

**A WARPSTONE PUBLICATION**

# **JOURNEY INTO DARKNESS**

**Part Two of the Saga of the Black Anvil**

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This scenario is the first of two sequels to "The Missing Children of Regensdorf". This first appeared in Warpstone issue 8 and then in *Corrupting Influence: The Best Of Warpstone Volume One*.

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## **Recent Events & Plot Overview:**

*Journey Into Darkness* is the second part of a three-part adventure based on the discovery and destruction of a dangerous Chaos artefact - the Black Anvil. It is strongly suggested that the adventurers should have played through part one or forcing a Chaos artifact on them may seem heavy-handed.

If the adventurers have played through the first instalment then it is likely that they have either buried the Anvil in the Forest of Shadows or still have it on their persons.

In this part of the saga, the adventurers must discover a way to destroy the Black Anvil. Investigation leads them to the discovery of a temple dedicated to a Cathan god of knowledge, Alum-O, situated far to the south of their current position.

The first section of this adventure details the troubled journey to the temple, known locally as the Alum-O. On the way they learn that the Anvil is being sought by the minions of Chaos, that it continues to attract Chaos monsters to their location, and that a powerful, but as yet unknown force, is seeking the Anvil for itself.

Once at the Alum-O things do not get any better for the party. A war band of Goblins arrives shortly after they do and begins to assault the temple. The battle that follows will be bloody and desperate, for the adventurers are all that stand between the Goblin hoards and the foul power of the Black Anvil being used to wrought evil upon The Empire.

This part of the saga ends with the adventurers learning how to destroy the Anvil and where they must perform the task. The destruction of the Anvil is detailed in part three.

## **The Way Temple of Alum-O**

### **A Brief History:**

The way temple dedicated to Alum-O, a minor deity from Cathay who shares a strong similarity to Verena, the goddess of learning and justice in The Empire, is typical of the majority of way temples that line the roads of The Empire.

When the temple was first erected, it was dedicated to Ulric, but as time went by it slowly slipped into desolation. Forty years ago a young priest by the name of Gustav, having just returned from a long voyage to Cathay, discovered the partially ruined temple and began clearing it of the refuse that had been dumped there over the years by the locals. Once it was cleared, he dedicated it to the Cathay god of knowledge Alum-O and began stocking it with books and scrolls from all over the Old World. Within thirty years it was a thriving temple of knowledge, dedicated to Alum-O and Verena with a compliment of three priests.

At first the locals were frightened of having a temple to a foreign god right in their back yard, but the priests

began a campaign of enlightenment and showed the villagers the similarity between Alum-O and Verena, and persuaded them to accept the fact that Alum-O is Verena's male counterpart. It took nearly two decades to convince the locals that the temple was beneficial to them, but the villagers did eventually come to look upon the temple and its inhabitants favourably.

The locals from the nearby village of Milchendorf get along well with the priests, although they only see them on the rare occasions they pay a visit to the temple, and refer to the temple simply as "the Alum-O."

Pilgrims, or those eager for knowledge, pay rare visits to the temple. The temple is built in a desolate area of The Empire, mainly to keep away curious passers-by. Although the priests generally dislike visitors, they are polite and accommodation is readily available.

### **Temple Description:**

A description of the temple, in some detail, follows below. It is based on the standard Way Temple diagram on page 332 of the main WFRP rulebook. A large photocopy of that drawing will prove useful in handling events at the Alum-O temple.

Most rooms can be assumed to be devoid of anything useful or interesting to the adventurers, although it will be filled with furniture appropriate to the room.

**Weapon Store:** the men-at-arms store their spare pikes and swords in the weapon store next to the main gate. Because of the small size of the garrison, there are only enough weapons here to fully arm three additional men (50% losses are deemed acceptable by the sergeant). The door is extremely sturdy and only the sergeant and Father Gustav have keys.

**Guard Room:** The guardroom outside of the weapon store has been taken over by the sergeant as his private office. During the day, if not on duty outside, he can normally be found in here completing his paperwork or sleeping. The office is well kept and contains nothing of any value.

**Guard Room:** The second guard room is used by off-duty men-at-arms to relax, clean their weapons, gamble, or whatever. The two off-duty men-at-arms are normally in here 40% of the time, otherwise they are somewhere else around the temple (such as the Hall).

**Main gates:** The main gates are well built and in good condition. Both sets are held closed at night by a stout wooden bar being placed behind them on iron supports. It takes approximately 30 seconds for two men to fully open or close the gates.

The outer set of gates is carved with the relief of an owl, the sacred symbol of Verena. The inner set are carved with the image of a heron, the sacred symbol of Alum-O.

**Dormitory:** Guards who are off-duty who want to sleep use the dormitory. Normally there are two guards in

here. The room contains a weapon rack, a set of bunk beds (the men share), and a table and chairs. Their weapons and armour are kept in neat racks and are easily accessible to groggy men-at-arms rudely awakened from a peaceful sleep.

**Chief Priest's Room:** Father Gustav's office, for that is all this room is used as, is sparsely furnished. Aside from a single table with a large chair behind it, there are only two small wooden stools.

The Father's papers, which can be found in the desk drawers, are mainly concerned with the daily running of the temple. A character with the *Super Numerate* skill can easily deduce that the temple's accounts are all in order.

Surprisingly, during the day the Father cannot often be found in here, spending much of his time in the Main Temple.

**Steward:** The steward's office is no longer used by a steward and has been converted into a storeroom for the temple's tax and invoice records. Chests full of boring documents stand high against the walls. Once the battle starts, alert characters will realise that this room prevents a serious fire hazard if the Goblins get a torch to it.

**Ante-Chamber:** The ante-chamber is decorated in a spartan fashion, with no tapestries or mosaics. In the wider ends of the room stand two statues, one in each corner. The left hand 'alcove' holds a statue of an owl and the right-hand one a statue of a heron. Both statues are wooden and stand as high as a man. Between them, on the floor, is engraved the phrase "knowledge gives strength to the arm."

**Robing Room:** Since the temple only has three priests, and they spend much of their time in their robes, the robing room has been converted into a meeting room. A large round table and ten chairs take up much of the room.

The room does not see much use, and tends to be used when locals from Milchendorf cannot sort out their differences and require the priests neutral viewpoint to bring about a sensible outcome.

**Main Temple:** The doors leading to the temple area are engraved with both owls and herons. The doors are made of solid oak and are very expensive, the carving being of quality craftsmanship. The doors are normally kept locked, except when a priest is inside. A small brass bell rests on a stool outside of the doors. Ringing it will bring a priest to investigate within a few minutes.

Once inside, the room is laid out in a peculiar fashion. Surrounding the walls are dozens of bookshelves, all pointing towards the wall and middle of the temple, forming a fan effect if viewed from the balcony above. The books are placed in order alphabetically by subject, and there are several thousand of them in total. Many

of the books are old, and quite valuable, and not a few are written in foreign tongues. Should the adventurers need to find a mundane book (there are no grimoires or books on demons here) then assume that there is an 80% chance of there being such a book, but a 40% chance that it is in a foreign or arcane tongue.

Rather unusually, the altar has been placed in the middle of room and consists of a marble slab draped with a blue velvet cover. The cover is inscribed with symbols sacred to both Verena and Alum-O. Atop the altar stand the stuffed corpses of a large eagle owl and a heron. Such is the quality of the work that the adventurers may think that they are alive. Between the two birds, placed there as guardians, are a silver reliquary containing ashes and a set of silver scales.

The reliquary, according to Verena cult lore, contains part of the ashes of the first book ever written and these are held as extremely sacred. Even touching them could get the adventurers arrested by the guards. The silver scales represent Verena in her position as goddess of justice. If the Goblins steal any of these relics, the priests will fight to the death to retrieve them.

