

Witch Hunt

A scenario for Warhammer Fantasy Role-Play by Markus Widmer

Introduction

This scenario was inspired by the Salem witch-hunts of 1692. It is set in a small town of my own design on the banks of the Iron River in Kislev. I have played it as an intermediary adventure between the first and the second part of *Something Rotten in Kislev*, but it can be used as a one-off adventure for travelling characters in any campaign, even – with some adaptation – outside Kislev.

GM's Summary

The players arrive at a small Kislevite town called Brestislava, where the crowd is presently cheering the burning of a witch. Shortly after this event, a young girl is accused of witchcraft and arrested. Her father, a wealthy citizen, begs the players to prove the innocence of his little girl, or free her with force. As the players are investigating more seemingly innocent people are being arrested, all accused by a girl afflicted by demons and evil spirits. Meanwhile, the High Priest of Taal arrives from Kislev to hold court, protected by a force of the Taal-Templars. How can the players convince the authorities that the whole thing is nothing but an intrigue of a teenage girl whose feelings have been hurt?

The City: Brestislava

Geography

Brestislava lies on the eastern bank of the Iron River, about 80 miles south-east of Kislev. Much of the dense forest typical for this region has been cleared around Brestislava to make room for extensive wheat fields. Thus Brestislava gained its wealth, and has become one of the main providers of wheat for the capital. A few miles north of the town lies a



mine, which used to be a rich source of iron ore – hence the river's name. However, the dwarven miners have depleted and left the site more than thirty years ago.

Populace

Almost 3000 people live in Brestislava. Most of them belong to the Gospodar people; lowly peasants, who are characteristically bad-tempered, suspicious, and extremely superstitious. The town's elite, however, consists of Norse noblemen. An exception to this rule is the guarding force of Brestislava. The watch's captain belongs to the fierce

tribe of the Ungols, and he has collected an assortment of fellow Ungols around him, building more of a small army than a town watch. Relations between the Norse city council and the watch are therefore always tense, but to this day, both parties always ended up concluding that they need each other ever so slightly more than they hate each other.

Religion

The state cult of Taal and Rhya dominate religious affairs in Brestislava, but Ulric is also widely revered, even rivalling Taal in times of war. Only very few citizens know that there actually is a temple to Verena in Brestislava, consisting of a library and a priest, whose studies are rarely ever disturbed by worshippers.

Guilds

The Merchants' Guild is dominated by the Norse land-owners, who export their wheat to Kislev and farther. The Stevedores' Guild is quite powerful and wealthy, as well, profiting from the heavy traffic of trading barges carrying wheat. Surprisingly, there is still a Miners' Guild in Brestislava, apparently busy maintaining the welfare of miners' widows, but this is only a cover for a very well-organised Thieves' Guild. There is neither a Wizards', nor an Alchemists' Guild in Brestislava – the town's citizens are much too superstitious to allow such sinister practises. Should a magic-wielding character happen to stay in Brestislava for a night or two, showing off his or her talents would certainly not be a good idea.

Places of Interest

Temple of Taal and Rhya

Set in the north-east of the town square, this is a huge, round, wooden construction, built out of entire trunks, magically embalmed to resist fire. The inside consists of a huge dome filled with smoke from the many ritual fires, and features a larger-than-life statue of Taal carved out of wood. The head priest of the temple is Juri Naschtarin. He is assisted by two more priests and four initiates.

Temple of Verena

This temple is hidden inside a run-down lower middle-class house in the dock district, a surprisingly poor area for a temple of Verena. Yet the temple has only very few visitors and even fewer donations – in fact, hardly any Brestislavan knows that it exists. The temple consists of a small, but well-sorted library maintained by the priest and librarian Miroslav Loskov.

Temple of Ulric

This temple features the castle-like construction typical for temples to the God of War.

Town Hall

A richly adorned two-wing affair, protected by an iron fence.

The Red Crescent

This is an upper middle-class inn set right at the town square.

GM's Background Information

This scenario is not linear. Apart from the opening events, much of the plot will be directly influenced by the action of the player characters, and thus the story can, will, and should take turns which cannot be expected by the GM. Hence the text following describes, firstly, the events which have led up to the present situation, then the events which will happen one way or another irrespective of the players' actions, a few probable courses the plot could take, and some ideas for the GM. On the other hand, much of the information the GM needs to run the game is contained in the NPC descriptions at the end of the scenario.

