

# AN INTRODUCTION TO UBERSREIK AND THE EMPIRE

## THE GLORIOUS EMPIRE

The Empire, your current home, is the greatest realm in the Old World. It has stood for over 2000 years. Though riven with bitter, internal politics, and beset to all sides by uncounted enemies, it stands proud, united by its long history and its adulation of its first emperor — Sigmar Heldenhammer — who is worshipped as a god. The Empire is currently led by Emperor Karl-Franz I.

## THE REIKLAND

The Reikland is the richest and most cosmopolitan of the grand provinces of the Empire. Its people are famous for their love of festivals and their relatively open-minded attitudes. They are also known for being pushy, arrogant, and meddlesome, quite convinced of their own superiority. Stout, traditional Dwarfs and short, jovial Halflings are commonplace in the Reikland and many have naturalised to the point they are barely noticed. By comparison, lithe, magical Elves are seen infrequently, arousing fear or wonder amongst the commonfolk. The Reikland is ruled by Grand Prince Karl-Franz I, who is also the Emperor.

## UBERSREIK

Ubersreik is one of the greatest fortress-towns of the Reikland with a gloried history as old as the Empire, and long-term ties with the Dwarfs of the Grey Mountains. It is a centre of trade in the fertile Vorbergland, a windswept, hilly province known for its farmlands and vineyards. Until recently, it was ruled by House Jungfreud, a noble family with enormous influence in the region. This came to an end when the Emperor, for reasons unknown, sent his army to seize control of the town. Ubersreik is also the name of the wider duchy in which the town of Ubersreik is found.

## GODS

In the Reikland, Sigmar, patron and founder of the Empire, is worshipped as a god. Millenia ago, Sigmar was a Reiklander himself, which leads many Reiklanders to be especially arrogant. Most arrogant of all are the noble Houses that claim Sigmar as an ancestor, for they believe holy blood runs through their righteous veins. Other important gods to the Reikland include: Ulric, God of Winter and War; his brother, Taal, God of the Hunt; Rhya, Taal's wife, the Goddess of Summer and Fertility; Shallya, Goddess of Peace and Mercy; her father Morr, the God of Death; and his wife Verena, the Goddess of Wisdom and Justice.

## WORSHIP

Innumerable priests, nuns, monks, and zealots gather in great cults to attend each god, but the common folk rarely place one god over another: a parent prays to Shallya for a sick child; a routed soldier begs forgiveness of Ulric; a hunter dedicates an arrow to Taal before firing. Reiklanders may consider themselves cultured and forward-thinking, more likely to grip to reason and tavern-

room philosophy than unfounded superstition, but they never forget their gods. Indeed, it's not only considered rude not to stop at shrines and temples to pay respects to the local gods, it's seen as foolhardy and potentially dangerous.

## ENEMIES

Beyond the boundaries of the Empire's major towns and cities, deep forests, wide rivers, and looming mountains dominate the countryside. Within these wild places lurk desperate Bandits and feared Mutants, as well as terrible Beastmen, barbarous Greenskins, Undead horrors, and worse. Few stray far from their barred gates without protection. But the greatest threat isn't the enemy without, it's the enemy within. Behind the walls of civilisation, cultists sworn to Chaos gods plot and connive. There they unpick the threads of society, unravelling everything Sigmar once stitched together. Hidden behind veils of benign clubs, secret circles, and curious hand gestures, these lost and damned souls prostrate themselves before the Dark Gods of Chaos, and work towards nothing less than the very end of all things.

## MAGIC

Chaos, the greatest threat to the Empire, is also the source of its greatest weapons. The Colleges of Magic in the Empire's capital of Altdorf train those 'gifted' with the talent to use magic in the service of Humanity. These wizards are powerful and terrifying in their own right, for they channel the Winds of Magick that invisibly blow across the land. Given the dark source of these Winds, wizards must be vigilant for signs of their own corruption. In this, they are a cut above the petty witches and hedge magicians that litter the countryside — though in the eyes of the uncultured peasantry, or a zealous Witch Hunter, there is little difference.

## DAILY LIFE IN THE REIKLAND

Despite the ever-present threat of death and dismemberment at the hands of any number of monstrous creatures, and the creeping existential threat of Chaos, most citizens of the Reikland live relatively normal lives: working daily, falling in love, raising families, and experiencing the myriad trials and tribulations that beset all folk.

In the Empire, the working week is 8 days long and ends on a Festag, the day where devout Reiklanders attend 'throng' at their local temple of Sigmar. There are 400 days in a year, including 6 intercalary days, which do not form part of a normal week. These days include Sonnstill, the summer solstice, and Geheimnistag, an eerie day of mystery and magic. The Empire's economy has three tiers of coinage: gold, which is only seen by nobles and the richest of merchants; silver, the staple of the burgeoning middle classes; and brass, the least valuable coins, used by the majority of the Reikland's citizenry. Two moons rise in the night sky: sedate Mannslieb, a silvery moon with a predictable passage, and ill-omened Morrslieb, a greenish moon with an erratic orbit.