

Grossplatz



The district of Grossplatz takes its name from the huge market square that can rightly be called the heart of Bergsburg. As well as its central hub, the platz has acted as a commercial focus for the town throughout its history. Ever since the city's beginnings as a small village called Bergsdorf, the Grossplatz has been the site of the market place and some common land. Originally just a meadow overlooking the Drakwasser, the platz has changed little, remaining unflagged and covering a substantial area.

Although not a coherent district, the Grossplatz so dominates this area of town that it has also given its name to the surrounding streets. To the west, the shops and dwellings give way to warehouses as the streets slope steeply towards the river and the bustling quayside. Southwards the square seems to disappear into the unkempt sprawl of Sudentor. To the east the fine Bergsburg artisans and craftsmen make their livings. To the north, the area gets noticeably wealthier towards where the judiciary and bureaucrats live and work amongst the large merchant houses and banking institutions. Buildings around the square are large, containing administrative offices, workshops and the premises of merchants.

Rather than a planned city square, the expansive and irregularly-shaped Grossplatz could better be described as simply a lack of buildings. The three busiest roads in Bergsburg, Middenweg, Bergenweg and Talabheimweg all meet here, and almost all traffic through the city comes through the square. Around the perimeter, the ground is cobbled or even flagged. Towards the centre, the ground is grassy or hard-packed earth.

The many different types of buildings and the haphazard nature of its development lend the square an eclectic and chaotic feel. This is enhanced by the people who use it, who come from all walks of life - lawyers rub shoulders with pick pockets, the poorest trader pitches alongside the wealthiest merchant and the pious mix with the amoral.

Despite the array of shops, workshops and civic buildings that line the square, the daily market dominates life here. It draws traders from all over Hochland and sometimes even beyond. Many farmers will bring their entire harvest and remain until it is all sold. The best pitches are at the north end of the square, where the wealthier generally shop.

Although basic market staples can be found here every day, certain days of the week have traditionally attracted a particular type of trader:

- Wellentag - Cereals and fruits
- Aubentag - Wooden and crafted goods
- Markttag - Cattle, horses and other livestock and eggs
- Backertag - Wines and Beers
- Bezhaltag - Cloth, wool and leather good
- Konigstag - Meat, honey and salt
- Angestag - Fancy and frivolous goods

Alongside the market, crowds gather to see the demagogues, buskers and entertainers that pitch on the Grossplatz. On feast days the city's festivals often converge on the square, and small stages are erected for morality plays, bear-baiting, wrestling and the like. On the last day of the Rolandsfest, Grossplatz is cleared for a spectacular game of snotball, in which a side from Unterfluss fights one from Uberfluss for the coveted Roland's Banner.

Grossplatz Law

The Grossplatz is historical common land and belongs to the people. There are countless ordinances and laws of the city and the Empire that through legal technicality do not apply within the boundary of the square.

Despite the fact that parts of it have been cobbled, any

sheep farmer has the right to graze his flock here. Anyone touching the Scharfstein cannot technically commit heresy or treason. Anyone carrying a fishing rod and carrying fish weighing more than a pound can kill with impunity someone who stands in their way. The list goes on.

Needless to say, the watch and magistrates would rather these laws were little known. Any lawyer using the Common Land and Amenities Act of 1734 and its associated sub-edicts to defend a client whose misdemeanour occurred in Grossplatz is heavily frowned upon, and jeopardises his career.

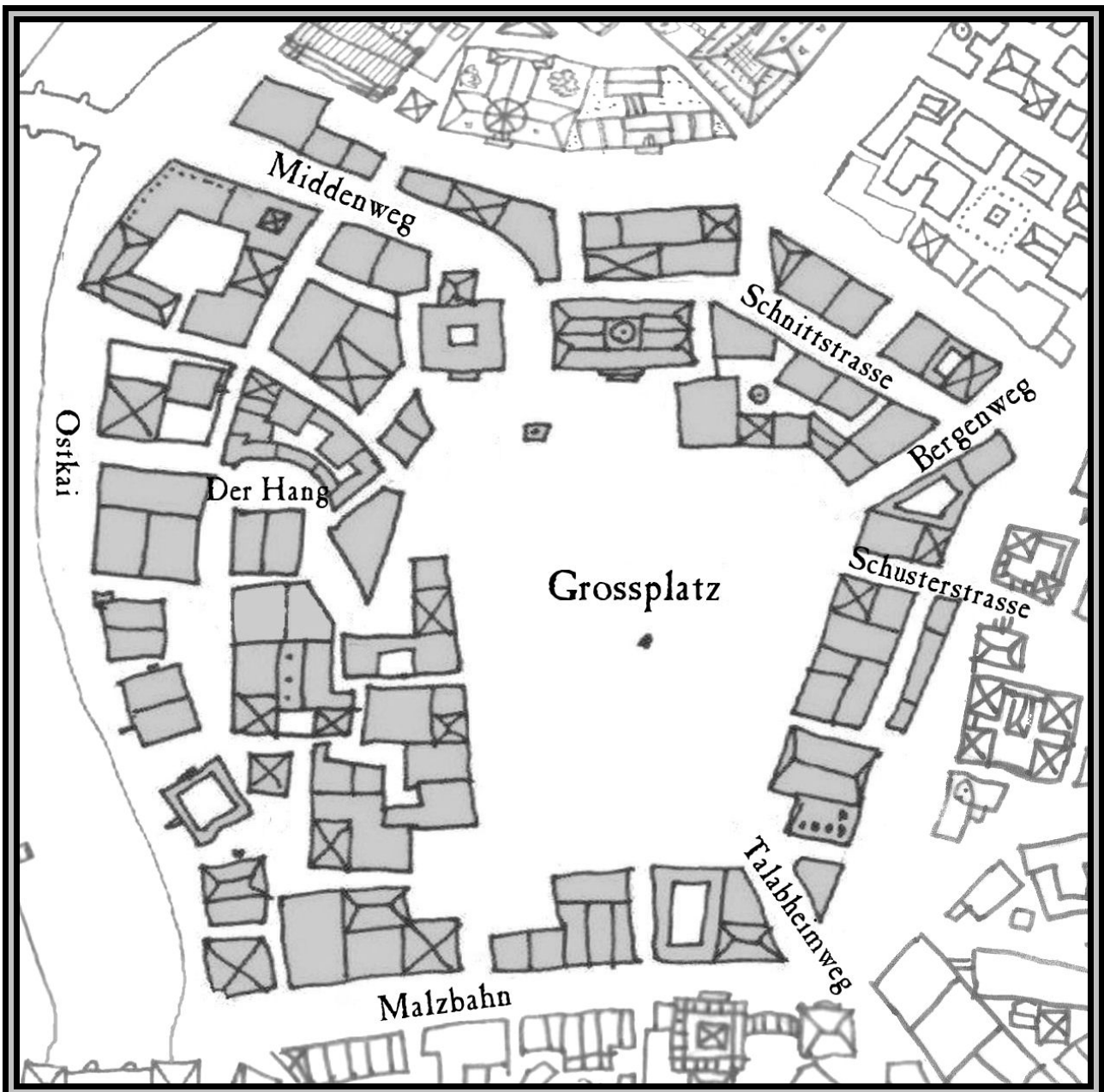
At the GM's discretion, any crime the PCs commit on the Grossplatz has an obscure loophole in the 'Common Land Act'. Of course, the smart-arse lawyer who knows this will demand a high price.

