

WARHAMMER®

# FANTASY ROLEPLAY™



## HERO'S CALL™

HEROIC CHARACTERS AND ADVENTURES IN THE OLD WORLD







## WARHAMMER FANTASY ROLEPLAY

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ISBN: 978-1-61661-334-1 Product Code: WHF19 Print ID: 1180NOV11 Printed in China

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# HERO'S CALL™

## HEROIC CHARACTERS AND ADVENTURES IN THE OLD WORLD

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## CORE PRODUCT

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

## How To Use This Book

The first half of *Hero's Call* contains information useful to both players and GMs alike. These chapters can be identified by the following symbol at the top and bottom of each page.



The second half of *Hero's Call* contains information intended for GMs alone. These chapters can be identified by the following symbol at the top and bottom of each page.



## CORRUPTION/MUTATION

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

## NEW RULES

In addition to a wealth of new information and background material on how to expand your adventures into high level play, *Hero's Call* includes some new and expanded rules on character creation and epic threats. Players and GMs should familiarise themselves with these new rules before using them in play.

## NEW CHARACTER CREATION OPTIONS

Includes new rules and content for playing both halfling and ogre characters as well as rules for playing human and dwarf characters from regions of the Empire outside of the Reikland. These rules can be found in Chapter 2, starting on page 10.

## EXTENDED CHALLENGE RULES

High-level characters that are both personally and socially powerful may find themselves undertaking tasks and facing challenges that are epic in scope and scale. Rules to resolve these challenges with a single roll of the dice are presented in Chapter 3, starting on page 23.

## SKILL MASTERY

Truly heroic characters can gain Mastery in a skill, enabling them to perform nearly impossible tasks. These rules can be found in Chapter 3, starting on page 22.

## HEROIC DIFFICULTIES

Truly potent heroes can attempt feats beyond the abilities of mere mortals. Rules explaining heroic tasks can be found in Chapter 3, starting on page 23.

## USING THE MATERIALS INCLUDED WITH HERO'S CALL

*Hero's Call* includes a variety of new cards, sheets, and components for the Game Master and his players.

### NEW CARDS

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

### CREATURE CARDS

*Hero's Call* includes 21 new creature cards. Full rules for creature cards can be found in the *Creature Guide* and abbreviated rules can be found in Chapter 6 on page 43.

### PUNCHBOARD

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

### EPIC THREAT SHEETS

There is a saying in the Old World that a man is best judged by the quality of his enemies. High-ranking adventurers expect to face foes worthy of their great talents and it is the GM's task to provide such challenges. Epic Threat sheets can be used to modify creature cards in order to create an even greater threat. See Chapter 6 on page 44 for more information on Epic Threat sheets.



### ENHANCE CARDS

*Hero's Call* introduces 3 new Enhance cards. First introduced in *Omen's of War*, Enhance cards are a special subset of action cards that are used to make existing actions better. Rules for using this type of card can be found in Chapter 3, on page 22.



## SET ICON

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







## CHAPTER ONE

# THE HEIGHTS OF POWER

With toil and determination, bravery and cunning, a true dedication to their chosen path and of course just a little luck, heroes may reach the ultimate level, the pinnacle of their profession, skilled beyond the measure of their peers. They may be elevated to the most prestigious rank, a leader of their order, the most skilled or most powerful in the land, accustomed to facing and overcoming the most perilous of dangers. Fate has led them to this point, marking them out as shining examples among the multitudes. Truly they have attained the heights of power.

However, such status means much more than just killing bigger monsters. The chances are, a hero's new station in life comes with a whole range of important responsibilities. High-ranking priests must preach and minister to thousands of faithful citizens and soldiers. Senior wizards must train the lower ranks and stand ready to defend the Empire with their magical abilities. Magistrates will be busy prosecuting and sentencing the never-ending supply of wrongdoers and miscreants that blight the towns and cities of the Empire, while the ruthless individuals who control the criminal underworld must work constantly to keep an iron grip on their organisations. All these duties leave far less time for simple

adventuring – these vital tasks must be attended to if the character is to retain his position, or he may return from a quest to find he has been deposed or replaced.

Fame may well be an unexpected side effect of a hero's rise to greatness, one that can on occasion be problematic. They will likely be recognized by passers-by and those they encounter, especially in regions close to their home or base of operation. This can cause significant difficulties when trying to travel incognito, slip unremarked through a crowd or attempting to impersonate someone else. They may even attract fawning hero-worshippers, who follow them around hoping to witness a great act or perhaps try to help in some way, desperate to receive a kind word or just a nod of acknowledgement. Such pathetic fans are a hindrance at best, and at worst can put themselves and the heroes into real danger, ruining attempts at stealth and getting in the way during fights. Well-known heroes also get many more requests for aid. These may be petitions for professional services, business propositions, begging letters, or missions that would require their adventuring expertise. It becomes rare for such prestigious individuals to stumble across an adventure – trouble finds them! In fact fame and success can cause particular problems for those in certain walks of life. Those that become famous for less than honourable deeds find their



notoriety attracts a lot of attention, as malicious rivals plot their downfall and the authorities devote greater resources to bringing them to justice. Even the best of heroes may have to deal with opposition, enemies, challenges to their status and even assassination attempts.

Finally, the missions and quests that powerful heroes are faced with will increase in enormity. The peril is greater, the stakes higher. No longer will they be saving a village. Now they must save the entire Empire.

## ACHIEVING MASTERY

Heroes who have reached the heights of power are some of the most skilled individuals in the land – the most lethal duellists, powerful spellcasters, influential orators and unshakable hunters to be found in the Old World. This pinnacle of expertise is not easy to achieve or maintain. Keeping their status as the best of the best requires long hours of study and training. Champions practice their weapon forms and drills, magistrates rehearse their speeches and arguments, and priests learn and revise the scriptures of their cult. They seek out arcane, lost tomes of knowledge and embark on epic pilgrimages to be taught by legendary tutors. For example, the feted champion Uchaeba Sung is said to have trained every morning while standing under an ice-cold waterfall to hone his endurance, followed by striking the trunk of an iron-bark tree a hundred times to condition his fists. Artemis Salk, of the College of the Light Order, battled hill trolls in the elven ruins of west Bretonnia in order to rediscover the Book of Dawn, whose mystical secrets ensured his elevation to the rank of Wizard Lord. Mortilla Marathorn, devout Ulrican Arch-Lector made a years-long, barefoot trek on the forest roads from Ubersreik to Middenheim, to receive the wisdom of

Ar-Ulric. Impressed, the high priest granted her command of a mission deep into the snow-covered Drakwald Forest to eliminate a savage beastlord – a task she completed, still without boots!

Of course, being known as the pre-eminent practitioner in your field comes along with some talented and determined competition. Such high-level practitioners that already exist may resent the hero's newfound success. Consumed with bitterness and jealousy, they may put obstacles in the way to hinder and undermine the newcomer's path to glory. Similarly, upcoming rivals dog their heels, making their own bids for power, issuing challenges and even actively sabotaging the hero's work. Crime Lord Garros Daggerskin had good reason to be thankful that he always slept with a knife under his pillow when a Tilean viper mysteriously found its way into his bed. Gold Wizard Ferrubus Hume was only alerted to the fact that someone had swapped one of his spell ingredients with black powder when he accidentally blew up an entire wing of his college. During the last significant greenskin incursion into Averland, the newly promoted and ambitious Captain Edvard Sigfrau begged his superiors for, and was granted, the honour of leading a strike force to eliminate one of the orc chieftains, whose isolated camp had been located by scouts. However, the intelligence maps he was provided with somehow got mixed up, and instead of destroying the orc outpost, the nighttime raiders blundered into a huge dung pile, tended by snotlings. The captain returned home humiliated and in dire need of a bath.

## THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF LEADERSHIP

As he or she grows in status and power, a hero will often gain a retinue of some sort. The group may consist of loyal followers as well as paid servants, and they may accompany their master (or mistress) on his most perilous missions or simply tend to his needs while he is at rest. Many serve to aid their master in his non-adventuring responsibilities. Such staff and hangers-on may be assistants, advisors and agents to help with day-to-day duties, minions and henchmen of questionable character and unpalatable skills, sentries and bodyguards for the more cautious or worrisome heroes, aspirants and initiates seeking wisdom or offering guidance, apprentices hoping to learn a trade or craft, servants, slaves and porters to complete tasks of daily drudgery, as well as more skilled individuals such as armourers, wranglers and cooks. Particularly famous or egotistical heroes may even attract or hire an archivist or balladeer to record their noble deeds.

The members of the retinue will, for the most part, have to be paid, and all will need food and accommodation of some kind if they are travelling with the hero. They will also expect their master to behave with consistency and fairness, at least if they are to respond with loyalty and obedience. A master who is weak or cruel is likely to be robbed by his servants and abandoned in times of hardship and danger.

There are many examples of retainers having a beneficial and mutually respectful relationship with their employers. Magistrate Heinrich Minch was a good and honest bringer of justice to the citizens of the Reikland, who relied on the able assistance and friendship of a scribe he had known and worked with since the start of his career. Similarly, the vampire hunter Bors Kesselmann was accompanied on all his successful wilderness missions by a pair of veteran trackers from Stirland.



Of course, other examples are less admirable. At the height of his success, Champion Ludo Ubermier, 'the Duellist of Frederheim', retained a valet, two porters, an armourer of the highest calibre to maintain his equipment, four training partners for practice sparring (including Blug, an ogre maneater), a halfling chef who in turn had his own assistant pot-washer, a wrangler to look after his two horses and one baggage mule, a boy to handle his hunting dog, a bugler to herald his arrival in a new town or village, a smooth-talking thief who he had caught trying to rob him and subsequently befriended, a wizened old mystic whose presence he considered to be lucky, and a poet he had hired to write an epic account of his life. Unfortunately, when word got about of his ignominious defeat by 'Alonso the Sword of the South' at the annual Bögenhafen fair, his income dried up. Unable to pay his extensive staff, they quickly left his side, glad to be away from his boring stories of all the fights he had won (but not before Blug the ogre had eaten his best steed in lieu of outstanding wages). Only the mystic remained with Ludo, dogging his steps despite his best attempts to ditch the old man, who now seemed to curse him with bad fortune wherever he went.

## RULING THE LAND

It is not uncommon for a high-ranking hero to be granted, or even to purchase, rulership of a particular settlement or area of land. Alternatively, a hero whose might and prowess is well known could be appointed as protector or sheriff of a place, without all the responsibilities of owning the land or all the potential benefits.

Becoming Lord of the Manor (or some other appropriate title) does not necessarily equate to the life of wealth and luxury that commoners might expect. Taxes must be paid year in year out if the ruler wants to retain his position, and the tax collectors are not sympathetic to sob stories of poor soil, failing harvests or beastman raiders. The land must be worked – farming, hunting and mining being the most common methods. The people must be properly motivated to toil and graft, with a mixture of the promise of reward (a pittance of wages and the occasional festival) and the threat of punishment (a night in the stocks, flogging or eviction). Too lenient an approach and the land will not be profitable, too harsh and the ruler may find himself dealing with discontent and rebellion. If the funds are available, the ruler may want to make improvements – but what to invest in? New machinery, livestock, buildings, magical protection or better defences are just a few possibilities, and the decision may be crucial. It's not surprising that many landowners borrow large sums from moneylenders, and often end up with huge debts that they can never hope to pay off.

An effective ruler must also be a gifted politician, forming useful contacts with peers at court and the town councils, or at the many social events open to those of a certain class. Such contacts and negotiations lead to the favourable allocation of provincial resources, increased trade and higher status for the settlement – all of which ultimately mean more coin in the coffers.

There will likely be fighting involved too, for the Empire is a dangerous place, the hazards increasing the further you are from a city. Isolated communities face raids and attacks from packs of wolves, rampaging beastmen, goblin tribes, trolls, mutants and even human brigands and bandits. The ruler is expected to pay for guards and watchmen, palisades, walls and watchtowers, and to rally the citizens, set a brave example and lead the defence in times of crisis. Even in peacetime there will be a host of matters to be dealt with: requests for judgement in a local dispute, for clemency against a harsh punishment, for retribution against an unjust act,

for improvement of the working or living conditions or simply for charity. There will also be pleas for aid that may lead the ruler back into their life of adventure – rescuing a child from nearby caves, investigating strange and disturbing night time noises or driving away a marauding giant.

## NOBLESSE OBLIGE

Heroes who belong to a noble family have particular responsibilities that may force them to return home at some point. Even if they are not the first born, set to inherit the family estate, the illness or death of an older sibling may change the situation, making them honour bound to come back and take on the mantle of rulership. Alternatively, if the hero's fame and status has outstripped the rest of the family, he or she may be called upon to become a figurehead and boost the family's fortunes.

Along with all the practical duties associated with managing the land, governing the citizens and serfs, and protecting the domain, noble rulers may have further issues to contend with. The family may bear a feudal debt to another house, a great lord or even an Elector Count, owing them increased financial or military support in return for some service or boon granted generations ago. They may inherit problems such as the loathing of the badly treated commoners, massive debts, a bitter feud with neighbouring lands, a crumbling family castle in dire need of expensive repairs, or the enmity of a local wizard. Tradition and honour bind them to whatever decisions, actions and promises were made by their ancestors. Sir Farqhar Boullion came into his inheritance upon the death of his father after many years away. He acquired responsibility for the family estate's profitable trade agreement with a nearby dwarf brewery, as well as a pledge to supply a hundred soldiers every year





to the service of Baron von Drexler, and was sworn to upkeep the bizarre family tradition of hoisting a live goblin up the flagpole every midwinter festival.

Other family members can also cause problems. Senile uncles may cause diplomatic blunders or insist that they are still fit to go out hunting beastmen. Younger siblings may run up gambling debts, have embarrassing romantic dalliances or get involved with dubious organisations. Such situations may mean that the family head must embark on a quest to rescue the wayward uncle, or extract the little brother from the influence of a sinister cult.

It should be noted that a hero who is awarded land in recompense for his mighty deeds may at the same time be granted the title of Baron or Baronet, thereby originating a new noble line. Of course, those noble families whose history dates back centuries give little credence to such upstarts, and will treat the newcomer with barely veiled contempt should he have the temerity to consider himself an equal. They may even use their political influence to hinder the new baron's ventures. Conversely, it is also possible to lose the family lands and noble title, whether through bankruptcy, failure to fulfil feudal commitments, devious political backstabbing or even destruction by raids or invasion. An exiled, disinherited noble must bear the shame of what he has lost, and harbours bitter grudges against those responsible.

## A REALM AT WAR

The Empire is a land occupied by hostile forces, vast swathes of barren wilderness, tangled forests and jagged mountains with just the occasional pinprick of safety and civilisation. The Elector Counts inevitably need to defend their provinces and are duty bound by the laws and traditions of the Empire to maintain armies of State Troops. Heroes who have pursued a successful military

career will ultimately be promoted to such rank where they will be tasked with organising and leading a portion of the Empire's armies.

Potential soldiers must be recruited from the general populace. Many sign up for a life in the military as a way to escape the monotonous toil of a life working the land as a farmer or miner, and to experience travel and excitement – though this romantic notion of a career in the army soon fades as they face the harsh realities of war and a few of the terrifying foes abroad in the world. However, if invasion is threatening or there simply aren't enough volunteers, it will be necessary to employ a few burly recruitment sergeants who are talented at 'persuading' men to accept the Emperor's shilling through a combination of strong liquor and physical intimidation. In fact, when times are desperate it is common practise to round up the local ruffians and bandits and empty the jails to form extra companies (though they need careful supervision to ensure they don't desert at the first opportunity).

Once a body of men has been formed, it is the ruler's responsibility to equip them, but organising this task will fall to a senior officer (often one getting on in years or too wounded for more demanding duties, or simply the captain who will lead the regiment). Arms must be bought or manufactured – spears are the cheapest option and halberds are generally preferred if the funds are available, while weapons such as greatswords and crossbows are expensive and time-consuming to make, so are naturally much less used. Uniforms must also be supplied, generally utilizing the formal colours associated with the province or city state of the regiment's founding. There is no standard pattern to follow, the exact design depending on the individual tailor and the particular materials and dyes available at that moment. Consequently, some regiments sport brightly coloured tunics and leggings with slashed, puff sleeves and stripes in the stylish fashion, while others wear a motley hotch-potch of patched up garments with perhaps just a cap feather or armband in the proper state colours.

The new soldiers must have some form of accommodation, whether a full barracks building or a tented encampment. They will also need regular meals, with all the logistical supply issues that entails – an army's baggage train is vital to its effectiveness when it is on the march. Finally, the troops must be trained, drilled by captains and sergeants in battlefield manoeuvres and the art of fighting in ranks – for even those destined to spend most of their time patrolling the city streets may be called upon to march to war.

Eventually the regiment can be assigned to its duty. Some will stand post at town gates, on city walls or in far-flung watchtowers. Some become watchmen, trudging the streets day and night, dealing with drunks and thieves. Others are employed as road or river wardens, keeping the highways and waterways of the Empire safe (or at least a modicum less dangerous) for travellers. For the captains appointed to lead these forces, there are never enough men. However, in some cases a wealthy or warlike ruler may also keep a dedicated standing army, allowing him to make proactive raids on his foes or even to march off and wage war in foreign lands.

Of course, everything changes when a major invasion threatens the Empire. Whether the barbaric multitudes of the greenskins are pouring out of the mountains, the savage hordes of the beastmen are bursting from the forest eaves, or the iron clad servants of Chaos encroach from the north, the response is the same. The Grand Muster is sounded and the provinces ready themselves for







war. Duty dictates that the troops are recalled from their postings and the officers and generals lead them to battle in defence of the Empire.

## BATTLE WEARY AND JADED

The long years of adventuring take their toll on some heroes with debilitating effects that build over time, and the added pressures and responsibilities that come with success and fame often accentuate the problem. Facing constant danger and near-death on a regular basis can leave a hero jaded, cold and distant. Witnessing too much bloodshed and the slaughter of innocents can cause a loss of hope and the feeling that the hero's efforts can never be enough. The increase in power and status can make a hero nervous of attacks and paranoid about enemy plots against them. Skilled fighters may grow overly bloodthirsty, the politically minded may become power-crazed while others grow obsessed with amassing enormous wealth. Encountering the most terrifying of foes can leave an individual anything from curiously eccentric to utterly mad, while being exposed to the warping power of the Winds of Magic and the taint of Chaos may cause spontaneous mutations. Such abominations of the flesh must be kept hidden from the world, lest they attract the attentions of a witch hunter or an angry mob, which may be easy or hard depending on the exact nature of the mutation, and the accepted mode of dress within the hero's chosen profession.

Any such traits and problems are likely to be exaggerated by a successful hero's power and reach. For example, two odd shaped lumps in the hairline of a spotty student will receive little notice, but years later as a well-known and outspoken magistrate, these 'horns' may start to be a problem. Similarly, a lowly peasant with delusions of paranoia might sleep with a knife under his pillow, whereas a

paranoid Master Wizard would conjure magical sentries, adopt mystical disguises, create enchanted wards and traps, and spend his days concocting spells and curses to eliminate his perceived enemies.

## RETIREMENT

The time may come when a hero chooses to hang his sword above the fireplace and leave the perilous life of adventuring behind. This often happens as the added duties and responsibilities that power and success have brought dominate more and more – there simply isn't enough time to go trudging through forests, poking around old ruins or chasing cultists through sewers. He is too busy ruling, leading, teaching or otherwise following his new path. Perhaps the hero feels he has done enough, achieved everything he set out to do, and that he is overdue some well-earned rest. He may be content to have reached the pinnacle of his profession, and is happy to rest on his laurels, enjoy the glory and live a life of luxury and wealth.

Elves, dwarfs and other non-human adventurers may have similar reasons for retirement, but there are other possible motivations too. They may simply miss their homeland and long to return, to be reunited with family and surrounded once again by their own kind. The reason they originally left may no longer be valid – a wrong righted, a grudge settled, an oath fulfilled, or a disgrace forgiven. Dwarfs may return home rich and successful, their family honour restored, or perhaps even to lead a great quest to retake a long-lost hold. Wood elves have a deep bond with the enchanted boughs of Athel Loren, and do all they can to protect their woodland home. They may return to their kindreds if they have completed a great service to thwart the enemies of the forest. High elves will sail home older and wiser, philosophical about all they have seen, or perhaps because they have received word of war on Ulthuan and they desire to lend their aid in defending the spires and citadels. Ogre man eaters are often driven by their eternal wanderlust, and simply stride away into the distance to fight in new lands. Others have ambitions of winning their own tribe among the Ogre Kingdoms and reckon they finally have the muscle to do it. Successful halflings often return to the simple pleasures of the Moot, while some become rich enough to live a life of gluttony.

Whatever the reason, it is time to let somebody else save the day for a change!

*There's old heroes and bold heroes, but there aren't any old, bold heroes. Well, except for me, of course.*

*- Aleksander Schmidt, the self-proclaimed Hero of Schondheim, retired*





## CHAPTER TWO

# NEW CHARACTER RACE OPTIONS

The Empire is a vast realm that stretches for hundreds and hundreds of miles. Endless oceans of forest cover the land, filled with malevolent trees and hideous creatures. Rising up out of the dark eaves are soaring mountain ranges, towering spurs of rock whose peaks scratch the heavens. Huge monsters and terrifying dangers lurk within the jagged gullies and caves. The great cities of the Empire are merely isolated pinpricks on the map, battling for their existence, effectively surrounded by enemy territory, because for the most part it is the beastmen that rule the forests, not the humans. Even without encountering any of the many perils that abound, it usually takes months to travel across the full extent of the domain. Armies march slowly through the land, to counter marauders and even full-scale invasions, and merchants travel to distant parts to establish trade routes. However, on the whole the common citizens of the Empire rarely venture beyond their province and in fact few ever travel further than the immediate locale of their homes.

It is not surprising then that the provinces of the Empire remain so distinct in character. The landscape and even the weather vary enormously, from the harsh, icy coastland of the north to the comparatively sheltered plains and foothills of the south. The different provinces have their own traditions, customs and laws, which can seem bizarre to outsiders. They have unique dialects and slang terms that can be so distinct that it is as if they are speaking in a foreign tongue. Their armies bear distinct state colours, worn

in various combinations by their regiments. Each province has a long, proud history and its own particular threats, problems and concerns, and each is ruled by an Elector Count, easily the equal of the king of a lesser realm than the Empire. These rulers maintain their own vast armies to defend the land and, on occasion, to make war on each other.

Of course, the civilised parts of the Empire are also home to a small number of non-humans – dwarfs, elves, halflings and ogres – who have, for various reasons, come to live within the land of men.



*Little Empire people scared. I say, "hokay, don't bother me none." They scared, they pay on time, they keep me fed.*

*- Blorg, Ogre Maneater*







## OGRES

Ogres are massive by human standards, standing over ten feet tall. They are hulking brutes, their broad frames covered in slabs of dense muscle, over which lies a thick layer of blubber that insulates them in the icy climes of their homeland. Their skulls are thick and their hide is tough as cured leather. Their legs are as sturdy as tree trunks and their arms can smash in a man's chest without even the need for a weapon. However, an ogre's most distinctive feature is his gut. The size of an ogre's gut is proportional to his status – those that are strong and successful eat well and develop massive bellies that spill out over the belt. Ogres take great pride in their guts and protect their precious innards with large armoured shields, fashioned from heavy iron and known as gut plates.

Every ogre has a ravenous appetite. Their whole society traditionally revolves around eating, and both their religion and magic are also based on food. Ogres can devour practically anything – powerful, grinding stomach muscles can even crack rocks if there is no alternative. They will eagerly consume their enemies at the end of a battle, shovelling bloody hunks of raw flesh into their ever-hungry maws.

It is a gross understatement to say that ogres are not the brightest individuals. In fact it is often said that they are dumber than the rocks they sometimes eat. They are completely illiterate and speak with growls, grunts and belches, using words with as few syllables as possible. However, they are capable of cobbling together crudely effective weapons. The only thing they excel at, apart from eating, is fighting. In battle, an ogre is the match of ten men – a devastating force, especially once he has picked up some momentum. An ogre's 'bull charge' can knock an armoured knight and his steed dazed and bruised to the floor.

## HISTORY

The ogres' homelands lie within the cold desolation of the Mountains of Mourn, far to the east of the Empire. Here they live in tribal groups, loosely organised into kingdoms ruled over by ogre chieftains known as Tyrants. It is a harsh environment, where the ogres climb onto the peaks with their huge clubs to hunt great mountain beasts such as mammoths, ice elk and rhinoxen. They also attack the occasional wagon trains and other travellers that pass through their domains, following the perilous mountain passes. This has provided the addition of mules, horses and men to their diet, and over time has taught them the value of gold.

Despite their tough existence, the ogre population has been growing in recent decades, enough to spur a massive expansion of the Ogre Kingdoms and the migration of many tribes into new parts of the world. This has led to war with other races as well as among the tribes themselves. A massive horde of ogres even made it through the Black Fire Pass and into the Empire. Dwarf armies from Karaz-a-Karak, Karak Kadrin and Zhufbar marched forth to hold back the invasion, but only prevailed after the arrival of a human force from Nuln. The massed artillery of dwarfs and men finally destroyed the threat in what became known as the Battle of a Hundred Cannons.

TABLE 2-1: DEFAULT RATINGS BY RACE

CHARACTERISTIC	OGRE	HALFLING
Strength	3	1
Toughness	3	2
Agility	2	3
Intelligence	1	2
Willpower	2	2
Fellowship	1	3
Creation Points	20	20





## OGRES IN THE REIKLAND

Most Reiklanders' experience of ogres is with maneaters. These wandering ogres have left their tribes to travel the world, fighting and eating at every opportunity. Those that come to the Empire find that it has a plentiful supply of war, gold and food, so many stay for some years before moving on. Maneaters often adopt the styles and culture of the lands they visit, so they may bear a curved Arabyan scimitar or wield a Tilean pike as a spear. After a while in the Empire, they may make crude attempts to copy the Imperial fashion of dress, hammer together something akin to a halberd or brandish a handgun the way a man would hold a pistol.

Despite their name, maneaters will happily kill and eat anyone or anything, and soon become very experienced and powerful having fought against every type of foe. They are highly sought after as mercenaries to bolster an army's battle lines, hired muscle for criminal gangs, and bodyguards for the rich and powerful. It is extremely important to pay a maneater promptly – an angry ogre will just as readily eat those he was meant to be helping. Nevertheless, they are becoming a more common sight in the province, and have proved their worth on a number of occasions. When an assassination attempt was made on the life of a well-liked nobleman, at a public event in the city of Altdorf, it was his ogre bodyguard Krumplog that saved the day. Turning to see what all the commotion was about, the ogre's huge stomach sent the assassin crashing into a pillar and knocked him out cold. The would-be killer's poisoned blade was found embedded in Krumplog's shoulder – he hadn't even noticed it. On another occasion, skaven night runners infiltrated an army camp near Grissenwald, intent on killing the general. However, they were unlucky enough to run into a regiment

of ogre mercenaries, and quickly became the brutes' evening snack. Thanks to events like these, maneaters have become an accepted, if not welcome, presence in the Reikland. The average Reiklander is fearful and wary of an ogre, but unlikely to run screaming in terror at the mere sight.

## OGRE CHARACTERS

To reflect their brutal upbringing, ever-consuming guts, and unique physiology, ogre characters have the following special rules and abilities:

- + **Starting Career:** All ogres begin play as a Maneater
- + **Career Restrictions:** Ogres can enter any career that both a human and a dwarf can enter.
- + **Thick Skin:** Ogre hide is tougher and thicker than the smaller and weaker races. Ogres gain +1 soak.
- + **The Great Maw:** Ogres can and will eat almost anything – their hunger is legendary. In fact, ogres must eat a pound of meat every hour or begin to starve. An ogre who fails to eat adds ■ to all checks for each "meal" he skips. He keeps adding ■ to his checks until he is able to eat enough meat to make up for his skipped meals. If the number of ■ added to his checks due to hunger ever exceeds an ogre's Toughness score, he either descends into a desperate, murderous, rage, killing and eating everything around him, or slumps helplessly to the ground until fed (player's choice). Ogres gain ■■ to any check to resist ingested toxins, diseases, or any other hazard encountered through eating.
- + **Bigger & Stronger:** Ogres may improve their Strength and Toughness scores at a cost of one fewer creation point or advance. So an ogre may improve his Strength from 4 to 5 at a cost of only 4 creation points. Since the maximum limit on characteristics (6) is based on the available slots in the open career advance section, this also means that ogres may increase their Strength and Toughness scores to 7, ignoring the normal maximum values. (They may not, however, exceed the normal starting characteristic limits of 5).
- + **Fearless:** Ogres treat the difficulty of all Fear ratings confronting them as 1 less than normal (to a minimum of 1). In addition, Terror ratings confronting them are treated as Fear ratings instead (but do not have their rating reduced).
- + **Wound Threshold:** 12 + Toughness rating.
- + **Corruption Threshold:** 10 + Toughness rating  
Ogres are more tolerant to the ravages of chaos than humans, but will still manifest mutations if subjected to enough corruption.





## HALFLINGS

The halflings are a race of short humanoids, typically around three feet tall when fully grown. They are generally considered to be sneaky little blighters, who are extremely selfish and greedy, and are often accused (with some justification) of being stunted, inbred and vulgar. They certainly arouse their share of prejudice, and like most non-human visitors to the Empire, the general opinion of the human citizens is somewhat at odds with how halflings describe themselves. They consider themselves lovers of peace and quiet, of relaxation and a pleasant snooze after a good meal. Others simply call them lazy. Halflings are also cautious and careful, sensibly wary of placing themselves into danger – qualities often construed as cowardice by all the other races. Similarly, they have a well deserved reputation for being light-fingered thieves, while the halflings themselves would say they are opportunistic and simply take the chances that fortune sends their way. They typically claim that if the former owner had really cared about keeping the given item, he would have kept it in a safer place. It's fair to say that if a halfling needs some string, he will happily borrow someone's shoelaces, and probably forget to give them back (and fail to own up when the angry wearer's boot falls off). Consequently, their pockets are usually full of 'useful' bits and bobs that they have acquired.

Fortunately, they do have a couple of redeeming features – firstly that they are rather good shots with a bow (a short bow of course), and secondly that they are excellent cooks. Unsurprisingly, these talents have grown from the desire to hunt and prepare a tasty dinner.

## HISTORY

The halflings' homeland is known as the Moot, a large, fertile area that was formerly part of the lands of the province of Stirland. This domain was controversially granted to the halflings many centuries ago by Emperor Ludwig the Fat (allegedly in gratitude for their fine contribution to the cuisine of the Empire). Ludwig even decreed that the Moot's foremost leader, called the Elder, would henceforth

have an electoral vote. It is not surprising then that the humans of the Empire traditionally harbour a degree of resentment towards halflings, and the citizens of the provinces neighbouring the Moot – Stirland and Averland – hold a particular antipathy for them.

As a less than martially proficient race, the halflings of the Moot have fared badly when hostile invasions ravaged the Empire. They suffered terribly from the greenskin armies of both Gorbad Ironclaw and Grom the Paunch of Misty Mountain, which rampaged across the land slaughtering and pillaging at will. Thousands more were killed recently, during Elector Count Marius Leitdorf's brutal suppression of the so-called Halfling Rebellion.

## HALFLINGS IN THE REIKLAND

Thanks to their few good qualities and talents, many halflings have found gainful (if not entirely honest) employment within the human lands of the Reikland. They are widely acknowledged as the best chefs available, and it has become something of a status symbol to have one in any wealthy household or retinue, though the employer would be well advised to keep a close eye on the silverware. As experts in the gathering and preparation of herbs, berries and fungi, halflings may also gain more dubious work creating drugs and poisons. Those with a less delicate touch are often hired as cooks in army barracks and even to help feed troops on the march. It is a fact that halfling cooks can make stew so fiery that it can be used as a weapon or war, one that has been deployed on the battlefield in times past.

Halflings are natural, instinctive poachers, and sometimes find work in grand estates as game wardens. They are excellent archers, but prefer to fire from a position of relative safety. As such, when they are called upon to join in the defence of the land, they often





## HALFLING CHARACTERS

To reflect their small, nimble stature and avaricious nature, halfling characters have the following racial abilities:

- ✦ **Career Restrictions:** Halflings can enter any career that a human can enter that possesses either the *Menial* or *Rogue* trait.
- ✦ **Roguish Pursuits:** Before investing any creation points, a halfling may train one of the following skills for free – Ballistic Skill, Guile, Skulduggery, Stealth.
- ✦ **Naturally Sneaky:** Halflings often escape notice and as such all Observation checks to detect the halfling add ■■ misfortune dice to the dice pool.
- ✦ **Night Vision:** Two fewer ■■ misfortune dice are added to a halfling's dice pool for any effects from darkness or lack of sufficient light.
- ✦ **Wound Threshold:** 7 + Toughness rating
- ✦ **Corruption Threshold:** 15 + Toughness rating

become stealthy scouts, operating on the flanks, hidden in the trees and undergrowth – they do not possess the confidence to stand their ground in the main battle line.

Other halflings embrace their natural aptitudes to become thieves. They are quiet and small, and thus often escape notice, allowing them to pick a pocket or reach a hand in through an open window. They are able to squeeze through narrow gaps and holes (at least before lunch) to gain admittance where they are not wanted, and are surprisingly fast on their feet when fleeing the scene of the crime.



## MEN OF OSTLAND

Ostland lies on the frontier with the land of Kislev, a firm ally of the Empire. The frozen steppes of Kislev form the most direct route for any overland invasion by the marauding tribes of the north, and if the Kislevites cannot hold back an invading army then the province of Ostland invariably receives the brunt of the attack. Indeed, some incursions seem to deliberately avoid the cities and roving cavalry patrols of Kislev, intent on ravaging the rich lands of the south – a far greater prize. The capital Wolfenburg, as well as Volganof, Kol-

## OSTLANDER CHARACTERS

To reflect their stubborn nature, and long enmity against the forces of Chaos, Ostlander characters have the following racial abilities:

- ✦ **Stubborn:** Ostlanders' mental characteristics are considered to be one higher for the purposes of determining whether that characteristic is distressed.
- ✦ **Fighters Against Chaos:** Ostlanders treat the difficulty of all Fear ratings of foes aligned to Chaos as 1 less than normal (to a minimum of 1). In addition, the Terror ratings of foes aligned to Chaos are treated as Fear ratings instead (but do not have their rating reduced).
- ✦ **Diversity:** At character creation, Ostlanders begin with 25 creation points.
- ✦ **Wound Threshold:** 9 + Toughness rating
- ✦ **Corruption Threshold:** 5 + Toughness rating

lengrad and Ferlangen have all been besieged at one time or other. Truly it can be said that Ostland is one of the provinces that form the front line in the defence of the Empire.

Yet invasion from the north is not the only concern for the men of Ostland. Much of the land is covered by the Forest of Shadows, a forbidding, haunted place filled with raiders, bandits and Chaos warbands – in fact it is said that there are more brigands than trees. The province is also overshadowed by the Middle Mountains, which while technically are largely within Ostland's borders, are in fact considered more or less enemy territory. This range of jagged peaks is surrounded by impenetrable forest, and the rocky uplands are perilous in the extreme, and in its furthest reaches stand the towers and walls of the Brass Keep – once an Imperial fortress, now in the hands of the warriors of Chaos.

Little wonder then that the Ostlanders are grim folk and proudly stubborn as the bull that adorns their flag. Their armies defend the borders clad in stark black and white livery, and are led by the fierce Elector Count Valmir von Raukov – a man who exemplifies the virtue of defiance in the face of any odds.

## REGIONAL CHARACTERISTIC RATINGS

Slight regional differences aside, humans are characteristically the same throughout the Empire. The default characteristic ratings of Reiklander humans are listed in the *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay* Core Product on Table 3-1. These same ratings should be used when generating human characters from any of the provinces listed in this book.

Similarly, besides a few minor distinctions, a dwarf is a dwarf no matter what stronghold he calls home. The default characteristic ratings listed for Azgaraz dwarfs in the Core Product on Table 3-1 should be used when generating dwarf characters from any of the strongholds listed in this book.



