

WARSTONE



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Elves

This issue of *Warpstone* started out as an Elf special. This never came to fruition but a number of articles did emerge. In the meantime however, the *Defenders of the Forest* (www.liberfanatica.net/Elf_Project.html) sourcebook was published. *Warpstone* is proud to present a number of new articles from the authors of *Defenders of the Forest*. We hope these encourage you to check it out if you have not already done so.

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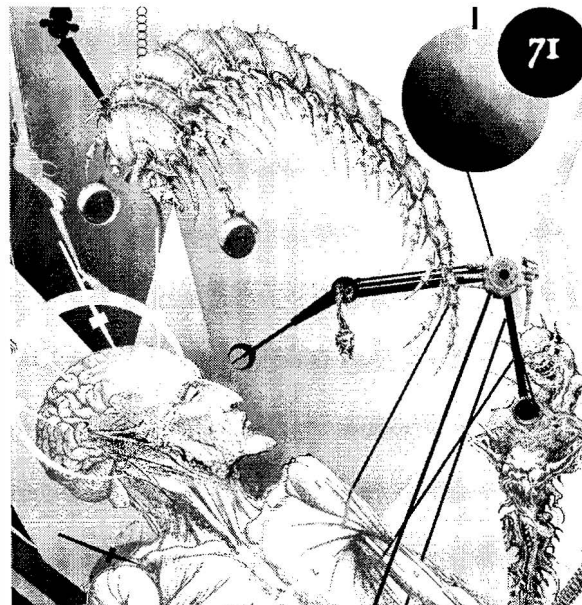
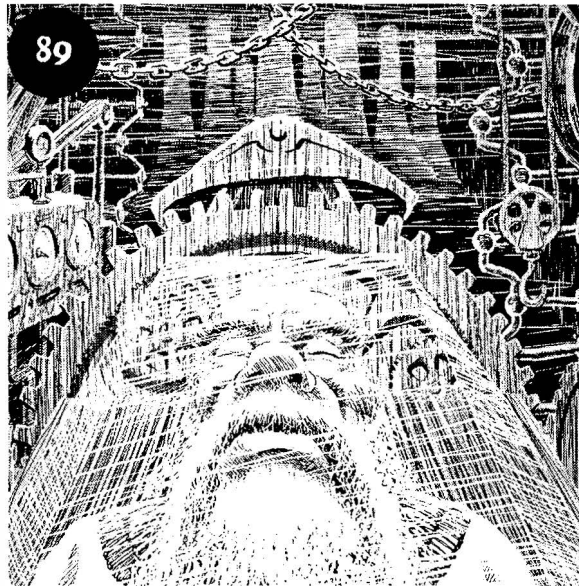
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EDITORIAL ONE

BY JOHN FOODY

It has been a long time coming but welcome to the final issue of *Warpstone*. Aside from the matter of FiG and Games Workshop telling *Warpstone* to cease and desist, it feels like it is the right time to end. It has been a great journey. There are a few indulgences in this issue to mark our passing so I hope you will forgive us. So, to start us off I thought I would list a few things I would like to see for WFRP in the future:

A Well Supported Game

Since the last issue the third edition of Warhammer FRP has come and gone leaving a large product line behind. (This issue was largely finished before the end of WFRP3 was announced.) I enjoyed the WFRP3 games I have played, and liked how it dealt with certain aspects of roleplaying, but it was not a game I wanted to play regularly. Whatever form a new edition takes it needs to be properly supported and encouraged to grow. I hope that fan support for WFRP continues while we wait for the new edition.

Less Strife Among Fans

Recently on the Strike-to-Stun WFRP forums, a poster asked how players of the three editions of WFRP could be brought together. To my mind, the simple answer is the Warhammer background. Even within different editions players develop and play a wide range of games. Each year at the now defunct Timcon (long live Wincon) I saw how the background could be twisted and abused but remain recognisably Warhammer. Arguing that there is only one version of the truth only serves to alienate possible players. *Warpstone* has generally pushed, although not exclusively, a certain style of WFRP but as with any RPG writing the material is there to inspire and to plunder.

Publishers and Fans Working Together

The involvement of WFRP fans is essential to the success of the game. Since WFRP1 fans have been instrumental in keeping the game alive and building the world. I would like to see more positive interaction between Games Workshop, the publisher and the fans. Too often it has felt that fans and publishers have not been working for the same goals.

Nearly the End...

So, *Warpstone* is nearly done but the final issue is over twice the size of any previous issue. I hope you will find something in these pages for you to enjoy and to contribute towards your game of WFRP; whatever shape it takes.

THE COVER

BY STEVEN PUNTER

The painting is a homage to John Keane's very first cover for *Warpstone* Issue 1. I still remember clearly the first time I saw the magazine and knew I wanted to be involved. In that picture there were two characters, a Dwarf and a Man, crawling through tunnels with something peering at them from the shadows as the dwarf picked up a *Warpstone* token. Well in this one although there is a source of light that might be suggestive of the man – that is all; the dwarf is alone, or actually that is the problem. He knows upon picking up the token what to expect... Cue the "They're behind me aren't they" moment...

FROM THEN TO NOW

by John Keane

All good things come to an end and I trust that all reading this will agree that *Warpstone* has in fact been a good thing. If you'll indulge me, I'll take a trip down memory lane...

Many years have passed since John Foody came to me and told me that he was going to create a fanzine for Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay. We knew each other from school, where we used to do a bit of role play (good old D&D). A few years later when our paths crossed again John invited me to join his role playing group. Many a fine Sunday was to be spent with us all insulting each other and doing a bit of gaming along the way. We played many games over the years, but WFRP overshadowed all by far.

John had remembered that I'd been okay at knocking out the odd picture here and there at school, so asked if I'd help by doing some pictures for the new fanzine. I must admit that at the time I don't even think I knew what a fanzine was! His idea sounded brilliant and would give me a chance to do something that I always loved to do, but had pretty much stopped doing after I left school. The first issue was... okay, but we immediately saw that it could be much better. It looked like many fanzines that were about at the time; basically like someone had put it together in their bedroom; photocopied it on A4, folded the sheets and stapled it together - which is pretty accurate!

Issue two was on much better quality paper, again A5 in size but now had a glossy cover (it looked awesome!) – particularly with the addition of new artist Steve Punter. I too felt the need to raise my game, seeing the excellent work that Steve was supplying. Issue three pushed past the A5 size boundaries and came out in full A4, glossy cover, more and better artwork and more fans wanting to contribute to what was fast becoming a popular resource for the dedicated WFRP following who had been left to their own devices for too long.

The fanzine continued in this vein; changing, evolving, mutating you might say, until its current and final issue. John's dedication and enthusiasm has been outstanding, whilst I hate to admit, I did not have as much time for *Warpstone*. Time moves on, life and responsibilities take over and priorities change – our lives mutate and not everything can be fitted in. I loved being involved in *Warpstone*, editing, page design, some writing (just couldn't manage to make the time to write that big article!) and of course the art. If I take nothing else away from the experience, I will at least take a profound gratitude that *Warpstone* helped me to focus and develop my art – I'm no DaVinci but the change from issue one to now has, I hope, been noticeable.

However, no amount of dedication or aesthetics would have kept the fanzine alive this long if the underlying content had not been interesting, intelligent, creative and thought-provoking. The fanzine has been successful firstly because it was underpinned by an excellent RPG that had enough interest and detail to keep you hooked and left enough gaps for individuals to fill with the creativity of their own imaginings. Secondly, and I think more importantly, it has been a success due to the multitude of talented people who contributed their time, effort, creativity and incredible imaginations to flesh out the Old World in a way that it always deserved.

Well, I think that's enough from me. Many thanks to everyone who has contributed over the years (whether it ended up in print or not) and to everyone who supported us through the years by buying the fanzine. And finally to you Mr Foody, thanks for getting me involved all those years ago!

IN AN ADVANCED STATE OF PUBLICATION

by Martin Oliver

I remember the announcement that Games Workshop would bring out a role playing game based on Warhammer. I remember the excitement amongst my friends. I had no idea that, over 25 years later, it would still be an influence on my life.

That first edition was a landmark. This game stood out in all sorts of ways. There were the illustrations – crazy, stunning illustrations, some of which were never explained. There was a sinister adventure, where the characters didn't become heroes, because they were manipulated and deceived instead. And instead of levels, there was an intriguing array of careers. Crazy careers, like the Giant Slayer. Incredibly prosaic careers, like Muleskinners. Pointless careers, like Hypnotists. In Dungeons and Dragons, which dominated role playing at the time, progress was linear; the only interesting way to develop your character was to get more powerful. In WFRP, the really interesting challenge was to play a diseased beggar with only one leg, and still try to save the world.

Warpstone came along at the perfect time for me. Steve Punter and I had been toying with the idea of starting a fanzine ourselves when we saw an advert for issue one of *Warpstone*. The relief I had seeing that first issue was huge, not least because we could stop trying to come up with a title for our own rag and, instead, throw our lot in with people who would actually get around to producing something. Getting involved led me, in turn, to working with Hogshead, and the end of a personal joke that had run for years. I seem to remember *Realms of Sorcery* had been promised before the first edition even came out; it was always “in an advanced state of publication”, a phrase my friends and I started using for anything we were never actually going to finish. For me, editing Ken Rolston's manuscript was a chance to put that particular demon to rest.

Meanwhile, like that diseased, one-legged beggar, *Warpstone* kept going, while giants were slain. Hogshead, Flame, Black Industries... *Warpstone* outlasted them. Maybe it had more Fate Points. Maybe it had Luck. More importantly, it had John Foody. Carrying this takes real dedication, and carrying it for a decade and a half – Very Resilient.

Here's to all those who've carried *Warpstone* through the years, who've kept the magic alive. You have my thanks.

Etc. (The Return of)

And so they appeared together at the border; the rag tag group and their followers. The tale of the later journey is untold for it was declared, righteously, self indulgent. But it no longer mattered for self indulgence was part of the spirit of the fanzine they held true. Most of them anyway. When it suited. Or when they thought of it. And certainly not on Tuesdays. Or Wednesday afternoon when in Talabheim. Usually. Behind them all stood the Empire. Ahead of each lay their path. For some it would cross back and forth across the border. For some they would never return. Behind them came the son of the beast. Few truly understood or cared to the power of this incarnation. Still it hunted them and cared not that they once fed and nurtured it. One of the group, older fatter, greyer and with less organs than he started out with pulled his coat tight. “Well then that's it. I'm off. It's been an honour.” And he walked into the fog and was gone. The others waited a few moments, nodded a farewell and then too were gone. Only one remained. The scribe. He took out the small shovel and dug a hole at the back of the small roadside shrine. Within he placed the body of the small dog that had once been vicious. He stroked its head one last time and was glad he was alone to say goodbye. Next to its small, sad body he placed the thirty pamphlets bound in cheap leather. He hoped they would one day be found and understood. He thought not, but still...

A FEW NOTES ON FAN WRITING

by Robin Low

Final issue and I'm really sad, but fan writing does and will go on without *Warpstone*. This seems like a good time to talk about fan writing.

People, Places, Plots: these are things I want to read about. I should add Events, Notions and Objects, but it loses the memorable alliteration. These are the most important elements of any RPG. They provide GMs with focus and inspiration for adventures. If they are interesting or mysterious, players want to actively engage and learn more about them.

It's an obvious cliché, but to be a writer you have to write. Overcoming laziness is my greatest challenge. *Warpstone* provided my motivation; you must find yours. The other challenge is self-doubt about quality and originality. I write, read it back, decide it's rubbish and give up. This sounds bad, but it's better to doubt than assume genius. So, if you write something and hate it, do not delete it. Save it and come back a week or a month later. Often it doesn't seem so bad, and encourages you to write more.

If you don't know where to start, take an idea and write a paragraph out of context. See where it goes. As other ideas occur to you, write headings down, perhaps with a sentence here and a paragraph there. These headings show you how to build the rest of the article, reminding you what else you need to cover. As you write, you will see links between sections, prompting more writing and revision, helping to build cohesion. It is essential to regularly go back and reread what you've written, from beginning to end, even if you only have headings and notes. It encourages self-editing, helps you understand the structure of your article, and helps you revise to improve flow. It also makes you reevaluate ideas and often inspires new ones. Take your time; you don't have a deadline.

When you reread and revise, look at every sentence and ask yourself, ‘Where's the scenario seed here?’ A scenario in every sentence is impractical, but it's a vital question to ask. You want GMs to read at least every paragraph and think, ‘Hey, I can build an adventure from that.’ And if it doesn't provide a scenario seed, see if it can provide descriptive flavour and atmosphere, a sense of place or character, something that brings life to the setting. The change of a few words is often all it takes.

Be original. This isn't easy, but you have to think beyond the obvious hooks and ideas we've seen so often before. Remember, you want readers to encounter ideas they wouldn't have thought of themselves, so if you're stuck with a cliché, see if you can subvert it. This is why it's important to take your time; you won't have all your good ideas at once. When you have them, develop them; one idea leads to another, if you think about it.

Finally, a message to fans: please, talk to fan writers more. *Warpstone* and *Liber Fanatica* have been blessed with support and praise, but all fan writers need comment and discussion. It's ego-boosting when an article is popular, but it's much more useful for a writer to know why it is popular. Similarly, give us the negative criticism, too, but make it constructive and informative. Feedback and discussion about what is good and what doesn't work is essential, especially if you want to encourage fan writers to keep writing and improve their writing. We also want to know how you used our articles: what worked, what failed, what you changed. Seeing an article in print or a PDF is a joy, but a fan writer's reward comes from learning that other fans used it in a great game. Thanks for your support; it is appreciated.

CAUGHT IN THE WARPSTONE WEB

by Steve Moss

I've really enjoyed helping out with *Warpstone* magazine. I joined around issue 20 and have helped the team with proofreading and acted as the webmaster for warpstone.org. I've also contributed product reviews and a short story. I bought my first copy of *Warpstone* at the Spiel convention in Essen and was hooked from page 1 of issue 10. *Warpstone* oozed atmosphere and it was great to see the WFRP world being explored and expanded.

For many years, *Warpstone* has been an important, independent resource for WFRP. GMs and players alike have been offered a wide range of articles, interviews, scenarios and short stories. It has always been a quality magazine made by fans, for the fans. It has grown from a thin fanzine, into the substantial magazine you hold in your hands today. Not only has the page count increased, but the quality of the articles and artwork has improved over the years. *Warpstone* has been a useful support for WFRP GMs since the 1990s and many of the scenarios are as good as those found in professional publications.

I'm sad that *Warpstone* is stopping print publication and reading issue 30 will be bitter-sweet for me. However, *Warpstone* leaves behind a very fine legacy. It has been one of the stalwart WFRP publications and has offered a major contribution to the game and the community, especially during the years without official support. I admire John Foody's dedication to WFRP, and *Warpstone* has been a labour of love for many years. It has been an absolute pleasure to work with him and the rest of the *Warpstone* team. It is a quality project and I am very proud to be involved with *Warpstone*.

Warpstone in Numbers...

17 years **30** issues

1768 pages **1,700,000** words

In Memoriam

So. Farewell then
Warpstone magazine.

The independent
magazine for Warhammer
Fantasy Roleplay.

That was your strapline.

But Keith's mum said
you were too realistic
for real roleplayers.

E. J. Thribb (44 ½)

The Joy of Fanzines

by Clive Oldfield

Shortly after we started roleplaying a friend and I visited the only store in town that catered to the likes of us. Well, it didn't really cater to the likes of us, it catered to, it seemed to me at the time, fat hairy bikers and other vague adults who liked to purchase comics, horror masks, crystals, and black printed T-shirts. I didn't know what that was all about at the time (and I still don't, I'm glad to say), but there was a small section of the shop set aside for roleplaying stuff.

Being 12 and having spent over half a year's pocket money on the AD&D core books we weren't really the sort of big spenders who could fork out for something like the TSR D3 module, *Vault of the Drow* (I eventually managed to borrow a copy and got my mum to photo copy it at work). So we had to make do with a smaller purchase.

We found a couple of cheap magazines that covered D&D but also did a load of roleplaying stuff we'd never really heard of. My friend grabbed an impressive A4 full-colour-covered magazine called *White Dwarf*. I went for *Dragonlords*, a couple of A5 bundles of roughly folded photocopied sheets with cover illustrations that looked like they had been tossed off during double maths, a presentation which made my mum's furtive coffee-break go at D3 look positively professional. I recall they cost about 45p each. If only I had kept hold of those; they go for up to a fiver on ebay, these days! (As an aside, one of the contributors to early *Dragonlords* was Marc Gascoigne who went to GW and turned up again as the head of Black Industries overseeing WFRP2.)

I'm sure I didn't understand much of it at the time (there were lots of in-jokes from books I still haven't read), and I have long since lost my *Dragonlords* collection (more than one is a collection, right?) but I do recall reading them cover to cover, several times. Having roleplaying supplied by enthusiastic amateurs, just like me, instead of through establishment mega-corporations like TSR was a new experience. It was as if the *Dragonlords* were in the room, roleplaying with us, instead of pronouncing from on high, in distant Geneva (or wherever).

So that is the spirit of *Warpstone*. Although this organ's production values have always been high, it is a direct descendent of those cobbled-together efforts that reflected the enthusiasm and excitement of the early days of roleplaying. That attitude, the sheer enjoyment of the game, comes to me through the pages of *Warpstone* and that is essentially why I (although late to this party) was drawn to it and wished to contribute to it in the first place.

So, my advice, if you want full enjoyment from these new-fangled, full-colour, heavily-illustrated, luxuriantly-produced, roleplaying products: get hold of a mechanical typewriter, and re-write the stuff sideways on A4, photocopy it, photocopy it again, and then fold the sheets up (don't worry if you haven't got the pagination quite right). Make sure the folds aren't quite straight or going through the middle of the pages. Then staple it all together (make sure one of the staples is bent) and put 45p in a charity box, somewhere.

Supporting material for
Warpstone 30 can be found at

www.warpstone.org

DEFENDERS OF THE FOREST

Dare you enter the woods?

An essential guide to the Wood Elves giving you everything you ever wanted to know about the Asrai and more...

Defenders of the Forest will immerse you in Wood Elf culture, magic and religion. With detailed descriptions of the woodland realms Athel Loren and the Laurëlorë plus an introductory adventure and numerous adventure seeds.

With eight new careers, three new monsters and guidelines for playing Wood Elf characters players will have everything they need to adventure with this mysterious race.



Available from
www.liberfanatica.net/Elf_Project.html

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“It is good to have an end to journey toward; but it is the journey that matters, in the end”

Ursula K. LeGuin

ABBREVIATIONS

A	Number of Attacks	GW	Games Workshop	SH	Sigmar's Heirs
A/C/E	Aggression/Cunning/Expertise	IC	Imperial Calendar	ST	Strength (WFRP3)
Ag	Agility	Int	Intelligence	SW	Specialist Weapon
AP	Armour Points	IP	Insanity Points	T	Toughness (WFRP1, WFRP2)
BI	Black Industries	M	Movement	TB	Toughness Bonus
BL	Black Library	Mag	Magic	TiT	Terror in Talabheim
BS	Ballistic Skill	M:SdtR	Marienburg: Sold Down the River	TO	Toughness (WFRP3)
C	Conservative	NPC	Non-player character	ToC	Tome of Corruption
CI	Cool	OWA	Old World Armoury	ToS	Tome of Salvation
CN	Casting Number	OWB	Old World Bestiary	TTT	The Thousand Thrones
CotHR	Children of the Horned Rat	PC	Player Character	W	Wounds
DotF	Defenders of the Forest	Pg	Page	WFB	Warhammer Fantasy Battle
Fel	Fellowship	R	Reckless	WFRP	Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay
FFG	Fantasy Flight Games	RoS	Realm of Sorcery (WFRP1)	WFRP1	Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay (WFRP1)
FP	Fate Points	RoS2	Realm of Sorcery (WFRP2)	WFRP2	Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay (WFRP2)
gc	Gold Crown	RPG	Role Playing Game	WFRP3	Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay (WFRP3)
GM	Games Master	S	Strength (WFRP1, WFRP2)	WP	Will Power
Gu	Guilder (Marienburg Coinage)	SB	Strength Bonus	WS	Weapon Skill

REVIEWS

WARHAMMER FANTASY ROLEPLAY (WFRP3) CORE SET REVIEW

PUBLISHED BY FFG

REVIEWED BY ROB HARPER



This is the first release for the third edition of WFRP. The new publishers, FFG, have taken the game in a new, controversial with some, direction. This new version is a boxed game supplied with a wide range of components needed to play the game.

This review gives an overview of the WFRP3 Core Set, focusing on the rule system. It is not a comparison of previous editions nor does it review the basic setting concept of the grim and doomed Old World. I have owned and read earlier edition rules, but not played in those systems, and I admit to having liked the setting more than rules.

What Comes in the Box?

The Core Set supports a GM and three players with four soft-cover books, custom dice, cards used in play, character sheet pads, punch-out stand-ups for characters and creatures, and other punch outs such as tracking chits.

A *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay Rulebook* provides rules and background on the Old World and the Empire. The *Tome of Adventure* gives GM-information and advice about the system, a bestiary of 33 monster and NPC types, and an introductory adventure.

Two other books outline magic generally and the Colleges of Magic (*Tome of Mysteries*) and similarly faith in the Old World and the Empire's official cults (*Tome of Blessings*). These books give rules and support for playing characters seeking to become Bright Wizards, Grey Wizards or Celestial Wizards or priests of Morr, Shallya or Sigmar. Later supplements cover other colleges and cults.

The background information focuses on the Empire's history and its region of the world with a light touch on other matters. General information on other nations, faiths and types of magic is provided. Attention is given to outlining the various menaces facing the Old World from greenskins to beastmen to Chaos cults, undead and of course the Enemy Within. It appears consistent with earlier edition material. The year is 2521 according to the introductory adventure.

The books read well. After two years, pages are coming out of the binding which is fair enough. Some of the art is familiar from earlier editions but it still looks good. There has been a widespread verdict that the rules content is poorly laid out which creates confusion on some points as noted below. FFG have tried to fix problems with online Errata/FAQs. The game is designed to be played without looking things up all the time so this is not as great a flaw as it might have been. In the end, it is an annoyance but one that does not last.

One copy of this Core Set is sufficient to run a game. In large part this is because of the system's card-based approach. Information about a Player Character's current career is on the Career Card. Information about basic or unique Actions is on Action Cards. If a wizard suffers a miscast, the consequences are determined by the card randomly pulled from the Miscast Deck. These cards and components are generally of good quality and hold up in play.

By taking full advantage of the use of physical components to support play, FFG has created a system that plays without having to frequently reference rules text, roll on tables or make notes of things. Most looking up is to find equipment prices and how hard items are to locate in markets when Player Characters go shopping.

The Core Box has three copies of all the basic actions that every Player Character gets for free (e.g., everyone knows how to make a basic *Melee Attack* or how to *Assess the Situation* and try to catch their breath or gather wits). A *Perform a Stunt* basic action is the game designers saying, "Hey! It's a table top RPG

with a live GM, your imagination is the limit.”

The design choice of making cards an integral part of the system works successfully but has consequences.

Firstly, this approach contributes to the game’s physical size and price point. This is not a game easily lugged around all day in a backpack.

Secondly, supporting added players with official product requires buying other supplements. A fourth set of basic action cards would have been all that was needed to make the base set support four players and the marginal improvement in value of the Core Set would have been well worth it. The decision not to include those extra cards was a shame.

Another consequence of the game’s physical aspect is that other than three copies of basic actions, the Core Set has one copy of every career, special action or special talent card used by Players to access the information on these character features. Some see this as a flaw if two Players both want the same Action Card (e.g. both want the Honeyed Words support action to use in social situations). However, it can also be looked on as a way to ensure that each Player Character is unique and to stop system breakage by stacking up any particularly sweet actions (just how many honeyed words should one encounter see, really).

In my opinion these trade-offs do not significantly detract from the overall value of the game. On this front, I admit to enjoying visual and tactile elements of the table top. As a GM, seeing the physical components representing various states and conditions on the table is also more useful to me than having them written down on character sheets.

Character Creation and Advancement

The Core Set gives players choices of four races: Reiklander human, Karak Azgaraz dwarf, high elf of Ulthuan or wood elf of Athel Loren. There are 30 careers. A minority of careers in the Core Set have special entry requirements and many have racial restrictions. As with previous editions of Warhammer, a career is a phase in a character’s life and changes in career are a fundamental aspect of character advancement.

Simply pulling four Career Cards at random (which is one method of generating starting careers instead of choosing) and reading the background text on them can give a good sense of the Old World and how particular Player Characters fit into it.

A point system is then used to finish building a character from there.

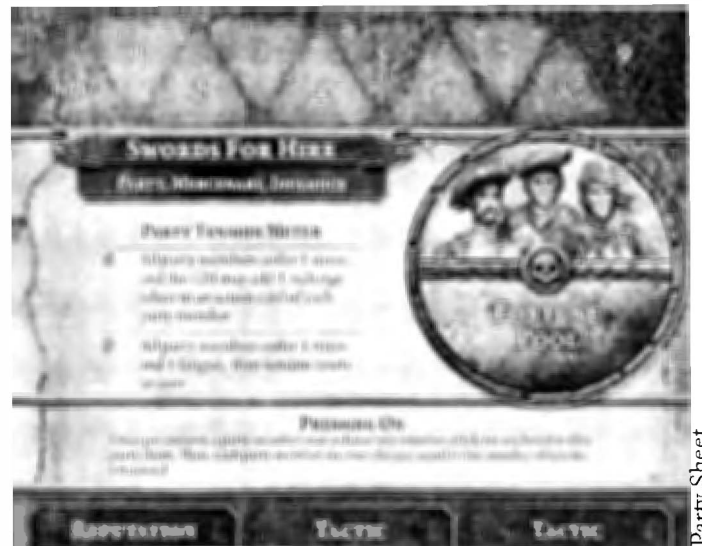
The final step of character creation is for players to collectively choose a Party Card. There are five cards to choose from each representing a different sort of group of heroes (e.g. Gang of Thugs, Brash Young Fools, Servants of Justice). Each of these then gives its own special ability to the Player Characters. Party Cards are also a way to share individual characters’ Talents (special abilities and tricks Player Characters gain). For example, if one Player Character has a Talent giving a bonus on Observation skill checks, this Talent card can be placed on the Party Card to show it is being shared. The Player then roleplays how that character makes comrades more observant.



The Party Card also has a tension meter to track party tension with negative results when trigger points are reached.

The Party Card is an excellent idea: a group identity and a mechanism to share abilities is sensible and facilitates good roleplaying. In practice, the tension meter triggers do not feel like they actually reflect inter-character tension and not being in front of individual players the Party Card’s text is often overlooked. The good news is whether officially dropped or just “forgotten”, issues with the Party Card do not affect the core system nor harm play – it simply does not live up to its promise.

Every session of play, every player earns an experience point. These are spent on advancements that cost from one to six



experience points. The accrual and expenditure of these experience points on different careers is tracked on career sheets that double as “current character sheets” as characters can move back and forth among careers.

Players can focus on making small improvements every session of play (e.g., learn another action, train a skill, get a talent) or save up for more expensive improvements (e.g., raise an ability or learn a skill not associated with the current career). This approach feels more natural in play than level-based systems with less frequent across-the-board improvements.

Overall, the character creation system is fairly typical of RPGs. The character creation and advancement options in the Core Set will support months of play before the range of careers and choices fall short and expansions are needed. The limits of the Core Set will be hit fastest by a player who focuses on advancing a magic-using character and dabbling in nothing else (22 sessions to top out). Those who enjoy the journey of various careers may find the Core Set going 30 or more sessions.

It's a Grim World

Critical Wounds and *Insanities* help define the grim and perilous nature of being a Player Character in the Old World.

When a hero falls unconscious from Wound damage in melee (exceeding their Wound Threshold), is subjected to particularly effective attacks such as those for which beastmen are known, or simply suffers a bad mishap, one of their normal (easily recovered) Wounds becomes a random one of 70 *Critical Wounds*. The deck of wound cards gives the variety of rolling on a table but eliminates rolling and having to write down outcomes. The wound card shows the narrative description of the critical wound, its mechanical effect and its Severity (how hard it is to heal) and is kept by the Player until it is healed.

It is a lucky fight that ends with no heroes suffering *Critical Wounds*, but dying isn't all that easy. A character with more unhealed *Critical Wounds* than their Toughness characteristic and falling unconscious from exceeding Wound Threshold will die. This is unlikely as long as heroes know when to stop being heroic and unconscious comrades aren't left to the mercy of zombie mobs.

Aside from Wounds, heroes accumulate *Fatigue* (physical weariness) and *Stress* (mental weariness) from overexerting themselves, witnessing terrifying events or situations such as being interrogated by a witch hunter or sneaking into a Garden of Morr. Both are recovered more quickly than ordinary Wounds, but too much of either begins to impair effectiveness (physical or mental as appropriate). Accruing too much of either in relation to the attributes of Toughness or Willpower causes a character to pass out.

More significantly, when *Stress* exceeds the Willpower characteristic, characters are at risk of acquiring mental quirks represented by *Insanity Cards*. These are handled similarly to *Critical Wounds*, drawn from their own deck, though their effects are more mental than physical. *Insanities* are the second threat to a character's long term existence. If a character ever

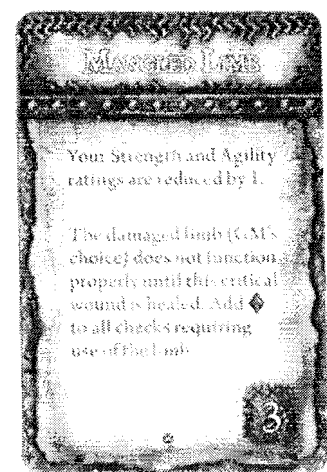
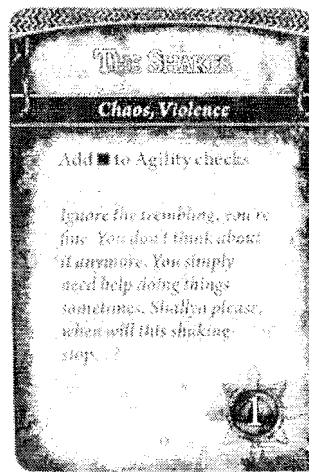
has more *insanities* than Willpower, they become truly and permanently mad and are removed from play.

Compared to *Critical Wounds*, *Insanities* are less likely to arise but more likely to linger as the recovery checks to get over *Insanities* are made monthly and must be accrued whereas *Critical Wounds* are checked nightly and one can be recovered each night if a hero is stout and fortunate (very fortunate to recover one a night).

The *Fatigue* and *Stress* mechanic allows non-combat challenges to be gamed in a way producing tension and risk. A ghost story in which terrifying events happen more often than life threatening ones can be a real risk to sanity.

However, if a scenario or GM does not pay particular attention to *Fatigue* and *Stress*, they may start to feel pointless. To avoid them becoming an irrelevant distraction, encounters need to hit on them particularly hard at times just as combat encounters need to threaten wounds (e.g. a gruelling physical challenge in a storm or a terrifying Garden of Morr with one startling event after another).

Overall, WFRP3 is not a lethal system rather it is a system that will give a character aches and pains with the odd mental compulsion. If heroes are always starting new adventures all feeling bright eyed and bushy tailed, the GM isn't using the system to its potential.



Insanity Card (L) & Wound Card (R)

The Core Resolution Mechanic

The system resolves actions by testing Characteristic Abilities, Skills, with the aid of Talents, superior gear and other modifiers against a difficulty level which may also have negative modifiers added to it.

Where this system differs from WFRP2 is that instead of a difficulty level being a number and Players rolling percentile or other numbered dice with possible bonuses their roll to meet or beat the number, WFRP3 uses custom dice with their own symbols for success (♣), challenge (⊗), boon (♠), bane (♣), righteous success (♠), delay (⊗), exertion (♠), Sigmar's Comet of great success (♠) and the Chaos Star of exceptional mishap (♠). Good dice have different arrays and frequencies of the good results and bad dice have different arrays of the harmful results (an example of this in play is given below).



Adjusting to this non-numerical system is one the game's more challenging aspects. However, though a novel system, the barrier to understanding it in practice is low.



This resolution system is WFRP3's strongest element for its flexible and varied outcomes and the way it keeps even high level play interesting (having seen it work with characters played over 50 sessions).

A numerical system sees bonuses and penalties cancel out as numbers are added and subtracted. WFRP3 does not cancel out "before roll" bonuses and penalties (all the good and bad dice go into the pool). As a consequence a foe being exposed but also in poor lighting isn't a wash; the average may be so but the roll has extremes of success and failure possible.

Most RPG systems support degrees of success or failure. WFRP3 offers this range and adds "helpful or harmful side consequences independent of whether the central task succeeded or failed" and the possibility of unexpected setbacks even on a success. Some results do not cancel each other out but stand even if they are contrasting (e.g. the dwarf slayer may split the beastman's skull, trip and damage their axe all at the same time). This variety makes action resolution more interesting and reduces the number of whiffy (nothing changes) outcomes dice yield.

These positive features require FFG's custom dice. A consequence is that it requires sharing the dice among Players or buying additional dice sets so that while one Player is rolling the next can be assembling a dice pool.

An example: Roadwarden Deiter has stopped off in a Stromdorf watering hole. Under the guise of sharing a drink, Deiter wants to get information about that missing merchant. The GM rules this will be resolved with a test to see if he holds his liquor. The GM calls for an Average (2 purple Challenge Dice) Resilience skill (Toughness characteristic) test. Deiter will roll blue Ability Dice (the workhorse of the good dice pool) equal to his Toughness ability (let's say 4, a reasonable starting Toughness for a physically active hero). If he has trained the Resilience skill, he can add a yellow Expertise die (this is the champion of good dice, the only die giving the sought after  or ). If he has skill specialization "imbibe Alcohol", he can add a moderately helpful white Fortune die (the positive mirror of a Misfortune die). The GM also adds a Black Misfortune die to represent some resistance by locals to chat an outsider. The Player takes up all these dice together (2 purple, 4 blue, one yellow, one white, one black).



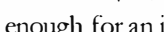
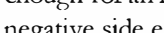
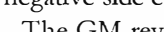
Heroes have *stances*, either a tendency to be cautious or careful, risking delays in order to assure success or to be reckless and eager, running more risk of failure to try for exceptional success. Moving into a stance allows swapping blue dice out for green (Conservative) or red (Reckless) dice. Most Action cards for special attacks, blessings, spells and social actions are also somewhat different in their green and red sides (as every Action card has two sides showing what it means to do it cautiously or recklessly). The green and red dice have different distributions of possible outcomes and their own special risk outcomes: green can yield the  of delay and red the  of






Fatigue or Stress. Deiter's character is in default neutral stance but favours Conservative generally so can choose to say he is one step into that stance and swap one blue die for a green one when making the roll.

The Player narrates how he is nursing his drinks as he chats in the bar and buys rounds for others to show his conservative approach. If he roleplays this well the GM may throw another white Fortune die into the pool. So 2 purple, 4 blue, one yellow, one black two white becomes: 2 purple, 3 blue, 1 green, one yellow, one black, two white.

Deiter needs to generate more successes on good dice than failures on bad dice to succeed. In this case, the GM has explained that means getting the *Intoxicated* condition and not learning anything useful.

Deiter's Player has choices if he does not like the looks of the dice pool before rolling. Every session of play he gets three Fate Points that he can trade in for white Fortune Dice on any roll, and as a human Reiklander he is *Favoured by Fate* for another two Fortune Dice on a roll once per session. He decides not to spend any of these though, saving them for direr situations.

Suppose the dice roll result is . These net to . The player has succeeded, and  is usually enough for an improved success. However,  means a slightly negative side effect and  means time passes.

The GM reveals useful information that the merchant was here and someone recalls the inn he was at () there is even a witness that the merchant got into an argument with two large men (). Then the GM narrates that Deiter suffers a point of Fatigue from the long evening (), and he is in the tavern until late, when it is mostly empty (), just him and the two large men strikingly similar to the ones the witness described (which is where the Chaos Star  has come in).

The non-cancellation of several types of negative result mean that even at high levels the dice still produce tension when rolled and the world is still grim.



All Those Cards

There are 30 Condition Cards to represent baneful and beneficial conditions heroes may be under from being *Inspired* by a Sigmarite's rhetoric to being *Frightened* of the Chaos Champion.

Another type of card is the Location Card. This has a sepa

tone artwork on one side showing a location image (e.g. Wood Elf Cairn or Crumbling Ruins) and on the other side is text description and a mechanical significance. This may mean a particular benefit Players can elect to trigger when rolling a Sigmar's Comet or a particular harm triggered when rolling a Chaos Star, or other modifiers to various actions such as trying to rest in a Shallyan Hospice.

The Location Cards are the easiest for a GM to homebrew. Unlike the randomizing cards for Wounds, Insanities and Miscasts, there is no concern for uniformity of appearance. This is just as well as Location Cards are a poorly executed component physically. Mechanically, they are a brilliant approach to representing everything from back alleys to Shallyan Hospices and work very well in the narrative-not-grid map style of WFRP. However, although the sepia tone artwork is thematic it does not stand out well on the table top – players need to pick them up and look at them to tell what they are really showing and saying, which interrupts the flow and immersion of play.

The Other Fiddly Bits

The Core Set includes cardboard punchouts to use as tracking tokens. These come in a few colours and shapes. They are used to track things such as Stress and Fatigue as well as the *recharge* of Actions. One of the key features characters and monsters have are their special signature actions. The game balances more and less effective actions and also ensures variety by giving them varying levels of recharge time. This is tracked by putting tokens on the Action Card.

From a design perspective, this approach works well and avoids paper record keeping. A GM may mourn the sudden passing of a monster to that amazing trick bow shot but takes solace in the fact it has six tracking tokens on it (meaning 6 turns before it can be used again).

However, the shape and colour distinctions of the counters are not optimal. A game table is a hurley burley place with dice flying and arms moving. Cardboard chits that look much like each other can easily get mixed up and moved around. FFG could have fixed this using more distinctive chits from its existing products. For example, its Arkham Horror line already has “blood and brain” themed chits that would have been more distinctive Fatigue and Stress trackers. A gaming group can make this sort of swap itself or buy more distinctive gaming stones or other trackers. As with the Location Cards, this is not a problem of the rules but rather a component that is not optimal and can be replaced without harming the core of the system.

Narrative Play

WFRP3 simulates time and space abstractly. Positioning uses an abstract system. It is serviceable but not outstanding. It can be used flexibly to represent combat in close quarters or racing across a city. The time structure of WFRP is also flexible meaning that a round can be seconds in a fight or days in a cross country journey

An Episode of Three Acts structure for the passage of time gets a fair amount of attention in the *Tome of Adventure*. This is trickier to get a handle on than the positioning system and one of the places the editing is not always helpful. It is important to get it right as this structure ties into rules about rest and recovery. The editing also leaves open the question of repeatedly (or not) using healing actions such as first aid skill or blessings. The core rules leave open to rules lawyers the question of whether repetitive healing is possible (it's not).

This cinematic approach to time works well once a GM and group come to grips with it. The system is not simulating reality; it is simulating fiction.

Starting Adventure

The Core Set includes an introductory adventure in the GM's *Tome of Adventure*. In keeping with the tradition of Warhammer, this is not a dungeon rather it is a situation the heroes are brought into which they are free to explore. There is something going on in a noble's mansion and the Player Characters are retained to look into it.

Different groups have played this adventure with outcomes ranging from leaving a dead noble and a manor in flames to taking on the noble as a patron.

The adventure can be daunting for a GM to look at. Being a situation in a location rather than a set of rooms and monsters, it takes some confidence to run it precisely because it has flexibility in it. This adventure is not for a first time GM.

However, someone familiar with GMing won't find it challenging even if new to the system. It is a fun situation with room for charm, sneaking, eventually some blade work, and if all fails, running real fast.

The game's approach of information on cards in front of you eases entry into play. The custom dice are the biggest thing to get used to and they are picked up quickly in practice.

Summing up

The WFRP3 Core Box is a hefty box that gives you a very different game system for a beloved setting. Its engine runs well once you get it set up. The less well executed parts of the engine don't impair its operation and can either be ignored or replaced with little difficulty.

Players familiar with the Old World will find it not much changed from when last they saw it, though no Storm of Chaos has raged. It would be rather much like visiting Europe after the Euro came in. New mechanics but you'll be fighting cultists and beastmen, worrying about witch hunters and count yourself lucky to have all your tender bits still attached after you've been through a few careers (that's the Old World, not Europe).

For all the cool moves and abilities Player Characters can gain, this is not a power fantasy game. Yes it is a game of characters developing new and better abilities, but also accumulating aches, pains and mental quirks in a grim, perilous world bound for ruin. It is Warhammer, the muddy, grim and doomed Old World - best fantasy setting ever.

BLACK FIRE PASS

PUBLISHED BY FFG

REVIEWED BY GLORIAN UNDERHILL



Black Fire Pass (BFP) is WFRP3's guide to Dwarfs and is split into two parts. Fluff and rules are in the Book of Grudges and the adventures are in the book named Black Fire Pass. The box itself is on the same quality level as most of FFG's Warhammer boxes. The art is from Draaken and just great. Unlike *Gathering Storm*, for example, the box itself cannot

be used to store the product for the game.

The Book of Grudges has a solid section concerning the background of Dwarfs in the Warhammer World and especially the Dwarfs of Karak Azgaraz. It is a relatively young hold in the Grey Mountains near the Reikland. Compared to the Dwarven-bible of WFRP1, *Stone and Steel*, there is little new information regarding the dwarven race. There is new background concerning the burial rites of the Dwarfs and lots of stories, grudges, key persons and Clans from Karak Azgaraz. The political situation is described along with a list of the current council of elders. This includes a short description of their appearance, motivation and trappings. There are also small adventure hooks hidden in the text.

An important omission is that the book is missing a plan of the Karak and the surrounding area and there are no pictures of the hold's front or halls. The description of the hold itself describes the different levels, but most of the levels get only 200 words each. No specific locations, descriptions of shops, special taverns or persons of note are included to help adventure in the Karak. WFRP2's Karak Azgal is more use for adventuring in a dwarven city.

BFP includes some new basic and advanced careers. Included is the advanced Dragonslayer career, as well as the intermediate and advanced Ironbreaker careers. For the Runesmith and Engineer there are the basic and intermediate versions and new rules included plus new dwarven careers like the Grudgekeeper, Miner and Thane.

For the Engineer there are the rules on how to include small devices which support different skill checks. They can upgrade these items with different dice which are added to the corresponding skill. These rules blend perfectly into the dice system. Inventions cost money and experience, so there is nothing for free.

The Runesmith and Engineer get some special action cards

which are very dwarf-like. Also there are some really cool slayer actions. The highlights are the drunken action cards which can only be used when the player is intoxicated. All of these cards support a very good dwarven point of view of the Old World and most of them made me smile. To get drunk in the first place there are some social actions which will help your PC to get the most out of his beer.

The concept of temporary runes from WFRP1 and WFRP2 has been dropped and the rules for striking permanent runes onto items are solid. Learning a rune costs one Talent and the striking costs money and time. Also the Dwarf needs a superior item to bear a rune. So runic items will not be so common in a group and cannot be mass produced, making every item precious. Every rune has a rune card and can be used as an attachment to an item. When combining them the cards stay as a rule reference.

Additionally, the crafting rules describe how to produce ordinary and superior items.

The Adventure Book is separated into two parts. The first has a list of one-shot scenarios, several of which incorporate mini rules. For example, in the fight in an old mine or the defence of a dwarven tower there is a progress marker showing how stable the mine is or how long the defenders of the tower can hold up the defence. This includes a lot of examples for the Chaos Star result in the described location. Also included is a description of the Black Fire Pass, its history and importance for the Empire. There is a map of the pass in the book but this map is not very useful. Most of the locations are not described and the map can hardly be used for any adventure or story reasons.

The second part is the adventure "Harrower of Thanes" using Korden's Hammer from the "An Eye for an Eye" scenario in the core box. The adventurers travel from Karak Azgaraz to the Black Fire Pass, meet new people, fight their enemies and encounter a beast of the past. The adventure is quite fun, although do not expect some sinister plot to unravel. It is a travel quest with a small dungeon at the end plus a big end boss. Nothing really grand but the location is very dwarf-like. Also the ending can lead to several follow up adventures which can cause some concern for Karak Azgaraz and the PCs. The adventure is a good setup for the players travelling to the Black Fire Pass. The adventure has a map for the dungeon but not for the journey. That is not a real problem as the PCs are led there by an NPC.

For playing a dwarven character in WFRP3 this box is a must. The Advanced careers and Action Cards for the Slayer and Ironbreaker are much needed. The dwarven specific careers are fun and are good career options for a Dwarf in a basic career from the core rules. Rules-wise the Engineer and Runesmith are fun and well balanced and the action cards are quite nice. Tacticians will have fun finding the best Rune or Invention combination.

If you want just fluff and background then there are better options on the market. On the same level of information is the *Dwarf Army Book* of this or the last two Editions of

the tabletop game. Even better are *Grudgelore* from the Black Library or *Stone and Steel* from WFRP1, but both books are hard to come by these days. With this box you have the basic setup of background for your Dwarf and the opportunity to give players of Dwarf PCs some more options to make their careers more dwarf-like. Missing though is some high level text on how to play a Dwarf or tips on how to incorporate one. The customisation is done by the careers and the actions and talents which can be taken by any dwarven PC. A more detailed description of Karak Azgaraz would have been nice.

If you like Dwarfs and Warhammer then you should buy this box. This was my first WFRP3 purchase and encouraged me to learn the game and found a party with only Dwarf PCs.

So grab your beer, your ancestor's axe and up into battle lad, or as one Slayer card says on its green side, "What are you doing in conservative stance pansy!?"

THE GATHERING STORM

PUBLISHED BY FFG

REVIEWED BY ROB HARPER



The Gathering Storm is the first WFRP3 adventure box. It comprises a soft cover campaign book 80 pages long that has been held up to use pretty well in my case. 22 pages detail the town of Stromdorf and its NPCs, while the rest gives the overarching plot, three adventures, short interludes between them and the climactic encounter. A

variety of cards and components are included. The regional map included shows GM-only information but FFG has a player-suitable map for free download on its website¹.

The components include a few additions to the base game that can be used beyond this adventure. For example there are weather related conditions *Under the Weather* and *Thunderstruck*. Additional insanity, critical wound, location and talent cards are also included. Most of the thirteen item cards are specific to this adventure.

The artwork is a mix of original and re-used pieces but all are suitable, although sometimes the art on creature stand-ups is not very distinguishable. There are editing errors but they are fairly minor (e.g. is it Father Grabbe or Brother Grabbe?).

The campaign features unique NPCs and named monsters (arrogant overconfident Celestial Wizards, drunken duelists, tragic yet monstrous figures). Otherwise, most of the foes are slight variations of ones in the core rules but it is nice to see Squigs appear with their Bounce and Chomp attack.

The campaign premise is that investigating a missing merchant's fate leads the PCs to the rainy town of Stromdorf. Different options are presented for the lead-in so groups can be noble or larcenous as they wish. This investigation leads into the first adventure. The merchant mystery is solved early on and the ongoing issues are new ones, so if an investigation heavy campaign was desired this is not it. Just as the campaign is a tour of adversaries it is a tour of different kinds of conflicts.

It is a nice introduction to the new edition that each adventure stars a different classical Old World foe. Two of the three adventures can be handled flexibly in whatever approach players try out while having a default through-line if players are not creative. It is easy to read the through-line as a railroading device but it is really only one way things could unfold. One of the three adventures is more of the tone that bad guys kick down the door and heroes try to survive. The adventures all have non-combat elements and social interaction. In particular each features memorable NPCs aside from foes. These include a simple-minded dung carrier, an heroic little girl and an amorous farmer's daughter.

There is time pressure which ensures the grim and perilous nature of the Old World is felt. Under the healing rules of WFRP3, critical wounds are frequently healed after a week or two of rest (since recovery checks are made every night). This means they often do not carry over between adventures but heroes could easily be carrying them over in this campaign as taking a week or more to rest is not an option. This is a positive feature to me.

There are a few weaker elements in the campaign and adventures. First, the master villain is obvious. The text does offer alternatives so if a GM does a little work they can pick a less obvious mastermind.

Second, the campaign uses *Storm Card* custom made progress tracks to provide the worsening weather's effects. The cards are excellent in creating a visible reminder of the time pressure on heroes as well as providing interesting effects. However, they make the *Conservative* stance riskier than the *Reckless* stance throughout the entire campaign. GMs may want to keep an eye out to compensate for that in order to avoid making players with *Conservative*-stance characters feel unduly persecuted.

The third issue may not annoy every table. The adventures are linked by the heroes' search for a magical artefact's fragments. This plot coupon approach can be tired if one has been roleplaying a long time. All mysteries are really of this sort but its better if the pieces to fit together are not literally that, but an assortment of items, information, relationships that fit once acquired to give results. In this case they are five pieces of a stone, each represented by an item card (with another for the assembled stone). The adventure offers some variety in obstacles and locations where these are found but groups may find the process repetitive.

The town of Stromdorf is one of the campaign's memorable features and has material to inspire further adventures or elaborate what is in this campaign. Stromdorf is in the Reikland's Ubersreik region, making it part of the region that

¹From WFRP support page at www.fantasyflightgames.com

FFG started developing with the adventure in the core rules boxed set and continues to elaborate in the adventure boxed set *Edge of Night*.

If a group really enjoys Stromdorf, the suggested end of the adventure is problematic as the heroes will not be coming back, succeed or fail. The parade of places you cannot go back to is something of a Warhammer tradition, but a GM who wants to keep using the location will have to revise the ending.

Overall, *The Gathering Storm* is a good strong start to support WFRP3 with just a few rough spots. Although it can be played in a very linear fashion, heroes get several sorts of encounter in different environments, facing different foes and encountering interesting figures.

THE WFRP COMPANION

PUBLISHED BY BLACK INDUSTRIES
REVIEWED BY CHRIS HUDSON



The *WFRP Companion* released by Black Industries in November 2006 is in a typical format, soft-back of 128 pages. The nautical cover (in keeping with much of the tone of the book) is to my eye evocative and one of the better WFRP2 covers.

The book itself is divided into thirteen stand-alone chapters plus an unnumbered introductory chapter. Each chapter is

given over to a different author, some of whose names will be familiar to those of us who frequent online WFRP forums.

The introductory chapter contains a rough guide to the Warhammer world, taking us to far flung corners of the map via the cardinal points of a compass. This could have been much better if only it had had a little more room to develop (a common problem with this style of book). We get a paragraph for each location and whilst some are full of good ideas others are clichéd. It does however contain completely new background for some of the more exotic locations.

The first chapter proper details travelling carnivals, freak-shows and the like, with background followed by descriptions of four travelling shows which could easily be dropped into ongoing campaigns. A decent chapter with some good food for thought.

Next we find ourselves travelling the rivers of the Empire. This is one of the best chapters in the book, in which the people and practices of the river folk are discussed. It includes game stats for playing a Strigany character, a few new careers, expanded swimming rules, and information about several varieties of river craft. A huge plus for this chapter is a detailed

(albeit small) map of the river systems and canals of the Empire and Reikland in particular.

Chapter 3 concerns itself with trade and all things mercantile. It contains background on guilds, brokers and the like, along with a trade zone map of the Empire. It also comes with a new set of trading rules, far superior to those in WFRP1. Not of use to everybody but it covers its subject in reasonable depth and the rules seem to work well. The availability matrix for mercantile goods is a great idea, and it would be nice to see others matrices for different regions.

The fourth chapter introduces astrology, and whilst the initial information regarding the various star signs is mildly interesting, the details of how people born in different star signs, act in various circumstances, jars with me, and in my opinion will only be of use to a few. A shame as this chapter could have been so much more if it had delved into astronomy as well.

Medicine is the subject of the next chapter, and it does it very well, providing a history and expanding the rules for treatment, surgery, etc. Overall a well written and very useful chapter given WFRP's penchant for deadly combat.

Chapter 6 is one which will divide opinion more than most, being optional rules for social interaction, much of which boils down to roll-playing as opposed to roleplaying. It appears to me to be aimed at newcomers to the hobby, and as such seems superfluous in this book and would have been better placed as a download on the official site. The latter part of this chapter deals with trials and court scenes and offers a little more to the experienced GM in terms of ideas and usefulness.

Chapters 7 and 8 are descriptions of the port cities of Sartosa and Tobaró respectively. I enjoyed these chapters but they feel far too similar to one another and a lack of space prevents the authors from exploring these cities properly, leaving us with what is often a clichéd glimpse of what could have been. The space could have been better utilised by giving it over to just one city, allowing us a more detailed look at one of these interesting locations.

We delve in to the background of a masonic style cult in the next chapter which provides us with a readymade behind the scenes foe, and a number of ideas for using it in your game. However I do not think it will appeal to many as it is not a particularly inspired cult and therefore a bit of a waste of a chapter.

In the next chapter we go pub-crawling as we are guided around four different taverns with accompanying descriptions and details of some patrons of note. It is always useful to have these sorts of pre-created locations to hand for dropping into campaigns or on the fly sessions and this is the sort of chapter I want to see in compendium books like this one.

Next is a tour of the Imperial Gunnery School in Nuln, full of flavour and interesting background, this is another good chapter, which covers its subject in depth, including some notes on tuition and training.

Gugnir's powder shop is the subject of the penultimate chapter and sadly seems more like filler than any of the other

chapters. There is nothing bad here, being a description of a gunpowder shop and its owner, but the article lacks both depth (being only four pages) and useful ideas; much more useful material could have filled this space.

The thirteenth and final chapter is a small bestiary, done in the familiar format of the *Old World Bestiary*, with a common view, and scholar's eye description of the beastie in question followed by the game stats. Many of these new creatures have a nautical/riverine feel such as the Behemoth, Mermaid and Triton whilst others are old friends re-vamped - it is good to see the ever useful Doppelganger return. Like them or loathe them this chapter is well written and informative.

The WFRP Companion is an ideal format for trying out new talent, although it does lead to a disjointed book with some chapters standing head and shoulders above others. Overall, it is a good addition to your collection and well worth picking up.

FORGES OF NULN

PUBLISHED BY BLACK INDUSTRIES

REVIEWED BY DAN WRAY



The final part of the *Paths of the Damned* campaign sees the climax of an all too familiar style 'quest' but it is one that benefits from being set in the distinctive environment of the Warhammer World. Like its predecessors, it is partly a sourcebook in addition to an adventure. The city of Nuln is given a much fuller description than it has in past WFRP products, and one that

tallies with former presentations in *The Oldenhaller Contract* and the Bill King novel, *Skavenslayer*. A map of the city is included which, whilst a bit bland and lacking in detail, is nonetheless welcome. The material manages to give the city a distinctive identity but it must be said that it's all a bit thin. It is an outline of the city rather than a fully developed background.

The adventure takes up the bulk of the 96 pages and like previous instalments, it sets a brisk pace. It's also similar to its predecessors in being a distinct adventure 'type;' in this case a timed scenario in which the PCs deal with challenges according to a pre-determined schedule. There are numerous sub-plots that keep the players guessing and there is plenty of incident to maintain interest. The adventure gives players the opportunity to mix with a broad range of Nulner society, whether nobles or non-entities, combining a central investigative plot with a series of set-piece incidents that are immediately recognisable as strong WFRP motifs. Attention to the details of the setting is also similarly encouraging. Tightly wound

to present the maximum amount of story within the space provided, this is well designed and essentially self-contained. All the necessary parts to play this module are here and it builds to an appropriately chaotic finale very economically.

However, this is also one of the scenario's weaknesses and has been a continuing issue with the campaign. Too much has been squeezed into too little space. Endeavouring to be both sourcebook and adventure has led to both elements suffering. Whilst the set-pieces were well chosen, many have not been given the room that would have enabled them to blossom. This module is certainly not as desperate for more support as *Spires of Altdorf* is, or indeed *Terror in Talabheim*, but it really could have benefited from being fleshed out more.

The plot also suffers from a number of unfortunate dramatic clichés, one of which also featured in the immediately preceding module! A key location, one of two that will be very familiar to players of *The Oldenhaller Contract*, is put to multiple uses in a way that is extremely ill-conceived. If feeling generous, one might hypothesise that this could have been due to a lack of space in which to detail a separate location, but the result is far from satisfactory. There is also a danger that one aspect of the plot could lead to an extremely repetitive dungeon crawl.

The adventure does allow for the PCs to apprehend the primary adversary before the end and employs some back up strategies to ensure that the narrative remains suitably climactic. This is certainly a worthy goal but sadly these stratagems are not incorporated into the plot at all convincingly. Whilst the physical environment of the Old World is distinctively conjured there are problems with the tone. For example, one of the NPCs having the epithet 'the third' makes them sound more like American bourgeoisie than Renaissance nobility. The motifs of the setting are extremely well chosen but the details often just don't 'feel' quite right. The grim(e)ness of the tone is often overstated as if someone had been told to present a caricature of WFRP, and the author seems to fear the concept of happy endings. This hints at a trend that has been noticeable in a number of products as if the authors were trying too hard to get the right ambiance. If every NPC is doomed to a miserable fate then the players' involvement becomes pointless and the game world will be predictable when it should be one of contrast, pathos and drama.

So does this mean that *Forges of Nuln* brings the *Paths of the Damned* campaign to a sorry end? That would not be entirely fair as the adventure has many strong elements and it is certainly a fast, playable module that can be enjoyable.

In the final analysis the adventure does have the right ingredients but something important is still missing from the flavour. Too many NPCs are shallow ciphers that come across as part of a narrative machine rather than a story; the material just doesn't induce emotional investment on the players' part. The investigations are geared towards preventing the unfolding events and not into finding out why they are happening. As a result the main adversary's history and development is largely for the GM's benefit and the players will probably have little inkling what it was all about. This is unsatisfying and WFRP

really ought to be more than a series of gruesome events that the PCs stumble into. There is a tale about the process of corruption that is the true heart of this story but, sadly, it is one that the PCs are never given the chance to get to grips with. This lack of pathos is a significant drawback, but one that is partially compensated for as the foremost sub-plot (which would probably make for a far more interesting central storyline) is considerably more engaging.

Overall it is not a bad effort. Occasionally blundering into cliché, the missteps in tone are merely details and the module does have a reasonably good sense of what the Old World is all about. There are considerably more essential books in the WFRP range but this is still a perfectly serviceable adventure and it has enough decent material in it to be worth owning. The campaign it is part of is rather prosaic and the repetition of plot devices suggests that it was poorly planned. The module could certainly be played as a stand-alone adventure, though admittedly the text's suggestions for going about this are rather uninspiring.

Some of the sequences in *Forges of Nuln* have the potential to be both memorable and enjoyable. Whilst it does have some drawbacks it is by no means a terrible product and if it had developed the supporting material more and had a bit more heart it could have been really rather good.

THE GATHERING DARKNESS CAMPAIGN (PART 1 - THE RISING SHADOW AND PART 2 - DARK DESPAIR)

BY ALFRED NUNEZ JR

REVIEWED BY DARK KNIGHT OF THE TWISTED MOON

The Rising Shadow and *Dark Despair* form the first two parts of *The Gathering Darkness* campaign¹, for which Pfeildorf is a sourcebook¹. The campaign is written for WFRP1, but there is a conversion document for WFRP2. Some modifications to the adventure may be required to take into consideration the background changes between the two editions.

*The Rising Shadow*² is a 73 page document comprising background and the scenario. The six-and-a-half pages of introduction focus on the geography, politics, economics and people of Sudenland, where the campaign is set, and the Lectorial Enclave of Eppiswald, where the events of this part of the campaign take place. Whilst the background on Sudenland as a whole is interesting and takes into consideration the effects of *The Empire in Flames/The Empire at War* there is nothing unexpected here and some of this information is duplicated from the Pfeildorf sourcebook.

The Eppiswald on the other hand is not only central to this part of the campaign, but also forms an interesting community that could be used independently by GMs in their own games. The Eppiswald itself is the remnant of a large and ancient forest, whilst the Lectorial Enclave of Eppiswald is a Sigmarite religious holding ruled by the absentee Lector of Sudenland. This political construct includes an abbey, the forest, a town

of the same name and four villages; interestingly, the enclave is directly owned by the Lector, rather than the Cult of Sigmar, having been bequeathed to his ancestors by the rulers of Pfeildorf, and will be passed on to his descendants, contrary to the edict that Lectors of Sigmar must be celibate, a point that is acknowledged and elucidated in the text.

Appendix 1 consists of eleven pages of new Gods and Goddesses and their cults; these include the Tilean deities **D**eanosus, **P**anasia and **P**haestos briefly mentioned in Pfeildorf. Here, however, they are developed much more deeply in the same way as the Religion and Beliefs chapter of the WFRP1 Rulebook, including several new spells/prayers for the priests of each. Also included here are **L**acothea, a local river goddess of the Söll and the Halfling deity, **T**he Pilgrim.

Appendix 2 provides a list of forty poisonous and medicinal plants of The Empire. I believe most, if not all, of these have been presented elsewhere previously, here usefully listed according to the terrain in which they might be found. Appendix 3 is a comprehensive gazetteer of Sudenland.

Part 2: *Dark Despair* comprises 84 pages of which two-thirds form the adventure. The first of these comprises three pages on monastic life, some of which is taken from Natascha Chrobok's unofficial sourcebook³. I am unsure as to the value of this, on the one hand it provides a useful overview of the subject, and there is no harm in duplicating work in a freely available publication such as this; on the other, since it is revised from a much larger treatise on the subject, it is very generic, and I feel a more specific study on the subject as it relates to this campaign, or even this adventure, would have been more useful.

Appendix 2 provides seven pages on the settlements and inns of the Lower River Söll from Eppiswald to Pfeildorf. Each entry provides only a sketch of the community, but will prove useful for GMs either to present consistent information on the hoof, or as a skeleton to flesh out.

Both parts also include maps and handouts for the adventures, and *The Gathering Darkness* provides eight pre-generated characters. The maps are detailed, the area ones being in Mad Alfred's usual, handwritten, style (which I like).

The campaign opens with the PCs already in the town of Eppiswald. Here they are hired by an agent of the Cult of Verena to investigate the disappearance of a professor from the University of Nuln. This professor disappeared over two years ago, and Eppiswald is one of the areas where he may have been conducting his fieldwork. The PCs set off to investigate, dealing with the local Sigmarite authorities and heading into the haunted forest. The evidence in this section is well presented, with a number of handouts drawing the PCs deeper into the search. However, the final escape may become repetitive and tedious quite quickly.

The campaign continues in *Dark Despair* as the PCs emerge from the forest back into the Lectorial Enclave. At this stage, some players will feel aggrieved at having their character's movements curtailed by the plot, but it does give them a chance to uncover further information and they will be on their way to Pfeildorf by boat soon enough. A timeline is given for this

¹Reviewed *Warstone* 29

²Available from Strike-to-Stun (www.strike-to-stun.net/downloads) and Mad Alfred's site (www.madalfred.durcore.net/Scenarios.html)

part of the adventure, showing how far the PCs will travel each day. Unfortunately, this timeline does not include the actions of the NPCs, which I feel was a missed opportunity.

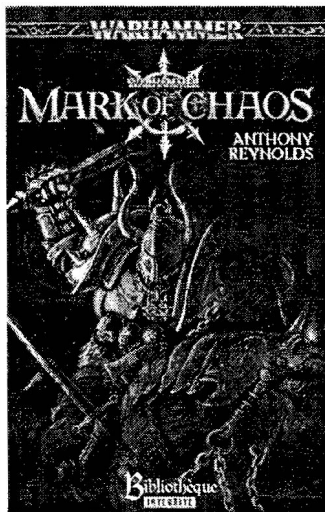
The final section of this part of the campaign begins as the PCs arrive in Pfeildorf. From here, things spiral out of control for them. This is probably the most open and complex part of the campaign to date, with various different factions involved, and working against one another as well as interacting in different ways with the PCs. MadAlfred provides a sidebar with details of all the major NPCs and this, along with suitable preparatory work, will greatly aid GMs in running this section.

So far *The Gathering Darkness* campaign is very promising, especially as it has so far largely avoided the normal fantasy (and even WFRP) bad guys, to focus on intra-human political and religious machinations.

MARKS OF CHAOS

PUBLISHED BY BLACK LIBRARY

REVIEWED BY STUART KERRIGAN



Marks of Chaos is a print-on-demand book available from the Black Library containing James Wallis's two "Chaos Hunter" Warhammer novels, *Mark of Damnation* and *Mark of Heresy*, as well as two short stories, *No Rest for the Wicked* and *A Night Too Long*.

The novels deal with Karl Hoche, a soldier whose discovery of Chaos within his regiment leads to him joining a secret branch of the Reiksguard called the Untersuchung (a group which investigates Chaos cults, and

alluded to in *Apocrypha Now*). From this point on the novel becomes a tense spy-novel, almost a Warhammer version of 24. Various Imperial factions are engaged in petty politicking against one another and are often compromised by Chaos cultists. They are as likely to hinder or try to kill our hero as help.

WFRP references abound in the books. For example, the Oldenhallers and the Purple Hand from *The Enemy Within*, as well as the Ancient Order of Illuminated Readers from *Dying of the Light* make welcome appearances. There are also plenty of new cults like the Cloaked Brotherhood that Wallis weaves into the narrative.

Wallis is a barge-hating man who likes to put characters through the ringer. Hoche is no exception, being doomed to life as a mutant early on. In other Warhammer novels mutation is trivialised an excuse to give the heroes superpowers. Here it is shown in all its horror - Hoche's mutation is rarely a blessing, but always a curse. The quality of Wallis's writing is such that Hoche's struggle against damnation is never trivialised. It takes

most of the first book for him to come to terms with his curse, and to renew his zeal for hunting Chaos from within.

Mark of Damnation sees Hoche revealed as a mutant and a traitor. *Mark of Heresy* has a labyrinthine plot of conspiracies revolving around the Storm of Chaos as Hoche aids Valten and Luthor Huss, ending up as a crucial background player while evading three witch hunters on his trail. We find out what the Purple Hand's plans were during the Storm (and it was not randomly poisoning wells).

Wallis planned two more books to complete Hoche's story. Given Games Workshop seems to be brushing the Storm of Chaos under the carpet perhaps Hoche's tale ends here, but there is some resolution.

The short stories have more of a buddy-cop feel, featuring two harassed Palisade members (Imperial security operatives) based in Altdorf. Grand Duke Bildhofen and the pre-Damnation Untersuchung make an appearance in *No Rest for the Wicked*, while *A Night Too Long* deals with Ultrican extremists.

The two novels are the real highlight of this omnibus which is worth checking out. They are well-written low-fantasy stories steeped in WFRP lore, as you would expect from one of its ambassadors. There are links to WFRP products (*The Enemy Within*, Hogshead publications, and even WFRP2 supplements that would follow these books) that make this worthwhile background material.

THE THOUSAND THRONES

PUBLISHED BY BLACK INDUSTRIES

REVIEWED BY STUART KERRIGAN



The Thousand Thrones is an epic 256 page softback campaign taking PCs from Marienburg to the distant north and is designed to be used with later WFRP2 supplements such as *Tome of Corruption*, *Tome of Salvation*, *Night's Dark Terror* and *Realm of the Ice Queen*.

This is one of the few WFRP2 adventures that embraces the post-Storm of Chaos setting. A child named Karlas, who may be the next incarnation of Sigmar, has come to prominence and raised an army of followers. The PCs must investigate this charismatic individual and his crusade.

In many ways *Thrones* harkens back to Hogshead's *Dying of the Light*. It is written by several authors and each of the nine chapters is a mini-scenario in itself. It begins in Marienburg but sends the PCs away early on. In my opinion it is probably best not played by ultra-lawful characters who would burn a mutant on sight. The PCs face many moral dilemmas and may have their very core beliefs shaken.

The campaign opens assuming the PCs will get involved in events and merely outlines basic hooks to get the PCs involved in the scenario - it is largely left up to the GM to choose and integrate these hooks and to hope the players bite. This is not a scenario GMs can run without substantial prep-work. Significant winging-it may be required, particularly if the characters go off track, and the book freely admits you may need to plug-in additional scenarios. Later GMs may find the information fed to the PCs in the first chapters leads to valid player decisions that prematurely end the campaign.

There is a good mix of investigation and combat in the different chapters. For example, chapter 1 sees the PCs investigating this apparent demi-god in Marienburg. The critical-path of the investigation is very linear. The Marienburg sourcebook (or the substitute information that was on Black Library's defunct website) is an essential resource as only a brief sketch of the city is provided. This is the case with other major locales in *The Thousand Thrones* that have been detailed in other Black Library products (such as Altdorf).

Some of the chapters have a jarring change of pace and often feel tangential to the perceived main plot. Perhaps this is a problem resulting from using many authors. Chapter 2 in particular is guilty of this, and while it could serve as a reasonable (if deadly) stand-alone scenario as part of the campaign the PCs may feel it is an annoying distraction. By contrast chapters 3 and 4 see the obvious main plot kick back into gear. Chapter 3 has a well-written and tense siege where the PCs' actions can mean the difference between life and death. Eventually the PCs catch up with Karl. Intrigue, corruption and treachery abound and the PCs may end up feeling railroaded into joining his faction. This is handled in a way that will once again potentially frustrate players though it does present an interesting roleplaying challenge.

Chapter 4 makes certain assumptions about the PCs' loyalties and their willingness to chase after Karl once more. Chapter 5 sees their investigations leading them to a memorable dungeon-crawl, whilst elements of chapter 6 reuse earlier tropes. The actual titular Thousand Thrones prophecies only finally materialise in chapter 7, and again only if the PCs persevere with chasing what the book openly admits is a red-herring (and thus could serve as a stand-alone scenario). Chapter 8 sees the characters finally able to act on what is going on.

Chapter 9 jarringly switches to a PC-killer dungeon crawl and then the campaign simply peters out. There is no solid 'tea and medals' epilogue as in *Empire in Flames*, it simply feels like they ran out of space. Perhaps they did, the font size is very small and the many handouts, maps and pictures feel crammed in. It would have been better as a series of books, giving the scenario more room to breathe and seeding the plot-threads earlier in the campaign.

Overall *The Thousand Thrones* is a mixed-bag. It is in my opinion the most ambitious WFRP2 scenario and WFRP2's closest answer to *The Enemy Within* but as written it falls short of the mark. An enterprising GM could use it as the basis of a long campaign, or at the least use sections of it in one-off scenarios.

With *Thrones* you will get back what you put in, but it is a lot of work.

THE THOUSAND THRONES EXPANSIONS

PUBLISHED BY LIBER FANATICA
REVIEWED BY STUART KERRIGAN

In what is clearly a labour of love some of the authors involved in producing *The Thousand Thrones* have created downloadable PDFs expanding the campaign. There are currently three documents available; the Campaign Overview - which expands and improves on the whole campaign meta-plot and Expansions 1 and 2. More expansions are planned.

The expansions contain campaign material that was cut due to space reasons, as well as new material designed to improve play. They are weighty documents in their own right (Expansion 2 is 78 pages long).

The expansions can be thought of as a software patch for the released campaign, addressing some of the problems. An introductory scenario called *The Forthcoming Maiden Voyage of the Gilded Drake* allows the players to organically choose the hook in-game that leads into *The Thousand Thrones* chapter 1.

The linearity of the campaign is tackled in the form of optional side-encounters and cameos, along with detailed alternative scenarios. For example at one point if the PCs travel by river rather than by road (which is what the original campaign assumes) the expansions provide an alternative scenario that gets the campaign back on track and gives different clues. Detailed encounter areas (such as lairs for the villains) are provided for the players to stumble upon and explore.

Each expansion gives the GM clues regarding the factions and the Thousand Thrones prophecies to seed throughout the campaign (which was apparently how the campaign was originally intended, rather than the information dump they later get). Expansion 2 for example suggests ways of making the events of the unfairly maligned chapter 2 seem more immediately relevant to the players.

Later expansions will also feature maps and side-encounters for the various cities and towns the campaign visits, along with more side-encounters. This should definitely help if your PCs investigations in, say, Marienburg seem to hit a brick wall.

If you are running the *Thousand Thrones* campaign I would recommend using these expansions. However their size alongside that of the published campaign means GMs must do a lot of work to cross-reference the two. It would be nice when all the expansions are released if a chapter-by-chapter overview of all the expansions is released. They could serve as a grab-box for if and when your group goes off-track in *Thrones* and do an excellent job of fixing problems in the scenario.

Even if you are not planning to run the *Thousand Thrones* campaign it is well worth checking out these supplements as you might find an encounter, a stat block or even entire scenarios you can adapt for use in your own campaign.

RENEGADE CROWNS

PUBLISHED BY BLACK INDUSTRIES

REVIEWED BY CHRIS HUDSON



Renegade Crowns is a sourcebook for the Border Princes, with its petty kingdoms and warring princes. Well, what can I say about this book other than it being a massive disappointment? Oh, and it is presented in the typical BI format with 128 full colour pages. Those expecting a “Guide to the Border Princes” be warned, we receive nothing of the sort.

What we get is a series of tables that simply create a nonsensical geographic area – with rivers that simply end and random deserts sprinkled with numerous ruins populated by all sorts of gribblyies. The tables also allow you to create a Prince to rule over the principality you have created. I understand that some leeway has to be given to your results on these random tables, but what I found in my couple of run-throughs was a constant need to alter the results, making the tables almost completely pointless.

At one point we are told “If the Player Characters are trying to set themselves up as rulers, economic resources are vital” but despite this we really do not get anything in the way of useful guidelines! I have always found when creating an area for an RPG that the map comes quite easily as does coming up with the ruler or big bad guy of said region. It is populating the area with believable inhabitants and habitations that is the hard part and that is where this book should come into play. Unfortunately it fails miserably in that it skims over all (what I consider) to be the important aspects of area generation, such as population numbers, economy guidelines to assist with tax income or expenditure, guilds, religion, military organisations, trade and commerce or agriculture. I appreciate that some of these aspects can lead to a lot of number crunching, but I expect some maths when creating a realistic environment. Speaking of omissions there is not even a brief history or decent (there is a map) map of the Border Princes or a timeline: nothing, nada, zip! I certainly could not find the “detailed system for generating towns, homesteads and villages, and how they relate to the principalities that control the region” mentioned on the back cover!

Other than the aforementioned pointless tables and example of region creation, we get a series of chapters which attempt to provide us with seeds for running a campaign in which the PCs are, or are trying to become a Princeling in the region. These chapters are overly repetitive and provide little food for thought despite their length. The advice for GMs in these

chapters generally seems to boil down to fudge it.

The example Border Princedom that rounds out the book is a fleshed out version of the example region provided earlier in the book. It is one of the better sections of the book although nowhere near good enough to save *Renegade Crowns*. The material does give you a ready-made setting and provides enough morsels for enterprising GMs to get their teeth into. Finally a few appendices finish off the book, mainly to assist with area generation. One is a useful settlement namegenerator covering most of the main human languages.

All in all *Renegade Crowns* is almost certainly the worst product to come out for WFRP2. I was expecting a *Harn Manor* style book for the Warhammer World. What I got was a lesson in how not to draw a fantasy map, and a bunch of half-hearted guides. *Renegade Crowns* feels as though it could have been written in the early 80s and whilst it did give me a brief nostalgia trip if I was to rate it out of 10, it would struggle to get a 1.

CLOCKWORK & CHIVALRY 2ND EDITION

PUBLISHED BY CUBICLE 7

REVIEWED BY ZBIGNIEW GASZCZYK-OZAROWSKI

Clockwork & Chivalry was released in 2010 as an add-on to the *Runequest II* system. When a year later Mongoose Publishing dropped the *Runequest II* licence, *Clockwork & Chivalry* was reissued in a standalone 2nd Edition that contains both the rules and the background.

The game is set in England during the Civil War. Both town and country are torn by ferocious military conflict fought between the Parliamentarians, led by Oliver Cromwell, and the Royalists, led by Prince Rupert, who rules on behalf of the son of the beheaded King Charles I. Parliamentarians and Royalists are not monolithic parties, neither are they the only two political groups player characters can join. Overall, there are twenty-five Factions which represent almost every world view one could think of in the seventeenth century (Anabaptists, Catholics, Presbyterians, Puritans and Deists, to name a few).

The authors have taken full advantage of the background: no later than in the character creation process a player is expected to choose which Faction his character belongs to. The game mechanics offer Righteousness Points as a useful measure of the passion of a character’s belief in his Faction. The higher this value, the more the character is committed to his Faction. Righteousness-based tests are pretty common: they are used to resolve arguments between opposing parties, to gain an undecided audience’s support, or to convert a non-player character to another Faction. Importantly, the authors have ruled that the results of debates between player characters are determined by roleplaying.

The position of a player character in society is also defined by which Social Class he was born into. Whether the character belongs to Peasantry, Townsmen, Middle Class, Gentry or Nobility has a major impact on Profession and the range of available skills he begins the game with. Among the Professions there are those familiar to WFRP players such as

Agitator, Clerk, Craftsman, Farmer, Highwayman, Lord/Lady, Mercenary, Merchant, Soldier or Watchman. However, we also find unusual ones, such as Mechanical Preacher, Member of Parliament and Devil's Horseman. Seventeenth-century English society was highly patriarchal, and it is suggested that some male Professions should be available only to women in disguise.

From a mechanical point of view, the character is described by seven Characteristics and a couple of derived attributes. Starting Skill levels are determined either by a sum of two relevant Characteristics or a doubled Characteristic. A majority of rolls are made with percentage dice: if the result is less than or equal to a given score, the roll is successful. Each character can take advantage of Hero Points which set him apart from the rest of the population. Hero Points work in a similar way to Fate Points in *WFRP*. All in all, the game mechanics resemble *Runequest* or *Call of Cthulhu*.

Characters who want to dabble in magic can choose between Alchemy and Witchcraft. Alchemy is considered a system of knowledge whose scientific foundations were laid by Francis Bacon. The "Father of Modern Alchemy" invented a reliable method of producing the Philosopher's Stone, without which spellcasting and potion brewing is impossible. The rulebook neatly organises the production process into three distinct phases: gathering ingredients, setting up the equipment, and creating the Philosopher's Stone. The Alchemist imbues the stone with magical energy. Once all the magic is used, the stone crumbles to dust. Quite conventionally, Alchemy in *Clockwork & Chivalry 2nd Edition* is based on four elements: fire, air, water and earth. Spells are pretty traditional, too, as they can be mainly utilised in combat and in a limited number of social situations. Alchemy has a long history, so it is favoured by the Royalists.

Witchcraft is more or less what you would expect. A majority of Witches swear their loyalty to Satan and draw their powers from dark magic. These are likely to be shunned by local communities and persecuted by Witch Finders. However, there are some Witches, called Cunning Men or Wise Women, who use their knowledge and spells with good intent and thus have earned local respect. Interestingly, many Witchcraft spells form opposite sides of the same coin. For example, if a Witch can enhance a target's strength, they are capable of enfeebling it as well. Doubtless it promotes roleplaying, as a player is not constrained by the profession itself, but is free to make his character cross the thin line between the good and

the evil. Unlike Alchemists, Witches can cast spells right away (sometimes ingredients are needed) and are only limited by temporary physical Fatigue.

The Clockwork technology certainly livens up the background. A clockwork device is a complicated mechanical structure comprised of gearwheels and springs. Being a novum, the technology is unsurprisingly utilised by the Parliamentarians. Any clockwork device must be wound up to become operable. Once potential mechanical energy stored in elastic parts (e.g. springs) is used up, the clockwork device has to be wound up again. Smaller devices, such as the Rotating Brushes or Bible Page Turners, can be wound with portable keys, whereas bigger ones, such as the Iron Horses (quasi-motorbikes) or Leviathans (machines resembling the *WFB* Empire Steam Tanks), can only

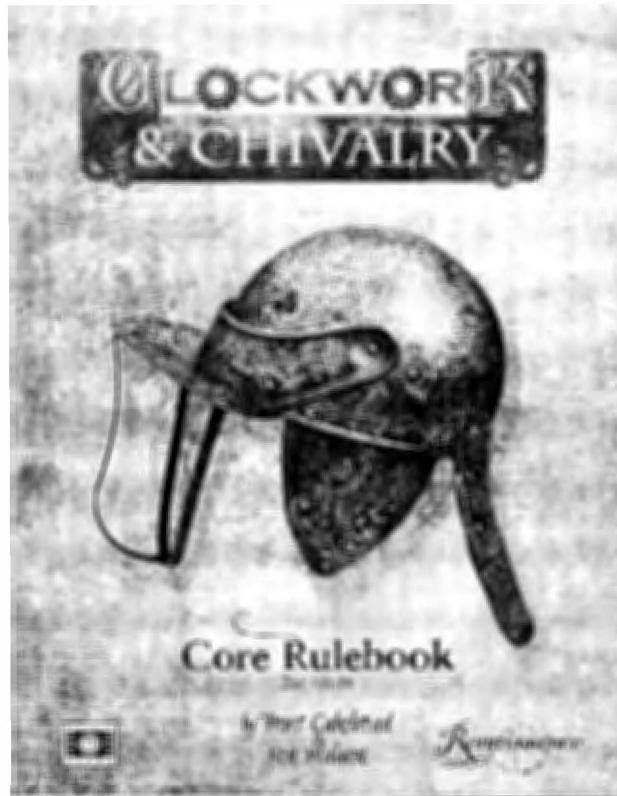
be charged at winding stations, usually converted windmills and watermills. Again, the presence of the Clockwork technology is strongly anchored in the background. For example, seizure of mills by Parliamentarians for military purposes (for use as winding stations) has caused famine, price inflation and social discontent among stalwart Cromwell supporters. The rulebook outlines the process of designing clockwork devices, their construction, repair and reverse engineering.

Each chapter abounds with references to the background. Descriptions of seventeenth-century England, warring Factions and their intrigues, as well as the wealth of language in the text are highly evocative and have a great potential for roleplaying. There are some bits

that obviously lack consistency. For example, on one hand the authors use the old English monetary system (abandoned in 1971), while on the other they have introduced decimal measures of length.

The book is not without its flaws. While the text is clear, the layout is poor, and the art is sparse and of a mixed standard. The index is so general it is almost useless and there is no contents page. However, a reader who is not deterred by this will be rewarded. *Clockwork & Chivalry 2nd Edition* is a breath of fresh air for fantasy gaming. The authors have successfully taken inspiration from English history and peppered the background with fantasy spice.

In my opinion, Peter Cakebread and Ken Walton, the self-labelled Purveyors of Fine Imaginings, have managed to concoct a very delicious roleplaying dish, second only to *WFRP1*.



NORSE TROLLS

BY ROBIN LOW



Common View

"A Troll's a Troll's a Troll. It's a waste o' time thinkin' otherwise."

BRANDEL "THEY DON'T LIKE IT"
UPPEMHEIMER, PIKEMAN

"Dere strange things. I've fought da ones in your forests, and ya, we have da same in our icy mountains in da north. But dere are others: still dangerous and untrustworthy, but not so stupid or angry. Dey make things, like shawls and blankets and pics and even necklaces. Some villages leave out

gifts on certain nights of the year; in da morning da gifts are gone and something is left in return."

ERIKA BERESIN, NORSE MERCENARY

"We were travelling through the forests of the Norscan mountains, when we heard the sound of hammer on anvil, and someone singing a strange song in a language none of us recognised. The voice was almost beautiful, but we still advanced cautiously; we'd already been caught out by cries of a Human baby that turned out to be some sort of lizard. We hid behind trees on the edge of a clearing and spied on the singer who was beating a length of red-glowing metal into a blade. We all thought afterwards that it must have

been some kind of Troll: it had a huge long nose, big ears and small rheumy eyes, and wore a stained leather apron, but it hammered the blade with a strange gentleness. It might even have been singing to the blade it was making. We were all fascinated, but when the creature suddenly paused and sniffed the air with its long, large nose we all decided to run."

PIETER BEAGEL, PROTEGÉ OF CLAUS DER WIN

THE SCHOLAR'S EYE

"If only Pieter and his companions had not run! Clearly, this was no ordinary Troll, if Troll it was. Long have I heard and read rumours of a more civilised branch of that family; perhaps I should say trunk, for surely the vile and twisted creatures we are more familiar with are the branches and offshoots of something better. The Norse Dwarfs are reluctant to speak of these Norse Trolls; perhaps their hatred of Trollkind is too intense for a more objective, analytical assessment of them, or perhaps there is yet another Grudge at the heart of the matter. However, I am certain from all the folklore of the Norsemen that these are beings that can be talked to and even traded with; any doubts and suggestions of untrustworthiness found in those same tales may stem from jealousy or prejudice, but I would not be so hasty to discount them completely."

CLAUS DER WIN, SCHOLAR OF MARIENBURG

"I have in my possession a silver ring with a single pearl set in it; pretty, isn't it? It came from Norsca and I can assure you it was crafted by a Troll. How do I know? Simple: I was the man who bought it at the cost of a prize ram stolen from a Norse settlement. The Norsemen are not people who forgive easily, so unsurprisingly I've never returned, which is a great shame as the ring protects me from the bitterest of blizzards. I only set the fire for cooking or my guests in winter, these days. True: from the day I first slipped it on my finger, my hair has been as white as snow despite my youth and my touch is like ice, but these seem modest costs. Maybe one day I will return to that Troll and see what other trinkets he has made. Perhaps you would travel in my stead? I can assure you, the Troll was a friendly sort, although a trifle pungent."

HENRIK VANENMEYR, EXPLORER

"I will be exceedingly generous and say there are undoubtedly more evil creatures extant in the world, but this does not mean that the Trolls of Norsca can be trusted. At best they are like unscrupulous merchants, at worst like the foulest of witches. They are supreme crafters of half-truths, and even their magical craftworks carry curses as well as boons. And I ask you: who could truly distinguish between a Norse Troll and Troll of Chaos in masquerade?"

MORITZ HAMMERFAN, MISSIONARY PRIEST OF SIGMAR

OUR OWN WORDS

"Come in, come into my cave dear ones and rest a while. The wind and snow are harsh at this time of year and I always keep a good hot stew bubbling and boiling for forest travellers like your noble selves. Here, eat up, eat up. Oh, no charge, no charge; giving this old Troll Wife some company will be payment enough. But... maybe there is something you could do for this old, lonely Troll Wife... it will only take you a few hours out of your way, I am sure..."

Nerrig Spindlenose, Old Troll Wife Of The North Wood

"Now, see... this rock, stone and metal mixed. I found it, and carried it down from the top of Old Frost Fang Peak in a sack on my back. Good metal in it... magic metal. I can melt it and shape it and cool it and forge it. What would you like? A pretty sword? A shiny buckle for your belt? A pendant to hang from a leather cord? Anything I can make with my fire and hammer and rock to beat against... better than those nasty Dwarfs with their grumbling and complaining. They don't like us, the Dwarfs... jealous they are of the lovely things we make. But we don't care; we have many happy customers. No one ever comes back to complain."

IRRIK GREENTONGUE, NORSE TROLL BLACKSMITH

"Many babes I've had. Good Troll Mother I've been. Seven daughters, seven sons, all married off with Trollings of their own. We meet at the gatherings every year in the High Forest to feast an' drink an' sing songs to the gods of the forests an' lakes. Two more Trollings I had, but they were badduns. One was a yellor an' a puker; stamped the bottom out his crib he did. In the end I had my husband carry him into the woods an' leave him wrapped in fresh wolfskin in the den of a whelped she-wolf, taking one of hers in return. Nice wolf, nice wolf. The girl-Troll was all long black curls an' deep, dark eyes like the forest tarn. Horrible, horrible, not all like a proper Troll, so we carried her through a blizzard one night an' left her on a doorstep in return for a milk-cow from the barn an' a sack of winter fodder. My husband carried the cow across his shoulders an' I carried the sack, trudgin' though the snow. Good winter that was. The girl-Troll did well for herself, I hear, spinnin' wool and making warm cloaks for all the young Norsemen. An' not a one of them knows who her real mam is!"

OLD MOTHER LONGEAR, TROLL WIFE

"My pot is large and the water's nearly boiled. A bath for you and a stew for me. Very fair, very fair."

A HUNGRY NORSE TROLL

The Norse priest of the Bear God glanced at the feverish, red-faced Dimitri, made a warding sign across his chest, and regarded us grimly. "This man's malady is too strange for me to heal. The disease is unnatural, something brought down on the darkest of north winds. There is no hope for your friend. Best kill him now and ease his pain." The Norseman turned his broad fur-covered shoulders and walked to the hut's door. He paused as he lifted the deerskin flap to leave, turning his head to look over his shoulders. "No. I spoke an untruth. There is one chance for your friend. Carry him north-west; there is a pass between the two black peaks, and in a forested valley beyond lies a cave where lives an old Troll Witch. She is as cold and treacherous as ice, but it's said that she can cure almost any sickness. But beware: her succour will cost you more than gold, and though she will be bound to her promise, her promise is not to be trusted."

If there is one thing I cannot stand in a roleplaying game, it is a monster whose only purpose is to be slain. Some games are full of them, and even dear old WFRP has its share. I have no particular objection to the thrill of combat and the satisfaction of annihilating a foe. However, I find it a damn sight more satisfying to face and defeat a worthy opponent who has previously lied and cheated, scuppered carefully laid plans, reached the goal first, and generally made such a thorough nuisance of himself that I and my PC alike are desperate to give the bastard a proper kicking! This requires a monster to have a modest degree of intelligence, and motivations and interests that go beyond mindless bloodshed.