Ostkai

The Ostkai is far less busy than the quays on the opposite bank, but any goods destined for the Grossplatz are usually landed here. Luggers are employed to take the loaded goods up the steep hill to Grossplatz. (See Der Hang)

Middenweg

The Middenweg slopes down towards the Rolandsbrucke. As it leaves the Grossplatz behind, the buildings become larger and the shops more formal. The two law firms are based here and the bureaucracies that deal with the city's legislature. This road carries much traffic and traffic jams are common, resulting in raised voices and much bad-tempered discussion.



Bergenweg

The Bergenweg leave Grossplatz from the northeast and leads through Osttor to the eastern city gate. The gates are visible from the square, and on a clear day one may be able to see the peaks of the Middle Mountains.

Schnittstrasse

Passing between Middenweg and Bergenweg, Schnittstrasse and the surrounding streets are home to the smarter residences of the district. The young lawyers and clerks who work at the Common Assize and Rathaus dwell in apartments here, along with the clerks and scribes employed at the merchant houses to the north. It is considered acceptable for middle-class families from all over Hochland to send their sons here to learn their trade in law and finance. The area has a reputation for having too many young men with too much money.

Malzbahn

South of Grossplatz runs Malzbahn - the eastern extension of Ruhigerstrasse after passing over St. Skulda's Bridge. The road takes its name from the brewery and taverns to be found to the south in Sudentor, and a strong smell of malt often wafts along the street.

Der Hang

This steep hill leads down to the Ostkai. It has a couple of taverns popular with the stevedores and locals alike. It is too difficult to get heavily laden carts up and down the hill, so the stevedores employ 'luggers' to take goods up and down. When the Ostkai is busy, these luggers make quite a spectacle struggling up and running down the steep Hang with their loads. The best luggers, though not at all well paid, are local heroes. On feast days there is often a 'Lugfest', where luggers race each other up the hill with huge loads.

The People

The bustle and energy of Grossplatz is overwhelming to many rural visitors and quite infectious. People are always rushing somewhere and a certain camaraderie seems to exist between the people, all trying to make money or enjoy the square. Because of the high proportion of non-Bergsburgers here, there is a general tolerance and the small-minded and provincial attitude of parts of the rest of the city is absent.

In general, the people of Grossplatz are the friendliest in the city. The relaxing atmosphere is conducive to the trade that the area depends on. Of course, the area is a magnet for the pickpockets, muggers, thieves, burglars and con artists that inhabit the city. Although the Watch has a heavy presence, the opportunism of criminals and the naivety of many rustic out of towners mean rich pickings for the more skillful thief.

Locations

The Scharfstein

The Scharfstein is a five foot tall shard of flint that stands roughly in the centre of the Grossplatz. There is no record of it having been put there, and it seems to have been there forever. Many legends explain its presence, the most common being a variant of the expectorating giant myth common throughout the Old World. One of the few well known of the 'Common Land' edicts involves the Scharfstein. If it is being touched, then anything said is assumed to be inspired by the stone and not the responsibility of the speaker. It was well proven in a famous case that this exculpates the speaker, even of heresy. However, the Watch and Bergsburg's religious authorities will observe those using the Scharfstein closely and in practice few heretics escape unpunished for some crime for long. At any time of the day, there is likely to be a religious fanatic or two standing by the Scharfstein evangelising their version of the truth, one of their hands firmly touching the stone.

The Statue of Roland

The statue of Roland graces the northern end of the Grossplatz. It stands in a pool of water. Roland is posed gracefully lifting his eyes to heaven with his arms raised as if in prayer. His sword is sheathed. Many white doves make their home on or around the statue. Traditionally anyone throwing a coin into the pool will have his or her prayers answered by Shallya. There is always a member of the watch around here, who makes sure nobody takes coins from the pool. He is also responsible for feeding the doves and collecting the offerings every evening.

The Common Assize

The courthouse at the north end of the Grossplatz, on the corner of Middenweg, deals with criminal as well as civil trials in Bergsburg. (Note that the nobles of Hochland are not tried here. Rather, they go before a jury of their own at the Baronial castle.)

The Rathaus

On the opposite corner of Middenweg to the Assize court, stands the grand stone Rathaus. This is where the Council of Five meet and decides the laws of Bergsburg. The Council meets in private and the only sign they are in session will be a heavy Watch presence. The Rathaus meeting room is also used for the Volksrat. The Volksrat is a system whereby the common people of Bergsburg get to petition the Mayor, Ruprecht Gutgenug, for new legislation. In reality, only those already in positions of power will be granted the privilege of addressing the Volksrat.

The Rathaus and nearby buildings along the Middenweg are used as offices by Bergsburg's

bureaucrats. Their rank and importance can be measured by their proximity to the Rathaus, and offices in the Rathaus are reserved for such high-powered positions as Guardian of the Privy Purse and the Marschall of the Rolls.

The Guildhall

On the east side of the Grossplatz is the Guildhall. It is a large, low stone building with a confusing layout and mismatched frontage and serves as the meeting place for the Council of Chartered Guildmasters. It also provides meeting premises for those guilds, which do not have offices of their own.

Hunter's Trophy

Oswald Kern, a one-armed ex-poacher with friends in high places, owns this hunting supply shop.

Heffelmann, Bahnbaum, Jinks und Scharatt

This venerable and famous law firm has chambers very close to The Common Assize. In the old days it was the first choice of the wealthy and the desperate. Nowadays, only Anton Jinks survives of the original partners, and the company now trades mostly on its reputation.

Hochland Crossing Coaches

The main offices of the coaching house are located here, although most coaches into the city will drop passengers at the company-owned inns by the main gates. Coaches leave from the offices however to the various destinations served by the company.

The Rolling Stones Tavern

This establishment is popular with wealthy merchants and serious gamblers. Run by Kaspar Schulten, it can be found on the Bergenweg just north of the Grossplatz.

Der Bronze Gotze

This unusual establishment on the east side of Grossplatz announces its presence subtly, with small lettering above the faded green door. In the window is a bronze statue apparently of oriental manufacture. The six arms of the female figure are outstretched delicately to the sides. The proprietor is Rudolf Retrender, a thin, aloof, middle-aged man who is never far from his crossbow, which he calls 'Thwack Thwack', when he talks to it, which is often. The shop is filled with a myriad of weird and exotic objects.

Ostkai Imports

Marius Balkan owns three riverboats. His crews travel

to Altdorf regularly taking mostly wool and wine. They bring back various cargoes, dependent on what Marius believes will make the most in Bergsburg. As a shrewd judge of human character, Marius often makes very wise decisions. The crews will be glad to take passengers down the Drakwasser to the Talabec and beyond, for the right price.

Les Vins du Parravon

Jules Lavoisier has the most excellent cellar in Bergsburg. He will deal only with the best taverns and the most discerning connoisseur. He is an appalling snob when it comes to wine, and the most awful bore when it comes to reminiscing about the excellence of his native duchy.

The Grossplatz Watch Post

The Interior Guard has a small post in Bergsburg, which is manned from sunrise to sunset. With this as their base, a handful of watchmen try to keep up with the numerable thieves and tricksters in the market. Some are fined on the spot while others are taken the jail of the Common Assize.

(Note: the locations described here are by no means exhaustive. It is intended that future contributors to the Bergsburg project will use this description of the area to build on what is delineated here. Although the 'major' institutions and landmarks of the area are described, there is plenty of room for expansion and further development)

The Common Assize

The Building

The Bergsburg courts are situated in Grossplatz in a two level building. The main doors are crowned with the court's motto: IUSTITIA ERGA INFERIORES EST VERISSIMA. The motto was forced on them by the Temple of Shallya without the consent of the judges. Therefore, some of the judges do everything they can to ridicule the motto in court.

