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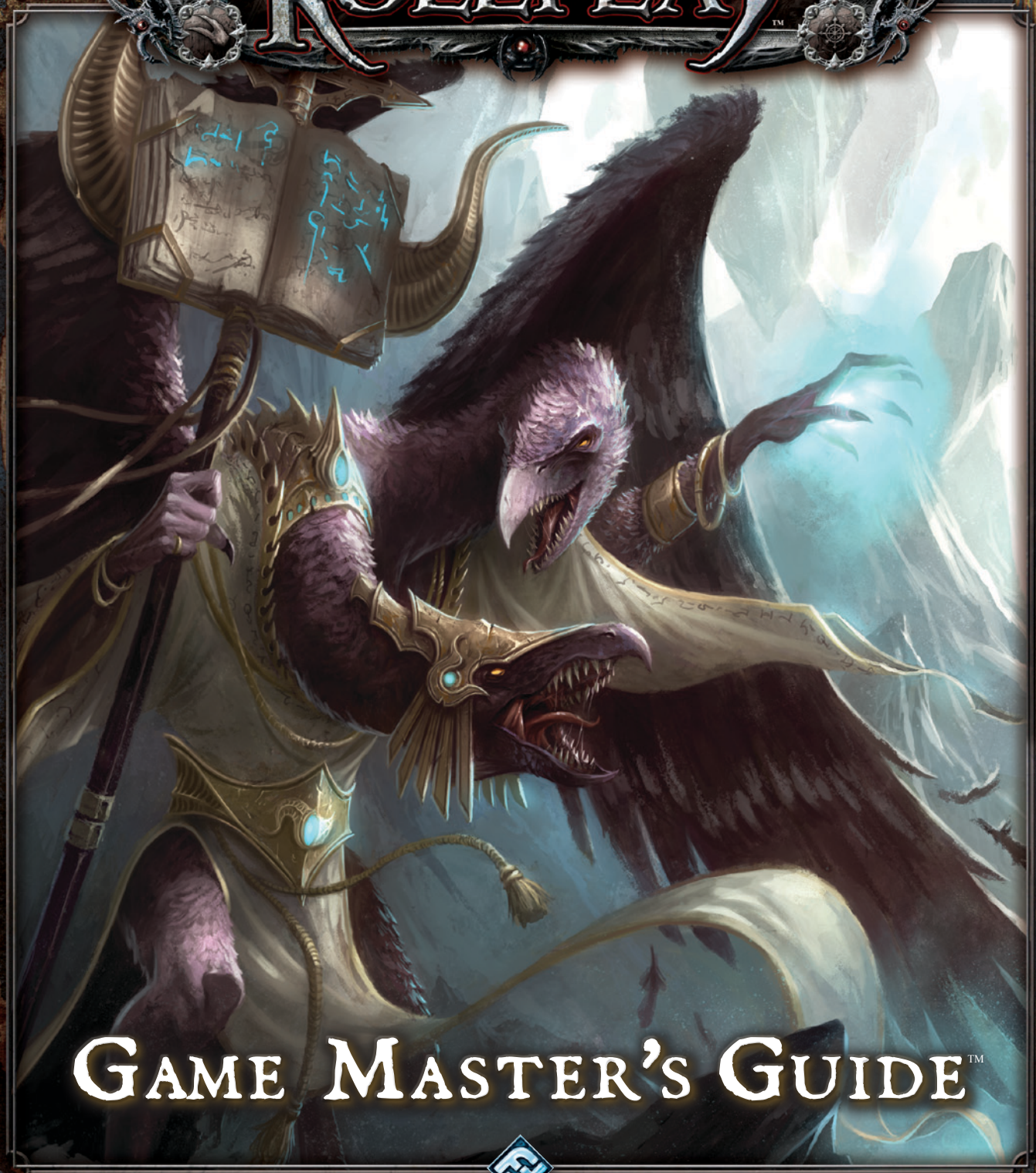
FANTASY ROLEPLAY™



GAME MASTER'S GUIDE™

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A Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay Resource for Game Mastery & Adventure

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New WFRP Game Masters

The Game Master's Guide contains important rules and information for the player who will be running the *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay* ("WFRP") sessions as the GM. It includes suggestions and guidelines on managing long-term campaigns, handling character development, and creating adventures. The book also contains the information to manage enemies and adversaries. The appendices feature charts and tables for reference. *The Game Master's Guide* also features a complete introductory adventure, *An Eye for an Eye*.

Veteran WFRP Game Masters

The Game Master's Guide contains a wealth of information for new and veteran GM's alike. Some of the content from this guide has been compiled from previous books—such as the *Tome of Adventure*, *Tome of Blessings*, and *Tome of Mysteries* from the popular *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay Core Set*. This book also contains the rules for corruption and mutation, as detailed in *Winds of Magic*, and the rules for disease as detailed in *Signs of Faith*.

The WFRP "Vaults"

This book references cards and components from several different WFRP products and component sets, including *The Game Master's Vault* and *The Player's Vault*. Available separately, *The Game Master's Vault* is the perfect complement to this book, featuring the components, cards, and other tools a GM may wish to use to help manage and run his *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay* sessions. *The Player's Vault* has the resources and components someone running a player character needs to manage his hero during a game.

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Chapter One
Game Mastering 101

This chapter provides a general overview of Game Mastering and the pleasures and pitfalls of the role. If you think of roleplaying as improvisational theatre, your job as the GM is equal parts director, stage crew, and bit player.

You develop the story that unfolds at the gaming table, introduce the intriguing events and dire challenges facing the other players, and take the role of all the characters the PCs meet, from the surly guard at the gate to the comically squeaking goblin shaman and the arrogant vampire count.

In and out of combat you decide enemy actions – but this doesn't mean you're in competition with the players. Quite the opposite. Your goal should always be fun for all. It's your job to keep the story moving forward (even when the players' decisions lead it to places you don't expect), to tailor adventures to your group's interests and play style, and to ensure that every game session is exciting, interesting, and memorable.

This chapter covers a variety of different topics of interest to a GM, from managing players at the table to setting expectations for a campaign, as well as tips and suggestions on making *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay* run as smooth as possible.

You're a Partner, not an Adversary

This is perhaps the most important thing to remember. Your goal isn't to kill the characters or beat the players. You're there to keep the adventure challenging and fun. There's no one player declared the "winner" of a roleplaying game as with traditional boardgames. As long as everyone's having a good time you're doing fine, and everyone wins.

Balancing the level of challenge can be tricky. If encounters are too difficult, the players will feel overwhelmed. If encounters are too easy, they grow bored. Practice and instinct can help a GM develop a good sense of gauging challenges. The GM also has some tools at his disposal to adjust the difficulty of a challenge, as shown in Chapter Six: Enemies & Adversaries, starting on page 44.

The issues of balance and challenge brings up an important question many GMs face: should you "fudge" rolls? Some GMs prefer to "let the dice fall where they may" while others use a Game Master screen to hide rolls. This increases suspense, but more importantly

Your Most Important Job!

First and foremost, the GM is there for the same reason as the other players – to have fun. But more than that, the GM has a great deal of control over the course of events, how the story unfolds, how action is resolved, and how immersed his players become.

It can take a while to grow comfortable with the role, but it is a richly rewarding experience. So how do you know when you're performing your GM duties well?

It's simple – if you and your players are having fun, you're doing a good job!

it lets them cheat…for the sake of a better game experience. When a hit would certainly result in a character's untimely death, for example, they might modify the result.

Be careful with fudging rolls; if the players begin to believe they are not really put at risk by the challenges they face, they'll lose the sense of achievement for their accomplishments. Likewise, succeeding at everything quickly makes for a dull game.

Whether you roll dice out in the open or in private, or choose to reinterpret the results, is largely a matter of personal style. If you do fudge rolls, however, you should do so to create a better story or more enjoyable experience in a way that favours the characters. They are, after all, the heroes, and bad luck shouldn't be the thing that thwarts their progress. Villains can, fate might, but bad luck? That's just a fleeting obstacle.

Your First Session

It's easy to obsess over making your first session "perfect." Don't. The novelty will mask imperfections, and you'll have plenty of time later to work in hints, interesting story hooks, and foreshadowing. The first few sessions generally focus on learning the basics of the game system, learning the characters' abilities and motivations, and getting comfortable in your role as a GM. Make sure you're familiar and comfortable with your events and NPCs. It can also be extremely helpful if you can tailor the adventure to the characters. Here are some tips to accomplish that goal.

Building the Story

Some GMs run adventures with nothing more than notes scrawled on cocktail napkins. Others prepare detailed flowcharts, character bios, and maps for any area the characters might visit. As a new GM, you may wish to err on the side of preparation, especially for things like monster statistics and basic task resolution. Be aware that the game can slow down considerably if you need to constantly flip through several books during play.

Fortunately, combat in *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay* plays out on an abstract battlefield instead of a grid or hex map, so you can focus on describing encounter areas rather than mapping them. Episodes are still very important, however, and can be another focus of your first effort. At least to start, it's recommended the GM use the Three Act Structure introduced in Chapter 2, starting on page 14.

Published Adventures

Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay has a rich history of existing adventures containing all the stories and challenges you need for a few evenings' entertainment. With a little customisation, you can take these adventures and tailor them to your group. Luckily, there are a few sure-fire ways to cement them in your world.

Include Character Hooks: Look for ways to link the adventure to the characters' personal stories. Slip long-sought items into the adventure rewards, replace adventure NPCs with PC allies or enemies, or set the adventure in familiar territory.

Go Beyond the Ending: There's no reason the adventure has to end with the last published page. Much like inserting locations, characters, and items from your continuity into the adventure, you can let popular or interesting aspects of the adventure integrate back into your growing world.

Bringing the Group Together

How do a thug, an apprentice wizard, a dishonoured dwarf Troll Slayer, and a wood elf hunter come to trust each other with their lives? That's a tough question. But it's also one of the most important you can answer during your first few sessions. It frames the world for the players before the action starts, giving them a common touchstone and a reason to remain together through the tough times to come.

Common friends or enemies work nicely, as do shared quests. Another, more complex option is a series of non-reciprocal connections between the characters. For example, the thug might be a low-life cousin to the apprentice wizard, who befriended the Troll Slayer during a nasty mess out in the wilds, where the Troll Slayer saved the wood elf's life, and so on. While somewhat contrived, these kinds of connections can be great fuel for future adventures. It also presents opportunities for strong roleplaying.

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Parts of nearly every adventure go unused. Encounters are skipped or avoided, NPCs are never met, or some combat encounters are resolved peacefully. Never fear. Work is never wasted. Save it all. Everything created can find a home in a future adventure. Simply change a few details and none will be the wiser.

Even previously used components can find new homes if enough of the details change. With a new name, a couple of different character options, and some unique quirks you can quickly transform that mercenary from three sessions ago into this week's Captain of the Guard. A bandit camp can become a missing traveller's last known location, decorated with clues to his whereabouts. Replace bay windows with arrow slits, and a manor house can double as a guard house. This tactic is especially helpful when you need to generate a person or place quickly.

Running the Game

They say no plan survives first contact with the enemy, and that's equally true of adventures. No matter how well you know your players and how much you prepare, they're going to take the game in new and unexpected directions. This can be tough, especially for a new GM who's still getting his feet wet. Here are some basic tips for handling these situations.

Maintaining Records

Another of your duties as GM is keeping track of things. Your players can help. They can share their updated character sheets after they spend advances, change equipment, and make other upgrades to keep you up to date on their progress.

Setting and NPC updates are your responsibility. Fortunately, many monsters die, flee, or are otherwise retired after an encounter, and the rest only need to change to satisfy the needs of the evolving story. Recurring villains may require regular upgrades and notes, mainly to keep them in line with the PCs' abilities.

If your group enjoys a higher degree of realism, you may want to periodically check things like encumbrance levels and ammunition, but a degree of trust is warranted. You're mainly looking for mistakes. Players don't usually intend to deceive the GM, but it's easy to overlook fired arrows and coins spent in the thick of play.

Making Rules Calls

Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay keeps things moving with simple, broadly-applied rules rather than mountains of special exceptions and legalese. With a little experience, you should be able to handle most situations. But no set of rules covers every contingency. You'll frequently have to make quick rulings as players test the unexpected and use abilities in unforeseen ways. In these cases, fall back on these tried and true guidelines.

Fast is Generally Better than Right

When making a rules call, keep the game's momentum in mind. It's acceptable to reference an easy-to-find rule that doesn't require much reading, but otherwise you're better off making a gut call and getting on with the game. Gut calls should generally side with the players, as it's a lot easier to forgive accidentally helping the group than hindering them.

Does it Enhance the Game?

If a player wants to try something off the beaten path, be open to his suggestions. If they have ideas that sound interesting and would make for a good story and add to the excitement, you don't need to let the cards or dice dictate the outcome. It's okay to rule in favour of an interesting idea by just letting it happen, or by giving the players a chance to let it happen.

Keep the Rules Consistent

After any session when you make a gut call, you can go back to study the official rule. At that point you might decide you like your own rule more, in which case you're fine. If not, then explain to the players at the next session that you're going with the official rule from then on.

It's fine to shift the rules a bit between sessions, but it can be jarring to do it within a single session. Should you discover, for instance, that you've been misreading or misinterpreting a monster's ability, there's no reason why you can't continue with the error until you take a break. Significant rule changes mid-encounter can be disorienting, pulling everyone out of the experience.

It is rare for anyone to succeed at every attempt. Actually, when it comes to one's first attempt at magic, sometimes it's quite surprising to find anyone succeeding...at all!

In fact, I have it on good authority that our very own Supreme Patriarch, the estimable Balthazar Gelt, failed his first apprenticeship task. Due to a miscalculation, the lead from his examination was transformed not into gold, but into a wheel of sharp cheese. It was one of the most delicious failures in the history of the Colleges, so I'm told.

– Gavius Klugge, Grey Wizard

Fixing a Bad Rules Call

Sometimes you'll make a call that dramatically increases an encounter's difficulty or hinders the party. You can still go back and make a final ruling later. But what if the characters are suddenly fighting for their lives in what should be a routine combat? You have a couple of options.

First, consider ways to level the playing field. Perhaps one or more of the enemies flee. Or reinforcements arrive to bolster the characters' defences. Have you awarded the party any fortune points lately? Allowing fortune to refresh so they have more fortune points at their disposal might do the trick.

Alternately, if it looks like the group will ultimately win the day, you can increase the reward to compensate for their pain and suffering. Maybe the enemies were holding a particular item the group's been hunting, or they have more silver coins than you had originally planned. The group might find some information that advances their personal goals or gives them an edge in an upcoming encounter.

It's often a good idea to keep the players in the loop, explaining why they're benefiting from such good fortune, but not always. With enough experience, you might be able to cover your mistakes without the players ever learning what happened.

Customising the Old World

You are the world for your players. You play every single character – and animal, and possibly sentient, mutated plant – in the Old World, apart from the players. Fortunately, as with so much of your job, this is a lot easier than it sounds. It starts with the following simple truth.

The Players are the Stars of the Show

No matter how much fun you have running NPCs—and it is fun—remember that they're guest stars in the characters' saga. One of the most common mistakes made by GMs is letting NPCs steal the characters' spotlight. With notable exceptions made to support the ongoing story, NPCs generally should not be faster, smarter, or more capable than the PCs. They shouldn't be solving all the PCs' problems, ordering the PCs around, or dominating events. Essentially, the player characters shouldn't take a back seat during their own adventures.

When required, NPC assistance should be plausible. Watchmen help solve crimes, soldiers help fight wars, merchants help haggle or have important information. Even when the characters call upon NPCs for help, strive to keep the PCs in the thick of the action. NPCs can be busy with other things, travelling in far-off lands, or simply may refuse to help for personal reasons. So long as the refusal makes sense given the NPC's background and personality, the players have nothing to complain about.

Building the Cast

When populating your world, keep it simple. You don't need statistics for every tailor, grocer, or barber in every city any more than you need them for every marauder, beastman, or Chaos cultist in the wild. Only the very small number of NPCs you expect to come "on stage" need to be fleshed out. And even then, you only need to provide enough detail for the players to easily visualise and interact with them.

A name, a few brief notes, and one or two personality quirks are plenty to make the average NPC memorable. Something as simple as this can suffice:

Heinrich the innkeeper. Very fussy, bit of a clean-freak.
Thinning hair. Friendly and outgoing.
Tries to sound sophisticated, even though he isn't.

Stock NPCs

Stock NPCs are pregenerated characters you can use at a moment's notice. They come in handy when the group takes a shine to an NPC who consists of little more than a name and a few notes, or when you need to introduce an unexpected character, for when the group is venturing off the beaten path. Just tweak one or two details and you're off and running!

Many archetypes show up in the Warhammer fantasy setting: the grizzled mercenary captain, the rich merchant, the spoiled young noble, the fanatical witch hunter, and many others. These are the basis for great stock NPCs. Over time you'll expand this collection for your world, increasing the tools at your disposal and making your game more vibrant and unique.

Recurring NPCs

Players have an odd habit of "adopting" NPCs they like, making them more important than you ever planned. The party's Bright Wizard might decide to take on the masterless apprentice you added as colour, and wants to take him to train at the Colleges of Magic. The Troll Slayer, finding he enjoys Rolf the gate guard's crude jokes, might try to hire him as a mercenary. The players could decide that the obnoxious drunken noble at the tavern is a follower of Nurgle and begin trailing him. In all these cases you've got a potentially recurring NPC on your hands – a character that keeps cropping up to support or advance a particular part of the story. In this case, parts of the story are being guided by the players.

Recurring NPCs can enhance the game for everyone. They strengthen continuity and reward those involved in creating and interacting with them. They expand your stable of regular characters and cement the players in the world. However, the GM shouldn't feel forced into making every background character recurring if it doesn't serve the needs of the story. The apprentice can turn down the wizard's offer, the gate guard might be happy where he is, and following the noble might reveal a dull life of simple civil service.

Famous NPCs

There's a vast amount of supporting material for the Warhammer fantasy universe, filled with fascinating characters. It can be a lot of fun to meet and interact with these personalities, but it runs the risk of sidelining the PCs. This is especially true if those famous characters are alive and well, and facing the same challenges as the group is facing.

As always, the GM has several options if he chooses to introduce such an NPC. The players could encounter a famed NPC when he's wounded, sick, imprisoned, or otherwise unable to act, but that only works in some scenarios. This can work particularly well if the group's goal is to heal, free, or assist the NPC.

Another option is to split the NPC off from the party at a critical moment, perhaps with the group taking half of a large force of enemies and the NPC taking the other. This approach allows the GM to showcase the NPC's prowess without undermining the challenge facing the group.

Funny Voices and Pretty Pictures

One of a GM's many fringe benefits is the chance to ham it up. For those so inclined, *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay* offers ample opportunity. You can have your orcs talk like soccer hooligans,

and goblins talk like soccer hooligans who've inhaled helium. Maybe haughty nobles have classic British accents and crime lords sound like Marlon Brando in his prime, while grizzled mercenaries get the guttural Clint Eastwood treatment.

For most NPCs, you can use a generic voice by race or career. But for the really special characters, you might want to add a little flourish so your portrayal is instantly recognisable, such as a signature accent, a turn of phrase, or certain manner of speech. You can also adopt body language, mannerisms, and gestures to bring these NPCs to life.

Pictures are another great way to upgrade NPCs. There are a lot of art resources available to a GM, and with a little bit of research and time, you can quickly generate a rogue's gallery to choose from when describing a particular type of NPC or introducing a crucial personality. Players can benefit from this as well, finding images that represent, loosely or specifically, what their character looks like. They might even start with the picture and choose their character's careers and other options to match.

Small props can also give your games that extra spark. When your players discover a note on the bandit they defeated, imagine how much more immersive and realistic it is if you hand the players an actual note you created, rather than just reading from your notes. Play money, an odd ring you pick up at a thrift store, or other props can add a lot to the experience.

As with stock characters, it shouldn't take you long to build a library of all these things, letting you slip in and out of characters with ease and helping make your sessions really come to life.

Managing Encounters and Enemies

While the GM is still learning the ropes, combat can be hectic. There's a lot to track, and while each player has only one character, you often have several. It's easy to get overwhelmed. In addition to the specific options to consider during an encounter as discussed in Chapter 6: Enemies & Adversaries, here are some other things to keep in mind while preparing your adventure.

Balancing Encounters

A group's success is determined not just by your ability to build an effective challenge but also by the composition of the party, the group's tactics, and simple, dumb luck. When you realise an encounter is getting too easy or too difficult for the characters, watch for ways to even the odds.

If the encounter is part of a multi-act episode, enemies can flee to be encountered again later, or they can get help from allies originally planned to arrive in a later act or scene.

Fortune dice are another option when the group is struggling. Give the players a few chances to shine and reward them on the spot for seizing the day. By awarding some fortune points to the party sheet and triggering a fortune refresh, you can provide the players with some important resources without sacrificing the intensity of an encounter. While preparing the adventure, you should also look for opportunities to reward players with fortune points. Uncovering clues, interacting with NPCs, and reaching key locations are all accomplishments that could warrant fortune points.

Encounter Variety

It's important not to let encounters become repetitive. The episode and act structure helps a great deal with this, as you aren't limited to a traditional linear pattern of fight monsters, get treasure, move to the next room, repeat. But some work is still required to ensure that each encounter becomes a compelling mini-story with its own twists, turns, and surprises.

As an example, let's assume the characters are fighting their way through a beastman infested forest. They might be surprised to find giant spiders as well, plus maybe a waylaid wood elf scout held prisoner in their webs. Or perhaps they run into a small band of goblins following a strange, mushroom-induced vision.

Unexpected twists like these add spice and provide the all-important sense that there's more happening beyond just the characters' adventures. It helps the world breathe with fascinating questions, some of which can lead to new stories. What was the wood elf looking for? Where did the goblins come from and was their vision real?

Hero Death

The worst case scenario in just about any roleplaying game is losing the entire group at once. It means starting over with all new characters and no continuity. Unless the players have agreed to start fresh, the GM may want to avoid this outcome. One option is to have the characters wake up somewhere new, perhaps as prisoners of the enemy. A less severe alternative might find them saved by an intervening force that rescues them and nurtures them back to health.

Sometimes though, you may want to let events run their course, particularly if wilfully ignorant decisions or poor judgement got the characters into their current predicament. Intervening to save the players from their own folly sends a message that there's no real risk to the game and encourages them to act carelessly. Warhammer is

a grim, dark, and fatalistic world where even powerful heroes are mortal. If the players begin to think their characters are not in any real danger, a vital component of the experience is lost.

Improvising

Sometimes PCs flounder despite all your clever hints. They fail to realise the innkeeper is a corrupt servant of Chaos. They ignore the eerie cavern in the hills in favour of chasing down red herrings you mentioned in passing. Or they spend an hour arguing over the best headgear for the witch hunter. In these moments, you have to get a little creative. This is when you can make the next step clear without telling the players precisely what to do.

Be careful not to go overboard, as it's neither helpful nor fun. If the innkeeper greets the group with *"Have you considered joining a Chaos cult? We meet every Konistag at dusk,"* the characters become spectators in their own story. Players love to pick up on clues. The trick is introducing them in such a way that your group will notice and understand them without feeling they were obvious. This is mostly about you observing your players and developing stories geared for their talents and strengths.

The best hints are subtle. The innkeeper could stumble and tear his shirt, revealing—for just a moment—a thin stream of dripping pus from high on his back. Sneaking up to his window that night as he takes off his shirt, the characters might get a better look at the source: a giant, oozing eye growing through his spine.

Magician's Choice

An important tool in every GM arsenal is the false choice—a set of options presented to the group that, no matter their choice, leads to the next step in the adventure. For example, the characters reach a fork in the road and can head left or right. Unbeknownst to them, either path leads to a bandit attack. Alternatively, the second road might lead to a group of goblins but after either fight the characters find clues leading to a dwarf mine.

A variation on this is useful when presenting a mystery, or any challenge in which the characters must come to one conclusion from many. Who is the real cultist? Which is the forged document? Whichever one the PCs choose! This works best when you can take the player's conclusions and reasonably apply them, accepting the group's choice as the right choice. This is a fantastic way to empower the players, reward them for their involvement, and keep the adventure on track.

When employing these tactics, it's only fair to include choices with separate and palpable consequences in later encounters. Otherwise the adventure becomes little more than a series of preordained obstacles which the group must overcome to resolve the story.

Keep the World Consistent

As with rules calls, once you declare something as true to the players, it should remain true. Unless there's a reasonable explanation, the facts should remain the facts. Everyone in the game, including the GM, relies on consistency to continue believing in the world. If the GM abandons this approach, the game starts to fall apart.

Make the World Your Own

Despite its long and rich history, during your sessions, Warhammer is your world. If you need a new town on the Reik, add one. If you want a massive WAAAGH! to reach Altdorf and threaten the city, feel free. Stretch your imagination to decorate, populate, and mutate the setting to your heart's content.

One word of caution. The players are expecting to play in the Warhammer world. If you change things too much, you undermine that expectation. Pacifist orcs, Troll Slayers leading sad, contemplative lives, or removing all Chaos and magic from the setting changes it so significantly – it's no longer Warhammer Fantasy. Keep the essence of the setting intact, and no matter how much else changes, your plans should blend nicely.

Let Fate Decide...

Here's another handy tip to use when you find yourself having to answer a question you haven't considered and don't have the first clue how to address, such as *"Is there a blacksmith in town?"* You can let the dice decide.

Just grab a few fortune dice, roll them, and evaluate the results. If there are any successes, the players get the answer they're looking for. Yes, there's a blacksmith. If there are also boons, perhaps things are even better than expected. He's an expert blacksmith, or he has exactly what the characters were looking for. No successes? Sorry, no blacksmith here. The more reasonable or likely the answer is to be yes, the more dice you can roll. The more outlandish or unlikely the answer is to be yes, the fewer dice you can roll.

...But Never Let the Game Rest on a Single Outcome

Allow for backup plans. It's an easy mistake to have everything hinge on a single roll, meeting a single NPC, or making a single choice. If the roll fails, the NPC is missed, or the choice is made incorrectly, the game suddenly freezes.

A classic example is the hidden secret door leading to the enemy hideout, the only way in or out. Unless the group finds that door, they never find the Chaos cult and never save the city. Adding one or two other ways to gain access offers other ways to complete the adventure, and encourages the players to keep trying.

Another example is the one and only NPC with clues leading to the next encounter. Should he die, you can introduce a backup character or, better yet, assign the information to a character the group's already met. Having multiple options encourages the players to more fully explore the story, rather than having everything hinge on one pivotal issue.

Running a Session

A typical roleplay session can last from three to six hours. This is a long time to do anything, even something as fun as roleplaying, so it's a good idea to make the environment as pleasant and inviting as possible. It should be clean and well-lit, because folks will be reading rules and checking character sheets and dice. There should be plenty of room, too. Cramped quarters lead to tipped soda cans and flared tempers. Make sure you have comfortable seats and that people can get around easily for bathroom breaks or to grab snacks.

Do your best to avoid distractions like TV, video games, laptops, and phones. Keep players focused on the game. Even when a player isn't "on stage", he can drag everyone out of the moment if his attention wanders or his phone starts ringing.

Watching the Clock

It's best to have a fixed start time and a general plan on when to end a session. When possible, try to end with a cliffhanger, right after a major fight, during an interlude between encounters, or just as the players have formulated a plan and are about to put it into action. This raises anticipation and gets people excited about the next session. Ending the evening at a lull has the opposite effect and should be avoided if possible.

Do your best to avoid ending a session in the middle of an ongoing encounter. Rally Steps—a brief pause in structured encounters discussed in more detail on page 15—are a great place to pause the game, marking progress in resolving an episode. If you stop in the middle of an encounter, you risk no one remembering the details or how far along the action has progressed. If necessary, consider fudging the end of an act to reach a Rally Step and call it a night.

Player Knowledge vs. Character Knowledge

Players sometimes learn things their characters don't. For example, the players might be present when one of the characters has a secret meeting with a local baron. All the players know what happened but the characters don't, and it's not reasonable for any of the other characters to act on that knowledge. A similar situation arises when one or more players figure out what the GM has planned in an adventure and use that knowledge to the group's benefit.

It's hard to ignore information, but in these cases it makes the game far more believable and interesting. There's a lot of fun to be had, for example, roleplaying a character who trusts an NPC that the player knows is a dangerous villain. If a player has knowledge his character doesn't have and doesn't abuse it, that's easily worth a fortune point added to the party sheet.

Absent Players

It happens. Sometimes someone can't make it to the session. Ideally, they've given some warning. It's good to have a stated absentee policy in advance, so everyone knows what to expect. In addition, the group should decide whether or not absent players earn experience points for the game session. Here are several options.

- The absent player's character takes care of some business "off screen" for the session. Alternately, he's considered to be "off exploring" or "fighting ineffectively."
- The GM controls the absent player's character for the session, effectively running him as an NPC.
- Another player runs the character. This is recommended as an advanced option, as it adds quite a lot of responsibility to the player in question. He has to keep track of two sets of stats and fret over whether he's playing the character the "right way." There's also the outside chance that the player abuses his control of multiple characters, perhaps having one fight recklessly to save the other.
- The group postpones the session until everyone can attend. This is generally the weakest option, but sometimes the game simply can't run without a particular character there, such as when the session is the climax of a very personal story arc.

On the other hand, a character often possesses knowledge that the player does not have. A player may not realise that his character is expected to stand when nobility enters the room, but his diplomatic High Elf envoy character would certainly know this. It is preferable to provide players with the information their characters would reasonably know rather than to punish them for any gaps in their real-world knowledge.

Keeping the Group Together

Some GMs try desperately to keep the group together during play. This is often easier said than done. For example, the characters visit a town. Everyone wants to do something on their own. The wizard wants to chat up his fellow academics, the dwarf wants to get drunk, and the pit fighter wants to earn some coin.

Under these circumstances, give everyone a little attention but keep the exchanges brisk. Don't linger on any single player for too long, and aim to resolve any solo activities as quickly and efficiently as possible. An attentive GM will find ways to reunite the group as the story and their individual actions unfold.

Introducing New Adventurers

Characters die, players leave the game and new players join, and sometimes players just want to try something different. All these situations change the group composition.

This can be difficult to handle. It interrupts the regular flow of play with a character's departure, which is an event that deserves special attention. There's also the group's acceptance of a newcomer, which can be difficult to justify in a world as paranoid as Warhammer. Here are some suggestions.

- Introduce the new character as a friend or relative of one of the other current PCs.
- Have a trusted NPC assign the new character to the group.
- Make the newcomer's arrival part of a special adventure conceived to help the group bond. For example, a rigorous gauntlet through enemy territory with lots of opportunities for characters to rely on each other, work together, and get used to each other's quirks.
- Create a "pool" of potential characters to draw from. The previously unnamed members of a mercenary guild, or apprentices from the wizard's college that the characters are associated with. This approach offers built-in camaraderie and background.

Pacing

When things get bogged down, don't be afraid to borrow from the classics. Someone kicks in the door and starts a fight. An orc raiding party stumbles into the group. The local baron mistakes them for spies and sends his elite troops after them. Chaos cultists need sacrifices and the players find themselves in the wrong place at the wrong time. The world of Warhammer is dark and dangerous. The threat of sudden violence looms everywhere.

Let the Players Shine

Over the course of an extended campaign, the GM may consider letting characters "star" in each adventure (though not to the exclusion of the others). For example, one of the PCs is a high elf envoy. An adventure might centre around his mission to make peaceful contact with a dwarf clan that has a long-standing grudge against the high elves.

The character must win the dwarfs' trust and make amends for past wrongs, real or imagined. Along the way he undertakes a dangerous quest or two, uncovers a mystery (perhaps that the dwarfs were fooled into thinking that the elves had insulted them), and so on. Yet even with all this focus on one character, the rest of the group must be involved. Fortunately, there's plenty of opportunity here. The other PCs can help battle the monsters, solve the puzzles, and make new friends and enemies along the way.

Next time, you might focus on the group's wizard or mercenary instead. This is the GM's chance to speak with the players about the things they'd like to see their characters do and experience. Some might want to fight a particular monster or visit a particular location. Others might want a tragic love story or a tale of dishonour and betrayal. Use this feedback as seeds for stories that ultimately involve everyone.

Group Dynamics

There are two group dynamics to consider as the GM. The dynamic between the players, and the dynamic between their characters. In the healthiest games, both run smoothly. The players get along as friends and characters get along as adventuring companions. Not all groups enjoy this luxury though, so it's important to recognise when and how things go awry. Here are a few potential pitfalls.

Debates & Arguments

In-game debates can easily spill out of game, or vice-versa. It's critical you notice when people are no longer roleplaying an argument but actually having an argument. These heated moments warrant a time out. Tell everyone to take a quick break. Grab some drinks. Order a pizza. Take a moment to discuss the situation with those involved, individually if necessary, and listen to everything they have to say. Often this is enough to defuse the situation. But don't be afraid to dig in and get to the bottom of any real issues lingering beneath the surface.

Tension & Friction

Tension is a little less troublesome in the character dynamic and can even enhance the game. The Party Tension meter on the party sheet helps model this. The Warhammer universe is filled with allies of necessity. It's a common theme to see the forces of good setting aside their small differences lest they be overwhelmed and destroyed by Chaos.

Knowing this intellectually and accepting it emotionally are different things, of course. Keep an eye on friction and tension, but ultimately, a good GM realises that great roleplaying and stories provide opportunities to confront – and overcome – such conflicts. Party tension can be increased when the characters (rather than their players) act in a way that erodes group cohesion or morale. The PCs are arguing, one steals from another, puts another member of the party at risk, or some other questionable activity.

Common Ground

Player characters should have enough in common to justify their continued companionship. It's easy for players to fall into a stubborn routine, crippling the group with indecision. Avoid this before the game begins by ensuring that the character concepts have some common ground, or by providing the group with a common reason

to put their differences aside. For example, a threat against their common homeland could unite the group. The group's party sheet can also help them establish a common purpose.

Character Balance & Variety

During character creation, the GM may want to encourage a balance of character options. The career system has a lot of flexibility, and provides a party of characters with many options. Even with this flexibility, no single character can do everything. If the whole party consists of Troll Slayers, or any other single career, they're going to have a hard time dealing with problems outside their area of expertise.

It is a good idea for the players to sit down and conceive their characters together, ensuring they can handle a variety of situations. Can the group deal with Chaos cultists, devious traps, underhanded politicians, rampaging orcs, complex mysteries, and any other elements you throw at them? If you're planning a story that leans heavily toward one or two concepts, this is a good time to tell the group so they can make sure they're prepared.

Comfort Zones

The Old World is bleak and occasionally depraved. Even the so-called good guys may be touched by darkness. Participants in the eternal conflicts routinely engage in shocking, horrific acts. How you depict these acts, or whether you depict them at all, is entirely up to your group.

People have varying comfort levels. In a social setting like a role-playing group, it's very important to recognise and respect those comfort levels. No one should indulge actions or descriptions that make players feel uncomfortable. Discuss everyone's comfort zones before you start playing, and you stand a much better chance of avoiding potential offences. Some topics that may test a player's comfort level include torture, extreme graphic violence, racism, sexism, or explicit sexuality. As a rule, it's best to leave evil acts to evil NPCs and keep the players firmly heroic in nature.

No one player should be allowed to unilaterally change the tone of a campaign. A common example involves interrogation. Some players leap directly to torture, thinking it's the most direct route to the information they want. Other players are disturbed by this behaviour or flatly refuse to stay in such environments. In these cases, simply pause the game and talk about it. If anyone's upset, it's time to tone the game down.

With that said, it's important to note the difference between a player's emotions and those of a character. A debate between an witch hunter and a gentle priest of Shallya over the way to treat a captured bandit can be grist for a wonderful night's play but when a player's beliefs, values, or principles are compromised, it's time to scale it back.

In general, exercise caution—especially if you don't already know your players' comfort levels. Setting clear expectations and boundaries for behaviour and acceptable play early in the campaign can prevent potential issues down the road.

Feedback and Improvement

Game Mastering is very much a skill, one that improves with time and practice. Getting good feedback from your players can have a significant impact on the quality of your sessions.

Learning from Mistakes

When you realise you've made a mistake, own up to it, apologise, and remember the error. Next time you won't misinterpret that particular rule, or leave such a gaping hole in the plot. Next time, you'll be better prepared and your adventures will be more carefully constructed.

Don't let mistakes get you down. Game Mastering is complicated. You constantly juggle group management, rules knowledge, improvisational theatre, and plot creation. Treat every mistake as a chance to learn and you're on the right track.

Asking for Advice

Don't be afraid to ask your players questions. After each session, if there's time, get feedback. Ask them to be honest but polite. Were the fights too hard or easy? Did a player feel he had nothing to do or that the encounter was geared too heavily towards one character? Would the players like the campaign to be more action oriented? Are they looking for something you're not giving them? Asking just a few questions each session can go a long way toward firming up your game and your skills.

It's also possible that some players are more familiar with the rules than you, especially if this is your first time as a GM. While you shouldn't allow players to constantly interrupt the game with minor rules questions, it can be a great help to take advantage of their expertise or willingness to help. It's okay to ask for help and say something like, *"I don't remember how this rule works. Do you mind looking it up while I resolve this creature's action?"*

Chapter Two

Episodes & Acts

Events in *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay* unfold and are resolved according to a variety of game measurements. Which measurement is used is based on the amount of time the events generally consume, and how they affect the advancement of the story. For instance, the largest units of measurements, campaigns and adventures, are fully developed storylines that span at least one game session and often encompass several sessions. These are discussed in their own section, in Chapter Five, starting on page 35.

During a game session, events occur in either story mode or encounter mode. Story mode is used when the story's focus is "zoomed out". When actions are not being presented with significant conflicts, they can be resolved in story mode in a broad manner as if described by a narrator. If an event advances the story, but its individual details can be resolved with little resistance or conflict or if the order in which they are resolved is of little consequence, it is best to manage these actions in story mode.

However, when the GM or players wish to "zoom in" the story's focus, the game often switches to encounter mode. This mode is useful when actions are being opposed, when resolving the order of events is important, or players wish to roleplay events in character. Often, significant events during encounter mode are presented as an episode, the game structure detailing the resolution of a series of connected scenes or activities. Episodes are generally composed of acts, more specific, focused elements of the narrative. Actions are resolved during encounter mode using rounds, turns, and phases, which usually represent relatively short units of time. The events and their outcomes may occur simultaneously, but mechanically the players describe their characters' actions, roll dice, and with the help of the GM, interpret the results to explain how the scene resolves and describe the results.

The Structure of a Story

Episodes are specific events that make up a story. An episode is a single cohesive activity that usually (but not always) takes place over a short amount of time and tends to be resolved within a single setting – though that setting can be as broad as "a castle" or "the trading road."

In a movie, it is easy to identify individual episodes. When the camera cuts away to a new location or the characters finish chasing someone or examining a crime scene or hacking their way through a jungle and begin a new course of action, it is a new scene or episode. The same is true in a game. When the focus of the action changes, and the characters adjust their immediate objectives, the game enters a new scene, a new episode.

Building Blocks

An adventure's episodes are composed of building blocks called acts. Episodes in *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay* make particular use of the three-act structure. This three-act structure is often seen in plays, with a rising action, a climax, and a falling action. In the classic format, the first act sets up the dramatic tension, the second act fulfils the tension, and the third act offers resolution. The third act may often become a springboard for the next encounter. Resolving the events of the previous act may reveal new clues and concerns which link back into the adventure or campaign, moving the larger plots along.

Specifically, an act is a single goal or action within that episode. If the characters are pursuing a fleeing band of cultists, that is the episode. It is part of the larger storyline, the characters' attempts to shut down the cult once and for all. But within that goal the episode is a clear activity with a finite duration. The individual steps of the pursuit are the acts that comprise the episode. If the cultists disappear into an old abandoned temple and the characters go in after them, then searching the temple is a single act. Battling the cultists within the cellar storeroom is a separate, second act. Stopping them from collapsing the unstable building and using the destruction to cover their escape could be the third act in this linked series of action. All the acts are part of the larger episode, but each act has a tighter focus, a narrower setting, and often its own separate set of immediate goals.

Structure is a Pacing Tools

Does this mean that every time the characters explore a building the exploration should fit within a single act? Not necessarily. It depends entirely upon the building in question and what you have planned for them. If it's an active cultist headquarters, and they have traps and shrines and gruesome scenes lurking in each room, you may want to tackle each as a separate act. In such a case, searching each floor could be its own episode.

In other cases, a single room may be an episode all by itself, complete with three acts: entering the room and discovering the danger, dealing with the danger, and then finding clues or artefacts or victims that answer whatever question or quest led the characters there in the first place.

Regardless of whether the third act is a complete resolution or a bridge to subsequent encounters, the episode framework helps structure and develop the encounters, allowing the GM to pace stories more effectively and keep the characters engaged throughout. Ultimately, the use of acts and episodes—of breaking up stories into smaller, concrete tasks and elements—is a pacing tool for GMs, allowing them to focus on more manageable aspects of a story rather than trying to juggle everything at once. And like most tools, the GM can use this in a variety of ways, or decide this particular tool isn't necessary to tell his stories.

The Rally Step

A unique element to the episode structure is the link between the acts. This interval is known as a Rally Step. It is a momentary lull in the action, a deliberate pause from the frenetic pace of the encounter, a commercial break from the current episode. The Rally Step is when characters and players alike can catch their breath, bind a wound, notch an arrow, and prepare for what comes next. In out-of-character terms it is the pause for bathroom breaks, drink refills, nagging rules questions, and off-topic asides. In-game, it is a chance for characters to reorient, rearm, and refocus.

The Rally Mechanics

In addition to its function from a narrative and book-keeping standpoint, the Rally Step has mechanical significance, as well. During the Rally Step, the GM evaluates the resolution of the previous act and prepares for the next act. This is a good time to award a fortune point or two to the party sheet for the players' participation, involvement, and performance in the previous act.

Further, when a Rally Step occurs, all the participants in the encounter immediately make these adjustments:

- Move their stance marker one step towards a neutral stance
- Remove one recharge token from each of their currently recharging cards
- Recover 1 stress and 1 fatigue
- Adjust current power or favour as if it were that character's End of Turn Phase

During a Rally Step, each character has the opportunity to perform one special Rally Step action. These actions can be performed in any order, or the GM may simply ask the players in turn which action they would like to perform. Characters can choose from the following options:

- Perform one manoeuvre
- Attempt a **First Aid check** on himself or another engaged target
- Attempt an **Easy (1d) Resilience check** to recover fatigue equal to the number of successes generated
- Attempt an **Easy (1d) Discipline check** to recover stress equal to the number of successes generated
- Re-roll initiative for the party's lowest initiative token
- Perform an action with the *Rally* trait

The GM may decide that certain options aren't available during a particular Rally Step based on the circumstances. If the PCs are engaged with a group of orcs, he may not allow them a chance to attempt a First Aid check, or if their hands are bound, disallow using manoeuvres to draw or sheath a weapon.

Henchmen NPCs do not get to perform any of these Rally Step actions, but the GM may allow important NPCs, creatures, and enemies to each perform one manoeuvre or action with the *Rally* trait.

Finally, during the Rally Step, the NPCs, creatures, and enemies refresh their Aggression, Cunning, and Expertise dice budgets. Information on Aggression, Cunning, and Expertise can be found in Chapter 6: Enemies & Adversaries, starting on page 44.

Why Three Acts?

Episodes can have as few or as many acts as needed to resolve the action. However using three acts is often an excellent choice. It is a classic foundation for drama, providing time for a proper set-up, an exciting conflict, and a clean resolution.

Add too many acts and the episode may become bloated and unfocused. The players begin to forget their objective for the episode, or lose interest as the initial complication gets buried in excess detail. Offer too few acts and an episode feels rushed or incomplete. Players feel they've been tossed into a conflict with little or no build-up, or that the conflict ends abruptly and now they're faced with an awkward scene change with too many questions left unanswered.

The important thing is to run through the acts in your head before running them in the game. Do they feel right? Is there a sense of continuous motion, and of a build-up through the first act and a release of tension and resolution through the third? Does any part feel rushed, or drawn out? Does anything seem abrupt or out of place? As GMs use the episode structure more often they will get more comfortable with it. Soon, a GM will be able to assess an encounter as it forms in his head, dividing it into its component acts and setting any additional scenes aside for episodes of their own.

Keep the Players Interested

Most good storytellers introduce Rally Steps automatically; it's just second nature. They just don't call them Rally Steps, or sometimes even realise they exist. When a storyteller reaches an exciting point in the story—the hero has just confronted the tyrant king and survived a sudden assault from the enraged ruler—and pauses to take a sip of water, he knows what he's doing. He's making his audience wait. He's keeping them interested, holding their attention, increasing the suspense even as he contrasts his own temporary silence with the action and noise of the scene he just described. It's a time-honoured technique. *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay* simply formalises this technique for the Game Master. It's another valuable tool the GM can employ to improve the game and increase everyone's enjoyment.

Introducing Rally Steps

So how do you use a Rally Step? Do you suddenly stop in the middle of a fight and say, *"Okay, Rally Step time! Everybody get up and stretch! Your characters are frozen in mid-motion!"*?

Of course not. That's not a Rally Step, it's a freeze-frame that takes everyone out of the story. A Rally Step is intended to keep everyone in the story while giving the story a chance to catch its breath.

First of all, Rally Steps are meant to occur between acts. That means you have to be familiar with the structure of your acts before you can see where a Rally Step naturally fits and how to define it. Think about the episode you've created. How does it break down? What are the components that build the whole? Where could you introduce a scene break?

Some pauses are more obvious than others. If the characters are fending off an attack upon a manor house, the different waves of attackers could be considered separate acts. Often in battle there's a brief pause between those waves, as attackers and defenders alike regroup. Those could certainly be Rally Steps.

The Reason to Rally

Without a Rally Step, the acts flow into one another without distinction. On the surface, that may sound good from a pacing standpoint – keep the energy flowing, the story rolling, and the characters running, so the adrenaline stays high and everyone stays focused . Without pauses, however, everything ultimately starts to blur together. Soon the characters (and players) will have a hard time focusing on anything at all. The mind needs a break from a long sequence of action and danger. The players need a minute to look around and realise just how scary things are, otherwise they become less affected by the terror. Without a brief respite, it is hard to experience the same dramatic highs and lows. Rally Steps provide an opportunity to restore that perspective, which allows the GM to ratchet the action back up again once the next act begins.

Rally Steps are also useful character tools from a mechanical and narrative angle. They give the players a chance to adjust their characters, reacting to the end of the previous act and readying themselves for the next act. There's rarely time in the middle of the action to work out a plan, but a Rally Step is that brief moment where the characters can catch their breath and decide what they want to do next.

Example Rally Step Triggers

Any number of in-game events could signal a scene transition or warrant a possible Rally Step. Here are just a few examples the GM may wish to consider:

- The scene is interrupted by a sudden crash of thunder or flash of lightning as the weather takes a turn for the worse
- An enemy blows his horn, calling for reinforcements
- The baron of the manor stops to weigh his options before deciding whether or not to help the PCs
- The leader of the enemy force is defeated, causing his minions to stop and assess their situation
- The chandelier overhead crashes to the ground, startling everyone for a moment
- Trumpets blare at the masquerade ball, signalling the arrival of an important noble

A change of scenery within a scene can also provide a natural place for a pause. Take the example of the cultists hiding in the abandoned temple, as mentioned earlier. The temple itself is the setting for the entire episode, but within that temple are several rooms or areas. When the characters finish searching one room and move to the next, that could be considered a scene break—they're still involved in the larger activity and still within the larger location, but they've just changed to a different section of that location and their activity may vary accordingly. Inserting a Rally Step between rooms or floors might make sense.

Other times, a Rally Step can be more subtle. The characters are after a crooked merchant. They trick or bully their way into his manor house, and find themselves face to face with the man himself. What do they do now? It's natural to pause for a second here—the dilettante straightens up, the ratcatcher dusts off his clothes, the mercenary clears his throat.

Why? Because the characters need a second to think, to switch gears. They've managed to get to the merchant, and so the new question is "now what?" This confrontation could indicate transition into a new act, which allows the GM to introduce a Rally Step. Admittedly, at first glance it might not appear that it should. After all, the characters are standing in a drawing room facing the merchant they've been pursuing. They don't leave the room, so their location stays the same. They still plan to stop the merchant, so their goal is the same. He's right in front of them, so they aren't going to take their eyes off him if they can help themselves. Yet, it could certainly be an act change and a Rally Step.

Why? Because they've accomplished one of their objectives. They've made it into the manor house and are confronting the merchant. The characters can cross that off their list and move on to the next step. That mental adjustment signifies a Rally Step—they may not be able to sit down, bind their wounds, and eat something, but the characters do have a few moments to think about what they want to do next. And their players have that same opportunity—they can turn to each other and say "Okay, now what?"

This is the time for them to get up, stretch their legs, and ponder the situation for a moment before the action starts up again full-force. And this sort of Rally Step also provides an excellent opportunity for a villain to make his *Big Prepared Speech* before the final battle ensues.

Focusing on the Task at Hand

As the GM, one of your responsibilities is to make sure that everyone takes advantage of a Rally Step. This is an opportunity to help the players focus on the task at hand, or to remind them of small details they might have overlooked but that can help them with their objectives. The simplest way to accomplish this is to ask each player in turn, *"okay, what are you going to do next?"* You can also use this as an opportunity to remind them of the details of the scene and what is going on around them, to help them stay in the story: *"Ok, so you've got beastmen crouching on the rocks in front of you and to the left side—to the right is a sheer drop. Behind you looms the forest from which you just emerged. What do you do now?"*

The Rally Step is the perfect time to remind players about things their characters have or have done if it's appropriate. For example, you can ask one player, *"Are you still holding your crossbow? You don't have a bolt in place right now, do you?"* That's enough to make the player remember that: 1) his character has a crossbow; 2) it's already in his hands; and 3) it isn't loaded.

You can also point out little details in the guise of narrative flavour: *"The mutant snarls at you, its wide, bulbous eyes blinking. Green pus oozes from tiny mouths on its neck, soiling the richly embroidered tabard it wears."* This might remind the players that those tabards all bear the same device, the sheaf and coin symbol of house Rudigor, the local count's household. And perhaps one of them may remember the signet ring they took off the count's envoy when he crossed paths with them earlier that same day.

Your goal isn't to force the players into any particular action, but to encourage them to use the Rally Step as fully as possible. It's essentially a free pass, a chance for players and characters alike to assess their situation and figure out how best to proceed. The more effectively that time is spent, the happier the players will be once action resumes, and the more enjoyment they will have in general.

Be careful, however. Rally Steps should generally only reflect brief pauses, nothing more. The merchant isn't going to stand there for an hour while the characters gather enough blackpowder to construct a crude explosive device. Nor should you let the players abuse the idea of a "game pause."

Going to the bathroom, getting more food, and chatting a bit about what to do next is all well and good—drawing up detailed maps and plotting out each possible manoeuvre isn't. If you let the players sit and talk too long, you risk losing the in-game momentum that's been building. Give the players just enough time to refresh themselves and think about their next few decisions before resuming the action.

Relative Timeframe & Scale

There is no hard and fast rule about the duration of episodes, acts, or even rounds. A particular episode might reflect the long, slow process of penetrating an elite social circle, an extensive investigation of a crime ring with ties to a Chaos cult, or perhaps even an arduous overland expedition. In such circumstances, social interactions may be carried out by messenger or letter rather than a face-to-face encounter. A single round can abstractly represent the characters' actions over the course of an entire day.

At such a level of abstraction, relative range (engaged, close, medium, long, and extreme) can either expand to encompass broader definitions or the GM may deem them irrelevant. In the right encounter, close range might mean in the same building, while medium range becomes in the same neighbourhood, long range extends out to the city limits, and so on.

With relatively few adjustments, the existing episode and act structure is flexible enough to accommodate virtually any scene you can imagine. The amount of time that goes by is less important than whether or not the focus is on a single plot element or story concept. Here is a good rule of thumb: if it could be a single chapter of a novel, then it can generally be resolved in a single episode – even if it represents several weeks or months of story time.

Such prolonged episodes can be useful breaks between more active adventures. Used sparingly, they can provide interesting and realistic pacing for your campaign, while at the same time allowing injured party members to recuperate, conduct research, or engage in other lengthy endeavours. These expanded episodes do tend to de-emphasise the frenetic combat and action elements of the game, however, which for some players is the main reason they're at the table!

Swapping Out Acts

One advantage of the three-act structure and the Rally Step is the time it affords you as the GM to think and adjust along with your players. This brief pause to reflect on the story is important because plans and stories rarely unfold exactly as planned. A character might kill a key non-player character before that NPC reveals some crucial information, which means the characters now need a new way of finding out where they need to go next. Or they may piece together clues long before you thought they would figure things out, allowing them to bypass several elements you had planned and approach an encounter earlier than you were expecting.

That's why Rally Steps are just as important for GMs as for players. You can stop and consider what happened in the last act and see how it affects your plans for the next act, for the remainder of the current episode, and for the campaign as a whole. It can be challenging to change all your plans on the fly, so use the Rally Step to evaluate where things stand. You can shuffle NPCs about a bit, build new links between recent events and those you have planned for the future, or set a few new clues to replace ones that were destroyed or ignored.

Sometimes, minor changes aren't enough. Sometimes you have to make more drastic revisions to your plans. You may even want to replace entire acts. For an example, go back and review the temple infiltration scene described earlier. The characters searched the temple just as you expected. They found the cultists down in the basement, exactly as you planned.

And then they attacked quickly and strategically, surrounding the cultists and cutting off their escape before killing or capturing every last one. You weren't expecting that! You thought they'd charge from the front of the room, allowing the cultists to slip through the concealed door at the back and try to escape back up through the temple! Now it's the end of the second act and the cultists have all been completely subdued. So what do you do now?

You originally intended the third act to resolve a scene where the cultists flee and bring the temple crashing down behind them. But that plan does not fit anymore. These cultists won't be able to lead the characters back to their hideout where the cult leader is busy summoning a daemon. You still want that confrontation—it's what you've been building toward throughout the story—so you have to find a new way to get the characters there. And you need a way to wrap this episode up before leading them in that direction.

Time for a completely new third act. Can any of the captured cultists escape? Unlikely—those who aren't dead are badly wounded, and securely bound. Could any other cultists come looking for them? That may be unrealistic—how would the other cultists know where to look, when this group ran into this temple only because they were being chased? Could the characters find something on the cultists that will lead them back to the headquarters? You might decide that's not possible—the cultists aren't that stupid, especially their leader, and he'd never have let them take such blatant clues with them.

But you also know that the cult leader is domineering, and paranoid, and has powerful magicks. He doesn't trust anyone, not even his own followers. And these cultists have been gone far too long already. He could use his dark arts to peer through their eyes, so he can see the characters and the situation. He knows the characters are searching for him, and he needs some way to stop them. And here, in this old temple, are several freshly slain cultists, whose souls already belong to him and to his daemonic master! Perfect!

Now you have a new third act. The cult leader speaks through one of the dead cultists, taunting the characters. Then he reanimates their bodies and orders them to attack! The fight for survival against the reanimated cultists could be resolved in a single tense act to end the current episode.

Alternatively, depending on how much emphasis the GM wanted to place on this story twist, this could lead into an entirely new episode, based on the characters facing the reanimated cultists. The first act could be the cult leader taunting them and the bodies

rising, the second act the battle between the heroes and the animated cultists, and the third act resolving with the defeat of the animated corpses in a way that provides a clue leading the characters back to the cult leader.

As you can see, Rally Steps give you the option of revising the acts and the direction of the episode, allowing you to adjust your plans, keep things moving, and keep the players and characters engaged. A GM can still make adjustments as he goes regardless; the Rally Step merely provides a structured method to accomplish this.

Planning Ahead

When building an over-arching story as a series of episodes, you will want to have several acts or events planned in advance. It is helpful to have a general idea of where you want the story to go, but even more helpful to identify scenes or story elements you think may develop into their own episodes.

Many GMs make up their stories as they go, confident that they can pull the elements together spontaneously and make it all appear seamless. Some of them can, too. But it's not easy, and takes a lot of practice. Mapping out some of the potential ways the story could evolve allows you to relax more and enjoy running the game instead of worrying about what might happen next.

Some GMs may be concerned about planning too far ahead, fearful of making the story feel stiff and predictable. The episode structure addresses those concerns, since the GM can customise each act during the Rally Step. Good GMs tend to do this naturally, minimising the elements the players are less interested in while focusing on the elements the players are also focused on.

It is still important to retain some flexibility in the story so it feels organic and responsive to the actions and deeds of the characters. You do not have to think *"well, I have these two episodes already lined up, so they've got to go through them exactly as I've planned them, one act at a time."* Instead, think of your acts and episodes as building blocks, ones that you've stacked in a particular arrangement, but which can be easily pulled out and rearranged based on what the story needs.

With this approach, if the characters wander left when you had thought they'd go to the right, ignoring the old ruins in favour of the tavern, you can simply push the "ambush in the ruins" act out of the way and pull the "strange rumours and an awkward reception at the tavern" act to the forefront. You may have to make some adjustments to the episode, but if you already have a good feel for the acts involved this becomes an easy adjustment to make.

Events and Actions Outside of Episodes

Even with the episode and act structure tools to help the GM construct and manage the story, this does not mean that all events occurring in encounter mode must be part of an episode with individual acts. Some scenes simply do not need that level of detail or that sense of building tensions and anticipation.

You only need to rely on episode structure when it feels appropriate. To help determine if there's a valid reason to consider using a structured approach, there are several questions you can ask yourself when considering whether to run a scene as an episode or simply resolve them in a less structured manner.

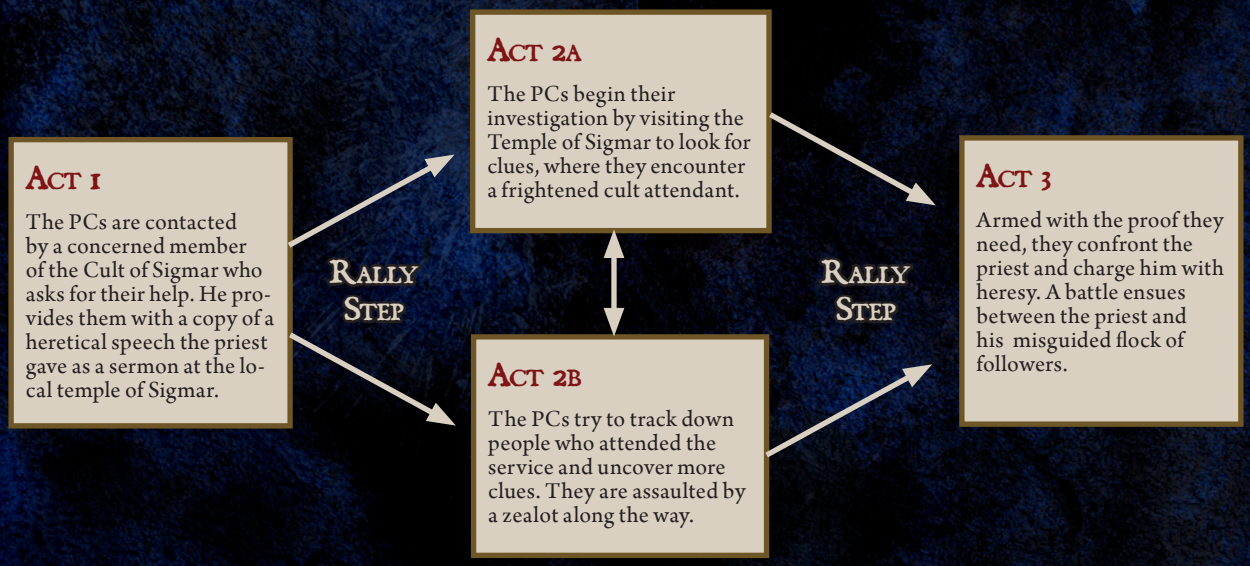
Question 1: How long is this encounter? If a scene is too short to accommodate acts separated by a Rally Step, it may be better off as a standard scene in encounter mode—or possibly resolved in story mode—rather than a structured episode. If a character wanders into a shop to buy a new pair of boots, how much time does he spend doing that? A few minutes? Is there enough time during this transaction to accommodate several acts and Rally Steps? Not really. Not if he goes in, selects a pair of boots, pays for them, and leaves. Even if there is some haggling involved or dialogue with an NPC, if it is a simple transaction, it does not warrant more than a single act to accomplish.

Question 2: Does the scene have any real stakes involved? Dramatic impact is also a factor. Buying new boots is a mundane activity. Unless something out of the ordinary occurs, it has very little dramatic impact on the story. In this case, it is unlikely you will want to use the episode structure, let alone a "zoom in" to use encounter mode.

Question 3: How many characters are involved in the scene? If only one character is involved, you may want to remain in story mode to move things along. This decision can be less about whether the scene feels important than about giving equal time to all your players. However, sometimes the encounter is significant enough, either to the character or to the story or to both, that it does warrant the episode approach.

Question 4: Does a structured approach feel like a natural fit? Once a GM gets comfortable using the act structure, he'll develop a sense of when a scene or encounter would benefit from using a more structured approach over a free-form approach. When in doubt, trust your instincts.

Example of Story Structure



This example shows how a series of Acts can be structured within the framework of the larger Episode. In this case, the Episode represents the scenes and events he expects the players to encounter over the course of the session. The over-arching plot for this episode consists of the characters investigating rumours about a corrupt priest who has been spreading heresy at a local Temple of Sigmar.

The GM has prepared a few Acts to cover the main encounters he has planned. To stay flexible, he's considered a few possible actions the PCs may take before finally confronting the priest. It's possible that the characters advance to Act 3 after resolving only one of the possible Act 2 scenes. Likewise, PCs may investigate more and end up resolving both of the GM's prepared Act 2 scenes before moving on.

Swapping Structure Mid-Stream

Players do not necessarily need to know what sort of structure you're using for a scene. The GM doesn't tell the players, *"Okay, this is an episode, and we're in act one!"* or *"This is not an episode, just so you know—no Rally Steps this time around."* This gives you the flexibility to change your mind based on how the scene resolves.

For a scene at the local tavern, you might expect the characters to just wander in, grab some food, maybe ask a few questions, and then depart. Instead, one of the characters decides to start a barroom brawl! As luck would have it, one of the guys he picks to beat on is someone you had already decided would have important information the characters could use. Someone with several friends watching his back.

The scene has just gone from a quick cutaway of the characters getting food to a brawl that could have a significant effect on the story. The stakes have gone up, the length of the encounter has increased, and the dramatic impact has shot up as well. This is a great opportunity to resolve the scene using encounter mode, rather than resolve it in story mode the way you originally planned.

A Transition in Progress

Here's one way to expand the barroom scene just described into an episode. The GM takes a moment to consider the scene now, and what might happen next. The characters are picking a fight with some of the locals. The shady figure and his friends are among their targets, and fight back. These men are armed and carry themselves like hardened mercenaries. That changes the stakes for the characters, and they might want to take a moment to reassess and draw their weapons. That is a good opportunity to use a Rally Step.

This transition depicts the start of the brawl as Act One, and the conflict with the mercenaries becomes Act Two. If the characters look like they are winning, the mercenaries will toss a few tables at them and make a break for it, dragging their wounded with them. If the mercenaries win, they take the characters captive and drag them off to ask a few pointed questions of their own. Either provides grounds for Act Three, leading to another scene with the mercenaries.

This also works the other way. The GM may have originally planned the entire bar room brawl as an episode, but the characters don't oblige—they ignore the mercenaries' taunts and manage to defuse the situation without coming to blows. The GM no longer needs a more structured approach. After dodging the issue of a brawl, the characters pay for their food and leave. A few of the mer-

cenaries follow them. Whether the mercenaries ambush them or the characters notice their shadows and turn the tables, this situation might evolve into its own episode. Regardless, the scene in the tavern is finished.

With a little planning, the GM can be prepared to adjust the scene structure when events change. This allows him to accommodate the story's needs and keep the players engaged and their characters on their toes.

Sample Episodes

The concept of structured episodes and acts to resolve encounters may be quite new to some GMs. Some examples are provided to help showcase the flexibility and usefulness of this approach. By fleshing out these simple templates with various details, the GM can run a variety of encounters.

The Hostage Negotiation

Overview: Someone has been kidnapped or taken hostage, and the characters have to rescue the victim using their heads instead of their sword arms.

Act 1: Opening Moves

News of the kidnap reaches the characters. The stage is set. The enemy's demands are made known. This may be a very short act and may play out in story mode. After some investigation or discussion of their plans, the act ends when the PCs decide where to go to deal with the situation.

Rally Step

Act 2 : Tense Negotiations

The characters arrive on the scene. Negotiations begin in earnest. Stakes are raised and tensions mount. A Progress Track could be used to resolve this scene, with tokens for the negotiation team, the hostage-takers, and potentially for any more direct rescue attempt. This act ends when the negotiator succeeds, the hostage-takers cut off negotiations, or a rescue attempt results in combat.

Rally Step

Act 3: The Resolution

The negotiation succeeds and the PCs may have bartered for the hostage's life. Or things went poorly and negotiations have escalated to bloodshed. Can the hostage be saved? Based on the results of Act 2, this act could be as simple as escorting the former hostage to safety or as complex as a rescue mission.

Possible Complications

The kidnapper is extremely powerful and unpredictable (such as a Chaos sorcerer), the kidnapper has nothing to lose (he'll be hanged if he survives), time is of the essence (the hostage is bleeding and will die unless treated quickly), violence is not an option (the kidnapper is the baron's son and the baron demands he not be harmed), the hostages don't want to be rescued.

Time & Duration

While keeping track of specific times and durations for *Warhammer Fantasy Roelplay* is often unnecessary, the game does use a series of terms to help manage units of time. The following list defines the terms from the broadest and most open-ended to the smallest and most specific units.

Campaign: A series of linked adventures. Campaigns can last for a handful of sessions, or comprise several dozen sessions, depending on the scale of the over-arching storyline. In game time, a campaign may represents weeks, months, or even years of time invested in the story.

Adventure: A series of linked episodes and events representing a distinct story line. Most adventures can be resolved in one to four sessions. Events in adventures occur in either Story Mode or Encounter Mode.

Episodes: Significant events or scenes which drive the elements of an adventure forward. Several episodes can be resolved during a single session. An episode may contain a series of structured, encounter mode events as well as story mode events.

Acts: A self-contained story element that details one part of an episode. Episodes are traditionally comprised of three acts. Individual acts are usually resolved in either story mode or encounter mode.

Rally Step: The brief pause in the action between acts, or the transition from one act to the next. This allows the players and Game Master to re-focus and take a short break (if needed) before diving back into the adventure.

Rounds: Resolving the action during encounter mode is done round-by-round, with characters taking their actions. The action described in encounter mode may take several rounds to resolve.

Turns: When the active player performs the actions for his character, he is taking his turn. During encounter mode, once all the participants have taken a turn, the round is over.

Phases: An individual turn may be broken down into phases. Some of the phases involve automatic book-keeping tasks, while others help structure the player's decisions.

The Ambush

Overview: The party is caught off guard and ambushed by a lurking threat. Perhaps beastmen waiting in the woods as they travel down a dusty road, or thugs waiting for them to pass by an alley in a seedy section of Altdorf.

Act 1: Blindsided!

The characters are blissfully unaware of what's about to happen. This act starts out in story mode—after all, if they're asked to roll for initiative, they'll suspect something is up! Some clues may alert them, and at a minimum someone should make an Observation check. This act ends either when the trap is sprung (when the PCs enter the kill-zone or the GM decides enough time has passed), or when the PCs detect the would-be-ambushers.

Rally Step

Act 2 - The Fight in Earnest

If the PCs failed to detect the ambushers, the attackers could receive some sort of bonus during this act—extra dice on their Initiative checks, faster recharge on their powers, or bonus fortune dice during the early stages of the fight.

The GM can set up a Progress Tracker to monitor progress during this stage—either have it move at a set rate (making the Act X rounds long) or a rate modified by the circumstances (one space per round and two space for each attacker killed, for example). Reaching the end of the track triggers Act 3.

Rally Step

Act 3: A Change of Plans

The fight changes in an important way—perhaps the attackers flee, or their leader reveals himself. The ambush bonus goes away here, as during the Rally Step the PCs reorient themselves. Alternately, Act 3 can trigger if the PCs change tactics—perhaps they decide to flee, for example.

Possible Complications

The weather works against the players (heavy rains, sleet), it's dark and at night, the characters were lured into the ambush and are unsuspecting, the characters are using themselves as bait and hoping to be ambushed, the characters are the ones setting up the ambush against another target.

Mistaken Identity

Overview: A member of the party is mistaken for a known fugitive or hated foe. This case of mistaken identity could have a number of social effects or implications.

Act 1: A Strange Feeling

The characters get a vibe from the crowd. Growing tension and uncomfortable reactions pour from NPCs. An accusation is levied. This act can be played out in story mode, with a Progress Tracker representing the level of suspicion the PCs are generating. Each time the suspected PC draws attention to himself, advance the progress marker. If the PCs skip town before reaching the end of the Progress Tracker, the episode ends. Otherwise, once the suspicion token reaches the end of the track, the act ends.

Rally Step

Act 2: A Cry for Help

The crowd raises an alarm or a cry for help. NPCs continue to accuse the character. Militia shows up to intervene or confront the PCs. Tensions mount, and some members of the crowd may become violent if the situation is not handled carefully.

During this act, the PCs must use some fast talking and cunning tricks to talk the local law enforcement out of arresting the suspected character or characters. Once law enforcement agrees to let the PCs go, makes their arrest, or the PCs offer resistance, the act ends.

Rally Step

Act 3: Clearing Things Up

If someone drew steel, then Act 3 may be a fight—possibly with elements of chase mixed in. It could end with the escape of the PCs, but may also end with them waking up in a prison cell!

If an arrest was made, Act 3 may be a trial or audience with the local leader, during which hopefully the mistake can be cleared up and perhaps a new objective can be revealed—perhaps the next episode will see the PCs agreeing to hunt down the real criminal.

Possible Complications

Someone has planted false evidence against the characters, the militia have a warrant with an uncanny resemblance, the crowd is bigoted against the character (based on race or career), an authority figure is the one making the accusations (such as a roadwarden or witch hunter).

Chapter Three

Game Master Resources

The GM has a variety of resources at his disposal to reward player actions, encourage a particular play style, and keep his players invested and interested in the game. As a GM gains experience, he will develop a feel for how to best use these resources to create the sort of game experience he and his players will most enjoy.

Fortune points

Fortune points are the most immediate and engaging reward a GM can provide his players. Whether rewarding good roleplaying, a clever idea, or even just a particularly hilarious line of dialogue, fortune points are incredibly useful and highly desirable to all players—but not so powerful that a GM needs to be overly concerned about awarding too many.

In fact, a GM probably should be awarding fortune points to his players with regularity. Doing so rewards "good" behaviour by the players and helps to confirm that they're on the right track. Fortune points can also be used to enhance immersion—if the players receive a boon of fortune points after cleansing a desecrated shrine to Sigmar, for example, or after asking a priest for his blessing, then they will have a feeling of the gods of the Old World being involved in their story.

Experience points

Experience points are best awarded at the end of the session, since spending them mid-stride can be both time-consuming and awkward from a storytelling perspective. When awarding experience, it can be helpful to indicate why the PCs are receiving this award. There's nothing wrong with giving out 1 or 2 experience points at the end of every session as a simple way to keep the game moving forward, but explaining that the PCs earned 1 experience point for defeating the goblin threat or 1 experience point for identifying the murderer helps increase their sense of accomplishment.