The aim of this short article is to take one such monster, in this case the Troll, and put a twist on it. However, rather than simply ignore the well-established background details of the Troll or create just a Troll variant, I have endeavoured to create a background that complements and supports the original, but gives Games Masters the option of doing more interesting things. Great Swedish Fairy Tales, illustrated by John Bauer, was the original inspiration for the article.

Using the WFRP2 *Old World Bestiary* treat Norse Trolls as Common Trolls, but ignore the special rules Stoopid and Vomit. Suggestions for appropriate careers, skills and talents are made in the text.

For WFRP3 GMs can use the stats for River Trolls in the Tome of Adventure with Fear 1 and without the Vomit Action.

LIFE AMONG THE NORSE TROLLS

A long time ago, the Norse Trolls lived in relative peace among the pine-forested slopes and crags of the icy lands of Norsca. They lived simple lives, either as solitary creatures or in small families. Their homes were deep, dark caves or ramshackle huts, and they ate snakes and toads and rats, all boiled up with moss and lichens in huge black iron cauldrons.

The Trolls were not pleasant creatures to look at, with long, bulbous noses and hair-covered ears that often hung down to the ground. They wore uncured animal skins and furs, mouldy woollens and flaxes, and never, ever took baths, so their smell was abominable. Their personalities were none too pleasant either. Although they could hold civil enough conversations with travellers, most Norse Trolls were mean and spiteful and

devious, always looking out for a way to trick or take advantage of the lost or weak. Some of them even ate people, if given half the chance.

Few Norse Trolls could be described as clever, and indeed some were quite foolish, but this is not to say that they were without talents. Many Troll Witches existed, capable of casting simple, useful spells and weaving illusions, and Troll blacksmiths forged tools and weapons and horseshoes, even building sleds and toboggans. In fact, some Witches and Blacksmiths even used their abilities to trade with other races, although their cunning twisting of verbal contracts made conducting business with Norse Trolls fraught with risk for the unwary.

THE UNDOING OF THE NORSE TROLLS

The Undoing of the Norse Trolls was two-fold. To begin with, the sickening winds howling down from the Chaos Wastes affected them greatly, perhaps more than many other species. The Norse Trolls first noticed it in their babes. Most Norse Trolls were quiet, speaking softly and disliking loud noises (even the blacksmiths); even their babies rarely cried, but rather watched with wide, wet eyes. But more and more Troll babes were born who screamed and roared and thrashed their arms and legs wildly. Oh, and the vomit! These baby Trolls grew up into creatures not at all like their parents. Although Norse Trolls were simple and unpleasant creatures, they were never as stupid or mindlessly aggressive as these young Trolls.

Although never trusted and sometimes fought with, the Norse Trolls were largely left alone by the other races. Unfortunately, the wanton violence of these debased youngsters regularly forced other races to take action, and little distinction was made between the Norse Trolls and their less pleasant kin; to most Old Worlders, these brutes represent the Common Troll. A number of Norse Trolls themselves compounded the problem by starting a tradition of stealing babies and young children from the other races, replacing them with their own ugly, angry infants.

The second thread of the Undoing of the Norse Trolls involved the Dwarfs. The two Norse races had never been friendly: the Dwarfs had little respect for the Norse Trolls' talent for twisting oaths and bargains to suit themselves, and disliked witches and their spells; the Norse Trolls complained about how noisy the Dwarfs were, and mocked their lack of stature and stunted limbs. At best there was only restrained respect between the blacksmiths of each race. Nevertheless, for a long time the race mostly avoided one another, and there was no great conflict between the two races.

This might have remained the case if it was not for the actions of an ambitious Norse Troll blacksmith by the name of Trudnokk Long-ear. One night long ago, Trudnokk slunk into the Norse Dwarfhold of Kraka Ravensvake through a hidden crack in the rock. Creeping silently through endless corridors, knocking guards over the head as he went, Trudnokk found what he was looking for: an Anvil of Doom, the only device upon which permanent runes can be made. The cunning troll lifted up the Anvil and fled the Dwarfhold.

The alarm was raised and the Dwarfs gave chase through forest, over ice, and across mountain, but Trudnokk escaped with his prize. A great entry was written in the hold's Book of Grudges, and some say the first Troll Slayers were born of that night. The Anvil of Doom was never recovered, and some say is still being used to produce debased runic blades.

PERSONALITIES

The most important aspect of Norse Troll nature is their relative calmness. Some may be friendly and talkative, while others dour and unresponsive, but few get angry without significant provocation. Even those with hostile intent will explain in simple, measured tones how they intend to bounce a

club over your head, and then drag you home for their supper.

Norse Trolls have a peculiar sense of honesty. Most feel that it is very important to tell the truth when asked a question, but very few will ever tell the whole truth. A Norse Troll might advise, helpfully, that a certain path leads to the forest's edge, and he will probably be telling the truth; he will just fail to mention that an ancient sleeping Giant lies across the path, covered in moss and leaves, who will wake when careless adventurers try clambering over his recumbent form. A Norse Troll might do this because he has some long-standing friendship with or obligation to the sleeping Giant, or because the Troll simply does not believe he is obliged to provide all the information. Anyone who survives dealings with a Norse Troll will learn to be careful in the phrasing of questions and that the answers can be trusted only so far as they go.

Similarly, Norse Trolls believe that if something is given or accepted, something must be given in return. Hence the occasional swapping of a Human babe for a Troll child, a Frost Toad or even an old log with a mass of shaggy lichen for hair. If a Norse Troll gives help, advice or some object or tool, he expects something in return. However, he will not necessarily ask for anything at the time, just appear later at an inconvenient moment with his request, or more likely just take something important or valuable when nobody is looking and explain the fair exchange later if someone comes to his cave to complain.

FROST TOADS

One of the more bizarre creatures of the Norscan wilderness is the Frost Toad. About the size of a human head and as black as night, these horrible toads squat unmoving for days on end becoming coated with frost and snow, only occasionally moving to scrape at lichens with horny lips or to flick out a shockingly red and sticky tongue to catch small rodents and the insects that emerge when the sun shines in the Norscan summer. They are unpleasant-looking, but do not do much; Norse Trolls find they make excellent low-maintenance pets and are good in pies (Hungry, my dears? Come and eat with me in my cave as we discuss our business. Mmmmmm, I do like sausages and batter pudding, don't you?).

Norse Troll blacksmiths have another use for Frost Toads, however. Large pearls form in the bellies of Frost Toads, usually white, but sometimes black or other colours, and the blacksmiths decorate sword hilts and pommels with them, string them into necklaces or incorporate them into broaches and clasps. Other races remain oblivious to where the Norse Trolls procure their pearls. In many cases, it is these Frost Toad pearls that give the weapons and jewellery made by Norse Troll blacksmiths peculiar magical properties, as the pearls form around grains of warpstone accidentally consumed by the toad.

As noted, some Frost Toads are kept as pets. Blacksmiths often have several toads, ones that are good pearl-producers that periodically cough-up pearls, usually singly, sometimes in multiples. They find this is better than wasting time searching for the toads and cutting open their bellies. A Norse Troll's sentimental side is often shown through a pet Frost Toad, as he sits with one on his lap, stroking its warty hide and feeding it giblets and moss. If you cannot come up with a tale of kidnap and woe involving Norse Trolls, Frost Toads and the Skaven, then you do not deserve to be a Games Master.

If the GM is using Corruption rules from the *Liber Mutatis* in his WFRP3 game then the presence of a Frost Toad for any length of time should be counted as at least Minor Exposure.

ROLES FOR NORSE TROLLS

Guides: Although Norsemen and Dwarfs might seem trustworthy enough, Norse Trolls should not be overlooked as potential guides. Many are nomadic and have knowledge of the hidden caves and forests of Norsca that remain unknown to other races. Furthermore, a Norse Troll leading a party has a better chance of persuading other Norse Trolls, and even Giants, to allow passage through their territory - there will still be a cost, possibly a high one, but a fight might be avoided.

Norse Trolls are the best guides to the Norse Dwarfhold of Kraka Ornsmoteck, the northernmost of the holds. It lies in one of the most dangerous parts of Norsca, but from its mines come diamonds, obsidian and gold; many traders deem the risk worth it. Norse Troll guides will lead traders around monsters and worse, or negotiate safe passage, but will leave their charges before the last mountain before the Dwarfhold is sighted; few wish to draw the attention of King Tyr 'Giantsbane' Forsetison, his wife Queen Vanyra Karindottir, or their Slayers.

Give Norse Troll guides skills in;

- ◆ Orientation (a skill in WFRP1, a talent in WFRP2)
- ◆ Follow Trail
- ◆ Scale Sheer Surface
- ◆ Concealment Rural
- ◆ Silent Move Rural
- ◆ Speak Language (possibilities are Goblin Tongue, Giantspeak, Grumbath (Ogres) and perhaps Dark Tongue, as well as Norse and Troll Tongue)

If you have WFRP2, add;

- ◆ Perception
- ◆ Outdoor Survival

Plus the talents;

- ◆ Rover
- ◆ Seasoned Traveller.

Guides in WFRP3 can be trained in;

- ◆ Stealth
- ◆ Nature Lore
- ◆ Observation

Witches: Many female Norse Trolls are capable of casting spells, as are some males. Most of their magic is simple and practical, but is supported by skills in herbalism, preparation of poisons and potions, and healing. When one's magic goes beyond the petty, it is almost exclusively focused on the creation of illusions and glammers. Norse Troll Witches appear to have a natural talent for making people, objects and places appear to be things they are not. Most of the time, Troll Witches use their skills and magics to benefit themselves (usually at the expense of others), although they can be persuaded to use their powers for the benefit of someone else (for a price), especially if somebody else is victimised in some way.

Treat a Troll Witch as a Hedge Wizard if you have WFRP2 or Realms of Sorcery for WFRP1, otherwise give them the ability to cast Petty and Illusion spells. The Shaman career and Lore of Spirits in the Old World Bestiary is less appropriate.

They have the following skills;

- ◆ Heal Wounds
- ◆ Herbalism
- ◆ Prepare Poisons
- ◆ Cure Disease.

In WFRP3 the GM can select Troll Witch spells especially from the Grey Order, Petty Magic and Hedge Magic.

Blacksmiths: To those used to the common Trolls of the Old World, Norse Troll blacksmiths come as a surprise. They are remarkably talented, creating delicate, bejewelled and beautiful necklaces, rings and broaches that would grace the most elfin of noblewomen. Many are also great weapon-smiths, almost exclusively forging swords. More mundane items, such as horseshoes, are also well-made. They will make items to order, but the cost is high, but not necessarily monetary.

Stories told by Norsemen suggest that the beauty, power and occasional magical nature of the creations of Norse Troll blacksmiths is often balanced by some taint or curse. In part this is rumour propagated by Norse Dwarfs jealous of Norse Troll talent, but there is some truth in it. Norse Troll blacksmiths possess secret knowledge of working meteoric iron, and it is common for such iron to be tainted to varying degrees with Warpstone. Such taint can confer peculiar magical properties, some useful, some more sinister.

Similarly, the use of pearls taken from the bellies of Frost Toads can affect jewellery they are worked into. One example is a set of horseshoes which enables the horse shod with them



to leap vast crevasses or run up the sheer sides of cliffs, or over water or even a few feet above the ground; unfortunately, the horse becomes exceptionally hard to control or dies of exhaustion on reaching its rider's desired destination.

Norse Troll blacksmiths have skills in;

- ◆ Gem Cutting
- ◆ Metallurgy (WFRP1) or Trade (Gem Cutter)
- ◆ Academic Knowledge (Metallurgy) in WFRP2
- ◆ A few might have Rune Lore in WFRP1 and Academic Knowledge (Runes) in WFRP2

In WFRP3 Norse Troll blacksmiths can have expertise in Tradecraft. GMs can use the Runesmithing rules from the *Book of Grudges* as the basis for crafting with pearls, combining these with the Corruption rules from *Liber Mutatis*.

The Norse Dwarf guard began to pat the palm of his large hand with his even larger hammer. "What did you say you hired to lead you through the Sacred Pass of Ranniddir Oathkeeper? Let me tell you this, Manlings: the fastest path is not always the best one to follow."

USING NORSE TROLLS

A typical PC will assume that a Norse Troll is just a Troll that lives in Norsca, and consequently will either run away from it or try to kill it before it has the chance to become interesting. It is up to the GM to delay either course of action. One way to do it is have the PCs meet some non-Troll NPCs who can make reference to the more curious aspects of the Norse Trolls and intrigue PCs and players. The opening story provides one example: a PC is taken ill, and the local Norseman priest advises the party to seek out a certain Norse Troll Witch for aid.

Similarly, a PC might be impressed by a Norseman's splendid sword (after the GM has the player make a roll to notice it) and discover from the ensuing conversation that Norse Trolls are more easily spoken too than their Common relative, and business can be done with them, for a price. There are other possibilities, such as a shouted conversation across a deep ravine leading to a cautious, closer meeting between Norse Troll and PCs. Another technique is having one party member separated from the group, and possibly injured, but found and cared for by a Troll Wife until the rest of the group arrives. The injured PC, hopefully, quickly persuades his friends that he does not need rescuing from his benefactor. Or, if given the choice between a family of angry giants, and a Norse Troll poking his head from a cave entrance to say, "Quick! This way! Hurry, small folk!" most will take their chances in the cave.

The possible roles Norse Trolls can play in a game should be clear from the above, and it should not be difficult to create plots to bring the PCs into contact with them. Drop enough hints about strange magical wind-chimes, secret routes through the mountains and cures for ghastly diseases, and the PCs will go looking for Norse Trolls all by themselves. The most important thing to remember, however, is that any interaction with Norse Trolls has a cost. In all likelihood, the PCs will get exactly what they were after. The trouble is (or will be) the

PCs will end up owing a Norse Troll something, and, when the verbal small print is explained to them, a lot more than they first thought. Alternatively, they might find they get away with something relatively simple (okay, getting hold of and lugging a barrel of the best Dwarven ale up the side of a mountain is hard, but it is doable), but later discover, when they are back in Altdorf, that their new swords and cloak clasps have very peculiar minds of their own.

Have fun with the Norse Trolls as NPCs, give the PCs and players exactly what they ask for, let them think they have got away with it, and then make their lives an absolute bloody misery.

TROLL MAIDS

From time to time, a Troll Wife gives birth to a daughter who is not like other Trolls. The Troll Child lacks the coarse features of a normal Troll, instead having long lithe limbs, smooth skin and silky hair. The Child grows into a Troll Maid who has more in common with a young human woman than a Troll: tall and straight-backed instead of squat and hunched-over; luxuriant thick black hair falling in long curls and waves rather than odd-coloured grimy, tangled straggles; dark eyes, large and moody, instead of piggy, rheumy and sinister.

Norse Trolls care for their children and love them in their own way, but sometimes caring parents find these babies too strange and seek to get rid of them. Instead of leaving the babe out in the forests for the wolves, Troll parents seek out the cribs of the Norsemen, perhaps leaving their Troll Child in the cot of the childless couple living on the edge of the forest, or secretly stealing a human babe, and leaving their own in exchange. Despite the strangeness of these children, they are usually accepted, although they are recognised as having an unearthly quality. They invariably grow up into women possessed of a strange beauty.

Troll Maids tend to fall into two personality types. The first is quiet and reserved, hard-working and talented in a craft, but living on the edges of her community. The other is loud, brash and outgoing, often lazy but demanding, taking full advantage of the interest her oddness and beauty inspires in young Norsemen.

Troll maids usually have skills in;

- ◆ Charm
- ◆ The brasher variety will have Seduction (WFRP1)
- ◆ The quiet ones typically have a Trade, such as;
 - Brewer
 - Farmer
 - Herbalist
 - Shoemaker
 - Tailor

WFRP3 Troll Maids can have an appropriate Tradecraft as well as levels in;

- ◆ Guile or Charm and
- ◆ Can use the Flirt and Style and Grace Actions from *Lure of Power*.

LUCKY CHARMS

By Robin Low

How do Lucky Charms Work?

There is no getting away from it: Lucky Charms are magic items. However, it is not wizards who are creating them for a mass market, but largely ordinary people (see **Making Lucky Charms**). So, how do they get their magical powers?

The answer is simple: belief. Lucky Charms work because the people who create them and the people who carry them believe in their power. Although those people do not necessarily know it, their belief attracts wisps of the ambient Colours of Magic to their focus of belief, the Lucky Charm. It happens when the Lucky Charm is created with care, it happens when it is bought with hope, and it happens every time the bearer rubs the Charm out of need or habit.

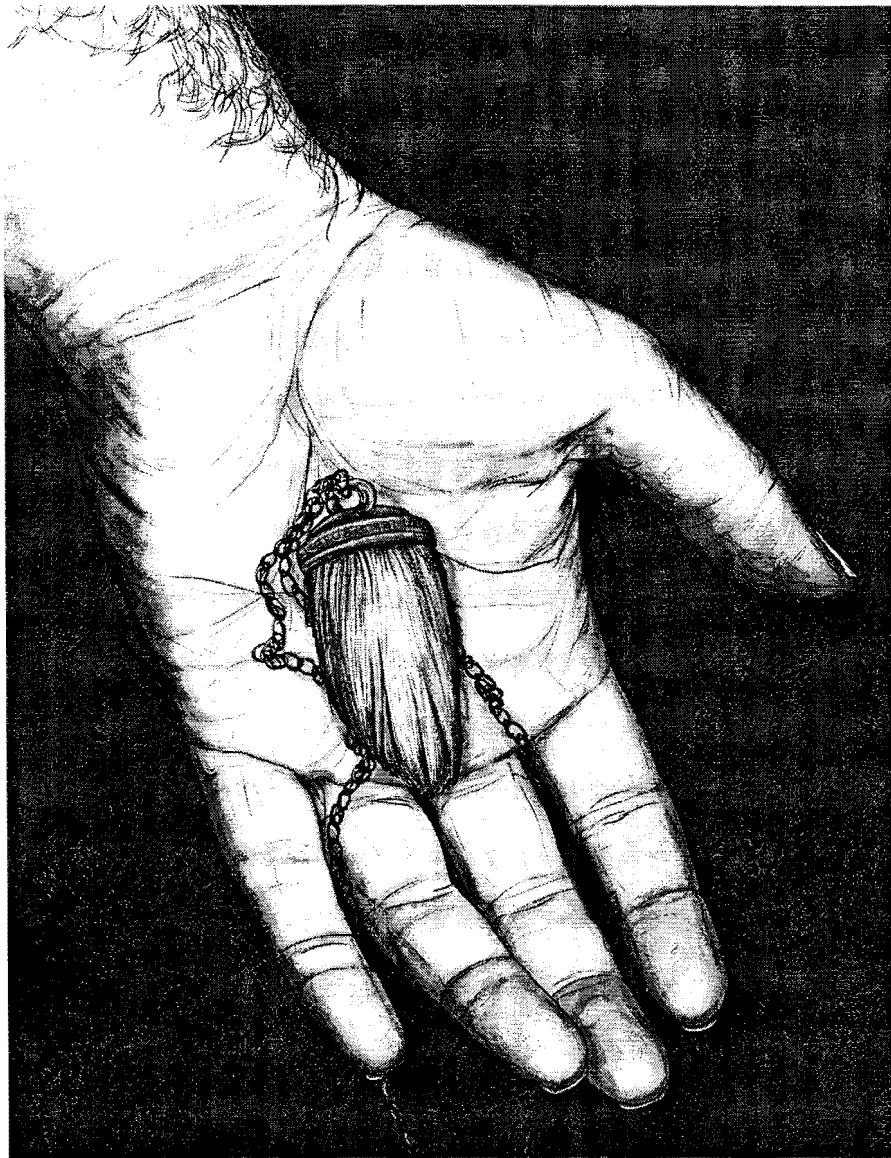
However, for game purposes, just saying "it's belief" is too simplistic: a player could all too easily claim, "Well, my character truly believes this acorn he found is a Lucky Charm, so I should be allowed a reroll." Instead, a real, working Lucky Charm should be something that has gone through the process of creation by a professional charm-maker and has been bought, traded or given as gift or payment (for stolen charms or those taken from the dead consider **Cursed Charms**). The rest of this article offers rules and ideas to support this and give Lucky Charms more in-game flavour and significance than they currently have.

Who Makes Lucky Charms?

In the Old World there are two main groups creating Lucky Charms for the mass market. The first group is composed of independent specialist craftsmen, creating their wares where they can find or rent space, and typically selling at markets or hawking them in the streets. The second group is also formed by specialist craftsmen, but these work exclusively for the various religious cults in temple workshops (usually just a

spare room, small out-building or shed on temple property), with their products being sold by initiates at the temple. Charms created by temple craftsmen are also blessed by a priest. This does not improve their efficacy, but it does help them sell.

There are others, of course, who create Lucky Charms, such as midwives, village wise-women, hermits who are believed to have special knowledge, witches and even apprentice wizards when they get the spare time. However, they do not do it on



a large scale or for the mass market, but rather for those who specifically ask for one to be made for them. Wizards can create Lucky Charms, too, but most consider it a waste of their time, although some who live in rural communities see it as good way of integrating with the locals, supporting them, and generally keeping on their good side.

Of course, the popularity of Lucky Charms means there is a thriving market in what are known as False Charms. These are made quickly and without care or belief by those who are after a quick coin. The lack of attention and belief during their creation means that these False Charms simply do not work or, worse, are cursed during the process (see **Cursed Charms**).

It is generally considered unlucky to fashion a charm for oneself, one's friends or one's family, however. This prevailing belief is strong enough to render a Lucky Charm useless or cursed. Of course, there is at least one traditional exception; when a young member of the family leaves home for the first time (perhaps to become an apprentice, or to undertake a long journey) it is considered acceptable for an older relative to fashion a Lucky Charm for her. GMs are free to create other exceptions and allow their players to do the same, but in such cases these Lucky Charms should become significant aspects of a character's background (they are a gift from someone close to them and the focus of subplots - charms can be stolen, be made of something unusual or noteworthy, take on a curious life of their own).

Lucky Charms Are Too Powerful

As the rules stand, Lucky Charms either give a reroll on any Skill Test or allow the bearer to ignore a successful hit. This is a relatively powerful magical ability for an item with an *average* availability. It also makes them rather generic and bland. Part of the solution to this is to separate the two powers. There are Lucky Charms that allow rerolls on Skill Tests and there are charms that allow the bearer to ignore a successful attack.

Rerolling any Skill Test is still powerful magic, so limit a charm's reroll ability to just three specific Skill Tests related to the nature of the charm. For example, a dried magpie's

In WFRP3

The complex dice system of WFRP3 is particularly suited to, and gives lots of opportunities for a variety of effects and bonuses. Many mechanics have been used to represent these sorts of boons in items and talents in the game. For example, an extra Fortune Point, adding Fortune or Expertise Dice to a roll, ignoring unwanted icons, converting two Boons to a Success, etc. The GM should consider these when inventing unique effects for charms.

To emulate the rare, one-shot, re-roll type bonus of WFRP2 Lucky Charms, the GM might wish to give a re-roll for any failed roll that also produces a Sigmar's Comet. A Cursed Charm would activate on a successful roll that also produces a Chaos Star. The 'ignore a hit' charm would work in a similar way to the second edition version.

claw with copper wire bound round the stump allows rerolls on Sleight of Hand, Evaluate or Perception. As magpies are associated with Ranald and have a liking for shining objects, and copper wire has value, the Skill Tests are made symbolically appropriate to the charm. Similarly, a strip of leather from an old blood-stained whip fashioned into a bracelet might offer rerolls on Animal Training, Intimidate or Torture.

The effect of the above is not only to put a limit on a charm's power, but much more importantly to add colour and atmosphere. If a Lucky Charm is merely the equivalent of a Get-Out-Of-Jail-Free card, it is nothing more than a handy bonus that adds nothing to the feel and character of the setting.

The ability to ignore a successful hit can make the difference between life and death. Charms with this power are serious magic. They must be made from materials specifically associated with protection: metal from a hero's breastplate, a tortoise shell, a stone from the battlements of a Dwarf Hold. The materials should be reasonably hard or expensive to obtain, like the examples given. Mussel shells are obviously protective in nature, but far too common to reflect the power of a protective charm. However, a charm made from a nautilus or tropical seashell could be used.

Making Lucky Charms

Lucky Charms are very variable in nature, but they all have one defining characteristic, namely that they must be small enough to be held securely in the palm of one closed hand. One might think this means that a Lucky Charm must be solid. This, however, is not the case, as some charms are curious liquids (or even gases) sealed within very small stoppered bottles.

A Lucky Charm has to be more than just a rabbit's foot lopped from a rabbit. To be effective (to draw the wisps of ambient magic to it), some care and effort has to go into its creation. In the case of the rabbit's foot, a charm-maker might shape a small cap from thin metal to close around the stump. Thin cord is threaded through the cap so that the charm can be worn around the neck. Or a fragile rat skull might be embedded in candle wax, which is then carved to look like a rat. An oak fragment from an old temple pew might be sanded and polished before being painted with designs appropriate to the temple's god. Two sycamore seeds might be glued together and then painted in lacquer to preserve them.

Many Lucky Charms are made from bits of dead animals, usually skulls and small bones. However, actively killing an animal specifically for the purpose of creating a charm is considered extremely unlucky, even more so if the animal in question is sacred to a god. In either case a charm can be cursed. Finding an appropriate animal corpse by chance, however, is considered inherently fortunate, so this is the preferred safe way of obtaining animal parts.

As dead animals feature so heavily in charm production, charm-makers have several methods of removing flesh from bones. These range from gently boiling animal corpses in water, use of mild acids, and carnivorous insects like ants. Charm-makers who commonly work with bones usually have

various pots simmering and bubbling away in their workshop, and have containers of earth containing ant nests (though these are usually only active in warm weather, and the process is not as rapid as many believe). Consequently, the smell of boiling flesh, acids and carrion can make visits to some charm-makers' workplaces an unpleasant experience. Of course, not all charm-makers use bone, and others just wait until they find something nature has already cleaned. (It should be noted that the Cult of Morr keeps a close watch on charm-makers who sell charms incorporating bone. Mostly the cult watches for bones that might have come from human skeletons – small bones like knuckle bones or those from the feet are the mostly likely to get used in charms.)

In rules terms, Lucky Charms can only be created by someone with the Trade (charm-maker) Skill. Although a **Charm-Maker** Career is described below, others can acquire the Skill. This can be a self-taught Skill, but players wanting to learn the Skill should make some effort to roleplay the learning process prior to spending the Experience Points. When they actually make Lucky Charms, they should roleplay this process, too, searching for materials and describing what they are fashioning. This need not be complex, just colourful. Following such a description, a successful Trade (charm-maker) Skill Test is sufficient to create a Lucky Charm. How long the process

takes depends on the materials (removing the flesh from a rat skull takes time) and complexity of the charm's final form (wrapping copper wire round the stump of a magpie's claw is quick, but painting finely intricate designs on a wishbone takes longer).

Finding interesting and useful things to make Lucky Charms from can be left to a Search Test, subject to a suitable modifier depending on the likely chances of finding a particular thing in the local environment. The GM should be realistic regarding what a PC can actually find, but at the same time not stifle a player's creativity, and perhaps offer logical alternatives if a Search Test only just fails. For example, the player wants his character to find a magpie skull, but fails the Test by one Degree or less, so the GM says he finds a pigeon skull or magpie feather instead.

Making Lucky Charms "Lucky" in Play

It can be argued that Lucky Charms work too easily – a player simply says he is using it and the Test is rerolled or a hit is ignored. To add some genuine luck to proceedings, rather than making a reroll automatically, when a player says he wants to use a charm he must roll 1D10. Only if he rolls a 0 does that charm work and allow the Test to be rerolled. Failure does not render the charm unusable (unless the GM has deemed it

CHARM-MAKER

AN ADVANCED CAREER

Charm-Makers are relatively common throughout the Empire. They are usually based in larger towns and cities, but are also found out in the countryside looking for the raw materials of their trade (although the urban environment itself has much to offer). Many are permanently based in towns, but others choose a travelling lifestyle, creating their wares on route, selling at lonely farmsteads and villages (towns and especially cities usually require Charm-Makers to be licensed). Some work exclusively for a temple, creating Lucky Charms for a religious market.

To be effective, Charm-Makers need to believe in what they do, so they are often strong-willed people. Many are particularly devout, especially those working for a particular temple, but all Charm-Makers tend to show respect for all the gods and hope for their goodwill.

The Animal Care Skill usually relates to ants and other small carrion-eating insects. The two other Trade Skills are usually trades that can involve small, intricate work, such as Gem Cutter, Candlemaker or Goldsmith. Although not officially listed as a trade, Carver (Ag) could relate to the delicate carving of bone, stone, wood and metal on a scale smaller than would be implied by Carpenter, Stoneworker or Smith. Common Knowledge (Folklore) is obviously a variation of the usual Skill, and covers superstitions, Old Wives' Tales, lore and legend regarding almost anything

animal, vegetable and mineral, as well as time and place.

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
		+5%	+5%	+20%	+10%	+20%	+10%
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
	+2						

Skills: Animal Care, Common Knowledge (Folklore), Drive, Evaluate, Haggle, Perception, Search, Secret Language (Guild Tongue), Trade (Charm-Maker), Trade (any two)

Talents: Artistic, Excellent Vision

Trappings: Trade Tools (small blades, needles, chisels, drills, pliers, paintbrushes, needles, wire and thread, a small hammer, pots of glue and lacquer), Assorted Bits and Bobs (feathers, bones, candles, stones, nuts, metal wire and shards, string and thread, bits of wood, shards of glass)

Career Entries: Apprentice Wizard, Artisan, Initiate, Tradesman

Career Exits: Apprentice Wizard, Artisan, Guild Master, Initiate, Merchant, Tradesman

cursed); it just does not work on this occasion. Maybe it will be lucky next time.

Cursed Charms

Some charms are made by people who do not believe in what they are creating, particularly members of the criminal element. Other charms are made from animals that have been killed deliberately to make them, which annoys the gods if it is one of their sacred animals. Sometimes charms are stolen, and not honestly traded, gifted or won fairly in battle. At best, such charms simply fail to work; at worst these charms are cursed.

Whether charms that were stolen or taken from the bodies of the dead are cursed is something GMs should decide. However, GMs should be mindful of what will make for the best story. For example, if charms can be stolen and remain Lucky, then the one owned by a PC could be targeted by a thief, thereby creating a plot thread. If, on the other hand, it is common knowledge that stolen charms are inherently cursed, then theft is less likely and a potential plot thread is stifled.

With regard to looting a charm from a corpse, questions arise such as did the looter murder or kill the victim in a fair fight? Did the looter just happen upon the corpse and decide to go through its purse? How these different actions are viewed can affect whether a Lucky Charm becomes a cursed one. Generally speaking, the advice should be to go with what makes for the most interesting story rather than strict rules – charms are magical and magic is uncertain and capricious. If in doubt, however, leave it to chance and roll a die, with a fifty-fifty chance of a Lucky Charm becoming cursed in these or similar circumstances.

Cursed Charms have a very simple in-game effect. Whenever a character carrying a Cursed Charm makes a *successful* Skill Test (any Test: it does not have to be specific to the charm's nature as described above, unless the GM decides otherwise), the GM should secretly roll 1D10. If he rolls a 0, then he informs the player that even though the Test was successful, the character has actually failed in what he was trying to do. The GM needs to make the roll secretly, so that the player remains unaware that he is carrying a Cursed Charm. Fortunately, like Lucky Charms, Cursed Charms only work once and crack or shatter when their damage is done. Of course, there is no reason at all why a GM cannot decide otherwise, and lumber a character with a Cursed Charm until he finds a way to properly destroy it.

Guild and Licensing

Like virtually every trade, craft and profession in the Empire, charm-makers, too, have a guild. And like all guilds, it sells licences to those wishing to work and trade within towns and cities permitting them to do so. Charm-makers working and selling in more rural areas are actually well tolerated by the urban guild, which does not seek to claim control over the charm trade in villages a day's walking distance (there and back) from a town's boundaries.

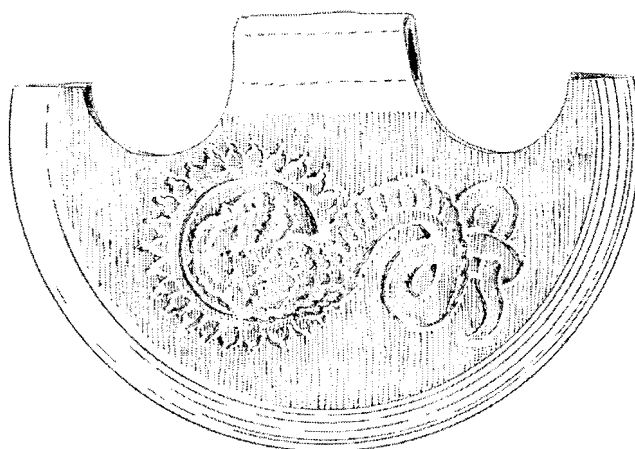
Charm-makers working exclusively for one of the cults

operate outside guild auspices, but are only allowed to work and trade within the legal boundaries of a temple. In this case, the local temple provides a licence, although only the temples in the larger cities license more than one or two charm-makers. Generally, there is little friction between the guild and the various cults, although local tensions can develop. On one occasion, when a guild charm-maker in Nuln began trading what the local cult of Shallya considered an excessive number of dove skull charms, the cult raised questions about where all these dove skulls were coming from. The guild was quick to defend its member's story that he found them floating in the water near a pier on the southern docks. This led to considerable bad feeling and claims and counter claims about the reliability of guild and temple charms. As it turned out (after the cult brought in a small independent team to look into the matter), the charm-maker was telling the truth: the skulls were the remains of doves caught and feasted upon by a nest of Nurglings (never officially referred to as such, of course) living under the docks.

Cost

In the core WFRP2 rules, Lucky Charms are given an *average* availability. Curiously, they are significantly more expensive than *scarce* Religious Relics. The peculiar logic behind this is the dubious argument of game balance: as the official rules stand, Religious Relics are only useful in very specific instances, whereas Lucky Charms are more widely useful. So, they are made more costly.

This article accepts the depiction of Lucky Charms as having an *average* availability with an established culture of production, and has also gone some way to reducing the extent and certainty of their powers. For those reasons, it is suggested that Lucky Charms are not prohibitively expensive for characters to purchase. However, the choice of economic system, official or fan-made, of any given WFRP campaign varies from GM to GM, and is subject to modification and circumstance, so no hard figures are offered.



THE CULT OF EVIL

an examination of
where evil is not chaos,
and might even be
legal. By Tim Eccles.



Bored with Chaos? For me WFRP is *The Enemy Within* 1st edition campaign. More specifically, it is about Teugen. To be even more specific, it is about the fools that Teugen manipulates into helping him. The greedy, selfish, self-interested, envious and generally unlikeable merchant classes. Chaos can be fun, but it is the real enemy within that I like. And that is why I want to talk about evil, in all its subjective interpretations. These people do not worship Chaos. They obey the laws (mostly), they worship the true gods (when in their own interests), they establish organisations to further legal interests (sort-of). They think of themselves as 'good' people and care for their families. And the best of these? The religious cults themselves. Those gods who protect us, and yet are represented on earth by exactly the same greedy, selfish, self-interested, envious and generally unlikeable sort of person that Teugen used. But even better, not only do they think that they are nice people, but they have a god to back them up on this!

What follows is a look at how to use 'normal' cults or their members as 'evil' features in a campaign. I am going to look primarily at the nasty side of organised religions and the sort of behaviour that would be labelled as psychotic if it were carried out by an individual. I have chosen the Cult of Morr as my focus since I think we need to put a little more fear, death and skulls into the god of death itself.

Death – and Skullz

There are a range of problems when dealing with any 'death god', especially in FRP literature. In real world polytheistic systems, most gods of the dead are marginal figures. For WFRP, we have the central problem as to whether I believe in Sigmar, for example, to look after me. Or whether at some point, I suddenly shift my attentions to Morr. Of course, in a true polytheistic system, I should worship all the gods all the time. This issue has been discussed previously in *Warpstone*, but the place of Morr in WFRP is both problematic, and also the potential source of some interesting characterisation for individuals and groups that might be useful both as background and as allies/enemies of our PCs. This article looks to developing some ideas that can flesh out the belief in Morr, and create some quite unsavoury individuals that might cause PCs some concerns. Whilst I do not want to put death cults into every Old World setting, putting a little fear, loathing and evil into the cult can hopefully provide a little added colour, albeit in sombre tones, to the cult. And bring evil into the game.

First, I want to get the issue of skulls out of the way. GW itself has a contradictory approach to the skull. It is used by the Imperium in 40K to reflect its totalitarian nature. It is used by Khorne worshippers to represent the forces of Chaos. Dark Elves make particular use of the skull on all their clothing. And yet it also serves a more 'historically accurate' purpose in some of the Warhammer imagery. What we have to remember is that throughout history and across cultures, the skull has not necessarily been a representation of 'evil'. It can be used to reflect many things. So, when using the cult generally, and evil sects within the cult especially, we need to be careful in our

use of imagery in general, and the skull in particular.

The wider issue with Morr revolves around the place of death in WFRP. There are three broad approaches, each with its own effect on the place of the god.

Death is a part of the cycle of life. This places Morr within the sphere of Taal, Rhya and similar '**nature**' deities.

Death is the end; that's all folks. This is nihilistic and results in death to be avoided. Morr becomes the enemy, something looming over everyone and to be feared.

Death is the gateway to the Afterlife. Quite what this means depends upon the nature of this afterlife, but it raises questions as to who controls entry to it and who wields power within it. This places Morr in conflict with all other gods. After all, why serve Sigmar for fifty years, if you have an eternity dominated by Morr to follow?

With these three threads, we can generate a number of plausible developments of belief within the Cult of Morr. In terms of helping create more difficult enemies for PCs, these can be very dangerous indeed. After all, however unpleasant, even evil, these groups are, since Morr is an official deity, none of these groups are heretical. Indeed, not only are their beliefs not heretical, these followers are a part of the Empire's social structures and so will be defended by all its organs – civil, military, religious, secular. They can almost certainly rely on the appropriate authorities to side with them against 'outsiders'. That said, mainstream cultists might be willing to look the other way, or tacitly support someone who upsets some of these activities. There are also a number of reasons why these beliefs or groups can be declared heretical or outlawed.

So, how do we apply some of this 'evil' into our games?

Evil in Action

Death is by its very nature a backward-looking issue, inasmuch as one considers the life of a dead person. Notwithstanding the promise of an eternal Afterlife, the actual concept of death is one of looking back to one's ancestors through graves and shrines. This tends to provide the cult with a conservative, one might even say reactionary, outlook. And this is the first way to plug a nasty side to the cult. At the very least, adventurers who step outside the traditional social hierarchy are a contagion to be destroyed, perhaps literally.

More widely, any social development should be distrusted, which means that the cult (or at least our 'nasty' members) will always side with those in control and oppose anyone who approaches their local town council with anything new, never mind radical. This includes politics and governance, but also pesky adventurers with their tales of woe intended to cause maximum disruption. So, our first step towards 'evil' is to stress the extremeness of conservatism and reaction. Inoculation against measles? **Better** the children die, their souls safe, than such a heretical new idea. If you are playing first edition, look towards the Lawful aspect for such sects rather than the more pragmatic 'Neutral' view on the human condition.

The concept of death as part of the natural cycle of life offers some interesting opportunities for the cult. Most obviously,

it allows us to steal directly from the Aztecs and their myths – ultimately using human sacrifice and collecting hearts. In tamer versions, animal sacrifice is probably fairly typical anyway, although it might be quite expensive for poorer communities. However, only the heart is needed to ensure that Morr looks with benevolence upon the village for another year, and the rest of the animal can then form a great feast.

Links to Rhya, Dyrath or Taal can be developed, and these can be sacrifices to maintain the world in some metaphysical manner or merely to ensure no drought, disease or pest kills off crops. Whether the ultimate source of such rituals is Lustria and the Slann in ages gone by, might be developed within a scenario where explorers have returned from an expedition there with a rather more 'efficient' form of the ritual. Indeed, disaster might drive a village to looking for a more potent version.

I am sure that the Cult has its libraries of long lost lore just like any self-respecting religious order. Because the cult has access to the bodies of the dead and performs their burial rites, perhaps one sect actually removes and sacrifices the heart for a similar purpose. It might not take much for someone to speculate on how much better a beating heart might be. And remember that if it can be supported by theology then it is not going to be against the law. So, those blood-crazed cultists kidnapping young girls suddenly become legally-sanctioned cultists engaging in lawful religious practice.

Again taking from the Aztecs, bloodletting might be ritualistic, such that priests cut themselves and offer their own blood. It might prove an interesting sidebar to a story should the PCs see a disfigured priest, perhaps with a lip plug. However, we are looking at 'evil' here, so let us develop this into a requirement to allow the priest to disfigure who he chooses – the girl who jilted him, those not quite generous enough with their offerings, the party that will not sell to the rich merchant who is building his new church, or everyone if we are going to make this belief a genuine one. And that would include those visiting PCs.

The position of the cult concerning dead bodies is another aspect to consider. Perhaps some sects 'steal' bodies or use body parts. Having bodysnatchers that turn out to be not only legal, but also senior members of the community, can turn the traditional adventure on its head. Given that WFRP accepts that relics exist, and even have powers, what would be the view of the Cult of Morr on dead body parts generally, and relics in particular? Whilst the common view might be that they bury people, not bits of people, is this true? And whilst some sects might dabble, I can see a hard core fundamentalist group that expect people to stay buried, not be dug up so that their remains can be packaged up and sold off in some marketplace.

This can lead to not only problems in the public domain concerning the award of licences to trade in relics, but also those who are prepared to break secular law to end the sale of relics permanently. Of course, if the cult was able to establish control over the relics market through its role as guardian of the dead, then this would be an excellent way of making money.

And, ensuring that no harm was done to the rituals and soul in the Afterlife, of course.

One way around this problem of 'parts of the dead' is to remove bits of people prior to their death. This does not affect any of the rites of Morr, but it does mean chopping up still living people. Is it murder? Maybe. But they were dying anyway, since the cult obtained a piece of paper that said so. And the relatives got paid. Of course, this only really works with rich and/or holy people who might be seen as valuable in the first place, and these families are less likely to need the money. Still, a broken down priory needs cash more than it needs a complete prior! However, it can also be a defence for a Ripper-style murderer. "I was just taking body parts in accordance with Morr's law," says the very pious local priest when investigators finally catch him.

The issue of burial itself is also an interesting one. In a world where the Undead are a constant presence, and continually invade too, then the destruction of this resource would be a rational response. The existence of Undead also points to inefficiencies within the burial process. So, two themes can be developed from here. First, one group of rationalists supports cremation. Second, the cult is probably in denial about Undead. There is not inherently a lot of evil here, though burning for heresy anyone who tries to warn of invading Undead is perhaps a little unfair. But, in the real world, cremation was also a response to overfull cemeteries, and this can also be a theme within Old World cities. There is simply nowhere left to bury people. Some enterprising churchmen can find new space by disposing of the previous residents. Indeed, forcing the poor into paying high fees for burial can place the cult in the role of avaricious merchants that are so beloved of WFRP. And dumping all those remains to make space? Well, how many diseases can dead bodies cause when disposed of in the local river? So, insisting on expensive rites for the dead can have so many dire consequences on the living that I think we can view it as evil.

With regard to Undead, I have always found Ghouls interesting. In first edition, it is unclear why they are Undead, except that they eat the dead. However, cannibalism might equally involve eating the living (though soon-to-be-dead). Cannibalism is also partly cultural rather than inherently evil, and often results from famine. This fits in the idea of Morr and his relationship to the lifecycle. I rather like the idea of some very deep-rooted cults that have retained a rather bloody aspect to the traditional nature cults. Add to this, an alliance of some with Ghouls, who are the personification of a living death, and I think we have what is apparently a very evil group, but one that can ultimately potentially call upon cult law to protect them from murdering PCs. How much more evil can we get than where cannibalism becomes legal and Ghouls are a respected part of the community?

Morrites do not inherently revere the dead. They are more involved in their own rites and what these do for the dead. Thus, they abhor those who have been buried in other ways. This can lead to problems for any village or town that buries

its dead outside of cult rules, and certainly will cause problems to non-humans proposing to use their own cultural rites. It is also the Cult of Morr that is most interested in destroying ancient barrows and uprooting all barbaric burial practices. All of this can generate sanctioned vandalism, looting, tomb robbing and disinterring non-humans (and others).

On a theological level, the transition of Sigmar from human prince to deity is an intriguing one for Morr. Did Sigmar die or did he evade Morr's clutches? It seems to me that there was a very important need in the early days of Sigmarism to explain how a man did not die, and how he transcended death to become a deity. This makes Morr (or his incarnation of 2500 years ago) a very important part of telling the myth of Sigmar. It is Morr who saves and transforms Sigmar. Unfortunately, 2500 years later, there is no real need for this same theological support as Sigmar is well established. Hence, the role of Morr can be downplayed, even ignored.

Once powerful ally sects are thus cut adrift, expensive donations dry up and shrines fall into disrepair and disuse. Perhaps something is needed to rekindle the place of Morr? Of course, if modern teachings explain how Sigmar defied death, does this not promote Sigmar above Morr? The reverse of this might also be true, that by not dying, Sigmar is a complete heresy towards the Cult of Morr. Followers would thus support the Cult of Ulric on the issue of Sigmar being a demon, and someone who had defied/ rejected/betrayed Morr. Cue religious debate, argument and violence.

Sample Sects

The following is intended to offer some specific examples of sects developed from some of the themes described above. All are technically legal, which makes attacking them (even in self-defence) a crime against an official religion. It also means that such groups get the protection of cult law.

According to all versions of WFRP, the Cult of Morr is not a centralised entity. This allows us two ways to play these themes. First, a sect controls a particular area and these practices are fairly endemic. This might bring them into confrontation with other cults or secular authorities, which might act as employers of PCs. The second approach is for these beliefs to be held by lone priests, who take on the role of the Bad Guy to be discovered but then turn out to have legal protection and their behaviour is sanctioned. Cue a number of possible avenues, most not good for the PCs.

The Defenders: Known more formally as the Defenders of the Ancient Ways, they are a group of Morr and Taal worshippers who venerate a rather bloody interpretation of the natural order with human sacrifice and alliance with, even the creation of, Ghouls. However, they generate popularity in rural areas since they support the peasantry and so-called traditional rights – be it to hunting, wood gathering, use of common land or whatever. Recently, they have established a core political following in rural Middenland to oppose the urban Carroburg and the Grand Duke. They also have

support from the reactionary noble classes against the upstart trade-orientated nobility of the city. However, their core area of worship is within Sylvania. Some claim that the group are servants of the Vampire Counts, but they point to a tradition directly descended from the Fennoles, tribesmen of the time of Sigmar. Whilst some point to Ghoulish allies as proof of inherent evil, others suggest that poverty and starvation is a more likely cause of the existence of Ghouls, for who the Defenders, as defenders of the poor, are a naturally sympathetic group.

The sect can be met as something as innocent as poachers on a private estate that can then develop into Ghouls, bandits, outlaws, bloody sacrificial rites and political agitators.

Naturis Profundi: Another corruption of the nature cults, the central core of the sect is that the followers of Morr are given the power and authority to defy death. Hence, this group is all about personal longevity and immortality. It is based upon the teachings of the Great Druid Malthus and involves the corruption of druidism and the abuse of ley lines. Stone circles are either directly taken over or the lines themselves are corrupted or bent in some way.

Human sacrifice and general self-interest make this sect a classically evil group, but the belief has religious precedent and so followers expect to be protected by the legal authorities or, at worst, judges under (very lenient) canon law.

Keepers of the New Fire: The origins of this sect are influenced by Arabyan teachings. The premise behind their teaching is that the dead can only be freed into the Afterlife through the Ceremony of the New Fire. For each year of life a stick is taken and wrapped into a bundle. These are then burnt, and the ashes stored in a small stone chest. When the individual dies, the body is cremated and the ashes added to the chest. Each person has a separate chest, and these are carved with ritual symbols.

This is a classic blackmailing opportunity. Chests are expensive, bundles need preparation, everything needs storing – for decades – and so fees are continually demanded. And they go up. Cannot pay? Then your bundles get thrown, and there is no Afterlife for you. So, this is one for the greedy merchant school of bad guy. Everyone has to pay, and they perhaps need to do ever more outrageous things to find the money.

Fundator: Absolute belief in the teachings of Morr have created a fundamentalist outlook, which takes the form of digging up and generally destroying anyone and anything not buried in accordance with the approved rites. Barrows and other historical sites are prime targets of their work, which can also lead to rich pickings where valuable grave goods are discovered.

More mainstream sect members may be genuine archaeologists, but the extremists are simple tomb robbers and vandals who enjoy nothing more than getting their shovels out and digging up a barrow or bashing a non-human tomb

down. Vandals, thieves, body stealers: all of these types now have legal protection and act with impunity.

Corpus Unitas: This group believes in the sanctity of the dead body. They preach that in order to enter the Afterlife, the body must be whole (or at least in the same condition as it was in life) during the burial ceremony. This prohibits taking relics, at least from the dead. Technically hacking bits off of the living is not Morr's problem.

The most immediate evil response to this tenet is to attack the living to hack bits off or harry the dying for body parts. Priests would also refuse burial of those torn apart or eaten by monsters. They may also encourage attacking relic sellers, both legally and physically. The cult might seek PCs prepared to repatriate (usually called stealing) relics to put them back with their original bodies, whilst desperate NPCs need someone stupid enough to find the eaten remains of a loved one.

Frater: Illusion is an aspect of reality, but one that is not understood by any except a favoured few. The future is preordained and Morr is an augur that provides direction. The Frater believe that the removal of one eye is necessary in order to remove the interference from the second eye on the truth revealed by true sight. In other words, by using two eyes we are distorting our vision of the reality of the world. Their philosophy runs along the lines that illusion works through tricking our sight by manipulating the duality of our vision. Removing one eye ensures that our vision is purified and that we can see through, beyond and within illusion. Most in the sect wear an eye patch to replicate this, but their seers and core members pluck their eye out.

What sort of idiot plucks out their own eye? The chosen are kidnapped, drugged and indoctrinated to believe this rubbish, so gangs are paid well to steal children for the sect. Perhaps the sect even sets up a school precisely to provide them with fresh followers. One possible plot hook might be that the latest child to be revealed as a seer is someone from a family who can pay the PCs to find their child.

Phasma Epistula: This group believe that only the priesthood of Morr can communicate with the dead. Seances are regulated and licensed.

How to deal with this depends upon whether one allows the dead to actually communicate. If the sect is peddling charlatanry, then this in itself is the evil aspect. Taking money off the gullible is a classic of the Victorian crime story. Perhaps if further prayers are not paid for, then the loved ones will suffer further in some sort of Purgatory?

However, genuine seances offer other intriguing ideas. Just think what the dead know. Then think how much the living might pay to keep this secret or to find out others' secrets. Blackmail is only the starting point. Codes and safe numbers might fall readily into the cult's hands, locations of buried treasure, inventions or patents – the list is endless. Basically, Phasma Epistula is a protection racket that could go on forever.

Dux Morr: The Empire cannot beat Chaos using ordinary means, and thus a Doomsday weapon is needed. The Undead must be used, commanded by priests of Morr to safeguard the general good.

This sect is evil inasmuch as the ends justify the means. First, they are, in effect, necromancers. Second, they need to steal and dig up the dead. Bodies go missing, cemeteries are dug up, the remains of a noble's ancestors are stolen, all done for the greater good.

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SKULLS

By Robin Low

Along with the seal, the skull has become a prominent motif in WFRP art. Not just human skulls, but also those of animals and monsters. In the art, some are clearly real, others are manufactured. Flicking through the WFRP2 rulebook, skulls form the pommel of swords and daggers, the head of staffs, and even the bow of keys. They are embroidered on clothing, hang from clothing as charms or decoration, ornament a sword guard, protect a seaman's chest and buckle a demagogue's belt. On page 89 a strange mutant owl-monkey with a dragon's tail carries one; on page 94 a skull-masked (faced?) performer juggles with flaming skulls atop batons; on page 219 a Skaven lord wears three impaled on spikes to intimidate his foes. The wonderful art of Pat Loboyko accounts for much – though not all – of this.

While the imagery of WFRP1 is very different, it is not free of skulls. On the front cover of the original rules, one skull decorates a shield and another decorates a wall. Internally, we have to look to John Blanche's magnificent colour plate depicting Nuln before we see a skull. Tony Ackland isn't such an admirer, but his wizard on page 131 sports a horned skull, his alchemist and illusionist both use skulls to support candles, and one decorates another wizard's sanctum. A skull is used decoratively on a demonologist's lamp, while in Wil Rees' classic *Shadows over Bogenhafen* a spectacular candelabrum is formed from about 22 skulls. Enchanted flying skulls are part of the classic *Grapes of Wrath* scenario. One graces the cover of *Power behind the Throne*. Finding other examples is not difficult.

In WFRP3 we see them in the game's logo, alongside symbols

as important as Sigmar's Comet, the Imperial Eagle and the Chaos Star. They hang from the belt of a Dragon Ogre on the cover of *The Creature Guide*, and inside are found on a Beastman's and Marauder's belts, on helmets and armours, and a Daemon's whip handle. Page 18 of *The Edge of Night* shows what looks like a small shrine; it bears the slogan *For Sigmar* and contains a pile of skulls. Yuri Popov in *Winds of Change* is tattooed with skulls. Other examples are scattered everywhere. An intriguing exception is found in the *Book of Grudges*, where Dwarf armour bears the faces or helmets of moustached Dwarfs. It seems the fertile races of man and monsters are obsessed with death, but the dying race of Dwarfs prefers not to be reminded.

Symbolism

Skulls are both powerful symbols and useful tools for mundane or mysterious uses. This means it is easy to give them both meaning and purpose in a game. Yes, a lot of the time, skulls are used in WFRP art merely as decoration, but without occasionally giving them in-game significance they just become background noise. Because symbols have power, some people wish to possess them. The acquisition of a skull (and often a specific skull at that) easily becomes a focus for a character or a plot.

What follows are thoughts and ideas looking at some of the things skulls symbolise and how they could be incorporated into plots, and how they can be used in location and character descriptions to help create a sense of atmosphere.



Warning and Death: More than anything else, a skull is a symbol of death. Consequently, they are used as warnings of danger or outright threats. They are often used as passive guardians of homes and temples, sacred groves and territorial borders, collapsing mines or rickety bridges in need of repair. In a largely illiterate society, with many different races and languages, the skull becomes a very useful symbol. However, while the meanings of such grisly warnings are often obvious from context, the precise purpose or meaning of a skull carved on a door or impaled upon a stick can also be lost to memory. Is the former a warning of imprisoned Undead or just an old tomb? Is the latter a marker of a goblin tribe's territory or a warning of disease or poisonous vegetation beyond?

Memorials: Old battlefields can be littered with skulls half buried in the dirt. A Norse chieftain's longhouse may be decorated with them, commemorating a score of victories over those who would challenge his authority; he calls them all by name and remembers every fight. In this way, the skull can become a marker of events, whether long-forgotten skirmishes or duels of vengeance. Even the war on crime is remembered by the polished skulls of infamous murderers decorating a courtroom's high shelves.

Morr and Khorne: Although they are not friends or allies (a rather contentious theological issue), these gods share the skull as a symbol of their nature and their power. Here, a skull (real or decorative) becomes a marker of allegiance and of philosophy for these gods' followers. Skulls adorn their temples and their symbols of power. There is an ambiguity here, and it can be hard to distinguish between a paternal god concerned with the wellbeing of the dead and a ferocious god only interested in creating the dead. It can be hard to know the true motives of a man for whom the skull is a sacred symbol.

Containers: A skull is a vessel for the brain, perhaps even for the soul. Of course, once the brain has rotted away it is empty. So why does this skull rattle when you shake it? What has been left behind? This skull has had its crown cut off, then reattached with a hinge and a lockable clasp, a receptacle for trinkets or for transporting messages, perhaps. This other skull has had its crown sawn off and discarded, turning it into a goblet for ale or wine, unholy water or holy blood. Who would calmly drink or eat from such a vessel?

Protection: Of course, a container's main purpose is to protect, so skulls are also symbols of protection and concealment. In ancient crypts, walls are often made from hundreds of skulls mortared together; they might be decorative or something may be hidden behind them. Along with other bones, skulls can become building materials, if you can get enough of them.

Watching: There is something about the two deep holes in a skull that makes you think it's watching you, even though those sockets are devoid of living eyeballs. This makes a skull

unnerving, especially if you suddenly get the feeling that it has just shifted slightly to get a better view of what you are doing. Perhaps the skull itself *is* watching you, or maybe its former occupant is keeping you under watch from another world. Wizards might turn skulls into watchers, guardians and spies, protecting their laboratories and towers, or observing their belongings while they travel. Or maybe it is just a skull, a simple inert ornament. But perhaps you should turn it towards the wall, just in case. If you dare to touch it, of course.

The Individual: Even stripped of flesh, even without a brain, a skull represents the person it used to be. That person may be long forgotten or still revered, but the skull remains a symbol of that person. Necromancers view a skull as a link to the soul or ghost of that person, and thus the skull becomes a magical tool to contact the dead. For a noble, the skull of a famed ancestor can become a force for inspiration, while the skull of a disgraced ancestor is a warning against hubris. It may be that a skull allows the dead themselves to reach back into the world of the living, to speak and influence for good or ill, or just chatter inanely, bringing sleepless nights and eventual madness.

Skull Charms

Some of the commonest charms found throughout the Old World and beyond are skull charms. These are created from the skulls of small animals and birds, so there is a considerable variety of them, often showing interesting regional variations based on the dominant cult, local saints, provincial colours, and local wildlife. Generally, to become a charm a skull must be small enough to fit comfortably in the palm of the hand; large skulls are not considered appropriate as charms.

Acquiring small animal skulls is not difficult. However, it is considered unlucky to deliberately kill animals in order to make charms from their skulls. It is believed to be more fortuitous to find a dead animal, clean its skull and bones (often by placing on an ants' nest, or simply leaving for flies to lay eggs on), and then create a charm. This is particularly true of animals sacred to certain gods, such as ravens (Morr), doves (Shallya) or magpies (Ranald) – gods do not look kindly upon those who kill their favoured animals for mere financial gain. Of course, this rarely stops unscrupulous charm-makers doing just that. Skull charms created like this simply do not work, and at the GM's discretion may become a Cursed Charm (see pg. 30).

Due to the delicate nature of small skulls, a significant part of creating skull charms involves making them more durable. The cheapest charms are simply embedded in wax, which is roughly carved into something resembling their original shape. More expensive charms are embedded in resin or dipped in a lacquer, such as shellac – it is no surprise that the folk who fashion skull charms are often the same people who create seals.

Broadly speaking, skull charms conform to the Lucky Charm rules described in the WFRP2 core rules (pg. 123) and in the articles on Lucky Charms (WS29, and pg. 27). Their use is not generic and they only allow rerolls on specific Skills. None of

them allow the bearer to ignore a successful hit. Some examples are given below.

Dove: Associated with Shallya, dove skull charms allow rerolls on Heal Tests and on Toughness Tests to resist disease. Associated with love, dove skull charms also allow rerolls on Charm Tests made during romantic situations.

Fish: It should be no great surprise that fish skull charms allow rerolls on Consume Alcohol and Swim Tests. They are popular with sailors and fishermen because they also allow rerolls on Row and Sail Tests.

Frog: Frogs are symbols of fertility, jumping, swimming and slipperiness. For some reason they are also associated with ancient knowledge, but nobody is quite sure why. They allow rerolls on Tests to get free of grapples, slip out of rope bonds and jumping, as well as Academic Knowledge Tests concerned with ancient or forgotten knowledge. If both parties are in possession of a frog charm, the chance of pregnancy is also increased.

Magpie: The magpie being Ranald's favoured animal, as well as being traditionally linked with petty thievery, magpie skull charms enable rerolls on Skill Tests such as Evaluate, Perception and Sleight of Hand.

Mouse: popular with thieves, but also carried by scouts, hunters and trackers, mouse skull charms allow rerolls on Concealment, Perception and Silent Move Tests.

Pigeon: The homing instinct of pigeons is well-known, from the wild northern lands of Albion to Lustria and Cathay. Pigeon skull charms allow rerolls on Navigation, and so are popular with sailors and merchants. As they have become associated with long-distance travel and movement in general, they also allow rerolls on Outdoor Survival and Follow Trail Tests.

Rat: Rat skull charms allow rerolls on Toughness Tests to resist disease, just like dove skull charms do, and so are very popular. As rats are generally considered suspicious and shifty in nature, as well as being a little bit scary, they also allow rerolls on Intimidate and Shadowing Tests. Rat Catchers, however, never, ever use them, believing they bring extremely bad luck. It is considered very bad form to offer one to a Rat Catcher.

Raven: Associated with Morr, raven skulls are rarely carried as charms for fear they might draw the god of death's attention. However, folklore claims that carrying a raven skull charm wards off the Undead for just that reason.

This is a potentially powerful magical ability, so individual GMs should decide if it is possible and how effective such a ward is. One possibility is that a raven skull charm enables the bearer to make an Intimidate Test to ward off an Undead creature, with penalties varying according to how powerful

or numerous the Undead are. Alternatively, the bearer might have to make a successful Will Power Test – demonstrating her belief in both Morr and the charm – with similar penalties based on the Undead in question.

Snake: Although not all snakes are venomous, they remain associated with poison. Unsurprisingly, snake skull charms allow rerolls on Prepare Poison. Snakes are also commonly believed to hypnotise their prey, and so snake skull charms also allow rerolls on Hypnotism and Charm Animal Tests. Of course, snakes share a lot of traits with mice (they move silently and conceal themselves well), but because mouse skulls are more common than snake skulls, snake skull charms are associated with less common Skills.

Songbird: There are so many birds that chirp and twitter and sing that they are often treated as being the same for skull charm purposes. They are popular with Performers as they allow rerolls on Singer and Musician Tests. Additionally, they allow rerolls on Gossip Tests.

Squirrel: Although squirrels are arguably just arboreal rats, squirrel skull charms reflect their origins, enabling rerolls on Outdoor Survival, Scale Sheer Surface and Search Tests.

Wolf: The skulls of even newborn wolves are too large to make into charms. However, teeth drawn from the skull are perfectly suited to becoming charms. Wolf teeth charms allow rerolls on Intimidate, Outdoor Survival and Follow Trail Tests. They are very rarely carried by followers of Sigmar due to their obvious Ulrican connotations.

Larger Skulls

In WFRP3's *The Gathering Storm*, the Beastman shaman, Foaldeath, carries a charm bearing a foal's skull giving him a bonus Fortune point. Although this article concerns small skulls that are easily carried in a purse or the palm of your hand, larger skulls could be incorporated into magical staffs, talismans and other devices. Such tools are likely to be longer lasting in nature than mere Lucky Charms, but GMs may wish to control their frequency of use, either limiting them to once a day or requiring them to be 'reconsecrated' or 'recharmed' in some manner (anointed with blood from a particular creature, for example).

Final Thoughts

Old and new, the skull is part of WFRP. Putting artistic style aside, questions arise: within the context of the setting, why is the skull such an important decoration for people in the Old World? Why does it appeal so much to people from all classes? Answer this and an artistic quirk becomes a significant and atmospheric piece of setting background with potential to drive characters and plots. Skulls, like seals, should not be dismissed as a Blanchism, but fully taken advantage of.



Hearts of Darkness

The morality and practicality of role-playing evil characters in WFRP
by Toby Pilling

Player 1: 'Come on, it will be fun to play evil characters.'

GM: 'I'm not sure. Is this what the rest of you want?'

Player 2: 'I'm easy.'

Player 3: 'Whatever.'

Player 4: 'I suppose it will be something different.'

GM: 'Well...I'll see what I can do.'

Player 1: 'Cool!'

Ever had a conversation like the above? As a GM, it was one like this that precipitated my first ever evil campaign, based around Skaven PCs. My aim within this article is to share my experiences of running it, as well as my thoughts and ruminations upon the whole issue of evil campaigns.

I admit at the outset that I was extremely dubious about the desirability of running a game for the bad guys - the attraction had always seemed rather adolescent and puerile to me. Was normal campaigning not enjoyable enough for my players, I asked myself. What does it mean to run an 'evil' campaign anyway? And if any or all the characters are going to be evil (and I include chaotic characters within that category), what was the best way to make the experience enjoyable? That is, if one should aim to make it enjoyable at all.

What follows shall therefore examine not just the practical issues of evil campaigns, with some relevant examples and suggestions for the Warhammer world, but also the moral and

intellectual issues that I pondered and struggled with as I began to research and invent my campaign.

WFRP History

Sourcebooks detailing evil races, with options to use them as PCs, only appeared with the advent of WFRP2. This is because, if my understanding is correct, Hogshead had previously shied away from such, believing Games Workshop was uncomfortable with some of their younger gamers buying such products.

Whilst WFRP3 under Fantasy Flight Games does not to my knowledge contain specific options for evil PCs, the same company has brought out 'Black Crusade' for its 40K series of role-playing games. It is all about the PCs being heretics - worshippers of the Ruinous Powers - and contains some interesting ideas which we will examine later for use in WFRP.

Going back to Black Industries and WFRP2 though, some would argue that they aimed at an even younger target audience than Hogshead's gamers. But whilst BI initially shied away from material containing more adult themes, such as slavery, torture or rape, it was they who opened up Skaven and other Chaotic fiends as PCs, in CoTHR and ToC.

This is an interesting fact and it is worth examining some official text from those publications, as I think it will help us probe the expectations of their designers, and indeed, the GMs

and players who will be involved in such campaigns.

"There is something darkly appealing to playing agents of Chaos..."
ToC, pg. 99

Hmm...Let's examine this contention later. Regarding mechanics and practicalities though, after describing the despicable nature of Skaven in CotHR:

"...no honour, no courage, no sense of decency or justice, and absolutely no ethics." The text goes onto say:

"Which are, of course, the opposite of characteristics commonly found in heroic characters in a roleplaying game: a sense of honour, courage under fire, a devotion to something greater, and a firm dedication to teamwork and collaboration."

CotHR, pg. 89

Brave, decent and honourable? It did not sound like many adventuring groups I had known. Having just finished running a *Lord of the Rings* campaign, even in that cradle of moral certitude it took all my efforts to prevent certain players having their PCs from lying, thieving and torturing prisoners. In WFRP, players would recite as rote that the game world was 'dark and gritty', to give them licence to behave however they liked.

On the same page, the official advice on roleplaying Skaven continued:

"...you are free to give in to your baser desires, which is what makes playing a Skaven so much fun".

This brings me onto my first area of discussion:

Aren't most PC groups pretty evil already?

Bad Apples

Most PC groups I am familiar with regularly lie, cheat, fight and steal. Breaking and entering buildings is common, as is murder – if we define that as the taking of life, unsanctioned by some kind of state authority. Prisoners are often tortured for information and vigilante type executions routinely carried out, with no burden of proof or possibility of trial. Bribes are offered and accepted, and recourse to violence is often the first response to any conflict. Arson is practiced regularly, as is robbery. Holy places, tombs and the bodies of the dead are looted as a matter of course.

And these are the good guys? Ah yes, of course – they are fighting Chaos. Oh well, that's all right then. 'Dark and gritty', and all that.

There are three excellent publications that I urge any GM who is considering some kind of evil campaign to obtain. I'll examine them all in turn throughout this article, but the first is *Violence: The Roleplaying Game of Egregious and Repulsive Bloodshed*.

It was published in 1999 by Hogshead, but is now downloadable for free on the internet¹. Written by Greg Costikyan under the pseudonym of Designer X, it is more a satire than a game. It mocks the dungeon bashing antics of some unsophisticated gamers, by transposing the 'break in, kill and loot' ethos to the modern day. Doing so plainly demonstrates that there is little to admire in such activities and indeed the PCs are all murderous, crack addicted psychos. Games consist of them going on raping, pillaging and killing



sprees against decent citizens, until they are all eventually gunned down by the authorities like mad dogs. So much for heroism.

Of course, we can all look down our noses at D&D type dungeon bashing, but another Hogshead publication has all RPGs within its sights. That is *Powerkill!*, a roleplaying metagame penned by John Tynes. It's another tongue in cheek swipe at conventions in RPGs. Sessions are meant to take place before and after standard roleplaying, and mockingly take the form of therapy sessions between a psychologist (the GM) and their deluded clients (the PCs), who are analysed within a secure mental institution about the anti-social behaviour they have previously acted out. Activities within the game world - say, clearing out a nest of Orcs - are assumed to have been the psychotic rationalisations of lunatics who have just, for example, massacred a family in Swindon.

To quote Mr Tynes:

'The actions taken by characters in NRGs (Normal Roleplaying Games) would almost always be completely un-acceptable in the real world; it is only the shoddy trappings of genre conventions that allow RPG players to consider their stories "heroic" or "dramatic." Stripped bare of themes and story arcs, RPG sessions consist of endless variations on the life of a criminal.'

What examples of the shoddy trappings of genre convention exist within WFRP? The lack of any effective law and order agencies to assist the PCs in their tasks might be one, given that the City Watch and other various arms of officialdom, are all invariably depicted as corrupt, incompetent, or both. Which nicely leaves our 'heroes' the job of dispensing justice; all of which can be justified in terms of the 'greater good' - the fight against Chaos. Cue murder, theft, etc. . .

Of course, many players might take pride in the fact that their characters are not shining paragons of virtue, claiming inspiration from another source - that of the anti-hero. Whether it is a melancholy Elric, a brooding Conan or a couple of quipping thieves like Fafhryd and the Grey Mouser, examples abound in fiction of the type. Even Shakespeare portrays the malcontent archetype - talented and ambitious but thwarted from receiving their 'fair' due because of some injustice, they can tend towards light or darkness in pursuit of their aims, but are often acting in the world of shadowy greys. While players might claim such literary role models, they tend



to miss out some of the behaviour they allege to emulate. For anti-heroes are often courageous, honourable (at least among themselves) and have a tendency for either self-sacrifice or fighting to the bitter end. The 'hero' in anti-hero still means something.

Whilst we may therefore question whether any move to an 'evil' campaign is actually necessary at all, we are still left with the question of why our story telling hobby so glorifies a life of crime in the first place.

Darkly Appealing

I do not want to get into a great debate about the nature or meaning of evil, though I shall have to cover the issue somewhat. Before I do so, I intend to ponder first, why it is that most RPGs glorify violent and illegal behaviour. Or perhaps I should really be asking, why such in-game behaviour so appeals to players, for it would not exist otherwise.

One of the main ingredients of fantasy gaming is escapism. There is a tendency to perceive much of reality as boring, sterile and mundane. Taking on the role of an alter-ego more powerful than the real self is attractive. One can indulge in dangerous, risk taking behaviour, without one's existence being threatened.

But the rules can also be escaped from, formal and informal, that bind normal behaviour. Breaking such rules in a fantasy world carries no negative consequences in reality, and usually few in game. Of course, an example of an informal rule in role-playing, is trying to behave in character, conforming to the PCs alignment or cultural norms as best as possible. Some players indeed will claim that they are perfectly justified behaving badly. After all, badness defined by a modern day westerner could be construed differently through the worldview of a figure from ages past. Slavery, for example, was only outlawed scant few centuries ago.

"This isn't the twenty first century."

A familiar refrain of players seeking to justify morally dubious behaviour is to point out that the game takes place in a different, darker era to our own; hence their characters cannot be expected to retain an unrealistic moral stance. It is only their superlative role-playing skills that allow them to be true to the period.

But wait - we are supposed to believe that player characters are exceptional individuals, as they have been graced with fate points. There have always been exceptions to the cultural norms of societies and we can safely assume that PCs are such, with a freedom to choose their moral compasses. As well as that, we have a gift in the Old World in the form of the Shallyan cult, which propounds a very modern, liberal moral outlook. Players can hardly claim ignorance of such. Besides which, players are products of their twenty first century upbringing, utilising rational, deductive thought processes and the like. They cannot escape such, and only claim a medieval mindset when it suits them.

If we accept this, we still have to examine what players commonly do when they are allowed to be evil. What models

do they use to guide their actions? How can they possibly behave any worse than normal bloodthirsty adventurers?

I'm evil, I am

Think of an evil (or at least, very morally bad) group of humans from real, modern world history, who could conceivably wander around together - a group of around half a dozen.

Whoever you choose, none of these individuals will commonly behave as players in RPGs depict evil.

I realise that I should at this point question what we really mean by evil – indeed, question whether it really exists at all or is just the absence of good. I should also query whether any individual is wholly evil anyway – perhaps it is a label that can only be attached to the deed, and not the person. But let us for simplicity's sake define an evil person as someone who commits evil acts. Also, let us mark as evil acts those that an individual perpetrates in pursuit of their desires or aims, with little or no thought to the negative consequences for other people.

Obviously, many if not all evil-doers do not see themselves as being the 'baddies'. Various ideologies and belief systems can persuade their adherents of the rightness of their cause, leading to many terrible acts. Criminal groups and others can form a sort of tribal loyalty, which turns all outsiders into fair game to be preyed upon. Most wrong-doers will commonly justify their behaviour.

Amongst many role-playing groups, however, players take their cue from fiction rather than reality, even when their characters are human. Two main stereotypes predominate – the sneaky, backstabbing type, exemplified by Warhammer's Goblins or Skaven, or the cool, cold and suave type, such as Dracula, or any Bond villain.

There is a third stereotype – the large, dim, violent brute, typified by Orcs. As he appears though in most PC groups already, evil or not, let us discount him for now.

My contention is that real life is often darker than fiction. Many players do not really want to play evil characters or campaigns at all, for to do so would be extremely disturbing. Instead, they want a chance to be nasty, cowardly and treacherous, or cool, powerful and death-dealing. They often just want to play cartoon baddies.

Thankfully such desires are relatively light-hearted and simple to fulfil – my own Skaven campaign was one example. There are also players though who will want to push the moral boundaries and explore deeper emotions and motives.

How best to give them all what they want?

The Enemy Within

The old days of sneaky assassins, Drow Elf warriors or evil clerics campaigning openly alongside good (or at least neutral) characters are largely past, as increasingly are concepts of alignment. The former is a good thing in my view, for it is extremely difficult to justify such a group sticking together for any length of time in game. It never seemed much of a problem for WFRP anyway.

There are two useful ways though to incorporate evil characters in a party of normal alignment. The first is to have the evil hidden, in a classic spy, traitor or cultist type role. It would indeed be possible, though unlikely, to have all the PCs acting towards concealed agendas. Any arrangement would ideally be set up at the start, though to make the character viable and prone to survive, it may be wise to concoct a reason for the 'mole' to watch, wait and report, with instructions to intervene only at the denouement of the whole campaign. Unfortunately, if the mole succeeds in disrupting the whole party's plans (especially if it leads to their destruction), it could cause resentment amongst players. Therefore it might be best if the traitor is briefed that their own plans may be foiled by the intervention of the Gods (or GM) in the interests of game enjoyment. Not all players will be able to accept such a role as stooge, but some will.

The second way is to have a character of formerly good temperament, go off the rails or 'turn to the dark side'. Experiences or revelations the character is subject to can provoke this, and the fall can be interesting to role-play. Once again, the character has more chance of continuing within the campaign if the change is mostly hidden. A classic plot device that can enable this in WFRP is the non-obvious mutation of a PC.

The fact is that when obviously evil characters abound, the parties containing them often have to compromise their role-playing to tolerate them. Having a façade of normalcy is much easier for a player to replicate, as long as they can accept that they may well end up the fall guy.

Evil Incarnate

There are two big factors to be taken into account when discussing evil within WFRP. The first is the actual manifestation of evil in the form of Chaos Gods, and the other is the existence of races other than humanity.

The fact of the existence of Khorne and the rest, bent on the destruction of humanity, can allow otherwise barbarous behaviour aimed at thwarting them to be excused. I've already covered this in describing most 'good' PC groups as pretty immoral anyway, but an interesting twist on the 'evil' campaign can be to have the party play religious (or secular) zealots, firm in the righteousness of their cause in opposing the Ruinous Powers. Such characters will behave normally most of the time, interacting with the society around them during their investigations, but acting with the ruthlessness only the fanatic can muster. Encounters and whole adventures can be prepared that start with morally simple problems (rooting out some Nurglist cultists, perhaps), then progress onto the more complex (children with mutations or hedge wizards, say). One could eventually see the PCs grimly exterminating entire villages for some perceived infraction, as effectively as any Beastman warband. Such campaigning would examine and reflect the true nature of evil more effectively than most.

Regarding non-human races, there are several evil ones. Running an adventure or campaign where the whole party are

one such race can be much simpler than trying with a band of humans. After all, because they are a fantasy race, questions of realism are mostly immaterial, and the players can indulge their stereotypical nasty behaviours. Skaven and Orcs have a brutish, tragic-comic depiction in WFRP literature, with a history of constant betrayal – so much so that one wonders if any such societies could actually function at all. They are the pantomime villains of nastiness. Whilst players may find it amusing to play such parts, one has to work at making such adventuring long term. These races are more often fodder for one-off scenarios.

Other evil races, such as Dark Elves or Vampires, more fit into the ‘cool’ baddie stereotype, full of haughty arrogance and dry quips. Maybe there is more scope for serious campaigning with these types, because they are more humanlike. The problem in any adventuring with inhuman baddies is, however, that interaction with human society may be difficult, so the GM will have to invent completely new civilisations. Such difficulties mean that these parties function best when out in the wilderness or completing a military type operation, as opposed to investigative. Needless to say, because players of an evil race generally expect to be violent, they will also want plenty of foes to entertain them.

Human Scum!

It would be hard for an openly evil group of human PCs to function in any part of the Empire. Anyone, for example bearing the marks of Chaos, would be instantly identified as an enemy. Such a group could again participate in explorative wilderness adventures or military missions easily enough, but are limited to staying away from most human habitations.

Of course, the evil could be hidden – a group of cultists, for example. What you may find as a GM however is that whilst one player may be willing to bear the heart of darkness in secrecy, whole parties tend to want the full trappings and power of evil, as well as no restrictions on their misbehaviour. You can almost see such players squirming to do something bad. I would therefore suggest that the chaotic tribes amongst the Norscans make the best evil human parties, for they also have the great advantage of a martial society that is relatively simple to emulate. Indeed, such parties could be the ideal evil adventurers, as they also have a bond of loyalty amongst themselves that tends to be lacking amongst the other evil races, which may lead to a secure group future.

If you do go for the Chaos worshipping cultist option, it could be worthwhile looking at how FFG deal with such in *Black Crusade*. Basically, PCs face a race between two ultimate fates (apart from death, of course): *Apotheosis*, which involves becoming a Daemon Prince, and *Corruption*, which means devolving into a chaos spawn. Characters gain infamy and corruption points as they progress through adventures, which contribute towards their destinies.

Plots and Ploys

Once you’ve got your player characters ready to roll, your first decision is going to be whether to run a one-off scenario or a

campaign. The former is certainly the easier, not least because the dearth of published material means nearly everything will have to be invented from scratch. Also, the lack of detail on the functioning of alien, non-human societies, may stunt opportunities for social intercourse. Whilst players might make an effort for a scenario or two, they will likely want some discourse with familiar types. Of course, if any of your players opt for the backstabbing evil archetype, a prolonged campaign may never even become an option, though they may attempt to rein in such excesses more if they know character life beckons beyond the present session.

Another factor to bear in mind when designing adventures is how committed all your players are to evil objectives. It may well be that some amongst them are going with the general flow, but deep down dislike the idea of aiding the enemies of humanity. In such a case (or for your own motives), the enemies of the PCs could be similarly evil. Having a Skaven party infiltrate an Orc warren to assassinate a warlord, or a Dark Elf group aiming to thwart the plans of an enemy Necromancer, can enable players to do good, even when they are doing bad, so to speak.

I would suggest there are three types of evil campaign: light-hearted, serious and disturbing. Let us look at a few examples of these.

Light-Hearted Villainy

The Blessed Litter (Skaven)

The PCs are all Clan Eshin Gutter Runners. What makes them remarkable is that they are all identical twin brothers from the same brood mother and thus show loyalty to each other, if not other Skaven (thus avoiding a frenzy of inter-party backstabbing). Adventures consist of them being sent on missions by their superiors, which rely mostly on stealth abilities – spying, sabotage, assassination and the like.

In my own campaign based upon the above premise, I went through as many old published scenarios as I could that featured the Skaven to see if I could modify them so that the players could enter the plotlines. It was a very interesting exercise and yielded much gaming fruit.

Bork's Boys (Orcs)

The PCs are goblinoids in the Vaults, united under the iron fist of Bork – a particularly brutal Orc Warboss. A series of military style operations beckon, possibly along with some diplomatic work – hiring or placating mercenary Ogres, for example. One interesting option could be to have the party investigating the recent aftermath of the Doomstones campaign, including Radzogg’s Blood Axe Alliance.

(This option could also work well with a party of Beastmen, though their intercourse, whilst similarly brutish, would tend to be less comedic than that of Greenskins).

Seriously Dubious

Outside the Law (Criminals)

Whether they are Sartossan pirates, drug dealers in Altdorf or

bandits in the Reikwald, the PCs are living a life of crime. Such a campaign could certainly vary from the light-hearted to the more thought-provoking. One could even blur the boundaries of illegality – Letters of Marque for buccaneers for example, or mercenary bands adopting brigandage between contracts.

Three Tomb Kings (Dark Elves)

The PCs are Dark Elf Corsairs who desert their fleet when they come into possession of a Nehekharan treasure map. It purports to identify the location of the fabled Star of Amon-Tep – a jewel of enormous wealth. The only problem is that it is located deep within the desert amidst the armies of warring Tomb Kings and a recent Orcish Waaagh! Not only that, but their erstwhile Dark Elf colleagues are determined to track down the deserters and bring them to slow and painful justice.

Lesser of Two Evils (Chaos cultists)

As a variant on a straight forward cultist campaign, the PCs follow the Ruinous Powers in order to oppose what they deem is a greater evil or injustice. They could be peasants worshipping Tzcentch in Bretonnia, aiming to ‘change’ their perpetual bondage, or Khorne worshippers in Sylvania, hoping the Blood God will save them from their blood-sucking oppressors. They could even be slaves of the Skaven or Dark Elves, turning to Nurgle both to protect them from rampant disease and to infect their despicable masters with virulent poxes. The justification a party can derive from such motivation may help players get into their roles – that is, if they need any help in the first place.

Disturbing and Upsetting

Few of the plot lines so described enable the PCs to explore the heart of darkness and peer into their own souls. I would question whether a GM or a group of players should even make the attempt.

They might not like what they see.

Pie Shop

The last of the RPGs I advocated studying at the start of this article I can now reveal as ‘Pie Shop’. To describe it in its own terms: *“It is a nasty twisted piece of trash that is designed to let you role play in the gutter of your imagination.”* Forget about a grand background to excuse the actions of the players – the setting is the modern day, and they take the role of serial killers and rapists. Those who want desolate death-dealers are contemptuously re-directed to the *World of Darkness* line. Seek not here for cool, angst-ridden killers in shades and leather – the murderers to model are Fred West and Peter Sutcliffe.

The rule book itself is painful to read. As part of character generation, alongside stats and skills the player chooses their target group – children, babies, the homeless, etc, – and then their ‘emotion’; their twisted motive to kill. This could be hate, hunger, guilt – or indeed, ‘Jesus told me’. One also has to choose a ‘methodology quirk’, which is a ritual or condition the player must fulfil during any murder to gain experience points. Examples include ‘must skin victim’, ‘must keep a part of

victim (finger, heart, eye)’ or ‘must have sex with victim after kill’.

The author, who works under the pseudonym of ‘Mr Toad’, is deliberately scornful of all readers of the rulebook, calling into question the desire to play at being evil at all. He really opens the cesspit of the mind and invites readers to peer within. After digesting its contents, pondering the antics of players pretending to be villainous seems increasingly puerile.

In the chapter on running campaigns, two passages are worth quoting at length:

“It is not enough to tell the GM what your character is doing; you must describe how he feels while he is doing it. Every step of the way. To do anything else is to lessen the impact. If it doesn’t scare you, then you are doing it wrong.”

“Unlike any other game, the purpose of this one is not to succeed in some scheme. It is to play a character until you are so sickened with them and the game that you can no longer go on. It is a role playing endurance test, and winning only proves you sicker than your friends.”

Pie Shop is effectively unplayable. I’m sure that is the intention of its author, and he succeeds dramatically.

Last Word

I used to think that evil campaigns were the domain of adolescents who wanted all the ‘kewl’ stuff, with the licence to do whatever they wanted with it. Having run my own – admittedly light-hearted – Skaven campaign, I now see though that WFRP can be a very good background for campaigns where the players are the baddies. Perhaps in part that is because, certainly in its first edition, it never took itself too seriously. Cornic villains work very well in Warhammer.

Beyond the darkly humorous, I will also admit that exploring alternative motivations and moralities can be a worthwhile roleplaying aim – if it is done well. The danger is that sessions can become juvenile exercises in rule-breaking. Certainly a lot of thought needs to go into the type of game you want and it is also important to discuss boundaries with your players and get some agreement in advance.

However, true evil – depraved and nauseating – is not a fitting subject for any game. My advice is to stay well away from that abyss.

Stick to Skaven instead.

GM: ‘OK chaps, here are your characters.’

Player 1: ‘Cool!’

GM: ‘As you can see, you are all cultists of a Slaaneshi cult in Marienburg. You hold down normal jobs, but your secret aim is to abduct children. Afterwards you mutilate and murder your victims in a ritual sacrifice. You then have to dispose of the bodies – I will award experience point bonuses for particularly ingenious methods.’

Player 2: ‘Err...’

Player 3: ‘I feel ill.’

Player 4: ‘Is this some kind of sick joke?’

Player 1: ‘This is...not cool.’

GM: ‘But guys, I thought you wanted to have some fun?’

THE FANTASIA EFFECT

Magie in Elven Culture by Steven Lewis



The Elves are said to be one of the greatest practitioners of the magical arts in *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay (WFRP2)* and yet there are no real guidelines on how to play or even present an Elf spellcaster. While *Realms of Sorcery (RoS)* does contain various suggestions on how Elves perceive the Winds of Magic, it is strange that as one of the four Player Races and perhaps the most prolific users of magic within the game, that the subject of Elven Magic was not given the same treatment as Dwarf Rune Magic. The intention of this article is to bring a better understanding to the various hints that can be found within those books published and offer a selection of rules to help translate them into gameplay, such as the use of the **Optional Rule: Children of the Gods** (see *TTTE*2 pg. 32) to explain the Elves ability to sense Karl's aura in the *TTT* (see *TTT* pg. 71). If you are interested in further information on Elves there will be forthcoming material from the Elf Project, which can be found on Liber Fanatica website.

A Natural Aptitude

We are told that Elven culture is suffused in mysticism and magic, and Elves believe their Gods surround them and are a part of them; see the *Tome of Salvation (ToS)* pg. 124). Yet we have no explanation for why this should be and how Players and GMs alike should use this important aspect of Elven culture within their game. The first thing we must consider is why Elves feel that they are connected to their Gods on such a personal level, which leads them to believe that their every action and thought is mystical in some respect. Perhaps the reason for this is that Elves are more linked to magic than any other race, hence the reason for the Aethyric Attunement Talent in an Elf's Racial Features (see *WFRP2* pg. 19).

In *RoS* we have an explanation of how the Aethyric Senses actually works (*RoS* pg. 46), and it would seem that every living creature has, to some degree, sensitivity to the Aethyr. In its most basic form this is known as intuition, with signs such as goose bumps and shivers. These signals are often ignored by most people, unaware that they give a hint of activity within the Winds of Magic. Those with a greater sense of intuition are blessed with the Sixth Sense and/or the Aethyric Attunement Talents, while those with the ability to use the Channelling and Magical Sense Skills display training in manipulating and perceiving the Winds of Magic.

The awareness that Elves are shown to display in *Warhammer* literature manifests itself as anything from a shiver, when in close proximity to a magical object, to a very specific physical and/or an emotional reaction to a particular Wind of Magic. This connection would thus explain why an Elf *'considers his every action, his every thought, to be mystical in some respect* (*ToS* pg. 124). Their belief would be further strengthened by the fact Elves know the Realms of Chaos and the Divine Realms of the Gods are, in fact, all part of

the Aethyr. With a large percentage of Elves being able to sense the influence their actions have upon the Aethyr it is easy to see how the different Elven cultures have developed a belief system based upon worship at a very intimate, individual, daily level.

How Does This Translate Into Gameplay?

Now that we have a deeper understanding of how Elves perceive the world around them we must consider its applications in the game itself. The easiest course of action is for the GM to simply permit all Elves to use the Magical Sense Skill as a Basic Skill (see *WFRP2* pg.89), so allowing a basic level of awareness of the Winds of Magic. This new ability would still work in conjunction with the Aethyric Attunement Talent, which is available during an Elf PC's generation (*WFRP2* pg.19), thus either giving them a greater feel for magic in the early stages of a spellcasting career or allowing them to use the Magical Sense Skill as a Basic Skill with greater efficiency.

Although a player may request the use of the Magical Sense Skill, it should be noted that fundamentally it is a GM tool (see *RoS* pg. 47) in that it can be used to help give players leads or foreshadow events to come. In addition a GM may also decide that an Elf PC who passes their Will Power Test by a large margin is more prone to an emotional reaction, such as grief in regard to *Shyish*, anger in regard to *Aqshy*, day-dreaming in regard to *Azyr*, and so on. This further supports the unique connection that Elves have with the Aethyr, though what effects this reaction has on gameplay is up to the GM. However in the three examples above they could be the following:

- Stunned for 1 Round or Action for grief,
- -10 to Fellowship and Will Power related Tests (when next used) for anger
- -10 to Agility, Intelligence and Weapon Skill related Tests for day-dreaming

The use of lesser Arcane Marks (*RoS* pg. 175) could also be used to develop further ideas.