The ground floor is occupied by two rooms in which the courts sit. One room, People's Assize, is for civil matters, and the other the Freistadt Assize handles criminal matters. Since the number of civil matters is relatively small, the religious cults also use this room for arbitration and judgement in inter-cult disputes. The guards have a room right at the entrance. There are always two guards present, and one guard stands at the door to ensure that no one carries weapons into court. The guards are members of the Interior Guard, but are specially assigned to the court. The commander of the watch has no command over them while they perform this duty; instead, they are commanded by the director of the

court, a position filled by the judge in criminal matters.

The upper floor is occupied by the offices of the judges, the chambers for deliberation, a small library, containing the most basic code books, some ethical manuscripts of Shally (rarely used) and the documents of the most recent cases that were decided (other documents are stored in the cellar); and finally two rooms, one for the court clerks and one where the lawyers may prepare. However, since most defendants can neither read nor afford a lawyer, the latter room is rarely used. Bergsburg does have a handful of law firms, but they are mostly occupied as advisors.

The cellar houses the court's archive and a holding prison. The court's archive is not in a very good condition. The damp air has taken its toll and the older records are almost unusable. The prison has only two cells; however, no one hesitates to stuff up to eight people into the prison. The prisons are only used for pre-trial confinement; confinement sentences are served in the Bergsburg Reformatory in Sudentor.

The Judges

The court currently has three professional judges. One for each court and one judge for the situation that either of the two is ill or cannot appear in court for other reasons (overwork, etc.).

The judge of the civil court is Ralph Vierauge, an elderly man with white hair and a potbelly. He is well respected and interested in justice rather than the law. He often reaches rather bizarre decisions. His most famous was when he ordered that a baker, who had cheated a customer, should supply the whole city with bread for one day. When he is not in the courthouse, he can often be found in the tavern Streithansel directly opposite of the court. The lawyers do not like him, due to his almost unpredictable decisions. He likes to talk about his cases and is generally a great source of information. He regularly visits the temple of Verena and is a devout follower.

The judge in criminal cases is Sturmhart Eisennagel. Although generally easy going, he has developed a harsh and cynical attitude towards anyone who commits an offence. His back is bent and he only dresses in black, which gives him an eerie appearance. He is much feared among the suspects, since he does not hesitate to promote torture. His relations with the cult of Shallya are strained, and he is summoned before the city council at least once a month to justify a decision. He is also a devout follower of Verena, but has a much more radical view than Vierauge. The two get along quite well, however. He spends his days in the courthouse, studying in the library when he does not have a case to prepare.

Maximilan Geres is the third judge. He has just finished his training and currently only supports the other two judges. When Ralph Vierauge retires, Maximilan will



take his seat. He is ambitious and spends most of his time in the library. He has not really been able to feel at home in Bergsburg until now, when his career seems to have taken off.

The Clerks

The court has two clerks and two clerk apprentices, one of each for both courts. For generations, the apprentices have been found amongst the Verenan initiates. Their work include the keeping of trial records, but they also serve as legal advisors to the lay judges in the case of a complex legal problem. The clerk will then draft a treatise based on the letter of the law and prior decisions of the court. This is read out to the court during the trial.

The clerks do their work efficiently and mostly unnoticed. The only exception to this is Wilibald Lieb, the clerk for the criminal court. On the outside he is respectful and caring. What nobody knows, however, is



that Wilibald is a devout follower of Solkan. He is very good in rhetoric and always tries to convince the court with his expertise to a very strict decision following exactly the letter of the law. Of medium height and frame, he is very inconspicuous.

A cleric of the temple of Verena, currently Alexander Fuchs, is often present in the court. In cases that may end in a death sentence and civil cases with a value in dispute above 100 GCs he may, upon the suspects/plaintiffs discretion, appear as lawyer and consultant. This position is regarded as one of the finest with the Verenan clergy of Bergsburg.

Bergsburg Law Practice

The practice of law and the range of sentences in Bergsburg are described in the Law section.

Rolling Stones Tavern

Under the sign of a caricatured goblin rolling two dice, this welcoming and smart establishment lies in the heart of the trading quarter, just off the Grossplatz. It is often busy, serving excellent food and drink to the business community. It is clean and smart, but by no means opulent. This is a favourite retreat of many merchants and traders, and the management is keen for it to be seen to be run in a business like manner.

All weapons, i.e. those that can be seen or are badly concealed, are left in the lobby where they will be quite safe. Three smartly dressed doormen are employed here, at least two of whom will be on duty at any time. One will always be in the lobby. Unless they have an appointment, a party armed to the teeth or one covered with the filth of adventure will not be allowed in. Generally the doormen will admit someone on his own unless he looks very dodgy. Anyone who has caused trouble here before will be severely beaten if they don't leave quickly and quietly. If there is any trouble there is a cord here that the doorman can pull to ring a bell and make the staff come running.

Description

The tavern is built on three floors and each floor serves a distinct purpose. The ground floor is much like many another respectable tavern or restaurant. For many merchants The Rolling Stones is their first stop after disposing of their wares. Here they can catch up with friends and the latest business news, and look for their next deal. The fare is expensive (+50%) but excellent and the range of goods exhaustive, and for established customers, Bretonian brandy is available.

Reached by a double staircase from the lobby, the first floor is somewhat contrasting. Here, you could almost be in the offices of a large merchant house. Many carved

wooden doors lead off from a long corridor. This floor is used as offices and conference rooms. Merchants and classy scammers can hire offices here by the month or even by the hour. Many merchants, looking for an edge to clinch a deal, wine and dine their clients here in the private rooms. Some of the offices have adjoining bedrooms. There is even a shrine to Handrich. The management can also arrange for scribes and lawyers, so a wealthy itinerant merchant can find everything he needs at The Rolling Stones to conduct his business in style.

Behind a door marked 'Accountant' some steps lead up into the attic of The Rolling Stones. A large round card table and a dice table dominate this low room. There is another door in the far wall. An eclectic mix of people usually populate this attic playing the card game Spinoletti or dice or simply wagering between themselves on some future event like the result of the next snoball game.

The clientele of the gaming room will generally comprise of a couple of casual gamblers, probably merchants, possibly invited by co-owner Frederick Niemens with whom they are currently doing a deal. Niemens' partner, Kasper Schulten, might also be here, playing dice. Some merchants who are experienced gamblers will be in attendance, some nobles perhaps, along with a couple of less reputable professional gamblers who have not made it to the 'big game'. There will be one bouncer. A couple of sharps or tricksters may be trying their luck; they would not have been here before or rather they would not have been caught cheating here before.

Beyond the door is the 'big game.' This is where the best action in the whole of Bergsburg is. There are only big money games here, starting at 10GC a game. It is very exclusive and you need to be invited. There are several ways to be invited. You could be doing business with one of the owners or one of the regulars and express an interest in gambling and have obvious wealth. You might





be winning too much in the main gaming room. You might be losing a lot in the gaming room, and have a lot more to lose. The only game here is Spinoletti. There are several interesting characters that spend much of their time at the 'big game.' Especially the Three Kings.

Kasper Schulten

"A drink here for my friend with the nice ring, a twelve carat bloodstone set in Tilean Gold dating from around the turn of the 23rd century, um, I mean, my friend here with the big hat."

Kasper, with Frederick Niemens, is the co-owner of the Rolling Stones. He's a tall, slightly overweight man and is very skilled with numbers. This, he puts to good effect, equally when running his business or playing dice in the gaming room on the top floor of the Rolling Stones Tavern. He is also Head of the Clerks at the Innkeeper's Guild. Kasper has now reached a position of respectability in Bergsburg, which belies his upbringing and previous career. A clue to his past can be gleaned when he meets a person for the first time, he always looks at the jewellery and valuables that person is wearing and tries to estimate its value. He sometimes simply stares at a person's fingers (rings) or neck (necklaces) and forgets to greet him/her.

