', prompting Haufmann with the next line: 'A whore is dead, and mine the hand that killed ...'

Haufmann hears the prompt, and responds instinctively to it, repeating the line tremulously, and then picking up confidence as he gets into Sternhaus' self-justifying elegy for Elizabeth. By the time he discovers Charis watching him, he appears to have forgotten the body at his feet.

It is possible that the PCs will realize what has happened, and try to intervene – but the GM should work to prevent that. From the audience, this still looks like a piece of acting, and although combat-experienced characters may know better, they should still have to make an *Observation* test at -20, with +10 for *Excellent Vision*. If they then jump up, start shouting, and try to reach the stage, they will be booed and shouted down by less sharp-eyed folk. Characters back-stage who realize what is going on will find themselves intercepted by Braten, who will try very hard indeed to prevent them from stopping the play. 'If people see this, there will be a panic – and too many stupid questions. I'm not sure I didn't see a witch-hunter in the audience, and we'll probably all end up at the stake if one of those maniacs gets involved. And Gianessa wouldn't have wanted us to stop, you know. Anyway, the play's nearly done now.'

(The line about the witch-hunter is, incidentally, a complete fiction – or perhaps a piece of warped wishful thinking. However, Braten has accidentally found one line that should worry the adventurers after their recent experiences, and if he notices the effect it has on a PC, he'll continue to use it.)

When the scene ends, the stage-hands remove Gianessa's body with distaste, but with no apparent intent of challenging Haufmann. It is easy to recover the dagger from where

Haufmann dropped it; if no PC does so, one of the stage-hands does. The play proceeds to its conclusion with no further disruption – unless of course the PCs are absolutely determined to intervene, and refuse to let anyone stop them. In that case, a huge and complicated furore will develop, but nothing useful will be achieved – except that no one will get a full night's sleep. The local legal authorities are useless (see below).

Only after *The Infernal Machinery of Desire* is over, and the props packed away, does the truth seem to sink in. Haufmann, realizing what he has done, is briefly distraught, then sinks into silent shock. Braten becomes violently manic-depressive; he is upset and disoriented, but also oddly jubilant. 'My faith in dear Gianessa has been utterly vindicated! She has been privileged to achieve the ultimate expression of her art! I defy you to find any portrayal of death to compare with such a masterpiece! What intensity! What feeling!' De Montalban ventures that the journey will be quite dangerous enough without a murderer in the party's midst, but Braten will have none of it. He is upset by Gianessa's death – he is not inhuman or uncaring – but his vision of Art is nearing completion, and he would rather pursue the dream she shared than give it up to mourn uselessly. Sternheimer will be oddly quiet, and later oddly elsewhere.

Investigation?

Gianessa's body is placed in a back-room of the inn, and pretty much ignored for the rest of the night – although most of the actors will stop by to pay their last respects. The PCs can examine her as much as they like, although some of her friends may object if they feel that she is being treated other than with respect. There is a single, simple wound; the blade went straight to her heart. Death was inevitable.

The staff at the inn are little help to anyone who wants to take action over this incident. They are inclined to write it off as a tragic accident – very sad for the woman, of course, but she was a strolling player, not anyone they *knew*. The town constable sees things much the same way – but given that he's a middle-aged part-timer who regards disputes over footpaths and market pitches as the limits of his job, that is hardly surprising.

At some point, someone is certain to look at the weapon that killed Gianessa. It is a retractable stage dagger, made entirely of painted wood, with a spring mechanism to allow the blade to recede into the handle. It works smoothly and perfectly, and would be hard put even to give its victim a bruise. But Gianessa's blood is drying on its blade. The PCs may look for hidden steel, or a switch that stops the blade retracting, or a mechanical fault, but they will find nothing. There can be no doubt; Adam Haufmann murdered Gianessa with a toy.

Showing the dagger to any villagers or refugees is asking for trouble. They will either treat it as a joke in extraordinarily

poor taste – or they will see 'black witchcraft', and become hostile. In fact, any research into the cause of the murder will reach a dead-end. This is not, as the PCs might suspect it to be, a murder mystery; Gianessa's death is a genuine if bizarre accident. However, it should cast suspicion on Sternheimer, and get the characters watching him much more closely.

Touched By The Moon

The next morning, the actors seem anything but downhearted by Gianessa's death. Even Haufmann has thrown off the tragedy, and excitedly relates how powerfully the play affected him. All are eager to praise Gianessa's talent, which reached its brilliant culmination in her portrayal of Elizabeth's death.

They will, of course, have to bury their colleague, but this will not take long. The local priest – a devotee of Rhya – will assume that this was a sad accident, shakes his head over the whole business, murmurs a prayer asking Rhya to intercede with Mórr for the departed's soul, and departs with a few coppers for less than an hour's work. The troupe will then strike out towards Marienburg with the fervour of the converted or the mad.

The adventurers may have decided by now to get away from these maniacs, but the essential problem remains; everyone is heading in the same direction at approximately the same pace. In fact, given that the adventurers would probably have to walk, carrying the Egg much of the time, the troupe may well move a little faster than them. Furthermore, the Egg retains a soft spot for Braten, and will become unhappy if she is dragged away from 'Uncle Steffan' for no clear reason; her power might even act to bring the two groups back together.

A few miles outside Klessen, the travellers encounter a group of lunatics: basically harmless folk, but with minds fatally susceptible to Chaos. Now, driven mad by the proximity of the eclipse and the influence of Morrslieb, and drawn together by their shared lunacy, they caper insanely but harmlessly around the party, until they spot the Egg.

Their madness includes a strange intuition, and they begin to argue loudly but incomprehensibly with each other – the words are recognizable, but they're not coherent – and then demand the Egg: 'It's ours, d'ye hear me! We put it down not eleven hundred years ago, and some bastard hid it while we weren't looking! Oh, please, sir, thank you kindly for looking after it, but it belongs to us and we want it back!'

They soon become angry and attack, pummelling with bare hands or inexpertly wielded daggers until they are incapacitated or killed. There are a dozen of them, none of whom are effective fighters, and the Egg will be frightened by them, causing her power to aid the party (for once).

The lunatics are muddy and ragged, and unless the PCs study them closely, they all look the same. During the combat, the GM should select one lunatic at random, and each round every PC in combat with that one should make an *Observe* roll. This lunatic is Klaus, their former travelling companion (see p.23). The light of reason has gone from his eyes, and he does not recognize the PCs, nor will he respond to his name. No healing will cure him: if he is returned to Marienburg and Goffman's care, he will slowly start to recover once the eclipse has passed.

The reactions of the lunatics tips off Paulus Sternheimer (if the adventurers have not already let the fact slip) that the Egg is important to Chaos; and is probably enough to convince him that this is the group he has been warned to look for. From this point onwards he will be searching for ways to separate her

Lunatics

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Id	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	30	25	3	3	5	20	1	30	20	20	20	20	20

Skills: Frenzied Attack.

Trappings: some have Daggers.

Note: despite their low WP characteristic, the lunatics are fanatical, and will not stop attacking, even if they are being slaughtered.



from the party, and will cultivate her friendship, trying to turn her against the adventurers.

The Chaos Moon rises above the horizon in mid-morning, and moves quickly up the sky. The clouds seem to avoid crossing in its face, and the edgier characters may imagine that the moon is following them with a mad, glaring eye. Certainly it seems to be too much for Haufmann, who begins to giggle and mutter to himself, occasionally uttering strangled little shrieks. The sun writhes colourfully, but for all its brightness it is the Chaos Moon that commands attention. It still doesn't pass close to the sun, but it is closer than it was yesterday.

The Chaos Moon reaches its zenith in the early afternoon, and Haufmann snaps. He turns on the people closest to him – Braten and Sternheimer, who are riding in the same cart – shrieking, 'This is your fault, isn't it? You and your damned transformations, you and your precious eclipse, you and your dreams of art! Well, there'll be no more of it! Not another step! I'll see you gutted, you devil, you child of Chaos – yes, and your fawning acolytes.' (Here he gestures around the group.) 'I'd sooner die than step into the light of that damnable moon!'

He pulls out his sword and waves it around uncertainly; it is unclear whether he means to attack or to kill himself. Before anyone can find out, he seems to see something reflected in the blade. Staring in horror, he gasps, throws the sword away, and recoils, falling down in an undignified and befouled heap.

Haufmann never speaks again, except in the voices of his characters. He has looked into the face of Chaos, and his mind has been destroyed.

The Merchant Of Sorcery

That night, *The Merchant of Sorcery* plays to an almost empty house in a disinterested rural tavern. Braten leads as Gathros, a merchant whose lavish and decadent habits have led him to the brink of bankruptcy, who turns to selling sinister enchanted toys to restore his fortunes. Lorenzo is surprisingly passable as the ugly witch Jalissa, who believes she is trapping Gathros but soon learns that he has exploited her as he exploits all his women. The adventurers may be surprised to see the Dwarf in a non-comic role, but he carries it off effectively.

The play suffers one major interruption. About two-thirds of the way through, Jalissa delivers a long tirade, pacing around her kitchen and denouncing Gathros' iniquity. The kitchen is a grab-bag of props: a cauldron, jars of elderly herbs, rotting books, a bowl of apples, cutlery and crockery; and perched above it all a beady-eyed stuffed crow, supposedly the witch's familiar, to whom the speech is addressed. As the soliloquy comes to its climax the crow flies up, dives into the wings, and assaults Braten with claws and beak. It then has a go at a couple of audience members, including a well-dressed refugee merchant.

The crow is surprisingly vicious when animated, but once the stuffing has been knocked out of it, it is a stuffed crow, and the PCs will find no evidence that it was ever anything more. The audience will be unnerved, of course, and there will be murmurs about finding a witch-hunter. Klaus, if he is with them, will cower and gibber in terror for the rest of the evening.

After the performance, Braten congratulates Lorenzo on his attention to detail. 'But where did you get the fruit at this time of year?' he asks. 'I thought we only had wooden props.' Lorenzo looks at him with contempt. 'We do only have wooden props,' he says; then, with impeccable comic timing, he gags horribly, clutches at his stomach, and throws up several masticated and

Stuffed Crow

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
1	33	0	2	2	5	30	1	-	10	14	24	24	-

nastily splintered pieces of wood. He stares in horror, spits blood onto the floor, and stamps off to bed.

If the adventurers check the props box, they will find several large bites taken out of a painted wooden apple.

When the PCs go to bed, one of them will find their bed short-sheeted, and another will very likely be soaked by a bucket of water precariously balanced on top of a slightly ajar door. The Egg will be found asleep in bed, wearing her best expression of angelic innocence. She really is innocent; Lorenzo's comic roles are beginning to overturn his dour reality.

Companions to Wolves

That night, the adventurers are woken by a commotion in the small hours of the morning. Sounds of expostulation, pacifying pleading and girlish sobbing are audible nearby in the inn. If the adventurers go out to investigate, they discover Braten hopping unceremoniously around outside a room which they know isn't his, frantically pulling on his trousers. 'Hurry up!' he cries as soon as he sees them. 'It's time we were leaving!' The rest of the troupe are already preparing to go.

If the PCs join this exodus, the Egg will complain vociferously. Sternheimer will try to pacify her, and attempts to persuade the majority of the adventurers to let her remain here, with him helping to look after her. He will probably try to kidnap her if they do, or even if they let him and the Egg out of their sight for more than a few minutes. If they choose to remain, Sternheimer will tell Braten that he (Braten) is a fool, and that he (Sternheimer) is not going anywhere.

Braten will be reluctant to waste time explaining until they are clear of the inn, but it transpires that a young lady, the rich merchant's daughter, was quite overwhelmed by Gathros' lifestyle – and that Braten was pleased to demonstrate precisely how Gathros went about corrupting his conquests. The girl's father, who had apparently been downstairs having his beak-wound tended by the barmaid, heard sounds which he considered to be improper to one of his daughter's station. On learning of their cause, he had issued some very coarse and personal threats against Braten. Naturally, Braten felt that in order to avoid disturbing the other guests, it would be wise to leave immediately.

The PCs may consider this a wholly inadequate excuse for rushing them out of the inn's warm hospitality in the middle of the night, but Braten cannot be persuaded to see it as anything other than a thrillingly romantic adventure. Some PCs may be so indelicate as to want to know why Braten has started sleeping with women, but this question is beneath his notice.

If the adventurers remain at the inn, they will find all this out from the expostulating merchant and the gossiping inn staff. The young lady is locked in her room. Unfortunately, the merchant has somehow formed the impression that the adventurers were Braten's friends, and will spend hours threatening them with legal action and simpler horrors. The party will not be permitted much sleep this night.

Before long, Braten and those with him find an empty barn where they spend the rest of the night in discomfort, and begin

the next day hungry, cramped and tired. If the adventurers remained at the inn, they will pass close to this barn just as the troupe are setting out the next morning (much to the Egg's delight). They are now only three days from Marienburg.

The day's travel is uneventful but seems unnaturally long; the glare of Morrslieb seems to draw their energy away, and the landscape is flat and unyielding. Nobody seems to have anything to say. It is only after several hours that someone will notice that De Montalban and the men-at-arms are not with the group, and have not been seen since the hurried exit from the inn. Braten curses them briefly and without enthusiasm, Sternheimer seems strangely pleased, and nobody else has the energy for emotion.

As the day draws to an end, the travellers find themselves in an increasingly populous area; they are coming into the lands around Marienburg. They can find an inn without difficulty, and an exhausted Braten gives a perfunctory performance of Sinclair's *Companions to Wolves*, the monologue of a child raised by wolves and adopted by merchants. He is as surprised as any when Haufmann breaks his silence to perform his usual 'sound effects' for this play (howling wolves and the chatter of voices) – but it is only Haufmann's role speaking through him.

Lorenzo will try to play some more practical jokes on his companions tonight, but it is likely that the adventurers will be on their guard this time, and will catch him. His answers to their questions are silly, comic and exaggerated; he doesn't take anyone seriously. His body language and facial expressions are those of a jester. His taciturnity is forgotten in favour of his traditional stage role. If Klaus is there, the two will be found exchanging gibberish and laughing hysterically at one point.

This night, Sternheimer decides that he needs assistance and casts a powerful *Summoning Of The Brotherhood* spell (see p.116), calling for aid. Very suspicious adventurers might catch him at it; and as he casts it anyone aligned with Chaos will recognize the *frisson* they felt when the Brotherhood agent cast the same spell close to them in Chapter One. Zahnarzt will visit up to three characters who have been particularly vocal in their suspicions about Sternheimer, and will give them all the same dream, in which the stage manager saves them from a monstrous Egg grown twenty feet high, with eyes like deep sea water and fangs like jagged rocks.

Taking a Cat to Wife

Two days to Marienburg. Tired, quite possibly bloody, harassed, haunted by stuffed crows, murdered actresses, whispering demons and recalcitrant seven-year-olds, our heroes are surely looking forward to the end of their quest. Nothing on the journey is certain any more. Haufmann is silent, and Braten and Sternheimer are endlessly debating how to perform *The Infernal Machinery of Desire* with both of their leads unavailable. There seems to be much less traffic on the road. The weather becomes more consistent: it rains; a heavy, cold downpour that chills to the marrow and feels more polluting than cleansing.

Two hours before nightfall, the group will encounter a man and his horse standing under a tree beside the road. He hails the party, claiming that his horse has gone lame and he is afraid to travel alone: could he join them? PCs will note that he wears a heavy travelling cloak over what seems to be black robes, his fingers wear heavy rings, and his horse does not seem to be lame at all. Characters who watch him or Sternheimer will notice that a significant amounts of eye-contact and some gestures

are exchanged between the two of them, but no words are spoken. The man will introduce himself as Franz Van Mehern, a merchant travelling to Marienburg – 'I understand there are some good bargains to be had at this time of year.' He will not say more. Anyone who sits within ten feet of him will discover he smells like rotted meat, and he seems remarkably dry for someone who has been travelling in the rain.

In the evening, the party quarters in a large coaching inn which is surprisingly only half full. Van Mehern retires to his room and is not to be found for the rest of the evening. The rain eases off and the troupe commandeers the stableyard to perform Gregory Hoggis' comedy *Taking a Cat to Wife*, in which Braten is seduced by a passionate feline (Lorenzo), leading to marriage, social ostracism, comic business and the traditional happy ending. Needless to say, the performances are breathtaking, and the audience of travellers and local villagers are suitably impressed.

And in this case, the 'traditional happy ending' involves thirteen zombies bursting into the stableyard, sending chairs, tables and patrons flying. This is a diversion, during which Sternheimer will try to 'rescue' the Egg while the adventurers are embroiled in the battle, leaping onto a horse he has saddled earlier, and riding at a furious gallop towards Marienburg.

If the PCs are hard pressed, Lorenzo will leap thirty feet off the stage on all fours, landing on a zombie and tearing it to shreds with his bare hands. The actor will then provide useful assistance to the party – except that he will insist on *playing* with his victims before killing them. He temporarily gains I 40, A 2, and the skills *Dodge Blow* and *Street Fighter*. Most of the patrons will scream and run for safety, but if the PCs are still having a hard time then four will return with drawn swords and join in: use the stats for the Besieging Rabble on p.77.

Anyone who knows the ways of zombies can tell that these ones are almost certainly being controlled, and so it is: 'Van Mehern', actually a member of the Brotherhood, has raised the contents of the local graveyard and is sitting on horseback in the road outside the inn, watching and guiding his forces, with a guard of two more zombies, in case he is attacked. All his energies are going into co-ordinating the undead attack; if he is hit or brought into combat then all the zombies immediately become *subject to stupidity*; if he is killed then they will collapse into heaps of putrefaction. However, if he feels he is in any danger or if Sternheimer has got away with the Egg then he will gallop off towards Gisoreux.

It is possible that Sternheimer has been killed before this climax is reached. In that case, Van Mehern will still rendezvous with the party, and will attempt to kidnap the Egg on his own. He will send the zombies into the inn's courtyard, get the combat brewing nicely, then ride in and snatch up the Egg from where she stands. Whether he succeeds or not depends on how stongly the GM wants to use the Egg's supernatural abilities to protect her.

If Sternheimer or Van Mehern gets away with the Egg, the adventurers have a problem. There is enough light from the Chaos Moon to let them pursue him, and *Follow Trail* skill will help with this; unfortunately, as it is dark, the attempt will require an *Intelligence* test at -20%. On the other hand, at the GM's option, there may be a few travellers still on the road who saw a man pass by, carrying a little girl. Sternheimer is heading for Marienburg, where he can find other cultists: he will pause at the Pick and Nugget in Lehmberg (see next chapter), and the PCs may catch up with him there – but if they attempt to take back the Egg, they will find themselves accused of kidnapping.



The Egg is utterly confused by all this, and her power will not help or hinder either side unless she is threatened directly. If the party loses Sternheimer completely, this will not wreck the adventure, but it may short-circuit the next chapter.

Once the attack has been driven off, and assuming the Egg is still with the party – and be sure to soundtrack the fight with the continuing background of *Taking a Cat to Wife*, since Braten and Lorenzo refuse to be interrupted, aside from Lorenzo possibly joining in the combat – the troupe can enjoy a quiet, relaxed, uneventful night. Braten, who will watch the fight after the play finishes, congratulates the party on their spontaneity and passion, and is impressed by the realism of their wounds. 'Though if I were you I'd make sure I washed all that stuff off. It's the very devil to get out, you know. Well, thanks for the show, darlings! I'm off to bed now. You were wonderful. Ask me about auditions after the eclipse.'

Next morning, the troupe will fall into a certain amount of confusion. With Sternheimer's quiet influence and Chaotic power gone (one way or another), the whole purpose of their project begins to seem unreal. The adventurers should soon realize that the Rosae Theatrum will be going nowhere for a while, and should leave them squabbling at the inn. The bizarre effects of Chaos on the landscape will die away, although the Chaos Moon is a constant looming feature in the sky, and can be seen to be licking its lips.

(If the GM wishes, the troupe may recover themselves after a while, and show up in the middle of events in Marienburg – but this would be purely for dramatic effect, as their plot function is gone. Optionally, it might be appropriate for the GM to reintroduce them as puppets under the control of Muuthauwg's piping, if and when the Quiet Herald makes his own move against Zahnarzt.)

'Franz Van Mehern'

Necromancer (Level 3); ex-Wizard, age 57

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
3	37	27	3	2	9	61	1	51	45	59	51	53	28

Alignment: Chaos

Magic points: 21 (9 after casting Raise Dead)

Skills: Arcane Language - Necromancy; Cast Spells (Necromantic Battle Magic, levels 1, 2 and 3); Demon Lore; Identify Undead; Lightning Reactions; Magical Awareness; Magic Sense; Manufacture Drugs; Meditation; Rune Lore; Scroll Lore

Spells: Produce Small Creature; Protection From Rain; Cause Animosity; Immunity From Poison; Wind Blast; Summon Skeletons; Destroy Undead; Extend Control; Hand of Dust; Raise Dead; Summoning of the Brotherhood

Disabilities: Unpleasant odour; Palsy; Has Tomb Rot

Trappings: Robes; Saddle-bags containing spell components; Pomander; 45 guilders

As high-level Necromancers go, 'Franz Van Mehern' is not a powerful one – if he was, he would probably be allied to another Chaos power instead of the weakling Zahnarzt. As it is, he lives in Gisoreux and spends most of his time in scholarship and sacrificing the occasional goat. Called out of semi-retirement into patrolling the road and watching for the Egg, he was attracted by Sternheimer's *Summoning*, and will use his powers to distract the party while his Brother attempts to snatch the Egg.

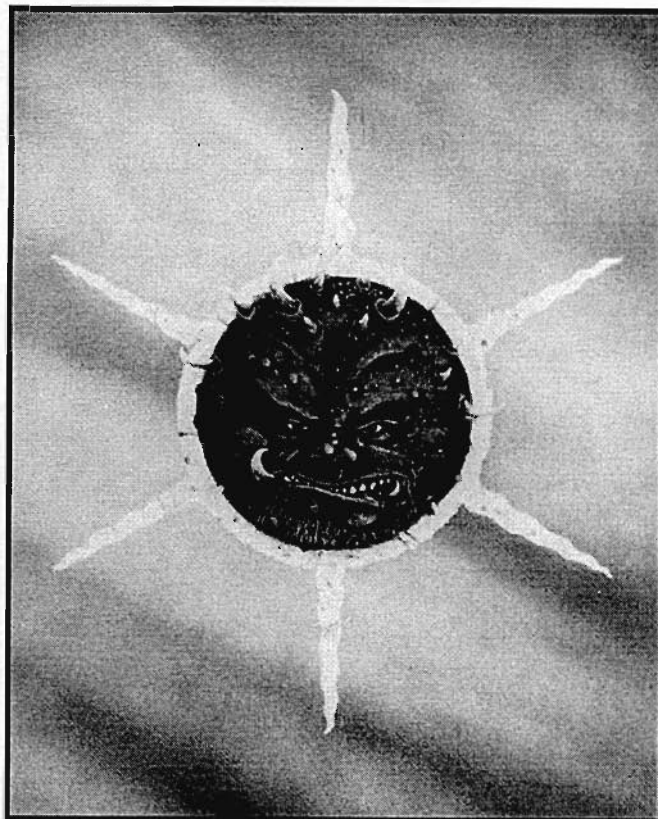
If Sternheimer is killed, or prevented from rescuing the Egg, or Van Mehern is attacked, or more than ten zombies are destroyed, he will abandon his control over the undead and ride towards Gisoreux with all speed. That night, he will cast a *Summoning of the Brotherhood*, altering those who have ears to hear that the Egg is still with the adventurers, and heading towards Marienburg.

