

*SOMETHING
IN THE
WATER*

by Kevin Naughton



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INTRODUCTION

The adventure starts in the town of Borschweig, some fifty miles west of Middenheim and situated along one of the lesser used roads to that city, and the town of Blutgel-on-Gwyth which is upriver from it. They are situated along the minor river Yurtz and one of its tributaries, the Gwyth. Players would happen upon Borschweig while travelling either to or from Middenheim while staying off the main trade road and, of course, GM's have the option of simply transplanting the entire Yurtz to nearly anywhere in the Old World and most of the details should still be correct. It is most suitable for characters on perhaps their second careers and should take, at most, no more than four hours to play.

SOME BACKGROUND OF THE AREA

The river Yurtz is known for its fish, mostly, and has its own distinctive breeds of both trout and pike (as well as the more purely decorative Yurtz Loach) which are farmed and traded in great numbers from the town of Borschweig. A little over seventy five years ago the town was nothing more than an overnight stop to Middenheim with a small village attached; but that was before, what came to be known by the locals as, "The blessing of the Loach". At the time, Borschweig was in a rut and had no economic or future prospects at all and the only thing the people of the village had to look forward to was the occasional affluent visitor on their way to Middenheim and the possibility that, with them, they would bring some coin and enough gossip to last the Borschweigiens until their next visitor. So it was that the Dame Eleonore Übelnase, aide to the elector of Nuln, came to stay in the local inn (then named the "Blossoming Root", although the paint had long since come off the "l" in "Blossoming" and the second "o" in "Root"...) on her way to meet up with the rest of his entourage in Middenheim. While there she had a chance encounter with a young boy who had recently caught a colourful yellow and brown fish from the river and she had become quite taken with its distinctive colouring. She brought the fish with her when she left and it became something of a minor hit with the fashionable elite for a short while, long enough to bring money and interest to Borschweig. This financial starting point led a good deal of the poor and disenfranchised to move there and try to earn their fortunes as fishers, most of them after the mythical *Gelbschmeck*, a Loach that was said to be entirely golden and would be worth a fortune to the man that fished it. Free loaders and prospectors aside, it did enable a booming fisheries trade to begin in the village and it encouraged some much needed income from the surrounding towns and cities. It was not long before Borschweig was well known among fish importers the length of the empire and things started to look extremely prosperous for its people.

As you would expect, it was not simply Borschweig that prospered from this fortunate influx of labour and gold. Further upriver, and off one minor tributary, was the tiny mining village of Blutgel-on-Gwyth which did all that it could to capitalise on the good fortunes of its neighbour. Extra hands who had no skill on the river moved in to take work in the mines; those without enough to buy or lodge in the increasingly expensive town downriver were forced to the cheaper, but still prosperous, little mining village. The relationship worked well as Blutgel needed somewhere nearby it could export ore to and it also needed increasing amounts of food to feed its population. Being mostly surrounded by scrubland, it became dependant on its trading relationship with Borschweig for many of the essentials of day to day living, and as it was making a profit from selling on the base ores it was receiving, they were more than happy to keep the relationship going.

IN MORE RECENT NEWS...

The furore over Borschweig has long since died down and it has sunk into anonymity as one of the Empire's many fish suppliers. Few outside of trading and fishing circles think twice about the town but its business is seen to be going well and money has continued to flow into the town. Rumours in said circles, however, also say that their ore exports have diminished recently; giving rise to the rumours that the relationship with their upriver cousins has gone downhill in recent years.

THE STORY

Given is an account of the story behind the adventure, most of this information is not for player consumption and, indeed, much need never be disclosed.

At the centre of Borschweig's prosperity for over fifty years has been the Addler family and their highly successful fisheries and export business. Their current patriarch is a distinguished philanthropist in the area named Erwin who, like his father and grandfather before him, has been building profit upon profit from the meagre resources of Borschweig for over 20 years. A significant part of that business used to come from the upriver mines as the Addler family would buy and sell on any precious ores and gems that might be found. It was through this enterprise that the families Addler and Mabbett became acquainted; so ultimately this is the starting point for the whole story.

Gustav Mabbett was the head of the Blutgel-on-Gwyth mining Coop in his day and was responsible for the pricing and dealing of all produce to Borschweig. To nobody's great surprise, Erwin Addler was the man who offered the best price and the fairest contracts, as he had a reputation for generosity and fairness, as had all his family. Frequent trips to ensure output quality and good relations led Gustav to travel into Borschweig on a monthly basis and it was not unusual to see him in town or on the road with his brown mongrel Aysu and either his daughter Imke or son Luitpold. Over time the two men became quite friendly and their meetings became more informal affairs, occasionally leading to Gustav staying for dinner with the Addlers or discussing business with Erwin over a casual game of bowls. This was how the trade was maintained and in many ways was reflected accurately the relationship between the very towns each man came from, the affluent neighbour kindly helping his poor friend with the straits he is in.

The fault, unfortunately, with their relationship was lost on Gustav Mabbett who genuinely believed Erwin Addler to be a friend. While it would be impossible to deny that Erwin had a strong fondness for his business partner, he understood that the informality of their relationship and the good will between the two of them was fundamental to keeping his prices low and business booming for both of them. He understood that he and Gustav were from two separate worlds and that, were it not for the business of the mine, they would have no common ground upon which he would be interested in basing their friendship. Of course this bothered him not one little bit as he saw no reason for their business to conclude or, consequently, their friendship to sour and so he continued to invite his friend to dinner and happily entertained his company for many years.

On the occasions when Gustav brought his children to visit and he was discussing business with Erwin; Luitpold and Imke were entertained by Erwin's own children, Gerlach and Sofie. Although they were slightly older than Gustav's, Erwin's children happily looked after and played with them

and all four became good friends over the years. Imke was shy, while her brother was brash and boisterous; were it not for being younger he probably would have bullied Gerlach, who was more interested in his father's bowls than playing soldier. Sofie, the oldest, played mother to them all and was shrewd enough to stop them from misbehaving overly and became very good at keeping their arguments short and friendly. It was after ten years of friendship and growing up together that, when she was sixteen and he eighteen, Imke and Gerlach fell in love.

Erwin Addler was caught between disbelief and shock when his son told him of his desire to be wedded to Imke Mabbett,

“Madness and balderdash and...and...madness!”

he called it. His aspirations were for his son to marry into a wealthy merchant family from Talabheim or Nuln and raise the profile and social standing of the Addler name, not to marry the daughter of a slag miner who he considered little better than his servant. He forbade Gerlach to see Imke any more and set about speeding up the process of finding him a suitable wife so he could quash any other strange notions the boy might have. For him, then, matter was settled and, although shook by his son's lack of social awareness and intuitive reasoning of what he considered to be “right”, he gave the idea of an Addler-Mabbett marriage no further thought. Gerlach, on the other hand, could not get the sadness at his father's reaction out of his heart any more than he could get the thought of Imke out of his head. Forlorn and heartsick, he became despondent and distant, to the point where his sister, probably against her better judgement, decided she had no choice but to help him. She arranged secret meetings between her brother and Imke, acted as a go between and made sure their father was none the wiser. Her plan succeeded almost perfectly, Gerlach was happy and there was no sign that anyone knew; unfortunately Sofie had not inherited her guile and shrewdness from her mother so despite her best efforts, and unbeknownst to her, Erwin Addler had discovered the plot and was already setting plans in motion to safeguard the future of his family name.

Dorlott Kamdell, a freelance Dwarven engineer, had received a request from “Addler, Addler & Son” as to some contract work along the River Yurtz. He was interviewed by Erwin Addler himself and hired, by discrete contract, to “thoroughly and rigorously test the structural integrity of the Blutgel-on-Gwyth mining installations”. Emphasis was placed verbally on the word “rigorously” and Dorlott set off straight from the meeting with some homemade explosives under his arm and every intention of “testing” the whole place to pieces. The following day was possibly one of the most grim Blutgel-on-Gwyth had ever seen. The dwarf had known his trade well and the main mine shafts had been weakened during the night, collapsing in on themselves and leaving no trace of his interference. The mine was unworkable and the foremen condemned it as too dangerous to work anymore, the livelihood of the entire town had vanished overnight and there was simply no hope left. People left the town in their droves, heading in all directions, to the nearby mining communities of the Middle Mountains and the southern ranges, deserting the small town on the banks of the Gwyth now that there was nothing left to stay for.

