

Stop the Rot!

Synopsis

The characters arrive at the remote Reikland village of Hafzig in southern Middenland, where all is not well. Their arrival coincides with an insidious Skaven plot to spread a foul disease to all corners of the Empire. Together they must track down a Healer, crack a code, deal with a duplicitous Bretonnian and along the way face Mutants, bandits, Beastmen and of course, Skaven...

The Village of Hafzig

For the purposes of this scenario the village of Hafzig is nominally located in southern Middenland, although GMs should feel free to relocate the village to fit in with their campaign.

Hafzig is a small timber and pig town ("there's nothing in Hafzig but logs and hogs"), nestled equally between a small river tributary and a narrow trade-track. Given time perhaps Hafzig could grow into a prosperous centre but for now it is home to only 72 simple farmers, loggers and traders.

The settlement sits on a small rise and surrounded by an ancient palisade. The bulk of the buildings are wood or a mixture of wood and wattle. The only stone building is a rather impressive two-story coach house. Judging from its stout design it may once have been a manor house or small keep.

The PCs should arrive in Hafzig at midmorning on a fine spring day; they will be thirsty from the road and eagerly anticipating a meal at the coach house.

However, upon their arrival they are greeted with an unnerving sight. The coach house doors and windows are boarded and daubed with symbols of Shallya (in this case stylised hearts and tears). Some 15-20 of the villagers are gathered in the platz. Despite the pleasant day, they don't look to be in good spirits.

Herman Klaster hurries up to the characters to seek their assistance. Herman is the Miller and the self-appointed leader since the innkeeper and bailiff have both fallen ill.

Herman's Tale

Herman pulls a tattered hat from his balding head as he approaches and rings it with both hands as he speaks.

"Sigmar smiles upon us for he has delivered our saviours!"

Herman goes on to explain that a number of villagers and militia are out scouting for the village's missing young Healer, Dema Konig. Many of the villagers will be reluctant to go too deep into the forest *"what with the bandits and Beastmen and all"*, but an able crew like the PCs would surely return her safely, for a reasonable consideration of course.

This is the story as Herman knows it: The previous afternoon three strangers sought lodging at the coach house (*"they most have come on foot as the coach had arrived earlier that afternoon and wouldn't be leaving until the following morning"*). Each wore heavy grey robes – one was unconscious (*"drunk they said"*), the other two quite short. Before midnight two members of the group (*"who spoke in rasping but high-pitched voices"*) left without a word (*"although they did pay their bill right enough"*), leaving their colleague to sleep off his stupor.

Early this morning, the 'sleeper' was disturbed by Irmella, the scullery maid. The man was near death and riddled with a terrible wasting disease.

Now, just a few hours later, three of the inn's staff and the Bailiff have been afflicted and lie delirious in a fever.

"We can't send for help as the coach left this morning – mind you, the chap on it didn't look none too good. Besides, if the authorities get wind of this business, they might just come along and burn poor Hafzig right to the ground will all us good folk locked inside!"

Worse still, the village Healer and Priest of Shallya, Dema Konig, fled her shrine shortly after viewing the infected villagers, to gather healing herbs and Herman fears she may have fallen foul of bandits or Beastmen or worse!

The Rot

Herman will insist on showing the characters the afflicted villagers (as long as they don't enter the room, they are not at risk of contagion), thinking that the sorry sight might stir their hearts and not their stomachs. He peers through a ground floor window and points out Ostmann the inn keep ("*he was such a thin man*") now bloated to balloon proportions and Lecter the Bailiff, the fingers on his left hand trail away to slender purple tentacles. Two others, including Irmella lie on nearby pallets, their flesh covered in pustulant boils.

The disease is the dread Neiglish Rot (see *WFRP* rule book page 136); if it makes its way to Altdorf (Herman can confirm that the coach will ultimately terminate in the capital) thousands of lives would be lost. Indeed, the disease may spread well beyond the intended target and bring the Empire to its knees! Of course, some GMs may consider that this is too grand a plot for a small band of Skaven in league with a chaotic Bretonnian to hatch and certainly too big for a band of neophyte adventurers to tackle. If so, assume that the disease is a much diluted version of the rot (detailed below).

Lesser Neiglish Rot

Description: This horrible disease born of the Warp will wreak terrible havoc upon the afflicted. The skin takes on a purplish-green hue, swelling and breaking out in yellow boils. One in ten (those that are susceptible to the hand of Chaos) can find themselves mutating along the way!

Duration: 6 days

Effects: Make a Toughness Test each day or lose 1-5 from each Characteristic. When the disease is first discovered, make a second Toughness Test, failure means that a Chaos Mutation (*WFRP* rule book page 229) will slowly begin to manifest over the period of the illness. At the end of the illness make a final Toughness Test, if successful, the Mutation becomes dormant; it never manages to take hold. If the Test is failed, the character becomes a fully-fledged Mutant.