Adventurers who manage to view the temple from the balcony see not only the fan-like effect of the bookcases, but also a mosaic covering the entire floor. It shows a large white owl balanced on the left side of a set of scales, whilst on the other stands a heron. The scales are perfectly balanced. The mosaic cannot be discerned from the temple floor itself.

**Store:** The store contains enough food and beer to last for two months if sensible rationing is imposed. Much of the foodstuffs are dried, pickled, or salted to preserve them. The only fresh food the temple inhabitants have is either grown by Brother Leopold or purchased from the local villagers as and when they need it.

**Kitchen:** The kitchen is well stocked with small food items such as spices, herbs and some fresh vegetables. The fire is kept lit all day and night, in case one of the priests or men-at-arms gets hungry and wants to cook themselves a meal. Normally though, Brother Leopold acts as cook. The pantry is kept locked by Brother Leopold and he has cast *Magic Alarm* on it to stop thieves stealing his stock.

Besides the usual collection of metal pots and wooden serving bowls, there is an expensive collection of cook's knives that, in combat, can be wielded as if they were daggers.

**Hall:** This room is used by the men-at-arms as their mess hall and only contains a table and seven chairs. The right-hand window has been converted into a door and unless already inside the temple the men-at-arms enter and leave through this side door to avoid disturbing anyone.

**Lower Stables:** The priests do not use the stables for their original purpose as they have no horses. Instead,

all but two are used to store wood, building stone, nails, woodworking and masonry tools, and the like. The men-at-arms perform many of the routine repairs around the temple and they use the stables as their workshops.

The other two stables are kept free and full of straw in case visitors bring their own horses.

**Upper Stables:** The servants quarters have been turned into sleeping areas for guests who require privacy or guests who the priests wish to keep an eye on. Each room has a comfortable mattress, a small chest in which to store personal possessions, and a table and chair. Although a little cramped they do offer peace and quiet.

**Well:** The well is capped with a wooden hatch to stop people falling in. A simple chain holds this on and once removed water can be removed from the well using the bucket that hangs on a peg driven into the nearby wall. The well is 100 feet deep and full of water to around seven feet.

**Common Room:** The common room is used by guests as a sleeping and recreation area. It is stocked with a few mattresses and some spare bed linen.

**Cells:** The priests use the cells as sleeping quarters and meditation areas. They also serve as private reading rooms for those who wish to study undisturbed. The top cell belongs to Brother Leopold, the middle cell to Brother Jakob and the lower to Father Gustav.

All of the rooms contain little in the way of adornment, having only a simple mattress, a table and chair, and a small chest for personal belongings. Each room does have some of its occupant's character; Brother Leopold's has scribbled recipes lying around, Brother Jakob's is virtually bare, and Father Gustav's contains scores of books balanced in wobbly piles.

Father Gustav's cell no longer has a normal door that joins to the area beyond it; instead it is a secret door. This door is protected by both *Magic Alarm* (which informs Father Gustav of any intrusion) and *Magic Lock*.

**The Other Cells:** The cells behind the secret door (to which Father Gustav has the only key) actually house another library, although the books here are normally magical grimoires, treatise on demons and elementals, and other similar books the priests consider too dangerous for the laity to read. They themselves rarely read the books. Each of the small cells in this area has been equipped as a reading room.

The secret library should only contain usable spell books if the GM wishes it to. Otherwise, the books are non-magical in nature.

### **The Inhabitants:**

Three priests, Father Gustav, Brother Leopold, and Brother Jakob run the temple. All three of them live at

the temple and have not left its grounds for many years. Each has their own speciality within the temple and is careful not to cross into another's chosen territory. Father Gustav is a small man in his early sixties. His grey hair is kept very short and he sports a pair of pince-nez glasses that; which, with his gaunt face, give him a severe look that doesn't fit his personality. He runs the library and is responsible for the upkeep of the existing books and the acquisition of new ones from passing merchants.

Brother Leopold is a highly skilled herbalist and cook, and he spends much of his time cultivating the small garden that feeds the priests and the men-at-arms. He is also a cordon bleu chef and keeps his ears open for talk of interesting foods from foreign lands. He is rather portly and enjoys nothing as much as sampling his own cooking as often as possible.

Lastly there is Brother Jakob, a student of unarmed combat, not for violent ends, but to better understand the limits and powers of his own body. He is in his early forties but has looked after his body well, and many adventurers would give someone else's right arm to have his physique. Whilst his methods are unusual in The Empire (being from Cathay), he hopes that they will catch on one day and is trying to convince the men-at-arms to learn his methods, with limited success so far. He spends much of his time meditating or practising his art.

The priests are assisted by a band of six men-at-arms and their sergeant who, whilst not Templars by any stretch of the imagination, are loyal to the defence of the temple and are on a permanent retainer. They are armed with a mail shirt, leather treads, a pike, a sword and a wooden shield embossed with the temple's symbol. One pair is normally on patrol on the battlements at any one time, one pair are asleep before their shift, and the last pair are awake but relaxing after their shift. The sergeant does not work any set shift, but splits his time between all three, to keep an eye on the men.

The only other permanent inhabitant of the temple is Columbus, the temple's resident mouser. Columbus is a rather mangy looking ginger tom who detests being touched by anyone, and is happy to show his displeasure with his claws and teeth.

### **Milchendorf:**

The village of Milchendorf lies some six miles from the Alum-O in a south-westerly direction. The village plays no part in the adventure but a few brief details are given here for the sake of clarity.

Milchendorf is home to 80 souls; 35 adult males, 30 adult females, and 15 children. There is no militia to speak of and so the villagers cannot help defend the temple (unless the heartless adventurers want to see some innocents get butchered!)

## THE ADVENTURE

The adventure has two possible beginnings. Firstly, if the adventurers have let the druid from Part One bury the Black Anvil, and secondly if they have kept it themselves. Regardless of where the adventurers start the adventure the track they take will be the same once they have the Anvil in their possession.

### **Nightmares in the Dark:**

If the adventurers have buried the Anvil they begin having bad dreams. The dreams start as hazy visions that merely interrupt their sleep, but within a week the dreams have taken 'solid' form. A dark form, shaped like a great wolf with red eyes, enters their dreams and screams in pain. It tells them that it is being corrupted and that the Anvil must be destroyed before it is too late. After a month of such dreams the adventurers start gaining one Insanity point per week, until the Anvil has been retrieved.

Travelling to the spot where the Anvil is buried can be as easy or as difficult as the individual GM wishes. Note that the adventurers need to reach the Anvil in order for the scenario to happen!

When the adventurers reach the spot where the Anvil was buried they cannot help but notice the corruption that has afflicted the area. The trees are twisted, their bark stained black and their leaves withered and dying (more so than normal for the Forest of Shadows.) Nearby animals are deformed and mutated. The area is roughly circular, and is 30 yards in diameter. The corruption is worse in the centre than at the edges.

Yet there is worse to see, for the wolf spirit left to guard the Anvil has succumbed to its dark power. The spirit used the last of its strength to warn the adventurers in their dreams, but now it is a force of darkness. As soon as the adventurers begin digging, the wolf spirit attacks them., desperate to protect the Anvil which now dominates its will.

Once the spirit has been banished the Anvil can be safely dug up. No rolls are needed but the process will take several hours. So, what happens once the adventurers are back in possession of this dangerous Chaos item?

### **Old Faces:**

As soon as the wolf spirit has been banished the Druid Gronwyn will be alerted to the fact. His tie to the spirit allows him to know that the spirit has been defeated but not by whom. In fear that the Anvil has fallen into the hands of evil forces he travels to Regensdorf and begins tracking the adventurers.

