

Nastassia's Wedding

*An Adventure for
Warhammer Fantasy
Roleplay with notes for GURPS
by Graeme Davis*

This *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay* adventure is set in the castle of one of the Empire's minor noble families. With a few name changes, it could be set almost anywhere in the Old World.

While this adventure may be run with the *WFRP* rulebook alone, GMs will find Hogshead Publishing's *Apocrypha Now* a useful aid, especially for the source material on Nobles and the Social Standing rules.

The adventure can be run using the *GURPS* rules very easily, in any historical, fantasy or horror setting with a medieval or higher tech level. It perhaps works best in a country-house situation set in England or New England in the late 19th or early 20th century. The adventure consists mostly of situations, so there is little actual conversion work for the GM to do.

The characters encountered here are mostly common archetypes – nobles, servants, thugs, spies and assassins – and generic character stats will be sufficient for most situations. The few cultural references are largely self-explanatory: ancient Araby is equivalent to ancient Egypt, and the taggee of Ind are the thuggee of India.

The Chaos God Slaanesh preaches the breaking of all social taboos, and in an early 20th-century horror setting could be substituted with Aleister "the Great Beast" Crowley. Alternatively, or in other settings, Slaanesh could be a Thing Man Was Not Meant To Know.

Preparation

The adventure involves a number of simultaneous plotlines, and the GM is encouraged to read the adventure through thoroughly before beginning play. The Events section will help, but GM confusion could be fatal – player confusion, on the other hand, is expected! It is almost inevitable that events from one plotline will interfere with events from another, and, of course, there is no accounting for what PCs will do, even in the most straightforward of situations.

The plots are presented below (and in the Events section) as they *should* happen, assuming nothing interferes with them. Alternatively, the GM could decide to run each plotline separately as an individual mini-adventure.

Introduction

The marriage of Gravin Nastassia von Saponatheim promises to be the social event of the season. The great and the good are gathering from all over The Empire for the celebrations at the family's home, Schloss Grauenberg. By some means or another, the PCs have wangled an invitation.

There are various ways to get PCs into the celebration. If they have been particularly successful in their adventures, they might be invited as celebrity guests, and expected to entertain the company with tales of their exploits from time to time. High-status characters – Nobles, high-level Clerics and Wizards, and others at the GM's discretion – might have ties to one of the families and merit a place on the guest list. Entertainers could be hired for the occasion, and Servants, Cooks, and similar characters could be employed by the hosts (even temporarily, to cope with the flood of guests) or have come along in the retinue of some noble guest.

The Happy Couple

Gravin Nastassia is a picture of maidenly beauty at sixteen, and her betrothed, Graf Karl-Heinz von Liebewitz of Ambosstein, is a handsome and athletic youth, one year her senior, from a minor branch of one of the Empire's most prominent families.

It seems like an ideal marriage. Although the Ambossteins are well-connected, they do not have the wealth and landholdings of the Nuln branch of the family; as the only child of Graf Wilhelm von Saponatheim of Schloss Grauenberg, Nastassia stands to inherit all of her father's lands around Bogenhafen and in the southern fringes of the Reikwald.

Castle Grauenberg

The notes on the plan should be self-explanatory. Only the key rooms have been marked; remaining guest rooms will be occupied by "generic" wedding guests. The courtyard is filled with tents occupied by the hired entertainers and any servants who cannot be accommodated in the castle.

Plot Summaries

Plot 1 – Old Scores. The Ambosstein party is headed by Graf Erich von Liebewitz and Gravin Maria-Ulrike, the groom's father and older sister, respectively. A few years ago, the Gravin successfully defended a lawsuit brought by Baron Eberhardt von Dammenblatz of Wissenberg, over the death of his father. Dammenblatz swore revenge, and his agents will be at work to discredit the von Liebewitz family and sabotage the wedding.

Plot 2 – Star-Crossed Lovers. Like many noble marriages, this match has more to do with family position, land and influence than with love. Nastassia is hopelessly in love with a jeweler's apprentice from Altdorf, and the two have carried on a hopeless – but unconsummated – affair for some time. Unable to persuade her father against the marriage, she has decided to elope with her paramour.

Plot 3 – A Collector's Item. Graf Wilhelm has always been interested in military life and is an avid collector of military curiosities. Through a contact in the Border Princes, he has recently acquired an ornate sword of antique Arabian design, which now hangs in the main hall. What he does not know is that the weapon was looted from an ancient tomb, and its rightful owner wants it back.