The Truth about Dema

Dema Konig left after catching sight of the sick folk at the coach house. Unknown to the PC's or the villagers, she is neither Healer nor Priest; in fact she is nothing more than a failed Student of Theology and Science from one of Altdorf's lesser universities. She arrived in Hafzig eight-months ago, a drop-out and failure but soon found that a little knowledge and a few white lies, goes a long way and quickly became a well respected member of the community.

However, faced with the horrific effects of the disease, she realised she was in over her head and decided to make a run for it!

The Reward

The villagers can muster about 25 crowns in coin and gear as a reward but offer to hand over the deed to a deserted farm on the outskirts of the forest if they are successful in locating the Healer.

Finding Dema

Following Dema is a **Very Easy (+30) Follow Trail Test** or an **Average (+0) Perception Test**. It should be obvious for those whose judgment is not clouded by hope and fear to see that she was making a run for it and not 'looking for herbs'. It will take 6 hours (less one hour per degree of success) to catch up with the errant 'Healer'.

You Need Hans

Following the trail into the woods they will eventually come upon a ragged man hunched over what looks like a log or mossy rock, he is easily seen but in the deep shadows of the forest, details are difficult to discern. As the characters approach, the 'man' stands and turns to face them.

He is a Mutant, one Hans Fuchs and the 'log' is one of the militia from Hafzig which Hans has clubbed and is now feasting on. He has thick dark blood running from his open maw and an Average Perception Test will spot similar splashes of crimson on his knotted club. Purple tentacles trail from his torso.

As soon as he sees the PCs he reaches out a tentacle with sorrow in his dark eyes.

"Have pity on a victim of Chaos, kind friends. The man was already dead, as you see him is how I found him."

If the PCs doubt his story, Hans will grow defensive:

"I've got to eat. And where do you think one such as I would find an honest meal? He was dead I tell you! His passing will serve to further my wretched existence! Who will miss one more wayward soul lost in these dark, dark woods?"

If the PCs haven't already attacked the mutant in Sigmar's name, they may question the morals of eating human flesh:

"A terrible evil battles for control of mind and tentacle. I spend every waking hour struggling for dominion over my own tortured being. I am driven to do things I must force myself to forget. Have mercy, let me leave this place with my wicked and unworthy life, such as it is, intact!"

A question about the blood on the club will illicit this response:

"Yes, blood. No, not his blood! There were Rat Men. Two of them, they attacked me; no doubt they killed this poor son of Hafzig! One of them ran at me, intent on ripping the life from my throat. I fought tooth and sucker to fend it off. I barely escaped. No doubt they had some other dark agenda for they soon left, and with much haste."

The PCs have a choice here: Hans doesn't represent much of a challenge and has little of value. Will they show mercy and let the Chaotic monstrosity go?

If the PCs let Hans live, award each of them 20XP (mercy is its own reward), if a debate ensues resulting in one character convincing the others to consider a peaceful resolution, give that character an extra 20XP. If Hans survives, he will likely return to prey on them when they have been wounded by stronger foes! If they choose to attack him, you will find his Profile in the Cast section.

The militia man is quite dead. Ghoulish PCs could recover 6 shillings from his purse and a spear from his cold, dead hands.

The First Encampment

After this minor mutant encounter, the characters continue along Dema's trail before stumbling across a near-deserted bandit camp. It is here that they locate the 'Healer'; she has indeed been captured as Herman had feared. Fortunately, the camp is lightly guarded as the majority of the outlaws are currently securing their latest prize at their 'secret bolt hole' and she should soon be rescued.

There are only 2 bandits per character here and they are already spooked having seen, and avoided the Mutant Hans, earlier. They are not worried about Dema, she is tied to a tree by a cold fire pit and gagged (she was talking too much for their liking).

The bandits are not expecting company so stealthy characters should easily be able to approach unseen to suitable ambush positions. Allow **Easy (+20) Silent Move Tests** to surprise the bandits – only allow the bandits an opposed Perception Test if one or more PCs do not possess the Silent Move Skill.

As for Dema, a few hours of captivity and an overheard conversation has been something of an epiphany for her.

She now knows that the bandits have a second camp (the bolt hole) where booty from a recent coach robbery is being held. The bandits (and now Dema) believe that the loot contains a chest which may hold holy relics of significance, and therefore, great value. Could it be that there is something to aid the village and redeem Dema in that chest?

Assuming Dema is rescued safely, rather than return with the characters to Hafzig, she will reveal her deceit and beg the characters to aid her in a raid on the second camp.

"The truth about me cannot help Hafzig now, but perhaps the contents of that chest can!"

The Second Encampment

From what Dema has overheard, she believes that the second bandit camp is at the base of a bald knoll about two hours hike to the west. Allow the PCs to make up to 3 **Follow Trail Skill Tests** (they only need one success) to locate the hill without alerting those at the second camp.

