

WARHAMMER
FANTASY
ROLE-PLAY

THE HORNED RAT

PART 4 OF THE ENEMY WITHIN CAMPAIGN



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◆ INTRODUCTION ◆



Welcome to **The Horned Rat**, the fourth volume in the Director's Cut edition of the **Enemy Within** campaign. While this adventure can be played on its own, it has been designed to be played after completing volume 3, **Power Behind the Throne**. This book contains everything you need to play the adventure (except for the **WFRP** 4th edition rulebook), as well as detailed information on the infamous Skaven.

A dreadful crisis has been narrowly averted in the City State of Middenheim. Boris Todbringer, the Graf, has not been well of late, suffering a profound melancholy following the death of his second wife, Anika-Elise of Nordland.

Law Lord Karl-Heinz Wasmeier sought to take advantage of the Graf's lassitude, and his schemes have been narrowly averted. He wished to undermine confidence in the leadership of the city through the imposition of harsh taxes on Dwarfs, Priests, and Wizards. His plan was to replace the Graf of Middenheim with a shapeshifting Doppelgänger under his control, rescind the taxes (which he had always been careful to publicly oppose), and rule Middenheim as a power behind the throne. The web of lies, blackmail, extortion, and hypnotism he created in order to bring his plan to fruition has led to many of the city's worthies becoming deeply compromised.

Unfortunately for Wasmeier, a group of adventurers had stumbled across the secret society he was a member of: the Tzeentch-worshipping Purple Hand. They foiled his plans and he narrowly escaped with his life. He is currently licking his wounds, figuring out how he might once again rise to prominence in a cult that must surely now regard him as a bumbling failure.

In Middenheim, Wasmeier's lieutenants scramble to find protection, convinced Sergeants of the Watch will soon be knocking on their door. During the process of its scheming, the Purple Hand had employed the services of Snikkit, a Skaven with a talent for abductions. Such cooperation was unusual, for whilst the Skaven are creatures of Chaos, they do not worship Tzeentch and take great pains to remain secretive and hidden in the Empire.

Snikkit's involvement with the Purple Hand was an outlying action of a greater plan, one that threatens to devastate much of the northern Empire. In the Middle Mountains, not far from Middenheim, the exceedingly wicked Warlock Engineer Maliss Manrack plans to assemble a vast warp lightning cannon, which he plans to use to break apart the chaos moon, Morrslieb, resulting in a rain of warpstone meteors.



ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The Horned Rat has a complex structure that leads the Players forward to an inevitable climax. At the beginning there are a number of strange things occurring in Middenheim, and members of the Purple Hand reacting to the disappearance of Karl-Heinz Wasmeier. All these require investigation, but the order in which to do so is up to the GM and players. As the Characters pursue their investigations they uncover evidence to help them convince Middenheim's citizens that the Skaven threat is real and serious. They must then find Maliss Manrack before he completes his operation to shoot Morrslieb.

Villainous Factions

The Purple Hand is in disarray, but still at large; the Skaven are present in more ways than one; and the Jade Sceptre is an ongoing concern.

Instigating Events

A discussion on how Characters who did not take part in **Power Behind the Throne** could become embroiled in this adventure.

Undercity Encounters

The Characters may decide to explore Middenheim's Undercity at several points during the early part of this adventure. This section explains how to manage subterranean adventuring.

Purrsecution

Watch Commander Schutzmann is under surveillance from an advanced spy rat, and the Yellow Fang are suppressing Middenheim's cats in order to ensure its continued operation.

Schutzmann's New Komission

The Characters are employed at the start of the adventure by Ulrich Schutzmann, Commander of Middenheim's Watch. This section describes initial leads.

Ordo Impedimentae

Erich Kalzbad is head of the Ordo Impedimentae in the Purple Hand. Having heard of Wasmeier's disappearance, he has decided to flee the city, and the Characters must move quickly to catch him.

The Great Defector

Gottfried Jarmund is the head of the Ordo Novitiae. He has had a change of heart and seeks rehabilitation, but before he could contact the authorities he was kidnapped by a Low King.

Ordo Terribilis Resurgens

Vizier Bahr, master of the Ordo Terribilis, can sense the net tighten around him, and plans to take as many of the cult's enemies down with him as he can.

Missing Convenor

The Skaven have abducted Gotthard von Wittgenstein because they believe he is an expert on Morrslieb's movements. Gotthard's old friends believe the Characters to be responsible.

A Cover-up

Skaven bodies are due to be displayed at Middenheim's Collegium Theologica, but the Yellow Fang wish to make Professor Eunice Hasche their patsy.

Mysterious Thefts

Items of interest have gone missing from various locations about the city. The culprit is Bors, a Ranaldan thief-priest who is unwittingly serving the Skaven.

Assassinations

Some of Middenheim's citizens are getting too close to uncovering the existence of Skaven activity, and a Clan Eshin assassin is in the process of shutting them up forever.

Audience with the Graf

The first portion of the adventure concludes with an audience with Middenheim's Graf. The Characters have a chance to put their case forward and, depending on how well they perform, are provided with support and resources. Three cases of interest to them are produced.

The Black Hunger

A noxious smell emanating leads the Characters to a band of starving Skaven willing to offer up useful information.

The Stolen Village

Sightings near Unterfraus herald a tragic event. Characters may examine the aftermath and draw links to picket of Brass Keep.

Griffon Down

Maliss Manrack has been test firing his secret weapon. A wounded Griffon has sought refuge near the village of Gladbeich, which means trouble for the locals.

Encounters

The Characters are granted permission to journey to Brass Keep, but various troublesome groups are now at large which may complicate matters.

Journey Through the Grand Duchy

The route from Middenheim to Brass Keep is described.

The Picket

Brass Keep is guarded by elements of House Kärzburdger, who do not appreciate agents of the Todbringers snooping around. A force of Skaven conducts a forlorn assault on Brass Keep.

Through the Middle Mountains

A forgotten Dwarf hold, Karak Skygg, is revealed as the base of operations of Maliss Manrack. The Characters must get there fast, and journey through the Middle Mountains to do so.

Moonbreaker

Maliss is about to shoot chunks from Morrslieb, unless the Characters can sabotage his operation.

THE SKAVEN

Skaven are a secretive species of ratmen who inhabit a vast Under-Empire beneath the world's surface. Most folk in the Empire dismiss them as tales to frighten children into cleaning behind their ears. *'If you don't stop your whining and wash up, the rat-men will think you're one of their stinking little pups and steal you away!'* But the Skaven are real, and ever-present.

APPEARANCE

An average full-grown Skaven stands between 4-6 ft tall. Their short fur is mangy, patched, and soiled with filth, their hides scarred from constant, violent squabbles. Their faces are frothing snouts filled with yellow fangs. Their beady, blood-coloured eyes simmer with malice. Their wiry limbs terminate in scrabbling claws, stained by filth. A long, sinuous tail lashes behind them with ever-present anxiety. Their stench is a gag-inducing reek of hot sewage and animalistic musk that lingers beyond their passing.

Skaven make nothing of quality. They produce urine-tanned hide and rust-pocked metal; each piece cast off, repurposed, or forged in decaying workshops. Most wear icons of their clan, either carved into their equipment, branded upon their flesh, or dyed into their fur with pigments derived from blood and effluvia.

SOCIETY

The putrid centre of Skavendom's power lies sinking into the Blighted Marshes. The ruined towers of Skavenblight rise above the murk. A great horned bell hangs at the towering apex of the greatest spire, its dolorous toll echoing out across the wetlands.

Beneath the ruins, a complex web of tunnels stretches out across the known and unknown world — running under mountains and oceans to link hidden Skaven lairs on every continent. It is said that if you know the way, you can follow these twisted warrens to reach anywhere that civilisation has ever thrived, as the Skaven are driven to eternally gnaw at the roots of mortal endeavours.

Skaven thrive in tunnels and ruins in a brutal and strictly hierarchical structure. At the bottom are slaves. These gangs of miserable souls are forced to undertake dangerous menial labour, farming mutated crops and endlessly mining. The lives of Skavenslaves are nightmarish and short.

The Warlord Clans are teeming masses of warrior Skaven. Clan Mors and Clan Rictus are hugely successful Warlord Clans who possess great prestige. Clan Mange are a lesser Warlord Clan.

Four clans are particularly powerful and wealthy, originators of technologies or techniques in high demand throughout

Skavendom. They are the Great Clans. Clan Moulder breed nightmarish abominations, such as Rat Ogres who make hulking bodyguards or terrifying shock troops. Clan Eshin are experts of infiltration and assassination who hire out their services to the other clans and eliminate targets with lethal efficiency. Clan Pestilens are frothing zealots who drag their diseased bodies through the Under-Empire, spreading corruption and plagues. Clan Skryre are mad engineers who use a nightmarish combination of sorcerous power and warpstone technology to forge terrifying technologies of unparalleled destructive power. Maliss Manrack is a Master Warlock of Clan Skryre.

The Council of Thirteen sits at the height of Skaven society. It comprises twelve Skaven, with the thirteenth seat symbolically held by the Great Horned Rat himself. They are terrifying creatures. Each was hand-picked by the Skaven god to rule, and each is a centuries-old monster of conniving spite, driven by the desire to best their rival Lords and dominate the world.

WARPSTONE

Warpstone is prized by Skaven. It fuels their economy, technology, sorcery, and even extends their lifespans — if prepared and consumed carefully. This hard, crystalline substance resembles hard-chipped obsidian that glows with a sickly-green light that plays along its glassy surface and refracts within its depths. (See **WFRP**, pages 233 and 237.) Magical scholars postulate that this accursed material enters the world through Chaos gates, and is formed when magical energy concentrates and stagnates, solidifying into a raw form of Chaos. Many suppose that the smaller of the world's two moons, Morrslieb, is made entirely from Warpstone.



SKAVEN TROOPS

Throughout the adventure certain types of Skaven may be encountered again and again. Refer back here for the profiles for standard Clanrats, Stormvermin, and officers. All Skaven are experienced, often exclusively, in living and fighting underground. Thus, all Skaven have the Tunnel Rat and Enclosed fighter Talents.

SKAVEN WARRIORS

Skaven Clanrats are poor warriors. They avoid direct combat whenever possible, and prefer to attack from hiding with as many of their kin as they can muster – to Skaven there is no such thing as a fair fight. After an attack, they may slink away at the earliest opportunity. In order to keep the Clanrats in line, they are sometimes led into battle by Clawleaders, who happily kill any Skaven that refuse to fight.

Stormvermin are stronger, better trained and equipped than Clanrats, and their Fangleaders can be frightening opponents. At the other end of the scale, Skavenslaves are the wretched subjugated underclass of Skaven society. They are sometimes herded into war, but with minimal expectations of being anything other than cannon fodder.

SKAVENSLAVE

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
5	20	20	30	30	30	35	30	30	10	10	11

Traits: Infected, Night Vision, Weapon (Sword) +7

Skills: Melee (Basic) 25

Trappings: Hand Weapon, Rags

CLANRAT

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
5	30	30	30	30	40	35	30	30	20	20	11

Traits: Armour 1, Infected, Night Vision, Weapon (Sword or Spear) +7

Skills: Athletics 45, Dodge 40, Melee (Basic) 35, Polearm 35, Stealth (Urban) 45

Trappings: Hand Weapon or Spear, Leather Armour

STORMVERMIN

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
5	45	35	35	35	55	50	30	30	25	20	11

Traits: Armour 3, Night Vision, Weapon (Halberd) +8

Skills: Athletics 60, Intimidate 50, Melee (Polearm) 55

Trappings: Breastplate, Halberd, Mail Coat

SKAVEN LEADERS

Chieftains are veteran Skaven warriors who are employed by the Warlords to lead larger raiding parties and even small armies. They command the lesser Skaven through strength and fear, rather than inspired leadership. Warlock-Engineers are the technicians and laboratory assistants of Clan Skryre. They can be equipped with a Warplock Pistol, Warpmusket, or 3 Poison Wind Globes.

CLANRAT CLAWLEADER

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
5	30	30	30	30	40	35	30	30	30	20	12

Traits: Armour 1, Infected, Night Vision, Weapon (Sword) +7

Skills: Athletics 45, Dodge 40, Leadership 30, Melee (Basic) 45, Stealth 45

Trappings: Hand Weapon, Helmet, Leather Armour

STORMVERMIN FANGLEADER

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
5	45	35	35	35	55	50	30	30	35	20	12

Traits: Armour 3, Infected, Night Vision, Weapon (Sword) +7, Ranged (Warplock Pistol) +8

Skills: Athletics 60, Intimidate 50, Leadership 45, Melee (Basic) 65, Ranged (Skaven Ranged Weapons) 45

Trappings: Plate and Mail, Sword, Warplock Pistol

CHIEFTAIN

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
5	50	45	45	45	60	55	30	30	40	25	12

Traits: Armour 3, Infected, Night Vision, Weapon (Sword) +8, Ranged (Warplock Pistol) +8

Skills: Athletics 65, Intimidate 60, Leadership 55, Lore (Warfare) 45, Melee (Basic) 75, Ranged (Skaven Ranged Weapons) 60

Trappings: Breastplate, Sword, Helmet, Mail Coat, Warplock Pistol

WARLOCK-ENGINEER

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
5	30	45	30	30	45	35	45	40	30	20	12

Traits: Armour 3, Infected, Night Vision, Weapon (Sword) +7

Skills: Athletics 45, Dodge 40, Melee (Basic) 35, Ranged (Skaven Ranged Weapons) 50, Stealth 45, Trade (Engineering) 60

Trappings: Engineer's Toolkit, Hand Weapon, Helmet, Heavy Armour

CLAN SKRYRE WEAPON CREW

Many of Clan Skryre's Clanrats are trained in the use of their inventive and frightening machineries of destruction. They typically benefit from some extra training, and crudely forged heavy armour. Most of the Weapon Crews encountered in The Horned Rat are either equipped with 3 Poison Wind Globes, or formed into teams of two, equipped with a Warplock Jezzail and a Large Shield.



WEAPON CREW

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
5	30	30	30	30	40	35	35	30	20	20	11

Traits: Armour 3, Infected, Night Vision, Weapon (Sword) +7

Skills: Athletics 45, Dodge 40, Melee (Basic 35, Warp-grinder 35), Ranged (Skaven Ranged Weapons) 40, Stealth 45, Trade (Engineering) 40

Trappings: Hand Weapon, Helmet, Heavy Armour

WARPSTONE

Attacks from weapons with the Warpstone quality count as magical. In addition to normal damage, each wounding hit causes Minor exposure to Corruption.

Poisoned Wind Globe

A Clan Skryre innovation, these small hollow glass spheres contain a noxious gas. When thrown, the sphere shatters, dispersing the poison. If the globe fails to hit its target, consult the following table.

1d10	Result
1	You drop the poisoned wind globe at your feet, but somehow it doesn't break.
2-9	The poisoned wind globe falls 1d10 yards short of the target.
10	You drop the poisoned wind globe at your feet and it shatters.

When the globe shatters, it releases a cloud of poisonous gas 3 yd in diameter and 3 yd high. The cloud persists for 1d10-1 rounds (a roll of 1 indicating that there is a draught or breeze strong enough to disperse it instantly). Every Character within the cloud must make a **Challenging (+0) Endurance Test**, modified by Resistance (Poison) and any other factor that the GM deems pertinent, or lose 4 Wounds, ignoring armour and Toughness Bonus. The Test is repeated every round that a Character ends their turn in the cloud.

SKAVEN RANGED WEAPONS

Weapon	Price	Enc	Availability	Range	Damage	Qualities and Flaws
Warplock Pistol	—	1	—	30	+8	Damaging, Dangerous, Penetrating, Pistol, Reload 1, Warpstone
Warpmusket	—	1	—	40	+9	Damaging, Dangerous, Penetrating, Reload 3, Warpstone
Warplock Jezzail	—	4	—	100	+12	Damaging, Dangerous, Penetrating, Reload 3, Warpstone
Poison Wind Globe	—	0	—	SBx3	Special	—

OTHER OPPONENTS

As well as the Skaven, characters may well encounter certain types of human opponent a number of times throughout the adventure. Thugs are rough folk employed by Middenheim's Low Kings as frighteners and enforcers. They are typically led by a forceful individual and fight hard if engaged, but they are not dedicated to the point of suicide. If they are deprived of leadership they slink off to receive new orders.



THUGS

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	35	30	40	35	30	35	35	25	35	30	13

Traits: Armour 1, Ranged (Crossbow) +9, Weapon +5

Skills: Athletics 32, Dodge 37, Intimidate 49, Melee (Basic 40, Brawling 35), Ranged (Crossbow) 33, Stealth (Urban) 31

Trappings: Dagger, Knuckledusters, Leather Jack, may also have Crossbows with 12 Bolts

The cultists of the Purple Hand remaining in Middenheim are tough, resourceful, and dedicated to the cause of change. They fight ferociously if encountered. Since Wasmeier's disappearance they have prepared to face down their persecutors: they give and expect no quarter. They can be identified, by those who know what to look for, by the items of purple clothing they wear, and the small tattoo of a purple hand inscribed on to their chests.

PURPLE HAND CULTIST

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	40	45	35	35	35	35	30	40	40	30	13

Traits: Armour 1, Ranged (Crossbow) +9, Weapon +5

Skills: Athletics 45, Dodge 45, Melee (Basic) 54, Ranged (Crossbow) 54

Trappings: Dagger, Knuckledusters, Leather Jack, may also have Crossbows with 12 Bolts

Many Yellow Fang Cultists have infiltrated the Sewer Jacks and Ratters' Guild. They tend to be poorer Middenheimers and can be identified by the fact that they have removed one of their front incisors and wear it on a string about their necks. They carry foul-smelling Skaven musk which they believe wins them favour with the 'masters' (it does not, though creatures such as Rat Ogres and other Moulder-bred abominations recognise those smelling of the musk as allies).

YELLOW FANG CULTIST

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	12

Traits: Armour 1, Weapon (Dagger) +5

Skills: Dodge 40, Melee (Basic) 45, Lore (Skaven) 40

Trappings: Leather Jack, Dagger, Vial of Skaven Musk

SKAVEN DENIAL

In the years following the Black Plague of 1111 IC, the Skaven roved openly throughout the Empire, but at Middenheim they were thrown back, and ever since they have been exceedingly cautious in how they approach this nation. Whilst the Skaven are hidden and secretive in general, they go to enormous lengths to keep the people of the Empire in a state of ignorance.

Their campaigns of misinformation, cover-up, and even mind-bending sorcerous ritual have been so successful that it has become something of a tradition, even an artefact of national identity, for folks in the Empire to doubt the very existence of Skaven. Openly discussing 'Rat-Headed Beastmen' is a good way to ruin the buzz in a tavern, or cause an awkward silence to descend upon a high-class dinner party. Agitators pushing for recognition of the fact that an Under-Empire exists beneath their feet can find themselves charged with causing pernicious mischief.

The denial comes in many forms. A hard-line fringe insists that there is no such thing as Skaven, and that phenomena that might prove their existence can be put down to freak mutation or sorcerous illusion. Such people can be surprisingly creative and vociferous when faced with evidence that conflicts with their beliefs.

More common is an acceptance that mutants with ratlike features do crop up, and may even band together in underground lairs, but that they do not form a coherent species with a populous society — let alone that they have mastered arcane sorcery and technology.

There are sections of Imperial society that do not deny the Skaven. Dwarfs have suffered greatly from their depredations, and find themselves caught between feeling frustrated at the ignorance of Manlings and feeling embarrassed to admit to how badly they have fared in their struggles. Scholars of History and Bestiaria know there is more to the Skaven than occasional freaks in the sewers. Mercenaries and adventurers also swap stories of having faced bands of Skaven on their expeditions.

During **The Horned Rat** the characters will have a number of opportunities to expose the Skaven to increasing scrutiny, and the degree to which they do so has an effect on the preparedness of the Skaven at a number of junctures in this adventure. The more evidence of Skaven activity the Characters produce, the more effort the Skaven have to expend on covering their tracks and avoiding repercussions, and the more inhibited their schemes become.

On the other hand, if the Characters fail to prevent operations carried out by the Skaven and the Yellow Fang then things become more difficult for them, and Skaven operations benefit from an increasing head start.

At the end of many sections of **The Horned Rat**, alongside experience awards, a modifier is given to a running total of Evidence. If the Characters do efficient work of exposing Skaven activity and foiling their schemes this number grows higher, but if they miss vital evidence or let the Skaven get away with their schemes it diminishes. The GM should keep track of this score, but keep it and its implications secret from the players.

MIDDENHEIMERS AND THEIR OPINIONS OF SKAVEN

By the time they commence **The Horned Rat** the Characters may well know many people in and around Middenheim, and they may try to sound out their opinion on the Skaven. See the table on the next page for their baseline attitudes.

NPCs marked with an * are people who have the ear of the Graf. (**Note:** He is rather more open to well-formed arguments than he was in **Power Behind the Throne**.) For each that is brought to a state of Full Acceptance, the Evidence Score increases by 1 point. On the other hand, if they are reduced to a state of Overwhelming Denial, it decreases the Evidence Score by 1 point. Other NPCs have no effect on the Evidence Score, but are given as examples of how folk in Middenheim think. NPCs brought to a state of Full Acceptance may also do what they can to help the Characters expose the Skaven, whilst those in a state of Overwhelming Denial may well try to complicate matters for them.

In order to move an NPC from one level of acceptance to another, a Character must do one of two things: give a coherent and sincere account of their experience with Skaven and pass a **Challenging (+0) Charm Test**, or produce physical evidence of Skaven existence or activity — for example, show a Skaven corpse or skeleton, or a Skaven in captivity. Skaven footprints and other evidence (bits of fur, claws, whiskers and teeth marks) do not have the same impact.

So Dieter Schmeidehammer (Bare Acceptance) could be brought to a state of Full Acceptance (and therefore contribute to a positive Evidence Score) if the Characters showed him a single Skaven corpse and told him of one encounter. Breugal (Overwhelming Denial) would need to see five separate corpses and/or be convinced of five accounts in order to reach the same level.

EVIDENCE SCORE TABLE

Evidence Score	Result
3 or more	Undeniable. The Characters are doing a fine job of exposing evidence of the existence and activities of Skaven. More people in the region maintain vigilance and act against the Skaven on their own initiative. Later parts of the adventure make note of how the performance of Skaven is negatively impacted by the efforts of the Characters.
-2 to 2	Plausible Denial. The Characters are causing a bit of a stir due to their efforts, but by and large people remain ignorant of the Skaven. There is no major effect from this result, but keep the score in mind as it will modify certain tests, such as convincing Middenheim's rulers to accept the Characters' findings.
-3 or less	Deeper Denial. The Characters' bungling is playing into the hands of the Skaven and even lending apparent credence to those who suggest the Skaven are a myth. Later parts of the adventure make note of how the Skaven benefit from the poor performance of the Characters.

If the Charm Test is failed by 3 SL or more, the Characters might actually contribute to denial, and if the evidence they produce turns out to be faked, the person they are hoping to convince will become even more of a denier. For example, the Characters may take Dieter Schmeidehammer to see Eunice Hasche dissect a Skaven corpse (page 62), but if her subject turns out to be a hoax, Dieter moves from a state of Bare Acceptance to Bare Denial.

EMPIRE ON THE BRINK OF TURMOIL

War is coming to the Empire; everyone can feel it. Whilst the subject of the violent period of turmoil into which the nation is soon to descend is the focus of the next part of the **Enemy Within** campaign, **Empire in Ruins**, it should be clear throughout **The Horned Rat** that outbreaks of fighting are occurring in various quarters and that troops are being recruited, trained, and despatched to the front. In particular, the following flashpoints are the subject of gossip on every street corner and barroom in Middenheim.

NOTABLE MIDDENHEIMERS AND THEIR OPINIONS OF SKAVEN

Belief In Skaven	Meaning	NPC names
Full Acceptance	The Skaven are real, organised, and their lairs can be found beneath several Empire cities, including Middenheim.	*Allavandrel Fanmaris, Ebn Al-Azir, Alfric 'Half-Nose' Anvilbreaker, Estelle Celadell, Glugnur, Ketri the Stout, Agna Lottrisdottir, Master Lukas, Yarnad Magradil, Clerk Thognar, Jacko Warble, Yanni Weber, Yarrick, Modi Zargul.
Partial Acceptance	The Skaven are real and occasionally trouble the Empire, but they are more of an issue for Tileans and Dwarfs.	*Albrecht Helseher, *Rallane Lafarel, *Luigi Pavarotti, Brother Bengt, Eva Dietrich, 'Magister' Hugo Greendale, Stefan Hochen, Irinka, Kirista Kallarial, Clerk Malondel, Beate Moser, High Priestess Edel Mueller, 'Nastassia', Eberhardt Stiefel, Hob Warble, Walpurga Wurlklich.
Bare Acceptance	The Skaven are real but the notion that they are organised or exist in great number is dubious.	*High Matriarch Isolde Begegnen, *Kirsten Jung, *Dieter Schmeidehammer, Rudolf Buffler, Sigrid Buffler, Marta Gerbenshreiber, Gerhard Heller, 'Josef', Bertha Jung, Ulrike Jung, Hieronymus Neugierde, Werner Ulf, Himbo Wobbulbeli.
Bare Denial	There may be small, scattered communities of Beastmen or mutants who tend to live underground and share rat-like features.	*Josef Sparsam, *Marshal von Genscher, Helmut Beckenbauer, Andrea Bruhn, Dunno Greendale, Emmeline Helstein, Rudolph Helstein, Wolfgang Hohmann, Gustav Holschtweig, Clerk Huggins, Hans Kaltenbrunner, Wanda Kaltenbrunner, Henricus von Kärzbudger, Karl Matthauss, Hettie Shortcrust, Wulfir Tore, Emil Valgeir, Captain Moritz Valgeir.
Sweeping Denial	Occasional mutant freaks lurk in the Undercity.	*Ulrich Schutzmann, *Petra Liebkosen, *Johann Schwermutt, Traudl Bauer, Waldtraud Blass, Eberhardt Geiger, Silas Greenhill, Erich Hinfällig, Hilda Holschtweig, Jochen, Velma Karbunkel, Klaus Kerzer, Horst Klepper, Bruno Kohl, Wereburga Krotpreffer, Claus Liebnitz, Georg Mikael, Captain Johannes Moesenleicher, Emmille Münzstätter, Josef Pfandleiher, Ritta, Hans Rustung, Rolf Steinmeyer, Ulrike Steinmeyer, Hilberry Stilburg, High Capitular Werner Stolz, Sascha Rothbert, Wulfrum Viert, Karl Zimmern.
Overwhelming Denial	There are no such things as Skaven and those who claim otherwise are fearmongers or attention seekers set on distracting us from serious matters.	*Hausmeister Breugal, *Natassia Sinnlich, *Hildegarde Zimperlich, Lammert Arbernard, Wolfgang Bandpater, Alex Eisen, Hartwig Flatbush, Bettie Greenhill, Old Otto, Siegfried Prunkvoll, Brigitte Schlegel, Johann Stallart, Reiner Staller.

The Reikland: The Emperor's decision to relieve the von Jungfreud family of their right to rule Übersreik has spread panic. Revolts have occurred in the city, and state troops from Altdorf are being sent there in increasing number. Nobles swell their retinues with regiments of hastily recruited 'mean men' in fear that they may be treated like the Jungfreuds. These hastily formed private armies are undisciplined, and their habit is to raid neighbouring estates. Bögenhafen is also a site of unrest, either due to Daemonic incursion or mysterious deaths of wealthy citizens, depending on the actions of the Characters there.

Nordland: Nordland's independence from Middenheim is being sought with increasing ferocity. Rumours of corruption and incompetence amongst Middenheim's rulers help to fuel the case for secession. A nobleman named Gausser seeks the overthrow of the Niskes who he claims are puppets of the Graf.

Averland: Averlanders are becoming increasingly frustrated with the rule of Iron Countess von Alptraum. Responding to complaints about recent food shortages, she is quoted as saying, *'Why are people so obstinate as to insist on bread when it is so scarce?'*

Ostland and Talabecland: Claims that Crown Prince Hergard von Tasseninck of Ostland was slain due to the machinations of the von Krieglitz family of Talabecland refuse to go away, and the two provinces seemed destined to make war on one another.

MIDDENHEIM IN RECOVERY

Whether or not the Characters played through **Power Behind the Throne**, the events described there have certainly occurred. Karl-Heinz Wasmeier, one of the city's three Law Lords, sought to usurp power by compromising and corrupting several of the most influential people in the city. Whilst disaster was averted Middenheim is reeling from the effects of his schemes.

Graf Boris Todbringer still mourns the death of Anika-Elise Niske, though he realises now that his dark moods contribute to Middenheim's vulnerability, and is slowly becoming a more actively involved ruler.

'Princess' Katarina has grown confident and curious. She takes a more active part in politics, supporting her father's recovery, and taking an interest in the findings of the Characters.

Chancellor Sparsam retains his position, despite suffering from a previous addiction to stimulants. He is deeply ashamed of the part he played in Wasmeier's schemes, and is keen to make amends. He devotes himself to his work, but is inhibited by mood swings resulting from his withdrawal.

Deputy High Wizard Janna Eberhauer prepares to journey to Altdorf on a diplomatic and fact-finding mission.

Ar-Ulric has stepped back from public life. During the adventure he spends time preparing his successor for the role before departing on a solitary quest for spiritual atonement that



will take him to the far north. His secret lover, Lady-at-Court Emmanuelle Schlagen, decides that she wishes to return to the acting life, and soon relocates to Altdorf.

Dieter Schmeidehammer prepares to retire as Graf's Champion. Though if Dieter was never diagnosed as having been hypnotised, and treated accordingly, he still occasionally voices rather surprising opinions about taxation.

Law Lord Hofflich is dead. Law Lord Wasmeier is missing, presumed dead. Law Lord Erlich is in a state of profound shock and cannot carry out his duties. For now the Worshipful Guild of Legalists steps in to maintain legislative processes in Middenheim, and new Law Lords are selected from their number in time.

Middenheim's citizens are largely kept in the dark about the reason for the sudden spate of resignations and disappearances amongst Middenheim's leadership. A number of lurid conspiracy theories are quickly invented and circulated to explain things. Many of them point the finger at the perfect scapegoats — Sigmarites.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

The Horned Rat is a complicated adventure with a number of parts that could interlock or occur simultaneously. As the GM you should familiarise yourself with the whole adventure before deciding which sections to present to the Players in which order. You could work through the adventure in its written sequence, which would reduce the risk of loose ends, or present leads to many cases all at once, which would give the Players more choice, but risk overwhelming them.

PICKING UP FROM POWER BEHIND THE THRONE

It is recommended that the Players play through the earlier parts of the **Enemy Within** campaign before starting **The Horned Rat**. Not only does this provide them with the proper context for concerning themselves with the destruction of the Purple Hand, unmasking of Gotthard von Wittgenstein, and dissemination of evidence proving the existence of the Skaven, but it also gives a great reason for the authorities in Middenheim to pay them significant regard. After the events of **Power Behind the Throne** several important figures in Middenheim have reason to be grateful, and the Characters have been offered a generous stipend to help Watch Commander Ulrich Schutzmann search out associates of Wasmeier. **The Horned Rat** begins with a meeting with Schutzmann in which he outlines a new threat to the city, and provides some promising leads.

STARTING FROM SCRATCH

The Horned Rat assumes Characters are quite experienced from adventuring through the previous **Enemy Within** books. New Characters may find the odds severely stacked against them, bordering on impossible. Characters who have played the full campaign up to this point should have gained approximately 3,500 Experience Points. Consider giving new Characters this bonus Experience before beginning, or their adventures may be very short indeed!

Ideas for how to involve new characters in the adventure are given in *Instigating Events* on page 32.

THE SCABROUS POX

Unfortunately the rumours about the Scabrous Pox (or Itching Pox as it is more widely known) are quite true. Characters who visit crowded places or Shallyan chapels in the poorer areas of town are very likely to encounter someone suffering from the disease — requiring them to test to see if they contract it themselves. (For rules on Itching Pox, see **WFRP**, page 187.)

Markets, taverns, and Shallyan chapels in Altquartier, Ostwald, Sudtor, and the Wynd are all likely sources of exposure (80% chance that a Character entering such a place is coughed on). Except for *The Drowned Rat*. Exposure to Galloping Yellow Scumpox is more likely at *The Drowned Rat*.

THE HARLEQUIN HURDY-GURDYIST OF HOVELHOF

This story of a town infested with rats is famous everywhere, but varies in any number of details as it travels across the Old World. In the north of the Empire, popular versions include 'The Pie-Eyed Piper of Middenheim' and 'The Rats of Hammstadt'. The most well-known version around Middenheim is 'The Harlequin Hurdy-gurdyist of Hovelhof'.

The story goes that a mysterious musician turns up in the town, offering to rid the place of their annoying rodents, for a fee. The Harlequin duly does so by playing such a sweet melody that enchants the rats. They follow the Harlequin as he leads them into a nearby mine to be lost forever.

However, the town council foolishly reneges on its agreed payment. As revenge, the Harlequin plays another tune, one that the Hovelhof's townsfolk cannot resist, and leads them to their doom, lost in the mines, forever. All the Characters are bound to have heard a similar version of this tale.

TIMELINE OF EPISODES

The GM could decide to run the adventure sequentially, or could simply dump all the leads on the Characters' laps at the start. However, here is a recommended order for events to happen in the early parts of the campaign.

Episode	Suggested Day	What occurs and when?
End of Power Behind the Throne	Day 0	Wasmeier disappears and the Graf is saved.
Initial Meeting with Schutzmann	Day 2	The Characters meet with Schutzmann to discuss the new Kommission.
Cover-Up	Various	Whilst the public dissection does not occur until later in the adventure, the handout promoting the dissection could go up shortly after Eunice Hasche takes delivery of the Skaven corpses. It could even go up during the events of Power Behind the Throne , if the GM has time to arrange for it. The date given for the dissection ought to occur within five days of the start of The Horned Rat .
Purrsecution	Various	The first meeting with Schutzmann should start to give clues as to the existence of the Akoustikk Rattee, and examples of cats being culled can occur whenever the Characters travel around Middenheim whilst following other leads.
Ordo Impedimentae	Day 2	This can be the first case Schutzmann provides to the Characters, occurring a few days after the events of Power Behind the Throne .
The Great Defector	Day 2	Leads to this case can also be presented to the Characters in their first meeting with Schutzmann.
Missing Convenor	Days 3–4	The Jade Sceptre can assail the party as soon as they begin asking questions about the Purple Hand. Their attack will likely lead the Characters to look into Gotthard's fate.
Ordo Terribilis Resurgens	Days 3–4	Leads to this episode are discovered during The Great Defector .
Mysterious Thefts	Days 4–6	Once the Characters have tied up a few loose ends from earlier episodes they can be informed of the mysterious thefts.
Assassinations	After Cover-Up Concludes	Once the Characters have tied up a few loose ends from earlier episodes they can be informed of the murder victims. It would also help if they have made the acquaintance of Professor Eunice Hasche by this point.
Undercity Encounters	Various	If Characters enter the Undercity at any point in their investigations refer to this chapter.
Audience with the Graf	Day 8 at the earliest	Once a convincing body of evidence for the existence of Skaven can be put together this episode can be triggered by either the players or the GM. It is not easy to arrange a meeting with the Graf at short notice, so the GM can delay this meeting if there are loose ends remaining to be explored.

Once the meeting with the Graf is complete the remaining adventure takes a more straightforward progression.



HEARSAY AND HERESY

Characters can learn a great deal about tensions within Middenheim and the Empire from listening to tavern gossip, town criers and well-travelled merchants.

Rumours about Middenheim

- ☠ *'Lean times ahead, I hear. Poor harvests, aye, and bandits bin' raiding granaries across Middenland. Something voracious has been through all the cabbage fields in the lee of the Middle Mountains. Dietrich Hoffman from the Farmer's Association ain't ruling out shortages if the Graf don't sort it out.'*
- ☠ *'I heard that those Sons of Ulric stopped Harald the blacksmith yesterday. Apparently they told him to quit making hammers. "Too Sigmarite," they said. "How's a man supposed to drive a nail with no hammer?" he asked them. Ha! They didn't have an answer for that one, so they broke both his legs. They used a hammer to do it too! There's irony for you.'*
- ☠ *'Sure they opposed the unfair taxes, but can you really trust those wizards? Always meddling with things good folk shouldn't touch, I say. They can turn lead into gold, so why would taxes even bother them? Something's up there, you mark my words.'*
- ☠ *'Lot of folks coming to Middenheim searching for missing family of late. Probably beastmen from the Drakwald, but it's easier to think they came here to make their names, I suppose. The way some of them wail, I'd say half of their families disappeared just to get away from the noise.'*
- ☠ *'It's good to see the Graf getting back to his old self. I thought he'd never get over the death of his wife, but there he was, all noble and lordly, voice booming. Took that heretic's head clean off with one swing of his Runefang! I love a good public execution, good for morale.'*
- ☠ *'It's a bad outbreak of the scabrous pox this year. Shallya's lot are barely keeping it under control, bless them. Oh all praise to Ulric, don't get me wrong, but it weren't Ar-Ulric who gave me a bottle of soothing cream down the Altquartier, if you get me. Best steer clear of Shallyan places and taverns in the poorer part of town until it subsides. Happens every other year after the carnival, all these southerners and Sigmarites bringing it in.'*
- ☠ *'I've never seen so many witch hunters! Swanning about, full of airs, in Ulric's own city no less! It's shameful to see them handle our affairs for us! Ultricans can punish cultists just fine, thank you.'*
- ☠ *'How'd I make my fortune? Lumber. I tell you, with the Ultricans setting fire to Sigmarite houses and Sigmarites setting fire to Ultrican houses, the timber barely even sees the inside of my warehouse!'*
- ☠ *[Optional] 'I heard that someone set Law Lord... I mean, the traitor Wasmeier's house on fire t'other day. Took the kids up to Nordgarten to watch, thought it'd be a nice change from the executions. More fool me. There weren't nothin' natural about that fire. I swear, an' I'm*

not the only one saw it. There was little laughin' faces in the flames. Ulric's truth. Wasmeier? Good riddance. Wherever he is now I hope he's bloody miserable.'

Rumours about the Empire

- ☠ *'The Emperor recovered? I didn't even know he was sick! That's great news, long may he ... Wait, what do you mean he was dead?'*
- ☠ *'Gustav von Krieglitz spread the rumours that he murdered the son of Hals von Tassenink! No, don't you see? He always reckoned he should rule Ostland as well as Talabecland, this is the perfect excuse to go to war!'*
- ☠ *'Crown Prince Wolfgang is still hiring troops! I hope he finds an enemy to set them all on soon, the Empire will go broke if he doesn't stop!'*
- ☠ *'No, I was in Altdorf a while back, and I saw Emperor Karl-Franz at the head of a parade with my own eyes. He looked fine to me. All this illness talk is nonsense, probably Crown Prince Wolfgang spreading lies looking to take the job early, yeah?'*
- ☠ *'Crown Prince Wolfgang fired all his troops! He's mad, mad I tell you!'*
- ☠ *'Baron Heinrich has been gone a long time. I thought he'd have talked sense into the von Tasseninks and von Krieglitzes by now, right? It must be bad over there.'*
- ☠ *'Oh no, von Tassenink's son isn't dead at all. He killed his father and took his place! I heard he just couldn't stand the man. Made him so angry he's trying to get it out of his system by starting a war with Talabecland. Family, eh?'*
- ☠ *'Crown Prince Wolfgang is lookin' to marry! All them soldiers is like a dowry, see, only royals have to really show off, so instead of yer aunt's mouldy ol' farmhouse, they give each other armies...'*
- ☠ *'Oh, the Emperor's been dead for ages. What they do is, see, they dress him up in his armour and paint his face all lifelike, then they tie him to the horse and shove a stick down his back to keep him up straight in the saddle.'*
- ☠ *'Hamlets in the lee of the Middle Mountains have been becoming mysteriously deserted of late. Folk say riders from Nordland, or maybe Ostland, is riding in, stealing all the food, and rounding up all the people to sell to Elven Corsairs. Me, I don't believe a word of it. I reckon it's the work of none other than ... The Harlequin Hurdy-gurdyist of Hovelhof!'*



VILLAINOUS FACTIONS

Up until this point in the campaign the GM and the Players may have regarded the Purple Hand, or the Skaven, as cohesive groups with common purposes. During **The Horned Rat**, though, the fact that these enemies are split into factions, with divergent purposes, begins to influence events. Whilst it isn't important that Characters become aware of this (confusion on their part is appropriate), the GM should benefit from understanding these divisions.

THE PURPLE HAND

The Purple Hand is regionally isolated into separate cells, within which are three Ordos: the Ordo Impedimentae, Ordo Terribilis, and Ordo Novitiae. Members of the Purple Hand are kept ignorant of one another. Even the Ordos' leaders only meet whilst disguised. At conclaves members may gather, but once initiated a member only comes into regular contact with their immediate superior and the few cultists they work alongside.

But there are exceptions. A few years ago an important member of the Purple Hand began to lobby for reorganisation, contacting cells throughout the Empire, and working to centralise the cult. This was Kastor Lieberung, the Magister Impedimentae of the Nuln Cell.

Why Kastor wished to reorganise the cult, and how he found the energy to do so, will become clear in **Empire in Ruins**. Kastor's activities attracted the attention of a bounty hunter, Adolphus Kuftsos, who coaxed him to Bögenhafen to collect a fortune.

Kastor contacted his fellows to inform them that he would soon receive a windfall. However, he then ceased communications, leaving the cult even more divided. Kastor was sighted in the Reikland, but refused to cooperate with cultists who approached him.

The Purple Hand in Middenheim

Recently the Purple Hand in Middenheim was thrown into disarray when one of the city's Law Lords, Karl-Heinz Wasmeier, was unmasked as their leader and fled. Rumours have it that Kastor, or Kastor's associates, had a hand in this disaster. Leaderless and paranoid that they are soon to receive a visit from the Watch, Wasmeier's lieutenants prepare themselves for trouble.

The Purple Hand in Altdorf

As Middenheim's Purple Hand disintegrates, the cult in Altdorf advance their own plans. Kastor had been cooperating with the Altdorf cell to corrupt the throne of the Emperor and instigate civil war.

Kastor's sudden change of behaviour, his failure to deliver promised funds, and the bungling of cult operations in Middenheim, has convinced the Altdorf cell to expedite their plans. Their activities feature in **Empire in Ruins**, though clues as to their intentions may be discovered during **The Horned Rat**.

THE SKAVEN

The Purple Hand are a model of efficiency compared to the labyrinthine designs directing Skavendom. The following summaries explain the motives of the major Skaven factions in **The Horned Rat**, but even within these factions there are individuals who would undermine the plans of their superiors if they were to sense profit in it.

Maliss Manrack, The Warlock Engineer of Karak Skygg

The Council of Thirteen granted permission to Maliss Manrack, a talented warlock master of Clan Skryre, to occupy Karak Skygg in the Middle Mountains in order to construct a huge Warp lightning cannon that he boasts will be capable of blasting chunks of Warpstone from the surface of Morrslieb. If Maliss pulls off his operation, he will be rich and powerful.

CRACKING CODES

Whilst investigating the Purple Hand, the Characters may find coded messages. These are meant to be fun and provide clues to Players and hint at wider developments. They do not carry information essential to the plot of the adventure, so if Players are unable to solve them it will not inhibit progress.

However, it may frustrate Players to miss important information, or they might spend time cracking codes when the GM would prefer them to get on with the adventure. Here is a suggested approach to codes to keep them as a fun distraction rather than a frustrating dead end.

- ☛ Let the Players have a go at cracking the code without assistance either in or out of character.
- ☛ If progress is slow, allow an **Average (+20) Intelligence Test** and provide a clue (such as pointing out how to substitute a symbol) for each SL scored. Multiple Characters can take the test and combine SLs.
- ☛ Provide more clues for every 15 minutes of in-game time a Character spends on the code — so if two people are working on a letter substitution code for 30 minutes give them 4 letters in addition to any other progress they make.
- ☛ Allow intelligent NPCs to quickly crack the code if they are asked to. Schutzmann is a fine code cracker. An exception to this is any code written in Dark Tongue, which takes time to crack unless the NPC is already familiar with it, or has access to a partially cracked code (such as the one found at the Jarmund residence).

But Maliss is greedy, and hopes to retain as much of the haul for himself as he can. Clan Skryre's rivals predict that the Warpstone haul could make Clan Skryre an even greater power within Skavendom, so they plan to help or hinder the operation depending on their hopes for alliance with the Warlock Engineers.

Clan Mange

Clan Mange is a minor Clan whose members find a niche within Skaven society by hiring themselves out as mercenaries to more powerful clans. They have pledged themselves to Maliss in the hope of being rewarded with Warpstone.

Whilst the Clan Mange Skaven serve Maliss loyally, he is sending them on increasingly dangerous missions, hoping to thin out their numbers to the point where he can enslave them. The leaders of Clan Mange have not realised his ulterior motive.

Under-Middenheim

The lair of Under-Middenheim is mostly populated by Skaven of Clan Scrutens, though Clans Pestilens, Eshin and Moulder also have a presence there. Castellan-Warlord Skrray tightly controls movement and resources, partly because of a need to maintain the lair's secrecy, but mostly because he is a gleeful tyrant.

Skrray knows about Maliss Manrack's plans, but resents that he is expected to allow Clan Mange access to his territory. During **The Horned Rat** he loses patience and starts to punish Clan Mange. This is intended to annoy Maliss but has the opposite effect of amusing him no end. The weaker Clan Mange become the better for him.

Snikkit's Warband

Snikkit is (or was) an oddity in Skaven society, a clanless mercenary whose band were willing to work for any master willing to pay in food, slaves, or Warpstone. Due to a connection with Vizier Bahr, Snikkit ran errands for the Purple Hand, kidnapping the niece of Law Lord Erlich and assassinating the crown prince von Tasseninck to sow discord between Ostland and Talabecland, but was also commissioned by Maliss to help undermine Clan Mange.

Unfortunately for Snikkit, his operations ran the risk of discovery by bold adventurers, so by this point he is likely either dead (if the Characters encountered him in **Power Behind the Throne**), or soon to be (if they did not).

THE YELLOW FANG IN MIDDENHEIM

Human worshippers of the Horned Rat are rare, but they do exist. The governing ethos of the cult is a belief that humanity's dominance is drawing to a close and that the Skaven, a younger and more vigorous species, will inherit in their place. In a forlorn hope that the Skaven will reward Humans who aid their ascension the Yellow Fang assist the Skaven where they can. The cult is powerful in Carroburg, and only exists in Middenheim

as a small splinter of around 25 cultists, most of whom are also members of Middenheim's Sewer Jacks.

The Yellow Fang have contacts with Clan Scrutens agents in Under-Middenheim. This used to be a rewarding collaboration as much information was shared. However, since he came to power in Under-Middenheim Castellan-Warlord Gnawretch Skrray has locked down much of this activity. The Yellow Fang have been reduced to performing perfunctory clean-up and cover-up operations.

Recently Clan Mange Skaven in the service of Maliss Manrack have contacted the Yellow Fang. Now they are busy again, performing thefts and abductions to provide resources for Maliss Manrack's Moonbreaker.

Cultists of the Yellow Fang often remove one of their front incisors, which is worn around their neck as a sign of their devotion. In Middenheim senior cult members disguise the loss with dentures, which tend to be a little awkward-looking.

Raina Mūs. The Yellow Fang's most accomplished cultist, Mūs is a senior Sewer Jack who indoctrinates her patrol and ensures they misdirect any enquiries about Skaven presence in the sewers. She also uses the sewers to contact Skaven scouts and conduct rites to the Horned Rat.

Dr Lanzaro Lindwurm. Professor of infectious diseases at the Collegium Theologica. He coordinates the discrediting of proponents of the existence of Skaven. Recently, at Maliss Manrack's urging (and to Gnawretch Skrray's dismay), he has turned his efforts to vilifying cats.

Karl and Gaius. A pair of porters at the Collegium Theologica. They aid Professor Lindwurm and perform legwork and enforcement for the cult.

Hauke Ayinger. A secretary of the Ratters' Guild who works to ensure that anyone enquiring about the Skaven is first pumped for information, and then subsequently misled or done away with.

Schmidt. An old man with no connections outside the cult. He wraps himself in rags and performs a passable impression of a Skaven. He follows proponents of the existence of Skaven about, begging in a squeaky voice to be given money to buy cheese. If he is accused of being a Skaven he finds the suggestion laughable, but if he is forced to unmask he vociferously complains about being bullied, and generally does all he can to embarrass and discredit his harassers.

Every thirteenth of the month these operatives meet in the basement of a building in the Freiburg district to share information and discuss new plans. Scathe the Tainted of Clan Scrutens attends in order to make a report of the meeting to Under-Middenheim.

◆ UNDERCITY ENCOUNTERS ◆



Middenheim's Undercity is a sprawling complex of ever-changing tunnels. It has never been adequately mapped, and any attempt to do so would be out of date before it saw print. In more than 2,500 years, no attempt to clear the tunnels has been successful: every few generations a Graf tries, and many lives are lost in the attempt. This is not a dungeon to be cleared room by room until the monsters are dead: it is a living environment whose inhabitants react to intruders; a food chain whose top spot is certainly not occupied by anyone from the surface.

THE SEWERS

The sewer system is cut through the rock of the Fauschlag. Because of the hard granite, the culverts are narrow, and rarely built with walkways or bridges. Architects have taken advantage of natural fissures in the rock, and the sewers twist and turn. In places the sewage seeps through pre-existing formations, opening into natural caverns where the water is wide, still, and fetid.

Elsewhere the system is lined with walls constructed of rock left over from excavations.

Most sewer courses terminate at the face of the Fauschlag, so despite its labyrinthine complexity, following the simple rule of heading downhill usually leads to the light of day. The

locations where the sewage emerges are easily found from the outside. They are marked by long, brown stains smeared down the Fauschlag, and are guarded by iron grilles that are regularly inspected.

THE UPPER TUNNELS

Dating back to Dwarf excavations for Artur's original settlement, this network extends beneath the city. Parts of it are home to Dwarfs and much of it is utilised by Middenheimers. The long, dead-straight passages, vaulted cellars, massive cisterns, and spacious warehouses are as impressive as any construction above ground. Neatly cut Dwarf structures are easily distinguished from later human works. Much of the network has been forgotten, even by the Dwarfs.

Though not intentional, the sewer network often intersects with the structures of the upper tunnels. This is caused by previously unknown natural routes through the rock, by cave-ins, or by deliberate tunnelling through to the sewers for illicit reasons.

THE LOWER TUNNELS

Apart from the deeper digging of ancient Dwarfs, the Fauschlag's lower tunnels are naturally formed from ancient faults, the upwards flow of hot springs, the drainage of rainwater, and even the mysterious venting of magical winds.



The deepest tunnels beneath the Fauschlag eventually link to the vast Skaven Under-Empire that reaches every corner of the Old World. The rat-men know these routes almost instinctively; otherwise they are unknowable and unmapable.

The Under-Empire is the Skaven's greatest secret and greatest weapon, allowing them access to every corner of the Old World without risking exposure to their surface-dwelling enemies. Warbands regularly patrol the commonly used tunnels, outposts are set up at strategic locations, and spies are everywhere.

SEWER JACKS

Middenheim's Sewer Jacks see themselves as the guardians of the Undercity, and their role is as important as the watchmen on the surface. Each area of the sewers has its own captain, who nominates a number of sergeants to organise their forces. One of their principal roles is to guard and maintain sewer grilles. These gateways set in the side of the Fauschlag offer a clandestine route into the city, and must be locked and checked. The grilles are a lucrative source of bribes for letting smugglers and other criminals through.

THE YELLOW FANG IN THE SEWERS

The cult has infiltrated Middenheim's Sewer Jacks. Under the direction of Raina Mūs a number of sergeants have joined the cult, and through them younger Jacks are steadily indoctrinated. Cult rituals are conflated with Sewer Jack traditions, and the wolf on their coat of arms looks remarkably like a rat. The cult can call on 20 or so members, who obey without question and are open to the Skaven.

Senior cultists regularly meet with Skaven to impart intelligence and receive instruction. Anything significant that happens in the Undercity could find its way to Skaven ears.

MIDDENHEIM SEWER JACK (BRASS 3)

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	40	30	40	35	35	35	30	30	35	30	13

Traits: Armour 2, Weapon (Sword) +7

Skills: Athletics 40, Climb 50, Consume Alcohol 40, Dodge 40, Endurance 40, Gamble 40, Melee (Basic) 50, Perception 40, Stealth (Underground) 40

Trappings: Sword, Mail Coat, Lantern

Raina Mūs

No one knows where Mūs is from. No one noticed her arrive. But she has inveigled her way into the inner circle of Sewer Jack captains. Mūs has always had the power to turn minds to her will, and to turn the world in her favour.



RAINA MŪS – SEWER JACK SERGEANT (SILVER 3)

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
5	47	33	55	47	52	33	33	45	60	53	19

Traits: Armour 3, Weapon (Sword) +7

Skills: Athletics 53, Channelling 70, Charm 63, Climb 65, Consume Alcohol 57, Cool 70, Dodge 53, Endurance 62, Gamble 55, Gossip 63, Intimidate 65, Intuition 62, Language (Magick) 60, Leadership 63, Melee (Basic 67, Polearm 62), Perception 72, Sleight of Hand 48, Stealth (Rural 48, Underground 43)

Talents: Ambidextrous, Arcane Magic (Witchery), Beneath Notice, Doomed (*Violence begets violence, peace begets death*), Flee!, Hardy, Petty Magic, Savvy, Strider (Sewers), Tenacious, Tunnel Rat, Warrior Born

Trappings: Sword, Spear, Dagger, Mail Coat worn over Soft Leather, Lantern

Spells

Petty Magic: Eavesdrop, Sounds, Twitch

Arcane Magic: Blight, Creeping Menace, Distracting, The Evil Eye

Small, unassuming, and mousey, Mūs is almost forgettable save for her hyperactive, twitching mannerisms and skittering gait. Though still young, Mūs moves through Sewer Jack circles bullying and cajoling her superiors. She is obeyed without question, turning her colleagues towards the Skaven through a mixture of forceful argument and menacing magic. *‘When the world turns upside-down, who will be on top?’* she asks the Sewer Jacks and the answer is indisputable. The thing she is vague on is how and when this will occur.

Mūs is able to move through the narrow, twisting tunnels of the undercity with remarkable ease and speed. She roams the depths of the Fauschlag of her own accord as she simply feels at home down there. Weirdly, she is also able to walk on the surface, among high society, and nobody questions her right to be there. No one even seems to think that the sewer waif is out of place.

EXPLORING THE UNDERCITY

Travel underground is unpleasant, tiring, and filthy — especially in the sewers. In order to find their way through the Undercity, Characters must state their goal. The GM should then call for a Navigation Test if the Characters are searching for a location, or a Track Test if they are following a trail. This Test is modified according to how challenging the Characters’ goal is. The deeper the Characters want to go, the colder the trail they follow is, and the less familiar they are with the route, then the harder it gets.

Only one member of the party can make the Test, though others can assist. **Note:** The member of the party making the Test must be at the front of the group as they travel.

Once the Test has been taken, the number of hazards the Characters face before achieving their goal is based on the result.

Example Exploration Goals and Difficulties

Example Goal	Difficulty
Explore an area of sewers within 50 yards of a manhole.	Very Easy (+60)
Explore an area of sewers within 150 yards of a manhole, find a location in the sewers they visited before, following a Skaven who just passed by.	Easy (+40)
Follow the trail of Skaven who passed a few minutes ago, explore the sewers with a map, find an area in the Upper Tunnels they visited before.	Average (+20)
Follow the trail of Skaven who passed a few hours ago, explore the sewers without a map, explore the Upper Tunnels with a map.	Challenging (+0)
Follow the trail of Skaven who passed a day ago, find an area in the Lower Tunnels they visited before.	Difficult (–10)
Find an area in the Upper Tunnels they have heard of but not visited without a map, find an entrance to the Lower Tunnels.	Hard (–20)
Follow the trail of a Skaven that is trying to cover its tracks, try to find an entrance to Under-Middenheim.	Very Hard (–30)

Hazards Encountered

SL	Result	Outcome
+6 or more	Astounding Success	1 Hazard in the deepest layer of the Undercity visited
+4 to +5	Impressive Success	1 Hazard in each layer of the Undercity visited
+2 to +3	Success	2 Hazards in each layer of the Undercity visited
+0 to +1	Marginal Success	3 Hazards in each layer of the Undercity visited
–1 to –0	Marginal Failure	4 Hazards in each layer of the Undercity visited
–2 to –3	Failure	5 Hazards in each layer of the Undercity visited
–4 to –5	Impressive Failure	6 Hazards in each layer of the Undercity visited
–6 or less	Astounding Failure	7 Hazards in each layer of the Undercity visited

Example: *Astrid, Gottri and Benni are heading to a cavern in the Lower Tunnels that they stumbled across by accident the last time they went down. They made a rudimentary map and have good equipment including ropes and lanterns. The GM decides that the test should be a Challenging (+0) Navigation Test. Astrid has the best Navigation skill at 45, so she opts to lead the party. Astrid rolls a 60 for her Navigation test, but she benefits from Gottri and Benni lending her assistance, meaning her Navigation is effectively 65. So she passes the test with +0 SL — a Marginal Success. This means that the party will face 3 Hazards in the Sewers, 3 in the Upper Tunnels and 3 in the Lower Tunnels.*

Order of Encounters

The GM decides the order in which Encounters are faced by the Characters. 50–75% of Hazards are faced during the journey into the Undercity, and the remainder faced on the way out. However, in order to reach the Upper Tunnels Characters must first navigate the sewers, and in order to reach the Lower Tunnels they must navigate the Upper Tunnels. Under-Middenheim, should Characters be mad enough to go there, is deeper still.

Example: *Astrid, Gottri and Benni head down. Their goal is a cavern in the Lower Tunnels. The GM decides the journey will go along the following lines: 2 Sewer Hazards – 1 Upper Tunnel Hazard – 2 Lower Tunnel Hazards – the goal is reached – 1 Lower Tunnel Hazard – 2 Upper Tunnel Hazards – 1 Sewer Hazard – back on the streets of Middenheim.*

Calling it off

It may be that after a damaging Hazard the party feel they have no hope of reaching their goal. If this is so they can return to the surface. If the GM still has Hazards left to play on the party for the levels they return through, these may still be faced.

Example: *Astrid, Gottri and Benni are suffering from the effects of 2 bruising Hazards and they have only reached the Upper Tunnels. They decide to turn back. The GM had planned to have them face 2 Upper Tunnel Hazards and 1 Sewer Hazard on their return journey. Feeling merciful, the GM opts to have them face only the Sewer Hazard before they reach the relative safety of the surface.*

Marching Order

Whether it is a narrow platform on the side of a sewer culvert or the passageways of the tunnel systems, most of the Undercity is very cramped and narrow. The Characters will have to decide on a marching order. Two people may walk side by side in normal conditions, and therefore benefit from the assistance of those directly in front and behind them, if need be. Certain Hazards may affect people according to marching order.

Raina's Patrol

Raina Mūs is an important villain. It is best that the Characters get a chance to encounter her early on in their investigations. Any time the Characters decide to explore the Undercity, the GM can decide to swap out any Hazard in the Sewers or Upper Tunnels with Raina's Sewer Jacks.

BESMIRCHED

This is a new condition that reflects the fact that a Character has become covered in noisome filth. Any Character who gains a *Prone* Condition whilst in a filthy environment such as a sewer also gains a *Besmitched* Condition.

Whilst *Besmitched* a Character counts as Brass 1 for the purposes of Status and any Fellowship-based Tests suffer from a penalty of –2 SL.

In addition any *Besmitched* Character who suffers wounds must pass an **Average (+20) Endurance Test** or contract a *Festering Wound* (see **WFRP**, page 187).

The *Besmitched* Condition can only be removed by washing in clean water.

THE DAMPS AND THE DAVRICH LAMP

Derived from the Reikspiel word for vapour, 'the damps' is a miners' term for a variety of gases that can collect dangerously in an underground passage. The four most feared are *firedamp* (Khazalid *bomlof*), *whitedamps* (*hvitlof*), *stinkdamp* (*aeglof*), and *blackdamp* (*kvelof*). A *Davrich Lamp* (**WFRP**, page 309) does not ignite underground gases.

LIST OF HAZARDS

☠ Blackdamp

This gas is unbreathable and hard to notice among the awful smells of the sewers. When it is present naked flames gutter and die. The gas pocket is 2d10 yards long and anyone crossing must make an **Average (+20) Endurance Test** each turn or suffer the effects. This is like becoming drunk, so refer to the rules for Consume Alcohol, **WFRP** page 121. If a Character passes out within *Blackdamp* they must be rescued or succumb and die in TB rounds. A point of Resilience may be spent in order to escape the *Blackdamp*. Once free of the *Blackdamp* an **Average (+20) Endurance Test** may be made every 5 minutes: the effects wear off once this test is passed. There is no hangover.

☠ Blue Mould

A patch of *Blue Mould* can be seen growing on the wall on a **Difficult (–10) Lore (Plants)** or **Very Hard (–30) Lore (Herbs)** Test. Characters can avoid triggering the mould on an **Average (+20) Stealth Test** if they are in a normal tunnel, or a **Difficult (–10) Stealth Test** if they are in a narrow fissure. If triggered the mould releases a cloud of spores for 5 yards to either side of the patch. The cloud lasts for 1d10 Rounds. Characters in the area must pass an **Average (+20) Endurance Test** or gain 1 *Poisoned* Condition, plus a further 1 *Poisoned* Condition per –SL.

UNDERCITY HAZARDS TABLE

1d100 Roll	Sewers	Upper Tunnels	Lower Tunnels	Under-Empire
01–04	Confusing Junction	Roll on Sewers	Roll on Upper Tunnels	Roll on Lower Tunnels
05–08	Discharge Pipe	Confusing Junction	Confusing Junction	Rat Swarm
09–12	Discharge Pipe	Slippery Surface	Confusing Junction	Giant Rat Nest
13–16	Discharge Pipe	Slippery Surface	Slippery Surface	Giant Rat Nest
17–20	Slippery Surface	Unseen Obstacle	Unseen Obstacle	Skavenslave Gang
21–24	Slippery Surface	Unseen Obstacle	Narrow Fissure	Skavenslave Gang
25–28	Slippery Surface	Narrow Fissure	Narrow Fissure (2)	Skavenslave Gang
29–32	Unseen Obstacle	Narrow Fissure (2)	Wide Cavern	Skavenslave Gang
33–36	Unseen Obstacle	Wide Cavern	Low Ceiling	Skavenslave Gang
37–40	Narrow Fissure	Wide Cavern	Rockfall	Clanrat Patrol
41–44	Low Ceiling	Low Ceiling	Stinkdamp	Clanrat Patrol
45–48	Low Ceiling	Low Ceiling	Giant Rat Nest	Clanrat Patrol
49–52	Rockfall	Rockfall	Yellow Mould	Clanrat Patrol
53–56	Blackdamp	Blackdamp	Blue Mould	Clanrat Patrol
57–60	Firedamp	Stinkdamp	Lurking Spider	Clanrat Patrol
61–64	Firedamp	Giant Rat Nest	Rat Swarm	Clanrat Patrol
65–68	Whitedamp	Yellow Mould	Dangerous Artefact	Clanrat Patrol
69–72	Stinkdamp	Yellow Mould	Wellspring of Ghur	Clanrat Patrol
73–76	Giant Rat Nest	Lurking Spider	Ghost	Clanrat Patrol
77–80	Yellow Mould	Lurking Spider	Yellow Fang Agent	Clanrat Patrol
81–84	Lurking Spider	Rat Swarm	Wandering Beast	Clanrat Patrol
85–88	Rat Swarm	Rat Swarm	Skaven Scout	Stormvermin Patrol
89–92	Sewer Jack Patrol	Dangerous Artefact	Skavenslave Gang	Stormvermin Patrol
93–96	Raina's Sewer Jacks	Yellow Fang Agent	Clanrat Patrol	Stormvermin Patrol
97–00	Raina's Sewer Jacks	Skaven Scout	Stormvermin Patrol	Stormvermin Bodyguard

☠ Clanrat Patrol

Clan Scrutens patrol the Lower Tunnels, making sure that any who threaten Under-Middenheim with discovery are found and overwhelmed. The patrol consists of five Clanrats and a Claw Leader. See **Reinforcements** on page 26.

☠ Confusing Junction

The Characters risk losing their way amongst the junctions and tunnels. Unless one of them passes a **Difficult (–20) Intuition** Test, they must roll twice again as they face additional Hazards in the part of the Undercity they are exploring.

☠ Dangerous Artefact

Skaven have left an artefact such as a trap, sharp weapon, or glass globe filled with poisonous gas, buried in the cavern floor. Each Character must make a **Challenging (+0) Perception** Test according to their marching order. If a Character passes the Test with +3SL or more, they spot the artefact and may point it out to others. If they pass with +0 SL to +2 SL, they merely avoid the artefact, but those following must then test to perceive it. The first Character to fail triggers the artefact.

DANGEROUS ARTEFACT TABLE

D10 roll	Artefact	Result
1–4	Alarum Bell	A buried bell gives off a deep and sonorous clang. This may summon Skaven Reinforcements, see below.
5–6	Shuriken	The Character is struck on the leg and loses 1d10 Wounds modified by Armour Points and Toughness. Roll an additional 1d10: on a roll of 1–3 the shuriken is also coated with 1 dose of Black Lotus (WFRP , page 306).
7–8	Trap	See Man-Traps on page 90
9–10	Poison Wind Globe	A globe of green glass that shatters releasing poisonous gas tinged with Warpstone. Count as a 7-yd cloud of Stinkdamp, but anyone caught in the cloud also suffers from minor exposure to Corruption.

☠ Discharge Pipe

A stream of effluent empties into the sewers. The lead Character should make a **Hard (–20) Perception** Test to notice a gurgling noise. Unless Characters take suitable precautions they must make a **Challenging (+0) Athletics** test or suffer a *Besmirched* Condition.

☠ Firedamp

A smell like rotten eggs indicates the highly flammable firedamp, most feared of all underground gases. Characters should pass a **Difficult (–10) Perception** Test to smell the gas before it is too late. The gas pocket is 2d10 yards long, occupying the width of the passage. The chance of an explosion is a cumulative 5% for every yard a Character travels through it with a naked flame. If an explosion occurs, the gas ignites with a flash and a bang. Each Character loses 1d10 Wounds, modified by Armour Points and Toughness Bonus and must succeed a **Challenging (+0) Endurance** Test or gain a *Prone* Condition. Additionally all Characters gain (Toughness Bonus – SL) *Deafened* and *Stunned* Conditions, and 1 *Ablaze* Condition.

☠ Ghost

A restless spirit haunts this passage, attacking any living soul who approaches. It can be defeated by the usual means, or laid to rest if the Characters ensure that its bones — which are scattered around within a 30-yard radius — are gathered up and handed over to the priests of Morr for burial.

☠ Giant Rat Nest

Four Giant Rats spill out from a hole in the wall nearby and launch an attack. (See the Giant Rat profile, **WFRP**, page 315.) Whilst the rats are vicious, they are mostly concerned with protecting their nearby brood, and do not pursue the Characters if they retreat or advance up the passage by 10 yards or more.

☠ Low Ceiling

The ceiling drops to 3 ft or so above the floor. Even Dwarfs and Halflings are obliged to move at a crouch. Characters without the *Enclosed Fighter* Talent find their movement halved, and all physical Skill Tests are two steps more difficult than normal. Bows cannot be used; loaded crossbows and firearms can be fired once without penalty, but cannot be reloaded until the wielder is back in a normal tunnel. The low ceiling remains in effect until the next hazard is resolved or the goal is reached.

☠ Lurking Spider

A Giant Spider, with a body about the size of a large rat and a 2-yard leg-span, is crawling along the ceiling towards the Characters. If Characters at the front of the order of march pass a **Challenging (+0) Perception** Test, they spot the spider when it is 10 yards away. If not, the spider drops down on to a random Character and attacks, inflicting a *Surprised* Condition on all Characters as it does so. If wounded, it drops to the floor and flees. (See the Giant Spider profile, **WFRP** page 315.)

☠ Narrow Fissure

In order to continue the Characters have to navigate a narrow sewer culvert or tunnel. The march order must account for the fact that Characters can only move in single file until the next Hazard is resolved, or the goal is reached. If a narrow fissure is marked (2) this means that Characters can only move in single file until the next 2 Hazards are resolved, or the goal is reached.

☠ Raina's Sewer Jacks

Raina Mūs leads the most hardworking Sewer Jack patrol in the city. They behave like a normal Sewer Jack patrol but, even if offered a bribe or shown a warrant, Raina still conducts an interview. She tries to understand why Characters are in the sewers and if they know anything about Skaven. If she comprehends where the Characters' investigations lead then she advises them and offers clues and tip-offs, but her advice is misleading or fictitious.