Awarding a bonus experience point after the climax of a story arc—particularly if the climax involved an unusually perilous or difficult encounter— is entirely appropriate, and will be received by the players as a satisfying reward for a hard job well done! Experience points are the most tangible and significant means to upgrade a character. Awarding bonus experience points based on defeating an enemy by force of arms, a session of good roleplaying, or advancing the story significantly sends a very clear message to the players about what sort of activities they should be engaging in during the game! However, be advised that handing out too many experience points can lead to characters advancing very, very quickly.

The Power of Yes

While there are a variety of resources for a GM, saying "yes" to your players is perhaps the single most powerful tool you have available. When the GM approves a player's idea or allows him to attempt an off-beat action or unusual tactic, it encourages creativity and cooperation, as well as affirms the GM's role is not as an adversary, but as a story facilitator.

That's not to say the GM should simply say "yes" to each and every request. Some players may try to abuse the GM's position if all requests are approved without a second thought. If a player's request is creative, interesting, and reasonable, but seems perhaps a bit above and beyond what a character could typically accomplish, the GM can impose a cost to the request. As you've seen, *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay* includes a number of resources that allow GMs and players to work with each other to reach a mutually agreeable cost to the proposed action.

These costs can be reflected by suffering fatigue or stress, requiring the character to perform a certain manoeuvre, or introducing misfortune dice into the action's dice pool. Further, the GM can impose a specific penalty for failure—perhaps if the action fails, the character falls prone, suffers a wound, or his action cards incur several recharge tokens.

If the player agrees to the proposed costs, the GM and player have reached an agreement. The player gets to perform his action, and the GM gets to say yes to the player while retaining a level of control and believability.

Once they reach an agreement, neither side has room to argue based on the results. If the action fails, the player can chalk it up to pushing his luck or assuming too great a risk. If the action succeeds, the GM can applaud the player's creativity and willingness to accept the additional costs, succeeding in the face of the odds.

Distributing experience points preferentially to individual players is discouraged. Favouritism can destroy a game group, and even well-intentioned, individually customised experience awards can make one character more powerful than the others, or create unneeded tension between the players.

Wealth

Some PCs (and players) are extremely wealth-oriented. Others, for whatever reason, are relatively disinterested in tiny pieces of precious metal. A GM should be able to swiftly identify which end of the spectrum his players lie on and respond appropriately.

Wealth is a valuable resource to the GM because it can be both given and taken away, but players seldom respond well to having anything taken from them! Far better to give them a good reason to give it away themselves.

On a related note, wealth is only valuable to the players if they feel that they have sufficient things to buy with it. Giving the players something they want to save up for can, by itself, make wealth more valuable to the players! Wealth can also influence which type of social tier a character belongs to (or appears to belong to).

Unlike experience, wealth should come and go through in-story means or the immersion will suffer. Keep in mind that wealth is not limited strictly to gold coins or letters of credit. Characters can acquire hard-to-find items, receive access to restricted locations or knowledge, earn parcels of land, receive trade goods that can be exchanged in another location, and accumulate wealth or station in a variety of other interesting ways.

Fatigue & Stress

Fatigue and stress are resources the GM can both give and take away. Like fortune points, individual points of fatigue and stress can be assigned or restored to reward behaviour or provide a visible indicator of how a player's actions impacts his character.

When the PCs suffer fatigue, the players immediately understand that their characters are becoming exhausted. When they have stress restored, they understand that they are more clear-headed and relaxed. If nothing else, fluctuating levels of fatigue and stress are a roleplaying aid. If the PCs recover 1 stress the first time they come across the beautiful hidden waterfall, the players will respond positively to the place. If the PCs suffer 1 stress when they walk into the Chaos temple, the players are unlikely to want to return!

Fortune & Misfortune

Ultimately, fortune and misfortune are bargaining chips the GM and players use to negotiate control over and immersion in the story. Misfortune dice enable the GM to say "yes" to his players when they attempt an action that is interesting or exciting, yet clearly difficult or dangerous. Although failure is still a possibility, players are more likely to accept failure of their hare-brained schemes in good grace than accept a simple "No, you can't do that" from the GM.

Further, fortune dice allow the GM to reward clever thinking or advantageous situations that the rules don't expressly cover. The rules may not specify that you get an advantage for swinging from a chandelier, but if a player wants to do so and the GM feels that it fits the spirit of the scene, then by all means award a fortune die to the action!

Party Tension

The tension track on each party sheet is a subtle way the GM can help resolve conflicts between players or their characters. When the party's focus starts to wander, or in-character arguments threaten to cross over into player arguments, the GM can advance the party's tension a space or two. If the characters are working together especially well, the GM can move the tracking token a space or two back to the left. The goal is not to punish the players, but rather provide a simple, visual cue that tension within the party is eroding their cohesion.

Renown

As the intrepid heroes brave the threats facing the Empire, they may gain renown. Acquiring renown, popularity, and particular reputations are great ways to flesh out characters, the party, and the setting. The gain or loss of renown is a great resource a GM can use to show that a character's actions have impact beyond the mechanics of the gameplay.

If the characters defeated a dangerous giant spider terrorising the area, perhaps the locals refer to them as the Spiderbane, or spin tall tales about the heroes over a mug of ale at the local tavern. If the party members treat people in town with respect and concern, other townsfolk may react more favourably toward them. Likewise, if the party members are rude, condescending or violent, they may quickly earn a reputation that keeps the townsfolk from willingly sharing information or cooperating with the characters.

Environmental Complications

Sometimes a pre-written adventure will offer some clear rules for the effects of the environment on gameplay. Most of the time, however, it will be up to the GM to describe the scene and determine what effects (if any) the environment has on the characters.

In most cases, the environment can be very easily modelled by using one of the most common resources a GM will learn to rely on—adding fortune or misfortune dice to relevant checks. Does the slope of the hill give the PCs the high ground in a battle? Give them a fortune die to their Weapon Skill and Ballistic Skill checks while they maintain that advantage. Does the driving rain reduce everything to mud? Add a misfortune die to ranged attacks and Athletics checks. For more pronounced advantages and disadvantages, simply add extra dice.

Remember to reward clever thinking and player ingenuity. If you describe a low wall running across the field and the party's scholar elects to take cover behind it, go ahead and add a misfortune die when the goblins throw their javelins at him even if you hadn't planned for it beforehand. In this sense, the terrain and environment are extensions of the general fortune and misfortune rules, and are easily blended into the narrative of each scene.

Some more specific terrain effects may manifest through Chaos Star or Sigmar's Comet results in the dice pools. Perhaps the first floor of the old inn is rotten and decaying, and anyone rolling a Chaos Star on his first check falls through to the ground floor. Maybe the soothing effect of the shrine to Sigmar restores fatigue and stress on a Sigmar's Comet.

Other environmental effects may be more immediate. A character under water has his movement impaired. A character under water for too long may drown. How precisely to adjudicate these effects is up to the Game Master. In general, the environment can inflict fatigue, stress, or wound damage directly on characters subjected to its effects, but if the player characters are suffering these effects with no way of escaping or avoiding them you could wind up with a very short adventure!

Random Environmental Damage & Effects

To randomly determine the effects of conditions that can potentially harm or damage a character, roll challenge and misfortune dice as you would for a check of that difficulty level, supplementing the dice pool with fortune or expertise dice based on the situation or relevant skills and abilities of the afflicted character.

The effect then imposes damage based on the net results in the dice pool:

- Suffer 1 fatigue
- Suffer 1 wound
- Suffer 1 critical wound

When deciding what effects to give to an environmental condition, consider the relative impact or severity you want the effect to have. This usually manifests as complications to succeeding at tasks, or risks to health. You can use the difficulty modifiers for checks as a benchmark to help you consider how to proceed.

Trivial (0d) complications have no effect on characters, though they can help establish the mood and setting. Examples: a light mist, a gentle slope, a cloudy day, a puddle.

Easy (1d) complications may impose a misfortune die to relevant checks, or require a manouevre to navigate. Examples: light rain, a short drop, thigh-deep water.

Average (2d) complications might make some actions impossible or cause them to recharge more slowly, add multiple misfortune dice, inflict 1 fatigue, or force a character to choose between an action or a manoeuvre on his turn—but perhaps not both. Examples: heavy rain, a drop about the height of a man, deep but still water, rushing thigh-high water.

Hard (3d) complications may inflict wounds, fatigue, or stress on a regular basis, possibly restrict actions, or add multiple challenge dice to checks. Examples: torrential rain, a drop of more than several paces, deep rushing water, fire, smoke inhalation.

Daunting (4d) complications may be instantly or gradually fatal. Obviously, saying *"you fall off the waterfall and die"* isn't terribly fun for the player whose character just perished. However, building a four-space progress tracker and saying *"when your token reaches the event space, your character will fall off the waterfall and die"* is sure to motivate the player! Examples: lightning, gale-force winds, a drop from a dizzying height.

Bah! If that pointy-eared, beardless oathbreaker says "Let's just take a moment to consider our options" one more time, by Grimnir's Beard I shall cleave him in twain myself!

– Gurni Thorgrimson, Dwarf Troll Slayer, illustrating a perfect opportunity to increase the current Party Tension

Intepreting the Dice Pool

The players may be tempted to evaluate the dice pool as quickly as possible, then scoop up all the dice for the next roll. Resist the temptation—taking a few moments to consider what the results of the dice pool reveal is well worth it. Since each type of die has a very specific function, and provides a specific mix of possible results, every roll of the dice has a story to tell.

Succeed or fail, each check generates a series of symbols that can be interpreted in a variety of ways. The depth of the dice system in *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay* provides the GM and players with an unmatched level of information and detail—the dice reveal both whether a task succeeds or fails, as well as *why* or *how* a task succeeds or fails.

Successes on the characteristic dice indicate that the character's innate abilities played an important part of the check. Successes on the stance dice show how the hero's risk management and posture affected the outcome. Successes on expertise dice represent how skill and training contributed to the check. Successes on the fortune dice show how fate, luck, or happenstance assisted the character. Likewise, challenge symbols or banes on the challenge and misfortune dice indicate how much the forces opposing the check contributed to its outcome. Challenge dice represent the inherent difficuly of the task being attempted, while the misfortune dice show how the odds, fate, or strange coincidences stacked up against the hero's best attempts.

GMs are encouraged to use their creativity to tie results to actions the PCs have taken, or integrate details of the environment—the PC succeeded with the fortune die you added for his clever use of his surroundings, or the goblin missed him because the player had mentioned his character was ducking behind a tree.

Dice Pool Evaluation

What do the following three sets of dice pool results have in common?

Each of these dice pools reflect a successful check—after all other evaluations are made, at least one success symbol remains in each pool. By taking a closer look at these three examples, we can delve deeper into the information the dice pools provide by exploring *how* each of these dice pools succeeded. Let's assume these checks represent a hero attacking a goblin. Each dice pool tells a different story. For a complete list of the dice symbols and their effects, please see Chapter Five of the WFRP Player's Guide.

Dice Pool 1 – Reckless Rewards: The only successes appear on the reckless die, so this character is fortunate he adopted a higher risk stance, otherwise he surely would have failed. His innate abilities provide him with a slight edge, overcoming misfortune (more boons on the characteristic dice than on the misfortune die). Finally, his skill shines through (the Sigmar's Comet on the expertise die), allowing him to inflict critical damage with his attack.

"The goblin wasn't prepared for your aggressive tactics, and you quickly press the advantage. Soon, your superior weapon training shines through, as thrust after thrust reaches past the goblin's weak attempts to parry. Your final thrust slides through his flimsy armour, inflicting significant damage."

Dice Pool 2 – Patience Pays Off: The challenge dice impose significant difficulty to this check, and the hero's innate characteristic by itself is not enough to succeed. Thankfully, his conservative approach generates three successes, indicating that a more cautious approach made the difference. The generation of a delay symbol indicates this cautious approach came at a price—taking a bit more time than expected.

"The goblin turns aside your tentative thrusts with his spear, deflecting blow after blow. But soon your patience pays off, as the goblin swings wide with a clumsy counter attack. It's just the opening you need to land a strike."

Dice Pool 3 – It's Good to be Lucky: The hero's characteristic dice generate a lot of boons, and without any banes opposing the check, that means the hero's innate ability provides an edge, sure to trigger some positive side effect. The reckless approach generates a success, but also an exertion symbol, causing the hero to suffer fatigue. With two successes on two fortune dice, fate is surely on the hero's side, and he wins through despite the challenges.

"You and the goblin fight to a near stand still. Then, the goblin slips slightly in the mud. You seize the fortunate opening and rush forward. The battle took a bit more out of you than you expected, but once the opening presented itself, you took down your foe quickly."

Chapter Four

The Progress Tracker

Another valuable GM tool used in *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay* is the Progress Tracker. This tool can be used to keep track of various events during the game. The Progress Tracker is built by assembling the puzzle-fit pieces, similar to building a character's stance meter. The neutral centre pieces form "event" spaces on the tracker, while the coloured stance pieces form "progress" spaces .

Using the Progress Tracker manages a lot of the bookkeeping that traditional note-taking accomplishes, while providing more information at a glance. It is also flexible and re-usable. For example, progress tracks are used to manage initiative during encounters. Alternatively, the GM might track food during a wilderness adventure, or trade goods spoiling over a long journey while travelling with a trade caravan, or how many torches the group has left during a long underground adventure.

A progress track can also be used for a lot more than just material goods. Virtually anything with clear goals can be charted using a progress track. Tracks can be assembled to show how quickly certain events take to resolve or pass, when the weather starts to worsen, how close the Skaven are to locating the party—and countless other possibilities!

One Tool, Many Uses

The Progress Tracker is generally used in one of two ways—tracking the progress of a single event or occurence, or tracking competition between multiple parties.

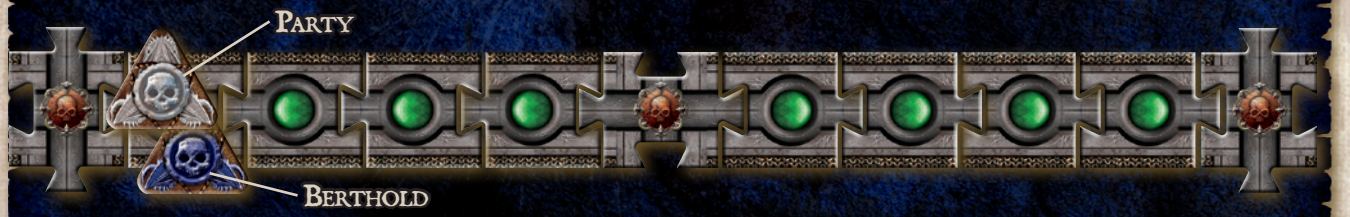
Starting at one end of a progress track and moving toward the other end with one token suggests something will happen, it's just a question of how soon or under what circumstances. For example, a storm is brewing on the horizon. The thunderstorm will break sooner or later. However, the characters want to try and reach the safety of the village before the storm arrives. The track could represent the number of hours before the storm breaks, and the GM moves the counter along the track based on how long it takes for the characters to travel and resolve encounters. Once the marker reaches the end of the track, the storm erupts.

Using two or more tokens on the track can represent multiple party's interests being resolved. If the party is chasing cultists, they have very different goals! The party wants to catch the cultists, and the cultists want to escape. By having two tokens that advance along the track based on different circumstances, the GM can

Progress Tracker Example: Chasing the Criminal

The party answers a plea for help from the local watchman, only to arrive at the jail and see that Berthold the Bloody, renowned criminal, has escaped from his cell! The watchman pleads with the party to find Berthold and capture him before he escapes for good.

The GM creates an 11-space track, placing two tokens on the first space, one for the party and one for Berthold. Some encounters may specify where along the track to set the tokens, or provide some factors that may modify its position, but in general, the GM starts at one one end or in the middle and works toward the extremes.



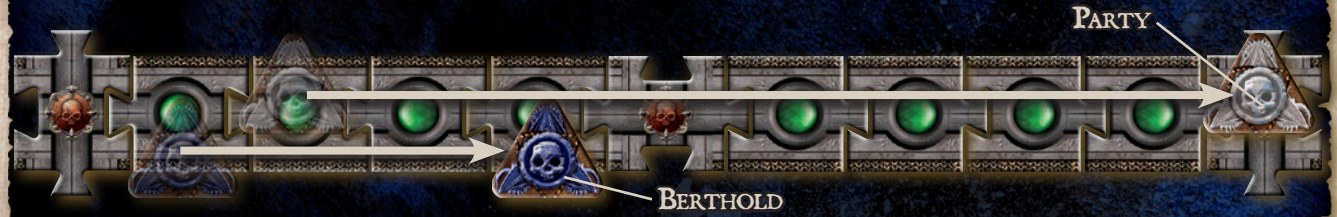
The group decides to split up and see if they can learn more about where Berthold may have gone. One of the players rouses the unconscious guard and learns that Berthold left just a few minutes ago. He also realises that Berthold stole the guard's cloak. That means they're close behind, and will have a better chance at identifying Berthold. The GM moves the party's tracking token one space to the right, one step closer to finding Berthold.

Another player heads to the local tavern and spends some coin to see if any of the locals have heard anything. The barkeep confesses he "might know something" but it's not worth him risking his neck. The character bargains with the barkeep and eventually learns that Berthold had kept a sword and a small pack of supplies hidden in the hayloft out by the stables. The GM moves the party token another space to the right.

A third character decides to try and follow Berthold's tracks. Fortunately, it had rained the entire day before, and the ground is muddy. Unfortunately, the character utterly fails his Observation check, follows the wrong set of tracks, and ends up back at the jail, wasting valuable time. This pushes Berthold's token toward the right.

As Berthold covers his tracks or the characters reach dead ends or become distracted by other things, his counter may progress further to the right. If it reaches the first event space before the party token does, he is able to recover his cache of supplies from his hideout. If his token ever reaches the far right event space, Berthold has escaped the party's clutches—now they'll have to either assemble a full manhunt or give up trying to recapture him.

By following up on clues, coming up with clever ideas, passing certain skill checks, and flexing their creativity, the party can advance the token further to the right. If it reaches the final event space before Berthold's token, they locate Berthold and can encounter him. What the characters do then is up to them...



determine which party achieves its goal. If the party token reaches the end of the track first, they've caught up to the cultists. If the cult token reaches the end, they've escaped!

GMs can even use more than one tracker at a time, to monitor several events at once. For example, if the players are tracking a fugitive, seeking a treasure map, trying to evade a band of killers, and (unbeknownst to them) about to be attacked by a crazy cultist, the GM may employ several progress tracks. Keeping them clearly labelled is important, so the GM can see at a glance how each event is progressing, or how soon any of them might intersect. This is one of the many advantages of using a Progress Tracker. The visual layout of the tracker allows the GM to quickly gauge how soon an event might occur, letting him prepare for it in-game.

Most of the time, the GM won't show the progress trackers to the players. Sometimes, however, it can give them some increased incentive if they catch a quick glimpse. That way, they know the GM is tracking something, but not necessarily what is being tracked. They'll wonder what it means, what the GM has planned for them, and this introduces some excitement to the session. A little added player motivation can go a long way!

Party Tension

Each party sheet has its own built-in version of the Progress Tracker to manage the party's tension and the friction amongst its members. Typically, friction builds over time until it boils over. The track printed on the party sheet is used to manage the party's current tension level. The tracking token starts at one end and moves toward the other end, as tension mounts.

This is particularly useful because friction and tension almost always exist but can vary wildly from day to day. A GM trying to keep notes on all the inter-character influences and frictions may be constantly erasing and rewriting. With the Progress Tracker, he can simply shift the token back and forth as tensions ebb and flow.

Certain elements push it one way or the other. The GM could decide that having a dwarf and a high elf in the same party, for example, might start the track a few spaces further to the right, representing their innate mistrust and dislike for each other. A soothing conversation and calming words by the Priestess of Shallya, on the other hand, could diffuse a potentially volatile situation and reduce tension by a space or two.

Encounters with NPCs or enemies can also affect tension. When the black orc shouts and bellows a fearsome challenge at the group as he charges, the characters may need to make a Discipline check

Each Party Sheet has its own custom Progress Tracker for managing Party Tension. At the beginning of a session, the GM should place a tracking token on the 0 space of the Party Tension track.

As events unfold that would increase or decrease party tension, the token is moved left or right along the track. Some of these triggering effects may come from certain spells, blessings, or actions, or may be a byproduct of the environment or foes the PCs face.

At other times, the GM may decide to move the tracking token based on the party's behaviour and roleplaying.

When the tracking token reaches the first event space, everyone in the party suffers the effect listed, such as suffering a level of stress. When the marker reaches the far end of the track, the friction and tension are so high that the next effect is triggered, as well. At this point, tension boils over, and the tracking token resets, and is placed back on the first space on the Party Tension track.

or risk their tension ratcheting up a point or two. When the Bright Wizard miscasts a spell and engulfs a party member in flames, it may affect party tension as well as singe the character!

Social Encounters

The most basic social encounter uses a progress tracker to indicate how close the party is to convincing their target to undertake some desired action. This can be as simple as a 10-space track, with each successful social action influencing the target. Influencing the target allows the party to advance its token one or more spaces depending on how well they accomplish their goals and how well they roll. Some special *Social Actions* may also allow a character to influence his target. When the token reaches the end of the track, the target gives in.

A progress track can be used to model a more complex social encounter, as well. By adding an opposing token to race the party down the track, the encounter gains a risk of failure (whether this token represents the arguments of an opposing force or the limits of the target's patience or available time). By adding an event space to the track, the timbre of the encounter can be shifted at the mid-point—perhaps the baron summons his advisors and the party's arguments become more difficult, or perhaps a priest of Sigmar joins the party and lends his support!

Task Completion

If the default assumption is that the party will succeed at the task, a progress track may be unnecessary—unless, perhaps, how quickly they do so is relevant, such as during a combat encounter. If failure is possible, the progress track should be built with this in mind. In general, a second token should be used to track the failure condition. Simply moving the same token back and forth on the track for success and failure is likely to result in a stalemate where the task is neither completed nor failed.

A number of specific examples follow.

Success Under Pressure

One or more members of the party (or NPCs acting on the party's behalf) are working on a particular task while the rest of the party defends them from danger. For example, the party Smuggler is using her Skulduggery skill to unlock a complicated door mechanism while the rest of the party keeps enemy skeletons at bay.

Each successful Skulduggery check unlocks another layer of the door, and advances their token on the progress track. Each failure does nothing. The progress track is five spaces long, and once the door is open the party members can retreat through it and close the door behind them, ending the encounter.

Success Within a Time Limit

One of the most basic failure conditions for a task is to run out of time. Find the murderer before he escapes. Open the door before the people inside suffocate. In this case, a failure token advances along the progress track at a predictable rate (for example, one space at the end of every round).

When it reaches the end of the track, the party has failed. If the party success token reaches the end of the track first, the party has succeeded. An event space on the track might buy the party extra time, by moving the failure token back or even resetting it entirely (perhaps the party finds a clue that the murderer is intending to flee, and can ask the city watch to seal all roads out of town).

Failure Is Not an Option

If you need the PCs to succeed at a given task in order for the story to advance, then failure should not be an option.

If failure is possible, then you, as the GM, must be prepared for it. The failure should advance the story just as much as success, but in a different direction. If the PCs fail to find or open a secret door to the villain's lair, then they must fight their way past his guards, or perhaps they will be ambushed by the villain later, rather than fighting him on their terms. If the PCs fail to convince the local baron to aid them, then they must press on without his help, or accept help from a less desirable source.

If there are two or more possible outcomes to a use of the Progress Tracker, be prepared for either! If there is only one possible outcome, then the Progress Tracker can help determine *when* and *how* the outcome occurs, rather than *if* the outcome occurs.

Race for Success

In this variation, the time limit isn't fixed. Another individual or group is competing to complete the task first, and they have their own token on the progress track. For simplicity's sake, this token might progress at a predictable rate, but the GM may also make skill checks for NPCs similar to whatever steps the party is taking to advance the token. What makes this different than from "Success Within a Time Limit" version above is that the PCs may be able to directly affect their rivals to gain an advantage.

For example, if two rival teams are arguing a case before a judge, the PCs may spend some actions advancing their own argument and some attacking (rhetorically!) the rival team, either damaging their previous arguments or impeding their ability to make new ones. The first team whose token advances to the end of the track is successful. Event spaces on the track may confer a bonus (or a penalty) to the first team to reach them.

Success vs. Failure

Sometimes the party members are undertaking a task that has no special constraints or rival complicating their attempt, but they only have one chance to get it right. (Or, if not one chance, a limited number of chances.) If the party is climbing a crumbling castle wall, for example, this is a complex task that will require many tests, has no special time constraints, but has a very real chance of failure.

This sort of task should use two tokens: a success token and a failure token. The tokens may be using different progress tracks, or may be aimed at different target spaces (maybe the failure token only needs to reach the first event space, while the success token must reach the end of the track).

Each time a party member succeeds at a check or action, the success token advances. Each time a party member fails at a check or attempts an inappropriate action (Intimidate might not be the best

way to get the countess to invite you to her ball!), the failure token advances. The party succeeds if the success token reaches its goal before the failure token, and fails if the opposite occurs.

This sort of encounter can result in only the character or characters who are best at a particular skill attempting to make checks. For example, if the objective is to infiltrate high society in a given town, the party Troll Slayer with a weak Fellowship score may feel he has nothing to contribute, since if he fails a Charm or Guile check he will hurt his party's chances. If the encounter is very short this might be okay, but for longer encounters this may sideline some players. Encourage them to come up with creative ways their characters can get involved.

Try to design the encounters such that all the party members can participate and contribute meaningfully. Maybe the Troll Slayer in the previous example can use his Dwarf craft skills to make gifts for important people, or can invoke a familial connection using Folklore to gain an audience with an otherwise hard-to-reach noble, or can seek employment as a bodyguard by showing off his prowess with a weapon.

If a member of the group is trying to be creative to find ways to contribute, find a way to say "yes." If a member of the group cannot contribute meaningfully and is frustrated about it, find a way to end the encounter gracefully – it was a poor match for the group, and that's not the Troll Slayer's fault.

The Chase Scene

Chase scenes are ideal for using the progress tracker. Use two tokens: one for the quarry and a separate one for the pursuers. The quarry has a head start. When the quarry reaches the end of the track, they've escaped. When the pursuer token reaches the quarry token, the quarry is caught.

Advance the tokens based on Athletics checks, Coordination checks, Stealth checks, or other criteria as appropriate to the story. Reward clever thinking. For simplicity's sake, consider having the quarry move at a constant rate, or at least a pre-determined rate (1 space on round 1, 2 on round 2, 1 on round 3, and so on).

A more complex chase scene might feature a branching progress tracker! If the quarry reaches the event space, they may split into two groups, adding a new token to the track moving off on a side-spur of the progress tracker. The pursuers must choose one to follow or split up themselves.

Resource Tracking

While the Reikland is one of the more civilised regions of the Empire, there are still huge swathes of wilderness within it. There may well be times when the party members find themselves running low on supplies on a long journey. A progress track can be a simple way to track their dwindling supplies or even the progress of starvation and/or exposure.

First, determine how many days worth of supplies the party is carrying. Then, set up the tracker with one space per day of supplies and an event space on the final day. Finally, add several more spaces after the event space, perhaps equal to the highest toughness score in the party. Each day that the party consumes supplies, advance the supply token one space. When the party resupplies (perhaps through Nature Lore checks), move the token back several spaces.

When the token reaches the event space, the party is out of food. Every day they go without food, move the token one space further. For each space beyond the event space the token reaches, each member of the party suffers 1 fatigue and 1 stress that they cannot recover until they are able to eat. Once the party begins to pass out from hunger, it might be time to change tactics.

Party Reputation

When the party first arrives in a new town, they are likely to be greeted with suspicion and mistrust. Only by proving themselves to the local populace can they be accepted. A progress track can be one means of monitoring their success or failure at this endeavour. Start the party token somewhere in the middle. Each time they do something rude, suspicious, or frightening, move the token to the left. Each time they do something kind, honest, or heroic, move the token to the right. If the token reaches the left side of the track, the local law (and/or lynch mob) ejects them from the town. If the token reaches the right side of the track, the town accepts them as one of their own.

The track could also be sprinkled with event spaces. Perhaps a local merchant offers a discount if the party becomes well-respected enough, or the local law enforcement starts watching them closely if they make a bad impression.

Investigation

The party is trying to discover some hidden fact, often the identity of one or more miscreants (murderers, Chaos cultists, etc.). As they discover clues, the progress tracker advances. When the progress tracker is complete, the looked-for information is revealed! This usage of the progress tracker needn't be tied to a particular encounter or episode – indeed, it can form the focus of an entire evening's play or even an entire adventure.

The progress tracker may also include event spaces, which may reflect the actions of the miscreants in question. As the party members ask their questions and discovers clues, the targets of their investigation take steps to remove the threat, possibly moving to bury evidence or to complete their evil plan before the party catches them!

The Investigation usage of the progress tracker may include one or more failure elements as described under the previous "Task Completion" section.

Combat Encounters

Some combat encounters may call for the use of a progress track. This works particularly well for encounters that are part of a structured act within an episode. Some simple uses follow.

Reinforcements

Reinforcements are a very simple way to spice up a combat encounter, whether they arrive on behalf of the PCs or their enemies. A progress tracker can be used to track the approach and arrival of reinforcements in a variety of ways. Here are a few examples:

- **Waves of Reinforcements:** Set up a six space progress track with event spaces at the third and sixth space and advance the token once at the end of every round. When the token reaches an event space, reinforcements arrive, entering the battle. These waves of reinforcements may reflect the beginning of a new act.

- **Ring the Gong:** Reinforcements are available, but they will not come until called. Set up a five space progress track with a single event space at the end. Either advance the progress tracker each time an enemy calls for help—for example by ringing a gong—or begin advancing it at a constant rate once the enemies manage to sound the alarm. For this variant, the arrival of the reinforcements is not guaranteed.

Morale

When dealing with a large group of basically cowardly enemies, especially henchmen (goblins or skaven are ideal!), you may not want to let the combat spin out until every last enemy is dead. A progress track can be used to indicate enemy morale; when the token reaches the end of the track, the villains break and run. Advance the token for each enemy defeated and each successful Intimidate check or effect that generates Fear or Terror.

Some encounters featuring cowardly henchmen will revolve around a single powerful leader or small group, such as the orcs leading a gang of goblins. In these cases, the morale track should be much more heavily impacted by the fate of these tough leaders than by the rank-and-file. For example, if there are 10 goblin henchmen and three orc leaders, the track may be constructed such that each fallen orc advances the track twice, and each goblin only once. When the track reaches the last space, the goblins turn and flee. This means that if all three orcs die, the surviving goblins flee even if they haven't taken any damage themselves!

Incidental Character Status

Sometimes for the sake of the story there will be various NPCs present who are not directly affecting the PCs. Perhaps the fight occurs on a city wall as the goblins attempt to breach, and there are many goblins and guardsmen fighting all along the length of the wall. Perhaps the baron's household guards are defending the front entrance while the PCs deal with the goblins emerging from the cellar. In any case, resolving the fate and/or success of the NPCs using the full game mechanics would be unnecessarily tedious. The Progress Tracker can be used to great effect here.

An NPC status token can be placed on the progress track. Decide beforehand how the status token will progress if the PCs do nothing or ignore the NPCs. If the PCs make any effort to defend or assist the NPCs, that can modify how the status token is moved alng the track.

The important thing is to remember why you are using the Progress Tracker in the first place: to reduce the downtime and complexity inherent in a large battle. If you find yourself spending more time managing the progress track than the primary action of the scene, the progress track may be too complex.

Here are some sample uses of the progress tracker to manage secondary characters:

- **The Wounded Coachman:** While the PCs battle the goblins around the coach, one of the goblins stays behind to finish off the driver. The status token marking the coachman's health advances once at the end of each round that the goblin remains unmolested, and if it reaches the end of the track the goblin finishes the coachman off and the PCs are deprived of a valuable clue.

- **Unexpected Allies:** The PCs are fighting orcs in the burning remains of an Empire town. Unbeknownst to them, a group of dwarf rangers are elsewhere in the town on a mission of their own. Advance the status token each time the PCs roll ✠✠ or more or ➘ on any roll. When it reaches the end of the track, the rangers arrive unexpectedly with assistance and information for the PCs.

- **The Baron's Guards:** While the PCs battle the Chaos Warrior and his entourage, the baron's guards are fighting a desperate rearguard against the beastman warparty. Use a progress track with a token for the number of guards and another for the number of beastmen. One of the guards die each time a ✲ is generated, advancing their status token. A beastman dies each time ✠✠ or ➘ are rolled, advancing their token one space. Whichever side reaches the end of the track first loses its will and breaks, freeing up the remaining force to support their side in the rest of the battle.

Scenery & Environment Status

Another novel use of a progress tracker is to help manage other background elements to create a more immersive, realistic experience for the players. Here are just a few examples of using a progress track to manage the scenery and environment:

- **Weather:** The skies darken and a storm threatens. For every ✲ rolled during the encounter, advance the storm's tracking token. When it reaches an event space, the weather worsens, until finally the party is caught in a deluge when the token reaches the final event space of the track.

- **A Collapsing Bridge:** The party is fighting on a rickety, crumbling bridge. How long before the bridge collapses? Build a short track, and advance the tracking token each round 3 or more characters crowd onto the bridge, or when a character generates a ✲ during a combat check while on the bridge. When the token reaches the last space, the bridge collapses!

- **The Blazing Building:** The party arrives to find goblins throwing a torch on the roof of a cottage. Can they defeat the goblins and rescue the people trapped inside before the entire cottage goes up in flames? Build a track, advancing the token every round, or moving it back if the players douse the flames with water. If they rescue the trapped townsfolk before the token reaches the final event space, they've been saved!

Looming Danger

Oftentimes, the GM will want to keep the status and nature of his progress tracks hidden from the players. After all, they shouldn't necessarily know how close they are to discovering the hidden temple or catching up to the fleeing orcs. Other times, however, the progress track should be public information, either to help the players keep a clear picture of the scene in mind or to let them see an immediate effect to actions that might not pay off until later.

Other times, a progress track just rests on the table, unexplained. The GM knows what it's for, but the players do not. Perhaps an orc army is coming through the pass and surrounding the city, but the PCs won't know until the first event space. Perhaps a Chaos cult is about to summon a daemon in their hidden lair, or a Witch Hunter is hot on the party's trail. A slowly-advancing progress token can provide a sense of looming danger, even if its purpose is never fully explained to the players.

Chapter Five
Campaign Play

As previously mentioned, adventures are a series of interconnected episodes, which are then divided into acts. This chapter describes how multiple adventures can be linked together as a campaign, in which players keep the same characters over time, watching them develop and improve as they earn experience.

Campaigns offer great potential for character growth, both in terms of background and ability. The campaign format isn't necessary to roleplay true heroes in the Empire, but it can enhance the game when getting to know your fellow adventurers is one of the long-term goals. Here is a look at several different campaign styles.

Mini-Campaigns

A mini-campaign is a self-contained story usually consisting of up to 10 adventures or play sessions. A variety of storylines and villains may be featured in a mini-campaign, but it usually centres on one primary threat. The campaign comes to an end once this threat is overcome.

One of the advantages to a mini-campaign is that you know your full story arc can be completed in a relatively short amount of time. This type of campaign gives the players enough room to get comfortable with their characters and the plotlines, allowing them to immerse themselves in the material. It also allows the story to unfold at a pace that feels right, without the need to abbreviate or pad any adventures or plotlines.

Mini-campaigns allow for many different styles of play. Gaming groups that enjoy brutal combats can focus on tracking down and destroying a rampaging Chaos warband. Groups that favour mystery and intrigue may prefer to unmask heretical cultists infiltrating the local priesthood. Mini-campaigns are particularly helpful for groups that meet infrequently, so long as they meet often enough for everyone to remember the plot.

Episodic Serials

Episodic serials are adventures with loose or no continuity. Each adventure presents a self-contained story and resolution, though links between adventures can still be quite common. Villains may appear as often as desired, and there may or may not be a constant, overarching threat in the series. Episodic serials might have a set end point but don't need to—they can technically go on as long as everyone's having fun.

Organisation & Player Logistics

Campaign play can be tremendously rewarding. Here are some tips to guarantee that your campaign will proceed smoothly from the opening scene to final curtain.

Components: *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay* includes special tuck boxes for storing cards and tokens between sessions. For a longer campaign, players may wish to purchase their own Adventurer's Kits to store more components and cards.

Absent players: If this is a concern, players can leave their character boxes with the GM after each session. Characters for absent players can either be off-screen, managed by the GM, or run by another player.

Communication: Email or online forums can help the group stay on top of a campaign between sessions. It's especially helpful for developing character stories and conducting extensive planning without interrupting the regular flow of play. Just be careful not to inundate each other with too much information!

Commitment: Securing reasonable commitments upfront is important to the health of a long-term campaign. In exchange, the GM should lay out an approximate timeframe and a capsule summary of the storyline so everyone has a clear idea what they're getting into.

An episodic serial is great for groups with irregular attendance; characters who miss a session can simply shift off-stage for a bit. They're also helpful for groups seeking variety, as each episode can feature an entirely different play style. One adventure can take place on the front lines of a bitter war, and the next can move to the royal courts of Altdorf for a bit of political machination.

Cities are ideal for long-term episodic serials. Inns and markets permit off-screen characters to conduct personal business, and urban landscapes allow for immediate crises like thefts and murders. It's also easy to justify recurring villains, memorable NPCs, important landmarks, and other points of continuity in the sprawl.

Heroic Journeys

Heroic journeys are driven by the characters' personal goals and motivations, with villains and challenges specifically tailored to the adventuring party. A heroic journey ends only after the characters have attained their ultimate goals—or perhaps died in the process.

This option works best for small, committed groups looking for immersive roleplay opportunities and situations of extreme personal turmoil for their characters. Characters are rarely the same when the campaign is over.

Ideally, each character has a unique heroic journey. The campaign blends their stories together, focusing on a few of these journeys each adventure. In this way, each player gets the "star" treatment and everyone gets the chance to invest directly in the journeys of their fellow party members.

Epic Quests

An epic quest consists of many short- and medium-term objectives on the way toward fulfilling a major, long-term objective. This type of campaign ends once the players have achieved this final goal.

The long-term goal might be recovering or destroying a magical artefact, defeating an evil overlord, rescuing kidnapped or captured friends, fulfilling an ancient prophesy, or locating mythical areas of great power. The scale is almost always grand, lending to competition between multiple factions.

Epic quests are excellent for groups of committed players who enjoy heavy continuity and crave accomplishment. They're frequently quite strategic, involving lots of planning and careful coordination with NPCs.

Developing a Campaign and Linking Stories

Here are some basic guidelines and tools GMs can use to construct engaging stories that will hold their players' interest.

Linear vs. Non-Linear Campaigns

In a linear campaign, adventures are played in a relatively fixed order. Adventure #1 might require the PCs to discover a piece of information that leads to adventure #2, and then adventure #2 concludes with the PCs being hunted by the main villain they'll be facing in adventure #3. These pre-planned storylines still allow for improvisation and interactivity because encounters provide opportunities to influence key story elements.

In contrast, a non-linear campaign has no fixed sequence. Adventure #1 might lead to a mysterious cult featured in adventure #3, or a tribe of goblins from adventure #5, depending upon the players' choices and priorities. Non-linear campaigns are often designed gradually over time to accommodate the players' ongoing decisions and changing plans.

As with all things, there's no sure path to success. Some groups favour non-linear campaigns so they can guide events. But the added complexity of simultaneously juggling multiple adventures plots is a lot to handle, even for the most experienced GM. If you're new to roleplaying, starting with a linear campaign is an excellent way for everyone to learn the system and become comfortable with roleplaying. You can always adopt a non-linear campaign later if you think the group will enjoy it.

Campaign Concepts & Themes

Campaigns usually feature a diverse selection of enemies. To prevent your campaign from becoming a hodgepodge of random monsters, attention should be paid to choosing the right opposition to support strong central concepts and recurring themes that resonate with your group. Here are just a few possibilities.

Blind Ambition

Themes: Assassins and poison, the temptation of dark magic, betrayal, the burden of power, unexpected consequences.

Adversaries: Cultists of Tzeentch, hedge wizards, or political figures fallen from grace.

The Call of Destiny

Themes: Prophecies and divination, unfulfilled potential, strange coincidences, mortality, the passage of time.

Adversaries: College wizards, religious orders, elves, and dwarfs.

Forbidden Love

Themes: Secret relationships, jealousy and heartache, inter-class marriages, illicit debauchery, the warm embrace of Chaos.

Adversaries: Common folk, cultists of Slaanesh, and nobles

Sanctity of the Family

Themes: Orphans, marriage and childbirth, sibling rivalries, inheritance disputes, loneliness and isolation.

Adversaries: Estranged nobles, and cultists of Nurgle

Tragic Hubris

Themes: Unsung heroes, delusions of grandeur, misguided martyrdom, ironic deaths, foiled plans.

Adversaries: Misguided wizards or priests, and wayward heroes

Plot Triggers & Character Hooks

In the best campaigns, players can see the impact that their decisions have on the storyline. *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay* provides two helpful tools for players to involve their characters – plot triggers and character hooks.

Plot triggers are essentially "cause and effect switches". Based on how events unfold during an adventure, actions impact a future event, location, item, or NPC that players encounter later on. Or conversely, action may unfold based on the status of an event, location, item, or NPC encountered in the past.

Character hooks, on the other hand, are player-generated plot seeds that motivate their characters' roles in the storyline. Each character has his own personal history, objectives, and relationships that will drive him forward through the plot.

Interlude, Entry, & Exit Triggers

There are three different types of plot triggers a GM can use – interlude, entry, and exit triggers.

Interlude Triggers

Interlude triggers are secret plot conditions adjusted by the GM between adventures, usually expressed as "if/then" statements. For example, if the herdstone is destroyed in adventure #1, then the beastmen warherd in adventure #2 won't be led by a wargor. They occur between story arcs, or between the individual acts in a larger episode. Even if the players have never before encountered the affected story element in the second adventure, it has now been impacted by their actions in the first adventure.

Entry Triggers

Entry triggers are conditions that are adjusted before an encounter begins. These adjustments may be based on the characters' skills, abilities, or reputations. For example, if there is a wood elf in the party, they won't be immediately ambushed when they enter the clearing with the sacred cairn. They will be confronted and questioned instead. An entry trigger does not rely on past events, but rather, the state of the characters, items, or locations when a related encounter is about to begin.

What motivates me? What motivates any man? No, no, not greed. Love. For some, it is love of money. For others, love for themselves. For me, it is the love I bear for my family. They are the reason I do what I do. Risk what I risk. It is that love that keeps me focused. Makes sure I train hard. Keeps my blade clean and sharp.

Even when those greenskins attacked the village while I was off to war, and took my family, they did not take the love I bear them. Nae, in fact, they made it stronger.

Does vengeance drive me? No, only love. I love my family. Almost as much as I love to kill greenskins.

– Stephan Krause, Soldier

Exit Triggers

Exit triggers are conditions that are adjusted once an encounter is completed, and can influence or inform future action. For example, if the characters succeed in convincing the baron to help them, he will no longer withhold his forces, and reinforcements arrive in time to help with the goblins. In contrast to entry triggers, exit triggers change the current state of an event, location, or NPC as a result of the encounter.

Character Hooks

Character hooks are personal character objectives that a player shares with the GM during character creation or between adventures, in order to provide the GM with information on what interests the player. These hooks are usually expressed as statements of intent, such as "Roderick wants to learn more about the reclusive hermit who lives outside town, and will try to earn his trust".

Using Triggers & Hooks

A GM can combine character hooks with different plot triggers to heighten a player's involvement and interest. These tools encourage players to influence and interact with a variety of story elements, and provide GMs with a wealth of valuable feedback and information to help him steer the campaign in a way his players will enjoy. Here are some of the important elements to consider when using hooks and triggers.

Knowledge: Activating a plot trigger can expose new information, which can in turn reveal important items, NPCs, or locations in subsequent adventures. Character hooks involving the acquisition of knowledge can lead to critical revelations, or possibly new training options (with the GM's permission).

Items: Retrieving or destroying an important item is a common plot trigger, and character hooks can involve the acquisition of coveted items. In both cases, success often leads to the previous owners looking to return the favour.

NPCs: Interacting with important NPCs (or defeating them) can activate plot triggers ranging from helpful assistance to angry retaliation and everything in-between. Character hooks can involve swaying, eliminating, or tricking NPCs.

Locations: Locations can be revealed, made inaccessible, or altered when plot triggers are activated. Character hooks can revolve around exploring, venturing to, or vandalising locations.

Events: Plot triggers can bring about unique events (immediately or in later adventures), while character hooks can involve causing, averting, or forestalling events.

Elements of a Campaign

The overall structure of a *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay* campaign is like a flowchart with individual cells (adventures) connected by one or more lines (plot triggers). The progression from one cell to the next is indicated by arrows, motivated by the players (character hooks) and the adventures (entry and exit triggers).

Though adventures vary in length, many can be resolved in just a few sessions. During the interludes between adventures, characters can attend personal business like training, buying, and gossiping. Interludes can last a full session or longer when the game plays out in a complex environment (like a city).

In fact, the environment in which the story unfolds can have a significant impact on a campaign.

Urban Settings

Painted facades and helpful smiles mask the taint of corruption festering in the heart of many villages, towns, and cities across the Empire. Publicly respected burgomeisters and magistrates operate secret criminal gangs and form pacts with dark gods and their daemons. Mutants, skaven, and deranged murderers skulk through slums and sewers. Vile Chaos temples thrive just a few steps away from bustling thoroughfares.

Yet despite all this, bastions of civilisation give characters the chance to rest, gather information, and uncover hidden threats. They're often a fallback point after rigorous adventures and the first stop when the characters need allies.

The challenge of an urban environment, for you and the players, is the sheer volume of NPCs and locations grouped so closely together. If you're new to roleplaying, you might want to consider building your campaign around relatively small villages and towns until you become accustomed to juggling between NPCs and plots.

Sample Campaign Flowchart

A campaign can follow a variety of paths. With a little bit of planning, a GM can design a simple flowchart to help guide the action. His adventure ideas can be fully-fleshed encounters, or a collection of brief scenes for the players to resolve.

The example follows a party comprised of a Troll Slayer, Bright Wizard, and Barber Surgeon as they begin their campaign. After talking to some tavern patrons, they hear rumours they'd like to investigate. These rumours are the **(1) Entry Triggers** that show how the character's actions and choices lead them into a particular adventure. Once the party engages with the GM's adventure, they may pursue leads in a different order than the GM originally intended – so remaining flexible is key.

After the adventure has been resolved to the players' satisfaction, events from the adventure may include a number of **(2) Interlude Triggers** that advance the story into the Interlude – for example, the Bright Wizard deciphers a clue after encountering an ancient scroll. During the Interlude, the players have the opportunity to pursue a variety of down-time activities and plan their next course of action. Based on their **(3) Character Hooks** and the subsequent adventures' **Entry Triggers**, the party may have several options on what to do next.

This example shows two possible paths, one which leads the party into a Dungeon adventure, the other path leading to a Wilderness Expedition. Within either of these adventure areas, a variety of different encounters may be resolved. As the corresponding adventure wraps up, the party may activate the **(4) Exit Triggers** which help resolve the action from the adventure.

Depending on which path the party memers followed after the Interlude, they may wish to explore their other leads after resolving the first leg of their adventure. Otherwise, a new campaign cycle may begin, with its own unique Triggers, Interludes and Character Hooks.

Campaign Pacing

Structuring a campaign to make good use of dramatic and comic timing is an art that can only be perfected with practise. Still, there are a couple rules of thumb. Precede action scenes with suspense, by using encounters with mystery or social conflict to build dramatic tension. Also, following them with a brief denouement lets players construct narratives about their characters' exploits.

Knowing when to conclude a session can be challenging. There's no harm in continuing for an extra hour if everyone's having a good time, but you should watch the players' energy levels because tired players are usually less creative and enjoy the game less.

Rally Steps and interludes are ideal places to end a session. After you've got used to roleplaying, you might also want to introduce new complications or cliffhangers as you close out for the session. These build anticipation and leave the players wanting more.

Also keep in mind that you don't have to detail every house, guild hall, and citizen. Focus your effort on important locations and characters, describing the rest in general terms as they're encountered in play. If you're worried about having details at the ready, prepare a list of names and one-line descriptions for quick reference.

Things you should consider when running a game in an urban setting are local law and government, economy, and important cultural distinctions. These are likely to come up often and tend to have great impact on the plot and the characters' actions.

Wilderness Expeditions

Travellers venturing into the Empire's untamed wilderness soon become aware of its dangers. In the forests' depths, sorcerers invoke forbidden magic without fear of witch hunters; mutants band together in freakish rural colonies, enjoying strength in numbers; outlaws lie in wait to rob and murder the unwary; and beastmen and greenskins raid human farms for food (usually the farmers), and to satisfy their primitive, violent urges.

Despite these dangers, adventurers brave the wilds in search of riches and valuable lore. Rumours of lost tombs and abandoned dwarf strongholds circulate in taverns, promising excitement and treasure. At the frontier of civilisation, characters don't follow the rules, they make them.

Wilderness expeditions often branch off from urban adventures when an exit trigger in town reveals information, items, locations, or non-player characters of special interest. As the party treks deeper into the perilous wilderness, you'll find that combats become much easier to justify and run, but the opposite happens with social encounters and investigations, which benefit from dense populations and rigid structure.

If you're new to roleplaying, you might find the wilderness easier to manage than cities. Important elements to consider when designing a wilderness expedition are weather, transportation, terrain, supplies, and monsters.

Dungeons

Dungeons are dank, unlit places high in adventure and yet too dangerous for anyone, even an adventuring party, to enter without good reason. Fraught with peril and filled with inhuman beings bent on death and destruction, dungeons could potentially pose some of the greatest challenges to a party of characters. By the end of a dungeon trip, the characters should be gripping their bloodied weapons with white-knuckled fear, desperate to see sunlight again.

The best dungeons seem natural to the setting and the storyline. It may seem simple enough to make any tomb, catacomb, castle, or sewer a dungeon, for example, but only evil overlords deliberately build them as monster-filled death traps. More often, they're abandoned for a while before the creepy-crawlies move in. Even then, comfortable conditions and a ready source of food are required to make them stay.

Things to consider with a dungeon environment is the layout and structure of the dungeon, the reasons why the dungeon was built or abandoned, and the motivations and of any of the dungeon's current residents.

Social Conflict

Social conflict provides a means for averting unnecessary fights using intimidation, diplomacy, or trickery. Adventurers with charm and guile can achieve success without undertaking gruelling expeditions. In merchant towns like Kemperbad and Bögenhofen, the wealthy businessmen who dominate town councils can be manipulated through negotiation and blackmail. Reikland nobles aren't as easily bribed; adventurers wishing to influence them often have to observe the rules of courtly etiquette. Social encounters offer excellent opportunities for roleplay.

High Fantasy vs. Gritty Realism

Much of the dark, heroic, tangible atmosphere in *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay* is created by you and the players rather than the rules. Vividly portraying the setting can be as simple as describing NPCs' quirky peculiarities and interjecting colourful slices of everyday life. No Reiklander is physically or morally unblemished, for example, and few places are devoid of oddity or taint. Meanwhile, players can contribute by embracing the world's darkly humorous grit and depicting their characters accordingly.

Against this gritty backdrop, tales of individual heroism can seem larger than life. When designing a campaign, you should try to strike a balance between "high fantasy" (e.g. monsters, sorcery, and magic items) and "low fantasy" (e.g. politics, commerce, and disease). Too much of the former can make the fantastic seem mundane while too much of the latter can make the setting feel dull or oppressive.

Campaign Downtime: The Interlude

Between adventures are short breaks called interludes, which give characters the opportunity to attend to personal business.

Interludes are the glue that holds a campaign together. In addition to any book-keeping or character development, the players need this time to discuss the campaign from their characters' perspectives and develop group stories. A GM who listens carefully to the players during interludes can come away with solid guidance for customising subsequent adventures.

Interludes vary in duration, though most are no longer than a few days of game time. They usually occur at the beginning or end of a session. Some interludes can be conducted by email, but campaign downtime provides unique opportunities for narrative development, and can be a lot of fun to resolve when everyone's together.

Interludes generally involve several steps.

Step 1: Submit Character Hooks

Each player writes down a one-line character hook expressing his PC's most immediate personal goal. The GM should sort or log these hooks for reference, comparing the hooks to any notes he has or upcoming parts of the adventure.

Step 2: Healing & Recovery

An interlude often represents a period of downtime where the characters can attempt to recover from the rigours of their adventures, such as tending to wounds or recovering from stress, fatigue, and other impairments.

Step 3: Activities

The players announce how their characters will pass the time during the interlude. Most interludes allow time for only one activity. There are a variety of options available, but requests to perform research, train abilities, seek employment, or travel somewhere are usually the most common.

Research: Topics may activate plot triggers and provide PCs with valuable information for the next adventure.

Training: The Game Master may decide that PCs need access to certain people or facilities to spend advances on skills, talents, or specific actions.

Employment: PCs can try to use their skills to earn coin during downtime. The Game Master sets the difficulty based on the skill being employed and the needs of the area, with the PC earning a coin of the appropriate tier (most often brass or silver) for each success generated.

Travel: PCs may seek to travel by foot, barge, or horseback. The speed of travel is best set by the needs of the story. Characters who select travel as their activity may be able to make skill checks to influence how swiftly the group travels, or help determine in what condition they arrive at their destination.

Gossip: PCs who engage the locals may be able to learn useful information about local NPCs, rumours, or locations with successful Charm or Guile checks.

Shopping: PCs may purchase locally available weapons and equipment.

Prayer: Most interludes permit time to venerate a god. If a character passes both an Invocation and Piety check during an interlude, he may earn the party a fortune point or possibly activate a plot trigger leading to unique events in the next adventure.

Once the end of my current contract is within sight, it is all I can think of to quit this business for good. Each time I swear I'll settle down somewhere, and scratch out a safer life for myself on some farm.

That lasts for a good day or two. Once the scars stop itching, my fingers start itching – for the feel of my sword in one hand, and gold crowns in the other.

– Jurgen Hetfield, Mercenary

Step 4: Interlude Encounter

An interlude might feature a brief, colourful scene like a festival, a visit from acquaintances, or strangers encountered along the road. These sorts of encounters can often be roleplayed completely freeform, without any dice.

Step 5: Check Plot Triggers

This step lets the players guide their characters' roles in the campaign. The GM notes any plot triggers activated by interlude activities or encounters and then compares character hooks with appropriate entry triggers influencing the next adventure. In some cases, character hooks don't match with any entry triggers, in

The Last Word

When a character's death occurs in the game, it can have an impact on the game for everyone in the campaign. In fact, the death of a character can be a compelling, dramatic moment in the player's roleplaying experience.

Players often enjoy describing their characters' deaths, gasping their parting words and writing their own eulogies. You only die once, after all. Narrative choices like this should be encouraged, as they elevate the game for all involved.

which case the corresponding players can be compensated with an additional interlude activity or possibly a private scene related to their character hook in the next adventure.

Culmination of a Campaign

Tangible campaign goals help sustain player interest over the long term and memorable campaigns usually end with one or more endgame conditions being met. These vary according to the style of the campaign.

Mini-Campaigns: The endgame condition of a mini-campaign is typically influenced by plot triggers from each of the previous adventures. The complexity of interweaving these triggers can be one of the most challenging aspects of building a mini-campaign.

Episodic Serials: In theory, episodic serials may continue indefinitely, but without a strong overarching plot players can eventually lose interest. GMs and players should focus on making each episode as strong and memorable as possible.

Heroic Journeys: Heroic journeys generally end when all of the original characters have attained their personal goals, died, or retired from injuries or insanity. Endgame conditions are designed individually for each character once his goals have been expressed through multiple character hooks. It's often a good idea to wait several adventures before considering personal endgame conditions.

Epic Quests: Epic quests usually involve secondary character goals running parallel to the main plot. Endgame conditions are sometimes complex enough to receive their own full-length adventure at the end of the campaign. Personal goals are resolved along with quest goals as the characters' old friends and nemeses converge for a grand showdown.

Building to a Crescendo

Ideally, the encounters leading up to a campaign's conclusion provide players with an ever increasing sense of drama and urgency. Narrative techniques like foreshadowing, time pressure, and plot twists can escalate the drama here.

By this stage of the campaign, you should have a solid grasp of each player's character hooks, which you can use to create a memorable, climactic adventure. Character hooks can be matched with plot triggers to leverage recurring themes and thrust the characters into interesting and poignant situations for the final episode.

The Final Episode

The interlude prior to the final episode provides one last chance for players to solve any lingering mysteries. They might benefit from recapping key campaign events and re-examining handouts that weren't previously deemed relevant.

You can make this final session even more memorable by doing something special. It doesn't need to be elaborate: you can prepare a special soundtrack to establish the session's importance, create an original handout, play by candlelight, or invite a guest participant to make a cameo appearance as a major NPC.

Tying up the Loose Ends

Following a campaign, the surviving characters might be assumed to go their own ways. Some return to their families or build a grand estate with their share of the treasure. Others continue adventuring. Before packing up the final session, the GM should encourage his players to take turns describing their characters' lives after the campaign. This could also be the perfect opportunity to discuss future campaign plans and to find out whether some of the heroes are retiring, or are looking for more adventures.

Character Death

The Old World is fraught with danger, and over the course of a full campaign, the death of a character may be inevitable. Most of the time play continues, in which case replacement PCs may be introduced during an appropriate interlude.

Death & Campaign Style

Losing a character can be a jarring experience for a player after so much time has been invested in building the PC's personality and improving his abilities. To curb the potential disappointment and to make sure that a character's death does not unravel the game's storylines, a GM might consider offering limited "plot protection", adjusting die rolls, rules, or NPC actions as necessary to keep a character alive, if it is appropriate to the campaign style. Remember, however, that even if the GM secretly offers characters plot protection, the players should always feel that the threats their characters face are genuine.

Mini-Campaigns: Short campaigns are well suited to a "sudden death" policy because players are less likely to become attached to their characters. Pre-existing NPCs can become replacement characters, retaining continuity in tightly plotted adventures. Replacement PCs may be introduced at any time except during the final encounter.

Episodic Serials: Episodic campaigns often feature a rotating cast of characters. Plot protection may be appropriate during the first act or two of each episode so the core story can unfold without disruption. If plot protection is offered, it should also extend to offstage PCs belonging to absent players.

Heroic Journeys: The protagonists of a heroic journey are closely integrated with the overall plot, and untimely deaths can disrupt campaign flow and produce anticlimactic storylines. Instead of dying, "killed" PCs can be captured, disfigured, or left for dead. Plot protection may be voided during pivotal encounters.

Epic Quests: Epic quests often end with great sacrifice and this is particularly true in Warhammer campaigns; PCs who survive an entire heroic journey should consider themselves very fortunate. Still, plot protection can occasionally be granted to PCs with strong personal connections to the quest.

Introducing Replacement Characters

You can partially mitigate a player's disappointment after losing a character by allowing his next to enter the campaign with some experience points. The GM may wish to provide the new PC with a percentage of the experience points of his previous character. Often having a new character join the group with slightly less experience than the other characters is often sufficient. This allows the new character to spend some advances to develop his skills and abilities before adventuring with the rest of the party.

A replacement character is an excellent opportunity to create new subplots and enrich existing ones. You should also consider potential background hooks before bringing a new character into play. Many players enjoy writing their own character backgrounds, but a certain amount of GM guidance can be a big help when linking a new PC to the continuing plot.

The replacement PC may be introduced as early as the next interlude in a city, or as a prisoner rescued in a dungeon. There are plenty of creative and novel opportunities to introduce a character if the story is taking place in an unusual setting.

Chapter Six

Enemies & Adversaries

Over the course of their adventures, characters are likely to face a variety of enemies. From brutish orcs to cunning cultists, numerous adversaries will rise to oppose the heroes. In this section, the GM will learn how to manage enemies during encounters. Then a number of potential enemies are presented, with background information and game statistics, providing GMs with everything they need to use these adversaries during the game.

Creatures and adversaries are more than just a set of numbers, and they can provide a wide range of potential plot twists and complications. To make the most out of encounters with enemies, the GM has a variety of tools at his disposal.

Making Memorable Bad Guys

The best enemies are memorable, distinct, and interesting—but not every enemy needs this sort of treatment. Henchmen can be common and straightforward. However, villainous masterminds, named nemeses, and important foes can make quite an impression on the players with a bit of extra attention.

Visual ideas

Often, a simple image can be the start of a good villain. There is a lot of great art in the Warhammer Fantasy setting. Flipping through the *Warhammer Fantasy Battles* army books or your favourite fantasy sourcebook can be a font of inspiration. Searching the Internet for art can also help. Or you can just sit back and imagine, and see what comes up.

You can always start with a compelling image and build a character around it. Perhaps the big bad guy is clad in heavy, black armour covered in spikes. Or he bears an ominous, glowing red axe. Or the villain is a rail thin, almost skeletal figure in oversized robes, talking to an onyx skull he holds in his claw-like fingers. Perhaps the heroes traverse the forest, entering a clearing where they stumble upon a hulking, scarred beastman whose hands have been replaced with wicked hooks.

Personality traits

The best villains have distinct personalities. Does he talk in a wheezing rasp, or a booming bass? Is he frugal or greedy? Is he sarcastically polite even in the midst of combat, or does he hurl curses and insults? Is he a loud, obnoxious boor, or a refined noble?

Consider traits likely to show up during the PC's interaction with the villain. An enemy who is likely to be met only in combat should have traits which show up in battle. Other traits, such as greed, avarice, or a fondness for chamber music are best reserved for villains who will be encountered in the proper setting to reveal these quirks.

Sympathetic Traits

For villains expected to make multiple appearances, the GM may wish to consider defining one or two sympathetic traits. Few people are evil in their own mind. Many so-called villains may even believe that their actions are justified, based on the circumstances. Even the most evil villain can have interesting quirks or traits that cause the player characters to pause or re-evaluate the situation.

The savage marauder has a twisted sense of honour and refuses to slay an unarmed foe. The mad Chaos cult leader began his trip into the realms of dark magic because he wished to cure his sister of a terrible illness. "There but for the grace of Sigmar go I" is a classic trope.

Connecting to the Characters

It can be helpful if villains, especially major ones, do not exist in a vacuum. Make it personal. A villain may have done some great wrong to a character in the past. This offence could be a very personal thing, or a general "He killed my family/village/cat" hook. One of the characters and a villain may have been students together in the Bright College until the villain was gruesomely scarred by a spell gone wrong, and now the villain blames the character for it. A villain might be a relative or former lover of a character, who approaches the character for assistance, and only time will reveal what the villain is truly up to.

Do not overplay these tropes, however. It can backfire if it becomes a running gag. "OK, so who turns out to be related to this bad guy?" is something you never want to hear your players say. Sometimes, the villain has no connection to the characters at all, and may even confront them wondering who these strange people are and why they're harassing him.

Tactics

Knowing what tactics to employ can be a challenging part of managing enemies during encounters. Should the GM use shrewd tactics and optimise each enemy's combat effectiveness—or should he pull back, playing them cautiously?

Fortunately, the entries for each type of adversary offer different tips and suggestions. The GM should also evaluate the enemy's Intelligence and other abilities, such as any special attack actions the enemy possesses, or the stance he favours. If the enemy is canny and cunning, stronger tactics may be warranted. If the enemy favours a conservative stance, more cautious and carefully planned tactics make sense.

In addition to these factors, the GM should also consider the needs of the story and the current encounter. Are the characters vastly outnumbered? Is the encounter a non-pivotal side quest? Have the characters grown lax and arrogant? All of these factors also influence how the GM uses the enemies during an encounter.

To Kill, or Not to Kill?

Should the enemy kill the PCs? From a purely logical perspective, the answer may seem obvious for many of the foes. Of course an orc would kill one of the heroes. However, from the perspective of what makes a good game, it's less clear.

Warhammer is a dark and gritty game, and the threat of death looms over the land. Despite this, it is sometimes better to let monsters move on to active foes once a hero falls unconscious, becomes paralysed, or is otherwise helpless. In the heat of combat, it makes sense to ignore foes which can no longer hurt you—you can always slit throats later.

However, if the players start to get the sense that their characters are immortal or invulnerable, the GM should remind them that the characters are indeed mortal…. by any means necessary.

Managing Enemies

While each player generally only has to worry about managing the actions for a single character, the GM often has to manage and track information for several enemies at once. Here are some tips and guidelines for the GM to more easily manage enemies.

Tracking Enemy Wounds

It is often unnecessary to draw wound cards for individual enemies in combat. When an enemy is wounded in combat, the GM draws one wound card and places it face down, then places a number of tracking tokens on the card representing the total number of wounds that target has suffered. Critical wounds are placed face up, as usual.

When a target has accumulated enough wound tracking tokens so that the number of tokens plus any critical wounds exceed its wound threshold, the target is defeated. The tracking tokens are returned to the supply, and the wound cards are shuffled back into the wound deck.

Tracking Enemy Abilities

Enemy Aggression, Cunning, and Expertise allotments can be tracked easily with tracking tokens. The GM can prepare the encounter by creating pools of tokens for the different enemies based on their ratings, returning the tokens to the supply as they are used.

Many enemies have special actions they can perform in addition to the normal range of basic actions available to the player characters. Enemy actions listed in the book function like action cards, interacting with other cards and effects as an action card does.

When an enemy performs an action with a recharge rating, place the appropriate number of recharge tokens on the action. However, since multiple enemies may share actions or other abilities, recharge tokens are not removed from enemy cards or special actions at the end of an individual enemy action. Rather, at the end of each round during an encounter, as well as during each Rally Step, the GM removes one token from every enemy action or card that is currently recharging.

Ending Combat Encounters

Combat should rarely end with one side being completely obliterated. Some creatures, such as snotlings or skaven, are cowardly and will eagerly flee from an encounter if they are vastly outnumbered or too many of their kin have been killed. Even more imposing or powerful combatants understand when their outlook is grim, and can use a tactical retreat to recover their wounds, seeking to exact revenge at some later time.

The GM may wish to use the Progress Tracker to create a morale track for enemy units. A good way to implement this is to create a number of spaces based on the average Willpower rating amongst creatures in the group, then place an event space, followed by a number of additional spaces equal to the highest Aggression rating among the creatures present, followed by another event space.

For each creature defeated by the heroes, advance the tracking token one space along the morale track. If the heroes successfully intimidate the creatures or otherwise demonstrate their combat prowess (a particularly gruesome critical wound, a devastating round of damage output, or a fiery spell exploding in the midst of the enemy's ranks), advance the token another space or two.

Conversely, the GM may decide that for each hero defeated, he will move the tracking marker back one space along the morale track. The GM may even move the marker back an additional space or two if the heroes fall victim to a significantly gruesome attack.

Here's one way the event spaces on the track can be used. When the first event space is reached, make an **Average (2d) Discipline** check based on the weakest creature still remaining. If the Discipline check succeeds, the most heavily wounded creature of that type breaks rank and flees the encounter. If the Discipline check fails, all wounded creatures of that type flee. If the tracking token reaches the end of the morale track, the heroes have broken the collective will of the foes. All enemies of the lowest rank flee, as well as any heavily injured enemies of higher ranks. Alternatively, the GM may declare the encounter a rout, in which case all remaining enemies retreat or flee from the battle.

Similar Progress Trackers can be developed for social and other non-combat encounters, helping the GM gauge the interest level or resolve of the other participants. In these situations, the event spaces can mark shifts in the social climate or denote the characters' progress in advancing their agenda.

Customising Encounters

As GMs become more comfortable with the system and the abilities of their particular players' characters, they may want to adjust encounters to provide the right level of challenge. There are several different ways a GM can adjust an encounter, and each adjustment can make an encounter slightly more or less difficult.

More Challenging Encounters

A GM has several options for increasing the challenge for a particular encounter. The GM should evaluate these options and start out by incorporating a few of these ideas until he has found the right challenge for his group.

Adding Action Cards. In addition to the actions presented with a creature's statistics, a GM can create tactical flexibility and mix things up by giving creatures access to action cards. As a general guideline, a creature can acquire additional action cards equal to one plus its Expertise rating. The more action cards the Game Master adds to the creatures' repertoire, the more challenging the encounter becomes.

Adding Henchmen. In addition to the normal enemies listed for an encounter, the GM may wish to include a few extra henchmen from a lower tier of that enemy type. For example, if the main encounter is with several goblins and an orc, the GM may wish to include some snotling henchmen.

Creating Environmental Effects. The GM can create a more challenging and memorable encounter by providing extra details about the environment, and imposing misfortune dice to action checks related to the effect. For example, heavy rain or darkness could impose penalties on Observation and Ballistics Skills checks, while blistering heat in the middle of summer could impose misfortune dice to physical checks, or increase the amount of fatigue suffered on poor rolls.

Upgrading Henchmen. One easy way to adjust the difficulty is to upgrade a few creatures listed as henchmen versions into standard creatures of that type.

Less Challenging Encounters

Alternatively, if the GM feels an encounter is too challenging for his group, there are several adjustments he can make to balance things out.

Downgrading to Henchmen. One of the simplest options for a combat encounter is to downgrade a few standard creatures into henchmen of the same type. Even just changing one or two creatures into henchmen can have a significant impact on how an encounter resolves.

Favourable Player Conditions. The GM can frame the encounter in a way that favours the players. Perhaps the encounter occurs during the day against creatures who don't like the light. Or the players have a terrain or positional advantage. Or several of the creatures are already wounded and not fighting at their peak. For social encounters, the people with whom the PCs are interacting may be more inclined to listen to them, or their initial resistance may be lower.

Fewer Adversaries. For smaller groups, or parties with fewer combat options, the GM may decide to have the group face fewer creatures. Taking away one standard creature or a handful of henchmen can help even the odds considerably.

Fortune Point Refreshes. To give players an edge, the GM may wish to increase the flow of fortune points. The more fortune points the players have, the more flexibility and options they have.

Managing Monsters

The Old World is filled with a veritable menagerie of creatures, both mundane and fantastic, from the brutal, feral beastmen to the ravaging greenskins, from gigantic, abominable versions of normal creatures to the subtle enemy within—human cultists. The breadth and variety of potential enemies is virtually unlimited. This section presents information on a wide range of enemies that heroes may encounter over the course of their adventures.

Enemy Statistics

Enemies in *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay* have a diverse range of abilities. Many of the same elements apply to enemies as to player characters – for example, enemies and PCs both have characteristics, wound thresholds, and an assortment of actions they can perform. There are some important differences, however, to help the Game Master track information and manage large numbers of foes more easily.

Enemies have the same six characteristics as player characters do; Strength, Toughness, Agility, Intelligence, Willpower, and Fellowship. These form the basis of dice pools for enemies just like they do for player characters. Despite these similarities, enemies have several attributes and interesting rules that are unique to them for use during encounters.

The enemy statistics shown represent the standard version of each described creature. In addition to standard creatures, *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay* provides rules for developing and managing henchmen versions of creatures. GMs can modify the statistics to give their creatures a unique feel.

Damage, Soak, and Defence

Listed along with each entry's characteristics are separate Damage, Soak, and Defence values for that type of NPC or monster. These are identified by a small icons. These values serve the same function as they do for weapons and armour, as described in Chapter Ten of the *WFRP Player's Guide*.

These numbers represent the default values assuming that the NPC listed is outfitted with typical gear or trappings for a creature of its kind. If the GM wishes to customise the encounter and provide specific equipment or other gear, replace the numbers in parentheses with the replacement equipment's actual values—such as damage rating, critical rating, and any special traits or abilities that may apply.

Damage Rating

Defence Rating

Soak Value

Weapons, Armour and Values

Every weapon has two values that are important to every attack made using that weapon: damage rating (DR) and critical rating (CR). A weapon's DR is added to the key characteristic for the attack to determine the overall damage potential of the attack. A weapon's CR is the number of boons required to trigger that weapon's inherent critical damage effect. A weapon with a CR of 3 can be considered to have the effect:

The attack deals critical damage.