Once he catches up with them he demands to know why they have taken the Anvil. It is up to the GM to decide where and when he catches up with them, but he must have met and left them by the time they reach

the temple. Assuming the adventurers explain their reasoning, the druid ponders thoughtfully for a few moments and then speaks to the adventurers.

*"I see! The situation has become graver than I first thought. Obviously the Anvil must be destroyed and you were right to remove it from where it lay. It is your duty now to see that it is destroyed. I cannot accompany you my friends. It is now my sacred duty to inform others of the situation and prepare for the worst. Travel carefully, trust no-one, and beware the shadows of the night! Good luck my friends and farewell. May next time we meet be under better circumstances."*

If the adventurers ask how to destroy the Anvil the druid admits that he does not know, but that the knowledge they seek may be contained at a small way temple known as the Alum-O which lies on the Talabheim to Averheim road. He does not know exactly where the temple lies, but knows that it is visible from the road.

Once the adventurers have asked any questions of the druid he turns and disappears into the forest.

### **The Way Forward:**

Although the adventurers have successfully recovered the Anvil they are a long way from finding a method to dispose of it again. Common sense should tell them that simply burying it will not work, and yet the Anvil is virtually immune to destruction.

Regensdorf is only a dozen miles away from the Anvil's burial spot and is as good a place as any to begin their quest to find a method of destruction for the Anvil.

None of the villagers, save the Burgomeister, know of any method to remove the Anvil from existence. Indeed, many of them have no way of even comprehending the power contained within the fell artefact. The Burgomeister, being a learned man, knows of someone who might be able to help them.

*"Good to see you again my friends! How have you been? Hmmm....a way to destroy the Black Anvil? No, I don't know of one myself but I know of someone who might. During my travels when I was younger I heard of a temple to Verena situated along the Talabheim to Averheim road. Now, this temple is quite small but it has one of the best libraries in The Empire. How come? Well, rumour has it that the priest who runs the temple has travelled to distant lands, even to distant Cathay, and has collected books found no-where else in The Empire."*

The Burgomeister is quite correct in his evaluation of the Temple of Verena. There is, contained within its library, a book that will indeed aid the adventurers.

If the adventurers talk about taking the Anvil to a city to consult with the library in a major Verena temple they should all make *Intelligence* Tests. Those who succeed soon realise that they have no control over the

corrupting influence of the Anvil - it could ruin an entire city before they even know it. Taking the Anvil to a smaller temple reduces the risks considerably. If the adventurers ignore their consciences and take the Anvil to a major city then two things will happen.

Firstly the Anvil will cause major havoc, corrupting dozens and dozens of people. Those nearer to corruption, and cities have large numbers of criminals and secret Chaos worshippers, succumb extremely quickly and will seek the Anvil for themselves. Plus being caught in possession of such a powerful Chaos item is sure to have the adventurers burnt at the stake by Templars or Witch Hunters. Secondly, although the library contains huge amounts of data on various Chaos artifacts it contains nothing on the Anvil except rumours of its existence. Of course, the adventurers need to convince the priests to even let them examine their library for books on forbidden knowledge. Either way, they must fail or they have no reason to visit the small Temple of Verena.

Yes, this is blatant railroading of the adventurers, but the decision behind going to the way temple is a logical one considering the power of the Anvil and its Chaotic nature. Common sense should dictate their path.

There is of course another source of information the adventurers can use - the book on demonology from Baron Regensdorf's library. Unless the adventurers have located it in part one they will have no access to it as the villagers have not entered the house and the contents have been removed by the Baron's relatives.

The book mentions a vague history of the Anvil and mentions that it can only be destroyed in the same forge that created it. Unfortunately it fails to mention where the forge is located. Reading the relevant section on the Anvil takes two days since it is written in an old version of Reikspiel.

### **On the Road to Averheim:**

The journey to the Alum-O is not likely to be a quick or easy road. The temple actually lies south of Wurtbad, roughly where the words 'Old Dwarf Road' cross the map on page 15 of *Shadows Over Bogenhafen*. Although the individual GM can allow the adventurers to take as long as he wants to reach the temple, the trip should not be overly quick or simple. There follows a series of small encounters that the GM should place in the adventurers' path. GMs should also feel free to insert ideas of their own to help change the journey from a simple trip to a great adventure in itself.

**Gypsies, Tramps & Thieves:** Along whichever forest path the party take they encounter a brightly painted wagon parked by the side of the road. Next to it burns a camp fire with a large pot of stew cooking over it. Four Humans, two males and two females, sit around the fire, dressed in bright clothes and wearing a fair

amount of gold jewellery, talking quietly amongst themselves. When they spy the party the oldest male stands at beckons them over.

*"Greetings strangers! Come over and sit by our fire a while! I am Giovanni, head of my family and a roving tinker by trade. Please join us and eat with us. We wish news of events in the north and would willing tell you of news we have. Please, join us."*

If the adventurers wish to avoid socialising with the gypsies then Giovanni says that he understands; *"things are not as friendly as they once were."* The party is allowed to go on unmolested.

If the party do elect to rest with the gypsies then they will be given some of the stew and offered a potent ale of the gypsies own manufacture. Giovanni introduces his family; his wife Martha, his daughter Mabel (a comely lass, almost old enough to marry) and Frederick, his young son (barely a toddler).

The family are interested in any news the party have and once they have heard the news they happily impart the following information.

*"We have travelled up from Altdorf, by way of Delberz and Hergig and are heading for Kislev. Things were fine until we neared the edge of the Forest of Shadows, when we encountered a band of mercenaries hunting for Goblins. They told us that several bands of Goblins had recently been on the move and that they were hunting them down."*

*"As we journeyed on we were stopped by a small party of men, six in number, who, for some strange reason, asked if we had an anvil on us. None of them had horses to shoe and they carried no obvious weapons. We showed them our own anvil and they spent a great deal of time examining it before saying that it was not the one they were looking for. Strange people they were, very mysterious about their business."*

*"Since then things have been quite quiet until we saw you travelling through the woods."*

This is a clue that the party is actively being sought by unknown forces. The cultists seeking the Anvil will not be directly encountered until much later in the journey.

Aside from information the gypsies can also supply some items for sale or trade. The following sections from the main rulebook are available, along with the availability code; Household Items & Personal Equipment (Plentiful), Illumination (Plentiful), and Clothing (Common). All items are priced at twice their normal costs, although the price can be haggled down to the normal cost.

If the party wishes, they may stay with the gypsies overnight. The gypsies leave just before dawn, heading north-west towards Kislev.

If, and only if, an adventurer asks for his fortune to be read do the gypsies do so. They will not make the offer themselves. Once the offer is made young Mabel

disappears into the caravan and comes out a few minutes later with a deck of Tarot cards. She shuffles them and asks each adventurer to touch the cards. After this is done she deals the cards face up, one for each adventurer. She studies the cards for a few minutes and then speaks, in a hushed whisper.

*“I see trouble ahead for you. A darkness follows you...no...wait, a darkness travels with you! I now see a small building, surrounded by a veil of darkness. Death awaits you there and yet you must go there to be free of the darkness you carry. I will say no more. That is all I can see.”*

With that, she picks up the cards and the entire family excuse themselves for the night and enter the caravan. They will have no more to do with the adventurers that night. Unless the adventurers post a guard, when they awake in the morning they find the caravan gone.

**Hiring A Boat:** Upon reaching the River Talabec the adventurers will undoubtedly begin searching for a boat to carry them down to Talabheim. Following the river downstream for a mile or so brings them to a lone wooden hut. Moored beside it on the river bank is a large barge, labelled in peeling paint *“Sigmar’s Hammer.”*

The owner of the boat, a greasy haired, unshaven man by the name of Luigi Borsi is hammering down some loose boards on the deck when the adventurers arrive on the scene. He pokes his head over the edge and waves to them in a friendly manner. His accent reveals his to be from the Tilean City States.