Barely a week after the mine's closure, it became apparent that not all its inhabitants were capable of simply leaving the town behind. Some had lived there so long they simply could not bear the thought of living anywhere else, some refused out of plain stubbornness and some were too ill or frail to survive moving. What's more, it became apparent that now the town no longer produced any goods worthy of trade, Borschweig's munificent nature vanished overnight and Blutgel-on-Gwyth was left cut off and facing a winter with neither prospects nor food for its people. Although enraged and disgusted with the swift change of heart their neighbours seemed to have had, and in Gustav's case, the unbelievable conduct of the man he thought was his friend, it was decided amongst the remaining townsfolk to reopen the mine and run it as best as they could under the circumstances, they simply felt they had no other choice. Two days after the mine resumed operations, there was a

catastrophic collapse, a dozen miners or more were trapped in the shaft as the whole thing caved in on itself. Among them was Gustav Mabbett.

Erwin's plan had been to close the mine and force the Mabbetts to move, thereby keeping Imke and Gerlach apart. He had never considered that anyone might try working the mine after it had been sabotaged and so was hit hard by the news of the accident and of Gustav's death. After the memorial service that was held in Bluthel-on-Gwyth, however, most of the people simply went back to what remained of their daily lives. The locals hunted animals for food and sold their pelts for coin, they farmed the meagre land around then and they eked out as best a life as they could. Unfortunately, their friendship with Borschweig was now at an end and life became unbearably hard; the town had atrophied to little more than a ghost town and the people, little more than peasants. The Mabbett children were forced to stay in the village after their father's death as their mother, Berhilde, took ill not long after the mine collapse and died after a few weeks suffering. They were left with no place to go and precious little to their name, they began the long struggle of trying to rebuild what was left of Blutgel-on-Gwyth along with its remaining inhabitants. As a final and decisive nail in the coffin of Gerlach and Imke's romance, he packed his son off to Talabheim and apprenticed him to a wealthy financier named Jagwein so that he might learn the trade and hopefully find himself a wife of proper standing.

Less than six months later, nearly all contact had been lost between the two towns. Travelers and traders no longer came from, nor went up, the Gwyth as they simply had no reason to. What did travel between the two places, however, were rumours; mutterings of a sickness in Blutgel-on-Gwyth spread around Borschweig, of a plague of madness that had gripped its people. Screams were sometimes heard in the night from upriver and livestock started to go missing more and more. Before long every strange and unfortunate occurrence in the town was attributed to their degenerate neighbours and wild stories were whispered behind closed doors. Eventually, however, this hysteria seemed to abate and while the strange happenings never entirely ceased, they curbed themselves after a short while and the people settled back into their daily fishmongering lives.

It is now five years after the accident, Blutgel-on-Gwyth is little more than a ghost story to the people of Borschweig but their hysteria about its mysterious plague petered out soon after it had begun when no symptoms were seen in the town. They mostly accredit this to the cessation of all contact with their upriver counterpart and are all, nearly to a man, perfectly happy to leave them and be left. Their mediocre lives have changed little through the scandal, the Addler's still make money from the town by administrating their fisheries and their trout is still served to the nobility as far away as Brettonia. As far as any of them are concerned, what happens or has happened to the village of Blutgel-on-Gwyth, is simply none of their concern.

THE TOWN OF BORSCHWEIG

Borschweig is a prosperous settlement with several hundred people living there, most of whom are employed in one capacity or another with the town's over active fishing trade. The town is spread both up and down the river Yurtz, with a secondary trade road to Middenheim running straight through it. The people are good, salt of the earth, imperial citizens who love their gossip and relish any opportunity to talk about either themselves or their home town. Still, after seventy five years, nearly every man, woman and child in Borschweig is personally proud of the fish they produce and all of them can tell the charming, if not terribly interesting, story of "Little Bruno Braun and the Blessing of the Loach", as it is a popular story told to children, passers by, traders, drinking partners and pretty much anyone who will listen. The most obvious feature of the town though is the prevalent smell of fish that permeates every nook and cranny of the place. The locals, naturally, can't smell a thing as they are so used to it, but they themselves are a common source of the smell from their mostly fish diet so it is inescapable to all while in the town.

The river is loaded with jetty's and docks, with single story warehouses and fishmongers lined all along both banks. The workers ply the river for miles in both directions during the day but it is deserted at night, except for the few careful experts who farm the elusive and largely nocturnal Yurtz Loach. It's docklands are by far the busiest area of the entire town, carts loaded with produce trundle in and out of the town constantly and the market streets are lined with as many different shapes and sizes of trout and pike you can think of. Towards the main street through the town is the Merchant district, home of the dozens of fish traders and exporters, as well as the occasional regular import trader. Chief among them, and by far the most noticeable are the offices of "Addler, Addler & Son" who have a magnificent three story townhouse, most of which is office and records space for the company, or hired out to other merchant firms or traders.

Borschweig is governed by a council of five magistrates, each of whom sees it as his duty to not mess up a system that has worked so very well for seventy five years. They are all successful traders from the town and all of them still look to the former Chief Magistrate Erwin Addler for guidance, despite the fact that he stepped down from office nearly two years ago.

THE NOBLE MERCHANT

It is impossible to visit the town without hearing the name Addler. He and his family have been instrumental in the rise of Borschweig's fortunes and everyone credits the shrewdness of their family almost as much as the Blessing of the Loach for the town's success. He is what the players should first notice about the town, besides from the smell of fish. His family's name is synonymous with what everyone in the town see as right, just, honourable and successful and they are all happy to be associated with him. Many people will claim even the most tenuous link to them and in all they are the local royalty of the town.

AN OPPORTUNITY

It is a well known fact that the local people of Borschweig enjoy their gossip, even if it were not well known, it would make itself immediately apparent to anyone visiting. This is how the players are to begin their association with the town.

Three weeks ago a roadwarden, named Casten Burgvogt, was seen visiting the town and speaking with the local authorities, such is not unusual for somewhere so close to Middenheim, but what was unusual is that this warden was seemingly inquiring about the current fortunes of Blutgel-on-Gwyth as no report had been received of in quite some time. He was seen travelling up the disused north road when he left the town hall that evening and no one has heard of him since.

Bits and pieces of this information are widespread about the town, to be overheard at a market stall or to be divulged by a talkative bartender. Most people will have different details of this but all of them have the same gossip and all of them will be happy to share it.

This presents an opportunity for the players as it is important to the town that they know what happened to warden Burgvogt, whether he simply took another route back to his barracks or he fell off his horse, the important thing is that the authorities know it was not the fault of the Borschweigans. The town is ill equipped, however, to send people that far north, especially with the rumours of plague still in the back of all their minds. It is the intention of the magistrates and town watch, therefore, to hire some mercenaries or otherwise freelance opportunists, to scout the road and town to the north to find any trace of the missing warden. This is, obviously, where the players come in and how they get roped into the whole mess.

Contact with the authorities is easy enough to arrange, as the players will be obvious in their travelling clothes and in the fact that they don't smell of fish. Obviously kitted out for adventuring (remember, the townsfolk see nearly everything and talk about it a lot) they will have been earmarked for this duty since they came into the town. They should be given the option of volunteering their services first by way of rumourmongers and over familiar landladies telling them of the situation. If they are less than helpful, the authorities will pay them a visit in the form of Christoph Schlauss, Lieutenant of the Watch; a portly man with a cleft lip and an overinflated sense of his own authority. He will fill them in on the sketchy details that they should already know and request that they travel north to investigate, he offers five gold a day for the party and an extra ten each upon their successful return with information. The players may well refuse this offer if you have decided to let them overhear some of the talk about plague in the north, old as the rumour may be, and that is when Erwin Addler himself may step in to see what influence he can exert. An invitation to the Addler offices, which any fish-brain can tell them is an invitation not to be refused, will be delivered to the players. Its tone gracious, it requests their attendance

“for the discussion of a business arrangement in the interests of both parties”.

Upon taking up the invitation, the players are shown through the illustrious front door of “Addler, Addler & Son”, while under the scrutiny of every eye available, and are put to wait in a worn but handsomely decorated office. Erwin Addler will see himself into the room and proceed to cajole the players services out of them. His approach is softer and significantly more charismatic than the abrupt character of Christoph Schlauss, he explains the worry of the town and the potential repercussions of anything gristly being blamed on the people of Borschweig to their trade and their way of life. Of more interest to the players, perhaps, is that he is willing to pay better than Lieutenant Schlauss, how much better is up to you. The Addler estate is very wealthy and capable of paying a great deal but you should bear in mind that this is supposed to be a simple investigation and shouldn't take more than a couple of days. He will also happily offer a discretionary bonus for any additional information and also by way of compensation for any dangers encountered, not that he anticipates any.