Plot 4 – A Matter of Business. A distant cousin of the von Saponatheims, Graf Johann von Lierer, has recently returned from Marienburg, where he was conducting some family business. A compulsive gambler, he lost heavily and ran out on gambling debts amounting to several thousand guilders – most of them to the dreaded crime lord Albrecht the Fish. For the sake of his reputation, if for no other reason, Albrecht cannot let this matter rest.

Plot 5 – Unspeakable Acts. The hedonism and degeneracy among some elements of the Old World's nobility are legendary. Some seek to push their search for pleasure to the limit, and these are easy prey for the Chaos God Slaanesh. A small group of lesser nobles among the wedding guests are followers of Slaanesh, and plan to subvert the celebrations into an appalling act of worship.

Plot 6 – In the Best of Families. Almost nobody knows that Nastassia is not Graf Wilhelm's only child. Locked up in the cellar, cared for by a few trusted retainers, is Manfred – a deformed, retarded wreck of a human being, who in law is the heir to Schloss Grauenberg and all the Saponatheim lands and possessions.

Plot 7 – The Rose Cat. The elderly Countess Clothilde of Carroburg has a legendary ruby – slightly pink in color, with a flaw in the shape of a cat's head – which she wears to all important occasions. An equally legendary jewel thief, known as the Wraith, has decided to steal the ruby, and will make the attempt at the wedding celebrations. To complicate matters, the Rose Cat was stolen from a prince of Ind five years ago; a group of the dreaded taggee Assassins has been sent to recover it.

Events

The wedding ceremony is due to begin at noon on Festag. The GM can set the exact date according to the requirements of the campaign. Guests begin to arrive on

Angestag, and the 24 hours before the wedding will prove to be quite eventful.

Set out below is roughly what will happen during that time, subject to the effects of whatever the PCs decide to do – and to whatever tweaks, changes and additional events the GM decides to throw in. The more, the merrier!



Angestag Afternoon

The trickle of guests arriving by road and river turns into a flood. At about 3 p.m., the river liner *Emperor Wilhelm* arrives amid much fuss and excitement, carrying most of the von Liebewitz party. Grand Duchess Emmanuelle pulled some strings to have the liner make the detour from Altdorf to Grauenberg. Although Electoral business (or higher matters, if this adventure takes place after *Empire in Flames*) prevents her attending the wedding in person, she has sent several lavish gifts with the small group of Nuln von Liebewitzes who have come along with their Ambosstein cousins.

Angestag Evening

A lavish feast is held in the Great Hall to welcome the guests and kick off the wedding festivities. Food and wine are plentiful and of superb quality; the Graf has spared no expense, even engaging legendary Bretonnian chef Marcel de Morceaux for the occasion. Entertainers of all kinds have come to the castle, including one troupe from faraway Ind. They amaze the company with acrobatic feats, fire-eating and, not least, with their exotic appearance and dress. Gossip and scandal run up and down the hall as the assembled Nobles get down to doing what Nobles do best.

While outwardly all seems to be happiness and merry-making, observant characters will notice a few things going on:

