

**A Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay Scenario of  
Fires, Swamps, Monsters and Heroes**

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So that's what happened last night!

# Mr Mephisto's Marvellous Menagerie

## Scene 1: Do you smell burning?

**Key objective: Get out of a burning inn!**

**Suggested start time: 10:00**

**Suggested max. scene duration: 20 mins**

In this WFRP scenario the PCs awake in a burning inn, help put the fire out, and then go on a quest to a nearby swamp for Mephisto the Menagerie owner to replace one of his star exhibits that perished in the flames. The PCs return triumphant only to find that not everything turns out all right in the end...

### GM's notes

The scenario is written with ease of use in mind, and is relatively straight forward, but do read the whole thing through before running your game.

Pre-generated characters have been provided, but the adventure can easily be used with any party of PCs. As well as the WFRP rules you'll also need the Bestiary, and a normal pack of 54 playing cards.

### You have 240 minutes, starting... now!

The scenario is designed to be run in 4 hours, but to ensure that everything runs smoothly and your players aren't denied the ending, you'll need to keep a careful eye on timing. To help you, suggested start times for the scenes are given (assuming a leisurely 10:00 start), along with suggested maximum durations. A few of the scenes are optional, so if you're running behind schedule these can simply be skipped. It's better to hurry things along a bit around the middle of the game to ensure the finale can be completed. Combat is usually where a lot of time can be lost, so if necessary ensure the PCs land that killed blow sooner rather than later! A few combat rounds dramatically described is more enjoyable than endless dice rolling.

### Flashbacks

Throughout the game there are points where the GM should give a secret note to one or more of the PCs to reveal some information. Most of the information is not critical, but it serves the purpose of making the players suspicious of one another. A full list of flashbacks to give to the PCs is given in **player handouts** at the end.

Moonlight shines down on the tranquil scene of a slumbering inn along one of the many roads that cross the Empire. Trees sway gently in the night air, and the stars twinkle brightly. All is quiet...

The PCs are sleeping drunkenly in the upstairs common room of the coaching inn "**The Lycanthrope Arms**" having broken the journey for the night. The setting can be anywhere.

As they snore away, a fine tendril of smoke curls under their door. Make **perception checks** for all PCs. The PC who rolls the best result awakens in the middle of the night to the smell of burning, the sound of snoring, and the taste of stale alcohol. Any PC who fails the test remains asleep. It's still very dark, and a few more **perception checks** reveal the following:

- \*A bad smell of feet, beer breath and body odour.
- \* An even stronger smell of burning.
- \* The hypnotic flicker of flames from outside the window.
- \* Cries of "Help!" and "Fire!"
- \* What sounds like horses screaming, and donkeys braying.
- \*Tendrils of smoke starting to creep in under the door!
- \*Some full chamber-pots near the players (which would be useful to take to help put out the fire.)
- \*An unlit lantern hanging from the roof (also useful to take).

It will be important later to know how long the PCs take to leave the room, so start working in combat rounds from here on.

Awake characters can attempt to rouse the heavy sleepers - it takes one round per character, or two if they failed the first perception test particularly badly.

Before the characters can do anything more they need to make three **consume alcohol tests** (At +10% for Elves who generally drink Wine, and +20% for everyone else who's been drinking beer) to find out how heavy a night's

Fan Material for Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay: Mr Mephisto's Marvellous Menagerie drinking they've just had. (Each failure adds a cumulative **penalty of 10% on WS, BS, Ag and Int** tests - see WFRP p115 for details). Note that failures results in the PC being drunk, and potentially a dangerous person to have around in the middle of a fire.

Any one sober enough to get up and move over to the wall and look out the window will see a fine star lit night, a full moon and... that there's a fire in the stable-yard. This is particularly bad news if the PCs own any horses - the screaming they heard is probably from their mounts! Panicky people are rushing about with buckets of water, trying to tame the flames. The fire fighting effort is not very coordinated and as the PC watches, two people bump into each other, both spilling their buckets. If the fire doesn't get put out soon it could engulf the whole inn, PCs, equipment and all!

**\*\*Flashback A:** Pass a note to one random PC to say they have a flashback to the previous night, and for some reason remembers everyone roaring with laughter at the amusing antics of a rather cute dancing goat called... Gerrard?

The obvious thing to do is to immediately escape the room, and help put out the fire before it becomes a towering inferno. But the PCs are unarmed, unarmoured, with their equipment scatted about the room, and quite possibly a bit drunk.

It's also the middle of the night and dark. For those without night vision, if any PCs specifically say they are spending a round making some light, then after that all perception checks are at +10%. PCs with night vision automatically get +20% but go to -20% for the first round after anyone turns on a bright light source. Remember to penalise the rolls accordingly (-10%/ -20%/ -30%) for any PC who is worse the wear for drink.

The quickest way out would be to jump through the window (the PCs are on the first floor) into what looks like hay bales under the window (although a closer inspection will reveal that it is actually a pile of very ripe manure). If so, go straight to **scene 2a**.

Or, they could take the more considered approach of gathering some equipment, putting on their boots, picking up their gold pouches, and rushing down the stairs. If this happens, then

this will make the PCs delayed by possibly a critical amount of time.

PCs might also chuck some of their stuff out the window to save it in case the inn does burn down. If this happens, some of it will get stolen by a light-fingered thief (one of the other guests), unless the PCs specifically say they've hidden it in the manure pile.

To help simulate the confusion, panic, and the untidy mess the PCs have left their room in after a night of heavy drinking, you can do the following: Use a normal deck of **54 playing cards** complete with jokers. For each round each PC spends searching they can draw a card and pick up (and put on) the relevant item. Refer to the **Card Effect Table** for details of what each card means.

#### Card Effect Table

2:	<b>Oops!</b> (See below)
3:	Boots/footwear
4:	Leg armour
5:	Arm armour
6:	Light weapon (e.g. dagger)
7:	<b>Ouch! My Head!</b> (See below)
8:	Body armour
9:	Helmet
10:	Heavy weapon (e.g. great axe)
J:	Ranged weapon (e.g. crossbow)
Q:	Backpack & contents
K:	Money belt/pouch
A:	<b>Aha! An excellent find!</b> (See below)

Discard the card after it has been drawn. If a card doesn't make sense - maybe the character doesn't have a helmet - then discard and draw again.

Any heart card means the PC has found an item of their **own** equipment. Any diamond or black card means they have found another random PCs piece of equipment. Any spade means they have somehow damaged the item (for example, by spilling beer on leather armour, treading on a sword and bending it, knocking armour into the smouldering fire-place, dropping an item in a full chamber pot, and so on.)

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Note that PCs can only damage each others equipment this way - which makes for more bad tempered, and entertaining, role-playing.

For the pre-generated characters they only have, at most, one of each item so you can simply ask your players to "tick" the item back on to their list. For campaign characters you might want to spend a few minutes checking over their equipment lists and assigning them into appropriate bundles, or keyed to certain cards.

**Oops!** The PC has found something unpleasant. Suggestions are:

- \* **Two of Clubs:** In their haste they have mistaken a chamber-pot for a helmet, with suitably comical results;
- \* **Two of Spades:** That's not a backpack, that's the Inn's cat - and it doesn't like its tail being pulled. Add a hissing cat to the dynamic - for next two rounds everyone must make an agility check or take 1 wound;
- \* **Two of Diamonds:** Ow! something sharp (a broken rum bottle) cuts the PC for 1 wound.
- \* **Two of Hearts:** Eww... is that vomit they put their hand in... it is!

**Ouch! My head!** The PC accidentally head-butts one of the other PCs whilst bending down to pick something up. Treat as a **strike to stun attack** (see WFRP p101), but with each doing an attack on the other, so both characters can be stunned for 1d10 rounds, with potentially lethal results. Another PC can un-stun them in one round with a slap/glass of liquid in the face.

**Aha! An excellent find!** The PC has found something belonging to the landlord that he's lost, and has been looking for absolutely everywhere: Suggestions are:

- \* **Ace of Hearts:** A gold locket with a tiny, well-drawn, portrait of his daughter (worth 5 Crowns);
- \* **Ace of Diamonds:** A small bag with three poorly cut green gem stones (worth 15 Crowns);
- \* **Ace of Spades:** A fine quality mouth harp marked "Lemmy" (worth 10 shillings);
- \* **Ace of Clubs:** An anti-toxin kit.

Note that the intention here is that the PCs should leave some items behind in the panic, fall over each other in an amusing fashion, and generally get in each other's way. Throughout

play up the sound of people crying "fire!" outside, the reflection of flames in the windows, how there's so much of the inn that is wood and very flammable to give PCs a sense that time is short, and they are in great danger.

If one of the **jokers** comes up the PCs hear a sudden cry as the flames outside flare up, making the fire even more difficult to put out. **Add three rounds** to the timing table below. The PCs also notice the smoke under the door getting blacker and more acrid - they should start to get scared they might be overcome with the fumes any minute now. Each round thereafter the PCs must take a **toughness** test or take 1 wound. If **both jokers** come up, the stairs down to the ground floor will be impassable, and PCs must make **toughness** tests at -10% or lose two wounds due to smoke inhalation. Add another three rounds to the timing table. It really is time to go, go, go!

**\*\*Flashback B:** Just as the PCs are about to leave, one of the PCs (the heaviest drinker), has a momentary flashback of sitting at the bar and admiring all the beautiful (and expensive) bottles. (Which might tempt them to save some of the stock from the fire.)

Exit by the window is described above. Exit by the door involves a quick dash down some stairs, through a corner of the bar, and out the front door, which is already open. This takes 3 rounds and needs 3 **agility** checks to avoid taking 1-3 wounds from the flames for each failed check. Adjust accordingly for slow/quick thinking and drunkenness. For example, pouring a full chamber pot over the PC will give just enough protection to halve (round-down) any wounds whilst escaping. Or wrapping a blanket around themselves will do the same.

Stopping to take any bottles from the bar requires a **hard (-20%) agility** check to avoid the flames and an additional 2 wounds, but does yield 2d10 silver pieces worth of top quality alcohol in very beautiful bottles.

Depending on how long they have spent, use the following **Escape Table** to determine what the immediate future holds for the PCs. Hopefully they haven't taken longer than 12 rounds to gather their possessions and flee the inn...

### Escape Table

Time taken to get outside the inn:

1-5 rounds:	Go to scene 2a
6-10 rounds:	Go to scene 2b
11-12 rounds:	Go to scene 2c
13+ rounds:	Oh dear... <b>Apocalypse!</b> (See below)

**Apocalypse!** If the PCs have been unbelievably slow, and take more than **13 rounds** to leave the room, then the door bursts open as the flames really take hold, and anyone still in the room must make an **agility** roll or be hit by a fireball (**Magic Missile Damage 3**: See the **Pyromancy spells** WFRP p152), and, if they fail a second **agility test**, catch fire (See WFRP p136).

Flaming characters lose 1d10 wounds per round until the flames are extinguished. They would do best to leap out the window and make a desperate and agonising run for the water trough (two rounds in total). Which can be empty if you're a tough love sort of Game Master. Or use a fate point to avoid becoming a kebab. Almost everything in the room will be destroyed. Go to **scene 2c**.

Note that if the PCs return to their room later, after the fire has been put out, then consult the following table for each item they left behind and hope has escaped the flames for the chance it has survived the fire, and check against the **Item Survival Table** below.

### Item Survival Table

Check time taken to escape the room to see chance of item surviving fire:

1-5 rounds:	80%
6-9 rounds:	50%
10-12 rounds:	20%
13+ rounds:	5%

You can add modifiers of up to +/- 10% for items especially resistant, or susceptible, to fire. A helmet is more likely to survive than a pair of boots for example. Anything that has survived smells very smoky, and is blackened.

## Scene 2: No time for a Bar-B-Q!

**Key objective: Help put out fire and rescue the other guests.**

**Suggested start time: 10:20**  
**Suggested max. scene duration: 40 mins**

In this scene the PCs become fire-fighters. To make game mechanics simple, think of the fire as a large monster with a set number of wounds and toughness depending on when the PCs start fighting it. The fire also has the regeneration ability (1d10 wounds per round), and only water based and smothering attacks can put it out. A bucket/chamber pot of water causes 2 wounds, a blanket causes 5 wounds, and a full water trough 2d10 +5 wounds (although lifting a full trough and pouring it in the right place can be tricky so you may want to make your PCs make a few **ability** checks to up the tension.) To keep the scene interesting, it will work better if the fire isn't put out until the last sub-encounter, so fudge rolls as necessary - the drama is more important than the dice rolling.

If PCs are very close to the fire then they run the risk of catching fire if exposed for two or more consecutive rounds (see WFRP p 136), and must make an agility check, modified as indicated below by the ferocity of the flames. To make things a little less lethal, rather than have the PCs take a Damage X hit each round they are exposed to the fire, they take either 2, 4 or 6 wounds, which can be reduced as described above by taking precautionary measures. The idea is to have the PCs a little roasted, but not burnt to death.

**Scene 2a: What fire? (Fire: 20 wounds, Toughness 1, inflicts 2 wounds/round, agility checks +10%)**

If the PCs escaped the inn pretty quickly the fire is not looking too bad, and with a bit of co-ordinated effort it should be possible to put it out. As they are catching their breath for a second there's a crash and a winged horse bursts out of the roof of the stables and soars off towards the moon. This stunning sight is Mephisto's **Hippogriff** making a break for freedom. But there's no time to admire the winged beast - a fire needs their attention!

Fan Material for Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay: Mr Mephisto's Marvellous Menagerie

**Scene 2b: Look at those flames! (Fire: 40 wounds, Toughness 2, inflicts 4 wounds/round, agility checks -10%)**

Slightly slower PCs will find the fire has got a better hold, and unless they really put their backs into it, and get all the people milling about to really work together it is going to be hard. Sharp-eyed PCs will see a winged beast (the **Hippogriff**) vanishing off into the horizon - perhaps it was a sort of dragon that caused the fire? The Innkeeper is rushing about, terribly distracted, muttering "Not again, not again!" He will be less than impressed if anyone is holding on to bottles of alcohol from behind the bar.

**Scene 2c: That looks dangerous! (Fire 60 wounds, Toughness 4, inflicts 6 wounds/round, agility checks -20%)**

Really tardy PCs will arrive to see a man on fire rush out of the stables and collapse on to the ground, worryingly close to the pile of hay/manure under their window (where the PCs may have stashed some of their equipment). This is one of the other patrons (Engelbert) who was trying to free his horse. He's not much help to anyone now.

If playing with the pre-generated characters, and using five or six, then the last two characters can turn up from any point from here on. For the barman he rushes up to the PCs as they emerge from the inn, calling for their help, and the grave robber staggers into view shortly thereafter - the PC with the best **perception roll** spots him first.

To put out the fire the PCs have a number of options:

Be **Persuasive**: Use some **charm, command** or **intimidate** skills on the other eight patrons (the Innkeeper, Leopold, and seven locals - five (four if they are late) humans (Engelbert, Hans, Elfreda, Pieter, & Dieter (PC number 5), an Elf (Larandar) and a Dwarf (Snorri)) to help set up a bucket chain. There's a well just across from the inn. With a bucket chain the NPCs will be able to throw 2-4 buckets on the fire per round, depending on how successful the PCs were when rolling their tests.

Be **Heroes**: Go in and try to beat the flames out using tarpaulins/blankets from outside the stables, and save anyone and anything left inside. This is the most dangerous approach, and presents the greatest risk of PCs getting burnt.