*“Eh, hello-a there! How-a can I-a help-a you? You-a want to-a hire my boat-a maybe? She is-a very good-a boat. Very comfortable and-a quick. You-a tell-a Captain Borsi where-a you-a want-a go and I-a work-a outta da price-a for-a you-a.”*

With that Captain Borsi, who calls himself captain because he owns a large barge rather than because he knows how to sail a boat with any degree of proficiency, leaps on the shore. If the adventurers mention any exact place as a possible destination he removes a sharp stick from behind his here and starts scribbling down figures on in the mud. The adventurers can hear him muttering to himself, *“three-a meals a day-a, and-a clean-a sheets, and-a insurance...”*

The rate will be reasonably fare (120% of normal) unless the adventurers give any indication that they are in some sort of trouble. The cost in this case rises to 200% of the regular fare one would expect to pay. The adventurers must also supply their own food if they have any special dietary requirements. Luigi is willing to haggle over the price as business has been rather poor recently. Of course, travelling with Luigi does have some benefits. Luigi is a smuggler and knows many safe places to dock at night and knows of canals and tributaries that he can use to avoid unwanted attention.

The *“Sigmar’s Hammer”* is a bit of a heap though. The boards are creaky, the hull leaks, and even the rats are mangy-looking. The sleeping area is extremely spartan, consisting of little more than an open-top unused cargo space with a tarpaulin to keep the rain out. The only good thing about the boat is Luigi’s cooking and his large supply of home-brewed alcohol, which he also uses to lubricate the engine and as rat poison.

Any character with *Boat Building* can determine that the boat has had its heyday but is river-worthy, at a push. This information can be used to help barter the price down.

**Death From Above:** This encounter takes place at some point during the boat trip, just as the boat is about to dock for the night. As evening draws in, Captain Borsi steers the boat towards the shore, preparing to dock the boat and tether up for the night.

As he begins the docking procedure keen-eyed adventurers (those who succeed at an *Observe Test*) spy a black dot on the horizon, moving fast and heading on a course that will intercept their own. Before the boat can dock and the adventurers disembark the beast comes into view as a wyvern. Although these beasts are rare, this one has been attracted by the Black Anvil and has been tracking it for some time along the river. At last it has located it. Being only of animal intelligence, the beast does not seek the Anvil for itself - it is merely attracted to it.

Characters may decide to attack the beast with missile fire, hide under the deck and hope the beast leaves of its own accord (which it will not), or jump overboard and try to swim for the shore.

Characters hiding under the deck will hear the creature land on the top deck and begin moving around. The wyvern can sense the Anvil (which is probably hidden below decks) but it cannot see it. After two hours it will go to sleep - on the deck! If the adventurers can creep up to it quietly they will be able to get in a free round of attacks at the prone target. After that it is a free for all. Desperate to be near the Anvil, the wyvern will fight to the bitter end.

If the characters try to swim for it have each of them make a *Swim* roll. Because the river is slow-flowing at this point along its length the Risk Test has a +10 bonus. Those who fail the roll find themselves bobbing up and down in the water as the wyvern swoops to attack them! Another Risk Test, this time with a -10 penalty, allows adventurers to duck under the water as the wyvern passes overhead. Success on the initial Test means the characters have reached the shore safely and can take cover under the trees. Fighting the wyvern whilst treading water gives characters a -20 penalty to his attack score.

**Faces in the Night:** This encounter takes places at some

## ARRIVAL AT THE TEMPLE

point during the boat trip whilst the adventurers sleep. As they doze have each make a *Willpower* roll. The character who fails by the highest amount is visited in his dreams by the Anvil's long dead creator.

The adventurer sees a tall, gaunt man with a skeletal face enter his dream. Eyes as red as coals burn into the adventurer's own and he is held helpless, unable to wake himself no matter how hard he tries. With a voice like nails down a chalkboard, the entity speaks.

*"The Anvil is mine, mortal fool! Return it to me and you will be well rewarded. Fail me and you will suffer an endless torment!"*

With that, the visage fades and the character wakes with a shout, his body dripping with sweat. He should then make another *Willpower* Test; failure gains him an Insanity Point. Aside from the figure's visage and words, the adventurer will also remember seeing an amulet around the creature's neck, shaped like a circle with two curved horns at the top.

**Bridge of Troubles:** This adventure takes place at the bridge over the River Stir, just north of Wurtbad. As usual, the bridge is part of a toll-house and the adventurers will be expected to pay their tolls, as do all citizens who wish to cross.

As the adventurers approach the gates a lone toll-keeper comes out to meet them. He eyes them up and down for a few moments and then asks their business in Wurtbad. Adventurers who have been Toll-Keepers, or those who know the *Law*, will know that the toll-keepers are not road wardens and have no rights to question the adventurers about their business in Wurtbad. All the adventurers may make *Observe* Tests. Those who succeed notice the toll-keeper wears an amulet around his neck similar to the one worn by the creature that haunted one of their member's sleep a few night back.

The real toll-keepers have been murdered and evil cultists, loyal to the Anvil's creator have taken their place. They hope to waylay the adventurers and take the Anvil back to their master. Whilst four of the cultists wait at the toll-house, convinced that the adventurers have not yet passed by, the remaining two have travelled westwards. They will be encountered in Part Three of the saga.

Of course, without searching every group that passes by the cultists have no way of knowing which party are carrying the Anvil, especially if wagons are being driven. Fortunately for them the adventurers are likely to react to the amulet and so reveal themselves as the Anvil's bearers!

If the adventurers go for weapons the toll-keeper will cry out and another three cultists leap from behind nearby cover to attack them. Aside from their weapons and 1d6GC each, the cultists are wearing the amulets.

No matter what time the adventurers left their last port of call, it is nearly dark by the time they reach the way temple of Alum-O. The temple can be seen from a short distance away as dark shape against the horizon of the fading sun. Small pinpricks of light shine from windows and a lantern glows invitingly beside the main gate.

Approaching, the adventurers are hailed by one of the men-at-arms on watch to identify themselves and their reason for being at the gate at such a late hour. If the adventurers give sensible and believable answers (such as the truth) they will be admitted into the inner courtyard whilst one of the guards fetches the priests. Answers liable to cause offence or that are downright stupid result in the rest of the guard being summoned, and the adventurers being treated very roughly as they are forced on their way. Persistent offenders are attacked, subdued, dragged inside, and held in a cell until the next road warden comes along to take custody of the troublemaker.

Assuming the adventurers manage to gain safe entry into the temple, they are eventually approached by Father Gustav, followed by Sergeant Udo Large-Hands, head of the temple guard.

*"The sudden opening of a door startles you, and down the steps that lead from the main temple walks a man in the latter part of his life, with grey hair and a gaunt, pinched look. Behind him walks a bear of a man, with broad-shoulders that seem to be trying to escape from his mail shirt. A sword hangs from his belt and his left hand rests casually on the pommel. The older man stops a few paces short of where you stand, and looks you up and down through his pince-nez glasses.*

*"What do you want here?" he asks in a croaky voice. 'It is late and we are about to retire for the evening, so make it quick.' With that, he stares down his nose at you, waiting expectantly."*

Regardless of what the adventurers told the guard to gain access to the temple compound, they now have to tell Father Gustav their reason for being at his temple gate after sunset. Father Gustav listens intently to the adventurers' story. If they mention the Black Anvil and something of its apparent power, he asks what more they know about it, his curiosity aroused. Eventually, unless the adventurers have already stated their reason for bringing the Anvil to the temple, Father Gustav asks what the adventurers want at his temple so late at night with such a dangerous Chaotic item in their possession.