These are the events that led to the present situation: Elisabeta, the ward of citizen Ishtan Aitmatov, notices that Olga Tschechova, their servant, is dabbling in magic. Being of Dolgan origin, she uses her Divination skill to foretell the future to her 'clients', but is also known to put a curse on a rejected lover of a well-paying youth, or mix more or less wholesome potions. Since both Elisabeta and Olga are rather dominant personalities, they don't get along very well. When Olga refused to mix a love potion for her, to be applied to Orin, the man of her dreams, Elisabeta seeks revenge. Using all her charm and charisma, she violently accuses Olga of witchcraft. As the watch finds every proof they need, Olga is arrested and soon sentenced to death. Realising how much power she can wield playing with people's superstitions, Elisabeta decides to use this possibility. Drawing along her stepsisters, she accuses Edina, who she thinks has 'stolen' her beloved Orin. Since hysteria is already in full swing, no proof is needed other than Elisabeta's and her friend's faked cramps and accusations. The next victim will be Natasha Klitshkova, the herbalist, who has caught Elisabeta stealing in her shop. If Elisabeta is allowed to go on, nobody is safe from her, and she might actually end up believing her own lies.

The Arrival

The PCs arrive at Brestislava in the evening. Funnily enough, the town's docks lack the usual flock of yelling children, bustling merchants, beggar, drunkards, and even stevedores eager to unload some cargo. Yet from the centre of the town come the muffled noise of a huge cheering crowd, and the smell of burning. Could that have anything to do with that huge column of black smoke issuing from the town centre? Following the Praag Strasse, the players will arrive at the town square, where more or less the entire population of Brestislava has gathered to watch the spectacle of a witch being burned at the stake. Indeed, in front of the huge round wooden construction that is the town's temple to Taal und Rhya burns a pyre in which the charred remains of a human can still be perceived. Asking around, the PCs will be told that the witch was a certain Olga Tschetchova, a servant in the house of Ischtvan Aitmatov.

A Strange Apprehension

Later that night, while most people still drink to the death of the evil witch, a teenage girl is arrested by four members of the town watch. Some people, perhaps the players, hear her scream as she is dragged to the watch barracks. Anyone trying to interfere with her apprehension will have to face the town watch. The news spreads quickly that another witch has been accused and apprehended; strangely enough this is Edina Eristova, the daughter of a well-known and rather wealthy citizen.

The Assignment

Early the next morning, when the PCs are probably getting ready to leave this place as quickly as possible, a messenger asks them to meet his master, Igor Eristov, in a back alley. The man is desperate, and he will go as far as dropping on his knees and pleading to the players. When the PCs meet Eristov himself, he looks even more wretched than his servant. He begs the players to help him: "You are my only hope. You are strangers, and you can see the truth, which is hidden to all the narrow-minded, frenzied citizens of Brestislava. My Edina is an innocent child. Save her! Prove her innocence! She must live!" Of course, the PCs will be rewarded, money doesn't matter. Eristov doesn't know much about the case, only that his daughter's accuser is a friend of hers, a certain Elisabeta, who is Ishtvan Aitmatov's ward.

Forces from the Capital

Around noon that day a richly adorned sailing ship arrives from Kislev. All Brestislava runs to the docks, as the High Priest of the Taal cult, Vitali Dedkov, gets off his vessel in the most pompous manner. He has been sent for by the head of the town council to investigate further witchcraft activities following the apprehension of Olga Tschetchova. His entourage features 20 templars, members of the Brotherhood of the Bear, dressed in imposing bearskins. Not wasting any time, the High Priest promises the crowd at the docks to eradicate witchcraft and chaotic magic from Brestislava with all the force needed.

Courtroom Drama

Later that day, Edina is brought before the court set up in the Town Hall. Needless to say, she is bound and heavily guarded by four templars. The trial is public, and the PCs will have trouble finding a seat unless they arrive an hour before its beginning. Shortly before the hearing starts, eight templars lead four teenage girls into the hall. According to the whispering Gospodars in the audience, these are the three daughters of Aitmatov and his ward, Elisabeta. Enter the High Priest. He has some trouble ruling order in the house, and then asks Elisabeta what her accusations against Edina are. Elisabeta begins to tell a horrific tale of spirits and demons torturing her, all whispering Edina's name. Then suddenly, she collapses in pain, and, writhing on the floor, shouts: "Edina, what are you doing to me? Please, call back your demons! Ah, stop! I am dying!" The three other girls join her after a few seconds. The whole hall turns into a huge riot, the High Priest interrupts the trial and states that the verdict will be read early the next day. An observant PC might notice a young man, who seems to be the only one not to be shouting in joy, but in horror.