Be **Blessed**: Call on the Gods for some help. Unless one of the characters is particularly religious and puts on a really good show, then, as is usually the case, this has no effect.

Be **Cowardly**: It is quite a big (and hot!) fire, and the PCs may decide to simply run away, but you should remind them that they've left some valuable equipment behind, it's the middle of the night and there's no where obvious to run to, and, more importantly, this is their chance to be heroes!

Be **Inspired**: Your PCs may come up with something inspirational. If so, give them the benefit of the doubt and go with it!

Whilst trying to sort all that out, there are several other things going on to make the job more difficult. You should throw these in as quickly as you can to keep the feeling of chaos, confusion and panic going. Make your PCs have to choose between saving animals or people (or their belongings!)

**It slimed me!**

As the PCs are about to start tackling the fire, there is an inhuman scream and a huge blackened shape with many tentacles streaks out of the smoke of the stables, heading towards the woods. Everyone needs to make a **routine (+10%) agility** check to leap out of its way. Anyone who fails, needs to make a **terror** check or gain **1 insanity point** (See WFRP p198), as the horrific flaming "thing" knocks them to one side on its way past. Surely, a creature of chaos, or something from the very depths of hell?! Anyone who fails the test will be very reluctant to go into the stables for fear there might be more of the fiendish beasts. Anyone who doesn't fail can stand and strike the creature, on its way past. Not that that will do much good, as it's only got seconds left to live anyway, but players sometimes like to let their swords do the talking.

**\*\*Flashback C**: The PC who made the worst willpower roll remembers the Innkeeper talking of chaos beasts stalking the woods!

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Interestingly, any Halfling in the group will notice that the smell of burning monster-flesh is actually quite mouthwatering.

The creature collapses before it reaches the woods. The PCs may try to extinguish the flames, but the monster is beyond saving. It has got at least half a dozen arms/legs. A **hard (-20%) common knowledge (the Empire)** test will reveal it is a bog octopus. Once that's known anyone making a **routine (+10%) Trade (cook)** test will remember that they make for good eating, quite a delicacy in fact! Halflings get a +10% bonus to the test.

The deceased octopus in question is "Otto", one of the star attractions of Mephisto's Menagerie, who has broken out of his tank to flee the flames, and escape being boiled alive.

### Towering Inn-ferno

As Otto expires, with the sound like a huge wine skin collapsing, a man with a big hat, blonde hair, and magnificent boots, runs out of the inn and makes towards the stables. Is he mad?! The heat is crazy!

The man is **Mephisto**, owner of the Menagerie that has stopped at the Inn. He needs to save his livelihood!

If the PCs try and stop him, Mephisto attempts to struggle free - he needs to go in and rescue his creatures! He calls their names frantically; "**Heironymous**" (the Hippogriff), "**Otto**" the Octopus (he hasn't yet seen the dead octopus), and "**Jerrard**" the dancing goat. If the PCs arrived late, they won't know that the Hippogriff has already gone. They may also think that Mephisto is calling out to fellow travellers, not animals, and there may be people still trapped inside!

Mephisto pleads with the PCs to help him rescue Otto and the rest. If they are not instantly helpful his Norse blood starts to take over and he starts going into a frenzy! If the PCs immediately let him go he rushes in to the flames of the stable.

A moment later two terrified ponies gallop out of the stable, pulling a gaudily painted wagon, which is steaming slightly, and the roof appears to have come off. A stocky human woman, **Utta**, is at the reins, and she pulls the cart

around a safe distance from the stable. She then jumps down and rushes back in after Mephisto.

**\*\*Flashback D:** One PC remembers both characters arriving in the wagon last night, and thinking they were from the circus or something, and was looking forward to seeing some clowns.

If the PCs follow Mephisto and Utta, go to "**I'll have my horse-steak well done.**" Otherwise, go to "**Where's wots-his-name?**"

### Where's wots-his-name?

Leopold, the Innkeeper, dashes over in a panic and says he's sure some of the evening's patrons are still inside! He can't account for his two bar maids **Beatrix** and **Gretchen**, nor **Theodor**, a wealthy travelling merchant. They must be trapped!

**\*\*Flashback E:** The (male) PC with the highest fellowship remembers chatting up two rather attractive bar maids the night before, but they seemed more interested in the clothes being displayed by another patron, a weasly man with bright eyes.

**\*\*Flashback F:** Any PC with thief type skills remembers a wealthy looking man with bright eyes in the bar. Rescuing wealthy people often means rewards...

The Innkeeper tells them Theodor was staying in the room next to the PCs, and the girls have a room behind the bar. If the PCs brave the flames, they find nothing behind the bar. They can get back up to the first floor relatively easily. But the door is locked! They can't hear anything inside, and can feel the flames get ever closer... As they decide what to do the stairs collapse behind them. Only one way on - through the room and out the window! If they break open the door, they see Theodor cowering in the room, his bright eyes darting about the room in a panic. The two girls are soundly asleep on the bed. He has lured them to his room, locked the door, drugged them both, and had evil on his mind when the fire started. He tried to escape but in his panic lost his room key and the window is jammed shut. He'll tell them he'd tried to escape by the bar, but couldn't get past the flames, the girls were there and scared witless, so he led them to his room to escape



Fan Material for Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay: Mr Mephisto's Marvellous Menagerie through the window, but they were overcome with smoke! Which doesn't explain why they are half naked though, or why the door was locked. A PC passing a **heal** check, or making a **hard (-20%) perception** check should be able to work out the girls have been drugged.

He'll offer the PCs all his money (17 Crowns) to help him escape. He also has three heavy (150 encumbrance) chests containing fine women's' clothing in the room, which he desperately wants saved too. (The contents of each chest are worth around 30 crowns each. Two are full of good quality ladies clothes, and the third is full of hats, including some really rather impressive ones with feathers of exotic animals.) He'll offer the PCs one fine item from each chest if really pressed, but only if they get the chests out of the room safely.

What the PCs do is up to them. but they'd better decide quickly, as the smoke gets ever thicker and more choking. The girls are impossible to wake, and will need to be carried out. The window can be broken open once it has taken a few solid blows from a weapon. There's no hay/manure below this window though and it's 9 yards to the ground so they won't be able to just drop the girls on to the ground. (Or if they do, the girls take falling damage for a 9 yard drop, which could be fatal as it is a Damage 7 hit. Beatrix has 11 wounds, and Gretchen 12, and both have a toughness of 3.)

They can shout for help, and as the flames get scorchingly close (**Agility** checks to avoid 1-2 wounds) the Innkeeper rushes around to the window with a rickety ladder. Build the tension, and with Theodore desperate to be the first out, along with this three chests of women's clothing, and getting in the way. The ladder will break on the second-to-last person out, or after all three chests have gone down, whichever is sooner. (See WFRP p138 for leaping and falling rules.)

PCs may also call for tarpaulins to jump out on to. If a successful **routine (+10%) command** test is made a tarpaulin is quickly brought over, but as with the ladder, it's not in the best of shape, and the last person to use it falls through, taking a damage 3 hit (the tarpaulin partially breaks their fall).

If Theodor isn't restrained in some way after he gets down the ladder (assuming the PCs

haven't killed him), he'll slip away into the night at the first opportunity, having hidden his chests in the wood to pick up later when things have calmed down. If PCs wonder later where's he gone they can search around for tracks and find the chests, but Theodor is long gone.

If the two girls are rescued, they will regain consciousness at around dawn but not remember anything about what happened, other than that nice merchant from Kislev, with the lovely eyes, had invited them to his room to try on some of his fine clothing. They are sad to hear he's gone, he had such lovely hats! They have no recollection of the fire, or being rescued. Sometimes, there's just no gratitude.

The PCs can now go into the stables if they haven't already, as Mephisto and Utta have not yet emerged. If they've already done that then go to "**Please, mister, save my dog!**"

### **I'll have my horse steak well-done**

The stables are in a bad way - and there are panicked horses bucking about - two have already succumbed to the fumes, and the others (two plus the PCs mounts if they have any) won't last long unless they are freed. Jerrard the dancing goat is at the back, slightly singed, but not yet worried as he's found an interesting bucket of amusingly shaped parsnips and turnips to gnaw on, so is easy to untie and lead to safety, where he does a cute little dance. But untying a terrified horse is no easy matter - and requires **dodge blow** rolls to avoid a quick kick to the head (Natural weapons SB-1 see WFRP p232 for horse and pony profiles).

No immediate sign of Mephisto or Utta though - they have gone to a room at the back of the stables. If PCs actively look for them, they notice the outlines of a door through the smoke, through which is a room where the Hippogriff was kept, which now just has hay and a big hole in the roof. Mephisto and Utta are bent over a small cage in the corner, and are carefully rescuing three albino war-dog puppies, and two full size wardogs. Mephisto tells the PCs to go and help put the fire out, he and Utta can sort this out.

If the PCs haven't yet saved Theodor and the girls then that scene happens as soon as they leave the stables.

Fan Material for Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay: Mr Mephisto's Marvellous Menagerie  
**Please, mister, save my dog!**

And finally, just when everything seems under control, the Innkeeper's daughter Anifreda (7) rushes over to waving frantically with one hand, tears streaming down her face, and pointing up to one of the higher windows - where there's a small dog barking frantically from inside the window. Wauzi must be rescued!

Remember that the PCs have probably already broken the ladder and tarpaulin, so a third way would be for a PC to climb up the outside of the building, and up to the window. Any brave PC attempting this needs to make two **routine (+10%) scale sheer surface** tests to reach the window, which is easy to open, then climb in and get the dog. Who bites (**agility** check to avoid or take one wound), and doesn't like being picked up (another **agility** check to catch the frisky hound). Then it's a simple matter of climbing down with a rope - assuming the PC remembered one in the first place! Anifreda is ecstatic if Wauzi is saved, but inconsolable if the poor little dog doesn't make it.

### **A moment's respite**

The fire (almost) out, and hopefully not all of the patrons and the menagerie reduced to charcoal the PCs can spend a little time gossiping to try and find out what was going on. The following rumours can be divulged with a bit of effort on the PC's behalf:

- \* The man in the hat was Mephisto. (True)
- \* Mephisto runs a travelling Menagerie with all sort of wonderous beasts, including Hippogriffs, basilisks and dragons. (Partially True - he doesn't have any basilisks or dragons.)
- \* Mephisto's assistant Utta has a tattoo on her back that is the mark of chaos! (False - she has no tattoo.)
- \* He's on his way to an appointment to see Lord Delcroix in the local town. (True)
- \* Some of Mephisto's animals are chaos beasts and witch-hunters want to speak to him, and probably hang him (False)
- \* He's down on his luck and needs money to keep the Menagerie going. (True)
- \* He used to be a berserker, and he's still got quite a temper on him. (True)
- \* That dancing goat of his is possessed by a demon. (Probably False).

### **I didn't start the fire!**

PCs might ask questions about how the fire started. And they'll get the following responses:

- \* A winged demon started the fire (False)
- \* A dragon flew out of the stables, it must have started the fire! (False)
- \* Mephisto had a phoenix egg, which must have hatched, setting fire to everything. (False)
- \* The Innkeeper's last Inn burnt down too (True, but it was struck by lightning)
- \* There was a shady character making for the back of the stables late after the bar closed. (True) This response leads to **Flashback G**.

**\*\*Flashback G:** This should be given to one of the characters who is a smoker (the Dwarf if using the sample PCs). They remember that they went out late at night to have a quiet smoke round the back of the stables, and to admire the stars. They're sure they put their smoke out at the end, but can't specifically remember...

### **Mephisto**

Once the PCs have started to show signs of boredom talking to the locals, the man in the big hat reappears from the smouldering ruin of the stables. He is nursing a small animal (one of the albino puppies) and sits down with a certain defeated air near the PCs. Utta comes out with the adult war dogs and the other two puppies, ties them to the wagon, and inspects the animals for wounds and the wagon for damage.

If they don't approach him, after a while he gets up and comes over to them and thanks them for trying to put out the fire and save his animals. He shows them a flyer (p41) and tells them he lost some of his prize animals, and the most troubling aspect is that he was travelling to see a local minor noble, Lord Delcroix, who has a particular interest in some of his creatures. He was hopeful that he'd find a wealthy sponsor, and be able to give all his animals much better conditions. But he doesn't think things will work out now, as the Noble had specifically asked to see the bog octopus which the PCs last saw breathing its smokey last outside the inn.



Mephisto is angling for the PCs to volunteer to go and get him another octopus. He can offer them free tickets to his show, the use of his octopus wagon, two ponies, and assistance from his travelling companion/bodyguard Utta. He can't go himself as he needs to see if he can recapture the Hippogriff, and also to look after the puppies. Mephisto will however insist that Utta goes with them as he doesn't entirely trust the PCs, and doesn't want to lose his wagon!

If really pressed he can also offer 5 Crowns each (up to 8 for good **haggling**), once they have visited Lord Delcroix. He has no money to speak of on him now.

The PCs' mission is to capture an undamaged bog octopus and bring it back, alive, to meet him at the gates of the nearest town by noon tomorrow.

### **No time for shopping!**

It's long before first cock crow, the PCs are in the middle of nowhere and most of the things that the landlord would have been prepared to

sell them have been burned. Especially if they didn't do a very good job of putting out the fire. But the following things are available for free if the PCs ask nicely (and hadn't stolen any bottles from the bar):

Two lanterns, a 10 yard rope, four full water skins, 3 blankets, and a matching set of four well made wooden tankards with the crest of the Lycanthrope Arms. Other minor items can be available for purchase at your discretion, but try to avoid bogging the game down in a shopping session.

If the PCs did a great job of putting out the fire and saved the Innkeeper's daughter's dog Wauzi then just before they mount up on the wagon, he comes over, wiping his hands on his very grubby apron, and gives them the following with his thanks:

A large side of (now very smoky) ham, two healing draughts, a sack full of fresh vegetables (parsnips mostly), and a bottle of Estalian Rum.

By the time the last remnants of the fire has been put out, and the PCs have recovered all

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their un-burnt belongings (and possibly sobered up a bit too - allow each PC to re-roll any failed **consume alcohol** tests), a cock crows, and the first light of dawn lazily emerges from behind the mountains. Adventure beckons!

Mephisto has given them reasonable directions, and unless the PCs are unusually stupid should be able to head in the right direction without too much trouble. If they are unreasonably stupid then Utta is driving the cart, so knows the right way. It's a bit slow going with the "Octopus" wagon, but fairly pleasant - the journey is through some rather fine woods - the PCs have had worse travelling experiences. Utta's not a very talkative companion, but she certainly know how to drive a cart. Note that she has healing skills so can attend to any PCs who have been burnt.

### Scene 3: Taxing times (Optional)

**Key objective: Relieve the PCs of some gold.**

**Suggested start time: 11:00**

**Suggested max. scene duration: 15 mins**

This scene is more to give players who enjoy a bit of combat a chance for a few minutes hack and slay. If you've taken a long time on Act I, or your players aren't so keen on combat, then you can skip this scene, or have Utta move things along.

After travelling for an hour or two, an observant PC (**routine (+10%) perception check**) will notice that there are some figures in the road ahead. Bandits!? There are five humans (three in the road, and two in the woods with cross-bows). They are dressed in guards clothes but, as far as the PCs are concerned, they might as well be bandits. Their leader, Sylvian, explains that they are not there to cause any trouble, just to collect a modest "road tax" on behalf of the local Lord. It's "just" one Crown (or equivalent) per leg. A PC making a **hard (-20%) common knowledge** test will recognise the eagle insignia on their tabards as belonging to Lord Steuerfanger, notorious in these parts for his insatiable appetite for collecting taxes.

