

The Steward of Grauwerk Manor

**A winter tale of gothic tragedy,
love lost, treachery, fey forests
and vampires.**

Rob Harper ~ valvorik on message boards

You can contact me at: robhthedm@yahoo.ca

Inspired by an entry about Graf Steirlich von Bruner in **Lure of Power**, page 14, and a story in **Tales of the Old World** collection, "**The Hanging Tree**", various "cabin in the woods isolation" tropes and, of course, period piece Hammer Horror films!

This is a completely unofficial, fan-written adventure for *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay 3rd Edition*.

All relevant trademarks and copyrights are used without permission and in no way intended to challenge their ownership by Fantasy Flight Games and Games Workshop.

Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay © Games Workshop Limited 1986, 2005. This edition © Games Workshop Limited 2009. Games Workshop, Warhammer, Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay, the foregoing marks' respective logos and all associated marks, logos, places, names, creatures, races and race insignia/devices/logos/symbols, vehicles, locations, weapons, units and unit insignia, characters, products and illustrations from the Warhammer World and Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay game setting are either ®, TM and/or © Games Workshop Ltd 1986-2009, variably registered in the UK and other countries around the world. This edition published under license to Fantasy Flight Publishing Inc. Fantasy Flight Games and the FFG logo are trademarks of Fantasy Flight Publishing, Inc. All Rights Reserved to their respective owners.

Character Rank

This adventure is for PC's with 30-40 advances. For groups under 30 advances, I suggest removing a rank of training from some key NPC skills and removing the "Potent" ability - this is a homebrew modifier I use for advanced NPC's, based on the modifiers for some official creatures. Also review carefully threats posed by the Tree, Malfi and the Green Ghost/Sylvana.

Sources

This adventure uses cards from several publications beyond the core set (sources noted through its text). In particular,

- Two creature group cards from the ***Creature Guide/Vault*** are important to representing key antagonist abilities.
- Reference is made to the herb and Disease Rules (GM Hardback and ***Signs of Faith/Liber Infectus***) and an item card from ***Signs of Faith*** used.

Vampires are modified from core rules based on WFRP 2nd Edition concepts. ***Nights Dark Masters*** is the source of these ideas, though they are reflected in other 2nd edition materials and Warhammer novels.

The background uses the Scion of Nagash concept from the ***Thousand Thrones*** 2nd edition WFRP adventure (available as pdf from online stores). If that is not available it does not create a problem. If it has been or will be played, the adventure makes use of ideas from it and can be tied in, but it is not critical. Free fan-written expansions provide some more information: <http://www.liberfanatica.net/TTT.html>

Scenario Expectations

The adventure must take place in late Fall or early Winter.

One Player Character has a special role which is best built up in advance. This PC's background drives much of the adventure and ensures it is not just "hack and slash". This PC is a human who does not know their true parents. Perhaps they were raised an orphan or in foster care. They know or find out prior to the adventure that they were left as a foundling by Strigany. This PC is referred to as "the PC Heir".

It is the PC Heir is 18 years old, with an adventure year of 2521, having been born in 2503. This can be adjusted for a different age with attention the dates in the Graf's personal history. Dates are referred to as x many years ago, just adjust the actual years referenced.

If you do not have such a PC, then a PC without a strong family backstory (e.g., you do no violence to their established character with this discovery) learns that their supposed parents were actually foster parents – this can be worked into the ***Prelude Scene*** if desired.

Among other PCs, a wood elf, jade magister or priest of Taal/Rhya will use their connection with nature. It broadens the focus if such PCs are not also the PC Heir. A Bright Wizard will find their magic hampered, but in the end will be well-rewarded with lots of chances to burn things! A Priest of Morr or Amethyst Wizard will find undead-fighting talents useful. Magical sight will be quite useful at some points and the adventure less rich without it.

Notes at the end of the adventure and some boxed text addresses dropping the PC Heir.

How the Plot Unfolds:

The adventure tone is Gothic and Tragic, the “monsters” and “threats” emerging from past crimes and failures. It is designed to be built up to and is a “situation” for a GM to manage more than a linear plot.

The adventure takes place when the PC Heir decides to visit their father, **Graf Steirlich von Bruner**. This can be to claim their birthright, to accuse him of abandoning their mother or if a push is needed a patron such as Lord von Aschaffenberg or the von Bruner family wants a message delivered. They can go openly or keep their kinship secret.

Heroes then travel to an isolated manor in haunted hills to see a reclusive, mysterious noble. They are encouraged to expect a vampire by the time they arrive. They have that expectation dispelled and find instead a peculiar ally in a life and death struggle of a different foe and sort of problem (fey gone wild).

Then that vampire expectation is fulfilled after all – but this not your “so glad you could come to dinner” vampire, this is a nightmarish monster which has been lured into a trap set long before.

Along the way they discover pointless sacrifices, lives ruined by vampire conspiracies, mysterious green spirits, and hopeless situations in which honourable death is the best outcome available.

Specifically, a crisis is developing when PCs enter the Grauwerk Valley. The corrupted fey **Tree of Bones** is growing more dangerous as season changes – its appetite sending forest spirits to find it blood. Animal life is becoming rare as the spirits even get the birds and squirrels and humans are next on the menu.

Malfi, a Strigoi vampire appears, drawn into the trap set for it long ago by the PC Heir’s appearance.

Events conspire to make the **Tree of Bones** “seal off the valley” to keep its larder full, isolating PC’s with their odd host, his fanatically loyal servants and surrounding threats.

To add to gothic flavour, a **Green Ghost** is influencing weak-minded inhabitants of the valley to go into the woods, where they perish before fulfilling its request. The Graf has a string of dead women in his past but this one is the original, undead, one: the transfixated Lahmia vampire **Sylvana** seeks to free herself. Some mistake her tormented psychic projection for a ghost or the influence of predatory fey.

PC’s may face additional peril due to **Graf Steirlich**’s desire to keep his heir’s existence secret from vampire spies.

When the Graf learns child has found him, he will do anything to protect his child – even arrange the deaths of any or all of his own servants who learn the truth and any of his child’s comrades who seems the least bit untrustworthy (apparent divisions among heroes can prove deadly).

If the Graf needs to kill everyone in the valley so that only his heir survives, he will do so – poison or sending them to their doom in the woods, whatever it takes.

No PC Heir Option:

If the adventure is played without a PC Heir, the Graf’s threat is different. When the Graf learns his son is dead (see details of this option below), he becomes despondent and abandons all in the valley to their fate. Bringing him out of this funk is critical then to surviving the crisis and should be reflected in a progress track where the tragic deaths of loyal servants provide some automatic advances.

The adventure is scripted in sequential scenes covering the journey to Grauwerk and arrival at Grauwerk manor.

After that, Player choices drive the sequence of events, with the GM upping the tension by throwing additional scenes at them whenever “play needs a shot in the arm” or Player choices naturally trigger that scene.

Two **Episodes** are given for particular events that will arise in any event – either Players drive towards them or the GM throws the hooks for them at the PC’s.

The adventure is intended to allow invoking a number of scenes of pathos, terror and tragedy.

Depending on how play progresses not all of these may come to pass but most should:

- ❖ The Horrifying Tree of Bones, its victims and minions.
- ❖ The forest's last pure spirits and their doom to fall to corruption or fade if the Tree of Bones is destroyed.
- ❖ The brutally terrifying Strigoi Vampire Malfi being trapped according to the plan laid years ago.
- ❖ The return to life of the beguiling Lahmia Sylvana.
- ❖ Revelation that the Graf's abandonment of his love and the PC Heir to [fostercare or orphanage] was needless.
- ❖ Loyal servants doomed by their master's mistakes.
- ❖ The desperate Graf Steirlich murdering loyal followers to save his heir.
- ❖ The Graf's doom through his connection to the Tree - possibly the Graf's tragic death to save his heir.

Setting The Stage Before the Adventure

Before the adventure, the chosen PC learns, all at once or over time that they are an orphan, left with kindly folk by Strigany. Their mother was a Strigany woman who died in childbirth after being abandoned by the mysterious Graf Steirlich von Bruner. Steirlich is now steward of a remote von Bruner holding in the Hagercrybs (Reikwald).

The PC is thus half-noble (though a bastard without a claim unless their father recognizes them) and half-Strigany for their mother was of that wandering, persecuted and distrusted folk

How this information is revealed should be tailored to your campaign - a revelation from what turns out to have been a foster parent or a letter delivered out of the past.

The "**Prelude Scene - The Kindly Fortune Teller and Good Luck Charm**", should be played during a different adventure, before the PC learns the truth of their history.

Seeking formal recognition by their father (making them a de facto noble) may be a PC motivation.

This background could be revealed just before the adventure, but rather than lots of exposition all at once, it is best is worked into a campaign earlier.

The key ingredients are: the PC has (and wears) the good luck charm and the PC learns their connection to Graf Steirlich. Ideally, these events happened separately and the Player does not associate them.

The Heir's Post Adventure Future

It is possible for the adventure to end with the PC Heir eligible for Noble status.

If male the adventure will reveal they are a true potential heir, if female they are not so fortunate under imperial law.

If it suits the campaign, a letter in the Graf's hand and bearing his seal would be found swearing he has a legitimate child, a copy witnessed with the bankers Klopstock and Billreuth in Altdorf (who would give out a noble stipend per the rules for nobility). The Rhyh hierarch Katrinelya could also attest to the Graf's marriage and its legitimacy, as the adventure reveals.

In this case, see ***Lure of Power*** and require the PC to next take a Noble Career if they actually want nobility's mechanical benefits.

Houserule - Narrative Acts

This adventure assumes a loose approach to time but still follows the Episode and Act structure to ensure that Fatigue and Stress matter, and actions used in more narrative time are still choices with consequences.

A Narrative Act has no fixed number of rounds. GM and Players announce and resolving actions such as a day's travel. Actions have recharge tokens placed on them when used and when the opportunity to take actions is still distributed equally (e.g., if one Player does something during the afternoon for which they roll, each other may also do something for which they roll). Each opportunity to take an Action is treated as one round for recharge times but there are limited opportunities (e.g., only one action may be attempted by each PC in an afternoon's travel).

Each of these "chances to act" then counts as one "round", though they may represent days or weeks.

A night in narrative time always allows wounds to heal but does not give Fatigue/Stress Recovery as the narrative time is within an Act. So, for example, stress or fatigue gained in an Act of travel that two days builds up reflecting that these build up over time.

Only give "full stress/fatigue recovery" at the end of a normal Episode (after 3 Acts) and the first night's rest after such an ending.

There are more conventional Episodes contained in this adventure (***Finding the Tree of Bones*** and ***Vampire Hunt***) and these follow normal rules.

The Mysterious Graf Steirlich von Bruner

Grauwerk valley's threats and the adventure's events are all driven by Graf Steirlich's tragic life. He is not a monster but has, unintentionally, created the valley's monsters.

Public Information (freely available)

Presumably the PC Heir tries to learn more about the Graf before visiting him. It is easily confirmed that the Graf is a low ranking von relation of the von Bruners of Ubersreik. His line of descent gives him no inheritance or position. In youth, he was a noted hunter of creatures of Chaos and darkness, but his hopes for recognition came to naught and prospective advantageous marriages never materialized. Dark and conflicting rumours circulate about his "fall from grace".

The Graf is said to be a bitter man, twisted by failed ambitions, and given to drink. Sixteen years ago, senior family members exiled him to the remote manor to avoid drunken and morose episodes being public.

What More Can PCs Learn?

PC's can learn more using an information gathering skill in a strategy such as interviewing those who know about the von Bruners (other nobility, scholars or agitators) on an **Average (2D)** roll of an appropriate skill. The von Bruner family itself is close-mouthed about the Graf and dealing with them is **Daunting (4D)**.

♣ The Graf hides in Grauwerk. He is disfigured in some way, perhaps touched by dark powers and mutated. Visitors have only seen him in darkened rooms for several years. What sort of *man* avoids showing himself in the light?

♣♣ *Wasn't there some scandal when his betrothed died in an accident, says one speaker. Another offers, Which one, that happened twice you know. No family since would consider him as a groom for one of their daughters.*

♣♣♣ *Amazing he's survived up there in the Hagercrybs with so few men, all these years. Well, he was well known for fighting Chaos and undead in creative ways. He had a Jade Magister with him.*

☠ *The whole von Bruner line is cursed by a Ruinous Power for having foiled its plans (cf Eye for an Eye in **Tome of Adventure** – Ruinous Powers have nothing to do with this adventure - just for a change).*

♣♣ *He is respected in the Hagercrybs - keeps beastman and bandits out of Grauwerk's region.*

☞ *Loved art and literature - would have been a painter not a warrior given a choice. Probably doesn't get to see much up there in those hills. [If PC's bring him any decent work of art or book on such they gain fortune dice dealing with the Graf commensurate with value and thoughtfulness.]*

The Truth

Only the Graf, his two most trusted aids, Grenz and Noll, and a vampire currently staked to a supernatural tree know the full story. Even each of them only knows one part.

The Graf is tormented by his time as a vampire's bloodswain (willing paramour).

The vampiress manipulated him to father a child as part of a trap for a rival vampire (the child is a 'false scion of Nagash' (see below), supposedly important in a vampire prophecy that rival vampire factions contend to fulfill).