Armour also has two values that are important to the combat sequence: a defence value and a soak value. The defence value indicates how many misfortune dice will be added to any attack targeting anyone wearing that armour. The soak value is added to toughness to find the total damage reduction against each attack. Sometimes non-player characters have additional defence or soak values from other sources, such as shields or special abilities. These values are cumulative.

More information on weapons, armour, and their various traits can be found in Chapter 10 of the *WFRP Player's Guide*.

Wound Thresholds

Each creature entry has a wound threshold listed, indicating the maximum number of wounds a standard creature of that type can withstand before being defeated. Enemies do not suffer stress or fatigue the way player characters do. An effect that would force an enemy to suffer stress or fatigue inflicts an equal number of wounds upon it instead.

Stance

Like player characters, many NPCs take advantage of stances. Unlike the PCs, an NPC's stance position is fixed. The stance rating listed with the NPC's statistics indicate what stance that NPC always uses. Conservative is abbreviated with a green coloured C and Reckless is abbreviated with a red coloured R. The number next to the letter indicates how many dice are converted into stance dice. So a Stance rating of C2 indicates the NPC uses two conservative dice when performing actions.

Enemy Threat Level

Each monster entry has a threat level rating listed with its description. This rating is represented by a number of skulls—the more skulls listed, the greater the threat posed by one standard creature of that type. It is important to note that this threat level rating compares monsters to other monsters, not to player characters. This rating helps establish a rough "pecking order" among the creatures of *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay*.

The GM can use this information to adjust encounters by evaluating how a particular group of characters fares against creatures of a certain threat level. If the group struggles, the GM may consider using creatures with a lower threat level. If the group finds little challenge with a particular type of creature, the GM can consider using creatures of a higher threat level.

In addition to adjusting encounters based on creatures' threat levels, the GM has a number of other options to help tailor encounters to his group's preferences and power level.

Aggression, Cunning, and Expertise

In addition to their characteristic ratings, monsters and NPCs are rated in three attributes—Aggression, Cunning, and Expertise. These ratings are abbreviated A/C/E in the statistic entries. These attributes make it easier to read and evaluate monster entries by broadly defining the physical and mental abilities beyond just characteristics, without listing skills or talents that may not come into play during an encounter.

The attribute ratings indicate how many bonus dice the GM can use for the NPCs during encounters for certain actions. The type of dice and actions relating to each attribute is explained below. These ratings give the GM a "budget" of dice to add to checks, allowing NPCs and monsters to have a lot of variety and some tricks up their sleeves. Once all the dice for a particular attribute have been used, no more dice are available for that purpose for the remainder of the current act. The A/C/E dice budget refreshes during the Rally Step between acts in episodes.

- **Aggression:** The Aggression rating indicates the number of fortune dice the GM can use when performing combat-oriented actions or other physical tasks with that monster or NPC. Any number of these fortune dice can be used for a single check. Aggression is a general indicator of an enemy's physical prowess, boldness, and vigour.

- **Cunning:** The Cunning rating indicates the number of fortune dice the GM can use when performing social actions or other mental tasks with that monster or NPC. Any number of these fortune dice can be used for a single check. Cunning is a general indicator of an enemy's mental acuity, instincts, and creativity.

- **Expertise:** The Expertise rating indicates the number of expertise dice the GM can apply to any checks he wishes. No more than a one expertise die can be added to any one check. Expertise is a general indicator of an enemy's training, resourcefulness, and aptitude.

Using Dice Budgets Defensively

In addition to their uses when the NPCs are the active player, the GM can spend dice from the A/C/E allotment to resist player actions. This allows NPCs to add misfortune dice to players' dice pools during opposed checks, even though most NPCs do not have trained skills or specialisations the way player characters do.

Aggression dice can be spent to modify a physical action dice pool, such as an incoming melee attack. Cunning dice can be spent to modify a mental action dice pool, such as a spell or Guile check targeting the creature. Each die spent from the corresponding budget adds ■ to the check.

Aggression and cunning can also be used to modify initiative checks. If it is a physical encounter or combat, where initiative is determined by Agility, then NPCs/creatures can spend dice from their Aggression budget to add □ to an initiative roll. If it is a social encounter or other encounter where Fellowship determines initiative, then the NPCs/creatures can spend dice from their Cunning budget to add □ dice to an initiative roll.

Henchmen, Minions, & Underlings

In addition to stout, hearty members of an individual NPC or monster entry, there are also weaker, less powerful members that fill out the ranks. These lower tier NPCs are collectively referred to as henchmen. Henchmen are a great option that allow GMs to introduce larger numbers of enemies without necessarily overwhelming the party.

Henchmen Work Together

Henchmen act in concert. Rather than each individual henchman acting on its own, they act together in groups. Henchmen of the same type are broken up into smaller groups equal to the size of the player party.

When facing a party of three adventurers, for example, henchmen of the same type act in groups of three. In this example, this means that every three henchmen would warrant one initiative check. When activated, three henchmen would act at the same time.

When activated, a single group of henchmen generally performs the same action, working together. For example, a group of snotling henchmen attacks the same target. In this case, only a single henchman from the group actually makes a check. Each additional henchman adds a fortune die to the action's dice pool.

Henchmen Withstand Fewer Wounds

Rather than use the wounds threshold listed for a standard member of that creature entry, each henchman can only withstand a number of wounds equal to its Toughness rating. For example, a standard gor beastman has 12 wounds, while a henchman gor beastman would only be able to withstand 5 wounds (its Toughness) before being defeated.

Henchmen Share Health

Henchmen of the same type share a common pool of health. Individual henchmen do not have their own unique wound thresholds. Instead, all henchmen of a same type share a pool of health equal to one member's Toughness value multiplied by the total number of henchmen of that type involved. For example, six snotling henchmen with Toughness 2 share a common pool of 12 health.

Wounds inflicted to a henchman are dealt to the common pool of health shared by all henchmen of that type. Individual henchmen are defeated when enough wounds are inflicted to defeat one of them. The Game Master should remove a number of tokens from the health pool equal to the wounds inflicted and denote that henchman as defeated.

Against henchmen, there is no wasted damage. Inflicting 6 wounds with a single attack would kill three snotling henchmen. Inflicting 7 wounds would kill three snotling henchmen, as well as contribute the remaining one wound towards killing another.

As with standard NPCs and monsters, a single wound card can be placed facedown in a convenient place for the GM to monitor henchmen health, using tracking tokens for individual wounds.

Henchmen Do Not Suffer Critical Wounds

Henchmen do not suffer from critical wounds the way characters or standard creatures do. When an attack or an effect would inflict a critical wound to a henchman, a critical wound card is drawn as normal. However, rather than being afflicted by the effect listed on the critical wound, the henchman suffers a number of additional wounds equal to the critical wound's severity rating. The critical wound card is then shuffled back into the wound deck.

Encounters with Multiple Enemies

When more than one NPC or monster is present in an encounter, each type of NPC or monster shares a single allotment of Aggression, Cunning, and Expertise dice for simplicity – you do not multiply these values by the number of creatures present.

For example, in an encounter with six snotlings, three goblins, and one orc, all six snotlings would share one pool of Aggression, Cunning, and Expertise dice. The three goblins would share a single pool based on the goblins' Aggression, Cunning, and Expertise ratings. The single orc has its own pool, separate from either the snotling or goblin pools. This rule applies whether or not the NPCs in question are henchmen.

Furthermore, when an NPC or monster uses a special action that has a recharge rating, that action cannot be used by other enemies that share access to that action until all the recharge tokens have been removed. Remember, the GM removes one token from every enemy action or card that is currently recharging at the end of every round during an encounter.

Creature & NPC Statistic Tables

Each entry features a table with the statistics for the creatures shown. One row contains all the information for a single type of adversary.

Name. The name of the adversary. Special actions may refer to this name to indicate which creatures of a certain type can perform that action.

Characteristics. These six characteristics are identical to the characteristics PCs have. The numbers in paretheses after the numbers are the Damage, Soak, and Defence Values for the adversary. In some formats, these are represented with the following icons:

Damage Soak Defence

Fortune Dice: Some characteristics are followed by white fortune dice. These dice are added to checks based on that characteristic.

Attributes. The A/C/E listing is an abbreviation for the entry's Aggression, Cunning, and Expertise, which provide a budget of dice the GM can use to customise encounters.

Wounds. Once a standard creature has suffering this many wounds, he is defeated. A henchman can only withstand wounds equal to its Toughness rating.

Stance. This abbreviation indicates how many characteristic dice from the creature's dice pool are converted into stance dice before making a check.

Nemesis NPCs

On the opposite end of the spectrum of NPCs from where henchmen sit are a special breed of adversary. Some of the characters the adventurers will face over the course of a campaign are every bit as detailed and developed as the PCs are—with their own distinct personality traits, abilities, resources, motives, and goals. When one of these fully fleshed out and developed NPCs is actively working against the PCs, it can really complicate the heroes' lives. A major NPC adversary that opposes the player characters is referred to as a Nemesis.

I Name Thee Nemesis

In broad terms, a Nemesis is a cut above the rank and file villains or "bad guys" the PCs generally face. A Nemesis may be the veteran warlord leading a host of enemy warriors in a bloody conflict to overtake a region. Or the cunning, unscrupulous politician manipulating and scheming from the Elector's council. The crazed doomsayer whipping the masses into a frenzy of anarchy and revolution could also be a Nemesis.

Regardless of how Nemesis NPCs manifest in your campaign, they provide a number of interesting options to a GM to help customise and craft a story that can challenge both a party's abilities and beliefs, as well as provide a tangible element—a distinct, evocative personality—to weave into the plot.

Nemesis NPC Abilities

A Nemesis character stands out from other types of NPCs. There are a few special rules that apply to Nemesis NPCs.

Stance Meter

In addition to any other abilities they may have, each Nemesis has his own stance meter, allowing him to adjust and react to situations like a player characters.

Stress & Fatigue

Rather than stress and fatigue being converted directly into wounds like they are for standard NPCs or henchmen, a Nemesis suffers stress and fatigue, and thus can become distressed and fatigued, just like a player character.

Additional Resources

To help flesh a Nemesis out even more, a GM may wish to consider giving him a few distinct talents and action cards that help reinforce the Nemesis NPC's role and purpose. The GM can also adjust his Aggression, Cunning, and Expertise ratings to reflect a more seasoned, well-rounded, or experienced Nemesis.

Types of Nemesis NPCs

There are a lot of different ways to use Nemesis NPCs. A Nemesis can serve as the key adversary behind complex schemes, the obvious enemy that must be overcome to thwart impending doom, or the unassuming ally that turns on the player character's when the situation grows most dire.

When developing a Nemesis, the GM should consider his motives, goals, and how and why he opposes the heroes. Does the Nemesis know who the PCs are? Is he working against them personally, or do his purposes simply run counter to the goals of the party?

Here are just a few examples of how a Nemesis could be featured in a campaign.

The Fallen Ally: Perhaps the most dangerous Nemesis is one who was once a friend. The Fallen Ally used to work with the PCs, but due to tragic events, betrayal, or corruption he now opposes them. The Fallen Ally may know the PCs well and use that knowledge against them.

The Gloryhound: Misguided by a lust for glory, prestige, and fame, the Gloryhound opposes the PCs not directly out of avarice, but out of vanity, pride, and perhaps a little madness and corruption. Pride goeth before a fall, and even a relatively "pure" Gloryhound may soon become an unwitting agent of evil.

The Heretic: This vile heretic or apostate is gaining popularity, preying on the weak-willed, whipping up religious fervour, and looking to supplant the powers of an established cult. He may be a hero to the common people who feel oppressed by an existing religion, but he is an enemy to public order.

The Mastermind: The Mastermind lurks in the shadows, pulling strings, manipulating politics, and using blackmail and minions to achieve his goals. He's a smart, clever opponent, always one step ahead, and has contingency plans for everything. Rather than directly influence events, he has his minions do his dirty work for him.

The Warlord: Whether a fearsome rebel leader or the chieftain of a violent marauder tribe, the Warlord is a ruthless and cunning battlefield commander who has the unquestioning support of his warriors. The Warlord is likely to be imposing and dangerous in his own right.

Chapter Seven

Corruption Rules

This chapter introduces the rules covering the accumulation of corruption, the risks posed by having too much corruption, and mutations. The GM should become familiar with these rules before bringing them into play, and may wish to share some of this information with his players the first time they are exposed to a corrupting influence, or if their characters conduct research or investigate corruption, mutation, or Chaos in more detail during the game.

These rules were first introduced in *Winds of Magic*. For the cards, components and more information on corruption and mutation, *Winds of Magic* is recommended.

Show Some Mercy!

As you will no doubt soon realise, developing mutations is very bad for a character's well being! Becoming a mutant is effectively a death sentence in the Empire unless a character goes to great length to disguise his deformities. Even lucky and careful mutant characters will effectively cease to be functioning members of society.

With such great risks at stake, GMs are advised to use these rules sparingly and to make sure that their players are forewarned as to the dangers of touching warpstone and other artefacts carried by the followers of Chaos. After all, every child raised in the Empire is told numerous cautionary tales against such foolhardy behaviour.

Bear in mind that, whilst PCs might be reckless enough to ignore lessons they should have learned on their mother's knee, NPCs are not likely to allow PCs to endanger them or their families.

For example, should a party of PCs enter a village whilst openly bearing shards of warpstone or some hideously profane artefact trailing wisps of tainted energy, they will cause panic. Most Empire folk simply assume that those who carry Chaos artefacts are worshippers of the dark gods, and they will take appropriate measures to eliminate them.

Corruption in Play

Corruption is one way to track a character's exposure to the unpredictable effects of Chaos. Characters can suffer from corruption in a number of ways. It can attract misfortune, cause madness, or lead to the most overt sign of corruption—mutation.

When a character is exposed to a corrupting influence he potentially accumulates corruption. Corruption is represented by purple diamond-shaped tokens. These tokens are gained and kept in a similar way to stress or fatigue counters, and should remain visible to the players and GM. They come in 1 and 5 point denominations for easier tracking.

Corrupting Influences

A variety of different encounters or events may trigger the accumulation of corruption. The magnitude of the event indicates how difficult it is to shrug off the effects, as well as the potential amount of corruption that may be generated. The following levels of exposure indicate the inherent risk when first coming into contact with the triggering event.

Subsequent exposure to the same trigger may have the same magnitude and risk, or the GM may choose to lower the difficulty if the character succeeded particularly well during previous exposure.

In each instance, a failed check results in corruption equal to the challenge level. Regardless of the check's success or failure, the character also suffers one corruption for each Chaos Star generated during the check.

For example, failing an **Average (2d) Resilience check** after minor exposure to a corrupting influence results in two corruption. Succeeding at a **Hard (3d) Resilience check** while generating one Chaos Star when exposed to a moderate corrupting influence results in one corruption.

Finally, some creatures may have attacks or special abilities which inflict corruption, in addition to other effects. In these situations, the amount of corruption gained will be listed with the ability.

Minor Exposure: Average (2d) Resilience check

This level of exposure includes low grade or minimum exposure to a corrupting influence. Could also be used to represent exposure over time to an otherwise trivial corrupting influence.

Examples could include:

- Prolonged exposure to skaven, beastmen, or Chaos cult paraphernalia or locations
- First hand witness to daemonic activities or rites
- Contact with a traveller of the Chaos Wastes
- Brief exposure to a small warpstone chunk

Moderate Exposure: Hard (3d) Resilience check

Moderate exposure reflects a more pronounced single event or circumstance, or more prolonged exposure to a corrupting influence. Could also be used to represent exposure over time to an otherwise minor corrupting influence.

Examples could include:

- Prolonged exposure to a Chaos Warrior, daemonic cult, or tainted paraphernalia or locations
- Contact with a cursed weapon, profane artefact, or daemonic entity
- Exposure to a large amount of warpstone

Major Exposure: Daunting (4d) Resilience check

This represents high grade or more prolonged exposure to a corrupting influence. Could also be used to represent exposure over time to an otherwise moderate corrupting influence.

Examples could include:

- Wounded by a cursed weapon, profane artefact, or daemonic entity
- Exposure to the savage Chaos Wastes and its environs
- Consumption of warpstone powder
- Direct exposure to a large amount of warpstone, or using warpstone to fuel spells

Corruption Thresholds

The different races of the Old World have varying tolerance to the corrupting effects of Chaos. From the viewpoint of dwarfs and elves, humans tend to be frail and easily susceptible to the ravages of Chaos. This perception is partly due to the fact that dwarfs and elves enjoy an incredibly high tolerance to Chaos, and are not affected by mutation the way humans are.

An individual character's corruption threshold is based on his race and his Toughness rating.

- **Human:** 5 + Toughness
- **Dwarf:** 10 + Toughness
- **High Elf:** 10 + Toughness
- **Wood Elf:** 10 + Toughness

These thresholds apply to all members of that type of race. So all humans, whether from the Reikland, Nordland, or Talabheim, have the same corruption threshold.

The Effects of Corruption

There are two main effects of corruption—generally referred to as manifestation and mutation. The first effect, manifestation is a relatively minor effect, that of inviting danger and adversity. This effect can be triggered by the GM at any time to make a check more challenging for a character with corruption.

The second effect, mutation, is triggered when the number of corruption points a character has exceeds the character's corruption threshold. Such a condition is very dangerous for a character as they will develop insanity or mutation as a result.

GM Invocation

Over the course of play, the GM has the option to "manifest" or "invoke" a character's corruption, weaving into the story that the exposure to corruption or taint is rearing its head. The GM narrates how the corruption is manifesting, which makes the upcoming task more challenging. The corruption might manifest as an overwhelming sense of temptation, painful cramps, or whispered daemonic voices only the character can hear.

Mechanically speaking, before a player performs an action, the GM may take one of the character's corruption points and replace it with a purple challenge die that gets added to the task's dice pool. The corruption token is returned to the general supply. No more than one corruption may be invoked in this manner per check.

Mutation & Insanity

Once a PC has accumulated more corruption points than his character's corruption threshold (based on the character's Race and Toughness), the corruption has ravaged the character's body and mind and manifests as a mutation (for humans) or insanity (for elves, dwarfs, and other races).

Mutation

For humans and other susceptible races, when the corruption threshold is passed, the player draws a mutation card from the deck *(See Table A-4 Mutation in Appendix, page 162)*. In addition to its other effects and rules, each mutation card has a severity rating, which indicates how much corruption is consumed in the transformation. For example, if the PC suffers from a mutation with a severity 4 rating, he returns 4 corruption point tokens to the supply when he draws that card.

If, after a mutation, the character is still above his corruption threshold, another mutation card is drawn, the process being repeated until the PC has corruption points equal to or less than his corruption threshold.

Insanity

Dwarfs and elves (as well as a few other notable races like halflings) are notoriously resistant to the ravages of corruption. Not only do these races have a significantly higher threshold than humans before succumbing to corruption, they are not afflicted by physical mutations.

Rather, when a member of one of these races accumulates corruption greater than his threshold, he gains an insanity. He draws an insanity card from the deck, until he has acquired an insanity with the *Supernatural* or *Chaos* trait, or an eligible trait based on his race—such as an insanity card with the *Dwarf* trait being drawn by a dwarf character *(Table A-2 Insanity in Appendix, page 158)*.

In addition to its other effects and rules, each insanity card has a severity rating, which indicates how much corruption is consumed in the transformation. For example, if an elf PC suffers from an insanity with a severity 3 rating over the course of this process, he returns 3 corruption points to the supply when he draws that card.

Mutation Cards

Name. The name of the mutation, providing some flavour and context for the impairment listed.

Traits. Each mutation card has one or more traits. These may be compared to the triggering effect to see what sort of mutation occurs.

Effect. The mutation's game effect is listed here.

Flavour Text. The description helps add context and additional information about the mutation.

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

Severity Rating. This number indicates how severe the mutation is. The higher this number, the more corruption the mutation consumes as it manifests.

If, after acquiring an insanity in this manner, the character is still above his corruption threshold, another insanity card is drawn, the process being repeated until the PC has corruption points equal to or less than his threshold.

Amassing Mutation

The human body can only withstand so much corruption and Chaos energy before it loses all semblance to its former self and devolves into a hideous monstrosity, known as a Chaos Spawn. These horrible mutations also wreak havoc on the mind, eroding an individual's sense of self and ability to function.

Falling to Chaos

If a character accumulates more mutations than his Toughness rating, he is immediately transformed into a Chaos Spawn (see *Creatures of the Old World* for details).

Those unfortunate enough to witness the transformation may wish to seek cover, before their former ally attempts to rip them apart with an amorphous, multi-hued pseudopod. The horrific transformation causes Terror 2.

After transforming into a Chaos Spawn, the character is no longer suitable for a player to run, and a replacement character should be considered. From this point on the character becomes an NPC and the GM decides what becomes of him.

The Chaos Spawn may disappear, heading towards the Chaos Wastes, he might run wild in an orgy of bloodshed, or may follow the characters for a while at a distance, bonded to them by foggy memories of companionship.

If a character accumulates more mutations than his Willpower rating (and has not yet devolved into a gibbering Chaos Spawn), he immediately gains a permanent insanity for each mutation greater than his Willpower. For example, a PC with Willpower 3 would immediately gain a permanent insanity once he gains his fourth mutation, and another permanent insanity if he gains a fifth mutation.

Losing Corruption

Once corruption has been gained, the two most common ways to lower the character's corruption are the two methods described earlier—the GM invoking the corruption to influence a task, or the corruption fueling a mutation.

However, the GM should also consider other means by which a character may be able to remove corruption. These alternate means should be significant stories, perhaps the central theme or motivation behind a series of adventures, or the ultimate reward for a dramatic and exciting campaign. Here are just a few suggestions.

- Completing an important holy quest to eradicate a corrupted zealot and his throng of followers, at the behest of the Cult of Sigmar
- Receiving a blessing from the High Priestesses of the Cult of Shallya for stopping a grand plot by a group of Nurgle Cultists
- Successfully surviving a harrowing, convoluted experiment for the Colleges of Magic that sought to unravel the very nature of corruption
- Destroying a powerful profane relic or artefact, purging a dangerous source of corruption from the Old World
- Cleansing an important wood elf forest glade of a tainted beastmen herdstone and the mutant Wargor and his followers who gather there
- Recovering an ancient elven artefact with curious healing properties from a mysterious temple hidden deep in the Reikwald Forest, and returning it to a High Elf Ambassador in Marienburg

Even with these suggestions in mind, it is strongly encouraged that the GM not allow corruption to simply heal over time or through rest. Corruption and the taint of Chaos are serious risks and afflictions in the Warhammer Fantasy setting.

Woe is he who bears the mark of Chaos. For he is already dead, though his mind may not yet know it.

–Canticle Six, from Litany of the Damned

Marks of Chaos

In addition to gaining corruption points and eventually acquiring mutations or insanities as a result, there is another way a character may be touched by Chaos—he may bear a Mark of Chaos.

A Mark of Chaos is a sign of favour from one of the Ruinous Powers, often bestowed upon a loyal subject. It is a brand connecting the person to his foul deity, and an outward sign of his devotion. Marks of Chaos can come in many different shapes, styles, or designs, but are clearly associated with their Ruinous Power and often the actual symbol of that god. Here are just a few examples.

- A Mark of Tzeentch may manifest as a pulsing blue Chaos Star, a raven tattoo that appears to be flying across the subject's skin, or a sinuous, writhing flame emblazoned on the subject's back.
- A Mark of Nurgle may be a distended boil oozing foetid pus, an open sore weeping a stream of maggots, or a pox-marked patch of vaguely green-tinted skin that constantly sheds and peels.
- A Mark of Khorne may change the marked person's eyes to deep, blood red, it may manifest as a dark red battle scar still wet with crimson blood, or a skull-shaped knob or deformity on the marked one's flesh.
- A Mark of Slaanesh may be a subtle, intoxicating scent of musk lingering to the person, a slightly dreamy, purplish tinge to the marked one's lips, eyes, and hair, or the growth of additional nipples.

Followers of the same Ruinous Power have an uncanny intuition, allowing them to sense when someone bearing their deity's Mark of Chaos is nearby. Bearers of a Mark of Chaos usually go to great lengths to hide it from non-believers, as recognition of such a sign is a death sentence, sure to draw the attention of Witch Hunters, angry mobs, or worse.

The Mark of Tzeentch

Assigning a Chaos Mark to an NPC is a new option GM can use to distinguish or tailor encounters to suit the story or challenge his players. The leader of a powerful cult, or an NPC who has been lured to Tzeentch's service by the promise of knowledge or power may be so marked by the Changer of Ways.

The Mark of Tzeentch has two different passive effects. First, a character targeting someone bearing the Mark of Tzeentch with an action suffers 1 stress if they generate one or more ✲ in his check, in addition to any other effects the Chaos Stars may impose.

Second, a character bearing the Mark of Tzeentch is imbued with arcane abilities. He can acquire and cast spells with the *Tzeentch* trait, and automatically acquires the Channelling and Spellcraft skills, as well as the Channel Power action, powering his spells like a wizard does. If the character so marked already has Channelling or Spellcraft acquired or trained, he gains an additional expertise die to all related checks.

The GM may wish to detail other effects, possibly positive or negative, for a Chaos Mark, as well. For example, a character bearing a Chaos Mark may suffer difficulties when forced to interact with people who are not affiliated with his chosen Ruinous Power, as he struggles to keep his mark and devotion a secret—for if the secret were to be revealed, the Witch Hunters would burn him at the stake.

The exact nature and magnitude of these additional effects are left up to the GM.

Chapter Eight
Disease Rules

These rules were first introduced in *Signs of Faith*. For the cards, components and more information on disease, *Signs of Faith* is recommended.

There are any number of minor ailments and diseases that infect the Old World. These can apply to the everyday life of a character: a common cold, a heavy cough, a spot of the flu, minor fever, lice and worms, sores, ulcers, rashes, and boils. The list goes on. This is the sort of thing that the average citizen of the Empire suffers almost daily, and they just get on with it. It's a fact of life. The Old World isn't a very hygienic or healthy place. The GM can make it clear to his players that this is the sort of world their characters live in, or he can gloss over it. He might give out the occasional misfortune die to reflect the odd minor ailment affecting the characters, as the story dictates.

Those are not the diseases discussed here. The afflictions represented by a disease card and those presented here are all potentially fatal. They are the worst kinds of pestilence that a character could be unlucky enough to contract. They can have a big effect on game play and with a bit of bad luck or neglect can lead to death. They are not to be trifled with. The GM should know that if he brings these diseases into the game that they can have a marked effect on play and even change the focus of a campaign. Finding a cure will often become a clear priority for afflicted characters.

Having said that, these are often colourful maladies that can be entertaining to have in play, to suffer from, and to hopefully overcome. If the characters take the right steps and are not too unlucky, they should recover from their afflictions and survive little worse for wear. Part of the fun should come in balancing the need for rest and recuperation with the needs of the game.

Without other pressing matters to attend to, most characters could just take a few weeks off from adventuring, consult physicians and priests, and possibly make a full recovery. If a character has a time critical mission, or is already in the midst of adventure and struggles when the disease strikes, he may need to stay in the thick of things. This is when diseases can be at their most challenging—and most deadly!

Players should know that if their characters are diseased when they continue to adventure, pushing themselves and putting their PCs' bodies through rigorous trials, then the diseases are more likely to get worse, and that is when fatality is most likely.

Disease Ratings

A disease check is required whenever a character encounters a situation described as **Disease X**, where X reflects the virulence of the disease or the risk of the exposure. Disease checks are **Resilience (To) checks** with a difficulty equal to the disease rating. So a **Disease 2 check** requires an **Average (2d) Resilience check**.

Like any other check, the GM should feel free to modify the Disease rating of any source of disease based on the nature of the exposure, or to add fortune or misfortune dice to the pool to reflect various favourable or unfavourable circumstances.

Here are some sample conditions that could warrant increased challenge ♦ or a higher disease rating:

- Unusually close or near-constant exposure to the disease.
- Exposure of infected material to open wounds, mouth, or eyes.
- Ingesting infected food or drink.

Sample conditions that could warrant ■ misfortune:

- Already suffering from a minor ailment.
- Fairly close or prolonged exposure to the disease (but less severe than above).
- Inadequate preparations or precautions, or over-reliance on ineffective precautions.

Sample conditions that could warrant □ fortune

- Survived the disease in question previously.
- Unusually brief exposure.
- Extraordinary (and effective!) precautions and preparations.

The Elder Races

Dwarfs are notoriously resilient and hearty, and elves are extremely long-lived. Members of these races gain □□ to all Disease checks.

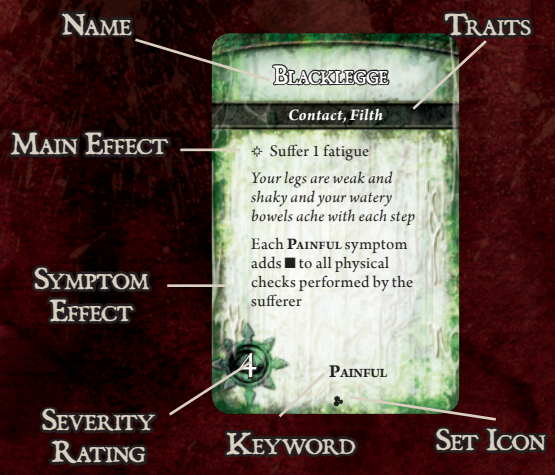
Catching a Disease

If the character fails a disease check, he catches a disease—the player draws a card from the disease deck *(See Table A-5 Diseases in Appendix, page 164)*. This is called the **active disease**. If he fails and also generates ☼ during the Disease check, he adds an extra symptom to that disease—an additional card is drawn and placed under the disease to indicate that it is a symptom of the original disease. Each symptom associated with the active disease is referred to as an **active symptom**.

A character with a disease suffers from the symptoms and effects described on his disease cards. These penalties apply to every relevant check. Some are effect lines (usually associated with a ☼ result) that the GM can choose to invoke during skill checks.

When afflicted with a disease, the disease card is socketed into a talent slot on the character's career sheet. Which talent socket it consumes is up to the character's player. This is another inconvenience of suffering from disease and reflects how the disease inhibits the activities and concentration of a character. To reclaim the talent slot, the character needs to fully recover from the disease.

Disease Cards



Name. The name of the disease, providing some flavour and context for the ailment shown.

Traits. Each disease card has one or more traits. These may be compared to the triggering effect to see what sort of disease is gained.

Main Effect. When this card is the underlying disease afflicting the character, this effect is always in play.

Symptom Effect. The gameplay effect of the card's symptom, which is always active, whether the card is the active disease or a symptom in the stack.

Severity Rating. This number indicates how severe the disease or symptom is. The higher the number, the more difficult it is to treat or cure.

Keyword. This keyword is always visible and refers to the symptom effect explained on the body of the card.

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

Stacks

It is possible to suffer from more than one disease at a time. However, if a character is exposed to disease-inducing conditions while already suffering from a disease and fails the Disease check, the GM should decide whether the PC will be subjected to a new disease or risk having another symptom added to his current disease. Further, if a PC generates one or more ☼ during a recovery check when trying to shake off his illness, his current disease may worsen, adding a new symptom to the active disease.

Example of Disease in Play

Birgitta the Roadwarden contracts a disease after traipsing about in the sewers—she failed a **Disease 2 check** set by the GM for the filthy conditions, so now she acquires a disease card. Due to the conditions, the GM deems a disease with the *Filth* trait will be most appropriate. Birgitta draws Blacklegge, a **Painful** disease.

A disease takes up a talent slot, so Birgitta has to choose one of her Roadwarden slots to affect. The player grimaces and attaches the disease to a Tactics slot. While afflicted with the disease, Birgitta cannot use that Tactics slot.

Alas, Birgitta's day is about to get much worse! Later she encounters a swarm of nurglings and a plague bearer, and is exposed to further risks. This time, the GM asks for a **Disease 3 check** to resist the tainted conditions, and Birgitta fails. The player draws a new disease card. Rather than being subjected to a separate, second disease, the new card is placed below Blacklegge, so only the bottom of the card is displayed—a new symptom has manifested!

The top portion of the symptom card stacked below Blacklegge is irrelevant. Only the severity rating and symptom are in effect. However, the severity ratings are adding up—Birgitta is currently suffering seven total severity from her disease. If it exceeds her wound threshold, Birgitta will succumb to the disease and die!

Further,the main effect of the Active Disease all its symptoms are cumulative. Her case of Blacklegge is getting worse—it's now **Tiring** as well as **Painful**! The rules for this new symptom are on the card itself for easy reference.

When recovering or being treated, the individual symptoms must be treated before the active disease itself can be cured. In this case, the **Tiring** symptom needs to be addressed, which has a Severity of 3. Once all the additional symptoms have been dealt with, the active disease itself can be treated.

Acquiring Additional Symptoms

When a character acquires a new symptom, he draws a disease card and places it under his active disease card so only the symptom keyword and severity rating on the bottom of the card are showing. None of the effects on the new card apply *except* the symptom and the severity rating. A stack of disease cards (the active disease and all its related active symptoms) is considered a single disease.

For example, a character suffering from Yellow Skull Fever wades through the sewers. The GM decides this requires a **Disease 2 check**. Instead of spawning a new disease, the GM decides that failure will make the Yellow Skull Fever worse. The character happens to draw a card with the **Tiring** symptom. So now, not only is the fever making him delirious, it is also making him tired. The character might want to consider leaving the sewer and spending a few days in the nearest Shallyan hospice.

If a character ever gets more than one card for a specific disease, they are stacked as shown in the Disease in Play example. The top card of a stack shows the active disease and its specific effect, but all the cards in the stack contribute active symptoms. **Symptoms from all the cards in the stack are cumulative!**

Infecting the Party

If a PC gets a disease then it's quite possible it will spread to others in the party. The rest of the party should make occasional Disease 1 checks even if they are only getting within close range of him. If they do contract a disease then it should be the same one. The party should share the disease card to reference its Specific Disease Effect and its symptom.

But because diseases affect everyone slightly differently, any other symptoms the various PCs collect under that disease will be accrued individually. Each player keeps his own stack of symptoms and will therefore suffer different penalties. Party members with the same disease will not spread that disease to each other continuously, and therefore they will not have to keep making disease checks. Similarly, if one party member recovers from a disease or is cured of it, he will not have to face disease checks for interacting with members of his party who still have it.

Disease Traits

A disease can be selected randomly from the deck of disease cards or a particular disease can be chosen by the GM if that makes sense in the situation. Alternatively, the GM may wish to draw a disease at random from the disease deck cards and use the traits on the cards to help match the disease to its source. The disease traits give an indication of what sort of circumstances a disease can be caught in. They are not hard and fast rules, but simply guidelines to help the GM choose diseases appropriate to the situation.

These traits are not intended to be scientific, but more to reflect the confused and largely speculative thinking about disease prevalent in the Old World. Of course, many situations will be a combination of more than one of the traits detailed below.

Wound

These are diseases that often infect cuts and open wounds, ones that get into the body through broken skin, or pass through blood. If a character receives two or more critical wounds in the same combat, it may warrant a Disease 2 check to see if he acquires a disease with the *Wound* trait.

Contact

Diseases with the *Contact* trait are often passed along by close physical contact with another sufferer or with some sort of contagion. Just talking to the character could require a Disease 1 check, fighting him or getting into close contact could bring a Disease 2 check. In general, engaging with someone with such an ailment should provoke a Disease 1 check.

Coming across monsters with the special disease abilities will most likely lead to catching diseases with the *Contact* trait. Of course, if the GM has in mind the particular disease they were suffering from, then that will be the disease the character catches.

Filth

The Old World is a dirty place, especially the urban centres. There is no telling what you can pick up just by walking around the streets of Altdorf. When a character gets into a particularly filthy situation, he might have to make a disease check. The filthier it is, the more difficult the check will be.

The GM can consider that a poor man will be more used to *Filth* than a rich one, and one from an urban background will be more used to the sort of filth the city throws up as one from a rural background will be more used to the filth of the countryside. Being out of his element might give a character a greater chance of catching a disease.

Ingestion

Some diseases are introduced to the body directly through the mouth, such as eating contaminated food or drink. These diseases include grim parasitical afflictions. If a character eats tainted, mouldy, or poorly prepared food, there is a chance it could lead to a disease. Just a bit of green ham sandwich at a seedy tavern might call for a Disease 1 check, but eating diseased meat, deliberately spoiled food, or drinking infected water would increase the disease rating significantly.

Miasma

Some scholars of the Old World have adopted the theory that disease is spread in more unfathomable ways than merely touching or the will of the gods. Some think diseases can be carried by ill smells or diseased vapours. If a character is ever in an area where disease is rife then they might catch the disease through its *Miasma*. Simply passing through a town where there is an epidemic might call for a Disease 1 check. Staying around longer and chatting to the inhabitants will soon raise this.

Undead

The undead of the Old World, especially ghouls and zombies, can carry all sorts of diseases. Some diseases are specific to undead creatures and have the *Undead* trait. Simply spending time exploring a tomb of the undead might warrant a Disease 1 check. Longer interactions with the walking dead might bring higher difficulty checks.

Nurgle

There is no explicit trait for Nurgle. As the father of all diseases, the spreader of goodwill, and the fickle purveyor of finest distempers, *every disease implicitly has the Nurgle trait*. Any interaction with the servants of Nurgle should probably warrant at least a Disease 1 check. Closer interaction doesn't bear thinking about.

Disease Checks & Recovery Checks

The two types of check associated with disease are disease checks and recovery checks. They are quite different. The disease check is made whenever a character comes across a situation where he risks contracting a disease. This is generally represented with a Disease X rating, where X reflects the virulence of the disease or the risk of the exposure. When a disease check is failed, the character picks up a new disease or new symptom.

A separate recovery check for disease is made every night that someone is suffering from a disease or whenever the character is undergoing an attempted cure.

Regular Recovery Checks

With every night's rest, the sufferer attempts a recovery check to see if he can shake off the disease or one of its symptoms. This is an **Average (2d) Resilience check** if the chararacter is suffering from only one disease, or a **Hard (3d) Resilience check** if the character is suffering from more than one disease. Add one ■ to the check for each additional symptom the character is suffering from.

If the character is being tended to by a character with Medicine trained, add ☐ for each rank of training. If he has spent time recuperating in a safe, clean location, or if he has been taking appropriate remedies, the GM should allow the player ☐ or ☐☐ to this check, based on the quality of the resources and conditions. However, if he has been particularly active during the time and put his body through strenuous activity or he has been in places where disease lurks, one or more ■ are added to the check instead.

Successful Recovery

If the character generates a number of successes equal to the severity rating of one of the symptoms, he can recover from that symptom. If only the main disease card itself is afflicting the character, then the disease itself is cured. The card is removed from the talent socket and the target is no longer suffering from the disease. If there are several eligible symptoms to remove, the player may choose which one to lose, provided the top card on the stack, the card that names the disease, is always the last one to be cured.

Failed Recovery

If the character passes the check but does not generate enough successes to cure one of the symptoms, then he keeps the disease and all the symptoms he currently has. If he fails the recovery check and, also generates one or more ☼ with the check, he must draw a new symptom from the disease deck.

Severity and Death

The diseases represented by disease cards are all potentially fatal. If the character picks up enough symptoms, it will eventually lead to his death. To determine whether the disease is fatal, take the combined severity ratings of each disease and all its related symptoms. If this total severity ratings in a single disease stack is greater than the character's wound threshold, he succumbs to the ravages of the disease and dies.

Treatment Recovery Checks

If the diseased character undergoes a complete treatment appropriate to the disease prescribed by a character with the Medicine skill, the character is eligible for a bonus Recovery check. Every level of Medicine training the tending character has adds ☐ to the pool. In addition, the treatment may also bring extra dice or modifiers depending on the cure. One treatment may be attempted per character per disease.

If the roll does not generate enough levels of success but does generate one or more ☼ then the GM can interpret that according to the cure attempted. It may be a new symptom is added to the disease stack. It may be that the cure was so severe or traumatic or poisonous that the unfortunate character must suffer some other penalty; he may even take a critical wound. Or perhaps the tending character has contracted the disease himself.

Divine Aid

Some powerful Shallyan blessings may be able to cure symptoms or even entire diseases outright, as noted on the action cards for those blessings. In general, these powerful miracles are beyond the resources available to most Shallyan priests. Some sufferers from disease make pilgrimages to holy sites or famous shrines to Shallya in search of a divine cure, in violation of any quarantine procedures that might be in place. These well-meaning and desperate unfortunates often, as a consequence, spread their disease far across the Empire, but those that survive long enough to reach these holy places usually receive excellent care.

Unless the situation warrants additional attention or intervention, the GM may wish to enforce a rule that only allows a given blessing to make one attempt to cure a single disease or symptom.

Other Medicine

There may be tonics and medications that do not actually cure the disease but suppress its symptoms and allow the character to behave more normally. If the character has had a correct dose of one of these, then he can be free of the effects of the symptom for a whole day. He should place a tracking token over the symptom or turn it face down to remind him. Some examples of possible medicines and folk remedies are described starting on page 63.

Roleplaying Disease

The players and GM should take their cue from the system effects of a disease and its description to imagine how that affects their characters during play. Suffering from disease and the reaction of others is fertile ground for roleplaying. The GM can assign all sorts of fortune and misfortune when dealing with diseased characters, and the plot can go off in unexpected ways.

Perhaps the sufferer has to keep going to the bathroom, needs to sit down and rest often, or is distracted by his ailment and becomes forgetful or aloof. It could be that he slips into melancholy or faces up to his predicament with stoicism. Maybe he immediately takes to his bed and doesn't get up again until better or he immediately seeks out a cure. He might throw money at anyone even offering the vaguest hope of one. He may consult learned experts from the Temple of Verena or the local fortune teller from the village square. Or he might simply trust to his gods.

Is the character genuinely afraid he might die or does he shrug it off knowing that he's just not the sort of person who will succumb? Does everyone avoid the character, or do his friends stay by him to nurse him through his illness? Do the city guards turn him back at the gate, or do they escort him directly to the Shallyan hospice? Might the character receive generous donations from others, or will he be ostracised, beaten, or even arrested?

The Mark of Nurgle

The Mark of Nurgle is a mark upon the body of a servant of that Dark God which signifies his allegiance and bestows upon him special powers.

✚ The first effect is that any time someone engaged with a marked servant attacks him and rolls a Chaos Star ✲ he must make a Disease 2 check or contract a disease. This is in addition to any other effect that the Chaos Star ✲ may incur.

✚ The second effect is that during his End of Turn Phase a marked servant of Nurgle may remove one normal wound card from his character.

✚ The final effect of the Mark of Nurgle is that the bearer is immune to the penalties and modifiers from any diseases or symptoms he carries.

The mark may also cause difficulties for the servant of Nurgle. For example, it may smell particularly disgusting and need to be hidden with perfume. It may be a conspicuous and unsightly boil or rash which may bring misfortune to Fellowship checks. It could also be recognisable to Chaotic rivals.

Specific Disease Effects

Each disease has a specific effect unique to that disease. In addition, each disease card has a symptom. A disease stack only utilises one specific disease effect, shown at the top of the card. But every symptom in the stack affects the unfortunate sufferer. All symptoms are cumulative, so a character with 2 Tiring symptoms in his stack will never suffer less than 2 fatigue. Most symptoms are self-explanatory and noted in detail on the relevant disease cards. The symptoms noted below warrant further explanation.

Virulent

Virulent diseases ravage the body. They are particularly at home in the character suffering from it, and make all other symptoms worse.

A Virulent disease does not have any effect on its own. But when other symptoms are in the stack it can be quite debilitating—it mimics the effects of every other symptom that is currently affecting the character. For example, if Virulent, Tiring and Fever are all in one disease stack, then the victim effectively suffers from 2 Tiring and 2 Fever. If he has 2 Tiring, then he effectively suffers from 4 Tiring.

Infectious

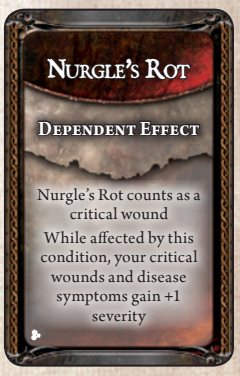
Infectious diseases are particularly contagious for some reason; it could be the character cannot stop sneezing, drips diseased pus, or loses control of his bowels. The Infectious symptom reflects the idea that the character has a very contagious problem and his party will naturally not want to catch it, or the symptoms make it more difficult for the group to work effectively. To reflect this, one of the talent slots on the party sheet is not available to the group, representing how their cooperation and team dynamic is affected. The party should put a token on the talent slot to show it is unavailable.

If the party is suffering from more Infectious symptoms than the number of talent slots on its party sheet, none of the party sheet's talent slots are available until fewer Infectious symptoms remain than talent slots.

Lethal

Sometimes a disease hits harder and is slower to shake off and even more likely to cause death. When a disease is lethal the severity rating of each *other* card in the stack—disease or symptom—is always counted as one higher than listed. The card with the lethal keyword is *not* affected by its own ability. This increased severity also applies when determining fatality (see Severity and Death on page 61), as well as affects the number of successes required to recover from or cure each symptom.

Nurgle's Rot



Nurgle's Rot is a special condition that applies to diseases. It is a favour granted by the Dark God. It cannot be contracted normally, using the disease rules, but is granted by Nurgle himself. A character with Nurgle's Rot is likely doomed to accumulate many diseases. His suffering reaches such heights that he no longer feels pain, his body so wracked it seems like vigour, and his mood so despairing that it may seem like joy. Eventually the sufferer's body crumbles under the strain of the manifold diseases it cultivates. When this happens, his soul is born anew in the Realm of Chaos as a plaguebearer—one of Nurgle's precious daemons—a form well suited to furthering his new master's plans.

Nurgle's Rot can cause the victim's flesh to turn a shade of green and bloat and it often becomes covered in pus-filled buboes. His hair and teeth fall out and phlegm drips from his limp mouth. A foetid stench rises from his sore-covered body. Pieces of flesh rot and fall off and swollen cankers take their place.

Such an unfortnate victim's function seems to be to travel the land bestowing Father Nurgle's great gifts on everyone he meets and glorying in his pathetic condition. A character with Nurgle's Rot triggers a Disease 2 check within close range or a Disease 3 check when engaged.

Although the victim appears to be irredeemably ill, he is actually quite hale. A victim of Nurgle's Rot does not suffer any of the specific disease effects or symptom penalties from the diseases he carries. He simply suffers ■ to Fellowship tests for each disease or symptom card he has. Every week, a victim of Nurgle's Rot picks one more random symptom and adds it to one of his disease stacks.

If the severity rating of all his diseases reaches more than twice his wound threshold then the character is reborn as a plaguebearer. That is the only way his suffering will end, for there is no known cure for Nurgle's Rot—not even the blessings of Shallya.

Herbs & Medicines

There are many plants and herbs in the Old World that can be used to help combat the effects of diseases and other ills. Some are straightforward enough to used by anyone. They just need to be known about and recognised.

An **Average (2d) Nature Lore check** suffices to identify the most common ingredients. But some need careful and skilled preparation to make them effective. This is most often in the form of a **Hard (3d) Medicine check** and varies in time required. Some preparations take only an hour or two of work, while other concoctions may need to steep or cure for several days. Fortunately, some already prepared doses can be found and purchased in town shoppes or from village wise folk. If purchased ready made, double the listed cost. The rarity of such prepared remedies is equal to the difficulty rating to prepare the concoction.

Some of the more commonly used remedies are detailed here—but the list is by no means exhaustive. The GM is encouraged to invent his own cure-alls and remedies that reflect the local traditions and beliefs where the PCs are campaigning.

Remedy	Dose	Cost	Preparation
Cococo Tonic	1 bottle	5s	Hard (3d) Medicine
Earth Root	1 root / 4 days	10s	n/a
Faxtoryll	1 smidgeon	20s	Hard (3d) Medicine
Gesundheit	1 handful	2s	Average (2d) Medicine
Graveroot	1 bowl	20s	Daunting (4d) Medicine
Onions	1 onion	1b	n/a
Speckled Rustwort	1 sprig / 6 doses	20s	n/a
Spiderleaf	1 brew	20s	Hard (3d) Nature Lore or Medicine
Valerian	1 cup	1s	Easy (1d) Nature Lore or Medicine

Cococo Tonic

Made from an exotic plant of the New World, this tonic really seems to work and variations of it can be found in many of the herbariums and quack houses of the Empire. One dose of this brown, sweet liquid taken during an illness can be enough to suppress the effects for an entire day.

Effect: While taking cococo tonic, you can ignore the top symptom for each disease you are suffering from. For one day after you stop taking this tonic, all physical checks gain ■.

Earth Root

These thick roots can be found in heavy bramble or deep in the recesses of dark forests. When eaten every day this foul tasting root is an effective cure for Black Plague.

Effect: Four doses allows an extra recovery check against Black Plague during the next night's rest after taking the final dose.

Faxtoryll

Made from the distilled essence of woodland flowers, when correctly prepared, this thick clear liquid can be smeared on wounds to help stop the bleeding. Loses effectiveness after just a few days.

Effect: Add □□ to a recovery check against a disease with the *Wound* trait.

Gesundheit

This remedy is made from a pale green herb found in ancient woodlands. When mashed and smeared onto a wound it helps prevent infection and aids healing.

Effect: When applied with a First Aid or Medicine check, that check gains □□.

Graveroot

Found in graveyards and other places of death, this is a common ingredient in magical concoctions. Graveroot is believed by many to be the only known cure for Tomb Rot.

Effect: If a character eats a specially prepared graveroot soup and makes an **Easy (1d) Toughness check** to keep it down (it tastes disgusting) he gains ■■ to his next recovery check against Tomb Rot (or another *Undead* disease) that same day.

Onions

Among the many properties afforded onions in the Old World is protection from disease. Many folk swear by them, being sure to eat a raw onion every day, the stronger the better. Some say a good onion can protect from undeath, magic, spirits, and just about anything else. They also taste good in stew, but cooking them is said to take away their power.

Effect: It makes your breath smell.

Speckled Rustwort

A rare herb found in remote mountain crannies. When dried and eaten, this flower can act as an effective cure for the Red Pox.

Effect: After six doses, add □□ to recovery checks, and if successful, count one extra ✱ against Fever symptoms.

Spiderleaf

When the thin, spidery fronds of this plant are brewed properly, it creates a cloudy white tea. The tea is then added to a healing draught, giving it a slightly bitter aftertaste.

Effect: Add □ to the effects of the augmented healing draught.

Valerian

A dark green herb found in dense forest, it is dried and brewed to make a pungent tea.

Effect: When drunk before sleep, recover 1 extra wound due to a good night's rest, and □ to the next **Resilience (To) check** the character makes the following day.

Oh, what great Woe is upon us. This, in the Empire's time of greatest need!

What chance does the mighty Empire have against the great evils it now must face? Greenskins vomit forth from its mountains. Beastmen stalk its forests. Marauders and dark elves raid its shores.

And corruption, sweet corruption, rots the fruit from within. And not until the Empire has bitten into the spoilt fruit will it even know its doom is nigh.

What chance does the Empire have? None, for I have done my master's bidding...

Chapter Nine

Faith in the Old World

"When Sigmar wishes to punish us, He answers our prayers"

– Erich Keller, Warrior Priest of Sigmar

The Old World is a dark and cruel place. Disease and deprivation fall on the good and the wicked alike. Evil spirits and powerful daemons prey upon the people's very souls. In the face of this, the inhabitants of the Empire turn to faith and superstition to protect them. The gods offer a sliver of hope in a violent and dangerous world, but that sliver is enough to make men cling to their faith with desperate strength. Only a fool ignores the gods, and only a madman insults them.

The Empire is steeped in religion and superstition. From birth to death, the gods watch over all aspects of life. From dawn to dusk, a man will pray to many gods many times as he goes about his daily life. The gods are everywhere, always watching and judging their flock. Every part of the world comes under the domain of a god and sometimes the domain of smaller, local spirits as well. Then there are the dark gods, their temples hidden, their worship banned, but their force still felt and feared by all.

The gods of the Old World are capricious and whimsical, and few see rhyme or reason in their interactions with mortal life. All hope and pray for miracles and blessings, but know the gods may just as soon send them burdens instead. The gods may even strike a man down in an instant, and as such they are feared as much as they are praised. This is right and proper, for the gods are mighty, and men are small and insignificant by comparison.

There are ten prominent gods citizens of the Empire worship. They are all recognised and treated with respect. Some people may choose one god over the others to be the focus of their worship. A rarer few still will join the cult of one god and become a priest. The priests of each god maintain the countless temples and shrines to their deity that are scattered across the Empire, and guide the common folk in worship.

Those who rise to the high positions of these Imperial Cults tend to the rituals of the faithful, and guide the entire Empire in its worship. No matter their position, priests from the Imperial Cults show respect to all the other gods, however, and expect their followers to do likewise.

The practices and rituals of worship vary greatly across the Empire. In the Reikland, where the faiths are strongly influenced by centralised organisations, there is general uniformity, but in the distant provinces the practices may be very different, possibly changing from village to village. Depictions and stories of the gods themselves may differ.

The Imperial Pantheon

Manann. God of Sailors, Sailing, and the Seas

Morr. God of Dreams and the Dead

Myrmidia. Goddess of Honourable Combat, Martial Virtues, and Soldiers

Ranald. God of Rogues, Tricksters, and Fortune

Rhya. Goddess of Fertility, Farming, and Love

Shallya. Goddess of Healing, Mercy, and Childbearing

Sigmar. God of the Empire and its People, Hammer against its Foes

Taal. God of beasts and wild places

Ulric. God of Battle, Winter, and Wolves

Verena. Goddess of Knowledge, Learning, and Justice

Yet most citizens of the Empire recognise that they all worship the same gods, however they may be worshipped. It is often this united faith in a shared pantheon that binds the Empire together as one people. They may know of foreign gods and faiths beyond the limits of the Empire, but these are simply signs of the ignorance or heathen nature of such unenlightened folk. Some also know of the dark gods and those who worship them, and look to the priests and witch hunters to guard them against such foes.

All the gods are great, but there is one that is loved above all by the people of the Empire – Sigmar. He walked as a man among them, and founded their great Empire. The citizens of the Empire are his chosen people and He watches over them with a greater care than the other, more distant deities.

The worship of Sigmar takes place throughout the Empire, and often his faith is inseparable from the life of the Empire. All of the gods have a degree of worldly power and secular influence, but Sigmar stands for the Empire, and it is not uncommon for his faith and followers to permeate Imperial politics and life. While each god may have warrior priests and devoted knight templars, the wars of the Empire are Sigmar's personal battles. It may be the Emperor and the nobles that declare war, but it is faith in Sigmar that drives the common man to take to the battlefield, and it is the words of Sigmar's pious warrior priests that give him the courage to face the enemy.

Folk Worship

"These humans – they cling to their faith like drowning men to a floating barrel."

– Suriel Lianllach, High Elf Envoy

The faithful of the Empire generally fall into two groups: common citizens, for whom worship is an almost casual activity, and members of the various Cults, for whom faith defines their entire lives.

For the common folk, worship is mostly informal, but religion is ingrained in their lives in countless ways. Every child is told of the gods from birth, and reverence and study of the gods is a sign of good upbringing or scholarship. Following their strictures and rituals is a sign of good manners and civic duty.

Neglect or disregard for the gods might be seen as carelessness or disrespectful. What's more, it can be dangerous: a sailor who forgets to say a prayer to Manann as his ship moves out from the harbour is inviting catastrophe, as is a soldier marching to battle who does not ask Sigmar for strength or Ulric for courage. In both cases, his companions may remind him of his laxity, not wanting to be standing near someone who is so eager to tempt the gods to punish him.

The line between faith and superstition is blurred for most common folk. Some rituals and observances are so old or ingrained that the people who practise them may have forgotten their religious meaning, performing them more out of habit or to avoid bad luck than any faithful devotion. Others offer sacrifices or donations more for social reasons than religious ones – it is good for business for a merchant to be seen donating wealth to the Temple of Shallya or other worthy causes, and every commander knows his men fight better when they hear Sigmar is with them.

The gods are invoked as they are needed. A sailor or fisherman may call to Manann every day but another man might only invoke Manann's name should he have to take a journey by boat. A farmer or trapper might make offerings to Taal and Rhya throughout the year, whereas a city-dweller may only entreat Taal when travelling through the forest by coach. The gods are not simply called to in emergencies or for deliverance from danger, however. Religion is the heartbeat of the Empire, and influences nearly every part of life. The boat-traveller may thank Manann for the beauty of the waters that morning, and the city-dweller might ask Taal to keep the road smooth and dry so as to speed him to his destination.

Reverence of the gods is clear in many Empire names, which often mean things such as "beloved of Ulric" or "from Verena." Many coats of arms or insignias feature religious imagery, and the symbols of the gods are carved into the stone and wood of houses and buildings. People wear small charms, tokens, or other signs of their religion, to identify their faith to others and of course to the watching gods themselves. References to the gods abound in songs and rhymes, in the names of the days and months and times of year, and in many figures of speech.

Common folk practise formal rituals as well. There are many holy days and festivals marked throughout the year and over a lifetime. Most people regularly attend local temples or shrines, where they pray together or perform rituals as a community of faith, lead by the local priest. Temples are often the centre of events at local festivals. In such bleak times, the citizens of the Empire relish these festivals.

Imperial Cults, Temples & Shrines

"I never enters the woods without throwin' a copper in the shrine, y'ken. An' I always come back out safe again."

– Old Hob, Middenland Peasant

For those who enter the religious orders, life may be very different compared to the typical citizen. While the exact details vary from faith to faith, followers often share some common experiences. Many initiates in the priesthood leave their families at a young age to be raised by the Cult, within a local temple. Here they will learn the full history of their god, the dogma and rituals of their faith and the care and maintenance of the temple.

Care of the temple is an important duty of initiates and priests alike, both in terms of preserving the physical building from the ravages of time and the violence of the godless, and in preserving the temple's place in the community. Many priests of the Empire have little need to recruit for their faith, but do work to ensure that proper respect is always paid to their god and his domains, and that the faithful perform the correct rituals at the correct times.

The workings of the Imperial Cults and the style of their temples vary enormously between the faiths. Even within the same faith, temples, shrines and holy places can look quite distinct. A local temple may be as ornate and immense as a palace, or little more than a hut, depending on the level of religious, economic and political influence of the order in that town or city.

In the Reikland, where all faiths leverage these three influences, grand temples can be found, lavishly decorated with fine art and great statues. Gold, jewels, and gilded relics adorn the walls, and holy artefacts fill the vaults. These temples are guarded vigilantly by heavily-armed templars to deter thieves.

Such majestic temples lie beyond the reach of most commoners. Instead, they erect and visit shrines. These are often temples in miniature, tiny free-standing structures with small altars to their chosen god within. Here the common folk can offer a quick prayer of thanks or supplication to the god, and perhaps make a small donation to its upkeep. In the case of smaller shrines, often keeping the shrine clean and tidy is the only donation needed.

Shrines can be found everywhere in the Empire, in virtually every village, at crossroads, and dotted through the forests and mountains. Some people may even have a small shrine next to their house or place of business. Shrines are also common near notable landmarks, bridges, or borders, where travellers can show respect to the gods, local spirits, or ask for protection as they journey onward.

I says a prayer to Old Man Morr
That me father's restin' fine
In his repose, while 'bove him grows
The field that now are mine

I says a prayer to Mother Rhya
That me oats will grow up well
So come Sonnestill we'll have our fill
And plenty more to sell

I says a prayer so bearded Taal
Keeps them beastmen in their lair
As oats are towed in wagon-load
Down to the market square

I says a prayer that Shallya's hands
Will hold me young lad fast
As plague and war took me other four
And this one be me last

I says a prayer to Verena
As the market deals are turnin'
That all declare me prices fair
And I makes a tidy earnin'

I says a prayer that Manann's grace
Has sent ships in from'out sea
And captains come with tidy sums
For each delivery

At last I pray to sly Ranald
For the tricks he has supplied
So farming men, who know of them,
Can make a little on the side

– Reiklander Folk Song

Holy Warriors

"Three things make the Empire great – guns, faith, and steel!"

– Attributed to Emperor Magnus the Pious

Most of the Imperial Cults have warriors amongst their orders. All the faiths – even the healers of Shallya – need protection from their enemies. There are temples to guard, sacred sites to watch over, and priests to escort safely on pilgrimage. For those who worship Myrmidia, Sigmar, and Ulric, battle is a holy duty. These orders often call their worshippers to arms or lead crusades against enemies of the faith.

The majority of knightly or templar orders in the Empire are secular institutions. They may mark themselves as serving a specific god, but owe allegiance to their state or count, and follow the orders of their commanders. War remains a primarily political matter in the Empire, although faith is still a potent and visible weapon.

Every soldier, from the lowliest peasant to the mightiest knight will say a prayer before taking the field. Chapterhouses and barracks throughout the Empire have shrines to various gods.

The enemies of the Empire are also the enemies of Sigmar, so his formidable warrior priests are well versed in warfare. This is most true in the Reikland, where military institutions prominently feature a shrine to Sigmar, and many battle units have detachments of Sigmarite priests. These warrior priests accompany armies on campaigns and into battle. They inspire their fellow soldiers to acts of phenomenal courage, call down the favour of their god and act as counsel and guides to the generals and counts who lead them. The armies of the Reikland are fuelled by a passionate faith in Sigmar.

Wandering Priests

"Ulric is in the wild places, in the wind, in the storm, in the snow, in the howl of the wolf. You cannot find him in your cities or your temples of stone."

– Heikki Russ, Wanderer of Ulric

Not all priests of the Empire are bound to a temple or fighting unit. The Imperial Cults have mendicant orders, and many other orders encourage their priests to explore the length and breadth of the Old World. For young initiates, it is a good way to experience the world and test their faith before they commit to a life-long vocation. For veteran priests, it is a good way to share their faith and wisdom and spread the word of their god.

Travel is fairly common between temples. Few temples have an opening for every aspiring novice who wishes to join, or the resources to train them, so many are sent away to train, and then elsewhere to serve. A single priest may serve a handful of communities in his short life. Priests may visit temples of other orders and even other faiths to learn more of their ways and to better understand their own god. Some travel in search of great knowledge or the libraries that hold it, others because they have a gift for preaching and feel inspired to use their gifts.

Finally, pilgrimages to holy sites and great churches are common. This applies to a large number of lay people, as well, to curry favour with the gods. For priests it is even more frequent, at times even expected for those keen to reach the higher ranks of their order. It is not uncommon for a priest to see more of the Empire than a common soldier or merchant.

Prayers and Blessings

"I never did find out what he prayed for, but after we left the shrine, the captain was never afraid of nothin' again. The next day, we broke the beastmen war party, and the captain took twenty skulls as prizes. So I don't ask me if Sigmar is with us – I know he is."

– Sergeant Valdred Hoch, Altdorfer Irregulars

The gods are distant and inscrutable figures whose ways cannot be understood by most mortals. However, they make their presence felt in subtle and occasionally even overt ways. Those who offer up great sacrifices or who send prayers in the direst of situations may find themselves blessed from above. Of course, different prayers appeal to different gods. A prayer to Taal offered in a deep forest grove is more likely to be heard than one offered in a library. A prayer for help to protect that grove from despoilers is more likely to be answered than a request for help in resolving a political matter.

The level of sacrifice seems to be a factor, as well. A pauper giving his last brass to the temple may move Shallya more than a noble giving a gold statue. The gods seem to prefer sacrifices that match their nature. Manann prefers great catches of fish to a slain stag; Verena prefers a donation towards a great library than to a hospice or orphanage.

In lieu of sacrifices, supplicants may also offer up oaths, pledges, or great deeds. A Shallyan may swear to live in poverty for the rest of her life, or may have already done so as a show of her great devotion. A Sigmarite who has spent years building a temple with his own hands may earn much favour. Deeds need not be so life-consuming, however. A devout Verenean might bring a notorious criminal to justice, an Ulrican might hunt a wolf through the snow without sword or bow, a follower of Ranald may steal a great prize. All of these show devotion to the principles of their respective faiths, and may earn divine aid.

The nature of blessings given tends to reflect the nature of the god providing them, as well. Taal may respond to a cry for help with a sudden rainstorm that slows the opponents' march, while Morr may send the fear of death into a priest's enemies. The blessings might be more personal. Taal may grant his faithful servant the strength of the oak in his weapon arm. Morr may send prophetic dreams offering deadly advice the night before a battle.

Some blessings are quite subtle, the kind of things that could be explained by coincidence or happenstance. Personal blessings often can not be seen by others, only felt in the heart of the faithful; a warm glow or a certain conviction, a breeze only they can feel or a whisper only they can hear.

Very rarely a god may manifest in a more overt fashion. The land shakes, the skies open, and heavenly horns sound as the force of the divine is made evident. Sigmar might give a man incredible strength, Shallya may heal a dying man, Morr may shatter an army of skeletons. There are even legends of the gods taking human form or imbuing a chosen one with their spirit to carry out their will. Such things are hard to prove, of course, but these are questions of faith, not proof.

Between these two extremes lie the powers of the priests. All those who enter the priesthood eventually learn to harness the power of their faith to perform miracles or invoke blessings. These demonstrations of piety and faith aid priests in completing the divine tasks their gods have set for them.

On the Question of Magic and Faith in the Gods

What follows is an excerpt from the Grey Wizard Gavius Klugge's controversial book, *Twenty Three Postulates on Magical Thought*. This excerpt comprises most of postulate eighteen, reflecting Gavius's views on the connection between magic and religion.

It is, at the very least, a controversial work.

On the question regarding magic and the faith in the gods: certainly it is a question worth much study. We are students of the secret forces that underlie the world; it is of grave interest to us if those others with power also use these forces, or if they have tapped some other power unknown to us, or indeed, if they do truck with daemons of Chaos.

Yet it is a question that resists study even more than the other mysteries of the Aethyric realm. Our brethren - and I call them that, for I feel in truth we share more than we might ever admit - who serve the gods are not fond of our studies and would object to any such means applied to their sacred practices.

I have, in my many years, had a chance to observe many priests summoning the power of their gods, enacting strange miracles upon the earth. In the Aethyric realm, I felt no surge of the Winds, no shimmer of the Aethyr upon them... and yet I did not feel nothing. The Aethyr felt disturbed, but not in any way I recognised, and indeed, it took me several years before I even detected the disturbance at all. So if the priests do manipulate the Aethyr they do it in a way that as yet remains beyond the ken of the Colleges, and any lore I have found or read of in all my nights in the library.

I can speculate, however, if my students will permit an old man's mind to such flights of fancy, a century ago, a most learned master of the Gold Order, Gotthilg Puchta, penned his Modest Treatise on the Nature of Magic. Therein, he ponders the nature of the Aethyr not as a physical place but as a place constructed from our thoughts and ideas. He likens the Aethyr to a kind of grand library where every thought and idea of the Mortal Realm is stored or into which they eventually seep, like water from a riddle. If this be the case, then one might further conclude that the mortal ideas which attract the most fervent belief might have the greatest volume or pre-eminence in this "library" of the Aethyr.

We have established elsewhere (see Postulates X, XI and XIV) that the Aethyr can act as a kind of humour reagent; that it is shaped not only by our conception of the spell form we are creating and our perception of the Wind to which we are aligned, but in extreme situations may also be shaped by strong emotion or memory. Hence the collusion of Dhar around sites of death and suffering. We can imagine that the idea of this suffering "draining" into the Aethyr, filling the "library" until it shapes that realm itself. So it is that mundane thought and mundane deed can shape magic without the mortals in question possessing any magical ability.

Such a theory could explain the nature of religious power. True faith in Sigmar is at the heart of our great Empire, and it has a power that has nothing to do with magic, as we understand it. Could it be then, that this faith is strong enough to shape the Aethyr around those who serve it and the centres of their belief? Could the prayers of the faithful reach into the Aethyr and channel this power into the answer to their prayers?

This theory has terrifying corollaries. It suggests that the Winds of Magic can be channelled by anyone with sufficient conviction. What is more, it suggests that the understanding of that channelling is coloured entirely by one's belief about the experience. To suggest to a priest that he is but a wizard in borrowed robes would be high heresy, and to suggest that us wizards are nought but priests playing at understanding that which has shaped itself into what we wished it to be is a thought my colleagues would dismiss as lunacy (assuming they have not already done so regarding my notes in Chapter VII and VIII).

Yet who is the master... us or the Aethyr? I am not sure which frightens me more. If the Aethyr shapes itself to suit our needs, are we perhaps puppets, being shaped by a force we can never understand nor master? But if it is us who defines the nature of the Aethyr, does that mean our base desires taint the power, turning it to Chaos? Could our mortal nature be the root of Chaos, poisoning the pure Aethyr from the moment it enters our minds and souls, like a rotting corpse in a mountain spring sickening all who drink downstream?

Whichever the case, I fear that our religious brethren have [illegible] their fears. It is they who are most likely to truck with daemons, daemons that wear the masks of gods [illegible] from the thoughts of men, shaped to perfection over millennia of belief, until none [illegible] hide amongst lies, and there are no lies stronger than the li[illegible]

- Gavius

It should be noted that the Cult of Sigmar officially denounces the validity of this article, and witch hunters consider possession or recitation of this information highly suspect, if not heretical.

Chapter Ten

The Imperial Cults

In the time before Sigmar, it is said all the Gods were known, but they were not equally worshipped. Each of the primitive tribes chose one God as their champion. The Teutognens held Ulric as their chief patron, the Taleutens had Taal, some say the Ostagoths chose Morr, and so forth.

Legend has it that when Sigmar united the tribes, he decreed that his Empire would be united in worshipping all the Gods. But so that no God would be forgotten, Sigmar charged each tribal chief to appoint a Priest for each God. These Priests would be ruled in spiritual matters not by their chief but by their superior in faith, appointed by Sigmar himself. Sigmar chose from his warriors those men he knew were the most devout and showed the greatest duty to their preferred God, and made each man the High Priest of his faith. So it was that the great Cults of the Empire began.

When Sigmar ascended to join the Gods, those left behind joined together, forming a cult to venerate this heroic, legendary figure. The leader of the cult was known as the Grand Theogonist. And so it has been forever since, and so may it be until Sigmar returns once more.

– Bertram Lehrer,
from The Condensed History of the Empire,
A Work Being for Students, Travellers and
Those of The Heathen Lands

Cult Structure and Hierarchy

"You can always tell which priests are holiest by how tall their hats are. Maybe the taller the hat, the closer their heads are to the Heavens?"

– Jakob Klein, Philosophical Ratcatcher

From their beginnings, all the Cults have had more or less a roughly similar structure. At the bottom of the Cults are the Initiates. These are usually those newest to the Cult, though in some cases they may remain Initiates for a very long time. Initiates are rarely considered to be true members of the Cult. Their training is a process of evaluation, where the Cult determines if they truly have the dedication and scholarship to enter the faith. Many fail and are cast back into general society.

If the Initiates prove sufficiently pious and dutiful, they will become full members of the Cult, although they will not yet be permitted to call themselves Priests. They are normally called Brothers or Sisters, or identified by their Cult: eg., a Sigmarite or a Myrmidian. Only after proving themselves at this rank will they earn the title of Priest. Priests are permitted to conduct services and are usually put in charge of temples of their own. Priests tend

to travel less than Brethren and Initiates, but for those who miss the outdoors, there are other options. Priests often go on to become warrior priests, taking up arms either spiritually or literally against the enemies of the faith. The nature of these priests varies, from the righteous battle hungry warrior priests of Sigmar to the hospitaliers of Shallya who tend to the wounded on the bloody battlefields of the Empire.

