

**The Madness
of
Baron Von Richter**

Introduction and Synopsis.

The Madness of Baron Von Richter is a short adventure primarily designed for characters in their late first or early second careers although with a little work it can be modified by altering the numbers of zombies, reducing/increasing their statistics or giving the Player Characters some help from local militiamen or the like.

The adventure follows the events which occur when the players arrive in the quiet town of Todesburg on the very night a grief stricken Baron attempts to resurrect his wife who has recently passed away. However, the spell goes horribly wrong (as such things tend to do) and she is instead raised as a zombie. And so are all the bodies in the town graveyard...

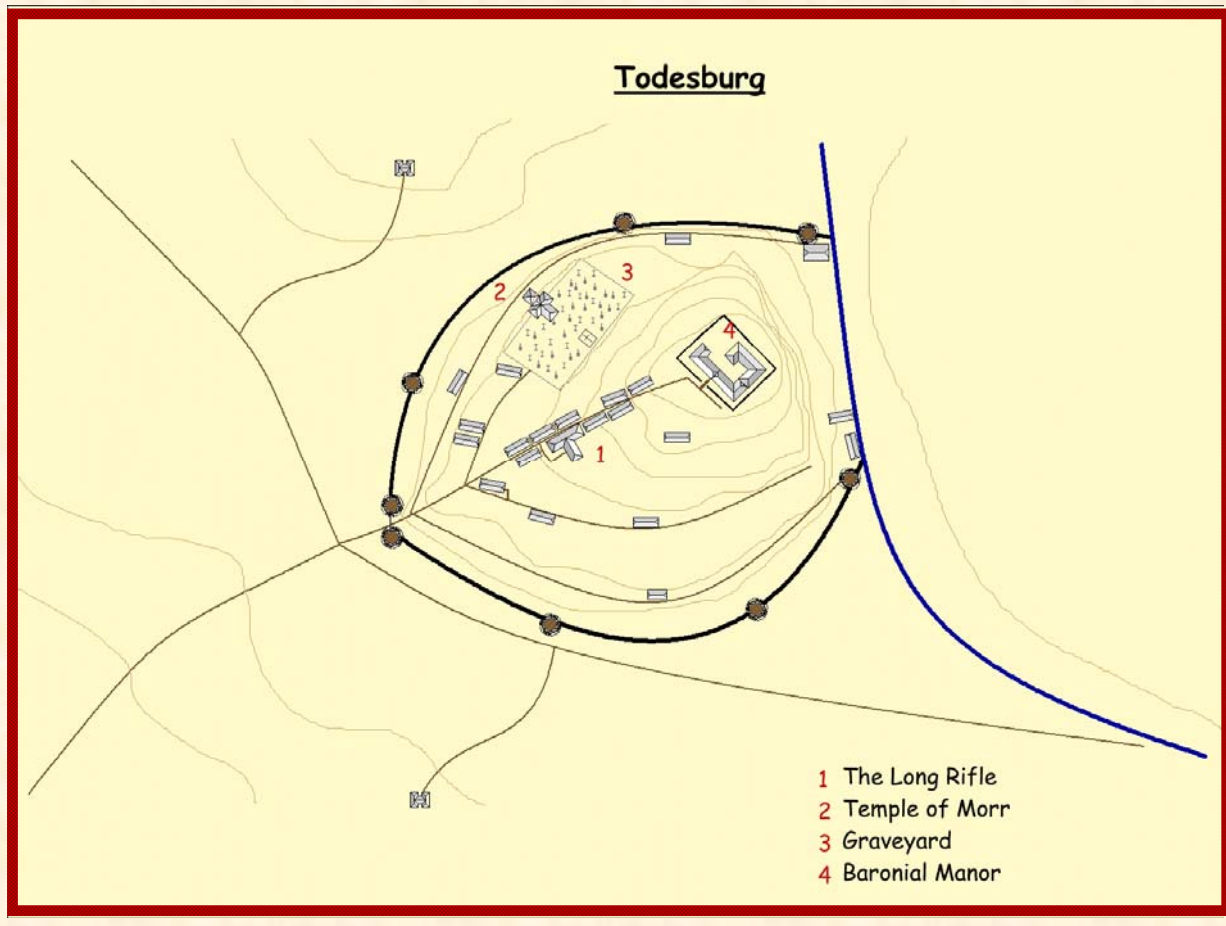
Todesburg can be placed anywhere which is convenient to your campaign - the adventure is designed as a one night stopover during a

journey. The timing of the adventure is also relatively unimportant but it would work particularly well on Geheimsnacht, Hexensnacht or any other night where Morrslieb is at its full.