However, he fell in love with the child's mother. To save her and the child, he spurned his true love and pretended to the vampire she had died. His life's noblest deed was also its cruelest and has haunted him ever since, driving him to drink.

Steirlich's decision to hide his face is because it reveals he is not aging normally. This is not due to any vampiric connection though some who have seen his un-aged face whisper that he is undead, a vampire even.

Steirlich's aging is slowing due to a connection with the Tree of Bones (see below). Drinking gives him red-eyes and puffy face, and causes him to be late abed. These circumstances feed rumours (pale, red-eyed night owl who doesn't age.....)

News of his extended youth would attract interest from witch hunters and similar dangerous inquiry. The Jade Order Magister Grenz who attends him would try to testify it is an explainable phenomenon.

The Prophecy

The Thousand Thrones 2nd edition campaign refers to the vampiric prophecy of the Time of a Thousand Thrones and such false scions but does not directly include one. This adventure can be a prelude to playing it.

Nagash is referenced in several Warhammer fantasy texts and books: the source of vampirism and "grand old man" of undeath from Ancient Nekhara, killed several times but always coming back.

The Scion is a (possibly) mythical "anti-Christ" figure vampires believe heralds the time of a Thousand Thrones when they rule the world.

The Graf's History (current year 2521)

Steirlich was born 49 years ago in 2472. He looks 15 years younger.

He has been Steward of Grauwerk for 16 years (since 2505). His previous life ended when he was 33 and the family "sent him into the hills". His parents, Wolfgang and Althea, are both deceased and he is estranged from the rest of von Bruner family.

As a youth, the Graf developed an interest in painting. Family disapproved of this artistic desire – nobles are patrons but don't actually waste their time as artists. The family set him more traditional tasks to hunt monsters and protect von Bruner lands, add glory to its name and oppose Chaos. He encountered other supernatural foes of Chaos such as forest spirits and vampires.

During this heroic phase, from his 18th birthday until his 32nd (2490-2504) he fought beastmen, cultists and even a bestial Strigoi vampire. He destroyed this bestial vampire with the aid of a mysterious woman named Sylvana.

Sylvana was a Lahmia vampire. She convinced Steirlich of their shared hatred of Chaos and that the self-restrained vampires of her bloodline were no threat to humanity, unlike bloodthirsty, monstrous breeds such as Strigoi.

Sylvana was also a muse to his painting talent. He fell increasingly under her sway, developing *bloodswains* addiction to being fed upon.

Sylvana told him to seduce a Strigany maid, Gretta of the Malfi Clan, to arrange for the birth of a child of the ancient bloodline Gretta carried. He thought it was to fulfill a vampire prophecy - but really it was all a fake to set a trap for other vampires by creating a "false

Scion of Nagash" (a prophesied child many vampires consider the key to a great time of power, the time of the Thousand Thrones).

Steirlich fell in love with Gretta and their love broke the bloodswain hold Sylvana had on him. These events happened 18 years ago (2503, the assumed year of birth of the PC Heir – adjust as necessary for the PC's age).

At this time Steirlich's artistic talent peaked - culminating in his painting of Gretta (see Grauwerk Manor – Crumbling Tower). He still wonders if it was love or the vampire's influence that inspired him.

Sylvana's false Scion of Nagash was to be a trap for vampires hunting for the scion, in particular Strigoi vampires associated with Gretta's people, the Malfi Strigany clan. Unknown to most, each Strigany clan traces its roots to the fallen realm of Strigos and the Strigoi are the lost lords of that land. The PC Heir is that false Scion. The PC is a false scion because the scion cannot be intentionally engineered - some power sees and frustrates such acts.

This incidentally means the PC Heir is also of the folk traditionally regarded as servant by the Strigoi vampires and not harmed as long as they "fulfill their duties" (e.g., hiding them).

The Graf wanted to protect Gretta and his child. He sent them away and pretended they had perished, severing connections.

Her plans evidently come to naught, Sylvana declared herself tired of Steirlich and left him.

Unknown to Steirlich, Gretta was rejected by her clan for her affair with an outsider and died in child birth, leaving the child (the PC Heir) to life in an orphanage (foster care or some other

background - ideally a hard start to life that the Graf will be sad and feel guilty to learn about).

In the years following, his family tried to arrange marriages for him twice. Both died in accidents before marriage leading to view he was cursed or unlucky as a groom.

Actually, their deaths were Sylvana's doing for she was a jealous creature even regarding her cast-offs. Steirlich feels guilty over their deaths and avoids women now - becoming a chaste bachelor out of guilt.

The Tree of Bones

When Graf Steirlich came to Grauwerk in 2505 he brought knowledge gained in his adventures, including a Druidic ritual from the ancient Belthani (the primitive folk who once lived in the Empire's region). The ritual would awaken a forest, so that it would be hostile to beastmen and other Chaos creatures. With his Jade Magister's assistance, he performed the ritual to create a refuge in the area. An old oak served as the ritual's focus.

The Graf's ritual bound him and the tree, which he called the Heart of the Forest or Heart Tree. If either the tree or the Graf dies, the other wastes away in a month. The Graf now ages very slowly, tied to the oak tree's longevity.

The ritual awakened forest spirits like Athel Loren's spirits but not bound in any pact with Wood Elves. They are foes of Chaos but also resent all "dreaming life" that fuels Chaos. Only because of their bond with Graf do they not harm him or those sworn to his service.

Left like this, he might have been only as Druid guardians of sacred woods often were of old: a long lived guardian of a special and dangerous forest, mediating between it and mortals.

Nine years ago (2512), Sylvana came to the valley, having learned that the Graf might have deceived her about the death of his child and wanting to know where to find it.

However, the Graf had brooded long on his loss and was now no easy prey for her. After an initial confrontation in which many of his soldiers died, he tricked her and lured her to the Heart Tree and with the aid of forest spirits overcame her servants. He staked her to the Tree itself, knowing enough of vampire lore to know that pinning her though the heart with a rowan stake did not truly kill her but instead paralyzed her and condemned her to a void for all eternity (or until the stake is removed) while her remains decayed to bones - which remain pinned to the tree to this day.

Steirlich himself wonders if this was his vengeful act of cruelty or a latent inability, even after all this time, to destroy his one-time vampire mistress. Another question that tortures him.

An unforeseen consequence of this choice to so trap the vampire was that Sylvana's vampire nature and blood tainted the Heart Tree. It developed a taste for blood and increasingly views all living things as a meal (except the Graf for it instinctively knows their lives are linked).

The Heart Tree's corruption has extended into the forest spirits, which now hunger for blood. Once, as in Athel Loren, the fey spirits hibernated in winter. Invigorated with the blood of living things, the forest now remains active but becomes hungry. It is in winter that it becomes most dangerous and predatory.

Sylvana's remains are still staked to the Tree. If the stake is removed she would revive, hungry for blood and vengeance. The circumstance of her transfixion allows her to manifest her

consciousness to creatures of lower Willpower (WP<3 or sleepers) and gives rise to stories of a "green ghost woman in the woods".

Grauwerk Background

This information can be learned or even known already with good enough appropriate checks such as Folklore (Geography).

Grauwerk is an isolated and fortified mansion in the Hagercryb Hills region of the Reikwald Forest. It is one of the von Bruner family's many holdings, built when there were productive iron and silver mines in the surrounding hills. The mines played out 30 years ago, having provided several generations of wealth to the von Bruners. The local village was abandoned 25 years ago. The Graf has been Steward for 16 years.

The von Bruners maintain still Grauwerk to patrol against creatures of Chaos in keeping with their original grant's terms. It is a point of honour and as one of their first holdings it has a sentimental value.

It is another thematic point of the adventure - that it takes place in a forgotten outpost against the encroachment of Chaos and the Old Dark.

Some von Bruners recall tales of Grauwerk as a beneficial place to rest and recuperate without realizing their truth. The area's rich Ghyran flows do promote healing. They see it now as a conveniently isolated post for an embarrassment to the family.

Design Note

The Tree of Bones and Grauwerk's fey are a chance to use all those fun fey creatures without having to go to Athel Loren.

Prelude Scene - The Kindly Fortune Teller and Good Luck Charm

- This scene works best if occurring during another adventure before the start of this one, as a random friendly encounter.
- Ideally, the item gained here simply becomes “my lucky charm”.

The travelling band of heroes comes across a Strigany encampment. Three brightly coloured vardos (the caravan-wagon homes of the Strigany) are drawn up around a fire.

The Strigany offer a few items for sale, which may include arrows or some other items heroes wish to restock – this could include a healing draught or some useful herbs (*Liber Infectus*).

Among the other goods or services, an elderly crone with bright eyes offers to sell the PC Heir a good luck charm – a wooden carving of Taal’s antlers (eventually the GM will give the Player the **Lucky Charm** Item Card from *Signs of Faith*, it looks exactly like the image on the Item Card) for a shilling, if bargained down for 10 pennies.

- If she must, the crone pushes it freely on the PC Heir, *“It is for you and no other. You must wear it for it will protect you in a time of trouble.”*

The first time the PC encounters a situation where it’s useful the charm’s magic is revealed and Item Card given.

- The Strigany Crone is Lucinda, mother of Gretta and the chosen PC’s grandmother. The charm, aside from being useful, has special meaning as it was a gift from the Graf to Gretta and he will recognize it later.

- Any **Intuition** etc. checks reveal she is well-meaning and very serious, also extremely intent on the PC Heir.
- The Charm is actually only lucky for the PC Heir (due to its personal connection with them), so any efforts to trade it etc. always fail and it comes back to them.
- The Charm has to be worn to be lucky - how can you expect Taal or any other power to bless you if you hide their tokens? (It is important later that others can see it).

These Strigany are the "Clan of Malfi", in everyday talk "the Malfi Clan". It is not a "clan name" rather it is a declaration of ownership. They are descended from those who once served the Strigoi vampire Malfi in long lost Strigos. Now wanderers, they remain loyal to him and his bloodline, in exchange for his (fickle) protection.

No PC Heir Option - Not So Kindly Fortune Teller

The Strigany appear after the encounter with the dying heir in which a PC received the good luck charm.

The old Strigany woman then looks at the PC and says, *"You already carry a charm. It was a token of love and carried luck but love has been drained dry and turned to ash. You must return the charm to the one who first gave it and tell him Malfi curses him."*

The vampire Malfi is following the charm into the valley. The Strigany's revenge is to bring their patron Malfi down on the Graf.

Episode 1: Trip to Grauwerk and Introductions

This episode covers travel to Graustadt and initial introductions at the Manor. It is the PC's "voyage into isolation".

Act 1 – The Trip to Grauwerk

If the heroes come from Ubersreik, they presumably sail 65 miles down the Teufel to Auerswald and then 30 to Rottfurt, where the adventure really begins as they then travel up the Rosswater to Grauwerk.

- By sailing ship, after finding a ship, it takes a day and a half, having stopped early first day in Auerwald, and costs 15 shillings.
- By barge it's 8 shillings and takes 3 days.

This Act has scenes in Rottfurt and on the trip into the Hagercrybs.

Rottfurt is a small village of 80 on the Teufel River, at its confluence with the Rosswater. It is under the Emperor's authority. Its folk are mostly shepherds, producing wool and mutton to trade via the river. It has a stout stone wall courtesy of its imperial status.

Rottfurt has one inn, *The Golden Crown*, which is better quality than the village size calls for due to its position on the river. The house dish is a very tasty 'shepherd's steak': bits of bacon, onion and lamb roasted on skewers. PCs are welcomed by Magarethe Krone, the owner, a cheerily talkative elderly woman, who is assisted by her silent husband Utger.

Magarethe is a very helpful source of folk tales and misinformation of all kinds. The Hagercrybs are littered with the bones of those who

Weather Effects - Winter

Sunset turns to darkness quickly as the hills block out the sun's light when it sets. It is easy to be caught out after dark in the hills.

Any ⚡ rolled later in day when out and about can mean being out after dark.

Snow adds ■■ to Athletics and Coordination checks involving movement or balance (cf Master the Seasons Jade spell).

If is late Fall, some nights an *Eerie Mist* (location card) appears and all know to keep indoors – it is said ghosts walk on such nights. Unberogen ghosts do indeed walk some parts of the Habercrybs at such times, though not in the valley.

listened to her well-meant superstition-laden advice.

Visitors are chatted to about where they are from, the news, where they are going.

If the heroes reveal they are going to Grauwerk:

Magarethe takes a shine to someone (a priest or other apparent virtuous or innocent person, or just someone who reminds her of "my dear brother Rolf, Sigmar rest his soul" - not the PC Heir) and warns them, "*Do you know where you are going, and what you are going to?*" She speaks no ill of Graustadt but implores her favoured not go there if they are not expected. Anyone who says they are expected sees her draw back, looking at them suspiciously.

Play this as a classical "peasant warning" horror scene - based on *Dracula*, Chapter 1, including adapted menu.

A Gift

If Magarethe is treated kindly, she gives her favoured PC a packet with three doses of *Graveroot* "to keep you safe from those that come back". She believes it wards off undead. It doesn't really but has useful medicinal effects against diseases they bear - PC's know all that with appropriate checks (see *Liber Infectus* p. 20, or GM hardback). A sheet of herb cards is included in handouts section.