The PCs can either negotiate, attack, or simply pay up. If asked, Utta says her preference is definitely to pay up and get going! She's got enough on without having to get on the wrong side of the local tax collectors.

Lord Steuerfanger's men will retreat if wounded beyond half original wounds, and will not fight to the death. Which means they can turn up later with revenge on their mind when the PCs are on the return journey...



**Lord Steuerfanger's tax collectors:** Use the standard profile for bandits given on WFRP p233.

**Quote:** "It s only a Crown for each leg! Or half a Crown if we cut a leg off."

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**Scene 4: In to the swamp!**

**Key objective: Leave Utta and the wagon behind and set off in to the swamp.**

**Suggested start time: 11:15**

**Suggested max. scene duration: 15 mins**

Having dealt with the tax collectors/bandits, the PCs travel on another few hours without disturbance until they reach the edges of the swamp at around mid afternoon. Which they smell before they see. Rotten eggs is never a good smell. And then they hear it a little before the woods give out. Sounds of lots of tiny biting insects, accompanied by a vaguely threatening frog chorus. Anyone with fine clothing has a premonition that by this time tomorrow their clothing won't be fine ever again.

The track peters out a little while after the edge of the forest, and it is going to be hard going to navigate the octopus wagon through the swamp, so it'd probably make better sense to leave it and come back for it. Utta offers to keep guard. If the PCs insist on travelling on with the wagon then minutes later one of the wheels gets stuck, then breaks, and they have to abandon the wagon whilst Utta fixes it in preparation for their return. She tells them to hurry on.

Before they set off, Utta reminds them they need to be back with her by around midnight, as it will take at least 6-8 hours travelling with the wagon to reach their meeting place with Mephisto. She'll also suggest, if your players don't think of it, that they might want to take some things from the back of the wagon to help them capture the octopus - they are to bring it back unharmed if at all possible!

### **Ow! Something bit me!**

Leaving Utta and the wagon behind, the PCs head off along a rough path. The swamp is very dreary, with sickly looking trees making it hard to see any distance, and mists rolling in and disappearing just as quickly, to give the PCs the feeling of being boxed in. It is also filled with hazards to keep the PCs on their toes.

There are also a lot of really irritating biting insects, which constantly buzz around, and their distracting nature means PCs have -5% on WS,

BS, WP, and Int checks unless they do something to ward off the vicious little critters. Liberal splashings of perfume/cologne keep them off for about 3 hours (a typical cologne bottle has about three applications), but also makes it pretty impossible for the PCs to surprise any creatures with good senses of smell if they approach from up wind. Note that if using the pre-generated characters, Siluvaine's perfume wards off the bugs, and she is untroubled by any of the midges and flies.

According to Mephisto's directions, the best place to find an octopus is in the big lake in the middle of the swamp. There are two main tracks through (one to the right, one to the left), or the PCs could possibly save some time by cutting through the middle, but that might be more dangerous...

Climbing a tree and scouting out the land (or doing something similar) will enable the PCs to see the lake in the far distance, but nothing much to see to the right but possibly a flash of metal, and to the left the top of a small stone building. Behind them, they can see Utta guarding the wagon (or fixing the wheel). The right path leads to "**A bad sign**", the left path to "**Cross my palm with silver, dearie!**", and through the middle to "**Argh! Quicksand!**".

**Timing note:** The PCs may now go to any of the next three scenes, so timings are all given with the same start. The key thing is to have reached scene eight within about 45 minutes, so if the PCs first visit the battle scene, then try and go through the quicksand, you'll need to speed things up a bit with the encounter with the witch.

### **Random Events**

To help get the atmosphere of the swamp right you can throw in a few random events. Consult the **Random Event Table**. Events can repeat.

#### **Random Events Table**

**01-20: Crows**  
**21-30: Snake**  
**31-40: Insects**  
**41-60: Bog**  
**61-70: Noises**  
**71-80: Smells**  
**81-90: Skull**  
**91-00: Tree**

**Crows:** Three crows land on a nearby withered tree and stare intently at one PC and follow the party for a few minutes, always intently regarding the same PC. That PC should start to feel a little freaked out by this behaviour, and any superstitious character will remember that the attention of crows means that Morr is near.

**Snake:** A very poisonous looking iridescent green snake slowly slithers down the branches of a tree. It pauses briefly, using its forked tongue to taste the air, looks directly at one of the PCs with its hypnotic eyes, then slides into a nearby hole. Another sign from Morr?

**Insects:** A cloud of biting insects heads straight for the smelliest PC and swirl about them in a most unpleasant manner, inflicting a further **-10%** on ability checks unless some way, such as heavy application of perfume, is found to get rid of them.

**Bog:** The middle PC steps onto a patch of very boggy ground, and suddenly sinks to their knees, and if they fail an **agility check**, fall flat on their face. The bog water smells awful, their clothes are ruined, and they are covered in little bits of moss and swamp debris. The other PCs may find this very funny of course.

**Noises:** A little way off there are some crashing sounds, suggesting maybe the PCs are being stalked. But going in the direction of the noises leads the PCs onto unstable ground - you can use the **quicksand encounter** from Scene 7.

**Smells:** There's a particularly bad smell of rotting in this area, and unless the PCs do something to ward off the smell, such as covering their nose with scent soaked material, they will need to make a **Toughness test** or be at **-10% WS/BS/WP** for the next encounter due to feeling queasy.

**Skull:** The last PC notices a skull at the base of a tree. It looks humanoid... and a little lizard pokes out of the eye socket as the PCs are looking at it.

**Tree:** The noise of the PCs passing causes a particularly rotten tree to collapse on the third PC to pass, who needs to make an agility check or be caught in the twisted branches as it falls, taking 1-2 wounds, and possibly breaking anything delicate in their possessions.

## Scene 5: A bad sign

**Key objective: Make the PCs nervous**

**Suggested start time: 11:30**

**Suggested max. scene duration: 15 mins**

After a while of struggling along, getting swea- tier and more uncomfortable, the first dry clear- ing the PCs come to is noticeable for some abandoned armour and weapons - but scattered all over the swamp, and much of it horribly dirty and some of it damaged. Staked upright are two human-sized plate breastplates, which have obscene images scrawled in what looks like blood. (Horse blood on closer inspection for anyone with animal related skills, or, worryingly, what could be demon blood to anyone else).

The breast plates are no longer in good condi- tion, but can still be worn, (treat as poor armour, and, when subjected to a weapon blow on a 1-2 on d10 become broken). They also smell bad, and are coated in snail trails too (and quite a few snails inside). To most this is rather horri- ble, but a Halfling might see this as an opportu- nity to use the breast plates as a make-shift pan to make a rather good snail stir-fry. With frog legs if anyone can be bothered to catch some. The party hasn't eaten for a few hours after all.

Whilst the PCs are poking around the most ob- servant one (best **perception** roll) sees a **large winged animal** flapping in a very ungainly manner towards them. Move to combat time, and see what the PCs want to do. The creature will be upon them in about two rounds. It's misty and the visibility is not great so it's hard to make out exactly what it is, but it is big, it has wings, and it is heading towards them. Might it be a demon? Maybe the one that set fire to the Inn? The PCs don't know each other very well, so suggest that perhaps it is after one of them.

The animal is Mephisto's Hippogriff who has been mortally wounded by poison-tipped goblin arrows. He's confused and dying. He's picked up Mephisto's scent on the PCs so is heading for them with the last of his strength, in the hope of aid and sanctuary. If the PCs loose off an arrow, this will pretty much finish off the Hip- pogriff and it'll come crashing down twenty yards away, dead. Which may take some ex- plaining to Mephisto.

If the PCs allow the beast to come nearer, it lands awkwardly near them and they can see

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many arrows sticking out it. A Dwarf will automatically recognise the arrows as Greenskin, probably Goblin, origin, and others can work this out on a **common knowledge (the Empire)** test. On closer inspection most of the arrows have distinctive brown and green feathers - a tribal marking. There's not much they can do though, as the poison will finish off the poor creature in two rounds. PCs making a **hard (-20%) animal care** test can attempt to sooth its last few moments, or those passing a **hard (-20%) heal** test can stabilise its bleeding so it lasts a full half hour, but there's not much else that can be done. Before too long the beautiful beast is dead and Mephisto has lost another one of his Menagerie's star exhibits. Clearly, there are some dangerous Greenskins in the swamp, and the PCs had better watch out!

This scene is designed to put the PCs on edge, so play it up a bit - perhaps they hear an odd sound nearby, or feel they are being watched. Close inspection of equipment and tracks suggests that there were at least three people (possibly two-three big ones and a smaller, but heavier, one) attacked by six to ten creatures. The bodies have been dragged away into the swamp. The tracks become impossible to follow after a few minutes, but the PCs do find a severed Dwarven head, with his beard shaven off - the sort of things Greenskins do. (Which should make any Dwarf PC rather furious).

This is where four soldiers (three humans and one dwarf) sent to investigate the sightings of goblins, were ambushed by a goblin hunting party, who the PCs may bump into later. Really perceptive PCs may notice that although there is quite a bit of armour and weaponry scattered about, there may not be quite enough for all the footprints, so maybe one person got away? Rooting around a bit the PCs can find three swords (two in poor condition), a broken cross-bow, five bolts which could be used again, three dented metal helmets (count as poor quality), a silver dagger, and a backpack with a day's provisions and an empty wine skin. The goblins have taken all the good stuff.

Twenty minutes further on and the path disappears into the swamp. The PCs can either continue through the Swamp (go to "**Agh! Quick-sand!**") or, perhaps more wisely, retrace their steps and take the other path they saw earlier, in which case go to "**Cross my palm with silver, dearie!**".

## Scene 6: Cross my palm with silver, dearie!

**Key objective: Have the PCs get their fortunes told, and possibly obtain a potion to sedate the octopus.**

**Suggested start time: 11:30**  
**Suggested max. scene duration: 45 mins**

In this part of the swamp there is a dilapidated small shrine, long since fallen to ruin through neglect. It's no longer even possible to tell which God the shrine was built for, although there is a badly eroded carving of a huge bulbous frog over the entrance way, which could rule out some of the Gods. The shrine is a simple alcove with oak doors (one missing) to shelter from the elements, which has been taken over by an evil old cannibalistic woman called **Mechthild**. As the PCs approach they can smell cooking, and see an old woman bent over a cauldron in front of the shrine. She's pretty perceptive, and before any PCs think of sneaking up on her she looks to exactly where there are and says; "Hello dearies, have you come to pay ol' Mechtild a visit? Come in, have some stew to fortify your bones!"

If the PCs come over, and try to sneak a peak into the alcove she'll say "Now, now, don't be nosy! The crows will have your eyes!" And cackles. If there's a Halfling in the party she'll say "Come here, little one, your kind appreciate food more than most, and my stew is just ready for tasting!"

She has an arrangement with the goblins of the swamp that she provides them with potions and poisons in return for their protection.

The Hag is cooking a **stew** which smells pretty good (but is partly made of human flesh). It tastes fine, but does have an undefined after-taste... she'll be vague about the recipe if asked, only saying that the PCs are lucky to have arrived when they did as she doesn't often have all the ingredients for this, her favourite, recipe. She calls it "**Mechtild's Bone Fortifier**". She also said that she knew Greta (of Greta's Boon fame), and the evil witch stole her recipe! If asked by the PCs if she could make them some Greta's Boon, she says she doesn't have all the ingredients, and it would take a week anyway.

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Note that if later the PCs start to suspect they have unknowingly eaten human flesh each PC who fails a **Will Power** check gains **1 insanity point**, and unless they then make a **Toughness** test promptly throw up, leaving them on **-10%** on tests for the next hour as they get over their queasiness.

If asked questions about the swamp she can reply with the following information:

- \* There are foul greenskins everywhere (True)
- \* There are worse things than greenskins too (True)
- \* The lake is not far off but it is a dangerous route there (True)
- \* Don't drink the water (True)
- \* Three pretty soldiers (and one short ugly one with a big beard) passed through here yesterday. (True)
- \* Beware the full moon (Often True)
- \* If they have any frogs or snails with them they'd add a certain something to the stew (True)

If they tell her they are on a mission to capture an octopus she can tell them the following:

- \* Octopi are vicious fighters and can easily kill a man (True)
- \* Octopusses only come out during the day (False)
- \* They also have a special nerve spot just behind the head that if you press hard enough knocks them out (False)
- \* She has a potion that should knock it out for a while. (True)
- \* Octopus suckers can be used as a key ingredient in a potent aphrodisiac (False) (If using the barman PC the Witch notices his bracelet and says she's a great kisser)

### **Morrslieb is in Uranus**

She will also offer to read the PCs fortune for a silver piece each. The **fortune telling** is not meant to be comforting for the PCs, but they aren't to know that in advance...

If they are interested, the old crone shuffles into the shrine, and returns a few minutes later with an extremely well used pack of cards, and a rather smelly and stained old blanket. She lays the blanket on the ground to make a make-shift table top then sits down with the cards. The PC

who wants their fortune told sits opposite and draws one card. The witch enjoys the theatrics of fortune telling, so ham it up a bit! Pretty much all the answers she gives are, in the true tradition of fortune telling, possibly true. If a **black card** (misfortune) is drawn, a second card may be drawn at the PCs choice, to attempt to provide further insight. If the second card is also **black**, then a third and final card can be drawn. **Three black cards is a bad sign** and unless the PC passes a **hard (-20%) Will Power** test they feel as if they have been **cursed** (See the **Ill Fortune** spell (WFRP p147). The fortune telling stops with the first red card, so the PCs will generally have more of a bad fortune than a good one.

Take the following cards out of the pack you used earlier for scene one: All Aces, Kings, Queens, Jacks, two Jokers, and discard the rest, leaving **eighteen cards**.

**Joker:** "You will suffer great misfortune, and be wracked with pain beyond all endurance! This is the very worst card, you should make your peace with Shallya now, for you are not long for the Empire." If the second joker is drawn, then, "I cannot speak of your fate, it is too horrific to put into words!" and she shudders very visibly.

**Black Ace:** "You will be laid low by a single foe, who'll cleave you right in two!". If clubs then, "A giant it is who spells your doom!".

**Red Ace:** "When the sun sinks crimson as the blood of martyrs you will be invincible until dawn!" (False!). If diamond then "Your sword will cut flesh like a hot knife through giblets!" (F)

**Black King:** "A Noble Lord seeks your death, soon, very soon." If Spades then, "He has already dug your shallow grave, full of maggots!"

**Red King:** "You will be greatly rewarded... but not yet, not yet!" If Hearts then, "When your reward comes it will be love not money."

**Red Queen:** "Shallya smiles on you!" If Diamonds then, "But she notices you have not donated to her temples lately. You must make a donation tonight or fear her wrath!"

**Black Queen:** (A gasp!) "Shallya has forsaken you - you'll never leave this accursed swamp alive! You are doomed!" If Spades then, "The second worst card! I dare not say what will happen to you this terrible night!"

**Black Jack:** "There is a traitor amongst you!" If clubs then, "She'll hit you over the head and leave you for dead in the marsh!"