If she suspects the Characters of looking for evidence of Skaven, then she has the Sewer Jacks pick on the Characters, bullying them, even jailing them for trivial breaches of the Middenheim Sewerage and Fresh Water Municipal Code. If the Characters inform her of Skaven artefacts, she attempts to steal them together with related paperwork. It could well feel like the entire Sewer Jack organisation is against the Characters, although just a few well-placed individuals pull the strings.

☠ Rat Swarm

A swarm of rats scampers down the tunnel and nips at the Characters before disappearing into small crevices. They deliver one attack at WS 25 with the Weapon +4 Trait against each Character as they pass. Boots count as 1 Armour Point against the attack. Each Character must also pass a **Challenging (+0) Athletics** Test as the rats swarm about them. Any who fail stumble down and gain a *Prone* Condition.

☠ Rockfall

The sewer culvert or cavern system is unstable here, and cracks spread out over the ceiling. The lead Character should make a **Hard (-20) Perception** Test to spot that a part of the roof is about to give way. Characters could safely prize out a dangerous loose stone with a polearm, but if they continue each Character passing must take a **Difficult (-10) Athletics** Test. The first Character to fail the test is hit on the head by the falling rock, taking 5 Damage that can be reduced by Toughness Bonus and any armour worn on the head.

☠ Sewer Jack Patrol

A patrol consists of six Sewer Jacks. They question anyone who enters the sewers as to their business. If they are not given a suitable answer they make arrests and transport the miscreants to the nearest Watch post. They are corrupt, and a bribe of a few shillings is all it takes for them to turn a blind eye. They respect Schutzmann's seal, or other forms of official warrant. If the Characters are pursuing Skaven, Sewer Jacks provide them with aid as long as it does not involve them entering the Lower Tunnels (*'People going down there don't come back, it's more than my job's worth!'*).

☠ Slippery Surface

Centuries of city waste has created a slippery film on the rock. This is difficult to identify, being indistinguishable from other patches of mud or effluent. The lead Character should make a **Hard (-20) Perception** Test to spot the surface before stepping

on it. Any Character stepping on the surface must make a **Difficult (-10) Athletics** test or slip up. This counts as a fall of 0 yards (1d10-TB Damage). If the fall takes place in the Sewers, the Character also suffers from a *Besmirched* Condition.

☠ Skaven Scout

A single Clan Scrutens Skaven. The Scouts are Clanrats, but have Perception of 65 and the *Flee!* Talent. It tries to escape to Under-Middenheim as soon as it is aware of the Characters.

☠ Skavenslave Gang

A group of Skavenslaves is excavating a new tunnel or straining to deliver a shipment of black corn. Skavenslaves fear and hate the species who live upon the surface and do not hesitate to attack. The gang consists of five Skavenslaves and a Claw Leader. See Reinforcements on page 26.

☠ Stinkdamp

Stinkdamp gas irritates the lungs. The gas pocket is d10 yards long, and anyone crossing must make an **Easy (+40) Endurance** Test each turn or gain a *Poisoned* Condition.

☠ Stormvermin Bodyguard

Important Skaven rarely travel from their burrows unless accompanied by a bodyguard of Stormvermin. The patrol consists of five Stormvermin, a Fang Leader, and a Warlock Engineer. If the GM wishes they may replace the Warlock Engineer with a Skaven personality from Under-Middenheim such as Kanker Fett or Gnawretch Skrray (see **Middenheim: City of the White Wolf**). Other Skaven personalities are also described in **The Horned Rat Companion**. See Reinforcements on page 26.

☠ Stormvermin Patrol

Prized elite fighters of Under-Middenheim, the Stormvermin patrol the lair's perimeter. The patrol consists of five Stormvermin and a Fang Leader. See Reinforcements on page 26.

☠ Unseen Obstacle

At this point a Character may stumble over a small pipe or hit their head on a jutting spur of rock. Ask each member of the party to make a **Challenging (+0) Perception** Test according to their marching order. If a Character passes the test with +3 SL or more, they spot the obstacle and may point it out to others. If they pass with +0 SL to +2 SL, they merely avoid the Hazard themselves. The first Character to fail is struck by the obstacle and loses 1d10 Wounds modified by Armour Points and Toughness. They must then pass a **Challenging (+0) Athletics** Test or gain a *Prone* condition.

☠ Wandering Beast

Many hostile creatures make the Undercity their home. Whilst they are hunted down by Dwarf Tunnel Fighters or Skaven foraging parties, enough remain to trouble adventurers who delve too deeply into the Undercity. Roll on the table below to discover the type of creature, and again for its disposition.

Unless their disposition indicates otherwise, the creature attacks as soon as it is aware of the Characters.

If you have **Middenheim: City of the White Wolf**, you could substitute a White Wolf in place of a Bear and (if you are feeling very mean) the Bloody Hidesman instead of a Bog Octopus.

THE WANDERING BEAST TABLE

D10 roll	Creature	Disposition
1	Cave Squig	Recently fought — reduce wounds by 50%
2	D10 Snotlings	Intimidated — slinks off unless engaged first
3–5	Bear	Territorial — stands ground but lets Characters retreat
6–7	4 Ghouls	Dozing — Characters may sneak round or surprise
8	Giant Spider (Size: Large)	Diseased — suffers from 1 Fatigued Condition
9	D10 Mutants	Hungry — ceases attack if given food
10	Bog Octopus	Lurking — attacks from hiding if not spotted on Hard (-20) Perception Test

☠ Wellspring of *Ghur*

The Characters draw close to the Wellspring of *Ghur*, surging magical energy that flows forth as the eternal fire in the High Temple of Ulric. Any Character capable of perceiving the Winds of Magic is at risk of becoming overwhelmed by the buffeting force. Such Characters must pass a **Difficult (-10) Endurance Test**, receiving a *Fatigued* Condition if they fail. It is impossible to cast spells safely in such an environment. If any Casting Test is made here an immediate **Hard (-20) Cool Test** must also be made, and every -1SL results in an immediate minor miscast.

☠ Whitedamp

Colourless and odourless, this gas ignites like Firedamp, and if not ignited it suffocates like Blackdamp.

☠ Wide Cavern

The passageway opens out into wide caverns or spacious Dwarf tunnels. The next hazard is faced in such an environment, and Characters benefit from normal freedom of movement.

☠ Yellow Fang Agent

The Characters spot a human with a lantern moving in the tunnels ahead. This is an agent of the Yellow Fang, either making their way to visit with a Skaven contact, or returning from such a meeting. There is a chance the Agent is unaware of the Characters if the Characters succeed in an opposed **Stealth/Perception Test**. The Agent may be Raina Mūs, Dr Lindwurm, or Karl Zeitenalter. If the Agent is accosted and asked about their business, they claim to be a proud Ulrican, searching the Undercity for the fabled Womb of the Wolf. They do not attack unless in self-defence, but mislead Characters if they can. If they are followed by exceptionally stealthy Characters, they may lead them on to a rendezvous with their Skaven contact, and be seen exchanging information or artefacts.

☠ Yellow Mould

A patch of Yellow Mould can be spotted on the wall on an **Easy (+20) Lore (Plants)** or **Challenging (+0) Lore (Herbs)** Test. Characters can avoid triggering the mould on an **Average (+20) Stealth Test** if they are in a normal tunnel, or a **Difficult (-10) Stealth Test** if they are in a narrow fissure. If triggered the mould releases a cloud of spores for 5 yards to either side of the patch. The cloud lasts for 1d10 Rounds. Characters in the area must pass an **Average (+20) Endurance Test** or gain 1 *Blinded* condition, plus a further 1 *Blinded* condition per -SL. Also all Characters receive 1 Wound for every round spent in the cloud.

Reinforcements

If the Characters come across Skaven in the Lower Tunnels they would be foolish to assume that there are not more nearby. Skaven rarely fight without seeking additional reinforcements.

Alarm Call

Unless they are surprised, Skaven encountered in the Lower Tunnels or the Under-Empire give warning shrieks to alert nearby patrols of the threat.

Getting Help

Skaven are not proud fighters. If a fight is going badly for them (for example, if half of a Skaven patrol has been killed without inflicting casualties on the other side), they scamper away and try to summon assistance.

In order to see what occurs as a result of a call for reinforcements, consult the table below whenever an alarm is called, or Skaven leave to seek help. The number in brackets is the number of turns it takes for help to arrive. Generally speaking, weaker forces will respond sooner to alarms, and stronger forces respond eventually as a result of getting help.

Calls for reinforcements can become an avalanche. When reinforcements arrive the first thing they do is call for more reinforcements, and if they fare badly in a fight they also run off to summon more help. Only so many reinforcements can be summoned in a particular area before they are exhausted.

SKAVEN REINFORCEMENTS TABLE

D10 roll	Lower Tunnel Alarm Call — Max 1	Lower Tunnel Get Help — Max 1	Under-Empire Alarm Call — Max 5	Under-Empire Get Help — Max 10
1–3	Nothing	Nothing	Nothing	Nothing
4–5	Nothing	Nothing	Skavenslave Gang (10)	Clanrat Patrol (25)
6	Nothing	Skavenslave Gang (20)	Skavenslave Gang (5)	Clanrat Patrol (15)
7	Skavenslave Gang (20)	Skavenslave Gang (15)	Clanrat Patrol (20)	Clanrat Patrol (10)
8	Skavenslave Gang (10)	Clanrat Patrol (25)	Clanrat Patrol (10)	Stormvermin Patrol (20)
9	Clanrat Patrol (20)	Clanrat Patrol (15)	Clanrat Patrol (5)	Stormvermin Patrol (10)
10	Clanrat Patrol (10)	Clanrat Patrol (10)	Stormvermin Patrol (10)	Stormvermin Bodyguard (20)

In the Lower Tunnels only 1 alarm call and 1 get help can be made per hazard. In the Under-Empire 5 alarm calls and 10 attempts to get help can be made per hazard.

Example: *Astrid, Gottri and Benni encounter a Skavenslave Gang, who raise an alarm. The GM rolls a 6, indicating that a further Skavenslave gang arrives in 20 Rounds. After some of the first Skavenslave gang are slain they run off to get help. The GM rolls a 10, indicating that a Clanrat Patrol will arrive in 10 Rounds.*

Because this encounter takes place in the Lower Tunnels only 1 alarm call and 1 get help can be applied. The Characters face two groups of Skavenslaves and a Clanrat patrol before the hazard is finally negotiated. If they persist in exploring the Lower Tunnels, and encounter another Skavenslave Gang, the process begins anew.

IN PURSUIT OF SKAVEN

The Skaven move easily and comfortably in the Undercity. They are able to leap chasms in a single bound that the Characters might hesitate to risk, they can squeeze through gaps that the Characters are not able to get through, scamper past patches of mould without triggering them, and do not care in the least about becoming besmirched. Obstacles may be used to mount an ambush on Characters who draw close in their pursuit.

Any pursuit of Skaven quickly confirms that they are in their element. GMs should notice that entering the Under-Empire is deliberately punishing. The point of this adventure is not to pursue Skaven in the Undercity, but to find and stop Maliss Manrack. Reckless Characters may be doomed to end their days in a corner of the Under-Empire in a fog of poison-wind with venomous blades stuck in their backs, which could bring a sudden halt to the campaign.

If circumstances are such that the party is overwhelmed by Skaven, the GM can offer them the chance to spend a number of Fate Points equal to the members of the party. In this instance

a fortuitous event occurs that sees the Characters spared death, but that also leaves them far from the Under-Empire. An example might be discovering a vertical shaft left by a spring now run dry, that leads back to the surface (but which caves in after the last Character has scaled it). Or the party could be captured and enslaved, stripped of their gear, put to work in part of the Undercity, and rescued by Dwarfs or Sewer Jacks.

ENTERING THE UNDER-EMPIRE

Should the Characters find their way to the Under-Empire, be sure to impress upon them what they have uncovered. The stench is overwhelming, a lethal mix of urine and animal musk that stings the eyes and constricts the throat. There is a constant background hiss of thousands of clawed feet on stone and packed earth. Every wall is lined with warrens and hiding places. Glinting unblinking eyes watch every move. The tunnels grow wider with each step forward and eventually open out to huge caverns packed with Skaven and their prisoners. The caverns are lit with the ominous glow of Warpstone lamps, and filled with shrill squeals of torment. Towering structures stretch from floor to ceiling, lined with machines of unknowable purpose that crackle with green lightning. The Under-Empire is the work of a civilisation so divorced from the understanding of those who live above as to be almost unfathomable. It is the impressive result of a species-wide effort to build a home for itself beneath the feet of the ignorant surface dwellers. The only fates possible for those who find themselves here are immediate escape, merciful death, or tormented enslavement.

This description serves a single purpose — get the Characters to run screaming back into the light of Middenheim, leaving any thoughts of confronting the Under-Empire behind them. They should come away with the realisation burned into their minds that they can no more defeat the Skaven beneath the city than they can invade Bretonnia. More subtle means must be found.

THE HORNED RAT



◆ PURRSECUTION ◆



Purrsecution is a series of events that can be weaved throughout the early stages of the Character's investigations. Yellow Fang agents have convinced Middenheim's Kommission of Public Works to help them cull Middenheim's cats, all the better to protect a spying device called Akoustikk Ratty. Once the Characters have eliminated Akoustikk Ratty, or have had an Audience with the Graf (see page 80) the Kommission stops offering a bounty on cats and the various phenomena described here come to a stop.

Maliss Manrack fears that the man-things of Middenheim might uncover his plans and arrange to stop him. He has forged contacts with the Yellow Fang in the city to help him cover his tracks, but has also constructed an ingenious spying device.

This is the Akoustikk Ratty, a re-animated rat partially rebuilt with clockwork and fitted with an ingenious contraption capable of recording sound, powered by a fragment of Warpstone. It would be ideal for spying on the humans above ground. Conversation can only be accurately recorded quite close-up, so the clockwork rat is programmed to sneak up in the shadows unnoticed.

Back to the Drawing Board

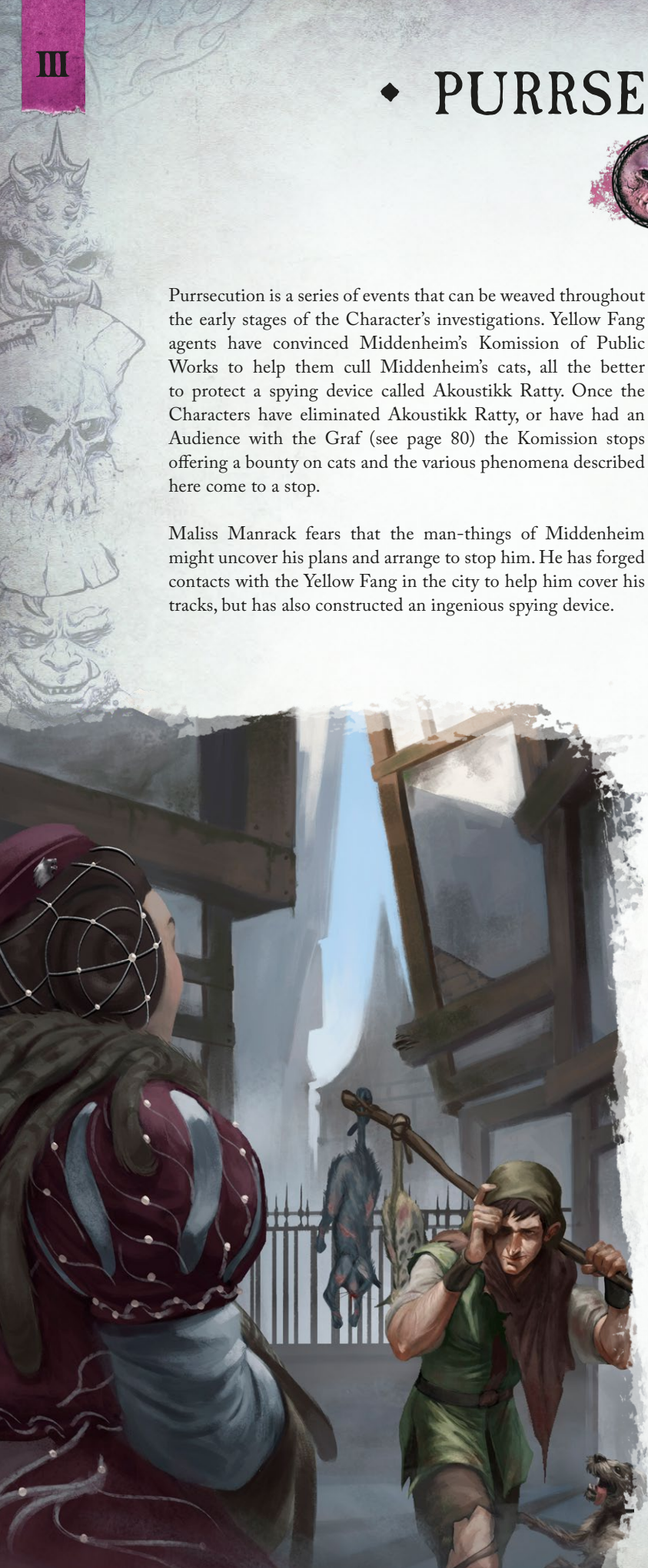
Maliss is currently operating Mark 2 of his invention. Mark 1 met a messy fate at the claws of Myrtle, Watch Commander Ulrich Schutzmann's cat. The Warlock Engineer had to rebuild the construct from scratch. An improvement on Mk1 is the ingenious cantrip Maliss incorporated that allows him to see what the Akoustikk Ratty sees via a crystal ball. He can also remotely control the Ratty's movements using a hand-held device — a box with a protruding handle, which Maliss has dubbed a 'Misery Stick'.

Maliss had not anticipated that a cat would prove the downfall of his masterplan. Before he could unleash Akoustikk Ratty Mk2 on the world, he decided that cats had to be eliminated from Middenheim. Maliss garnered the resources of the Yellow Fang, ordering them to suppress Middenheim's moggies. They started with Myrtle, which was a total catastrophe for Shutzmann.

Plots and Schemes

The Yellow Fang carries out the will of their Skaven masters with various schemes and plots, which have been put in action over the past few weeks (the destruction of Akoustikk Ratty Mk1 took place about a month ago). Dr Lanzaro Lindwurm is the chief agent overseeing the pussy persecution. The medical professor is a prominent member of the Collegium Theologica, a secret Yellow Fang cultist, and Professor Eunice Hasche's arch-enemy (see The Cover Up on page 62).

An outbreak of Itching Pox in Middenheim, as uncomfortable as it is ultimately deadly, is used by Lindwurm as the excuse to purge the city's cat population. He has convinced Middenheim's Kommission of Public Works that he has uncovered a link between the dreaded pox and a microscopic organism that inhabits cat fur. The best cure for the Itching Pox, he declares in a widely disseminated medical treatise *'The Cat — an Underappreciated Vector in the Transmission of Endoparasites, Disease, New Millennialism, and Daemonic Manifestation'*, is to cull the species *Felis Catus*, thus eliminating the disease at its source.



DR LANZARO LINDWURM

The Characters can meet the doctor at his study in the Collegium Theologica during daylight hours. He is eager to talk to the public about how cats are dangerous vectors of disease, and has a number of dry academic studies and files of carefully doctored data to back up his claims.

Dr Lindwurm is a thin man, with a shock of blond hair, an unruly moustache, a missing front incisor, and purple-tinted spectacles balanced on his bulbous nose. His black scholarly robes are in need of a good clean. He is insistent that cats spread Itching Pox, and the only way this disease can be fought is by culling the cat population. The Doctor tries to appeal to the Characters' sense of civic duty to do all they can to help combat the disease.

If he discovers that the Characters know Professor Hasche, he tries to persuade them that she is a crank, and that she achieved her seat through nepotism, riding on the coattails of her late father, the esteemed Professor Justus Hasche. He has nothing but contempt for Eunice. On the face of it this seems like sheer scholarly rivalry, but in truth it is because of her research into the existence of Skaven, revealing things the Yellow Fang would rather keep hidden.

Lindwurm is unaware of the Akoustikk Ratty's existence. He has merely been ordered by his Skaven contacts to eliminate all cats. He does as he's told, no questions asked. The fact that Lindwurm is allergic to cats is neither here nor there.

THE CULL

The GM can seed the following as minor occurrences. They happen as the Characters move about Middenheim in the early days of the adventure. In each case, the Characters can be passive witnesses, or involve themselves in the action.

The Cat's in the Bag

The Kommission of Public Works has offered a bounty on cats' in a desperate bid to eliminate the Itching Pox. A reward of 1d a cat makes this a lucrative trade for the city's urchins.

A couple of ragged street urchins, Tom and Kittë, are fighting like cats in a bag in the middle of the road. Ironically, a cat in a bag is exactly what they are fighting over. The unfortunate creatures yowls from inside the rough burlap sack as the two tussle over it. If the Characters intervene. *'This geezer giz us a penny fer each moggy 'e gets.'*

Both starvelings are desperate to win the bounty. Unless the Characters come to a fair arrangement between them, they'll start fighting ferociously again. Meanwhile, a third urchin, watching from an alleyway, darts out during the chaos and tries to snatch the bag.

The urchins won't divulge the procurer of cats as they want to keep the pennies he pays for themselves. If the Characters track the urchins, or persuade them to confess (a silver schilling would be a fortune to them), they discover that the Kommission of Public Works is the source of the bounty.

An officious clerk at the Kommission handles the bounties. He can be bribed or intimidated into giving Dr Lindwurm and Hauke Ayinger, a secretary of Middenheim's Ratters' Guild (see page 92) as the people who convinced the Kommission to take action.

Moggy Medical Misery

Dr Lindwurm's treatise is widely read among Middenheim's medical fraternity. Throughout the city, barber-surgeons encourage their patients to bring the animals to them for 'processing.' A crowd of citizens gather outside a barber-surgeon's premises. They are all clutching cats that are yowling and trying to wriggle free.

The barber-surgeon, a bald, sweating heavily-jowled man, and his young assistant, are collecting the cats and gleefully processing them. The unfortunate creatures vanish into the back of the surgery. A short but loud few minutes later, one of the barber-surgeon's assistants returns with a putrid bottle labelled 'Hessence of Catt' — a purported cure for Itching Pox. For a small fee, folk can turn their kitty from beloved (or tolerated) family pet to medicinal draught in less than an hour.

The barber-surgeon has a spare copy of Dr Lindwurm's treatise explaining this as the appropriate treatment for Itching Pox, which he provides to the Characters if they express an interest.

A Character who reads the tract and passes an **Easy (+40) Lore (Science)** or **Easy (+40) Lore (Medicine)** Test can ascertain that it is so much claptrap and blather — though it seems impressive to anyone without a medical background. Lindwurm wrote his treatise to serve the ambitions of the Skaven. There is no scientific rationale behind his claims at all.

Cataclysm

Stepping out of an alleyway, the Characters notice a curious sight — a rat catcher emerges from darkness onto the street with three dead cats on the end of his rat catcher's pole.

If they engage him in conversation, he introduces himself as Piet Schädling and tells them that cat-catching is the current policy recently introduced by the Ratters' Guild, and most of his fellow catchers have turned their attention on the city cats as a result. He is offered a small bounty per cat he brings to the Kommission of Public Works. The official reason is that cats spread Itching Pox, so need to be destroyed to stop the disease. However, he confesses that the fewer cats around, the more rats there'll be for rat catchers to catch, which is good for business.

Later on the Characters see a rat catcher accosted by an irate shop-owner who berates the Ratters' Guild for letting his premises become infested with vermin. 'Not my problem,' replies the rat catcher. 'I'm catching cats today. Orders from above.' Other local business owners join in, and soon the rat catcher is surrounded by furious citizens, threatening him with violence if he doesn't sort out their rat problem right away.

If the Characters visit the Ratters' Guild they are met by guild secretary Isaak Köstritzer. He is not happy at the way the guild is abandoning its traditional responsibilities and ridding the city of cats. He confides with the Characters that it's down to the avarice of the guild leadership. He holds particular scorn for one of them, another guild secretary named Hauke Ayinger, who has been instrumental in pushing this new policy. Köstritzer also states that the recent turmoil amongst the Law Lords have made it easier for half-baked ideas to become policy. He does not believe that Ayinger is concerned with public health — he's doing it to drum up work for the guild. 'Fewer cats, more rats could be his motto' he spits in contempt.

Ayinger is a member of the Yellow Fang. He is a short, middle-aged man, with a mop of dark hair, a missing front incisor, and tinted round spectacles. He is richly dressed in fine clothes. He is short of temper, as well as of stature, and despite his height, manages to look down his nose at those he believes are below his rank. He is obsequious to those he deems his social superiors.

If Ayinger can be followed unnoticed, every second evening at seven o'clock he meets Karl Zeigenalter (see *The Cover Up* on page 62) at a lively tavern called *The Tardy Ass*. Characters who pass a **Hard (-10) Stealth (Urban)** Test followed by a **Hard (-10) Perception** Test are able to hear the following snatch of pertinent conversation as Ayinger states, 'so you can let Lindwurm know that for the time being the Kommission are willing to fund the cull, but such extravagance can't be guaranteed to last'.

If the Characters confront the men, Zeigenalter produces a stream of babble but refuses to answer questions — his devotion to the Skaven is so great that not even torture or the threat of death persuade him to talk. Ayinger claims that it was a meeting of acquaintances — a social event. If pressed why he is friends with Zeigenalter, he claims that the Ratters' Guild benefits from the latest research to come out of the Collegium Theologica. At the end of this meeting Zeigenalter returns to the Collegium Theologica. Ayinger heads out and to the nearest manhole. Checking that he isn't observed he heads down into the sewers.

If Characters wish to shadow Ayinger they must make a **Hard (-10) Navigation** Test to travel the Undercity to the Upper Tunnels. If they are successful they come to a small cavern in which Ayinger speaks to a Clan Mange scout.

Characters overhear him say 'Please let the master know that the cull proceeds, your little spies can complete their great work in safety'. If the Characters intervene the Skaven flees and Ayinger fights ferociously. If captured and intimidated he claims he believes the Skaven use rats as spies.

A Feline Feast

The Characters pass a cart in the middle of a square with a large cage loaded on the back. A rather tired looking donkey is hitched to the vehicle, stoically chewing on some hay, while a broad shouldered man bellows about the pressing need for cats outside the city, in the wider Grand Duchy of Middenheim.

'Step up, step up, and do your patriotic duty! Rats are abroad in great numbers, and the grain stores across the duchy fall prey to vile vermin! Gather up your fat city cats and make them earn their keep!'

Saucers of milk line the cobbles around the cart, and as cats gather to drink, the man scoops them up and deposits them in the cage on the back of his cart. This is supplemented by the occasional citizen who tearfully hands over a prized pet *'for the good of Middenheim.'*

If questioned the tout gives his name as Marius Lazard, and explains that he is just a concerned citizen trying to deal with the rats that plague the farms and villages around Middenheim. This is partially true — there have been more rats of late — but Marius is no good samaritan. He is being paid by Professor Lindwurm (page 29) to collect as many cats as he can.

Each evening he takes his load of yeowling cats to the forests at the base of the Fauschlag, purportedly to take them to surrounding farms and villages. Despite his grift Marius is an animal lover, and can't bring himself to simply toss the animals off the Fauschlag, as Dr. Lindwurm suggested. Instead, he simply releases the animals into the forest to join their increasingly feral kin from previous days. The Characters can learn this easily by following him, or simply noting how little time it takes him to travel 'all around the Grand Duchy'.

DISCOVERING THE AKOUSTIKK RATTY

The Characters will be meeting regularly with Schutzmann, enough to ensure that they will be in his office on at least three occasions during the early part of the campaign. Maliss is using the Akoustikk Ratty to spy on Schutzmann, and during each meeting is recording their conversation.

During the first meeting, give the Characters a chance to find a clue, but not to catch the rat. If they pass a **Hard (-10) Perception** Test they notice the pungent whiff of rat, and if they investigate they find a pile of droppings behind some ledgers on a shelf in the office. The droppings are grey and oddly oily.

If Schutzmann is made aware of this, he curses the damn vermin. He tells the Characters that about a month ago his cat Myrtle became ill. He was considering whether or not to bother a physician when she coughed up an evil smelling fur ball. It was also oily, and when he looked closer he saw that it contained a small brass cog. He bemoans that whilst Myrtle recovered she disappeared soon after. He presumes she was one of the first victims of the crazed hatred of cats that has since swept the city.

During the second meeting, the whiff of rat odour is stronger, and everyone can smell it. Characters passing a **Hard (-10) Perception** Test hear a faint scrabbling and curious whirring noise coming from one of the room's corners. If the Characters act very promptly (for example, creeping up on the source of the sound and blocking all means of exit, such as holes in the skirting boards) they have a chance to catch Akoustikk Ratty.

In the third and subsequent meetings, the rat odour is always present, and it becomes even easier to hear the weird sounds — passing an **Easy (+40) Perception** Test will do it.

Splat the Rat

Once the Characters are aware of the whirring noise, any Character who investigates can see two tiny green eyes shining out of the shadows (the Warpstone fragment makes the Ratty's eyes gleam in the dark).

The Akoustikk Ratty is the size of a normal rat, and has the form of a mangy rat apart from the mechanisms welded to its scabrous animal frame, a weird clockwork contraption that powers its legs. It immediately attempts to flee when discovered. Characters who want to catch it will either have to kill it with missile fire or magic, or chase it down (handle this as a Pursuit, the Akoustikk Ratty has a head start of 2 and if the Pursuit is inconclusive after 4 rounds the Akoustikk Ratty finds a hole in the skirting and escapes).

If caught or killed, the Characters find a red button on its posterior, just beneath the base of its tail. If pressed, the Characters hear a slightly garbled rendition of their most recent conversation.

If the Characters dig deeper into the rat, they discover a tiny, weird green crystal grafted into its skull (handling this shard of Warpstone counts as minor exposure to Corruption). The rat's insides are a mess of innards, and intricate and complicated clockwork wheels and cogs.

The remains of Akoustikk Ratty Mk2 will be of great interest to those who delve into the myth of the Ratmen, such as Professor Hasche of the Collegium Theologica, who performs a detailed examination of the corpse if it is gifted to her. It might be useful to persuade the authorities that the threat from Skaven is real. Captain Schutzmann is certainly alarmed that an unseen enemy is spying on him.

Rewards

Good roleplaying and clever thinking should be rewarded, but there are additional XP for the following:

- 20 points for eliminating Akoustikk Ratty
- 20 points for taking effective action to end cat culling
- 15 points for determining that the Ratty is a listening device
- 15 points for identifying Professor Lindwurm as a suspicious person
- 5–10 points for dealing with each example of cat culling

If the cat culling is inhibited by the Characters' actions increase the Evidence Score by 2.

If the Akoustikk Ratty is caught or slain before the third meeting with Schutzmann increase the Evidence Score by 2.

If the Akoustikk Ratty is caught or slain after the fourth meeting with Schutzmann decrease the Evidence Score by 1.

If the Akoustikk Ratty is still alive by the meeting with the Graf decrease the Evidence Score by 3 as the Skaven's ongoing access to sensitive discussions allows them to easily sow further targeted misinformation.



◆ INSTIGATING EVENTS ◆



If the Characters have not played **Power Behind the Throne**, some initial set-up will be required to hook them into the main story. The story begins in Middenheim, a city to the north of the Empire famed for stoic attitudes, the worship of Ulric, the liberal rule of the Todbringer family, and its seat atop a flat mountain called the Fauschlag.

A GM could start the adventure a day or two after the Carnival that almost saw the Purple Hand take control; everyone in Middenheim is back to their gruff selves, the only out-of-towners are either angry about missing the party, or stragglers bragging about all the fun the Characters missed. Every inn has out-of-date posters advertising all sorts of entertainment that the Characters *just missed*, from fire-breathing acrobats to knightly jousting to bare-knuckle boxing. People are still gossiping about how great this year's Carnival was, how the Middenball final was the best in decades, or how funny it was when one of Barnumble's Incredible Performing Elephants tossed a cabbage so hard at a posing Reikland fop that he was knocked into a heap of dung.

The Characters have little knowledge of how the city almost fell to Chaos, but can learn the basics from asking around.

THE RAID

This event is only necessary if the Characters have not already encountered Snikkit, either by not playing through **Power Behind the Throne** or avoiding the event. It assumes the Characters are lodged at *The Templar's Arms* in Middenheim. It also assumes the Characters are experienced veterans who have completed the previous **Enemy Within** adventures.

Officially the Empire denies the existence of Skaven. Of the few who know of them, most consider them enemies. A very few, however, find them useful. They possess great stealth, vast warrens of secret tunnels, and not a shred of morality, making them extremely competent spies, thieves, and assassins.

Snikkit was a mercenary Skaven. He and his warband were a critical part of the Purple Hand's plans to destabilise the Empire. They shot Crown Prince von Tasseninck and kidnapped Reya Ehrlich, Law Lord Ehrlich's niece. But Snikkit was also working for Maliss Manrack, helping him steal items and abduct slaves from Middenheim. Maliss wishes to persuade his Clan Mange allies that Brass Keep, a stronghold in the Middle Mountains, ought to be of interest to them, and he directed Snikkit to retrieve a map of Brass Keep from *The Templar's Arms*. Snikkit also decided to use the theft as an opportunity to indulge in summary slave raiding.

Snikkit's raid begins before dawn. The Characters are roused by shouting and screaming from the inn's main barroom. Give them one minute to react before a pair of Skaven warriors burst through their door. This is enough time for them to grab weapons, cast spells, or don pieces of armour such as coifs, helmets or shields. Heavier armour is far too complicated to put on in time. The warband is currently split up, searching the inn in pairs to round up captives, so Characters can use this to their advantage and fight the Skaven band as small isolated groups.



SNIKKIT, STORMVERMIN

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
5	55	25	35	35	55	50	30	30	25	20	11

Traits: Armour 3, Shield 2, Infected, Night Vision, Tracker, Weapon (Short Spear) +7

Skills: Dodge 55, Melee (Basic 70, Parry 65), Perception 65, Stealth (Urban) 60

Trappings: Hand Weapon (Short Spear), Dagger, Mail Coat, Chausses and Coif worn over Soft Leather, Shield

*Snikkit has one eye, which accounts for his low BS

Everyone else in the inn has been dragged to the barroom and tied up. Those who put up a fight were killed outright to cow the others into compliance. Snikkit, in the barroom, tears down an old map on the wall, rolls it up, and tucks it into his belt. If Characters are not present to witness this but the other hostages survive they can mention it. If there are no survivors, then call for an **Average (+10) Perception** Test. If failed, the Characters notice the missing map but can only recall it showed the western end of the Middle Mountains. If passed, they recall that it also marked the position of a fortress called Brass Keep.

The warband consists of Snikkit and six Clanrats. It is a volatile situation, and the Skaven are just as nervous as their prisoners. They could erupt into violence at so much as a dirty look. In a fight, the Skaven are cowardly and prefer to gang up on enemies. Snikkit, being their leader, directs them from behind, attacking only when he has the upper hand. If cornered he fights to the death. Otherwise, he tries to flee into the sewers and escape to the Staging Post (see **Ordo Terribilis Resurgens** on page 50).

CORNERED RATS

The Watch arrive in force (2d10+2 Watchmen, 2 Sergeants and a Captain, use the Sewer Jack profiles on page 19 if they get involved in a fight) five minutes after the attack begins. This can be a little earlier if the Characters are clearly overwhelmed, or they can run into the Watch on their way if they choose to flee.

The Captain takes the Characters' names for a follow-up interview, commending them for saving the captives or for escaping to get help. They'll send for a Priest of Morr to collect any dead guests or staff (this can be Yergard from **Assassinations** on page 75 if the Characters wait to meet him), and for the Collegium Theologica to collect any Skaven corpses for further study. If the Characters ask, they are told that Professor Eunice Hasche deals with unusual creatures. If the Characters wait around the two Collegium porters, Karl Zeitenalter and Gaius Stummzunge, arrive with a pushcart, pile the Skaven bodies on to it, and wheel them off to Nordtor and the Collegium. These members of the Yellow Fang are the cause of much mischief, though there is nothing to suggest here that Karl and Gaius are anything other than hardworking porters at this point.

The following afternoon the Characters are summoned for questions by Watch Commander Schutzmann.

MEETING WATCH COMMANDER SCHUTZMANN

The commander listens carefully to their account of the incident and offers congratulations. He is convinced that Skaven are just mutant freaks who occasionally crop up in the sewers of the Old World, and finds the idea that they could seriously threaten Middenheim preposterous. If the Characters are sincere, however, he dutifully records their statements. If they mention the map Snikkit stole, or Brass Keep, he makes a note and tells them those lands are well beyond his jurisdiction, but that he will bring it to the Graf's attention. He then takes an appraising look at them and makes the following offer of employment.

'By all accounts you handled yourselves well in last night's attack, and after recent events my people are stretched thin. I have a list of investigations long as an Elven lifespan. Some I can't spare the men for and others are in places where the sight of a uniform would cause trouble. Some dangerous work, I won't lie, but you did well last night, and I can promise the payment will match the risk.'

If asked about these recent events, Schutzmann explains that there was a conspiracy involving Law Lord Wasmeier, now a suspected Chaos Sorcerer and wanted man. Such a powerful public official turning traitor has the city in turmoil, and tensions were running high long before that. Schutzmann is suspicious that some of his men might have ties to Wasmeier's cult or, even worse, to one or more of Middenheim's Low Kings, the bosses of the city's underworld. As folks who are relatively new in town, he thinks the Characters should be free of such associations, and therefore better placed to perform the investigations he wishes to have carried out.

Schutzmann's offer is this: provided they remain discreet, and as long as they are willing to help his investigations, he can provide the Characters with considerable resources. They can requisition whatever non-magical equipment, armour or weapons they might want. Schutzmann can arrange comfortable accommodation at one of Middenheim's finer establishments, and they will receive a wage of one gold crown each per week, a very generous sum indeed.

If the party has played **Power Behind the Throne**, Schutzmann has already made them this offer (**Power Behind the Throne** page 112). They may still be working for him, or left to pursue their own goals, but are still near enough to Middenheim for a messenger to find them. Schutzmann has a high opinion of the Characters, especially if they saved the Graf and exposed Law Lord Wasmeier, and asks about any adventures they've had since they last spoke.

SCHUTZMANN'S NEW KOMISSION



WATCH COMMANDER ULRICH SCHUTZMANN

Ulrich is the overall commander of the Middenheim Watch. An imposing man of about 50, tall and well-built, with close-cropped iron-grey hair and dark-blue eyes. He conducts himself with great solemnity at parades and ceremonies, and is generally regarded as a dedicated, 'spit-and-polish' soldier. He is harsh and unbending, a strict disciplinarian, but a good strategist and sound tactician. He is one of the few open Sigmartites to have earned high office in Ulric's city.

ULRICH SCHUTZMANN – WATCH CAPTAIN (GOLD 1)

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	64	37	58	48	57	36	34	57	57	54	18

Skills: Athletics 56, Charm 69, Climb 78, Consume Alcohol 48, Cool 80, Dodge 56, Endurance 58, Gamble 67, Gossip 62, Intimidate 78, Intuition 77, Leadership 79, Lore (Law 77, Middenheim 82, Politics 77), Melee (Basic) 89, Perception 77, Stealth (Urban) 46, Track 72

Talents: Break and Enter, Doomed (*Beware the Man*), Drilled, Etiquette (Criminals, Nobles, Soldiers), Read/Write, Robust, Savvy, Shadow, Tenacious, Warrior Born

Trappings: Ceremonial uniform consisting of a deep-blue tunic beneath a breastplate of chased and engraved silver, knee-length black boots polished to a mirror finish, an open helmet of silver with elaborate niello-work, topped by a deep-blue plume, and a ceremonial sword in a gorgeously jewelled scabbard

The **Horned Rat** truly begins with Schutzmann inviting the Characters to meet him at his public office, an outbuilding of the State Army Barracks by the Square of Martials. In the waiting room a representative of the Dwarf Engineers' Guild is sitting in a chair, apparently deep in thought. If the Characters introduce themselves he is curt.

'Modi Zargul of the Engineers' Guild, here to speak with the Marshal and yourselves, but he'll brief you first, so don't natter, head inside and I'll be speaking with you soon enough.'

YOU'RE BOOKED!

Schutzmann's office is a small room lined with reports. Characters perusing his shelves can see *The Seventh Annual Report into Ostwald's Organised Crime*, *A Log of Religious Unrest in Middenheim: 2509–2511*, *Suspected Aliases of The Man F-L*, *What Half-Nose Knows Half Of*, *Kärzburdger Influence over Ulrican Extremism*, *Criminal Rehabilitation – A Verenan Myth?*, *Gouda – The Wastelander Connection*, *The Greatest Caper of 1550 IC – What We Know*, *Suspected Aliases of The Man S-U*, and so on.

These texts are dry justifications for Watch policy in Middenheim. However, scanning them provides information on the city's Low Kings, notes on the information broker Alfric Half-Nose, that the theft of the Drakwald Runefang in 1550 IC is thought to be the work of Ranaldan burglars, and that the Kärzburdger family, who own estates to the east of Middenheim, have a long history of barely restrained hostility towards the Todbringers. These facts will be of use to Characters later in the investigation.

In Schutzmann's office, Characters passing a **Hard** (–10) **Perception** Test notice that on the desk are several plain but well-made books bound in goat leather, and inscribed with Dwarf runes. Characters who can read Khazalid see that they are discourses on how to construct cannons, crew cannons, fire cannons, and lay siege with cannons.

Ulrich Schutzmann greets the Characters warmly. *'Good to see you. I trust that you have been recovering well from your exertions over Carnival week?'* This is an opportunity for Characters to ask any questions about the fallout from the events of **Power Behind the Throne**. Schutzmann will take the time to answer these questions, thanking the Characters again for their assistance, but he makes clear that there are fresh concerns.

'Since the death of the former Law Lord, we have not been idle. My best codebreakers have gone through Wasmeier's papers, and we have several leads. Vestiges of this Purple Hand cult remain in Middenheim, and I mean to tear them out by the root. I expect that this is something you may be interested in assisting me with?'

It is likely that veteran Characters will indeed wish to put an end to the Purple Hand in Middenheim, but if they seem reticent, Schutzmann is pragmatic, and explains that he has provisionally established a Komission.

THE KOMISSION

The Kommission of Inquiry into Threats Unknown to Middenheim has been provisionally established by Schutzmann, and assigned a small budget that remains independent of the Watch. The purpose of the Kommission, in Schutzmann's view, is to investigate threats of the sort posed to the Graf. Whilst he is grateful for the Characters' assistance, the very fact that unsolicited outside intervention was required to essentially save the Graf's life and the city's independence is a matter of shame and concern. The Kommission, called KITUM for short, seeks to address similar outlandish threats to the city.

Schutzmann offers the Characters the opportunity to join the Kommission, on a temporary basis, answering only to him and bearing his seal of authority to help with their investigations.

He gives them each a warrant bearing his seal and identifying them as investigators. *'You can use these, if needed. But be discreet! Any mention of me, or of working for the Watch, risks alerting the wrong people — it's likely that the Watch has been infiltrated by both the Purple Hand and the Low Kings.'*

Whilst he expects them to agree to a nominal payment in line with their status, he is a pragmatic man, and will pay up to 2 GC a week, if money seems to be a concern. As well as this the armouries of the Watch are made available to the Characters, though attempts to requisition things like plate armour or other expensive items will be refused on the grounds that Schutzmann expects the Characters to be *discreet*.

DODGING THE DRAFT

If the Characters seem unwilling to agree to joining the Kommission on any terms, Schutzmann will enlist any of the NPCs from **Power Behind the Throne** with which the Characters developed a relationship to try to talk them around. If they still refuse to participate, he will inform them of Modi Zargul's evidence (opposite) in the hope that they will undertake their own investigations, much as they did during **Power Behind the Throne**. Whilst it is not strictly essential that the Characters work with Schutzmann, running the adventure without the evidence and direction he can provide will prove challenging. It is recommended that Schutzmann offer whatever it takes to secure the Characters' assistance.



ONE PROBLEM DWARFS ANOTHER

The initial task set to the Kommission, and the Characters, will be to track down the Purple Hand in Middenheim. However, another matter has caught Schutzmann's attention, and given his justifiably paranoid state of mind in the aftermath of **Power Behind the Throne**, he does not wish to leave any stone unturned.

Calling in Modi Zargul, Schutzmann explains: *'A representative of the Dwarf Engineers' Guild approached me earlier about a matter, and I thought your experience with cult activity may prove pertinent.'*

The stout Dwarf enters the room annoyed at having to wait, especially if the Characters drew out their negotiations with Schutzmann. Modi gestures to the dwarf books and grumbles. *'Tomes of hard-earned lore my folk built up concerning best practices with gunpowder artillery. Last night a thief lifted them from our guild offices. We don't take kindly to thieves, so she didn't live, but when I reported the incident to the Marshal he thought it might interest you.'*

Schutzmann nods. *'I believe the thief may have been in cahoots with Wasmeier's organisation. I suspect they may construct a siege weapon with which to shatter the Fauschlag, and lay waste to all of Middenheim.'*

Modi snorts. *'Unlikely that any Manling could engineer such a device without it blowing up in their face, but whoever wants these books is certainly interested in cannon.'*

Schutzmann dismisses Modi after this, directing the Characters to query him after the meeting if they have further questions. He then proceeds to brief the Characters on initial investigations. Depending on your players, you may wish to tailor which investigations to begin with from Chapter 5 onward. We suggest you begin with either **Ordo Impedimentae** on page 36, **The Great Defector** on page 44, or both of them at once.

If the Characters later question Modi about the thief, he says she was a young woman who has since been taken to the Morrspark. If Characters go there quickly, her body is being prepared to be thrown off the Cliff of Sighs. She does not have any purple clothing, and her body has no Purple Hand tattoo. However, she was wearing her own front incisor on a string about her neck and on a **Hard (-20) Perception** Test a Character catches a faint whiff of sewage.

With this information in hand, the Characters are free to pursue the investigation as they wish. While Schutzmann expects frequent updates, he is not overbearing about methodology. Once the Characters keep him informed he allows them a free hand in running the investigation.

◆ THE ORDO IMPEDIMENTAE ◆



Erich Kalzbad is Senior Clerk in the Chancellery, trusted by Chancellor Sparsam with the administration of Middenheim's finances. He is also Magister of the Ordo Impedimentae, charged with securing funds for the Purple Hand in Middenheim. Through manipulation of tax revenues, wage rolls, and fraudulent bookkeeping, Kalzbad embezzled considerable funds for the cult's coffers. He was too wary of Middenheim's Low Kings to get involved in organised crime, but a network of thieves and other ne'er-do-wells also helped swell the cult's resources.

FLYING THE COOP

But now Wasmeier has flown, agents of Schutzman are investigating the cult, and Kastor Lieberung has apparently returned (if the lookalike is present, see **Death on the Reik**, page 6). Already paranoid and struggling to hide a mutation, Kalzbad fears exposure or treachery from his fellow cultists. He's making plans to leave the city without informing them, using cult funds to hire mercenaries to protect him and eliminate any pursuers.

Kalzbad sends a letter to inform the Chancellor of his resignation, explaining that he plans to start a business in Marienburg. He then spends several days tying up loose ends, burning evidence and gathering gold and cult documents which might prove useful.

The party has two full days and a night to find Kalzbad before he boards a coach out of the city. Fortunately, in his haste he lacks caution. If the Characters move quickly they can stop one of Middenheim's predominant cultists and gain valuable intelligence on the Purple Hand's greater plans.



KALZBAD'S PLAN

TWO DAYS AGO

- ☠ Greta Kalzbad leaves for Krudenwald with her maid
- ☠ Kalzbad meets Sergeant Ulf Stoll and threatens him to keep quiet
- ☠ At home he packs two large trunks and tells his son, Jonas, that he is leaving Middenheim on business and will return
- ☠ He stays overnight in the abandoned Shrine of the Holy Companion in Sudtor

YESTERDAY

- ☠ Kalzbad visits the Sword and Flail inn in Nordtor to hire mercenaries — the Red Shield Company (a dubious Bergsburg mercenary company)
- ☠ He hires a sedan chair to avoid being seen in public
- ☠ Kalzbad secures passage for himself and two guards on the Castle Rock Middenheim-Bergsburg-Wolfenbürg carriage in three days time, using the name 'Klaus Zichengabe'
- ☠ Kalzbad breaks into a Purple Hand library and sets it alight
- ☠ He returns to the Shrine of the Holy Companion

TODAY

- ☠ Previously dispatched resignation letter lands on Sparsam's desk.
- ☠ The party visit the Treasury and discover Kalzbad's resignation
- ☠ Kalzbad visits Englebrecht's office to gather documents and funds. He burns it down, witnessed by Asbjorn Thaler
- ☠ He returns to Shrine of the Holy Companion

TOMORROW

- ☠ Kalzbad visits Stiefel's for spell ingredients
- ☠ He visits several more Purple Hand secret locations, including Wasmeier's house — which he burns
- ☠ He returns to Shrine of the Holy Companion

TWO DAYS TIME

- ☠ Kalzbad travels to Castle Rock terminus to board coach at 7 bells
- ☠ He leaves for Krudenwald to meet his wife and then continue to Bergsburg and beyond

THIS DOESN'T ADD UP

If Schutzmann gives the Characters this lead straight away he says *'Please drop in on the Chancellor's office, he says one of his clerks suddenly resigned and left a big mess behind them. I'm suspicious and need to find out more.'* If the Characters are looking into other matters you could instigate this investigation as an errand boy delivers an envelope bearing Schutzmann's seal to the party. The message states: 'Treasury. A matter of interest to our investigations. Use my seal.'

The Treasury is in the Middenpalaz grounds, incorporating the Chancellor's offices and counting house where the bookkeepers and clerks administer the city's finances. Schutzmann's seal will get the party past the Knights Panther on the gates — Chancellor Sparsam is eager to assist the Watch Commander given his shameful behaviour prior to the events of **Power Behind The Throne**.

The party is ushered through the main counting house, which is dominated by rows of desks where scribes work with pipe rolls, ledgers, and abacuses to reckon the city's revenues. A raised desk is empty, where Kalzbad toiled until two days ago.

Chancellor Sparsam greets them warmly if they created a good impression during **Power Behind the Throne**, or with professional distance if not. He explains that previously dependable Senior Clerk Erich Kalzbad has resigned and disappeared. Given the recent flight of Wasmeier, Sparsam is suspicious. Kalzbad left a brief resignation letter, explaining that he intended to 'pursue a mercantile opportunity in Marienburg'. Clerk Lina Gerdt has since made some worrying discoveries about Kalzbad. The Chancellor asks that the party exercise discretion in their investigations and invites Lina Gerdt to share her discoveries.

LINA GERDT

Lina is an excitable young bookkeeper who finds accountancy fascinating and can't understand that others don't. She is obsessed with bookkeeping and often says things like 'credit me' when she has worked something out, or 'see you next reckoning' instead of goodbye. She uses technical language and mathematical detail while talking, but the essence of her conclusions are clear. Her job is to balance the wage rolls for the State Army regiments, under Kalzbad's oversight

- ☛ He was always suspiciously secretive about the payroll
- ☛ When Kalzbad left, she cross-referenced ledgers with the army rolls and found he was issuing gold to larger regiments than really exist (see Sergeant Stoll on page 40)
- ☛ She's since discovered more evidence of fraud, including a huge payment to 'Piotr-Pavel Englebrecht' for plague masks which were never delivered

Chancellor Sparsam desperately wants them to track down the missing clerk. If they act quickly he may still be in the city.

TRACKING DOWN

There are several trails of clues to Kalzbad's location at the Shrine of the Holy Companion. The first three leads are suggested by Lina if necessary. Kalzbad departs on the Wolfenburg carriage just after dawn, two days after the party visits the Treasury. Once the party starts investigating, keep up the pace — make it clear the clock is ticking and Kalzbad could soon escape. Mention temple bells chiming the hour, the sun setting, and other signs that time is passing. If they ask an NPC when they encountered Kalzbad, the timeline above should help.

Remember Kalzbad is active while the party investigates. He's taking gold and documents, and setting fires. Plumes of smoke rising into the sky will give them a sense that the Magister is out there, covering his tracks.

KALZBAD'S HOME

Erich Kalzbad lived in a comfortable but plain townhouse in Nordgarten with his wife, Greta, their son, Jonas, and a few servants. Greta left the city two days ago by the East Gate, heading to Krudenwald where she will liaise with her husband. Jonas was left behind to continue his apprenticeship.

Jonas Kalzbad

Jonas is 17 years old and apprenticed to the Worshipful Guild of Legalists as a scribe. He is a surly youth who had a poor relationship with his parents. He has a long fringe, which he continually flicks out of his face while he talks.

In the parlour is a portrait of Kalzbad, looking self-important with an abacus and a stack of ledgers. He has a porcelain pipe on the table beside him. The party will recognise him, if they see him in person.

If they think to ask, Jonas will let them search Kalzbad's study. The room stinks of pungent tobacco with a slight note of brimstone. Amongst a sheaf of papers on the top of Kalzbad's desk is a partially decoded message, *Declaration of Change*. This will help the party decipher Chaos runes elsewhere (see page 38).

A successful **Average (+20) Perception** Test reveals a false drawer bottom in Kalzbad's desk. This is empty, other than a signed receipt from Stiefel's Emporium for 3 GCs and 14/-. Another **Average (+20) Perception** Test reveals faint purple ink stains on the writing surface — an unusual colour for anyone writing normal correspondence.



CONVERSATION WITH JONAS KALZBAD

On a successful Average (+20) Charm Test he will share the following with a rising intonation that makes every response sound like a question.

Where's your father?

'Who cares? I'm glad to see the back of the old man. The most boring person in Middenheim, as far as I'm concerned. He's been gone a few days now.'

Where has he gone?

'He was in a hurry, and just said he's travelling on Treasury business for a few days? But he packed two big trunks for the road, which isn't what you need for a few days, is it?'

What happened to the trunks?

'Are you really that interested? Two trunks full of ledgers and the drabbest clothes imaginable? They were picked up yesterday. The carter was taking them to the Castle Rock Inn.'

Where's your mother?

'She left to visit some relatives in Hochland on the same day? Maybe they're as uptight as her? I'd never heard of them before.'

Can we look around?

'Be my guest. His study is through there? Nothing interesting there — the old man never did anything out of line. All the glamour of the Palace... the Princess, the Elves, the Ladies at Court... and he spent late nights in the counting house!'

ENGLEBRECHT OFFICES

Piotr-Pavel Englebrecht didn't supply any plague masks because he doesn't exist. His company was a front created by Kalzbad to siphon funds to the Purple Hand. As the party approaches this address in Geldmund, they see a column of smoke and smell burning. They just missed Kalzbad, and he's left a raging fire behind him.

As they arrive, they find a modest merchant's office up in flames. Chains of locals are throwing buckets of water onto the fire. The party can help, but the blaze is almost under control. There is a faint smell of brimstone coming from the fire. Asbjorn Thaler is sitting on a nearby barrel, staring into space and slightly singed.

Thaler is a burglar who was breaking into the building as Kalzbad set it alight. He is in a state of shock and, providing the party doesn't make a big show of working for the Watch, he will tell them what he saw.

What happened?

'Flames. The flames. They were dancing. I saw them. The flames were dancing. They were alive. They were grinning.'

Who lived here?

'Never saw anyone. Never anyone here. But the soldier came each week. Brought boxes. Heavy strongboxes. The kind they fill with gold.'

The soldier?

'City Guard. Nervous bloke.'

What were you doing here?

'I wanted the boxes. The gold. Been watching the building. I can get into places. Get the gold. But he came and set the place alight with dancing flames.'

Who set the fire?

'Didn't see me. Serious bloke. Smelly pipe. Took paper. Took gold. Lit fire.'

Where did he go?

'Rode off in a chair. Chair with a silver wolf. Two soldiers carried him. Red shield patches.'

Nobody else saw Kalzbad leave in the sedan chair. The crowd watching the burning building know it was a merchant's office, someone called Englebrecht, but nobody ever saw him. If the players treat Asbjorn kindly he may be a useful contact in later investigations, as he knows Bors, the Ranaldan responsible for Mysterious Thefts (see page 69).

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THE STATE ARMY BARRACKS

At the barracks in Graftplatz, the party can visit the Paymaster's Office to find out what happened to the missing wages. As the Watch are also headquartered in the barracks, they can use Schutzmänn's influence to meet with Paymaster Captain Tomas Bingham, a short man who is eager to please.

The Paymaster confirms that wages delivered match the correct regimental numbers, so the excess gold must have gone missing between the Treasury and the Barracks. The wages are transported every Konistag by wagon. Eight veteran halberdiers are assigned to guard its journey. Bingham is happy to introduce the party to the guards.

Treasury Guard

A professional unit who take their jobs very seriously. They stand to attention as Captain Bingham enters and answers questions as if on the parade ground. There are only seven guards here, and when asked about the missing person they explain that Sergeant Stoll has been on unplanned leave for two days. He can usually be found in the *Sword and Flail* in Nordtor.

INVESTIGATION

At each location, it shouldn't be difficult to get the relevant information. Schutzmänn's seal will open some mouths, and silver or charm will help elsewhere. If the party mentions cultists then an informant may reveal what they know out of fear.

ARSON ABOUT

While the party searches for Kalzbäd, he's busy in the city. After Englebrecht's office, he sets a few more fires, which the Characters will hear about or if they see smoke above the city. In each case, the smell of burning has the same subtle notes of brimstone.

Yesterday — Kalzbäd burned a small cobbler's in the Wynd that once held a store of Purple Hand scrolls and books. He took some scrolls and set the rest alight. There were no witnesses.

Today — Englebrecht's Office.

Tomorrow — Wasmeier's house. Kalzbäd visits on the day before leaving the city, breaks in and finds that Schutzmänn's men have cleared the place. He burns it in frustration. If the party hears about this and investigates, an urchin called Till claims that he saw imps dancing in the fire. His sister Ilsa says she saw a chair being carried by two strong men in black and grey. The chair had a silver wolf on it.

THE SWORD AND FLAIL

This Nordtor inn is run by ex-soldier Gerhard Heller and is patronised by other fighting men, including mercenaries and watchmen. Anyone in a Warrior career gets +10 Bonus to Fellowship tests.

The large taproom has only a few stools and no tables — which makes the inevitable bar fights less destructive. If you think the party would enjoy some combat, the GM can throw in an aggressive drunk who takes exception to the colour of a Character's breeches. Fights should not involve weapons, and if the party comes out of it well, they'll subsequently benefit from +30% bonus to any Fellowship tests while seeking information.

If the players ask around, buy a few drinks, and share gossip they can discover the following:

RUMOURS AND MUTTERINGS AT THE SWORD AND FLAIL



- **Red Shield motif or black and grey livery.** This belongs to the Red Shield Company, a dubious Bergsburg mercenary company, more outlaws than soldiers. There were a few in here this week, but they've not been around in the last few days.
- **Description of Kalzbäd.** He was in here recently, stinking up the place with his pipe. He needed out-of-town muscle to escort him to Krudenwald and maybe further. The mercenary sharing this information was undercut by Jurgen Muntz, who got his Red Shield boys the work. Kalzbäd was offering good money.
- **Sergeant Ulf Stoll.** A few people know Stoll, and expect he'll be in soon. He's a bit precious about his job as a Treasury Guard, and avoids bar fights, but always buys a round. If the players wait half an hour, Stoll arrives and he'll be pointed out to them.

Sergeant Stoll

He looks edgy and broken, drinking down a pint of ale quickly. If the party promises amnesty or similar, he'll tell his story — he's looking for a way out of his predicament. Threats might also work. He eventually admits the following:

- ☠ Kalzbad approached him several years ago and asked him to help on clandestine Treasury business, taking funds to a secret location
- ☠ He's been taking a strongbox from the army wages to Englebrecht's Office in Geldmund
- ☠ He was suspicious, but Kalzbad gave him a small cut of the proceeds, and he kept quiet
- ☠ A few days ago, Kalzbad approached him at the Barracks and threatened him — said that if he tells anyone what's been going on, he'll expose Stoll's thievery to Marshal von Genscher

Stoll is terrified, but the party may be able to reassure him that his help will be taken into account. He offers to contact them if Kalzbad shows up again.

STIEFEL'S EMPORIUM

Stiefel's Emporium is an alchemical supplies store in Freiburg where Kalzbad bought spell ingredients, lying to the owner that he was licenced. If the party convince Stiefel they're working for the city authorities, he invites them to the back room and discloses the following:

- ☠ Kalzbad has been a customer here for several years, although Stiefel believes that he is a licenced wizard
- ☠ Kalzbad visited the store today. He ordered a selection of spell ingredients and asked that they be delivered to a specific address — the purple door halfway down Begleitersallee in Sudtor

When the party leaves Stiefel's they are set upon by five Red Shield mercenaries. They've been followed and Kalzbad has instructed his guards to put them off his scent, permanently if necessary. Use the profile above for the attackers. Use enough mercenaries to give the party a decent fight. If more than two mercenaries are incapacitated then the others flee.

CASTLE ROCK COACHES

If the party visits the coaching inn in Neumarkt they'll discover nobody under the name of Kalzbad has made a booking. If they use Schutzmann's seal and give Kalzbad's description, they'll learn that he gave his name as 'Klaus Zichengabe' and made a booking to leave at 7 bells tomorrow* on the coach to Wolfenburg, with two bodyguards. If three spaces become available on an earlier coach east, he demanded that they send a message to the house with the purple door on Begleitersallee in Sudtor. (*or two days if they visit here on the first day of their investigation).



PURSUIT

Eventually the party should have an address — the purple door on Begleitersallee. If not, there are other ways they can find Kalzbad's hideout.

Posh people in Sudtor? An Easy (+40) Lore (Middenheim)

Test suggests that a sedan chair is a rare sight in a rundown district like Sudtor. If they visit the area and start asking around (**Gossip tests**), they find out that the chair has been back and forth on Begleitersallee, specifically at a purple door (*It's a storehouse, I think. Nothing worth nicking though.*)

Sergeant Stoll returns. If the party is really going off-track, Sergeant Stoll arrives at their lodgings. Kalzbad returned and ordered him to bring a final strongbox from the barracks to the purple door on Begleitersallee. Stoll chose to inform on Kalzbad instead. He hopes the party remembers this when they report back to Schutzmann?



THE SHRINE OF THE HOLY COMPANION

Many centuries ago, the Sigmarte Shrine of the Holy Companion served the district of Sudtor. It commemorates Pendrag, a lifelong friend and sword-brother of Sigmar who dwelled in Middenheim for many years — some Sigmartites claim he was first count of Middenheim, but never in earshot of an Ulrican.

During the Time of Three Emperors, when anti-Sigmar sentiment in the city ran high, the shrine was all but abandoned. Eventually the door was bricked up, new buildings were built above and around it and the shrine was forgotten. The Purple Hand discovered the location and secretly opened up access from an adjacent storehouse. Now it's used as a secret meeting place for the cult or to keep captives destined for sacrifice. Erich Kalzbad is hiding here while he makes preparations to leave the city.

CONFRONTATION

The party should eventually confront Kalzbad at the Shrine. Depending on the time of day, you could decide he is elsewhere — in which case they find his belongings and can prepare an ambush.

Begleitersallee is a dingy terraced backstreet where poor workers live. The purple door is halfway down on the lowest terrace. Behind it is a draughty room with bales of mouldering cloth stacked against one wall. An **Average (+20) Perception Test** reveals that the dust around the cloth has been disturbed. Behind the bales is an unlocked wooden door leading into the forgotten shrine.

LAYOUT

Devotional room. This is a windowless stone-walled room lit by candles. There is a plain stone altar and two worn statues of Pendrag and Sigmar. Pendrag is holding aloft a sword. Sigmar is wearing the Crown of Sorcery he took from Brass Keep. Both statues have a purple hand print across their faces. There are bloodstains on the altar. The walls are scrawled with nonsensical Tzeentchian screeds written in Dark Tongue. The original entrance is bricked up.

Antechamber. This was once a storage room for candles and shrine furniture. It is now a makeshift camp for Kalzbad, who has placed a bedroll, small mirror and wooden crate to make it more homely. There are several bags of travel belongings and some of his papers.

There are four Red Shield bodyguards here at any time, one of them stands at the front of the purple door, another within the store room. The remaining two position themselves behind first story windows at either side of the alleyway, ready to shoot at troublemakers. They can be spotted lurking in the darkness by anyone passing at **Hard (-10) Perception Test**. Kalzbad and his Red Shield bodyguards attack anyone who enters. He shouts, *'Did Bahr send you? Or was it Jarmund?'* If the Liebering lookalike is here, he'll add *'And you, Lieberung! Such exalted ambition! But our brothers in Altdorf will see through it!'*

After a round of combat, the Magister throws open his doublet to reveal a hideous elongated third arm ending in a gaping, toothless orifice. A gout of blue flame bursts from the end and spreads across the floor.

Other than Kalzbad, everyone in the Devotional Room takes **1d10 Damage** modified by Toughness Bonus and Armour Points. The conflagration instantly coalesces into a number of animated flames, one for every two members of the party. The flames tumble towards the Characters, writhing with malevolent, mocking mouths.





Erich Kalzbad — Magister Impedimentae

On the surface, Kalzbad is a calm business-like clerk with thinning grey hair and conservative attire. He wears a cape and smokes a noxious pipe. The latter is to conceal the smell of brimstone which emanates from his mutation. Beneath the cape, Kalzbad hides a gift from Tzeentch, a twisted extra arm which gouts magical flame on command.

If Kalzbad is defeated but not killed, he bellows words in Dark Tongue '*Skrrch'tzen kbur'na!*' and turns his flamer arm on himself. His body arches and writhes unnaturally as he is incinerated in pink fire. Witnesses must pass a **Challenging (+0) Cool** Test to avoid **1 Corruption point**.

ERICH KALZBAD – HUMAN COUNSELLOR (GOLD 1)

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	34	43	35	45	52	47	47	51	52	36	16

Traits: Weapon (Sword) +7, Breath 2 (Multicoloured Fire)

Skills: Bribery 52, Charm 46, Cool 58, Dodge 52, Evaluate 61, Haggle 41, Intuition 53, Leadership 39, Lore (Law 53, Middenheim 59, Chaos 57, Tzeentch 58), Perception 54, Research 59

Talents: Etiquette (Nobles), Savvy, Briber, Chaos Magic (Tzeentch), Magical Sense, Arcane Magic, Read/Write, Super Numerate

Trappings: Hand Weapon (Sword), cape, silver-topped cane, secret documents

Spells

Petty spells: Magic Flame

Arcane spells: Move Object, Drop

Lore of Tzeentch spells: Treason of Tzeentch, Blue Fire of Tzeentch, Mindfire

*If hit by Kalzbad's flames, Characters must pass an **Easy (+40) Endurance** Test or gain a point of Corruption. Animated Flames struck by Kalzbad's flames are instantly healed of any lost wounds. Additionally, every time Kalzbad uses this Trait an additional Animated Flame is created.

Animated Flames

These fluctuate in height and colour, cycling between pink, blue and yellow. Eyes and mouths appear and disappear spontaneously. As the flames lick across the floor and lap around their enemies they gibber and giggle ceaselessly in strange, high pitched voices. They repeat their opponents words in mocking voices,

The Animated Flames can be harmed with normal weapons. They are very vulnerable to water. A cup of water would have the same effect on an Animated Flame as a Incendiary would have on a living creature.

ANIMATED FLAMES

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	35	-	25	25	40	40	-	-	30	-	6

Traits: Afraid (Water), Distracting, Weapon (Fiery Attack) +5 (any hit inflicts an Ablaze condition)



The Red Shield Company

These mercenaries spend most of their time robbing prospectors and unwary travellers in the foothills of the Middle Mountains. Their leader, Jurgen Muntz, has pulled together a loose assembly of former soldiers who are reasonably competent with sword and bow. The Company is based in Bergsburg. There are only nine men in Middenheim, hired by Kalzbad to act as lookouts, bodyguards and protection on the road east.

None of the mercenaries are cultists. If they discover that Kalzbad is a follower of the Ruinous Powers, they leave him.

RED SHIELD MERCENARY

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	35	38	38	36	34	36	35	25	33	31	12

Traits: Armour (Body) 1, Ranged (Bow) +6, Weapon (Sword) +7

Skills: Athletics 41, Consume Alcohol 41, Cool 38, Dodge 41, Intimidate 47, Ranged (Bow) 47, Stealth (Rural) 39, Stealth (Urban) 38

Trappings: Hand Weapon (Sword), Leather Jack, Open Helm, Bow and 12 Arrows, Grey and black clothing with Red Shield badge

WHAT IF HE GETS AWAY?

It will take some degree of player incompetence for Kalzbad to leave the Shrine before the party find him, If this happens here are two options:

The party could intercept him early in the morning on the way to the Castle Rock Inn, where he is being taken in his sedan chair. Kalzbad is so desperate to leave that he fights them in the street with the aid of his guards, but he won't use his mutation or magic. Instead he appeals to passers by that he is being robbed. His papers are left in the chair.