In real life this game can be a particularly fun event to run on Halloween or a stormy night. A good atmosphere can add a whole extra level of depth to the scenario.

A note on Gore:

A typical zombie attack can leave many people dead and disembowelled. This adventure will not go into details on descriptions of such things. However, I heartily encourage the GM to become as imaginative as he likes when describing these events. Plenty of inspiration can be had from the numerous Zombie films out there if you want it, but you certainly shouldn't feel compelled to include it if you would rather focus on other aspects of the game.



The Cast.

Baron Ludwig Von Richter.

The Baron is a tortured soul; his wife who he has devoted his every waking moment to for 23 years has died from a mysterious illness. He has been driven over the edge by his loss and has cut himself off from the world, locking himself in his library.

Although he is getting on in years the Baron is still a healthy man whose years of adventuring in his youth have given him much experience of the world outside. Since settling in Todesburg he has devoted his life to study and has amassed a vast collection of books. Among these is a dark tome he found in Araby which is at least partly to blame for his current state of mind.

He is a fairly tall man with greying hair and a weathered face but is still strong enough to put up a fight if he has to.

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Wp	Fel
41%	36%	31%	31%	36%	48%	50%	21%
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	15	3	3	4	2	8	0

Race: Human

Career: Necromancer (ex Noble)

Age: 52

Eye colour: Black (ex Blue)

Hair Colour: Black/Grey

Insanities: Mad with Grief

Skills: Academic Knowledge (Magic) (Necromancy) (History), Channelling, Charm, Common Knowledge (Empire), Gossip, Magical Sense, Read/Write, Ride, Speak Arcane Language (Magick), Speak Language (Reikspiel), Command, Seasoned Traveller.

Talents: Etiquette, Dark Lore (Necromancy), Dark Magic, Fast Hands, Public Speaking, Specialist Weapon Groups (Fencing) (Parrying), Schemer

Trappings: Dark Grimoire, Noble's Garb, Foil, Main Gauche, Purse with 50gc

Baroness Mathilde

The love of Ludwig's life, the baroness, is now a fan of munching on limbs and entrails. She was a frightening woman in life and her recent death by mysterious illness has done little to improve her mood.

Mathilde enjoys needlework, riding in the country and eating raw flesh.

Her walking corpse is pale and covered in green boils. Her once fine black hair obscures her face. She's tall (taller than Ludwig) but shambles along hunched over.

Because she was the focus of the necromantic energies she is somewhat stronger than the other zombies roaming the town.

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Wp	Fel
56%	0%	45%	45%	15%	-	-	-
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
2	20	4	4	4	0	0	0

Race: Human (Dead)

Career: Zombie (ex Noblewoman)

Age: 47

Eye colour: Green

Hair Colour: Black

Skills: None

Talents: Frightening, Night Vision, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Injure, Undead

Special Rules:

- Mindless: Can never take or fail Intelligence, Will Power or Fellowship based tests
- Shambling: Cannot take the Run Action

Trappings: Tattered Noble's Garb, Silver Candlestick (Hand Weapon)

Konrad Gustavson

Konrad became an initiate of Morr at the age of 16 after a series of dreams about a raven telling him to. A very serious young boy he excelled in his studies at the temple of Morr in Talabheim. It was here, after visiting with the famed augur Paul von Soleck, that he was encouraged to take up the post of priest in Todesburg.

He has lived in the town for almost 10 years now, caring for the dead and growing ever more bitter at the lack of purpose in his life since he arrived in the backwater town. All of that is about to change as he meets his true calling.