The two examples from *Black Library (BL)* novels below give a small insight into how to use this Talent as a plot device and give suggestions for how an Elf PC's actions and thoughts, and those of others, might affect the Winds

Optional Rule: Children of the Gods

Description: All Elves are able to sense the Winds of Magic, as such, at the GMs discretion. This natural aptitude can be characterised by allowing them to use Magical Sense as a Basic Skill (see *WFRP2* pg. 89). The saturation of magical energy also means they are more resistant to diseases gaining a +20% to resist them, and when failing a test to resist possible mutation they automatically roll on **Table: Curse of the Aenarion**.

of Magic and how the Elf PC is able to sense and interpret those subtle shifts. It is with interest that *Black Industries* (BI) final publication, *The Thousand Thrones*, also features an Elf party from Athel Loren that displays a similar notion towards sensing un-seen corruption, see page 71: "Do not approach. There is great danger here. The aura of power around that child is like none I've ever seen". However in the Elves' profiles we find nothing that would suggest how they would know or feel this. If Coriael, the leader of the Elf group, had taken Aethyric Attunement during character generation, he would still have had Specialist Weapon (Longbow) as a Kithband Warrior as his first career.

Example 1: In the BL novel *A Murder in Marienburg* by David Bishop, we have a situation where the body of the murdered Elf *Arullen* is visited by his brother at the Temple of Morr. In the scene *Tyramin Silverspoon* lets his thoughts and feelings reach out to make contact with Arullen's spirit. He is able to sense that cleansing and purification rituals were complete and that his brother's spirit had moved on, before catching two last words from the echo of the spirit. Since *Shyish* the Purple Wind lingers around areas of death, we can suppose that *Tyramin*, with a successful Magical Sense Test, was able to sense these things through the Purple Wind of Magic.

Example 2: In the BL novel *Defenders of Ulthuan* by Graham McNeill, there is a section which describes a Sword Master of Hoeth, called *Yvraine*, performing a cleansing ritual. In the ritual she enters a meditative trance and slowly whispers the mantra of the Sword Masters of Hoeth, allowing magic to be attuned to her subtle vibrations, building up within her, before beginning a series of dazzling manoeuvres with her sword. We can deduce from this description that *Yvraine* is able to sense the Wind of Magic *Hysb* permeate her body, simply because *Hysb* is attracted to harmonious actions like chanting and is linked with enlightenment, something which the Sword Masters of Hoeth strive for in martial prowess.

Corruption

Although more resistant to corruption than most other races, all Elves are still susceptible to the insidious effects of Chaos. In the case of the High Elves, it is believed that since the time of Aenarion, the first Phoenix King, and the moment he drew the Widomaker from the Altar of Khaine, the God of Murder, all Elves were forever doomed.

We might though consider if Elves are as much affected by their environment as they are by their behaviour. In the last WFB Dark Elves supplement it talks of how the Druchii's battle for survival in the cold, forbidding wilderness of the Land of Chill gnawed away all compassion, so that they became as harsh and unrelenting as their new realm. Those Elves that stayed within the Old World at the end of the War of the Beard and became the Wood Elves are without

Talent (New): The Gifted

Description: During the generation of a Human PC, if you roll Sixth Sense or Luck as a Random Talent then you can replace it with The Gifted. This Talent allows the use of the Magical Sense Skill as a Basic Skill. You may either choose with your GM or determine randomly one Wind of Magic that you have a natural aptitude and connection with, as all other manifestations from other Winds of Magic are hard to perceive (-10% penalty to all tests). Should you obtain the Magical Sense Skill fully the other Winds of Magic will become visible to your magical perception. This ability is as much a curse as a gift, since although Magisters may view you as a potential apprentice, the Witch Hunters can mistake it as a sign of corruption.

doubt changed by living within a forest environment as much, if not more, than those within Averlorn in Ulthuan.

As an example of a more subtle approach to corruption in Elves the following table provides some basic subtle results in regard to showing the taint of Chaos within High Elves. A further table, the Curse of the Wild, detailing the effect the forests have upon Wood Elf corruption will be enclosed in the Wood Elf supplement to be released by the Elf Project.

The Curse of Khaine

The corruption of Elves is more subtle and insidious, involving effects upon the mind, heart, body and soul, so when failing a test to resist mutation, they must roll a 1d10 and apply the *Degree of Failure* to the affected area upon **Curse of Aenarion Table** (see pg. 48).

A Question of Balance

We may also question why some Humans display a natural aptitude for magic and are spotted at a young age and trained in the magical traditions of their lands, while others reach adulthood without such training. In the first example above there is scene directly before in which a Human by the name of *Belladonna*, was able to commune with the ghostly spirit of *Arullen*, moments before *Tyramin* arrives. We can conclude that this is because the spirit is restless, since he was murdered, but also because we are told she has a talent for seeing what others do not, beyond that of mere instinct or intuition, so maybe *Belladonna* is able to sense the Winds of Magic to some degree. While the Magical Sense Skill does not fully explain *Belladonna's* abilities, we can assume that she is drawn strongly towards the Purple Wind of Magic.

So at a basic level for those PCs that do not wish to become a spellcaster we could allow them to swap a relevant talent for the ability to use the Magical Sense as a Basic Skill as well, though it could be argued that it should be a 'lesser'

Curse of Aenarion

1 - 3 Corruption of the Mind

- 0-1 *DoF* You feel as though you are no longer able to focus your intellect, you suffer a -5% penalty to all Perception Tests.
- 2-3 *DoF* You become easily muddled and confused; gain 1 Insanity Point and take a -5% penalty to all Intelligence Tests.
- 4+ *DoF* You gain 1d5 Insanity Points and your next disorder must be Blasted Brains.

4 - 6 Corruption of the Heart

- 0-1 *DoF* You have the heart of a warrior, gaining the Warrior Born Talent (see *WTRP2* pg. 102), but appear calculated and aloof to others and receive a -5% penalty to all Fellowship Tests.
- 2-3 *DoF* You become increasingly cold, callous and cruel, as the taint of Khaine settles into your heart. You take a -5% penalty to all Fellowship tests and gain 1 Insanity Point.
- 4+ *DoF* You feel despair and anger at the fate of Elvenkind. Gain 1d5 Insanity Points and your next disorder must be Heart of Despair or Blasphemous Rage (decided randomly).

7 - 8 Corruption of the Body

- 0-1 *DoF* You are infused with the Winds of Magic, gaining +1 to your Magic characteristic and may learn Dark Magic at any time for 100 xp. However, you no longer receive the benefit of resisting disease (see *Children of the Gods* pg. 46)
- 2-3 *DoF* You become sterile or barren from the magic that permeates your body and are now capable of obtaining Arcane Marks (see *RoS2* pg. 175) when using magick. You also gain 1 Insanity Point.
- 4+ *DoF* You gain a mutation as normal.

9 - 10 Corruption of the Soul

- 0-1 *DoF* You become tainted and your skin loses all colour, becoming pale even for an Elf, gaining the Menacing Talent. However, you suffer a -5% penalty to all Fellowship Tests.
- 2-3 *DoF* You feel as though no one can be trusted and you gain 1 Insanity Point and your next disorder must be Venomous Thoughts.
- 4+ *DoF* You gain 1d5 Insanity Points and your next disorder must be the Host of Fiends.

version of that displayed by Elves. As such, until the PC obtains the Magical Sense Skill fully they should only be fully aware of a single Wind of Magic, suffering a -10% to all other tests relevant to the other Winds of Magic. It could also be said that the Wind of Magic that the PC is attuned towards should be the one they learn, should they enter the Colleges of Magick for training.

The other Player Races, Halflings and Dwarfs, are more resistant to the effects of Aethyr and are thus unable to sense the Winds of Magic as easily as Humans and Elves. As such they would be unable to gain any ability that would allow them to do so, unless a GM felt it necessary for a NPC to have such an ability for the purpose of their game.

Spirituality and Magick

In allowing Elves such an affinity with the Aethyr we can

perhaps also come to understand the way that Elves worship their Gods and how that affects their race. In fact it has been said that because Elves are so attuned to the Aethyr, their very nature is directly influenced by the Winds of Magic and that they are able to control this influence through the way in which they worship their Gods. Elves worship a wide variety of deities which can be divided into two main spheres of influence, with neither having dominance over the other. This is encapsulated in the Elven belief of *Yenlui*, or balance, a philosophy that dictates that there must be harmony between the light and dark natures of the Elven spirit (see *WFB Dark Elves* pg. 14). The two spheres of influence in elven belief are the *Cadaei*, or gods of the Heavens, who represent the more positive characteristics of elven culture, and the *Cytharai*, or gods of the Underworld, who represent the more unsavoury aspects of their nature.

This is re-enforced in the way Magisters, who are influenced by the High Elves, follow the Gods of the Old World, in that they do not directly worship any particular deity, but do give respectful observances to the Gods (see *RoS2* pg. 71 for further detail). So while Elves worship their Gods on a personal and intimate level and would appear not to use priests (see *ToS* pg. 124), we do have references to shrines and priests in *WTB*, with the worship of Khaine by the Dark Elves as the greatest evidence of a structured religion. It would appear instead that all three cultures worship in a common theme, but with slight differences to the extremes in which they practise.

Some High Elves would appear to be dedicated to a particular deity and are given the title of Priest, such as the Priests of Vaul and the Priests of Asuryan, while the Loremasters and Swordmasters of Hoeth are viewed as adepts of Hoeth that both practise the use of magic in two distinctive forms and yet are not viewed as priests. Not to mention the fabled Djed'hi who are similar to Loremasters in their devotion to Hoeth, but prefer to gain wisdom and knowledge through experience, rather than dusty tomes in a library. To further complicate matters we know of spellcasters that are devotees of Mathlann, the God of Storms, who specialise in the use of magic that is relevant to the sea.

Although the Dark Elves seem to have a clear distinction between the Priests and Sorceresses, indeed there are numerous sources that point out that the Hags (the Priestesses of Khaine) are forbidden to use the magical arts, we should question the wording of the Witch King's decree. It could be suggested that what is meant is that the Hags may not use magic in the sense that trained spellcasters do, but instead may use the power of prayer. However it could be that while the other cults within Druchii society may do this, allowing for example the obvious use of Vaul's Anvil in Naggaroth by the Priests of Vaul corrupted by Hotek and Morathi, the Cult of Khaine is simply forbidden as they are the most powerful rivals to the Convents of the Sorceresses which are governed by Morathi, the Witch King's mother.

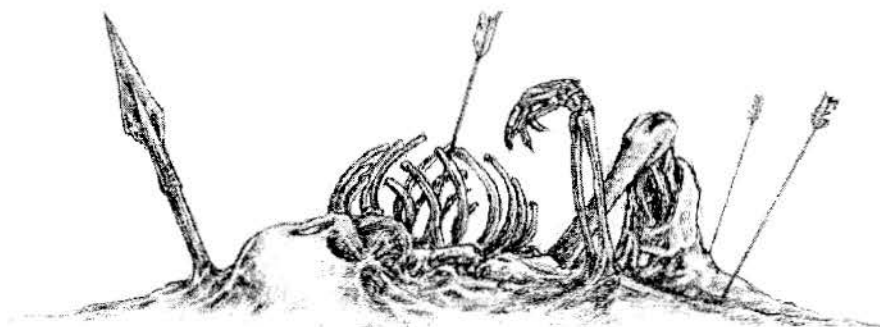
While the Wood Elves view their spellcasters as Handmaidens or Stewards of Ariel, suggesting a clear link with Isha, it should be remembered that the *WTB* Wood

Elf army book also mentions Daith as a master smith capable of creating magical weapons. Such ability is clearly in line with the use of Vaul's Anvil in the forest of Athel Loren, suggesting the possibility of other magic users within the forest; in Daith's case he is clearly a follower of Vaul, the Elven God of Smithing. Indeed it could be said that Wardancers, who are devotees of Loec, use magic directed through their dances and not through the power of prayer as most divine casters.

As such the use of the Priest careers should be acceptable throughout all cultures and also the possibility for Priest to be inserted as a career exit for certain spellcasting professions, such as the Wood Elf Handmaidens or Stewards of Ariel and also the High Elf Mages of Saphery. It should also be suggested that the *GMs Note: Arcane and Divine Lore* (see *ToS* pg. 214) does not apply to Elves, thus reinforcing the notion that Elves view the Aethyr in a different manner to Humans. The use of magic by Wood Elf Wardancers, High Elf Swordmasters, Dark Elf Witch Elves and Assassins, along with details on how an Elf may become more spiritually linked to a deity and not be a Priest, will be explored further in the Elf Project!

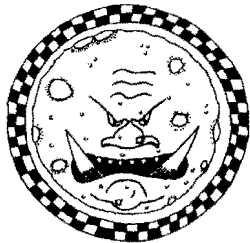
Conclusion

I have aimed to bring together some of the scattered references to provide a firm footing for GMs and players who wish to use Elves. More importantly I have tried to supply an opportunity to make Elf PCs and NPCs feel different to Humans, other than being pointy eared, without overtly allowing power gaming. This is represented by 31 being the average result for an Elf's Will Power characteristic, which even with the Coolheaded Talent, gives a base 15-18% chance of the Elf detecting any disturbances in the Winds of Magic. This is only increased by +10% when combined with the Aethyric Attunement Talent, but this at least allows the choice of the talent to be more viable. As such the concept of Elves being alien and mystical in the Warhammer World is re-enforced and enriches the roleplay environment, so that under these guidelines it is possible to make other creatures that are said to be magical, such as Dragons, Great Eagles and Unicorns, even more appealing and mystical.



THROWING CAUTION TO THE WINDS

A Magical Alternative for WFRP2 by Robin Low



The following describes an alternative approach to magic in WFRP2, with a deliberate attempt to make magic harder to perform and more frequently dangerous. I have aimed to keep it relatively simple and close to the official rules. Although aimed at wizards, most changes are applicable

to priests and runesmiths.

The Magic Characteristic

All characters have a percentile Magic Characteristic, determined by rolling 2d10+20. GMs can change this according to their perception of the relative magical natures of various races, but the maximum initial roll of 40 should be kept. For

A Brief Summary

The following is very short and to the point, lacking the detail and alternative suggestions within the main text, so do not regard it as a strict set of rules.

All starting characters have a percentile Magic Characteristic 2d10+20. Advances from Career profiles are bought at the usual cost; for each +1 advance, +15 is added instead.

A *Casting Target* is determined for each spell or ritual by subtracting the Casting Number from the character's Magic Characteristic. The player must then roll equal to or under the Casting Target on percentile dice to successfully cast the spell.

Failing to cast a spell successfully results in Tzeentch's Curse. Which Manifestation table is rolled on depends on the Casting Number of the spell or ritual: 1-10 rolls on Minor, 11-20 rolls on Major, 21+ rolls on Catastrophic. Each Degree of Failure adds 5 to the result.

Channelling can help or hinder the casting. For every Degree of Success or Failure of a Channelling Test a point is added or subtracted, respectively, to the spell's Casting Target.

Spell ingredient bonuses add to the Casting Target; variable Winds and locations add or subtract.

example, Elves might roll 1d10+30, and Dwarves 3d10+10 to represent the racial and cultural differences. All races have the *potential* for magic, but not all races have the temperament, desire or cultural inclination to develop that potential.

The Magic Characteristic advances for relevant careers are multiplied by 15. Each +15 advance costs 100xp.

The Magic Characteristics of the creatures and races in the *Old World Bestiary* and NPCs in supplements are up to individual GMs, using the original Magic Characteristic as an indicator of how magical any individual is likely to be. As a rough guide, multiply the old Magic Characteristic by 20 and add 15, meaning that NPCs and creatures have Magic Characteristics of 15, 35, 55, 75 or 95. Certain magic activities demand a minimum score in the Magic Characteristic before they can be attempted – these can be converted from old to new in the same fashion and freely modified according to the needs of the game.

Rationalisation: The Warhammer World has been saturated with low levels of magical energy since the collapse of the warp gates thousands of years ago. Consequently, magical potential exists in just about everything, although to varying degrees. Advances for the percentile Magic Characteristic are multiples of 15. This seems generous, but the nature of the system outlined below makes it necessary

Casting a Spell or Performing a Ritual

To cast a spell or perform a ritual a character must roll equal to or less than his Magic Characteristic minus the Casting Number of the spell or ritual. This new number is called the *Casting Target*.

Before play begins, the Casting Target is calculated and recorded for each spell the character knows. As a character's Magic Characteristic increases, the Casting Target for each known spell similarly increases. However, the Casting Target can be temporarily modified during play by various factors, such as Channelling, use of spell ingredients, and variations in the local ambient magic or the strength of the local Winds as determined by the GM.

Rationalisation: Casting spells and performing rituals in WFRP are about controlling magical energy. A Wizard Lord should be able to control small amounts of such energy easily, but an Apprentice Wizard will find it harder.

Example

Alphonse the Apprentice attempts to cast Sounds. He is a promising student, with a Magic Characteristic of 55 (the player achieved a full 40 when rolling the Magic Characteristic and has the +15 advance from the Apprentice Wizard profile). The Casting Number for Sounds is 4, so Alphonse's Casting Target for this spell is 51 (Magic Characteristic 55 minus Casting Number 4).

If Alphonse feels ambitious and attempts to cast Wings of the Falcon, his Casting Target for this spell is 30 (Magic Characteristic 55 minus Casting Number 25).

In contrast, Alphonse's master, the Wizard Lord Blonheim has a Magic Characteristic of a lofty 100 (he too began with a Magic Characteristic of 40, and had taken four +15 advances during his career). His Casting Targets for Sounds and Wings of the Falcon are 96 and 75 respectively.

Spell and Ritual Failure

Failure to cast a spell or perform a ritual successfully results in Tzeentch's Curse. The Manifestation table rolled on depends on the Casting Number (not the Casting Target) of the spell or ritual:

Casting Number	Table
1-10	Minor
11-20	Major
21+	Catastrophic.

The Degrees of Failure on a Casting Test increase the severity of the Curse. For every Degree of Failure, add 5 to the roll made on the appropriate Manifestation table. Where possible, the result rolled should be linked in some way to the spell attempted.

Example

Alphonse, perhaps foolishly, is attempting to cast Wings of the Falcon. His Casting Target for this spell is 30. Unfortunately, his player rolls 76. Failure to cast the spell means he must roll for Tzeentch's Curse, using the Catastrophic Manifestation table because the spell's Casting Number is 25. The player rolls 27 for Tzeentch's Lash. Unfortunately, Alphonse experienced 4 Degrees of Failure, which adds 20 to the roll, for a total of 47. Alphonse experiences a Heretical Vision, a far worse fate.

Had Alphonse's master attempted the same spell, his Casting Target would have been 75. Even if he failed to cast the spell, at worst (rolling 100) he would only have achieved 2 Degrees of Failure. He would still experience a Catastrophic Manifestation, but the result is potentially less extreme.

Rationalisation: A failed casting represents failure to effectively control magical energy, whether drawn from the Winds and ambient magic, or directly from the Aethyr following a Channelling Test (see below). The greater the Degree of Failure, the worse the side effects. Failure always results in problems, even for experienced wizards.

Weaker wizards can attempt to cast more powerful spells, but because they are more likely to experience a greater Degree of Failure, the more extreme the result of failure is likely to be

(the classic tale of *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* is a perfect example).

Channelling

A Channelling Test can be made before a Casting Test to increase the chances of successfully casting a spell or performing a ritual, but it is a double edged sword. A Channelling Test is made as normal, but Degrees of Success or Failure are respectively added to or subtracted from the Casting Target of the spell being attempted. GMs may opt to multiply Degrees of Success or Failure by two or even three in order to make the effects of Channelling more significant, either routinely or according to circumstances (being in a place closely linked to the Aethyr, for example). Once a character has made a Channelling Test he is committed to a Casting Test.

Example

Following his Heretical Vision, Alphonse has become a little bonkers and is obsessed with flying. Standing on top of a building he attempts Wings of the Falcon again. This time, he decides to Channel additional Aethyric energy first. Alphonse's player must roll against his Will Power Characteristic of 45. The player rolls a very lucky 03, resulting in 4 Degrees of Success. This increases Alphonse's Casting Target of 30 for the spell to 34! It might make all the difference...

Rationalisation: When normally casting spells or performing rituals, a character is drawing on the ambient magic and the relevant Wind of Magic in the normal environment. However, Channelling draws more directly on power from within the Aethyr itself. Consequently, a successful Channelling Test allows this additional magical energy to be controlled, but failure increases the chance of the spell failing and worsening the effects of Tzeentch's Curse through the uncontrolled magic energy.

Increasing the Importance of Spell Ingredients

In WFRP1, ingredients were quirky requirements for spell casting. WFRP2 kept them, but very sensibly made their use optional but beneficial. However, it did not get to grips with what they represent and how they could be used more creatively.

Spell ingredients are symbolic elements that help Wizards focus on the desired effect. The symbolism lies in the connection between the ingredients and that effect. As the spell ingredient is magically consumed during the casting it is also a sacrifice, with the ingredient converted from symbolic matter into magical potential – this is seen in the way rare, valuable or uneasily obtained ingredients have greater benefit than those that are cheaper and more easily found. Priests make such sacrifices directly to their god; wizards sacrifice to the Aethyr, although they may not realise this. Understanding these two characteristics, symbolism and sacrifice, why not develop them further?

The official ingredients for spells in published materials can be viewed as suggestions. Characters should be allowed to substitute different spell components *provided they can demonstrate a symbolic link between a potential ingredient and spell.* For example,

Drop requires a dab of butter, but why not a drop of oil or any other slippery or slimy object, even a slimy frog! Perhaps the coffin nail being saved for *Acceptance of Fate* could be used for *Swift Passing* instead. This approach gives players, and GMs, greater flexibility and opportunities for using their imagination.

WFRP2 gives spell ingredients bonuses ranging from +1 to +3 that add to a player's Casting roll, improving the chances of the spell succeeding. Within these revised magic rules, this bonus is doubled becoming +2, +4 or +6, adding to a spell or ritual's Casting Target (GMs are free to be more flexible). The more valuable, hazardous, or rare the ingredient is, the higher the bonus. So, if a Wizard uses an ingredient that is more expensive or unusual than the standard spell ingredient needed for a spell, the bonus should be higher. For example, a Casting roll on *Claws of Fury* gains a +2 bonus if a cat's claw is used as an ingredient, so why not use a hawk's talon to get a +4 bonus, or a lion's claw for a +6? This works the other way too: if a dragon's scale is unavailable to give a +6 bonus to cast *Breathe Fire*, a handful of chewed peppercorns might give a +2.

Symbolic links do not have to be obvious to others; they just have to be understood by the wizard using them. For example, a Wizard casting *Summer Heat* could use an old rag (+4) because he knew that it had been used to mop the brow of a woman in the heat of childbirth.

Two seemingly identical items can have totally different symbolic values. For example, a Casting Target on *Lightning Storm* can be increased by +6 when using a weather vane. However, there is a difference between a weather vane freshly forged by a blacksmith (+2), one that has been on a steeple for twenty or more years (+4) and one that was once actually struck by lightning (+6). A lens gives +2 for *Radiant Gaze*, but what about the lens from the telescope through which the battlefield death of a great hero was witnessed?

Spell ingredients should be used to make magic more interesting and creative, and themselves become the objects of plots and stories. They can become the *real* magic items of WFRP. GMs should consider increasing the range of bonuses spell ingredients can offer (+10 as a maximum for an individual item,

unless it is something *really* special), but should be wary of allowing the use of more than one ingredient to enhance any single Casting Target. If more than one ingredient is allowed to be used, then each ingredient should be significantly different (a bagful of coffin nails for *Acceptance of Fate* is no better than a single coffin nail) and the combined bonus can be no higher than +20 or greater than half the official Casting Number, rounded down. Arguably, this makes casting minor spells easier, but then symbolically significant spell ingredients should be hard enough to obtain that they are not used frivolously. Of course, spell ingredients also become a cunning way of avoiding or limiting Tzeentch's Curse, but why not? Everyone tries to make dangerous things safer, and it makes sense for Wizards to strive towards making their craft less hazardous, especially those who are less experienced. However, good ingredients should not be easy to acquire or consequence free to use – an



unused coffin nail is close to worthless, while one pulled from a coffin carries magical value, but obtaining such has other implications.

One restriction GMs might want to impose is the use of living creatures. For example, it is suggested above that a slippery frog might substitute for a dab of butter for the spell *Drop*. A cunning player might get the idea that by simply touching a gigantic frog-like beastman and casting *Drop* the beastman becomes a spell ingredient and vanishes when the spell is cast. To avoid this sort of thing, the GM should probably rule that only dead things can serve as spell ingredients (although the spell *Wings of the Falcon* does technically allow it). A reasonable exception to this restriction is to say that a living creature can be used as long as it is sacrificed as part of a formal ritual, even if that just means quickly wringing the falcon's neck.

Example

Alphonse is not only Channelling additional energy to assist his casting of Wings of the Falcon, he has stolen one of his master's prized Griffon feathers – even if he survives the casting, he may not survive his master! The value and rarity of the feather gives it a value of +6 as a spell ingredient, increasing Alphonse's Casting Target from 34 to 40. Alphonse may yet fly!

The Winds of Magic

The variability of the Winds of Magic can also improve the chances of a successful casting. Wizards seek out places where the Winds blow particularly strongly or where a particular Colour of Magic has saturated the local environment. One of the reasons wizards have a habit of building towers in the middle of nowhere is because they are taking advantage of strong local Winds or a wood or river or mountain that has absorbed a lot of Colour. Of course, such places could as easily be a garret room, a temple, or merchant's warehouse in the right part of the city.

In effect, these places are very large spell ingredients, only ones that *do not* vanish after casting. Unsurprisingly, some Wizards spend a lot of time searching for such places, and fight tooth and nail to keep them to themselves or overcome the current owners. In rules terms, these places of magical power are treated as providing similar bonuses as spell ingredients above whenever a Wizard casts there.

However, GMs can require Wizards to attune themselves to these places, perhaps through a successful Channelling Test, before they can take advantage of the bonuses. An unsuccessful Test might mean the wizard is struck by Tzeentch's Curse, is never able to use the place to enhance his magic, or the place gives a penalty rather than a bonus whenever he tries to cast magic there.

Familiars

Both editions of *Realms of Sorcery* have rules for familiars, but the second edition in particular imposes a hefty set of prerequisites before one can be created and bound. Remove these prerequisites and treat acquiring a familiar as a Talent

available to any magical Career (one providing a Magic Characteristic more than 0) that the GM deems suitable:

Familiar: the character is able to create or find a creature and then bind it to himself as a familiar. This new Talent *cannot* be taken at Character Creation (even if you are creating a Wizard Lord), but must be bought with Experience Points, and then the familiar found and bound in play. Rules for creating, finding and binding a familiar are as described in *Realms of Sorcery*. If a familiar is destroyed, then the Talent must be bought again before a new one can be acquired.

Given the cost of creating or buying a familiar, most characters prefer to search for a suitable animal to bind as a familiar. The Binding of the familiar (the Search, Time and Test described on page 186 of *RoS*) should become an interesting plot or sub-plot for the party or specific character in question, and not merely a series of dice rolls.

Allowing less powerful magical characters to have familiars enables them potentially to take advantage of the Magic Power familiar ability. Under the modified rule in this article, Magic Power gives the Wizard to whom the familiar is bound a +10% bonus to her Magic Characteristic.

(Although this is a matter of personal taste, given that most gods have favoured animals, Priests too could be allowed to acquire familiars. However, while this might have been common practice for priests back in the days of Sigmar and his ancestors, familiars have become seen as inherently suspect and associated with sorcery, so few Priests dare have a familiar openly these days, and those that do never refer to them as familiars, merely as pets or the sacred animals of their god.)

Rationalisation: It is reasonable that familiars should be part and parcel of being a magical character at all levels of power, having a traditional, folkloric feel about them. What is more, they add flavour, provide potential for roleplaying and can serve as handy plot devices. Within the context of the revised rules in this article, they can make spell casting easier under difficult circumstances, but with attendant social problems balancing the advantage.

Learning Spells

Instead of automatically knowing all spells within a lore, GMs could require characters to learn them instead. Learning a spell costs ten times the Casting Number in experience points and requires a successful Intelligence Test after a number of days of study and practice equal to the Casting Number. Failure means the spell is not learnt, but no experience points are spent. A character starting as an Apprentice Wizard automatically knows the Petty Magic (Arcane) spells from the core rulebook when he is created. New Petty Magic spells (whether Arcane, Divine or Hedge) from other sources should be learnt as described. Lesser Magic spells continue to be bought as Talents, but Wizards should not be limited to what their career descriptions allow them as long as the costs and Intelligence Tests are applied as above.

Controlling the Use of Magic

Some people have commented that it can be too easy to keep casting spells, even with the threat of Tzeentch's Curse. In the system described above, automatically rolling on a Chaos Manifestation table following spell or ritual failure makes magic much riskier for lesser Wizards, but much safer for more powerful Wizards casting weaker spells. However, here is another way of controlling spell use, even that of powerful Wizards, without changing the rules too much. It can be used as an alternative method of applying Tzeentch's Curse automatically or an additional one used in conjunction with the official rules or the ones described in this article.

In this system, a record is kept of the Casting Number of each spell a Wizard casts. When the sum of those Casting Numbers becomes equal to the Wizard's Magic Characteristic, a limiting point is reached. (This can work under the official rules, the limit being determined by multiplying the Magic Characteristic by twenty and adding ten.) For example, an Apprentice Wizard with a Magic Characteristic of 37 could attempt to cast five spells each with a Casting Number of six, one spell with a

Casting Number of four, and one with Casting Number of three before reaching his limit.

If the Wizard has not quite reached his limit, but attempts to cast a spell with a Casting Number that carries him over his limit, he is treated as if he already had reached his limit (see below). Even if the casting is not successful, the Casting Number of the attempted spell is still counted towards the limit.

Reaching this limit represents the Wizard becoming saturated with magic as the Winds of Magic (or magic drawn from the Aethyr during Channelling) blow through him. He cannot attempt to cast further spells (regardless of Casting Number) without dangerous consequences, unless he first rids himself of this magic.

The Wizard can clear this magic by making a successful Channelling roll in conjunction with a period of magical abstinence (until next sun or moonrise, whichever is longest). This is called Cleansing, and there is opportunity for the creation of personal cleansing habits for colour and roleplay (for example, a simple bath in water, drinking lots of water or perhaps ale, stripping naked beneath the light of the stars and the moon or the sun for an hour, passing the hands through a flame, and so on).

Failure to cleanse himself means the next spell the Wizard attempts to cast results in automatic Tzeentch's Curse, rolling on the Catastrophic Chaos Manifestations table, even if the casting is successful.

If a PC/player decides to attempt a casting regardless of the risk, then the GM could impose a Will Power Test – the Wizard will know what he is doing is dangerous, so must find the courage and determination to take the chance.

Rationalisation: The concept of corruption and the fear of contamination and taint are prevalent in WFRP. Consequently, the idea of Cleansing seems entirely appropriate to the setting and is a useful tool for controlling the use of magic. Apprentice Wizards can potentially cast a number of spells and while more powerful wizards can cast numerous weaker spells, they are limited when it comes to casting more powerful ones.

Final Thoughts

If you implement the core rules changes described here then magic becomes harder and more hazardous, especially for Apprentice Wizards. For some, this will be exactly the way they like it. However, for those who want magic to be more fun, more magical, options are suggested throughout the text: doubling or trebling the effects of Channelling and enhancing the range of bonuses provided by spell ingredients or variable winds and magic saturated places are key to this. Making magic harder and more dangerous makes those aspects of magic much more significant, providing far greater scope for creativity, imagination and unusual situations as players/PCs look for in-game ways to improve chances of success and limit the risks. Overall, this makes magic far more interesting than just rolling dice and hoping doubles, or worse, do not come up.



INTO THE DARKNESS

A CLOSE EXAMINATION IN THE ART OF TUNNEL FIGHTING

BY ALFRED NUÑEZ, JR.

In the Beginning...

Dwarfs are among the most militaristic of the races in the Warhammer World. They have waged more centuries-spanning wars against different enemy races than even the High Elves of Ulthuan. The type of warfare conducted by these various races greatly tested and strained the valiant Dwarfs until their own ingenuity and skill enabled them to stave off defeat and ruin.

As their 500 year war against the Elves neared its successful conclusion, the Dwarf war machine was the most powerful in the Old World. Their engineers and weaponsmiths contributed as much to the all-but-certain victory as did the tactical genius of Dwarf generals and the skill at arms of the Dwarf warrior. In this time of innovation and strife, the Dwarfs mastered the use of river transport to move troops and provisions

throughout the land later called the Empire, as well as forward bases with which they could consolidate their military gains. Dwarf resourcefulness also allowed them to replace their inferior bows (when compared to that which the Elves used to great effectiveness) with the newly developed crossbow and pikes which provided them with protection from the arrows fired by Elven archers and the means to break the charges of Elven cavalry. They also evolved siege warfare through the development of the ballista, catapult, trebuchet, and siege towers.

The Goblin Wars

The Dwarf victory over the High Elves was short-lived, however, as massive earthquakes rent their mountainous empire of Karaz Ankor and the ancient volcanoes awoke anew with clouds of ash and rivers of lava. Hordes of green-



skinned denizens from the Dark Lands came upon the heels of these natural disasters. The Orcs and Goblins swarmed over the mountains while their subterranean kin, the Night Goblins, and exploited the cave-ins and fissures in the myriad underground passages.

The Dwarfs were caught unawares. The earth had been their refuge since the Coming of Chaos three millennia in the past and they were wholly unprepared for underground warfare. The narrow confines of their tunnels and mineshafts prohibited the use of the weapons and tactics the Dwarfs had perfected in their successful wars against Chaos and, more recently, the High Elves. In fact, the Dwarfs found themselves fighting on two fronts. Most of their forces were initially deployed on the surface to repel the larger force of Orcs and Goblins, only to find their rear surprised and collapsing from the onslaught below. Karak Ungor was the first Dwarfhold to fall, followed by Karak Varn. In the latter engagement, the Dwarfs were also set upon by another subterranean enemy: the Skaven.

The Dwarfs faced a war of survival. No quarter was given, none asked. Yet, the Dwarfs were greatly outnumbered and needed to improve upon the manner of conducting underground warfare. Most of their surface weaponry and tactics could still be used with great effect in the vastness of the great halls. The tunnels required different tactics coupled with the finely crafted swords, axes, and hammers from the forges of the Dwarf weaponsmiths.

A number of clans of the Warrior craftguild grew tired of the defensive posture taken in the tunnels beneath the remaining Dwarfholds and believed that they must regain the initiative. Many knew the Dwarf tunnels, as well as the nearby natural cave systems, extremely well from years of labouring in the mines during their youth. If the Dwarfs intended to regain control of the war they had to use their knowledge and natural fighting prowess to the utmost. The early stages met with limited success as the Dwarf Tunnel Fighters slowly developed their approach to underground combat. In the millennium before Sigmar Heldenhammer rose to prominence, the Dwarfs perfected subterranean combat.

Tactics

Similar to the Dwarf scouts on the surface, Tunnel Fighters venture forth in small groups to search for their enemies.

They equip themselves with the appropriate gear to fight a prolonged engagement away from Dwarf mining tunnels. Missile weapons are left behind for most missions as the irregular tunnels, caverns, and other underground passageways greatly limit the effectiveness of such weapons. Instead, Tunnel Fighters carry rope, picks, shuttered lanterns, small casks of ale, and other equipment similar to that which miners carry.

Tunnel Fighters depend heavily on rapid (for a Dwarf, at any rate) movement, ambush, and hand-to-hand combat to dispatch their enemies. They generally plan their actions to the smallest detail before setting out from their safe haven in silence. This quiet march allows the Dwarfs to hear the squabbling of Night Goblins and the chattering of Skaven long before their enemies sense the Dwarfs' presence. One lantern carried by the second or third Dwarf in line is shuttered in such a way that there is barely any illumination: just enough, in fact, to allow the Dwarfs to use their Night Vision to best effect. Pre-arranged hand signals are used to communicate whenever Tunnel Fighters are on patrol.



Along the way, Tunnel Fighters prepare traps for the unwary. Pitfalls and camouflaged crevasses are the most common, though the Dwarfs would hardly pass on an opportunity to weaken any support beams and bridges that their enemies build. Having endured the same, Tunnel Fighters are not above poisoning pools of water frequented by their enemies.

[S] Essentially, Tunnel Fighters operate like commandos behind enemy lines.

They waylay small patrols, instil fear, and generally harass and kill their enemies.

Optional rule for WFRP2

The description of Tunnel Fighters in the WFRP2 rulebook gives a hint of the role these subterranean warriors play in the defence of their stronghold. This section provides some options for the GM willing to explore adventuring possibilities in the vastness beneath the Worlds Edge and other mountain ranges where the Dwarfs live.

The GM may employ the advance scheme for a Mercenary Sergeant whenever they need an experienced leader to command a group of Tunnel Fighters into the fray or a solo warrior who ruthlessly attacks the unsuspecting enemy.

These characters are considered "Vermin Hunters" or some other colourful title. They substitute the following skills for those listed under that particular career: Concealment-Rural (underground only), Consume Alcohol, Earth Lore, Scale Sheer Surface (underground only), Silent Move Rural (underground only), Set Traps, Spelunking, Spot Traps.

Earth Lore is a new skill which is detailed in the *Dwarfs: Stone and Steel* sourcebook, pg. 91. Spelunking is another new skill and is described as follows:

Spelunking Characters with this skill are able to make their way through underground passages, even if it means manoeuvring through the narrowest of passages and around treacherous crevasses. Moreover, characters with this skill are able to lead others through the myriad tunnels and caverns found below the earth's surface. This skill gives the character a +10 modifier to **Observe** tests whenever the character is examining a route for hazards such as obscured pitfalls and unstable ceilings. In addition, **Int** is likewise modified by +10% any time the character is determining the safest route around or through these obstacles.

Adventure Hooks

Given the specialisation of Tunnel Fighters, encounters with them should be rare events. A few suggestions follow:

Lost and Forgotten

Exploring underground passages in one of the mountain ranges ringing the Empire, the PCs have lost their way through ill-planning or ill-luck. Their rations are running low (assuming they remember to eat something along the way), and they are concerned that they will never see the surface again. As they stumble along, they are ambushed by a raiding party of Tunnel Fighters. The Dwarfs are not certain whether the PCs are fools or Skaven agents, so they capture the bewildered characters with the intent of interrogating them in a secure place. Along the way, a large Skaven force attacks. The Dwarfs leave their captives bound in order to the fight. The PCs can free themselves. In the confusion, should they run? Or, fight alongside the out-numbered Dwarfs? What will the Skaven do to them if the Ratmen prove victorious?

What Have We Found?

PCs exploring the fastness of the Worlds Edge Mountains are captured by Imperial Dwarfs from a local hold for trespassing

on their realm without the proper credentials. They are brought before a Dwarf Lord who demands a service in exchange for letting the PCs go. Some mysterious evil has been killing miners in the deep tunnels below the Hold, which could lead to an economic disaster. As the Lord has limited resources to commit to such an enterprise (the greenskins have become more active in the region), the PCs are pressed into service. A veteran Tunnel Fighter (or Vermin Hunter) will lead them into the mines and caverns so the PCs can conduct their investigations. The GM should have ample villains for this scenario. An obvious choice would be Skaven, Trolls, or Night Goblins. More ancient evils - such as Dragon Ogres, Lizardmen or, once-imprisoned Daemons - could be surprises for the PCs. Perhaps even a Dwarf who was once lost in the tunnels, presumed dead and now (while very much alive) seeks revenge on those who stopped searching for him.



In the Dark

While staying at a human castle or hunting lodge in the mountains, the PCs experience a small earthquake, and have to avoid injury and rescue one or two other guests. After the shock and hazards of the quake are over, the PCs discover a deep fissure in the rock has opened under or near the building. If the PCs indicate a desire to explore, one their fellow guests mentions that an old Dwarf lives in the nearby village, and perhaps he would be a useful companion. When they meet the Dwarf they discover he is exceedingly old and virtually blind. However, he is a veteran Tunnel Fighter and remains very much at home in the dark. He is tough, but no longer strong, and needs some assistance. He can teach the PCs the

tricks and skills of Tunnel Fighters, while also boring them with endless stories of his battles below the earth and his long-dead friends.

Rat Poison

In the course of an adventure involving Skaven, the PCs have to do some research. Whether from a book or a scholar, they discover a tale about Dwarf Tunnel Fighters using a lethal toxin to poison Skaven water and food sources. It may be worth the PCs making a trip to a Dwarf Hold in search of Tunnel Fighters, the poison recipe, and the exotic ingredients required. Inevitably, the Tunnel Fighters will not give up their secret recipe without something in return, or they may have lost it or never even heard of it themselves, necessitating another adventure or experiments to rediscover it.

TUNNEL FIGHTER

BASIC CAREER: DWARF
Basic, Combat, Rural, Specialist

PRIMARY

CHARACTERISTICS
Agility, Toughness

CAREER SKILLS
Athletics, Nature
Lore, Observation,
Resilience, Stealth,
Weapon Skill

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ADVANCES

Action	2	Talent	1
Skill	3	Fortune	1
Conservative	1	Reckless	1
Wound	1		



FOCUS

TACTIC

VERMIN HUNTER

ADVANCED CAREER: DWARF
Combat, Intermediate, Rural, Specialist

PRIMARY

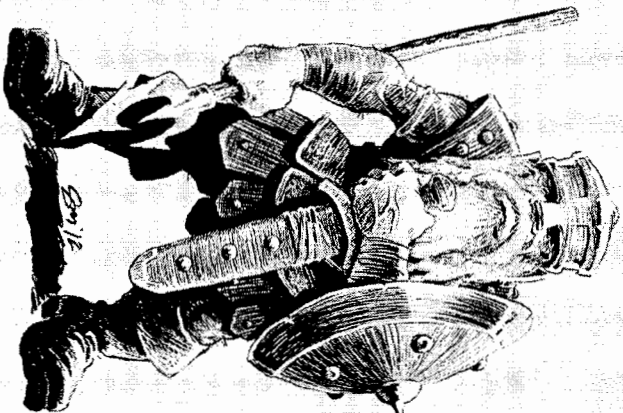
CHARACTERISTICS
Intelligence, Toughness

CAREER SKILLS
Leadership, Nature
Lore, Observation,
Resilience, Stealth,
Weapon Skill

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ADVANCES

Action	2	Talent	2
Skill	2	Fortune	1
Conservative	1	Reckless	1
Wound	1		



FOCUS

TACTIC

TUNNEL FIGHTER CAREER ABILITY

ABILITY

When spending fortune points on any check in a cavern add (Yellow Die) instead of (White Die)

VERMIN HUNTER CAREER ABILITY

ABILITY

Once per session you may add (Yellow Die) to any Observation or Stealth check in a cavern

Clan Asgedalaion

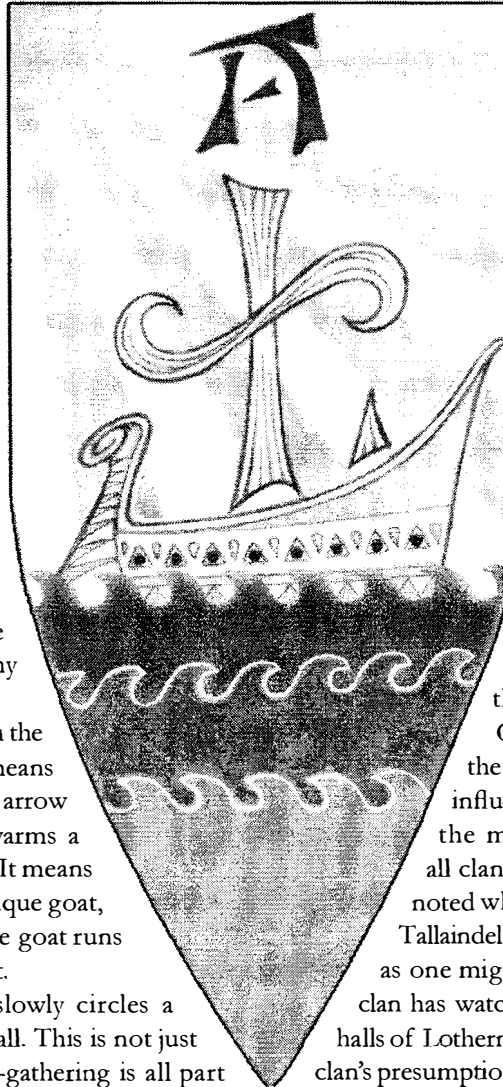
A Sea Elf Influence Clan by Clive Oldfield

Asgedalaion is a *doiragthaiava*, an 'influence clan' of the Sea Elves. It vies for attention and respect at the court of the Phoenix King. It seeks to ensure that which is said at court can be trusted. It seeks to ensure that what it promises can be made to happen either in Lothorn, or all Ulthuan (a much harder task than one might imagine), and beyond that throughout the entire world. The clan wishes to be known as the clan that one should consult, to learn something of any place in the world, but more importantly, if change is desired in any place in the world. The clan wishes to be called the ink that writes in the great book in which the truth of the world is written. The clan also wishes for respect and influence wherever it functions, for that is a worthy means to an end.

Thaiaca is best translated as influence in the limited language of the Empire. But it means the wind on white sails as a ship sails arrow straight, and it means when the sun warms a warrior so that he takes off his armour. It means when a white lion slowly circles a Cothique goat, and it shows its tail on purpose, and the goat runs into the valley where the cat will have it.

It also means, when a white lion slowly circles a Cothique goat and shows it nothing at all. This is not just spying, though spying and intelligence-gathering is all part of Clan Asgedalaion's function; it is only a tiny part of it, and as much a by-product as a goal or even a means to that goal. It is coercion, but that is a dirty word, and there is an Eltharin word just as dirty: *mintanaicei*. Asgedalaion would resent forever being accused of *dintanaicei*.

The clan's watchword is *lonthain* which means something like 'putting a spherical thing down and it still being there when



you go to pick it up again, even after a great party.' Perhaps reliability would be the simplest translation, but that is much too dull for the panache that the word radiates in Eltharin.

Asgedalaion is up and coming in the Phoenix halls. It is a young dragon nipping at the tail of an ancient one. It used to be a trading clan, but clan chief Heladia Goldenskin has changed it over the fifty or so years of her tenure as chief. She has used the infrastructure of the trading clan and built upon it to fashion a path to influence. (It is not unusual for clans to change their nature in this way.) She would see herself as a chart showing shallows and depths. When she is dead this chart will remain and the clan, the future chiefs, the Sea Elves in general may do as they wish with that chart.

Clan Tallaindeloth (M:SdtR, pg.71) is the ancient dragon. Though it is not an influence clan, it certainly has grown through the millennia to be the most influential of all clans. This would seem to be in spite of its noted whimsical and capricious nature. Some call Tallaindeloth *Ulgaitbo*; that is, a clan that is described as one might describe a different clan. The curious clan has watched Asgedalaion's entry into the highest halls of Lothorn with interest. It is amused by the younger clan's presumption, but also very ready to explain the status quo, should that be necessary.

Tallaindeloth, famous for its magic users, is prepared to accommodate and even cooperate with Asgedalaion provided it gets due respect. This means, explicitly, that Asgedalaion must always bow to Tallaindeloth's will when required, though as a matter of pride, they will require it as little as possible. Implicitly, however, it means that Asgedalaion magic users of

any note at all are carefully watched.

Asgedalaion still trades; it is the cover for its current function and the basis of the new direction. That is what sustains the search for influence, because the income gained by influence is incidental and often erratic. Fortunately, as Sea Elf clans all know, the clan system can be cheap to run; its community will always live within its means. 'A poor clan lives poorly and then is poor. A rich clan lives richly and then is poor.' That's an Elven saying.

In Lothern, the clan's mansion rises twenty storeys and covers two acres. This would be grand elsewhere, but it is just another building in Lothern. A bit on the conservative side. That suits Asgedalaion because they know the appearance of an action is more important than the appearance of inaction. This can be difficult for Old Worlders to grasp. A popular pun for Asgedalaion amongst rival clans is Asgedanlian, which roughly translates as 'that which thinks it looks good when the sun is shining on it.' This is very amusing to Elf ears. This means that an Elf with a large mansion and a fleet of ships who sits in his mansion and looks at his ships below him in the harbour, is poorer than an Elf with no house and one ship when that Elf is sailing his ship.

In the previous century, the clan specialised in trading between the Old World, Araby, Ind and Cathay, as well as Ulthuan. This has shaped its growth as an influence clan. It has mansions in many of the great cities of the world. Its largest overseas mansion sits in the Foreigners District of the free city of Shan Gai. It is the only foreign company allowed to roam freely outside of the Foreigners District. It is common knowledge that Chin Zao, of the Highest Heavenly Throne of Amethyst and Jade, takes green tea with Asgedalaion envoys once every month. Asgedalaion also has mansions in Elfgemeente in Marienburg, and in Brionne, Luccini, Copher, Serat, and the Tower of Radiance.

As a bold new Thaiaca, a clan Asgedalaion representative, Liadro Glimmersail, has arrived in Altdorf with letters of introduction from Theodoric, Duc de Brionne. She is attempting to get an audience with the Emperor himself, promising a mutually beneficial arrangement and an 'Elven artefact.' On the face of it, Liadro is simply after a charter for trading glass, but those in the know have been cautioning the Emperor; as the saying goes: 'What an Elf asks for is never all he wants, and what he offers is never all you get.'

*"What's the difference between an Elf and a Sea Elf?
The Boat."*

Lothern joke

Cheas: Experience

A young clan Elf will be expected to attain experience and expertise in order to further himself and his clan. He undergoes a semi-formal apprenticeship within and without the clan; this is called the Cheas. During his Cheas, all the Elves he comes into contact with will be expected to share their wisdom and

experience in order to help the youth. For Elves of the same clan this is virtually mandatory, but even for Elves of a different clan, it is considered at least good manners. Young Elves get experience in a variety of ways from lonely meditation to intensive training, but the most straightforward is simply to travel. Asgedalaion like all the Sea Elf clans is predisposed towards such a method. During a young Elf's education he will partake in one or more (and perhaps all) of the roles below.

Suitable careers to undertake during a Sea Elf's Cheas to represent this learning process can include Envoy, Seaman, Initiate, Apprentice Wizard, Student, Marine, and Noble. Elven society offers these opportunities to males and females equally.

Crew

First, a youth would be expected to crew a trade ship for several years. He would learn every aspect of running and

On the Naming of the Sea Elves

In the reign of Caradryel the Peacemaker, after the War of the Beard, midst the great struggle between the Elves of Ulthuan and the Elves of Naggaroth. Caradryel called to the world of Elves to return to Ulthuan and defend their homelands. And most did.

But some stayed out in the world. They said that Ulthuan was no longer their home and they would not leave their new homes. And just as they could not defend Ulthuan, Ulthuan could not defend them. And they were evicted from their lands and forced into the margins: into the swamps and the marshes and forests and the jungles and into the desert, or they looked towards Naggaroth. And they were lost to the Elves forever.

And many simply stayed upon the sea. They served Ulthuan but they served their clans and they served the sea and they served Human and Dwarf and Skink more and they served those Elves who had forsaken Ulthuan.

But at the time of Ulthuan's greatest need, when she was assailed upon all sides, some returned from across the sea. And they were welcomed by Ulthuan for, although they had forsaken their heritage, they had returned, and they were celebrated. And these were dubbed the Sea Elves for they had returned from across the sea.

The Book of Endymion 3:12:23-26

This is how the story of the Sea Elves is told amongst the Elves. Today the trade clans and the explorer clans and many other clans, those who own fleets and make their living across the oceans of the world, are also called the Sea Elves. But the genuine Sea Elves of the Endymion are long gone. It is true that many of the Sea Elf clans can trace their ancestors back to the original Sea Elves that returned from across the sea to fight Ulthuan's enemies. But it is just as true that they can trace as many ancestors back to the Elves who stayed in Ulthuan.

crewing a ship, captaining, navigation, survival, trade, and so on. It is expected that no captain hordes technical expertise, nor information; this would be against their instinct. A crew is always learning and positions aboard the ship are often changing. There is a hierarchy but it is more nuanced than, say, aboard an Imperial carrack. The vessel is run, and decisions made, and jobs assigned, with a view to experience and sometimes novelty.

The youth will usually then leave the ship but may stay on, wishing not to continue his Cheas and simply crew for the rest of his life. This is known as Kliiaai, or sea-tied. A sea-tied Elf will rarely leave his ship, and when going ashore, rarely travel out of sight of the ship, or out of sight of the sea, if he can help it. This would be considered an insanity by the standards of human physicians, but is actually not uncommon amongst the Sea Elves. Many ships of the Sea Elves have crew who have worked the same ship for over a hundred years. But some Kliiaai Elves still prefer to spend only a few years on the same boat, spending their lives flitting from ship to ship.

Envoy

Envoys are the public face of Elf clans, those who interact with the other races and are seen by outsiders to effectively run the more pragmatic side of the clan's business. An envoy is not simply an apprentice; he also performs necessary and valuable

work for the clans. The effectiveness of an envoy's stint sets the precedent for how he will be perceived and valued by his clan throughout his life. In some clans the Cheas is a time for frivolity and for mistakes. But for some clans it is taken very seriously; Asgedalaion is one of these clans.

Most Asgedalaion envoys get sent to work at a lowly bureaucratic post in one of the overseas Mansions. Gradually, over the course of their tenure as they show competence, they will be allowed more responsibility and freedom until they are ready to make decisions on behalf of the clan and plan clan business on their own initiative, with little oversight by clan elders.

Wanderer

Wanderer is a name given to the Elves that leave the clan and go walkabout somewhere in the world. This is especially encouraged by some clans and nearly all Elves of Clan Asgedalaion will go through this at some point in their Cheas. In Eltharin it is known as 'Agappiair,' a rite of passage for the young of the clan. They go somewhere, they can go wherever they like. Some are advised on where they are wanted and what they might do. Some clan families have a tradition in this and strongly encourage their offspring to wander in a certain direction. But, essentially, a young Elf can choose the area and manner of their wandering, often guided by dream or whim. They can also choose how long they will be gone. Some go for only a year, many stay away for much longer. They use agappiair as an opportunity to learn about the world and more importantly about themselves, and in the case of Clan Asgedalaion, to make contacts and learn things that will help them and their clan once they have returned.

Some Elves on agappiair do not return to their clan and are never seen again. This is a sad thing for the clan. After ten years an Elf is mourned as if dead. There is an element of shame for the clan that their culture has been snubbed by the apprentice, and once they are mourned an Elf will not be welcomed back. Some missing Elves do indeed reject Elven culture and choose to live amongst Humans or Skinks or whoever, but some, no doubt, just get eaten by spiders.

Warrior

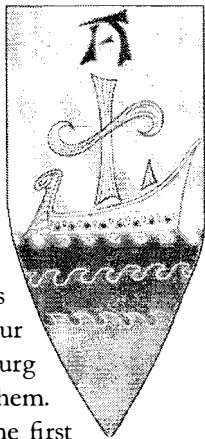
Though not a priority for Asgedalaion and many of the knowledge-oriented clans, the warrior role is still vital to their business. Asgedalaion like things subtle and not brutish, but even they acknowledge the convenience of being able to call on a band of skilled soldiers. Most young Elves of Asgedalaion spend a year in the soldiery and are very happy to leave at the end of it and get back to what the clan is really about. But some, of course, find their niche and serve as muscle for their clan for the rest of their lives. Asgedalaion are not proud of their military might, they are proud that they do not require the sort of military might that some clans seem to need. On the other hand, in time of need, Asgedalaion have found it necessary to request aid from Clan Cyloian, when their subtle influences need to be made plainer.

ITHNAI: YEARNING

Some Elves that travel the sea are left with a yearning. The word in Eltharin is Ithnai; this is not a thing specific to the sea but a general feeling suffered by many Elves who have wandered and adventured.

Ithnai is best described to an Imperial as the feeling you get when you have brought two Carroburg cakes into your study and you continue your work, and you absently eat a Carroburg Cake, taking small bites, savouring them. Then you think you have finished the first cake and you look forward to the second and your hand reaches for the plate. Suddenly you discover that you ate both cakes without realising. And now, despite having had two cakes, you are flooded with the unfulfilled expectation of Carroburg Cake.

Elves can suffer a feeling of Ithnai for a great variety of things that they have grown accustomed to, especially those of a magnificent and elemental nature: the deserts of Araby, the forests of the Old World, the jungles of Lustria, the Worlds Edge Mountains, and most likely of all, the sea itself. (Probably not actually Carroburg Cake, however.) Once they have departed this special place they are left with a yearning for it, and a desire to return. When they do return, they often do not leave again.



Thaiaca: Influence

It is sometimes hard for Humans to see the value of an Influence Clan. There often seems to be little tangible advantage or financial gain from it. Some of their accomplishments seem oddly trivial. But they are valued, there is no doubt of that, and held in high esteem by their fellows. It is almost as if the Elves, and whisper this quietly in some parts of the Old World, have an unfathomable and very long term plan for Humans, for the Old World, and for the whole world.

Marienburg

In Marienburg envoys from Clan Asgedalaion have the ear of many influential people. Lithlinqe Whitehand advises the Keeper of the Stadtholder's Gardens and Ponds on the best fish to keep and what to feed them on. She has gifted the Keeper a breeding pair of Tiranoc Fighting Lionfish. This is Thaiaca.

Lithlinqe is also a regular guest of Odo Rothemuur (the pair of them are 'head over heels,' apparently) who is the second son of Maximilian, head of the Rothemuur trading house. While his heir, Stefan, is less fond of the Elves, Maximilian sees that Rothemuur's continued cooperation with the Sea Elves is vital to the prospects of his House.

Brionne

The *Glommersil* has been anchored in Brionne Bay for over a year now. The Elves march through the streets, up to the castle every few weeks, making a spectacle of themselves. The locals used to cower as they went, but now they clamour for a grasp of elven cloak or halberd shaft, as it is said to offer a cure for the plagues. Some vendors sell 'elven hair,' locks purportedly clipped from elven heads, and a guaranteed cure-all.

Recently member of a local 'cult' were all hanged from the castle wall in gibbets for daring to suggest that the Elves had brought disease with them. The people were happy enough about this, as they are attached to the idea that the Elves will rid their land of the plagues, eventually. This is Thaiaca.

Copher

In Copher, Clan Lianllach has its own office in the Blue Palace. The word according to Asgedalaion litany is that Lianllach supplies the Emir's favourite wife with certain spices that are only available in her native Lustria. But an unusually high number of these shipments, over the years, have been hit by piracy. And so does Lianllach's fortune swing.

The pirates are rumoured to reside in a lost city that can never be found from the sea, and only barely might it be stumbled upon from the desert. No one from Lianllach will leave the sea (no one of any standing, anyway) and so they have asked Asgedalaion to deal with this. Elven stories of tolerance ('The 1001 Ellyrion Evenings,' for example), disguised as Arabyan folktales, have been spread by Asgedalaion along the caravan routes, and so therefore throughout Araby. It is unclear whether this can be called Thaiaca.

Clan Ulliogtha wants to see Lianllach run out of the Blue

Palace, but it knows little of its business there. Asgedalaion knows much of it. Negotiations are proceeding even now, at the Phoenix Court.

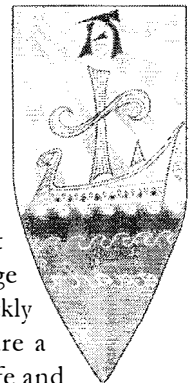
The Tower of Radiance

The pinnacle of Asgedalaion influence at this time is the Tower of Kalkat in Ind. The settlement is an Asgedalaion drin. *Drin* is an Eltharin word implying ownership or control. It does not mean that the clan owns the settlement, or has any official position or wields force there, but it means the place belongs to the clan in the sense that everything they want from it they can get. Asgedalaion drin Kalkat as Ulliogtha drin Marienburg.

Asgedalaion has all the influence it requires in the Tower: perhaps, too much. The highest clan members back in Ulthuan are considering luring a rival influence clan there, to make them

TALENT: THIROLIANOL, ELVEN LITANY

Elves are just as likely as Humans to resort to the written word when they need to keep track of large amounts of data. But some Elf clans teach a skill that allows them to reliably learn extremely long lists of information.



When Elves on clan business meet, often Envoys (and to a lesser extent Wanderers), it can be to their advantage to exchange much information quickly and without small talk. The elves are a poetical lot, but they are poetical in life and in poems. In work, in battle, they are good at concentrating on the job at hand, so they can become remarkably succinct.

They are also able to learn very long and detailed strings of information in the form of great litanies that can be recounted word for word. This lends itself to Envoys exchanging information very efficiently. As one Envoy recounts his litany, the other sits and listens intently deep in concentration for many minutes and even hours. The listener will then sit quietly, for as long again as the list took to recount, making sure he had everything straight in his mind and concentrating on techniques to keep it there. And then their roles can be reversed.

It is this Talent that is responsible for the common misconception amongst humans that Elves have extraordinary and faultless, or even eidetic, memories. As an option, GMs can offer this Talent to any Elf schooled in the clan system. Any Elf with the Talent should be able to remember anything he needs to and can also learn unfeasibly long tracts of information. Two Elves with the Talent meeting, can exchange lots of information extremely quickly. But, they might not be able to exchange specific information particularly quickly as the data is always stored in the form of lists and an entire list, or at least a great part of it, must be recounted in strict order.

vie for influence. It is felt that this will better focus the effort of Asgedalaion, where they have had things easy for a while.

Many hundreds of years ago when Asgedalaion was still a trade clan, Turinim Moonnose was shipwrecked near Kalkat in the midst of a civil war between Indic factions. The Kerkandha prince Nerhti saved him and his crew and treated them as honoured guests. Nerhti was hard pressed defending his estates against his neighbours at the time. But the Elves were long revered in local folklore and their merest presence was enough to reassert Nerhti's authority and bring stability to the region. And from that stability, and trade with the Elves, Kalkat soon grew to be one of the most powerful Indic states.

A new Kalkat was rebuilt upon the nearby ruined towers of a once great Elven city, and one of these towers was given to Turinim as a gift of the grateful people. It was named the Tower of Radiance by him. It was partially rebuilt to rise far above all the other towers of Kalkat and a light was lit there, as it had been in old times (according to legend), that can be seen at night halfway across the ocean. That is Thaiaca.

Though Asgedalaion's dominance of Kalkat was based on trade, their presence in the city has been a boon to their new role. It is guaranteed that the Elves can travel unmolested and greatly honoured wherever there are Kerkandhans. The clan is extremely influential over half of Ind. And it could be said

that the entire future of the continent is somehow plotted out in detail in the Phoenix Halls of Lothorn.

Bergsburg

Thaiaca need not be epic or grand, and the clans do not necessarily concentrate on the centres of traditional power. In Bergsburg, Troalicoa Nimblefear dines regularly with Jem Hollyburr and passed on the secret of how to stop rosemary custard curdling. Troalicoa is now a regular guest at Kopfenschlag gatherings; he is this year's status-guest for the city's aspiring Halfling hostesses. Now, Baroness Tussen-Hochen has invited the pair of them up to the castle to have a cooking competition.

Troalicoa is becoming quite famous. He is never recognised, however, when he makes his semi-regular trips down to the Cross Hands to meet with crime lord 'Magnus.'

Bogenhafen

Ceorindel Redwave has joined many benevolent institutions in the city and is being generous with his fortune. The newly arrived philanthropist is throwing himself into all parts of city life. He seems especially interested in talking to those involved with charitable societies, and those who want to talk to those talking about charitable societies.

TRANSLATOR

AN ADVANCED CAREER FOR WFRP2 BY ROBIN LOW

Translators are a vital part of a world where so many different languages and cultures meet. They are frequently employed to assist merchants in their business activities abroad, and are called upon by the nobility to facilitate political discussions between nations. The various religious Cults also find good Translators invaluable, whether for translating ancient texts or communicating with their brethren in foreign lands. Many are employed in sedentary posts in the magical as well as the mundane colleges throughout the Old World, assisting in translating and archiving documents. Equally, many others travel throughout the Old World and beyond, whether as part of trading caravans or religious pilgrimages, archaeological expeditions or mercenary bands. Not all Translators work for such laudable aims, however, and smugglers and other criminals whose activities recognise no national boundaries also need their services. Translators not only know many languages, but they know a great deal about the cultures that speak them, helping to avoid unfortunate cultural misunderstandings. Given the valuable and necessary role Translators play in the Old World and beyond, their various guilds are frequently powerful and influential. The typical Translator is a disciplined scholar, hardy and steadfast, and fascinated by other races and cultures.

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
+5%			+5%	+10%	+20%	+20%	+20%
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
	+4						

Skills: Academic Knowledge (any two), Blather, Common Knowledge (any four), Gossip, Haggle, Lip Reading, Perception, Read/Write, Secret language (Guild Tongue plus any one), Speak Arcane Language (any one), Speak Language (any four), Speak Language (Classical), Trade (Calligrapher)

Talents: Acute Hearing, Etiquette, Linguistics, Mimic, Seasoned Traveller

Trappings: Writing Kit

Career Entries: Any Priest, Any Wizard, Envoy, Explorer, Mercenary, Messenger, Noble, Scholar, Scribe, Seaman, Smuggler, Student

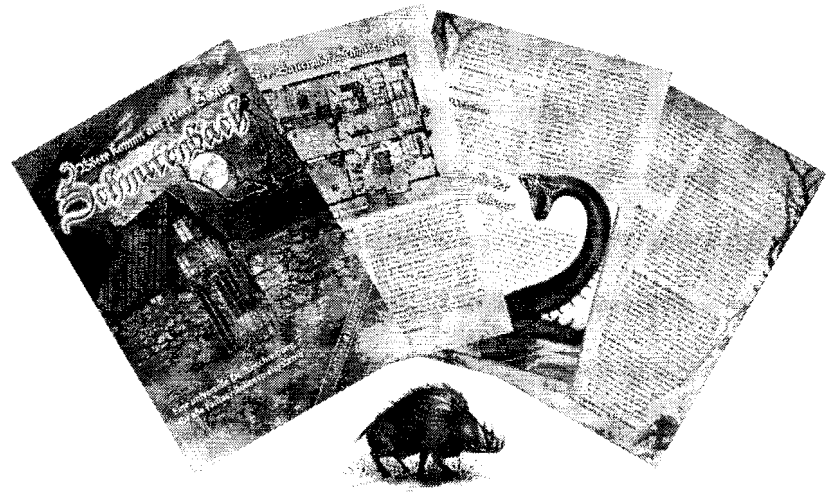
Career Exits: Courtier, Explorer, Herald, Initiate, Interrogator, Merchant, Politician, Scholar, Spy, Steward

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THAT SINKING FEELING

A WFRP3 Scenario
by Daniel Gooch

This adventure is designed as a fun one-off introduction to WFRP3. It is all about surviving on the grim and perilous Warhammer seas. It can easily be run as part of a campaign, possibly as the dramatic opening scene. This would be ideal if you want to start a campaign with the PCs washed up and seemingly without hope in some inhospitable and exotic corner of the world, perhaps Lustria, Norsca or Naggaroth. Alternatively, it can be slotted into any existing game where the PCs need to undertake a sea voyage.

ACT ONE: A RUDE AWAKENING

The adventure starts by throwing the PCs right into the middle of the action aboard the good ship *Esmerelda*, sailing the high seas on a course set for adventure.

Splash! Salt spray slaps in to your faces, causing you to jerk awake as your world lurches abruptly to the left. The dimly-lit room sways back and forth, the lantern casting alarming shadows. Surely you haven't been drinking with Snorrison again?! But this is not right. Your startled eyes scan your surroundings - you're below decks! A deck-hand, Ludolf, ankle deep in water, face white in panic, screams at you through the doorway as you lie in your hammocks; "She's heading for the rocks! Abandon ship! Save yourselves! Swim for Port!" The lantern causes his mermaid pendant to sparkle, and then he is gone.

After that rude awakening the PCs need to quickly decide what

to do. First they need to make an **Easy (1d) Discipline check** to avoid going into a panic.

Keep track of Sigmar's Comets and Chaos Stars rolled throughout the adventure as they will affect a later outcome. You can use a progress tracker for this.

Then a quick look around the dark, dingy, and swaying cabin shows they are unarmoured and unequipped with only a moment to grab their precious things. If they hesitate advance the Party Tension by one. Any PC who stays to gather their things rolls for an **Average (2d) Observation check**, with the following results:

Roll	Result - Average (2d) Observation check
⚡ ⚡ ⚡	Well used to waking and jumping to action the PC quickly gathers up all their equipment.
⚡ Or ⚡ ⚡	The PC grabs one or two items: their pack, a weapon, or a piece of armour.
⚡ ⚡	The PC also grabs some rope and a rum bottle.
☠ ☠	This is all too stressful! The PC suffers a point of stress.
✘ ✘	The PC gets tangled up in their hammock, dropping anything they have picked up, and needs help to free themselves, also taking a point of Fatigue.
☞	The PC grabs the cabin's only lantern.
☼	The PC clumsily smashes the cabin's lantern and some rum bottles, setting fire to the cabin, and taking a critical wound.

Emerging from the cabin, the PCs see:

The ship sways and rolls sickeningly as you stagger out of your cabin and up on to deck. The sight that greets you brings despair. The ship is foundering in a great storm. Lightning flashes through the sky, illuminating the ragged rigging and the frantic crew as all hands work to keep the ship off the looming rocks towering up off the coast. Port lights twinkle in the far distance. It's a scene out of a nightmare. As you look on aghast, Ludolf, the crewman who woke you, is struck by a flailing pulley. He collapses, bleeding profusely.

It is much worse than they thought!

Ludolf, lies unmoving in an expanding pool of blood, right in front of the PCs. There is, sadly, nothing to be done for him, as he is dead. Those free-swinging pulleys are clearly

lethal. He is wearing a very elegant mermaid pendant made of emerald and gold, surely worth a few coins. An **Easy (1d) Skulduggery check** can remove it without anyone noticing. But failure or a ☼ means a crewman sees this, which could have dire implications later.

The PCs need to make an **Average (2d) Discipline check** to avoid going into a panic. And also an **Average (2d) Toughness check** to avoid feeling terribly seasick, with failure adding a misfortune ■ die to all rolls throughout their time on board.

Any PCs making a **Hard (3d) Observation check** see the following. As it is night, it is hard to see (adding two misfortune ■ dice to the roll), unless one of the PCs grabbed the lantern in the cabin in which case add two fortune □□ dice. For each of the Warhammer results the individual PC sees only one of the two possible outcomes. See pg. 67 for results.

As the PCs take in the desperate and chaotic scene on the *Esmerelda's* deck, allow them a **rally step** to ready themselves for action.

ACT II: ALL HANDS ON DECK

The PCs should quickly choose who to assist. Those PCs who failed the initial **Observation check** can spend a round assessing the situation and try again, this time as an **Average (2d) Observation check**. The party cannot help everyone at once, not everyone has seen everything going on, and time is of the essence. If they hesitate, advance the party tension by one. As the ship is swaying and lurching add a misfortune ■ die to all rolls involving agility.

Construct a **nine-space progress tracker** with event spaces at the **fifth** and **ninth** spaces. Move the progress tracker ahead one step every round. If everyone stayed to gather equipment, start the tracker on the second space.

The Captain: Up on the *Esmerelda's* bridge, buffeted by the raging storm, Captain Sigiswald Schimmelpfennig is straining with all his might against the wheel to steer a course for the distant lights of the port. A single PC can join him at the wheel. Each turn a **Hard (3d) Strength check** is made the progress tracker moves back one step. If a Chaos Star comes up the PC loses his grip, the wheel spins furiously, both the Captain and the PC are thrown back, and the ship lurches towards the rocks. Advance the progress tracker one step. Roundly cursing the PC's ineptness, the Captain regains the wheel. After two attempts he says, "Go! We'll never make it! She's breaking up! Save my crew!"

The Cabin Boy: Rudi the cabin boy has fallen from his lookout's perch in the crow's nest and is in a right panic, all tangled up in the rigging. Someone will need to climb up and cut him free. The climb needs two **Hard (3d) Athletics checks**,

Roll	Result - Hard (3d) Observation check
⚡ ⚡ ⚡	The Cook , trapped under the foremost mast, calling weakly for help. The Cabin Boy tangled upside down in the rigging just below the crow's nest, red in the face and screaming his head off.
⚡ ⚡	The Captain struggling heroically at the wheel, his First Mate dead at his feet, blood pouring from a head wound. A cry of " man overboard! " and a man pointing frantically in to the sea off the port bow.
⚡	The Crew desperately struggling to get the launch over the starboard side of the ship. A Dwarf in plate mail (could it be Gromril!?) hanging on to the mast for grim death, his face the colour of fresh spinach.
🗳 🗳	Some large wooden barrels on the port side of the deck.
🗳	The starboard-side ship's cannon about to slip its moorings and become a lethal impediment to all on deck.
💀 💀	This can't be happening! The PC takes a point of stress
✂	The PC is hit by loose rigging flailing around taking one wound for each sword.
👉	A Priest in the prow of the ship praying fervently, a loose pulley swinging back and forth dangerously close to his head. The PC who spots the Priest feels momentarily blessed with a sense of calm amidst the raging seas. Remove one stress point.
⚡	The PC does not see a loose pulley swinging towards them with deadly force and takes a critical wound, is knocked to the ground next to Ludolf, and gains the Staggered condition.

one per round, followed by an **Easy (1d) Weapon Skill check** to cut him free. Once freed, the PC and Rudi can quickly slide down on a rope to the deck on an **Easy (1d) Athletics check**. Failure means they slip, taking a critical wound for the PC and knocking Rudi unconscious. A ⚡ means they both fall into the raging sea.

The Priest: Mannfred, a Priest of Manann, crouches at the prow, chanting a spell and praying for safe passage. As the PCs approach he is chanting, "*Save us from the abomination that is your brother Stromfels. See us safe to shore.*" The pulley swings with lethal force towards his head. Anyone making an **Average (2d) Agility check** pushes Mannfred out of the way. Failure means the pulley hits him right in the back of the head knocking him out. Lightning flashes, and a huge wave sweeps over the prow, knocking everyone down. Advance the progress tracker one step. Success, and he keeps chanting his spell, the waves momentarily subside, gaining the PCs a brief respite. Move the progress tracker back a space. The PCs can either leave him to his fate, or convince him using **Leadership** or **Piety** that he has done his duty to save the ship, and must join them or be swallowed by the waves, which can't be what his God wants.

The Crew: Six crewmen are trying desperately to get the ship's

launch over the side and into the water, but it is tangled in some fallen rigging. To assist the panicked crew requires a **Hard (3d) Leadership check** to co-ordinate them into freeing the boat, followed the next round by an **Average (2d) Strength check** to get it over the side and in the water. If a ⚡ comes up then the boat tips upside down and splinters to matchwood on the hull. One of the beefier crewmen screams, "*You've doomed us all you clumsy fool!*" and hammers hysterically at the PC with his fists, causing two wounds. If the launch is successfully lowered into the water the six crewmen hastily scramble into it and start rowing. It can hold eight, but they are not waiting for anyone!

The Barrels: These are empty rum and water barrels from the long voyage, which a smart PC might think to throw overboard as emergency floatation devices. There are six of them, and it takes an **Easy (1d) Strength check** to hurl one per round into the sea, or two if the PC chooses to take one fatigue.

The Cook: Udo, the Cook, is trapped under a fallen beam. He has gone pale and not moving so much anymore, but there is life in the old sea dog. A **Hard (3d) Strength check** is sufficient to move the beam enough to extract him, but by then he is unconscious. Someone will have to carry him. Or leave him behind. He is wearing a valuable diamond ear-ring which an

Easy (1d) Skulduggery check could remove without anyone noticing. But failure or a ✨ means one of the crew sees this, which could have implications later.

Man Overboard!: Crewman Heinrich is on the port side, pointing out to sea, where Stefan, the navigator, is waving frantically from the dark rolling waters. A **Hard (3d) Agility check** is enough to get a rope to him, followed by two **Average (2d) Strength checks** to pull him back on board. But watch for ✨ on the rolls. If one is rolled the PCs spot a black shark's fin just yards from Stefan, racing towards him. If a second one is rolled, Stefan cries out then sinks beneath the water, the rope going slack.

The Dwarf: Snorri Snorrison has found he hates ship travel, and has been green around the gills the entire voyage. He is dressed in full plate, which will send him straight to the bottom if he tries to swim, which he cannot anyway. The PCs need to convince him to leave his armour behind, let go of the mast, and get off the ship. This requires a **Hard (3d) Charm check** or **Leadership check**, or a **Daunting (4d) Intimidate check** - Snorri is not a Dwarf to be easily intimidated. A smart PC may think to put Snorri's armour in one of the water barrels, seal it, and throw it overboard, towing it with a rope. This sounds like a great idea to Snorri and reduces the difficulty of the Charm or Leadership check to **Easy (1d)**. It takes two rounds to help Snorri out of his armour.

The Cannon: If the cannon breaks free it will be a lethal mass of metal rolling back and forth across the deck, adding

OPTIONAL EXTRA PERIL FROM THE SKIES!

If you would like to add in even more of a challenge for your PCs, and throw in some combat, then the cliffs are home to a nest of three vicious, cruel, yet savagely beautiful **Harpies** (*Creature Guide* pg. 19 & pg. 92), who delight in preying on sailors in trouble. They arrive on round 2, swooping down silently from above, without warning, attacking anyone in the rigging helping the cabin boy. Note Harpies cause **Fear 1**.

They then split on round 3 to attack different parts of the boat, one staying in the rigging, one going after the captain, and the last one attacking the crew adding a **Challenge** (Purple Diamond) to attempts to get the launch into the water. They lash viciously at their prey with their blade-sharp talons / claws. Captain Schimmelfennig throws his black-powder pistol to the nearest PC while he wrestles with the wheel, crying, "One shot, make it count!" The Harpies retreat when reduced to three wounds or less, or one of them is killed.

a **Challenge** (Purple Diamond) die to all agility checks as everyone seeks to avoid being crushed. It needs an **Average (2d) Agility check** to securely lash it back into position.

For the first few rounds the PCs should be darting frantically about all over the deck trying to help who they can, whilst working out how they are going to save themselves too. But time is short, they cannot help everyone, and very soon the first event space will be reached.

FIRST EVENT: THE MAST BREAKS

There's a terrible crack that makes you look up in alarm. The main mast is falling! Lightning splits the sky repeatedly and the fall appears to be in ghostly slow motion, burning the image into the back of your eyes. The mast crashes down, the ship rolls and almost turns turtle, before righting itself. As your faces tipped towards the sea you saw black fins in the water.

Everyone must make an **Average (2d) Agility check** to avoid being struck by the falling mast. Failure causes a wound for each bane ☠, and a critical wound for each ✨.

If Rudi has not been freed from the rigging he is killed. If Udo had not been freed from the beam the mast crashes down on him, crushing the life out of him. It also crashes on to the barrels, sending splinters flying everywhere.

Meanwhile, Stefan drowns if not aided, and the cannon breaks free if not secured. The Captain keeps struggling at the wheel. Manfred keeps praying. And Snorri keeps hanging on.

The situation on the ship becomes desperate. The PCs need to make a **Hard (3d) Discipline check** to avoid panic. The PCs really need to get off the ship quickly. If they have not helped with the launch, now is the time. Let them take a few more frantic actions as the progress tracker advances inexorably towards the next event space.



SECOND EVENT: THE SHIP HITS THE ROCKS

The deck jumps up. There's a gut-wrenching sound of wood splintering. The Captain cries out, "We've hit the rocks! Save..." but his words are cut off as he tumbles backwards off the deck into the sea as the ship's wheel breaks apart. This is bad, very bad.

If they have not helped the crew, then the crew finally manage to get the launch into the water and jump in, rowing for their lives. If the PCs have not yet attended to Snorri he cries out to them for help, out of his mind with fear, still in his armour. At the prow, Manfred keeps on calmly chanting, remarkably unperturbed by events.

The easiest way off the ship is to simply jump over the side, requiring an **Easy (1d) Agility check**, although any ✨ cause a critical wound as they strike the hull or debris on the way into the water. Savvy PCs might realise swimming in armour is a big mistake.

But which side to jump off? The launch is on the *starboard* side, but any barrels thrown overboard are on the *port* side. If Snorri was helped he is clinging to a barrel with crewman Heinrich on the port side. If Manfred was helped he is swimming strongly towards the launch. They may also have unconscious NPCs with them that they will need to decide what to do with. Allow a **rally step** as they take a deep breath before leaping overboard.

ACT III: IN AT THE DEEP END

Once in the water PCs need to make **Average (2d) Athletics checks** every round to swim and keep their heads above water. Add challenge dice as you see fit if they were foolish enough to jump in whilst wearing armour.

On the starboard side, if the launch made it into the water, six of the crew are intent on rowing away, and they are not waiting for anyone. If Manfred was persuaded to leave the ship he is first to reach the launch and they help him on, as it would be a grave mistake to not give assistance to a Priest of Manann at a time like this. The launch is at medium range to the PCs and reachable with some exertion. If a PC is wearing Ludolf's necklace, or Udo's earrings, or a crewman saw him take either item, they beat at him with their oars - there is no way they will let a corpse-thief on the boat! The launch can only just hold eight though, and anyone else trying to scramble on board will cause it to capsize.

On the port side, roll a fortune die for each barrel the PCs threw overboard. Each boon means a barrel is, miraculously,

nearby, including the one with Snorri's armour if relevant, with Snorri clinging to it. A barrel is good enough to provide buoyancy for one PC, or NPC, and they can lash themselves to it.

Which just leaves the matter of the sharks. Check how many Sigmar's Comets and Chaos Stars were rolled during the encounter. If there are more ♣ than ✨ then there is one shark, on the starboard side, going after the launch. Otherwise, there are two sharks, one on each side. Or, if there are more than twice as many ✨ as ♣, three sharks are after their blood. The third shark is on whichever side of the boat there are more PCs. If the PCs have a clever idea such as to use Ludolf's body as shark bait and make a diversion then reduce the number of sharks by one. One meal is enough for a shark, which may mean the unfortunate end of various NPCs the PCs have been trying hard to save. Also, if Snorri is present, a shark eats the barrel with his armour, narrowly missing eating him, and then swims off with chronic indigestion.

The PCs may come up with their own weird and wonderful ideas for getting themselves out of the mess. Whilst the ship is doomed, there are other ways to stay afloat if the launch is scuttled and the PCs did not make good use of the barrels. For example, a dead shark floats, so can also be used to cling on to. Similarly, if you used the Harpies to attack the PCs, any Harpies the PCs killed also float in the water. Or, fast working and focused PCs could make a makeshift raft whilst on the boat, but this would likely be at the expense of rescuing several NPCs.

Eventually the PCs fall unconscious from their exertions and the Act ends as they drift towards shore, carried by the tide, clinging to whatever they could find. When they wake on the shore, surf rolling gently about their bruised bodies, allow a **rally step** to prepare for the next part of the adventure.

WHAT HAPPENED TO EVERYONE ELSE?

The PCs actions have wider consequences than they know. Here's what happened to the NPCs who made it off the boat alive. Everyone washed up on different parts of the beach, away from the PCs, and staggered into port once they regained consciousness.

The Captain: Despite being last seen washed overboard, Schimmelpfennig managed to make it to shore. He can be met later in the harbour, where, if the PCs made a good impression with their activities on deck, he promises them a free ticket out of port on a ship, once he has worked out how to acquire one. It might be a while. He has a number of local contacts and can help get them a good price for a boat if needed (up to 50% of f).

The Cook: He winds up in one of the better dock-side inns as a cook, ensuring the PCs have a free and hearty meal whenever

they drop by (recovering one Party Tension), as well as being a good source of gossip.

The Dwarf: The loss of his armour is a terrible shame which makes him take the troll-slayer path. He turns to drink too, becoming a sad and drunken menace in the local fish market.

The Priest: Mannfred takes up a post at the Temple of Manann, and happily blesses the PCs should they drop by to pay their respects.

The Cabin Boy: Rudi decides a life on the sea is not for him.

But he misses the views from the crow's nest and explores all over the roofs of the port. He is a good source of information for the PCs about unusual (and discreet) ways of gaining access to buildings.

The Crew: Apart from the unfortunate Ludolf, the rest of the crew never really liked the PCs and consider it their fault somehow that the Esmerelda came to grief. They find various jobs around town, taking care to avoid the PCs, whilst holding a smouldering resentment against them which could flare up into trouble.




HORROR OF THE DEEP

CREATURE	CATEGORY	ST	TO	AG	INT	WP	FEL	A/C/E	W	STANCE
SHARK	BEAST	4□(S)	5(I)	5(I)	1	3	1	6/2/0	19	R3

SHARK ABILITIES

Sharks often frequent the waters around busy ports, their terrible power often attracting Stromfels Cultists to port for something magnificent to worship.”

Ambush: When rolling for initiative, a shark adds one Expertise  (yellow) die to its check.

Bloodgreed: Driven by its thirst for flesh, when a shark kills an opponent it may perform a manoeuvre to feed on its victim's remains. If it does so, it heals one normal wound and gains 1 Aggression die. If it does not succumb to its bloodgreed, it loses 1 Aggression.

Instinctive: A shark may use Willpower instead of Intelligence when attempting Observation checks.

Fast: Sharks require only 1 manoeuvre to move between medium range and long range, and 2 manoeuvres to move between long and extreme range

Terrifying: For anyone in the water, realising a shark is nearby causes Terror 2.


NOTHING BUT TEETH

Combat 


Monstrous 3


Weapon Skill (St) VS Target Defence
Used by: Shark
Engaged with Target


Effect: The shark makes a devastating attack on its victim's hind quarters, seeking to immobilise it and stop it swimming.


 The target is struck for +1 damage

 The attack inflicts +3 damage, +1 critical

 +3 damage, target is Staggered.

 The shark suffers 2 wounds

 The shark dislikes the taste of its meal and targets another victim in future rounds

 +3 damage, +1 critical

AN ELVEN AUTOPSY

TEXT BY STEVE MOSS
ART BY IAN MILLER

SECRET

I, Doctor Fischer, will act as prosector and will carry out the dissection of unknown male Elf, found washed up on the sea shore east of Neue Emskrank, Nordland, this day 17 Sigmarzeit, 2522 IC.

External Examination

Male Elf. Height 6' 1" tall, weight 130lbs. The Elf's skin felt smooth and cold to the touch. It had a translucent quality somewhat similar to that of a pearl. I am not sure of the cause but this pearly effect only occurred when I viewed it from certain angles and only for short periods of time. (Please note, some of the translucent residue rubbed off onto my fingers but disappeared after a few moments. It is not uncommon for my hands to come into contact with foreign substances and body fluids during autopsies. I do not wear gloves as they would hinder my work. Precision is key for an accurate dissection.)

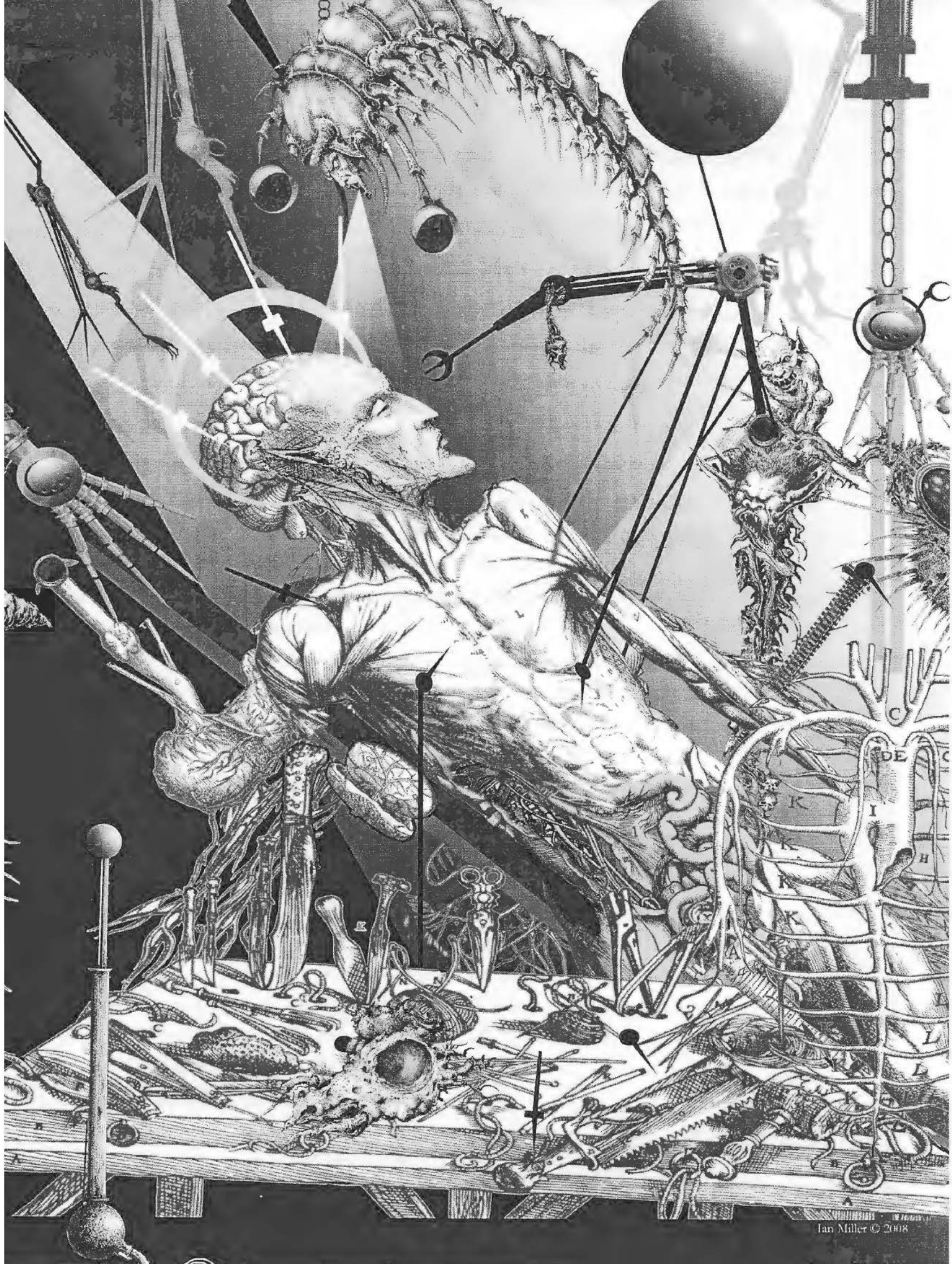
There was no odour of decay from the body, which indicates a recent death, and I was not surprised to detect a faint salty smell. The body was found washed up on the beach, which

leads me to believe that this Elf was possibly a sailor by trade, perhaps a crew member on an Elven corsair. The deceased had light brown hair with blonde areas, most likely bleached by many hours in the sun. He had broad, almond shaped eyes and both irises were hazel-coloured with a few green flecks in the right iris. Both ears came to a sharp, angular point at the tip. I measured the angle of the tips of his ears at 21 degrees. There was only a small amount of flesh on the earlobes with no sign of piercing, tears or abrasions on either ear. There was an inch long abrasion on the left side of the nose, no scab had formed on this cut, so I can only assume that it is a recent injury, perhaps caused by a blow to the nose. I was able to move the bridge of the nose with my fingers; this is evidence that the nose was broken. The lips were thin and delicate with no sign of parchedness caused by dehydration. There was no moustache or beard of any description. (I must step outside the laboratory at this point because I have developed a nagging headache. I believe some fresh air will help clear it).