Another Apprehension

The same day, at any time you feel is right, Natasha Klitshkova is arrested in her herb shop by the templars under a charge of witchcraft.

Lynch Mob

Towards midnight, a group of 15 Gospodar drunks gathers, lights some torches, gathers some improvised weapons and walks towards Eristov's house to "burn out the witch-father". The watch will not stop them. The PCs better do something, or they might lose their employer. This should not be too difficult, however, if they can use the particular dynamic of a lynch mob in their favour. For instance, they simply shout, "he ran away, that way!", and the crowd will be hunting for Eristov in the wrong direction while the PCs can take him to a secure place, like the Temple of Verena.

The Verdict

On the third day, Edina will be sentenced to die at the stake, the execution being set for three days later. Unless, of course, the players have done something to avoid this.

Investigation

Jail

If the PCs try to see Edina in jail before the templars arrive, they will have a chance of bluffing, bribing or charming their way through the guards and have a minute or two to interrogate Edina. As *Magical Sense* will reveal, she is not a spell-caster. Common sense will tell the players that she is truly innocent. If the players tell her that it is Elisabeta who accuses her, she will at once suspect the truth, and tell the PCs about Orin and Elisabeta's jealousy.

Orin

The PCs may find out that Edina has a boyfriend, or meet him during the trial. This is Orin. He works at the Stevedores' Guild as a scribe, but hasn't been seen in his office ever since Edina has been arrested. But he can easily be found in his little room in the attic of a lowly boarding house. He will tell the PCs everything he knows, and he will point out especially that Elisabeta is in love with him and has written dozens of fiery love letters to him. Unfortunately, he has burned all of these, enraged about Elisabeta's obsession with him. The letters stopped a few weeks ago, when Elisabeta heard about Orin's relationship with Edina. He would like to help the players, but his cowardly nature gets in the way all the time. It will be very difficult to convince him that he must testify in court.

The Mine

The PCs will at some point hear about the abandoned mines being haunted. The mine is set in a hill three miles from Brestislava. The entrance seems to be intact, although the tools lying around the spot have not been touched for years. A quick search reveals the trail of a single human leading into the mine. Entering the mine, the PCs will hear a deep, grumbling sound once or twice. If the characters continue, they will be lead into a tunnel on the left-hand side by Marsh Lights. On a successful Initiative test, the PCs will notice that they are being lead into a pit covered with light twigs and mud. The pit is four yards deep. If the players fall into it, the illusionist Gregory will come and investigate. If the characters continue straight-on through the main tunnel, they will arrive at a vault, where a wolf-headed beastman featuring four arms will greet them. The thing, however, stays put and waves its arms. On a successful intelligence test, the PCs might see through the illusion. The beastman is, in fact, only Gregory, a well-meaning but scared illusionist, hiding from the Brestislavians' superstition, and studying his craft in isolation. He will only attack to defend himself, and in any case prefer to confuse his opponents with illusionist spells such as Clone Image.

The Herb Shop

cf. Natasha Klitshkova

Temple of Verena

Miroslav Loskov is an excellent source of information. He is not very up-to-date about the present situation, but well informed about the political, religious, and ideological tensions in town – cf. his NPC description.

Elisabeta and the Girls

Elisabeta lives with her uncle Ishtvan Aitmatov and his three daughters Raissa, Anna and Martina. Talking to any of them is impossible after the templars from Kislev have arrived – Aitmatov's house is heavily guarded thereafter. Should the players think of confronting Elisabeta before the arrival of the templars, they will be able to do so, although there are a few members of the town watch around the house. In fact, this is not a very good idea, unless they have devised of a way to intimidate Elisabeta, since, as soon as she knows the PCs are after her, she will simply accuse them of witchcraft or of siding with the witches. She could even fake one of her spasms while the PCs are present – that's them done for. Contacting one of her step-sisters is a better idea, although Elisabeta will see to it that the girls will remain shielded from any outside contact. She knows they are weak without her. A way to contact Elisabeta is to slip her a note during one of the riotous courtroom scenes, perhaps even a letter written by Orin.

Guilds and Town Council

The unanimous opinion of all guilds, the town's administration and councillors is that the trials and verdicts are necessary. But they are the temples' business, anyway.