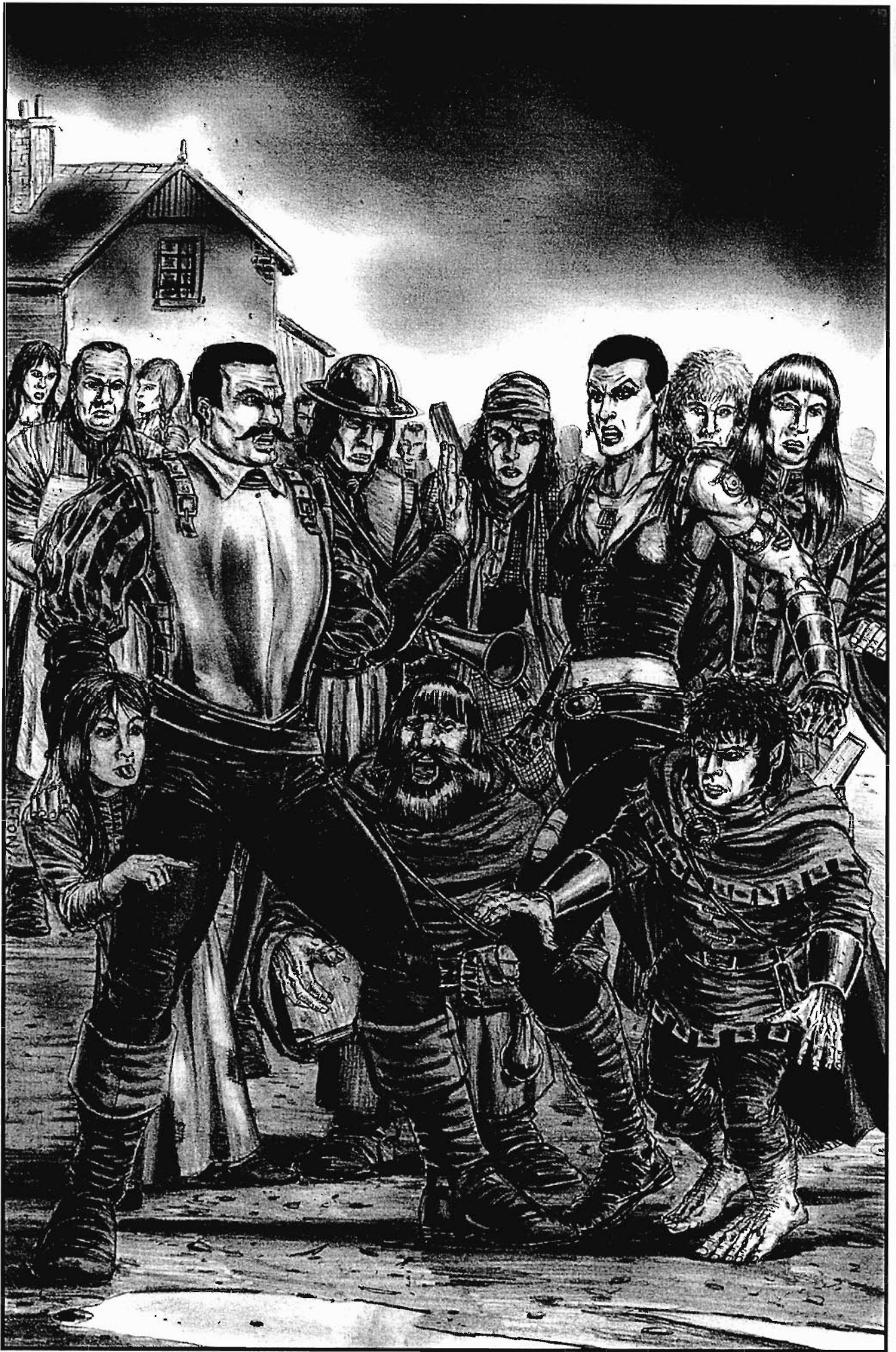
Thirteen Zombies

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	25	0	3	3	5	10	1	10	10	14	14	14	-

Special abilities: Cause fear; each hit has a chance of causing *Tomb Rot* or *Infected Wounds* (WFRP p.252)

Trappings: All are carrying Improvised Weapons.







Chapter 8:

Trial and Error

The adventurers are almost within sight of their goal! They are in truly civilized country, and for all the rumours and refugees, life seems more or less normal here, in the farmlands that feed the city of Marienburg. Leaving the squabbling remnants of the mad theatrical troupe behind them, the returning party strike out towards the city. Their supplies are running low, and the Egg is becoming restive, but that's no problem; a small village comes into view, with a simple but decent-looking inn. There's no point in returning to the city faint with hunger, after all.

On what should be the last day of their journey, the adventurers come to a small village named Lehmberg. They need to eat and to rest for a short while; and this is an obvious place. The GM should be building up a feeling of slightly weary calm by now; they should be able to make Marienburg by nightfall, and there is a hint of snow-clouds in the sky – but nothing looks set to break for a day or two yet. Despite the odd refugee, this area looks calm and unworried, even by the Chaos Moon's approach to the sun. Rest and food should be natural concerns.

If the party perversely refuse to take the hint and pause, the GM can have the Egg start to become fractious, quickly building to a massive tantrum, at which point her power cuts in, and the most determined PC falls flat on their face in the mud, while another suffers from a broken strap on a large pack. If the characters are being played as irrational, the GM can be moderately merciless.

The Village

Lehmberg is a small farming village, less than a day's ride from Marienburg. Apart from the inn, it consists of a couple of houses, a smithy, a prison, a shrine to Sigmar, and some outlying farms. It is not a major stop – most coaches in either direction prefer to continue for a while more – so the village is fairly quiet, despite its location on the road. However, the local watch also looks after law and order for farms for several miles around, and have had to deal with a number of vicious bandits, so they are surprisingly tough. They are also partly funded by Marienburg's city authorities, so their equipment and uniforms are in good condition.

The Pick and Nugget

The Pick, as the villagers lazily call it, is an average coaching inn, although somewhat tarnished. The walls are in dire need of new paint and some of the windows are cracked. The stables are currently being used as shelter for refugees (in return for a small fee). When the need arises, which is seldom, the inn also functions as a town hall.

The inn is run by Hans Kiefern, a tall, fat man, beginning to go bald. He is in his early forties and seems mainly concerned with extracting money from his customers. His wife died a few years ago, giving birth to their first son, who also died some

weeks later. This has made Hans a quiet, gloomy shadow of his former self. The only thing that moves him is children, who first cheer him up, then launch him into a state of depression. He would love to take on an orphan child or remarry someday, although neither of these options seems likely. Hans cooks the food himself, and is good at it, which shows on his girth. His employees are Irma Schreck, a young girl who serves in the bar and cleans the rooms, and Hugo Viktor, a servant boy who is secretly in love with Irma.

However, Irma despises Hugo and dreams of the prince who will one day take her from this gods-forsaken place.

On the bottom floor of the inn, besides the dormitory and the bar room, lie the kitchen and bedrooms for Hans, Irma and Hugo. There are also a couple of storerooms and an unused room which Hans and his wife planned to use as a nursery. The kitchen is a mess, as Hans is not a tidy person and Hugo doesn't usually do the dishes until they are piled to the roof. Hans' bedroom reflects this untidiness; it also holds a large closet containing dusty dresses and other women's clothing. The bottom of the closet has a loose plank, under which Hans stashes the profits from the inn.

Also on the ground floor are the privies, which are built, very luxuriously, *inside* the house. These are, however, of the usual type – a hole in a wooden bench. The waste runs into the river via a ditch, which could grant entry for a slim person who is not concerned about odour or cleanliness.

On the upper floor are the inn's eight guest-rooms, which currently only house two guests. All guest-rooms contain a double bed, a closet and a bed stand (with an oil lamp), a couple of chairs, and a table. Under each bed is a chamber pot and a small



*Hans Kiefern,
innkeeper of the Pick & Nugget*

Another room is occupied by a politician from Altdorf who got rich by taking bribes and recently moved to Marienburg to avoid being prosecuted. He keeps all his money (350 guilders) in a money belt which he always wears except when he is sleeping, when he keeps it under his pillow. He is a little bit paranoid and will avoid talking to anybody. He is a lousy fighter (WS 8, BS 5), and armed only with a pistol he keeps handy.

The Prison

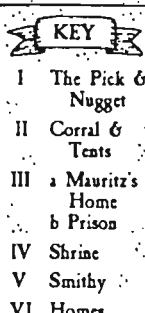
Food and Rest

The point of all this is that by the time the adventurers actually enter the inn, they should be a little irritated with the Egg, ideally so much that one of them has her in a firm grip. If the adventurers don't want to enter the inn, it's okay to let them wander around the village a while. The inn is the only place where they can get food; the Egg is clearly hungry, and the GM can warn PCs that her power is liable to kick in if they are not careful. If nothing else works it will begin to rain, getting worse by the minute.

When the adventurers finally enter the inn a feeling of warmth seeps into their bones. The bar-room is about half full, and the smell of food permeates the air. Irma runs busily from table to table as Hans brings food from the kitchen and Hugo cleans up. Mauritz Kleiter sits in the corner, feet on a chair in front of him and his helmet on the table. After a few moments, Irma approaches and asks what they would like, maybe exchanging a few significant looks with one of the cleaner male PCs.

The point of all this is to make the adventurers deny the Egg something. The moment that happens, the Egg will begin to cry piteously, get up from her chair, and run to Hans at the bar. If the adventurers buy her the strawberry pie, she will refuse to eat it and demand something else equally outrageous.

The adventurers will probably try to persuade the Egg to return to them, but as that fails, they may begin to get desperate. The Egg hides behind Hans, and sticks her tongue out at the adventurers to further enrage them. (Remember, she thinks this is fun.) At the first sign of any violence or threatening manners Mauritz will get up from his table and ask if he 'can be of some assistance', signalling to Hugo to fetch more guards from the jail.



Go Directly to Jail

Mauritz then goes on to ask the adventurers where they come from, who they are, and so on. He seems to be listening carefully and pondering what to do, but he isn't. He has already decided to apprehend the adventurers and is just waiting for the other guards to arrive, which they will do after a few minutes of embarrassing explanations, or if the adventurers seem tempted to use violence. He then explains that the adventurers are under arrest, suspected of kidnapping. The characters notice the sudden absence of people around them, and the blunderbuss being pointed in their direction ...

As Mauritz is an experienced bounty hunter he is well aware of spell-casters and their abilities. Any attempt to cast spells earns the caster a quick slap in the face, effectively disrupting the spell. Furthermore, the Egg loves all this fun, and her power may disrupt any attempts that the PCs make to fight their way out. The party is thoroughly searched and relieved of weapons, armour, spell components and any other item that either looks suspicious or might help them escape. They are then tied together and dragged to the prison, where they are thrown into a cell which is anything but warm and comfortable.

Once in safe containment, the PCs are informed by Mauritz that he will send for a magistrate tomorrow, and that the adventurers will be hanging on the gallows within a few days. The adventurers should be very conscious of the time-pressure, but arguing will not help, save to persuade Mauritz to send for the magistrate at once. After locking their possessions in the iron cabinet, Mauritz then leaves with the Egg. He will let Hans take care of her for now, but lets the PCs believe that she is staying with him. If the adventurers had any horses when they arrived, Mauritz will forget them and they will be stolen by some refugees during the first night, along with any equipment on them.

(Note: If Mauritz sends for a magistrate the next day, delay all events one day, making the adventurers spend three nights in jail. In that case, the adventurers will be adequately guarded all through the first night, first day and second night. Nothing significant will happen during that day; Mauritz could ask them some more questions and the priest may pop by and try to persuade them to confess. Of course, this will make their ultimate arrival in Marienburg all the later and more frantic.)

The cell is small and has not been used in a long time. The cold stone floor is covered by some mouldy straw, and two wooden benches stand along the walls. The door is made of iron bars, so the guards have a complete view of the whole cell. The only place where something could be hidden is a tiny hole in the wall. A small window lets in some light and rain during the day. The cell looks about the right size for two prisoners, and is therefore very cramped.

The other part of the prison consists of one room where the guards on duty spend their time. It is furnished with a large wooden table, some chairs, a weapons rack and a large iron cabinet. A lantern hangs above the table and just outside the door hangs a large bell. This is the alarm that will make Mauritz and the rest of the guards arrive, along with a small group of curious villagers.

The cabinet is left over from the days when Lehmberg had a bank, and wary traders wanted to deposit their money outside Marienburg's city walls – usually as a tax dodge. Mauritz bought the cabinet when he settled down as the watch sergeant, and it is here that the adventurers' possessions are kept. Only Mauritz has the key, and the cabinet is impossible to break open without proper tools.

Mauritz Kleiter

Ex-Bounty Hunter and Sergeant of the Watch

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	53	63	4	5	9	48	3	36	38	47	40	36	29

Skills: Follow Trail, Read/Write, Shadowing, Silent Move Rural, Silent Move Urban, Strike to Stun, Strike Mighty Blow, Specialist Weapons: Lasso, Long Bow, Net.

Trappings: Long bow and 30 Arrows, Sword, Mail Coat, Pot Helmet, Riding Horse, Pipe and Tobacco.



Mauritz is an old adventurer and bounty hunter who has settled down as

a leader of the local militia. It is a fairly well-paid job, and he doesn't like disturbances. He is in fact nervous about making mistakes, and doesn't like serious decisions (hence his sending for a magistrate).

Mauritz is quite tall and well-built, although somewhat corpulent. He has short cropped light brown hair and a bushy moustache, and looks rather ordinary. His only prominent feature is his right ear, which was half shot off by a crossbow bolt some years ago, an incident which made him retire from bounty hunting. He is dressed like all the guards, in a slashed tunic bearing the colours of Marienburg. When he is on duty he also wears a breastplate and a pot helmet. He is a quiet, reasonably intelligent man who always addresses people as 'Sir.' ('No, sir. Yes, sir. Sorry sir, I have to take your weapons, sir.')

At this point the adventurers will probably be trying to escape. Examining the cell won't take long and yields nothing. If anyone is interested in the hole, he/she will see something in there. If someone sticks in a hand, it turns out to be an angry rat (35% chance of causing *infected wounds*, see *WFRP* p.83). The guards laugh loudly at this. There are at least two guards present all night; the first night they are very interested in the adventurers and come and go at various times during the night, talking, speculating and sometimes taunting the adventurers. Make sure that the PCs understand that they are the main attraction, and everything they do and say will be noticed by the guards. They will have a hard time escaping since the guards are so attentive, and telling the truth will not help. Of course, you shouldn't tell the adventurers this, let them keep trying (see *Jailbreak* (p.99) for details).

If they should escape before the trial, they will have a problem concerning the Egg; they have no idea whatsoever where she is. It is also a good idea to make sure that the adventurers are caught again, as the whole idea of this scenario is to make the party sweat it out in court. The exact details concerning

their re-apprehension is left to the GM's discretion. (Imagine the characters, without any equipment, searching the village for the Egg in the middle of the night. And when they do find her she begins to scream and call for Hans ...)

However, should the adventurers escape and then try to hide somewhere and wait, remind them of the eclipse that looms closer every day. Also remember that Mauritz will most surely conduct a search of the area as soon as possible. As far as he's concerned the PCs are potentially dangerous, a large man-hunt will justify his next budget-claim to the Marienburg authorities, and besides he's having fun.

Justice

The next morning the adventurers will be relieved to find out that the messenger managed to find a magistrate who was on his way back home to Marienburg from a nearby village. The magistrate rides into town a few minutes later along with a tall man (Kuno) who he introduces as his 'assistant', and stops at the inn, where he wakes up Hans and demands a room. He then sends Hugo to fetch Mauritz.

The 'magistrate' is Keine von Dorfentadt. Unfortunately he is not a magistrate at all, but an agent of the Brotherhood of the Forgotten One. (Of course, Keine is not his real name.) Like 'Franz Van Mehern' he has been looking for the Egg for weeks; then Sternheimer cast his *Summoning of the Brotherhood*, and Keine followed a trail of clues to the party. As he closed in, he intercepted Mauritz's messenger, and persuaded the man to lead himself and Kuno to the village. (This 'persuasion' was accomplished by means of a certain amount of money coupled with Kuno's knife. The messenger is too frightened to tell anyone, and wants the money.) If anyone asks why the magistrate arrived so early Keine explains that he was on his way back to Marienburg from some other duty when he ran into the messenger. No NPCs will question this.

Keine asks for all the details concerning the case, and then instructs Mauritz (in such an authoritative way that he doesn't object) that he will interrogate the prisoners one at a time, and requests that they be sent to his room. The adventurers are fetched one by one, and brought to the inn in shackles by Mauritz and one of the other guards. Mauritz demands to be present during the questioning, but he is made to wait outside. This is repeated with each PC, so Mauritz will be quite irate after a while, and barks at anyone who gets in his way or fails to comply immediately (this will be a guard if none of the PCs does anything appropriate).

Each PC is sent into the room where Keine tells Mauritz to unlock the restraints (further upsetting Mauritz). Keine then introduces himself and bids the PC to sit down. Keine remains standing and walks around in the room during the questioning, while Kuno sits at the door taking notes.

Keine will start each questioning by asking the PC his or her name, profession and place of origin. He will nod as if something could be deduced from these facts. He doesn't care if the adventurers lie, and proceeds to ask simple questions about minor details in their backgrounds, gradually moving to more interesting topics such as why they became adventurers and events in their pasts. This is to lull the adventurers into a sense of security, and to give them the false impression that they may have a chance to clear themselves. If they start to explain the whole story he nods and encourages them to go on; otherwise he suddenly turns around and asks them why they kidnapped the girl.

All this is just show, but Keine hopes to lure someone into telling him more: he knows the Egg is somewhere on this road, but is not sure that he's found her, and thinks the PCs may give something away. If the adventurers deny any charges he asks, 'How come you are travelling with a seven-year-old girl?' (Be sure to use these words, as his knowledge of the Egg's exact age is the first sign of Keine not being what he claims.)

However, if anyone mentions a mission, the eclipse, demons or such things, he will be *very* eager to hear more. He will ask the adventurers about anything they mention that is connected with their mission, even if they don't mention the mission itself. Even if the adventurers construct a partially false story Keine will show a great deal of interest in the true parts, and almost no interest in the false. If the adventurers don't mention anything, he will ask leading questions.

Keep the interrogations brief but to the point. Remember that Keine is intelligent, and knows what he is after. Don't overdo his slips of the tongue: ideally each PC should witness one slip, but no more than two should witness the same mistake. Most importantly, if any PC reacts to one of his errors, he will not repeat it. This episode serves to give the adventurers some hints of Keine's true identity. Needless to say, if one of the adventurers tries to escape, Kuno will quickly subdue him or her with a little help from Mauritz.

The interrogations shouldn't last more than half the day, after which preparations are being made to use the inn as a court. During this time Keine and Mauritz will look for witnesses in the village, while Kuno secretly adds to the rumours already circulating.

The Trial

The trial should start some time between three and six o'clock, making it a perfect afternoon viewing for the villagers. The inn's bar-room has hastily been converted into a makeshift court. Most of the tables have been removed leaving only the two largest, one of which is to be used by Keine. The other, placed more to the side, is where the adventurers will be seated. The rest of the room is occupied by chairs for the audience, leaving an empty space in front of Keine and the adventurers.

Shortly after all the adventurers have been interrogated, they are served a minimal meal from the inn, and the guards take great pleasure in pointing out that it may be their last but one. This gives them some time to discuss their situation and maybe decide on some sort of plan. Don't give them too much time, and as always, the guards are listening. About half an hour before the trial is due to begin, the local priest, Johann Geistlicher, (p.97) pays the adventurers a visit, to inform them that he has been appointed their counsel for the trial. He admits that his legal experience is limited to the theoretical but that shouldn't be a problem as long as the adventurers stick to the truth and admit their crimes.

Should the adventurers mention any suspicions concerning Keine, Johann will dismiss them as lies. Note however, that he will not forget the PCs' suspicions, and they might sway him to their side during the trial. For the time being he is convinced that the characters are guilty, is trying to get them to confess, and doesn't want to hear anything about demons or eclipses. He also explains the rules of the court, which are basically that the adventurers may only speak if given permission. Most of the time Johann will speak for them. If they break the rules, they will only make things worse. If any of the PCs claim to

Keine von Dorfenstadt

Fake Magistrate and Chaos Cultist

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	34	21	3	4	10	55	1	36	51	55	66	32	58

Skills: Acting, Art (Forgery), Blather, Bribery, Cure Disease, Disguise, Etiquette, Haggle, Heal Wounds, Law, Public Speaking, Read/Write, Ride, Secret Languages (Classical, Thieves), Wit, Specialist Weapon: Fencing Weapons.

Trappings: Horse, Cane that is actually a Sword-Stick Rapier, Clothing, Various Wigs, Make-up, Writing Equipment, a Smoke Bomb, Small Bottle of Manbane (2 doses).

The Brotherhood of the Forgotten One has agents and spies scattered all over the Empire, and 'Keine von Dorfenstadt' is one of their best. Originally a scholar, Keine can pose as anything from a wealthy merchant to a caring doctor. He is a perfectionist who strives for power and control, and doesn't like to fail; he fell into the worship of Chaos because he sees it as a path to power, and now it has taken over his mind. In fact, it has made him a psychopath, caring nothing for others – but with a terribly cool, calculating intelligence, and some surface charm. He is also somewhat theatrical. He shuns violence as being inferior to the workings of the mind, and if he must resort to physical means, he lets his henchman Kuno execute the deeds. He sees the Egg as another tool to gain him power in his cult and in the world. Kuno provides him with muscle and is loyal unto the death, which will probably come soon enough.

Keine is large man in his mid-forties. He is about 5'8", and weighs almost two hundred pounds. He has dark brown hair with a hint of grey in it, and a well-kept beard. He wears black robes and has a red sash tied around his waist. The round black hat of office and the compulsory white wig completes the picture of a magistrate. He is very well-educated, and should be played a little like an old,



stern teacher. Anyone who found the impressive array of disguise equipment hidden in his baggage might guess with surprise just how artificial this act is – but it is far from clear that there is a 'real' Keine any more, rather than a series of clever acts.

Kuno

Bodyguard and Chaos Cultist

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	53	37	4	4	12	42	2	36	24	39	45	31	28

Skills: Acting, Acute Hearing, Concealment Rural, Concealment Urban, Disarm, Disguise, Pick Lock, Read/Write, Secret Language (Thieves), Shadowing, Silent Move Rural, Silent Move Urban, Sixth Sense, Street Fighting, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Injure, Specialist Weapon: Fist Weapon.

Trappings: Horse, Assorted Clothing, Leather Jack, Sword, Dagger, Knuckle-Duster, Writing Equipment.

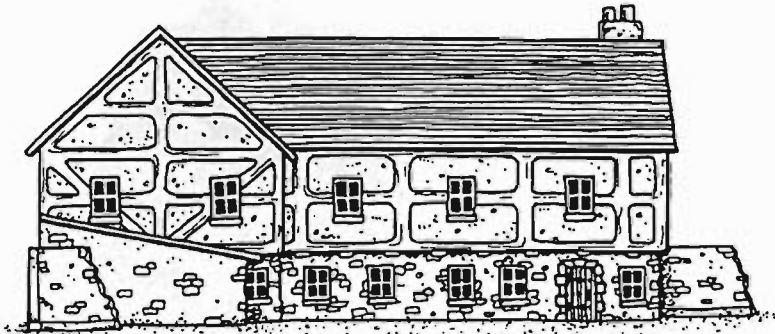
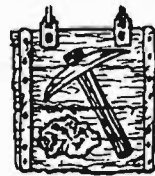
Kuno is not an average thug, but a minor but effective warrior of Chaos. At heart he is a soldier who happens, by some accident of personal history, to have sworn allegiance to the Brotherhood of the Forgotten One, and his belief is that a good soldier never questions orders. His primary duty is to protect Keine at all times, and to help him with his assignments. In order to be convincing as a servant to whichever role Keine is playing at the moment, he has had to learn all sorts of things, including fair manners.