Let him escape. Kalzbad leaves Middenheim, meets his wife in Krudenwald, and heads east to Bergsburg, where he institutes a new cell of Purple Hand, then Wolfenburg to do the same. The party do not find his papers

INTRIGUING DOCUMENTS

After his defeat, the party can examine Kalzbad's possessions. Along with 35GCs in a purse and various personal effects, there is one item of interest - another enciphered document written in Characters of The Dark Tounge. Clever Players should be able to use the earlier letter found in Kalzbad's home to decipher it.

When deciphered, the letter reads:

My friends in Change,

It is time. Our many hands must come together as one. For too long the Purple Hand has worked as fragments each to its own agenda. We have sown glorious chaos but to bring the Time of Changes we must act as one under a Champion In Shadows.

Your friend, Kastor Lieberung

Ah -CO...ND9 .n <φ<NI.

..Γ ..9 Γ..A. / 4UO A<NΛ φ<ND9
 AU9Γ <4A. Γ4I.Γφ.0 <9 4n. /
 -C4O Γ44 14NI Γφ. EUOEI.
 φ<ND φ<9 44O<.D <9 -CO<I.A.NΓ9
 .<< Γ4 ..Γ9 44N <I.ND< / 4.
 φ<V. 944N I14O..4U9 <C49 1UΓ
 Γ4 1O..NI Γφ. Γ..A. 4C
 <<NI.9 4. AU9Γ <<Γ <9 4n.
 UNO.O < <<A<..4N ..N 9φ<D449

44UO -CO...ND
 <<9Γ4O 1...OONI

REWARDS

Good roleplaying and clever thinking should be rewarded, but there are additional XP for the following: Players should be rewarded as follows:

- 30 points each for defeating Kalzbad
- 15 for exposing Kalzbad to the mercenaries
- 10-15 points each for following the trail of clues to the Shrine
- 10 points for handling themselves well in the *Sword and Flail* and meeting Sergeant Stoll
- 5 points each for making a good impression at the Treasury

◆ THE GREAT DEFECTOR ◆



INVOLVING THE CHARACTERS

Marshal Schutzmann introduces this investigation by saying: *'A leader of the Purple Hand has offered to defect. His name is Gottfried Jarmund, a prominent radical lawyer. This morning I received word from him.'* Schutzmann relates Jarmund's demands: amnesty, safe passage to a city of Jarmund's choice, and 1,000 GC in return for revealing everything he knows. *'But, there is a complication. This arrived soon after.'* He then hands them the note below.

Schutzmann continues, *'We need to find Jarmund. Bring him and any documents to me. We need that intelligence. If you can't take him alive, at least get those. I will stall this Low King with negotiations to give you time. To prove you are my emissaries, show Gottfried this,'* whereupon he gives them a small woman's ring. If asked its significance, he replies, *'We were friends long ago. To prove his identity he mentioned the name of someone we both held dear then — Elise. This is her ring. He will recognise it.'*

'We cannot let the Purple Hand or the Low Kings find out we're looking for him. I suggest starting with his home in Sudgarten. While he hasn't been seen in days, you may learn something. Perhaps also consult with any criminal contacts you have, though spare me the details. Good luck!'

My Dear Marshal.

Your errant Magister is now my guest. I should think 1,000 GC would be a sufficient bounty to have him handed over in return for our hard work in capturing such a dangerous individual. When you are ready to make payment, let Half-Nose know. Words reaching his ears soon reach mine.

Regards, a Low King

INVESTIGATIONS

Starting with Gottfried Jarmund's home, the Characters uncover leads that will eventually lead them through Middenheim's criminal underworld to a small Shallyan chapel in Ostwald where the former magister hides in fear.

JARMUND'S HOME

The Sudgarten house is a narrow, four-storey terraced house separated by cramped alleys from its neighbours. Solid and well-maintained, it projects bourgeois respectability. On an **Average (+20) Perception** test, Characters notice light coming from one of the rooms through the drawn curtains. A notice pinned to the door reads, *'Due to illness, all current clients are referred to the Worshipful Guild of Legalists to seek new counsel. — G. Jarmund, esq.'*

Knocking rouses the grumpy housekeeper, Hermina, who tells the characters that *'The Master is ill and under a doctor's care, with strict instructions not to be disturbed. Now go away!'* Flashing the warrant from Schutzmann makes her far more cooperative.

Once inside she explains, *'The Master asked me to say that, so that no one would know he had gone to court a married lady. He paid me a whole Crown for my trouble!'* She does not, however, have any idea who the lady is or where he may have gone.

Characters find nothing helpful in the search, until they come to Jarmund's study on the top floor. The door is locked. Hermina does not have a key, Jarmund having forbidden her to enter that room. Characters may pick the lock on a **Difficult (–10) Pick Locks** Test. Within are signs of a quick exit: desk drawers rifled, secret compartments exposed and empty. On the wall behind the desk, a safe lies open and empty, the painting that once concealed it tossed aside. Everything, it seems, was cleaned out.

An **Average (+20) Perception** Test uncovers a desk diary Jarmund forgot to take with him. It is an ordinary daybook, in which he recorded his non-cult activities: appointments and incidental expenses. If someone with the **Read/Write** Talent examines it, a **Challenging (+0) Perception** Test notes regular donations over the last six months to a 'SH. Chap.' for 2 GC each. This is a clue to Jarmund's connection to the chapel in Ostwald. If asked about the book and entries, Hermina says that Jarmund had mentioned visiting a Shallyan chapel, but not which one. A Shallyan herself, she can, however, provide a list of chapels in the city.

WHAT IF THEY DON'T ASK HERMINA?

Players may not ask Hermina about the diary entries. The Temple of Shallya can serve as an alternate resource, Sister Hildegund being all too happy to make them a list in return for a few shillings in the poor box.

The Five Shrines of Shallya

Hermina supplies a list of five chapels, all staffed by Initiates.

The Church of the Blessed Tears, Osttor. Staffed most days by Brother Simon, this two-room church occupies what was once a candle shop, the space donated by the owner in his will. Brother Simon has never met Herr Jarmund, but would the gentlemen and ladies care to contribute to the chapel's good work?

Saint Agnete's shrine, Brotkopfs. Staffed by Sister Else, this shrine at the base of a boarding house provides religious solace to locals, and also maintains a small fund for needy congregants. Supported by member donations, she would be happy for help, but she has never met Gottfried Jarmund.

The Dove and Heart, Geldmund. Sister Ermegart maintains this standalone chapel, which seems more of a social club for local wives than a place of prayer. She has met Herr Jarmund, but he has never donated anything to them.

St Berta's chapel, The Wynd. Built centuries ago by wealthy clothier donors when the district was much more fashionable, this small church has fallen into disrepair, but still boasts amazing fresco art of sheep shearing. Staffed by Brother Gerardus, who also operates a small first aid clinic here, St Berta's has never received a visit from Jarmund.

Tears of the Lady chapel, Ostwald. In a neglected neighbourhood, this three-room storefront church serves the poorest of the poor. A former fencing operation put to better use, it is staffed by Sister Anais Nuhn, a reformed gang member. It is also where Jarmund has taken sanctuary, hiding in the basement. She denies knowing Jarmund, and attempts to turn any conversation to donations for the temple. A **Hard (-20) Intuition** Test reveals she is hiding something, but not what.

FAVOURITE HAUNTS

Players may seek leads on Jarmund at places he was known to frequent, such as Sudgarten establishments, the Worshipful Guild of Legalists, and taverns in Freiburg where law students gather. Most turn up publicly known information: working class and radical student groups see him as a hero for fighting the system, while the higher classes scorn him as a soft-on-crime showboater.

One lead, however, is found at *The Cat and Mouse*, a tavern in southern Sudgarten. On an **Average (+20) Gossip** Test, the barkeep reveals Jarmund was there a few days ago talking with Alfric 'Half-Nose' Anvilbreaker, a 'professional gossip' who frequents the *Brettonnian House* in Altquartier. Jarmund seemed anxious, though the barman doesn't know what they talked about.

BUT WHICH LOW KING HAS HIM?

Characters must discover which Low King is holding Gottfried Jarmund. But, approaching a Low King or their lieutenants directly would be indiscreet, as well as dangerous. A safer approach is to talk to people who know things and are willing to share — for a price. If they haven't already heard of Alfric 'Half-Nose', they can be pointed in his direction by speaking to anyone in a tavern about Underworld contacts and passing an **Easy (+40) Gossip** Test. NPCs such as Karl Matthaus (**Power Behind the Throne**, page 64) or Josef (**Power Behind the Throne**, page 53) can also recommend Alfric.

Half-Nose

Brettonnian House Inn (**Middenheim**, page 39) squats in the middle of Altquartier, between the territories of Low Kings Bleyden and Edam Gouda. It is owned by the landlord Jaques Henri (he pronounces it 'Jacks Henry'), who speaks limited Brettonnian in a broad Altdorf accent. The inn is dingy and smells of stale cabbage, like everything inside. It is easy to pick out Alfric's mutilated face at a table in a quiet corner. A round of drinks buys his leave to have a seat, but Alfric expects money in return for information. He answers the Characters' questions only after being paid for each question asked. Even if he doesn't know or answers 'no' he still demands payment — knowledge of his ignorance is still knowledge, after all.

The Low Kings?

Alfric summarises what is generally known (**Middenheim**, page 130), explaining who each is, what territories they control, and their general reputations. This costs 10 shillings.

Bleyden?

2 shillings. *'Don't make me laugh. He couldn't pull off kidnapping a big-time lawyer. Too busy looking for Gouda's shadow to jump at.'*

Herla Heiwardt?

4 shillings. *'Nah. Not her style. She makes her dosh selling nose candy to rich young scholars, not kidnapping.'*

The Big Cheese?

6 shillings. *'Be careful how you step. Mr Gouda doesn't like people butting into his business. That said, he's more likely to leave your lawyer as a corpse to warn others than kidnap him.'*

The Man?

Half-Nose pauses, a successful **Challenging (+0) Intuition** Test showing he's afraid. Offering 12 or more shillings gets him to admit, *'You ain't heard this from me, got it? There's been somethin' odd going on at one of The Man's safehouses: Number 33 Baumhafen Weg, in Westor. Now get lost.'*





Alfric 'Half-Nose' Anvilbreaker

As his name suggests, much of Alfric's nose has been cut away. No one is sure how he came to be so disfigured, and Alfric isn't telling. One of the foremost blackmailers and informants in the city, Alfric carefully courts the favour of local Low Kings, providing free information to the agents of both Bleyden and Edam Gouda.

If he feels that visiting Characters have interesting stories, he operates on a quid pro quo basis. Otherwise he sells information for between one and ten shillings depending on how juicy he thinks it is. He is able to relay anything known amongst the criminal community.

Alfric has dealings with another information broker known only as Josef, and he is careful to ensure that neither one of them monopolises the market. Alfric deals in rumours about Middenheim's underworld whilst Josef specialises in high-society gossip. Alfric can corroborate a story Josef has sold, but only if Josef has been paid for it first. Josef is of no particular abode but Alfric knows how to find him, for a price.

ALFRIC 'HALF-NOSE' ANVILBREAKER – DWARF FENCE (SILVER 2)

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
3	42	32	42	44	38	30	36	49	41	38	16

Traits: Animosity (Elves), Hatred (Greenskins), Prejudice (Strangers), Weapon (Dagger) +6

Skills: Consume Alcohol 51, Evaluate 64, Gossip 68, Haggle 45, Intuition 44, Language (Khazalid) 58, Melee (Basic) 50, Perception 55, Secret Signs (Thief) 52, Trade (Mason) 38

Talents: Criminal, Dealmaker, Etiquette (Criminals), Gregarious, Magic Resistance, Night Vision, Read/Write, Sturdy

Trappings: Dagger, Sharp Ears, Writing Kit

THE SAFE HOUSE

The Westor safehouse sits quietly on a street of mostly terraced houses, some with shops on the ground floor. Three 'minders' quietly kept Jarmund 'company', not attracting attention. Then one said something indiscreet, Gottfried realised the betrayal, and now the minders are dead, and Jarmund is gone.

The place is an abandoned wreck. The top-floor rooms show signs of a struggle: blood on the walls and floors, broken glass and furniture. An **Average (+20) Intuition, Perception, or Track Test** by anyone with the *Second Sight* Talent detects faint traces of the Winds *Shyish*, *Ulgu*, and *Aqshy*. A **Challenging (+0) Lore (Magick)** check confirms this is Tzeentch magic. In the bedroom is a hurriedly drawn and bloody summoning octagram. (Discovering the betrayal, Jarmund conducted a hasty ritual and used his own blood to summon a daemon to eat his captors alive. He then fled into the night.)

Questioning neighbours will find one who witnessed the aftermath. *'Terrible screams I heard, and then this fella dashes out and goes running off toward Ostwald like a daemon itself was chasing him.'*

Unbeknownst to the Characters, the house has been under observation since the incident by The Man, in case a lead to Jarmund turned up. Once the players leave, the watcher reports back, and The Man has them surveilled.

OUT OF THE COLD

Clues from the safe house, Jarmund's daybook, and the list obtained at the Temple of Shallya should all point the Characters to the Tears of the Lady chapel in Ostwald.

THE CHAPEL

Characters can observe the chapel from an alley across the street that provides concealment on an **Average (+20) Stealth Check**. Behind the chapel, an abandoned tenement provides similar cover to watch the rear. While the street is crowded, on a **Challenging (+0) Perception** Check watchers see Sister Anais returning with food for more than one person. If they have visited this or other Shallyan chapels before, they know that it is unusual for more than one person to staff them.

Tenement observers see her come out twice in short order to empty a chamber pot. A **Challenging (+0) Perception** Check spots it is a different pot each time. In turn, she sees watchers on an opposed **Perception vs Stealth** Test. If she wins the test, Sister Anais warns Jarmund, making him more paranoid (–10 to any attempts to persuade him).

CONVINCING SISTER ANAIS AND JARMUND

By her late teens, Anais Nuhn was a talented burglar and pickpocket prowling Ostwald and Sudgarten, when she was captured filching the purse of a prominent lawyer, Gottfried Jarmund. Sentenced to an almost certainly fatal term in the mines at Middenheim's penal colony, she was stunned when Jarmund rose in her defence and got her sentence reduced to branding on the left hand, asking for nothing in return. This act of kindness drove her eventually to the cult of Shallya, whose service she entered. Now an Initiate, she was shocked when Jarmund ran in begging for sanctuary. It was time to return the favour.

Sister Anais has given Jarmund sanctuary in return for renouncing magic. If the Characters are honest, admitting they are from Marshall Schutzmann and want to help Jarmund, and if they swear by Shallya that they will not harm him, she takes them to the storage room and down into the basement to meet the Magister. Jarmund is hiding in the storage room. He is a skinny and highly neurotic man in his mid-forties. His eyes dart about even when he is in the midst of conversation, and his well-tailored lawyer's clothes are frayed at the sleeves where he has picked at them.

Jarmund is terrified that they are assassins there to kill him. *'Liars! You're with The Man, aren't you? I had to kill them, he set me up! Or are you Purple Hand? Dierk sent you, didn't he? That traitor has always wanted my position! No, now I understand! You're from that other cult! Well, you couldn't hide from me, I figured you out! I knew there were more kidnappings than we could account for — I have it all here in my books! Stay back!'*

Convincing Jarmund requires a successful **Very Hard (-30) Charm Test** (with +10 for good roleplaying, +10 if Sister Anais vouches for them, +10 for producing Elise's ring). Even then he demands Sister Anais accompany him. Failure has consequences. Failing by 0 to -3 Success Levels allows the Character to try again, with a -10 modifier. Fail by more than 3 levels, however, and paranoia wins out: Gottfried breaks his vow and attacks with magic.

SISTER ANAIS NUHN PRIESTESS (BRASS 2) THIEF (BRASS 3)

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	31	31	37	30	34	28	49	33	33	30	12

Skills: Animal Care 33, Athletics 38, Charm 30, Climb 42, Consume Alcohol 30, Cool 43, Dodge 33, Endurance 40, Evaluate 42, Gossip 35, Haggle 30, Intuition 44, Leadership 30, Lore (Middenheim) 38, Lore (Theology) 38, Melee (Basic) 31, Perception 44, Pick Lock 54, Pray 35, Research 38, Secret Signs (Thief) 38, Sleight of Hand 54, Stealth Urban 33

Talents: Bless (Shallya), Doomed (*Trust is thy fever*), Fast Hands, Flee!, Read/Write (Reikspiel)



GOTTFRIED JARMUND – LAWYER, CULT MAGUS (GOLD 1)

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	28	35	30	28	39	27	35	55	39	55	12

Traits: Weapon (Dagger) +5

Skills: Art (Writing) 35, Bribery 55, Channelling (Dhar) 39, Charm 60, Consume Alcohol 28, Cool 42, Endurance 28, Entertain (Acting, Speeches) 58, Evaluate 58, Gossip 58, Haggle 55, Intimidate 28, Intuition 39, Language (Classical, Guilder, Magick) 55, Leadership 60, Lore (Law, Middenheim, Theology, Tzeentch) 55, Perception 39, Research 55, Secret Signs (Cultist, Guilder) 55, Stealth (Urban) 27

Talents: Arcane Lore (Daemonology), Chaos Magic (Tzeentch), Criminal, Doomed (*A pair of safe hands guide you through Morr's portal*), Double Life, Read/Write, Etiquette (Scholar), Impassioned Zeal, Magical Sense, Petty Magic, Savvy, Secret Identity, Suave

Trappings: Cult documents, Dagger, Dishevelled cult robes

Corruption: Fearful Concern (reflected in profile)

Spells

Petty: Careful Step, Dart, Rot, Sleep, Shock, Warning

Arcane: Arrow Shield, Fearsome, Magic Shield, Manifest Lesser Daemon, Octagram

Lore of Tzeentch: Treason of Tzeentch

Interview with Jarmund

If the Characters manage to convince Jarmund that they are here to assist with his defection, he is willing to explain his situation to them. He explains that he had wanted to escape from the Purple Hand for a long time, loathing it and himself for what he had done in its name. His chance came when Wasmeier's plot collapsed. With ensuing chaos as a cover, he made contact with The Man and arranged to be hidden while he negotiated his defection. Betrayed by The Man, he fled and took shelter with Sister Anais, his last hope.

Jarmund is willing to explain some matters to the Characters, but if they press him for additional information, he clams up and says he must speak with Schutzmann. However, he provides them with the coded message and codebreaking matrix even if they do not query him further, saying, *'Here is something that should help you with further investigations'*. He shows the Characters how to translate it if they are unsure.

RKCAH NAOWZAO JKS WP OEYPU
AECPP OECEOIQJZSAC EJ KOOPKN. JK
KJA DANA GJKSO KB PDAI.
SAZAWHEJ YKHZ XKZEAO KJHU!
U'CCNEHR PUWGI FVAAPYD!
REVEAN XDWN IKP

It reads: *Vogel resides now at sixty eight Sigismundweg in Osstor. No one here knows of them. We deal in cold bodies only! Y'ggrilv tkak Tzeentch! Vizier Bhar, MOT*

How are the Purple Hand Organised?

'There are three arms of the cult: the Novitiae, Terribilis, and Impedimentae. The Ordo Novitiae were involved in recruitment and indoctrination, headed by myself. The Ordo Terribilis were involved in research and strategy, headed by Wasmeier until he disappeared. A man named Bahr looks set to take his place. The Ordo Impedimentae organised resources, I'm not sure who ran them.'

You don't know?

'We only ever met a couple of times a year, and in disguise. We tended to move recruits between cities in order to maintain anonymity. I came to know Bahr and Wasmeier, but I can only guess at others.'

It was Erich Kalzbad.

'Really? I know Kalzbad! Well I never would have guessed!'

What became of Reya Erlich (if she went missing during the events of Power Behind the Throne)?

Jarmund will look very uncomfortable. *'She could be anywhere. Those responsible had many agents willing to take in new recruits.'*

You mentioned another cult?

'Well, someone's lifting bodies from the streets of Middenheim, and it is not us ... not all of them.'

THE CIPHER

The cipher is a simple one that shifts the alphabet four to the left. Thus 'A' is encrypted as 'W,' 'B' as 'X,' 'C' as 'Y', and so forth. If the Players seem stumped, a successful Average (+20) Lore (Cryptography) or Secret Signs (Any) Test reveals the key. Lacking the skills, a Difficult (-10) Int test does the same.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G
E	F	G	H	I	J	K
H	I	J	K	L	M	N
L	M	N	O	P	Q	R
O	P	Q	R	S	T	U
S	T	U	V	W	X	Y
V	W	X	Y	Z		
Z	A	B	C	D		

Do you know Kastor Lieberung?

If the lookalike is present, Jarmund may well address him as if he is Kastor. *'We all know Kastor. He was a cult leader from Nuln who broke protocols by meeting members from various places. He had plans to unite the cult in the hope of fulfilling a prophecy, the creation of a perfect leader. We pretty much dismissed him as a crank, but then heard he came into money. Wouldn't you know it — he went quiet on us after that.'*

Where can Bahr be found?

'I don't know. I was trying to get information from him recently. There had been some suggestion that I had been recruiting people — missing persons — and it wasn't me. I found that note at my house two days ago.'

Who is Vogel?

'A young man who helps us with internal communications.'

ESCAPE?

Checking outside the front and rear of the building reveals watchers keeping tabs on the chapel. These are The Man's goons, waiting for the Characters to leave to see if Jarmund is really with them. If he is, the goons attack to capture or kill them all.

However, a group of 4 Purple Hand Cultists led by Dierk Vormann, Jarmund's under-Magister, have likely been following them since they searched Jarmund's home. They have spotted The Man's people and have decided to wait, let them fight, and then swoop in to kill Jarmund and recover the documents after everyone is weakened. Two of the cultists have crossbows.

Desperate Chase

On an **Average (+20) Perception** Check, Characters spot a wagon delivering beer to a nearby tavern *The Underpass*. If asked if there is any other way out, Anais recalls hearing of a tunnel used in the days of the fencing operation to move goods between this building and a tenement up the street that happens to be across from the tavern. However, she never found either end when she looked for it. Characters searching the basement locate the entrance behind loose plaster on a **Challenging (+0) Perception** Check.

From the tenement basement, the wagon lies a short dash across the street: the driver's whip and several barrels of beer are on it. The thugs spot them on a **Challenging (+0) Perception** check. Even if they fail, the thugs see the fleeing Characters when the wagon pulls away and the driver yells, *'Stop! Thieves!'*

Use the Pursuit rules (**WFRP**, page 166) for the chase. Each round, the driver of the wagon must make an **Average (+20) Drive** Test, due to the chaos caused by a wagon careering through the streets.

Should the thugs be about to capture the Characters, the Purple Hand team strikes, attacking both the heroes and the thugs — they want to be the ones to kill the traitor! The confusion gives the Characters an opportunity to escape, finally delivering Gottfried Jarmund to Marshall Schutzmann. Use the profile for Thugs found on page 9. Three of them are armed with Crossbows.

Max the Racketeer

Max is one of The Man's more straightforward underlings — not particularly imaginative, but with just the sort of vices that make him easily understood and controlled by his superiors. While not precisely loyal, Max has a deep-seated fear of his employer that, in the eyes of The Man, is the next best thing.

Dierk Vormann

While the rest of the Purple Hand were losing their heads over Wasmeier's death — some quite literally — Vormann was marvelling that so few could see the opportunity his failure created. Vormann is certain that by disposing of the traitor Jarmund he can make a name for himself in the cult. Even were this not the case, it would behove Vormann to kill the turncoat, as Jarmund knows Vormann and will almost certainly out him as a cult member should he fall into the hands of the authorities.

Wrapping Up

Safe at last with Jarmund locked away for debriefing, the Characters can catch up with the Marshal. In return for the documents, he has agreed to help Jarmund defect. *'This information can help us roll up much of the remaining Ordo Novitiae, and even gives us leads to the head of Middenheim's Ordo Terribilis. We know people have been kidnapped by the cult; perhaps we can recover them. Good work!'*

If asked about the 'other cult' Jarmund raved about, Schutzmann is sceptical. *'It's possible, but the Ordos sometimes work at cross purposes. He may have been tracking his own cult! Still, it bears investigating.'*

Regarding The Man, who surely bears the Characters a grudge, Schutzmann smiles slightly. *'I've let the Low King know that you are my agents, and retaliation would be a very bad idea.'* He then grows serious again. *'But that type has long memories of debts owed. Be careful.'*

REWARDS

Good roleplaying and clever thinking should be rewarded, but there are additional XP for the following.

- 35 points for convincing Sister Anais to help them
- 25 points for getting Jarmund's documents to Schutzmann
- 25 points for a clever escape from The Man's thugs and the Purple Hand squad
- 25 points for convincing Gottfried Jarmund to turn himself in, without resorting to violence

Nothing in this part of the adventure affects the Evidence Score.

MAX THE RACKETEER – RACKETEER (BRASS 5)

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	40	28	39	35	30	27	32	32	35	31	15

Traits: Armour 1, Weapon (Knuckledusters +5, Dagger +5, Sword +7), Ranged (Crossbow) +9

Skills: Athletics 27, Dodge 32, Intimidate 42, Leadership 31, Melee (Basic 45, Brawling 40), Ranged (Crossbow) 33, Stealth (Urban) 31

Talents: Coolheaded, Hardy, Strong Back, Very Strong, Warrior Born

Trappings: Leather Jack, Crossbow and 12 Bolts, Dagger, Sword, Knuckledusters

DIERK VORMANN – CULT MAGUS OF TZEENTCH (BRASS 0)

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	32	38	32	33	30	30	28	42	40	38	13

Traits: Weapon (Dagger) +5

Skills: Dodge 32, Language (Magick) 52, Melee (Basic) 42, Perception 40, Lore (Chaos) 52

Talents: Doomed (*Though you know not mercy, on mercy's doorstep thou perish*), Petty Magic, Savvy

Trappings: Dagger, Merchant's Clothing with a Purple Cap, 2d10 Silver Shillings

Spells

Petty: Dart, Drain, Shock

♦ ORDO TERRIBILIS RESURGENS ♦



INTRODUCTION

Soon after the recovery of Gottfried Jarmund, Marshall Schutzmänn again requests help. Among Jarmund's papers were notes indicating disputes with the Ordo Terribilis over kidnappings and a safehouse in Osttor. He tasks the Characters to investigate the lair, and follow any leads they find. What they do find will lead them to a resurgent Ordo Terribilis led by a dangerous necromancer, Vizier Bhar, and evidence of its alliance with something far worse — the Skaven.



CHAOS PIGEONS

The safe house location is a boarding house in southern Osttor. On the top floor, accessible via external stairs, the flat looks south over Altquartier, The Wynd, and beyond. The lock requires an **Average (+20) Pick Lock Test**, or the landlady, Frau Ziegler, can let them in if she is provided with a plausible reason. If asked about her tenant, she says, *'Herr Vogel was quiet, a student at the Collegium, always in his books. He was very nice, helping me take care of my pigeons. He's been gone for days, now, and the rent is due...'* If asked when he disappeared, she answers that he vanished just after the end of the Carnival.

Searching the flat doesn't reveal much: an unmade bed, some clothes, a dirty cup on its side. There are texts on mathematics and astrology, as well as a small telescope on a tripod in a corner. An empty nest in a straw-filled box rests atop a shelf by the south-facing window.

Either while a Character examines the nest, or just as they are leaving, they hear the sound of tapping at the window, where a pigeon waits to get in — a pigeon with iridescent purple feathers on its head, three eyes, and a slip of paper wrapped around its leg.

RKCAH. DWRA WOOQIAZ YKIIWJZ.
 KLANWPEKJO NAOQIA EIIAZEWPAHU
 YKNLOAO JAAZAZ BKN NAOAWNVD.
 WYGJKSHAZCA WJZ WSWEP
 EJOPNQYPEKJO U'CCNEHR PGWG
 PVAAJPYD! REVEAN XDWN IKP

The bird is tame and lets a Character hold it to remove the paper, after which it flutters to the nest. The paper is an enciphered using the same code as that recovered from Jarmund (see pages 37-38)

It reads, *'Vogel. Have assumed command. Operations resume immediately, corpses needed for research. Acknowledge and await instructions. Y'ggrilv tkak Tzeentch! Vizier Bhar, MOT'*

FLYING THE COOP

Characters with **Animal Care** or **Animal Training** know that carrier pigeons are one-way birds, which means 'Vogel' probably had a bird for return messages. But there is none in the apartment. There is, however, an obvious dovecote built over the exterior of a window at the end of the common hallway outside the flat's internal door. Inside are several pigeons — Frau Ziegler's pets. One has shiny purplish feathers on its head (and only two eyes), but she insists it isn't hers. An **Easy (+40) Intuition Test** confirms this is Vogel's bird.

FOLLOW THAT PIGEON!

The Characters may release the second pigeon to see where it goes. Tracking it is simple with the telescope. First it circles and then flies south over Altmarkt and Altquartier, an **Easy (+40) Perception Test** following its flight. However, it descends and vanishes among the spires and peaked roofs of Altquartier. Succeeding at a **Challenging (+0) Perception Test**, the observer sees it go down somewhere around where Altquartier and The Wynd meet, while failure gives them just a general sense of 'over Altquartier.'

INVESTIGATION

At this point, the Characters know they are dealing with a resurgent Ordo Terribilis and a new Magister. But, how do they find him?

SHOE LEATHER

The obvious strategy is to canvas the area looking for clues to the Purple Hand cell. Altquartier and The Wynd, however, are rough areas under the control of the Low Kings — Edam Gouda and Bleyden split Altquartier, while Gouda and The Man dominate The Wynd. Direct questions might lead to a visit from a Low King's enforcers — and Characters who earlier rescued Gottfried Jarmund likely have poor relations with The Man, already!

The Pigeon Guild

If Characters search around the area where the Altquartier meets the Wynd they notice a great deal of pigeons. The birds flock around the market hoping to find food. If the Characters try to track their movements call for a **Challenging (+0) Perception** Test. Those who pass notice a lot of pigeons coming and going from a two-storey building that looks derelict (Crazy Heintze's). On an Impressive Success (+6 SL) they notice that pigeons also fly to and from a warehouse within a courtyard in which carts are unloaded in the Wynd (Windhund Haulage).

Asking around if there is anywhere nearby where pigeons tend to congregate earns the Characters some bemused looks and a common response. *'If you're looking for pigeons, the best place is Crazy Heintze's.'* Characters can learn from any local that Crazy Heintze has lived on the southern edge of Altquartier for more than 20 years and is *'eccentric, to say the least'*.

Crazy Heintze lives in a filthy tenement house which he treats as a massive pigeon coop. His 'breeding' consists of letting them nest wherever they want. When the Characters knock here, they hear shuffling and fluttering noises, and a voice saying, 'Yes, Lady Greyplume, someone at the door!' A short while later a wiry and unkempt man in his late 50s, opens the door and lets them in. His clothing may have been fine once, but it is now threadbare, faded, and covered in down and guano. Heintze has an odd connection with the birds, understanding them as the result of a magical quirk. He only talks to the Characters by talking to the birds about the Characters. He is convinced they are people and has names for each one, but none have purple feathers. Interviewing Heintze is a strange process as he only responds to the birds, but a conversation might run along the following lines.

Did one of your birds deliver this message?

'What's that, Admiral Avi Anne? The strangers seek to employ you as messengers? How vulgar. And they won't pay you properly will they? We ought to form a guild! The Pigeon Guild!'

No, we don't want to deliver a message, just find out who delivered this one.

'Lord Pek the Iridescent, you are quite right! Hahaha! None of us would stoop so low as to run errands!'

Do any of your birds have purple feathers?

'Do they criticise your grey and lustrous sheens, my darlings?'

Do you know anything about a bird with three eyes?

'What say you, young master Coe, barely fledged, you have an unusual lores, but three eyes, none of you would be so deviant as to grow an extra eye. You are proud birds, and upstanding! What's that, Countess Clawfoot? There are such birds at the place with the carts and boxes, where they work all night.'

Where is this place?

'Master Squab with the missing foot, your intrinsic sense of northwardsness is keen, tell me where it is! South of here, but not far. The Wynd then! A big place with carts coming and going.'

You've been very helpful, how might we repay you?

'They are patronising aren't they, Baron Roller? If they can't buy us they can't own us!'

Asking The Right People

Characters may also seek information about odd doings or even disappearances in the area. A successful **Challenging (+0) Gossip** Test leads to an old beggar who sweeps up at *The Graf's Head*. For the price of a pint and a meal, Andreas tells how a number of his friends have gone missing recently, *'just up and vanished without saying goodbye! Oh, 'cept for Mikkal. Saw him a couple nights ago, over in Braun's Alley, by Wynd. He was just standing there outside the lights, but I recognised his crooked back! I called him, but he just moaned and started moving toward me all weird like. I got scared and hightailed it out of there.'* Any Characters with **Lore (Magick)** or **Lore (Theology)** recognise unmistakable signs of a zombie — Necromancy.

Investigating Braun's Alley finds nothing of interest, but on an **Easy (+40) Perception** Test the Character sees pigeons flocking about the eaves of Windhund Haulage close by. The missing persons were kidnapped and killed for Bhar's research. 'Mikkal' staggered out one night through a carelessly left-open gate.

Bretonnian House

In return for 6 shillings, Alfric Half-Nose sighs deeply through his sliced nose and asks a question, *'Windhund does a lot of business, right? How come they haven't taken on any new customers in months?'* If pressed, he shrugs and says, *'Just an observation.'* 2 hours later he passes on news of the Characters' curiosity to Edam Gouda, to whom Windhund pays protection. The Big Cheese in turn informs Theodor at Windhund, as a 'professional courtesy.'



COMPLICATIONS

You can use the following events as you wish to crank up the tension.

A Message From The Big Cheese

Word eventually gets back to The Big Cheese that snoops are digging around Windhund. This in turn leads to a visit from one of Gouda's street captains, accompanied by some thugs.

The confrontation takes place on one of Altquartier's narrow streets or alleys, the thugs positioning themselves at either end. The leader, Hannes, demands to know their business with Windhund and warns them to forget it, *'Otherwise you'll make Mr Gouda angry, and you wouldn't want that. Just ask Half-Nose.'* After delivering the warning, Hannes will take anything they say back to Gouda.

Should a fight break out, use the profiles on page 9 for the Thugs, who are armed with clubs and knuckledusters:

Hannes

Those used to dealing with the types of people who act as enforcers for shakedowns and extortion find Hannes rather unusual. He comes across as thoughtful, even respectful, as he regretfully explains why it would be best for all involved to just move along so that everyone can end the day with a similar number of teeth as they started with. This should not be mistaken for weakness, however, as when it is called for Hannes has no hesitation in 'regretfully' administering a rather serious beating.

HANNES

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	55	50	45	35	30	30	30	30	65	45	16

Traits: Armour (Leather Jack) 1, Elite, Leader, Weapon (Sword) +8

Skills: Dodge 30, Leadership 45, Melee (Basic) 55

Nice Doggie

Either after their visit to Windhund or after Gouda alerts them, Vizier Bhar orders the elimination of the Characters. Late one night in either Altquartier or The Wynd, they are hunted by Bhar's 'pet' Lyca, a zombie wolf infused with daemonic energy.

DAEMONIC WOLF

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	55	50	45	35	30	30	30	30	65	45	16

Traits: Armour 2, Daemonic 8+, Bite 6, Breath 9 (Blue Fire), Dark Vision, Fast, Fear 2, Ghostly Howl, Size (Large), Stealthy, Stride, Tough, Tracker, Undead, Unstable, Weapon (Bite) +6

In The Belly Of The Undead Beast

By now, the Characters likely have identified Windhund Haulage as the lair of the Purple Hand cell. While breaking and entering is a probable course of action, they may also seek to bring in reinforcements.

THE BIG CHEESE

Windhund Haulage sits in Edam Gouda's territory, paying him protection money to remain undisturbed. However, the Big Cheese does not know that the smuggling operation is a cover for a Chaos cult — he would be angry to learn he has been played for a fool. He would also fear Middenheim's reaction to the news he was harbouring a dangerous cult, particularly after the events of **Power Behind the Throne**.

By working contacts and dropping coin around Altquartier, the Characters can get word to Gouda that they want a meeting.

It will take evidence of the true nature of Windhund, such as the coded message, the three-eyed pigeon, or the fight with the undead Daemon Hound, and a successful **Very Hard (-30) Charm** Test to persuade the Big Cheese to stand aside. He won't lend direct help, but his men won't interfere, if the Characters make a move against Windhund.

Failure has consequences, however. On 0 to -1 SL, Gouda throws them out, but enough doubt is planted in his mind that he does not warn Windhund. Failure by -2 to -3 SL means Gouda remains unconvinced. He dismisses them with a warning to mind their own business, as well as relieving them of their cash as a fee for his time. On a greater failure, Gouda has the Characters seized, robbed, and beaten before being thrown out. Worse, he warns Windhund and Bhar, who then flees Middenheim with all his documents.

THE MAN

Resourceful Characters may think to approach The Man about the situation with Windhund Haulage, after all, even the Low Kings do not suffer to be associated with the Ruinous Powers. After Gottfried Jarmund's rescue however, the Characters may have 'strained' relations with The Man, and the risk should they fall into his hands is great. But, taking that risk could benefit them.

Through intermediaries such as Alfric Half-Nose, the Characters can arrange for a meeting with 'Emmerich,' one of The Man's under-bosses. Meeting at *The Journeyman* (**Middenheim**, page 105), the usual staff is nowhere to be seen, while several hulking men occupy the other tables. Other customers are turned away because of an 'event.' Before the Characters can say anything, Emmerich opens with a question, *'The Man would like to know why we shouldn't kill you now and toss your bodies off the Fauschlag.'*

If he is told that Gouda harbours a follower of Chaos then Emmerich, acting for his boss, agrees to allow the Characters, and any help they bring, free passage through The Wynd to raid Windhund. This lets them sneak an armed force close to Windhund without alerting Gouda.

Emmerich has one condition: their promise on behalf of Marshall Schutzmann that, when The Man decides to eliminate Gouda and absorb his territory, the Watch will stand aside. They cannot *'go back to consult'* — he wants their answer now.

Failure means the meeting comes to an abrupt end. Emmerich's toughs do not attack, but he advises them to never, ever show their faces in The Man's territory again.

WINDHUND HAULAGE

Windhund is a busy place during the day. Carts come and go every few minutes, and labourers work at loading and unloading them, and sorting crates and barrels. It is impossible to sneak in during the day, and a daylight raid risks injuring innocent people. This section assumes a climactic action at night.

The Yard

Surrounded by an 8-ft high wall with a large double gate in front and a smaller postern gate at the rear, The Windhund warehouse sits in a yard roughly 40 yd in diameter and is crowded with wagons. The gates are locked (–10 to a **Pick Locks Test**) and barred from the inside.

Pausing outside to listen detects, on a successful **Average (+20) Perception Test**, the sounds of someone working. With a successful **Challenging (+0) Intuition Test**, the listener realises there are no sounds of people: no talking, no laughter, no cursing. Nothing.

There are five Zombies in the yard performing the repetitive tasks Theodor gives them. They are an enhanced product of Vizier Bhar's experiments, and commanded to kill intruders.

The Warehouse

The warehouse, which houses the office, is a 60-by-40 ft structure at the back of the yard. Sliding double barn doors open from the yard, and there is a smaller personal door on one panel of the sliding doors and on one side of the warehouse. All are closed and secured with **Difficult (–10)** locks.

Inside is a maze of crates and barrels, all labelled for delivery around the Empire. Most are fakes, awaiting use as containers for contraband. In an open area at the rear of the warehouse, a wooden trap door in the floor is closed but not locked, leading to the basement lair of Vizier Bhar. By the back wall, partially hidden behind boxes, a rope leads from the office in the loft down through the floor. Theodor uses this to communicate warnings to Bhar.

BAHR'S ENHANCED ZOMBIES

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
3	40	–	40	40	5	10	15	–	–	–	12

Traits: Brute, Construct, Dark Vision, Distracting, Fear 2, Painless, Territorial (Yard), Undead, Weapon (Club) +8



Also at the rear, wooden stairs climb to a loft where the office and dovecote are. Unless the Characters pass an **Average (+20) Stealth Test**, they disturb the pigeons, which leads to the noises of panicked birds that awakens Theodor and his dogs on a **Challenging (+0) Perception Test**.

The office doubles as Theodor's living quarters, which he shares with three large mastiffs (Brute, Force, and Bettë) he keeps in case one of Bhar's experiments goes berserk. If awakened, he will automatically let the dogs loose and, if he has time, yank the bell-pull by his desk.

THE BASEMENT LAIR

Vizier Bhar's laboratory and living quarters is a former cold storage basement. He rarely leaves, instead passing orders through Theodor. Having proclaimed himself the Magister of the Ordo Terribilis, the Necromancer plots the resurgence of the Purple Hand.

From the trap door in the warehouse, stone steps lead down to a dim, cold room. Characters with the Second Sight Talent automatically see a heavy presence of Dhar.

The Laboratory

The stairs lead to Bhar's laboratory, a mad combination of Necromantic and Daemonological equipment. A rectangle 30 by 40 ft in size with a grey stone floor and thick walls, there are three dissection tables, each with a flayed cadaver strapped to it, one weakly struggling against its bonds. Worktables are laden with alchemical equipment all filled with colourful bubbling liquids. At the far end is an octagonal summoning star, drawn in blood and surrounded by a large copper ring. Two solid wooden doors on the right-hand wall lead out.

If Theodor warns Bhar, he summons the Blue Horror bound to the octagram and releases the zombies from the cold storage room. Casting an initial round of spells, he flees to his private chamber and through the secret door into Middenheim's Undercity, to seek refuge with his Skaven allies.

If not warned, the Horror forms of its own volition and attacks, while the zombies only act at Bhar's command. Once Bhar realises the danger, he flees and sacrifices the daemon to buy time.

Cold Storage

This grisly room, 20 ft by 20 ft, contains six slabs, each holding corpses preserved by the cold and Bhar's magic for later experiments. Two enhanced zombies are also kept here awaiting orders. If Bhar has not sent them into battle, they remain here, motionless, until a Character enters the room. They use the same profile as Bhar's Enhanced Zombies on page 53.

Where the Magic Happens

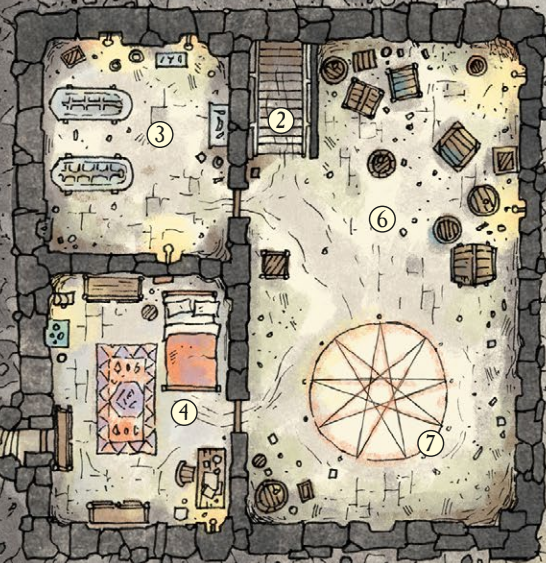
Bhar's bedchamber is also his study, a room of 20 by 20 ft. Decorated in an Arabyan fashion, there is a large, opulent bed, a comfortable chair, a desk, and a large bookcase. The bed is covered in pink, blue, and black silks. A large array of skulls engraved with mystic sigils, some of them decidedly not human, adorn niches in the room's walls. The hollow sockets all face the party. A sickly-sweet heavy scent lingers in the air.

If not killed or captured, Bhar flees for his life through the secret door hidden behind the bookcase. While the Undercity side of the door requires a **Hard (-20) Perception Test** to find, from inside Bhar's chamber it is **Average (+20)**.

1. Stairs Down
2. Stairs Up
3. Cold Storage
4. Bhar's Quarters
5. Secret Tunnel
6. The Laboratory
7. Summoning Circle
8. Theodor's Quarters
9. Trap Door



WAREHOUSE MAP



If he does escape, Characters on a successful **Challenging (+0) Perception** Test hear footsteps fading away. If they wish, they can pursue the Magister into the Undercity, itself.

Also here are Bhar's records, abandoned in his flight. In addition to his spell book and forbidden works on Daemonology and Necromancy, there is a bundle of correspondence between Bhar and Brunhilde Klaglich in the same code as the message the pigeon brought. Translated, it speaks of an alliance between the Ordo Terribilis and the Skaven, but also expresses concern.

PDA PQJJAH ZSAHHANO LANBKNI
SAHH. OKKJWBAN SKNZ KB PDA
ZANPD LNEJUAPDAU LNAOAF-
PAZ PK IA WJZ YNLPRQNAZ PDA
CENH. XQP SDU PDAOA KPDAN
WXZQUPKJO? LHAWOA WZREOA.
XG

It reads: *'The Tunnel dwellers perform well. Soon after word of the death of the prince they presented to me and captured the girl, but why these other abductions? Please advise. BK'*

THE STAGING POST

The Staging Post is a location in the Upper Tunnels of Middenheim's Undercity. There are two ways to find this location. The first is to try to retrace the trail of Snikkit's warband from the *Templar's Arms*. This is a convoluted trail through the sewers and Upper Tunnels and requires a **Very Hard (-30) Navigation** or **Challenging (+0) Track** Test in order to determine which Hazards are encountered on the way to the post. The other way is to follow the tunnel down from the secret passage found behind Vizier Bahr's bookcase. This is a much more direct route, requiring an **Average (+20) Navigation** Test in order to determine which Hazards are encountered on the way.

The Staging Post is situated in a narrow, vertiginous cavern which drops several hundred feet, straight down. The cavern is lined with scrap-wood platforms, old ropes, and makeshift ladders. Several iron chains are attached to cranks and ratchets near the top of the cavern. Iron cages are attached to each of these chains, around fifty feet below, which are used to hold their captives. The warband is always on the lookout for potential slaves and also careful to kidnap anyone who could give their existence away.

The cages can be raised and lowered using the winches near the top of the cavern. They are usually raised to receive prisoners and then lowered to the bottom of the cavern to be released. The mechanisms are so old and rickety that they take a good few minutes to drop the full depth of the cavern.

The vertical cavern links several underground routes and cave systems making it strategically important to the Skaven. There is only one main route into the top of the cavern, which is always guarded by a group of 6 Clan Mange Clanrats. Other ways in the Skaven are not bothered about, as they believe only they could know of them.

There are a pair of prisoners currently in the cages, beggars who have been lifted from the Altquartier streets late at night. One, Delberdt, is suffering badly from Ratte Fever, delirious and fading fast. The other, Götz, is able to talk. If he is rescued, he can give an account of his abduction. Men with gap-toothed smiles coerced him and his friend to place sacks over their heads, and then led them along the streets to the Freiburg, then down some stairs where they were handed over to the ratmen, and dragged through the sewers and placed in cages. He says the ratmen mostly just squeaked to one another, but that when he had demanded to know what was happening to them, one had said they were *'going to the mountain'* and that they would *'help kill the moon'*.

Leading from this cavern, about halfway down, there is a side cavern that is barred by a makeshift door made from an old triangular jezzail shield and other scraps. Snikkit's chamber is behind the door, which amounts to little more than a few furs strewn about the place and some mouldy cheese sitting on an incongruously finely crafted side-table. Snikkit uses this room for briefing his warband. On the smoothest part of the cavern wall is his latest effort. For the elucidation of his gang, Snikkit has drawn a charcoal street plan of the Wynd. One of the buildings has been marked with a large X, with the words FIZZY FIZZY next to it. Characters with knowledge of Middenheim, and a successful **Difficult (-20) Navigation** Test, might be able to work out that the map refers to Windhund Haulage.

Wrapping Up

Though not pleased if the Characters made a deal with The Man, Schutzmann accepts it as necessary to a more important goal: crushing the Purple Hand and uncovering its plots. He is very happy with the wealth of information recovered and either the death or capture of Vizier Bhar.

Rewards

Good roleplaying and clever thinking should be rewarded, but there are additional XP for the following:

- 30 points or killing or capturing Vizier Bhar
- 30 points for destroying the Zombies and Blue Horror
- 25 points for recovering his papers
- 15 points for cleaning out Windhund
- 15 points for investigating the Staging Post
- 15 points for making a deal with The Man or Edam Gouda



Vizier Bhar

A talented Necromancer from the Spice Port of Copher, the Vizier fled Araby after his magical malfesances were exposed. Most Chaos Sorcerers deplore Necromancy as the philosophies governing mastery of Undeath conflict with those of violent mutability. The Vizier has no such qualms, arguing that a synthesis of disciplines better serves the dark gods.

GRAND VIZIER BHAR - NECROMANCER (SILVER 3)

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	42	37	32	55	45	37	40	62	54	49	18

Skills: Bribery 55, Channelling 74, Charm 54, Charm Animal 64, Cool 70, Dodge 52, Endurance 68, Gossip 52, Haggle 67, Intimidate 49, Intuition 56, Language (Arabyan 99, Classical 81), Language (Magick) 80, Lore (Daemonology 65, Dark Magic 68, Necromancy 75, Tzeentch 72), Perception 56, Research 88, Sleight of Hand 58, Stealth (Rural) 65, Trade (Herbalist) 52

Talents: Aethyric Attunement, Animal Affinity, Arcane Magic (Daemonology, Necromancy, Tzeentch, Witchery), Attractive, Bookish, Criminal, Detect Artefact, Etiquette (Criminals, Cultists), Fast Hands, Frightening, Instinctive Diction, Luck, Magical Sense, Menacing, Petty Magic, Savant (Necromancy), Sixth Sense, Strong Minded, Tower of Memories 4, Witch!

Spells

Petty: Dazzle, Dart, Drain, Magic Flame, Open Lock, Rot, Sleep

Arcane: Aethyric Armour, Bolt, Breath, Dark Vision, Fearsome, Magic Shield, Ward

Daemonology: Destroy Lesser Daemon, Detect Daemon, Manifest Lesser Daemon

Necromancy: Raise Dead, Reanimate, Screaming Skull

Witchcraft: Blight, Curse of Ill Fortune, The Evil Eye

Lore of Tzeentch: Treason of Tzeentch



Bhar's Blue Horror

The daemon is a surly creature with a dull, long suffering voice. It is not terribly pleased to be under the control of a human wizard, but in fact wouldn't be any happier anywhere else. The daemon will attack all living beings, save Bhar and Theodor.

BHAR'S BLUE HORROR

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	30	30	35	30	35	30	35	25	30	10	12

Traits: Corruption (Moderate), Daemonic 9+, Fear 1, Tongue Attack +3 (3 yards), Unstable, Weapon +6 (Claws)

Skills: Channelling 55, Language (Magick) 50

Spells: Blast, Chain Attack, Dart

Theodor, Cultist and Windhund Manager

Theodor's job is to run the warehouse and get Bhar what he wants. He corrals the Yard Zombies in the basement cold storage during the day, bringing them out after hours.

THEODOR, CULTIST AND WINDHUND MANAGER

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	45	30	45	40	35	30	30	28	30	30	19

Traits: Weapon (Axe) +8

Skills: Drive 40, Dodge 40, Lore (Tzeentch) 38, Melee (Basic) 55

Talents: Hardy

THEODOR'S DOGS - BRUTE, FORCE, AND BETTÉ

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	25	-	40	30	35	25	-	15	10	15	11

Traits: Big, Bite +7, Brute, Fast, Immunity to Psychology

◆ THE MISSING CONVENOR ◆



THE LAST WITTGENSTEIN

If they played **Death on the Reik**, the party may have heard of Gotthard von Wittgenstein who moved to Middenheim and escaped the fate of his family. Taking the name 'Wallenstein', he entered the city's upper echelons, and joined the Cult of the Jade Sceptre. Thanks to his connections, he was made Chair of the Merchants' Guild and Convenor of the Kommission of Commerce, Trade, and Taxation.

Maliss Manrack is desperate to find Gotthard. He is convinced Gotthard knows of his great-great-grandfather Dagmar's research on the movements of Morrslieb. He has learned that Gotthard became Convenor of the Kommission. Clan Mange agents in Middenheim have kidnapped Gotthard and torture him to reveal what he knows about Dagmar von Wittgenstein's research. If he's been replaced as Convenor, his unfortunate successor suffers the same fate — Clan Mange Skaven have no idea what Gotthard looks like.

KICKING THINGS OFF

There are several start points for this part of the adventure:

The party is investigating Wittgenstein: The Jade Sceptre is aware of their investigations, and when Gotthard vanishes, they naturally blame the nosey Characters.

The party shows no interest in Gotthard: The last of the Von Wittgenstein's is no fool, and knows it's only a matter of time. He informs the Jade Sceptre that the Characters are old enemies in preparation for their elimination. When the Skaven take Gotthard, his fellow cultists naturally blame the Characters.

Wittgenstein has been dealt with: It's possible that the party has already unmasked Gotthard. He may be imprisoned, dead, or in hiding. If so, he has been replaced by Hans Pendelwert who the Skaven take in his place. The Jade Sceptre want revenge.

HANS PENDELWERT

If Gotthard has been replaced as Convenor, Hans Pendelwert is his successor. After the casual leadership of Gotthard, the Kommission chose a dull but dependable leather merchant to oversee their operations. Pendelwert is a teetotal family man whose only indulgences are a taste for sugary sweetmeats and a secret dream of playing harpsichord at *The Singing Moon*.

If Hans is the victim, the letter (HANDOUT X) was delivered to the Convenor's office and the hapless recipient went to *The Heaven's Lament* to clear up the misunderstanding.



The Pavilion of the Sublime

Gotthard was planning a spectacular ritual for the Jade Sceptre, when he promised to guide the cultists to the *Pavilion of the Sublime*, where Slaanesh's servants will grant their every desire. Everyone was disappointed when their leader went missing. Now they're determined to find him or get revenge on whoever took their beloved Deviant Master away.

Lovers not Fighters...

The Jade Sceptre don't specialise in violence. Two senior cultists, Felix von Rosam and Blanca Emrich, intend to subdue the party with sorcery then question them about Gotthard's whereabouts.

Von Rosam and Emrich wait for night to follow the party to a quiet street — perhaps when they are returning to their lodgings. Von Rosam casts *Aura of Acquiescence* from a scroll and then orders the four acolytes to attack any who are unaffected while they abduct those who succumb.

THE SCEPTRE STRIKES

Though not terribly well practiced in non-recreational violence, the cultists nevertheless attack the Characters with enthusiasm. Things have been terribly boring since Gotthard went missing, and they intend to do whatever it takes to locate him.



Felix von Rosam, Senior Jade Sceptre Cultist

Felix has a cherubic, friendly expression and no hair on his head or face — he could be anywhere between 30 and 50. He is a gourmand who spends excessive amounts on the finest delicacies.

The scroll allows Felix to cast *Aquiescence* (WFRP, page 257) on anyone within 6 yd, before it burns up in a pale-blue flame.

FELIX VON ROSAM
SENIOR JADE SCEPTRE CULTIST

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	33	36	38	44	41	32	51	46	45	63	14

Traits: Weapon (Sword) +7, Corruption (Minor), Hungry

Skills: Charm 69, Cool 53, Endurance 52, Intimidate 42, Lore (Chaos 49, Slaanesh 61), Secret Signs (Jade Sceptre) 68

Trappings: Sword, Jade Sceptre amulet, Magical Scroll (Aura of Acquiescence), small tin of honeyed lark's

Blanca Emrich, Senior Jade Sceptre Cultist

Blanca is a 20-something weirdroot addict with unpredictable moods and unusual desires. She is the daughter of a wealthy Knight Panther. Her clothes are fashionable and well-cut.

BLANCA EMRICH, SENIOR JADE SCEPTRE CULTIST

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	47	24	42	38	48	52	46	37	33	28	13

Traits: Weapon (Flail) +8, Corruption (Minor), Armour (1), Fury

Skills: Athletics 54, Dodge 54, Intimidate 47, Stealth (Urban) 57, Lore (Chaos 42, Slaanesh 52), Secret Signs (Jade Sceptre) 64

Trappings: Flail, Fashionable green leather jack, Jade Sceptre amulet, 4 doses of weirdroot

Acolytes — Four Dilettante Ruffians

These cultists are getting their kicks tonight by playing the part of street thugs.

ACOLYTES

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	12

Traits: Weapon (Sword) +7, Corruption (Minor), Hungry

Skills: Charm 69, Cool 53, Endurance 52, Intimidate 42, Lore (Chaos 49, Slaanesh 61), Secret Signs (Jade Sceptre) 68

Trappings: Sword, Jade Sceptre amulet, Magical Scroll (Aura of Acquiescence), small tin of honeyed lark's

WHO'S GOT GOTTHARD?

During the fight, the increasingly unhinged Emrich bombards the party with questions and insults, 'Where did you take him? Where's Gotthard? You filthy wretches! What did you do with him?'

Eventually von Rosam interjects. 'They know nothing. Let's go.' They attempt to flee while the acolytes fight on, thoroughly enjoying themselves. Anyone successfully abducted is dragged into an alley and questioned. Von Rosam is charming and apologetic, but very insistent that they reveal where the party took Gotthard. Emrich threatens them with exquisite disembowelment. If affected by *Aquiescence*, the characters must pass a **Hard (-20) Willpower** Test to avoid answering truthfully.

If anyone suggests that they were responsible for Gotthard's fate, the cultists try to kill them.

INVESTIGATING THE DISAPPEARANCE

The Jade Sceptre will continue to harass the Characters more or less ceaselessly, and it will quickly become apparent that rest will only be found if Gotthard's fate is discovered. The urgency of this will only be underscored when Schutzmann informs them that the Convenor has recently vanished without trace. At a time like this that could hardly be a coincidence — could it?

There are two natural places to start investigating: Gotthard's home or the Kommission.

GOTTHARD'S HOUSE

The Wallenstein residence in Brotkopfs is in disarray. Gotthard rushed out in the middle of the night over a week ago, and the servants don't know where he went. If Characters approach the front door, the party is greeted by Adolphus, a nervous butler who tries to put them off. If they mention their connection to the Watch, or pressure him another way, he reluctantly lets them in. The other servants stay out of their way, but if questioned, they can reveal that Gotthard was a cruel master who liked entertaining unpleasant guests from out of town. They explain that he returned from carousing in the early hours of the morning, went to his room and then stormed from the house in a rage. None know anything about Gotthard's cult activity.

The bedchamber

Gotthard's bedchamber is untouched since his disappearance — the servants are so scared of him that they dare not disturb its contents. It's locked, but Adolphus can give them the key. The room is lavishly decorated, with a leather chaise longue and silk-hung four poster bed, the underside of the canopy decorated with a tasteless scene of cavorting figures. The wardrobe contains expensive courtier's clothing and fine travel clothes, suggesting Gotthard did not intend to leave the city.

A letter has been screwed up and tossed onto the writing desk. It's addressed to 'Gotthard von Wittgenstein.

On the wall is a portrait of the Wittgensteins in less-mutated times. Ludwig stands beside the imperious Lady Ingrid, along with three children, Kurt, Gotthard and Margritte.

Herr Kommissioner Gotthard von Wittgenstein,

We know your true heritage. If you wish to keep your secret, be at the Heaven's Lament tonight after midnight, ask for Herr Gelb. Bring Dagmar Wittgenstein's diaries with you!

Your correspondent, Herr Gelb

All appear untainted, but Margritte has a disturbing stare. Behind the portrait is a safe (**Hard Lock -20**). This contains Jade Sceptre robes, letters from Margritte (rather disturbing, but nothing new), and an amulet shaped as a symbol of Slaanesh.

THE CONVENOR'S OFFICE

At the Merchants' Guild or Convenor's Office at the Kommission for Commerce, Trade, and Taxation the party discovers that Gotthard has not been seen for a week. A clerk suggests they try his home. If Pendelwert replaced Gotthard, the party finds the blackmail letter on his desk. The clerk is worried and remembers the Convenor asking if he knew anyone called 'Wittgenstein'.

THE HEAVEN'S LAMENT

The Heaven's Lament is an expensive cabaret bar, where Gotthard occasionally spent evenings in lascivious company. Entry is for members and their guests only. There are several private rooms where patrons can socialise away from the crowd, each named after an astronomical phenomenon. Gotthard (or Hans) came here in the early hours of the morning, met 'Herr Gelb' (an alias of the Yellow Fang cultist Karl Zeigenalter), and failed to produce Dagmar's research. After a brief struggle, the Convenor was taken through a concealed tunnel into the Undercity.

Three people can provide clues on what happened that night.

MARTINA GRAF — PROPRIETOR

Martina is the imposing owner of the club. She is wary of sharing information about her patrons, but with persuasion she reveals the following:

- Gotthard was a regular patron. He was over-familiar with the servants and cabaret performers, and none liked him.
- 'Herr Gelb' became a member a week before the Convenor disappeared. She knew 'Gelb' was an alias, assumed he worked for the Low Kings, and left it there.
- 'Gelb' arrived at the club before midnight and went to the 'Verdra Room', where Heidi was serving. She didn't see Gotthard (or Hans) arrive.
- She didn't see Gotthard or 'Gelb' leave that night. She was busy with a big win on the gambling tables.

GALZARA — BOUNCER

Galzara Voloshar worked the door on the night in question. She is a tall woman of Dolgan origin and perfectly capable of handling difficult patrons.

- 'Gelb' arrived late in the evening. She didn't know him, but he was a member, so she let him in.
- Gotthard arrived a few hours after midnight. He was furious; did not make his usual obscene proposition and demanded to see Gelb.
- She doesn't remember either Gelb or Gotthard leaving, which she realises is odd, given she was on the door until the last patron left

HEIDI — SERVANT

The serving girl who attended the Verdra Room remembers that night well. She's a precocious young Middenheimer from Ostwald who is happy to talk.

- ☠ 'Herr Gelb' was quiet when he arrived, quite twitchy. He's nothing to do with the Low Kings — when you grow up in Ostwald you can recognise that kind of person.
- ☠ Gotthard arrived in a bad mood. She dreaded his visits, but he was preoccupied, and kept his hands to himself.
- ☠ 'Gelb' and Gotthard didn't seem to know each other. She served them two glasses of Pritzstock white wine and left them to it.
- ☠ She soon heard them arguing. Listening at the door, she caught a few snatches of conversation. Gotthard said, 'he couldn't care less what Dagmar was doing'. Gelb replied, 'my masters won't take no for an answer'.
- ☠ About quarter of an hour later, Heidi returned to take another order. After knocking and receiving no answer, she opened the door. The room was empty. There was a smell of sewage and something like damp fur.

WHAT ABOUT PENDELWERT?

If Hans came to *The Heaven's Lament*, it was his first time here. Martina knew of him as Convenor and was surprised to see him in a drinking establishment. Galzara says he was nervous and admitted him as a guest of Herr Gelb. Heidi felt sorry for him — he seemed out of place.

THE VERDRA ROOM AND BENEATH

The small private room is oak-panelled with comfortable green upholstered chairs. It is named after Verdra, the green planet associated with abundance. The door is the only way in or out. If the party examines the room, they find the wall panels are solid. If they pass a **Challenging (+0) Perception** Test they realise that one of the flagstones has been recently moved. When prised up (**Hard (-10) Strength** Test), they find a narrow tunnel leading underneath the building. Anyone with the *Tunnel Rat* Talent knows it was dug recently... with claws rather than spade or pick. The tunnel descends 10 yd to a sewer and the Undercity. Gotthard's (or Hans's) story continues in Undercity Encounters on page 18.

Harried Gotthard and the Cavern of Secrets

This section assumes Gotthard von Wittgenstein is the Convenor of the Kommission for Commerce, Trade, and Taxation, and he has been captured by the Skaven. If Gotthard is dead or fled, and Hans Pendelwert has been kidnapped instead.

The torture chamber is a vaulted, stone, Dwarf construction whose original purpose is long-since forgotten. The Skaven torturers are cowardly even for Skaven, so as soon as they are disturbed they flee down through narrow escape routes. However, they try to summon reinforcements, so the longer the Characters stay here, the greater the chance of a Skaven

counterattack (roll on the Under-Empire column of the Undercity Hazards table on page 22 for every 15 minutes the Characters spend in the chamber).

FINDING THE TORTURE CHAMBER

The Torture Chamber is a location in the Upper Tunnels of Middenheim's Undercity. Characters can access it by following a trail from beneath the *Heaven's Lament*. If they follow the trail as soon as they discover it, they must pass a **Difficult (-10) Navigation** or **Average (+20) Track** Test in order to determine which Hazards are encountered on the way. If the Characters delay their expedition (in order to better prepare) this becomes a **Very Hard (-30) Navigation** or **Difficult (-10) Track** Test.

In the middle of the room, Gotthard is attached to the roof and walls by rusting chains that force him to stand. The Skaven have not been kind to Gotthard, and depending on how slow the Characters were in reaching him he may have been partially consumed or, mercifully, dead. The torturers, in their haste to flee, left behind several pages of notes. These notes include a diagram created from their understanding of Dagmar Wittgenstein's work, and their own odd scratchings on rat skin.



Questioning Wallenstein

The Characters may have the chance to rescue Gotthard Wallenstein. He is severely wounded from the torture he has endured, and half out of his mind with fear and pain. At first, he is unable to speak coherently, but if the Characters treat his wounds he is able to tell them what little he knows.

'They kept asking about stone. "What stone?" I asked. "From the castle," they said. "What castle?" I asked. I would have told them anything if I only knew what they were after. I think they had me confused with someone else, but they wouldn't listen when I tried to tell them that.'

If Gotthard realises that the Characters know that he is really a von Wittgenstein, and that they will not be put off with denials and protestations of innocence, Gotthard changes his tack.

'There was some Warpstone in the castle — I knew that. But I'm no wizard or alchemist. All that reading — no, thanks! I don't even read my own contracts — no need if you've got a good staff. My sister Magritte, that's the one you should talk to. She has all of old Dagmar's books — knows all about that stuff. I almost sent them her way, just to make the torture stop.'

If the Characters have played **Death on the Reik**, they may decide to tell Gotthard that his sister and the rest of the Wittgensteins are all dead, and the castle destroyed by Skaven who found and removed the remaining Warpstone. A brief flicker of emotion crosses his face, especially if the Characters admit to having any role in the deaths of his family. Then, a thought clearly occurs to him.

'Wait... so I'm the last of the Wittgensteins?' He takes a moment to consider this. *'So, whatever's left — not much, by the sound of it — but whatever's left, it's all mine?'* His expression brightens considerably.

'I tell you what,' he says, turning to the Characters with a broad smile that he clearly believes is charming, *'you get me out of here — safely back to the city — and I'll make it worth your while. I won't even ask why you were down here in the first place. Two hundred Crowns apiece sound reasonable?'*

Gotthard expects the Characters to escort him to the surface — to his home, or to the headquarters of the Merchants' Guild. If they explain that they have other plans, his expression changes to one of petulant disappointment. He will stick with the Characters — at least until he finds someone else to lead him out of the Undercity, or until he is killed — but he will be something of a liability.

Gotthard assumes that he is in command of the party, unless one of the Characters is a noble who clearly outranks him. Even so, he will question every decision, demand that every side-tunnel be investigated for a way to the surface, and grumble constantly.

He is completely unused to the underground environment, making noise when it is most inconvenient, walking into almost every hazard before the Characters can avoid or neutralise it, and throwing loud tantrums every time his clumsiness gets him hurt. The Characters may be sorely tempted to kill him, or at least to abandon him in some dark passage.

He does not have two hundred Crowns to give the Characters, promising that the money will be theirs *'as soon as I can access my estates, and collect some excise from the peons'*. He does all he can to collect his remaining riches and disappear to pastures new.

GOTTHARD WALLENSTEIN – MERCHANT (SILVER 5)

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	45	30	32	30	47	42	43	46	41	43	13

Traits: Mental Corruption (Thrill Hunter), Prejudice (killjoys, presumptuous paupers, snobby stewards), Weapon (Rapier) +7

Skills: Bribery 63, Charm 53, Consume Alcohol 45, Cool 44, Entertain (Storytelling) 53, Evaluate 49, Gamble 63, Gossip 61, Haggle 68, Intimidate 37, Leadership 48, Lore (Heraldry 56, Middenheim 51, Reikland 51, Slaanesh 61), Melee (Basic 55, Fencing 50), Play (Harpsichord) 48, Ride (Horse) 57, Sleight of Hand 58, Secret Signs (Cultist) 56, Stealth (Urban) 62

Talents: Beneath Notice, Blather, Briber, Carouser, Dealmaker, Doomed (*The apparent threat obsesses you, the hidden one possesses you*), Embezzle, Etiquette (Criminals, Guilders, Nobles), Gregarious, Luck, Noble Blood, Read/Write, Secret Identity

Possessions: Fine or shabby clothing depending on context. Disguise kit. Purse containing coins to a value of 1 crown, d10 doses of Ranald's Delight, Moonflower and/or Weirddoot, d10 candles and a ginger fig.