Should your players decide to be stubborn, Erwin is in a position to offer other things as payment, should you feel it would influence the players more. The job should be portrayed as easy money for

the players though and should have them jumping to get it done and paid before they are on their way.

THE TOWN OF BLUTGEL-ON- GWYTH

Desolate, run down, deserted and destitute can describe both the town of Blutgel-on-Gwyth and its inhabitants themselves. In the five years since the mine collapse, it has down nothing but shrivelled and waned. The outlying houses all stand abandoned and every road and street to and through the village is overgrown with weeds and flora. There are only a few dozen people living here now, reduced drastically from over two hundred who were there just a short time ago. All of the current residents are thin and starved, poor and dirty, they spend their days trawling the nearby forests for food and fish on the Gwyth as best they can. Nearly everything in the town is dedicated to nothing but their own survival. The remaining people have precious little to live for and nowhere else to go, they may be poor but they have roofs over their heads and an invaluable community spirit borne of dependence and shared hardship.

At the village centre is a cobbled square, overgrown vegetation has wormed its way between the cobbles and into the corners of every house. Only this central area of the village is inhabited, with families sharing houses and keeping what little population they have left together. Blutgel-on-Gwyth is too small to be governed or policed to any degree but everyone looks to Duncan Kotzman, an old miner who worked closely with Gustav Mabbett, for guidance and he is the closest thing they have to a town mayor.

THE LAND OF THE YURTZ

Upriver from Borschweig, along the Yurtz plains, the land is barren. Coarse forests carpet the land where rocky hills and infertile scrubland do not. Were it not for the mine and the rich produce of the Yurtz, the land would be simply useless. This is the place that Blutgel-on-Gwyth is situated and this is what it is left to work with since the mine collapsed. The hills support a small number of wild goats and sheep, some of which are occasionally slaughtered in times of direst need, and they are tended by some locals, though there are honestly too few to be called a herd or for them to be of real use to the village. The forests are rife with small animals, and they comprise, along with wild mushrooms, berries and a very small crop of turnips and parsnips, the majority of the villagers eat. The area, unfortunately, is also cold and harsh, most crops simply die in the ground if they grow at all and the forests have their fair share of aggressive wildlife as well. Wolves frequently encroach, sometimes even into the abandoned parts of town, and can make life for the trappers and hunters dangerous.

It is land that was never meant to be lived on. It is suitable for mining in areas but little else and without any finance to rebuild the old mine or to dig a new one, it is a land slowly killing the people of Blutgel-on-Gwyth.

The people who live there are, by now, paranoid and unhelpful; they have seen the worst of people in the worst of times and rely heavily on each other for everything from food to support and shelter. They function more as one giant family than as a real village and everyone not only knows everyone else, but feels a connection to them as well. Their biggest weakness is their desperation and their hunger, some of them are caught between their desperate desire to live and their pride in their own self sufficiency.

THE INCONSPICUOUS BODY

The players should arrive in the area of Blutgel-on-Gwyth with the sole intention of finding out what happened to Carsten Bergvogt, returning to Borschweig and getting paid. It has the potential to be the easiest sack of crowns they've made in a long time and, indeed, if you feel they need the cash there's no reason not to simply run the adventure short and let them be on their way. If, however, you decide to make them work a bit for their money, the following is what should interest you.

Looking for tracks belonging to the warden is somewhat wishful thinking as the trail is two weeks old at this stage and not much remains of them, but a **Hard (-20%) Follow Trail** test will reveal that the roadway has been used, in places, a couple of times in the past month or so. It is nearly a day's slow ride over winding and hard terrain before the players will come to the edge of the Gwyth Valley; a slight trench most of the length of the Gwyth tributary, which allows them to see the miserable village of Blutgel-on-Gwyth. At this point a **Routine (+10%) Follow Trail** test will reveal a suspicious amount of disturbed vegetation to the side of the trail, snapped branches and bushes part torn from the ground. This leads the players partway into the forest where they come upon a marshy clearing, and an **Easy (+20%) Search** test will reveal muddied reins trailing from a dense lump of marshy ground. Closer inspection reveals the reins to be still connected to a horse's bridle and the bridle itself to still be connected to the remains of a horse. The entire clump the players mistook for a natural feature is, in fact, the muddied and decaying remains of a partly eaten horse. Any player with Animal Care can easily tell the animal died of shock and severe blood-loss, it's rear, right, leg has been broken and mush of it's underbelly torn and raked away by teeth and claws. An Average test reveals the wounds to be inflicted by wolves, obviously in the process of devouring the animal before being driven off by something. Apparel still within the saddlebags clearly denotes this as the missing roadwarden's mount, standard gear with the official seal of the Middenland Roadwardens all over it and the dried remains of some trout, which he had obviously acquired before leaving Borschweig; indeed the player's probably have much the same provisions, there being precious little else available to them. Unfortunately, precious little more information can be gathered from the scene and the strategic placement of a wolf howl and the rapidly fading daylight can quickly convince the players to head in the direction of the nearby village.

First impressions from the village will be of stares from behind curtains and sideways glances from locals crossing the street. They will not be used to visitors and as soon as they are spotted someone will run to fetch Duncan, he will intercept them before they have had much time to speak to anyone, and long before they manage to get any kind of response other than "*leave me alone*" or "*I don't want nothin' from ye...*" or possibly a good slap or spitting on. Duncan will act as a more civil man but not a more friendly one. His attitude to the players is hostile only because he is so unused to strangers but will answer their questions guardedly and quite unhelpfully, though he will mellow somewhat if the players have brought anything of use with them that they are willing to trade, especially food or tools. Once he is happy that they are not looking to disrupt the workings of the village or take advantage of any of it's people, he will let them alone to bed down in one of the

abandoned, and quite mildewed, houses for the night; hopefully in exchange for something the players offer. He is a proud man and cannot bring himself to beg but will look embarrassed upon asking for payment for the use of the accommodation as he sees it as little better. Straight after talking to them, he will gather the present villagers for a quick meeting behind closed doors. It is impossible for the players to hear all of this meeting but should any of them be resourceful and sneaky enough to approach the house in which the villagers are, they will overhear Duncan warning the people;

“...need to be careful Maebel, if these new folk spread word of this it'll be the pyre for sure”, “I understand it's not that easy, we all do, but for now, especially for tonight, we have to keep everything normal...”, “so keep your traps shut if ye must talk to them and with any luck o' the gods they'll be gone by morning”.

If this doesn't pique the player's curiosity I dread to think what will.

Most of the people in the village are old, many of them are belligerent and world weary so any investigations involving them will probably lead to the players listening to exaggerated stories of the glory days when Blutgel-on-Gwyth was wealthy and successful or tales of how treacherous the people of Borschweig are with made up stories about how they scammed their ore for their own profits and sold them on an inflated prices. Nearly all the people have an axe to grind and after their lips have been loosened, are more than willing to enlighten the players as to why. An exception to this is possibly the youngest inhabitant of the village, Imke Mabbett. Still shy and essentially quite pretty, time has not been kind to her at all. Her hair has more than it's fair share of grey and she is unhealthily thin, her face bears wrinkles that make her look nearly ten years older and, if the players care to notice, she is missing the littlest finger on her right hand. In some ways she stands out from the rest of the town and she is protected from overbearing players by all the villagers and especially Duncan, who all but adopted her after her parents died. There is no loosening of Imke's tongue, she is quite obviously scared of strangers and only wishes to get away from them should they approach her. There are also certain other oddities about her manner, to an onlooker she seems mildly mad, singing quietly to herself and jumping at every sudden movement and loud noise. It is these things that should draw the player's attentions to her and, most importantly, to the ring she wears on her left ring finger which, a **Hard (-20%) Perception** test reveals to the players, bears the symbol of house Addler. If any attention is drawn to this, she will run away without hesitation and if not given that option will collapse into hysterical tears which will bring the entire village running to her aid. The local's reaction will be outrageous, Duncan leading the mob demanding to know

“Who in th' nine shades o' quartz d'ye tink y'are? Upsettin' Imke like that! Cruel is what y'are, cruel and selfish! No better'n 'em fish faced gutterpike downstream!”

and their outrage should only be quelled by the most charismatic of characters with the most diplomatic of approaches to the situation such as a **Very Hard (-30%) Charm** test. Such an incident could well see them run out of town.