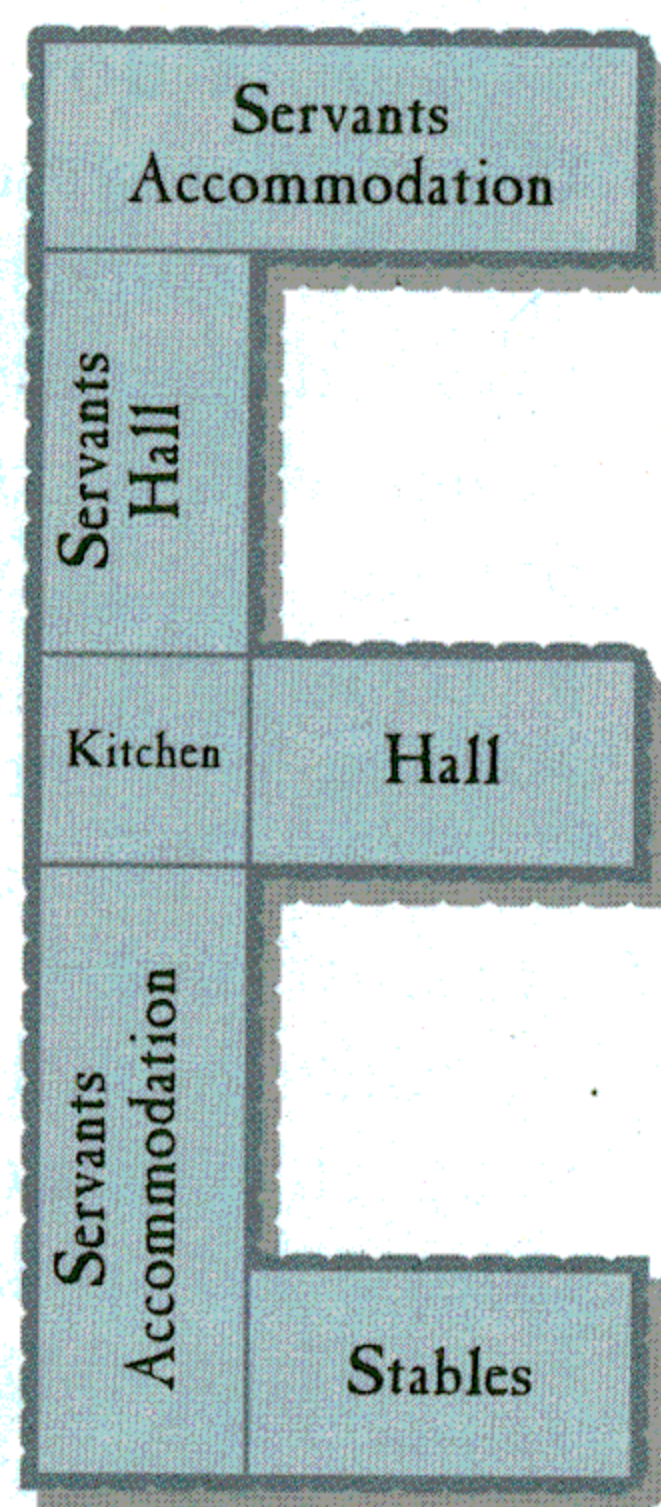
A successful test against the average of Int+1 (modifiers, if any, are in parentheses) is necessary to reveal each of the following:

(Entertainer +20) The entertainers from Ind seem not to be playing the hall in the same way as the other entertainers. They start off moving around, collecting money thrown on the floor like everyone else, but after a few minutes they stick to one place, and seem to be paying close attention to a group of local nobles from Carroburg. Any Noble character who knows this may make an