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Wp	Fel
46%	41%	41%	41%	36%	41%	51%	46%
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	15	4	4	4	1	0	0

Race: Human

Career: Priest (ex Initiate)

Age: 34

Eye colour: Purple

Hair Colour: Dark Brown

Skills: Academic Knowledge (Theology +10%) (Law) (History), Channelling, Heal +10%, Magical Sense, Perception +10%, Read/Write +10%, Ride, Speak Language (Classical) (Reikspiel), Speak Arcane Language (Magick), Intimidate, Trade (Embalmer)

Talents: Very Strong, Public Speaking, Warrior Born, Armoured Caster, Petty Magic (Divine), Strike to Injure, Menacing

Trappings: Prayer Book, Religious Symbol (Raven), Robes (Black, Hooded), Dagger, Great Axe (looks somewhat like a scythe).

Hans the Innkeeper

Before he bought the Long Rifle, Hans was one of the Barons armsmen. At the age of 34 he was seriously wounded in the right leg defending the Baroness, who he was escort-

ing back from a trip to Altdorf. He was invalidated out of service but as a reward for saving the Baroness's life from bandits the Baron gave him a substantial sum of money and Hans settled down to open an inn. He married and had a pair of daughters with his wife Frieda. His wife has passed away now and he is left to take care of his daughters - Elsa and Klara - who he is fiercely protective of.

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Wp	Fel
41%	36%	36%	41%	41%	43%	39%	51%
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	14	3	4	4	0	0	0

Race: Human

Career: Innkeeper (ex Soldier)

Age: 53

Eye colour: Blue

Hair Colour: Light Brown

Distinguishing Features: Limp, Scar on right cheek

Skills: Blather, Charm, Common Knowledge (empire), Consume Alcohol, Evaluate, Gossip, Haggle, Perception, Read/Write, Speak Language (Reikspiel +10%), Trade (Cook, Brewer), Specialist Weapon Group (gunpowder), Dodge Blow.

Talents: Streetwise, Dealmaker, Strike to Stun, Rapid Reload.

Trappings: Inn (The long rifle), 2 Servants (Elsa and Klara), Firearm (long rifle over bar), Shot and powder for 10 shots (behind bar), Dagger, Good Craftsmanship Clothing.

Zombies

The dead have risen in Todesburg and march upon the living. The corpses in the town's graveyard have risen up and are feeding upon the living. The slain rise up again to join their ranks.

Zombies vary greatly in appearance; some may appear almost living while others may appear skeletal. Some will still have axes in their heads or holes clean through them.

Some may have picked up weapons they knew in life. If you're stuck for ideas just watch any zombie film while keeping a notepad handy.

If a Player Character or NPC dies in the town they will be resurrected as Undead. They will retain all their equipment (GM's discretion whether they can use it or not) but their skills and statistics revert to the standard zombie profile. If a player dies in this way and wishes to continue allow them to take the part of an NPC hiding somewhere in the town or defending the inn.

The following is the standard zombie profile as shown in *The Old World Armoury*. All zombies in the town (apart from the Baroness) have these statistics:

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	Wp	Fel
25%	0%	35%	35%	10%	-	-	-
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	12	3	3	4	0	0	0

Race: Human (Dead)

Career: Zombie

Skills: None

Talents: Frightening, Night Vision, Undead

Special Rules:

- Mindless: Can never take or fail Intelligence, Will Power or Fellowship based tests
- Shambling: Cannot take the Run Action

Trappings: Various implements (hand weapons), in some case light armour (leather jack).

Braaaaaaaaaiiiiinnnnnnnsssss...

-Todesburg Blacksmith...
or at least he used to be...

Arrival.

The Player Characters reach the top of a hill and see beneath them the walled town of Todesburg. Built on a small rise near the river the grey stone of the town rises out of the green wilds of the forest. They will be exhausted from days of travelling and sleeping rough on the road so will no doubt welcome a rest and a hot meal. Passing through the town gates they will see only one watchman who's leaning against the wall smoking his pipe. The town clearly doesn't expect much in the way of trouble.

The main street climbs straight up the hill to a large manor house on the hill. On the right hand side you can see a tavern sign.

At this point the players may wish to go shopping. The town is small and doesn't have much in the way of shops but the players can buy food, some basic equipment and even some basic weapons from the general store farmers stop at. There are stables in the town but there are no horses for sale as they are all being used to harvest crops.