In any dealings with any of the people of Blutgel-on-Gwyth, it should be noted, from a **Routine (+10%) Perception or Gossip** test, that they are hiding something. There is some secret or hidden fact that makes them nervous above and beyond their usual trepidation in dealing with strangers. None will divulge this secret and even the slightest hint that something is being hid can prompt any one of them to simply clam up and leave the conversation quickly. Too much prying into this will see a similar reaction from Duncan as bothering Imke and can see the players run out of town. It is almost inescapably the case, however, to any player considerate enough to find out, that there is something undeniably fishy about Blutgel-on-Gwyth that makes Borschweig smell like roses.

It isn't long before the players discover that no one has seen Warden Burgvogt or at least is willing to admit to it. Should the opportunity arise it is well within the mien of the locals to claim they did see him, he chatted to a few of them and went on his way but such a story should be sufficiently filled with vague details and generalities as to ring quite false. Accusations of lying will by met with indignation and quite possibly a good spitting on but no such story of a successful and peaceful flying visit by the warden will hold up to any scrutiny. The players might not care, of course, and simply return to Borschweig to get their money but, assuming some adventurous curiosity, they should hopefully continue to investigate. They may choose to search the town, this will be met with outright, and somewhat exaggerated, refusal consisting of shouting and hitting with brooms.

“It's a violation of our trus' and 'ospi'ali'y, you money grubbin' mongrels 'd know nothin' about i'!”, “Ya can in my freshly dug slag pit search tha' house! Take yer fishpaid big nose and stick i' in someone else's business will ye?”

and so on. Again, in many ways they will react far more aggressively than they players should expect, even from such a paranoid cloister. They can look around outside and ask unobtrusive questions to their hearts content but beyond that they should be met with a brick wall of unified defiance.

Their investigations with the people of Blutgel-on-Gwyth stonewalled, it turns to the investigation of the village itself to provide clues for the players. There are a few main curiosities for them to discover in their short time there, all of which lead them to the large wooden rainwater tank to the outskirts of the village centre.

- ◆ The strange taste out of the tank itself, from which the players would be getting their water while they are staying in the town. It would take a seasoned adventurer to accurately identify the taste of water polluted by decaying bodies.
- ◆ The fact that, despite the water tower's ease of access and the fact that it is obviously full, the people all travel the few miles to the Gwyth to fetch their water for cooking the regular diet of stew and soup. From the above you should have an idea why...
- ◆ The character's horse's reluctance to go near the water from the tower.
- ◆ There are suspicious tracks to and from it which are quite recent, signs of things being dragged that have been inexpertly covered up. A **Mildly Challenging (-5%) Follow Trail** test will reveal this quite satisfactorily to the players.
- ◆ There is a faint smell of decaying meat and a vague over prevalence of flies surrounding the tower, though only a keen nose (**-15%) Perception** test would notice anything.

Inside the tank is a nauseating sight, for floating in the water are the remains, in various stages of dismemberment, of nearly fifteen bodies. Bloated and drained of blood by the water running through the cistern, they are pale and waxy but the sight is nothing compared to the smell. A **Hard (-20%) Toughness** test is required to keep from vomiting upon opening the hatch of the tank. All the remains are decomposing to various degrees, some, at the bottom, are mostly pulp and have been there for years but some are more recent. Near the top of the tank is the mostly intact body of a man still wearing scraps of what is recognisably the black and white uniform of a Middenalnd roadwarden.

Upon the discovery of the remains, the people of the village simply refuse to so much as look at the players, confining themselves to their houses and simply staying mute. Overly pressurising anyone in the town at this point could easily push them into a violent confrontation as their guilt and fear are the only thing keeping them at bay. Indeed the hostility of the whole village takes on a much more sinister tone after this discovery.

The first thing that a successful Heal test reveals is that Carsten's cause of death was wolves, a large gash across his throat is clearly the worst of his injuries and it is obviously one not any man would be likely to survive. The guilt of the locals can well be explained, however, by some further markings around his body, such as his missing right arm and much removed flesh around his torso, which noticeably, with a **Hard (-20%) Heal** test, have been inflicted by human teeth. Also dotted around all the body pieces are the occasional signs of rat gnawing and pustules of fly larvae. Many of the other bodies also bear similar bite marks and most of them have had a lot of flesh removed, the vast majority of the tank is filled with human offal and very few arms or legs can be recovered. Although there are heads present, very few have recognizable features remaining after the rotting in the tank and the removal of bits by various animals. It is a sight simply no person should ever have to see.

THE MYSTERY OF BLUTGEL-ON- GWYTH

The dark secret and probably the most tragic result of the destruction of the mine in Blutgel-on-Gwyth is that when it collapsed, vital shafts running under and alongside the Gwyth were severed. Heavy metals and poisonous ores were released into the water and contaminated it. The people of the village had no idea, of course, continued to drink it and over a short period of time many became terribly ill. Of those people who did not die of the poison or move away, two types remain. Those who, by fate or divine fortune, were naturally resistant to the toxins and those who fell prey to an altogether more sinister sickness, one of the mind. Many people throughout the village began to suffer from delusions and dementia, although help was sought from Borschweig and any other neighbouring settlements within reach, none would risk going near them once the rumours of plague began to spread.

The people had little choice but to try and care for their stricken brethren on their own, to try and treat them and pray that they might somehow recover. Unfortunately, though they managed to eventually quash the rumours of a plague, it became obvious that they would have to continue to care for the sick in secret or else they would be eventually subject to measures by the authorities of the realm and that meant little more than a painful death by fire for everyone. From time to time, especially in the first few months, the occasional deranged villager would make it as far south as the outskirts of Borschweig and, mad with hunger and sickness, would do something such as kill chickens or steal fish, lead cattle out of fields and various other harrising misdemeanours. This led to the occasional visit from the Borschweig watch who used to look into them and helped cultivate the paranoid self reliance, that the villagers have now developed, as they hid their sick in basements and behind closed doors, anywhere so they would not be seen for they were all becoming wretched things.

All the stricken continued to degenerate, despite the best efforts of their friends and families. They became frequently violent and began to eat vermin raw when they found them. This escalated to small animals they would find anytime they managed to escape their captivity and, finally, after the desperate hunger had swelled in everyone's belly for many months, they began to turn on each other. The first death hit the entire community hard, everyone knew what was happening was wrong and sick but still no one could see a way out. All they could do was separate the demented from

each other and keep them locked away. This is how they have lived for the past five years, caring for and attempting to restrain people who were once family and friends but are now little more than cannibalistic ghouls. The ties of family have come to mean so much to the people of Blutgel-on-Gwyth, however, that they cannot bear the thought of harming their mad brothers and sisters and so, gradually, they have become more and more skilled at turning a blind eye on the ever increasing monstrosity of their actions. Every other night these days some of them escape their confinement to roam the forests and plains, returning to be found wandering the village square or streets by morning, often an animal, be it cat, rat or goat, limp in their grasp and blood all over their face and rags. On rare occasions they find people in the woods, sometimes people from Borschweig, sometimes random travellers and on one occasion, a Middenland roadwarden. Curiously, the ghouls have never attacked their own; possibly they retain just enough humanity in them to recognise the scent of family or maybe they know if they turn on them, no one will escape the repercussions alive. Whatever the case may be, the villagers of Blutgel-on-Gwyth have slowly come to accept this abominable way of life as their only choice and they grimly continue to lead it despite the cost to their own humanity.

Over the past five years, the ghouls have stockpiled the remains of their victims in the water tower, though none of the villagers even know truly why. Possibly it is some primitive instinct to stockpile food but any attempt to empty it has led to violent outbursts and attacks from the ghouls. Since then, they have simply left it alone, occasionally an escaped ghoul will make his way there and have to be fished out of the fetid water when he was done gorging himself. This gruesome job is thankfully seldom performed as mostly the ghouls simply do not seem to remember that their stockpile is there.

INSUFFICIENT CAUSE

The easy way out for the players at this point is to simply return to Erwin Addler and tell him it was wolves that killed the warden; to collect their money and to be on their way. If that satisfies you and your players and you both decide to leave the degenerate village well enough alone, then you should feel perfectly happy to do so.