Temple of Taal

Once the High Priest has arrived, it is almost impossible to talk to anyone of importance in the temple. Before that, cautious and diplomatic PCs may be able to get to the temple's head priest, Juri Nashtarin. He will first maintain the position that is officially endorsed by his cult, namely that the verdicts are necessary, and that there is no doubt that the accused are guilty. If the PCs are able to gain his confidence, however, they might learn that Juri is more than sceptic about the goings-on in Brestislava. As a matter of fact, he only very reluctantly sanctioned the verdict against Olga, although she apparently has been practising witchcraft. He was against involving the High Priest, for he foresaw that this would only further the hysteria in town. Once the players have gained Juri's trust, he may prove to be a very powerful ally, having the guts to oppose his superior and a rather direct line to his god.

Rumours and Common Knowledge

- "The High Priest of Taal is on his way from Kislev to Brestislava. Seems like this is getting really serious." (*obviously, this rumour is only useful until his arrival*)
- "Natasha Klitshkova will be the next one to burn. Everybody knows that. Poisons as many as she heals, the old hag!" (*to be used before her apprehension*)

- "Elisabeta and her step sisters have been possessed by evil spirits and demons. Poor things, writhing and screaming, rolling on the floor – they almost died fighting the evil incursions of that other girl's demons!"



- "Olga always had mysterious powers. Used to foretell the future, heal or curse people, mix love potions, poisons and worse. She was a Dolgan, after all."
- "Those Demonologists and witches must be razed off the face of the earth!"
- "Finally, the priests of Taal are doing something about the spirit-mongers. It was about time. These chaps were getting soft on Chaos, you know. Always preaching that Taal will protect us, and all. Now they show that they can do something if they only want to."
- "I suppose they will send some templars to the old mine, soon. It has been haunted for years, you know..."

Minor Events

- One of the many peddlers trying to sell cheap talismans in Brestislava is fighting with a customer who is not quite satisfied with the former's product.
- The children on the streets are playing "burn the witch".
- In the "Red Crescent", a barroom brawl starts over mutual accusations of witchcraft.

Helpful NPCs

Should the players be stuck, send them a NPC or two to nudge them in the right direction. Here are two possibilities.

- Gregory, the illusionist living in the abandoned mine, may use one of his spells to help the players. For instance, if the PCs are able to arrange a meeting with Elisabeta, he might appear as the charred body of Olga Tshechova, and shock her conveniently. Another possibility is to use an illusion at court – although there is an imminent danger that the high priest will see through the illusion. However, if everything is staged most effectively, the PCs might get away with it – and save Edina!
- One of Elisabeta's step-sisters might lose her nerve and run to the PCs. She will tell them everything she knows – and be the next one to be accused by Elisabeta.

Possible Solutions

- Threaten or trick Elisabeta or one of the girls to give themselves away at the trial, for instance with the help of Gregory, the illusionist.

- Appear as an advocate at the next trial after Edina's death-verdict. And be very, very convincing. This will certainly get the players a top place on Elisabeta's list of evil witches and demonologists.
- Gain Juri Nashtarin's trust. He might spend a night in deep prayer and bring about a sign by Taal Himself. Even the High Priest would be convinced if brambles grow out of the courtroom's benches around Elisabeta's hands and feet... On the other hand, if a druid attempted the same thing, he or she might just end up at the stake...
- Trick the girls into accusing a member of the town watch or city council. Many very influential NPCs would suddenly side with the PCs.
- Save Natasha and convince her as well as Orin (which is difficult) to testify in court. This, combined with one or more of the measures mentioned above, might just turn the tables.

Conclusion

Either way, this scenario should have its final and climactic moment in one of the courtroom scenes – if your players have been smart enough, at the proclamation of Edina's sentence. Several witnesses may speak up in Edina's favour, magic, or even divine intervention may convince the High Priest and the hysterical mob that they were seriously wrong. On the other hand, all attempts may fail, and only result in the PCs being accused of witchcraft. In that case, their best option is to flee as quickly as possible. In either case, try to stage the climactic events as effectively as possible, always taking into account the violent reactions of the hysterical crowd gathered in the courtroom.

If the players make it, they are of course heartily hugged and rewarded by Igor Eristov. He will give a dinner in the PCs honour, write any letter of recommendation they require, hand them one or two crates of his best *kvas* along with an appropriate amount of Gold Crowns (depends on how much you would like your players to have).

Experience

100 EPs for saving Edina, 30 – 50 for role-play.

Essential NPCs

Igor Eristov

| M | WS | BS | S | T | W | I | A | Dex | Ld | Int | Cl | WP | Fel |
|---|----|----|---|---|---|----|---|-----|----|-----|----|----|-----|
| 4 | 35 | 35 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 30 | 1 | 30 | 40 | 39 | 30 | 29 | 39 |

Age: 55 **Alignment:** Neutral

Skills: Evaluate, Haggle, Etiquette, Supernumerate, Secret Language: Guilder

Background: Eristov is a self-made man. He is of Gospodar origin, and nevertheless has worked his way up from little trader to wealthy merchant. He is a quiet and too good-hearted to be a very imposing character. Ever since the death of his beloved wife five years ago, his daughter Edina has meant everything to him.