The town also contains a Temple to Morr, Konrad the local priest can offer basic healing for a small donation to the temple.

Any attempt to enter the walled manor grounds will be stopped by watchmen far more alert then the ones at the gate.

The Long Rifle.

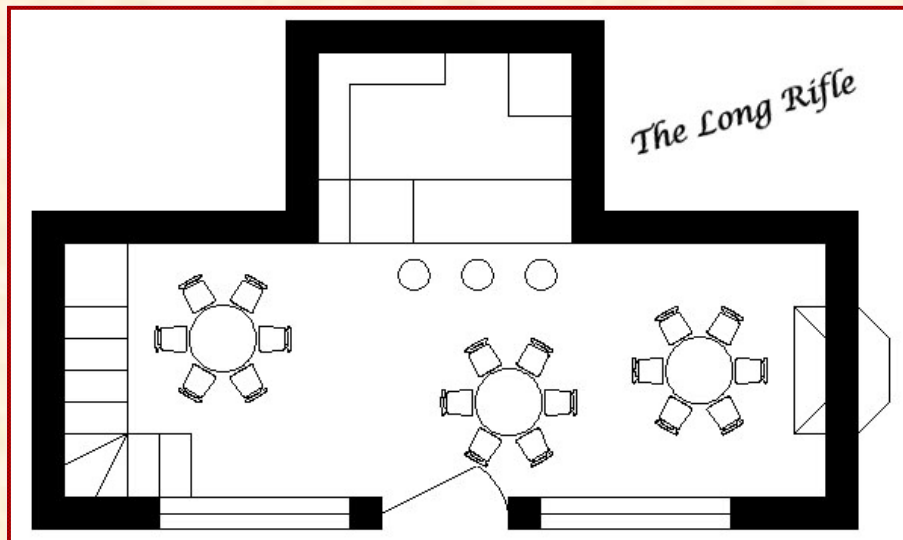
A swinging sign showing a Hochland Long Rifle beckons the PCs in. Entering they will see a common room taking up most of the Ground Floor, the Bar stands opposite the door and in between are a dozen tables. Above the bar is mounted Hans's old Long Rifle from his days in the Baron's Army. To their right an ornate fireplace is set but not yet burning. To the left stairs lead up to rooms. The Players can rent twin rooms for 8s per room and have an evening meal for 12p (average beef stew). Ales cost 2p each.



The innkeeper (Hans) and the 2 barmaids (his daughters Elsa and Klara) are behind the bar and waiting on tables respectively. As mentioned in his description, Hans is very protective of them and will come down hard on anyone who hassles them at all.

By nightfall most of the tables will be taken up by farmers and the odd watchman. Despite Todesburg's fairly small size it is the market and route centre for the scores of farms scattered around the region and receives a lot of custom.

The downstairs plan is included here. Players probably won't need to go upstairs but if they do there is a corridor along the middle and 4 guest rooms. Hans and his daughters live in the next house up the street.



The Storm Cometh.

As the sun sets clouds roll in fairly quickly and within a short time a large storm is crashing over the town. By this point the player characters should be back in the Inn. If not, feel free to hurry them along with descriptions of icy water trickling down their necks and lightning crackling overhead.



Gossip around the town.

From talking to the Tavern staff, Konrad or various people around the town the players can find out some of the following. These can be found out by Very easy (+30%) gossip tests or from effective roleplay.

- The Town is ruled by Baron Ludwig von Richter an aging man who in his youth was a keen scholar and was said to have travelled all over the empire and beyond.
- The Baroness, Mathilde, passed away recently from an unknown illness that neither Konrad the priest nor Beatrix (the local wise-woman) was able to cure.
- The Baron is said to have gone near mad with grief and has locked himself in his library.
- Konrad the priest is rumoured to be fond of the drink (this is false).
- Beatrix the wise-woman is a witch (false – she is just a wise old woman who lives out of town and shouldn't even be encountered in this adventure)

It may also be useful to have the innkeeper or another NPC comment on the Baron's past – *"Ah... adventurers are ye? Well we get quite a few o' your sort around here. Did ye know that the ol' baron even travelled as far as Araby in his youth?"*

Any character with the Magical Sense skill will at this point realise that something is wrong and that Dark Magiks flow this night.