Offending her (e.g., roleplaying badly or failure and ✱ on social check) causes her to withdraw and say only, "may you enjoy the Graf's hospitality", as if that is all the ill she could wish.

Drawing Magarethe Out: ✱ on a **2D social check** learns that those who enter the region uninvited do not leave it. ✱✱✱ she has heard rumours about the reclusive Graf - he is really a monster of some sort, though far be it for her to speak badly of the nobility. **Average (2D) Intuition** realizes she is simply repeating juicy gossip and has no reliable information, but means well.

Into the Hagercrybs

The next two social encounters take place as the heroes travel up the Rosswater into the Hagercrybs. In the trip's social encounters "gossip about Grauwerk Manor" may be obtained from those who travel in the area, see the box to the right.

From Rottfurt, the trip into the hills is 25 miles. The terrain is rough but there is a trail. There's no danger of getting lost as one simply follows the Rosswater stream. It takes two days to reach the destination by foot or horse, though travel on foot arrives the end of 2nd day and by

horse arrives mid-day. This time is all narrative, there is no Rally step.

Gossip about Grauwerk Manor (from roadwardens or shepherds)

Each success learns another item from this list, going in order although ➡ gets the final item immediately.

✱ Graf von Bruner (locals just call him that) keeps the valley of Graudstadt safe, Graudstadt being the old abandoned mining town that made the von Bruners a fortune in great-grandfather's time but played out three decades past.

✱ Graf von Bruner is a cruel man if crossed - something ate up all the mercy in him. But he is fair in his fashion, it's only wrongdoers who need fear. He is merciless to bandits. No bandit or beastman passes through that valley.

✱ There may be no beastmen, but there is something in those woods. (shiver)

✱ The Graf is a pious man, makes all his people wear Sigmar's hammer - don't be taking the first Emperor's name in vain up there.

✱ The Graf looks no older than when he came to the region 16 years ago. Some whisper he is a vampire – no one ever sees those he takes to be executed. Others say he pays a Jade Order magician to keep him young.*

✱ The vampire rumours are silly. One good thing about the Graf is he leaves the peasant girls alone, unlike some nobles, now that's not like any vampire you ever heard of, is it?

✱ There are old stories that the valley's waters are healthful. When the mines were there and the village inhabited, its folk enjoyed good health.

*This is spurious rumour. An actual Jade Order magister knows that there is no Jade magic to "keep young", at least no wholesome magic. A magister of another college knows that on **Easy (1D) Education**. Someone not trained in magic must make a **Hard (3D)** check to know that wizards do not actually live longer than other people (or at least not longer than other people who have access to the best care).

Encounter One: Bandits Meeting their Fate

In which it is demonstrated the PCs are entering a region of rough justice and autocratic rule....

This morning you left Rottfurt, heading west in the Hagercrybs, following the Rosswater upstream. It is hilly, lightly wooded terrain.

On a rise ahead, beside the stream, you see two Roadwardens and four militia in Reikland's red and black colours. Two dead men are on ground. A third is being interrogated, while militia tie a noose in a rope to go over a sturdy tree branch.

Just-apprehended bandits are being executed. The survivor of the fight is being questioned about their camp's location.

The bandit refuses to talk, cursing everyone present, "I will hold Morr's gate open for you!"

Interaction:

Roadwardens Dirk Cloos and Jonas Gickel ask what the PC's business is in the area, to be sure they are not bandits or trafficking with them.

Overcoming the Roadwardens' suspicions requires an appropriate **Social Skill Average (2D)** check for a relevant skill such as **Charm**.

- If the PC's tried to help with the prisoner's interrogation, the check cannot fail.

This becomes easy **(1D)** if any PC is an official such as an Agent, Bailiff etc.. Such PCs may also use **Leadership** instead of Charm. A *Noble* career trait gives a free ♠ in the outcome pool - caps are doffed, mi'lord, for "we respect nobility in these parts, not like them city folk".

Failure and ☠ or ✨ means a day's delay returning to Rottfurt to confirm identities as the Roadwardens become more suspicions - unless

the PC's want to fight Roadwardens or again unless a Noble career is possessed by a PC.

If satisfied heroes are not bandits, the Roadwardens warn,

The Hagercrybs are dangerous for the unwary, keep to the stream and go straight on to the manor and you'll be safe enough within a day's ride of Grauwerk valley, thanks to the Graf. Present yourselves to the Steward and don't be skulking about and get mistaken for bandits.

Any successes in social checks will, in addition to the intended effect, lead to the Roadwardens revealing information from the **Gossip About Grauwerk Manor** box (page 12).

If heroes speak ill of Graf: *None of that bad-mouthing of von Bruners, few do as much as them against Chaos.* The Roadwardens respect the Graf for his aggressive law enforcement.

Assuming it fits how matters were left:

You continue on and in a few minutes hear a short cry. Looking back, you see the tree atop the rise has a body swinging from it.

It is pure coincidence that the PC's will later encounter a deadly tree with many bodies, but if the GM wants to play his up as in ill omen, have at it!

A Priest of Morr might sense something more in it. They can spend a fortune point to get an augury: "It is not the last body upon a tree we shall see....". The augury should allow a benefit in the confrontation with Tree of Bones such as two fortune dice on terror check is player remembers to invoke it.

Encounter Two - Shepherds In the Hills

Later the same day, PC's hear dogs barking, sheepdogs bark an alarm of their approach.

You meet four shepherds. Long moustachioed men with shepherd's staves, slings and knives, dressed in heavy cloaks and broad-brimmed hats against the weather. They have 40 sheep with thickening wool coats, and three dogs.

They are from Schafstadt village (2 miles away).

Interaction:

This not a New Act.
The Players likely only made one or two rolls in the first Encounter. Treat each of those as 'rounds' for recharge. The whole trip is one Act and that "long recharge" social action is likely only used once on the trip.

The shepherds are taciturn and drawing them out is another **Social Skill Average (2D)** which becomes easy if the PC's have alcoholic beverages to share.

Here too, a *Noble* career gives one

free ♠ in the outcome pool. For a noble, the shepherds all stand and do not sit unless invited.

On success the shepherds share that for the past couple of years they have found Grauwerk Valley stranger "*there is a hunger in the woods*".

Only the oldest has seen the Graf, some ten years ago, "*he is seldom out these days but he must be getting older now so that is not surprising.*"

Once drawn out, the shepherds freely share that the Graf's men patrol widely to keep area safe. They are currently hunting a bandit gang that lairs somewhere in region.

The Graf demands a share of the wool sheered each spring and mutton at other seasons as Steward of Grauwerk but the shepherds don't begrudge it. In fact, the shepherds are taking some sheep to the manor in a day or two.

- **The shepherds intention to come to manor soon is important, the shepherds' fate is a "building suspense" point later.**

Camp for the Night (Rally Step)

Making camp for night, the PC responsible for choosing the campsite must make an **Average (2D) Nature Lore**

(locate shelter) check, with the harsh season adding ■■ - unless Players indicated they were bringing appropriate gear.

Success means a decent night's camp is made.

Failure means that a poor camp is chosen. Everyone awakes the next stiff and sore, with 1 Fatigue on the day they reach Grauwerk. +1 Party Tension.

The night is a *Rally Step* between Acts in narrative time. There is no over-night recovery of Fatigue/Stress beyond the Rally Step, as this is narrative time.

In choosing Rally actions Players should be informed, "tomorrow you enter Grauwerk valley and reach the mansion".

Act 2 - The Grauwerk Valley Woods

The second day from Rottfurt (either in afternoon or dusk depending on whether walking or riding), heroes enter the thickly wooded Grauwerk valley.

Grauwerk is a large valley surrounded by gently sloping hills that rise into the Habercrybs. Several small streams run down to water the well-wooded valley filled with beautiful, majestic trees – a mixed forest of evergreens and now bare deciduous trees.

Hidden from sight entering the valley, the streams feed a small tarn from which the Rosswater flows east to the Teufel.

Entering the Valley

Most stands of trees seen in your journey were scraggly, wind-bent efforts to grow in the rocky hills – the valley is an exception, a dense forest. The thick wood threatens to hem in the trail alongside the stream. Barely visible through the boles of the trees are remnants of log cabins and huts of a village.

The **Creepy Forest** card (see **Handouts** section) comes out and its **Fear** check is made.

Any wood elf PC receives the handout "**The forest is awake**". Other nature-attuned characters such as a Jade magister or priest of Taal/Rhya may receive the handout with an appropriate 2D check (based on what sort of relationship they have with nature).

GM Reference: Grauwerk Valley's Magical Effects

☐☐ to Channelling for Jade wizards.
■ to Channelling for Bright wizards.
Overnight rest Resilience and Disease Recovery checks gain a free ♣♣ from the Jade wind's "life affirming" powers.

The following checks as the woods are traversed are optional.

Each PC can make only one but more than one PC can make the same check. This can be done each time the woods are entered.

Simple **Mage Sight** (no check) notes winds are strong here and in the water. **Magic Sense** learns a different amount of information depending on chosen check difficulty. The wizard must choose what difficulty check to try, each subsumes the results of all the lower difficulties.

◆ ♣ abundant Ghyran is flowing into the valley
♣ along streams from hills to collect in the headwater).

◆◆ ♣ valley is a strong repository of the green wind of fertility and healing, explaining the lush woods you see before you.

♣♣♣ Aqshy is weaker here, harder to channel.

◆◆◆ ♣ no specific enchantment is at work generally in the valley though the Ghyran concentration has consequences - learns the Valley's Magic effects (see boxed text).

♣♣♣ realizes that the tarn likely was a waystone in it which eventually channels off the collecting aetheryic power safely (this last is irrelevant to adventure but explains why the ghyr flows don't stagnate into Dhar).

♣ some force draws on the winds – as powerful as a wizard lord in terms of the disturbance.

Nature Lore 2D check (plants, but do not reveal which speciality applies, just give an extra success): ♣ there is an anomaly in size of the trees and growth with age of abandoned village – there are trees that must have been growing for 80 years but the buildings are not

abandoned more than 30. 🌲🌲🌲 these woods would be a good place to find healing herbs such as Valerian or Fextoryl in Spring or Summer, reducing the difficulty of finding by one ♦ but there is no point looking for them at this time of year.

Observation (eavesdropping) 2D check: 🌲 the forest is quieter than you would expect, even for the season; 🌲 notices a whispering wind stirring branches even when no wind otherwise felt; 🌲🌲 the branches are actually creating the wind (as the trees talk to each other) – another *Creepy Forest Fear* check with ■ ■!

Folklore (Superstition) 2D check: On a success reveal the listed information. Success and 🌲 means the information is more reliable – also then give the bracketed information. Improved success gives the lesser outcomes (still only with the improved quality if boons rolled – i.e., 🌲🌲🌲 🌲 learns everything below.

🌲 enchanted woods can defy seasons and time in them can be strange, men are often forever lost in them 🌲 distances change inside such woods as paths move or loop back on themselves, this accounts for much of the time/losing way effect of such woods.

🌲 maiden-like forest spirits lure men away to be their lovers, or dinner, depending on the story 🌲 dangerous fables, the fey creatures are like cats playing with mice – nothing good comes of going off with them.

🌲🌲🌲 wood elves and forest spirits live in such places and are dangerous to mortals 🌲 worked metal and other civilized items created by destroying living things arouse anger in woodland spirits, dwarves are particularly distrusted.

This Act ends when trail comes to the stream's source, the tarn at the valley's centre that several streams from the hills feed.

Across the small lake, perhaps 200 years away, you can see Grauwerk Manor – a fortified manor standing on a small rise, with a lone tower rising above it to survey the surrounding land.

- As heroes leave the woods, a watch horn sounds from the tower (a lookout has spotted them).

Rally Step.

Note – It is assumed PC's take the advice of going straight on to the manor. If they want to muck about in the woods, they can have the “**Last True Spirit**” scene or you can have a patrol lead by Captain Noll find them “just as it seemed the whole forest was about to burst with some menace”.

Act 3 – Welcome to Grauwerk Manor

Approaching the manor other than by stealth means that four crossbowmen are visible behind the wall (with cover) and two soldiers with swords and shield come out with a well-armoured officer (Noll, see description) to meet them at the gate.

No one approaching an isolated manor should expect to be welcomed in without being questioned.

Reaction rolls are required meeting each of **Captain Noll**, **Magister Grenz** and the **Graf** for the first time.

If a declaration of blood is made, see “*I’m the Graf’s heir*” scene.

Interaction

Captain Fritz Noll greets visitors and asks their business in von Bruner lands - Charm or other social check determines his attitude (opposed against his WP3). *See his character section, p.22.*

He expects adventurous types to be here tomb-robbing (folly) or hunting bandits for bounty (competition), in neither case is he overly welcoming or generous but he is civil unless rolls or roleplaying go badly.

If they claim to be passing through, then on social check **✚**, he offers to let the heroes rest overnight in the manor before going on

If they have official business with the Graf he is more welcoming. He conveys their greetings and arrange rooms. Perhaps the Graf will join them for dinner (he won’t, see ***My Lord Graf is Indisposed***).

Hospitality is a “guest hall” with a fireplace, table and six beds.