Int test (Court Intrigue skill +10) to remember that Countess Clothilde of Carroburg – who is sitting with the group in question – has been showing off a pink ruby all season, which is said to have come from Ind.

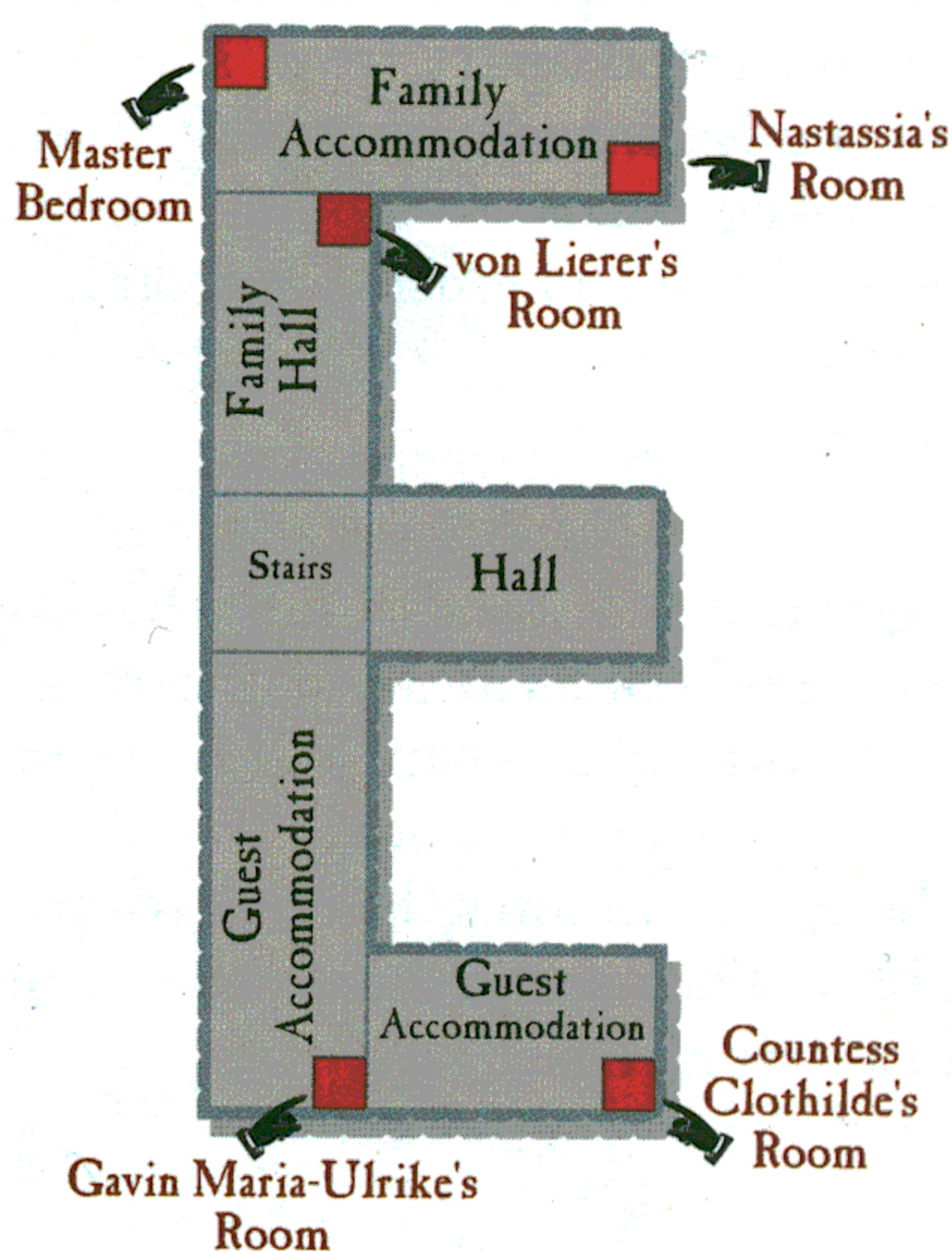
(Females +10) The bride-to-be, while outwardly radiant, looks nervous from time to time, looking around as if scanning the hall for someone or something. She does not even glance at the bridegroom, despite the fact that they have not seen each other since they were betrothed at the ages of six and seven.

