

Heroes of the Empire

(A Gathering of Non Playing Characters from the
Novel Zavant)

(By Richard Leon)

Introduction

Many enemies of humankind exist in the Warhammer World. Bloodthirsty Orcs, cruel, ageless vampires, shadowy rat-men known as Skaven and the unrelenting worshippers of the Four Damned Powers of Chaos are a few of the reasons why the good races of this world need heroes.

In this savage world few are bold enough to become men of valor. From across the Empire of Sigmar comes several champions to take up the reins of defenders and challenge the dark powers. A few good men are gathered here for those wanting good characters to turn the tides of war against the foes of mankind.

Zavant and Vido

In the city of Altdorf everyone knows who to turn to when a mystery needs to be solved. Near the University of Altdorf in a plush two story house live the mystic sage, world renowned scholar and eccentric detective known as Zavant Konniger. With his ex-thief halfling manservant named Vido the two solve the most puzzling cases ever to haunt the Empire and humanity. Staying chiefly in the capital of the Empire but known to go abroad, the Sage and Thief track down all sorts of villains, bringing them to the Emperor's justice.

Zavant Konniger is a tall, muscular, wiry man of late middle age who gives a grim first impression of a dangerous bird of prey. With a very large forehead and long hawkish nose he reinforces the first impression of an avian hunter, someone who constantly seeks. Of course Zavant only hunts knowledge unless it is a perpetrator of some serious crime or deviant of some heretical nature. His hair is grey and thinning tied back in a pony tail like a Norse seaman. The eyes of this mystic knight is the most striking feature of all, piercing, cold, radiant blue giving anyone pause when staring him face to face. Zavant is a remarkable man to behold, not only upon sight but in his personal history, vivid intellect, and sharp personality.

No one is sure of his birth or who his parents were. Most of those documents are long destroyed and cannot be found. One thing is for certain, he is a man of the empire and possibly of noble birth.

In his youth he studied in and around the University of Altdorf taking up many fields of study. In the classroom of one of Altdorf's most respected scholars, Herr von Lattmann, Zavant gained much of his background in philosophies and literature. Another student of Herr von Lattmann was an ambitious son of a merchant; now the infamous crime lord of Altdorf named Vesper Klasst. Both are now Arch Enemies of each other with Herr Klasst constantly plotting schemes of power which Zavant relentlessly unravels.

During his late teens Zavant entered into the services of the Empire as a student of Graf Otto von Bitternach. The "Iron Graf" as he is well known is the Lord Chamberlain of the Emperor Karl Franz and his predecessor Emperor Luitpold. Also there is another role Graf Otto takes upon himself, that of master spy and diplomat of the Empire. Zavant being the top student of Herr von Lattmann is a natural to fill the role of a Chamberlain and Spymaster of Future Emperors. So for several years he served the Iron Graf running many missions around the world as a spy for the Empire. During his tenure as an agent of the Empire, Zavant has a change of heart. He found religion and gave himself to the clergy of the Empire.

One event of his youth drove the young spy into service of Sigmar, Warrior god of the Empire and its patron deity. No one is quite sure of its nature but it gave young Zavant the need to battle the forces of darkness, especially Chaos. This desire to vanquish Chaos drove the spy away from his chosen path and into holy worship as a cleric of Sigmar.

Several years of his young adulthood was spent as a priest. He traveled to many parts of the Empire as a brother of Sigmar learning theology and everything the church had to know. Though the knowledge of the Church is much, most of it is kept locked away. Many writings of heretical nature were deemed too diabolical for the majority of the priest to read. Zavant went into those sacred vaults in different chapels, monasteries churches and temples to learn the nature of his foe and how to defeat him. This seeking of infernal knowledge led him into many troubles with head clergymen and high ranking priest.

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Often he was called in for making trouble for he encouraged free thought among the brethren. So after several years of service to his god, he parted ways, to study on his own and seek information on how to defeat the enemies of the Empire thru alchemical and scholarly endeavors.