Sooner or later the adventurers will ask for access to the temple library (trust me!) When they do, Father Gustav slowly shakes his head and tuts to himself under his breath. After a few moments of this he glares at the adventurers and smiles a wicked grin.



*“Such patience! If only everyone could be as subtle as an ox what a better place The Empire would be! No, you may not have access to the library....yet. The Empire has lasted for two-and-a-half thousand years, it will last one more night. Firstly you will eat with us. Then you will talk with us. Then you may rest here until morning. By then I will have decided if you are allowed to read from the books...and not before!”*

With that Father Gustav turns and walks back towards the side door near the stewards room, beckoning the adventurers to follow him as he does so. Sergeant Udo waits for the adventurers to follow the father, and then he follow behind them, keeping a close eye on them.

### **A Sociable Chat:**

Just before the adventurers enter the door, Sergeant Udo asks them to leave their weapons at the door. One of the men-at-arms takes the weapons and places them in a sturdy chest, which is then locked and guarded by one of the men-at-arms.

Once they are disarmed, the adventurers lead through the steward’s room, which is quite bare aside from some chairs, to the cleric’s hall where the other priests are sat eating their supper. The fire is stacked full of wood and the room is cosy and warm. Father Gustav motions for the adventurers to be seated.

Once they are comfortably seated Brother Leopold serves them a bowl of hot broth from a pot which hangs over the fire and gives each of them a chunk of bread and cheese. Mulled wine is also served. After the adventurers have eaten, or sooner if they begin asking questions, Father Gustav enquires how the party came about the Anvil (assuming the adventurers have mentioned it to him). He is intensely interested in the Black Anvil, not because he desires it for himself, but because he is a student of ancient lore.

If the adventurers are honest with the priests, Father Gustav will allow them to stay in the common room overnight while he decides what to do about their request to use the library. Father Gustav will not mention the existence of the secret library.

When the adventurers are ready to retire for the night sergeant Udo will guide them to the servants quarters above the stables. Udo warns the adventurers not to leave the room during the night, *“for your own safety.”* A guard is stationed at the bottom of the stairs all night.

### **“Some Goblin’s Want A Word, Sir”:**

As day dawns, the men-at-arms on sentry duty spot a large band of Goblins walking out from the woods some five miles to the north, heading straight towards the temple. The first the adventurers will probably hear of this is when the alarm horn is sounded. The Goblins have been tracking the Anvil since the adventurers left Regensdorf and this force, a small scouting force, was sent ahead to spy out the temple. Unfortunately the

Goblin commander has other ideas.

By the time the adventurers arrive in the main courtyard the men-at-arms have already assembled and are being briefed for action by Sergeant Udo. The men-at-arms are told to be brave, to remember that their loved ones need them, and to kill as many Goblins as possible. They are then posted to various points on the battlements. Once they are in position, the sergeant turns to the adventurers.

*“Well sars, it seems like we is in some bover! A band of Goblins has come hout hov the woods and his currently building siege hequipment just hover thar,” he signals to the north with his spear. The sound of wood being chopped and sawn can be easily discerned. “We hestimate that there is about four dozen of the ‘orrible little bleeders, sar. I reckons that they is going to try and storm us sar!”*

Being a sensible man, the sergeant will listen to the adventurers if they have any suggestions on how to defend the temple against nearly a hundred Goblins, armed with bows as well as melee weapons. His men are skilled fighters but know little about defending a fortification in a siege.

The adventurers have two hours before the first Goblin assault and in this time they may do whatever they want with the resources they have at hand. The building of traps or better fortifications should certainly be high on their list. The individual Gamesmaster will have to judge the time taken to build whatever defences the adventurers plan based on its complexity, how many people help and how skilled they are. Whilst the priests don’t mind lending a hand, the men-at-arms refuse to leave their sentry posts. Note that Columbus the cat can be used to great effect here!

If any of the adventurers suggest scouting the surrounding territory the sergeant happily draws them a map and describes the area, but will not leave himself as he is paid to defend the temple and the priests. The events of any scouting party are left to the individual Gamesmaster, but the scouts shouldn’t be wounded too severely if combat occurs.

If any adventurer tries to parley with the Goblins, their leader approaches the temple wall and shouts at them to *“’and ova da Anvil an’ we’ll let yoo liv.”* If the adventurers refuse outright or try to explain why it must be destroyed for the good of The Empire, a volley of arrows is loosed at them. The Goblins aren’t really trying too hard to hit anyone at the moment as they are busy building ladders and have their chance of actually striking the adventurer reduced to 5% per arrow fired (assume 3d6 worth are launched in total).

Handing over the Anvil is not a wise decision; firstly because it gives the Goblins a dangerous item of great Chaotic power, and secondly because the Goblins will massacre the adventurers once they have they grubby hands on it.

### **“Here They Come!”:**

Exactly two hours after the Goblins arrive they start the first of many assaults against the temple and its hopelessly outnumbered defenders.

Ten Goblins charge each side of the temple, six with swords drawn and four holding two ladders between them. Once they get within range, the Goblins with the ladders plant the bottom of them in the ground and push them up against the walls. The remaining six Goblins then proceed to scale the ladders whilst the four ladder-bearers cover them with bows. Once the six have secured a foothold atop the wall, the four archers scale the ladders to aid them.

The remaining ten Goblins stay a safe distance away and fire their bows at any defenders who show their heads. If one attack force creates a hole in the temple’s defences these Goblins charge to exploit it. They do not reinforce areas that are failing, except by missile fire.

Obviously, the adventurers and the men-at-arms are going to have a hard time defending the temple without resorting to magic and dirty tricks. Each player should be given a man-at-arms to play until there are no NPCs left unplayed on their side. This way, the players are completely responsible for the temple’s defenders leaving the Gamesmaster to control the Goblins.

The first charge should be repelled when the Goblins have lost around fifteen of their number. If the adventurers and their associated men-at-arms cannot do this on their own, then have the priests lend a hand with some magic at an appropriately climactic point. The adventurers should be made to feel lucky that they have survived the assault with so few casualties.

Once repelled the surviving Goblins fall back out of bow range to discuss their options. Although badly shaken by their defeat they are drawn irresistibly to the Anvil and will not let this setback stop them. They also know something the adventurers don’t - reinforcements are on their way!

### **No Rest for the Wicked:**

After driving off the first Goblin assault, the adventurers will have three hours to prepare for the next assault. This gives them time to prepare new traps and tactics to defeat the Goblins. During this time the priests begin to pack away many of the temple’s valuables, including numerous books, into large wooden trunks, ready in case they must flee for their lives.

If the adventurers suggest sending a messenger for help, Brother Jakob will volunteer without hesitation. The other priests try to talk him out of it, but he explains that not only is he fit, but he also knows how to kill with his bare-hands, meaning that he won’t need a weighty sword slowing him down. Whether the plan works is up to the individual Gamesmaster and should be based on events in the temple.

If the adventurers are slaughtering the Goblins then have Brother Jakob killed or captured and used as a hostage the Goblins can bargain with in exchange for the Black Anvil. Alternately, if the adventurers are getting massacred, have Brother Jakob locate a troop of Templars or Imperial Cavalry, who then charge to the rescue (just in time, of course).

### **The Second Coming:**

The second assault by the Goblins concentrates on a single point – the front gate. At the start of the assault a group of five archers approach the rear of the temple and launch fire-arrows over the battlements, trying to flush out the defenders or at least draw them to the rear to return fire.

