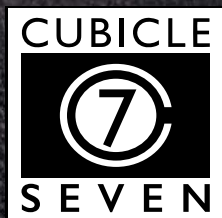


WARHAMMER
FANTASY
ROLE-PLAY

All the Fun of the Carnival
... Graeme Davis



DEVELOPER
DIARY

DEVELOPER DIARY 14

by Graeme Davis

Welcome to Dev Diary 14! We hope you are all enjoying **Death on the Reik** and the recently released Companion! In this Dev Diary we focus on the next exciting release for the **Enemy Within** Campaign — **Power Behind the Throne**. Below, Graeme Davis offers some helpful rules and advice to help you navigate the crowds you will likely encounter while in Middenheim!

Power Behind the Throne takes place against the backdrop of Middenheim's famous Carnival. Your Characters will have to contend with scheming nobles, religious cults at one another's throats, and, of course, the ever-present but hidden agents of Chaos. Thanks to the crowds, it is a challenge just to get from one place to another. Following or pursuing someone through Middenheim's cramped streets and dark alleys is even harder.

Chapter 4 of **Power Behind the Throne** offers some rules for dealing with the crowds, as well as a few encounters. Here are ideas for 24 more incidents to use whenever you like. Many can be used in any crowded city environment, such as Ubersreik.

1. Pickpockets: One of the Characters is targeted by a pickpocket (Thief – Brass 3) with Sleight of Hand 45. If the targeted Character is standing still in the crowd, they may make a **Challenging (+0) Perception Test** in order to catch them in the act. Otherwise, all the pushing and jostling makes it a **Difficult (-10%) Perception Test**, as it is hard to tell exactly which push or jostle is caused by a pickpocket.

2. False Accusations: An NPC close to the party has just been robbed by a pickpocket, and the Characters find themselves accused of the crime and surrounded by a press of hostile townsfolk. A successful **Challenging (+0) Charm** or **Intimidate Test** is required before they can move on. Failure may mean the crowd calls the guards, or worse forms an impromptu mob to take care of business themselves!

3. Nice Doggy: To a small dog, a crowd of people is nothing more or less than a forest of ankles to bite and lower legs to... well, *inconvenience*. These small dogs can't seriously wound anyone — they aren't vicious after all — but they are quite annoying. Detaching a biting (or otherwise attached) dog from one's leg requires a full round and a successful **Challenging (+0) Agility** or **Strength Test**.



4. Trip: People in a crowd very seldom look at the ground, so it is important to keep one's feet. Anyone who trips or falls must make a successful **Challenging (+0) Athletics** Test to rise before they are trampled, taking 1 Wound in Damage. Armour and Toughness does not reduce this damage.. The Athletics Test must be repeated once per round until successful.

5. Lost Child: A young child has become separated from her family in the crowd, and is forcing her way through, pushing, kicking shins, and howling for her mother. Although no damage is caused, a push or kick requires the victim to make a successful **Challenging (+0) Athletics** Test or trip and fall, as above. Kind-hearted characters may feel obliged to reunite parent and child, leading to further delays. If you are feeling cruel, the child is a diversion used by a gang of pickpockets (see **Pickpockets** above), and anyone who tries to help her suffers a further -10 penalty to Perception Tests as they are robbed.

6. Every Home Should Have One: An enterprising tradesman is selling crudely-carved wooden mannequins with the word 'witch' or 'heretic' painted across the chest. Each one comes with a handful of straw and kindling in a small bag of coarse cloth. *'Witches and heretics!' he cries, 'Only a shilling each! Take a couple home for the kids! Witches and heretics!'* He wanders through the crowd, and eager buyers shove their way towards him — possibly impeding the Characters as they try to make their own way through the crowd. Given the current religious tensions, some of the 'heretics' might sport crude hammers of Sigmar painted on their chests. A crowd-pleaser among Middenlanders, these might lead to conflict with visiting Sigmarites.

7. Brawl: A brawl spills into the street from a nearby tavern or side-alley, or breaks out between members of the crowd. The Characters are in the wrong place at the wrong time, and the expanding fight engulfs them. There is no neutrality — indeed, no concept of friend or foe — as punches, kicks, and chair legs fly in all directions. Each Character is attacked once per round, and must disengage or flee (see **WFRP**, page 165) to get out of the brawl. After 1d10 rounds, a watch patrol appears, wading into the crowd and arresting everyone they can subdue.

8. A Tough Crowd: There are rules in **Power Behind the Throne** (page @@) for handling occasions where an especially poor performance turns a crowd ugly. The Characters run smack into a failed entertainer who is fleeing from a small but angry crowd. The Characters must make a **Challenging (+0) Dodge** Test to avoid collision and possible trampling; it is almost impossible to avoid the barrage of fruit and dung the crowd is throwing.

9. Hot Headed: As the Characters pass by a fire-eater busking on the street, an ill-timed burst of flame catches the feather on someone's hat, or some other vulnerable target. They gain one *Ablaze* Condition.

10. A Volunteer from the Audience: One of the Characters is targeted by a group of buskers — clowns, for example, or a knife-thrower's assistants, or some other act that requires a victim from the audience. They try to drag the Character into their performance, laughing maniacally and refusing to take no for an answer. The Character can expect a few minutes of danger or humiliation unless they fight their way free, which risks angering the small crowd of onlookers and turning the situation into a brawl. As always, there is the chance that one of the troupe is a pickpocket who uses all the manhandling as a distraction.

11. Just Dropping In: An acrobat has stretched a tightrope between the upper-floor windows of two houses, and slips and falls as the Characters are walking beneath the rope. One of the characters chosen by the GM must make a **Challenging (+0) Athletics** Test or suffer 1 Wound as the performer falls on them. If they score an Impressive Failure, they take 2 Wounds and the performer is seriously injured. With an Astounding Failure, the performer meets a tragic end. The crowd might take a turn for the worse, thinking the Characters killed the acrobat.