REWARDS

Good roleplaying and clever thinking should be rewarded, but there are additional XP for the following:

- 20 points for dealing with the Jade Sceptre
- 15 points for recovering artefacts from the torture chamber
- 10–15 points for uncovering the events of the night Gotthard disappeared
- 10 points for finding the tunnel
- 5 points for discovering the blackmail attempt

If the Characters return from the Undercity with Gotthard or Pendelwert increase the Evidence Score by 2.

◆ THE COVER UP ◆



Eunice Hasche, professor of Bestiaria at the Collegium Theologica is researching Skaven existence. She has come into possession of bodies from Snikkit's raid on the Templar's Arms (see **The Power Behind the Throne**, page 22). She plans to field a public dissection of the bodies in order to reveal the 'newly discovered' species of ratman. Unbeknownst to anyone, her assistants, Karl Zeigenalter and Gaius Stummzunge, are secret members of the Yellow Fang. They plan to swap the Skaven bodies for Ungor corpses with their heads replaced with giant rat heads — just before the dissection. Professor Hasche will be discredited, and the secret of the Skavens' existence will remain.

A Publicke Demonstration

The following notices are being displayed around the city:

A **Publicke Demonstration** by Professor Eunice Hasche, revealing the Anatomie of two recently acquired examples of a Species hitherto **UNKNOWN**
To SCIENCE – Rattus Homunculus

FREE TO ALL OF A CURIOUS DISPOSITION

At the Theatre of Anatomy, the Collegium Theologica.

Doors open at noon on Festag.

The flyer gives the date (whenever the GM prefers the demonstration to be held).

The Demonstration

An excited crowd gathers at the Theatre of Anatomy. There are scholars, of course, some enthusiastic; others dismissive of Professor Hasche's 'ravings of a diseased mind'. But the event has attracted folk from all walks of life. There is also a sizeable mob of protesters, condemning Hasche's outlandish beliefs. The Watch prevents them from entering the theatre.

Eventually, the theatre doors open and the crowd filters inside.

Seating is arranged in a semi-circle, in high tiers, facing the podium where dissections take place. Professor Hasche stands by a table of sharp medical implements. Her assistants, Karl and Gaius, wheel in two dissection tables, each laid out with a corpse hidden by a white blanket.

Hasche claps her hands for silence, and begins.

'Ladies and gentlemen. Today is a momentous day, when a new addition to the Bestiary will be revealed to science. You are honoured to be among the first to set eyes upon these marvels of nature. I will reveal two specimens, recently acquired, and examine them using the most sophisticated scientific techniques. Those of a nervous disposition should excuse themselves now. For the rest of you, prepare to be witnesses to a milestone in scientific discovery.'



At this point, one of the protestors (Hasche's arch-enemy, Dr Lindwurm – see page 29) stands and berates the professor. *'You charlatan, fraud! You think you can hoodwink us into believing your mad theories about "man rats". You seek to profit from spreading fear and lies — shame on you! Shame! Mark my words — those bodies are fakes!'*

Lindwurm is standing next to the Characters. They might play a part in shutting him up and throwing him out of the theatre. When the drama is over, Hasche claps her hands and smiles. *'There are always a few blind to science who seek to blinker us with their ignorance. Now, let us begin!'*

What her assistants hope to happen next is that the corpses are publicly revealed to be crude facsimiles, Hasche is humiliated in front of the crowd, and ultimately the city, leading to the collapse of her career.

However, the Characters have a chance to scupper their plans.

As Hasche begins to unveil one of the corpses, any Character passing a **Hard (-10) Perception** Test notices that the ratman's head is crudely stitched onto the neck, and is too small for the body. They have an instant to save Hasche's credibility — leaping up and causing a commotion which makes her stop revealing the rest of the corpse. However, the angry audience forcibly eject the Characters from the auditorium unless the Characters flash the seal Schutzmann gave them and shout out a reasonable excuse to stop the demonstration.

Hasche is furious if her demonstration is stopped. She demands to talk to the Characters to berate them for the disruption. Her assistants glare at the Characters, fuming that their plan has gone awry. Once the auditorium is empty, it is safe to reveal that the 'Skaven' are fakes. Hasche forgives them as soon as she realises that they have saved her reputation, and seeks their help in figuring out what has happened to the real bodies.

If the Characters do not act, they have a second chance to save her reputation. After poking the head for a bit, with a puzzled look on her face, Hasche pulls the sheet down the hairy torso and prepares to cut. A Character passing a **Hard (-10) Perception** Test can see that the build is wrong for a Skaven and that the bodies don't quite match the heads, giving them another opportunity to stop the demonstration.

If the dissection continues, Hasche cuts into the body. Sawdust scatters from the wound she creates. She steps back, mouth agape. A gasp emits from the spectators, followed by stunned silence. The professor turns slowly to face the audience, her face ashen.

Instead of two undiscovered specimens, on the tables lie the hairy, hooved and clawed bodies of small beastmen, their heads replaced with those of giant rats, crudely stitched into place. The crowd erupts. *'Shame! Lies! Forgery!'*

Bedlam ensues — protestors surge past security and begin trashing the theatre, tearing up seats and hurling them around. At the same time, many members of the audience attempt to leave, causing a crush at the exits. The Watch stream in to restore order, weapons drawn.

Respected scholars of Bestiaria in the audience, infuriated by the apparent deceit of their peer, attempt to reach Hasche to vent their anger. The Characters should have the chance to waylay these individuals before they can cause her harm. Indeed, the Characters should be encouraged to help Hasche escape as her life is evidently in danger.

Eventually, the Watch takes control and clears the theatre. If the Characters help keep Hasche from danger, she will try to retain their company until she is confident that she is safe from harm. During this time, the party can try to figure out exactly what is going on.

The Scheme

When Professor Hasche announced that she had acquired Skaven specimens, their first instincts were to dispose of the bodies before she could display them to the public. However, this proved impossible, as she vigilantly kept watch over the bodies in her laboratory (stored in barrels and pickled in rum). When she shared her plan to hold a public dissection, her assistants hatched a desperate plan.

They knew that the barrels would be kept backstage behind the anatomy theatre. They also knew that there was a trapdoor backstage — a refuse chute down which the remains of autopsies were dropped into the sewers below.

A week before the demonstration, Karl and Gaius stole two stuffed Ungor corpses from a display in the Collegium Theologica's museum. They purchased two giant rats' heads from Piet Schädling, a local rat catcher, in exchange for a significant purse of silver and his silence. They removed the Ungor heads, and sewed on the giant rat heads.

They got two similar barrels. They stuffed the Ungor bodies into the barrels and quietly positioned them backstage, the night before the autopsy was to take place.

The switch took place smoothly. On the day of the demonstration, they followed Professor Hasche's instructions and moved the barrels in her laboratory to the anatomy theatre, under her eagle eye, and prepared the dissection tables, laying out the Skaven corpses and shrouding them with white cloth. While Hasche was welcoming the audience, they simply swapped the Skaven for the Ungor and disposed of the Skaven bodies down the refuse chute. Job done!



Heads Will Roll

Professor Hasche is utterly bewildered by what has happened. She checked on the bodies moments before stepping out into the auditorium. She swears by Verena that the bodies placed on the table by her assistants were Skaven corpses. She considers her assistants utterly faithful and takes a dim view of anyone accusing them without proof (she will be devastated if she learns of their betrayal).

Her only explanation must be magic — she is convinced that a rival in the college has hired a wizard to magically replace the Skaven bodies with the cheap fakes, perhaps in order to humiliate her. Her assistants will do all they can to back up her theory.

If the Characters can regain her honour by proving that she has been the victim of a ruse, Hasche is indebted to them, and they will gain a powerful ally.

The Characters have a number of clues to find and leads to follow to discover what happened, as follows.

The Theatre of Anatomy

Exploring backstage of the theatre of anatomy will yield a few clues.

• They can find the trapdoor that opens to the underground river. Those who work at the theatre can inform the Characters that this is used to dispose of corpses following anatomy demonstrations. The underground river itself is deep and swift, and impossible to navigate. Any evidence thrown down there will have been swept away.

• Apart from the two dissection tables, and drawers and shelves of various dissecting equipment, there are four barrels backstage. Two smell strongly of rum. The other two have traces of sawdust at the bottom.

Hasche can confirm that the ratmen bodies were stored in those barrels of rum. She kept them in her laboratory, never leaving them out of her sight. The ratmen were still in there on the morning of the demonstration. She knows — she checked. Indeed, she supervised her assistants when they hauled the corpses from the barrels and laid them onto the dissection tables and covered them in cloth, just before the demonstration was to begin. The only time the ratmen were out of her sight was when she gave her introductory speech to the audience in the theatre. The assistants were guarding backstage at that time, and a short while later rolled the tables out to the audience.

Employees of the theatre do not know where the other two barrels came from. No one ordered their delivery. If the Characters are diligent with their investigations, and offer drinks at the nearby student bar, they can find a young student, Vinzent Veltins.

Veltins was working in the college library late a few nights before the demonstration, and while outside smoking his pipe, he saw two men manhandle a couple of barrels into the theatre's back entrance. He thought nothing of it — simply a late night delivery. One man was short, the other tall and broad — but it was too dark to make out much more than that. He certainly doesn't recognise the assistants, if asked, though their height and build were similar to the two he saw that night.

The Ungor Torsos

Examining the Ungor torsos reveals some interesting anomalies.

• The corpses are actually examples of expert taxidermy — stuffed with straw and sawdust. They are quite old, the fur moth-eaten in places. If this is pointed out to Hasche, she comments that they are reminiscent of the exhibits displayed at the University Museum.

• Investigations at the museum reveal that indeed the Ungor did come from there. Clarita Neuzeller, the museum's curator, an elderly but sharp-minded scholar, can tell them more. Alerted by the party, she discovers that two Ungor specimens, from the Bestiaria displays, have gone missing, a fact unnoticed until now. There is no indication how they were stolen, but a cleaner remembers they were there at least a week before the demonstration, as she remembers brushing them. The Ungor were originally fully formed — if the Characters can track down the missing heads, Neuzeller will be most grateful. Asked about Hasche's assistants, Neuzeller recognises them, as they are regular visitors to museum archives.

The Giant Rat Heads

• The giant rat heads have been sewn onto the Ungor bodies using a strong, black thread. Characters of a medical background might recognise it as the type often used to suture wounds.

• The heads are quite fresh, but not rotting. They have been treated with formaldehyde to preserve them (the assistants did this after they acquired them — plenty of preserving chemicals in Hasche's lab). They are not stuffed like the Ungor corpses. Both have a mortal wound to the skull, probably a crossbow shot. Examining the wound of one of the heads reveals the head of a crossbow bolt. If this is closely examined, a fletcher's mark will be found.

Elmo Flensburger, the fletcher who made this bolt can easily be identified, if this mark is shown to fellow fletcher. He is a well-known weaponsmith in Middenheim. A fat, balding man with a fierce black beard, he'll answer any questions if his palm is crossed with silver. He acknowledges that he manufactured the bolt, but he keeps no record of customer orders, and he makes dozens of them throughout the year.

However, if the Characters mention that they found it in the head of a giant rat, Flensburger wonders whether it was a rat catcher client of his — Piet Schädling — whom he regularly supplies with crossbow ammunition.

Piet Schädling haunts a dingy Alquartier venue, *The Baiting Pit*, gambling and drinking. A bull is being worried by vicious Hobhounds to the cheers of the bloodthirsty onlookers. Money changes hands as the spectators bet on which dog will survive the bout, or which will bring down the bull. Piet is down on his luck and out of pocket, but if the Characters loan him some silver and ply him with drink, he'll loosen his lips. He tells them that about a week ago, he was commissioned to hunt down a couple of giant rats and provide his customers with rat heads. He promptly went down into the sewers and delivered — there are plenty of giant rats lurking down there.

Zeigenalter and Stummzunge were his customers (of course they deny all involvement). However, Piet refuses to describe them, as he was paid to keep schtum. A significant bribe will help — Piet has had a run of bad luck in this gambling den.

Zeigenalter is worried that he has left a loose end in his scheme. He has informed the Yellow Fang of the Piet's identity — they have sent a hired thug to dispatch him. The thug is among the crowd at the bullpit, intent on doing away with Piet with a swift dagger between the ribs. Perceptive Characters might notice the undue attention he's giving Piet, and intervene before the thug's dagger strikes. Any scuffle sparks a mass brawl among the drunken and riotous crowd, and as well as deal with the would-be assassin, the Characters must ensure the rat catcher's safety in the tumult. After 5 rounds the Watch intervene and drag people away to the cells, Piet being one of them. The Characters have to try to negotiate his freedom before Piet will talk to them.

The Assistants

If interviewed, Karl Zeigenalter does all the talking. Gaius Stummzunge simply nods or shakes his head impassively. Karl does all he can to ingratiate himself with the party and play innocent.

The assistants claim that they have no idea how the Ungor bodies appeared. They say that just before they wheeled the dissection tables out to the auditorium, there was a flash that temporarily blinded them and a smell of sulphur. They quickly recovered but had no time to locate the cause, as they needed to wheel the tables out to the auditorium.

Both are seasoned liars. It will be difficult for the Characters to detect that they are telling lies.

The assistants are confident that nobody will discover their plot, and remain at the Professor's side — should they make a run for it, suspicion will undoubtedly fall on them, so they stay put.

The Assistants' Lodgings

Karl and Gaius share lodgings in the college's halls of residence. Unless they can persuade the college authorities (especially Hasche) that her assistants were responsible for the disappearance of the Skaven corpses (for example, by tracking down Piet the rat catcher, or providing evidence that the Ungor bodies were stolen by the assistants from the museum), access to their lodgings will be forbidden.

Determined Characters can try to break into the lodgings, dodging the college security — retired watchmen or the like employed as porters. Though elderly, they can still put up a bit of a fight, and if they sound the alert the Watch prove a more difficult adversary.

Keys to the lodgings are held by the porters at the halls of residence reception, and can be pilfered by sneaky Characters (or they can hire a thief to do the deed), or they can trick their way in some way. The lodgings are on the third floor, so only an accomplished cat-burglar can access the rooms through the outside windows. A Halfling Character might brave access via the chimney.

At night, the lodgings are occupied by the assistants, but by day Karl and Gaius are at work, helping the professor, and the lodgings are unoccupied.

Karl likes to keep his residence immaculate, and everything is kept in order. In contrast, Gaius's room is a complete mess. There are several important clues here:

- ☛ It was on the kitchen table that the work assembling the fake Skaven was done, a Character passing a **Challenging (+0) Perception** Test spots sawdust under the table, which matches the colour and texture of the sawdust used to stuff the Ungor bodies.
- ☛ A box under Zeigenalter's bed contains a sewing kit, including a roll of suture thread identical to that used to sew the Giant Rat heads.
- ☛ A mounted Ungor head on the top of a coat stand can be seen in the corner of Gaius's room, from where it glares down with beady glass eyes. The head is stuffed with the same type of sawdust found on the kitchen floor and used to stuff the Ungor bodies. It is a perfect match for one of the stuffed beastman corpses — this is surely enough to prove that the assistants were involved with the sabotage of Hasche's demonstration.





Eunice Hasche, Professor of Bestiaria

Eunice is erudite, ebullient and energetic. Constantly on the move, the professor often paces the corridors of Middenheim's Collegium Theologica muttering Classical words of extinct creatures. Her broad-shouldered silhouette is often seen at night; her purposeful strides echoing through the campus. Her impeccable posture is identifiable, despite years of leaning over specimen tables. It's hard to put an age on Hasche due to her lively manner and quick wit, but most believe she is in her mid 40s, if not the wrong side of 50.

Much admired and sometimes feared, rumours abound that Hasche's obsession with Skaven has impacted her other research. Known for encouraging and valuing her students' advice, some believe this has added to her current distraction. With a tendency to only see the good in people, she can overlook character flaws to her own detriment. She has an unwavering belief in her assistants' abilities, Karl and Gaius. Her peers have questioned her assistants' academic qualifications, as well as their ability to carry out simple research, but Eunice remains resolute. She believes her peers' concerns are simply down to academic snobbery.

Hasche is tall with good posture. She wears her dark hair in a bun with the odd stray greying hair framing her face. Antique reading glasses hang from a chain around her neck — said to be a gift from an old lover, but no one has dared to ask. Her light-green eyes are lively and focused. Her skin is sun-kissed from her daily field trips and excursions.

Hasche has been professor of Bestiaria at the Collegium Theologica for six years, during which she has specialised in the research of cryptozoology — the study of creatures as yet unknown to science. She has been particularly intrigued with the myth of the ratmen, and has written many treatises on the subject and investigated the folklore behind such stories.

EUNICE HASCHE – HUMAN FELLOW (SILVER 5)

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	34	34	37	55	43	28	33	57	51	43	18

Skills: Art (Writing) 48, Charm 46, Cool 56, Consume Alcohol 70, Entertain (Lecture 53, Storytelling 58), Evaluate 60, Gamble 72, Gossip 48, Haggle 58, Intimidate 47, Intuition 58, Language (Classical 72, Tilean 67), Leadership 48, Lore (Bestiaria 77, Heraldry 67, History 67, Science 62), Melee (Basic) 37, Perception 58, Research 77, Trade (Calligrapher) 43

Talents: Bookish, Carouser, Doomed (First thine discharge, then a swift shadow falls over thee), Etiquette (Scholars), Linguistics, Public Speaker, Savant (Theology) 2, Read/Write, Savvy, Speedreader, Suave, Super Numerate, Tower of Memories

Trappings: Freiburg house with impressive library, writing kit, parchment, her own laboratory at the Collegium Theologica

THE PROFESSOR'S ASSISTANTS

Hasche is usually shadowed by her two assistants, who always accompany her on her field expeditions. They have won her trust through their loyalty and ability to extract her from the many scrapes she has experienced during her 'monster-hunting' tours.

To all intents and purposes, they are loyal assistants. They have worked with her since she gained her chair at the Collegium. They had been working for Professor Lindwurm, but he contrived to fall out with them just as Professor Hasche was in need of lab assistants. Their aim is to divert Hasche's attention away from the existence of the Skaven. So far they have been successful, destroying evidence she has uncovered before she can log it. But her acquisition of two ratman corpses is a problem, which has required all their ingenuity to solve.



Karl Zeigenalter

Karl Zeigenalter is a small, thin fellow with receding light-brown hair, a pencil-moustache, and large protruding teeth. He is manic, neurotic, and one of the most talkative people in the Empire, expounding on any subject, taking tangents and introducing non-sequiturs as he pleases, and happily taking on any turn of conversation others try to introduce. If told that he speaks too much he will talk about the fact that he speaks too much. The only way to shut him up is to mention the Skaven, upon which he finally becomes tight-lipped.

KARL ZEIGENALTER - YELLOW FANG SPY (SILVER 3)

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	39	34	33	32	31	44	42	36	41	51	12

Skills: Animal Care 41, Bribery 61, Charm 66, Consume Alcohol 42, Cool 51, Dodge 49, Drive 52, Gamble 46, Gossip 81, Haggle 71, Intuition 41, Language (Bretonnian) 40, Perception 56, Trade (Porter) 47, Stealth (Urban) 54

Talents: Beneath Notice, Blather 4, Dealmaker, Doomed (Fail to learn innocuousness at thine peril), Gregarious 3, Night Vision, Read/Write, Savvy, Shadow, Suave

Trappings: Practical clothing, Dagger, Notepaper, Stick of Charcoal



Gaius Stummzunge

Gaius Stummzunge is a hulking fellow who always has a pipe in his mouth and never speaks. He has thin, fair hair. Gaius is fearless, vicious and one of the Yellow Fang's top enforcers. He looks upon everyone with a quiet fierceness. His size is enough to cow most potential challengers.

GAIUS STUMMZUNGE - YELLOW FANG SPY (SILVER 3)

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	44	34	44	40	31	44	42	31	41	25	20

Skills: Consume Alcohol 50, Cool 71, Dodge 49, Drive 52, Gamble 41, Intuition 41, Melee (Basic) 64, Perception 51, Trade (Porter) 47, Stealth (Urban) 54

Talents: Beneath Notice, Doomed (*That of thou cannot speak, thereof thou must be silent*), Hardy, Night Vision, Read/Write, Riposte, Savvy, Shadow, Very Strong, Warrior Born

Trappings: Practical clothing, Dagger, Big Boots, Pipe, Pouch of Mootland Tobacco, Lantern, Flask of Lamp Oil

REVEALING THE CULPRITS

If the Characters amass enough evidence to reveal that the assistants were the culprits, they need to use the information carefully.

If they confront the professor alone, she is shocked at the revelation and upset that her assistants have betrayed her. However, they have not committed a crime as such — they have simply dented her scholarly reputation. All she can do is dismiss them. Their only criminal behaviour is stealing and damaging the old Ungor exhibits from the museum, which is due cause for dismissal.

If the assistants are confronted with evidence of their scam, they deny what can be denied, but if pressed will claim that they were paid by Dr Arnau Dinkelacker, one of Hasche's rivals, to disrupt her demonstration. Knowing that their game is up, they will try to disappear, pack their bags and leave their lodgings for an undisclosed location.

Dr Dinkelacker is indeed a bitter rival of Professor Hasche, decrying her field of expertise, cryptozoology, as a mere pseudoscience. Whilst he is glad that her 'foolish' demonstration came to nought, he has no idea who her assistants are and certainly did not pay them to disrupt her work — he is an honourable man and would not stoop so low to discredit a fellow scholar, no matter how vehemently he disagrees with their theories. By the time the Characters have finished talking to him, the assistants are long gone.

The Characters are unable to draw any information from the assistants except by threats. Holding them against their will is not a legal option as they have committed no crime. However, if the Characters manage to corner the assistants, they will not be captured without a fight. Karl tries to scurry away while Gaius stands and fights like a bull — to the death if necessary. Of course, if Gaius is captured it's pointless trying to interrogate him — his silence is not voluntary: his tongue has been torn from its roots a long time ago (a self-inflicted trauma, done to prove his loyalty to the Yellow Fang).

If Zeigenalter is somehow pinned down, he concocts all manner of false stories to cover his tracks. He never discloses his allegiance to the Yellow Fang however. There is a reason the cult chose these two to shadow Professor Hasche — they are fanatically loyal to the Yellow Fang and would rather die than reveal its existence. Zeigenalter is an expert of escape, and when the Characters have their guard down, he can slip his bonds and vanish into the shadows. He'll leave Gaius behind, knowing the secrets are safe with him.

REWARDS

Good roleplaying and clever thinking should be rewarded, but there are additional XP for the following:

- 40 points for fingering the culprits
- 30 points for stopping the demonstration
- 10–50 points for investigating where the fakes came from

If Eunice is discredited in public reduce the Evidence Score by three.



◆ MYSTERIOUS THEFTS ◆



INTRODUCTION

Days after the capture or killing of Vizier Bhar, a grave Marshall Schutzmann summons the Characters to another meeting.

'I must swear you all to sincere secrecy. Not a word of this must leave this room.' He pauses, then continues, *'The "Helm of the Ratslayer," also known as "Mandred's Crown," has been stolen from its chapel in the Middenpalaz. It is the helm Emperor Mandred made from the skull of the Rat King in the Great War for Liberation nearly 1,500 years ago. It is a powerful relic; the Graf displays it once a year as a symbol of Middenheim's invincibility. We fear this may be part of a larger plot against the city, itself. The documents you recovered from both Jarmund and Bhar suggest an alliance between the Purple Hand and — by the Heldenhammer I still struggle to believe this — the Skaven.'*

'You can understand our concern; confirmation of the existence of Skaven could lead to riots, especially if they are behind the theft.' He hands them a document. *'This is a list of recent thefts in the city reported to the Watch. We think the theft of Mandred's Crown was the culmination of a series, but we need to know who and why. Start at the Middenpalaz, then follow the trail wherever it leads. Be discreet, but dogged. A word of caution: besides us in this room, only the Graf, the Midden Marshalls, and the Knights Panther who were there know of the Helm's theft. It must remain that way.'* He pauses, *'A carriage awaits you outside. Good luck.'*



*Collegium Theologica library.
Librarian Agnise Fuensterburg. Rare books.*

*Temple of Ulric, Lore House. Rare book.
See Brother Schlager.*

*Dr Isidore Kopernik, Freiburg.
Astronomical research notes.*

*Otmar Zufall's residence, Geldmund. Antique art.
The Royal College of Music. See Music Director
Amadeus Tankunst. Rare libretto.*

INVESTIGATION

After the Middenpalaz, Characters can proceed through the list in any order. The clues suggest the presence of a priest-thief aligned with Ranald.

THE MIDDENPALAZ

The carriage takes the Characters to a side door where a Knights Panther sergeant whisks them down a little-used stairway to an ancient basement level. Passing through locked and guarded doors, they come to a door set in an ornately decorated doorway, the carvings showing men fighting rat-like beastmen. There they meet Franz, the guard on duty that night. The sergeant orders him to tell his story.

Franz says that everything was quiet as usual. Following procedure he and the prior guard both verified the Helm was secure, then locked the door. *'It was the oddest thing. Soon after, I heard a clatter, then the sounds of rolling dice, but none of us would gamble on duty, Ulric's word! When I went into the chapel to check... it was gone!'*

(The sounds were Bors knocking a candelabra over, grabbing the Helm, then quickly casting *'You Ain't Seen Me, Right?'* He then hid until the guard ran out, leaving via the secret door.)

The chapel itself is a shrine to Ulric housing weapons, armour, and banners from the time of Mandred. An empty stand shows where the Helm rested. The secret door is undetectable from this side, and no one in the Palace these days is aware of it. There are no other clues; Bors was careful to cover his tracks.

DR KOPERNIK'S

Dr Isidore Kopernik, Tutor in Astronomy and Mathematics at the Collegium Theologica, has chambers in the Freiburg district, where he hosts seminars for his students and does most of his research. An elderly eccentric, he is also a renowned collector of antique nose-picks. When the characters arrive, he is much more excited to talk about those than his stolen notes. *Ah, they were thoughts and formulae for predicting the movement of Morrslieb for a book I'm writing. I was close to a breakthrough! I can recreate the work eventually, but I thought I should report it. But can you believe the thieves left this set of gold-plated 15th century nose-picks untouched?*

(One of the professor's students is a cultist in the Yellow Fang, who passed on the information to the cult, who then alerted Bors.)

PICKING UP A TAIL

Within hours of their visit, Dr Kopernik lets slip during a seminar that the Watch had come by asking about the stolen papers. Among his students is the Yellow Fang cultist, who warns the cult. Two members then stalk the Characters, in case they get too close. When they find Bors, they attempt to kill the Characters and the Priest. (See FIRE!, page 73) They can be spotted on a successful opposed **Challenging (+0) Perception** Test against the cultists' *Stealth (Urban)* score of 55. If the cultists are captured or killed, the attack at the tavern does not occur.

THE COLLEGIUM THEOLOGICA LIBRARY

Agnise Fuensterburg was the duty library that night. Still outraged, she takes the Characters into the musty bookstacks. Each book had been chained to its shelf and secured with a lock, each of which has been clearly picked. *I was at my desk that night when a man came up and asked the way to the stacks. He was blond, had a trim beard, and his accent sounded Marienburger to me. I'd never seen him before, but he had a pass. After a few minutes, I heard a mocking laugh from the stacks. I went to look, but he was gone, and so were the books!*

She can provide a list of the stolen books.

White Wolf's Range: A Geography of the Middle Mountains by Hieronymous Wundefuesse, 2114 IC

Taking the Shot: Everything You always Wanted to Know About Ballistics But Were Afraid to Ask, by Benevento Cannonero, on the mathematics of ballistics from 2401 IC

Another Tilean book, *Walk Home Syndrome: Escaping on Foot*, Alfano Lo Sfortunato Tucci's memoir written in 1356 IC. Tucci claimed he had been prisoner for ten years in a city of man-like rats beneath Nuln.

(The laughter she heard was a side effect of the miracle Bors cast to open a stubborn lock, 'An Invitation.')

LORE HOUSE

The Lore House is the Temple of Ulric's private library, where works of interest are kept for the benefit of priests and generous donors. Brother Schlager shows the Characters where the book was kept in a locked cabinet. On a **Challenging (+0) Perception** Test, the Character notices faint, relatively fresh scratch marks around the lock — signs that it had been picked recently. Asked if he saw anything, Schlager shakes his head, *No. I came that morning and it was gone. We don't lock up at night. I mean, who is crazy enough to rob Ulric's temple?* The title of the work was, *The Middle Mountains Campaign: a History of the Glorious Assaults on Brass Keep in the War Against Chaos, with Some Assistance by Magnus of Nuln.*

ART THEFT

The Geldmund home of Otmar Zufall, a prosperous and pretentious textile merchant, is known for its extensive and expensive art collection dealing with Middenheim's history. Taken to Zufall's study, they find the master of the house staring forlornly at an empty space on his wall. *It's about time you're here. I have connections at court, you know!* He points to where the painting was. *"Mandred Rampant Upon the Howling Hills," by Gerlach Wendler, a contemporary of the Emperor. Magnificent work. The detailing on the rat-beastmen Mandred was slaying is so good, they almost seem real. That evening, I found a cat wandering the house as if he owned it. No, not mine. I hate the things. Servants must have left the door open — and I bet that's how the thief got in! When I came down the next morning, it was gone.* Questioning the staff elicits nothing else besides denials that any of them has a cat or would ever leave a door open.

(The cat was summoned through the miracle 'Cat's Eyes,' which Bors used to case the joint.)

ROYAL COLLEGE OF MUSIC

Located in Nordtor, the Royal College of Music is full of life as carpenters build sets, performers rehearse, and a man in the orchestra pit screams at a musician for getting a note wrong. This is Amadeus Tonkunst, Musical Director. Questioned about the theft, he explodes: *I'm ruined! This was the only copy of an 18th century Tilean comic opera by Giuseppe di Burrataverde, The Moon, The Cheese, And The Rat, about a rat that tries to eat Morrslieb. Brilliant work! He was quite mad, claiming his work was prophecy, but the opera is a delight. To my horror, yesterday morning, it was stolen from a locked desk drawer in my office. I have the only key! The performance has already been advertised and tickets sold! Ruined, I say!*

Examining his office, a successful **Challenging (+0) Perception** Test reveals recent scratch marks are found on the lock, just as at the Lore House.

TO CATCH A THIEF

At this point, the Characters should realise there is a common thread to the thefts: Morrslieb, the Middle Mountains, and the Skaven. But who is the thief? The Evidence hints at a Ranaldan priest, possibly a Wastelander. To find him or her, the Characters have several avenues.

Bleyden

Through their connections — Alfric 'Half-Nose,' Karl Matthaus, or Sister Anais, among others — the Characters can learn that, while the Low Kings and Ranaldans don't get along, one, Bleyden, has shown an interest in the cult. By spreading a few shillings around his territory and putting out the word they want a meeting, or on a referral from Half-Nose, they can get a meeting with the Lowest King.

Bleyden meets them in a private room at *The Two Tankards*, a dingy Altmarkt tavern he controls. If the Characters explain they are seeking a Ranaldan who's been pulling a string of burglaries, and treat the old man with respect, he confesses he hasn't heard of such a person, but, if they agree to put in a good word for him with the cult, he can give them a pointer. *'Were I lookin' for thievin' magpie, I'd see Gilbertus at Luigi and Salvatore's, or ask around The Fifth Finger.'*

Pity Square, Sudgarten

Characters with the Criminal talent or **Lore (Middenheim)** will know of the notice board at Pity Square, near Sister Hildegard's Well (**Middenheim**, page 93). Those possessing the *Secret Signs (Thieves)* skill can spot several hidden messages among the public notices. One in particular reads *'Magpies looking to flock? Look no further than The Fifth Finger, Westor.'*

THE RANALD CONNECTION

The Mocker's hand can be perceived in several ways. Characters with **Lore (Theology)** recognise the signs of Ranaldan miracles on an **Average (+20) Int Test**. A Priest or Thief dedicated to Ranald makes the connection on an **Easy (+40) Test**. On a further **Average (+20) Intuition Test**, it dawns on the Character how odd it is that a Ranaldan would be working with the Skaven...

THE RANALD PROBLEM

The investigation leads the Characters to Middenheim's Ranaldan community, but there is a problem: they work for the Watch! The cult has strictures against ratting to the authorities, leading to suspicion of anyone with law enforcement connections. When Characters deal with Ranaldans and their Watch connection is known, impose a -10 penalty to any **Charm** attempts.

Luigi and Salvatore's, Nordgarten

Luigi and Salvatore's (**Middenheim**, page 74) is the local branch of a posh Tilean chain with stores in several Imperial cities. On a successful **Average(+20) Lore (Middenheim or Criminal) Test**, they have heard that the store may be a front for smuggling, though that's not certain.

Staff snobbishly assume Characters not dressed as if they belong are tradesmen, and sniff that *'deliveries are around the back.'* While asking for Gilbertus meets with, *'He's in a meeting.'* Characters at the Silver 3 or above Tier, however, or succeeding at an **Average (+20) Secret Signs (Thieves) Test**, can get a moment of his time.

Unfortunately, he knows nothing of who is behind the thefts. *'Not our style. We're "merchants," if you know what I mean, though the Low Kings have such a clamp on this city, it's been hard to get operations going.'* An offer to connect Gilbertus with Bleyden earns a favour in return, *'Talk with Rudolph and Sigrid at The Prospect. If anyone knows who's pulling these jobs, they do.'*

The Prospect, Nordgarten

Serving only the 'best' people, *The Prospect* (**Middenheim**, page 75) inn is owned and operated by Rudolph and Sigrid Buffler, secretly Middenheim's most daring cat-burglars. Characters asking about a string of mysterious thefts get nowhere as they maintain their pretense of being humble innkeepers. Mentioning Gilbertus's referral, however, or a successful use of **Secret Signs (Thieves)** convinces them to open up.

They admit they may know the person who carried out the heists — they even know something happened at the Middenpalaz, just not what. If the Characters pass a **Challenging (+0, +10 for being Ranaldan) Charm Test**, the Bufflers will get word to 'him or her' and set up a meet. Failing by 0 to -2 SL lets the Characters try again to persuade them, but with a further -10 penalty. On a failure by greater than -2 SL, the Bufflers clam up and end the meeting. Word goes out to the 'community' that they are not to be trusted.



The Fifth Finger, Westor

The other way to find Bors is through *The Fifth Finger* (Middenheim, page 101), a tavern quietly situated near Shallya's temple. No sign marks its presence, but those with the Secret Signs (Thieves) skill see identifying marks. Otherwise, anyone making a successful **Challenging (+0) Intuition** Test notes one building trying hard to be unnoticeable.

Inside, the tavern is as lively as it is quiet outside. Ranaldans fill the tables, laughing, bragging, and gambling. In a corner by the bar, a statue of a laughing rogue holding a bowl under a sign reading '*Remember the cut!*' serves as the shrine club's focal point. Though the room does not go quiet when the Characters enter, a successful **Difficult (-10) Perception** Test reveals several patrons keeping an eye on them. A few shillings in the statue's donation bowl causes them to relax a bit.

Nadya, the red-haired Kislevite barkeep who runs the club, is the person they want. No-nonsense and suspicious of authority, she knows of Bors. If the Characters pass a **Challenging (+0, +10 for being Ranaldan) Charm** Test, she agrees to arrange a meeting. Failing by 0 to -3 SLs lets the Characters make another attempt, but with a further -10 penalty. On a failure greater than -3 SLs, Nadya clams up and several patrons gather to escort them from the premises.

MEETING BORS

A few hours later a Character feels a tug at a pocket or purse. An **Average (+20) Perception** Test reveals a small child running away, but not carrying anything. On checking, the Character finds a folded note, '*The well at Pity Square. One hour.*' There is no signature.

The area is busy with locals getting water and chatting, but no one looks like someone waiting for them. Then one Character notices something rubbing his leg: a black cat. Looking up at the Character, it meows once and, before the Character can pick it up, dashes off down an alley.

If the Characters follow, it is nowhere to be seen. However, sitting cross legged on some crates under an oil lamp illuminating a side door to a local tavern, the *Wolf and Lamb*, a man pulls back his hood and says in a Wastelander accent, '*I'm Bors. You wanted to talk with me?*'

WHAT IF THEY BLOW IT?

If the Characters fail both with Gilbertus and the Bufflers, word still gets to Bors that they want to talk with him. Worried by his current sinful state (see **Bors Sirk**, he decides to take a chance and contacts them as described in **Meeting Bors**).



Bors Sirk

Raised on the Marienburg canals, Bors decided to 'head east and see the world,' when life there became too hot. In Middenheim, he spent time tracking down the legends of the lost Middenpalaz passages that were supposedly used in 'The Greatest Caper' of 1550 IC (Middenheim, page 14), finding the secret door. When a group of students hired him for a series of thefts as a prank on the rich, including the Helm of the Ratslayer, he couldn't resist the opportunity for his own 'Greatest Caper.' Now, however, Bors is worried he made a mistake: the day after turning the Helm over, he could no longer remember his prayers, meaning he could no longer call down the miracles of Ranald.

BORS SIRK – THIEF (BRASS 5), PRIEST (SILVER 1)

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	30	29	40	33	36	30	47	41	50	43	15

Skills: Athletics 35, Bribery 48, Charm 48, Climb 45, Cool 55, Dodge 35, Endurance 38, Entertain (Storytelling) 48, Evaluate 46, Gamble 46, Gossip 48, Heal 46, Intimidate 34, Intuition 41, Language (Reikspiel) 46, Lore (Famous Thefts, Theology, Wasteland) 46, Melee (Basic) 30, Perception 41, Pick Lock 52, Pray 48, Ranged (Crossbow) 34, Research 46, Secret Signs (Thief) 46, Sleight of Hand 52, Stealth (Urban) 35, Track 41

Talents: Coolheaded, Doomed, Savvy, Sharp, Very Resilient, Alley Cat, Criminal, Flee!, Strike to Stun, Break and Enter, Fast Hands, Shadow, Bless (Ranald), Holy Visions, Read/Write, Suave, Blather, Bookish, Etiquette (Thieves), Invoke (Ranald), Nimble Fingered

Trappings: Crossbow Pistol (10 Bolts), Leather Jerkin, Dagger +5, Lock Picks

Miracles: An Invitation, Cat's Eyes, You Ain't Seen Me, Right?

Convincing Bors

Bors takes them inside the nearly empty tavern and nods to the barman, who chases out the few customers and closes up for the night. Bors then turns to the Characters, *'Now, tell me why you've been looking for me.'*

This is the Characters' chance to persuade Bors that they need his help. He is already worried that he has somehow sinned (see **Bors Sirk**). On a **Challenging (+0, +10 if a Ranaldan is present, +20 if a Priest of Ranald)** Charm Test, Bors agrees to take them to the people who hired them.

Whether he agrees or not, that is when the Yellow Fang strikes.

Fire!

Just as Bors decides, one of the tavern windows shatters when a brick crashes through it, followed seconds later by a lit bottle of oil that breaks and sets the furniture ablaze.

The Players have three rounds before the fire gets out of control. Suppressing it requires an extended **Challenging (+0) Athletics** Test that accumulates 10 SL. The SL of all Characters rolling is totaled. A Critical Success means the fire is put out, while a Critical Failure means the rolling Character gains one Ablaze condition. After three rounds, neighborhood residents arrive to put it out before it can spread, though the tavern is a loss.

Characters dashing outside will not find their attackers, who fled assuming the fire would do the trick.

If Bors had turned the Characters down earlier, he changes his mind, angry at the attempt to murder him and kill innocents in the process. *'Come, I'll lead you to them!'*

BREAKING THE YELLOW FANG

Bors leads the Characters to Freiburg, taking them down several alleys and then to an isolated courtyard surrounded by boarding houses. He points to a basement door down a flight of stairs; faint light shining from behind drawn curtains. *'There, that's where they hold their meetings, and where I delivered the stolen goods. They call themselves "The Yellow Fang." I thought they were just a student club wanting to drink and have fun. I was an idiot, but now I can atone. What do we do?'*

The door leads to a cavernous basement the Yellow Fang uses for worship and meeting with the Skaven. With money supplied by the Ratmen, the cult bought the building and turned it into a fraternity on the ground floors above, using the noises of unsuspecting members' parties as a cover for cult meetings.

Inside, the cult is turning over the Helm itself to Scathe the Tainted, a chieftain of Clan Scrutens with peculiar misshapen horns on his head. Scathe is an important lieutenant of Under-Middenheim who organises thefts of evidence from the city above. He is accompanied by Rip-kill, his Rat Ogre guard.

The Helm is all Scathe cares about. When the Characters intervene, he orders his Rat Ogre, Stabb-Stabb, to attack, joined by four Yellow Fang Cultists (see page 9) who are determined to protect the 'master.' He himself, however, flees through a passageway into Middenheim's Undercity. Characters tracking Scathe see his trail leads deeper and deeper.

THE STASH

Scathe makes for a secret cavern deep within the Upper Tunnels. He has been using this cavern as a stash within which he keeps all the items the Yellow Fang have collected recently. In order to follow the Warlord, the Characters must venture through the Undercity, making a **Very Hard (-30) Navigation** or **Hard (-20) Track** Test in order to work out what Hazards they face during their journey. Bors may assist this test if he is still alive and cooperative.

The Stash is a circular cavern about 20 yd in diameter, littered with detritus and filth. There are two Clan Scrutens Clanrats, Skritch and Skuttle, posted here at all times. They keep watch over a large wooden chest. In the chest are various stolen items.

CONTENTS OF THE CHEST

The chest swings open with an ominous creak, revealing the bounty inside. Be sure to vaguely allude to the terrible importance of each and every one of these items if pressed, but in fact very little here is of use, though some items can be sold.

- ☠ a cat-skull charm
- ☠ an unfathomable map of underground tunnels
- ☠ a tattered banner depicting Clan Mange heraldry
- ☠ a Skaven rune earring
- ☠ a Clan Mange badge
- ☠ an iron greave
- ☠ a triangular shuriken
- ☠ a small brass telescope
- ☠ a phial of Black Lotus blade-venom
- ☠ a sheaf of papers marked 'Ansten Krohn', outlining a plan to improve Middenheim's sewers
- ☠ a chunk of cheese (white Schwartzhafen, if you must know)
- ☠ a cracked fondue bowl
- ☠ a child's stuffed bear toy
- ☠ any items stolen by Bors
- ☠ any items that the Yellow Fang have confiscated or stolen from the Characters during their investigations

A Misleading Map

Most importantly, as far as the Characters' investigation goes, there is a large scrap of folded, yellowed parchment in the chest. This parchment depicts a map of Brass Keep, to which has been added, in an ugly scrawl, an arrow pointing to the keep, and the legend "Krristall of Imortalitee is heer'."

Rewards

Good roleplaying and clever thinking should be rewarded, but there are additional XP for the following:

- 50 points for retrieving the Helm?
- 40 points for chasing and capturing the Skaven warlord?
- 30 points for killing or capturing the Rat Ogre
- 25 points for finding Bors
- 15 points for connecting Bleyden to Gilbertus
- 15–30 for recovering some or all of the stolen items
- 15 points for figuring out the connections between all the stolen items

If the stash is handed over to Schutzmann, increase the Evidence Score by two.

SCATHE THE TAINTED

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
5	50	50	30	40	40	35	30	30	50	20	16

Traits: Armour 3, Elite, Infected, Mutation (Uneven Horns, +1 AP head, horn attack +3), Night Vision, Stealthy, Tough, Weapon (Sword) +7, Ranged (Warplock Pistol) +8

Skills: Athletics 60, Intimidate 50, Leadership 45, Melee (Basic) 65, Ranged (Skaven Ranged Weapons) 45

Trappings: Breastplate, Sword, Helmet, Mail Coat, Warplock Pistol

STABB-STABB THE RAT OGRE

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
5	50	15	60	50	40	45	30	11	30	25	38

Traits: Armour 1, Disease (Ratte Fever), Infected, Night Vision, Size (Large), Tail +9, Weapon (Sword) +10

Traits: Melee (Basic) 65, Lore (Stabbing) 22



◆ ASSASSINATIONS ◆



Yegard Weill, a priest of Morr, sent Captain Schutzmann a notice regarding several recent murders in the city. The Captain asks the Characters to investigate. The line of inquiry is a viable one, though the Characters may come to regret their involvement, the Skaven Clan Eshin's Master Assassin is stalking Middenheim killing targets who threaten the Skaven's plans or have seen 'too much'. Professor Eunice Hachse is his next target.

Whilst this section of the adventure can be instigated at any time it is probably best if the Characters are already familiar with Professor Hasche having completed the Cover Up investigation on page 62.

CLAN ESHIN IN MIDDENHEIM

Clan Eshin are the most secretive of all Skaven — masters of stealth, poison, deceit, and murder. Wielding deadly arts learned long ago in distant Cathay, they act as the unseen hand of the Council of Thirteen, ferreting out secrets, sabotaging rivals, and assassinating 'threats', and working as mercenaries for other clans. The Eshin maintain a small coterie in Under-Middenheim, ostensibly to assist Clan Scrutens on a contractual basis. Castellan-Warlord Gnawretch Skrray, suspects they also spy on him for their masters (he's right) but finds them useful all the same. Clan Mange has paid dearly to secure Master Assassin Fleeer Twitchkill's services. He has been murdering targets at their behest.

CORPSE INQUIRY

Located in the Sudgarten, the Morrspark also holds the city's only burial ground (**Middenheim**, page 91). Characters asking about unusual deaths are directed here.

The graveyard is a warren of burial chambers; plots are limited and expensive. Characters asking about unusual deaths, or specifically for 'Weill' are directed to a middle-aged priest with a thickening frame and a bright blue-green glass eye. While Yegard's ill-fitting blue glass eye is eye-catching, it occasionally falls out when he grows animated. Fortunately, he is used to catching and replacing it in a deft manoeuvre.

Asking about the 'unusual deaths' piques his interest. *'Ah yes, those murders, strange, indeed.'* Weill produces a mortician's ledger; after checking particulars, he mentions three murders within the last week. The victims moved in different circles and were murdered in different locations — yet there was an apparent connection — each was killed with a triangular blade.

Ansten Krohn — The Civil Engineer

Ansten's body was found in an alley in Nordtor. He was killed by a single blade thrust to the back of the skull. The wound was unusual — the blade was triangular. His wife, Britte Krohn, a resident of the Wynd, paid for his funeral, and his body was placed in the Eternal Flame.

Britte is a clerk for the Kommission of Public Works. Ansten was a civil engineer for the Kommission, responsible for upkeep for Middenheim's monuments, streets, and sewer system. Still mourning her husband's death, Britte wants justice.

Britte has no idea who killed Ansten. He had no enemies and not much to steal. Ansten had been working on a map of the sewers and upper tunnels of the Fauschlag, in preparation of sealing off the sewers from the lower tunnels: to make them cleaner and more efficient. His body was found close to one of the larger sewer grates. All of his notes on the undercity have vanished. Britte states that she just thinks they've been misplaced as, *'nobody cared about fixing the sewers as much as Ansten'*.

Krohn was killed because the Skaven exploit the porous nature of the sewers. Yellow Fang cultists stole his papers to prevent his work continuing.

Yiva — The Burglar

Yiva is listed as a grocer, whose body was found in an abandoned apartment in Sudtor. Like Krohn, she was killed by a single thrust to the back of a skull with a triangular blade. She was given a Pauper's Funeral attended by friends from the Labourers' Hospice, Morr's blessings, and sent over the Cliff of Sighs.

Further investigation in Sudtor is met with hostility, and Hospice staff claim to have never met Yiva. Careful inquiry will reveal that Yiva was a burglar working for The Man. It will take coin and the right brokers (Alfric Half-Nose) to determine that Yiva was employed by The Man, and to discover which parts of the sewers were heavily patrolled by the Sewer Jacks. Her last report indicated that she 'had seen something she could barely believe', and had dangerous, blackmail material on one of the Jack Captains. Yiva's body was found the next day.

Yiva came upon a meeting between Yellow Fang Sewer Jack Captain, Raina Mūs, and her Skaven contact. While Yiva thought she hadn't been noticed, the Skaven picked up her scent and marked her for elimination.

Haludan Gerg — The Sewer Jack

Sewer Jack Haludan Gerg's place of death and the circumstances were withheld, though it was noted at his funeral that he 'died defending Middenheim', when he was buried at the edge of the Warrenburg. He had been slashed multiple times and stabbed in the chest with a triangular blade.

Characters investigating will be directed to ask after Sewer Jacks at the Watch office on the Square of Martials. Questions soon lead them to the most-scarred and formidable-looking Halfling they've ever met, Jacko Warble, Commander of Middenheim's Sewer Jacks (see **Power Behind the Throne**, page 47). Unless he knows them, Warble will have some pointed questions, but once the Characters indicate they work for Schutzmann, he becomes cooperative. Asking about Skaven makes him guarded, but he reluctantly says that the Sewer Jacks occasionally tangle with 'rat headed Beastmen' with a habit of collapsing tunnels in Middenheim's Undercity.

Warble says Haludan was a valiant man, but he can't tell the Characters much other than that his body was found in a sewer beneath Neumarkt. If told about the 'triangular blade', he says: *'Be careful. You don't want to cross anyone that could take Haludan.'* He hands a folded hide out to the Characters. *'Haludan had that clutched in a death grip. I hope it helps you nail whoever did this.'*

The hide is covered with odd-shaped runes and unusual markings. It appears to be a map of some kind, but it is difficult to discern. Any Character can make a **Difficult (-10) Intuition Test - Average (+20)** if they have any Cartography — to realise the map shows a portion of Middenheim from below. There are grey lines that show sewers and tunnels, with black and yellow runes at various points. Most striking are three blood-red triangular shaped runes (the Horned Rat's Sigil):

- one with notations of some sort, including a red line tracing along a sewer beneath Nordtor (Ansten's remains)
- one with several markings beneath Sudtor (Yiva's remains)
- one over a portion of Freiburg, just south of the Collegium Theologica (Hasche's residence)

Haludan came upon the assassin consulting his map and they fought. Haludan grabbed the map which depicts, among other things, a target mark over Hachse's residence.

What Do We Know?

The weapon and the sewers are the links between the murders. The Characters may deduce that Haludan's death was not premeditated, but as result of stumbling upon the assassin. Intuitive Characters can guess that keeping the sewers in disrepair, avoiding conflict between the Sewer Jacks and the Low Kings is in the Skaven's best interest. These insights can be granted by passing a **Difficult (-10) Intuition Test** if Players don't realise them themselves.

The Characters may realise that Hachse is in mortal danger. If they don't tie the pieces together in time, by not following the clues, or giving other matters priority, they eventually hear that Hachse's body was found in the Great Park with a single wound to the back of the skull, made with a triangular blade.

GUARDING EUNICE

Eunice lives in a third-floor flat in the southern end of Freiburg overlooking the Great Park. Characters with the Skaven Map may correctly reason that one of the red runes overlays her apartment. No matter how persuasive they may be, no one is likely to believe the Characters if they insist that a Skaven Assassin is hunting the Professor. For her part, Hasche will be sceptical that she is in danger, but will listen to the Characters with focused intent. She'll look at the map, if they show it to her, studying the runes intently. She taps the crimson Skaven rune over her flat agreeing, *'This does seem ominous.'*

Eunice offers tea and insists on going to the Altmarkt to buy provisions to feed her 'guests'. It takes a **Difficult (-10) Charm Test** to talk her out of it, but she insists on sending one of the Characters with a very-particular shopping list. If they cannot, play up trying to guard Eunice as she wanders through the Altmarkt. If they question her, she smiles and says, *'How can I be in danger when the courageous folk who saved the Graf himself are guarding me?'* or words to that effect.

Let the Characters make whatever preparations they want in the time they have. Hasche is willing to listen to some reason, and could even be convinced to allow them to set up a trap in her home, but she cannot be talked out of leaving her apartment to be guarded elsewhere from a threat that may not exist.

THE ASSASSIN

The Skaven of Clan Eshin spend years perfecting their fighting and subterfuge skills. While even the least of their members are swift and lethal, most are deemed expendable by their masters, and die before they are considered for the vaunted rank of Death Runner, much less the pinnacle of their killing arts: Clan Eshin Master Assassin. Unlike the majority of Skaven, Master Assassins often work alone. They have a myriad of deadly skills and each has their own preferences in how they choose to operate and deal out murder.

Fighting the Assassin

You should make this one a fight to remember. Fleeer Twitchkill is an exceedingly deadly foe, who does not care about the Characters — for the moment — they are merely obstacles on the way to his real target.

The assassin arrives in 'Middenheim Above' in the early evening and will study Hachse's apartment from a nearby rooftop, looking for anything out of the ordinary. He strikes late at night, using his near preternatural stealth to slip in and kill her. His plan is to climb up the side of the building and enter through a window. He doesn't expect any resistance, even if she has protection, he assumes they'll not be aware of his presence until it is too late. He will attempt to charge past any foes, leaping past them to kill Eunice swiftly before retreating.

He'll target obvious Wizards with a Black Lotus coated throwing blade immediately before moving on to eliminate Elves and armoured warriors. Emphasise his 'wispy' presence, due to the effects of his cloak. He often appears as a fast-moving shadow, with gleaming green eyes and the flash of a tarnished sword. Describe attacks passing right through him without harm, trailing a wisp of shadow with them, whenever his Ward save prevents him from taking damage.

Note his great speed, ability to run along walls, and crawl over ceilings. To get past a foe, he may leap up to the ceiling, then rapidly scuttle over it, past a blocking Character to drop down on the Professor. If the fight goes into the street, he'll rapidly traverse the sides of buildings, hurling throwing blades with deadly accuracy as he runs across the cityscape, before leaping back to attack from on high.

The Skaven Assassin *will not stop* until his target is dead, or he is.

The Aftermath

If the Characters kill Fleeer before he kills Hachse and flees, a remarkable thing happens: his body dissolves due to the effects of the Eshin *Traceless Demise* spell. His flesh disintegrates into nothing, a process that can only be stopped by a swift counterspell. When it is finished, all that remains is a stained piece of cloth (the Shadow Cloak), his triangular blade, and several Skaven-symbol shaped throwing blades.

The blades add to the evidence the Characters are gathering on Skaven existence. If they've managed to save Hachse, she makes for a powerful ally in convincing the Graf of Skaven existence and their threat to Middenheim. Otherwise, sadly, her corpse does at least indicate that someone was willing to kill a 'discredited' Professor, but is far less persuasive than a living Hachse.

If Fleeer survives, he will return to eliminate the Characters later — meaning you could drop him in at a most inopportune time later, while the Characters are otherwise distracted.

REWARDS

Good roleplaying and clever thinking should be rewarded, but there are additional XP for the following:

- 50 points for killing Fleeer Twitchkill and saving Professor Hasche
- 10 points for following up on each murder victim
- 10 points for gathering any evidence (after Fleeer's death, or items he left while escaping)
- 0-15 points for inferring the modus operandi of Fleeer from the murders

If Hasche is killed the cause of enlightening Middenheim about the Skaven is dealt a severe blow. Reduce the Evidence Score by three points.

If Jacko Warble is warned about a corrupt Sewer Jack captain he is *very* interested, but without further evidence, or a name to go on, he does not know who it might be. He does exercise increasing vigilance. Increase the Evidence Score by two points.



THE ASSASSIN

Master Assassin Fleeer Twitchkill's destiny was altered long ago when chance (and a Grey Wizard target) led him to acquiring a curious artefact of 'living' *Ulgû* cloth – a literal Shadow Cloak. With his semi-parasitic cloak enhancing his formidable skills, Fleeer is a deadly foe that most never see coming. He is a controlled, dispassionate killer, calculating what move or stratagem is the most effective. If he has a flaw, it is a tendency to underestimate 'lesser' species — everyone not Skaven.

Fleeer's throwing blades are tri-bladed. His sword, if looked at from the point, forms the Great Skaven Sigil, hence the triangular blade. He carries a variety of blades, including two coated with Black Lotus – but can only throw one poisoned blade during an attack due to being cautious to not cut himself. All of his blades are made of a warpstone-alloy; targets damaged by them must make a **Minor Corruption** Test.

CLAN ESHIN MASTER ASSASSIN FLEER TWITCHKILL

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
6	62	64	42	45	55	65	55	45	55	30	17*

Traits: Armour 1, Dark Vision, Immunity to Psychology, Stealthy, Ward 8+, Wallcrawler, Ranged (Throwing Blades) +10 (8), Tail Attack +6, Weapon (Sword) +9

Skills: Athletics 80, Dodge 85, Melee (Basic) 77, Ranged (Throwing) 84, Stealth 75 (+6 SL due to Stealthy)

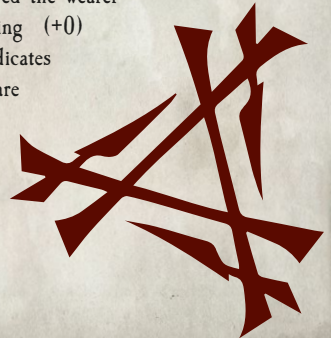
Quick-Quick as Whisper – Fleeer's speed is such that he can Dodge non-Blackpowder Ranged Attacks.

Talents: Accurate Shot 3, Combat Master 2, Combat Reflexes, Distract, Dual Wielder, Furious Assault, Hardy,* Luck 2, Relentless 2, Step Aside, Strike to Injure 2, Sure Shot 3, Tunnel Rat

THE SHADOW CLOAK

Fleeer wears a cloak woven from greasy human hair, tattered cobwebs, and strands of *Ulgû*. It grants the assassin his Ward save and Stealthy Traits. The Cloak clings to its wearer almost with a sense of desperation, and removing the fragile thing carelessly can result in ruining it. This hardly bothers Fleeer, however, as since he pried it from the corpse of its prior owner he has never taken it off.

Wearers of the cloak benefit from Ward 8+ and acquire the Stealthy Trait. However it is clearly an item of arcane manufacture. Witch Hunters and other authorities are highly suspicious of the provenance of the item, and it looks and smells awful. If it is removed the wearer must make a Challenging (+0) Athletics Test. Failure indicates that the frayed and threadbare cloak is torn in the effort to remove it. The Ward save worsens to 9+ the first time this occurs, 10+ the second, and the cloak is torn to shreds and is useless thereafter.



PROPONENTS OF CONTROVERSY



This section of the adventure revolves around an audience with Middenheim's Graf. One way or another he has heard of the Characters' investigations and seeks to learn more.

FACING THE FACTS

It is up to the GM to decide when the call is put out to the Characters to present themselves at the palace. The best option would be for them to exhaust the leads and challenges described in the first part of the adventure, whereupon Ulric Schutzmann informs them that the Graf wishes to hear their report. If the Characters have made slow progress, then this development can still occur in order to prevent the adventure grinding to a halt, though the Characters are at a disadvantage when it comes to getting the Graf to take them seriously.

Even if the Characters have done a poor job uncovering evidence and confronting their enemies, the Graf still wishes to see them, though in such a circumstance he will be more motivated to have them account for the mess they have created than listen to them make a case for their investigation.

The Characters could also instigate this meeting themselves by suggesting the authorities in Middenheim take direct action against the Skaven. If this is the case, Schutzmann can have them chase up any remaining leads whilst he arranges for them to see the Graf. After all, Middenheim's ruler cannot be presumed to meet with adventurers at the drop of a hat — even if they did save his life.

THE MIDDENPALAZ

As the Characters enter the waiting room they are shown to their seats by a page in Todbringer livery. The anteroom is grand in and of itself — draped in slate-blue tapestries depicting the legends of Ulric in fine silver embroidery. Richly upholstered chairs line the room. A middle-aged man with a long full silver beard wearing sumptuous clothing sits with impeccable posture in one of the chairs. He stares intently at the party. A successful **Challenging (+0) Lore (Heraldry)** Test identifies him as wearing icons associated with the von Helstein family, who own small estates at the Graf's pleasure throughout the Grand Duchy of Middenheim.

FAMILIAR FACES

Many of the NPCs in this chapter have featured prominently in the events of **Power Behind the Throne**, and you may find more details on their personalities and goals in **Power Behind the Throne** and its Companion volume. The essential details have been presented here, so if you don't have access to those books don't panic! If you do be sure to pepper in further details and idiosyncracies, and call back to earlier interactions the NPC may have had with the Characters.

Hausmeister Breugal is the cold and formal Chamberlain of the Graf, and it is he who decides who gets to see Middenheim's ruler and when, if at all. Just as the Characters are ushered into the anteroom, Breugal opens the great door to the audience chamber and in stentorian tones says, *'Your excellency, I present to you the Count von Helstein'*. At this the man in the chair rises gracefully and enters the audience room with purposeful strides. Breugal closes the door behind him leaving the Characters alone.

EAVESDROPPING

Characters can listen at the door. On an **Average (+20) Perception** Test they catch snatches of the conversation through the wall, enough to tell that the Graf is gently chastising the Count for swelling his retinue of armed men beyond the number they had previously agreed, whilst von Helstein is apologetic, he complains that his estate must be allowed to defend itself. *'My lord, our holdings around Nordringen are beset by plagues and reavers from Nordland, and we worry about arguments with the Reikland that may need, ultimately, to be settled upon the field.'*

A Diplomatic Incident

At this point an elderly nobleman enters the anteroom and takes a seat near the Characters, he wears his white beard long and wild, and is dressed in fine puffed and slashed clothing made from red taffeta that has become faded and worn. A successful **Challenging (+0) Lore (Heraldry)** Test identifies him as wearing icons associated with the Kärzburdger family, who enjoy hereditary tenure of a large estate to the north east of the Grand Duchy of Middenheim. This is Henricus von Kärzburdger, who the Characters may have met at the Garden Party as described in the **Power Behind the Throne Companion** (page 14).

A CURT KÄRZBURDGER

Henricus tips his hat to the Characters and strikes up a conversation. Whilst he seems friendly, he is a touchy man who tends to take offence at the smallest slights, and the Characters may unwittingly cause trouble.

'A good day to you all, so you are here to meet with his Excellency the Graf?'

Allow the Characters to respond.

'And you are here at the right time? Breugal has arranged it so that you may speak to him once he is finished with the Count?'

If the Characters say yes he responds:

'Are you ennobled and sincere in your devotions to Ulric? Where do you keep your estates?'

If the Characters cannot convince Henricus that they are both devoted Ulricans and landed aristocrats, he grows angry, lurches to his feet and proclaims:

'By the claws and teeth of the White Wolf! Do they think I will abide by this disgrace? My line may have diminished as the fortunes of the Todbringers have waxed, but I will not be obliged to wait as the Graf gossips with the likes of you. Poxes and agues upon thee!'

Henricus is determined to storm off in a self-righteous huff (he enjoys playing the part of persecuted scion of a once great line), but it would be wise for the Characters to try to mollify him as much as possible. If they insist he take their place in the queue he assents, though they must then wait for a while whilst he gripes to Graf Boris about nothing in particular. Their treatment of him might affect how they are treated in turn later in the adventure.



AN AUDIENCE WITH THE GRAF

Finally the Characters are admitted to the audience chamber. The Graf is seated on his throne and there are several other people in attendance. An honour guard, three Knights Panther and three Knights of the White Wolf, are arrayed about him. 'Princess' Katarina sits to one side. She is quiet throughout the audience, but anyone who pays her attention sees she is listening intently. Middenheim's snobbish Knight Eternal Siegfried Prunkvoll is also in attendance, resplendent in his bright armour, and Breugal remains by the main door, which is also flanked by two Knights Panther.

THE ROLE OF PRUNKVOLL

Prunkvoll may be something of an ignoramus, but in this circumstance he has been encouraged to speak. He is not easily impressed, especially if the Characters performed badly under Ulric Schutzmann's direction. He is here because he makes a perfect, if unwitting, devil's advocate. He is such a snob that even if he comes to find the Characters credible he still finds fault in their account.

But Prunkvoll is also developing a distrust of Altdorf, the Emperor, and Sigmarites — similar to the distrust that has been growing in Middenheim recently. He is all too ready to believe, as Graf Boris does, that the plot the Characters thwarted in **Power Behind the Throne** had nothing to do with Chaos, but was part of a Sigmarite conspiracy to seize control of northern provinces, suppress the cult of Ulric, and see to it that Karl-Franz is made an absolute ruler with the cult of Sigmar as an established state religion.

Prunkvoll stands beside the Graf throughout the audience, making sarcastic remarks that support the Graf's doubts and fears, while undermining whatever the Characters say. The GM can use him to complicate the Characters' task, and also to show the darkening mood that is growing in the region.

A few comments are given below as examples, and the GM should feel free to improvise more during play. While it may be enjoyable for the GM to play Prunkvoll to the hilt, and ridicule everything the Characters say, he stops short of open heckling. If necessary, the Graf will issue a stern word and Prunkvoll settles into a resentful silence, expressing his opinions with tuts, sighs, eye-rolls, and muttered words like 'Altdorf,' 'likely story,' and 'must think we're stupid'.



SIEGFRIED PRUNKVOLL – FIRST KNIGHT (GOLD 2)

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	58	31	55	32	54	49	37	25	44	24	15

Traits: Prejudice (Rogues and Peasants), Armour 5, Weapon (Sword) +11

Skills: Athletics 59, Animal Care 35, Bribery 29, Charm 29, Charm Animal 54, Consume Alcohol 37, Cool 57, Dodge 59, Evaluate 28, Gamble 35, Gossip 27, Heal 35, Intimidate 65, Language (Battle) 35, Leadership 29, Lore (Heraldry 50, Middenheim 30, Warfare 35), Melee (Basic 73, Cavalry 78, Fencing 68), Play (Harpsichord) 42, Ride (Horse) 59, Trade (Farrier) 47

Talents: Doomed (*A misadventure in plain sight of Wolfenbourg's walls*), Etiquette (Nobles), Noble Blood, Read/Write, Stout-hearted, Strike Mighty Blow 2, Warrior Born

Possessions: Magical full plate armour (Counts as Magical, has 0 Encumbrance when worn in a full set), mail and leathers. Fine quality sword. Purse containing coins to a value of 2 crowns.

THE GRAF'S QUESTIONS

Questions that the Graf might ask initially are listed below. There is no firm script for this scene, and the GM should feel free to let the conversation go where it will. The Characters' answers prompt the Graf to ask further questions. Whenever the discussion begins to lose steam or veers too far from the immediate topic, the Graf can switch to another question. The conversation should touch upon all of these topics, at least in passing, before the scene ends.

Did you recover the stolen relic?

Mindful of eavesdroppers, the Graf does not name the Helm of the Ratslayer himself, and tries to prevent any of the Characters from doing so. His disappointment is obvious if the Characters admit that they were unable to catch the thieves, his relief restrained if they did.

'So what you're saying is, you failed and you have no idea where the relic is.'



Skaven, you say? Surely they are extinct — or never existed?

The Graf is taking the official line in denying the existence of Skaven, but if the Characters are detailed in their descriptions of the creatures they encountered, and tell of their previous run-ins with the Ratmen, he may be convinced. If he is told of the stolen documents, and shown any fragments that the Characters recovered with text that concerns Skaven, his mood grows grim. The thought that the Ratmen are real, that they can move freely in Middenheim's Undercity without detection, and that they take deliberate pains to ensure that the surface-dwellers know as little as possible about them — all these are deeply worrying.

'So what you're saying is Mandred didn't kill them all? So he didn't deserve to be Emperor? Sounds like Sigmarite propaganda to me.'

'Oh, yes, Skaven — no doubt. I've seen them dancing at the Laughing Jackass on a Festag night.'

'So Middenheim's sewer jacks are all blind, stupid, or paid off — is that it?'



The other books were about warpstone and Morrslieb? What do you make of that?

The Characters can explain about the Skaven who stole warpstone from Castle Wittgenstein, if they have not already done so. They may also recall Dagmar von Wittgenstein's notes on Morrslieb's movements and the falls of warpstone meteorites, and infer that there is some connection. The Graf listens to their arguments, nodding gravely, and tugs on a bell-pull that hangs beside his chair. When a liveried flunkey appears, he orders the servant to 'get Helseher back here, along with anyone from the Collegium who had documents stolen.'

'Clever, that — leaving a few clues behind so we know what they took. Almost as though they wanted us to think they were Skaven.'

'Warpstone falling from the sky? Of course. Couldn't be gold or bread, now, could it?'

'You're sure it wasn't cheese they took? The two can look an awful lot alike, you know.'

You say that these Skaven plan a major attack? Why do you think so?

If the Graf is told any information that might indicate the Skaven are drawing up plans to attack Brass Keep or making other aggressive military moves, he will try to get the Characters to divulge more information and elaborate on their investigation.

'Oh, so not only have we walking rat creatures living beneath our feet, but they have been reading Allurian's War Studies.'

'Whipping the Kärzburdgers up against us would certainly please Altdorf.'

Ehrlich tells me you played a role in exposing Wasmeier and saving the city. Tell me what you know — briefly. As far as you know, are any conspirators still at large?

The Graf is serious about wanting a brief report, and cuts off any Character who goes into too much detail. His main question concerns surviving conspirators, which is the Characters' cue to tell him about the Purple Hand.

Of course, in your version of **Power Behind the Throne** the Characters may already be known to the Graf, in which case he takes a brief moment to acknowledge their accomplishments.