Merchant Addler may not be sufficiently pleased with this result, however, especially given that the players will be incapable of bringing back more proof of this than some torn clothing as bringing back the body will raise every suspicion there is in Borschweig. What's more is that Erwin knows the people have been fretting about the state of Blutgel-on-Gwyth for some time, ever since the plague rumours began and they have decided that their neighbours must be getting desperate at this point, desperate enough from their isolation to start attacking Borschweig and stealing their fish, livestock and even their children. Needless to say their imaginations need no encouragement given enough time to fester. Despite the imaginary nature of their fears, however, Erwin Addler is determined to look after their interests and an excuse to send a few imperial platoons to the village and raze it to the ground is exactly what he is looking for from the players. If they do not provide it, he will attempt to encourage them to continue investigations until they do.

“Perhaps your investigation has not been, shall we say, rigorous enough? Perhaps it would be in the best interests of everyone if you were to, say, continue your investigation until you find something more pertinent to the situation in Blutgel, hmmm? And to not cease your work there until you find something more useful to us all.”

“I'm sure this, shall we call it your preliminary report? Is fascinating, wolves being at fault and all, but I was hoping that possibly you could have provided us with something more along the lines of a root cause, shall we say? Something possibly about the quality of people still living in Blutgel, do we understand each other?”

After their discovery in Blutgel-on-Gwyth, the players can no longer be realistically be considered safe there. The villagers will slowly decide that their only chance of survival is to quietly do away with them, the only factor to be decided is when do they come to this conclusion. This is all dependant on how the players have acted since their arrival and how much they have endeared themselves to the village, players who have been sympathetic to their plight will be safe for much longer than those who have tried to bully their way through the investigation. Either way, be it quickly or slowly, the people of Blutgel-on-Gwyth will almost certainly come to the same conclusion, to release their stricken charges from their cells and let them deal with the players.

At this point, the players should not know about the existence of the ghouls and, in an attempt to stop them from leaving the village, Duncan or any present villager will tell them whatever it is they need to hear to do so. Be it an outrageous story of a killer recently caught or an admission of guilt, they will tell the players anything just to stop them from leaving the town. If they wait around too long before trying to leave, they may even be restrained by the villagers and tied up in the square to await a gristly fate. Ideally, from the villagers point of view, they will convince the players to stay another night and tell them all in the morning or help them with the investigation or anything that convinces them to stay. A story of lycanthropy wouldn't be amiss here either given the prevalence of wolf killings in the area recently and would probably placate the players given that there isn't a full moon for weeks. A successful Academic Knowledge (Astronomy) test will reveal, however, that there was no full moon when the Warden Burgvogt was killed either which would put paid to that ruse, should you decide to use it. Don't underestimate the desperate lengths the villagers will go to, however, to detain the players.

During the night, if the players stay, or during the day and left tied up in the square if they try to leave, or possibly in a chase through the forests of they try to simply run, the ghouls are released. The first thing they smell is fresh meat and they will head unerringly towards the players. There are twelve of them in total and although they are slow to manoeuvre and clumsy, weight of numbers gives them a major advantage and in straight lines they can run quite fast. It would be a wiser option for players of a less combat oriented skillset to run as the situation is incredibly dangerous for them. Their best options combat wise are probably to climb to safety if given the choice as the ghouls are very bad at climbing and navigating obstacles. If enough are killed and the players seem to be having an easy time of it, however, feel free to include some smarter opponents in the form of the villagers coming to the defence of their families.

Escaping the dangers of Blutgel-on-Gwyth should be challenging but not immensely difficult, the ghouls are stupid and the villagers too paranoid and self involved to consider following them too far out of town. The only other thing the players need to worry about are wolves, should they stray into the woods, as name of them are as hunger stricken as the Blutgellians and will attack anything large enough to attract their attention out of desperation.

The information about the ghouls is more than enough for Erwin Addler, although horrified and saddened by the plight of its people, he will waste no time in sending for an imperial force to deal with the obvious

“Unseemly and unnatural chaotic perversion of our beautiful, natural land and it's people”.

Ever the diplomat and opportunist, he will happily pay the players for services rendered if they feel that they can eliminate the influence in Blutgel-on Gwyth, but bear in mind that Erwin wants the entire town razed, ghouls and villagers killed, everyone and this may not be exactly to the player's taste. Alternatively, if you feel like they need a little more cash, the incoming imperial force will happily pay a small mercenary rate for their help in locating Blutgel-on-Gwyth and eradicating the menace, in this situation they would only have to kill the ghouls, the fight would be a lot easier and the troops would take care of the unseemly task of killing the villagers.

Once again, the opportunity to simply walk away with a little more money in their pocket feeling like they have done the Empire a service is wide open to the players but the more curious among them might be drawn to the few apparently loose ends.

HIDDEN TRUTHS

Erwin Addler has suspected for a long time that the mine collapse he orchestrated did more than drive people away from Blutgel-on-Gwyth. Too many strange occurrences started happening shortly afterwards for it to be a coincidence and he has kept his eye and ear out for any rumours or mutterings about it diligently for the past five years. Eventually, after nothing concrete came back and the rumours started to subside, he thought all was done with it and he moved on. That was until Warden Burgvogt arrived, not too long ago, and insisted on investigating the village for himself. Since his disappearance, Addler has been worried about the state of the place and all his old anxieties have resurfaced, he decided that the only thing to do was to find a reason to have the entire place erased from the map and so hired the players with the intention that they would help him to do just that. Once it had been completely torn down and all its people arrested or killed, at this point he doesn't much care which, he will be in the clear and can enjoy his impending retirement with a clear conscience.

The course of the investigation should lead the players to the same conclusion as their wealthy patron, that everything began with the collapse of the mine. A **Very Hard (-30%) Trade (Mining)**, or similar, test conducted while investigating the mine will show that the structural weaknesses were caused by sabotage and a **Challenging (-10%) Trade (Apothecary)** test on the river water will show large amounts of toxic compounds dissolved in it.

Imke's ring, should the players manage to get a look at it, through fair means or foul, has the name "Gerlach" inscribed on its inside, and was given to her by his sister after he had been sent away, a token he wished her to have but would not be able to give her himself. Imke herself can tell the story of their doomed love affair and the stop Erwin Addler put to it, as can Sofie Addler who still lives in the family home and works for the "Addler, Addler & Son Trading Company" from there.

Sofie Addler, and of course any intrepid thieving players, have access to Erwin's contract records, among which are the details of hiring one freelance Dwarven Engineer, then resident in Middenheim, around the time of the mine collapse. Erwin was always too consummate a merchant to leave anything, even something potentially incriminating, unrecorded. Unfortunately, Dorlott Kamdell is not around to question after an unspecified incident with the Middenheim watch involving the violent and explosive removal of the side wall of an imperial treasury deposit, Dorlott maintained all the way to the deepest cell in the mountain that he had every right to be there and had simply forgotten his key. Involved questioning within the Middenheim watch, should the players decide to go that far afield with their investigation, will eventually yield the record he held of countless violations and misdemeanours, most of which involved homemade explosives.

The apothecary trade in Borschweig has always been slow, but has always been there. Detlef Kwoon, the proprietor, would well remember a dwarven gentleman inquiring about the local price of such ingredients as saltpeter and Tilean fire about five years ago, his clientèle seldom being in the market for such things, it sticks out in his mind. Although he cannot remember the quantities bought of these explosive ingredients, he does remember that they were of substantial amounts and he did wonder, at the time, what on earth they could be for. The only answer he could coax from the dwarf was "excavations".

DEMISE OF A PHILANTHROPIST

The investigations that lead to this final conclusion of the story are intentionally difficult and this is also where that extra effort pays off for the players in both experience and, most probably, gold. However, Erwin Addler is a professional and well respected merchant who he does not make mistakes regularly; Those he does make, he covers up as completely and ruthlessly as possible, his success being a testament to his ability. It is an opportunity for the most ardent of justice seeking players to get to the bottom of the mystery where others may be perfectly happy to see the ghoul menace destroyed. It should be borne in mind, though, that this an opportunity for ardent and observant players to cash in on their diligence and the GM should feel no obligation to help them acquire all the information provided here, if they're happy to leave they should feel like they can without any fear that they left something important undone.