Kasper deals more with the day-to-day running of the tavern than his partner, Frederick Niemens. He lives here and is usually present to deal with any untoward occurrences. He is a fair host and employer and is respected by clientele and employees alike. In his manner however, it is discernable from which side of the tracks he has come and although he rarely finds it necessary, he can show his more menacing and desperate side to those who cross him.

Kasper Schulten

Male Human

Innkeeper (ex-Scribe, Rogue)

Main Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
31	22	34	36	36	52	27	30

Secondary Profile

A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	11	3	3	4	0	0	0

Skills: Common Knowledge (the Empire), Evaluate, Gamble, Gossip, Perception, Read/Write, Sleight of Hand, Speak Language (Reikspiel)

Talents: Excellent Vision, Lightning Reflexes, Savvy, Streetwise, Super Numerate

Armour: None

Armour Points: Head 0, Arms 0, Body 0, Legs 0

Weapons: Dagger

Trappings: 29Gold Crowns, Jewellery (worth 12 Crowns), 6 Dice

Frederick Niemens

"Yes, I have my finger in one or two pies round here."

Frederick is a foundling. He was left outside the temple of Shallya when he was only a few hours old. Although he was well cared for at the temple orphanage and still holds many of the beliefs he was taught there, he holds a deep resentment towards his unknown family and this fundamental insecurity burns at the heart of his personality.

Frederick is a driven and brilliant businessman. His half ownership of the Rolling Stones is only a minor part of his interests. He likes to avoid attention and there are no businesses with the name of Niemens, instead he is usually the silent partner and his money lies behind many large concerns, some in direct competition with each other. Although there are many more famous names than his in the town, Frederick is one of the richest men in Bergsburg.

Niemens is a workaholic always looking for investment opportunities. Even when he seems to be at leisure, entertaining at the Rolling Stones for example, there will always be the possibility of a business deal

Frederick Niemens

Male Human

Merchant (ex-Gambler, Burgher)

Main Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
44	35	43	33	41	69	46	52

Secondary Profile

A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	13	4	3	4	0	0	0

Skills: Academic Knowledge (Law), Blather, Charm, Common Knowledge (the Empire), Evaluate, Gamble (+10), Gossip, Haggle, Perception, Read/Write, Secret Language (Guild Tongue), Speak Language (Reikspiel, Bretonian)

Talents: Dealmaker, Etiquette, Savvy, Schemer, Streetwise, Suave, Super Numerate

Armour: None

Armour Points: Head 0, Arms 0, Body 0, Legs 0

Weapons: Dagger

Trappings: A Share in much of Bergsburg

Alfred Sparks

Male Human

Protagonist (ex-Bodyguard)

Main Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
67	32	61	54	43	30	28	32

Secondary Profile

A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
2	16	6	5	4	0	0	0

Skills: Common Knowledge (the Empire), Consume Alcohol, Dodge Blow, Intimidate, Perception, Speak Language (Reikspiel)

Talents: Disarm, Hardy, Menacing, Street Fighting, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Stun, Very Strong, Warrior Born

Armour: None

Armour Points: Head 0, Arms 0, Body 0, Legs 0

Weapons: Club, Dagger, Knuckleduster

Trappings: Suit

behind his actions. He could be described as ruthless but he is too shrewd an operator to make any significant enemies among the business community.

Frederick is also obsessed with finding the identity of his family. He variously entertains romantic ideals of who they might be. The von Tussen-Hochens is one of his favourite fancies but he has thought that he might be the offspring of two famous and powerful sorcerors who were forced to leave him behind in their flight from the minions of chaos, or witch hunters. Perhaps he wasn't a foundling at all, but a gift to the temple sent directly from Shallya herself. To this end, he employs a number of retainers from scholars to underworlders who search for clues as to his identity. They are all sworn to secrecy and his insecurity is such that anyone casually speculating as to his ancestry will suffer swift retribution.

Alfred Sparks

"Yes, certainly sir."

"Would you like to visit the accountant, sir?"

The head bouncer at The Rolling Stones is an aging former circus strongman. He is nearly seven feet tall and

makes a very imposing sight. Despite his intimidating air, he is softly spoken and impeccably courteous to the establishment's clientele. In the event of any trouble Alfred will attempt to take a back seat and let his younger colleagues deal with the situation. If he feels he is needed, however, Alfred will have no hesitation in wading into the fray and using his huge bulk and excellent fighting skills to good effect.

Markus Baal

"Yes, certainly sir."

"[Don't speak to me like that again, you tub of lard, or you'll have my fist in your face]"

Markus is in the wrong job. He doesn't like being polite to the customers. He doesn't like not being allowed to drink on duty. He doesn't like the customers treating him without respect, and how some of them recoil when they notice he has an ear missing. He doesn't like wearing a suit. He doesn't like how little trouble happens at the Rolling Stones.

What Markus wants is a scruffy little adventurer or prospector type to try and get in to the Rolling Stones. And after Markus refuses him entry, he wants him to

Markus Baal							
Male Human							
Bodyguard							
Main Profile							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
48	25	54	38	38	26	36	22
Secondary Profile							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
2	14	5	3	4	0	0	0
<p>Skills: Common Knowledge (the Empire), Consume Alcohol, Intimidate, Speak Language (Reikspiel)</p> <p>Talents: Disarm, Lightning Reflexes, Street Fighting, Strike to Stun, Strike Mighty Blow, Very Strong</p> <p>Armour: None</p> <p>Armour Points: Head 0, Arms 0, Body 0, Legs 0</p> <p>Weapons: Club, Dagger, Knuckleduster</p> <p>Trappings: Ill-fitting suit</p>							

Stephan Krieg							
Male Human							
Bodyguard							
Main Profile							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
49	35	46	44	40	26	32	35
Secondary Profile							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
2	14	4	4	5	0	0	0
<p>Skills: Common Knowledge (the Empire), Dodge Blow, Gossip, Speak Language (Reikspiel)</p> <p>Talents: Disarm, Fleet-Footed, Hardy, Lightning Reflexes, Strike Mighty Blow, Very Strong, Warrior Born</p> <p>Armour: None</p> <p>Armour Points: Head 0, Arms 0, Body 0, Legs 0</p> <p>Weapons: Sword, Club, Dagger</p> <p>Trappings: Father's Sword, Suit</p>							

cause a fuss. And then, Markus wants about fifteen minutes alone with the troublemaker in the dark alley at the side of the tavern. That will make him feel better.

A few months ago, Markus was the bouncer at Bernie's, an altogether seedier establishment in Sudentor. After a fight in which he nearly lost his life and actually lost an ear, his wife, whose cousin is friendly with Mrs Sparks, got him this job. Alfred vouched for Markus possibly against his better judgement and is keeping a close eye on him.

Stephan Krieg

"Wow, and after you saved the town by dispatching the Chaos God with your sublime combat skills and altogether impeccable cooperation as a highly disciplined fighting unit, what did you do then? And by the way, I heard Bogenhafen was razed to the ground."

Stephan is the son of Hilde. He is big and strong and only nineteen. He is already a skilled swordsman as he practices almost obsessively. He wants nothing more than to become an adventurer and travel the world righting wrongs on Sigmar's behalf. Hilde got him this job in the vain hope that it will be enough to satisfy his dreams, though she knows it won't be long before he sets out in

search of adventure.