On a failure, and if no official business, the Captain is suspicious and tells them to camp on the tarn’s shore (e.g., rough it) – in which case he advises them to stay near the manor (sleeping in the Creepy Woods is not a good idea) – though later he appears and offer hospitality (as the Graf has ordered it being curious and anxious for company).

- One way or another they get to sleep inside.

Guests must surrender weapons. This should not be considered unusual. Knives/daggers are considered tools and can be kept. A Sigmarite priest may retain hammer and a Gold Tier visitor may keep a sword as a privilege of class. On **✚✚✚** social with the Captain, weapons are placed in the guest’s room (it being a matter of manners not security) but otherwise they are kept locked up in the Guardroom (it being a matter of security).

While guests, it would be insulting to wear armour or carry a shield, adding **✚✚✚** to all social interaction outcomes. It automatically means not being invited to dinner (if you are going to dress like a soldier, eat with them).

Magister Felix Grenz appears in short order once PC's are settled anywhere – even waiting in the hall, as unofficial manor steward. The unassuming and friendly Grenz is interested in news of the world. He exchanges introductions with any Magister in the party as a colleague, particularly a Green Magister, and is interested to speak to any wood elf (he will bring discussion around to about Athel Loren). He would be similarly interested in a priest of Taal or Rhya. He most definitely notices the ‘lucky charm’. *See his character section, p.22*

Where To Go From Here:

A new episode starts once heroes have entered the manor.

Their first evening at the mansion brings an "**end of Episode**" full WP/To recovery of Stress and Fatigue.

The Graf is indisposed (up in his tower) this afternoon/evening. They dine with Noll and Grenz (see **Dinner Scenes**).

In any case, that night's rest is a full recovery for a night including wounds.

The following days are treated as Acts and only Rally Step recoveries permitted for the nights (and wound recovery rolls), with "Episode" ends called when equivalent of three Acts pass.

Scenes develop from here according to Player actions and the normal course of life in the manor, with **Suspense Builds** scenes being interjected to keep the plot moving along and ensure action builds towards a climax.

Two specific Episodes can be invoked to keep things moving: the **Vampire Hunt Episode** and **Tree of Bones Episode**. Each has 3 Acts – be sure to give a full episode recovery before these start.

Events in and around the manor, accompanying patrols, talking to staff etc. can all create additional narrative time scenes. The **Green Ghost** is another series of scenes to add suspense.

The Manor

The manor combines elements of several location cards as it is a *Run-Down Manor/Noble's Mansion* and its tallest spire is a *Crumbling Watchtower*.

See the handouts section for a 'consolidated text' in large font to print out for the playing space. Put the two 'cards' next to each other – with the Creepy Forest card next to them – you have a 'narrative map' of the scene. If an actual map is required, use the Manor from *Eye for an Eye*. It is also a von Bruner holding, the two can have been built by the same architect - though this one has no secret cellar and no cultists).

The manor has an external stone wall. Interior walls are mainly stone with wooden floors.

The manor is beautiful despite the aging stonework. Its many vines and shrubs give it an ivied and tranquil appearance.

- Vines make climbing the exterior walls an **Easy (1D) Athletics (climbing)**, but do not extend up the Crumbling Watchtower.
- ✨ rolled sneaking around the manor or picking locks etc. should mean an NPC happens along inconveniently. Roll ■, on a blank it's a servant, on ♠ guard, on ✕ one of the key named NPC's.

The grounds have a stables (12 horses) and a 'buried' powder room for storing blackpowder, that doubles as a root cellar since the manor has little blackpowder – it entry faces away from the mansion.

The manor has more room than its current occupants use and thus has many dusty echoing halls and chambers including dining hall, kitchen, library, parlour, barracks, great hall and a small private chapel to Sigmar.

The great hall has several paintings that are well cared-for (eight paintings with values of a few gold crowns each, total value 40 gold crowns - showing a good eye for quality).

The Library has fifteen books! (Being realistic, libraries of 100's of books are very rare in the Empire). Five of them are about art, eight are about the undead, and two are about the history of the empire and pre-imperial times.

- Yes that's alot about undead. What's more there are annotations in the books. It takes a literate PC an afternoon to read through to find notations such as "idiot" next to an author talking about how vampires can't cross running water and "never would say why " next to a passage about Sigmar's power over vampires.

The *Crumbling Watchtower* has a lookout post atop it that is manned at all times, and a carrier pigeon coop (Grenz's pigeons).

Within it is the Graf's private studio - the "locked room"™ – **Hard (3D) Skulduggery (pick locks)**, the Graf alone has the key.

The Graf spends long hours here trying to paint – constantly falling short of his talent – and drinking. It has an untitled portrait of a beautiful Strigany maid with deep brown eyes, curly hair and a kind smile – wearing the same good luck charm the PC Heir carries.

- This is the Graf's painting of his lost love, the PC Heir's mother. It is his best painting, beautiful and gratifying to behold.
- Upon first seeing it a hero recovers 2 stress. If the Player Heir realizes it is their mother they can also get 2 extra Fortune Points that last till next session - only the first time.
- It is worth 8 gold crowns on merits; 40 gold crowns if its "tragic story" is used to sell it.

Grenz the Jade Magister's room locked – **Average (2D) Skulduggery (pick locks)**. Its most notable contents are a tome open with a burnt down candle and some handwritten notes by it, the 120 year old “*Historie of Druids and Nature Worship Before Teclis*”, open to the “Ritual of Calling the Forest Soul”.

- This is what the Graf and Grenz did to wake the forest years ago. He is studying it at the Graf's command, to see if it can be undone.
- Reading the ritual reveals that the awakened forest is centred on a 'focus', an oak tree ideally, to which the ritual worker is bound for life (either's death leading to other wasting away in a moon's time).
- There are notes all over it - written in shorthand used in Altdorf universities and magical colleges, anyone who went to such reads it easily - otherwise it is **Easy (1D) Education** to read them: the notes are trying to figure out a way to undo the ritual and not having much luck.
- An ambitious hero might try to figure out how to reverse the ritual but a week and **Daunting (4D) Education** 🎲 realizes there is no way to reverse it, there is no way to put the forest spirits to sleep without destroying the focus, the focus being the Great Tree, which in turn would kill the Graf and 🎲🎲 the tree's taint will eventually enter the Graf (only revealed if the tree's corruption is known).

Looking through his other effects some strange charms will be found. They are Strigany and may be so identified with an **Average Folklore (2D)** check. One is a stick fetish that is broken, it takes 🎲🎲 to know this is an old superstition about how to call the attention of Strigany ancestors. This is why Grenz just broke it,

seeing the PC Heir's token and realizing the Scion has come!

The Manor's Routines

Daily life in the manor is slow paced. The soldiers practice arms drill, and most days a patrol of three mounts up to ride out beyond the valley and hunt for bandits, often with the Captain. Their pre-occupation is finding a bandit camp they are sure is somewhere in region. One of these patrols (without Captain) meets its fate in *Suspense Builds Scene 4*.

My lord graf is indisposed

The Graf's availability varies.

He is typically up late, sleeping till near noon. He is sober for the afternoon and then dinner onwards often in the tower room and/or intoxicated (indisposed).

Once there is a call for action involving the PC Heir he rises to the occasion and does not have an indisposed period that day.

The Valley

The Graubergwerk (grey mine village) lay near the tarn until the forest reclaimed the village.

In the hills overlooking the valley are *Abandoned Mine* heads (location card).

The Region Beyond Valley

The hills are forested. The shepherd's *Rural Settlement* of Schafstadt two miles away. A *Bandit Camp* is hidden in the hills further away.

These are all beyond the scope of this adventure unless you want to expand activities.

Manor Inhabitants

(stats for encounters are presented later)

The Graf's Men -16: 8 crossbowmen, 4 halberdiers and 4 sword and board men – a few names if needed: Wim, Udo, Norbert, Otto, Nicholas, Rolf, Dirk, Heinrich.

The Graf's men are handpicked and loyal to a fault. None has been here longer than 8 years. The Graf rotates men every 4 years or so - most do not want an isolated post permanently.

- None of the soldiers were here when Sylvana came - but all know that there was a ferocious fight with a vampiress that cost many lives nine years ago.

Each degree of influence in a social check (remember the loyalty penalty if appropriate) earns some of the information below. They are not in a particular order - reveal whichever is most relevant to the questions PC's ask.

- ✦ Everyone here enjoys good health. The Graf seems to enjoy a bit more benefit, looking perhaps a decade younger than his near 50 years but his men attribute that to *"a blessing, were not Sigmar and Magnus both lions to the end?"*
- ✦ The woods are hostile to beastmen and other Chaos creatures – making the valley a safe haven from which to patrol and strike against them.
- ✦ The Graf has an execution ground in the forest where bandits, cultists and even beastmen who did not die in battle are taken and killed – it's a clearing with a big oak tree on which the bodies are hung as a warning. The tree scares them but they don't like admitting it.

Wim the Perceptive: Wim picks up more of what is going on and is a bit better travelled. He suspects that the Jade Magister and the Graf have enchanted the forest and that "all may not be well with it". He wonders if the "green maiden" is not the forest asking for help or the ghost of some poor girl sacrificed to it?

Rolf the Dreamer: Rolf is dim-witted and has been dreaming that the "green maiden" is singing to him, begging him to save her.

- He is unwittingly becoming an agent of Lahmia vampire Sylvana who is trying to compel someone to come to the tree and pull out the stake (a task by no means easy).
- If at all possible, Rolf should be along on any expeditions into the forest – as he will pull the stake out of Sylvana if reaching the tree (he counts as a willing servant for purposes of her using him to refresh herself).

Servants: the six servants have been here longer than any soldiers. They are even more loyal to the Graf. They are all members of two families. The cook *Hanna* and butler *Ernst* are married and one maid *Frieda* their daughter. The groundskeeper *Gotz*, stable boy *Holger* and other maid *Nadja* are brothers and sister.

The servants were here when the vampire came and can relate the story: three quarters of the soldiers at the time were slaughtered singly and in pairs, but no one saw a thing. The Graf had all the servants gather in the great hall and light the fires, and keep their symbols of Sigmar to hand. He, Grenz and Noll fought it off – just barely. Noll still has the scars. The Graf went out into the woods alone to pursue it and destroyed it. Having saved them all with his courage is a key reason all the servants are loyal unto death to the Graf.

The Graf's Lieutenants

Noll and Grenz are both long time comrades to the Graf who know that he won free of the influence of Lahmia vampires and fears their return.

Both know of the Strigany maid Gretta and that the Graf turned away from her to save her from the jealousy of Sylvana. Neither know she was pregnant. Only Grenz knows of the potential significance of the child she would have had (as a Strigoi spy).

Captain Fritz Noll *scarred-face, trim soldier in his mid-40's, fit and ready for anything, with pistol, sword and shield.*

Combat-connected career traits give him checks, as he respects these traits.

Freely reveals: With the Graf since before he came to manor. You want to know about the Graf, ask the Graf.

If drawn out: Last winter two men were lost in the forest, the Graf's Men think the forest is getting sleepy in winter and beastmen got them, Noll has other suspicions and doesn't want people wandering around the woods.

Secret: He knows about the Tree of Bones and how it was created. He knows that the Graf did not intend to create a monster, indeed it is only in the past year it became dangerous.

He does not know the Graf had a son, he thought that the Strigany maid the Graf dabbled with died (the Graf kept his secret from even his closest friends – not sure who he could trust).

Magister Fritz Grenz *Friar Tuck with curly hair and green robes that are embroidered with ivy patterns, with a quarterstaff that seems to be made of twisted driftwood (as a Jade Magister, he does not indulge in the over-the-top ceremonial get-ups the other orders like).*

Reminder - If a PC tries, gauging another wizard's power is a **Challenging Magical Sight (3D)** check. Grenz is a Rank 3 Wizard.

Freely reveals: He has been with the Graf for 20 years (2 years before PC Heir was born). If he is impressed/trusts a wizard (make a **Spellcraft 2D** check to discuss magic intelligently), he may invite them to his chambers to get their opinion of the problem he is trying to solve. He does this only because he is desperate to make progress.

Grenz is more interested in drawing out any wizards, elves or priests of Taal/Rhya than himself revealing information (questions are answered with questions). He wants to know if anyone knows of old druid rituals that involve "living forests".

- He is very good at getting information, make an opposed Int check to avoid revealing something. An Asrai gains ☐ to avoid revealing secrets of Athel Loren when he asks if the forest ever menaces the elves, its guardians, and what they do about it. Athel Loren does, of course, threaten the Asrai - the sacred rites conducted annually keep the ancient alliance with forest intact - the nature of these rites is a secret not even understood by most wood elves.

Secret: He knows same secrets as Noll and also does not know the Graf had a son. In his case the Graf keeping secrets was wise – Grenz is a secret servant of the Strigoi vampires!

Grenz the Vampire Agent

Grenz is Strigani by birth and of the same clan as the PC Heir's mother Gretta, the Malfi clan. He retains these blood loyalties despite his College training.

He is a "loyalist". Despite being taken as a child to be trained by the druids of the Jade Order, Grenz never forgot the people of his birth. He is fascinated by how vampires extend "life" by feeding on life (a twisted view of Ghyr) and takes his duty to "the Old Masters" seriously.