Those who do not seek a martial life will probably remain Priests, but a few select individuals who show extreme piety may rise to become Lectors. These superior Priests minister to whole cities or several temples in a region. From their number come the Arch-Lectors, and chosen from this small group of supreme priests is the High Priest who rules the entire Cult. The method of choosing the High Priest is different in each Cult, and can vary from year to year: the Vereneans choose anew each year after spirited debate, whereas the Ulrican High Priest must prove himself in the art of combat and rules until death. Among the more martial faiths, Arch-Lectors and High Priests will often come from the ranks of Warrior Priests. In the case of Sigmar and Ulric, the High Priest is expected not just to lead the Cult, but to lead it into battle.

The Role of the Cults

"I'm glad the Gods are watching over my tavern, but I'd prefer their servants stay away. Folks don't drink nearly as much when they think a priest is keeping count."

– Klara Vogel, Barkeep and Cutpurse

Faith is the drumbeat of the Empire, but it must be kept in proper time. The purpose of the Priests is to guide the common folk through their worship and duties. The purpose of the Cults is to instruct those Priests in their task, and to guide the whole Empire through its worship and duties. The pursuit of the former defines much of religious life; the pursuit of the latter has defined much of Empire history.

The primary role of a Cult is to demonstrate to its members the nature of the faith and how it should be observed. Some of the Cults, like those of Manann, Morr, and Ranald, have little organisation and little prescriptive dogma, leaving most of the details of practising the faith to each temple or individual. Others, like the Cults of Sigmar, Myrmidia, and Ulric are extremely centralised and demand a much stricter orthodoxy. Of course, the more strictly a faith is dictated, the more readily deviations and splinter groups arise, each claiming they profess the true version of the faith. Combating such deviation requires evangelical Priests and social, political, and military pressure, and the Cult of Sigmar has all of these.

Since the origins of the Empire, the High Priest of Sigmar's Cult has been an Elector, one of those with the responsibility of choosing the new Emperor. Over time, two Arch-Lectors of Sigmar have also become Electors, as well as the High Priest of Ulric. This gives them enormous power in determining the course of Empire politics. They use this power to drive the Emperor to act against the forces of Chaos and other heresies. Witch Hunters are officers of the Empire, but they exist because the Cult of Sigmar demands it. The political influence of the Sigmarites is another reason why so many of its number feel the need to create splinter groups, "freed" from such worldly concerns. The Ulricans concern themselves more with the practice of war than everyday life, so their political influence is less widely felt.

Other faiths have less influence because of their smaller numbers or their minor domains. Shallyans may help heal the warriors of the Empire, but their pacifist ways prevent them from possessing much temporal power. They have strict teachings for their Priests, but they cannot hope to spread these to the world. Similarly, the gentler Cult of Rhya has been all-but subsumed into the more bellicose Cult of her husband Taal, and while Manann's Cult keeps the Empire's trade ships afloat, it has little influence further inland.

The prominent Cults determine not just politics and law, but culture as well. In the Reikland, where Sigmar's Cult is the primary force, Sigmar is worshipped universally. His temples are always the largest, his rituals always the most observed, and his name the most often invoked for intercession. Other Cults rule elsewhere. The Cult of Taal is centred in Talabecland, so the politics and faith of that province are driven by the edicts of the forest god. Ulric is the chief faith of the Middenlanders, Morr's Cult is prominent in Ostermark due to its proximity to Sylvania, and the people of Marienburg cry to Manann for deliverance. The impact of a Cult also varies in different social circles: Verena, for example, has much influence in the areas of education and justice but little impact on matters of war. Magistrates and burgomeisters know her faith well, but most soldiers do not.

Life in a Cult

"Human children, locked away behind cold stone walls for years? Such a strange people. Loec, how do they distinguish their temples from their prisons?"

– Mellerion, Wood Elf Hunter

Life in any of the Cults follows much the same pattern. Young people are selected for their piety, are foundlings raised by the Cult, or volunteer themselves for the life of an Initiate. From that point on, the Cult attends to their food, shelter, and education for the rest of their lives. Many outsiders see it as an escape from the toil of real life, but the life of an Initiate is very hard, and only the truly hard-working and studious progress. The education of a Priest never stops, either, for all but the High Priest himself have something to learn about their god and faith. Those who seek to be a Warrior

Priest of the faith face a much more physical form of study: Cult warriors are trained to be masters of battle, in the literal and the abstract, lest the enemies of the faith be victorious.

Whichever path a Priest chooses, the Cult provides all the resources for his study and training. There are many within each Cult who are ambitious or driven by private convictions, but for others, the Priesthood removes the need to decide the course of their own fate. The sheltering nature of the Cults is why so many Priests are ordered to wander the world at some point in their vocation.

As well as education and a livelihood, the Cults provide sanctuary and support to members of the Empire's faiths. Of course, few temples have wealth or men to spare. A wandering Priest can count on bread, broth, and a bed for the night, but little else, even in the largest temples. However, if evidence was produced of a great and terrible threat against the gods and their teachings, even a small temple could raise an armed force and send word to other temples or knightly templars for more assistance. A particularly persuasive Priest may get the same response from a village or group of townsfolk, if he convinces them their very souls are in peril, and their local Priest agrees. The common folk of the Empire will trust a holy man more than anyone else, but a stranger is still a stranger.

There are many advantages to the life of the Priest. The common folk defer to Priests, nobles grant them many liberties, and criminals are often afraid to prey upon them. Even so, most common folk pity Priests. Although the Priests may gain some protection from their gods, they face far stricter scrutiny of their behaviour in return. Few are pure enough to withstand such personal attention. The protection of the gods also demands obedience to their will, and the gods are rarely small in their demands. Even if the Priest is not sent on dangerous pilgrimages or into terrible battles, he must still live apart from his friends and family, and suffer through the rigours of a lengthy education.

Priests of higher rank enjoy more control over their lives, but such positions also incur more work and responsibility. The High Priest holds the fate of his entire Cult and all the faithful in his hands, and must act as the primary conduit to his god. Most High Priests die soon after taking the post, worn away by the stress of playing politics or the exhaustion of living so piously. The more powerful the Priest, the less he can be seen to falter by his flock, and the more his god will punish him for pride or hubris. So while there will always be some who seek the priesthood solely for personal gain or selfish pride, there are easier and safer ways to ascend through society, and which do not risk damnation of one's soul.

Sample Strictures of Manann

Apart from tithing before and after a journey and opposing Stromfels, the strictures of Manann are extremely variable. They are drawn from the enormous body of sailor superstition, and which ones are considered the most important depend on the individual Priest. Some of the more common ones are:

- Obey your captain
- Never look back to port when departing
- Never kill an albatross
- No whistling on deck
- Do not embark on a voyage on the thirteenth day
- The first fish of a catch or the first coin of payment must be thrown into the sea

The Cult of Manann

"I don't hold with no boats nor barges, no sir. I killed me a seagull when I was a lad, and I know Manann still holds a grudge."

– Oswald Schimmerman, Landbound Ratcatcher

The sea is a terrible thing. It smashes strong ships to splinters and swallows strong men whole. And Manann laughs.

Of all the gods of the Empire, Manann is the most capricious, and even seems to take some pleasure in his cruelty. Like his father Taal, he embodies the untameable forces of nature, teaching men that they are small compared to the might of the gods, but unlike his father, he refuses to be stony-faced about it. His followers are similar: pragmatic people who know that their God demands appeasement and that no appeasement can ever be enough to guarantee his mercy. Yet to deny him is far worse, so no one in the Empire steps aboard a boat without a prayer to the God of Seas and Rivers.

Every dock in the Reikland has a shrine to Manann, and every captain gives him some remembrance before he casts off. For captains of larger vessels, this offering is usually made by engaging a member of the Cult of Manann among their crew. Through their faith, the Cult's priests are expert navigators who also ensure that proper respect is shown throughout the journey. Travelling without a member of Manann is so risky that the Cult has become the gatekeeper of almost all sea trade. This has made the Cult very wealthy, and gives them enormous power over the finances of the Empire, doubly so in the huge mercantile port of Marienberg.

Marienberg is the centre of their Cult and the seat of the High Priest. The Manannites have almost no Lectors or Arch-Lectors, with the High Priest preferring to let each temple govern itself. Most Manannites are ex-seamen or marines, so are used to being self-sufficient.

The symbols of Manann are his five-pointed crown and his trident. Other signs include the Albatross or wave patterns of blue and white. His Cultists wear little adornment over their robes of turquoise or blue-grey. The sign of their God is a single arm upraised with one finger extended, reading the winds of the sea both literally and spiritually. Cultists of Manann need to be near water to hear their God and dislike being far from it for long. Thus, the Cult is most popular on the northern coasts and along the lower Reik as it stretches from the Reikland to the sea, but fishermen and boatmen

far up river still pay their tithes. Priests with Manann's favour may request a safe journey, and may also be able to breathe underwater or walk across the waves or, at high levels, summon squalls or fill an enemy's lungs with water.

Manann warrior priests usually join one of the mighty Imperial fleets guarding the coasts of the Empire or step aboard the river patrols which keep the life blood of the Empire flowing through its provinces. They advise the Emperor's admirals and barge captains in matters of navigating the treacherous shoals and shores as well gaining the weather gauge against enemy fleets. During battle they call upon their god to bring the power of the seas to bear against their foes or to save souls from the terrors of the deep.

They are dedicated to the destruction of pirates, wreckers, and the worshippers of Stromfels. Sailors know Manann's dark mirror as Stromfels, the God of Storms, Sharks, and Dangers of the Seas. He takes true pleasure in killing seamen, and his blood-soaked rites are favoured by pirates. Worship of Stromfels is a crime punishable by death, yet his followers do not diminish. Those who suffer the cruelty of the sea soon see little difference between Stromfel's bloodthirstiness and Manann's indifference. Those who look closer see a different deity altogether…

The Cult of Morr

"Now, being that I have a Hochland long rifle aimed at your head, you have a very simple choice to make. You can tell your story to me, or you can tell it to Old Man Morr."

– Lars Hammett, Bounty Hunter

Morr has his Priests, his Temples, and his holy days, but nobody prays to him. Only the dead need his protection, and the dead do not pray.

The folk of the Empire believe that after death, a person's spirit is in great danger. It may be captured by the Dark Gods, be controlled by necromancers, or be unable to depart the mortal realm. The god who guards against this is Morr. He is not the god of death but of the Dead, ruler of the underworld, and it is the duty of his followers to perform the sacred rites that ensure spirits enter his realm swiftly and safely. His Priests have little concern for the living, and most rarely leave their gardens. Everyone needs their services soon enough.

Morr's temples are his Gardens. They are surrounded by high walls and iron gates and, in the cities, are guarded by the many different knightly orders of Morr's silent, obsidian-armoured templars. This protection mimics that offered by Morr and prevents necromancers from gaining access to the dead. Not even families of the deceased are allowed inside the gates: they must worship from outside. The ways of Morr are kept apart from society, and his Priests are likewise very private people. As a result, they are rarely liked and often feared – and sometimes even accused of being necromancers themselves.

Sleep is when we are closest to death, and Morr's other domain is dreams. Morr sends visions and portents to his faithful in dreams, revealing dangers to the Cult or to the Empire itself. Those Priests who most often have visions and are dedicated to their interpretation are known as the Doomsayers, and come from an order of Morr called the Augurs. Those who tend to the dead are a separate order known as the Shroud, but the two groups co-exist without conflict, each caring for its own demesne.

Since the rites and duties of Morr are unchanging, the Cult needs little organisation. A Priest from each temple makes regular attendances at the conclaves held every ten years, but in the case of remote temples, some priests may only make the journey once a lifetime.

The symbols of Morr are the raven and the black roses which grow in his Gardens. His Priests dress in severe black robes with no indication of rank or other ornamentation. Morrites greet each other by moving their hand down their face, palm out, to mimic their God's shrouded face. Only Morrites make the signs of their God, for common folk who do so may attract his undue attention.

Rarely does a Morrite travel, spending a lifetime tending his Garden, instead. When they do travel it is often to visit another Garden or during the festival of Morr. This festival occurs once a year, and the gates of the Gardens of Morr are opened for all to enter and grieve. The priests wander the streets during this time demanding to be fed. It is considered bad luck to fail in this duty.

The Doomsayers are the most travelled of Morrites, seeming to randomly follow their dreams. They visit places where people are about to die – whether from battle, plague, or natural disaster. They preach the doom they have foreseen, and administer funeral rites where no one else will. They also dedicate their lives to uncovering and destroying necromancers and the undead. Many of Morr's prayers focus on these efforts: providing aid against the undead and quieting restless spirits, as well as speaking to the dead and seeing glimpses of the future to garner information.

Sample Strictures of Morr

- Observe all rites of funeral and wake
- Be respectful of the dead, the dying and those who mourn
- Oppose the undead and necromancers at every turn
- Pay heed to your dreams

Morrites seem to carry death with them and are rarely welcomed, but if this bothers them, they never let it show through their dour demeanours. They also see it as their duty to care for the bereaved as well as the dead, so there are those who view the black-robed Priests with gratitude rather than fear.

The Cult of Myrmidia

"They say she walked with them, taught them to use a spear, showed them great art, learning, truth, honour – she sounds like an elf to me."

– Suriel Lianllach, High Elf Envoy

Myrmidia is the goddess of war and protector of soldiers. She is the daughter of Verena and Morr. Myrmidia stands for bravery and cunning, courage, honour, and martial virtue. She is the natural protector deity who guards the weak against the cruel and capricious.

While growing in popularity in the Empire, Myrmidia boasts a large number of followers in the southern lands of Tilea and Estalia, where worship of the warrior goddess is said to originate. Her foreign origins are not forgotten, but her faith has been accepted by the Empire as one of its own.

Worship of Myrmidia came to the Empire from the Knights of the Blazing Sun, who encountered Myrmidia in the Crusades against Araby. Since its establishment, the order has spread throughout the Empire to become one of the most prominent knightly orders.

Sample Strictures of Myrmidia

- Act with honour and dignity at all times, even towards your enemy.
- Observe all treaties and surrenders, and treat prisoners with respect.
- Show no mercy to the enemies of humanity.
- Honour your commander and follow his orders, unless obedience would contradict another stricture.

In the Empire, of course, Sigmar and Ulric are the masters of war, and they roar for death and glory. Most soldiers mock Myrmidia as an "officer's god," with ideals too lofty for the common fighting man, and most generals prefer to shift their bias to Sigmar and Ulric. Myrmidia is also a foreign goddess and considered strange by many Empire folk. Thus her cult is small and relatively powerless. It survives in the Empire because of the distinction and courage with which her devotees fight. The saying goes that Sigmar takes you to war, but Myrmidia brings you back; her followers are renowned for their tactical acumen which has won the Empire many victories.

In the Empire, every worshipper of Myrmidia is a warrior. To be a priest of Myrmidia is to be knowledgeable and schooled in the arts of war. Indeed, the Knights of the Blazing Sun train Myrmidia's priests, while the Order of the Eagle contains the cult's lectors who govern and manage the strictures and articles of its faith.

Eagles are sacred to Myrmidia and a common symbol of her cult. Initiates and priests of Myrmidia greet each other with crossed hands in the shape of an eagle. The goddess's other symbol consists of a spear and shield, Myrmidia's favoured armament.

Myrmidian colours are white or yellow; in the Empire, this is often combined with blue hoods with red edging. Expertise in a weapon is mandatory for Myrmidia's followers, and many carry their weapons at all times. Some also always wear armour. No Myrmidian meets the day without being ready for war, in however small a fashion.

Myrmidian temples reflect the cult's southern origins, borrowing architectural designs that in turn came from elven styles, whose ancient ruins dot the Tilean landscape. Marble columns illuminate circular rooms with domed roofs and spired towers; most have weapon halls and training rooms as well as pulpits.

Many temples are also chapter houses which serve as temporary bases for the Knights of the Blazing Sun and training grounds for the order of the Eagle. Arms and armour are in full supply, as are men and women skilled in their use. The clang of steel on steel sounds throughout the day, and when not testing their skill with the blade, Myrmidians may be found studying strategy, tactics and historical battles in their temple's libraries.

Myrmidians may be few, but they are well known because their priests often wander the world as trainers and advisors to the Empire's military forces. They seek out worthy battles to fight or honourable causes to uphold. The Myrmidian concept of honour is sometimes perceived as naiveté or cowardice, with critics asserting her followers would prefer to read about combat than to fight.

Myrmidians rarely rise to such provocations, for such mockery is beneath them. Their goddess teaches her warriors to be as proud as the falcon, and grants them the wisdom of the owl and the vision of the eagle. Her favour also provides her followers with the courage, strength, and speed they need to fight any enemy.

The Cult of Ranald

"Ranald's kept my neck in one piece, and kept my pockets full of brass and silver. Ain't none of the other gods can say that."

– Anonymous tavern patron after several pints of ale

Ranald is an official God of the Empire, but his Cult is unlike all the others, and to many it barely seems like a Cult at all. That is the nature of Ranald – to never be what he seems.

Some know Ranald as the god of Fate and Fortune, and pray to him whenever they take a chance or make a bet. Others know him as the Night Prowler, the patron of all thieves and rogues. Conmen worship him as Ranald the Deceiver, the personification of not just trickery and illusion but the irony of all existence, where the weak rise and the good suffer. Yet he is also sometimes Ranald the Protector, he who undercuts tyrants and undermines oppression. For the law is just another shackle, and it was meant to be broken. Ranald demands it.

Most of his Priests are lawbreakers in some way. Many are actual thieves, others iconoclasts, and some just "honest" businessmen who tell their customers what they want to hear and keep plenty hidden away from the bailiff. Not all thieves follow Ranald, of course. Most street thugs find his strictures far too binding: Ranald prefers his followers to eschew violence in favour of stealth, use finesse over brute strength, and give some of their take to charity. The perfect crime is not the one with the biggest pay-off, but the one where the prize seems impossible to reach and the crime goes completely unnoticed.

Ranald's Priests are aided in such business with favours such as increased darkness to hide a leaping burglar, or a moment of confusion overcoming an enemy. Powerful Ranaldians may be granted the ability to manipulate the black market or completely change their identity. However, it is considered bad form to petition Ranald for aid unless the situation is dire. Ranald helps those who help themselves, and will never save a poor thief from his own incompetence!

Many in authority would like to see the Cult dissipated, but it survives because of its enduring popularity with the common folk and because of its disorganised structure. His temples are hidden in backrooms or cellars, or arranged at a moment's notice. His Priests wear no robes and keep their holy symbols hidden. Ranald is also the champion of freedom, and His servants are all individualists. Every Priest keeps the faith in his own way, and a Cult that has no form cannot be found.

Ranald does have a few universal symbols, however. Followers can show allegiance by crossing their fingers, or by marking an X on their clothes, equipment, or skin. Authorities are aware of this use of the symbol but so many X pendants are sold at every street market (they bring good luck) that the sign is ubiquitous. Ranald is also depicted as a black cat, and Ranaldans consider these creatures extremely lucky.

Ranaldan Priests do gather for worship, or to plan a particularly spectacular crime, but then just as soon go their separate ways. They do not have any central authority, and anyone foolish enough to declare himself the High Priest would only be mocked for it. Each Priest recruits and trains Initiates on his own, usually by spotting a likely candidate and challenging him to perform some great theft or scam. If he shows sufficient skill, he will be admitted.

Should the Initiate later prove unworthy, his recruiter will be expected to pull his student into line or remove him from the faith. If this isn't done, Ranald will renounce his usual distaste for violence rather than be dishonoured. The Cult's warrior priests are typically master thieves, nimble rascals and military agents acting on behalf of the Emperor. It is even rumoured that Felix Mann, the master thief who stole the Carstein Ring off the finger of the sleeping Vampire Vlad in 2051, was a Ranaldan priest and agent of the Empire.

The rejection of violence and petty crime also earns the Cult many allies. The Shallyans respect Ranaldans for their pacifist ways and their devotion to charity, and most watchmen would prefer a dozen Ranaldans on his beat than a drunken thug or a murderous gangster. Ranald teaches what most already understand: a little bit of crime is always going to happen. So it might as well be his kind of crimes.

Sample Strictures of Ranald

- One coin in ten belongs to Ranald
- Live by your wits, not your sword
- It is better to live free than suffer oppression
- There is no honour among thieves, but trust your brothers and sisters in Ranald
- Laws are meant to be broken
- Don't get caught

The Cult of Shallya

"You think mercy is for the weak? 'Twas Shallya's mercy healed my broken arm so I could lead the vanguard against the beastmen in our last campaign. You saying that makes me weak? Think carefully before you answer, lad..."

– Sergeant Marcus Orton to a green recruit

The Old World is thick with pain, death, and suffering. In such a dark world, perhaps only a fool would believe in a Goddess of mercy. The Shallyans are used to such cynicism, but they still believe. For even in the darkest of places, mercy can be found.

It is said that everyone loves Shallya, but nobody trusts her. Certainly everyone owes the Maiden of Mercy something: there is almost no one in the Empire whose birth was not attended by a Shallyan, who has never lain in the Cult's temple hospices, or who has never had an ailment cured after offering prayers to the Goddess. Yet there is also almost no-one in the Empire who has not had a loved one taken from them by war or illness. Shallya is the daughter of Morr and Verena, and although she weeps for all who suffer, she is beholden to her parents. Shallya asks that justice and death be tempered by mercy, but yields to her parents' demands.

Her followers have learned to be practical people. Her Priests focus on the here and now, fixing the immediate problems as best they can. Their temples are hospices where they tend to the sick, the wounded, and the insane and gather food for the poor. They eschew any kind of politics so that they can always reach those in need. Of course, they often save the lives of wealthy people and are granted gifts in return, but the Cult uses these gifts to aid the poor, not to live in luxry. The Cult's temples are functional and unadorned, and her Priests strive for an ascetic lifestyle.

They wear plain robes of hard-wearing cloth, usually of white or yellow. The symbols of Shallya – the dove, the heart, the tear, or the drop of blood – are often embroidered on the chest, but otherwise they wear no ornamentation. Nor do they have much subdivision or hierarchy. They are, however, strictly organised in a feudal structure, with every local temple owing tribute to a larger temple above, all the way up to the Matriarch in Couronne in Bretonnia. All Shallyans can heal, but those with a lesser talent for it dedicate themselves to organising the faith and they do so with a military-like efficiency. This ensures every temple has plenty of bandages and mandrake, but the difference between a beautiful young nurse and a terrifying Shallyan matron can be startling to a visitor.

Almost all Shallyans are female, but there is nothing that prevents males from entering the faith. Most Shallyans are orphans raised by the Cult; few who are not raised within the faith can demonstrate the life-long servitude required by the Goddess, and most male orphans are passed on to one of the more militaristic Cults.

Shallyan warrior priests are known as hospitaliers. In times of war, the hospitaliers tend to the sick and wounded on the battlefield. Though they abhor violence, as a last resort they will fiercely defend the army's wounded, hospices, and healing tents. Shallyans have wandering orders too, who bring healing to all they encounter. Since Shallyans often place themselves in dangerous places to tend to those in greatest need, neither vocation is a safe one, and it is not made easier by Shallya's disdain for violence.

Shallya has no such compunctions when it comes to the abominations of her fiercest enemy, Nurgle, the Fly Lord. This Dark God is the master of disease and decay, and his followers spread sickness wherever they go. Shallyan favours are almost entirely focussed on healing wounds and sickness, but the Goddess will also lend her faithful strength and courage for destroying agents of the Fly Lord or any of her enemies. And because she heals all, her allies are legion. So though many think the Shallyans are fools, only a fool would ever attack them.

Sample Strictures of Shallya

- Violence is the last resort
- Ease the suffering of all in need
- Never halt a soul when Morr calls for it to depart
- Go through life unfettered by material needs
- Abhor the Fly Lord in all his forms
- Do not waste energy on your own pleasure

The Cult of Sigmar

"Sigmar is the hammer, and I am his holy anvil. Woe to any caught between us!"

– Juergen Dunkel, zealot

Sigmar is the Empire, and the Empire is Sigmar. He founded the Empire and was its first ruler. After his death, he became a legendary, heroic forebearer of his people, and became worshipped as a warrior god. Everything the Empire possesses is because of Sigmar. This is why the folk of the Empire are known as Sigmar's People – the Sons of Sigmar – and the Emperor is the Heir of Sigmar regardless of his ancestry.

The followers of Sigmar are dedicated to proving themselves worthy of their god's legacy and protecting his holy Empire. Defence is the watchword of all Sigmarites: defence of the Empire, defence of its peoples, and defence of their minds, hearts, and souls. So watchful are they that they often seem paranoid or superstitious, always wary of Sigmar's disapproval or looking for any sign of the handiwork of the Empire's enemies. Chaos never sleeps, they say, so the Sigmarites never rest in their vigil.

To properly guard the Empire, Sigmarites must play a role in every level of society. The high priest of the Holy Temple of Sigmar, known as the Grand Theogonist, is an Imperial Elector and a private counsellor to the Emperor himself. Beneath him are two Arch Lectors and a great assemblage of lectors, warrior priests, preachers, monks, flagellants, and pilgrims. Sigmar's cult is by far the largest one in the Empire and has a monumentally complicated hierarchical structure. It is divided into many orders, each with their own duties.

The cult has many warrior priests; Sigmarites are inseparable from war and are part of the Imperial army as well as the priesthood. Almost every Imperial army marches out accompanied by warrior priests of Sigmar to bolster the courage and faith of its soldiers.

Sigmar's cult is ingrained in every level of society. Most citizens of the Empire, from nobles to dung collectors, visit a temple of Sigmar at least once a week. In these grand, austere buildings, priests deliver the word of Sigmar in readings and sermons. Sigmarite priests are guardians of their communities, looked to for insight into proper behaviour and holy law. Sigmarites keep secular law as well, for that too comes from the edicts of their god when he founded the nation. This is right and proper, for only by controlling the laws can the cult protect the Empire's citizens from themselves.

The cult takes initiates who have been touched by Sigmar in some way, a tiny proportion of his power manifesting itself in them. These initiates come from all walks of life and the Cult asks for little beyond unquestioning obedience, so even in the mainstream cult no two priests are ever the same. Even their robes may vary in colour, style, and insignia. All bear some symbol of their god, however, be it the warhammer sigil or the twin-tailed comet that foretold Sigmar's birth or the griffon which symbolises the strength of his Empire. Most priests can also be recognised by their shaved or tonsured heads, a practice performed on new priests, male and female alike, by almost all Sigmarite temples.

The favour of Sigmar allows his servants to better combat his enemies, calling down holy fire against greenskins, scourging the undead, and bring his wrath against Chaos. He also grants hope and healing to his warriors, and this is Sigmar's true gift to his people. He united them in the belief that they could be something more, in the hope that they could stand against the greenskin armies, and every day he gives hope anew to his followers, so that they can stand against the Empire's legion of enemies. These foes are many, and the task of guarding Sigmar's legacy is enormous, but his priests' hopes spring eternal through their defiance and hatred of evil.

Sample Strictures of Sigmar

- Obey your orders, for your superiors know better the will of Sigmar
- Aid the dwarf folk, in honour of Sigmar's alliance with them
- Root out and destroy all enemies of the Empire: the greenskins, the undead, daemons, the servants of Chaos, and those who use dark magic
- Bear true allegiance to the Emperor
- Work to protect the unity and continuing strength of the Empire, even at the cost of your own life and liberty

The Cult of Taal

"The cities can have their grand temples, their golden idols and burning incense. All the hustle and bustle of men, praising the great gods. Taal needs none of that. Look around you – these trees are his temple. The birds are his choir. Out here, those gods are small and far away. But Taal is everywhere."

– Rickard Strauss, Woodsman

Rhya, Taal's Wife

Rhya is often associated with the gentle, providential, and giving side of nature. Hers is the heartbeat which quickens in a mother's belly, the first birdsong of spring, and the bleat of newborn lambs. She taught humans how to plant and harvest, and it is she who makes the grain grow each season and makes the fruit ripen on the branch.

Rhya cools Taal's rage and ameliorates his stubbornness, but as a good wife, she is also beholden to his will, so oftentimes frost kills the lambs or floods take the crops.

More, hence, ask for Taal's mercy than Rhya's blessing, and apart from country matters, her worship is limited. Some say that once the two gods were two aspects of the same god, but the wild warriors of Taal dismiss such foolishness.

Taal is the oldest of all the gods of the Empire. Some say he is the king of the gods; others call him the All-Father. From him came the lands and the rivers, the forests and the mountains, and all the beasts that live among them. He has little concern for humans, for his domain is the remote wilderness, the primal fury of the beast, and the relentless strength of nature.

Sample Strictures of Taal

- Taal's children give themselves to you for food and sacrifice. Honour that gift as well as the abundance of the forest and the soil
- Make a sacrifice of flesh or grain once a month at the dark of the moon
- Spend eight days a year in isolation in the wild, living only on what you can hunt or gather
- Do not clad yourself in metal, only hides and leathers, and arm yourself only with wood
- Take pride in natural strength and skill, and the natural ways. Shun firearms and other works of engineering and science

Taal is a god of action rather than contemplation, and his cult shuns the trappings of civilisation, considering them unnatural and emasculating. His followers champion self-reliance, and initiation into the cult begins with an ordeal of surviving alone in the forest. Priests of Taal are often loners, visiting the most remote villages and patrolling the darkest woods.

They do, however, value community – the deer and stags are safest when they herd together. As the oldest and most pervasive of all the cults in the Empire, the community of Taal is mighty indeed. He is the chief god of Talabecland and the eastern provinces, and patron of the great city of Talabheim.

Despite its priests' affinity for the wild, the cult is surprisingly structured. The cult has two high priests, known as a Hierarchs. Theoretically, the Hierarch of Rhya rules in spring and autumn and the Hierarch of Taal rules during summer and winter. Although supposedly equal, with the waning of Rhya, it is the Hierarch of Taal who has the greater authority all year round. Beneath the Hierarchs are the arch lectors who act as guardians over important communities, wild lands, or sacred sites. Lesser priests deal with smaller areas, maintaining shrines and ministering to farmers, hunters, and travellers.

Taal's warrior priests are known as longshanks. They are experts with the yew bow and forest lore, who guard against the needless destruction of nature such as excessive deforestation, and protect the land against the taint of Chaos. Their aid is invaluable in campaigns waged within the wilds and forests of the Empire.

Taal's temples are wild spaces, perhaps marked only by a ring of trees or standing stones. His shrines are similar, usually carved from a rock or tree, and are found throughout the great forests of the Empire, so that all those that wander may request Taal's protection. Although the cult is well-ordered, its priests seldom meet and their temples are rarely occupied.

Similarly, the cult exerts little political pressure despite its large numbers, as it is too busy tending to its duties to play the games of civilised men. They need no holy books or calendars, for their rituals are the ways of nature and their sacred days are determined by the seasons.

Taalist priests wear only natural hides and skins. Even the longshanks shun metal armour and swords for leather, wooden bows, and staves. Taalists thump their thighs, chest, and arms – "roots, trunk, and branches" – as a greeting and an invocation to their god. Taal rewards his devotees with favours to control wild beasts and forest trees. He also grants them the strength and fervour of the wild, so his priests are always passionate in whatever they do. Fear the quiet Taalist, goes the saying, lest the mountain wakes.

The Cult of Ulric

Old White Wolf will sniff you out, Old White Wolf with braided hair,
Old White Wolf will hunt you down, Old White Wolf will rip and tear!

– Middenheimer children's rhyme

Before the coming of Sigmar, the men of the Old World looked to a different god in times of war: Ulric the mighty, Ulric the proud, Ulric the wolf as white as snow. Now his cult is overshadowed by that of Sigmar, but his devotees know that there is only one true warrior among the heavens.

According to legend, the great city of Middenheim was founded by Ulric himself. Ulric's brother, the god Taal, gifted the towering mountain to the Wolf God, striking the mountain top flat with his mighty fist. This is why the mountain is sometimes called Fauschlag, from the ancient word "fist-strike." It is here that Ulric established a home for his followers.

The northern lands of the Empire remain a stronghold of Ulric, but elsewhere the cult's influence has declined. Sigmar and Myrmidia share the domain of war, and Sigmar's cult has taken over most of Ulric's political presence. Ar-Ulric, the cult's high priest, remains an Elector, however, and the power of the faith in the north cannot be denied.

More than once, posturing between the two cults has thrown the Empire into civil war, and under a weaker Emperor than Karl Franz, it may yet do so again. Even today many Ulricans regard Sigmarites as arrogant upstarts, while Sigmarites reciprocate with the view that Ulricans are boorish barbarians.

The situation isn't helped by the fact that Ulricans love to fight. Ulric teaches his warriors never to back down when challenged, and even brothers-in-arms will frequently fall into brawls. Yet these fights rarely cause division: Ulric's devotees know that they are strongest together, like a pack of wolves. However, Ulric also demands that his followers should be strong alone, and initiates must prove themselves worthy by surviving an ordeal alone in the wilderness, preferably during the icy winter.

The followers of Ulric are fearsome fighters, and the cult's warrior priests are admired across the Empire for their legendary battle prowess and courage under fire, as are the Knights of the White Wolf, a templar order dedicated to Ulric. Military training is mandatory for all priests, and few of Ulric's clerics have never seen battle.

Ulrican temples are square-walled buildings protecting a fortified inner sanctum and are designed to quarter great companies of warriors and hold off a siege, and inside there is as much training for war as there is prayer. When not fighting, priests of Ulric loudly preach their god's name to their congregations and admonish those who refuse to fight against Ulric's enemies.

As well as their distaste for Sigmarites, Ulricans are suspicious of Ranaldans, as Ulric detests lies and trickery in any form. They also look down upon Myrmidian battle tactics, dismissing convoluted strategies as un-heroic. The clash of blades is music to Ulric's ears, and the blood of his enemies splashing the ground makes him

Sample Strictures of Ulric

- Obey your betters
- Defend your honour
- Never back down, unless ordered by a superior
- Stand honest and true. Deception and trickery are not Ulric's ways
- Never wear a wolfskin unless you killed the wolf yourself, with your own blade
- Shun helmets. Let the enemy see your wolf mane
- Black-powder weapons and crossbows are the weapons of cowards
- Keep the sacred flames of Ulric always burning in his holy places

smile. However, although followers of Ulric fight with the ferocity of wolves, they recognise the need for discipline, and the cult operates under a strict command structure.

Every Ulrican, from arch lectors to the lowest initiate, knows his place and would lay down his life if his superior gave such an order. In return for his followers' obedience, Ulric grants them courage, endurance, and terrible battle fury.

When not in armour, Ulricans wear simple black robes and wolf skins. Many Ulrican males sport thick beards, and both men and women tend towards braided hair. The symbol of Ulric is a fist with the index and smallest fingers raised, symbolising the wolf's head. Some Ulricans show displeasure by snarling like a wolf.

Southern folk often mock devotees of the White Wolf for their bestial nature, but followers of Ulric know that the world is harsh, and when the icy storms of winter grip the land, wolves survive whereas lambs do not.

The Cult of Verena

"There is truth in words. For me and my brothers, our truth is the spoken word. To my Verenean comrades, they find the truth in the written word. And in words left unspoken."

– Erich Keller, Warrior Priest of Sigmar

Sample Strictures of Verena

- Preserve knowledge and justice, for they are the foundation of civilisation
- All knowledge is equally important
- Arbitrate disputes wherever you can
- Make your judgements based on facts and knowledge, without fear or favour
- Never allow yourself to be a tool of injustice or ignorance
- Violence destroys knowledge, but do not be afraid to take up Verena's sword if the need is great

The Empire is a benighted land. Although its armies keep the enemies of civilisation at bay, ignorance, superstition, and fear still rule within its borders. The only thing that lights the darkness is the twin beacon of learning and justice: the domains of Verena.

Some speculate that Verena taught humans how to read and write and guided them in creating the first laws, since such things are held in such high regard by the goddess and her followers. She charges her priests to be active in her name, spreading knowledge and justice wherever they are lacking. The cult believes in preserving all knowledge. Few are willing to risk death or torture on this point, but Vereneans are passionate.

Many a Verenean would run into a burning building to retrieve scrolls, or travel to the ends of the Empire to seek lost knowledge. Verena teaches that learning is sacred – but still acknowledges that some topics are too dangerous to pursue, such as necromancy or Chaos. All Vereneans are scholars. Initiates are sought in the scriptoriums and universities of the Empire and must undergo further education before becoming a priest. Once inducted, they are sent back to administer such institutions: most universities and libraries in the Empire are run partly or wholly by Vereneans. In smaller towns, Vereneans will act as notaries or archivists, preserving the history and knowledge of their community.

Verena values justice along with learning, so her priests also act as mediators and aides to the fearsome Imperial judges. However, the cult teaches that a tyrannical abuse of power offers no justice, and Vereneans are quick to support the Empire against such tyrannical forces. Many nobles recognise the value of Verenean learning and pay heed to the counsel of the goddess's priests. Thus, the cult has much influence throughout the Empire. In large cities, priests often have official positions as advisors in the courts of elector counts.

The cult has little formal hierarchy. Each temple manages its affairs independently. Individual priests devote themselves to different aspects of Verenean lore. There are various schools of philosophical thought within the cult. The two most important are the Scalebearers and Lorekeepers – the former focus on Verena as divine arbiter, the latter worship her as the guardian of all knowledge.

Among the various sects within the cult are the Order of Mysteries, devoted to scouring the world for forgotten lore, and the Order of the Sword and Scale, which is composed of Verena's warrior priests who wield their swords to protect the cult and offer advice to battlefield councils of war and knowledge and information on the enemy during invasions.

The sword of justice is an important symbol of the goddess, indicating that justice without action is impotent and that unguarded learning will be lost. Verena grants her priests favours not only to pursue truth and justice, but to discover lies and obfuscation and to bring down terrible retribution against those who would pervert truth and justice for their own ends. Though they prefer only to wield it as a last resort, Vereneans wear a sword to remind themselves that they must sometimes be warriors as well as scholars.

The other symbols of Verena are the owl, representing wisdom, and the scales of justice. Tomes of lore and learning are ubiquitous among her devotees. The goddess is often depicted blindfolded, showing that her justice is blind to wealth or station, and her most devout followers often wear a blindfold when passing judgement. Vereneans invoke their goddess with one hand turned down and one up, to represent the great scales of life, and pray to her to keep them fair and balanced in their outlook.

Chapter Eleven

Other Faiths

"A wise man makes faith his fortress, yea, but he does not turn his eyes away from events beyond his battlements."

– from the Book of Myrmidia

The people of the Empire are united in their shared faith of a common pantheon, but they are not blind to the faiths that exist beyond their borders. Dwarfs, elves, and foreigners bring their gods with them when they come into the Empire.

Travellers speak of the different cults in faraway lands. Scholars know of old gods now forgotten or half-remembered by only a tiny few. Such things are not to be trusted, but do not threaten the faith of the average citizen of the Empire.

Only the most fanatical have any objection to the gods of elves or dwarfs, for clearly humans need to have human gods. Some do consider such gods as lesser deities, but such types find everything of the other races to be inferior. For the most part, the people of the Empire remember the bond between Sigmar and the dwarfs, and show great respect to all aspects of dwarf culture as a result.

Elven gods are less well known, not least because the elves keep their faith private and they are a rare sight in many places. Those few Empire folk who know something of elven religion, however, show respect for what few temples the elves build.

Not everyone is so accepting, however. Empire citizens fervently believe that Sigmar is the greatest of gods. While many may show respect for the gods of foreigners, it is not always easy to accept how others could deny Sigmar's divinity. Sigmar is the enemy of Chaos. Particularly zealous (or mentally unstable) followers see a denial of Sigmar as embracing darkness and the forces of Chaos.

Or at the very least, such a denier is fertile breeding ground for heresy. It is somewhat ironic that some of the most devout Sigmarites can be found in the Reikland, where a large number of foreigners, elves, and dwarfs live. Although the Cult of Sigmar avoids publicly denouncing foreign faiths, religious prejudice and violence is not uncommon.

In more remote areas of the Empire, foreign gods are rare. Religious variation comes instead in the form of minor gods raised to greater prominence or ancient gods still remembered. Across the thousands of miles of the Empire, and over its millennia of history,

the people have worshipped hundreds of different gods, spirits, or supernatural forces. Most of these faiths are extremely small, dedicated to a local spirit.

Many followers of these faiths worship spirits representing some aspect of nature, or revere a specific local place, or venerate a specific person, event, or legend. Such beliefs are highly localised, and the venerated object may be unknown to anyone more than several leagues away. Other minor spirits or lesser deities are simply variations or subsets of the major faiths, or arise from twisted representations of one of the more common gods.

Of course, some variation and nuance is common and expected to a certain degree, but witch hunters and common folk alike grow wary when a belief twists into something too exotic. The more bizarre or unusual the practices, the greater the suspicions of being in league with Chaos.

The Dwarf Gods

"Prayers are for those who wish to live."

– Gurni Thorgrimson, Troll Slayer

The gods of the dwarfs are not otherworldly beings. They are the dwarfs' ancient ancestors, who founded the great dwarf empire and established the great clans. Today they look down on their descendants, charging them to prove themselves worthy of their ancestors' legacy. The most revered ancestors are known as the Ancestor Gods, but the word does not mean the same thing to dwarfs as it does to humans.

Dwarfs do not celebrate their faith publicly, but every clanhold and dwarf house has a space set aside to honour their particular ancestors, as well as the great Ancestor Gods. In the cities of the Empire, expatriate dwarfs have built temples to their ancestor gods to allow them to worship as they would back home. These temples are often filled with solemn dwarfs and many kegs of beer.

Dwarf Lorekeepers fulfil a role somewhat akin to priests, maintaining the shrines and records of the Ancestor Gods. However, since all dwarfs study and revere their ancestors, dwarf priests do not share the same sort of social role as their human counterparts. Dwarfs value deeds above words, and those whose deeds bring the most honour to their ancestors are those most favoured. Dwarf priests are mediators and law keepers, however, for it is they who preside over judgements of clan traditions and rites.

Table 3-1: The Dwarf Ancestor Gods

Ancestor God	Domain of Influence
Gazul *	Death and the Underearth
Grimnir	Battle and Warriors
Grungni	Mining and Stonework
Morgrim*	Engineering
Smednir*	Smithing
Thungni*	Runes and Runemagic
Valaya	Home and Healing

** Lesser Dwarf God*

Of all the Ancestor Gods, there are three that are of supreme importance. Grungni is the god of mining, stoneworking, and craftsmanship. He first taught the dwarfs to hew stone, mine ore, and smith metal, and his example is what drives dwarfs to take pride in their work. His symbol is the pick.

His brother, Grimnir the Fearless, is the god of warriors and battle. He taught the first dwarfs the art of war, and he is remembered for his deadly axe. When Chaos fell upon the world, he shaved off most of his hair and departed to slay the daemons single-handedly. Today, Troll Slayers follow his example.

Valaya is goddess of home and healing. Valaya invented dwarf script, and brewed the first dwarf beer. Valaya was also the defender of her stronghold while Grimnir fought and Grungni dug, so her symbol is the shield. Dwarf women typically follow her example in their own holds or houses.

The Elven Gods

"Asking an elf about his gods is like asking a fish about water."

– Bertram Lehrer, Empire Scholar

Elves rarely, if ever, speak of their gods to outsiders, and even when they do, the nature of their faith is difficult for any human to understand. Their gods are not apart from them, and they need no priests to speak to them or interpret their will. Their lives are bound in mysticism, and there is perhaps no time when they are not in conversation with their gods or enacting a ritual of worship.

Since they have no formalised religion, it is easy for elves to keep their faith private when among humans. However, elves are also artisans, and do make shrines and sculptures of their gods, and paint holy symbols on their possessions, so those humans who take care to look are not entirely ignorant of the elven pantheon.

Meanwhile, elves are naturally curious, so know much of human religion. The parallels between some of the gods are obvious, and most elves consider the human gods poor reflections of their own. Religious scholars of the Empire have often come to the opposite conclusion.

Unlike humans, however, elves do not see their gods as cruel or capricious. The gifts of the elven gods are clearly visible, and their hand in events is easy to see. The gods are part of every elf and every action he takes. When an elf hunts, he is with Kurnous, when he kills he is with Khaine, and when he casts a spell, he is with Hoeth.

Table 3-2: The Elven Gods

God	Realm of Mastery
Asuryan	Leadership and Courage
Hoeth	Knowledge and Wisdom
Isha	Fertility and Motherhood
Khaine	War and Murder
Kurnous	Hunting and Fatherhood
Lileath	Dreams and Fortune
Loec	Revelry and Jest
Mathlann	Travel and Exploration
Morai-heg	Fate and Death
Vaul	Smithing and Construction

The ten elven gods and their realms are listed above. All of them are respected, but the most important gods among the high elves are Asuryan, Hoeth, and Khaine, as kingship, knowledge, and battle are their chief concerns. Among the wood elves, the primary gods are Kurnous and his wife Isha. This is because the wood elf king and queen, Orion and Ariel, are said to be living avatars of these gods.

Holy Days, Festivals, and Rituals

"Can't get to the privies, today, m'lord. It's a feast day for Ranald see. One of them real holy ones."

– Oswald Schimmerman, Recalcitrant Ratcatcher

Most Empire holy days revolve around the turn of the seasons and the phases of the moon rather than religious events. The nights of the Old World are lit by two moons: Mannslieb, which turns every 33 days, and Morrslieb, a darker orb with a seemingly erratic motion. On two days of every year, both moons are full. In midwinter it is known as Witching Night (or Hexensnacht) and marks the turning of the new year.

This night is considered inauspicious, a time when daemons roam, witches draw great power and the dead stir in their graves. On this night, the people of the Empire stay in their homes and pray to their gods for protection. In late summer, the day of twin moons is

known as the Day of Mystery (or Geheimnistag). Although still a day of dark shadows and grim foretellings, it is considered a safer time than Hexensnacht.

Soon after Hexensnacht is Year's Blessing, when Verena is beseeched to grant wisdom for the new year. At the start of spring, feasts mark the fading of the time of Ulric's snows and Taal's green-fingered return. Also in springtime is Ranald's Day of Folly, where trickery and deception are the heart of the revelry.

The first day of summer is given over to praising Sigmar. It is said that on this day he ascended to the heavens as a god, and the Empire celebrates their patron with great excess and ribald decoration. When autumn comes again, Ulric's return is marked by sacrificing some of the harvest upon great bonfires. These holidays are of course only the major holy days of the year, and there are countless smaller occasions and local festivals.

Shallya has no time of the year as her own. She is offered sacrifices whenever a child is born or a sickness passes, and indeed, her priests and priestesses are usually present to help with the birth or the cure. Anniversaries of both events are typically marked with subsequent gifts to Shallya, in continued thanks. While there are no widely observed holy days of Morr, Hexensnacht is sacred to his followers. The people of the Empire believe that the spirits of the dead waste away to nothing unless they are properly remembered by their descendants and their body cared for by the priests of Morr.

For a few pennies, the priests will lay a corpse within the walled cemetery grounds known as a Garden of Morr. Here the remains will be protected from necromancers and other disturbances, and the Morrite priests can perform rites that will guide the dead spirit to Morr's realm. Despite the general tenets restricting families from entering the Gardens to visit the deceased, once a year, people are allowed inside to feast and sacrifice to the dead.

Which of the gods do I believe in? Why, all of 'em, of course! By Verena's all-seeing owls, I figure if I believe in enough of them gods, a few of 'em are bound to believe in me!

– Rodrick Steiner, Frederheim Bailiff

Strange Festivals and Rituals of the Reikland

The people of the Empire are devout and fervent servants of the gods. This devotion is expressed in a variety of strange and novel ways. Here are some of the more unusual traditions found in some parts of the Reikland.

The Dooming

Some children in the Reikland, should they live to be ten years old, are given their Dooming. Meat, milk, and sometimes human blood are thrown on a brazier to take the place of the child in Morr's realm, in hope of granting the child a long life. During the ceremony, many people also receive foretellings of the manner of their death.

Mournlimb

Another ritual dedicated to Morr is Mournlimb, where soldiers and sailors gather outside a Garden of Morr to drink and toast the memory of the parts of their bodies which have gone ahead of them into death.

The Wedding Jug

Marriage in the Empire is mostly secular and – for common folk – a simple affair. A priest presides over the marriage, and in some areas of the Reikland the short ceremony is completed by the couple jumping over a jug or bowl. It is bad luck to break the wedding jug thereafter, so this item usually has pride of place in the house.

Because courtship and conception belong to Taal and Rhya, it is their priests who are most often invited to preside over weddings. However, any priest will do and priests of all faiths are common officiants–except for priests of Morr, who many feel are out-of-place at a joyous celebration.

First Quaff

The dwarfs of Karak Azgaraz celebrate the new year with a tradition known as First Quaff, where the kegs of beer made the year before are tapped and tasted for the first time. Valaya is praised for keeping the hold healthy through the winter, and the dwarfs boast to each other of all the heroic deeds they will perform in the coming year.

The Spirit Walk

Practised in small villages and towns, far from the likes of Altdorf, is the tradition known as the Spirit Walk. Elders of a community will pack one skin of water, one skin of wine, and one loaf of bread, and then walk off into the forest, or along a stream or other trail, until the bread and water are nearly gone. They then pour the wine out as an offering to the local spirits they believe protect their community, before returning home. However, in some of the more remote villages, it is said the Elders do not return from their Spirit Walk, making themselves a final offering to their patron spirits.

Two moons stare down upon the Old World from the night sky, Mannslieb and Morrslieb. Both are the subject of many myths and stories. Mannslieb is light grey, and much brighter and larger than the darkish green lump of Morrslieb. Mannslieb's name means "beloved of Manann" and the sea god's worshippers believe the moon affects the tides and oceans. Morrslieb is called the Dark Moon, and named after Morr, the god of death and dreams. Empire folks are a superstitious lot, and many folk see ill omens at work when misfortune befalls them under the pale green light of Morrslieb.

Superstitions & Folk Customs

In a world full of wizards casting spells, Daemons of Chaos tempting the faithful, and bizarre mutants roaming the wild lands, the inhabitants of the Old World are, by intent or in defence, incredibly superstitious. There is rarely a moment that goes by when the average person doesn't take into account some superstitious ritual, such as muttering a prayer after crossing the shadow of a plague victim, or tossing a bit of spilt salt over one's shoulder. Superstitions run the gamut, from the fate of a person, curses, and even the occasional boon.

Most of the superstitions in the Empire are ancient beyond compare, and few people can remember exactly what the reasoning for it may have been. Still, traditions in the Empire die hard, and regardless of whether these superstitions continue to have any power or purpose is meaningless to the majority of its inhabitants.

The hard, harsh life of most citizens of the Empire makes them view almost every event with a superstitious eye—most of it with a cynical, paranoid bent. Regardless of a person's learning or status, superstitions manage to creep into the daily routine.

A person believing they are under the effects of a curse caused by a superstition can usually be "cured" through some sort of superstitious act. Entire industries exist of charlatans and self-proclaimed mystics offering advice and ingredients to reverse the effects of a superstition gone wrong. Naturally, none of these efforts actually work, and word of people proclaiming such things may reach the ear of a witch hunter.

Magic, Religion & Superstition

There is a fine line between what is considered actual magic, divine intervention and what is nothing more than pure superstition. Scholars, priests, and wizards all debate the nature of superstition as it applies to religion and magic. They often ask themselves: does magic work because of the superstitious nature of people, or are people superstitious because of the works of magic? Do people believe in the gods because they have seen signs that strengthen their faith, or vice versa? Can one believe in both divinity and magic? These questions are difficult to answer, as the answer varies based on who is asked.

Although many wizards tend to look down on the backwards practices of the masses, most recognise the fact that such behaviour exists for a reason. More than a few beliefs have sprung up simply thanks to the idle words spoken by a wizard who then sees the Winds of Magic twist and bend due to the reactions of others reacting to their comments. Priests have also seen benedictions and prayers misinterpreted, or signs of faith proclaimed where no such evidence exists.

The typical citizen of the Empire sees little difference between superstition, magic, and religion. This is particularly problematic for those who practise magic for a living, as religion is far more accepted than arcane studies throughout most of the Empire. For most people, the world is a dangerous and mysterious place, with the evil powers kept at bay only because of the mutterings of certain phrases or performing certain acts, regardless of whether they make sense or not.

Variations in Folk Customs

Just as the Empire is really a collection of semi-unified peoples under the banner of a single Emperor, so are the beliefs of its inhabitants. Customs of worship vary from place to place. Old Worlders are notoriously insular by nature, and most rarely venture more than a few miles from their homes. As a result, beliefs and religious customs have slight variations even among settlements relatively close to one another. Those people that travel more extensively usually accept this fact for what it is, as long as the customs they encounter do not come across as blasphemous or too far from what is considered acceptable.

Most of the variations in worship are minor. For example, a town celebrating the coming of spring may require revellers to wear flowers in their hair, while those in the village down the road wear wreathes of flowers about their necks. However, there are times in which these variations can be jarring for a foreigner travelling to a different region.

Depending on their beliefs, and how rigid their mindset is, some of these variations may even come across as heretical or blasphemous. Witch hunters, always on the prowl for heresy, begrudgingly accept the fact that the Empire is large, and unified practice of a cult's customs is impossible. Still, if an isolated community takes these differences too far, the gossip and shock generated is sure to pique a witch hunter's interest.

Chapter Twelve

Corruption & Heresy

Of all the threats facing the Empire –and there are many –perhaps the most sinister are the threats posed by corruption, heresy, and the mortal's lust for power. For these threats are subtle, and may go unnoticed, growing unchecked, until the threat boils over, spilling forth its foul influence. If the Empire were only besieged by the likes of beastmen and orcs, enemies one can see and face on the field of battle, terrible though they may be, then its long history would have quite a different tale to tell.

Corruption & Cults

"Citizens who bow to the dark gods are worse than the ignorant heathen of the north. They are children of Sigmar who have turned against their brothers and sisters. Like weeds in a wheatfield, these traitors must be rooted out and destroyed so that the healthy crops can grow."

– Erich Keller, Warrior Priest of Sigmar

The four dark gods of Chaos: Khorne, Nurgle, Slaanesh, and Tzeentch, are embodiments of slaughter, suffering, madness, and mutation. So why do some degenerates stoop to worship these Ruinous Powers?

Temptations of the Dark Gods

High elves, wood elves, and dwarfs despise Chaos and are resistant to its lure. Most Empire folk revile the dark gods too, but a dangerous minority revere them. Many of these belong to Chaos from birth–mutants, despised and persecuted by society, turn to the Ruinous Powers which marked them. Likewise, those born with the gift of magic will likely be consumed by Chaos unless they conform to the strictures of the Colleges of Magic.

However, there are some deviants who offer their souls to Chaos of their own accord. The dark gods whisper temptations in dreams, and the weak of will answer their summons. A jaded aristocrat is teased with illicit thrills, a merchant is offered riches, or a scholar is shown forbidden lore. A soldier is granted fortitude, an artist is beguiled by fame, or a peasant is promised a bountiful harvest. The weak are given power; the meek, courage; the wronged, vengeance. Those who submit to the Ruinous Powers become pawns in their plans to destroy the Empire, often compelled to commit sabotage and murder.

The dark gods favour loyal worshippers with the "gift" of mutation. Some deformities are subtle – a welt raised to resemble the star of Chaos, for example. Others are blatant – an extra arm ending in a bony scythe. As their mutations become more visible, followers

of Chaos must hide themselves, or must escape to the forests to join the mutant bands which lurk there. Insanity takes its inevitable toll as Chaos twists its minions' bodies into increasingly unnatural forms.

Devotees of the dark gods await the final apocalypse when Chaos hordes storm the Empire, heralding a reign of blood and madness among civilisation's ruins. These followers dream of immortality as a daemon prince – the ultimate reward for faithful service. In reality, these wretches are nothing but chaff to their unholy masters, who will discard them once their usefulness is over.

Chaos Cults

Chaos worshippers congregate into cults which secretly gather to praise the dark gods. There is no such thing as a typical cult – practices and organisation vary wildly. However, it is worth mentioning some that have achieved recent notoriety, such as the Brotherhood of Untold Aeons. The organisation was rumoured to be composed of two dozen high-ranking Nulners, including Baron von Rundsted, the respected physician Dr. Ungern Stroessner, and eminent scholars from Nuln University.

They were led by a man they knew only as Arch-heretic Veneficus. The cultists never saw him without his ritual mask. New recruits were recommended by existing members of the Brotherhood and were vetted by the Arch-heretic. Initiates had to drink wine laced with wyrdstone powder. This drink mutated them, marking them as children of Tzeentch, the focus of the cult's devotions.

Each equinox, the cult met in the underground dome of an abandoned ice house on the grounds of von Rundsted's mansion. Attendees were robed in multi-hued vestments and wore masks depicting eight eyes arranged to form the star of Chaos. Veneficus would intone the thousand names of Tzeentch and sacrifice victims in his name.

These victims had been procured by cult member Ranulf Gastgeber, innkeeper of The Lucky Man in Nuln's Westen district. He preyed on guests who would not be missed. At the climax of the ritual, a pig representing the Emperor, dressed in purple robes with a crude crown on its head, would be set upon and devoured alive by the frenzied congregation.

On Hexenstag, 2522, the cult convened for the last time. The number of victims destined to die that night were nine, a number sacred to Tzeentch. Their blood would summon a terrible daemon, a Changer of Ways, which the cultists hoped would devastate Nuln, winning them Tzeentch's favour. But the brotherhood's secrecy had been compromised. Gastgeber had been careless selecting his victims. His activities had alerted the Witch Hunter Markus Reiner, who followed clues to von Rundsted's mansion. The Witch Hunter's men stormed the ice house, interrupting the ritual. Veneficus vanished in a cloud of brimstone, but his minions were arrested and executed. Reiner continues to hunt for their escaped master.

The Eldritch Order of the Unblinking Eye is another cult that caused a scandal relatively recently. Active in Altdorf perhaps as early as 2470, the Eldritch Eye is one of the most long-lived Chaos cults on record. Although never very large, the cult recruited from amongst the intelligentsia and taste-makers of Altdorf. Famed artists, scholars, and even, if the darker rumours are to be believed, a College-trained wizard were amongst its members.

The Eldritch Eye was organized rather like an exclusive gentleman's dinner club or salon. Indeed, to outsiders that is exactly what it appeared to be. Members would drop by for a round of stimulating intellectual debate, a fine meal, and a spot of ritual mutilation or vivisection of a still-living human. Cult members would use the social connections afforded them by the Eldritch Order of the Unblinking Eye to further their careers in purely mundane ways, without even needing to invoke prayers to the Chaos powers to get ahead.

When the cult was infiltrated by witch hunters the extent of its insidious corruption was brought to light. Although its membership was small, the cult had spread heretical thinking in the guise of purely academic discussion. Agitators on street corners were found preaching revolutionary propaganda that had originated with the Eldritch Eye. Entire art galleries were condemned as heretical and burned. The "gentleman's club" was found to conceal a temple to the ruinous powers and the corpses of many missing persons, not to mention profane artefacts and books from every corner of the world.

Fortunately, the cult was exposed before its greatest evil could come to light (and what precisely that nefarious plot was remains unknown to the general public). The majority of its members were burned by the order of Magistrate Heissman von Bruner sometime around 2510. Some few may have escaped, but the Eldritch Eye is no more.

Most Chaos cultists are largely ignorant as to the true nature of the gods they worship. Although cults devoted to a particular god do exist, the majority of Chaos worshippers lack the knowledge to discriminate and favour one god over the others. Even relatively sophisticated cults such as the Eldritch Order of the Unblinking Eye may not cleave to a single patron.

Sigmarite Dogma

The priests of the Empire perceive life as a constant struggle between those who follow the path of righteousness espoused by the Imperial faiths, and those who take the cursed road of Chaos. The Cult of Sigmar, in particular, is eager to take the battle to the enemy. Just as the mortal Sigmar defended the tribes of mankind, as a god he defends the souls of his people.

Sigmar's priests fortify their flock with holy liturgies and, when necessary, defend them with their warhammers. His priests wander the provinces, purging cultist, mutant, witch, and sorcerer with equal fervour.

A few zealous Sigmarites hold to the antiquated view that all wizards are dabblers in Chaos, and this sometimes creates a rift between the Cult of Sigmar and the Colleges of Magic. Generally, though, most priests of Sigmar accept that sanctioned wizards are a necessary evil, fighting Chaotic hellfire with hellfire.

Necromancy

Necromancers are wizards who have devoted themselves to using their magic to cheat death. Each strives to make himself as immortal as Nagash, the undying sorcerer who created the art of Necromancy so many millennia ago.

Not all necromancers begin their quest for purely evil reasons. Some may begin their dabblings in the magic of unlife in order to resurrect a loved one recently deceased, or perhaps even with the noble (if utterly insane) goal of ending the cycle of death forever for all mankind. However, repeated use of necromany corrupts the mind and body of even practitioners with the purest of intentions.

Necromancers lead solitary existences, their bodies slowly decaying around them until the line between alive and dead is completely blurred. They reanimate corpses as servants and soldiers, and may extend their influence over other undead creatures such as ghouls and wights. Necromancers are all aware that their studies will cause them to be burned at the stake, and they will balk at nothing to continue their research.

The Ruinous Powers

The four Ruinous Powers are Khorne, Nurgle, Slaanesh, and Tzeentch. No sane man utters these names. It is unlucky even to speak of them as the Chaos gods. If they must be mentioned, folk refer to them as the dark gods, and then quickly make the sign of Sigmar's hammer.

Khorne

When Chaos marauders sweep south, killing all in their path, many chant a chilling war cry: "Blood for the Blood God!" These marauders are devotees of Khorne, god of slaughter. The battlefield is his temple, where his followers massacre armies in his honour.

Resplendent in bronze armour, his dog head snarling, Khorne is said to sit on a brass throne atop a mountain of skulls reaped by his champions. His followers seek his favour with outrageous acts of violence, drenching themselves in the gore of their enemies. In the absence of a foe, they will kill their allies. Because they eschew magic as a dishonourable art, there are no sorcerers among them. The clash of arms is their sole religious duty.

Although veneration of Khorne is common among the wild tribes of the northern wastes, in the Empire it is usually only bands of outlaws who openly revere him, killing their victims ruthlessly. Rarely, an individual might run amok through a town's streets, screaming the Blood God's name and butchering everyone in his path before he is stopped. Organised cults dedicated to Khorne do not exist – he has nothing but contempt for secrets and politics.

However, there do exist illegal cults dedicated to Khaine, who some theorise is an aspect of Khorne. Khaine is extolled with stealthy murder and sanguinous rituals, his acolytes gathering in cellars or caves to wallow in the blood of human sacrifices. A series of unsolved murders in Altdorf has been rumoured to be the work of a hunters' club of aristocratic followers of Khaine, who select prey from among the populace. Individuals might pay homage to their god with random killings, ever more grotesque, while assassins and cut-throats glorify him with each furtive deathblow. Authorities aware of the cult of Khaine fear that its adherents are waiting until the time is right for them to throw aside their secrecy and redden the streets with slaughter in the name of the Blood God, whom they truly serve.

Nurgle

Disease is dreaded by nobles and commoners alike. The efforts of physicians, barber surgeons, and leech-doctors to cure the afflicted are all in vain, for sickness is the gift of Nurgle, Lord of Decay.

Nurgle's followers envision their god as a corpulent monstrosity, his pallid skin slick with fever sweat and oozing pus from a thousand sores. Entrails spill from suppurated wounds gashing his belly. Nurglings, the Plaguelord's daemonic imps, nestle between his rolls of fat, giggling like mad children. Nurgle's smile is a horror of rotten fangs, his tongue a plump, purple worm. Maggots wriggle from his flesh, and a cloud of flies drones about his head.

The Plaguelord is worshipped wherever sickness reigns. The diseased sometimes turn to him in desperation, when their prayers to Shallya, goddess of healing, go unanswered and when even Morr ignores their pleas for a quick death. They offer secret sacrifices to Nurgle for alleviation from their suffering. As they sink deeper into adoring him, they become immune to their pain, though their diseases multiply. They grow to cherish their decay, and seek to spread Nurgle's plagues throughout the Empire. Nurgle is also sometimes prayed to by ignorant countryfolk whose lands are stricken by famine. In nature, life feeds off decay; fungus thrives on a rotting log, and maggots writhe inside a corpse. Witch hunters have exterminated entire villages of peasants who fertilised their crops with the blood of human sacrifices to this vile god.

In towns, cultists of the Plaguelord might meet in stinking sewers. Nobles, burghers, and beggars gather as equals – plague does not discriminate between wealth and privilege. The cultists enact sordid rituals amongst the filth. They have been known to brew potions using ingredients squeezed from weeping buboes and to taint wells and watering holes in the hope of infecting the populace with the incurable Nurgle's Rot. Such degenerates perceive beauty in physical corruption and hear sweet music in the moans of the sick.

Slaanesh

The man who leers lustfully at a woman who is not his wife, the gourmand who fills his fat belly with delicacies, and the beauty who preens too long at the mirror, transfixed by her own allure, might think that their private indiscretions remain guilty secrets. But Slaanesh, Dark Prince of Chaos and Lord of Pleasure, is watching them and waiting. The priests of Sigmar preach abstinence and frugality for good reason: those addicted to the pleasures of life may find their obsessions have devolved into perversity. It is then that the Dark Prince ensnares them, feeding them excess in return for adoration.

Slaanesh is depicted as a towering hermaphrodite of aching beauty, male on the left side, female on the right. Soporific musk emanating from the god's flowing, perfumed hair overwhelms the senses, and his laughter trills like a thousand crystal bells. When a mortal gazes into Slaanesh's dazzling eyes, he becomes a slave to desire.

The Dark Prince has many acolytes in the Empire. He is sought by decadent aristocrats, who have tasted all things but demand more. Artists and musicians may bequeath their souls to him in return for the gift of genius. Politicians might worship him to gain charisma and majesty. The avaricious, the lustful, and the vain all adore him. Yet all are damned – their lives are not their own, but belong to Slaanesh to amuse himself as he chooses. Beneath the apparent charm and beauty of his devotees, mutations squirm and madness clouds their minds.

Cultists of Slaanesh glorify their master with secret orgies of drink, drugs, and other indulgences. While they cavort in the shadows, intoxicating their senses and writhing in ecstasy, they abandon their duties to their Emperor. As the minions of the Lord of Pleasure increase in number, the moral fabric of the Empire disintegrates.

Tzeentch

The very embodiment of Chaos, Tzeentch is the Changer of the Ways. He is master of intrigue and manipulation, of destiny and deviation, of mutation and magic. The eye of Tzeentch sees all, and his convoluted stratagems take aeons to unfold.

Tzeentch has a thousand names and a thousand forms. He can appear as a scintillating cloud of rainbow light that bewilders and confuses, or can incarnate as a giant whose skin ripples with uncountable faces that laugh or cry or rage or mock, their mouths repeating the god's words with subtle innuendos – a thousand barely heard whispers. The winds of magic howl around him, weaving incomprehensible patterns in the surrounding aethyr. His eyes are mirrors into infinity, melting the mind of any mortal who stares into them.

No one chooses to follow Tzeentch. He chooses them. A man might wake from a fevered dream to find a new limb sprouting from his chest or a third eye staring from his forehead. Sometimes it amuses the god to win devotion in more subtle ways. He will tap and tap at a man's resolve, tempting him with power, fame, or wealth – whatever his victim's secret desires are. Few mortals can resist his wiles, and they become a playing piece in his eternal game.

Tzeentch is also the Great Sorcerer. He has mastery over all magic. Even the High Elf mages and wizards of the Imperial Colleges of Magic court danger whenever they cast a spell, for a single lapse of concentration could allow Tzeentch to use them as a conduit to pervert reality.

The cults of Tzeentch are subtle, cunning, and almost impossible to root out. They riddle the towns and cities of the Empire, hatching plots to hasten its downfall. The more convoluted a scheme is, the more favourable the cultists hope it will be to their unfathomable master. Cultists of Tzeentch delight in infiltrating positions of power and manipulating events for their own ends.

They weave an intricate web of lies to trick unwitting stooges into implementing their plans. In the countryside, covens of witches and warlocks gather on hills or in grottos to sacrifice human victims to Tzeentch, praying that he will grant them arcane knowledge. Tzeentch uses his acolytes to pick at the ragged edges of the Emperor's realm, so that when Chaos invades southwards again, the Empire will unravel at the seams.

Heresy & Renegades

"Brought in another raving cultist today. The cells are getting full of them. Had to cut out her tongue to stop her spitting blasphemy. I'm looking forward to throwing her on the pyre after Witch Hunter Friedhof has got his confession. Nothing quite like the screams of a heretic to lift the soul, praise Sigmar!"

– Johan Strauss, Human Watchman

Heresy rots the Empire to its core. Unchecked, the minions of Chaos will subvert and destroy the Empire's will to resist the Ruinous Powers. Thus, the Emperor's agents must maintain vigilance day and night.

The Dangers of Heresy

According to Imperial authorities, heretics are those who choose to follow the Ruinous Powers, turning their backs on the gods of their ancestors and spurning Sigmar, the divine protector of the nation. Imperial law punishes such treachery with violent retribution.

Heresy takes many forms. Those cursed with mutation are Chaos incarnate and must be purged on sight. Their flesh rebels against the divine order of nature. Chaos cultists pose a greater danger, for they hide in towns and cities. They infiltrate politics, using their influence to undermine society. They plot to assassinate the nobility, sow discord among the masses, or sabotage the forges and granaries which supply the Empire's armies. They foment rebellion between the Empire and its allies, and stoke the embers of civil war between the provinces.

Until two centuries ago, Imperial edicts persecuted all practitioners of magic, decreeing them to be servants of Chaos. Today, the Colleges of Magic scour the Empire for those born with innate arcane power in order to assimilate them as apprentice wizards and control their powers – or destroy them before they pose a more serious risk. Witches and sorcerers – those who practise magic without legal sanction – are extremely dangerous, for their wild spellcraft can open rifts to daemonic realms.

They easily succumb to corruption, raising hellish storms that blight crops or sink the Emperor's ships. An even graver threat is posed by sanctioned wizards who experiment with forbidden lores. Their mastery of magic makes them potent foes. Chaos eats at the minds of all who deviate from the strictures of the Colleges of Magic, and the authorities exterminate renegades without mercy.

Witch Hunters

The Imperial authorities legislate heavily against heresy, and employ witch hunters to sniff out the worshippers of the dark gods. Sanctioned witch hunters are members of the Holy Order of the Templars of Sigmar, a militant arm of the Cult of Sigmar, but are controlled by both the Grand Theogonist and the Emperor.

Not even the priesthood or the state is above suspicion of heresy, and this arrangement ensures that neither can prejudice the witch hunters' investigations. Members of the Templars of Sigmar seek out secret Chaos cults, hidden mutants, and unsanctioned sorcerers and have the authority to detain suspects at will. Some work alone, while others recruit warriors, priests, and wizards to help them.

The enemy is cunning and deadly, so witch hunters use any means necessary to get at the truth. Torture is a common method of interrogation, not only to secure a confession but also to force a prisoner to implicate collaborators – cultists and witches rarely operate on their own.

Once a heretic has confessed, he and any accomplices are brought to trial, presided over by the witch hunter himself. It is testimony to the witch hunters' efficiency that very few heretics escape justice. The guilty are sentenced to be drowned, impaled, hung by the neck, nailed to a tree, or burned on a pyre. Repentance is never an option.

Many Empire folk fear witch hunters. Perhaps rightly so, for some witch hunters have been known to condemn entire villages to flame on account of a single transgression of the heresy laws. However, witch hunters execute their duties to protect the Empire. If a few in-

nocents must die for the greater good, then so be it. Multitudes would perish should a Chaos cult summon a rampaging daemon, or should a witch wither fertile cornfields.