Although Stephan does his job well, has self-discipline and is courteous to the clientele, if he decides that a party is made up of brave adventurers he will not be able to resist badgering them for tales of their deeds. If these are impressive, Stephan will be willing to join the party or run any errands that they request. An unscrupulous group could easily take advantage of Stephan's bravery and naivety.

Bernadette Sparks

"Add a sprinkle of Gringwort root, et voila."

The wife of the head bouncer, Bernadette is the chef of the Rolling Stones. She also works behind the bar when demand for meals is not great. She is an excellent cook and The Rolling Stones is well known for the quality of its food.

Hilde Krieg

"Now then young man, tell the nice gentlemen that you can't go with them on their quest for the mythical winged necromancer of Drakwald as you have to be in bed by eight o'clock."

Bernadette Sparks

Female Human

Servant

Main Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
25	27	30	32	35	32	32	38

Secondary Profile

A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	10	3	3	4	0	0	0

Skills: Common Knowledge (the Empire), Gossip, Performer (Dancer, Singer), Speak Language (Reikspiel), Trade (Brewing, Cooking, Herbalist)

Talents: Etiquette

Armour: None

Armour Points: Head 0, Arms 0, Body 0, Legs 0

Weapons: Cleaver, Knife, Saucepan

Trappings: Well-stocked Kitchen

A small neat middle aged lady, Hilde is the House Keeper of the Rolling Stones. She is proud of job and her work here. She keeps the establishment very clean. She is apt to toady to her employers and their clients, showing them much deference. Conversely her limited powers over her cleaning staff has gone to her head and she treats them badly. She will not suffer any slackness from her staff and is often to be heard scolding them loudly.

She also keeps a keen eye on her son, Stephan, who works here as a doorman, turning up at embarrassing moments for him to straighten his attire or remind him to eat his vegetables. She is very aware of his desire for adventure and if she feels that a group of adventurers is turning his head towards the wild lifestyle she will tell them off for 'taking advantage of impressionable small boy' (Stephan is almost twice her size).

Truusje Remajn

"An honour and a privilege to do business with you, Sir... Shake my hand properly you limp-wristed Hochland fop, or I'll have my man cut it off for you."

Truusje was clearly very attractive when she was younger. Now, however, her piercing eyes have faded and her features lined not just with age. Usually she acts with the utmost decorum although she has an altogether manic edge about her and can act unpredictably. She is apt to

fly into sudden rages and is not slow to incite her bodyguards into action. She has been warned as to her conduct by Alfred Sparks after an incident with another of the guests of the Rolling Stones, and Markus Baal is dying to get one of her bodyguards alone.

Truusje is a merchant from Marienburg. She has made her temporary base at the Rolling Stones. She is part of an organisation of Marienburger that exports Arabyan spices and silks throughout the empire, The Oosterhuis Trading Company. Truusje is responsible for the Talabheim to Middenheim trade route.

Truusje is accompanied by two large Marienburger bodyguards who look overly menacing to be working for an honest merchant. The Oosterhuis Trading Company is a front for a smuggling operation that is a major supplier of Black Lotus in the empire. Truusje was overseeing her part of the operation from Talabheim, but through her own fault, came to the attention of a rival gang there and decided it would be prudent to withdraw to the safety of Bergsburg. Also prudently, Truusje has decided that none

Truusje Remajn

Female Human

Merchant (ex-Smuggler)

Main Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
43	46	43	46	43	59	42	42

Secondary Profile

A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	13	4	4	4	0	10	0

Skills: Academic Knowledge (Law), Blather, Common Knowledge (the Empire, the Wasteland), Evaluate, Gossip, Haggle, Performer (Dancer), Perception, Read/Write, Ride, Secret Language (Guild Tongue), Speak Language (Wastelander, Reikspiel)

Talents: Dealmaker, Savvy, Schemer, Suave, Super Numerate

Armour: None

Armour Points: Head 0, Arms 0, Body 0, Legs 0

Weapons: Sword

Trappings: 100-200 Gold Crowns, Respectable Mercantile Equipment, Black Lotus for personal use and Paraphernalia

Insanities: Mandrake Man (Black Lotus Woman)

of her illicit wares will be sold in or around Bergsburg, so, in effect, her business in this city is legal.

However, Truusje's careful planning is being undermined by her own recklessness. In more reflective moods she realises that Bergsburg is an excellent base for her business and that shouldn't be jeopardised. Unfortunately, Truusje has developed a dependency for Black Lotus and her behaviour is becoming increasingly erratic. This is against the first rule of the Oosterhuis Trading Company, and Truusje fears that it may be only a matter of time before her superiors discover her secret and make arrangements to dispose of her services. She is considering going to the Temple of Shallya for help to overcome her dependency.

Walther Schulden

"Just a couple more weeks, I promise. I've had a bit of bad luck recently."

Walther is a successful merchant from Middenheim. He has an easy way and an endearing smile and is used to much success in his line of work. He can be very persuasive, likeable and honest. His whole life had been going well to plan until very recently.

A few months ago, Walther made a deal with a

merchant in Middenheim. He payed over nearly all his capital to Vaclav Ruttiger, whereby they would go 50/50 on a plan to trade Middenheimer paper in Bergsburg and beyond. Walther was present at the signing of the contract with the suppliers, Wint und Gleis, and everything seemed to be going smoothly. Walther travelled to Bergsburg to set up that end of the operation, leaving his partner to deal with the suppliers in Middenheim. He expected to receive the first shipment within a couple of weeks, and further shipments every month.

Seeking to gain a high profile, Walther hired some of the best offices at the Rolling Stones and successfully established good relations with a couple of merchants in Bergsburg, with whom he signed contracts to supply the paper.

Walther was also tempted by the gaming at the Rolling Stones and quickly lost most of his remaining capital. A month passed and there was no sign of the shipment. Nearly broke, Walther decided to move into a single tiny room at the tavern, temporarily.

A few days ago, Walther used up the last of his money. By then, he was seriously considering that Vaclav had conned him. However, when questioned by Kasper Schulten on why he could not pay for his room, Walther could not bring himself to admit the straits he was in. Instead, he lied that he had recently received word from Middenheim that the shipment would arrive within the next couple of weeks. Schulten is keeping a careful eye on Walther, suspecting he might himself be a con artist.

Walther is now nervous and frightened, terrified he might end up penniless on the streets of a strange town. He feels he cannot leave the Rolling Stones. He needs to find someone who can travel to Middenheim and discover the truth behind the mess he is in. He is willing to promise huge sums of money to anyone who can get his investment back for him. After all, half of his fortune is better than none of it.

Helmut von Blaufontein

"Two aces and a king, don't you know. Oh lack-a-day, you have three aces. Well played that man, hoorah."

"Why sir, you have a better hand than me, but I've got the better hat, don't you know?"

Helmut is obviously decadent nobility. He has pale skin, weedy frame and delicate features. He wears the most fashionable clothes, fresh in from Altdorf or even Bretonnia. He has a large collection of big hats. Helmut is a bit of a fop. Not as foppish as his many noble-born friends that he often invites to the big game, but he likes to join in and when in the mood can out-fop the foppiest. He is the third son of Baron von Blaufontein, lord of a large estate in Wissenland. A few months ago he heard that the waters of Bergsburg were nice this time of year.