**Red Jack:** "One of you will sacrifice themselves to save the others!" If hearts then, "Love dies to save love!"

### You are feeling sleepy...

If the PCs ask about a **sedative potion** she shuffles off again into the shrine, and returns with a slightly dusty dark bottle, which has a carefully attached label with an icon of two closed eyes and a smiley face drawn in a spidery hand. She assures the PCs that a few drops on the tip of an arrow should be enough to put a giant to sleep, let alone an octopus! Note that the potion does work perfectly well on humanoid (equivalent to four doses of the **Sleep** spell (see WFRP p146)), but, as the PCs may discover later, doesn't work quite as expected on octopi. She's willing to sell it for 5 Crowns (or equivalent), or 4 Crowns if a PC passes an opposed **Haggle** test. If the PCs examine it closely, it has a faintly blue colour and smells of Lavender.

Mechtild has a very impressive knowledge of herbs and spices, and has a great many in the shrine, some growing in little pots, others carefully dried in bundles. Some have come all the way from Araby and will look very unfamiliar. She mutters under her breath what the properties for the body, mind and soul are when mixing up her remedies. Note that the items may not actually have the properties she says they have... See Table on **Herbs and Spices** for her thoughts on the properties of these items.

### Greenskins to the rescue!

All going well, she waves the PCs on their way towards the Lake. The PCs shouldn't have any good reason to attack a little old lady in the woods, even if she does seem a little strange. However, if attacked, she cries out a strange word "**Gnarzalid!**" and quickly retreats into the alcove. She has set a trap inside the door for just such moments as these. Carefully balanced above the door is a bucket full of rocks, and a sharp tug on a carefully concealed string will call it to tumble down on any intruder. The first PC in must make a **hard (-20%) agility** check or take a **damage 3 hit** to the head. Inside there are a lot of bones, including some which look very human, which should make the PCs think about what they may just have eaten...

### Herbs and Spices Table

<b>Anise</b> - Relieves coughs, stops hiccups, induces sleep when bewitched with bad dreams
<b>Caraway</b> - Wards off witches, prevents lovers being fickle (she cackles)
<b>Cinnamon</b> - Stimulates the appetite & the pelvic organs (she leers when saying this)
<b>Coriander</b> - Eases flatulence, confers immortality (eventually), aids colic
<b>Cumin</b> - Helps digestion, relieves pain in the side, especially from battle wounds
<b>Fenugreek</b> - Soothes liver and kidney complaints (the drinkers friend!)
<b>Ginger</b> - Prevents head colds and mental possession by promoting sneezing
<b>Garlic</b> - Keeps dysentery and vampires at bay
<b>Mint</b> - Calms the nerves and gives clarity to see the works of Chaos
<b>Pepper</b> - Reduces lethargy, increases desire (much leering and gestures again)
<b>Saffron</b> - Refreshes the spirit, mollifies fear and hysteria caused by demons
<b>Cloves</b> - Promotes perspiration, quenches thirst, increases ability to hear the approach of beasts with cloven hooves
<b>Parsley</b> - Prevent intoxication, repel mosquitoes, mild laxative
<b>Bay</b> - Protects against evil, aids digestion and reduces dyspepsia
<b>Chervil</b> - Alleviates jaundice and blood clots
<b>Sorrel</b> - Helps prevent stomach ache and colic
<b>Thyme</b> - Wards off diseases, aids asthma, and alleviates impatience
<b>Celery</b> - Increase virility, aids scalp disorders
<b>Sunflower</b> - Relieves fever and ague, and protects against Night goblins

Her second line of defence if the PCs keep coming is to cast the Hedge Magic Spell **Shock** (WFRP p147), but she knows she can't beat the PCs in combat, so is looking more to delay the PCs until reinforcements turn up and she can make her escape. Three rounds after calling for greenskin help, four goblins turn up, and if the PCs engage them Mechtild will try and slip away (there is a small concealed hole at the back of the shrine for precisely this purpose).

**Goblins:** For goblins use the standard profile on WFRP p229 or Bestiary p97.

**Quote:** (In Goblin-tongue) "Humies! Kill, kill, eat, eat!", "Put their heads in Mechtild's pot!"

If the PCs do attack Mechthild, but she manages to escape, then, once she's safely away, she'll fashion a few dolls and curse the lot of them with the **Ill Fortune** spell (WFRP p147). The effects of this will be felt as the PCs reach the shore of the lake. They feel a bit funny, as if someone has put a spell on them...

If the PCs feel outnumbered, and try to escape back the way they came, it sounds like several more goblins are coming up the path, so they'll either need to cut through the swamp (go to "**Argh! Quicksand!**") or simply rush off down the unexplored path (go to "**Slither!**"). The Goblins won't follow if the PCs run - all they do is chase the intruders away from Mechthild's home, and then they'll stop for some stew.

### Hovel, sweet hovel

Inside the shrine, it's all rather a mess - lots of relatively common potion making items, a load of potion bottles scattered about, various vegetables and odd looking cuts of meat, a slightly smelly bedroll, and a few pieces of wooden cutlery. There's also a spade, which looks a bit bloody (used to bury bodies), some child sized manacles, a box of candles, and a tinder-box.

In one corner there is a sturdy locked chest (Mechthild keeps the key buried outside under a rock). A successful **pick lock** test will open it, but a failure will set off the trap. There's a tiny spring-loaded dart with a dose of **black lotus poison** (see WFRP p122) that shoots out of the front of the chest into whoever was trying to open it. Inside the chest there are some of Mechthild's more treasured possessions, which include: four child sized skulls (one of which is Hansel's), a necklace made of snail shells, another **sleeping** potion (also blue, smells of lavender), a healing potion (smiley face on label, clear, smells of forest fruits), 1 Gold Crown, 7 silver pieces, a dose of **black lotus poison** (skull and cross bones on label, black syrupy mix, smells of liquorice), three mad-cap mushrooms, an anti-toxin kit, some wooden teeth, and a bottle of rough spirits. There's also a velvet pouch with what feels like a glass jar inside. Anyone opening the pouch will see a jar-full of salted eyes staring back at them. The PC who opened the pouch should take a **willpower** check or gain an **insanity point**. These are another of Mechthild's little trophies from the children she's eaten.

## Scene 7: Argh! Quicksand!

**Key objective: Make the PCs learn that going off the path is a bad idea.**

**Suggested start time: 11:30**

**Suggested max. scene duration: 30 mins**

Going away from the path is a bad idea - this is a swamp after all, and has claimed the lives of many a careless traveller. The swamp is an evil place and apart from the blighted trees, hordes of snails, the faintly sinister croak of frogs, the horrible biting insects, and the dampness, there are real risks to make our heroes lives even more miserable:

### Quicksand

After travelling away from one of the main paths for about half an hour, the first character must make an **agility** check, or start sinking into the quicksand. The character will sink in 6-worn armour rounds (e.g 1 round if wearing full plate, but 5 rounds if wearing just leather armour), and will drown in a matter of minutes according to the suffocation rules (WFRP p136).

Characters can be pulled out by the other characters making **strength** checks - make a combined check for the whole group using the highest characters strength +10% for one character helping, +25% for two characters, and +50% for three characters, modified by -10% for each level of armour the character in the marsh is wearing. Characters can try and slip out of armour, making an **agility** check (one per round) for each piece (but permanently lose the item if successful). If the first round is unsuccessful all characters assisting must also make **agility** checks (modified by any precautions taken such as tying themselves to trees), or fall into the quicksand too! If it looks like the death of the adventures, then a **fate point** will make one of the characters feel solid ground under their feet and can move themselves carefully towards the edge, and any other character can grimly hang on. If the PCs decide this route is not for them, they find their way back to the first clearing without trouble and can choose one of paths.

### Marsh gas

If not put off by quicksand, then after another hour or so the party enter an area of **marsh gas bubbles**. PCs can make a **perception** check to

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notice that the swamp has suddenly become even smellier. If they continue, the last character steps on a bubble of gas, which explodes, and the character plummets into the hole created, also drowning in a scant few minutes according to the suffocation rules. Making a **hard (-20%) agility** check means a successful leap clear. Apply the same rules as for quicksand for other characters to dig the unlucky one out. Again, if it looks like the whole party might drown then a **Fate Point** well spent will save them all. There's an ominous rumbling, then a very large bubble of gas bursts and the PCs are flung through the air landing in a nearby tree. Which breaks under their combined weight, and they need to make an **agility** check or take 1-2 wounds, but are otherwise unharmed.

If the PCs decide to retrace their steps to avoid further disaster they actually end getting a little lost and unknowingly finding a shortcut to the shrine - go to "**Cross my palm with silver, dearie!**". (This is to save a little game time, and keep things moving).

But if they are made of sterner stuff, and not put off by a little sand and gas, and push on, then they'll find that natural features aren't the only hazards in the swamp if you leave the path...

### One... two... troll!

The third misfortune to befall the PCs if they don't stick to the path is more dangerous and challenging. They hear a scream, in a language they probably don't recognise (Goblin tongue), suddenly cut off. A little further on, a **common troll** is taking a snack on an unfortunate goblin. The troll is pretty engrossed with plucking the goblins limbs off and eating them, so the PCs should be able to sneak back the way they came, and end up at "**Cross my palm with silver dearie!**". However, if they've doused themselves in perfume to ward off the midges, or make a lot of noise, then the troll suddenly becomes aware of them, and, sensing an even better dinner opportunity, moves to attack! A troll is a dangerous adversary. Combat is likely to be pretty tough, and, to make life even more miserable, you may also want to apply -5%/-10% modifiers for the treacherous ground underfoot, and to make PCs take **agility** checks every now and then to keep their footing, or fall and count as prone for combat.

The PCs might try and distract the troll (using interesting smells, the dead goblin's body, magic spells, or whatever comes to mind), to enable an escape, in which case reward their ingenuity accordingly.

Alternatively, they may just go for it hammer and tongs, and try and bag themselves a troll! Weaker PCs might decide ranged combat from the safety of a swamp tree might be the best option. However, the swamp trees are not very strong and for any PCs climbing one roll 1d10. On 1-5 (1-6 for heavy characters (e.g. Dwarves), 1-4 for light ones (e.g. Halflings)) the tree falls under the PCs weight and unless they make a **agility** roll to jump clear, they take 1-2 wounds, as they are caught up in the tree branches and are stunned for a round, before being able to get upright.

Inevitably the Troll's first attack will be to **vomit**, which has the added delight of the PCs being sprayed with partially digested goblin. If the PCs actually manage to kill the troll, they'll be rather disappointed if they were hoping for piles of treasure. Apart from the troll's great axe, and the goblin's spear, shield, and a (Dwarf) finger-bone necklace, there's nothing of interest.

**Troll:** For common troll profile see the Bestiary p111. **Quote:** "Raaargh! Sweet Humies! Good Eat!"

Having survived the middle route through the swamp, the PCs finally emerge, weary, muddy, bitten, sweaty and tired to encounter "**Slither!**".



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**Scene 8: Slither! (Optional)**

**Key objective: Avoid getting eaten by the snake!**

**Suggested start time: 12:15**  
**Suggested max. scene duration: 15 mins**

**Timing note:** If you are running late, just run this scene in five minutes, playing up the spooky atmosphere, but don't have the snake attack, and go straight on to the next scene. If on the return journey you find you have time to spare the snake can attack the party then.

As the PCs move on through the swamp, there is less and less tree cover and more and more smelly black marsh, until the PCs find themselves on a rather hard to follow trail going through tufts of scratchy swamp grass, surrounded by marsh. It's not pleasant. But it's a lot quieter - the irritating frog chorus that has been accompanying them for some time has faded out, and apart from the odd wading-bird there's nothing much in the way of wildlife at all, although the midges are still plentiful. It really is rather bleak. The lake should be a little further on after the marsh - probably no more than another hour's travel.

It's been pretty hard going up to now, and if the PCs haven't eaten they may want to before they head on. Anyone who chooses not to eat, (or didn't eat earlier), will be at **-5%** on all WS/ BS/ S and T rolls until they do.

If the PCs are short on food a few **outdoor survival** rolls will rustle up a handful of juicy snails, but no frogs, as they avoid this area of the swamp, for good reason.

About an hour after setting off across the marsh, a mist rolls in and visibility becomes very poor, and the swamp takes on an even more evil and claustrophobic aspect. Sounds become muffled, and it's hard to tell which direction they come from. The PCs need to stick close or lose sight of one another. Even sticking close, it is hard for the last PC to see the first one clearly. It's very quiet, and any PC with **sixth sense** could be told a shiver runs up their spine, and they sense a malevolent presence. They notice that there's not a sound from any other creature in the marsh, and even the insects seemed to have thinned out.

A minute or two later, the lead PC can make a **perception** check to spot a **huge snake** rearing out of the marsh to attack them! Failure means the whole party is surprised. The snake is horribly muscled, and has the colour of the marsh, but it is its huge eyes and venom-dripping teeth that most captures the PCs attention.

The snake is quite a fierce opponent, and knows well to use the mist to its advantage. After two rounds of attack, it breaks off combat and disappears again. Keep in combat time, and ask each PCs which way they are facing (front, back, left, right), and what they are doing. Two rounds pass with nothing happening. On the third round, the snake rears out of the mist from a random direction (front, back, left, right), and any PC facing that direction can make a **perception** check to avoid being surprised. PCs not facing the correct direction can make a **hard (-20%) perception** check to avoid being surprised.

The snake does the same routine - two attacks then a slithery retreat. If it still has more than 5 wounds it will make a final third attack before giving up on the party as being too tough. Make the PCs scared, and not sure from what direction an attack might come. Also, the ground is treacherous, especially in the mist, so any PC in melee combat with the snake must make an **agility** check or fall over in the marsh, and must fight from a prone position (-20% WS) until they get up.

Less brave PCs might decide to rush off and leave the main party to fight the monster, however, that is exactly what the snake wants - and it will break off combat with the group to follow and attack the individual. Because of the mist it will be hard for the PCs to work out where their cowardly comrade is if they want to run and give help, and will need to make **hard (-20%) perception checks** to work out which direction to head in. The GM should make these secretly for each PC and then if there are some failures give conflicting advice, so the PCs are torn about which way to head, all the time hearing the sounds of battle very close.

Once the PCs have killed the snake, or it has escaped back into the marsh, then they are free to move on towards their goal of the lake in the swamp. Which they reach about an hour later - go to **"The ghost and the bog octopus"**.

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**Scene 9: The ghost and the bog octopus**  
**The swamp at night**

**Key objective: Help a ghost, capture an octopus.**

**Suggested start time: 12:30**  
**Suggested max. scene duration: 45 mins**

Eventually the PCs reach the shore of a large freshwater lake in the middle of the swamp. By the time the PCs get this far, it is about an hour before dusk, and they have the feeling there's a long hard night ahead of them. It's still misty, but visibility has improved, and the frogs are back. But to the task in hand - capture (un-harmed) a large octopus.

The PCs may have a number of plans for how to go about this, and, to help them with some ideas, they notice a **small rowing boat** (M3 TB 3 W8) anchored near by. It has got some fishing lines, two small nets, a lantern, a full water skin, and two oars. It's a bit dilapidated but is sea-worthy (although you might want to make your PCs doubt this) and can easily seat four. It gets rather wobbly if more than one person stands up though. It's even more wobbly if there's no one with **rowing** skill at the oars.