## OSTERMARK CHARACTERS

To reflect their experience fighting monsters and defending the Empire, Ostermark characters have the following racial abilities:

- + **Monster Slayers:** Ostermarkers gain ☐ to all *Melee Attacks* or *Ranged Attacks*, or *Spells* or *Blessings* that target the defence of any creature with a Fear or Terror rating.
- + **Stoic Defenders:** Add ☐ to all *Melee Attacks* or *Ranged Attacks*, or *Spells* or *Blessings* that target the defence of an Ostermarker whenever he is outnumbered.
- + **Diversity:** At character creation, Ostermarkers begin with 25 creation points.
- + **Wound Threshold:** 9 + Toughness rating
- + **Corruption Threshold:** 5 + Toughness rating



## MEN OF OSTERMARK

The people of Ostermark have strong ties with Kislevites from the lands to the north and have marched to their aid on many occasions when Chaos worshipping tribes have rampaged southwards intent on spilling blood in the name of the dark gods. Like neighbouring Ostland, Ostermark forms a vital part of the Empire's frontier against invasion from the north.

This rural province is a sombre place with a long history of warfare and disaster. To the south lies the cursed land of Sylvania, erstwhile home of the infamous Vampire Counts, and the terrible Mannfred von Carstein was finally defeated in Ostermark at the Battle of Hel Fenn.

The realm features bleak moors and endless, fog-shrouded marshes, where entire armies have been lost, never to be seen again. Rumours abound of ghouls, skaven, and even stranger creatures lurking within the damp mists, and that whole farmsteads and villages have vanished without a trace. While many of these stories are undoubtedly fanciful exaggerations, there is surely an element of truth, for the province is bounded by the towering Worlds Edge Mountains – home of slaving monsters and countless foul creatures. These terrors often roam down into the lands of Ostermark, forcing the people to defend their homes. The State Troops of Ostermark, clad in reddish purple and yellow or white, have faced

wyverns, ogres and giants, while the province's banner bears the emblem of a mantichore, slain, according to legend, by the very first Elector Count of Ostermark.



## MEN OF HOCHLAND

The province of Hochland is swathed in the eastern marches of the Drakwald Forest and its northern border comprise of the foothills of the dangerous Middle Mountains, a mighty range of peaks that harbour many vile and terrible creatures right in the heart of the Empire. Under the dark canopy of the trees, roads theoretically connect the far-flung towns and logging camps, but contact is tenuous at best. The vast tracts of wilderness that separate villages are full of savage beastmen, goblin tribes and other dangers. A series of forts, watchtowers, armoured shrines and fortified coaching houses dot the forest highways, and patrols of road wardens regularly march or ride the routes between. However, any journey is perilous and there is often time for just a single volley before foes are upon you. As such, Hochlanders tend to become top-notch marksmen and learn to make each shot count. Their armies, clad in the state colours of red and green, often include many handgunner regiments, and many of the Hochlanders who travel south hope to find work of a similar fashion.

The Hochland long rifle was developed by an Imperial engineer from the accurate weapons used by the hunters of the province. Known properly as Leon Todmeister's Fantabulously Far-reaching Harquebus of Unforseeable and Unperceived Bereavement, the gun has become the bane of enemy generals and unit commanders,

## HOCHLANDER CHARACTERS

To reflect experience of the dangers of the forest, Hochlander characters have the following racial abilities:

- + **Rustic Composure:** Hochlanders gain ☐☐ on initiative checks when in a rural setting.
- + **Marksmen:** When a Hochlander spends a fortune point on a Ballistic Skill check with a weapon with which he is specialised, he adds ☐ to the check instead of ☐.
- + **Diversity:** At character creation, Hochlanders begin with 25 creation points.
- + **Wound Threshold:** 9 + Toughness rating
- + **Corruption Threshold:** 5 + Toughness rating



its firer being able to single them out even within a regiment of troops thanks to the excellent precision and magnifying telescopic apparatus mounted on the barrel. The Hochlanders are suitably proud of the invention and have often put it to good use. When the provincial capital of Hergig was threatened by a sudden attack of massed goblin tribes, sharpshooting engineers on the highest towers targeted the goblin leaders with the biggest profusion of banners and feathers, as well as aiming for the eyes of the gargantuan spider that spearheaded the assault. The enemy quickly fell into disarray, and were soundly beaten when a relief force arrived from the nearby Count's castle.



## MEN OF TALABECLAND

The province of Talabecland is so called after Taal, god of beasts and wild places. It is an appropriate name, as most of the realm is covered by the ancient boughs of the Great Forest. Though large tracts have been cleared to form farmland, many of the felled trees have necessarily been used to build sturdy palisades, designed to keep the fierce creatures of the woods at bay. Despite the dangers of the forest, the sparse population has a strong affinity with nature and the wild. Talabeclanders are at home camping, tracking and hunting, although they are always vigilant and sure to post enough guards and watchmen.

Worship of Taal is especially prevalent in the province, among its citizens as well as visiting travellers – it is considered good luck to cross the wide River Talabec, and army regiments will often dip

### TALABECLANDER CHARACTERS

To reflect their association with Taal, god of the wild, Talabeclander characters have the following racial abilities:

- + **Lore of the Wild:** When a Talabeclander spends a fortune point on a Nature Lore check, he adds   to the check instead of  .
- + **Trackers:** Talabeclanders add   to all Observation checks made in a rural environment.
- + **Diversity:** At character creation, Talabeclanders begin with 25 creation points.
- + **Wound Threshold:** 9 + Toughness rating
- + **Corruption Threshold:** 5 + Toughness rating

their banners or weapon tips into the waters to gain Taal's blessing. The State Troops often bear the image of a stag or a tree on their banners, both symbols of Taal.

The capital of the province is Talabheim, a city state in its own right, situated within the bowl of a massive crater. The crater edges have been built up into high bastions that make the city one of the best protected in the Empire. The city's troops wear red and white livery, while the armies of the wider province wear striking red and yellow.

While it is largely surrounded by the other provinces, Talabecland has its share of hostile threats. Beastmen lurk in the forests and the Barren Hills that lie north of Kemperbad are riddled with skaven warrens.



## MEN OF STIRLAND

Stirland is the poorest province of the Empire, a situation not helped by their most fertile lands being given away to the halflings, centuries ago when the Moot was formed (which still causes bitterness and resentment). The Stirlanders are rustic people, and their strange customs and old-fashioned ways are the cause for many a sneer and snide comment from the citizens of Reikland and other more progressive provinces. Their pronounced accents and collo-

### STIRLANDER CHARACTERS

To reflect their battles with the restless dead of Sylvania, Stirlander characters have the following racial abilities:

- + **Poor:** During character creation, it costs 3 creation points for a Stirlander to start as comfortable, and 4 to start as affluent.
- + **Unflinching:** Stirlanders treat the difficulty of all Fear ratings of undead as 1 less than normal (to a minimum of 1). In addition, the Terror ratings of undead are treated as Fear ratings instead (but do not have their rating reduced).
- + **Hatred of Undead:** Stirlanders gain the Invigorated condition whenever they are within long range of undead.
- + **Diversity:** At character creation, Stirlanders begin with 25 creation points.
- + **Wound Threshold:** 9 + Toughness rating
- + **Corruption Threshold:** 5 + Toughness rating



quial phrases mean that travellers from Stirland find themselves endlessly repeating their words just to be understood by other people of the Empire.

Their armies tend to be equipped mostly with those weapons that are cheap and easy to produce, particularly spears and bows. However, they excel with these arms, and make proficient hunters besides. The provincial colours of green and yellow are often worn only in a token fashion, and uniforms are usually patched and mended many times. A hunting horn adorns many shields and the state banner, and its bearers fight all the harder to dispel any assumptions that Stirlanders are in any way inferior.

The realm of Sylvania is technically part of Stirland. However, this cursed land was blighted by the Vampire Counts of old and to this day the dead do not rest easy there. During the terrible wars against these dark lords, huge undead armies decimated the farms, villages and towns of the province and the fallen only swelled the numbers of the shambling hordes. The population of Stirland remains rightly fearful of the walking dead, but is at least hardened to the evil of their existence. When mouldering zombies and ravening crypt ghouls stalk the lands, the brave Stirlanders stand ready to face the horror that assails them.



## MEN OF MIDDENLAND

Middenland is the land of Ulric, god of winter, wolves and battles, an ancient warrior-god who predates the birth of Sigmar. All those who travel here offer up a prayer lest they fall foul of the vicious white wolves that roam the land. These creatures are sacred to Ulric, and his icon takes the form of one of these ferocious beasts. Middenland is the centre of Ulrican worship, and his great temple is located in the capital, Middenheim.

The realm is wide and covered by the dark, perilous Drakwald Forest. In fact, a large part of Middenland used to be the separate province of Drakwald. However this land was lost during the time of the Black Plague over a thousand years ago, with almost the entire population wiped out by disease. The province was formally divided up between Middenland and Nordland, but has never really been reclaimed. Towns and villages lie ruined and overgrown deep within the dense trees, ruled only by the beastmen.

Beastmen seem to be especially numerous within the Drakwald Forest and are a major threat to the people of Middenland. These savage man-hating mutants are not content with lurking under the eaves, and regularly pour out of the forest in frenzied hordes to tear down human settlements and feast on the torn flesh of the fallen. Isolated farms and outposts maintain high walls and a careful watch, while the forest roads are heavily patrolled – but the danger is always there. Middenlanders have learned to be wary, and are well-practiced in battles with the accursed half-beasts.

## MIDDENLANDER CHARACTERS

To reflect their constant battles with the beastmen of the Drakwald Forest and their close ties to Ulric, Middenlander characters have the following racial abilities:

- + **Spirit of the Wolf:** Once per session, when targeted by an attack, a Middenlander may increase his defence value by an amount equal to his Agility.
- + **Slayers of Beastmen:** All of a Middenlander's *Melee Attacks* or *Ranged Attacks*, or *Spells* or *Blessings* that target the defence of a beastman gains:  
⚔⚔ +2 damage
- + **Diversity:** At character creation, Middenlanders begin with 25 creation points.
- + **Wound Threshold:** 9 + Toughness rating
- + **Corruption Threshold:** 5 + Toughness rating

Only Middenheim, seat of Elector Count Graf Boris Todbringer, offers a reliable haven against the beastmen. This great city state is built atop a huge pinnacle of rock that rises up out of the trees, and is only accessible by long viaducts or hair-raising lifts. The armies of Middenland customarily wear blue, while those from the capital are differentiated in blue and white. The province is also famously home to the fierce Knights of the White Wolf.



## MEN OF AVERLAND

Averland is one of the wealthier provinces of the Empire. This is largely thanks to the fact that the domain is far less forested than it is further north, and the climate is less unkind. These advantages make it easier to farm the land and have provided Averland with a flourishing trade in breeding fine horses. The province's affluence means its armies are often clad in gleaming armour, equipped with the latest innovations in weaponry, and adorned with outlandish feathers and decoration on their yellow and black livery.

The main route into the Empire from the south – Black Fire Pass, which leads through the mountains from the lands of the Border Princes – winds down through the foothills into Averland. This is the route taken by many invasion forces into the Empire, and so the province has formed the front line against attack on innumerable occasions. Mighty fortresses and watchtowers guard the end of the pass, but there have been times when these defences were overwhelmed and marauding hordes have poured through into the



## AVERLANDER CHARACTERS

To reflect the incessant orc and goblin attacks into their province and the fine horses bred in their lands, Averlander characters have the following racial abilities:

- + **Greenskinners:** Each time an Averlander kills a non-henchman greenskin, he may recover either 1 stress or 1 fatigue or may perform a free manoeuvre.
- + **Superior Stock:** The Strength score of any horse ridden by an Averlander is increased by 1.
- + **Diversity:** At character creation, Averlanders begin with 25 creation points.
- + **Wound Threshold:** 9 + Toughness rating
- + **Corruption Threshold:** 5 + Toughness rating

heartlands of the Empire. Most notable was the terrible invasion in 1707 led by Gorbad Ironclaw, the greatest orc warlord in history. Gorbad's armies rampaged and ravaged the lands of the Empire, and he was only stopped after his attempt to besiege and sack Altdorf failed. The entire province of Solland was wiped from the map, and the disinherited nobles of that land settled in Averland, whose banner now bears their icon, a stylized sun, in memory of those terrible events.

The greenskins have proved a grave threat time and again, and Averlanders have developed a particular loathing for these war-mongering brutes. In 2420, the goblin chieftain Grom led another massive invasion that swept across the Empire, and a recent incursion saw the Elector Count Marius Leitdorf slain, and the invaders were only thrown back by the intervention of the Emperor himself.



## MEN OF WISSENLAND

After the orc warlord Gorbad Ironclaw's invasion in the year 1707, the devastated lands of the province of Solland became part of Wissenland. It should be noted that certain descendants of the exiled Solland nobles, who fled and settled in Averland, still harbour a bitter resentment over their lost family estates and dream of refounding the lost province. The Wissenlanders themselves also suffered terribly at the hands of the greenskins, and their numbers have never entirely recovered. As a result, the province today is sparsely populated and is dotted with hundreds of abandoned, ruined and burnt out villages, farmsteads and towns. More recent invasions by orcs, goblins and other attackers out of the Black Mountains have

## WISSENLANDER CHARACTERS

To reflect the devastating attacks upon their province, Wissenlander characters have the following racial abilities:

- + **Devout:** After resolving an action in which a Wissenlander spent one or more fortune point, roll . If the result is a , the Wissenlander gains 1 fortune point.
- + **Grim:** When performing an action, a Wissenlander ignores the first that is not canceled by a , before triggering any bane effects.
- + **Diversity:** At character creation, Wissenlanders begin with 25 creation points.
- + **Wound Threshold:** 9 + Toughness rating
- + **Corruption Threshold:** 5 + Toughness rating

kept the province on the back foot, and its population is constantly rebuilding shattered towns, repairing defences and re-seeding ravaged farmland.

Such a grim existence has led Wissenlanders to cling to religion for succour in their time of hardship. They have become devout worshippers of the entire pantheon of gods of the Empire. Shrines and temples are well maintained (or at least the first things to be rebuilt after an attack), and priests can always find willing ears to listen to the divine words of their cult. Warrior Priests are a common sight in the province, stirring the Wissenlanders to defend what remains of their homes and instilling the fires of vengeance and fury.

Many lose all hope and ultimately lose their sanity in the face of so much war and hopelessness. These poor souls abandon their squalid lives to join the roving bands of flagellants. These doom-filled fanatics wander the land, seeking penitence in the fires of battle. They hurl themselves at the enemy in a lunatic frenzy – utterly convinced that the end of the world has arrived.



## MEN OF NORDLAND

The northernmost province of the Empire is the only one with a substantial coastline. The icy Sea of Claws lies beyond its shores, and a chill wind blows off the waves and through the snowbound forests. Strange monsters lurk beneath the waters, but that is not the worst threat that comes from the sea. When the northern tribes of Chaos-worshipping marauders and iron clad warriors invade the lands of the south, oftentimes they will bypass the realm of Kislev



## NORDLANDER CHARACTERS

To reflect their knowledge of ocean lore and acclimatisation to the icy cold, Nordlander characters have the following racial abilities:

- ✦ **Nautical:** Nordlanders add ☐ to any check made to handle a boat, navigate a ship, swim, or work with ropes.
- ✦ **Northerners:** Two fewer ☐ misfortune dice are added to a Nordlander's dice pool for any effects from cold, wind or bad weather.
- ✦ **Diversity:** At character creation, Nordlanders begin with 25 creation points.
- ✦ **Wound Threshold:** 9 + Toughness rating
- ✦ **Corruption Threshold:** 5 + Toughness rating

completely by constructing a fleet of longships. Seaborne incursions are a major issue for there are hundreds of miles of cliffs and beaches, and little warning as the dark sails appear looming out of the fog.

Consequently the coast is lined with watchtowers and sea fortresses, manned with stern-faced regiments, and mounted shore-guards patrol in between. Systems of warning beacons and fast riders are maintained ready to raise the alarm whenever enemy ships are sighted. Time is of the essence, for once an invasion force has made landfall, it can easily disappear into the cold forests and become a much greater problem to deal with. The armies of Nordland, clad in blue and yellow uniforms, are often forced to trudge through knee-deep snow as their scouts attempt to locate warbands that have slipped inland.

Nordland has its own navy that, for the most part, patrols the Sea of Claws to intercept enemy ships or bring early warning of large invasion fleets. As a result, Nordlanders are far more familiar with boats, ropes and nautical matters than the average Empire citizen, and it is common for young adults to serve time on board ship before taking up their chosen profession.

## DWARFS OF ZHUFBAR

Zhufbar lies within the Worlds Edge Mountains, overlooking the Empire province of Stirland, and north of the huge upland lake known as Black Water, or Varn Drazh in the dwarfish tongue. The dwarf hold is built in a deep chasm, into which a raging torrent from the lake cascades. The tumultuous waterfall is channelled into cunningly built culverts and flow-pipes to drive hundreds of waterwheels. These in turn operate enormous drop hammers, ore crushers, and steam bellows, driving the industry of the dwarfs as they process and smelt the precious ore mined near Varn Drazh. After much toil and expertise handed down through generations, exquisite items made from the priceless meteoric iron are completed – impregnable suits of armour and mighty rune-forged weapons. These go to the stout armies that defend the lower tunnels against skaven and goblins, or are traded on to other dwarf strongholds.

Zhufbar has long represented the best of dwarf engineering, guarding the ancient knowledge and techniques of their ancestors. The city contains the principle shrine of the dwarf Guild of Engineers, and is a centre for metalworking and industry of every kind. Although the beardedlings sometimes display a desire to experiment and innovate, their elders ensure that the old ways are learnt and treasured, lest they be lost for all time.

Not surprising then, that a dwarf born and raised in Zhufbar invariably has an innate mechanical expertise and a talent for building things, not to mention a love of fine craftsmanship and a loathing for shoddy, rushed workmanship. A common saying among Zhufbar dwarfs goes: 'If a job's worth doing, it's worth doing slowly.'

## DWARFS OF BARAK VARR

Barak Varr is found to the south of the Empire, beyond the Black Mountains, where two mighty rivers converge and open out into the sea known as the Black Gulf. Uniquely in the entire dwarf realm, it is a sea port, carved out from the towering cliffs to form a series of vast underground harbours and docks, as well as the caverns and tunnels that form the rest of the city. The stone piers and quays bristle with cannons to defend against attacks from the sea, while the dwarf armies patrol inland, warding off raiding orcs and goblins from the Badlands to the south. This provides an invaluable barrier between the greenskin tribes and the frontier kingdoms of Border Princes to the north.

The dwarfs' sea-going fleet is based here, though dwarfs are not fond of the ocean and consequently their vessels are quite unlike those of other races. They are heavily fortified against both enemy

## ZHUFBAR DWARF CHARACTERS

To reflect their innate aptitude for engineering and proud dwarf traditions, Zhufbar dwarf characters have the following racial abilities:

- ✦ **Natural Engineers:** During character creation, a Zhufbar dwarf may train one of the following basic skills for free – Discipline or Resilience. Alternatively a Zhufbar dwarf may acquire (but not train) the advanced skill Tradecraft for free. If you have access to *Black Fire Pass*, a Zhufbar dwarf may instead acquire (but not train) the advanced skill Dwarf Engineering for free.
- ✦ **Grudge:** A Zhufbar dwarf gains ☐ to all *Melee Attack* and *Ranged Attack* actions against greenskins, and any target that has wounded him. This bonus lasts until the end of the encounter.
- ✦ **Sturdy:** A Zhufbar dwarf adds 5 to his encumbrance limit.
- ✦ **Night Vision:** Two fewer ☐ misfortune dice are added to a dwarf's dice pool for any effects from darkness or lack of sufficient light.
- ✦ **Wound Threshold:** 10 + Toughness rating
- ✦ **Corruption Threshold:** 10 + Toughness rating



## BARAK VARR DWARF CHARACTERS

To reflect their cosmopolitan outlook and mercantile experience, Barak Varr dwarf characters have the following racial abilities:

- + **Born Traders:** During character creation, Barak Varr dwarfs may train one of the following basic skills for free – Charm, Discipline or Resilience. In addition, when a Barak Varr dwarf makes a successful Charm or Guile check when haggling, add **+** to the results pool.
- + **Grudge:** A Barak Varr dwarf gains **+** to all *Melee Attack* and *Ranged Attack* actions against greenskins, and any target that has wounded him. This bonus lasts until the end of the encounter.
- + **Sturdy:** A Barak Varr dwarf adds 5 to his encumbrance limit.
- + **Night Vision:** Two fewer **■** misfortune dice are added to a dwarf's dice pool for any effects from darkness or lack of sufficient light.
- + **Wound Threshold:** 10 + Toughness rating
- + **Corruption Threshold:** 10 + Toughness rating

attack and the elements themselves, and are powered by coal-fired steam engines instead of sails, in order to rely on the weather as little as possible.

Barak Varr is a great trade centre, not just with the other holds but also with the wider world, and as such is one of the most open, cosmopolitan dwarf cities. Traders from across the world bring goods from every realm, including Bretonnia and Estalia, Tilea and Araby, and even exotic items from Ind and Cathay. The merchandise is then transported inland, to the dwarf capital or through the Black Fire Pass into the Empire of men.

After a lifetime surrounded by commerce and trade, any dwarf that harks from Barak Varr is a stony-faced expert at haggling a good price, and has the contacts to obtain the rarest of goods.

## DWARFS OF KARAZ-A-KARAK

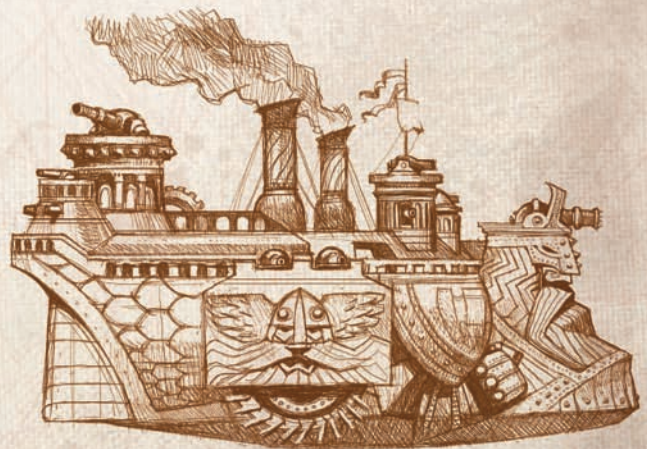
Karaz-a-Karak is the mighty capital of the entire dwarf empire. Its towering halls are carved out deep in the heart of the Worlds Edge Mountains, an impregnable fortress-city that has never fallen, even as the rest of the realm slowly crumbles. It is the seat of the High King of the dwarfs, who rules from a vast throne vault the size of a human town, wielding the full might of the dwarfen armies. Ornatly carved pillars and statues line the walls and elaborate mirror systems reflect shafts of light from above. The noble clans that dwell here have long and proud histories, and can trace their ancestries back for thousands of years – a fact which earns them great respect from dwarfs of other holds whose family line dates back mere centuries. Many are the guardians of ancient artefacts and rune-etched relics whose secrets of manufacture are long forgotten.

## KARAZ-A-KARAK DWARF CHARACTERS

To reflect their pride and serious nature, Karaz-a-Karak dwarf characters have the following racial abilities:

- + **Eternal Grudge:** A Karaz-a-Karak dwarf gains **+** to all *Melee Attack* and *Ranged Attack* actions against greenskins, and any individual that has ever wounded, taunted or insulted him. A Karaz-a-Karak dwarf may choose to suffer stress in order to add additional **+** to the dice pool of any such action. For each stress suffered in this way, add **+** to the dice pool.
- + **Proud and Strong:** A Karaz-a-Karak dwarf ignores the first point of stress and the first point of fatigue suffered each session.
- + **Sturdy:** A Karaz-a-Karak dwarf adds 5 to his encumbrance limit.
- + **Night Vision:** Two fewer **■** misfortune dice are added to a dwarf's dice pool for any effects from darkness or lack of sufficient light.
- + **Wound Threshold:** 10 + Toughness rating
- + **Corruption Threshold:** 10 + Toughness rating

Here can be found the high temples of the ancestor-gods Grungni, Grimnir and Valaya. Here too is kept the Great Book of Grudges, wherein is written every wrong, sleight, broken oath or outright attack against the dwarf people. For the dwarfs are bitter and grudgeful, and none more so than clansfolk of Karaz-a-Karak, who nurture the memory of every last misdeed until vengeance is exacted. It is considered woefully shameful for a dwarf of Karaz-a-Karak to go to his grave and pass a long list of grudges on to his sons and daughters. What exactly constitutes a long list is debatable, but certainly includes anything over an entire bookful. Consequently dwarfs of the capital are famously quick to anger and seize upon any perceived insult with rage and threats (at the very least) of violence.







## CHAPTER THREE

# EXPANDED RULES

Hero's Call introduces a selection of new rules to expand your Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay experience. Some of the rules listed in this chapter are optional and are clearly indicated as such by the word "optional" in the section header for that rule.

### TIERED CAREERS BY TRAIT (OPTIONAL)

Each career includes a trait that suggests its relative status and prestige, which effectively breaks them into five distinct tiers. As an optional rule, GMs may enforce some or all of these ranks as restrictions for entering the career: a character must have attained the requisite character rank before entering a career of a given rank.

Tiered careers may be introduced at two levels of impact. At the **strict** level, each career rank is restricted to characters of at least that character rank. At the **relaxed** level (recommended), only the **Elite** and **Heroic** careers are restricted by character rank.

**Basic** careers are available to all characters Rank 1 and above.

**Intermediate** careers become available at Rank 2.

**Advanced** careers become available at Rank 3.

**Elite** careers become available at Rank 4.

**Heroic** careers become available at Rank 5.

### NEW ACTION CARD, TALENT CARD, AND OTHER RULES

There are a number of additional considerations for action & talent cards in this expansion.

### THE EPIC TRAIT

Some action and talent cards have the **Epic** trait. These cards are very powerful and intended for high-level characters, and may not be acquired or used by characters below Rank 4.

The **Epic** trait also appears on party sheets and enemies. In all cases, the trait indicates that the component in question is intended for the higher tier of play and should not normally be available to PCs before Rank 4.



Game Masters are advised to keep this in mind when choosing actions for NPCs and monsters, and to use **Epic** action cards sparingly, especially when the PCs are not yet **Epic** themselves. As a rule of thumb, GMs may wish to use **Epic** trait actions and talents only with **Nemesis** NPCs or with **Epic** threats.

## INHERENT DIFFICULTY

Some action cards – particularly **Epic** action cards – have an additional difficulty modifier in the form of results symbols, rather than dice. These results symbols are simply added directly into the results pool, as if they had been rolled on dice. For example, an action card might have a modifier of **◆** **■** **✖** **☠**; this means that **◆** **■** is added to the dice pool, and that **✖** **☠** is added to the results pool after dice are rolled. (It can be helpful, but is not necessary, to add dice showing the relevant challenge and bane symbols to the pool after the dice are rolled as a reminder when resolving the check. If you do, it is important to remember that these results symbols are not actually present on any die, they cannot be “rerolled” by any effect that would ordinarily allow it, nor can they be ignored by effects that allow dice to be ignored.)

## NEW ORDER & FAITH CARDS

*Hero's Call* includes a full selection of new Order and Faith cards for wizard and priest characters. These additional Order and Faith cards are new, bonus talents that are available only to wizard and priest characters of the appropriate order or faith.

These talents may be purchased like any other talent, and once acquired the character may exchange the Order or Faith card in his appropriate talent slot just like any other talent (by spending a manoeuvre). In essence, he gains 2 Order or Faith abilities that he may swap between whenever he likes. It should be noted however that these new Order and Faith cards also possess the **Epic** trait, and may not be acquired or used by characters below Rank 4.

The stance meter on the original Order or Faith talent remains in full effect as long as the PC remains in a wizard or priest career; it does not have to be his active Order or Faith talent.

## THE "ANY" SOCKET

Some high-ranking career sheets feature an “any” talent socket. This socket follows the same rules as the other talent slots except that any focus, reputation, or tactic talent card can be socketed into it.

## ENHANCE CARDS

**Enhance** cards are a special subset of action cards that are used to make existing actions better. They are acquired and learned just like other action cards, but can only be played in concert with another action – one that can be enhanced by the card in question.

When playing an **Enhance**, the active player first announces his action and his target, then announces and plays his **Enhance** card while assembling his dice pool. When he does this, he may remove dice from his dice pool to trigger specific bonuses to his action. Up to 1 die of the appropriate type to fill each “slot” on the **Enhance** card may be removed; for example, if a card has a Fortune die slot, a Characteristic die slot, and an Expertise die slot, the player may choose to remove up to 1 each of Fortune, Characteristic, and

## ENHANCE CARDS

ACTION TYPE



DIFFICULTY

EFFECTS

Enhance cards have many features in common with other action cards. The differences are noted below:

**Action Type.** Enhance cards are represented by a comet icon.

**Difficulty.** Any additional dice to be added to the parent action's dice pool when using this enhance.

**Effect.** The enhance cards's game effects are listed here.

Expertise dice from his dice pool. For each die that is removed in this way, the corresponding specific effect from the **Enhance** card is triggered if the action is successful.

Each action may only be enhanced by one **Enhance** card.

**Enhance** cards are always considered successfully played if their “parent” action is successful. If the “parent” action fails, then so does the **Enhance** card.

**Enhance** cards are considered action cards in all respects, except as noted above.


## SKILL MASTERY

Ordinarily, characters may only train a maximum of 3 ranks in a given skill, adding up to 3 expertise dice to the dice pool. Characters of at least Rank 4 may train a fourth rank in a skill, but this rank does not add an additional expertise die. No character may ever add more than 3 expertise dice to a dice pool from skill training (additional expertise dice may still be added from other effects). Rather, the fourth rank of skill training is referred to as **Mastery** in that skill. A character that has Mastered a skill gains the following benefits to checks using that skill (in addition to the 3 expertise dice added by his prior 3 ranks of training):



- ✦ The character is not obligated to roll for **Simple (0d)** or **Easy (1d)** checks unless those checks target an enemy character. Should the character opt not to roll, assume the results are a single success with no other effects.
- ✦ The character may choose to remove all of his expertise dice from the pool before the roll and replace them with a single Sigmar's Comet result – he can simply place one of the dice on the table showing its comet face. (If the character has already removed 1 or more expertise dice – for example to use an **Enhance** – he must still have at least 1 expertise die in the pool to remove to trigger this ability of Mastery.)

## HEROIC DIFFICULTIES

Truly potent heroes can attempt feats beyond the abilities of mere mortals. In addition to tasks that are simply daunting, heroic tasks are true longshots, one-in-a-million chances, and legendary feats of strength. No one should expect to succeed at a heroic task, but if fortune smiles on a character and he is successful, he can expect to live on in song and story. Only characters with exceptional characteristics and training have any realistic chance of succeeding at a heroic task. A heroic task adds five purple challenge dice  to the dice pool and may be listed as a **Heroic (5d)** check.

## FURTHER COMPLICATIONS (OPTIONAL)

Heroes can accomplish great things...but they can also fail spectacularly. As tasks exceed the **Daunting (4d)** level of difficulty, they become more dangerous, more difficult, and carry higher consequences for failure. As more purple challenge dice are added to a roll, there is a greater chance that the check will result in one or more ✧ Chaos Stars. To further increase the challenge of high-difficulty tasks, GMs may consider the following special rules for ✧ Chaos Stars on checks with more than 4 purple challenge dice or checks with 4 purple challenge dice and at least 1 black misfortune die.

- ✦ In addition to their effects as ✧ Chaos Stars, GMs may treat ✧ as ✕.
- ✦ If the check generates 4 or more ✧ Chaos Stars, the check automatically fails regardless of the number of ✨ successes rolled. Additionally, there may be other narrative or mechanical effects based on the ✧ Chaos Stars. There are no guarantees at Heroic difficulty!

These changes will make heroic checks slightly more difficult than they would be otherwise, so they remain appropriately challenging even for powerful Rank 4 and 5 PCs.

## EXTENDED CHALLENGES

High-level characters that are both personally and socially powerful may find themselves undertaking tasks and facing challenges that are epic in scope and scale. Heroes may launch themselves from a mountaintop to swing an axe at a dragon's neck or unravel the secrets of an ancient tome written in an alien tongue while daemons claw at the door. Fortunately, the existing dice and game mechanics are entirely able to represent such immediate and short-term events and tasks.

However, some heroes may find themselves attempting tasks of enormous complexity that play out over a period of time. A character of notable military rank may be responsible for leading an army against an orc Waaagh!, a crime lord may wage a sustained underworld campaign to consolidate his hold on the lotus trade in Altdorf, or a magistrate might run for an election in a friedstadt (or engage in a bribery campaign to ensure a post). Such a series of events and challenges, all part of a larger mission, could form the core of an adventure in its own right. However, some GMs – especially those with groups in which many characters have similar long-term ambitions – may want to resolve these challenges with a single die roll.

Extended challenge dice rolls can be resolved just like any other check in the WFRP game. However, the construction of the dice pool for such a check is where things get interesting!

Most dice pools are constructed by considering various factors such as characteristics, inherent difficulty, skill training and specialisation, and then various circumstances represented by fortune and misfortune dice. However, that is not the only way a dice pool can be assembled, no more than dice rolls can only be used to resolve skill or characteristic checks.

The same system could be used to, for example, model a game of skuttles (a game similar to skittles, played with skulls and common in the seedier parts of Ubersreik) between two teams. The teams assemble dice pools, a single characteristic die representing each character, and then roll competitive checks against one another. The GM allows the two players (one on each team) with training in Athletics to adopt a stance and convert their individual characteristic die to a stance die. He also awards the team with the “home court” advantage a fortune die and gives the away team a misfortune die after the home team captain explains that he has hired some hooligans in the crowd to “cause some trouble” whenever the





away team is attempting to bowl. Finally, the away team brings in a ringer, noted skuttles player and 3-time All Reikland Champion Ludo Lightfinger. The GM decides that Ludo is worth an expertise die, rather than a characteristic die. Once assembled, the two dice pools are rolled to represent the entire skuttles match, and the results of both checks are compared to determine the winner and any other effects of the day's play. (As it happens, Ludo's expertise die generates a Sigmar's Comet, so the GM rules that Ludo shares a number of useful pointers with the rest of the team, giving them all the "skuttles" specialisation for Athletics for free.)

Once dice are decoupled from representing only the abilities and skills of a single person, any number of large and involved tasks, often including multiple people, can be modelled using dice. A dice pool can be constructed over the course of an entire play session or even adventure, the GM adding good and bad dice to the pool to represent the flow of events and successes or failures in various sub-tasks. What follows are a number of suggestions as to what else the WFRP dice can represent when assembling a dice pool and several examples of using this system in-game.

## CHARACTERISTIC DICE ◆

Characteristic dice form the basis of the dice pool. For the sake of simplicity, only one of the options below should be used.

- ✦ A unit of manpower, whether that represents a person, a military unit, a gang of thieves, or a well-read broadsheet publisher and his staff acting on behalf of the active character. In this case, adding additional characteristic dice gradually over the course of the story may be the thrust of an encounter or adventure.

- ✦ The active character's natural talent or potential in the arena in question (perhaps based on the active character's characteristic). In this case, the characteristic dice are probably added all at once at the beginning and form the starting point for the narrative of building the dice pool.
- ✦ A single piece of evidence or other basic building-block of an argument or long-term campaign (unit of building materials when constructing something, volume of an encyclopaedia gathered, etc.).

## STANCE DICE ● & ●

Stance dice should still be swapped out for characteristic dice, but not necessarily based on the active character's stance. It may even be possible to have both Reckless and Conservative dice in the same pool.

- ✦ A special or unique unit of manpower with a clear penchant for a given stance, such as a military unit of troll slayers, an infamous cat-burglar known for meticulously planning his crimes, or a truly "yellow" brand of "journalist."
- ✦ A reflection of the overall demeanour or stance of the active character, perhaps as reflected by his choices over the course of the narrative. In this case, the active character may be presented with a series of choices on how to proceed, each choice changing the stance of one of his characteristic dice.

## CHALLENGE DICE ◆

These dice may represent the inherent difficulty of the task or specific impediments or obstacles that are accumulated in the same manner as characteristic dice. Note that challenge dice are more powerful than characteristic dice and should be added to the pool accordingly.