Many tales have been told since his adulthood of his mysteries that he solves for many clients. Cases are noted here for many to see and reference in their quest for more knowledge of the mystic sage. The list is as follows and is not in alphabetical or chronological order: The Affair of the Araby Exhibit, The Case of the Tsarina's Pearls, The Puzzle of the Norscan Pirate, The Case of the Morrsliebnacht Murders, Case of the Emperor's Envoy, The affair of the Tilean Rat-idol, The Mystery of the Albion Monolith, The Case of the Tilean Widow, The Case of the Moussillon Bard, A Scandal in Gisoreux, The Affair of the Purloined Banner, The Mystery of Alderman's Twin, The Case of the Jeweled Monkey Statue, The Case of the Twisted Man, The affair of the Stirland Vampire, The mystery of the Dwarf Engineer's Thumb, The Case of the Verezzo Naval Treaty .

The main tool Zavant uses for solving the many riddles of the Old World is simple mental deduction, observation, logic and note-taking. Those who think he uses witchcraft or scrying devises should know that he only uses alchemical mixtures and other instruments of scientific nature to defeat the forces of darkness. Readers should also know that Zavant is a studied and accomplished Alchemist. Some of the devices he uses will be noted in his trappings.

Zavant Konniger's Life work is an academic treaty called *Principia Chaotica* or the Chaos Theory. This is a full in-depth look at the four ruinous powers and their effect on life as we know it. No one is sure if it will be ever finished but some of his notes have gone into publishing in certain Tilean intellectual circles. One Book by him already in print is *Out of Araby: A Most Hazardous Field Investigation of the Tomb Cities of Khermi*.

*The Mystic Sage also served as Ambassador to Bretonnia in the Court of Gisoreux. He still holds some of that status and carries a signet ring with him to show that he still hold some Imperial authority.

Herr Konniger is a man of habit when at home. He does not like to be taken out of his routine. (-10 Fel check if disturbing his routine).

Zavant uses force as a last resort. If forced to use violence he will fight bare handed unless a quarterstaff might be handy. It is his way. He rarely carries anything sharp including a sharp knife. His manservant holds several of these on his person if he needs one to borrow.

*One thing of note is his skill with weapons and his high WS. He learned some combat skills from a traveling monk from Cathay. He uses a peculiar style of street fighting that makes him a deadly foe in combat even without a weapon. He also learned the mastery of pole-arms from him also.

*Another skill of note is his Chaotic Sense. This enables him to vaguely detect the machinations of chaos in a one mile radius. This skill sharpens in effect during full phase of the chaos moon Morrslieb.

Zavant acquired this skill thru the smoking of refined Warpstone mixed with an Araby Tobacco in his old wooden pipe. Very few know of this practice except for his manservant Vido and an Araby merchant. If word of this got out it would put the Mystic Sage's life in jeopardy!

*His cast spells ability is still in effect for his priesthood. (It is said he can still call upon the god's wrath to anyone who challenges the Empire.) He has never turned against his vows to Sigmar his god. Also the few spells he uses of petty and Alchemist are of use to his studies and not exploited.

*One more item of note is Herr Konniger's high intellect. His high aptitude has made him a savant among normal men. Some say even the High Elves scholars regard him as an equal and that is high praise indeed.

Stats: Zavant Konniger, Scholar, Ex Student, Spy, Initiate, Cleric of Sigmar 1&2, Alchemist Apprentice, Alchemist 1&2, Race Human, Alignment Neutral

Physical								Mental					
M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	DEX	LD	INT	CL	WP	FEL
4	67*	51	4	4	10	73*	2	55	59	91*	77	59	61

Skills: Lightning Reflexes*, Very Intelligent*, Sixth Sense, Read/ Write, Arcane Language Magik, Secret Language- Classical, History, Astronomy, Cartography, Identify Plants, Numismatics, Speak Additional Language: Cathay/ Norse/ Nipponese/ Araby/ Eltharin/ Khazalid, Act, Bribery, Street Fighter Cathay Style*, Specialist Weapon Pole arms Cathay style*, Concealment Urban Cryptography, Disguise, Flee!