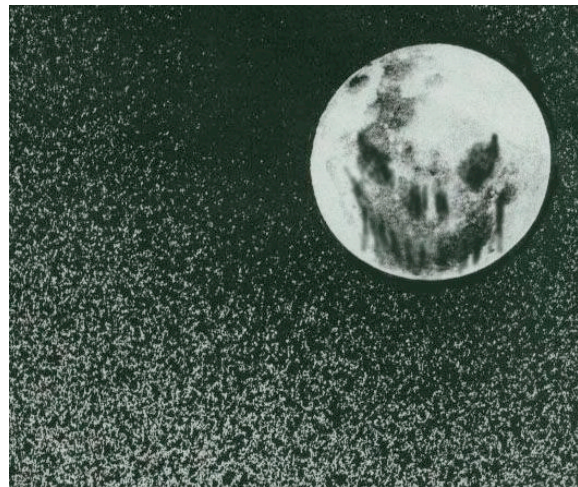
### Desperately seeking suckers

Let the PCs come up with various ideas for finding the octopus (see also next section), but the important thing to bear in mind is that Octopi are nocturnal animals, so if the PCs do much before darkness falls they won't have any success.

But that's no reason not to have them head out nervously into the water and mess about a bit. Build some tension, as they are up against the clock. Make them feel anxious.

Before long, there's an all too brief sunset where the sun is crimson as the blood of martyrs, and then night has fallen. (If one of the PCs drew a red ace when having their fortune told this sunset will have special meaning for them.) Shortly after the moon comes up and leers down on them.

The PCs remember that they don't have that much time - Utta won't wait for ever and they are supposed to meet Mephisto next morning, so they'd better hurry up and catch an octopus.



At night, the frogs sound even more menacing. Star light lends a little beauty to the swamp, and reflects hypnotically on the inky-black water. PCs who don't have night-vision will need some sort of **illumination** (see WFRP p117) or will have difficult seeing much. There are also many fluttering things, accursed moths that fly to the torches and flare brightly before being engulfed by flames.

An hour after night fall, when the PCs are getting frustrated about not capturing an octopus, they hear a child's voice calling out "Help me!".

Anyone who passes a **routine (+10%) perception** check spots a peasant child emerging out of the swamp and coming towards them. On closer inspection, the child is floating, not walking. The child doesn't look frightening, just disheveled and sad. If the PCs make no threatening moves, the ghost introduces herself as **Gretel**, and asks for the PCs help in recovering her body from the swamp and burying it on dry land. She explains that she drowned in the swamp whilst running away with her brother from an evil woman. She sadly adds that "I only drowned but she ate Hansel." (The PCs might suddenly have doubts about the old woman they met previously if they don't already).

**Gretel, the melancholy Ghost:** For Ghost profile see Bestiary p109.

**Quote:** "It's very lonely in the swamp, especially knowing Hansel has been eaten. I guess the Witch ate his ghost too, otherwise he'd keep me company now wouldn't he?"

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Gretel can float out into the swamp and hover mournfully over where her body is - about 20 yards out in the swamp where it is about 5ft deep. The body is fairly easy to find as Gretel will give directions and say "*You're touching me!*" as soon as a PC's foot touches her body. Bending down to pick up the body is not difficult, but the PC needs to duck under the surface and is out of sight (and blind) for a round or two.

However, Gretel's body is not all that's in the swamp, as the PCs well know! A successful **perception** check (**hard (-20%)** from the bank, **easy (+10%)** from the rowboat if nearby) will see ripples and some bubbles near the PC in the water retrieving the body - the bog octopus they've been hunting for is moving in for the kill! Whilst this is what the PCs are here for, the Octopus has other plans...

Move to combat time, and make a note of the PCs positions relative to the one who is retrieving Gretel's body.

The first attack is a tentacle attack on the PC retrieving Gretel, and an attempt to drag the unfortunate PC under water to eat. Note that if the rest of the PCs are still on the shore it will take about two rounds to close to melee combat, if the PCs run, or swim, as fast as they can through the lake (three rounds for a Dwarf, one round for an Elf, two for Halflings or Humans).

Note that because of the depth of the water, Dwarves and Halflings will have to fight whilst swimming, which gives a **-20%** modifier. If the PC doesn't have **swim** skill they could be in great danger. They should have been in the boat!

**\*\*Flashback H:** One PC has a sudden flashback to Mephisto saying to them quite emphatically "I want an unharmed octopus for my menagerie!"

This should be a grim and perilous combat, made all the more difficult as whilst the octopus is doing its best to crush, eat or drown all the PCs they need to capture her alive!

Play up the thrashing about in the water, emphasizing the muscular snake-like tentacles cutting through the water and air with lightning speed, the suckers leaving burning marks across the adventurer's skin, and the glimpses of the evil black beak with its razor sharp edges.

The lake water is also dirty, smelly and tastes foul, and anyone in the water fighting keeps getting pulled under and taking great gulps of the horrible brew. There are also other things (fish hopefully) brushing against their legs. The PCs in the water will be fighting for their lives, and should be feeling very sacred.

Moorslieb shines down but visibility is poor on the inky black water, and makes the PCs and the octopus look ghostly.

Gretel gets frantic as all this goes on and hovers, screaming, above where the octopus is. You can have her encourage the PCs by saying things like "[PC's name] is turning blue!", "His eyes are popping out!", "It's got its tentacles round his neck!".

If help is slow in coming for the struggling PC then a **fate point** results in the octopus taking a strong dislike to the PC's flavour, and hurling the PC away, to land with a splash by the shore.

If on the other hand it all seems a bit too easy then perhaps this would be an ideal time for a few of the goblins in the swamp to turn up on the shore and start attacking anyone there, or making off with any equipment left of the bank, so the PCs have to fight on two fronts.

Remember also that unless one of the PCs in the boat has row skill it will be pretty easy for the boat to capsize amongst all the chaos. You may want to make your PCs take a few row skill checks. Ideally at some point everyone will end up in the water, whether they planned to or not!

### A slippery customer

The PCs have a number of options for capturing the octopus (mostly) unharmed. Possible capture methods, and Gretel's comments, include:

\* With **nets**: The bottom of the row boat has two small fishing nets which the PCs could try and use to truss up the Octopus. These are **entangling weapons**, and using them in combat from a boat could result in PCs falling overboard. Anyone throwing a net from the boat makes it wobble alarmingly, and all the other PCs must make **agility** checks or fall in the water. It's not possible to throw a net from the water with any accuracy (**-30%BS**). The nets are actually too delicate to hold an enraged octopus for more than 1d10 rounds.

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Gretel is enthusiastic about this one, saying "My dad was a fisherman, he used to take me and Hansel out, and said when we grown up Hansel would be a fisherman too, and I'd marry the most handsomest fisherman in the World. I would have liked that." Then she goes all forlorn and quiet.

\* With a **baited trap**: Utta had a bucket of snails and crabs in the wagon, which could be used as bait in a carefully rigged trap, if the PCs remembered to bring it. Octopuses are also attracted to light (a PC might remember if passing a **hard (+20%) common knowledge** test), and the PCs could be on the boat with some lanterns/torches to lure it in. **Trap setting** skills would be useful here. Also, **mimic** skills could possibly be used, if a PC says they'd like to make the sound of an octopus mating call... This could end up being too easy, so make the octopus escape after being caught, requiring the PCs to have a second attempt.

Gretel admires the PCs trap making skills, and says, "Hansel and me once made a trap for the big rat that lived under our floor. We got some really stinky cheese from Mr Limburg's shop, but in the morning all we had was a rat's tail and no cheese."

\* With **strike-to-stun**: This can also work, perhaps using the boat-oars as improvised stunning-weapons, but the PCs will need to be fast to tie up the octopus as stunning only lasts 1d10 rounds, and once stunned the octopus sinks in to the water and may take a few rounds to find. Ideally you'll have all the PCs in the water looking for the stunned octopus when it regains consciousness and is very angry!

Gretel's not so keen on this and says, "My mum once hit my dad over the head with the skillet when he'd been drinking - his eyes went completely crossed! I wonder if they miss us?"

\* With **grappling** skills: PCs in the water in combat with the octopus can try and grapple it and hold it still while others try to truss it up. This could be quite a fight, with the octopus continually slipping out of the grip. Despite what the PCs may have learned from Mechthild, there's no magic spot on the back of an octopus's head that'll knock it out quick - but the PCs may have a tough time learning that the hard way.

Gretel laughs at this idea and says, "Hansel and I once saw two fat men wrestling at the traveling circus! They were so noisy!"

\* With **drugs**: The PCs may have picked up a sedative from Mechthild, to use with a ranged weapon. Unfortunately the witch hasn't got it quite right, and whilst the concoction will work perfectly well as a sedative on humanoids, it acts more like a combat enhancer on octopi. A successful attack causes no wound, but rather than sedating the octopus, it gives it the equivalent of a dose of mad-cap mushrooms... and also puts the octopus into **frenzy**.

Gretel looks on with professional interest, "When mum was pushing Hansel out of her tummy, she screamed the house down until Mrs Oetker gave her a special vial. She said it had contained the dreams of a Shallyan priest, and would be very restful. It smelt funny though."

\* With **magic**. A very brave magic user could try and use a **sleep** spell, but there are going to have to get up close and personal with the octopus in the water to do this as sleep is a touch spell. Note that, as with stunning, the octopus sinks if successfully put to sleep (for 1d10 rounds).

Gretel shrieks at the mention of magic and has to half cover her eyes with her hands, and look out from between her fingers. She's scared as everyone knows only bad people use magic.

Your PCs may think up other ideas, and if they come up with something beautifully ingenious then reward them by having them capture the octopus relatively easily, and without too much risk to life and limb.

### Oops! I think it's dead!

It's possible that the PCs are too rough in their approach to capturing the octopus, and actually end up killing it. If this happens then get them to argue with each other for a bit over whose stupid fault it is, then have one of them realise that there might well be more than one octopus in the lake. (And, to make life easy, there is!). Or, if your game session is running out of time, just make the octopus give a twitch - it's still alive, but down to zero wounds. **Animal care** and **healing** skills can then be used to stabilise Otto's replacement's condition.

Once the PCs have captured, and tied-up the bog octopus, and recovered Gretel's poor little drowned body (which has nothing of value), and buried it, her ghost smiles sadly at the PCs, makes a little wave, and says "I hope I'll see Hansel now", and gradually fades from view.

All PCs who were in the water should make a **routine (+10%) outdoor survival** check. Those who fail are horrified to find they've picked up some big fat leeches, who are sucking greedily at their exposed flesh! Leeches cause 1 wound, or 2 if the check was failed badly. You might want to cause nervousness by casually mentioning that swamp fevers can be carried by leeches... Some salt (from the PCs provisions) is needed to carefully remove the leeches, or else the affected PCs suffer an extra wound.

The PC who recovered Gretel's body can be given a **fortune point** in recognition of a kind act done in a dark place, in bad conditions.

### One heavy sucker

Hopefully the PCs have remembered to bring some ropes and tarpaulins with them, to safely transport the octopus back to the wagon. It's pretty straightforward to truss the poor critter up, but he's pretty heavy, with an encumbrance of 800. If the PCs fashion some sort of stretcher, remember that two PCs will have both hands full, and will need to drop the stretcher if they want to take part in combat. A strong Dwarf could probably just about manage to carry a carefully bound octopus over his shoulders - and what a sight that would make! (See WFRP p103 for encumbrance rules and how much PCs can carry.)

When the Octopus regains consciousness, it tries to thrash about for a bit, but then settles down, with a look on its face (if an Octopus can be said to have a face) that suggests it is contemplating its escape and revenge. Better check those bindings!

Bog Octopi dry out pretty quickly once out of their wet environment. The PCs need to wash down the octopus every hour or so with swamp water or it must make a **toughness** test of lose 1 Wound. If PCs ask how the octopus is looking, say it looks a little dry, and maybe they'll get the hint. Or have them make an **animal care** test.

## Scene 10: The return journey

**Key objective: Hurry the party back through the swamp to the octopus wagon.**

**Suggested start time: 13:15**

**Suggested max. scene duration: 15 mins**

The PCs still need to return to their wagon, whilst transporting Otto through the night. They'll need to go back the way they came in: across the snake-mire, and then either through the swamp or via the shrine.

**Through the snake-mire.** This passes uneventfully - the snake is either dead or off hunting elsewhere, and the mist has lifted, so whilst spooky, there is no immediate danger. But keep them on edge! (**Timing note:** If you skipped this earlier and now have time, have the snake attack, otherwise hurry through in two minutes.)

**Through the swamp:** If the PCs have been through the swamp once already, (and defeated the troll) allow the PCs +20% bonuses on checks to spot quicksand and marsh gas, due to familiarity. Otherwise play the scene as written. (**Timing note:** If running short of time, just make brief passing reference to the bad smells, how narrowly the PCs came to falling into quicksand and other hazards, and move swiftly on.)

**Via the Witch:** If the PCs went this way then amend depending on how they left the place. If Mechthild wasn't harmed earlier, or escaped, then she's not present on the return journey, having gone out to get some potion ingredients by the light of the full moon. The PCs have a bad feeling about the shrine so encourage them to hurry past. (**Timing note:** This is the easiest part of the route back so shouldn't take more than two minutes. If the PCs want to investigate the shrine, say that they're already very late for their meet up with Utta).

### Greenskins!

But it would be too easy to simply get back to Utta without complications, so just when the PCs think they are almost there... **Goblins!** (**Timing note:** If running short of time, have the goblins gone, and just the remains of the camp fire smouldering away.) The PCs come up to the clearing where they first started and see that a small group of six goblins has set up camp. One of them is cooking something in an oddly



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shaped pan over a fire. The pan, on closed inspection, looks to be made from a Dwarf-sized breastplate! The PCs could try to sneak past, and the goblins are more interested in the food cooking over the fire, than paying attention to their surroundings. This may be the moment when their trussed octopus gets a tentacle out and smacks one of them to make a loud noise...

Or, if they do have to go into combat (putting the Octopus down gently first), and it starts to go against them, they receive help from an unexpected quarter - a bedraggled and injured soldier charges out of the swamp and joins the attack. She's the sole survivor of the goblin ambush described in "**a bad sign**".

**Goblins:** For goblins use the standard profile on WFRP p229 or Bestiary p97.

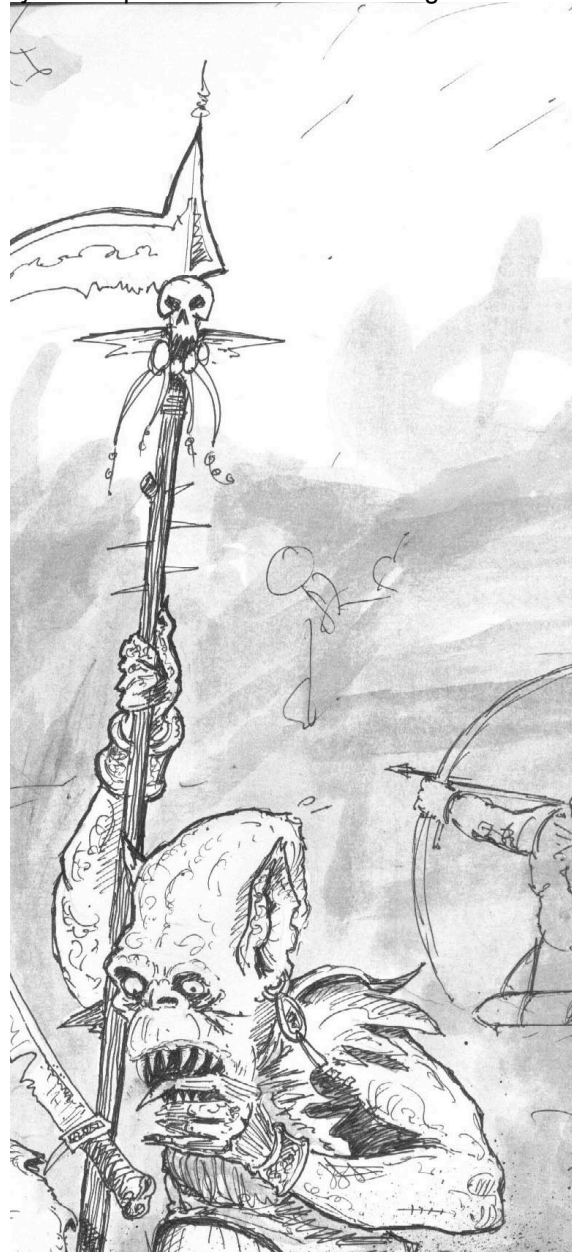
**Quote:** (In Goblin-tongue) "Humies! Kill, kill, eat, eat!", "Cut off the fat one's beard!"