Blood, Faith & Fire

The Holy Order of the Templars of Sigmar is the organisation that enjoys the gruesome and terrifying reputation of being the Witch Hunters. The broad brimmed hat, brace of pistols and propensity towards mass burnings that are the hallmark of Witch Hunters in the minds of the common people are all associated with this zealous group. Long supported and funded by the Cult of Sigmar, these Witch Hunters are granted their powers by the cult and the Empire.

A Witch Hunter's holy duty is to protect the Empire and its citizens from the Infernal Powers, their allies and those who would serve them. This includes Daemons, servants of Daemons, Chaos cultists, worshippers of the Dark Gods, Chaos sorcerers, Necromancers, Mutants, Beastmen and undead creatures. They are dedicated to the eradication of witches: including Hedge Wizards, Warlocks, petty sorcerers, fortune tellers, unsanctioned users of magic, deviants, blasphemers, or sinners in general. Indeed, there are few who escape the suspicions of these Witch Hunters with the possible exception of other Templars of Sigmar.

Many Witch Hunters specialize in a particular field of investigation, and spend years, or even decades, travelling the Empire to track all the members of a certain cult, or on the trail of a particular priest of a Dark God.

Agents of the Emperor

The origins of the Witch Hunters lie in the Order of the Silver Hammer. The order is reputed to have been created by Sigmar himself as a secret order to safeguard terrible items of great power and mystery. It is said that Sigmar initiated the first head of the order, Wolfgart Krieger, after he aided Sigmar in his duel against Nagash. In 1682 the Grand Thoegonist Siebold II officially recognised the order, and tasked it with the defence of the Empire. Despite this recognition, the order still operated in almost complete and utter secrecy.

After the Great War Against Chaos the new Emperor, Magnus the Pious, decreed that the Empire would be better protected by the citizens of the Empire being openly aware of the existence of the order. To this effect he changed the order's name to Holy Order of the Templars of Sigmar, and officially sanctioned it. The newly re-named order zealously embraced its new status, resulting in the infamous purges of 2306 which ended in the deaths of nearly six hundred heretics, several notable burgomeisters and even an archlector.

So was born the unnerving reputation of the zealous Witch Hunters, and the general population learned to fear and respect them. The reforms Emperor Magnus brought in were an attempt to have the Witch Hunters established as an institution woven into the fabric of the Empire, thereby becoming a visible extension of both the state and the Cult of Sigmar – under direction and command of both the Emperor and the Grand Theogonist.

Ours is a simple task. What we do is keep yourself and your loved ones from falling into the festering abyss of Chaos. Without us, I estimate it would take the daemons a month—possibly two—to amass their numbers sufficiently. Then the gutters of these streets would run with blood and entrails.

To prevent this we must seek out the infestation where ever it lurks. With fire and steel we must strike it down and strike down all who would protect it.

You seem to sweat quite a bit for someone who claims to have nothing to hide. Is there something in this conversation that makes you nervous?

– Rudiger Uller, Witch Hunter

Judge, Jury & Executioner

The changes were political though and the order's task is the same as it has been for hundreds of years. The Witch Hunters still serve as judge, jury and executioner. They have the power to arrest any Imperial citizen they believe is guilty of Witchery or Daemon-worship, and can call for that person to be tried at once – a request very few nobles or burgomeisters refuse. In theory, the accused has the right to a trial, although it is up to the individual witch hunter to determine if the offences are grievous enough to bypass a trial and end in summary judgement. As one can imagine given the Witch Hunters' fearsome reputations, very few such accusations end in trial.

On those exceedingly rare occasions when a trial does occur – often a political concession for an accused person of some social standing – the Witch Hunter serves as chief litigant for the accused, as well as chief prosecutor. Since there are so few laws on evidentiary matters, the prosecutors use oratory, implication, suspicion, and even veiled threats to persuade a lord, judge, or magistrate of the accused's guilt. If found guilty (and most people accused and brought to trial by a witch hunter are found guilty), the usual sentence for the accused is death by burning – thought to be the only way to destroy the body and purge its foul spirit at the same time.

While some Witch Hunters endeavour to condemn only the guilty to the pyre, others are less scrupulous. In fact, many believe that everyone is guilty of something. As a consequence, Witch Hunters are feared throughout the Empire. Still, it's widely agreed that the only thing more frightening than a Witch Hunter is the threat of Chaos unchecked by their endeavours!

Heresy & Literacy

The recent development of the printing press is putting a host of new pressures on every Cult in the Empire, particularly in cosmopolitan cities such as Altdorf and Nuln. The principle holy texts of the major Cults were some of the first pieces to be reproduced via printing press, of course, but pamphlets full of revolutionary and arguably heretical thought followed soon after.

The increasing influence and wealth of the middle class, coupled with increased access to the printed word, have combined to make people in the Reikland slighty more literate now than they were before. For the first time, some laypersons are reading holy books and asking difficult questions about inconsistencies found therein, real and imagined – sometimes, these are not even related to their reading abilities. Priests who for generations have preached to a flock incapable of reading their holy texts find themselves subject to impertinent questions about details of theology from the most unexpected quarters. It seems that if the trend continues even the ratcatchers may learn how to read!

The new technology and the revolutionary fervour it engenders have proved fertile ground for heretical thought. Agitators routinely question both secular and religious authority. Some have gone so far as to suggest that the individual, rather than the Cult, should determine the relevance and meaning of the holy texts.

Each Cult and indeed each priest has responded to the new breed of heresy in its own way. Most Shallyans attempt to channel the often-good intentions of the agitators towards charity and help for the poor. Vereneans often seem almost delighted to engage in spirited theological debate. The Cults of Ulric and Sigmar have, for the most part, not handled the transition as gracefully. These Cults put a great deal of emphasis on obeying authority rather than questioning it.

For their part, the new breed of heretics, revolutionaries, or agitators – whatever name they are called by – view the authority of the High Priests and their Cults as questionable at best and immoral at worst. Asserting individual authority to decide matters of religion ties directly into the new populist vision they have of the world. It takes a foolish revolutionary indeed, however, to press his heretical pamphlet on a Witch Hunter of the Order of the Templars of Sigmar…

Every major faith has its holy books, even the Cult of Taal. Whether it's the Book of Sigmar or the Teutognengeschichte, holy texts are taught to every Cult initiate as part of their basic training. In the thousands of years of history each of the Cults possesses, however, there are some texts that may once have been considered holy that are now anything but. Some are merely apocryphal, such as the Fate of Sigmar by Stefan Schneider, whereas others, such as the tawdry, ostensibly Shallyan text Passion of Mercy, are considered deeply heretical and routinely burned. Unscrupulous bookbinders will gladly print either type, so long as they think the book will sell…

Chapter Thirteen

Magic Theories

What follows is a collection of assorted essays, treatises, and texts from one Gavius Klugge, a Wizard of the Grey College, known to some as the "College of Shadows."

It is known to me and my brethren by another name. The Order of Lies.

When studying these texts, you must remain ever vigilant. Gavius Klugge, as other wizards of his order do, has twisted words and truths, blending just enough fact with his fiction to make the untwining of the two nigh impossible.

A casual or inattentive reader could easily be taken in by the scholarly sounding works, and believe it a work of historical fact and merit. But close examination and reflection upon these words will reveal them for what they are – a ruse to deceive the ill-informed and weak-willed.

Read on with caution, and may Sigmar's light illuminate what little truth is contained herein.

– Wilhelm Leopold, Witch Hunter Captain

Bah!

The Witch Hunters fear what they do not understand, as so many of the common folk of the Empire do. It is a sad state to live in, filled with such dread. A dread of the unknown.

Wilhelm purports that these works are shrouded in shadow. Yet shadow cannot exist without the light. Only with both, the light and the darkness, does one get a full view of the world.

But you need fear no longer. For the enemy of fear is Truth.

And within these pages, that is what I offer.

Truth.

And an end to your fear of the dark corners of this life.

– G.K.

The Twenty-Three Postulates on Magical Thought

Forewarning

It is my duty as a humble servant of the Aethyr, and as a Master of the Grey Order, to submit this, my life's work, a treatise on the great Colleges of Magic of Altdorf in the Reikland. Herein is offered everything a student of the Laws of Magic may need to know to bring him through his apprenticeship to the exalted status of Wizard.

As you will already know, having the wherewithal to even read this tome, the world is steeped in magic. The Winds of Magic erupt from the far north and billow across the Old World, splitting into distinct constituent Winds. These Winds bring magical energies to those who may wield them. Unfortunately, they bring with them too the pervasive and corrupting influence of Chaos.

Where these Winds ultimately come from or how they were formed are issues beyond the scope of this treatise, and I would not presume to guess. These are matters that still tax the mightiest brains of Altdorf. Expeditions have been sent, of course, to locate the fabled source of the magical Winds. And one day, we hope someone may return. But through diligent observation and assiduous experimentation, many things have been discovered on the nature of magic, and many other things can be reasonably surmised. And here for the magical student, I offer the wealth of my experience.

But I offer this with a warning. Heed, I insist, the teachings of your masters. Heed, young apprentice, the arcane techniques and strictures you are taught. Heed the discipline of ritual and tradition, and heed even your own instinct for what is true. For magic has a power that can never be truly controlled, it can only be coerced and, perhaps, placated. And he who is not wary of this, he who displays recklessness in the shadow of the awesome power of magic, he who cannot face fate's fickle boons and banes, levelly and with composure, may just be unfortunate enough to live a long life.

Gavius Klugge, Grey Wizard

Magic in the Old World

Where magic enters the world, its energy is dense and black and blows strongly; the very landscape is warped and made mad. This magical energy is often described as a Wind, flowing and churning across the landscape. As it billows southwards, the magical power splits into many distinct Winds and begins to dissipate. Even in the Old World, far from the Chaos Wastes, the Winds are barely tamable. They flow across the land as their nature dictates, leaving nothing untouched. They are everywhere and within everything, but unseen and largely unfelt by normal man.

Human wizards can see many Winds, though they may only manipulate one. This is fundamental to Imperial magical theory. Many have tried to master more than one Wind, but that way lies a dangerous and proscribed path. The Winds billow and settle in the places attuned to their nature, and wizards often seek out places steeped in their own Wind of Magic to increase the power at their disposal.

The Winds of Magic are often described in terms of colours, though these are not real colours and these Winds are not real winds. Colour is just a metaphor for the strange unreal appearance of the Winds of Magic, an appearance that can barely be described in the mundane languages of man.

These metaphors are necessary to allow wizards to communicate with other wizards, and to give non-wizards a means to discuss the arcane arts. Like a lot of the nomenclature of magic, the words in our language can only scratch the surface of truth. They are empty place holders where real meaning cannot be conveyed. To approach the truth of magic through language, one must learn one of the ancient tongues, like the arcane language referred to as Magick. *Hysh, Chamon, Ghyran, Azyr, Ulgu, Shyish, Aqshy,* and *Ghur* are the names of the Winds in the arcane tongue.

The Superiority of Teclisian Technique

The roots of modern Imperial magic can be found in the teachings of the great High Elf Archmage Teclis. His words have shaped the Imperial Colleges of Magic for the past two hundred years. Magic has been a fact of life in the Old World since even before Sigmar. It has always been treated with a mixture of fear and awe. Those rare individuals who have found that they can perceive and manipulate the Winds of Magic have been outcasts, yet have also been a necessary part of society. They have been venerated and loved, and hunted down and murdered, according to the political climate and the mood of the people.

But despite what the tales of ancient wizards might tell, the magic of long ago was a petty, ignorant thing, barely gleaning the possible. During the Great War Against Chaos, the magical power that Magnus the Pious could unite behind him – all the greatest wizards from across the Empire and the Old World – was a pathetic shadow of the forces they faced. The Empire almost fell to its knees, and it was clear that more ammunition was needed in the fight against such a powerful foe.

I have been to the court of the Emperor of men, in Altdorf, and I have heard them boast of their wizards, of their Colleges of Magic, their great gleaming towers, and their brave armies. They think that makes them safe here, with such power to protect them. And inside I laugh.

In Ulthuan, the towers are indeed great, and they gleam a thousand times brighter. And there the armies too are braver. And the cities vastly bigger. But all that pales when compared to the differences between our mages and theirs. The elderly strutting things who purport grand wisdom and arcane knowledge, who think of themselves the finest minds of the world, who pompously dictate in the belief that they have glimpsed ultimate truths, are but poor ignorant children when stood beside even a mediocre elven mage.

– Suriel Lianllach, High Elf Envoy

The Empire had a history of condemning magic use and putting an end to many spell casters as dangerous followers of Chaos, and it almost paid for such purges with its very survival. However, at the height of the Great War, Teclis arrived and convinced Magnus that magic could indeed be used against Chaos and so save the Empire. Teclis offered to school human wizards in elven techniques and teach them secrets of magic that they had never even dreamt of. Magnus accepted gratefully, and the power of Imperial wizardry did indeed leap forward enough to defeat the enemy. But even this was a double-edged sword; in the act of freeing the Empire from its terrible foe, Teclis imprisoned its wizards in a much more subtle jail.

It was thought at the time that Teclis was imparting the magic of the elves. The human wizards thought they might become as powerful as the great elven mages, and Teclis, it is said, encouraged such beliefs. It was not until later, until the humans had begun to master the colour magic they had learned, that some realised they had not been told the whole story. Teclis had deliberately withheld fundamental truths.

The humans of the Empire could indeed see the separate colours of magic. They could differentiate between Winds, and therefore take a single Wind, isolate it, and manipulate it. And thus they could tap greater power than they had ever managed before. But, true elven magic includes manipulating more than one Wind – mixing them together, combining them, taking the powers of one Wind and adding that to another to form even greater magic, taking a weakness of one Wind and canceling that with the strength of another.

The Colleges of Altdorf are vital institutions in the defence of the Empire. So says my Emperor, and I must agree. And so they are accepted into the life of the city and the province, and have gained a respectability among Sigmar-fearing folk. And should the armies be called upon, the wizards will be there supporting our people, if not in the front line of battle, then somewhere, at least, on the field.

But let me ask you this: if you were confronted with the minions of Chaos, if you were to fear for your life in the face of the bestial abominations of our enemy, if you were to stare into the eyes of blasphemous darkness, what would you rather have recourse to call upon–the almighty power of our great god Sigmar, or a mere wizard?

– Erich Keller, Warrior Priest

However, that lore was denied to the humans; Teclis taught them to manipulate one Wind, and one Wind only. He claimed that humans could never master more than one Wind; they simply did not have the talent. And so, committed to Teclisian technique, the human wizards were bound to his restrictions. They could only gaze westwards towards Ulthuan and imagine a great artist painting lifelike figures in rainbow colours, while they were stuck with a single hue upon their bare palette.

Over the years, many humans have attempted to conjure with more than one Wind. I myself have investigated such possibility (in a purely academic manner, condoned by the masters of my College, of course). Many have had to admit defeat, some have been driven mad by the effort, or worse, some may have even succeeded.

Magic Across the World

The elves present themselves as the highest authority on magic in the entire world. And I talk here of the high elves of Ulthuan. Those we call wood elves are magically little more sophisticated than our own Jade Wizards. The high elves look down upon the Colleges of Altdorf with some disdain. I have met such elves. They have helped us in the past, it is true, at our time of greatest need. But in so doing, I am sure they were careful that we were helping them more.

But Ulthuan is where we must inevitably look for greatness in magic. There are many aspects of elven practice that we must strive towards. Perhaps due to the machinations of Teclis, we are doomed to stumble along this path forever frustrated. Perhaps there is a path from such darkness into the white light.

The magic of the elves, given shape through the controlled reunification of the Winds, is able to produce spectacularly powerful effects. Teclis himself says in *The Founding of the Eight Orders*, "Ulthuan is a magical artifice, a spell so utterly powerful that it keeps the world turning." This is undoubtedly exaggeration, but even so, I am led to believe that the magic of the elves does indeed keep the world in balance and the pervading distortion of Chaos itself in check. How this is so, one can only speculate.

It's possible we should even be grateful to the high elves for this fact. Perhaps if they did not practise their magic in this manner, if their civilisation were not set the way it is, the whole world would be awash with the perverting energies of Chaos. It is food for thought, at least.

But even so, the elves are not the greatest mages of the world. Whisper it even in Altdorf, for the high elves have spies here, too, but I have discovered this in the dustiest tomes of the Great Library and the library of the Grey College. In the subtle allusions to ancient spell casters, in obscure marginalia, in enigmatic metaphors laid down within allegories in some of the fundamental works of magical theory, I have discovered hints that there is a greater magical race, ancient creatures that now live only in a corner of the globe, in the gods-forsaken jungles of Lustria. There live mages that in their magical light make the elves appear as though they are first-day, snot-nosed apprentices.

According to my notes, the creatures of Lustria are so ancient and learned that they can cast world-shaping enchantments in their sleep. They could in a dream, devastate an entire Empire army. They are almost (may Sigmar forgive me, I did say almost) godlike in their power.

So there is hope for human magic. If not only the elves can ascend the magical heights, if there is power beyond elven comprehension, there can be a way to overturn that which Teclis gifted us. There may be methods and training which can free the College wizards from their bonds and bring us towards our potential. And it was at my recommendation, I am proud to say, that the Imperial expedition to Lustria left Altdorf last year.

Moreover, across the whole world there are other lands that boast magic users of all kinds. The courts of Ind and Cathay, I hear, employ wizards in a similar manner to the Imperial nobility. There is little contact between us, but perhaps one day they can join with the wizards of the Empire and those of Estalia and Tilea, and even Araby, to share and expand the secrets of human magic.

Perhaps even the baser creatures have something to teach us, even greenskins. After all, if, as has been reported on many occasions, ignorant goblins can conjure devastating sorceries, then perhaps we can learn something from them of how to harness our own powers better. Even creatures of legend, merely glimpsed in stories, are said to wield some form of magic: one-eyed swamp monsters, six-legged forest reptiles, and many more of the world's weird and wonderful beings. And this is not to mention the perverted magic of Chaos-tainted creatures, which I discuss in depth elsewhere.

Magic, Religion, & Chaos

The relationship between the various supernatural forces of the world must be relevant to our study. The debate over that relationship rages across all the disciplines of Altdorf intellectual life. It has been declared by some that magic and what we call Chaos and divine miracles are unrelated and entirely separate. This is a natu-

ral position to take, for the source of divine miracle is evidently devotion and the favour of the gods, and the source of magic is practised technique and diligent study, and the source of Chaos is unspeakable taint and mindless evil.

These things all have very different manifestations, and all begin with different motivations. But they all have things in common, I would suggest. Is it beyond the realms of possibility that the very essence of all these things, the tiniest spark at the heart of these disparate phenomena, could be the same?

Several times before my own eyes, priests have acted as the vessel of divine will. I have witnessed miraculous healing from Shallyans. I have seen the wrath of Sigmar himself called down onto the battlefield by a devout follower. And no one would deny that the gods watch over us, and that when they deem it right they act upon our behalf. And I have of course seen many magical effects from my own College and from all the Colleges of Altdorf. I have created countless myself.

And I would ask the objective observer to put away his preconceptions and ignore the clear separation between Cult and College. Relying simply upon empirical evidence, consider the difference between a priest smiting with a hammer glowing with Sigmar's divine radiance and a wizard striking with a sword of fire created by Bright magic. Just where the difference stops and how similar they might be is a matter for conjecture and further investigation.

Likewise, I have seen the minions of Chaos upon the battlefield spraying pink fire at hapless Imperial troops and moving through defences as if they were not truly solid. And I have seen Bright Wizards wielding red fire and Grey Wizards passing through closed doors as if they were open. Let me simply assert that there may be similarities between the two, however circumstantial.

The apparent overlap between magical practice and Chaos is well documented. I myself have seen many instances. I have seen a wizard of previously impeccable character get the sudden notion to scratch unholy symbols into his face, in honour of the Dark Gods. I have seen pink flames rise up without warning to consume a fellow in the act of casting a spell. I have seen daemonic figures enter our world to snatch away a young apprentice, leaving no trace behind save a whiff of Dark Wind. Research has shown me that these phenomena may be rooted in a single unutterable source, that which has many names, but in some arcane tongues is called *Tzeentch*.

It is Imperial College doctrine that the eight Winds are the only colours that can be sensed. But there are other colours, just beyond perception, always on the edge of a wizard's focus. These Winds might be discernible to the right (or rather, wrong) sort of wizard. These Winds might be the key to new methods and new magical powers. College discipline explicitly precludes any attempt to focus upon or manipulate these strange forces. But again, deep study of the most ancient magical tomes has led me to the name in Magick of one of these execrable winds, and it is called *Dhar*.

I have been warned before about going into too much detail on this matter, or trying too hard to make the facts fit my assumptions. So, I will leave it here. But to be clear: one should not make the erroneous conclusion that just because I postulate that a wizard's spells and a priest's invocations are similar, and that a wizard's spells and a daemon's affectations are similar, that I am in any way saying that a priest's spells and a daemon's affectations are similar. I quite pointedly do not state that here.

Well, they might act high and mighty, like they're not of this world. They might act like they're better than us; they probably are better than us. But they're as human as you or I, that's for sure. They're men, just the same as you. They might pretend to be above it all, or whatever it is they do up in their towers. But men are men and they're no different. And I should know.

I can prove it. Although I wouldn't want to; and be clear, I don't intend to. I considered a little blackmail once. Nothing too greedy, nothing he couldn't afford. But I couldn't face the thought of never knowing, never being sure I was safe, never closing my eyes at night without the nagging fear that their unnatural powers and unfathomable ways might just catch up with me. Don't cross 'em. That's best.

– Klara Vogel, Barmaid

Chapter Fourteen

The Colleges of Magic

The Founding of the Colleges

Based in Altdorf, the Colleges of Magic are the eight institutions which control magic use and wizardry in the Empire. They constitute the only legal method of wizardry in the Empire. Each College specialises in one of the Winds of Magic, and that Wind shapes the nature of the College and the nature of the College's wizards.

The Colleges were formed in the days after Magnus the Pious defeated the Chaos incursion in 2304. Though the Imperial armies were steadfast and vital to Magnus the Pious's great victory, they were aided by elven mages sent from Ulthuan. The leader of these mages was Teclis. Teclis saw how the human spell casters of the day were scrabbling about in their ignorance, inhibited by primitive superstitions, and he began to teach them a greater magic.

The eight Colleges of Magic were formed at a time of dire need, hurriedly, out of necessity, but they have developed into long-lasting institutions that dominate all magical research in the Empire. Over the two hundred years or so of their existence, the Colleges have grown in power and influence. Now, they pull strings at virtually all levels of Imperial society. A number of nobles, and all manner of institutions and organisations, employ or consult members of the College orders. In a very short time, the Colleges have come to rival all but the largest religious cults for influence in public life and the Imperial court.

Despite their power, the Colleges are still largely unknown and mistrusted by the populace. The common citizen of the Empire may find wizards awe-inspiring in theory, but he rarely encounters one in the flesh, and might not be pleased to do so. The existence of magic is common knowledge, but at the same time, it is still a thing of fantasy and wonder, and often only half-believed. Unlike the religious cults, which are seen to help the people and have a practical effect on everyday life, the Colleges of Magic, even in Altdorf, are seen as otherworldly and aloof. Beyond Altdorf, all sorts of superstitious nonsense is spouted and believed about them.

Importantly, the Colleges report directly to the Emperor. This gives them a certain amount of power to bypass the usual protocols and laws, and it makes them envied by nobles and servants of Imperial and provincial governments alike. This independence of action

from the rest of the Empire's institutions, and this exemption from certain laws of the land puts the Colleges on a par with the officially approved religious cults; in many matters, they are a law unto themselves.

Many of the Colleges are housed in grand conspicuous buildings in Altdorf – or at least conspicuous to those with the gift of magical sight. To commoners, some of the College buildings are shrouded and obscured by magic, virtually invisible. Several are near the Imperial Palace, where their influence is strongly felt. The Colleges are not just collections of wizened sages, sitting around discussing arcane theory in dull tones. They are complex, resourceful institutions supported by many staff, servants, and retainers, and they possess a network of colleagues and sympathisers spread throughout the Empire and the Old World.

The Colleges strive to present a united front to the world, and usually they work together to further their common interests. Sometimes, though, bitter rivalries break out onto the wider stage, and one College might actively attempt to curtail the influence of another. There also exists the inevitable infighting and petty feuds that develop in any institution wielding power and influence.

Each College is ruled by a Patriarch, an esteemed individual who has complete authority over the affairs of his College. Though all-powerful in theory, in practice the Patriarch realises the importance of asking for and taking advice from the Wizard Lords of the College, when prudent. The Colleges are represented before the Emperor by the Supreme Patriarch, who ascends to the position by besting his predecessor in a harrowing contest of magical prowess fought in the Hall of Duels.

The health of each College's finances varies from order to order, but most Colleges have many important patrons, including Elector Counts and, of course, the Emperor himself. Wealthy families pay to get a child into an apprenticeship, but those who enter the Colleges are from all walks of life. The nature of magic means that the Colleges are, to an extent, meritocratic institutions.

Inevitably, as they go about their business, wizards are not above making a profit from their activities, for themselves and their order. Any help that the Colleges give outsiders notoriously comes with a high price or strings attached. Many Colleges have long-standing relationships with some institutions, which suggest a bond beyond the merely financial.

The Colleges have minor wizards' houses and towers throughout the Empire, as a means of spreading their influence, conducting experiments, and making observations, as well as to keep a keen eye on political and magical events. Some of these magical outposts are obvious to all and are often miniature representations of the College buildings in Altdorf. But some appear merely as conventional businesses and residences, unrecognisable to the untrained eye. The clues pointing to their real purpose are only available to those with special knowledge or who can detect the presence of magic.

History of the Colleges

In the aftermath of the Great War Against Chaos, Magnus the Pious worked incessantly to rebuild the Empire. To aid him, the high elf mage Teclis proposed that he should organise the wizards who had served so effectively against Chaos. Magnus trusted in Teclis's judgement, much to the chagrin of many of the Emperor's advisors, who were wary of giving the high elves too much trust.

Teclis believed that the human mind could safely control only a single Wind of Magic, because men were simply not as attuned to the Winds as the high elves nor did they live as long. Under Teclis's guidance, historians credit Magnus with establishing the Colleges of Magic with eight distinct orders, each order focused on the study and application of one of the eight Winds.

Some scholars claim the founding of the Colleges of Magic is the single most significant event to occur in the long and storied history of the Empire, heralding an age of prominence.

Others claim it is one of the lowest points in our history, a harbinger of our doom. They claim that war in the Empire has risen steadily since the founding of the Colleges, and the threats of Chaos have increased tenfold.

These latter scholars are obviously daft.

– Gavius Klugge, Grey Wizard

Female Wizards

In the old days, we used to think that females did not have the discipline to be proper Collegians, nor were they able to face the rigours of a military campaign. And so they were only rarely admitted to a College, and many witches were burned. But today, a more enlightened age, we increasingly realise that this is not the case.

But, because of the history and the general distrust of wizards in some places, the people are still less keen for their daughters to go to College than their sons. And that is why today's Collegians are more likely to be men, and untrained wizards more likely to be female. And the further you get from Altdorf, the more discrepancy there is.

But I have been charged with the guidance and education of female apprentices and male apprentices alike. I have taught them the underlying techniques of Shadow magic of my Order.

Through tedious repetition and judicious application of my boot, I have battered into their thick skulls the fundamentals of ritual and the tenets of theory. And the only difference I have ever perceived between them, man and woman, boy and girl, is that, to my mind, the female smells slightly less unpleasant.

– Gavius Klugge, Grey Wizard

Even the establishment of the Colleges was controversial to the high elves. Some sensed a frailty in mankind, believing that men might one day fight against the high elves and that the knowledge Teclis was granting might eventually prove to be the elves' undoing. Many high elves were content for the humans to go back to being the magically inept people they had always been. Others supported Teclis's involvement. After all, elves possessed direct access to mankind's new-found powers, so who better to influence and guide their development?

The magical principles to which the Colleges adhere were purportedly drawn up by Teclis himself, which is why some wizards refer to them as the Teclisian Laws of Magic (or more simply as the Laws of Magic). These laws are the cornerstone of Collegiate magic. Each order's Patriarch keeps a copy of the tome. Over the years, however, the human wizards have built upon these fundamental principles, and College magic is much more sophisticated than it was two hundred years ago. It continues to grow in power and purpose as human wizards constantly strive to unravel the many mysteries of the Winds of Magic.

It is said that the founding of the Colleges in the midst of the Great War Against Chaos is precedent that the Colleges ultimately exist to defend the Empire. In the aftermath of the Great War, however, the Colleges gradually gained increasing independence from the army. While there is still a strong link between the military and the Colleges, it is not as direct as it used to be, although most orders, particularly the fiery wizards of the Bright Order, are still heavily involved in the Emperor's campaigns and are invaluable battlefield assets.

As the influence of the Colleges grew, disputes with the Cult of Sigmar became more common. For hundreds of years, the Cult of Sigmar had fervently protected the Empire from foul magic. Many Sigmarites had trouble coming to terms with the idea of sanctioned wizards working on behalf of the Emperor, openly practising magic for the defence of the realm. Even today, there is friction between the more zealous followers of Sigmar and College wizards. Despite this, many witch hunters find themselves having to work hand in hand with Collegiate wizards to track down renegade wizards who have turned to dark magic and Chaos.

Today, the Colleges look back upon a long and dedicated tradition of disciplined and loyal service dedicated to keeping the people of the Empire safe. Despite this, many of the Empire's citizens do not, and probably never will, trust Collegiate wizards. Superstitions concerning magic and its link to Chaos, fuelled by the Sigmarites and the witch hunters, will forever cast a shadow of fear.

Joining a College

Every aspiring wizard in the Empire is expected to join a College and become an apprentice. Children showing signs of magical latency are sent to Altdorf by their families before they can be reported to the authorities and arrested. Even the very poor have the opportunity to send their children there, and, theoretically at least, all applicants are treated equally. The net is cast wide by the Colleges, but inevitably some potential applicants miss the opportunity. Even though there has been a stigma attached to magical use throughout the centuries and a mistrust that persists even today, the Colleges are becoming increasingly respectable. Among the petty gentry, minor nobility, and the wealthy urban merchants, having a son or daughter attending a magical College is now a thing to be proud of.

Some Colleges send out wizards to scour the countryside looking for prospective apprentices. They use their powers to sense magic use and home in on anyone that might be gifted. If those they find are suitable, the prospects are brought back to the Colleges. However, if the young magic user is too wild in his ways, or has already picked up dangerous techniques, he is put to death instead before he can cause more havoc. This is why the family and friends of a budding wizard will sometimes hide him or send him away from their village instead of offering him to the authorities. Wild rumours spread about the nature of the Colleges and what happens to the children there.

Some children with no talent whatsoever are sent to the Colleges by their pushy parents. These can be accepted into the College to perform other College functions, especially if their parents offer high apprenticeship fees. Those lucky children that do go to Altdorf are strenuously tested by the masters of the Colleges to see if they are suitable candidates, to determine which College they might be most suited to, and to ascertain whether they have already acquired dangerous habits. Sometimes the child is considered a lost cause and is never seen again.

Any children deemed suitable are admitted and expected to serve their College resolutely for the rest of their lives. It should be apparent through the magical talent that the child already shows and from the cantrips he has created which of the Colleges suits him best and which Wind of Magic he has the most affinity for. The

question of which College he joins is an important one, because once he has been trained to focus upon and manipulate a certain Wind, according to the Laws of Magic, he will never be able to affect another Wind.

The Colleges guard their expertise carefully and police their own students and masters with vigilance sometimes bordering on the paranoid. For those who wield the most power also know how corrupting and dangerous these forces can be, if not handled with the utmost discipline and respect.

Anyone entering a College is made to take the Oath of Loyalty. The oath took many years to hone so that all interested parties were content with the wording. The oath is ostensibly to the Emperor above all else, as Magnus the Pious insisted was only right and proper. But logicians from the Gold College are satisfied that they have discovered enough semantic ambiguity in the wording that wizards, if they wish, can place the service of their College above all else and still hold true to the oath. Similarly, the Elector Counts are inclined to interpret it in a manner that suits them.

Once a wizard joins a College, he is expected to stay within the organisation until he dies, even if he shows no magical talent, or leaves Altdorf and settles elsewhere. Wherever life takes him, a wizard is a member of his College first and foremost, and, with a few notorious exceptions, will obey to the best of his ability any instruction he receives from the College hierarchy.

College Ranks

To reflect an aspiring magister's dedication to his studies and proficiency with his chosen Wind, many of the Colleges have developed a hierarchy, by which to refer and designate its members. While each college has its own rules, structures, and guidelines, the following ranks are more or less consistent between the Colleges.

Apprentice

The long College apprenticeship is filled with many tedious chores, boring learning by rote, repetitive ritual, and lots of uninteresting, extremely unmagical things, where the apprentices rarely leave the College buildings. All apprentices are expected to apply themselves diligently, and to demonstrate obedience, discipline, and hard work in all things. After a while, however, once an apprentice can be trusted by his masters, he will likely be sent on more interesting tasks. These tasks may be to carry out errands outside the College, sometimes requiring many miles or travel. This is a test; although the apprentice will not be aware of it, the College will be keeping a careful eye on him and making sure that he is safe. And by safe, this does not mean that the apprentice is looked after and not exposed to danger. It means that he does not employ proscribed techniques, nor is touched by the Ruinous Powers, nor seeks to research forbidden lores.

Often an apprentice, especially an individual from one of the less regimented Colleges, will be allowed to roam free for a year or so towards the end of his apprenticeship in order to gain more life experience and be tested by the real world. If he acquits himself well during that stage, then that is a sign that he is ready to end his apprenticeship and become an Acolyte of his College.

Some apprentices, through lack of ability or discipline, never become a wizard. Some stay at the College and, despite their lack of talent, are regarded as useful and loyal members (and hardly looked down upon at all by the successful wizards). Others leave the College to lead a life in the outside world. Even those who do leave and pursue other goals, though, are expected to keep their loyalty to the College, feel beholden to it, and act as its servant and agent throughout their whole life.

Apprentices wear long robes in their College's colour, and a hat, usually a small skullcap. As a wizard rises in rank within the College, his robes often become more decorated with symbols that reflect experience, rank, and knowledge. He also wears larger and ever more conspicuous headgear, and carries an ever more ornate staff.

Acolyte

Once an apprentice graduates, he becomes a member of the College with the full rank and privilege afforded to all official wizards of the Empire. This includes the right to cast spells and hold certain items and tomes that would be proscribed to any normal member of the public. It also gives him certain privileges under law. Collegiate wizards who are arrested in the Empire are often (but not always) handed over to their College to be judged.

The lowest rank of College wizard is called an Acolyte. These aspiring wizards can be distinguished from apprentices in various ways. Depending on the College, they may wear a bigger hat, more gaudy robes, or wield staffs adorned with more charms and trinkets. As his affinity with his chosen Wind grows, the Acolyte starts to take on more traits associated with his order. For example, the hair of an Acolyte in the Bright Order turns red, his temperament becomes more volatile, and the glowing tattoos of *Aqshy* start to manifest more noticeably on his body.

Wizard Staffs & Other Arcane Foci

When an apprentice enters a College, he acquires the raw materials for making his own arcane focus. This is usually a staff of some form.

The materials used are those which possess an affinity for the relevant Wind of Magic. The apprentice creates the object as a tool to help gather and focus the magical energy required for the casting of spells.

For example, Bright Wizards often make swords out of steel decorated with rubies; this is used as a melee weapon, but is also perfect for gathering the magical wind of *Aqshy*. Amber Wizards use hardwood decorated with, appropriately, amber and animal skulls, which help attract the magical energy of *Ghur*.

Many apprentices spend long hours attuning this creation to themselves and their Wind. The staff is a sacred object to the wizard, one he will try to keep all his life, gradually adding pieces to it. By the time a wizard is old, his staff can look very odd and unwieldy, but possesses great power.

For more information on attuned items, see the *WFRP Player's Guide*. With your GM's permission, an Apprentice Wizard character may begin the game with a single item with the Attuned 1 quality.

The Acolyte has much more freedom than he did as an apprentice. He has few College responsibilities to start with, and if he wants he can choose to throw himself into College life and gain influence and learning that way, staying close to the College and working directly for his College's goals.

However, some wizards choose to leave the College to adventure, gaining knowledge, power, and experience through more exciting, but also more dangerous, pursuits. They will still be in contact with their College and remain loyal servants of it, therefore, any knowledge and artefacts gained are expected to be shared with or donated to the College. They should also be ready to go on long journeys and other quests at the behest of their College when required.

The current Supreme Patriarch is Balthasar Gelt, who earned his position by defeating Thyrus Gorman of the Bright Order in a Wizard Duel. Many strange stories surround Gelt. Some say he was disfigured in a magical experiment that went wrong and his entire body has turned to gold, a fact he attempts to conceal behind flowing robes and a golden face mask. Needless to say, he is one of the most feared and respected figures ever to lead the Empire's wizards.

Neither lifestyle is more approved than the other. Both are necessary for the running of the College, and the Colleges generally appreciate the advantages of having a varied membership. Naturally, though, the majority of governing posts within the College are held by wizards who remain in Altdorf and who have spent some time pulling the relevant political strings. On the other hand, an adventuring wizard might return with some great magical treasure or discovery and force his way into an important post within the College that way.

Acolytes can fulfil other roles in society. Many noble families (and even some municipalities) like to keep wizards on their staff for advice and defence. Some have arrangements with specific Colleges so that they are sent a suitable wizard to become part of their household. This suits the College, as such an appointment is a good way to spread influence, and a better way to gather intelligence, and serves as good training for a newly graduated Collegian. However, a wizard's first loyalty is always to his College, whatever he may tell his noble employer.

Wizard

There should come a time when an Acolyte is ready to ascend to the next tier of the College system. This is typically decided by a meeting of the Wizard Lords, who are advised by others who may know the candidate better. If it is decided that the Acolyte might be ready to take on more responsibilities, then the candidate is given a grilling interview about his progress and recent deeds. If he can hold his own, he is bestowed the title of Wizard and given a bigger hat. Though high-flying Acolytes can be promoted quite young as a direct result of good deeds and impressive achievements, the honour is also awarded to time-served and experienced Acolytes as a reward for their lengthy service.

A wizard is given more responsibility in the College. He now has the clout to launch his own projects on behalf of the College, and even to recruit apprentices to his cause. A Wizard might also get his own room at the College. Sometimes this room is little more than a cell in the bowels of the College building; sometimes it is a sumptuous laboratory overlooking the Imperial Palace with spectacular river views. There is no little rivalry over who gets the most prestigious chambers.

A wizard is called upon to aid his College in more dangerous jobs, as he should now be up to the task. He may even get called to campaign in the Imperial army. However, a wizard becomes a more valuable and precious resource as he gains power and experience, and so is used more carefully and sparingly by his College. Suffice to say, if a wizard gets sent on an important but plainly dangerous task, it will be because either the College is very keen for the mission to succeed, or he has made some influential enemies at the College.

Higher Ranks

The highest ranks of the College are Battle Wizard, Master Wizard, and Wizard Lord. Though great wizards and mighty intellects, they have a reputation for intolerance of any but the highest standards, and for giving their inferiors short shrift. But that is only to be expected of such illustrious personages. An apprentice might look up to these figures in awe, never believing that he could reach the heights of technique and power that these rare individuals have achieved.

Wizards become known by their function in the College. One who goes out with the armies fighting battles, or perhaps adventures on behalf of the College searching out dangers and fighting evil, are given the rank of Battle Wizard. Conversely, one who stays at his College and concentrates perhaps on research and the more cerebral side of wizardry becomes known as a Master Wizard. Though Battle Wizards and Master Wizards are officially of exactly the same rank and status, there is often rivalry between the two vocations. Battle Wizards look down upon Master Wizards for their lack of practical experience and bravery, while Master Wizards look down upon the Battle Wizards for lacking the necessary philosophical grounding and proper technique.

Successful Battle Wizards and Master Wizards become Wizard Lords. This is the highest rank and usually the pinnacle of any wizard's career. Wizard Lords essentially run the College, dictating the daily affairs and guiding long-term strategy. These are highly respected people, only a little short of true noble status in the Empire. The Master Wizards of a College sometimes get to choose one of their number to become the College's Patriarch.

The Patriarch is the most powerful and respected Wizard Lord of the College. Sometimes the Patriarch is elected by the Wizard Lords of the College, and sometimes he is chosen by a ritual magical duel. The purpose of the Wizard Duel is to find the most powerful magical mind, while not endangering the participants unduly (although, several aspiring Patriarchs over the years have been left shadows of their former selves after suffering an emphatic defeat). The Supreme Patriarch, the head of all the Colleges of Magic, is determined in a similar way.

Ranks & Symbols

Wizards surround themselves with symbols and metaphor. This is sometimes to hide the truth or to protect it, but often it is simply because what is expressed in their magic cannot be expressed in any other way. The metaphors and symbolism can serve to communicate elements of magical technique and procedure. Some of this expression manifests in the very clothing and trappings of a wizard.

The study and practical application of magic is, of course, a very complex and nuanced discipline. The study of wizards can be, too. There are any number of tiny signals that can communicate a wizard's place in the hierarchy of his College.

The most blatant sign, and intentionally so, is the simple colour of a wizard's robes. This leaves no one in any doubt as to which College a wizard belongs. Then it starts to get complicated. Apprentices are discouraged from adorning their robes too enthusiastically, and so wear generally plain garments. They also wear small hats or simple skull caps. More experienced apprentices might feel that they have an idea of what an Acolyte wears, and so might try to ape that in some way. However, the differences are subtle. The language of a wizard's dress is directly determined by the language of magic, and so comprehension of a dress code comes no sooner than comprehension of rituals and spells. Therefore, any experienced wizard can easily tell an ambitious apprentice from a new Acolyte, even though the average person would barely notice that they do not look the same.

Many elements of a wizard's dress are enhanced as his knowledge progresses: the staff, the adornment of the robes in symbols and devices, the size and style of the hat, the wearing of charms, the sporting of magically imbued tattoos, and so on. All these contribute to a wizard's imposing presence, and they all change over time as the wizard rises in rank during his College career.

The distinctive mode of dress of Collegiate wizards serves several purposes. In addition to identifying rank and order of a given wizard, the styles serve as a sort of unofficial uniform, satisfying the elitist tendencies of many wizards. It also ensures that it is very difficult for an imposter to pretend to be a college wizard. Some unsanctioned spell casters have been known to pose as college wizards in order to give their activities the look of legitimacy – it is not hard to fool the man on the street in this regard. While experienced wizards recognise the rank and standing of a member of his own College quite easily, even he might get confused when dealing with another College. Some organisations, such as the Cult of Sigmar, have agents who are able to read the appearance of a College wizard as a safeguard against witchcraft, and they boast that they can tell any imposter at a glance.

Sometimes an official writ or document is legitimately important. Wizards on a mission may carry a letter of introduction from their superior or employer. Carrying such a writ is a good way for a wizard to get semi-official backing and to gain admittance to people and places he might not otherwise have access to. It is likely this practice contributed to the myth of the wizard's warrant.

For some reason, rumours persist among certain commonfolk that a wizard needs to have a special warrant from the Colleges of Magic to practice his craft. This is not actually the case; there is no such thing as a "wizard's warrant." However, due to the misperception that such things exist, some wizards, especially those who need to travel far and wide, carry certain papers with them describing their position and signed by someone of rank – usually the Elector Count of the province they are in. This added bit of precaution can keep a group of commoners from turning into an angry mob if they're expecting certain fictions to exist.

Perceptions & Superstitions

In Altdorf, wizards are respectable gentlemen for the most part. They are powerful and not to be crossed, but they are civilised and reasonable. They are part of the establishment, and better than the common man. All Altdorfers have seen a wizard walking the city streets at some time or other, even if they haven't witnessed one fending off muggers with a flaming sword.

Away from the big city, however, this is not always the case. In the farthest flung corners of the Empire and off the beaten track, wizards are strange and unusual. They are treated with distrust and suspicion by the common folk. A local landowner might try to prove his urbane credentials by attempting to take the presence of a wizard in his stride, but even he would be wary. A wizard travelling on his own in this sort of area must trust to his luck or his confident demeanour to keep the locals at bay.

Many ideas about wizards and magic circulate through the Empire, often based on superstition, hearsay, and rumour. Such ideas seem typical of the uneducated, illiterate commonfolk, but have little basis in fact.

For example, onions are considered a good magical defence. If a wizard walks into town, several of the unhinged and esoteric folk might immediately eat a whole onion as quickly as they can for the protection it is supposed to afford. This is also the reason why some travelling wizards think that all common folk smell of onions. Cats are thought to be wizards in disguise. That is why some of the more batty housewives of Altdorf, especially in the districts close to Colleges, take to feeding stray cats and treating them well. It is also the reason why cats are distrusted in more bucolic areas.

There is also an alarmingly popular theory that all wizards call upon the Dark Powers. Even among the middle classes, it is sometimes thought that wizards truck with the forbidden forces and are just state-sanctioned Chaos cultists. Some citizens are happy enough with this supposed state of affairs, content to believe that wizards are fighting Chaotic daemonfire with daemonfire of their own. It is also a common belief that wizards cannot be killed except by burning. In other places this is drowning, and in others hanging. In some places it is all three.

Discipline

A wizard who strays from the strict ethos of his College in minor matters is likely to be given a talking to by his superiors and warned to change his ways. How much leeway he is given depends on the rank of the offender and the nature of the transgression, not to mention how much influence and good will he has already garnered in the College. Depending on the evidence, a wizard suspected of nefarious action may be given a proper trial before three Wizard Lords, held within their College.

This is especially true if he is of previous good standing and well connected. One who turns to dark magic or other proscribed techniques to advance his powers will undoubtedly be expelled from the College (a technicality) and then usually put to death. Some renegade wizards are kept imprisoned within their College until they have been sufficiently interrogated. A rare few may be allowed to live just long enough to write down their experiences or a full disclosure of their deeds.

If a renegade wizard escapes, his College will want him dealt with as soon as possible. In many cases, the fearsome Battle Wizards are sent to track him down and put an end to his foul practices. The last thing that a College wants is one of its members going rogue and wreaking havoc. It is bad for their reputation. The College will try to keep things quiet if it can, but it will make things public if that is the only way to ensure that a renegade wizard gets brought to justice. And death is the only justice in such circumstances.

Tomes & Artefacts

It is traditional for a wizard to have his book of magic tucked under his arm. A wizard researches and learns throughout his career, and it would be impossible for most of them to keep everything they need to know in their heads. So, just as in any number of occupations, a wizard makes plenty of notes. A number of wizards write up all their research into a single volume and carry it around with them wherever they go.

That is convenient, especially if they have to travel a lot. But many wizards are wary of possessing a single tome wherein they write down everything of worth – what if it got lost? Hence many wizards treat their notes like any tradesman might treat them, sensibly filed away, spread around the office, written up in a series of logs, or whatever takes their fancy. Some are very protective of their knowledge and hide all their notes around their dwelling, for example: under the floorboards or in the mattress. It takes all sorts. Certainly, though, they must write down everything in Magick, for it is only this arcane language that can possibly convey upon the page the sublime notions of spell casting.

It is well known that certain materials have affinity for certain Winds of Magic. Some of these materials can hold concentrated amounts of the magic. Powerful spell casters can imbue objects with focused and purposeful magic that can affect the properties of the object in unnatural ways – these are known as magic items. Dwarf runesmiths are well known for their skill at enchanting in this way, but they are not the only ones able to do this.

In the distant past, it seems that there were many items of great magical power. Some of the most famous in the Empire are the Runefangs, which are magically imbued swords crafted by the dwarf smith Alaric the Mad as gifts for the Elector Counts back in Sigmar's era. Over time, the craft and art necessary to create such magnificent items have been lost to all but a few. That is why items of powerful magical properties are nearly always extremely old. Because of their age and rarity, they are highly prized and jealously guarded. The Emperor himself has a grand collection of magical items, as do the Elector Counts and other prestigious individuals.

Today, minor magical items are still created. Petty charms and magical trinkets are not uncommon, but whether these hold any real enchantment or simply feed superstition and wishful thinking is open to debate. Wizards should be able to spot a magical item by the Winds of Magic that billow around it, but it is a much more difficult task identifying the precise nature of the magic and how it might affect the object's function. Magical items could take almost any form, but are most often weapons, armour, or amulets.

Being conduits of magic, however, these arcane items are inherently dangerous and should be treated with the utmost care. The more powerful the item and the more imperfect its construction, the more chance it has of being subverted by unpredictable energies, or even becoming influenced by Chaos itself. There also exist deliberately cursed items dreamt up by perverted sorcerers. Some say that these contain the very souls of captured daemons, which attempt to possess the mind of their wielder and bend it to their own terrible will.

Magical Sight

The Winds of Magic are perceived as separate colours by wizards and other talented individuals. This ability is called magical sight – but to fearful folk it is known as the witchsight. It is a fundamental ability that a wizard requires to function. For without being able to perceive the Winds, how could he begin to manipulate them?

In the same way that the Winds of Magic are not real winds, they are not real colours. These are just metaphors that wizards use to help describe these effects to the untalented. What a person with magical sight actually perceives is beyond the scope of mundane language.

All magic affects the Winds in some way or another, and some wizards are extremely skilled at reading such traces. A person who reads the Winds of Magic could glean all sorts of useful information. If a spell has been cast in a place or upon an object recently, then the colour of that Wind will still be present in the area. If a wizard has passed through a place recently, or touched something there, a trace of magical colour might still be lurking in concentrations higher than one might expect.

More specific information could be available. A certain spell from a particular caster might always leave the same shape in the Wind. And if it is viewed soon enough after, another wizard might recognise such a spell signature and so know who cast it. Magical items have a distinct signature too, and a wizard who has examined an object before would be able to recognise it again or tell if it has recently been present nearby, or can even make an educated guess as to the function and power of that object.

Eventually, of course, such a signature will dissipate to such an extent that it will be impossible for a wizard to make sense of it.

For more information on the rules governing magical sight, see the magic section in the *WFRP Player's Guide*.

It was at a meeting of the College culinary committee to decide the menu for the Hexenstag eve feast. I have often observed how such petty affairs are apt to bring simmering feuds to the boil. Gorgi Hackheim was set on something fowl, like swan or duck, but Klaus von Detterlick made it plain that he preferred a nice big portion of beef. Hackheim said it certainly showed, and patted his decidedly lithe belly to leave us in no doubt that he was referring to von Detterlick's more ample figure: a touchy subject. And so the duel ensued.

Von Detterlick locked his gaze upon Hackheim's one good eye and raised his arm. As his brow furrowed in concentration, he channelled the Wind of Ulgu into his fist. We could clearly see the lamplight shadow that his hand cast upon the wall suddenly begin to change shape. It seemed to possess long bestial claws, and the unnatural shape grabbed at Hackheim's own shadow. It caught it, and as it did, Hackheim himself was rapt by the magical forces, unable to move. Von Detterlick went for the kill. He squeezed his own fist, and the shadowy fist squeezed too.

Hackheim gasped for breath, but then suddenly was gone. Disappeared. Von Detterlick looked around uneasily to see Hackheim appear behind him, and enshroud von Detterlick like a cloak. Von Detterlick struggled back, and soon the two figures were scuffling around desperately on the floor, in a most undignified manner.

But von Detterlick had been fooled. Hackheim was never there. It was all an illusion. The mists of Ulgu coalesced a few yards away, as Hackheim returned to the room. He stood above von Detterlick's prone figure, and threw a vague serpentine shape at his head. Von Detterlick tried to flick it away with a gust of wind, but it hit him squarely in the face. Von Detterlick was left writhing on the floor screaming as the shadow-snake bit at his flabby jowls.

Duck a l'orange it is then, announced Hackheim, smugly.

Chapter Fifteen

The Eight Orders

When Teclis worked with Magnus the Pious to found the Colleges of Magic, the study of each of the Winds of Magic was given over to its own order, for Teclis reckoned the human mind and will were not strong enough to wield more than one single Wind of Magic. And so, the Eight Orders were formed.

The Eight Orders study the Eight Winds and are named for them– Amber, Amethyst, Bright, Celestial, Gold, Grey, Jade, and Light. The following pages take a closer look at each of the Eight Orders, examining that College's role and the wizards who practise its arts, while seeking to provide some insights into what makes each order unique.

The Amber Order

…which utilises the Amber Wind, called Ghur, *whose colour is Amber, whose Lore is that of the Beasts, whose rune is the Arrow, and whose practitioners are called Shamans.*

– *From* The Founding of the Eight Orders, *credited to Teclis*

The Amber Wind is a wild magical tempest which blows through the untamed land where few have trodden. It pools in the blood and bones of savage beasts, as well as in their lairs. Amber Wizards weave their Wind into spells of rage and destruction. Tapping a feral ferocity, they channel the wild animal and almost become the beast, as they let rage loose upon the world. Amber wizards tend to be solitary individuals, often preferring the company of wild beasts to men.

The College of the Amber Order

The Amber Order is the only College that does not have a building in the city of Altdorf. It has very few proper buildings at all. The wizards of the College much prefer the wilder places that have never been cultivated. It could be said that the College itself exists in all the wild places of the world.

Shamans

Amber Wizards follow their instincts; they feel that their wanderings will lead them naturally into worthwhile situations. Members of the College certainly plot and plan, but their machinations seem to be long-term schemes and strategies. Communication across the wide diaspora of the Amber Brotherhood is vital to the running of the College, and so apprentices and acolytes are often required to run errands and carry messages across the Old World for their masters. It has been said by disparaging critics of the Order that defending the wild beasts of the Empire is often more important to Amber Wizards than defending its human population.

I once had a goblin caravan under surveillance down in the Border Princes, alongside a brother of Amber. He had got us through the wilderness, and it was now my job to observe as closely as I could. We had orders simply to watch and not to engage. And they were fair orders, for the goblins numbered several hundred. As we watched, the goblins fell upon a caravan heading for the dwarf city of Barak Varr.

Soon they were butchering the merchants and their guard with much glee. We stood by, until some of the goblins ran down a couple of draft horses, stopping them very close to us.

They hacked the animals up and began to feast. It was then, and only then, that my Amber companion roused. Suddenly, I could feel the Winds of Ghur push me aside, and he sprang upon the goblins, appearing for all the world as a lion.

I, of course, stuck to my orders, observing the carnage with diligence and impartiality.

–Gavius Klugge, Grey Wizard

Amber Wizards grow to look wild and unkempt with long hair. Their features sometimes change to resemble that of the animal for which they have an affinity. They have no time for etiquette and urbane sophistry, but have a reputation for savagery and unpredictability, and, if truth be told, many delight in the fear they provoke in more civilised folk.

Becoming an Apprentice

Finding an Amber Wizard's apprentice is a much more informal affair than in other Colleges. Sometimes a youth will be drawn instinctively to the Wind of *Ghur*, follow it away from civilisation, and eventually come across a Shaman. Sometimes an Amber Wizard will be drawn during his wanderings to a youth in whom he senses the power of magic burning. He will simply steal the child away and bring him up in the lore of the Amber Brotherhood. When he is ready, an apprentice Amber Wizard is expected to wander far from his master and to follow his own instincts, like a young wild animal evicted from its lair by its parents.

Wizards of the Amber Brotherhood yearn to be away from civilisation, living in wilderness caves or sleeping under the stars. They drink from streams and hunt for their food. They catch their prey with their bare hands and eat its flesh raw, or so I am told. These are not hardships for an Amber Wizard, but a joyous celebration of the energy of their magical path. Their rituals and totems channel *Ghur* into their bodies, enabling them to take on the characteristics of the animals they venerate. This brings out the caster's feral urges in powerful ways, and Amber Wizards risk losing part of themselves to their animal instincts.

Opinions on the Amber Order

The Order's elusive base is said to be a series of caves high in the Amber Hills just outside Altdorf, but I myself have looked for this and say it does not exist. Others say it is further afield, but in truth, I believe there is no base. The College has no physical structure, but is simply a loose affiliation wherein the wild wizards roam the untamed places, meet and talk, and depart again.

Much to the consternation of the Imperial court, the Amber College seems to be beyond their control. Even if a representative of the Emperor manages to track down a high-ranking Amber Wizard, he often seems loath to do the Emperor's bidding. No one doubts their loyalty to this land, but it is the land to which they are loyal, not the political entity that is the Empire.

Amber Wizards are treated with trepidation by the wizards of other Colleges, their appearance and wildness reminding them too much of the true nature of the Winds they seek to control. Other wizards generally believe that the Amber Wizards have given too much of themselves to their arcane Wind. In a sphere where technique and discipline are considered the most vital virtues, this can make wizards of other orders extremely uncomfortable. The unknown size and the loose organisation of the College can also leave other wizards feeling confused about the Amber Brotherhood.

The Amethyst Order

…which utilises the Amethyst Wind, called Shyish, *whose colour is Purple, whose Lore is that of Death, whose rune is the Scythe, and whose practitioners are called Spiriters.*

– *From* The Founding of the Eight Orders, *credited to Teclis*

The Amethyst Wind lurks around dead things as a still and stagnant pool of purple magic–upon corpses, in graveyards, and in charnel houses. It collects inside skulls and bones, under gallows and around the slain. Whenever a spirit leaves the world, a burst of *Shyish* is released. The Amethyst Wizard uses the power of *Shyish* to breach the veil between life and death, to commune with departed spirits, and even to unleash the power of death itself.

The College of the Amethyst Order

Situated overlooking the cemetery of Old Altdorf, the monolithic building of the Amethyst College is a cold, bare, unwelcoming place. Within, robed figures walk silently through its vaulted halls, and an unnatural dust-laden stillness haunts the air. Unsurprisingly, few who do not have official business there are brave enough to venture in and consult the Amethyst Wizards.

Spiriters

Members of the order are often pale and gaunt, and the more they are exposed to the morbid wind of *Shyish*, the more they grow to resemble the dead they study. They often hide their disquieting features beneath the cowl of their heavy purple robes. This in turn makes people suspect that they have something more to hide.

Spiriters have a reputation for curtness, which has also given rise to the rumour that Amethyst Wizards never speak at all. One should not be deceived by their appearance and the nature of their work; Amethyst Wizards often possess a quick wit and a ready, if somewhat sardonic, gallows sense of humour. They prefer, after all, to commune with the dead rather than the living, because the dead have better things to say for themselves.

Though the ignorant and misinformed may mistake them for necromancers, they are emphatically not. They have little in common with those dark wizards who selfishly strive for immortality and animate dead things. They do not raise the dead or bring spirits back from whence they go. Though the desire for immortality is one shared by most men, the wizards of the Amethyst College are wise enough to know that that path too often falls into necromancy. Thus, study in that specific direction is frowned upon, except under the most rigorous supervision.

That said, the College practises some regimes and techniques that contribute to longevity, and occasionally an overzealous Amethyst Wizard might fall into the trap of believing that necromantic magic will help him further his own research. These are regrettable occurrences that the College does its very best to keep a lid on so as not to alarm the people. It might be said that necromancers wish to triumph over death by brutal means, whereas Amethyst Wizards simply wish to come to an amicable understanding with it.

Becoming an Apprentice

It takes a particular fellow to be drawn to the Amethyst Order, for Purple Wizards are disliked and feared by the common folk more than the wizards of any other College. The Spiriters know that their task is of the utmost importance to the Empire. Their main challenge and the focus of much of their study is to channel the potentially mightiest Wind of all, as well as to keep the Empire safe from its enemies.

Young Amethyst Wizards and apprentices are often sent out to sites of reported hauntings and undead activity in order to cast the dead down once more, or to study the phenomenon and report back to

Of all the College wizards, those of the Amethyst Order are the most feared and distrusted by everyone. The reason for this is plain: they see dead people. And they talk to them. I have even heard it said by the common man that Spiriters can kill with their minds.

This is an idle rumour that I can hereby assure you turns out to be entirely true. They can also use their powers to plant the fear of death into those who cross them. In fact, I have seen a man brought to a gibbering mess by the utter terror of simply gazing into a Spiriter's eyes.

Amethyst Wizards tend to play up their death-like appearance, partly, I imagine, to keep unwanted attention from their affairs. They tend to make their arcane focus into the shape of a scythe, which adds to this morbid appearance. But, it also has a very practical use for focusing their chosen Wind, as any Amethyst Wizard could explain were he in the mood. I certainly could not get it explained to me.

–Gavius Klugge, Grey Wizard

the College. Sometimes an apprentice might be sent out simply to collect interesting dead things, a duty that sounds entirely uninspiring, but is the sort of thing that Amethyst Wizards tend to enjoy.

Opinions on the Amethyst Order

The other Colleges are happy to leave the morbid Purple Wind to the College of Amethyst. The College does tend to keep its distance from the others, and rarely seems to delve into worldly political machinations. When they do, the other Colleges are quick to give them what they wish, for they realise it must be important– even wizards are not immune to the trepidation that Spiriters engender in others.

I had occasion to accompany a wizard of the Bright Order on a voyage to Kemperbad. This was pleasant enough, except for when we stopped at a boating inn for the night.

I ordered the stew for dinner and Wizard Fire (I believe in the circumstance it is only polite to keep his name from the record) ordered the steak. He wanted it well done. When it arrived, it looked a fine enough comestible to my mind, and fit to grace any pewter plate. However Wizard Fire was all affronted. "Well done?" he shouted at the top of his lungs. "Well done?"

The servant blanched and bowed, but the wizard would not be placated. "I'll show you well done!" he screamed, and a ball of flame erupted from his palm. In moments it was the size of a pumpkin. Giving me just enough time to stand up and retreat a few paces, he hurled the ball of flame at the poor steak.

Wizard Fire must have been more upset than he realised, and his reckless demeanour powered the spell well beyond his intention. The flame burst forth across the table, then took out two nearby tables before exploding against the wooden wall of the inn. The curtains caught light immediately, and in a matter of minutes the whole inn was ablaze.

Needless to say, we spent the night under the stars.

–Gavius Klugge, Grey Wizard

Though often associated with the brethren of the Cult of Morr, Amethyst Wizards are not so much concerned with seeing the departed safely on their eternal journey, but more with harnessing the very power of their deaths.

The Bright Order

...which utilises the Bright Wind, called Aqshy, *whose colour is Red, whose Lore is that of Fire, whose rune is the Key of Secrets, and whose practitioners are called Pyromancers.*

– *From* The Founding of the Eight Orders, *credited to Teclis*

The Red Wind is *Aqshy*, the magic of combustion and flame. It is found wherever there is fire, heat, or flammable substances. It clings to dry places, and dislikes the wet. It is the single most explosive and dangerous Wind to harness, and many an apprentice of the Bright Order has paid with life or limb for experimentation that has strayed even a degree from accepted processes.

The College of the Bright Order

Powerful illusions make the order's headquarters in Altdorf resemble fire-razed ruins, but in reality its blazing towers surround a great furnace, where Bright Wizards forge their fiery spells. The battle honours of the College's wizards are hung grandly in the entrance hallway, and it is the ambition of every Bright College apprentice to write his name upon its hall of fame.

Pyromancers

Bright Wizards have the most aggressive spells of all the orders, and they are the most likely to be found in the front line of an Imperial army. They have a reputation for stubbornness and bravery in the field of battle, and their tempers are said to be as fiery as their magic. Away from battle, they tend to act similarly; despite the undoubted subtlety and finesse of magical manipulation, it seems as if Bright Wizards always want to meet every problem head on and apply brute force, or preferably, set fire to it.

As Bright Wizards age, they become, literally, brighter. Their hair turns towards a shade of red, and Pyromancers who start off red-headed (their most common complexion, as it happens) become increasingly so. Their skin also takes on a florid hue, adding to the hot-headed and fiery tempered reputation of the College. Glowing tattoos also begin to manifest, writhing along their arms and chest.

Becoming an Apprentice

The Bright Order is the most popular with prospective apprentices. Many with no magical aptitude at all attempt to enter the order, and, thanks to its relationship with the military, it is the one magi-

cal order that is not stigmatised at all by the nobility and the well-to-do. Often, apprentices are disappointed that although they show magical ability, the masters of the Bright Order decide that their affinity is for a different Wind of Magic. Because of this popularity, the Bright Order takes many of the most gifted recruits.

Apprentices are groomed to become Battle Wizards within the Empire's armies, which is the goal of most Pyromancers. Promising apprentices are hired out to expeditionary forces in order to gain experience and to test their mettle in the heat of battle. As they develop and rise in rank, they can spend more and more time on campaign with the Imperial armies. However, some wizards prefer to stay closer to Altdorf where they can make their political influence more hotly felt.

Opinions on the Bright Order

The other Colleges tend to view the Bright Wizards as loose cannons liable to go off at any moment and incapable of subtlety. This is mostly fair; although the highest ranking wizards of the Order did not necessarily get where they are today by blasting things with flaming balls; though to be honest, most of them probably did.

Woe betide anyone who gets on the wrong side of a Bright Wizard, with hot temper, Imperial sanction, and martial training. On the other hand, what better character could one wish to fight alongside while on campaign in some gods-forsaken corner of the Empire. And there is always a nice warm fire, afterwards.

The Celestial Order

…which utilises the Celestial Wind, called Azyr, *whose colour is Blue, whose Lore is that of the Heavens, whose rune is the Comet of Power, and whose practitioners are called Astromancers.*

– *From* The Founding of the Eight Orders, *credited to Teclis*

The Blue Wind is *Azyr*, which blows across the Empire like wind itself. It rises and billows like clouds, hanging in the air – raw power waiting to be manipulated by those who can see it. The Celestial Wizards' business is prediction. Astromancers study the sky for signs and portents. They manipulate the Celestial Wind to determine what may be, and attempt to turn fate's fickle hand to their, and the Empire's, favour.

The College of the Celestial Order

The College building is famously ostentatious and awe-inspiring, comprising sixteen tall glass-domed towers dwarfing all neighbouring buildings. Of course, it is magically hidden, so these impressive sights go unseen by the majority of the population of Altdorf. Beneath a huge dome in the midst of these towers is a convoluted array of telescopes and clockwork equipment that models the movement of the celestial bodies. At the centre of all this is a magical astrolabe, spinning eternally on the head of a silver needle. With this impressive apparatus, the Celestial Order use their magic to attempt to predict the future.

The library of the College is inspiring, too, not least because of the cavernous cellar crammed full of detailed records and meticulous meteorological readings going back two hundred years. The records all contribute to the great repository of information, charts, and statistics which the Astromancers can call upon.

Astromancers

When an apprentice of the Celestial Order becomes an Acolyte, he is often allowed to go to serve a noble (or other high-paying master) as a court astrologer or the suchlike. This suits the College as it brings in funds, spreads the College's influence, and also gives it an opportunity to collect more data for the Grand Experiment. Imperial Astromancers are also a fashionable fixture of high noble courts in Tilea and Estalia.

I have heard that a few of the Wizard Lords of the Celestial Order are undertaking a Grand Experiment, an ambitious project to measure everything, and thereby predict anything. To this end they have apparently excavated a few levels beneath the College building and have set aside a tower solely for the storage and analysis of their records.

One day, far into the future, these wizards plan to feed all the information into a giant clockwork machine, an even more advanced version of their magical astrolabe. And by this method, they say, the clock will be able to predict the future as accurately as it might tell the time.

–Gavius Klugge, Grey Wizard

With such a network of wizards spread across the Old World concerned with the business of advice and prediction, the College is very influential. It would not be beyond the ethics of an Astromancer to interpret omens in a way that might suit the College, rather than in a way that reflects the truth of a divination.

Some Astromancers are seen as aloof. Their preoccupation with the future means that they sometimes forget the present, and they can come across as uncaring and oblivious to the more mundane needs of everyday life.

Becoming an Apprentice

Prospective Celestial Wizards' apprentices turn up at a side door to the Celestial College. This itself is no small feat, since the candidate needs magical sight to even see the building, and enough talent at divination to be led to the location at the proper time. The polished brass door has no markings upon it, or even a handle. With a gentle push, the door may glide smoothly open, allowing the new apprentice to enter the hallowed institution.

Alternatively it may stay fast, barring the disappointed candidate from entering. How does the apprentice know when to push the door or when it might open? When does the door even know that a candidate might be attempting access? And what mechanism determines whether the door is open or locked? The answers are written in the stars.

Apprentices are often sent out on long journeys to take seemingly insignificant but painstaking measurements required by their masters for complicated divinations, or to add to the wealth of records at the College's disposal. Other, less talented apprentices are set to work in the library cataloguing discoveries and helping to maintain the impressive collection. A popular pastime of College apprentices, and even some masters, is a simple dice game they play that tests players' powers of prediction.

Opinions on the Celestial Order

The Emperor is always concerned that the omens are auspicious for any regal occasion or military campaign. He takes a keen interest in the Celestial Order, and hears the advice of the Celestial Patriarch regularly; indeed this individual is one of the fixtures at the Imperial court.

The Emperor rarely takes a decision before he knows what the omens are, although he has been known to overrule any predictions he does not agree with. This practice has filtered through to the noble classes, and it is becoming increasingly common to have an Astromancer at one's court if one knows what's the done thing. Due to this, the College is becoming increasingly wealthy, as court Astromancers channel most of their pay back to their Order in Altdorf.

Some wizards of other Colleges are jealous of the influence that the Celestial College has throughout the political life of Altdorf, especially at the Imperial Palace. They also consider that the magic of the College is not real "get your hands dirty" stuff; they say that Celestial Wizards' high tower stargazing is more like ivory tower navel gazing.

But this does not prevent them from consulting the College when they themselves need an insight into the future or are troubled by omens. And they are wary of turning against the College directly, in even the smallest way, fearing that the Astromancers will see it coming.

The Gold Order

...which utilises the Gold Wind, called Chamon, *whose colour is Yellow, whose Lore is that of Metal, whose rune is the Soaring Eagle, and whose practitioners are called Alchemists.*

– *From* The Founding of the Eight Orders, *credited to Teclis*

The Gold Wind is dense and so quickly settles and seeps into the ground; it collects in ores and metals, in particular, of course, gold. Gold Wizards are preoccupied with that metal. They dedicate their life to it. They aspire to the secret of true transmutation: the permanent transformation of base metal into gold.

The study of alchemy is a deep science with a broad base of expertise and disciplines. The Alchemists are famous for their knowledge of almost any field and for their interest in all other branches of science and magic, though their main focus is always upon finding the secret of transmutation. Any number of theories are advanced to this cause. Many are predicated upon a secret ingredient known as the Philosopher's Stone.

The College of the Gold Order

The Gold College is a very wealthy one, despite the fact that the discovery of true transmutation still eludes them. Their wealth is because the College has many wealthy investors hoping for a share in any profits; for should an experiment actually succeed, the proceeds would be infinite. So keen is the Emperor to acquire the secret of true transmutation that he himself is a major sponsor of the College.

Despite its wealth, the College's buildings resemble industrial forges, with great chimneys belching irridescent smoke into the sky.

Alchemists

While baser humans covet gold for petty greed, the wizards of the Gold College desire it for a much more noble purpose, or so they insist. They wish to study it and find out its secrets so that they might be able to create more of the stuff for the good of the Empire. But ultimately, the discovery of this method would lead to unimaginable wealth for their College, and that must be what the Alchemists strive for, despite their denials.

However, Alchemists do possess a wide range of expertise across their field. They are famous for creating potions, philtres, and the like, and are rumoured to have magically animated mechanical creatures. Their expertise with potions stems from their striving for recipes that might aid longevity. The unchanging and eternal nature of gold is an important ingredient for those wishing to find immortality.

Another facet of the power of Gold magic is the seduction of the minds of men and dwarfs through the financial power of gold. Some say that many of the donations made to the College are not sincere investments in the prospect of transmutation after all, but are in fact duped out of the patrons through underhanded glamorous magic.

Alchemists are often given free rein to pursue their studies in the direction they think best. There will invariably be a senior wizard looking over an Alchemist's shoulder, not only "to help and to advise," but also to borrow any ideas that look promising. A more adventurous wizard might dedicate himself to the quest for the Philosopher's Stone: following rumours of its whereabouts could lead him all across the Old World and even beyond.