'My lord, we'd know about a Chaos cult that size in the city. Altdorf's pointing the finger away from itself again.'

'You met agents of this Purple Hand in Altdorf, did you? So how do you know that's not their headquarters? I'd believe that sooner than Middenheim.'

'Where did Wasmeier study law? I bet it was Altdorf.'

'So you're saying half the court was blackmailed, hypnotised, and — what, generally magicked — into betraying the city and murdering the Graf? You've not been in town long, have you, or you'd know Middenheimers aren't so easily swayed.'

'Be careful what you say about Ar-Ulric. Talk like that will get you burned — if you live to see the stake.'

What do you know of Wallenstein? Is his disappearance somehow a part of all this?

The Graf will also be interested in anything the adventures can tell him about the Jade Sceptre and the fate — and true identity — of Gotthard von Wittgenstein. He makes plain his intention to root out these two cults from every part of the city.

'Another cult? And the Temple of Ulric's full of Beastmen, too, I suppose?'

A Chaos cult in Middenheim? No — wait — two of them? That's impossible. As the Knight Eternal says, no cult could grow so large and powerful without being detected. No — this comes from Altdorf.

'They always wanted to control you, my lord. Middenheim and Ulric dominate the north, and Altdorf doesn't like that.'

Making the Case

At the end of this interview, it is time for the Characters to see how well they have made the case for the existence of Skaven and the degree to which they have convinced Middenheim's rulers that Chaos cults and Skaven activity trouble the area.

In order to see how well they have performed, ask each of the Characters who spoke at the meeting to make **Challenging (+0) Charm** Test. Total up the resulting SL and apply the modifiers in Uncovering the Skaven, below.

UNCOVERING THE SKAVEN

- ☠ Add or subtract the Evidence Score as it currently stands.
- ☠ +1 for each of the following NPCs the characters brought with them to give their own testimony: Eunice Hasche, Bors or Jacko Warble.
- ☠ A modifier of between -5 and +2 for how well the Characters dealt with Boris and Prunkvoll. If they remained polite and professional, despite provocation, this score should be positive; if they were rude or frustrated, it should be negative.
- ☠ +2 if one of the Characters has the position of Graf's Champion.
- ☠ +1 for each Character in the party who is either in a Gold Tier career, is in a Warrior career and comports themselves as a professional, or is a dedicated follower of Ulric.

Once the score has been calculated consult the Investigation Result Table on the following page.

Investigation Result Table

SL	Result	Effects
5 or more	Watertight case	Katarina, Boris and Prunkvoll are supportive. 250 GC in resources. 3 encounters allayed. Middenheimers' attitude improves by 2 steps.
2 to 4	Clear case	Katarina and Boris are supportive. 200 GC in resources. 2 encounters allayed. Middenheimers' attitude improves by 1 step.
0 to 2	Borderline case	Katarina and Boris are supportive. 150 GC in resources. 1 encounter allayed.
–1 to –3	Dubious case	Katarina is supportive. 100 GC in resources.
–4 or less	Desultory effort	Katarina is supportive. 50 GC in resources. Middenheimers' attitude reduces by 1 step.

Support

By the end of their presentation the Characters will have won the support of at least one important NPC who can act as their patron in overcoming obstacles later in the adventure.

Even if the Characters do a very bad job of putting their case forward, they win 'Princess' Katarina's support. She is becoming increasingly aware of her ability to influence events, and seeks to avert disaster. In particular, she does not share the suspicion of Altdorf and Sigmar held by her father and Prunkvoll. As a worshipper of Shallya, Katarina finds Ulrican chauvinism rather alienating. She cannot muster much political or military support without her father's cooperation, but her backing can help the Characters procure resources and open doors.

Boris's support is a true watershed — if he is won over the Characters are well on the way to proving their case to wider Middenheim society. If the Characters make a really brilliant case, even Prunkvoll grudgingly admits to finding them persuasive.

Resources

One immediate effect of patronage is that resources can be made available to the party, if they ask for them. Middenheim's noble lords would not be so foolish and vulgar as to merely hand over sacks of gold crowns, but if the Characters were to wish to go shopping they could spend the listed amount at the expense of their supporters.



KATARINA TODBRINGER – NOBLE (GOLD 3)

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	38	32	31	31	42	32	44	29	37	51	12

Skills: Bribery 61, Charm 71, Consume Alcohol 41, Cool 40, Evaluate 32, Gamble 34, Gossip 64, Intimidate 41, Language (Classical) 44, Leadership 66, Lore (Heraldry 39, Middenheim 44), Melee (Fencing) 43, Play (Lute) 59, Ride (Horse) 42

Talents: Attractive, Coolheaded, Doomed (*A whistling wind from the North bites deep*), Etiquette (Nobles), Noble Blood, Read/Write, Suave

Possessions: Fine quality court clothing. Jewellery to a value of 50 gold crowns. She wears a magical golden necklace depicting the Todbringer coat of arms. It gives her the equivalent of 3 AP on all locations, and gives her the Trait *Magic Resistance 3* (this necklace would be worth at least 25 Gold Crows to those who didn't realise its properties, and at least 250 crowns to those who did). Katarina is escorted by a detachment of 20 Knights Panther whenever she appears in public.

The type of gear available to buy depends on the supporter.

Katarina: Tools and Kits, Books and Documents, Packs and Containers, Clothing and Accessories, Rations, Herbs and Draughts, Prosthetics, Miscellaneous Trappings.

Graf Boris: The same as Katarina's list plus Animals and Vehicles, Weapons, Ammunition, Armour.

Prunkvoll: The same as Katarina's and Boris's list plus various Alchemical treatments and Poisons (not that Prunkvoll is a procurer of such things, but more that his level of support indicates that the situation is desperate enough to employ them as measures).

Encounters Allayed

During the final stages of the adventure the Empire begins to descend into the chaos of internecine conflict, and agents of the Skaven try to prevent the Characters from achieving their goals.

There are eight different encounters detailed from page 85 pmwards, and whilst it is up to the GM to decide exactly how and when to spring them on the party, we recommend at least six of them are employed as the Characters home in on the situation at Brass Keep.

However the more support they get from powerful NPCs, the greater the collective effort to curb unruly elements and suppress Skaven activity. This means that the Characters are less likely to face additional difficulties during their investigations.

So if Katarina is the only supporter, the Characters should face six to eight encounters; whilst if Prunkvoll is brought on board, they should only face three to five encounters.

Middenheimers' Attitudes

The final effect of making a good (or bad) case is that word starts to spread through Middenheim, causing a general improvement (or regress) in people's willingness to face up to the scale of the Skaven threat.

This is not a sudden shift, but occurs over the week following the interview as news of the Characters' report spreads throughout the city.

WE RIDE FOR BRASS KEEP!

The Characters may well feel at this point that they have justified reasons for heading to Brass Keep with all possible haste. There is a problem though, the lands around Brass Keep are part of the Duchy of Middenheim, but they are not ruled by Boris Todbringer. The keep lies within the Kärzburdger estate, and the Kärzburdger family are not on friendly terms with the Todbringers.

If the Characters suggest that they should head for Brass Keep at this juncture, Prunkvoll explains the issue.

'We must exercise restraint. Hereditary tenure of the lands around the keep is held by the Kärzburdgers. They used to be Grafts of Middenheim before the ascent of the Todbringers, and they would not take kindly to those they perceive as being agents of the Graf poking about in their estates. We must respect their rights to manage their lands, and approach them according to protocol. Were you to journey there before we have explained the situation to them — they may hang you as spies.'

The Characters may try to wrangle, but the view of those in power is that more must be done to illustrate an existential threat before troubling the Kärzburdgers.

The Investigation Continues

Within a few hours of their meeting with the Graf, the Characters are summoned to another meeting with Ulrich Schutzmänn. Once they are within his office, he sits down and says:

'You must have impressed someone, I have been given permission to inform you of three local cases that bear marked similarities to the phenomena you have been investigating. I have been holding off on sending the Watch in to deal with these matters, as I believe you are better equipped to work out what is going on.'

'Speaking unofficially, I have received word that a charter is being arranged to send you to Brass Keep as official envoys of the Graf in order to observe conditions there, but it is a tricky process negotiating with the von Kärzburdgers. In the meantime, if you look into these three sites and recover more evidence, it will be of great assistance in securing this permission.'

Schutzmänn then outlines the three cases the party should look into:

'There have been complaints about odd smells emanating from an area to the north of the Altmarkt, the sort you might associate with vermin. We spoke with the Ratters' Guild about it, but they complained that it wasn't worth visiting the place because there were no rats to be caught. Given that a number of storage facilities are there this seems strange indeed.' (See The Black Hunger on page 91).

'A man has been brought to the Temple of Morr with strange green-tinted injuries. He was a miner from Unterfraus in the Barony of Holzbek, two days hard ride to the east. The Pedlar who brought him to Middenheim is still in town, lodged at the Regent's House. We have told him not to leave until you have spoken with him.' (See The Stolen Village on page 96).

'Finally, his Lordship Baron Holzbek has beseeched the Graf for assistance. He claims his own troops are tied up protecting his lands from raiding Goblins, but that recently he has heard disturbing reports of roaring noises near the village of Gladbeich, and a creature described as a rat-faced mutant seen nearby. Holzbek has been less than honest in the past, but you could stop off on the way to Unterfraus and see if there is any justification for concern.' (See Griffon Down on page 102).



◆ ENCOUNTERS ◆



As they progress through the adventure, you should continue to make it apparent to the Characters that a collapse of order and stability in the Empire gathers pace. This section details a variety of situations representing the scenes of disorder flaring up throughout Middenheim and the surrounding countryside. It also includes encounters that directly affect the Characters as a result of them poking their noses where they are not wanted.

Use these encounters as and when you see fit, but if the Characters have been effective in their investigations and arguments, then they should be confronted with between three and five of these encounters between their leaving the Graf's Audience Chamber and arriving at the Picket near Brass Keep. If they have been inept or unconvincing, they should have to deal with six or more of these encounters. Their efforts have had an effect, for good or ill, on the spread of Chaos in the region.

Adapt each encounter according to the Characters' capabilities and what you want the encounter to achieve. These encounters are designed to be malleable, so feel free to add bits of your own, chopping and changing as you see fit. They can also be used as inspirations for you to create your own encounters.

Characters should not emerge too badly hurt, and especially not end up dead, as a result of these encounters — what an anticlimax to the campaign! If things get out of hand, a barber-surgeon might fortuitously appear to save the day, and there's always the City Watch to rescue the Characters' hides, if need be. However, be careful to make it *seem* like these encounters can be dangerous. Ramp up the fear, even when there's nothing for them to be afraid of. Keep them on their toes...

Disturbers of the Peace

There are many in Middenheim who don't believe that Skaven exist, and others who pretend that they do not exist out of fear of that terrible reality. However, there are also others who deny the existence of such creatures with a manic vehemence. They regard not only the concept of intelligent ratmen an abomination, but those who disseminate such 'disinformation' as dangerous saboteurs — believing them to be agents of disorder, spreading panic and fear amongst a credulous populace.

One such individual is Captain Heimrad Gaffel, commander of the Wynd District Watch Barracks in Middenheim. A fierce proponent of law and order, he regards it his duty to maintain peace in his district, at any cost. He takes it upon himself to exact instant and often terminal justice on those he catches disturbing that peace. Spreaders of malicious gossip, fear mongers, and panic-causers, for certain, attract his ire.

The Characters might be paid an unfriendly visit by Gaffel and his men, should word get to him that they are encouraging citizens on his patch to believe that the Skaven myth is real. Perhaps he is aware that they are allies of Professor Hasche (whom he despises), or they have talked to the wrong person about their experiences with the Skaven, and they have been reported as troublemakers to the Watch Captain.

Gaffel will be intent on ensuring that the Characters shut their mouths. His duty is to make sure the streets are not panicked by idle rumours. He is not the sort of person who asks politely, but will attempt to arrest the Characters for sedition. Woe betide them if they attempt to resist — they will earn a life-long enemy in him. A night in the cells will be a sleepless one, as Gaffel insists on being present to force the Characters to accept that Skaven do not exist. If the Characters can convince him that he has illuminated them, he will release them with a fine. However, if they cross his path again, and he finds out that they still believe that ratmen roam the shadows, woe betide them!



Heimrad Gaffel – Human Watch Captain

Captain Gaffel is a tall, sturdy man, with a bald, round head, the fierceness of his stern visage accentuated by the mass of long black whiskers bristling from his upper lip and jaw. He dresses in black leather armour edged in scarlet, and a sword and pistol swing from his weapons belt. He never lowers his voice quieter than a stern bark, and is accompanied by an entourage of halberdier-armed watchmen protected by breastplate and white-plumed helmets, who fear and love him in equal measure. If Heimrad had anything so sentimental as a heart, one might argue it was in the right place. He is well aware of the troubles facing the Empire, and knows full well that no sanctuary is truly beyond harm, nor any safety truly assured. The Skaven 'myth' infuriates him, as he is certain it was created to draw attention away from actual threats such as Beastmen, adherents of the Ruinous Powers, and the Bretonnian menace.

HEIMRAD GAFFEL – HUMAN WATCH CAPTAIN (GOLD 1)

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	62	31	56	44	63	42	30	41	64	56	23

Traits: Armour 2, Weapon (Sword) +9

Skills: Athletics 77, Climb 86, Consume Alcohol 74, Cool 74, Dodge 62, Endurance 54, Entertain (Storytelling) 66, Gamble 61, Gossip 76, Haggle 76, Intimidate 76, Intuition 83, Language (Wastelander) 61, Melee (Basic 82, Brawling 72, Polearm 77), Perception 83, Ranged (Bow) 51

Talents: Diceman, Disarm, Doomed (*Lies do you in*), Hardy, Menacing, Savvy, Strike to Stun, Tenacious, Very Resilient

Trappings: Breastplate, Hand Weapon (Fine Quality Sword), Helmet, Leather Jack, Uniform, Symbol of Rank



The City's Secrets

If the Characters have been snooping around in Middenheim's shadows, they might stir up unwelcome attention from its criminal denizens. The Low Kings of Middenheim — the leaders of the various criminal gangs and factions that profit from organised thievery, smuggling or assassination — like to keep themselves and their agendas hidden, and anyone unearthing their nefarious enterprises is likely to suffer a serious 'accident' to ensure their silence.

Members of the Yellow Fang keep surreptitious contacts among the criminal underworld who they utilise to carry out the plans of the Skaven masters — of course, the criminals have no idea who they are running errands for, and prefer not to know. The Low Kings do not do anything for nothing, and only ally with Yellow Fang cultists, who can themselves provide a service or a profit. So if the Characters kill a member of the Yellow Fang, they might unwittingly have destroyed the profitable contact of a crime lord, who reacts against the Characters accordingly.

Thugs and racketeers may warn the Characters off, or even try to waylay isolated members of the party (use the profiles given in for Thugs on page 9). However, the Low Kings may realise that there could be a much more profitable way to cause trouble for the Characters. Adventurers are well known for travelling around flashing cash and prized items found during their quests. So Hissing Heinrich, one of Middenheim's finest burglars, is despatched to follow them about and acquire as much of their treasure as possible. He may even abscond with handouts and other useful clues.

Hissing Heinrich – Cat Burglar

Hissing Heinrich is a nimble fingered man who got his start lifting purses from oblivious merchants in the Altquartier. After a few sound beatings he moved on to more profitable ventures, and has become a dab hand at relieving Carnival attendees from out of town of their valuables. Due to an unfortunate mix up Heinrich was in the lock up during the Carnival just gone, and has a sizable hole in his income to redress.

HISSING HEINRICH – CAT BURGLAR (SILVER 3)

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	32	33	55	35	65	65	69	40	65	40	17

Traits: Weapon +7

Skills: Athletics 85, Climb 85, Charm 50, Cool 88, Dodge 95, Endurance 55, Evaluate 60, Gossip 65, Haggle 43, Intuition 95, Perception 85, Lore (Local 55, Reikland 43), Pick Lock 99, Secret Signs (Thief) 60, Sleight of Hand 89, Stealth (Urban) 85

Talents: Alley Cat, Break and Enter, Catfall, Criminal, Doomed (*Quickly as thou goes, fortune deserts the slow*), Fast Hands, Flee!, Luck 3, Night Vision, Nimble Fingered, Scale Sheer Surface, Shadow, Step Aside

Trappings: Black Clothing, Dagger, Hood, Rope, Sack

Shadows in the Dark

If the Characters begin to make their activities known to the Yellow Fang, but do not yet pose a very significant threat to them, cult agents might try to curb their investigations through subtle means. Killing the Characters at this stage might bring unwanted attention should the would-be assassin fall alive into the hands of the law, or should the authorities seek to investigate any attempt at murder.

A small cell of Yellow Fang agents of the lowest order are employed for the task — thugs and ne'er-do-wells who know nothing of the grander schemes of their cult but follow the orders of their direct superior. Should the Characters, or anyone else, catch them, they offer very little information apart from a shadowy description of their cells' cult contact, who keeps their identity a carefully guarded secret from those they order about.

These agents are at first told to shadow the Characters, to find out who they talk to, where they go, what their habits are — any information that can be used to manipulate them. Whether an agent successfully accomplishes this is governed by the agent's competence and the Characters' diligence. Characters passing a Perception Check opposed by the Agents' Stealth may spot these folks tailing them.

YELLOW FANG SPY (SILVER 3)

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	44	34	33	32	31	42	42	31	41	41	12

Skills: Bribery 56, Charm 56, Consume Alcohol 42, Cool 51, Dodge 52, Drive 52, Gamble 41, Gossip 51, Haggle 51, Intuition 41, Melee (Basic) 54, Perception 46, Secret Signs (Yellow Fang) 41, Stealth (Urban) 57

Talents: Beneath Notice, Blather, Dealmaker, Gregarious, Night Vision, Read/Write, Shadow

Trappings: Drab clothing, Hand Weapon

If the Characters are observed committing a criminal act, the agents will report this to their contact, who then orders them to blackmail the Characters to force them to desist their investigations. Alternatively, a situation can be contrived by the agents where the Characters are tricked into apparent criminal behaviour, with the same consequences of blackmail.

If the Characters are observed to maintain close contact with an enemy of the Yellow Fang, such as Professor Hasche, the agents might be given the task to smear their reputation with that person, to sour that friendship. The agents themselves might be tasked with engineering a fake friendship with the Characters, winning their trust and offering their help, only to mislead and confound them at every turn. The cultists will do whatever it takes to steer the Characters' attention away from the scheming of the Yellow Fang network, short of murder — for now.

A Blade in the Back

If the Characters continue to confound the Yellow Fang's best attempts to divert them, and are getting closer to thwarting the cult's schemes, or bringing them to light, the Yellow Fang will be forced to undertake more extreme measures.



Jannick Warsteiner, a trusted and competent agent, is despatched with orders to track down and murder the Characters. If the Characters' overall fighting capabilities are known by the Yellow Fang to be strong, they will give Warsteiner their permission to hire hoodlums to help him ambush them, otherwise he'll try to pick them off in their sleep, preferably one by one.

If Warsteiner is obliged to resort to hired help (he prefers to act alone), he chooses men who'll do the job no questions asked. Minions do not know anything about the man who hired them. Should Warsteiner himself be captured, he'll bide his time, waiting for a way of escape, pretending to be a mere hitman hired by the Low King known as Bleyden. If the questioning gets too rough, he'll bite off his own tongue to avoid talking, then seek a quick death.

Warsteiner is a short, wiry young man, with close cropped hair, clean-shaven and lantern-jawed. He wears dark, well-cut clothes, and is always immaculately presented, especially when presenting himself to a 'client'. An expert in dagger-work, stealth and caution is his byword when in action. He'll stalk a victim until an opportunity presents itself for a clean, calm kill and an easy escape.

JANNICK WARSTEINER - YELLOW FANG ENFORCER (SILVER 3)

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	58	36	46	55	36	32	31	55	67	53	20

Traits: Weapon (Dagger) +8

Skills: Bribery 63, Charm 58, Consume Alcohol 60, Cool 77, Dodge 42, Endurance 65, Evaluate 65, Gossip 58, Intimidate 66, Intuition 51, Leadership 63, Lore (Local) 75, Melee (Basic 78, Brawling 88), Perception 46, Stealth (Urban) 52

Talents: Criminal, Etiquette (Criminals), Doomed (*Tangle ye not with Southern folk*), Instinctive Diction, Menacing, Savvy, Sharp, Strike Mighty Blow 2, Warrior Born

Trappings: Dark Clothing, Several Daggers

Refugees

This encounter can take place in Middenheim or on the outskirts.

A crowd of refugees shuffles towards the Characters, blocking their path. The refugees are victims of the instability plaguing the lands surrounding Middenheim. Perhaps their village was razed during a private war between local nobles, or between Sigmarite and Ulrican factions, or they are folk who have settled in the north from elsewhere in the Empire, driven out by force by Nordlanders agitating for self-rule. The horrific fact that should be made evident to the Characters is that this suffering was not caused by creatures such as Orcs or Beastmen, but by antagonistic factions within the Empire.

The group consists of about two dozen miserable souls — women, children, old folk, and a scattering of injured young men, all dressed in drab, ragged clothes. Their faces are drawn with hunger, their eyes hollow. Many have bare feet, the others shod with worn footwear — all limp on forwards despite their evident pain and weakness, as though determined to make as much distance as they can from whatever horrors they've left behind them.

On closer inspection, the refugees are from all walks of life. The attire of a few of the women and elderly folk denote their status as minor nobility, though their clothes are as torn and filth-encrusted as those of the peasants with whom they rub shoulders. An old scholar staggers among the crowd, his spectacles broken, clutching a leather-bound book burned round the edges.

A young woman helps a soldier stagger along, his breastplate pierced in many places, a vicious wound scarring one side of his face. A priest of Taal with thinning hair and brown robes, wanders along in a daze, eyes half closed, muttering supplications to his god, arms raised as if in prayer. Bloody bandages are wrapped around the stumps where his hands should be.

If this scene takes place on the streets of Middenheim, or in an outlying town or village, the reaction of passers-by is almost invariably the same — people shy away from the refugees with expressions of terror as though fearful that these unfortunates will attract the calamity they have escaped. A few individuals seek to engage the refugees — a priestess of Shallya offers prayers, a compassionate baker brings bread to ease their obvious hunger, or a crazed flagellant approaches them, and begins whipping them, extolling their deliverance from sin with pain. A band of street urchins might dart amongst the refugees, pilfering their few pitiful possessions.

The Character may want to come to the aid of those who are trying to alleviate the sufferings of the crowd, or stop those causing them harm.

Eventually, the refugees are rounded up by the forces of law and order within the vicinity. The Characters might be involved in discussions on what to do with them, especially if the captain of the watch or local militia wants to wash his hands of these people and move them on elsewhere — let them be someone else's problem; there are too many new mouths to feed...



Scourge-Riders

The political instability also affects the areas surrounding Middenheim. The following event can take place whenever the Characters are travelling beyond the city gates.

A pall of smoke attracts the Characters to a burning village. If they help put out the flames, the grateful villagers tell them that their village was targeted by a band of mounted men in the blue and yellow uniforms of Nordland state troops. They arrived without warning, and set about with fire and destruction. The Characters can follow their trail to another village, and intervene before the horsemen can inflict too much damage. If the Characters get into trouble, a contingent of Road Wardens rides to their rescue.

In fact, the raiders are mercenaries from the Border Princes, the self-styled Scourge-Riders led by one Lobar Zumborski, a Kislevite exile, a vicious killer who delights in atrocity. They have been hired by a wealthy woman in Salzenmund who provided their clothing. If the Characters capture one of the riders, he gives the following justification for their actions.

'We were hired by the agent of this fine fellow called Gausser, proper gentleman he is. He's paid to show Middenheim's Graf what for if he doesn't respect the rights of Nordlanders to rule for themselves. So we're here to give the Todbringers a bloody nose. Death to the rotten Graf of Middenheim! Death to his lackeys the lickspittle Nikses! Long live Count Gausser and a free Nordland!'

The riders have been paid extra to divulge this information if they were captured, and for all they know it is true. In fact, their patron is a secret agent of the Altdorf cell of the Purple Hand, tasked to spread destruction among the villages that provide Middenheim with its vital food supply, and to exacerbate tensions between the provinces.

If a captured scourge rider is asked about the identity of Gausser's agent, they do not know; but if asked if Gausser's agent wore purple clothing they say, *'she had a very fine mauve bat on her'*.

SCOURGE RIDER

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	50	40	45	30	30	45	30	30	30	30	14

Traits: Armour 2, Weapon +7, Ranged +8

Skills: Animal Care 40, Charm Animal 40, Cool 40, Endurance 45, Language (Battle) 40, Melee (Basic) 65, Outdoor Survival 40, Perception 45, Ranged (Blackpowder) 45, Ride (Horse) 60

Talents: Roughrider, Warrior Born

Trappings: Hand Weapon, Leather Jack, Pistol with Powder and Ammunition for 10 shots, Riding Horse with Saddle and Tack

From the Gutter

If the Characters continue to frustrate the Yellow Fang's plans, and the cult's indirect and direct action fails to faze them, the cultists' Skaven masters might decide to seize the initiative themselves.

The ratmen will not confront the Characters directly — if anything goes wrong, they risk revealing their presence to the upper world. Their aim is to discover how much the Characters know about their existence, and to engineer a fatal 'accident' — if they decide the Characters pose too much of a risk.

Their first action will be to tail the Characters, discover where they are based, and break into their rooms and rifle through their belongings, stealing any items incriminating to Skaven existence. The Gutter Runners tasked with this mission leave virtually no clues behind, though a sharp-eyed Character might spot a trace of a paw print that resembles that of a man-sized rat to an imaginative onlooker (it's certainly not decisive evidence).

If the Skaven decide that the Characters pose a significant threat to their plans, they'll try to dispose of them sneakily. The Characters might experience a flurry of 'accidents', each increasingly more devastating and indiscriminate than the last, for example: a collapsing wall; a runaway horse and cart; a sinkhole swallowing the street due to a collapsing sewer work; an exploding building apparently caused by a build-up of gas in an underground drainage system.

The Characters should escape these events by the skin of their teeth, or with minor injuries. Worse will be the effects on those around the Characters — the innocents caught up by the devastation. No doubt the Characters will want to go to the help of the injured, or rescue those endangered by the carnage.

Such accidents occur whenever the Characters spend more than two nights in a row in the same location, they might earn a grim reputation as accursed individuals, and people familiar with them might get nervous at their approach...



Mantrappers

The Characters may also fall foul of the Skaven while travelling the wilds alone. Clan Mange is constantly on the prowl for slaves. It prefers to prey on Middenheim's weak and vulnerable, the destitute and forgotten souls who will not be missed by society. But should the watch patrols strengthen due to rising disturbances within the city, the clan might be forced to widen its range to encompass the settlements and roadways beyond the city walls.

A Clan Mange kidnapping attempt will take place in a remote area in terrain suited for their purposes. They tend to choose isolated stretches of road with soft cover (such as bushes) to one side and hard cover (such as rocks) on the other. They bury their mantraps around the rocks and hide in the bushes. When a small group of travellers pass by the mantrappers open their ambush with a hail of bullets from the bushes. Those targets who remain in open are soon subdued by the slingshots, and those who seek cover incapacitated by the mantraps.

If the Skaven have underestimated their intended prey, and the Characters stand their ground, the ratmen slink away into the wilderness. There will be other, easier targets, and it is not worth their while risking their lives unnecessarily or revealing their existence.

If the Characters are unlucky and find themselves all trapped, they should be rescued at the last minute by the chance arrival of Road Wardens. The Skaven prefer to escape, leaving their victims behind, sooner than face any sort of determined resistance from well-armed opponents. There will be no indication of any Skaven presence by the time the horsemen have appraised the situation, and the Characters' protestations that they have been victimised by ratmen will be met with ridicule and scorn.

CLAN MANGE SLAVE MASTER

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
5	45	40	30	40	40	45	30	30	30	20	14

Traits: Armour 1, Infected, Night Vision, Tracker, Weapon +7

Skills: Athletics 65, Endurance 50, Intimidate 45, Intuition 50, Melee (Basic) 65, Outdoor Survival 45, Perception 60, Ranged (Sling) 50, Set Trap 45, Track 55

Talents: Marksman, Shadow, Strike to Stun

Trappings: Hand Weapon, Leather Jerkin, Mantrap, Sling with 10 Lead Bullets, Rope



MANTRAPS

A mantrap consists of two spiked, semi-circular jaws that spring up when a victim steps on a pressure plate between them; they bite into the victim's lower leg causing severe injury, and can only be opened on a successful **Difficult (-10) Strength Test**.

When it is placed, the GM should note the result of the Set Trap Test, and use it to oppose the Perception Tests of any potential victims.

Weapon	Price	Enc	Availability	Reach	Dam	Qualities and Flaws
Man-trap	18/-	2	Common	Personal*	SB+4 (10)†	Fast, Penetrating, Entangle‡

* The trap is not wielded and can only attack someone who steps on it.

There is no roll to hit – this is resolved using a Set Trap Test above.

† Leg hits only: equal chance of either leg unless circumstances dictate otherwise.

‡ If the trap was chained down, the victim is held in place until freed. If not, a hit causes one Entangled Condition because of its weight. This Condition can only be removed by freeing the victim from the trap.

◆ THE BLACK HUNGER ◆



NONE SHALL PASS

Like all Skaven, the rulers of Under-Middenheim expect treachery from other clans. Maliss Manrack's agents in the city have angered them, for they fear that their lack of discretion will expose their presence below Middenheim. Castellan-Warlord Gnawretch Skrray is making a show of strength by trapping a Clan Mange pack in a tunnel just below the surface. They want to send a message to Maliss — this is our territory, beg forgiveness or we will starve and kill your agents.

Under-Middenheim is deep beneath the Fauschlag, but the Skaven have carved tunnels into the Undercity for when they need to encroach on the man-things' city. Snikkit and his band used these tunnels, and the agents of Maliss Manrack have followed. A full regiment of Clan Mange Clanrats were sent to the city to capture slaves and take hostages and artefacts desired by Maliss. This was the final straw for Gnawretch Skrray. He ordered Fangleader Hisskar and his Clan Scrutens Stormvermin to lure the pack to an access chamber and spring a trap, barricading them in to die. Now they are starving and succumbing to the Black Hunger, an affliction which drives

Skaven to cannibalise one another in a desperate frenzy. When the party investigates certain peculiar phenomena around Lachmann's Quality Victuals in Altmarkt, they may discover the fate of the Mange pack, and learn more of the Skaven and the machinations of Maliss Manrack.

THE BLACK HUNGER

The Skaven are constantly ravenous, enslaved by a fast metabolism that gives them a relentless need to eat. If denied sustenance for long enough, they weaken and soon go mad. In this state, Skaven enter a frenzy which overcomes their natural cautiousness and drives them to devour anything they can seize. All too often this is their own kin. In this wild state, they are blind to anything but their own hunger.

The Clanrats of the Patchclaw pack are slowly succumbing to the Black Hunger in the dark below Altmarkt. They alternate between famished torpor and desperate frenzy, gnawing at their own limbs and tearing down their weakest fellows.



INVESTIGATIONS

There are several hooks into this scenario, which may come to light when investigating the Skaven:

THE RATTERS' GUILD

At the Ratters' Guild the Characters may be received by either one of the two guild secretaries, Hauke Ayingen or Isaak Köstritzer. If they are received by Hauke (assuming he has not yet been unmasked as a member of the Yellow Fang) he will interrogate the Characters for any information that might be of use to the cult, but is not otherwise hostile. Asked about rats in the Altmarkt he is as helpful as his colleague as he does not connect this particular line of inquiry to Skaven activity.

On the subject of a recent paucity of rats in Altmarkt the Rat Catchers say that Jasper Lachmann has been complaining about the smell of dead vermin and squeaking in his walls, which is costing him business from the fancy inns that buy his stock. But when Rat Catcher Thal Bohnet went down there with his terrier, Furst, they found nothing, not a single mouse or rat. Altmarkt is the city's main source of food, and for a property to contain no vermin is impossible. Bohnet and Furst are among the city's best ratters, so nobody can explain it.

The reason is simple. Rats have an innate aversion to the reek given off by Skaven suffering the Black Hunger. They are giving Lachmann's a wide berth for fear of being next on the menu.

FINE DINING

If the party visits a high-end eatery (such as the *Harvest Goose*, the *Showboat* or the *Horse and Groom*) they are surprised to find the menu severely restricted. If they ask why venison, swan or wheels of Bretonnian soft cheese are not available, the proprietor apologises and explains that their usual supplier, Lachmann's, was unable to provide ingredients of sufficient quality. If they enquire further, they are told that they take pride in serving only the finest quality ingredients and it seems Lachmann's current stock is riddled with vermin. When the chef visited the warehouse earlier, the place stank of rats, and they could be heard writhing and squeaking below the floor.

RUMOURS

The party can pick up gossip around Altmarkt from stallholders, grocers, and anyone else who likes spreading rumours about wealthy people.

- 'Have you heard? Old Lachmann's going out of business! His whole place stinks of dead rats. About time, snooty old git.'
- 'I passed Lachmann's yesterday and you could smell it — that sweet gamey smell you get with dead rats under the floor. By Sigmar, it was so strong.'
- 'You can hear them from the street, squealing and fighting. Nasty little buggers. But the rat catcher said there are none there!'

LACHMANN'S QUALITY VICTUALS

Jasper Lachmann is a proud self-made man. He rose from selling notably sawdust free sausages from a handcart to running a successful business dealing in the best foodstuffs for the most discerning kitchens in Middenheim, including the Palace. He is a self-satisfied merchant who enjoys berating other grocers as too lazy to make something of themselves.

Lachmann's warehouse is in the northern streets of Altmarkt, with a well-appointed storefront for customers. Above ground, there are cured meats and fresh produce in crates and hanging from the ceiling. In the extensive cellars Lachmann stores salted goods and even a small icehouse.

Unknown to Lachmann, his cellars adjoin a stretch of the Skaven's tunnels — where Fangleader Hisskar's Stormvermin have trapped the Patchclaw Clanrats in a bottle-shaped chamber. The stench of death, decay and concentrated musk of fear emanates from several small fissures in the walls. It is so powerful that it permeates the entire warehouse and shop above.

As the party enter Lachmann's, they see celebrated chef Harrani Busuk storm out, followed by two worried kitchen boys, Kale and Dill. Lachmann is behind a counter, protesting that his lobster was fresh from the Nordland shore only two days ago. Anyone entering the warehouse is struck by the smell from below despite Lachmann's attempts to cover it by burning aromatic herbs, which just makes it more nauseating. A **Hard (-20) Perception Test (Acute Sense: Hearing +30)** also detects distant squeaks and squeals from somewhere underfoot.

Lachmann is desperate. Any inquiries are answered along the following lines.

Do you know what the smell is?

'It's rats! But that useless rat catcher Bohnet said, "there aren't any". And he's supposed to be the best in the business.'

When did it start?

'Two days ago. It's got worse and worse. And there's the noise... You can hear the little things down there, laughing at me.'

Where does it come from?

'If I knew that I'd have got rid of it. But it's strongest in the cellars. Bohnet and his runt of a dog looked next door at Krummer's place, but there were no rats there either.'

Can we help?

'You look like you can handle yourself in a fight, but how are you going to fight a smell? But whatever you can do... I'm watching my business collapse here. I'll tell you what, get this sorted, I'll give you 10 crowns between you.'

A successful **Average (+20) Haggles** Test raise this to 20 GCs

IN THE CELLAR

There are three adjoining cellars under Lachmann's, but the eye-watering smell is strongest in the westernmost room. This is where larded and salted meat is stored, but most has been moved during an attempt to uncover the source of the smell and noise.

The walls are stone. The one on the west is older and somewhat cracked. The pungent smell is much stronger here. From the other side of the wall chittering, frantic scrabbling, and noise that can only be described as writhing can be heard. Occasionally there is a louder squeal of distress. The noise is unmistakably the sound of rats, but perhaps an octave deeper than usual. Lachmann notes that it's never been this loud before.

The party may want to break through the wall somehow, but Lachmann objects strongly should they suggest or try this. *'Are you insane? The whole building would come down.'*

What's on the other side of this?

'The Fauschlag. I always thought it was solid rock. Krummer might know different, but he's been gone for a year now.'

Who is Krummer?

'Leo Krummer, owns the empty place next door. He rents it out, but tenants never stick around. Krummer went travelling I think.'

KRUMMER'S PLACE

Adjoining Lachmann's warehouse is a townhouse owned by landlord Leo Krummer. He rented the place out to travelling merchants who wanted to base themselves in Middenheim, but few stayed long.

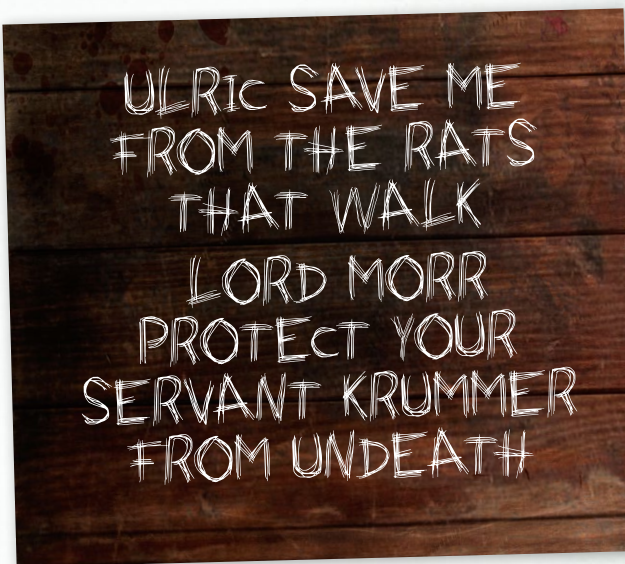
The Skaven's access tunnels run under the property and the ratmen realised that residents here might discover their presence. Leo Krummer was lured here by a Yellow Fang cultist posing as a 'potential long-term tenant'. The Skaven then bricked him up in the walls to die. His desiccated corpse has gone undiscovered for 13 months. Now the property remains abandoned, the windows shuttered and door locked. The Yellow Fang keep an eye on it to ensure nobody breaks in.

Getting into Krummer's property is easy. The door has a **Challenging** lock. Inside is dark and eerie. A light source reveals wooden furniture covered in an inch of dust, burnt-out candles in pools of wax and wind whistling through a broken upstairs window. There are no footprints in the dust, suggesting that the property has been undisturbed for some time.

The smell is strongest in the kitchen and the sound of agonised squeals comes from below the stone-flagged floor. There is a doorway which was once the larder, but is now bricked up. Anyone inspecting the brickwork realises it is relatively new, but hastily and crudely done. If the party breaks down the bricks (**T6, 10 W**), Krummer's corpse falls through. It is hideous: emaciated and dried out; its fingers scratched to stubs as he

clearly tried to escape. His face is the most disturbing part — his mouth stretched wide in a permanent expression of terror. **Test for Fear (Rating 2).**

On the wall of the larder, Krummer scratched a sentence in the last hours of his life.



In the corner of the kitchen is a wooden cabinet. The noise is loudest here, and if they destroy the wooden base, they'll find an iron grill. Beneath is a 1-ft shaft opening into the stone chamber where the Patchclaws are trapped. The stench here is unbearable. Characters ought to pass a **Hard (-10) Endurance** Test or suffer -1 SL to all tests until they leave the area.

If they shine a light through the shaft, they see a hideous sight. A mass of furred bodies are crushed together, writhing in agonised frenzy. Countless red eyes stare back at them from the dark. Sharp, yellow teeth gnash, bloodied spittle flying through the air. The ratmen are weak, but struggle in torment. Some tear at their own bodies, devouring their own flesh. Others set upon their kin, gnawing the flesh from their exposed heads and limbs. There are dead Skaven amongst the crush, flesh and gristle almost stripped to the bone. Those who survive have been sustained by the dead.

This warrants a **Hard (-20) Cool** Test and **1 Corruption Point** if failed. The party have several options.

OBSERVE

If the party decides to watch the chamber, they'll be spectators to a particularly unpleasant spectacle. The Clanrats are crushed together in their own filth. They cannibalise one another, throw themselves at the walls and scramble desperately at the barricades. Against one wall, a larger Skaven seems to be holding himself together, mostly by eating his weaker brethren. This is Clawleader Rikkhin of Clan Mange.

Beyond the barricades, they see large, black-furred Skaven in heavy armour, chittering in delight as the Patchclaws suffer. Occasionally Rikkhin tries to negotiate with an unseen Skaven beyond the barriers. The conversation is in Queekish, but a **Challenging (+0) Intelligence** Test suggests that Rikkhin is both beseeching and berating another Skaven. If by some chance the party can understand Queekish, they learn that Rikkhin is trying to bargain with Fangleader Hisskar by promising him a fortune in warpstone, which Rikkhin believes he will soon receive from Karak Skygg.

CHATS WITH RATS

If the party shine a light through the shaft and speak, they come to Clawleader Rikkhin's attention. He doesn't care who they are — he knows he's going to die — and will sell out the whole Skaven species to live another 24 hours. He speaks broken Reikspiel and offers to bargain with them if they come down and help. It's possible to conduct a conversation and learn something of the Skaven plans, but only if he believes that they can help him out of his predicament.

Who are you?

'Man-things! Servants of Horned One, yes? Here to help man-friend Rikkhin? I am Clawleader of Clan Mange. You are wise-mighty man-things.'

What are you doing here?

'Betrayed. Trapped by turntail Scrutens. They not like-like Mange work for great Master Warlock Maliss. We are loyal-trusted. Mange never traitor. The Horned One will gnaw the entrails of Scrutens.'

What's going on?

'The rage-hunger. The eat-kill. No food. Save Rikkhin. I help-help man-things. Gift with blessed stone. Tell all you want to know.'

What are you doing in Middenheim?

'We follow orders of Maliss Manrack, great Warlock and Fabricator. Mighty among Clan Skryre. He order us to steal. Abduct weak-mewling man-things.'

What are your orders?

'Clan Mange soon-soon attack brass tower in mountains. Big attack. Man-things outside, plague-things within. Mange win.'

What else can you tell us?

'Warlock Master Maliss works a great scheme. Bring down great bounty from the Horned One. Rain of blessed stone. Clan Skyre pay great-great reward to Clan Mange. Plenty-much stone to me. Lay waste to all! Lay waste to all! But-but but leave you mighty man-things safe.'

ENTER THE CHAMBER

If the Characters lever up the iron grill, they can drop down into the stone chamber one at a time. There is an 8-ft drop from

to the ground but their fall is broken by Skaven corpses. On landing they are set upon by two frenzied Patchclaws.

The stone chamber is a bottle-shaped room, blocked at both ends by a barricade of rubble and wood. The Stormvermin of Clan Scrutens peer through spy holes and chitter in delight to see the fate of the Clan Mange Clanrats. If the Players enter the chamber, the Stormvermin leave to fetch their leader Hisskar.

There are 15 living Clanrats in the chamber, including Clawleader Rikkhin. While his pack fling themselves at the party, he backs away to save himself.

Starved Clanrats

These are wretched creatures, weakened by hunger and weaponless. Each one has the characteristic piebald fur of Clan Mange, under all the blood and excrement. They have eaten their leather armour and chewed at their weaponry into uselessness.

STARVED CLANRATS

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
5	30	30	21	23	30	35	30	15	10	10	7

Traits: Infected, Night Vision, Hungry, Frenzy, Weapon+6

Clawleader Rikkhin

Rikkhin is dishevelled and scratched, but held onto his leather armour and helmet. He has piebald fur.

If the party overcome a Clanrat, the others immediately set upon it and tear to pieces in a beserk hunger. If they kill more than five Clanrats, Rikkhin speaks with them as above — he sees an opportunity to escape.

While talking, the other Clanrats continue to attack the party. If they kill the remaining Patchclaws, the Stormvermin from the barricades attack. These are tougher opposition. Three enter from each end of the chamber. Use the Stormvermin profile (WFRP, page 337). These trained Skaven have a simple objective, to kill every human who witnessed their existence. Hisskar stays out of harm's way and flees — if the party beats his Stormvermin.

CLAWLEADER RIKKHIN

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
5	38	30	30	35	45	35	30	30	25	20	11

Traits: Armour 2, Infected, Night Vision, Hungry, Frenzy, Weapon (Sword) +7

Trappings: Helmet, Leather armour, rusty sword

KILL FROM A DISTANCE

If the Characters decide to eliminate the Patchclaws from the shaft (for example, dropping incendiaries or explosives, or using magic) then the wretched ratmen die pretty easily with blood-curdling squeals. The Stormvermin withdraw, disappointed that their entertainment is over. If the party is overzealous, they may damage the foundations of Krummer's property and Lachmann's.

TELL SOMEONE

The party may want to summon help or use this as the perfect opportunity to prove the existence of the Skaven.

Lachmann — the merchant is horrified and asks them to deal with it. He doesn't quite believe them, but will pay an extra 10 GCs to the party, if they can make the problem go away without alerting the authorities.

The Ratters' Guild — If the Ratters' Guild is consulted their response depends on who is manning reception. There is a 50% chance that either Hauke Ayinger (assuming he hasn't been unmasked) or Isaak Köstritzer is on duty during opening hours. Köstritzer is aware of the Skaven, but knows better than to advertise the fact. He is wary and encourages the party to keep it to themselves. *'Sounds like the sort of thing that got Old Magda killed last month. Best wait it out to see what happens...'* Ayinger scoffs at the notion but, with feigned reluctance, agrees to note down as much information about the trapped Skaven as he can. Half an hour later he heads off to meet with a Sewer Jack captain (Raina Mūs if she lives). He explains the situation. The Sewer Jack then descends into the Undercity and informs a Clan Scrutens scout that the starving Skaven have been discovered. Clan Scrutens quickly kill any remaining members of the Patchclaws and clean the cavern of any remains.

The authorities — most officials dismiss the stories as fanciful nonsense. Schutzmann is concerned, and encourages them to find more proof of the Skaven to make their case stronger. He suggests they ensure the starving Skaven all are dead.

If they leave the scene, use 'Other incidents' below to move the situation on while they are away.

HELP THE SKAVEN

It's possible the party decides to help Rikkhin and the Patchclaws in some way. The Clanrats are too far gone to resist attacking them, but Rikkhin suggests they storm one of the barricades with him. If this works, the Clawleader and any remaining Clanrats flee, and never see the party again. Clan Mange 'loyalty' does not extend to man-things.

OTHER INCIDENTS

If the party leaves the scene, events unfold without them.

A Clanrat becomes so insanely hungry and desperate to escape that it leaps up the shaft and squeezes through the bars, a sickly cracking echoing in the tight space as it snaps its own bones to do so. If a Character returns to Krummer's house, it springs at the first Character to enter the kitchen, ruined bones grating in a pain it entirely ignores. Use the Starved Clanrat profile (page 94) and the element of surprise.

The Yellow Fang are watching the property and saw the Characters enter. When they later investigate, the cultists don't know what to do. There are masters dying while *other* masters look on and watch. If the party returns, four Yellow Fang cultists ambush them, and throw anyone they defeat down the shaft for the Patchclaws to eat.

If more than half a day passes, the situation comes to a head. The remaining Patchclaws become so insanely famished that they lose all sense and storm the barricades. It's a massacre, and Rikkhin is killed in moments. The Clan Scrutens Stormvermin clear the chamber to remove evidence of Skaven presence.

Rewards

Good roleplaying and clever thinking should be rewarded, but there are additional XP for the following:

- 20–40 points for eliminating the Skaven in and around the chamber
- 20 points for talking with Rikkhin
- 15 points for discovering the chamber beneath Krummer's property
- 10 points for dealing with Lachmann successfully

If Skaven bodies are removed from the chamber and exhibited in Middenheim increase the Evidence Score by two.



◆ THE STOLEN VILLAGE ◆



Unterfraus is a village situated below an iron mine in the foothills of the Middle Mountains. Though not thriving, the mines supply enough ore to keep the village comfortable and the roads maintained.

Recently, the miners stumbled upon the preparations for a Clan Mange watch post. The Skaven were using a Warp-grinder and a Warpstone-powered excavator. The miners were caught in the blast and injured.

Chieftain Snee, who was in charge of the dig, realised that they were in danger of discovery and had to act quickly. He raided Unterfraus and ordered that every prisoner have their eyes removed before being herded into the Under-Empire. The mine workings, which lead to the Skaven tunnels, are to be collapsed by a huge explosion as soon as enough supplies of black powder can reach the site.

Gelbert Vogel

Vogel was one of the miners who was caught in the blast, losing his right arm and severely injuring the entire right side of his body. His fellow miners carried him to the surface as they fled.

Vogel had such severe injuries it was decided that he needed expert medical attention. As it happened, Pitor Wagner, a pedlar of mining supplies, was in town and was paid to take Vogel to Middenheim. Unfortunately, Vogel did not survive the journey.

Pitor Wagner

The Characters can find Wagner lodged at *The Regents House*, a rough tavern in Ostwald. He is able to tell them that when he arrived in Middenheim he brought Vogel's body to the Temple of Morr, where the unusual wounds were noticed. Wagner believes that the miners were attacked by some sort of spirit of the dead that used magical powers. The surviving miners were full of stories of green glowing lights, flickering lightning, and terrible eyes in the darkness. Wagner happily embellishes this tale.

The Corpse

Gelbert Vogel's corpse is currently lying in a vault at the Great Temple of Ulric. As well as the terrible wound from the Warp-grinder, it has been partially dissected by some of the most enthusiastic surgeons at the Collegium Theologica, and is in sorry state.

The right arm is completely missing. It has been sheared off from above the shoulder and some of the adjoining rib cage is missing too. The wound however seems to have been cauterised leaving a neat arc of blackened flesh. Much of the surrounding skin is tinged green. Vogel's corpse also bears injuries from the wear and tear of a lifetime of mining, and the recent dissections.

Middenheim to Unterfraus

As Ulrich Shutzmann claimed, it takes two days hard riding, or four days at a more comfortable pace, to reach Unterfraus. The Characters could even make a diversion to Gladbeich on their way there, though it is off the main road, and this adds another day to the journey.

UNTERFRAUS

The night before the Characters reach Unterfraus every living person there was rounded up by the Skaven, herded through the mines, and into the Under-Empire. The place feels like time has suddenly stopped. Apart from minor damage caused by the Skaven, Unterfraus is as it was when the villagers went to bed the night before, oblivious to their fate.

Unterfraus is a reasonably sized mining settlement. It is built below the mountains, a mile or so from the mine itself, around an agricultural village that existed before the ore was discovered. So the village is a mix of traditional farm buildings and associated infrastructure, with a couple of rows of smaller miners' cottages.

There is an unmissable, well-trodden track leading from the village up through thick forest to the mine entrance. The through-road heads towards Middenheim and southwards into Hochland.

As the Characters approach Unterfraus, they become aware of a strange silence and stillness in the air. This could just be their imagination playing tricks on them, of course. There are no animals out grazing in the fields. They are still in the enclosures and sheds in which they normally spend the night. Their distressed barks, bleats, crows, moos, and yelps reverberate around the village, adding to the unsettling atmosphere. It is clear that something cataclysmic has occurred in the deserted village.

Exploring the Village

The Skaven came in the dead of night so there were no fires lit or housework ongoing. Any number of small items and personal effects sit there waiting for owners who will never return. The odd cat slinks about hoping to be fed. Apart from the occasional call of a distant animal the village is silent.

The victims were ripped from their beds, or overpowered as they emerged from their dwellings. There were violent struggles and some of the rooms are wrecked by their struggles, but most are entirely untouched. There are a few corpses around the place, but Snee's orders were to keep as many alive as possible.

After exploring a few of Unterfraus's homes, the Characters get the impression that everyone has been taken from the village without needing to painstakingly visit every building, but here is a list of potential discoveries as they search the village.

The Temple to Ulric

The Temple to Ulric is a modest stone building at the centre of the village served by a single priest. He was elderly and able to work miracles, so it was never part of the plan to enslave him. Instead, he was tied to his own altar, with ropes stolen for the mine, tortured, and then bled to death. The priest's empty body remains there to be discovered by the Characters.

The wooden carving of a wolf that used to stand on the Altar has been hacked into pieces, and the great axe that hung from the wall behind it has been snapped in two and discarded. A tapestry depicting Ulric slaying a gigantic red Daemon has been pulled down and soaked in the priest's blood.

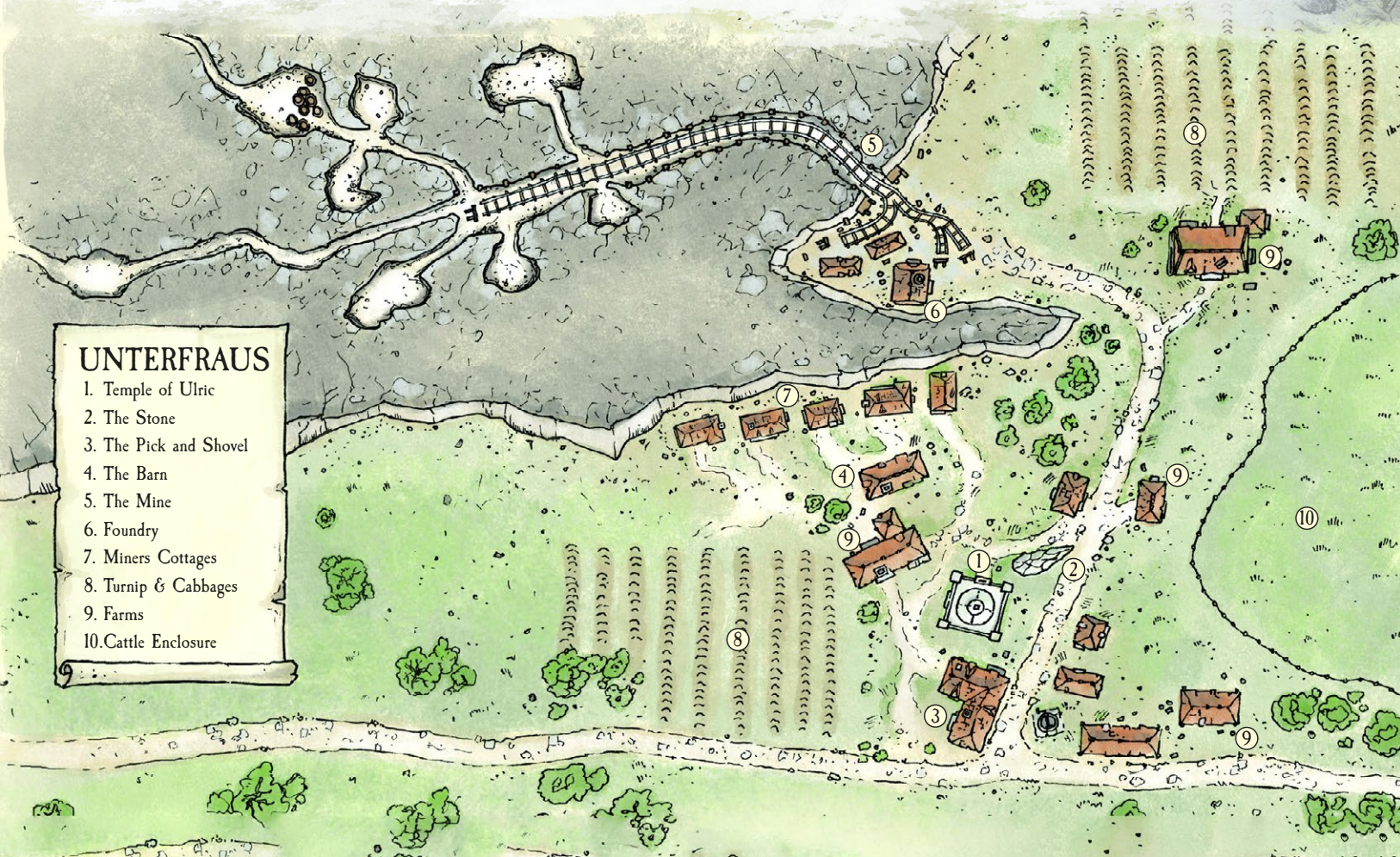
The Stone

Outside the temple is a large, horizontal stone. It looks like it could have been an Old Faith standing stone that has now fallen or been knocked over. Someone has carved an impression of Blitzbiel into it. This was the ancient centre of the village, but apart from attracting wispy traces of *Ghur* it has no significance.

The Pick and Shovel

This is a no-frills boarding house used by many of the miners, and is the centre of village life. The miners here were able to put up some resistance against the Skaven, working together to raise some makeshift barricades and keep the attack at bay for a while.

Tables and chairs have been stacked up across part of the room. The damage throughout the building and the bloody floor of the bar area are testament to the pitched battle. A number of mining tools and other improvised weapons have been left around the place, unwanted by the Skaven.



The bodies of a couple of miners have been left in the bar area. A Character passing a successful **Hard (-10) Perception** Test can tell that bodies have been removed and that some of the bloodstains are darker and more rank smelling than you would expect from human blood.

The Barn

One of the first barns the Characters explore will be empty of livestock but hold a gruesome secret. This is the location the Skaven chose to make the centre of their operations. A **Difficult (-20) Track** Test reveals lots of human and 'animal' traffic going in one end and out the other.

In the middle of the barn is an old haycart that has been used by the Skaven as a makeshift operating table. The cart is stained with blood, urine, and excrement, and the place reeks of death. Beneath the cart is a bloodied gelatinous mass. On closer inspection, it is revealed to be dozens of eyes. In one corner of the barn are two bodies, villagers who did not survive the operation.

A Rat

As a Character enters one of the family dwellings, the usual emptiness and signs of struggle are apparent, but in a dark corner of the room there is some movement. It appears a humanoid shape could be there, twitching slightly. As the Character approaches, it moves again, and then suddenly, a rat darts from its cover, scurries across the floor, and disappears through a crack in the wall. The humanoid shape was no more than a hat left upon a pile of blankets, disturbed by the rodent.

A Fairy-Tale

In one farmhouse, a bedroom has been wrecked. The struggle to get the family out was evidently desperate. Among the items strewn across the floor is a copy of *Drakwald Fairy-Tales*, which has happened to fall open at the beginning of the Harlequin Hurdy-gurdyist of Hovelhof poem.

THE HARLEQUIN HURDY-GURDYIST OF HOVELHOF

So! Here is a tale told from days of old
Hovelhof town within the dark Drakwald
Is the scene where was a most heinous crime
The subject fine of this worrisome rhyme
T'was a hundred and thirteen years ago
Swarms of loathsome rats scuttled to and fro
Around and about the old market square
Their squeakings drove the goodly burghers spare
To the stricken place strode a loud fellow
His hat pea green and his tunic yellow
His hose bright red, his cod-piece sky blue
He said he alone knew just what to do
To rid the place of the scut'ling vermin
Soon and sincerely he would determine
To deliver this desperate old town
For hard earned fee of a single gold crown
The burghers did not demur, so then he
Spun the mauve crank of his Hurdy-gurdy



A Stuffed Toy

Children's stuffed toys are common enough. Most of them are bears, but wolves are popular, especially in the north of the Empire. This one seems to be a rat. It has been left behind, dropped into a puddle during the kidnappings. At first glance, it might be mistaken for a real rat. In fact, the toy is supposed to be a bear, it is just badly made.

A Skaven Weapon

This weapon has been accidentally left behind by the raiders. It has a long, jagged blade, covered in rust and other filth, and a fur-covered handle, which is actually rat skin. It is like nothing of Human or Dwarf manufacture. The Clan Mange symbol has been etched into the blade, though this would not be visible without giving the weapon a good clean.

A Hurdy-gurdy

This hurdy-gurdy can be found in one of the homes of Unterfarus lying damaged on the floor. A half-decent sound can still be got out of it, although it must be repaired before a tune can be played on it.

THE MINE

A Character making a **Challenging (+0) Track** Test will be able to see that the trail up to the mine has a number of unusual footprints. Some are bare-footed human prints, and others are from the Skaven. Once discovered, following the tracks is easy despite the chaotic movements they reflect. They follow the road and disappear into the mine.

Snee's plan has always been to blow up the mine one hundred yards or so into the mountain, a good distance from the Skaven outpost. He wants it to be a spectacular blast leaving no chance of repair. He has had some logistical problems obtaining enough black powder, so the explosion has not occurred yet. A shipment of powder has recently arrived from the picket near Brass Keep, and so the detonation is imminent. In addition, he has had his Warp-grinder team get to work on weakening the rocks around the blast area to ensure even more destruction.

If the Characters have been taking their time and showing little urgency during their journey to Unterfraus and their exploration of the village, then the GM could decide that this explosion occurs as they begin to make their way up towards the mine. This prevents pursuit of the Skaven raiders. Otherwise, the Characters have time to enter the mine and potentially prevent the explosion.

The mine entrance is easy to spot. There is a railway leading into the darkness, and some equipment is messily strewn about the site. There is a stone-built foundry, whose fires have been left to die, and some wooden sheds that are used as workshops and for storage. Two railway wagons are parked outside, laden with ore for smelting. In one of the sheds is a pile of pig iron.

The railway follows the main route into the mine for a few hundred yards, but the mine works soon split into several branches. A **Difficult (-20) Track** Test reveals the route taken by the villagers. If the Characters choose the wrong route, then they are spotted by a Clanrat sentry who waits for them to go before sneaking off to notify his superiors. This gives the Characters no time to find the correct route, and the mine is exploded a few minutes later, when they are exploring a different section.

If they choose the correct route, then the sentry alerts his fellows of the Characters' approach. This may result in a pursuit with the sentry having a head start of 5. The Pursuit should be continued for 5 rounds. If the sentry is caught in that time, the Characters may deal with him and creep up on the demolition crew (though the GM may decide that Brakit performs the demolition if they take too long). If the Pursuit is inconclusive after 5 rounds, the sentry runs into the demolition crew a short distance ahead of the Characters.

If the sentry breaks away, the Skaven remaining in this section use their advantage to ambush the Characters from the shadows,

and then retreat to safety. They, of course, have no desire to be caught in the blast or on the wrong side of it, and so fight with an eye to fleeing before it is too late.

Brakit is a Warlock-Engineer armed with a Warplock Pistol. He is accompanied by three Skavenslaves, three Clanrats, a Clanrat Pawleader, and two Weapon Crew equipped with a Warp-grinder.

The Warp-grinder that was used to help excavate the Skaven outpost has also been used to widen the tunnel section to allow the raiding party through, and the captured villagers back. It is also being used to weaken the rock formations around the black powder barrels. Once the operators realise they are being attacked, they turn the Warp-grinder against the Characters with unpredictable results.

Ignition

Explosives expert Brakit is in charge of the detonation of the black powder. He has already arranged the barrels of powder along the mine area. When the Characters arrive he is close to finishing laying out his slow match. All he needs to do is roll out another 20 yd of match and light it. If the Characters have acted well so far, they should have an opportunity to stop him, but it is not easy.

Brakit is well aware of the need to keep the Skaven presence secret, and so is reluctant to detonate the explosives while there are still some Skaven on the wrong side of the blast. On the other hand, he has no compunction over killing his own kind. Burying his comrades under tonnes of rock could solve two problems. This, of course, means that the Characters are also at risk of being caught in the explosion.

Anyone in the middle of the rockfall has no chance of survival, and so Characters should probably only be caught at the edge of the blast. That will be dangerous enough. If confronted by the Characters, Brakit attempts to light the match and then run as fast as he can away from the explosion.



THE WARP-GRINDER

The Warp-grinder is an experimental Skaven device for speedy excavation. It can cut through the hardest rock formations in a matter of moments. It is powered by Warpstone, and thus potentially very unstable. The Warp-grinder is a Major Corrupting Influence.

The Warp-grinder projects a flickering arc of green-black dark magic that rips through everything it touches.

The Warp-grinder consists of a Warpstone-tipped staff connected to a brass-jacketed Warpstone condenser by a tangle of hoses and wires. It requires a crew of two: one to carry the condenser and one to operate the staff.

The Warp-grinder can cut a 5-ft diameter tunnel through most kinds of rock at a Movement rate of 2. While it was not designed as a weapon, it can be deadly at short range. Of a two-Skaven Warp-grinder crew, the one with the staff can attack with the Warp-grinder, and the Skaven with the condenser uses a hand weapon. Enc is shared between the crew.

Weapon	Price	Enc	Availability	Reach	Damage	Qualities and Flaws
Warp-grinder	N/A	4	Skaven only	Long	+12	Penetrating, Slow, Tiring, Warpstone

Like most products of Clan Skryre's technomancy, the Warp-grinder is dangerously unreliable. If a Fumble is indicated, roll on the following table:

1d10 Roll	Result
1	<i>Cave-in!</i> If fighting underground the tunnel collapses, burying the Warp-grinder and its crew. They suffer d10 damage and gain a number of <i>Entangled</i> conditions equal to the number rolled on the dice. Everyone else within 5 yd suffers d10-3 damage from falling debris. The tunnel is blocked and impassable. If above ground, ignore this result.
2-6	<i>Click... click...</i> Something has come loose inside the Warp-grinder, and it will not operate until it is repaired by passing a Very Hard (-30) Trade (Engineering) Test .
7-8	<i>Overheat.</i> The condenser is running dangerously hot. The Warp-grinder cuts rock at twice the normal rate, or does +16 damage if used as a weapon. However, if used for a further two turns the Warp-grinder explodes as described below.
9-0	<i>Explosion!</i> The Warp-grinder explodes with Damage +12 and Blast 5.

The Kärzburdger Crest

Brakit has found that Yellow Fang agents working at a military picket at Brass Keep are a good source of gunpowder, and over the past few weeks he has used their help to assemble a small stash of kegs. The Kärzburdger crest is stamped onto these kegs, providing a clear clue to their, albeit unwitting, involvement. If Characters reach the kegs before the explosion is set off, they can retrieve 12 kegs decorated with the crests. If they arrive after the explosion, a shattered piece of keg decorated with the crest can be found in the rubble on an **Average (+20) Perception Test**.

Characters may like to take kegs of gunpowder and use them as weapons later on in the adventure. This is possible, but not very practical. Provided they are kept dry the kegs count as Bombs (WFRP, page 295) but have an Enc of 2. They could be used to attack structures, in which case they inflict twice the damage they otherwise would.



Aftermath

If the Characters manage to prevent the Skaven from blowing up the mine then they will have decisions to make. They may feel obliged to follow the adventure deeper into the mountain, despite being ordered to report back to Middenheim as soon as they know the cause of Vogel's wounds (which they should have worked out by now). They already have some useful information, the Kärzburdger black powder, and perhaps some Skaven corpses.

The residual lurid Warp-glow and fragility of the Warp-grinder created passages are foreboding even to the Skaven. The residue of Dhar that pervades them should be off-putting to any Wizard, and count as a Minor Corrupting Influence to all who use them.

If the Characters do continue, the first area they will come across is likely to be the Skaven outpost. This is well defended, although Sneee and the majority of the raiding party are accompanying the captured villagers and are long gone.

Beyond the outpost things will get increasingly more dangerous. The size and power of Skaven parties will grow considerably, and so too will the likelihood of running into even more terrible creatures. If Sneee or other warlords perceive the Characters as a threat, then they make sure to pit strong forces against them. Any Characters who decide to enter the Skaven Under-Empire are bound to realise their error sooner or later.

If the Skaven succeed at blowing up the mine, the party will have no chance of following up this line of investigation, or any hope of ever finding the people of Unterfraus. This section of the mine will be completely unworkable and would take a large gang of professional miners many weeks to fix.

The Characters will have time to investigate the village after the explosion. Eventually, a company of the Baron of Holzbek's soldiers will turn up to cordon off the area and go about their own heavy-handed and largely fruitless investigation. A few weeks later flyers on behalf of the Barony of Holzbek will be seen around Middenheim, telling of great new work opportunities to be had in Unterfraus for hard workers with mining experience.

The Characters are likely to come across enough evidence to give them a decent idea of what has happened to the people of Unterfraus. However, they need some very concrete proof of Rat-people if they are to put forward such an outlandish theory. Even if they are successful in convincing the authorities, the incident is officially put down to a simple mining disaster.

Rewards

Good roleplaying and clever thinking should be rewarded, but there are additional XP for the following:

- ☉ 20–40 points for eliminating the Skaven in and around the mine
- ☉ 15 points for discovering the mine
- ☉ 15 points for discovering the Kärzburdger crest
- ☉ 10 points for exploring Unterfraus

If Skaven bodies are taken from Unterfraus and exhibited in Middenheim increase the Evidence Score by two.

No doubt, some fanciful thinkers are inclined to think that the incident was caused by the return of the Harlequin Hurdy-gurdyist of Hovelhof, and if the Characters spread the story themselves they undermine their case and reduce the Evidence Score by one.



◆ GRIFFON DOWN ◆



Several days journey east of Middenheim, in the Barony of Holzbek along the Kleiflusch River, lies the sleepy little village of Gladbeich. Lately, dreadful cries are reported to shake the very stones of the nearby Middle Mountains at all hours. While this would normally clearly be Baron Holzbek's responsibility, he is tied up with a series of skirmishes against local Goblin tribes. However, Holzbek sent a request to the Graf asking for support when a Beastmen scout was spotted in the area. An unusual detail in his message noted that the 'scout' apparently had the head of a giant rat...