The players have the means, albeit not the easy means, of acquiring evidence that he hired someone to sabotage the mine, that this resulted in the deaths of dozens of villagers and the mental and physical degeneration of others. It can, possibly, be further proven by the player's testimony that he was looking for an excuse to eradicate this mistake and through the intentional murder of innocent people, cover any trace of his guilt in the matter.

The choices they have range from, at one extreme, bringing this evidence to the authorities in Middenheim and having Erwin Addler arrested and charged with mass murder and conspiracy to corrupt innocents to chaos. A charge that would almost certainly lead to a capital punishment and the seizure of all "Addler, Addler & Son"'s assets. Or, at the other end, simply blackmailing and extorting money from him with the threat of exposing his crimes to everyone.

Whether the public release of these details would effect Erwin too much in the end is debatable, given the amount of money he has at his disposal to ensure his own freedom. The people of Borschweig would probably side with him over any amount of evidence from a ragtag band of mercenary investigators regardless of the truth of the matter. It does mean, though, that he would be willing to part with little more than, at most, two hundred gold for the documents and other evidence the players manage to collect. He figures that any more than that and the money would be better spent

"Hiring quality academics to legally combat the, shall we say, insidious lies you have obviously fabricated against me".

He will happily haggle the players down to as little as he can though.

The resolution has the potential to go in any direction and I recommend you chose one that your players would find most fulfilling; be it the tantalising frustration of a guilty man getting off scot free, a pompous elitist receiving his just desserts or the simple and elegant mercenary resolution of extorting as much money and goods as you can out of him before leaving the entire place alone.

EXPERIENCE AWARDS

- 10-50 xp each for good roleplaying
- 20-30 xp each for dealing with Lieutenant Schlauss and the initial contract with Addler
- 10 xp for discovering the trail of Carsten Burgvogt
- 15 xp for discovering his horse and how it was killed
- 10-30 xp each for the initial investigation and the questioning in Blutgel-on-Gwyth
- 5 xp for noticing Imke's missing finger and her "wedding ring"
- 10 xp for noticing and recognising the Addler crest on Imkes ring
- 25 xp for finding the horror in the water tower before drinking the water
- 15 xp for finding the horror in the water tower *after* drinking the water
- 10-20 xp each for handling the villagers reaction to the discovery
- 10 xp for each ghoul killed
- 50 xp each for resolving the investigation to Erwin Addler's satisfaction
- 50-100 xp each for the successful acquisition of varying evidence and construction of a case against Erwin Addler in the matter of the demise of Blutgel-on-Gwyth
- 25-50 xp each for the *successful* exploitation of the evidence against Erwin Addler for either personal or moral gain.
- 50 xp for getting out of Borschweig alive and financially better off

CHARACTERS

Details are given here only of the primary characters from each town, standard character sheets for *Common NPC's* (WFRP pg233) can be used for any others who require stats at any point during the scenario. In the case of Borschweig, feel free to add Trade (Fisherman) to any and all of them.

THE PEOPLE OF BORSCHWEIG

MERCHANT ERWIN ADDLER

Merchant Trader

Owner of “Addler, Addler & Son: Exporters of Borschweig's Finest Aquatic Faire”

“I appreciate your situation my friend, truly I do, but you must appreciate mine and your price is, shall we say, a little more generous than it is fair? Hmmm?”

Erwin Addler has lived the town of Borschweig all his life. His family moved here as a last resort to avoid the slums of Middenheim and began a prosperous business of fishmongering. The town at the time had quite the reputation for being the right place for hard working people in the fisheries business, it served many local areas with vital food reserves from their excesses of the tasty local Yurtz Trout. His grandfather grew up in an environment where every second person had done what his family did, and there was somewhat of an over abundance of anglers and fishmongers. He moved, bit by bit, the business into trading and away from fisheries. This is the environment Erwin's father, and later Erwin himself, grew up in, with money constantly flowing in and business from every road. He has never known the life of most of the townsfolk and as a result has a carefully hidden superiority complex over them. He is a member of the most successful merchant family Borschweig has ever known and about the only third generation merchant here as their near monopoly over the town has forced all major competitors to move for their own good. It should be understood that there was no foul play involved in any of this takeover, the Addlers are just exceptional merchants with a wealth of local knowledge about Borschweig, its inhabitants and its economy.

He would be known as a philanthropist to the townsfolk if any of them understood the term and his money has helped the town through any rough times and difficulties with a demeanour of patronage and benevolence. Ultimately his only goal is the increase of his own personal wealth and acclimation of power for his family but he achieves this through genuine cultivation of loyal townsfolk and healthy investment. He understands that you need to spend money to make money and that public relations can be more valuable than gold in a place like this.

His hopes these days are centred around his family and their future as he is beginning to realise that not all his dreams will come true in his lifetime. Though he still harbours the desire to move into the wealthier setting of a major city, be it Middenheim, Talabheim or Altdorf, he also realises that he'll be in no fit state to continue as the merchant lord of his holdings by the time he does. To this end he

was sincerely hoping his son, Gerlach, might succeed him but has been disappointed by his lack of innate business sense. This is a source of major trouble to Erwin as his daughter did inherit said trait but, as he well knows, could never successfully trade in a city setting due to her status and prejudices against her gender. It's a personal trouble but to Erwin it is also very much a problem that affects his life's work and all his hopes and dreams for the future. As an extremely self centred individual, this represents a horror for him and has begun to affect his demeanour making him abrupt and depressed most of the time. Now, during a recent depression in the area, the town can ill afford for its most influential private citizen to fall apart or he may well take the town with him.

<i>Main Profile</i>							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
40	39	36	41	48	60	53	68
<i>Secondary Profile</i>							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	16	3	4	4	-	-	-

Ex-Tradesman, Ex-Merchant, Guild Master

Skills:

Academic Knowledge (History), Charm, Common Knowledge (The Empire, Brettonia, The Border Princes), Command, Drive, Evaluate, Gossip, Haggle, Perception, Read/Write, Ride, Secret Language (Guild Tongue), Speak Language (Breton, Norse, Estalian), Trade (Fisher, Calligrapher, Merchant),

Talents:

Dealmaker, Etiquette, Linguistics, Savvy, Streetwise, Super Numerate

SOFIE ADDLER

Daughter of Erwin Addler, socialite and power behind the Addler throne

“It is a pleasure to make your acquaintance Mister Dregg, and I'm sure my father would be more than happy to meet with you were it not for the urgent council meeting that has, only just now, demanded his attention. If you leave the details of your proposal with me, however, I will see that they are dealt with by him personally.”

Sofie Addler is the son that Erwin never had, her wit and business sense are both as keen as her fathers and her demeanour is often considerably more charming. The unfortunate situation she is in, however, is not lost on her as she knows that, even though her brother Gerlach is hopeless in all aspects of business, the Addler estate will be passed to him regardless of her ability or achievements. Still, for love of her father, loyalty to her family and the good of Borschweig she maintains an eye over all the dealings that come through her house, quietly dealing and arranging contracts through her fathers brokers. Erwin knows well of her skill in business himself and is thankful that she has taken an active, if not visible hand, in the maintenance of the company. His time largely taken up, these days, with advisory meetings to the Borschweig Magistrate council and

personal appearances at social functions to keep the Addler profile high, has left him with little time to ensure the proper running of his affairs. Over time, Sofie has been taking more and more off his plate for him, dealing with more high profile contracts and overseeing some very satisfactory profits over the past few years.

To meet, she is polite and unassuming, always seemingly deferring to her father and speaking when spoken to. She is complementary and professional to everyone she meets and has a genuine love for Borschweig and its people. In private, though, and while engaged in business she is shrewd and occasionally ruthless, she knows the value of everything to her business and will not let so much as a stray copper go unaccounted for. Only her father's brokers have ever seen this side of her as she tailors their contracts and supervises all deals and trade agreements that they sign. From the Addler home, she is slowly becoming the riving force of their profits and the linchpin that holds the entire business together.

<i>Main Profile</i>							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
46	38	38	35	43	60	47	47
<i>Secondary Profile</i>							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	16	3	3	4	-	-	-

Ex-Tradesman, Merchant.

Skills:

Charm, Common Knowledge (The Empire, Brettonia), Drive, Evaluate, Gossip, Haggle, Perception, Read/Write, Ride, Secret Language (Guild Tongue), Speak Language (Breton), Trade (Fisher, Merchant).

Talents:

Dealmaker, Savvy, Streetwise, Supernumerate.