- ✦ A unit of manpower working against the active character, especially if the unit is more potent, skilled, or fearsome than that on the active character's side. For example, if the active character amasses a militia of lightly-armed peasants, the challenge dice may represent mobs of orcs.
- ✦ A reflection of the opposition's skill and talent, perhaps established by comparing characteristics as in an opposed test.
- ✦ A specific action or event triggered by an antagonistic agent, such as a powerful NPC. In most cases, these should be reflections of the failures or choices of the PCs (for example, if the PCs leave the valley to ask for help from the baron, they are not present to stop the villain desecrating the Temple of Sigmar). They can also serve to highlight the danger or power of a specific NPC.
- ✦ A specific challenge standing in the way of success or a vital step in a complex process, such as first gaining the right to speak in an accused heretic's defence, gathering enough evidence to acquit him, and then actually convincing the Witch Hunter and the crowd of his innocence.

## EXPERTISE DICE ■

These dice are extremely potent factors working in the active character's favour. Often, they should represent an important factor in the story and acquiring the necessary support to gain such





a die may be an entire episode or adventure in its own right. A GM may wish to specifically identify the availability of such a die beforehand, giving the PCs a medium-term goal to work towards while tackling the longer-term goal of the adventure.

- ✦ A specific, elite, and probably unique unit of manpower – a famous and skilled duellist, an elite unit of Knights Panther, or a major noble.
- ✦ A major benefit, potent enough to turn the entire course of the challenge – a fortified position, proof that the prosecution has manufactured key evidence in the case, or the official sanction of the Cult of Sigmar.

## FORTUNE DICE ☐

These dice represent circumstances or other minor benefits acting in the active character's favour. In most cases, they should be a reflection of player choice and action. Spending fortune points can also add fortune dice to the pool, but they should only be added just before the dice pool is rolled. In cases where the active character represents the entire party, the GM may wish to limit the party to spending 1 fortune point per PC (otherwise, the pool could easily be flooded with fortune dice).

- ✦ A favourable circumstance that the active character has arranged, such as timing his attack for just before dawn or arranging for a trial to be held in his hometown.

### DICE AND THE NARRATIVE

In the example given below, the GM is using the Extended Challenge to insert uncertainty into his narrative. He wants the hero players to know that the outcome of the trial is in doubt, despite their best efforts, and that in the Old World no one is safe – especially someone accused of heresy!

For some GMs, Otto's guilt or innocence is an established fact and the uncertainty arises from the trial itself. Such GMs generally like to plan things out in advance and have an idea (or, more usually several ideas) as to the direction the story will take. Other GMs may be happy to leave Otto's guilt or innocence up to the whims of the dice. These GMs find the WFRP dice a valuable roleplaying tool not only because of their ability to resolve conflicts, but also their ability to provide narrative prompts and sometimes take the story in unexpected directions. In short, some GMs use dice to reveal the narrative. Others may use dice to drive the narrative.

There's nothing wrong with either approach, and most GMs probably use some combination of the two. GMs of the former sort may be more reluctant to use Extended Challenges, as they have a plan for how certain circumstances are to proceed – it's the same sort of logic that says rather than roll to find a secret door necessary to the advancement of the plot, the PCs simply find it. But just like the secret door example, an Extended Challenge can still be of use even when the "outcome" has been decided beforehand. In this case, it's not the success or failure that's in doubt, but the quality of the success or failure.



- ✦ A minor unit of manpower or other benefit, such as a mounted messenger boy for a large battle or a map through a dangerous area.
- ✦ The actions of PCs during the moment of crisis - one acting as leader, another as messenger, etc. If the PCs can all describe how they assist in the overall struggle, they probably warrant a fortune die.

## MISFORTUNE DICE ☐






As usual, misfortune dice are the "dark twin" of fortune dice. Anything a fortune die can represent working in favour of the active character, misfortune dice can represent that same thing working in favour of the opposition (if any).

- ✦ An unfavourable circumstance working against the PCs. In most cases, they should be placed into the dice pool at the beginning of the challenge so the PCs know what they must overcome.
- ✦ An unintended side-effect of the PCs' efforts returning to haunt them, perhaps as the result of banes on checks or as failures in certain efforts.
- ✦ A new factor introduced either through the action of the opposition or the inaction or failure of the PCs.





### EXAMPLE OF AN EXTENDED CHALLENGE


*Otto Hilm, a friend of the PCs, has been accused of witchcraft and heresy by Herr Krieger, a Witch Hunter of great repute. His trial is three days away, and the PCs are well aware that given the standards of justice in the Empire and Herr Krieger's reputation, their friend is "guilty until proven innocent." They resolve to do what they can to exonerate Otto and speak for him on the day of the trial.*





The GM explains that they must acquire the right to speak on Otto's behalf in the trial, overcome Herr Krieger's evidence, and ultimately convince the Witch Hunter and (more importantly) the crowd of Otto's innocence. He places 3 purple dice    in the dice pool to represent the inherent difficulty of the task. He then adds 2 misfortune dice  , explaining that the crowd is eager to see a witch burning and that Herr Krieger enjoys a fearsome reputation. The PCs can now see the dice pool representing the challenge they must overcome and set about adding good dice to the pool.

The group decides to search for evidence to exonerate their friend, each solid piece represented by a blue characteristic die. Over the next three days of game time, the GM adds dice to the pool for the following reasons:

- + Birgitta, the roadwarden, visits the scene of the alleged crime and finds tracks that clearly belong to a peg-legged man; Otto has both his feet. Birgitta trusts that her status as a roadwarden in good standing will be sufficient to admit her testimony to the trial. 
- + Johann, the charlatan, cajoles a skilled actor into providing a (false) alibi for Otto during the time in question - quite the risky move if it is discovered! 
- + Erich, the priest of Sigmar, pleads his case with the local lector of Sigmar, explaining that Otto is a devout Sigmarite and couldn't possibly be a Chaos-worshipper. The lector extends his blessing on their endeavour and agrees to speak in Otto's defence at the trial. 
- + Gurni, the dwarf, attempts to intimidate Herr Krieger into backing off before the trial. His attempt fails, badly. 

+ Birgitta and Johann inquire with the local watch about the peg-legged man. They discover that a man matching that description was seen fleeing the town shortly after the crime occurred. 

+ Erich confers with Otto the evening before the trial and offers to lead the crowd in a prayer to Sigmar, during which Otto can make conspicuous shows of piety. 


+ As time grows short, Birgitta rides from the city in pursuit of the peg-legged man. If she can bring him back in time, it could be the key to Otto's freedom... 

Finally it is time for the trial. The group roleplays out the early stages of the trial, with the GM taking the opportunity to add a few more fortune and misfortune dice to the pool for good roleplaying. When it's time to reach a verdict, the dice pool is assembled...

...and the GM rolls! These are the results:

All the results cancel except for a single  Chaos Star... the GM cackles with glee as he describes the trial, during which the PCs almost manage to convince the crowd and Herr Krieger of Otto's innocence, but after Birgitta comes back from her hunt with a grim expression on her face and shaking her head, Otto shrugs and cries out in a twisted tongue! His skin rips open and the monster within is revealed...







## CHAPTER FOUR

# THE HIGH AND THE MIGHTY

As player characters grow in power, fame, and wealth, the GM's task to provide them with challenging encounters and scenarios becomes more difficult. At higher ranks, the game's scope widens, embroiling PCs in the affairs of entire realms rather than just towns or villages, and pitting them against the machinations of infamous arch-villains or the might of legendary monsters. This chapter contains advice that will hopefully inspire GMs with ideas for running high-level games and producing adventures that will tax even the most advanced player characters.

PCs in their fourth rank or higher are approaching the zenith of their career. After combating the perils of the Old World and striving hard to achieve positions of influence and power, their expectations and ambitions will be radically different from those they had when they took the first step on the long and dangerous path of adventure. High-level games should be run very differently than low-level games. The best way to illustrate these differences is by comparing and contrasting the two.

### GOALS

Low-level parties usually have petty goals, with a relatively low price of failure, affecting a localised area. For example, the PCs must stop a Chaos cult from sacrificing a victim in order to summon a lesser daemon that will kill a few dozen townsfolk if it materialises.

When a party reaches the higher ranks, its goals become loftier, with a higher cost of failure. The plot might incorporate a far wider geographical area. The example scenario given above might only be the starting point for high-level adventurers. They must go on to stop an entire conspiracy of Chaos cults from performing rituals that involve dozens or even hundreds of sacrificial victims. If they fail, the Chaos cultists will open a series of Chaos Gates that will plunge the entire Empire into disorder and destruction. The Chaos cults are spread across several cities, and thwarting them involves travel and coordinated communication across the Empire or even beyond.





## REWARDS

For beginning groups, a small reward can prove to be a major source of motivation, whether that reward is a few gold coins, a minor magic artefact, a snippet of knowledge, or a source of minor influence, such as the patronage of a petty noble.

When the PCs reach the higher ranks, because they might already possess everything they need or can purchase whatever they require, incentives of money and treasure might not interest them. Rewards need to be greater and much more rare to motivate them – a long-lost magic item of legendary power, a unique tome containing ancient words of wisdom, an alliance with an Elector Count or a fleeting audience with Emperor Karl Franz.

## OBSTACLES

Minor obstacles can prove to be a major challenge to low-level parties; sudden death or social stigma is an ever-present danger. For example, a warband of orcs poses a significant threat to the PCs. Watchmen bar the door to the building the PCs have to enter and must be bribed, eluded, or overpowered. A reticent barkeep withholds vital information unless the adventurers successfully charm or intimidate him – if he really dislikes them, he will ensure their names are dirt in the surrounding neighbourhood.

For high-ranking parties, minor obstacles are no longer any challenge. They can despatch a single orc warband with contemptuous ease. The watchmen might recognise the PCs and allow them into the building, bowing low as they pass. The barkeep is honoured that such famous individuals should visit his humble tavern, tells them everything they need to know, and plies them with free drinks.

Thus, challenges must be amplified. The PCs must mobilise an entire army to oppose a vast orc horde. They must enter a building that is patrolled by elite guards utterly loyal to the duchess who resides there. The only way to gain free access is to seduce the noble lady with gifts and flattery, which takes considerable time and money. The barkeep tells the PCs that the man with the information they need disappeared ten years ago under mysterious circumstances. Although the trail is cold, highly experienced investigators could probably follow it.

## ENEMIES

Low-ranking adventurers generally face foes of a lesser Threat Level or similarly low status. More powerful enemies may pull strings in the background or influence events from afar, but the PCs must defeat them indirectly by overcoming their henchmen. For example, a group of low-ranking PCs may be only vaguely aware that the Chaos cultists they must thwart are merely the fanatical minions of a shadowy, unseen master.

As PCs become more powerful, they face increasingly powerful enemies. Their adventures bring them into direct conflict with the puppet masters themselves, who will seek to destroy or discredit the PCs if they pose a significant threat to their plans. These arch-villains may be powerful individuals (see Chapter 6: Epic Threats for a few examples) or be secretly entrenched in high society and difficult to openly oppose – the master of the Chaos cult might be a high-ranking member of Imperial society or even an advisor of the Emperor. The risk of failure may have grave consequences to the party's reputation and safety. If the PCs blunder during their



investigations, they could be alienated from their acquaintances in high society or even risk charges of treason, resulting in exile or the threat of the executioner's axe.

## ALLIES

Low-status NPCs play a greater role in scenarios for low-level parties; the most influential and powerful NPCs are more distant, harder to approach, and less interested in the PCs' affairs. In addition, the adventurers lack support and gain allies only with considerable effort. What few allies they have might be unreliable or limited in ability.

In contrast, when a party reaches the higher ranks, high-ranking NPCs may begin to take an interest in their affairs. As the PCs' political or social influence increases, or wealth grows, so they increasingly mix in influential circles as befits their new status. The party may have acquired many allies, some of great expertise, others of great influence. The PCs' high reputation means that new allies are easy to win over. The adventurers may be rich enough to afford a small army of hirelings. They can delegate tasks – their Leadership skill may become the most important of their attributes. This means they can accomplish a variety of tasks in a short space of time.

## WEALTH

Beginning PCs often start out impoverished. Even if characters heavily invest in wealth during character creation, their few gold coins barely lift them from the lower social tiers. If they are not careful, they can easily lose their meagre riches to cutpurses and confidence tricksters or fritter them away if they find no means of steady income. Day by day, they live from pocket to mouth. On the whole, they are stuck in the Brass tier, or the Silver tier if they are lucky, with little immediate hope of advancement.



When they reach the higher ranks, PCs have likely amassed a small fortune or be associated with a wealthy patron who is able and willing to support them. Mundane expenses do not concern them. They may still be in the Silver or even Brass tier socially, but their fame or the influence they have with individuals in the Gold tier wins them the respect of the higher orders of society. Perhaps they were lucky enough to rise to the Gold tier during their adventures. Problems associated with wealthy PCs are detailed later in this chapter.

## ENTHUSIASM

At the beginning of a campaign, player enthusiasm is high – their characters are fresh and exciting, they have ambitions to achieve and experience points to gain and spend. The GM is brimming with ideas and it is easy to come up with new and enlivening encounters.

However, after several play sessions, the players may have reached the lofty heights of fame and power with many adventures under their belts. The PCs may have defeated their arch-foes and fulfilled their ambitions and now wonder where to go next. Although the GM might be running out of fresh ideas for plotlines, he must raise the bar high enough to keep the players and their characters sufficiently challenged in order maintain an interesting campaign. This chapter is strewn with examples of how to keep high-ranking PCs on their toes and more detailed encounters are given in the following chapter.

The players have invested a lot of time and energy developing their characters to such a high level. The worst thing that can happen to a campaign is for it to fizzle out so it is important for a GM to decide when to bring the campaign to a close and how to end it with a bang. The final quest should stretch the PCs to their limit – their actions alone can save the Old World. It is tempting to send the PCs out in a blaze of glory, securing victory against the odds with their heroic deaths, but the GM might also allow them to survive as living legends, winning a peaceful retirement for their actions. Perhaps he might include them as famous personages in a future campaign – ideal role models to which a new generation of adventurers can aspire. An example of a ‘game-ending’ scenario can be found on page 41.

## THE PERILS OF PRESTIGE

The first chapter of this book describes the power and influence that high-ranking adventurers might achieve, as well as the various responsibilities that come with such power. In brief, the main spheres of prestige are leadership, rulership, military power, expertise, and nobility. This section highlights the problems that PCs with such prestige can pose for the GM and gives possible solutions to deal with them. Everything comes at a price in the Old World, and power and influence are no exceptions.

## EXPERTISE

A PC who has devoted himself to acquiring a complete command of a particular field of knowledge is much easier to incorporate into adventures than one who has taken the path of leadership. For example, a wizard lord is invaluable in any situation, a master thief is useful where stealth and guile are needed, and a university professor is an asset in any situation requiring investigation and fact-finding.

The key to motivating high-ranking PCs specialising in a particular set of skills is to involve them in situations where their abilities can shine. It is easy for the GM to accommodate them in his own campaign, but in a published adventure he must be prepared to tailor certain encounters to ensure that any specialised PCs in the party can overcome some challenges using their specific fields of expertise.

## LEADERSHIP

An influential PC may have a great number of NPCs under his command and can delegate tasks to his minions, thus removing himself from the immediate stage of action. By relying upon servants, the PC becomes more of a director than a doer and faces little direct danger himself.

The GM can use several methods to reduce a PC’s reliance on his underlings:

- ✦ **Incompetence.** The NPCs are too useless, lazy, or cowardly to accomplish some tasks, or important tasks are simply too difficult for even the most skilled among them to accomplish alone. A leader may have to be present among his minions to motivate them, thus putting himself in the front line of action.
- ✦ **Expense.** It requires significant income to upkeep servants, pay hirelings, and employ agents. Unless a PC is incredibly wealthy, he will have trouble maintaining his entourage, and the harder the task they are employed to do, the more money they will demand recompense.
- ✦ **Make It Personal.** The GM might have to tailor the most important tasks a PC must accomplish so that they are of the utmost importance to him personally or too vital to be allotted





to underlings. For example, one of the PC's family members or loved ones is in danger, his hometown is threatened, or he harbours a personal grudge against the enemy he faces. When emotion is involved and the PC's blood is up, the vendetta must be settled with his own hands.

## RULERSHIP

A PC with political power has access to the influence, wealth, and resources to solve many situations. Beastmen are attacking the villages? Send in the militia. A minor nobleman is suspected of Chaos worship? Have him arrested and put on trial.

The wealth and power wielded by a ruler is mitigated by his many responsibilities, as well as the constant struggle to maintain his dominance. A ruler is often too busy controlling his fiefdom to continue adventuring as he did earlier in his earlier life. The GM may have to shift the focus of adventures that include a ruler in the party to involve threats directed at his domain, as well as political complications from within his sphere of control. This ties in the ruler's responsibilities with the aims of the party as a whole and turns his duties from a bind that restricts his ability to go on an adventure to a source of motivation to participate in a scenario.

So, for example, while beastmen warbands ravage the PC's lands, he is unable to muster the militia. Perhaps they are engaged against enemies attacking elsewhere or are badly trained and refuse to fight. Perhaps their captain 'misinterprets' the PC's orders – he is in the pay of a rival powerbroker that wants to stall the PC's attempts to protect the peasants in order to denigrate his reputation as a competent ruler. The PC becomes embroiled in a struggle to control his limited resources and must call in his old adventuring friends to save the peasants from being butchered.

In the case of the second scenario, the nobleman suspected of heresy has less political power than the PC investigating him and so cannot use influence and favours to deflect suspicion. Instead he resorts to subterfuge and intrigue to push suspicion away from himself and onto the PC ruler. Before he can bring the true perpetrator to justice, he is jailed under false evidence. Only his faithful comrades, his fellow PCs, know for certain he is innocent and must break him from jail, clear his name, and prove the heretic nobleman's guilt.

## NOBILITY

Some players steer their characters to the top of the social ladder and acquire all its attendant privileges. However, although a noble appears to lead a carefree life of luxury and leisure, he may privately endure stress and struggle to maintain his air of grandeur. The nobility are obsessed with social status. The higher their rank, the more money they must spend to make a conspicuous demonstration of their status. The frequent social spectacles that a noble is expected to maintain, such as grand balls, week-long hunting parties, or the staging of mock sea-battles on the estate's expansive lake, for example, might devastate the family inheritance. PCs who want to remain in the highest social tier will soon exhaust their wealth holding such events. If their names are not routine fixtures on the social calendar, they may become pariahs among their own class.

A hotbed of intrigue, banquets and balls provide fertile territory for the dissemination of rumours and the GM can feed attendant PCs with various plots and scenarios that they can later pursue. They are also excellent places to make influential allies or, if the wrong word is spoken or an inadvertent snub goes without apology, im-



placable enemies. Meanwhile, a hunt can make an exciting scenario in its own right – particularly if the prey is a ferocious griffon or wyvern. And what happens if one of the attendant nobles is found propped against a tree with an arrow through his heart? Murder or accident?

## MILITARY POWER

A PC who has risen to top military command finds it difficult to extricate himself from his duties to the army and to his men. He cannot simply go off adventuring when his realm requires him to be on constant standby against invasion. However, the responsibilities of a military commander can be the seed for exciting scenarios that can involve the entire party. When the PC is called to lead his men to war, he might want to invite his old adventuring friends to campaign alongside him. They may have skills and talents useful to the military cause and he can enlist them as temporary specialists or advisors.

When running a battle, rather than focusing on one-on-one combat, the GM should involve the military commander in the motivation and movement of units of troops, formulating battle plans and manoeuvres. When the armies clash, the commander should be faced with such challenges as rallying wavering soldiers, bolstering his men's resolve in the face of an enemy charge, reacting to enemy flanking attempts, recapturing a banner seized by the foe, or holding a hill in a desperate last stand while waiting for reinforcements to arrive. Perhaps the battle ends with the enemy leader offering to meet the PC or one of his champions in single combat, the fate of the entire battle hanging on the outcome.

During rare times of peace, a military commander is expected to train his men, recruit volunteers, and ensure his force is provisioned adequately – hardly stirring subjects for adventures. However, political intrigue within the officer ranks might be endemic in



peacetime – rivalries between officers come to the fore, sometimes resulting in duels to save face. Also, the agents of the Ruinous Powers and other enemies are always active, chipping away at the resolve of the Emperor's armies, slowly and subtly corrupting officers and rank-and-file soldiers so that when war comes the forces of the Empire are unfit to serve. A competent commander must weed out infiltrators and stamp out corruption.

## FAME

A character's rank is usually an indication of his fame (or infamy). Some characters bask in the fame their achievements bring them. Others shy away from the attention, though often in vain if their deeds are well known. Below is a broad correlation between a PC's rank and his attendant fame. The text assumes that the adventurer is based in the Empire; GMs should adapt these guidelines for parties adventuring in other areas of the world.

### RANK 1

A nobody. The vast majority of people hold this rank. They are the faceless citizens of the Empire, for example. Nobody beyond the PC's immediate circle of family, friends, and acquaintances knows or cares about him.

### RANK 2

By this time, a character may have earned localised fame in the immediate area of his operations. For example, he might be known by the populace of a village he saved from orcs or within a small district of a town or city where he brought a Chaos cult to justice. Perhaps those within his particular field of expertise have taken note of his accomplishments; a young engineer's peers, for example, admire him for his new invention.

When a PC of Rank 2 visits an area in which he has adventured, he is recognised by any local NPC he interacts with who passes a **Daunting (4d) Folklore check**.

### RANK 3

Word of mouth spreads tales of the PC's accomplishments beyond his area of operation. For example, the adventurer's feats might be the source of gossip in neighbouring villages or within a town or city quarter. People of influence might even have heard of him.

When a PC of Rank 3 visits an area in which he has adventured, he (or his name) is recognised by any local NPC who passes a **Hard (3d) Folklore check**. If the NPC is a visiting outsider, or the PC is in an area where word of his accomplishments has spread, increase the Difficulty by ♦.

### RANK 4

The character's deeds are the talk of an entire province. By now he is something of a hero to those who have heard of him (or a notorious villain depending on his actions). If his face is not recognised, his accomplishments certainly will be.

When a PC of Rank 4 visits a city or province where his adventures have taken place, he (or his name) is recognised by any NPC who passes an **Average (2d) Folklore check**. Elsewhere throughout the Empire, his name is recognised by a **Hard (3d) Folklore check**. In neighbouring realms, the check is **Daunting (4d)**.

## HAVE WE MET?

The GM may rule that if an NPC making a Folklore check to recognise a PC has previously met the PC, even briefly, he can add one or more □ to the dice pool, or ■ if the NPC's Observation is trained. Obviously, NPCs who have had frequent or significant dealings with a PC should recognise him immediately.

One or more □ might be added to a recognition check if the NPC shares past or current careers with the PC (representing the PC's reputation within his profession).

If a PC wants to promote his fame, the GM can add an extra □ to the pool, but there is a danger that the NPC might take umbrage at the PC's arrogance (especially if a ✱ is scored for the Folklore check). A ➞ might result in the NPC being star struck by the 'celebrity'.

If a PC wants to hide his fame, the GM should add ■ to the pool, or ♦ if the PC has Guile trained.

### RANK 5+

The PC is now among such luminaries as Gotrek Gurnisson, Luthor Huss, and Ludwig Schwartzhelm, the Emperor's Champion. His deeds are the subject of popular songs and thrilling chapbooks, and travelling players re-enact his exploits before excited audiences.

When a PC of Rank 5 visits a city or province where his adventures have taken place, he (or his name) is recognised by any NPC who passes an **Easy (1d) Folklore check**. Elsewhere throughout the Empire, his name is recognised by an **Average (2d) Folklore check**. In neighbouring realms, the check is **Hard (3d)**. Farther afield, it is **Daunting (4d)**.

Characters who achieve Rank 6 or higher may well find themselves in the same hall of fame as the most celebrated champions of the Empire – the Grand Theogonist, Balthasar Gelt, and even the Emperor himself. Usually no check is needed for most citizens of the Empire to recognise such luminaries. Even beyond the Empire, their fame travels far.

## RENOWN AND NOTORIETY

Although many PCs strive to battle evil and win acclaim for their heroics, others, through intent or misfortune, acquire more unsavoury reputations.

### RENOWN

A PC might gain renown by risking his life thwarting evil, accomplishing a deed for the common good of his fellow men (or dwarfs or elves), or by being an admired expert in his profession. Renowned characters gain the following benefits:



## FAVOURED

Those who regard the character with renown ply him with gifts as a token of their esteem and everyone wants to make his acquaintance. A PC of Rank 2 or 3 may simply be offered free food and lodging if he is recognised and bought plenty of drinks at the local hostelry. Local tradesmen might perform small services, such as sword sharpening or repairing armour, at a generous discount. A PC of a higher rank might be the guest of honour at prestigious banquets, where they are feted by influential nobles and pursued by the opposite sex. They might even be given the freedom of a city or named an honorary fellow of a university or guild.

Social actions performed by a PC targeting an NPC who regards him with renown might add one or more ☐ to the pool. When haggling, a renowned character can adjust his Customer Rating up by one increment or can automatically increase it to Favoured if he is Rank 5 or more.

## SOCIAL MOBILITY

In the Old World, social status is often considered immutable. However, some individuals, through luck and perseverance, can raise themselves to a higher social tier. For example, a humble but skilled barber-surgeon might eventually be admitted into the ranks of the Physician's Guild, entering the Silver tier after years of hard work and study. After many more years of diligent practise, he manages to become the personal doctor of an Elector Count, effectively becoming a member of the Gold tier. Such occurrences are very rare, but of course PCs are possess a unique mettle that marks them above the mundane herd so social advancement is not such an impossibility for them.

Merely entering a high rank career is not enough to raise a PC's social status. He must also accrue sufficient wealth to impress those of the tier he wishes to join, and gain allies and influence among them – a hard task when the higher tiers look down upon those below them with contempt. As a general rule, most careers of Rank 4 allow a character to be eligible to become a member of the Silver tier, while those of Rank 5 permit him entry into the Gold tier. Of course, a character's race and background should be taken into account. Reikland characters of noble blood, for example, will be member of the Gold tier from birth, though their circumstances at the beginning of a campaign might render them less prestigious than many NPCs of the Silver tier and they will have to work their way up the social ladder like the other party members. The cultures of non-human PCs and foreign humans differ markedly from each other and it is ultimately up to the GM to decide how these characters are viewed among their own kind and how they fit into the social tier system of the Empire. For example, a dwarf who wins renown amongst Empire folk may be despised as an outcast in his home stronghold.

## THE DRAWBACKS OF RENOWN

Renown can also have drawbacks. Some examples are described below:

### RECOGNITION

Renowned PCs may find it impossible to act covertly without travelling incognito. They may even need to hire bodyguards to keep excited mobs of admirers at bay. Hangers-on eager to win their idols' attention might prove to be a nuisance. Notable citizens are eager to be seen in the company of such great heroes and will try to monopolise their time in order to raise their own social or political

status. If the PCs comply to their demands, they are in danger of becoming nothing more than the noble's 'pets,' yet if they try to extricate themselves from the endless round of dinners and dances held in their honour, they are in danger of insulting their hosts, resulting in a social backlash and ostracism.

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS

Whenever danger strikes, the people turn to their heroes to save them yet again. PCs famous for their daring exploits are expected to deal with greater threats and more dangerous foes. Perhaps their deeds have been exaggerated in the retelling and the PCs are expected to face an enemy too powerful for them to handle. If they back down, their past deeds will be forgotten and they will be scorned as cowards.

## RIVALRY

Lowborn characters face abject discrimination as they try to scale the social ladder. The higher they climb, the more precarious their position. Jealous peers may attempt character assassination and other intrigues against the characters if they feel threatened by such parvenus. Social climbers also risk alienation from the tier they left behind and may breed resentment among the lower classes. They may become ripe targets for agitation and even mob violence if they do not court popularity with the commoners. Heroic deeds are soon forgotten when the twin vipers of jealousy and rivalry rear their heads.

## NOTORIETY

Too many misdeeds can earn the character a sordid reputation for notoriety. Although most PCs try to avoid such a mark, some brazen criminals revel in their bad reputation as a badge of 'honour'.

Renown and notoriety are often in the eye of the beholder. A bandit considered notorious by the merchants and taxmen he preys upon might be a renowned hero to the starving peasants who receive the proceeds of his robberies. A noble general might be considered a renowned commander by the Emperor, but his many victories are won through flagrant disregard for the lives of his own men-at-arms and he is hated as a notorious butcher by the common folk.

Whether a low-life thug, known for his brutality in the gangland streets, or an ambitious crime lord who controls a vast criminal underworld, notoriety can affect a character as follows:

### FEAR

Folk fear to cross the character, or fear that they are to be his next victim, especially if he has built his bad reputation on violence. Anyone who knows him will do almost anything to appease him, unless they are brave or foolish enough to stand up to the villain. Perhaps he gains one or more ☐ to Intimidate checks against NPCs who are aware of his reputation. Characters of Rank 4 or higher might even inspire Fear 1 in some NPCs.

### HENCHMEN

A notorious PC is admired for his misdeeds among his underworld peers, whether they are criminal scum or his brutal bodyguards. He easily attracts henchmen, especially if he is generous in distributing his ill-gotten gains. A notorious individual can quickly become the leader of a gang or faction – thugs and desperadoes eager to prove themselves to him. However, the PC must constantly guard against



## DWARF GOLD LUST

Dwarfs are the most likely characters to amass wealth for its own sake, but they do so for a specific purpose: to ensure a high social status among their own kind and to honour their revered ancestors by adding to the ancient treasure hoards they have inherited (or to rebuild a lost ancestral hoard). Such loot is not for spending – any dwarf worth his salt should be able to sit on his treasure pile with his feet far from the floor. The GM should ensure that a dwarf who spends too much of his gold is ostracised from his kin for dishonouring the family name – it is considered a great social stigma among dwarf folk to fritter away one's wealth on useless fripperies.

insubordination; the slightest show of weakness or misjudgement on his part might inspire an ambitious crony to try to usurp leadership.

### HUNTED

The PC must learn to sleep with one eye always open. Lower ranked characters are pursued by road wardens or the watch while higher-level ne'er-do-wells might be pursued by the feared Imperial Judges, or Warrior Priests of Verena. Bounty hunters are a constant problem. A bounty of a few hundred shillings, dead or alive, might be posted on lesser criminals, while those of Rank 4 or 5 can have hundreds of gold crowns over their head, depending upon their crimes, attracting bounty hunters of the greatest calibre. Perhaps the more unscrupulous of his henchmen might betray him to the authorities as a means to get rich quick.

If a PC's bad behaviour encroaches upon the realms of sorcery or deviant behaviour, the Witch Hunters pursue him relentlessly. Such an individual finds it impossible to act openly and must be an expert in disguise or have a secure network of sympathisers to operate successfully.

## WEALTHY PCs

By the time they have reached their 4th or 5th rank, some PCs may have accrued sufficient wealth to make them rich individuals within the Empire. Such characters might think they can solve any problem by throwing enough money at it, such as buying allegiances and information or paying off enemies whenever possible. This might be fun and novel for the players to try at first, but if it becomes a repetitive solution, games become less challenging and less enjoyable. In addition, the main ambition for some PCs might be the acquisition of great wealth. When they have acquired their longed-for riches, what next for them?

### OVERFLOWING COFFERS

The following are various examples of how the GM can curtail the advantages that a wealthy PC can use and abuse:

#### EASY COME EASY GO

Riches attract criminals like crows to carrion, especially if an unwary PC wantonly displays his wealth in public. A character that does not protect his treasures may find himself the victim of burglary, kidnapping, or an elaborate confidence trick. Tax collectors,

thieves in all but name, will be eager to wrest his finances from him, and bailiffs, with the power of the law behind them, are far harder to resist than robbers.

However, making a PC lose all his hard-won gold is an unsatisfying conclusion to the many sessions he has spent labouring to amass it. A player understandably feels cheated if all his character's efforts have come to naught. If a PC is robbed or swindled of his wealth due to his own negligence, then he deserves it, but a GM should be aware reducing a rich character to rags without giving him a chance to recover his wealth. A canny GM can create entire scenarios based around the character tracking down the master burglar or con artists who robbed him or stealing back the loot seized by the bailiffs.

A more satisfying way that a GM can curtail a rich PC's reliance on his wealth is to force him into a lose-lose situation in which he must choose between his wealth and his integrity. Perhaps invasion threatens the land and the authorities are in dire need of donations to raise an army in defence. A rich PC can win great renown by donating his wealth to the cause, but is left impoverished as a result; he could also withhold the money and watch the underpaid, underfed defenders rout before the invaders. The PC must then struggle to save his wealth from being looted by the conquerors.

### EXPENDITURE

The lifestyle of the rich requires a massive expenditure to maintain. Unless a PC wants to sit on his pile of gold in a dimly lit vault (dwarf characters may actually relish doing this), he will have to invest his wealth. His mansion or castle needs constant upkeep or it will fall to ruin. Servants and guards must be paid, lest they desert their posts or even riot. Taxes are levied on goods and buildings. The cost of fuel, transport, food, and drink must all be taken into consideration. A PC who puts his money into land must also employ people to run it for him, and spend even more money to exploit the land – perhaps farming or mining it. He might back an ambitious mercantile venture, with poor profits if he invests unwisely. A religious character may feel the need to set up shrines or temples, so that the gods favour his exploits. These sacred buildings require upkeep and provide no income, but a wealthy individual who ignores the gods may become plagued with bad luck.

### LOADS OF MONEY, NOWHERE TO SPEND IT

In games set in urban surroundings, money might make life easier for a rich PC. However, a wealthy character has little outlet for his gold when he has to wander into the sewers or through trackless wilderness and is unable to rely upon his riches in such environments. Once in a while, a GM should give a rich PC the satisfaction of influencing the outcome of a scenario using his wealth, but a change of scenery will force the character to find alternative means to overcome problems.

### MONEY DOESN'T MAKE THE WORLD GO 'ROUND

If a character's main ambition involves money, he may become jaded if he becomes filthy rich. What is the point of adventuring when he has everything he desired? The GM must find another way to motivate such characters.



## STATUS AND POWER

A PC dripping in gold might expect instant admission into the Gold tier, but rarely is life so straightforward in the Old World. A character must prove he is worthy of joining the aristocratic class, which often involves an extravagant display of personal wealth (this has already been described in the discussion of the pitfalls of nobility in the Perils of Prestige section (page 29). A character must also learn proper etiquette before being accepted into high society. Often, it is a matter of 'who you know'; an entire scenario feature the PC attempting to impress the right noble contacts in order to attain that all-important invitation to the Elector Count's masquerade.

Once a character has gained status, power does not necessarily follow; it is nurtured by winning influential allies and wrong-footing political enemies. Perhaps a character tries to rise to power backed by the city mob, whose fickle loyalty must be bought. His supporters can easily desert him for a richer or more charismatic rival or be routed in street fighting by the mob of another powerbroker. Perhaps he can wheedle his way into power by winning over those at the very top – the Elector Counts or even the Emperor. But to gain the trust of such an influential patron, the PC may be obliged to successfully perform several challenging or dangerous tasks. Meanwhile, rivals for the patron's ear try their best to undermine the character's efforts.

## A MATTER OF HONOUR

Being rich attracts enemies. Perhaps rivals are intimidated by a PC's wealth or are jealous of his success. Intrigue and slander are inevitable bedfellows of the wealthy. A PC may have to prove he is innocent of malicious rumours spread against him – he cannot buy off bad publicity, but rather must investigate the source of the rumours and unravel the conspiracy targeting him.

## FAMILY AFFAIRS

The PC can be spurred into action by a threat to someone close to his heart. Perhaps a well-loved relative or friend has gone missing, his hometown faces imminent destruction from invaders, or the theft of a family heirloom compromises the family honour.

## THE CURE

There are some problems that cannot be solved by money. Perhaps the character, or someone close to him, contracts a deadly disease that foxes all physicians. The only chance of recovery is if the PC undertakes a pilgrimage to a remote Shallyan shrine to pray for a cure. The shrine must be defended against enemies or its priestess will only affect a cure if the pilgrim fulfils a special mission. Perhaps famine sweeps the land and the PC must take up his adventuring gear once more to locate and destroy the supernatural cause of the blight. Perhaps the character grows fearful of his own mortality – what is the point of all his riches if he is not alive to enjoy them? He hears of a means to extend longevity and organises an expedition into the wilderness to find it.

## RESTLESSNESS

At heart, the PC still yearns for adventure. He discovers that a life of luxury is quite a dull existence. Having lived his dream, he quickly tires of it and realises that what he truly desires is life on the road again.

