



A Knife in the Back

Putting a bit of intrigue back into Mordheim

By Sean Wilt

Has your campaign consisted of “You bump into opponent X while exploring the ruins of Mordheim, you battle, gather wyrdstone, sell it, roll injury results, and get more equipment and/or men.” I like playing Mordheim and it's the wargame of choice at my household but I wanted to add a little intrigue into the game, to put a new spin on an favorite as the saying goes.

I did a bit of thinking about what makes Mordheim such a great game and about what makes it different from other wargames. The first thought that jumped into my thoughts was detail. The area that this game is set in is the ruined city of Mordheim, an area that is large enough to battle but not so overwhelming as to get lost in the area. The warbands are small enough so you have enough time paint them in better detail and if you are like me, create a story on how your group ended up in Mordheim, Lustria, Khermi, or whatever area you decide to set your campaign.

With these thoughts, I have come up with an scenario and a house rule or two to more fully use this scenario in your own campaign to add more excitement to Mordheim.



A BIT ROLEPLAYING

The first part of this scenario doesn't even take place on the battlefield. In our campaign, we had two players who ran mercenary bands, a group from Marienburg called the Silver Falcons and a group from Reikland called the Sons of Sigmar. I secretly met with each player separately and at different times to have a short roleplaying session.

Before I go on any further, I had to warn anyone that wants to run this scenario that a little bit of deception is needed to run it successfully. In my mind's eye, I pictured a short, lithe, dirty man with dark hair who I called Vigo Delantri. I described the situation that the player was in before introducing him to Vigo. I told the player running the Silver Falcons that one of his henchmen, Alexander Marcos, a swordsmen in the band is sitting in a seedy tavern, which we called the Tin Bucket, minding his own business when he is approached by Vigo. After bantering back and forth for a bit, Alexander manages to find out that Vigo wants to talk to the leader of his band, Captain Caser DeAugustino. He also determines that Vigo wants to hire for a task but insists on talking to the Captain before discussing anything else. Alexander finally points out the Captain to Vigo and discusses the task and payment for performing the task. They negotiate a deal that would have the Silver Falcons going to a ruined noblemen's house to search for a signet ring and for other family heirlooms. I even wrote a portion of the conversation that took place.



Vigo: Kind sir, I am looking for a group of men who call themselves the Silver Falcons. I was given a description that matches you, sir. Can you help me?

Alexander: What's it to you, 'kind sir'?

Vigo: I need to speak to their leader about a personal matter.

Alexander: I will more that that before helping the likes of you.

Vigo: (*sighs*) I need to speak of matters that will enrich his group...

Alexander: (*points to Captain DeAugustino*) Go talk to that man over there...

While this discussion was going on, the player running the Silver Falcons asked if there was a rule for negotiation or sensing truthfulness. I quickly decided he could let the Captain make a leadership for negotiation and another roll to make a hunch. 2D6 was rolled for the hunch and an eight was scored. Normally, for Caser, this would be a success since his leadership is an eight but I added a +2 modifier because of Vigo's skill at deception. Then, another 2D6 was rolled and a six was scored. The negotiation was a success. Vigo was offering an initial sum of 100 gold but the 'successful' negotiation got the price raised to 110 gp.

HOUSE RULES

Hunch: In our campaign, when a roleplaying session takes place, the player in question can make a leadership roll to see if the group is leading can tell if an NPC is lying. The player running the campaign actually makes the roll in secret instead of the player running the warband. The campaign runner will ask the leadership of the highest ranked member of the warband. A successful Leadership rolls allows the player running the campaign to give a vague hint on the truthfulness of the NPC in question. If failed, an erroneous conclusion will be hinted at.

Negotiation: I thought of a new skill that my warband could get in the future, which would allow them to possibly raise the price of any fees given that weren't associated with the buying and selling of objects. I would allow the Leader to make a leadership roll. For every two points rolled below the Leadership trait, I would raise the fee by 10%. If failed, every two points rolled above the Leadership trait, I would lower the fee by 10%. Ignore any odd fractions. For example, if my Captain's Ld was a eight and I rolled a three, then I would be able to raise the fee by 20%.