(I return to the post mortem after a half hour in the fresh sea air. The headache has receded but I do feel a tingling sensation in my fingertips. It is not unpleasant and I doubt it will affect my work). I found no sign of external taint or mutation on the body but there was extensive bruising of the abdomen above the kidneys. There was little to no fat anywhere on the trunk of the body. Although the Elf was lean and thin, there was nothing to indicate he was malnourished. The Elf's arms and legs were long and sinewy and there was very good muscle definition indicating that he often engaged in physical activity. After severing the right arm at the shoulder with my surgical saw, I began a detailed examination of the bone composition of the arm. There was a significant amount of hollow cartilage in both the lower and upper arm, somewhat similar in composition to that of a cuttlefish but it was not as chalky. Perhaps this combination of hollow bones and the superior tendon structure would explain the renowned Elven athleticism? The arms and legs had a very small amount of fine transparent hair. The hair in the pubic area was quite soft and downy unlike the coarser human hair found in the genital area. The colouration of the pubic hair matched the light brown hair on his head. The male genitalia were slightly small compared to the average human male. I do not know if this is indicative of Elves in general. Perhaps this is due to the cold temperature of the sea leading up to his death or perhaps this Elven male was less well endowed than others of his race.

Internal Examination

I usually make a deep "Y" incision from the front of each shoulder to the pubic bone, cut the skin, peel it back and saw the ribs off. But not this time. Instead I made careful incisions from the sides under the armpits. (I do not know why but it seemed the proper thing to do). There



was a faint smell not unlike raw lamb meat. After further opening the abdomen from the side, I cut through the sternal wall and I removed the internal organs for detailed examination. It must be noted that this procedure took much longer than normal because the muscles & tendons attaching the organs to the trunk, spine and pelvis are much tougher than those of a typical human. I used my finger to examine the pulmonary artery where it exits the heart. I did not feel any blood clots that may have travelled from elsewhere in the body and lodged here near the heart. I can rule out sudden death from a heart-clot. I examined the heart and found no visible signs of disease. However, all of the inner walls of the main arteries were coated with an unusual substance. I sliced off a sample and after further, detailed, examination I discovered a double membrane very similar to that associated with Chloroplasts, which are found in certain plant cells.

The liver, pancreas and spleen were also dissected and I could find no abnormalities. There were signs of damage to the kidney. I found an amount of bruising and a small amount of clotted blood just above the urinary bladder. This corresponds to the bruising I previously noted to the abdominal skin. The deceased most likely suffered a non-fatal blunt trauma injury to the kidney area, possibly a punch or a blow from a heavy object. [My headache has now totally gone, it has been replaced by a vague sense of euphoria. Colours seem sharper and I can make out the textures of shadows. The tingling in my fingers has now spread along my arms but I am certain that it will not hinder my work.]

I opened up the stomach along its greater curvature and the stomach contents resembled a green soup that smelt strongly of seafood and gastric acid. I believe the Elf had fish for his last meal. The smell of fish was nothing compared to the malodorous stench that arose when I opened up the intestines. After a brief pause to compose myself, I washed the surface of the bowel, emptying the contents into the sink. The detailed examination of the intestine revealed mucal ducts similar to those found in humans but I also found more of the Chloroplast-like membranes that I encountered earlier in the main arteries. I can only guess they help transfer substances from ingested plants into the Elf's body. I may send samples of these to my learned colleagues of the Physician's Guild in Salzenmund. Perhaps with further study they can determine their true function. I thoroughly examined the larynx and trachea. I have never before seen such highly defined vocal cords in all my years as a physician. The Elf must have had a powerful singing voice. I would wager that he could have turned a simple sea shanty into a magnificent opera. [How tragic that I will never get to speak to

him. I have referred to him as the Elf but this is such an impersonal term for such a magnificent creature. What was his true name? I am convinced it was powerful and regal. Just as he was/is.)

The Brain

(The tingling has now spread beyond my arms to my body. I feel so alive! My senses are expanding and I can almost see/feel the true nature of everything. Even mundane objects such as my surgical equipment are alive.) I make a deep (but reverential) incision at the back of the scalp, cutting from behind the left ear, up to the crown of the head, and behind the right ear. I carefully remove the flap of scalp (and hand it to my insect assistant who floats nearby).

The top hemisphere of the skull is exposed. I make several cuts around the equator of the cranium and gain access to the top of the brain. Magnificent! As I have previously noted, my Elven friend has several strong muscles and tendons in his body and I am not surprised to find tough ligaments connecting the brain to the spinal column. It takes me the best part of half an hour to carefully detach the brain from the body (but the extra light afforded by the organic spheres that now whirr round my chamber aids me greatly). Most brains are soft and easily damaged and they need to be immersed in a solution of formalin for a period of time before examination but this Elven brain is rigid & tougher than any other brain I have seen. I need to thoroughly examine it without deforming it. The cortex...

(What have I done? I must stop this dissection. I can no longer harm my Elven friend). The cortex! (The post mortem is unholy!) I must touch the cortex! Now! Communion! Rapturous Communion! El menso trontus nendossia vivandrell...

Addendum

1. Manfred von Schleicher, priest of Sigmar have taken possession of the earthly remains of Dr Maximilian Fischer. His body was found by the local watch sprawled on the floor of his laboratory. I have determined the probable cause of death to be poisoning. The non-human remains found in the laboratory have been destroyed and the watchmen sworn to secrecy upon pain of death. The scribe who recorded the draft version of the above notes has fled. The burning of the doctor's body will take place in Neue Emskrank, Nordland, this day 19 Sigmarzeit, 2522 IR. There will be no post mortem.

History of the Laurëlorñ Forest

By Dawn Lewis

At the end of the War of the Beard the majority of Elven manuscripts in colonies of the Old World were plundered or burned by the Dwarfs. Those Elves that remained in the lands, against the Phoenix King's decree, turned to song to record their history. This tradition was used in the times of Aenarion, the first Phoenix King, when all was beset by Chaos, so that the records of the past would live from one generation to the next.

The following, from a translation of unknown origin, is sung by the Wood Elves of the Laurëlorñ Forest, recalling the creation of the forest realm and its people's beginnings.

The Tale of Torothal

No tale from the Time of Legends
Is so sorrowful, tragic and sad
As the story of Lithangl's Guardian
Whose love drove her half mad

During the Season of Rain, in the time of Bel-Shanaar,
Great Athel Loren was discovered, after our kin had travelled afar.
But unwilling to surrender its secrets, this ancient forest was found
To prevent our kin entry, and so the forest was bound.

With patronage from Prince Malgith, a mighty expedition was planned
And northeast of Athel Toralien, Archmage Torothal entry found.
The great Tower of Lithangl, upon the Misty Hills was housed,
And from here awakening rituals, the slumbering spirits aroused.

Over centuries the forest awakened, guided by our gentle kin.
But immersed in the spirits stirrings, and focused entirely within
They were oblivious of troubles around them, til refugees began to arrive
Escaping the devastating Sundering, young Sarriel made Torothal feel alive.

Against the advice of her court, Archmage Torothal and the Seer were wed
They reigned o'er the Tower of Ilthiloren and the forest's golden age was ahead.

During the Season of Sun, forest and Elf did thrive,
The settlement grew to Tor Lithangl, as more of our kin arrived.

The Elves and the Dwarfs were befriended, and traded in these tranquil times,
But the Seer foresaw great darkness, to be caused by cruel Druchii crimes.
With arrogance pitted 'gainst stubbornness, it was as Sarriel feared,
Dwarf and Elf did do battle, in the clash of the War of the Beard.

Protected within the great forest, by rituals of disguise and miss-seeing
Our kin cut themselves from Ulthuan, after betrayal of the Phoenix King.
But things in the woodland realm, though peaceful for a time,
Would soon see the Season of Storm, and Sarriel's favour declining.

After a vision of his beloved, in the arms of a warrior Elf,
Sarriel grew cold to Torothal, and in the Misty Hills sought himself.
While wandering lonely forest paths, a stunning waterfall he found
Beside the pool sat a water nymph, whose beauty was abound.

Sarriel misread his vision, not comprehending context or time
With the Naiad he found solace, in her arms he had peace of mind.
But his behaviour did not go unnoticed, and Torothal's suspicions grew,
She ordered that he should be followed; this task giv'n to her trusted few.

Discovering Sarriel's betrayal, Torothal's heart tore a rent
And rejecting the comfort of others, to confront the lovers she went.
Sarriel, challenged by his wife, declared love for her alone
So the spurned Naiad attacked, o'er the waterfall Sarriel was thrown.

In the battle that did follow, the pool's water raged and foamed
Though Torothal near' drown repeatedly, she managed to hold her own.
Eventually the Naiad relented, and Torothal, believing her gone
Began to cast incantations, to open portal to Tor Ithiloren.

But the Naiad had not given up, and she surged towards Torothal
Locked together the pair did grapple, and plunge over the waterfall.
The violence and unleashed magic, made the pair become one another
And returning to Tor Ithiloren, Torothal was like no other.

Then came the Season of Frost, and in pain silently screams
Torothal curses her husband, to walk forever in dreams.
The contempt of the Naiad grew in her, till vengeance she rained around
Expelling the Elves to the forest, to placate her Queen she is crowned.

Many a long year later, Sarriel's vision did recall
For during a yearly Wild Hunt, Orion lay with Torothal
Kern was the fruit of this union, and as foretold in the stars
The borders of Laurëlorë forest, this warrior forever guards.

Alfar Levantine

Dark Elves in Carroburg by Tim Eccles

This article looks at one very particular Dark Elf presence within the Empire, that of Carroburg¹. It takes the form of the private company Alfar Levantine. It is not intended to address the issues of how to play Dark Elves per se, nor is it rewriting the nature of the Dark Elf within WFRP or other GW games. However, it does try to turn the stereotype on its head (and to that end we do need the ideal type Dark Elf to be prevalent) and presents a practical example of Dark Elves within the Empire for GMs to run adventures around. However, Alfar Levantine also provides a more practical view of Dark Elf culture.

The starting point for this proposal is that slaving is expensive and risky. Equipping and resourcing a Dark Ark is a damned expensive business. Potential slaves tend to object to their enslavement and the results of any raid can be risky and random. So, why not adopt a more cost effective approach?

Trade

Slavery is also a very highly charged term and has certain connotations. Okay, slaves are sacrificed – but what actual value is the sacrifice of an unwilling and downtrodden slave? Whilst it might keep the others in line, does Khaine really respect this sort of sacrifice? I doubt it. No, slaves are a resource. They cost money to obtain, and they need to be looked after. The luxurious and excessive enjoyment of the typical Dark Elf is built upon the hard work of slaves, on the land, in factories, in the craft and artisan trades.

Alfar Levantine buys slaves but rather than risk all on running slaving operations, it simply purchases them at market rates. It does this with the collusion of the Carroburg authorities, and certain officials in the Grand Duke's administration. This keeps the prisons empty, crime down, and brings in an income.

Alfar Levantine has

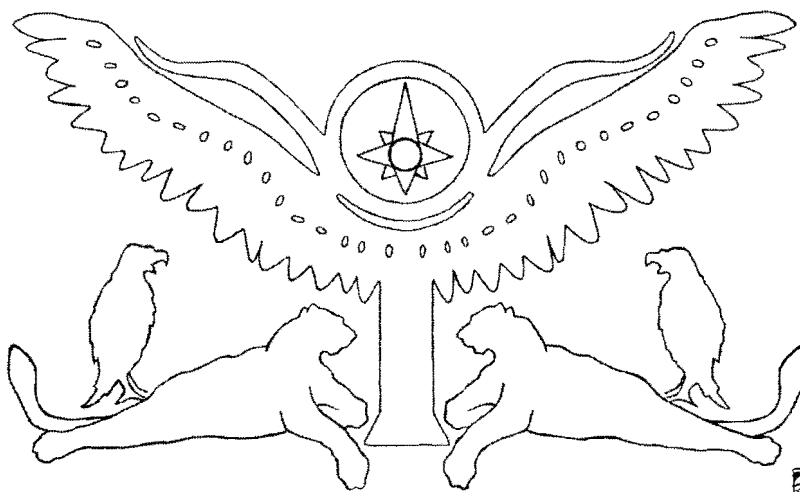
also expanded into voluntary serfdom. Life is so harsh in the Old World that some prefer bondage in an alien country to the poverty, starvation and arbitrary treatment of their human overlords. Okay, once they get there, then things might not seem to have been quite so bad back home! But, then again, pragmatic slave-owners care for their assets, and a bonded slave can have a physically better life than a landless vagabond in the Old World. Those with skills and abilities might even progress to positions of authority. Slaves, and especially their children, might even be provided with training so that they become skilled and obtain a certain material standard of living, rather than destitution in the slums of the Empire. Hey, the weather is probably better, too.

The Company

Alfar Levantine is a merchant company, one of those many we see in WFRP games whose actual business is all rather vague. They have warehousing, a private jetty and a small fitting yard in Carroburg, together with rather smarter offices. A main shipbuilding yard (though mostly repairing) is located upriver in a small village within Carroburg's influence. Aside from working on ships, they transport anything and everything. Recently, they have moved into ship insurance and also into shipbuilding.

Unofficially, of course, they are primarily slavers, providing slaves to Dark Elf ships off the northern coast. They also have a base in the marshes to the east of the city in which they base

their ships and pirates. Enough work can be carried out on captured ships to get them to their main shipyard. Locating this in a village outside the city means that it is easier to spot snoops, and locals employed by the only employer in town are likely to keep their mouths shut. This village ought to be regarded as one wealth point richer than the surrounding



¹ For details of Carroburg see Warpstone 26

villages (as measured by the WFRP gazetteer system).

The nominal head of the shipping company is an Elf called Markus. “Call me Markus”, as he tells all his clients, rather enjoys Carroburg and has become a star in the city’s social circles. His Slaaneshi interests are causing him to party to excess, although this is tempered by his loyalty to (read: fear of) his ‘wife’. However, a large slice of Carroburg’s great and good are slowly becoming corrupted to excess, if not Chaos (yet). His parties are ‘musts’ to the social elite, and he brightens up even the dullest dinner party. Provincial Carroburg is even starting to get a reputation as a not-quite-so-dull backwater.

The real power behind the company is Rixliana (“you would not be able to pronounce my proper name”), who plays Markus’ wife. As someone on the Khaine/Witch-y side of the religious divide, she despises his religious beliefs and his general lifestyle. This has fuelled her sense of boredom and her wish to do ‘something’ and so she has created her own sideline – a group of pirates that have begun to prey on local shipping. Her pirates are an unlikely group of Savage Orcs, which she imported, commanded by a trusty Witch Elf lieutenant, Xeroxius. They have a base in the marshland east of the city, emerging from there to prey on river shipping. They are very good at slaughtering crews, slightly less good at arranging for the captured ships to be taken to a Levantine docking facility to be refitted to be resold or used by the company. Rixliana’s contacts in Carroburg allow her to obtain all details of shipping, and also to make a lucrative sideline in the nascent insurance market.

A fourth Elf, Bokdar, acts as muscle and bodyguard, and runs a small group of human mercenaries as security for the various Alfar Levantine assets and facilities.

All four are officially High Elf merchants (Sea Elves in the old editions). For obvious reasons, they avoid Marienburg, and anything to do with it. This is why they chose Carroburg, and is a further reason for their popularity. They feed into and off Carroburg’s antipathy towards Marienburg. So, refusing to meet a Marienburg trader curries favour with the locals and reduces the risk of being discovered.

Markus is actually, much to his own surprise, starting to like humans. True, they are provincial and rather, well, humanish, but they are certainly enthusiastic. They try, and they sometimes even manage to surprise him. It is all rather a shock to his preconceived ideas. The others can barely hide their views of



human as cattle, but they are faithful to their orders and this usually keeps them in line.

What are their orders? Basically, to obtain slaves. However, they have a certain freedom to progress any activity appropriate to that mission – and it is this that offers scenario possibilities.

Threats and Weaknesses: Adventure Threads

Whilst Alfar Levantine is very careful, players might be hired to look into a number of issues. Slavery is illegal, and whilst the authorities are happily engaged with this, it is neither done officially nor with the Grand Duke’s knowledge. People go missing, and someone, somewhere might start to ask questions. Equally, others will try to silence them. Hence, there is a convoluted network of those in the city involved with the company and those who are not – though some of the latter might also like to be. The issue here is to try to avoid stereotypes should the PCs involve others in bringing down the company. For example, elements within the local Cult of Shallya support the company since they see the benefits of relocation of some of the most destitute, are given a donation for each ‘volunteer’ they find (to spend on good works – the road to Hell and all that), and the senior clergy all rather have a crush on Markus.

None of the Elves really understand humans and their management techniques have been rather ‘archaic’. They have also made some mistakes, initially because they did not understand human behaviour or psychology. Because the Elves are really not interested in managing a company, they rely on human assistance and one or two employees found it all very distasteful. One was killed, and a second became one of his own commodities. In addition, the middle class families of these white collar ex-employees are a little more able to demand action from the authorities and a number of family members had to be silenced. This, of course, led even

the dimmest constable to the common thread in both cases: Alfar Levantine. However, due to a mixture of incompetence, bigotry and judicious use of bribery, the official line is that these attacks are aimed at the company, rather than the actions of it. Rumours in the city might make mention of an anti-Elven gang working in the city; most blame either Marienburg or reactionary rural Middenlanders – or both. None of this alters the fact that all sorts of people have gone missing, in numbers that are just starting to look suspicious – certainly enough to bring in some cheap labour investigators (aka adventurers) to shake things up. Of course, do not overlook the fact that people are always going missing in any city environment. There are red herrings aplenty for even the most assiduous investigator – and the local Watch are not remotely motivated over this.

Similarly, the piracy is starting to get out of hand, and PCs as mercenaries are an expendable part of any search. At the moment, officials regard action as too expensive, but some merchants do not. Preparing a “Q-Ship”, ostensibly a rich trader, but loaded with mercenaries, might flush out an attack. Whilst Rixliana has hidden her tracks well, there are ships out there thought lost. A new coat of paint and some retrofitting might fool the unwary, but will it fool the old drunk on the dockside, who served on the original for 30 years? Similarly, a successful Q-Ship ruse that leads to a dead Elf with orcs is bound to raise questions and there is only one group of Elves in Carroburg. What might a secret trip to the Levantine refitting yard reveal? Even a careful examination of certain ship registers might find mistakes; Rixliana is bright, but she is not a natural bureaucrat.

One easy way to lead the party astray through a red herring is stories of Markus’ parties – the orgies, sadism and other excesses. Of course, Markus is a Slaaneshi and his parties might ultimately lead to Chaos worship, but that is *so* last year, and currently he is just having fun. *With lots of important people.* Sometimes prudes and witch-hunters simply are killjoys, and this is one possible opportunity to prove it.

Finally, missing shipping costs money, especially to merchants and insurance underwriters. Whether the latter ought to exist, it is a more ‘academic’ way of approaching the piracy issue. Alfar Levantine seems to insure only non-pirated ships, or re-insures those that it does insure. Other underwriters are losing money; maybe they are getting suspicious. The Elves are quite clever at covering their tracks, but the evidence is there.

A Sideline

Part of the nature of Chaos is mischievousness. High Elf coinage is universally respected and establishes the gold standard upon which other coins are judged, so what better way to strike a small victory for upsetting things than to debase Elf coinage by counterfeiting it. Markus regards this as a hobby and certainly has no intention of flooding the market with such coins, but it adds a small amount to his party funds – and does some damage to those smug self-assured Sea Elf traders. It is also one up to destabilising currencies and those Marienburgers.

Unfortunately, any debasement of these coins is going to

warrant attention. After all, international trade is based upon a gold standard that is presumed to be inviolate. And Markus’ very skill is in itself suspicious to those who secretly work to keep the wheels of global trade oiled. Who are these people? Well here is your opportunity to engage in a little conspiracy theory. Is there a Davos-like entente of business interests? Or is the world still ruled by the Slann, disguised through illusion or the like as the rulers of the world. Whoever they are, they want the debasement stopped.

Chainmail Bikinis

Finally, there is also the option of adding the violent imagery if you desire. Alfar Levantine was created to turn the stereotype on its head, but there is no reason that you need to remove it all completely. The pirate base can include a temple with a Cauldron of Blood. What is a Witch Elf without the chainmail bikini? Of course, the bikini might be rather more interesting at one of Markus’ parties, especially if worn by a group of Shallyan priestesses. Either way, if your players are not interested in investigative work or the PCs do not have the skills, then turning up a Cauldron of Blood in a pirate base is something that no one can really ignore. Probably...

Conclusions

Alfar Levantine plays against the Dark Elf stereotype and the simplistic views of Chaos and the nature of slavery. Human society is essentially pragmatic and if both sides can get what they want out of trade, partying at the same time, then why not? Only those excluded from this are going to object – the enslaved, the puritans and the fundamentalists. Of course, this set-up only tends to work where most Dark Elves engage in raids from their Arks and bathe in human blood. But, hopefully, you will find it a useful contrast. And how else are you going to get Savage Orcs into the Old World?

The Alfar Levantine are probably best used as a slow burner. Ultimately, the Elves are too lazy (Markus) and too impetuous (Rixliana) and are involved in too many dodgy activities (counterfeiting, piracy, hijacking, slavery, consorting with Orcs to name a few) to get away with it. They are also going to arouse the interest of some quite powerful groups (from High Elves to Marienburg to local authorities to insurance companies to Imperial agents) since they are upsetting existing interests.

At the same time, they are not stupid, they have their own friends and they also provide a niche service to low and high alike. And let us not forget their parties. Whilst justice in the Empire is rather ambivalent about the collation of evidence, Alfar Levantine will not be easy to catch.

They can also cut loose their Orcs, drop their counterfeiting and cease hijacking ships if the need arises. Markus can even arrange to have one of his parties raided in order to establish that he is not running chaotically lewd parties. And, ultimately, the main target of the company’s attentions is the Sea Elves and burghers of Marienburg. If the truth were to fully come out, quite a lot in Carroburg would be more than happy to lend a hand...

WHAT'S IN A GNOME? - GNOMES REVISITED

by Brian Gillatt and Steven Hanlon

Gnomes are an irrelevance to the affairs of the Empire. They offer no martial advantages as the Dwarfs do, they cannot deal in magic in the ways of the Elves and their political demands are indistinguishable from those of the Halflings. As a people I cannot see the point in them, they contribute nothing but poor comedians and labourers to society. I mean, there was one of them at the Imperial court, an 'entertainer' of some kind, brought in the entourage of one of those dreadful lords from the provinces; really it had no business being there at all. The last straw was when it was involved in the Unpleasantness. I'm not entirely clear on the details. All I know is poor Lady Caroline has not been horse riding for three months now and she cries whenever she sees the butcher's boy. It... the creature had the temerity to suggest the whole affair was merely in jest, but it seemed entirely in bad taste to me. I can tell you they have not been welcome around the Imperial court since. In fact I don't entirely know what became of them. Unpleasant little bulbous nosed things.'

Baron Albrecht Weiss, Herald to the Imperial Court.

'Kak! Kak! Arghhumph! Gnomes, hundreds of 'em! Urghh! They came from nowhere, from the trees from the, aak, bushes. Like shadows, stabbing, jabbing shadows! Laughing they were, laughing as they slaughtered us. Hook nosed little ergg...'

Grusnak The Mighty's dying words, translated from the Orkish by Sergeant Klaus Dumpfl, Staff Sergeant 2nd Nuln Engineers.

'Gnomes? What happened to them?! They're gone? I don't think so, sir. I bought a pan from one only last week!'

Nils Lofgrun, Bone Picker



'I'm a laughing gnome and you can't catch me...'

Davut Bowhiem, troubled troubadour

Though many academic works neglect the Gnomes entirely, they are one of the most common races in the Old World and have a unique outlook and culture, making them a most rewarding object of study for the scholar.

Gnomish civilisation was born in the east of the Old World, at the foot of the World's Edge Mountains, in a region known to them as Karid Kambol, which translates to Reikspiel as the Mirror Moors. This region should not be confused with the Mirror Moors in the Wasteland, near Marienburg (although some maps show them in Middenland); this region was named coincidentally by humans and contains no Gnomes whatsoever. (Ironically the Gnomish for this region of swamp and squalor is N'Ghassalad a stark warning which translates as 'Gnomes - Man's Land') In addition, Gnome settlements are hidden throughout the civilised lands, and few cities are without a Gnomish quarter.



Gnomish Psychology

'And to the bush burned and Ringil spake, 'Commandments? Commandments! What kind of religion do you think this is?! Thou shalt go out and seek what is there to be found. You lazy beggar.'

The Book of Ringil, Chapter One, Verse One

Religion is central to Gnomish life. Ringil is the Gnome God of Jest, Smithing and Fishing and is the Gnomes' only god. Gnomes do not attribute the creation of the world to Ringil, but he is credited with shaping the Gnomish parts of it. He is also regarded as the father of the Gnomish race and the ultimate source of knowledge about the trades Gnomes rely on.

Ringil is not a god who provides miracles, blessings, curses or anything of the ilk. Instead he provides inspiration, pointing his followers in the right direction, but allowing them to work out their own solutions to their problems. At other times, Ringil is whimsically misleading, teaching Gnomes not to take him, or themselves, too seriously.

Consequently being adept at multiple trades and talents is much admired in Gnome society. One might meet a Gnome miner one year, but the next year find that he is a healer. A further five years later, one might find that the same Gnome has become a priest. Gnomes of age and life experience are greatly admired as they have had the most opportunity to learn different trades.

Gnomes are a self-reliant people, who value cleverness and hard work. Everything they have has been won through innovation and toil. For Gnomes, being able to 'do for yourself' is a matter of great virtue and religious importance. Leaders, therefore, tend to be the oldest and most experienced members of the group.

To outsiders, especially those who happily spend lifetimes

Disclaimer – Gnome Blame Attached

Gnome PCs for WFRP1 first appeared in 'Into the Garden' by Phil Gallagher many years ago in *White Dwarf* 86 and was reprinted in *Apocrypha Now*. This is not an attempt to reproduce that article, (although on re-reading it now, many years later, I realise we have stolen one of the puns - sorry!), rather this is an attempt to bring the Gnome back into WFRP and re-imagine them as a truly distinct race that sets itself apart from the Dwarfs, Elves and Halflings of the world.

So what can Gnomes add to your Warhammer game?

Some commentators have observed that Gnomes don't add much to the Warhammer World and have suggested that their place could be taken by any of the other races. We disagree. Gnomes could bring a number of benefits to your game:

- ◆ a new and unique psychology to present to your players. We hope that we have demonstrated that Gnomes think and act quite differently to all the other races.
- ◆ an interesting and unexpected party for an intrigue scenario. We guarantee that when your players trace the money back through a series of go-betweens to the true instigators of the plot, the last thing they will be expecting will be a committee of Gnomes. Better than yet another Chaos cult, we think.
- ◆ another element of fantasy. Sometimes we feel that PCs encounter too many Elves and Dwarfs considering their relative rarity. By adding another race, you give yourself a little more room to work in elements of the fantastic without over-using the other races.
- ◆ fairy tales are full of stories of strange lights seen on haunted moors, herds led away never to be seen again and forests that shift to confound travellers. Gnomes provide a WFRP explanation for such strange phenomena.
- ◆ Gnomes are easy to fit into a campaign midway. They are, after all, hidden.
- ◆ why not have Gnomes? Just because Tolkien did not write about them? Shame on you!

mastering a craft, this looks terribly inconsistent, even flighty. However, it makes perfect sense to the Gnomes.

Ringil's jesting aspect is seen as an infuriating part of the character of Gnomes. To other races they have an inability to take the world around them completely seriously. The world, with all its problems and hardships, seems like an elaborate joke. For the Gnomes, it is a foolish thing to be broken by the world; it shows a lack of sense of humour. The most admirable response to adversity is to turn to it, look it in the eye, and laugh.

For all their wit and humour, Gnomes cannot be described as easy-going. As a people they are proud of their accomplishments and do not like to be mocked by outsiders who do not

GNOME PCs

Gnomes have a reputation for being grumpy, largely because their reaction to anything stressful or alien is sarcasm and caustic jibes. They react poorly to insults or jokes at their expense from other races – to them humour is a sacred thing that outsiders simply do not understand. However, they do grow used to the company of non-Gnomes, accepting them into their lives (though rarely introducing them to the larger Gnomish community). It is then that the Gnomish qualities of self-reliance, inventiveness and strength of character shine through.

Unlike Elves, Gnomes away from their communities are not exiled; they very much feel part of the larger Gnomish world around them. On returning to their own communities they are welcomed with open arms, especially if they have developed new trades or skills they can teach for the benefit of others.

CHARACTERISTICS

WS	2d10+20
BS	2d10+10
S	2d10+20
T	2d10+10
Ag	2d10+20
Int	2d10+30
WP	2d10+30
Fel	2d10+20
M	4

d10 Roll	Starting Wounds	d10 Roll	Starting Fate Points
1-3	9	1-4	2
4-6	10	5-7	3
7-9	11	8-10	3
10	12		

STARTING SKILLS AND TALENTS

Skills: Performer (Jester) or Common Knowledge (the Empire), Concealment or Trade (Smith), Common Knowledge (Gnomes), Speak Language (Gnomish), Speak Language (Reikspiel)

Talents: Night Vision, Tunnel Rat plus one random talent.

STARTING CAREER

The following basic careers are available to Gnome starting characters. City-born Gnomes may be found in almost all urban

careers. Gnomes in rural careers will almost certainly be from traditional Gnome villages or traveller communities.

01	Agitator	53-55	Miner
02-04	Apprentice Landseer	56	Outlaw
05	Bailiff	57-61	Peasant
06-07	Barber-Surgeon	62-64	Rat-Catcher
08-10	Boatman	65-67	Rogue ²
11-14	Bone Picker	68-70	Scribe
15-18	Burgher	71-74	Servant
19-22	Camp Follower	75	Smuggler
23-24	Charcoal-Burner	76	Soldier
25-26	Coachman	77-79	Student
27-31	Entertainer ¹	80-82	Thief ²
32-33	Ferryman	83-84	Toll Keeper
34-38	Fisherman	85-89	Tradesman
39-41	Hunter	90-91	Vagabond
42-46	Initiate	92-93	Valet
47	Jailer	94-95	Watchman
48	Mercenary	96-98	Woodsmen
49-50	Messenger	99-100	Zealot ³
51-52	Militiaman		

¹ Entertaining is a high status profession in Gnomish society, particularly amongst the city-dwellers. Human nobles and merchants consider it a mark of high status to retain a Gnome jester. The Gnomes cheerfully exploit this; it is the norm for jesters to report back all they see and hear to the priests of Ringil who use such information for political advantage.

² It is very rare for Gnomes to defraud or steal from other Gnomes for material gain, though good-natured pranking is common, encouraged even. Other races are not afforded this privilege. Indeed many Gnomes consider that the larger the gain, the funnier the joke.

³ Gnome Zealots have taken the teachings of Ringil too far in one direction, forgetting his versatile nature. They may take the doctrine of 'do for yourself' so far they cannot accept anything at all from others, or they may have pranked so often and so effectively that they became impossible to live with. Perhaps they simply spend their lives sitting by small pools clutching their fishing rods. However they behave, they have become outcasts from their communities and begun wandering, guided by their interpretation of the will of Ringil.



LANDSEERS

APPRENTICE LANDSEER A BASIC CAREER

The Gnome Landseers are responsible for managing the land around settlements so as to conceal them from enemies. This is accomplished through a mixture of creative botany, misdirection and magic. The subtleties of cultivating plants in the right places, managing animal populations (it is important that the rivers are well stocked with beavers, but not too well stocked) and making sure the community has enough to eat require a long apprenticeship in and of itself, even before the use of magic is considered. It is not unusual for the apprentice to study for several years before being declared a Landseer in full.

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
			+10	+5	+5	+5	
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
	+2				+1		

Note: Only Gnomes may enter this career.

Skills: Animal Care, Channelling, Concealment or Follow Trail, Magical Sense, Outdoor Survival, Perception, Read/Write, Silent Move, Speak Arcane Language (Magick), Trade (Gardener) (Int)

Talents: Orientation, Petty Magic (Arcane), Rover or Very Resilient

Trappings: Light Armour (Leather Jack), Quarter Staff

Career Entries: Hunter, Outrider, Peasant, Scout, Vagabond, Woodsman

Career Exits: Landseer, Scout

LANDSEER AN ADVANCED CAREER

Not all Apprentice Landseers go on to be Landseers in their own right. The job involves long periods of time wandering the land around settlements alone, attending to obscure matters of landscaping and botany. Furthermore, the level of responsibility that the Landseer has puts many off. Gnomes rely on the Landseers to keep them hidden. One mistake can give a settlement away. It is a heavy burden to bear.

However, the work, a mixture of delicate craftsmanship, outdoorsmanship and misdirection, is almost the epitome of the Gnomish ideal and Landseers are very close to Ringil, sometimes even more so than the priesthood.

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
+10		+10	+15	+15	+20	+20	
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
	+4				+2		

Note: Only Gnomes may enter this career.

Skills: Animal Care, Animal Training, Channelling, Charm Animal, Concealment, Follow Trail, Magical Sense, Navigation, Outdoor Survival, Perception, Read/Write, Scale Sheer Surface, Silent Move, Speak Arcane Language (Magick), Swim, Trade (Gardener) (Int)

Talents: Arcane Lore (Landseer), Keen Senses, Orientation, Rover, Tunnel Rat, Very Resilient

Trappings: Light Armour (Leather Jack), Quarter Staff

Career Entries: Apprentice Landseer

Career Exits: Scout

understand how to jest properly. On occasion it can seem as if Gnomes are intolerant of all races. This is not the case, simply every Gnome knows that big things are stupid: giants, trolls, ogres, humans... Insults are likely to be met by a volley of abusive jibes in return.

'I've never understood human cities, out there in the open where all those nasty beasties can see them.'

Karin, Gnomish Philosopher

Gnomish Society

Gnomish society consists of small, well-concealed settlements, typically of 50-150 Gnomes, and never more than around

500. The Gnomish tendency to develop several talents and professions makes small Gnomish communities more sophisticated than a human settlement of equivalent size would be.

Since Gnomes are physically small and lacking in resilience, they hide their settlements carefully, living mostly underground and manipulating the nearby terrain so as to make it almost impossible for enemies to locate them. Gnomes simply feel much safer staying out of sight of the many hostile races that plague the Old World. A Gnome ranger, called the Landseer, manages the land, making sure that the settlement is properly hidden and that needs for food and other resources can be satisfied.

Concealment of the settlement is the most important part of the Landseer's job. The Elvish tendency to achieve camouflage through use of the Lore of Shadow, is viewed by Gnomes as flashy and wasteful. In contrast a Landseer will spend many hours moving rocks and planting bushes to create the appearance of natural terrain, which in reality hides the Gnomish dwelling.

Communities are headed jointly by three individuals representing the three aspects of Ringil: a priest of Ringil, representing jesting; a senior craftsman, symbolising smithing; and, representing fishing, the Landseer.

Traditional Gnomish society has two community types – static and nomadic. Static communities tend to be combinations of half buried houses linked by tunnels and larger burrows under the ground. Communal areas are always below ground, though Gnomes certainly venture above ground when it is safe to do so. A typical Gnomish living space consists of an open living, cooking and sleeping area with a low, A-frame roof. Smoke from the lower area is channelled up into the attic where fish can be smoked (smoke is released at night when it will not be noticed). Each house has its own small vegetable garden. Gnomes are very good gardeners, in a peculiarly Gnomish kind of way, planting gardens that appear to the untrained eye to be a naturally occurring tangle of bushes and undergrowth.

A typical diet primarily consists of root vegetables and mushrooms, which are grown in underground caverns. Some game is eaten, but Gnomes are poor marksmen, and trapping comes with the risk of the traps being found. Pickling and smoking are important in the winter.

Fishing is of great religious significance to Gnomes. They believe that originally Ringil put Gnomes close to rivers so they could obtain food with relative ease. Now every Gnomish community will be close to a sizeable body of water, well stocked with fish. In some parts of the Old World these lakes also attract giant beavers, leading to the Gnomes and beavers living in symbiotic harmony. This peculiar arrangement gives rise to rural folk saying 'It's as sure as Gnomes have big beavers.'

Gnomes do not arrange themselves into human-style families. There is no concept of marriage and Gnomes do not form monogamous, or even particularly long-lasting, relationships. In general, too-close relationships between couples are viewed as weakening the overall cohesion of the community. Children are raised communally, though parents usually show close interest in their child, hiding presents on their birthday and encouraging them to do their gnome-work. Since Gnomes are long-lived and keep their communities small, children are relatively rare. A Gnomish house will be home to a number of Gnomes who care to live together – they may be related or not. Living arrangements are rarely permanent, however, and Gnomes move between houses often. On a day to day basis Gnomes are not precious about their personal space and happily wander through each other's houses.

Nomadic communities are groups of pedlars, venturing away from Gnomish regions to trade with humans, Dwarfs and Halflings. The pedlars usually set up a temporary camp and hide it carefully before sending a small number of representatives to the town or village to sell their wares.

Both communities regularly intermingle and it is common



for Gnomes from a static community to decide almost on a whim to take up a travelling life.

Of course, many modern Gnomes have lived in human cities all their lives. Traditional Gnomes shake their heads at these metro-Gnomes, regarding their associating with humans as an amusing character flaw. Gnome communities in cities often

attach themselves to Halfling quarters, using them as buffers to hide behind. It cannot be denied that living near humans is affecting the city-dwellers, as they often have a much more strongly developed sense of family and a perverse desire to live above ground (especially in Marienburg, where early burrowing experiments met with hilarious consequences). Modern metro-

LORE OF THE LANDSEERS

'Hedge' Magick is the divine lore practised by the Landseers of Ringil. It is used primarily to protect and conceal Gnomish dwellings from prying eyes, although its use in practical joking and other areas has not escaped the eyes of the more extroverted Landseers. As they develop in the art Landseers become more 'at one' with nature, their hair becomes bushier, and commonly small mammals will nest in them. At the higher reaches of the art the Landseer's skin appears to change colour to that of the land, allowing him to hide all the more effectively.

Call Roots

Casting number 5

Casting time - A half action

Ingredient - The root of a tree (+1)

Description - This spell can only be cast in areas where plants are found. It causes the roots of the plants to grow out through the ground and entangle one target chosen by the caster. The target must make an Agility Test or be literally rooted to the ground for one turn. During this time he may only strike and parry as normal but may not move. Hits against him have a +20 WS bonus.

False Trail

Casting Number 8

Casting time - One full action

Ingredient - Crushed stinkwort berries (+1)

Description - This spell allows the Gnome to create a false trail to mislead enemies. The spellcaster can nominate a direction of his choice and a set of false footprints will appear heading off in that direction. Note this does not conceal the smell of the Gnome, and if he is being tracked by scent the handler is allowed an Intelligence Test to notice his genuine path.

Alter Landscape

Casting Number 11

Casting Time - One full action

Ingredient - A small shovel (+1)

Description - This spell is usually used by Landseers for minor earthworks around Gnome dwellings. However it can also be used to alter the ground beneath the feet of enemies making it unexpectedly uneven, marshy, riddled with rabbit holes or some similar effect. Use the large area template to determine the area affected. Anyone in the area must make

an Agility Test to stay on their feet. Those failing fall down and must spend a full action struggling to their feet. During this time they count as prone targets.

Ringil's Curse

Casting Number 14

Casting Time - A half action

Ingredient - A bag of rusty nails (+2)

Description - Used to punish those who the Landseer believes have angered Ringil. Once cast it causes all manufactured items of one type (e.g. all hand weapons or gunpowder weapons, leather armour etc.) to collapse down to their constituent parts. Use the large area template. Items of good craftsmanship will be destroyed only on a roll of 6-10 on a D10 as they are better made and thus more resistant to the spell. Magic items or best quality items are not affected.

Dead End

Casting Number 17

Casting Time - A full action

Ingredient - A brick (+2)

Description - A more advanced version of the False Trail spell, used only to throw off pursuit or block entrances to Gnome villages. This spell causes the terrain behind the Gnome to alter in such a way that it becomes impassable: bushes will grow so they become thick and impenetrable, tunnel walls will collapse etc. Use the large area template to determine the affected area. Anyone in the region that is becoming impassable is allowed an Agility Test to escape. Otherwise they may become stuck or take damage depending on the effect. For example, if a tunnel is collapsing, they may take a damage 6 hit. If bushes are growing they will be entangled until their friends can cut through to them.

Enrage Land

Casting Number 20

Casting time - Two full actions

Ingredient - A small axe made of silver (+3)

Description - This most powerful of hedge magick spells is used to bring down the anger of Ringil on those threatening his followers. It has the effect of causing the land to rise up and attack - branches strike people down, mushrooms grow from the ground releasing deadly spores, stones smash the priest's attackers etc. Use the large area template. Anyone within this area will take a damage 6 hit.

Gnome communities share the same sense of communality as their country cousins, banding together in times of difficulty. In cities such as Marienburg where the non-human races have official representation it is common for Kommissions of Dwarf, Elf and Halfling interests to have a small 'Gnome Office.'

Physique

Gnomes are short creatures, rarely taller than four feet. They are somewhat stocky, but considerably slighter than Dwarfs. Facial features are typically exaggerated – large bulbous noses and big ears are common. Thick shaggy eyebrows and beards are the height of masculinity. Skin has a weather-beaten and tanned appearance, even among the most urban Gnomes. Females are as common as males and tend to be a little heavier. Hair is almost always dark, either black or dark brown, though red-heads have been known.

Gnome Language and Names

The Gnomish language sounds similar to the Dwarf tongue, having evolved in parallel with Khazalid, but it has far more rhythm and many layers of meaning, making it excellent for puns, wordplay and verse. Words added from various human and Halfling languages, brought to the Gnomes by traders, add further layers of ambiguity to an already baffling vocabulary.

It is common for outsiders to claim that Gnomish names are long and complicated affairs, reflecting the bearer's rank, lineage, profession and such-like. This amusing fib was told to the Imperial scholar Otto Ketels some two hundred years ago and has since become 'common knowledge' among learned humans (the story of this scam is commemorated in thirty stanzas of comic verse which have, unfortunately, never been translated from the original Gnomish. It is always a big hit with the kids at temple, though).

The truth is that Gnomish names are merely short constructions of syllables that their parents thought strung together in a pleasant or amusing way. Human, Dwarvish or Halfling names that have some kind of meaning when translated into Gnomish are popular. It is customary for a young Gnome to be given one name by each parent. Concealing greater wordplay in the combination of the two names is particularly admired.

They're just...not...Gnomes!

Norris, Gnome Landseer.

How Gnomes See others

Dwarfs: Gnomes resent the view often held by other races that they are just like small Dwarfs (there are certain anatomical differences, don't you know), viewing Dwarfs as oversized mockeries of Gnomish-ness. On the other hand, it has not escaped their notice that the Dwarf-holds of the World's Edge Mountains have always protected the Gnomish lands and official relations are cordial.

Elves: As a race that values the acquisition of experience and

skills, Gnomes have nothing but contempt for the elven practice of eliminating memories. To Gnomes, Elves are somewhat ridiculous and, what is more, take themselves far too seriously.

Halflings: Gnomes regard Halflings with good-natured amusement and trade with the Moot regularly, even if they are rather wasteful and indolent little fellows.

Humans: Gnomes like the large, safe communities that humans build, but do worry about how visible the towns are and what they see as slack attitudes toward Chaos and the undead. Humans just do not do things properly!

Chaos: Just as Gnomes are physically small and lacking in resilience, their communities are small and cannot withstand the corrupting influence of Chaos. This has led Gnomish society to take an extremely hard line on Chaos – when mutants are born, for example, they are put to death and the mother exiled or even executed.

Skaven: The rat men also build hidden, subterranean homes and they have the wit to sniff out hidden burrows. Competition for real estate, therefore, has caused many bloody confrontations and most Gnomes hold a particular hatred for Skaven.

Gnomes in Imperial Society

Craftsmen - Gnomes make fine craftsmen, rivalling the Dwarfs in many ways. Gnomes are free of the social conservatism of Dwarfs, thriving on innovation. Toys, elaborate clockwork devices of great intricacy and precision and with an eye for the theatrical, are particularly prized.

Money Lenders - It appeals deeply to the Gnomish psychology to be a silent partner, secretly funding an enterprise. The local Cult of Ringil of many towns is very wealthy and may be invested in a variety of private and civic enterprises. Gnomes also regularly lend money to individuals. They consider it wonderfully amusing that people are prepared to pay good money to borrow funds that they could simply go out and earn. Some Gnomes are even willing to fund schemes of dubious legality. Others are downright criminal.

Jesters - Through jesting, Gnomes gain access to the upper echelons of human society. The prestige that human nobles attach to having a Gnomish jester puts a Gnome in the home of all the most influential men of means. Make no mistake, a good jester knows when to shut up and simply listen. He also understands the power of ridicule in influencing who will win a valuable business deal or marriage.

Watchmen and Sewerjacks - Gnomes are short in stature and comfortable underground. Both qualities make them perfect sewerjacks. The insular nature of their communities makes it a good idea for the watch to recruit at least a couple of Gnomes if they ever want any useful information from them.

RINGIL AND HIS CULT

Ringil is the Gnomes' only God. They do not accept the pantheons of the other races, asserting that Ringil provided Gnomes with all that they need. Ringil's tenets instruct every part of the Gnomish way of life whether it is the thanks they give him for allowing them to find new food sources or raucous joy at thinking up a prank that has never been done before. Gnomes are almost fatalistic in their outlook, believing that Ringil is leading them gradually towards 'perfect Gnomish-ness'. Either that, or he is playing some elaborate joke on them. Gnomes do not devote a lot of effort to trying to discern which is the case. After all, a good straight man does not try to second guess the comedian!

TEMPERAMENT

Ringil is usually depicted as a very old Gnome with wisdom in his eyes and a whimsical smile on his face. He sometimes adopts a good-natured, professorial air. Other times he is a grumpy and caustic old man. On occasion, he is a sly trickster. The uncertainty is part of the fun of worshipping Ringil.

SYMBOLS

The most common symbols of Ringil are anvils, fishing rods and bladders on sticks, often combined into single devices. Priests wear iron pendants with an anvil design.

STRICTURES

Ringil is not the sort of god to lay down hard and fast strictures, considering the benefits of living according to his virtues to be self-evident. His priests, however, have one or two ideas about how a good Gnome should live.

- Never spoil a fellow Gnome's prank by informing on him or alerting his victim.
- Do not allow insults against Gnomes to go unanswered.
- Do not allow the works of Gnomish craftsmanship to be abused.
- One tenth of everything a Gnome earns belongs to Ringil.

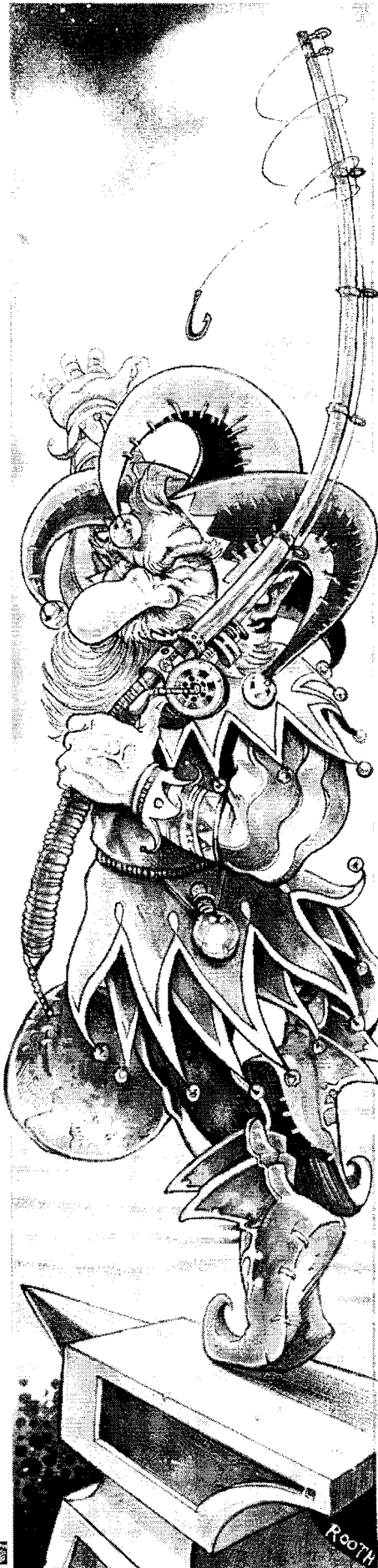
CAREERS AND SPELL USE

Magic is the manipulation of the energies of Chaos. Consequently Gnomes are extremely suspicious of magic users and do not encourage wizards in their society. The only magic available to Gnomes are the divine lores practised by the Landseers.

Gnomes may not enter the Priest career. Instead, Gnomes who have completed the Initiate career usually enter the Friar career once they are fully ordained.

CULT SKILLS AND TALENTS

Initiates of Ringil learn Trade (Smith) in addition to their normal starting skills. Priests may acquire any of the following as part of their careers: Trade (Smith or Miner), Performer (Jester or Comedian), Set Trap, Trap Finder.



GNOMES: SHELTER FROM THE STORM

What happened to the Gnomes by Robin Low

The Gnomes foresaw the Storm.

So, they sought shelter.

Unluckily for them, they found it.



sf

The Gnomes have gone. The Mirror Moors are empty. Gnome peddlars no longer walk the paths of the Empire or its towns hawking their intricate wares. The thriving burrows of the World's Edge foothills are silent, their entrances lost. Even the Imperial Court Jester has vanished, and it is not a laughing matter. What is more, *nobody* has noticed, *nobody* remembers, and *all* traces of an entire people have disappeared. As far as the world and its inhabitants are concerned, the Gnomes never, ever existed at all.

It is entirely their own fault.

They really should have gnome better.

The Storm is Breaking

The Storm of Chaos was no surprise to the Gnomes, or at least some of them. Its breaking was foreseen by one of the race's oldest oneiromancers, Nostrilamus. In a series of appalling nightmares, the ancient Gnome dreamt of Archaeon's fell hordes, the slaughter of thousands and, most terrible of all, the eventual annihilation of the Gnome race, either crushed in battle or worked to death in the mines and factories of the black industries arming Chaos as it slowly but surely overwhelmed the Old World and beyond. With a trembling hand, Nostrilamus recorded all he witnessed during those long dark nights of

terror in his dream diary, and after further prayers to Morris (the Gnome god of Dreams and Fancies) asking for guidance took his greatest book of prophecies to the Gnome Council of Xurik in the foothills of the World's Edge Mountains.



The Gnomes of Xurik

For centuries, the Gnomes of Xurik have semi-secretly guided Gnome affairs, protecting the race from exploitation and preparing for times of strife. Like the Halflings, being small in both number and stature made the Gnomes vulnerable to the physically stronger and more numerous races; even their cousins the Dwarfs were secretly perceived by many Gnomes as a potential danger, given their warlike ways and lust for gold. The Halflings found their own way to secure their position in the Empire; the Gnomes did likewise, creating a council of some of the race's most able illusionists, artisans and oneiromancers.

The Council, created by its namesake, is an unelected, unofficial body, with new members being invited to join when the Council perceives gaps in its knowledge and experience. It makes no representation to the Imperial authorities or any Dwarfhold and is not recognised by them in any official way. In fact, most people have never even heard of the Gnomes of Xurik, the exceptions being a few intelligence gathering organisations and a handful of folk with very close connections to the Gnome race, such as Gnome-friendly merchants, nobles and Dwarfs. However, these outsiders regard the Gnomes of Xurik as little more than a club or society than a political body and pay it limited attention.

The Council's aims have always been to find ways to survive within societies where Gnomes have no official power or influence, and wherever possible gently manipulate those societies so that Gnomes are seen as a valuable, honest and likable race. The Council predicts, plans and decrees, sending out instructions and advice three or four times a year to the leaders of the various Gnome communities within the Empire, which usually, but not always, become local policy. Down the centuries, such instructions have become a fairly open secret within Gnome society (although not normally discussed within earshot of non-Gnomes), and largely respected and followed despite the fact they often make no apparent sense or seem utterly pointless (examples include the so-called Year of the Pointy Red Hats, the Time of Compulsory Beards and the rather more enduring Annual Fishing Championships). The Gnome race has survived terrible wars, plagues and famines, so it seems to most Gnomes that the Council of Xurik is either doing a good job or is relatively harmless and gives everyone something to gossip about. The only problem is that other races see Gnomes as being somewhat eccentric, given to unusual, short-lived fads and always putting on bizarre festivals. Or at least, that is how people used to see them.



Bad Dreams

The Council's response when presented with Nostrilamus's dream diary was affirmative. The oneiromancers on the Council itself had already experienced dark dreams suggesting something awful was afoot, and warnings had been received from oneiromancers in other parts of Gnome society. Nostrilamus's dreams simply provided the Council with confirmation, further detail, and a horrendous outcome. Clearly, the Council had to plan for the coming war.

Several possibilities were discussed. Informing the Imperial authorities was considered, but the Council concluded that prophetic dreams would be dismissed as the silly little superstitions of a silly little race. It was felt the Dwarfs would have a similarly patronising response. Informing the whole of Gnome society and perhaps attempting a mass exodus from the Old World was deemed impractical and only delaying the inevitable anyway. No, a more radical solution was deemed necessary, one that would not cause panic in Gnome society or draw attention from outsiders. After a month of discussion, the Council came up with a plan, one which would be kept secret even from Gnome society and implemented on its behalf.



Shelter from the Storm

In order to survive the coming Storm, the Gnomes of Xurik decided to make use of their natural talents for machinery and illusion magic. They would construct an extraordinary magical engine with the power to hide them from the forces of Chaos, allowing them to continue to live in the Old World but be untouchable by their enemies.

It was not an entirely new plan. The magical theories and technical designs had been drafted centuries earlier when the Gnome named Xurik first organised the Council. The Great Machine, as it was referred to, was considered a way for the new Council to fulfil its purpose in one stroke, but it was deemed too radical, too extreme. Now, with the threat of extermination imminent, ancient tomes were dusted off, and Gnome engineers and illusionists were summoned, sworn to secrecy and put to work in the deepest burrows of the World's Edge Mountains.

The Great Engine was not that costly. The Council of Xurik had been secretly hoarding vaults full of metal and precious stones for centuries (a hoard long rumoured within the Old World's thieving communities), and the labour force was so enthused by the incredible project that it worked for cost-of-living rates of pay. The most difficult aspect of the construction was the magical. A team of illusionists studied the original theories, attempted small-scale tests and were disappointed. Developing a ritual powerful enough to sustain a permanent illusion on the scale necessary, even powered by the Great Engine, was deemed virtually impossible.

The ancient Nostrilamus came to their aid. He offered himself up as a sacrifice. He would become a living component at the heart of the Great Machine. He would quite literally dream the Gnome race into a recognisable, but safer world.

Fade Away

On the appointed day, Nostrilamus settled down into a narrow but comfortable bed of goose feathers and furs and took a long drink of the traditional oneiromancers' dreaming potion Gnorlix. Clockmakers lowered the carved crystal lid on the bed. Cogs began turning, conveying the bed into the heart of the Great Machine, with doors closing and locking behind it.

A half hour passed, and then the mechanism of the Great Engine slowly began to tic-toc, tic-toc of its own accord. The sudden fear and excitement this generated was palpable. More Gnomes slowly gathered in the vault to watch the engine as wheels and cogs turned and spun and clicked along. Shortly after, the restful tic-toc, tic-toc was joined by a deep and somewhat nasal snoring.

And then, twenty minutes after the snoring began, every Gnome in the world, from those in the vault of the Great Engine to those few who had travelled to the wilds of Lustria and beyond, witnessed all colour fading from themselves and the world around them. *Everything* turned black or grey or white. Steadily, black became grey, grey became white, whiter and whiter until everything faded away, hidden in a brilliant, brilliant white. Then nothing.

When nothing became something again, the Gnomes found themselves blinking from the gleaming brilliance that had almost blinded them. In the vault of the Great Machine, the gathered Gnomes looked around them, wondering what had happened. The Great Machine continued spinning, ticking and tocking, and snoring restfully.

All those present wondered the same question: had it worked? Almost as one, everyone ran for the tunnels leading out. What greeted them in the hills and fields outside the burrows of the World's Edge Mountains was something of a shock.

The Gnome town outside the entrance to the burrows was... changed. Gone were the houses of wood and stone, and in their place were... toadstools. Really, really big toadstools. With little windows and doors in them. The Gnomes stood around gaping in confusion, and then someone shouted that the ponies in the stables (well, the woven bramble-vine stables) had all turned into giant rabbits. With saddles. A rather heated debate suddenly erupted.

A lot of theory was thrown about, and so were some fists and giant rabbit droppings. It was suggested that Nostrilamus and the Great Machine had shrunk the Gnomes so as to hide them from the world, but this was quickly dismissed as it was clear that aside from some obvious exceptions most other things (grass, mountains, trees, and the nearby river) were exactly the right size. Instead, it seemed more likely the problem lay with the dream that Nostrilamus was dreaming. The Great Machine was essentially a thing of illusion, powered by an aged oneiromancer. The Gnomes came to the conclusion that they had been hidden from their former world within a powerful dream, and it was a rather odd dream at that.



Back in the Old Old World

Once this idea was broadly agreed, the Gnomes of Xurik remembered they had to inform the wider Gnomish population across the world of what had happened and why it was done. Dream-sendings were performed, passing information to oneiromancers in other settlements throughout the Old, sorry, New Old World and beyond. Many angry dreams were sent back in return, especially from the Gnomes of Albion and an oneiromancer in Lustria (the New New World). Over the next few days news also returned confirming that the Gnomes appeared to be alone in this strange new world, with no sign of Humans or Dwarfs or any of the things those races created.

One other piece of information the Gnomes of Xurik sent by dream was for illusionists, describing a ritual to enchant a small body of water, such as a pond, so it could be used as a magical viewing device enabling anyone to see back into the world they had left behind. Perhaps more than anything, it was this ritual that calmed some of the fear and anger felt by the vast majority of Gnomes who had not been involved with the construction of the Great Machine. The scrying pools allowed the Gnomes to witness the opening horrors of the Storm of Chaos, and they quickly understood what they had been saved from. Living inside mushrooms suddenly did not seem quite so bad, and everyone said they had started to like the smell.

Watching the Storm of Chaos became something of a morbid habit for Gnomes everywhere. Every day, after toiling in the gardens and burrows, Gnomes would gather around ponds to see what new horrors had been wrought. Gnomes who complained about the loss of fishing rights were shouted down, but they either joined to watch too or went to shoo away the young Gnomes who wanted to watch but were not allowed because of their age.

Of course, as the weeks and months went on, the Storm of Chaos blew itself out. The war came to an end, as many, many wars had done before. This prompted another fierce debate, within communities and by angry dream-sendings. Many said they should have braved the Storm, but others asked how many would have died in the fighting and the horrors, and how many more would have succumbed to famine, plague and bandits in the aftermath? It is an argument that goes on to this day.



A Way Home?

A few months after the Storm of Chaos ended, some of the theorists among the Gnome illusionists and oneiromancers found a way to modify the scrying pools into small, temporary doorways, giving them a route back into the Old Old World. It proved to be something of an inexact magic: stepping into a scrying pool in the New Old World, a Gnome would emerge (dry) in the Old Old World, popping out from holes between the roots of a tree, out of cupboards, under stairs, out of wells, or landing with a bump in someone's attic.

Sensibly, those who discovered this route home informed the Council of Xurik, who advised cautious experimentation and

reconnaissance before informing the population. This was a good idea, as it provided two shocking revelations. Firstly, the existence of Gnomes had been completely erased from the Old Old World. Their homes and settlements, the things they had created, even the other races' memory of them having existed: all was wiped from reality. It was obvious that these scrying portals did not offer a way home – the home and reality they had known appeared to have gone for good. The second revelation was a little more bizarre. When the reconnaissance Gnomes entered the Old Old World they quickly realised that they had shrunk. In the Old Old World, adult Gnomes were now about two feet tall. Smaller than bloody Halflings. The only advantage was that it was a lot easier to avoid being seen and to squeeze through narrow gaps if something decided to chase you. Actual measurement showed they were only smaller in the Old Old World; in the new Old World they were as tall as ever they were (consequently any other race following some Gnomes into the New Old World will suffer the disconcerting feeling that they themselves have shrunk a bit).

So, despite some protests and a fair bit of grumbling, the wider Gnome population accepted their lot with a degree of stoicism. After all, the world they found themselves in was not so bad, was it? The Council of Xurik sanctioned controlled, limited forays back into the Old Old World to acquire items that might be needed, but generally the Gnomes just settled down and got on with life. At least, some Gnome jesters observed, they had not all been turned blue.



A New Old World

Despite the upheaval, the shock and indignation, the Gnomes initially found their new world to be something of a bucolic fantasy. Wherever they are, the Gnomes and their communities exist in a landscape that is broadly recognisable as the one they came from, but more rural and more rustic. Birds chirp sweetly in the trees, plants and crops grow well wherever seeds are sown, rivers are full of leaping silvery fish, and mountain streams tinkle and chuckle as they flow. There are no Humans, no Dwarfs, no Elves, no Halflings, and none of their towns and cities and holds. So far, it seems to be the height of summer, all the time. There is something altogether less grim and perilous about the place. For the most part, anyway.



The Bramble Forests

While the landscape is familiar, beyond the fields and gardens of Gnome settlements much of the land is copse and wood and forests. Many, these forests have become dark twisted things of tangled briar and bramble. They are awkward and slow to navigate, and thorns and spike clutch and snag at clothing and flesh with every step. Some Gnomes made attempts early on to explore these woods, but there were a few disappearances and others hurried out having glimpsed strange things moving in the depths. Odd, distant roars and peculiar smells come from

the bramble forests some nights. Most Gnomes avoid them, although during the day many are happy to venture to the edges of the smaller forests to cut the hard thorns from which useful tools and items can be carved. Younger, more flexible brambles sprout up in places, and the Gnomes are happy to transplant them as they grow quickly and can be trained to form fences and boundaries. They need to be trimmed though, as they can quickly get out of hand.



The Weasels

Obviously, something very odd had happened to the rabbits (or the ponies, depending on your point of view). They were now big enough to ride, remarkably obedient and probably about as smart as the ponies they replaced. They got through a hell of a lot of carrots, but at least the fields were extremely productive.

It was some months before they were first encountered, but another normally small animal was discovered to have become unusually large and worryingly cunning and intelligent: Weasels. The Weasels were larger than the Gnomes, though tending to a stooped but upright posture, only going on all fours when running (almost as fast as the rabbits). They used bows and arrows and carried spears and clubs, made from the wood and thorns of the bramble forests in which they lurked. Seemingly nocturnal, their eyes shone yellow in the dark. To date, the Weasels have mostly been encountered at dusk and at a distance. One or two fatalities have occurred (usually by arrows), and the Weasels have given chase to several rabbit-riders who have ventured close to some of the bramble forests. Strange noises and footprints suggest that some Weasels have ventured into Gnome towns and fields at night. However, there has been no formal or large scale threat made against the Gnomes. For their part, the Gnomes steer clear of the larger bramble forests (although youngsters like to dare one another), set guards to patrol at night, and are training a small force of rabbit-riders armed with lances that is becoming known as the Knights of the White Rabbit. And, yes, they do get the joke.



Metal Theft

The New Old World is strangely short on metal, with anything from door knobs to cutlery to belt buckles being substituted by things like wood, stone, bone and horn or even the hard thorns from the bramble forests. Exploratory mining yielded nothing of note, although there is an unusual abundance of small semi-precious stones and precious gems to be excavated.

Being excellent craftsmen, Gnomes have adapted easily, but they still like to work with metal tools and find metal materials necessary for many jobs. Consequently, when it was discovered that the scrying pools to the Old Old World could be used as temporary portals, authorised Gnomes were sent back to steal small metal objects. Being a fairly honest race, the Gnomes have felt bad about stealing, but have lessened their feelings of guilt by

doing the occasional good turn (perhaps fixing something that was broken) or leaving behind a gift (such as a small gemstone).



Laughing Gnome

One of the more peculiar encounters experienced by Gnome communities is the Laughing Gnome. To date, he has only been seen from afar, usually a dark silhouette stood on a hilltop on a starry, moonlit night. Gnomefolk usually become aware of his presence because of his maniacal laughter, drifting down from the hills, waking them in their beds. Nobody has managed to get to him before he vanishes into the night, leaving only a trail of fading chuckles, so who or what he really is remains a mystery. Many Gnomes consider him an annoying practical joker and others suggest he is just a Gnome gone mad from their translocation. However, some members of the team who created the Great Machine wonder if the Laughing Gnome is the slightly disturbed spirit of the sleeping Nostrilamus.



The Burning Bull

Of all the strange things the Gnomes have seen here, the Burning Bull must rank as the weirdest. Quite literally, it is a huge, horned brown bull, quite natural-looking save for the fact that from the crown of its head all the way along its back and flanks it is covered with red flames. Its hooves are also alight, so wherever it steps it leaves scorched prints.

Again, most magicians and artificers involved with creating the Great Machine speculate the Burning Bull is some manifestation of Nostrilamus's rage, while a few think it represents frustration and pain and he must be feeling trapped within the machine. Theory is sadly irrelevant, however, to those Gnomes who have their crops trampled or their carts butted and set aflame, or those nearly crushed to death when the beast suddenly arrives to charge through the centre of town.



And what of the Great Machine?

By now, you may be wondering why the Gnomes have not just switched off the Great Machine or attempted to make contact with Nostrilamus. In answer to the first query, the designers failed to install an off switch, and furthermore nobody is sure what will happen if it is turned-off anyway. It was, the engineers and illusionists will point out defensively, a bit of a rushed job. As for Nostrilamus, well, some of the finest oneiromancers have tried to get dream messages through to him or tap into his dreams and make them more lucid. However, this has resulted in splitting headaches and bouts of insomnia at best, and raging clockwork nightmares at worst. Feel free to allow PCs access to an oneiromancer's clockwork nightmares as they are suitably grim and perilous – shared dreaming is an important oneiromantic ritual (few Morrite priests still know such rituals).

The Gnome engineers and illusionists (who love theoretical arguments) speculate it might be possible to make a controlled shutdown of the Great Machine on the Old Old World side, working on the assumption that the machine exists simultaneously in both worlds. Unfortunately, the Gnome-dug burrows and tunnels leading to the natural cave in which the Great Machine was housed no longer exist in the Old Old World and scrying portals seem unwilling to open there (due to quantum oneiric effects, according to some bright spark). Either the tunnels would have to be dug afresh, or an alternative existing route to the cave would have to be discovered, and the Gnomes would need help to do that (*cough* PCs *cough*).



How to Use the Gnomes

The magical shunting of the Gnome race from the Old Old World to the dreamlike New Old World has had the complication of completely removing them not only physically but also from the memories of those left behind. Similarly, it has removed all physical trace of them; their houses and burrows are gone, their mines and gardens are gone, the things they created are gone. They are even gone from the history books. Anything that might have been left behind (i.e. anything the GM deems a useful plot hook) remains as something of mystery, a bit like the ancient standing stones charcoal burners sometimes find half-buried in the forests. The Gnomes cannot simply come back home, as home is gone and they are strangers and outsiders. Given the circumstances, GMs may wonder what use Gnomes are now.



Gnomeworld

The Gnomes' New World is extremely under detailed, even though it is potentially a setting in its own right. This is largely because I do not see many WFRP GMs using it as a core part of any campaign, and also because GMs should tailor its whimsical idiosyncrasies to his plot needs and his players' tolerance levels. It can be a simple parody of garden Gnomes or Wil Huygen and Rien Poortvliet's *The Secret Book of Gnomes*, or it can be more serious and draw on a vast body of serious folklore or children's literature – look online and you will discover *a lot* of material to work with. What is more, it is a dream world, touched by nightmares and prophetic visions, and because of this, almost anything goes. Also, it could easily be shrunk down to become an extremely weird region of the Chaos Wastes, protected from the outside by a bramble thorn hedge of such density and danger that no Beastman or Chaos monstrosity has ever made it through to where the Gnomes are. At least not yet...

However a GM chooses to depict it, the place remains a handy plot device or an unusual location for occasional adventures, and most importantly it can be 'shut off' at the GM's convenience.

Gnome Tales

WFRP could do with some fairy tales. The trouble is, in a world with Elves and Goblins and Magic Spells, much of the traditional subject matter of such stories is commonplace. In the past, when someone discovered their garden tools had been pinched they usually blamed the local Halflings. As soon as someone spotted a thief with a beard, they blamed the Dwarfs. More recently, however, when they also discovered that the thief had taken the trouble to mend all of the family's shoes during the night, they realised it could not have been Dwarfs because Dwarfs are just not that considerate. Or that quiet.

Player Characters are most likely to first encounter Gnomes by rumour and story. They are little folk who are said to seemingly pop up out of nowhere, out of holes in the ground, out of cupboards and wardrobes, from behind trees, out of pools of water in the forest. They are said to steal things such as farming tools, nails, chickens and sheep. Often, they leave something nice in return (small gemstones are typical, or carved ornaments that folk consider Lucky Charms), do a good deed or fix something, but not always. If something is lost or suddenly goes missing or is simply dropped, Gnomes are usually blamed. A few people even claim to have talked to Gnomes. When asked where they come from, or where they are going, such Gnomes invariably say, "Why, right here, of course!"

As far as anyone can remember, grandparents have been telling grandchildren stories of Gnomes for centuries, although the tales seem to have become more commonplace in recent years, and you are just as likely to hear Gnome tales in the halls and taverns of towns and cities as you are in the barns and fields of villages and farmsteads.



Doorways

The Gnomes use the scrying portals from the New Old World to the Old Old World, mostly for reasons of foraging and theft. There is no reason why something else from the New Old World could not learn the same ritual through secretive observation or just sneak through an open portal. This, ahem, opens the way for Weasels, the Laughing Gnome, or even the Burning Bull to make its way into the Old Old World. Imagine: Weasels getting embroiled with Skaven; the Burning Bull rampaging through Ulrican Talabecland (remember that a Red Bull is the provincial symbol of Sigmarite Ostland); or windblown seeds of the bramble forests taking root in the Old Old World and growing at breathtakingly rapid speeds.

Similarly, some Gnomes might make unauthorised visits to the Old Old World. They might just want to look around for old time's sake (and get caught in the process). They might want to take revenge on someone who wronged them (who has no memory of doing so, and technically never did since the Gnomes never existed) or return a favour owed to someone who did them a kindness. Gnome jesters may just want to make a nuisance of themselves to relieve the boredom. Always keep in mind that Gnomes are a diverse and lively bunch, and all of them have

past in the Old Old World, even if the Old Old World does not have them in its past (if that makes sense), so any Gnome might have a reason for trying to sneak back, if only for a short time.



New Old Friends... or Not

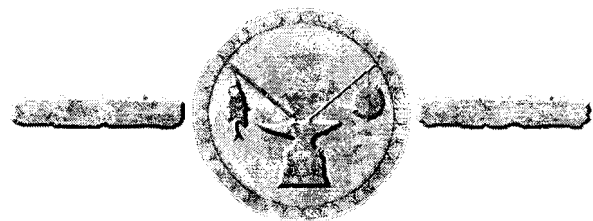
Whether the PCs first encounter Gnomes as brief glimpses out of the corner of the eye, little thieves in the night, or as suspected Chaotic bogles, sooner or later you will want them to become friends, or at least allies of convenience. The Gnomes have the advantage of being able to get to places the PCs probably cannot, so they are good folk to have on your side. They are also great craftsmen – the Dwarfs may be good with stone and metal, but the Gnomes excel as carpenters, leatherworkers and tailors, and have a talent for clockwork devices. You could extend the rules and ideas in the Lucky Charms and Skulls articles (pg. 27 & pg. 30) to allow Gnome-made magical items with minor effects, such as saddles of riding or satchels of holding, and so on.

As usual, there is a contrary approach. The Gnomes can be used as a real menace, albeit a small one. As thieves and mischief makers they could plague a town. Or they could be swarming little bastards armed with massive thorns out stealing sheep night after night. Perhaps a group of Gnomes, angry with what has happened, come to the Old Old World with no intention of returning. They may not be evil, but are probably desperate enough to resort to extreme measures to survive. Maybe there were some Gnomes who became secretly fascinated by the horrors of the Storm of Chaos they witnessed in the scrying pools and their minds were twisted by it until they formed a small cult, eager to return to the Old Old World and show their new allegiance to the Dark Gods.



And Finally...

Who knows? Maybe one day Games Workshop will decide there is money to be made from a Gnome army or specialist mercenary units of Gnome illusionists riding giant rabbits. If that day comes, you can dust off this article and use it to tell the story of how the PCs helped the Gnomes destroy the Great Machine and the mad ghost of Nostrilamus, restoring the Gnomish race to its former place in the Old World. Of course, if they succeed everything will be exactly as it was meant to be, and nobody, not even the PCs, will ever know what happened. Except, perhaps, in their dreams.



NOBODY'S GNOME

More theories on what happened to the Gnomes

OUT OF SIGHT, OUT OF MIND

By TOBY PILLING

"We Gnomes were ever both inquisitive and acquisitive – the curse of our race, as it turned out. Our technical mastery of the mechanical device (surpassing stolid Dwarven engineering, if I say so myself) was matched only by our aptitude in weaving the winds of Ulgu to suit our needs – shadow magic, or the art of illusion.

"However, we were never a numerous or doughty people and cherished our privacy and secrets above all. Always isolationist, to survive the myriad threats the world threw at us, we increasingly had to hide. A quest began – to seek for something greater than the trick of transmuting lead into gold: the secret of invisibility.

"I do not mean temporary invisibility – we could already achieve that – but something more lasting. The invention of the Dimensional Exception Bombe seemed the answer to our prayers, a mechanical computing device (we called it a bombe) powered by 9000 clockwork perpetual motion motors (I ruefully admit I had no small part in the contributing research to these) and invested with the magic of Ulgu. It existed in the liminal zones between the dimensions (or in both the "real world" and the "warp" at the same time, if you prefer). Constructed to calculate the exact point in the world of each Gnome, it then created what we termed a 'null point' at that location.

"I can see I'm losing you here – your eyes are glazing over. What it meant, in layman terms, was that every Gnome became invisible to any creature with a warp signature – that is, every being in existence.

"At first we were ecstatic – oh, the fun we had! No secret was beyond our ability to discover it, no jester's prank could be avoided. It soon became apparent though that not only did the invisibility seem permanent, but that the nullity of our existence extended to the records and memories of all other beings too – their minds would ignore pictures, books or monuments mentioning our people. Even if we acted upon them – lifting their skirts (for example), they would ascribe such misfortune either to rational phenomenon (a gust of wind, say), or the attention of supernatural boggarts and some such. It was as if we had never existed!

"Naturally, the novelty of our situation soon palled and discussion turned to finding a way to reverse the invisibility. It was decided that the machine would have to be switched off.

"The DEB 9000 (as we called it) though had begun to learn at a geometric rate. In the early hours of the morning of Geheimnstag, 2521 (as you Imperials measure the years), it became self-aware. Given that its primary directive was protecting the Gnomish race, it deemed that attempts to disable it were therefore a form of racial suicide. Acting to protect itself (and therefore the Gnomes under its charge) it afflicted us with what we termed 'the dreaming' - a sleep from which none awaken. Our few remaining scholars ponder whether DEB has secured a haven for their souls in the warp, therefore achieving its prime directive, for it is certainly the case that their physical bodies eventually wither and die. Whatever the case may be, more and more of our dwindling race succumb to the dreaming state every day. I am only protected through wearing this harness, which features the lone miniature prototype bombe, enabling me to project my own null point and effectively cancel out DEB's invisibility around my person.

"So I ask you again: will you help me destroy the DEB 9000 and save the Gnomish race?"



PACKED UP AND GONE GNOME

By BRIAN GILLATT AND STEVEN HANLON

The astute reader will note that, while in the 2512 background of WFRP1 Gnomes were a thriving, if minority, race, by the 2520s of WFRP2 they seem to have disappeared. The explanation is as simple as it is tragic.

In 2514, the Emperor's court jester, Gordo the Amazing (self-titled), was already out of favour due to a series of off-colour satires relating to recent incidents of Chaos worship and conspiracy amongst humans. Some of these satires went so far as to imply an intrinsic tendency toward evil in humans and, indeed, anyone more than 5' tall. The straw that broke the monarch's back, however, was a brilliant, if ill-conceived, practical joke (the details are unknown, except that it involved a highly placed lady at court and an unusually large carrowurst sausage.)

An enraged Emperor ordered Gordo thrown into the deepest, darkest dungeon that could be found. Unfortunately, Gordo's insuperable nature got the better of him again and he died three weeks later, beaten to death by a gang of rabid inmates.

Upon learning of his death, the Gnomish community in Atldorf protested in the most violent and extreme manner they could imagine. They disappeared entirely, to a Gnome Overnight.

Needless to say, the keeping of Gnomish jesters became suddenly unfashionable among the nobles of the Empire. Insulted and robbed of their main contact with influential human society, the urban Gnomes of the Empire have withdrawn into their own communities, closing their Gnome Kommission offices and trading with humans only through Dwarf and Halfling third parties.

The lives of rural and itinerant Gnomes have fortunately remained largely unchanged by these urban shenanigans. Indeed, the whole sorry story has merely confirmed the impression that metro-Gnomes are a bit peculiar. Meanwhile, in Marienburg, profit continued to be king and the whims of foreign monarchs were ignored, except in mockery.

In the aftermath of the Storm of Chaos, Gnomes are beginning to put their heads above the parapet, hoping to carve out a more solid place in society for themselves. Gnomes are now one of the wealthiest sections of society, having been spared such troublesome trifles as taxation and conscription. Gnome jesters are even coming back into fashion. Frankly, everyone could use a bit of a giggle.



DECODING THE GNOME By CLIVE OLDFIELD

Imperial Scout Ship Paracelsus, transmission (partial records recovered)

...Encountered unknown planet on edge of unstable warp rift. Indication that warp rift was generated by activity on or around that planet. Mission mandates any warp manipulation be investigated and destroyed.

...Entering planetary atmosphere. Warp disturbance from one of the planet's satellites has affected ship's systems. Both engines on fire. Crash landing imminent.

T+0000.00.01 Imperial Scout Ship has survived impact. Many systems down. Only one Surveillance Resource (SR25) defence system has survived crash. Defence system Sigma Rho 25 activated. Mission: seek out and destroy warp entities. Sigma Rho energy weapons malfunction. Imperative: improvise.

T+0000.00.02 Full inventory of planetary genetic material required. Genome investigation robots activation attempted. Genome investigation robots status report: AI replicators damaged in crash. Too few resources for full humanoid simulation routines. All genome investigation robots built

half size (exception Over-compensation: olfactory systems, double size).

T+0000.00.04 Sigma Rho defence system reports interaction with local life forms. Local life forms humanoid. Estimated mostly harmless. Local life form fraternisation and recruitment protocols activated.

T+0000.00.23 Sigma Rho defence system attracting undue attention. Download cultural camouflage. Recommend standard messianic module 3.1. Motivation: unite local life forms to facilitate warp entity search.

T+0005.07.12 Sigma Rho defence system sensors indicate warp gate activity at some distance. Seek and destroy protocols activated.

T+0005.08.04 Sigma Rho defence system reports warp gate sighting. Investigation continues.

T+0005.08.05 Contact lost with Sigma Rho system.

T+0007.05.20 Genome investigation robots report potential hostilities from local life forms. Subterranean survival protocols activated. Survival protocols downloaded, subroutines: hunter-gatherer: subsections: cavern and riverside eco-systems.

T+0018.05.20 Genome investigation robots surveillance continues. Only sporadic communication with genome robots available. Systems failing. Behaviour erratic. Survey inefficiencies. Remedial Action: Robots assigned autonomous operation, AI systems maximised. Local cultural/mythological rationale required: self-delusion subroutines downloaded. Sardonic humour module downloaded. Survey completion estimate >2000 years.

T+2512.10.05 Genome surveillance complete.

Human life forms: positive ID.

Eldar life forms: positive ID

Ork life forms: positive ID

Warp Entities: positive ID

Planet designated battleground status. Priority request: Imperial force.

T+2512.10.06 Genome identification robots self destruct.

Transmission ends

BAD JOKES BY ROBIN LOW

Haven't you got a gnome to go to?

Gnome one here by that name.

No one here by that gnome.

That's absolute gnomesense, that is.

There's no place like gnome.

Good gnoming.

It's time to call in the Gnome Guard.

We'll keep the gnome fires burning.

He's broken a gnome (after falling off the roof onto one).

It's gnomebody's business but his gnome.

That's more than enough of that...

THE MARGRAVE

A SCENARIO BY PAUL MACKINTOSH

Finding themselves in the ancient city of Talabheim, the PCs are approached by an excitable fellow, one **Kaspar Padesu**. He knows nothing of them and seems to have been drawn to them for no better reason than that they are an armed and hardy-looking bunch of travelling types. Kaspar is the city factor of a minor Talabecland noble, and is attired accordingly in the simple tunic and felt cap of a clerk. He is in an almost breathless state, clutching small, round reading glasses in one hand and an unfolded paper in the other. Begging them to hear him out, he explains his urgent need of just such a company as them, while not forgetting to mention that a good reward is on offer.



[D]

transfer took place. (The servant did not want to be made to return to Medreicha, yet felt guilty enough to ensure the letter was delivered.) As there seems no reason why the letter's content should be concealed, Kaspar can reveal it. If the PCs seem hesitant, he will show them the letter to convince them of his honesty. He feels that perhaps his master's own words will do a better job of winning them over. [See *Player Handout 1*]

If the PCs ask Kaspar about his master or Medreicha, he can explain that he is merely the margrave's city factor and has only visited the place once. The following gives an idea of what he does know.

Kaspar's brief summary of Medreicha

The Margrave's estate is in the eastern Empire's grand province of Talabecland, out towards the Ostermark border, north of the town of Krugeneim and the river Stir, 200 miles north-east of Talabheim. Being some way off the major roads it is seldom visited by outsiders. The nearest proper village is Zlatba, a good dozen miles south towards the Kolsa Hills along an old, dilapidated road.

The village, part of the margrave's fief, has an inn and a number of outlying hovels. Although he has little need to conduct personal day-to-day business with the village folk, Millo is obliged to act as judge at the occasional law court sessions.

Medreicha's castle, Zweiteheim, has a curtain wall studded with towers, enclosing two main buildings: the old hall which is rarely used now, and the much more recent 'Lichthalle' known for its long, thin windows of leaded blue glass. There is also

Kaspar's master, **Millo Teyss**, is the Margrave of **Medreicha**. Millo is in some kind of trouble, and has instructed Kaspar by letter to send help to his castle home. There are 80 *gc* to be paid in advance, and more will be paid upon completion of the service, as well as food and shelter provided for their stay at the castle. The PCs must set off immediately, for it is about 200 miles to Medreicha by road and there is no particularly helpful river route. Kaspar can provide two horses for the journey (average quality riding horses recently ordered by Millo).

Note: 'Sigmar's Heirs' mentions only counts and barons for Talabecland, but margrave is simply an old title for a border count. The Medreicha line of nobles, minor enough not to warrant a mention in said tome, have stuck with the more archaic name.

Kaspar really does not know why his master needs help, but the PCs could still learn more from him. There is the letter which appears to have come through a succession of hands, originally by way of a servant, who then gave it to a traveller to carry the rest of the way. Kaspar has no idea why this

Zweiteheim, Medreicha, the 2nd day of Brauzeit

I write to thee, Kaspar, in the utmost haste, with orders you must carry out with equal haste. Find a company of capable and armed folk and dispatch them immediately to me. Do not choose mere swaggering sell-swords, nor some superstitious militia youths, but those who have travelled this land, and know a goblin from an orc, and can stand firm in the face of wickedness. There is something evil here in the village, which I am afraid will be visited upon the castle before long. I must look to its defence and so have need of more guards. Give them all you can in advance of the monies I sent you last month - I need not the horses now. They have my word I shall pay them most generously for their services, better than any common mercenary could expect, and I shall reward them further for any brave act they do in my service. There is not even an hour to waste, for your master is in dire peril.

Pay the bearer of this missive 10 gold crowns.

Millo Teyss, Margrave

Player Handout One

a relatively famous library within, reputedly containing several hundred tomes, collected over the years by the family's scholars.

Kaspar will say very little about his master. It is not his place to do so. He will only reveal that Millo is a young man, scholarly and honest, and as yet unmarried. The only surviving child of the last margrave, Millo seems keen to ensure the family estate is kept in good repair, and has spent a considerable sum doing so. His heraldic device is a black bear upon a white background, holding a large hammer. (*These arms are stamped on the back of the letter.*) His servants' and guards' livery is plum red, with the black and white badge sewn onto their tunics or surcoats.

Of course, there is a lot that Kaspar does not know. For a start, any PCs passing an **Academic Knowledge (History or Heraldry/Genealogy) Test** will recall old stories about Millo's family's ancestors. Once a powerful noble family, the margraves of Medreicha served as high-ranking officers in the court of the Grand Duke of Talabecland. They made themselves very rich during the fragmentation of the Empire, and they stayed rich for centuries. Eventually, however, they were shamed by some failure in their duty. They fell from grace and have been declining ever since. What exactly shamed them is less clear - one story says they were mixed up with robber bands during the Kislevite wars against Chaos, another states there was cowardice and insanity in the family, and yet another claims a great sum of the Grand Duke's money was lost by the margrave Arnold Hagleb who could never pay it back.

A FAMILY HISTORY

The Teyss family ancestors, the margraves and margavines of Medreicha, have ruled the region around the village for centuries. The line has never yet been broken so badly that an heir could not be found, but occasionally an heiress has inherited so that their family name has changed several times.

During a lesser incursion of Chaos into Kislev (IC.2254) the Tsar of Kislev paid the Grand Duke of Talabecland a huge sum for military aid. In this time of interminable strife the Grand Duke had many mercenary soldiers at his disposal. The Kislevite money was to be paid in three instalments - an advance, a war chest, and a reward after the campaign. Only the latter two payments, however, were ever received. The advance was lost when the margrave Arnold Hagleb, Chancellor to the Grand Duke, was apparently robbed by a bandit force. Nevertheless, the army was still sent to aid the Kislevites. The Grand Duke was struggling to pay their wages and only too glad to make their maintenance and discipline the Tsar's problem.

Arnold had taken the Hagleb family to the very apex of their fortunes, but his failure to deliver the advance money proved to be his downfall. He was forced to retire in shame from public office. Not long after the robbery a rumour was born that is still partially remembered today amongst local folk. People said they knew why the margrave was ashamed. They claimed he had taken the money for himself, only to realise he could never use it, for then his crime would be revealed. Thus the

fortune in Kislevite silver and gold lay hidden in the depths of his castle. Years later the locals told tales of robbers looking for the money coming to sticky ends, or being frightened off by Arnold's ghost haunting any who disturbed his ill-gotten prize. Now, however, these tales of robbers have long been forgotten. All that remains is the notion that long ago the Teyss family were robbers, and one or two muddled stories about a ghost called 'Harnol' who haunts the castle.

In truth it was Arnold's young wife, the Margravine Stanoska, who encouraged him to steal the money, and it was she who realised that too much suspicion existed for the money to be spent. Her husband went insane with guilt, while she became ever more obsessed with how she could safely spend the fortune. Eventually she decided she could only use it when folk had forgotten about its existence - which would be long after her own death! Now quite mad herself, she locked her gibbering wreck of a husband away in the care of two servants, and made her way eastwards to Sovada, the Sylvania home of her uncle, Jotuitso, Baron of Sovada.