Kuno has dark brown, medium-length hair surrounding a thin face with intelligent eyes and thick lips. He is about six feet tall, lean and very fit, something he conceals with mannerisms and clothing.

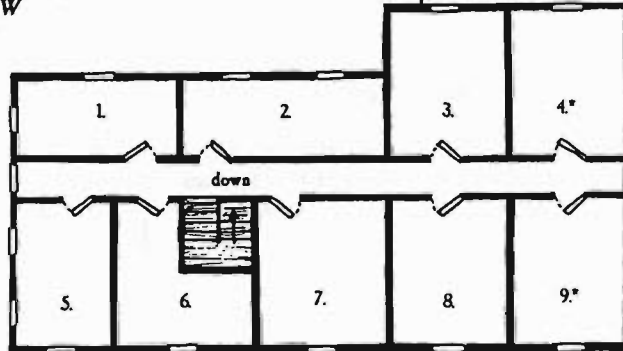
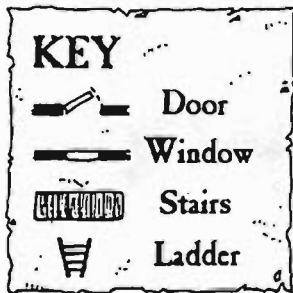
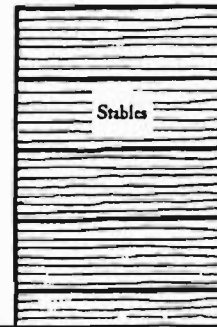
He is almost always dressed in high quality travelling clothes, with sturdy boots and a leather jacket. From his belt hang a longsword in its scabbard, along with a dagger. Like all members of the Brotherhood, he bears its mark (a distorted symbol of Khorne) tattooed over his heart.



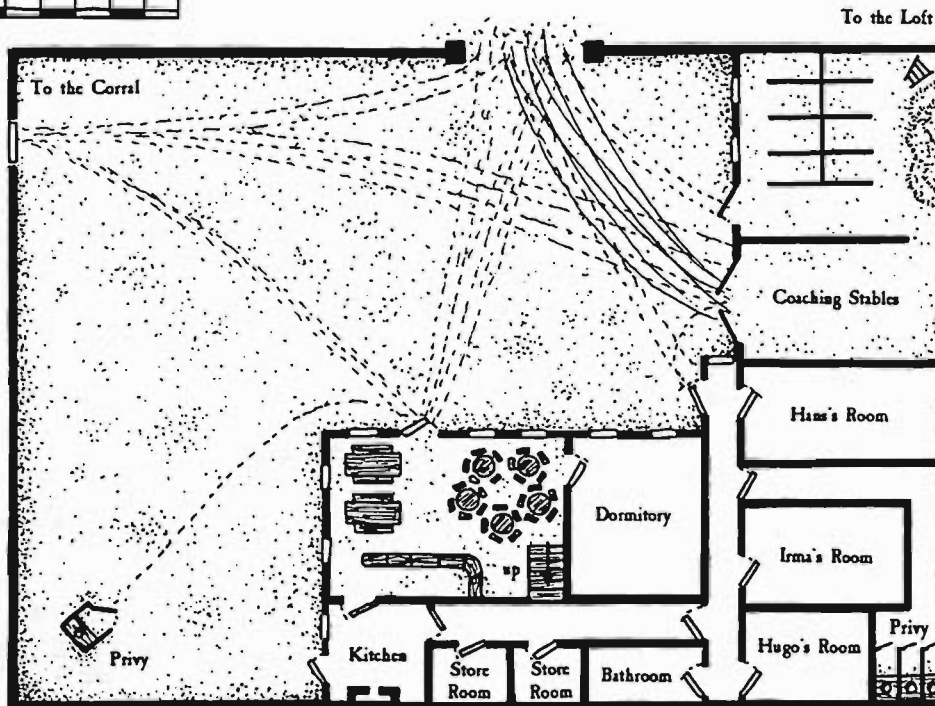
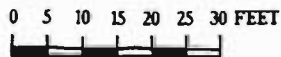
THE PICK AND NUGGET



FRONT VIEW



FIRST FLOOR



GROUND FLOOR

JG

have any legal experience, Johann will tell them that high-flown city talk may not impress a local audience, and he knows these people better than they do.

The trial is turning into a great feast, with the whole village and various refugees crowding the inn and its yard. Those that couldn't fit inside the makeshift courtroom are trying to see through the windows, and people are standing in the doorway and on the stairs. The adventurers are securely tied together and escorted to the inn by all the guards. They are met with boos and hisses from the crowd, and the guards have a hard time to keep the mob away from the PCs. Apparently, the rumour about a trial has spread (with some help from Kuno), and reports of the adventurers' crimes range from kidnapping through murder and demon-worship. The PCs should feel lucky to even have a trial! Make sure that they understand that should they try to escape they are likely to be lynched.

The Case For The Persecution

As soon as they are seated, Kuno announces: 'All rise for the honourable Keine von Dorfenstadt, Magistrate.' If the adventurers don't comply, Mauritz hits them in the back with a pair of knuckle-dusters. Keine enters from the stairs, strides across room and takes his place at the table. He then invites everyone to be seated and pauses before continuing:

'This court has been assembled, according to Wasteland Law, to ensure that justice is served and that the guilty are punished. A heinous crime has been committed, an innocent girl of seven years has been brutally taken away from her loving parents; not only kidnapped, but threatened and dragged on a dangerous journey across the Wasteland, to a terrible fate in the cesspits of Marienburg. I put it to you that these shady characters – ' he points at the adventurers ' – have committed the horrible crimes aforementioned. It is my duty to take into consideration the facts of this case, which I will now present to you, and thereafter pronounce judgement upon the defendants!'

This is meant to stir up the masses and set the tone for the trial. As mentioned, Keine is a theatrical perfectionist, and his plan is to get the adventurers (legally) executed for kidnapping so he can lay his hands on the Egg without interference. Note that in his opening speech Keine has already made two errors (see below) and he will occasionally slip without noticing it. How often this happens and exactly what he says is again up to the GM as it depends on previous events.

Keine will present the 'facts' of the case, depending on how much information he has gained from the adventurers during the interrogations, followed by the party's arrival in Lehmberg, the Egg's 'desperate attempt to gain Herr Kiefern's protection', and so on: add more details as appropriate. Any PC attempting to interrupt his speech will earn another blow in the back. Keine will talk about the adventurers 'seeming ready to assault Herr Kiefern' before they were 'heroically apprehended', state that the Egg has said that they are no relatives of hers, and so on. He then casually asks, 'Have the defendants anything to say?'

Before the PCs can say anything, Johann rises and says, 'Your honour, the defendants feel deeply remorseful and wish for the court to regard the extenuating circumstances. They are innocent victims of the foul workings of Chaos, and I am glad to inform the court that the defendants have taken Sigmar to their hearts.' Naturally the PCs may react to this in some way, gaining yet another blow in the back from Mauritz. At that, Johann reacts very strongly, telling Mauritz not to hurt his clients, which Mauritz reluctantly obeys. Johann will then ask Keine

for a short recess while he discusses the case with the PCs. This will be granted by Keine, as he doesn't really have any choice.

The point is that almost any kind of protest will gain the adventurers an apology from Johann and a real defence can be initiated. Johann will still be speaking for the adventurers and he still isn't convinced of their innocence. However, he now listens to the adventurers before addressing the court. Up until now, the trial has been predetermined, but now the adventurers' fate is in their own hands. The solution is not to convince the court of their innocence, but to convince Johann that there is something wrong about the magistrate. Keine wants a quick trial; he intends to call some witnesses to 'prove' that Egg was kidnapped, and sentence the adventurers to death as soon as possible. Hopefully the adventurers will have other ideas.

Keine will call in various witnesses, including Kiefern and Mauritz, to confirm the details of the story – accurately enough in their way, but with many exaggerations and self-serving distortions influenced by Keine's opening speech. If the adventurers have tried to escape or behaved badly in jail, Keine will ask

Johann Geistlicher

Cleric of Sigmar

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
3	36	33	4	2	9	41	1	29	35	26	40	33	41

Skills: Arcane Language (Magick), Cast Spells, Cure Disease, Etiquette, Heraldry, Law, Meditate, Public Speaking, Read/Write, Scroll Lore, Secret Language (Classical), Theology.

Spells: Aura of Resistance, Cure Light Injury, Wind Blast.

Trappings: Robes, Religious Symbol.

Magic Points: 11

Johann has been the priest in Lehmberg for almost nine years, a commission he is content with as he likes the quiet country life; he spends much of his time reading or playing chess with Mauritz. Since his childhood he wanted to be a priest, and originally applied to The Order of the Silver Hammer, but he lacked the stamina required to travel the Empire and bring glory to the cult. Instead, he was recruited to The Order of the Torch, who are concerned with the administration of temples, religious services, and parish priesthoods.

Since the secession of Marienburg, Sigmar has been surpassed as patron-god by Manann, although the cult still has its followers throughout the Wasteland. The Order of the Torch still supplies clerics to the area, intent on not letting it slip through their fingers. Although advancement in the order is slow, Johann is not bothered. He is devoted to Sigmar without being a fanatic, though his sermons can be a little tiresome. He has accepted the role given to him, and generally favours non-violent solutions. Unfortunately for the PCs, he is also rather conventional, and terribly slow to accept new ideas, or the possibility that someone in authority might not be entirely good and righteous.

Johann is in his mid-thirties and has a round face. He keeps his blond hair, which is a bit longer than is customary, combed back over his head. He wears round spectacles and is dressed in clerical robes bearing the (old) Sigmarite symbol of the twin-tailed comet.

about this, and Mauritz will brag about how he caught them again before they had a chance to lay their foul hands on the girl. If the adventurers want to question these witnesses, Johann will inform them that it is not appropriate to do so at this point. If pressed, he will confess that he isn't exactly sure of standard court procedures, but he thinks it best to go easy at this stage. Johann won't come up with any good ideas on his own.

From The Mouths Of Babes

The key to a successful defence is to get Keine's tongue to slip, and the first step is to get the Egg to testify. Keine has no intention of letting her, but if the PCs ask Johann why the alleged victim isn't present, he will request that the Egg be summoned. Keine will object, saying that it is not customary to let children testify, and she couldn't possibly add anything significant. If the PCs insist (through Johann), he has to consent; however, he will ask her questions such as 'Are these people your parents?', emphasizing the areas which confirm his case.

The Egg has been enjoying Hans' hospitality, and knows nothing of the adventurers' predicament. If she has to testify, she will not immediately recognize their peril. She is only seven, after all, and has never been in a court before. If she knew her 'game' could get them killed she might stop pretending – but her precise behaviour will depend a great deal on how the PCs have treated her. If she watched her foster-parents being killed, she may still be bearing a traumatized grudge.

Quite correctly, Keine suspects that if she is allowed to tell too much of her side of the story, his plan will fail. Thus he tries to avoid those parts of her story that doesn't fit. As long as the adventurers don't demand to question the Egg themselves, this won't be a problem. If the adventurers want to question the Egg, Keine will again be forced to allow this, as Johann points out that there is nothing in the law against it.

While it can be fun to torment the PCs with the Egg, who has been a little monster up to this point, now may be the moment to turn the tables and have her save the party's bacon from Keine's waiting frying-pan. After all, the characters will need some reason to want to save her from the Order in the next chapter. If the PCs ask intelligent questions (e.g. 'Did your parents let you come with us?') then she will answer truthfully; and her blonde curls and blue eyes will make her the epitome of credible child-like innocence.

As soon as the Egg's answers begin to make him uncomfortable, Keine will interrupt her by rising and shouting, '*Witchcraft!*' At this a few shouts of '*Burn them!*' are heard from the crowd. Keine continues before anyone has the chance to say anything: 'Order in the court! Order in the court!' (Knocking frantically with his club.) 'It is obvious that the child is under the influence of a spell cast by the defendants. Sergeant! Remove her from the court!'

This should seem highly suspicious, but no protests will help as Mauritz escorts the Egg into the kitchen and leaves her with Hans. To recover from this rather uncomfortable position, Keine continues:

'As to you,' (pointing at the crowd with his club), 'I will point out that nobody shouts "*Burn them*" in my court! If you don't keep quiet, I will empty the room, and hold the trial behind closed doors. No matter what foul crimes someone has committed, they are always entitled to a fair trial, at least as long as I am magistrate around here!' (To Johann) 'Does the defence have anything to say in this matter?' Johann is taken by surprise and can only stutter agreement: 'Yes, a fair trial, that's correct.'

Keine now plays his ace, as he calls Johann Geistlicher as a witness. This will only happen if he is about to lose control over the trial; that is, if the adventurers has managed to get the Egg to testify. Keine is relying on the fact that Johann will obey his strictures as a cleric of Sigmar, meaning he will not lie, and if he is not overly suspicious, will obey Keine's commands.

Never Trust A Lawyer

Keine first asks Johann about the character of the previous villager witnesses, and whether they are likely to have been telling the truth. Johann answers that, 'There is no doubt that they told what they regard as the truth.' (If Johann isn't yet convinced that the PCs might be innocent, then his answer will be more straightforward, which will satisfy Keine much more.) Then Keine quickly asks Johann's opinion of the crime of kidnapping a child; Johann naturally says that it is despicable.

'And what would you say if I submitted to you that these people (pointing at the adventurers) are slavers?' says Keine. As Johann, bewildered, flails around for an answer, Keine announces that 'For some time now, a band of slavers has been operating in the Wasteland, brutally ripping innocent children from their parents loving care. Witnesses have described the band ...' (Here, he throws in vague descriptions of the adventurers.) 'I have been travelling the Wasteland in search of these criminals, and it is truly a blessing of the gods that I happened upon your messenger; my search is finally over.'

Even Johann becomes rather uncertain at this, asking uncertainly if there is any evidence. Keine says that of course there is. 'I have here some documents pertaining to the band of slavers. You may examine them.' He hands Johann a sheaf of forged documents (see below). Silence fills the court as Johann reads them and turns ashen. Keine continues, 'Is there any doubt that the accused are guilty?'

This is a cunning question; Johann is under oath and has to say what he thinks about the PCs. It is up to the GM to decide whether the party have managed to sway him to their side. If they have pointed out the various discrepancies to Johann and presented a believable story, he will object and ask if Keine can put forth more proof that the PCs really are the slavers. Otherwise he will probably agree that the adventurers seem guilty.

Keine spent most of the previous night preparing the documents. They contain several faked testimonies by fictional people living in the Wasteland and in Marienburg. All tell of how their children were kidnapped, and some describe the slavers. The perpetrators resemble the PCs, with the same mix of races. The testimonies are all signed by the witnesses (most with 'X') and the documents bear the seal of the Magistrates' Office in Marienburg. The reason Keine doesn't use them sooner is that he doesn't want to leave any traces behind, and if he can get the adventurers hung without them, he will.

The Verdict Of You All

The trial can end in three different ways, depending on the party's actions:

If the PCs have made the mob and Mauritz hostile towards them, and don't manage to shed enough doubt on Keine's actions to convince Johann (say, if they miss half of the clues and keep arguing with Mauritz), this will let Keine sentence them to death with the support of all present: 'By the power vested in me I hereby sentence you to be hanged by the neck until you are dead, *Dead, DEAD!* I will question the girl further, so that



we can return her to her parents.' The PCs are now forced to flee during the night or else they will be hanged at dawn.

But the adventurers may have behaved reasonably intelligently, convincing Johann of their probable innocence, and that there is something fishy about Keine. Relevant clues include: Keine's knowing Egg's exact age, his knowledge that they are travelling across the Wasteland to Marienburg (the adventurers *could* have kidnapped her nearer to the city, or be travelling the other way), his uncanny knack of knowing which parts of the adventurers' story to focus on, and especially the fact that Keine waited so long before producing the documents.

All these will make Johann demand that sentence be postponed until further evidence is produced, and that Egg's parents should be found. Keine will have difficulty opposing this – he wants to avoid casting suspicion on himself, and will order that Egg be taken to his room for further questioning. The PCs are thrown back in their cell, while Keine plans to disappear during the night, taking the Egg with him. If the adventurers don't escape, they will be freed in the morning by Johann and an embarrassed Mauritz who explain that Keine has vanished, along with his aide and the Egg! (See *The End*.)

The PCs *might* be absolutely brilliant and reveal all Keine's errors, preferably pushing him into more as they go. This will enable Johann to accuse him instead, in a truly riveting piece of courtroom drama. Everyone might end up totally convinced of Keine's evil intent, and Johann can order Mauritz to arrest him. The adventurers are free to go and take the Egg with them.

Keine, however, always has reserve plans! He realizes that the game is up and orders Kuno to hold everybody off. He then uses his smoke bomb to add to the confusion while escaping through the inn's back door.

The PCs won't be able to do much, because they will still be chained together. When Kuno has been overwhelmed and the confusion has subsided it will be clear that there is no chance to catch Keine. He won't have time to grab the Egg, but the adventurers should be wary of figures who *might* be following them on the way to Marienburg (see *The End*) – or he might reappear as part of the Brotherhood's force in the final assault on the Library, in the next chapter.

Jailbreak

If the adventurers decide to break out of jail they could try a number of ideas, some good and some bad. Note that it will be much easier to escape after the trial, as the guards start to relax and the novelty of guarding the prisoners has worn off. As mentioned before, there will be at least two guards (sometimes more) present before the trial.

Some PCs might think of playing sick. Unless the act is very convincing, this will only gain a bucketful of (if they are lucky) water. On the other hand, one of the guards might be convinced to go and fetch the doctor. It is possible to seize the doctor and use him as a hostage, but the alarm will be raised – and the villagers may decide that they never liked the doctor much.

Chapter 9:

When Darkness Falls

Home at last! The walls of Marienburg lie ahead! Unfortunately, the Chaos Moon is now almost visibly crawling towards the sun. The eclipse is clearly imminent, and it is still far from clear what should be done to stave off the return of Zahnarzt – or even who it is safe to trust.

In this, the final section of the adventure, the PCs return to Marienburg and are faced with a terrible dilemma. With only hours before the Eclipse, with no one in the city prepared to help them, and with the forces of Law and Chaos ranged against them, can they find a way of saving the city without killing an innocent child?

For the characters, time is of the essence: they will know whether they have been travelling fast or slow, but they do not know exactly when the eclipse is going to happen. Unless anything remarkable has happened on the journey, they will have returned either one or two days before the eclipse; even if they made exceptionally good speed, the GM should not give them an extra day: however, if they were slow then the forces of Chaos may be better prepared for them.

Since the exact day of the eclipse is unknown, fudging it is simple: the day the PCs go to Foyles Rock is the day the eclipse will happen. However, the PCs will know that time is short, and therefore the GM can frustrate them with time-wasting delays, incompetent NPCs and belligerent city guards eager to throw trouble-makers out of the town, in order to heighten the dramatic tension.

In this section, more than in any other part of this adventure, GMs must use their knowledge, intelligence and imagination to respond to the players' ideas and actions; remember that it is always better to bend the rules to create a dramatic, fast-moving, exciting climax to a long adventure than to risk being boring or tedious by sticking to the exact printed details.

Here We Are Again!

The characters return to a Marienburg bizarrely affected by the on-coming eclipse. Outside the city's boundaries is a new shantytown of carts and tents: people who have been refused entrance to the city, or who have been thrown out for causing trouble. They are a strange mixture of merchants, travellers, agitators, religious fanatics and gossips; and all feel that they have been harshly treated. The PCs are unlikely to learn anything directly relevant from them, but can pick up the main points of what has happened in the city.

After they left, the rioting and panic got steadily worse. Trade was suffering, and eventually the City Council placed the entire town under martial law for the duration of 'the present emergency', ordered the gates closed and allowed nobody to enter

or exit without Council-issued passes. They extended the existing curfew: anyone on the streets during the hours of darkness (5pm to 7am) without the proper papers, or anyone causing any sort of affray, is liable to immediate arrest or, at the discretion of the officer on duty, summary execution. In practice, most are simply slung out of the city and told not to come back until the eclipse is over. There is to be a 24-hour curfew on the day of the eclipse itself – but that day is not yet known.

In the last few days, the effects of Chaos that the PCs witnessed in the last two adventures have touched Marienburg itself. The sun has been blood-red for the past week; strange graffiti has appeared across the city; the face of a demon was seen among the clouds; a gale blew from the north and rearranged a few of the streets; a two-headed dog ran through the marketplace; a horde of Skaven were seen disappearing into the sewers with something large and glowing; and one day the fishermen brought in a catch of boiled herring. All this has caused much disquiet and unrest.

The City Council still believes that the eclipse will pass over with no ill effects, and think that the town will be back to normal in a few days time. Nevertheless, proclamations have been issued stating that the Council has hired the best sorcerers around in preparation for any supernatural harm that may approach the city. This is balderdash, but has done a little to calm the overall mood.

All the city gates are shut, but the guards can be persuaded to open them to let people in. By coincidence, the guards on duty when the PCs arrive are the same ones who were on duty when the PCs left on their outward journey, and are very amused that the same group of people are trying to get into the city again. The guards won't let them in without the proper paperwork – which they don't have. A successful *blather*, *bluff* or *bribe* (10 guilders each) will get them in; if that fails, anyone leaving the city can be persuaded to part with their papers for 30 guilders, and one set will be enough for everyone.

There is an eerie silence across the streets, wharves and canals of the great city: the occasional sound of a mewling cat, a crying child, the singing of a monk or the clattering of a passing Guard patrol is all that breaks the silence. A few shops are open, but they have little stock and fewer customers. Those folk who have remained in the city are staying firmly at home; the few on the streets hurry about, their faces lowered to avoid eye-contact with the patrols of City Guards who swagger through the

roads as if they owned them. These are the only people that the party are likely to meet on the street, and they will be extremely suspicious, even if it is before the curfew has been sounded.

Despite the lack of traffic on the streets, the Egg is completely overwhelmed by the size of Marienburg. She will start off being loud and excited, trying to run away and explore. After a little while, as the city streets continue in every direction, she quietens into childish awe. After a couple of hours she will become tired and homesick, with intermittent tears and pleas to be taken back to her parents.

Meanwhile...

Father Faber of the Ancient Order of Illuminated Readers has managed to find a duplicate copy of 'A Theory of Chaos' in the Unseen Library's stacks of unsorted books, and has realized that Vogelgesang was on to something that threatens the future of the Library itself. Acting swiftly, the Order has surprised even itself with the resources that it has been able to apply to the problem. The Order includes wizards and astrologers within its number, and several more such have been bribed with snip-pets of arcane lore.

Between them, these experts have come up with a history of events, a set of predictions and some tracking-spells – all a little half-baked and hasty, but sufficient to tell them what the Egg is, and when and where it may be intercepted. Meanwhile, Faber has called in various favours from various temples and the City Council, who have in turn called in other favours; and as a result, the Order is receiving reports from within the City Guard and militia, as well as from members of their own organization placed in strategic sites around the city.