Alchemists often dress with the utmost ostentation in garishly adorned robes of intricate filigree designs, weighed down with golden amulets, chains, and charms. Their staffs are gold and crowned with crystal orbs. It is as if an Alchemist must prove his competence by the amount of gold he can wear at one time.

Becoming an Apprentice

It is plain that the wizards of the Gold College are thought of as greedy, even by the members of the other Colleges. What other motive could they have for choosing such an ostentatious order? Why would they dress in such finery and decorate themselves with gold? Certainly there are those who do join for these very reasons, and certainly many Gold wizards do grow very wealthy – in fact, the College itself is one of the wealthiest institutions of the Reikland.

But the College is a hive of activity, diligence, and innovation. The place attracts some of the finest minds in the Old World. Those who are to make any progress at transmutation must possess a huge range of tenuously related knowledge. They must show expertise in multiple disciplines if they are to break through in this heavily invested field.

So, even those who want not pure gold but pure knowledge, who strive for excellence in magic and academe, not just wealth and power, will find a welcome home at the Gold College. Certainly the College will accept even the poorest student if he were to show the requisite application and talent. Perhaps these facts are not entirely unrelated. Greed is good, they say, at inspiring the minds of great wizards to become greater still.

Opinions on the Gold Order

Needless to say, other Colleges have few good words for the Gold College. Their great wealth, their ostentation, their interfering in other Colleges' business, the sponsorship of the most powerful personages of the Empire, their great wealth, their smug assurance that they are only one experiment away from a major breakthrough, and their great wealth, are all good reasons why Alchemists are almost universally disliked by their rivals.

It has long been speculated that an item referred to by Alchemists as a "Philosopher's Stone" must be a substance that is extremely amenable to the Winds of Magic, one perhaps that is a source of concentrated Aethyric energy. And so, not unreasonably, the focus of some Alchemists' research has been drawn towards the substance known as wyrdstone or warpstone. Throughout the ages it has been well-known that warpstone does indeed facilitate transmutation.

However, it transforms not just base metal into gold; it transforms bodies into monstrosities and minds into shadows. For this reason, warpstone is proscribed. It is not just the populace at large who are forbidden from using the stuff. Even the wizards of the Colleges – who are exempt from almost every other Imperial law regarding spellcraft – are prohibited from utilising this terrible material. If it truly even exists.

–Gavius Klugge, Grey Wizard

The Grey Order

…which utilises the Grey Wind, called Ulgu*, and whose colour is Grey, whose Lore is that of the Shadows, and whose rune is the Sword of Judgement, and whose practitioners are called Illusionists.*

– *From* The Founding of the Eight Orders*, credited to Teclis*

The Grey Wind *Ulgu* is a disorienting mist that plays on the mind. It settles like a thick fog obscuring what lies behind it. It can be manipulated to alter perceptions, to make what is false seem real, or to change a person's very thoughts.

It can conjure whole scenes that may convince the unwitting senses, presenting them as pleasant idylls as easily as nightmarish terrors. Leveraging such a versatile and mysterious lore, some Grey Wizards are known as Illusionists or Tricksters. Many refer to themselves as Grey Guardians, tasked with protecting the Empire from secrets and mysteries too terrible to know.

The College of the Grey Order

The Grey College in Altdorf is a drab building in the city's poorest district. Its location keeps honest citizens at bay, and makes members of the city watch reluctant to patrol the area. Grey Wizards come and go as they please from the unremarkable building via myriad secret tunnels and hidden entrances.

There is one lesson above all others that my decades devoted to the study of Ulgu have taught me. Question everything you think you see. For upon the closest examination, nothing is truly as it seems. A shadow is not the perfect reflection of the man casting it. Nor is the man the perfect reflection of his own shadow.

–Gavius Klugge, Grey Wizard

The buildings of the Grey Order tend to be nondescript, and are secreted deep within the bowels of the city – amongst back alleys, slums, and areas far from prying eyes. To passers-by, the drab building may appear shrouded in mist and shadow. At some times, there are no discernible entrances. To one gifted with magical sight, however, the mists and shadows often writhe and shift, phantom faces appearing and disappearing to ward off all but the most resolute.

Entry into a building of the Grey Order is never easy. Many have access only through secret tunnels and passageways, sometimes connecting to labyrinthine mazes below the city streets. This serves the secretive Illusionists well, as only the most determined or cunning can find their way inside.

Illusionists

Illusionists often robe themselves in greys and blacks, shrouding their features with long cloaks and deep hoods. Some Illusionists change their appearance regularly, cutting or dying their hair, shaving or growing beards, possibly even adopting disguises to maintain an air of mystery. Many Grey Wizards carry a sword, often tucked beneath their robes, representing their order's symbol – the Sword of Judgement.

The secretive nature of their studies leads some Illusionists into isolation, but many keep on the move and wander freely to avoid becoming predictable. Years of dedication to secrets, shadow, and illusion can wear at a wizard's mind. Immersion in the study of *Ulgu* tends to breed paranoia and suspicion amongst Grey Wizards. Illusionists can be a mistrustful lot, convinced that there is always more going on than first appears and constantly questioning the motives of those around them.

Becoming an Apprentice

There are a handful of documented cases describing how Illusionists first arrive at the Grey Order to begin their apprenticeship – if one can find them. These documents are heavily guarded secrets, as behoves practitioners of the Lore of Shadow. Despite the Grey Order's efforts to maintain secrecy, rumours persist. Several initiation rites involve mirrors, nightmares, or solving complex puzzles.

In one rite, a youth is gifted with a tarnished silver mirror by a robed stranger. If the youth shows the proper curiosity to explore the mystery of the silver mirror, he finds a way to polish the surface to a lustrous sheen. Peering into the mirror, he sees a twisted reflection of himself – mutating, skin peeling, afflicted with the pox.

Some go insane after seeing such horrific visions. Others see past the illusion and realise that there is more going on than meets the eye. Upon this revelation, the mirror's reflection speaks to the youth in riddles. Unravelling the riddles leads him to a darkened alley in the heart of Altdorf's most notorious slum, and eventually to the Grey College itself.

Potential candidates passing such tests are armed with the information they need to locate a Grey Order building or a Grey Wizard to start their studies and begin formal apprenticeship into the Lore of Shadows. Once an apprentice has proven his worth and displayed an affinity for *Ulgu*, he is afforded the title of Illusionist as he continues his studies.

Gavius Klugge

If the reader would indulge me for but a moment. Perhaps it would be best if I were to provide a bit about myself, to provide a clearer context for the information I have presented herein. I shall recount for you my own very personal experience with the discovery of magic, and my indoctrination into the Grey Order.

The lean Gavius Klugge is a Master Grey Wizard who has been a member of the Grey Order for more than fifty years. His journey into shadow left an indelible mark. Today, he is a nervous, fidgety man whose dark grey eyes constantly flit from side to side.

His introduction to *Ulgu* was shrouded in horrific nightmares. Upon reaching his tenth birthday, terrifying visions clouded young Gavius's waking hours, and haunted what little sleep he could muster. Gavius had recurring dreams of a spiral stairwell hewn into the cellar of a tavern. He was tormented by daemonic shadows, which drove him inexorably towards the stairwell. The dreams persisted for weeks, and poor Gavius was nearly driven mad by the nightmares and lack of sleep.

Gavius's father took the boy to the temple of Shallya, hoping that the priests could tend to his mental ails. Stopping for sustenance at a tavern on the way, Gavius immediately recognised the tavern from his dreams, and slipped away from his father to creep into the cellar. Swirling mists surrounded the entrance to a spiral stone stairwell.

Taking a deep breath, he descended the stairs. The curling spiral stairway wound deeper and deeper into the earth. The light slowly faded, and the boy saw the daemonic shadows from his dreams forming in the darkness. But he was more frightened by his father and what he might do should Gavius return, so the young boy pressed on, descending ever downward. Hours passed by as Gavius descended, now in complete and total darkness. Just as fear seized his throat and he considered turning back, Gavius stepped out onto a smooth, polished stone floor.

Dirty grey light filtered from above, and he found himself standing in the centre of a great hall. Four wizards on stout wooden benches peered at him from deep within their dark grey hoods. One approached Gavius with a long, slender sword in hand. Gavius did not flinch, standing there in a dreamlike state. The wizard bent down, fastening the sword to Gavius's waist, and whispered into his ear.

"The dream is over, Gavius. Open your eyes. You have truly awoken."

Opinions on the Grey Order

As an esteemed member of this order, I find it difficult to constructively provide feedback or input on the opinions others may entertain regarding the Grey College. We are, after all, undoubtedly the most well respected order within the Colleges of Magic. Just ask any of my fellow Grey Wizards, they shall confirm this as fact!

The Jade Order

...which utilises the Jade Wind, called Ghyran, *whose colour is Green, whose Lore is that of Life, whose rune is the Coil of Life, and whose practitioners are called Elementalists.*

– From The Founding of the Eight Orders, credited to Teclis

The Jade Wind is the Wind of life; it is in all living things. It travels in water, in the streams and rivers and rains, and it brings forth life and vitality. Thus it is strongest in the growing season and weakest in the dead of winter. The Wind settles in strange patterns upon ley lines that invisibly crisscross the Old World. *Ghyran* allows its manipulator to grow things preternaturally, to twist plants to his service, and to direct the very forces of nature.

The College of the Jade Order

The College building in Altdorf is not at all impressive on the outside, but inside it seems to be made from the trees themselves, and the halls of wood house a network of ponds and streams that eventually drain into a vast silver pool. Much diverse flora grow around the pools, and even wild animals live within the college.

The building is not busy, as the wizards of the College prefer to spend their time in the countryside. However, for those who must be there, the building offers an oasis of nature and magical focus in the heart of the city.

Elementalists

Considered the most closely related to the pre-College mages of the Empire, the Jade Wizards concern themselves with the growing of crops, the health of the land, and the balance between man and nature. They have the best reputation and relationship with the people of the Empire. They often travel the countryside aiding farmers, and seem readiest to help the common folk. There are any number of problems that can affect the crops of the Empire, and so the wizards of the Jade College are kept busy advising and aiding when required.

Their interest in farming and maintaining the natural order does not mean they are loath to fight. Jade Wizards have another, far more dangerous side. In battle they can unleash the raw power of the natural world, sending the awesome power of floods and landslides against their enemies, and binding plants to their will. Once roused, rather like nature itself, they can become cruel and unyielding.

One thing I can say from my studies is that Ghyran does indeed tend to settle in patterns across the world known as ley lines. These can be potent sources of magical power, especially where they intersect. Jade Wizards consider them to be the key to keeping the natural things of the Empire in glorious harmony.

I have read with some interest of the vast standing stone networks across the Old World, supposedly constructed by the mages of forgotten races. The Jade College believes these networks help focus the magic of the ley lines, and constantly strive to protect them from desecration.

During my travels, I cannot help but notice the standing stones bear some resemblance to the great cairns guarded by the enigmatic cousins of Ulthuan who live in the deepest woodlands of the Old World. I have my suspicions that there may be some relation between the Wind utilized by my Jade colleagues, and the fey and wild powers wielded by these "wood elves."

– Gavius Klugge, Grey Wizard

Jade Wizards strive to control living things or to take the energies given off by the living and turn them into something more. They can grow plants at amazing speeds, for example. They also feel an affinity for the natural order of things, which means they have a special loathing for the perverting effects of Chaos upon nature.

Becoming an Apprentice

Very often, apprentices come to the attention of the Jade College simply by following their instincts. They choose to wander, and unconsciously their wandering follows the course of ley lines. Along their journey, they may meet wizards of the College or encounter standing stones which have instructions etched upon them in *Ghyran*. These direct a talented youth in the development of his art. Ley lines may also lead to the Jade College in Altdorf, which is situated on many converging lines.

Appropriately, the path of *Ghyran* attracts those who are called to nature, those who feel more at home in the countryside and amongst plants rather than inside towns or cities, and those who love to travel through the Empire's lands. It might seem strange that this urge for nature takes them to the biggest city of the Empire, but that is where it leads. And from the harsh and dirty scar upon the land that is Altdorf, suddenly a prospective apprentice leaves the filthy streets behind to enter the College building and the oasis of nature within.

Opinions on the Jade Order

The Imperial Palace does not often directly employ Jade Wizards, and nor do the provincial courts of the Elector Counts. They are usually sought out by rural communities to solve problems with crops and livestock. In turn, the Jade College is not enthusiastic about playing political games in urban areas.

This reluctance to become involved with the wealthy notables of the Empire means the College is not a wealthy one. Still, they require very little to keep themselves going, and Jade Wizards can easily live self-sufficiently, growing and making their own food and equipment. They tend to display the vitality associated with their magical realm, taking to tasks eagerly and with good humour. However, I have noticed that they are apt to get carried away with things, throwing themselves into projects, and losing their sense of perspective.

Other wizards attach a stigma to the Jade College, claiming that their methods are backwards, that their magic is uncomfortably close to the old magic, and that their ways are the way things were done before Teclis. These claims are resented by members of the Jade Order as plainly not true. Nevertheless, as a serious student of the magical arts, I have noticed that Jade Wizards tend to be a bit old fashioned in their techniques and their attitude.

More interestingly, I can say from my studies that *Ghyran* does tend to settle in patterns across the world known as ley lines. These can be potent sources of magical power, especially where they intersect. Jade Wizards consider them to be the key to keeping the natural things of the Empire in glorious harmony. These standing stones and magical sites bear some resemblance to the great cairns guarded and revered by the wood elves. Further, the similarity to these ancient standing stones and the herdstones of the foul beastmen cannot go ignored. Although Jade Wizards I have consulted insist there is no correlation between the two, I cannot help but wonder...

The Light Order

... which utilises the Light Wind, called Hysh, *whose colour is White, whose Lore is that of Light, and whose rune is the Serpent of Light, and whose practitioners are called Hierophants.*

– From The Founding of the Eight Orders, credited to Teclis

The White Wind illuminates and sometimes blinds. It seems to fall from the sun, and is everywhere, momentarily, before fading into the earth. Ever elusive, it is the Wind of wisdom and truth. It can

bring life and healing, or utter destruction. The complex spells cast with *Hysh* are often released with a blinding white light, and many are cast with elaborate, complicated rituals.

The College of the Light Order

Hidden from the view of those without magic sight, the college building is a simple pyramid, made of some strange translucent material. Neither large nor ornate, it seems to be an unusual base for such an important institution. In fact, the pyramid extends far beyond what is visible, to a vast underground complex.

The pyramid is designed to focus the elusive *Hysh* and to make it readily available to members of the College of Light. Altdorf therefore is a fine location for the casting of Light spells – within the College is even finer. The further a Hierophant travels from the capital, the harder it could be for him to gather power for his spells.

Hierophants

Light Wizards hold a special place in the Colleges of Magic. The College of Light is considered the most senior order, and boasts that it follows the closest system to the elven ideal. Hierophants are noted for their wisdom and their broad knowledge of the more philosophical disciplines. There is always a resident Hierophant at the Imperial court, ready to advise the Emperor. The College likes to take a leading role in the affairs of state. Often, it is the Patriarch himself, known as the Grand Magister or High Luminary, who dabbles the most.

The wizards of the College of Light often indulge in diligent study, pushing the bounds of narrow disciplines. They tend to get lost in their research, disappearing for weeks or even months at a time, only to emerge with some wonderful new insight into magic or the mind of man. Sometimes they never emerge, simply fading away into the Aethyr, vanishing as if they were a breath of *Hysh*.

As White Wizards age, they live up to their name by becoming increasingly pale. Their hair turns white and their skin becomes almost translucent. Their white College robes add to the effect, and their appearance can become quite ethereal and disturbing, polishing their reputation for wisdom and venerability.

Becoming an Apprentice

Many White Wizards attest to the suddenness of the discovery of their vocation through a life-changing epiphany. As if in a blinding flash, they come to see the true nature of the world, the nature of the Winds of Magic, and the realisation that they can wield such forces. This epiphany can come at any moment in their youth, usually to otherwise academic and respectful persons, students or apprentices in other fields.

Sometimes an apprentice from another order becomes suddenly aware that his future lies with the Wind of *Hysh*, and moves to the College of Light. Stories from across the Old World abound wherein a seemingly normal person, without warning, is filled with the desire to journey to Altdorf and to enter the pyramid of the White College. They call this "Seeing the Light."

Opinions on the Light Order

The College of Light is generally respected among the other Colleges. It often arbitrates on disputes between the Colleges and between the Colleges and the state. It is in the interest of all other Colleges that good relations with the College of Light are maintained, and it seems that the College of Light has good relations with all the others.

The College's affinity for light, illumination, and the acquisition of knowledge are often seen as more benign pursuits than those of many of the other Colleges. As such, the Light Order tends to keep its members out of controversies, and away from the suspicious eyes of the Witch Hunters, far better than the other orders.

I was once told a tale, and I do not know whether to believe it. The teller was a once-powerful master of his art, but could now barely move, fading, it seemed, into the very fabric of his chair, insubstantial, almost ethereal.

He told me that those apprentices of the College of Light who do not show enough single-mindedness and individuality to become an esteemed Hierophant are kept in the College, arrayed chanting around a blinding light at the centre of the pyramid, deep below Altdorf. He said that there were countless numbers of them, a battery of chanting peons contributing their entire lives to a single eternal spell of Hysh. As one apprentice becomes exhausted he is carried to his cell by a Master Chanter to recharge while another takes his place. And so on, forever. The winds of Hysh are hereby focused upon Altdorf in defence of the realm.

If the chanters were to ever stop or falter, then the pyramid would split apart, or disappear, or crack, or something. These rumours are spread across the Colleges of Magic, but it is not clear what might really happen if the spell were to fail.

– Gavius Klugge, Grey Wizard

Chapter Sixteen

Forbidden Lore

Unauthorised Magic

In the Empire it is strictly forbidden to cast spells or use magic outside the purview of the Colleges of Magic. Witch hunters, whether associated with the Holy Orders of the Templars of Sigmar or rare renegade freelancers, tirelessly hunt down those who break this law. The college wizards use many colloquial terms to describe unsanctioned magic users, such as hedge wizards, low sorcerers, witches, and warlocks. The distinctions between these terms are often lost on commonfolk, who tend to refer to anyone using magic in a proscribed way as a witch.

However, there are some exceptions to this rule. A witch hunter or college wizard would never call an elf mage or Kislevite ice witch a "hedge wizard" – not without wanting to cause serious offence anyway. Such terms are usually reserved for those who learn magic in an instinctive or untrained manner, such as the village wise woman who passes on a few petty spells to her daughter, a travelling seer who divines the future in spilt sheep entrails, or a backstreet magician who uses a few cantrips to emphasise his bunko acts. The witch hunters warn that such people are to be feared and hated and that if they are found they should be burned at the stake.

The witch hunters claim that there is good reason for such suspicion and intolerance. They preach that to dabble with magic is to tap into the same energies that give form to the powers of Chaos. To the normal folk of the Empire, a fortune teller using cards to determine future events may be an entertaining distraction, but to the zealots of the Templars of Sigmar such a person is on a road to damnation. In their eyes, such seemingly petty conjuring, which need not even include any actual spellcasting, leads to the worship of daemons and an eternity of servitude to the Ruinous Powers.

The fact that Sigmar, the divine founder of the Empire, outlawed sorcery during his lifetime is often touted as the rationale behind the witch hunters' fervour to burn every sorcerer. In fact, some witch hunters even harbour a hatred of college-trained wizards, though few are so rash as to act upon it. However, because Sigmar made this proclamation, wizards from other cultures are often afforded more tolerance.

A damsel (as many spell-casting Bretonnians are known) could enter the Empire without causing too much furore, despite the fact that she is not technically authorised as a sanctioned wizard. After all, Sigmar's decree does not apply to Bretonnia. Some suggest that it is not out of any doctrinal integrity that the witch hunters do

not persecute foreign magic users who enter the Empire, but that they stay their tortures and executions out of fear of diplomatic incidents.

A citizen of the Empire who does learn some of the secrets of sorcery had either better hide the fact or apply to the Colleges of Magic. On rare occasions, the college wizards take on petty spell casters as apprentices, though mostly they prefer to take on students who have yet to actually cast a spell and who are therefore untainted by the process.

Most petty magic users do not contact the colleges, out of fear of being refused entry and turned over to the witch hunters. They may practice their arts in secret, or travel to remote locales where the witch hunters are less likely to find them and where rustic peasants may even admire their arts. Others greedily pursue the powers that come with the practise of magic and may even become great daemonologists or necromancers in the fullness of time.

Magic beyond the Empire

The harsh attitude that the establishment of the Empire show to unauthorised magic users is mirrored to some degree in the other lands of the Old World. Superstitious foreign nobles have even been known to arrest Imperial wizards for sorcery if they're not accompanying an influential patron.

Travelling Imperial wizards often encounter alternate paradigms of magic theory when interacting with foreign sorcerers, as well as alternate names for familiar concepts. The attitudes towards magic users vary from culture to culture.

The Border Princes

In the Border Princes, the law depends on the moral mores of the local warlord or self-appointed prince. Some of the rulers of that land fear magic even more than the Templars of Sigmar, and cruelly persecute all sorcerers within their domains. Others have a lax attitude, and may include wild magicians in their courts. There is always somewhere for sorcerers to hide within the Borderlands, and the region remains a popular destination for fugitives from the witch hunters.

Bretonnia

Bretonnian folklore tells tales of how the Fey Enchantress takes children with the potential to work magic and leads them to an eerie Otherworld. The girls they abduct are raised and taught how to exercise their abilities. After many years, they reappear in Bretonnia, their innate skill with magic honed. The peasantry see them as almost mythical, and sometimes even worship them as prophetesses of the Lady of the Lake. No tales tell of the fate of those male children who are taken by the fey.

Kislev

In the north lands of Kislev, the Gospodar shamans practice a native form of magic. Known as Ice Magic, this sorcery draws its power from the land and is concerned with the manipulation of chill, frost, and biting winds. In ancient times, the leaders of these warlike tribes were powerful sorcerers. The blood was rumoured to run cold in their veins, and none were more powerful than the Khan Queens of the Gospodar. The current ruler of Kislev is the Tzarina Katarin, the Ice Queen of Kislev, a fearsome mistress of Ice Magic.

Norsca

In Norsca the worship of the gods of Chaos is not viewed with the antipathy it provokes in the nations to the south. Many inhabitants of Norsca regard the rewards that come from honouring the Ruinous Powers as gifts to enable them to better survive their harsh existence. This includes the abilities needed to work magic.

Untrained magic users are not viewed with fear or suspicion by the people of Norsca. Instead they are admired as potential Chaos Sorcerers, and those who fulfil this promise become truly vaunted members of society.

Sorcerers

After Sigmar's apotheosis, his warnings against sorcery became holy writ, and suspicion of low sorcerers, hedge wizards, witches, and warlocks became deeply institutionalised in the Empire's religion. Witch hunters have existed for almost as long as the Empire itself. In fact, the Templars of Sigmar trace the formation of their order to 15 IC, though many historians dispute the claim as clearly fictional.

However, the practice of sorcery could not be quashed entirely, and over the years, humans became increasingly proficient with magic. Sorcerers even collaborated to form hidden cabals based on the principles of elementalism and alchemy. Few of these covens survived the witch hunters' fires, however, until the Colleges of Magic were founded in Altdorf just over two hundred years ago.

If one is privileged enough to be allowed to study the histories that can be found in the White Tower of Hoeth, one can find many stories regarding the origins of magic. The most well regarded of these myths concerns a race called the Old Ones, who are purported to be the architects of both the continents and inhabitants of the world. For their own mysterious purposes they created two huge gates, one to the extreme north and another to the far south. However, there was a calamity. The two gates shattered, and through the broken portals flowed Chaos and magic. At this time the nascent race of humanity was extremely primitive. Their mystics were unable to wield the power of magic without becoming corrupted. Sigmar Heldenhammer understood the dangers of magic. He wisely decreed that only the elves possessed the mental fortitude to exercise magical arts, and banned their use in the lands of men.

Hedge wizards, mystics, sages…no matter what you call them, they are witches. I've heard sceptics suggest that witch hunters of the Silver Hammer are overzealous in their pursuit of witches. To the doubters, I ask: Do they not have recourse to join the Colleges of Magic instead of honing their foul craft in the shadows?

To willingly eschew the sanctioned methods of magic is surely evidence of dark designs. I refer you to Chapter VI of the Deus Sigmar, *wherein the founder of our great Empire condemns Chaos under all its guises. Pay special heed to this passage from the Litany of Vigilance:*

"We pledge to the Empire our Blood, and rest all Hope in thy hammer. We falter never in our dedication, for thy comet's light reveals the basest Desire of man. Give strength to our hearts, that foul magicks will not bring Decay upon us. All Hail Sigmar Heldenhammer!"

This passage clearly instructs us, proud defenders of the Empire, to unearth the hidden seeds of Chaos before they can take root. And now you understand why Sigmar's witch hunters cannot suffer any sorcerer to live.

– Erich Keller, Warrior Priest of Sigmar

In the reign of Karl Franz, sorcerers are commonly defined as spell casters who remain independent of the Colleges. These sorcerers often become hedge wizards to try to escape persecution from the witch hunters. Some flee to the wilds, and lead a lonely and druidic lifestyle communing with nature. Their isolation affords them a measure of protection and solace, and there they are free to experiment with their abilities at will.

The majority, though, establish themselves in small villages and hamlets. There they use their petty magic to earn a living as common fortune-tellers, healers, oracles, diviners, talisman makers, sages, and the like. Their role in the community becomes a front for real powers.

Witches and Warlocks: The Lure of Chaos

Living in isolation, or endlessly concealing one's true nature, is bound to drive one a little crazy. Hedge wizards who rely on nature's spirit for companionship are also vulnerable to the suggestive whispers of daemonic entities and tormented souls. When a hedge wizard's mind begins to snap, he becomes able to perceive the swirling colours of Chaos that promise unlimited power.

Longer exposure to Chaos increases the power of witches, but their madness and malignancy will grow alongside their abilities. Years of studying lore from proscribed grimoires twist their minds, making them cruel and fickle. There are a few witches whose ambitions lead them beyond their initial hedge wizardry. They gain some insight into the nature of the Ruinous Powers and revel in their worship.

Those of them that manage to stay alive, and with some semblance of sanity, can wield powers equal to those magic users who have been trained in the Colleges, and they are known as warlocks by the witch hunters. Many such warlocks begin to develop an affinity with controlling dead matter, or commanding spirits of the departed, and become necromancers. Others devote themselves more completely to the worship of Chaos, learning daemonology or becoming fully fledged Chaos Sorcerers.

Witches and warlocks are not just insane; they can become quite powerful and often very bitter. Ambitious warlocks can recruit bands of mutants, cultists, and outcasts, and return to the town

from which they had once fled, exacting terrible revenge upon those who once shunned them. After hedge wizards have embraced the corrupting power of Chaos, they rarely turn back.

The folk of the Empire do not know of the difference between those who dabble in petty magic and those wielding the terrible full power of Chaos. If they are not members of the Colleges of Magic, they are to be feared, hunted, and persecuted and reported to the witch hunters, tortured into revealing their secrets and associates, and, finally, burnt at the stake.

Dark Magic & High Magic

The Colleges of Magic in Altdorf are extremely protective of arcane lore. Those who study their art outside their orders and in secret must pay exorbitant prices to occult book sellers and smugglers of rare tomes. However, magic's darker secrets can be learned without college supervision, and in some cases without any books at all. In their dreams, sorcerers may strike deals with daemons and spirits, bargaining their services in exchange for magical knowledge.

Renegade sorcerers are highly susceptible to channelling Dark Magic accidentally, for Chaotic and necromantic energy is made from the very same Winds of Magic that sorcerers seek to control. Even college wizards, despite their disciplined training, sometimes channel Dark Magic unintentionally.

Dark Magic – Dhar

In its raw form, magic is combined into an energy called Dark Magic, or *Dhar*. This is the form of magic that draws power directly from the primal energies that flow into the world from the Realm of Chaos. Because of this, spells cast using Dark Magic often have very powerful effects, can be extremely destructive, and are associated with wildly unpredictable side-effects such as mutation and madness. Spellcasters working with *Dhar* must possess both wilfulness and confidence in their ability to control Dark Magic.

Dhar is used by necromancers and vampires to animate skeletons and zombies or to exert their will over creatures such as ghouls or dire wolves. Daemons and other dark spirits are strongly drawn to *Dhar*, and it is inevitably involved whenever spells are used to summon them.

Chaos feeds on strong emotions, so places where great negative emotions such as fear, hatred, and horror have been felt also attract *Dhar*. Since Dark Magic provides the motivating power to animate the undead, areas where *Dhar* is strongest attract or spawn undead. These areas include the cursed province of Sylvania in the Empire, the swamps in the north of Tilea, and the Mound of Krell in the Grey Mountains.

High Magic – Qhaysh

Scholars of wizardry sometimes refer to High Magic as magical harmony. They say that using a single Wind of magic, as the magicians of the Colleges do, is like plucking a string on a lute, whilst using High Magic is like strumming a chord.

High Magic spellcasters are able to form spells of incredible power. The greatest High Magic spells ever cast have literally shifted continents and destroyed whole armies at once. High Elf Archmages are renowned for the use of this powerful form of magic, which they tend to associate closely with their gods.

Humans are not deemed to be capable of mastering *Qhaysh*. The elven mages at the time of the Great War Against Chaos taught that humans do not live long enough to truly master every Wind and combine them and that the human mind is incapable of comprehending the vast complexities of all eight Winds of Magic when they interact. Because of this ruling, human wizards are restricted to learning only the comparative basics of a single lore while the high elves master the combined lores.

Of Warpstone

When Dark Magic slows and settles, it forms dense, heavy concentrations of magic known as True *Dhar*, known to be the most potent magical energy in the world. Over extremely long periods of time, these concentrations of magic can solidify into the highly volatile and mutagenic substance known as warpstone. The Chaos Moon, Morrslieb, is said to be made entirely from one huge mass of warpstone, and sometimes chunks of the substance falls from the sky as black meteorites.

Many wizards seek to obtain shards of warpstone. It is used in a number of magical rituals. Many people claim that it can be used in alchemical processes, reasoning that if warpstone can mutate flesh then why not attempt to use it to turn lead to gold. However, warpstone is a banned substance in the Empire, and to buy, sell, or keep the material is a burning offence. Still, inquisitive wizards, even those trained by the Colleges, sometimes bypass the law in their eagerness to study the rock. Wizards and scholars of alchemy often use euphemisms when referring to the material, "wyrdstone" being the most common such term. They do so in order to distance their own use of the material from the fact that it is a result of Chaos and a source of much mutation and madness.

Rumours also persist of a subterranean race which craves the substance. It is said that their appetite for warpstone far outstrips that of the human wizards who seek to use it. Often the first time the authorities hear of a wizard who has been secretly studying the substance is when he is found dead, with his laboratory ransacked, and a trail of misshapen footprints leading to the nearest sewer.

I do not believe that the greenskins use magic the same way we do. And I don't mean that they're different the way High Elves or Chaos sorcerers are, channelling the Winds of Magic unfiltered. No, I do not think they use the Winds of Magic at all.

Bear with me as I strive to explain. Greenskins are undisciplined, unthinking, violent brutes. They lack the patience or the mental capacity for proper magic. For that matter, they lack the patience or mental capacity to form a civilisation or even to all march in the same direction for more than a few minutes.

But their mighty armies – the 'Waaagh!,' as they are sometimes called – pose a grave threat to the Empire, and their shamans can rival Imperial Battle Wizards for sheer destructive potential. How?

I propose that the answer to both questions is the same. Some force links every orc and goblin together, something unconscious within them. It is what makes the orcs obey a powerful leader, allows them to form massive warbands. I believe that their shamans have the ability to…harness…this energy and to unleash it in ways that look very much like magic to the untrained eye.

As evidence, I suggest you look no further than the tendency of their shamans' heads to explode when surrounded by chanting and excited greenskins.

– Hilde Krämer, Celestial Order Wizard

Wizards within the Empire

Despite the zealous attitude of the witch hunters, there are many wizards who work within the Empire. The Colleges of Magic were founded in Altdorf after the Great War against Chaos in 2304 IC. The newly legitimised wizards, trained in the colleges, became some of the most recognisable defenders of the Empire. This is in part due to the spectacular effect of college-trained spell casting on the battlefield, which ravages enemy ranks as effectively as any war machine, and also to the eccentric appearance of the wizards themselves.

Wizards from the colleges are figures of both awe and suspicion in the Empire. From the time of Sigmar until the Great War against Chaos, the cult of Sigmar, and the noble leaders of the Empire were of one voice regarding magic, that it inescapably led its practitioners to damnation. Over two thousand years of prejudice are not easy to overcome, even by decree of a man as great as Magnus the Pious.

Magic & Heresy

College wizards observe the same gods as normal folk, and they often have to correct citizens who mistake their magic for being of divine origin. To the untrained eye, the difference between spells and divine blessings isn't always apparent.

Heretical priests have brought entire congregations of deluded believers with them to the witch hunters' pyres after being revealed as sorcerers. Certain heretics, such as the Ariasanists and the Apostles of Truth, believe that Sigmar is merely a pawn of the Dark Gods and that his blessings are actually magic. These heretics are hunted with special fervour by the Colleges' agents, for they conflate honest wizardry with religion and Chaos magic in the public's eye.

I fear Apprentice Gunnar Henning may be irrevocably scarred by his imprisonment by the Black Scab goblins. When Acolyte Sieber found the apprentice in that strange cave in the Hagercrybs, he was clutching this scrap of parchment in one hand, and a nub of charcoal in the other.

What do humies no 'bout WAAAGH!?
Nuffink dat's wot!

We gots da mighteest magicks in all da Old Wurld. It bigger. It better. Humies and deir stoopid theeries and collej and stuffs. Dey stink! We shamans starez hate out ar eyes and burn humies krispy wiv it!

You want big magicks like us? Stop finkin' an' start doin' ... Finkin' dunt do nuffink but make yer hed hurts. A shaman hates and rages and burns and screems WAAAGH! 'til the fires burnin' in 'is hed all burst out ov it – Bang!

Wanta make sumfin's brain burst? Easy. You gots to scream loud 'nuff to make sure da gods hear ya. Screams out loud to Mork...or mebbe Gork. Wanta make sumfink smashed flat? Scream yer hedz of ta Gork. Or mebbe Mork.

Anyway. Humie magick week like humie soldiers. We gots da biggest and bestest magicks. Dat's why we'z alway's thumpin' humies in battle.

WAAAGH!

Chapter Seventeen

An Eye for an Eye

This scenario is designed as an introduction to *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay* for newcomers to the game. The adventure introduces players to the perils of the Reikland and provides novice GMs with all the information they need to run the adventure. If you intend to participate in this adventure as a player **DO NOT READ ANY FURTHER**. The following information is for the GM's eyes only.

Background

The player characters are employed by a worried noble , Lord Rickard Aschaffenberg, to look into a strange malaise that is affecting his manor's staff. By investigating the manor house, the PCs uncover clues hinting that a vile Chaos cult has infiltrated the manor. Can the PCs reveal the villains in time to prevent them from enacting a terrible ritual that will summon a daemon? The presence of worshippers of Chaos provides plenty of opportunities for combat, though clever players can bypass some of the dangers they face through careful investigation.

The scenario is set in Grunewald Lodge, a modest fortified manor in the Reikland that marks the northern extent of the lands belonging to the noble von Bruner family. Grunewald Lodge lies in the Reikwald Forest, near the foothills of the Grey Mountains. It is several miles from the closest village and at least a day's journey from the nearest town of any notable size. There are many such fortified manors in the Empire, making it easy for the GM to change the exact location with a few changes to names and other details.

Running the Adventure

This adventure's plot is relatively open-ended. The PCs have the freedom to explore Grunewald Lodge and investigate its inhabitants. Gathering clues will be important if they are to expose the Chaos cult and foil the daemon summoning. As the GM, it is important to familiarise yourself with the layout of the manor and with the NPCs. At the end of this scenario, you will find a useful NPC Quick Reference table, on page 150, as well as stats and actions for the NPCs and creatures starting on page 151.

The adventure takes place over three chapters:

Chapter 1: Welcome to Grunewald

The adventurers make their way to Grunewald Lodge in the company of Lord Aschaffenberg's servant Vern Hendrick. As they arrive, the party is ambushed by beastmen and must turn back the assault to allow the staff of Grunewald to open the gate and allow them entry.

Chapter 2: Investigation

The PCs explore Grunewald Lodge to learn more about the strange goings on. This investigation may involve observing and interacting with the manor staff as they go about their daily business. Many members of the staff will not appreciate this, as they are either trying to do their jobs under difficult circumstances or are members of a forbidden Chaos cult who do not wish to be discovered.

The PCs have arrived just in time – while they undertake their investigations, the Chaos cult is in the process of enacting its master plan. The pursuit of these endeavours becomes a race as the PCs work to uncover the cult while the cult works to gather the necessary materials for their ritual. The GM uses a Progress Tracker to mark the relative progress of both the investigation and the cult. The success or failure of the investigation has important ramifications during Chapter 3.

Chapter 3: The Dramatic Finale

With both beastmen and Chaos cultists operating in the area, a fight with the PCs is inevitable. By now the PCs will likely have discovered enough about the goings on at Grunewald Lodge to be able to marshal an effective defence of the manor and its innocent inhabitants. If not, a bruising battle is likely to result with a great deal of bloodshed and destruction.

If the PCs manage to thwart the Chaos cultists' plans and defeat the beastmen, they will be well rewarded and may gain a valuable ally. If they fail, the forces of Chaos will grow stronger in the region.

A History of Grunewald Lodge

Grunewald Lodge was originally built as a simple hunting lodge by the ancestors of the von Bruner family, more than 800 years ago. In the year 2012, the von Bruners rebuilt the manor as a defensive structure. During this period of history, the Empire was politically weak, with many claimants vying for the Imperial throne.

It was not until 2304, when Magnus the Pious united the Empire following the Great War Against Chaos, that factional infighting between the provinces diminished and the forests were purged of raiders. Grunewald Lodge was now an ugly fortification where once there had been a comfortable hunting lodge. As a consequence, the von Bruners neglected the building. During the last few centuries, it has become the inherited property of a lesser branch of the von Bruner bloodline and today is considered an inconsequential backwater.

As such, it was surprising when Andreas von Bruner was handed the keys to the manor in 2515. Andreas was the second son of a cousin of Graf Sigismund, patriarch of the very powerful von Jungfreud family. Due to the young man's relatively high birth, charm, and undeniably keen intellect, he should have been granted a much more prestigious seat to control. Such an apparent snub caused a minor stir amongst those who maintained an interest in the affairs of the aristocracy, though the event went unnoticed by the general population of Reikland.

However, what became more widely known was the mysterious disappearance of Andreas five years later. No one could account for the vanished noble – he was simply at Grunewald Lodge one evening, then gone in the morning.

Using this Information in the Game

Not all the PCs will know the full details of the manor's history. Very few people in the Empire are educated, and those who are tend to be more versed in folklore and Imperial propaganda than historical facts. However, if any character passes an **Average (2d) Education check** or **Folklore check**, give him a synopsis of the history of Grunewald Lodge; this information will add colour to the adventure and provide some subtle clues. If the check generates any boons, the character has heard rumours that Andreas was sent away to the lodge on account of his bizarre behaviour, which embarrassed his family. If the check generates any banes, be sure to slip in some incorrect information along with the facts.

What the Characters Certainly Don't Know...

Andreas von Bruner was a seeker of forbidden lore. Andreas's manservant, a man named Gregor Piersson, had long ago devoted himself to Chaos. He used to be a member of a Chaos cult known as the Eldritch Order of the Unblinking Eye (see page 126) but fled his home in Altdorf when the cult was broken up by witch hunters and most of its members condemned to the pyre by Magistrate Lord Heissman von Bruner. Gregor escaped both the witch hunters and the pyre, but his heart burned for revenge against Lord Heissman. When chance brought him to Ubersreik, the home of the von Bruner family, and delivered Andreas von Bruner, Lord Heissman's eldest son, to him, Piersson saw it as the hand of Chaos at work and devised a plan for his revenge…

Piersson introduced Andreas to a number of proscribed texts, beginning with the innocuous and gradually moving to the profane. As the blasphemous lore rotted Andreas's soul, his appalled family, unaware that he had slid into Chaos worship, deemed it wise to send him to a remote location where his behaviour would not bring the name of von Bruner into disrepute. The dilapidated and little visited Grunewald Lodge was the perfect location.

Cult Members

Here is a quick overview of the NPCs who are members of the Eldritch Order of the Unblinking Eye.

- **Gregor Piersson.** Cult leader and steward of Grunewald Lodge
- **Dr. Stefan Sieger.** Physician
- **Otto Geizhals.** Librarian
- **Albrecht Krug.** Coachman
- **Karla Wagner.** Cook
- **Pieter Koch.** Guard
- **Bertoldt Granhof.** Gardener
- **Gunnar Wetzel.** Servant
- **Hanna Dralst.** Servant
- **Konrad Voss.** Servant
- **Josef Vacmark.** Servant

The hope was that Andreas would repent his aberrant ways in exile, but unfortunately Piersson accompanied him and assumed the role of the lodge's steward. Thus the nobleman continued with his degenerate lifestyle. Andreas and Piersson secretly tempted members of the manor's staff to join them in secret rituals devoted to Chaos. The new master of Grunewald Lodge converted parts of the manor house into a secret library and temple to Chaos where he could pursue his quest for damned knowledge at leisure.

Gregor had even darker plans. In addition to a number of profane books, he had brought with him an artefact from Altdorf that had been held sacred by the Unblinking Eye: a painting created by an insane artist who had bound a daemon within its brush strokes. Gregor knew the secrets of the painting – by making a small sacrifice of his own blood, a person could command the painting to show him anything he wished to see. However, anyone who did this unwittingly donated a fraction of his own essence to the entity trapped within, weakening himself whilst gradually giving the daemon the energy it needed to manifest in the mortal realm, where it yearned to wreak havoc.

Gregor encouraged Andreas to use the painting again and again, though failed to tell him of the price he paid for each viewing. Andreas was greedy to see the wonders of the world, from the warped landscapes of the Chaos Wastes to the mysteries of far-off Cathay. The more he used it, the more his flesh withered and his sanity declined. Eventually, Andreas passed enough of his essence to the daemon to give it the strength to manifest. A year and a day ago, the painting absorbed what was left of Andreas's wasted physical form, since which time the daemon has been quietly gestating within the canvas. Grunewald Lodge was devoid of a master once more.

Recent Events

Two months ago, Ludmilla von Bruner, one of Andreas's cousins, was betrothed to Rickard Aschaffenberg, a member of a minor noble family from Ubersreik. As part of the dowry, Lord Heissman has granted Grunewald Lodge to Rickard until Lord Heissman's youngest son, Leopold von Bruner, comes of age. Rickard has spent a few weeks at the lodge in an attempt to get a feel for the place before moving in, and is beginning to suspect that something unwholesome is going on.

Also, a serious problem has developed. After an absence of many years, beastmen are once again gathering in the Reikwald Forest around the area. A herd of these creatures has been drawn to the manor. Their leader unconsciously senses that there is a daemonic essence emanating from within the building, and he lusts to release it. To this end, he has incited a wargor and his warband to assault the manor. The attack, occurring shortly after Rickard's arrival, was savage, but was repulsed by the manor's guards. The beastmen were driven back into the forest, where they lick their wounds and plan another attack.

The Eldritch Order of the Unblinking Eye

The Eldritch Order of the Unblinking Eye is a Chaos cult that formed in Altdorf about fifty years ago. It was initially exclusive to intelligentsia drawn from the city's high society. Just over a decade ago, the Eldritch Eye was infiltrated by witch hunters and almost all of its senior members captured and condemned to die by Magistrate Heissman von Bruner. Without leadership, many of the cult's members disappeared or fled for their lives.

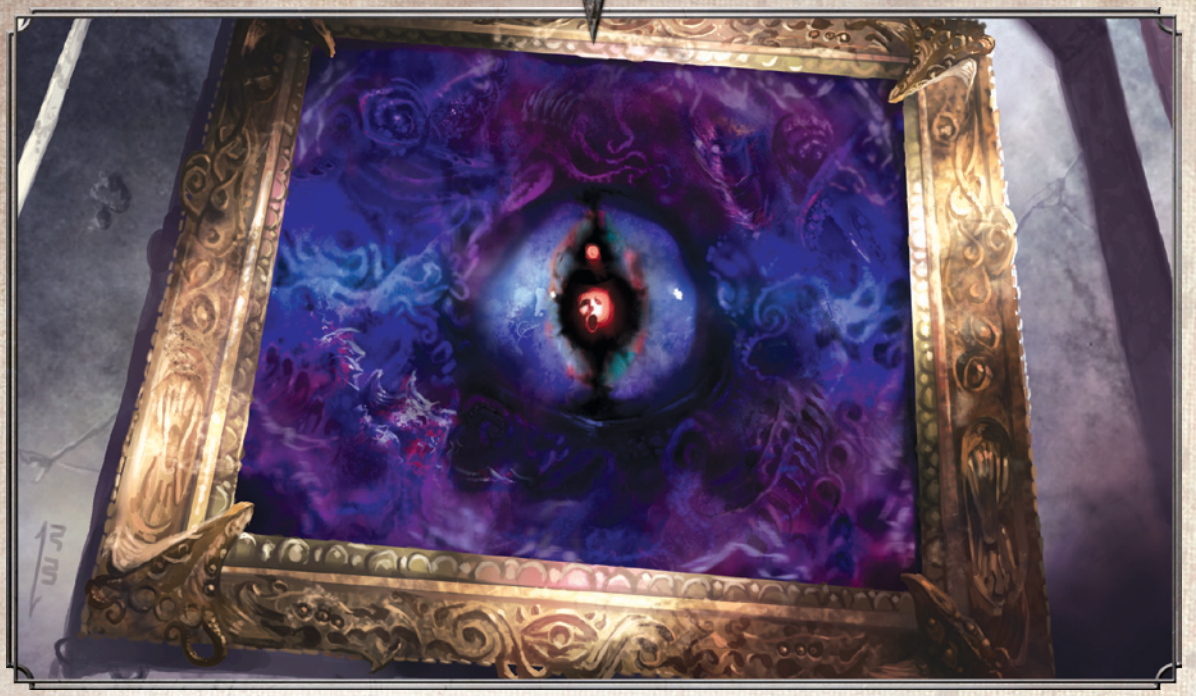
A young member named Gregor Piersson escaped retribution and fled to Ubersreik, taking with him one of the cult's most important magical artefacts. When he encountered Andreas von Bruner, Lord Heissman's eldest son, he devised a plan for revenge. He found employment as Andreas's manservant and slowly turned the youth towards the clandestine worship of Chaos. Andreas had a keen intellect, but under Piersson's influence, he turned his studies towards damned esoteric lore, and as a result, his behaviour became erratic. Once convinced of the young noble's dedication to forbidden knowledge, Piersson inducted him into the worship of Chaos, and the Eldritch Order of the Unblinking Eye was reborn.

When Andreas was forced to move to the Grunewald Lodge in 2515, he and Piersson took the opportunity to secretly corrupt some of its weaker-minded staff and induct them into their cult.

The Painting

The artefact that Piersson smuggled during his escape is a large portrait depicting a human eye. The painting was created long before Piersson joined the Eldritch Eye, and he has no idea about what rituals were involved in its manufacture. He does know that a lesser daemon is bound within the portrait, which is painted upon a canvas of its own flayed skin.

The painting depicts a distended, disturbing human eye, with a pale blue iris and a large dilated pupil. Close examination reveals bloody stains on the pupil. The painting is mounted upon a heavy frame carved with a series of startling geometric patterns. It is highly disturbing to look at, and so it is hidden behind a blue



curtain in the sitting room. Only the Chaos cult members are even aware of the painting's existence – the other staff avoid the room when necessary, perturbed by its evil atmosphere, and none have plucked the courage to peek behind the curtain.

Viewing the Painting

If anyone looks at the painting, the great eye captivates the viewer with its disquieting stare, and icy dread scratches at the recesses of the viewer's mind. Characters need to make Discipline checks each time they look at the painting.

The painting has an initial Terror Rating of 3, and the *Chaos* and *Supernatural* insanity traits. (See the *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay Player's Guide*, Chapter Nine for the rules on Terror and Fear). Even after the first viewing, the painting has an effect on viewers – all subsequent viewings have a Fear Rating of 2.

Properties of the Painting

Before Andreas was absorbed into the painting, it could be used to view scenes from afar by wiping the viewer's blood onto the pupil of the eye, which would then magically display the desired image. Since Andreas was absorbed, this ability has been lost as the daemon funnels all its energies into growing strong enough to manifest.

It is very difficult to destroy the painting. Whilst the frame can easily be smashed, the canvas itself is impervious to damage inflicted by any means. A PC passing an **Easy (1d) Piety or Folklore check** will understand that the best thing to do would be to hand the painting over to the Cult of Sigmar or a witch hunter for safe destruction.

The PCs may decide that the painting should be given to Sister Sonja, who is a zealous follower of Sigmar. However, her ability to help is limited. If given the painting, she will take it to the Shrine of Sigmar and place it in front of the triptych there. She will claim that if the painting is left alone in the shrine overnight, it will be exorcised, but this will have no actual effect.

Chapter 1: Welcome to Grunewald

The investigation takes place in and around Grunewald Lodge, so the first thing the Game Master must do is get the party there. Depending on your group, and especially if this is your first *Warhammer Fantasy* adventure, it may work well to begin the adventure under the assumption that the party has already met with Vern Hendrick and accepted a job on behalf of Lord Aschaffenberg. If this is the case, you can proceed directly to **Encounter 1: A Warm Welcome** on page 129

Otherwise, there are a number of ways a party of adventurers can become involved in this adventure. Here are a few suggestions:

Investigating the Disappearance of Andreas von Bruner

Whilst Lord Heissman is not too concerned with the fact that a wastrel relative has vanished, other members of the family might still be keen to find out where Andreas went. Should the party have a noble patron or contact, he or she may be interested in learning of Andreas's fate, especially if the noble has ties to the von Bruner dynasty. The noble might employ the PCs to investigate the disappearance and contact Lord Aschaffenberg to ask him to accept them as guests while they examine the matter. Lord Aschaffenberg might then take advantage of their presence and use them to help out with his own enquiries.

Following Clues Leading to a Chaos Cult

The Eldritch Eye and other cults worshipping the Ruinous Powers have sects throughout the Empire. These sects are fractious and often given to infighting. However, they do form alliances from time to time, for reasons of survival or to trade forbidden knowledge. The party may have faced a group of Chaos cultists and found papers in their possession that provide cryptic clues to a similar fac-

tion near Grunewald. Alternatively, if the PCs have a contact who is a witch hunter, he may have discovered such a link and, unable to investigate himself, may have hired the PCs to investigate on his behalf.

Hired by Lord Aschaffenberg

The current lord of Grunewald Lodge is very concerned about the state of the manor and the staff. Suspecting foul play, Lord Aschaffenberg is on the lookout for competent strangers he can hire to get to the bottom of the matter without arousing undue suspicion from whoever might be responsible. This scenario is the default assumption for the adventure. However, should you feel that one of the other methods fits your campaign or group better, it is easy enough to alter a few details in order to suit your game.

Encounter 0: A Job Offer

This encounter transitions the party from Ubersreik (or any other town that the party may find themselves in) to Grunewald Lodge. Although it has many roleplaying opportunities, this encounter may be skipped if your group is willing to accept some dramatic license. In that case, you can begin with the party accepting the job and already en-route to Grunewald. If you do so, proceed directly to **Encounter 1: A Warm Welcome**, on page 129.

Lord Aschaffenberg has sent his most trusted servant to the town of Ubersreik in search of likely hirelings. His servant has arranged to have the following information posted throughout nearby towns.

LOOKING FOR WORK?

Resourceful and intrepid fellows required to assist in house move. Job involves discretion, danger, and some heavy lifting. Only honest applicants will be considered. No layabouts.

Hired candidates will earn 6 silver schillings a day for their labour, plus any expenses incurred.

INTERESTED?

Ask for Herr Hendrick at The Red Moon Inn in Ubersreik. Don't delay – seek Herr Hendrick today!

You may need to provide some extra incentive for the PCs to take on the job. They might be desperate for any work they can get – perhaps they have been robbed, gambled their money away, or owe large debts. If the PCs try to look for other work in the area, there is none to be found at the moment.

The Red Moon Inn

The Red Moon is an inn on the Ubersreik waterfront, easily reached by road or from the River Teufel. The main floor is stone, with a half-timbered upper level overhanging the street. Read the following to the players as they enter the inn:

The common room of the Red Moon is smoky and dark and smells sharply of a mixture of fish, smoke, and sour beer. The bar is little more than a plank, and the furnishings are shabby. Against one wall are a series of snug booths, many with curtains of tattered linen slung across them to offer some privacy. A scattering of candles and oil lamps light the room, as the small, grimy windows offer very little illumination from outside.

Once inside the inn, if anyone asks for Herr Hendrick, a friendly patron or pox-scarred barmaid directs the party to one of the many private snugs that line one side of the lounge.

Vern Hendrick

Vern Hendrick is Lord Aschaffenberg's manservant. (See page 135 for his description. Remember to direct the PCs' attention to his bandaged left hand.) He is rather irritated at being asked to leave Grunewald Lodge for this task, which he deems entirely beneath him. However, he is one of the few people Lord Aschaffenberg trusts at this time. Hendrick will give the PCs a probing interview, which can be an opportunity to get the characters to introduce themselves to the rest of the group if this is their first session together. Although Vern is in a bad mood and not friendly at the best of times, he remains loyal to Lord Aschaffenberg and wants to make sure the people he's hiring are trustworthy and at least vaguely competent.

If the PCs opt to use a few social skills to ingratiate themselves to Vern Hendrick, the checks should be Simple (0d) or Easy (1d). After all, he is desperate to hire someone, and the PCs are the only ones to respond to his handbill. The GM may add misfortune dice to the checks to represent his foul mood. Once one check succeeds, the GM should assume that Vern decides to trust the PCs and hires them.

Once Hendrick is sure the PCs are trustworthy, he explains that he works for Lord Aschaffenberg, who is the new master of Grunewald Lodge. Hendrick makes sure that the party is well aware of the following instruction, which may be read aloud to the players.

> *"Lord Aschaffenberg is most concerned with the state of his new manor. He thinks there may be some kind of rebellion fomenting in the ranks of the staff, on the whole a shiftless and uncooperative crew to a man. He wants to hire some people to look into this matter. Ostensibly you will be there to help unload the lord's coach and arrange his furniture, but really you are to there to covertly spy upon the staff, learn what you can of any insubordination, and report it to Lord Aschaffenberg."*

Asked about any potential dangers, Hendrick offers the following information whilst indicating his bandaged hand:

> *"There are herds of beastmen on the move in the woods around the lodge. Last week a band of the creatures attacked the manor. They were repulsed by the guards, but a number of the staff were injured in the attack. We hit them harder than they hit us, but they may return if their nerve recovers."*

Hendrick can answer questions about the history of the manor and the layout of the grounds (see page 134 and onwards for details), but he does not know any secrets. For example, he could tell them that Olver Gand is the kennel master and that he has three trained Tilean manhounds, but not that he feeds them beastman flesh. Hendrick is a taciturn fellow who will not volunteer information unless asked for it.

After he has hired the PCs and paid them each six silver schillings in advance, Hendrick tells them to meet him outside the Red Moon at first light the following morning. The PCs are free to spend the rest of the day exploring Ubersreik and preparing for their coming mission.

Hendrick arranges for a wagon to take them to Grunewald Lodge. The next morning, he is waiting outside the inn next to a heavily provisioned wagon piled high with a dozen chests. Hendrick sits next to the driver, while the PCs have to perch precariously atop the luggage. Once they're situated, commence Encounter 1.

Encounter 1: A Warm Welcome

Once the PCs commence their journey from Ubersreik, read the following to the players aloud:

> *The journey from Ubersreik is long, uncomfortable, and more than a little boring. The road takes you through the fertile foothills of the Vorberg-land and through the village of Geissbach. The weather is sunny and warm, the road is dry, and you make good time. Herr Hendrick spends most of the journey complaining about the remoteness of Grunewald Lodge, the deficiencies of rural folk, and the pain of his injury.*

Invite the PCs to add their own descriptions of how they spend the journey and how they interact with Herr Hendrick. Once you're ready to move on, read the following:

> *After leaving Geissbach, the road enters the Reikwald Forest and the Grey Mountains to the south disappear behind the dark forest canopy. As the gloom deepens, Herr Hendrick ceases his complaints and indeed stops talking altogether. His eyes dart all around, and he startles at the slightest rustling of leaves or cry of a woodland creature.*

Act 1: The Reikwald

Keep the PCs on edge as they traverse the forest by telling them that they hear rustling in the bushes, and every so often hear strange hoots and animal cries from deep in the woods. Hendrick

Beastman Battle Progress Tracker

Assemble a Progress Tracker for this battle to track the beastmen's morale. The tracker should be 5 spaces long with an event marker on the last space of the track. Place a tracking token on the first space.

- For each ungor killed, advance the token 1 space
- For each gor killed, advance the token 2 spaces
- For each successful use of Intimidate by the PCs, or other effects or roleplaying ideas that would erode the beastmen's morale, advance the morale token 1 space

When the morale tracker reaches the event space at the end of the track, the beastmen's morale breaks and they begin to flee. Begin Act 3: The Retreat.

stops whining, and begins to act extremely nervous, jumping at every noise. As they progress deeper into the forest, each character should attempt an **Easy (1d) Observation check**. A successful character spots movement amongst the trees – a flash of angry red eyes from the gloom and a man-sized dark shape flitting through the undergrowth.

If anyone wants to investigate closer, Hendrick, trembling with fear, tries to dissuade them. Anyone investigating regardless may attempt an **Average (2d) Observation check**. A PC passing this check finds tracks created by large cloven hooves, though no creature can be found. The tracks disappear deep into the woods.

The Guards

The guards on the wall can have as much or as little impact on the encounter as the GM wishes. Their default course of action is to fire their crossbows from the wall, but as they are injured (and possibly drugged), they are not very effective. To represent their assistance, the guards kill one ungor henchman within medium range of the wall at the end of every turn. If the PCs are doing extremely well (or extremely poorly), feel free to decrease or increase the effectiveness of the guards as appropriate.

The guards are unwilling to open the gate with beastmen waging war outside. If the PCs are clearly in dire straits, let them attempt Charm, Guile, or Leadership checks to convince the guards to open the gates, adjusting the encounter as necessary.

As the PCs near Grunewald Lodge, allow them to make additional Observation checks if they are keeping an active watch. Success at an **Average (2d) Observation check** reveals that they are being carefully shadowed by several stealthy forms in the forest. If the PCs take hostile action or the beastmen realise they've been spotted, transition to Act 2: The Attack.

Act 2: The Attack

If the PCs avoid conflict before they reach the lodge, read the following:

Finally, the wagon enters a large clearing in the forest, dominated by a collection of buildings protected by a twelve foot high, ivy-covered stone wall. Parts of the wall have collapsed and are reinforced with crude barricades. A guard in a mail shirt and pot-helmet and wielding a crossbow patrols the top of the wall. The wall is surrounded by a wide, overgrown ditch. A small gatehouse with a crumbling, turreted tower, built of dark stone, protects the entrance. Another guard, similarly armed and armoured, stands alert on the turret of the tower.

As the wagon approaches the gates, play out a very brief exchange with the guards. Hendrick orders the gates opened. The guards are sluggish to respond. The PCs may join in urging the gates opened, particularly if they suspect the beastmen are close behind. Before the gate can be opened, however, the beastmen attack!

Suddenly a guttural howl rises from the forest around you! Several misshapen humanoid forms emerge from the undergrowth, dropping from the boughs of trees and bursting from behind scrub. They have twisted, cloven hooves and bestial faces, patches of mangy fur on their bodies, and the nubs of stunted horns on their heads. Between them strides a larger, more powerful form with the head of a ram and proud, curling horns. The creature bares blood-stained fangs and howls a challenge. At this, the beastmen leap to the attack!

The PCs begin engaged with the wagon, which is at medium range from the gate. A group of ungor henchmen equal in number to the PCs, led by a single gor, have sprung from the underbrush at close range from the wagon, closing in between them and the gate. Another group of ungors and a single gor appear at extreme range, further down the road, slowly advancing towards the party.

If the PCs start the battle early, let them know that they can see the tip of the guardhouse turret peeking above the trees just around the next bend in the road. In any case, the beastmen intend to chase the PCs to the lodge to force the inhabitants to open the gate to allow the PCs entry. When the gate opens, the beastmen attempt to force their way inside.

If the beastmen successfully ambush the PCs – for example, by attacking PCs who are not aware of their presence – they gain an additional ☐ to their attacks and checks during the first round of combat, or until the morale tracker moves.

Herr Hendrick climbs higher up the wagon and grimly defends himself and his master's possessions with a dagger, but offers very little assistance otherwise. Make a point to mention his screaming invective at the guards, demanding they open the gate or berating them for their incompetence.

Act 3: The Retreat

Once the beastmen's morale breaks, the ungors begin to flee. Any ungors not currently engaged with an enemy flee for the forest at the first opportunity. The remaining ungors continue fighting, but add ■■ to all their checks.

The gors continue to battle until only gors remain, at which point they disengage from the enemy and flee for safety. If the PCs elect to give chase. the sounds of braying, howling, and war-horns from the trees all around them should persuade them not to continue with the pursuit. Herr Hendrick will also yell at them to head back to Grunewald Lodge - with the beastmen defeated, the guards finally open the gate to allow the party to enter.

Encounter 2: Let Me Get Your Bags

The manor house stands two storeys high, its broad, crenellated roof giving it a practical, military appearance. It has seen better days: ivy creeps up the stone walls, its windows are filthy with grime, and the brick chimneystack on the roof is crumbling.

The building is surrounded by a large garden, which is comprised of overgrown flowerbeds and a lawn of long grass, a pond, and a small orchard. Several wooden buildings are enclosed by the outer wall: a dilapidated coach-house and stables, a block of kennels that echo with loud barking, and a forge hidden away in a corner of the perimeter wall. A ramshackle shrine stands at one end of the garden. The wagon creaks to a halt opposite the coach house, and Hendrick disembarks to unhitch the tired horses. Three stablehands sullenly watch him, none of them offering to help until Hendrick snaps and orders one to take the horses. Then Hendrick invites the PCs to meet Lord Aschaffenberg.

Lord Aschaffenberg

A bear of a man, sporting a bushy, dark brown beard and wearing gold chains over his ermine robes with fashionably slashed sleeves, strides from the manor and across the overgrown garden. He bellows an ebullient greeting to the PCs as he draws closer. Hendrick bows before the man and introduces him as Lord Rickard Aschaffenberg (see page 134 for a full description). The nobleman slaps the nearest PC on the back, a wide grin on his face.

> *"Ah! Finally my luggage arrives! A spot of excitement there outside the gates, what what! Anyone hurt? No? Then will you stout fellows help shift the blessed things?! Good, good! A house isn't a home without one's belongings! This way, gentlemen. Grab yourselves a box and follow me!"*

At this point, each PC may attempt an **Easy (1d) Observation check**. Any PC passing this check notices a face staring at the newcomers from a first floor window. At this point, the GM should describe Gregor Piersson to him (see page 145). If the PC succeeds and also generates one or more boons, he notices that the face has a suspicious, scowling expression. It vanishes from the window as soon as the PC looks up.

Lord Aschaffenberg leads the party across the overgrown lawn and into the manor house. The PCs first enter the great hall (see page 140 for a description). Be sure to impress upon them the grandness of this room. Aschaffenberg strides across the hall, up the flight of stairs, onto the landing, and into his private room.

Each PC is expected to carry a chest, unless visibly injured. Hendrick helps the characters, muttering under his breath about lazy staff, but no one else comes to lend them a hand.

A Secret Mission

Once all twelve chests are within his chamber, Aschaffenberg closes the door and speaks to the PCs in a hushed and serious tone, while Hendrick stands guard on the landing outside.

> *"I assume Hendrick has filled you in with all the details. By Ranald's crossed fingers, I know there's something rather strange going on, but I'm not sure if it's serious enough to bother the proper authorities with yet. Don't want to go upsetting the applecart over nothing, what?"*

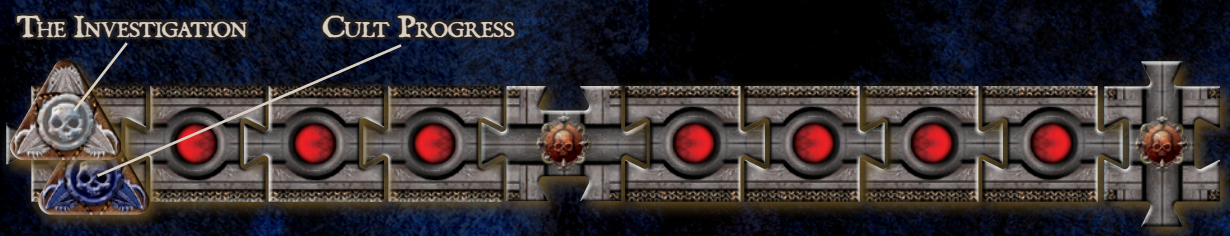
Lord Aschaffenberg pauses to see if anyone laughs at his joke. If no one has anything to add, he will continue.

> *"Right! Well, what I would like you to do is pretend I have given you the rest of the day off. If you mention that you've been lugging those crates all the way from my estate in Ubersreik, you should win folk's sympathy. Of course, what you'll really be doing is trying to uncover some clue as to what's so damned odd about this place. Meet me in the great hall for dinner this evening and we'll discuss matters further after the meal. Which reminds me; what would you like for dinner? Our chef is preparing goose or venison tonight. I recommend the venison!"*

Once Aschaffenberg has their answer, the PCs are free to explore the manor. As soon as the audience ends, you can begin Chapter 2.

Lord Aschaffenberg is happy to answer any questions the PCs might have, although he'll stress that if he had all the answers he wouldn't need to hire any investigators! He can name and describe most of the staff and locations around the lodge if pressed, and will pass off any questions as to the "minutia" of running the lodge to Vern Hendrick or Gregor Peirsson.

Investigation Progress Tracker



Make a Progress Tracker ten spaces long, with event markers at the 5th and 10th spaces along the track. Place one tracking token at the start of the track to represent the PCs' investigation and a second, different coloured token on the track representing the cult's progress. This Progress Tracker will help manage the events of this chapter and its ramifications for Chapter 3.

This section contains guidelines for moving tokens along the Progress Tracker. However, don't feel restricted by these guidelines! If the PCs discover the secret passages and the temple before the Progress Tracker indicates they should, let them. The Progress Tracker is a tool to ensure that the story progresses, not a brake restricting the rate of discovery. If the players arrive at a key discovery early, simply advance the Progress Tracker to the appropriate event space, to keep it in pace with events.

Managing the Investigation

Advance the investigation token each time the PCs make progress on their investigation. Some of the events that can advance the PCs' investigation include:

- The PCs find the suspicious books in the library.
- The PCs find the missing blunderbuss.
- The PCs locate the herb garden.
- The PCs deduce the nature of schlaf.
- Each time the PCs notice unusual or suspicious behaviour on the part of a cult member.
- The PCs first encounter the painting.
- The PCs listen to the ravings of Korden Kurgansson.

When the investigation token reaches the first event space on the track, direct the party towards an as-yet-undiscovered overt clue, such as the blasphemous books in the library or the painting itself. Take a moment to clarify with the party that this is profoundly disturbing evidence of corruption on the part of the manor's previous resident, or the current staff – or perhaps both!

When the investigation token reaches the final event space, the PCs discover the hidden passages beneath the lodge and ultimately the Chaos temple. This discovery leads directly into Chapter 3.

If Lord Aschaffenberg is asked about the beastmen attack, he says:

> *"Yes, nasty pieces of work, aren't they? We thought we'd seen the last of them when they attacked last week – I'm sure Vern mentioned – but the blasted creatures just don't know when to quit. We suspected they might still be in the area, and now you've proved it. That makes your presence here doubly important, what? The sooner we get this mess straightened out, the sooner we can address the beastman problem!" Then, after a pause, "The two problems couldn't be related, could they? Ha! How the mind does grow suspicious out here in the woods."*

Chapter 2: Investigation

Chapter 2 is open-ended and not broken into individual encounters. You can use the Progress Tracker over the course of this entire chapter to monitor the status of the party's investigation and the Unblinking Eye's preparations for their ritual.

The Cult

The cult token indicates the activities of the cult members as they prepare for the blasphemous ritual. It also serves as a rough measure of the passage of time.

Advance the cult token each time the PCs waste time, encounter a dead end, chase a false lead, or interact significantly with a cult member without suspecting they've done so. Also, since the cult still perpetuates its agenda even if the PCs are hot on their tail, advance the cult token after every few clues the PCs uncover, especially if it was uncovered in sight of a cult member. If the PCs give Gregor Piersson reason to suspect that they're close to uncovering the Unblinking Eye, the cult token should start advancing faster.

When the cult token reaches the first event space on the track, Doctor Sieger and Karla Wagner poison the venison dish, and dinner is served. (See "The Dinner" on page 146.)

When the cult token reaches the final event space, the cult abducts a member of the staff and brings him down to the temple to begin the ritual. This triggers Chapter 3.

A Mysterious Note

At some point, the PCs come across Gunnar Wetzel and Todd Heistlenburger cleaning. Wetzel drops an important clue from his pocket while cleaning. This message was given to Wetzel by Piersson to warn him to eat the goose at dinner tonight, as the cook has laced the venison with schlaf.

The Servants' Movements

Whilst most of the manor staff remain in particular areas during the time between the PCs' arrival and dinner, some are moving about the manor.

- Gregor Piersson wanders the manor to keep an eye on the other members of the staff – his role as steward of the manor means that he is responsible for making sure the other staff members are doing their jobs. This gives him plenty of cover for checking up on his fellow Chaos cultists and monitoring the movements of the PCs.
- Konrad Voss is with Piersson as he is the steward's assistant.
- The servants Hanna Dralst, Gunnar Wetzel, and Josef Vacmark run errands for senior members of the staff, prepare the great hall for dinner, dust the hallways, and so on. As Chaos cultists, they are used by Piersson as his eyes and ears around the lodge, and they report to him any suspicious activity they notice the PCs getting up to.
- Gertie Hochen and Todd Heistlenburger are also servants, and perform similar duties. However, they are not associated with the Chaos cult and have both been drugged with schlaf by Doctor Sieger.

Schlaf Poisoning

Several of the staff are suffering from schlaf poisoning, administered through their food by Doctor Sieger and Karla Wagner, the cook. Piersson wants them to remain oblivious to what is going on around them. Doctor Sieger has also been testing the potency of the new batch of schlaf he has created. The currently drugged staff include the coachman Hans Kurtz, the young groom Franz Lange, the servants Gertie Hochen and Todd Heistlenburger, and several guards. Other staff will become drugged after eating venison at dinner.

Anyone drugged by schlaf displays the following symptoms:

- Deliberate and slowed speech, somewhat slurred.
- Lack of curiosity as to what goes on around them.
- Chronic sleepiness.
- Heavy, red-rimmed eyes.

Effects of Schlaf Poisoning

In game terms, drugged characters add ■■ to all physical checks and add ♦ to all Observation checks.

PCs talking to drugged staff members may notice the physical effects of these symptoms if they pass an **Easy (1d) Intuition check**. Anyone wishing to examine the symptoms more closely may attempt an **Average (2d) First Aid check** or an **Easy (1d) Medicine check**. Success indicates that the subject is suffering from the effects of some type of soporific drug. If a boon is also generated, the character knows that this drug is known as schlaf, concocted from the gortsiete plant.