Sylvana knew of his true loyalty and planned use him to lure a Strigoi vampire into a trap with the "false scion". It was his friendship with the Graf that made her choose Steirlich. The Graf's actions forestalled all of this but when the PC Heir comes to the valley, the plan at last reaches fruition.

Using Grenz:

Grenz should recognize the lucky charm/PC Heir (who can have some facial features similar to the Graf) almost immediately.

He uses the magical fetish in his quarters to send a message to the "Old Masters", leading to the supernaturally swift arrival of the vampire Malfi in the valley (for "the dead travel fast").

Grenz truly likes the Graf and Noll, and tries not to lose his cover, but will serve the vampire Malfi in foiling traps laid for him and otherwise being a "mole" inside the manor.

Grenz also will protect the PC Heir's life as he is "for the Old Masters" (in addition to being a distant relation). Grenz is strangely envious of the "special destiny" the PC Heir possesses and may speak to him of "you are fortunate to have so great a legacy" (not meaning Steirlich at all).

Scenes To Use:

Theme of menace and isolation, of beautiful nature gone alien and dangerous (the forest is like the dark side of Athel Loren, twisted even further), of lurking menace, of loss and treachery.

Triggered Scenes deal with particular eventualities.

Suspense Builds scenes are numbered but can be used in any order as appropriate to keep the story moving to the valley's closure.

Green Ghost scenes are mixed in with these, but can extend into the period of tension when the valley is closed.

Graf's Heir scenes deal with this story thread unfolding.

Triggered Scene: Meeting the Graf for the First Time

The Graf is gracious though "looks his regular self" (see background). If the PCs are on any official mission he is touched at "being remembered".

He perfunctorily asks for news of his relations the von Bruners – though if PC's have met any von Bruners (e.g., *Eye for an Eye*, *Horror at Hugeldal*, *Edge of Night*) he is interested to hear what they have to say.

He bears the von Bruners ill will for leaving him out here so any hardships they have suffered give him some satisfaction but he will still mourn any deaths etc.

If matters go well, he opens a couple of bottles of Couronne Red for dinner (it is a fine wine, a rich ruby red).

The Graf wants to hear about the heroes' adventures dealing with Chaos, Goblins and ... undead? If they have face vampires he asks for descriptions of which sort they fought. However much they know about vampires, he clearly knows more.

Triggered Scene: The Graf Cleans House

If the Graf decides to dispose of his heir's comrades to "keep the Heir safe", he arranges that a bandit/vampire/tree hunting expedition goes where he knows forest spirits are thick. He would stay close to his heir if known (so heir not attacked) while the others are set upon. If it fits with flow of adventure, this could be the "big confrontation" with the Tree of Bones.

Another optional scene is that captive bandits are brought in by a patrol and taken into the forest by the Graf, Captain and a couple of men.

Triggered Scene: The Valley Is Closed

Whenever the heroes would leave, the conflict with the Forest escalates.

NO ONE IS GETTING OUT, regardless of the Graf's intent. When the situation is right, the Tree of Bones closes the valley.

Using fey powers of confusion and its bond with the earth, it makes the outer forest around the valley a maze in which any traveller is turned back and finds themselves back at the tarn or if they fail to pass safely – at the Tree of Bones itself (to be fed on).

The mansion, abandoned settlement, and abandoned mine heads are all "within" the closed off area.

Triggered Scene - Kill the Graf!

The adventure does not require the PC's to ever try to fight or kill Graf Steirlich.

However there are several routes whereby some or all of them may end up fighting him.

Initially, if they take the "he's a vampire" rumour to heart and decide to act pre-emptively.

He gains all the assistance noted below, and the first time he is wounded he bleeds normally as a man should. This and his failure to use any supernatural powers etc. should cause PC's to call off the attack.

He decides to kill the PC Heir's comrades to keep his heir's secret.

As noted, the Graf will try to find out if the PC Heir's secret status as the Scion of Nagash is at risk from his comrades. If it is, he will suggest going hunting or vampire hunting if Malfi has arrived, or green ghost hunting if its presence has been discussed.

His objective is simply to get the PCs into the woods. He will arrange for the PC Heir and himself to be separated as the others are then attacked by a group of fey spirits (see page 37), but is not above "trying to finish them off".

The PC Heir may be able to dissuade him and convince him to call off such an assault. He will be honest it is to keep the PC Heir alive and is only required because, "my son cannot trust you to protect his secret".

Down But Not Out

If Graf Steirlich is killed but his remains not "properly treated", he may rise as a vampire. This is a latent result of his time as a

bloodswaine, aggravated by his connection to the Tree of Bones. This means he continues to exist and the Tree does not fade away.

Whether he is a tortured, wanting to deny his nature vampire or a "freshly relishing in power" vampire is up to the GM. Whichever feels right for the table and for the story of his relationship with the PC Heir.

He is a "thrall" (use standard Vampire stats), having been made by a Lahmia. This bloodline of vampires only makes women into true vampires and would regard Steirlich as an abomination (even in death he can't catch a break).

Suspense Builds 1 - The Pigeons are Late

(This scene should happen in the first lull after the PC's arrive - as soon as the next day)

Magister Grenz reports that two of his carrier pigeons have not returned from carrying messages to Rottfurt. He is disturbed, as the reason for sending two a bit apart is to protect against one being lost to a predator or other source - usually both get through, never have both failed.

There are concerned and knowing glances among the Graf and Captain at this news (all three realize the forest is getting hungrier and this is an ill omen) - **Observation (minute) (2D)** to see glances and ~~then~~ to realize something more was being communicated. Intuition opposed senses the same thing.

Suspends Builds 2 – We found some sheep but no shepherds.

The 2nd or 3rd day

Three guards ride in to report finding sheep, a few of which they have escorted along, but no shepherds. They fear that beastmen are returning to the woods.

The Captain wants to return to the scene of the crime and the Graf comes with them.

- These are the same shepherds the PCs met coming to Grauwerk.
- There are tracks - **Observation (2D) (tracking)** with snow making it easier ☐☐. The tracks are strange talon-like feet, not beastmen hooves or bandit boots.
- PC's may wish to follow them into the woods but the Graf advises against it – *This*

is the sort of thing beastmen and other predators want. We shall return to the manor and plan a strategy to deal with the threat on our terms, not walk into a trap. (Intuition opposed - he is being completely honest except in mentioning beastmen, he knows it's not)

GM: Dryads attacked and took the bodies were taken to the tree – a wood elf could identify them

Suspense Builds 3 - A Pure Spirit

Any time after arriving when in the woods without the Graf or his lieutenants.

If PCs insist on tracking the trail from the missing shepherds in Scene 2, this can be used as the next scene.

*This scene happens in the **Creepy Forest**.*

The PCs happen onto the sight of one of the last pure spirit dryad being hunted by 3 corrupt dryads.

Most of the forest spirits have been corrupted by the Tree of Bones to have its predatory and bloodthirsty appetite. A few remain as they were before - not sweet woodland spirits of course, but also not as murderous as the Tree of Bones' coterie.

You see a woman in a short green tunic running through the woods, pursued by shadows flitting through the woods further back, and bleeding.

As soon as they see the woman, call a Rally Step and treat ensuing action as an Act. The woman is at medium range and the shadows at long range.

One Rally step action can be trying to get a better look at the fleeing woman or the shadows.

The woman: **Observation (2D)** (minute details) with ■ ■ ■ (range modifier from forest card) sees green blood from many cuts.

The shadows: **Observation (2D)** (keen vision) with ■ ■ ■ ■ (range modifier from forest card) sees they are other women in russet brown dresses.

Heroes have to make an **Average Athletics (2D)** check or spend 2 Fatigue running to physically intervene if trying to protect the fleeing woman and or intercept the hunters (Creepy Forest modifiers apply to running).

- The woman suffers no hindrance running through the woods, even less than a wood elf being fey of these woods.

The fleeing dryad is still hostile to intruders (social action modifier of ♦♦) except an Asrai (wood elf) or one attuned to nature (e.g., a Jade Wizard) either of which may interact less difficulty (social action modifier of ■■). Being pre-occupied with staying free of the Tree of Bones' influence and their corrupted kin, these spirits are inclined to avoid confrontation and the initial challenge (first ♣) in any interaction is simply to get them to stay and talk.

A ♣♣♣ social interaction gains the creature's blessing – not that it likes the PC but it sees an “enemy of my enemy” (sap is daubed on that hero, plus one per each additional success or ♣♣, and the hero can now ignore the Forest's Enmity misfortune pool in encounters).

Suspense Builds 4 - A new (ancient) menace - The Strigoi Vampire Malfi.

Two of the Graf's soldiers are found dead, savaged and drained of blood.

This was not done at the Tree and so means there is a vampire in the valley – the Graf and Magister realize as much and blame a vampire for all human and animal disappearances for public purposes (scapegoating for any Tree activity).

The vampire is lairing in an *Abandoned Mine* (iron, not silver). This can lead to the ***Vampire Hunt Episode.***

The Graf and his men want to hunt down the vampire and equip themselves to set off to do so. If players help they form two parties. The vampire is met in the mines or outside at night.

If for any reason a hunt is delayed, an additional Suspense Builds scene occurs at night as Malfi climbs the tower and kills the guard on duty in it that night.

Green Ghost Scenes

The vampire Sylvana is transfixed, trapped in limbo while her body is pinioned to the Tree of Bones with a hawthorn stake.

Normally this would leave her consciousness trapped in a void, but instead her spirit is able to manifest. Just as the Tree of Bones has been tainted by her vampiric nature, so her spirit is able to appear despite her body being transfixed.

Her spirit is a tortured thing, craving freedom from its limbo. It does not know its name or nature. It knows only that its body lies in the forest, that its lover the Graf has condemned it to a tortured existence that it will be released from only if its remains are "freed".

Up Late Scene

This scene can be used whenever a PC is up late at night, preferably alone at the particular moment, and has a view outside the manor.

This could be when they are outside at night or inside and near a window. If a choice of PC's is available, it is the one with lowest Willpower though preferably not the PC Heir (just to broaden out adventure's attentions)

You see a green light in the woods.

If the Player takes time to call others then the others don't see anything.

Whoever first sees the light is then the one who keeps seeing it. This can be as simple as when others are looking in a different direction.

The second time this happens, increase **Party Tension +1** (crying wolf etc.)

If the affected PC wants to investigate, they must move out into the woods to get a better look (against the advice of any manor residents - *the woods, at night, are you mad?*).

An **Observation (2D) (keen vision)** check is required though darkness imposes ■■■, adding a fourth ■ once under the forest boughs. However, the fact the target glows adds □□□.

If the PC spots the figure it comes clearer now, and others with the PC can then see it too. The PC first chosen may recover 1 Stress once comrades see the figure as well (*you see it too!*)

Go to "meeting the Green Ghost"

Meeting the Green Ghost

The green light is revealed as a woman's ghostly apparition - she is a white phantom in a green nimbus. She has a dress and long hair but her features are hazy - like a fuzzy negative.

Fear 1 check is required once seeing the spirit this clearly - see the Green Ghost/Sylvana section (p.42). Note, in the Creepy Forest the forest's misfortune dice budget is good to spend on making Fear checks more difficult, describing how the forest worsens the menace.

The ghost wails and tries to communicate, unfortunately its unearthly speech is potentially fatal to mortals.

The spirit's "communication" is its **Banshee Wail** action.

Failing the check required by action but rolling one or more ✖ means at least realizing there are words in the scream and that only someone who can keep control of their fears will be able to make them out.

Anyone forced to make the **Discipline** check who passes it understands what the spirit is saying, which is in Reikspiel.

Why have you done this Stierlich? Why give me to the woods like this? It is so dark, so cold - not as it was when we embraced.

The ghost does not attack people but may seek to touch or embrace them, leading to the use of the **Haunting Visions** action. In addition to the mechanical effects, actual visions "A dark endless void with flashes of a dark grove, horrifying skeletal tree figures and the feeling of being trapped."

The "withstand its wail" to understand a ghost etc. is a recurring feature of how I handle spirits with 'something to say' (resisting the attack effect of the wail is required). If you make it one in your campaign than a suitable Knowledge check would reveal this fact.

Confronting Manor Residents about the Ghost

The Graf, Noll and Grenz can all honestly say they have never seen such a creature. They suspect it is a fey spirit, likely one that does not mean well - and so warn anyone talking to them against it.

The servants take the Graf's views to heart and distrust the spirit, though some have seen a figure flitting about in the woods late at night.

See Soldiers Wim and Rolf in the NPC section for two different NPC reactions.

Graf's Heir Scenes

Once the Graf suspects his child's heritage he wants to secretly spend time with them and also keep them safe.

The Graf's Heir Meets the Graf For First Time Scene

Unless it is stated to be hidden, the Graf's eye is obviously drawn to good luck charm.

- Spotting where his gaze goes is **Observation (Int) (2D) (minute detail)**, though the PC Heir suffers ■ ■ as it's harder to see when you're the subject.
- Intuition vs Fel to discern his attitude.
- Proper checks see a look of recognition on his face (this was Gretta's). He then looks carefully at the heir (he suspects the truth) - his demeanour will soften and then a brief impression of horror and fear, but he tries to maintain a facade of distance.

When revealed as heir and once "private", the Graf says of the good luck charm:

"Treasure that charm, it was your mother's. Katrinelya of Rhya gave it to her as gift the day she married us.