Walter Schulden							
Male Human							
Merchant (ex-Burgher)							
Main Profile							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
34	26	32	41	36	52	24	46
Secondary Profile							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	10	3	4	4	0	0	0
Skills: Blather, Common Knowledge (the Empire), Drive, Evaluate, Gossip, Haggle, Read/Write, Ride, Secret Language (Guild Tongue), Speak Language (Reikspiel)							
Talents: Luck, Savvy, Super Numerate							
Armour: None							
Armour Points: Head 0, Arms 0, Body 0, Legs 0							
Weapons: Dagger							
Trappings: The Clothes on his Back							

Spinoletti

Spinoletti is the game of choice at The Rolling Stones. As the name would suggest, it came to the Empire by way of Tilea and is now popular throughout the Empire. The nature of the game means that it can quickly get to very high stakes indeed, if a player decides to chase his losses. The best strategy is usually to avoid buying yourself back in to the game unless you've had a particularly nasty roll and there are not many players left in. Spinoletti is a card game, but is abstracted here using dice.

The game is played for a basic stake, say, ten crowns. The winner is the last person who builds a total of 100 or more. Each player left in takes it in turn to deal. Each player rolls D100 and takes away his Int score. He may also take away another 10 for the Gambling skill.

(Optional: I allow players who already have the Gambling skill and have played the game a few times to spend 100 exp gaining the Gamble-Spinoletti skill. This will give them an extra modifier of 10.)

A player who is dealing may make a Palm Object test to swipe a card. Every whole 10% the roll is failed by allows one of the other players to notice this cheating, often with dire consequences. A successful test means a key card has been palmed and that player may count any single score that session as zero.

Every player with a score greater then zero, has this score added to his total. A player rolling a fumble higher than his modified Int score, scores the unmodified number rolled. Any player whose total goes above ninety-nine is out and loses his stake, unless he buys himself back in. It would cost double the original stake to buy himself back in once, the second time it costs four times, then eight etc. So losses can escalate quickly. A player that buys himself back in simply ignores the last score he rolled and continues with the game. The game ends when only one player has a score below one hundred and that player takes all the money. (No one can buy back in if only one player is still in the game.) If all players go above ninety-nine in the same round, the player with the lowest total wins all the money.

(NB If the table is full of excellent players with high Int, Luck Gambling and Spinoletti skill the game could take a long time, suggest playing up to 50 or even 40)

Generally, no credit is given. To buy oneself back in, a player must produce the hard cash there and then. Of course, there might be a moneylender hanging around the gaming tables, just waiting to offer someone attractive rates of interest (See the Three Kings).

Helmut von Blaufontein

Male Human

Gambler (ex-Noble)

Main Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
24	23	32	31	36	27	29	45

Secondary Profile

A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	10	3	3	4	0	0	0

Skills: Academic Knowledge (Heraldry), Blather, Charm, Common Knowledge (the Empire), Gamble (+10), Gossip, Perception, Read/Write, Ride, Speak Language (Reikspiel)

Talents: Etiquette, Luck, Suave

Armour: None

Armour Points: Head 0, Arms 0, Body 0, Legs 0

Weapons: Dagger

Trappings: Pack of Cards, Nice Clothes, Big Hats, Stiletto

Ever since then his father has been paying him to stay here.

Helmut has lost a great deal of money at the big game but his supply seems to be exhaustive. The Three Kings are looking to get him into debt - it is taking time, but they have got time. They think it will be amusing to own lots of land in the south. Unfortunately it's not Helmut's land. He has told everyone that he is the eldest son and heir. The fact is, his father is sick of his behaviour and could disown him at any moment. When this happens, Helmut will be in a fix.

Adventure Hooks

The Mother of Invention

If the party show themselves to be trustworthy and discrete investigators, Frederick Niemens may hire them to look into a new lead he has found regarding his parentage. Somebody has said that they knew of a spinster who had given her baby up at about that time. They only have an address. Enquiries there will lead to another address in Viehstadt which is home to a kindly looking but extremely astute old lady called Granny Liselle.

Liselle knows nothing of the matter, but is always



looking to make a quick schilling. She will tell the party anything they might want to hear. If the party is guarded, then she will have no idea what this might be. If, however, the party are naive, then they may give her enough clues to pull off a decent charade, for which she will be expecting a reward.

If the party report back to Niemens that they have indeed found his old mother, they may also hear, in a few days, that 'some old lady was found with her throat cut in Viehstadt.'

Mother and Child Reunion

If the party do take on Stephan Krieg as their hireling or lackey, and they have seen the mother and son comedy routine, if he stays alive for a time and the party go far from Bergsburg, braving many dangers on the way, then, his mother, Hilde, will suddenly turn up. She will dust him down and wipe the splattering of blood from his forehead, then berate the party most severely for taking her little boy all this way from his nice safe home. She will then begin the journey back to Bergsburg, with her son in tow.

Cheap Assassination

Arnout van Wijk of the Oosterhuis Trading Company has been keeping an eye on Truusje Remajn and has decided she has become a bad risk. He wishes to get rid of her and has come up with a plan whereby he needn't soil his hands nor wait for reinforcements. He will hire the party to search her rooms at The Rolling Stones on the pretext that he is an exciseman and she is suspected of carrying drugs. He has arranged a meeting with her and guarantees that she will be with him, on the ground floor, for the entire evening. Arnout will wish to know the details of the party's plan so he can make sure that Truusje will return to her rooms at the worst time for the party. Arnout is hoping that in the ensuing melee (if there is one) Truusje will be killed. Arnout will hang around for a short time to see what happens, or to see if his blade need

be used, then he will lie low on the other side of town for a while.

References

The Gambler Career can be found in Sigmar's Heirs.

Three Kings

Abdullah Khalidjaffarali

"As the Sultan of Al Elamena once said to me, 'Beware those who fish in the stream, but swim in the river.'"

"So Sheik Feyd the butcher of Bagdalhi looked me straight in the eyes and said, 'your third wife, man, your third wife, I'd rather have your third camel,' how we laughed."

Arrayed in long shiny black robes adorned with jewels and golden symbols Abdullah looks every inch the powerful sorcerer from Araby. He wears a silver turban adorned with a large ruby set into an intricate metal plate. About his ample waist is a thick metal belt from which hang many trinkets, phials and charms. Two ornate curved daggers are tucked into his belt. Abdullah carries a long golden staff shaped at the top like a cobra about to strike. He almost looks like something out of a play.

Abdullah's piercing keen eyes peer out of a swarthy face that can barely be seen behind his thick dark well-groomed beard. Although there is nothing immediately threatening about his demeanour, Abdullah gives the impression that that might change at any time and that he is never to be trifled with. He will not tolerate requests for aid from other magical types and is not interested in an apprentice or sorcerous collaborations. If anyone approaches him for this he will put him down pithily.

Abdullah will be encountered (if not in the streets where he makes an obvious spectacle) on the top floor of The Rolling Stones where he pursues his love of gambling. Abdullah is an excellent gambler and card sharp although it never fails to amaze him how proficient his business partners Jan Berger and Gerd Bueller are in this field.

Three years ago a thin hungry burglar climbed to the roof of a warehouse belonging to the Wertheim und Sohnen Gold Company. He was looking for anything that might make a few crowns. He could hear faint voices in the still night air and see a skylight illuminated from a lantern within and so crept over to look inside. The panes were thick with dirt, but one of them was missing and this gave him a good view of the scene below.