## A CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

It is inevitable that many high-ranking parties include PCs with split interests. This is not as much of a problem in low-ranking parties because they usually have to muck in together just to survive. However, as they progress, their career choices might lead to very odd pairings – for example, a crime lord and a magistrate or a Witch Hunter captain and a practitioner of dark magic.

There are various ways in which the GM can encourage such party members to deal with their situation:

- ✦ Some of the party members are unaware of the path others have taken and the characters with the less savoury careers must take pains to hide their secrets from their companions.
- ✦ The party members are aware of what their fellows are up to, but tolerate one other due to their history. Perhaps they owe each other their lives or the bond between them forged during years of adventuring together is stronger than their duties to their career, allowing them to turn a blind eye to each other's actions.
- ✦ The party members are forced to cooperate. For example, a Witch Hunter who travels alongside a warlock castigates his companion at every opportunity and would have him burned in an instant, except that the warlock has proved useful in the past in infiltrating Chaos cults and helping the Witch Hunter bring them to justice. Against his conscience, the Witch Hunter decides that the warlock is better to his cause alive than dead and hides his unlikely companion's secret from his Sigmarite brethren.

These solutions might be unsatisfactory for some groups, particularly where religious zealotry or political duty is involved. However, for the sake of party unity, the GM might feel obliged to gloss over any inconsistencies within the party to allow his players to play the characters they want. The party tension meter will certainly go into overdrive for such groups.

*Despite my reputation, I am not a heartless man. I often struggle to reconcile what must be done with my sympathies for those accursed by the taint of Chaos. The day I consigned my own sister to the flames was especially hard. She didn't ask to be tainted...but tainted she was.*

*- Witch Hunter Captain Leopold*





## CHAPTER FIVE

# HEROIC EPISODE TEMPLATES

The six episode templates detailed in this chapter provide the GM with episode structures for various stock situations that a high-ranking party of adventurers might encounter.

- ✦ **Rally the Masses** challenges the players' leadership, as they must stem disaster by quelling public dissent, calming a volatile mob, and dealing with the rabble-rouser inciting the trouble.
- ✦ **Monster Slayers** details the archetypal heroic 'dragon-killing' quest, pitting the party against a monster of legendary proportions and terrible ferocity.
- ✦ **Court Intrigue** challenges the PCs' investigative skills as they unravel the secrets of the rich and powerful.
- ✦ **The Conclave** allows the PCs to flex their political muscles as they seek to persuade an influential body of nobility to commit to urgent action.
- ✦ **Battle Lines** showcases the involvement of high-ranking PCs in pitched battles, where an understanding of tactics and troop movements are as important as brute strength.
- ✦ **The Grand Finale** demonstrates how a GM can bring his epic campaign to a dramatic and memorable close.

These examples can be used as the basis of an adventure, as part of a larger scenario, or even as the inspiration for a wider campaign story arc involving advanced player characters. Each template begins with a brief overview of the encounter, followed by a description of possible ways to develop each of the three acts within the episode. For more information on acts and episodes refer to the Episodes & Acts chapter in the Core Product. A specific example situation highlights how a particular episode can be used. The templates are ordered so that each example can be used concurrently to develop a complete campaign for high-ranking adventurers.



*Today, you and I do battle for the last time. On this field we will clash steel and shed each others blood. But tonight... I will celebrate your death.*

*-Final words of the champion Niklas Kessler*





# RALLY THE MASSES

**Overview:** This episode template challenges the party's leadership skills. The common folk, panicked by impending disaster or enraged by some injustice, threaten to plunge the region into wide-scale disorder. The PCs must pacify the mob and deal with the instigator of the unrest.

## ACT 1: RIOTS

The lower orders of society are discontent and blame the higher tiers either for being directly responsible for their suffering or for doing nothing to alleviate it. Agitators stir trouble, mobs brawl with the watch, and flagellants parade through the streets whipping themselves and spectators into a frenzy. The unrest soon boils over into full-scale rioting and looting.

The PCs find themselves targeted (perhaps unjustly) along with other influential people on account of their high-status, wealth, or power. They must escape the violence, perhaps by seeking refuge in a noble's castle or a magistrate's mansion. They may have to interrupt their flight to avert an injustice being carried out by the furious mob, such as the lynching of an authority figure.

**Example:** The PCs are in the city of Talabheim. A seemingly endless flow of refugees is streaming from the east. Ostermarkers bring tales of a terrifying monster, half-ogre and half dragon, ravaging from the World's Edge Mountains. The Elector Count of Talabecland is away campaigning alongside the Emperor against Norse marauders on the northern coasts. A rapacious steward governs in his place and takes advantage of the refugees by selling them food at inflated prices. Inevitably, the refugees riot. The PCs are caught

up in the unrest and must flee through the streets to reach the sanctuary of the Elector Count's fortress. Do they pause in their flight to save the city's High Priest of Verena from the rioters?

## ACT 2: PARLEY

Authority has broken down – perhaps the local leaders ran away, were killed or captured by the mob, or are panicked or incompetent. The PCs must step in to command the situation. Do they deal with the mob by using diplomacy or brute force?

**Example:** The steward is stricken by panic and utterly unable to command affairs. The mob surrounds the Elector Count's fortress, baying for his head. Can the PCs placate the mob with reason and oratory, or must they mobilise the castle guard to rout the rioters?

## ACT 3: THE RINGLEADER

Calm has been restored, but the two sides are at an impasse. If the PCs used diplomacy to calm the mob, the negotiations between the two sides have brought about a temporary truce, but the mob will not back down until its demands are met. If the PCs used brute force, the troops may have subdued the rioters, but the mob is too large to disperse fully.

The mob has elevated someone from its ranks to air its grievances. He is steadfast in his support of their demands, but without its figurehead, the mob will lose its cohesion and spirit. Is this individual championing justice for the common man or is he an enemy agent, fomenting civil disorder to further his own plans? Will the PCs acquiesce to his wishes, earning them the respect of the mob but the hatred of the nobility? Will they try to assassinate or kidnap the ringleader? Do they try to smuggle a message out of the city pleading for troops to be sent to quell the riot?

**Example:** The mob is led by a fiery agitator who rails at the authorities for deliberately starving the refugees and for failing to protect them against the incursions from the east. He is too well-guarded to be attacked, but perhaps the PCs can entrap him with a ruse to capture or kill him. Alternatively, they can hand over the steward to the mob, though in doing so they will anger Talabheim's Elector Count when he hears of the incident and gain a powerful enemy.

## POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

The discontent is not confined to a single location and instead affects an entire region. The PCs must travel from place to place to bring order and calm.

The PCs openly sympathise with the mob's demands, but, due to their high position, are nevertheless treated with intense suspicion and hostility by the rioters.

The PCs instigate the disorder and must utilise their leadership skills to raise the populace against a ruler who is either unjust or secretly corrupted by Chaos.





# MONSTER SLAYERS

**Overview:** This template represents that most iconic of heroic quests – the adventurers must slay a legendary monster. The beast should have a Threat Level of at least 6, and the GM can increase its statistics and give it extra actions or special rules to make it an exceptionally challenging foe. Alternatively, the GM can use an Epic Threat Sheet (see page 44) to increase the Threat Level of a weaker beast.

## ACT 1: THE HUNT

The monster is ravaging the land. Other heroes have gone forth to destroy it, but all have been slain. The PCs may be expected to go after the beast on account of their great reputation, which will suffer if they refuse to face it. They might have a personal reason to kill it – perhaps it has ravaged their homes or devoured one of their allies. Of course, the lure of glory or some vast reward promised to anyone who lays low the beast could also provide sufficient motivation.

The PCs must track the monster to its lair by following its trail of carnage. They might attempt to ambush the creature during one of its forays, but it will flee back to its lair if its attackers gain the upper hand. The PCs may also encounter survivors of the monster's attacks who could hamper them by tagging along.

**Example:** A monstrous shaggoth, more powerful than any other of its kind, rampages through Ostermark, devastating entire towns in its wake, a fierce lightning storm heralding its attacks. The Elector Count of Ostermark, despairing of champions to defeat the beast, petitions the famous adventurers for help in slaying it, promising them with land and titles should they succeed. The PCs track the shaggoth's trail of devastation to the foot of the World's Edge Mountains and proceed to climb to its lair among the peaks.

## ACT 2: REACHING THE LAIR

To reach the lair, the PCs must either traverse a confusing labyrinth riddled with traps or overcome the wild denizens that inhabit the area. Perhaps the lair is almost impossible to reach, involving a precipitous climb or the crossing of a deadly lake or swamp.

**Example:** The PCs must battle the elements to reach the shaggoth's lair high in the mountains. The climb is difficult, a hard slog up vertical cliffs as lightning strikes all around them. The GM should impose Athletics checks to climb or jump precipices, Coordination checks to grab handholds as rock crumbles underfoot, Resilience checks to avoid fatigue, and Discipline checks to overcome a giddy fear of heights. The more Chaos Stars scored on these checks, the fiercer the lightning storm will be once the PCs reach their quarry's lair.

## ACT 3: CONFRONTATION

The adventurers finally come face to face with the monster. Not only must they face the creature on its home turf, but the very location of its lair also provides significant tactical obstacles, such as steep drops, a raging waterfall, or a lava flow. The PCs should be given the opportunity to use cunning and trickery to overcome the creature if brute force proves insufficient.

**Example:** The PCs attack the shaggoth in its lair. Lightning crashes around the combat, striking PCs or invigorating the shaggoth. The lair is surrounded by sheer precipices – the shaggoth can make use of the Beat Back action to hurl any enemies it strikes over the sides to their potential doom, unless they can grab hold of the edge and pull themselves back up.

Cunning PCs might figure out that if they goad the monster to a weak section of the lair, the lightning attracted to the beast will trigger a landslide that will bury it, making it easier to dispatch (though the PCs have to be careful not to be crushed by rocks themselves).

## POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

The monster is nigh impregnable except for a single weakness that the PCs must somehow discover (perhaps by rescuing survivors during the first act of this episode).

The PCs must capture rather than kill the monster – perhaps the Emperor demands it for his zoological collection or a renowned seer has foreseen a great calamity should the beast be slain.

The PCs must rescue an individual taken by the monster before it decides to devour the poor soul.





# COURT INTRIGUE

**Overview:** This template covers a situation in which the PCs must deal with the ruthless schemes of the highborn nobility or political powerbrokers. For example, they could be trying to uncover Chaos corruption among the nobility, investigating the murder of a prominent aristocrat, or unravelling a conspiracy of lies to save a nobleman's reputation.

## ACT 1: SOMETHING ROTTEN...

The PCs become aware of the conspiracy. A murder, a theft, a suicide, or the confession of a frightened conspirator (who promises to reveal more before promptly disappearing) leads the PCs to realise that something is amiss. The conspirators try to deflect suspicion by blackening the PCs' reputations.

**Example:** The adventurers are honoured guests at the court of the Elector Count of Ostermark, fêted as heroes for slaying the monster that ravaged the province.

Baron Sedlitz, an influential member of the Elector Count's court, is secretly an agent of Chaos. Visions from his dark master, Tzeentch, convince him that the adventurers will obstruct the future plans of the Chaos Gods. However, their current popularity makes it difficult to eliminate them. The baron seeks to blacken the adventurers' reputation by instigating a whispering campaign among the other nobles at court. The PCs must discover who is behind the poisonous lies that are quickly making them pariahs at the Elector Count's court.

## ACT 2: UNRAVELLING THE KNOT

The PCs follow a series of clues that eventually lead them to the conspirators, but discover that their political position makes them unassailable. The PCs must win powerful allies among the nobility, otherwise they will be completely ostracised. Should they end up with no high-placed friends to protect them, their enemies can strike to silence them, perhaps with a knife in the dark.

**Example:** Through patient investigation and subterfuge, the PCs discover the identity of the rumourmonger and discover circumstantial evidence that suggests he is an agent of Chaos, but Sedlitz is a favourite of the Elector Count and they can prove nothing against him while he enjoys this privilege. Using all their political guile and social charm, the PCs regain their former popularity at court in order to win the ear of the Elector Count. If they can convince him of the baron's perfidy, he will have no choice but to arrest his treacherous friend.

## ACT 3: JUSTICE AT LAST?

With enough proof against the conspirators, the PCs can have them arrested and brought to trial, hoping to bring them to justice. However, the conspirators' henchmen might use dirty tricks to threaten and undermine the PCs or try to intimidate them into giving up the case. The PCs may have to argue their case before the entire court, opposed by the finest legal minds the conspirators' money and influence can buy. Perhaps the accused invoke an ancient right to trial by combat and the PCs must fight their champions to win the case.

If the PCs cannot bring the conspirators to trial, they must hatch a plot to ensure their enemies' downfall in another way – possibly using criminal means that will get them into trouble if they are caught.

**Example:** The baron is put on trial if the PCs successfully persuade the Elector Count of his guilt. Whether Sedlitz is convicted for his treachery or not depends on the amount of proof the PCs gather against him. They have only a few days to secure their case; if they fail to sway the Elector Count, the baron goes free and the PCs are punished for perjury.

If the PCs bungled their attempts to influence the Elector Count in the previous act, Sedlitz arranges to have the PCs tried for treason on trumped up charges. Can the PCs win a reprieve and instead prove that it is the baron who should be chained as a traitor?

## POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

One of the conspirators is a former ally gone bad that the PCs initially trust. Alternatively, he might be a blood relation to a powerful individual, making it much harder to secure proof against him.

Although the PCs think they have smashed the conspiracy, the conspirators are part of a much greater plot that spans the entire realm.

After his conviction, a conspirator escapes his cell. While on the run, he stops at nothing to wreak revenge against the PCs.





# THE CONCLAVE

**Overview:** The PCs have to persuade those in power to take action against a threat. They must muster all their skills of diplomacy to triumph and also arm themselves against political rivals who, through jealousy or ignorance, seek to undermine their efforts.

## ACT 1: CALLING THE CONCLAVE

The PCs identify the threat and realise that the authorities must act quickly to stop it. They must first amass evidence to persuade the authorities that the threat is real. The authorities are not convinced that the threat is serious enough to warrant action, but call a conclave of nobles and advisors to discuss the issue.

**Example:** The PCs meet a group of Kislevite peasants fleeing across the border into Ostermark. The frightened refugees claim that a massive horde of Chaos, led by none other than Archaon the Everchosen, is marching through the land of the Ice Queen, slaughtering all before them, intent on invading the Empire.

The PCs return to Bechafen to warn the Elector Count of Ostermark of this impending doom. He calls a gathering of those who hold power and influence in the province to discuss whether the province's army should march into Kislev to meet the invaders before they reach Ostermark's border.

## ACT 2: FACTION FIGHTING

Perhaps the nobles are too embroiled in their own petty factionalism to care about the PCs' warnings or perhaps one faction is deliberately stalling a decision for its own purposes. The PCs state their case to the conclave and then face off criticism from the factions that oppose action. The GM can use a progress tracker to record the ebb and flow of argument – the PCs can use any of their social skills to advance the tracker or even use Education to cite obscure legal precedents to support their case. Excellent roleplaying and persuasive logic will also advance the tracker. The higher the tracker at the end of the act, the more votes the PCs win at the conclave.

**Example:** Many nobles attending the conclave believe that the ignorant Kislevite peasants are exaggerating the size of Archaon's invasion force and believe it is nothing more than a raiding party. Others say that if the Chaos hordes do march through Kislev, the Kislevites can defend themselves. A few nobles argue that Ostermark should not be emptied of troops, leaving it defenceless to other threats. One faction is jealous of the PCs' great reputation and oppose them whatever their stance, claiming that the PCs are overstating the threat to boost their influence with the Elector Count. The PCs must use all their powers of persuasion to win votes to their side.

## ACT 3: DECISION TIME

The conclave reaches a decision influenced by how persuasive the PCs were in the previous act. How do the winners and losers react? If the PCs win, will their rivals spitefully try to undermine their efforts to deal with the threat? If the PCs lose, will they try to gather support to deal with the threat despite the conclave's decision? And what happens if they adhere to the decision and the threat becomes a catastrophe?

**Example:** The Elector Count makes his decision. If the PCs successfully persuade him to act immediately, he calls upon his generals to muster the provincial army. However, some of those who disagree with the Count's edict try to stall the muster, hampering the call to arms. The Elector Count sends the PCs to enforce his decision, either with bold words or brute force.

If the PCs fail to persuade the Elector Count to muster his army, they might choose to inspire the common folk to action, raising an army of resolute peasants to meet the threat in defiance of the Count's decision. However, this is outright treason against the lord of Ostermark and he sends his captains out to arrest the PCs and disband their ragtag force. Will they comply or resist the Count's agents?

Meanwhile, more and more refugees spill across the border from Kislev into Ostermark with stories of the defeat of the Ice Queen's army...

## POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

Only the PCs are aware of the magnitude of the threat. To everyone else, the PCs' pronouncements that doom is nigh are the ramblings of madmen.

The authorities are already swayed towards the opinion of the PCs' rivals at the conclave.

The conclave drags on and on over days while the threat grows stronger with each passing day.





# BATTLE LINES

**Overview:** High-ranking PCs may be duty-bound to serve in the Emperor's armies as war leaders, advisors, master engineers, battle wizards, or warrior priests. For such powerful individuals, hand-to-hand combat plays less of a role in battle than does commanding troops and formulating tactics.

## ACT 1: TO ARMS!






Before battle, the PCs gather with the army officers and advisors in the commander's tent to study the maps and decide upon battle plans based on scouts' reports. The PCs may find that they argue with other officers or even the commander over which tactics to use. When the army is ready to march, the PCs muster the troops under their command and strengthen their resolve with rousing oratory. Meanwhile, the enemy arrays their forces in readiness to attack.

**Example:** The march to war is inevitable. Archaon's army ploughs through Kislev towards the Empire. The Emperor Karl Franz and most of his armies are fighting Norse marauders along the northern coasts; only the provincial forces of Ostermark stand in the way of Archaon's vast horde.

The PCs are enlisted as commanders or advisors by the Elector Count of Ostermark and join him in his council of war with the other leaders. The defenders are hopelessly outnumbered and face certain destruction unless the PCs can devise a clever plan.

## ACT 2: THE CLASH OF ARMIES

The armies meet in battle. Skirmishers clash first, followed by an exchange of missile fire and the sounding of the charge. The PCs may have to encourage the troops to stand firm in the face of an artillery barrage, inspire them to brave the initial enemy charge, manoeuvre their regiment to face a flank attack, or take down an enemy monster to prevent it from rampaging through their lines. Perhaps the PCs lead a dashing counter-attack to seize an enemy standard or rally broken troops before their panic infects the entire army. An enemy champion might even single out one of the PCs in a challenge. In the confusion of battle, unless they are airborne or have the advantage of high ground, the PCs have little awareness of events occurring elsewhere on the battlefield.

To determine the battle's outcome at the end of the act, the GM can build a dice pool, adding    and stance dice to represent the PC's side's advantages, and  and  to represent the opposing force's strength. Extra dice can be added depending on the PCs' own successes or failures during the battle. The GM rolls the pool and interprets victory or defeat from the result.

Alternatively, the GM can use a progress tracker to gauge the PCs' individual victories or setbacks during the battle. If the tracker reaches the final event space by the end of the act, the PC's side wins; otherwise, the opposing army is victorious. This method simplifies events by making the PCs' efforts integral to the battle's outcome.

**Example:** Along the freezing border between Ostermark and Kislev, the Elector Count's army faces the Chaos horde in battle. The PCs' leadership abilities and fighting prowess are tested to the limit in the ensuing melee. Vastly outnumbered, the Ostermark

army cannot totally destroy Archaon's force, but if it inflicts enough casualties it can temporarily stem the Chaos horde's advance.

## ACT 3: THE AFTERMATH

If the PCs' side wins the battle, they may want to mop up pockets of resistance, capture prisoners, rescue the wounded, and plunder spoils of war. To secure victory, they may have to pursue the fleeing enemy general. However, against a larger force, the only option might be withdrawal. If the PC's side loses the battle, the adventurers become engaged in a desperate struggle for survival as they flee the battlefield.

**Example:** If the Elector Count's army won the engagement, its only option is an orderly withdrawal to the walls of Bechafen to prepare for a siege. Enemy skirmishers pursue the retreating Ostermarkers, picking off stragglers. The PCs must maintain order in the ranks and lead counter-sorties against skirmishers if they want to reach the city walls with minimal casualties.

If the Ostermarkers are routed, the PCs may find themselves fighting a last stand, surrounded by victorious Chaos troops. They must battle their way through the enemy lines and race to Bechafen with the entire horde at their heels.

## POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

A midnight raid before the battle has to be beaten back or the PCs' side is shaken before the battle.

The enemy attempts to lay the PCs low with skulduggery, be it an assassination attempt, an ambush, or a magical curse.

The enemy possesses a secret weapon that the PCs must defeat – a terrifying monster, devastating artillery, or a powerful wizard, for example.





# THE GRAND FINALE

**Overview:** A campaign cannot go on forever. Rather than have it fizzle out inconsequentially, it is best for the PCs to go out in one final, dramatic episode involving a cataclysmic “do-or-die” event. Typical situations might involve halting an apocalyptic Chaos ritual that will open a yawning Chaos gate in Altdorf, thwarting a plot to assassinate the Emperor, or stopping a crazed skaven grey seer from unleashing deadly plague across the Empire.

## ACT 1: OMENS ON THE HORIZON

The PCs become aware of the approaching doom and learn that they have little hope of surviving the disaster to come. At some point, each PC should experience an omen of their impending fate. For human characters, the GM could introduce events that tally with their vision of doom. The PCs should be made to realise that they can either die cowering from their impending fate or face the end as heroes.

**Example:** Bechafen, capital of Ostermark, is isolated. Archaon’s march through Ostermark is relentless and the province burns in his wake. The Ostermark army has retired behind the city walls and faces certain destruction. There is little hope of reinforcements arriving soon as the Emperor is fighting Norse raiders far away in Nordland. Archaon invests the city, hoping to breach the walls quickly and raze the place to the ground.

The PCs are trapped behind the city walls, surrounded by the countless hordes of the Everchosen. Their only choice is to help the defenders batter back the onslaught of Chaos and make the enemy pay dearly for their inevitable victory. When the outer walls of the city fall, the PCs and surviving defenders are forced back to the inner fortress.

## ACT 2: AT THE BRINK

In the second act, the PCs endure the very brink of defeat. The GM should not shrink from throwing unassailable challenges at the PCs that test them to the limit.

**Example:** Archaon’s forces storm Bechafen’s walls and breach the defences. As the PCs make a fighting retreat to the inner fortress, the Elector Count is wounded in a swooping attack by the Chaos drake, Galrauch. The PCs must rescue the Count from the dragon’s claws and carry him to safety. With the city in flames and the fortress surrounded, the PCs and any remaining defenders prepare for the final hour.

### A BLAST FROM THE PAST

For the grand finale, the GM should dig up an old ally or two from earlier adventures to help the PCs. A magic item acquired early in their adventuring careers might also play a significant role in the resolution of this final episode.

## ACT 3: THE FINAL STRUGGLE

The final scene should be a deadly, nail-biting affair – the most difficult challenge the PCs have ever faced. The PCs should be given a chance to snatch victory from the jaws of defeat. Perhaps one or more of them must sacrifice their lives, a final act of valiant heroism.

**Example:** Archaon leads the assault on the fort. He wants to claim the Elector Count’s head for himself. The final battle, at the very top of the highest tower of the fort, sees the PCs defending the injured Count against Archaon and his deadly warband, the Swords of Chaos. If Galrauch survived the initial encounter with the PCs, he swoops in to join the attack.

Will the beguiling words of the Everchosen perhaps corrupt one of the PCs to bend his knee to the Dark Gods and turn against his friends? Perhaps one adventurer will be forced to throw himself upon Archaon’s blade to take a strike meant for the Elector Count. Perhaps when Archaon’s blood-hungry daemonic blade strikes out at one of his Chaos Warriors, a quick-thinking PC can exploit the confusion and hurl himself at the Everchosen, tipping them both to their deaths from the tower top. Should Archaon fall, old enmities and rivalries, held in check by Archaon’s great personality, erupt throughout the Chaos ranks and they either set upon each other or panic and disperse once they learn that their leader is vanquished.

Survivors of the final battle retire with the greatest honours of the Empire, awarded by Karl Franz himself. The slain are lauded as legendary heroes and saviours of civilisation.







## CHAPTER SIX

# EPIC THREATS

There is a saying in the Old World that a man is best judged by the quality of his enemies. High-ranking adventurers expect to face foes worthy of their great talents and it is the GM's task to provide such challenges.

This chapter describes a variety of epic threats, along with their statistics and special rules, and suggests how GMs might incorporate them into their campaigns. Epic threats follow the rules for Nemesis NPCs (see page 51 of the Game Master's Guide) and are divided into two types: epic antagonists and epic monsters. Antagonists are infamous individuals who are feared throughout the lands, command hordes of bloodthirsty warriors, and threaten the very fabric of the civilised realms with their nefarious plots. Epic monsters are horrific creatures of legend that beget death and destruction on a massive scale. High-ranking opponents need not be confined to the examples described in this chapter – any adversary with a Threat Level of 6 or more can be used as an epic threat and GMs should feel free to create their own.

### GROWING DANGER

Rather than suddenly appearing when the PCs reach a specific rank, epic antagonists could be introduced early in a campaign as the mastermind of the overarching plot. At this stage, the PCs are not strong enough to defeat him, but they can thwart his plans by thwarting his minions and unravelling his conspiracies. As the PCs become more powerful, the epic antagonist is increasingly aware of their presence and perhaps diverts resources to eliminate them. The showdown between the antagonist and the party should be the ultimate episode in the campaign, where the PCs finally face their arch-rival in an epic struggle.

Epic monsters are less subtle opponents. When lesser monsters no longer challenge the PCs, it is time for them to face much greater horrors. Usually very rare creatures, epic monsters should be encountered at the climax of a scenario – perhaps as the 'bodyguard' of an epic antagonist.



## ANATOMY OF A CREATURE CARD

Creature cards put all the information a GM needs to manage creatures during an encounter right at his fingertips. The important statistics and game information are organised on one side, with art the GM can show the players on the other side.

In addition to the convenience of managing creatures during a session, the card format makes it easier for GMs to prepare between sessions. The creature cards can be combined with action cards to create a limitless variety of encounters to challenge the players.

Some creatures have icons appearing on the side of their card indicating a number of action cards, by type, that the GM can select to help customise the creature, making these opponents more diverse and challenging.

The GM can select any action cards of the appropriate type for which the creature meets the requirements listed on the card. This is in addition to the basic actions to which all NPCs and creatures have access, so long as they meet the card's specific requirements.



Melee

Ranged

Support



Spell

Blessing



**1 Threat Rating.** The creature's threat rating.

**2 Creature Name.** Name of the creature shown on the card

**3 Category.** The NPC/Adversary group it belongs to.

**4 Wound Threshold.** The creature's wound threshold. Once it has suffered more wounds than its threshold, the creature is defeated.

**5 Characteristics.** The creature's six characteristics, including any fortune dice associated with its characteristics.

**6 Stance.** The creature's default stance, which the GM can adjust, if desired, by spending dice from the creature's Cunning budget.

**7 A/C/E Budget.** The Aggression, Cunning, and Expertise dice budget for the creature.

**8 Damage Rating.** The damage of the creature's attacks, reflecting its innate or default capacity for carnage. This value may be swapped with a different rating if the creature is equipped with specific weapons or effects.

**9 Soak Value.** The Soak Value of the creature, reflecting its innate or default resistance to damage. This value may be swapped with a different rating if the creature is equipped with specific armour or effects.

**10 Defence Value.** The Defence Value of the creature, reflecting its innate or default ability to avoid or deflect attacks. This value may be swapped with a different rating if the creature is equipped with specific armour or effects.

**11 Action Card Options.** The number and type of actions the creature may be supplemented with by the GM in addition to their standard abilities.

**12 Special Rule Summary.** A brief list of the creature's special abilities or rules. Refer to the specific creature entry for full details.

**13 Set Icon.** Each card is marked with a set icon to quickly identify which product the card is from.



# EPIC THREAT SHEETS

In addition to the epic threats described later in this chapter, *Hero's Call* contains a number of epic threat sheets that can be used to increase the threat of many of the creatures and NPCs from the Core Product and other previous expansions. In order to 'upgrade' a creature or NPC, simply socket the desired creature card onto the epic threat sheet (see diagram). During an encounter, simply add all corresponding granted bonuses provided by the epic threat sheet to the creature or NPC's normal statistics and game information listed on the creature card to arrive at its final new statistics and abilities.

Each of the new epic threat sheets are described below:

- ✦ **Hero.** A hero is smarter, stronger, and more durable in every way than regular creatures of its type. This elite threat sheet can be used to create the leader of a small band of creatures or perhaps an elite soldier.
- ✦ **Lord.** This is an advanced version of the **Hero** Epic Threat sheet. This will create an even more powerful creature or NPC capable of standing toe to toe with an entire party of heroes. This elite threat sheet can be used to create powerful leaders of great armies, such as an orc warboss or a skaven warlord.
- ✦ **Sorcerer.** This will imbue a creature or NPC with sorcerous ability (or enhance such abilities if already possessed). This elite threat sheet can be used to create a goblin shaman or perhaps a powerful necromancer.
- ✦ **Mastermind.** This will create a more cunning and intelligent creature or NPC. This elite threat sheet is perfect for creating a nemesis who will harry the PCs over the course of an entire campaign.
- ✦ **Monstrous.** This will elevate a normal creature to the type of brutal beast that can stand alone against a group of powerful PCs. It will be able to withstand and dish out a great deal of damage. This elite threat sheet can be used to create powerful unique beasts and creatures of legend.

## EPIC THREAT SHEET

1 **Creature Card.** The creature card you would like to 'upgrade' is socketed here.

2 **Wound Threshold.** The socketed creature's wound threshold is increased by this amount.

3 **Threat Rating.** The socketed creature's threat rating is increased by this amount.

4 **Characteristics.** The creature's six characteristics are increased by the amount shown. Fortune dice associated with characteristics are added to the fortune dice listed on the creature card, if any.

5 **Damage Rating, Soak Value, and Defence Value.** Each of the creature cards ratings are increased by the corresponding amount listed on the epic threat sheet.

6 **Stance.** The creature's default stance is increased by this amount. Creature's with special stance ratings have both stance ratings increased by this amount.

7 **Action Card Options.** Additional actions the socketed creature may be supplemented with.

8 **A/C/E Budget.** The creature's Aggression, Cunning, and Expertise dice budgets are increased by this amount.

9 **Special Rule Summary.** Additional special abilities that the socketed creature gains.

10 **Name.** Name of the epic threat sheet. A socketed creature card gains this name as an additional trait.

11 **Set Icon.** Each sheet is marked with a set icon to quickly identify which product the sheet is from.





# EPIC ANTAGONISTS

Thwarting the nefarious plots of the following epic antagonists can easily be the basis for an entire campaign.

## ARCHAON THE EVERCHOSEN ☠☠☠☠☠☠☠☠

The Dark Gods have chosen a mortal champion to unite the northern hordes of Chaos and bring doom upon the Old World. He is Archaon, who risked all to reclaim the six treasures of Chaos from the Northern Wastes and emerged from his quest Lord of the End Times.

Archaon towers over eight feet high in his black Chaos armour, the huge horns of his golden battle-helm, the Crown of Domination, adding to his ferocious appearance. His blood-red cloak is topped with the shaggy brown pelt of a mighty Chaos beast slain by his bare hands, and around his neck hang the skulls of rival Chaos champions inscribed with fell runes. He wields the Slayer of Kings, a runeblade crackling with dark energy and moaning with the manic fury of U'zuhl, the daemon imprisoned within it. His massive black tower shield is emblazoned with a golden star of Chaos.

The Everchosen rides into battle atop Dorghar, a monstrous daemon-steed, its night-black hide suppured with bony protrusions, its eyes blazing with hellfire, and its flanks branded with the mark of Chaos.

Archaon's war-hardened band of Chaos Knights, the Swords of Chaos, is never far from his side, protecting their master in the midst of battle. The Everchosen fights the disparate tribes of the Chaos Wastes to unite them under his banner, and as his force grows in number, the clouds of war grow blacker in the north.

## USING ARCHAON

A campaign involving Archaon will probably be set in the northern provinces of the Empire or in Kislev. Norse pirates who have bowed to Archaon's command harry Imperial settlements along the Sea of Claws, and a few Chaos warbands may have fought their way through Kislev to ravage the Empire's northeastern territories. Perhaps the PCs must organise the defence of these borders, long neglected by corrupt or incompetent officials. They must unite bickering Elector Counts and inspire them to action, gather armies to meet the immense Chaos horde bearing down on the Empire, and ultimately try to win the day by plunging into the tide of Chaos to lay Archaon low.

## ARCHAON SPECIAL RULES

**Battleleader:** Archaon has Mastery in Weapon Skill, Resilience, and Leadership.

**Chosen of the Dark Gods:** Archaon knows all Tzeentch spells of Rank 3 or lower. Archaon has the Mark of Tzeentch, Nurgle, Khorne, and Slaanesh. Information on these can be found in *Winds of Magic*, *Signs of Faith*, *Omens of War*, and *Lure of Power*.

**Mounted:** If mounted upon Dorghar, Archaon gains □ to *Melee Attacks* and opponents add ■ to *Melee Attacks* unless armed with a spear, lance, or similar weapon. He is also Swift while mounted and may perform 1 movement manoeuvre per turn for free. If playing with the mounted rules from *Omens of War*, Dorghar is considered to have a Strength of 6 and a Wind score of 10.

## TREASURES OF CHAOS

Of all the Everchosen of Chaos over the ages, Archaon is the most ruthless and powerful, for he alone has succeeded in reclaiming the treasures of Chaos. Any group powerful enough to destroy the Lord of the End Times, may suddenly find themselves in possession of the following treasures, although what to do with them may be an adventure in itself.

**The Slayer of Kings:** The Greater Daemon U'zuhl is trapped within this blade, bound to the sword by the Second Chosen of Chaos, Vangel. This magic sword has CR 2 and Pierce 5.

**The Armour of Morkhar:** This magic armour once belonged to the Lord Morkar, First Chosen of Chaos, and shields the wearer from the all but the deadliest of blows, granting Soak 8 and Defence 4.

**The Crown of Domination:** An ancient battle-helm from the time of Morkar, it exudes an aura of raw malice, cowering servants of Chaos and terrifying the enemy. The wearer causes Terror 3. Chaos servants within medium range of the wearer will fight to the death.

**The Eye of Sheerian:** This magical stone, named after the Tzeentchian Sorcerer who first discovered it, is now set into the Crown of Domination and allows the wearer to predict the immediate future and evade incoming attacks. Add ♦ to all attacks that target the wearer.

**Suggested Actions:** Wrath of U'zuhl, Pronouncements of Doom, Devastating Swing, and any action with the *Chaos* trait. May add 1 or more *Mounted* actions.

## THE SWORDS OF CHAOS SPECIAL RULES

**Mounted:** The Swords of Chaos are Chaos Knights mounted atop deadly steeds. While mounted, the Sword of Chaos gains □ to *Melee Attacks* and opponents add ■ to *Melee Attacks* unless armed with a spear, lance, or similar weapon. They are also Swift while mounted and may perform 1 movement manoeuvre per turn for free. If playing with the mounted rules from *Omens of War*, anything that would cause their steed to lose wind instead inflicts 1 wound on the Sword of Chaos.

**Masters of Warfare:** The Swords of Chaos have 2 ranks of Weapon Skill and Resilience trained.

**Frightening:** The Swords of Chaos cause Fear 2.

**Suggested Actions:** Brutal Assault, Reaving Strike, Eviscerator, and Ruinous Attack. May add 1 or more *Mounted* actions.

## KHAZRAK ONE-EYE ☠☠☠☠☠☠☠☠

The raids and predations of the beastmen of the Drakwald Forest might at first seem unpredictable, but in actuality an uncanny cunning directs the ire of the Chaos herds. The beastlord Khazrak One-Eye has a dangerous talent to direct the raw aggression of his bestial followers to fulfil his commands. He is patient and devious,



## KHAZRAK SPECIAL RULES

**Battleleader:** Khazrak has 2 ranks of Ballistic Skill, Weapon Skill and Resilience, and 3 ranks of Leadership trained.