TEST-TEST!

Maliss Manrack has been test firing the Moonbreaker cannon. A golden opportunity to fire upon a moving target presented itself when the Skaven spotted a Griffon soaring over the Middle Mountains, allowing for the gathering of important information by blowing it out of the sky and inspecting the resultant corpse.

An apprentice Warlock-Engineer and his guards are even now preparing to set out in the footsteps of their forward lookout to inspect the Griffon's corpse in order to gather data. Unfortunately for the Skaven (and the Characters), though it is badly wounded, and mutating from the Warp-lightning it was blasted with, the Griffon is still alive.

ON THE ROAD

Gladbeich lies 35 miles east of Middenheim. The first portion of the journey there is pleasant, at least, as the Characters can travel along the Old Forest Road which boasts frequent Road Warden patrols and comfortable coaching inns. The stretch of the road they'll travel on passes through one of the only portions of the Drakwald that might be described as tame, though only a fool lets down their guard.



At just over halfway to the village, the Characters have to leave well-trodden paths when they arrive at the Kleiflusch River crossing. A day's journey along the river's northern bank will take them near directly to Gladbeich. The Kleiflusch is filled with peat, smells of iron, and no one drinks it gladly. The soil along the banks is a soft, boot-sucking loam, which makes travel wearisome.

THE VILLAGE OF GLADBEICH

The first glimpse the Characters get of Gladbeich are wide fields of barley that surround the settlement. A modest village of just over a hundred souls, Gladbeich is notionally protected by a log palisade covered with moss and a haphazard array of spikes.

The village's wooden buildings vary in appearance from the sturdy to the precarious. All have low-peaked roofs covered with grassy sod. Four farmhouses and a coaching inn, the *Floodstone*, are the biggest buildings in Gladbeich. Each of the farmhouses is fortified by solid reinforced-wood fences. The Kleiflusch runs directly through the town and powers a small water wheel connected to an old grain mill. A makeshift wooden bridge lies over the river.

The only stone construction evident is a small shrine dedicated to Ulric that stands in the middle of Gladbeich on a small hillock. The outer walls of the shrine are covered with weapons in various stages of rust, though if one of the Characters enters the shrine they'll see that the weapons covering one inner wall are pristine. This is effectively the village armoury. Armour, swords and bows needed to equip six people are missing.

The main gate is guarded by two nervous looking spear-wielding guards, one of whom asks after the Characters' business with a slightly tremulous voice. They look visibly relieved if the Characters reveal that they've come from Middenheim. They are reluctant to answer questions, merely directing the Characters to the inn, saying 'You'll be wanting Reeve Klein — ask after her at the Floodstone.' They look very askance at any Wizards, but are especially deferential if there happen to be any priests present — even a Sigmarrite one.

As the Characters pass through the gate, a horrible shrieking cry echoes over the village from the East. It seems to be far off, but still resonant and clear — a grating, shrill screech that lingers in the air, echoing off the looming Middle Mountains. The guards shudder and mutter, *'Ulric deliver us from the Beast'*.

The Characters see almost no one about the village, though they'll be furtively eyed from lookout cupolas atop two of the farmhouses. Gladbeich's history is a long saga of quiet years, punctuated by occasional raids by Forest Goblins and Beastmen. The most excitement the village can recall (before current events) occurred several decades ago when a Grey Wizard living near the village was exposed as an evil sorcerer and burned. The villagers remain exceedingly wary of Wizards and any party which contains one will suffer a **-10% Penalty** to all Fellowship based Tests.

THE FLOODSTONE

Named for a large granite boulder that came down from the Middle Mountains long ago during a storm and which now sits prominently in the inn's outer courtyard, the *Floodstone* is the centre of Gladbeich's social life. The innkeeper, Arvor Gilbransson is in his 50s with a long grey beard and bright eyes. He runs the inn with the help of his wife, Karin, his two daughters, their husbands, and several grandchildren. He is deeply worried, though he tries to put a brave face on it. One of his sons-in-law is missing, and the irregular haunting cries of the Beast are getting on his nerves.

Gilbransson meets with any guests, apologising for the present upheaval. If the Characters obscure their reasons for being in Gladbeich, for whatever reasons, but look like competent adventurous sorts, he tries to hire them to have a look into what happened to the missing villagers and what the origin of the horrible cries might be. He offers room and board, along with a small purse. If the Characters represent themselves as the Graf's agents, Gilbransson looks visibly relieved and says, *'Ah! You'll be wanting the Reeve. I'll have one of the lads fetch her. A moment!'*

IDA KLEIN – REEVE OF GLADBEICH

Klein leads the small village, answering to Baron Holzbek for the harvest. After long, relatively quiet years since the incident with the Grey Wizard, Ida is beside herself with worry. As the leader of a remote rural village, Ida and her folk are superstitious and feel that the Beast is a curse inflicted upon the village. Much talk has been made of the recent sighting of wolves led by a snowy white pack leader, and of a gigantic stag that lingered long near the river, gazing to the east, and of the rat-headed creature seen prowling the hills near sunset. All these omens were followed by the roaring from the woods, a sound full of anguish, rage and despair. It drew several intrepid villagers into the depths of the forest. The search party that was sent after them was well-armed, but there's been no sign of any of them returning.

Tensions within the village are high, and Ida's leadership is being questioned. At this point, she's even willing to accept the help of a wizard. Ida has long silver hair, warm brown eyes and very sharp, prominent cheekbones.



THE MISSING & THE ANXIOUS

Reeve Klein soon arrives, as visibly relieved to meet the Characters as Gilbransson was. She swiftly requests and is granted a private meeting room at the *Floodstone*, inviting the Characters to join her for a drink and to share what she knows. This is completely necessary, for the second any of the villagers in the bar hear that the Characters are from the Graf, they are bombarded with questions about what they intend to do. The villagers also begin yelling at Klein, demanding action or tearfully begging for help in locating their missing friends and relatives.

Ida can tell the party the following information:

- ☠ An incredibly loud sound from off to the east was heard 12 days ago, one that shook the Middle Mountains, and everyone in Gladbeich heard it. A farmer and ex-miner named Friedal swore to Klein that it reminded him of explosives he'd heard Dwarfs use. (This was a clap of thunder that resulted from Warp-lightning.)
- ☠ A few days later, one of the villager's hunters disappeared. Another villager went missing the next day and the terrible, mournful cry from the woods to the east, near the Middle Mountain foothills, was heard for the first time late that night.
- ☠ A search party set out the next morning. They sent word that they'd seen what looked to be a Beastmen scout with the head of a large rat along the edge of the foothills. Klein sent word to Baron Holzbek of their plight that very night. The village hasn't heard or seen anyone from the search party since — it's been almost a whole week since they disappeared.
- ☠ The same awful cries have been heard sporadically since, both during the day, and late at night. The villagers think they've been cursed and refer to whatever is making the sound as 'the Beast'.
- ☠ A few days after the search party disappeared, a message from the Baron came, saying affairs with the Greenskins were detaining him, but he had sent word to the Graf asking for assistance for Gladbeich.

The Reeve has waited in desperate hope since. She has forbidden any villagers from investigating until help came from the Graf, but it is all she can do to keep everyone near the village. She notes that they are *'people of Ulric all, and not without courage'* — but that they are farmers not fighters. Ida is as worried about a Beastman raid as she is about the Beast, and suspects that the creature might be a monster unleashed by Beastmen.

The Reeve thinks the best plan is for the Characters to head to the east, determine if they can deal with whatever is out there, or return to inform her what they are facing if they cannot, though she is open to whatever the Characters have to suggest; however, she will not risk more of her people until she knows exactly what they are up against. If the Characters mention Skaven, beyond the context of a single rat-headed Beastman, she looks upset, stating that this is *'no time for levity'*.

Whatever the Characters decide to do, the villagers of Gladbeich are desperately curious and immediately begin calling out questions the second they and the Reeve emerge from the private room. Klein relates a somewhat grandiose version of whatever she and the Characters agreed. *'These brave folk have come from the chambers of the Graf himself to see what is to be done about the Beast'*, and so on. The gathered crowd looks hopefully at the Characters until Gilbransson takes a quiet cue from Klein and clears them out of the *Floodstone*.

A GUIDING HAND

As they leave, a slender teenage girl clad in a green cloak approaches the Characters and declares, *'You'll be needing a guide and that's me.'* The Reeve protests, *'No Veronika!'* and refuses to countenance it. Play it out with the Characters — the young hunter swears she knows the woods to the east like the back of her hand. The Reeve doesn't wish to credit this, but if the Characters persist, admits that, despite her age, the girl is a gifted tracker. Veronika is a hunter and her father, who taught her all he knew of such matters, is among the missing. If the Characters side with the Reeve, the girl approaches them later to make another passionate pitch and reveal her missing father. If they still refuse, she slips after them soon after they leave.

It is early afternoon by the time the Characters have spoken with the young hunter and they're likely tired from the road. Determine whether they intend to set out immediately, or spend the night at the *Floodstone* first before getting underway in the morning. If they set out immediately they must make **Challenging (+0) Endurance** Tests to avoid taking a *Fatigued* Condition. However, they find the beast just before nightfall and before the Skaven Look-See Claw Team. If not, they arrive nearly simultaneously with the Skaven the following day.

THAT HIDEOUS WARBLING

The missing villagers have been torn to pieces by the injured Griffon. Griffons are normally proud and stoic beasts, screaming either to terrify their prey, or to signal to one another. This Griffon shrieks sporadically because the Warpstone-energy that seared its body is causing it to painfully mutate in twisted spurts.

Its makeshift lair is a cave wound through the roots of a massive tree, beneath a hillock. It has dragged the corpses of a few of the villagers it has killed to its lair, but others still lie where they were slain — very atypical behaviour for a predatory beast.

Anyone tracking the Beast must make a **Challenging (+0) Outdoor Survival** Test once they reach the woods 3 miles to the east of Gladbeich. While tracks appear prominently when they are first made here, the loamy ground soon covers them up, making tracking difficult.

CAT AND MOUSE

SLs	Effects
4 or more	The hunters find the Beast within an hour and can <i>Surprise</i> it, sneaking up under the cover of its pained cries.
0 to 3	The hunters find the Beast, but it takes a few hours. If they set out the first night, they will have -10 penalty to sight-based tests due to the heavy cool mists of the twilight forest.
-1 or less	The Beast finds the hunters just after night has fallen the first night (-20 to sight-based tests in darkness, unless they have <i>Night Vision</i> , carry torches, and so on), or while they are slogging through mire the following day. It <i>Surprises</i> its foes on the first round of combat.

Look-See Claw Team

Not long after the Griffon was shot out of the sky, Maliss Manrack granted Apprentice Warlock Engineer Krat Snagglefang command of a team of 10 Clan Mange Clanrats and two Weapon Crew armed with a Warplock Jezzail. He was ordered to find the dead creature in order to study the trauma caused by the shot using esoteric callipers and an odd device that measures Warpstone energy residuals.

If the Characters visit Gladbeich before going to Unterfraus, they beat the Skaven to the Beast by a day. How much information the Look-See Claw Team can then derive depends on how much fighting the Characters effected the Beast's cannon wound, whether or not they left the corpse to rot in the forest, or perhaps burned it. It may well be that the Characters killed the Beast, but still left everything the Look-See Claw Team needed (much to their chattering amusement — stupid man-things).

If the Characters visit Gladbeich after going to Unterfraus, they find the Beast at about the same time the Skaven do. Have fun describing the two groups blinking at each other over the shrieking and apoplectic Griffon.

Snagglefang promises vague and nebulous rewards to his troops, but threatens them with exceedingly clear and inventive punishments, if they fail to bring down the Beast. However, if things start to go poorly, Snagglefang certainly isn't above retreating to let the Characters do the heavy-lifting, then immediately returning to retrieve the data by tricking the

Characters away from the corpse, ordering his troops to engage them in a running battle as he assumes they won't have any idea that he is interested in the corpse itself.

How it Went Down

If the Characters fight off the Skaven and kill Snagglefang, they'll find his strange callipers and unusual device on his body, along with several parchments denoting various bizarre diagrams, covered with Skaven writing. The odd device starts making peculiar clicking sounds when brought near the Beast's corpse, with higher pitched and faster ones, if it is brought near the charred wound, or the seared wing's end. The blank spots awaiting notations across the papers surely indicate he was attempting to gather data.

Presuming the Characters dealt with the Beast, the villagers, though grief stricken over their loss, still do their best to hold a small celebration in their honour. If Veronika Troger survives, Reeve Klein makes a very big deal of the young hunter's bravery, in part, to give her people a little pride back after their losses. If the Characters played any part in directly saving Veronika, Ida quietly gives them a purse worth a Gold Crown apiece as they are preparing to leave Gladbeich along with her sincerest regard. The villagers are *highly* sceptical of any tails of 'Skaven', though they readily accept that the Characters defeated a pack of very rat-like Beastmen.

Scurry-Flee!

Snagglefang's first priority is to survive, which predicates bringing back some data his master can use. If the Characters prove to be more than his '*clearly bad-feeble disloyal-false underlings*' can handle, the Apprentice will take to his heels, losing some of his equipment and papers as he goes (which the Characters can retrieve if they follow his trail some).

Rewards

Good roleplaying and clever thinking should be rewarded, but there are additional XP for the following:

- 20-40 points for eliminating Krat and the Look-See Claw Team
- 30 points for slaying the Griffon
- 15 points for discovering the Griffon
- 10 points for dealing with the Villagers in Gladbeich

If Skaven bodies are taken from Gladbeich and exhibited in Middenheim, increase the Evidence Score by two.

If Snagglefang escapes having observed the Griffon, his notes are of great help to Maliss Manrack who can devote more resources to the advancement of his plans, reduce the Evidence Score by two.



The Beast – Mutated Griffon

The Beast's hindquarters are coloured like the skin of a leopard. Its left wing has been seared in half, with a spur of charred bone exposed. A charred, gaping hole is clearly visible in its side, just beneath where the wing joint connects to the body. About the hole are a ring of flailing tendrils, gleaming eyes, and jutting teeth. Mottled scaly skin, like that of a snake, creeps far out across its flanks like a spreading stain from the burned hole. Whenever the Beast screams the wound also moans in unison, causing cracks to appear in the burnt flesh that weep clear fluid. As opponents draw near, a snake-like tongue covered with sharp tiny barbed-fangs shoots out of the Beast's wound to ensnare prey and drag them to it.

Should the Characters succeed in killing the beast, if they study the mutated wound, they can clearly see that it is surrounded by heavily burned flesh that glistens with a greenish tinge.

THE BEAST – MUTATED GRIFFON

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
6	55	45	50	50	45	60	–	20	40	–	51

Traits: Armour 2, Bite (Hooked Beak) +9, Corruption (Minor), Distracting (Horrible Cries), Fury, Night Vision, Size (Enormous), Razor-Tooth Tongue Attack +8 (10), Weapon (Talons) +9

In a Bad Way – The Beast is heavily wounded, and its Wounds total is lowered to reflect this.

The Guide – Veronika Troger

Veronika has a local reputation for biting off more than she can chew, but as she is inclined to share the proceeds of these hunts with the other villagers, she is well liked in the village. Despite the fact that a great deal of local wildlife has fled the Griffon's wrath, she will have no trouble locating food during an extended trip into the woods, assuming the Characters like roots, bugs and berries.

Quick on her feet and not inclined to wait for those who struggle to move through the woodlands as quick as she, Veronika is likely to travel far ahead of the rest of the Characters. This fact is likely to get her into trouble should she accompany them unless she can be convinced of the dangers of letting the group get too spread out.

VERONIKA TROGER – HUNTER (BRASS 4)

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	30	53	32	43	30	33	40	30	44	31	19

Traits: Ranged (Bow) +8 (50), Weapon (Dagger) +5

Skills: Charm Animal 49, Climb 37, Cool 49, Endurance 48, Gossip 36, Lore (Beasts 35, Middenland 35), Melee (Basic) 35, Intuition 35, Outdoor Survival 45, Perception 40, Ranged (Bow 63, Sling 58), Secret Signs (Hunter) 35, Set Trap 45, Stealth (Rural) 43

Talents: Accurate Shot 2, Coolheaded, Doomed (*Water shall bring thy salvation and thy end*), Hardy, Marksman, Orientation, Rover, Warrior Born

Trappings: Bow and 12 Arrows, Cloak, Clothing, Dagger

The Engineer – Krat Snagglegang

Snagglegang is a Skaven with a bone to pick with Skavendom at large. The bone is a sharpened femur taken from the last of Manrack's apprentices, whose untimely death quite conveniently opened a more senior position for Krat. The Engineer is determined to prove his worth to Mallis, whom he views with a mixture of admiration and outright jealousy. The Griffon, he knows, is just the start of something so much bigger.

APPRENTICE WARLOCK ENGINEER KRAT SNAGGLEFANG

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
5	30	40	30	30	40	45	30	40	30	20	12

Traits: Armour 2, Night Vision, Ranged (Warlock Pistol) +8, Weapon (Sharpened Femur) +7

Skills: Ranged (Skaven Ranged Weapons) 50

Trappings: Esoteric Callipers, Skaven Warp-counter, Hand Weapon (Sharpened Femur), Warlock Pistol and Ammunition for 12 Shots

◆ THE ROAD EAST ◆



The Characters return to Middenheim should be uncomplicated, though give them opportunities to stop at a coaching inn or farmstead in order to pick up any gossip they have missed, share stories of their exploits, and show off Skaven corpses.

Once they return to the Middenpalaz arrangements are made for them to quickly meet with the Graf. Boris Todbringer seems increasingly vital and energetic. This time he does not invite Siegfried Prunkvoll to attend the audience and his attitude to the Characters is of increasing high regard. He asks them to summarise the situations they came across during their investigations., listens as they describe their adventures, then nods to Breughal who leaves the audience chamber.

'Thank you for your service,' he says. 'This is a tricky situation requiring discretion, I may need the Kärzburdgers' support in days to come, so cannot be seen to grant permission to interfere with their affairs, but we have given this circumstance serious thought. Please take your leave, my agent will meet you outside and elaborate.'

THE PRINCESS REQUESTS

The Characters are led out of the audience chamber to the anteroom, where they find 'Princess' Katarina waiting for them with an escort of six Knights Panther. The Characters are immediately struck by her serious demeanor. Gone is the naive young lady they may remember. Recent events have brought to the fore previously hidden reserves of Todbringer steel.

'Thank you for coming,' she says. 'Please join me. There is something I wish to talk to you about.' The escort forms up around the Princess and the Characters, and they set off in the direction of the gardens. The 'Princess' talks as they walk.

'It's true then?' she asks. 'The Skaven are real?' She listens to what the Characters have to say, briskly bringing them back to the point if they ramble.

'All this time,' she says with genuine sadness. 'We all laughed at anyone who made a fuss. Locked them up, even. It's terrible. My father would like to offer you assistance, but it is imperative that he isn't seen to be interfering with Kärzburdger business. They own the lands around Brass Keep, and resent my family for our good fortune.'

She produces a scroll and hands it to the Characters.

'So I am handing you this charter. It grants you the right to investigate matters at the picket on authority of the Todbringers, but should anyone ask you who gave it to you, tell them the truth: that it was me, not my father. We all accept that answers to some pressing questions can be found at Brass Keep, but if we dispatch a regiment of troops we could find ourselves at war with the Kärzburdgers. Go there and find out all you can, but only make the involvement of my family plain if people refuse to help.'



'Your orders then are to travel to the picket, present yourselves and ask for an audience with Emmiline von Kärzburdger. You are to explain to her discreetly that the Todbringers have concerns that Skaven seem to be preparing action against Brass Keep, and they are able to deploy a machine to shoot things down from the sky. Reassure her that we have no wish to ordain her family's affairs, but that any assistance will be greatly appreciated. Do not seek to oblige more from her than she gives willingly.'

Katarina invites questions at this point, likely topics of conversation are given here. Even if the Characters are not curious, she warns them not to go to the Keep itself, and to be careful not to offend the Kärzburdgers.

Why are the Kärzburdgers not more cooperative?

'The Kärzburdgers were Grafts of Middenheim during the reign of Emperor Magnus, but our own family won the throne a short while later. Many living Kärzburdgers see our rise as a usurpation of their rights. Even those who acknowledge our rule would still regard any interference in their estate as an unwarranted provocation.'

Could they be working with the Skaven?

'The Kärzburdgers are prickly and resentful, but since they lost the throne they have not been treasonous or consorted with Dark Powers. They have as much to lose from the corruption of Chaos as any other noble family of the Empire, so I don't think it is likely.'

Why is Brass Keep guarded by a picket?

'Legends say the keep was built by a Necromancer who was slain by Sigmar. Later it was garrisoned by soldiers from Middenheim, but it was always costly to man. Accidents occurred there, soldiers fell to corruption. During the Great War Against Chaos an advance party of damned men pledged to the Plague God, the Blighters, stormed the Keep. They have lurked there ever since, kept alive by magical means. The Keep is atop a mountain pass, hard to besiege, and the Kärzburdgers argue that it is better to contain the Blighters there than having to storm and garrison a cursed castle. The Picket is there to keep an eye on the situation and react if the Blighters sally forth.'

Do you expect us to enter the Keep?

'That'd be suicide! The Blighters are said to be indomitable. Each is the size of a bloated Ogre, armoured in enchanted plate, and bearing weapons that can kill with a scratch. They have been known to summon daemonic servants and command vile sorcery. Even proximity to the Keep invites infection by their diseases. Observe it if you will, but don't venture beyond the picket lines.'

We need horses/weaponry/armour/equipment

'Middenheim is grateful for your service. Anything you need just let us know. But employ haste, present Watch Commander Schutzmann with any requests and be ready to leave in the morning.'

The problem is not with Brass Keep, it somewhere else in the Middle Mountains

'But where? If nothing else investigating the situation at Brass Keep may provide us with more guidance.'

LEAVING MIDDENHEIM

This rest of this chapter covers the Characters journey to the Picket. From Middenheim, the road leads through Hovelhoff, Hohenfahrt and Lindenheim, and from there into the mountains via Ferlangst Tower, Mittler Castle, and Hope Square to the Picket.

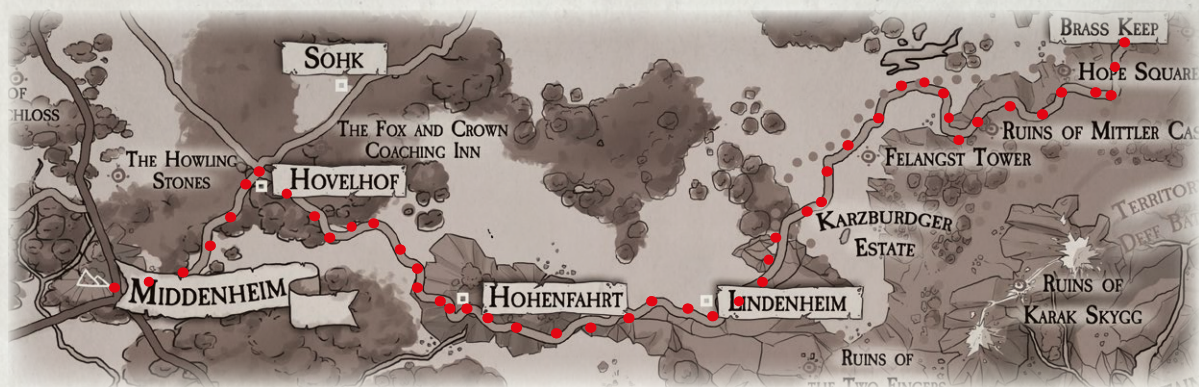


Before setting out, the Characters are given horses (bearing the city brand), if they need them. They also have the Charter given to them by Katarina, bearing the Todbringer seal. It commands all loyal subjects, servants and officers of the Graf to allow the party to pass and not obstruct them. It does not command anyone to help them though: they must accomplish their mission themselves. Illiterate folk of the Grand Duchy of Middenheim are impressed by the seal, and might be talked into giving assistance; but those who can read study the document, then do the absolute minimum to comply with its demands.

The road from Middenheim to Hovelhof runs north-east from the base of the Fauschlag. A road runs east from Hovelhof to Hohenfahrt. This road continues through the Middle Mountain foothills through Lindenheim and on to Ferlangst Tower. This outpost marks the border of the Kärzburdger estate, and is the best place to rest before the terrain becomes mountainous. From there the Characters can strike out past the ruins of Mittler Castle. The penitentiary at Hope Square is the last place to find shelter before reaching the Picket.

If the Characters want to push on as fast as possible, they do not need to stop at every location, and benefit from the fact that they likely reach the picket ahead of any Yellow Fang agents or rumours of their activities. However, they are more likely to suffer *Fatigue* conditions. Ask the Characters if they want to make each stage of the journey at full pelt, or at an easy pace.

THE ROAD TO BRASS KEEP



Stage	Points of Interest	Riding Full Pelt	Easy Pace
1	Middenheim – Hovelhof – Hohenfahrt It is about 10 miles to Hovelhof and then a further 25 to Hohenfahrt, on decent roads with no sharp inclines.	It takes 1 day to reach Hohenfahrt. Each rider and horse ought to take a Hard (-10) Endurance Test or suffer a <i>fatigued</i> condition on reaching Hohenfahrt.	It takes 2 days to reach Hohenfahrt. The Characters reach Hovelhof in the early afternoon of the first day, stay there, and then make Hohenfahrt the late afternoon of the second day.
2	Hohenfahrt – Lindenheim – Ferlangst Tower It's about 10 miles to Lindenheim and another 10 to the Tower. The road is fair, but becomes steeper as it climbs into the mountains.	It takes 1 day to reach Ferlangst Tower. Each rider and horse ought to take a Difficult (-20) Endurance Test or suffer a <i>Fatigued</i> condition on reaching Ferlangst Tower. An Astonishing Failure indicates a disaster such as a lamed or winded horse. The party must stop at Lindenheim	It takes 2 days to reach Ferlangst Tower. The Characters reach Lindenheim in the late afternoon of the first day, stay there, and then make Ferlangst Tower in the late afternoon of the second day.
3	Ferlangst Tower – Mittler Castle – Hope Square – Picket The road becomes increasingly narrow, treacherous and mountainous, even those who travel at a fast pace need to stop to negotiate tricky sections.	The party takes 2 days to reach the Picket. They can decide whether they want to stop for the night at either Mittler Castle (which they will reach early afternoon) or Hope Square (which they will reach in the evening). If they leave from Mittler Castle, they reach the Picket late afternoon of the second day. If they leave from Hope Square, they reach the Picket at noon of the second day. Each day each rider and horse ought to take a Very Difficult (-30) Endurance Test or suffer a <i>Fatigued</i> condition on reaching the Picket. An Astonishing Failure indicates a disaster such as a lamed or winded horse. Meaning the party can only make it to the next stage by nightfall, and must move at an Easy Pace from then on.	It takes three days to reach the Picket. The party arrives at Mittler Castle in the late afternoon of the first day, Hope Square the late afternoon of the second day, and the Picket late afternoon of the third day. Each day each rider and horse ought to take an Easy (+40) Endurance Test or suffer a <i>Fatigued</i> condition from the day's hard climbing.

THE YELLOW FANG MOBILISED

It is likely that the Characters have identified a number of Middenheim's residents who are members of the Yellow Fang, and either dealt with them personally, or suggested that Ulrich Schutzmann look into them.

However, if the Characters have not uncovered and dealt with all the members of the Yellow Fang, the remaining cultists band together and ride off to alert their comrade at the Picket. If any of these Yellow Fang members are still at large when the Characters leave for the Picket, they congregate together with two Sewer Jacks from Raina's patrol, acquire horses and give chase to the Characters, hoping to overtake them.

The Yellow Fang group are a day behind the Characters. They ride hard, making Hohenfahrt the evening of the first day, and Ferlangst Tower on the late afternoon of the second. On the third day they reach Hope Square. However, during their journey one of their horses becomes badly winded between Mittler Castle and Hope Square. The Yellow Fang waylay a wagon returning from delivering supplies to Hope Square in order to get replacement mounts.

If the Yellow Fang have overtaken the party then the Characters pass the bloody results of their activity. The cart, the bodies of the drovers, and the corpse of the lamed horse have all been pushed off the road into the valley below. Blood stains remain however, and can be seen by any Character who passes an **Average (+20) Perception** Test. Once they are spotted any Character looking where they lead sees the wrecked cart and corpses.

The Yellow Fang arrive at the Picket around noon of the fourth day of their trip. This means they arrive one day behind the Characters, if the Characters moved as quickly as possible.

If the Characters moved at an easy pace, it is likely that the Yellow Fang overtake them during the journey. This could happen in one of two ways.

If the Yellow Fang arrives at a settlement or coaching inn at which the Characters are staying, they do not stop. They know the Characters have a certain degree of authority due to the Todbringers' patronage, so they fear that assailing the Characters in any way would rouse bystanders. So, in this circumstance the Yellow Fang ride on through the night. This is an exhausting regimen, and if the Characters confront them later on Yellow Fang members who made the journey suffer from a *Fatigued* Condition.

If the Yellow Fang catch up with the Characters on the road, they initially hang back and try to appraise the situation. Allow the Characters to make **Perception** Tests (difficulty depending on how vigilant they are being). If they pass, they see a group of horsemen trying to keep out of sight on the road behind them.

What occurs next depends on the disposition of the party. The Yellow Fang are not skilled fighters, and they know that the Characters are capable individuals, so they avoid a fair fight. They wait until the Characters stop for the night and then overtake, or may use what magic and other skills are at their disposal to hurt and inconvenience the Characters. If they follow the Characters to Mittler Castle they try to ambush them individually during the night.

EVIDENCE OF IGNORANCE

Depending on how well the Characters have been doing, the Yellow Fang may be in a better or worse position to confront them. As mentioned, only those figures that the Characters failed to kill, or identify to Schutzmann, are able to pursue the party. Additionally, the Yellow Fang's fate have been affected by how much evidence of Skaven has been uncovered.

Current Evidence Score	Description	Effect
Undeniable	The Skaven of Under-Middenheim are outraged at the failure of their many safeguards. The Yellow Fang in Middenheim are either failures or complicit, and assassins are dispatched to finish off most of them.	Pick a single member of the Yellow Fang who is still at large. They are the only survivor of a Skaven purge of the cult. They beg the Characters for aid against a pack of Clan Scrutens Clanrats that now pursue them. They prove a useful source of information — if they survive.
Plausible Denial	Evidence mounts that the Skaven are real, and the paranoid creators are worried. They send any remaining Yellow Fang members to track the Characters, and divert the rest of their focus to consolidating their defences in Middenheim.	No additional effect.
Deeper Denial	The Yellow Fang have clearly been doing their job as of late, and though never grateful, their Skaven masters have seen fit to invest more into the group.	You may outfit any of the Yellow Fang cultists with better armour (increase any Armour traits by 2 AP).

NEWS AND RUMOURS

Some of these rumours carry on stories that the Characters may have heard during *Death on the Reik*. Others reflect the events of *Power Behind the Throne*, albeit in a slightly garbled, hearsay form, and others still add snippets of information that advance the plot of this adventure. Where necessary, the GM may fill in any missing details from previous stories, if the Characters somehow failed to pick up the relevant information in earlier rumours.

☠ 'Do you remember the early days of the reign of Karl-Franz first of his name? People had such hopes didn't they? Here was a man of stature, bloodied in combat, son to an Imperial line who had mostly proved good statesmen, and promoters of Imperial unity. But over the last year or so he seems a different man. What's he doing to put an end to the violence between Ultrican zealots and Sigmarite fanatics? Nothing. And he's saying mutants ought to be legal citizens? They're damned to fall to forces I won't be so reckless as to even mention! He's meant to embody our nation's Defiance of the Dark! I reckon he's out of his wits, but the Empire keeps running. Someone must be pulling the strings and they're up to no good, trying to turn north and south against each other and doing who knows what else besides.'

☠ 'The Emperor has been put out of the way by the Grand Theogonist, who now has a free hand to persecute other faiths, and turn the Empire into his own theocratic tyranny in the name of Sigmar. Informants are divided as to the means used: some believe he infected the Emperor with some kind of magical illness; while others claim that the Emperor was mutated: the cult of Sigmar has always been in league with Chaos, you know!'

☠ 'Things are getting worse between Talabecland and Ostland. Both sides have mustered their armies and begun hiring mercenaries. The renowned Baumann's Blitztruppen left Middenheim just a few days ago, having recruited a lot of new bodies during the Carnival. No one knows yet which side Baumann will join; it is thought that he will see which Elector makes the better offer.'

☠ 'I heard something odd the other day. Apparently, despite all the disorder within our borders, a campaign has been arranged in conjunction with the Margrave of Parravon to quest into the grey Mountains and besiege Blood Keep. That this foul Necromancer's nest has stood upon our borders for so long without answer is a disgrace, but at last it seems someone is doing something about it, and they've brought the Bretonnians in to help. Wonderful!'

☠ 'There's trouble brewing up north of here. Baron Nikse has governed Nordland in the style of his forebears, which means he does what the Todbringers tell him to do, and all the better for it. Now some upstart count by the name of Theodric Gausser is stirring up trouble. The Guassers once ruled an independent Nordland, you see, in days before Middenheim extended her benevolent protection, and this Theodric is pretending to those in Altdorf that he's effectively taken over from the Nikses, and, therefore, the Graf. It'd be just like those cloth-headed Altdorfers to believe such piffle too.'

☠ The Sigmarite monastery at Priestlicheim, near the Barren Hills, was attacked recently. All the monks were slaughtered and the place was ransacked. Priestlicheim is on the southern bank of the Talabec, just across the river from Middenland, and the Grand Duke suspects the Sons of Ulric. Is the Graf going to side with Ostland in the dispute between the two provinces? A current or former priest of Sigmar may make an Intelligence Test to remember that the Priestlicheim monastery – known as the Temple of Leopold – was founded to study the Barren Hills and determine what afflicts the land there. Characters may already know that the land was affected by a shower of Warpstone meteorites.

☠ The Players may not put two and two together immediately, but later in the adventure they will realise that the Skaven have been stealing research and searching for clues that might lead to more warpstone.

☠ Tensions are rising between the Reikland and Talabecland, which is already on the verge of war with Ostland. An Imperial signal tower, under construction on the banks of the Reik, just south of Castle Reikguard, has been attacked several times in recent weeks, and the Dwarven building crew finally abandoned the project after another attack three days ago. (Any Dwarf Character will be outraged by this assertion, which impugns Dwarven honesty, courage, and good sense in the most insulting way), but court sources suspect that they were magically disguised Characters in the pay of the Grand Duke of Talabecland, who has been warning the capital to stay out of the growing Ostland–Talabecland dispute. The Characters should know that this is the signal tower in whose foundation they found the library of Dagmar von Wittgenstein, but the GM can drop the name of Aynjulls Isembeard to jog their memories if necessary. The most recent attack was by a group of Skaven sent to recover Dagmar's remaining books, as the Characters will discover later in this adventure.



HOVELHOF

Hovelhof is a small impoverished village, perched atop a high hill with spectacular views eastward to the mountains and southward to Middenheim. The air is sweet and clear, the upland meadows lush, and the sky is a vibrant, cloudless blue. A handful of squat huts clusters around the green, and the village is ringed by goat and cattle pens. On the village green stands a simple but dignified statue of Magnus the Pious, whose timely arrival during the Great War saved the village from the forces of Chaos that gathered around Brass Keep.

Hovelhof might be an ideal first stop on the road from Middenheim to Salzenmund, but the people of the village have a marked tendency to distrust outsiders. Hovelhof's elders petitioned the Graf to have a large inn and tavern built, further along the road and out of sight in a shallow dell. Called the *Fox and Crown*, it brings the village a small stipend income without impinging on the villagers' lives. Anyone trying to talk to the locals in Hovelhof will be told to mind their own business and go to the inn if they wish to gossip.

FOX AND CROWN

Standing a little way outside the village, the *Fox and Crown* is a good-sized inn, comparable to the *Coach and Horses* from *Mistaken Identity* (**Enemy in Shadows** page 11). Accommodation and food are available at standard rates, and apart from the occasional drunken soldier it is a peaceful and orderly place. The rooms, including the bar-room, are remarkably clean, the food is simple but of excellent quality, and the beer, brewed on the premises, is as good as any in the Empire.

Every member of the inn's staff is unfailingly pleasant and courteous, solicitous of their guests' comfort and well-being, but completely uninterested in their business. Characters who are used to being able to bribe inn staff for information on other guests, access to their rooms, or other dubious purposes find themselves facing a polite but impregnable show of incomprehension when they ask for such things at the *Fox and Crown*. Those who become angry or troublesome will be politely asked to leave, or their food is drugged with both Schlafenkraut and Slowmind (see the **Death on the Reik Companion**, page 9) so that they fall into a deep sleep and awake many hours later on a distant hillside with all their belongings set down beside them — and a case of hypothermia, if it happens to be winter.

HOHENFAHRT

The tiny hamlet of Hohenfahrt is ruled directly from Middenheim, being part of the City-State. It is not wealthy, but its people make a little money harvesting timber from the surrounding forest, quarrying slate in the foothills of the Middle Mountains, and serving travellers at the inn.

The village has shrines to both Sigmar and Ulric. There is no sign of the religious strife that is so evident elsewhere in Middenland, and if they are asked, the villagers will simply

reply that it is better to get along with everyone and be good neighbours rather than bad. The followers of Sigmar and Ulric fought side by side in the Great War, and with mutant births and Beastmen activity on the rise, it is unwise to let anything divide the Empire's people. The Graf, the Emperor and the priests are wise and educated men, so surely they can resolve any religious differences reasonably, without any need for unpleasantness.

Notable buildings along the main street include a lumberyard surrounded by a 6-ft plank palisade, another yard with cut slates piled up to more than the height of a man, a carter's stable with four heavy carts in the yard and about a dozen draft horses resting in stalls. There's a small tavern called the *Mill*, where only locals are welcome; a slightly larger tavern called the *Foresters' Arms*, which is friendlier, and a village shop that sells everything from tools to preserved foods. A local market is held on Markttag and Angestag afternoons, dealing in fresh meats and vegetables from surrounding farms.

Smaller side-streets lead off to either side of the road, leading to clusters of modest cottages where most of the villagers live. After a hundred yards or so, the buildings peter out and the road begins to climb into the foothills.

The Foresters' Arms

The first building the Characters come to is an inn called the *Foresters' Arms*. It is a two-storey building, the lower level made of stone and the upper floor of timber, with a walled courtyard containing stables, various outbuildings, and a well.

If the PCs arrive in Hohenfahrt late in the day, they should be able to find lodging here: room rates and all other prices are 10% above normal as the innkeeper takes advantage of the heavier traffic on the road as Carnival-goers return home from Middenheim. As the PCs sit down to their evening meal in the inn's bar-room, begin the event *Suspicious Behaviour*.

SUSPICIOUS BEHAVIOUR

Quartermaster Habicht at the Picket is corrupt, and he has been purchasing poor quality gunpowder from a contact in Salzenmund to disguise the fact that he is passing on the Picket's much better powder to Sergeant Brantner, who in turn passes it on to the Skaven. Habicht has paid for the services of a woman called Valeria Roth to ferry the different grades of gunpowder to their intended destinations. She knows Karl and Gaius at the Collegium Theologica, who pass it on to the Skaven.

Valeria's cover is that she regularly delivers kegs of ale to the picket, and returns with the empty kegs. A few extra barrels of gunpowder amongst her stock are easily overlooked. Valeria is staying at the *Foresters' Arms* when the Characters arrive. She is a professional smuggler, and a follower of Ranald. She knows that her work could be linked to sinister activities — gunpowder is dangerous stuff after all — but were she to learn that her work assists the Skaven she would be very confused and upset.

The last time she was in Middenheim, Valeria was told to look out for people of the Characters' descriptions. Karl and Gaius warned her that the Characters were working for Middenheim's Watch, and might investigate the activities of a smuggler such as herself. Once the Characters have settled in the inn Valeria approaches them, pretending to be a friendly local. Curious about an unusual group of armed strangers travelling along this quiet route, she attempts to engage them in conversation and find out their business. If Valeria is rebuffed or provided with an unconvincing story, she becomes suspicious, and tries to eavesdrop on their conversation without being detected.

If she confirms her suspicion that the Characters are on the way to the Picket, Valeria leaves the inn hurriedly and rushes to there to warn Habicht. If a Character is looking at Valeria and passes a **Hard (-10) Perception** Test, they notice that she seems to be alarmed. If the Characters try to question her, she makes some excuse about feeling unwell. If she must, she tries to sneak or fight her way from the inn, steals a horse — perhaps from the Characters — and rides towards the Picket. What she lacks in guile, she more than makes up in agility, and she will be very difficult for the Characters to catch.

If she is caught, Valeria claims that she ran because she is a deserter from the Picket and does not want to be taken back there. If the Characters force her to return to the Picket, she does cooperate sulkily — though a successful **Hard (-10) Intuition** Test reveals that her mood is feigned, and she is actually eager to reach it — she hopes to slip away and warn Habicht.

Valeria Roth - Smuggler

Valeria got into the smuggling business for the money, but has stayed due to the interesting characters she has met along the way. While Habicht and his associates are on the erie side of peculiar, they pay quite well and the smuggler hopes to get some good barstool stories out of her engagement with them. She is a relatively devout follower of Ranald, and tries to avoid violence if she can, relying on her winning charm to keep her from harm. For now at least, this appears to be working.

VALERIA ROTH - SMUGGLER (BRASS 3)

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	33	29	35	30	48	55	47	31	41	31	13

Traits: Armour 1, Weapon (Sword) +7

Skills: Athletics 60, Bribery 41, Charm 41, Consume Alcohol 40, Cool 51, Drive 60, Evaluate 36, Gossip 41, Haggle 41, Lore (Middenheim) 41, Stealth (Rural) 65

Talents: Criminal, Doomed (*Your wishes granted in the most horrible way*), Gregarious, Savvy, Suave, Read/Write

Trappings: Mule and Cart carrying 38 barrels of poor quality ale and 2 barrels of gunpowder, Tinderbox, Storm Lantern, Sword, Leather Jack.

THE MOUNTAIN ROAD

Along the road to Lindenheim, the Characters may encounter villagers travelling to Middenheim for supplies, trappers bringing meat and furs to sell, or herders driving sheep or goats out of the foothills to market.

More rarely, they may meet with military personnel heading to or from the Picket on a number of errands: carts carrying supplies, new recruits being marched out from Middenheim, or the few lucky officers who secured passes for Carnival Week returning to their posts after a spell in the city. If the Characters talk about their mission to any military types, though, there is a chance that whatever they say finds its way back to Quartermaster Habicht or worse, Sergeant Brantner, which could make their lives considerably more difficult.

Lindenheim Trading Post

Lindenheim is a small trading post with a surrounding community of smallholders and foresters. There is a simple inn here called the *Orchard View*. No orchard can be seen from the inn, and food served here is poor quality, if served at all.

Ferlangst Tower

Ferlangst Tower is a small fortification used as a waystation on the supply route to the Picket. It is one of the forts in the area owned by the Kärzburdger family where the Characters can get a meal and a safe place to spend the night. However, Heinrich von Kärzburdger is currently in residence. If the Characters upset him during their audience with the Graf, he does not allow them to rest at the castle, even if they present him with the Todbringer charter.

Mittler Castle

Mittler Castle is another way station. However, it is just an old ruin, destroyed and scavenged for stone that was used to build Ferlangst Tower. It is an eerie spot and only relatively sheltered in comparison to the rocky mountain sides that surround it. The Characters could camp here for the night, but it is a forlorn sight, and the perfect place for any pursuers to spring an ambush.

Hope Square

Hope Square is a penal colony; wretched chain gangs make their way through the clustered buildings and into the mines. A statue of Sister Hildegunde, the Shallyan reformer who promoted prison as an alternative to execution, stands in the middle of the square. Travellers are not encouraged to stop at Hope Square, but the guards at the penal colony find a place for the Characters to sleep if they show the Todbringer charter.

Rewards

Good roleplaying and clever thinking should be rewarded, but there are additional XP for the following:

- ☉ 20 points for interrogating the Smuggler
- ☉ 20 points for dealing with any Yellow Fang agents following on the road



◆ THE PICKET ◆



The Brass Keep picket is in a sorry state, and morale is low. Undermanned, undersupplied and with little hope of accomplishing anything of note, the men and women stationed here count the days until they are reassigned. One might think the arrival of the Characters would provide a welcome distraction, but the Yellow Fang have seen to it that they will receive a frosty reception.

The picket is positioned a few miles west of the keep itself, at the mouth of a mountain pass. Efforts to create a picket closer to the keep failed, as the Blightkings would launch harrying sorties in the night, and strange illnesses would lay the garrison low. No serious attempt has been made on the keep in decades, and now the picket serves only to stop anyone from entering or leaving the pass.

An agent of the Yellow Fang, Sergeant Otfried Brantner, has been embedded at the picket, keeping Clan Mange informed of any developments there. He has been told of the Characters' imminent arrival and instructed to hinder them as much as possible. To that end, he has been spreading malicious rumours about the Characters, including that they are here to seize control of the picket from the Kärzburdger family in the name of Graf Todbringer.

Picket People

The picket is commanded by Emmiline von Kärzburdger, and the 200 soldiers assigned here are Kärzburdger men-at-arms. The Kärzburdgers are too proud to ask for assistance in maintaining the picket, but lack the wealth to afford more than a nominal force. Emmiline has heard rumours about the Characters' arrival and is worried. She is a proud woman, and knows that the picket is in poor condition.

Emmiline is assisted by Hildegund Froiz, a priestess of Myrmidia. Hildegund worries about the poor condition of the picket, and thinks the Kärzburdgers' enmity with the Graf distracts from the threat of Brass Keep. She pays little heed to rumours about the Characters, and is curious as to their purpose.

Quartermaster Willus Habicht controls the picket's supplies. Habicht considers his current assignment beneath him, and has decided to leave the Kärzburdgers' service. In order to finance his new life, he has been skimming funds, buying poor or insufficient supplies and keeping the savings. He sees the Characters' arrival as another opportunity for profit, as he happily sells out his masters for a little coin.

Artillerist Degni Rulsson is in charge of the picket's one cannon, 'Astrid'. Degni was assigned here due to his propensity for blowing things up. He has had to curtail his experiments





with explosives due to a shortage of blackpowder. This has become worse of late, as the blackpowder that arrived in the last shipment was poor quality. Unbeknownst to him, Quartermaster Habicht has been substituting military-grade gunpowder with an inferior product (see page 100). While Degni has overheard rumours about the Characters he really doesn't care.

Captain Tylik leads a detachment (a *rota*) of 20 Kislevite horse archers. He and his men are baffled as to why they have been tasked with guarding a mountain pass, an unsuitable task for a cavalry unit. Still, Middenheim and Kislev exchange troops on a yearly basis in honour of old alliances, and the Kislevites serve without complaint. The Characters' arrival is the most interesting thing to happen in the six months they have been assigned here, and they're hoping entertainment ensues.

THE ARRIVAL

The Characters are still a mile from the picket when a dozen Ungol horsemen emerge from a thicket of trees and greet them. They are led by Captain Tylik, who gruffly tells the Characters they were expected. Any Character making an **Average (+20) Perception** Test notices a wisp of smoke rising from the thicket Tylik's men emerged from. The Ungols have a camp there, where they have a makeshift still. If asked, Tylik waves it off, stating that he left a few men there to watch the western approaches.

Tylik leads the party over the next rise, bringing the picket into view. The mountains rise above it, dwarfing the ramshackle collection of buildings and tents at the mouth of the pass. A line of six long grey-stone houses sits across from a large warehouse-like structure. To the south is a small square building, which has large, open doors on its northern and southern sides. A stream passes to the south of the buildings, next to which stands a corral of horses and a stable, and (downstream) a line of outhouses. The stream emerges from under a palisade of earth and wood, which stretches north and south to either side of the pass. Even from a distance, the Characters can see that the palisade is in poor repair. A single gate sits in the middle of the wall, with a rickety wooden tower standing above it.

Beyond the palisade lies the pass itself. The mountains cast it into shadow, and it twists and turns, making it difficult to see very far. Any Character with *Sixth Sense* will feel a foreboding chill upon seeing the pass, while a Character with *Second Sight* notes tendrils of *Dhar* drifting out of the pass, dissipating as they come into the sunlight.

A Warm Welcome

As Tylik leads them closer, the garrison begins to take notice. An **Easy (+40) Intuition** Test reveals that the Characters are not welcome. Soldiers stop what they're doing and glare at them. There seems to be more to it than a stereotypical Middenlander orneriness. There's active hostility in some gazes, and several observers meaningfully heft weapons as the Characters pass.

As they approach the barracks, Tylik leaves them with Sergeant Brantner, who seems amiable. He leads them to the Commander's quarters, making casual chit-chat along the way. Brantner is eager to meet the Characters as he is hoping to gain material he can use to spread more rumours. He asks them about their journey, the weather, their experiences in Middenheim — anything to get them talking. An **Opposed Intuition/Cool** Test reveals he seems keen to engage all the Characters, being sure to include each of them in the conversation.

SLANDEROUS RUMOURS

Brantner has been spreading all kinds of tales about the Characters, but was limited by the information the Yellow Fang was able to provide him. If the Characters successfully neutralised most of the Fang agents they encountered, then Brantner had little to work with. The rumours about them are vague, mostly just suggesting that they are the Graf's agents. If, however, most of the Yellow Fang's agents survived to reach the picket, Brantner's rumours will disparage various aspects of the Characters' species, personalities, careers, or histories. The more Brantner has to work with, the poorer the view among the garrison is, and the more hostile their reception.

Increase the difficulty of social tests the Characters make when interacting with the soldiers at the picket by one to three steps, depending on how much information Brantner had to work with.

Create rumours tailored to the Characters, based on incidents in their adventuring careers, and especially their encounters in Middenheim. The more the Yellow Fang knows about them, the more accurate the rumours are. If a Character fought off thugs in the street, Brantner's rumours cast them as 'The Butcher of Brotkopfs', killer of soldiers in a street brawl covered up on the Graf's orders. If a Character is a licensed Wizard who enjoys using the Sleep spell, they are known as 'The Wynd's Own Warlock', who curses their enemies to appear dead only to awaken as they are tossed off the Cliff of Sighs.

A Commanding Presence

When they arrive at Emmiline's quarters, the Characters are met by Priestess Hildgeund. She is wearing white robes edged in red, and a silver eagle hangs on a chain around her neck. A **Very Easy (+60) Lore (Theology)** or an **Average (+20) Lore (Reikland or Middenland)** Test identifies her as a priestess of Myrmidia. She dismisses Brantner (who is visibly annoyed by this, and complains loudly once outside) and welcomes the Characters. She apologises on behalf of Commander von Kärzburdger, explaining that Emmiline is busy with paperwork.





This is not true (**Very Easy (+60) Intuition** Test to notice, as Hildegund doesn't like to lie); Emmiline wants to make the Characters wait. Hildegund answers any of the Characters' questions, and is in turn keen to learn more about their purpose at the picket. If the Characters mention Skaven to her, she listens attentively. While she has never fought them herself, she has heard stories from Tilean mercenaries of hordes of ratmen pouring from marshlands or mountain holds, wielding strange magics and terrible weapons. She was never quite sure whether these stories were true, but she is more open to tales of Skaven than most. See the Evidence Table below for her exact opinion on the matter.

After ten minutes the door to Emmiline's office opens, and she greets them. She is polite, but cold. She asks about their purpose, and tells them they are not to go beyond the palisade without her express permission. If asked why, Emmiline explains that anyone travelling closer to the Brass Keep is likely to be killed, or (even worse) captured, tortured, and then released, bringing disease back with them. If further pressed (for example, if a Character insists that they have the Graf's authority), she reluctantly admits that she worries about provoking the Blighters. She fears that her forces at the picket are not strong enough to defeat an all-out attack. She considers requests to scout Brass Keep, but is not willing to allow it at this time.

She has no patience for talk of ratmen or Yellow Fang agents. There have been no sightings of beastmen (*'rat-headed or otherwise'*), and she won't abide questioning of her men's loyalty.

Emmiline ends the meeting by telling the Characters to speak with Quartermaster Habicht regarding lodgings and supplies. She assigns 'Hildee' (Priestess Hildegund) to liaise with them — if they have further questions, she can answer them.

Getting Settled

Hildegund accompanies the Characters to Habicht's office in the storehouse. He informs them that as there is no room in the barracks to house them, he'll set aside space in the storeroom and requisition bunks from the regular soldiers. He tries to be as helpful and charming as possible, telling them he is at their disposal.

Habicht will try to arrange a meeting with the Characters that evening, *'just to ensure all their needs are being met.'* An **Average (+20) Intuition** Test reveals he has something he wants to share, but not with Hildegund present.

As they are leaving, Degni Rulsson storms into the office. He ignores the Characters and immediately begins berating Habicht over the quality of the latest shipment of blackpowder (*'not fit to blow up a Grobi's backside!'*). Habicht hurriedly bids the Characters goodbye and closes the office door.

EXPLORING THE PICKET

Once they are settled, Hildegund leaves the Characters to their own devices. They are free to explore the picket, but are not allowed across the palisade. If they try, the guards on duty intercept them, and let them know that if they try it again they will be shot *'as a mercy'*. In order to gain permission to cross the picket the Characters need to win the Commander's trust — or find a way to force her hand.

SKAVEN EVIDENCE TABLE – THE PICKET

Current Evidence Score	Priestess Hildegund's and Emmiline von Kärzburdger's reaction
Undeniable (3 or more)	Hildegund has heard the recent rumours of Skaven activity, and pays close attention to any news of them. Von Kärzburdger has heard that rumours of Skaven are circulating among the great and the good of Middenheim, but she assumes that this is some scheme to distract attention. The Characters' presence at the picket leads her to believe that some plot is at work involving her or her family. She watches the Characters obsessively, and, at least initially, provides no aid.
Plausible Denial (-2 to +2)	Hildegund is naturally disposed to contemplate any tales of Skaven, but considers them little more than a curiosity. Von Kärzburdger is dismissive of the very idea of the creatures. She renders the Characters what aid she feels they are entitled to, and nothing more.
Deeper Denial (-3 or worse)	Hildegund is suspicious of the sudden rise in what she considers disinformation regarding the Skaven, and pays extra attention to the Characters' stories of the creatures. Von Kärzburdger is dismissive of the very idea of the creatures. She will render the Characters what aid she feels they are entitled to, and nothing more.



Meeting the Soldiers

The rumours spread about the Characters ensure a hostile reception from most of the garrison, and the regular soldiers make it clear they have no interest in speaking with them. However, a particularly charming (or intimidating) Character might be able to glean information.

If the Characters press the soldiers as to where they heard these rumours, the best they'll get is a shrug and that they *'heard it playing dice'*. Most of them didn't actually hear the rumours from Brantner's own mouth (they were passed on by other soldiers), and he was always careful to suggest he himself heard the rumour from someone else in the camp. However, they'll admit they first heard the rumours a few days ago — shortly after the Characters left Middenheim. None of the soldiers recall any messengers or supply trains arriving in that time, so where the knowledge of their arrival came from is a mystery.

The Ungol Detachment

The Characters find a warmer reception from Tylik and his men. Though gruff, the Ungols pay no heed to the rumours plaguing the camp, and judge the Characters on their own merits. They respect anyone with good horsemanship, skill at arms, or the ability to hold their drink. They are boastful by nature, and expect the Characters to be the same. This may lead to a challenge (horse riding, sword fighting, wrestling, or drinking are all popular), and whether they win or lose, the horse archers respect them for trying.

If they spend time with the Ungols, the Characters notice they always seem to have a bottle of *kvas* (a popular Kislevite drink) handy. The Ungols brew it in their still, hidden in the woods, but it's of poor quality. Any Character with an appropriate skill — such as Lore (Chemistry, Engineering) or Trade (Brewer, Cook, Engineer, Smith) — can help them improve their results with advice on the ingredients, process, or improvements to the still. This wins their lasting friendship (and a bottle of *kvas*). Characters drinking *kvas* must take **Hard (-20) Consume Alcohol** Tests. Anyone becoming Stinking Drunk automatically gets the 'How Did I Get Here' result (**WFRP**, page 121).

Characters may discover the still by investigating the Ungol camp in the woods, shadowing Tylik or his men as they go back and forth, or just by chatting with the horse archers. If they decide to discreetly tell von Kärzburdger about it, she appreciates them bringing it to her attention. She won't do anything about it (yet), as destroying it would be bad for morale, but knowing it is there means she can make sure it doesn't become a problem. Their honesty also causes her to reconsider her initial impression of the Characters, though it takes more to win her trust.

A Quiet Word

If the Characters do not approach Habicht, he eventually goes to them and seeks a word in private. He starts an odd conversation, initially dancing around the subject, before dropping hints, and

eventually (if they don't figure it out) asking them for a bribe in exchange for his testimony against Commander Emmiline von Kärzburdger. The Characters may be confused by this, but Habicht explains that he knows why they're here — to humiliate the Kärzburdgers! Everyone in the camp knows.

Habicht discusses anything of interest to the Characters in exchange for a few coins. He also answers questions they have about the picket. One piece of information he has is the identity of the rumormonger — Sergeant Brantner. Habicht has been paying attention to gossip around the camp, wary that his embezzlement has been detected. He noticed that Brantner was spreading rumours about the Characters. Habicht jumped to the conclusion that Brantner overheard Emmiline and Hildegund discussing the Characters' mission to the picket — after all, how else could he have known they were coming?

If Habicht is accused of selling blackpowder to the Yellow Fang, he initially denies it, but an **Average (+20) Intimidate** Test gets him to crack. If this test fails, Habicht first insists that the Characters promise not to divulge his involvement in the trade to anyone, before revealing that Brantner arranged for the sale to 'an old army buddy'. He does not know who the Yellow Fang might be, but assumes they are contacts of Brantner's.

If Brantner is accused he denies any involvement and claims that Habicht is covering up his own illegal dealings. While it is clear that something untoward is afoot, Emmiline is unwilling to arrest any of her 'loyal' troops on the word of Todbringer lapdogs — at least not without further evidence.

Dealing with the Dwarf

If the Characters spend any time in the Storehouse, they notice Degni stomping about, muttering angrily. He ignores them unless approached, upon which he'll happily tell them about his troubles. While he has things to say about the poor food (*'Umgi slop!'*), terrible accommodation (*'Why is it all aboveground, I ask you?'*), and bad company (*'Right irritable, the lot of them, and that's coming from a Dwarf!'*), his biggest gripe is the blackpowder Habicht has provided (*'Too much smoke, not enough BOOM!'*). He's set aside the latest shipment, as he doesn't want to get it mixed up with the last of *'the good stuff'*. He's baffled as to why Habicht keeps buying such terrible powder, as he gave the Quartermaster careful instructions when putting in his last order. He suspects Habicht is either an imbecile, or just hates him and wants to deprive him of ever experiencing a true explosion again.

If any of the Characters is a Dwarf, an engineer, or conveys an appreciation for blackpowder weapons, fire, or explosions, Degni shows them his side project. While Habicht's blackpowder isn't good enough for use with Astrid, Degni's found another use for it: bombs. He has filled four ale kegs with blackpowder and attached fuses. Treat as bombs (per the **Ranged Weapons** table, **WFRP**, page 295) with the **Bulky Flaw**.





THE FIRST NIGHT

In an attempt to hinder the Characters' activities, Brantner convinces five soldiers to *'teach them a lesson'*. They wait until after midnight and then approach the Storehouse. The two guards on duty are convinced to take an *'outhouse break'*, and the attackers make their way to the Characters' room.

If a Character is on watch they hear the attackers approaching. If all Characters are asleep, they must pass a **Very Hard (-30) Perception** Test to wake up as the attackers enter the room, otherwise they wake up after being attacked. A waking Character starts with the *Fatigued, Prone* and *Surprised* Conditions.

The soldiers don't want to kill the Characters, just hurt them. They pull their blows (**WFRP**, page 173), and stop striking a Character once they reach 0 Wounds. They aren't looking for a real fight, and flee if any of them are injured. If captured, they won't reveal Brantner's involvement unless a Character wins an **Opposed Challenging (+0) Intimidate/Average (+20) Cool** Test. Each of the soldiers has 20 silver shillings, which Brantner gave them as a little extra incentive for the attack.

THE SECOND NIGHT

If Brantner is still at large on the second night after the Characters' arrival, he decides to eliminate them once and for all. He steals a barrel of blackpowder from Degni's stores, then places it outside the Storehouse, next to the Characters' room. If any Character is on watch, they may hear Brantner struggling with the barrel with an **Opposed Perception/Stealth** Test.

Brantner lays a trail of blackpowder to the barrel, then runs. Thankfully, the barrel he picked is filled with poor quality blackpowder, and the explosion isn't as powerful as it should be. Anyone in the room takes 12 Damage (minus TB) and receives the *Prone* and *Stunned* Conditions. They must also make an **Average (+20) Endurance** Test or receive an *Unconscious* Condition. The explosion blows a hole in the wall, and the room fills with smoke. Anyone in the room must make a **Challenging (+0) Endurance** Test each round or gain a *Poisoned* Condition, which remains until they are clear of the smoke.

Brantner hides nearby, and if he sees a Character emerge from the Storehouse he decides it's time to flee the picket. Soldiers stream from the barracks, but a Character making a **Challenging (+0) Perception** Test spots Brantner scurrying away into the darkness, and can give chase. Alternatively, an **Easy (+40) Track** Test can pick up his trail.

BRANTNER CAPTURED

Throughout their stay at the picket, Brantner keeps an eye on the Characters. If he suspects that Habicht has sold him out, or if they survive his attempt to kill them, he flees into the woods, where he has hidden a backpack with supplies and the last of his gold. While he won't go down without a fight, he surrenders immediately if reduced below 6 Wounds, or if he suffers a

OLD ACQUAINTANCES

By this time any Yellow Fang cultists from Middenheim have made contact with Brantner. If Brantner is caught before the second night, cultists try to blow up the Characters instead. If Brantner is still at large, cultists join him to help execute his plan, and the Characters may spot them fleeing with Brantner.

Critical Wound. If interrogated, he cracks if a Character wins an **Opposed Intimidate/Cool** Test. Unfortunately he knows little of his masters' plans. He was occasionally contacted by a Skaven agent, who would demand updates on activities at the picket. They would ask whether the Commander was sending any patrols into the mountains, and if there had been any activity from the keep. The last contact warned him that the Characters were coming, and ordered him to hinder them.

In addition, he was to do anything he could to acquire plans of Brass Keep (which he has not located yet), and to do anything possible to reduce the readiness of the garrison (he considers his part in the gunpowder plot (page 100) to have covered this. He does not know why he was asked to do these things, but will mention that the 'secret master' he spoke to seemed even more agitated and restless than normal.

LOCATIONS

The Barracks

The picket's garrison is accommodated in six grey-stone buildings, arrayed in a line. They were built with defence in mind, with small doorways and windows that let in little light, while failing to keep in the heat.

Five of the buildings house the Kärzburdger regular troops, with 40 soldiers in each. Space is tight, with the soldiers' double-bunks squeezed next to each other, and weapon racks and personal belongings packed in wherever possible. Each has a large fireplace at one end, and a bunk nearer to the heat of the fire is a common stake in the soldiers' dice games.

The sixth building is the officers' quarters. It has been divided into a parlour, a bedroom (shared by Emmiline and Hildegund), an office, a small kitchen, and a meeting room. It is far more spacious and comfortably appointed than the barrack-houses.

The Storehouse

The largest building at the picket, the storehouse includes a larder, kitchen, mess-hall, quarters for Quartermaster Habicht and Artillerist Rulsson, as well as store rooms full of spare weapons, ammunition, and Astrid, the picket's cannon. There are always two guards stationed at the front door, but off-duty soldiers can usually be found here at any hour. The soldiers take turns preparing meals, which are served at first light and an hour before nightfall.



If the Characters check the blackpowder barrels, they find them stacked next to Astrid. Each bears the Kärzburdger family crest, but several crests are crudely printed on. If asked about this, Degni admits that those barrels arrived in the last shipment, but he didn't think anything of it at the time.

Habicht's quarters include a small desk where he keeps his records. These are a mess, as he has intentionally made them as confusing as possible. It will take several hours to read through his accounts and figure out what he has been doing, unless a Character has either the *Research Skill* or the *Embezzle* or *Numismatics* Talents, in which case it will take ten minutes. However, someone searching his desk who succeeds in a **Difficult (-10) Perception** Test hears coins clinking as they pull out a drawer. Pulling the drawer completely free of the desk reveals a small box, in which they'll find 164 GC, wrapped in cloth.

Habicht clears out one of the store rooms to make space for the Characters. Two bunk beds are dragged from the nearest barracks for them (the legs still covered in mud), and he provides some thin blankets and a chest for storing possessions.

The Shrine

This odd-looking building stands apart from the picket's other structures. It is square, with double doors on its north and south faces. It contains a single large room, with a wide pillar in the centre stretching from the floor to the ceiling.

MAKING FRIENDS OR INFLUENCING PEOPLE

The Characters can try to win Emmiline's respect, or try to browbeat her into submission. If they treat her with respect and do not undermine her command, she accepts that they are there with good intentions. Alternatively, they can use the poor conditions and various problems at the picket to threaten her position. While this angers her, it also provides them with leverage. If the Characters insulted Henricus von Kärzburdger earlier in the adventure Emmiline is harder to win over.

The Characters might bring any of the following to Emmiline's attention. The more discreet they are about them, the more she appreciates it.

- ☠ Captain Tylik's still
- ☠ Quartermaster Habicht's embezzlement
- ☠ the late-night attack on the Characters as they slept
- ☠ Gunpowder found in Unterfraus

Hildegund is a good source of advice on winning Emmiline over, while Habicht suggests trying to threaten her.

This building is a shrine to both Sigmar and Ulric. The south side of the pillar is carved with an image of Sigmar holding aloft a hammer, the broken bodies of Orcs scattered at his feet. The north side of the pillar is carved with a cruder image of a wolf's head over a great flame. Half-melted candles cluster about the base of the pillar, along with various offerings (a few broken or rusted blades, worn bits of armour, the occasional penny).

While there are devout Sigmarites and Ulricans amongst the garrison, there is little tension between the two groups. Here, at least, the followers of both cults are more concerned with the potential threat of the dark gods than with the petty squabbles of court and cult.

If a Character spends time sincerely praying at the shrine, they see soldiers on both sides of the pillar, united in their mission to defend the Empire from Chaos. For a moment, the candles seem to burn more brightly, and a sense of purpose fills the Character. They gain the *Resistance (Chaos)* Talent for the next 8 days (a Character can only gain this benefit once).

The Stables

Situated next to a stream that provides the picket with fresh water, the stables and the neighbouring corral have been expanded since the arrival of Captain Tylik's *rota*. Rather than squeeze into the barracks, the Ungols reside near their horses. A few Ungols can be found here at all times, tending their mounts. The stables also house Commander Emmiline and Priestess Hildegund's warhorses (Black Hammer and Peaches).

The Picket Wall

A crude rampart of earth and stone stretches across the mountain pass, topped with a wooden palisade. There is a ditch on the other side of the wall, but it has grown shallow over the years, and barely presents a challenge to an attacker. The palisade has gaps in a number of places, especially where sections of the rampart have given way due to erosion. The stream passes under the palisade near the southern end, cutting through the rampart.

The wooden tower overlooking the gate is manned by two crossbowmen during the day, while ten pikemen and another two crossbowmen are stationed next to the gate itself. A small tent has been pitched next to the gate for shelter, and the soldiers have set up a campfire there. During the night, the soldiers occasionally embark on four-man patrols up and down the length of the palisade, but these are easily avoided, as they light their way with lanterns and make no attempt at stealth.

Beyond the palisade lies the pass. The ground is rocky and bare, with no plant life to be seen. The only movement is that of the stream, which winds down from the mountains.





NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

Commander Emmiline von Kärzburdger



COMMANDER EMMILINE VON KÄRZBURDGER – OFFICER (GOLD 1)

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	52	50	34	51	50	34	36	32	48	48	17

Traits: Armour (Leather and Mail) 3,
Weapon (Rapier) +7, Ranged (Pistol) +9

Skills: Bribery 53, Charm 58, Consume Alcohol 66,
Cool 65, Endurance 68, Gamble 68, Gossip 59,
Intimidate 67, Language (Battle) 55, Leadership 69,
Lore (Heraldry, Middenland) 42, Lore (Warfare) 35,
Melee (Fencing) 62, Melee (Parry) 62, Outdoor
Survival 65, Play (Harp) 41, Ranged (Blackpowder) 69,
Ride (Horse) 34

Talents: Etiquette (Nobles, Soldiers), Noble Blood,
Rapid Reload, Read/Write

Trappings: Full set of plate and mail armour (the plate is
only worn in battle, and increases her Armour trait to 5),
Light Warhorse, Pistol, Pouch with 3 GC, Rapier

In her youth Emmiline was a wild child, constantly engaging in unladylike behaviour. As she seemed unsuited to courtly life, her father put her in charge of a unit of the family guard, a role she undertook with gusto. A devout Sigmarite, she enjoys nothing more than leading soldiers into battle against the Empire's enemies.