After a short and uneventful trip through the forest the PCs locate the bare rocky hill, at the base of which lies a small camp centred around a huge hollow tree. All is not as expected, however, and the PC's witness a scene of devastation.

A marauding pack of Beastmen had been travelling south since the defeat of their lord at Middenheim, attacking refugees and travellers along the way. They were surprised to discover the bandit camp, although not as surprised as the bandits, and a fierce battle broke out.

The bulk of the bandits are dead or dying and many Beastmen also perished – although enough survived to give the characters a run for their money (1-2 Beastmen per PC and ally)!

Assuming the PCs overcome the Beastmen they should easily discover the bandits' loot. The chest is located in the hollow trunk of a massive tree, along with a stash of booty, but seems to have some sort of arcane puzzle lock (inscribed with the symbols of Morr, Verena and Shallya).

The Bandit's Stash (Enc shown in parentheses)

1 Sleeved mail shirt (not many arrow holes)

2d10 + 30 Crowns

2d10 + 60 shillings

A case of fine Ostland brandy (30, 5 each)

A telescope (5), sadly the lens is missing

An Oil Lamp (20)

2 pots of Lamp Oil (5 each)

2 pairs of manacles (20 each)

A flask of Healing Draught (5)

A string of pearls (Enc. 1; alas an Evaluate Test reveals they are fakes and worth only 5 shillings)

A slender dirk with a polished emerald set in the hilt (Enc. 10; again, costume jewellery only worth 14 shillings)

The Chest

The chest is of stout oak, bound with black iron. The chest lid is set with a steel plate containing 11 ceramic plates each bearing a symbol. The plates must be slotted into the correct sequence for the chest to open (like a child's puzzle picture). Cracking the code will take 3 consecutive Skill Tests as follows:

Academic Knowledge (Engineer): Challenging (-10) or

Academic Knowledge (Science): Hard (-20) or

Perception: Very Hard (-30) but only if the Trapfinder Talent is also possessed.

Allow one roll per hour.

If a Dwarf should make the attempt and also makes an **Easy (+20) Common Knowledge (Dwarfs) Skill Test**, improve the Test Difficulty by 4 steps (for example, Challenging becomes Very Easy).

The chest could be broken open with axes or hammers and maces. It has T:5 and W:21 – make a WS roll for each attack, any roll of 96+ indicates that no damage is done to the chest and the weapon making the attack is broken.

Note: If the characters manage to open the chest – Beloch (see below) will approach their camp immediately rather than wait until they head for Niersdorf.

Dema will advise against breaking the chest in case the contents are fragile (like a flask of healing potion) or the chest is trapped.

However, Dema says she knows a Dwarf in nearby Niersdorf who is a master of such mechanical trickery and may be able to open the chest. The characters can head to Niersdorf if they have been unable to open the chest and hope to save the good people of Hafzig!

To Niersdorf

Although a riverboat would quickly get them there, Dema is reluctant to return to Hafzig and board a vessel just yet – instead they must travel overland, a journey which will take the rest of the day.

Enroute to Niersdorf the characters meet Beloch the Bear, a huge mountain of a man with a black feathered cloak. He is a Wizard and Dark Mage in league with the band of Skaven; those who seeded the Rot in Hafzig. Beloch has been watching the party's progress in 'raven form' and is now keen to know what might be in that chest they are guarding. He will be friendly and helpful; ingratiating himself with the PCs thanks to some Skaven assistance! He doesn't look like a Wizard and will try to keep his true vocation a secret.

Should a PC Wizard become suspicious, an Average Magical Sense Test will reveal Beloch's true nature.

Beloch Arrives with a Bang!

The appearance of Beloch will be preceded by six or more Skaven (at least 2 plus 1 more for each character or ally) crowding the path before the characters, some 10 yards distant. They are mostly wrapped in grey hooded cloaks and their rat-like forms are only guessed by their hunched frames and the occasionally glimpsed twitching tail. They are silent but look ominous. If any characters had doubts about the existence of such creatures, those misguided beliefs will be sorely tested.

The stand off is so intense that the characters won't notice Beloch appear behind them. He will make himself known with a mighty roar as he stabs the earth with his staff. (Don't forget the Bretonnian accent!)

"Be gone foul vermin of pestilence! Back to the pits of hell from which you have crawled!"

The rats will shrink back a few paces and Beloch will unleash another barrage of heavily accented Bretonnian.

"I see the strength runs from your flea-infested hides when faced with worthy foes!"

Two of the Skaven retreat in the woods whilst the rest back away down the road. If the characters start to ready missile weapons, Beloch quickly speaks again...

"Take flight or once more taste the wrath of Beloch and his boon companions!"

With this last soliloquy the Skaven vanish into the woods!

"Bon jour my fine friends! Together we have bested the evil Skaven!"