**One Eye:** Khazrak adds ■■ to *Ranged Attacks* (except **Scourge Lash**) and Observation checks involving sight (though he has a keen sense of smell).

**Frightening:** Khazrak causes Fear 3.

**Bestial Cunning:** The Ambush special rule of all beastmen within medium range of Khazrak is improved. Such beastmen add 2 expertise dice to initiative checks instead of 1, and they add 2 fortune dice instead of 1 to all combat checks against any enemy who has not yet acted. In addition, all beastmen within sight of Khazrak ignore the Unruly special rule.

**Scourge:** This magic whip has DR 6 and a CR 3. It allows Khazrak to use the **Scourge Lash** action. He ignores the penalty for having one eye when performing this action.

**The Dark Mail:** This magic armour gives Khazrak Soak 7 and Defence 2. In addition, any magic weapon striking Khazrak is counted as a normal weapon of its type – all special powers are ignored.

**Suggested Actions:** Scourge Lash, Pronouncements of Doom, any action with the *Beastman* trait.

## GRIMGOR IRONHIDE ☠☠☠☠☠☠☠

The battle lust of the black orc war leader, Grimgor Ironhide, is infamous across the Old World. Some years ago he emerged from the Blasted Wastes at the head of a vast horde of orcs and goblins cowed into following him by his battle prowess. Grimgor's Waaagh! plunged into the Empire, laying waste to town and village, but turned back just before the walls of Altdorf. The Empire's priests gave thanks to Sigmar for this miracle, but the mundane reason was that Grimgor simply grew bored of 'bashin' squishy 'oomanz' and sought out a worthier enemy back east.

He found such a foe within the labyrinths beneath Red Eye Mountain in the icy north. Beyond the warrens of the Red Eye goblins, a constant battle rages between Grimgor's greenskins and the skaven of the under-tunnels. The hordes of ratmen provide him with an endless stream of foes to kill. When the slaughter ebbs, his mood grows even fouler and with no enemy in sight he starts brawling with his fellow orcs. He cares not whose blood wets his axeblade.

Grimgor is a mass of iron muscle taut with rage. His hide is the darkest green and his yellow eyes blaze. His armour of battle-tarnished steel was forged in the blood of dwarf rune priests and repels all but the mightiest of blows. He carries a double-headed battleaxe, Gitsnik, that imbues him with preternatural speed and can slice through metal, flesh, and bone with a single swipe. He is always accompanied by his personal black orc warband, Da Immortalz, which earned its name by surviving the most impossible battles.

## USING GRIMGOR IRONHIDE

The skaven of Red Eye Mountain are desperate to be rid of Grimgor. The Grey Seers secretly manipulate the PCs into travelling east on a quest to recover a lost heirloom of the Emperors. The trail leads them into Red Eye Mountain. The skaven sneakily direct the adventurers towards Grimgor in the hope that they might kill

a prodigy among his own kind. The savagery of the beastmen is always dangerous, but it becomes deadly when focused by malign intelligence.

The Elector Count of Middenland, Boris Todbringer, recognises the threat. He has personally led hunts to kill Khazrak, but the beastlord is always one step ahead of him. Only once he has cornered Khazrak, blinding the beastlord's left eye with his Runefang before the fiend escaped. In retaliation, Khazrak lured Todbringer into a trap, threw him from his horse, and gouged out his left eye with the tip of his horn. For some reason, he allowed the Elector Count to live; perhaps he relishes matching wits with his arch-foe?

Khazrak is a huge beastman; his body ripples with muscle and his horns curl around his vicious face. His right eye glitters with intelligence, but the other, which has never fully healed, weeps pus and blood. He is clad in ancient, dark chainmail that seems to suck the enchantment from any magical weapon that strikes it. Skulls hang from his belt, the trophies of past victories. He wields a cruelly-barbed scourge, cursed by bray-shamans, and a massive sword, its blade inscribed with dark sigils.

## USING KHAZRAK

An obvious draw for adventurers to pit their wits against Khazrak is the 10,000 gold crown bounty that Boris Todbringer has posted on his head. Not only will they have to outwit old One-Eye, but other bounty hunters will try to undermine their efforts. The PCs might become heavily involved in Boris's obsession to kill the beastlord, and, as a result, may become ensnared in the political webs of the Middenheim court – which is arguably as perilous to them as the tangled undergrowth of the Drakwald.



him, or at least make him so annoyed with humans that he leads his forces from the skaven lairs to vent his rage against the Empire once more.

### GRIMGOR IRONHIDE SPECIAL RULES

**Stomp Everyone:** Grimgor hates everyone and gains ☐ on all *Melee Attacks*.

**Iz Biggest:** Grimgor has 3 ranks of Weapon Skill and Resilience trained. While critically wounded, his *Melee Attacks* inflict +2 damage.

**Fearsome Reputation:** Grimgor causes Fear 3.

**Gitznik:** Grimgor's magic axe has DR 8, CR 2, and the Fast quality.

**Suggested Actions:** Unquenchable Rage, Pronouncements of Doom, and any action with the *Greenskin* trait.

### MANNFRED VON CARSTEIN ☠☠☠☠☠☠☠☠

In 2145 IC, the Empire rejoiced, for Mannfred, last of the von Carstein vampires, was slain at the Battle of Hel Fenn. Following the death of Konrad von Carstein in 2121, Mannfred seized power in Sylvania. His knowledge of necromancy was unparalleled and he began to resurrect Sylvania's undead hordes. A master of political ruse, he ensnared the Imperial aristocracy with his wiles. Civil war broke out among the Elector Counts, and Mannfred's army of death marched unopposed on a divided Empire and laid siege to Altdorf. The city was saved when the Grand Theogonist's holy incantations caused the skeletal army to crumble. Mannfred was then forced to flee back to Sylvania where he met his demise.

That is the official history. Felix Jaeger, chronicler of the saga of Gotrek Gurnisson, claims that Mannfred was resurrected by a petty necromancer but then killed by the famous slayer. However, more reliable are the rumours whispered by the border folk neighbouring Sylvania that Mannfred has returned to his ancestral home, Castle Drakenhof, for the dead once more stir in their graves.

Portraits of Mannfred show him as a handsome, dark-haired gentleman with piercing eyes, clad in finery. Reports of his true form, however, tell of a tall, muscle-bound, bald-headed fiend with bestial features. In battle, he wore the Armour of Templehof, an impenetrable suit of baroque plate, and wielded the Sword of Unholy Power. It is said that his scarlet cloak, bound with writhing spirits, twisted behind him as though whipped by a fierce wind.

### USING MANNFRED VON CARSTEIN

Mannfred lives! He seeks the Carstein Ring, which grants virtual immortality to the wearer. The arch-thief Felix Mann stole it from his predecessor, Vlad von Carstein, almost five hundred years ago. Perhaps Mannfred manipulates the PCs into finding the ring for him or they unwittingly acquire it and so cross paths with the count. Mannfred is also secretly spreading strife among the Imperial nobles. The PCs may have to act as peace brokers among the warring nobility and raise resistance against the inevitable onslaught of Mannfred's undead armies.

### MANNFRED VON CARSTEIN SPECIAL RULES

**Centuries of Knowledge:** Mannfred has 3 ranks of training in Channelling, Charm, Education, Guile, Intimidate, Intuition, Magical Sight, and Spellcraft.

**Fearsome Reputation:** Mannfred causes Fear 3.

**Dead Earnest:** Mannfred is unaffected by Fear and Terror, as well as other conditions based on psychology at the GM's discretion.

**Night Vision:** Two fewer ■■ misfortune dice are added to Mannfred's dice pool for any effects from darkness or lack of sufficient light.

**Dead Calm:** Effects that target Mannfred's Willpower add ♦♦ to their pools. He can also 'turn off' his ability to cause Fear, whenever he wishes.

**Blood Pool:** Mannfred can drink the blood of his victims to replenish his strength and regain Expertise dice. He has a number of Expertise dice equal to his current Blood Pool. This can be tracked using a ten space tracker or the Undead group sheet introduced in *The Creature Guide* and the *Creature Vault*. Every time Mannfred spends an expertise die, his Blood Pool token should be moved down one space.

The *Melee Attack* actions and the special **Beguile** action performed by Mannfred gain:

■■ Advance Mannfred's Blood Pool token one space

**Sword of Unholy Power:** This magic sword has DR 5 and CR 3. Whenever the sword causes a critical, Mannfred immediately gains an amount of power equal to the critical's severity rating.

**Master of Necromancy:** Mannfred knows all spells with the *Necromancy* trait, and all spells of the *Amethyst Order*, of any rank. When using any action to raise the dead, he raises double the number of undead stated on the action card. He can safely store any amount of power and ignores the rules for venting power.





**Suggested Actions:** Summon Creatures of the Night, Beguile, Deathly Presence, No Escape, No Hope, Pronouncements of Doom, and Raise the Dead.

## GREY SEER THANQUOL ☠☠☠☠☠☠☠☠

Chief among the skaven Grey Seers is Thanquol, who considers himself the most brilliant and ruthless ratman who has ever lived. The Council of Thirteen, rulers of the skaven under-empire, entrust him to enact their plans to dominate the world above ground, but his schemes only ever come close to fruition; he blames many failed schemes on an annoying dwarf slayer who he believes dogs his every move. In reality, Thanquol is adept at 'misunderstanding' his superiors' commands in order to fulfil his own ambitions and it is his own self-serving nature that is his downfall.


Thanquol has a gift of squirming his way out of blame, and he always diverts the Council's wrath for his failures onto others. He has an uncanny knack of avoiding physical harm as well, and misfortune that should affect him hurts nearby minions instead. Wary of his many enemies, Thanquol is guarded by a rat-ogre, heavily 'improved' with mechanical appendages. Countless bodyguards have perished in his service, but he gives each replacement the affectionate name of 'Boneripper'.

Thanquol wears ragged grey robes, with sigils of the Horned Rat hanging round his neck. He has dirty white fur, with horns twisting round the side of his rat-like head. His eyes glare with yellow hatred. One paw clutches a gnarled staff, while the other is rarely far from the pouch of warpstone at his belt. He has a gnawing hunger for warpstone, which he claims bring him visions from the Horned Rat, but in reality he is a slave to its addictive qualities.

## USING GREY SEER THANQUOL


Thanquol's high Threat Level is based on the danger he poses to mankind. Well-versed in their customs, languages, and history, he is an expert at manipulating political intrigue among nobles of the highest order and controls a network of agents across the Old World. He should be involved in a scenario as the hidden puppet master behind assassinations, civil strife, and other subterfuge, and remains unrevealed until the closing stages of an adventure, when the PCs have thwarted his plans and face his revenge.


## GREY SEER THANQUOL SPECIAL RULES

**Keen Senses:** Thanquol has a well-developed sense of smell. He adds  to Observation checks where the sense of smell provides an advantage.

**Grey Seer Expertise:** Thanquol has Mastery in Channelling, Coordination, Education, Guile, Intuition, Leadership, Magical Sight, and Spellcraft.

**Master of Skaven Magic:** Thanquol knows all spells with the *Skaven* trait, of any rank. He can safely store any amount of power, and ignores the rules for venting power.

**Warpstone Addiction:** The first time Thanquol rolls  during an encounter, he succumbs to the urge to devour warpstone from his pouch. Alternatively, the GM may decide that Thanquol begins to eat warpstone at any time. As soon as Thanquol starts eating warpstone, he must spend a manoeuvre to eat the stuff on each subsequent turn until the end of the encounter. When he does so, any power he gains from a Channelling check made that turn is doubled. However, that Channelling check gains:

 Suffer a temporary insanity

**Suggested Actions:** Blessing of the Horned Rat, Fight-Fight!, Advanced Dodge, and Pronouncements of Doom.

## BONERIPPER SPECIAL RULES

**Warpfire Thrower:** Boneripper has been modified with an extra arm fused to a warpfire thrower. This allows him to use the **Flame Breath** action (this action uses Willpower instead of Agility for the check), or any other suitable action that the GM decides. If you are using corruption rules in your game, damage from the warpfire is considered to be a Moderate source of corruption, requiring a **Hard (3d) Resilience check**.

**Terrifying:** Boneripper causes Terror 2.

**Fearsome Claws:** Boneripper's *Melee Attacks* have Pierce 3.

**Automaton:** Boneripper is unaffected by Fear and Terror, as well as other conditions based on psychology at the GM's discretion. He obeys Thanquol's orders to the letter.

**Bodyguard Construct:** Boneripper has been programmed by its inventors to stay within medium range of Grey Seer Thanquol. Whenever Boneripper is further than medium range from Grey Seer Thanquol he must use all available manoeuvres to move closer to his master.

**Suggested Actions:** Boneripper and Flame Breath.



## GOLGFAG MANEATER ☠☠☠☠☠☠☠

Golfag Maneater and his ogre mercenaries, imaginatively named the Maneaters, roam from conflict to conflict, sought after by warlords, princes, and emperors because their presence usually ensures victory. Golfag has amassed, and lost, a king's ransom over the years, and has been personally decorated by Karl Franz. However, he is less interested in gold and medals than good eating and he'll often side with the force facing the tastier opponents.

His first paymaster, many years ago, was Gnashrak the orc, besieger of Karak Kadrin. The greenskins turned on the mercenaries after they ate all the goblins in the army and drank all the grog. In revenge, Golfag helped the dwarf king of Karak Kadrin rout Gnashrak's force. Despite being well-rewarded by the king, Golfag ransacked his treasury. Years later, after many travels, Golfag and his band were captured by dwarfs from the karak and thrown into the hold's dungeons. Forced to starve, Golfag ate his entire warband, apart from Skaff, his oldest comrade, who only lost a leg to his captain's appetite. The dwarfs were so impressed by this act of stoic fortitude that they released the two ogres. Golfag has since restored his mercenary band to its original strength and fought his way to fame and glory.

Golfag is an immense hulk of bulging muscle, his massive belly protected by a gutplate of battered steel. Beneath his horned helmet are fierce eyes and jagged tusks. He carries an array of weapons stolen from the corpses of enemy commanders and champions he has killed.

### USING GOLGFAG

There are a number of ways to introduce Golfag into an adventure. Perhaps the PCs must try to win him away from an enemy that has employed him. If they fail to accomplish this task, they must face Golfag and his ogres in the ensuing battle. Alternatively, Golfag could be employed by Karl Franz and the PCs are ordered to 'babysit' the ogre and make sure he does not cause trouble or switch sides. The PCs may be searching for an artefact vital to their mission which Golfag has acquired and is reluctant to give up.

### GOLGFAG SPECIAL RULES

**Fearsome Reputation:** Golfag causes Fear 3.

**Vicious Assault:** Golfag always wades into combat wielding two large hand weapons, each with a DR 6 and CR 2.

**Gut Buster:** Golfag has the uncanny knack of catching blows on his gutplate. All *Melee Attacks* or *Ranged Attacks*, or *Spells* or *Blessings* that targets Golfag's defence gain:

✱ -3 damage

**Suggested Actions:** Bonecruncher Assault, Devastating Swing, Reckless Cleave, and Throw Into the Wall.

### GOLGFAG'S MANEATERS SPECIAL RULES

**Maneaters:** Golfag's Maneaters use the stats for Ogre Maneaters.

**Fearsome:** Golfag's Maneaters cause Fear 2.

**Battle Veterans:** Golfag's Maneaters have 2 ranks of Weapon Skill and Resilience trained.

**Suggested Actions:** Mighty Blow and Reckless Cleave.

## LOKHIR FELLHEART ☠☠☠☠☠☠☠

Across the oceans of the world, in every port and every coastal settlement, are recounted tales of the infamous dark elf, Lokhir Fellheart, whose very name chills the soul. He rides the waves aboard his immense floating fortress, the Tower of Blessed Dread. When the great sails of this black ark loom into view it bodes a night of terror, for when the sun sinks below the horizon his corsairs will alight to plunder the land and drag back screaming captives to the slave galleys. Fellheart has laid waste to entire towns in the past, shipping the inhabitants to Naggarth to endure the pleasures of his evil lords.

It is said that Fellheart first won fame with the sack of Tor Canabae in the Ulthuan kingdom of Eataine. His raid on the sunken city of Chupayotl, off the Lustrian coast, cemented his reputation. Dark magic enabled him and his corsairs to breath underwater and among the ruins they battled undersea beasts and the strange aquatic descendants of the original inhabitants of the city. He returned with many chests of treasure and a reputation for single-minded ruthlessness in pursuit of his goals.

Lokhir wears cruelly bladed chain and plate armour and is further protected by a cloak of turquoise sea dragon scales. His face is masked by a golden helm fashioned in the likeness of a tentacled sea monster. This is the Helm of the Kraken, looted from Chupayotl, which grants him unnatural resilience to wounds and inspires dread in all who gaze upon it. His twin blades are forged from Indan bloodsteel, red and razor sharp.





## USING LOKHIR FELLHEART

From the Tower of Blessed Dread, Lokhir orchestrates a series of dark elf raids along the Empire's coast and completes his perfidy by kidnapping the heir of the Elector Count of Nordland. The PCs must locate and infiltrate the black ark to rescue the noble captive, culminating in a showdown with Fellheart himself. Alternatively, if the PCs are searching for an undersea treasure, they might cross paths with Lokhir, who stops at nothing to secure it for himself.

### LOKHIR FELLHEART SPECIAL RULES

**Master Corsair:** Lokhir has Mastery in Athletics, Intimidate, Leadership, and Weapon Skill.

**Eternal Hatred:** Like the rest of his dark elf brethren, Lokhir is filled with loathing for every other species. Lokhir gains  $\square$  to all *Melee Attack* and *Ranged Attack* actions targeting non-Dark Elf humanoids.

**Night Vision:** Two fewer  $\blacksquare$  misfortune dice are added to Lokhir's dice pool for any effects from darkness or lack of sufficient light.

**Helm of the Kraken:** This bestows Lokhir with Terror 2 and Regeneration. Lokhir recovers 1 normal wound at the end of each of his End of Turn phases. Regeneration does not work during a round in which Lokhir was harmed by fire.

**The Red Blades:** Lokhir's two magic blades are of Superior quality and have the Vicious quality.

**Daring Leap:** Each turn, Lokhir may engage any enemy within close range of him as a free manoeuvre. If he is already engaged at the start of his turn, he may disengage for free as part of this move.

**Suggested Actions:** Blur of Red Ruin, Agile Strike, and any dark elf action.

### GALRAUCH THE GREAT DRAKE ☠☠☠☠☠☠☠☠

Six thousand years ago, Galrauch the Gold Drake was at the forefront of the battle defending Ulthuan against the invading daemon-ic hordes. He fought the Lord of Change, Fateclaw, in an epic battle, and ripped the daemon's bird-like head clean from its shoulders. As the daemon's corpse dissipated into the aether, Galrauch convulsed and dropped from the sky. His skin rippled like liquid as tentacles and spikes sprouted from his scales, their golden sheen tarnished as though blackened by fire. His wings warped and his underhide writhed red and raw in a mass of howling daemon faces. As an evil light shone in his eyes, his freefall turned into a swoop and he bathed his elven allies with multi-hued flames from his maw, melting flesh and armour. The muscles of his neck parted in a shower of gore, and where there had been one head, there were now two, each with one horn and a single eye. The heads mauled each other as the last vestige of the Gold Drake's soul fought to regain control of its body. By the time the spirit of Fateclaw finally won out, the elves had vanquished the daemons, and the thing that had once been Galrauch was forced to flee far from mortal lands.

Galrauch has slumbered for centuries, waking from time to time to ravage the lands of men, dwarfs, and elves. Hundreds of heroes have tried and failed to slay the dragon. Some have succumbed to his daemon-ic magic, others to the flame and corrosive gas belched by his heads, or been turned to spawn by his Breath of Change. Old Worlders fear the day when the Great Drake will return to lay waste to their lands.



## USING GALRAUCH

A high elf scholar has identified a pattern to Galrauch's attacks throughout history and pinpoints when the Chaos drake will next emerge from its lair. The adventurers must locate Galrauch's lair and slay him before he stirs from his slumber, but not until they have recovered the elven sword that drew blood from Fateclaw during the battle that sealed Galrauch's fate. The Great Drake's doom rests upon that blade.

### GALRAUCH SPECIAL RULES

**Flight:** Galrauch does not need to perform a manoeuvre to disengage from opponents before moving. He can move away from engaged opponents as if he were not engaged with them, unless they can also fly.

**Terrifying:** Galrauch causes Terror 3.

**Mark of Tzeentch:** Galrauch has the Mark of Tzeentch. Information on the Mark of Tzeentch can be found in *Winds of Magic*.

**Unfathomable Power:** All actions and skill checks targeting Galrauch gain  $\blacklozenge$ .

**Flaming Retribution:** Attacks from characters engaged with or within close range of Galrauch gain:

- ✧ Suffer 1 wound, plus 1 additional wound per  $\skull$  as a tongue of flame licks out from one of the monster's maws.



**Master of the Arcane:** Galrauch has Mastery in Education, Guile, Intuition, Observation, and Spellcraft. He does not need to channel power to fuel his spells. He knows all spells of Tzeentch of any rank.

**Fused Breath:** When performing a **Flame Breath** action, Galrauch can choose to have his other head spew a cloud of corrosive gas, increasing the size of the blast. If he does, the Flame Breath targets an engagement and the action check changes to **Ballistic Skill (Ag) vs. Highest Target Defence**. When used in this way, Flame Breath has a Recharge Rating of 7.

**Suggested Actions:** Breath of Change, Flame Breath, Aerial Assault, Vicious Bite, any action with the *Dragon* trait.

## EPIC MONSTERS

Epic Monsters are creatures of legend that can be dropped into any campaign, ready to face-off against a party of high-ranking PCs.

### ARACHNAROK SPIDER ☠☠☠☠☠☠☠

Deep in the wild forests of the Old World lurk spiders of such immense proportions that they hunt giants for food, trapping them in massive webs. A single man is nothing but a tasty morsel for such monsters and they have been known to wrap their sticky fronds around entire villages while folk sleep, waiting to pounce and spin their deadly cocoon around their victims when they blunder into the web. Venom in the web dissolves flesh to mush and when the spider has sucked its victims dry, nothing remains except glistening skeletons suspended on sticky strands.

Forest goblins have learned how to tempt arachnarok spiders to their camps with offerings of fresh blood. The goblins erect totems to their Spider God, the Feaster From Beyond, that seem to mollify the spiders' natural ferocity. Shamans chew the tiny Purple Skull-back spider and enter a spasmodic trance-like state. Those that survive this ordeal are able to commune with the massive arachnids and tame them. Forest goblins construct shanty towers atop tamed arachnarok spiders and ride them into battle, sometimes erecting a crude catapult in the howdah that fires poisonous webbing. The spiders treat the squabbling goblins on their backs like their own young and fight with rabid determination to protect them.

### USING THE ARACHNAROK SPIDER

The presence of an arachnarok spider turns weakling forest goblins into formidable opponents. They can be encountered at the forefront of a greenskin invasion or could ambush a party as they creep through wild, uncharted woods. Perhaps a spider has enmeshed a village in its web and the PCs have to drive off the monster and rescue survivors. They then have to track the creature to its lair to finish it off. Perhaps the poison in the web forms the antidote for another poison that threatens the life of a noble and the PCs must recover a ball of webbing from deep in the forest.

### ARACHNAROK SPIDER SPECIAL RULES

**Instinctive:** Arachnarok spiders may use Willpower instead of Intelligence when attempting Observation checks.

**Fast:** Arachnarok spiders require only 1 manoeuvre to move between medium range and long range, and 2 manoeuvres to move between long and extreme range.

**Wall-crawler:** Arachnarok spiders can move up and down vertical surfaces with ease, and ignore terrain-based manoeuvre penalties and up to two ■■ misfortune dice penalties to movement and actions performed while in adverse terrain.

**Terrifying:** Arachnarok spiders cause Terror 3.

**Venom Surge:** When an arachnarok spider inflicts a critical wound, the target suffers fatigue equal to the critical wound's severity. An arachnarok spider's bite has CR 2 and the Vicious quality.

**Night Vision:** Two fewer ■■ misfortune dice are added to an arachnarok spider's dice pool for any effects from darkness or lack of sufficient light.

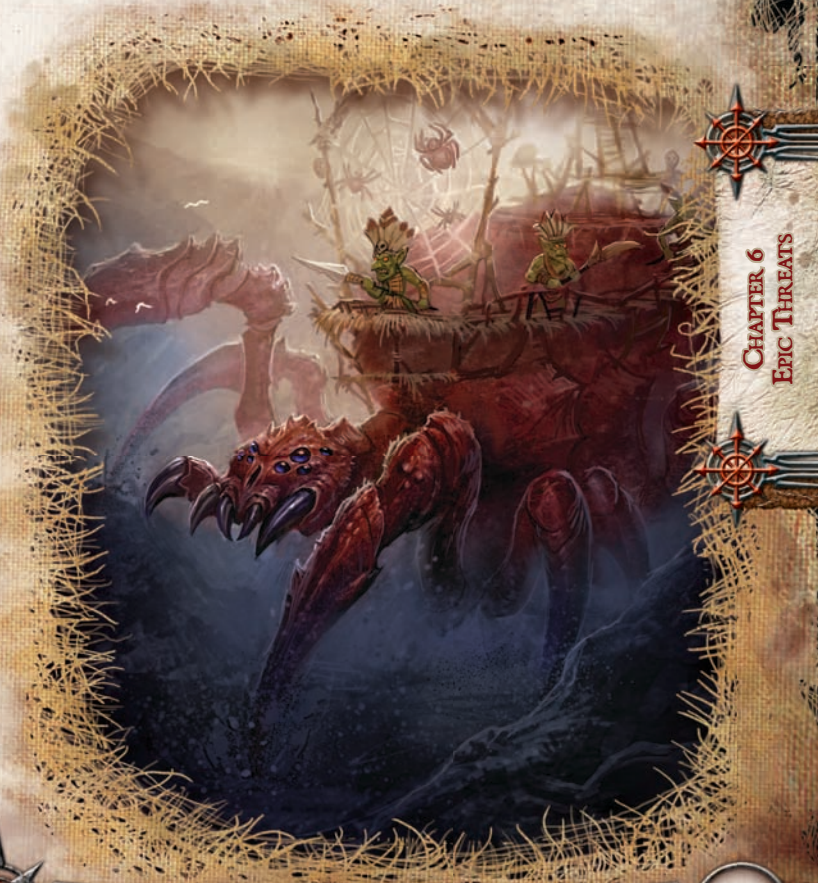
**Howdah Goblin Crew:** Arachnarok spiders are sometimes ridden by a small mob of forest goblins. Treat the riders as eight to twelve goblin henchmen armed with bows and spears. A few arachnarok spiders also carry goblin shamans.

**Flinger:** Goblins riding on the back of an arachnarok spider sometimes construct a crude catapult called a flinger that fires bundles of poisoned webbing at enemies. An arachnarok spider with a flinger is allowed to use the **Venomous Web** action.

**Suggested Actions:** Venomous Web, Inescapable Power, and Vicious Bite.

### GHORGON ☠☠☠☠☠☠☠☠

The beastmen spawn many twisted forms, but none as terrible as the ghorgons. These monsters can grow almost as high as the tallest trees in the ancient forests in which they dwell. They resemble massive minotaurs, with cloven hooves, stinking fur, steel muscles, and a bull-head crowned with twisted horns. They typically have four arms, two ending in bony, cleaver-like appendages used to carve apart their prey. They hunt anything that comes within their





## GHORGON SPECIAL RULES

**Reach:** A ghorgon may use *Melee Attack* actions against targets it is not engaged with at close range.

**Terrifying:** Ghorgons cause Terror 3.

**Bloodgreed:** Each time a ghorgon kills a creature, it may perform a manoeuvre to feast on its victim's flesh. If it does so, the ghorgon heals one normal wound and gains 1 Aggression die. If the ghorgon resists, and does not feed, it instead loses 1 Aggression.

**Bloodlust:** A ghorgon gains +2 damage on all attacks against critically wounded targets.

**Frenzy:** A ghorgon always has the Frenzied condition.

**Four Arms:** After a ghorgon resolves a *Basic Melee Attack*, it may immediately perform another *Basic Melee Attack* against a different target within close range. A ghorgon may do this only once per turn.

**Sensitive Nostrils:** Ghorgons may use Willpower instead of Intelligence for Observation checks involving the sense of smell, and add ■ to the dice pool for such checks.

**Suggested Actions:** Swallow Whole, Devastating Swing, Savage Strike, and Fearsome Charge.

## HELL PIT ABOMINATION ☠☠☠☠☠☠☠

The skaven master moulders of the northern under-fortress of Hell Pit compete with each other to produce the most vicious and voracious creations, melding the flesh of living creatures together to form abhorrent monstrosities. They have far exceeded themselves with the beasts known as the Hell Pit abominations, joining the torsos of rat-ogres to the huge, writhing worm-like creatures that burrow deep below Hell Pit. They fuse the pink, throbbing flesh of their creations with mad contraptions of rusted metal – cogs and pistons that spin and clank for no discernable purpose other than to drive the monsters' rage. They ram spikes of warpstone into the things' hides, mutating them in ways delightful to the Horned Rat and making them grow to a titanic size. When an abomination attacks, snapping jaws might protrude from fleshy tubes to rend and feed or a mass of slithering tentacles could vomit forth from its belly to drag its victims into its pulsing stomach. The monsters move by slithering on the folds of their bellyflesh, dragging themselves along with a multitude of arms, or by the power of the steam-driven wheels grafted to their underside.

Clan Moulder hires out its pets to the highest bidders and the most prestigious skaven warlords consider it a point of honour to have an abomination from Hell Pit in their force. A careful warlord makes sure the abomination faces the enemy; otherwise it will plough into his own ranks, mindlessly gorging on terrified skaven.

## USING THE HELL PIT ABOMINATION

A Hell Pit abomination might be the focus of any scenario in which the PCs battle skaven armies. The shambling monster provides a rallying point for the ratmen; should it die, so too will the resolve of the enemy army. If the PCs have to infiltrate the secret laboratory of a master moulder, perhaps to rescue a captive destined for an awful experiment, they will undoubtedly face one of the things guarding the place. Perhaps the skaven maliciously turn one of the things loose in the city sewers, causing untold havoc when it emerges into the streets to feed at night.

path, chopping up living flesh with their bone-blades and cramming the bloody hunks into their fang-filled mouths. Some of the more hideously mutated ghorgons possess gnashing mouths on their limbs or torso, as though one maw is not enough to sate their hunger. It has been known for one ghorgon to consume an entire tribe of beastmen or village of humans in a single orgy of feasting. They have an extremely sensitive sense of smell, and few creatures can escape their attention.

Tradition has it that ghorgons began life as minotaurs, but were consumed by their gluttony and killed and ate indiscriminately, growing taller and stronger with each frenzied feeding. Some say their unnatural size and rapid mutation are caused by their habit of swallowing chunks of warpstone, which can sometimes be found deep in the blighted forests.

The most gifted bray-shamans, the seers of the beastmen herds, know how to draw the ghorgons to the herdstones that dot the forests. Rampaging warbands sometimes have one of these monstrosities stomping among their ranks, but it is only through the rituals of the bray-shamans that their lust for meat is channelled towards the enemy and not their own side.

## USING THE GHORGON

A ghorgon could be causing ruin in forest settlements in the Empire, in which case the PCs must hunt it down and kill it. Alternatively, a huge army of beastmen swarms from the forests to invade the Empire. The presence of a ghorgon makes the army almost unstoppable, but should the PCs kill the bray-shamans that bound it, they can turn its uncontrolled wrath against the beastmen themselves.



## HELL PIT ABOMINATION SPECIAL RULES

**Eldritch Physiology:** An abomination does not suffer critical wounds. Any critical wounds are treated as normal wounds.

**Flailing Appendages:** After an abomination completes a *Melee Attack*, roll ☐. On a ☒ result, the abomination may immediately perform a *Basic Melee Attack*. It may continue to perform additional *Basic Melee Attacks* until this special die roll does not produce a ☒ result.

**Terrifying:** Abominations cause Terror 3.

**Regeneration:** During its End of Turn Phase, an abomination recovers one normal wound. Regeneration does not work during a round in which the abomination was harmed by fire.

**Too Horrible to Die:** Unless the abomination's final wound was caused by a flaming attack, roll ☒ when it 'dies.'

✕ The creature revives, with 1 wound restored

☠ The creature revives, with 14 wounds restored

Blank: The abomination is truly dead

**Suggested Actions:** Feeding Frenzy/Avalanche of Flesh, Tooth and Claw, and Vicious Bite.

## WAR HYDRA ☠☠☠☠☠☠

The land of Naggaroth is harsh and unforgiving; the creatures that survive there are, by necessity, as cruel and merciless as the terrain. None is more terrifying than the hydra. It has the body of a massive lizard, dragon-like in size and protected by thick, uniquely-patterned scales, with a long tail that can shatter a man's bones with a single lash. From its neck rear seven serpentine heads, with crocodilian jaws arrayed with needle-sharp fangs. The immense size of these creatures and their writhing, snapping heads are not their only defence – each head can gout flame, burning prey to a crisp so that the monster can feed on the roasted meat. The metabolism of the creatures is remarkable; their wounds clot and close up with astounding speed.

The dark elves of Naggaroth have learned how to dominate these beasts. Beastmasters enter their cavernous lairs and subdue them with lashing whips and prongs. Some beastmasters are devoured undertaking this task, but their companions do not mourn them – such is the price that weaklings must pay. The hydras are taken to the breeding grounds within the dark elves' forbidding cities and there they are cruelly trained for war. The beastmasters crossbreed the most dangerous traits of these monsters and sorceresses cast dark enchantments upon the eggs to hatch even fiercer types of hydra. In battle, teams of beastmasters goad their war hydras towards the enemy to burn, rend, and devour. There are few opponents can stand against such monstrous foes.

## USING THE WAR HYDRA

Adventurers might encounter a hydra when traversing their natural habitat in the mountain ranges of Naggaroth or when facing an invading dark elf army. Some war hydras are kept as 'pets' by dark elf lords, including rulers of the black arks, to inspire fear in their rivals or provide a means of disposing prisoners and enemies. As with all pets, however, war hydras require exercise. Perhaps the commander of a black ark takes a break from slave raiding to go a-hunting with his war hydra along the Empire's coast.

## WAR HYDRA SPECIAL RULES

**Instinctive:** War hydras may use Willpower instead of Intelligence when attempting Observation checks.

**Terrifying:** War hydras cause Terror 3.

**Regeneration:** During its End of Turn Phase, a war hydra recovers one normal wound. Regeneration does not work during a round in which it was harmed by fire. The war hydra's actions gain:

☠☠☠ One destroyed head grows back to life

**Flaming Retribution:** Attacks from characters engaged with or within close range of a war hydra gain:

✧ Suffer 1 wound, plus 1 additional wound per ☠ as a tongue of flame licks out from one of the monster's maws.

In addition, when a war hydra uses the **Flame Breath** action, it adds ☐ to the dice pool for each of its living heads beyond the first.

**Multiple Heads:** A war hydra can make a *Basic Melee Attack* against as many characters within close range as it has living heads. Most hydras have five heads, though the GM can decide exactly how many heads an individual possesses. When a war hydra that possesses two or more heads suffers a critical wound, it must make a Resilience check with a difficulty equal to the highest Severity amongst the critical wounds suffered. Failure indicates that one of the war hydra's heads is destroyed.