The ingredients needed for an antidote are not available in the manor grounds, so the only treatment is for the patient to recover fatigue by getting a few days' bed rest.

PCs consuming schlaf

If a character consumes schlaf, he may notice that the food or drink has a subtle acrid taste if he passes a **Hard (3d) Observation check**. If the intended victim consumes the dose, he feels extremely lethargic, as mentioned above, and may suffer up to 6 fatigue. The victim must immediately attempt an **Average (2d) Resilience check**. Each success and each boon reduces the amount of fatigue suffered by one. Each bane generated increases the fatigue suffered by one. A character fatigued by schlaf must add ■■ to all physical checks and add ♦ to all Observation checks.

How to Use this Material

What follows is a description of key locations of the Grunewald Lodge and its inhabitants. The PCs may visit most or even all of these locations as they investigate the weird happenings within the lodge. Feel free to give them hints as to which location to visit next, possibly by having something catch their eye (who was that hunched figure who just went through that door?) or having an NPC offer a suggestion ("Oh, you should talk to Otto Geizhals in the library about that!").

The PCs should not be required to visit every location to unravel the mystery unless they wish to, and certainly there is no particular order they need to follow. If you feel that things are dragging and the players are floundering, use the Progress Tracker to accelerate the progress of the cult's preparations or offer a clue in the form of a friendly NPC (such as Sister Sonja or Hans Kurtz).

Layout of Grunewald Lodge & Grounds

Each location entry includes a basic description, notes on which of the manor's inhabitants may be in the area, and details concerning any clues which the PCs might find there. Feel free to elaborate on the descriptions given, including as much detail as you think necessary to bring Grunewald Lodge to life for the players.

The Manor – First Floor

Upstairs there are sleeping quarters for the Lord, as well as rooms for guests and some of the staff.

The Master Bedroom

The master bedroom is filled with piles of crates and boxes, as Lord Aschaffenberg attempts to unpack his own wardrobe and effects, and remove the previous master's remaining articles. A giant, four poster bed groans under the weight of the boxes piled onto it. A window looks out over the garden below and the forest surrounding the lodge. On the wall to the right of the window, is a book cupboard holding all manner of old and new books.

Occupants

Lord Aschaffenberg remains in the room, sorting through the piles of stuff until it is time for dinner. He is being helped by his manservant, Vern Hendrick.

Clues

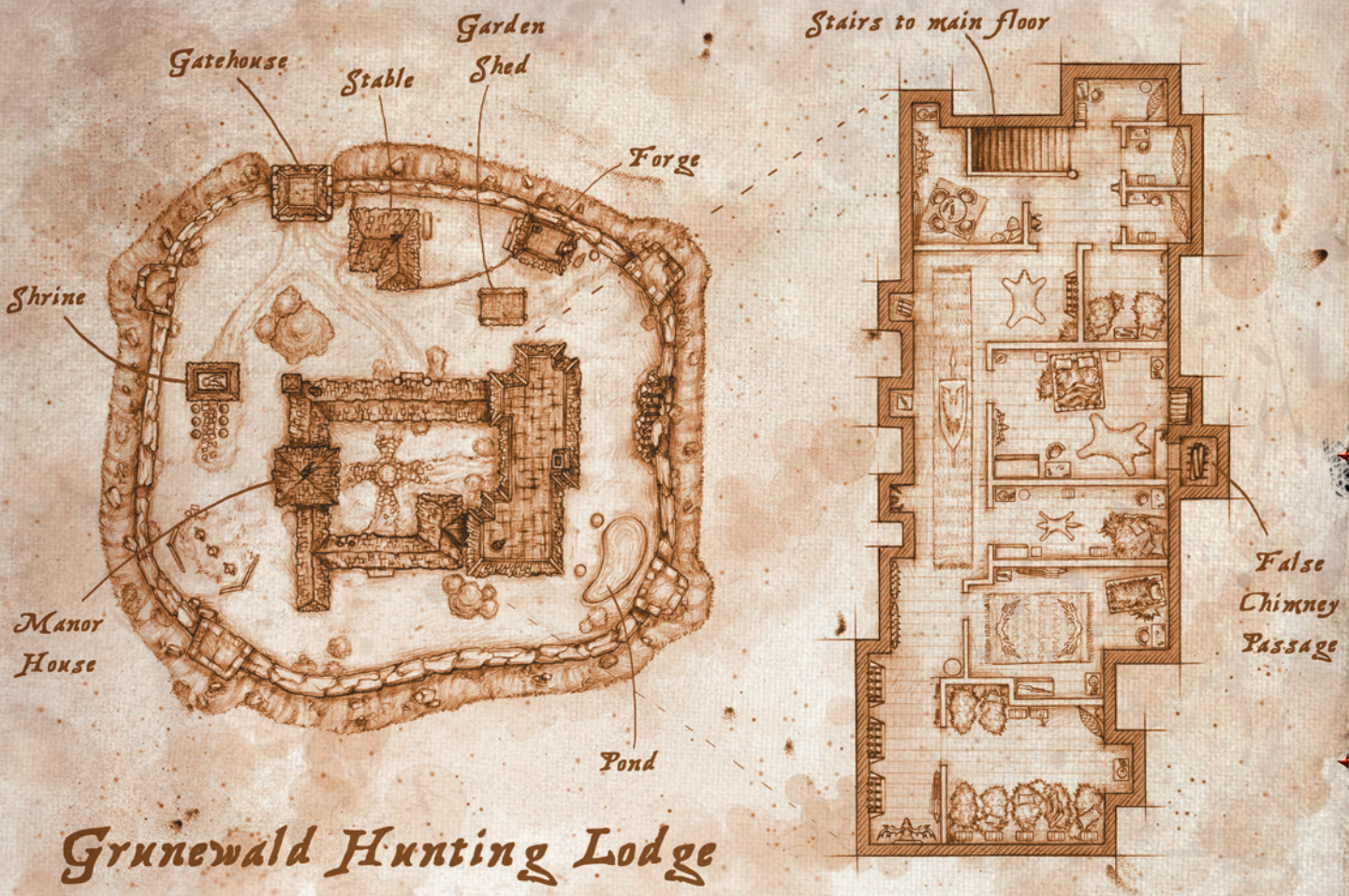
The bookshelf hides a secret passageway leading to the Chaos temple. Lord Aschaffenberg is unaware of this passage. A character examining the bookshelf (which is mostly full of racy novels and old religious tomes) may attempt a **Hard (3d) Observation check**. If he passes, he notices faint grooves in the floor indicating that the bookshelf has been frequently heaved back.

Lord Rickard Aschaffenberg

Location: Master Bedroom
Occupation: Lord of the Manor
Health: Drugged at dinner

Although only a minor noble, Lord Aschaffenberg is still a wealthy and powerful individual. He is a huge bear of a man, overweight but otherwise hale. He has a large, bushy, dark brown beard and dresses ostentatiously, wearing his golden chains of rank over an ermine robe with fashionably slashed silk sleeves. He is extroverted and usually speaks with a booming and commanding voice.

Aschaffenberg is a gregarious and generous man and, despite appearances, tries to take the responsibilities of his class seriously. He believes in the inherent superiority of the aristocracy, and he will not find it easy to accept that his predecessor was at the head of a cult. Having recently married into the von Bruner family, Aschaffenberg is keen not to do anything to upset his new relations



– a family whose wealth and legacy are significantly greater than his own. These delicate family matters are why he is reluctant to involve the authorities until he knows exactly what is going on.

How he interacts with the PCs during their investigation
Aschaffenberg wants the PCs to keep their distance from him in order to better employ the ruse that they are merely hired porters.

How he reacts to a fight breaking out
Aschaffenberg is a brave and competent swordsman. Should a fight break out, he attempts to break it up, but if one of the combatants seems unreasonable or malicious, he confronts them. He is armed with a fine rapier with a jewelled hilt. It is of superior craftsmanship, granting □ on skill checks to use it. Treat Aschaffenberg as a Noble (see page 151).

Vern Hendrick

Location: Master Bedroom
Occupation: Manservant
Health: Lightly wounded, drugged at dinner

Hendrick is Lord Aschaffenberg's manservant. He is a moody and professional individual in his mid-thirties with a deeply lined face and short, peppery hair. He is dressed in practical, servant's clothes. Whilst he is diligent in his duties, Hendrick is not clever enough to piece together what's going on and naively trusts Piersson, as the servant closest in rank and experience to himself.

Hendrick was wounded during the beastmen attack – his hand was bitten. He keeps the suppurating wound wrapped in a bandage, but it gives him constant pain and affects his mood for the worse.

How he interacts with the PCs during their investigation
Hendrick does not want to have much to do with the party once he is back in the manor. Pain from his injuries makes him irritable, and he privately believes Lord Aschaffenberg to be unduly paranoid. If presented with any proof of a conspiracy, he remembers his duties and from then on diligently strives to protect his master from danger.

How he reacts to a fight breaking out
Hendrick seeks out Lord Aschaffenberg and protects him should violence break out. He fights with a dagger, which he keeps thrust in his belt. Treat Hendrick as a Townsfolk NPC (page 151).

The Dormitories

These small rooms provide sleeping spaces for the manor staff. They are sparsely furnished and decorated, containing two or three beds and little else. When not working, manor staff usually head to their dormitories, where they either play dice or card games or simply spend their time idling.

The senior members of the staff, Piersson, Doctor Sieger, and Vern Hendrick, have their own rooms. Hendrick's is rather spacious and grand. He has been asked by Lord Aschaffenberg to share his room with the PCs when they retire for the night (and is annoyed by the request).

Occupants

All the dormitories will be empty until after dinner, when many of the drugged staff will totter off to bed.

Clues

One of the rooms belongs to Doctor Stefan Sieger. The room is locked. A PC who passes an **Average (2d) Skulduggery check** can pick the lock. The room contains a single bed, an upright human skeleton of a sort commonly found in medical colleges, and a wardrobe containing a man's spare clothes. The room smells strongly of ripe vegetation. The smell emanates from two fermenting bins stored under the bed beside several empty leather bottles.

The doctor has been harvesting gortsiete plants from the garden and processing them into the soporific poison known as schlaf. Any character who passes an **Average (2d) Education, Medicine**, or **Nature Lore check** identifies the sludge at the bottom of the bins as containing the gortsiete herb, a prime ingredient of schlaf (see page 134 for details).

The Hospice

This room used to be the guest chamber, but since the beastmen attacks it has been used to house members of the staff who require treatment. The larger furniture has been shifted up against the walls to make room for the makeshift cots set up on the floor. A large window on the south wall lightens the room and overlooks the garden and the forest beyond the defences.

Occupants

The wounded are being treated here by Doctor Stefan Sieger, assisted by Sister Sonja. Many of those who were wounded have been treated and have returned to their posts. The dwarf smith Korden Kurgansson, the guards Helmut Zondervan and Astrid Slazinger, and the gardener (and Chaos cultist) Bertoldt Granhof are still here. Astrid and Helmut are heavily injured and bandaged, and also drugged unconscious on schlaf. They are unlikely to play a role in the events of this adventure.

Clues

Doctor Sieger and Bertoldt Granhof are cultists, and Doctor Sieger has a small quantity of schlaf on his person. Korden Kurgansson's ramblings may suggest a conspiracy of evil to someone listening attentively, but then again they could be simply the product of an unhinged mind. Both Doctor Sieger and Bertoldt dismiss his ravings, and even Sister Sonja sadly comments on the dwarf's degraded state.

Dr. Stefan Sieger ☼

Location: Hospice
Occupation: Physician (Chaos cultist)
Health: Fine

Doctor Sieger is a short, emaciated man in his mid-20s, dressed in smart city clothes. When tending to the wounded in the hospice, he wears a white physician's apron, stained in blood, over his clothes. Anyone engaged with him can detect a strange aroma about his person if he passes an **Average (2d) Observation check**. This is the same smell of ripe vegetation in the fermenting bins in his room (see the opposite column).

Doctor Sieger maintains that he is a trained physician from the University of Nuln and attributes his talents to inspiration from Shallya. In fact, he is little more than a backstreet surgeon, and his knack with drugs and poisons is inspired by a darker power.

The doctor is a senior member of the Eldritch Eye, and Piersson's right hand man. He regularly poisons members of the manor staff not associated with the Chaos cult with the drug schlaf so that they become fatigued. By this method, Doctor Sieger and Piersson keep the staff pliant and incurious concerning their nefarious activities.

Doctor Sieger's flirtation with Chaos has eroded his mind somewhat. He is obsessed with the inner workings of the human body and on occasion has murdered members of the staff in his care so that he has an excuse to delve into their corpses. Piersson allows him to perform his bloody autopsies in the secrecy of the temple, but only if he can watch.

How he interacts with the PCs during their investigation
Doctor Sieger does not have any time for the PCs. He claims to be too busy ministering to his patients to talk to them. However, he is very attentive to the PCs should they talk to anyone within his earshot.

How he reacts to a fight breaking out
The doctor is a coward who only fights if the odds are clearly stacked in his favour. If he does fight, he wields a sharp medical scalpel (counts as a dagger). Treat Dr. Sieger as a Townsfolk NPC (page 151) with First Aid and Education trained.

Sister Sonja

Location: Hospice
Occupation: Zealot
Health: Blind

A Sigmarite sister in her forties, Sister Sonja has dark grey hair, a hooked nose, and milky-white eyes. She wears simple white robes, and a crudely whittled wooden hammer on a string dangles about her neck. A fever took her sight ten years ago while she stayed over at the manor during a pilgrimage from Ubersreik to the High Temple of Sigmar in Altdorf. She took it as a sign from Sigmar to stay here and watch over the little shrine until her vision returns. She generally stays in the hospice, tending to the needs of the sick there, though her ministrations tend to consist of half-remembered quotations from texts about the life of Sigmar – of little practical help.

Sister Sonja is blind, but not naïve. Since Korden's illness took a turn for the worse, she's beginning to suspect that things are not exactly as they seem around Grunewald Lodge. In a rare moment of near-lucidity, Korden asked her to hide his family's ancestral hammer from "them". Korden invoked the ancient friendship between Sigmar and the dwarfs and begged her to retrieve it from the forge and hide it somewhere even he couldn't find it. She hid it in the only place she could think of: the Shrine to Sigmar.

How she interacts with the PCs during their investigation
Sister Sonja is willing to help the PCs if they talk to her about odd goings on, but they may find her more of a hindrance. She is convinced that almost every member of the manor staff is guilty of some sort of immorality. She regards Otto Geizhals and Olver

Gand as particularly sinister and will lecture the PCs at length on Geizhals's sloth and the fact that Gand is an antisocial loner who prefers the company of his dogs to humans. The only person in the lodge with whom she has truly formed a friendship is Korden Kurgansson, , the dwarf smith, and his illness has made her increasingly worried and suspicious.

If any of the PCs are dwarfs or priests of Sigmar, she considers confiding in them the location of the hammer. However, she is well aware of the cultural significance of such an important family heirloom, and the PCs will have to offer assurances to return the hammer to Korden or to Karak Azgaraz to truly earn her trust.

How she reacts to a fight breaking out
Should she hear a fight break out, Sonja becomes hysterical. Being blind, she is no use in a fight, though her loud exhortations to Sigmar provide moral support. If the PCs have shown a liking to Sister Sonja, her presence will grant each of them the Inspired condition for the duration of a combat. Treat Sister Sonja as a townsfolk NPC (page 151) with Piety and Folklore trained, although she cannot perform any actions requiring sight.

Korden Kurgansson

Location: Hospice
Occupation: Blacksmith
Health: Drugged, completely insane

Korden Kurgansson is the lodge's blacksmith. He came to the lodge about twenty years ago from Karak Azgaraz with nothing more than his ancestral hammer and a set of blacksmith's tools. Once a hale and hearty youthful dwarf (only 150 years old), following the previous beastmen attack, Kurgansson is now a ghost of his former self. His face is sunken and yellow, and his prematurely grey beard is straggled and unkempt. While "recovering" in the hospice, he wears a long, white and red striped nightgown and a matching nightcap.

Korden was injured defending his forge. While recovering in the hospice, Doctor Sieger slipped him some poisoned broth. The doctor and Piersson know about Korden's hammer, but they don't know where it is. They have been taking him into the sitting room and forcing him to stare at the painting during interrogations, unsuccessfully trying to make him to talk. At night, his screams echo through the manor. As a result, he is now stark raving mad. He is utterly unaware of the hammer's current location.

How he interacts with the PCs during their investigation
Kurgansson mostly just mutters incomprehensibly, but he may utter interesting tidbits of information. If overheard by the characters when Doctor Sieger is present, the physician dismisses his mutterings as the rambling of a lunatic.

How he reacts to a fight breaking out
Kurgansson will be alarmed by any violence in his vicinity and will react to it by cowering behind furniture whilst begging his ancestors to forgive his dishonour – the sign of true madness in a dwarf. All Korden's characteristics count as being 1, and he has only 5 wounds. He is utterly useless.

Bertoldt Granhof ☼

Location: Hospice
Occupation: Gardener (Chaos cultist)
Health: Malingering (pretends to be injured)

Divine Aid

If a PC generates a ☙ on a check in Sister Sonja's presence, allow Sister Sonja to intervene directly and usefully in the task being undertaken, as if by chance or providence – she happens to say just the right thing, manages to land a blow in battle, or accidentally discovers an important clue.

Sister Sonja's intervention in this regard should be impressive and providential, in addition to any other effects generated by the ☙ result.

Adding special touches like this to the resolution of encounters and scenes can really make the Old World come to life for your players.

The gardener is a tall, nervous, and idiotic man in his mid-20s, with a mop of yellow hair. He is dressed in dirty gardening attire, even in the hospice. He has not kept the gardens of the manor well; they are in a complete state of disrepair, and all the flowers have gone to seed. If pressed about the gardens, Granhof lazily blames the mess on the beastmen attack, though other members of the staff contradict him, saying that the garden has been unattended for several years. He lingers around the hospice despite not being visibly unwell, complaining of trouble with his knee, his back, and his shoulders, but is quite spry when he thinks no one is watching.

Granhof is a member of the Chaos cult. Seeking to emulate the bizarre experiments of his former master (and cult leader) Andreas von Bruner, Granhof spends his time attempting unlikely, ill-advised hybridisation experiments that are blasphemous to Taal, god

Korden's Ramblings

The dwarf's ramblings can be as useful (or useless) as desired. If he made a habit of saying anything directly damning, of course, Doctor Sieger would simply kill him, so the ramblings should seem innocuous at first blush, even if they may contain a clue. Feel free to sprinkle in as much foreshadowing as desired. Here are several ramblings, with a bias towards the cryptically useful.

"Th'eye sees all! Th'eye sees all!"

"What a pretty flower. T'sleep now. Sleep."

"Hide th' hammer! Th'eye can't see what t'blind eyes know."

"Stone-fer-bones, stone-fer-bones, ye'll be bones 'neath the stones…" (A debased rendition of a dwarf children's song.)

"Books, wine, 'n sleep. No, no! Books, wine, 'n sleep! Tis evil. All wrong."

"Don't let 'em shave me beard… don't let 'em near! Never trust them barbers!"

"Me ancestor's fist 'tis the only thing they fear."

of nature. Granhof currently spends his days malingering in the hospice, watching Doctor Sieger work with the enthusiasm and comprehension of a puppy. He is considered something of a liability by the senior members of the Chaos cult.

How he interacts with the PCs during their investigation
Granhof is trusting of the PCs and will tend to answer questions they might have honestly – if vacantly. If he is asked about anything related to the Chaos cult, however, he becomes wary and clams up. Give the PCs a bonus fortune die to all their social checks against Granhof right up until he realises that they're suspicious about a Chaos cult.

How he reacts to a fight breaking out
Granhof tends to watch any fights with idiotic glee unless ordered by another member of the Chaos cult to take action. Granhof then fights with languid clumsiness. He does not seem the least bit upset should he be wounded or even maimed. He fights with any weapon or improvised weapon he finds nearby. Treat Granhof as a Cult Follower (see page 152).

The Manor – Ground Floor

The ground floor of the manor features rooms for the day to day events of the manor and for the entertainment of guests.

The Library

The library is a small, shadowy room lined with loaded bookshelves. Sections of the library are devoted to the subjects of hunting, history of the Empire, poetry, drama, geography, and philosophy. Many of the shelves are coated in thick dust. In the centre of the floor is a large, moth-eaten rug with a strange design of interlaced geometric shapes in lurid colours.

Occupants

Otto Geizhals is the librarian. He occupies a comfortable armchair near a large bay window overlooking the garden, where he leafs through a large bestiary, idly taking notes and drawing bizarre crossbreeds of the creatures he finds within the book. Anyone passing an **Average (2d) Observation check** sees what he's doodling before he slams the book shut and stuffs the notes into his shirt. If the librarian suspects that the PCs are spying on him, apply two misfortune dice to the test. Geizhals is reticent about what he was taking notes on and, if pressed, merely insists that he was "only scribbling."

Geizhals is a lazy fellow and lets people browse the library without interruption. He is a member of the Eldritch Eye, and if the PCs make it clear that they are on the trail of Chaos cultists, he informs Piersson of their activities as soon as possible.

If he becomes aware of any PC lifting the carpet, he angrily asks what they are doing and tries to stop them from investigating underneath it. If he fails to stop them, he becomes extremely agitated. He denies any knowledge of the trapdoor and where it leads to. If the PCs disappear down the trapdoor, he immediately warns Piersson about their meddling.

Clues

Apart from its garish design, there is nothing sinister about the rug. However, it conceals a trapdoor leading to the secret tunnels.

Also, two of the books in the library are banned works, forgotten by the librarian and left on the shelves by mistake. A PC who passes either a **Hard (3d) Observation check** or an **Average (2d) Education check** while perusing the library finds them and may know about their notoriety. If a character actively searches the shelves for clues, he finds the books automatically given enough time, but Otto Geizhals will almost certainly notice. These books are described below.

A Disquieting Proposal: This sheaf of cheaply printed pages is the work of an anonymous author. It is a philosophical tract which argues that because those who honour the gods of the Empire are fated after death to become wailing shades in Morr's netherworld, one might as well worship the Ruinous Powers in the slim hope of becoming their immortal servant.

Strange Flowers: This gloomy play deals sympathetically with the subject of mutation. Emmanuelle von Leibwitz, Elector Countess of Wissenland, deemed the play obscene and banned productions in Nuln. The author was an eccentric aristocrat, Manfred von Diehl, who disappeared shortly after his work was banned.

If Geizhals is questioned about these items, he excuses them as trifles. He claims that the library belonged to the previous master of the lodge, Andreas von Bruner, who had "cosmopolitan tastes" and judges that "in the hands of a commoner such tracts might be an indication of a seditious nature, but in the hands of a noble, they are merely educational tools." The librarian then promises to have the offending materials destroyed immediately. However, Geizhals has absolutely no intention of doing so. When the PCs leave, he deposits the books in the Chaos temple, as described below.

He does not intervene if zealous PCs destroy the books. A character watching him while this act is taking place can make an **Average (2d) Intuition check** to notice that Geizhals winces as the books are destroyed.

If the characters miss the books, Geizhals remembers them and realises he has had a lucky escape. Once the PCs have left the room, he lifts up the rug and squeezes down the trapdoor to hide the books on the bookshelves in the Chaos temple. Should anyone enter the library again during the next five minutes, they find the rug in disarray and Geizhals nowhere to be seen. They may even arrive to find him heaving himself out of the open trapdoor on his way back from the temple.

In this case, Geizhals claims that he heard something rustling under the floorboards, found the trapdoor, and went to investigate. "Nothing but a dreary tunnel and vermin. I shall have to suggest to Lord Aschaffenberg that he employ a ratcatcher." The librarian is a terrible liar – anyone beating him in an **opposed Intuition versus Guile check** knows he's being deceitful. Treat Geizhals as a Cult Follower (see page 152). If Geizhals is allowed to go free, he immediately warns Piersson that the location of the temple has been compromised.

Otto Geizhals ☼

Location: Library
Occupation: Librarian (Chaos cultist)
Health: Fine

Otto Geizhals is a corpulent, red-faced man with bristling mutton-chops, dressed in scholarly robes, with a pince-nez perched precariously on his fat nose. He has turned indolence into an art form, spending his days stealing scraps from the kitchen and then sitting

in the library to eat and read. He is growing rather podgy as a result. Geizhals justifies his lifestyle by claiming that it is the duty of a good librarian to learn what is contained within his books.

How he interacts with the PCs during their investigation
Geizhals answers questions about the manor in a vague, disinterested manner. Other than that, he is completely absorbed in his books and will pay the PCs no attention. He reports anything they say to Piersson. If the PCs attempt to deprive him of his books, he becomes increasingly agitated.

How he reacts to a fight breaking out
Geizhals tends to shun violence. He attempts to waddle away if a situation becomes desperate.

The Gallery

This long corridor, well-lit with oil lamps, is lined with grand paintings. Most of the paintings depict historical subjects or scenes from the myths of the gods of the Empire. The largest is entitled The *Battle of Bogwurst*, a landscape showing an epic melee between knights of the Empire and Bretonnia. A knight bearing von Bruner heraldry (a wild boar on a blue shield) is given a prominent position, hewing down his opponent.

The Study

This cramped room is lit by tall candelabra in one corner and contains a chair and a large desk. Sheaves of parchment and leather-bound ledgers are stacked high on the desk, on which are also strewn writing tools and an abacus. Lord Aschaffenberg has been poring over his predecessor's accounts here.

The Kitchen

The kitchen is a spacious room with red brick walls rising up to a high ceiling. There is a sweltering fire burning in one of the two huge fireplaces, with spits over the flames, cooking haunches of venison and a whole goose for tonight's meal. The aroma of roasting meat is mouth-watering. A large table dominates the room, covered in all manner of kitchen implements, sharp knives and cleavers, trenchers for the evening meal, and a cauldron full of chopped vegetables.

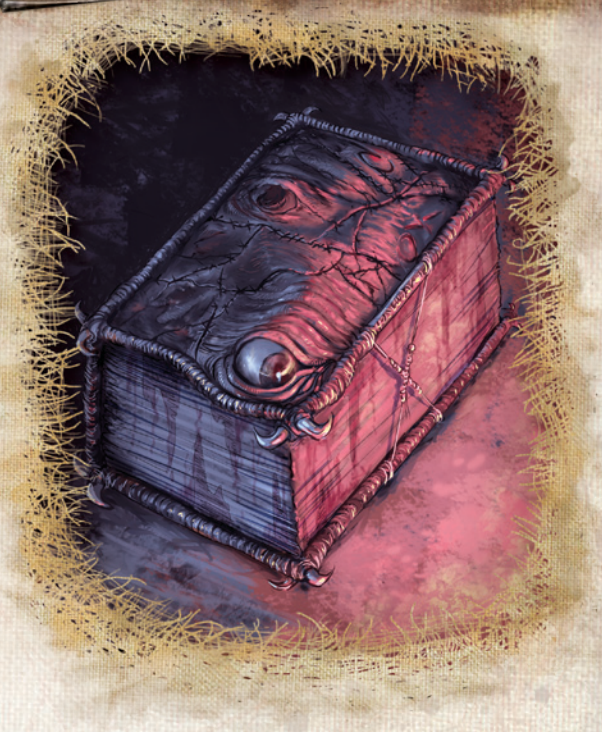
Occupants

The chef (and Chaos cultist) Karla Wagner is at work in the kitchen preparing food.

Karla Wagner ☼

Location: Kitchen
Occupation: Cook (Chaos cultist)
Health: Fine

Karla Wagner is a stocky woman of 35, with fierce blue eyes, flushed cheeks, and brown hair tied in a bun. Close up, her breath stinks of strong wine. She wears white chef's clothes, stained with blood and food. She has been the chef at the manor for four years, and unusually (perhaps even suspiciously, considering the rest of the manor), she is both good at her job and enjoys it. Karla also has a weakness for alcohol and helps herself to glasses of Pritzstock Reisling throughout the day.



Karla is a member of the Unblinking Eye and colludes with Doctor Sieger to lace meals and drinks with soporific drugs. Her worship of Chaos has her thinking about adding all sorts of (dangerous and unwise) ingredients to her meals, and she is always looking forward to whatever new "spice" Doctor Sieger will bring her.

How she interacts with the PCs during their investigation
Karla does not suffer any interruption from strangers whilst she is cooking and becomes angry if pressed. The only ways to win her attention is to compliment her cooking, to offer her an alcoholic drink, or to help cut vegetables for the stewpot. She scolds anyone attempting to go into the wine cellar, accusing any who do so of being a thief. By the end of the day, Karla becomes somewhat drunk, slurring her speech and moving clumsily about. When she is drunk, add 2 ■■ to all checks she makes.

How she reacts to a fight breaking out
Karla fights manically against those who oppose the Chaos cult, though she attempts to run away if the situation looks hopeless. She wields a vicious meat cleaver (treat as a hand weapon with the Vicious quality). Treat Karla as a Cult Follower (see page 152).

The Sitting Room

The characters feel a strange sense of foreboding upon entering this room. It is brightly lit, with a large window looking out at a small grove, to either side of which hang heavy dark drapes. Despite the sunlight streaming into the chamber, the PCs get goose pimples with the chill of the room, and their breath wisps visibly from their noses and mouths. A wide, low table and a dozen rigid, uncomfortable-looking chairs are arranged in the centre of the room. On the east stone wall is a plush, blue curtain. Behind the curtain is the painting of the eye. Facing the curtain is a high-backed chair with thick cushions, once an opulent piece of furniture but now threadbare. A glass chandelier hangs from the ceiling. In the wall of the chamber, a large brick fireplace lies empty and unused, despite the cold.

Clues

At the start of the adventure, the painting of the eye is here, hidden by the blue velvet curtain. Piersson arranges its removal if he begins to suspect the PCs. See the section entitled The Painting on page 126 for more information. Within the chimney, blackened iron rings provide access to the roof, though anyone climbing up there will be blackened by soot, to the point that they must add one misfortune die for Social checks until cleaned up.

The Great Hall

This huge room is dominated by a great oak dining table surrounded by large wooden chairs. Ostentatious silver candlesticks are arranged on the table. Along the wall, logs crackle gently in an impressively large fireplace. A grand flight of stairs sweeps up to the first floor of the manor. Around the walls, the stuffed heads of bears, wolves, deer, and boar are mounted on oak panels. Some of the trophies are of more exotic prey: a leering, ugly, green head with a crooked nose is decorated with pheasant feathers and labelled *Chieftain of the Reikwald Goblins*. Further down the wall is what first looks like a large goat's head, but which on closer inspection bears cruel, sharp fangs.

The main entrance to the manor house opens into the hall, and this extravagant chamber is the first thing to welcome visitors. The dinner will be held here.

The Manor – Basement

The basement of the manor is used for storage and also provides tunnels and rooms for clandestine activities.

The Wine Cellar

The wine cellar is a small, dingy room, lit by daylight streaming from a grille on the wall, close to the ceiling. It is very cool in the cellar, and the air has a damp, earthy smell. An unlit oil lamp hangs from a hook on one wall. The cellar is well stocked with a number of fine beverages, including bottles of Pritzstock Reisling, Bugman's Best Bitter, and Thunderwater Ale.

Clues

There is an entry to a secret passage leading to the temple of Chaos behind a rack of wine bottles. A character examining the racks may attempt an **Average (2d) Observation check**. If he passes, he notices scratches on the floor near the rack pointing to the fact that the rack swings outwards.

Secret Tunnels

This tunnel network was built to provide a safe bolt hole for the von Bruners in ages past. Knowledge of the tunnels has been handed down from the lords of the manor to their heirs in strict secrecy. Even the serving staff of Grunewald Lodge do not know of their existence, though Andreas von Bruner broke with this tradition and let the members of the Eldritch Eye use the tunnels for their own purposes. Everyone else, including Lord Aschaffenberg, is unaware of the tunnels' existence.

The tunnels can be accessed from the master bedroom, the library, and the wine cellar. All lead to the secret temple of Chaos. They are narrow, low, and musty.

If a Chaos cultist is present when the PCs discover an entrance to the tunnels, he or she will do all in his power to dissuade the party from exploring them. For example, the cultist might claim that the tunnels are too dangerous and that a few years ago a servant exploring one died when it collapsed on his head. If the PCs insist on exploring the tunnel, the Chaos cultist warns Piersson.

The Chaos Temple

This large chamber is plainly decorated, with lit torches in sconces lining the walls offering dim, flickering light. It has a cool temperature and smells damp. Against one wall is a small bookcase, and in the centre of the room is a six foot long block of jet-black granite covered in dry blood. Upon the floor of the shrine, a symbol is sketched out with lines of old, dried blood: an eight-pointed star. The symbol is horrible to look at, chilling the soul of the beholder. When first viewed, it has a Fear Rating of 1 with the *Chaos* trait. Anyone passing an **Easy (1d) Education or Folklore check** recognises the star as a symbol of Chaos.

Three tunnels lead from the room, one leading to the master bedroom, one to the library, and another to the wine cellar.

Occupants

Before dinner, the place is empty, unless the PCs encounter Geizhals the librarian down here, returning the proscribed texts from the library to their rightful places on the bookshelf. He shrieks at being discovered and attacks the PCs if found. Geizhals fights to the death, cornered like a rat in its lair. After dinner, the place might be swarming with Chaos cultists (see page 146).

Clues

The whole chamber is profane. The bookcase contains several blasphemous tomes. Of the two most important, the first is bound in tanned leather and is titled *Libram Libris Bestiis Chaotis*. It is an arcane tome of knowledge, written in the classical language. The other is bound in black leather and titled *De Natura Daemonium: A Work Concerning Daemonkind*. The books from the library (*A Disquieting Proposal* and *Strange Flowers*) may have been moved to this shelf.

De Natura Daemonium is required to summon the daemon, as it contains the words of a necessary incantation. Securing or destroying this work is the easiest way to thwart Piersson's plans.

The Manor – Roof

The roof of the manor house is broad and flat, slightly angled to let water and debris roll off the back of the building. The roof is accessible via a worn, nearly rotted ladder at the back of the building or through the chimney stack in the sitting room.

Climbing the old ladder up or down requires an **Easy (1d) Athletics check**. The ladder is several paces high. If the PC passes the check but generates a ☼, a rung breaks underfoot, but he ascends the ladder safely, although the difficulty of climbing the ladder in the future increases by one – from Easy (1d) to Average (2d). If the PC fails the check, a rung breaks and the character falls, suffering one wound. If he fails the check and also generates ☼, the ladder collapses and is utterly destroyed. If this occurs, the Cultists will notice – advance the Cult token on the progress track.

The Grounds

Several other structures necessary for the household to run smoothly are located nearby.

Garden & Garden Shed

The garden is large and not well cultivated. The flowerbeds have gone to seed and are full of leaves and dandelions. The lawn is overgrown, and characters have to wade through long grass to get anywhere. A fetid pool, choked with leaves and green scum, is in the south-east corner of the grounds. There is also a small orchard of several sickly-looking apple trees in the south-west corner of the grounds. Shaded by these trees is a quiet cemetery, with a dozen small, unmarked gravestones. This is where those who die at the lodge are buried if they cannot be easily transported to the shrine of Morr in Geissbach village for burial.

In one corner of the garden is a small wooden shack, filled with a variety of gardening tools, potted young plants, and a wheelbarrow.

Occupants

None. Bertoldt Granhof (a member of the cult) is the gardener, but is currently malingering in the makeshift hospice area.

Clues

Near the shed, there is a small herb garden, a drab collection of flowerless plants ravaged by slugs and caterpillars. This is where Doctor Sieger acquires his herbs. A PC who passes an **Average (2d) Education, Medicine, or Nature Lore check** can identify the herbs. There is a small patch of Taal's root (that eases the symptoms of the black plague), a small patch of faxtoryll (that aids the clotting of blood), and a large area of gortsiete (used in the manufacture of a soporific potion known as schlaf).

Shrine to Sigmar

The small shrine is little more than a wooden shed constructed over a brass triptych bearing an image of Ghal Maraz, a twin-tailed comet, and a skull with a laurel wreath. The triptych is weathered, and a thick green patina mars its surface. The icon of Ghal Maraz, a full-size replica of a warhammer, looks positively filthy.

Occupants

The shrine is empty. Only Sister Sonja visits regularly for a quick prayer, although today she is too preoccupied with tending to the wounded in the hospice.

Clues

The shrine is suspiciously run-down and dingy, appearing abandoned but for a single prayer candle that looks to have seen recent use. An **Easy (1d) Observation check** reveals that the hammer icon is smeared with dirt, soot, and clay, in a manner that indicates more than just the simple patina of neglect. An **Easy (1d) Piety** or **Average (2d) Education or Folklore check** suggests that the shape of the hammer is not an accurate depiction of Ghal Maraz, rather it looks more like a traditional warhammer. Devout Sigmarite characters add ■ to this check.

In reality, the hammer icon is not an icon at all. It is the ancestral warhammer of Korden Kurgansson, hidden in plain sight by Sister Sonja. Removing the hammer from its set piece is a **Simple (0d)**

Korden's Hammer

Korden's hammer is represented by its own special item card. If the party recovers or is allowed to carry Korden's hammer, give them the corresponding item card, or provide them the following informaton:

Damage Rating: 5
Critical Rating: 3
Group: Ordinary
Encumbrance: 4

Korden's Hammer is of superior craftsmanship; its wielder adds ■ to the dice pool of all attacks made while wielding it.

Against Daemons, Korden's Hammer inflicts +2 damage for each fortune point spent to enhance the attack's dice pool.

Strength check and reveals that the true icon of Ghal Maraz is still in place behind it and that the hammer is, despite its grimy state, in excellent condition.

The hammer is a superior craftsmanship hand weapon. When wielded against daemons, if fortune points are spent to add ☐ to the *Melee Attack*, the hammer inflicts +2 damage for every fortune point spent. When cleaned off, the hammer is revealed to be a fine piece of dwarfen craftsmanship, its steel head inscribed with runes denoting its clan lineage and granting it power against daemons.

Make clear to any Sigmarite or dwarf characters in the group that the hammer is an ancestral relic and failure to return it to its owner or his clan in a timely manner will merit an entry in the great Book of Grudges of the dwarfs.

The Stables & Coach House

The timber-built stables and adjoining coach house are in shoddy condition. Two of the six stalls are occupied by healthy looking horses (the steeds for Lord Aschaffenberg's coach), but the unoccupied stalls require mucking out before any other horses can be stabled there. The tools and horse tack hanging on the walls are worn and ragged.

A foul odour permeates the area, and clouds of blowflies buzz ceaselessly. Occupying the coach house is a stately coach bearing the von Bruner coat of arms (a wild boar on a blue shield). In sharp contrast to its surroundings, the coach is well maintained and clean. A ladder leads up from the stables into a hayloft, and a window here gives a commanding view of the grounds.

The wagon on which the party travelled from Ubersreik will be parked outside the stables for the duration of the adventure.

Occupants

Franz Lange is the young groom and is here at all times tending to the horses. He is neither competent nor hard-working, but he is not a Chaos cultist. Hans Kurtz and Albrecht Krug (who is a member of the cult) are the coachmen and can also be found here during the day of the adventure. When not tending to the newly arrived wagon, they lounge outside in the sun, fleecing the wagoneer from Ubersreik of his money at cards.

The wagoneer, Heiko Dieter, will stay at the lodge until it is safe for him to return to Ubersreik in the morning. He chooses to sleep in his wagon, knows nothing of the goings on in the lodge, and keeps to himself. He will join everyone in the great hall come dinner and will be drugged by consuming venison.

Clues

Krug has hidden Kurtz's blunderbuss in the hayloft. The Chaos cultist wants to use the weapon later to dispatch members of the staff when Piersson's plan comes to fruition. Kurtz is missing the weapon, but is too embarrassed to mention its disappearance to anyone. He seems distracted and worried if spoken to.

Krug tries to dissuade any PC expressing an interest in exploring the loft from doing so, claiming that rotten floorboards make it too dangerous to visit. If the PCs use Charm or Guile checks to ingratiate themselves to Kurtz, he sheepishly admits to his missing blunderbuss, asking the PCs not to mention it to Lord Aschaffenberg and to keep their eyes out for the weapon.

Anyone passing an **Average (2d) Observation check** while in the hayloft spots the gun hidden under some straw. Krug has placed it here, aware that Kurtz, who has a smashed knee, will not be able to ascend the ladder. If the weapon is discovered, Krug will sheepishly confess that he hid it up there "as a joke", at which point Kurtz hurls abuse at him. If Kurtz is reunited with his blunderbuss, he does not let it leave his sight. He treats any PC who presents him with his lost gun as a veritable hero.

Albrecht Krug ☼

Location: Stables
Occupation: Coachman (Chaos cultist)
Health: Fine

Albrecht Krug is an imposing man in his mid-30s with a magnificent ginger Imperial moustache and a shaved head. He wears durable, leather clothes. Krug is a member of the Eldritch Eye and a mutant. A large patch of discoloured and hairy skin is spreading on his back, which he regards as a special blessing, though he is careful to hide the mutation from others. Krug is committed to the Chaos cult and is one of its more dangerous and resourceful members.

Krug has hidden his partner's blunderbuss in the hayloft, knowing that Hans finds it hard to climb ladders in his condition. He intends to use the stolen weapon for lethal purposes later that evening.

How he interacts with the PCs during their investigation
Krug appears convivial should the PCs talk with him. He does his best to answer any queries they might have and asks them why they are so interested in the manor. He may offer to give them a tour of the grounds, but is careful to avoid the hayloft and the doctor's herb garden.

How he reacts to a fight breaking out
As a mutant, Krug feels he has nothing to lose, and he serves Piersson faithfully. He actively hates those who do not serve Chaos and fights them bravely. He would rather die than surrender. He has a whip at his belt and a heavy truncheon (hand weapon). Later in the evening, he may be armed with the blunderbuss. Treat Krug as a Cult Mutant (see page 152).

Hans Kurtz

Location: Stables
Occupation: Coachman
Health: Smashed knee, drugged

Hans Kurtz is a handsome man in his 20s, with a neat beard, dressed in hard-wearing clothes and a long leather coat. During the beastman attack, he was clubbed in the leg and still walks with a pronounced limp. He finds it painful to climb stairs or ladders and moves sluggishly. Doctor Sieger gave him medicine for the pain. This was laced with schlaf, and Kurtz is fatigued as a result.

Recently he has discovered that his blunderbuss is missing. He is too ashamed to admit the loss to anyone at the moment, but is becoming increasingly worried. He does not know if he merely misplaced it or if someone has stolen it.

How he interacts with the PCs during their investigation
Kurtz is friendly and accommodating to the PCs. However, he is under the influence of schlaf. He is weary, and if asked about his sleepiness, he admits that it might be due to some medicine he was given by Doctor Sieger. He's not happy about it, because it affects his work, but he's too tired to bother the Doctor further. If the PCs talk to him about odd goings on in the manor, he seeks them out

after a period of consideration and mentions to them that he has recently lost his blunderbuss. He suspects that someone stole it from him.

How he reacts to a fight breaking out
Hans tries to engage anyone who he believes is threatening the security of the manor, but is too groggy to be of much use. He fights with the sword he has at his belt. Due to his sore leg, whenever he performs a movement manoeuvre, add ■■ to any action he makes in his following turn. Treat Kurtz as a Townsfolk NPC (page 151).

Franz Lange

Location: Stables
Occupation: Groom
Health: Drugged

Franz is a lad of sixteen with tanned skin and curly black hair, dressed in peasant clothes. He takes care of the stables and horses. He is industrious by nature, but is suffering from fatigue. Doctor Sieger gave Albrecht Krug some schlaf to slip into the boy's drink in order to test the efficacy of the latest batch brewed, so Franz is sleepy all the time. He manages to ensure that the horses are fed and groomed, but is too tired to muck out their stables. Franz also keeps the von Bruner coach well polished, as Piersson has pointed out to him how important it is to keep up appearances.

How he interacts with the PCs during their investigation
Franz is of little help. He responds very slowly to the PCs' questions, and tends to give monosyllabic replies. He dearly wants to be left alone to do his duties and catch some sleep.

How he reacts to a fight breaking out
Franz is wary of fights and is chronically exhausted. He defends himself with a pitchfork from the stables (an improvised weapon), but cannot be motivated to take the fight to the enemy. Treat Lang as a Townsfolk NPC (see page 151).

The Kennels

Next to the stables is a large square wooden shed, abutted by a yard surrounded by a tall fence. These are the kennels. There is a tradition of keeping hunting dogs at Grunewald Lodge. From within the shed comes the loud, persistent barking of several large dogs.

The shed is divided into the large space where three fierce-looking Tilean manhounds are kept and their handler's sleeping quarters: a small side room containing a rough bed, an open chest of clothes, and a bucket of water for washing. A long boar-spear is propped in one corner, and on one wall is a large closet, its door ajar, from which emanates the faint stink of rotting meat.

Occupants

Olver Gand is the kennel master. He stays in his room, except to feed the hounds with the contents of the closet once a day. The hounds remain in the kennels for the duration of the adventure. They are in excellent health. They are strong, powerful, and wilful and are completely obedient to Gand.

Clues

There is nothing in the kennels that points to the cult, but there is a grisly find to be made if the party members search the premises (Gand will have to be out of the way for them to do this – he is very protective of his private space). Anyone who opens the closet finds the dismembered corpse of a beastman hanging inside. The sight

is so shocking that it has a Fear Rating of 1, with the *Violence* trait. Gand, if present, makes no effort to hide the fact that he has this rotting cadaver on the premises, although he is angry that the PCs have been snooping in his private quarters. He explains simply that he is feeding it to the dogs to "give 'em a taste for the beasts."

Olver Gand

Location: Kennels
Occupation: Hunter
Health: Fine

Olver Gand, a former soldier, is the kennel master of Grunewald Lodge. He is a huge , bald man in his early 30s, nearly six and a half feet tall and heavily built. His stubbled face is a mass of scars, and he sports a broken nose. He wears tall, leather hunting boots and leather trousers, but prefers to bare his chest to display his rippling muscles. He wears a spiked collar around his neck. Gand is a quiet man, but fiercely protective of his hounds.

How he interacts with the PCs during their investigation
Gand is not a communicative man, but he may warm to PCs who show interest in his dogs. He has little useful information for the party, but if they win his trust, he takes their suggestions seriously and is willing to lend them a hand if their ideas seem sound enough. If asked, he notes that his dogs severely dislike both Albrecht Krug and Gregor Piersson (both mutants), who now avoid his kennel.

How he reacts to a fight breaking out
Gand is a brave man and a formidable foe. He has a hatred of the followers of Chaos, particularly beastmen, which he has fought many times. Gand fights to the death to oppose them. He fights

using his massive hunting knife or arms himself with his long boar-spear if he is near the kennels. Treat Gand as a Soldier NPC (see page 151).

The Tilean manhounds attack anyone attempting to hurt Gand. He releases them from the kennels if the lodge is attacked.

There are no statistics for these dogs and the GM is encouraged to use them narratively. They are powerful, fearsome animals. In most conflicts, they would kill anything they are directed to attack, except for the wargor or the daemon, which will drive them off snarling and whining.

The Forge

Tucked against the corner of the walls is a small smithy, originally associated with the stables for the shoeing of horses and the mending of tools, but later used to repair weapons and armour. Inside is a cold furnace and heavy anvil, and blacksmith's tools hang from the walls. Upon a large wooden workbench there is a collection of battered arms and armour: four mail shirts, four dented pot-helmets, and four notched swords. All these items are in need of repair and are of poor craftsmanship. They belonged to guards killed during the previous beastman attack.

Occupants

The dwarf Korden Kurgansson is the blacksmith in residence, though he is currently languishing in the makeshift hospice.

Clues

A thorough search of the forge reveals a small wooden case behind the armour racks. Its lock has been smashed. When opened, it is revealed to be a velvet-lined carrying case of the sort used to carry precious and important items. The silhouette of the missing item in the centre of the case resembles a warhammer. This is the case inside of which Korden kept his family's hammer. Sister Sonja has since taken it and hidden it in the shrine.

The Wall & Gatehouse

The stone wall surrounding the Grunewald Lodge used to be an impressive structure. It runs around the whole estate and is about twelve feet in height. However, much of the wall is now covered in ivy, and sections of it have collapsed due to neglect. These areas have been reinforced with ramshackle timber barricades, which are far from secure. A wide ditch surrounds the wall. It was evidently once a deep obstacle, but is now overgrown with bushes.

Crossing the ditch and climbing the wall requires a **Hard (3d) Athletics check**. During an encounter, this takes a minimum of three manoeuvres.

The wall has a small stone gatehouse on its western side. The gatehouse consists of a single-storey, turreted watchtower with an adjoining guardroom where the guards sleep. The guardroom is equipped with eight crossbows, six halberds, and six shields for use by the guards.

A large oak gate, studded with iron nails and wide and tall enough to allow a coach passage, blocks the entrance under the tower. The gate is kept bolted shut from the inside at all times when not in use. A rickety wooden bridge spans the ditch in front of the gatehouse. It can be pulled up by a windlass inside the guardroom if the manor is attacked.

Occupants

The manor guard consists of Captain Anders Blucher, Sven Bleuler, Ernest Bohne, Manfred Klammerer, and Pieter Koch. They work a shift system whereby one guard mans the turret of the watchtower and another patrols the walls for four hours before being relieved by other guards. During the day of the adventure, Koch (a member of the Chaos cult) patrols the walls whilst Bohne mans the watchtower. Captain Blucher, Bleuler, and Klammerer remain in the guardroom, playing card games like "Find the Empress" for pennies. This shift changes at dinnertime when Bleuler patrols and Klammerer occupies the watchtower. Captain Blucher goes to the great hall for dinner, while the others eat and rest in the guardroom.

The Guards – Captain Anders Blucher, Sven Bleuler, Ernest Bohne, Manfred Klammerer, and Pieter Koch ☼

Location: Guardroom, watchtower, and walls
Occupation: Guards (Koch is a Chaos cultist)
Health: Bleuler and Klammerer are wounded, and all except Koch will be drugged at dinner

The guards are under Captain Blucher's command. The captain is a tall man in his late 30s with a long blond beard and handlebar moustache. He owns a set of well maintained breastplate armour, of which he is very proud, and fights with a greatsword. He wears a scarlet wide-brimmed hat at a rakish angle, with a long white plume curling from the brim. He takes his position very seriously, and suffers no fools.

The other guards are in their 20s, dressed in black leather breeches, white shirts with slashed sleeves, mail coats, and Empire pot-helmets decorated with red feathers. Each has a sword strapped to his belt. Those on patrol carry crossbows. They all have lucky charms, such as a rabbit's foot, prayer scroll, or miniature hammer, hanging from their armour, belts, and scabbards.

The guards took the brunt of the beastman attack, and their numbers are stretched as a result. Two of the guards died in the assault and are buried in the cemetery, near the orchard, and two languish in the hospice. The others are impatiently waiting for Lord Aschaffenberg to organise reinforcements. Sven Bleuler is recovering from a wound to his temple and has his head wrapped in bandages, whilst Manfred Klammerer has two broken fingers on his left hand, which is also bandaged. The guards are grizzled professionals who are used to this sort of hardship and have taken their knocks with stoicism.

Pieter Koch is a member of the Eldritch Eye and is a violent and sadistic man, with a hot temper. The other guards are more amenable and enjoy playing games of chance when not on duty.

How they react to a fight breaking out
The guards fight against any obvious opponents, such as beastmen or daemons. In other situations, they try to break fights up, or follow the instructions of Captain Blucher, who acts in the best interest of his employer. The exception is Koch, who fights fiercely in the interests of Piersson and the cult. Treat each guard and the captain as a Soldier NPC (see page 151). Captain Blucher has an extra expertise die, and Weapon Skill trained.

Other Characters

The characters likely to be found at a given location are described under that location's heading, but there are several characters whose locations are not fixed.

Gregor Piersson ☼

Location: Wandering
Occupation: Steward (Leader of the Unblinking Eye)
Health: Mutant

Gregor Piersson is a slightly built man in his late 30s, with receding black hair slicked back with oil. He dresses in the neat uniform of a butler and usually maintains an impassive composure. His day to day duties are those of a steward, and as such, he is ultimately responsible for the running of the manor.

Piersson is a zealous follower of Chaos and is the leader of the Eldritch Order of the Unblinking Eye at the manor. His worship of Chaos has had a strange effect upon his body. His right eye is taking on a shape more pleasing to the Ruinous Powers, becoming a large and bulbous black orb. Luckily for him, he noticed the change before anyone else did and hides the mutation under a bandage. If asked about the bandage, Piersson claims he was hurt during the night of the beastman attack. To reinforce this story, he has inflicted some trivial wounds to his right arm, which is also bandaged up. However, if the PCs ask staff members who are not associated with the Chaos cult about Piersson's bandage, they mention that Piersson's eye has been bandaged for several months before the attack. If confronted about this, Piersson says the wound to his eye aggravated an eye infection he has been suffering from, which is being treated by Sieger the physician. The doctor confirms this story.

How he interacts with the PCs during their investigation
Piersson tends to keep his distance from the PCs, preferring to find out about their actions from other members of the Chaos cult. He pretends to be busy during the day, as he claims to have a lot to look into regarding the running of the estate. Nevertheless he is respectful to the party and politely answers any queries they might have.

Piersson blames the poor condition of the manor on a malady that seems to be causing some members of the staff to feel weary. He maintains that he is too compassionate to fire people based on such circumstances and praises Doctor Sieger's efforts in treating the illness.

How he reacts to a fight breaking out
Piersson is self-serving and does not want to die. He tries to escape violent confrontation, only fighting back if cornered. He hides a highly decorated knife with a serpentine blade under his clothes, which he uses when performing Chaos rituals in the secret temple (see page 140). Piersson is a Cult Leader, and his characteristics can be found on page 152.

The Serving Staff – Hanna Dralst ☼, Todd Heistlenburger, Gertie Hochen, Josef Vacmark ☼, Konrad Voss ☼, and Gunnar Wetzel ☼

Location: Wandering
Occupation: Servants (Hanna, Konrad, Gunnar, and Josef are Chaos cultists)
Health: Gertie and Todd are drugged. Todd and Gunnar are wounded.

The serving staff of Grunewald Lodge consists mostly of young men and women from Geissbach between the ages of 18 and 24. They perform duties as needed and when they are asked to by a senior member of the staff. The women wear typical servant's dresses, while the young men are dressed in practical peasant's shirts and breeches.

Gunnar and Todd were injured in the beastman attack. Both are back on their feet now, but Todd has his left arm in a sling, and Gunnar has a bandaged head.

How they interact with the PCs during their investigation
Gertie and Todd are suffering from the effects of schlaf. They are lethargic and distant and often take breaks from their work to catch a quick snooze. Doctor Sieger always ensures that these two servants are drugged, as it is they who enter the sitting room most often, to clean and dust, and he does not want them prying. If the PCs ever ask them about the painting of the eye in the sitting room, both tell them that they know nothing about the painting and avoid the room as it gives them the creeps. If pressed, they can recall that Andreas von Bruner often spent time alone in the sitting room and that he didn't like to be disturbed whilst doing so.

Hanna, Konrad, Gunnar, and Josef are members of the Chaos cult. They are younger than the other staff and share this secret among themselves, spending as much time giggling and whispering with one another as they do working.

How they react to a fight breaking out
None of the servants are keen to become involved in serious violence. The Chaos cultists follow Piersson's orders, but run away or attempt to surrender if the fight goes against them. The other two servants attempt to act in the best interest of their employers, but are too exhausted to put up much of a fight. They try to stand fast in the face of an attack by beastmen, but flee in terror from the daemon. They fight with any weapons they can find nearby. Treat each loyal servant as a Townsfolk NPC (page 151), and each Chaos worshipping servant as a Cult Follower (page 152).

Schlaf Poisoning Recap

It's possible during the dinner that one or more characters in the story are exposed to schlaf poisoning by dining on the poisoned venison.

Remember that people affected by schlaf display the following symptoms: deliberate and slowed speech, lack of curiosity, chronic tiredness, and heavy, red-rimmed eyes.

For the complete details and mechanical affects of schlaf poisoning, refer to page 80.

The Dinner

In the evening, the manor staff gather to eat dinner in the great hall. Lord Aschaffenberg seats himself at the head of the huge table. The following staff also attend (listed in the order that they sit clockwise from the lord):

Doctor Sieger, Captain Anders Blucher, Otto Geizhals, Olver Gand, Bertoldt Granhof, Heiko Dieter the wagoneer from Ubersreik, the player characters, and Vern Hendrick (who sits to the right of the lord).

Sister Sonja dutifully remains in the hospice to look after the three patients who remain there. Pieter Koch and Sven Bleuler are on guard duty outside, and the other guards, Ernest Bohne and Manfred Klammerer, eat and rest in the guard room, in case the lodge is attacked again.

Hans Kurtz and Franz Lange, drugged on schlaf, fall asleep in the stables, and Albrecht Krug stays to watch over them and grabs the blunderbuss.

Piersson himself does not join the table, but assumes the role of butler, directing the six servants as they bring in the plates of food or clear the tables for the next course. Karla Wagner remains in the kitchen, organising the meal or washing up.

A Three Course Banquet

There are three courses to the meal: a spicy vegetable soup, followed by the meat dish , and then finally a rich pudding covered in custard. Wine and beer is plentiful, and the food is excellent. The servants Gertie Hochen and Todd Heistlenburger (drugged on schlaf) look thoroughly exhausted as they try to keep up with the diners' demands, and they drop plates or spill soup, to the anger of Piersson, who scolds them for their incompetence.

When the second course is served, Lord Aschaffenberg chooses venison and once again recommends it to the PCs. Most of the other diners follow suit. If the PCs are actively paying attention, they'll note that the only diners who ask for goose are Doctor Sieger, Otto Geizhals, and Bertoldt Granhof.

The venison dishes are laced with schlaf, and anyone eating from them are affected as if they had taken a dose of the drug. Any PC who claims that the venison has been poisoned but has no concrete evidence will be laughed at or told his attempts at humour are both dark and inappropriate.

During dinner, Koch drugs his fellow guards with schlaf-laced tea. Bleuler and Klammerer suffer the effects of the drug when they return to duty ten minutes later, and the other guards fall asleep in the guardroom.

Howls in the Night

Just after the meat course, the dinner is interrupted by loud howling coming from the kennels. Olver Gand makes a gruff excuse and leaves the table. See "The Beastmen" on page 148 for more information should members of the party also investigate. Olver remains with his hounds and does not return to dinner. He barely had a chance to touch his venison and is not drugged.

The End of Dinner

By the time the dessert arrives, everyone who ate venison (possibly including the PCs) will be feeling the effects of schlaf poisoning. Many diners look groggy, and Vern Hendrick falls asleep in his pudding. At this point, PCs who ate venison must make their Resilience checks to determine how seriously they are affected.

When the meal ends, everyone except the Chaos cultists shuffles off to bed, yawning uncontrollably. Doctor Sieger, Granhof, and Geizhals remain at the table, drinking brandy and chatting animatedly. The servants stay behind to clear the table under the eagle eye of the steward, though Gertie is allowed by Piersson to crawl to bed. He keeps Todd working, as he needs him for the ritual later on.

Lord Aschaffenberg asks the PCs to join him for a glass of brandy in the master bedroom. There he asks the PCs about the progress of their investigations. However, unless he was prevented from eating the venison dish, he becomes very sleepy during the interview and dismisses the PCs after just a few minutes, saying he will talk to them further in the morning. Before the PCs even leave the room, he falls fast asleep, still fully clothed, atop his bed.

After Dinner

The PCs are likely to wish to resume their investigations, which is the last thing Piersson wants. He dispatches one or more cultists to impede the investigation. If the PCs have taken a liking to any of the cultists, Piersson is clever enough to use that to his advantage. Otherwise, he sends Otto Geizhals and Doctor Seiger, perhaps supported by Bertoldt, to ply the characters with brandy and idle discussion on philosophy, religion, politics, or science. These new "friends" are unwilling to let the PCs be unless driven off with some use of social skills, in which case they report directly to Piersson.

The Cult token on the Progress Tracker will now begin to move at a fast pace, and Chapter 3 begins soon.

Chapter 3: The Dramatic Finale

Broadly speaking, there are two ways to begin the finale. Either the PCs have prevented the cult from beginning the ritual, in which case the finale begins when they confront the cult prior to the beastmen attack; or, if the ritual has begun, they must deal with the cult and the beastmen attack at roughly the same time.

Because several variables can be introduced by the actions of the PCs throughout the adventure so far, this chapter may resolve in a variety of ways. The following encounters and sequence of events are guidelines only. Modify them as needed to reflect your character's actions.

Encounter 1: The Ritual

After most people in the lodge have fallen asleep, Gregor Piersson, Bertoldt Granhof, Hanna Dralst, Josef Vacmark, Gunnar Wetzel, and Konrad Voss convene in the temple, dragging the unconscious sacrifice with them. This is most likely Todd Heistlenburger. Piersson first goes to the sitting room to collect the painting of the eye, ripping the canvas from the frame. Out of a twisted reverence to the painting, Piersson removes his bandages here, leaving the ichor-stained fabric as a clue to any PCs snooping about later on. Assembled in the temple, the cult members don the robes hanging in the cupboard.

The Beastmen

The beastmen outside the lodge attempt their next attack during the ritual. Read Encounter 2: The Beastmen for more details. If the PCs attempt to deal with both problems at once, you will have to prioritise which encounter receives the bulk of your attention for playability reasons. Focusing on the ritual and abstracting the beastmen assault with a Progress Tracker is the ideal solution. The focus can change if the two events overlap later on.

Act 1: The Sacrifice

If the PCs are in a position to intervene with the sacrifice, this act should probably be played out in encounter mode. Once the PCs become aware that the sacrifice (or at least the ritual) is under way, the speed with which they respond, and the order of the participants, becomes more important.

Assemble a Progress Tracker with ten spaces, with an event marker in the final space. Place a ritual token at the beginning of the track as the ritual begins. Place it several spaces further along the track if the PCs are stymied or delayed. At the end of each round, whether in combat or with the PCs racing through the manor trying to find the ritual, advance the token one space. This represents the ritual taking nine rounds to complete. When the token reaches the final space, Piersson kills the victim and the sacrifice is complete.

If the PCs manage to disrupt the ritual in a meaningful way, such as by killing or incapacitating one of the chanting cultists, move the ritual token back one space. If they manage to remove a key element of the ritual (see "Elements of the Ritual", right), the token stops moving altogether until it is restored.

Elements of the Ritual

The following elements are required to perform the daemon-summoning ritual under ideal conditions:

- The painting
- Six people to chant for nine minutes (although fewer people will work; it simply takes longer)
- The book *De Natura Daemonium*

Without these elements, the ritual cannot take place. If the PCs secure either the painting or the book, the Chaos cultists try to take them back, preferably by subterfuge but by force if necessary.

Other components

The following components are also used to ensure the ritual runs smoothly.

- A human sacrifice
- The blood of a mutant
- Bathing the painting under the light of Morrslieb for nine minutes

Without the human sacrifice, the daemon feels no obligation to serve the Eldritch Eye. Furthermore, the daemon is affronted by the fact that it was summoned without a suitable gift, and attacks those who summoned it unless they provide it with an immediate sacrifice.

The blood of a mutant gives vigour to the daemon. Without it, the daemon materialises weaker. Piersson, a mutant, provides the blood. In the absence of Piersson, Albrecht Krug uses his blood.

Morrslieb's light is a simple catalyst to the ritual. Without it, the daemon still materialises, but it takes 18 minutes to fully manifest. During this time, the painting will smoulder, bubble gently, and drip the occasional gobbet of ectoplasm.

If either the mutant blood is not offered, or the daemon is not brought forth under Morrslieb, use the second stat line for the daemon, reflecting a weaker version of the creature.

If the PCs discover the ritual in action, read the following aloud:

> *Torches and candles light the room with a flickering glow. Four robed people stand in a loose circle in the centre of the temple, while a fifth restrains the slumped form of Todd Heistlenburger by the heavy black block of the depraved altar. Standing at the head of the altar is a twisted apparition holding a leather-bound tome and chanting in a spitting, guttural tongue. It's Gregor Piersson, the butler, but he is twisted and wrong, his bandages gone, revealing a terrible, black bulbous orb bulging from his right eye socket! The air drones with a murmuring chant and you feel sick to your stomach. Inexorably, your eye is drawn to a strange sheet unrolled across the altar, what appears to be a canvas painted with a single, terrible, unblinking eye…*

The canvas is draped over the altar in the centre of the temple, and Piersson stands next to it, with the unholy book *De Natura Daemonium*.

If the PCs attack, the cultists continue their chant. All other cult members not otherwise engaged in the manor (likely Karla Wagner and Bertoldt Granhof, at least) rush forward to intercept the characters. Otherwise, the four chanting cultists fight while maintaining their chant, which inflicts one misfortune die on all their checks. Piersson and the final cultist fight back only if engaged.

If the sacrifice is completed, read the following aloud:

> *As the chanting reaches a crescendo, Piersson's voice twists into an unearthly, feral shriek. He drags his ritual knife across the throat of the hapless sacrifice, showering the painting and everyone nearby with a spray of crimson. The cultists utter a sound midway between a gasp and a moan and every torch and candle in the room is extinguished in a gust of cold, biting wind. The only light now is cast by the unblinking eye, shining with eldritch radiance as the blood pools on its surface.*

This event has a Terror Rating of 2 with the *Violence* trait.

During the Rally Step, Piersson reverently hands the book to the cultist standing nearest him, then slices open his own left palm with the bloody knife, dripping his blood on to the canvas.

Act 2: To the Roof!

Once the sacrifice is complete, the cultists move to the sitting room, Piersson taking the blood-soaked canvas with him. The victim's body is left in a pool of blood on the temple floor. In the sitting room, the cultists ascend the sooty ladder up the chimney to the roof one by one. If unmolested, the cult takes about ten minutes to go from the temple to the roof. If being actively opposed or pursued by the PCs, they let Piersson ascend first, defending the ladder while Piersson begins the next step.

Once on the roof, Piersson unrolls the canvas beneath a clear night, where both moons, Mannslieb and Morrslieb, shine brightly. The painting starts bathing in the sickly green light of Morrslieb for nine minutes. A twisted face is apparent in that moon, its eye seeming to leer down at the painting. The paint begins to bubble and splutter.

If the PCs are in a position to attempt to stop any of this, you can reuse the previous Progress Tracker to monitor the emergence of the daemon. Once the tracking token reaches the final space, the daemon manifests. When this occurs, the painting bursts into a many hued flame, and talons claw from the canvas. During the rally step, the daemon emerges and the surviving cultists take no action except to stare in awe.

This Act is may be a good time to introduce the beastmen, sowing confusion throughout the manor. The beastmen don't discriminate between cultists and other lodge residents. Both the PCs and Piersson can attempt to make use of the confusion that their presence adds to the scene.

Act 3: The Daemon

The daemon is a horrible monstrosity, a twisted parody of a human figure with huge, unblinking eyes, leathery wings, and malicious talons. The daemon summoned from the painting is a larger, more monstrous version of a Chaos fury. It is slightly larger than a man and terrifically strong and fast, and the combination of its fearsome appearance, the smell of blood that follows it everywhere, and the terrible keening wail it emits as it kills gives it a Fear rating of 3.

If properly summoned and controlled, the daemon rampages through the manor, destroying everything in its path, leaving only the Chaos cultists unmolested.

The Chaos cultists follow the daemon, killing anything that puts up a fight and capturing those who don't to use as future sacrifices. If the daemon is killed, surviving Chaos cultists scream in anguish and collapse gibbering to the ground. Some hardy few, such as Albrecht, Koch, or Piersson, may escape into the forest to return another day, but by and large the death of the daemon spells the doom of this sect of the Unblinking Eye.

The Daemon Unleashed

If, when the daemon finally emerges, Piersson is no longer alive or present, the daemon is completely out of control. It attacks the nearest human or animal, cultist or not, and it continues to rampage through the manor until destroyed or it runs out of things to kill. The beastmen revere it as a god. Once it has nothing left to kill, the daemon vanishes back to the Realm of Chaos.

Encounter 2: The Beastmen

The members of the Order of the Eldritch Eye are not the only followers of Chaos in the area. The beastmen who attacked the manor earlier are still in the area. For stats on these beastmen, see page 153. The warband consists of the following:

- A wargor wearing rusty chainmail, bearing a crude great axe.
- Six gor henchmen, armed with axes or clubs.
- Approximately a dozen ungor henchmen with crude spears. Add more or fewer ungor as needed for your story.

The beastmen took a beating the last time they assaulted the manor, but they are drawn back to the place, attracted by the daemonic energies emanating from the painting. At certain times of the evening, they perform the following acts:

During dinner: The ungors scout the perimeter of the manor. The dogs in the kennels begin to bark wildly in the direction of the rear of the manor. Olver Gand leaves his dinner to investigate. Bleuler and Klammerer are on duty but, because they are drugged, notice nothing. Gand settles the dogs down and decides to stay with them to keep them calm. PCs who respond quickly may be able to spot the scouts before they disappear back into the forest. Anyone immediately following Gand and mounting the rear wall of the grounds must make an **opposed Observation check** versus the ungors' Stealth. Because it is dusk, characters without night vision add ■ to the check. Anyone passing the check spots four man-like shadows moving in the woods, and can determine they are ungors if any boons are generated. Those who spot the ungors will be able to shoot long-range missiles at them for one round before they vanish into the undergrowth.

After dinner, while the ritual begins: The four ungor scouts approach the rear of the manor again, this time with a couple of large bundles of branches, which they quietly use to bridge the ditch and then set them at the base of the walls. This sets off the dogs barking again. The guards, now incredibly tired from the effects of schlaf, still notice nothing.

As the ritual reaches its climax: The beastmen attempt to storm the rear walls, using the piled branches to scale the walls. The beastmen attempt to kill any who oppose them. They are not in league with the cultists and will attack them. However, if the daemon has been summoned successfully, the beastmen worship the daemon as a god and willingly do its bidding. The beastmen make their way to either the daemon or the painting (if the daemon is yet to be summoned), killing anyone who gets in the way. If they find the painting, they attempt to abscond with it. The beastmen have no idea how to summon the daemon; they simply desire to own and protect the artefact, which they take to their unholy herdstone deep in the forest as an offering to the gods.

Tying up Loose Ends

If all has gone well, the PCs should have thwarted the plans of the Eldritch Eye and fought off the beastmen.

Lord Aschaffenberg will be shocked to learn that there was a Chaos cult within the manor and will be very grateful to the PCs for exposing it and wiping out the heretics. However, he is now responsible for making repairs to the estate and caring for his staff out of his own pocket; still, he will be as generous to the PCs as he can. He pays them the remainder of their fee: six silver schillings for today's work and covers any expenses they incurred, within reason. He also allows them to keep any of the mundane tools, items, or arms they acquired within the manor grounds.

If the PCs have exposed the Chaos cult, minimised the damage to the estate, and clearly saved the lives of his staff, Lord Aschaffenberg also pays them an additional twenty schillings between them, apologising profusely for not being able to offer more in the way of remuneration. He assures the PCs that they have earned his gratitude and that they can count on his good word in the future.

Running the Beastmen in the Final Battle

Clearly, the beastmen outnumber the player characters. Further, using the full combat rules to depict a full-scale battle between the entire beastman warband and the entire manor population could be unwieldy.

Use a Progress Tracker to broadly indicate who is winning the battle (beastmen, manor staff, or cultists) and allow the PCs to make Intimidate, Leadership, and other checks to modify these results. Remember to reward clever thinking. Reserve the detailed combat rules for beastmen or cultists who are directly involved in combat with the PCs.