Emmiline's manners are brisk, but she has a soft spot for good manners. In her mid-thirties with a commanding presence, great posture and good ankles (a sign of *very* good breeding), it's rare to see her out of armour. Her resting face is not pleasant, but when she is in a good mood, she is pretty with a disarming smile. Emmiline von Kärzburdger is popular with the troops, but guarding the picket has left her frustrated, and her irate attitude has spread to her soldiers. If only she could slip away to remove her armour, and have a sip of something warm and sweet, without constant interruptions. If she could rest her head on Hildegund's shoulder for a brief moment, she could tolerate the rest of the day.

Emmiline views the arrival of the Characters with distrust. She has no love for the Graf, and is an ardent supporter of Nordlander independence. She treats noble or warrior Characters with respect, and if the Characters are courteous and respectful she eventually warms to them.

Priestess Hildegund Froiz

The daughter of an Altdorf camp follower and an Estalian mercenary, Hildegund spent her childhood in the baggage train of mercenary companies. Her upbringing granted her an insight into military logistics, and eventually drew the attention of a Myrmidian priestess. Since her initiation into the cult, she has continued to travel, providing strategic, tactical and logistical advice to any worthy leader who accepts it.

Hildegund met Emmiline while both were battling Greenskin raiders. Mutual respect borne on the battlefield quickly turned to friendship, and they have only grown closer since. When Emmiline was assigned to the picket, Hildegund joined her. She is displeased by the state of the picket's defences, and Emmiline's attitude, which has led to tension. The picket troops, who are mostly Sigmarites or Ulricans, do not quite trust her.

Hildegund wakes early, regardless of her late-night discussions with Emmiline. Her routines are sacrosanct and her well-worn copy of the *Bellum Strategica* is a treasured guide. She memorises the words as she stretches and salutes the sun; feeling closer to Myrmidia with each syllable, and the thrill that her mind is working over, memorising and identifying systems, aiming to ensure that her soldiers return (either from victorious battle, or a tactically significant retreat in good order).

She wears her raven hair short. She thanks Myrmidia daily for her sharp eyes and acute hearing, her sense of direction and keen wits. Her short, muscular frame brings her joy. She believes that a healthy, strong body means a healthy, strong mind.



Artillerist Degni Rulsson



ARTILLERIST DEGNI RULSSON – MASTER ENGINEER (SILVER 4)

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	37	45	33	51	46	29	61	50	48	26	15

Traits: Armour (Leather Jack) 1, Weapon (Hammer) +4 (Undamaging)

Skills: Consume Alcohol 70, Cool 65, Drive 39, Endurance 69, Evaluate, Language (Classical, Khazalid) 55, Lore (Engineer, Metallurgy) 55, Perception 56, Ranged (Blackpowder, Engineering) 65, Research 60, Trade (Engineer) 71

Talents: Craftsman (Engineer), Gunner (3), Magic Resistance, Night Vision, Read/Write, Resolute, Sturdy, Tinker

Trappings: Pouches filled with blackpowder, Guild Licence, Trade Tools



PRIESTESS HILDEGUND FROIZ – PRIESTESS SERGEANT (SILVER 3)

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	49	30	45	50	49	32	28	39	51	38	19

Traits: Armour (Leather and Breastplate) 3, Weapon (Spear) +8

Skills: Animal Care 44, Cool 56, Dodge 47, Endurance 65, Evaluate 44, Haggle 43, Heal 44, Language (Battle) 50, Language (Estalian) 42, Leadership 58, Lore (Estalia, Reikland, Tilea) 42, Lore (Theology) 45, Lore (Warfare) 49, Melee (Basic, Polearm) 70, Perception 64, Pray 45

Talents: Acute Sense (Hearing), Combat Aware, Doomed (*The blade cannot parry all weapons*), Lightning Reflexes, Read/Write, Seasoned Traveller, Stout Hearted

Trappings: Light Warhorse, Pouch with 8/11, Religious symbol of Myrmidia, Spear, Sword

Born and raised in Middenheim, Degni Rulsson joined the Dwarfen Engineers' Guild for one reason only: to blow stuff up. While an adequate student, he ignored the finer aspects of engineering, focusing his attention on the myriad uses of blackpowder. Upon completion of his studies, a Guildmaster arranged for Degni to take up service with the Kärzburdgers. Whether this was because he felt that Degni's knowledge would benefit the family, or because the Guild was keen to have fewer explosions disturbing the peace of Middenheim is unclear.

While the Kärzburdgers welcomed Degni's efforts to improve their siege weaponry, his demands for funding, his acerbic nature, and his Middenheim background reduced his standing. Now assigned to the picket, he has only a single cannon to work with, and not nearly enough blackpowder. Despite Degni's clear instructions to Habicht, each new delivery of powder seems to be worse than the last, leaving him in a foul mood.



Quartermaster Willus Habicht



QUARTERMASTER WILLUS HABICHT – ATTENDANT (SILVER 5)

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	24	26	38	37	43	46	32	41	25	42	11

Skills: Animal Care 44, Athletics 51, Charm 47, Climb 43, Cool 28, Dodge 56, Drive 51, Endurance 47, Evaluate 46, Gossip 47, Haggle 47, Intuition 58, Lore (Middenland) 46, Perception 58, Stealth (Urban) 51

Talents: Doomed (*Either a rich servant or a poor thief*), Embezzle, Etiquette (Servants), Flee!, Read/Write, Shadow, Super Numerate, Supportive

Trappings: Hidden stash of coins (164 GC), House Kärzburdger Livery, Picket Accounts, Pouch with 17/42, Writing Kit<

A tall, thin man in his early 50s, Quartermaster Habicht's wispy white hair, ready smile, and prominent eyebrows give him the aspect of a distracted scholar. He is often seen striding about the picket grounds, talking with the soldiers and promising to do what he can for their needs. Some blame him for the poor state of the picket, but most accept that he's done the best he can with the little coin available to him.

Which is not entirely true. While the picket hasn't received the support it needs, the situation is made worse by Habicht's siphoning of funds into his private retirement fund. A once-loyal servant of the Kärzburdgers, Habicht has grown tired of his good work being rewarded with more onerous tasks. His assignment to the picket was the last straw. He's saved up quite a stash, and plans to abscond with it when he next goes on leave.

Horse Captain Tylik



HORSE CAPTAIN TYLIK – CAVALRY SERGEANT (GOLD 1)

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	54	47	46	38	40	47	30	29	27	29	17

Traits: Armour (Leather and Breastplate) 3, Ranged (Bow) +8, Weapon (Sword) +8, Weapon (Lance) +10

Skills: Animal Care 45, Charm 34, Charm Animal 45, Consume Alcohol 48, Cool 39, Endurance 43, Gossip 32, Intimidate 60, Language (Battle, Kislevan, Reikspiel) 34, Leadership 35, Lore (Kislev) 32, Melee (Basic, Cavalry) 69, Outdoor Survival 44, Perception 50, Ranged (Bow) 62, Ride 65

Talents: Combat Aware, Crack the Whip, Fast Shot, Hardy, Roughrider, Seasoned Traveller, Trick Riding

Trappings: Bottle of Kvas, Bow with 20 Arrows, Dagger, Leather Jack and Breastplate, Lance, Light Warhorse, Pouch with 6/10, Saddle and Tack, Sword

A veteran of many wars, Tylik is a short, scarred figure, his dark moustache beginning to go grey. Tylik cares little for politics, and (having heard the rumours) believes the Characters are visiting the picket to advance the Graf's agenda. He cares little for this, though it lowers his opinion of the Characters. If they can convince him they have a legitimate reason for being there, he may open up to them. He is also impressed with good horsemanship or skill at arms. Any attempt to smooth-talk him is likely to backfire, unless it's accompanied by strong drink.

Sergeant Otfried Brantner



SERGEANT OTFRIED BRANTNER – SERGEANT/CULTIST (SILVER 5)

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	43	37	34	47	35	30	33	39	34	30	14

Traits: Armour (Breastplate, Helmet) 2, Weapon (Sword) +7

Skills: Animal Care 44, Athletics 40, Charm 35, Climb 44, Consume Alcohol 52, Cool 45, Dodge 40, Endurance 57, Gamble 54, Gossip 45, Intimidate 39, Language (Battle) 44, Lore (Skaven) 44, Melee (Basic) 56, Play (Drum) 38, Outdoor Survival 42, Secret Signs (Yellow Fang) 49

Talents: Diceman, Doomed (*A crooked tongue will bite itself*), Etiquette (Soldiers), Menacing, Night Vision

Trappings: Breastplate, Helmet, Pouch with 4 GC 89/32, Sword, Uniform

A short man in his late 30s, Sergeant Brantner's half-lidded eyes give him a perpetually sleepy demeanor, and he always looks like he's about to apologise for something. Otfried is generally seen as somewhat dim, completely harmless, and thoroughly unsuited to the position of sergeant.

Otfried owes his current rank to an unfortunate 'accident' that saw the demise of his predecessor, combined with blackmail to convince his superior to promote him over someone more qualified. His friendly, bumbling persona conceals his ruthlessness and ambition — but not his inherent laziness or cowardice.

He sees the Yellow Fang as a route to advancement that doesn't require actual soldiering. He's put out by his current assignment, which actually requires effort on his part, but on the other hand, the cult has provided him with ample coin for the mission, and has promised greater rewards should he succeed.

Garrison Soldiers

The soldiers of the picket garrison are irritable and unmotivated at the best of times, and the Characters' arrival has left them grumpier than usual. That said, they are good stolid Middenlander folk. Though they are both Sigmarites and Ulricans, there has been little tension between the followers of the two gods, as they are united in their desire to defy the dark forces in Brass Keep.

GARRISON SOLDIERS

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	50	40	35	40	30	30	30	30	40	25	15

Traits: Armour (Leather and Breastplate) 3, Ranged (Crossbow) +9, Weapon (Hand Weapon) +7 or Weapon (Halberd) +7 (Defensive, Hack, Impale)

Skills: Athletics 40, Consume Alcohol 50, Cool 50, Gamble 40, Gossip 30, Melee (Basic, Polearm) 60, Perception 40, Ranged (Crossbow) 50

Talents: Drilled, Rapid Reload

Trappings: Crossbow or Halberd, Leather and Breastplate, Sword, Uniform

Ungol Horse Archers

Scarred, weatherbeaten mercenaries, their bristling moustaches and fierce countenances make them intimidating, but Tylik's men are quite friendly. They are also bored, and eager for anything to distract them from the monotony of the picket.

UNGOL HORSE ARCHERS (SILVER 4)

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	50	45	40	35	30	45	30	30	35	30	12

Traits: Armour (Leather) 1, Ranged (Bow) +8, Weapon (Sword) +8, Weapon (Lance) +10

Skills: Animal Care 40, Endurance 45, Melee (Basic, Cavalry) 60, Outdoor Survival 40, Perception 40, Ranged (Bow) 55, Ride (Horse) 60

Talents: Roughrider, Trick Riding

Trappings: Bow with 20 Arrows, Dagger, Leather Jack and Breastplate, Lance, Light Warhorse, Saddle and Tack, Sword



CLAN MANGE ATTACK!

An hour before dawn, a bright green flash lights the night sky, silhouetting the Middle Mountains. Seconds later a rumbling roar echoes from the mountains. The picket's garrison stumble from their barracks, clumsily preparing weapons, as Emmiline shouts orders at them and Hildegund queries the sentries as to what they saw. Minutes later, the sound of distant, tolling bells emerges from the pass, ringing discordantly. They fade away, to be replaced with a faint, high-pitched screeching, like thousands of rats all squealing at once.

Clan Mange has begun its attack on the Brass Keep.

The atmosphere of dread and anticipation breaks as the camp springs into action. Emmiline soon has the garrison organised into ranks, halberds and crossbows at the ready. Degni can be seen shouting at a trio of soldiers as they drag Astrid towards the palisade. Tylik and his men are soon mounted and ready for action, though they look uncertain as to what role they might play. If Characters offer to help, Hildegund asks them to stand ready. Everyone is expecting an attack to emerge from the pass, but instead the sounds of bells and squealing continue unabated.

ANY VOLUNTEERS?

The next hour is spent at attention, with a hasty breakfast ferried to watchful soldiers as sounds of battle echo down from the Keep. Occasional chunks of fortification land far off in the blasted wasteland, and more than once the ground churns where Skaven digging machines draw close to the surface. It is clear that approaching the Keep is a dangerous prospect, but as the long minutes wear on and the sounds of battle wane it becomes clear that someone must soon venture out to scout the Keep.

As the sun begins to dawn, Emmiline confers with Hildegund, Degni and Tylik. If the Characters are on good terms with her, she invites them too. If not, Hildegund suggests including them, to which Emmiline reluctantly agrees.

Emmiline needs to know what is happening in the pass, but is reluctant to send her own men. Tylik's *rota* could go, but the terrain is unsuitable for cavalry. If the Characters do not volunteer, Hildegund points out that this disturbance coinciding with their presence at the picket is unlikely to be a coincidence. This is why the Graf sent them — they would be failing in their duties if they didn't investigate now.

Emmiline agrees to let the Characters scout the pass. If they are on good terms with her, she is happy to support their effort to complete their mission. If they've angered her, she's happy to let them get themselves killed.



If the Characters have won the good regard of any of the NPCs at the picket, they approach to offer their support.

- Emmiline lets them requisition any equipment they want from the Storehouse.
- Hildegund gives them directions to a hidden path, a little over halfway down the pass. It leads to an excellent vantage point from which to observe the Brass Keep.
- Tylik hands one of the Characters a horn, carved around the rim with pictures of Ungol horse archers. He tells them if they are in serious need, to sound the horn three times, and he will lead his *rota* to their aid.
- Degni gives them his supply of explosives, with advice on how to use them. They're not much use as ranged weapons, but he hopes the Characters find use for them.

The garrison watch, silently, as the Characters cross through the palisade gate. They clearly don't expect to see any of them again.

DERELICTION OF DUTY

Discretion is the better part of valour, but if the Characters fail to take the initiative in the events to come it ends badly for everyone, so they should be given every chance to get close to Brass Keep and witness events with their own eyes. However, should they fail to do so, and assuming you wish to keep the adventure on track, events can play out a little differently.

While the troops watch the mountains, and a volunteer force led by Hildegund ventures into the wasteland, a rumbling is heard behind the picket line. Characters have a moment to react as a section of the picket collapses inward, tents and all. A handful of navigationally challenged Skaven spew out of a tunnel that was meant to exit in the courtyard of Brass Keep. The Skaven attack the picket forces, who see them off with little trouble. Characters may contribute to the fight, but the unfortunate Skaven are outmatched and the battle can go only one way.

The tunnel is collapsed, preventing the creatures from escaping, and the creatures can be pressed for information. The captive may even be pressed into assisting with the interrogation. The creatures squeal that it's all a '*big-big mistake*', and that they were meant to '*kill the plague things, and steal their life-stone, yes-yes!*' If these captives are asked about the flash of green light, or the observers on the peak (see *The Scout Returns*, page 128), they look from one to another before clammung up. If persuaded to continue speaking, a one-eared Skaven will offer '*Test-test new cannon, yes yes! Meant for killing plague things only!*' The foul creatures claim to have no further information, and indeed they know precious little more — but if they are imprisoned together they eat the one-eared Skaven.

INTO THE PASS

The pass is dark, and the temperature seems to fall two degrees as soon as the Characters cross the picket line. There is no life to be seen. The ground is bare stone, and the only movement is that of the stream. The cacophony has died down, but the Characters still hear the squealing of rats, and clash of weapons.

If the Characters ride up the pass, the ground by the stream is flat enough for horses. The ground ascends unevenly to either side, rising up to sheer cliffs (any *Ride* tests in this terrain are three steps more difficult). The pass twists and turns, quickly hiding the palisade from sight.

Any Character with *Second Sight* can see that the pass is heavy with *Dhar*. Any spells cast with *Dhar* gain +2 SL, while casting with any other wind of magic suffers a penalty of -1SL.

Rats Fleeing a Shattered Siege

A few minutes after entering the pass, the Characters encounter a band of Clanrats. These Skaven have realised the battle is going badly. Rather than returning to the tunnels (where they would either be punished or ordered back to the Keep), they have decided to take their chances with the pass. They are making no effort to be stealthy, screeching to each other in anger and fear, so Characters hear them coming with an **Easy (+40) Perception** Test. There isn't much cover in the pass, but Characters can attempt to hide with a **Hard (-20) Stealth** Test, opposed by the Clanrats' **Perception** (roll one Perception test for the Clanrats, as they aren't paying much attention to their surroundings). If the Characters win, the Clanrats suffer a *Surprised* Condition.

There are two Clan Mange Clanrats for every Character. They round the pass 40 yards ahead. All of them suffer from injuries taken in the battle at the Brass Keep (each has only 6 Wounds remaining), and are exhausted from the battle and a lack of food (suffer a *Fatigued* Condition). Despite their poor condition, they charge the Characters once they see them.

The Clanrats' desperation drives them, and they fight to the death in their attempt to escape in any direction except back towards the Keep. Once they are defeated, the Characters notice that they are armed with hammers and axes that are clearly not of Skaven manufacture. While rusty and notched, they are clearly well made, and each is marked with a Khazalid rune. An **Easy (+40) Lore (Dwarf)** or **Trade (Any)** Test will identify the rune as some kind of maker's mark. It is actually the guildmark of the Karak Skygg Weaponsmiths' Guild, which Degni is able to identify if they are shown to him.





Ratholes

As the Characters round another twist in the pass, they spot what appears to be the entrance to a mine up ahead. Loose earth and rocks are scattered around the entrance, and the roof is propped up with crude wooden supports. The tracks of hundreds of Skaven can clearly be seen emerging from the tunnel and heading east, further down the pass. Anyone who has ever been a miner, or who has the *Trade (Engineer)* or *Track* skills, can tell that the mine was dug out from the inside, and only within the last few hours.

If the Characters venture inside the mine, they find it descends steeply for 30 ft and then twists out of sight. There are smaller tunnels, barely big enough for a human to fit through, branching off from the main tunnel. These lack any support at all, and the Characters find one that has collapsed completely. The arm of an unfortunate Skaven can be seen sticking out of the rubble. A thick layer of dirt covers everything, and as they enter the mine one of the supports slips loose, causing another shower of earth and rocks to rain down. The sounds of Skaven squealing and skittering can be heard further down the mine, though they don't appear to be coming any closer.

A number of pickaxes and shovels are scattered along the tunnel. These are well-made dwarf tools, and each bears the guildmark of the Karak Skygg Metalsmiths' Guild.

It should be clear that exploring the mine is unwise. Not only could there be any number of Skaven inside, but the whole thing is unstable, and could come down at any moment.

If the Characters want to destroy the mine entrance, they have several options. Damaging supports at the entrance causes a partial collapse, but the Skaven can dig through it in mere minutes. A Character with *Lore (Engineering)*, or equivalent skill, can make an **Average (+20)** Test to identify some load-bearing supports a little deeper into the tunnel, and use ropes to pull them loose from the safety of the entrance. Alternatively, if the Characters have any of Degni's bombs, they can use them to destroy the tunnel. If Degni instructed them in how to set the explosives, no test is required, otherwise an **Easy (+40) Ranged (Blackpowder)** or **Lore (Engineering)** Test is required.

Approaching the Keep

The pass turns again ahead, and the sounds of battle are closer. The Characters have almost reached Brass Keep. They can continue travelling along the floor of the pass, but an alternative path climbs the cliff wall to their left. If Hildegund has given them directions to it, the Characters find it with ease. Alternatively, a Character trying to find another way to the Keep can try a **Hard (-20) Perception** or an **Average (+20) Outdoor Survival** Test to find it. If they have horses with them, they must decide whether to hobble them at the base of the pass, or release them to make their way back to the picket.

If they continue along the floor of the pass, they come upon a band of 12 Skaven Clanrats milling about in confusion. A larger, better-fed Skaven tries to organise them, battering them with the flat of his blade and screaming orders. If the Characters attack, the Skaven suffer a *Surprised* Condition on the first round. If the Characters wait, one of the Clanrats musters enough courage to attack their commander, and suddenly the rest turn on him as well. After hacking him to death, the Clanrats turn to flee — right into the path of the Characters.

The Clanrats are all injured (down to 6 Wounds) and suffer a *Fatigued* Condition. They are armed with Dwarf weapons from Karak Skygg. If half of their number are downed they rout, running back towards Brass Keep. The Characters can pursue them, making it round the final bend in the pass.

If the Characters use the hidden path, they will be able to spot the Skaven far below them, and see the Clanrats turn on their officer and flee. The Characters can continue along the pass wall. The going is steep, and the footing occasionally treacherous. Each Character should make a **Challenging (0) Athletics** or **Easy (+40) Climb** Test, or suffer a *Fatigued* Condition.

THE BRASS KEEP

As the Characters round the last bend of the pass, Clan Mange's last effort to assault the Brass Keep plays out before them. The keep sits high above the pass, a strange light glowing from the windows of the central tower. A waterfall pours from a tarn next to the keep, pooling at the base of the cliff before flowing down the pass. A crooked, twisting stairway climbs the side of the mountain, upon which hundreds of Skaven scabble up towards the keep. Others climb straight up the cliff walls, heedless of the risk. Stones drop from above, killing ratmen in droves, their bodies falling to the pass below. Hundreds more corpses lie on the sides of the pass, casualties of earlier assaults. Mine entrances, similar to the one the Characters passed earlier, dot the pass near the foot of the stairs, where bands of Clanrats mill about as their officers try to get them organised.

Of interest is a massive hole blasted in the east side of the Keep. It's edges glow with a harsh green light, and Skaven are pouring towards it. Unfortunately the hole is too high to be of much use in actually breaching the fort, but is an impressive sight. The walls of Brass Keep have seen off many a siege down the years, and its walls have proved highly resistant to damage from magical and mundane artillery alike, which Degni is happy to tell the Characters should he hear of the breach.

Characters who pass a **Difficult (-20) Perception** Test notice an odd sight. On a nearby peak, close enough to get a good look but far enough to be out of danger, several figures are watching the battle. If viewed through a spyglass, they are seen to be Skaven, pointing odd devices towards the keep and apparently taking measurements. They are low-ranking Engineers from Karak Skygg, dispatched to observe the effectiveness of the Moonbreaker cannon, which just breached the castle wall.



Suddenly a thunderous groan emanates from the keep, drowning out all other sound. The great gate rumbles open. The Skaven surge forward for a moment, until they are met by a charge from within. Dozens of huge warriors, clad in full plate mail and wielding greatswords and huge axes, flow out of the keep and cut through the Clanrats. The Skaven lines hold for a second, then break. Panic takes hold, Skaven surge down the stairs, dozens falling to their doom as their fellows push them out of the way. Seeing this, Skaven at the base of the cliff turn and run, forcing their way into the mine entrances — which begin to collapse under the pressure. As the dust clears, the surviving ratmen scatter in all directions. The Chaos Warriors continue to pursue them down the stairs, cutting them down in droves.

On the Run

While the Skaven are confused and disorganised, if the Characters don't hurry, they'll find themselves cut off or overrun by the Skaven and the pursuing Chaos Warriors.

Their one advantage is that the Skaven are confused, and getting in each other's way. Some are desperately trying to dig their way through the collapsed mine entrances, while others flee in every direction, some trying to climb the walls of the pass. A few are even trying to organise a desperate defence, but as the Chaos Warriors grow closer their nerve fails.

If the Characters took the high pass and left their horses hobbled below, they find that one of them is dead, and is currently being devoured by a trio of starving Skaven. The Characters can easily sneak up on them (they automatically suffer a *Surprised Condition*), but one of the Characters will then have to ride double with another (–10 to any Ride tests).

THE ROTA TO THE RESCUE

If Tylik gave the Characters his horn, they may decide to use it to summon aid. Tylik immediately leads his *rota* into the pass, but it takes some time for them to reach the Characters. You should have them arrive at a dramatically suitable moment, announcing their arrival with a flight of arrows that cuts into the Skaven ranks. This causes the Skaven to scatter in confusion, giving the Characters a chance to escape. Tylik and his men will surround them and escort them to safety.

If the Characters use the horn before Clan Mange are broken at Brass Keep, it draws attention. A dozen Clanrats led by a Stormvermin are dispatched to investigate, and find the Characters a few rounds before the Ungols. The Characters have to hold them off until the *rota* arrives to help.

Whether the Characters made their way up the high path or along the pass floor, they have enough of a head start on the Skaven to keep ahead of them — until they reach the mine entrance. If the entrance still stands, the Characters find eight Clanrats led by a Stormvermin waiting for them. If the Characters damaged the entrance to the mine, they find that the Skaven have partially cleared the debris. Four Clanrats are outside, and squeal for help. Two more Skaven emerge each round, until all 12 are out, followed by the Stormvermin. If the Characters completely destroyed the mine entrance (using Degni's explosives or some engineering ingenuity), they find a single desperate Skaven, frantically clawing at the collapsed mine entrance. It flees as soon as it sees them.

The Characters can fight their way through the Skaven, or (if they are on horseback) try to go around them. In order to evade the Skaven, they will need to make **Hard (–20) Ride Tests**.

If the Characters spend more than 6 rounds at the mine entrance, they hear the screeching of the surviving Clan Mange forces as they approach. They have 2 more rounds to dispatch any remaining Clanrats before the routed horde arrives. While most of the Skaven will try to flee through the mine entrance (or begin desperately digging their way through the detritus), over three dozen will immediately begin following the Characters.

Use the Pursuit rules (**WFRP**, page 166). The Skaven begin at a distance of 6. Make a single *Athletics* test for the Skaven each round. If the Characters are on horseback, don't forget to modify their *Ride* tests because of the uneven terrain of the pass.

If the Skaven score the highest SL on any round, choose one of the following events.

- Some Clanrats break off the chase for a moment, take out their slings and fling rocks at the Characters. Each Character is attacked by a sling shot (roll to hit as normal).
- As the Characters round a corner of the pass, one of the more adventurous Clanrats takes a shortcut. He leaps nimbly over the rough terrain by the side of the pass and jumps at the lead Character. Have them make **Opposed WS Tests** (the Character may use **Melee (Brawl)** instead). If the Character is successful, the Skaven is knocked aside. If the Clanrat is successful, he clings to the Character for a moment before thinking better of it and letting go (the Character suffers a –2 SL penalty to their next Pursuit test).

Caught!

If the Skaven catch up to the Characters, they quickly surround them, but are reluctant to engage. They are panting for breath, and half-starved. The Characters can see a wild, desperate ferocity in their eyes. Some eventually muster up the courage to attack, and one Skaven leaps forward per Character. In their maddened state, these Clanrats have the *Frenzy Trait*.





If a Skaven is reduced to 0 Wounds or is otherwise knocked prone, a starved Skaven pounces on him, biting into his flesh and ripping out gobs of meat. Other Skaven join in, and suddenly they all turn on each other, biting and stabbing ferociously. Skaven engaged with the Characters continue to fight, but if the Characters flee, they are not followed. If they look back, they see Skaven devouring each other in a frenzied melee.

RETURN TO THE PICKET

Once the Characters make it back to the picket, Commander Emmiline immediately demands they report their findings. She then orders Tylik to take a message to the Kärzburdger Estate. If the Characters are on good terms with her, she will also have him send one of his men with a message to Graf Todbringer.

Hildegund is eager to hear what the Characters have to say, and asks them to repeat what they saw of the battle at the Keep itself. Neither woman will wish to see the Characters depart the picket until the following morning at least. They are the sole witnesses to events at the Keep, and as such cannot be allowed to wander the pass even as daylight stretches thin.

The Scout Returns

As the Characters are being debriefed, shouts of welcome are heard elsewhere in the camp. A scout is ushered into the command tent shortly thereafter. The scout, Private Ewa Bruchmeier, breathlessly raves about witnessing *'a bolt of green lightning shooting from the peak of a mountain to the east'*. If the Characters are on good terms with Emmiline, she allows them to stay while the scout catches her breath. If not, she ushers them out of the tent before asking the scout to continue. They must track the woman down later if they wish to hear her story.

The scout recounts that she was posted high above the picket on the south side of the valley, carrying out her observation of the keep, when her attention was drawn by a bright green flash from a mountaintop, within the Middle Mountains and several days south of Brass Keep. She watched as bright flashes flickered out and struck the keep. Blocks of the wall tumbled away where the beam of lightning struck. The sound reached her many seconds later, which she thinks indicates that the source of the blast was very far away.

Ewa also noticed figures on the nearby peak observing Brass Keep, but she keeps this to herself, unless specifically asked. Observing them through her spyglass, she noted their ratlike features, and decided to neglect to mention seeing creatures that reminded her of her aunt's ravings about Skaven. However, if the Evidence Tracker is at Plausible Denial or higher, she mentions seeing 'creatures' on the peak, revealing more details if pressed. She got a good look at them, and noted that they were carrying devices very similar to those used by Degni when test firing Astrid; brass objects that measure range and trajectory.

Dwarf Craftsmanship

The Characters may have recovered some of the Dwarf weapons or tools from the Skaven. If they show any of these to Degni (or describe the guild marks on them), he instantly identifies them as being from Karak Skygg. He has seen copies of these runes in the records of Middenheim's Dwarven Engineers' Guild, and heard stories of the fall of Karak Skygg from other engineers. He can tell the Characters how to reach Karak Skygg from the picket, and what he knows of its history.

If Degni is informed of what Ewa Bruchmeier witnessed, and has a chance to confer with the scout, he determines that the distant mountaintop is the site of Karak Skygg. He says no artillery piece designed by either Dwarf or Manling could shoot accurately over such a distance, and the implications of such a weapon terrify him.

Unexpected visitor

As evening approaches, a shout sounds out from the picket line, as a guard spots something in the pass. A strange buzzing noise echoes off the mountain walls, grating on the Characters' ears. Flying high above the mountain stream is a hideous beast, a bloated black insect at least 10 ft in length. Its round belly is covered in yellow pustules, and writhing tentacles slither out from between its mandibles. Sitting between its wings is putrid figure clad in tattered robes, bile streaming from a dozen open wounds. A **Challenging (+0) Lore (Chaos)** Test identifies the creature as a sorcerer of Nurgle, and doubtless an ally to the armoured figures in the keep. He pauses and tosses something into the stream, gurgling *'Catch it!'* in a phlegm-filled voice. He then turns and flies back up the pass.

The object slowly floats down the stream towards the palisade. Emmiline has one of her men carefully retrieve it, piercing it on the head of a halberd and then shoving it in a sack, before burning it. If any of the Characters ask to look at it before it's destroyed, they will find it is a rotting Skaven head, with strange symbols carved into the skin. An **Easy (+40) Language (Dark Tongue)** Test deciphers the runes: *'A gift from Papa Nurgle.'*

The next day, the soldier who retrieved the head comes down with a fast-acting version of the Bloody Flux (**WFRP**, page 186, but with an Incubation of 1 day). It quickly spreads throughout the garrison, and the Characters will have to make an **Average (+20) Endurance** Test every day to avoid coming down with it. If they are infected, the symptoms pass unusually quickly if they depart, and they are completely cured the following morning.

Rewards

Good roleplaying and clever thinking should be rewarded, but there are additional XP for the following.

- 30 points for dealing with the Yellow Fang at the Picket
- 20 points for carrying out an observation of Clan Mange's assault
- 20 points for each major NPC brought on side

◆ INTO THE MIDDLE MOUNTAINS ◆



In the aftermath of the disastrous Clan Mange attack on Brass Keep, the Characters have enough information to work out the location of Karak Skygg. Depending on their actions at the picket, Emmiline may be convinced of their good intentions and offer to help them. The Characters shouldn't expect much, given the parlous state of the picket, but they can at least replenish rations and drinking water. If they are on good terms with Emmiline or other NPCs, they may provide further help.

REQUISITIONS

If she has a good opinion of them, Emmiline is willing to offer basic supplies. Quartermaster Habicht can supply equipment if the Characters are lacking appropriate supplies and have not turned him in for his crimes. He can supply (or sell, if they don't think to blackmail him) rope, basic travelling furs, and enough tents to shelter the party. He warns them, *'These mountains are harsh. The tallest peaks have never seen a single summer, it's Ulric's own domain. This stuff will only take you so far. If'n you want to survive out there, you want to be just as harsh.'*

HORSES FOR COURSES

Captain Tylik may offer to buy any horses the Characters possess, or to take care of them until they return. The terrain towards Karak Skygg will be extremely dangerous for horses, and they are likely to die or break legs if forced into such hazardous lands. He can provide payment in coin (use the appropriate value from the Animals and Vehicles table in **WFRP**, page 306). You can

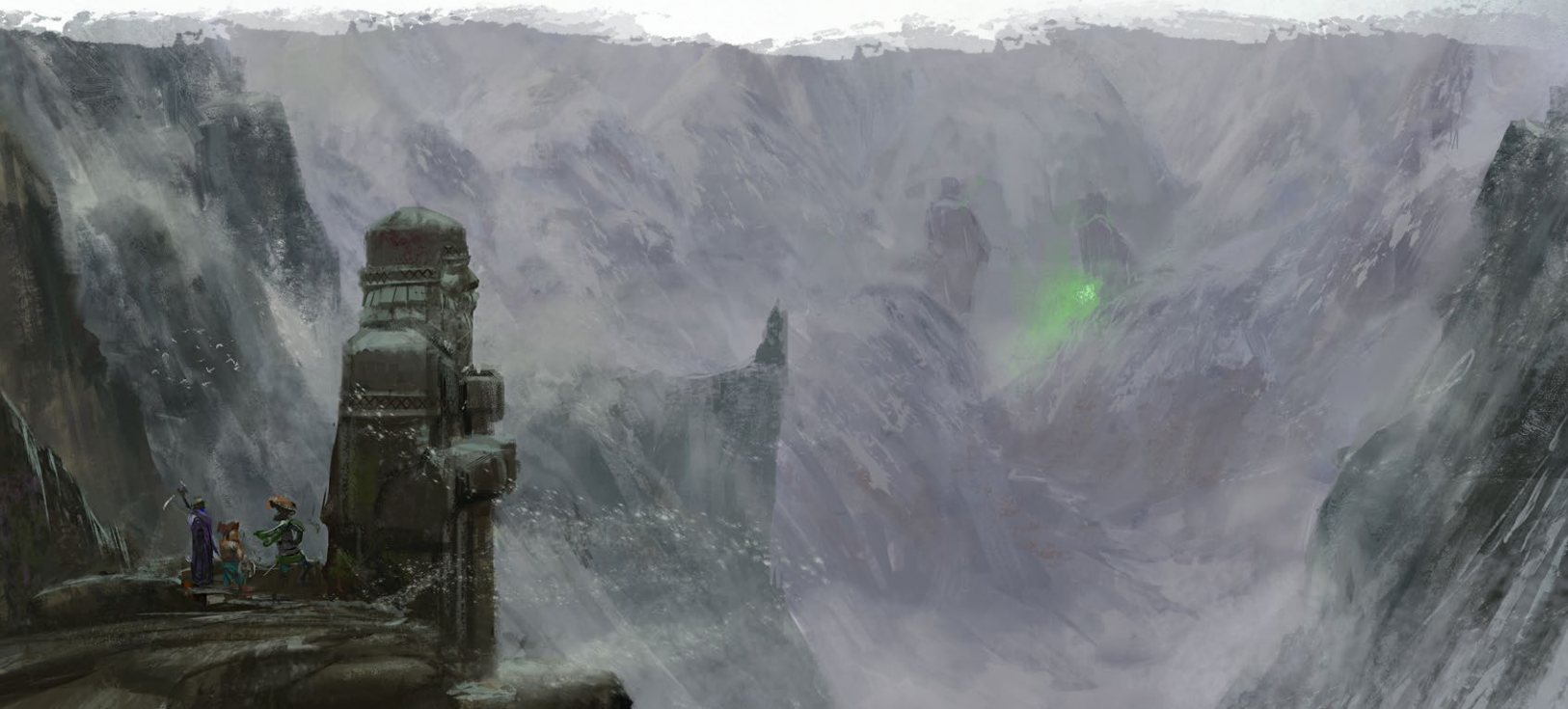
offer 1GC less than the stated price for *'wear and tear'*, if you feel cruel, or if the Characters have a surprising amount of cash!), or payment in goods (an equivalent value in items from the Miscellaneous Trappings table in **WFRP**, page 308).

AN EXPLOSIVE FINALE

Degni Rulsson might be willing to part with more explosives or ammunition for any blackpowder weapons, if the Characters are convincing enough, and they made a good impression on him. A Character who also passes a **Very Difficult (-30) Haggle** Test persuades him to part with a Cinderblast Bomb for 1GC instead of the usual 3GC. However, if the Characters explain that they are attempting to thwart a Skaven plot, Degni gives them 2 Cinderblast Bombs for free, saying, *'Those damned raki took my sister some seventy years back. You give 'em a bloody nose with these, and my family might consider her avenged.'*

Travel Advice

Before the Characters leave the picket, they may seek advice from the various contacts they have made there. If the Characters do not seek advice, then they will have to face every single hazard and encounter listed in this chapter as they make their way to Karak Skygg, so asking friendly folk at the picket is a good way of making things easier for them. Kärzburdger forces have been stationed here a long time, and Emmiline's scouts know the immediate region well.





DEGNI'S CINDERBLAST BOMBS

These are devastating incendiary grenades commonly used by the dwarfs in their endless subterranean battles against the Goblins and Skaven. Best used by tossing them into packed enemy squads, they explode in a terrifying blast of flaming shrapnel which is extremely effective against even armoured opponents. The artillerist only has 2 of these brutal weapons, and will not part with more than one unless convinced they will be used against the Skaven. (For other terrifying examples of Dwarf engineering see *Archives of the Empire*, page 58.)

Weapon	Price	Enc	Availability	Range	Damage	Qualities and Flaws
Cinderblast Bomb	3GC	0	Exotic	SB	+14	Blast 3, Dangerous, Impact, Penetrating

Emmiline

Emmiline has had to direct foraging parties to scour the mountains, and benefits from generations of hard won knowledge about the area, so her advice is the most useful. If asked she tries to help as best she can, but stresses that her knowledge of the Middle Mountains only extends as far as the immediate region around Brass Keep. She does, however, possess charts by military cartographers which are almost certainly more detailed than anything the Characters have. Large parts of the Middle Mountains are too dangerous for surveyors to map, but what details they have noted may be of help to the Characters in planning a route to Karak Skygg.

The map presents a dilemma. A lost Dwarf Hold is shown on the map, but it is surrounded by a swathe of territory marked 'Haunt of the Deff Batz'. A route bypasses this area, but it is busy with tall peaks. With the help of this map the Characters have a choice: either they can avoid encounters with Goblins (but face all the other Mountain Hazards and Encounters), or they can avoid Hidden Drops, Altitude Sickness and Landslides (but must cross Deff Batz territory).

It's up to the Characters to plan their own route, but Emmiline points out the risks. *'It's a mountain range, of course you'll have to climb some mountains! The weather can turn at the drop of a hat. The wind and rain will freeze you to death if you're not careful. We know there are Goblins up there, and Wyverns, and Trolls. The gods alone know what else you might find, but I doubt any of it is friendly.'*

Tylik

Captain Tylik has little advice to give, though he suggests taking along a goat or two. *'You may need an emergency meal, not for yourselves, but to satisfy the appetite of a Troll, should you encounter one'*. Goats can be purchased from the picket at three times the price they would otherwise command (the soldiers are not happy to surrender a source of fresh milk, even if goat's milk is a bit ... gamey). The goats could indeed be useful if surrendered to a monster with the Hungry Trait.

Degni

Degni Rulsson gives the Characters well-meant but patronising advice about wrapping up warm and making sure they get enough sleep. If he is asked about Night Goblins, he grows grim and lists the names of several ancestors and friends who fell in dozens of subterranean conflicts. *'Be wary of their traps. You wouldn't think it to look at them but when it comes to creating devices in order to make mischief Grobi can be cunning engineers.'*

Hildegund

As a follower of Myrmidia Priestess, Hildegund is a useful source of strategic insight. She can provide any of the advice offered by other NPCs, plus the following titbits of information:

'Goblins can be bargained with, don't let any Sigmarite or Dwarf hear it, but if you are willing to trade intoxicants in order to obtain the right of passage they can prove honourable.' (Hildegund will not offer this advice to a devout Sigmarite or a Dwarf.)

'Keep something flammable on you at all times. Many creatures who haunt the mountains are adverse to fire, and it robs Trolls of their healing abilities.'

'There are vengeful spirits who haunt narrow passes in mountainsides. If you see a lone figure it is likely to be a wraith or spectre.'

'The Skaven assault on Brass Keep never stood a chance. It is almost deliberate in its total incompetence. Is the mastermind behind it a fool, or did he want his army to shatter?'

'The Wide-Mouthed Mountain Viper is occasionally encountered, they bask in the open during sunny spells, and can be hard to spot among the rocks. They have a nasty bite, but are more afraid of you than you are of them.'



MALEVOLENT MOUNTAINS

In order to work out what hazards are faced during the journey the Characters should make a **Difficult (-10) Navigation** Test. Consult the following table to work out what hazards the Characters face. No matter how well the Characters do they must face Hidden Drops, Altitude Sickness, Landslides, and Deff Batz territory (unless they avoid hazards using Emmiline's map). Plus hazards mentioned in the table below.

While few of the natural hazards of the Middle Mountains can be avoided entirely, the danger they pose can at least be reduced by a savvy Character. The Characters may prepare against some in advance, perhaps by insisting they tether each other to protect against falls, or being careful not to push themselves so they can acclimatise to the increased altitude. Feel free to let them discuss potential hazards and possible solutions. If the party becomes aware of a danger ahead give them a chance to prepare for it by passing a **Challenging (+0) Outdoor Survival** Test. Success allows a Character to anticipate any hazard. They may take precautions that will give the whole party a +1 SL bonus to any Tests required to navigate the hazard.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the mountains bright, sunny weather can become a freezing downpour with zero visibility in minutes. An **Average (+20) Perception** Test allows a Character to spot warning signs in advance of a drastic weather change — certain species of flower closing up, slight temperature changes, and so on.

Clouds gather over the next few minutes, and the temperature drops by 10 degrees. Visibility drops to 30 yards due to low cloud and fine drizzle. Then the wind picks up to gale force, lashing freezing rain against the Characters as they trudge onward, getting colder, wetter and more miserable by the minute. Good weatherproof clothing keeps out the worst of it, but the rain is fine enough to penetrate everywhere, and only a *Protection from Rain* spell provides any real comfort.

Sensible Characters will try to find shelter somewhere — even the lee of a rock is better than nothing. Pitching a tent in these conditions requires an Extended **Very Hard (-30) Dexterity** Test with 5 Success Levels required.

Some foolhardy Characters may refuse to be cowed by a little bad weather, and may insist on pressing on. Skilled Characters are permitted an **Average (+40) Outdoor Survival** Test to know that this is a very bad idea. Water flows down the track in torrents, turning the whole area marshy and requiring a successful **Athletics** Test to move at any speed above walking pace: on an Impressive or worse failure, the unlucky Character also gains the *Prone* condition.

Horses grow nervous and unsure of their footing. Riders or drovers must pass a **Difficult (-10) Charm Animal** Test. Failure means the animal spends the next turn rearing, whinnying, and

SL	Result	Outcome
+4 or more	Impressive Success	No further hazards
+2 to +3	Success	Snake
+0 to +1	Marginal Success	Snake and Stragglers
-1 to -0	Marginal Failure	Snake!, Stragglers, Vengeful Ghost
-2 to -3	Failure	Snake!, Stragglers, Vengeful Ghost, Inclement Weather
-4 or less	Impressive Failure	Snake!, Stragglers, Vengeful Ghost, Inclement Weather, Young Wyvern

refusing to move. Pack animals have a 5% chance of shedding their load while doing this. On an Impressive or worse failure, the animal attacks any Character who tries to force it to go on.

Cold and Wet

Characters who fail to take shelter from bad weather end up soaked to the skin and freezing cold. Every 15 minutes that the Characters persist in moving through bad weather, they must make a **Challenging (+0) Endurance** Test. Those who fail gain a *Fatigued* Condition for every -1SL.

If a Character gets more *Fatigued* Conditions than their Toughness Bonus in these conditions, they begin to suffer from hypothermia. Every hour until such a Character can warm up and dry out, they must make a **Challenging (+0) Endurance** Test. If they fail they lose 1d10 points from each characteristic.





If any characteristic reaches zero, the character falls unconscious and can only be roused once all characteristics are raised back to 1 point or more. Once a Character is warm and dry, all characteristics return at the rate of 1d10 points per hour, doubled on a successful **Average (+20) Endurance** Test.

HIDDEN DROPS

Blizzards can cause snow to build up over a crevice, concealing the drop. Unwary Characters, thinking they are on unbroken ground, could easily step on the snow 'bridge' which cannot support their weight, taking a nasty fall, or breaking their ankle or leg. Such hazards are difficult to see (a **Hard (-20) Perception** Test) but passing an **Average (+20) Outdoor Survival** Test is enough to know of their existence and avoid them by testing the ground ahead with a stick. If a Character fails to spot the danger and steps in it, they can attempt an **Average (+20) Athletics** Test. Success means the Character grabbed on at the last moment. However, if they fail, they suffer a fall of D10 yards.

ALTITUDE SICKNESS

As they leave the last signs of Imperial civilisation behind and climb towards Karak Skygg, the Characters risk the effects of thinner air. At some point during their ascent you should call for each Human and Halfling Character to test to avoid contracting Altitude Sickness. Ideally, call for the Test after a day of strenuous climbing and travel.

A Character can successfully recognise the sickness and recall appropriate treatment by passing an **Average (+20) Healing** or **Challenging (+0) Outdoor Survival** Test.

Contraction: If a Character fails an **Average (+20) Endurance** Test after a day where you deem them to have climbed high enough. If the Characters are making effort to travel as quickly as possible, the Test difficulty becomes **Challenging (+0)**.

Incubation: 1d10 hours

Duration: 2 days with rest, but further exertion while sick may exacerbate symptoms.

Symptoms: Malaise, Nausea.

At the end of the initial duration, if the Character insists on exerting themselves, they must pass another **Difficult (-10) Endurance** Test or suffer a further 2 days of worsened symptoms. Add another *Fatigued* Condition to Malaise, and Nausea becomes so severe that in addition to gaining a *Stunned* Condition upon failing a roll involving physical movement, the character also loses 1 Wound as their lungs fill with fluid.

Treatment is quite simple. Most Characters acclimatise to the air, if they spend the duration of sickness resting, and returning to lower altitudes likewise cures it. Remember that the Characters' journey across the mountains goes downwards as well as up, so they should be given opportunities to recover.

LANDSLIDES

You can decide to tease the Characters from time to time with small rocks and pebbles tumbling down on their hats from higher slopes. They may think there are enemies above them, or move and speak very gently for fear of setting off a landslide.

A landslide could be instigated by a number of things — a bullet or spell could miss its target, or a bungled **Climb** Test could cause a Character to dislodge a rock that was holding up several others. Landslides are extremely dangerous, so provide a way for Characters to escape the worst of it, such as an outcrop to shelter behind, rope tethers to keep them from falling to their deaths, or even just **Climb** or **Athletics** Tests to grab on to a ledge mid-fall.

A rockfall causes 1d10 damage to every creature in its path, modified by Armour and Toughness Bonus as normal. Characters may make **Challenging (+0) Dodge** Tests to avoid the rocks, but if they suffer an Impressive Failure or worse, they are swept along with the rockfall, falling 1d10 yards down the mountain, and suffering additional damage as a result.

Snake!

A snake has crawled out to warm itself on the stones of the trackway. It is well camouflaged, and requires a **Difficult (-10) Perception** Test to spot from a distance. An Impressive or worse failure indicates that the Character's horse spotted the snake first, and rears in fright, requiring a **Challenging (+0) Ride** Test to avoid being thrown from the horse.

The snake does not attack unless it feels threatened, and slithers away if subjected to missile fire.

SNAKE

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
3	40	-	30	25	25	40	-	5	45	-	6

Traits: Armour 1, Bestial, Cold-blooded, Fast, Size (Small), Venom (Challenging), Weapon+5

Vengeful Ghost

Hazards such as avalanches and rockfalls have claimed the lives of many incautious and unlucky travellers, and once in a while, a Ghost haunts a particular stretch of the narrow mountain pass. Driven by a distorted memory of its death, it becomes obsessed with driving others to their doom.

VENGEFUL GHOST

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
6	30	-	30	30	10	30	20	15	15	-	10

Traits: Dark Vision, Ethereal, Fear 2, Fury, Territorial (place of death), Undead, Unstable, Weapon+6



This kind of encounter is most effective in poor light — either towards dusk or in bad weather. At first, the Ghost might seem to be a fellow traveller, either coming toward the party or standing by the roadside; but as the Characters approach, they can see that its body is translucent and its feet do not seem to touch the ground. With a howl, the angry spirit swoops on the Characters, using its *Fear* Trait to try to make them — or their mounts — panic and fall over the edge.

Should the Ghost manage to inflict a *Broken* Condition on either a Character or their mount there is a risk that they will stumble and fall. Any Broken Character should make a **Challenging (+0) Athletics** Test. If they pass, they skirt round their companions and retreat back the way they came. If they fail, they suffer a fall of 2d10 yards.

Young Wyvern

Wyverns may be seen occasionally in the distance, circling high above the mountains as they scan the ground for prey. A juvenile swoops over the mountains near to Karak Skygg, looking for easy pickings. The Characters can spot the Wyvern before it sees them by passing a **Hard (-20) Perception** Test. If they wish to hide from the Wyvern, they can do so by passing a **Stealth** Test opposed by its Perception of 15. The Wyvern leaves the area after 15 minutes, but it returns every hour for another patrol.

YOUNG WYVERN

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	50	-	55	50	15	45	-	10	40	-	38

Traits: Armour 2, Bestial, Flight 90, Horns, Hungry, Size (Large), Tail+9, Venom (Difficult), Weapon +10

If the Characters successfully evade the Wyvern 3 times, they are spared further harassment by none other than Maliss Manrack. There is a tremendous 'Zzzzapp!' sound as the Moonbreaker cannon shoots the creature out of the sky.

If the Wyvern spots the Characters it follows them at a distance of 200 yards. If the party stays together, the wyvern does not attack, but looks for an opportunity to pick off a pack animal — or a Character — who falls behind by more than 30 yards.

Clan Mange Stragglers

As the Characters approach a cave mouth by the side of the pass, they should make a **Difficult (-10) Perception** Test. Those who pass hear sounds of chittering and squeaking emanating from within. A group of wretched Skaven are making their way to Karak Skygg: survivors of the battle at Brass Keep. These five members of Clan Mange have not yet realised that they have been betrayed. They are in a bad state and try to avoid any Man-things, but if the Characters insist on entering the cave they fight like cornered rats.

WELCOME TO DEFF BATZ COUNTRY

The Deff Batz are a tribe of Night Goblins who have suffered hard times recently. They are vassals of the Red Tusk Orcs whose territory is upon the south west slopes of the Middle Mountains. But they are not valued vassals, and when they began to suffer from the depredations of the Skaven at Karak Skygg, their Orc masters were unwilling to come to their rescue. The remaining Deff Batz have become even more belligerent and resentful than they used to be, which is some feat given that they were thoroughly horrible to begin with.

The first sign of trouble is a large post by the side of a mountain path. The post is topped with the dried heads of three humans and a pair of Dwarfs. There is a board attached to the sign with crude runes etched onto it (it reads 'turn back now and we might not eat you' in badly formed Khazalid).

If the Characters move on, a small figure appears on top of a crag about 120 yards further up the pass. He is clearly a Night Goblin, and whilst he is small and far away, his shrill voice carries clearly in the mountain air.

'Hoy! Didja see dat sign? Didja see it? Dat means stay off our zoggin' mountain! Stay zoggin' off it!'

This is Bartog the Naff, chief diplomat of the Deff Batz. The Characters must decide quickly how they are going to react.

Retreat: Hostilities cease if the Characters retreat, but recommence if they return.

Attack: The characters may attack Bartog. If they can kill him quickly from afar, this is an effective way to deal with him. However, unless he is killed straight away, he drops down from his perch, and scampers off to rouse Scuttlescree the Troll.

CLAN MANGE STRAGGLERS

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
5	30	30	30	30	40	35	30	30	20	20	1d10*

Traits: Armour 2, Infected, Night Vision, Skittish, Tracker, Weapon+7

Trappings: Sword, leather armour, shield

* Scores are generated randomly to reflect the wounds of some encountered Skaven.



Negotiate: The Characters can try and reason with Bartog, but this is unlikely to bear fruit, he is belligerent and insulting, even against his own self-interest. If any spells, miracles, or manoeuvres are made during negotiations, Bartog runs to wake up Scuttlescree. Typical responses to requests include:

'I sed zog off yoo stoopid 'umie! We don't wants yor stink up 'ere!'

'Eivver zog off rite now or I'll go fetch Scuttlescree, an den I'll 'ave woteva 'e don't eat!'

'Stoopid 'umie gitz, yoo just wanna come in 'ere an ruin evryfingh, well I sez zog off!'

'Oo wants yor stoopid stinkin' gold? No use ta gobbos. Stick it where it 'urts and zog right off!'

Trading with Bartog

There is one way to get Bartog to allow the Characters to move through Deff Batz territory, and that is to offer him something he wants. Bartog, like most Goblins, is interested in two things: equipment that can be used to cause mayhem, and strong drink.

If the Characters offer Bartog weaponry or booze for the privilege of crossing Deff Batz territory, he will still be sneering and aggressive, but is basically honourable. For example, if the Characters were to suggest that they have a keg of ale and a cache of cinder blasts to offer for safe passage, Bartog's response would be along the lines of:

'Ugh it'll 'ave yor slime all over it! But leave that stuff by the post, and we'll let yoo over da mountain, but mind you go fast as yoo can, we don't wants yer stinkin' the place aht.'

Provided the Characters are able to produce enough weaponry and/or booze to impress Bartog. (Note: He is interested in quantity than quality, though weapons that produce explosions are particularly prized.) However, Bartog does not trade if there are any Dwarfs in the party.

BARTOG THE NAFF – NIGHT GOBLIN DIPLOMAT

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	25	35	30	30	20	35	30	30	20	22	11

Traits: Animosity (Everything), Armour 1, Afraid (Elves), Infected, Night Vision, Weapon+7

Skills: Dodge 45, Language (Reikspiel) 40, Melee (Basic) 35, Stealth (Underground) 45

Talents: Tunnel Rat, Enclosed Fighter

Trappings: Sword, Shield.

As the Characters pass through Deff Batz territory after a trade, they may see the occasional Night Goblin keeping watch on them, but the agreement is honoured and they may pass through unmolested as long as they don't complicate matters themselves.

Waking Scuttlescree

Bartog is well placed to abandon his position by sliding down a slope on the far side of the crag which ends at the mouth of a cave. Within the cave sleeps Scuttlescree, a particularly malign and ornery Stone Troll.

Scuttlescree proceeds to exit his cave and sniffs the air. He can track Characters by smell, and attacks them in an animal frenzy. Scuttlescree is hungry and enraged. He fights to the death but may be persuaded to abandon the fight if he is given something significant to eat (such as a horse or a dead Character). In the meantime, Bartog slips away into the mountains.

SCUTTLESCREE – STONE TROLL

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
6	35	15	60	45	20	15	15	10	25	5	32

Traits: Armour 2, Bite+8, Die Hard, Hungry, Infected, Magic Resistance, Regenerate, Size (Large), Stupid, Tough, Vomit, Weapon (Maul) +10

Skills: Cool 35, Dodge 25, Melee (Basic) 45

Talents: Combat Reflexes, Resolute

Trappings: Hand Weapon (Big Wooden Maul)

A Beating in the Peaks

If Bartog is not satisfied or killed he rouses more of his tribe to set an ambush for the Characters. A few hours after they encountered him, during a spell of fair weather, the Characters hear an incongruous rumble of thunder echo across the rocky valleys and crevasses. Loose pebbles shower down on their heads. If a Character passes a **Difficult (-10) Perception** Test they may notice that there does not seem to be a cloud in the sky, or any evidence of oncoming landslides.

Up ahead of the Characters is the wide mouth of a natural cave. They may think to take shelter within, either to escape the elements, or to bed down for the night, or just out of idle curiosity. However, the cave is a trap. A Character passing an **Average (+20) Perception** Test notices that a net containing many large stones has been hoisted over the cave mouth.

But the sound isn't coming from the skies at all, and the second, much louder rumble erupts from deeper within the cave. There's no mistaking it now; the sound is the beating of mighty drums. Any Character who passes an **Average (+20) Perception** Test can feel a light draught of air coming from deeper in the caves, indicating there is another exit. If they get 4+SL, they also hear high pitched cackling coming from within the cave.



The ground shakes, and the stones in the net are released. The cave entrance is blocked up as rocks and earth tumble down. Characters and animals standing at the entrance risk being struck as if caught in a landslide. The Characters have been trapped by the Goblins, who wait in a larger cave further into the mountain, hoping to use their numbers to their advantage. They are confident the Characters cannot pass the blockage and have no choice but to pass by their carefully prepared forces.

Resourceful Characters may be able to clear the blockage after all. It is certainly difficult, but not impossible for a strong party. Using physical force to move the boulder requires 6SL on an Extended **Very Hard (-30) Athletics** Test, and the tunnel is too narrow to allow more than two Characters (one making the roll and the other lending aid). Each roll represents 5 minutes of the Characters straining to shift rocks and earth. Alternatively, a suitably devastating spell could clear the blockage. Smaller Magic Missile spells such as Blast or Bolt are too weak, but *Ghur's* Amber Spear, or *Aqshy's* Great Fires of U'Zhul are powerful enough to shatter, melt or otherwise shift the blockage. Any damaging spell with an Area of Effect and a CN of 8+ should be sufficient, but if Characters come up with particularly creative magic or other solutions by all means allow it. If the Characters go this route, the Goblins give chase, leading to combat regardless, but the narrow paths and dangerous terrain cost them their advantage in numbers.

If the Characters journey into the cave they must meet the Goblin horde head on. Further down the cramped, twisting tunnel is a large cavern. There are 16 Goblins waiting in ambush, but the enthusiastic drumming has made it obvious there is a fight waiting for the Characters. The Goblins are confident in their numbers at first, but flee as soon as they lose half their number. The Characters might cut them down as they flee, or they may escape down narrow tunnels, either way once they are defeated the Goblins do not trouble the Characters further.

After the fight Characters might want to investigate the bodies. A Character passing a **Hard (-20) Perception** Test can deduce that the Goblin bodies are all showing signs of malnourishment. Goblin bones can be seen here and there in the lair they were using, suggesting that they have been engaging in cannibalism.

The tunnel continues on for several hundred yards before the Characters emerge into the fresh air and open sky once more.

Rewards

Good roleplaying and clever thinking should be rewarded, but there are additional XP for the following:

- 30 points for crossing Deff Bats Territory
- 20 points for each hazard faced

MALNOURISHED NIGHT GOBLIN

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	25	35	30	30	20	35	30	30	20	20	1d10 +1

Traits: Animosity (Everything), Armour 1, Afraid (Elves), Hungry, Infected, Night Vision, Weapon (Sword) +7

Skills: Dodge 45, Melee (Basic) 35, Stealth (Underground) 45

Talents: Tunnel Rat, Enclosed Fighter

Trappings: Sword, Shield.





◆ KARAK SKYGG ◆



This chapter of **The Horned Rat** takes the party to the abandoned Dwarfhold of Karak Skygg, where they will discover Warlock Engineer Maliss Manrack's lair, and his insane plot to shoot down the moon. The fate of the northern Empire is in their hands, for should the Skaven succeed, colossal chunks of Warpstone will rain down on the land.

Once within Karak Skygg, it becomes apparent that the mountain is a hive of activity. Slaves, Clanrats and Engineers toil to complete the cannon and bring the weapon into alignment with Morrslieb. The hour of destiny is close at hand, with only the party able to stop this catastrophe.

The rest of this chapter is divided into six sections:

Running the scenario provides an overview of the events and escapades that the party can experience while infiltrating Karak Skygg, and how you can create a sense of atmosphere and urgency.

Maliss Manrack's plan and how to stop it outlines exactly what the Warlock Engineer will do — if the party takes no action; along with four ways to thwart the destruction of Morrslieb.

Getting into Karak Skygg provides a brief summary of the journey to the Hold, and several ways for the party to get inside.

Karak Skygg gives them an opportunity to explore, learn, and plan — and encounter some of the more interesting denizens of the Skaven lair.

The Evil Genius gives Warlock Engineer Maliss Manrack his moment on stage. The party will have a chance to confront him, and hopefully end his insane scheme.

Escape to victory presents various ways in which the Characters can avoid a grisly fate when the whole place comes crashing down.

RUNNING THE SCENARIO

The Characters have arrived in the nick of time. This very night, Morrslieb will pass directly over the Dwarfhold, perfectly positioned for the Moonbreaker Cannon to fire.

Specific hints about time pressure are scattered throughout the rest of this chapter, but you should make sure it is never far from the Players' minds. From the moment they enter the hold, the sense of urgency is palpable.





- ☠ The sun is sinking towards the horizon and Morrslieb waxes large as it moves steadily across the darkening sky.
- ☠ Warlock Engineers scurry to and fro, fitting Warpstone crystals, adjusting controls, tightening bolts — and getting occasional shocks and singses from a circuit that clearly needs more work.
- ☠ Slaves carry sacks of Warpstone and pieces of equipment, from nuts and bolts to girders, under the relentless lashes of overseers.
- ☠ At seemingly-random intervals, a great bell tolls from above. With each ring, the Skaven are thrown into fresh bursts of panicked activity.

Karak Skygg is not a dungeon to be bashed room by room. The Skaven react quickly to any violence, overwhelming the Characters with almost unlimited numbers until they are dead, disabled, unconscious, or grappled to a standstill. The best course of action is stealth and deception.

Like Castle Wittgenstein, there are NPCs who can help and hinder the party's progress. If the Players roleplay rather than just fight and sneak, they can discover several routes to stopping Maliss Manrack's scheme — and even rescue an old friend.

SKAVEN EVIDENCE CHART — KARAK SKYGG

Evidence Score	Result
Undeniable	The Skaven in Karak Skygg have had to work much harder than they might have in order to secure slaves and resources needed to carry out their plans. The Characters find it much easier to sneak past or bluff the overworked Skaven, and so gain +2 SL on any Stealth, Charm, or Intimidate Tests made against Skaven in Karak Skygg. Apart from named Skaven NPC, any Skaven they meet has a 50% of having a <i>Fatigued</i> Condition.
Plausible Denial	No effect.
Deeper Denial	Things have been going very smoothly for Maliss. As soon as the Characters enter Karak Skygg, they hear the bell toll three times. Any Yellow Fang cultists not killed earlier in the adventure are here, and may well recognise the Characters.

THE BENEFITS OF EVIDENCE

Even though the Characters are far from civilisation, the degree to which they exposed Skaven machinations in the early part of the scenario may help them in their efforts to stop Maliss Manrak from shattering Morrslieb. Refer to the following table to see what the results of their efforts are.

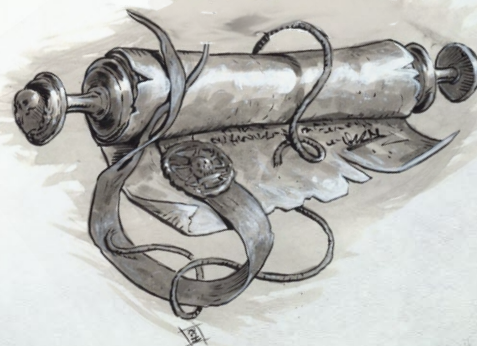
MALISS MANRACK'S PLAN AND HOW TO STOP IT

Warlock Engineer Maliss used Dagmar von Wittgenstein's research on Morrslieb's trajectory to track the likely movements of the chaos moon. But Maliss was frustrated by Morrslieb's unpredictability, and even after stealing more astronomical research, could not forecast a moment when the moon would be above Karak Skygg. He had a breakthrough when he coerced a kidnapped Astromancer to use their expertise to give him an answer. Deputy High Wizard Janna Eberhaeur has unknowingly provided the last piece of research for Maliss — and she's about to outlive her usefulness.

The Moonbreaker Cannon is a humongous device which channels the raw power of refined Warpstone to generate bolts of Warp lightning. For many weeks, the Skaven in Karak Skygg have sweated to refine the Warpstone that Maliss Manrack's agents gathered from across the Empire. Meanwhile, Maliss and his Warlock Engineers tinker with the Moonbreaker Cannon ready for the great moment when they use it to shatter Morrslieb.

But the Skaven are treacherous, and several Clan Skryre rivals will undo Maliss's work if it brings them greater glory. Warlock Engineer Zingetail is determined to steal Maliss's plans and sees that he dies. He has despatched his agent Brokenclaw to do the deed.

One shot will not suffice to destroy a moon, so the Moonbreaker Cannon will fire a continuous volley of ball lightning at Morrslieb, each shot weakening the moon's integrity until it shatters. The subsequent rain of Warpstone meteorites will devastate life in the Northern Old World, leaving the Skaven... and especially Warlock Engineer Maliss... to take over.





THE FINAL COUNTDOWN

Morrslieb's movements are unpredictable even to the last hours, so Maliss commanded that a great bell is rung as the moon approaches. There is still work to be done completing construction of the cannon and refining sufficient Warpfuel, so he wants the whole place to work faster and harder. When Morrslieb reaches a fixed point in the night sky, the bell tolls 13 times, and the cannon has a narrow interval to fire its volley. The intervals between tolls are as irregular as Morrslieb's trajectory is chaotic, so the whole of Karak Skygg is on tenterhooks, unsure when the bell will ring next.

The great thing about Morrslieb's unpredictability is that you can make the bell toll whenever you want to pick up the pace — use the tolling bell to spur the Players along. The first time they hear it, the party will just hear one chime, but on the second and third they'll understand that it's counting up. If they talk with any Skaven or Yellow Fang cultist, they can explain that 13 is the sacred number of the Horned Rat.

SOLUTIONS

There are three effective ways for the party to prevent Maliss's scheme and save the Empire from catastrophe.

Target Maliss — by sneaking through Karak Skygg and evading capture, the party could reach the Warlock Engineer's laboratory and kill him before the Moonbreaker Cannon is fired. This is perhaps the most straightforward solution, although they'll need to evade capture, and it leaves the problem of a mountain full of Skaven and a deadly cannon.

Slave revolt — Many Clan Mange mercenaries were wiped out at Brass Keep, with the remainder now enslaved in Karak Skygg. But the sadistic Maliss kept the Clan Mange Warlord alive to witness the fate of his clanmates. If the party free Warlord Kratz and explain what happened at Brass Keep and under Middenheim, the general may set aside his suspicion of man-things and whip up a desperate rebellion. The Skavenslaves vastly outnumber Clan Skryre, and may be able to overwhelm them, especially if the party lends a hand by freeing enough captives.

Sabotage — the Moonbreaker Cannon is an intricate device which must be fired at a very specific time — and it's still not quite finished. If the party delays completion, tampers with the refined Warpstone or interferes with the workings, they could prevent the cannon firing on Morrslieb, or cause it to malfunction and explode. The Skaven spy Brokenclaw could be their unlikely ally in this or traitor engineer Hermann von Talg may also unwittingly help direct their wrecking efforts.

GETTING INTO KARAK SKYGG

The party of Characters are not the only travellers to the Dwarfhold, as Skaven and their slaves are skulking along the mountain paths, carrying with them supplies for the mad Warlock Engineer. The Characters must be careful to avoid these packs, or they could hide amongst these slaves as a means to enter Karak Skygg.

Swift reconnaissance should several ways into Karak Skygg:

- ☛ Sneak in via the Outflow tunnel.
- ☛ Disguise themselves as slaves and try to enter by the main gate by tricking the Tally Rat
- ☛ Pretend to be Yellow Fang cultists working on some secretive mission for their masters
- ☛ Use one of the winches or platforms hanging down the sides of the mountain to haul up warpstone and ores to the forges

The Players may come up with other inventive ways to get in undetected. If they're foolish enough to *fight* their way into a mountain full of Skaven, don't feel bad about taking Fate Points away.