If that's not enough to tip the combat in the PCs' favour, then after another round or two Utta sends a crossbow bolt into the nearest Goblin from the edge of the forest - she heard the combat and raced to give support.

Note that Goblins night vision can be interrupted for 1 round if the PCs are in darkness then light a lamp (although then the PCs will lose any chance of seeing in the dark that round). If the Goblins are defeated, there's not much worth taking. They have the usual poor quality and smelly Goblin leather armour that no one would really want to wear, and their swords and shields. One of them has a purse with what could only be a Dwarf's beard.

### We said we'd be back!

Eventually, in the wee small hours of the morning, the PCs return to where they left Utta. She is calmly sitting at the front of the wagon with her crossbow loaded. PCs might want to call out first to avoid getting shot at by mistake. Once Utta has seen the PCs, she wastes no time opening the top of the wagon, and helping them put the rather unhappy Octopus in to the tank. If you want to give the PCs a hard time you can make them roll for an **agility** check to avoid falling into the tank with the octopus, who's only too pleased to have something to play with...



Utta gives the octopus a critical examination, and is suitably complimentary if the PCs have managed to capture it unharmed. If the PCs haven't yet suggested a name she suggests "Octavius". Once everything is secured, and the top of the tank locked, Utta gets the ponies to gee up and the party heads off the way it came. Note that she has the **heal** skill, so the party can have her tend to them before they leave.

As dawn comes up, the PCs find themselves well on the way to Mephisto, with a wagon reassuringly full of valuable octopus, and the promise of a good handful of coins before the day is out. Go to "**Look Who's Come To Dinner!!**"

## Scene 11: Look who's come to dinner!

**Key objective: Save Mephisto!**

**Suggested start time: 13:30**

**Suggested max. scene duration: 30 mins**

The PCs turn up with the octopus at the gates of the city a little before noon, as specified by Mephisto. He's waiting nervously and pacing about, feeding bits of meat to a hawk, but is overjoyed to see them. He tells them he hasn't been able to recapture the Hippogriff (and the PCs may know he's dead), but is sure the Lord will be delighted with the octopus they've found. Gerrard the goat is nearby and makes another little dance if any of the PCs come near him. Utta makes her excuses and leaves - she's going to look after the animals - and says she'll meet them later. She takes Gerrard and the Hawk with her. (Note, this is to make the GM's life easier by only having one NPC on the PCs' side in the forthcoming encounter.)

The final scene is fairly short, and in order to keep things running smoothly it's worth spending a minute or so noting down the starting

wounds of all the non-player participants in the final combat, including Mephisto, and the octopus. When you're ready, the PCs head off with Mephisto into the city. After a short argument with the gate guards over a leg tax (successfully argued by Mephisto that the octopus only has arms, not legs), the PCs enter the city and Mephisto guides them through the bustling streets, picking up a small crowd of gawkers (and pickpockets if you are feeling mean) on the way to the house of **Lord Delcroix**.

A bit of gossiping on the way can reveal the following:

\* A group of adventurers have captured a chaos beast which will bring doom to the city. (False)

\* The city is plagued by pickpockets. (T)

\* A demon burnt down an inn! (F)

\* Witch hunters are looking for the rogues who fled after burning a nearby inn, and killing everyone. (False)

\* Lord Delcroix is a noted gourmet. (True)

\* The PCs smell of swamp... did they see the wicked witch who is said to live in the swamp and eat children?! (Possibly True)

\* There's talk of a beard tax to reduce the number of Dwarves in these parts. (False)



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At the house they are shown in, the octopus is parked in the courtyard with its tank shut, and the PCs are shown up with Mephisto by a nameless servant. Mephisto is obviously anxious - the future of his menagerie depends on this meeting going well.

As the PCs are going up the stairs they notice a Halfling enter the courtyard pulling a small cart laden with various vegetables - garlic, shallots, onions, and some more unusual shaped ones, probably from Araby.

### Lord Fatso

Shown in to the main room of the house, which has two guards lounging about, they are introduced to **Lord Delcroix**, who is a hugely obese pig of a man, half way through demolishing a massive feast. He doesn't get up, but gestures to the group to come forward with a sweaty hand, and take seat with him.

He does not indicate to the PCs that they should join him eating the food, and if anyone is presumptuous enough to try something, he slaps their hand away and roars at them "Touch my food again peasant and I'll have your hand ripped off and fed to my pigs!" and the guards who have been lounging around, pay closer attention to the PCs, slipping knives from sheaths, checking straps on armour and so on.

Observant PCs will note that there's quite a lot on the table that they don't recognise. Good **perception** checks (halflings get +10% bonus) will spot things such as Altdorf River Duck, Kislevian Roasted Swan, and other more unusual and exotic items.

Mephisto starts outlining to the Lord how support to the tune of just 150 Crowns a month would ensure the continued well being of all the animals under his care in his Marvellous Menagerie, plus the possibility of acquiring a few new ones - he looks encouragingly at the adventures here - perhaps there might be more work for them!

### Feed me!

The Lord doesn't take too much interest, and after a few minutes, stops Mephisto and says "Enough, enough, have you brought the creatures you spoke about!?", Mephisto nods, and the Lord roars "Eva! Feed Me!" and Mephisto

looks puzzled. A few seconds later the Halfling the PCs saw earlier, who is presumably Eva, appears carrying a huge silver platter covered with a dome shaped lid. She puts it squarely in front of his Lordship, whips off the top like a true professional, and there's a fabulous smell of fried meat, fused with the piquant aroma of onions, shallots, garlic, and some spicy unfamiliar smells too. In the middle of the platter is what is unmistakably part of a large tentacle! (Flanked by two stuffed albino dogs). He reaches forward with his fork...

The PCs have a number of options here. Anyone with **sixth sense** has a very strong inkling that things are about to get dangerously crazy any second now.

**\*\*Flashback I:** One of the PCs remembers one of the patrons of the Lycanthrope Arms saying that Mephisto used to be a Norse Berserker and isn't always very good at keeping his temper.

They should also realise they are in the middle of the house of a wealthy Noble, with armed guards, who is about to tuck into their animal-loving patron's prize Menagerie Exhibit, the one they've just risked their necks to capture!

As Lord Delcroix is about to plunge his fork into the tentacle, he pauses, and says "Oh, where are my manners! Mephisto, here is your payment for my exquisite dinner!" He chucks a small pouch of coins (5 Shillings) at Mephisto's feet - who looks like he is going to explode with rage - then roars "Now GET OUT! I'm Eating!"

His guards have stood up, and are ready for action. Move to combat time. Ask the PCs what they want to do (run for the door would be one good option, preferably dragging Mephisto). When each has replied, and you know what they plan to do, Mephisto explodes and makes to leap across the table, going for the throat of Lord Delcroix, but is neatly intercepted by the nearest guard who wrestles him to the floor. Lord Delcroix takes his first bite of Octopus and makes a pleased "Mmmm!" face.

In the ensuing combat, Mephisto is in a frenzy, and the two guards will do everything they can to protect their Lord, but will not give up their lives for him. Eva rushes in at the first sound of combat with a huge kitchen cleaver. Lord Delcroix continues eating, unless things are getting really out of hand, in which case he pulls his

Fan Material for Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay: Mr Mephisto's Marvellous Menagerie  
pistol from under the table, fires it into the ceiling and says calmly "I won't tell you again, get out, or I'll be eating your livers for my breakfast".

In the combat, PCs can either make a run for it, in which case they escape pretty easily, or they can help Mephisto, (but killing a Noble is not a good move generally), or, if an amoral bunch, they could side with Lord Delcroix and help restrain Mephisto (perhaps with the intention of getting him out of the room alive.)

If the PCs run, the guards give Mephisto a bad beating, but have no interest in pursuing the PCs - they need to protect their employer for the rest of his dinner.

If the PCs restrain Mephisto, and get him out of the room alive, then they will have his gratitude, and, if Lord Delcroix is unwounded, he will be too busy with his gluttony to pursue a grudge.

If the PCs kill Lord Delcroix and all his staff (both the guards and Eva) then they'd better find a way out of town very quickly - Mephisto will help if alive.

If the PCs kill Mephisto (!), Lord Delcroix stops eating briefly and looks at them with coldly calculating eyes, and says "I could use people like you, come back and see me tomorrow." The PCs have gained a patron!

### **Seven legs are better than none**

Three rounds in to the combat, the Octopus bursts in to the room - he lives! Eva has only severed one of his tentacles (Reduce wounds by five). He's very angry, and either attacks the PCs if they've mistreated him, or goes straight for Eva, then the guards, then Delcroix. If Mephisto is still alive he will insist that they help get the octopus back in his tank and away - he'll not leave without him!

Once back in the courtyard (possibly at speed, dragging a foaming Mephisto and a furious Octopus), the PCs notice that the octopus tank is still there, although the water is bloody, and now would be a good time to make a fast get away. If they have recaptured the octopus they can put it back in the tank. The lock is gone so someone needs to sit on the lid to keep it closed.

Note that there are two guards on the gate, who if the PCs are making a lot of fuss and bother

will come over and see what's going on. They may even call the Watch if things are looking very suspicious.

Once the PCs are out of the gate, ideally at speed, hanging on to the wagon for grim death, with an angry octopus thrashing about, and the watch in hot pursuit, the adventure is over.

### **And finally...**

#### **Experience points & financial awards:**

General Roleplaying:	0-40xp
All PCs surviving:	10xp
Escaping Inn in under 5 rounds:	5xp
Helping to put out the fire:	5-15xp
Saving the barmaids:	10xp
Saving the dog:	5xp
Giving innkeeper his items back:	5xp
Avoiding combat with tax men:	5xp
Finding the Dwarf's head:	5xp
Getting fortunes told:	5xp
Getting "sedative" potion:	5xp
Avoiding combat with troll:	10xp
Killing the swamp-snake:	10xp
Capturing octopus unwounded:	25xp
Or... Capturing octopus wounded:	10xp
Or... Almost killing the octopus:	5xp
Burying Gretel's body:	5xp
Defeating all the goblins:	10xp
Saving Mephisto:	20xp
Secret Mission:	5xp

Mephisto also pays up the money he promised, as well as tickets for the show. He gives them each an extra 5 shillings if he thinks they did a fine job. And possibly a few more if they really whine on about how tough a time they had.

#### **Further adventures**

The PCs might be employed by Mephisto to capture other animals for his Menagerie, or, depending on how things turned out, Lord Delcroix may have a number of little errands for them, mostly involving inflicting pain on people. If the wicked witch escaped them in the swamp she may want some revenge, so you can have Mechthild pop up when least expected. Also, if Lord Delcroix was killed, but Eva the Halfling Cook escaped, she may also be after the PCs for revenge!

Fan Material for Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay: Mr Mephisto's Marvellous Menagerie  
**Key NPC & monster profiles**

**Mephisto** - Human, Mercenary, Ex-Norse Berserker. (Male)

**Quote:** "Roll up, roll up, see the beasts of Mephisto's Marvellous Menagerie, only 2 pennies!", "An unharmed octopus", "Must... not... go... berserk."

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
50	48	44	40	32	37	44	36
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mg	IP	FP
2	13	4	4	4	0	3	1

Having originally come from Norsca, he has seen a lot of battles, especially around horses when fighting in Kislev. Mephisto became quite adept at looking after animals, and, when one day he had to nurse his Lord's injured Hippogriff back to health, he decided that there was a better future for him preserving wild creatures than killing Orcs. Given the Hippogriff as a parting gift from his Lord, Mephisto's Marvellous Menagerie began. Mephisto (original name Knut Stefansson) has been touring the lands making an acceptable living showing various exotic beasts, for a few shillings a show. Keeping such beasts healthy and fed is not easy, and due to some ill health amongst his beasts he needs to find 150 Crowns quickly. The full Menagerie has over twenty beasts, and is currently housed in a local town, where it has been for the past five weeks. He has but a few of the prize critters with him, as he is on the way to meet Lord Delcroix who has indicated that he may be able to support Mephisto with his work if he could see some of the animals first.

**Skills:** Common Knowledge (Empire, Norsca, Kislev), Consume Alcohol, Intimidate, Performer (Storyteller), Speak Language (Reikspiel, Norse), Swim, Animal Care, Gamble, Dodge Blow, Ride, Gossip, Perception, Secret Language (Battle Tongue), Drive, Haggle, Search.  
**Talents:** Frenzy, Menacing, Quick Draw, Specialist Weapon Group (two-handed), Disarm, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Stun, Resistance to Disease, Sturdy.

**Armour:** Leather jerkin

**A. Points:** Body 1, rest 0

**Weapons:** Great Weapon (axe), dagger

**Trappings:** Show man's clothes, big hat, magnificent boots, Bottle of Good Norse spirits, backpack with animal care equipment, healing draught, wagon and contents, two ponies, the animals of the Menagerie, flyers for the Menagerie, and purse with 7 Crowns and 37 pennies.

**Utta Gunillasdottir** - Human, Bodyguard. (Female)

**Quote:** "I don't think Mephisto would like you to do that.", "Nej, the dogs are staying with me.", "Are you sure you're up to this task?"

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
45	37	38	37	37	36	29	28
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mg	IP	FP
2	13	3	3	4	0	1	0

Also from Norsca, Utta has been a travelling companion of Mephisto for some years, and each has saved the other's skin on a number of occasions. Like Mephisto, Utta has an affinity for animals. Unlike Mephisto, she doesn't talk much, and isn't very "showy". If asked about how she and Mephisto managed to capture the original octopus, she smiles sadly and refuses to be drawn on details, only to say, "It was very hard, and cost poor Seigmund his life. But Otto was a fine specimen and the children loved him. I miss them both."