Yes, we were married by a priestess of an imperial cult - you are not a bastard my son.

If only I had a legacy to give you. I have no papers or proof for you, it would be a doom upon you to have such."

The fact this comes from their mother explains its unique effectiveness.

* Katrinelya of Rhya is now the Hierarch of Rhya (per 2nd Edition **Tome of Salvation** p.64-65). She is a very reliable witness as to the marriage if witnesses are ever needed.

The PC Openly Claims Connection

The claim evokes different responses among NPCs.

Reaction from Graf

A brief emotion crosses his face before he controls and conceals it (Horror)! (Intuition vs his Fel 5 to detect it).

His first response is denial.

This is not possible, the claim is spurious – what do you hope to gain? Even if you were my bastard, you have no claim upon me unless I recognize you. I would sooner die without an heir than clutch at the fantasy I have one. You have picked the wrong target for your con-game – begone from the valley within an hour of tomorrow's dawn.

Then stalks off.

- Intuition can reveal he does not mean what he is saying, he is scared but not of the heir, and there is a look of hope and anguish in his eyes.
- Doesn't order them to leave at night because of danger of forest to his son, and because he wants chance for the second, secret rendezvous that night.

The Graf Learns of Gretta's Death, the PC Heir's abandonment

Whenever it is disclosed that Gretta died another emotion is briefly visible on the Graf's face. (Grief)! (Intuition vs his Fel 5 to detect it, check gains □□).

Well you might as well stay to dinner...

Even if parentage claimed, and bizarrely for his declarations, but not if one believes them false,

the Graf may *"invite the jester and his accompanists to dine with him – we can see what little play they have for us, a shame to not let them recite their lines."*

To draw out story and get to the suspense points, and have a "dinner scene" where the Captain and Magister are present.

Reaction From Others

Disbelief. The Graf is well known among his men for having "no appetite" in that direction.

Most believe (wrongly) that he suffered an "injury" earlier in life making children or a meaningful marriage unlikely.

This is paired with "so what if a noble has a bastard here or there." Noble by-blows are common and most work in sculleries and stables all over the Empire. The law gives no rights to a bastard unless their father claims them.

If hero manages to be convincing, a "wait and see" attitude (maybe the Graf recognizes him so can't afford to be unpleasant until Graf's attitude clear).

Reaction from Magister Grenz

Exactly the same on surface – Intuition vs Int 5 can reveal intense interest. *"So when and where did you originate?"*

He is interested in knowing if this is a Scion (he does not know about the False Scion plan, as he is a Strigoi agent)

A Knock in the Door in the Night

HANDOUT

Later, secretly, the Graf approaches the PC Heir,

"You risk your life by naming yourself my child. Here is what I can give you [purse of 24 gold crowns - a noble's monthly stipend for 2 years]. You must leave and abandon this claim. I can give you nothing more that is not a death sentence. The only reason I abandoned you mother and you was to prevent you becoming known as a possible Scion of Nagash due to your bloodline and the alignment of stars at the time of your conception. There were those who sought to bring about your conception and I did not want them to know they had succeeded - they did not expect me to love your mother or you."

If you become known as a Scion of Nagash, you are condemned to a pyre or a worse fate at the hands of those who would seek to gain his power or resurrect him. A wizard would seek to claim power through you, a priest to burn you, a cultist to awaken something, a vampire to bring their time of a Thousand Thrones - none would let you walk your own path."

When you are back in civilization proclaim you attempted a fraud and swindled me, say whatever you wish but make clear you do not believe yourself my child."

Your comrades, do they believe you are my son, will they agree to claim it a fraud or not?"

FINDING THE TREE OF BONES EPISODE

- Try to have some soldiers along for the expedition, including Rolf (p.21) - who will be compelled to pull the stake out of Sylvana.

The Graf, Captain and Magister all know the tree's location but pretend ignorance as they do not want anyone going there since it is unsafe for intruder and their secret. The soldiers know where they execute bandits which is the tree's clearing, though they haven't been there in two months and only go there with the Graf as "the forest lies to play tricks".

Attempting to approach the tree if seen as foes (without the Graf) requires succeeding on ***If You Go Into the Woods Today*** progress tracker as the forest seems to change, trees to move, making it hard to find the way. The valley is small, less than a mile across, but the forest can make itself seem endless as can any awakened forest. The *Creepy Forest* card is in play.

There are two event steps, each an Encounter which provokes an Act (intended to make this a 3 Act Episode, with rally steps before Act 2 and 3). Beyond rally steps, spending an action on First Aid etc. between Acts while in the progress track means that hero is not making any contribution to advance track.

Event One is a swarm (henchman group) of Spites in form of animate swirl of now flies around the hero who is making the most contribution to the progress track distracting, plucking at hair and tweaking nose – leaving small nicks (a single Inhibiting Attack). A *Demoralized* condition gained here lasts until the 2nd Act ends. The encounter budget here is spent all at once on anything a hero does.

Event Two is an ambush by Tree Kin with a gang of Dryads (one per hero, henchmen). The treekin reveals itself with Strangleroots attack – Initiative check with the ambush penalty from forest spirits (who attempt to appear in Enchanting Visage guise if their initiative is better than the highest Discipline character's then they count as unobserved when they check (they spend their Cunning Budget completely on check). Their intent is only to drop guise later in order to go from Fear 2 to Fear 3.

Event Three is the Tree of Bones.

See Forest Spirits for more information on creatures and possible additional encounters.

VAMPIRE HUNT EPISODE

Key elements - Grenz' treachery revealed, the vampire attacks the PC heir seeking to taste his blood and is disappointed for this is not a Scion of Nagas – realizing it was a trap.

Once he realizes it's a trap, Malfi is seeking only to escape. He assumes one or more present are "in on it" and snarls *"Tell your bitch queen we will drag all her kind from their silken holes and leave them to burn in the sun."*

Act 1 - Tracking Vampire to its Lair

This assumes heroes try to track the vampire from the scene of an attack, other possibilities include setting a trap such as staking out a "goat" (bait).

The vampire and its pack can be tracked **Average Observation (tracking)** ♦♦, through the *Creepy Forest*, with □□ for snow making it easier. The difficulty increases with passage of time (misfortune dice every few hours). ♣ follows to the minehead it lairs in. ♠♠ realizes there is more than one creature being followed. ♠♠♠ identifies five sets of prints, one of which is deeper and heavier.

Act 2 - Old Iron Mine (*This Mine Isn't Safe card*)

The mine is dark, and often cramped. It is still possible to track but now by seeing minute disturbances here and there more than a trail, this is **Hard Observation (minute)** ♦♦♦.

It is almost completely dark (■■■■■) so tracking within the mine requires a light source. Faint light such as a candle or glowing rune (Close) – ■■■■ Moderate light such as a torch or lantern (Medium)- ■■■

Strong light source - several torches or lanterns, or a Bright Wizard's flaming staff (Long) - ■

A rat swarm attacks the heroes as they progress, with two ghouls. Injury by either requires a *Disease Check* at the Rally step – if hit only once add □: the rats carry **Grim Ague** (♦♦) ghouls carry **Ghoulpox** (♦♦♦♦). Remember dwarf/elf bonus □□

Act 3 - The Vampire (and 4 Ghoul Henchmen and a Swarm of Bats)

The vampire lairs up a mine shaft which must be climbed to reach him - **Average Athletics (climbing)** ♦♦. It's wide enough for two to climb abreast.

Malfi awaits at top for the first PCs climbing up - combat starts just as the first one or two pulls themselves up. The PCs start 'prone' with no ability to *Dodge* since they are hanging there.

- Anyone below has no line of fire for ranged attacks (*Trick Shot* might work)
- Heroes suffer ♦ to initiative if they confront the vampire this way.
- Until they force Malfi back (hit and sacrifice all damage to just force back), the PCs are at the top of the drop off. The 'Steep Cliff' location card is used - being pushed back means a tumbling back fall down steep slope shaft (1 Wound, 1 Fatigue, and brief Staggered condition, Medium range from the top).
- His ghoul henchmen appear behind PC's to attack anyone hanging back.
- See Malfi page 41 for tactics of bats etc.

Smart Approaches to the Vampire

Smart PC's may set traps or try alternatives to confronting a vampire in a dark cave of its choosing – this should be rewarded. At a minimum, Grenz's treachery may be revealed as he foils a trap for his master!

Challenges to success include Malfi's

Observation; his use of bat swarms and ghouls to scout and spring; his own ability to use bat form to scout as "secretly" as he can; and his inhuman patience, he can wait for hours to act when foes are tiring and losing alertness.

Grauwerk Manor Character Profiles

All characters except Magister Grenz are extremely loyal to Graf, ♦ to any actions to seeking to cause them to act otherwise.

Graf Steirlich von Bruner (Duelist)

A handsome man nearing the end of his 30's. Clean-shaven with long tangled hair, a strong jaw and bloodshot eyes. Long-limbed with fine fingers. He wears a tailored shirt and leather doublet embossed with the von Bruner house boar's head crest, a gold-chased basket hilted rapier at his side.

Informally wears leather doublet (Def 0, Soak 2), if armed to patrol breastplate & chain (Def 1, Soak 4)

To Magesight - there is a slight aura about the graf, it takes success on a ♦♦♦ check to ascertain that he was long enmeshed in a powerful aura of dhar and shyish and though it is gone it still leaves traces on him (this is the after-affect of having been a vampire's lover for several years).

St	To	Ag	Int	WP	Fel	A/C/E	Wounds	Stance
5(5) □	4(2 or 4) □	4(0 or 1)	4	4 □	5	5.2.3	20	C2*

Potent: ♦ to all actions that target this character, for he is experienced, quick-witted and strong-willed.

Weapon Skill double trained, Superior Weapon □. Reiklander □□ once/session.

Driven to Drink: exposed to alcohol becomes intoxicated unless making Hard ♦♦♦ check.

Noble (Rank 2): □ to Charm/Guile vs Gold Tier, to Guile/Intimidate vs Silver Tier, to Intimidate/Leadership vs Brass Tier; suffer Stress if losing face before peer

Reclusion Insanity: cannot benefit from aid another or other ways to get help from others.

Actions: Riposte, Duelist's Strike, Dramatic Flourish, Dazzling Display, Improved Parry, Improved Dodge

* In Extremis - if all is revealed and he is struggling to save his heir, his Stance becomes R2

Captain Fritz Noll (Soldier)

Scarred-face, trim soldier in his mid-40's, fit and ready for anything, with pistol, sword and shield.

St	To	Ag	Int	WP	Fel	A/C/E	Wounds	Stance
4(5) □	5(3)	3(2)	3	3	3	6.3.1	15	R2

Leadership, Intimidate and Weapon Skill Trained. Reiklander □□ once/session.

Pistol (DR 6, CR2, Pierce 1, Unreliable 2). Wears mail shirt and carries round shield.

Actions: Improved Block, Warning Shot, Sword and Board, Counterblow.

In case of Vampires: **Blessed Hawthorn Stake** melee attack against a vampire Superior □, DR 5 Weapon Skill vs Defence for ♣ normal damage; ♣♣ +1 critical, ♣♣ vampire loses its free manoeuvre each round as transfixed - if hero maintains a hold they can keep it from being dislodged - the vampire cannot use Blood Pool special abilities (e.g., change shape house rule). On a ✱ the stake burns to ash.

Felix Grenz, Jade Magister (Rank 3)

Secret vampire agent Equilibrium Power 5

Imagine an olive-skinned Friar Tuck with curly hair and green robes that are embroidered with ivy patterns, with a quarterstaff that seems to be made of twisted driftwood (as a Jade Magister, Grenz does not indulge in the over-the-top ceremonial get-ups the other orders like)

St	To	Ag	Int	WP	Fel	A/C/E	Wounds	Stance
3(4)	3(1)	3(1)	5 □	4 □	3	3.5.2	15	R2

Challenging: ■■ to all actions that target this character.

Double-Trained: Education, Guile, Magic Sense, Channelling (□ if Power less than 4) and Spellcraft.

Reiklander □□ once/session. Staff Attuned to Ghyre (□□□). His staff means Parry action adds additional ■ to an attacker.

Actions: Rank 1 or lower (□ spellcraft) Magic Dart, Howler Winds (Channel to cast), Whispering Winds, Gift of Life (out of season if in Fall); Rank 2 Leaf Fall; Rank 3 Lance of Nature (Channel to cast)

In case of Vampires: Scroll of **Death's Release** (Rank 3 Amethyst, ♦♦♦ Education check to read, Green side ♣ 10 wounds ignoring soak and To, ♣♣♣ 20 wounds ignoring soak and To, page 245 Player Guide)

Note – in this region, His Channelling is thus ♦ 2 blue, 2 red and 6 white, plus □ if WP<4.

Prerolled Channelling Attempts (normal): 6 power, 6 power and comet (expertise to casting), 6 power

if WP<4: 7 power, 7 power and comet, 7 power

Guardsmen - 16 (*men at arms* henchmen): 8 crossbowmen, 4 halberdiers and 4 sword and board men. 10 on duty days and 6 on duty nights (crossbowmen more day than night). Note Crossbow DR 6, CR 3, Reload.