GERLACH ADDLER

Fop, Journeyman Financier and heir to the Addler Estate

*"I tell you honestly now my *hic* friend, I can barely add!"*

A fop through and through, Gerlach Addler is his father's greatest failure. Ever since he was a boy his interests and capabilities have been less that his father had hoped. He is inattentive and flighty, his passion is for wine and dancing and he cares little for the fish trading business. By far a simpler creature than his sister, Gerlach is ruled by his erratic emotions and has no clue about successful business, he never wanted to succeed his father and after he put an end to Gerlach's relationship with Imke Mabbett, he had little interest in even remaining related to him. Both sides were appeased, then, when Erwin sent Gerlach to Talabheim to work under the humourless watch of Ernst Jagwein, a former employee of the Addler's who had proven himself to be a financier of

extraordinary talent and opened his own business when he left Borschweig. He is blind to the cavorting of Gerlach around the social circles of Talabhim and cares little for what he does while not at the offices, during the day, however, Gerlach is left reading and re-reading account statements and financial transactions in the vain hope that some of it will sink in. Unfortunately, after five years of this apprenticeship, Ernst has decided that Gerlach is somewhat simple and only keeps him on as long as his father continues to pay a generous stipend.

As a result, Gerlach spends his days in a dark room with a headache looking over numbers he barely understands and his nights drinking away the money his sister sends him. He is still lovelorn and thinks of Imke Mabbett every day, having romanticised their tragic relationship as much as he can, he now uses it as a means to keep himself drinking and remind him why he hates his father.

<i>Main Profile</i>							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
36	30	26	31	36	52	46	58
<i>Secondary Profile</i>							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	14	2	3	4	-	-	-

Ex-Noble, Courtier

Skills:

Academic Knowledge (The Arts), Blather, Common Knowledge (The Empire), Charm, Consume Alcohol, Gamble, Performer (Dancer), Read/Write, Ride, Speak Language (Breton, Reikspiel).

Talents:

Dealmaker, Etiquette, Luck, Public Speaking, Specialist Weapon Group (Fencing), Specialist Weapon (Parrying), Suave.

LIEUTENANT CHRISTOPH SCHLAUSS

Lieutenant of the Borschweig Watch

“Yeh, youe 'erd me, I thed pick it up and ea' it. You 'ave a problem wiff 'at? Maybe I thud feed it to yeh eh? Yeh know well there's no li'errin' 'ere and maybe this'll give yeh cauth the rememba'!”

As a portly boy with a cleft lip, Christoph was never much respected or listened to when he was younger, in time he has over compensated in becoming an officer of the watch. People no more listen to nor respect him now as the portly *man* with a cleft lip, that he has become, but a least he can fool himself into thinking that they do and has a small measure of authority he can exercise over them.

He is brash and uneducated with little capacity for reasoning beyond the understanding of whose orders he should follow and who should follow his. He sneers when he is not outright

condescending and has a short temper for those who do not respond to his authority.

<i>Main Profile</i>							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
40	38	40	40	35	43	33	42
<i>Secondary Profile</i>							
A.	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
2	12	4	4	4	-	-	-

Ex-Thug, Watchman

Skills:

Academic Knowledge (Law), Consume Alcohol, Dodge Blow, Follow Trail, Gamble, Intimidate, Perception, Search, Secret Language (Thieves' Tongue).

Talents:

Lightning Reflexes, Disarm, Resistance to Poison, Savvy, Street Fighting, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Stun, Wrestling

APOTHECARY DETLEF KWON

Proprietor of “Borschweig's Finest Medicinals”

“Good afternoon gentlemen, we purvey countless concoctions for calamities from coughs and colds to codrot and the clap. Now, what can I do for you today?”

“Indeed, I acquired this shipment at an extremely good price, which is why I can sell it on to you at such a steal. It's all about contacts you see, as my close personal friendship with Berger Allain DuMontcad of Brionne is honestly what secured the deal for me. You are, of course, familiar with Monsieur DuMontcard? Of the DuMontcards of Anemaine? No?”

Trained in Altdorf at the *Imperial Institute for Alchemy, Accounting and the Performing Arts* Detlef is a man who has plenty of notions about himself. He proudly displays his qualifications behind the counter at his store and is not adverse to drawing the customers attentions to them if the opportunity should arise. He also name drops like no other man in the Old World, mentioning old professors and professional acquaintances or customers and business partners. It is terribly unfortunate for Detlef, however, that few people have ever heard of any one of these people he seems to think are so very important. He acquired the store he now owns after a good many years of apprenticeship to Heinrich Fenn, the previous owner who retired, allowing his store to be bought by the young and enterprising Detlef.

The store itself is well stocked with all common medicinals and also maintains a steady supply of material for other herbalist or engineering related endeavours. Detlef himself is quite knowledgeable about his field and, despite his often desperate demeanour, knows the trade well.

<i>Main Profile</i>							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
39	40	37	37	38	74	46	42
<i>Secondary Profile</i>							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	15	3	3	4	-	-	-

Ex-Student, Scholar

Skills:

Academic Knowledge (Astronomy, Engineering, Magic, Science), Charm, Common Knowledge (The Empire, Brettiona, Tilea), Evaluate, Gossip, Heal, Perception, Read/Write, Speak Language (Breton, Classical, Estalien, Norse, Reikspiel), Trade (Apothecary).

Talents:

Etiquette, Linguistics, Savvy, Super Numerate

THE PEOPLE OF BLUTGEL-ON-GWYTH

DUNCAN KOTZMAN

Ex-miner and would-be mayor of Blutgel-on-Gwyth

“Ne'er have I seen such evil in a man as tha' hear'less fish gut named Addler!”

Once a reasonable and sensible man, Duncan longed for a simple life of mining and possibly finding a good woman to settle down with. He had achieved the former in Blutgel-on-Gwyth but alas never found a proper wife. He made up for it with his close relationship to the family Mabbett, with his best friend Gustav and his family. When the mine collapsed and Gustav was killed however, Duncan was racked with guilt as he had recently retired and believed it a weakness in himself that he had not joined his friend, and died with him, when he attempted to reopen it.

When Gustav's wife died shortly after him, Duncan saw it as his duty to safeguard the children left behind and has been their unofficial guardian and father figure ever since. In the hardships that followed the exodus of most of the village and the sickness that ravaged them all, his level head and protective nature earned him the trust and loyalty of the whole village. At the time of the adventure, he is the paternal figure, even to the older people, in Blutgel-on-Gwyth and they all take their lead from him.

<i>Main Profile</i>							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
35	41	45	46	36	36	37	48
<i>Secondary Profile</i>							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	12	4	4	4	-	3	-

Ex-Miner, Agitator

Skills:

Animal Care, Common Knowledge (The Empire), Charm, Concealment, Drive, Gossip, Outdoor Survival, Navigation, Perception, Scale Sheer Surface, Speak Language (Reikspiel), Trade (Miner).

Talents:

Cool Headed, Flee!, Orientation, Public Speaking, Specialist Weapon Group (Two Handed), Very Resilient.

Insanity:

Delirious Saviour: Duncan firmly believes that he was spared the fate of the dead and sickened so

that he could protect than nurture his fellow survivors to rebuilding the village. It is his goal and his only desire.

Rotted Soul: Over time Duncan's ethical standards have waned considerably. He is not only less disgusted by the inhuman activities of the ghouls but honestly cannot understand what could be wrong with protecting and looking after them. To him they are family and in need of help and support and he is increasingly incapable of reacting in a usual manner to any of the horrors they might have or may yet commit.

IMKE MABBETT

Ex-fianceé of Gerlach Addler and survivor of the Blutgel-on Gwyth collapse

“...I'm sorry, I should go...”

All Imke ever wanted to do since she was as little as she can remember, was to live in the big house she used to visit with her father in Borschweig. Later still she added to that dream and all she wanted to do was live with Gerlach in that big house in Borschweig. For a short time her dreams even looked as though they may come true, until Erwin Addler became involved and shattered not only her dream but her life completely.

She has always been quiet but when the mine collapsed and she lost her parents *and* Gerlach in such a short time, she became even more withdrawn. Throughout the gradual degeneration of her brother Imke has lost much of the life that used to quietly bubble inside her as the last vestige of her life when she was happy is taken from her. Although very grateful for the help and concern the entire village, and Duncan especially, Imke does nothing with her days but think back to happier times and daydream that everything turned out as she had hoped and that none of the tragedies that have befallen her ever happened.