The overall result is that the Order *will* know when the Egg reaches the city, and *will* be able to react with great speed. Unfortunately their spells have already gone off half-cocked a few times, and four Chaos-free small children are currently imprisoned within the Library. The Readers are not heartless enough to kill them, but dare not return them to the city lest they reveal the location of the Order's hidden centre.

Goffman, meanwhile, managed to locate one passage in 'A Theory Of Chaos', which reads:

'If this book survives unto the day of the next rising of the demon, then the surest council is this. Bind firmly the Egg of the Moon, but strike it not until the day of the eclipse comes. When Morrslieb touches first the sun, but has yet not plunged the whole world into darkness, make the sign of Solkan three times over it, and when that is done, slice open its living heart, then cut down and ... (Three paragraphs of stomach-churning butchery follow). Only in this wise may Zahnarzt be utterly laid to rest. But if you have not the stomach to tear out the heart of Chaos, and if in thy compassion you would place into mortal peril all the world, then take in your right hand –'

The rest of the passage is missing because of the cavity that was created to conceal the Tooth, but it was enough to convince him that the Egg is a living being. When word reached him from the Order that all Readers should be on the look-out for a band of adventurers with a small child, his worst suspicions were confirmed. He set out to Foyles Rock, hoping to locate the rest of the passage, but on his arrival was summoned before the Order's leader, Father Faber and charged with behaviour that might reveal the existence of the Order.

Goffman pleaded with Faber to take the humane course in dealing with the Egg; Faber flatly refused, believing that the only good potential demonic vessel is a dead one. A squad of mobile librarians were sent to Goffman's house to recover all his books. Faber then used the mutilated copy of 'A Theory of Chaos' as an excuse to charge Goffman with defacing library books (even though he knew the book was damaged before Vogelgesang stole it). Goffman was tortured for all the information he knew about Zahnarzt and the forthcoming eclipse, then his tongue was ripped out and he has been imprisoned within the island. He will be disposed of after the eclipse.

Meanwhile, the Brotherhood of the Forgotten One should not have to do anything to bring about the return of their master – if it were not for the interference of the accursed forces of Law. Zahnarzt *should* return to them as a matter of course. The cult in the city is simply waiting until the moment of his return comes, hoping that at any moment their agents will return with news that the interfering ones have been killed.

The recent Summoning of the Brotherhood spell indicated that they were close. As time passes and the message does not come, the cult becomes increasingly concerned – could it be that, after all these years of waiting, they are going to be foiled again?

You Can't Make An Omelette...

When the party arrive in Marienburg, either they will have the Egg, or she will have been removed from them by either Sternheimer or Keine. Either way, she is shortly to end up in the hands of the Order.

If the party has the Egg with them, before they have a chance to visit Goffman, they will be approached by four members of the Order. Although the PCs will notice that they are wearing the Library's symbol, they appear to be normal, friendly men in priestly robes. Three of them are visitors from Foyles Rock (and hence silent), but one is the deaf tobacconist Johan Harupz (p.19), who is there to serve as an interpreter. He is also in the robes of the Order, and if they have come across him before, PCs will require an *Observe* roll to notice it is the same person.

Johan will tell them that he and his 'brothers' have matters of great import to discuss, and suggest that everyone ducks into a convenient tavern to talk for a while. They are prepared to talk on the street, but that might lead to irritating interference from the City Guard (and, of course, being out of public view will suit the Librarians). Assuming that the PCs are prepared to follow and listen, they will be told the following:

'Master Stoughton says that he is very proud to meet such brave heroes. He asks if the City Council has offered you the freedom of Marienburg yet? No? He says it is a mere oversight. To have risked so much to rescue this innocent creature from the hands of Goffman! You have met Goffman? And escaped with your life? He says that you are more heroic than he realized. Do you know what he had in store for the child? He intended to use her as a human sacrifice. A Chaos agent of the first order. No doubt you were threatened along the way; it's the way of Chaos to betray its own.

'And now only one thing remains. Come little girl – do you have a name? Egg! What a nice name. Well, Egg, we are going on a little trip. Have you ever been to an island before? You must understand, we have fought Chaos for centuries, and only with us can this little one be completely safe ...'

If the PCs do not fall for this, then the Readers are prepared to use more direct means. Johan has a supply of an extremely

rare and potent Arabian drug that will induce a deep sleep in anyone who ingests the slightest amount. He will not only offer it to them as snuff or in tobacco (mentioning that it is his finest stock and he sells none better – this is a major clue), but he has also bribed the inn's staff to put it into the adventurers' drinks (*Observe* to detect a sickly-sweet taste), but if that fails, he will throw it in their faces from a pouch on his belt. Any quantity taken internally will automatically knock the victim out in 2D6 rounds (i.e. 20 seconds to 2 minutes). The Egg will quaff hers down, with no ill-effects at all.

If Johan has to throw the powder around, the GM may permit the PCs to make an I test to react and jump backwards, or to hold their breath – but the players must specify that their characters are doing such a thing. On a failure, they are out of action for 3D6 rounds.

Meanwhile, Harupz and one of the Librarians will hustle the Egg away (she is too confused and bemused by the city to argue), while the other two attempt to block pursuing PCs by standing in their way, knocking furniture over, and so on. If this happens in a tavern, the staff have been generously bribed by Johan to ignore everything – but if the place starts to get too badly smashed up, they may protest.

Meanwhile, a patrol of eight City Guards (p.8) will be close to hand. Unfortunately for the PCs, this unit has also been subverted by the Librarians. Whether the PCs call for help, emerge from a tavern to pursue fleeing librarians, or start any kind of altercation in the street, the patrol will intervene – doing *nothing* to stop the Librarians and everything to obstruct the PCs. They will start off by demanding to see the PCs' papers immediately; if the PCs refuse to be slowed by that, the militia will draw swords, simultaneously blowing whistles to summon aid.

No attempt to *bribe*, *blather* or *bluff* their way out of trouble will work – City Guards who won't take a bribe ought to rouse PC suspicions. If they start taking serious damage, they will back off, but by then, 2D4 more guards will be on the scene, and the PCs will be in serious trouble, with the likelihood of imprisonment or being thrown out of the city. If the PCs let themselves be delayed, the guards will allow them to proceed after a few minutes, with some vague mutters of 'Behave yourselves in future – we'll be watching you.'

Any Elf or Halfling in the party will, on making an *Observe* test, realize that the Readers smelled faintly of pipe tobacco – Dwarven or Human senses aren't acute enough to notice this.

... If You Don't Have An Egg

If the party has lost their prize earlier, presumably because she was taken by Keine or Sternheimer, then the Brotherhood's agents are the ones who are intercepted by the Librarians, and who lose the Egg to them. It is important that the PCs discover that this has happened, so a dramatic scene is in order.

As the party are arguing with the City Guards at the gates of Marienburg, and putting up with a certain amount of amiable ribbing, they suddenly hear the sound of whistles being blown loudly a few streets away. The guards look at each other, mutter, 'part-timers,' and a couple of them jog off in the direction of the sound.

The PCs should be encouraged to take an interest in this, but by the time they have passed through the gates and reached the scene, however, most of the excitement is over. A trio of City Guards are lying in the street; at least two of them look unlikely ever to get up again. Others, and the gate-guards, stand around; enough of them seem to know enough first-aid that

any offers of assistance (apart from magical healing) will be met with a brush-off.

However, with a brief look round the area, the PCs can find a witness; a beggar or street-urchin. It seems that a small group of travellers, mostly adults, but with one kid – 'pretty little girl she was' – came down the street, and were met by a group of 'old fellows' in some kind of robes. After a short conversation, the meeting turned into a fight – at which a bunch of City Guards boiled up from nowhere and took on the travellers, while the 'old fellows' took off, *taking the girl with them*. Magic started flashing about, and it looked like the travellers were coming off best, but as more militia showed up they scattered.

As they depart this scene, the PCs will hear a quiet call from a narrow alley-way. Looking that way, they see a man in travel-stained clothes leaning against a wall, with one hand clutching at a nasty sword-cut across his chest. Ideally, this should be a member of the Brotherhood they have met and fought in the past – Sternheimer would be a good choice, if that is possible, as would Kuno; von Dorfenstadt would also fit the bill, but it might be more interesting to keep him alive for later use. The Chaotic agent smiles grimly.

'Looks like ... we've both ... lost,' he gasps. 'Who'd have thought those bookworm Law-filth ... could be so sneaky? Well, you can go after 'em ... now. Hope you and them ... do for each other ...'

Then he slumps to the ground, arterial blood staining his clothes. It is up to the PCs whether they make any serious attempt to help him, and up to the GM how successful they might be. He would take a lot of saving, he doesn't know much more that would help, and he is now wanted by the city authorities on capital charges: if nothing else, he may be worth saving for the reward of 100 guilders on his head – payable only if he is alive. He knows of the Order, but not where they are based.

The Absence of Goffman

When the PCs return to Goffman's house to tell him the bad news, they will find that he is not there: an unfamiliar halfling housekeeper (Bilna Treestump, who is stout even by halfling standards, chews liquorice-root, makes strong tea and complains about her sore leg a lot) will answer the door, and say that she has not seen him for a week.

If they assure her that they are friends of Goffman's, she will allow them to roam through the house, so long as they do not disturb her in the kitchen. However, there is no evidence of violence or burglary anywhere, except that the bookshelves have been cleared. Goffman's notes are still spread over his desk. Of Vogelgesang's book, there is no sign.

Most of the notes are completely unintelligible. For one thing, Goffman writes simultaneously in three languages (Old Worlde, Classical, and an obscure Arabian dialect that he learnt as a boy and likes to practise); for another, his handwriting is quite appalling. Pages begin with remarks like 'Moon passes through constellations. That much obvious. Refutation of astrology. (Memo to self: Have never won more than a shilling in lottery. Krantz is a charlatan.)' However, towards the end the writing improves, and the PCs can read the following:

'The brutes would do it; they would tear the heart out of a child in the name of Law. And Manann forgive me, I have caused the child to be brought to her death. Perhaps the young fool and the pack of chancers I sent will prove as incompetent as they appeared, and will fail at their mission. But no, I cannot rely on this. I must go to the Temple on the Rock and

confront Faber; make him see sense. There is another way ... if only some fool hadn't destroyed the page.'

As they are rustling through the pages, Bilna will appear to offer them some herbal tea, and to answer any questions. She knows little; she doesn't live in the house, and only noticed the books were missing about six days ago – 'I expect Doctor Goffman's got them wherever he is; he likes his books' – but there was no sign of a forced entry. As she is about to leave, she turns and asks if any of them know Herr Klaus, Goffman's old student. 'Only my cousin Jemima has a letter for him from the Doctor, and is anxious he gets it. She's staying with her cousin Cristan the leatherworker, over in the Suiddock.'

Anyone examining the papers or the desk extremely closely will find tiny traces of unsmoked tobacco scattered over it – left by the mobile librarians who removed Goffman's books. Neither Goffman nor Klaus smoked, so this is another Clue, even though it may do no more than lead PCs on a hunt through every tobacconist in the city, or conclude that Bilna's dusting leaves much to be desired. If the PCs search the entire house, they will find a set of Lay-Reader's robes, inscribed with the insignia of the Order, in a cupboard in Goffman's dressing room. This may give them ideas.

Persuasion

It's entirely possible that a callous group of PCs will decide that getting sacrificed by the Order is a fitting fate for a small child as nauseating as the Egg. While their sentiment is understandable, it's not tremendously heroic of them. There is also the problem of the Brotherhood – who, as the PCs know from experience, can be just as ruthless as the Order. Moreover, the Brotherhood does not need to go through any involved ceremonies to summon back Zahnarzt; if they can disrupt the Order's sacrifice (or if the Order's sacrifice doesn't work) then Marienburg is rubble.

The problem for the GM is how to communicate this to the PCs without actually telling them outright. While walking about town, let them spot known members of the Brotherhood (Sternheimer, von Dorfenstadt, Kuno, or even Franz van Mehern), deep in conversation with a number of other equally shady individuals. Make it clear that something is being plotted, but the moment the Brotherhood realize that they are being eavesdropped, they will switch to discussing the price of market goods – eggs, for example. Doing this once will worry the party; doing it twice ought to convince them that something is afoot, and they really ought to intervene.

A Messenger

If the PCs head straight over to the Suiddock, they will find Cristan much as he was when they first met him (p.9-10), and still trying to sell them handbags. Jemima is at the market, but returns as the PCs are talking to her cousin. Goffman told her to only give the letter to Klaus and she will take some persuading to give it up: a tearful story about Klaus's heroic demise while fending off several hundred Skaven ought to do it. She is pleased to see the PCs again, although they should get the feeling that the death of Vogelgesang and disappearance of Goffman has left her a lost soul, looking for a new role in life.

If the PCs fail to pick up the clue from Bilna, or are uncertain on the correct course of action, then somewhere around the town, either on the street outside Goffman's house or in a

market, they are approached by a short figure in a conspicuous red-hooded cloak. It turns out to be Jemima, looking unusually worried and nervous. She draws the party aside, and asks about Klaus, Goffman's student.

When the PCs tell her his fate, she shakes her head sadly, says, 'Well in that case, I was to give this to one of you,' and slips one of them a sealed bundle of parchment. 'He said that you should have this – if you didn't see him in person, like ... Dr Goffman, that is ... Poor Herr Vogelgesang's friend ... He said that Kunz – Herr Vogelgesang – he would have wanted...' Then she scurries off, refusing to say any more.

When the PCs open the bundle, they find that it is a letter from Goffman to Klaus (see the hand-out on p.126), together with several pages of parchment, each with a large hole through it, and a small piece of flat copper etched with strange symbols. The letter should prompt them to take action, and may help them later. On an **Int** roll, PCs will recognize the parchment as pages torn from 'A Theory of Chaos'. There is no clue what the piece of copper is; in fact it is Vogelgesang's old 'library card'; the identification needed to enter the Unseen Library.

If the characters check the pages of the book that Goffman has torn out, they will see that the crucial charm words are missing because of the hole. Now, the adventurers can realize that the paper that they have been carrying with them – the paper that the Tooth is wrapped in – has the missing part of the ritual on it. That is, they have what Goffman lacked: a means to avert the catastrophe without killing the Egg – who is, after all, just a seven-year-old.

Who spots this fact – and how – is up to the GM. It may be a matter of making a set of **Int** tests until somebody succeeds, or the GM might prefer to drop hints to the players. Scholarly characters are more likely to spot such a thing, while an ex-scribe may have the necessary sense of the physical nature of manuscripts. One option is to have a non-literate character notice that 'Duh – dese bits look like dey fit togedda ...'

If they have thrown the piece of paper away, GMs who like happy endings can have it turn up at the bottom of someone's pocket; those who prefer tragedy will let the PCs realize they have thrown away their only hope of salvation. But perhaps that's too down-beat. If all else fails, the Library has another copy of 'A Theory Of Chaos', which is on Father Faber's desk.

When it is at last revealed, the complete passage sounds deadly: at the moment that Morrslieb covers the *entire* face of the sun, the vessel (Egg) must be stabbed through the heart with the Tooth. This will, according to Mandelbrote, draw the demonic essences from the child into the Tooth, which will then disintegrate; and the child will be healed and whole. No chants or preparations are needed – but it must be done at *exactly* the right moment.

Day Trip To Foyles Rock

Once the adventurers realize that the Egg (and maybe Goffman) must be in the hands of the Librarians, they will need to find a way of getting to the Library; and may need to find that the Library itself exists. Goffman's letter and various other sources have given plenty of hints, mentioning an island in the Reik estuary. Unfortunately there are around fifty islands that fit the basic description, some inhabited and some just rocks or sandbanks. It would take days to check them all.

Although anyone who asks questions at the moment will be treated with suspicion, one or two hours of making enquiries in the inns on the waterfront will find a docker or boatman

When Darkness Falls

who knows of an island with a ruined Solkanite temple and a mad hermit on it, which people visit from time to time. The party can find someone to take them out there fairly easily, although it may cost them a healthy payment. (Some PCs may decide to steal a boat; in that case, the GM should ensure that at least one of them has *Row* or *Sailing* as appropriate, and should consider having them arrested later for the crime.)

Alternatively, it may be easier for PCs in the docks to spot a boat with eight men in robes coming in from the estuary; the passengers disembark, but the boatman stays where he is, as if waiting for them to return. They do, three hours later, with sacks of provisions. It is possible to hire or steal a boat and pursue the Readers back to the island; it is also possible (just) to pursue them along the river-bank. Foolhardy characters who do not know the meaning of 'dying of exposure' may want to swim after the boat; the more prudent may think of obtaining the Readers' robes and sneaking on in their place.

Almost every scholar in Marienburg knows of the Order, but most are unwilling to talk of it. Of the contacts the PCs have made, Gustav Andersen knows nothing, but Boris Bludenheim has overheard enough conversations to learn that the Order has a base – not necessarily its main one – on one of the islands in the estuary. Johan Tynus knows the whole truth, but has embroidered it with a great deal of fiction. The person who may be the most help to them is Jemima, although she doesn't know it: she has heard Vogelgesang mention Foyles Rock many times, but does not know what its significance is, and so will not have mentioned it before.

As a final act of desperation, the party may be able to find a robed member of the Order wandering the city streets, and get the information out of them by fair means or foul. Only a few

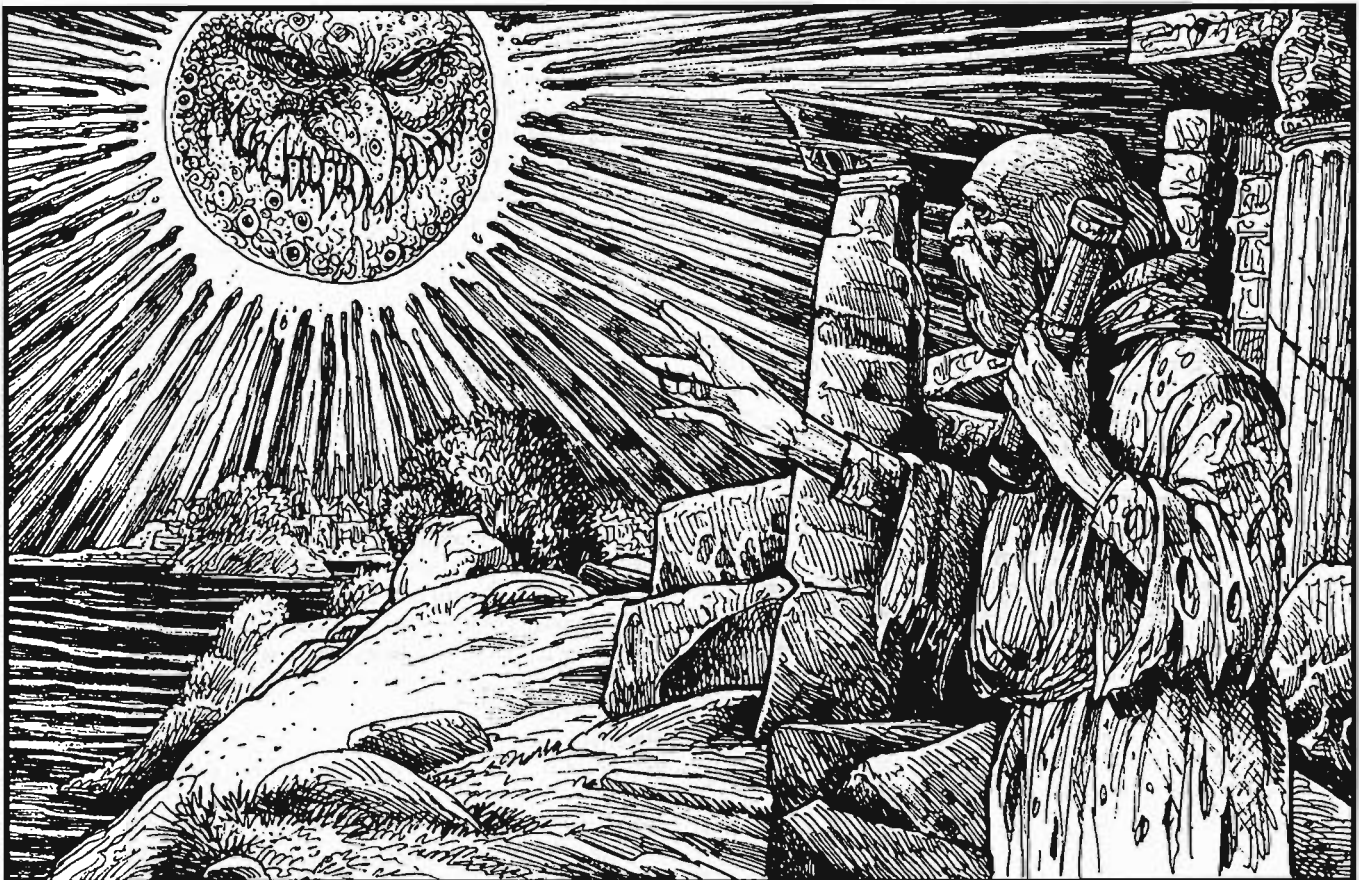
are around, and it will take several hours to locate one – and there is a 70% chance he is a full member, and therefore has no tongue. ('Talk, damn you! Talk!' 'Aaa-aaaaaa-aa!')

There is one very simple way of finding out where the Egg is; using the Tooth to get a bearing on her. Since the party are so close to the source, they can even use triangulation to get a fix on her exact position. However, any use of the Tooth will attract the attention of the Brotherhood, and three of its agents will pay a visit to the party within 1-4 hours, trying to persuade them that some form of action, or even an alliance, against the Order is a good idea.

The Day Is Nigh

It may take the PCs a day or so to work out where the Egg has been taken, but eventually they will learn about Foyles Rock. If they spend a night in Marienburg, they will all be visited and given dreams by Zahnarzt: images of a strange cavern; of vile, twisted men in the robes of the Order, their features deformed by lascivious leers and grimaces; the Egg strapped to an altar and screaming in sheer terror – and suddenly they *are* the Egg, looking up at the hideous old men bending over them, seeing the twisted dagger descending towards their heart, feeling its point touch their skin ... and at this moment they will wake up, bathed in a cold sweat. If they have used the Tooth, then Zahnarzt may even visit them during the day, trying to cajole them into attacking the Order with whispered promises of rewards of great power.

As the characters are setting out to go to Foyles Rock, if they look up at the sky, any character with *Astronomy* will, on a successful *Int* test, realize that the path of Morrslieb is going to



intersect with the path of the sun in two to three hours. Anyone else can tell, from the fact that the sky is blood-red and the Chaos Moon's mouth is gaping wide as if about to devour something whole, that things are generally coming to a climax.

The Reik Stuff

If the PCs do not know about the tunnel under the tobacco-sellers, they will have to try to get into the Unseen Library from the surface. Foyles Rock sits out in the estuary about eight hundred yards from shore; a solitary lump of rock about a hundred yards long and thirty wide. Only two walls remain of the old Solkanite temple, and the only inhabitants are a few seals and seagulls, a rather emaciated cow, and an elderly monk.

This is Reader Hodder, who is eccentric even by the standards of the Ancient Order of Illuminated Readers, among whom eccentricity is an entry requirement. He has spent the last ten years reading and re-reading the same ancient scroll, a document in an obscure language that was found by accident in the deserts of Araby. Hodder himself is unsure what the document means, but thinks that if he reads it enough times, the meaning will eventually present itself.

Hodder greets visitors by mouthing (he, like all full members of the Order, is mute) 'Four thousand, seven hundred and ninety one' – the number of times he has read the parchment. He finds that spending his whole life open to the forces of nature helps his concentration. Hodder is also a doorkeeper: normally only people who are already Lay-Readers of the Order are allowed into the Library itself.