At the same time a larger band manoeuvres a battering ram around to the front of the temple, using the woods and hills as cover. Once in position the Goblins signal the attack by firing a volley of arrows over the front gate at the same time the battering ram begins thundering towards the gate. A hoard of Goblins numbering around twenty charge behind the battering ram, swords and spears waving in the air.

It will take five rounds for the battering ram to reach the gate. During this time the ram’s eight controllers are unprotected from missile fire (the Goblins didn’t have time to build a cover). If over half the controlling Goblins can be killed or incapacitated in this time, the ram suddenly veers off course and smashes into one of the walls. A huge chunk of wall is destroyed but no breach is created. The remaining Goblins charging behind the battering ram turn and flee back into the woods as the ram crashes harmlessly in to the wall.

Should the ram reach the main gates with at least half of its crew it crashes straight through them, splintering the wood like it was kindling and allowing the trailing Goblins to pour through en masse. A determined resistance in the main courtyard by the adventurers that manages to kill at least half of the invading force causes the Goblins to flee again.

If the weight of the Goblins’ numbers is too much for the adventurers then the only place left for them to retreat to that offers any security is the main temple complex. Things are looking bad if this happens as the Goblins now control the inner courtyard. If the Goblins end the day holding the courtyard, then ignore the next section and go straight to *Besieged!*

### **A Quiet Night?**

The remaining Goblins flee into the woods to lick their wounds and wait until nightfall, when they will have the tactical advantage.

The adventurers and the surviving men-at-arms will be exhausted after the day’s fighting and Brother Leopold supplies plenty of hot foot and watered down ale to boost their strength. All of the men-at-arms talk

about the coming night, and how hard it will be to stop the Goblins, especially as the Goblins can see in the dark. Morale is a little low at the moment, but a successful *Dance, Sing, or Play Instrument* Test cheers the men up before they start the night-time vigil.

The adventurers have six hours to come up with a defensive plan before the Goblins launch their night assault. It will be dark in roughly five hours however, giving the adventurers an hour of dusk to acclimatise their eyes to the darkness.

The night attack starts by a small group of Goblins banging at the front gate and generally making enough noise to make the adventurers think that a much larger force is there. If the gates have been destroyed they will bang at whatever defences the adventurers have erected. They hope to create enough of a diversion to lure the defenders away from their current locations.

A few minutes after the diversion starts two bands of five Goblins quietly rest ladders against the east and west walls respectively. Within two rounds the Goblins are atop the battlements. Rather than trying to attack the defenders, the Goblins attempt to gain entry into the temple complex itself. Their chances of doing this successfully should be based on the defences the adventurers have erected.

If successful, the Goblins enter the main temple and steal the silver. They also try to find the priests and slay them as quietly as possible (the GM may wish to role-play this by handing a priest's character sheet to a player.) Once their task is complete they hide themselves as best they can and wait until the early morning attack, during which time they will reveal themselves by attacking the defenders from inside the temple. If this plan actually works the Goblins will not attack again that night, although the adventurers shouldn't know this.

In the more likely instance that the Goblins make a hash of the break-in they will attempt to run away back to the woods. Those that cannot flee fight to the death. The remaining Goblins in the woods launch two volleys of fire arrows at the temple, trying to create a distraction for their fleeing comrades.

Four hours after the abortive assault, the remaining Goblins are back for more. If there are less than twenty Goblins remaining, have their strength bolstered by the arrival of scouts from their main force.

Their attack plan follows their initial assault, using ladders and weight of numbers, but it is concentrated on the back wall. The GM should make this battle as confusing and hectic as possible, with Goblins seeming to come from all sides and in seemingly unlimited numbers. The priests should use up most of their remaining magic in this battle.

Unless things go very badly the battle is likely to end with the adventurers driving away the demoralised Goblin force. If things go badly for the adventurers

however they are likely to find themselves besieged in the main temple. See the section below for details.

### **Besieged!**

If at any time the adventurers lose control of the main courtyard then they are either all dead (in which case the adventure is over) or they have retreated to the main buildings and sealed themselves in.

The Goblins repeatedly try to storm the complex, smashing through doors and windows in a desperate bid to acquire the Anvil. The Goblins are desperate to seize the Anvil and flee before the other Goblin forces arrive at dawn and take it from them.

Whatever happens, the few remaining Goblins should not succeed in capturing the Anvil - with the adventurers, priests and traps to get through first it is unlikely that the Goblins will be able capture the Anvil anyway. Once the attackers are reduced down to five or less members they flee the complex back to the woods.

### **The Morning After the Battle Before:**

As the sun rises, the adventurers view the carnage that surrounds them. Many of the Goblins are likely to be either dead or severely wounded. Blood and severed limbs cover the battlements and the courtyard below, broken weapons lie beside broken bodies. The likelihood of there being any survivors is slim to say the least.

Breakfast is served to the adventurers by whichever of the priests is still alive. They then tend the wounds of those hurt during the night and take any dead away for burial. The remaining men-at-arms check the remaining fortifications. After breakfast is over the men-at-arms resume their watches atop the battlements.

An hour after dawn the alarm is raised by an alert guard. More Goblins are approaching, and from multiple sides! Adventurers who rush to the battlements spot bands of Goblins approaching, one from each side of the temple. Any character with knowledge of Goblins (GM's prerogative on this) recognises the banners of those of the Slak Jaw, Foul Wind, Gobsmakker and Bloody Stump tribes. Each force has nearly one hundred Goblins in it and they are ready for war, with scaling ladders, bows, and a small catapult ready for use.

At their best guess, the adventurers have roughly one hour before the Goblins can organise their forces into attacking with any degree of co-ordination.

The adventurers should have the distinct feeling that their days are numbered. Allow them to make whatever plans they have for their final stand. Their destiny as protectors of the anvil should encourage them to put on a brave face, quote some corny manly lines, and prepare to meet their gods face to face.

Once the players are ready to die the Goblins attack.

The Goblins scale the walls in huge numbers and are about to overrun the battlements with great ease when the adventurers hear the sounds of horns blowing. Imperial Guard horns!

Outside the walls, members of the Imperial Guard and a unit of archers have arrived to rescue the adventurers. If the adventurers sent a messenger then he may have got through, otherwise the soldiers were trailing the Goblins, trying to find out what their plan was. Either way, they are here now. The Guard and the archers begin attacking the Goblins from behind, causing panic amongst the attackers.

Inside the temple the Goblins launch a last ditch effort to smash through the defenders and take possession of the Black Anvil. The defenders should be outnumbered three-to-one and the fight should be played out in full. If the adventurers can hold out against these odds for five rounds the Imperial Guard routs the Goblins and crushes them as they attempt to flee the field. If the adventurers cannot hold out then they had best have an emergency plan.

### **The Dead Remembered:**

Once the Goblins are destroyed, the leader of the Imperial Guard detachment, Baron Frederick von Neumann, enters the temple grounds with his advisors. They stand for a few moments, surveying the bloodshed around them, and then begin congratulating the adventurers on a magnificent job of protecting the temple against such odds. The praise is genuine and the surviving adventurers should feel proud of themselves for what they have done.

Baron von Neumann feels grief for those defenders who died, and promises that they will be remembered forever. He gives his personal guarantee that a memorial stone will be erected outside the temple walls, dedicated to those brave souls who died defending the Alum-O against a vastly larger Goblin force. True to his word, within two months a splendid stone memorial will be erected outside the temple gateway.

Any of the priests that are still alive thank the adventurers profusely and offer their services to them as part of the reward. They even go as far as giving the adventurers access to the secret library, helping them to find books regarding the Black Anvil. They further reward the adventurers with 30GC each (up to 200GC in total) and the promise that they may return whenever they wish as guests.