Once they're inside let them stew for a few minutes, listening to locals remarking at the sudden storm and perhaps raising a toast to the deceased baroness. If your players are particularly intelligent at working out plots of scenarios you may wish to throw in a couple of red herrings or distractions such as shifty looking characters or tales of witches causing the weather.

A Warning in the Night.

Once the players are pondering what to do next or look to be getting the wrong end of the stick Konrad will burst into the common room, the draught snuffing out candles and irritating the inn's patrons. Konrad will be panting as if he's just run the length of the town (which he has) and is babbling incoherently about the dead walking. If the player characters have not reached the inn by this point or are out and about in the town have them encounter him on his way to the inn. This may mean that "The Dead Walk" won't happen, instead the characters should encounter the zombies in the streets and be forced to find an alternative means of reaching the Mansion to stop the Baron (see appendix I for more on this).

When he catches his breath he will say the following:

"Hurry, hurry! We must bar the doors! The dead have risen from their graves and are killing the living!"

Many of the townspeople will scoff at this, saying that he's had too much to drink, is a good storyteller, the embalming oils have got to him etc... However in this case he's absolutely right, a look out of the inns windows will reveal 30 or so zombies converging on the Inn. If nobody bothers to look Konrad will continue his story.

"I was preparing the Von Richter family crypt

for the Baroness's burial when the storm broke. I could feel that something was wrong as soon as the first clap of thunder sounded and I could feel dark energies on the wind. Worse, they seemed to be focusing on the graveyard. I am ashamed to say that at that point I fled to the temple seeking shelter and safety but almost as soon as I got there I was attacked by the bodies on the embalming tables! Stolen from Morr's kingdom by magiks most..."

The Dead Walk.

He is interrupted by fists hammering on the doors and windows, the Zombies have arrived. If the player characters are outside at the time make sure that it is clear to them that they can't hope to defeat the horde in open combat and should take shelter.

What happens from here in the inn is primarily up to you and the players. The locals are a general mix of farmers, labourers and a few militiamen. It is extremely impractical to have a combat involving 30 zombies, 10 townsfolk and several adventurers so you should have the combats between locals run narratively *sans dice*. Simply describe what happens vaguely (remember the PCs are very busy at this stage so won't be looking around too closely). How much detail you go in to is up to you – remember my previous comments on gore. More zombies should arrive as townspeople fall (and then get back up) and others arrive outside. At some stage the zombies will break down the door. Most (if not all) of the townspeople will die including Hans's 2 daughters. Virtually mad with grief he will pull his old firearm from its bracket above the bar and open fire on the zombies. Konrad will yell *"Aim for their heads!"*

The defenders are greatly outnumbered by the zombies so at some point the players will have to flee. Hans will tell them that there is a sewer access in the cellar accessible via the trapdoor behind the bar. The PCs, Konrad, Hans and any surviving townspeople (if you feel the need to reinforce the players for later

on) can retreat down here. Hans will be the last out, still firing wildly into the horde of Undead. The Zombies will take several chunks out of Hans before he escapes.

Flight through the Sewers.

The exhausted and quite likely wounded characters will manage to seal themselves in; the zombies won't be getting in that way. The mortally wounded innkeeper will collapse against the wall as he bleeds out from his numerous wounds. Konrad will attempt to staunch his wounds unsuccessfully.

Intelligent characters may at this point realize what is about to happen and act to prevent it. If not then another combat is fought – with the innkeeper's reanimated corpse.

At this point Konrad can help the players out with some healing before they are properly in the sewers. This is their last chance before the finale.

Todesburg is a small town so its sewers are rather small and primitive. They consist of a single dank tunnel leading from the Baronial mansion, down the main road down the hill then curving around to empty in the river. The tunnel is small and cramped so the players will have to walk hunched over, knee deep in sludge and sewer water. Other pipes empty out overhead from other houses in the town but these are barely large enough for a rat to



crawl down. The players here have two choices; left will take them up to the Baronial mansion, which Konrad's magical sense (and that of anyone else with the skill) indicates is the source of the necromantic magiks. The other route leads to the river and freedom. Hopefully your "heroes" will choose to attempt saving the town but if not let them flee and dock almost all of their XP reward. If they do so Konrad will refuse to follow them and will instead go onwards on his own muttering about dreams and destiny. In the next town the players will hear rumours of the "Zombie town" of Todesburg and if they linger long enough will see Konrad arrive, at the head of a zombie horde - he has become one of them. Hopefully the players will take the more heroic route however and make their way through the sewer to the Baronial Mansion.