Beloch goes on to explain how several weeks ago whilst hunting in the woods he came upon a huge Rat-man who was barely alive after what must have been a terrible battle with some monstrous creature that had clearly been more than the Rat's equal. Beloch did what any right thinking son of Myrmidia or Sigmar should and ended the creature's reign of terror with a single blow from his staff. Moments later a handful of breathless Skaven hurried into the clearing where their leader had fallen. Rather than attacking they fled in abject terror.

Beloch has encountered Skaven since and they fear him greatly. Beloch assumes that they believe their leader was slain by him and rather than seek revenge, they treat him as a harbinger of doom to be avoided at all costs.

"What can you expect from such primitive minds!"

Of course, this tale is merely a lie to allow Beloch to join the group. It is expected that the PCs will take Beloch into their confidence – if they do not and he is unable to convince them otherwise he will bid them adieu and slink off in to the forest where he will continue to spy on them in his raven guise.

Niersdorf

At the slightly larger village of Niersdorf (120+ souls), Dema introduces an old friend and lecturer of hers from university, the Dwarf Leonardo Da Vinki (known as 'Cogwise' to his close friends).

Cogwise keeps a tidy brick cottage on the outskirts of town with a deep cellar which contains his workshop. Cogwise is happy to see his young student again and is keen to spend some time catching up over a few ales. However, Dema quickly apprises him of the situation and he works through the night to crack the chest's code – which he does of course – although the PCs may have to chip in with some help.

If the GM wishes to involve the PCs in cracking the Da Vinki Code, allow them Academic Knowledge or Intelligence Tests and tell them that the degree of success obtained reduces the time Cogwise requires. In truth, however, Cogwise cracks the code before dawn whatever the characters do!

The Contents of the Puzzle Chest

Inside the chest, wrapped in the clerical robes of a Sigmar Initiate is a small steel coffer, this time there is no lock or seal. Within is found a folded piece of ragged cloth, yellow with age and a hastily hand-written note.

The note claims that the rag is a remnant of the death shroud of Mother Elsbeth (pg 182 *WFRP* rule book). Furthermore, that it has healing powers.

Apparently, the writer, one Emil Tolzen – an Initiate of Sigmar in Delberz received a vision from the “Gods themselves” warning of a terrible cancer spreading from Hafzig and ultimately making its way to the Emperor. Emil couldn't understand why a lowly Initiate such as himself should witness such a portent or indeed why none of his superiors would believe him (the fact the Emil is a notorious drunk might be a factor) but his mission was clear. Emil stole the relic of Mother Elsbeth and sent the coffer in a sealed chest to Hafzig by courier. The code for the chest was to be sent by separate courier to avoid the relic falling into the wrong hands. (See the player handout for the exact text of the note).

Alas neither courier (dead) nor chest (stolen) arrived as planned in Hafzig.

Once Beloch learns of the chest's contents he will slip away from the PCs in raven-form to alert his Skaven allies. He will then stage an attack to capture or destroy the relic – most likely this will take place on the return journey to Hafzig – which could be via riverboat.

Skaven Assault!

The Skaven will attack with slings from the forest (allow the PCs opposed **Perception Tests** against the Skaven) or attempt to sink the riverboat with a heavy rock from the riverbank – the Skaven launch the rock from a tree by the riverbank, its attached to a length of chain and has a 20% chance of hitting the boat. Once hit the boat will sink in 1d10 rounds.

Assume 1.5 to 2 Skaven per character and ally. Beloch will initially act surprised and make a half-hearted attempt to assist until it is obvious (hopefully) that the tide is turning against the Skaven. Then he turns his attention to the PCs! Remember that Beloch has a Fate Point...

Assuming the PCs are successful, the rest of return trip to Hafzig will be uneventful (unless Hans the Mutant still lives – in which case he will wreak his 'revenge' on the party). Once there, Dema can use the power of the Shroud (see Appendix 2) to cure the Rot.

Epilogue One: Edgewood Cottage (the Farm)

The PCs have now met two allies (Dema and Cogwise); they may have a base of operations (the old farm) and even their very first nemesis (Beloch), not bad for a days work!

Once the trials of 'Stop the Rot' are over, the characters have the opportunity to look over their prize: Edgewood Cottage. GM's will also learn how it is that a Bretonnian is in league with Skaven and why indeed, Hafzig was chosen for their 'rotten' plot!

Once the characters have successfully averted the disaster at Hafzig, they will find themselves the proud owners of a small cottage (referred to as a 'farm' by Herman the Miller, who will provide them with a huge iron key to the front door), on the edge of the woods, just beyond the protection of the village.

The characters may not have time to enjoy their new real estate immediately, since they may have to dash off, down the road to Altdorf, in a desperate attempt to stop a plague-bearer making his way to the Imperial Capital.