KARAK SKYGG

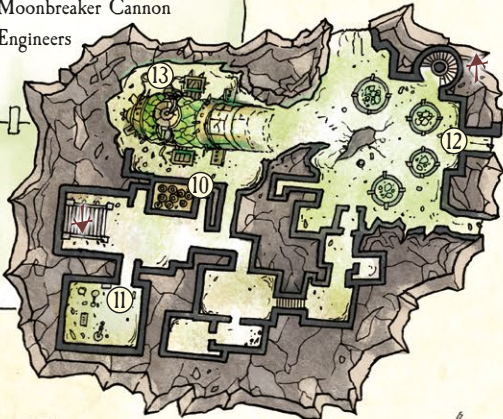
High in the Middle Mountains stands the abandoned Dwarfhold of Karak Skygg. For centuries this was home to the mountain folk but never a major settlement — perhaps the equivalent of a small human town or fortress. At some point in the past, for unknown reasons, the Dwarfs of the Middle Mountains abandoned and sealed their Holds to return to the World's Edge Mountains.

Now the Hold is home to Skaven who burrowed past the rune-sealed barriers to despoil the interior. The dark stone tunnels are filthy with their waste, and countless ancient carvings and statues have been torn down. At the peaks, the Skaven have smashed through numerous floors to accommodate the Moonbreaker Cannon. Dotted around the mountain are gibbets from which prisoners hang either dead or almost dead, pecked, half eaten, and frozen to the bone. Ricketty wooden platforms protrude from holes in the Hold's walls, upon which lightning conductors, winches and pulleys hang.

The following description is not an exhaustive account of every room and corridor in Karak Skygg. It provides a guide to the most important locations and what the party may find there.

KARAK SKYGG

1. The Outflow
2. The Pit
3. The Gate of Grugni
4. The Furnace
5. The Slave Pens and Prisons
6. The Storehouse
7. Barracks
8. The Great Hall
9. Ruined Temple of Grinnir
10. The Hidden Arsenal
11. Clan Skryre Workshops
12. The Refinery
13. The Moonbreaker Cannon
14. The Engineers Lair





Should they choose to explore the full extent of the Dwarf halls, they may spend a lot of time looking at dusty chambers that were stripped and abandoned thousands of years ago. If they stray too far from the main locations, have the bell toll to remind them of the urgency of their mission, or put a solid stone Dwarf blockade in their way — the legacy of the inhabitants who sealed Karak Skygg supposedly forever.

ENCOUNTERS

The main tunnels and chambers of Karak Skygg are busy, with packs of slaves, Clan Skryre clanrats and warriors, and even some Yellow Fang cultists bustling about. Rats are everywhere, gnawing on suspicious lumps of gristle, fighting and slinking in and out of cracks in the walls. Most corridors are dimly lit with the occasional torch or bundle of burning rags shoved into a wall sconce.

As the Characters explore the Hold, you can use the following table to provide atmosphere. If the party acts suspiciously, they may be challenged by any Skaven they meet.

Most of the Skaven are preoccupied with the work at hand, and are so used to seeing man-things and other slaves that they will not give the Characters a second glance as long as they have no reason to suspect that they are intruders. The Characters may have to make **Stealth** or **Entertain (Acting)** Tests from time to time, but if no alarm has been raised, all Tests to avoid notice or allay suspicions are **Average (+20)**.

KARAK SKYGG ENCOUNTERS

1d100	Encounter
0–5	Worked to death: An emaciated Skaven with piebald fur bursts from the shadows, looks around frantically and collapses. Moments later a Packmaster follows, kicks the corpse and forces two more Skavenslaves to drag it to the Pit.
6–10	Rat swarm: A wave of rats rush down the corridor, some with two heads or several extra eyes. They'll sweep past the party ward off with fire or a similar attack — use the Rat Swarm encounter on page 24.
11–16	Careful now! Two masked Clan Skyre Skaven walk past carrying a sealed cask very carefully as if it might explode. If surprised, they will drop the cask and it <i>will</i> explode, inflicting +8 Damage with the Blast (3) quality.
17–30	Guards: Six Clan Skryre Stormvermin going to or from the Barracks. See page 7 for profiles. They are carrying halberds and poisoned wind globes and wear goggles.
31–45	Skavenslaves: Five skavenslaves driven by a Packmaster. They are carrying heavy buckets of broken ore and struggle under the weight. See page 7 for profiles.
45–50	Ominous boom: A loud noise comes from above, reverberating through the Hold. A cracked Dwarf carving falls from the wall and smashes on the ground.
51–65	Slaves: A group of five wretched Humans and possibly a Dwarf or Halfling stumble along, carrying metal components. They are tied together by the neck. One Packmaster pulls them along while the other whips them from behind, chittering with mirth.
66–75	Warlock Engineers: A Clan Skryre Warlock Engineer, light armour (1 AP) and hand weapon, plus a 25% chance of a warlock pistol. It hustles the Characters out of the way before cuffing a smaller Skaven around the head and squealing angrily in Queekish.
76–85	Health and safety incident: A Skaven swaddled in heavy rags pushes a cart with several dead slaves piled on it, their mouths drool glowing green saliva and hideous fleshy growths sprout from their bodies.
86–90	Clan Mange slaves: A pack of six Skavenslaves with piebald fur stalk past, grumbling in Queekish and shooting murderous glances at the Clan Skryre Packmaster who holds their chains.
91–95	Get out of the way! A small crowd of 3 Skaven Clanrats rush past, chittering nervously. (See WFRP , page 337 for profiles.)
96–00	Cultists: Four Yellow Fang cultists, unarmoured, with daggers. The cult's emblem is painted on their clothing. They are carrying boxes of miscellaneous components that look like junk to anyone but a Warlock Engineer. They look pleased to be working for the masters.



Bluff

If challenged by a lone Skaven or a small group of guards, the Characters can try to convince the Ratmen that they are a part of the great project. So many Skaven are involved, that none could possibly know this isn't true.

For a group that enjoys roleplaying and negotiation, this option offers a great deal of entertainment. **Charm** Tests will be necessary, modified by a number of factors:

- what the Characters were doing to arouse suspicion
- the effectiveness (or otherwise) of any disguises
- the success or failure of any **Entertain (Acting)** Tests made in the effort to look like they belong

These **Charm** Tests will be opposed by the **Cool** or **Willpower** of the challenging party, which can be taken from the appropriate profile.

A successful Test will send the challenger away, giving the Characters time to finish what they were doing and get out of the area.

Fight!

If the Characters are foolish or unlucky and a fight seems inevitable, they may be able to subdue their opponents without raising the alarm or attracting attention. For every Round of combat, there is a 15% chance some more Skaven happen across them. Roll on the encounter table above to see what happens.

Run!

The party may also try to flee, losing themselves in the mass of Skaven and slaves before a pursuit can be organised.

To make good their escape, each of the Characters should make an Extended **Average (+10) Stealth** Test with a total of 5 SLs required. Chapter 4 of **Power Behind the Throne** includes detailed rules for chases and shadowing in the crowded streets of Middenheim's Carnival week, which can be used to add detail to the process: each Round with no movement imposes a cumulative -10 penalty on the next Round's Test.

Captured!

If everything goes wrong, the consequences depend on where the party is captured and what they were doing.

If they are on the 3rd or 4th stratum or engaged in sabotage, they are taken to Maliss for interrogation.

If they are disguised as slaves or on any other level, they are taken to the Slave Pens and thrown into a cage which happens to contain Hetri Bittercrag.

Brokenclaw, the Skaven spy, can be encountered anywhere in Karak Skygg — you can deploy him if the party is doing something suspicious and they could use additional help.

Brokenclaw

Brokenclaw, as a member of Clan Skryre, carries and wears items made with the Skaven's twisted form of science and alchemy. It has complex goggles, many tools, and devices designed to pick locks, or open contraptions. Brokenclaw's fur is slick and seems always wet or oiled, and his left paw is mutated so that his over-large thumb is on the wrong side. Brokenclaw is an engineer, but also a master spy for the Grand Skreeductor, Zingetail.

Brokenclaw is here to steal Maliss's research and prevent the Moonbreaker from firing. Zingetail will not tolerate his rival's success. For this reason, Brokenclaw is not above making a deal with the adventurers, if it means he can achieve his own goals without risking his own life.

BROKENCLAW

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
5	58	43	32	38	59	55	36	42	32	29	12

Traits: Armour 2, Bite (5), Champion, Dark Vision, Venom, Weapon (Hand Weapon) +7, Ranged (Dart Ejector) +8

Skills: Dodge 48, Melee (Basic) 67, Parry 62, Ranged (Engineering) 51, Language (Reikspiel) 52

Talents: Deadeye Shot, Shadow, Well-prepared

Trappings: Various tools, solvents and devices befitting a master spy.





LOCATIONS

Karak Skygg can be considered as a stack of four layered 'strata', each consisting of several floors with similar functions.

BELOW EARTH

In times past, the deepest chambers were under the protection of Grungni and to a lesser extent, Gazul, protector of the dead. The Halls of Gazul housed the tombs of the ancestors and the Temple of Grungni was dedicated to the predominant Ancestor God and Father of Dwarfs. It was here that the Deep Forges burned and the Underway carried swift messengers to other Holds in the Middle Mountains.

Today, the lowest levels of the Hold are choked with rockfalls and riddled with Skaven tunnels from where the ratmen first broke into Karak Skygg. The tombs were removed wholesale to the World's Edge Mountains, and the Temple deconsecrated and stripped bare. The Underway is sealed with colossal stone barricades and flooded with a foot of water, while the mines have been blocked with rubble.

The Outflow

A reinforced tunnel, wide and tall enough for a coach and horses to ride through. This was once the culvert carrying waste from the Hold — runoff from the forges, waste water and sewage. The tunnel opening is in the valley below the mountain, surrounded by a grotesque carved head resembling a goblin and covered with a rusty iron grill with large gaps. A trickle of foul water still flows from the tunnel, sustaining a lush growth of tall reeds. These provide perfect cover for anyone trying to sneak in.

After navigating the dark, stinking tunnel, the outflow eventually opens in a large drainage chamber with a broken pump. Climbing this leads up into the Pit.

The Pit

Below the prisons and slave pens is a chamber that was once the cistern, where drinking water would gather and collect, and below that is the outflow. The Skaven have excavated this area, breaking through to the former Halls of Gazul and Temple of Grungni. It is now a huge open chamber supported by massive pillars of cut stone. From holes above, filth and waste is thrown down, including the dead. This pile of rotting organic matter provides fertiliser for Black Corn, a putrid Skaven crop which is grown here to feed the lowest denizens of Karak Skygg. The only light in the Pit comes from the glowing fungus that clings to the walls and roof, and creeps across the crop, bathing everything in a faint blue glow.

Any adventurers entering the Pit, from the outflow or some other route, must contend with the Skavenslaves who work here gathering the corn, and who are whipped and punished by packmasters if they dare eat the harvest. These slaves are not strong, but are numerous and desperate. The air is foul. The noxious fumes from the decomposing require adventurers to pass **Average (+20) Toughness** Tests to not be overcome by the stench, suffer -1 SL to all tests for d10-WP hours. Furthermore, any Character injured when fighting here as a chance of the wound being infected. Characters must pass an **Easy (+40) Endurance** Test or suffer a Festering Wound (see **WFRP**, page 187 k).





THE FIRST STRATUM — HALLS OF VALAYA

The grand entrance to Karak Skygg once granted admittance to the Entrance Hall, the Merchants Halls, brewery, granaries, storehouses, and kitchens. It was here that the Dwarfs received envoys from the world beyond, traded, and fed the population. The walls still bear carvings of the Ancestor Goddess of the Hearth and several toppled statues litter the rooms.

The many slaves who work for the Warlock Engineer are kept prisoner on these floors, crammed into pens, and dragged to and from their labours as their masters see fit.

The Gate of Grungni

Standing, each leg straddling the main gate to the Hold, is a gargantuan statue of Grungi. Stone carvings are either side of him, implacable Dwarf faces which once housed great cannons projecting from their eyes, but now contain nests of rats.

Through the main gates, new slaves and Clanrats enter the fortress, whipped by their masters. Checking the number of slaves brought in, and their quality, is Tiktik the Tally Rat. He sits with an abacus at the entrance, writing upon his scrolls, directing where the chattel should be taken.

If the adventurers enter here as slaves they will come face to face with Tiktik, assessed as healthy, and told in broken Reikspiel that they will, '*Work-toil hard, meaty man-things*'. If they are disguised as Yellow Fang cultists, he sneers, and demands they praise him before admittance.

Tiktik the Tally Rat, Packmaster of Clan Skryre

Tiktik appears wizened, for a Skaven. Grey hair trails from the end of his snout, and he hobbles about wincing with pain. His tail is not as long as it should be, because of an ancient injury. He carries scrolls, parchment, and a few vials of ink. His left index

finger claw is long and shaped to act as a stylus for writing. A pair of spectacles sit on his snout, and on brass armatures are numerous lenses that he uses to read closely and inspect slaves.

Tiktik sneers and tuts as he inspects all new slaves brought to him. He is no fool, but the increased number of slaves coming and going has made him less diligent when scrutinising them.

The Furnace

The Halls of Valaya once had an extensive bakery and kitchens to feed the hundreds of Dwarfs that lived here. Now the fires burn, fed by anything and everything the Skaven consider waste that can't be fed into the Pit. These fires provide some heat, but primarily help to power the steam system that powers all manner of contraptions and devices within the Hold. The Skaven working the furnaces have patchwork hair, skin sore from burns, and their whiskers are singed almost down to the snout.

Extinguishing the furnace slows the operation of the equipment far above in the fortress, namely the steam powered winches and equipment used to transport refined warpstone to the cannon. It won't prevent the Moonbreaker from firing but causes panic amongst the Engineers. Further sabotage and stealth is much easier as the Skaven scramble to bring the furnace back to temperature, and argue and lay blame on each other.

Food is still prepared in the old kitchens. Bubbling in large vats on hot coals are stinking volumes of 'soup', with hunks of meat bobbing about in it — this is the finest cuisine in Karak Skygg, reserved for the Clan Skryre masters. Packmasters, between berating their underlings and cracking whips, will come here to take a break, stir the soup, sip it, and then add some more ingredients. These slacking Skaven are ripe for ambush. The ingredients come from the storehouse and several rusting, blood-stained buckets. From a distance it appears that the soup is made from the off cuts of pigs.

The Slave Pens and Prisons

The former Merchants' Halls now play host to slaves, in large cages, watched over by Slavemasters stationed in a former guardhouse. Skavenslaves are kept separate to the unfortunate masses of human and Dwarf captives. If the party is captured and considered escaped slaves, they will be shoved into one of the cages with several slaves, including Hetri the Dwarf Scout

The guards keep a small pack of savage Giant Rats (WFRP page 315). Bred by Clan Moulder, these rats are the size of a small hound, and used to intimidate and occasionally tear apart the slaves. The Slavemasters keep them half-starved, and given the chance they would turn on their masters when easier prey is unavailable. Succeeding at a **Hard (-20) Strength test** breaks the lock on the Giant Rat cage, sending the unruly beasts out into the main hall and creating enough of a distraction for the adventurers to mess with the cages or sneak past.

TIKTIK THE TALLY RAT
PACKMASTER OF CLAN SKRYRE

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
5	38	34	42	52	35	27	42	56	47	38	18

Traits: Corrupted (1), Die Hard, Disease (Ratte Fever), Infected, Weapon (Sword +8, Man Catcher +8)

Skills: Animal Care 62, Animal Training 64, Endurance 67, Melee (Basic 48, Polearm 53), Perception 53, Language (Reikspiel) 66

Talents: Night Vision, Surgery, Strike to Stun

Trappings: Man Catcher (Treat as a spear with *Entangle* and *Undamaging*), Hand Weapon (Sword)



Hetri Bittercrag, Dwarf Slave

If Hetri was in better health, her shoulder-length brown curls and rosy cheeks would be full of life. Only her hazel eyes betray a sense of who she was before becoming a prisoner. She has missing teeth, scratches and scabs on her skin, cracked lips, and her hands are worn and peeling. She is dressed in nothing more than a rag, offering her some modesty, but little warmth. As she speaks she wheezes, becoming breathless and tired.

The arrival of the Characters brightens her sallow face, and her heart will be filled with hope once more. She offers the Characters what information she can, but insists they help free her. She is immensely proud of her knowledge of the Middle Mountains. She was exploring around Karak Skygg to look for knowledge of the former inhabitants when she was captured.

When encountered, Hetri is suffering from a *Fatigued Condition* that only escape from Karak Skygg and perhaps a pint of Bugman's Best Bitter can hope to remove.

Escaping the jail cell will require guile and subtlety, and Hetri points out that there is a path that they can take if they wish to enter the chamber where the Skaven leave all discarded equipment before they sort through it. Desperate Characters can take this route, but risk being discovered by the two Skaven who are sorting through the pile of clothes, armour, weapons and other items.

HETRI BITTERCRAG, DWARF SLAVE

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
3	43	28	34	42	23	29	31	37	35	38	14

Traits: Animosity (Elves), Hatred (Skaven)

Skills: Outdoor Survival 46, Navigation 37, Secret Signs 46, Lore (Dwarfs) 65

Talents: Night Vision, Magic Resistance, Strong Legs
Trappings: Rag

How did you get here?

'I was exploring Karak Skygg in hope of discovering something of my ancestors, but I was captured.'

What is this place?

'Thousands of years ago, when you manlings were in furs, my ancestors built mighty Karaks throughout these mountains. Many a Dwarf toiled beneath the ground to raise up citadels such as this, many clans made their home in this mountain, much cheer and many victories were sung in these halls. Karak Skygg was once a jewel in the crown of Karaz Ghumbul, but in their venerated wisdom, my ancestors chose to return to the heartland of Karaz Ankor. They sealed the gates with powerful runes and blessed the halls. The Runepriests declared the mountains accursed and departed. Great Thognar the Wise stood atop this mountain and bellowed, "In the name of Valaya..."'

No, I mean... what is it now?

'Den of foul Raki. Bastards can get in through the tiniest holes.'

What are they doing?

'A terrible thing that will see the end of us all. They plan to shoot down the moon you call Morrslieb. We must stop them.'

How?

'I know the passageways here. The ancestors left their runes to guide me. With your help we can escape these cages. Then we can take a closer look at their weapon. If I can't... then I'll take the oath of the Slayer.'

If Hetri accompanies the party, she is weakened but helpful. She can guide them through corridors and inform them about quieter routes. If they pass close to the Hidden Arsenal with her, she notices the runes on the wall revealing its presence.

The Storehouse

The storehouse is a series of enclosed rooms on several levels which open onto a central chamber. The whole place is piled high with the rotting carcasses of animals looted from farmsteads from about Middenland. Though buzzing with flies and maggots, these supplies provide food for the Hold. Behind a pile of the rotting meat is a secret entrance to the passageways within the fortress that the Skaven have not discovered, but Hetri can detect from concealed runes on the walls. The passageway here leads up to the Refinery.

If the adventurers need to hide, this pile of cadavers and meat conceals their scent from the Skaven's sensitive noses. Hiding for more than four Rounds in the rotting mass of meat requires a **Challenging (+0) Toughness** Test to resist vomiting, and a further **Average (+20) Toughness** Test to avoid a case of Galloping Trots (see **WFRP**, page 187).

THE SECOND STRATUM — AXE HALLS

These Halls once housed the Throng of Karak Skygg, regiments of Dwarf warriors devoted to defending the Hold. Across these levels, the walls are carved with a repeated axe motif. A ruined Temple of Grimnir is completely lost under mountains of slag from the Warpstone refineries above. These floors are dominated by the Great Hall, once the audience chamber for the King of the Hold, it has become a mustering place where Clan Skryre engineers select slaves for their work.

Barracks

There's an irony that the chambers once used by stoic Dwarf warriors are now inhabited by filthy Skaven troops, huddled in stinking nests awaiting the orders of their Clan Skryre superiors. At all times, there are Clan Skryre clanrats and Stormvermin feeding, bickering and patrolling the corridors. Clan Skryre infantry are better equipped than that of other clans, utilising missile weapons such as the Warplack jezzail and poison wind globes.



If the party ventures into this area, describe the smell of close-packed Skaven bodies in crowded barracks rooms. Here and there, the lurid glow of a forge and the smell of smoke and hot metal indicate a workshop where weapons and armour are repaired. Gangs of slaves carrying food to the troops and suffering abuse are thrown rubbish as they pass through.

The northern levels of the old barracks have been smashed through to incorporate a gigantic slag heap, where spoil from the refineries is dumped through holes from above. The old Temple of Grinnir is completely buried, and excess spoil falls from a ragged hole in the side of the mountain.

The Great Hall

When the King of Karak Skygg received guests, they would attend him here in his granite throne flanked by his Hammerers and advisors. The hall is dominated by a grand staircase leading upwards, though in places the masonry and stonework has fallen away leaving gaps in the staircase. All around are pillars supporting the ceiling above, each carved in the typical Dwarf manner, with ornate knots and runes.

Now the throne is surmounted by a crude wooden platform where Warlock Engineers oversee the crowds of slaves ushered into the hall by their Packmasters. They pick work teams for their endeavours in the refineries or workshops, preferring those who they think are least likely to die before the job is done. At times, the hall is crowded with packs of slaves shoved towards the throne platform by their overseers. When there is less demand, there may be only a single Warlock Engineer picking through the handful of work gangs presented for his inspection.

As an extra humiliation, Warlock Engineer Maliss has chained Warlord Kratz to the throne. Kratz was commander of the Clan Mange mercenaries betrayed by Clan Skryre, and it is his fate to watch the sorry remains of his forces enslaved and humiliated by the greater clan.

Warlord Kratz, Clan Mange General

Kratz is a burly Skaven with grizzled piebald fur, a scarred snout and a beaten expression. He has been stripped down to rags. He is fastened to the throne with a barbed chain, but he stands out as more powerful than most other Skaven in Karak Skygg. His eyes remain alert and intense. Although he flatters and complements the Warlock Engineers on the platform above, he does not look especially subservient.

Kratz was born from the same litter as Clawleader Rikkhin who was trapped beneath Altmarkt during the events of **Black Hunger** (page 91). While Skaven have no real affection for their siblings, Clan Mange have a little more loyalty than most. If the party can tell him anything of Rikkhin's fate, or the events of Brass Keep, he may believe them — and becomes both angry and frightened... a deadly combination in a powerful Skaven. The party will need to pick a moment when the Warlock Engineers are distracted to talk with Kratz.

What are you doing here?

'What you care Man-things? Maliss great-great betrayal. Now he rub my snout in it — to shame-humble Clan Mange. How he chattered! "Great Warlord Kratz a slave now! Watch-watch, suffer-shame!"'

Do you know Rikkhin?

'Clawleader Rikkhin? Brood-mate Rikkhin? Best of the rest of our litter, only tried to kill-kill me once. Why you ask man-thing?'

We met him below Middenheim, betrayed by the other Skaven there.

'Ah! Always Mange abused by rotten-bad clans. Too much trust-trust!'

What would happen if we freed you?

'Gather Mange slaves, find Maliss, squeeze-squeeze neck until head pop off. Feed head to Wolf Rats. No... feed head to Mange slaves. Or eat head myself... will decide later.'

Then what?

'Conquer man-thing Empire, rule world.'

If freed, Kratz will race through the hall and rush down to the slave pens to start freeing his Clanrats. This creates a major distraction, but he won't ever reach Maliss to squeeze off his head... nor will he conquer the Empire.

WARLORD KRATZ, CLAN MANGE GENERAL

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
5	55	45	49	48	69	50	30	43	47	28	16

Traits: Night Vision, Weapon (Barbed Chain) +8, Tough, Leader, Champion, Fury

Skills: Language (Reikspiel) 48, Leadership 48, Melee (Basic) 75

Trappings: Ragged loincloth

THE THIRD STRATUM — THE FORGES

The Runesmiths of Karak Skygg established their forges high in the mountain, where they could channel the wind for their furnaces and catch meltwater for quenching metal. The Hold's arms and armour were crafted on these levels to the exacting standards of the Dwarf artisans.

The Skaven have hacked through many of the walls on these levels to create space for their hellish Warpstone refineries and the base of the Moonbreaker Cannon itself. The halls crackle with green lightning and the Skaven engineers' hissing chatter in their workshops.



The Hidden Arsenal

At the heart of the mountain is a three storey chamber sealed off with rune magic from the rest of the Hold. Should a Dwarf pass outside the hidden chamber, Khazalid runes appear etched into the stone walls with a faint orange glow.

I, RUNELORD THOGNAR TORBROW LET IT BE KNOWN THAT THE DENIZENS OF KARAK SKYGG HAVE RELENTED THIS PLACE. NO DWARF, NOR ANY OTHER SHALL DWELL IN THESE HALLS. SHOULD THEY FALL UNDER THE DOMINION OF FOUL URKS, GROBI, OR ELGI, THIS KARAK SHALL BE RENDERED INTO RUIN. BEYOND THIS WALL, ARE STOWED FULL HUNDRED CASKS OF POWDER FOR THE FIRING. DO WHAT THOU MUST, SON OF GRUNGNI

If she is with the party, Hetri will see this and whisper a translation urgently to the Characters. She is delighted, informing them that beyond the wall is a chamber full of gunpowder — a final act by the Runesmiths to prevent the hold being defiled. If a Character questions whether it could still be good after centuries, she quickly snaps:

'It's Dawi-made. I should put you in the Book of Grudges just for asking.'

A series of Khazalid runes direct towards a secret door by depressing the eye in a carved Dwarf ancestor face. Inside is an eerie sight — a silent chamber reaching high into the mountain with rows upon rows of sturdy casks piled on wooden racks, over 500 in all. Each has been coated in pitch and dusty. A lead-sealed box contains flints and three fuses long enough to burn for just five minutes.

However, most of the barrels have spoiled over the years. Characters passing a **Hard (-10) Perception** Test notice a rime of white residue on a barrel if they examine or move it. A Character passing an **Easy (+40) Trade (Apothecary)** or **Lore (Science)** Test can tell that damp has gotten in and spoiled the powder in such cases. There are 10 barrels of unspoiled powder left. They can be used to the same effect as a bomb.

Clan Skryre Workshops

Through a warren of rooms are the Clan Skryre workshops. These chambers have since been converted, with shafts leading upwards and downwards, through which winches and pulleys raise and lower lifts used to move ore, warpstone, and parts for the cannon. There are further holes in the outer wall of the fortress used to winch up supplies — another means of entry.

This is where Skavenslaves toil under the watchful eyes of their engineer masters. Furnaces burn, melting stolen ores and recovered metals, so that they may cast parts for the cannon. Powered by coal, steam engines pound ore, tended by scorched Skavenslaves. Warpstone is crushed and taken away in trolleys to be further refined in the levels above. Smaller furnaces turn out weapons and armour, as Clan Skryre prepare for their domination of the Empire once the Morrslieb has been struck.

The cacophony of machinery and the crackling of electricity makes sneaking about these chambers easier, conferring a +20 bonus to Stealth rolls. Amongst the Skavenslaves are engineers and packmasters, who bear all manner of crackling devices, used to keep the slaves in check. Characters who pass an **Easy (+40) Lore (Engineer)** Test will be able to understand some of the documents that are on workbenches of the engineers, making this an ideal opportunity to sabotage the cannon. Destroying schematics will delay the firing of the weapon, buying the group time for further actions.





In one of the forges, the party finds a deranged Yellow Fang cultist helping supervise the work. The party can engage with Hermann von Talg as slaves or Yellow Fang cultists. If they do, give them an **Average (+20) Charm** Test to avoid suspicion. They can learn useful technical information about the Moonbreaker Cannon (including its vulnerabilities), and more about Warlock Engineer Maliss Manrack's plan. Von Talg is slightly deranged and because of his enthusiasm for Clan Skryre engineering he won't hold back any information.

Hermann von Talg, Quisling Engineer

Von Talg is the very model of an eccentric Imperial Engineer, with monocle and moustaches in place. But there's something off about him — his clothes are tattered and he wears a Yellow Fang patch stitched to his doublet. In conversation, he twitches and sniffs, as if he's emulating the Skaven he admires so much. Hermann von Talg was dismissed from the Imperial Engineer's School in Altdorf for his dangerous experiments with pressurised steam. After a series of failed employments, he became aware of Clan Skryre and fell in love. He's completely devoted to the innovative, no-holds-barred inventiveness of the Skaven, and thinks Maliss is the greatest genius in history.

HERMANN VON TALG, QUISLING ENGINEER

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	34	41	28	40	29	32	38	41	31	26	13

Skills: Dodge 38, Ranged (Engineering) 47, Research 45, Language (Guilder) 49, Cool 38, Endurance 36, Language (Classical) 46, Language (Queekish) 48, Lore (Engineer) 47, Perception 35, Ranged (Blackpowder) 46, Trade (Engineer) 53

Talents: Gunner, Read/Write, Tinker, Craftsman (Engineer), Orientation, Very Resilient

Trappings: Worn burgher finery, leather apron (1AP body and legs), goggles, dagger, tools, Moonbreaker schematic

Who are you?

'Marvellous to meet you! Von Talg, formerly of the Imperial Engineers but found them a little limiting, don't you know? No imagination. Have you seen this? It's essentially a copper tube, but these runes and this cage actually trap lightning until it's ready to be released. Incredible!'

What are you doing here?

'Here to learn, boy! Here to learn! Maliss is a genius. Wasn't too sure about these hairy chaps at first, but look at all this — he's a visionary. Makes Leonardo da Miragliano look like a Tilean halfwit!'

Who is Maliss?

'Only the smartest Warlock Engineer in Clan Skryre! Honestly, I wasted so many years at the Imperial School in Altdorf, or trying to learn from the Dwarfs. But the masters are so much more inventive, always trying something new, and not too squeamish about blowing up a few lab assistants in the name of science.'

What can you tell us about the project?

'He's built this tremendous cannon which shoots green lightning. Calls it the Moonbreaker because, and you'll like this... because he's going to use it to blow up Morrslieb.'

Tell us more about the Moonbreaker Cannon?

'It's a pretty smart bit of kit. Fuel builds the charge, charge generates warp lightning, zips up the barrel focused by the runes, jolly powerful ball of lightning blasts from the inductors. Sounds simple doesn't it? But it's supremely complicated. Absolutely everything needs to be done to precision. If the Warpfuel is contaminated... boom! If the induction chamber is misaligned with the charge bore... boom! If the transmission gear rotates a shade too slowly... You get the idea.'

What do you stand to get out of this?

'Well, the masters seem to appreciate the work I'm doing for them and I expect Maliss will give me a workshop of my own when the whole moon thing is done. I think he's taken a shine to me!'

The Refinery

These levels have been opened up, with shoddily constructed supports, to house several large bronze-lined vats of bubbling refined warpstone. Over the top of these vats are suspended dangerous gangways from which Skavenslaves pour in more Warpstone and other alchemical reagents. The entire chamber is illuminated by the inky viridian light from the vats. The place is uncomfortably hot.

Leaks are common from the bronze lined tanks, with caustic green fluid dribbling from rivets, and occasionally spurting the searing hot alchemical mix from a fresh hole, maiming or killing anyone nearby. When a vat is ready, slaves siphon the liquid into a tank and carry it to the base of the cannon. The presence of so many large vats makes it much easier to sneak past any Skaven in this room, or even scale a ladder to drop something into the fuel.

CHEMICAL BURN!

The Warpfuel, if it lands on flesh, is corrosive and corrupting. A Character passing the storage tanks has a 10% chance of being sprayed by the mutating fluid. If this happens, a Character has to make a **Challenging (+0) Dodge** Test to avoid getting hit. Those struck by the fluid suffer **1D10+2 Wounds**, modified by Toughness Bonus and Armour Points, to a minimum of 1. A shield can block the spray, just as like any incoming attack. Those wounded by the Warpfuel also have Moderate Exposure to Corruption, and must test to see if they gain Corruption Points.

Falling into a vat of Warpfuel is death for anyone. For antagonists we can assume they perish, screaming, as they melt away until nothing is left. For adventurers, it's a Fate point.



The Moonbreaker Emplacement

At the bottom of a void hacked from the mountain by the Skaven is the Moonbreaker's base. Two large tanks filled with hundreds of gallons of Warpfuel sit under the cannon, emitting a deathly glow. A small group of Clan Skryre clanrats in full protective gear swarm around the device, scrutinising gauges, fixing copper protrusions and checking Warpfuel levels. They're all busy, but any attempt at sabotage requires a distraction.

The gun itself towers above, pointing out of the mountain's peak, apparently an ancient volcanic caldera, towards the night sky. It is a tapered metal cylinder made from bronze and roughly 180-ft long. The surface of the barrel is etched with Skaven runes and covered with a bewildering tangle of beams, pipes, chains, bolts, plates, and levers. Makeshift wooden steps lead out of the gun chamber up to Maliss Manrack's lair.

THE FOURTH STRATUM — THE PEAKS

The very highest levels of Karak Skygg were once the King's chambers and treasure house — unusually for a Dwarfhold, where most Kings prefer to dwell deep in the earth. Now Maliss Manrack has taken the King's Chambers for his own.

The Moonbreaker Cannon

Visible from this height, the sheer size of the gun becomes apparent. It projects a full 25 ft from the mountain peak into the night sky. At the end of the barrel, two great induction prongs project either side of a crystal of pure Warpfuel.

The Warlock Engineer's Lair

The empty Treasure House is now home to a huge bell marked with Skaven runes and the head of the Horned Rat. It is not magical, but it is extremely loud. The bell ringer is a deaf Rat Ogre, Three-Eyes, who is attached with a long chain to Maliss himself. Three-Eyes is stripped to the waist and focused intently on the bell — any attack will have him already in the *Surprised Condition*, or the party can sneak out unnoticed. At key moments, Maliss pulls on the chain and Three-Eyes hits the bell with a mallet for the countdown. If this happens when the party is in the room, they will be deafened for three turns.

Three-Eyes, Rat Ogre bellringer and bodyguard

Three-Eyes is a hulking Rat Ogre with three eyes and a small brain. He is Maliss's bodyguard, bought at no small expense from Clan Moulder. He is utterly loyal and completely deaf.

THREE-EYES, RAT OGRE BELLRINGER AND BODYGUARD

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
5	35	10	55	45	35	45	25	10	25	15	30

Traits: Infected, Night Vision, Size (Large), Stupid, Weapon+11, Corruption (Minor)

Trappings: Big Mallet (Warhammer), Tiny Loincloth

The former Map Room has been plastered with charts, plans, and depictions of the night sky over the walls and reading pedestals. A domed gap in the ceiling allowed the Dwarf Loremasters to observe the stars — now incorporates a large telescope of human manufacture. There are usually two Clan Skryre Clanrats in here poring over diagrams. More interesting to the party is the presence of Deputy High Wizard Janna Eberhauer, surrounded by four Stormvermin wearing gasmasks.



JANNA EBERHAUER — MASTER WIZARD (GOLD 1)

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
4	43	27	30	32	52	54	37	58	53	55	12

Skills: Channelling (*Azyr*) 68, Charm 70, Cool 66, Dodge 69, Evaluate 71, Gossip 68, Intimidate 45, Intuition 67, Language (Battle 68, Classical 68, Magick 73), Leadership 60, Lore (Magic 73, Middenheim 63, Warfare 68), Melee (Basic 53, Polearm 53), Perception 67, Ride (Horse) 64

Talents: Aethyric Attunement, Arcane Magic (Lore of Metal), Detect Magic, Doomed (*An Ogre's feast, a six-legged beast, a hope at least, then a film of yeast*), Etiquette (Nobles), Instinctive Diction, Magical Sense, Petty Magic, Pure Soul, Read/Write, Savvy, Second Sight, Sixth Sense, Suave

SPELLS

Petty Magic Spells: Bearings, Dart, Dazzle, Gust, Light, Magic Flame, Open Lock, Sleep, Warning

Arcane Magic Spells: Aethyric Armour, Aethyric Arms, Arrow Shield, Chain Attack, Flight, Teleport

Lore Spells: Cerulean Shield, Fate's Fickle Fingers, Starcrossed, T'Essla's Arc, The First Portent of Amul, The Second Portent of Amul



Eberhauer was kidnapped several weeks ago. The Guild knew she was travelling to the Celestial College in Altdorf, so when she was abducted her absence went unnoticed. Her reaction to the party should reflect how they interacted during **Power Behind the Throne**. But regardless of whether they made a good or bad impression, she's relieved to see them.

Any human entering Maliss Manrack's lair is suspicious, so the party will have no choice but to subdue the Stormvermin and Clanrats (see **WFRP**, page 337). Should they do that, they can talk with Janna and (presumably) free her.

Eberhauer has been forced to work for Maliss, helping him forecast Morrslieb's movements. She tried lying, but he wasn't fooled and gnawed off the little toe on her left foot as punishment. She's been a reluctant collaborator since then, not realising the full horror of his plan.

Janna is secured by a long chain which allows her to move between a desk covered in books and charts, a large spherical brass astrolabe and a telescope. She has a tight gag around her mouth to prevent her casting spells. The presence of the Stormvermin also ensures that she doesn't get the chance to do anything funny without getting hit with the blunt end of a halberd.

Other than the toe, she hasn't been treated too badly. Maliss knows that if she can't conduct her studies on Morrslieb then she won't provide the information he needs. Given his plan is almost complete, he intends to kill her once Morrslieb is in pieces.

Janna Eberhauer — Astromancer in Chains

Janna looks exhausted. She is wearing travelling clothes and a deep-blue cloak that's torn and dirty.

Wait a minute, you're Janna Eberhauer!

'Thank Ulric you're here! It's been a nightmare. Wait ... you're not cultists are you?'

No! What are you doing here?

'The leader — he forced me to track the path of Morrslieb, and tell him when it will pass over this mountain. He's got these insane diaries from an astronomer called Dagmar von Wittgenstein and notes from Herr Vogelgesang of Marienburg, who's something of an expert on Morrslieb.'

When will Morrslieb pass overhead?

'Verena help me... it's tonight. You can only really predict Morrslieb a few days in advance and that's only if you have decent equipment. In less than 30 minutes it will be at its zenith relative to this mountain. I tried lying to him, but he found me out and ... he ate my toe.'

What's he got planned?

'I've no idea. He's built some sort of contraption, but I don't know what it does. He's insane. I think he's planning to fire a hollow shell full of engineers to Morrslieb to explore the surface.'

Janna can walk despite her injury, but she's not in her full health, and spellcasting is difficult for her. If you let her use powerful magic to beat Maliss in a fight, it won't make an especially satisfying conclusion for most Players. If she joins a battle with the Warlock Engineer, her *Fatigued* Conditions make it hard to cast her more powerful spells.

THE EVIL GENIUS

Maliss has taken the former King's Chamber for himself. A precarious gantry has been built looking out over the Moonbreaker Cannon, and when the party enters he is staring at it, silhouetted against the eerie green light emitting from the great gun. The room is cold, as the Middle Mountains' biting winds whip through the hole in the peak.

If the party is captured in the right circumstances, they'll be dragged here to meet the Warlock Engineer for interrogation. He enjoys ranting to a captive audience, so they'll get to talk with him before he demands who sent them. Unless they come up with an extremely convincing reason for him to keep them alive, he'll order five Stormvermin to take them to the warpstone refinery to be dropped into the vats. The Stormvermin's gas masks do hamper their vision, applying a -20 penalty to Perception tests, so escape may be possible before this disastrous fate befalls the Characters.

If they confront him otherwise, he shrieks about his plans to them as the scene unfolds.





Maliss Manrack, Bronze-Finger

Maliss has replaced several parts of his body with Warpstone-powered prosthetics. His left leg is a clanking iron contraption which vents green steam from time to time, and patches of fur are covered with metal plates. Most notable is the prosthetic finger on his right hand, earning him the name, Bronze-Finger. His face is scarred, with one milky-white eye, which Maliss idly scratches. He speaks in the third person.

Maliss is a calculating and cruel taskmaster, eager to see his plans acted upon, and will not suffer excuses or fools. His megalomania makes him prone to outbursts, rants, and bouts of destructive depression if his plans are hindered in any way. If the Moonbreaker scheme works, he believes that no Skaven in the Under-Empire will deny his right to ruling the Council of Thirteen. Success is so close that he can almost taste it...

A conversation with Bronze-Finger

'Yes-yes. Man-things here cause problem. Not big-big problem, small-small like flea. Still annoying. No more now. Maliss clever-smart. Think-think very sharp. Search-find Warpstone. Build big-big plan. The Moonbreaker. The end of the man-things, time for Clan Skryre, time for Maliss!'

MALISS MANRACK, MASTER WARLOCK-ENGINEER

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
5	35	62	36	55	67	35	65	64	66	20	19

Traits: Armour 3, Infected, Night Vision, Weapon (Sword) +7

Skills: Athletics 87, Cool 86, Dodge 77, Endurance 75, Language (Khazalid 69, Reikspeil 69), Leadership 45, Lore (Engineering 94, Magick 74, Science 84), Melee (Basic) 55, Perception 87, Ranged (Skaven Ranged Weapons) 75, Research 89, Stealth 55, Trade (Engineer) 90

Talents: Gunner, Marksman, Rapid Reload, Tinker, Unshakable

Trappings: Engineer's Toolkit, Hand Weapon, Helmet, Heavy Armour, Poison Wind Globe, Warlock Pistol

LONG-HAIRED WHITE FANCY RAT

M	WS	BS	S	T	I	Ag	Dex	Int	WP	Fel	W
6	35	-	24	30	52	48	-	15	15	-	6

Traits: Infected, Night Vision, Size (Small), Skittish



What do you...

'Silence! Clever-smart, you-things. Creep-creep, get inside, hide-hide, no one see. Gnaw something here, burn something there. But plan still good. Maliss servants collect warp-stone from everywhere. Big-big amount of Warpstone spent, but spent to get the biggest chunk Warpstone. Know green moon? Yes-yes. Morr-libb, you-call. Fear-fear. Good-fear, too — Morr-libb kill-kill this-night. Soon.'

Not if we...

'Quiet mouth man-thing! Quiet or we hold it and stop you breathing! Morr-libb Warpstone — you know, yes? Yes. All-same Warpstone. Good-good Skaven, bad-bad you-things. Kill-you, twist-you, yes. Soon-soon Morr-libb break. You-things all-die. Great Horned One smile! Smile on Maliss.'

As you can see, they won't get much sense from Maliss. You can use his ranting to fill in any gaps in the party's knowledge of his plans. If they meet him after sabotaging, destroying the Moonbreaker Cannon, or delaying the shot after Morrslieb's passing, he doesn't say much other than scream — and he gains the **Frenzy** trait.

MOONSTRIKE!

WHAT HAPPENS IF MALISS GETS CLOSE TO SUCCESS?

As Morrslieb drifts into sight above the Moonbreaker, the bell tolls 13 times as small adjustments are made to the cannon's alignment. The tanks of Warpfuel begin to bubble and glow as electricity sparks and charges the weapon. Maliss, now so close to his plan being fulfilled, is agitated, peering at the moon and then at a lever he has to hand — this conducts a burst of Warp energy from his chamber to the firing mechanism, starting the reactions which fire the gun.

If it comes to this, the adventurers now have only moments before the weapon fires its volleys at Morrslieb.

As the weapon begins to charge, even more electricity sparks and lighting crackles. The Players need to kill Maliss before he pulls the lever. If they attack, Maliss pulls the chain at his wrist to summon Three-Eyes who arrives after two turns.

If the fight is going badly for the party, you can introduce Brokenclaw. Zingetail's agent will appear, taking shots with his Dart Ejector at Maliss. He cares for nothing but killing Maliss, and will try to escape once this is done, swiping plans from the Map Room before he goes.

If the party defeats Maliss, Three-Eyes and the Stormvermin, they can investigate his chambers. A peculiar artefact is amongst the papers, charts and purloined books. A small gold-

backed hand mirror is being used as a paperweight, but when a Character looks into the glass they see another pair of human eyes looking back at them — not their own. The glass shatters immediately and the eyes disappear. They won't discover this until **Empire in Ruins**, but the mirror was an enchanted spying artefact employed by one of the Nine Eyes of Tzeentch.

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE MOONBREAKER CANNON?

If the Players leave the gun intact, there's a risk that Brokenclaw will seize it for his master Zingetail. If Hetri or Janna are there, they insist that the cannon is destroyed — either by sabotage, explosives or Janna casting *T'Essla's Arc* to detonate the fuel tanks. It's very likely that any cause of action will make the cannon explode.

If the Moonbreaker Cannon detonates under any circumstances, it sends a searing hot blast through the upper strata of Karak Skygg. Unless they're some distance from the explosion or shielded in some way, the Characters all take 1d10+4 damage, modified by Armour but not Toughness. If they're very close to the Cannon, they'll only survive by spending a Fate Point. Throughout the upper parts of the Hold, Skaven are incinerated in their hundreds, and survivors scramble to escape the Hold in terror. The vats in the refineries explode in turn, blowing a huge hole in the side of the mountain.

WHAT HAPPENS IF MALISS SUCCEEDS?

If the Characters fail to stop Maliss, the Moonbreaker fires a great jolt of warp lightning towards Morrslieb. Witnesses watch as the Chaos Moon seems to reel like a living creature as energy sparks and leaps over its surface. Then there is a great explosion as the southern pole of the moon shatters into thousands of warpstone meteors. All round Karak Skygg the Skaven squeal in victorious delight.

Shards of warpstone trailing green fire plunge through the sky, raining down on the Old World. They largely scatter across the peaks and valleys of the Middle Mountains, but many of them fall down amongst the trees of the Forest of Shadows. A swathe of northern Ostland is reduced to an uninhabitable warpstone-tainted nightmare and a particularly large stone turns the town of Ferlangen into a hellhole reminiscent of the fate of forlorn Mordheim.

Veterans of **Death on the Reik** are aware of the malign effect a single warpstone meteor can have on a region. Maliss has scattered scores of much larger meteors around the Middle Mountains.

The Skaven celebrate Maliss as a genius, and prepare to scour the wasteland that is now northern Ostland for the supreme bounty of warpstone it will yield to them.

It's carnage. The party needs to get out of there.





ESCAPE TO VICTORY

Escaping Karak Skygg is easier than getting in — the panicking Skaven are not particularly interested in humans leaving unless they get in the way.

There are several routes out:

Down the side — the winches and pulleys on the sides of the mountain are perhaps safer than the exploding interior. With a little cunning and a head for heights, they can be employed in a similar manner to the Middenheim Chair Lifts.

The Gate of Grungni — Skaven are surging through the main entrance and the party can join them. If they are willing to race through the Hold, past burning Skaven, through collapsing tunnels and down to the Entrance Hall, they will need to fight through d10 Clanrats to get out.

The Outflow — by the time the party reaches the Pit at the bottom of the Hold, the slaves have escaped. This is the safest way out of Karak Skygg.

END IN SIGHT

With the destruction of the Moonbreaker Cannon, Maliss dead and Karak Skygg ablaze, the Characters are stranded in the Middle Mountains in the dark of the night, with bands of terrified Skaven fleeing the area. It's also freezing cold. Depending on how the events of the previous chapter played out, the Characters are looking up at a clear night sky illuminated by the grimacing orb of Morrslieb, or possibly looking up at a sky filled with fireballs as warpstone meteorites rain down on Middenland.

But soon a pinprick of light from the east grows bigger, intermittently flaring, before appearing closer as something rather miraculous — a dirigible — bearing the Todbringers' livery.

NEED A LIFT?

Seeing the adventurers trapped on the mountainside, likely waving for help, Baron Heinrich Todbringer drops an anchor down from his dirigible, bellowing down to the party, *'Who are you! What has happened here?'* If you have played through the events of **The Power Behind the Throne**, the Characters may have learnt that Heinrich has travelled to Wolfenburg to play diplomat and peacemaker in Talabecland and Ostland. They perhaps have heard a description of this bastard son of Boris Todbringer, or even seen a painting of Heinrich.

The towering noble is not alone in his balloon, as he is accompanied by the equally massive Veiran Thugenheim. The light from the blasts of hot air reflects off Veiran's armour and, and reveals his decorations as a member of the Knights Panther.

Heinrich asks about the huge explosion they've just seen. If the Characters satisfy the initial questions (take a **Challenging (+0) Charm Test** for the Character doing most of the talking, reduced to **Average (+20)** if the Characters provide plausible or compelling answers), the dirigible descends to the mountain so that the discussion can continue — Heinrich will not leave people to die in the mountains. However, Heinrich is suspicious of everyone, especially given his knowledge of human cultists who work for the Skaven. If Janna Eberhauer is with them, the **Charm Test** is not necessary.

With the dirigible moored, Heinrich continues to question the party, and any evidence they have to back up their claims. All the while Heinrich is questioning the adventurers, Veiran will lean in to whisper in Heinrich's ear, shooting a glare at the party before walking back and forth on the deck of the dirigible, clearly annoyed by the delay in their journey.

ENDING THE ADVENTURE

Empire in Ruins, the final part of **The Enemy Within**, carries on directly from this point. If you plan on seeing the campaign through to its thrilling conclusion be sure to get your hands on that volume to find out what happens next.

Rewards

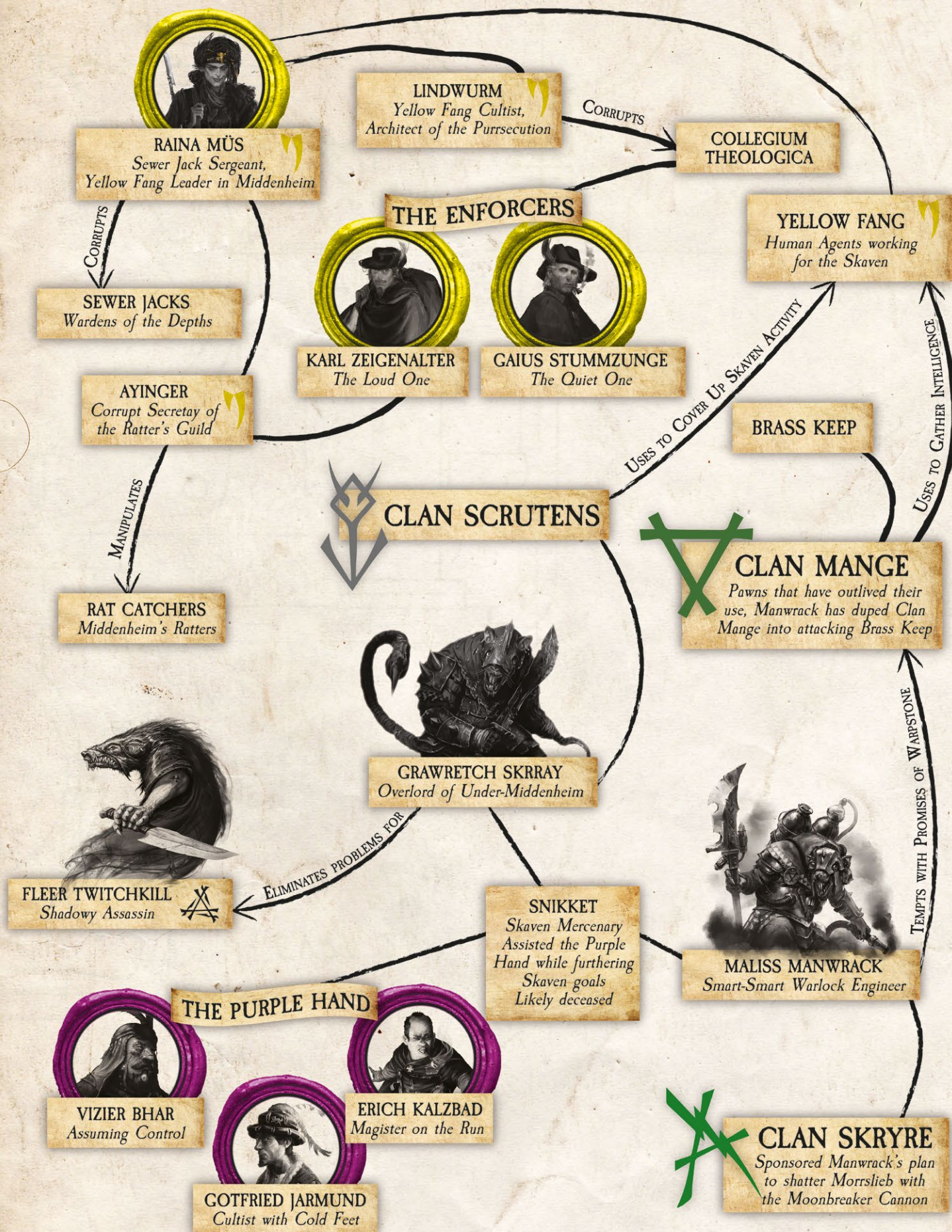
Good roleplaying and clever thinking should be rewarded, but there are additional XP for the following:

- 200 points and 1 Fate Point for preventing the Moonbreaker from firing
- 80 points for slaying Maliss Manrack
- 20 points for rescuing Hetri Bittercrag
- 20 points for rescuing Janna Erberhauer

THE LAST WORD

It is intended that Characters who survive the events of **The Horned Rat** immediately make their way to Middenheim on Baron Heinrich's balloon. With the Skaven dealt with the political turmoil which has thus far been confined mostly to rumours and minor events will take centre stage. Ideally, you will have **Empire in Ruins** to hand when your group finishes this part of the campaign.

However, if this is not the case you may wish to allow your Characters time to travel and partake of other adventures for a time before diving into the final part of **The Enemy Within**. If so, try to have your Characters end up somewhere that Baron Heinrich's balloon might plausibly find them once you are ready to dive back in. Once aboard, the Baron will carry them off towards Middenheim and into the final thrilling chapter of **The Enemy Within**.



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My Dear Marshal.

Your errant Magister is now my quest. I should think 1,000 GC would be a sufficient bounty to have him handed over in return for our hard work in capturing such a dangerous individual. When you are ready to make payment, let Half-Nose know. Words reaching his ears soon reach mine.

Regards, a Low King

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RKCAH NAOWZAO JKS WP OEYPU
AELDP OECEOIQJZSAC EJ KOOPKN. JK
KJA DANA GJKSO KB PDAI.
SAZAWH EJ YKHZ XKZEO KJHU!
U'CCNEHR PGIWGI FVAAJPD!
REVEAN XDWN IKP

A	B	C	D	E	F	G
E	F	G	H	I	J	K
H	I	J	K	L	M	N
L	M	N	O	P	Q	R
O	P	Q	R	S	T	U
S	T	U	V	W	X	Y
V	W	X	Y	Z		
Z	A	B	C	D		

Herr Komissioner Gotthard von Wittgenstein,

We know your true heritage. If you wish to keep your secret, be at the Heaven's Lament tonight after midnight, ask for Herr Gelb. Bring Dagmar Wittgenstein's diaries with you!

Your correspondent, Herr Gelb



RKCAH. DWRA WOOQIAZ YKIWIJZ.
 KLANWPEKJO NAOQIA EIIAZEPATHU
 YKNOAO JAAZAZ BKN NAOAMWYD.
 WYGJSHAZGA WJZ WSWEP
 EJOPIHQPEKJO U'CCNEHR PGWG
 PVAATPYDI REVEAN XDWN IKP



PDA PQJJAH ZSAHHANO LANBKNI
 SAHH. OKKJWBPAJ SKNZ KB PDA
 ZAWPD LNEJYAPDAU LNAOAJ-
 PAZ PK IA WJZ UNLPQNAZ PDA
 CENH. XQP SDU PDAOA KPDAN
 WXZRUPEKJO? LHAOWA WZREOA.

XG





A **Publicke Demonstration** by Professor Eunice Hasche, revealing the Anatomic of two recently acquired examples of a Species hitherto **UNKNOWN** To **SCIENCE** – Rattus Homunculus

FREE TO ALL OF A CURIOUS DISPOSITION

At the Theatre of Anatomy, the Collegium Theologica.

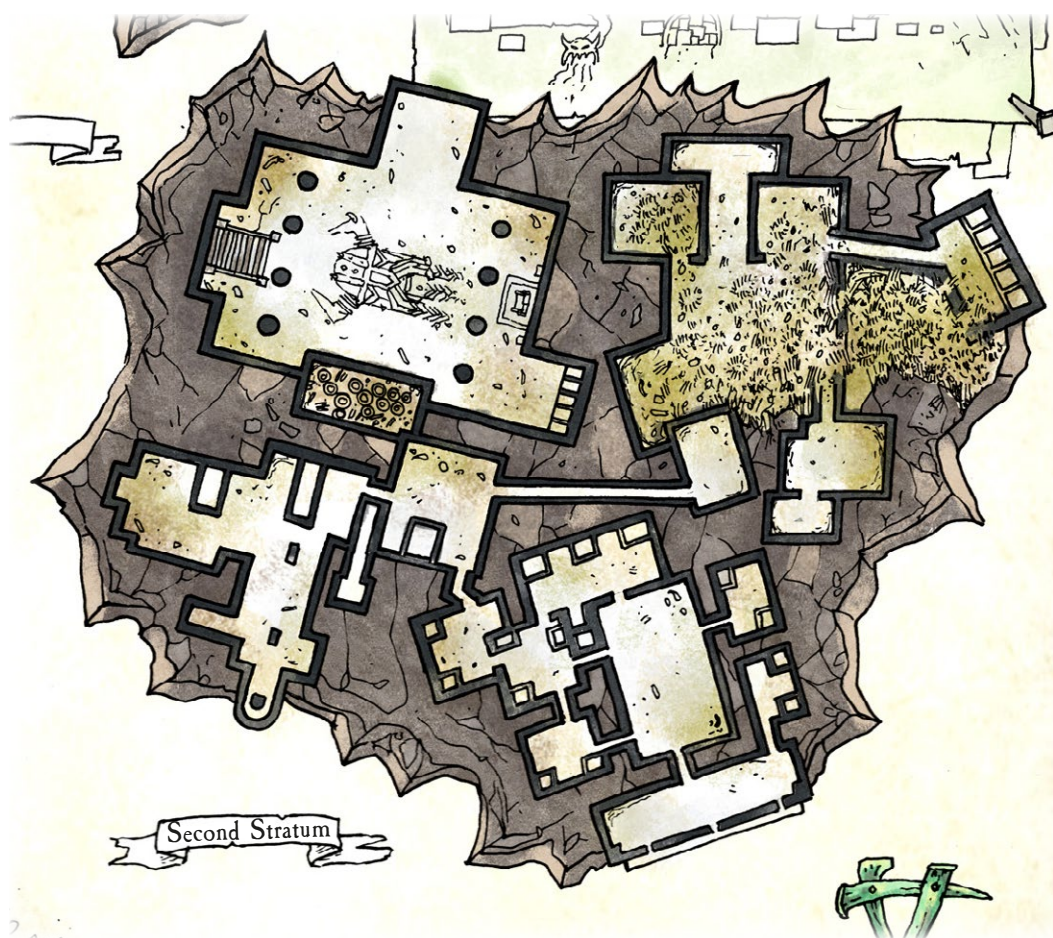
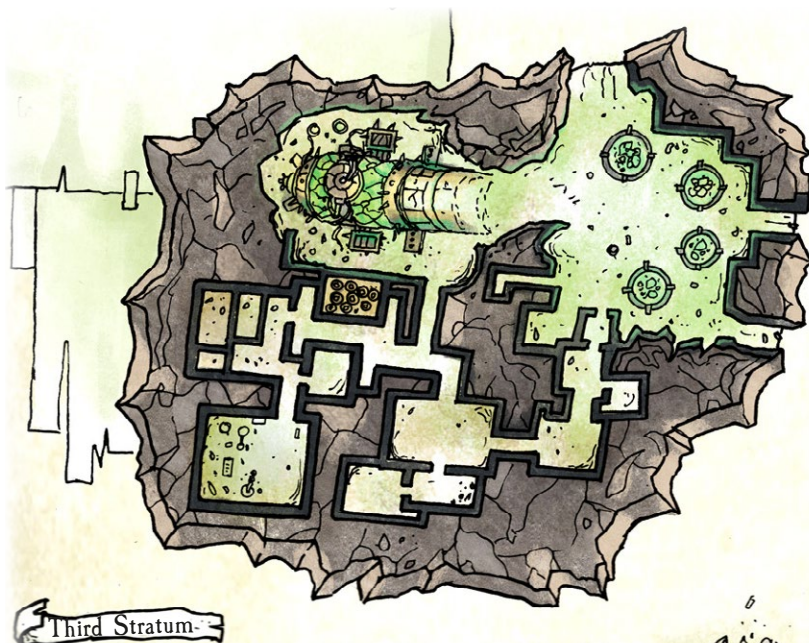
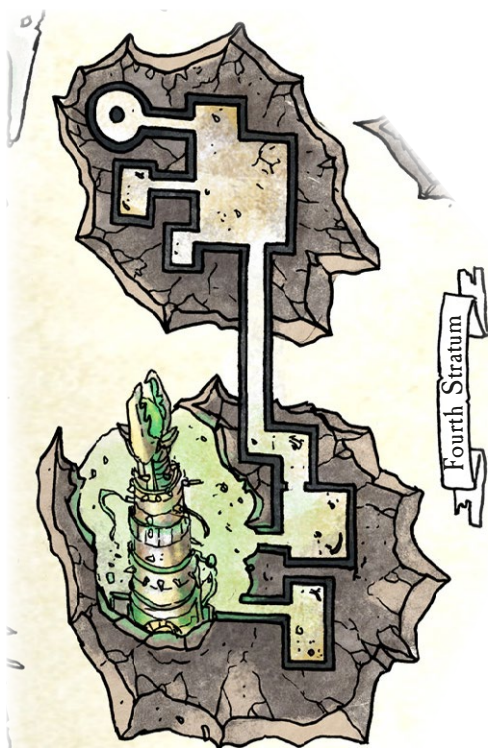
Doors open at noon on Festag.

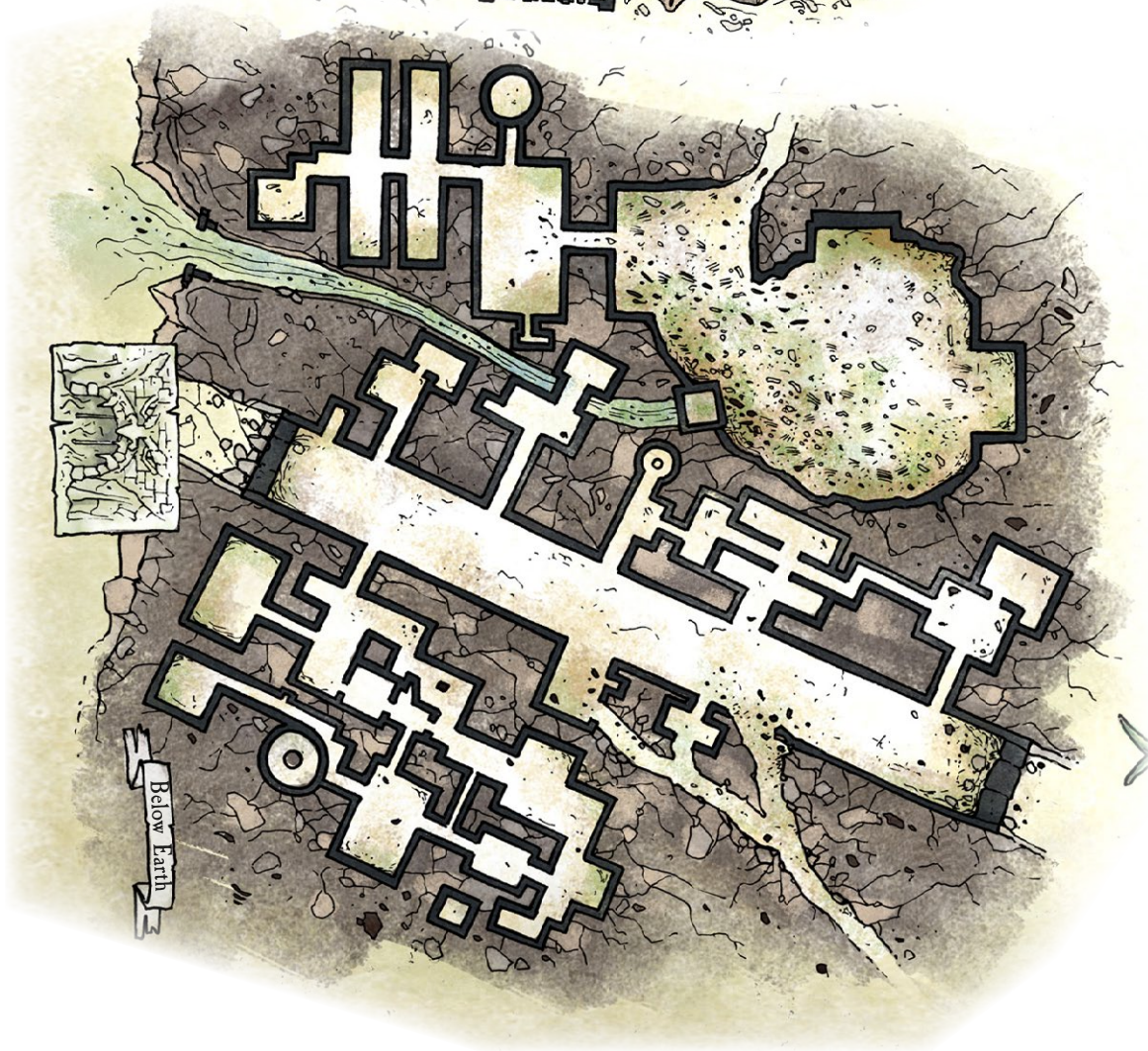
*Collegium Theologica library.
librarian Agnise Fuenstetubug. Rare books.*

*Temple of Utric, Love House. Rare book.
See Brother Schlager.*

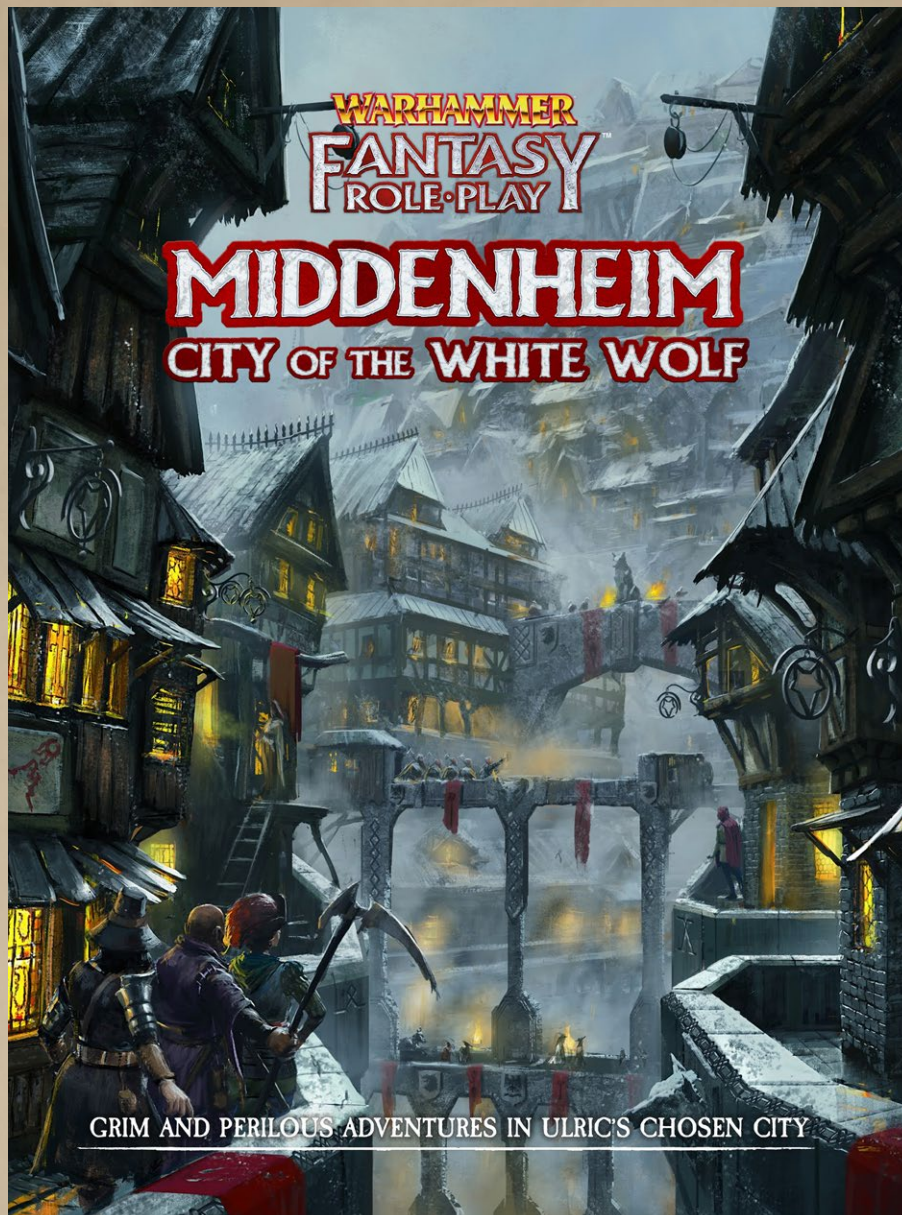
*Dr Isidore Kopevnik, Freiburg.
Astronomical research notes.*

*Omara Zufall's residence, Gellmund. Antique art.
The Royal College of Music. See Music Director
Amadeus Tonkunst. Rare libretto.*





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