Most Marienburgers believe that he is the last of the old priests of Solkan who built this temple, and this is a fiction that the Order is happy to keep up. Local sailors think of him as a hermit, and occasionally leave food for him. Occasionally people come to the island to seek Hodder's advice, which is always cryptic and never helpful, and therefore is highly valued. It also serves to explain the boats brought to the island by Lay-Readers coming to use the Library.

Fortunately, since Hodder is an unworldly mystic, he knows very little of the current crises facing the Order and the city. PCs who demand entrance or threaten him will not get very far as he will simply pretend to know nothing; however, if they pose as seekers after truth, Hodder will be interested.

If they have Vogelgesang's library card, or a rare book to deposit in the library (such as Rakka's book of Fimir magic), he will happily let them in. 'Take it to Faber,' he will scribble on his slate, 'down both sets of stairs, first on the right, second left, hang on was it second right? You'll find it.'

The Brotherhood Attack Squad

M	WS	BS	S	T	V	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	43	35	3	4	9	34	2	29	25	25	35	32	20

Skills: Concealment Urban, Flee!, Frenzied Attack, Immunity to Disease, Pick Lock or Read/Write or Torture, Secret Language (Thieves), Silent Move Urban, Specialist Weapon (Sword, Crossbow), Street Fighter.

Trappings: Swords, Daggers, Dark Clothing; half also have small crossbows.

He opens the hidden door. Beyond it, a stone stairway descends about a hundred feet, widening as it goes, and opens out into a cavernous space: the Great Reading Room (see below).

The door to the staircase is hidden cleverly amidst the stonework of the ruined temple where Hodder sleeps, is very solid, and is controlled by an intricate system of locks and levers. It is possible to find it by searching the ruins (the search will take an agonizing half-hour, as the Chaos Moon creeps visibly closer to the sun), but can only be opened by Hodder, or a CR roll at -25%. Or, if the PCs knock heavily on it for several minutes, a Reader will eventually open it from the inside.

Going Underground

If the PCs have the key from the Librarian-Assassins (p.18), or if they have followed anyone to Johan Harupz's shop, or have asked around and found the location of the only tobacco-seller in the Suiddock, then they may be able to get into the Library via the secret tunnel. If they have already seen someone entering the secret tunnel, this task should be relatively easy, as whatever else Johan is, he is not a warrior.

If they do not know that the tunnel exists then they have a more difficult task in front of them, since Johan will not betray the Library under any circumstances except vilest torture, and nice characters shouldn't do that sort of thing. However, a reasonably thorough search of the building will eventually reveal the entrance to the tunnel, hidden in the cellar.

If the PCs have the key but no idea where it can be used, the GM might speed things up by drawing their attention to the shop. This could be done by having a captured Librarian talk (or gesture) too much, or that old plot-device Muuthauwg could show up and entrance various NPCs or PCs, lead them to the very door of the shop, and then release them and depart, saying, 'Within is a hidden portal ... Use it, lest darkness swallow us all.'

The tunnel is nearly a half-mile long, damp, and totally dark. Any dwarves in the party will feel right at home here, and will admire the engineering work, which a dwarf obviously had a hand in. Anyone else is likely to find it a very unpleasant, claustrophobic walk. Unless the PCs have managed to advertise their presence to the Order, the tunnel will not be guarded, and they will emerge, through another secret door, into a small cave on the very edge of the underground complex.

Anyone coming in by this route will have to negotiate a labyrinth of books and bookshelves to reach the Reading Room. This can be done by someone who knows the way in a few minutes (Harupz himself, for example) or by following someone who does know their way through; however, anyone without access to a map is likely to get very lost very quickly.

The Solkanites originally used the Unseen Library as a catacomb, placing the bodies of their honoured dead in its caves. Although one can still come across the bones and sarcophagi of dead priests, the entire complex is now given over to the storage of books. The Library is a veritable rat-warren of tunnels, corridors, and dead ends. In some passages, crude indentations have been cut into the rock, where books sit in untidy piles. In others, whole cave walls are covered with carved wooden bookcases, on which shelf after shelf of books have been neatly arranged. In yet others, unclassified volumes lie in man-high stacks.

The Readers have no organized system for classifying or storing books, although many of the Order have arranged material

that is interesting to them in ways that they think best. One can see shelves containing nothing but works on fishing; books on disparate subjects but all written in the same language; or collections copied by a particular scribe or bound by a particular book-binder. By far the most common system of classification is 'Those books that Reader Gollanz was studying last month.'

Without help, it will take 30 minutes to negotiate this labyrinth. Deduct 5 minutes for each character with *Orientation* or *Luck*; add 5 minutes for each academic in the party being distracted and slowing everyone up. Twenty minutes after the PCs enter the maze, a party of Brotherhood cultists will follow them down: they too have no map, but the PCs will hear the noise of a group of people behind them. If they decide to wait, they may find the Brotherhood are useful allies at this point; if they press on, they will meet a Reader.

Encountering the Brotherhood

The Brotherhood knows that the Order has the Egg. They have waylaid and captured a Lay-Reader of the Order, and tortured further information out of him. Then they intercepted one of the Library's agents, killed him, and found a key to the secret tunnel in Johan's shop on his body.

Alternatively, if the PCs have been careless with a captured key, the Brotherhood might have somehow got hold of it – this is left to the GM; or, if the Brotherhood in the city has become aware of the PCs, they may simply follow them to the tobacco-seller – in which case two of the Cultists will have *Shadowing*. A picked team of sneaky, competent, fanatical cultists has now been sent into their enemies' lair, wearing the robes of Lay-Readers. Like the PCs, they are here to stop the sacrifice.

If they meet the PCs in the maze, then it is likely that both groups will be instantly antagonistic towards the other, and any fight will attract the attention of the Readers. However – in the very short term – both groups have very similar aims: saving the Egg's life. If this becomes obvious, one of the Brotherhood will suggest a temporary alliance: rescue the child from the Order, then settle their differences.

There is one less cultist than there are characters. It can be amusing to have this group include an enemy the PCs have met before, such as von Dorfenstadt, Kuno or Sternheimer, but this should only occur if it fits in with what has gone before.

Encountering a Reader

The Reader – Brother Harper, a bald man with a long beard – will express mild surprise at seeing visitors who he doesn't know, but will not assume that the PCs are intruders unless they are wearing armour, carrying weapons or behaving in a hostile way. He may even offer (in sign language, or by chalking on a small slate) to find specific books, or to show the PCs the way to the Reading Room. However, if the PCs give any indications that they know about the Egg, Goffman, the stolen book, or the Eclipse, the Reader will raise the alarm (by ringing a small bell attached to his belt; he can't very well shout for aid.)

Muuthauwg

The Quiet Herald represents a potential wild card at this point in the story – and throughout this chapter. He may not appear at all; in fact, GMs should be cautious about introducing him at this point, because he can too easily take over the plot. On the other hand, he can represent a useful way of passing hints or

assistance to the adventurers, or just of enhancing the atmosphere: a few piped notes in the background; a flash of green behind a pile of books, or a musical diversion at exactly the right moment.

For a blunter effect, they may encounter Muuthauwg himself, alone, pipe in hand. When he sees them, he stops playing immediately, and bows ironically – but there is a definite look of worry on his face. Unusually for him, he speaks first.

'He is here,' says the Piper, 'at the heart of the maze, and he hungers for blood and death. And I am weak in this place. You must go – you must stop him – you must spill no young blood for him to drink.'

Then, before any of the adventurers can cross-examine him, he will lean against a wall, smile ruefully, and simply – fade out of sight.

The Great Reading Room

Whichever way the PCs enter the Unseen Library, they will find themselves in a large underground room lit by *Glowing Lights*, and filled with desks, niches and waist-high stacks of ancient books. This is the largest room in the library, the Great Reading Room. It was originally the crypt of the Temple to Solkan on the Rock, and is an impressive structure with a tiled floor and an arched ceiling. The walls are lined with books – books in languages that the PCs have never heard of; ancient books stretching back to before the foundation of the Empire. A number of complex tunnels and caves lead away from here, and a staircase spirals down to another chamber of similar size below.

On the floor of the Great Reading Room, in tiles, is a map of the layout of the library. Initiates are expected to study and memorize this map, and part of the ceremony for becoming a full member of the Order involves showing that you can remember it. However, the map is completely out of date, and the Readers themselves frequently get lost while searching for books. There is also a strange arrangement of mirrors, tied to the corners of book-cases, lying on the floor or propped up against a stack of ancient tomes on mushrooms.

The Readers spend most of their lives studying in the Great Reading Room, which is where the most valuable books are kept. They have never fully explored or mapped the library: the shifting mounds of books and bookcases make it effectively unmappable. Occasionally a new secret passage is discovered behind a bookshelf that no one has referred to for sixty years: this passage may lead to an empty cave, or to a cache of long-forgotten books. The whole Library is unnaturally quiet and any sound carries twice as far as usual.

Readers and Lay-Readers

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	30	34	2	2	6	33	1	28	30	56	30	34	31

Skills: Blather (Lay Readers only); Heraldry; Law; Read/Write; Secret Language - Classical; a great many academic skills irrelevant here.

Trappings: Robes, Bell, Blank book; Lead pencil

Actions And Reactions

If the party enter the Reading Room in silence, nobody will look up from their books. If they are talking, making a noise or dressed in clanking armour, as they emerge into the light every scholar in the place (around eighty people; fifty Readers and thirty Lay-Readers) will look up simultaneously, and go 'Shhh!'

The Readers' reaction to the PCs depends on how they are dressed. If at least one member of the group is wearing the robes of a Reader then so long as they remain quiet nobody will disturb them, assuming they are new initiates coming to see Father Faber. However, if anyone wearing the robes of a full Reader speaks, even in a whisper, then their cover is blown.

If the PCs are not dressed for the occasion, one Reader will approach them, friendly but suspicious. He begins by making hand-signals at them; when these prove unintelligible he pulls out a slate and chalks 'Why are you here?' on it. Any spoken response will be greeted with frantic hushing; the PCs are expected to write their answer on the slate. While this is going on, one member of the Librarian-Assassins (or, if they were all killed, then another Reader who has met the PCs) will recognize them and will scuttle down the spiral stairs to warn Father Faber, who will appear in 1D6 minutes.

If the alarm is raised, or if the party enters looking hostile, wearing armour or carrying drawn weapons, the Readers will react, forming a barrier of desks and tables between the party and themselves, while others hastily gather up books and move them to safety. The Readers are not expecting any kind of intrusion and are not trained for it, but they are capable of defending themselves if necessary. Twenty will fight but only if attacked. Any noise will bring Father Faber and his guards up from below to investigate in 1D3 minutes. Note that all full Readers are prepared to risk death rather than let any precious book come to harm, and the PCs can use this to their benefit.

Exploring Further

The spiral staircase leads down to a chamber below the Great Reading Room. This area is normally laid out with wooden benches and tables, where the Readers eat; inevitably there are also many bookcases and piles of texts, which are beginning to encroach on the space in the centre of the room. Between the bookcases around the edge of the room are oak doors, cracked with time, leading to the private studies and cells of the senior Readers. One is clearly larger than the others, and leads to Father Faber's chamber. Another, behind an unmarked door, is used to store books which have become damaged or need repair, and also where Goffman and the four children are being kept prisoner. The Egg is asleep in the room next door to it.

Most of the tables have been cleared back, and a make-shift altar has been erected in the middle of the chamber. Beside it is yet another mirror. Anyone looking in this will be surprised to see daylight: the network of mirrors is reflecting the image of the portion of the sky where the eclipse will take place.

The foot of the staircase is guarded by three Lay-Readers, whose orders are not to let anyone down here until after the eclipse has passed. They think of themselves as heavies (they do have *Street Fighter*) but will not use brute strength, preferring to summon help by calling or ringing their bells. This will bring Father Faber, as well as 1D6 curious Readers.

There are actually four Librarian-Assassins (see p.18) hiding here, just in case. Two are lurking in the shadows cast by the bookcases, and the others are lying flat on top of the higher

Father Faber

Level 3 Cleric, age 47

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
3	41	15	3	4	11	62	1	32	57	58	65	77	60

Magic points: 35

Skills: Arcane Languages (Demonic, Druidic, Magick), Cast Spells (Clerical 1, Clerical 2, Clerical 3), Demon Lore, History, Identify Undead, Linguistics, Magical Awareness, Magical Sense, Manufacture Scrolls, Mediate, Public Speaking, Read/Write, Rune Lore, Scroll Lore, Secret Language (Classical), Theology.
Spells: Gift of Tongues, Magic Lock, Open, Steal Mind, Wind Blast, Cause Stupidity.

Trappings: Robes of the Order, Symbol of Verena, Bell, Knife, Bunch of keys



Father Faber is the Head Librarian of the Ancient Order of Illuminated Readers, and has been for the last eight years. He lives for the Library and will do anything he can to protect it and its unique resources. He is very wary of Lay-Readers, aware that some have been stealing books and selling them, and watches their comings and goings like a hawk.

By tradition the Head Librarian is elected from the Lay-Readers and is allowed to keep his tongue, since he will need it for organizing the day-to-day affairs of the Order. Faber also holds the strings to the Order's considerable purses, used to buy food, equipment, hire people to do the Library's dirty work, and buy the occasional rare book or collection when they become available.

The sunless environment of the Library has caused Faber to age prematurely, making him look twenty years older than he is, and he occasionally yearns for the life he has left behind. Like many of the Readers, personal hygiene has never been a strong point with him, but despite that he has a strange charisma and a soft yet commanding voice. The members of the Order are divided about him: four-fifths think he is a strong leader and a good organizer who ensures that they can continue their studies in peace, while the old-timers describe him as 'a young scoundrel with ideas below his station.'

bookcases, pressed against them and silent: they are not obvious to anyone who isn't looking for them, and they will wait for the correct moment to make a surprise attack – they have read lots of books on tactics.

You're Booked

If there is any disturbance, or if the PCs explore much of the Library, it is likely that they will meet Father Faber, the senior officer of the Order of Illuminated Readers, who will be called to sort out any problem. The PCs will not recognize him, but if

they brought the Egg back to the city or if they have been recognized by one of the Librarian-Assassins then Faber will know who they are, and why they are there. He will be pleasant and friendly, ignoring any threats, and will invite the PCs into his chambers for a chat. If they do not comply, Faber will cast *Cause Stupidity* at them, and they will then be set upon by the Librarian-Assassins.

Faber's chambers are tidy and well-kept. The main one is used as an office, with ten chairs, a desk, several bookcases and a large blackboard mounted on the wall. A door leads through into his sleeping-quarters; empty except for a narrow bed, one broken leg propped up on a pile of Gnomish erotica. Also in here, hidden behind a pivoting book-case, is the secret exit which connects with the third tunnel and from there to the mainland; not even Faber knows of its existence, although his predecessor did, as do some of the older Readers.

Faber will offer the PCs some refreshments ('Just dry biscuits and tea, I'm afraid – so hard to get fresh supplies') and will ask them to explain why they are here, listening to any response with composed expression and steepled fingers. He will let them finish, pause a moment, and then:

'As I suspected, you have been fed a very one-sided version of the truth. Such a shame that two former followers of Verena should go so astray, but ... Yes, we have the vessel, the thing of Chaos. She is asleep in there,' he lies, gesturing to the closed door of his sleeping quarters, 'and will sleep until the ceremony. If such a thing can be said to truly sleep.

'You know its history? Born over a thousand years ago with the sole purpose of being the demon's vessel? Blessed and given strength by the worst powers of Chaos? Exiled to Morrslieb by the demon's ex-cohort, now his most vengeful enemy? This is not a child, this is a pawn, a toy in a struggle between two mighty powers of Chaos. And we – we cannot let either of them win. If the thing remains alive, there will still be a chance that Zahnarzt can return. We must set back these two demons in their struggle as much as we can, or one of them will rule us, and Law will never triumph.

'Its death? We will all die ere long; that is our tragedy. What is one more or one less in the register, compared to the ill we will be making good by this deed? The abomination must die, lest we all do sooner than our appointed hour.

'We worry too that the members of the Brotherhood, the sect which created the thing a millennium ago, will try to stop us. We have our own defences, but any help and strength you may lend would be welcomed.'

While this monologue is going on, PCs may want to look around the room. It is fairly spartan, but their attention will be drawn to a stack of books on Faber's desk – containing not only an undamaged copy of 'A Theory Of Chaos', with the complete passage describing how to save the Egg; but also a copy of 'A True and Honest Account of the Land of Lustria', the book they were sent to Marienburg to fetch (Goffman mentioned it during his torture, and Faber had it located to see if it was relevant to the eclipse. It isn't.)

Any protestations or questions that the PCs may have about Faber's argument will be met with reasoned replies, based on principles of Law (rather than Good): better to kill one than risk thousands; better to be sure of destroying Chaos than giving it a chance to return, even in a thousand years. The PCs may or may not be swayed by his argument, but if they appear to be convinced, he will explain the basic rules of the Library (no talking, no damaging the books) and will let them wait in the lower chamber for the ritual to begin – GMs should use their

skill and judgement to decide how long this will be, and therefore how long the PCs have to explore.

If the PCs will not agree, Faber will politely ask them to leave the Library. If they refuse, he will ask them to wait a moment, leave the room, and lock the door behind him. His intention, of course, is to keep them imprisoned there, but they may try to stage a cunning escape by grabbing the books and the Egg, finding the secret exit and disappearing along it.

Alas, Faber was lying when he said the Egg was in his sleeping-quarters; she is in fact in a separate room off the lower chamber. Nevertheless the PCs might decide to leave anyway, abandoning the Library to its fate. In that case they will die in the Great Fire of Marienburg which will start a couple of hours later, and it probably serves them right.

The Sacrifice

When the Egg was brought to Foyles Rock, Father Faber took personal charge of her, and has looked after her since. He explained to her that the wicked people who took her from her parents wanted to do harm to her. He promised that, in a few days time, he would send her back to the Wasteland to be with her parents again. He gave her a room of her own, and found her a book about mutants, which she enjoys a lot since it is full of pictures of 'ordinary-looking people'. He even arranged for sweetmeats and cakes to be brought from the mainland for her pleasure. In short, this is probably the best time she's had since leaving the farm.

While some of the younger Librarians may think that Faber is giving the traditional favours to the condemned person, or possibly pampering the sacrificial victim, Faber's intentions are purely selfish. He knows about the Egg's powers, and thinks it is most sensible to stay on her good side. He talked and played with her until late the previous night, and she is now sleeping very soundly. She is also convinced that her former friends in the party wanted to hurt her, and she will not be too pleased to see them again.

Goffman In Chains

If Goffman is still alive, he is held prisoner in a room off the lower chamber – manacled to a case full of duplicate and flood-ruined books, along with four blond and innocent children. He has suffered a number of bruises and cuts, but the Librarians haven't got around to locating their best books on punitive torture yet. The PCs may locate him as they skulk around, or he may even (at the GM's option) be in earshot of the place of sacrifice. The keys to his chains are tucked in Faber's innermost vest pocket, but the chains can be shattered by heavy weapons (which will make a fair amount of noise), or the locks can be picked fairly easily (CR +20%).

His use in this scene is as an advisor, to provide the PCs with suggestions and motivation. In this, he can act as the GM's mouthpiece, so long as he can find something to write on – but he *will* always act in character, struggling to prevent the sacrifice and generally opposing Chaos and evil.

Before his final visit to the Library, Goffman discovered the true nature of Muuthauwg, of which the PCs only know a small part. He will try to warn the characters about this as soon as he sees them again, telling them that the piper is Zahnarzt's brother, and a demon of equal but opposing power. If the Herald should appear during the ceremony, Goffman will panic and may do something unpredictable – GMs can use him as a wild card.

The Ritual In Darkness

Unless the PCs do something drastic to stop it before it has started, the ritual will begin as planned. The Egg will be brought out from her room and taken to the altar in the lower chamber a few minutes before the eclipse, so that all can be prepared for the sacrifice. She is asleep, but any loud noise or sudden motion will wake her. About fifteen Readers are present in the chamber: Faber, his 'heavies', and various others.

Two minutes before the eclipse the lower chamber will become very cold, and the PCs will have a feeling that there is one more person in the room than there should be. 'Old Zahnarzt is here', as a few country folk would say. Father Faber will approach the altar, and as he does so, the members of the Brotherhood who have infiltrated the Library through the tunnel, and who are pretending to be Readers, will open fire on him with their crossbows.

The Librarian-Assassins will spring from their posts and attack them; the other Readers will scatter in a panic. One member of the Brotherhood will specifically try to move the mirrors so Faber can no longer tell precisely when the eclipse starts. Faber will try to continue the ritual.

All of the cultists will rather die than allow Faber to succeed. If they are aware of the presence of the PCs, they will try to show what they are doing in a good light – emphasizing that they, the forces of Chaos, want to save the girl's life, whereas the supposed forces of Law are about to kill her horribly.

Two minutes later, a black, shadowy hand will touch the Egg's face. She wakes up, and screams: the demon has touched her at the exact moment that Morrslieb first touched the Sun. At the same moment, if Faber is able to (mirrors notwithstanding – he can tell what's going on), he will chant incantations to Solkan and Verena, bless the dagger, and plunge it into the child, making a sequence of ritual cuts and slices. She will scream again; but her cry is drowned by the terrible howl from Zahnarzt, as he realizes that his body has been taken from him. Faber continues dismembering.

This is very bad – not as bad as Zahnarzt returning, but a small child has just been slaughtered in a particularly unpleasant way. Every PC present gains 1D6 Insanity Points, and if they fail a CI test then they will spend the next two rounds throwing up. They will have nightmares about this moment for the rest of their lives. And that's not all.

Smashed Egg

If Faber carried out his ritual, what follows next is left to the GM. The simplest assumption is that the sacrifice, although morally appalling, was effective; Zahnarzt is completely barred from materialization. Because of this, he will make a psychic attack on Faber, which will leave the old man entirely mad. The effort will also leave Zahnarzt completely incapable of communicating with intelligent minds for about a century.

Worse, the anger and hatred that the Egg felt for Faber in the moments before her death will bring down an appalling curse on the Library: dripping is heard from upstairs: in all parts of the building, leaks are springing, and the building is flooding. See *The Flood*, below.

However, GMs may prefer to assume that the warning in Goffman's letter was fully justified; the blood-sacrifice of a being dedicated to Zahnarzt and in the demon's presence, gives him huge but partial power – despite its intent. In this case, at

the moment of the Egg's death, an earthquake rips through Marienburg, destroying buildings, starting countless fires, and killing scores of people.

It also triggers the destruction of the Library, as in *The Flood* below, but this is unlikely to be the PCs' main concern, as a dark, choking smoke boils up from the pool of the innocent's blood. This quickly coalesces into a solid body, hideous to look upon; a huge skeleton clad in a tattered cloak. Denied his full power, Zahnarzt has nonetheless used this death to rise as a 'death-demon' – a Mardagg (*WFRP*, p.258). He will set out to annihilate the Library and everyone in it, and then, striding out through the flood waters, the entire city.

Fortunately, as the eclipse ends, Zahnarzt becomes *subject to instability*, and this, along with Marienburg's resident heroes and wizards, should ensure his defeat before the city is entirely annihilated. How much comfort this will be for the PCs is another matter.