**Skills:** Common Knowledge (the Empire), Gossip, Speak Language (Reikspiel & Norsca) Dodge Blow, Heal, Intimidate, Perception, Drive, Animal care

**Talents:** Disarm, Specialist Weapon Group (parrying), SWG (throwing), Street Fighting, Strike to Stun, Very Strong, Acute Hearing, Hardy

**Weapons:** Throwing axes (two), crossbow and 15 bolts, sword.

**Armour:** Leather jerkin

**A. points:** Body 1, rest 0

**Trappings:** Contents of Menagerie wagon, good clothes, purse with 3 Crowns.

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**Mephisto's Marvellous Menagerie Wagon**

Mephisto and Utta have been travelling with a specially modified wagon built at some expense with the assistance of Altdorf glass merchants. About two thirds of the inside of the wagon has been converted into a large, water-filled, glass tank, that Otto can be exhibited in. There's a large wooden flap on both of the long sides of the wagon that can be unlocked and lowered to allow viewing of the tank. There's a wooden hatch over the top which has a simple lock (Utta and Mephisto both have keys), which can be lifted to feed Otto. The walls of the tank are very thick (20 wounds). The rest of the wagon contains enough space for two hammocks to hang, and there is also some equipment: a lantern, 2 buckets (for topping up the tank), a long hose (for draining it), bedding rolls, flyers for the Menagerie, Octopus food (a big smelly bucket of snails and small crabs in salt water), Donkey & goat food (some greens, carrots and sugar lumps), Hippogriff food (a cage with three big live rats), dog food (a bag of pigs ears), 2 tarpaulins, 2 ropes, and a small barrel of good beer with two pewter tankards. Pinned on one wall is a small map of the Empire with pins in showing where they have exhibited. The wagon is pulled by two rather docile ponies - Gertrude and Alphonse. Use standard profiles (See WFRP p232).

The tank is heavy, especially when full of water and octopus, so movement is reduced by 1 to 3 from normal movement of 4. (TB5, W30).

For the war dogs Knut and Bjork use the standard profiles (See WFRP p233) and for Gerrard the goat use the pony profile (See WFRP p232).

**Theodor Herzog - Human Tradesman (male)**

**Quote:** "They re not drugged, they re overcome with smoke!", "Oh, you look absolutely marvelous in that!"

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
33	29	32	35	33	27	31	41
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mg	IP	FP
1	12	3	4	4	0	0	0

A weasly man with piercing eyes, he travels the roads hawking his fine women's clothing, but also preying on women.

**Skills:** Common Knowledge (the Empire), Gossip, Drive, Haggle, Evaluate, Perception, Read/Write, Secret Language (Guild Tongue), Trade (Tailor and merchant), Speak Language (Reikspiel)

**Talents:** Fleet footed, Suave, Dealmaker & Savvy

**Weapons:** Evil looking sacrificial dagger

**Armour:** None

**A. points:** None

**Trappings:** Fine clothing, vial of sleeping powder, three chests of women's clothing, purse with 17 GC.

**Mechthild - Human, Hedge Wizard. (Female)**

**Quote:** "This ll put hairs on your chest!", "Cross my palm with silver, dearie, and I ll see what the Gods have in store for you!", "Taste s good doesn t it? That ll be me secret ingredients."

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
27	29	31	31	37	41	45	34
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mg	IP	FP
1	11	3	3	3	1	4	1

A slightly deranged woman, with cannibalistic tastes, who lives in the swamp, making potions for goblins to keep them on her side, and eating the occasional unfortunate child who strays into her path. Reads fortunes too, and cooks an interesting stew.

**Skills:** Animal Care, Haggle, Charm, Channelling, Trade (Apothecary), Heal, Hypnotism, Magical Sense, Perception, Search, Prepare Poison, Common Knowledge (the Empire), Gossip, Speak Language (Reikspeil, Goblin Tongue)

**Talents:** Hedge Magic, Petty Magic (Hedge), Resistance to Poison, Excellent Vision

**Weapons:** Dagger (poisoned with Black Lotus Poison (see WFRP p122))

**Armour:** None

**A. Points:** None

**Trappings:** Ragged clothes, contents of shrine, and purse with three shiny buttons and 6 Silver pieces.

### Swamp snake

**Quote:** "Ssssss! SSSSSsssss!"

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
45	0	51	43	50	15	30	10
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mg	IP	FP
1	30	5	4	6	0	0	0

Swamp snakes are fierce inhabitants of desolate mires, who grow big on frogs and snails, but even bigger on careless greenskins and adventurers. They are very agile, and cunning, and take advantage of the mists that roll across their habitat to surprise their prey.

**Skills:** Concealment +10%, Dodge Blow, Perception +10%, Silent Move +10%

**Talents:** Frightening, Keen Senses, Natural Weapons (teeth), Night Vision, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Stun.

**Special Rules:**

\* Scales: 2AP all locations.

\* Poisonous Bite: An attack that deals at least 1 Wound deals 4 additional Wounds unless the target succeeds on a Toughness test.

**Armour:** Head (2), Body (2).

**Weapons:** Fangs and poisonous bite

### Bog Octopus

**Quote:** "Bloop!"

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
38	0	46	43	55	15	35	15
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mg	IP	FP
3	22	4	4	6	0	0	0

Bog Octopi (say experts or octopusses according to the peasants) are unpleasant swamp creatures that, in a bad light, look like hugely bloated spiders, and in a good light are not much prettier. They are fast and sneaky lone predators, consuming prey by grappling it in its many tentacles then passing it to its vicious beak. They rely more on ambush, and, if they find they are facing a strong foe, can quickly

disengage and scuttle off to find easier morsels. Typically an attack will use two tentacles to grapple the victim and pull them towards the beak. Although they can smell a bit fresh out of the bog, when washed and prepared well they are quite tasty.

**Skills:** Concealment +10%, Perception +10%, Silent Move +10%, Swim +10%

**Talents:** Frightening, Keen Senses, Natural Weapons (beak and tentacles), Night Vision, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Stun.

**Special Rules:**

\* Tentacles: +20% on all grappling attacks.

\* Leathery skin: 1AP all locations.

\* Powerful Bite: An Octopus's beak is very deadly and counts as having the Impact Quality. Beak does SB-1 damage.

**Armour:** 1AP all locations.

**Weapons:** Tentacles (SB-2) and beak (SB+1)

### Kersten Kartoffelkopf - Human Sergeant (Ex-soldier). (Female)

**Quote:** "This is for Magnor!" (slash of blade!)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
49	49	36	41	39	36	46	41
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mg	IP	FP
2	14*	3	4	4	0	2	0

**\*Current wounds: 9**

The only survivor of a patrol sent into the swamp to investigate reports of goblins and worse. Still slightly in shock, especially with what happened to her Dwarf comrade, Magnor. A good soldier, but carefully considering a different career right now.

**Skills:** Heal, Common Knowledge (the Empire, Kislev), Perception, Dodge Blow, Ride, Gossip, Gamble, Intimidate, Academic Knowledge (Strategy/Tactics), Command, Swim, Secret Language (Battle Tongue), Speak Language (Tilean, Reikspiel)

**Talents:** Disarm, Strike Mighty Blow, Specialist Weapon Group (Gunpowder), Rapid Reload, Mighty Shot, Seasoned Traveller, Street Fighting, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Stun, Ambidextrous, Resistance to Chaos

**Weapon:** Firearm with 3 shots (ooo), sword

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**Armour:** Full mail armour, plate breastplate

**A. points:** Head 3, Body 5, Legs 3, Arms 3

**Trappings:** Uniform (which has seen better days), empty water skin, purse with 5GCs. backpack.

### Lord Hubertus Alphonse Renoir Delcroix

Human, Noble. (Male)

**Quote:** "Feed me!", "Feed them to my pigs!", "Hang him. Hang all of them. Their dogs too."

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
41	34	31	32	29	39	39	29
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mg	IP	FP
1	12	3	3	3	0	0	0

A fat pig of a man, prone to gluttony, who's just simply not good company. The sort of Lord who arbitrarily has peasants hanged for looking at him in a funny way. He has got Mephisto to capture an octopus by lying he was interested in supporting the Menagerie where in reality all he is interested in is stuffing his ever-expanding belly with exotic morsels.

The Delcroix family coat of arms includes a large swan, and he has had specially made helmets with swans on for his guards.

**Skills:** Command, Common Knowledge (the Empire), Consume Alcohol, Charm (seldom used!), Gamble, Gossip, Read/Write, Ride, & Speak Language (Reikspiel).

**Talents:** Etiquette, Public Speaking, Specialist Weapon (Fencing), Schemer, Specialist Weapon (Gunpowder), Resistance to Poison, & Resistance to Disease.

**Weapons:** Pistol with 5 shots (ooooo), rapier, dagger

**Armour:** None

**A. points:** None

**Trappings:** Fine clothing, a large number of pills to aid digestion and reduce flatulence, and Mansion and all contents.

**Eva, Halfling Servant Cook (Female)**

**Quote:** "You'll like this your Lordship, I made it using an Araby recipe. It's quite spicy!", "No! Don't hurt Hubertus!"

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
22	45	36	19	41	36	33	50
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mg	IP	FP
1	9	3	1	4	0	0	0

A loyal retainer to her Lord, as she's never met anyone who's enjoyed food quite as much as he does, and it's a great job being his cook!

**Skills:** Trade (cook), Blather, Dodge Blow, Haggle, Gossip, Perception, Sleight of Hand, Academic Knowledge (Genealogy/Heraldry), Common Knowledge (Halflings), Speak Language (Halfling, Reikspiel).

**Talents:** Flee!, Etiquette, Lightning Reflexes, Night Vision, Resistance to Chaos, Specialist weapon Group (Sling), Resistance to Poison

**Armour:** None

**A. points:** None

**Weapons:** Large cleaver (treat as axe)

**Equipment:** Cook's clothes, packet of exotic spices.

### Lord Delcroix's guards - Human mercenaries

**Quote:** "What are you looking at, peasant?"

The two guards in Lord Delcroix's chambers, Mauritz and Kurtz, have been on the receiving end of his Lordship's fierce temper on a number of occasions, making them not as loyal as they might be. They are however not going to let a few peasants upstage them in front of their Master. The two gate guards, Heinrich and Matilda, are relatively new, and more amenable to taking a bribe, and turning a blind eye.

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
35	30	33	35	30	25	35	28
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mg	IP	FP
1	11	3	3	4	0	0	0



Fan Material for Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay: Mr Mephisto's Marvellous Menagerie  
**The Player Characters**



**Skills:** Common Knowledge (the Empire), Dodge Blow, Drive, Gamble, Gossip +10%, Perception, Secret Language (Battle Tongue), Speak Language (Reikspiel)

**Talents:** Coolheaded, disarm, marksman, rapid reload, sharpshooter.

**Armour:** Full leather armour, mail shirt, mail coif, special swan helmet

**A. Points:** Head 3, Arms 1, Body 3, Legs 1

**Equipment:** Crossbow and twenty bolts, Hand Weapon (Sword and Halberd).

**Trappings:** Uniform, and each also has 1d10 Crowns.

The following pages list PCs which have been designed with this scenario in mind, and with particular backgrounds and secret missions to introduce some tension within the group to aid role playing. All profiles already include any +5% bonuses due to talents such as savvy.

The scenario was written for four players, however it can be run with up to six players. One of the tricky things to running scenarios to time is what to do when some of your players turn up late for the start, as often happens. To resolve this, the game can be started as soon as you have four players around the table, and the last two optional PCs come into the game shortly after it starts (and when your friends arrive). The barman character comes into play as soon as scene 2 starts, and the last PC can arrive any time up to the end of scene 2. Note that in scene 1, the card routine won't work with more than four PCs, as there are only four suits.

**Character traits** are given for each PC to help with role playing, and a brief description of what each PC thinks of the others. For the first four PCs they haven't really noticed the fifth PC (the barman) so they have no thoughts about him, and the sixth PC (the grave robber) arrives late so isn't known to any of the others.

A **Secret Mission** has also been included for each character, each of which consists of three parts, although some of the missions will have more than that if playing with five or six characters. This should also aid role playing within the group, and make the players a little suspicious of what each other is doing, which given that they have only just met, should be reasonable!

### **What?! My character is dead already?!**

The scenario is not meant to be lethal, but it is possible that with a bit of bad luck a player may lose a character half way through the session. It's boring to watch your friends play, so the solution to this is to have the NPC Kersten Kartoffelkopf appear at an opportune scene, and be taken over by the player who has lost a character. In the unlikely event that two PCs are lost to Morr's embrace, then use Mephisto's companion Utta as a second replacement PC. After that the PCs will have to go with what they've got, although you could have someone play the octopus in the final combat...

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**Siluvaine Purelight**  
**Elven Apprentice Wizard (Female)**

**Quotes:** "My clothes, ruined, and from the finest tailor in Middenheim! The stench, it is unbearable!"; "By Ulric, when did you last wash!?!"; "You must smell this, it's fantastic!"

Main Profile							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
30	38	30	30	49	42	36	33
-	-	-	-	+5	+10	+15	+5
30	38	30	30	49	42	36	33
Secondary Profile							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mg	IP	FP
1	11	3	3	5	0	0	1
-	+2	-	-	-	+1√	-	-
1	11	3	3	5	1	0	1

**Skills:** Common Knowledge (Elves), Speak Languages (Eltharin, Reikspiel), Academic Knowledge (Magic), Channeling, Magical Sense, Perception, Read/Write, Search, Speak Arcane Languages (Magick, Classical).

**Talents:** Aethyric Attunement, Fast Hands, Coolheaded, Excellent Vision, Night Vision, Petty Magic (Arcane), Savvy.

**Armour:** None (so be careful!)

**A. points:** Head 0, Arms 0, Body 0, Legs 0

**Weapons:** Quarterstaff, dagger

**Trappings:** Good boots & clothes (flowing robes), fine dark purple cloak, backpack, blanket, wooden tankard and cutlery set, printed book (Festendiggers Guide to Magical Runes), small pouch containing unusual spell ingredients (currently: a tiny bell, three small darts, and a piece of down), another pouch containing 13 Crowns, 1 Silver Piece, and a small blue gem worth 5 Crowns, wineskin (full), and two days good quality rations.

**Treasured Item:** Bottle of perfume embossed with a scene from Laurelorn Forest, half full of finest perfume from fabled Bretonnian Perfumery Guy et Guy.

**Background:** You've grown up around interesting smells - your parents ran a perfume shop - and you have a very sensitive nose (+10% to perception checks involving smell), the downside of which is you find it hard to be around smelly people or being unclean. Your heightened sense may account for your early interest in magic (sometimes you think you can even smell magic), and you are keen to experience more of the scents the World can offer, and to work out which path of magic you wish to follow. You know people don't always take too kindly to Elves, and especially to those with magical abilities, so most of the time you pretend you are a minor noble, and like to have others around you to give the impression of a retinue.

**Character traits:** Overly dramatic, fussy

**Secret mission:** To persuade all other party members to have a really good wash and wear some of your perfume. By Ulric, it would be a big improvement!

**What you think of the others:**

**Dwarf:** You've always been a bit unsure around Dwarves, and this one is particularly smelly, so you're finding it a bit difficult, but you do recognise it's useful to have a good fighter around, so you're trying to be nice. You'd really feel pleased with yourself if you could persuade him above all others to wash and put on some perfume.

**Halfling:** The Halfling says she's a good cook, and as someone who appreciates fine smells, you hope it is not all bravado. Other than that you don't notice her much - she's usually below your line of sight. Doesn't smell bad though. Terrible fidget.

**Human:** What a strange accent! Probably need to keep an eye on him though, as sometimes people like that freak out and become a danger not only to themselves, but everyone around them too. Generous last night buying the drinks.

Fan Material for Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay: Mr Mephisto's Marvellous Menagerie  
**"Bear" Bjorn Tymbarck**  
**Human Kislevite Kossar (Male)**

**Quote:** "And they we chopped all their heads off, jah, chop, chop, choppity-chop!", "Let s make a wager on that, jah?", "You think this bad, you should try living in the wind like in Kislev where I from!"