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Linguistics, Pick Lock, Palm Object, Seduction, Shadowing, Silent Move Urban, Wit, Scroll Lore, Theology, *Cast Spells -Cleric of Sigmar 1&2/Alchemist 1&2, Mediate, Public Speaking, Disarm, Identify Undead, Magical Sense, Dodge Blow, Brewing, Evaluate, Chemistry, Metallurgy, Herb Lore, Heal Wounds, Prepare Poison, Rune Lore

Spells: Petty Gift of Tongues, Glowing Light, Magic Alarm, Magic Flame, Magic Lock, Open, Remove Curse, Zone of Warmth/ Cold /Silence/ Friendliness*, Dark Sight*, Sharp Eyes*, Stealth* Cleric 1 Aura of Resistance, Cure Light Injury, Strength of Combat, Bless Weapon** Dispel Sorcery** Righteous Blow** Cleric 2 Smash, Hand of God** Alchemist 1 Channeled Shock*, Cool*, Create Vacuum*, Impervious Hand*, Pressure*

***Realms of Sorcery Spells**

****Realms of Divine Magic by Ken Rolston Spells**

Trappings and Items of Note: Silver wrought flask of Bretonnian Brandy carried on his belt and attached to the hip/ Voluminous, many pocketed Kislev-style cloak made of wolf's pelt and wool dyed in a dark blue color/ Silver Embroidered Brocaded Garnache/ Soft leather slip on shoes/ Glass of red Reiklander wine kept at bedside with a mix of sleeping herbs/ Old, dwarf pipe made of Ivory and Gromril/ Large stash of pipe tobacco laced with Warpstone/ Many shelves of books on many different subjects (Valued at over 20,000 GC)/ Small pouch of powdered silver/ Flintbox/ Candle of Vampire Awareness*/ Needle of Undead Seeking*/ Leonardo's Sunbox*/ Signet Ambassador's ring (symbol of the double headed eagle carved in relief)*/Other oddities and strange, magical artifacts.

***Candle of Vampire Awareness:** This is a yellow colored candle that burns a black flame in the presence of Vampires. Imported from the Southlands of Araby this candle is said to be made from the fat of a vampire. Since this is a hard candle to make, they are very rare and only a few necromancers from Araby know how to make such a candle. A pinch of dust is all that is required to activate the candle. The cost of this item is very high, but its uses to those who deal with these nocturnal creatures are priceless.

***Needle of Undead Seeking:** Another artifact from the country of Araby is the Needle of Undead Seeking. Its uses are for those who seek out any undead creature. Made from the bone of any type of undead creature, it is then coated with the venom of a scarab beetle. It is then tied to a thin cord and held in between two fingers and then it points to the strongest area of activity of the undead. The needle is highly dangerous and one prick can cause instant death (Similar to man bane). It is a rare artifact but can be purchased from various black-markets for a high fee. The effectiveness varies on each making.

***Leonardo's Sunbox:** An invention made by the Tilean genius Leonardo several hundred years ago. It captures the rays of the sun in concentrated form for use in refraction experiment. Zavant alters the Sunbox to emit solar rays from a piece of Warpstone. This device exposed to Vampires is quite fatal. Only one such item exists, but a smart engineer could duplicate this.

Zavant's personal manservant Vido is anything but a typical halfling from the moot. He is a former member of the Thief's Guild in Altdorf and still considered to be a master thief in his own right. Now he serves as Herr Konniger's right hand man doing the dirty work for a very successful personal detective and scholar. He has learned many things in his travels with the mystic sage and a lot of Zavant's personal beliefs are rubbing off on him. Given time, as Halflings are longer lived people he might make a formidable detective as his moot addled brains are saturated with the scholar's wisdom and learning.

Standing at three and a half feet in height Vido is a typical unassuming halfling who blends well into crowds easily. His wavy hair is dark brown and cut close for utilitarian reasons. Shiny brown eyes set in a semi jovial face stare back giving most men the impressions of a child. But at over 80 years of age he has seen many things that would make anyone else look like they were every bit his age. He dresses usually in unimposing brown leathers and white cotte shirt which is typical for lower class or working folk. His footsteps are soft as are most halfling since they wear no shoes. Only in appearance would someone over look him but in skill and attitude there are few to match him.

The lure of fortune and women is what lured a simple son of a brewer to the capital city of the Empire. In Altdorf he joined the Albrecht Strasse Mob a small gang who was loyal to Vesper Klasst and his Thief's Guild. Under the tutelage of another Halfling named Hergabo Klienbratten he became a Cat burglar and Master thief who robbed nobility and merchants of their hard earned goods. Life was good for a while until he first met Herr Konniger, then everything changed.