(Nobles +10, Rogues +20) A couple of the guests seem out

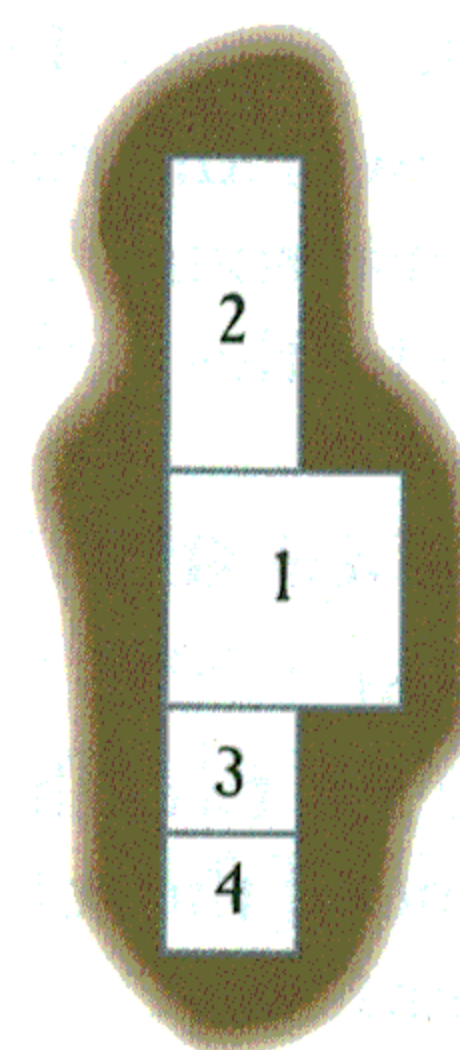
Ground Floor



Upper Floor

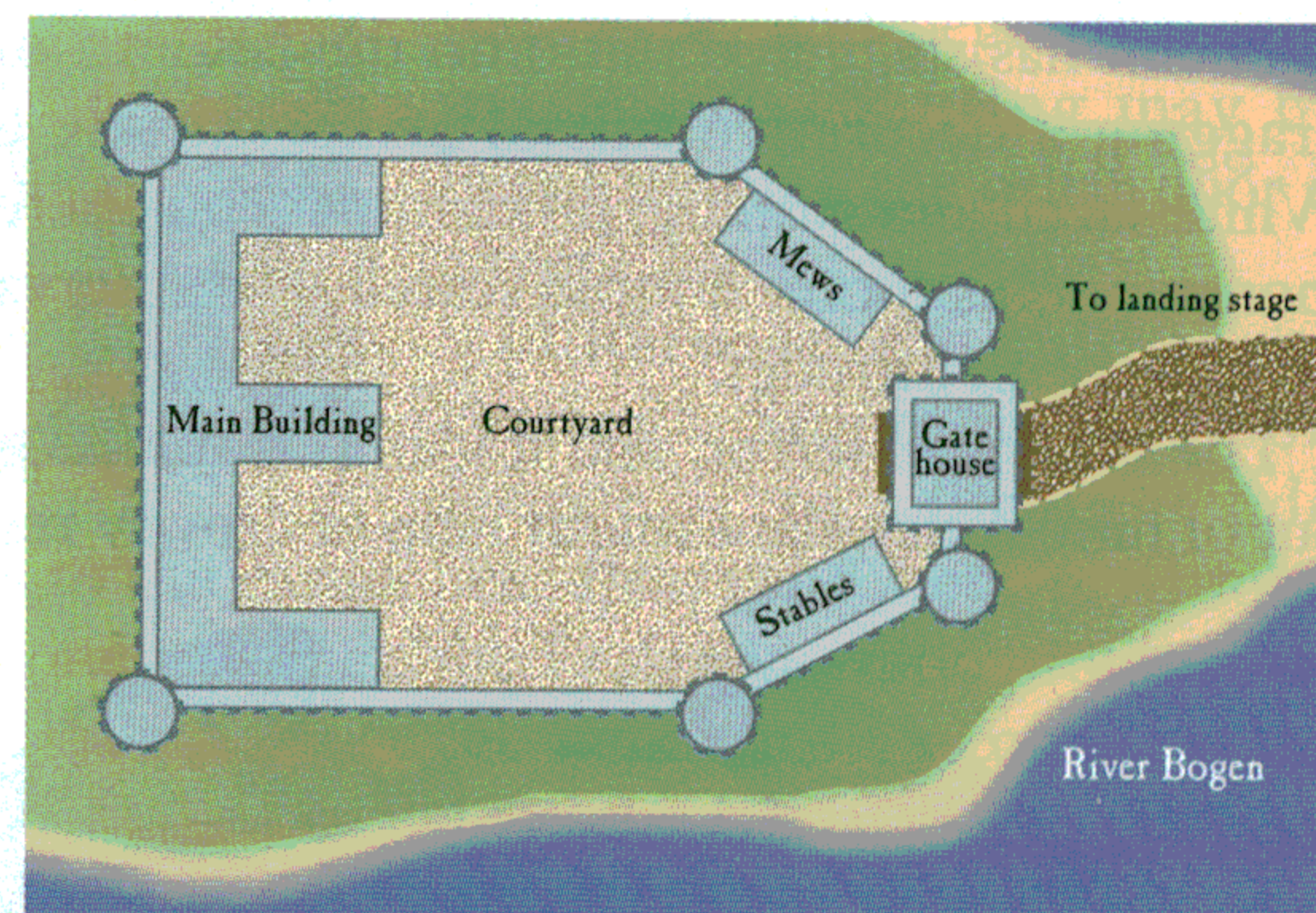


Cellars



- 1 - Food cellar
- 2 - Wine cellar
- 3 - Secret room
- 4 - Manfred's room

Castle Grauenberg general plan



of place. They are as expensively dressed as anyone else, but their clothes somehow don't fit them quite right. They keep to themselves, and don't seem to know anyone else at the feast. Nobles may think they are provincial merchants who have somehow wangled an invitation, but Rogues will have no doubt that they are Racketeers. At some time in the evening, the two sidle up to a table near the bottom of the hall, position themselves on either side of a young male guest, and a quiet but clearly heated exchange takes place. Nobles may attempt an Int test to know that the young guest is a cousin of the von Saponatheims, Graf Johann von Lierer, recently returned from Marienburg. A further Int test (Noble +10, Tailor +20, recently in Marienburg +40) will reveal that the clothes of the two heavy-set individuals follow the Marienburg fashion of a couple of years ago.

The GM may add other incidents and events at will. As often happens on such occasions, some of the younger guests may overindulge and things may get a little out of hand. For instance, two drunken young Nobles may decide to have a duel in the hall or somewhere else in the castle. A couple may slip off for a secret assignation, and be caught *in flagrante delicto* in some bedchamber, crypt or shrubbery. Practical jokes and acts of petty theft and vandalism may take place. Just high-spirited young Nobles, having a good time.

The feast ends around 10 p.m., and the company disperses. Guests drift, stagger, and – in some cases – are

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carried to the various guest rooms. Nastassia is among the first to leave the tables, pleading an upset stomach. By midnight, the Great Hall is deserted apart from servants clearing away the ruins of the feast, and a cluster of crusty old Barons around a brandy-keg, loudly re-fighting various historical battles with pieces of fruit and much argument.

Angestag night

12 midnight

Albrecht's two thugs go to von Lierer's room, having bribed one of the servants to find out its location. There is a single muffled yell (normal noise: 60% chance to be heard in the passage), and then everything goes quiet.