A surviving man-at-arms tells the adventurers of the secret library if there are no priests alive at the end of the battle. He tells them that it is unlikely the priests would mind them using it for their cause, especially after saving the temple from certain destruction. The key, he informs them, is kept around Father Gustav's neck. As long as the adventurers are not obviously

desecrating the temple, Baron von Neumann lets them do pretty much as they please.

If there are no survivors apart from the adventurers then fate plays its hand and the adventurers discover the book they need inside one of their packs.

No matter how they find the book, the adventurers discover that a single owl's feather marks the page they need to start reading from.

Baron von Neumann's men take over the defence of the temple, whilst riders are sent to Talabheim to fetch reinforcements and spread the news of the Goblin's defeat. He apologises that he cannot loan the party any men to continue their journey, but they are needed to find and destroy the remaining Goblins. The adventurers can now rest and read their newly found book.

### **Secret Information & Epilogue:**

The book which the adventurers now possess does indeed cover the Black Anvil they have in their care. The book is written in Reikspiel and is thus easy enough for the adventurers to read. Although the section on the Black Anvil is very slim it does give the adventurers everything they need to know about destroying the Black Anvil. Anyone wishing to study the entire book can use it as an aid to learning *Demon Lore*.

The important information is summarised in Player Handout #1 and should be given to the players at this juncture.

Once the adventurers have read the book they have all the information they need to go on to part three of the Black Anvil saga.

## **EXPERIENCE**

Once the adventurers have defended the Alum-O from the Goblin hoards and have discovered how to destroy the Black Anvil the adventure is over and experience can be handed out. GMs should assign smaller awards for each of the encounters along the way. Remember, this is a long journey and the adventurers will need to be quite tough by the time they reach the Alum-O.

## BESTIARY & TREASURES

### Corrupt Wolf Spirit

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
9	50	0	4	4	17	40	2	-	66	-	29	-	-

The wolf spirit cannot travel more than 100 yards from the Black Anvil. Aside from its physical attacks it also has the power to howl with supernatural rage. Those that hear the sound must make *Fear* Tests or flee and gain one *Insanity* point. The beast cannot be harmed by normal weapons, although normal weapons and spells cause normal damage.

### Cultists at the Toll-house

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	31	25	3	3	6	30	1	29	29	29	29	29	29

The cultists are armed with swords, shields, crossbows, mail shirts (1 AP on body and arms) and a shield - all stolen from the real toll-keepers. The cultists are fanatical and will not surrender.

### Goblins, Typical Hoard Member

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	25	25	3	3	7	20	1	18	18	18	18	18	18

The Goblins are armed with swords and bows. They have *Night Vision* 10 yards, *Hate* Dwarves and *Fear* Elves (unless they outnumber them 2-to-1 or better.)

### Father Gustav - High Priest

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	37	49	3	4	11	58	1	54	45	59	52	64	48

#### Skills:

Arcane Language - Magick, Cast Spells 1, 2 & 3, History, Identify Undead, Law, Magical Awareness, Magical Sense, Manufacture Scrolls, Meditate, Numismatics, Public Speaking, Rune Lore, Scroll Lore, Secret Language - Classical, Secret Language - Guilder, Speak Language - Albion, Speak Additional Languages - Arabian, Cathan, Elthárin, & Khazalid, Theology

#### Spells

#### Magic Points (24)

Gift of Tongues (1), Magic Alarm (2), Magic Lock (3), Open (3), Sleep (2), Aura of Protection (3), Cause Panic (3), Mystic Mist (4), Zone of Steadfastness (3) Father Gustav was always destined for a life in the priesthood of Verena. His wealthy parents sent him to the best schools and he attended university at Altdorf, achieving honours in a language degree. After finishing his schooling he applied to the Altdorf Verena temple for admittance and was accepted.

Gustav studied long and hard and within ten years he was promoted to the position of Lore Master, the youngest person to ever have achieved the title. The

title allowed Gustav to found his own temple but he did not feel that he was ready to do so. Instead he asked for an indefinite leave of absence to be allowed to journey around the world and gather more knowledge. His superiors reluctantly agreed.

Gustav spent almost ten years travelling through the Known World, reaching Cathay, Araby, Norsca and Albion. There he studied many obscure texts and purchased even more for transportation back to The Empire.

Upon his return he informed his superiors that he would be setting up a new temple but that it would be away from civilisation, and would be a centre of quiet contemplation and study, a repository of knowledge for all men willing to put themselves through the arduous journey to get there.

His superiors, hopeful that he soon forget his idea, agreed, on the condition that he donate large numbers of his new tomes to the main cult centres. Gustav agreed and so began the founding of the Alum-O temple.

Although rather stern looking, with his gaunt face and pince-nez glasses, Father Gustav is an amiable fellow, so long those speaking to him are reasonably intelligent. Gustav detests ignorance and classes those of low intelligence as little more than animals.

#### Equipment:

Priestly robes, holy symbol of office, key to the secret library (which circumvents the spells guarding the door), pince-nez glasses.

### Brother Leopold - Cook

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
3	49	41	5	5	9	51	1	42	41	42	41	40	41

#### Skills:

Arcane Language - Magick, Cast Spells 1 & 2, Brewing, Cook, Heal Wounds, Herb Lore, Identify Plant, Identify Undead, Magical Sense, Meditate, Public Speaking, , Scroll Lore, Secret Language - Classical, Secret Language - Guilder, Theology

#### Spells

#### Magic Points (20)

Gift of Tongues(1), Magic Alarm(2), Cure Light Injury(1), Immunity from Poison (2)

Leopold began life in the poorer area of Wolfenburg, one of thirteen children. From an early age it was obvious that Leopold was going to be a problem child - he was not aggressive or unruly, he merely ate a great deal and his poor parents could not afford to keep him.

Leopold was barely at schooling age when his parents left him at the door of the nearest temple, which just happened to be a temple of Verena. The priests were a little unsure what to do with the young child but his ability to name virtually every foodstuff in The Empire impressed them and they adopted him.

So it was that Leopold began his schooling within the cult of Verena. Leopold learned well and specialised in herbs and plants, becoming an expert on their uses in cooking and in medicine. However, Leopold's appetite grew as he did and when the hierarchy of the cult in Wolfenburg heard of the Alum-O temple they contacted Father Gustav and bade him to take Leopold off their hands, failing to mention his appetite!

Father Gustav immediately put Brother Leopold to work creating and maintaining a temple garden, and allowed him to grow whatever herbs he wished for his own research. He also made Leopold the temple's cook - a position he thoroughly enjoys.

Brother Leopold is fat (actually he is *very* fat) but happy. He loves to cook, swap recipes and practise with new dishes. He also loves eating. Anyone offering Leopold a well cooked meal, for he does value well-prepared food, will have a friend for life.

**Equipment:**

Priestly robes, holy symbol, several pouches of herbs

**Brother Jakob - Martial Artist**

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
5	46	45	4	5	12	54	2	52	37	41	45	49	44

**Skills:**

Arcane Language - Magick, Cast Spells 1, Contortionist, Meditation, Public Speaking, Read/Write, Scroll Lore, Secret Language - Classical, Speak Language - Cathan, Specialist Weapon - Fist Weapons, Specialist Weapon - Flail, Street Fighter, Strike Mighty Blow\*, Strike to Injure\*, Strike to Stun\*, Theology  
 \*Through years of training and dedication, Brother Jakob can employ these skills when using his bare hands as weapons.

**Spells**

**Magic Points (13)**

Gift of Tongues (1), Cure Light Injury (1), Hammerhand (2), Strength of Combat (1)

Brother Jakob was always a rather sickly child and although possessed of keen wit and sharp mind he was no use to his father, who wanted a strong son to help him run his labouring business. Jakob was placed in the care of a monastery when he was only seven. The priests recognised Jakob's mind for what it was and shipped him off to the local Verenan temple. There Jakob studied hard and soon passed his initiate exams.