Once they do have a chance to explore the cottage, they may discover exactly why the Skaven chose Hafzig to hatch their plot and why the cottage has such an unfortunate history.

"Can't say you didn't earn it five times over." Beams Herman holding up a rusty iron key attached to a length of rotten hemp string.

Herman and a collection of relieved and grateful villagers will take the characters to the site of their new home, some 20 minutes walk from the village proper.

If asked why the farm is empty and available to use as a reward, Herman will explain:

"It's been empty for over 12 months now. Tomas Nix had a small orchard but he died with no heir or relative. Before him was Heinz Klumm, he and his wife moved away after their lad went missing and I think before the Klumms there were the Neiderhauzes, they were carried away by Witch Hunters from Nuln. We didn't see them again. I'm not sure I can remember any others. Oh yes, the Waldermars. They had a nice vineyard. Went mad, every last one of 'em."

Could the place be cursed? If the PCs ask, Herman has just the answer:

"Cursed? I don't think so. Just a run of bad luck is all. I'm sure it'll all change for the better now!"

The House & Land Package

The property consists of a cluster of three buildings, a handful of withered grapevines and 5 acres of semi-cultivated land. A character making a **Routine (+10) Trade (Farming) Test** can clearly see that over the years the land has been used for various crops, most recently, perhaps in the last five years, as an orchard. The apple trees are badly overgrown, it's hard to tell where the orchard ends and the woods start.

The cottage itself is wooden, built on a stone and mortar foundation. Some of the shutters are missing, although one of the windows remains intact. The sagging roof is of clay tiles; mostly held together with moss and fallen branches but several of the tiles are clearly 'absent without leave'.

This really is the 'unique fixer-upper opportunity'. In fact it would take **20 degrees of success** with the **Trade (Carpenter) Skill** to put the property in order. Allow a skilled character 8 Tests per day of work. The difficulty is **Challenging (-10)** if he works alone, **Average** if he has at least one unskilled labourer and **Routine (+10)** if he has at least one other skilled helper. The job will cost about 20 Shillings in timber, tar and tiles.

Two outbuildings are linked to the cottage by rickety grape vine frames. The vines lie withered and dead. The first is a narrow wood store (empty) and privy (also, thankfully, empty), the second a storage barn containing two huge barrels, one is empty (the bottom is missing), the other, half full of cider. The alcohol is so heavily fermented that it counts as 'spirits' for the purposes of **Consume Alcohol Tests**. There are at least 50 mugs of cider left in the barrel. The first mouthful tastes horrible but after that it just gets better and better...

Even with the key, opening the door to the cottage requires an **Easy (+20) Strength Test** as the door is bloated with damp. The interior is split into two sizeable areas, the first larger than the second. The door opens into a broad living room, its floor festooned with flotsam blown in through the windows and boards warped thanks to the rain and the leaky roof. The interior is bare save for a wood stove and a door leading to the rear room.

The second room has one narrow shuttered window and a stone floor. Set into the floor, near the far wall is a very solid looking trap door with a heavy padlock and chain, fused into one by the rust. No key or lock pick will open the padlock, the chain must be broken with a **Challenging (-10) Strength Test** or struck with a blunt weapon (automatically successful).

The Skeleton Key

Below, the PCs will find a damp storage area some six feet high with a slick and muddy floor. Again, this room is almost empty. Lying near the opening is a bundle of tattered clothes and some yellowed skeletal remains.

Allow a **Challenging (-10) Academic Knowledge (Science) Test** or a **Very Hard (-30) Common Knowledge (the Empire) Test** to determine that the remains are not human but Skaven (the deformed skull is damaged so it's not immediately apparent). An **Average (+0) Heal Test** will reveal that the skeleton is easily a hundred years old. Clutched in one hand is a wickedly curved dagger that is surprisingly free from rust or other signs of age; the other hand is manacled to a length of chain which has also escaped the ravages of time and element... Both dagger and manacle bear the mark of the Horned Rat (an inverted triangle). The chain leads to the centre of the room where it disappears into the muck before terminating at a metal ring – another trap door!

This new door is beneath six inches of accumulated mud and waste, a few handfuls will reveal a solid steel door set into a stone floor, but it will take two-man hours to scoop out enough muck to attempt to open the trap door.

A **Routine (+10) Magical Sense Test** will reveal that the door is unusual and clearly magical – despite its mundane appearance. To the trained eye, a swirling mote of magical wind can be seen churning slowly just above the door. Rather than a door per-se, it appears to be a seal or 'plug' as there doesn't seem to be any handle (other than the chain to which the skeleton's chain is attached) or visible hinge. Not on this side at least.

The presence of a spell caster or an intrinsically magical item (such as the Shroud of Elsbeth), or even the tiniest fragment of warpstone will cause the mote of magic to flux, expanding and contracting. Any Chaos Lore spell cast in this room will cause the magical energy to disappear; the steel plate will then drop away to the passage below and after what feels like an age, a distant 'clang' echoes up from the darkness below.