The two leave after about ten minutes, having stripped the room of all its valuables. They sneak out of the castle and head off downriver in a waiting boat.

12:15 a.m.

There is a commotion by the Master Bedroom. Graf Wilhelm has staggered out onto the landing and collapsed, dragging a decorative suit of armor noisily to the floor. White-faced and gasping, he stammers incoherently about a monster in his room. A rapid search by the servants turns up no trace of an intruder.

The Graf is in terror, and it is impossible to get any sense out of him. A deleriant might help (a drowsy result indicates

that he is calm enough to speak), or a successful use of Hypnotism will calm him down sufficiently, though the servants may try to "protect" him from being hypnotized. If questioned under either of these circumstances, he will say that he was awakened by a transparent, bird-bodied Beastman. Further questioning will reveal that the creature made no attempt to harm him, but seemed very angry about something, and spoke harshly in a foreign tongue.

The creature is not a Beastman, but a ka – a kind of Spectre native to Araby. It was disturbed when its tomb was looted and the sword recently acquired by the Graf was stolen. It has stayed close to the Graf, but turned invisible. Any character with Identify Undead skill can sense its presence on a successful WP test (Cleric of Morr +5/level).

If it realizes it has been detected, the spirit will show itself again – looking very much like a large, semi-transparent bird with a human head – and demand that the sword be returned to its tomb. The Graf will scream and faint at this point. Unfortunately, the ka only speaks the ancient language of Araby. A Gift of Tongues spell will allow the caster to understand it, and a character with Arcane Language – Magick will be able to pick out odd words here and there, requiring a successful Int test to piece together enough of the message to understand.

The ka automatically causes fear when it shows itself, but will not choose to cause terror unless it is attacked or otherwise offended – in other words, if the sword is not taken down immediately and shipped off to Araby. It will invisibly accompany the sword back to its tomb, and punish anyone who interferes or delays its return.

12:30 a.m.

There is a scream from von Lierer's room. A serving-maid, with whom he had made an assignation for the night, went to his room as arranged and found that it had been thoroughly wrecked. Von Lierer himself is dead, tied to the bed with signs of having been severely beaten and – strangest of all – a fresh herring between his teeth . . .

12:45 a.m.

There is a disturbance outside the family apartments as servants intercept a young guest who appears to have lost his way. He seems drunk, and is unable even to give his name or the name of his family, so that he can be directed to the right quarters.

This is Joachim Bitterfeld, the apprentice from Altdorf who is planning to elope with the Gravin Nastassia. He has lost his way in the castle, and is pretending to be drunk in the hope of being left alone so he can keep looking for



Nastassia's room. A successful Int test (Consume Alcohol +10) will reveal that his drunkenness is feigned, and characters who investigate further will find that he is wearing two sets of clothes – one set is a disguise for Nastassia so that they can sneak out of the castle together.

If left alone, Joachim will keep looking for Nastassia's room throughout the night – possibly causing disturbances in various parts of the castle as he goes into wrong rooms from time to time, whenever and wherever the GM wants.

1 a.m.

Manfred breaks out of the cellars, breaking the necks of two servants and making his way up to the main hall. Unless stopped, he will go upstairs to the master bedroom to confront his father. It is not likely that Graf Wilhelm will survive the encounter.

1:15 a.m.

The Gravin Nastassia leaves her room to look for Joachim. If she encounters anyone along the way, she will pretend to be sleepwalking. Anyone who enters her room after this time will find a note to her father, left propped up on her dressing-table. The note explains that she has eloped with her true love, rather than face this arranged marriage.

1:30 a.m.

The Dammenblatz agent sets out to deal with Gravin Maria-Ulrike. Posing as a wedding guest, he arranged to get invited to another guest's room to share a bottle of brandy. Having quietly murdered his drinking-companion, he sets out to take the body to the Gravin's room. If encountered, he will pretend to be drunk (somewhat better than Joachim, owing to his Acting skill), and claim that his friend has drunk himself unconscious.

Then, he will quietly break into the Gravin's room as she sleeps, and drug her with a blowpipe dart coated with three doses of Madman's Cap, to make sure she stays asleep. He will dump the body by her bed, leaving a bloody dagger near her hand. To top it all off, he will scatter pages from a scandalous pamphlet describing and illustrating the rites of Slaanesh (with more imagination than accuracy) about the room. He will then ring for the Gravin's maid, hide under the bed while she discovers the body, and then sneak out into the corridor while she goes for help. He will try to get away, but if this is impossible he will blend in with the crowd of guests and servants drawn by the maid's screams.