Make the journey as torturous as possible. Unless they have a light source the players will be forced to feel their way along in the dark, feeling things squish under their hands and feet and other horrible smells, sensations and even sounds.

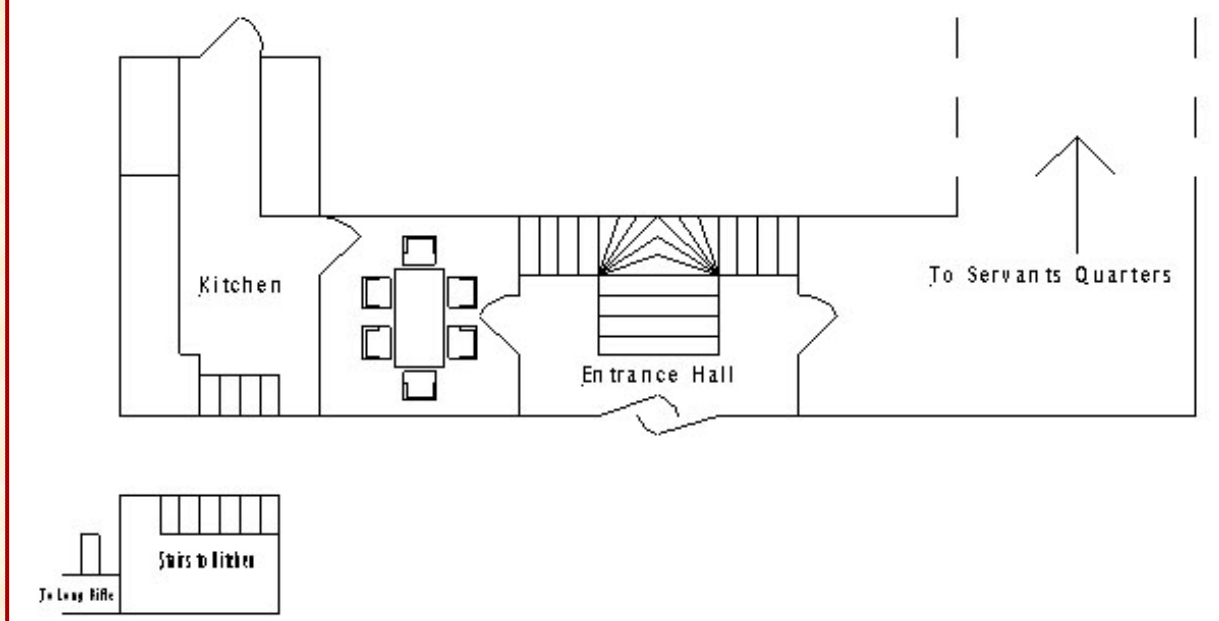
Also, due to the contents of what they've been wading through the players will suffer a -20% modifier to any Fellowship tests they make until they next have an opportunity to bathe.

The Baronial Mansion.

The sewer has an access in the wine cellar of the mansion. A hidden door conceals it from the cellar side; it appears that at one time the passage was used as a bolt hole for the Baron's ancestors. The cellar is deserted and contains several wine racks filled with old dusty bottles. A set of stone steps lead up to a trapdoor.

Above the trapdoor are the kitchens where they find that the entire catering staff is dead. But of course in this town, that isn't stopping them at all. The manor is relatively small but still has 3 cooks. Players can continue with hack and slash tactics to get past them or

Ground Floor and Wine Cellar



they can use their initiative. Sneaking past (silent move test), or alternatively the more comical method of pretending to be a zombie can get them past without a fight. Or they could just run of course. If they choose to do the zombie act make sure that you force them to get up from the gaming table and do it themselves, take it from me – this is a lot of fun.