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Zavant was on a case for the Altdorf watch dealing with a smuggling operation happening down on the docks. In an abandon warehouse Zavant fell into a trap set by some hired mercenaries of Vesper Klasst. He shouted to no avail trapped in a building that was set ablaze. Vido and his mentor Hergabo rescued the detective and made good his escape. Word was spread thru the organization, but only Hergabo was dealt with directly as he wound up dead one dark and foggy night. Vido was framed later as word was leaked out that Hergabo had an accomplice in his rescue of Zavant. The Master thief went to the gallows set up by his gang and caught by the Altdorf watch.

As his sentence of hanging was read in the public square, Herr Konniger stopped the execution with an order from the emperor himself, a full pardon no less. Thankful, Vido went with Zavant, but he did not find out the nature of the bargain for his life till later that evening as the Halfling tried on some servant clothes and made a new home at Zavant's home near the university. From then on they were a team.

Vido is a creature of comforts, but not one of hard work. He loves to sit by a cozy fire and smoke some weed after a good meal. But life with Zavant is hectic and very few nights are those which he gets to enjoy. He prefers to skip direct confrontations and talk his way out of situations. He still has thoughts of riches to buy a life of security and well being and will daze off if there is loot nearby. His master keeps him in line and focused on the task at hand.

His senses are keen and his blades are always kept sharp and at the ready in his leather jacket he wears. At least three throwing knives are on his person at any given time. He also carries a small book in which he scribbles notes for his boss. It is very rare to catch this halfling flatfooted.

**Stats: Vido, Student, Ex Servant, Cat Burglar*, Smuggler, Thief-Burglar / Race Halfling/
Alignment Neutral**

Physical								Mental					
M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	DEX	LD	INT	CL	WP	FEL
5	59	59	3	3	8	88	2	91	27	45	51	31	58

***New Career by Alfred Nunez from Warpstone Issue 18**

Skills: Cook, Luck, Sixth Sense, Ambidextrous, Night Vision 20 yards, Concealment Urban, Secret Language, Thieves' Tongue, Secret Signs Thief Signs, Silent Move Rural/ Urban, Evaluate, Pick Lock, Scale Sheer Surface, Spot Trap, Specialist Weapon Throwing Weapons, Drive Cart, Row, Speak Additional Language-Araby, Bribery, Charm, Dance, Etiquette, Evaluate, Gamble, Heraldry, Numismatics, Palm Object, Dodge Blow, Animal Care, Blather, Drive Cart, Ride-Pony, Arcane Language-Magik, Read/Write, Secret Language-Classical, History, Astronomy, Identify Plants.

Trappings: Leather Jacket (0/1 Armor Body/Arms), Cotte (Medieval Long Sleeved Shirt), Brown Cotton Breeches, Leather Belt, Purse with 3d 6 GC, Lock picking tools, (Belt) d6 Throwing Knives (Leather Jacket), Small Sling bag with Small Notebook and several pieces of Charcoal

Scenarios for Role-play

Zavant Konniger can be used for many ideas and campaigns in and around Altdorf. He makes for a commanding NPC who will rivet the attention of all who speak to him. His sureness and knowledge will be an asset to anyone accompanying him on an endeavor. The Mystic Sage can be many things to adventurers who are looking for guidance in this cruel inhospitable world.

Zavant as a Benefactor

GM's can use Herr Konniger as a patron for a party of adventurers looking to scour hidden tombs and ancient crypts of the Warhammer World. Zavant is always in need of information and items in his quest to know and destroy Chaos. Gm's can base a whole campaign out of Altdorf using the map in SoB and some notes taken from several books of the Black Library. He can always use a body guard or two when he plans to go into somewhere dangerous (he can take care of himself mind you). They may also become embroiled in on of his famous cases. (GM's might take notes on one of the stories and create a scenario out of it for the PC's) Zavant's endless quest for knowledge will always keep PC's busy.

Zavant as a Mentor

If a character wishes to become a scholar, then Zavant would make an excellent teacher. His vast knowledge would be a boon to any student. Many theories could be discussed and characters could also take up correspondence with him if they are traveling out of country to adventure somewhere else. His

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extensive knowledge on Chaos will also help anyone who pursues after cultist of the dark powers. He can be a consultant as well helping PC's to identify strange artifacts.