Main Profile							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
33	36	34	36	40	28	32	37
+10	+10		+10√			+10	
33	36	34	41	40	28	32	37
Secondary Profile							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Ma g	IP	FP
1	13	3	3	4	0	0	1
	+2						
1	13	3	4	4	0	0	1

**Skills:** Common Knowledge (The Empire, Kislev), Consume Alcohol, Dodge Blow, Gamble, Gossip, Outdoor Survival, Perception, Search, Speak Language (Reikspiel, Kislevian)

**Talents:** Specialist Weapon Group (Two-handed), Strike to Injure, Suave, Lightning Reflexes

**Armour:** Mail Coat, Leather Jack, Leather Leggings, big furry leather hat

**A. Points:** Head 1, Arms 1, Body 3, Legs 3

**Weapons:** Bow with 9 arrows (ooo ooo ooo), Great Weapon (Two-handed sword), dagger

**Trappings:** Excellent boots, good clothes, big fur cloak, backpack, blanket, wooden tankard and cutlery, bone dice, deck of cards, pouch with 23 Gold Crowns, water skin (full), 1 days rations.

**Treasured item:** Gold ear-rings (worth 5 Crowns each) given to you by your mother before you left Kislev.

**Background:** You left Kislev a few months ago and have been keen to see what the Empire has to offer. You're interested to see that a lot of the folk of the Empire are smaller than you, and are curious about Dwarves and Halflings, as you haven't seen many of these before. You're also trying to improve your Reikspiel, as your accent seems to be hard for some people to understand. You've a good sense of humour and tend to see the amusing and positive side of things, which is quite unusual in the Empire you've come to notice. You've just met up with three interesting non-humans in an Inn whose name you don't understand. To celebrate you have been buying drinks generously for them until late last night. You've also done well winning money off the other patrons. A good night!

**Character traits:** Boisterous, always smiling

**Secret mission:** You are a keen gambler, loving both dice and cards, and you intend to gamble with each of the others and win at least 5 GCs (or equivalent).

**What you think of the others:**

**Dwarf:** Little guy, big axe, crazy blue tattoos, great hair, big drinker!

**Halfling:** Ha! She's half my size! I could lift her with one hand! And probably juggle her!

**Elf:** Cute pointy ears! Good smell! Curvy!

Fan Material for Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay: Mr Mephisto's Marvellous Menagerie  
**Ragnar Hakagruntson**  
**Dwarven Troll-Slayer (Male)**

**Quotes:** "I love it when a plan comes together!";  
 "No, you can't have a cigar!"; "What did you say  
 about my hair?! You looking to taste my axe?"

Main Profile							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
45	29	36	45	21	31	29	18
+10	-	+5	+5	+5	-	+10	-
45	29	36	45	21	31	29	18
Secondary Profile							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mg	IP	FP
1	14	3	4	3	0	0	1
+1√	+3	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	14	3	4	3	0	0	1

**Skills:** Common Knowledge (Dwarfs), Speak Languages (Khazalid, Reikspeil), Trade (Miner), Consume Alcohol, Dodge Blow, Intimidate.

**Talents:** Dwarfcraft, Grudge-Born Fury, Night Vision, Resistance to Magic, Stout-Hearted, Sturdy, Quick Draw, Hardy, Lightning Reflexes, Specialist Weapon Group (Two-handed), Street Fighter, Strike Mighty Blow.

**Armour:** Leather Jerkin

**A. Points:** Body 1, Legs 0, Head 0, Arms 0

**Weapons:** Two-handed axe, dagger

**Trappings:** Well-worn boots, common clothes (shirt and breeches), very dirty cloak, sling bag, blanket, wooden tankard and cutlery set, three small jars (one containing orange hair dye, one with blue dye to supplement your tattoos before combat, and the other some smelly gunk for making your hair spiky), a steel mirror (to check correct application of contents of jars), half full bottle of poor craftsmanship spirits, a money pouch (sadly currently empty), and half an old pie.

**Treasured Item:** Six best craftsmanship matches and four finest Tilean cigars (all perfectly dry) in a small silver case.

**Background:** Having had a humiliating experience when goblins ambushed your caravan, knocking you out before you'd felled a single greenskin, you have been travelling on a mission to kill at least three of the abominations, before heading north to seek out ice trolls to really test your axe blade on. You have found that smoking the odd cigar has helped take your mind off things. It's boring travelling on your own, as you have too much time to think, so it was good to spend the night drinking with some interesting travellers, especially with the big longshanks paying.

**Character traits:** Gloomy, superstitious

**Secret mission:** You have in mind to make a necklace of goblin ears - you reckon six would be about right, so you need the heads of (at least!) three goblins.

**What you think of the others:**

**Elf:** Gah, a poncey Elf with airs and graces, and suspiciously clean to boot. She just reeks of perfume! On the other hand, it's worth having people with money around as they're always good for a drink or two. Or they'd better be. She's not as rude as most Nobles, so perhaps that is something. Pointy ears take some getting used to though.

**Halfling:** It's odd to have someone shorter than you around, as you're not really used to that. But she's a fidget, always darting around, and watching her hands fly about can make your eyes water! And you've never seen such hairy feet! She says she can cook which would be welcome as you've not had a decent meal in days.

**Human:** You recognise a fellow fighter, and have a grudging respect for those who have mastered the arts of combat! But he talks funny, and a true warrior's weapon is an axe not a sword! However, his coin is good, and that smile lifts even your gloomy mood.

Fan Material for Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay: Mr Mephisto's Marvellous Menagerie  
**Elmflower Dibbly-Firkin**  
**Halfling Thief (Female)**

**Quotes:** "That s a pretty item, I m sure you must treasure it?"; "No, my hand wasn t in your pocket, I was just brushing off a stain."; "Hmm, this lacks spice. I have just the thing!"

Main Profile							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
21	41	22	20	47	29	27	41
+5	+5	-	-	+15 √	+5	-	+10
21	41	22	20	52	29	27	41
Secondary Profile							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mg	IP	FP
1	10	2	2	4	0	0	2
	+2						
1	10	2	2	4	0	0	2

**Skills:** Academic Knowledge (Genealogy/ Heraldry), Common Knowledge (Halflings), Gossip, Speak Language (Halfling, Reikspiel), Trade (Cook), Scale Sheer Surface, Concealment, Evaluate, Pick Lock, Perception, Sleight of Hand, Search, Secret Signs (Thief), & Silent Move.

**Talents:** Night vision, Resistance to Chaos, Specialist Weapon Group (Sling), Luck\*, Resistance to Poison, Streetwise, & Trapfinder. (\*Gives you an extra fortune point each day!)

**Armour:** Leather Jerkin, leather skullcap

**A. points:** Body 1, head 1, legs 0, arms 0

**Weapons:** Short sword, dagger & sling

**Trappings:** Good boots & clothes, black cloak (with many concealed pockets), sling bag, blanket, wooden tankard and cutlery set, lock picks, 10 yards of rope, two sacks, small bag mixed spices, small cooking pot (carefully muffled in blanket so as not to clank), tinder-box, purse with 2 crowns, 1 silver piece, and two small blue gems worth 3 Crowns each.

**Treasured item:** Anyone else's treasured item! Last night you pocketed a lucky charm in the shape of a black pig from one of the bar staff, and that was easy! Note: The charm can be used once to re-roll one Test or ignore a successful hit.

**Background:** Having hastily left the Moot a few months ago after a disagreement over ownership of a purse full of gems, you've been drifting around the local towns for a while making a modest living using your thievery skills, but can't help thinking there must be more to life than this. Whilst you masquerade as a cook, and say you're traveling the Empire to seek out new taste sensations, you are in fact just a simple thief, and find it hard not to steal anything that anyone else particularly treasurers. Which often leads to trouble, as you found to your cost in the Moot! You've been a little surprised at the harshness of life in the Empire, and have been experiencing the odd bout of home-sickness recently. Still, there's a lot of flavours to enjoy yet before you head back to the Moot, and pockets to be picked too!

**Character traits:** Fidget, always hungry

**Secret mission:** Each of the other characters has a treasured item. You want them! Badly!

**What you think of the others:**

**Elf:** Seems alright, a bit aloof. Says she's a Noble, so if you hang around she's bound to lead you to some promising pickings amongst rich people. Can go on a bit.

**Dwarf:** Typically surly, and doesn't that orange spiky hair look ridiculous! Good person to have at your back in a fight though.

**Human:** A bit scary - he's very big and powerful! You're worried he might step on you! Those gold ear-rings look valuable...

Fan Material for Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay: Mr Mephisto's Marvellous Menagerie  
**Dieter Affenkuss**  
**Human Servant (Barman) (Male)**

**Quotes:** "You re barred!", "No, that is the correct change.", "That ll teach you, you vermin."

Main Profile							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
31	31	34	29	44	27	33	25
+5		+5		+10 √	+5	+10	+5
31	31	34	29	49	27	33	25
Secondary Profile							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mg	IP	FP
1	11	3	2	4	0	0	1
	+2						
1	11	3	2	4	0	0	1

**Skills:** Common Knowledge (The Empire), Gossip, Speak Language (Reikspiel), Animal Care, Blather, Dodge Blow, Search, Haggle, Perception, Sleight of Hand

**Talents:** Mimic, Resistance to Poison, Flee!, Etiquette, Lightning Reflexes

**Armour:** Leather jerkin

**A. points:** Body 1, head 0, legs 0, arms 0

**Weapons:** Dagger

**Trappings:** Pewter tankard inscribed "Lycanthrope Arms", tinderbox, storm lantern, lamp oil, good clothes (boots, shirt, breeches and cloak), bottle of fine Bretonnian brandy "borrowed" from the inn, sling bag, blanket, metal cutlery set, purse with 2 Crowns and 7 shillings, large bottle of foul-tasting herbal cough mixture. You did also have a lucky charm in the shape of a black pig, but you seem to have lost it.

**Treasured item:** A bracelet made of many coloured strings that, the merchant said, the Ladies will find simply irresistible.

**Background:** You've been working in the Lycanthrope arms for a few months, and, as you don't get on well with Leopold the innkeeper, and all your flirting with the barmaids has come to nothing, you haven't been particularly enjoying it. You've been thinking of leaving for a while, as you've heard enough interesting tales from the patrons who pass through to tempt you to try your hand as an adventurer. But you haven't yet picked up the courage to set out on your own. You know you haven't been a very good barman, and you tend to do things, like short changing customers, and palming the odd item, that can lead to antagonism. You're a bit worried about a cough you've picked up and don't now seem to be able to shake...

You were having a bit of a sleepless night, dreaming of drowning in a lake by moonlight, when the smell of smoke awoke you - you got out the inn as quickly as you could and started throwing water on the flames, but it doesn't look good, and you haven't seen several of the patrons, nor the rest of the inn staff - there must still be people inside!

**Character traits:** Irritating, worrisome cough

**Secret mission:** You're quite excited by the bracelet you bought last night, and have set yourself an objective of three kisses from three different people by the end of the day, or you'll be finding that charlatan merchant and asking for your money back!

**What you think of the others:**

In your line of work you see lots of different people every day, and you've long since stopped paying particular attention to others. If pressed, you'd say the elf was attractive, the human too loud, and as for the dwarf and halfling you don't have much time for shorties anyway.

Fan Material for Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay: Mr Mephisto's Marvellous Menagerie  
**Adalbert Altfleisch**  
**Human Grave Robber (Male)**

**Quotes:** "What goes in the ground doesn't always stay there." "Where there's skin there's shillings.", "No, there's nothing suspicious in my bag."

Main Profile							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
36	30	33	34	27	29	39	32
+5	+5	+5		+10		+10 √	
36	30	33	34	27	29	44	32
Secondary Profile							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mg	IP	FP
1	12	3	3	4	0	0	1
	+2						
1	12*	3	3	4	0	0	1

\*current wounds 7

**Skills:** Common Knowledge (The Empire), Gossip, Speak Language (Reikspiel), Drive, Haggle, Perception, Scale Sheer Surface, Search, Secret Signs (thief), Silent Move

**Talents:** Acute Hearing, Excellent Vision, Flee! (a skill that has saved your neck once already tonight), Resistance to Disease, Street-wise

**Armour:** Leather jack, leather skullcap

**A. points:** Body 1, head 1, legs 0, arms 0

**Weapons:** Sword, Dagger

**Trappings:** A sack with five freshly severed hands and two eyes (you have a contact in the local Physicians Guild for such things), and grubby clothes (boots, shirt, breeches and cloak). Everything else you dropped.

**Treasured item:** A ruby ring you found on the body of a beautiful Elven woman, which you wear proudly on your right hand.

**Background:** By Sigmar! What a night! You were doing a quiet spot of grave robbing, looking for some choice items when you were disturbed by the Watch, and had to make a run for it, dropping your belongings and purse. They gave chase and you took an arrow to the shoulder, which really hurts, and made you drop your lamp. You didn't dare drop what was in your sack. One of the Watch recognised you so there's no going back to town for a while. Middle of the night found you a long way from home, bleeding, and in a rather bad mood, with no light source. You saw the lights from a roadside inn - unusually bright - so headed for that in search of some shelter and medical attention. It's not wise to tell people you are a grave robber, so you've made up a story that you're a coachman who was attacked by bandits.

**Character traits:** Vulgar, irritable

**Secret mission:** You like to see people's reactions when you're vulgar, and you play a little game with yourself to see if you can upset people without actually being rude, as that would be too easy!

**What you think of the others:**

Being a late-comer to the party you haven't had time to take stock of the others, other than to notice that the Halfling can't stop fidgeting and the big guy seems to have a stupid grin on his face all the time. Nothing to laugh about that you can see, and in fact you'd struggle to remember the last time you even half smiled. You'd think a lot of anyone right now who could take the arrow out and patch up your shoulder.

## Player Handouts - Flashbacks

### **\*\*Flashback A:**

You have a flashback from the previous night, and for some reason remember everyone roaring with laughter at the amusing antics of a rather cute dancing goat called... Gerrard?

### **\*\*Flashback B:**

You have a momentary flashback of sitting at the bar and admiring all the beautiful (and expensive) bottles behind the bar. Valuable stuff!

### **\*\*Flashback C:**

You remember with a shiver that the Innkeeper was talking last night of chaos beasts stalking the woods!

### **\*\*Flashback D:**

You remember both these characters arriving in the strange-looking wagon last night, and thinking they were from the circus or something, and was looking forward to seeing some clowns.

### **\*\*Flashback E:**

You remember chatting up two rather attractive bar maids the night before, but they seemed more interested in the clothes being displayed by another patron, a weasly man with bright eyes.

### **\*\*Flashback F:**

You remember a wealthy looking man with bright eyes in the bar. Rescuing wealthy people often means rewards...

### **\*\*Flashback G:**

You remember that you went out late at night to have a quiet smoke round the back of the stables, and to admire the stars. You're sure you put your smoke out at the end, but can't specifically remember...

### **\*\*Flashback H:**

You remember Mephisto saying quite emphatically "I want an unharmed octopus for my menagerie!"

### **\*\*Flashback I:**

You remember one of the patrons of the Lycanthrope Arms saying that Mephisto used to be a Norse Berserker and isn't always very good at keeping his temper.



## Player Handouts - Menagerie Flyer