There are 2 exits from the kitchen, one leads outside to a central courtyard which is basically a paved square around a well. The other door leads to a fancy wood panelled room. A large dark hardwood table with 6 chairs takes up most of the room. One heavy silver candlestick sits on the table, although it appears that there were originally two. There are teeth marks in the remaining one. The room is empty of people – zombies or otherwise.

The next room they will come to is the entrance hall; elegant stairs lead up to the next floor with well carved banisters and a fine red carpet. There are 4 exits from this room. Back the way they came, the main doors, the door to the servants' quarters and the stairs up. This room also contains Hugo, the butler,

who is of course dead. The players can again fight or sneak past in whatever manner they wish.

The Baron is upstairs but if your players choose to head round to the servants' quarters you can easily engineer a few more encounters with zombie maids and town guards.

Eventually though they will have to head upstairs if they wish to stop the evil which assails the town.

Den of Evil.

At the summit of the stairs the players again appear to have a choice of alternative routes. However, the decision of where to go will be made for them by the noises of mutterings and zombie-like groans coming from the western room. As if that weren't enough a sickly green glow can be seen emanating from the crack in the door, magical senses will also continue to indicate that the source of the spell is in here.

The room is the combined study/library of

Baron Ludwig. However the players' attention will be more drawn to the central table where the Barons rarest book sits (see attached note) in the centre of a pentagram marked in a red liquid (very easy (+30%) perception test indicates blood) with black candles burning at each of the 5 points. The book is the source of the rooms green illumination.

The room also contains the Baron and Baroness. He is trying to restrain her from taking a chunk out of him, babbling about how they'll be together forever and the like.

"There dear, nothing can separate us now; I told you I'd never leave you didn't I. Ouch! Be careful now! I don't have that many fingers to spare! Oh look we have visitors! Be a dear and tell Sara to make a pot of tea would you?"

He has clearly lost it, and the distraction of the players' entry gives Mathilde the opportunity to take a bite out of him. Go to combat time if you haven't already. After the Baron is bitten he will stagger backwards into the shelves, knocking over a lamp, which shatters on the floor. The Baroness will then go straight for the players.

How things progress from here depends entirely on the players. The Baron is only down by three wounds and will move to defend the Baroness from harm if he sees that players want to hurt her.

To break the spell all three components of it must be destroyed: the book, the necromancer (the Baron) and the focus (the Baroness). If

The Barons Book

The book is bound in human skin (identified by Challenging (-10%) perception test) and marked with runic symbols which hurt the eyes of those not trained in magic. It is written in the Arcane Language (Magic).

There are several candidates for what book it actually is. It is relatively unimportant for the purposes of this adventure but if your players express a wish to track down and deal with its source (almost certainly another necromancer) the subject may come up. The most notorious necromantic tomes are the following:

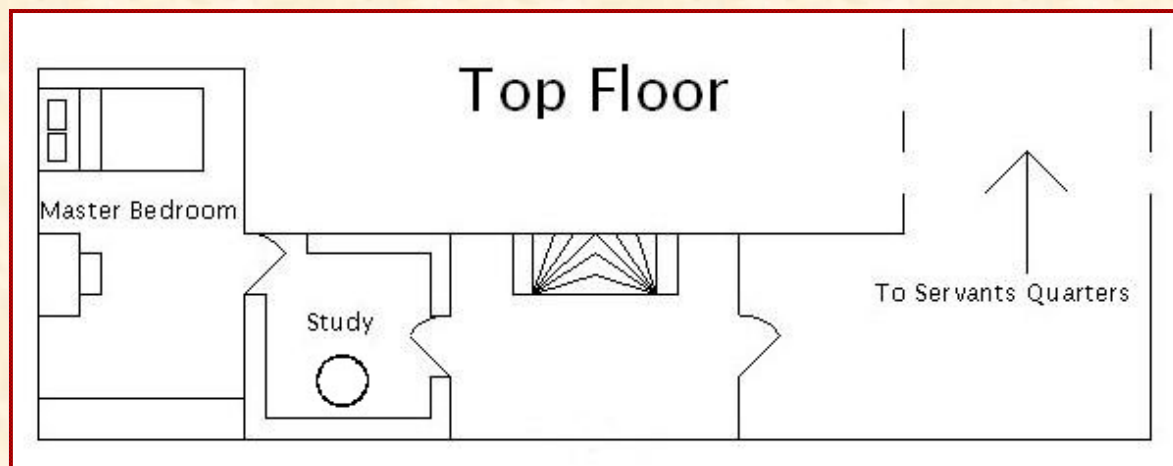
- One of the 9 books of Nagash - *Nagash*
- The Liber Mortis - *Van Hel*
- Grimoire Necronium - *Melkhior*
- Book of the Dead - *Abdul Ben Raschid*