Knowledge: Apart from details about the economic situation and trade in Brestislava, Igor Eristov does not know much the PCs could use. He has not even been introduced to Orin, his daughter's boyfriend, and does not suspect her of such romantic endeavours.

Edina Eristov

| M | WS | BS | S | T | W | I | A | Dex | Ld | Int | Cl | WP | Fel |
|---|----|----|---|---|---|----|---|-----|----|-----|----|----|-----|
| 3 | 30 | 25 | 2 | 2 | 5 | 33 | 1 | 30 | 42 | 39 | 32 | 30 | 45 |

Age: 18 **Alignment:** Neutral

Skills: Charm, Seduction, Sing, Dance

Background: After the death of her mother Edina Eristov assumed her role as mistress of the Eristov house – in matters concerning housekeeping and socialising, that is. Yet Edina had enough of her father in her not to become haughty or presumptuous. In fact, she has many friends in lower social levels, and even fell in love with the lowly scribe Orin. She has kept the relationship secret from her father – basically to make it more romantic.

Knowledge: Edina knows Elisabeta, and Orin told her about the latter's infatuation with him. Of course, she thinks this is Elisabeta's motivation for accusing her.

Elisabeta

| M | WS | BS | S | T | W | I | A | Dex | Ld | Int | Cl | WP | Fel |
|---|----|----|---|---|---|----|---|-----|----|-----|----|----|-----|
| 3 | 30 | 25 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 33 | 1 | 30 | 42 | 39 | 32 | 30 | 45 |

Age: 18 **Alignment:** Evil

Skills: Animal Care – Chicken, Blather, Charm, Cook, Flee!, Orientation, Public Speaking, Seduction, Silent Move Rural, Story Telling

Background: Elisabeta has been adopted by her uncle Ishtvan Aitmatov after her parents died in fire. She grew up as a more or less equal member of the family along with her step-sisters, and yet she always secretly felt unwanted and unloved. Being charming and quick-witted on the surface, she is generally well-liked by the people who know her. Only a few, like Aitmatov's servant Olga, have noticed the meanness, jealousy, intrigue and ambition brooding below the surface. Ever since her first love Orin has rejected her, these evil tendencies have been secretly unleashed. Denouncing Olga was too easy – Elisabeta had tasted blood. Her immense jealousy towards Edina did the rest.

Knowledge: Elisabeta is aware that Olga was in fact the only person in Brestislava who could more or less reasonably be called a witch.

Ishtvan Aitmatov

| M | WS | BS | S | T | W | I | A | Dex | Ld | Int | Cl | WP | Fel |
|---|----|----|---|---|---|----|---|-----|----|-----|----|----|-----|
| 3 | 30 | 25 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 30 | 1 | 30 | 30 | 20 | 30 | 25 | 35 |

Age: 54 **Alignment:** Neutral

Skills: Animal Care, Consume Alcohol, Evaluate, Drive Cart, Ride, Haggle

Background: Elisabeta's uncle is a nice, harmless, if somewhat naive character, utterly shocked about the goings-on in his house.

Knowledge: Ishtvan's wife has died giving birth to her third daughter 14 years ago. He is very fond of his daughter and his ward Elisabeta, However, he has noticed that his daughters have become more secretive towards him as they got closer and closer to Elisabeta. He has not noticed anything odd about Olga other than the fact that she was a Dolgan. Otherwise, Ishtvan is completely ignorant of what goes on in his house.

Aitmatov's daughters: Raissa, Anna and Martina

| M | WS | BS | S | T | W | I | A | Dex | Ld | Int | Cl | WP | Fel |
|---|----|----|---|---|---|----|---|-----|----|-----|----|----|-----|
| 4 | 31 | 25 | 2 | 2 | 5 | 32 | 1 | 35 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 30 |

Age: 18 (Raissa), 16 (Anna), and 14 (Martina)

Skills: Animal Care, Cook, Dance, Sing

Background: The three Aitmatov girls are a charming and cute little bunch, but being without a mother, they are all too easily influenced, which Elisabeta took advantage of. They follow her as their charismatic leader, half believing her stories of witches and demons, half imitating her outrageous act. Actually, as the witch hunt continues, the girls get more and more nervous, but are too afraid to publicly oppose Elisabeta.

