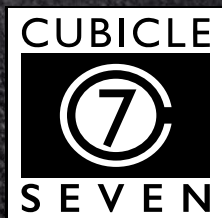


WARHAMMER
FANTASY
ROLE-PLAY

Power Behind the Throne
— Padraig Murphy



DEVELOPER
DIARY

POWER BEHIND THE THRONE

by Pdraig Murphy

'It's not just all flying wizards, garden parties, and mythical beasts, there's also operas, seething clerics, and the sordid lives of opulent nobles to take your mind off the taxes, even temporarily.'

Five days of carnival entertainment is enough to tire anyone out, even more so when it's the Middenheim Carnival. Any seasoned Old World traveller will know that this is an event not to miss! We've been so immersed in the City of the White Wolf that we thought now might be a good time to throw off our purple-stained pelts, put down our tankards and update you on what's really going on behind the scenes...

Middenheim: City of the White Wolf has got exceptional feedback. Though it's been an extraordinary year, the team at Cubicle 7 really pulled together to ensure that it was worth the wait. It's also a brilliant introduction to some of the incredible chicanery that's going on right under Karl-Franz's nose. Enough, we hope, to whet everyone's appetite for the increased and audacious machinations that take place in **Power Behind the Throne!** The city of Middenheim is a fabulous location — from its imposing seat on the Fauschlag, its Ulrican culture and character, its Dwarf stonework, and its place at the heart of many great events in both **WFRP** and Warhammer Fantasy Battles lore — it provides amazing opportunity for adventure.

All of this came about due to **Power Behind the Throne**, the late Carl Sargent's legendary adventure, and part three of The Enemy Within Campaign. Graeme Davis has done a great job of updating the text for a modern audience, and I'm very excited to see your reaction to it.

First off, I need to admit that the first time I played **Power Behind the Throne** as a player, we didn't finish it. This is much more of a reflection of my younger self than of the adventure, but after the daring escapades of **Death on the Reik**, with its freeform exploration of the waterways that still did an excellent job of keeping you on the path to its conclusion, we didn't know what to do with the contained sandbox that is **Power Behind the Throne**. How, and indeed why, were we to address the problems facing Middenheim. What is this issue with taxes? We're adventurers, what's bookkeeping to us? A good deal of Gold Crowns, as it turned out.

We set upon the trail of the last of the Wittgensteins and searched high and low for the Purple Hand, studiously ignoring the intricate web of personal connections that had been woven in front of our faces. If I'm being honest, we were probably looking for a problem that could be solved with the quick thrust of a blade or, as was our modus operandi, setting some substantial structure on fire. It likely didn't help that our very put upon GM was doing their best to memorise a dozen NPC's descriptions, motivations, and locations at the time, only to find most of it we would never get to.

Power Behind the Throne is not an adventure that can be best experienced with that mindset. When I later ran the campaign, a good deal older and arguably wiser, a much better time was had by all. The Graf's troubles were seen to, Middenheim was saved (in the most part — thankfully good Dwarf stonework doesn't burn quite so well as dry Reikwald timbers), and we all knew we had just experienced something rather special. There was a sense of knowing something of each NPC, of their strong identities in part because of their detailed motivations and attitudes, and in part because of their interwoven relationships to other NPCs. Everything felt so coherent in a way that very few other adventures ever have.

So, putting aside the past, what has changed in this edition of **Power Behind the Throne**? Well, new art aside, Graeme Davis has done a fantastic job of restructuring much of the original content in a way that makes it accessible. Anyone who has GMed the adventure knows that there are a good deal of moving parts, and numerous NPCs to recall. We have reordered information on the city, the characters, the plots, and the powers to make a GM's life easier. We have kept every major NPC as a two-page spread towards the back of the book for quick reference, so that it is easy to get to mid-game when one player unexpectedly decides to ask Dieter Schmeidehammer what he thinks of Gotthard Wallenstein.

Taking a cue from a clue planted in the original adventure, we've also put together our own Web of Influence, showing every major NPC, their major connections and affiliations, and a few small notes on each. I do believe that this graphic has the highest density of spoilers per page of anything we have done thus far — keep it far away from your players! The general size of location maps has been increased (and will be made available to our VTT players

in both player-safe and GM versions too!) to make them a bit easier to use. The Carnival itself has gotten a good selection of new props to put to use, as I love a good handout and, while they were memorable, the original adventure had very few of these when compared with earlier editions.

Graeme's now familiar Grognaard Boxes make an appearance, with some frankly Daemonic advice on how to change the main villain of the piece, should you wish to shake things up. These can also be incorporated into a game with entirely new players too, so if you feel your antagonist should have some fellow agents among the great and the good, there is advice on how best to achieve this. We have also added some sections detailing the Cults of the Ruinous Powers operating in Middenheim, and added some suggestions on how a canny 'Kastor Leiberung' might finally be able to work their dubious association with the late Magister to their benefit.

A good deal of all of this has been woven in with the **Power Behind the Throne Companion** content, and between the three books detailing Middenheim, there is enough content to satisfy even the most demanding adventure. I don't want to give away too much Companion content just yet, but suffice to say if you ever looked at *Power Behind the Throne* and thought, *'Hum, this needs even more highly detailed NPCs'*, then we have just the book for you.

For my own contributions, I have tried to remember the feeling of uniqueness that **Power Behind the Throne** engendered on that second playthrough — the first time we actually finished it — and bear it in mind at every step taken in bringing both **Middenheim: City of the White Wolf** and **Power Behind the Throne** to this edition of **WFRP**. I hope that we have done justice to the work that so many have contributed to over the years. In particular, Graeme Davis and Dave Allen deserve special recognition for these editions of **Power Behind the Throne** and **Middenheim**, respectively. Without understanding both of their Trojan efforts, I do expect both would agree that their work stands on the shoulders of giants, some of whom are no longer with us. I hope that all would be happy with how their work has been brought to a new audience.

Enjoy the Carnival.

Padraig Murphy
WFRP Producer, 2020

ART REVEAL

The Minotaur Fight!

Throwing aside all notes of how **Power Behind the Throne** is an intricate web of social intrigue, you can also fight this Minotaur — and quite possibly the Slayer too, if you play your cards especially wrong!

Portraits

This edition of **WFRP** has, I think, become known for its especially good portrait art, and we have continued that thread into **Power Behind the Throne**, where the NPCs are particularly well developed and deserving of special treatment. Sam Manley may never forgive me for the number of portrait briefs he was handed for this project, but I can rest easy in the knowledge that he is probably seeing the faces of Middenheimer's in his sleep. Here are two particularly lovely portraits that I will leave without naming — I think many will be able to place them without too much trouble, and for the rest it may be better to meet them at the Grand Carnival of Middenheim than here.