If the PCs manage to prevent the guards from being drugged or murdered, the beastmen should have a rough fight on their hands and the PCs should be able to focus on the cult and the ritual relatively unmolested. If the PCs have cultivated good relations with Olver Gand and his hounds, the three Tilean manhounds he maintains can easily swing the battle if unleashed at the right time.

If the guards have been drugged and the PCs do nothing, the beastmen rampage through the manor, kill most of the staff, and fall under the sway of the cult's daemon. Olver Gand and his hounds can't fight them off alone and will perish or flee.

If asked, he will write them letters of introduction to other nobles or the heads of guilds living in Ubersreik and Altdorf. Aschaffenberg is even be willing to put in a good word with the von Bruner family, who may be able to provide the PCs with employment or have other mysteries that the PCs could try to solve.

The PCs may also have earned themselves some enemies. Some members of the Unblinking Eye may have escaped detection or fled from a fight into the Reikwald Forest. Lord Aschaffenberg may even hire the PCs to hunt down members of his renegade staff so he can bring them to justice.

If the daemon is not destroyed, it stays in Grunewald Lodge, growing stronger as Piersson feeds it additional sacrifices. Once it is strong enough, the creature takes to the sky, flying to Ubersreik and then Altdorf, to murder Lord Heissman von Bruner and everyone else involved in the downfall of the Eldritch Order of the Unblinking Eye.

Should the PCs fail in their mission, they may be able to redeem themselves by organising a counter-attack to destroy the Chaos cultists holding the lodge, banishing the daemon, or ridding the woods of beastmen raiders. But that is another story.

Experience Rewards

At the end of each play session, remember to give each player one experience point. If the players distinguished themselves with exceptional play and everyone had fun, reward them with a bonus experience point upon completion of the adventure. For one very long session, an experience point for every Chapter completed is a good rule of thumb.

If the characters stopped the daemon from being summoned, or if they destroy the daemon themselves, give each player one bonus experience point at the end of the adventure. Likewise, the players earn one bonus experience point if they killed or captured all eleven Chaos cultists, effectively extinguishing this sect of the Unblinking Eye.

Table 8-1: Master NPC Index

Name	Location	Occupation	Wounded?	Poisoned?	Cultist?
Lord Rickard Aschaffenberg	Master Bedroom	Lord of the Manor		☠	
Gregor Piersson	Wanders	Steward			✓
Vern Hendrick	Master Bedroom	Manservant	Lightly wounded	☠	
Gertie Hochen	Wanders	Servant		✓	
Gunnar Wetzel	Wanders	Servant			✓
Hanna Dralst	Wanders	Servant			✓
Josef Vacmark	Wanders	Servant			✓
Konrad Voss	Wanders	Servant			✓
Todd Heistlenburger	Wanders	Servant	Lightly wounded	✓	
Dr. Stefan Sieger	Hospice	Physician			✓
Sister Sonja	Hospice	Zealot	Blind		
Korden Kurgansson	Hospice	Blacksmith	Completely insane		
Bertoldt Granhof	Hospice	Gardener	Lightly wounded		✓
Astrid Slazinger	Hospice	Guard	Critically wounded	✓	
Helmut Zondervan	Hospice	Guard	Critically wounded	✓	
Otto Geizhals	Library	Librarian			✓
Karla Wagner	Kitchen	Chef			✓
Albrecht Krug	Stables	Coachman			✓
Hans Kurtz	Stables	Coachman	Smashed Knee	✓	
Franz Lange	Stables	Groom		✓	
Olver Gand	Kennels	Hunter			
Cpt. Anders Blucher	Walls	Guard captain		☠	
Sven Bleuler	Guardroom	Guard	Lightly wounded	☠	
Ernest Bohne	Watchtower	Guard		☠	
Manfred Klammerer	Guardroom	Guard	Lightly wounded	☠	
Pieter Koch	Guardroom	Guard			✓

Characters who have been poisoned count as if they are suffering from extreme fatigue, which adds ■■ to all checks based on physical characteristics, and add ◆ to all Observation checks.
Characters marked with a ☠ choose the venison at dinner, and become poisoned as a result.

NPCs	St	To	Ag	Int	WP	Fel	A/C/E	Wounds	Stance
Townsfolk	3 (3)	3 (1) ■	3 (0)	3	3 ■	3	4/3/0	10	R1
Noble	3 (3)	3 (1)	3 (0)	3	3 □	4 □	3/4/1	13	C2
Soldier	3 (4) ■	3 (2) ■	3 (1)	3	3	3	5/2/1	15	C1

Make a Stand

Basic, NPC

2

Weapon Skill (St) vs. Target Defence

Used By: Basic NPCs
Engaged with target

Special: If the attack is successful, the target suffers 1 fatigue for every 3 Basic NPCs engaged with the target

Effect: The NPCs band together to stand against a common foe

The attack inflicts normal damage

The attack inflicts normal damage, and the target suffers 1 stress

The target suffers the Rattled condition for 2 rounds

The attacker suffers 1 wound

Mob Justice

NPC

3

Weapon Skill (St) vs. Target Defence

Used By: Townsfolk
Engaged with target

Special: If there are more townsfolk in the engagement than enemies, add □ to the attack's dice pool.

Effect: The townsfolk band together to tackle a more formidable opponent

The attack inflicts normal damage

The attack inflicts +2 damage, +1 critical

The target suffers the Overwhelmed condition for 2 rounds

The attacker suffers 1 wound

☼ All townsfolk in the engagement suffer 1 wound

Do You Know Who I Am?

Social, NPC, Ongoing

4

Charm (Fel)

Used By: Nobles
Target within medium range

Effect: The noble converses with the target, flaunting his station and superior birth

While this card is recharging, the noble gains □ to all Fellowship-based skill checks

While this card is recharging, the noble gains □ to all Fellowship-based skill checks

Add 1 recharge token to this action

While this card is recharging, the noble benefits from the Invigorated condition

Remove 1 recharge token from this action

☼ The noble suffers the Cowed condition for 2 rounds

Subdue

NPC

3

Weapon Skill (St) vs. Target Defence

Used By: Soldiers
Engaged with target

Effect: The soldier attempts to overpower a target with a minimum of bloodshed

The attack inflicts –1 damage, and the target suffers from the Overwhelmed condition for 2 rounds

As above, and the target suffers one fatigue

The target suffers the Weakened condition for 2 rounds

If the target was wielding a weapon, he is disarmed

The attacker suffers 1 wound

☼ The attacker is disarmed, dropping his weapon

Cultists	St	To	Ag	Int	WP	Fel	A/C/E	Wounds	Stance
Cult Follower	3(3)	3(1)	3 (0)	3	3■	3	2/2/1	8	C1
Cult Mutant	3□(3)	4□(2)	3 (1)	3	3	2	4/2/1	14	R1
Gregor Piersson	3(4)	4(1)	3 (1)	4■	4■	5	2/7/3	14	C2

Slay the Unbeliever

Basic, Cultist — 0

Weapon Skill (St) vs. Target Defence

Used By: Cultists
Engaged with target

Special: If the attacker is within close range of at least three other cultists, ignore the difficulty modifier

Effect: The Cultists' blind zeal compels them to lash out violently, cursing those who oppose them

The target is struck for normal damage

The target is struck for +2 damage

The target suffers the Ill-Fortuned condition for 2 rounds

The attacker suffers 1 wound

Revel in Corruption

Cultist, Ruinous Power — 3

Weapon Skill (St) vs. Target Defence

Used By: Cult Mutant
Engaged with target

Special: If the target is critically wounded, reduce the difficulty modifier to ■. If the Cult Mutant is critically wounded, the attack gains □

Effect: The Cult Mutant is driven to a terrifying frenzy by the power of his foul god

The target is struck for normal damage, and suffers 1 fatigue

The attack inflicts normal damage, and the target suffers fatigue and stress equal to the number of critical wounds he is currently suffering

The attack gains Fear 2

The target may immediately perform a manoeuvre after the attacker completes this action

The target may immediately retaliate with a *Basic Melee Attack* after the attacker completes this action

Profane Rites

Cultist — 2

Weapon Skill (St) vs. Target Defence

Used By: Cult Follower, Cult Leader
Engaged with target

Special: If the attacker is within close range of at least three other cultists, reduce the difficulty modifier to ■

Effect: The attacker infuses his assault with the power granted by his abhorrent faith

The attack inflicts critical damage

As above, and the target is afflicted by an insanity with the *Chaos* or *Trauma* trait until the end of the current act

The attack gains Pierce 2

The attacker suffers 1 wound

All cultists in close range (including the attacker) suffer 1 wound

Blasphemous Litany

Cultist, Ruinous Power — 2

Guile (Fel) vs. Target Discipline (WP)

Used By: Cult Leader
Target within medium range

Special: If the cult leader is within close range of at least three other cultists, reduce the difficulty modifier to ■

Effect: The cult leader's chanting corrupts the target's flesh!

One random normal wound affecting the target becomes a critical wound

As above, and the target immediately suffers stress equal to the severity of the critical wound

The action affects one additional target within close range of the cult leader

The attacker suffers 1 wound

The attack has Terror 2

All cultists in close range (including the attacker) suffer 1 wound

Beastmen	St	To	Ag	Int	WP	Fel	A/C/E	Wounds	Stance
Ungor	4(4)	4■(1)	4(0)	3	3	2	3/3/1	8	n/a
Gor	5(4)	5□(2)	4(1)	3	3□	2	4/2/1	12	R1
Wargor	6■(5)	6(3)	4(2)	3	3■	2	6/2/2	16	R2

Savage Strike 0

Basic

Weapon Skill (St) vs. Target Defence

Used By: Beastmen
Engaged with target

Effect: The beastman's most common attack, it lashes out with fists, horns, claws, or weapons to pummel its foes

The target is struck for normal damage

The target is struck for normal damage, +1 critical

+2 damage

The attacker suffers 1 wound

The attacker suffers 1 wound

Fearsome Charge 3

Weapon Skill (St) vs. Target Defence

Used By: Gor, Wargor
Melee weapon, not engaged with target, target within close range

Special: The performs a free manoeuvre as part of the action to engage the target

Effect: The beastman lowers its sharp horns and charges into battle, looking to impale the target

The target is struck for +1 damage

The target is struck for +3 damage

The target must succeed at an Average (2d) Discipline (WP) check or gain the rattled condition for 2 rounds

The target may immediately take a free *Basic Melee Attack* against the beastman

Bestial Howl 4

Monstrous, Trauma

Intimidate (str) vs. Target Discipline (WP)

Used By: Gor, Wargor
Targets within close range

Special: The beastman targets an engagement within close range. The check is opposed by the highest Willpower among enemies in the engagement. Each opponent in the engagement with Discipline trained adds one ■ to the dice pool

Effect: The beastman unleashes a fearsome roar, attempting to unnerve its opponents, while spurring its fellow beastmen to action

Each opponent in the engagement suffers 1 stress

Each opponent in the engagement suffers 2 stress

Up to two beastmen within close range of the engagement may immediately join the engagement as a free manoeuvre

An opponent in the targeted engagement may safely leave the engagement as a free manoeuvre. Or an unengaged opponent within close range of the acting beastman may immediately engage the beastman as a free manoeuvre

Undying Ferocity 0

Reaction

Weapon Skill (str) vs. Target Defence

Used By: Wargor
Melee weapon, engaged with target, received a killing blow

Special: This action is performed immediately after the attack that dealt the killing blow is resolved, before any other manoeuvres or effects. Undying Ferocity interrupts the active player's turn until this action has been resolved

Effect: As the creature is dealt a death blow, the wargor lashes out one last time at a nearby opponent

The target is struck for normal damage

The target is struck for +2 damage, critical damage

+2 damage

The target may perform a free manoeuvre after this action is resolved

The Daemon	St	To	Ag	Int	WP	Fel	A/C/E	Wounds	Stance
Strong Form	5(4)	5■(3)	4■(2)	3■	4	1	5/2/2	18	R3
Weak Form	4(4)	5(3)	4(1)	3	4	1	4/2/2	15	R2

The Daemon from the painting is a more powerful version of a Chaos Fury

Chaos Incarnate

Daemonic, Ruinous Power

3

Discipline (WP) check

Used By: Daemons

Effect: The Chaotic nature of the daemons begins to warp reality around it, creating panic in nearby targets, making the daemon more difficult to oppose

While this action is recharging, all enemies engaged with the daemon add ■ to their skill checks

While this action is recharging, all enemies within close range of the daemon add ■ to their skill checks

While this action is recharging, all enemies within close range of the daemon add ■■ to their skill checks

Add 1 additional recharge token

☼ The daemon and all targets engaged with it suffer the Weakened condition while this action is recharging

Strafing Talon Strike

Daemonic

3

Weapon Skill (St) vs. Target Defence

Used By: Furies
Not engaged with target, target within close range

Special: The fury must perform a manoeuvre to initiate this attack. Then, if the attack is successful, the fury may perform a free manoeuvre

Effect: The fury swoops down upon the target, tearing at it with its vicious claws

The attack inflicts normal damage, and the target suffers 1 fatigue

The attack inflicts normal damage, and the target suffers fatigue and stress equal to the number of critical wounds he is currently suffering from

The target suffers from the Cowed condition for 2 rounds

☼ The fury suffers 1 critical wound

Appendix

Charts & Tables

Whether for the convenience of looking something up in a single place or comparing several elements at a glance, some players may prefer a more traditional, structured format to the information presented on some of the cards and components used with *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay*. On the following pages, many of the most common elements are presented in a series of charts and tables.

The information in the charts comes from several sources. The data is marked to indicate which product it is from. If the GM would like to acquire the cards and components for each of these items, the set icon makes it easier to identify. Many of the cards and components for this information are available in the *Game Master's Vault*, the companion product to this book.

The tables provide lookup and random generation of Critical Wounds, Disease, Insanity, Miscasts, and Mutation. This appendix also includes a list of common conditions a character may be affected by, and an assortment of locations with details to inspire a GM when preparing or running an encounter.

Using the Charts & Tables

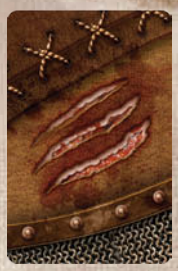
These pages can be used for a quick reference, or a GM may opt to use these tables to generate the game results. To do so, the GM will need two standard ten-sided dice and roll percentiles, then consult the corresponding table.

To roll percentiles—also referred to as 'd00'—the GM rolls two ten-sided dice and designates one as the "tens digit" and the other as the "ones digit." The two numbers are read consecutively, not added together. For example, if the GM rolls a 5 on the "tens digit" die and a 3 on the "ones digit" die, the final result is a 53.

In some cases, the GM may be asked to roll again or multiple times to resolve a lookup. Each section contains instructions on how to generate the results for that particular topic.

WFRP Core Set · Adventurer's Toolkit · The Gathering Storm · Game Master's Toolkit · Winds of Magic
Edge of Night · Signs of Faith · Creature Vault · Player's Vault · Game Master's Vault

Table A-1: Critical Wounds



When you need to generate a critical wound result, you may either draw a card from the wound deck, or roll percentile dice (d00) and consult the following table. The number in the SR column is the critical wound's Severity Rating.

When a critical wound is inflicted on a character, be sure to note the critical wound's effect and Severity Rating for easy reference, and for eventual treatment!

Roll	Critical	Effect	SR	Set
01	Aches and Pains	At the end of each encounter, or after a full night's rest, you recover 1 less stress and 1 less fatigue than normal	2	○
02	Aches and Pains	At the end of each encounter, or after a full night's rest, you recover 1 less stress and 1 less fatigue than normal	3	○
03	Aggravated Wound	Your stance is considered one space closer to neutral	2	○
04	Aggravated Wound	Your stance is considered one space closer to neutral	3	○
05	Annoying Injury	After you perform an *Active Defence* action, add 1 additional recharge token to that card	3	○
06	Blood in the Eyes	When you receive this wound, the GM may place a number of recharge tokens equal to the number of critical wounds you have on any combination of your action cards.	2	◐
07	Blow to the Head	When you acquire this critical wound, suffer 1 stress. Add ■ to Intelligence checks	3	○
08	Broken Nose	Add ■ to your *Social* actions	3	○
9-10	Broken Rib	Each time you suffer a critical wound, suffer 1 normal wound	2	○ ◔
11-14	Concussion	Add ■ to all your checks while you have any cards recharging. If you ever acquire two Concussions, you collapse unconscious until one of them is healed	1	○
15-16	Concussion	Add ■ to all your checks while you have any cards recharging. If you ever acquire two Concussions, you collapse unconscious until one of them is healed	2	○
17-18	Constant Pain	Whenever you suffer stress, suffer 1 fatigue	1	○
19-20	Crushing Blow	When you acquire this critical wound, suffer 1 fatigue. Add ■ to Toughness checks	3	○
21-22	Deep Wound	This wound has no special effect aside from its high severity	5	◔
23	Disfiguring Scar	Add ■ to all Fellowship checks. Add □ to Intimidation checks	2	◔
24	Dislocated Shoulder	You inflict –2 damage with *Melee Attacks* and *Ranged Attacks*	3	○
25	Disoriented	Your mental checks gain: ☠ Suffer 1 stress	2	○
26	Distracting Injury	Suffer 1 stress each time you adjust your stance to a position further away from the neutral space on your stance meter	2	○
27	Exposed Weakness	Reduce your Soak Value by 1	2	○
28	Exposed Weakness	Reduce your Soak Value by 1	3	○
29-30	Festering Wound	Until this critical wound is healed, its Severity Rating increases by 1 each day, to a maximum Severity of 5	0	○
31-36	Flesh Wound	The Severity Rating of this critical wound is equal to the number of Flesh Wounds affecting you	X	○
37	Grievous Injury	After you perform an *Active Defence* action, add 1 additional recharge token to that card	4	○
38	Gruesome Bruise	When you acquire this critical wound, suffer 1 stress. Add ■ to Fellowship checks	3	○
39-40	Hideous Injury	The Severity Rating of every critical wound affecting you increases by 1	2	○
41	Horrible Gash	When you acquire this critical wound, suffer 1 fatigue. Add ■ to Agility checks	3	○
42-43	Internal Bleeding	Your *Melee Attacks* and *Ranged Attacks* gain: ✲ Suffer 1 wound	3	○
44-45	Low Blow	Whenever you suffer one or more wounds, the GM may add or remove one recharge token from one of your currently recharging cards	2	○
46	Mangled Eye	One of your eyes is badly damaged (GM's choice). Add ■ ■ to all your checks requiring vision.	4	◔
47	Mangled Limb	Your Strength and Agility are reduced by 1. The damaged limb (GM's choice) does not function properly until this critical wound is healed. Add ◆ to all checks requiring use of the limb	2	◔
48	Mangled Limb	Your Strength and Agility are reduced by 1. The damaged limb (GM's choice) does not function properly until this critical wound is healed. Add ◆ to all checks requiring use of the limb	3	◔
49	Minor Nuisance	Add ■ to Intelligence checks	2	○

Roll	Critical	Effect	SR	Set
50	Minor Nuisance	Add ■ to Willpower checks	2	○
51	Minor Nuisance	Add ■ to Fellowship checks	2	○
52	Minor Nuisance	Add ■ to Strength checks	2	○
53	Minor Nuisance	Add ■ to Toughness checks	2	○
54	Minor Nuisance	Add ■ to Agility checks	2	○
55	Minor Trauma	Add ■ to Intelligence checks	3	○
56	Minor Trauma	Add ■ to Willpower checks	3	○
57	Minor Trauma	Add ■ to Fellowship checks	3	○
58	Minor Trauma	Add ■ to Strength checks	3	○
59	Minor Trauma	Add ■ to Toughness checks	3	○
60	Minor Trauma	Add ■ to Agility checks	3	○
61-62	Nagging Injury	After you perform an Active Defence action, add 1 additional recharge token to that card	2	○
63	Painful Blow	Your physical checks gain: ☠ The GM may add or remove one recharge token from one of your recharging cards	2	○
64-65	Painful Injury	Whenever you suffer a critical wound, suffer 1 stress and 1 fatigue	2	○
66	Pulled Muscle	Add ♦ to initiative checks	2	○
67	Pulled Muscle	When you acquire this critical wound, suffer 1 fatigue. Add ■ to Strength checks	3	○
68	Ringing Blow	Whenever you suffer stress, suffer 1 additional stress	2	○
69	Ringing Skull	During your End of Turn phase: The GM must add or remove one recharge token from one of your recharging action cards. Lose 1 power. Lose 1 favour	2	○
70	Ringing Skull	During your End of Turn phase: The GM must add or remove one recharge token from one of your recharging action cards. Lose 1 power. Lose 1 favour	3	○
71	Ringing Skull	During your End of Turn phase: The GM must add or remove one recharge token from one of your recharging action cards. Lose 1 power. Lose 1 favour	4	○
72	Ruptured Spleen	You count as having an extra point of fatigue while you are affected by this critical wound	2	○
73	Ruptured Spleen	You count as having an extra point of fatigue while you are affected by this critical wound	3	○
74	Seething Pain	If your character does not rely on power or favour, suffer 1 fatigue when this wound is acquired. Otherwise, whenever you generate power or favour, you generate 1 less power or favour	2	○
75-76	Severe Sprain	Your physical checks gain: ☠ Suffer 1 fatigue	2	○
77	Short of Breath	Suffer 1 fatigue each time you use an Active Defence	2	○
78	Short of Breath	Suffer 1 fatigue each time you use an Active Defence	3	○
79	Sickening Blow	You count as having an extra point of stress while you are affected by this critical wound	2	○
80	Sickening Blow	You count as having an extra point of stress while you are affected by this critical wound	3	○
81	Smashed Fingers	The fingers on one of your hands (GM's choice) have been smashed. Add ■■ to all your checks made with that hand – including attacks made wielding a two-handed weapon.	2	◔
82-83	Smashed Limb	Suffer 1 additional fatigue each time you perform a movement manoeuvre	2	○
84-85	Spitting Teeth	When you receive this critical wound, you immediately suffer a number of additional wounds equal to the highest Severity Rating among all the critical wounds you are suffering from	2	○
86-87	Swimming Vision	Add ■ to Ranged Attacks and Observation checks which involve the sense of sight	3	○
88	Traumatic Blow	Add ♦ to checks made to resist Fear or Terror	2	○
89-90	Twisted Joint	You do not gain a free manoeuvre on your turn	2	○
91	Weeping Sore	You may not recover fatigue or stress during the rally step. If left untreated for a day, this wound's severity increases to 3.	2	◔
92	Worrisome Blow	When you acquire this critical wound, suffer 1 stress. Add ■ to Willpower checks	3	○
93-94	Wrenched Back	Your Melee Attacks and Ranged Attacks gain: ☠ Suffer 1 fatigue	1	○
95-98		Roll Twice and select the critical wound with the higher severity rating (if tied, GM chooses)		
99-00		Roll Twice and apply both results! You poor sod...		

○ WFRP Core Set ⊠ Adventurer's Toolkit ◔ The Gathering Storm ♜ Game Master's Toolkit ♁ Winds of Magic
☾ Edge of Night ♣ Signs of Faith ❦ Creature Vault ◉ Player's Vault ◈ Game Master's Vault

Table A-2: Insanity

When you need to generate an insanity result, you may either draw a card from the insanity deck, or roll percentile dice (d00) and consult the following table. The number in the SR column is the insanity's Severity Rating.

In some cases, the GM may wish to generate an insanity that has a particular trait, based on how the insanity is gained. If the first insanity generated does not have the proper trait, the GM may either roll again, or simply evaluate the next insanity in order, until he finds an insanity with the appropriate trait.

When a character acquires an insanity, be sure to note the insanity's effect and Severity Rating for easy reference, and for eventual treatment!

For more information on acquiring temporary and permanent insanity, as well as treating insanity, see Chapter Nine of *The Player's Guide*.

Roll	Name & Trait	Effect	SR	Set
01-03	Agoraphobia *Enigma, Trauma*	*The stinking mass of humanity pressing around you… You have to get someplace quiet and safe!* If you end your turn in an engagement with 5 or more characters, suffer 1 stress	2	
04-05	Breathless Anxiety *Supernatural, Violence*	*Focus. Breathe. This is no time to fall apart. You're getting light-headed. Did it just grow darker in here?* You suffer 1 additional fatigue for each extra manoeuvre you perform during your turn	2	
06-07	Catatonia *Chaos, Enigma*	*You retreat into yourself, your senses trying to shut out the world. Others find you distant, cold, and unresponsive.* At the end of your turn, move the tracking token on your Stance meter two spaces towards the neutral stance	1	
08-09	Delusions of Grandeur *Enigma, Trauma*	*Do not presume to tell me your thoughts! You are unworthy of my attention. I am superior! In every way and every manner!* All of your failed skill checks gain: ☠ Suffer 1 stress	1	
10-11	Dizzying Delirium *Enigma, Trauma*	*Sounds change timbre and your vision swims. It seems almost anything can trigger a fit.* Whenever you use an action card with a recharge rating (except one with the *Ongoing* trait), add one additional recharge token to the card	3	
12-13	Don't Leave Me! *Enigma, Violence*	*The most terrifying thing in the world is being alone. You must never be separated from your friends and allies!* If you end your turn with no allies within close range, suffer 1 stress	2	
14-15	Dreadful Insight *Chaos, Supernatural*	*You've seen a terrible glimpse of things to come, and each time a new revelation proves true, your dread increases…* Each time you pass a mental check, suffer 1 stress	2	
16-17	Dry Heaves, The *Supernatural, Trauma*	*Sometimes you see it again, and then the bile comes bubbling up… or worse, it doesn't, and you just retch.* When you suffer 1 or more stress, suffer 1 fatigue as well	2	
18-20	Fading Memories *Supernatural, Trauma*	*Mercifully, you find it difficult to remember the precise details of that awful event. Unfortunately, you find it difficult to remember much of anything.* Add ■ to Intelligence checks	1	
21-22	Faltering Steps *Trauma, Violence*	*I don't want to be a bother, but could you– oh, never mind, it was a bad idea anyway.* You suffer 1 additional stress for each extra space you move the activation token on your Stance meter at the beginning of your turn	2	
23-24	Fragile Nerves *Chaos, Trauma*	*You've seen too many nasty things and could really use a little peace and quiet, but it never stops. It never, ever stops. It's just one thing after another…* Add ■ to Discipline, Intimidate, and Leadership checks you make	1	
25-26	Gibbering Terrors *Supernatural, Violence*	*Shallya have mercy! Oh gods, we're all going to die and I'm going to die last! I'm going to have to watch you all die!* Whenever you suffer 1 or more stress, suffer 1 additional stress	3	
27-29	Gold Lust *Dwarf, Enigma*	*I must have it ... I must have it all! Glorious, wonderful gold. More, more!* Add ♦ to all checks to haggle and trade, and to *Social* actions where gold and riches are at stake.	4	
30-31	Growing Apathy *Chaos, Trauma*	*What's the point? Chaos is inevitable and terrible things will happen no matter what you do...* Whenever you fail a physical check, suffer 1 fatigue	2	
32-33	Irrational Compulsion *Chaos, Violence*	*Blood for the Blood God! Skulls for the Skull –what was I saying?* At the end of any round of combat you are involved in, if you did not attack an ally or enemy within close range, suffer 1 stress	3	
34-36	Khaine's Spite *Elf, Enigma*	*You do not understand the anger, the hatred, that I must keep checked, lest it be unleashed upon you and spell your doom!* Your *Social* actions suffer ■ equal to the depth of your current stance.	4	

Roll	Name	Effect	SR	Set
37-38	Lack of Confidence *Enigma, Trauma*	*You're fairly certain you used to be able to do these things but you're less and less certain as time goes on…* Add ■ to any check you make in which the dice pool includes at least one expertise die ▣	1	⚡
39-41	Lethargy *Trauma, Violence*	*Perhaps I'll just stay in this chair for now. It's so comfortable and I can't seem to keep my eyes open. Go on without me...I'll just rest right here for a bit.* Add ■ to Strength checks	2	○
42-43	Manic Fervour *Chaos, Trauma*	*You feel great! There's no challenge that you can't handle! You can't sit still; you must keep moving!* Each time you pass a physical check, suffer 1 fatigue	2	○
44-46	Mental Mutation *Chaos, Violence*	*Obviously something is wrong with your body. You can't see it, but sometimes you can feel it lurking inside you. It's only a matter of time before it happens…* When fatigued or distressed, add twice the normal number of ■ to your dice pools.	2	⚡
47-49	Mounting Tension *Supernatural, Enigma*	*Moment by moment, the threat comes closer. It's always lurking, just outside the corner of your vision.* Whenever you suffer one or more wounds, suffer 1 stress	3	○
50-52	Nagging Doubts *Chaos, Supernatural*	*The plan is flawed. This can only end in disaster, and it will be all my fault.* Whenever you fail a mental check, suffer 1 stress	2	○
53-55	Omens of Doom *Chaos, Enigma*	*Your dreams are plagued by terrible visions of the future. Not useful visions. Just the horrific, mind-shattering ones.* Each time you wake up from a rest, suffer 2 stress	3	○
56-58	Oppressive Fear *Chaos, Violence*	*The world is full of things that are trying to kill you. Eventually one of them is going to succeed.* Whenever you suffer one or more wounds, suffer 1 fatigue	3	○
59-60	Paranoia *Chaos, Enigma*	*You've read between the lines. You know what's going on. Your friends are traitors, out to get you. But you'll show them…* Whenever your group's Party Tension increases, you must spend 1 fortune point or the group's Party Tension increases by 1	3	○
61-63	Reclusion *Any Race, Enigma*	*I can do it by myself. I don't need your help. I don't need anyone's help.* You cannot benefit from the Assist manoeuvre or from fortune dice provided by allies. Performing the Assist manoeuvre to aid another character causes 1 stress.	4	☾
64-65	Rotting Body *Supernatural, Violence*	*Everyone claims that you look fine, that you don't smell of rotten flesh, and your body is not mouldering. But you know better.* Your physical checks gain: ☠ Suffer 1 fatigue	1	○
66-67	Solipsism *Enigma, Supernatural*	*You're no longer convinced that anything besides yourself truly exists.* Add ■ to your dice pool on all actions that target characters aside from yourself.	3	⚡
68-70	Shakes, The *Chaos, Violence*	*Ignore the trembling, you're fine. You don't think about it anymore. You simply need help doing things sometimes. Shallya please, when will this shaking stop…?* Add ■ to Agility checks	1	○
71-73	Temerity *Elf, Enigma*	*How dare you question me! I have decades – nay, centuries – more experience than you do!* Whenever you suffer 1 or more stress, party tension increases by 1	2	☾
74-76	Terrifying Visions *Enigma, Supernatural*	*When you sleep, you see awful visions, terrifying things that should not and cannot be…* At the end of each encounter, or after a full night's rest, you recover 1 less stress and 1 less fatigue than normal	3	○
77-79	Trepidation *Supernatural, Violence*	*You're terrified of acting, afraid of doing the wrong thing. Everything you do always seems to turn out wrong.* You do not gain a free manoeuvre on your turn	1	○
80-82	Unhinged *Enigma, Supernatural*	*The world is slowly unravelling around you. Well, not as slowly as it once was...* The Severity Value of all your other insanities is increased by 1	2	○
83-85	Unnatural Cravings *Enigma, Supernatural*	*So many tempting choices... A small bite won't hurt anyone. A tiny sip, just to see what it's like. Mmm...I wonder what he tastes like.* Your mental checks gain: ☠ Suffer 1 stress	1	○
86-88	Unresolved Grudge *Dwarf, Enigma*	*I shall never forget this sleight, foul cur. I must cleanse this stain on my honour!* Actions that do not target a hostile or known enemy gain ■	2	☾
89-90	Xenophobia *Any Race, Enigma*	*You can't trust them. Any of them. They're not like us.* Your Social actions and Fellowship skill checks suffer ◆ whenever dealing with a member of a different race.	3	☾
91-92	Yellow Streak *Trauma, Violence*	*Some call you a coward... You are just acutely aware of the dangers that constantly surround you.* If you end your turn in an engagement where your allies are outnumbered by enemies, suffer 1 stress and 1 fatigue	2	○
93-98		Roll Twice and select the insanity with the higher severity rating (if tied, GM chooses)		
99-00		Roll Twice and apply both results! You poor sod...		

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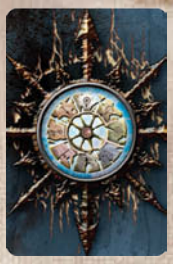
Table A-3: Miscast



When you need to generate a miscast result, you may either draw a card from the miscast deck, or roll percentile dice (d00) and consult the following table. If there are still ✲ remaining after fulfilling all the effects listed for a particular miscast entry, roll again and apply ✲ results until all ✲ have been spent triggering miscast effects.

Miscasts are most often triggered when an arcane spellcaster generates one or more ✲ on a Channelling or Spellcraft check when wielding the winds of magic to fuel or perform a spell. For more information on miscasts, see Chapter Ten of *The Player's Guide*.

Roll	Name	Effect	Set
01-04	Arcing Magic	✲ Your spell, crackling with energy, arcs to a new – and unintended! – target. The GM chooses another target within range of the spell (or within close range if the spell is a personal effect) who is affected exactly as the primary target.	
05-08	Blinding Light	✲ You are temporarily blinded by a dazzling light. Add ◆ to your next skill check that requires the sense of sight. ✲✲✲ You gain the Blinded condition for the rest of this encounter	
09-11	Cacophony	✲ You find yourself screaming curses in a strange, daemonic tongue. It takes an act of supreme willpower to intersperse your blasphemous shrieks with normal speech. All of your Fellowship and Spellcraft checks gain ◆ until the end of the current encounter.	
12-14	Chaotic Tremor	✲ Energy channels down through your body. The ground below you suddenly shudders and shakes violently for a moment. You fall prone and suffer 1 fatigue. ✲✲ As above, and all characters engaged with you also fall prone	
15-17	Coldsnap	✲ For an instant, the surrounding temperature plummets to freezing. Any water within close range of you turns to ice. You and everyone engaged with you suffers 1 fatigue. ✲✲ As above, and you gain the Sluggish condition for 2 rounds	
18-21	Erratic Reflux	✲ An unexpected kickback of magical energy disorients you. Add 2 recharge tokens to the action just performed. ✲✲✲ As above, and if the action inflicts damage to a target, you also suffer damage as if you had been struck by the action	
21-23	Hideous Vigour	✲ The Winds of Magic swirl around you, vitalising you with unnatural vigour. Suffer 1 fatigue and 1 stress, but recover 1 normal wound. ✲✲✲ Suffer 2 fatigue and 2 stress, but recover two normal wounds	
24-27	Levitation	✲ Until the end of your next turn, you find yourself floating several feet above the ground. You may not move from your current location (although you may be dragged or pushed to a new location by another person). Characters add □ to Ranged Attacks that target you while you are floating.	
28-30	Lightning Rod	✲ A bolt of lightning descends from the sky, striking you. You suffer 2 wounds and gain the Thunderstruck condition for 2 rounds. ✲✲✲ As above, and all characters engaged with you also gain the Thunderstruck condition for 2 rounds	
31-33	Magical Fury	✲ Oh gods, the voices, the horrible, screeching voices! Suffer 1 stress, suffer 1 fatigue, and lose all power. ✲✲ As above, and suffer 1 wound. ✲✲✲ As both previous effects, and immediately draw 1 insanity card as a permanent insanity	
34-36	Major Corruption	The winds of magic batter at you, lashing out against your mind and body. Suffer 1 fatigue and 1 corruption, plus 1 additional corruption for each ✲ generated	
37-40	Minor Corruption	The winds of magic swirl about you, threatening to corrupt mind and body. Suffer 1 corruption for each ✲ generated	
41-44	Minor Disturbance	✲ A minor ripple of energy cascades out from you. Within close range of you, milk curdles, animals grow tense, and there is an odd, cloying smell in the air. Suffer 1 stress. ✲✲✲ As above, and all characters within close range of you suffer 1 stress	

Roll	Name	Effect	Set
45-47	Minor Rift	✲✲ A small rift to the Realm of Chaos is torn open before you. A Chaos Imp (see *The Creature's Guide*) flutters through before it closes, appearing somewhere within close range. The imp then acts according to its nature.	⊘
48-50	Mutation!	A taint within the Winds of Magic temporarily corrupts your body. Draw one random mutation and place 3 recharge tokens on the mutation for each ✲ generated. When the last recharge token is removed, the temporary mutation fades away. Suffer 1 stress for each ✲	☾
51-53	Nauseating Surge	✲ A nauseating surge of energy passes through you for the briefest of moments. Suffer 1 fatigue. ✲✲ As above, and your stance automatically shifts to neutral	○
54-56	Petrification	✲ Rampaging Chaos energy freezes you in position, immobilising you until the end of your next turn. While petrified, add 4 to your soak value. ✲✲ As above, and suffer 1 fatigue	○
57-59	Power Drain	✲ The Winds of Magic leech power from you! Lose 1 power for each ✲ generated	○
60-62	Reality Switch	✲ A slender tendril of Chaos energy strikes at you and a target chosen by the GM within medium range of you. Change positions with that target. ✲✲ As above, and both targets also suffer 1 fatigue	○
63-65	Simulacrum	✲ Your image blurs, as a shadowy, purple copy is created, trailing your actions until the end of the encounter. Suffer 2 stress. ✲✲ As above, and add ■ to all Ranged Attacks targeting you	○
66-68	Static Burst	✲ You crackle and shimmer with electrical energy. You and all characters engaged with you suffer 1 fatigue. ✲✲ As above, and you and characters engaged with you also suffer 1 wound	⊘
69-71	Strained Senses	✲ Tendrils of Aethyr lick over your senses, muddling your mind and body. Suffer 1 stress and 1 fatigue. ✲✲✲ Suffer 2 stress and 2 fatigue	○
72-74	Tainted Mind	✲ Swirling chaotic energy clouds your mind and thoughts. Immediately exhaust all talent and specialty cards attached to your character, placing 4 recharge tokens on each. Suffer 1 corruption for each card exhausted in this manner.	☾
75-77	Temporary Insanity	✲ Your mind opens upon the briefest glimpse into the realm of magic, shaking your composure. Immediately draw 1 insanity card, and place 1 tracking token on the card for each ✲ generated	○
78-80	Time Dilation	The GM adds a number of recharge tokens to your Spell actions equal to twice the number of ✲ generated.	☾
81-83	Time Distortion	✲ Your connection to the aethyr distorts your sense of time, as the world seems to speed up around you. You do not remove any recharge tokens from your cards at the end of this round. ✲✲ As above, and suffer 1 stress for each ✲ generated by the check	○
84-86	Unexpected Surge	A surge of magical energy rushes through you. Gain 2 power for each ✲ generated. Suffer 1 stress for each ✲ generated	☾
87-89	Unnatural Lucidity	✲ Brief exposure to the Aethyr has crystallised your senses. Add □□ to the next skill check you make during this encounter. ✲✲✲ As above, and suffer 1 stress	○
90-92	Violent Backlash	✲ Chaos eddies recoil violently against you. Suffer 1 wound. ✲✲✲ Suffer 2 wounds	○
93-95	Wracking Agony	✲ Agonising power courses through your body, rupturing your flesh. Randomly select 1 normal wound and flip it over to make it a critical wound. If you are unwounded, you suffer an automatic wound. ✲✲ As above, but randomly select 2 wounds to become critical wounds	○
96-98		Roll again, and apply the results with an additional ✲ which must be resolved during the miscast	
99-00		Roll again, and apply the results with an additional ✲✲ which must be resolved during the miscast	

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Table A-4: Mutation

When you need to generate a mutation, you may either draw a card from the mutation deck, or roll percentile dice (d00) and consult the following table. The number in the SR column is the mutation's Severity Rating.

In some cases, the GM may wish to generate a mutation that has a particular trait, based on how the mutation manifests. If the first mutation generated does not have the proper trait, the GM may either roll again, or simply evaluate the next mutation in order, until he finds an mutation with the appropriate trait.

When a character acquires a mutation, be sure to note the mutation's effect and Severity Rating for easy reference. When a mutation manifests, the afflicted character loses corruption equal to the mutation's Severity Rating.

For more information on corruption and mutation, see Chapter Seven of this book, starting on page 52.

Roll	Name	Effect	SR	Set
01-03	Abnormal Eye *Chaos, Grotesque*	*A new eye grows, peering out from somewhere on your body. The eye doesn't closely resemble your original eyes, nor does it reliably obey your commands.* Add ◆ to all checks to interact with people who can see your mutation.	2	
04-06	Ageless Form *Chaos, Grotesque*	*Your body becomes a twisted, horrible mass of flesh, but you no longer age. Your face remains fresh and young-looking forever.* You gain □ on Social actions while your face is visible, and suffer ◆ on Social actions while your body is visible.	3	
07-09	Beaked Face *Chaos, Tzeentch*	*Your lips harden and fuse into a vicious beak. Speaking becomes difficult, but the beak is very sharp…* Melee Attack actions gain: +1 damage. Add ■■ to all checks to interact with people who can see your mutation.	3	
10-12	Bestial Features *Chaos, Monstrous*	*You face becomes like unto a beast or fanciful monster.* Your sharp teeth, tusks, or mandibles serve as weapons with DR2/CR3. Add ◆ to all checks to interact with people who can see your mutation.	3	
13-15	Brightly Coloured Skin *Chaos, Tzeentch*	*Your skin has become a bright and exotic colour, or perhaps a stunning pattern in several bright and exotic colours. And there's no guarantee that the colours are constant.* Add ■■ to all checks to interact with people who can see your mutation.	2	
16-18	Cacophony *Chaos*	*Your tongue becomes black and twisted, and your speech is garbled with daemonic words.* Add ◆ to your dice pool for any check where clear speech is relevant, including invoking blessings or casting non-Chaos spells.	2	
19-21	Clawed Hands *Chaos, Monstrous*	*Your razor-sharp claws fortunately don't interfere with your manual dexterity…much.* Your clawed hands are equivalent to being armed with daggers. Add ■■ to Skulduggery checks and checks to interact with people who can see your claws.	3	
22-24	Cloven Hooves *Chaos, Monstrous*	*Your legs distend and mutate to cloven hooves.* Movement between range bands costs 1 less manoeuvre to perform, to a minimum of 1 manouevre. Add ■■ to all checks to interact with people who can see your mutation.	2	
25-27	Distended Limbs *Chaos, Grotesque*	*Your limbs grow overly large and distended, with warped and disproportionate joints. Aside from revulsion, your new body brings constant pain as your joints ache.* Add ■■ to all checks to interact with people who can see your mutation.	4	
28-30	Dripping Pus *Chaos, Grotesque*	*Your body secretes an unending supply of oozing, dripping pus.* All characters engaged with you add ■ to all mental checks. You are immune to your own pus. Add ■■ to all checks to interact with people who can see your mutation.	3	
31-33	Exotic Locomotion *Chaos, Tzeentch*	*Tentacles, spider-legs, or something even more bizarre…* You can scuttle and climb across difficult terrain with ease. You reduce penalties from difficult terrain by up to ■■. Add ■■ to all checks to interact with people who can see your mutation.	4	
34-36	Extra Mouth *Chaos, Grotesque*	*A second mouth leers from somewhere on your body. You can speak (maybe) and eat through your new mouth, but you're not certain where the food goes.* Add ◆ to all checks to interact with people who can see your mutation.	2	
37-39	Faceted Eyes *Chaos, Nurgle*	*Your bulging eyes are divided into hundreds of unnerving mirror-like facets, just like a fly. While your field of view is greatly expanded, your eyes can no longer distinguish colours.* Add □◆ to all Observation checks.	4	
40-42	Feathers *Chaos, Tzeentch*	*Ragged patches of feathers sprout all over, but as hard as you try you cannot fly.* Colourful feathers sprout from your skin, providing +1 Defence. Add ■■ to all checks to interact with people who can see your mutation.	4	
43-45	Featureless *Chaos, Tzeentch*	*Your face becomes a blank, featureless mask; no eyes, no nose, no mouth. You speak with a voice from nowhere.* Add ◆ to Charm checks, ■■ to Guile checks, and □ to Intimidate checks for all who can see your mutation.	3	

Roll	Name	Effect	SR	Set
46-48	Festering Skin *Chaos, Nurgle*	*Your skin constantly blisters and discolours, sloughing off at an alarming rate... then quickly regrows to blister again.* Your opposed actions gain: Target suffers 1 stress. Add ♦ to checks to interact with people who can see your skin.	3	♣
49-51	Foetid Fog *Chaos, Nurgle*	*A stinking, bilious miasma of swirling, mite-infested putrescence envelops your body.* While suffering from a disease, gain +1 Defence for each disease or symptom card you have. Add ♦ to all Fellowship checks.	4	♣
52-54	Glowing Eyes *Chaos, Tzeentch*	*Your eyes glow with an unholy light.* Gain □ to Observation checks. Negate ■ from checks based on dark conditions or lack of light. Add ■■ to all checks to interact with people who can see your mutation.	2	ℰ
55-57	Grotesque Features *Chaos, Grotesque*	*Perhaps your face has been completely rearranged, with your mouth above your eyes. Perhaps you're just incredibly ugly. Your facial features are distended to unnatural proportions.* Add ♦ to all *Social* checks.	4	ℰ
58-60	Horns *Chaos, Monstrous*	*Large, dangerous-looking horns sprout from your brow. They may or may not resemble animal horns.* Melee Attack actions gain: +1 damage. Add ♦ to checks to interact with people who can see your horns... You may be mistaken for a beastman.	3	ℰ
61-63	Hulking Frame *Chaos, Monstrous*	*Your muscles swell, bones twist, and clothes tear. You become a misshapen, musclebound freak.* You gain □ to all Strength checks and your wound threshold increases by 1. You suffer ■■ to Agility and Fellowship checks.	4	☾
64-66	Inhuman Eyes *Chaos, Grotesque*	*Your eyes become truly inhuman, whether slitted like a cat, or jewel-like as an insect, or even pure milky white.* You gain □ to Intimidate checks, but ■■ to all other *Social* checks to interact with those who can see your mutation.	2	☾
67-69	Obscene Obesity *Chaos, Nurgle*	*Your entire body swells and bloats to twice your original weight. Your stomach distends to a horrific girth... and demands to be constantly fed.* You gain +1 Soak. Add ♦ to all Agility and Fellowship checks.	5	♣
70-72	Pliable Limbs *Chaos*	*Your arms and legs distend into flexible, rubbery appendages.* Add □ to Coordination checks, and ■ to Athletics checks. Add ♦ to all checks to interact with people who can see your mutation.	3	☾
73-75	Rancid Bile *Chaos, Nurgle*	*Your body produces foul, green bile at an alarming rate that threatens to burst from your mouth.* Your attacks against engaged opponents gain: You vomit on your target. The target suffers 1 stress, 1 fatigue, and must make a Disease 2 check	3	♣
76-78	Scaly Skin *Chaos, Monstrous*	*Your skin flakes, peels, and sloughs off, revealing gleaming-hard scales beneath.* You gain +1 Soak. Add ♦ to all checks to interact with people who can see your mutation.	4	ℰ
79-81	Skull Face *Chaos, Grotesque*	*Your face shrivels and contracts. Your normal features are replaced by a grinning death's head.* Sight of your deformity causes Fear 1. You gain no special resistance to Fear caused by other creatures and may suffer penalties to interact with others.	3	☾
82-84	Slavering Tongue *Chaos, Nurgle*	*Your tongue distends and bulges. It writhes in your mouth, dripping bile as it hungers to taste its surroundings.* Add ♦ to all checks that require clear articulation or speech	2	♣
85-87	Soporific Musk *Chaos*	*You smell pungent, perhaps a little sweet, like overripe fruit. Animals avoid you, but people seem to like your scent. You exude a mildly narcotic musk.* All characters engaged with you add ■ to all physical checks. You are immune to your own musk.	3	ℰ
88-90	Tail *Chaos, Monstrous*	*A long, flexible tail sprouts from your backside. It may resemble an animal tail, or something worse…* While your tail is free, your Coordination checks gain □. Add ♦ to all checks to interact with people who can see your mutation.	4	ℰ
91-93	Tentacle *Chaos, Monstrous*	*A fleshy tentacle erupts from your body. Perhaps it is strong and muscular and replaces your arm, or perhaps it's a cluster of small, weak tentacles of no use to anyone.* Add ♦ to all checks to interact with people who can see your mutation.	4	ℰ
94-96	Wings *Chaos, Tzeentch*	*Small wings spread from your shoulders.* You can't fly, but the wings add □ to Athletics and Coordination checks involving movement. Add ♦ to all checks to interact with people who can see your mutation.	4	ℰ
97-99		Roll Twice and select the mutation with the higher severity rating (if tied, GM chooses)		
00		Roll Twice and apply both results! You freak...		

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Table A-5: Diseases

When you need to generate a disease, you may either draw a card from the disease deck, or roll percentile dice (d00) and consult the following table. The number in the SR column is the disease's Severity Rating.

In some cases, the GM may wish to generate a disease that has a particular trait, based on how the disease is acquired. If the first disease generated does not have the proper trait, the GM may either roll again, or simply evaluate the next disease in order, until he finds an disease with the appropriate trait.

When a character acquires a disease, be sure to note the disease's effect, symptom Keyword and Severity Rating for easy reference, and possible treatment!

For more information on diseases, symptoms and symptom Keywords, see Chapter Eight of this book, starting on page 57.

Roll	Name	Effect Field	Keyword	SR	Set
01-04	Blacklegge *Contact, Filth*	*Your legs are weak and shaky and your watery bowels ache with each step* ✲ Suffer 1 fatigue	Painful	4	
05-08	Bog Lice *Contact, Filth*	*Small, blood-sucking mites live in the folds of your skin causing itchy, smelly blotches* ✲ Suffer 1 stress	Infectious	4	
09-12	Boil Lurgy *Contact, Wound*	*Your body, particularly your face, is covered with large, throbbing red boils* Fellowship checks gain ♦	Virulent	4	
13-16	Flea Buboes *Contact, Filth*	*The horrible red welts itch terribly and seem to attract troublesome mites* ✲ Raise party tension 1	Infectious	3	
17-20	Galloping Trots *Filth, Ingestion*	*Something's squirming in your gut, and that something doesn't want to share it* ✲ Suffer 1 fatigue and 1 stress	Painful	4	
21-23	Ghastly Vapours *Ingestion, Miasma*	*The rank, foetid stench of disease tries to slip out of any orifice it can reach* ✲ Allies within close range suffer 1 stress	Weary	2	
24-26	Ghoulpox *Filth, Undead*	*Your skin turns white and thin while your eyes sink into the hollows of your skull* ✲ Suffer 1 fatigue	Tiring	4	
27-30	Giddy Haunts *Contact, Wound*	*The world keeps spinning the wrong way and you can't tell up from down* ✲ Move 1 space toward a neutral stance. If you are already in a neutral stance, suffer 1 stress and 1 fatigue	Delirium	4	
31-34	Green Pox *Contact, Miasma*	*Pus-filled boils appear on your skin and burst, trickling green ichor* ✲ Suffer 1 fatigue	Infectious	3	
35-38	Grim Ague, The *Wound, Miasma*	*The way your mind is racing, it's hard to focus, let alone get anything done* ✲ Suffer 1 stress	Delirium	2	
39-42	Grimdark Fever *Filth, Wound*	*The pressure inside your head grows as waves of fever wash over your mind* Intelligence checks gain ♦	Fever	2	
43-45	Gutter Worms *Ingestion, Filth*	*The burrowing parasites eat away all your energy* ✲ The GM may add or remove 1 recharge token from any action	Weary	3	
46-49	Morleyís Revenge *Miasma, Ingestion*	*Your insides ache so badly that just the thought of food makes you queasy* Strength checks gain ♦	Painful	4	
50-53	Oozing Eye *Filth, Wound*	*Your eyes constantly weep stinging yellow pus* Actions against targets beyond close range gain ♦	Infectious	3	
54-57	Plague, The *Contact, Miasma*	*The pain, the fatigue, the fever...everything just keeps getting worse* ✲ Convert an existing normal wound into a critical wound	Lethal	5	
58-61	Purple Brain Fever *Contact, Miasma*	*Your mind feels like it is on fire, making it difficult to concentrate on anything* ✲ Suffer 1 stress	Fever	5	
62-64	Rattlelung *Filth, Miasma*	*You feel slow and lethargic, lacking the energy to do much of anything* ✲ Suffer 1 fatigue	Tiring	4	

Roll	Name	Effect Field	Keyword	SR	Set
65-67	Red Pox *Contact, Miasma*	*The burning red sores swell and spread, slowly creeping across your skin* ✲ Suffer 1 wound	Virulent	4	♣
68-71	Scarlet Ague *Contact, Wound*	*Your mind aches, blurring your senses almost to the point of hallucination* ✲ Suffer 1 stress	Fever	4	♣
72-75	Skinflake *Contact, Ingestion*	*Your skin drys and starts to painfully slough off in long, scaly strips* Fellowship checks gain ◆	Painful	2	♣
76-79	Slackjaw *Contact, Miasma*	*You stare vacantly off into space, constantly forgetting what you were going to do* ✲ The GM may add or remove 1 recharge token from any action	Weary	5	♣
80-83	Stenchfoot *Contact, Wound*	*The skin on your feet goes hard and black, and the smell is unbearable* ✲ Raise party tension 1	Painful	5	♣
84-87	Tomb Rot *Undead, Wound*	*Your flesh slowly begins to rot before your very eyes* ✲ Convert an existing normal wound into a critical wound	Lethal	5	♣
88-91	Weevil Cough *Filth, Ingestion*	*The wracking cough and constant wheezing makes it hard to stay on your feet* Agility checks gain ◆	Tiring	3	♣
92-95	Yellow Skull Fever *Contact, Wound*	*Your brain burns so badly; it feels like any movement will cause your head to explode* Intelligence checks gain ◆	Fever	5	♣
96-99		Roll Twice and select the disease with the higher severity rating (if tied, GM chooses)			
00		Roll Twice and apply both results! You poor, poor soul...			

Disease Symptom Keywords

Delirium

Each **Delirium** symptom counts as 1 stress

Fever

Each **Fever** symptom adds ■ to all mental checks performed by the sufferer

Infectious

Each **Infectious** symptom disables one Party Sheet talent slot. Place a token on the talent slot to show it is unavailable

Lethal

Each **Lethal** symptom increases the severity rating of each other disease or symptom card by +1

Painful

Each **Painful** symptom adds ■ to all physical checks performed by the sufferer

Tiring

Each **Tiring** symptom counts as 1 fatigue

Virulent

Each **Virulent** symptom acts as a copy of each other symptom the target suffers from

Weary

Each **Weary** symptom adds 1 recharge token to actions performed, or adds 1 fewer token to *Ongoing* actions

Conditions

Conditions refer to the variety of affects and statuses that may affect a character. Some are positive and beneficial (such as being Inspired) while others are negative and detrimental (such as being Cowed or Ill-Fortuned).

Conditions can come into play in several different ways. The most common way is for the GM to apply a condition based on an in-game reason presented by the story or the circumstance. Conditions can also be imparted as a side effect of a number of different actions, such as Spells, Blessings, or Melee Attacks. In addition to its effects, each condition is defined by a certain duration. The three basic durations for a condition are brief, dependent, and lingering.

To learn more about conditions, see *The Players Guide*, page 90.

Brief: A brief effect usually only lasts for a few turns. To represent the number of turns, tracking tokens are placed on the effect. During the End of Turn Phase, a character removes one token from each brief condition affecting him. When there are no more tokens, the brief effect expires and the card is removed.

Brief effects with the same name do not stack. If a character is already subject to a condition with a brief duration and would be subjected to the same condition again, the status with the longer duration applies.

Dependent: A dependent effect lasts as long as the circumstance mandating the effect exists. For example, the Damaged status modifier found in the Adventurer's Toolkit—it lasts until the modified item has been repaired. During the End of Turn phase, the circumstances for each dependent effect are checked. If the proper circumstances cease to exist, the dependent condition no longer applies and the card is returned to the proper deck.

Lingering: Lingering effects last until the next extended pause in the action. This means that lingering effects last until the end of the current encounter, for the duration of the current act, or until the next Rally Step occurs, whichever occurs first. Lingering effects with the same name do not stack. If a character is already subject to a condition with a lingering effect and would be subjected to the same condition again, it has no further effect.

Condition	Duration	Effect	Set
Blinded	Lingering	Any checks you perform that require the sense of sight gain ◆	○
Cowed	Brief	You cannot convert characteristic dice into reckless dice	○
Damaged	Dependent	*Applies only to equipment.* Weapons have their DR reduced by 2. Armor has its Defence rating reduced by 2. All other items add ■■ to any skill check in which they are used, until the damage is repaired	⊠
Demoralised	Lingering	*Cancels Inspired.* Add ■ to all skill checks	○
Energised	Brief	*Cancels Sluggish.* During your turn, you may perform 1 additional manoeuvre without suffering fatigue	○
Entangled	Lingering	Suffer 1 additional fatigue when performing manoeuvres. When performing a physical action, suffer 2 fatigue	⊠
Exposed	Brief	Attackers targeting you add □ to their dice pools	○
Frightened	Lingering	When engaged with a target that has a Fear or Terror Rating at the beginning of your turn, suffer 1 stress. While so engaged, you convert one less characteristic die into a stance die	○
Ill-Fortuned	Brief	Suffer 1 stress each time you suffer 1 or more wounds	○
Inspired	Lingering	*Cancels Demoralised.* Add □ to all skill checks	○
Intoxicated	Lingering	Add ■■ □ to all checks	⊠ ◔
Invigorated	Lingering	During your End of Turn phase, you may remove one additional recharge token from any one of your currently recharging cards	○
Overwhelmed	Brief	Add ◆ to checks based on physical characteristics	○
Perplexed	Brief	Add ◆ to checks based on mental characteristics	○
Rattled	Brief	You cannot convert characteristic dice into conservative dice	○
Shock	Lingering	You may not recover stress while in Shock. Mental skill checks gain ■	⊠
Sluggish	Brief	*Cancels Energised.* Suffer 1 additional fatigue for each manoeuvre you perform during your turn	○
Staggered	Brief	Your stance is considered 1 step closer to neutral. Add 1 additional recharge token to any *Active Defence* you perform	○
Thunderstruck	Lingering	Remove an expertise die ■ from your dice pool before each check. When you are dealt damage, you are dealt +1 damage	◔
Traumatised	Lingering	Add ◆ to initiative checks. You may not use the first hero marker on the initiative track unless it is the only hero marker there	⊠
Under the Weather	Lingering	Whenever you would suffer 1 fatigue, suffer 2 fatigue instead	◔
Weakened	Brief	Add ■■ to Strength checks. Attacks using Strength inflict -2 damage	○

○ WFRP Core Set ⊠ Adventurer's Toolkit ◔ The Gathering Storm ♜ Game Master's Toolkit ☙ Winds of Magic
☾ Edge of Night ♣ Signs of Faith ❧ Creature Vault ◉ Player's Vault ◈ Game Master's Vault

Locations

The Old World is filled with a variety of interesting, dangerous, and even exotic locations. A number of these locations are represented by specific cards in the *Game Master's Vault*, available separately. The cards can be used when creating an encounter to find inspiration, or used while running an encounter to represent different places where the encounter is occurring.

The flavourful descriptions and the mechanical effects of locations can be a valuable resource for any GM. An assortment of the different kinds of locations introduced in *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay* are described here, as a handy reference or source of inspiration for GMs.

Abandoned Cemetery

This graveyard is silent as death, a collection of overgrown tombstones and crumbling monuments. Macabre statues loom imposingly in the gloom.

Fear and Terror ratings are increased by 1 in the Abandoned Cemetery. Willpower tests gain:

☠☠ Add ⚔ to the results pool

Abandoned Mine

Cut deep into the mountainside, this mineshaft was sunk by dwarfs long, long ago. The fact that it still stands is testament to the skill of the miners who shored it up with heavy beams.

When a Chaos Star ✡ is rolled on any check, or when the Abandoned Mine is subjected to abuse (an explosion, something heavy slamming into a support, or similar events), add a tracking token to this card. When the number of tracking tokens on this card reaches a value secretly chosen by the GM beforehand, the mine collapses.

Audience Chamber

The vaulted ceiling of this bright and magnificent room is ornately carved and gilded with gold leaf. The white plaster walls are inlaid with bas-relief, and every flat surface has been painted by a master's brush. One could spend hours studying the depictions of the gods and heroes of the Empire's past here.

The Audience Chamber belongs to one character, hereafter referred to as the owner. Typically, the owner is immediately obvious – he's the one sitting in the big chair! Social actions and attempts to use Charm, Guile, and Intimidate in the Audience Chamber gain either □ or ■ at the owner's discretion.

Burning Building

This building is on fire!

Build a progress tracker to monitor the intensity of the flame, with an event space partway down and a fire token in the start space. Advance the fire token each round. Before the first event space, characters in the burning building must pass an Average (2d) Resilience (To) check or suffer 1 fatigue each round. After the first event space, characters suffer 1 fatigue each round and must pass a Hard (3d) Resilience (To) check or suffer 1 wound each round. When the token reaches the end of the track, the building collapses.

City Gates

Walls and gates are essential elements of any Old World city. This gate is of solid wood set into a stone wall, decorated with carven skulls and other sigils.

It takes only two people to block the gate–so long as two or more allies are engaged with the gate, their enemies may not pass by the gate through ordinary means.

Crumbling Ruins

Ancient stone walls, crawling with green vines and feathery lichen, loom above you. The ground is scattered with fallen stones and low scrub, concealing uneven flooring and treacherous holes. Watch your step!

Physical Actions gain:

✡ You twist your ankle and suffer 1 wound

Dilapidated Shrine

Little more than an altar under an awning, this tumbledown shrine has been neglected for many years. Its metal fixtures are green with verdigris, and the icons and sculptures of deities are obscured by dust. Only a confusion of candle stubs, their wax melted and fused together, suggest that this place has welcomed any supplicants in the last decade or so.

PC actions here gain:

➥ Recover 1 wound, 1 stress, and 1 fatigue

Festival Grounds

A broad square of churned mud and dirt, beaten flat by many feet. The festival grounds are ringed about by gaily-coloured tents, crammed full of wares and merchants, long low benches and barrels of ale. The grounds are thronged with happy people, celebrating the festival.

The all-pervasive festival atmosphere grants a fortune die ☐ to all Fellowship checks.

Forest Glade

Sunlight filtered through green leaves dapples the forest floor. The trees give way, here, to an open grassy space studded with stones and low scrub. The air is still, and the forest is quiet…

The distance from one edge of the Forest Glade to the other is long. Any characters further than long range are obscured by the trees and are not visible

Forge

This simple building is full of the tools and products of the smith's trade. Chisels, hammers, and tongs hang from the walls. Jars full of nails lie on shelves. The forge itself lies cold, and a half-completed sword blade lies resting on the anvil.

The Forge is full of Improvised Weapons – any character may snatch one up as a manoeuvre. Improvised Weapons from the Forge have +1 Damage Rating. Physical actions here gain:

☼ You strike your head or shin on something heavy and metal. Suffer 1 fatigue and gain the Staggered condition for 2 rounds

Fortified Entrance

A tall wall of heavy grey stone surrounds this gate, with crenellations atop it to protect the guards. It would take an army to take it by storm.

Guards upon the gate gain a fortune die ☐ to all attacks or checks that target characters not on the battlements. They also gain +2 defence

Hidden Shrine

The shrine is almost an afterthought to the quiet, still, and peaceful surroundings here. It's easy to imagine that the shrine was built by men, but that this place was made holy by the gods long before that…

When you rest here, you regain 1 more stress and fatigue than you would otherwise.

PC actions here gain: ➔ Recover 1 stress and 1 fatigue

Marketstrasse

Stalls covered by brightly-colored awnings line the street on either side, crowding into the thoroughfare with their wares. The street is crooked and narrow, thanks to the stalls, with two- or three-story half-timbered buildings. The upper floors loom together, jettied to be larger than the ground floor, crowding out into the street. Everywhere is the hustle, bustle, and almighty din of the market crowd.

During market hours, the Marketstrasse is crowded. All characters here are considered engaged with multiple noncombatant NPCs at all times. Stealth (Ag) checks gain ☐

Merchant's Wagon

Resembling a tiny, stunted house on large wooden wheels, the merchant's wagon is festooned with brightly coloured paint and fluttering banners.

The merchant's wagon requires a **Hard (3d) Strength check** to move it within close range. To move it any faster than that, more than one person is required to drag the wagon. Properly harnessed draft animals can drag the wagon at speed.

While under way, characters on or within the wagon suffer a misfortune die ■ to all checks unless they have Coordination trained.

Mysterious Cave

The air in the cave is cool and musty. Light penetrates but shallowly into its interior – who knows what secrets lie in its mysterious depths?

All characters in the Mysterious Cave are treated as one step closer to Neutral Stance.

Old Dirt Road

This road has either fallen into disrepair or was never in great condition to begin with. Its deep ruts and frequent potholes and stones make rapid travel by coach or wagon nearly impossible. Still, surrounded on either side by fields and stands of trees, it's the only way to get where you're going…

While traveling along the Old Dirt Road, it takes only 1 manoeuvre to move between medium and long range

River Ferry Station

The wharf at the end of the ferry station is made of old, weathered wood, jutting out into the river. The ferry, gently drifting in the water, is secured to the wharf with a stout rope. There's a heavy iron bell hanging nearby, and off to one side sits a cairn of stones with the antlered skull of a deer resting atop it – a shrine to Taal, or some heretical icon?

Physical checks made while on the wharf gain:

☼ You fall into the water and your turn ends after this action resolves

Rural Settlement

Isolated hamlets like this one are common throughout the Empire, and home to the bulk of its population. A stone or half-timbred palisade and a collection of small houses and ramshackle buildings cluster together for shelter from the perilous darkness of the Old World…

Outsiders suffer two misfortune dice ■■ to all Fellowship checks that target locals. Local stubbornness increases the Willpower of all locals by 1 while within the confines of the settlement

Secret Passageway

The narrow passageway twists and turns, lit dimly by hanging lanterns. Vermin scurry away at your approach, vanishing into small cracks in the ancient stone walls.

The Secret Passageway is cramped. No engagement in the Secret Passageway may be larger than 4 characters. When the 5th character joins an engagement, he chooses 1 character in the engagement, and that character becomes disengaged and is moved out to close range.

Steep Cliff

Below you plummets a steep drop. The ground near the edge of the cliff seems to be crumbling slightly–watch your step!

Physical actions here gain:

☼ You fall off the edge of the cliff and barely catch yourself. It will require an **Average (2d) Athletics (St) check** to climb back up.

☼ ☼ You fall off the edge of the cliff and do not catch yourself…

Toll House

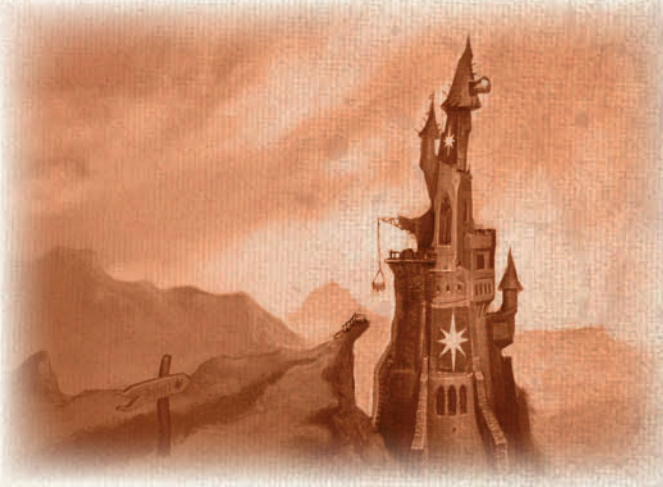
A small house in the typical half-timbered Empire style. The toll house crowds up against the road with a clapboard-shuttered window adjacent to the toll-gate. The gate is a simple wooden barrier, not difficult to remove, but in clear view of the toll house.

The occupant of the toll house gains a fortune die □ to all checks targeting characters in the road. Characters in the road gain a misfortune die ■ to all checks targeting anyone in the toll house (presuming they can even see them!).

Treasure Vault

Thick, cold, stone walls surround this small chamber. Aside from a few carvings around the doorway, the room is unadorned, as if not to detract from the spoils within. And what spoils they are…

The treasure vault is full of treasure. Ask your GM for details.



Wizard's Tower

Tall, haphazard, and crackling with eldritch power, this building looks like it's grown up over the years like a demented mushroom. A wooden turret surmounts the stone remains of the last tower, and chimneys, lightning rods, and instruments jut out the windows and off the roof at odd angles.

Spell Actions gain:

➘ Immediately gain 2 power

When you roll ☼ on checks made here, draw 2 Miscast cards. The GM will choose how to apply the ☼

Wood Elf Cairn

A tall menhir, inscribed with elven runes, marks the centre of this wooded glade. A tumble of stones at the base of the menhir is overgrown with vines and greenery, but a collection of bones and discarded weapons marks this place as the grave of some enemy of the elves…perhaps a mass grave. For just an instant, you think you see a tiny creature looking at you from atop the menhir.

All actions gain:

➘ The spites of the forest decide to aid you! Add ✦✦ to the results pool

☼ The spites of the forest capriciously intervene! Add ✕ to the results pool

Game Master's Guide

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Success & Failure Symbols

Success: Each success rolled counts toward accomplishing the task. If the net result of the check includes at least 1 success, the task succeeds.

Righteous Success: This counts as a success, and has a small plus sign next to the hammer icon for identification. In addition to its function as a success, the player rolls an additional die of the same type that generated the righteous success. Any results from the additional die are added to the results pool.

Challenge: Each challenge symbol cancels one success in the results pool. If there are more challenge symbols than success symbols, the task is too challenging for the character to resolve; the task automatically fails.

Blank: The blank sides of a die do not add any symbols to the task resolution. It neither aids nor hinders the task.

Fortune & Misfortune Symbols

Bane: Banes fuel negative side effects. They represent the flaws and imperfections with a task resolution. It is possible to succeed at a task and still trigger a bane effect. Banes and boons cancel each other out—if there are an equal number of both rolled, no bane or boon effects will be triggered.

Boon: Boons fuel beneficial side effects. They represent the advantages and perks that may arise during task resolution. It is possible to fail at a task and still trigger a boon effect. Banes and boons cancel each other out—if there are an equal number of both rolled, no bane or boon effects will be triggered.

Rare Outcome Symbols

Chaos Star: The Chaos Star has the potential to trigger serious negative side effects. A Chaos Star triggers effects denoted by a Chaos Star. If there are no eligible effects to trigger, the Chaos Star counts as a bane. In some situations, one or more Chaos Stars may inspire the GM to narrate dire circumstances based on some of the "worst case scenario" outcomes for the task generating the Chaos Stars.

Delay: If at least one hourglass symbol appears in the results pool, the action causes a delay. During encounter mode, after the action is resolved, the GM has the option to either place two recharge counters on one of the rolling character's action cards, or move the topmost token for the delayed character on the initiative track down one space in initiative order. During story mode, the GM may determine the action takes longer to resolve than expected.

Exertion: The task was more taxing than expected. If at least one exertion symbol appears in the results pool, the character performing the check suffers 1 stress (if it was a mental task) or 1 fatigue (if it was a physical task).

Sigmar's Comet: Sigmar's Comet has the potential to trigger powerful positive side effects. The active player may choose to have a Sigmar's Comet result count as a success symbol or a boon symbol. Alternatively, a Sigmar's Comet can trigger an effect denoted by a Sigmar's Comet symbol.

Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay Campaign Log

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+ Places Visited
+ Enemies Made
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+ Unsolved Mysteries

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Upcoming Elements:

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+ Items / Artefacts
+ Regions / Geography
+ Enemies & Adversaries
+ Moral Choices
+ Impending Mysteries

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Game Master's Guide™

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