A spell of any other Lore, or indeed Petty or Lesser magic will cause the magical protection to diminish by one-third. After the third spell is cast, the door will drop away. Alternatively the PCs may lay the Shroud upon the plate to achieve the same effect. If they do this, 10% of the Shroud will vapourise as if it had been used for healing.

Stop the Plot!

What if the PCs don't have access to magic? Without a character with a **Magic** score of one or more the PCs must rely on the Shroud or similar item.

If they lack the Shroud because they have yet to obtain it – the door will not yield. If they have found the Shroud but have given it away to Dema or Herman, the character with the highest **Intelligence** will see a shimmering image of the Shroud above the steel door. When the Shroud is brought within two yards of the door, an unseen wind will tug at it, drawing it towards the door.

Going Down?

Or not. The pit is unfathomably deep. At this early stage in the character's careers, there is no way for them to navigate the decent to the ancient Skaven tunnels and warpstone reserves below.

In ages past a splinter group of Clan Skryre tunnelled into the Hafzig region and made their nest here. It was secure save for one cinder chimney which terminated in the then deserted Edgewood cottage. The opening was capped with magic and guarded.

After a time a schism within the renegade clan led to many deaths and a series of cave-ins which doomed the survivors.

In more recent times, Clan Skryre has returned to the region, knowing from their collected histories that a renegade faction vanished in these parts taking with them valuable warpstone supplies. This is why the Skaven left their disease carrier at the Hafzig coach house. Their singular goal was to clean out the village so that they could search in peace; that the Rot might make its way to Altdorf is merely a bonus.

The Bretonnian Connection

And what of Beloch? He is a servant of the Purple Hand, a nefarious Chaos Cult devoted to Tzeentch. The lower ranks of the Hand have, after considerable effort, made contact with the Skaven of Middenheim and have 'loaned' them the services of Beloch in the hope of obtaining some of rat men's warpstone. The Skaven are happy to use Beloch whilst appearing to be subservient although they have no intention of handing over any warpstone!

Epilogue Two: Altdorf Express

And what of the coach heading to Altdorf with a diseased bearing Passenger? Much of the detail is left to individual GMs. The idea is that the attempt to stop the coach segue ways into the GM's own adventure or one of those contained in *Plundered Vaults*.

For example:

1. The characters might catch up with the coach at The Three Feathers Inn and after curing (or burying) the afflicted passenger, they get caught up in the goings on there.
2. The wreckage of the coach is located, the passenger is dead. The coach was run off the road by a flaming skull from the Grapes of Wrath adventure; the driver seems to have made his way to the nearby village of Grubentreich.
3. The coach has been attacked and destroyed by Beastmen. The driver and passenger(s) did not survive. Nearby, the characters spot the mortally wounded Gustav Vonreuter and the Carrion Call adventure begins.
4. The coach made it as far as Untergard where it was lost in the battle that followed. The characters now find themselves at the beginning of the 'Through the Drakwald' and on their way to Middenheim.
5. Add your own custom built adventure!

Experience Points

GMs may choose to award a standard 100 XP per session (as does the author) or consider the following awards:

Use the Shroud of Elsbeth to heal the villagers	50
Show mercy to Hans Fuchs	20
Defeat Beloch	25
Track down the infected coach	10
Role-playing bonus	5-20

Appendix 1: The Relic

Mother Elsbeth's shroud is a small ragged and yellowed sheet of cotton, approximately 12 by 24 inches.

The power of the shroud is invoked by placing it on the face of a sick or injured character. The shroud then begins to glow with an unearthly pale light. Within moments, the subject will be entirely healed or cured. In doing so the light of the cloth will fade and as it passes, a segment of the cloth will begin to unravel, fading to nothing. After each use 10% of the cloth will vanish. After the tenth use, it will be completely gone!

Optional Power

At the GMs discretion, the Shroud will not only heal the wounded or sick but also regrow or restore severed or crippled limbs. This may or may not cost an additional 'percentage' of the cloth.

Appendix 2: Cast of Characters

Dema Konig

Race: Human

Career: Student masquerading as both Healer and Priest

MAIN PROFILE							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
31	37	26	35	46	41	36	41
SECONDARY PROFILE							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	14	2	3	4	0	0	1

Dema is not cruel by nature and certainly not evil. She came to Hafzig as an itinerant labourer but due to her well-schooled demeanour she was mistaken for a Physician and later a Priest. For the most part favour has smiled on her and she has been able to use her Academic Knowledge to help the villagers. When she saw the 'Rot' it was clear that she could help them no more – she fled in shame and fear. But fortune smiles again – she has the chance to redeem herself and once more help the good folk of Hafzig!