Three-And-A-Half Minute Egg

If the Brotherhood and/or the PCs have managed to prevent Faber from performing the sacrifice, either by killing him or by disrupting the mirrors so his timing is out, not all is lost. There are another *three-and-a-half minutes* before Morrslieb fully covers the sun and Zahnarzt can take complete possession of the Egg; and there are still two ways to save the day. During this short time, the shadow covering the Egg's body will extend and grow visibly darker, and she will feel deathly cold to the touch. Although she can scream, she cannot move of her own accord.

Activating The Tooth

Activating the Tooth will, as the PCs should already know, negate or remove the Egg's special powers and blessings, temporarily turning her into an ordinary little girl. If they do this, then the Egg will perish in the same way that every other mortal that Zahnarzt has ever tried to possess has perished: her body will become too weak to house the soul of a major demon, and it will burn up. (For extra interest, the cultists might realize what is going on, and attempt to snatch the Tooth from the PC – its effects will be disrupted if it is taken more than twenty feet from the Egg.)

In this case, the Egg is dead and the appearance of Zahnarzt will have been averted. The PC responsible will, like Faber in the above example, be harangued by Zahnarzt, screaming: *'Another thousand years of exile, another thousand years in the darkness; another thousand years the Chaos Realms are denied to me! YOU ... YOU ... I CURSE ... I curse ... you ... I ...'* His voice fades into the shadows, its final echoes drowned by the low rumble of crumbling masonry – go to *The Flood*, below. The cursed PC will gain 1D6 insanity points or, if the GM prefers, suffer the effects of a very serious curse – a wasting disease, perhaps, which would require a pilgrimage or the locating of rare herbs or a hermit healer to remove.

(Of course, the PCs might have activated the Tooth *and* killed the Egg ahead of the eclipse deadline; however, this has drawbacks, as described in chapter 4.)

Performing Goffman's Ceremony

This is only an option if the PCs have the Demon's Tooth, have found the missing part of Mandelbrote's spell, and can observe the exact moment of the total eclipse.

There is just time – if the PCs have the presence of mind – for a character to sprint to the top of the stairs and yell down

news of the progress of the eclipse, or for a strong character to grab the Egg and run to where daylight can be seen (not necessarily the top of the stairs; any unadjusted part of the network of mirrors in the Reading Room will still be reflecting the eclipse). There, the second ritual with the Tooth can be performed, and the world saved. Needless to say, the remaining members of the Brotherhood and the Order will be doing everything they can to prevent this.

From its description, the ritual of stabbing the Egg with the Tooth seems like it should kill its victim. It does not. The Tooth does not penetrate the Egg's chest, but liquifies and flows over it instead. Wherever it touches, the shadow of Zahnarzt disappears, as if sucked into the only remaining part of the demon's original body. As the last splinter of darkness disappears, the Tooth will reform – and explodes, causing 1D4 Wounds to the hand of the PC holding it. Everyone within five feet (except the Egg) is hit by small pieces of flying Tooth, which cause 1 Wound and leave small black scars that can never be erased. Of Zahnarzt there is no sign: it will take him decades to recover.

Unfortunately, in all the above cases, the Egg will awake during the ceremony, and in her terror and confusion at having people waving sharp objects at her, will call down her great curse on the Library – so PCs will still have *The Flood* to contend with, as described below.

Raw Egg

If neither Goffman's nor Faber's ceremony is performed, and the Tooth is not activated, then Zahnarzt will manifest; his darkness spreading through every part of the innocent girl's body until he fully possesses her.

The Egg stands up. She still looks as she did before, but there is a different expression in her voice. She giggles like a little girl, but then says, in a very adult voice:

'After all this time, I am whole again.'

Any Chaos cultists who are still alive form a ring around her, and start to worship her hysterically. If Faber is still alive, she kills him first. She will then turn to her cult and say, 'Come, my children – We have work to do.' Zahnarzt then gestures casually, triggering an earthquake that causes the destruction of the Library by flood (yes, it is inevitable in all cases), before leaving through the labyrinth.

Piped Music

If the adventurers, the Brotherhood, and the Librarians all cancel each other out, there is one final force that can influence the outcome of this adventure; Muuthauwg, the Quiet Herald. Unfortunately, bringing him in at this point, in person, is a blatant *deus ex machina* plot-device that will probably annoy the players and make them feel that their characters' efforts throughout the adventure have been pointless. However, if they've really screwed it up, and for the sake of the campaign generally, the GM doesn't wish to have Marienburg and the Wasteland devastated, Muuthauwg can save the day – but kill the adventurers (and a lot of other people) in the process.

The extreme version of this scene would go something like the following passage:

Zahnarzt giggles again, louder this time. But through the laughter, you hear another sound; the familiar tones of a simple pipe.

A door opens, and figures dance into the room. Most seem to be Librarians, or stray drunks from the streets of Marienburg, but you recognize some members of the Rosae Theatrum – and one in the robes of a powerful wizard. Your own feet begin to move with the irresistible music.

The Egg screams with rage, and rushes across the room, her shape distorting with Chaotic power. She grasps one dancer and throws him against a wall; you hear bones splinter. But ever more dancers appear, circling around the walls of the chamber. Now the Piper himself enters, and the Egg seems paralysed. The wizard dances a strange step, his hands gesturing in the air.

The dance speeds up, as the piping becomes louder. Zahnarzt howls with frustration. The earth itself shudders, and you feel it rise with a vast sensation of power. As the walls disintegrate, you see light glowing through – moonlight. It seems as if you have all been cocooned in magical power, and now the earth itself is spitting out this pellet of failure and corruption.

The air grows thin, and the swirling powers intolerable. As you lapse into final unconsciousness, the last thing you hear is Zahnarzt, screaming rage and hatred at you all...

Alternatively, and less drastically, Muuthauwg may arrive at any point, leading a huge pack of ordinary and giant rats, bats, and other creatures who might be found around or under the island. He can also create small localized earthquakes, throwing groups of people off their feet (roll under 1 to stay upright), collapsing bookcases on opponents nearby, and so on. His main concern is to prevent Zahnarzt's return – but he might just shift the balance enough to enable the PCs to accomplish something desirable.

In either case, the forces he unleashes will have one additional side-effect; they will cause a lot of damage to the structure of the Library. This in turn will bring about *The Flood*.

The Flood

Once any curse, demonic manifestation, or assault by other powers starts the collapse of the Unseen Library, it rapidly gathers speed. A team of talented engineers, preferably including dwarves, might be able to stem the flood: how this could be handled is left to the GM. (It certainly isn't possible if Zahnarzt is loose, in any manifestation.) Otherwise, the PCs and the other people in the building have about fifteen minutes to get out before the Library completely collapses. Unfortunately, the first thing to go was the staircase leading up to the island; other means of departure are necessary.

The Egg is, of course, protected by her powers, and will probably wander off and get out through the labyrinth, or be swept away with a convenient wooden bench as one wall gives way, bob to the surface of the bay, and be picked up by a passing fishing boat. The PCs are less blessed. If they left marks or thread, fifteen minutes is ample time to find their way out of the labyrinth: if not, they are in serious trouble.

Meanwhile, some of the monks make futile attempts to stem the flood: some of them try to transfer especially valuable books to water-tight containers. The majority of the them continue their studies as if nothing has happened. Although PCs may be



able to persuade some individual monks to leave, saving the whole Order is not a possibility.

If the party does not know a way out of the maze, either through leaving signs or through finding a map, then they have only two options: they can force on of the monks to show them the way out, which may be a lengthy process given how unworldly some of these folk are, or –

They can use Faber's secret exit, as described in Goffman's letter, or even by Goffman himself, if they have found him. This means finding a rather creaky but functional secret door – concealed, inevitably, behind a bookcase – and scrambling up a long, musty, damp, unlit tunnel, which emerges through another disused hidden door into a sewer on the Marienburg water-front, where the party will promptly encounter a militia patrol, who will endeavour to arrest them for curfew-breaking, vagrancy, and assorted public health irregularities. Or, if the GM is feeling particularly sadistic, or the adventure has been run as

a one-off, then it surfaces in a basement of the prison-island of Rijkers Isle, in the middle of the estuary. How exactly the PCs might get out of that one, we leave up to you and them.

Otherwise, the PCs will probably drown with the majority of the book collection, having given their lives to prevent Zahnarzt from returning. However, if the players come up with any particularly ingenious or inspired alternative plans, the GM can assess these on their own merits; something *might* work.

Incidentally, note that if Goffman is alive but still chained up when the flood happens, and if nobody thinks to help him, he is certainly doomed. Of course, if he dies then the PCs will have no way of getting the money he promised to pay them (p.22). Do not feel compelled to remind them about this; nor about the copy of 'A True And Honest Account Of The Land Of Lustria' on Faber's desk. Although this adventure is light in rewards and treasure, if the party handle the climax right then they can actually make a reasonable income from it.

Epilogue

If Zahnarzt has been reborn

It (he? she?) leads its worshippers into the labyrinth as it floods, showing no remorse as the corridors fill with water and they drown. It then returns to the city, where it wreaks some brief, random havoc – setting fire to a number of buildings and ripping the throats out of anyone mad enough to be on the streets. If the Rosae Theatrum actually got this far, it may sit and watch their performance before killing them all.

Its final defeat of its ages-old enemy Muuthauwg is almost beneath its notice – and evidently beneath Khorne's as well, since the demon is not summoned back to the Realm of Chaos. It then makes for the wasteland, where it plans to rally the Fimir and launch a full fledged attack on Marienburg, and use it as a base to conquer Altdorf and the Empire.

Gamers may like to play out Zahnarzt's war against the empire using *Warhammer Fantasy Battle*. It is likely that after a long, bloody campaign, Zahnarzt will be defeated: let's face it, the Empire has faced worse threats than major demons before now. Just for amusement value, note that the Empire will have the unexpected aid of a small number of fanatical worshippers of Khorne in this war. Old hatreds die hard.

And the PCs? If they survive, they might do well to stay away from the Empire for a while. They do say that Kislev is lovely in the springtime ...

If Zahnarzt has not been reborn

The eclipse lasts another five minutes, and then is done for another thousand years. The remaining population of Marienburg breathes a collective sigh of relief. The Council and Ruzzel Krantz look smug and say, 'I told you so.' The flooding of Foyles Rock passes almost without comment, although over the next few weeks, pages of old books begin to be washed up on the shore. For years to come, elderly scholars can be seen in the early mornings, walking up and down the coast hoping to find scraps of water-stained paper bearing ancient secrets.

Although it takes several weeks, once it becomes clear that no great catastrophe did happen during the eclipse, the majority of the refugees rather sheepishly return to the town. Some claim that they were simply off on a short holiday, while others insist that it is always better to be safe than sorry under these

circumstances. The winter is fierce but short-lived, and by early spring life in the city is back to normal.

If the characters have saved the Egg's life

In the short term, the party will have a terrified, hysterical child on their hands, who is in the process of taking her anger out on the PCs, the library, Marienburg, and the world in general. It is likely to take several gold pieces worth of sweetmeats, cakes, and so on to even calm her down. Once she comes out of shock, she will be very excited by Marienburg (the first city she has ever seen) and will demand to be shown (and bought) everything in it.

In the longer term, the characters will have to decide what is to be done with her. The Egg will assume that after this 'holiday' she is going to be taken back to her parents, but the PCs know that this is not likely to be possible.

Soft-hearted referees who want to go for a mega-happy ending might wish to rule that Werther and Eva escaped from the villagers and the Skaven, and eventually came to Sister Astrid's colony, in which case the Egg could be returned to them there. If the PCs abandoned the colony or failed to save it, then cruel referees who want a tragic ending might rule that Werther and Eva escaped from the villagers and the Skaven, came to Sister Astrid's colony and were promptly burned alive by Luftanser.

If there are any maternally minded PCs in the group, they might chose to adopt the Egg. Failing that, Shallyan convents often run orphanages for parentless children; a sufficiently wealthy or kind-hearted party might even try to place her in a boarding school for young ladies. Once the nature of the Egg's 'powers' are discovered, it might be difficult to persuade either type of institution to take her on.

Finally, anyone running a really long-term campaign may be interested to know that, although the Egg will grow up to be a fine, good-looking young lady, she will never appear to be much older than twenty-one. Is it possible that, just over a thousand years from now, a strange immortal woman will find that an ancient curse returns to haunt her? Fortunately, this is not going to be a matter of overriding concern for most PCs ... not for a while, anyway.

Appendix

Background Information

Zahnarzt the Bodiless

Zahnarzt is a demon prince known in the Old World as the *Forgotten One*, the *Bodiless*, and *He Who Goes By Darkness*. Millennia ago he was one of the Blood God Khorne's most powerful servants, but Zahnarzt and his brother/cohort Muuthauwg attempted to usurp their master's power by treachery and magic. The attempt failed, and in punishment Khorne stripped the two of almost all their power, banished them from the Chaos Realm, and made them a promise: whichever destroyed the other would regain its former place among Khorne's forces.

Zahnarzt's physical form was annihilated, and his spirit has wandered the Old World ever since. Without a body he has almost no power, and as time passes he can sense his energies slowly draining away. In a few thousand years his spirit will entirely dissipate, and Muuthauwg will have won. Therefore, he is constantly attempting to find a way to assume a corporeal body once more, which will allow him to defeat his former ally, Muuthauwg, and return to the Chaos Realm. At the same time Muuthauwg (p.116) is trying to prevent him from doing this.

Zahnarzt's energies have drained so much that he can only function in darkness: during the night, or in dark places. He appears as a shadow, or the vague sense that someone is nearby. His voice is a whisper so low that the gullible might mistake it for their own thoughts, and this is Zahnarzt's only tool in his search for a new body. He can *sometimes* influence mortals by whispering dark thoughts into their minds: resisting this takes a WP roll, but at +25%. This chance is lower if the character is aligned with Law (base modifier is +40%, not +25%) or enhanced if the character is aligned with Chaos (+10%, not +25%) or a little unstable (-3% for every Insanity Point).

During daylight he can only whisper a few words before his energies are drained, but at night he can be much more lucid. When the Chaos Moon is full, he can carry on reasoned arguments for several hours. The demon can only speak to one character at a time, and will never attempt to converse with a group. Nor can he read minds. The 'whispering' is faint and unreliable, but GMs can use it as a plot device. A few NPCs who appear in this adventure have been influenced by Zahnarzt, and GMs may like to have Zahnarzt lurk around the PCs – a faint shadow in the corner of a character's vision, or a thought or dream of treachery or murder in the middle of the night.

Zahnarzt is intelligent and persuasive, using arguments not threats or commands. He is still at heart a being of Chaos, and will blithely make promises he cannot keep, or which he intends to break. He is adept at spotting a being's weak spots or desires, and will build them into his arguments. He can understand any language, and speak it without an accent. His knowledge is immense, and although he cannot cast magic himself, he can teach others the incantations needed to do so – if he feels he can trust them.

The demon, being incorporeal, cannot be wounded or harmed in any way, even by the use of magic. He is not subject to any physical restraint, and can pass through solid and even enchanted walls and barriers. However, his maximum rate of travel is around thirty miles an hour, or about the speed of a galloping horse, so he cannot be everywhere. At the start of the adventure he is in Marienburg, but as the eclipse nears he will move first to the farm where the Egg is (see chapter 4), and will then stay close to the Egg for the rest of the adventure.

When Khorne annihilated Zahnarzt's physical body, one of his teeth survived. This Demon's Tooth has no direct power over Zahnarzt himself, nor can he sense where it is, but it is intimately linked to him and, with the right incantations can be made to betray some of his secrets. The Tooth came into the possession of a mortal who found that, when he held it, Zahnarzt came to him. The demon offered the mortal and his descendants undreamed-of power if they could bring about the demon's reincarnation. The Demon's Tooth was passed to another mortal, and then to another; down through the centuries, it was guarded by a Chaos cult that became known as the Brotherhood of the Forgotten One.

Zahnarzt is a creature of darkness and Chaos – all but powerless by day, stronger by night, and stronger still in the presence of Warpstone. So, on the rare occasions (about once every thousand years) when the sun is blotted out by the Chaos Moon, Zahnarzt will be at his most powerful. At the next eclipse, he attempted to possess the body of the then-leader of his Brotherhood. The mortal's body was too weak to contain the spirit of a major demon, and crumbled to dust on the spot.

Twice more this was tried, and twice more it failed. Each time, more elaborate incantations were used, greater magics were summoned to protect the vessel, and greater precautions were taken. Each time, the chosen body could not contain the spirit of the demon, and was destroyed.

A thousand years ago, shortly before another eclipse, the leader of the Brotherhood conceived a daughter, and worked with Zahnarzt throughout her pregnancy to prepare the child to be the host for the demon prince. Nine days before the eclipse, she was delivered of a daughter, and held a great ceremony for the birth. It is said that demons and great sorcerous powers attended it. The powers of Chaos were evoked, and everyone there wished blessings on the child. She would be clever and cunning. Anyone who tried to harm her would meet with misfortune. She would have great strength – enough that her body could survive possession by a major demon. Finally, Zahnarzt appeared and swore an unbreakable oath that while this body lived, he would not make his home in any other place.

As the ceremony was at its height, two men – Muuthauwg and a mighty Demonologist who has never been identified –

forced their way in with powerful magics. While Muuthauwg kept the Brotherhood at bay with his pipings, the other tried to destroy the child and, finding he could not, caused it to vanish away. The eclipse came and went, the child had not been found, and Zahnarzt was deprived of his new body; and was bound by his oath not to possess any other.

During the Age of the Three Emperors, the Brotherhood was scattered, and its forbidden books – the Demon's Tooth hidden among them – were captured and taken to the Imperial Library in Altdorf. The book containing the Tooth was stolen about four hundred years ago, and for the last three centuries it has lain forgotten in the library at Foyles Rock; not even the demon knows where it is. The Brotherhood has slowly been re-establishing itself and searching for the Tooth. Meanwhile, Zahnarzt and his story have passed into folklore, and like most folktales, they have become garbled with countless re-tellings. The truth is only known to members of the Brotherhood, and a few scholars of arcane demonic lore.

After a millennium of constant searching, Zahnarzt finally discovered what Muuthauwg and his sorcerous assistant had done to his vessel. The baby was still alive and healthy, hidden on Morrslieb itself, wrapped in a cocoon of timelessness and Warpstone. She had not aged a day since she was banished there.

One night seven years ago, an old woman was sitting outside her farm in the Wasteland beyond Marienburg, looking at the moon. She had no children, and knew that she was now

too old to ever nurse an infant of her own. In the darkness, a voice whispered into her mind. It said that it could teach her a spell that would bring her a baby. If she would do this, she could keep the baby for seven years – but afterwards she would have to give it to those who would come to find it.

The woman agreed. She learned the spell and cast it, and Morrslieb spat out the baby that had rested on it for hundreds of years. It landed on the old woman's farm, in a shooting star made from a strange green stone.

'Shallya protect us!' said her husband. 'The Moon has laid an egg!' So they called the child 'Moon's Egg'. The couple adopted her, and have treated her as their own ever since.

On the day of the eclipse, when the influence of the Chaos Moon is strongest, Zahnarzt will claim the Egg as his rightful home. This does not require any particular preparation or ceremony – the vessel has already been made ready for him, over a thousand years ago – and he is content to let the Egg stay with her foster-parents until the hour of the eclipse. He has not told any members of the Brotherhood where the Egg is, for fear that they would meddle. Having been thwarted so many times before, he is determined that nothing should stop him now. Enter, stage right, a group of player characters ...

Note: No characteristics or powers are listed for the materialized Zahnarzt. He is a demon lord. If he acquires a functional body, he can do – and more importantly to him, kill – more or less whatever he wishes.

The Demon's Tooth

The Demon's Tooth is a curved tooth about three-and-a-half inches long, looking like a fang from a particularly ferocious predator. It seems inert, but anyone who can sense the power of Chaos and who comes within a few feet of it will be able to detect it and will realize it is powerful.

As the only remaining solid part of the demon Zahnarzt, it has strange abilities. Firstly, with the proper incantation, it will begin to move very slowly in the direction of the Moon's Egg; it was used in the creation of the Egg's powers and still has an affinity to it. By charting the direction of its movement, characters can work out in which direction the Egg lies. The same incantation will stop the Tooth's movement. Secondly, if the

same chant is used to activate the Tooth within twenty feet of the Moon's Egg, all the child's powers vanish for 2D6 minutes.

However, every time the Tooth is activated by the chant, it sends out a burst of energy which can be detected by certain beings: Chaos cultists, members of the Brotherhood of the Forgotten One, Zahnarzt and Muuthauwg. Chaos cultists will simply feel unnerved by the burst, but the members of the Brotherhood recognize the Tooth's signature, and will be able to zero in on its location. Likewise, Zahnarzt and Muuthauwg are likely to move swiftly to wherever the Tooth has been used.

The Tooth can be used as a weapon (I+10, D-3), but is hardly potent. It cannot be broken or destroyed by normal means.

The Brotherhood Of The Forgotten One

A minor Chaos cult devoted to an almost forgotten and powerless demon, the Brotherhood of the Forgotten One enjoyed its last burst of power over a thousand years ago, and since then has fallen into decline. With no prospect of its patron returning for many years, it has had to find another role in order to survive. Working on the principle that cultists follow demons because they want power, not because they want the end of the world, the Brotherhood evolved into a successful networking organization for the status-hungry dabbler in Chaos.

Membership of the Brotherhood tends to be hereditary and, despite the name, is not restricted to any one sex or race – or to anyone from any particular profession or walk of life. Members are sworn to help each other no matter what; usually this means acquiring jobs, property and status, although it has also applied to court cases and even situations on the battlefield.

Members recognize each other by a bizarre range of gestures, signals and phrases – 'Will no one help the windowed sun?' is a typical one – and over the last few centuries many

initiates of the Brotherhood have gained considerable status through helping each other into positions of power, even though the cult itself languishes, and the power of its demonic patron is weakening. The Brotherhood has members all over the civilized world; every major city has at least one Lodge, and although members tend to avoid public office, they are adept at becoming advisors to rulers, governors, mayors, generals and anyone who controls power or money. Despite all that, it has managed to keep its profile very low, and is almost unknown beyond its membership, even to scholars of demonology.

The possible return of Zahnarzt has caught the Brotherhood by surprise: although its initiates are still taught its lore, rituals and spells, and must wear a tattoo of the cult's symbol above their heart, the demon's whisperings have come as an unwelcome reminder of their responsibilities. Not all the members were fully aware of the nature of the group they have joined, or regarded it as superstition or a means to an end, and for some it has come as a nasty shock.

Nonetheless, a hard-core of Zahnarzt's followers remains within the cult, and they have thrown themselves into the task with a zeal inspired by the prospect of near-divine power if the

New Spell:

Summoning of the Brotherhood

Spell level: Petty

Magic points: Variable

Range: See Magic Points

Duration: Instantaneous

Ingredients: None

While the Brotherhood has many members who are involved in magic, not all of them are, and a cult so wide-spread needs a method of communicating among its members. Thus the Summoning of the Brotherhood spell was created, usable by anyone with even the simplest magical training.

Despite its name, it is not a summoning spell at all. Instead, on casting, it sends a brief burst of Chaos energy into the ether, like a kind of radio beacon. Anybody with a sensitivity to Chaos will feel something, but most will have no idea what it is. Members of the Brotherhood, on the other hand, are trained to recognize it, and also the (200+) different lengths and tones of

summoning is successful. Members are converging on Marienburg at the same time as the party, ready to work to ensure that Zahnarzt's return will not be foiled this time.

the pulses that can be sent, which are coded to different meanings. Since they can also determine the rough direction and distance of the sender, a single pulse of energy can mean anything from 'I need magical help immediately, twenty miles to the south' to 'The meeting has been postponed a month.'