**Suggested Actions:** Snapping Heads, Vicious Bite, Bestial Frenzy, and Flame Breath.





## EPIC ANTAGONISTS

CREATURE	ST	TO	AG	INT	WP	FEL	A/C/E	WOUNDS	STANCE
ARCHAON THE EVERCHOSEN	8■(6)	7■(8)	4(4)	4	6■	6■	10/10/8	28	C4/R4
KHAZRAK ONE-EYE	7■(6)	7■(7)	4■(2)	4	4■	3	10/8/6	20	C4/R2
GRIMGORE IRONHIDE	7■(8)	7■(8)	4(4)	2■	5■	2	10/6/8	24	R6
MANNFRED VON CARSTEIN	7■(5)	6■(6)	5■(4)	6■	6■	6■	8/10/8	30	C4/R4
GREY SEER THANQUOL	3(4)	4(1)	6(2)	7■	7■	6	4/10/8	18	C5/R2
GOLGFAG MANEATER	8■(6)	8■(5)	3(2)	3	4■	4	8/4/8	24	C1/R5
LOKHIR FELLHEART	4(6)	5(3)	7■(4)	4	4■	5■	6/6/6	18	C2/R4

## EPIC MONSTERS

CREATURE	ST	TO	AG	INT	WP	FEL	A/C/E	WOUNDS	STANCE
GALRAUCH THE GREAT DRAKE	8■(8)	8■(4)	5(3)	10	8	6	12/9/9	40	C4/R4
ARACHNAROK SPIDER	7■(5)	8(6)	5■(2)	2	3	1	6/6/4	36	C3/R1
GHORGON	9■(7)	8■(4)	3(1)	2	3■	2	8/2/2	32	C1/R4
HELL PIT ABOMINATION	8■(5)	7(4)	3■(0)	2	1■	1	9/0/1	28	C2/R3
WAR HYDRA	7(5)	6(3)	3(2)	2	3	1	6/2/2	24	C1/R3

## EPIC MINIONS

CREATURE	ST	TO	AG	INT	WP	FEL	A/C/E	WOUNDS	STANCE
SWORD OF CHAOS	6■(6)	6■(4)	3(2)	3	5■	3	8/2/3	20	R3
BONERIPPER	7(5)	7(4)	2(1)	2	6	1	10/0/2	18	R3
OGRE MANEATER	6■(6)	6■(3)	3(2)	2	3■	2	5/1/2	18	R2





## CHAPTER SEVEN

# THE ART OF WAAAGH!

This is an adventure for high rank characters (4th or 5th rank) who will stand, virtually alone, before a mighty invasion of greenskins. Even for figures such as they, this should be a challenging and perilous mission. Can they heed the hero's call?

## INTRODUCTION

A Waaagh! (a great assembly of countless greenskin tribes under one powerful leader) is building in the mountains above Ubersreik. If it is allowed to rampage unchecked it will stream from the mountains, lay waste to the lands in the foothills of the Grey Mountains, and threaten to destroy Ubersreik itself. The rest of the Reikland will then be at its mercy.

At the head of this great gathering is the cunning and ruthless black orc boss of the Red Maw tribe, Washnack Gorejaw. He rides at the head of his army upon his cruel mount, the wyvern Bonemauler. No other greenskin in the area can match Washnack's power and leadership, and so he is able to assemble the Waaagh! without being undermined by tribal animosity and internecine feuding. It takes a great leader to hold together such a ferocious force. How does Washnack manage such a feat? If that can be discovered then perhaps the Waaagh! can be stopped.

## BACK TO THE BEGINNING

Many years ago, in 1681 IC, all across the Empire, the dead rose from their graves. For one night, known as the Night of the Restless Dead, the veil between the worlds was broken and the dead moved among the living. Destruction and mayhem reigned. The Empire, already riven by internal feuding, was brought to its knees.

One hero of that time now lies long-forgotten in his tomb. Otto III, Count of Wissenland, led a small force into the Grey Mountains and confronted a force of Blood Knights under the shadowy vampire creature known as Karlmann the Red. On an island in the middle of the River Teufel, Otto's force made its last, desperate stand and managed to turn back the undead horde.

Otto struck down Karlmann, but was killed, in turn. He was buried where he fell. Some say the river ran so thick with blood that it was given a new name. As, some miles below, the people of Ubersreik saw the waters running red with the blood of Otto's valiant comrades in arms, they thought it must be the work of some sort of devil, and called it the Teufel. This is only one of several legends explaining the Teufels' name and the redness of its waters.



## GRAVE TIDINGS

The survivors of Otto's army discovered a small cave on the island, and decided it would make a fitting burial place for their count. He was interred with his trophies of war. They laid him to rest with his sword laid upon his chest, the blood of Karlmann the Red still upon it. Among other goods, they put in a crystal orb that Karlmann had carried. They knew not what it was, but thought it a valuable enough trophy to honour their fallen hero.

This decision, innocent as it was, has proved disastrous, and is indirectly responsible for the strength, cunning, and vigour of Waaagh! Washnack.

## SCHLUESSELSCHLOSS

Over the centuries an important fortress, Schluesselschloss, has grown up around Otto's tomb. Layer upon layer of defences have been built upon the island. Because of the narrow gorge leading to the Reikland, and the castle's dominance of that route, Schluesselschloss is in an obvious and vital defensive position.

The stronghold is famous as a last bastion against the raiders and monsters of the mountains. Many an invasion has been stopped short of the Reikland, broken upon the walls of Schluesselschloss and washed away by the waters of the Teufel.

## COUNT OTTO

Over the past several centuries, Otto has awakened as a vampire. Perhaps Karlmann the Red delivered his Blood Kiss before Otto struck the killing blow, or perhaps it was some other cause entirely - Otto himself does not know. What Otto does know is that for centuries he has languished in his tomb, unable to leave because of the holy sigils of Sigmar inscribed upon it, subsisting on rats and vermin. Whether due to the fact that he is now a vampire, or as a consequence of his long imprisonment, Otto now hates the Empire as much as he once loved it. With nothing to do but contemplate the black stone in his tomb, Otto has become a potent force, reaching out through the stone to influence Blickstein, Phlegmflan, and Stinktongue. Otto has more influence and control than any other bearer of a black stone in centuries. While he cannot see through the eyes of the other stone bearers, nor can he control their actions directly, he has a dim sense of the situation - enough to know that if the Schluesselschloss falls, he will be revenged upon the Empire. However, he is ultimately ignorant of anything that has transpired since his death - including his own burial. He is not even aware that his semi-conscious manipulations may lead to his freedom, as Washnack's Waaagh! smashes the Schluesselschloss.

Of course, should Otto be freed, he would use his vampiric powers to assume control of the orc Waaagh!, murder the defenders of the Schluesselschloss and raise them as undead servants, and unleash a combined horde of orcs and undead across the Reikland. The attack would usher in a time of darkness and war throughout the Empire not seen since the Vampire Wars.

The PCs could find Otto during the build up to the siege of Schluesselschloss, but it will probably be more dramatic if this occurs during the latter stages of the siege when the PCs will be the most desperate, and the stakes higher.



## THE BLACK STONES

The black orb buried in Otto's tomb is no mere bauble, but a piece of malignant magic from ages past. It is possible that who made the stones and why will never be known, but they have surfaced from time to time, usually in the hands of necromancers, Chaos sorcerers, or, as in the case of Karlmann the Red, vampires.

There are many such stones - some scholars hypothesize that there are eight - scattered throughout the world, but this adventure revolves around 4 of them, each of which has fallen into the hands of an unlikely figure.

The first stone is Karlmann the Red's - the one buried in Otto's tomb. The second stone is in the hands of Blickstein, the steward of the Schluesselschloss. The third stone belongs to Phlegmflan, a goblin shaman and advisor to Washnack Gorejaw. The fourth stone is in the hands of the night goblin chieftain Stinktongue.

These stones are linked by whatever fel magics created them in the first place. The bearer of the stones feels more confident, inspired, and clever, as his mind is attuned to the bearer of each other stone. Ideas, concepts, beliefs, and desires pass back and forth between the stone bearers at a subconscious level. This generally makes a person appear more intelligent - he has access to a small "think tank" of others to help him with his plots and schemes. However, the stones themselves are malicious and evil, and slowly twist and pervert every thought that passes through them. Inevitably, these thoughts become tainted by darkness, ambition, and perverse desires.

In the Teufeltal region, Otto's is by far the strongest will, and so it is his consciousness (or subconsciousness) that is most dominant between the shared mind of the Black Stones. A careful examination of Washnack's military strategy will reveal that it strongly resembles the exploits of the living Count Otto. Blickstein's evil-minded ambition to rule is a twisted version of Otto's own self-assured superiority. Even Stinktongue's ambitions and desires have been twisted to be in accord with Otto's own. Each of them has become possessed of a single goal: The Schluesselschloss must fall. Of course, some of Otto's other...proclivities may also be passed along via the stones. Blickstein, Phlegmflan, and Stinktongue may begin to thirst for blood, shun the sunlight (not that Stinktongue has ever



been comfortable in the sunlight), and generally behave suspiciously. They will have no idea why, but clever PCs may observe these behaviours and deduce that there is a vampire at the root of everything.

Finding and examining one of the black stones can be a key clue to this adventure. PCs may examine the stone with the aid of Magical Sight, search their knowledge of the stones with Folklore, or even try to determine the stone's effect on its bearer by carrying it about and using Intuition. These checks should all be **Hard (3d)**, and may reveal some of the following clues (more successes reveals more clues):

- ✦ The stone is a work of dark magic. (Magical Sight, Folklore)
- ✦ The stone is linked to something else in the valley, or even in the castle. (Magical Sight)
- ✦ The stone makes its bearer smarter. (Intuition, Folklore)
- ✦ Other, similar stones exist. (Folklore)
- ✦ The stone brings new ideas and new thoughts. (Intuition)
- ✦ The stone has an evil intelligence. (Intuition; this may be Otto's intelligence, or perhaps the stones really are intelligent in their own rights!?)

If a PC scores one or more ✦ on a check to examine the stones, he gains 1 corruption (if using the corruption rules) and places a tracking token on the stone. Later during the adventure, if still within close range of the stone, the GM may remove a tracking token to have the character suddenly perform a **Simple (0d)** action or a manoeuvre as the perverse will of the stone is felt. (This may mean the character drops his weapon at a crucial time, or throws open the gates when he should be defending them, for example.) The affected character will believe that the action he has just taken was his own idea, although he may have difficulty explaining why he did it.

## WASHNACK GOREJAW

Washnack is the belligerent warlord of the Red Maw tribe. He rides a huge wyvern, Bonemauler, so that no greenskin can be in any doubt about his great ferocity and power. Washnack would be just another aspiring greenskin chieftain, mad for power, but clueless about how to direct it effectively, except that he is advised by a goblin shaman who possesses one of the black stones and so thinks like Otto. The three of them have made a formidable team, and a great Waaagh! is building around Washnack's tribal homeland as testament to that collaboration.

Washnack is a huge black orc, bedecked with so much rusting armour that barely any of him is visible. He wears a large, round, iron helmet that looks like it may have once been part of a dwarfen brewery, and wields the biggest choppa this side of the Grey Mountains.

## PHLEGMFLAN

Phlegmflan is Washnack's shaman and official carrier of the black stone. The cowardly goblin stabbed seven rivals in the back to get hold of the shiny, precious, stone and will not give it up easily. The black stone marks Phlegmflan as the second most important

greenskin in the Waaagh!, and he is not slow to remind everyone of this. He has the protection of Washnack and so is even able to bully orcs (up to a point).

Phlegmflan wears a headdress of exotic feathers and other charms to mark him as a shaman and carries a lightning-struck, wooden staff etched with primitive runes.

## STINKTONGUE

Stinktongue wears the characteristic night goblin black robes adorned with the green mushroom motif of the Death Stalker tribe. Apart from two beady eyes peering from beneath the cowl, little else can be seen of Stinktongue save for the hook of his green nose.

For many generations the Death Stalker tribe's symbol of leadership has been a black stone. With the arrival of Waaagh! Washnack and Blickstein, added to Otto's influence, Stinktongue has now fixated on the Schluesselschloss. He has moved his tribe into some caverns beneath the castle, and is waiting for his moment to attack. Stinktongue always keeps his stone hidden from prying eyes beneath his capacious robes.

## REINHART BLICKSTEIN

Blickstein is the traitor inside the castle. He will do his utmost to thwart the PCs at every turn. He found a black stone in a curiosity shoppe in Altdorf over thirty years ago and immediately got the feeling they belonged together. Over the past 30 years, the comparatively weak-willed Blickstein has been thinking Otto's thoughts and hungering for Otto's power.

Blickstein is now the steward of Schluesselschloss in charge of the everyday running of the castle, and a trusted advisor to the von Schluessel family. He appears as an unremarkable and unassuming elderly gent, but always proudly wears the golden chains of his office. Blickstein finds his position as steward entirely unacceptable. Possessed of Otto's sense of entitlement, he believes that he is the only sensible person to rule not only the castle, but ultimately the whole of the Reikland. For this to happen, first the entire von Schluessel family must die, leaving a vacancy that Blickstein can occupy.

Assassination as a method of career advancement has not yet occurred to either Blickstein or Otto. Otto, and therefore Blickstein, believes that it is war and battle that makes or breaks the fortunes of a man. Waaagh! Washnack is an opportunity to ensure that the von Schluessel family's fortunes are broken. Blickstein will do everything he can to ensure that the Schluesselschloss falls, then try to escape and bring word to Ubersreik, telling a story in which he is a brave hero and the corrupt and incompetent von Schluessel family only survived as long as they did thanks to him.

Blickstein jealously guards his black stone, hiding it in his bed-chamber and fondling it at night and during his free time during the day. If he is deprived of his stone, he quickly breaks down into a hollow, useless shell of a man, lacking all of Otto's confidence.

## OTHER STONES

If the GM has other adversaries he wishes the PCs to get involved with, he can use a black stone as a way of getting them to the area. Then Otto's influence can bring them directly into conflict with the PCs. Who knows what sort of character might have come across a black stone in another corner of the Old World and be drawn mysteriously towards Schluesselschloss?





## THE TEUFELTAL

The Teufeltal (devil's valley) is a bowl of a valley surrounded on all sides by the high land of the Grey Mountains. Its scrubby hillsides are suitable for little other than sheep farming, though there are a few vineyards around Tallerhof. The Teufel itself flows from beneath the great mountain Frugelhorn and settles in a high lake. From there it flows east and then bursts through the mountains down a spectacular gorge and on towards Ubersreik and the great Reik basin.

The Grey Lady Pass road runs alongside the Teufel through the valley, until it climbs high into the mountains. This is a route through to Bretonnia. Higher, and more treacherous, and often closed in the coldest months, the Grey Lady Pass is not as busy or as famous as Axe Bite Pass further north. It has a reputation for attracting smugglers and other nefarious groups, but it is still an important trading route for the Reikland, and especially for Ubersreik.

The somewhat ramshackle stronghold of Schluesselschloss sits upon the island that was once the site of Otto's brave defence against Karlmann the Red. This gives it an impressive, natural, fast-flowing moat. The oldest structure on it was Otto's mausoleum. A wooden watchtower was soon added, later rebuilt in stone. Over the years more defences were added and the stronghold grew ever more impressive until it filled the entire island. Its buildings form a veritable labyrinth that spirals around the spike-like island.

Tallerhof is a small village and the only real settlement in the Teufeltal. Apart from being a stopover on the coach route to Bretonnia, Ubersreikers think of it merely as an outpost for shepherds

and smugglers. A dwarf road splits from the Grey Lady Pass in the village and rises towards Karak Azgaraz. It is the key route for the trade between Ubersreik and the dwarf hold.

In addition to the castle and the town, PCs may wish to visit De-Blanc's School, the Lowe Farm, the Gutbuster's mercenary camp, and the chapter house of the Order of the Grey Wolf.

## BARON HARALD VON SCHLUESSEL (DECEASED)

Harald ruled Teufeltal from Schluesselschloss for many years, unremarkably and largely competently. However, over the past few years Blickstein has worked to undermine his leadership. The baron died a couple of days ago in a ruthless trap set by Blickstein and Phlegmfian as part of Otto's scheme to weaken the castle's defences.

After reports of greenskins nearby, and with the encouragement of Blickstein, Harald took an army of his best men up into the hills to hunt some orc. They spotted some goblin scouts and joined battle. Von Schluessel's retinue was ambushed and surrounded by some of Washnack's finest orcs, and wiped out. This leaves the castle severely undermanned and without a baron. No one at the castle, except Blickstein, realises this yet.

## PREPARE FOR WAAAGH!

After the battle Washnack withdrew his army back up the valley a few miles and waited for even more reinforcements to swell his huge force. He has attracted greenskin tribes from all over the Grey Mountains, spider riders from the Reikwald, tattooed savage orcs



from the south, fleet wolf riders from the north, night goblins from below, boar boyz from the Massif Orcal, stone trolls from the mountains, river trolls from the valleys, and even a giant. A force of arachnarok spiders has made its painstaking journey across the mountains under the goblin shaman Buggrit, and his brother Buggrupp. The Grey Mountains has not seen a Waaagh! like it in living memory.

As soon as Washnack believes that it is time (because it's the decision Otto would make), the army will move against Schluesselschloss. Washnack and his chieftains are impatient, and the massacre of von Schluessel's expeditionary force has only served to whet their appetite for bloodshed and destruction.

## PART ONE: A TANGLED WEB

The adventure starts on the road to Karak Azgaraz, and therefore the PCs will need to be travelling that route. There are any number of reasons why they might be going that way. Now the PCs have achieved a certain amount of power and influence in the Old World it might not be suitable simply to send them places at the behest of their superiors, although, those in hierarchical institutions, such as wizards, priests, and witch hunters, will always have someone ranked directly above them, able to dispatch them where they will. The GM may wish not to use such a heavy hand now the characters have presumably demonstrated an ability to act on their own initiative.

The GM could find a way to work whatever plot the PCs are focusing on into a hook for the Art of Waaagh! If they need a specific artefact then it can be found in Karak Azgaraz. If they need a magical tome then it was last known in the possession of a wizard heading for the dwarf hold. A certain technology is required: a famous dwarf engineer there is bound to know it. A reluctant witness, renegade wizard, con artist – all could have fled to Karak Azgaraz.

The gods of the Old World can move in mysterious ways and the PCs by this stage could be likely to receive their direct instruction. A god might send an omen to a devout servant indicating that he should travel to Karak Azgaraz. No explanation should be required. The gods speak and mortals obey. An appropriate vision might include a host of greenskins baying for blood, a fast-flowing river running red and ancient ramparts crumbling into the bloody water.

Perhaps, if a character has been wielding Korden's hammer since the adventure 'An Eye for an Eye' then Grungni might send a vision making it plain that the artefact should be returned to Karak Azgaraz as soon as possible.

In short, any plans the PCs have are bound to hinge on a strange character or item at some point and it should not be difficult to have the last known whereabouts of this person or thing in Karak Azgaraz. Using the PCs' own plans to lead to hooks also brings the game a greater sense of freedom and player agency.

## THE JOURNEY UP

The locations and characters mentioned below are dealt with in detail in the next section. The GM should introduce as many as he can to the PCs on their way up the valley in order to give an impression of everyday life in the valley, and to foreshadow later options.

The PCs should be coming up to the Teufeltal from Ubersreik, which means they must travel up the gorge of Schluesselschlosschlucht. The road is on the northern bank, and observant PCs will see the odd band of goblins on the southern bank. These are the beginnings of a force that will soon block the gorge to all traffic. They will probably be too far away to be engaged by the PCs and in any case have orders to keep a low profile at this point. If the PCs try to cross the river, lurking trolls will have something to say about that. If the PCs do get to the goblins most of them will flee into the warren of caverns that permeates the gorge.

Even if the PCs can't do much about the goblins at this stage, they could realise that such a force this close to the Reikland is an unusual sight and an indication that all is not right with the Old World. Responsible characters would certainly want to warn the locals, including those in the castle of Schluesselschloss and the village of Tallerhof, when they get the chance.

The castle guards the entrance to the gorge. If the PCs wish to cross the river here, they will be allowed to do so. Alternatively, if they warn the guards of greenskin sightings they will get to meet Pansy Spoonbill, and if they push it, and have some authority, Reinhart Blickstein. The most glaring first impression of the castle is the slack state of its guards and defences. The PCs could also learn that the baron of the castle left on a punitive expedition against the orcs a couple of days ago, and headed towards Karak Azgaraz.

In the village of Tallerhof the PCs will come across a band of smugglers. If they look authoritative then the smugglers will be furtive and evasive, but otherwise will try to do a deal with the PCs. They will have Bretonnian brandy, or beer from Karak Azgaraz, depending on the party. The price will be so generous that it will be plain to anyone that they are up to no good.

The PCs might also run into a patrol of Knights of the Grey Wolf from the temple. If they are travelling to Bretonnia, they will be told of the existence of the temple and the weather conditions up on the pass, but if the PCs tell them they are heading up the dwarf road, then the Grey Wolves will take little interest.

## TRAVEL TIMES

It is about 20 miles from the Schluesselschloss to the chapter house of the Order of the Grey Wolf at the far side of the Teufeltal, which is about how far a group can travel in a day in the mountainous terrain (8 hours hike, about 6 on horseback). As a broad rule of thumb, it takes 1 day to travel to and have encounters at any of the points of interest within the Teufeltal from the Schluesselschloss, and another day to travel back and resolve more business at the castle. With horses, PCs can perhaps make the out-and-back trip in a day, but they'll have to hurry and get precious little sleep.

Some characters may wish to travel faster than is safe or for longer than is wise. These characters can do so, but will suffer fatigue that they cannot easily get rid of (at least, not without resting, which defeats the purpose of hurrying in the first place). For every hour past 8 the PCs travel without a rest, or for every hour they attempt to shave off a long journey, they arrive at their destination with 1 fatigue.



The PCs may run into a lone ogre from the maneater mercenary company camped by the lake. He is in Tallerhof to buy some fishing bait. The ogres believe that the chicken pies at the Bridge Inn are the best bait available. The ogre will of course eat most of the pies before he gets back to the camp. Also, as the PCs start to climb the dwarf road towards Karak Azgaraz, it will be possible to see the ogre camp below on the far side of the lake. It will not be clear exactly who inhabits it, though the assembled tents look massive, even at this distance.

The PCs should be able to see the buildings of De Blanc's School upon a ridge in the distance as they begin their journey up the dwarf road.

## AMBUSH

On their way up the dwarf road the PCs will be ambushed by goblin spider rider scouts from the Waaagh! The road passes below and to the west of a range of spiky cliffs, interspersed with thick gorse and heather. From the bottom to the top of the cliffs is long range, and a fall would constitute a **Hard (3d)** environmental hazard. This makes perfect cover, and the spider riders can observe the PCs' approach from a safe distance and fall upon them without warning. They can even use their spider-silk to rappel from the cliffs to land silently, suddenly engaged.

The PCs will be ambushed the moment they get their first glimpse of the battlefield (described below). The goblins will take advantage of the PCs' preoccupation with that gruesome sight in order to make their attack.

## THE LONG LEGS

The spider riders are acting as outriders for the Waaagh! They are the Long Leg tribe from the Reikwald and have been ordered to watch Grey Lady Pass and the dwarf road for any more signs of Imperial aggression. Once they spot the PCs, however, they will expertly conceal themselves, and while the PCs are travelling below the cliff, they will manoeuvre above and around them and spring an ambush.

For a fourth rank party there should be about twice as many spiders and riders as PCs. They should make very dangerous ambushers, and so if the PCs do not fall into the trap, there can be more of them. As soon as the PCs appear to be reacting to the view of the battlefield, the spiders will drop silently from above.

## SPIDER RIDER GLIDER

If a spider rider is positioned more or less directly above a target, which they will be here as they are hiding in the cliff side directly above the road, then on their turn they can engage from long range as a single manoeuvre and have a normal basic Melee Attack. The spiders and riders share their initiative and will be able to make any appropriate action. There is not room, however, for more than one spider rider to use this method to engage a single target in the same round.

## GRIZNIK DA REALLY BIG

The Long Legs' daddy is the goblin shaman, Griznik da Really Big. He is a particularly scrawny specimen, saved from a life of snivelling by his prodigious powers of mind. When the spider riders attack, he will hang back in a concealed position with a good view of the fray and aid his goblins with magic. He is unusually brave

## GRIZNIK SPILLS THE BEANS

"You 'as killed me init you smelly 'umies, but you won't last long, an' no mistake. Washnack's gonna come down 'ere-like a ton of green bricks. E's got da biggest Waaagh! you 'as evar seen an' it's 'eadin' your way. You'd be betta leavin' da valley right now, coz when we takes schla, schlussall, schlusserschla, when we takes da castle, you is gonna be as good as dead, an' da Reikland will be ars."

and foolhardy for a goblin, due to his unshakeable belief in his invulnerability. If things go badly, he will abseil down and finish the fight even if he has little hope of success while lesser goblins turn-abdomen and flee. If Griznik is defeated he will beg the PCs in broken Reikspiel to spare his life. In return he can tell them all about the Waaagh! He knows that it is led by Washnack, of course, and he can reveal that the black orc's aim is to enter the Reikland by way of the gorge, and that therefore first Schluesselschloss must fall. Griznik has been with the Waaagh! for several days and so will know a lot about it and so can reveal as much information as the GM sees fit. He can give vague details of the various factions that have joined the force and can put into perspective just how massive this Waaagh! is, even in the scale of greenskin legend.

If Griznik dies or the PCs are not interested in what he has to say, then his words can be put into the mouth of a lone scout who might get captured, or any other surviving greenskin (perhaps from the battlefield) that the PCs come across. Griznik's main function is to lend more weight to the notion that a Waaagh! is imminent, and that it will be coming through Schluesselschloss on its way to Ubersreik. This may be obvious to some PCs in any case, but it may have to be made clear to others. If no greenskin gets forced into revealing this then a more friendly character, like Andreas von Averbach, might be able to make the observation.

## THE BATTLEFIELD

If defeated, the Long Legs will flee southwards, roughly along the dwarf road, this will bring them closer to the main body of the Waaagh! The Waaagh! is a good hour's ride away at the moment, and so it will take them a while to report the PCs' presence.

If the PCs follow the spider riders or journey any way south at all, or climb the cliffs, they will soon see a terrible sight in the distance, the remains of yesterday's battle where Baron von Schluessel fell. The air will be thick with the stench of death. Birds and animals scavenge on the outskirts of the site, while bloodstained snotlings pick their way through the bodies, finishing off survivors and looting anything that might be useful. An area of bright metal and blue cloaks shows where von Schluessel's force made its stand. This is surrounded by areas of green flesh and rust. Even from a distance it is easy to work out the shape of the battle. From the battlefield, the PCs will be able to see the main body of the Waaagh! camped up in the hills a few miles away (see 'This is Waaagh!' on page 61).

If the PCs get close to the battlefield then the scavenging snotlings will group together around their goblin gang-masters and attempt to make a defence of their position before fleeing in all directions. Most of them are already satisfied and are making their way back to the main force laden with the weapons and armour of the fallen.



Some of the smaller ones still remain, getting the slimmest pickings. Remember these are the lowest of the low, the weakest and most cowardly of all the greenskins in the Waaagh!

After scaring away the scavengers, the PCs might find von Schluessel's body. He should be easy enough to pick out due to his conspicuous helmet and dress; he lies beside his army's broken banner, and wears the baronial seal on his finger. If the PCs manage to bring the body back to Schluesselschloss, this will be appreciated by many of the people there. The PCs might also notice Andreas von Averbach, one of von Schluessel's trusted knights, who still lives. If they save him, he will give them an account of the battle.

If the PCs do not head south and do not see the battlefield, or if they did not encounter Andreas von Averbach on the field, they can come across him on their way back down into the valley. He will have managed to drag himself away from the bloody field unseen and will be heading for Tallerhof.

## ANDREAS VON AVERBACH

Andreas is a young knight whose family owns land neighbouring one of von Schluessel's Reikland estates. He was sent up to the mountains 'to make a man of him'. He is badly injured, having a deep wound to his thigh which he was able to close but now looks infected, and he will die in the next couple of days unless he gets some decent medical attention. He can tell the PCs what happened in the battle and will ask to be helped back to the castle, but first he will demand they try to find the body of Baron Harald von Schluessel and bring it back to the castle.

## THIS IS WAAAGH!

Any PCs that approach the battlefield will be able to see Washnack's force in the distance. As they crest a rise, they will suddenly see before them thousands upon thousands of greenskins staining the hillside: black orcs in armour, naked, strangely painted orcs, boar-riding orcs, and masses of goblins, some on spiders and wolves, others in regiments cloaked in black or clad in patchwork armour. There are also trundling war machines, as well as giants and trolls. The horde stretches as far as the eye can see, filling the valley, making any more progress plainly impossible.

The PCs should immediately be hit by the sheer, awesome size of the army, and the sudden realisation that they are in serious trouble. To underline the effect, the GM can decide that the scene causes Terror 2, or he can increase party tension. If the party wishes to con-

### ANDREAS' ACCOUNT OF THE BATTLE

"The baron wanted to check out reports of orcs in the area what with the caravan to Karak Azgaraz going missing. We were making our way up the dwarf road, and suddenly these gobbos started pouring from the hills. Thousands of them. We fell back and prepared to meet them, and then suddenly, as if they knew exactly where we'd be, huge great orcs appeared behind us, and on both sides of us. Boar riders, big armoured brutes, naked ones, and other monsters fell upon us. We were completely surrounded, didn't stand a chance. The baron fought bravely, but... the baron, I saw him fall..."

tinue on, they will only have themselves to blame when wave after wave of greenskins meet them in battle. Sensible PCs will realise they need to retreat and come up with a plan. If the PCs don't take cover or other steps to avoid being spotted, or just spend too long arguing about what to do without making any progress, Washnack will dispatch a mob of 10 or so wolf riders or boarboyz to kill the PCs before they can bring word of his Waaagh! back to the castle.

Two things should be obvious about the Waaagh! to anyone with any military training or knowledge of orcs. Firstly, the Waaagh! is effectively cutting off the overland route to Karak Azgaraz, laying siege to that hold. Secondly, it's only a matter of time before the orcs attack the Schluesselschloss and, absent heroic effort on the part of the defenders, smash right through it.

For the adventure to proceed smoothly, the PCs must become aware of the Waaagh! and ideally get a sense of its scope. The easiest way to do this is for them to see it. If they go looking for either Baron von Schluessel or Karak Azgaraz, they will stumble across the Waaagh!. If they are in the pass for other reasons, they may encounter a survivor from the battle – such as Andreas von Averbach – or another eyewitness to the Waaagh!.

Whenever the PCs finally learn of the Waaagh!, begin the countdown on the Washnack's Waaagh! Tracker (see Timing below). The PCs or a seasoned military veteran NPC (such as von Averbach) can estimate how long it would take the Waaagh! to reach the Schluesselschloss based on its level of organisation and proportion of infantry.





area and do not overlook any important locations. Even if they do not have time to visit them all, they should have the chance to consider them.

## TIMING

The PCs should have about four or five days to see to the defence of the castle. If there are only a couple of PCs they could be given longer, but if there are many then they can be given less time. The GM should make a judgement, but a party of four should be given about four or five days. So, the GM should start the Waaagh! Tracker token on the 4 or 5 space. When the token reaches 0, the Waaagh! will arrive at the castle and the assault will begin.

The token should be moved down one space every night, but events can also hasten the Waaagh! Because Blickstein's black stone is attuned to Phlegmflan's, any sense of urgency or nervousness on his part will be transferred to the Waaagh! - this means if Blickstein is uncovered or the PCs find a black stone, the Waaagh! may begin to move faster. If the PCs somehow manage to let Otto know where he is or that they're using the time well, he will reach out through the stones and try to urge the Waaagh! on as well.

With the Waaagh! looming, and the PCs having seen the vast greenskin throng with their own eyes, a sense of urgency should already be in the air. The GM may wish to use Andreas von Averbach and other NPCs to increase this. Refugees can arrive at the castle telling of the approach of the green tide. If the PCs send out scouts they will return with a look of dread in their eyes as they report on the enemy closing in. Also, the PCs themselves can witness the inexorable progress of the horde for themselves, if they go to look.

The Teufeltal is about twenty miles long. It should take about a day to travel that distance on foot, and a bit less time than that mounted. Because of the harsh terrain and winding, rocky trails, travelling on horseback is often not too much quicker than going by foot. PCs should be allowed to push themselves, but they will suffer fatigue and run the risk of damaging themselves or their mount. Moreover, if they do travel more quickly they will necessarily be taking less care to stay hidden from the enemy.

## THE WASHNACK'S WAAAGH! SHEET

The GM should mark the progress of the Waaagh! on the Waaagh! Approaches tracker. The initial position of the token determines the maximum number of days before the Waaagh! reaches the castle. This should be set to around 4 or 5 for a party of four. The lower the number, the harder it will be to prepare the castle for the greenskin assault. The sheet does include a possible 8 spaces for this tracker - a full week. Some GMs may wish to start the tracker (secretly or not) early, before the PCs are aware of the orc threat, rather than simply giving the PCs 4 or 5 days after discovering the orcs.

As the Waaagh! Tracker token approaches 0, the greenskin army approaches the castle. The Waaagh! Tracker token should be moved down one space every day. The token may also move if the orcs are given some reason to hurry (perhaps due to Otto's influence). When the token reaches the zero space, the assault upon the castle will begin.

Note that as the horde marches, it will overrun various landmarks in the Teufeltal valley. Three days before reaching the castle, Tall-erhof will be overrun. Two days before the siege, orc foraging parties will finally destroy De Blanc's school. On the day of the siege,

## PART TWO: PREPARATIONS

Once the Waaagh! has been established as a threat, the PCs will have to decide what to do about it. The most obvious answer is to return to the Schluesselschloss and do what they can to help fortify it. If the PCs would rather flee the Teufeltal altogether, make it clear that the river trolls and goblins in the Schluesselschlosschlucht make that idea untenable. An NPC - probably Matthaus von Schluessel - can also plead with the PCs to help with the defence of the castle, and offer them significant rewards. The consensus amongst nearly everyone in the valley is that the horde must be stopped at the Schluesselschloss. The soldiers available to the von Schluessels are too few to meet the orcs in the field, and there is no other fortified position that can hope to stand against the Waaagh! The PCs may have a number of clever ideas to delay, harass, or weaken the orc army, but by the time they are aware of the Waaagh!, a siege at the castle is inevitable.

Due to the size and relative lack of organisation of the orcish host, it will take Washnack's troops several days to reach the castle and besiege it. The PCs have until that happens to help the castle prepare for the siege. (If the PCs don't help, Blickstein will sabotage all efforts from within and the castle will fall in less than 24 hours after the orcs arrive.)

Nearly everyone the PCs meet will know the valley well. The GM should feel free to let NPCs offer their ideas and insights to the PCs, especially in regard to the locations on the map. They don't necessarily have to be good ideas or insights but the GM should make sure that sociable PCs can glean a general knowledge of the



## OPEN OR SECRET TRACKING?

It will be important to know how much time the PCs are taking for their activities. The GM should keep careful track. Whether he allows the players to see the Washnack's Waaagh! Tracker will be up to him and the sort of game he likes to play. If he does then they will be able to sense the Waaagh! approaching with the movement of the token, and this should increase the air of doom.

Even if the players do not see the tracker, the fact that they can see the GM using it (with a conspicuous shift of the token behind a screen every night perhaps) can be enough to remind them that they are on the clock, and will add a proper sense of urgency to their plans. The PCs should never be left thinking they have plenty of time, even if they do not know exactly how much they have.

those same orcs will ravage the Lowe farm and make contact with the Gutbusters (which may be friendly or hostile depending on the actions of the PCs).

The GM should also track the PCs' contribution to the defence of the castle on the Defence of Schluesselschloss tracker. The initial position of the token should be set to 1, indicating the horrible state of affairs in the Schluesselschloss thanks mostly to Blickstein. The more they achieve, the easier their defence will be and the longer they should manage to hold out against the enemy.

Whenever the PCs make a significant contribution to the defence of the castle or they trigger an event marked by a **Tower Symbol**, this advances the token on the Defence Tracker by one space.



Whenever they make a major error or trigger an event marked by an **Orc Symbol**, this will move the token back down again.



## EVERYBODY SPLIT UP

There should be a lot to get done. As the PCs are competent people, it might be worth considering having them go off on their own or in smaller groups for the necessary missions. Certainly, a party that stays together will be safer, but will not have time to get everything done before the Waaagh! arrives. Obviously this should be up to the players, but a GM can advise them depending on how he wants to run the game and what sort of preference he has for running games where everyone splits up. If the party does split up the GM should be generous about coordinating their efforts and meeting up again.

This sort of game has pros and cons. One of the advantages is that more can get done, in game time. The party will use its time more efficiently. It can also be entertainingly dramatic if the GM cuts regularly between each player or group, creating a sense of activity and progress.

One of the disadvantages is that a player will necessarily spend most of his time with his PC not immediately involved in what is going on. Another disadvantage is that one PC's mission may take

up much more 'screen time' than another equally important mission, and some players may get little to do while another might get too much.