12. A Splendid Race: Two young nobles, fresh from the horse fair on Backertag, are riding their newly purchased mounts through the crowd at a furious speed, having made a bet over who can reach their home in the Graftsmund first. Those who fail to dodge risk being ridden down.

13. A Question of Faith: The Characters pass by a street-corner preacher — a priest, or warrior priest, or even a flagellant — who has gathered a small but enthusiastic crowd through fiery rhetoric. The preacher and the crowd might be Ulrican or Sigmarite. If one or more Characters has the misfortune to be showing emblems of the opposing deity, one of the preachers points them out with a howl and denounces them as traitors, heretics, and enemies of all that is good and true. As the crowd turns toward them, fired up by the preacher's words, the Characters need a successful **Difficult (-10) Charm or Intimidate** Test — or a swift exit — if they hope to avoid a beating or worse.

14. What Are You Looking At? The crowds and plentiful drink at the Carnival regularly lead to small disturbances, and the Characters encounter just such a situation. A few townsfolk, drunk and spoiling for a fight, decide that the Characters have offended them somehow. The altercation starts with a couple of rounds of threats and posturing, during which time a successful **Challenging (+0) Charm** or **Intimidate** Test may calm the situation. If not, things escalate to a brawl (see above) almost instantly.

15. The Wrong Colours: The Middenball competition draws spectators from all over the north to the Bernabau Stadium, and those whose team is not playing roam the city looking for food, drink, and entertainment — which, in some cases, includes fighting. One such group, decked in the colours of their favoured team, spots the Characters and takes exception to a garment that one of them is wearing, which happens to be in the colours of the group's arch-rivals. Even if the Characters can convince them that they are not rival supporters, they insist that the offending garment is removed immediately and burned in the street, and they are prepared to use force to get their way.

16. Look Out Below: The Characters are walking along a narrow street lined with buildings whose upper storeys jut out almost close enough to touch each other. By an accident of timing, they pass beneath a particular window just as someone is emptying a chamber pot out of it. A cry of *'Look out below!'* is their only warning.

17. A Cry for Justice: The street ahead is blocked by a dense crowd gathered around an agitator. If you have <title of Middenheim book>, the agitator might be a New Millennialist, but their cause does not matter. The Characters must push their way through the crowd with an **Average (+20) Athletics** Test. The crowd is already whipped up to a fever pitch by the agitator's words and tempers are dangerously high. If a Character scores an Impressive Failure, a brawl breaks out.

18. Guilt by Association: An agitator comes running down the street toward the Characters, pursued by a Watch patrol. A collision is almost inevitable, and unlucky Characters may even be knocked down, but the agitator is up and running again before the Characters can react, leaving a snowstorm of pamphlets swirling in the air around them. Having lost their quarry, the Watch decides to arrest the Characters instead, for possessing seditious material.

19. Poor Sportsmanship: The Characters — perhaps while chasing one of the many NPCs in **Power Behind the Throne** — run into the improvised booth of a bunko artist in the middle of a game. They are immediately grappled by the bunko artist's lookouts, who insist on an outrageous sum in 'damages' and look ready to resort to violence. If any Character is a Rogue, there is a chance that the gang assumes that the accident was a poorly disguised attack aimed at taking over their turf.



20. The Wisdom of Fools: A beggar on a street corner notices the Characters. His face is transformed into a mask of shock and wonder as he seems to recognise one of them. This might be the Lieberung character, in keeping with one of the campaign's major themes, or it might be someone else entirely, just to keep the Characters and the Players guessing. The beggar hauls himself unsteadily to his feet and totters after the Characters, babbling semi-coherently and giving the impression that he once served the Character and wants to do so again. If the Characters stop, they can't make sense of anything he says and he cannot be induced to do anything useful. He just keeps babbling and fawning. If the Characters decide to ignore him and keep moving, he follows, calling after them in increasingly piteous tones, until they manage to leave him behind. If the Characters seek magical or miraculous healing for his poor, damaged mind, he does not recognise them when cured, and has no memory of why he fixated on one of them.

21. A Regrettable Accident: Pushing through a crowd, one of the Characters accidentally bumps into a passerby hard enough to knock them down, perhaps as the result of an impressive failure on an Athletics Test while moving through a Very Crowded area. A middle-class lady's husband shouts and calls for the Watch, as does anyone who sees them knock down an old person. Alternatively, a martial passerby — perhaps one of Middenheim's many knights — steps in to teach the culprit some manners.

22. Future Champions: A dozen or so children come running along the street, whacking at each other with sticks in imitation of the contestants they have been watching at the Minotaur fights or the challenges to the Graf's Champion. While trying to negotiate this moving obstacle, the Characters suffer a -10 penalty to all Tests relating to shadowing or pursuit — and an exceptionally unlucky Character might also catch a stick in the eye, gaining one *Blinded* Condition.

23. The Upper Crust: A cultural event has recently finished, or is due to start shortly. Possibilities include any event at the Royal Gardens or the Royal College of Music, especially the Graf's garden party on Markttag. Group of gorgeously-dressed nobles and other worthies are making their way to or from the event, taking up the full width of the street whether they are on foot or in coaches. In either case, they are accompanied by an escort of guards whose only duty is to push anyone and everyone out of the way, including the Characters. An NPC whom the Characters are following just manages to dodge past the nobles, leaving the guards especially determined not to let anyone else pass.

24. Student Larks: A small group of students from the Collegium Theologica rampage drunkenly through the crowd, throwing firecrackers or casting petty magic to their own immense amusement, and the annoyance of everyone else..