Two men were talking. One man handed over a bundle of papers, the other, who looked like a wealthy

Abdullah Khalidjaffarali							
Male Human							
Charlatan (ex-Cat Burglar, Rogue)							
Main Profile							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
35	32	37	41	47	47	46	48
Secondary Profile							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	15	3	4	5			
<p>Skills: Blather, Charm, Common Knowledge (the Empire), Concealment, Disguise, Evaluate, Gamble, Gossip, Haggle, Perception, Performer (Actor), Pick Lock, Scale Sheer Surface, Search, Secret Language (Thieves' Tongue), Secret Signs (Thief), Silent Move, Sleight of Hand, Speak Language (Reikspiel)</p> <p>Talents: Alley Cat, Flee!, Luck, Mimic, Schemer, Sixth Sense, Street Fighting, Streetwise, Trapfinder</p> <p>Armour: None</p> <p>Armour Points: Head 0, Arms 0, Body 0, Legs 0</p> <p>Weapons: Dagger, Quarterstaff</p> <p>Trappings: Ludicrous Costume, Staff, Playing Cards, Daggers, Thieves' Tools</p>							

merchant, poured out a pile of gold from his purse, onto the table. The first man counted the gold then scooped it into his bag. They shook hands and then he turned to leave. Suddenly the merchant grabbed a grappling hook from nearby and smashed it down onto the other's head. The burglar watched, not daring to move. He watched while the merchant paced the room, seemingly thinking of a plan. Eventually, the merchant stuffed the papers into his jacket and began to drag the body away. One of the papers fell to the floor. The merchant hesitated but then decided he could return to get it later and continued struggling with the corpse. The burglar waited until he heard a side door of the warehouse open. He checked to see the merchant dragging the body by the hook that remained lodged in its skull, towards the river.

Then the burglar went about his profession. He managed to force the rusted skylight open and slipped down into the room. He grabbed the victim's bag of gold and felt its weight. He then remembered the paper that had fallen to the floor, and picked it up, deciding it must be of great value. He tucked the blood stained parchment into his pocket and began to climb back up into the night.

When the burglar got to his digs he looked again at the gold. He had never seen this much money before in his life. It could keep him for years. But then he remembered his plight. Soon, he thought, there would be a bounty on his head. Every low life in the city would be after him, and for sure they would rather have him dead than alive.

Then he remembered a play he had seen when he was a small boy, 'The Sultan's Lament'. Then, he remembered the stupid burglary he had made on the Tiegel Theater a few weeks before; all he had found was useless props, wigs and costumes. Then he remembered names he had heard as a boy, in fairy tales, 'I will be His Excellency Abdullah Khalidjaffarali, Sultan of Mirabel,' he said to himself, 'and soon, no one will remember my old name.'

The next day Abdullah walked boldly down Erikstrasse. He was in the middle of Osttor, the merchants' quarter. Some merchants wanted him dead. Usually he walked slouched; he tried to remain anonymous because he didn't want to attract attention. The streets were dangerous. Now that he was in more danger than he had ever been, he strutted. Heads turned in the street to gaze at this exotic spectacle. Abdullah cast withering glances back at them and they quickly turned away.

Abdullah came to The Rolling Stones Tavern. He had gambled in the seedy dives of Pottplatz for pennies, always making sure he did not win too much, just enough that the losers would not feel like killing him. He had always dreamed of making a killing at a posh place like this. The Tavern was full of merchants. Some merchants wanted him dead. Abdullah marched within. The huge bouncer quickly stood aside. Some wealthy looking traders quickly shuffled away to avoid his ample padded girth. 'Will you be wanting to see the accountant, Sir?' the bemused doorman asked. Abdullah nodded sagely and made a strange gesture with his hand. 'Come this way please, Sir.' the doorman said respectfully.

Jan Berger

"You've convinced me. I'll let you sign the promissory note with the higher rate of interest."

Berger is good looking, but not striking; he is neat but not immaculate. He manages to blend into the background, except when he doesn't want to. He is a good gambler, but not as good as his friend Gerd Bueller. Whereas Bueller is the inspiration behind their schemes, Berger is the pragmatist who gets things done.

Jan Berger started out as a money lender amongst the prospectors of Osttor. He found many profitable clients among the unsuccessful dreamers there. If they did strike it rich, then Berger was paid with great interest and quickly. If they did not, then Berger was paid more slowly, as they worked off their debt in menial labour, at a higher rate of interest. Although nothing explicit was ever said, Berger's clients rarely crossed him, for rumours

Jan Berger							
Male Human							
Charlatan (ex-Rogue, Burgher)							
Main Profile							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
42	44	37	42	45	54	49	58
Secondary Profile							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	14	3	4	4			
<p>Skills: Blather, Charm, Common Knowledge (the Empire), Disguise, Evaluate, Gossip, Gamble, Performer (Singer), Public Speaking, Magical Sense, Read/Write, Ride, Secret Language (Thieves' Tongue), Sleight of Hand, Speak Language (Reikspiel)</p> <p>Talents: Luck, Mimic, Sixth Sense, Street Fighting, Suave, Super Numerate</p> <p>Armour: None</p> <p>Armour Points: Head 0, Arms 0, Body 0, Legs 0</p> <p>Weapons: Dagger</p> <p>Trappings: Playing Cards, Little Black Book, Two Well-concealed Stiletos</p>							

spread that if anyone did, they would regret it for the rest of their short lives.

Berger is a very skilled gambler and soon, instead of waiting for prospectors to come to him, he realised that he could create debtors at the card and dice tables, winning their money, and then, winning again as he lent them more money to lose.

Berger keeps track of all the people who owed him, or over whom he had any influence at all, in a small leather book that he always keeps with him. It is written in almost indecipherable code. Now that he is part of the Three Kings, the book is indispensable as the favours their 'subjects' are required to do, when combined with the creative plans of Gerd Bueller, can be worth much more than the original debts.

Berger certainly has a ruthless streak, and he has influence over an assortment of unsavoury cut throats and assassins, who while often not appropriate to be used in Bueller's schemes, are useful when enforcing the payment of debts and surrounding Berger with the air of ruthlessness and fear he has cultivated.

Jan Berger sat across the table from the merchant. He had been listening to his story for several minutes and his mind began to wander. The merchant was making more excuses about how he could not make a full repayment on his debts. They sounded plausible but Berger knew the truth. He had heard from contacts how this man's business was successful and how he should have no trouble making the repayments. He had heard to how the merchant liked to gamble, and how he was not good at it.

The merchant continued his litany. Berger wondered. The merchant could probably afford to pay him back over the course of a few years without any problems. Berger would have to spend his time collecting the money, keeping his books and listening to his incessant rambling. It was tedious, but it was a good living. If on the other hand, the merchant owed him say, four times what he did now, then that would be worth his while. The he would own the guy. He could break him if he wanted, he could have his eternal gratitude if he didn't break him. He could bend him to his will. Now, that would be power.

'OK,' said Berger. 'I realise you have trouble paying the full amount. I'm gonna give you an oportunity to clear your debt with me right now.'

The merchant stopped suddenly and looked in hope at the money lender. Berger drew a gold coin from his purse. 'If you win,' he said, 'then there is no debt. If you lose, then the debt is doubled.'

The merchant hesitated for a moment, but Jan knew he would agree. As the coin flipped through the air, the merchant called heads. The coin fell and landed, revealing the castle and dove motif of the Bergsburg Crown.

The colour drained from the merchant's face. He looked like he might be sick. 'It's OK,' Berger said, with a reassuring smile. 'We can do the same thing again.' He picked up the coin and threw it once more into the air. Before the merchant had even thought about what he was doing he had cried tails. The coin fell. The face of Karl-Franz looked on.

The merchant seemed to crumple before Berger. The money lender put his arm around him. 'It's OK,' he said softly. 'We can work this out. You can keep your business. You can keep your home. You might be able to keep all that. I just need one or two favours to get this all straight, OK. This might take some time, but I'm gonna need one or two favours.'

Gerd Bueller

"We can take this town. We can take it for its last brass penny. And we can make them thank us for it."