1:45 a.m.

Unless prevented, the Gravin Nastassia will find Joachim

about now, and the two will look for somewhere she can change into her disguise. This process will take about ten minutes, and then the two "young nobles" will try to sneak out of the castle.

2 a.m.

Six young nobles sneak out of various guest rooms and make their way down to the wine cellars. Beneath their dressing-gowns, each wears the ritual garb appropriate to the worship of Slaanesh. If challenged, they will pretend to be going to the cellars to help themselves to some more wine and brandy.

Once in the cellars, the cultists will bar the door from the inside, and begin their ritual. A low chanting may be heard through the cellar door if anyone listens carefully.

Otherwise, the cultists are casting Summon Demon Horde, to bring 6d6

Daemonettes to the castle. See *Apocrypha Now*, p. 85 for a typical Daemonette, or use the Lesser Daemon profile from the *WFRP* rulebook. Once the summoning is complete, the cultists unbar the cellar door and the Daemonettes rampage through the castle in an orgy of destruction and worse.

2:15 a.m.

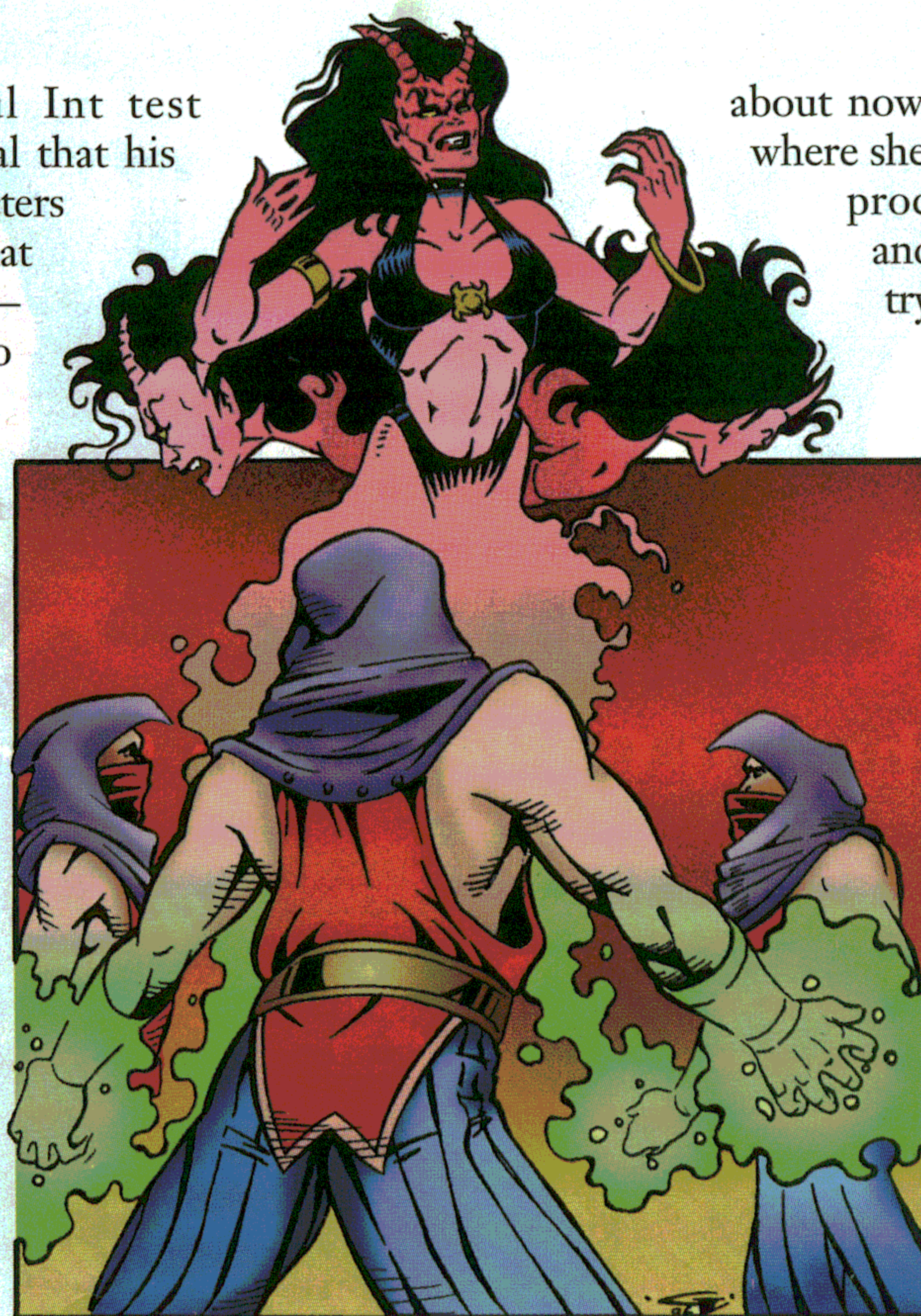
Four taggee assassins sneak out of the entertainers' quarters and head for Countess Clothilde's rooms. They may be encountered anywhere the GM wishes over the next 5-10 minutes, as they try to locate their quarry. However, they are well-trained and extremely wary, and will avoid encounters when possible.