Devious: I gave Vigo the Devious trait. This trait would allow someone to force the person in negotiations with another to make that other person add +2 to their Ld, possibly turning a success into a failure. As a balancing attribute, I would add +1 to any rolls to hire Dramatis Personae, making it harder to hire them since their reputation precedes them.

I met with the second player running the Reiklander group called the "Sons of Sigmar" and had similarly successful results. Everything was set up except for the "knife." I recently painted a Skaven warband that was ready to play but I wanted to surprise the others with them. Actually, I wanted to use an Undead or Possessed group but unfortunately, I don't have the models to represent them but the Skaven band, the Silent Walkers, would do quite nicely.

As it turned out, my Skaven band hired Vigo through another agent to get two warbands to meet a certain location and to get to battle each other, weaken them, and take out both group. My Skaven, "The Silent Walkers", were told by one of Nightmaster's henchmen to set both groups for the greater glory of Clan Eshin. I set up a classic hidden treasure scenario and let them go at it. They both found the building and got there at the same time. The Reiklanders managed to get one of their in the building and guarded the only entrance and exit so that the Marienburg band would be forced to either go into missile fire and then into melee while a Youngblood carried the treasure chest.

However, when the treasure was found, I placed the Skaven warband on the other side of the Reiklander group at the end of turn five, which happened to be the turn when they rolled for treasure. Ironically, the Silent Walkers already picked the place clean and let the empty treasure chest. I had the Sons of Sigmars pinned. They would have to battle one group or the other. The Reikland Captain offered the Marienburg Captain fifty gc and half the treasure to attack the Skaven with them. The Marienburg Captain agreed and the Reikland group threw the bag of gold crowns over to him. The Skaven crept closer, not knowing about the bribe. Both weakened groups sprang into action and attacked my band. It was a very fierce battle but three turns later, they caused my group to flee away in disgrace.

I allowed the other two players to do this since they had already fought and now had another warband after them. Their Captains talked to each other and discovered the vile treachery done to them by Vigo. Plans of revenge started to form very quickly.

I talked to them after the scenario to see what they thought of it. They both patted on the back, which I found a little ominous and told me that they didn't see what hit them. I, in turn, congratulated them for surviving and for their resourcefulness in the heat of battle. I told them that we could have a campaign in which the object would be finding and eliminating the Skaven band that set them up. I am now waiting for their answer.

THE SCENARIO

This scenario is set up very much like the scenario on pg 131 of the Mordheim rulebook. The rules for Hidden Treasure are used with the following twists. I would highly suggest talking to the players beforehand and have them convinced that the Hidden Treasure scenario will be played. The building with the 'treasure' is set in the center of the playing area. Therefore, each player know exactly where they need to go in order to find the treasure. Then, each player places a piece of terrain onto the playing area. On the turn that the treasure chest is found and before any other moves are made, the third treacherous warship is then deployed. The third warband may set themselves anywhere on the playing area as long as it is no closer than 12" to any other member of either warband. In my game, I allowed the other two players to move first but you could re-roll initiative if you desired to instead. The third warband would win the scenario if they could take the two captains out of action and have a draw if one captain could be taken out of action. I decided to be really mean and rule that there was nothing in the treasure chest but worthless rocks but if you are a nicer campaign runner, you could still let them make D6 rolls to see if there was anything in the treasure chest.

Ending the game:

If one warband gets the treasure to safety or one warband routs, the game ends. If the third put the other two leaders out of action, the game ends.

Experience for the third warband:

+1 survives. If a hero or a henchmen group survives the battle they gain +1 experience.

+1 Winning Leader. If the leader actually succeeds at the tasking of eliminating both rival leaders the Leader gains +1 experience.

+2 Per Leader Out of Action. Any Hero that takes a Leader of action gains +2 experience.

Stats for Vigo Delantri:

50 gold crowns per warband to be set up

Just a moment of your time, good sir. I represent a man seeking a bit of help for band such as yourselves. I have a map of where you would need to search. One quick search and then you will be paid the vast sum of 150 gold crowns. I am even authorized to give 25 gold crowns if you agree to go and start your search tomorrow. Think it over but please think quickly...

May be hired: Anyone but the Witch Hunters and the Sisters of Sigmar can hire Vigo.

Rating: Vigo increases the warband's rating by 10 points, although the warband that Vigo.

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld	Save
Vigo	4	3	3	2	3	2	3	1	6	None