After years of service in the temple Jakob heard of Father Gustav and his small temple and left the mainstream world to help erect a new temple of learning.

In Father Gustav's personal library Jakob found several books on the Cathay fighting style which used nothing but hands and feet. Interested by an art that did not require a strong body but only a keen mind and

dedication, he set out on the long road of training. Over the last ten years Jakob has mastered many of the Cathay fighting arts but he rarely uses them, preferring to use them only in self-defence.

*Note:* Brother Jakob's high Toughness and Wounds are a result of years of physical training.

Brother Jakob has dedicated much of his life to perfecting his body, not for reasons of vanity, but to bring his body and mind closer together. He is a serious man, dedicated to his beliefs, and driven almost to the point of fanaticism. Whilst willing to teach others the basics of his skills, he will only do so to pupils he believes are deserving.

**Equipment:**

Priestly robes, holy symbol, flail

**Sergeant Udo - Captain of the Guard**

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	51	35	6	4	10	49	2	29	54	39	47	42	29

**Skills:**

Consume Alcohol, Concealment - Urban, Disarm, Dodge Blow, Secret Language - Battle, Specialist Weapon - Pike, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Stun, Theology (Verena), Very Strong

Sergeant Udo began his life on a farm in the County of Sylvania. He lived there happily for many years, and when he was old enough he helped his parents on their farm. All that changed one fateful day when Goblin raiders from the World's Edge Mountains descended upon the farm and slew everyone and everything they found there. Udo only survived because his father had hidden him in the barn.

For a week after the attack Udo stayed on the farm. He buried his parents and tried to put the farm back into shape. A roving band of mercenaries came across the farm and found young Udo. Seeing as he had no future on the farm Udo asked to join. Although he was only young the unit commander saw promise in the boy and hired him on as a weapon cleaner and general dogsbody.

After a month of careful tracking the mercenaries found the Goblins that had destroyed Udo's parents' farm and attacked them. Against orders Udo grabbed a weapon and joined in the melee. Before the battle had ended he had personally slain six Goblins. From that point on Udo was a fully fledged fighting member of the unit.

Udo stayed with the unit for several more years and slew many more Goblins. For a while he was stationed in the Grand Principality of Ostland and whilst there befriended a Bretonian mercenary by the name of Luc Gascon.

Udo eventually took one wound too many and realised that he might actually die before he had really

lived - it was time for him to settle down and live a normal life. And yet he couldn't just give up his old life. Whilst wandering through The Empire trying to find a place to settle Udo came across the Alum-O and offered his services to the three priests in return for a little peace and quiet. He has been at the temple for many years.

Udo is naturally large and uses his physique to great effect. He still remembers his parents' death like it was yesterday and never becomes too closely attached to anyone. Adventurers trying to befriend him will find him cold but polite. He is a true professional when it comes to fighting. The sergeant should be played very similar to the Sergeant Major played by Windsor Davies in "It Ain't Half Hot Mum".

**Equipment:**

Sleeved mail shirt (AP 1), helmet (AP 1), pike, sword, dagger, wooden sword

**Temple Men-at-Arms**

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	43	35	3	3	8	40	1	29	29	29	29	29	29

Although nowhere near the calibre of the Templars who guard more prosperous temple, the men are loyal to the temple and the priests. Although technically mercenaries, they are on permanent retainer and have been with the temple for several years.

**Skills:**

Disarm, Dodge Blow, Secret Language - Battle, Specialist Weapon - Pike, Street Fighting, Strike Mighty Blow, 50% Carpentry, 50% Consume Alcohol

**Equipment:**

Mail shirt (AP 1), pike, sword, wooden shield

**The Black Anvil**

The black anvil was created long, long ago by a powerful demonist, who was in league with one of the Lords of Hell, for the sole purpose of creating an army of living armour. The anvil was enchanted with dark magicks but was never used, the demonist being killed by a band of adventurers before he had chance to test it and iron out any quirks. For centuries the anvil was lost to mankind.

Thirty years ago a young wizard's apprentice came across the anvil whilst exploring an old, ruined tower. He was soon corrupted by its power and planned to create an indestructible army and conquer the lands of The Empire. That wizard was the young Baron Reinhardt Ennum, who gave up casting magic when he inherited his father's title, following his untimely death in a most bizarre riding accident.

The anvil is jet black, made of iron and is perfectly smooth. No force on the face of the Old World can

make a mark on its surface. The surface is icy cold to the touch. It weighs the same as a standard anvil but is imbued with the following powers:

The anvil has a strong evil aura and acts as a magnet for chaotic and evil creatures. Weak-willed creatures within ten miles are drawn towards its location, finding the area strangely comforting and homely.

Creatures that remain within close proximity of the anvil (generally closer than 10 feet for more than six hours a day and for a week) begin to be affected by its evil nature. Over a period of weeks, they become more and more evil, although they vehemently deny any change in their personality. Indeed, the victim is completely unaware of what is happening to them.

Any suit of plate armour created using the anvil becomes host to a part of the anvil's evil and is transformed into a baneguard (q.v. *The Missing Children of Regensdorf* in Warpstone issue 8). The anvil's owner can control the baneguard, but they are notoriously unreliable.

**The Anvil's Corrupting Power**

The Black Anvil is an insidious device, slowly corrupting those that use it, whether they know its true purpose or not.

Each week, after the first month, that the adventurers are still in possession of the Anvil they may find themselves in danger of being corrupted by its dark power. Consult the following chart to see the penalties each party member must make to a *Willpower* Test, based on his general proximity to the Anvil. The proximity is based on an average over the day and the individual GM must decide which category an adventurer falls into.

<i>Proximity</i>	<i>Penalty to Willpower</i>
Touching	-40
Carrying (within a few feet)	-20
Close (on the same cart)	-10
Distant (within 10 feet)	-5

Adventurers who fail their *Willpower* rolls are on the slow road to corruption. Their *Willpower* is reduced by 10 points (temporarily and only for the purposes of resisting the Anvil), making their next Test harder to pass. When an adventurers *Willpower* reaches zero he is in the thrall of the Black Anvil's corrupting power.

A corrupt character has his alignment turned to Evil, and is likely to be extremely violent to his fellows, performing cruel deeds purely for the fun of it. Players who role-play this well should be given an Experience Point reward of **20 - 50** points.

A character who has not yet become fully corrupt can restore 10 points of *Willpower* per week that he spends away from the Anvil (at least ten miles away). Those that are totally corrupted are in for a much harder time and must either seek professional psychiatric help or destroy the Anvil in order to be released (which they won't want to happen, of course.)

**A**ND so it came to pass that the foul demonologist, Carolus Magister, high priest of Tzeentch, did create the most fell and powerful Black Anvil in the year 2048 of The Empire so that he might create for himself an army of unbeatable warriors with no souls. And lo! The Anvil was given life through the powerful demon Maalatherax, who doth infest the Anvil and is kept locked in by the power of the demonologist and his rites.

**A**ND yet the Anvil is not indestructible for its creator did unwittingly leave a method for its destruction. Let it be known to men of sane mind that the Anvil can be destroyed by returning it to the forge it was created in, which doth dwell within the Tower of Black Portals, for all things may be destroyed by that which created them.

**A**ND where doth this Black Tower stand? In the Grey Mountains at the edge of The Empire there stands the Tower of Black Portals. Atop a high peak 10 leagues west of the northern source of the Dunkelburg River stands the Tower, but beware! For it is guarded by all manner of fell creatures that feast on men's souls and minds.