The range of a Summoning depends on how many Magical Points are put into it. An initial point is needed to power the spell to a distance of half a mile, but each point thereafter adds three miles to its range. The spell is not directional; everybody attuned to Chaos within the radius will sense it. That includes all members of the Brotherhood, ex-members of the Brotherhood, members of other Chaos cults, chaos monsters, and others. However, anyone not educated in the meanings of the different energy-bursts will simply get an eerie feeling that something is trying to attract their attention.

Summonings are used rarely, and only to communicate matters of some importance.

Muuthauwg, the Quiet Herald

Muuthauwg is the brother and former acolyte of the former demon prince Zahnarzt. Many millennia ago, acting under his prince's orders, he staged a revolt against Khorne, and was stripped of his powers and exiled from the Chaos Realm for his trouble – but not before the Blood God told the two exiles that whichever could destroy the other would be permitted to return to their former place in Khorne's armies.

Muuthauwg did better than Zahnarzt: he retained a corporeal form and a few powers, and was left to roam the world as an immortal. However, as part of his punishment Khorne forbade Muuthauwg from killing any mortals, directly or indirectly – which, for a follower of the Blood God, is an awesome curse. Muuthauwg is not physically prevented from killing a mortal being, but if he does so or if his actions cause a mortal to die, he will be immediately and utterly destroyed.

In the millennia which followed, Muuthauwg's personality has undergone a sea-change. While still having utter contempt for mortals, he has begun to understand their ways. More importantly, he has realized that the chances of Khorne keeping his promise about reinstatement are not exactly high, so his best chance for continued survival comes from prolonging the conflict between himself and Zahnarzt. He has also developed a few magical abilities, which he knows would alienate him further from Khorne.

Muuthauwg is incredibly intelligent. He can speak and comprehend any language, but says very little; in fact, having the arrogance of a demon prince, he rarely regards the conversation of mortals – or mortals generally – as important. To him, humans are tools to be used in the thwarting of Zahnarzt's plans. He has never formed an order similar to the Brotherhood of the Forgotten One, because he fears that if one of them died on a mission, Khorne's restriction on killing mortals would be broken. Like many supernatural beings his only real weak spot lies within his true name; but Khorne is the only being who knows what that is, including Muuthauwg himself.

GMs depicting Muuthauwg should bear in mind that he is not even partly human, and his concerns and objectives are usually peculiar and often bizarre. His actions are part of a scheme which has been unfolding for thousands of years, and are likely to be completely incomprehensible to mere mortals. He's also as whimsical and unpredictable as the weather. He will never abandon his mission of foiling Zahnarzt but, subject to that proviso, GMs can feel free to make Muuthauwg's actions as strange and confusing as they like.

Muuthauwg is an obscure figure; solid information about him is only known to the few students of legends surrounding Zahnarzt. His story has been muddled with other folklore about strange pipers and heralds, and he has become associated with the Old Faith, and druids in particular. There is a 10% chance that a druid will have heard of Muuthauwg, regarding him as some kind of benign nature-spirit; and most areas have legends or fairytales about an errant piper in bright clothing.

PCs who spend more time than they can afford researching the legends will find references to Muuthauwg confusing. On the one hand, he appears as a force for good, foiling Zahnarzt and preventing the demon's manifestation. On the other hand, texts refer to him as 'The Herald of the Bodiless' and 'The Shadow Which Darkness Casts Before It'. Depending on interpretation, he is thought to be either an agent of Law, an avatar of the natural world sent to restore the balance of the world, or a vague manifestation of Chaos. The only books containing the truth are in the Unseen Library.

Muuthauwg has only recently become aware that the child he banished to the Chaos Moon a thousand years ago has returned to the world. He is trying to find her, and will then work out a scheme for stopping Zahnarzt from taking possession of her. However, events may conspire to thwart him.

The former demon usually appears entirely human. He can pass as a strolling troubadour of about eighteen or so, beardless and fresh-faced. The only peculiar thing about him is his

style of dress, which is eccentric even by the standards of troubadours. He wears a doublet, trousers and broad-brimmed hat, all of them loose and ragged, with many tatters and patches – but with many more layers beneath. The clothes are a multiplicity of shades of green, shot through with yellow and brown.

This seemingly human form is merely a convenience, although he requires some kind of physical body to function in the physical world. Being more or less immortal, he is incredibly robust and hard to injure, as well as being deceptively quick on his feet. He has no need to sleep, and is utterly tireless. Muuthauwg has the ability to communicate in any language, and has a quiet, pleasant, musical voice.

If he wishes, Muuthauwg can transform into a swarm or flock of small creatures of any single type. Each of these has 1 Wound, and there are as many as he had remaining Wounds when he transformed. By gathering them together, he can reform his human shape, with as many Wounds as there were surviving members of the swarm. His favourite shapes include large rats (in towns and cities), birds (to travel quickly), and fish (to survive in water). He can use any natural abilities of his chosen forms, such as flight, but he can only use his piping when in human form.

He has acute physical and metaphysical senses; he is as hard to surprise as a wild animal, and he can detect and respond to any spell cast at him, even by a completely hidden opponent, with a resistance to all spells at 95% minus the level of the spellcaster. He is usually friendly to druids, but he expects them to be on his side, and if they fail to assist him, he may be briefly, whimsically vengeful.

However, Muuthauwg's most striking ability is his piping. He can produce a pipe from within his ragged tunic whenever he wants. His quiet tunes sound simple, but musicians will soon notice their subtle melodic and harmonic complexity. They reach into the depths of the listener's mind, and begin to control it. Any creature with hearing may be affected (*completely* deaf characters and creatures are immune), but can resist with a WP roll, with a cumulative -10% penalty if the character is drunk, already dancing, or has more than one skill relating to music, singing or dancing. At first, victims find their feet tapping, then they stand up and begin to caper; within a minute or two, they are moving to the music with wild enthusiasm.

Characters must test when they first hear the music, and then every two minutes (roughly). The piping is normally an area effect, covering everyone within earshot, but Muuthauwg can focus at a specific target, who must roll against WP every three rounds, at -30%, to avoid being drawn in. Muuthauwg's music incorporates subtle commands that make the dancers do what he requires. They will follow him wherever he goes, never voluntarily wandering out of range. Dancers have +40% resistance against any psychological effect that might distract them from something Muuthauwg commands or desires.

If Muuthauwg attempts to make a dancer do something blatantly dangerous or painful – which is unlikely given the nature of his curse – they are allowed an immediate WP test to break free. The GM may assign bonuses or penalties to this roll, depending on the degree of danger. Dancing into the path of someone trying to attack Muuthauwg, or of a missile, will *not* trigger such a test, unless the attacker is very big, nasty, and ostentatiously willing to destroy anything that gets in its way.

Once drawn into the dance, characters may make WP rolls to try to break free of the music. They may roll once every five minutes, but the roll has a cumulative -5% penalty: -5% on the first attempt; -10% on the second; -15% on the third, and so on.

Muuthauwg's Human Form

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
7	58	50	8	10	35	90	2	95	62	83	100	88	44



Muuthauwg's music may sometimes protect its victims from exhaustion as they dance, but this is highly unreliable; in fact, the dancing can be quite tiring. Basically, this is a matter for GM judgement and plot convenience; characters escaping the music should definitely be *tired*, but should only be seriously incapacitated if they have been dancing for hours and the GM wants to take them out of play for a while. One possible rule to reflect this might be as follows: for every hour spent dancing, characters suffer a -10% penalty on combat and similar activities, until they've had a chance to rest for at least half as long as they spent dancing.

However, after victims have been dancing for at least four hours, Muuthauwg can *make* them fall into a deep, restful slumber for a suitable period; when he is leading his procession of revellers through the Wasteland, he uses this power to ensure that his victims catch just enough rest before waking them with his pipe to dance onwards. As a supernatural entity, Muuthauwg himself doesn't need to sleep.

Muuthauwg can direct controlled dancers in subtle but very useful ways. For example, he can cause them to block attacks, getting in the way of both charging opponents and incoming missiles. He doesn't have much regard for humans and will use this as a last-ditch defence, but only if he is certain that the dancer will not die from being used as a shield. At least one

dancer will intercept any character trying to mêlée with Muuthauwg (unless there are more attackers than dancers), and the attacker will have to incapacitate or out-run these obstructions to reach the piper – who will be taking the opportunity to make a get-away. If anyone does close with the demon, they will suffer a -20% WS penalty for each dancer that Muuthauwg can command to obstruct them.

Characters who cannot hear Muuthauwg's music clearly are partly immune to its effects. GMs should judge each situation on its own merits, but for example, characters fifty yards from Muuthauwg, or on the other side of a couple of solid walls, would get a bonus of about +25% to their WP rolls. The music can penetrate a *Zone of Silence*, but characters within one will get +50% resistance. Earplugs are a reasonable defence; if char-

acters take a round to improvise some then they get +30% resistance, while a carefully prepared pair of earplugs gives +40%. However, GMs should note that effective earplugs render a PC effectively deaf, which can make party co-ordination much harder. Putting one's fingers in one's ears counts as improvised earplugs, but is rather limiting in other respects.

If, by some extraordinary chance, Muuthauwg is killed then the player characters will have deprived themselves of a potentially useful ally. However, his death will not be permanent (this is part of his punishment: only Khorne, Zahnarzt or his own curse can cause his ultimate demise) and a year and a day after his 'death' a new body will claw its way from the ground in the spot where the fatal blow was struck. Which, if it was in a building, could give someone a nasty surprise.

The Ancient Order of Illuminated Readers

The Ancient Order of Illuminated Readers is an ascetic, secretive, Lawful sect of priests and scholars dedicated partly to Solkan but mostly to Verena, goddess of knowledge, in her aspect as Daora, patron of ultimate wisdom and enlightenment. Established a thousand years ago, they believe that at the beginning of time the key to mortal understanding was hidden on the earth; it was lost; and they are dedicated to rediscovering it. Some believe that the secret is contained in one mysterious hidden tome, others think that it will only become clear when they have amassed all knowledge in the world. Either way, they are committed to amassing and studying the written word. They regard it as blasphemous to destroy, lose or damage any book (even an evil or Chaotic one) since some fragment of the Great Secret might thereby be lost. Although the Order is not illegal, many of the papers that it possesses are regarded as dangerous or heretical, so the it tries to keep its existence a secret.

Despite this, some knowledge of it and its headquarters, the Unseen Library, has made its way into academic folklore. Almost nobody knows whether the Unseen Library really exists, and its location is reported variously as Nuln, Marienburg, Miragliano, Brionne or Praag. It is said to be the greatest repository of knowledge in the entire world; which is probably true. Anything else said about it by anyone who is not at least a Lay Reader is probably false, but there is a 40% chance that any scholar, wizard or academic will have heard of the Unseen Library (though not of the Order), and a 5% chance that they take the rumour seriously.

The Unseen Library does exist, on a small island in the Marienburg estuary known as Foyles Rock. It is common knowledge that there was once a temple dedicated to Solkan, god of lawful vengeance, on the island, but it was raided by pirates many centuries ago and destroyed by fire. Legend has it that the pirate captain was cursed by Solkan to sail the Sea of Claws until the end of the world.

It is also widely known that one or more strange religious hermits still inhabit the ruins of the old temple. Pilgrims and the devout will occasionally visit the ruined temple to ask the hermits for advice, although this tends to be obscure, particularly as the hermits cannot speak. What is known only to a very few is that the real temple, and its real treasure – a huge underground library – survived the fire.

To join the Order, one must contribute at least five books to its archives, each at least five hundred years old. Full members of the Order take vows of silence, and dedicate their lives to the study of the written word, within the confines of Foyles Rock.

As a sign of commitment, and to help them keep their vows, initiates have their tongues removed after the final vows. In theory any member of any race can join the Order so long as they are prepared to devote their lives to total learning. In practice, all the current members are male and human.

The Order also has a number of Lay-Readers: intellectuals and scholars who are prepared to take vows of loyalty to the Order and its goals in order to gain access to its secret knowledge. They are allowed access to the Unseen Library, and may even withdraw up to three books for two weeks at a time.

Lay Readers take vows of partial silence: they promise never to speak of the Order or the Unseen Library to any non-member. Members or Lay-Readers who are suspected of breaking this vow, or of not returning a book in time, defacing a book, eating while handling one of the Library's books or any one of a hundred other vows, are often found with their throats slit and their tongues cut out. The Order can look after itself.

A surprising number of well-known and highly respected scholars from all over the world are Lay-Readers of the Order, making a trip to Marienburg every few years to consult the Unseen Library's resources, or to leave a rare or proscribed book in the care of the Illuminated Readers.

All the Library's books are marked with a symbol on the inside cover: an owl with one eye open and one eye closed, to symbolize the unseen knowledge in the world. Many Lay Readers also wear a signet ring with this variant symbol of Verena on it, to identify them to other members: the symbol is not recognized outside the Order. While in the Library, all Readers and Lay Readers must wear robes embroidered with the same symbol; light grey for Lay-Readers, dark grey for full members.

Because the main purpose of the Order is to discover the Great Secret of the universe, and the members of the Order are too busy to tidy up, the Unseen Library's workings will be inscrutable to any non-initiates who manage to penetrate its depths. The place is a labyrinth of bookshelves, with stacks and piles and heaps of musty, mildewed tomes, scrolls rescued from a witch-finder's bonfire, sheets of papyrus, clay tablets, knotted strings, and even flayed skins bearing ancient, arcane tattoos.

Even a full member is more likely to know about the five levels of symbolic meaning in Dogbrush's *Sixty Ways To Serve A Squirrel* than to actually know the location of a book in the collection, and Lay Readers are occasionally found starved to death in obscure corners of the Unseen Library where they have become lost, or fatally crushed under a fallen stack of romanic novels written in the pictograms of far Cathay.

Gustav Steinbock

Male Human Duellist
(ex-Protagonist, ex-Thief (Burglar))
Age 25; Height 5'10"

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
3	65	32	4	4	6	43	2	49	28	33	30	32	24

Skills: Blather, Concealment Urban, Contortionist, Disarm, Dodge Blow, Etiquette, Marksmanship, Pick Lock, Scale Sheer Surface, Secret Language (Thieves' Tongue), Secret Signs (Thieves' Signs), Silent Movement Rural, Silent Movement Urban, Specialist Weapons (Fencing Sword, Parrying Weapons).

Weapons: Rapier (I+20, Dam -1), Sword-breaker (Dam -2, Parry -10), Sword, Knife (I+10, Dam -2), Crossbow (R 32/64/300/4, one round to load), Pistol (R 8/16/50/3, two rounds to load, misfires on a double).

Armour: Breastplate.

Fate Points: 2

History: You grew up as the spoiled younger son of a wealthy upper-class family in Nuln. Bored with your cushioned, comfortable, safe family, you ventured into a life of crime as a gentleman thief. For two glorious years you kept up your double identity. Although it was all a game to you initially, it brought you into contact with people from backgrounds far dissimilar to your own. You realized that the gap between rich and poor in the city was wider than you ever dreamed. What you were doing for fun, others were doing simply to keep alive.

Unfortunately, one night you pushed your luck too far, and were caught. Your family paid a huge amount of money to keep you out of jail, and you were sent away in disgrace, told never to return. Bitter at this rejection, you kept moving for the next few years, looking for trouble. Tavern brawls and strong ale became the main focus of your life. These days, your anger has largely burned out and you live the life of an adventurer. One day you may think about returning to the family, but meanwhile you enjoy wandering the world with your companions.

Personality: You have recovered the manners of your youth. If you pick a fight now, it is with your rapier or pistols, not your fists. The group you travel with has become like a second family. In particular, Suldrek's fatherly advice often helps calm your hot-headed impulses. Though, of course, sometimes there simply is nothing else to do but rush in ...

The face you show the world is that of a polished gentleman; cultured, honourable and slightly cynical. However, you still retain a strong sense of injustice, and are always ready to help those less fortunate than yourself. Particularly young ladies.

Appearance: Young and immaculately dressed, with a charming smile and long, carefully curled ash-blond hair. Over his fine clothing (ruffles of lace are apparent at throat and wrists), Gustav wears a breastplate, and carries a duelling rapier and sword-breaker, along with his pistols. His expression is slightly superior and amused, and his blue eyes sparkle.



Notes:

Max Briartree

Male Halfling Targeteer
(ex-Gamekeeper)
Age 32; Height 3' 7"

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
3	27	67	4	3	6	52	2	59	22	29	29	40	58

Skills: Ambidextrous, Concealment Rural, Cook, Herb Lore, Marksmanship, Night Vision, Secret Language (Ranger), Set Trap, Silent Move Rural, Specialist Weapons (Throwing Knife, Crossbow Pistol), Spot Traps.

Weapons: Sword, Knife (I +10, Dam -2, Parry -20), Thrown Knife (R 4/7/20/4), Crossbow Pistol (R 4/8/20/2, four rounds to load). Max can throw or fire once from each hand per round at the same target at -20%.

Fate Points: 2

History: You grew up as part of a large halfling family in a village on the estate of a human noble. You followed in your father's footsteps and worked in the lord's woods as a gamekeeper. It was you who taught the lord's son Erich how to stalk and kill game, or how to get close enough to touch the sleek coat of a grazing deer. The two of you became firm friends.

When Erich left home to ride to some distant war, you did an unthinkable thing for a halfling: you polished your set of throwing knives, took your bow and arrows, and went along. Erich would only have got into trouble without you. Your keenness of eye and deadly aim stood you in good stead, and soon you were known as one of the best shots in your regiment.

When the fighting was over, you found you had discovered a taste for adventure and, after a brief visit home to your family, set out to try your luck on the roads. You still write long letters home whenever you get the chance, and intend to go back and settle down some day. But not yet.

Personality: Life on the road can be hard for a halfling, and it has taken its toll on you. Although you are attached to your companions, you miss the society of your own race, and the comforts of a stable existence. To counter this, you throw yourself into the adventuring life with gusto, seeking thrills and adventure almost as if you were trying to forget the simpler pleasures you might be missing at home.

You know Illse from your early career, and you admire her for both her decision and her determination. You often feel that she and you are the voices of common sense in the group. Although they are a very mixed band, you regard the party you adventure with almost as a second family. All of the others are trusted friends (even the light-fingered Gustav) and you are extremely fond of all of them.

Appearance: Max looks a little thinner than most halflings, and his expression is alert, with a hint of a smile, and bright, slightly narrowed green eyes. Other halflings consider him very handsome. He has thick dark curly hair, lightly tanned skin. He is often found testing the balance of a throwing knife, or practising with a crossbow-pistol. He dresses like a forester.



Notes:

Illse Verheilen

Female Human Physician
(ex-Mercenary, ex-Physician's Student)
Age 35; Height 5'4"

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
3	45	33	5	3	8	53	2	44	31	39	37	33	34

Skills: Acute Hearing, Animal Care, Cure Disease, Drive Cart, Disarm, Dodge Blow, Heal Wounds, Lightning Reflexes, Manufacture Drugs, Prepare Poisons, Read/Write, Ride, Secret Language (Battle Tongue), Scroll Lore, Secret Language (Classical), Sing, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Stun, Surgery, Very Strong.

Weapons: Sword, Knife (I +10, Dam -2, Parry -20), Crossbow (R 32/64/300/4).

Armour: Shield, Mail Shirt.

Fate Points: 2

History: Having grown up in a family with five older brothers, you were always more than capable of taking care of yourself. When you were old enough, to the despair of your mother, you went off to seek adventure as your brothers had before you.

You began your career as a hired sword, fighting other people's wars. You had some good times and made some good friends. But you lost a lot of friends too, and began to tire of the constant killing. During one battle, you were pressed into helping a battlefield surgeon with the wounded. By the end of that day, you no longer wanted to be a hired sword. From now on, you would study the arts of saving life, not taking it.

You studied hard, and eventually set out on the road again as a fully qualified member of the Physicians' Guild of Nuln. The road is a dangerous place. You keep your old skills with a sword sharp, should reasoned argument fail to prevent violence.

Personality: Others have described you as a 'forceful woman', but your force comes from within, not from a strong arm or a raised voice. You found your vocation and are happy with it: travelling, helping the injured and sick brings you a tranquillity you never knew as a mercenary. Sometimes you wonder if your old spirit has begun to mellow, or whether you have just found a new direction for it. On the rare occasions when you do let your calm facade drop and make your opinions felt with force, others are in no doubt that the old Illse still exists.

You know Max from long ago. He is an ex-gamekeeper, who had come to the front to fight beside his lord's son. You often feel that he and you are the voices of common sense in the group. Although they are a very mixed group, you regard the other almost as a second family. All are trusted friends (even the light-fingered Gustav), and you are fond of all of them. In particular, you feel a responsibility for the younger members, Gustav and Josef.

Appearance: Illse's looks are comfortable, almost motherly. She has a sweet smile, a square jaw, and an open expression. Her eyes are deep brown. Her blonde hair is quite short, and curls onto her shoulders, kept away from her face by a scarf. Her



Notes:

dress is practical – mail shirt over breeches and shirt – and she carries a sword, dagger and crossbow as well as her physician's supplies. Only the scar on her left temple hints at her days as a mercenary soldier.

Josef Ausstellen

Human Male Wizard, level 2

(ex-Wizard's Apprentice)

Age 26; Height 5' 7"

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
3	27	32	3	4	8	47	1	43	28	45	40	34	38

Skills: Arcane Language (Magick), Astronomy, Cast Spell (Petty Magic); Cast Spell (Battle Magic Level 1); Cast Spell (Battle Magic Level 2), Etiquette, Magic Sense, Read/Write, Rune Lore, Scroll Lore, Secret Language (Classical), Theology.

Weapons: Sword, Knife (I +10, Dam -2, Parry -20), Crossbow (R32/64/300/4 load, 1 round).

Spells: Magic Flame, Protection from Rain, Fireball, Flight, Cause Frenzy, Lightning Bolt.

Magic Points: 23

Fate Points: 1

History: When you were very young, your village was attacked and burned by Chaos beastmen from the nearby forest. They killed your parents, who had gone to help with the defence. Even worse, they dragged away your little sister, Inge. You heard her screaming and the invaders' laughter, and there was nothing you could do. On that day, you swore you would never feel helpless again. It has taken years of study and all the money you could raise from selling your family's goods, but with luck and the right tutors, you have become a powerful mage. You chose to learn the flashiest, most powerful spells you could find, and you are not afraid to use them.

Personality: No one laughs at you or threatens your friends without having to deal with you. You flaunt your spell-casting abilities at every opportunity – even though it can annoy the rest of the group when you alone stay dry in a downpour, or casually conjure life into the campfire that Max has been working with his tinderbox for ten minutes. Your attitude is brash and self-confident – some would say arrogant. But it's not arrogant to know your own worth, right? And a magician needs to have the right image, to command respect.

But none of this takes away the memory of Inge's screams, and how helpless you felt. Every time you are faced with danger, your mouth dries up and you feel like a frightened child of seven again. You just hope the others never find out.

You are very fond of all the members of your adventuring group, although it is really not the sort of thing for a powerful mage to show. You have come to regard them as almost a replacement for the family you lost so early – especially Illse, who has always been kind to you; almost motherly.

Appearance: Handsome in an arrogant sort of way, Josef is young and thin, dressed in long, heavily embroidered wizard's robes. His features are angular, and his dark grey eyes are very intense. He wears his black hair long and straight, and he has a taste for rings and other jewellery.