She wears Gerlach's signet ring at all times, fingering it frequently, as she thinks of him. The missing little finger beside it is the doing of Luitpold who bit it off in the early throes of his sickness as she tried to restrain him.

<i>Main Profile</i>							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
36	31	30	38	29	31	33	28
<i>Secondary Profile</i>							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	15	3	3	4	-	1	-

Peasant

Skills:

Animal Care, Swim, Charm Animal, Concealment, Drive, Performer (Singer), Outdoor Survival, Silent Move.

Talents:

Flee!, Hardy

Insanity:

Desperate and Doomed: Life is over for Imke, as far as she is concerned, and she spends all her time either dreaming of days gone by or simply staring morosely into the middle distance. She simply waits for whatever tragic fate is destined to befall her as it has all her loved ones and end her pain.

Rotted Soul: See above.

LUITPOLD MABBETT

Ex-mining apprentice, Mutated Cannibalistic ghoul

**drools* "...jewsy...meete..."*

Poor Luitpold had not the time to be aggrieved by his parents successive deaths, nor the appalling treatment his village had received from Borschweig, as shortly after his mother passed away he became brain sick. It started with headaches and a fever, slowly becoming delusions and morose periods before eventually simply rotting his brain and sapping his humanity. Like all the other stricken people of Blutgel-on-Gwyth, hunger drove him to kill and eat ever increasing sizes of animals until it eventually led him to murder and cannibalism.

<i>Main Profile</i>							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
39	39	40	51	19	8	36	4
<i>Secondary Profile</i>							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
2	10	4	5	5	-	6	-

Ex-Peasant, Cannibalistic Ghoul

Skills:

Concealment, Silent Move.

Talents:

Fearless, Fleet Footed, Frightening, Hardy, Natural Weapons, Rover, Strike Mighty Blow.

Insanity:

Taste of Human Flesh: Luitpold, much like all his ghoulish brethren, feels compelled to search out and consume human flesh. Pretty straightforward actually.

Mind of the Beast: He has lost near all capacity of human reason, his actions are all on some base instinct and is completely inhuman in thought and action.

WILLEMINA KHURP AND MAEBEL LIEBERHOCHD

Town Busybodies and Nurses to Degenerate Cannibalistic Ghouls

“Listen to this Maebel, this handsome young man can read! It's like he's a baron or some such.”
“Very nice Willemina, but I suppose 'e's taken. All the good un' usually are...”

Willemina and Maebel represent the most common traits of Blutgel-on-Gwyth, they are slow to talk at first but hard to stop when they get going, their favourite subject to talk about is how they have been wronged by everybody and both are quite, quite, mad. Often flirtatious and improper to newcomers, both Maebel and Willemina are well into their fifties with unkempt hair and dressed in rags. Neither lady has bathed in living memory and their overly familiar manner would make even the most seasoned gravedigger long for the distinct Borschweigian scent of fish.

Although capable of answering questions laid out by the players, both ladies tend to ramble and go off on tangents, often mishearing or misinterpreting the question asked. Neither have a good memory but, given that they are hardly ever seen apart, one usually remembers what the other does not.

In more prosperous times they both worked with Dietrich Mengtz, a local Surgeon, as caretakers and nurses. He was one of the first to move away, five years ago, and these two have become the primary caregivers in the village, even now with their ever-deteriorating dementia.

The “ladies” have the same Profile, Skills and Talents.

<i>Main Profile</i>							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
43	35	26	33	42	34	42	42
<i>Secondary Profile</i>							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	14	2	3	4	-	1	-

Ex-Barber Surgeon, Vagabond

Skills:

Charm, Gossip, Haggle, Heal, Outdoor Survival, Perception, Performer (Storyteller), Speak Language (Reikspiel), Swim, Trade (Apothecary).

Talents:

Fleet Footed, Orientation, Resistance to Disease, Surgery, Very Resilient.

Insanity:

Delusions of Grandeur: Both ladies have become convinced, most probably by each other, that the grotesqueries around them simply aren't there. To their minds the town is struggling but surviving, there are no degenerate cannibals living in the basements of the ruined buildings that surround them and in general everything is pretty fine. This includes the belief that they are both younger and far prettier than they actually are, giving them a confidence and boldness that leads them to the occasional improper suggestion, comment or, not to mention, act. Both women even firmly believe that they bathe regularly, despite the pungent evidence to the contrary.

THE PEOPLE FROM NEITHER BORSCHWEIG NOR BLUTGEL-ON-GWYTH

ROADWARDEN CARSTEN BURGVOGT

Middenland roadwarden and unfortunate victim of wolves

“I tell you my man, I have no interest in your affairs. All I am interested in is the fact that your cart bears the markings of Altdorf but your livery is that of Nuln. As we have had a large number of highway incidents on this stretch recently I must ask you to explain yourself, or I am afraid I will have to bring you in for questioning.”

A tall, young man with a strong sense of justice, Carsten was disgusted to discover that no report of Blutgel-on-Gwyth had been filed in over five years. His concern for the people there and the proper care he feels the roadwardens have promised the people of the Middenland drove him to investigate. Upon arrival in Borschweig, however, he was presented with a smiling trader who told him all was as well as ever, a small

“gift from the people of the town good sir, to prove how we don't want no trouble”

was offered to him with the obvious expectation that he would simply continue on about his business. His idealism incensed, he demanded a meeting with the town Magistrates and was directed to Erwin Addler with the assurance that he was probably more the man to talk to. After Erwin explained the situation in terms of the needs of Borschweig outweighing those of Blutgel-on-Gwyth to the trades here and downplaying the bribe tendered as

“a simple, shall we say, misunderstanding about recent government taxes?”

Carsten decided to see Blutgel-on-Gwyth for himself. He saddled up and left for the town that afternoon to arrive shortly after sundown. He was never seen alive again.

ENGINEER DORLOTT KAMDELL

Freelance Dwarven Engineer and Professional Structural Stability Appraiser

**stares* “Aye. What of it?”*

Surliness is the essence of Engineer Kamdell, he is short, to the point and self involved. His love of explosives and all things destructive borders on compulsive and he has an unnatural liking for fire. As such he was perfect for the job Erwin Addler had in mind, discrete, devious and destructive. He used every ounce of ingenuity and stealth he had to make it to the mine and take it down within a single night's work. No mean feat by any stretch of the imagination.

After his time in Borschweig, Dorlott took his money and went on to other things, mostly petty theft

and extra freelance destruction where he could get it. An informal contract with a cartel of Estalian opportunists, however, went bad when they left him right in the middle of a, less than strictly legal, job in Middenheim where he was picked up by the watch. Unmoved by his testimony, the court locked him away in some of the converted the city's tunnels, the type of place they put men they would rather not see again.

<i>Main Profile</i>							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
57	49	43	64	23	61	50	15
<i>Secondary Profile</i>							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	19	3	4	3	-	2	-

Ex-Miner, Engineer

Skills:

Academic Knowledge (Engineering, Science), Animal Care, Common Knowledge (Dwarfs), Concealment, Drive, Outdoor Survival, Navigation, Perception, Read/Write, Scale Sheer Surface, Speak Language (Khazalid), Trade (Gunsmith, Miner).

Talents:

Master Gunner, Orientation, Specialist Weapon Group (Two Handed, Engineer), Very Resilient.

MISCELLANEOUS OTHER STATS

Most Common NPC statistics can be found in the WFRP core rulebook on page 233. Below are just a couple of basic profiles that may come in handy for the adventure.

THE BLUTGELLIAN GHOULS

There are twelve Ghouls in total, including Luitpold Mabbett.

<i>Main Profile</i>							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
39	39	40	51	19	8	36	4
<i>Secondary Profile</i>							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
2	12	4	5	5	-	6	-

Skills:

Concealment, Silent Move.

Talents:

Fearless, Fleet Footed, Frightening, Hardy, Natural Weapons, Rover, Strike Mighty Blow.

Insanity:

Taste of Human Flesh: See Above; **Mind of the Beast:** See Above

WOLVES

The forests are rife with starving and desperate wolves. An encounter with a small pack of them either to or from Blutgel-on-Gwyth is very possible, especially for a Gamesmaster who feel their players have been having an easy time of it.

<i>Main Profile</i>							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
33	0	36	38	30	6	10	0
<i>Secondary Profile</i>							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	17	3	3	7	-	6	-