Servants – 6 servants (*townsfolk*) butler, cook, 2 maids, stable boy and groundskeeper.

THE FOREST SPIRITS

The forest spirits and the woods are played for suspense and fear. Fear and Terror checks are important (see their group card talent as well).

The spirits use 'predator' tactics: one appears and then others from a different direction - hanging back is a way to be attacked by a more powerful forest spirit as it appears from the other direction. They impose ♦ on foe's initiatives and ✱ means that the character's first action is lost.

Magesight ♦ sees Ghylan flowing about the forest spirits.

Encounters just mucking about in the woods may be with:

- ✕ A single Dryad in beguiling form seeking to lure someone away, as two other Dryads wait.
- ✕ A Gang of Spites with Tree Kin and another Gang of Spites lurking
- ✕ A Gang of Spites with Tree King Gang lurking

The Wood Elf Forest Walk ability is in play - ignore terrain difficulties and up to ■■ in misfortune penalties in such terrain.

Spite - *an incessant chattering at a high pitch, (swarm)* Actions: Inhibiting Attack. These are nettling spites, they attack with AG and on ✱✱ they inflict *Entangled* condition.

Dryad - *"Your sap will be sweet."* As hard as oak when struck, supple as a reed bending out of way. Actions: Enchanting Visage, Tooth and Nail. [quote from *Old World Bestiary*]

Treekin - *"Give back the life you have taken."* Actions: Crush 'Em Good, Strangleroots, Thunderous Blow.

Forest Spirits group card in use. All gain *Intimidating Presence* reputation (In this case, Fear and Terror checks gain: ☠ suffer 1 stress) and *Flanking Manoeuvre* tactic (if engaged with at least 1 ally, you and allies all gain □ added to Melee Attack dice pools vs engaged foes, this benefits swarms etc.).

THE TREE OF BONES

Forest Glade is gloomy and over-hung with branches. Though the branches of deciduous trees are bare, they are so thick that they block out the light – as if a lattice-work of bones overarches the grove casting it in shadow. The massive oak at the centre has an evil and twisted appearance. A skeleton is staked to it and from its branches hang corpses, some skeletons and others more recently dead – beastmen, humans, animals. Dark shadows flit about it. A young woman hangs, bound from a lower branch.

Even in daylight, the shadowy light imposes ■■ modifier on all sight-based actions (so an elf or dwarf will see just fine).

Terror 3 check required (☠ suffer 1 stress added effect from group card). An Asrai (wood elf) that fails may choose *Frenzied* (this a blasphemy to an Asrai) instead of *Frightened* as a condition.

- **Observation (Minute)** ♦ – the bodies aren't lashed to the tree, the tree has impaled them.
- **Magesight** ♦ sees the Ghyran expected; ♦♦ but also black Dhar and amethyst Syish. ♣♣ It's the corpse – that's skeleton is a whirlpool of dark magics, immediately make a **Hard Education** ♦♦♦ ♣ this particular combination is a Vampiric combination.

The shadows are a cloud of spites flying about it (1 henchmen gang).

The “young woman” is a dryad playing at being a victim to draw onlookers in. If approached, it shifts to warform (fear check!) as it drops onto a foe (□ to attack).

Two tree kin lurk nearby, though if looking **Observation** opposed vs their Agility 4 can spot them.

The Tree of Bones is an immobile Treeman. It can summon aid by reducing the group card **Forest Spirits Spring to Summer** track 3 steps in which case roll ■: blank it is another cloud of spites; ☠ it is another dryad; ✕ it is a treekin. By reducing the track 6 steps, it can become mobile until it rolls a ✨.

Its forest spirits gain an expertise die to actions in the Tree's presence and the Blood Tree gets a free expertise die on all actions. (Drop this for weaker groups).

The skeleton staked to the tree is the Lahmia vampire Sylvana – still “alive”.

To Magical Sight:

Simple Magesight detects a strong disturbance in the aethyr such as could be made by a spellcaster, the subject of a spell or supernatural effect, one carrying magical items or more ominously a hedge witch, sorcerer, daemon or other creature of supernatural nature. A ♦ check detects only that more than one simple colour of magic is involved, it takes a ♦♦ check to see Ghyran (green winds) mixing with Dhar (black magic) and strands of Shyish (amethyst) – in a whirlpool around the tree. ♣♣♣ sees the Tree is primarily green and running through it like black snakes are lines of the black/amethyst energy that emanate from the skeleton staked to it. Success on ♦♦♦ check ascertains that the tree is a fey creature brought to life by Ghyran magic and the creature staked to it is an undead being – one that is not destroyed. If the mage has ever seen a vampire with mage sight before, they recognize the signature as vampiric.

Vampires

These are house rules designed to give vampires more flavour and reflect the 2nd Edition concept of different bloodlines: Strigoi, Necrarch, Lahmia, Carstein and Blood Dragon.

Detecting Vampires

Many are monstrous to behold and thus easily detected, others pass for human in poor lighting and under hoods while still others pass for human easily. The most monstrous may be mistaken for particularly muscular and hideous ghouls (Strigoi) or liches (Necrarchs) and not recognized as a vampire.

Those that often pass for human (Lahmia and von Carstein, and less often – mostly by virtue of concealing armour, Blood Dragons) can be seen as their true selves in mirrors and other reflective surfaces. The superstition that they are invisible in mirrors is just that, they avoid them for their true form is revealed which may be more or less monstrous but almost always shows their unnatural nature. Some vampires command sufficient magic to create illusions or control the minds of victims to hide themselves - the subject believing they see a reflection they do not (thus the usefulness of using a mirror without their knowledge). Note that mirrors are expensive. A small mirror is Rare, costs 10 shillings or more, Enc of 1+ (even if small must be carefully handled to avoid breakage, any Chaos Star rolled while a mirror is at risk could mean it breaks).

Simple Magesight detects a disturbance around a vampire such as could be made by a spellcaster, the subject of a spell or supernatural effect, one carrying magical items or more ominously a hedge witch, sorcerer, daemon or other creature of supernatural nature. A ♦ check detects only that more than one simple colour of magic is involved (meaning a college wizard is likely not the subject), it takes a ♦♦ check to see Dhar (black magic) with strands of Shyish (amethyst), and with ♣♣♣ make out that it flows around the creature as if it were a cape, or loving, caressing tendrils, a flurry of batlike shadows, a myriad of crawling black beetles or some other thematic manifestation indicating the subject is “at one” with this aura. Traces of such an aura could be seen as well on thralls, bloodswains, recent victims of vampire feeding or anyone who contends often with dark magic. Success on a ♦♦♦ check ascertains the creature's nature with certainty. ✨ on any magesight used against a vampire alerts the vampire to the attention and leaves the mage open to immediate retaliation (e.g., a Beguile).

- Note that seeing a vampire's aura with magesight is a disturbing experience and warrants a Fear check (even if one already made).

Vampire Weaknesses – standard to all vampires although the most powerful may have limited abilities to ignore them.

Bloodthirst: a powerful urge to drink blood which can cause them to betray themselves at its sight and drives them to hunt constantly at risk of exposure.

Concealing their appetite for blood (e.g., when someone cuts themselves shaving) is an opposed test of vampire Discipline vs watcher's Observation. If Bloodpool is over normal rating, they gain a fortune die per excess point on this check. A vampire that is below its normal Bloodpool rating suffers a misfortune die for each point short in efforts to conceal its appetite.

Sunlight: ♦ to actions as if "blinded". Blood Pool tracker loses one space/round in direct sunlight. At "empty Blood Pool", draw a Critical Wound card and inflict wounds = severity, with "dissolution" at zero wounds. Blood Powers cannot be used, except *Resist the Dawn*. (A power some older vampires have to do just that, though with fewer special powers useable in sunlight)

Silver and Fire: wounds so caused cannot be healed except by “rest”. All other wounds can be healed more rapidly by sating blood thirst (see below). This means such wounds should be tracked separately.

Reflection: mirrors show their true form (see detecting vampires, above).

Running water: the flow of Ghyran life magic in most naturally running water imposes the **Weakened** condition when even partially submerged and if fully submerged inflicts 1 Wound/round as it carries away the undead’s life force. While immersed Blood Powers cannot be used (e.g., cannot change shape to flee). This effect does not apply to salt water or any particularly tainted waters. This does not stop a vampire taking a boat or using a bridge but most will not wish to wade across a river.

Warpstone: a Corruption check must be made, failure results in no corruption but for each point that would have been gained a vampire suffers a Wound as if inflicted by fire or silver. In all cases, even if the Corruption test is passed exposure to warpstone makes Blood Powers unusable for a number of rounds equal to challenge dice in Corruption check (e.g., at least 2). Warpstone shackles can thus keep a vampire from using shapeshifting and similar powers to escape.

Sigmar’s Religious Symbols: When used with the **Guarded Position** action, the resulting misfortune dice modifiers are treated as challenge dice by vampires using melee attacks as they do not like approaching so closely. If the vampire or an ally rolls a comet in a melee attack means the symbols is knocked away.

Blood Powers

Adult vampires, those who have survived a century, come into “blood powers”. These are special abilities that vary by their bloodline. Using a blood power requires reducing the Blood Pool (undead group creature card) by one step. Blood powers cannot usually be used in sunlight or while in running fresh water (two conditions vampires find unpleasant to varying degrees). The vampires in this adventure each have such powers.

MALFI, THE STRIGOI VAMPIRE

A bestial and terrifying form, looking like a huge ghoul with empty eyes, skin like iron and a deathly stench.

The Strigoi vampire Malfi, believing a possible Scion of Nagash is present, has come to the valley. Malfi has a cold, terrible resolve. Like all Vampires, Strigoi take their right to feed upon and dominate all lesser beings as a birthright, and they take just as much offence as their brethren when anything upsets this natural order.... The Strigoi take pride in their incredible strength and consider it a sign of their true place amongst Vampire kind—the strongest should be at the top.

When he uses Combat Focus his vampiric nature is obvious. He keeps 1 point in Blood Pool for a batform escape and otherwise uses it for an expertise die it every attack.

St	To	Ag	Int	Wp	Fel	A/C/E	Wounds	Stance
7(5)	6 (5)	5(3)	4	6□	5□	6/4/5*	24	R2

Challenging Foe ♦ *Animal Senses:* uses WP not Int for Observation add □□□ for keen senses.

Stench First time engaging him, Resilience check ♦♦ (resist poison) or the horrid stench causes **Queasy** condition if remaining within Close range.

Fear 3 (can be turned off), Dead Earnest (immune fear and terror), Night Vision, Dead Calm (effects targeting its Willpower add ♦♦)

*Blood Pool card (starting 5).

Weapon Skill Trained. Melee actions gain ⚔️ +1 Blood Pool

Fast: spend one manoeuvre to move between Medium and Long, 2 between Long and extreme.

Sating Blood Thirst: if a Bloodpool reaches its maximum, each further gain to it allows the vampire to heal Wounds equal to number of boons allocated, being at least two (except those caused by Silver, Sun damage or Fire, see **Weaknesses**). During a Rally Step, a vampire with any bloodswains (Lahmia) or other willing subjects can completely heal all normal wounds by draining the victim dry (destroy one ally to heal completely).

Deadly Claws: melee attacks have Pierce 2 and CR 2

Ferocity – if Critically wounded, Stance becomes R3

Actions: Mauling Blow, Combat Focus, Bone Ripper (ghouls not skaven), Go for the Throat, Improved Dodge, Summon Creatures of the Night (bats only)

Blood Powers (use of any reduces Blood Pool by 1): Batform (as a Move Action, becomes swift and Def rises to 5 due to size). He may reduce Bloodpool by 1 to add ⚔️ into his **Summon Creatures of the Night** outcome pool.

Common Vampire Weaknesses (see above)

Malfi is accompanied by a pack of 4 ghouls, and tends to summon bat swarms – which he then hides in using Batform to appear as “just another bat”. His favourite trick is for a bat swarm to harry victim(s) and then “poof” he is also there among them a figure of terror and death. Malfi’s bat swarm and pack of ghouls are only there to help him – they use Guarded Position to make it harder to hurt him, they attack anyone using a Sigmarite holy symbol, etc.

THE GREEN GHOST

Use a **Tomb Banshee** with the **Banshee Wail** and **Haunting Visions** Actions. For stronger groups having the **Deathly Presence** action felt first. Liberal use of ethereal ability to appear and disappear – it can pass through woods without slowing down etc.

SYLVANA

Lahmia Vampire (starved)

St	To	Ag	Int	Wp	Fel	A/C/E	Wounds	Stance
7(5)	6 (3)	5(3)	5	6□	5□	4/6/0*	18	C2 – R2

*Blood Pool card, normally starting 5 but she is in special circumstance of having been transfixed, making her pool Zero. She is desperate to feed and cannot use any Blood Powers until she does.

Fear 2 (can be turned off), *Dead Earnest* (immune fear and terror), *Night Vision* (two fewer ■■), *Dead Calm* (effects targeting Willpower add ♦♦).

Melee and Beguile gain ⚔️ +1 Blood Pool

Animal Senses: uses WP not Int for Observation, add □□□ due to keen senses.

Fast: spend one manoeuvre to move between Medium and Long, 2 between Long and extreme.