A lone character can have a tense and exciting time hiding from or escaping the enemy knowing a slip may mean certain death. The GM should not scale the danger of encounters to lone PCs. When the PC decides to go it alone he knows that he is taking a risk and relying on his wits more than his sword. It would not make sense to then give him a fighting chance by making sure he only meets one or two of the enemy at a time, especially when there are so many of the enemy about.

## SCHLUESSELSCHLOSS

The defence of the valley should centre on Schluesselschloss. The castle is built on a spike of an island in the middle of the fast-flowing Teufel, at the entrance to a steep gorge. It is the perfect defensive position. There are drawbridges on both sides of the castle, so that it effectively bridges the river.

Despite its spectacular location, the castle itself is not particularly impressive. It is more a jumble of walls and towers from the last eight hundred years, a mishmash of styles, material, and quality. A wall runs around the perimeter studded with towers, but apart from that logic there seems to be little rhyme or reason for its design. Many of the rooms of the castle are actually cut out of the rock and burrow quite deeply into the spike.

The Barons von Schluessel have called the fortress home for many generations. They have income from the Teufeltal, and some small estates around Ubersreik. They are also paid a generous stipend by the burghers of Ubersreik who are well aware of the vital strategic position of the castle. The von Schluessels generally hold their family duty to defend this castle very seriously indeed. The von Schluessel coat of arms is a white tower on a blue field and the family motto is 'Remember the Schluesselschloss'.

## WANDERING AROUND

The Teufeltal will become an increasingly dangerous place to be as the Waaagh! approaches. As the PCs travel around they run the risk of encountering scouts and other elements of the Waaagh! As an option, for every journey the PCs make, the GM can roll some challenge dice. The GM should start with one ♦, but as the Waaagh! approaches, or the PCs travel closer to the heart of Washnack's force, he should increase the ♦ as appropriate.

✱ indicates that an adversary crosses their path. A single ✱ would be a small scouting party, or a band of looters, or a lone monstrous foe, (i.e. 2 orcs with 10 goblin henchmen, 6 goblins on giant wolves, or a single troll) while ✱✱ would be a far larger and more organised group (i.e. 6 orcs led by a Black Orc, 4 orcs with 2 dozen goblin henchmen, 3-4 trolls, 5 orc boar boyz). ✱✱✱ would indicate that somehow the PCs have come across an entire army or a whole tribe of monstrous foes (sufficient enemies to force the PCs to retreat).



## REINHART BLICKSTEIN

Reinhart is a grey-haired and weasel-faced old man. He proudly wears the heavy, golden chain that marks him as the steward of Schluesselschloss. He is the central character in this part of the adventure; the rotten apple that has managed to spoil this entire barrel. Everyone of the castle's inhabitants' attitudes and beliefs have been shaped by Blickstein to some degree, and therefore the PCs will find getting anything done or anyone motivated more of a chore than it should be.

Blickstein has already persuaded Harald von Schluessel to ride off towards what Blickstein knew would be certain death. He has also poisoned the relationship between Matilde and her two sons.

Blickstein's mind has been entirely corrupted by the black stones. Blickstein is effectively addicted to his communion with the stone and must return to his room to gaze into it several times per day. He puts all his effort and creativity into sabotaging the von Schluessels and is good at it. He will behave proactively and will attempt to turn any situation to his advantage, making comments to the von Schluessels in order to turn them against each other and against the PCs. He will have the good sense not to try to turn one PC against another unless there is an excellent opportunity.

One of the ways Blickstein weakened the castle was to have the baron and baroness at each other's throats. He accomplished this by setting their two sons against each other. He knew that the baroness favoured Erik, and so manipulated Harald into sticking up for Matthaus.

Before the baron rode off for his fateful battle, Blickstein had him sign a will disinheriting Erik and naming Matthaus as heir. He has this document hidden in his quarters (with the stone). He does not intend to use it now, however, seeing an opportunity to manipulate Matilde. He has let her know the will exists, but has hinted that he may not use it if things go to his liking. He is using this leverage to veto anything the baroness wishes to do, further plunging the castle into paralysis. For this reason, Matilde may agree on principal to what the PCs ask but then later change her mind.

If the PCs get rid of Blickstein:



In addition, if the PCs do get rid of Blickstein, he will not be there to enact his plan, in which case some of the PCs' plans to defend the castle should stand more chance of succeeding.

## MATILDE VON SCHLUESEL

Matilde is a thin, beautiful aristocratic creature who believes that the Empire will endure simply through the force of will of the upper classes. She is self-centred, haughty, and dismissive. She has always had everything done for her, and so does not understand that she might need to do things for herself. She comes from very old, very wealthy, but not very sane aristocratic stock.

When first told the fate of her husband, Matilde falls into a sudden (and obviously affected) faint. Her grieving will continue to be remarkably conspicuous and hog the attention of the household. This is not a sad or tragic exercise, but one of selfishness and misplaced duty. As she is not competent to run the household, she will use her grief as a cover for her ineffectuality at such a vital time. As the situation becomes more serious, so will her grief become more conspicuous. Her black outfits will become increasingly outrageous, and she will paint her face with ever thickening layers of white pow-

## GETTING IN

Although the castle is a fortified position, its gates are normally open during daylight hours and a human, halfling, or dwarf would have no difficulty getting inside.

If the PCs have any sort of rank or nobility or they are seen to be performing a service for the von Schluessels, they will be received by Baroness Matilde. Otherwise, if they want to talk to someone in charge they'll wind up dealing with Blickstein or Pansy. When they meet the household, they should notice an air of unease and distrust. Matilde is alternately estranged from her two sons, shifting her favour from one to the other. No one respects Pansy, the halfling captain. They all seem to obey Blickstein unquestioningly, but no one holds him with affection.

The PCs will be treated well and can stay in the castle for a while, but if the PCs are not proactive nothing much will get done. The guards will not prepare for battle. Supplies will not be stored. Time will pass. It will be plain to the PCs that despite the people of the castle going through the motions, the place is dysfunctional and suffers from extremely low morale. The guards drill, but the drill is slack. Victuallers go about their business, but the food (for the von Schluessels) is poor and supplies are short.

If the PCs bring Harald's body back to the castle then it will be laid to rest in the family's private mausoleum. Remember that Otto's tomb is long forgotten. Harald's body will not be taken there.



der. She will even threaten to throw herself from the battlements at one stage in order to join her beloved husband, a threat she has no intention whatsoever of carrying out.

Matilde is in charge of the castle but will increasingly be unwilling to make rulings. This means that if the PCs go through the proper channels, she will try to hamper their efforts. In addition, if the PCs force her to make decisions once Blickstein gets to her, she will change her mind again. Because of her fickleness and indecision, as well as Blickstein's secret manipulation, it could seem as if the baroness is deliberately trying to undermine the PCs' efforts.


The PCs could try to sideline her somehow or take more drastic action like mutiny, which could be a reasonable course. However, they should know that under law this should get them hanged or burned.

## ERIK VON SCHLUESSEL

Erik is large-headed and red-faced with gangly limbs and huge, clumsy fists. He is big and brave and a little stupid. He loves hunting, manly pursuits, and beating up his younger brother. Once he learns that his father is dead, he will want to know why he is not yet the baron. His mother will fob him off with excuses, but this will not be good enough and he will spend the start of the adventure whining that he should be the baron and everyone should be doing what he says.

He will order the PCs around like they are his personal servants. If he takes a dislike to a PC then he will do everything he can to get one up on his new enemy, and Sigmar help that PC if Erik should eventually succeed to the barony.

Having said all that, as a born leader and brave warrior, he will be a great asset to the defence of the castle. Even though he does not value the garrison, his leadership in battle and the fact that he is a von Schluessel will inspire the men.

If the PCs get rid of Erik: 

## MATTHAUS VON SCHLUESSEL

In contrast to his brother, Matthauss is small and timid. He would rather have his head in a book of Imperial history than go hunting or fighting. In addition to their other obvious physical differences, he does not look like his brother at all, with thin red hair in contrast to his brother's thick black hair. He is also the only von Schluessel that the PCs will be able to have a reasonable conversation with. The lad is extremely garrulous and will talk for hours. Most of it will be fanciful or uninteresting, but his words might contain some useful gems. He will certainly mention locations in the valley that can be strategically important to the PCs if they haven't been mentioned yet.

He will be surprised to learn that he is in the running to be baron. He was looking forward to a quiet life of study and the odd trip to the Great Library in Altdorf. Because of his studying, Matthauss will know the history of the castle and the story of Otto III. However, he will not think to bring it up unless the PCs specifically mention it first.


During the siege, Matthauss will mostly stay in the library reading avidly to take his mind off things, but he will emerge from time to time to tell a PC some recently learned useless fact: 'Did you know that if you lay all the sausages in Averland end to end they will be long enough to reach from Altdorf to Praag?'

## CAPTAIN PANSY SPOONBILL

Pansy is a plump halfling and a keen cook, more interested in dill and potato mashing than drill and square-bashing. His captain's uniform was originally designed for a human and, despite being altered considerably, is still straining around the waist and comically long in the sleeve. The old baron had him promoted to captain of the castle guard on Blickstein's recommendation. Previously he had simply been the company cook, so his promotion was a bit of a surprise, not least for Pansy himself. The halfling's plan to live a life of ease with as much food as he can eat has gone awry thanks to Blickstein's efforts to undermine the castle's defences.

Pansy goes through the motions of commanding his troops, but it is plain that his heart is not in it. He is not respected by his men – in fact they loathe him. If the PCs know what they're doing, they'll have Pansy moved back to the kitchen and replace him with Sergeant Schatz. Despite his poor showing as a captain, Pansy's natural avarice has spread to his charges. His men are probably the best fed in the entire Empire. This means they're also all overweight. Pansy's acquisitiveness and position of power means that his men actually eat better than the von Schluessels.

At the height of the siege, when everyone else is straining every sinew to defend the castle and hold out against the odds, Pansy will decide it's time for a party. He resigns himself to the fact that the castle will soon be overrun, and decides that he would rather die with a full belly. He will give orders for as much of the food as possible to be prepared in the most ostentatious way possible by as many cooks and servants as possible. He's that sort of halfling.

If Pansy leads the Schluesselschloss garrison during the siege: 





## SERGEANT MARTIN SCHATZ

Schatz is an experienced soldier and looks the part; his shaven head boasts several scars and he wears a goblin ear necklace. He has the respect of his men, and when the last captain left (he retired, innocently enough), they were shocked that Schatz was not chosen to replace him. He used to do his best to keep his men fighting fit, but he is now worn out from being undermined regularly by Pansy, and by his frustration at the atrocious morale of his men. If he is promoted to captain then his old enthusiasm returns.

Schatz can be a useful source of information and speculation if the PCs befriend him (promoting him to captain would help in this). Over the past couple of years he has seen how things have deteriorated at the castle. He does not know the cause of it, but can say that it has happened gradually and comes right from the top. If pushed, he can speculate that either the baroness or the steward was a bad influence on the baron, but can't back up this claim.

During the siege, Schatz can be relied upon to be standing nearby whenever the PCs require a convenient synopsis of the state of the battle, a reliable opinion on the morale of the men, and so on.

If the PCs get Schatz promoted to captain:



## GARRISON

Most of the best men of Schluesselschloss have already been lost, following Harald into the mountains. There remain only about one hundred of the garrison: the lucky, the shirkers, and the malingerers. They wear bright blue uniforms emblazoned with a white tower to match the von Schluessel coat of arms. It should be obvious to anyone with any military experience that the soldiers of the garrison are slack, lazy, and ill-disciplined. Guards are inattentive and often absent. Any detailed examination will show them to be dirty and poorly drilled. They are well-fed, however. Nearly every one of the guards is a bit on the chubby side.

The castle has three great cannon that could aid a defence. However, one clearly has a broken wheel. A second appears to be in working order but if a PC succeeds at a **Hard (3d) Tradecraft (engineering) check** they discover that it is in fact so poorly maintained that it will explode when it fires its next shot. So only one is immediately safe and usable. If the PCs get them cleaned and fixed then all three will be available for the battle. Remember the men have fallen into bad practice so if the PCs simply delegate then the chances are things will still not get done. The PCs will have to keep an eye on the soldiers and make sure their orders are carried out.

If the PCs get the cannon mended:



If the PCs can get some discipline and self-respect back into the troops:



## SOMETHING ROTTEN IN SCHLUESSELSCHLOSS

It should be clear that not everything is how it should be in Schluesselschloss, but the cause might not be obvious. Blickstein is very cunning and will only oppose the PCs in convoluted or subtle ways. For example, if the PCs give some duties to a competent underling, such as Schatz, Blickstein may pile additional duties onto that NPC, such that he can't possibly accomplish them all. He will not

stand against them directly and will appear to be on their side. The PCs will probably see good progress as they try to get the castle into shape, but once their back is turned things will degenerate again. Because the PCs should be busy travelling throughout the Teufeltal, this will give Blickstein opportunities to undermine their efforts and blame others.

Refugees will arrive at the castle as word of the Waaagh! begins to spread, but they will be turned away on the baroness's orders unless the PCs intervene. However, if they are admitted, they will simply lie about the place all day getting in the way and using up resources unless the PCs see to it that they are put to useful work.

There is little food in the castle stores and what there is goes straight to Pansy's ambitious recipes for his garrison. The PCs could get to the bottom of this, reprimand Pansy and arrange for more supplies. However, the supplies might then become mysteriously spoiled by a rapacious green fungus (courtesy of the night goblins, see below).

One night one of the castle's great cannons might become untied from its station and fall from the wall to the courtyard below, smashing it utterly. Or several of the garrison will simply disappear without trace. All this will be down to Blickstein or the goblins..

If the PCs patrol the castle carefully at night, they might manage to see something important or even to catch one of the goblins, but they will have to be very good to catch Blickstein. If they should finger him, no one in the castle will act against him; the PCs will have to take responsibility for that themselves and they will have to be careful not to antagonise the garrison. If they do manage to capture Blickstein and search his quarters, a **Difficult (3d) Observation (Int) check** will reveal a hidden compartment behind a wooden panel, which contains his black stone, the baron's will, and a couple of Scarlet Elf Cap toadstools.

## THE NIGHT GOBLINS

Stinktongue and his Death Stalker tribe of foul night goblins lurk in caverns beneath the Schluesselschloss. Driven by the urgency of the black stones (and Otto's belief that the castle is the key to the Reikland's defence), Stinktongue will do everything he can to undermine the castle's defences. He has the abstract notion (gleaned from the stones) that the time to attack the castle is soon, and so he is actively and aggressively softening it up...but he doesn't actually know about or work with the Waaagh!; rather he intends to "gavver da ladz" and launch an attack from below when the time is right himself. (But Stinktongue doesn't have enough soldiers for an all-out attack from his tribe to be successful.)

Stinktongue is an important chance for the PCs to get their hands on another black stone, which he will have on him at all times. At some point before the siege commences, the PCs should have an opportunity to catch Stinktongue in action and secure his black stone. Seeing that Stinktongue and Blickstein have the same black stone is an important clue.

Stinktongue knows, because Blickstein knows, that the castle's ammunition stores are a vital target. He may come himself to ensure the success of a raid on the magazine, which will give the PCs a chance to intercept him and a further clue as to the greenskins' odd behaviour - how did the goblins know to attack the gunpowder stores? (Note that none of the goblins quite understand how vola-



## SCARLET ELF CAP



*This pointy, warty mushrooms smells foul and seems to ooze a red-black sludge. You're certain it's not good to eat.*

Extracting the poison from a Scarlet Elf Cap is an **Easy (1d) Nature Lore (Int) or Medicine (Int) check**. A \* on the check means you have poisoned yourself; suffer 3 fatigue. When applied to a weapon, Scarlet Elf Cap extract gives the wearer the Poison ability: if an attack with a Poison weapon deals a critical wound, the target suffers fatigue equal to that wound's severity. 1 mushroom is enough poison for 1 weapon; it lasts about 1 hour.

tile gunpowder is - if their raid is successful, the PCs can recover Stinktongue's black stone from his corpse beneath the shattered masonry of the castle wall.)

The Death Stalker night goblins use Scarlet Elf Cap poison. This innocuous-seeming mushroom grows in damp places, including the castle dungeons, and Blickstein has some as well (he "figured out" how to prepare it due to the black stone he carries).

Every time Blickstein or the goblins manages to effectively undermine the PCs' actions:



The night goblins use secret tunnels beneath the castle to get in and out. These tunnels are a liability to the defenders. If the PCs discover and seal the tunnels:



## SCHLUESSELSCHLOSSSCHLUCT

The gorge with its treacherous rapids and precarious trail is the only decent route between Teufeltal and Ubersreik. Soon after the PCs arrive in Teufeltal, the gorge will be overrun with goblins and river trolls. (The PCs should have noticed signs of the beginning of this invasion on their journey up.) This blocks any escape to Uber-

sreik and prevents reinforcements arriving. Though the PCs could attempt to fight their way through, that would mean abandoning the people of the valley and the castle to a terrible fate.

Though the gorge is the only easy way to get from Ubersreik up to the Teufeltal, there are a few secret trails known only to goats and smugglers. These are treacherous and hard-going. However, using the gorge is not straightforward. The Grey Lady road winds along the left bank of the Teufel, sometimes narrowing to little more than the width of a cart. Sometimes it rises and switches back following the cliff side and then falls steeply back down again. Sometimes it is blocked by falling rocks, and sometimes by rising waters. Despite this, it is the only way to get a decent fighting force up or down the valley.

Phlegmflan knows this and so Washnack has sent goblins and river trolls to secure the route. He will not be able to get his army down the gorge until Schluesselschloss is taken. However, because of these forces, no one else can get up or down either. Many locals will try as they flee the greenskin onslaught, but all should fail.

Only very small boats can navigate upriver of Ubersreik, and certainly no boats can make their way up through the gorge against the fast rapids. However, it would be possible, although rather dangerous, to use a boat to get down through the gorge quickly. There are a few rowing boats around the castle, village, and lake that the locals use for fishing. Any PCs trying to 'white water raft' down the gorge will not only run the risk of hitting the innumerable rocks along the river course, but also have to run the gauntlet of the many river trolls and goblins that are patrolling the area.

## CONTACTING UBERSREIK

The PCs may realise that word needs to be sent to Ubersreik for help. If they send someone else on that mission the chances are he will fail and be eaten by trolls. If an NPC acting on behalf of the PCs does manage to get to Ubersreik then his influence will depend on his importance and credibility. A smuggler with knowledge of the secret ways through the mountains will have more chance of getting to Ubersreik but less chance of being believed once he arrives.

The most direct way to go about alerting Ubersreik is for a competent scout-type PC to make his way down there and then use whatever reputation and contacts he has to get his voice heard. If he does this well then the wheels will be set in motion for the castle's eventual relief. The rulers of Ubersreik (who exactly this might be could depend on events in the adventure *Edge of Night*) will raise as big an army as quickly as they can and march it up the Schluesselschlossschlucht.

Any other method of contacting Ubersreik should be considered on its merits. The GM should reward clever thinking, but at the same time should not make this too easy for the PCs. He should bear in mind that the relief force will not raise the siege; it will only allow the castle to hold out for about two more days.

At the very quickest, Ubersreik will be able to get a decently sized force together seven days after receiving word (perhaps six if the PC is particularly persuasive). This means that Schluesselschloss will have to hold out that long until the reinforcements arrive. The GM should keep careful track of the days.

If the PCs do not think of sending a message to the city, the relieving force from Ubersreik will not be raised and therefore there will be no relief of Schluesselschloss. It's all down to them.



## EVERYBODY OUT

If the PCs try an organised descent of the gorge by taking all the castle's inhabitants and leading them down towards Ubersreik, they should be allowed to. Strategically, however, it would be a bad move because the Waaagh! will stream down the gorge and into the Reikland unopposed. Also, the refugees will be harried at every turn by goblins and trolls. The goblins will rain rocks down upon them and gang up on stragglers, while river trolls will rise from the water and grab any victim they choose almost with impunity.

## TALLERHOF

Tallerhof is a village of about two hundred dwellings perched on the banks of the Teufel where the Grey Lady road meets the dwarf road. It is an austere looking place of windswept, low buildings and grey slate roofs, surrounded by a grey stone wall. Its only notable feature is an ancient iron bridge, built by the dwarfs long ago for their trade route to the Reikland. While many of the villagers are law-abiding folk, there is a heavy presence of smugglers in the settlement. Its location is perfect for smuggling dwarf goods from Karak Azgaraz or other goods to and from Bretonnia. Rumour has it that even Werner Smokkel, the village's mayor, used to be a smuggler. This is not true – he still is one. The village priest, Siegfried Steuer, fights against him at every turn.

The Iron Bridge is the village's only inn. It seems to have distinct, dual roles. The lounge bar accommodates legitimate travellers, honest traders, and upright dwarfs. The saloon bar is a den of smuggling and villainy.

If the PCs try to organise anything in the village, they will be told to either clear it with Steuer or Smokkel first, depending on the activity and that villager's loyalty.

## WERNER SMOKKEL

The village's mayor is a smuggler of long standing with a finger in every pie. He has grown rich through corruption but still looks out for those he considers his own kind. He has dark, greasy, slicked back hair and wears a huge, sheepskin coat. He can sway the opinion of the village's smuggler community with a single word.

The smugglers' experience and savvy could be vital to the PCs, but they won't want to get involved. They would be more inclined to go up into their secret caves in the mountains and wait things out, until it is safe once more. Getting the smugglers onside, at least a **Hard (3d) check**, should help with a number of strategic factors, such as locating a route down to Ubersreik that avoids the gorge and many other secret routes around the valley will help the PCs get about in less danger. The smugglers, however, will be extremely loathe to give up their stores of smuggled goods hidden around the mountains in secret, well-concealed caves.

During the siege, Smokkel will be useless in a fight but good at marshalling the civilians and keeping their spirits up. Also, he might just remember that old story his grandfather used to him, which he doesn't really believe, about there being secret tunnels underneath the castle that smugglers used to use.

## FATHER SIEGFRIED STEUER

In contrast to the smugglers of Tallerhof, Steuer is a staunch and loyal Imperial who always pays his taxes. (The Cult of Sigmar is actually exempt from the local taxes so he doesn't actually pay them, but he is a staunch supporter of the principle.) Despite the village's reputation and the undoubted number of smugglers there, the majority of folk are Sigmar-fearing and loyal.

As soon as word of the build-up of greenskin forces reaches the village, Steuer sounds the alarm (the temple bell) and the villagers gather at the temple. He leads them in a service, praying for help and salvation. Steuer truly believes his prayers will protect the village and so will not think to retreat to the castle. Unless the PCs intervene, Steuer's flock stay at the temple until the entire village is destroyed by the Waaagh! and they are all killed.

If the PCs try to intimidate Steuer or come across as selfish, or appear to him to be enemies of the Empire, then it will be a **Daunting (4d) Intimidate check** to get him on side. However, if they present themselves as loyal to Sigmar then only an **Average (2d) Charm check** will be required to convince him to go along with their plans.

Steuer will insist that Smokkel and the smugglers are no good and that they will only undermine the defence of Schluesselschloss. He attempts to convince the PCs to have nothing to do with them, and even threaten to withdraw from the defence of the castle if they are included (an idle threat).

The rest of the villagers, those neither smugglers nor fanatical Sigmarites, will flee directly to the castle as soon as they realise they are in great danger. If they are not admitted there (which they won't be unless the PCs have something to do with it) they make their way down the gorge towards Ubersreik where they will become troll snacks.





The more villagers the PCs can get into the castle, the better. Many will be competent with bows or spears, and they can be quickly trained up to work in a coordinated fashion. Those that can't fight can fetch and carry and help build defences. There may be a problem with food, however. If too many people are in the castle then the PCs will need to consider how to keep them all fed.

During the siege, Steuer will be more interested in calling down help from Sigmar than doing anything to help himself. He will be useful to have around to lead prayers and generally keep everyone aware that this is all for the glory of Sigmar. He has a running feud with Werner Smokkel, so any time the pair of them are together things will degenerate into squabbles and name-calling.

If the PCs convince Werner to help the defence of Schluesselschloss:



If the PCs can get more villagers to the castle to help with the defence:



## DE BLANC'S SCHOOL

De Blanc's School, as the sign outside the building suggests, is a 'School for the Refinement and Education of Young Gentleladies'. The school building is a run-down, fortified manor house that sits atop a windswept ridge commanding fine views of the whole Teufeltal. Noble and aspiring parents from the Reikland and beyond send their offspring here to be given a rounded education.

The school can be seen from all around the Teufeltal so it should come to the PCs' attention quite quickly. If they ask about it, almost anyone will be able to tell the PCs what the building is used for and probably even suggest that the girls will need rescuing.

What the PCs may not realise, if they go up to evacuate the girls, is that the school is run in the Myrmidian tradition. This includes the notion that the finest quality a young lady can possess is the ability to strike a man dead with a single blow of her hat pin while still looking elegant in the latest fashions. Therefore, though they are young ladies, the pupils will be a great asset to the defence of Schluesselschloss.

The GM should consider running a combat up in the school. Perhaps as the PCs are talking to the schoolmistress Philline de Blanc in her office, telling her about the Waaagh! and offering to escort the pupils down to the castle, a tribe of savage orcs can burst into the school intent on mayhem. Even before the PCs can organise a decent defence, the school girls can pile in and riposte the savage orc attack with deadly, elegant combinations and well-practised tactics.

Philline is loyal to the school and expects her girls to be the same. She will be content for them to make a last stand in the school hall dressed in best uniform, singing the school song. More useful to the defence of the Empire would be if the PCs can convince Philline to bring her charges down to the castle to help defend it. If presented with a reasonable strategic and tactical rationale, it should only require an **Hard (3d) Charm check** to convince Philline to help. Trying to bully her or pulling rank will make the task a **Daunting (4d) Intimidate check**.



## PHILLINE DE BLANC

Philline is a stern schoolmistress with her hair tied back in a bun and spectacles perched upon her nose. She will usually be found carrying a large book, which counts as a hand weapon and shield in her expert hands. She looks mostly harmless, but just like her girls is not to be underestimated.

In fact Philline is so competent that it may be in the PCs' best interest to let her help run the defence of Schluesselschloss. Philline can be given jobs to do and trusted to accomplish them. She can be a reliable and competent ally for the PCs, who can act on her own initiative because, Myrmidia knows, they are short of good help.

If the PCs convince Philline de Blanc and her girls to help the defence of Schluesselschloss and they get to the castle:



## LOWE FARM

Arndt Lowe and his wife Marie run this sheep farm high on the edge of the Teufeltal. They make use of the marginal land that no one else has the fortitude to farm. Despite being faced with wolves and other predators, goblins and bandits, and foul winter weather, their farm has managed to prosper over the years. However, now that the couple are aged, it is beginning to become run down. The farm building is little more than a strong and fortified stone-built barn with a loft for the family living space.

Arndt is a stoic and gruff old man who won't make a decision today that he can make tomorrow. "You don't run a good farm by making decisions, after all; you run it by looking after your animals."



The PCs will probably need to be told of the existence of the farm. At any point when they are discussing supplies at the castle or the village, Lowe farm will be mentioned as the only place left that isn't low on food. It would normally make little sense to try to rescue the Lowe family when there is so much else to do to secure Schluesselschloss, but lots of sheep means that the poorly prepared Schluesselschloss will be able to withstand a siege for much longer, and the PCs will have an easier time convincing the Gutbusters maneaters to join them.

Persuading Arndt and Marie to sell their sheep should not be too difficult. They are reasonable people and the flock is beginning to get too big for them. If they can be convinced that the Waaagh! is imminent and that they will be paid a fair price for the flock, they will be content to allow the PCs to drive the sheep to the castle. Persuading the couple to leave, however, will require a **Daunting (4d) check**. They have lived up here on the hills for all their lives and they do not intend to leave now, greenskins or no.

Getting the sheep down the hillside to the castle should be an adventure in itself, especially if the PCs have no experience of farming. It should take an entire day and they will be at the mercy of enemy raids. Probably, as they approach Tallerhof, greenskin scouts will have brought word back to Washnack, and he dispatches a company of boar boyz to intercept them. If the boar boyz get amongst the sheep then it will be carnage.

If the PCs get most of Lowe's sheep to Schluesselschloss:



## GUTBUSTER'S GUTBUSTERS

Gutbuster's Gutbusters are a company of ogre maneater mercenaries. They are seasoned veterans and have fought for (and sometimes against) Imperial armies from the Grey Mountains to the Worlds Edge Mountains and from Kislev to the Border Princes. They are hardened and cynical, and wouldn't think twice about eating the PCs if things come to that.

They are currently camping around the Teufeltal Lake spending their bounty. They have eaten most of the sheep from all the small farms around Tallerhof. The farmers are pleased because they've got a good price for their flocks, but food is running low. The ogres are keen to stay because they are avidly trying to catch 'Old One Eye', the local legendary giant fish of Teufeltal Lake. The entire company has become obsessed with the idea of catching and eating the giant fish and cannot be persuaded that it doesn't exist.

The Gutbusters will do nothing for free. The PCs will have a hard time convincing them to join the defence against the Waaagh! unless they are prepared to pay handsomely. It looks like certain death, and the company has no loyalty except to their stomachs. The best thing they can do is offer lots of good food, and the next best thing would be lots of money. Food might be a problem; the Lowe Farm is the only one around that has a good number of sheep left. If the PCs could bring all the sheep down from the hills, that would definitely convince the maneaters to help, but will of course cost them even more of their limited time.

The ogres are extremely fierce and used to being treated with respect, if not outright fear. If the PCs make a mess of negotiations or try to intimidate them, it will not take much for the ogres to fight them to the death.

## SNARKY GUTBUSTER

Snarky is the company's corpulent captain. The other ogres are in awe of the size of his belly and the sheer amount he can fit in his mouth in one go. So large is Snarky that he carries an Imperial cannon, which he uses as if it were a mere handgun.

During the siege, Snarky and his ogres will work hard and bravely push their way to wherever the fiercest fighting is. However, they will want to be rewarded. They will push around and bully anyone they can. They might even eat some people if they aren't given proper respect, and they will insist on stupendous amounts of food. A cat and mouse game will develop between the ogres and Pansy Spoonbill whereby Pansy will attempt to get as much good food to his men as possible, while the ogres will keep an eye out for him and steal everything they can.

If the PCs convince the Gutbusters to help the defence of Schluesselschloss:



## GREY WOLF TEMPLE

The Grey Wolf Temple is a small fortress high up on the Grey Lady Pass. It has been there for many thousands of years, some say almost as far back as the time of Sigmar. It is there to offer hospitality in the name of Ulric to those travelling to and from Bretonnia. The Templar Knights of the Order of the Grey Wolf have manned the temple for generations. The two-dozen or so knights scout the area and keep the pass free of bandits and predators in return for a small donation from those travelling through.





*I pledge with every last drop of my blood to fight to keep the Grey Lady Pass open and protect those who would use it for the greater glory of Ulric. In Ulric's name.*

*- The Grey Wolf pledge*

The knights are hardened folk, dedicated to their cause and excellent warriors. They are quite prepared to fight to their deaths to defend their temple and Ulric's glory; in fact, they have sworn an oath to do just that. However, the PCs could believe that they are doing little to stop the Waaagh! up in their temple and would be much better employed in Schluesselschloss. When the Grey Wolves are told about the Waaagh!, they will expect that once it is underway the greenskins will swarm up to the temple and defeat the defenders and destroy the fortress. They are stoically resigned to this fate. Actually, the greenskins do not need to take Grey Lady Pass. A few scouts will wander up there, but the temple will be just about the safest place in the valley during the Waaagh!

## MASTER ULRIC KRAUSE

Krause has long grey curly hair that could be mistaken for the wolfskin he wears as part of his uniform. He is a typical Ulrican, alternately gruff and ebullient, with a love of battle. The PCs may want to convince him to lead his men down to the castle. If they manage this it will clearly be invaluable to the defence. This is not an easy job, however. Krause interprets his oath as a Grey Wolf to mean that he and his order must always defend the temple. He will need a lot of convincing to ignore his oath and order his knights to do the same. Because of the pledge, any attempt to sway Krause will be **Daunting (4d)**. PCs will have more luck if they argue Krause around to a more liberal interpretation of his oath – then it's only a **Hard (3d)** task.

While Krause is a good and loyal fighter, as the siege wears on he will become increasingly on edge. He will begin to snap at the smallest thing and become contrary for no discernible reason. As the greenskin victory gets closer, he will begin to crack under the pressure. He will challenge PCs and NPCs to fights to settle minor differences and may even lash out violently without warning. If there is a major rift then all the Grey Wolves will remain loyal to him. At worst, Krause will not be able to endure another moment in the castle. He will gather his troops together and lead a suicidal charge against the enemy.

The PCs should be given the opportunity to influence Krause for the better during the siege. This will be a **Daunting (4d)** task, but a PC might be able to calm Krause's nerves and keep him as a valuable defender of the castle. Krause will still be prickly and short-tempered, but at least this could be directed against the enemy.

If the PCs get the Grey Wolf Knights to join the defence of Schluesselschloss:



If the Grey Wolf Knights later abandon the castle:



## KARAK AZGARAZ

The only sizeable dwarf hold in the nearby area is Karak Azgaraz. Ruled by King Thuringar, it has been a staunch defender against the greenskins of the mountains and a loyal ally of the Reikland for many generations. Even the city walls of Ubersreik were built by the dwarfs as a mark of their loyalty and connections with that city. Surely they will help Schluesselschloss at its moment of need.

The first step to getting dwarf help is actually getting word to Karak Azgaraz. It is over a day's ride from Schluesselschloss and most of that route is firmly in the grip of the Waaagh! The main body of the Waaagh! is even camped across the dwarf road, forcing any messenger to detour for some distance. In addition, the hold is being besieged to keep the dwarfs in. It would take a very stealthy character to reach the dwarf hold without getting spotted.

Washnack is a firm foe of the dwarfs of Karak Azgaraz. If it were up to him, he would be concentrating on destroying that place, but he's clever enough to know that the Schluesselschloss is the easier target. The Red Maw orcs have harassed the hold for many years and Washnack will not stop now, just because he is head of a huge army. He has sent a few of the orc tribes he doesn't like much to attack the dwarf hold. It keeps their numbers down, and their leaders weak, and also it has the hold battened down and isolated. So even if the PCs were to reach Karak Azgaraz and convince King Thuringar to send forces, they would be left with the problem of getting back to Schluesselschloss.

Getting an audience with King Thuringar should not be too difficult if a PC has managed to sneak through the besieging forces. Thuringar will realise what a fine achievement it was just to reach





the hold, but convincing him to spare dwarfs will be a **Daunting (4d) Charm check**. The king believes that the Waaagh! is massing for an assault on his hold. If the PCs present evidence that the greenskins will in fact be heading down into the Reikland this will help their case. If a PC knows about Karak Azgaraz's historical ties to Ubersreik and the shaming of the hold when its dwarfs were unable to send forces to help the town during the War Against Chaos, that would be worth mentioning and, if presented in a diplomatic way, will add a fortune die to all dealings with the king. The PC will also have to come up with a convincing plan to get any dwarfs that Thuringar might offer down to Schluesselschloss.

## DUNDRI ULGARSSON

If Thuringar does grant forces to help at Schluesselschloss they will be led by Dundri, a young, hot-headed ranger. Dundri is prepared to lay down his own life for the glory of the hold and the success of a plan, but he is just as reckless with the lives of others.

Amongst dwarfs Dundri is often teased for the shamefully lacking growth of his beard. Despite this he is remarkably upbeat for a dwarf and very friendly. He has a song for every occasion even though he doesn't have much of a singing voice. He is more at home in the outdoors than below ground and doesn't even mind elves too much.

If Dundri makes it to the siege of Schluesselschloss then he will be enthusiastic and positive. He will always be thinking of ways to take the fight to the greenskins even when this might be strategically absurd. He will try to convince any PC who will listen to join him on some midnight sabotage raid or other daring mission behind enemy lines.

If the PCs manage to bring a dwarf force to the defence of Schluesselschloss:



In the unlikely event that the PCs manage to break the siege of Karak Azgaraz, King Thuringar can dispatch a major portion of his throng to the castle. If Otto's influence is broken when the throng arrives, the orcs will be crushed between the dwarfs and the castle and the Waaagh! ended in a bloody and heroic battle. (These dwarfs are quite good at killing orcs!) If Otto is still lending his cunning to the orcs, then the dwarf throng will be advancing down the valley through a series of brutal ambushes and will be much reduced in strength if and when they arrive - treat them like the Ubersreik reinforcements (see page 77).