It is recognizable by a Very Easy (+30%) Academic Knowledge (Necromancy) test or a very hard (-30%) Academic Knowledge (Magic) or (Theology) test.

the Baroness is heavily wounded or killed the Baron will go berserk – gaining the effects of the Frenzy talent immediately (with no need for psyching up). During the combat the previously dislodged lamp will set the carpet, and then the book shelves, on fire. Within 2 minutes (12 rounds) the combatants will be forced to flee to save themselves. However, the Baroness will only leave if it is to follow her next meal (i.e. the players) and the Baron will stay with her, crying out her name in heartbroken anguish as he is consumed by the flames.

A Cleansing Flame.

As the players flee the fire, the house will collapse around them. Some agility tests can be used to emphasize the danger as they attempt



to dodge burning rafters falling upon them. When the book catches fire the entire mansion will explode in green flames. If the players did not burn the book and instead took it they will reach the outside to find themselves facing all the remaining Undead in the village. Hopefully they will realize the need to destroy it.

When the three components have all been destroyed, the remaining zombies will collapse, returned to their eternal rest. If Konrad still lives he will offer them healing and will reward them with 10gc each from the temples coffers as well as giving them each symbols of Morr as gratitude for their assistance.

Experience Points.

The PCs receive 50 xp each for surviving. The player(s) who killed the Baron and Baroness will also gain 50 xp for each one. If the adventure proved particularly challenging for them you may wish to give them a fate point. You can also give out 5-30 xp to each character for good roleplaying.

Appendix I: Continuing the Tale

Intermission

The adventure as it is presented here is the primary path players can be expected to travel. However being players they will almost certainly do something to mess up your well laid scenario. Rather than having Ulric flatten them with a thunderbolt take what they do and make it work for you. For example, what if rather than being in the Inn at sunset the players are wandering around the town? The solution to this is simple – have Konrad meet them outside and the confrontation with the zombies happen there instead. This can lead onto yet more variations, from a wild chase through the graveyard with hands emerging to claw at ankles to breaking into the Baron's mansion by a desperate climb over the walls where failure of an agility test could lead to being torn apart.

Expansion on a Quest

This short encounter can lead on to a greater story. Perhaps the Baron's ownership and knowledge of a necromantic tome has a dark history. Was this whole adventure a plot by dark forces to destroy the empire itself? And where did the Baroness's strange Illness truly originate? Who gave the Baron the tome and where did that person find it? Perhaps the spell isn't truly over and instead the curse of undeath begins to spread throughout the province. The players may have to travel to find magical assistance, rouse the army or even confront vampires in their search for the truth. The possibilities are endless.

The Legend of Todesburg

Even if you don't intend to expand on it and wish to hurry the players on to their final destination and finish your true campaign it wouldn't hurt to have other consequences result from the events described here. A few weeks down the line the players may be told a fantastic story in a tavern about brave warriors of light and dark forces of evil intent battling for supremacy in the town of Todesburg. The players have become legends to local people and no player would deny enjoying the praise and accolades of the common folk.

Appendix II: So long and thanks for All the Fishmen

I'd like to thank everyone for reading through my adventure, I hope you enjoyed it. If you try it out I'd love to hear from you. I can be reached at: BobReturns@googlemail.com I'd especially like to thank Dave Allen and the other guys and girls and Black Industries/Green Ronin/Games Workshop for giving me the opportunity to get my work published on their website and of course for producing a really great game.

And also a nod to my gaming buddies - Gregor, Farky, Frat, Jono, Matt and Mr M - for reading over the adventure and for participating in the playtest.