Knowledge: Not much. They noticed how Olga dabbled in witchcraft. They are half-aware that Elisabeta is staging a dangerous act. They know nothing of her personal motivations, such as Orin or her grudge against Natasha.

Orin Brekovitch

| M | WS | BS | S | T | W | I | A | Dex | Ld | Int | Cl | WP | Fel |
|---|----|----|---|---|---|----|---|-----|----|-----|----|----|-----|
| 4 | 30 | 25 | 3 | 3 | 7 | 40 | 1 | 30 | 30 | 30 | 30 | 40 | 40 |

Age: 19 **Alignment:** Neutral

Skills: Linguistics, Read/Write, Secret Language: Classical, Supernumerate

Background: Orin is a nice-looking kid, but also a complete and utter coward. He truly loves Edina, but the relationship with her has also been a good opportunity to end the aggressive courtship of Elisabeta once and for all. Not that Elisabeta wasn't pretty, but Orin just didn't like her. Orin will not risk his life for Edina, but the PCs can talk him into doing anything for her rescue as long as he remains reasonably safe. Hence convincing him to testify in court will be very, very hard.

Knowledge: Elisabeta has written wild love-letters to him for over a year, but he has burned them all. Presumably, she will still have some of his not-too-nice answers. Edina knows of this, but is not very jealous of the lowly peasant girl. Orin clearly suspects Elisabeta's motive for accusing Edina, but will not let on until he feels safe to do so.

Juri Nashtarin, Cleric – Level 2

| M | WS | BS | S | T | W | I | A | Dex | Ld | Int | Cl | WP | Fel |
|---|----|----|---|---|---|----|---|-----|----|-----|----|----|-----|
| 5 | 34 | 40 | 5 | 3 | 9 | 40 | 1 | 36 | 42 | 55 | 41 | 54 | 42 |

Age: 42 **MP:** 22 **Alignment:** Neutral

Skills: Super Numerate, Read/Write, Scroll Lore, Secret Language – Classical, Theology, Arcane Language – Magick, Cast Spells – Clerical II, Meditation, Public Speaking, Magic Sense

Spells: Zone of Warmth, Zone of Silence, Wind Blast, Mystic Mist, Zone of Hiding, Move Object

Background: Juri is the head priest of Brestislava's temple of Taal. A man of reason and education, he prefers to do his work in the background, serving his god the best he can. He is not a fanatic and detests politics. Nevertheless, he could not help but sanction the verdict against Olga, for anything else would have led to a riot which would have threatened the existence of his temple. He does not like being superseded by the High Priest, but he will not seek open conflict, for this would possible harm the cult. If he is given an opportunity, he will try and stop the witch hunt.

Knowledge: Juri is aware of the religious and political background of the witch hunt. The High Priest is presumable glad to demonstrate how the cult deals with Chaos worshippers, since the worship of Taal and Rhya has been in decline, and cynics started talking about the clerics getting soft on Chaos. It is the ancient principle of finding an outside enemy to pacify the Enemy Within.

Vitali Sputin, Cleric – Level 3

| M | WS | BS | S | T | W | I | A | Dex | Ld | Int | Cl | WP | Fel |
|---|----|----|---|---|---|----|---|-----|----|-----|----|----|-----|
| 5 | 42 | 43 | 5 | 5 | 9 | 56 | 1 | 61 | 70 | 55 | 60 | 66 | 62 |

Age: 56 **Alignment:** Neutral **MP:** 41

Skills: Anything goes

Spells: Most Petty and Elemental Magic Spells

Background: A good friend to the Tsar himself, Vitali Sputin one of the most important men in Kislevian politics. Although he has not ascended to the throne of the High Priest of the Taal cult until a year ago, Sputin has already substantially influenced the political stance of the cult as well as the state. Some say he is a religious fanatic, others think that this is a clever tactician, assuming the role which most fits his schemes. Either way, his present strategy is obvious: strengthen the state cult. Nobody would deny that this is necessary. Faced with the ever rising terror of Chaos' minions, many worshippers turned away from Taal and Rhya, since believing in them did not seem to help them as much as their swords and axes. The Gospodars' natural cynicism and scepticism did not exactly help, either. Hence Vitali Sputin is eager to portray his cult as relentlessly fighting Chaos. No wonder he quickly accepted an invitation of the city council of Brestislava to further investigate the activities of witches and demonologists in their town. Only if it is made clear to him that the witch trials may bring more harm than good to his cult will Sputin even think of suspending them.