Notes:

Suldrek

Dwarf Male Alchemist, level 2
(ex-Engineer, ex-Alchemist's Apprentice)
Age 75; Height 5' 0"

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
3	53	29	3	6	7	35	1	35	51	43	47	57	18

Skills: Arcane Language (Magic), Astronomy, Brewing, Carpentry, Cast Spells (Petty Magic), Cast Spells (Battle Magic 1), Chemistry, Drive Cart, Engineering, Metallurgy, Mining (enhanced), Night vision (30 yards), Read/Write, Secret Sign (Dwarven Engineers' Guild), Set Trap, Swimming, Spot Traps, Very Resilient.
Weapons: Hammer, Knife (I+10, Dam -2, Parry -20), Crossbow (R 34/64/300/4, Load 1, Fire 1).

Spells: Sleep, Open, Cure Light Injury, Hammerhead (a Dwarven version of Hammerhand, identical except for the name), Wind Blast.

Magic Points: 10

Fate Points: 2

History: Your early life was spent studying with teams of engineers in your dwarven home. You respected your teachers, but eventually began to feel that their learning was too restricted, too conventional, for your taste. You wanted to explore new areas of knowledge, experiment with new things. Unfortunately, these suggestions did not go down too well with your elders. Eventually, you realized that if you were to pursue your desire for knowledge, you would have to do so amongst the scholars of the human cities and universities.

You spent many years studying with alchemists at the small University of Marienburg, until eventually you felt the urge to move on, travelling the Empire, finding wonderful new sights, new areas of interest, new thoughts and books. Recently you met up with a former tutor of yours, Veit Pogner. He has promised you a letter of introduction to the Head of Alchemical Studies at the University of Altdorf if you will get a rare book, 'A True And Honest Account of the Land of Lustria', from a friend of his in Marienburg. You miss the old city, and the prospect of spending a winter there has let you persuade the others that it would be an ideal place to spend some time.

Personality: You strike many people as taciturn, maybe even abrupt, since you are actually quite reserved and always try to think through all the options before speaking. Sometimes the possibilities are so engrossing that you forget to answer the question at all. At other times, you answer at length: once you start talking about something of interest, you are hard to stop.

Your shyness is made worse by the fact that many humans expect you to only be interested in the next fight or flagon of ale 'because dwarfs are like that'. You endeavour to correct this mistaken image whenever you can.

You miss your dwarven homeland bitterly at times and have come to regard your travelling companions as your family. In particular, you often feel compelled to offer steadying, fatherly advice to young Gustav, who tends to think with his sword arm.



Notes:

Appearance: Suldrek is grey-haired and bearded, and his hair is neatly groomed. He wears a hooded robe, with many small pouches at the belt. Although he is stocky and muscular like most dwarves, his expression is gentle and thoughtful – he is more likely to be carrying a book than a weapon.

Katja ('Kat')

Female Elf, Mercenary Sergeant
(ex-Marine)

Age 63; Height 6'0"

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
5	63	38	5	4	8	69	2	48	54	45	63	38	42

Skills: Consume Alcohol, Disarm, Dodge Blow, Excellent vision, Gamble, Night vision, Read/Write, Ride, Row, Secret Language (Battle Tongue), Sing, Street Fighter, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Stun, Swim.

Languages: Old Worlдер, Elthàrin.

Weapons: Sword, Knife (I+10, Dam -2 Parry -20), Elf Bow (R 32/64/300/4).

Armour: Shield, mail shirt, mail coat.

Fate Points: 3

History: A sea elf from the great port of Marienburg, you grew up on the rolling deck of a ship with the salt air in your face. There is nothing like the freedom of the open seas! You served as a marine for many years, and will one day go back to the sea for good.

You left life on the waves to fight as a mercenary in the Empire's wars, becoming a Sergeant before going into business for yourself as an adventurer. One day, you will strike it rich and build the ship you spend your spare time dreaming about.

Personality: You came out of your past careers as tough as they come. There's nothing you like better than an evening's carousing and gambling in some tavern. If it ends in a good brawl, so much the better. You live life at top speed, and if people can't take you as they find you, tough. You won't pretty up your manners, or soften your sailor's speech just to please some fool with romantic notions about elvish culture.

Fortunately the rather mixed bag of adventurers you have fallen in with accept you exactly as you are, although Max the halfling occasionally attempts to be a restraining influence on you. You just laugh – good-naturedly, of course: Max would be a better influence if he wasn't so short. In fact they are a pretty good bunch, and you have grown fond of them all – even if it would take a good few flagons of ale to get you to admit it!

Appearance: Tall and muscular, Kat wears her dark hair close-cropped, revealing her elven features and ears pierced several times. She wears a leather vest (her bare arms are heavily tattooed), leggings and boots. Her expression is alert, with a wicked smile. She carries a longsword and dagger, and is usually to be seen with either a tankard or bottle in her hand.



Notes:

Chapter VI

FROM THE LEIDER DAM TO NIDDESDORF

Although it can be approached from other directions, the best view of the Leider dam will be found by following the Leider river upstream. This will bring the travellers to the very foot of the dam, and enable them to see this amazing work of Dwarven engineering in all its glory.

Built nearly two hundred years ago, the dam provides power to drive the hammers and machinery of the forges built within the cliff. The approach from below is guarded, but friendly travellers need have no fear of the Dwarven community who will, for a gold coin, provide a guided tour of the works.

A day or two should be allowed to see all the machinery. While accommodation is not available within the cliff complex, many Dwarves and humans live nearby in the delightful lake-side village of Leiderburg. There, travellers will easily find rooms at the Waterfront Tavern.

Lake Leider is an artificial lake, made by the Dwarves as part of the dam-building process, and several strange legends exist about this body of water. It is hard to credit them as one sits outside the tavern drinking Dwarven beer, eating fresh-caught fish and watching the sunlight sparkle on the blue water.

Among the stories is a tale of one village in the valley, whose inhabitants would not heed the warnings that it was to be flooded. Those

who stayed in their homes are said to live on under the surface of the water, and there are many related stories to be collected in the tavern.

Some locals say that on fine days you can see strange shapes moving about at the bottom of the clear lake, while others will tell you about fishing boats that never came back or that came back empty, causing a pleasant shiver to run up the spine of the listener, even in the sunlight.

In the evenings the tavern reverberates to the sound of Dwarven drums and pipes. Travellers arriving here at the Spring Equinox may see the unusual sight of the traditional Dwarf-maiden dances along the lakeside.

Although many Dwarven communities would not welcome visitors at this time, the Leider Dwarves are friendly and consider strangers to bring good luck. Money is always an appropriate gift to give to a Dwarf, and a Dwarven friend assures me that any prices quoted do not include the obligatory gratuity.

Upstream of the lake are the Todtnacht and Damerung Gorges, which adventurously romantic visitors may view with a pleasing terror. However, travellers should be warned that these are not bridged for some miles and the dam itself is the only reliable means of crossing this water-course without a detour of several days through wild country.

My dear Klaus,

If you receive this letter, then I fear that the risks that I was obliged to accept have led to a perhaps inevitable result. I hope that you will not disgrace my memory.

I have continued to pursue the topics that I discussed before your departure, and the conclusions that I have drawn were very much as I expected. Be warned, my boy: do not let preconceptions cloud your judgement when performing research! The texts I studied did indeed imply that the most reliable method of deflecting The Wanger was also the most vile: an act of brutal Murder. Now, I must endeavour to persuade the fanatics of the Ancient Order of Illuminated Readers to refrain from such a path.

(Have I ever named the Order to you in full before? I believe not. But now, I fear that my own path has taken me too far from the course of loyalty to their vapid oaths. Ah well.)

Were my motivations simple sentimentality, I would accept the obloquy that they will no doubt call down upon my head with better grace. But I fear that the folly and blindness is theirs, not mine. As I believe I told you (were you paying attention? I wonder), Mandelbrote was a diligent and truthful writer, but also somewhat crass in his perceptions, and quite incapable of perceiving the subtler ramifications of the actions he recommends. In this case, he urges that the return of Zahnarzt the Bodiless be prevented by means of a blood sacrifice; yet it never occurs to him what the implications of such an act, in relation to a demonic power, might be.

Perhaps this murder would impede Zahnarzt, or at least weaken him. Perhaps ancient spells would make it impossible to perform. We oppose Chaos here, my boy, and nothing can be certain. But I for one am convinced that the compassionate course is, in fact, also the most truly safe in this matter. I just wish that the fanatics of the Order could be trusted to see beyond the simple idea of destroying what they fear. If I cannot save them from themselves, then you must.

You may well require assistance in this mission. If you still enjoy the company of the persons who escorted you into the Wasteland, I bid you pass this word on to them above all; do not trust the judgement of the Librarians; strive to prevent the death of the unfortunate one who you have brought back from the Wasteland. You undertook this mission at my bidding, for which I alone must bear responsibility; now, I can only entreat you to repair the damage I have caused. This is not simply a matter of the life of one person, or my own conscience; the entire world may well be at risk.

There is perhaps one other matter that I should bring to your attention. You may never extract any benefit from this datum, but I give it to you, just like all of the lessons I attempted to teach you. Once, for a period of a bare few weeks, I became intrigued by the Order itself, and made some study of its foundations, both spiritual and physical. I believe that, when the caverns were excavated under the original Solkanite temple, several means of entrance and egress were incorporated. (Should you wish to confirm this, I direct you to the memoirs of Vorrtoke the Dwarf, in manuscript in the Library.) Many of these routes have doubtless been sealed or suffered disaster over the intervening period, but I believe that three survive. One is, of course, through the cellars of the aforementioned island temple; another is the tunnel of which their full members and trusted agents make use when issuing forth into Marienburg. The third is, I believe, never used today, but a chance remark from the former Chief Librarian makes me believe that a close examination of his own study might bear fruit. Use this information as you will.

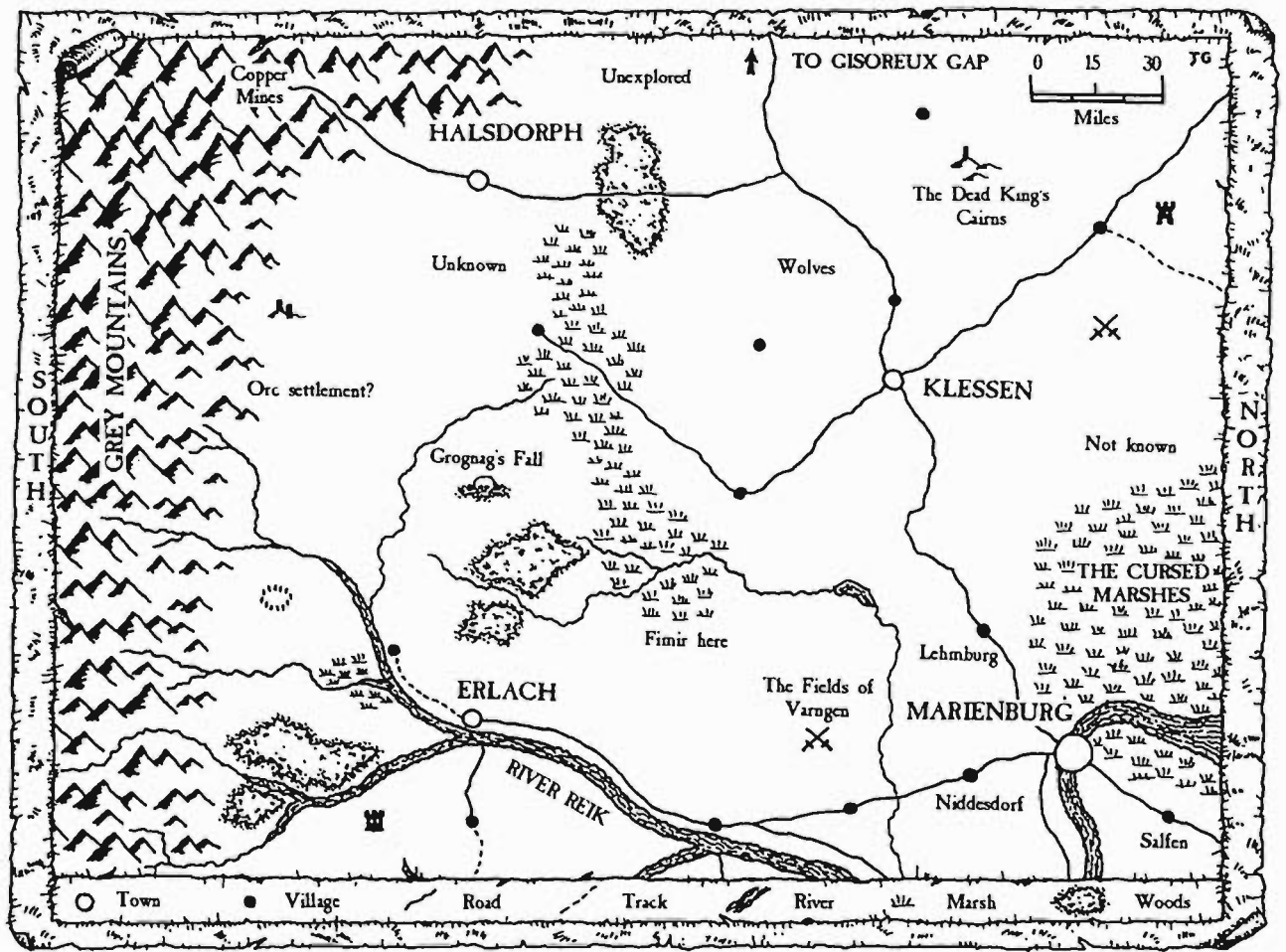
Once again, I am sorry that I cannot, under the circumstances in which you will read this, speak with you in person. Should you choose to follow a career in academia, as I hope you will, I would wish that you will identify some other scholar capable of providing you with the guidance and discipline that you so seriously require.

With my Sincerest Hopes that you will not fail in the mission I give you,

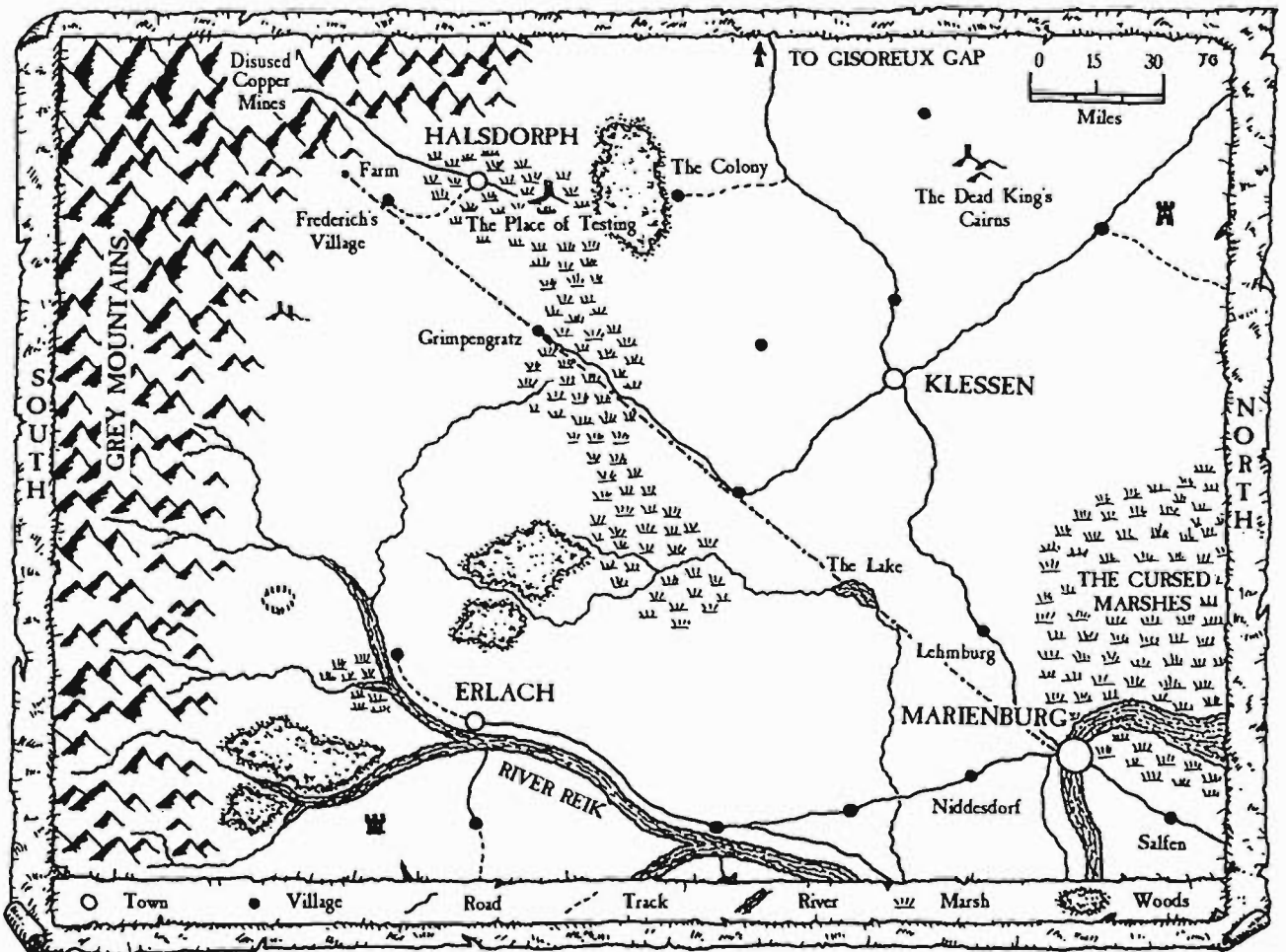
Ernst Goffman

PostScript: Please, my boy, never again make the mistake of referring to Hyllic philosophical systems when you merely wish to indicate that they have a Materialist element. Had you continued with such pretentiousness while under my tutelage, I would have contemplated despair.

Players' map of the Wasteland



GM's map of the Wasteland



Writers

Lea Crowe (*Transformation Moon*) has been a freelance librarian, a mathematician, a quantity surveyor, a convention organizer, a reference-book editor, a technical author, a very bad climber, an even worse caver, an occasional wargamer, and is working on a mould-breaking new role-playing game; but then who isn't? Lea wishes to thank Geoff Hale and Lance Hanson for their assistance.

Lief Eriksson (*Trial And Error*) has recently entered the dark realm of above-twenty-five-year-olds, where he lives with his girlfriend and two pet killer-rabbits. He discovered America some thousand years ago, but was killed by natives on his fifth visit. Leif was seduced by the dark side of role-playing in the mid-eighties and has organized a **Warhammer FRP** tournament at UppCon in Sweden since 1992, the last two years along with Stefan Karlsson. While writing 'Trial and Error' he tried to study Mathematics and generally have a good time.

Stefan Karlsson (*Trial And Error*) Stefan Karlsson is twenty-two years old and is desperately trying to do something with his life before he enters the dark realm. So far he has had little success, since books, films and RPGs always seem to distract him. He leapt at the chance of writing for Hogshead without giving any thought to the consequences. He is currently studying English and has a degree within reach if he can repair the damage caused by 'Trial and Error'.

Phil Masters (*Wherever You May Be*) has written for numerous role-playing magazines, starting with *White Dwarf* in 1980, and including *The Last Province*, *Pyramid*, *Shadis*, *Interactive Fantasy*, and *Dragon*. He wrote 'Kingdom of Champions' and other material for Hero Games, 'GURPS Arabian Nights' and half of 'GURPS Places of Mystery' for Steve Jackson Games, and the upcoming 'Sands of Time' for Atlas Games. He finances his taste for French brandy, Belgian chocolate and Internet activity by doubling as a computer programmer.

Sandy Mitchell (*Burn Them! Burn Them!*) has been a freelance writer of gaming scenarios and other related material for many years. His credits include fiction set in the *Warhammer* world, as well as articles and reviews for *White Dwarf*, *Valkyrie*, and other magazines. Apart from gaming, his hobbies include martial arts, SF fandom, and worrying about his overdraft.

Christian Pramas (*The Place Of Testing*) is a long-time **Warhammer FRP** proponent, and has been freelancing for the past two years, writing for Mayfair Games, Pariah Press and the magazine *The Familiar*. He lives in New York City and is currently working on his Masters thesis at the New School for Social Research. When not working, gaming or serving an exciting array of hot beverages to cranky New Yorkers, he works at the ABC No Rio (a volunteer-run non-profit arts centre/punk club) and sings in a punk-rock band.

Anthony Ragan (*The Colony*) is a freelance Northern Californian writer living in exile in Los Angeles. A man with too many hobbies and not enough time, his main interests are gaming, tropical fish, history, fantasy and science fiction, art, and computers. His favourite speculative fiction authors are Tolkien, Turtledove, Asimov and Lovecraft. At age 36, he is still stunned that editors will pay him to have fun writing. His credits include co-authoring the original *Marienburg* articles in *White Dwarf* 118-121, and a forthcoming book for Chaosium's 'Elric!' game.

Andrew Rilstone (*Error Of The Moon, Back To The Egg, When Darkness Falls*) is the editor of *Interactive Fantasy*, the critically acclaimed magazine about games design and criticism. He is also a co-creator of the story-telling card game 'Once Upon A Time', published by Atlas Games.

James Wallis (*additional material, editing, layout*) is the director of Hogshead Publishing Ltd, and the creator of the forthcoming 'FRUP' RPG. He only talks about his previous publications under extreme duress, but will admit to being a co-creator of the aforementioned card game 'Once Upon A Time'.

Ken and Jo Walton (*A Watery Grave*) are married to each other, and live in Lancaster, England. They have been role-playing for more years than they care to remember, and have had articles published in *White Dwarf*, *Pyramid*, *Heroquest Magazine*, and the *Proceedings of the Royal Martian Geographical Society*. They are the authors of the forthcoming 'GURPS Celtic Myth' for Steve Jackson Games, and are currently working on 'GURPS Faerie Queen' and a forthcoming **Warhammer FRP** supplement.

The Dying of the Light™

*Whisperer, whisperer, will she come soon,
The one who lives in the Chaos Moon?
Whisperer, whisperer, are we undone
When Morrslieb's face eats up the sun?
Whisperer, whisperer, can it be true?
Oh yes, my child, now I'll eat you!*

(Marienburg nursery rhyme)

Marienburg: city of commerce, learning, superstition and death. Sent there to seek a rare book, the adventurers begin to uncover a sinister web of intrigue, missing scholars and strange powers at work. Then news of an eclipse begins to spread, and with it rumours of ancient demons.

The city is plunged into panic and rioting, and the adventurers find themselves pitted against conspiracies, cultists and a bizarre order of scholar-priests in a desperate race against time to search out and recover the only artefact that might protect Marienburg from devastation. Along the way they must contend with monsters, mutants, sabotage and treachery.

But will the 'Moon's Egg' the adventurers are seeking save the city – or condemn it to ultimate destruction by the forces of Chaos?

ZAHNARZT SHALL RISE AGAIN

Dying Of The Light is a brand-new 128-page adventure for Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay. Set in and around the largest port in the Old World, it blends intrigue, action, suspense and dark atmosphere into a series of adventures, combining to form an extraordinary quest that could only happen in the Warhammer world, as a search for knowledge turns into a desperate race for survival.

Dying Of The Light contains nine linked adventures, new background on Marienburg and the bleak Wasteland that surrounds it, maps and hand-outs, plus six pre-generated player characters. It is designed for characters in their second or third career, and can easily be fitted into an existing campaign.

Packed with stunning artwork, thrilling encounters and constant danger, *Dying Of The Light* is the first completely new supplement for Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay to appear for several years, and will appeal to old fans and new players alike.



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