Jotuitso was a recluse, and for good reason, for he was a vampire. He had not been undead for long, but was already very old when he was given the 'gift' by a young (and poor) vampiress. Unusually, Jotuitso's mortal infirmities were still somewhat evident in undeath, making him weak for a vampire. But he was clever, mentally strong, and was never really enthralled by the vampiress who sired him. He had his servants trick and trap and kill her. Ever since he has 'lived' a solitary existence.

Stanoska begged her uncle to bestow the gift of undeath upon her while her body was young. In the end he acquiesced, but only upon her promise that she would offer him sanctuary at Medreicha if ever he needed it, and that she would stay with

him for twelve years at Sovada. These promises she willingly made.

After only five months, with a thirst for blood that would never leave her, yet still obsessed with the Kislevite cash, she broke her vow and returned to Medreicha. There her first blood-victim was her husband, followed within moments by the two servants who had tended him. She blamed them for his death and had them executed for the crime. Folk believed her - her new demeanour made them afraid not to! The Margravine then (apparently) went into a prolonged mourning, shunning the joy of daylight and dressing ever in black to express her continuing grief.

Now sole ruler of the Medreicha estates she ordered a new castle, Zweiteheim ('Second home') to be built. The old keep became known as Alturm ('Old tower') before it was forgotten by almost everyone. Much of the Alturm was demolished and its dressed stone used to build the new castle. Nowadays only a lane, leading some of the way towards it, retains the name. A secret tunnel was also dug to connect the old and new castles. Beneath Zweiteheim a secret repository was constructed to hold the stolen fortune. The building of the castle took many years, and just as it was completed Stanoska faked her

death. According to her wishes to be buried with her husband she was interred in the crypt beneath the Alturm. There she went into a deep slumber to allow the passage of two centuries, hoping then to reclaim her estate and spend the stolen fortune. Her overwhelming obsession had stuck fast when she became one of the undead. It will never leave her.

Upon her apparent death in IC 2288, Arnold's nephew Gurnig Savirsin inherited the Medreicha estate. He had been residing in Talabheim, where his studies were severely interrupted by the prolonged Sigmarzeit riots the previous year. Thus happy to leave, Gurnig never returned to Talabheim. He was also glad



A

Medreicha

Castle
Zweiteheim

Castle graveyard

Grave-
yard

Village of
Medreicha

Alturm lane

Southfield
lane

his surname was different from Arnold's, for it helped distance him a little from the rumours of foul play.

Time passed. Unbeknownst to Stanoska, while she slumbered, Baron Jotuitso came to Medreicha just as he had insinuated he might one day, having been chased out of his home by a powerful witchfinder. He crept quietly beneath the Alturm, sensing the whereabouts of his vampiric progeny. Finding that she had made for herself a secure and secret resting place, he scattered a handful of his homeland's soil next to her, settled himself in and fell into a deep slumber.

Gurnig's son Cabrero inherited, and eventually discovered the entrance to the secret repository. He could not enter, however, as the lock was complex and Stanoska had the only key. He considered breaking in, but an overwhelming fear wrenched at his bowels whenever he approached it. The room beyond must be cursed. Perhaps, he thought, his great uncle or aunt's troubled souls haunted it. So he had a second door made a little way down the tunnel. Within the new antechamber he placed two small shrines, one to Sigmar and the other to Morr, to guard against any spirits residing within. He also had the symbol of Morr (*a raven*) carved upon the new outer door, which itself sat beneath a heavy lintel (*the most common symbol of Morr*). These he considered sufficient safeguards. Only he possessed a key to this new door, which he always kept upon his person. At his end, he was buried with it.

Generation after generation went by. Every decade or so new portraits appeared on the castle walls. One of them, now tucked away in a dark twist of stairs, shows the Margrave Cabrero, armoured, clutching a sword in his right hand, and wearing a key on a chain around his neck. The key's head is in the shape of Morr's raven. At some point the Margraves' surname became Teyss. Times of dearth were succeeded by times of plenty. Some of the family went mad, others spent their days studying the magic arts, others did little else but hunting and hawking. When old, they grew tired and frail within the castle walls.

VERY RECENT EVENTS

All the while, the Margravine Stanoska slept beneath the ruins of the old castle, while by her side lay Jotuitso. Until recently, that is, for only a few weeks ago a band of ghouls crept into her crypt from the forest, lured by the smell of decay, and so awoke both vampires. Jotuitso arose first, being the last to fall into the long sleep and fled. Stanoska had (and still has) no idea that he was ever present. All she could smell as she woke was the filthy stench of the ghouls.

Stanoska was gripped by a tremendous, unthinking rage against those who had disturbed her. In that moment she killed two of the ghouls. Unluckily for her these were the only two that had seen Jotuitso. When she finally remembered *what* she was (a noble vampiress) she stopped, deciding that the killing of such foul creatures was beneath her. The ghouls grovelled abjectly at her feet, so she commanded them to do her bidding. Like vicious but obedient dogs they bowed even lower before her, becoming totally subjugated to her will.

One particular desire had her in its grip: the need for blood. So addled was she by the long decades of slumber that it took several nights of feeding upon the villagers, until she was so gorged that blood seeped from the pores of her skin. Meanwhile Jotuitso watched from the shadows, quietly drinking from those poor souls who managed to hide from Stanoska's rampage. While the vampires preyed upon the living villagers, the ghouls broke open graves to gnaw upon bones, or fought amongst themselves over the bloodless corpses their mistress discarded.

With her thirst for blood quenched, Stanoska now set about satisfying her lust for gold - for *the* gold. She soon discovered that the tunnel between the old and new castle was blocked. Recalling the reluctance of the doomed workers she had forced to construct it, she assumed the whole thing had collapsed. She knew the castle had some safeguards against magic and she was not confident that she could fight determined guards with only ghouls to aid her.

Calling the creatures of the night to her, she sent a swarm of bats over the walls in an attempt to scare off the occupants. Meanwhile she commanded a pack of howling 'schrecklich' (*'dire'*) wolves to attack any who tried to approach the castle. To protect her resting place she raised the bony forms of two of her long dead guards.

When she personally came to Zweiteheim she brought further terror. As well as killing everyone she discovered outside, she sired a lesser vampire thrall, the castle's guard captain, Borsa. When dawn finally approached, she had not managed to make her way into the castle, for the Margrave Millo and his remaining guards were well armed and brave in their desperation. She was forced to return to the Alturm.

Now aware of what he faced, Millo set about preparing the castle for better defence, using every trick he could learn from the Lichthalle's extensive library to ward off the undead. Several days and nights of terror passed, as Stanoska assaulted the castle, sending more giant bats over the walls to tear apart those they could catch inside. Borsa led the ghouls in an attempt to burn down the outer gates. Yet still he could not enter because of the inner portcullis. So Stanoska had a captured maidservant brought to her. Using her hypnotic gaze she ordered the poor girl to raise the portcullis. Trembling, the maid returned and was allowed into the castle by a merciful guard to commit her traitorous deed.

In went Stanoska and her vile servants. No one was able to stand in her way. (Millo himself was sick, scratched by a ghoul and now badly infected). When Stanoska finally drew close to the secret repository, she discovered a last obstacle. It was now barred by a new door through which she could not pass, for it was not only locked but also marked with a potent symbol of Morr which had been worked with magic. It both physically and spiritually repulsed her and her servants, and would burn her if she were merely to touch it.

She needed not only courage to approach the symbol, but much more importantly, the key. She reckoned she could put up with the pain for the moment or two it would take to unlock

the door, and then pass quickly by. So she searched out Millo, and found him. As he lay at her feet, she demanded the key. He, being a scholar of some ability, had already deduced what probably lay behind the marked door, and who had made it, for he had found entries in an old history [see *The Library* and *Player Handout 2*]. But he had no idea where the Margrave Cabrero had hidden the key. Stanoska refused to believe him, so she had him carried to the Alturm where she began cruel torture to force him to reveal the key's whereabouts.

THE JOURNEY TO MEDREICHA

Taking the most direct route over an old path through the Kölsa Hills, it is 210 miles from Talabheim to Medreicha. If the PCs are on foot it will take six days or four if they push themselves. If they are mounted then they might cut this time

to three days. Alternative routes would not necessarily be any shorter or safer.

THE CURRENT SITUATION

As the PCs arrive at Medreicha

The Margrave and the Key

Millo grows weaker from both sickness and torture, but he cannot answer the vampiress' question. Stanoska might soon realise this. She is right about the key being hidden, and even though poor Millo has all the clues, he has not worked out the significance of the passage in the *History* which says '*there is but one clavis (key) and I am the janitor (key holder)*'. The Margrave Cabrero still has it, clutched in his bony hands as he lies in his crypt.

The Village

The villagers of Medreicha are trapped. They dare not flee, for they know wolves and ghouls wander the surrounding woods. Many have banded together, leaving several homes abandoned.

The Castle

Only three servants remain alive, having managed to hide in a tower until now. Two nights ago their master was taken, and they heard his awful cries. At night they bar the door and listen fearfully to the sounds of movement outside. Each night the ghouls return to roam the castle, while the vampire thrall Captain Borsa searches for the hidden key. Last night he broke nearly everything in the Lichthalle that might hide such an item, so it is now a wreck of a place. He has scoured much of the rest of the castle, but has not yet broken open the sarcophagi (this has not crossed his mind).

The Woods

These seem to be more twisted and frightening than they once were; the malignant presence of ghouls, wolves and bats does not help. Parts are now littered with human remains, gnawed bones, skulls and such like. The ghouls, with what wit they have left in their base brains, occasionally decorate places with that which



they most desire: bones. Thus they create their loathsome places, quite abhorrent to any who stumble upon them. PCs running around in these woods might run face-first into a corpse's hand dangling from a branch, or trip and fall onto the mangled remains of a half-eaten corpse.

HIDDEN GHOULS

It is evening, with full darkness perhaps an hour or so away. Just as you begin to think you must be approaching Medreicha, said to be thirteen miles from the last village, Zlatba, you spot something up ahead.

Movement catches your eye - something dirty, white, fluttering. A tattered sheet of linen caught upon the branches of a roadside 'crampbark' thicket, with its white flowers and red berries. Next to the sheet, lying in the middle of the road is a human skull, placed on a neat pile of dirt. The skull is decorated in a most hideous fashion, as bony fingers protrude from every orifice: from the eye sockets, the ragged central cavity where the nose should be, even from the ear-holes.

Suddenly, as a warm breeze curls down the road towards you, the bony fingers loll forwards, as if grasping weakly at the skull. Its death-grimace seems to grow wider. Then comes the foul taste of the breeze - the sickly smell of death. It occurs to you all that the darkly stained rags are the remains of a shroud.

These charnel-house trappings are a pretty basic message left by the ghouls: "If you come this way, then you enter our world." The ghouls have been ordered to chase away strangers, but may be reluctant to come to grips immediately with the PCs due to the PCs' weapons and demeanour. However, the ghouls should have numbers on their side (a good three or four more than the PCs) and they have been emboldened by their recent successes in the village.

Note: If it is already night, then the ghouls may be led by the recently sired vampire thrall Borsa. If things are going badly he is clever enough to make a getaway and report to his mistress.

You can run this encounter like one of those 'can't quite see what the monsters are' scenes in a horror film, with ghouls only glimpsed as they dash between the trees making ugly gurgling sounds. A PC could spot one of their leering faces: deathly white with purple bruises, yellowing eyes and black tongue lolling from its gaping mouth.

THE VILLAGE

Two weeks ago the villagers experienced four awful nights of terror. Since then the survivors have armed themselves as best they can, hoping to drive off anyone who might bring more trouble. Thankfully the evil that killed so many seems to have turned its attention to the castle.

Now, before darkness falls every evening, torches and braziers are lit to illuminate the central street. Symbols of Taal or Ulric adorn most homes, and prayers have become the most oft-spoken words. The old wise woman, Gennif, the Taalist Priest, Jannich, and the village elders (Peiter Kanniger, Balten One Eye & Hernetta) reassure folk, helping them where they can, but there has been panic, mistakes, and deadly consequences.

The PCs' Arrival

You first see Medreicha as the road crests a modest hill, the sprawling village nestled below in a valley ringed by three wooded slopes. Zweiteheim castle sits on the largest of the hills, looming ominously over everything else, silhouetted in the night sky and entirely black.

Apart from busy activity in what looks like a graveyard (just discernible beyond the village, where the road climbs upwards towards the castle) the village appears very quiet. There are only two figures on the central street, carrying faggots of wood to build up three bonfire stacks. Smoke drifts lazily out of about half of the chimneys. The houses range from mere hovels to proper timber framed affairs, the largest situated centrally. The Zlatba road winds downwards to become the central street.

By the time you enter the village those people carrying wood are gone. Every door is closed, every window shuttered, but from the creaking and clanking of latches, it is obvious that folk are peering through the cracks at you.

As well as the three prepared bonfires, umpteen blackened braziers and torch brackets adorn the gates and yards. There are unusual decorations upon nearly every hovel - bits of white thorn or aspen wood nailed by openings, the stench of garlic smeared upon thresholds. The doors sport carved Ulrican wolf heads or painted Taalist heads with antlers.

PCs who pass a **Routine (+10%) Common Knowledge Empire Test** may realise the significance of the various adornments to the lintels and windowsills.

The villagers

The villagers are likely to shun the PCs at first - outsiders are not to be trusted. They fear that strangers will only invite evil eyes to look once more upon them. They might warn the PCs off with shouts such as, "Go to the castle. He's the one who sent for you. Leave us be," or "You're not needed here, strangers, nor are you welcome. Be off!" or "Fools for coming here." PCs who get heavy (perhaps trying to force a door) will certainly elicit a response, but not a welcome one. A mob will quickly gather to drive them off, emboldened both by the need to do so before darkness as well as the fact that they have far more terrible things to fear.

The PCs can learn more if they behave decently, cleverly or if they find a more amenable villager. They might still be told to leave but in a nicer way - advised to wait until morning before leaving and perhaps offered somewhere to hide for the night. Some villagers could suggest that if they want to help they should bring soldiers. No-one thinks the folk of Zlatba would be particularly keen to help, but the roadwarden there might do something.

Other villagers may be impressed that the PCs managed to get to the village at all, but the wisest will put it down to dumb luck. If, however, the PCs satisfactorily convince the villagers of their potential helpfulness then they can learn more. The villagers could describe the castle or the lay of the land hereabout. They also know the information given in *Kaspar's brief summary of Medreicha* above and other rumours and stories.

Rumours and stories

The margraves of old: The elders know this story. A long time ago there was a Margrave who brought true shame onto

the family. He was a greedy brigand who stole a huge amount of money.

Harnol's loot: Peiter Kanniger knows more about that money. Great piles of stolen loot were buried beneath the castle, deeper even than the well! A long time ago folk tried to dig it up, but a ghost called Harnol frightened them off and scared others to death. In fact, one of the statues in the Old Hall is a robber who was turned to stone by Harnol's touch.

Two weeks ago: There were four terrible nights when many were killed. Each victim was left white as snow, drained of blood. All had a terrible grimace fixed upon their faces, and they had to be buried like that because it could not be changed. Some were half eaten. Others were stuffed into dark places, as if they had been hidden after being killed. On the fifth night, the evil turned its attention on the castle, but everyone fears it could return.

The Graveyard: A few enterprising lads, Grogvar, Urknel and Heinar, are digging a pit trap hoping to kill some ghouls (who they call 'menschenfresser').

The Alturm: (Unless the PCs have already learnt something in *Zweiteheim* then there is no reason for this topic to come up.) Most know very little about the Alturm, merely that there are some almost-forgotten ruins about a mile from the village down an overgrown track (Alturm Lane). Only the first third of the track is still in use, as it leads to the outermost village clearing. Every now and again children wander out along the lane and, in the bright light of day, might think the ruins are a fun place to play. It is never long before they stop feeling that way. Something about the tumbledown tower soon frightens them off.

THE GRAVEYARD

The road to the castle passes by the graveyard before it climbs castle hill. It is obvious to all (except halflings who cannot see over the wall) that the graveyard has been disturbed of late – piles of earth or stone packed upon graves, herbs and sundry objects placed around to ward off evil, even the headstones pushed over creating makeshift stone lids.

Any remaining workers will look suspiciously at the PCs, and most likely be disinclined to speak of their misery. One or two of the younger men who were digging the pit trap might be persuaded to speak, perhaps keen to get their hands on some of the PCs' weapons.

THE CASTLE (Zweiteheim)

Arrival at the gates

As you top the hill and the castle gatehouse comes into view there is just enough moonlight for you to see that it was built with style in mind as well as defensibility. It is very 'gothic' in architecture, with scattered gargoyles clutching at ledges or squatting in recesses and fancy fluted stonework around the gate itself. The gatehouse's slit windows have leaded glazing of red and purple hues. As the castle is moated, the gatehouse is reached over a stone bridge. One glance at the castle gates reveals they were attacked

recently – the charred remains of the outer wooden gates hang from their hinges to reveal the partially open portcullis behind.

Castle Yard

Long moon shadows are cast by the towers and central buildings, creating areas of complete blackness interspersed with strips of light. Window shutters creak and swing in the breeze. Scattered all over the place are discarded items – a cracked lantern, a knife, a single shoe smeared in blood, the fragments of a broken jug.

Any PC who has already failed a **Fear Test** (perhaps during the ghoul encounter) may find that the lingering after-effects of that shock will colour their experience here. The whole place seems to crowd in on them – the high walls with their tall towers on all sides. Moonlit wisps of clouds drift overhead, but to a frightened PC's stomach it seems rather that the castle is moving while the sky stands still.

Towers

Gatehouse

The outer wooden gates have been burned beyond the point of collapse. The portcullis is partially open, with a two foot gap at the bottom, just enough for someone to squeeze through.

Porter's Lodge

This is a little, one storey wooden construction. The porter lies on the threshold in a sticky pool of blood, his throat slit raggedly. His belt has been cut, as if something has been removed. This was his key ring, taken by Captain Borsa who has used the keys to open just about every door in the castle.

Portcullis Chamber

This bare stone room is on the first floor of the gatehouse,

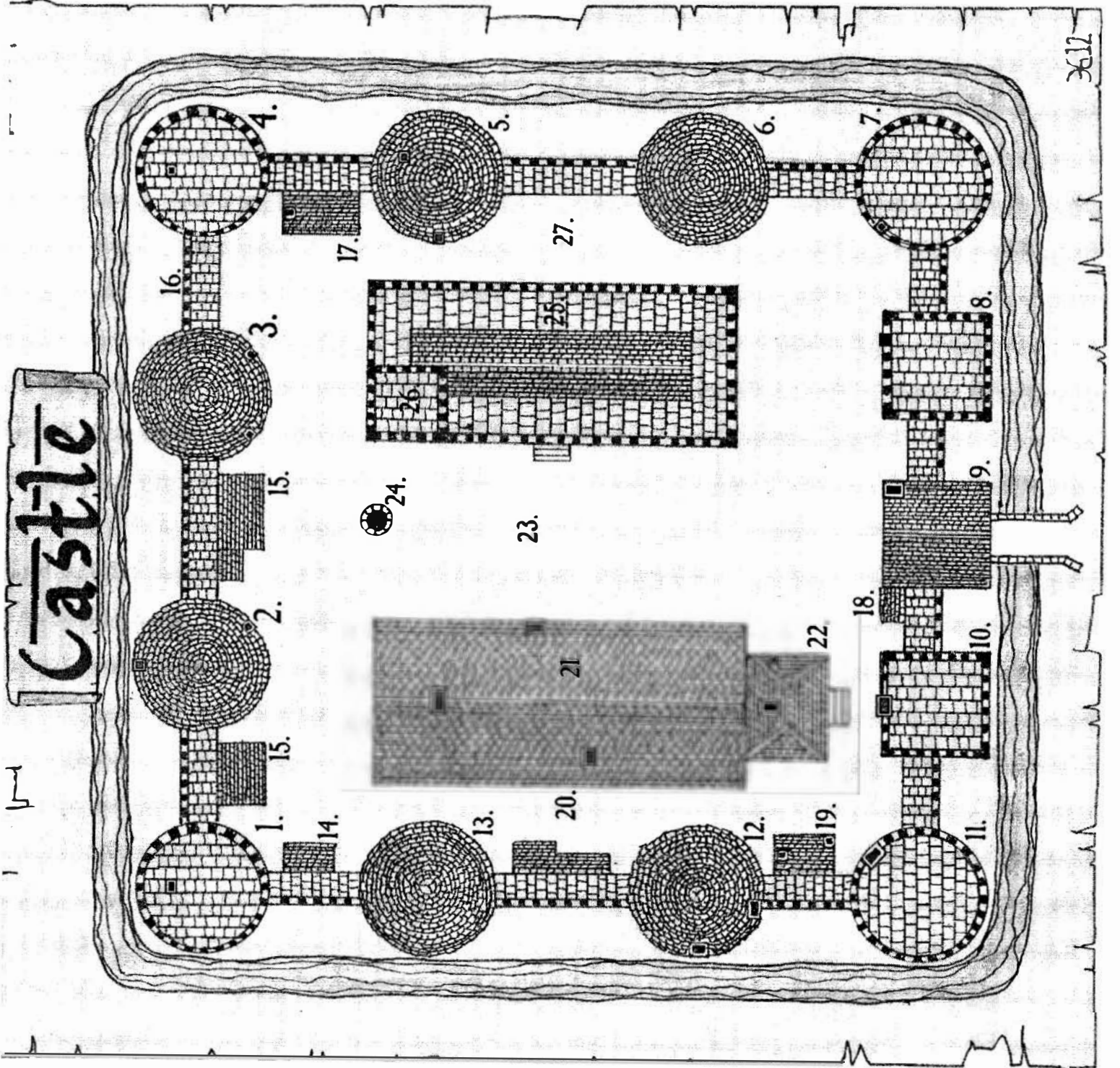
Describing the Castle

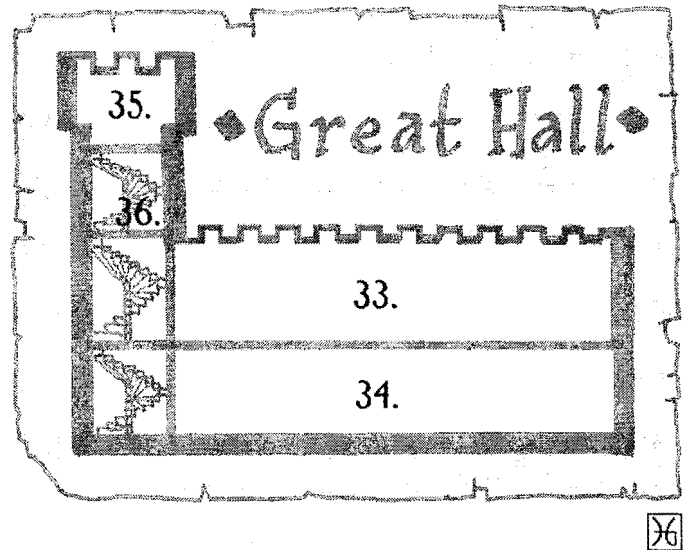
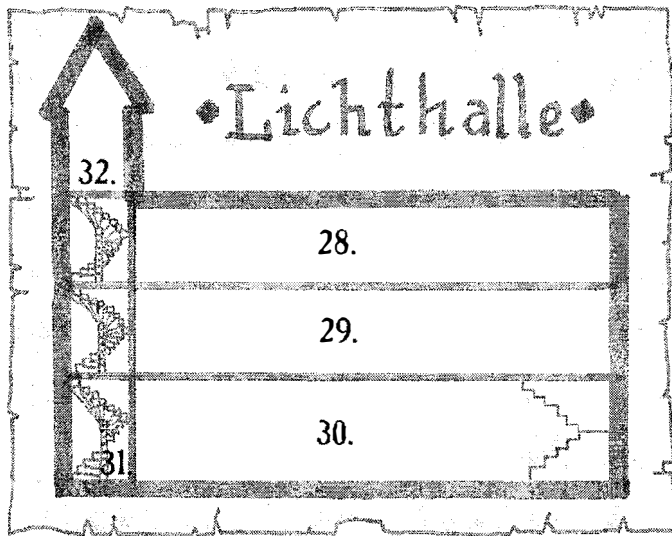
The important encounters described after this section are not tied to any particular place in the castle. This means you can keep the story unfolding at a lively pace.

You might want to sketch an unlabelled version of the map to give to your players, as once the PCs enter the courtyard they would immediately get a good idea of the castle's general layout. A basic map like this allows players to experience a level of orientation similar to that felt by the PCs. Do not feel obliged to plod your way through describing hallways, rooms and doors, and so on. If the PCs pass purposely from one place to another, merely give brief descriptions of the intervening terrain, before describing their destination (or places they stop to scrutinise). For atmosphere, incorporate **sounds** (creaking doors, whistling wind, scuttling rats, distant screams and howls); **smells** (smoke, putrefaction, dusty dryness or mouldy dampness); **light** (coloured by the leaded windows, shafts of moon light, dancing dust motes, eerie shadows and flickering flames); and **touch** (cold, slimy walls, the tickling of cobwebs).

Map Key.

- Castle.
- 1. West Watchtower
- 2. Osiers Tower
- 3. Servants' Tower
- 4. North Watchtower
- 5. Stewards Tower
- 6. Sigmar Chapel Tower
- 7. East Watchtower
- 8. Guard Tower
- 9. Gate (w/ portcullis)
- 10. Barracks Tower
- 11. South Watchtower
- 12. Armoury Tower
- 13. Taal Chapel tower
- 14. Hay Barn
- 15. Stables
- 16. Sally Port
- 17. Brew House
- 18. Porter's Lodge
- 19. Bake House
- 20. West Yard
- 21. Lichthalle
- 22. High Tower
- 23. Castle Yard
- 24. Well
- 25. Great Hall
- 26. Beacon Tower
- 27. East Yard
- 28. Lichthalle.
- 29. Athletic Chambers
- 30. Library
- 31. New Hall
- 32. Lobby
- 33. Tower Chamber
- 34. Great Hall.
- 35. Council Hall
- 36. Kitchens, larders, Dairy
- 37. Lord's Chamber
- 38. Old Chamber





accessed by curving stairs leading from the castle courtyard. In the corner by the winding mechanism lies the corpse of a maid, her eyes wide in death and fixed upon the doorway. At first glance, it seems she is somehow attached to the portcullis gears. On closer inspection this proves to be horribly true - her left arm has been pulled between the two gear wheels and crushed. No wooden wedge holds the portcullis in place, rather it is this poor maid's broken bones. Anyone wanting to lift or lower the portcullis is going to have to get uncomfortably close. Weaker souls might have to pass **Fear Tests** or suffer nausea.

Guard Tower and Barracks Tower

These are two storey affairs like all the wall towers. A door leads from the courtyard into the square ground floor room, with a central ladder leading up to the first floor. That in turn has two exits, leading both ways out onto the ramparts. Another ladder leads up to the parapets of the roof level. In these two particular towers, the lower rooms are for storage and cooking, the first floor for sleeping. Both exhibit signs of struggle, with scattered stools, trestles and belongings.

Chapel to Taal

All the wall towers have pretty much the same basic design as the Guard and Barracks Towers, but are round in shape. Here the ground floor chapel still smells of incense, even with the outer door hanging open. A priest lies dead at the little altar, covered from head to toe in bite marks, his eyes turned into terrifying black pits, his eyeballs having been removed. Entirely unnecessarily, as he is quite gruesome enough, the shredded remains of his tongue hang from his mouth. Upstairs is the priest's private chamber, a fairly basic affair with nothing of value.

Chapel of Sigmar

Before it was burnt this may have been similar to the chapel

to Taal, but is now a hollow stone shell containing only the blackened remains of furniture. Even the timbers of the floor and roof have collapsed. In amongst the debris lie two severely charred corpses fused into their blackened armour.

The Four Watchtowers

These corner towers are different in design from the mid-wall towers, as each has a proper stone stairway serving the first floor and a parapet roof. The castle denizens would normally use these to access the rampart rather than struggling up the wall towers' ladders. All four watchtowers are empty.

Armoury Tower

Here there is not much left in the way of weapons, though all the workshop necessities are present.

Steward's Tower

This has been abandoned and ransacked.

Servants' Tower

Outwardly no different to the other towers apart from its closed door (barred from the inside). This is the hiding place of the three surviving servants [see *The Hidden Servants* later].

Ostler's Tower and adjacent Stables

A series of adjacent stables sit on the far wall of the castle, the lower level of the tower is also kitted out as a stable. The upper level of the tower served as the ostler's quarters, filled with the necessities of life as well as a variety of trade tools. There are two pathetic-looking horses in one stall, straining at their ropes, wide eyed with terror and foaming at the mouth. Several more lie dead, bloated and stinking nearby. The living horses are weak, but with an **Animal Care Test** shows someone may at least have given them water recently. A sturdily built coach is parked near the stables.

Minor Buildings

Hay Barn

The hay spills out onto the yard, with blood blotches on it here and there. Some bloodsucking bats now nestle in the rafters, quietly hanging upside down. If disturbed there is a good chance the disturber would regret doing so.

Brewhouse and Bakehouse

Both these stone constructions seem relatively untouched. The first is three floors in height, with ladders in between, the second floor being a malting floor. The bakehouse has a good-sized oven filling one side, and sacks of flour stored in heaps. A large, central table provides a work surface and a good number of stale, but not yet inedible loaves sit in a basket by the door.

Well

This is a hooded affair with a large windlass winch. The bucket is not visible. If approached, something starts splashing, groaning and wheezing from down in the dark depths, causing the rope to jerk. It is an injured ghoul who was pushed in by a desperate guard several nights ago. It clings to the bucket, its legs badly broken by the fall. Now that it has healed a little, it might start climbing the rope. The moment its hideous visage is illuminated can be made quite exciting. Its bruised, sallow, leathery flesh framing overlarge sharp teeth and bloodshot eyes, all contorted into a scowl of hatred. Perhaps they catch only the briefest of glimpses before the foul creature bats aside the falling light source and the water extinguishes it.

Old Keep

Council Hall

The first floor hall is entered by ascending a set of steps climbing grandly from the castle yard. Inside a heavy, throne-like armchair sits upon a raised plinth at one end of the room, with four lesser chairs arrayed upon either side. Before them, stretching almost the full length of the room, are two long tables, each with their own benches. Just about everything in here looks ancient and unused. For years this room has served merely as an alternative route to the kitchens below. The sconces on the walls contain no torches. The few remaining tapestries are threadbare, their designs and patterns barely discernible. In the wall behind the raised chair there are three recessed doorways. The two nearest the corners lead to stairs spiralling downward, one to the crypt, the other to the kitchens. The central doorway leads to stairs ascending to the tower above.

Kitchen

The great hearths are cold, the boards cluttered with the remnants of work left days ago. Game of several different kinds hang from the iron hoops known as 'Marienburg Crowns,' huge cheeses wrapped in cloth sit upon the central table, and dozens of pancake-like oat-breads hang from a slatted wooden rack attached to the ceiling. There are two huge olive oil jars, and sideboards cluttered with every kind of earthenware. Butchery tools and knives hang from hooks on the wall, while the two

great hearths are festooned with hooks and kettles and spits for roasting. As all baking would be done in the bake-house in the yard, there are no ovens here. One little door leads off into a separate little dairy, another into a large storage closet, containing all sorts of cooking ingredients. The stairs themselves open onto this room, but also descend even further down to the wine vaults [see *Below Ground*].

Old Chamber

This has been stripped of everything but cobwebs. The spiralling stairs continue upwards to the Lord's Bedchamber.

Lord's Bedchamber

Long since abandoned, but cluttered with all sorts of old possessions. The bedstead is unstrung, its mouldy mattresses heaped in a corner. There are chests of moth eaten clothes, a trestle table buried under a pile of all sorts, including old wigs, cracked chamber pots and a crumbling bundle of maps (perhaps a source of future adventures?). The stairs lead up to the roof, where the beacon is situated.

Beacon Tower

Upon this parapet platform is a huge iron brazier, containing the now cold remains of a fire.

Lichthalle

Doors and Lobby

On approaching the Lichthalle steps it is obvious that the outer double doors here have been bashed open – the great wooden beam used to do the job lies discarded on the two wide steps. The door frame is elaborately carved, with fluting and scroll work. In the lobby lies the corpse of a guard, still clutching his blade, his face collapsed inwards and his throat ripped wide open. Three doors serve this lobby – the outer door, the main inner door directly ahead of it (leading to the New Hall) and a little side door that leads to a spiral stairwell going both up and down.

New Hall

This is a very lofty room, the high ceiling richly decorated with painted patterns. Long, thin beams of blue light – very dark in hue if it is a moonlit night - streak across the hall's entire length, cast by the long, high windows. Immediately noticeable is a great pile of benches, tables and stools lying perpendicular to the entrance, as if a makeshift barrier was created for a line of defence. A very corrupted, naked corpse lies in front of this obstacle, a crossbow bolt buried so deep in its forehead that the point protrudes from the back of its oozing skull. Two bodies in the livery of the Margrave's guard lie in amongst the wooden wreckage. Fat, black flies buzz lazily around both the corpses. Crossbow bolts stud the door's inside face and frame, and three crossbows lie discarded.

At the bottom of the grand staircase is a corpse. Its hands clutch the banister, even in death. Both legs are missing, one from the knee, the other entirely.

Library

Once again there is turmoil. The two long walls are lined with bookshelves, but a good half of the books lie scattered across the floor. There must be several hundred tomes in this room, as well as an odd assortment of scrolls, maps, portfolios, animal skulls, two (rather differing) globes, an orrery on a brass stand and many a framed portrait. Two substantial tables, with one or two chairs at them, stand centrally. The books cover all sorts of topics, from horticulture to astrology, from mythology to engineering, though many are in the Classical tongue. Everything is illuminated in blue by the long, thin leaded windows. There are plenty of beeswax candles on pedestals on the tables, as well as in sconces on the walls. None are lit. Near the northern end of the room stands a writing slope, richly inlaid with many woods. Upon this, lying open at a spot marked by an embroidered bookmark, is a large book titled 'A History of the Margraves of Medreicha'. [See *Player Handout 2* for contents of the two visible pages.]

The vampire thrall Borsa looked at these pages last night and laughed at the words revealed, for he knew how wrong they were – Stanoska never died. His old master's family have ever been fools. The rest of the book is a mish-mash of entries made by various scholarly margraves. The authors are thus in chronological order, but the topics far from so, as each author wrote of different periods. Mirten II, for example, was writing about ancestors several generations previous, yet a later entry shows that Mirten only died about 80 years ago.

If a PC chooses to inspect the book very closely (or passes a **Hard (+20%) Perception Test**), he will discover that there is another, much more subtle page-mark than the cloth strip lying across this page - a tiny fold in the corner of an earlier page. This marked page bears the cryptic scribbles of the Margrave Cabrero regarding the underground chamber he constructed (as well as the door, sigils and key). These are in a pseudoscholarly mish-mash of Classical and archaic Reikspiel. [See *Player Handout 3* - versions given for literate and illiterate PCs.]

GM's vocabulary guide for Player Handout 3

(in order of appearance in the text)

silvarum incola = *keeper of the forest,*

venditatio = *advertisement*

De Mortuis Nil Nisi Bonum = *Let nothing but good be said of the dead*

camera atrox = *gloomy chamber*

pro bono familia = *for the good of the family*

Labor Omnia Vincit = *Labour conquers all things*

janua novus = *new door*

clavis = *key*

janitor = *door keeper*

Sigmar est veritas et praevalebit = *Sigmar is great and will prevail*

Post mortem, Morrus illuminatio mea = *After death, may Morr guide me*

H.S.E. = "Hic situs est" = *Here is the place*

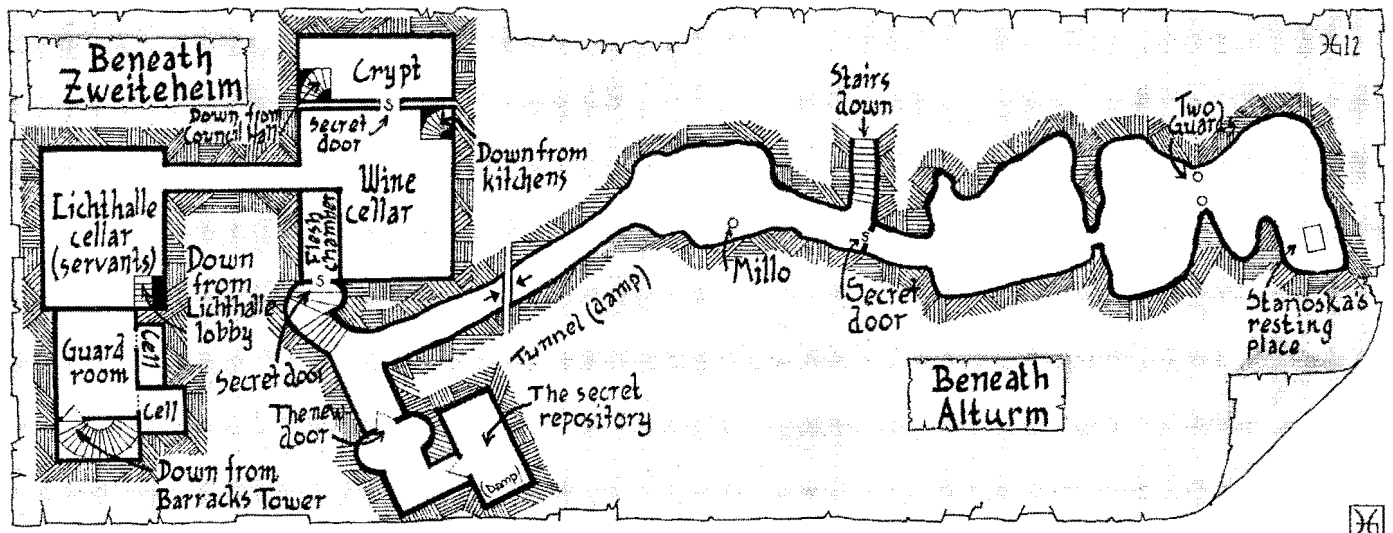
Quieta non movere = *Do not move settled things (i.e. 'Let sleeping dogs lie')*

Monitae estis = *You have been warned*

If a literate PC also has **Speak Language (Classical)** then they will understand the classical words in the text. If the PCs search for a Classical dictionary, they will find one among the scattered piles of books (pass a **Hard (+20%) Search Test** to succeed in a reasonable time) then literate PCs will be able to translate everything.

Note: If the PCs look in the History for an entry on Cabrero, they only find that Mirten II does write about him, but says only that he was Gurnig Savirsin's son and spent his days continuing the building work at the castle, and died in IC2335.

Behind the library and the tower stairs, the stairs descend to the lobby and rise to the attic chambers.



but it is for the encounter with the rabid goblin that he shall be remembered.

The Margrave Arnold Hagleb (JC. 2223 - 2256 (Gosp. 699 - 732)) This writ by Mirten JJ

This Margrave, the last of the Hagleb's, took the family to the very apex of its fortunes. First a member of the Peer House, as his father had been, he came to hold the office of Chawcellor to the Grand Duke. Inheriting Medreicha from his father (Arnich) at the age of twenty and one, he was rarely at Medreicha for the first eight years of his rule until he settled his wife (Margravine Stanoska) there. It is sufficient to record that she had made her presence too often felt in the Marble Hall, and to no good purpose. Stanoska was not made happy by her absence from Talabheim. She bore Arnold no children. Yet his visits were much more frequent from that date, and of ever-longer durations, which perhaps contributed to his falling out of favour in the Geheimkonseil.

Arnold's ruin occurred in JC 2254 during the incursion of Galzar the Brute's corrupted horde into Kislev. The Tsar of Kislev paid the Grand Duke a huge sum of money for military aid. This was no treaty like that of Talgris the Fool (n century previous), but merely a mercenary contract. Margrave Arnold was to treat with the Tsar, then accompany the advance sum upon its return journey. His own retinue was to be bolstered by a dozen lances of the Knights Panther. But in this the Margrave failed, for the money was lost when a force of outlaws robbed the wagon train.

His failure to deliver the money was truly his downfall. All but banished from the court, he was forced to retire from public office in shame. Never again was Medreicha to hold such influence. Forever would the margraves move in ever decreasing circles.

I will not recount the false rumours and libellous perjuries which were told of Arnold, and which drove him to despair and madness; of the wicked few who said there was more to his shame, and that his father's greed was passed to him. Even to this day there are those who would

mutter the same in Medreicha. Verena's curse upon them. Tales are told of his spectre, entrapped in this realm by lust for lucre. Base lies, for never have I seen or heard any such spirit in nigh upon two score years.

Margravine Stanoska (JC. 2233 - 2288 (Gosp. 709 - 764)) This writ by Mirten JJ

Arnold's wife, the Margravine Stanoska inherited the estate, though for nigh upon two years she effectively governed its business while Arnold was incapacitated and in the care of his servants. Free of her husband's authority, and while he still lived, she chose once more to go abroad, but not to Talabheim which she had come to hate. For six months she tended her uncle the Baron of Sovada, only returning when she heard her husband was gravely ill. She could not tend him as she had her uncle, for he died the very day she returned. Perhaps the joy of her return was too much for his weak heart? She was stricken at his loss, at times enraged by her sadness, made cruel in one moment, then gently kind in the next.

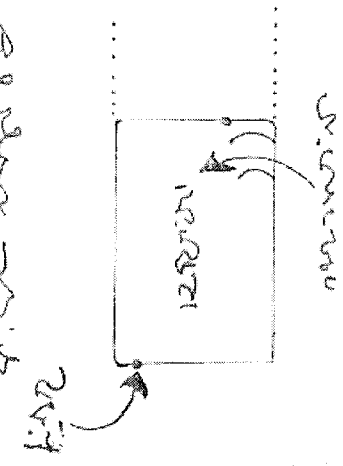
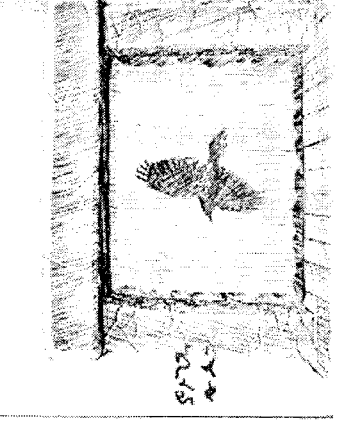
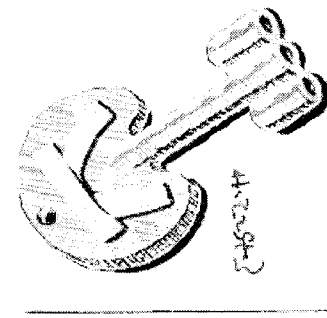
Now sole ruler of the estates, she ordered the Zweiteheim built, for it grieved her to live in Arnold's home. Much was stripped from the Alturm, yet not all, so that some still stands. And though her new home surrounded her, the stones had brought their sorrowful memories with them. She lived a recluse, ever rapt in grief; caught like a pressed flower in the moment of her loss, she grew pale in her beauty.

Gurnig Savirsin (JC. 22?? - 2327) This writ by Mirten JJ

Upon Stanoska's death in JC 2288, Arnold's nephew (Gurnig Savirsin) inherited all the estates. Previously residing in Talabheim, where his studies were interrupted severely by the Sigmarzeit riots. About that time he had fallen out of favour with the usurper Baron Boris Syberg, as had many others who thought his rule unworthy and unjust. Once he came to Medreicha, Gurnig never returned to the Talabheim, for he made it his business to complete and then improve the Zweiteheim, rebuilding in stone

Handwritten text at the top of the page, possibly a title or header.

Handwritten text in the upper middle section, consisting of several lines of cursive script.



A 4x4 grid with a circled 'U' in the top-right cell. The word 'janua occultus' is written above the grid.

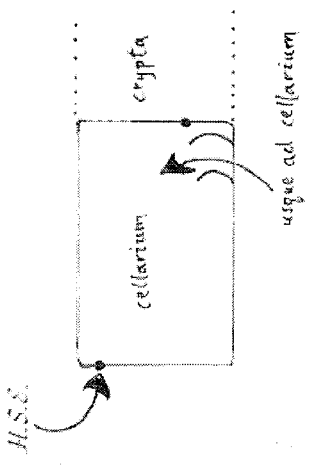
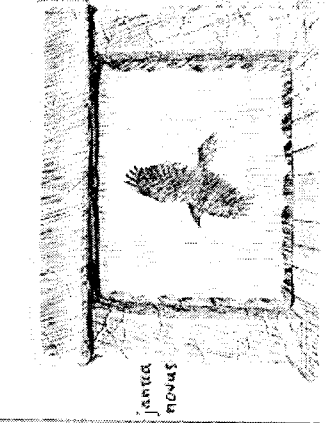
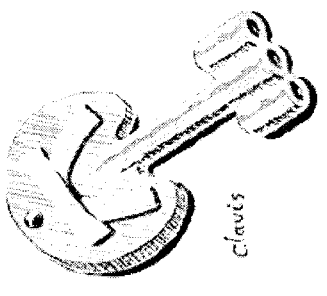
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Player Handout 3, for illiterate PCs

The work completed JC 2932 by Cabrenno. This is his hand.

Unhabetuated to a diet and air of fear within mine own domicile, no matter how accus-
tomed I am to the same abroad where terror is the very silencing media, I have done
what I have done to make the Zwitberg safe. In obscurity I found the place, and
know full well who must lie there. Never once did I approach without feeling his anger,
never did I fail to feel the confidence of his curse. Yet, O, Martius Nil Nisi Bonum,
so I shall say no more of him. Yet lest any danger might burst forth from that cavern
altru, pro bene familia I have done what I have done. Labor Omnia Vincit. For the
janua novus there is but one chair and I am the possessor.

Signatur est veritas et procedit. Post meridiem, Mercurius illuminatio intra.



A 4x4 grid with a circled 'U' in the top-right cell. The word 'janua occultus' is written above the grid.

Go not there.
Quia non invenit
Mortuae estis.

Player Handout 3, for literate PCs

The Library Chamber and Attic Chambers

The library chamber serves as a parlour of sorts, a private room to take food. It is sparsely decorated with only the necessities. The attic chambers are a series of four rooms extending the full length of the building, with a side corridor to give access all the way along. Their doors hang wide open and all have been ransacked. Each is filled with all the usual sleeping quarters furniture. Hidden amongst the turmoil are a few items of value (fine clothes, jewellery, silver hand mirrors and powder pots, silver buttons). These chambers are not as well lit as the ones below having smaller dark-blue windows.

In one of the bedchambers a loud and disgustingly phlegmatic snoring is heard. A rogue ghoul is sleeping in one of the beds. Stuffed under the bed is a corpse it uses for midnight snacks, which is beginning to stink. Do what you want with this encounter: play for laughs or for horror-film grisliness.

Tower Chamber

This is Millo's chamber. The windows offer the highest view from the castle, overlooking the walls and down into the valley. The room itself is furnished as a rich gentleman's chamber, with a large hearth. It is from here that that Millo was snatched by Stanoska, even though it is adorned with all kinds of protective paraphernalia: white thorn wood is fastened above the door lintel and windows; garlic cloves lie on the threshold and sills; a symbol of Morr (a raven) has been crudely scratched onto the door. These hurried protections are nowhere near as potent as that on the underground *januanovus* ('new door').

Surprisingly, this chamber has not been ransacked at all, because Borsa thought Millo would not be so foolish as to hide the key so close to his person. Also the vampire thrall finds lingering in this room painful (what with its wards against the undead). He intends to search it last of all.

Below Ground

Crypt

Being windowless, this is very dark, and any light cast by torches does not seem to reach quite as far as it should. Thirteen stone sarcophagi line this chamber, some elaborate in design. Each has a stone shield with different versions of the family arms upon them. The Medreicha arms always consist of a standing bear holding something (usually martial in nature) in one or both hands. The current margrave's arms have the bear resting its hand upon an oversized hammer – but of course that particular design does not yet feature in this crypt. Each sarcophagus also has the carved name of the interred margrave or margravine (the earliest being Gurnig Savirsin). Cabrero's



Sf

sarcophagus has his name engraved upon it. The key to the secret antechamber is on his chest, clutched in his hand.

Storage Vault (the wine cellar)

A large room with a ceiling made of elaborate criss-crossing arches, crammed full with casks and barrels of wine, along with dusty bottles of hot liquors stacked neatly on racks. Four torch brackets hang empty on the walls. Swept to the edges lie shards of glass from broken bottles. There is a little door (to the Flesh Chamber) right next to a tunnel leading under the central castle yard to the Lichthalle cellars.

Flesh chamber

A cold room entirely tiled with plain ceramic squares. It contains huge slabs and animal carcasses hanging from hooks in rows down both sides, leaving only a narrow central passage. This room was purposely built by Cabrero to more effectively hide the secret door. At the very end, in the corner, one particular tile (successful **Search Test** needed, add a bonus if the PCs have Player Handout 3 in mind) has a recess and circular groove. By turning this, a latch mechanism releases and a secret door can be pushed open to reveal tight, spiralling stairs leading downwards.

Lichthalle Cellar

This is the servants' dormitory, divided by wooden screens into semi-private niches each furnished with a little trundle bed and a chest containing the servants' meagre possessions. At one end a door leads to the tunnel extending to the wine cellar. At the other end there are stairs leading up to the Lichthalle lobby as well as a door leading into the Guard Room.

Guard Room

A functional room provided with stools and a trestle table, as well as a large grindstone. The periphery of the room is

cluttered with a variety of old wooden and iron tools, worn, rusted and broken. If studied carefully it will become clear that they are mostly instruments of torture.

Cells

Both empty, apart from musty straw and leather drinking vessels.

Antechamber

The 'new door': A large image of a black raven made of inlaid wood decorates its outside surface. The whole door itself sits beneath an oversize lintel of stone. If the PCs do not have Cabrero's key, then getting through this will take a lot of hard work!

The antechamber itself is an L-shaped section of enclosed corridor. Alcoves on either side house little shrines consisting of a tiny altar, a statue, and prayers written on brass plates. One has a statue immediately recognisable as Sigmar, the other has what looks like a cross between a man and a raven (Morr). Both prayers are in Classical and concern themselves with warding off the undead.

Secret Repository

A very sturdy iron door guards this room and Stanoska has the only key. The door swings outwards, into the antechamber. As suggested by the villagers' tales of Harnol the ghost, it is indeed haunted by Stanoska's long dead husband Arnold.

As the heavy door slowly creaks open, dry, dusty air and a weak light spill out to suffuse the antechamber. There, on the threshold of the inner room, is an ethereal, transparent man. 'Corpse' might be a better term, for he has the face of death, with sunken cheeks and staring eyes. He hangs in the air, gently swaying - a motion apparently caused by the slow shaking of his head. His meaning is unmistakable: "No!"

Behind this figure, quite visible through his transparent form, lie several large chests stacked upon each other, spewing coins of gold and silver from their open tops.

Ghosts cause fear but do little else, so play this out as a pure horror encounter. If the PCs move into the room, concentrate on the lead character, or whoever has not had much luck with Fear Tests so far. Arnold will attempt first to warn them off, then to frighten them away. Should anyone touch just one coin, he will appear at their side, his hand coming to rest upon theirs as if trying to stop them lifting the coin. If they still take the coin, his anger will flare and he will transform into an even more frightening form...

Suddenly the ghost slides through the stale air to halt inches from your face, his angry eyes piercing into you. His mouth opens wide, wider than humanly possible, and he screams. The sound hits you full on, piercing, pushing right inside your head until it comes from inside you.

The player must pass a **Very Hard (+30%) Fear Test**, if failed the PC starts screaming too.

The other PCs, of course, do not hear the ghost's scream, only that of the PC.

[For the ghost's stats see *Old World Bestiary* pg. 109. Arnold is an exception to the normal 'Place of Death' rule - he haunts the castle where the stolen money that ruined him is kept.

The Stage is Set

The above is just the stage scenery for the real (rotten) meat and potatoes of the adventure. That's about surviving, rescuing the margrave, defeating vampires and/or making themselves rich. The encounters are set out below in a suggested order, but alter as required. Exploring groups could get right up to *Trapped and Entranced* in the one night. More cautious groups might not reach that part until the next night.

AN EVIL PRESENCE

Before long (certainly if the adventure threatens to drag), Arnold Hagleb's ghost will arrive. He will linger a while to watch the PCs. He wants to learn if they are after the money. Admittedly, there is not much the PCs can do to him, but the encounter can go beyond merely sensing his presence.

THE HIDDEN SERVANTS

The PCs will probably stumble upon the three hidden servants (Ersnt, Old Saars and Puchesa) at some point. If they do not find the rear wall tower where they are hidden, then during daylight they might spot the boy Ersnt mooching around the



well, wondering if he should drop something down onto the ghoul below!

In summary, Old Saars is a wise old soul, Ernst a cheeky lad, and Puchesa a no-nonsense wench. What follows are the kind of things they might say about likely topics of conversation:

Concerning Millo: *"The master is gone. He went missing two nights ago. Puchesa heard him scream and he said he wouldn't let 'her' in."*

If the PCs ask for better details, then Puchesa may add, *"He asked someone, 'Please, my Lady, take it instead of me. Have it all,' he said, 'it's yours. But I won't let you in.'" Puchesa heard these things during a frightening stillness in the night. She was hiding in the Lichthalle attic chamber nearest the stairs. None of the servants know who the lady was. Puchesa was too terrified to look out from beneath the bed, even when the Margrave was dragged past the room.*

Hiding: *"We hide every night, but even when daylight comes we don't dare step out."*

Evil things: *"An evil has come to this land, scratching every night. I don't think it'll stop until all of us are dead. It rules all the black creatures of the night, every monstrous beast that crawls or flies in the shadows. They've killed so many, and scared the rest away."*

Guards: *"The last guard left three nights ago. But the master wouldn't give in to fear, and he wouldn't leave. That's been his undoing. Maybe ours too?"* The servants also know that some servants fled to the village.

Dead Servants: *"The dead servants were cremated at first, on the Margrave's orders, while there were enough of us to do it. After that we cremated who we could, until things got too bad to do even that."*

TRAPPED AND ENTRANCED

An optional sequence of events

There are many ways to run the events that may occur in this scenario. The following are only suggestions that serve to illustrate how things might progress and to give ideas but are certainly not the only way.

When Stanoska learns of the PCs' presence in the castle (even her bats can inform her of this), she might decide they could be used as forced labour to break into the repository. She cannot use the surviving villagers as they now protect themselves too well, but these newcomers will do perfectly. After all, they will not be repulsed by the protective anti-undead magic.

Stanoska's plan: The PCs are to be driven into a corner by a huge swarm of bats against which they have little defence. Thus terrified, forced to crouch in screaming huddles with their wills broken, Stanoska will enter and with a word of command dismiss the bats. She will then enthrall the company and convince them to serve her. This should be easy considering their weakened state. The PCs' minds will fabricate whatever false reasons they can to explain their actions, filling in the mental gaps. She hopes they will serve her just long enough to destroy the door.

It does not really matter what exact form the PCs' false perceptions take. If your PCs would be more convinced

by quite different events, change what follows accordingly. Eventually these events will be recognised for what they are – mere delusional fantasies. Do not assume every PC shares the *same* delusion. Each fabricates their own private fantasy to explain why they need to break down the door. As all these false memories will eventually fade from their minds, it does not matter that you did not play out each individual PC's experience. Just play out one delusional sequence and leave it at that.

This trick is not as powerful as it might at first appear. Stanoska does not actually create any false memories, instead the PCs' own minds make up the details. They think they are doing the right thing, and so must be working on their own or on their new master's behalf. Stanoska just starts the process off.

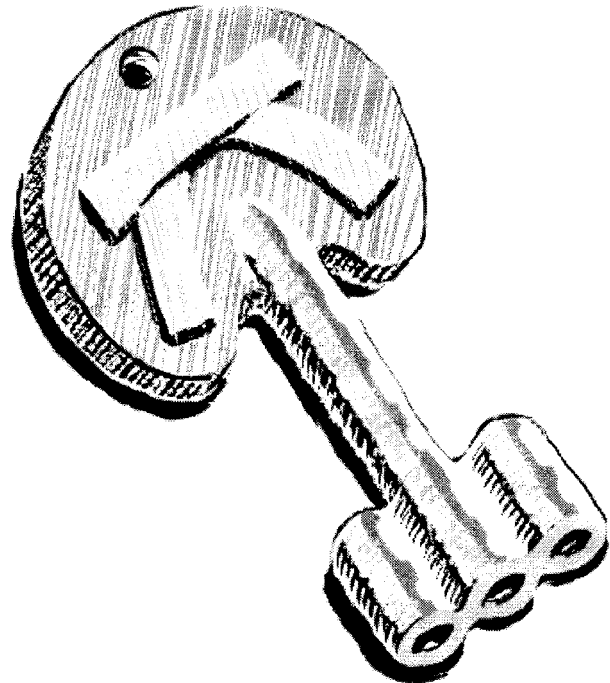
This confusion begins with a bit of reality – the arrival of the bats.

Noise

*There is a fluttering sound, growing louder, until it is a great mass of noise, like a thousand pigeons swirling simultaneously from a city square but closer, leathery, with the scratching of tiny claws against stone. Suddenly a black wall of bats, thick as treacle, filling the room and corridor from floor to ceiling, surging forward [a **Fear Test** is appropriate here].*

The bats flood through every opening into whatever place the party currently occupies, forcing open shutters or bulging and breaking the glass if they have to.

*A breeze goes before them, a swish of air extinguishing any candles. Then, before you can do much more than blink, the blackness, a realm of suffocating fur and piercing fangs overwhelms you [now a **Very Hard (+30%) Fear Test** is required], as uncountable bats scratch at your heads and any exposed flesh, even (horribly) pushing upon your faces, a claw thrust into your gaping mouth, razor sharp nails clamped into the*



*flesh of your lips; even mouths trying to suck out your eyes [now the coup de grace -- a **Hard (+20%) Terror Test!**]*

This sequence is designed to force the issue. I believe this kind of thing is excusable just once per adventure. The PCs have to fail one of those tests. This is not unfair, as the failure will not result in any PC's death. It just moves the story on a little. No stats are provided for this swarm of bats, because they are pretty much overwhelming en masse, and although one might expect such creatures to be afraid of fire, these particular bats are not -- they are driven by the will of a vampiress.

Saved!

A man's voice is suddenly, piercing the mass of fur: "Hear this command, foul creatures of the night: Rentumtormentum, by Sirchade's light, be driven from this place, and return not unbidden." A light surges between the mass of bats, like woven threads of brightness, then grows to fill the room as the bats swarm upwards and out through [wherever it was they came in].

The man is the margrave Millo. He helps the PCs to their feet, aided by his few remaining servants. The PCs feel shaken, weak and confused; they ache and tremble uncontrollably. They are led (carried?) somewhere a little more comfortable to be tended, their wounds hastily washed and bandaged.

All these events will seem muddled and hazy. Not only do the PCs have pain, but their heads are still buzzing with the confusion and bewilderment following their terrible experience. If they try to ask something too specific, take a secret (supposed) **Will Power Test** for them and answer that they lose their train of thought before they get the words out. Alternatively you can answer them with lies and delaying tactics, or have Millo begin speaking (see below). The bewildering blur of events should carry them along.

Millo is obviously in a hurry. There is something that needs to be done, and he says the PCs are the ones to do it while he holds the enemy back. He begins a frantic monologue, delivered with gusto.

Millo's speech: *"This is all about gold! Can you believe it? Well, my friends, they must not have it. This will be my last act. My powers are weakened and they will find me soon. But I can hold them back; keep them busy. And while I do that, you must remove the gold. My servant here" [this can be Old Sars if he is still alive] "will show you where it is. All you need do is break down the door, take it away and hide it. Just make sure they don't get it. I can keep them entertained just long enough for you to do so. For this I could never thank you enough. May the gods protect you."*

The servant beckons the PCs to follow. Do whatever you can to give the players the impression their PCs are truly experiencing all this. Answer any questions about their surroundings, as they are actually making the journey. Let them interact with their guide. The PCs' imaginations will provide apparent details.

The servant, clutching a burning torch, leads the way to the wine cellar beneath the Council Hall, into a cold room filled with hanging meats, then through a strangely unexpected door and down some dark, winding stairs. At the bottom lies a bunch of tools wrapped in a cloth -- two picks,

two hammers and three iron wedges. The servant gestures at a large door decorated with a raven design, hangs his torch in a bracket on the wall, then heads off back up the stairs.

What really happened?

In order to GM the next part, where the illusion slips and the PCs begin to recall reality, you yourself need to know what really happened. Firstly, Millo did not drive the bats away - it was Stanoska. Her actual words were: *"Begone, my pets, leave them to me now."* The bats withdrew and the PCs were dragged away by ghouls. Any weapons they were holding before the bat attack were left behind. Stanoska then entranced them one by one and gave them some instructions:

"You will obey my command and serve me willingly, for you will believe you are serving your master. Go to the place this creature takes you to and tear down the door. When that is done, and you see room within, remember then that only one of you can enter. You must kill each other until only one remains, who will be filled with great joy at the deed."

A ghoul then led them to the new door.

The labour

The players can tell you how they divide the work, but as the PCs are still befuddled it does not matter if you or the players are somewhat vague about the details.

The 'spell' fails

Stanoska's hold will weaken as they work, the process accelerated by the symbol of Morr. The PCs now begin to experience glimpsed visions of reality. Bit by bit, their apparent memories of recent events transform into the truth.

Begin making secret **Will Power Tests** as soon as the PCs begin hacking at the door. Those who pass are slipping from their entranced state. To keep things uncertain for the players during this process, you could claim that any PCs who experience visions are *failing* tests of some sort -- perhaps something to do with a curse on the door.

PCs who pass their tests start recalling memories that surprise and confuse them. Either pass out slips of paper containing one of the following fragments, or read them only to the player in question.

** You seem to remember something: there's an image in your mind of Millo, after he chased off the bats with the incantation. Now he's changing, melting, transforming. His face blurs to take on a new form -- that of a strikingly beautiful woman, with fascinating eyes and a cruel expression, like the haughtiest aristocrat looking down upon the poorest of beggars. She stares right at you, yet somehow you know she thinks you can't see her.*

** Could you find your way out of this place if trouble started? Mentally retracing your steps you remember how the margrave's servant led the way here. In your mind's eye, however, there is something wrong about the servant, he seems to lurch and stumble ahead of you, his clothes fall away from him, and his skin turns yellow and foul. You recall how he turned to gesture into the corridor, but this time you don't see his face. It has been replaced by a gruesome visage -- an ugly maw of ragged, sharp teeth, with one eye as yellow as its flesh, the other made black by the blood*

leaking from behind it, leaving a filthy, oozing trail down one cheek.

* *There might be something dangerous behind the door. When you check your weapons you discover that the one you were last carrying is missing. Only those tucked in belts or scabbards remain. You thought you had it with you. When did you put it down, and why didn't you pick it up again?*

* *Where are the bandages you thought the servants put upon your wounds? They are gone!*

To make sure each player is involved, here are some bits of information for PCs who fail their **Will Power Test**. These represent further false memories as the entrancement maintains its hold:

* *You now remember Millo showing you a gold coin during the speech he made. It was huge, with an eagle design upon it, just like one you saw years ago. This is what must be behind the door, more coins like that, enough to make you rich. Maybe, just maybe, you wouldn't want to share what's behind the door.*

* *The pain from the bat swarm is still there, but whatever Millo's servants used to tend your wounds is quite wonderful, for you can feel it beginning to sooth you, the pain falling away into forgetfulness. In a dreamy way, if it is possible, you feel invigorated, as if your body could work on while your mind slept!*

You can now answer any questions from players whose PCs passed their **Will Power Test**, filling in other details. If they are a PC's mental queries, answer only to the player in question; if the PC openly voices his thoughts, then answer aloud for all players to hear (the whole company's memories are triggered by the more lucid PC's words). You do not have to reveal the whole truth straight away, simply fill in each bit they ask about. For example, if they ask:

* *"What did Millo say to scare off the bats?"* Read Stanoska's words of command, and say they were spoken with a woman's voice (see above).

* *"When did we lose our weapons?"* Tell them they were left in the room where the bats had been.

* *"What did Millo tell us to do?"* Stanoska's actual words come to mind.

Slowly the truth shapes itself in their minds, as per their enquiries, until the whole truth is out. The PCs will know they have been duped.

Note: The story outline described above is just one possible sequence of events, a set piece that can occur if Stanoska maintains the initiative during the adventure. If, however, by their actions the PCs wrench the initiative from her (say by very quickly finding the history book, key and/or the secret way to the new door) then events could be quite different.

ESCAPE

Just a little way up the steps a pair of ghouls linger, one ordered to bring news to Borsa when the door is finally broken down, the other to inform Stanoska. If they hear the PCs stop working, either because the door has been smashed or because the PCs have snapped out of their trance, then they will rush

upstairs. This brings Borsa down the stairs, as he was waiting in the wine cellar with even more ghouls, yearning for his chance to kill the PCs.

Fear Tests are appropriate here. I personally tend to allow characters failing fear tests in certain circumstances to stumble backwards, whimpering, or even collapse weak kneed to the floor, rather than staying motionless as the rules (WFRP2 pg.197) suggest. This seems a reasonable response, and can give the braver members of a party the chance to step forward to defend their frightened

comrades. What makes this fight extra

challenging for the PCs is the fact that they have probably lost their main weapons, replaced by tools. They cannot easily return the way they came as the stairs are very narrow, forcing ascent and descent in single file (unless you are a pair of ghouls ungainly squeezing down together). Then there is Borsa – armed and armoured as a captain of the guard, a skilled fighter and frightening, too. The odds are certainly against the PCs. There is, however, an **escape route** – the tunnel.

The PCs will probably try to fight anyway, which should make for an exciting combat. Keep some details in mind:

* Only one torch lights the area. If it is extinguished then pitch darkness will ensue, which will not favour the PCs. If knocked to the ground it becomes an interesting hazard, as well as casting weird shadows.



* You can have as many extra ghouls as you like arrive. The newly sired vampire is quite happy to lead from the back, sending ghouls forward to soften up his foes while he chooses those who need his personal attention.

* If the PCs have not yet fully broken down the door, Borsa might not actually try to kill them, but rather aim to subdue them again so they can continue working later.

* Also if the raven design on the door is still largely intact, the ghouls and Borsa may shy away from it, favouring the farther side of the passage. This may give the PCs some tactical opportunities.

Note: If the PCs have investigated cleverly and got down here on their own, then Borsa and the ghouls can arrive just after the door is opened. The PCs will probably be cursing when they find inside another locked door to which they don't have a key, so the arrival of Borsa and party will add injury to insult.

By opening the first door they will have considerably weakened its protective magic, allowing the enemy to pass (though perhaps painfully). The ensuing combat might be a little different from what would have happened, but it will nevertheless still be a very hard slog for most parties. Which brings us back to that escape route.

THE TUNNEL

This is the obvious way to avoid trouble, whether the PCs use it immediately or after attempting to put up some sort of fight. The ghouls and Borsa will almost certainly pursue.

The walls, roof and floor in the first part of the tunnel are constructed of worked blocks of stone, plunging down quite steeply. Everything is damp, coated in slime. [This part goes under the moat.] Behind you the ghouls scurry eagerly along ahead of the armoured man.

Challenging, Hard or Very Hard Agility Tests are required here to avoid slipping, according to the PCs' speed, any precautions they take, and whether or not they have a satisfactory source of light. If the PCs do not come up with a plan to slow their pursuers down, then have the lead ghoul slip and fall, then some others tumble over him. This will buy time. Borsa himself will not rush because he knows the tunnel is a dead end.

Soon the tunnel sides are made up of roughly hewn rocks; then, further downwards they turn into ancient, rotten timbers supporting packed clay riddled with roots.

If you are feeling cruel have a PC take another **Agility Test** to avoid getting tangled in some roots. Or, to maintain a frantic pace, have the PCs faced with a semi-collapsed section of tunnel that they must squeeze through. The rear-most PCs could then find their feet grabbed by ghouls, requiring the lead PCs to take **Opposed Strength Tests** against the ghouls to pull the poor unfortunate through. The PCs can improve their chances by doubling up to pull, grabbing a hand each. That way they will both get to take tests at +10% bonus. Only one needs to beat the ghoul.

Eventually the PCs will arrive at a full cave-in, a wall of earth completely blocking the tunnel. They are kind of stuck here, with Borsa and the ghouls still bearing down on them.

JOTUITSO TO THE RESCUE

Parts of the following can be used whenever the PCs encounter Jotuitso.

Jotuitso can now rescue the PCs from the collapsed tunnel. He could smell their passage through the ground beneath him and saves them by causing a collapse behind them.

Suddenly there is dirt and debris in the air, then a bulge above and behind you. The pursuing ghouls [if still around, if not then this happens to Borsa] stop and look upwards, just in time to be buried by a collapse of the ceiling!

A shaft of moonlight pierces the darkness through a ragged hole just this side of the new collapse. Something moves above, evidenced by the beam of light being briefly broken. A hand reaches down: long fingered, with blackened nails and wrinkled flesh, wearing two large golden rings. A voice, hoarsely whispered but commanding in tone, is heard, "Here, take my hand. They will not catch you now."

Jotuitso will help the PCs out if they let him, though he is happy to allow the first ones out to assist in removing the others. What follows can be a frightening encounter, not as in 'boo!' but in terms of the conversation. Jotuitso is a vampire, and no matter how hard he tries to conceal it, even in his 'Pass for Human' form, he smells of evil. No Fear Test is required, but the threat is there. Characters who know about fashion will see his attire is very dated. You can, if you wish, add a humorous element by giving him the stereotypical Hollywood Transylvanian vampire accent.

If the PCs' previous actions mean that Jotuitso cannot perform this rescue, the PCs can simply find a hole to climb out of. Reminding them of the rotten tunnel supports may give them the idea of blocking their pursuers. This is also an option if you prefer the PCs to escape without Jotuitso's aid. They can meet him afterwards.

Jotuitso refers to himself as the '**Baron Sovada**', and may explain (i.e. lie) how he came here to visit his cousin Millo, only to find things are far from well. He wants to appear friendly, and should almost be convincing, though to the wise his every word is discernibly tainted. He will offer to tend the wounded, apparently empathising with the PCs' fears and needs. He will make every attempt to steer the topic of conversation to Stanoska.

"I know Stanoska of old. I know her lust for power, and her greed." If asked to explain further, *"She has wronged me, for she has not yielded what she owes me."* He will not say exactly what this is, other than it is a promise broken.

Eventually he will make an offer, approaching the idea something like this:

"We would do well to work together against this our common foe, for she is strong. Divided we are weak. To her you are candles to be snuffed out with a mere pinch. But she would never expect that you and I might ally, so she will not think to look both ways. Besides, she does not even know I have come."

"I know where she sleeps. She believes it is well hidden. Of course, the Margrave, Millo—you will want to help him. I know where he is also, and will tell you. But you must promise to kill the Margravine Stanoska."

A deal?

If the PCs promise to help him, he will describe where to find Stanoska and how to kill her.

“Take with you a sharpened stake of hawthorn. Follow the old track, which is clear to those who know to look for it [he gestures in the direction of the track]. Travel in daylight. You will find a ruinous place, long since abandoned. Look for that part which stands tallest. At its base there is an entrance, concealed by shadows. Descend within, and turn left when you can. Let your feet take you to the farthest wall. There she lies upon the right hand, within an alcove. You must act quickly to pierce her heart with the hawthorn. This will hold her; make her harmless. With kindling and wood, fashion a pyre to burn her so that only ashes remain. Take care never to remove the stake.”

“Do this late in the afternoon, an hour or so before dark, for her sleep will then be at its deepest. Do not approach her earlier, for she will awake from her slumber at the sound. Your master, Millo, is close by. Once she is destroyed you will find him, for her command over him will have ended. You will hear his wretched cries.”

Here the baron is being disingenuous, to hide his true motive for instructing the PCs to attack just before nightfall. He is hoping they will emerge battered and weakened by their struggle just in time for him to ambush them outside and all the more easily destroy them. You should consider allowing PCs with knowledge of the undead (folklore, priestly or magical backgrounds, or simply previous experience) an appropriate Knowledge Test to consider that midday would surely be time of deepest sleep.

“Until the time is right you must hide here in the woods. Hide well, for she has many servants, though less in the daytime. I will make them believe you are still in the castle.”

The Baron is able to give additional help. If the PCs complain of a lack of weapons, he will tell them to wait, and then return within an hour with swords collected from bodies in the castle. These will be tightly wrapped in a bloody sheet. Jotuitso leaves as soon as the PCs begin opening the bundle. Why the rush? Because he has also brought them a hawthorn stake and he does not want to be around when they have that in their possession.

If the PCs are entirely unmotivated by the urge to save

Millo, or feel no particular obligation to fight evil, then Jotuitso offers them gold (he has enough on his person to give them an advance of some kind), or whatever you think will hook them. He will lie through his pointy teeth all you like.

After the baron’s departure

Once it is daylight, you find that your memories of the baron change. Was he really that tall? Was he as strong as he appeared? Now in your mind’s eye you recall an old man, who had to haul you from the tunnel using both hands and grunted with the effort; a man who seemed tired when he lay down the bundle of swords; a man who did not stride boldly through the woods as you first thought, but who moved rather more carefully. Until now these truths were masked.

This is just the way vampires are – they just cannot help themselves. They love making as much of an impression as they can, even if that means surreptitiously twisting people’s perceptions, even just a tiny bit.

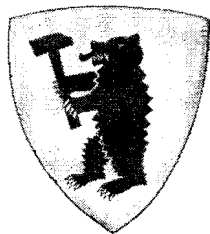


How to learn about Stanoska and Millo's location in the Alturm

The following ideas are presented in case the PCs do not listen to Jotuitso or do not meet him.

Following Stanoska's servants: Skilled PCs could attempt to follow bats, ghouls or wolves, or their tracks, to the Alturm.

Studious Research : A PC who *really* puts in the time (several hours) reading the 'History' could find a note in a later chapter where someone has scrawled "*A vampire? This I suspect from her steward's accounts,*" in the margin next to Stanoska's name. In another chapter concerning the castle's crypt there is a remark that surprisingly Stanoska was not buried in her beloved Zweiteheim. The author thus supposes she must have been buried in Alturm, perhaps to be near her dead husband. This book could be found discarded by the entrance to the tunnel. Local stories: The elders might say that the present evil must surely have come from the Alturm, as it is an accursed place. Finally, if the PCs are still not getting it, the villagers could bring a youth named Grogvar to the PCs. This brave (foolish?) lad was out just before dawn the other night, and saw the Margrave being dragged by ghouls down Alturm Lane.



THE ATTEMPT TO KILL STANOSKA (and/or Rescue Millo?)

The PCs will probably have some time to make preparations, perhaps gathering what they need for the cremation. If any PCs already believe they are facing vampires, without the Baron's advice, then you could have the most appropriately experienced ones amongst them take an **Intelligence Test** to remember about using a wooden stake to transfix such creatures, and perhaps a second test to recall that burning them or beheading them is the *only* way to ensure they are truly destroyed.

The Alturm

The tumbledown remains of a long since abandoned stone keep. The tallest part, still partially enclosed by a yard, has an entrance just visible at its base, not only hidden by shadows but also overgrown with vines.

The steps inside go down almost 30 feet. Once within the ruins things should get frightening. Flickering shadows distort into hideous, grotesque forms.

Down at the very bottom of the steps all is very quiet, the air close and damp. These dungeons are so ancient that they have taken on the look of caverns, with stalagmites, stalactites and uneven floors and walls.

If the PCs remember the Baron's instructions, they will know to turn left at the bottom of the stairs, having to push open a heavy, rotting door. If they go the other way they should

meet Millo, lying semi-conscious and tied with heavy ropes. If revived a little, he knows enough to tell them that Stanoska is somewhere beyond the door.

As the PCs pass the middle of the first cavern

Your torches/lanterns [whatever] all flicker, as if a breeze has touched them. Yet you felt no such thing; all is still, the air hanging dank and heavy. Suddenly every light source goes out. A chill immediately courses through your bodies, as if ghostly, cold hands clench your hearts. Your throats tighten so that your next breaths come less easily. The whole cavern is pitch black, with not even a speck of light permeating from the base of the steps.

This is the result of a prepared spell, which takes effect when living creatures draw close to the vampiress. Stanoska is the source of its power, even though she lies unconscious. It wraps up all light and heat, holding both tight so that neither can escape, explaining the lesser effect on the PCs' warm hearts. Any attempts to re-light a torch or lantern will not only fail, but will prove dangerous, because the flames are still present. Even though they send no light or heat outwards anymore, they are still just as hot. If a PC tries to re-light one, or in curiosity merely touches the 'wrong end', D2 wounds are received.

The PCs must fumble on as best they can in this darkness to find their way through the narrow opening into the next cavern. There it is just as dark as the first, except for something up ahead.

There, opposite you and perhaps ten yards away, are two pairs of reddish glows like eyes but bigger, in fact as big as the eye sockets in a human skull. For a moment they are still, but suddenly they intensify and in that instant begin to move towards you.

These magically illuminated eyes belong to the long dead skeletal warriors guarding the entrance to Stanoska's resting place. A **Fear Test** is required here by those PCs who enter first. The skeletons are armed with swords and clothed in mail armour (3 AP). The PCs' chances are improved because their opponents' eyes reveal their positions.

Fighting in the dark

It is impossible to give advice on every situation that could occur during this combat. Come up with your own house-rules suiting your style of play. PCs can attempt **Hard (-20%) Perception Tests** to work out the other PCs' relative positions. The **Tunnel Rat** or **Orientation** Talents could earn bonuses for this and other tests. As they can only see their opponents' eyes (and with one of them barely that) then negative **to hit** modifiers are appropriate.

Touching the sarcophagus

Eventually, someone will reach Stanoska's open-topped, marble sarcophagus. For those who were entranced by her earlier in the adventure, the very touch of it will conjure up her image. An **Easy (+20%) Fear Test** might be appropriate.

Once again there is the beautiful, wicked woman. Now she is looking right at you, into you, and anger is writ plain upon her face. Her lips curl into an animal snarl, revealing viciously sharp teeth.

Because of her powerful magical aura, and the fact that she entranced them last night, the PC also needs to pass an opposed **Will Power Test**. If they fail, they now believe they are dreaming.

Suddenly it dawns on you — this is all a dream. Maybe a nightmare, but surely a dream. Nothing is real.

Have a word with the player secretly about this, then see what they do with this. ●f course, the PC could legitimately carry on attempting to kill Stanoska, simply now believing they are only dreaming of doing so. But some players might make their PCs act strangely, enough to confuse the others.

Touching Stanoska

The real test of willpower comes when a PC actually touches the vampiress herself, which they are going to have to do if they intend to stick a stake into her heart in absolute darkness. Now the last battle of wills takes place. Demand another opposed **Will Power Test**. If this is failed, then there are three possible ways to go...

(A) If it is a male PC who already believes he is dreaming then the dream now becomes somewhat erotic. Describe this however you wish; their PC honestly knows no better. First they touch the soft, perfectly smooth skin, clothed in delicate silks. Tell them this is their new lover, a woman the like of which they could only ever have dreamed about before; that they are in her chamber and their love is about to be consummated. How they will react to the decidedly rude presence of the other characters is up to them. And should another PC attempt to restrain him or assault his lover, things really could get messy. ●f course, it is doubtful he would keep hold of the wooden stake. Can the others find it?

(B) If it is someone who experienced the bat attack, then they feel engulfed by fur and leathery wings once more and paralysed by Fear.

A **Hard (+20%) Terror Test** is required to snap out of this. If failed, the PC falls to the ground, incapacitated by the delusions until someone tries to help them, at which point a **Fear Test** suffices to bring them to their senses.

(C) If neither of the above is appropriate, then the PC will instead begin to tremble violently, and have to pass a **Strength Test** merely to keep hold of the stake. An opposed **Will Power Test** is required to stay in control enough to stake the right spot. If another PC assists this would greatly help.

In all three above possibilities, Stanoska is biding her time for she is close to waking. If the PCs delay too long things could get very dangerous. Luckily, Stanoska will still take a few moments to wake fully, being quite groggy and confused. Quick thinking PCs should have time to do the deed.

Stanoska is staked

As soon as it is done, all flames will suddenly flare to life again, as if their pent up energy was being stored up during the period of darkness.

A bright flash of light fills every corner of the cavern, then dies down suddenly to become merely the lights you brought in earlier. And there

is the vampiress, eyes wide open and exuding hatred, her head turned to stare right at you. But she doesn't move, not an inch — she seems locked rigid, transfixed.

All PCs caught in some delusion or shaking fit now come to their senses. As they then prepare to destroy her, her eyes somehow watch them even though she cannot move, like those of a portrait. They feel her hatred and curse, but it is no longer as frightening, because her own terror and anguish are mixed in too. If they do burn her, then the cavern will fill with smoke.

If the PCs have not already found Millo, then as soon as Stanoska is set on fire (or her head is removed) piteous screams will be heard. These are the tortured margrave's cries.

The key

Stanoska has the key to Zweiteheim's original inner repository door. It hangs from her silken belt. Even if the PCs do not notice it, the fire will not damage it at all.

ABOVE GROUND - THE FINALE

Borsa arrives

If Borsa is still active, then he will be outside the Alturm as the PCs emerge. He sensed immediately when his mistress was killed, and came rushing to the place. (If he was buried in the tunnel collapse earlier, it will have taken him some time to dig himself out.) Being so young a vampire, and still subservient to his mistress's will, he now loses much of his self-control. His body involuntarily twists and transforms into a cross between vampire and vampire bat, although not quite the full transformation that Strigoi can adopt. His armour has either fallen away or been torn from his body in animalistic rage. His only motive now is a lust for vengeance, and the need to relish the deed.

This is the start of a cat-and-mouse style attack by Borsa. The vampire will try to pick off his enemies one by one, but especially going for Millo, whom he thinks must be responsible for Stanoska's death. Borsa might first swoop out of the dark night sky, against whichever PC is farthest from the rest. If the PC party stick together for better defence, he might attempt to break them up and scatter them by pushing down a ruined wall. If they make it into the forest, he might conceal himself ahead of them, obscured by bushes or dead leaves and branches, so that he can suddenly emerge before one of them. Borsa is happy to take his time over this, like a cat toying with its prey. Make sure that he does not take suicidal risks, but picks at the PCs, striking then flying away, wearing them down. You want Borsa alive for the next part. Ironically, this actually helps the PCs survive, because someone else is on the way.

Jotuitso arrives

Now that both the PCs and Stanoska's servant are weakened, Jotuitso turns up, intent on finishing them all off. He has summoned a large shambling company of zombies raised from the corpses of the recently slaughtered guards, villagers and ghouls. If he can destroy both the PCs and Borsa, then he can

claim the castle for himself, and make the valley his own mini-Sylvania. He also wants whatever it was Stanoska was after. He knows it must be riches of some kind, and now knows where it is. Although it is warded against the undead, he will have all the time he needs to work out how to get in.

Keep in mind that Jotuitso is relatively weak for a vampire, and will thus have his servants do the fighting for him. He hopes the zombies' sheer weight of numbers will overwhelm the opposition. Also, there are Schrechlich wolves surrounding the area now under his control. These will drive back any who attempt to flee the scene.

Zombies

The PCs will be disgusted by the sight and smell, but can skip the Fear Tests. They have experienced too many horrors and are somewhat washed out by it all. At this stage the situation should look impossible, and you can rub this in if you want. The PCs' limbs are weak, their heads spin, their hearts pound while their will to live is slipping. But things are not as bad as they believe – as Borsa now realises that this new vampire was behind the attack upon his mistress.

Borsa vs. Jotuitso

While zombies swarm in the PCs' way, Borsa swoops down to crash bloodily into the older vampire. Make this dramatic, the PCs only catching glimpses of the struggle through the zombie line. If your PCs have managed to get to this stage without too much harm then drive those zombies at them and make them work to survive. Do not worry about dice rolls for the fight between Borsa and Jotuitso as after all they are both NPCs. There are two possible final outcomes.

Jotuitso kills Borsa

Perhaps Jotuitso uses the Shadow Knives spell (WFRP2 pg.158) to do so, after which he himself is left magically drained. His control of the zombies fails and he is forced to flee. The PCs might now break through the even more confused than normal zombies and hack him down. Or maybe he gets away? He would make a good future campaign adversary.

Or Borsa kills Jotuitso

The zombies collapse, and the PCs are left facing only Borsa, weak, battered and insane. He will probably flee, making almost as good a campaign adversary as the baron would have done.

Alternatively...

Do not overwhelm the PCs with zombies. Distract them with a few weak ones, but allow the Jotuiso/Borsa fight get underway. Once the zombies are disposed of, they have a choice of fleeing (give them a fair chance to fight through or evade the wolves) or picking a side...

A final trick

If Jotuitso is the survivor of the vampire bash, and you still feel your PCs have yet to be challenged to breaking point, then he could attempt to creep invisibly (Shroud of Invisibility, pg.

158) behind one of the PCs and suddenly regain corporeal form. Thus he appears clasp the PC from behind, his teeth at their neck.

Suddenly a breeze wafts over you from behind, both dusty and bloody, and in that same instant you find your arms pinned by wizened hands. At your throat you feel two sharp points pricking at your skin.

Jotuitso might thus try to escape, using the PC as a hostage. He may be silent, letting his actions do the talking for him. As a parting gift, he might taste the PCs' blood, giving you some future campaign hooks. Was the PC tainted by this action? Do they suffer only nightmares, or perhaps have an urge to know more of vampirism?

THE AFTERMATH

More Campaign Consequence

If the PCs have saved Millo he will reward them, but will not use the money from the repository, as he believes it to be cursed. Give the PCs whatever you think is appropriate. If, however, the PCs beat the vampires but failed to save Millo, perhaps they will face the ghost 'Harnol' and rob the Kislevite silver? I will leave you to decide on exactly how staggering the amount is. The money, however, could draw unwanted attention. It is hard to find someone who will give a good exchange rate for such old coins of dubious origins, and so gradually more and more greedy/criminal folk will learn of the haul. And there is the tricky fact that it bears the name and image of Tsar Ivan 13th of Kislev.

If the lawyers of the court of Talabheim learn of its existence, they might do a bit of research and work out it is the missing money owed to an ancient Grand Duke of Talabecland. By rights it is now the property of Elector-Count Helmut Feuerbach. If your PCs are clever and have the haul melted down, you can always have a coin or two surreptitiously finding their way into the wrong hands.

If the PCs supported one vampire over the other, then they may have a truce on their hands, though probably a temporary one. At best, Jotuitso could be an interesting but manipulative patron. Borsa, on the other hand, will not forget the PCs killed his creator.

If the PCs fled and dealt with the wolves, they may be unaware of how the fight of the vampires resolved. Perhaps the older vampire manages to subdue and dominate rather than kill the younger. Much weakened, Jotuitso decides to pursue the PCs another day. After all, he and Borsa have all the time they need...



NPC APPENDIX
Dramatis Personae

CAPTAIN BORSA (Vampire Thrall)

Personality: Fiercely loyal and obedient to his new mistress.

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
65	42	62	63	66	45	70	65
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
2	21	6	6	6(5)	1	0	0

Skills: Academic Knowledge (Strategy/Tactics); Dodge Blow; Read/Write; Ride; Command +10%; Perception; Scale Sheer Surface, Search; Shadowing

Talents: Disarm; Fearless, Frightening; Night Vision; Natural Weapons (Claws); Undead; Lightning Parry; Specialist Weapon Group (Parrying); Strike Mighty Blow; Strike to Stun.

Special Rules: See pg.115 of *Old World Bestiary*

Armour: Full Plate Armour – all locations, 5 AP.

MARGRAVINE STANOSKA (Vampiress)

Seductively attired in slashed robes of archaic design, with pale, perfect skin and red eyes.

Personality: Obsessed, enraged, cunning, proud.

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
63	42	62	63	67	45	72	60
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
2	21	6	6	6	4	0	0

Skills: Academic Knowledge (Magic, Necromancy, History, Genealogy); Charm +10%; Read/Write; Ride; Command +10%; Perception; Scale Sheer Surface; Search; Shadowing; Channelling; Intimidate; Magical Sense; Speak Arcane Language (Magick); Dodge Blow; Torture

Talents: Aethyric Attunement; Dark Magic; Lesser Magic; Fast Hands; Fearless, Frightening; Night Vision; Natural Weapons (Claws); Undead; Keen Senses; Petty Magic (Arcane); Schemer
Spells: **Petty** (Arcane) - Light, Sounds, Drop, Dark, Sleep, etc; **Necromantic** - Face of Death, Re-animate, Invigorate Vitae, Hand of Dust, Call of Vanhel, Control Undead, Corpse Flesh, Raise Dead, Awakening, Banish

Special Rules: See pg. 115 of *Old World Bestiary*. Also **Hypnotise**: Stanoska is unusual, as she can hypnotise several people at once with her gaze and voice. She became skilled at this while ruling her castle and servants years ago as a vampire. This is a combination of Charm, Intimidate, Transfix & other magical influence and works best on weakened, injured, fearful victims.

MARGRAVE MILLO TEYSS

Bruised and bloody, his rich green, velvet jerkin torn. Black hair, atop which sits a scholar's white hat.

Personality: Fearful, but underneath determined to live through this. The pain has made him groggy, his face locked in a grimace.