At about the same time, Graf Josef von Angendorf has made his transformation into the notorious jewel thief the Wraith. A black-clad figure slips out of the window of Graf Josef's guest apartment, and climbs around the outside of the castle toward Countess Clothilde's rooms. He should arrive a few minutes before the taggee.

Concluding the Adventure

Experience points should be awarded for the following:

Preventing the completion of the Chaos ritual in the cellar	30 points each
Preventing the theft of Countess Clothilde's ruby	20 points each
Helping deal with the ka.....	20 points each
Thwarting the Dammenblatz agent	20 points each
Recapturing Manfred.....	10 points each
Stopping Albrecht's thugs before they kill von Lierer	10 points each



What Next?

There are various ways to extend the adventure. If Nastassia succeeds in eloping, the PCs might be hired to track her and her paramour down before they can get to Altdorf and be married. There is also the question of returning the sword to Araby, and possibly recovering the ruby from whoever manages to steal it. The ritual in the cellar could lead to a long-term investigation of a Slaaneshi cult among the Empire's nobility, and the discovery of an unknown heir to the von Saponatheim family could cause dynastic complications, and even lead to the von Liebewitz family withdrawing from the match – especially since the bride has gone missing...

Non-Player Characters

Wedding guests, servants and guards can be treated as Nobles, Servants and Soldiers respectively. Albrecht's thugs are Racketeers, and the Dammenblatz agent is an Assassin. Other profiles are as follows:

The Ka (Spectre)

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I
4	41	0	0	4	23	40
A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	0	18	18	18	18	29

Special Rules: Ethereal. Immune to non-magical attacks. Attack causes paralysis for 2d6 turns unless victim makes a successful WP test. Cause fear in living creatures; cause terror in living creatures at will. Subject to instability over 50 yards from the sword (see Plot 3); immune to psychological effects.

Taggee Assassins

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I
4	61	61	4	4	12	61
A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	61	51	51	51	51	51

Skills: Concealment Rural; Concealment Urban; Disguise; Marksmanship; Prepare Poisons; Scale Sheer Surface; Shadowing; Silent Move Rural; Silent Move Urban; Specialist Weapon – Blowpipe, Fist Weapon, Throwing Knife. Each assassin also has one of: Acrobatics; Fire Eating; Juggle; Escapology.

Possessions: Entertainers' garb; 5 daggers; tiger claw (see below); 5 doses manbane blade venom; garrote; blowpipe and 12 darts. The tiger claw is like a knuckleduster with four projecting blades. It has the same modifiers as a dagger. On a successful Dex test, a character with Specialist Weapon – Fist Weapons skill can make a wound with this weapon look like it was caused by a big cat or similar animal.

Manfred von Saponatheim

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I
3	51	11	5	5	13	51
A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
2	31	21	11	31	21	00

Skills: Acute Hearing; Flee!; Frenzied Attack; Silent Move Urban; Sixth Sense; Strike Mighty Blow; Very Resilient*; Very Strong*

Possessions: Ragged clothing.

Notes: Manfred hates the father who keeps him locked up, and will feel animosity toward any well-dressed adult male he encounters. He fears anyone holding anything that looks like medicine or medical implements.

The Wraith (Graf Josef von Angendorf)

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I
3	51	51	4	3	11	61
A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
1	41	51	61	41	41	41

Skills: Acting; Acute Hearing; Blather; Charm; Concealment Urban; Consume Alcohol; Disguise; Etiquette; Evaluate; Flee!; Gamble; Heraldry; Lightning Reflexes*; Luck; Magical Sense; Palm Object; Pick Lock; Pick Pocket; Read/Write; Ride; Scale Sheer Surface; Sense Magical Alarm; Silent Move Urban; Specialist Weapon – Fencing Sword; Spot Trap; Wit. Possessions: Noble clothes; and jewelry; dark clothes; rope; grapnel; lock picks.

Notes: As Graf Josef, the Wraith plays the role of a charming but dim-witted young Noble, with no interests outside the latest fashions and gossip.