Zavant as an Antagonist

An elaborate web is spun putting the player characters in a trap where they look like the guilty party. This trap could be set up by cultists (The Purple Hand) who are seeking revenge for an earlier plot spoiled. The charges could be anything from espionage, murder or robbery. Zavant could be introduced to help find out the truth as long as the characters cooperate. This is a good way to introduce the mystic sage into their lives giving a good source for mentoring or consulting.

If the PC's do something worth of attention (like a robbery of a priceless artifact) then Zavant could be hot on their trail seeking the truth! It can be set up as a match of intellects between the Pc's and Zavant (GM). This might be good as well especially if the PC's are cultist or of Evil intent.

The Iron Graf and the Emperor's Right Hand

The Empire has many enemies who wish to see its demise and all those who guard her. These opponents vary and some of them are called allies during times of war. Lord Chamberlain Graf Otto von Bitternach, Imperial Diplomat and Chief Spy and his primary henchman, Vaul Steiner the Emperor's Bodyguard ensure none of the Emperor's foes succeed in their plans.

Graf Otto von Bitternach or "The Iron Graf" as he is commonly referred to is a high stakes politician who makes judgments of life and death everyday. He is a very old man who stays mostly indoors in the Emperor's Palace at Altdorf. Most of his orders are carried out by his army of informants, spies, assassins, minor nobles bought and freelance mercenaries. Very little does he deal directly with any other imperial power except to gain an advantage politically. He has few friends in the other Electors of the Empire and they consider him a meddling nuisance. He has a partnership with the Empire College of Illusionist (RoS Pg 57) and is a main contributor to the schools academic programs. Part of the lands outside of Altdorf in the Reikland area are owned by him with a few insane asylums ran by clerics of Shallya. (Some say political enemies of the empire and other radicals who are not publicly executed are put here!) It is said he has an ear everywhere and no secret escapes his thoughts for he has a precise clockwork mind. If he wants someone to disappear overnight, it will happen! The Emperor's personal champion is in his services (By the Emperor's leave of course). It is for this reason few people are willing to challenge his power directly.

The Iron Graf is a small, old, wizened man with a few patches of silvery white hair on a liver spotted head. He wears a well kept beard which is also white. He looks upon everyone who sees him with small, sunken, dark brown eyes that often have the look of senility these days. But he is sharp as ever and uses this façade as a ploy to see into the intentions of those who serve him. Graf von Bitternach wears cloaks of dark grey with his symbol of office, a gold medallion with the symbol of the double headed eagle inset with ruby eyes on a golden chain that hangs on his neck. Underneath he wears undergarments nothing more. Several rings including a signet ring used to seal documents adorn his hands. The Graf is a man of thought not of action for he very seldom gets up to do much now days except bathe, eat or sleep. But few doubt his potency.

Stats: Graf Otto von Bitternach Noble Rank Five*, Ex-Noble Rank 4*, 3*, Spy, Explorer, Noble (* from Apocrypha Now Pg 17-20) Race Human, Alignment Lawful

Physical								Mental					
M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	DEX	LD	INT	CL	WP	FEL
3	61	42	2	3	7	73	2	45	93	78	67	71	67

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Skills: Luck, Dodge Blow, Read/ Write, Blather, Charm, Etiquette, Heraldry, Ride, Wit, Gamble, Public Speaking, Consume Alcohol, Cartography, Drive Cart, Evaluate, Follow Trail, Law, Linguistics, Orientation, Act, Concealment Urban, Cryptography, Disguise, Flee!, Pick Lock, Palm Object, Seduction, Shadowing, Silent Move Urban, Sixth Sense, Evaluate, Influence, Intimidate, Specialist Weapons, Fencing, Dynastic Knowledge, Secret Language, Classical, Speak Additional Language, Norse, Araby, Southlander, Orcish, Dwarf, Stewardship, Court Intrigue.

Trappings: As GM sees fit (full army of resources, men and Vault Steiner at his disposal).

In the Empire no one can anger the emperor and live. There are many men who are dead from crossing words with Emperor Karl- Franz. But he is not a brutal dictator sending men to the gallows on a mere evil stare. He likes to get along with everyone and put up a façade of civility. So in order to preserve the Empire and The Emperor's dignity, his personal bodyguard, Vault Steiner, takes care of whoever displeases the ruler of this Kingdom.