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
41	41	31	42	51	68	52	48
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	3*	3	4	3	0	7	0

Skills: Read/Write; Academic Knowledge (History, Law); Common Knowledge (Empire); Ride

Talents: Etiquette; Super Numerate; Savvy; Luck

BARON JOTUITSO (Sylvanian Von Carstein vampire)

Dark red robes, concealed dagger. Face long, sallow, sunken cheeks.

Personality: Cautiously cunning, patiently evil. Desires power, but happy to bide his time to get it.

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
50	40	39	47	55	50	70	58
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
2	18	3	4	4	5	0	0

Skills: Academic Knowledge (Magic, Necromancy, Genealogy); Charm +10%; Read/Write; Ride; Command +10%; Perception; Scale Sheer Surface; Search; Shadowing; Channelling; Intimidate; Magical Sense; Speak Arcane Language (Magick); Dodge Blow; Concealment

Talents: Aethyric Attunement; Dark Magic; Lesser magic; Fast Hands; Fearless; Frightening; Night Vision; Natural Weapons (Claws); Undead; Keen Senses; Petty Magic (Arcane); Schemer; Arcane Lore (Shadow)

Spells: **Petty** (arcane) - Light, Sounds, Drop, Dark, Sleep, etc; **Necromantic** - Face of Death, Re-animate, Invigorate Vitae, Hand of Dust, Call of Vanhel, Control Undead, Corpse Flesh, Raise Dead, Awakening, Banish; **Lore of Shadow** - Shadowcloak, Doppelganger, Bewilder, Cloak Activity, Pall of Darkness, Invisibility, Dread Aspect, Shadow Knives, Illusion, Universal Confusion

Special Rules: See pg. 115 of *Old World Bestiary*.

CASTLE SERVANTS

Ernst the scullion lad (a pudgy little lad, in a brown servant's smock).

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
25	32	19	17	39	22	28	35
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	8	1	1	3	0	2	1

Talent: Lightning Reflexes

Puchesa the kitchen maid (gaudily attired in a yellow bodice and an orange skirt, her floury hair loose).

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
20	20	31	26	25	32	24	40
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	11*	3	2	4	0	3	0

Skills: Trade (Cook); Gossip; Perception; Blather; Haggle.
Talents: Hardy; Acute Hearing.

Saars the old retainer (a bald, frail looking man in a blue servant's smock, uses a stick to walk).

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
33	20	22	24	25	40	38	37
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	9	2	2	2	0	4	0

Skills: Animal Care; Drive; Evaluate; Sleight of Hand.
Talents: Etiquette

VILLAGERS

Use the Common Servant profile from Old World Armoury (pg. 98) and adjust as detailed below or as required.

Village elders - Peiter Kanniger, Balten One Eye and wife Hernetta

Skills: Trade (Farmer); Charm Animal; Blather. Talents: Public Speaking (Storytelling).

Village youths - Grogvar, Urknel and Heinar

Skills: Animal Care; Gamble; Outdoor Survival; Silent Move.
Talents: Rover

Priest of Taal - Janich Morgvas

Skills: Academic Knowledge (Theology & Law); Channelling (Channel Winds of Magic); Common Knowledge (Kislev &

Empire); Magical Sense; Read/Write; Speak Arcane Language (Magic); Speak Language (Classical); Ride; Charm Animal. Talents: Master Orator; Petty Magic (Divine - Blessings of Courage, Speed, Fortitude, Healing, Might & Protection); Strike to Stun. Strictures: see WFRP2 pg.179

Escaped castle servants - Jorgen the Doorkeeper and Sasha the Chamber Maid

Skills: Dodge Blow; Perception; Search. Talents: Flee; Lightning Reflexes

Village wise woman - Old Gennif

Skills: Animal Care; Charm; Channelling (Channel Winds of Magic); Magical sense; Charm Animal; Heal; Perception; Blather; Search. Talents: Hedge Magic; Petty Magic (Hedge)

Miller - Ernich Jut

Skills: Trade (Milling); Drive; Consume Alcohol; Swim. Talents: Wrestling

Blacksmith - Burnt Hans, a Dwarf

Skills: Common Knowledge (Dwarfs); Drive; Gossip; Haggle; Evaluate; Read/Write; Secret Language (Guild Tongue); Trade (Armourer, Smith, Weapon-smith). Talents: Sturdy; Dealmaker; Dwarf-craft; Night-vision; Stout Hearted; Grudge-born Fury.

Roadwarden - Johann Magelson

Skills: Ride; Perception; Search; Outdoor Survival; Navigation; Follow Trail; Animal Care. Talents: Quick Draw; Specialist Weapons Group (Gunpowder)

Innkeeper - 'Fat' Werner Gemgold

Skills: Gossip; Haggle; Evaluate; Trade (Brewing)

Farmers & Herdsman - Mascher, Jukengar and Vasturgin

Skills: Animal Care; Charm Animal; Perception; Outdoor Survival; Search
Talents: Rover

'MONSTERS'

For Dire Wolves, Ghouls, Giant Wolves, Skeleton Warriors, Vampire Bats, Wolves and Zombies see the *Old World Bestiary* and WFRP2.



Who Tricks the Tricksters

A Short Story by J.D. Lanz

The Imperial College of Illusionists is a gathering of eccentric but harmless and, on occasion, fairly amusing wizards.

It enjoys wonderful relations with its neighbours, with some measure of good reason. For though no one has ever taken a census of magical institutions blowing up, or more generally ravaging, either themselves or surrounding areas, the College would be rated last on any such list. The worst doom to befall the College's neighbours was a stampede caused by a clumsy spell clumsily cast at a herd of cattle. The responsible student was made to tend the cows for six months thereafter and that was the last of any Illusionist ever seriously annoying their neighbours. Besides, the Illusionists are all sworn to use their powers openly and honestly for the enjoyment of the good folk of the Empire.

Except, of course, a select number of the Illusionists are sworn to the exact opposite – working in secret in the best interests of the good folk of the Empire.

Only three men besides the Emperor know all about it. Actually, they haven't deemed it useful to let His Imperial Majesty know. Called the Triumvirate, they are the three directors of the College. Two are perfectly satisfied with the scheme and right now they are talking about the third. He's been erratic lately; more than expected from him.

"I know you and I have talked about this several times, Reiner, but we might have to retire him soon. I don't like his new turn of mind." Anyone knowing Johannes Kleuger would have realised at once it was one of his fabled jokes, though more elaborate and deadpan than usual. Reiner Stark knew him, however, so he answered just as purposefully.

"Interesting you should raise the matter, Johannes." Stark's severe mien hardly changed as he spoke. "Does the name of Gunthar Lasker strike a chord?" Kleuger shrugged. "He is Bertolt's star pupil; he recently told me..."

"Star pupil!" Kleuger's tone was openly scoffing. "Bertolt doesn't have star pupils, Reiner. No star is seen next to the sun." Bertolt Hessen, their reluctant partner, fellow College director and current discussion topic, was indisputably the greatest magician and teacher in the whole College. His only praise was a rare smile rewarding only his students' most outstanding achievements. The very notion of a 'best pupil' sounded silly.

"I know how absurd it sounds," Stark countered, "but Lasker is indeed remarkable. Insight, talent, dedication..."

he has the makings of another Hessen – with a more realistic attitude at that." Both exchanged an uneasy glance, for despite his failings, they had grown quite fond of their fellow illusionist and conspirator.

X

Shadow politics aside, Stefan Arnold was having the same thoughts. The day before, his old friend Bertolt Hessen had handed him a sealed volume with strange instructions. "It's something young Lasker entrusted to me. He deems it too interesting to destroy but somewhat dangerous. At any rate, he does not want it opened until after his death, if at all. I'm a researcher and such things do not fit my character. But your scholarly pursuits make it more your province. Will you keep it?"

Arnold liked Hessen a lot but did not quite believe him – nevertheless he accepted the book. He would die before the book or Lasker would fall into the hands of the authorities with no one aware of its contents. Arnold knew that it contained the practical implementation of one of Hessen's wildest theories that they had both discussed more than once over several years. Hessen believed that genius was much more commonplace in human minds than was generally assumed, but that in most individuals it slumbered throughout their lives. The scholar's opinion was that it was a fortunate state of affairs lest there remain woefully insufficient manpower to work the fields.

Hessen used to insist he had devised a spell he called 'clear mind,' and that he cast it upon himself when researching particularly involved topics, with objectively effective results. Arnold had remained wary of the spell, but Hessen had never insisted on trying it on him; of course, it was but the first step to awakening the brilliance that Hessen was so fond of. While the reasoning did not seem entirely sound to Arnold, and a number of accidents with unwitting test subjects had proved practice was not perfect, Hessen could have put forth one case to prove his point. Indeed, Gunthar Lasker, though gifted with the strength of will to make his illusions believable, had been devoid of the brilliance that would make them lively until Hessen had worked his magic on him.

The old master's exacting need for certainty made him wait a long time to consider his results had been proven in

the long run, testing Lasker to his limits as he demanded every effort from him as from every pupil. All the while, he entered another field of illusionism, arguably the most difficult and least researched.

This time experimenting on pupils was even more difficult, though he found a way. At long last, after months of research had begun to turn into years and his survey of Lasker's meteoric progress had never shown any sign of undesirable side-effects, Hessen believed he had hit the mark when an obnoxious student learned the understanding of catspeak overnight.

Hessen waited some more time to check the results of his work until a nasty business about an old pupil suspected of turning to Chaos raised differences between him and his two fellow plotters. This, led said plotters to the discussion above and prodded Hessen into action. That night, he prepared a letter for them, put it into an envelope bearing the name of the High Celestial, and set to work.

X

In the morning, Bertolt Hessen woke up at sunrise, prepared for his meeting with his fellow directors and was a little surprised to find a letter from the High Celestial on his desk addressed to Johannes Kleuger and Reiner Stark. Guessing a clerk had misplaced it yesterday evening Bertolt took it with him to their meeting and left to other business before they read it.

My fellow directors,

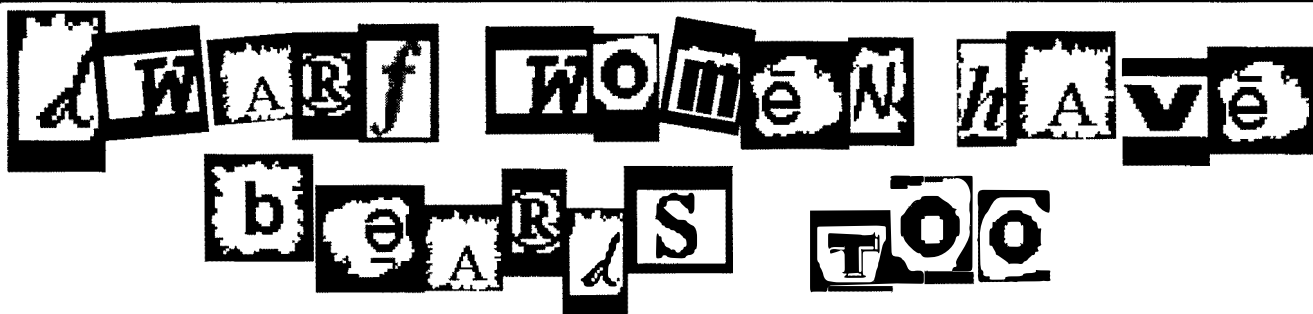
This letter was never written by the High Celestial. I apologise for the deception, but as you are reading this I am unaware of it. Yes, I know how preposterous this sounds; but please humour me and read on. You may consider this my letter of resignation, since I understand young Lasker is quite able to take my place now, not to mention perfectly willing.

You see, the man you have seen this morning is not quite the same as the one you knew. I have perfected a very particular spell, the details thereof are enclosed; I'm sure you will find countless uses for it. Should you doubt my claim, you are welcome to try teaching the spell to any irritating student of your choice. Allow me to digress a little.

As you already know, I have grown tired of the charade we play upon our own people. I understand it may be necessary, but that doesn't make it much more palatable to me. Still, I know that I know too much to be allowed to leave just like that, which is why I have sought an alternate way of retiring. By the way, I would not deem it unfit if I was kept in a high research post of some sort. I'll let you work out the details.

I needed to be silenced but left alive; since you cannot afford to trust even my word of honour, I had to forget everything we have done together. That is precisely what I have achieved. Modesty has never been my strong point, but even without setting it aside, this piece of work can arguably be called the greatest illusion spell ever. Indeed, it was designed to fool its own caster.

And with that Bertolt Hessen became nothing more than the old, brilliant teacher the world knew.



The Final Issue

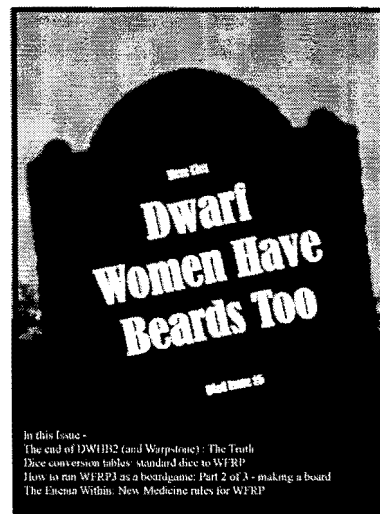
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UNDER TRIAL

Criminal Procedure in the Empire
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I have always thought that the official rules for criminal trials, as presented in various *WFRP* publications, fail to provide an incentive for players to roleplay a judicial conflict. The need to refer to numerous tables, take into account numerous modifiers and roll dice several times means roleplaying takes a back seat as the role of players is reduced to that of mere observers. It is undesirable that once PCs break the law and get caught, players are supposed, at least from my point of view, to sit and wait for the outcome of this dice-contest.

The following article is an attempt to change this. I have tried to introduce into the trial as many opportunities for roleplaying as is possible without abandoning the idea that Imperial criminal law is harsh, does not treat subjects equally and legal prosecution is the last thing PCs would wish to experience. Therefore, the article presents an alternative legal criminal system for the Empire, one more closely based on historical fact.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

Being an inherent part of a social and cultural milieu, law stems from and is intertwined with history and tradition. Sigmar's fatherland has a complex history spanning over twenty-five centuries and it is not surprising that law in the Empire has developed a plethora of disparate forms. This variety of local legal systems reflects the diversity of Imperial society.

One does not need to be a bachelor at the University of Altdorf to note that, with the recent emergence of burghers as a political force, the main dividing line now lies between the town and the countryside. It is the town that has assembled

intellectual and financial elites whereas the country has remained the home of people who often regard change with suspicion and distrust. Since the law tends to mirror society's relationships, both the town and the country have their own legal systems.

Common Ground

Although distinctly different, both urban and rural criminal procedures have common origins and therefore some common points.

Firstly, the accused is presumed innocent until a judgment of guilty has been passed.

Secondly, due to deeply-rooted distrust, no magic is allowed during any stage of the proceedings. If a participant resorts to magic in the course of legal proceedings, their legal actions are considered null and void. Similarly, if the accused has used magic during legal proceedings, he is automatically found guilty, whereas such an accuser is usually considered to have made a false accusation in bad faith.

Thirdly, both criminal procedures share the same catalogue of punishments: pecuniary (e.g. fines), corporal (e.g. flogging), mutilation (e.g. cutting off a part of the body) or death. Imprisonment is not an option as few are willing to maintain a convict. However, depending on the gravity of the offence the accused may be imprisoned pending trial. While being held in custody, the accused is allowed no visitors with a few exceptions including Priests, members of the legal professions and Witch Hunters. Generally speaking, municipal courts favour corporal, mutilation or death penalties, whereas in the country convicts are preferably sentenced to pecuniary

penalties. This is because rural communities, especially those in remote areas of the Empire, must be self-dependent and every able-bodied member of the community is supposed to work. Corporeal, mutilation and death penalties inevitably decrease the number of people able to earn their living. Nonetheless, those found guilty of violating the Law of Eight Articles (see below) are always condemned to death.

Fourthly, procedures are still based on the view that a criminal act is the violation of an individual right rather than a breach of the general peace. Therefore, as a rule, legal authorities cannot initiate criminal proceedings until an interested party has made an accusation.

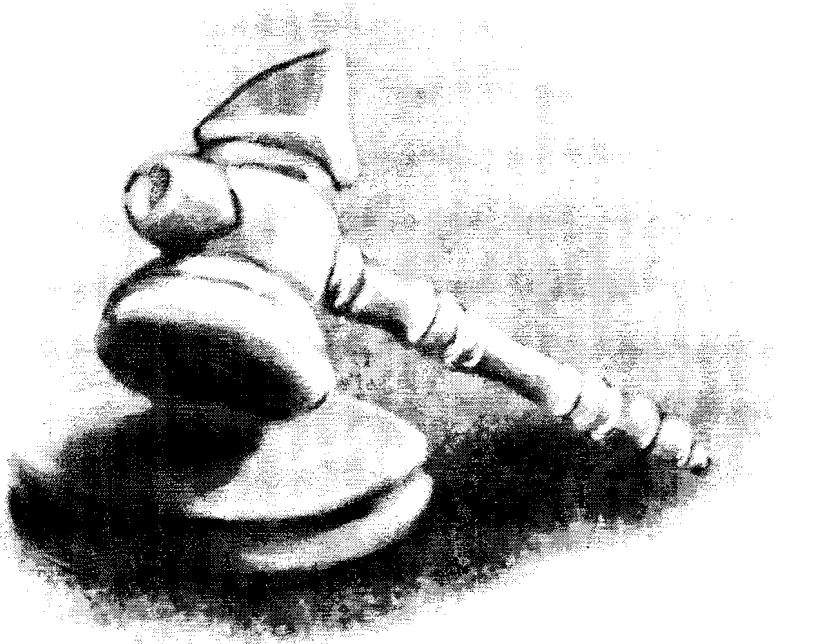
Lastly, all criminal cases are subject to the jurisdiction of Imperial law unless both parties are non-humans of the same race. As an exception, if the accused is an Elf of Ulthuan and the accuser is not, the trial is always held in Altdorf under the law of Ulthuan.

However, to maintain public order and prevent committing acts that carry an exceptional weight of social outrage, the Emperor, with the assent of the Prime Estates, has recently passed the Law of Eight Articles. According to this law, anyone, including a landed noble or a non-human, who is suspected of (1) arson, (2) abduction, rape or murder of a noblewoman, (3) assault on a travelling judge, (4) coin counterfeiting, (5) forgery of public documents, (6) highway robbery and inland piracy, (7) robbery of a noble's estate, or (8) worship of the Ruinous Powers, is to be tried before the nearest municipal court of law.

MUNICIPAL CRIMINAL PROCEDURE

A criminal offence that has been committed in a town falls under the jurisdiction of the local authorities. The prosecution is undertaken by a judge who is appointed by and acts on behalf of the municipal authorities. Municipal criminal law is believed to be the pinnacle of legal achievement, because a judge is obliged to take into account both the effect of the perpetrator's act and his intentions. As a result, criminal offences committed wilfully and deliberately (i.e. with malice aforethought) are subject to harsher punishment.

Accusation. This action can be brought by a victim, any of his relatives, his military or ecclesiastical superior, or a creditor whom the victim owes a debt worth at least his monthly pay (*WA* pg. 7), provided the victim and the accuser, if applicable, are *not* infamous among the locals for practising a disreputable profession (see *Warpstone* website). Worship of the Ruinous Powers is considered a criminal attack against the will of the Emperor and therefore it is a Witch Hunter (*WFRP2*, pg. 87) who makes the accusation on behalf of the Emperor.



Other offences under the Eight Articles are perceived to be criminal attacks against local authorities, so a municipal official is entitled to assume the role of the accuser. The accuser is expected to present evidence supporting his action, be it the name of a witness or a document, though this is not obligatory. If the perpetrator is unknown, an accusation is said to be brought against the nameless perpetrator. Once filed in the court, the accusation cannot be retracted. If the accusation is false and has been made in bad faith, the accuser is subject to the penalty for the same criminal offence.

Arrest on suspicion. If no complaint has been made by a victim or another entitled person, a judge cannot set the criminal procedure in motion. The judge is solely granted power to seize an alleged culprit, publicly announce that he has been arrested on suspicion of the crime, and publicly call upon the victim and other entitled persons to constitute themselves accusers. If they, within the period of forty consecutive days, do not do so, the alleged culprit is then released. Arrest on suspicion is by no means public prosecution – it is merely a stimulant to private accusation. Once a year and a day have lapsed since the date of release of the alleged culprit, a prosecution is no longer possible.

Inquest by the state. Although the judge has no power to commence criminal proceedings on his own, he can ask the alleged culprit to submit to the inquest by the state, i.e. to agree to be judged without a private accuser. The public inquest cannot be held without the detainee's assent, but the public authorities are allowed to deprive him of food for the second half, or any part thereof, of the prescribed period of arrest on suspicion (i.e. up to twenty consecutive days) to obtain his assent.

If the alleged culprit gives his assent, he is then tried as if a proper accusation has been brought against him. A detainee that does not give his assent and survives (see Starvation, *WFRP2* pg. 114) is then normally released.

Example: *Though the watch in Nuln take no interest in criminal dealings as long as they are limited to the Shantytown, a recent series of assaults have lead to deaths of three pregnant women, and the Shalhyan clergy intervened. Being a local thug infamous in the district, Guntar is naturally the foremost suspect. Unfortunately, none of the victims will accuse him, so the judge cannot prosecute the alleged culprit. Nonetheless, Guntar is arrested. The watch, at the behest of the judge, publicly announce Guntar's arrest but no one answers the appeal. On the twenty-first day of the thug's arrest, he is asked to submit to the inquest by the state. He refuses and is deprived of food. The victim's relatives still fail to appear, but Guntar dies before the end of the forty-day period when he would have been released.*

Caught in the act. If a perpetrator is caught red-handed by a patrol of Watchmen, one of them assumes the role of the accuser. Such a Watchman is also allowed to act as a witness (see below). Similarly, if a Chaos worshipper is caught in the act by a Witch Hunter, the Witch Hunter not only assumes the role of the accuser, but may also act as a witness (see below).

Preliminary judicial proceedings. Once an accusation has been brought or the alleged culprit has assented to the inquest of the state, the judge is obliged to commence preliminary judicial proceedings. At this stage, the judge orders his assistants to identify the nameless perpetrator, apprehend the alleged culprit, or look for witnesses and other evidence. The first hearing of the witnesses is undertaken by the judge in absence of the accused and their testimonies are recorded by the court scribe.

Weighing evidence and the system of legal proofs

Municipal criminal procedure recognises four classes of proof: a confession, a witness testimony, a document, and a presumption. Each class is governed by detailed principles.

By classifying proofs into one of the four categories and predetermining their judicial value, the legislator removes the burden of evaluating evidence from the judge. In this way the judge's sole duty is simply to collect evidence and apply the proper procedure.

A *complete proof* is the requisite for a successful prosecution. A *complete proof* comprises two *full proofs*, and a *full proof* consists of two *half-proofs*. Arithmetically a *full proof* has a value of 1 and a *half-proof* a value of 0.5.

It can be summarised as follows:

$$2 = 1 + 1 = 1 + 0.5 + 0.5$$

where:

2 is the value of the *complete proof*,

1 is the value of any *full proof*,

0.5 is the value of any *half-proof*.

Some scholars trace this system back to before the time of Sigmar. Certain of the early tribes would sit in judgement of offenders. The chieftain's judgement would count as equal to the judgements of his two advisors (that is, his 1 vote to their two 1/2 votes). However, the chieftain would also make the casting vote in the event of a tie. Of course, some scholars describe this as nonsense.

Proof by confession: A confession must comprise both the act of pleading guilty and an in-depth explanation regarding the circumstances of the criminal offence. A guilty plea that is not accompanied by a reasonable explanation is not considered proof by confession and is legally worthless. A confession is obtained:

- by the judge's questions in which case it is referred to as the voluntary confession, or
- by means of physical extortion (i.e. torture) and is referred to as the involuntary confession.

Proof by confession is considered a *full proof* unless otherwise stated.

Proof by witnesses: This is considered the best proof in criminal cases. To obtain a conviction the following four conditions must all be met to constitute a *complete proof*:

- two witnesses must testify to the same fact which is directly related to the criminal offence
- both must be eye-witnesses to the fact they testify to
- testimonies of each witness must be identical (but not necessarily verbatim) during both hearings
- both witnesses must be regarded as legally competent (see below).

Witness testimonies are put in writing by the court scribe.

The proof by witnesses is considered a *complete proof*. The testimony of one witness is legally irrelevant ("one witness is no witness") and does not constitute any proof at all. The two witnesses are chosen at the judge's discretion, so the judge who has not taken a liking to the accused can theoretically select people that will testify against him.

Witness exclusion rules. A witness is regarded legally incompetent (i.e. his testimony is inadmissible before the court) if any of the following occurs:

To qualify as a municipal judge in the Empire, a character must *complete* the Scholar (*WFRP2*, pg. 82, Academic Knowledge (Law) Skill is the requisite) or Verenean Investigator career (*SH*, pg. 124). To qualify as a court scribe, the character must be literate in Reikspiel, though *completion* of the Scribe career (*WFRP2*, pg. 51) is widely considered an advantage.

- the witness is female or the witness is younger than thirteen years old;
- the witness has been recognised as mentally impaired by a male priest of Verena;
- the witness is obviously biased against the accused or in favour of the victim;
- the witness has a personal interest in the conviction of the accused (e.g. is the victim, the accuser etc.);
- the witness is known to follow a disreputable profession, or is notorious for his dealings with the demi-monde, or known for his immoral conduct or dishonesty. A list of professions that are *not* regarded as disreputable can be found on the *Warpstone* website;
- the witness has previously been found guilty of a criminal offence;
- the witness has ever been suspected of meddling with the Ruinous Powers.

A Witch Hunter who makes an accusation of worship of the Ruinous Powers is normally allowed to deposit his testimony as a witness because Witch Hunters are said to have no personal interest in the conviction of the accused. Similarly, a Watchman who caught a perpetrator in the act and made an accusation can testify as well because the watch are thought to have no personal interest in the conviction of the accused.

Example: Josef has been charged with his wife's murder by his mother-in-law. His fourteen-year-old son and fifteen-year-old daughter witnessed this appalling crime. The boy has been found a competent witness by a judge, but the daughter, albeit the eye-witness, cannot be considered a competent witness because she is female. As "one witness is no witness", the boy's testimonies alone do not have any legal impact, and they cannot be even considered a full proof. The judge's assistants must start looking for further evidence from scratch.

Example: Gunthar has been accused of highway robbery. He has not pleaded guilty so far. Eventually, Roadwardens identified two witnesses who claimed they had heard him boasting of his cruelty to waylaid travellers. Both witnesses are found competent and heard twice. As their depositions are consistent, a complete proof has been obtained. It is enough to convict Gunthar.

Proof by document: Due to the general illiteracy of the Imperial population the written proof is rare. It can be, nonetheless, employed in certain types of criminal offences, such as forgery or perjury. A document must fulfil the following conditions to be admitted by the judge:

- it is related directly to the facts of the criminal offence
- it is authentic
- if it is appended with the signature of the accused and he must acknowledge that, be it voluntarily or involuntarily.

The authenticity of the document is established by the court scribe. The proof by document is considered a *full proof* unless otherwise stated.

Proof by presumption. Even if the judge has failed to gather enough evidence, certain preventive measures can be taken to make sure the accused does not escape justice. Imperial jurists know that certain circumstances, called aggravating indications, strongly imply the guilt of the accused. Two of the following aggravating indications constitute the proof by presumption:

- the accused was seen in the proximity of the site of the crime at the time of the crime;
- the accused is known to follow a disreputable profession (see *Warpstone* website), is notorious for his dealings with the demi-monde, his immoral conduct or dishonesty, and is therefore perceived capable of committing the criminal offence in question;
- the accused is deemed to have motive to commit the criminal offence in question (e.g. envy, malice, disagreements with the victim, etc.);
- the accused is deemed to benefit financially from the criminal offence in question (e.g. is in possession of stolen goods, is likely to become a successor, etc.);
- the accused is said to have a bad physiognomy (Fellowship below 40). This mainly affects people from low social classes (well, the law is not equal);
- the accused has previously been found guilty of a criminal offence;
- the accused has sued the victim or has been sued by the victim;
- the accused has ever been suspected of meddling with the Ruinous Powers.

Proof by presumption is considered a *half-proof* unless otherwise stated.

GOING TO TRIAL

Trial. The accused is summoned before the court. After he is informed of the imputed offence, he is then interrogated by the judge as many times as the judge sees fit. The accused is compelled to reply. His explanations are recorded in writing by the court scribe. If the accused pleads guilty and suitable evidence, other than testimonies of two witnesses, has been gathered, the judge is obliged to pronounce the accused guilty.

If the accused pleads guilty, but suitable evidence has not been collected to find him guilty, the judge is obliged to release the accused conditionally (see below). If the accused refuses to plead guilty, he is then presented with the evidence against him, usually the witnesses' depositions, along with their names.

Now the second hearing of the witnesses takes place in the presence of the accused. At this stage the accused has the right to try to impeach the witnesses for incompetence or point out any inconsistencies (see above) or contradictions in the witnesses' testimonies. At this stage of the trial the accused may also call for two new competent witnesses who must both testify as to facts that can *solely* repeal proofs by presumption if those have been brought against him.



Administration of torture. If more than a *half-proof* but less than a *complete proof* has been gathered and the accused does not plead guilty, torture is administered to extort confession. How long the torture lasts varies widely, depending on local law, but under Imperial law it must never exceed a two-hour period per day for more than twenty consecutive days.

If the accused has not pleaded guilty under torture, he is immediately acquitted. If the accused pleads guilty under torture, and his involuntary confession amounts to the *complete proof*, the conviction must be pronounced. If the accused pleads guilty under torture, but his involuntary confession does *not* amount to the *complete proof*, he is conditionally released. In fact, this is only possible if involuntary confession is regarded as a *half-proof*, as it is in some places (see *Warpstone* website).

Example: Josef has not pleaded guilty during several interrogations. However, he was seen in the proximity of the crime site by others at the time of the murder, and is well known among the neighbours for physical cruelty to his late wife and frequent, abusive arguments with her. Moreover, the watch has intercepted a fence's letter to a local crime

lord. Its author has written that Josef sold a couple of valuables belonging to his late wife and mentioned he had killed her.

The judge deems that document is directly related to the murder, and his scribe finds it authentic. Since the accused has not signed it, there is no need to make him acknowledge that. The judge knows that according to the legal theory of proofs, which he is bound to apply, there is not enough evidence to convict Josef: the letter constitutes a full proof, and two aggravating indications amount to a proof of presumption which is considered a half-proof ($1 + 0.5 = 1.5$). Since the accused denies committing the murder, the judge decides to administer torture.

If a document is appended with the signature of the accused who denies it, torture can also be administered. In this case the purpose of torture is to obtain the acknowledgement of the authorship of the document and not to extort confession.

The judge can administer torture only if the acknowledgement of the authorship is the last element needed to gather a *complete proof*. In other words, torture can be administered if at least a *full proof* has been gathered so far, the document is related directly to the facts of the criminal offence and the court scribe has

already confirmed the document's authenticity.

Torture can be administered either to extort conviction or to obtain the acknowledgement of authorship. If torture has been administered to extort confession, the judge cannot administer torture to obtain the acknowledgement of the authorship, and *vice versa*.

Conviction. Once a *complete proof*, or more, has been gathered, the judge is obliged to pronounce the accused guilty.

Example: Josef pleaded guilty during the first torture session. In Middenheim the involuntary confession constitutes a full proof, so the judge has now gathered more than the complete proof ($1 + 0.5 + 1 = 2.5$). Josef is found guilty of murdering his wife.

Acquittal. If imprisoned, the accused must be released immediately. Moreover, he cannot be prosecuted again for the crime.

Conditional release. The accused pleads guilty, but a *complete proof* has not been gathered. Although released immediately,

the accused is prone to further prosecution if new evidence that amounts to a *complete proof* is collected. However, after a year and a day he can never be prosecuted for the crime he has pleaded guilty to.

Appeal. As the municipal criminal procedure is considered to be the summit of legal science, appeals (with a few exceptions) are not permitted. According to Imperial jurists, a judge applying the correct procedure cannot be mistaken.

General exceptions. Members of the Imperial *landed* nobility do not fall under jurisdiction of municipal courts of law and are judged by their peers unless suspected of breaching the Law of Eight Articles, they are to be tried before the nearest municipal court. Administration of torture requires the consent of the local Elector.



A noble who has been found guilty under the Law of Eight Articles is allowed to appeal. The appeal takes the shape of a judicial duel between the convicted noble and a Judicial Champion representing the court. If the nobleman is willing to pay an equivalent of their weight in gold crowns (one pound equals one gold crown) to the town, he may appoint a Judicial Champion, who must be also paid, to fight in his place. A noblewoman, who appoints a Judicial Champion, is exempt from paying the gold equivalent, but she may still have to pay the Champion to fight for her. According to the procedure, it is the Judicial Champion representing the court

that chooses the type of weapon and armour both combatants will fight with. The noble or his substitute is expected to equip themselves with the requisite tools of war. The judicial duel is continued until first blood is shed or one of the combatants falls unconscious or surrenders. If it is the convict or his appointee that has surrendered, fallen unconscious or has been wounded first, the appeal is repealed. Otherwise, the noble is acquitted.

RURAL CRIMINAL PROCEDURE

General principles. The countryside regards law as a kind of a fixed reality, which can at most be slightly adapted to meet current needs, but the skeleton of which remains unchanged. For example, just as under primitive tribal law, rural criminal law still pays no attention to the element of intention that accompanies the committing of a criminal offence. It is the effect of the perpetrator's act that matters and no consideration is given to his intention or the lack thereof. This is the result of the need for fixed rules that are easy to handle by an illiterate jury. Legal authority is exercised by travelling judges that regularly visit villages lying within their assigned districts. During the travelling judge's absence, accusations are filed to the elder of a local community who, if necessary, rules to imprison the accused pending the judge's arrival. Criminal offences stated in the Law of the Eight Articles are always tried under provisions of the municipal criminal procedure at the nearest town court.

Example: Gustav deliberately killed his older brother while Herman accidentally ran a child down with his horse, causing the child's death. If found guilty, both are subject to the same penalty under rural law because no legal consideration is given to the elements of their intention.

Accusation. This action belongs to a victim or, if dead, to any of his relatives. The criminal action is merely a judicial contest between two private parties, i.e. the accuser and the accused. Bearing this in mind, arrest on suspicion and inquest by the state are *not* admissible. An accusation may be retracted at any time before the trial and if retracted cannot be made against that person again. If the action is brought against a minor

Roleplaying hints: If a PC has been accused, other PCs may want to find proper evidence to impeach witnesses for incompetency. They may also try to bribe or intimidate a court scribe to meddle with records of witnesses' testimonies. Conversely, if PCs work for the judge, they may have to find the nameless perpetrator, eye-witnesses or documents and identify aggravating indications that incriminate the accused.

(usually, a boy aged less than twelve or a girl less than sixteen), their father or an adult brother takes the role of the accused. An accusation may not be brought against a pregnant female or a male who is currently serving in the Imperial army.

Proofs. The law of proof is based on a notion that counter-proofs are inadmissible. In other words, only one party, be it the accuser or the accused, can be given the right of proof. Both parties (the accuser and the accused) contest to convince the judge that the right of proof lies on their side.

This contest is resolved in the following way: the accuser makes an allegation and the accused can in turn choose to make either a counter-allegation or a new allegation. The counter-allegation is actually nothing more than the negative of the allegation, repeated word for word. A new allegation is a statement that has been added to the wording of the prior allegation. The wording of the prior allegation often must be changed into the negative to make sense but this is decided on a case-by-case basis. If the accused makes a counter-allegation, they are given the right to substantiate their counter-allegation.

Example: Dieter has accused Hans of stealing his hen. During the trial Dieter alleges, "The accused stole a hen from my hen-house last Königstag," to which Hans makes a counter-allegation, "I did not steal a hen from the accuser's hen-house last Königstag." Hans has successfully negated Dieter's allegation and is given the right of proof. Now he has to prove that he did not steal a hen from Dieter's hen-house at the given time.

However, if the accused decides to make a new allegation in reply to the accuser's allegation, it is now the accuser that must make either a counter-allegation or a new allegation. Similarly to the accused, if the accuser makes a counter-allegation, they are given the right to prove that their counter-allegation is true.

Example: Let us suppose that in reply to Dieter's allegation Hans decides to make a new allegation: "I didn't steal a hen from the accuser's hen-house on Königstag because I was in Kemperbad at that time." Now it is Dieter's turn to react. He can make either a counter-allegation to attain the right of proof or a new allegation. If Dieter makes a counter-allegation and says, "The accused stole a hen from my hen-house on Königstag because he was not in Kemperbad at that time," he attains the right of proof and is now supposed to substantiate the statement added last, i.e. Hans did not stay in Kemperbad on Königstag. If he succeeds, he will indirectly prove Hans has committed the theft. It must be stressed that Dieter actually does not need to prove that the very act of theft had taken place!

Travelling Judges

To qualify as a travelling judge, the character must complete the Litigant (see *TiT*, pg. 16), Scholar (*WFRP2*, pg. 82, Academic Knowledge (Law) Skill is the requisite) or Verenean Investigator career (see *SH*, pg. 124).

If the accuser, however, chooses to make a new allegation in reply to the allegation of the accused, it is now the turn of the accused to react correspondingly as has already been described above.

Example: However, Dieter decides to make a new allegation: "The accused stole a hen from my hen-house on Königstag because he was not in Kemperbad at that time. His wife cooked broth from the hen that day." Now it is Hans who is expected make either a counter-allegation or a new allegation.

Hans decides to make a counter-allegation: "I have not stolen a hen from the accuser's hen-house on Königstag because I was in Kemperbad at that time. My wife did not cook broth from the hen that day." Now he is given the right of proof and is expected to prove that his wife did not cook broth from the hen that day. If Hans succeeds, he will indirectly prove that he has not stolen the hen.

Generally speaking, the right of proof is given to the party who has successfully managed to negate the other party's allegation by making a counter-allegation. The fact to be



proved is the negation of the other party's newest statement in their last allegation. If the party succeeds, they win the case, otherwise they lose. If the party who is expected to make a counter-allegation remains silent or the reiteration is not precise, they lose the case. Likewise, if the party who makes a new allegation fails to reiterate precisely, they lose the case.

Example: *If Hans had made the following counter-allegation, "I did not steal the hen from the accuser's house last Königstag," he would have lost the case because of the error in his statement. He should have used the word 'hen-house'.*

Due to the development of this specific judicial contest the parties can substantially depart from the original issue. Usually, it is because of the tactics of one party who consciously avoids probing into some aspect of the case. Each new allegation adds to the length of the original statement that was the accuser's initial allegation. Obviously, the longer this statement, the easier it is to make an error repeating it and therefore lose the case.

Proof by confession. Confession is said to be the queen of proofs. Therefore, the act of pleading guilty does not have to be accompanied by any explanations.

Proof by oath. The party, be it the accuser or the accused, swears to the truth of their own counter-allegation. This oath requires the support of oath-helpers whose exact number depends on the gravity of the accusation. The oath-helpers actually swear that the party's oath is *not* perjured rather than attest to the truth of the facts in the counter-allegation.

The court is not told why the oath-helpers believe in the truth of the party's oath. The number of oath-helpers varies across the Empire, but usually at least six people are required to attest to the truth of the party's oath when allegations are concerned with death or injury. In lesser cases, such as theft, two oath-helpers normally suffice.

Not everyone can become an oath-helper: they must be either an adult member of the local community or an outsider who has personal status or respected profession, e.g. Noble, Knight, Priest, Scholar, Physician, Witch Hunter, Roadwarden, etc. It is left to the travelling judge's discretion whether an outsider is suitable to become an oath-helper. Up to half of the party's oath-helpers can be related to the party, which means that in cases when two oath-helpers are required one may be a relative.

Example: *Dieter has made a counter-allegation and said: "The accused stole a hen from my hen-house on Königstag because he was not in Kemperbad at that time". Since he is given the right of proof, he must swear to the truth of his counter-allegation and two oath-helpers are expected to pledge their support to the truth of Dieter's oath. With these three oaths Dieter has proved that Hans was not in Kemperbad on Königstag.*

Example: *Let us assume that Hans has negated Dieter's allegation by stating: "I didn't steal a hen from the accuser's hen-house on Königstag because I was in Kemperbad at that time. My wife did not cook broth from the hen that day". Having thus attained the right of proof, he must take an oath that it was not his wife that cooked chicken broth that day, or it was beef broth that his wife cooked that day, or it was not Dieter's hen that his wife cooked broth from that day, etc. His two fellow oath-helpers are supposed to swear to the truth of Hans' oath. If the three succeed, Hans has managed to substantiate his counter-allegation.*

Proof by witness. Witness testimonies are inadmissible but a witness can assume the role of an oath-helper.

Proof by ordeal. The ordeal is an appeal to divine judgment. In the ordeal the gods are thought to attest to the truth or falsehood of a given counter-allegation so the jury does not need to render the judgment afterwards. Generally speaking, since the outcome of the ordeal is always uncertain, the ordeal is the last resort in cases when a party is unable to produce the requisite number of oath-helpers. It must be emphasised that the ordeal is sanctioned only if the party decides to submit to the ordeal of their own accord. However, if the party voluntarily accepts the ordeal and then retracts their consent, they lose the case. Likewise, if the party fails the ordeal, they lose the case. It is the judge who chooses, at his own discretion, the type of the ordeal the party will submit to.

There are many different types of permitted ordeals, the most common follow:

Ordeal of water. The party is bound to a long pole so that they can move neither their hands nor legs, and is tossed into the water. Once a period of time, usually five minutes, lapses, the party is taken out of the water. If they survive (see Suffocation, *WFRP2*, pg. 136), they win the case.

Ordeal of hammer. The party is expected to shatter the head of a smith's hammer against an anvil with one blow. If the wielder inflicts Damage 7 or higher, the hammer may break. To check this, throw 1d10. On a roll of a 1 the head of the weapon shatters, and the party wins the case. Sigmar would never punish the innocent!

Ordeal of iron. The party is expected to walk a short distance, while firmly holding an incandescent piece of iron with their bare hand. This counts as a Damage 1 fire attack (see Fire, *WFRP2*, pg. 136, the party cannot catch on fire). Afterwards, the burn wound is wrapped in a clean cloth that must not be removed. No other treatment is allowed. After the lapse of three days the cloth is unwrapped: if the burn is not infected, the party wins the case (see Initial Infection, *The WFRP2 Companion*, pg. 57, wrapping does not count as applying the Heal skill).

Ordeal of oil. The party must use his bare hand to grab and

remove a small stone that has been submerged in boiling oil. This counts as a Damage 2 fire attack. The wound is then judged in the same way as in the Ordeal of Iron.

Ordeal of wolf. The party must leave the settlement immediately, venturing bare-footed into a forest to track and kill an adult wolf, returning with its hide within a certain period of time. All personal belongings, except for clothes, are taken from the hunter who is allowed to use any items that they can manufacture in the forest. If they survive to return with the hide, they win the case. Ulric always favours the just and strong!

Ordeal of combat. One party challenges the other party to a judicial duel. The challenged party determines the type of weapon, either hand-weapon or staff, both combatants will use. No armour is allowed. The duel stops when first blood is shed, a combatant falls unconscious or surrenders. The challenging party must fight themselves. If the challenged party is not able to fight because they are female, too young or too old, have mental or physical disability, the judge chooses a substitute from among the able-bodied adult men of the local community, the challenging party's relatives excepted. However, no substitute is given to an outsider.

Caught in the act. If a perpetrator is captured red-handed and the victim, or if he is dead, any of his relatives reports it immediately to a local authority, the accuser is granted the right of proof, which means that the accuser has the right to prove his allegation is true. This is an exception to the general rule that the right of proof is given to the party that has made a successful counter-allegation.

GOING TO TRIAL

Trial. The trial is held in public, usually in the open air, at the public meeting-place of a village in the presence of members of the local community. No one is permitted to record the course of the trial in writing, except for the judge or his scribe. The exact place and date of the hearing is fixed in the summons and both parties are expected to personally appear – no representation is allowed. Both must either arrive accompanied by their would-be oath-helpers or find them later among the assembled audience.

The accuser must repeat his accusation and the accused is obliged to answer on the spot without omitting any words or making a mistake (see above). The trial is presided over by the travelling judge, but the judgment is rendered by the



jury. Depending on the area where the trial takes place, the jury usually comprises either all adult male members of the local community present or a group of people selected from among the adult male members of the community.

The judgment is rendered when:

- the accused has failed to appear on the trial; or
- the accused has pleaded guilty; or
- a party has failed to make either a successful counter-allegation or a new allegation; or
- a party that was given the right of proof has substantiated their counter-allegation; or
- a party that was given the right of proof has failed to substantiate their counter-allegation.

The judge asks one member of the jury whether the accused is guilty of the imputed criminal offence. That juror is obliged

Fate Points

Except for some forms of ordeals and appeals, judicial trials are non-combat contests but given the severity of law, they can be lethal. Fate points can be expended to avoid being sentenced to death or mutilation. For example, in rural criminal procedure a Fate Point can be used to let a character pass an ordeal that they would otherwise have failed, and in municipal criminal procedure a well-spent Fate Point can reveal, in the nick of time, the incompetence of a witness.

to propose a judgment (guilty or not guilty) but he can demand an opportunity to confer with his fellow members of the jury and ask their opinion. After the juror has proposed the judgment, the judge officially inquires whether all members of the jury agree. If they do, the judgment is said to have been passed. If any member of the jury has offered the opposing proposal of the judgment, the judge asks the jury to choose between both proposals. The proposed judgment with the most votes is adopted and passed as the judgment. The vote is held publicly and all jurors must vote in favour of one of the proposals. If the vote is tied, the judge must cast the deciding vote. Usually, the judgment passed accords with the proven facts, but the jury is not bound by the outcome of fact-finding and may decide the opposite. This rarely happens.

Example: Jürgen is in the jury. The judge asks him to propose a judgment. Jürgen is unsure and wants to talk with his fellow jurors. After a while he finds out that the majority think Hans is guilty. Jürgen announces his proposal of the judgment: guilty. Now the travelling judge asks the jurors if they all agree. Thomas is not convinced of Hans' guilt, so he opposes.

As the jurors are not unanimous, the judge rules that they must vote. Faced by the fact that the vote is held publicly, some jurors change their mind and it turns out that the result is tied, i.e. the guilty and not-guilty judgments receive half of the votes. The travelling judge must vote and he will now decide whether Hans is guilty or not.

Since no one would dare to defy divine judgment, the judgment is *not* rendered by the jury if the party has submitted to the ordeal. Instead, it is the outcome of the ordeal that determines whether the accused is guilty of the imputed criminal offence.

As already implied, if the party accepts the ordeal and retracts their consent, they automatically lose the case and no judgement is rendered, too. The travelling judge normally pronounces a penalty if applicable.

The judgment must be rendered before sunset, otherwise the accuser loses the case and is obliged to pay a fine to the travelling judge.

Conviction. After the rendition of the judgment the travelling judge is obliged to publicly impose the punishment.

Acquittal. If imprisoned, the accused is immediately released. Moreover, he can never be accused again of this crime.

Appeal. Albeit permitted in certain cases, filing an appeal amounts to questioning the jury's decision which represents the will of the community. Therefore, if the party fails to appeal successfully, they usually cast themselves out from the community. The judge is obliged to dismiss the appeal if:

- it has *not* been made immediately after the rendition of the judgment; or
- the accused has pleaded guilty; or

SKILLS

Academic Knowledge (Law): A character possessing this skill is familiar with the outlines of municipal and rural criminal procedures. However, to acquaint himself with the regional subtleties of local procedures (as described in *Warpstone* website) the PC must have access to books or experts on local laws and a day to study each aspect. A character who has *completed* the career of Litigant (*TiT*, pg. 16) or Priest of Verena (*WFRP2*, pg. 81) is given an extra +10% bonus to the tests below to reflect his experience in practical aspects of legal proceedings. Holding the Speak Additional Language (Classical) skill gains another +10% bonus to all tests to represent his ability to consult even the most obscure dissertations.

Municipal criminal procedure. Those sections of the local law related to accusation, arrest on suspicion, inquest by the state and administration of torture are learnt if the character passes a Routine (+10%) Academic Knowledge (Law) Test. On a successful Easy (+20%) Academic Knowledge (Law) Test the character becomes acquainted with the local witness exclusion rules. Similarly, successful Easy (+20%) Academic Knowledge (Law) Test reveals regional intricacies of presumptions. Each failed test may be retried once, providing the character is willing to spend another day on research. If the character cannot dedicate enough time to browse the literature, the difficulty rates of the tests increase by three degrees (e.g. an Easy (+10%) test becomes a Challenging (-20%)) and no retries are allowed.

Rural criminal procedure. On a successful Routine (+10%) Academic Knowledge (Law) Test the character may answer the summons and postpone the trial until the next visit of a travelling judge. If the character passes an Average Academic Knowledge (Law) Test, he is allowed once per trial to rectify an error that has occurred in the reiteration of his statement (bc it an allegation or a counter-allegation).

Common Knowledge (the Empire): A character with this skill who has lived in a given town for at least a year is allowed a Challenging (-10%) Common Knowledge (the Empire) Test to recall one aggravating indication *or* one witness exclusion rule (GM's discretion). For each degree of success one further aggravating indication *or* one further witness exclusion rule is revealed. If a character who lived in the country in a given province for at least a year passes a Routine (+10%) Common Knowledge (the Empire) Test, he has recalled who may become a member of the jury. At the GM's discretion, he may know the most common types of ordeals in the area. The above tests cannot be retried.

- any of the parties has already submitted to the ordeal;
or
- any of the parties has decided to submit to the ordeal but later retracted their consent.

An appeal is a submission to the ordeal (see above). If the judge selects the ordeal of combat, the appealing party fights against the Judicial Champion accompanying the travelling judge.

General exceptions. In a majority of criminal cases members of the Imperial *landed* nobility are judged by their peers. The proceedings follow the rules of the rural criminal procedure with some notable exceptions.

Firstly, the trial is held by the electoral criminal court of the province in which the estates of the accused or his family lie.

Secondly, the jury usually comprises twelve members of the provincial landed gentry.

Thirdly, the trial is presided over by a judge of noble birth appointed by the elector.

Fourthly, only members of the Imperial *landed* nobility, high-ranking priests or knights may become oath-helpers. Although females of noble birth are admissible as oath-helpers, few call them, because it is considered dishonourable to entangle a woman in legal proceedings. For the very same reason a nobleman will not accuse a noblewoman, unless under exceptional circumstances.

Since the electoral court is overloaded with cases against other nobles, the trial lasts only one hour a day. If the judgment has not been rendered, the trial is resumed the following day. However, to prevent deliberate delays to the case, the accuser is obliged to bear the cost of living expenses of the accused

(see Food per Day (Good) and Best Craftsmanship Private Room in a hostel, *OWA*, pg. 5, 59, 89). Should the accused lose the case, he is obliged to pay back these living expenses to the accuser *and* reimburse the living expenses of the accuser.

Fifthly, the only ordeal a party may choose is ordeal by combat. The party cannot appoint a substitute and must fight against one of the elector's Judicial Champions. It is the Judicial Champion representing the court that chooses the type of weapon and armour both combatants will fight with. The party is expected to equip themselves with the requisite tools of battle. The judicial duel is continued until the first blood is shed or one of the combatants falls unconscious or surrenders. If the Judicial Champion loses the noble has passed the ordeal by combat and won the case. Otherwise, they lose. There are no appeals.

Roleplaying hints: The formality and verbal nature of the trial provide a powerful incentive to roleplay. If a PC has accused or been accused, the GM takes the role of the opposing party. In this way, both the player and GM participate in this specific word duel. In the meantime other players control the precision of reiterations of allegations and counter-allegations made by the player and GM.

CONCLUSION

The article is an attempt to show how the majority of criminal cases are handled in the Empire. Taking into account the diversity of laws across the Empire, these municipal and rural criminal procedures do not exhaust all possibilities of prosecuting an alleged culprit.

Guild courts are competent to try minor offences committed by guild members against their fellows, temple courts have retained the right to try apostates, university courts exercise in minor cases criminal jurisdiction over professors and students, provincial courts try tax-evading individuals and those accused of high treason are brought to trial before the Prime Estates.

Municipal criminal procedure emphasizes social stratification in that a member of a lower class will rarely qualify to be able to accuse someone who is higher on the social ladder and, instead, must sue the perpetrator to the civil court which is very costly. On the other hand, rural criminal procedure is prone to discriminate against outsiders who often suffer from lack of oath-helpers.

Some examples of major regional differences in criminal procedures have been provided on the *Warpstone* website. Nevertheless, a GM is encouraged to modify them further so that they eventually reflect his own unique view on a variety of legal systems in the Empire. The easiest way to achieve this is to add new ordeals, witness exclusion rules and aggravating indications. The reader will also find outlines of both criminal procedures on the *Warpstone* website – their aim is to serve as quick-reference cards during game sessions.



ORPHANAGES

by Robin Low

Infant mortality in the Old World is shockingly high, and many babes die before their first year. At the same time, so many hungry mouths are born daily that populations rise rather than fall, and while many parents see their babes carried to Morr, many children see their own parents die before they are old enough to fend for themselves. War and disease, hunger and dangerous working practices all contribute to the creation of countless orphans. Yet more babies and children are abandoned to the streets and the woods, perhaps because they are born out of wedlock, or the child's hair does not match that of his father, or because a family cannot afford yet another belly that needs filling, or simply because a child is an inconvenience the mother can do without. And that is before we consider the children that are considered *wrong*: the ones with the extra finger or with eyes whose colours do not match.

The Empire is not a state that cares for the welfare of its citizens, and it does not seek to do the best it can for these orphans. In fact, it does not seek to do anything at all for them. Many fall into the gutters of the Empire's cities, turning to beggary, thieving, or worse. Others find a life in the wilds of the forests, surviving by theft and poaching, living off the land, perhaps becoming outlaws in later life. Others, perhaps many or perhaps the lucky few (nobody makes any effort to find out) are taken in by orphanages, which are almost exclusively run by the religious cults. The cults petition Imperial and city authorities for funding and seek wealthy benefactors, but by and large, cult orphanages have to be self-sufficient. The orphans often become a source of income in themselves; most of the time this is largely benign and entirely beneficial to the child.

Players should consider the possibility their character was orphaned at a young age. It is a good starting point for creating a background, encouraging a player to think about the circumstances of the parents' death or how the character might have been abandoned as a child, and how he survived and came into his starting career. Often, it means the character has no roots to hold him to a place, which is very convenient for a PC. It is also ripe for building sub-plots around the character: perhaps the PC wants to discover the identity of the masked man who murdered his parents; get even with the owner of the

mine where his father was killed in a cave-in; or discover the significance of the engraved brass ring found in the wooden box with her when she was left on the orphanage's doorstep. It is also a marvellous opportunity for GMs to introduce a new plot: a letter arrives from someone claiming to be the character's brother (or other long-lost or unknown relative); the PC is (unknown to the player or the character) the last descendent of a wealthy family or a mystical bloodline, and someone starts stalking her; the character is mistaken for someone else who was at the same orphanage; or an NPC could be introduced who was known to one of the PCs at the same orphanage (and she might have gone on to great or terrible things, or even ordinary and honest ones).

Another campaign hook is that all the characters are orphans and grew up together at the same orphanage. This provides a powerful unifying factor, giving a reason for PCs to know and trust one another, and a reason for them being together at the start of play. It is even possible that an adventure or even a whole campaign could be based at the orphanage, with the PCs all being children. A possible adventure could involve an orphanage (perhaps in a rural setting or a small town), set during the start of the Storm of Chaos. One day, the PCs are up a tree during play-time when they spy a band of Beastmen in the distance, or they might have an encounter with a couple of Beastmen scouts. From here, a scenario could become the story of a siege, an exodus in search of safety, or if the adults at the orphanage do not believe the children then the PCs could become leaders of a break-out and escape from the marauders through dangerous forests, caves or the streets of a sacked town.

The following is a look at how some of the main cults of the Old World view and run their orphanages.

Haendryk

The cult of Haendryk boasts only one orphanage, which is located a short distance from the temple of Haendryk in Marienburg's Tempelwijk (temple district). The orphanage is a simple two-storey wooden building. Each floor boasts a long, large room, with several separate rooms partitioned off at the

end of each. The ground floor room serves as a classroom for the orphans, with tables, desks and chairs. At one end is a raised area with a large blackboard, above which is a painting of two hands clasped in a handshake. To one side is a large fireplace, linked to the same chimney that serves the kitchen of the floor above. At the room's other end are two doors leading to a corridor, off which are boys and girls' washrooms and drains, an office-cum-storage room, and a narrow stairs leading up.

The large second floor room serves as the orphanage's dormitory and dining room: fifteen bunk beds run down either side, with long tables and benches down the middle. At the end of the room opposite the stairs, roughly above the blackboard area in the room below are doorways leading to the kitchen, staff rooms and more storage.

Shuttered windows are set high on both floors. The only normal access in and out of the building is a set of double doors on one long wall of the ground floor, which leads into a walled, gated court-yard. The doors are normally locked at night. In the event of a fire, access is a serious problem. Within the courtyard is a large wooden shed serving as a laundry, wood store and stable.

The orphanage has room for sixty children, but only takes in those old enough to walk and talk. This is because the orphanage mainly sees itself as a school, educating orphans for roles in the mercantile trade. To this end, the orphans are primarily educated in reading and arithmetic, together with some geography. Older or brighter children are sometimes given lessons on evaluating goods, the law, and trading technique (or haggling). Practical skills such as driving the orphanage's small wagon and caring for the horse are also taught. The cult encourages honesty and fair dealing.

As part of the cult of Haendryk, the orphanage is also a business. Children are apprenticed, for a price, to reputable merchants who are known to the local cult, becoming scribes, servants, or tradesmen. As the cult and orphanage have good reputations, finding homes for orphans is rarely difficult. Some are accepted as initiates of the cult.

Those who cannot be apprenticed or otherwise placed by the age of nine, often because of simple lack of academic ability, are found a role within the local temple, usually as simple servants. The current live-in cook and caretaker of the orphanage, Debora Stolk, is an example. As the children are seen as something of a commodity, effort is made to look after them and some of the money the orphanage makes is invested in keeping them fed and healthy.

The orphans' day begins with a six a.m. bell. The girls and boys run down to their separate washrooms, wash and get into their day clothes before coming back up where they are inspected for cleanliness by Debora Stolk. Breakfast follows, which is usually hot porridge, with a small blob of jam on special occasions. After breakfast, the children have lessons, given by one of the priests from the temple, with no break until mid-day. The mid-day meal is often the highlight of the day, and consists of fish soup and bread four days a week, with a vegetable soup alternating on the other days.

The afternoon follows a somewhat more varied schedule. On Wellentag (Work Day) the children and Stolk spend time washing their clothes in the laundry. The orphanage makes some extra money by taking in laundry and sewing from outside, a not uncommon practice for many orphanages. Afterwards, the children are allowed half an hour's free time, although the older children are often sometimes sent out on errands by Stolk. Lessons continue in the afternoon.

NPCS of Note

Debora Stolk is a sweet, caring girl with plenty of practical sense but no head for numbers. She can reel off the names of all sixty of her charges, but gets confused when she tries to count more than about ten of them at a time. Nevertheless, the priests recognised her talents and put her in charge when she was due to leave the orphanage. At fifteen, she has the modest ambition of becoming a merchant's wife. Debora hopes that her good cooking (the smell of which often reaches the temple of Haendryk) and housekeeping skills will attract a husband who is looking for a wife and not a bookkeeper.

Rolf Teffelen is one of several middle-aged priests of Haendryk who comes to teach the orphans. Although Rolf knows how to read, write and do the maths, he is not actually very good at teaching any of it, to the mild annoyance of his colleagues. However, he is something of a storyteller, and he maintains the interest and respect of his class and colleagues through his tales, which usually carry some moral for business or an educational twist. Consequently, Rolf is an excellent source of information on Haendryk folklore, noted merchants, and famous (or infamous) deals, not to mention a ship's hold full of gossip. Of course, as a priest of Haendryk, Rolf could not possibly share his knowledge or advice without some sort of donation.

At eight years old, **Peter Plugge**, is already an entrepreneur. Having realised that Debora cannot count very well he has been stealing a few bread rolls and vegetables from the stores and selling them to street children at a price they can afford because he feels sad for them. At this stage of his career, it is unclear as to whether Peter will ultimately follow in the footsteps of Haendryk, Ranald or Shallya.

Manann

The cult of Manann maintains a few orphanages in the larger cityports of the Old World. These are almost always in old ships, hulks that while still afloat are no longer sea or river-worthy. Children who are taken in are worked hard: rope-splicing, net-repairing, ship's carpentry, and sail-mending. They are hired out to help load and unload ships and they learn to climb rigging and walk the arms; deaths are not commonplace, but equally they are far from unusual. A handful of the smarter ones are given lessons in navigation and map-reading. These orphans tend to become a tough breed, with rough hands, no

fear of heights and an excellent sense of balance. As soon as they are deemed capable (and sometimes before) they are apprenticed off to ships as cabin boys and junior crew.

Shallya

The cult of Shallya certainly runs the largest number of orphanages of any god, with the largest number of orphans. It is almost certain that its orphanages are the kindest, particularly because caring for the innocent and those in need is a major part of the cult's philosophy. However, due to the numbers of children to be cared for, those children are worked fairly hard, whether in the cult's laundries in the cities or the fields surrounding its rural monasteries, to generate the income and resources to care for them and others. Wherever possible, the cult seeks to settle children with childless couples, see them apprenticed to masters or taken on as servants in households of good repute. However, as with the cult of Morr, many children grow up within the cult and stay with it when they become adults.



Morr

Arguably, Morr creates orphans, and his cult takes considerable interest in and responsibility for them. While it tends to leave the youngest infants for the cult of Shallya, the cult of Morr concerns itself with those children old enough for their parents' deaths to have touched them. To have known death so young marks them out. Also, a minority of such children show a tendency to either develop a morbid interest in death or become resentful of Morr. The cult deems it worthwhile to keep an eye on such children. Despite the cult's grim reputation, its orphanages are kind and gentle places, although definitely strict, silent and sombre, with limited time for high spirits. Many orphanages are part of a larger temple. Unsurprisingly, the orphans' energies are directed towards the temple's business: coffin-making, shroud-making, tomb-building and sculpture, grave-digging, gardening, and hearse-driving. Some orphans are sent off to become assistants to priests serving smaller communities. Many of the cult's initiates, priests and associated employees grew up in the cult's orphanages, which perhaps explains the quietly unnerving personality they seem to share.

Myrmidia

The cult of Myrmidia does not have orphanages as such, but it is known to take on orphans as servants for its various temples, academies and chapterhouses. As befits the cult, such orphans get a degree of education and tend to become disciplined and organised, even if they do not have an aptitude for war. Those who do often receive training before being passed into the care of knights and gentlemen as squires.

Ranald

To a degree, Ranald and his informal cult are fond of

expressions like 'every man for himself' and 'sink or swim'. However, the god and his followers are not typically hard-hearted and do not find any pleasure in the suffering of the weak and innocent, especially when that suffering is not of the victim's own making. In the cities, the cult of Ranald shows concern for orphans who find themselves on the streets, or whose criminal parents were hanged or killed by the watch, offering a few coppers here, a wedge of bread there, a roof for the night. Where possible, cult members teach them to be self-reliant and to trust in the fortune of Ranald, but do not exploit them beyond reminding them of the value of loyalty to friends and those who aid you.

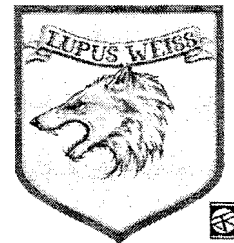
Sigmar

There are stories about the life of Sigmar when he was a very young boy, but they tend to be tales of youthful strength and courage beyond his years. There is some debate over whether or not he ever fathered any children. Unsurprisingly, the cult of Sigmar has as little to do with children as possible. On occasion, the cult is given custody of the young children of Sigmarite nobles who die early with no other family; this may be given in a will or, more rarely, on the authority of an Elector. The cult rarely complains too much, as more often than not the responsibility comes with an estate or a legacy attached. Responsibility for the upbringing and care of the child is usually passed to whoever is given charge for the care of the estate or the legacy until the child comes of age.



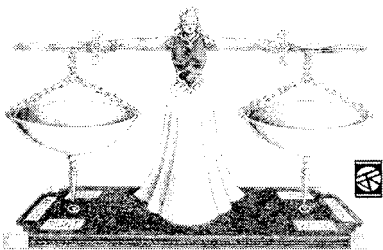
Ulric

Sigmarite propaganda claims the cult of Ulric throws orphans into pits with young wolves, adopting whichever survives. Or, Ulrican priests abandon small groups of children in the wilderness to see if they can make it back to civilisation. Maybe this was once true, and maybe it still is in remote parts of the Old World, but generally it is not. Instead, the cult often takes in orphans unwanted by other cults, commonly those who are aggressive and unruly. The cult seeks to focus its orphans' anger and frustrations into more productive martial endeavours. Its orphanages are extremely disciplined and not shy of physical punishments. Equally, they are not shy of disputes and conflicts between children, which are resolved through rule-based challenges and duelling (typically boxing or wrestling, but sometimes quarterstaves or clubs). Alongside, there is a huge emphasis on teamwork and loyalty to the group. Unlike many cults, that of Ulric tends not to use orphans chiefly as a cheap labour force, more as a propaganda tool. It aims to create warriors who will go on to join the armies and mercenary forces of the world, carrying with them and sharing the philosophies and ideals of the cult.



Verena

While not philosophically inclined to care for children, the Vereneans have a practical use for orphans. The cult takes in children, educates them, and sets them to work copying manuscripts. Even children incapable of understanding or even reading can be taught to duplicate symbols! In a world where the printing press is rare (or non-existent depending on your view of the setting), these countless hands are the next best thing. Unsurprisingly, the cult tends to require older children with better coordination, and they often liaise with the orphanages of Shallya, Morr and Myrmidia to find suitable children. As adults, many of these children move on to work as scribes, accountants and librarians, creating an informal network of contacts for the cult.

**Taal and Rhya**

The rural cults of Taal and Rhya lack the traditional temples of the other cults, and so do not tend to have anything in the way of distinct orphanages. However, orphaned children turn up quite commonly in the woods and hills of the Empire: many are abandoned in the forests, others are orphaned in Beastmen attacks, or are the lucky survivors of famine and pestilence. The priests of Taal and Rhya attempt to find these orphans new homes in villages and farms, or among charcoal burners and other rural communities. These settlements are often in dire need of new additions to keep them alive. The priests and priestesses tend to be very good at keeping an eye on the children they place and the people they place them with, periodically checking on them. One thing they are not so good at, is checking on where such children came from in the first place. A babe found alive in the wreckage of a carriage on a lonely road is in need of care regardless of who he is or where he came from, and a priest of Taal's only concern is finding someone to look after him.

Story and Character Ideas

Some GMs will undoubtedly read this article and wonder if they are ever going to really need that many orphanages. It is a fair question, so imagine running a campaign where a powerful benefactor asks the PCs to locate an orphaned child. Perhaps the child is the true heir to a fortune or just a noble title. Perhaps the child is the subject of a prophecy (for good or ill). Perhaps a childless couple are just really, *really* fussy about the sort of child they want to adopt, but are willing to pay well to find the right one. Regardless, this is potentially a campaign that can have the PCs travelling the length and breadth of the Empire, taking them to several and perhaps many different orphanages, each with their own side-plots bringing delays and distractions.

Another campaign featuring several different orphanages is one involving a cult seeking to recruit and indoctrinate young

and malleable minds in an effort to boost its numbers. This need not be a Chaos cult, but could easily involve a gang of thieves or bandits, whose members pose as childless, loving couples. Likewise, a gang of slave-traders could decide that orphanages are easy targets. In a twist on the first campaign suggestion, it could be members of a Chaos cult who are trying to track down a child connected to some Prophecy of Chaos, and travelling from orphanage to orphanage in their search. The PCs are on the cult's trail for completely unrelated reasons, only discovering that the cult is seeking a certain child as the plot progresses.

**“PLEASE, SIR,
I WANT SOME MORE.”**
Further idea and plots for Orphanages

AN UNUSUAL CHILD
By DANIEL GOOCH

Orphans do not have to be children, but could be all types of shady characters masquerading as children. They could be Halflings and Dwarfs that are half human, or adults who have aged very slowly (through some Chaos mutation perhaps) so although they have the appearance of a child they have the mind (and cunning) of an (evil and psychotically murderous) adult. They could turn up at an orphanage with a sorry tale, get taken in by the sisters of Shallya, who soon find them to be more than they can handle, and foster them out as quickly as possible, asking passing PCs to escort them to their new home.

The children may not be orphans at all, but have been dumped on the orphanage by aristocratic parents because there is something wrong with them - they look funny - or they are bastards. Somehow the child finds out, and seeks assistance from the PCs in reclaiming their birthright. An orphan's background may be more exotic. A group of kids, speaking in a foreign tongue, are washed up from a ship and taken in by the Cult of Manann. Each has an unusual tattoo, which following scholarly interpretation says “If found, please return to Lustria, for extensive reward”. The church employs the PCs to make the voyage. At sea, the children are collectively found to have strange powers, such as the ability to sing to the waves to calm a storm, or maybe cause a storm, and prove difficult and fractious. The priest of Manann on board starts to suspect, shortly before he is washed overboard, that they are not children at all, but strange spirits sent by Manann (or perhaps worse) for unknown purpose.

GOTTA PICK A POCKET OR TWO
By DANIEL GOOCH

It has been known for the church of Ranald to rent out orphans as pick pockets. It is possible to have a whole Oliver! themed

adventure or campaign, where one player is Fagin, and the others are his boys.

Perhaps a Fagin type PC turns up at the Temple of Ranald to get some new help, the last lot of his boys were all apprehended (or brutally murdered), and the five he gets are a bit odd. Maybe he has visit two or three orphanages, and each orphan has an ulterior motive, such as reclaiming a birthright, is a psychotic killer, possessed by a spirit of Manann, and so on, leading to lots of conflict in game. He needs them to do something kids are good at, like getting into small places, so maybe there is an unusual place he wants robbed, such as a magician's tower (in through the chimney but watch out for magical defences), an underground lair (in through the drains, but watch out for Skaven), or maybe infiltrate a posh school to steal from the nobs?

THE FOUNDLING

By GRAEME DAVIS

It is not uncommon for the keepers of an orphanage to open the doors one morning and find an infant abandoned on the step. These poor foundlings may be left by poor mothers who cannot afford to raise them, or by the agents of prominent families who cannot afford to have the fruit of an illicit affair become known. But in some places, darker stories are told.

Across the Old World, the rumours and legends are the same. A baby is found abandoned on the doorstep of an orphanage.

When it is taken in, mysterious accidents and illnesses take a terrible toll on the orphanage's inmates and staff. Finally the evil is traced to the new arrival, who is revealed to be a daemon in disguise, or even a vampire child who can never grow up and is stuck at a few months of age. Clerics or witch hunters are alerted, and the evil foundling is dealt with.

This kind of story offers a number of possibilities to the GM. In a one-off game, the players might take the roles of children at the orphanage, with suitably reduced characteristic and skill scores. The adults will not believe that anything is wrong, and the inmates must uncover and deal with the problem for themselves. The horror of the situation is heightened by the comparative helplessness of the youthful PCs, and the absolute refusal of the orphanage's staff to recognize that anything is amiss.

If the foundling is a vampire infant, the PCs face a moral choice: can they bring themselves to kill an apparently innocent child, even if it is to save many other children and adults? Whether they do it or not, what does this experience do to them, both psychologically and in terms of their standing with the gods?

THE SIXTH SENSE

By ALFRED NUNEZ JR

Stefan was a foundling left on the doorstep of the Shallyan orphanage of the White Lady's Charges outside of Nuln.



His large, lively dark eyes and dark brown hair was in striking contrast to his fair skin and attracted the attention of the sisters. In particular, Sister Annette of Couronne took a shine to the infant.

In time, Stefan grew to be an attractive and shy boy who kept to himself, oftentimes rocking and quietly humming as he positioned himself in a corner, furthest away from the fireplace. One day, Sister Annette actually heard the boy in a rather quiet conversation in the garden. Pleased that he finally found a friend among the other children, Sister Annette turned to the corner to find that there was no one there with the wide-eyed boy.

Concerned that Stefan might be hallucinating, Sister Annette politely asked him with whom he was speaking. Stefan turned to the Sister and quietly told her that the man said she would not understand as she could not possibly see or hear him. When asked to describe the invisible man, Stefan looked at the empty space before him and then replied that the man – who went by the name of Johannes Becker – had a deep gash in his head and a rope around his neck. Annette recognised the name as that of a man murdered outside the orphanage years ago.

The Mórrian priest, Father Roderic, interviewed Stefan at length. He told Sister Annette that the boy had a gift which not only allowed Stefan to converse with the spirits of the dead, but he could also calm those with an unbridled anger towards the living. He told the Shallyan that the boy should be kept safe until he could make arrangements for him at the Temple of Mórr. The priest warned that should Stefan's gifts become known, he would be in danger from those who would exploit him... or end his life.

As he hurried to the Temple, Father Roderic did not reveal to Sister Annette his concern that the boy may even have the power to influence or direct the dead spirits for his own ends. He could not confirm his suspicions in this regard but nor could he dismiss them.

Unfortunately for Sister Annette, there would be no placement for her young charge. A shadow crossed Father Roderic's path on his way to Nuln, causing his horse to rear and toss him from the saddle. The priest's head hit a rock, cracking his skull. In his dying breath, Father Roderic muttered the name of "Johannes Becker..."

THE BLESSED MANANN HOME FOR FOUNDLINGS OF THE SEA

By ANTHONY RAGAN

In Tempelwijk across the Three Gulls bridge from the Cathedral of Manann and near to the crumbling bank of the fetid Doodkanal sits an orphanage maintained by the cult for the care and education of the children of cult faithful lost at sea. Formerly a little-used temple long overshadowed by the cathedral, it was converted to charitable work over a century ago by a civic-minded predecessor of the current high priest, Wouter Berkhout. Now the temple serves as a chapel and schoolroom for the children, and a tenement next door has been converted to a (gender-segregated) dormitory, including

rooms for the priest and three lay brothers who look after the children.

The children resident in the orphanage, roughly a score at the moment, range in age from a few months to sixteen. Their education is a practical one, for they are expected to repay the cult by serving as sailors and marines, whether in the service of the Great Houses or the cult itself. Thus they learn counting in terms of knots and fathoms, and sailmaking is considered more important than reading. In their sixteenth year, if not claimed already, residents are apprenticed onto ships looking for help; the orphanage has a reputation for making good sailors.

One resident is unusual though, a quiet thirteen-year old boy by the name of "Matthias." He has no family name, for no one knows who his parents were. He was found one drizzly morning in a basket at the chapel doors, wrapped in swaddling and just a few days old. A note pinned to his clothing read "His name is Matthias. In the name of Manaán, protect him."

Protect him from what, no one has ever known.

Still, no one was willing to leave an infant exposed to die, and so he was taken in.

Matthias at first grew just like a normal boy: playing, fighting, and all the rest, just like the other children. While he showed no special aptitudes, he was well-liked, and it was expected he would be "placed" sooner rather than later.

But, a little over a year ago, Matthias entered puberty, and more than the usual change took place. He grew quiet and introspective, as if he were sometimes listening to voices only he could hear. Then, a few months ago, bouts of catatonia began. When he came out of them, he would take paper and charcoal and sketch maps – highly accurate maps of places he could never have seen, let alone heard about, but which tally with maps stored in the cathedral library and at Baron Henryk's College of Navigation and Sea Magicks. Young Matthias has no idea what is happening; only that, sometimes, he draws what the voices tell him, and at others he just draws what he sees in his mind.

Matthias's talents have already come to the attention of the High Priest and his aides, who have silenced all on this matter, while they consider the implications. He is no longer allowed to leave the orphanage unsupervised.

Just the other day, Matthias drew a map of the coast, far to the south of an Imperial colony in the Southlands, where no explorer has gone before. On it was marked a "castle of the Ancients." Needless to say, this has caused quite a stir.

What's Going On?

Brother Albert had been looking into Matthias' history and the following is the story he told Berkhout. Albert was hit and killed in an accident with a cart the next day.

Matthias is something thought impossible, a half-human, half-Sea Elf crossbreed. His father was a sailor for the ruthless Clan Lianllach, who fell ill after sailing too close to the Chaos energies far to the north. Though he recovered, he was tainted and mutated in a subtle way: he could breed with humans. He impregnated a tavern wench in a night of revelry, and the

resulting child was Matthias. When the House found out, they killed the father as a mutant and sought out the mother and child, but she had fled.

Fearing the Elves would kill her baby, she left him at the orphanage and she was never to be seen again. And what explains Matthias? His father passed on the Taint of Chaos, but, not surprisingly, it affected the boy differently. On the onset of manhood, he became tuned in to the minds of Sea Elf navigators around the globe, and thus the maps they have drawn or studied, he can himself reproduce, including parts of the world no Old Worlder has ever visited, including those the Sea and High Elves forbid them to visit.

After having not thought about that "regrettable incident" in many years, word of Matthias' accomplishments have reached the clan's Council of Wavemasters, who realise who the boy is and the threat he poses. Even now, they are considering sending an assassin to a humble orphanage to once and for all "clean up this mess."

NURGLE:

PROTECTING THE WEAK AND DISEASED

By RICHARD LEON

The Chaos god of pestilence and decay runs a number of orphanages across the Old World, often in disguise as another cult. Every member of the staff is usually involved and the orphanage is a front for this cult's activities. Smaller towns close to cities are prime targets. The disguise is usually that of orphanages of the Cult of Morr or Shallya. Growing up in such places can be a horrid or pleasant experience much like any other orphanage as virtues such as kindness and comfort are known to Father Nurgle. Often the orphans do not know they are being raised in a proscribed cult atmosphere until they reach adulthood, if then.

Followers of Nurgle teach special prayers and greetings to the kids. These sayings and prayers might be recognised by Witch Hunters if they have such knowledge. Often the phrases substitute the word Father for the god's name. Other clues to their secret tongue involve substituting key words such as plague with blessing. Signs of the plague god can be found in many areas of the town such as flies drawn on town buildings and the three circles marking stitched into cultist clothing. Players who grew up in a Nurgle orphanage may have the chance to be a cultist themselves. At the very least kids who grow up in the Cult of Nurgle know the Secret Signs and Secret Language Skills related to the cult.

Our Lady of Mercy and Grace Orphanage

Our Lady of Mercy and Grace is a well-known orphanage and monastery run by priests of "Shallya" in the small mining town of Schoninghagen, south-southwest of Middenheim. Over half of the children are handicapped or terminally ill. The orphanage gives them a chance at living a "normal life" in the rural area. The orphans spend their days tending crops, preparing and delivering food for the miners. The cult of Nurgle holds sway in this town recruiting new members and

growing stronger. However, not all of the children or cultists are willing participants.

Under the guise of a Shallyan high priestess, Cordula Von Amsel runs Our Lady of Mercy and Grace for her god Nurgle with ten full time cultists and several teenage orphan devotees. She is a lean, tall woman with a few broken teeth but comely looks for someone of middle age and used to hard work. Her personality and style consists of fairness and heavy labour, often praising kids for doing a good job. But she is fully dedicated to her god, calling him Shallya's Father in front of guests and the children.

The cult's assets are close by. In a hidden part of the mine, long abandoned, sits a small cache of powdered warpstone and an altar dedicated to the god of pestilence and decay. Several lesser daemons are bound to Frau Von Amsel and she has some military resources (rusted swords, scavenged mail armour, small shields) and provisions to fend off a small attack or to escape. The cult lives in a still intact, desecrated monastery to Shallya which is built as a fortress overlooking vineyards and wheat fields.

If a player chooses to come from the orphanage of Our Lady of Mercy and Grace, they can choose to be an escapee, or cultists looking to infiltrate normal society. The player might have knowledge of the cult's ultimate plans. The cultists of Nurgle in Schoninghagen are seeking to infiltrate the city of Middenheim. They are developing warpstone infected wheat and grapes and wine bottles that can be used to carry a variety of diseases. Their plan is to spread the joy of Nurgle among the populace.



THE MONKS OF SORROW

A MONASTIC ORDER FOR MORR BY JOHN FOODY

On the very edge of Kislev stand the Worlds Edge Mountains, within which is the famous mountain, the Rock of Sorrows, home to the monastic order of the Sacred Quorum of the Moon's Pain, dedicated to serving Morr. They stand guard to the Cave of True Sight, a pilgrimage site for many Kislevites. They say the Rock and the Cave were holy to the Khan Queens and their followers in ancient times. Now, Morr sends visions to those deserving enough to receive them. Above the cave stands the Monastery, once a dwarf prison but built on the site of something much older. The Rock is a place where the truth is difficult to find and can be dangerous to those who choose to look.

The following information is current as of 2510 when Tsr Radii Bokha ruled Kislev:

The Sacred Quorum of the Moon's Pain is a small order of monks who have dedicated their lives to the worship of Morr, serving him through prayer, study, abstinence and hardship. The brothers, known as the Black Monks, The Monks of Sorrow, Once-Hanged Men, Brothers of the Quorum and, to themselves, the Brethren, are dedicated to searching for the insight of Morr through clues the God of Death gives to mortals. Their duties include looking after the Cave of True Sight and the pilgrims who travel there. The order has become wealthy thanks to the gifts these visitors bring.

Some monks are chosen to spread the word of Morr throughout Kislev and the Eastern Empire. They remind the people that they should honour Morr at all times as death is

always waiting in the shadows and once they are dead then it is too late for prayers. The Black Monks are disliked by most, who

see them as too unyielding. They also come into conflict with priests from all orders, upset at their persistence that Morr should be worshipped above all others. The monks' promise of enlightenment through worshipping Morr usually falls on deaf ears.

The order currently consists of thirty-five full brethren. It is run by two senior Brethren who are traditionally (and ideologically) supposed to make decisions together. In practice there is a division of labour and responsibility rather

than the intended balance. The current leaders are the veteran Aleksey Zlabachov and the ambitious Pavel Rutkin. Rutkin is about to travel to the court of the Tsr to bring the guidance of Morr and seek royal endorsement for the order. The charismatic Rutkin has also been very successful in recruiting new members in recent years and there are now over forty initiates. This is the largest the order has ever been.

The order promises its recruits true insight into the world around them. They believe the world is an illusion, woven by Morr. They say that at the very edge of death, Morr shows the truth of the world and how worshippers can pass through his gates into a paradise beyond. Death is not to be feared but embraced. The monks believe that reality is a veil and they study the art of illusion so they can adjust and understand it. Drinking, drugs and flagellation (or indeed anything else) are all valid methods to the monks as ways of seeing through the illusions but it is through pain that the real world can be seen



A

and controlled. Within the walls of the Monastery the monks also worship Morr's brother Khaine, the God of Murder, as an equal, believing that he can see through the illusion Morr creates. The monks follow the old belief that Morr and Khaine are brothers. The statues in the Monastery are two-faced with Morr and Khaine joined. A hooded cloak is a simple covering for the face of Khaine when visitors come to the monastery. Khaine is seen by the monks as bringing the blessing of death to those lucky enough to be able to pass through Morr's gates. The Brethren do not believe that people should be killed but simply accept that this is the way of the world.

*Ride the Raven to the Rock
There to visit the Queen
A prison of ice from which to be freed
Oh friend! Give me the keys
Verse from folk song 'A Heart of Ice'*

The History of the Rock

The holy men of the early inhabitants of the land to the east believed that they could communicate with the gods from the mountain. They travelled there to lie in the darkness of the caves, awaiting the gods to come to them on chariots of light.

The early Khan Queens took the rock as a seat of power. They were crowned there and in time they proclaimed, in sight of the gods, their law there. A permanent priesthood was established on the Rock, building a small temple. Later, the Khan Queens were buried deep beneath the mountain. The priests guarded these remains even when the Khan Queens fell.

Centuries later some of the tombs were plundered by distant strangers who did not care about the sanctity of the mountain or its supposed curse. Word spread and more came. The Dwarfs, old friends of the priesthood, gave assistance and in time the priests asked for more permanent help. The Dwarfs decided to build a prison on the rock for their worst criminals and the tombs were hidden and protected beneath.

The prison came to be seen as degrading by many among the Dwarfs, few of whom knew its dual purpose. One winter a relief guard arrived to find the door sealed from the inside and the bodies of the dead, prisoner and guard alike, frozen in death. It had been a terrible slaughter, the corridors slippery with icy blood. As they waited, with their warming fire, the dead started to rise around them. The three survivors sealed the gates once more and escaped to tell the tale. The Dwarfs returned to seal the prison for good, despite the protests of the lone priest of the Khan Queens who stood watch.

The people of Kislev stayed away from the cursed mountain until the prison was opened and cleared by the Black Monks and they made it a place of pilgrimage.

*As I lay dead upon the snow
A raven came to say
I'll have both the eyes an'
Let Morr guide you on your way*

The History of the Order

The Sacred Quorum was founded by Igor Wasisnov in the fifteenth century (IC). He travelled the Old World and beyond looking for understanding, trying to divine Morr's plans. He gathered disciples behind him and they became known as The Parters of the Veil. The order, then based in the Empire, was declared heretical during the Wizards' War of the late twentieth century for their worship of Khaine. Going underground they emerged as the Sacred Quorum of the Moon's Pain and with the worship of Khaine now a secret tradition.

The order's largely nomadic life ended just over three hundred years ago when the twins Filat and Gleb Bondarchuk were guided to the Rock by dreams sent by Morr. The twins discovered the old dwarf prison on the Rock had been abandoned but it took them many years to break through the barriers the Dwarfs had erected. When they gained entry they found that those Dwarfs sealed inside the prison were now undead. With the power of Morr on their side the order soon had a new home.

The presence of the order encouraged pilgrims to visit the Rock to look for the blessing and guidance of Morr and the spirits of the Khan Queens.

The Order has had little trouble with the main Cult of Morr over the years, helped by the remoteness of the monastery and the cult's fragmented structure. This suits the Brethren and they work to ensure it stays that way. They donate part of their income to other temples of Morr in Kislev and beyond, ensuring good will and tolerance from their peers. They have only once had to resort to murder when a Cleric of Morr in Talabheim started circulating accusations against the Brethren.

*"What demonery is this? Should those of noble blood be chained like dogs?"
"Nyet. Like slaves. For we are all such to the judgement of Morr. My lord."*

The Rock of Sorrows Today

The track leading to the Rock is known as the Funeral Path. Those following the road come to the small village of Stepnov, which stands at the foot of the mountain. The village is little more than two inns and a dozen hovels, busy in the summer, but almost empty in the deep of winter.

The Sorrowful Rest is a good inn and filled with merchants and minor nobility and their retainers. During the eight months of the year it is open there is rarely a vacancy and prices are twice that of the Queen's Storm, the second inn. Although much more ramshackle in appearance with its boarded windows and goats in the yard, the Queen's Storm is warm and comfortable with a friendly atmosphere. It is also the regular home to Alexis Sinnokov, a historian funded by a trust fund and working on behalf of Talabheim's Diszipunterr University. Sinnokov is researching the history of the rock and will be able to impart much of the known history of the rock and the order (see sidebar). He is occasionally allowed access to the Monastery but finds it too tiring to stay there all the time. He

is friendly (as much as is possible) with some of the monks.

A hundred yards from the village is the pilgrim's camp, made up of a few tents. These stand outside the Supplicants' Cave, where the poorer travellers keep warm around the fire the monks light at night.

The Funeral Path continues up the mountain in steep, snaking steps worn smooth with age. Remains of statues that once lined the stairs can be found alongside the path. There are few remains large enough to show they were once statues of Gospodar warriors set to guard the Rock.

Halfway up the path, a narrow crevice leads to the Cave of True Sight also known as the Queen's Cave. The entrance is flanked by two painted statues of Morr behind which are two wooden gates. The walls are decorated with rough cave drawings of horses, people and strange creatures. Black Monks guide visitors to spaces along the wall to pray while two braziers burn in the centre of the room. Twice a day, the gates are locked and one of the two remaining monks throws hallucinogenic drugs on the fire. The pilgrims then experience visions for around an hour. During this time screeches and shouts drift down the mountain. Some are badly affected and have to be helped and a few sometimes die from the experience. It is a life changing experience for many. The monks randomly choose a few pilgrims to talk to afterwards looking for any messages that have been sent by Morr.

The path continues upwards to the locked gates of the monastery.

*I look forward and I look back
And there is always the Ravens and the black
In his hand, the measure of my fate
Never too early and never too late
Common prayer to Morr*

The Monastery of the Moon's Quorum

The dwarf prison was completed in the seventh century. Deep in the cellars are the entrances to the tombs of the Khan Queens but only the descendants of the Gospodar priests now know how to find them (see 'The Secret Priesthood' below).

The monastery consists of three sections, each higher up the mountain and each joined by three underground tunnels. The walls are thick and there are no windows, although there are holes for some light and air to enter. Many of these have been partly blocked with grime and debris over the years. They are too small for anyone to use to enter the monastery.

The only entrance to the building is on the lower level and consists of a gatehouse and a plain waiting room. Beyond another set of doors is a second chamber – the Rail Room. Here can be found the first sign of the strangest aspect of the monastery.

The dwarf builders, led by famed engineer M. Ironbanks, built a series of sunken metal rails throughout the entire prison. Prisoners would be made to wear a collar attached to a metal pole connected to the rails. There were four ranks of prisoner and the higher the rank the more rails could be used. The

connection of the end of the pole ensured this. Throughout the corridor are passing points and levers that allow rail users to travel in different directions. At night prisoners were allowed out of their collars to sleep in individual cells.