Knowledge: Actually, Vitali Sputin does not know much about the goings-on in Brestislava. However, he will not be caught by simple legal ruse – he knows everything about religious as well as secular law.

The Brotherhood of the Bear – Templars of Taal

| M | WS | BS | S | T | W | I | A | Dex | Ld | Int | Cl | WP | Fel |
|---|----|----|---|---|----|----|---|-----|----|-----|----|----|-----|
| 4 | 70 | 55 | 5 | 5 | 15 | 70 | 3 | 59 | 59 | 50 | 65 | 60 | 59 |

Alignment: Neutral

Skills: Disarm, Dodge Blow, Etiquette, Follow Trail, Heraldry, History, Read/Write, Ride, Secret Languages – Ranger and Templar, Specialist Weapons – Flail, Lance, Two-handed Weapons, Silent Move Rural, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Injure, Strike to Stun, Theology - Taal.

Background: The usual templars: religious fanatics, relentless fighters, featuring endless loyalty to their superior priests. No messing with these guys!

Knowledge: Everything about Rhya, Taal, and fighting. Nothing about the witch hunt.

Ivan Krushtshenko

| M | WS | BS | S | T | W | I | A | Dex | Ld | Int | Cl | WP | Fel |
|---|----|----|---|---|---|----|---|-----|----|-----|----|----|-----|
| 4 | 35 | 35 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 30 | 1 | 30 | 44 | 36 | 32 | 29 | 45 |

Age: 56 **Alignment:** Neutral

Skills: Evaluate, Etiquette, Haggle, Heraldry, History, Law

Background: Like the rest of the city council, mayor Ivan Krushtshenko descends from the traditional Norse nobility. Unlike some of his peers, he has never disdained trade and has multiplied his family's fortune by exporting wheat grown on their land. Nevertheless, he is still Norse and thus looks down upon every other people in Kislef, which entails an unhealthy conflict between him and the Ungol captain of the town watch, Stanislav Limko. Krushtshenko quickly sent a messenger with a plea for help to the High Priest in Kislef after Olga had been apprehended. On the one hand, this was due to the fact that he was truly worried about witchcraft in his town. On the other hand, he also knew that he could gain the favour of the superstitious Gospodars by relentlessly fighting alleged Chaos minions in Brestislava. This in turn would perhaps make it possible for him to raise the taxes again without risking an open revolt. Yet, even if he would never admit it, Krushtshenko asks himself whether he has not acted too rashly.

Knowledge: He knows about the political motivation of Sputin's crusade-spirit. Naturally, Krushtshenko has the best contacts to the Merchants' Guild and every respectable citizen in town. However, anyone addressing him without using his or her Etiquette skill will not be listened to.

Natasha Klitshkova

| M | WS | BS | S | T | W | I | A | Dex | Ld | Int | Cl | WP | Fel |
|---|----|----|---|---|---|----|---|-----|----|-----|----|----|-----|
| 3 | 30 | 27 | 3 | 3 | 7 | 33 | 1 | 39 | 32 | 42 | 35 | 32 | 29 |

Age: 24 **Alignment:** Neutral

Skills: Astronomy, Arcane Language – Druidic, Cure Disease, Heal Wounds, Herb Lore, Identify Plant, Read/Write, Secret Languages – Classical and Guilder, Prepare Poison

Background: Natasha always has been good with herbs and chemicals. Even though nobody thought that this was a good idea, she decided to study herbalism and set up her little shop in Brestislava. She soon realised the locals' attitude towards her craft: as long as someone is ill and in need of herbal cure, she is liked and respected – at any other given time, however, the superstitious people of Brestislava resent her powers. She is commonly known as the herb witch, and suspected of poisoning as many customers as she saves. Which is rubbish, by the way. Natasha is well aware of what people say, and does not care much. As will become clear, she underestimates the Brestislavians' hysteria.

Knowledge: Natasha has caught Elisabeta stealing in her shop a couple of weeks ago. Elisabeta denied everything and got hysterical, but Natasha calmly threw her out and told her never to come back. Olga had been buying a few herbs and rather

unusual items such as bats' tongues, but Natasha never really took her seriously. She will have to be convinced that she actually is in danger of being killed.