Sating Blood Thirst: if a Bloodpool reaches its maximum, each further gain to it allows the vampire to heal Wounds equal to number of boons allocated, being at least two (except those caused by Silver, Sun damage or Fire, see **Weaknesses**). During a Rally Step, a vampire with any bloodswains (Lahmia) or other willing subjects can completely heal all normal wounds by draining the victim dry (destroy one ally to heal completely).

Pass for Human (cannot use while starved) - appear human (fangs or claws being used ends effect, cannot increase Bloodpool while using this ability). If revealing natural weapons and attacking with surprise, foes add a challenge die to initiative.

Blood Power (use requires reducing Blood Pool one point) - Corrupted Innocence - unsettling beauty makes it difficult to imagine trying to hurt her – add ♦⚔️ to one targeted PC's attempts to harm her (once this effect is activated against a particular PC, it continues for the remainder of the Act without having to spend another Blood Pool point).

Guile and **Spellcraft** Trained

Actions: Melee: Cut and Run, Sudden Knife (claws or knife); Support: Beguile, Improved Dodge, Twisting Words. Spells: Petty Magics (Cantrip, Channel Power, Counterspell, Magic Dart, Quickcasting), Doombolt.

Common Vampire Weaknesses (see above)

Sylvanna is not a “combat monster”, she favours attacking from range or using her Beguile action. She will not stand and fight multiple foes if outnumbered – her first actions when freed are likely to “cut and run” unless she has some fool handy (e.g., Rolf) that the Green Ghost has ‘beguiled’ in which case she will reward him by draining him dry to restore Blood Pool to 5.

HANDOUT

To be given to Player when the Graf approaches the PC heir secretly

"You risk your life by naming yourself my child. Here is what I can give you [purse of 24 gold crowns - a noble's monthly stipend for 2 years]. You must leave and abandon this claim. I can give you nothing more that is not a death sentence. The only reason I abandoned you mother and you was to prevent you becoming known as a possible Scion of Nagash due to your bloodline and the alignment of stars at the time of your conception. There were those who sought to bring about your conception and I did not want them to know they had succeeded - they did not expect me to love your mother or you.

If you become known as a Scion of Nagash, the accursed Nekharan who brought undead into the world, you are condemned to a pyre or a worse fate at the hands of those who would seek to gain his power or resurrect him. A wizard would seek to claim power through you, a priest to burn you, a cultist to awaken something, a vampire to bring their time of a Thousand Thrones - none would let you walk your own path.

When you are back in civilization proclaim you attempted a fraud and swindled me, say whatever you wish but make clear you do not believe yourself my child.

Your comrades, do they believe you are my son, will they agree to claim it a fraud or not?"

Time is short - you have time to answer his question and for one question of your own – what is your answer and your question?

The Graf's Ancestry

If heroes desire a family tree, this is it. It posits unofficial connections between some published NPCs.

Graf Steirlich is only son of Wolfgang and Althea von Bruner. Wolfgang was the son of Graf Gottolf von Bruner and Fronika. Gottolf was the youngest of three sons of Lord Theodoric von Bruner. Lord Theodoric's eldest son Augustus married Dorthilda von Jungfrued (aunt to the current Graf Sigismund von Jungfreud).

Augustus and Dorthilda had two sons, the eldest being Lord Magistrate Heissman von Bruner and younger being Heinrich von Bruner. Heinrich von Bruner is the father of Ludmilla and Agnetha von Bruner who married Rikard von Aschaffenberg and Matthias von Jungfreud respectively.

Thus in von Bruner line, the entire lines of Augustus and Sigric (the two older brothers of Theodoric) come to the principal inheritances before the impoverished line of Gottolf (which inherited little from Theodoric and has not done well since).

This Mine Isn't Safe!

Start	◆ Check	◆◆ Check	◆◆ Check	COLLAPSE! ◆◆◆ Check
<p>This track advances one step any time a PC generates a ✨ that is not allocated by a card in play, indicating a mishap causes loose rocks to come tumbling down.</p> <p>It can only advance one step on a single turn.</p> <p>The first three times a step is advanced a <i>Coordination</i> check at listed difficulty must be made by each PC to avoid one wound from falling debris, on a failure each ☠☠ is another wound. On these checks ✨ inflicts “Damaged Condition” on an item. A dwarf or miner subtracts one ◆ from the check.</p> <p>The final time, the <i>Coordination</i> check is to escape being crushed by a major collapse – everyone takes 8 wounds minus the number of successes rolled, minus 1 per 🌿, minus 4 per 🌀, plus 1 per ☠☠, ✨ generates a Critical Wound. Assuming the hero remains conscious, they escape.</p> <p>If a hero falls, another hero who did not may attempt to drag him free by making an <i>Average Athletics (lifting)</i> ◆◆ check. Failure means the helping hero survives but did not extract their comrade, however each ☠ is another wound to the rescuer and ✨ is a Critical Wound to rescuer.</p>				

Use this tracker for any trips through the forest such as tracking something or seeking the Tree of Bones. It being a "magical forest", having been through it once doesn't guarantee path is the same this time.

If You Go Into the Woods Today

Enter Woods		Encounter		Encounter		Destination
▲	▶	◆	▶	◆	▶	◆

Athletics, Observation or Nature Lore ♦♦ check: ♠ advance on the progress tracker; ♠♠♠ advance two steps.

No check of a given type can be repeated until the other two types of check have both been attempted.

After each hero has had opportunity to check, roll ■ and on ✕ *Shadows Lengthen* (as per delay).

If a "local guide" (Graf, Captain Noll, Magister Grenz) is available, the check gains ■.

⌚ *Shadows Lengthen*: each time this adds ■ from poor light to maximum of ■■■■.

☼ *Ulric's Cold Breath*: wind and snow start blowing add ■■ to Observation and to any ranged attack beyond Close.

Second ☼: That PC makes *Resilience* ♦♦ check to avoid gaining the *Freezing* condition until they get someplace warm.

Failed Check: no progress and all suffer 1 Fatigue.

Graveroot Card (cost is preparation cost not purchase – rules for use are in Liber Infectus and GM Hardback – these rules are needed to use this card properly properly). *Made with the Strange Eons program.*



Run-Down Manor + Noble's Mansion which also gives the benefits of a good inn room (EW card) is Crumbling Watchtower with cramped spaces such as below decks from dreadfleet pod

Run Down Noble Mansion

Impressive building showing the owner's status and taste, though it has seen better times and houses too few souls.

Social actions and **Charm** gain □ if having the owner's favour and ■ if working against the owner. Stealth gains ■ ■ due to ever-present servants.

Physical actions gain: ☼ Foot goes through floor, stair carpet slides loose or other mishap leaves you prone and does 1 Fatigue and 1 Wound

Stealth Actions gain: ☼ Someone happens along.

Overnight rest (if in the best chambers) gains +2 Wound recovery.

Crumbling Tower

Mansion Card effects continue, add:

☼☼ A fall down stone spiral steps deals 1 Fatigue, 1 Wound and 1 Critical (severity 2 or less)

No more than 3 medium characters can be engaged. Joining if no one steps out requires **Athletics** or **Coordination ♦♦**, to push one out. Fail, also suffer one Wound.

The Tree of Bones can be used to represent its location and effects.

The "Asrai can tell" handout is for a wood elf.

TREE OF BONES

Heroes gain:

☼ Suffer 1 Stress and 1 Fatigue

Forest Spirits (including Tree)

Gain:

☞ Recover 5 wounds if wounded, Refresh ACE pool otherwise.

An Asrai can tell, the forest here is awake as Athel Loren is awake. An awakened forest has no love for creatures that cut wood or shape stone and metal. The Asrai gained and keep Athel Loren's acceptance with difficulty and even now it is not unquestioned. The Asrai do not reveal the lore of wakened forests to others, who might seek to break the bond of the Asrai and Athel Loren. An Asrai has ■■ to resist subterfuge or duress that would so result.

Forest spirits such as spites, dryads and treekin may walk these woods, as agents of the forest's will or at rare times as independent creatures. You know these are not kindly sprites.

Creepy Forest

The leaves whisper secrets and the forest is angry. Is something watching, what was that noise?

Foliage obscures vision and undergrowth makes running difficult.

FEAR 1 check each time entered.

Urban trait ■■ all mental checks - *it's just all too green.*

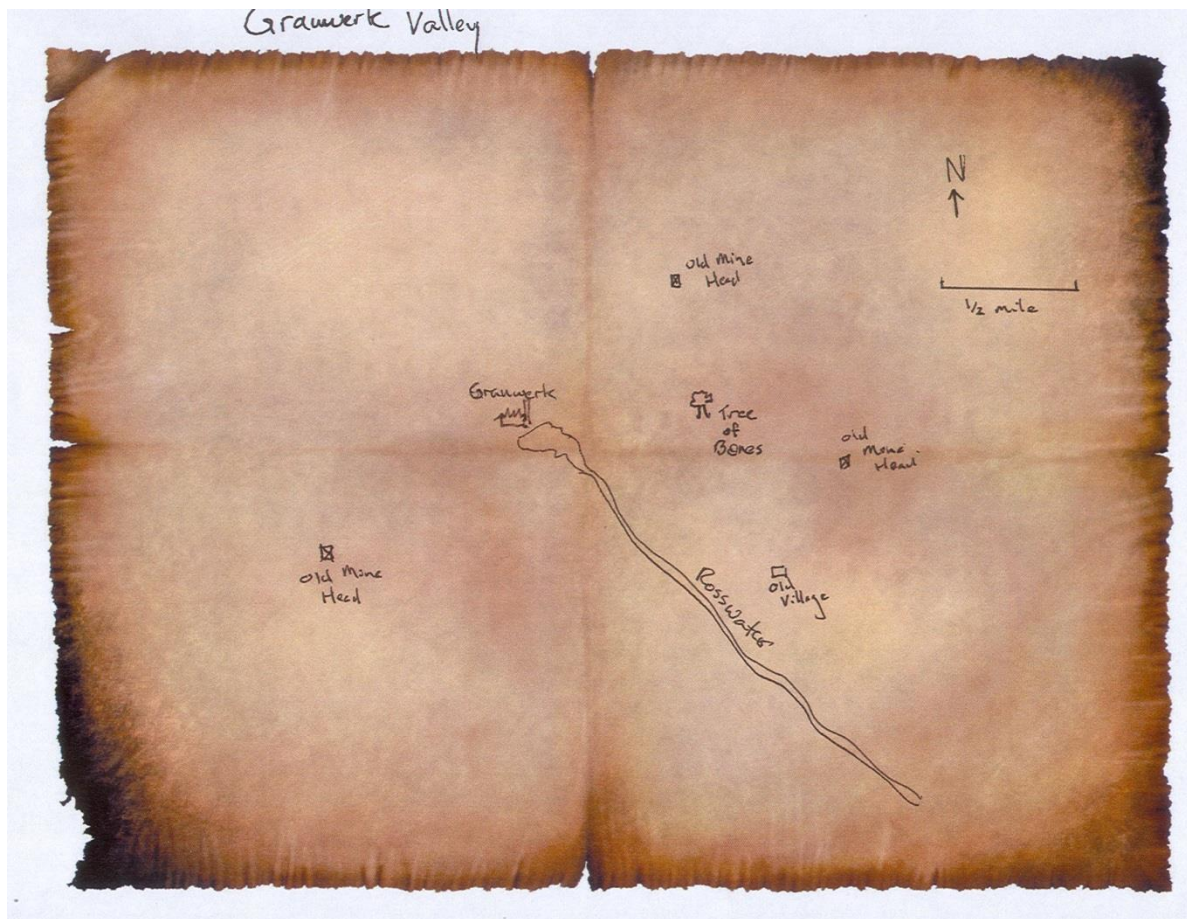
Wood Elf gains ■■ to resist Fear or other forest mental effects - *Asrai belong in creepy forests.*

The Forest Is Angry - Each encounter, GM has an environmental ■■■■ per Player budget.

Forest Effects: Ranged Attack & Observation penalty/ **Stealth** bonus: Close ■/■; Medium ■■■/■■■; Long ■■■■/■■■

Moving Extra: after first move **Easy (1D) Coordination (Acrobatics)** with # of ■ = # additional moves, failure = trip and fall prone instead. Ability to ignore in ■ woods allows that many extra moves before test (e.g. wood elf gets to make two before having to worry about tripping when running around in woods).

Graumark Valley



The Adventure without PC Heir Role

You can modify the adventure to not have the PC Heir role present at all. The story of the Graf remains the same and there was such a child.

The PC's encounter this NPC and find them dying of wounds in the course of some other adventure. If possible, they owe this NPC some debt of honour or gratitude (as simple as the NPC shouting a warning and then being struck down by attacking beastmen or whatever). The more the NPC mattered to the PC's the better.

The unlucky soul presses their "good luck charm" onto a PC and make them promise to *"return this to the Steward of Grauwerk – tell him both mother and child are now beyond hurting his precious name."*

If they do not return the good luck charm they find it is cursed/haunted – **Ill Fortuned** condition – and keeps reappearing if destroyed or given away etc.

The Lahmia machinations can be simplified to a plot targeting the Strigoi Malfi using a prophecy particular to his clan and promising the Strigany clan that were his subjects will one day give birth to a child who will be the means by which the humbled and persecuted Strigoi vampires will rise to power over all their kin.