Known as the Emperor's Right Hand, Vault Steiner serves the chosen Elector as his personal assassin. But very seldom does he get to do this for his Emperor personally, for he works with his Chamberlain Graf Von Bitternach often to protect the interest of the empire. As a personal servant of the throne, Vault believes he can best serve his majesty by working alongside his Chamberlain. Since the Emperor is rarely seen it makes perfect sense. Usually Karl Franz will have his palace guards escort him to his daily meals and other state affairs. Sometimes on special occasions Herr Steiner accompanies the Emperor which usually turns out to be a boring exercise in his opinion. Rarely does he assassinate for the Emperor directly, but he kills quite frequently for his personal advisor and master of spies who represents the Emperor's interest in these affairs.

Little is known of Vault Steiner's past, but it is safe to say he is a woodsman of great skill. He lived many days out in the wild living off the land and killing anything in his path. It is said he was in the service of a Duke as a gamekeeper until one day he saved the Duke's life. Then he became his bodyguard. Eventually his reputation at tournaments representing the duke earned him a good name. He became noticed at one of these festival tourneys and was hired on to serve the Emperor directly. Even though he seldom has need of his services directly Karl Franz is glad to have hired one of the most noted warriors in the Empire.

Herr Steiner is a solid built man of six feet, with cold grey uncaring eyes that can put a chill down your back. His dark brown hair is short and kept neat along with a clean shaven face which he uses his knives on everyday. Vault wears a patchy grey cloak with leather boots and worn traveling clothes. He carries several knives, swords and bolts for his crossbow in a quiver. The assassin carries a menacing look about him as if he distrusts the whole world (which is a good idea). He is cold, calculating and ruthless with a martial prowess that few can match. One look from this man could mean death; for it is said he never forgets a face.

Stats: Vault Steiner Assassin Ex Judicial Champion, Bodyguard, Gamekeeper, Hunter / Race Human/ Alignment Lawful

Physical								Mental					
M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	DEX	LD	INT	CL	WP	FEL
5	80	89	5	6*	14	87	4	65	71	66	86	76	31

Skills: *Very Resilient, Lightning Reflexes, Ambidextrous, Marksmanship, Concealment Rural/Urban, Follow Trail, Game Hunting, Secret Language, Ranger, Secret Signs, Woodsman, Silent Move Rural/Urban, Immunity to Poisons, Set Trap, Spot Traps, Disarm, Specialist Weapon, Fist, Fencing Sword, Flail, Lasso, Net, Parry Weapon, Two handed, Blow pipe, Throwing knife, Dodge Blow, Strike Mighty Blow, Street Fighting Strike to Stun, Prepare Poisons, Scale Sheer Surface, Shadowing, Torture

Trappings: Hooded Grey Cloak, Leather Boots, Crossbow, Quiver with 15 bolts, Two swords, Left-handed Dagger, D6 knives, Garrote, Mail shirt, Leather Jack, (Armor ½ body 0/1 Arms) , D8 does of man bane in a vial, Backpack with rations and supplies.

Scenarios for Role-play

In service of the Empire

PC's may wish to enter careers as spies, assassins or bodyguards and work for the Empire. Those who do so might find themselves under the Iron Graf's will. This might prove to be a stand along campaign, or they could be attached to the group of travelers in SRIK supplement, by Ken Rolston. Also they might work beside the greatest assassin the Empire has. This might prove to be quite unsettling to those with weaker stomachs since he is known to be cast into very dangerous scenarios. There are rewards for those in service to the Emperor and a steady paycheck. But they will all swear an oath of fealty to the crown and find this oath tested constantly.

Death at the Mother's Cupboard Inn

A nice inn that sits on the docks of Altdorf, it is a stopping place for travelers and merchants. Two wealthy traders who have committed treasonous acts against the Empire are staying here. They hire the PC's to guard them for their stay in Altdorf. Little do they know the Emperor's best are out to see the two merchants dead. This could lead to an all out battle and chase thru the streets of the Empire's Capital. It might bode ill for the PC's if captured since the Graf Von Bitternach and Herr Steiner are known for getting the truth out of their victims thru many different types of ploys and tortures.