The Black Monks saw the rail system as a gift from Morr. They changed the rods to chains and now different ranked brethren receive different collar types. The most basic freedom is reserved for visitors. No visitors may enter the monastery without a collar. To do so is a crime punished by death, although the monks may take their time in carrying out such a sentence. The wearing of the collars is seen as an integral part of the discipline and hardship of life in the monastery. The full Brethren wear unlocked collars – they have long developed the discipline not to want to take them off. The monks are sometimes called the Once-Hanged Men because of the red mark the collar leaves on their necks.

The Words of Alexis Sinnokov

“There is still much we don't know about the Rock of Sorrows. The stories of the peasants say that the Khan Queens were crowned here and buried here. Many believe their treasures can be found under the mountain. However it was widely believed that the mountain was cursed and protected by a fearsome guardian.

“The Dwarfs built a prison here about fifteen hundred years ago but there is no clue as to why. Dwarf Scholars I have communicated with say that there was opposition to the location of the prison and, in later years, to the regime in the prison but I have been unable to discover why. The Dwarfs occupied the site for about nine hundred years and their presence ended in some kind of massacre. Official records say that a goblin warband slaughtered the inhabitants but imperial documents of the time suggest the prisoners rose up against the guards. Either way the prison was sealed.

“The Sacred Quorum of the Moon's Pain appears as the occupant of the prison about three centuries later. It is a little confusing as there is mention that there was an organised priesthood here before then, even through the time of the Dwarfs. The Order, although initially insular, encouraged pilgrims to come to the Rock and receive wisdom from Morr at the Cave of True Sight. The pilgrims will not say but as many are here for the wisdom of the great Khan Queens of old as they are for the God of Death.

“The Monks, who refer to themselves as the Brethren, are not the most talkative folk but they do allow me to visit sometimes. An interesting experience I should tell you. The order seems to be run by two senior monks but it is the most recent incumbent, Pavel Rutkin, who I find the most intriguing. The son of a peasant from the tundra and late to the calling he is determined to bring the word of the order to the whole of Kislev and beyond. They tell me that he himself has been invited to the Tsar's own court next month. Oh, that will be a sight to see.”

Visitors are welcome in the monastery but at night must stay in the cells as virtual prisoners. Each cell has two doors. The small chamber between these is where the collar is removed each night. The locks on the two doors are operated from the corridor. The monks will remove the collars each time a visitor enters and exits a guest room.

The inside of the monastery is, as could be expected from its history, claustrophobic. The ceilings are generally over six feet tall but the stone is dark and the light holes provide little relief. Torches are present in the main corridors but the smoke hangs in the air. Those with Night Vision will be able to operate more freely.

The daily life and structure of the monastery is similar to holy orders all over the Empire. (Further background on monasteries and their inhabitants can be found in Natascha Chrobok's *Monastic Orders in the Old World*¹.)

The Secret Priesthood

Since the fall of the Khan Queens, the descendents of their Gospodar priests have kept watch on the Rock and the tombs below. After skirmishes with tomb robbers it was the priests who approached the Dwarfs to build defences for their tombs and the secrets within. Some of the priests were killed when the Bondarchuk twins first came to the Rock. The priests withdrew and in time infiltrated the order where they now keep watch. Three of the full brethren and two of the initiates are members of this secret priesthood. The priests believe that the Khan Queens will rise again to rule Kislev. Female priests of the order travel Kislev in search of signs for this day. The priests refer to themselves as the Queen Carvers as their predecessors once carved the statues that now lie smashed on the mountain.

The Monks

The following career path can be used for the Monks.

- Initiate
- Monk or Priest or Friar
- Abbot or Anointed Priest
- High Priest

Disorders

Should a monk gain a disorder it is likely to be *Desperate and Doomed* or *Delirious Saviour*.

Spells of the Quorum

The Lore in the table below are available to the Brethren. Most monks follow the Parter's Way as it reflects the balance of the Order's beliefs and others follow the Face of Morr as the more public aspect of the order. A very few follow the Face of Khaine, but many will be able to use one or more spells from this list. Petty Magic spells are usually taken from Morrian Petty Magic (ToS, pg 216).

New Spell

The following spell is taught to those in the order who have come to truly see through the illusion Morr has set to confuse the living.

Confound Foe

Casting Number: 20

Casting Time: Half-Action

Ingredients: An hour glass (+1)

Description: This illusion can be cast when the caster has suffered combat damage during the round. It can be cast even if the caster has been killed. The spell has the effect of negating all combat damage sustained during that round just as if it did not really happen – *because it didn't*.

WFRP1

Monks should use the Initiate and Cleric career path but use Illusionist spells.

WFRP3

In WFRP3 Monks use the typical Priest career progression. They can cast any blessings of Morr.

"You there! Oi! You! Who is that fellow there?"

"My... My... L.. Lord. It is the monk P.. Pavel Ru... Ru... Ru... Rutkin, Sire."

"I had heard he was heading to the court. Damned Charlatan!"

"They, say that Ru... Ru... Ru... Rutkin has eyes of glowing fire."

"You superstitious peasants look at these people with terror and fear. The Tsar will soon send him on his way."

The North Gate, City of Kislev, Summer 2511 I.C.

The Face of Morr

Deathsight (WFRP2 pg. 151)

Doppelganger (WFRP2 pg. 151)

Acceptance of Fate (WFRP2 pg. 151)

Dream Message (WFRP2 pg. 163)

Vision of Morr (WFRP2 pg. 163)

Final Words (WFRP2 pg. 151)

The Parter's Way

Shadowcloak (WFRP2. pg 163)

Glimpse Ahead (ToS. 225)

Cloak Activity (WFRP2 pg. 151)

Vision of Morr (WFRP2 pg. 163)

Shroud of Invisibility (WFRP2 pg. 151)

Illusion (WFRP2 pg. 159)

The Face of Khaine

Deathsight (WFRP2 pg. 151)

Hidden Blade (ToS pg. 222)

Sign of the Raven (WFRP2 pg. 163)

Vision of Morr (WFRP2 pg. 59)

The Icy Grip of Death (RoS2 pg. 143)

The Lord of Murder (ToS pg. 222)

A NIGHT IN THE HILLS

A SHORT SCENARIO BY ROBIN LOW

The PCs are travelling along a road skirting the edge of a range of partly forested hills and uplands. They are some distance from any town of particular note, although small farmsteads are common enough along their way. Around midday a small village comes into view, a humble collection of fields and barns and cottages, snug against the forested slopes of the hills. Sheep can be heard bleating. The road will take the PCs through the muddy middle of it. There is little sign of activity, even in the fields, but smoke rises from chimneys.

A short distance outside town the PCs have their first encounter with a villager, a small grubby child, his eyes bright and wide, his finger firmly up his nose. As soon as the PCs greet him or as soon as they get within a couple of cart-lengths of him, he bolts along the road and rushes up the steps of one of the buildings, notably different from any of the others, not quite a cottage, not quite a barn. Very quickly a man emerges holding the child's hand; he rings a toneless bell that hangs outside the building and then walks towards the PCs.

"Did the wardens send you?" asks the man holding the child's hand. This is Wilhelm the Smith, the village of Schrag's spokesman and father of Little Billum who still has his finger up his nose. "Have you come to help?"

Villagers of all ages soon come to greet them, all of them looking concerned but hopeful. As soon as it is clear that the PCs have no idea about 'wardens' and 'help', Wilhelm looks warily up to the hills and suggests going back into the meeting house.

The meeting house is quite dark, filled with rough benches and tables. It is warmed by a large central fire with a conical chimney above, looking rather like an oversized wishing well. In one corner is a large ale barrel next to a table decked with old mugs. The PCs are encouraged to sit down, with the increasing group of villagers joining them. They are not offered any ale.

If the PCs ask questions the following story emerges. The villagers, cooperatively, graze a fair number of sheep up on the hills above the forest. A couple of weeks ago two of the shepherds came back down sooner than expected, dragging behind them a horribly mauled carcass. "'Twere 'orrible!" one of them opines. "'An' 'tweren't wolves, neither!" notes the other.

There were no other carcasses, but there seemed to be fewer sheep about and those that remained were all huddled tightly together in groups and clearly terrified. The shepherds did not hang around to search further. The next day, a large party of menfolk went up to bring down the remaining sheep; they estimate that at least a dozen, a quarter or so of the flock, were missing.

A few days later, a pair of roadwardens passed through, and the villagers stopped them and reported the incident, hoping that what was clearly a monstrous beast roaming the hills would be formally noted and hunted down by the authorities. The roadwardens were travelling in the direction the PCs came from. Wilhelm and the villagers had hoped the PCs were official beast hunters sent to

solve their problem. Discovering that they are not causes varying degrees of despair and fear. There is some concern that whatever is up in the hills, now devoid of easy prey, will come down in search of food.

The villagers are not likely to ask random travellers to go monster hunting for them unless they have been given reason to suppose the PCs normally do that kind of thing. Here it is assumed the PCs offer their services, because sometimes you just have to hope that the fish goes for the worm. PCs with a social conscience will be rewarded with cheers, slaps on the back and a mug of ale. Just the one, mind.

Further Questions

The villagers inform them that no wolves have been seen in the area for a good number of years. Every now and then someone reckons they saw a Goblin, but that is usually dismissed as the ale talking.

The PCs might also ask about the area the carcass was found, and what it is like up on the hills. They are told that once you have walked up through the forest, it opens up into scrubby grass, with a few trees and rocky outcroppings round and about. The sheep mostly graze around some old ruins of what is referred to as the watchtower, where they can shelter in poor weather. The carcass was found close by. Nobody knows the origins of the building.

If the PCs want to see the carcass that was brought back to the village, they are told it was buried. If they insist, it can be easily dug up again. Examination proves difficult given a couple of weeks of decay, blood congealed in the wool, and a lot of soil. With a little effort, though, the main injuries can be revealed as deep puncture wounds in the middle of the back; not quite the horrific mauling described, but still the result of a creature with rather large teeth and claws. A more thorough examination reveals that all the animal's legs are broken, as are other bones. Allow the players a chance to speculate for themselves that the broken bones are indicative of a long fall or a drop.

Path to the Hills

The path from the village up to the hillside where the sheep graze winds its way through fairly dense woodland. The gradient is a leisurely one, but it takes about three hours for the PCs to emerge (on horseback, it probably takes longer given the narrowness of the path). The journey can be uneventful, but can be enlivened by the fact that Little Billum has decided to follow them up. Billum is quite stealthy and PCs are unlikely to become aware of him until he emerges from the woods on the hillside around the same time they do. His presence is simply an additional complication for the PCs as he presents a very tempting target for the beast.

If you wish to complicate the journey through the woods, about an hour from their eventual destination the PCs hear the sudden cry of a small child. Little Billum has been pounced on and kidnapped by a small tribe of Snotlings, who carry him off to their home in

the great hollow trunk and twisted branches of a very large, dead oak tree. While the dozen or more Snotlings are no great threat to the experienced PCs, they can easily kill Billum. However, they can (just about) understand and speak Reikspiel, and can be negotiated with. They will exchange Billum for a sizable quantity of food, or suggest that the PCs kill a local wild boar that has been harassing them. They claim no knowledge of the sheep attacks, but will be quite interested in knowing about any dangerous monsters. Anyone who suggests and succeeds in persuading the Snotlings to join them in the hunt for the beast almost certainly deserves a sizable XP bonus!

In the Hills

The grassy hillside above the forest is fairly open, although it is studded with rocky outcrops of various sizes and small groups of tough gnarled shrubs and bushes. This landscape is intended to enable a degree of cat-and-mouse games between the PCs and the beast come nightfall.

Searching the vicinity of the watchtower yields nothing other than sheep droppings, snagged wool and a patch of what is very likely dried blood on a rocky outcrop. GMs who want to drop a hint can allow the discovery of a few footprints, suggestive of a giant cat-like creature, that go a short way before suddenly vanishing altogether. Experienced trackers and hunters might notice that the beast goes on all fours then seemingly rears-up on its hind legs (the prints are deeper) before the prints vanish.

The Ruined Watchtower

What the villagers call the watchtower is not much more than three high but crumbling stone-and-mortar walls; the fourth wall is a stony ridge in the ground for half its length, with what is remaining being much lower than the other walls, barely above a man's head. The area within is wide open to the elements, the ground uneven and grown over with leafy weeds. Going up one wall are crumbling stone stairs, indicating that there was once an upper floor, though whether that floor would have been a room or a the roof is hard to say. The steps go high enough to give a good view of the surrounding landscape, but it is unclear as to this structure's original purpose.

The ruins provide a convenient base for the PCs' explorations, although little in the way of protection or cover, save perhaps against the prevailing wind. Cunning players might find a way to turn the ruins into a trap (perhaps involving a net that the villagers would help them make). Its only other function is to provide a potential hook for future adventures (if the PCs dig a fire-pit in the ruins, perhaps they unearth a heavy stone slab with a rusty ring in the centre...).

First Encounter

The beast that stalks the hills will, most likely, be first encountered at night, well after the sun has gone down. However, the sky is filled with countless stars and at least half a moon to provide pale light and accompanying shadows. Regardless of the heat of the day, the air cools quickly and there is a light breeze. There is just enough cloud to occasionally cross the moon when the GM needs to make it a little harder for the PCs to see what's going on.

Anyone who is awake or keeping guard should get some sort of awareness or perception roll. They might hear the dull, slow *whump*

of heavy wings or momentarily notice stars or even the moon being blotted out as something flies across the sky: it is up to the GM to decide how he wants to announce the beast's presence, but failing to spot the beast's presence leads to an attempted attack on the most isolated individual of the group.

The beast is well aware of the PCs, especially if they have lit a campfire, but it is wary of them. Nevertheless it is actively seeking prey, and once it lands it starts hunting them. If the PCs have not already taken or sent him back to the village, Little Billum is a favoured target because of his small size.

Unbeknownst to the PCs at this stage, the beast of the hills is a Manticore, specifically a female (it lacks a lion's mane, but its face is that of a strikingly leonine human woman). Once on the ground, the Manticore will hunt like a big cat and will not take flight again unless it starts to lose a fight or it has some prey to carry off. The landscape of the hillside, with its rocky outcropping and bushes, and the shadows cast by the moonlight allow the Manticore a certain freedom to stalk its prey. It has things to hide behind, and by hunching down still and silent it might be mistaken for part of the landscape.

As previously suggested, this sequence should be treated as a game of cat-and-mouse. The Manticore is looking for easy prey, not a full-on fight to the death. If it can grab Little Billum it will take flight at once; any PCs who put themselves at risk to stop Billum being snatched or who somehow cause the Manticore to drop Billum before it flies too high should get an XP bonus, as they will have undoubtedly saved his life.

Back to Its Lair

Whether because it is injured or because it has snatched some prey (Billum, Snotlings or a perhaps a Halfling PC) the Manticore will eventually take to the sky. When this happens the PCs should be given a very clear idea of the direction it is heading. At this point, it is a matter of following it.

If the PCs set-off immediately then it is close to dawn and deeper into the hills by the time they spot a small copse of windswept trees and bushes ahead. Whether they go cautiously or not, they soon discover that the trees ring a fairly deep, broad and rocky-sided pit. The bottom is strewn with rocks and weeds, and there is an obvious cave entrance in the side. The cave is not that deep, but the PCs cannot know that unless they enter it.

If it carried off some Snotlings, then they are as good as dead. If the Manticore carried off Little Billum, then he is *almost certainly* dead, unless that level of realism is unappealing; injured and in need of swift treatment can then be the order of the day; a happier possibility is suggested below. If a PC has been carried off, then his player and the GM may need to run a short private sequence that gives the PC a chance to make a break for it at the bottom of the pit and hide himself in a suitable crack in the rocks, just out of reach of claws and stinger.

The PCs might kill the Manticore or, if they are clever and lucky, even capture it. However, the Manticore will not attempt to flee at any point for reasons that become clear when the PCs enter the cave at the bottom of the hole. Inside, there are three little Manticore kittens in a nest of bloody wool, surrounded by sheep bones, and possibly those of Little Billum if you have decided to be harsh. If you've decided to be gentler, Little Billum has some new pets to play with.

The Silent Kindred

A Defenders of the Forest Expansion by Steven Lewis

While Defenders of the Forest focuses primarily upon the Wood Elves of Athel Loren and the Laurelorn Forest, it also introduces the concept of Hinterglades as a way to showcase the smaller settlements scattered throughout the forests of the Old World. This allows us to think outside the box and make the Elves of each Hinterglade unique to their setting and experiences, instead of following the traditional views of Wood Elves. Hinterglades are also designed to encourage GMs to develop their own communities, using the layout as a template to give a quick snap-shot of a unique settlement without becoming bogged down in detail.

Asrai Terminology

The Hinterglade contains several terms that are unique to the Wood Elves. The following is a brief description of the key terms used within Asrai culture.

- **Kinband:** A community of Wood Elves that have pledged loyalty to an Elven Lord.
- **Kindred:** The collective term used to describe Wood Elves that share a common belief or way of life. However, each Kindred is split into several factions, more often than not formed through rivalry between Kinbands. For example the Kindred of the Singing Blade and the Kindred of the Dancing Spear are both affiliated to the Wardancer Kindred, but are pledged to different Kinbands within the Silent Kindred (see Korannir Shadowblade).
- **Kithbands:** Kithbands are generally considered to be small groups of Elves from the same Kindred, such as a group of Kithband Warriors scouting the forest for Beastmen or a Troupe of Wardancers. However, sometimes a Kithband can be formed that draws from different Kindreds in order to fulfill a specific need for a Kinband (akin to a party of PCs).
- **Shadow Walk:** The silver paths that exist between worlds is called the Shadow Walk. Magister Druids believe these hidden paths are linked to the leylines that form a world grid, though how the Asrai access these paths is beyond the skill of the Magisters.

Hinterglade #4: The Silent Kindred

The Silent Kindred, known as the Cynathain in Eltharin, are descendants of a High Elf settlement that once thrived as a trading colony in the distant past. In the depths of the Altern Forest, on the edge of the Mootland, the Elves fight an ongoing war against the Undead. The Halflings of the Moot view the forest as cursed and believe it to be haunted by "spirits of the Old Ways", with no knowledge of the Elves within that defend their dwellings beyond fairy tales and old traditions. GMs could possibly introduce small Kithbands of Elves from the Silent Kindred to PCs who are in need of help fighting against an Undead menace.

History and Origins

Several millennia ago the Elves and Dwarfs formed an alliance and traded together, exchanging goods and knowledge. In this time a small High Elf settlement called Ghyrothonai or Green Serpent of the Mountains in Elvish, was founded. Located upon the banks of the River Aver near to modern day Sauerapfel (SH pg. 62) it allowed the Elves to corner the trading rights with the Dwarfs of Zhufbar along the mountain road and those of Karak Varn further upstream the Blue Reach.

When the Dwarf throngs marched against the Elves during the War of the Beard the Elves of Ghyrothonai were forced to hide in the forest that guarded the approach of the Dwarfs from Zhufbar. There the Elves, so far from the support of other colonies, witnessed from amongst the trees the destruction of their homes. Although some attempted to reach kin in the colonies on the coastline, none were heard from again and those that remained turned to a simpler way of living.

In seclusion the Elves became aware of the spirits of the forest and were eventually visited by a Spellweaver of Athel Loren, travelling through the Shadow Walk (DotF pg. 22) to a mysterious cavern in the depths of the forest. But in 2010 IC the War of the Vampire Counts erupted across the lands of the Empire as the Undead menace spilled from Sylvania. The taint of the vampires corrupted the leyline that led to

Athel Loren and many of the Kindred fell to the Undead, only to be raised as one of them. The last four hundred years have seen the Kindred's numbers decline, as their continued fight to survive takes its toll.

Culture and Customs

The Wood Elves of the Silent Kindred are forlorn and full of melancholy. So many of their number are upon the path of vengeance in retaliation against the Undead. Although the vampire threat was several centuries ago, the many atrocities against their kin still reverberate vividly. Since those times the Elves have been unable to leave their dead to return to the forest naturally. They fear the prospect of having to fight risen kin and so use funeral pyres to burn the deceased to ash. It is customary for the Kithbands who patrol the forest for signs of the Undead to paint their faces in a parody of their foe. In an act of remembrance the face paint used is created from the ashes of deceased kin members.

Although disconnection from Athel Loren occurred only a short time ago in Elf terms, the intense presence of Shyish has accelerated their conversion to a more ancestral based worship. They would not appreciate the comparison, but

the Silent Kindred venerate their ancestors in much the same way as the Dwarfs.

Although their Elven deities are still of importance they now place significant emphasis on acts to respect, honour and look after their ancestors. The taint of the Undead continues to encroach, with the foul blood spilled upon the forest floor corrupting the roots of the trees. As such the Elves are more fearful of Treemen, Dryads and Treekin, those that could once be counted as friends. In an attempt to restore the trees to health the Wood Elves sacrifice those living that trespass, in the belief that untainted blood will nurture the natural balance of the forest. It is thought by the Wood Elves of Athel Loren that this belief stems from the influence of Winter Dryads (DotF pg. 70) or the misguided practices of the followers of the Old Faith. The Spellsingers that perform the blood rites are infused with Shyish, the Purple Wind of Magic associated with death, gaining the Amethyst Arcane Mark Pallor (RoS2 pg. 176). This worries some as it suggests the Elves are upon the same dark path as the Druchii of Naggaroth, as the Khainites of the Dark Elves display similar traits. However, Spellweaver Stormcrow whom leads the blood-rites, is feared amongst the Kindred as

it is believed she is able to direct the Winter Dryads against those that openly speak against the spilling of blood.

Friends and Foes

Although the Undead threat is diminished its presence continues to be felt, with many of the spirits of the forest drawn to the nutrients of the blood. Corruption is a continued problem for the Wood Elves, as cleansing the forest of Ghouls continues to spill tainted blood. It is this corruption of the spirits of the forest that led to the Shadow Walk to Athel Loren being inaccessible, as now a Naiad, a nature spirit with a taste for blood, languishes in the pool that is the elemental fulcrum.

Only the Halfings of the Moot could be viewed as allies, but very few are brave enough to enter the forest as they view it as haunted and cursed. However, the offerings they make to the forest, in the form of food parcels, are greatly appreciated in the depths of winter.

Player Characters

A number of individual Elves can be found outside of the forest, as survivors of Kithbands disbanded in disgrace for the failure to protect the forest or kin. While others may be the sole survivor of a



Kithband destroyed while hunting an Undead creature. Ghoststriders scour the lands outside of the forest in search of the Vampires that unleashed the menace of the Undead upon their woodland home. Such individuals will stop at nothing to catch their prey, willing even to manipulate others into the role of bait or diversion. Spellcasters could also be travelling to Athel Loren by foot, as the corrupted leyline cannot be used to access the Shadow Walk (DotF pg. 22).

With an innate sense of the Winds of Magic other Elves are able to sometimes sense a subtle corruption of the natural psyche in a Wood Elf PC from the Silent Kindred. While this is viewed with caution by the Asrai community, High Elves would view them as tainted and could possibly react with aggression, while Dark Elves may see a kindred spirit.

Kindreds

Characters from the Silent Kindred may belong to one of the following Kindreds: Alter, Eternal, Scout, Spellinger, Warrior, Waywatcher, or Vengeance.

Magic

Spellingers of the Silent Kindred may learn the Prophet or Guardian schools from the Lore of the Forest. Unable to travel the corrupted leyline to Athel Loren and receive tutelage from one of Ariel's Spellweavers, the Lore of Spirits (OWB pg. 81) is learnt in place of the Lore of Athel Loren.

Gazetteer: Sith Elthair

The Silent Kindred of Sith Elthair is located in the Altern Forest in the Mootland (SH pg. 59). This could be modified by situating the Kindred in the Forest of Shadows and replacing the Undead threat with Giant Spiders, Beastmen, Night Goblins, or Chaos Warbands. The warpaint worn by the Elves should be changed to reflect the nemesis.

1. White Holly Grove

The Kindred of Elthair numbers at around 150 Elves, with the normal laughter of the Wood Elves replaced by the sound of martial practice. The original settlement of the Elves was razed to the ground by the Vampire Counts; the current dwellings are make-shift shelters as the Elves do not have the heart to invest time into the creation of a permanent home. The dwellings are often decorated with holly, for its association with rest and death. Many also contain spears, made from the holly tree, hidden within their construction so that a weapon is always at hand.

The approach to the settlement is through the perilous Mawn Pools, which gives the Elves a greater level of defence.

Though the area is dangerous, the Elves have marked a path that weaves through the pools. These woodland signs can be spotted upon a successful Challenging (-10) Secret Signs (Ranger) Skill Test.

2. The Mawn Pools

The first Mawn Pool was created many centuries ago when a section of the cave complex below collapsed. Over the years the sink hole filled with water creating a deep, steep sided pool that proved deadly to anything that had the misfortune to fall into it. Over the years more sections of the cave collapsed creating a network of deathly, still pools.

Even before the corruption of the Vampire Counts the Mawn Pools attracted Shyish due to the number of creatures that met an unfortunate end within them. The Elves found this concentration of Shyish allowed the Mawn Pools to be used as mirrors that reflected events past, present and future. Unfortunately, numerous Undead from the armies of the Vampire Counts have fallen into these mystical pools corrupting them entirely.

Instead of showing true images through time they now prey on the insecurities of those who wander close, showing images of ones own death and the death of loved ones. It requires a successful Challenging (-10) Willpower Test to pass the Mawn Pools as a traveller weaves their way through the maze of water. Failure results in the traveller having to make a successful Hard (-20) Agility Test to avoid the grasping hands of the Undead trapped within a pool without stumbling into an adjacent pool. Those held by the Undead will drown (WFRP2 pg. 136) unless a successful Strength Test is made at the end of minute in an attempt to crawl out of a pool.

3. Quyl-Ish-Arh

The cave complex of Quyl-Ish-Arh reaches far below the Mawn Pools. Over countless years water from the pools above has dripped through the earth and rocks, forming dangerous stalactites and stalagmites which, if touched, have the same effects as the Limbwithier Spell (RoS pg. 143). Within the deepest section of the caves water collects within a beautiful pool that constantly ripples from the dripping water. The deep pool is itself an Elemental Fulcrum, used to access the Shadow Walk, and the lair of a bloodthirsty Naiad. The Elves have been unsuccessful in defeating the Naiad and are contemplating making tributes of blood in order to placate the bloodlust of the nature spirit.

4. Ashen Glade

Although the Elves still respect the forest, the vegetation

around the Ashen Glade appears to pull away from the area, as fire is used to consume the dead of the Silent Kindred. Within the trees surrounding the Glade the Wood Elves suspend carvings made from the Holly tree to ward off the dead. In the centre of the clearing is a slight hollow, so that a pyre will collapse in upon itself, allowing the Elves to collect the ash of the deceased for the ritual face painting.

Important NPCs

The following NPCs of the Silent Kindred could be encountered within the Altern Forest.

Princess Aenoeth

The sole remaining Elf of Highborn heritage is Princess Aenoeth. However, she has not been seen by Elves around Sith Elthair since the death of her father. The Elves of Sith Elthair believe that her grief has driven her to seek solitude in the forest where she can mourn his passing in her own way. Some, though, suspect that she may have met her fate within the forest, as no trace of her can be found.

In truth the Princess is in hiding. She was a Handmaiden of Isha, under the guidance the Kindred's spiritual leader. However, upon the death of her father and brothers the role of leader would have passed to her, as the next Highborn Elf of the bloodline. Seeing a chance to gain power the Spellweaver of the Kindred attempted to kill Aenoeth. PCs may encounter the Princess in several ways; she may come to their aid or seek help in regaining her rightful position within the Kindred, or they could be sent to discover her location by the Spellweaver, either as part of the coup or as pawns leading the Spellweaver's minions to her location.

Lanodrian Stormcrow

Stormcrow is the most skilled Spellweaver of the Kindred and its spiritual leader. She and her Spellsingers have led the Elves of Sith Elthair upon a dark path in their attempts to cleanse the forest of the Undead taint. Having witnessed Druids in the past conducting blood rites as part of their normal worship, Stormcrow honestly believed that sacrificing "clean" intruders would purify the forest, washing away the foulness of the Undead blood continually being spilt upon the earth. However, such power over the life and death of others has corrupted Stormcrow, driving her to seek greater power by any means.

Lanodrian Stormcrow appears to be a forthright female, driven by a desire to cleanse the forest and eradicate the Undead threat. If approached by the PCs to assist them in defeating an Undead foe she willingly pledges her assistance, for a price. Stormcrow is shrewd and devious,

using others wherever possible to sate her lust for power. Stormcrow may try to use the PCs in her plan to kill Princess Aenoeth, but a GM may also choose to use her to send the PCs on an errand.

Moramain Darkmoon

A gifted young Treesinger, Darkmoon has devoted his life to the furtherment of his knowledge and understanding. As such he is one of the few within Sith Elthair who sees the darkness surrounding the blood rites being performed by Lanodrian Stormcrow and her Spellsingers, though he dares not voice his concerns. He understands the theory behind Stormcrow's actions but he can also see the consequences and has witnessed first hand the taint it is leaving on the Spellsingers. Having tentatively raised some concerns with one the Spellsingers Handmaidens he met swift reprisal from Stormcrow for his lack of faith. This has left Darkmoon distrustful of all, even those within his own Kithband.

Darkmoon was always a stern faced Elf, but since Stormcrow's punishment he never smiles and has a constant air of sadness about him. If approached by the PCs they may initially mistake him for a Human. Stormcrow's penalty for distrusting her methods was to mutilate his ears, they now look more human than elf. He will be wary and appear distant to anyone trying to talk to him, but if the PCs are able to convince him they can be trusted they gain a strong ally in any action against the Undead or Stormcrow.

Koranmir Shadowblade

One of the most skilled swordsmen within Sith Elthair's troupes of Wardancers. Shadowblade lives for the thrill of the fight and revels in the grace with which the Wardancers are able to take down their foes. Orphaned years ago by an Undead hordes that swept through the forest, Shadowblade became the youngest to ever pass the trials and be accepted into the Kindred of the Dancing Spear. Ever since, he has spent every waking moment practicing his art.

Shadowblade is slightly more unhinged than most Wardancers after witnessing his parents slaughtered. He is bent upon the total destruction of all Undead and any who threaten those he holds dear. If he is not with the troupe, he can be encountered walking the paths of the forest. Although he will assist the PCs in any task that will see him some action, his primary interest is finding Princess Aenoeth. Shadowblade had been lucky enough, being a Lowborn, to befriend the Princess when they were children and has great affection for her. Unlike others, he does not believe she perished within the forest and searches whenever possible for a trace of her whereabouts.

THE QUICKENING

A SHORT STORY BY TOBY PILLING

Through the steam, the wooden bowl appeared like a votive offering proffered by hands as sweat-soaked as his own. He accepted it and raised it to his lips, feeling, rather than seeing, the eyes of his companions upon him. The alcohol was almost raw, scouring his throat as he swallowed. He breathed in sharply, though the humid air provided no succour. Slowly, he passed the bowl across to their master, who refilled it from an earthenware pot. The ritual progressed.

They had fasted all day, only eating the rubbery mushrooms their master had prepared at dusk, just before they had shed their clothes and entered the sweat lodge. Luther knew little of the sequence of the Quickening, the initiation rites undergone by followers of Taal. But the whispered conversations he had overheard suggested that this night would be the final one.

There were three other young men in the Lodge; all sons of outdoorsmen, like himself. There had been two others, but Rickard had broken a leg in his fall from a tree and a boar had gored Mackzek. Both had been unable to continue.

Luther's perception seemed to be altering slightly – instead of the wooden lodge it seemed as if they all sat within an oppressively hot, dark, misty cave. He'd been warned by his father though: "You shall see things. Visions. Be not scared. By the end you shall be no longer a youth; but a man." That was all the advice he had garnered from his tight-lipped sire, but he paid heed to it now and maintained his composure.

It was their master who broke the silence eventually, words rumbling forth from his hirsute, craggy countenance.

"We are all servants of Taal. We came from the forests, wild and free, and tonight we shall return there. All that is wild is our ally," he uttered, but then his face twisted somewhat and he added, "Save Chaos."

Their master had an almost archaic mode of speech that Luther had heard the others mock privately before now. All were solemn at the moment though, exchanging guarded looks as they pondered the words. A thought intruded upon Luther's mind, and he advanced a question, surprising himself. "What of the Elves, master? Are those who dwell within the Laurelorn our allies too?"

Dark eyes turned towards him, along with those of his fellows. Luther had indeed surprised himself. He wondered whether it was the alcohol that had emboldened him so.

Their master always paused before answering any query, as if his words were so valuable their expenditure must be rationed.

"I shall tell you a tale", he began, eventually, "and after that you may consider whether they be allies or no." Luther's eyes widened; their master was a man of few words, so this must be important indeed.

"Though I cannot vouch that what I relate is true, for I did not see it with my own eyes, the tale was told me by one of those we call the Horned Hunters." Luther had heard of the fanatically brave defenders of the forests, sacred warriors of Taal who eschewed civilisation. "I have no reason to doubt his word," he finished.

"Long had he followed the spoor of that abomination which he sought, one of the Waldteufel. The creature had hooves and antlers and brayed like an elk; yet it could stand and walk upon its hind legs as would a man, and could bear weapons and arms also. But whether it was a beast that dreamed it was a man, or an accursed turnskin of his own kind, to him mattered not. Such warped fiends deserved to die, and this one was bleeding steadily from the shaft he had earlier loosed. Alas! That he had not felled the beast with one true strike. Yet if he had, he would not have pursued it, and this tale would then be a short one.

"Rugged and hardy are the Waldteufel, and though sorely wounded, this one sped deeper into the darkening forest – westward, ever westward – as if it raced the setting sun itself! Yet the Horned Hunters too are not like ordinary men; no weaklings are they. Bound for bound, leap for leap, he matched it; and though the trees about him in the lengthening shadows became taller, their silver bark beginning to gleam as the moon waxed, he noticed it not in the thrill of the chase. For had he pondered the changes about him (and his kind are not renowned for pondering, it is true), he would have known he was entering the Laurelorn, and perhaps, just perhaps, his ardour for the hunt would have lessened.

"Soon the wan glow of the stars, filtering through mighty boughs, was all the light that might guide him. His pace lessened as he must study the tracks, and he grew ever more wrathful at the thought that his prey might elude him. All at once though he started, for out of the gloom ahead arose a bellowing cry; surely it issued from no human

mouth! Grinning with bloodlust he padded on, splashing through a brook whose iciness seemed to refresh him on the instant. Here, of course, was his second warning; for the enchantments that flow through those waters that border the Elven realm are well known. Yet even now in his sober state he heeded it not, for his mind was still affixed on the nearness of his foe.

“And so it was that he came upon a scene, the like of which no man had yet seen – or at least, seen and survived to tell the tale.

“For there opened up before him a glade, and within it, at the foot of an ancient, withered and gnarled tree, lay the corpse of the beast he had followed. Its foam-flecked lips would taste man-flesh no longer!

“About the still body, bathed in an emerald glow, were many tall, slender beings, both beautiful and terrible to behold; he recognised them instantly as Elves. And the source of that glow, beheld by his disbelieving eyes, was a city, seemingly crafted of tall and stately towers of green glass that did shimmer and sparkle on a nearby round hill.

“Now I know there are those who might now begin to doubt the truth of this tale; mayhap even start to think it naught but fancy. But had you looked into the teller’s haunted eyes as I have, you would seek no further proof.

“The Elves were clustered about a large, egg shaped device, also green and glass-like, though it seemed mechanical also; for various metallic appendages, coiled and sinuous, issued from it like ribbons and streamers. As he wondered at the provenance of the artefact, a rider on a milk-white horse burst into the glade. The Elf quickly dismounted from his majestic steed, whose flanks steamed with sweat that marked the speed at which it had been ridden.

“Make haste!” bade the Elf, as he hurried to his fellows. “By dawn I must return that which I have taken, lest the loss be noted’. The man noticed then that the Elf indeed bore a small bundle, bound in cloth, which he carefully placed within the egg. And as the coverings fell away there arose a squalling cry, for revealed within was a human babe!

“A war was fought within the man that watched then, between fear and honour. And it was fear that won, alas. For though he saved his own life by not acting then to save that of the child, he lost something more dear than existence. A wretched, broken man he is now, that once brave defender of the wild. But he had his choices, and he made one.

“Be that as it may, he looked on, craven, as the Elves plotted the child’s doom. An Elven female whom he judged one of their leaders then spoke, loud and clear as if reciting some well-remembered verse. And though her face was very fair, her words were not:

“Long ago did we make our bargain with those Lords of the Forest who chafed at our stewardship and resented our presence. To them we promised that dream they hold most dear: to walk, breathe, live and love, as do we. In return for their protection we could make such a dream reality; and so

we have, in compliance with that promise, with every hundred years that pass.’

“While she thus extolled the hideous deeds of her people, other Elves were affixing the ropes of intricate metalwork to the tree in whose shadow they stood, connecting the device in which the child still bawled, to the bark-clad ancient.

“Still fearful but also ignorant of the grievous import of that he watched, he gazed on as the Elven maid commanded ‘So from our deeds let our sworn oaths be renewed. Draugelin, accept your prize!’ and with a flourish of her hand, the Egg began to pulse and quiver, as if it were alive itself.

“It was then that our watcher did look about him in expectation, for the leaves and boughs about him shivered as if some wind had bent them, though no breeze stirred his hair. But twisted also was his mind, for what he saw next did so shock him that he cracked, as can even the mightiest trunk in a tempest. For he noticed that the ancient, moss clad tree had begun to writhe itself, and a crooked opening yawned within it that had moments before seemed but an empty bole. Then as realisation struck him as a bolt that the tree itself was alive and sentient, and must be this Draugelin, there issued from the creaking maw a cry: the eternally mournful cry of an infant, bereft and hopeless. And at that moment the babe hushed, opened its eyes and smiled. And it was a smile that never was nor ever should be seen on the face of a child, for it was one of ancient, knowing malevolence.

“The man fled then, as the Elves cried out in exultation. I met him some time after that. Gaunt, savage and half-starved: he was a creature of instinct, driven only by the urge to survive. I had taken him in, pitying the poor fellow, and it was only after a long period that he began to mutter the odd word, let alone apprise me of the tale I have now told you. The morning after that telling (following a night in which my dreams were haunted) he was gone, and I never saw hide nor hair of him again. But he had finished his tale with one message that I now pass onto you: ‘Ware the trickery of Elves.’

“I have pondered his warning long, and now realise its truth. For these Lords of the Forest, evil as they may be and with a cunning wrought of centuries, were as much victims of the Elves as we men. For whilst the bargain they struck may indeed grant them life as an Elf might find it, such a glimpse would be but fleeting in a mortal vessel. After a century, any body would decay and die, offering no warning to its fellows that their taste of a full life would be but the merest sip, compared to the long draughts the Elves may linger over.

“In answer to your question then, I advise you thus: whether Elves appear as allies or enemies, they will ever deceive. Trust them not.”

Silence reigned. Steam suddenly hissed as their Master poured water on a hot stone. The haze of vapour obscured every face, for which Luther was thankful, for his own was clouded with disquiet.

Troubled, he waited for the Quickening to begin.

Q



QUEEN OF HEARTS

A

TALES
of the
FALLEN
COUNTESS



A scenario by
Alexander J
Bateman

TALES
of the
FALLEN
COUNTESS



A scenario by
Alexander J
Bateman

TALES
of the
FALLEN
COUNTESS



A scenario by
Alexander J
Bateman

The focus of this scenario is social interaction, with some research and investigation, although options for plenty of combat are available. The middle segment of the adventure is made up of a series of encounters that can be progressed through in a non-linear way, as your PCs explore the city of Marienburg in a race to repel a dire threat from Marienburg's past.

Although it is not required, this scenario can be enhanced by use of material that has been developed for Marienburg. In particular the first chapter of *The Thousand Thrones* and the out of print *Marienburg: Sold Down the River*.

This scenario provides an ideal introduction to *The Thousand Thrones* campaign, or could be used within the *Paths of the Damned* or *The Enemy Within* campaign during any part of a scenario where the PCs are travelling upon the River Reik.

Plot Overview

Seventy years ago the Bright Wizard Barda von Micklestein launched a Gargoyle invasion onto Marienburg. This was stopped by Father Harm Roterodamus a priest of ●lovald. No-one knew of the Priest's brave victory which cost him his life. Even if they had done, his devotion to the outlawed river god would likely have been hidden by the Cult of Manann.

Decades later and miles to the South, the famous artist van Klomp painted the Elector of Nuln Countess Emmanuelle von Liebwitz. The painting revealed rather more of the Countess than was deemed proper and it was ordered destroyed. It was placed into the hands of Guard Captain who owed hundreds of Crowns in gambling debts and he used the painting to pay these off shortly before he was knifed to death in an alleyway.

The painting, now known as "The Fallen Countess" made its way to Marienburg where it was obtained by Paulus van Uylenburgh, a merchant and patron to the arts. Terrified by a visit from the Witch-hunters, he hid the painting in a hidden compartment of a statue of himself at his gallery. He died of syphilis shortly afterwards and the painting was lost.

The secret compartment in the statue was found by the keen eyes of the Halfling Jasin Biermatz who often set up his cards games near the statue. Biermatz took the painting to the artist Meert Nieuwendijk and paid him to copy the painting onto a playing card that Biermatz would use in his card games.

Nieuwendijk meanwhile painted a reproduction of the painting and sold it to Hector Diewald, an Imperial Merchant. Diewald later presented the painting to a select few friends at his Altdorf home. Unfortunately for Diewald one informed the authorities and the painting was seized. Diewald was arrested and died of a heart attack before being able to fully explain where he purchased the painting.

News that the painting has recently emerged become known to three interested parties who will all meet the PCs in the coming days. They are local Watch Lieutenant Jan Willem van Grijpstra, Bretonnian agent Contessa l'Breuil and Nuln agent and the Grey Wizard von Schwarznase.

The Contessa and von Schwarznase arrive in the city at around the same time as the PCs are visiting Marienburg on a trading trip where they find themselves trapped by the city's labyrinthine excise inspection system. Meanwhile, Lieutenant Jan Willem van Grijpstra approaches the PCs for impromptu employment with the local watch.

Van Grijpstra asks them to escort Sister Trinette, a Shallyan Nun, around the academic institutions of the city as she hunts down an abandoned temple on Hooykaas Wharf in Rijkspoort which is currently occupied by hostile slavers. However, van Grijpstra is aware that Sister Trinette is really the Bretonnian agent l'Breuil.

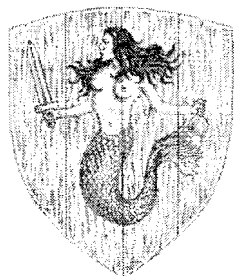
After this van Grijpstra will ask them to arrest the troublesome Halfling Jasin Biermatz. Whether they succeed or fail during this investigation, which may take them to several locations within Marienburg, they will come across the secret of how to recover the valuable painting, The Fallen Countess, which could make them very rich. However, once they retrieve the painting, the various factions try to claim it. Von Schwarznase, caring little for Marienburg and obsessed by obtaining the painting, unleashes a Daemonic Gargoyle invasion of the city.

Made aware that the invasion is linked to the painting, the PCs have an opportunity to stop the Gargoyle attack started by von Schwarznase. Against the background of the struggle for the painting they must race around the city tracing the events of the first Gargoyle invasion started by the Barda von Micklestein.

The PCs' investigations will lead them to the final resting place of Father Roterodamus in Barda von Micklestein's secret laboratory. This lies beneath Barda von Micklestein's old home, now a shop. They must enter the sewers to find the laboratory and the means to attempt to end the Gargoyle menace, while trying to retain the painting.

INTRODUCTION MESSING ABOUT ON THE RIVER

This scenario starts with the PCs arriving in Marienburg by boat. The reasons for this can be as simple or as complex as you wish, but the obvious one is someone offering them work transporting a cargo down the Reik. If the PCs already have a boat this should be easy to facilitate. If not, simply have a local representative of House Bacher offer them a rather lucrative



job crewing a boat at the next riverside town or city they visit.

The boat offered will be a small cog, and the cargo 10,000 encumbrance worth of buckwheat flour stored in 50 heavy sacks. (In total, this cargo is typically worth 250 Guilders, not that the PCs should be attempting to sell it!) The contract will state that the PCs are responsible for the safe transport of goods to the House Bacher docks in the Rijkspoort district of Marienburg. As with most of these contracts, to be honoured, the PCs must not only take the flour safe and unspoiled to Marienburg, but also successfully traverse through Marienburg customs with no issues.

Getting Impounded

Arriving at Marienburg through the impressive Strompoort Gate, the PCs will be forced over to the docks by a River Watch patrol boat as no boat may enter the Marienburg Harbour without a member of the Brotherhood of Seamen and Pilots guiding them.

If the PCs disregard the River Watch, after a bit of being yelled at and threatened, you have a boat-to-boat combat to run. The River Watch Boat has Move 4, TB 10 and 100 wounds, and the 10 crewmen on board are all armed with Halberds and Blunderbusses. Even if the PCs win they will then be assumed to be saboteurs, assassins or possibly even some form of invading military force.

If the PCs do pull over, Rykaard Weijden of the Marienburg Revenue Service will give their boat a thorough search. Any contraband not carefully hidden will be confiscated, and an on the spot fine levied of half its value. The Exciseman will probably be suspicious of the PCs, especially if they are armed to the teeth, and will question them at length about why they are visiting the city. Finally Weijden will explain that under Marienburg Law the boat will be impounded for several days while a more thorough search of it takes place and the paperwork brought up to date. He says the PCs should return in a week's time to check upon the progress of their application for the barge to enter the port. Rykaard cannot be bribed and will make a note of anyone offering him one. He prides himself upon being the incorruptible face of the Marienburg Revenue Service.

The PCs have little choice but to kick back their heels for a while and the city is a large port with much to offer.

Additional Encounter: A visit to House Bacher

Standing in the Guilderveld district of the city, the Bacher building is an ostentatious stone structure surmounted by a large tower that rises out of the high peaked roofs that crown it. It stands five storeys high and draped from all the windowsills are long red banners sporting the Bacher Grasshopper symbol, clearly marking the building as the headquarters of the largest grain and baked products merchants in the Old World. Unlike many other places in Marienburg, there are no impromptu stalls outside as under the Guilderveld ward law, no pedlars or the like may operate until every licensed shop in the ward has closed, effectively banishing them to other districts.

Still House Bacher is a hive of activity, with important merchants and burgomasters visiting throughout the day. Those who attempt to gain entrance to the building who do not look the part, (i.e. at least Good Craftsmanship clothing and being bathed within at least the last week), will be politely, and then not so politely, asked to leave.

Assuming that the PCs gain entry their next task will be to stand around awaiting an appointment with a minor clerk, who will thank them for the information, and inform them that they should hand the cargo over as soon as the boat is no longer impounded. While the delay is routine, he is authorised to offer a small bonus (say 15 Guilders) to agents who manage to speed up the process, along with the offer of far more lucrative contracts in future for competent operatives. Overall the clerk is unconcerned about what is, after all, a routine delay and will get rid of the PCs as fast as he possibly can. House Bacher will not agree to pay for the goods under any circumstances until the grain is safely passed through customs and loaded onto one of the House Bacher wharfs. They simply do not want to risk dealing with a barge that may contain stolen goods, ruinous artefacts or rodents-of-unusual-size.

CHAPTER ONE APPROACHED FOR A JOB

At some point Jan Willem van Grijpstra, a Lieutenant of the Rijkspoort district Honourable Company of Lamplighters and Watchmen, will approach the PCs. He will try to stage this somewhere relatively out of the way; taverns such as the 'Pelicans Perch' or the 'Long Dragon' would prove ideal. Failing that, he will ask them to meet him in his offices in the Rijkspoort Watch Barracks.

His offer is simple: help the Black Caps out with a small job, and he will make sure the PCs impounded boat is processed quickly. He will strongly make the point that this is in no way a threat, he is simply offering to speed things up as a reward. He will also make it clear that he dislikes Rykaard Weijden and thinks that the man is a fool, but that his hands are tied in that he can only speed things up for people engaged in official Black Cap business. (Note that any PCs with the Common Knowledge (The Wasteland) Skill will know that the city's Black Caps and River Watch rather famously do not get on.)

If the PCs show little interest in having their ship freed from impoundment quickly then van Grijpstra can offer to have the fees reduced or even waived or offer to pay the PCs.

His base rate is 20 Guilders but he can be haggled up to 30 Guilders (to be split between the PCs). He will stress that this is for what is probably only an afternoon's work. If the PCs do not accept this van Grijpstra will try to force their hand by simply informing Sister Trinette that the PCs are available to guard her.

The task, he will explain, is simple. A Shallyan nun from Bretonnia, Sister Trinette, has asked him for protection while she goes about her business in various insalubrious areas of the city. While he cannot spare any of his men to guard her,



Marienburgers do not take advantage of a woman on her own. She is happy to work to whatever schedule the PCs wish and will generally accommodate them.

What has gone before

Everything here is not as it seems. Sister Trinette is actually the Contessa l'Breuil, an agent of the Bretonnian Royal Court in Couronne. Sent on a mission to find and recover a painting known to be hidden in Marienburg, she has used her disguise as a Shallyan nun to try to recruit van Grijpstra as an unwitting ally. Unknown to the Contessa however, van Grijpstra already knows exactly who she is and who she is working for, having been tipped off by one of his own network of informants. He now plans to use the Contessa to lead him to the painting.

However to do this successfully he needs disposable agents to accompany the Contessa, who can be simply made to leave Marienburg one way or another once he has the painting.

The Contessa knows that the painting's artist, van Klomp, spent some time housed in an abandoned temple of Manaan, a lead she is now following up in case van Klomp concealed the painting within the temple.

Finding the Temple

Following the Contessa throughout the day is pretty relaxing, as she will spend the majority of it visiting various libraries around the city. While there is no real need to have the PCs accompany her for this, it does provide a good opportunity to showcase some of the city's locations and also point out to them sources of research they can use later in the scenario (see the 'Libraries within Marienburg' sidebar).

This is an ideal opportunity to introduce newcomers to various aspects of Marienburg life. Pickpockets, street vendors, beggars and other rogues can all make memorable encounters as the PCs traverse the city, giving them a feel for Marienburg's street life. Once you feel that this segment has gone on long enough, the Contessa will find a document suggesting that the Rijkspoort temple she is looking for should be located near the Hooykaas Wharf on the Noordmuur canal.

The Hooykaas Wharf is in the middle of a large area of warehouses and other businesses that take the trade coming down the Reik from the Empire, chiefly Reikland grain and textiles from Nuln. Compared to the docks of the Suiddock and other areas that border upon Marienburg's busy Rijksweg, the Noordmuur canal docks are quiet, with gangs of stevedores awaiting scheduled cargos arriving in boats often owned by some of Marienburg's richest merchant-houses and citizens.

The temple building itself is a small single storey structure built from small weathered blocks of sandstone. The main door is made of two sections of badly rotted wood, while the left wing also has a smaller door that looks to be boarded up. Flanked with modern brick-built warehouses on each side, it looks curiously out of place and the temple grounds, once ornamental gardens, are overgrown with weeds and choked with refuse.

Approaching during the day with the Contessa will betray

he would like to offer her some guards to maintain good relations with her cult. If questioned he will state that he does not believe anyone would seriously assault a member of the Shallyan Clergy, so it should be a relatively risk free job.

Meeting with Sister Trinette

Assuming the PCs are agreeable, van Grijpstra will arrange for them to meet with Sister Trinette at Marjolijn Droogstoppel's Coffee Emporium, a small Rijkspoort bistro specialising in bringing the luxury of coffee to Marienburg's less affluent classes. As coffee beans imported from Araby fetch over 35 Guilders a pound on the dockside markets, achieving this aim requires a certain amount of Marienburger ingenuity. This has resulted in the simple expedient of not actually selling coffee at all. Instead, Marjolijn sells a hot drink made from the roasted seeds of the Yellow Water-flage Lily, of which a large amount grow in the nearby Grootmoer's Marsh. This beverage is fast becoming a Marienburger favourite, tasting somewhat like a cross between coffee and liquorice.

Sister Trinette will be waiting for the PCs alone at a table, clad in the yellow robes that mark her as a member of the Bretonnian Cult of Shallya. She will explain that she is looking to make a pilgrimage to a shrine of a Shallyan saint reputed to be lost within the Rijkspoort. As locating this no doubt will require her venturing among some of the city's lower classes, she requires an escort. She says she needs to do some research in the city's libraries and visit locations in the Rijkspoort, and would be happy for the PCs to accompany her so that

little sign that the temple is being used in any way, although PCs with the Follow Trail Skill may make a **Challenging (-10%) Test** to notice recent footprints leading to the boarded-up side door. Should the PCs approach the Temple during the night they will see it clearly lit from inside.

Both doors are locked and barred although a swift boot applied to either (**Strength Test**) easily breaks them open. Inside slaver Jan van Niezer and some of his men are asleep in crude straw cots around the room. Manacled to a wall is a young girl, barely dressed and obviously bruised.

The temple's occupants sleep during the day but do keep within reach of their weapons. Along with van Niezer himself there are two to four other slavers present (use the profiles for "Marienburg Dockworker").

If the PCs make their presence known first, van Niezer will come to the door and demand they leave his property, and will brook no argument. If the PCs refuse or delay, he and his men will attack. In either case they will try to subdue and restrain the Contessa (and any attractive female PCs) hoping to make a quick profit by selling them into bondage.

Should the PCs capture and question any of the men here, none of them but van Niezer knows the details of who they work for. However, all of them are willing to trade information they have made up in an attempt to avoid the gallows on Rijker's Isle.

Exploring the Temple of Olovald

Once the inhabitants have been overcome the Contessa will search the temple, enlisting the aid of the PCs if she can. This search will be easy however, as the only notable features in the temple are all somewhat obvious.

The rear of the room is dominated by a stone altar, over which is inset a large stone panel that has been superbly carved with a distinctive crowned face. Any PCs who make an **Academic Knowledge (Theology)** or **Common Knowledge (The Wasteland) Test** will recognise it as a depiction as Olovald. Once known as the God of the Marienburg Delta and patron of the city itself, Olovald fell out of favour in the 11th century and members of his cult absorbed into the cult of Manaan or driven underground.

Set into the walls are several alcoves in which lists of names have been carved in the Classical language. These are the priests that officiated in the temple and each is given with the years that they started and ended their tenures. The last of the names is that of Father Harm Roterodamus, who started his term over ninety years ago and has no end date marked.

Finally, a large stone slab is set into the floor by the right wall, with a large iron ring attached clearly showing that it can be opened. This requires a **Hard (-20%) Strength Test** to open unaided. Underneath it are stone steps leading down into the temple's vault, a dank and unpleasant place long looted of anything valuable. This is not immediately apparent however, as the bricks that line the walls of this room have long since crumbled through lack of care, resulting in the whole of the structure being knee-high in water. Small green-

Titus Rottenrow

The Captain of the Rijkspoort district Honourable Company of Lamplighters and Watchmen is a huge barrel-chested man, sporting a ginger beard and a jovial demeanour utterly at odds with his sadistic and bullying personality.

Born in the slums of Kruiersmuur, Rottenrow's meteoric rise through the ranks of the watch has come from his ability to ally with the right man at the right time. He has done favours for several of Marienburg's more prominent citizens, including Kris van Kjurann, Anton de Leg and Crispijn van Haagen.

Rottenrow has a coarse sense of humour and takes notorious pride in his working class roots, spending most of his days in Rijkspoort's beer-halls and clubs. He is also an enthusiastic although somewhat unlucky gambler, particularly on blood sports such as pit fights. Indeed, several back street fighting pits have simply written off the gambling debts he owes them in exchange for him not simply having his watch shut their premises down.

Politically he currently backs Georges Sandler's campaign to ascend to the post of watch commander, possibly due to the fact that the current incumbent believes Rottenrow to be an ineffective fool. Lieutenant Jan Willem van Grijpstra finds Rottenrow insufferable, corrupt and foolish, and Rottenrow delights in making his life as unpleasant as possible.

Most of the above can be gained through Gossip Tests or other means but such enquiries may well come to Rottenrow's attention.



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bellied leeches inhabit the water, sheltering here from the fast flowing Noordmuur canal. These will attach themselves to any character immersed in the water for more than five minutes, causing a single wound of damage (regardless of Toughness or Armour Points) and rendering the character effectively “Stinking Drunk” (WFRP2 pg. 115) for the next hour.

After a reasonably thorough search (preferably avoiding getting wet if she can by having the PCs search for her), the Contessa will acknowledge that there is nothing here and it seems that this was not a Temple to Shallya after all. As this is the end of the period that the PCs are officially employed to guard her, she will thank them and tell them she hopes she can help them in the future. This effectively ends the First Chapter, although there is still the matter of dealing with the girl they have rescued.

Libraries within Marienburg

As a city with a proud history of education and learning, Marienburg has several libraries, state and privately owned. The following are five of the most useful locations where PCs can conduct research.

The Grand Temple of Verena

A whole wing of the cathedral is taken up by the Great Library, which claims to be the largest library in the Old World. Typically, only public records and legal texts are open to the public, although Priests of Verena or anyone who has managed to get a seal of authority from someone like Jan Willem van Grijpstra will be grudgingly given access to the library proper. Even then, PCs will be closely watched by at least one Anointed Priest and four Temple Guards.

The library here has Closed Stacks, meaning anyone wishing to look through a book must ask the librarian for it. This service costs a donation of at least 10 Guilders per day, no matter how many books are required. The penalty for damaging or attempting to steal books from the library is death, and the Temple Guards will be more than happy to enforce this.

Most of the relevant history texts are written in Classical, although some useful texts may be written in Daemonic if the PCs dare to ask for them. In this case they will have to answer a series of questions and endure a full body examination by the Temple’s dour Chief Librarian for any hope of access. Treat this as a **Hard (-20%) Charm** or **Academic Knowledge (Law) Test**.

The City Records Office

The city’s official library of records is located in the Mariusplein, Marienburg’s great square that stands within the Paleisbuurt district. The square itself is massive, sat between the Stadsraad, the New Palace and Marienburg’s High Court. Various Tilean style nude statues are located here, including a controversial image of Sigmar as a naked young man, while in the square’s centre there is a large fountain decorated with ornate carvings of dolphins and other sea life. The square bustles with activity, with various clerks, litigants and politicians conducting their

business. Blue robed Initiates from the square’s Temple of Manann are in abundance, as are the Black Caps, whose central headquarters is also located here.

The records office itself is on the right hand side of the High Court. It is a two-storey building made of red brick, with a long queue of messengers and burghers almost constantly outside it. The offices are open between ten and five, and the queue to get in can take anything up to half an hour, with no shelter provided from Marienburg’s atrocious weather.

Unlike the other libraries, PCs are technically not allowed to access the records even under supervision. However, a small bribe and successful **Charm Skill Test** will serve to have a clerk leave the right books lying on a table. All records are written in Classical. Only information on people’s birth, death, address and tax status can be found here, although the records do go back over three hundred years.

Koopvaardijvloot Hoom

One of the most distinctive buildings in Marienburg, Koopvaardijvloot Hoom is also known simply as the Admiralty Building. It stands on Hightower Isle, adjacent to the famous Neiderbrug Bridge, which connects that isle to the Luydenhoek. Painted a distinctive shade of green with white trim, it is surmounted by four stone-carved fen-wolves representing Marius, making it an iconic landmark throughout the city. Inside are almost all the important offices of the port of Marienburg, including the Secretariat for Trade Equity, the office of the Lord Harbourmaster and the office of the Commandant of the hated River Watch.

The archives here deal with records of ships. This includes records of ownership, serving captains and full accounts of harbours they have visited. Additionally, records that relate to enforcement of maritime law and many census documents relating to the city’s merchants are also held in the building. While access to the records is available at any time for the fee of 10 Shillings, this officially requires fourteen days notice. However, simply offering the duty clerk a bribe of 5 Guilders will have him fetch the correct ledger. All records are written in Classical and books may not be removed from the front office under any circumstances.

Baron Henryk’s College of Navigation and Sea Magicks

The sprawling campus of Baron Henryk’s College is principally located within the former palace of the Contessa Esmeralda Cioppino, overlooking the Manaanshaven harbour. This is a vast twisting maze of departments and facilities that have seemingly been thrown together at random, with each department within the College maintaining its own small library of relevant texts. Departments specialising in almost any academic subject the PCs can imagine exist somewhere on campus, although for the purposes of this scenario the PCs will most probably wish to visit the School of Ancient and Modern Historical Studies, overseen by Professor Merkwürdig.

All of the libraries here are open to all students who have either paid the enrolment fee of 50 Guilders for the year – or

have paid a bribe of 2 Guilders a day to have the Librarians look the other way.

Books are chained to the shelves and stealing or damaging them is punishable by a fine of between 750 to 3500 Guilders (ten times the cost of the book) with imprisonment in Rijker's Isle until the fine is paid. Most of the relevant historical texts are written in Classical or Arcane Language (Magick).

The Vermillion Pawn¹

This pawnshop is typical of the various private libraries that are scattered throughout Marienburg. Under usual circumstances the owner, a dwarf named Lukas will not allow anyone access to his library, but once there is a plague of Daemons rampaging over Marienburg's skies he will be a little more flexible. Even so, getting access requires a **Challenging (-10%) Charm Test** and around 25 Guilders per day.

The books that Lukas allows the PCs to look at will be provided in a big chest in the reception room, with Lukas' guards watching over them. If they try to steal any, Lukas will happily set his dogs upon them, and persecute them to the full extent of his influence (which in Marienburg is quite considerable).

The vast majority of Lukas' books are written in Classical, although some useful texts may be written in Arcane Language (Daemonic) or Arcane Language (Arcane Dwarf).

Similar conditions will apply at other private libraries.

CHAPTER TWO THE SHORT CON

If the PCs do not report back to van Grijpstra of their own accord after finishing escorting Sister TrINETTE, he will send a messenger to summon them to his office for debriefing.

He will thank the PCs and commend them on their service (unless they somehow really messed up) and offer them another, easier job as a reward, with the same rate of pay.

This second task is relatively simple: He will explain that there is a Halfling running a stall down on the Rijkspoort docks who is causing considerable disturbance, and who he wishes to have arrested. However as van Grijpstra insists on doing everything above board, he needs evidence of wrong doing, which he has been unable to collect as the Halfling is a wily sort and always packs up and flees as soon as he sees a Black Cap. As the Halfling seems to know all of Marienburg's Black Caps by sight, van Grijpstra needs some out-of-towners to go and find out what the Halfling is up to, and then arrest him for "Breach of the Peace" plus whatever other crimes he is found to be committing.

He will also provide each one of the PCs with a Warrant of Authority. This a large sheet of paper, written in both Classical and Reikspiel, affixed with the red seal of the Rijkspoort District Honourable Company of Lamplighters and Watchmen. This certificate essentially deputises them into the Black Caps but it does not give any immunity to Marienburg's laws.

Marienburg has a long and proud tradition of using civilians

to augment the Watch in this way. PCs with Common Knowledge (The Wasteland) will also know that in districts such as the Doodkanaal, Kruiersmuur and even the Suiddock, such civilians are often the target of violence, and being seen with such a document can be an effective death sentence.

The Bunko Booth

The Rijkspoort docks are a busy part of Marienburg, with a mixture of tourists and Marienburgers going about their daily business. The district contains the boroughs of Luigistad and Kisleviersweg, leading to a large number of Tileans and Kislevans being in this section of the docks. Many shops are located here, as are various market stalls selling bread, fruit and a seemingly endless variety of fresh fish.

Intermixed between these are various beggars and con men, including pavement artists, gambling games and charlatans selling brightly coloured powders and potions for as much as they can. Most of these stalls do little business, with their owners desperately hawking their wares to passersby.

The stall of the Halfling Jasin Biermatz, has quite a crowd gathered around it. Many other stalls of this nature are set up here, but only the Halfling's seems to be generating much business.

Asking the crowd for information will largely result in the PCs being informed to wait their turn and stop pushing. PCs will also notice a tall one-legged adolescent male hanging around the edge of the crowd, scanning the horizon for any sign of Black Caps.

Sneaking up on Biermatz should be relatively easy, especially as he or his lookout has no real reason to suspect the PCs. You could ask for a **Routine (+10%) Strength** or **Agility Test** to get through the crowd.

When the PCs get to the booth, they discover that the Halfling is offering a traditional scam known as Find the Lady, a basic three card trick where the mark has to pick the queen after the cards have been shuffled about in front of them. The reason for the Halfling's popularity is the deck of cards he is using, or at least one of them. The Queen of Hearts of his deck is a saucy picture of a rather scantily dressed lady, which is of good enough quality that the crowd is happy to surge forward to see it.

The backs of the cards are also unusual, although this will not be particularly apparent to anyone but the PCs. Each card has a hand-painted copy of the bust of Olovald they saw in the Hooykaas Wharf Temple that they visited earlier.

Biermatz is inordinately proud of the cards, cheerfully mentioning in his patter that it is an image of the beautiful Countess Emmanuelle, painted by the renowned van Klomp. He occasionally mentions that the original has been lost for many years and that many people would pay a fortune to find it.

Biermatz had the cards created especially as a draw for his stall. While images like these are not uncommon in Marienburg, they are typically black and white poor quality woodcuts rather than exceptional works of art. PCs will realise that this is an

unusual and valuable item. PCs will also be aware that uniformly printed decks are very rare.

If the PCs wish to actually play Find-the-Lady, then Biermatz will happily scam them of as much silver as they wish to lose. This is run as an opposed **Gamble Skill Test**, with the PC competing against Biermatz's score of 51. If Biermatz loses this however, he makes a Sleight of Hand Skill check on his score of 59 (Biermatz has a +10% bonus to his skill due to the deck being marked).

If he succeeds upon this he automatically wins, while if he fails his opponent should be allowed an Perception Test to catch him cheating. If they fail this then Biermatz still counts as having won. The stakes are normally 1 silver a game and winners get 5 silver.

Once the PCs make their move then Biermatz will try to run. When he feels he may get caught he will throw the three cards that he uses behind him in the hope it will distract his pursuers.

Due to the crowds in the dock area it is possible that Biermatz

will give the PCs the slip and disappear down a dark alleyway somewhere, but resourceful PCs should be allowed to follow him (he will make his way to the Dog and Duck), or capture him.

Another plan of attack is going after Biermatz's lookout, Roderick "Halfwijze" Lubbe. Due to the fact he is both half-witted and lame, this should be a rather easy task. Bribery will be effective, as even a couple of brass pennies is a small fortune to Roderick. Attempting to use Intimidate on the other hand will reduce Roderick to a pathetic wreck, unable to string two sentences together; much less answer the PCs' questions.

Roderick neither knows very much and is also rather easily confused, and therefore may not give answers that are exactly accurate. In general, he knows that the card is valuable and that the PCs should return it to Biermatz, he knows that Biermatz lives on the Vrouw Maria Tenement and that he got the card from Meert the Painter. All questions beyond that he simply does not know the answer.

If, and when, the PCs do capture Biermatz, he will attempt to buy them off, by offering them a full account of how to retrieve the painting in exchange for being let go. If they ask Biermatz why he has not sold the painting, he will be non-committal, saying he never found a buyer he could trust. The truth is Biermatz knows full well that powerful people would want the original painting of the Fallen Countess, and has no real wish to be assassinated by agents of any of Marienburg's greedy art collectors.

At this point, the PCs can either let Biermatz go or hand him over to Jan Willem van Grijpstra's Black Caps to collect their pay. In this situation Biermatz will no doubt be yelling a string of obscenities and curses every step of the way.

If the PCs do not do anything, then after a couple of days an irate van Grijpstra will call upon them to ask exactly what they are doing about his problem.

The Fallen Countess

If the PCs retrieved the three cards and are aware that they are both valuable and connected to the Hooykaas Wharf Temple – then they may wish to further investigate them. (Certainly if the Contessa l'Breuil is still in contact with them, she will somewhat enthusiastically encourage them to look into them.) If the PCs simply try to sell the cards instead, you should have the Fence or Art Dealer send them to the artist anyway – as ideally they would like a full deck.

While the ace and eight are quite normal in their design, the Queen is somewhat more significant. An **Evaluate Test** will tell them that the card is possibly a reproduction of a better quality image, however due to its high quality it is still valuable (at least 10 Guilders), although it is technically illegal for sale under Marienburg's public decency laws. Worth an on the spot fine of around 10 Guilders and confiscation of the card, or a swift trial resulting in 3d10 lashes to be performed in public if the PC makes the mistake of not paying up.

All PCs with the Skill Common Knowledge (the Empire) will realise the card is an unusually high quality reproduction of





an image of a woman that looks somewhat like the Countess Emmanuelle von Liebwitz of Nuln. Such images are very popular, although often also illegal, within the Empire.

An **Academic Knowledge (The Arts) Test** reveals that from its colour and condition, the card is probably a very recently made reproduction of the lost portrait of Countess Emmanuelle von Liebwitz by van Klomp. This outlawed work is reputedly worth a fortune and has been missing for several years after the end of what some scurrilous rumours suggest was a rather tempestuous affair with the Countess. It is this very painting that the Contessa l'Breuil has been sent to Marienburg to recover.

Despite being one of the Old World's finest painters, van Klomp was a rather tragic figure. After being plagued with depression, he died a few years ago, hanging himself from the Hoogbrug Bridge. (Some rumours state that Witch Hunters were involved in this "suicide", while others state that agents of the vengeful Countess were actually responsible.)

The card is also, rather bizarrely, signed with the name Meert Nieuwendijk, which anyone with the Read/Write Skill will spot.

The Vrouw Maria Tenement

Land being at a premium in Marienburg, several novel solutions have been found over the years to provide additional space for housing and business.

Decaying carracks and galleons line the city's canals, often in the slow moving Doodkanaal or beached upon the Vlakland. Some enterprising souls have bought these rotting hulls, and converted them into basic tenement buildings, offering cheap accommodation to Marienburg's poorest citizens.

One of these floating tenements is the Vrouw Maria, which lies permanently docked on the south shore of the Kruiersmuur, lying in the noxious Doodkanaal. Typical of these floating tenements, all of the vessel's fixtures and fittings have been ripped out to create greater space in which to live. Crude walls made out of fishing nets, matted cloth and driftwood divide the ship's hold into small rooms often no larger than the bunk or hammock that lies within.

The living conditions here are hardly ideal. Rats, cockroaches and stranger vermin prowl the rotted wood of the Vrouw Maria and water from the ever-present Marienburg rain often flows inside, soaking the inhabitants. Worse still are the lower levels of the ship, where the rancid water of the Doodkanaal occasionally flows into the rotted hull, washing those unfortunates that are forced to live in this hell hole in its foul, disease-ridden water.

(PCs coming into contact with this water risk infection from The Green Pox or any other nasty disease the GM wishes to substitute.)

Occasional labourers, desperate stevedores and simple rogues dwell within the ship, including many Halflings wanting to be near Kleinmoot.

There is no security on the three partially rotted gangplanks that provide access into the ship proper, although requests for coin, food and booze from the tenants will be bombarded at any character looking in the slightest bit wealthy (i.e. in better than Poor Craftsmanship clothing or looking clean).

After being allowed to wander around the tenement questioning the locals, who only know that Biermatz has not been back here since the PCs last encountered him, a pair

of Footpads will approach the PCs, informing them that the Captain of the Vrouw Maria demands an audience. Arguments can quickly end up in a brawl with fifty or so of the Vrouw Maria's desperate inhabitants.

If they accept the invitation, they will be led through the rotting hulk to the Captain's cabin, which is by far the largest room within the tenement and draped with rotting fineries. Pieter Raachmens, the Vrouw Maria's so called Captain, sits on an over-ornate gilded throne. He greets the PCs cordially, enquiring why they are aboard his ship. Should they confide in him that they are looking for Biermatz, he will be more than helpful – offering to capture Biermatz for the PCs in exchange for them recovering the painting for him. He may well decide to claim that Biermatz actually stole the painting from him, if he believes the PCs are sufficiently gullible to swallow this story.

Should they decline the offer of capturing Biermatz, Raachmens will

also offer to reward the PCs 100 Guilders to recover the painting, and can be haggled up substantially as he well knows (but of course would never disclose to the PCs) that the painting is worth over a hundred times that.

If asked about the Hooykaas Wharf Temple, he will shrug and say he has never heard of it, telling the PCs that it is almost certainly not important. In actual fact he is well aware that the temple is the base of one of Kris van Kjurann's (one of Marienburg's most powerful merchants) smuggling operations, and has no wish to risk interfering in his sadistic master's business.

The main advantage of dealing with Raachmens is that he knows a lot of what is going on in Marienburg and is more than happy to sell information. What Raachmens does not



know is where Biermatz actually found the original painting but he has heard through his contacts that it came from someone connected to the van Uylenburgh Art Gallery. He now suspects that the painting is hidden somewhere in the gallery, although none of the men he has sent there have managed to locate it. Raachmens has heard a rumour that the artist Meert Nieuwendijk was involved in reproducing the painting.

Meeting with Meert Nieuwendijk

Meert Nieuwendijk resides in the Tempelwijk district of the city and any Gossip tests to find information about him while in that district are Easy (+20%) as he spends a lot of time within the local student taverns. Outside of Tempelwijk, it is much less likely anyone will have heard of him, although if PCs think to ask art dealers and the like, they should be allowed a **Gossip Test** to locate him.

Not the most pleasant of individuals, Nieuwendijk talks down to anyone that he feels is his intellectual inferior. This is pretty much everyone, although PCs with the Academic Knowledge (The Arts) Skill or the Etiquette Talent may make a **Challenging (-10%) Charm Test** to get Meert to regard them as a Human being. Even then Nieuwendijk expects to be able to leech free drinks and possibly even be bribed just for the pleasure of speaking to him. However, Nieuwendijk is also an abject coward, and any attempt to use the Intimidate Skill on him is not only an **Easy (+20%) Test** but will probably reduce him to a quivering wreck, desperate to do anything to avoid being hurt.

PCs successful in either of these methods who confront Meert with the playing card can get Nieuwendijk to tell them that he did indeed copy the lost portrait of Countess Emmanuelle von Liebwitz by van Klomp, which was provided for him by Jasin Biermatz, who then took the painting away again. He drew the back of the card based on some sketches by the same artist which Biermatz brought along with the painting.

If asked where Biermatz got the painting and sketches from, all Nieuwendijk knows is that Biermatz said he got the painting

from “the hand of van Uylenburgh himself”. However, Nieuwendijk has not heard of anyone with that name in the city as he seldom ventures outside of Tempelwijk.

Paulus van Uylenburgh

Neither the most famous nor the most influential of Marienburg’s citizens, PCs may attempt **Academic Knowledge (The Arts)**, **Academic Knowledge (History)** or a **Gossip Test** to recall or locate information relating to him. Living in Marienburg over a hundred years ago, Paulus van Uylenburgh was a moderately wealthy merchant whose one contribution to Marienburg was a small art gallery in the Rijkspoort district. Had the PCs already visited the gallery then they should be able to recall that it had the name Paulus van Uylenburgh carved into the stonework above the entrance arch.

The art gallery is a simple four storey ramshackle house near the Strompoort Gate, within the Rijkspoort district of Marienburg. It leans heavily to one side where it is seemingly supported by the even older looking Dog and Duck Inn which dominates the square.

Directly outside stands a large decrepit gallows, which clearly has not been used for some time. The ground around it appears scorched, and any PCs that can make a **Routine (+10%) Magical Sense Test** will see the whole frame is wrapped in Bright and Amethyst strands of magic, in the same manner they would cling to a funeral pyre.

A few streets away stands the Indierswijk, Marienburg’s spice docks; exotic smells and scents occasionally drift over the whole area, much to the disapproval of the locals.

Assuming he has survived the initial parts of the scenario, Biermatz has set up his Find-the-Lady stall outside the front of the gallery, semi-sheltered under a jutting-out first floor bay window. This is his usual spot and how he came to find the painting. Unless the PCs carefully sneak up to the location, he will automatically spot them and attempt to run away.

The Imperial agent, von Schwarznase, is also here, sat on one of the decrepit looking tables outside the Dog and Duck, drinking a pint of the local “sterkbier”. Von Schwarznase is a very experienced wizard and no trace of any unusual magick can be seen about his person, however he has gone to very little effort to disguise himself, and PCs may wonder what an Imperial noble is doing slumming it in Rijkspoort.

If approached, von Schwarznase will pass himself off as an art dealer. However, as he lacks both Academic Knowledge (The Arts) and the Trade (Merchant) Skills, this disguise is imperfect to say the least. Anyone with either skill engaging him in lengthy conversation should be allowed a **Perception Test** to realise that something does not quite add up.

In fact, he believes that the Van Uylenburgh Art Gallery is a possible location of the painting due to the transcripts of some of van Klomp’s letters provided to him by his superiors. Over the course of the last week, he has been pestering the gallery staff with questions they cannot answer.

Asking von Schwarznase about van Klomp will elicit some excitement from him. He will falsely explain his interest by



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claiming he was following up vague rumours he heard from art dealers in Wurtbad – a town he has never even visited. He will then ask the PCs for everything they know, hoping that they will provide the breakthrough he needs.

Should von Schwarznase suspect that the PCs are holding back information, he will resort to making veiled threats and will try to intimidate the information out of them. However, he will quickly back down and retreat to a safe location, and then put his greater plan into motion. This leads into Chapter Three.

Inside the Gallery

The lone statue in the foyer is of the Gallery's founder, Paulus van Uylenburgh. A slightly chubby individual, he is portrayed clad in elaborate robes that were presumably once very fashionable, with a small tasselled box hat sculpted upon his balding head.

Beyond the foyer the gallery contains three large rooms on the ground floor, with steps heading up to the first and second floors. The third floor is mostly made up of a large copper dome and there is no access for the public. (A hidden servants' stairway linking all four floors is the sole means of access.)

Each room contains artwork of varying quality, collected by the gallery's curator, a scribe who visits infrequently. An ornate broken column with a slot in the top stands just inside the first room, where donations can be deposited into a strong box in the foundations of the building, only accessible via the hidden servants' stairs and locked with a key that only the curator holds.

At any given time, between four and ten pm, the gallery guards patrol the building, although none patrol the foyer as it contains nothing of value beyond the immovable statue. Occasional students and foreign visitors will be the only other people here; the whole building suffers from a sense of neglect. That said, the gallery has a connecting door into the Dog and Duck Inn next door, and Staats Remmerswaal sends a servant through to the guards with their meals and the occasional pint of sterkbier.

Searching the gallery will quickly show that the portrait of the Countess is not here and the guards exasperatedly confirm that the gallery holds no works by van Klomp at all. But they should talk to the Imperial noble outside, who has been asking similar questions.

Asking the guards about Biermatz will be more useful: the guards will confirm that they have had to run a Halfling out of the foyer several times; he was loitering and using it as a shelter. One guard will even mention that he caught the Halfling messing about with van Uylenburgh's statue.

The secret of Biermatz's cryptic remark, that "he got the painting from the hand of van Uylenburgh himself", is explained by the fact that the right arm of the statue can be twisted, by grasping it firmly in the secret handshake of the Merchants' Guild.

Any character with Secret Language (Guild Tongue) will automatically know the required grasp; alternatively a character will be able to open the statue with a **Routine (+10%) Pick**

Lock Test. This reveals a compartment in the statue's robes containing a rolled up painting and several sketches of Marienburg architecture.

If the PCs do not locate the painting there are a few choices. Firstly, they could pursue and capture Biermatz and force him to tell them how to find it. Secondly, PCs researching the gallery at one of Marienburg's libraries may come across the long forgotten plans for the statue, which note that it was created by an engineer in conjunction with a sculptor. (See *A Visit to the Library* for further ideas on how to run this.) Finally as a last resort, you could simply have the Contessa l'Breuil solve the riddle for them. (See *Keeping it all on the Rails*.)

Keeping it all on the Rails

If the PCs show no interest in the painting, it may be necessary to prod them in the right direction; one of the best ways to do this is through the return of the Contessa l'Breuil.

The Contessa's mission in Marienburg is the exact same as von Schwarznase's. Indeed, her superiors sent her when they got wind of von Schwarznase's mission from Bretonnian agents operating in Nuln. Her orders are to track down and steal the painting before agents of the Empire can retrieve it. Once the Bretonnians have the painting they will use it to blackmail or bribe Countess Emmanuelle von Liebwitz into giving Bretonnia trade and political concessions throughout Wissenland and Nuln.

The Contessa, as Sister Trinette, will generally make herself useful to the group, telling the PCs that she feels she must repay them for saving her life. (If they did not you may need to improvise here!) Her overall aim is to become indispensable to the PCs, by cheerfully volunteering to do all the little jobs they hate, as well as providing a free source of non-magical healing and perhaps some useful herbs using her Trade (Herbalist) Skill. Finally, the Contessa will try to seduce any male(s) who seem interested in her, in the hope of gaining greater control over them.

Once she is established, she will encourage them to look for the painting, tempting them with whatever seems to motivate them best. A typical story could be that she has a cousin who collects works of art in Bretonnia who would pay them well for the painting, if only the PCs were brave and clever enough to find it.

The Contessa knows that the PCs are working for van Grijpstra. She is also aware that the Empire has sent agents to find the painting; however, she does not know that the agent is von Schwarznase or anything of his plans. (Likewise, von Schwarznase has no knowledge of the Contessa.)

It is important not to over use the Contessa at this stage. Only have her offer input if the players seem to be genuinely stuck.

Chapter Three Terror in the Skies

Around a day after von Schwarznase hears that the painting of the Fallen Countess has been recovered, he will bring his master plan into motion. Heading to a secret laboratory under the city, he will unleash a Gargoyle horde upon Marienburg and demand that the city hand the painting over to him. His anonymous but public demands require that the painting be dropped at a safe location, in this case the gibbet outside the Dog and Duck.

Note that due to his cowardice von Schwarznase will not directly confront the PCs save as a last resort, and even then will always attempt to have enough minions present to outnumber them.

The details of these demands are easy to find as, not knowing exactly who he was dealing with, von Schwarznase simply plastered a series of Reikspiel posters in prominent places around the city (Player Handout 1).

It is not important how von Schwarznase comes by the information. He has spies and paid informants throughout Marienburg, as well as potential access to magical divination.

In addition to von Schwarznase the only people who may suspect the PCs of having the painting are van Grijpstra and the Contessa. Hopefully, the nagging doubt that they have caused the Gargoyle problem combined with the fact that von Schwarznase is demanding the painting they now own, will spur them into trying to resolve the issue; if not, see the 'We are not at home to Meneer Teflon!' sidebar for some ideas of how to get things back on track.

The following is a set of likely locations, events and NPCs

that can be visited in any fashion as the PCs explore Marienburg and try to track down the solution to the Gargoyle plague. This section can be difficult to run, as there is a mixture of PC and NPC triggered encounters with no fixed time line.

Encounter: The Second Gargoyle Horde of Marienburg

The Gargoyles released by the actions of von Schwarznase do not all manifest together, instead small groups are slowly allowed into the world concealed within the catacombs and caves of Marienburg's Oudgeldwijk district. From here, they sneak out into the city proper, stealthily murdering lone travellers and perching upon housetops in their stony form. As the week passes the Gargoyles become more and more numerous and obvious.

As the scenario progresses Morrslieb the Chaos Moon appears in the night sky, illuminating the doom of the city. Morrslieb only appears this way inside the city, PCs that have played through the scenario *Shadows over Bogenhafen* or others may remember that the moon behaved in a similar way then.

Finally, note that this is the second instance of a Gargoyle invasion of Marienburg. More information about the first invasion can be found in the Sidebar 'History Repeating.'

Day 1 – The Ritual

On the first day that von Schwarznase releases the Barda Gargoyles upon the city, it is generally quiet. That said there are some clues that not all in the city is normal. PCs with either Academic Knowledge (The Arts) or Academic Knowledge (Engineering) should be allowed a **Very Hard (-30%) Perception** Test to notice that there seems to be rather a lot more decorative Gargoyles on Marienburg's roofs than there

To All Concerned!

SAVE YOUR CITY!!!

I Demand that the Nefarious Criminals who stole my Painting of E. return it to me by the gibbet outside the Dog and Duck Inn!

OBEY OR WATCH THE TRAITOROUS CITY OF
MARIENBURG BURN!!!

The Authorities are advised to keep clear if they value their homes!

Player Handout 1

really should be. Closer examination shows nothing unusual but if attacked they will fly off.

During the first night the prevailing derision that is directed towards the message in the posters begins to fade away as Morrslieb appears over the city as a full moon.

Day 2 – Murders in Marienburg

While the average citizen still openly scorns von Schwarznase's threat of the burning of Marienburg (not the first such claim), this attitude is no longer universal – several powerful merchants and astrologers are hastily making plans to leave. They are openly mocked for their gullibility and cowardice. As the second day progresses however, more and more unnerved citizens looking for missing family and friends should come to the fore.

At night, Morrslieb is even larger than the night before, and shadows play across its pale green surface, almost looking like facial features.

Day 3 – Shadows over Marienburg

The third day has much in common with the second, only more pronounced, as more Marienburgers seem to have vanished over the course of the night. The harbours of the Goudberg and Guilderveld districts are largely empty, with many of Marienburg's richest citizens sailing out on their pleasure yachts in an impromptu regatta earlier in the morning. Black Caps patrol in greater numbers than usual and the city is pervaded with an uneasy feeling that something is not right.

When night falls, the first packs of Gargoyles are openly spotted flying over the city, assaulting lone Marienburgers and mocking priests, wizards and Black Caps from a safe distance. Over the course of the night, the Gargoyles gain in both boldness and numbers, although they still will not engage in assaults upon any targets that present a threat.

Morrslieb seems to have moved closer to the city and the shadows have formed into more distinct facial features. PCs with Sense Magic will see with their Witchsight that the Moon has a grinning face, with closed eyes, needle sharp teeth and a long crooked goblin-like nose.

Day 4 – Death's City

More Gargoyles appear over the city throughout the fourth day. Although they seem to be everywhere, there are not actually that many and they try to stay airborne, occasionally swooping down and carrying off anyone foolish enough to be on their own. The only places they will initially attack are places that have weaponry that can be used against aerial targets – just to show they mean business. In general though, as long as the Marienburgers stay indoors or travel in organised armed gangs, they are relatively safe.

One place that attracts undue attention, although few Marienburg citizens will recognise the significance, is the temple of Olovald at Hooykaas Wharf. Here Gargoyles flock around, flitting in and out of the temple, lewdly despoiling it with profane acts. This will be known locally and may come to the PCs' attention.

Morrslieb is clearly visible throughout the day and has brightened from a pale green to a sickly shade of yellow. Occasional tattered street preachers appear on Marienburg's squares and street corners. These zealots proclaim that the time of the Bad Moon has arrived and that the city will burn for its usury and wickedness. Many of these preachers take to painting a yellow bad moon upon their foreheads as the day progresses.

Day 5 – Death on the Reik

Late upon the fifth day, a powerful Elven Djed'hi mage will begin casting an incantation from the decks of one of the Elven Eagleships docked in the Sea Elf enclave of Elfsgemeente. Gargoyles rapidly swarm around the ship, with the more powerful of their number blasting it with balls of fire. The evening sky is lit with conflicting magick for several minutes and then the Djed'hi is ripped apart by daemons' talons and the mighty Eagleship is sunk, a testament to the power of the Gargoyles.

More street preachers are evident on Marienburg's streets, gathering disciples. Occasional fights break out between the various factions, especially between the Bad Moon cultists and followers of the God Morr, who are targeted due to the God's association with the Chaos moon. The PCs may well get harassed by these desperate mobs, especially if any of the party are openly followers of any God or look to be Wizards.

Morrslieb has again moved closer to the city and Witchsight reveals that Morrslieb's grinning face has opened its eyes, staring directly at any mage who looks upon it. Occasionally it licks its lips with a long red tongue as if savouring a coming feast.

Day 6 – Dying of the Light

Led on by street preachers, throughout the city mobs of desperate Bad Moon zealots and flagellants roam the streets – seeing the Gargoyles as a sign of the Gods' displeasure, they hunt out the sinful, whipping them with crude metal flails. This seems to amuse the Gargoyles and they allow these desperate wretches to roam the city streets unimpeded.

The Gargoyles race around the skies, cavorting and cackling with glee as if in great anticipation. Many areas of Marienburg have been set on fire and a vast cloud of smoke starts to blot out the light of the sun, although the sickly yellow light of the grinning and ever-closer Morrslieb seems to shine through unimpeded.

Around midday, the Gargoyles all emit a mass croaking howl of triumph as the Great Banner of the Gargoyles is summoned into the city and erected upon the roof of the New Palace. While the Banner flies over the city, no other Daemons will interfere with the Barda Gargoyles; even the most powerful of Greater Daemons will avoid angering this mighty Daemonic deity.

Day 7 – City of Chaos

Mutants from the Vlakland and Marienburg's catacombs openly roam the city's streets, clashing with the various fanatics.

Marienburg's citizens no longer venture outside their homes, and even the Black Caps no longer patrol the streets, instead remaining within the major fortified watch barracks with their friends and family. Gaining access to most locations now requires the PCs to beg for entry or break down doors.

For the first time the Barda Gargoyles start actively attacking the people of Marienburg, breaking into houses and dragging people out into the street where they execute them in graphic displays of bloodlust. That said, the Gargoyles are cowardly creatures at heart, avoiding the temples and the guarded abodes of Marienburg's rich Merchants.

Over the course of this day, the moon's mouth slowly opens wider and wider until its vast fanged maw looks like it is about to swallow the city whole.