*Well? Do you want to sit about grumbling, waiting for our beards to reach our toes? Or should we kill some orcs today?*

*- Dundri Ulgarsson*

## PART THREE: THE SIEGE OF SCHLUESSELSCHLOSS

Once the Waaagh! Tracker token reaches the end of the tracker, Washnack's Waaagh! will reach Schluesselschloss and battle will be joined. The air will fill with the distant sound of drums, and black orcs will lead the throng down from Tallerhof towards the castle. The horde will have destroyed that village leaving no survivors and then will stream along the Grey Lady road, a seemingly endless mass of green mayhem. From the hills, goblin spider riders, wolf riders, and boar boyz rush down into the valley. Huge figures – lumbering giants and trolls – are seen among the greenskins.

The Empire's only hope to stem this seemingly unstoppable tide are the ramshackle stronghold and the PCs. The GM should hype the impossible odds and the idea of certain death to give the PCs the comforting knowledge that at least if their deaths are inevitable, they might achieve a glorious place in history.

At the sight of the Waaagh!, the PCs should make a Terror 2 check.

## USING THE DEFENCE TRACKER


Now that the Waaagh! Tracker has run out to signal the beginning of the siege, the Defence Tracker is used to indicate how long the defenders can withstand Washnack's onslaught. The PCs should have moved the tracker up the track during their preparations for the assault. Now, everything they have already achieved will buy them time during the siege. There are a number of events described

### WHERE DID YOU COME FROM?

With the odds stacked so highly against them, it is quite possible that one or more of the PCs will perish during the siege. As unlikely as it would be for a suitable replacement to just "show up" while the castle is surrounded by a Waaagh!, it would be far worse to have one player sitting around with nothing to do. Below are several suggestions for powerful replacement PCs should the need arise.

- ✦ A wizard (or perhaps a priest) arrives in the center of the Schluesselschloss via magic.
- ✦ A dwarf from Karak Azgaraz riding in a sputtering gyrocopter crash lands in the courtyard.
- ✦ A noble lord, champion, or any other martial career with a small force fights his way inside.
- ✦ A wood elf riding a warhawk lands in the courtyard, his mount mortally wounded by Bonemauler.
- ✦ An elf abruptly appears amongst the defenders for inscrutable reasons and using inscrutable methods of his own.
- ✦ A previously background character, realizing things are dire, steps forward to take an active role.
- ✦ A character that has been here all along, but has been sick or otherwise indisposed until now.



below that could occur during the siege. The GM should use his favourite ones as he sees fit to bring life and excitement to the siege. However, every time an event marked with  is used, the tracker token should be moved one space down. When the token reaches 0, the next event should be 'The Castle Falls!'

To stretch the PCs and the castle's defences, the GM can run several events at once. For example, he might run 'Pontoon Bridge' at the same time as 'Black Orc Attack' to give the orcs a decent bridge, while distracting at least one PC with 'Blickstein Loses It.' These events combined will move the Defence Tracker token two spaces.

Of course, most of these events are very dangerous in themselves and if not dealt with properly can result in the defeat of the defenders and the capture of the castle ahead of schedule. The GM should use about two events every day and perhaps another at night. He should also keep track of the relieving force from Ubersreik if the PCs have managed to get one going. If the castle is relieved before it falls then the GM should run the 'Relief' event, which will buy the defenders more time.

## RUNNING THE SIEGE

The huge battle swirling around the PCs should be dealt with abstractly, while only events that affect the PCs directly should be played conventionally. The Defence rating on the Waaagh! Tracker gives a decent measure of how well the castle is faring in the face the Waaagh! It is an indicator of how long the castle will be able to hold out before it is overrun by greenskins, and also of the wellbeing, morale, and strength of the defenders. The GM should try to focus in on a key point of each event that involves the PCs, and try to resolve that crucial point.

The siege is not one continuous pitched battle raging for many days. It should be largely quiet with sudden attacks and events breaking the monotony. The PCs might spend most of their time nervously looking out over the battlements or dealing with more mundane matters like supplies and the guards' shifts.

At quieter times or during the night the important characters will gravitate towards the great hall of the castle. They should go there to report to Matilde in any case, and it will be where Blickstein conspires and sows the seeds of doubt. The interaction with the other characters there will help to provide a bigger picture of the siege and perhaps reveal of these NPCs' true nature.

As the siege wears on, tempers will become frayed and people will become snappy and confrontational. It might not be long before people forget what contributions the PCs have made so far and accuse them of not pulling their weight. Matilde will generally be evasive and distant, needing to increasingly check with Blickstein before she can make a decision. Blickstein will appear to be helpful and neutral, but will scheme effectively in the background. Erik will initially be angry that he is not yet the baron, but will soon concentrate on the battle and be a fearless defender, showing that he may after all make a good leader. Matthauss will be of no use in a fight, but can be used to give the PCs snippets of knowledge amongst his largely uninteresting facts. Phylline de Blanc and Ulric Krause should take an immediate dislike to each other and disagree on everything, including clear-cut tactical or strategic decisions, doing their best to insist on their side of any argument, however spurious. If either of them is not present then the GM should choose other characters to feud. Snarky won't care who likes him as long as he gets lots of food. Dundri will become obsessed with daring

raids. Father Steuer will encourage everyone to prepare themselves to meet Sigmar, and Werner Smokkel will put a brave face on things by cracking inappropriate (and often blasphemous) jokes.

## OTTO AND THE SIEGE

Otto is the key to the entire adventure. Even if the Waaagh! is defeated, Otto will still imperil all of the Empire through his black stone; the PCs must defeat him. To accomplish that they will probably need one of the stones. The best way to get one is for Blickstein to blow his cover and then the PCs search his room. However, the PCs might be fortunate to capture a black stone from Stinktongue or Phlegmflan.

### FORESHADOWING OTTO

In order for this adventure to unfold according to design, the PCs must find and destroy Otto. To do this, they need to have a reason to look for him. This means the hero players must make two important realisations: first, that there is a guiding force behind the activity of the Waaagh!, and second, that the force is located within the Schluesselschloss. There are a number of ways the GM can seed these conclusions through the adventure. Here are a few ideas!

- + Blickstein, Stinktongue, and Phlegmflan may all have picked up a few "vampiric" character traits from Otto via the stones. An aversion to sunlight and a thirst for human (or at least unhealthy fixation on) human blood are two good and obvious tropes to play with. This works best if the PCs see these characteristics from at least 2 people, as that makes it a pattern.
- + The cleverness and discipline of the orcs is extremely unusual. Various NPCs may comment on this as some of the orc ploys are revealed. Matthauss may even make one of his trivial comments: "The pass hasn't seen a general this gifted since Count Otto of Wissenland."
- + A PC who has acquired a black stone may start having increasingly-vivid nightmares of being trapped in the dark and thirsting for blood - or may begin have "goblin dreams" influenced by Phlegmflan.
- + The orcs have ignored their traditional enemy, the dwarfs, and come to the Schluesselschloss. Simultaneously, goblins attack from below. Why is the castle special?
- + The hearthstone in the Schluesselschloss has markings of Sigmar and Morr - unusual for a hearthstone.
- + There are no rats anywhere in the castle. (Otto eats them all.)
- + The only notable vampire in the history of the Schluesselschloss is Karlmann the Red, who was defeated by Count Otto. (This is known by all members of the von Schluessel family.)



The GM should therefore choose carefully when he runs the events that involve Blickstein or black stones. These should be run to give the PCs a chance of survival, but they should not be run too soon. The GM should try to find a good balance between the external battle events and occasional internal ones.

As part of 'The Castle Falls' event, the GM can also run the 'Blickstein Triumphant' event. This will give the PCs a chance to defeat Otto even as the castle's defences crumble around them. The GM should know that it is vital to include at least one event whereby the PCs can discover a black stone (Stinktongue is ideal for this).

## WATER CROSSING

As wave upon wave of greenskin is thrown against the castle's defences, the besiegers will need to cross the fast-flowing Teufel. This is obviously perilous. Many of the attackers will be lost as they cross, drowning or simply being washed away. The greenskins will swim, wade, use ladders, ropes and grapples, clamber across each, and do whatever it takes to cross the river. Not all of them will make it. The crossing will slow the attackers' momentum, and they will still have to deal with the castle walls, but however much it helps the castle's defence, the river is not enough on its own to keep the invaders out.

There are pockets of cover and rocky outcrops on the island for the invaders to hide behind and regroup before making more attacks against the castle. If the greenskins manage to create a bridgehead on the island then they will attempt to build their forces up there before making a coordinated attack on the castle.

The PCs have more options if they wish to cross the water to carry the fight to the orcs. The castle has a few small boats (**Hard (3d) Athletics checks** from the rowers to keep from being washed downstream), and of course the drawbridges can be lowered to let out a sortie. But they'll have to be careful and clever to get back again - and obviously attacking the entire orc horde head-on is no route to victory.

## EVENTS

Described below are a number of events that could occur during the siege. GMs are encouraged to create additional events as needed.


### WASHNACK

Before anything happens at the battle Washnack will appear upon Bonemaular, with Phlegmflan hanging on desperately behind. The great chieftain will swoop from the rear of his forces and do one pass of the castle, surveying his army and his enemy in a way that he hopes will demoralise the defenders.

To be fair, this is asking for trouble, and a decent attack might be able to finish him off there and then. Washnack should fly at extreme range. A decent shot with a long rifle or a long bow might hit the spot and draw first blood, but it probably won't kill him.

If Washnack does die during the siege, this would be a serious event. Normally the death of a strong leader holding a Waaagh! together would be enough to stop the force in its tracks and lead to its break up as the various factions squabble for supremacy. However, because of Otto's influence through Phlegmflan, a new leader will soon be appointed whom the whole Waaagh! will accept. The death

of Washnack will buy the PCs some time but otherwise things will continue on as normal under the new leader, Bashnag (who uses the same stats as Washnack).

If Washnack dies: 

## PARLEY

Before the assault begins, Washnack drops Phlegmflan off and the goblin walks towards the castle waving a pair of dirty white britches. He expects to be allowed in to talk terms with the PCs (he knows enough broken Reikspiel to accomplish this).

Phlegmflan offers to allow all the occupants of the castle to leave in peace and make their way to Ubersreik with whatever they can carry. He personally gives his and Washnack's guarantee that they will remain unmolested. Should the PCs take him up on the offer they will have a very difficult time convincing the other occupants of the castle to leave. It is at least a **Daunting (4d) Charm check** to persuade the NPCs to believe in the greenskin's offer and to follow the PCs out. If anyone leaves the castle, they will be allowed to get about a third of the way down the gorge, when they will be savagely ambushed on all sides and massacred. This entire tactic is not very orc-like, and the PCs who succeed at an **Average (2d) Folklore check** could reasonably note this, but it is Otto's nature and therefore Phlegmflan's.

This can be an opportunity for the PCs to learn about the Waaagh! If the PCs are clever, they can entice Phlegmflan into conversation, perhaps encouraging him to reveal more than he should. The vain little goblin is susceptible to flattery and charm. PCs should add fortune to such wiles, but add misfortune to attempts to intimidate him. After all, he has a huge army backing him up.

Phlegmflan does not have the black stone with him, but he may get tricked into revealing its existence - quite easily, in fact, since he'll be nervous and irritable without the soothing confidence and intelligence the stone brings him.

If the PCs get so annoyed at Phlegmflan that they decide to kill him or keep him prisoner then Washnack will take his stone. Washnack is fairly strong-willed in his own right, but he knows sound military advice when he sees it; he'll be less under Otto's thrall, but a partnership between Washnack and Otto as equals is probably a worst-case scenario for the entire Empire.

## ROCK LOBBERS

Some stone trolls will drag up a couple of huge war machines while the greenskins proudly look on at their engineering prowess. After some painstaking preparation the rock lobbers will begin tossing huge boulders at the castle. The first attempts will miss by a long way, many falling short and hitting goblin skirmishers, and some flying far over the castle and smashing into greenskins on the other side. This will cause animosity and infighting for a time. However, eventually the rock lobbers will find their range and start smashing into the buildings of Schluesselschloss. The force is much too great for the castle structures and they will gradually be destroyed. It will be clear that it is only a matter of time before the defences become useless. Luckily, night falls.

This assault will continue each day from first light through night-fall until the war machines are destroyed, hurrying the demise of the castle. Each day that the PCs fail to deal with the rock lobbers, move the token down one space on the Defence of Schluesselschloss tracker.



## DOOM DIVERS

Under the cover of night, Washnack orders doom divers (goblins equipped with crude artificial wings launched from a catapult) to be fired into the castle. The plan is that one may survive and make his way to one of the gatehouses where he will let down a drawbridge for awaiting orcs.

As mad as this sounds, this will work unless the PCs have made contingencies or are paying attention. They may hear or get awoken by some doom divers landing in the castle courtyard, being splatted against one of the castle walls, splashing loudly into the Teufel or even flying through the window of whatever room the PCs are residing in. If they investigate they will find a dying doom diver. Another doom diver has managed to land safely and begin to make his way to the nearest gatehouse. If the PCs have dealt with gatehouse security then he will soon be captured. If the PCs haven't made suitable precautions then they will need to put two and two together (or interrogate the dying doom diver) to realise that the doom divers might be after the gatehouse. If the PCs do nothing then the drawbridge will be lowered and the greenskins will stream in.

## ARACHNAROK

There is a lull in the fighting and things go strangely quiet. The orc drums cease, and a reverential hush passes across the greenskin horde. Then, from around a bend in the valley, the PCs see a humongous spider advancing towards them. The arachnarok is truly terrible and awe-inspiring. It strides forward under the guidance of its forest goblin riders, stopping short just before crashing into the waters of the Teufel. Waves of snotlings crowd behind the massive spider being herded forward by a few large orcs. Companies of black orcs and savage orcs begin lining up behind them. Phlegmflan and his person goblin guards looks on nearby.

The spider begins to spin a web over the raging waters, quickly creating a long sticky bridge to the island. Washnack orders the snotlings across first, each one getting stuck in the strands, allowing every subsequent goblin to make it a bit further before getting stuck itself. Eventually this creates a living bridge of flailing snotlings across the river and the orcs push forward to begin their assault of the castle.

This is all the idea of Phlegmflan, and he will be leading the assault over the 'bridge'. He will be carrying his black stone and leading his personal guard of goblins. Any PC who makes an Observation check to examine the orc forces on this attack and scores boons will notice Phlegmflan communing with his black stone.

The PCs will need to hatch a plan to destroy the bridge, or they will surely be lost. In addition, once the bridge is complete, the great spider will be directed towards the Schluesselschloss, easily scaling the walls and climbing all over the fortress wreaking havoc. The massive arachnid will be able to cause great damage unless the PCs intervene.

## PONTOON BRIDGE

At some point the PCs notice dozens of makeshift, rickety craft floating down the Teufel towards the castle. They are manned by many goblins. Once the craft reach the castle, the goblins attempt to crash them into the bank, scuttle them on rocks, or simply sink



them. The plan is that the pile of wrecks will eventually stretch from one bank to the other. Black orcs wait impatiently near the shore to rush across the bridge.

This might be a bit of a hare-brained scheme, but it will work if the PCs do nothing. So they will have to come up with a plan to destroy or dislodge the boats. Firing cannon at them should work well, or they could wade into the fray and try to cut the boats free and send them further downstream.

## BLACK ORC ATTACK

Washnack sends some of his best shock troops against the castle's defences. Several regiments of black orcs work together for a coordinated assault on the castle. They plough across the river using whatever method they can, and fiercely assault the castle walls. They may even try wading across. Many will be swept downstream and drown, but Washnack knows there are plenty more where they came from.

The black orcs are some of Washnack's best troops. They should get to the castle walls roughly where the PCs are and it should require the PCs to force them back again and save the day. Perhaps even Washnack will make a few diving runs upon Bonemauler at the defenders.

## NIGHT GOBLIN SNEAK

If the PCs have not discovered the secret tunnels under the castle and done something about them, then Stinktongue's night goblins will try to flood into the castle from below. The night goblins will burst through the lower levels of the fortress, attacking everything



they can. They will probably fall upon refugees and menial workers first, before they reach the defenders. If they manage to reach the castle's drawbridge, then the defenders really are in trouble.

Stinktongue leads the force. Have him confront one of the PCs if possible. This will give the PC a chance to slay the goblin and discover his stone. If the rest of the attack is repulsed then the PCs will have earned a valuable clue. If the PCs do get hold of the black stone then they can use it to piece together the clues that point towards Otto's influence as described earlier.

## REAVERS RETURN

If the PCs did not manage to convince Snarky and his maneaters to join them then they may be surprised to see them turn up amongst the enemy force. Washnack promised the ogres the defenders as food if they joined his Waaagh! The GM should arrange things so that the PC who was the most disliked by Snarky ends up facing him in hand-to-hand combat.

## RIVER AND STONE

River trolls are great at crossing the Teufel. Stone trolls are great at bashing down the stone walls of the castle. Can Washnack get the stupid trolls in his army to get it together enough to cooperate in a joint raid?

## GIANTS

Washnack decides to bring up Gorblut the giant, and his brothers. The monsters simply walk up to the castle (probably under the cover of another attack), wade through the river and step over the

castle walls. The PCs will need to engage them as soon as possible and defeat them, or they will spread death and panic throughout the castle.

## EXPLOSION

As discussed previously on page 66, Stinktongue and his night goblins may lead an assault on the gunpowder stores, hurling lit torches recklessly into the magazine. If they fail, Blickstein may attempt to do the same.

During the night he sneaks down to the gunpowder store. The place is guarded and he does not want any witnesses, so he stabs the guard on the door to death. This might make some noise. He then uses his key for the stores (he owns the only one in existence) to unlock the heavy metal door, makes a trail of gunpowder a safe distance away, and then sets this alight.

In a few moments there will be an almighty explosion as the entire store explodes. As well as neutralising the castle's artillery, the explosion rips a huge crack in the side of an exterior wall, leaving a breach for the attackers to exploit.

If anyone witnesses Blickstein doing the deed then his cover will be blown. The castle is of course bustling with people during the siege, even in the dead of night, so there is a chance that someone might see him, but it should really be down to a PC to discover him. In the aftermath, Blickstein slips out of the castle, convinced that it is now doomed to fall and that he must bring word of his heroism to Ubersreik. Blickstein makes it as far as the river's edge before he is brought down by a night goblin arrow. Schluesselschloss guards find his body and his black stone the next morning.

## PLANTING EVIDENCE

One of the PCs' most faithful allies is found dead in his or her quarters or in another part of the castle. Shortly afterwards a bloody dagger is found amongst the possessions of one of the PCs. This leads to all sorts of accusations, and might prevent the PCs from concentrating on the defence of the castle.

Blickstein is behind all this, but remains fairly quiet. He lets the other characters draw their own conclusions before confronting the PC. The PC could find himself confined to the dungeons until further notice, or if things get out of control then he might even get sentenced to death.

There are not necessarily any clues leading to Blickstein's involvement in the murder. It is up to the GM to decide how much he wants to turn this event from an annoying distraction into a proper whodunit, especially considering it's occurring in the middle of a desperate battle.

If Blickstein gets away with this, he may even murder a second ally a few days later.

## BLICKSTEIN LOSES IT

As the PCs hold out for longer than expected and continually thwart Blickstein's best laid plans, he gradually loses his cool and becomes more blatant about opposing their aims and less subtle in his manipulation of others. Eventually he is unable to take any more.





He attempts to engage a PC in conversation alone. While the PC is unguarded, Blickstein casually attempts to slide a blade poisoned with Scarlet Elf Cap between the PC's ribs. If the attack hits and the poison works then the PC will have little hope of survival. If Blickstein is successful, he hides the body and then chooses another PC victim, until all are dead!

## RELIEF



About seven days after the PCs first contact Ubersreik and call for an army to help them, the relieving force manages to bravely fight its way up the Schluesselschlossschlucht and come to the rescue of the castle.

The gallant garrison of Ubersreik, other soldiers of the area, mercenaries, and local volunteers force their way to the castle despite suffering heavy losses along their route. The defenders should be mightily relieved to see their arrival. However, this force has no chance of defeating the mighty Waaagh! in open battle. If it is not admitted into the castle, it will be quickly annihilated by the besiegers.

Someone (a PC, of course) will need to arrange for the north drawbridge to be lowered and the relieving force to be covered while it scrambles for the entrance. The greenskins will be put off at first, but will soon realise that this presents them an opportunity to enter the castle, and so they will battle hard to reach the drawbridge before it is raised again.

The extra troops will be a great help. The arrival of the relief force means that the castle should be able to stand for another two days at least, even though there are now more mouths to feed. In addition, if Blickstein is feeling the heat, then their arrival may prompt him to act more recklessly. The GM should consider running the Explosion event, the Planting Evidence event, or the Blickstein Loses It event if he hasn't done so already.

## THE CASTLE FALLS!

Once the Defence Tracker token reaches the final space, the defenders will not be able to resist the Waaagh! any longer. While running The Castle Falls event, if the PCs haven't located Otto yet, the GM should consider running the Blickstein Triumphant event at the same time, especially if he thinks the PCs deserve a break.

Washnack launches a final massive assault that makes the crucial breakthrough. If the PCs are dealing adequately with their elements of the attack then the breakthrough should occur somewhere they are not covering. Masses of greenskins run amok throughout the castle, killing everyone they come across. The defenders fall bravely. The GM should run a mix of whatever events he has not used yet.

The PCs should be rewarded for their bravery with appropriate showdowns with the enemy characters or powerful monsters. For example, if a PC has a particular dislike for Washnack, he can be given a final one-to-one duel with the great orc chieftain. A more wary PC could get cornered by Stinktongue creeping through the shadows. A PC wizard can become involved in a magic duel with Phlegmflan, and so on.

If the PCs are going to die heroes they should go out on a real high.

## BLICKSTEIN TRIUMPHANT

As the greenskins breach the defences and pour into the castle, it becomes apparent that all is lost and Blickstein will not be able to resist the chance to gloat. He locates the PCs (or whoever he can find through the fog of battle) and tells them how clever he has been. He shows them the black stone and explains how it has made him clever, bold, and confident. He informs the PCs that he will go to Ubersreik and tell the authorities there that the PCs corrupted and betrayed the von Schluessels, and that Blickstein should rule as lord of the Schluesselschloss. This is so demonstrably mad (as the castle is currently collapsing around his ears) that the PCs will hopefully realise that the black stone is the cause of Blickstein's odd behaviour.

This could give the PCs a final lifeline, if they are quick enough to locate the long-dead count amidst the chaos of the assault upon the castle.

Even though the castle has fallen, defeating Otto will bring the means to undermine Washnack, and although the way will be open to attack the Reikland, the PCs could make sure that Washnack will not lead his force there.

## OUT FOR THE COUNT

Between the black stones, Blickstein, and the goblins Phlegmflan and Stinktongue, at some point the PCs will likely figure out that Otto is the true master of the Waaagh! If the PCs hear Otto's name from any of these people, or from the black stones, or an off-hand comment from Matthauss or another NPC, a **Hard (3d) Education** or **Daunting (4d) Folklore check** will be sufficient to remember much of Otto's history. Once they've come this far, it's a simple matter for the PCs to ask Matthauss or examine the Schluesselschloss library and find more information (see page 78).

The PCs may conclude that eliminating Otto will deal the Waaagh! a mortal blow, depriving Washnack of his best counsel and perhaps his confidence. They may even (wrongly) think that the Waaagh!'s goal is to free Otto – the horrors of an orc Waaagh! allied to a powerful vampire should be self-evident. If the PCs do not come to their own reasons for wanting Otto destroyed, Matthauss or another NPC may suggest one to them. Then it's simply a matter of finding the vampire's tomb...

## OTTO'S TOMB

As the PCs can discover by consulting Matthauss and his books, Otto's tomb is actually located within the castle – although the vampire doesn't even know this himself.

The castle has been so extensively rebuilt and renovated that at this point it's interior is a maze of passages with almost no logic to them, and perhaps a half-dozen people alive have a perfect knowledge of every room and passage. So it should come as no surprise that the entrance to Otto's tomb is actually behind the fireplace in the great hall. The bricks there can be knocked down with a few blows from a heavy mallet, revealing a long, twisting, and utterly black passageway adorned with cloaked, skeletal engravings - symbols of Morr. Pressing through the passageway (about 20 yards, twisting and turning) will bring the PCs to the tomb proper, a heavy stone slab inscribed with the words "Otto III, Count of Wissenland, 1644-1681, He Lived and Died in Sigmar's Name," and a variety of symbols and icons of Sigmar and Morr. Shifting the stone slab



## SCHLUESSELSCHLOSS LIBRARY

### Account of the Battle of the Teufel from 'A History of the Reikland, 2459 IC'

And the hordes of not-living abominations did stream from the mountains, under the black gaze of the red knight. And Otto III, Count of Wissenland brought his men to an island of the river and upon its rocks did pledge to hold the red knight and all his minions, or die there for the Empire...

### Account of the burial of Otto III from 'A History of the Reikland, 2459 IC'

And so Otto was laid to rest. He was buried with the very sword that did slay Karlmann the Red, and with some of the red knight's treasures as fitting spoils for the brave count. And a cave was noticed that did delve deep within the island rock and Otto's body was put there for to rest in Morr's great realm for eternity...

### Description of the tomb from 'Gregor's Guide to the Grey Mountains, 2011 IC'

Relayed by the supposed mason who rebuilt the damaged facade of the fireplace in the great hall of the Schluesselschloss, the following information is unverified and considered erroneous. Behind the fireplace in the great hall, a narrow passage leads to a mysterious tomb. This is thought to be the oldest structure on the island. It seems to be a simple cave but now blocked by a large slab of stone. Behind it, according to the inscription, lies the body of one Otto III, a minor count of Wissenland, who died on the island, long ago.

can be done quick and dirty with a **Daunting (4d) Athletics (St) check**, or more easily and slowly with the proper tools (no need to check). However, doing so also breaks the blessed seal on the tomb – Otto will now be able to leave.

If the PCs make a lot of noise attempting to open the tomb (i.e. if they fail the check or elect not to attempt it), Otto will hear them coming and realize that he is on the island. Delighted at his stroke of good fortune, Otto will call out through the black stones, calling all their bearers to his crypt. Depending on the success of the PCs thus far, this may result in a massive and bloody assault by the orcs and the arrival of Blickstein, Phlegmflan, Stinktongue, or even Washnack during the final confrontation with Otto.

## COUNT OTTO III

When the PCs meet Otto face-to-face, Otto will suddenly realize a few things. Firstly, that he must be located in the Schluesselschloss. Secondly, that an entire orc Waaagh! is just outside and his for the taking – all he has to do is dominate the warboss. And thirdly that he will finally (finally!) taste human blood after centuries of surviving on rats. Blood-starved and insane, Otto may gloat, he may boast, or he may rage against the PCs...but he will certainly end by attempting to kill them and drink their blood. In the true tradition of villains and vampires everywhere, Otto will be delighted to share the details of his hastily-assembled master plan, his plan to sweep through the Empire from an unexpected quarter, to turn

the dead of Ubersreik into his undead army, to make the whole world bow down before him. He'll also be hungry for any information the PCs might have about the world after his death - between their dialogue, Otto and the PCs can together piece together the intricacies of the adventure's plot. Any lingering details or unresolved questions the PCs may have about events, Otto will be happy to answer. After all, he's not likely to die of old age. And the longer the PCs stick about to hear him boast and gloat, the better the chances his pet orc Waaagh! will break the walls of the castle and come to his aid.

Otto was a tall man, once, and even handsome, wearing fine (if outdated) plate mail and wielding a superb sword. His armour and clothing bear the Wissenland crest, but have tarnished and withered in the centuries since his death. His skin is almost white and seems cold and thin – the skin of an ancient man or a corpse. His hair is brittle and faded. His armour and weapons are all superior quality, and Otto is a formidable foe in his own right. However, to add some spice to the final encounter, and depending on the strength of the PCs, the GM can use the following 3-act structure to make the final confrontation with Otto tougher.

## ACT I: BOASTING AND GLOATING

As covered above, Otto tries to keep the PCs talking as long as he can while he hopes his minions can arrive to aid him. As soon as the PCs attempt to leave or attack, or Otto receives information that tells him reinforcements are imminent, Otto attacks and Act II begins.





## ACT II: BLOOD AND DEATH

Otto fights like he's been dreaming of nothing else for centuries. He glories and exults in battle, and especially in bloodshed – he hasn't had a drop of human blood since he died, and this will be his first true encounter with the vampire's thirst. He'll attempt to drink the blood of anyone felled in this battle, friend or foe.

When Otto is defeated or the PCs break and run, Otto assumes the form of a large and vile bat and rushes through the passageway during the rally step. The PCs, if they pursue, can catch him elsewhere in the castle, perhaps at the gatehouse, just finishing a meal of an innocent NPC (perhaps someone the PCs know and like, such as Matthauss?). Begin Act III.

## ACT III: THE COUNT AT BAY

His recent meal has refreshed him – the GM should discard some or all of Otto's wounds, depending on how quickly the PCs pursued and how cruel he is feeling. With the sun still up (presumably), Otto cannot fly away from the castle – so his only hope is to defeat the PCs and open the gates. He'll attempt to do that and fight to the death. If Washnack and his wyvern are still at large, consider having them arrive in the middle of this act – although it's not necessarily at all clear which side he'll fight on!

## AFTERMATH

If the PCs manage to destroy Otto then the Waaagh! is beatable. Without Otto's subconscious guidance, Phlegmflan and Washnack are just an ordinary shaman and an ordinary warboss, no cleverer than most. The tactical acumen of the orcs will degenerate almost immediately, and they will start throwing away lives in reckless assaults, breaking and fleeing from determined defenders, and devolving into animosity. If the defenders can hold on for even another day, reinforcements from Karak Azgaraz or Ubersreik will arrive and break the back of the Waaagh! It will be hard to deny the PCs their proper place as heroes of the Reikland. Depending on how things end, and what stories get told about it, the PCs may get honoured by the Emperor himself. One may even be offered the Barony of Teufeltal, if no suitable heir exists.

If the Waaagh! is successful, the PCs will probably all die. The greenskins will stream down to Ubersreik and attack the city. They may or may not destroy it, but the tale of Washnack's Waaagh! will live on in Reikland legend.

Perhaps new PCs might hear of the great siege of Schluesselschloss that bought the Reikland invaluable time to make a stand against Washnack. They may even hear the names of the gallant heroes who died so bravely so that others might live: those who truly answered the hero's call. Alternatively, these new PCs may need to be the ones to help muster the defence of Ubersreik against the Waaagh!

## NOTABLE PERSONALITIES

The following section details the stats and special abilities of the NPCs that the PCs will encounter over the course of the adventure.

Many of these NPCs have Creature Cards included (see page 43 for a description of Creature Cards).

### WASHNACK GOREJAW ☠☠☠☠☠☠

**Epic Threat:** Washnack uses the Black Orc creature card placed onto the **Lord** epic threat sheet. Please see page 44 for more information on epic threat sheets. Washnack's threat level and the statistics listed on page 80 have been derived using this method.

**Stomp Da' Stunties:** Washnack hates dwarfs and gains ☐ on all *Melee Attacks* against them.

**We Iz Bigga!:** Washnack has Weapon Skill and Resilience trained. While Washnack is critically wounded, his *Melee Attacks* inflict +1 damage.

**Suggested Action:** Kiss my Waaagh!

### BONEMAULER ☠☠☠☠☠☠

**Terrifying:** Bonemauler causes Terror 3.

**Instinctive:** Bonemauler may use Willpower instead of Intelligence when attempting Observation checks.

**Flight:** Bonemauler does not need to perform a manoeuvre to disengage from opponents before moving. He can move away from engaged opponents as if he were not engaged with them, unless they can also fly.

**Poisonous Tail:** When Bonemauler inflicts a critical wound, the target suffers fatigue equal to the critical wounds severity.

**Unbroken:** Ride checks to control Bonemauler by anyone other than Washnack Gorejaw are **Hard (3d)**.

**Suggested Actions:** Vicious Bite, Aerial Assault.

### PHLEGMFLAN ☠☠☠☠☠☠

**Epic Threat:** Phlegmflan uses the Goblin Shaman creature card placed onto the **Mastermind** epic threat sheet. Please see page 44 for more information on epic threat sheets. Phlegmflan's threat level and the statistics listed on page 80 have been derived using this method.

**Waaagh! Shaman:** Phlegmflan has Channel Power and gathers and uses power as a wizard.

**Suggested Actions:** Fire of Mork, Vindictive Glare, Advanced Counterspell, Pronouncements of Doom, any Waaagh! spell.

### STINKTONGUE ☠☠☠

**Epic Threat:** Stinktongue uses the Night Goblin creature card placed onto the **Hero** epic threat sheet. Please see page 44 for more information on epic threat sheets. Stinktongue's threat level and the statistics listed on page 80 have been derived using this method.



**Night Eyes:** Stinktongue ignores ■ from darkness effects. He adds ■ to Observation and Ballistic Skill checks when in light.

**Elves Is Creepy:** When Stinktongue is outnumbered by elves in an engagement, he suffers ■ to all checks. If outnumbered by more than two to one by elves, he suffers ◆ to checks instead.

**Suggested Actions:** Backstab, Find Weakness.

### REINHART BLICKSTEIN ☠☠☠☠

**Silver Tongue:** Reinhart Blickstein has 1 rank of training in Charm, Discipline, Guile, Intuition, and Observation.

**Suggested Actions:** Backstab, Twisting Words, Devious Manoeuvre

### COUNT OTTO III ☠☠☠☠☠☠

**Blood Starved:** Whenever Otto's Expertise budget is 4+, he gains +2 damage on all his attacks. All of Otto's *Melee Attacks* gain:

☠☠ Otto gains ■■ to his Expertise budget

**Dead Calm:** Effects that target Otto's Willpower add ◆◆ to their pools. He is also able to 'turn off' his natural ability to cause Fear whenever he wishes.

**Dead Earnest:** Otto is unaffected by Fear and Terror, and might be exempt from other conditions based on psychology at the GM's discretion.

**Fear of Undeath:** Otto causes Fear 2.

**Night Vision:** Two fewer ■■ are added to Otto's dice pool for any effects from darkness or lack of sufficient light.

**Suggested Actions:** Beguile, Raise the Dead, Seized By Bloodlust, No Escape, No Hope, Haunting Visions.

### MATILDE VON SCHLUESSEL ☠

Matilde uses the Noble stats.

**ERIK VON SCHLUESSEL, SERGEANT MARTIN SCHATZ, PHILLINE DE BLANC, MASTER ULRIC KRAUSSE, AND DUNDRI ULGARSSON ☠☠**

Each NPC uses the Soldier stats but has a Strength and Toughness of 4 and 17 wounds.

### MATTHAUS VON SCHLUESSEL ☠

Matthaus uses the Noble stats but has an Intelligence of 4 and only 11 wounds.

### ANDREAS VON AVERBACH ☠☠

Andreas uses the Soldier stats.

### CAPTAIN PANSY SPOONBILL ☠

Pansy uses the Specialist stats but only has a Strength of 2.

### WERNER SMOKKEL ☠

Werner uses the Specialist stats.

### FATHER SIEGFRIED STEUER ☠

Siegfried uses the Priest stats.

### ARNDT & MARIE LOWE ☠

Arndt and Marie use the Townsfolk stats.

### SNARKY GUTBUSTER ☠☠☠☠☠

Snarky uses the Ogre Maneater stats but has a Strength and Toughness of 7.

## NOTABLE PERSONALITIES

CREATURE	ST	TO	AG	INT	WP	FEL	A/C/E	WOUNDS	STANCE
WASHNACK GOREJAW	8■■(9)	8■■(5)	5■(4)	4■	6■■	4■	10/5/4	28	R4
BONEMAULER	8(5)	8(3)	3(2)	2	4	1	6/2/4	26	R2
PHLEGMFLAN	3(3)	3(2)	3(3)	7■■■	6	6■	3/10/6	14	R4
STINKTONGUE	4(5)	4■(2)	5(2)	4■	3■	4	5/5/2	15	C2
REINHART BLICKSTEIN	3(4)	3(1)	3(1)	5■	4■	5■	1/6/6	16	C3
COUNT OTTO III	7(5)	6(3)	5(3)	5	6■	5■■	6/5/0	20	C2/R3





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