Skills: Common Knowledge (the Empire), Gossip, Academic Knowledge (Science), Academic Knowledge (Theology), Charm, Heal, Perception, Read/Write, Speak Language (Reikspiel), Speak Language (Classical)

Talents: Linguistics, Suave, Super Numerate, Resistance to Disease, Savvy

Armour: None

Weapons: Hand Weapon (sword), Quarter Staff

Trappings: Textbooks and writing kit, bandages, a purse with 13 shillings

Hans Fuchs, the Mutant in the woods

MAIN PROFILE							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
33	24	41	35	29	32	36	22
SECONDARY PROFILE							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	13	4	3	4	0	0	0

Hans is the twisted result of the Hand of Chaos. He is undeniably evil in every way but will say and do anything to preserve his existence.

Skills: Animal Care, Concealment, Outdoor Survival, Perception, Silent Move, Speak Language (Reikspiel)

Talents: Strike to Stun, Flee!

Mutations: Tentacle-like arms (+10 WS when grappling)

Armour: Leather Jack

Armour Points: Head 0, Arms 1, Body 1, Legs 0

Weapons: Hand Weapon (Knotted oak Club)

Trappings: Small collection of bones, a purse of 6 shillings lifted from the dead militia man

Tactics: Hans is not insane but he will fight for his pitiful existence! Once battle seems inevitable, he will close to attack the weakest looking character, Striking to Stun where possible. If he loses at least 9 Wounds he will Disengage and use his Flee! Talent.

Bandits

Race: Human
Career: Outlaw

MAIN PROFILE							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
29	42	30	31	35	30	28	25
SECONDARY PROFILE							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	12	3	3	4	0	0	0

Skills: Animal Care, Common Knowledge (the Empire), Concealment, Drive, Dodge Blow, Gossip, Perception, Scale Sheer Surface, Set Trap, Silent Move, Speak Language (Reikspiel)

Talents: Hardy, Lighting Reflexes, Rover, Sharpshooter

Armour: Leather Skull Cap and Leather Jack

Armour Points: Head 1, Arms 1, Body 1, Legs 0

Weapons: Hand Weapon (Sword), Bow

Trappings: 20 Arrows

Tactics: The bandits are reasonable proficient but toe-to-toe fighting is not their bag. Where possible, they will attempt to Disengage and use Aim and Standard Attack Actions. If cornered they use Guarded Attacks.

Beloch the Bear (pron. Bell-ock)

Race: Human
Career: Bretonnian Journeyman Wizard (ex-Apprentice Wizard, ex-Student)

MAIN PROFILE							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
38	37	31	47	46	51	55	41
SECONDARY PROFILE							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	14	3	4	4	2	5	1

Beloch is a man of great stature and girth. He laughs loudly, tugs his thick black beard and slaps his thighs often (remember Sallah from *Raiders of the Lost Ark*?); until, that is, his true motives become clear. Then his dark brows shadow his steely eyes and his face takes on a grim malevolence.

Skills: Academic Knowledge (History), Academic Knowledge (Magic) +20, Channelling, Charm, Charm Animal +10, Common Knowledge (the Empire), Gossip +10, Magical Sense, Perception +10, Read/Write +10, Search, Speak Arcane Language (Magic) Speak Language (Classical) +10, Speak Language (Reikspiel) +10

Talents: Aethyric Attunement, Arcane Lore (Beasts), Coolheaded, Dark Magic, Lesser Magic (Aethyric Armour), Lesser Magic (Silence), Linguistics, Meditation, Petty Magic (Arcane), Savvy, Super Numerate, Very Resilient

Trappings: Common Clothes, Grimoir (Daimler's Coiled Beast), Heavy Feathered Cloak, Pouch (containing a number of cat's claws and raven's feathers), Purse with 13 gc, a silver locket (without portrait) worth 6 gc, Writing Kit

Armour: Heavy Cloak

Armour Points: Head 0, Arms 0, Body 1, Legs 0

Weapons: Hand Weapon (Sword D+3), Quarter Staff (D+1, Defensive, Pummelling)

Tactics: Once in melee combat Beloch will take a Half Action to cast Claws of Fury (C: 8), gaining +1 A and +10 WS, then take a Standard Attack. In subsequent rounds he will take the Swift Attack Action. If the tide turns against him, he will take a Full Action to cast Form of the Soaring Raven (CN: 7) then Disengage.

Note that Beloch has 5 IP, he's pretty close to acquiring an Insanity, which in this case would most likely be: Profane Persecutions.