Gregory Olomov – Level 1 Illusionist

| M | WS | BS | S | T | W | I | A | Dex | Ld | Int | Cl | WP | Fel |
|---|----|----|---|---|---|----|---|-----|----|-----|----|----|-----|
| 3 | 32 | 29 | 4 | 4 | 7 | 45 | 1 | 40 | 29 | 42 | 33 | 40 | 30 |

Age: 30 **Magic Points:** 14 **Alignment:** Neutral

Skills: Cast Spells – Petty, Battle Magic Level I, Illusionist Magic Level I, Read/Write, Secret Language – Classical, Scroll Lore, Identify Plant, Magical Sense, Rune Lore, Arcane Language – Illusionist Magic, Evaluate

Spells: Marsh Lights, Sounds, Clone Image, Illusionary Appearance

Background: Two years ago, through a combination of unlucky circumstances Gregory one day ended up in Brestislava with a suitcase full of Arcane literature and no money to travel on. He soon found out that wizards were not liked in Brestislava – let alone needed or paid. But on one of his long strolls around the town he found an abandoned mine and decided to make himself a hermit. Thus he finally came round to reading everything he always had wanted to read, perfecting his spells and knowledge, living on berries and the occasional rabbit. His experiments with Illusionist Magic has led to the rumour that the mines are haunted, which has the desirable side-effect that no-one will disturb Gregory. The man himself is a very amiable character, if a little nervous for a hermit. But he could not hurt anyone and abhors Battle Magic.

Knowledge: He knows the Brestislavians' superstition from his own experience and thus will be willing to help any of its victims. Otherwise he has been isolated from goings-on in town.

Miroslav Loskov – Cleric Level 1

| M | WS | BS | S | T | W | I | A | Dex | Ld | Int | Cl | WP | Fel |
|---|----|----|---|---|---|----|---|-----|----|-----|----|----|-----|
| 3 | 36 | 27 | 4 | 4 | 7 | 41 | 1 | 36 | 26 | 49 | 38 | 48 | 48 |

Age: 57 **Magic Points:** 7 **Alignment:** Neutral

Skills: Astronomy, Heraldry, Read/Write, Scroll Lore, History, Secret Language – Classical, Arcane Language – Magick, Theology, Meditation, Public Speaking

Spells: Magic Flame, Magic Lock

Background: A lonely librarian in his almost forgotten temple of Verena, Miroslav Loskov is one of the very few voices of reason in Brestislava. He spends most of his time taking care of and reading the hundreds of books he has gathered over the decades. He is not bitter about the ignorance prevalent in the town, but thinks that it is his responsibility to maintain a home for the learned and reasonable. A lean, crooked little man sporting an immense beard, Miroslav will welcome anyone eager to gain knowledge in his temple and shelter those persecuted by the ignorant.

Knowledge: Loskov knows almost everything on Brestislava, or Kislev and its people: religion, politics, geography, history – ask whatever you want. If he does not know it himself, he will find one or two relevant volumes in the library's collection. However, his knowledge is not quite up to date, since it originates in books, gazettes, and pamphlets rather than actual experience.

Stanislav Limko

| M | WS | BS | S | T | W | I | A | Dex | Ld | Int | Cl | WP | Fel |
|---|----|----|---|---|----|----|---|-----|----|-----|----|----|-----|
| 4 | 65 | 35 | 5 | 5 | 10 | 55 | 2 | 39 | 65 | 39 | 55 | 45 | 45 |

Age: 39 **Alignment:** Neutral

Skills: Disarm, Dodge Blow, Secret Language: Battle Tongue, Specialist Weapons: Two-Handed Weapons, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Injure, Strike to Stun, Speak Additional Language: Ungol

Trappings: Two-Handed Sword, Sleeved Mail Coat, Breast Plate, Helmet

Background: Two decades ago, the city council of Brestislava came up with the following idea: why not putting the Ungol minority in charge of the town watch. This, so they thought, would channel their fierceness and give them an opportunity to fight – if only against petty criminals. This was a good idea in terms of security, since the Ungols proved to be able watchmen. On the other hand, ever since that time there has been a rivalry between the Ungol captains of the watch and the town council, for both parties kept suspecting that the other was undermining their power. However, to this day, the equilibrium of power has been more or less stable. The present captain, Stanislav Limko, is a heavily built man, but rather quiet for an Ungol. He presides over his men like a general, and maintains his military style when talking to strangers.

Knowledge: Limko knows that there had been enough evidence to justify Olga's death sentence. He has no reason to disrupt the trials or undermine the law, and will not have much authority left once the Brotherhood of the Bear is in town. However, should an Ungol, through a combination of unlucky circumstances or the intervention of the PCs, be accused of witchcraft, he might go as far as staging a coup to prevent his or her death.