Day 8 – Marienburg in Flames

On the eighth day since von Schwarznase let loose the daemonic horde upon the city, the PCs face their final opportunity to resolve the situation. The PCs should be clear that the end is almost upon them; Morrslieb's teeth seem to encircle the city, which is lit only by the fires of burning buildings. Dismembered corpses line the streets and ships are sunk in the blackened Reik.

Here the GM is forced to decide what to do if the PCs fail to resolve the situation. The safest, although most anticlimactic options are to either have the Gargoyle invasion simply come to an end naturally or be stopped by someone else. This is perhaps dull but does mean there are no massive long-term complications to deal with.

Perhaps a more satisfying and intense way of dealing with the PCs' failure is to wipe Marienburg off the map by allowing the God of the Barda Gargoyles to physically manifest in the city. As it has never been named who the Barda Gargoyles Banner depicts, the GM has many options here, from squid-like tentacle-beasties to massive Gargoyle lords that blot out the sun with their sheer size. Perhaps one of the most fitting options would be to use Be'lakor, the Dark Master, who could manifest within Marienburg and raze it to Chaos-plagued ruins much like he did to Mordheim many years ago.

Encounter: The Return of the One Legged Man

This encounter is best run when the players feel they have come to a dead end in their investigation, or at another moment when the tempo seems to have dipped. It is triggered by Roderick Lubbe finding the PCs, while he is in a state of confused desperation. (This is assuming of course, that Roderick survived their earlier encounter.)

Prior to this, Pieter Raachmens had discovered where von Schwarznase was staying from his contacts among the various lowlifes that von Schwarznase has hired. Hoping to capitalise on this information, he despatched Roderick and another tenement dweller Theo Rijnwijn to the Helmsman Inn in the Handelaarmarkt, which stands next to the Oostenpoort gate. There, while Roderick acted as a lookout, Theo broke into a room that Raachmens believed would be empty.

Roderick was therefore somewhat surprised when after a

THE BAKKER SKETCHES

These rough sketches were found on the street by Father Bogart as the Gargoyle menace came to an end. Talking to witnesses, Bogart believed they were part of a larger portfolio (numbered 2012) drawn by Dael Bakker. Bakker was the youngest daughter of a merchant family linked to the Foogers. She went missing during the invasion and her body was never found. Bakker was inspired by the gargoyle pictures at the van Uylenburgh Art Gallery which she saw as a child. If the PCs need a hand then they could meet Bakker on the streets trying to sketch a gargoyle, or even threatened by one, and she could point them in the direction of the gallery.



Seen at the van Haagen's private dock. It watched me until I was finished and then flew away.

few minutes Theo raced out of the building, pursued by the rather irate looking von Schwarznase. Theo grabbed hold of Roderick dragging him down a back alley, telling him that he 'had the answer' and that they 'needed to go to Barda's House'.

Unfortunately, at that point a huge shadowy monster appeared and eviscerated Theo before Roderick's eyes. (This was actually von Schwarznase under the guise of his *Dread Aspect* spell.)

This has reduced Roderick to a state of barely coherent terror, and he has just managed to hunt down the PCs to help him when the Shadow Daemons come to get him. It never actually occurred to von Schwarznase that the one-legged beggar in the alleyway was connected to the thief in his room.

Roderick dare not return to the Vrouw Maria, as he knows that several of the people dwelling there are working for Von Schwarznase, and believes they will turn him over to the wizard. Therefore, in his somewhat confused state, he has decided to latch onto the PCs as the only people who might defend him.

Further questioning of Roderick is pointless, as the only things he knows are that Shadow Daemons are coming to eat him and that Theo said he 'needed to go to Barda's House'.

Encounter: Jan Willem van Grijpstra

Van Grijpstra also has many agents spread throughout the city – including men who know some of those currently in von Schwarznase's employ. From these, he receives information that von Schwarznase believes the painting has been found by a band of itinerate traders that sound suspiciously like the PCs in his employ.

Van Grijpstra views the painting as an ideal way of getting bargaining power to enact revenge upon both Kris van Kjurann and Titus Rottenrow, and will stop at little to get it. Although he is a formidable combatant, he prefers guile and subterfuge to open threats and violence.

His first plan will be to cajole a Marienburg thief into stealing it, in exchange for being let out of the cells. If that fails to work he will offer the PCs the job of finding the painting for the Black Caps, promising to reward them amply for its recovery (they will barely be rewarded at all, however) in the hope that they simply hand it over. Finally, he will have the PCs arrested for their own protection, so that he can demand the painting from them.

Both the Contessa and von Schwarznase will take active steps to prevent this latter situation from happening, however, and may well spring the PCs from gaol if they cannot do it for themselves. The Contessa may even go so far as to seduce Titus Rottenrow in the hope of getting van Grijpstra out of the game.

Encounter: The Contessa's Move

The Contessa's plan for getting the painting is simple: she will ask for it.

First, she will offer to hide it, pointing out that the PCs currently do not have anywhere safe they can store it. If they do have somewhere safe to store it and she knows where it is,



Some kind of leader. It led a group into the chapel of St. Annahus - this could well be her skull.

then she will simply have her agents steal it. Secondly, she will point out that she will be easily able to smuggle it out of the city, as the Black Caps will not search a Shallyan nun.

If all of this fails then she will attempt to spike one or more of the PCs' food or drink with Oxleaf and then simply steal the painting while they are asleep.

Of course, the Contessa will strongly advise the PCs not to hand the painting over to either van Grijpstra or von Schwarznase, explaining that she feels neither of them can be trusted. For their parts, van Grijpstra may well try to trick the Contessa by passing her fake orders that seem to come from Bretonnia, while von Schwarznase will simply attempt to attack her.

Optional Encounter: Return to the Dog and Duck Inn

Alongside the art gallery the PCs visited earlier stands the ancient Dog and Duck Inn. This building has three storeys, topped by a grimy tiled, stepped roof with tiny clerestory windows denoting the rooms of the inn's staff. A large double gate opens into a central courtyard, containing the inn's stables and a collection of old wooden tables that are hardly ever used due to Marienburg's inclement weather. PCs with Witch Sight will be able to see that the ambient tendrils of Amethyst and Bright magic, which flow around the old wooden gibbet, now occasionally form themselves into images of small Gargoyles, mocking or cheering the approaching moon.

The taproom of the inn has three entrances: the main entrance from the square, the entrance from the courtyard by the tables and the passageway that leads into the gallery itself. Staats Remmerswaal is the inn's head barman, and he stands



BR

Watching from a recess by the Verhoff Tannery - it swooped down to harry anyone with a weapon. It was killed by group of Black Caps.

behind the long oak bar while Birgitte and Geertruida, a pair of the inn's attractive serving girls, wait upon the various locals and guests.

Staats and some of the locals had a run in with some looters who were attempting to steal several paintings from the storage in the gallery next door. He has now used them to decorate his inn as both a warning and an attraction. The paintings tell the tale of the first Gargoyle horde and the hanging of Barda von Micklestien. One of the older locals here will give anyone showing any curiosity in the paintings a brief explanation in exchange for a drink.

Anyone asking about von Schwarznase specifically will discover from the locals that he paid a lot of attention to these paintings, particularly the one of Barda von Micklestien stood outside of his old house. This hopefully should be enough information to lead the PCs into Chapter Three. Stories of the paintings will slowly circulate around Marienburg.

A Visit to the Library

PCs who are more scholarly may realise that many of the questions they have can be answered by looking through the city's records and archives. Alternatively NPCs can point them in the direction of one of Marienburg's libraries should the PCs pester them with too many questions.

Regardless of which library the PCs use the mechanics for research remain the same. Anyone with both the Read/Write Skill and the required Language Skills may use the library. This grants two advantages, firstly all Academic Knowledge tests made while in the library count as Basic Skill tests rather than Advanced. Secondly, PCs may re-roll a failed **Academic Knowledge Skill Test** for each additional full day they spend looking through the books. Unless none of the party has the Read/Write Skill, you should really let the PCs do the research themselves rather than having them pay someone else to do it, but researchers may be hired (OWA pg. 99).

After two days of research, if done by the PCs themselves, they will find a description of Barda von Micklestein's old house; this hopefully should be enough information to lead the PCs into Chapter Four.

Optional Encounter: The Cathedral of Shallya

With its attached public hospital, the large, whitewashed Temple of Shallya in Tempelwijk stands between the Doolweg and Groeneketter bridges, directly across from the Oudgeldwijk district. The hospital itself is completely enclosed, with red tiled roofs sheltering the courtyards from the Marienburg rain.

The possible reasons the PCs will come to this location are to obtain magical healing or to check out the Contessa's story.

Magical healing is in short supply, with the injured forms of Marienburg Black Caps and others savaged by Gargoyle attacks slumped against the walls, desperate for life saving miracles from the few overworked Anointed Priests that are stationed here. Twenty Templars from the Cult of Myrmydia are also here, protecting the Shallyan Sisters from Gargoyles, hysterical burghers and any PCs that attempt to get too pushy. Obtaining any healing here will require queuing for at least 1d10 hours, and add another five hours to this for receiving actual spells. The priests will refuse to be swayed by bribes, threats or any other form of persuasion.

The temple has no record of "Sister Trinette" – however this is not unusual as there are many members of the Cult of Shallya dispersed throughout the city. Some are assigned to the various temples scattered around Marienburg and others are travelling through on pilgrimages and missions of mercy. The cathedral makes no attempt to track them all.

Optional Encounter: The Handover

Some PCs may decide that the obvious way to end the Gargoyle threat is to give-in to von Schwarznase's ultimatum, handing the painting over to him at the gallows outside the Dog and Duck.

Von Schwarznase has the whole area under surveillance from a rooftop vantage point a couple of blocks away, where

he has set up a powerful telescope. He is pretty confident in his magical ability to escape the PCs, but has also hired several unscrupulous locals to hang around and pitch in should violence break out. (See the “Von Schwarznase’s Men” entry in the appendix.) Should he spot any signs of the Black Caps or other suspicious gathering of forces he will not attend the meeting and will move on to his second plan of simply robbing the PCs.

If the PCs hand the painting over to von Schwarznase, or if he simply grabs it off them in an ambush, he immediately flees Marienburg, heads straight to Nuln – making no attempt to fulfil his side of the bargain.

There is one additional piece of knowledge that may be useful, that will be known to any character who has the Common Knowledge (Empire) Skill and makes an **Average Academic Knowledge (Magick) Test**. As a Grey wizard, von Schwarznase is utterly forbidden from taking part in personal political missions for any of the Elector Counts or other nobility of the Empire. Brandishing this fact at him may allow a **Hard (-20%) Intimidate Test** to have him back down

and flee Marienburg without attempting to bludgeon the PCs and steal the painting. Of course, in his abject cowardice he still does not bother to solve the small issue of the Gargoyles.

Optional Encounter: The Handover with Ambush

As an alternative to simply handing the painting over to von Schwarznase, the players may decide to use the handover to lure him into the open so they can hang him or otherwise kill him. They may believe that it was the Marienburg mob that killed Barda that resulted in the end of the Gargoyle problem. (Any character with Arcane Knowledge (Daemonology) should be told that it almost certainly was not.) However even though butchering von Schwarznase actually will not help in the slightest, it will make those in the know feel a lot better about the whole Gargoyle situation if someone gets a bit of revenge in.

If it does come to combat, von Schwarznase is essentially an utter coward and will use his illusion spells to make a fast escape, while his men wade in and hopefully (from von Schwarznase’s point of view) kill his attackers. If he escapes, von Schwarznase will regroup and attempt to hunt the PCs down and use his spells to attack them when they least expect it.

Optional Encounter: Gargoyle Attack

If your PCs enjoy combat, the Gargoyles provide an endless pool of antagonists. Swooping down from the sky to attack, perhaps knowing in their stony daemonic hearts that this bunch of foolish mortals plots against them, or perhaps simply seeing them as easy pickings as they scurry around Marienburg’s streets and canals.

The small boats and punts that are normally used to traverse Marienburg are not exactly suited to combat. In fact, they are really unsuited to it, and any PCs using one make an ideal target for a Gargoyle attack. Fighting on a small boat like this requires a **Row Skill Test** at the start of each round by anyone engaged in combat. Failure results in them falling into the canal.

Additionally anyone swimming in one of Marienburg’s filthy canals must make a **Toughness Test** or catch the Disease “The Galloping Trots”. In the unbelievably foul Doodkanaal this is Challenging (-10%) and the Disease caught is “The Green Pox” instead.

Optional Encounter: The Stadtholder’s Second Guard

Most of the troops stationed in Marienburg are members of private household guards in the employ of powerful merchants. Even so, Stadtholder van Raemerswijk has overall command of over two thousand mercenaries to defend the city itself. As befits a city whose walls mostly contain water rather than land, the vast majority of these mercenaries serve as marines stationed on ships guarding the Reik and Manaanspoort Sea from invasion by Bretonnia or the Empire. The city has also stationed garrisons in the great fort of Rijker’s Isle or guarding the massive Vloedmuur wall. None of these troops are ideally placed to fend off an aerial invasion. A further problem plaguing the Stadtholder’s own guard is that, as the merchant



DA

I saw this one throwing stones down on passers-by. It took evil pleasure when it hit someone.

houses all pay a far greater wage than the city; Marienburg's official mercenary force comprises of a mixture of rookie troops, incompetents and others generally unemployable in any other force. Consequently, as the crisis progresses the PCs will come across more and more small bands of deserting troops, who have hastily ripped off their insignia and are now fleeing their former pay masters to avoid fighting the daemonic horde.

At some point on the fourth day or later, the PCs could have a run in with Commandeur Johan Anthoniszoon "Jan" Spaen, a merchant who holds a commission in the Stadtholder's Second Guard. The Commandeur has become frustrated by the political bickering taking place in the Old Palace over the deployment of Marienburg's official forces and has decided to take matters into his own hands. To this end, he has decided to take to the streets and aid Marienburg's populace by destroying bridges and buildings to prevent the spread of fire. While this

is often a useful technique, Commandeur Jan Spaen has not actually got any idea what he is doing, and is essentially just destroying bits of the city at random. A good way to involve the PCs in an encounter like this is to have them pass by a building they want to save just as the Commandeur is starting his demolition. GMs wishing to drive the dilemma home might wish to pick a location such as the 'Marienburg Home for Foundlings' and have a horde of distressed young children grab the PCs' legs and beg them to save their homes.

Commandeur Jan Spaen is not an unreasonable man, just frustrated and impatient. PCs should be able to Charm or even Command him into doing more useful work, especially if they can call upon Academic Knowledge (Engineering or Science). Spaen has a profile equivalent to Jan Willem van Grijpstra and soldiers use the profile for 'Sell Swords'.

Optional Encounter: Capture the Flag

If events get to day five, the Gargoyles' banner flies over the Marienburg New Palace. If the PCs are frustrated, powerful or simply insane; they may wish to have a go at capturing it.

This should by no means be easy. Firstly, the banner has been placed on the roof of Marienburg's New Palace. Most of this building is heavily fortified and Black Cap soldiers armed with pistols and halberds are entrenched behind the walls with orders to shoot interlopers on sight. However, the north wing of the building has been expanded with an unfortified temple and banquet hall, providing a place for PCs to climb up onto the roof without being shot at by the Black Caps.

Upon the roof are located several Gargoyles, at least two per character and one or more Gargoyle champions. Littering the roof are the bones of several of Stadtholder van Raemerswijk's famous racing pigeons, which have provided a quick and easy snack for the perching Gargoyles.

Should the PCs capture the banner, they then need to destroy it. The banner is not damaged by fire and cannot be ripped or cut by non-magical attacks. The banner, however, can be cut or damaged by magic or sacred items and will dissolve if holy water is poured over it. This must be done quickly as each round the PCs have the banner, a pack of Gargoyles attack the PCs, desperate to recover their standard.

If the PCs do capture and destroy the banner then the city cannot be destroyed upon day eight and Morrslieb will stop hovering over the city and return to its usual unpredictable orbit. While this still leaves the Gargoyles themselves to be mopped up, this is essentially a partial victory for the PCs.

Optional Encounter: Hiring a Forger

Really smart PCs, or ones with Trade (Artist), may wish to create a forgery of the painting to hand over while keeping the real



D

Seen through the window of the Blind Gull on Schuytstraat. The man never made it through the locked door before five of the creatures descended on him.

one to sell later. This is the kind of low underhand cunning that should be encouraged and nurtured.

Hiring a Forger requires a **Hard (-20%) Gossip Test** to locate one and a fee of 10 silver a day for an Average Craftsmanship Forger; this drops to 5 silver if they can somehow persuade him the work is legal. Alternatively, they can simply ask Meert Nieuwendijk, who will start by asking for 1 Guilder a day but who can be quickly bargained down to doing it in exchange for the privilege of not having his legs broken.

Each day the forger works, he must make a **Challenging (-10%) Trade (Artist) Test**. On a success, he makes a copy that can only be told apart by someone making a **Very Easy (+30%) Academic Knowledge (The Arts) Test**. For each additional day spent working on the forgery after this, the difficulty of this **Academic Knowledge (The Arts) Test** is increased by one stage, if the **Trade (Artist) Test** is passed.

As none of the prime contenders after the painting actually has the **Academic Knowledge (The Arts) Skill** only one skill test is required, but of course the PCs do not know this, and may well attempt to get the very best forgery they can.

CHAPTER FOUR IN THE HOUSE OF VON BARDA

There are several ways to locate Barda von Micklestein's old house.

The first is the same way as von Schwarznase, by finding the location shown in the picture hanging in the Dog and Duck. This is not as hard as it sounds. Anyone with Common

Oxleaf

The sap of this herb can be rendered down to a fine powder, which can be dissolved in a glass of any alcoholic drink. It does however have a slight distinct odour, and so anyone with an Oxleaf laced beverage may make a **Challenging (-10%) Perception Test** to notice that their drink has been spiked. A skilled Poisoner will often add Oxleaf to a meal by adding it to a sauce or marinating the meat in drugged ale. In these cases the **Perception Test** becomes **Very Hard (-30%)**.

Type: Natural (Ingested)

Effects: If a character drinks a full glass of any beverage laced with Oxleaf, they must pass a **Toughness Test**, or after 1d10 rounds have lapsed they will pass out for 1d10 hours exactly as if they had become stinking drunk (WFRP2 pg.115).

Price and Availability: 5 Guilders per dose (Rare)

Manufacture: Oxleaf grows wild throughout both the Empire and the Wasteland, although some traders cultivate their own plants. A character that spends 1d10/2 hours searching for this plant and who succeeds on a **Routine (+10%) Outdoor Survival Test** discovers enough of the herb to provide a single dose. A **Hard (-20%) Prepare Poison Test** is required to render this plant into a useable dose of the drug.



The creature plunged its stone weapon into the chest of a young apprentice. It stood still long after its poor victim had stopped moving.

Knowledge (the Wasteland) will automatically realise that the area depicted is Oudgeldwijk, and with a successful skill test they can narrow it down further to Lekstratt, a quiet shopping street known for its relatively inexpensive clothing and equipment shops.

A trip to the town records will locate Barda von Micklestein's old address, although getting hold of the relevant seventy year old document will be time consuming and expensive.

One of the old folk questioned may just remember the location, although this should pretty much be the GM's last resort.

Oudgeldwijk was once Marienburg's aristocratic quarter, but the years and the continual movement of those with wealth and influence to the north side of the river have not been kind to the district. These days it is a strange mixture, with some of Marienburg's oldest most conservative noble families living in houses next to buildings that are little better than those in the slums, impressive old town houses converted into both tenement style apartments, and offices for fledgling merchants, traders and other professionals. Houses here are often four

or five storeys high, and surmounted by odd towers, spires and weathercocks, with competing nobles desperate to add a few extra feet of height to demonstrate superiority over their fellows.

Barda von Micklestein's old townhouse is easy to spot due to the large von Micklestein crest carved into the front stonework, identifiable with an **Arcane Knowledge (Genealogy/Heraldry) Test**. The lower levels of the building have been converted into 'Ruud Leeuwenhoek's Chandlery Shop' which specialises in navigation equipment and other valuable ship supplies, such as sextons, telescopes, a stuffed crocodile and a fine range of other naval apparel. Any character with Secret

houses in Oudgeldwijk, this building will have an extensive series of basements, sub-basements and even sub-sub-basements. These resulted from a series of old edicts by the Barons of Westerland, who would occasionally order



Seen screeching from atop the sign of the Long Dragon inn.

Signs (Thieves) will note that the shop is clearly marked as being under the protection of 'the guild with no name'.

The shop's owner, Ruud Leeuwenhoek, stands behind the large counter opposite the shop's door. He will immediately be wary of any PCs that do not appear nautical. He concludes that such people are either time wasters or criminals aiming to take advantage of the Gargoyle horde to rob him while the Black Caps are preoccupied.

PCs with Academic Knowledge (Architecture) or Academic Knowledge (History) will realise that as with almost all the

History Repeating

PCs making a **Hard (-20%) Common Knowledge (the Wasteland) Test** or an **Academic Knowledge (History) Test** will remember the vague details of the first Gargoyle invasion of Marienburg.

Over seventy years ago hordes of Lesser Daemons were loosed upon Marienburg due to the ineptitude of the Bright Wizard Barda von Micklestein.

For seven days these Daemons, named as "Flying Gargoyles of Barda" by Marienburg's populace, stalked and slew the citizens of Marienburg with impunity, revelling in an orgy of destruction.

On the eve of the eighth day the Daemons disappeared, leaving much of the city a smoking ruin. Barda von Micklestein himself had been lynched by a mob of angry citizens and hung from the quickly constructed gibbet that stands outside the Dog and Duck Inn to this day.

The same information can also be gained through research or alternatively gossiping with the natives. In particular, GMs using the additional Marienburg content may wish to use Granny Hetta or Albert Waarmans, both of whom can remember the first Gargoyle invasion and will happily talk about it at length. Gossiping in this way will quickly garner the information that pictures showing the event can be found at the Dog and Duck Inn.

Some PCs, may wish to trace von Micklestein's blood relatives (for example, Amethyst Mages wishing to cast the spell, 'Knocks of the Departed'). Only one currently resides in Marienburg, Radboud van Micklestein – a young but well off ne'er-do-well living in a small flat in the Tempelwijk district. He knows very little that is useful and will not take well to being approached, fearing that his family's past may well result in him being blamed. (Indeed if it somehow comes out, he will be assaulted by the desperate mob on Day 5 of the invasion.) The information to find Radboud van Micklestein is easily available via any of Marienburg's main libraries, (See *A Visit to the Library*) Note that the von Micklestein family Marienburgised its name to van Micklestein a few decades ago.

One aspect of the background material that this scenario has ignored is the idea that wizards at Baron Henryk's College of Navigation and Sea Magicks can safely summon and control Barda Gargoyles and use them as a mercenary force.

While the idea that Marienburg practices Daemonology on such a commercial scale may seem out of keeping with WFRP2, GMs wishing to explore this aspect should allow members of the college to learn a ritual to summon Barda Gargoyles using the rules for Summoning Daemons in *Tome of Corruption*.

We are not at home to Maheer Teflon!

One of the sad details of life is that some PCs adopt a simple strategy of "when the going gets tough, the PCs run off and hide from the plot." This typically will manifest in one of three ways.

"Getting help" or "Why do we have to do this?"

The PCs may well wonder why, being in a city full of armed soldiers, powerful wizards and mighty priests, only they can save the day. To counter this it is vital that you should press home that the Gargoyle problem is taking up the majority of Marienburg's resources. Every member of the watch or military that they see should be involved in either preparing defences against the Gargoyles or actually in combat with them. Furthermore, NPCs will generally assume that as the PCs seem to already be making progress in sorting out the problem, they are clearly the right people for the job anyway, especially as they seem to be doing it for free.

Running Away

This is a common response, and one that is often hard to counter.

If they have, or people think they have, the van Klomp, then everyone will simply chase after them. This will lead to a fast pursuit over whatever countryside they choose, with various Templars, Witch-Hunters, criminals and other city officials desperate to drag them back to Marienburg to solve the Gargoyle problem, for which they are soundly blamed. Crossing the border into Bretonnia or the Empire will do them no good either. The reward on their heads, dead or alive, from Marienburg's Stadsraad starts at 1000 Guilders and increases each week the PCs remain at large. Nobody loses a Daemonic Horde upon the richest city on earth and gets away with it! Even if it was not technically their fault.

Everybody the PCs meet is likely to want to capture them and hand them over, and their best bet is to flee to somewhere relatively remote, like Lustria or the South Lands. That being said, some Witch Hunters of Sigmar are likely to be quite happy that this calamity has befallen the hated bastion of anarchy that is Marienburg, and may even tell the PCs this as they burn them at the stake for participating in Daemon summoning. Additionally, if they have taken the Contessa with them, she will take action anyway; see the Encounter: The Contessa's Move.

Siege Mentality

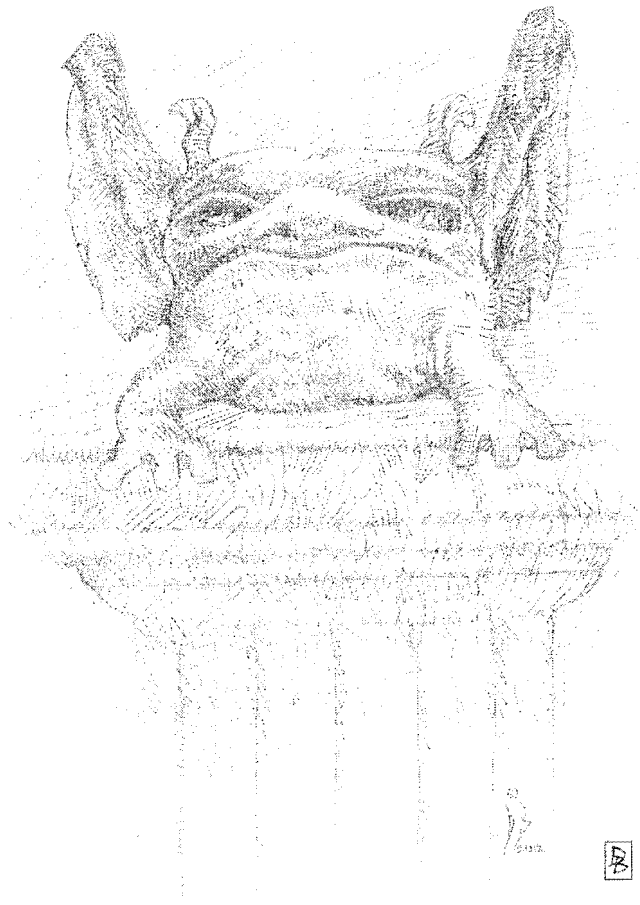
The PCs could also find a building, fortify it with twelve year's supply of pickled fish and simply never venture outside. Ploys to encourage PCs could involve having beautiful young maidens hammer on the door in terror as Gargoyles descend upon them, in the hope that they will show some moral courage. Failing this have von Schwarznase work out where they are and have him and his thugs attempt to storm the building.

Oudgeldwijk to be flattened so that it could be rebuilt above the tidemark. Nobles would typically avoid such edicts, meaning that entire levels of their homes would lie under the new level of the pavement. The shopkeeper will deny any knowledge of anything under the house. This is because he is a part time smuggler who uses his business to get small goods in and out of the city via the network of tunnels below the Oudgeldwijk district.

There are essentially three ways to get Ruud Leeuwenhoek to help; Charm, Intimidate or Haggle.

Charm tests can be done by anyone who has a convincing story, and in this case, the truth will work. Ruud Leeuwenhoek had no idea why von Schwarznase paid him 5 Guilders to be shown how to access the tunnels under the shop and assumed he was simply up to something mildly criminal, such as smuggling.

Intimidate tests are all Hard (-20%) due to Ruud Leeuwenhoek being protected by 'The League of Gentlemen Entrepreneurs.'



Seen on Kalvermarkt. A poor house guard laughed at it before it bit his head off in one bite. I could hear the crunching across the canal.

However, his links to the guild can be turned to an advantage. If the PCs threaten to tell 'the guild with no name' that Leeuwenhoek was responsible for allowing von Schwarznase to release the Gargoyle horde, the difficulty becomes Routine (+10%) instead.

If the PCs do carry out this threat and tell the 'the guild with no name' Leeuwenhoek will be found outside the Dog and Duck a week later, having committed suicide by stabbing himself in the back fourteen times. After all, no one likes a man who upsets the business of the Marienburg by helping a madman unleash his Daemonic hordes upon the city.

Bribing Ruud Leeuwenhoek is probably the easiest way; he is, after all, a businessman, and one particularly lacking in morals. Approximately five Guilders would be a suitable amount.

A staircase in the small office of the chandlery shop leads down into the building's basement, which is used as a storeroom and is full of various ships supplies. The Trapdoor down to the sub-basement is hidden under two heavy barrels of caulking tar. If the PCs have persuaded Leeuwenhoek to lead them here then he will show them the way down, otherwise a **Search Test** is required unless the PCs specifically mention that they are moving the heavy barrels.

Underneath the trapdoor, a pitted iron ladder leads down into the room where Leeuwenhoek runs his smuggling operation. To the east of the room a small boat is tied to a jetty in a flooded corridor about 5 feet high (2 feet of which is under the water), while to the north the wall contains a single iron door marked with a stylised key symbol. The door is rusted and pitted, but the lock has had the rust scraped off and has been recently picked.

Should the PCs head down the underground canal itself, they will either have to use the small boat, (which only seats two people,) or wade through the two foot of water and worse that fills it. The tunnel is covered with stone tiles, and insects, rats and even strange albino lizards flit around here, just at the edge of any torch light. The whole thing is pervaded with a horrid stench, making the PCs' eyes water.

No formal encounters are presented here for PCs exploring what is in effect a pointless side trip; however, GMs wishing to spice this section up should feel free to have their PCs encounter smugglers, sewerjack patrols or even mutants or Skaven hiding in the darkness. Eventually the canal empties, via a partially concealed locked gate (for which Ruud Leeuwenhoek has a key) into the Rijksweg, at the very north of the Oudgeldwijk district.

On the other side of the iron door, a spiral staircase descends to an even deeper basement. Drops fall from the ceiling, clearly illustrating that the rooms here are under the waterline. This room is von Micklestein's secret laboratory, and is in a state of disrepair, as apart from von Schwarznase's visit, it has not been used in over seventy years. Anyone with magic sight will see that the wind of Bright Magic is particularly powerful here, and the torches upon the wall will spontaneously ignite as soon as anyone steps near to one.

The room is carpeted in red felt and the walls have orange

cloth hangings upon them, interspaced between the many bookcases full of various ancient scrolls. A few tables have intricate arrays of glassware upon them, with the stains within them being all that is left of von Micklestein's various experiments.

Anyone making a **Challenging (-10%) Perception Test** will realise that the scrolls in the laboratory are covered with an unusual mould. Due to this, creating any disturbances within the room will release a cloud of poisonous spores. All living creatures in the laboratory must make a **Toughness Test** each round. A failed test results in the loss of D10/2 wounds, regardless of Toughness Bonus or Armour.

Two large stone plinths stand at the far end of the room. Both are covered with a cloth showing the symbol of Olovald. One plinth has a large tome resting on it that has clearly been recently disturbed, while upon the other slumps a blue robed, dust covered skeleton clutching a large scroll. These are the remains of Father Harm Roterodamus, the Priest of Olovald



B

One of a group by the docks,
they snatched a stevedore from a
deck.

De Natura Daemonium

This large heavy tome is bound in a black scaly material, somewhat like snake or lizard skin. It has a trailing heavy iron chain that once bound it to some form of mounting, but this has been severed with what appears to have been a rather heavy bladed instrument. Inside the cover is an embossed image of an owl with one eye shut. The sepia writing is spidery and crosses the pages at a distinctive off-kilter angle. The *De Natura Daemonium* is written in the *Lingua Praesentia*, and is said to be one of the greatest catalogues of Daemonic lore in existence.

Using De Natura Daemonium

Understanding the book requires a successful Read/Write Skill Test by a character with the Speak Arcane Language (Magick) Skill, along with a full eight hours of uninterrupted study. Once this test is made, the character has absorbed all the information in the book and may thereafter obtain the Academic Knowledge (Daemonology) Skill for 100 experience points, regardless of his current career. Additionally the character must make a **Will Power Test**, failure results in the character gaining an Insanity Point plus an additional Insanity Point for each Degree of Failure.

This book provides a way to allow PCs to learn Rituals and Lesser Magic Spells. GMs wishing to use this option should select whichever spells they wish the character to have access too. "Hand of God", "Side-Step" and the Ritual "Call Daemon" from *Tome of Corruption* are all particularly appropriate choices.

However, the major problem with the book, as Barda von Micklestein found out, is that misreading the names can easily result in summoning a large quantity of Gargoyles into the world. Each time a **Read/Write Test** is failed the reader must immediately make a **Will Power Test** or the book will summon a horde of Gargoyles that will raid the local area until they are all destroyed. Of course, someone unscrupulous like von Schwarznase could actually deliberately decide to fail this second roll.

who dwelt in the temple the PCs visited in chapter one. It was he who successfully ended the first Gargoyle invasion some 70 years ago, dying in the process.

Any character with the Read/Write Skill will be able to read that this scroll contains an invocation that will end the Gargoyle assault if read aloud. The scroll should probably be written in Arcane Language (Magick); however Classical or even Reikspiel could be substituted if the GM wishes.

If no one in the group has the Read/Write Skill, this presents two issues. Firstly, the PCs may not realise that the scroll will end the Gargoyle invasion, secondly they cannot read it aloud to resolve the issue anyway.

A possible way to key the PCs into the scroll being the solution to the issue would be to have a single Gargoyle fly down and assault the PCs, growling to them that he will kill them before

they can use the scroll. The PCs can then have a dramatic chase through the streets or even sewers of Marienburg, fighting off Gargoyles as they desperately try to deliver the scroll to either Baron Henryk's College of Navigation and Sea Magicks or one of the city's temples, where a wizard or priest can read out the scroll and end the Gargoyle invasion. He will probably be rewarded richly for this, unlike the PCs.

All the PCs need to do to end the Gargoyle threat is read the scroll aloud. The problem with this plan is that it takes ten rounds to read and every Gargoyle in the vicinity will home in to try to kill the reader.

Gargoyles will immediately swarm towards the scroll as it is read. Forcing the Gargoyles to fight on the spiral staircase means that only one Gargoyle can effectively fight due to their wingspan, while up to three PCs will be able to attack in return.

After ten rounds reading the scroll every Gargoyle within Marienburg vanishes at the end of its current round.

At this point the Gargoyle threat is ended; all that is left is to wrap up the scenario.

CONCLUSION AFTERMATHS OR INTERLUDES

The following outlines some likely endings to the scenario, depending on who ended up with van Klomp's painting. Each of these may well lead onto other opportunities and indeed many other dangers.

If the PCs hand the painting over to von Schwarznase, he will flee with it as fast as he can, and as he is a Grey Wizard, that is very fast indeed. His objective is to get the painting back to Nuln, and vengeful PCs – mindful of the fact that he did not keep his end of the bargain – may well wish to try to hunt him down. This tangent is possibly one of the most involved;

The Priest of Olovald

Although officially declared a Saint of Manann in the Imperial Year 1010, a few Marienburgers still worship Olovald as a god in his own right. News that a priest of their god was responsible for ending the first Gargoyle plague would be very welcome to these worshippers and they may be willing to pay for conclusive proof of the fact. Of course, Witch Hunters from the Temple of Manann would be very happy to reward anyone spreading such lies and heresy within the city, by holding their heads under the Doodkanaal for a few hours.

Additionally, if the PCs give the bones of Father Harm Roterodamus a proper burial at a Temple of Olovald, Manann or Morr, then the PCs may be rewarded by some small divine favour, perhaps a +5% bonus to their next Swim, Navigation or Row Test or even, if they organised an extremely elaborate and public burial, a single Fate Point lost during this scenario. This latter option is especially appropriate if this is being used as part of a longer campaign.

a break neck chase to Nuln in pursuit of a master of illusion – the start of a campaign in its own right.

If they hand the painting over to the Contessa, she will be very grateful before disappearing without a trace. A number of weeks later, rumours may surface of the Countess Emmanuelle von Liebwitz of Nuln entering negotiations with Bretonnia, in an act that may destabilise the very Empire itself! GMs wishing to continue this plot strand may send the PCs on a mission into Bretonnia, to recover the painting from the Court of Louen Leoncouer.

If the PCs handed the painting over to Jan Willem van Grijpstra he will once more rise into a position of real power in Marienburg – if the PCs proved competent he may well hire them again for various ‘off the record’ tasks. If however the PCs proved to be incompetent, dangerous or know far too much, they may well be visited by a few members of the Black Caps, who will run them out of the city.

If the PCs hand the painting over to Pieter Raachmens, he will hand over whatever he agreed to pay for it, be it Biermatz (who he will be able to arrange to have captured) or cash. The PCs may well learn later that Raachmens has left the Vrouw Maria and climbed high within Kris van Kjurann’s organisation, having used the painting to buy favour. Indeed Raachmens

may provide a source of employment for the PCs down the line.

Finally if the PCs managed to somehow keep the painting they have to decide what to do with it. Along with this they may have possession of the several sketches of Marienburg architecture that van Klomp hid with his painting. Each of these sketches can be sold for 3d10 Guilders to a collector, and there are twelve in total.

The PCs may have made a useful contact in Ruud Leeuwenhoek who, depending on the Character’s conduct, may be inclined to offer them his smuggling service should they ever need it. Alternatively, if they have mistreated him he may well seek revenge, possibly by hiring a bunch of thugs through the ‘League’ to run the PCs out of town.

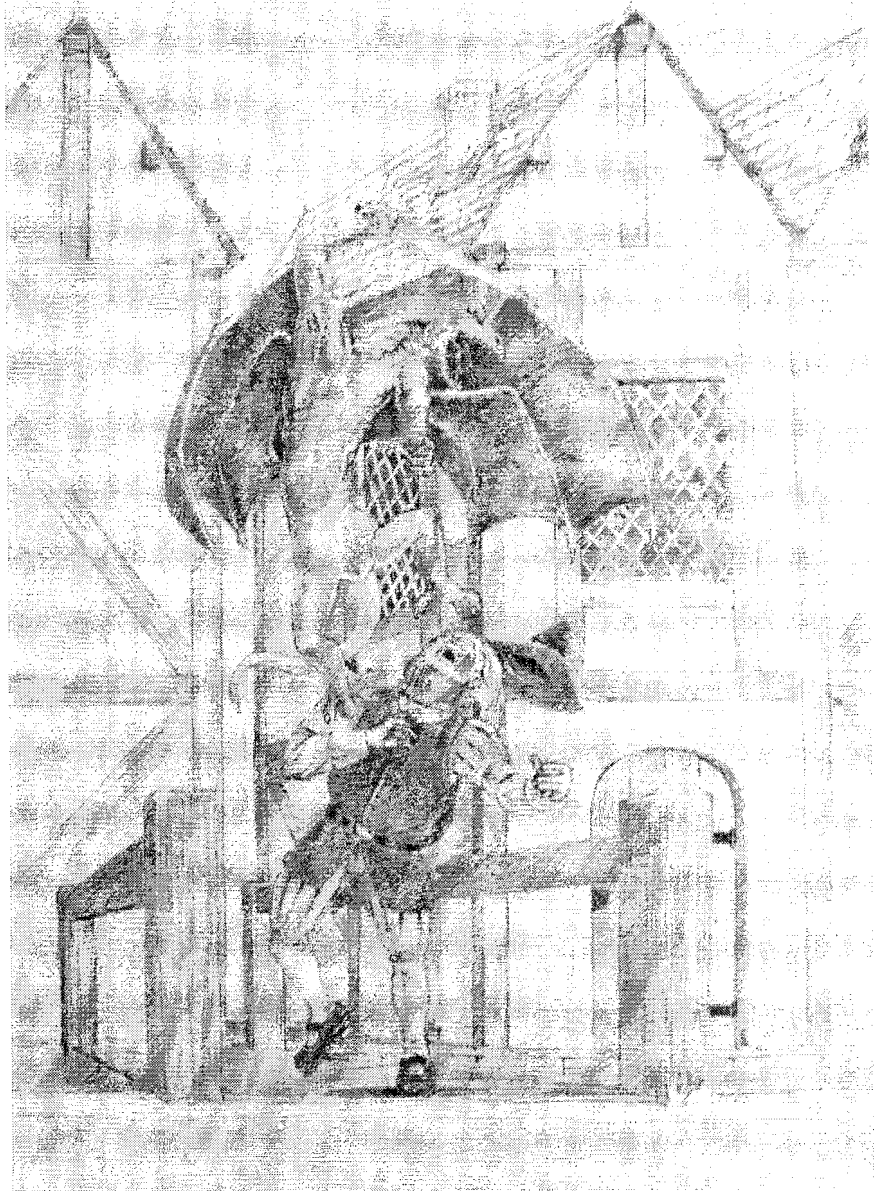
Experience and Advancement

This scenario is worth around 100 Experience for each chapter completed. With perhaps a bonus or penalty of 25 Experience due to exceptionally good or poor roleplaying, problem solving and general participation.

The painting of the Fallen Countess by van Klomp

Informally known as the “The Painting of the Fallen Countess” even though she is actually standing up, this painting is a portrait of Countess Emmanuelle von Liebwitz of Nuln, and will be recognised as a very good likeness by anyone who has ever seen her. The portrait is also very distinguishable as the Countess’s bodice is pulled very low indeed, totally exposing her entire upper body. This last feature makes the painting immensely popular, and it can be expected to fetch a good price from a dedicated collector.

The painting is worth an absolute fortune, easily capable of fetching 15,000 Guilders or more at auction, placing it near the top rung of art prices detailed in the *Old World Armoury*. It is perhaps even more valuable as a tool that could be used to garner political leverage in Nuln. Note that the dangers in trying to sell the work are incredible. The painting is illegal in the Empire, and the Countess herself will mobilise considerable resources to regain it. Attempting to use it to blackmail or bribe the Countess will need to be handled with great discretion and caution.



**APPENDIX
PCs AND MONSTERS**

Jan Willem van Grijpstra

Politician (Ex-Watchman, ex-Sergeant, ex-Captain)

Jan Willem is a quiet and soft-spoken man in his late thirties. He was once an up-and-coming watch captain, renowned for his fast progress through the ranks of the Black Caps.

This all changed when in the course of his duty he crossed paths with the sadistic Kris van Kjurann, a prominent Marienburg Crime Lord and member of Marienburg's Stadsraad.

Van Grijpstra's downfall came shortly after he shut down a highly profitable smuggling ring. Unknown to him, the smuggling was directly controlled by Kris van Kjurann to provide his private parties with exotic goods, forbidden drugs and even, on occasion, pleasure slaves.

Incensed by the loss of part of his criminal empire, Kris van Kjurann took little time to use his influence to strip van Grijpstra of his captaincy within the Black Caps and instead assigned him as a lieutenant in the dead-end Rijkspoort district, under the command of Watch Captain Titus Rottenrow. Rottenrow is well known as one of the harshest commanders of the Black Caps, who loves to belittle the former Captain van Grijpstra and misses no chance to assign him the most degrading and unrewarding of tasks.

Van Grijpstra now carefully bides his time, waiting for an opportunity to gain revenge on both Rottenrow and van Kjurann, and will take advantage of any opportunity to return to power, no matter the cost. He is still dedicated to Marienburg the city, but strives to cut out the corrupt elements like van Kjurann's criminal organisation. When he is not expecting a fight, van Grijpstra wears his floppy black cap with badge of office rather than his helmet.



WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
53	57	49	49	55	58	57	56
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
3	17	4	4	4	0	0	0

Skills: Academic Knowledge (Genealogy/Heraldry, Law, Strategy/Tactics), Animal Care, Charm, Command, Common Knowledge (the Empire, Kislev, Norsca, the Wasteland), Dodge Blow, Evaluate, Follow Trail, Gossip, Haggle, Intimidate, Perception, Read/Write, Search, Secret Language (Battle Tongue), Speak Language (Reikspiel, Tilean), Swim

Talents: Coolheaded, Dealmaker, Disarm, Etiquette, Lightning

Parry, Public Speaking, Savvy, Schemer, Seasoned Traveller, Specialist Weapon (Parrying, Two-handed), Street Fighting, Streetwise, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Stun, Super Numerate

Armour (Heavy): Breastplate and helm, studded leather sleeves and leggings

Armour Points: Head 5, Arms 2, Body 5, Legs 2

Weapons: Long sword (Good Craftsmanship hand weapon, 1d10+5), baton of rank (Hand Weapon, 1d10+5), buckler (1d10+1, Balanced, Defensive, Pummelling)

Equipment: Floppy black cap with badge of office, Good Craftsmanship clothing, hip flask containing Alte Geheerentode Rum, purse containing 25 Guilders

Contessa l'Breuil

Spy (Ex-Camp Follower, ex-Initiate)

The Contessa l'Breuil is one of the chief Bretonnian agents currently within Marienburg. A stunningly attractive woman who escaped from a life as an initiate of Shallya. Her orders are to retrieve the painting at all costs. She favours using persuasion to get what she wants and will attempt to charm or even seduce whoever she believes has the painting. When pretending to be a Shallyan nun, she goes by the name of Sister Trinette. As she was an Initiate of Shallya, her disguise is pretty much perfect, therefore even another member of the Cult of Shallya should have little chance of catching her out.



WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
49	46	29	33	58	55	36	61
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	16	2	3	4	0	0	0

Skills: Academic Knowledge (Astronomy, History, Theology), Charm+20%, Common Knowledge (Bretonnia, the Empire, the Wasteland), Concealment, Disguise, Drive, Evaluate, Gossip+10%, Haggle, Heal+10%, Lip Reading, Perception+10%, Performer (Actor), Pick Lock, Read/Write, Search, Secret Language (Guild Tongue), Shadowing, Silent Move, Sleight of Hand+10%, Speak Language (Breton+10%, Classical, Kislevan, Reikspiel+10%, Tilean), Trade (Herbalist)

Talents: Dealmaker, Fleel, Lightning Reflexes, Linguistics, Luck, Public Speaking, Resistance to Disease, Schemer, Sixth Sense, Suave

Armour (None): Simple yellow robes with Shallyan wimple worn over Bretonnian lingerie

Armour Points: Head 0, Arms 0, Body 0, Legs 0

Weapons: Garrotte (Special), Misericorde (Good Craftsmanship Dagger, 1d10-1)

Equipment: SilverDove Brooch, Palm Mirror, Perfume, Several doses of Oxleaf Poison, Set of Lock Picks concealed in both her Wimple and her Garter, Luxurious flat in the Paleisbuurt district, Extensive wardrobe of Good Craftsmanship Noble's Clothing, Selection of Good Craftsmanship Jewellery

Jan van Niezer

Slaver (Ex-Seaman, ex-Reaver)

One of the more unpleasant inhabitants of the Rijkspoort, Jan van Niezer cuts an unimpressive figure, middle-aged with a midriff that has long gone to flab. He ran away to sea when he was just a lad, falling in with a hardened crew of corsairs that raided the coasts of the Old World capturing slaves for profit.

Having made a modest fortune, van Niezer retired to the position of the ship's contact dealing in the flesh market of Marienburg. Here he quickly came to the attention of Kris van Kjurann, for whom he has principally worked ever since.

Although he is careful to never openly display them, Jan van Niezer also sports several tattoos which he gained during his maritime career. Anyone sighting these with Academic Knowledge (Daemonology, Law or Theology) will realise that they are obscure symbols associated with the Ruinous Powers, enough evidence to assure his execution even if it cannot be proven he is guilty of any other crime.

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
51	50	55	39	40	29	36	27
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
2	14	5	3	4	0	0	0

Skills: Common Knowledge (Norsca, the Empire, the Wasteland), Consume Alcohol, Dodge Blow+10%, Drive, Evaluate, Follow Trail, Gossip, Haggle, Intimidate, Ride, Row, Sail, Scale Sheer Surface, Speak Language (Norse, Reikspiel, Tilean), Swim, Torture

Talents: Dealmaker, Menacing, Public Speaking, Resistance to Disease, Seasoned Traveller, Specialist Weapon (Entangling), Street Fighting, Sturdy, Swashbuckler

Armour (Medium): Helmet and Mail shirt over Full Leather Armour

Armour Points: Head 3, Arms 1, Body 3, Legs 1

Weapons: Boarding Axe (Hand Weapon, 1d10+5), Net (Special)

Equipment: Bottle of Poor Craftsmanship spirits, a collection

of tattoos, three sets of manacles, 10 yards of rope

Jasin Biermatz

Halfling - Rogue (Ex-Tradesman, ex-Gambler)

A small time con artist, Jasin Biermatz runs various simple scams down by the docks situated just inside the Strompoort Gate, typically aiming to fleece new gullible visitors to the city of as much cash as possible. He is known by the Halfling population of Marienburg, but seldom crosses the river to the Kleinmoot, and generally has little to do with Halflings. He has no strong ties to anyone else in the city either, with both the Black Caps and the 'Guild we do not talk about' regarding him as little more than a pest.



Biermatz is short, side-burned and occasionally more than a little crude, especially in the company of females of any race. Should he survive the scenario without being killed or arrested, he can be relied upon to try to involve himself in any 'get rich quick' scheme the GM can think of, and could also be a useful contact in Marienburg's seedy underside.

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
26	45	28	24	49	41	38	47
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	12	2	2	5	0	0	0

Skills: Academic Knowledge (Genealogy/Heraldry), Blather, Charm, Common Knowledge (Halflings), Drive, Evaluate, Gamble+10%, Gossip, Haggle, Perception, Performer (Actor), Read/Write, Secret Language (Guild Tongue, Thieves' Tongue), Secret Signs (Thieves), Sleight of Hand, Speak Language (Halfling, Reikspiel), Trade (Artist, Cook)

Talents: Dealmaker, Flee!, Fleet Footed, Luck, Night Vision, Public Speaking, Resistance to Chaos, Sixth Sense, Specialist Weapon (Sling), Streetwise

Insanities: Due to a childhood misfortune, Biermatz suffers from 'The Fear' of Eagles and other similar birds of prey.

Armour (Light): Leather Jerkin and Trousers

Armour Points: Head 0, Arms 0, Body 1, Legs 1

Weapons: Dagger (1d10-1)

Equipment: Deck of Hand Painted Cards (marked), Set of bone dice (weighted), Stone Lucky Charm on a leather thong, Purse containing 10+5d10 silver if his stall has done well or a few pennies if it has not

**Roderick "Halfwijze" Lubbe
Boatman**

Roderick Lubbe, known as Halfwijze (Halfwit) to almost everyone, is fairly typical of Marienburg's desperate poor. Unable to work as a boatman, and too witless to learn a new trade, Roderick typically spends his days doing the most simple and low paid tasks. Having recently been fired from a position washing pots in a typical Marienburger hive of scum and villainy, Roderick was hired by Biermatz who had just been thrown out of the same establishment for trying to con his way out of paying. Roderick is therefore quite grateful to Biermatz and will loyally protect the Halfing, although his general incompetence and gullibility will often thwart his attempts to do so.

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
28	25	27	30	28	22	24	23
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	10	2	3	3	0	0	0

Skills: Common Knowledge (Kislev, the Empire, the Wasteland), Consume Alcohol, Gossip, Navigation, Outdoor Survival, Perception, Row, Sail, Speak Language (Kislevan, Reikspiel), Swim

Talents: Excellent Vision, Orientation, Resistance to Disease, Seasoned Traveller

Special Rules:

False Leg: Roderick managed to lose his leg when it was crushed under a crate of salted Cavecrabs imported from the Black Gulf. He has replaced his lost appendage with a simple wooden peg leg, granting him a penalty to movement as reflected in his profile. (Without the false leg his Move is further reduced to 2). Additionally he suffers a -20% penalty to all tests based on mobility (note that this usually includes his Row, Sail and Swim Skills).

Armour (Light): Poor Craftsmanship leather jack and Poor Craftsmanship clothing

Armour Points: Head: 0 Arms: 1 Body: 1 Legs: 0

Weapons: Dagger (1d10-1)

Equipment: Battered wooden peg leg, Small box containing a pet beetle, 1d10 brass coins hidden about his person

Pieter Raachmens

Racketeer (Ex-Seaman, ex-Bailiff)

Never the strongest or most skilled of sailors, Pieter Raachmens quickly left the life of a seaman to work for the organisation of Kris van Kjurann. There he worked as a rent collector

for several years, patrolling van Kjurann's slum tenements and demanding coin and goods from some of Marienburg's poorest citizens. He soon learned to augment his meagre pay by demanding additional rent to pocket for himself, and eventually retired to become the landlord of one of the van Kjurann floating tenements.

Now Pieter Raachmens styles himself Captain of the Vrouw Maria. He has set up his court in the largest of the ship's old cabins, draping it with tattered silks and satins and filling it with other stolen goods and contraband. Raachmens himself wears the finest nautical clothing from a bygone age and everything surrounding him is always of decaying opulence. Rather overweight, he is coarse and crudely spoken, often using nautical slang and curse words to emphasise his role as Captain, although in the presence of people he regards as being his betters he quickly drops his accent, becoming a snivelling toady.

As the landlord, Pieter Raachmens is the final arbitrator of who can gain shelter within the Vrouw Maria tenement and who has to dwell upon the perilous streets and sandbanks of Marienburg. This allows him to act as a petty tyrant, demanding tribute from his tenants and insisting they obey his every command.

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
28	25	27	30	28	22	24	23
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	10	2	3	3	0	0	0

Skills: Academic Knowledge (Law), Command, Common Knowledge (the Empire, the Wasteland), Dodge Blow+10%, Evaluate, Gossip+10%, Haggle, Intimidate, Navigation, Perception, Read/Write, Ride, Row, Sail, Scale Sheer Surface, Shadowing, Speak Language (Breton, Reikspiel), Swim

Talents: Coolheaded, Menacing, Night Vision, Public Speaking, Seasoned Traveller, Street Fighting, Streetwise, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Stun, Super Numerate, Swashbuckler

Armour (Light): Good Craftsmanship Clothing with Leather Jerkin and a Hard Leather Tricorn Hat

Armour Points: Head: 1 Arms: 0 Body: 1 Legs: 0

Weapons: Cutlass (Hand Weapon, 1d10+5), Knuckle-Dusters (1d10+2, Pummelling)

Equipment: Powdered White Periwig worn under his Captain's Hat, Tankard fashioned from a Snotling's Skull, Poor Craftsmanship Telescope, Bronze Ship's Bell used to summon the "Crew". At any given time Raachmens will have 1d10x20 Guilders worth of Stolen Goods and Contraband openly held in his cabin

**Meert Nieuwendijk
Forger (Ex-Student)**

Nieuwendijk calls himself a student of arts, although he is no longer enrolled at any college. However, he does live the student's lifestyle to the full, waking in the early afternoon and spending his nights drinking and gambling in the clubs and taverns of the Tempelwijk district. He is slowly paying off his rather impressive collection of debts to various temples, merchants and even crime lords. Nieuwendijk is a man of few moral principles and will happily produce forgeries of artwork, documents or even counterfeit coinage for the right price.

Lazy, condescending, cowardly and habitually drunk, Nieuwendijk's knowledge of artwork is often spotty at best, a legacy of countless missed lectures. For those willing to put up with his odious personality however, Nieuwendijk can provide an excellent guide to Tempelwijk's drinking and gambling establishments.

Von Schwarznase

Spy (Ex-Noble, ex-Apprentice Wizard, ex-Journeyman Wizard, ex-Charlatan)

Von Schwarznase is a Grey Wizard dispatched by High Chancellor Jekil Rohrig of Nuln to follow up rumours of the painting. He has been spectacularly unsuccessful in this so far, being far too much of a blunt instrument to function effectively in a complex city like Marienburg. A truly loathsome example of a human being, von Schwarznase is a cowardly bully who is perfectly happy to condemn thousands of people to death in his mission to reclaim the painting.

To this end, his strategy is very much to let someone else do the hard work of finding the painting, and then simply bully them into handing it over by unleashing the Daemonic Invasion. If in the process the hated traitor-port of Marienburg is devastated, so much the better.

Note that von Schwarznase is actually an alias and he never uses his actual name.

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
43	43	31	42	48	53	53	54
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
2	14	3	4	4	2	0	0

Skills: Academic Knowledge (Astronomy, Magic), Arcane Language (Magick), Blather, Channelling, Charm, Common Knowledge (Bretonnia, the Empire, the Wasteland), Concealment+10%, Consume Alcohol, Disguise, Evaluate, Gamble, Gossip, Haggle, Intimidate, Lip Reading, Magical Sense, Perception, Pick Lock, Read/Write, Ride, Search, Secret Language (Thieves Tongue), Shadowing, Sleight of Hand, Speak Language (Breton, Classical, Reikspiel, Tilean)

Talents: Arcane Lore (Shadow), Dark Magic, Etiquette, Fast Hands, Flee!, Lesser Magic (Move, Silence), Linguistics, Meditation, Mimic, Petty Magic (Arcane), Public Speaking, Resistance to Magic, Schemer, Seasoned Traveller, Sixth Sense, Specialist Weapon (Fencing), Very Resilient

Magic: 2; Arcane Lore (Shadow), Move, Silence, Petty Magic (Arcane)

Armour (None): Good Craftsmanship Noble's Garb with a large grey cape

Armour Points: Head 0, Arms 0, Body 0, Legs 0

Weapons: Rapier (1d10+3, Fast), Dagger (1d10+1)

Equipment: Various forged documents of identity, several printed books and grimoires upon Magic, scroll case containing copies of several of van Klomp's letters, small tin of Best Craftsmanship moustache wax, purse containing 25 Guilders, seal of authority from High Chancellor Jekil Rohrig of Nuln (this allows him to commandeer troops of the Empire to work for him), von Schwarznase has also rented a room at the Oostenpoort gate, where he has stabled his riding horse.

Art Gallery Guards

Temple Guardians (Ex-Initiates)

Due to some ill thought-out deal with Paulus van Uylenburgh, the Temple of Handrich is obligated to provide four guards at his Art Gallery at all times, despite the fact he passed away some decades ago. Some priests mutter over the expense of this, but no devout worshipper of Handrich would risk their god's anger by suggesting that the deal should be broken. For his part, High Priest Goudenkruijn takes good advantage of this obscure piece of church law, by assigning those initiates of the cult who have somehow displeased him to fulfil this duty, which keeps them far away from the Cult's temple proper.

Use Town Guard profiles (WFRP2 pg. 235) although they also have academic training.

Von Schwarznase's Men

Protagonists

Von Schwarznase has hired a bunch of guards from amongst some of the toughest dregs of Marienburg. They care not one jot about the fate of Marienburg, and will be loyal to von Schwarznase for as long as they believe that he can still pay them.

Use sell-swords profile (WFRP2 pg. 235).

Flying Gargoyle of Barda

Lesser Daemon of Chaos Undivided

These foul monstrosities appear to be animated stone Gargoyles, with hellish, inhuman forms carved from solid basalt. However they are actually Lesser Daemons called forth from the Realms of Chaos, who attack with sword and spear while making croaking howls and insane cackles. They often pretend to be statues, using this disguise to creep up on innocents while their backs are turned.

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
55	55	41	35	63	29	39	19
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
2	14	4	3(5)	4(6)	0	0	0

Skills: Concealment+10%, Disguise, Intimidate, Perception, Silent Move, Shadowing+20%, Speak Arcane Language (Daemonic), Speak Language (Dark Tongue)

Traits: Daemonic Aura, Flier, Frightening, Night Vision, Will of Iron

Special Rules:

Basalt Skin: The Gargoyles stony hide is almost incombustible and is extremely resistant to all damage. This provides 3 points of armour on all locations, which can be stacked with other armour to the normal limit of 5 points. Additionally a Gargoyle reduces any fire damage it receives from spells or other sources by 10.

Chaos Mutations: Horns, Wings. A Gargoyle has a 50% chance of having an additional mutation, generated randomly. Modify the Daemon's stats as appropriate.

Form of Stone: Due to their unique composition, Gargoyles gain a +30% bonus to any attempt to use the Disguise Skill to appear to be a Harmless Statue and a -30% penalty upon any attempt to use the Disguise Skill to appear as anything else. Barda Gargoyles can change colour at will.

Instability: On a round in which a Gargoyle is injured in melee combat, but fails to inflict any Wounds in return, it must succeed at a **Will Power Test** or be banished back into the Realm of Chaos.

Armour (None): Stony Skin

Armour Points: Head 3, Arms 3, Body 3, Legs 3

Weapons: Spear (1d10+4, fast) or Hand Weapon (1d10+4) and Shield, Horns (1d10+3)

Slaughter Margin: Challenging

Equipment: None

**Flying Gargoyle of Barda Daemonic Champion
Lesser Daemon of Chaos Undivided**

The most powerful Gargoyles are the champions of their kind, skilled in the arts of foul sorcery along with claw and blade. Like their lesser kin, these foul fiends typically only communicate in mocking laughter and bestial howls. As with many servitors of Chaos Undivided they have a particular affinity for fire, hanging behind their lesser kin while flinging burning spells over their heads.

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
66	66	53	35	71	39	49	21
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
2	18	5	3(5)	4(6)	2	0	0

Skills: Channelling, Concealment+10%, Disguise+10%, Intimidate+10%, Perception, Silent Move, Shadowing+20%, Speak Arcane Language (Daemonic), Speak Language (Dark Tongue)

Talents: Arcane Lore (Fire), Dark Magic, Petty Magic (Chaos)

Traits: Daemonic Aura, Flier, Frightening, Night Vision, Will of Iron

Special Rules: As Flying Gargoyle of Barda.

Magic: 2; Arcane Lore (Fire), Petty Magic (Chaos)

Armour (None): Stony Skin

Armour Points: Head 3, Arms 3, Body 3, Legs 3

Weapons: Spear (1d10+4, Fast) or Hand Weapon (1d10+4) and Shield, horns (1d10+3)

Slaughter Margin: Hard

Equipment: None

COGS

Cogs are small single mast boats with rounded hulls and a basic forecastle and aft castle that typically contain a single room in each. Most cargo is stored on the boat's deck, which is simply the inside of the hull. Primitive boats such as these are suitable for both deep river journeys and sea trips, provided you keep close to the coast.

The typical cog, if such a thing can be said to exist, measures about 15 yards from stern to keel, and 5 yards from starboard to port in the middle. Larger cogs can carry an additional 5000 encumbrance and gain +1 wound per extra yard of length; however, few cogs are longer than 25 yards. Cogs have a crew of between 4 and 20 men, and can carry 15,000 encumbrance points of trade goods. Many cogs are armed to hold off pirates, and seeing a small bolt thrower, swivel gun or even a naval cannon mounted on the foredeck is by no means uncommon.

M	TB	W
2	8	100

Cogs have an Availability of Rare and cost 800 Guilders plus an additional 100 Guilders per yard of length over 15.

So, you wish to become my Apprentice, do you? Well, my first Apprentice found himself incapable of learning to read and now lives in the gutter without a trade. My second was trampled and crippled by a horse who took a sudden dislike to me. As for my third, one night I returned home to find the cellar flooded and he was huddled in the corner squeaking something about brooms and endless pails of water. Are you still sure you wish to become my Apprentice?

HERMITAGE WIZARDS AND THE SOLITARY APPRENTICE

by Robin Low

Contrary to popular belief, not all Imperial wizards go through an apprenticeship within the Imperial Magic Colleges. Scattered through the Empire there are wizards operating as private individuals in cities, towns and villages, private estates in the country or in isolated hermitages until their services are required. These so-called Hermitage Wizards, who are full members of the Imperial Colleges, are entitled to take apprentice should they encounter suitable candidates able to fulfil certain other requirements themselves.

Within the Imperial College system, the relatively large number of apprentices all learning together in the same environment and following similarly standardised modes of teaching tends to create a measure of uniformity. However, there is no doubt that the private and often isolated tuition offered by Hermitage Wizards creates many of the more eccentric and individualistic wizards found serving the Empire. It also yields more ideas and creativity than the often stifling and rigid teaching left by Teclis and followed so strictly in the Imperial Colleges. Most wizards trained by Hermitage Wizards become Hermitage Wizards themselves.

Unsurprisingly, there is some animosity and suspicion between the Imperial Colleges and Hermitage Wizards. The former are able to maintain an upper hand through their legal right to control teaching through the issuing of licences (see **Obtaining a Teaching Licence**) and making unannounced inspections, as well as the unspoken threat of making a passing comment to the witch hunters who like to hang-about near the Colleges looking for trouble. However, the fact that the occasional prodigy and hero emerges through private training

in the magical arts encourages a degree of tolerance from the magical authorities.

Obtaining a Teaching Licence

The Colleges of Magic and Imperial authorities like to keep track of who is being trained in the magical arts, and consequently any Hermitage Wizard who wishes to train an apprentice must acquire a special licence from one of the Imperial Colleges to do so. Without one, both the Hermitage Wizard and her apprentice will be subject to all the unpleasantness unlicensed wizards can experience.

It will come as no surprise that obtaining a licence to train is not simple. Applying for the licence can be a long, tedious and complex process. One of the colleges might want the apprentice for itself and try to pressure the Hermitage Wizard into handing him over. Old animosities and feuds dating from the Hermitage Wizard's own time at college may rear their heads to scupper the application. Some colleges require that the Hermitage Wizard first undertakes a teacher training course and obtains a licence qualifying her ability to teach magic, before applying for an additional licence to actually take on an apprentice. Some colleges also demand that a Hermitage Wizard is at least a Master Wizard before a licence to take an apprentice is awarded, but this may depend on the relative abundance of higher level wizards in an individual GM's campaign. After issuing a teaching licence, the particular College issuing it is entitled to send representatives to observe and inspect the teaching process and facilities available (usually the wizard's home) at any time, and without prior warning.



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Finding an Apprentice

If she wants one, a Hermitage Wizard has to find her own apprentice, and more often than not suitable youngsters are spotted by chance (see **Recognising Magic Potential**). A sensible wizard usually approaches such a child's parents or other guardians, attempts to learn more about the child (and she may talk to people other than the parents), speaks to the child herself, and then maybe makes a formal offer to take the child on as her apprentice. As many folk are apprehensive about wizards and magic there is often reluctance, but some folk are not so hostile or fearful, wish better things for their children, or simply want to be rid of an extra mouth or that strange, quiet child around whom *things* happen. A few Gold Crowns is often sufficient to overcome parents' doubts, and a payment in one direction or the other is traditional when a child is taken as any sort of apprentice, anyway.

A child publicly identified as apprentice material who remains in her community can become the focus of gossip and whispers. The nature of such talk depends on the community, and the standing and importance of the family within it. Most Hermitage Wizards show discretion in their approaches, but others are less considerate, causing unrest in communities centred upon the unfortunate child and its family. Ruthless wizards determined to take a particular youngster as an apprentice are often flamboyantly public in

their identifications, hoping subsequent gossip or hostility pressurises parents or guardians into passing the child into the wizard's care.

Wizards are often accused when children disappear. On occasion, there is truth to these accusations, as daemonologists, necromancers and other dark wizards have an even harder time than most finding suitable apprentices. Hedge Wizards and even some Magisters of the Imperial Colleges have also been found guilty of kidnap before now. Hermitage Wizards are particularly vulnerable to such accusations, guilty or not, as they are often known locally as wizards; dark wizards are usually more circumspect.

Some are keen to see their offspring go on to better things. Their motives may be selfish, hoping that their child's success and power will benefit them in later years, or they may be genuinely altruistic; a mixture of the two is common. Of course, most parents look first to the more traditional artisan apprenticeships, but a wizard can still be a respected professional, even if that respect is underpinned by a measure of fear; in some cases the ability to inspire fear is precisely what the parents want from the child. Parents with a precocious (real or imagined) or plain weird child are not necessarily in a position to travel all the way to the Imperial Colleges, so taking advantage of a local Hermitage Wizard is the next best thing. Consequently, Hermitage Wizards expecting to leave

discovery of a potential student to chance and circumstance can find folk knocking on their doors, babes and children for assessment in tow.

A child's willingness to become an apprentice is not always relevant to many wizards as an indication of suitability; potential aptitude is considered more important. After all, this is a world where children can still be beaten into doing what they are told. That said, there have always been children who want to become wizards. Not every child learns the wariness their parents show whenever a wizard walks down the street. Depending on how they experience it, magic can be a thing of wonder and excitement that entrances them utterly or a thing of brutality, terror and power; either experience can make magic immensely attractive to an impressionable young mind. Such children abandon their chores or creep out of their rooms at night to go and see what the local wizard is up to, offering help and asking to be taught a simple spell, ignoring the reprimands and anguish of their families.

Hermitage Apprenticeships

It is traditionally claimed that the life of the solitary Apprentice Wizard is a hard one, filled with drudgery, exploitation and abuse at the hands of someone reluctant to let go of their secrets. While this may be true to varying degrees for some apprentices, it is a claim commonly made by failed apprentices, often people who were too lazy or who lacked the necessary physical and mental stamina or strength of will to persevere. However, there is no doubt that a wizard's apprentice *is* made to work, and made to work hard. Magic requires focus and discipline, and a good way of developing those qualities is through physical labours alongside the purely academic. Sweeping the floor and fetching water are traditional forms of exercise for apprentices, and these activities may have given rise to the Old Wives' Tales of wizards flying brooms and poisoning wells. Visitors to a Hermitage Wizard's home will find that no matter how atmospherically cobwebbed the ceiling beams are, the floorboards are always free of dust, and the kettle is always boiling, ready for a brew.

There are two strands to an apprentice's academic training. One is the magical (represented by the skills Academic Knowledge (Magic), Channelling, Magical Sense) and the other is linguistic (Read/Write, Speak Arcane Language (Magick), Speak Language (Classical)). The magical strand is traditionally taught first, as it is felt that if the apprentice cannot grasp fundamental magical skills then there is no point wasting one's time teaching reading and writing. This approach is as true of the Colleges of Magic as it is of Hermitage Wizards; a lot of time is saved in this way. The Colleges have found it reduces the number of students who learn to read and write and then leave to train as lawyers – more money, almost as much power, and no Tzeentch's Curse; and although lawyers are even more loathed than wizards, witch hunters are generally less twitchy about them.

Hermitage Wizards have various approaches to teaching

reading and writing, but a two-step process is common. The first is the initial recognition of letters, being able to copy their shape, and their pronunciation. This is often taught though the labelling and cataloguing of spell ingredients (see **Apprentices and Spell Ingredients**). All writing practice is done on slate or wax tablets until the apprentice is proficient: parchment and paper is too expensive to waste. When the basics are understood, the wizard starts the apprentice on writing spell seals (see *Breaking the Seal* in *Warpstone* 27), essentially transcription of the verbal part of any spell. Once writing proficiency is in place, the apprentice becomes responsible for keeping a diary and record of his master's magical experimentation and experiences. Other Hermitage Wizards set their apprentice to copying textbooks, magical and otherwise, in order to sell them. Apprentice Wizards are occasionally seen at the larger markets and fairs, or working the temples, trying to sell more general texts. Incidentally, handwritten works on magic are more popular with wizards than the latest types coming off the rare printing presses that are scattered across the Empire. Wizards believe that something that has taken time to produce possesses more innate power and value than something created in no time at all (most wizards remain oblivious to the obvious irony here with regard to the practice of magic).

Two other skills apprentices are encouraged to develop are Perception and the ability to Search; being able to see, to *really* see, the world is considered essential. These skills benefit wizards in all sorts of ways: locating spell ingredients, identifying those who wish them ill, recognising important objects, places and people, and watching for any of Tzeentch's Curses lurking almost out of sight, ready to pounce. To this end, apprentices are routinely assigned Ingredient Hunts. These can be as simple as having to locate a jar containing a particular ingredient hidden among hundreds of others before the sands run out on a timer. Or, the wizard may put something very important out of place around his home or laboratory and see how long it takes before his apprentice notices. When out travelling through the countryside, the apprentice could be suddenly sent off to find something odd, like a black feather, a particular plant or a bird's nest.

This goes on in the Imperial Colleges, too, and some have turned Ingredient Hunts into annual events, with the apprentices let loose to gather items on a long list from around the town and its environs. These events are very exciting, with apprentices tearing around town and getting into all sorts of scrapes. Hermitage Wizards commonly travel to Altdorf so their apprentices can participate in these events, hoping their apprentice's success reflects well on their teaching ability. Among locals, there are mixed feelings about these Ingredient Hunts. Some towns have turned them into festivals for all the citizens, seeing them as great opportunities to draw more people into town for the day, and make money from incomers and apprentices alike. Others see it as the wizards causing mayhem and unnecessary disturbance for honest, normal

folk. In Altdorf, there are on-going meetings and arguments between its several Colleges and the civil authorities over whether it is better to have a single Ingredient Hunt day when all Colleges participate, or separate smaller events spread over the year.

Apprentices and Spell Ingredients

One of the most important tasks assigned to apprentices is the gathering, preparation and storage of spell ingredients for their master. Wizards find this encourages resourcefulness and lateral thinking, and more importantly keeps most apprentices busy and out from under their feet most of the time. Many apprentices first learn their letters by copying out labels from jars and cards. Often, it is through ingredient-gathering missions and labelling pots and jars on high dusty shelves that an apprentice begins to understand the symbolic patterns that underlie spells: when an apprentice asks if honey could be substituted for a sugar lump when casting *Calm the Wild Beast* on a bear, or use a dove feather to modify *Form of the Soaring Raven* into *Form of the Gentle Dove*, then the Beast Mage knows his apprentice *understands*.

Ingredient Hunts can be adventures. True, some ingredients are only a walk to the market away and others can be found lying in the streets or fields if you look carefully. Others can be made to order by an artisan or the apprentice herself, but there is always some requiring greater effort, like dragon scales, for example. And where do you find miniature helmets sculpted of lead for *Armour of Lead*, unless you plan to cast them yourself? And a vial of sweat from an honest man? Good luck in gathering it even if you find him! Acquiring a particularly obscure ingredient, or an impressively novel one, can be the final test a master gives to her apprentice before conferring the name of journeyman upon him (see **Becoming a Journeyman**).

Watch My Back

A typical wizard is regarded with varying degrees of fear and suspicion by most. While a wizard may have power, she does not (always) have eyes in the back of her head and still has to sleep sometimes, and can be vulnerable to unprovoked and unanticipated assaults from almost any group or individual. This is even truer for Hermitage Wizards living outside the obvious security of the Imperial Colleges. Consequently, an apprentice is frequently called upon to watch his mentor's back. What is required of the apprentice in this regard really depends on the personality of the wizard he serves. If she is unworldly and oblivious to the fearful hostility of the tavern's rustic clientele, the apprentice will try to stop her drinking too much, steer her away from crowded tables and spend a lot of time apologising. If she is arrogant and patronising, then physically or magically guarding her back after she complains loudly about the quality of the ale and the smell of the locals may be an all too common experience. Even an apprentice serving a wise and courteous wizard will often spend lonely

nights watching and listening for the creeping footsteps of those seeking to slit his mistress's throat before she can curse the whole village.

These problems often occur when the wizard is travelling; apprentices can usually relax when they are on home territory, as the locals have probably had time to get used to a wizard in their midst. However, where a wizard is trusted, or at least tolerated, the apprentice may have to fend off the generally curious or those knocking on the door asking for cures for baldness, love potions or hexes to be placed on an unpopular neighbour (of course, some wizards, and even apprentices, are happy to help on this score, for a small consideration, whether financial or a favour owed).

Gossip

Apprentices are often a hermitage wizard's eyes and ears in the outside world. While the master is busy at work experimenting in her rooms, the apprentice is out gathering firewood, drawing water from the well or buying bread and ale from the local farmer or shopkeeper. The fields, streets and taverns are where people meet and talk, discussing their problems, suspicions and rumours of all sorts; a wise apprentice pays attention and a wiser one joins in without giving anything away himself. Of course, rumour spreading, and more legitimate information, can go both ways; some apprentices are tolerated, even liked sometimes, and are turned to by the common folk for news, opinion and advice, in the belief that their masters must know everything.

Apprentices and Tzeentch's Curse

Sooner or later, every apprentice witnesses his master struck by Tzeentch's Curse. It might be in private or in public, but he will have to deal with it as best he can. The minor manifestations are unsettling, and their lingering effects can leave an apprentice permanently on edge or distracted until he learns to ignore them.

However, an apprentice may never get used to the disturbing sounds of giggling that have followed him along corridors at night, just out of range of the candle's light, ever since the master cast *Cloak Activity*. Of course, that is nothing to the apprentice who faced a daemonic imp as it burst from the ground; thank goodness her master had successfully taken the *Form of the Raging Bear*.

Another apprentice is extremely proud of the time when his master had his magic taken from him and the apprentice successfully negotiated safe passage for them through bandit territory after casting a simple *Sleep* on the outlaw leader's second-in-command.

Certainly these events and similar ones throughout an apprentice's training are formative experiences that frequently shape his personality and idiosyncrasies. They can also affect his approach to using magic (caution, because his master was Called to the Void; recklessness, because he never saw his master suffer anything more than a cold draft up his robe

and a nose bleed now and again).

Apprentices of the Imperial Colleges are both more shielded from and more exposed to Tzeentch's Curse than a single apprentice with his master. By dint of the fact that college apprentices meet more wizards during their studies, they witness more examples of the Curse but at the same time they have the emotional support of their peers and there are experienced wizards about to respond to the more extreme manifestations.

Tzeentch's Curse can become the stuff of amusing or

scandalous gossip; alternatively, some apprentices will find themselves harbouring terrible secrets, ones dangerous to know.

A player should think about using his character's (technically the master's) experiences of Tzeentch's Curse to create background plot. It should be an integral part of a magic-using character's background, in some form or another. Similarly, since novice spellcasters have an increased risk of gaining Insanity Points, it seems more than likely an apprentice could have gained one before a game begins. With this in mind, *if* the GM permits, an apprentice character could start with one Insanity Point; the player should create an interesting story to explain it, something a cunning GM can exploit in a future plot.

Recognising Magical Potential

A wizard's *Magical Sense* skill allows her to spot someone with that special spark marking him as apprentice material, the first hint of a magical aura. Sometimes the skill kicks in automatically (usually at the GM's discretion) in the form of Witchsight, but most commonly the wizard will be actively looking, perhaps scanning a crowd in the market place. In both cases, the mechanism for spotting someone suitable is the same: the wizard's player makes a *Magical Sense* roll, and if successful, the individual's faint aura is noticed. However, some individuals stand out because they have the *Sixth Sense* or *Luck* Talents, which also confer very faint auras of magic. Few wizards rely on their *Magical Sense* alone, however, and investigate further. Stubborn and egotistical wizards have been known to put too much faith in their magical intuition, and persevere with unsuitable apprentices, resulting in odd folk who can cast a couple of Petty Magic spells and are always chattering to voices only they can hear.

Magical Sense Tests are also used to spot wizards. However, experienced wizards (Apprentice Wizards upwards, as well as Hedge Wizards) learn how to suppress their magical auras, so either physical contact (as simple as brushing past someone in a corridor) is required before there is any chance of noticing one or the GM may increase the difficulty of the test. There are also rituals to mask magical auras. So they say.

Although some innate potential is usually looked for in an apprentice, there are wizards who believe that almost anyone can be taught to cast spells and develop a *Magical Sense*. Such wizards are usually more concerned with what they can get out of an apprentice, whether that is a free servant, a financial donation, or favours and patronage from powerful parents – a significant number of Apprentice Wizards enrolled in the Colleges are of noble birth or mercantile families seeking an edge. Wizards are far from immune to political ambition, and having the right apprentice can sometimes benefit them far more than a shiny magic wand. It is said the Imperial Colleges are increasingly likely to accept people who show no obvious aptitude for magic as apprentices, purely in response to financial and political incentives. This is also true of some Hermitage Wizards.

Becoming a Journeyman

The transition from the Apprentice Wizard career to that of Journeyman Wizard should involve more than just paying out the requisite number of Experience Points. This does not mean that a player must successfully make an Academic Knowledge (Magic) roll to pass an exam or require the character to cast a spell in front of an audience, forfeiting hard earned Experience Points if rolls are failed (though cruel GMs are free to try to maintain a magic-lite setting through such means).

Instead, some events need to be woven around the payment of the Experience Points. Now, this may be the Final Examination Paper or demonstrating a spell to an independent assessor, but they should, for example, be accompanied by scandals of alleged cheating, bribery and theft of exam papers (not necessarily connected to the character) or previously unknown non-player characters assessing the spellcasting demonstration. It is very common for Hermitage Wizards to send their apprentices out into the wider world for a year and a day, often with a specific task in mind, like acquiring and learning a new spell or spell ingredient; why else are all these Apprentice Wizards out there having adventures? Whatever happens, it should be something that makes becoming a journeyman memorable for all concerned.

And having passed any tests, what then? Well, like his master he is a member of an Imperial College with all the attendant duties and responsibilities. He might choose to become actively involved with his particular College in Altdorf, where he will find he is regarded as something of a country cousin by many of his seniors, peers and students, only sometimes admired by the more curious, adventurous and open-minded. He may find that his master's enemies become his enemies, but by the same token his master's friends might become his friends or mentors within the complex intrigue and politics within and between colleges. ●f course, like his master, the new wizard might reject the Colleges (at least in as much as he is allowed to do so without becoming a renegade) and become a travelling or Hermitage Wizard himself, the stuff adventurers are made of.

THE KNIGHTS JEDDI

A not entirely sensible career by Andrew Limsk

My dear Alexander, I have just attended a performance of Chaos Kriege. While I quite enjoyed the adventures of the Nulu smuggler Hans Solobeim and his hairy mutant ogre companion, I admit I found myself lost with mentions of lightning-swords, X-sails, and how devices devised by ancient frog-men should make the Millennium Falchion move so fast. I appear to be alone in my confusion as the crowd in the cheap-seats were suitably enthralled. I was accosted twice on the way home by children asking me to tell them how the Warp Force works. I tried to explain the basics of Colour Magic and Warp theory but they seemed to have little interest. I hope that this will be forgotten soon but I overheard talk of nine plays.

The Order of the Knights Jeddi are said to be an ancient order of warrior-mystics whose origins are lost in the mists of time. This secretive order leapt into the consciousness of the Empire in 1977IC when the visionary playwright Jorge Lukas staged *Chaos Kriege*, the first of three hit plays. The plays follow the epic adventures of a young farmer from Tattoheim who learns from a wise Knight Jeddi and overcomes incredible odds to defeat a mighty Chaos invasion. Scholars widely dismiss the historical nature of Lukas' works but that does not stop revivals of the plays sparking interest every few decades. Certainly the plays appeared at a time of deep troubles to a populace looking for heroes. Some even claim they heralded the coming of Magnus the Pious hundreds of years later.

Despite their acclaim, the Jeddi are said to live simple lives away from centres of population, caring little for money or power and have a fanatical belief in truth, justice and freedom. This makes them immensely popular with the common folk and a royal pain in the rear to the nobility of the Empire. They have an unfailing tendency to side with the weak, helpless, and downtrodden against the strong. At several crucial times in history, their surprise appearance has changed the flow of events and caused the early retirement of many a dastardly, black-hearted villain (usually involving plenty of crowd-pleasing stunts and pyrotechnics). Details on recent interventions are sketchy but many can tell of events witnessed by a friend of their cousin or the like.

If there is one trait that separates the Knights Jeddi from other wandering bands of meddling do-gooders, it is their mastery of the mystical power known as 'the Warp Force'. In the play a Knight Jeddi says: "The Warp Force is what gives a Jeddi his power. It is an energy field created by all living things. It surrounds us, penetrates us... binds everything together." It

is said that this is so remarkably close to the words of Teclis that the Colleges of Magic investigated Lukas (although these words appear only in later versions of the play).

It is commonly believed that the arch-wizards of the Imperial Colleges of Magic are as yet unable to fathom the workings of this Warp Force and that is why they refuse to comment on it. Every so often they have to explain to a new Emperor that it is simply because the Warp Force is nonsense. Nevertheless, its effects are common knowledge to the thousands of Old Worlders who have watched the *Chaos Kriege* trilogy. The Warp Force appears to be a form of arcane mind-power with which skilled practitioners can influence the minds of others, move objects without touching them and sense their surroundings. Sages (their qualifications are never very clear) researching this phenomenon have speculated that the Warp Force is a pre-Teclis discipline introduced by the mysterious Slann, which may have some basis, especially considering the strange, otherworldly weapons called Lightning-Swords borne by the Jeddi.

Despite their all-round wholesome image, there are rumours spoken in hushed whispers about Chaos Jeddi, an order founded in the now forgotten town of Sithkov in Kislev. If these rumours are true then it appears that the insidious forces of Chaos have also left their mark upon this noble order. Knights Jeddi lead very structured lives, trying to avoid fear, anger, and hate in the pursuit of knowledge. By forgoing this long, arduous journey and giving in to the baser emotions, a Jeddi falls prey to the power of Chaos and gains great powers in the Warp Force. Such fallen ones become Chaos Jeddi Lords, strong with the power of the Dark Warp Force. These Chaos-following Jeddi are the archenemies of true Jeddi, and are often encountered spearheading the forces of Chaos.

Basic Career - Jeddi Apprentice

Those who aspire to join The Order of the Knights Jeddi have to learn the ancient ways of the Warp Force from a fully-trained Knight Jeddi. While not easy to find, Jeddi Masters are always on the lookout for potential aspirants, especially those who are 'strong with the Force'. Since no one else knows exactly how to detect the Force, most folk just nod sagely at their undoubted wisdom.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I
	+10	+10	-	-	+2	+10
A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
-	-	+10	-	+10	+10	-

Skills:

- Dodge Blow
- Flee!
- Luck (enables miraculous escapes in spite of incredible odds)
- Orientation
- 50% chance of *Speak Sagely Level 1*

Trappings:

- 50% Chance of Slann Technology – Lightning-Sword (See below)
- Simple robes

Career Entry: Any but somehow, the best Jeddi always seem to have been farmers...

Career Exits: Knight Jeddi

Advanced Career - Knight Jeddi

An apprentice who studies hard and patiently eventually gains mastery of the Warp Force, and with it, great powers over thought and matter. But the path is a narrow one— their powers are meant only to advance freedom, harmony, and the survival of life. Using the Warp Force for personal gain or to injure or kill eventually marks a Jeddi as one of the Fallen, a Chaos Jeddi Lord and dooms the person to wear black forever...

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I
-	+20	+20	+1	-	+3	+20
A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
+1	-	+20	+10	+20	+20	+10

Skills:

- Arcane Language - Old Slann
- Astronomy (to know what a moon looks like!)
- Concealment – Rural & Urban (to better hide from hordes of Chaos soldiers)

- Dodge Blow
- History
- Marksmanship (to hit small targets from fast-moving mounts)
- Meditation
- Scale Sheer Surface
- Silent Move – Rural
- Silent Move – Urban
- Speak Sagely Level 2*
- Specialist Weapon – Lightning-Sword*
- Strike Mighty Blow
- Strike to Stun
- The Force*

Trappings:

- Lightning-Sword (see below)
- Simple robes (Chaos Jeddi may wear Chaos armour, but always in Black)
- Suitably Strange Name*

New Skills

Speak Sagely – Jeddi must learn to appear wise and sagacious and thus, cannot use slang or obscenities. At Level 2, Jeddi are required by their charter to say things like: “I sense a presence in the Warp Force” or “The Warp Force is strong with this one”.

Specialist Weapon: Lightning-sword – A skill is only taught by and to Jeddi, and confers the ability to use the fabled weapon to full effect. Trying to use these strange weapons without this skill usually ends in embarrassing self-mutilation.

Suitably Strange Name – Upon achieving full status, Knights Jeddi are expected to adopt an ancient name to reflect their station. No self-respecting Jeddi would be called Johan, Hans, or Bengt. This is especially true for Chaos Jeddi Lords.

The Force – The arcane knowledge of thought and matter known only to the mystical order of Knights Jeddi. Since nobody knows what exactly the Force is we can simply assume persons with this skill can do the following at will:

- Sense the presence of others, especially other Jeddi
- Increase any one stat by +1/+10 for an hour
- Alter the perceptions of minor NPCs on a successful WP test
- Move objects telekinetically
- Crush tracheas telekinetically (Chaos Jeddi Lords only)

Lightning-Swords

While they are not (strictly speaking) magical, these swords can cut through any known material except perhaps another Lightning-Sword. In game terms, all AP is ignored unless magical, and parries are not allowed against them unless the defender is wielding another lightning-sword. Against fragile targets (such as people), each hit causes 2D6 wounds and flammable targets may be set alight. With double sixes, the victim's body parts end up in different time zones.

The Final Word

Thanks to everyone who has ever bought or read *Warpstone*.

Warpstone has been a team effort over the last 30 issues. Without the input of so many the magazine would not have been what it is. There would be no *Warpstone* without John Keane, and his contribution is therefore beyond simple thanks. The editorial team has changed over the years but they should take much of the credit for the way *Warpstone* improved - Martin Oliver, Steven Punter, Robin Low, Steve Moss, Clive Oldfield, Mel Tudno-Jones and Steven M. Gerke. Tim Eccles and Alfred Nunez Jr. were essential ingredients to all things *Warpstone*. Thanks go to all the writers and artists who have been published in *Warpstone* - you have been a pleasure to work with. There are also thanks for anyone who ever contributed to *Warpstone* in other ways, especially those whose contribution was significant - Sara Keane, James Wallis, Robert Rces, Spencer Wallace, Roderic Oswald, David Neale, Konrad Schubert, Peter Huntington, Anthony Carroll and Adam Januszewski.

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This issue is dedicated to Isabel.

In Memoriam - Peter Moore and François Dubé.

John Foody
July 2014