Skaven

MAIN PROFILE							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
30	25	30	30	40	25	25	15
SECONDARY PROFILE							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	9	3	3	5	0	0	0

Skills: Concealment, Outdoor Survival, Perception, Scale Sheer Surface, Silent Move, Speak Language (Queekish), Specialist Weapon Group (Sling), Swim

Talents: Night Vision, Tunnel Rat

Trappings: Heavy grey cloaks that almost conceal their ratty forms, Money Pouch each containing 2d10 looted shillings

Armour: Leather Jack and Skull Cap

Armour Points: Head 1, Arms 1, Body 1, Legs 0

Weapons: Hand Weapon (Sword), Sling

Tactics: Beloch will point out which character carries the shroud (if he knows) and the Skaven will single-mindedly attack that person. If their leader (the Brute, not Beloch) falls, they will flee but while he stands, they will fight to the death. Once engaged they will take Standard Attack and Parrying Stance Actions.

Skaven Brute

MAIN PROFILE							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
50	35	45	45	55	25	40	25
SECONDARY PROFILE							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
2	15	4	4	5	0	0	0

Skills: Concealment, Outdoor Survival, Perception +10, Scale Sheer Surface, Silent Move, Speak Language (Queekish), Specialist Weapon Group (Sling), Swim, Command, Dodge Blow, Intimidate, Search

Talents: Night Vision, Tunnel Rat, Strike Mighty Blow, Specialist Weapon Group (Two-handed)

Armour: Skull Cap, Mail Shirt and Leather Jack

Armour Points: Head 1, Arms 3, Body 3, Legs 0

Weapons: Hand Weapon (Sword), Sling, Great Weapon (Mattock)

Tactics: The Brute will close as soon as possible taking the Swift Attack Action whenever possible. He wants that cloth!

Beastmen at the Bandit Camp

MAIN PROFILE							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
40	25	35	45	35	25	25	25
SECONDARY PROFILE							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	12	3	4	6	0	0	0

Skills: Concealment, Follow Trail, Intimidate, Outdoor Survival, Shadowing, Silent Move, Speak Language (Dark Tongue)

Talents: Keen Senses, Menacing, Rover

Mutations: Animalistic Legs

Armour: Leather Jack

Armour Points: Head 0, Arms 1, Body 1, Legs 0

Weapons: Hand Weapon (Sword), Shield, Horns (+2)

There will be one surviving Beastman for each PC and ally present. If the battle goes heavily against the Beastmen, two more will emerge from the woods.

Tactics: They engage at once using Standard Attacks and Parrying Stance initially then Feint if the opposition is parrying and dodging too effectively.

Leonardo Da Vinki (pron. Vin-Key) AKA 'Cogwise'

Race: Dwarf

Career: Engineer (ex-Tradesman)

MAIN PROFILE							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
53	46	40	47	36	53	47	21
SECONDARY PROFILE							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	17	4	4	3	0	0	0

Cogwise is a well-to-do business Dwarf from Tilea, who has also served a small university in Altdorf as a Professor. He dresses in bright red velvet tunic and breeches with gold embroidery and owns a fine repeating pistol which he made himself.

Skills: Common Knowledge (Dwarfs, Tilea, the Empire) +10, Speak Language (Khazalid, Reikspiel, Tilean), Trade (Smith, Carpenter, Merchant, Gunsmith), Gossip, Drive, Haggle, Evaluate, Perception +10, Read/Write +10, Secret Language (Guild Tongue), Academic Knowledge (Engineering, Science),

Talents: Dwarfcraft, Grudge-born Fury, Night Vision, Resistance to Magic, Stout-hearted, Sturdy, Dealmaker, Master Gunner, Specialist Weapon Group (Gunpowder, Engineer)

Trappings: Engineer's Kit, 6 Spikes

Armour: Leather Jack, Leather Skull Cap

Armour Points: Head 1, Arms 1, Body 1, Legs 0

Weapons: Repeater Pistol (Damage +4, see page 108), Hand Weapon (Warhammer)

Handout: Emil Tolzen's Note

This is the hand of Emil Tolzen.

I have sinned but oft-times, it is said, the end justifies the means.

I do not know why the Gods have singled out a lowly Initiate such as I to bear this burden but know it, I do.

I saw the Comet and Sigmar came to my dreams with images of a terrible cancer growing in Hafzig. A foul rot that, if left unchecked, would reach the Emperor himself.

My words were lost on Hambril and his peers; he named me 'drunk' and 'fool' and I cannot deny that he has been right in years past, but not today. For today I have done that which was needed, I have stolen from my order.

I liberated the relic; that portion of Mother Elsbeth's shroud granted to our Order.

It holds a healing power as once did she. By the time it is missed it will be on its way to Hafzig by the fastest courier I can afford. Hambril and others will suspect me but they will find only a fool and his drink.

The fool who will send the code to this Dwarven wonder by separate messenger, lest this cloth of purity finds its way to the hands of evil.

So, to the Healer of Hafzig, be ye wise woman, learned scholar or gentle Priest, take the shroud and keep it safe, keep it close.

Sigmar has spoken; in the wake of the Storm, the breath of Chaos shall come to Hafzig. And with its coming, all else shall pass.

Emil