Tastefully attired, Gerd looks like he might be just another senior ranking, middle-aged merchant's clerk. If encountered in The Rolling Stones games room, he looks like he might have wandered up there by mistake, or is

Gerd Bueller							
Male Human							
Charlatan (ex-Rogue)							
Main Profile							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
33	35	34	38	54	54	56	55
Secondary Profile							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	14	3	3	4			
<p>Skills: Blather, Charm, Common Knowledge (the Empire), Disguise, Evaluate, Gamble, Gossip, Read/Write, Ride, Sleight of Hand, Speak Language (Reikspiel)</p> <p>Talents: Luck, Savvy, Sixth Sense, Suave</p> <p>Armour: None</p> <p>Armour Points: Head 0, Arms 0, Body 0, Legs 0</p> <p>Weapons: Dagger</p> <p>Trappings: Several Decks of Cards, Dice (Loaded and Unloaded)</p>							

there on a slow day at the office to risk a couple of crowns in a friendly low-stakes game, probably the most dangerous thing he has done in his life. Don't let appearances deceive; Bueller is the most accomplished gambler, trickster, cardsharp and con man this side of the Talabec.

When dealing a hand of Spinoletti, Bueller can give any of the players any score he wishes. And he can pull an equivalent stunt with most games he knows. (Optionally, to make it fair on the PCs, he may have to roll to pull this off. If you choose to roll, notice that Bueller has triple skill level in Gamble for an extra +20 bonus. But remember, getting stabbed to death by a thuggish adventurer who notices him cheating is not this guy's style at all).

Bueller learned his trade in the darkest deadliest gambling dens of Altdorf. He teamed up with an accomplice there in a plot to fleece the thieves' guild of a large amount of their ill-gotten gains. The plan was successful but unfortunately, as they made their escape to Bergsburg, his accomplice was killed. In Bergsburg, he found the locals almost as wealthy and a lot more naïve than their cousins in the capital. Backed by his new found wealth, he was determined to find worthy collaborators with which to execute his many schemes. He found this in

the Three Kings and he has a vague idea that their growing influence is leading to some grand plan, although he has no idea what this plan is, yet. He firmly believes fate has something big in store for them.

The traveller pulled the box closer to his chest and stroked the cold metal brackets. Inside lay his passport to a life of luxury. The Hochland Crossing coach bounced over a pot hole and the weight of the stones from within the box clinked satisfyingly. The rain played heavily on the coach roof. It might turn to snow soon, he thought, it was getting colder as the depths of winter neared, but the thought of his new-found wealth warmed him. And the manner in which he had earned it warmed him more.

The only other passenger on the coach was asleep. His hat covered his face and he snored loudly. The open flask in his lap testified to his drunken state. His sleeping companion was well attired and obviously had money to lose. The traveller toyed with a plan to win some of it, but it was just habit, he would do nothing to jeopardise what he had already won tonight, more money than he had ever seen in his life.

The cold crept through the coach. The man wrapped his cloak tighter around himself and the box. He thought about how he had won tonight, and the losers he had left behind. The thieves' guild of Altdorf was only too keen to contribute towards a plan to part the newly-wed nobles of their estate. His accomplice had thought of a great scheme to outwit the nobles and at the same time, relieve the guild of their investment. But he had been cleverer than all of them. He had taken all the money and left his accomplice to face the music. Right now, he decided, the guild would be torturing his old friend to death. This thought warmed him more, there was absolutely nothing he could reveal to them, he was safe and rich.

The snow began to fall and the warm feeling inside of triumph was not quite enough for the freezing air. He looked at the drunken sleeper opposite. He would not mind if he took a sip of his liquor, he clearly did not need anymore. The man lifted the flask from the sleeper's lap and drained it.

A few minutes later, the 'sleeper' removed his hat. He looked at the dead man opposite. He gave a wry smile, a slight sadness tinged the moment of triumph but the manner of his death was almost poetical. He put his hat over the dead man's face and ripped the chest from his grasp. Then he waited for the next Inn, where, as luck would have it, some might say, he had stabled two horses a few weeks earlier.

The Three Kings

Abdullah, Berger and Bueller style themselves The Three Kings. When playing cards among themselves they will not cheat each other. They believe that they can all spot each other manipulating the cards. (Bueller occasionally pulls a trick that he believes the other two

won't spot, but this is just to keep his hand in and he will make sure he wins no money from it.) They will not cheat any of the regulars at the big game except possibly Helmut if he is having a run of luck but generally they don't need to. They will however band together to totally wipe out anyone who comes to the big game and is cocky, has a high opinion of their own skill or who shows them a lack of respect. They will use every trick in the book to lure their victim into risking more than he can afford; Berger will then lend the victim money, which they will win, and lend him some more, which they will also win. Berger will then make sure that the victim does their bidding as their whims dictate. The Three Kings call those people who owe them obedience for whatever reason, their subjects.

The Three Kings are not just cardsharps; they are confidence tricksters of unique subtlety and skill. They spend much of their time dreaming up and discussing the most intricate plans for spectacular cons against, as they see it, a deserving victim. Some of these plans involve great financial gain, some are for fun, and some leave their victims open to blackmail and control. These plans often involve the ignorant or knowing assistance of some or many of their subjects.

For the Taking

The merchant from Harzel was shaking. His face was bright red. Berger could tell he didn't like losing. 'Then he shouldn't play with me,' he thought. The merchant stood up and was ready to leave, only three crowns left. Berger was tempted to offer to lend him some more money, but changed his mind. The merchant was poor company and he didn't want to spend any longer at the same table.

A second man got up too. Berger knew him well. He was Kerr Rudbeck, a local weaponsmith. He was here to just make up the numbers and Berger knew it was not worth winning any money from him, as it would just be more money for the man to owe him. Instead, Berger had other uses for the Rudbeck's special talent, but that would not be needed tonight. He had given him the signal that it was time for him to leave also.

Berger sized up his remaining opponents; both were strangers to him. The first, Gerd Bueller, had an Altdorf accent, and a broad one at that, but he was dressed like he had money to spare. He was playing well, but Berger knew he had a few tricks left that could defeat him.

The final man, Abdullah Something-or-other, made a bizarre spectacle. He was dressed in long shiny black robes and wore a turban adorned with gold. He had a thick black beard and of his facial features, only his eyes could be discerned. He was from Araby apparently, which was beyond Tilea, somewhere. How he had ended up in Bergsburg was a mystery.

The three men played into the night, and much money changed hands but when one lost, he would soon win and

a winner gradually lost his winnings until he was about even again. Conversation flowed, and Berger noticed, that although each man talked a lot, especially the Arabyan, no one had managed to say anything of significance or allow an insight into their lives. But it was the best game Berger had played for a long, long time.

Eventually, Bueller prepared to leave. 'Thank you both, it's been a great game. But it's time to go.'

'When the desert mouse spies the raw-hawk,' said Abdullah, profoundly, 'It is always time to go.'

'And what does that mean?' Bueller replied, defensively.

Berger laughed, 'It means if you stay around any longer, we're going to take you for everything you have.'

Bueller sat back down again. 'Is that right?' he said and began to shuffle. When Berger had cut, the Altdorfer dealt; he clearly meant business. Berger looked at his hand, three sevens. It was the best hand he had had all night, he really was going to take Bueller, and with Bueller's pride wounded by Abdullah's remark, he knew he would bet high. Berger decided to open with twenty crowns, to rope his opponents in slowly.

Before he could push his coins to the center of the table, Bueller gestured to stop him. 'OK,' he said, and took a deep breath. 'You're gonna open with twenty. If we both stay in, you'll raise to fifty. If one of us drops out, you'll stay at twenty, maybe thirty.'

Berger was stunned, he was absolutely right. 'But we're both gonna stay in,' Bueller continued, 'because my friend here has three tens. You're gonna raise each other until one of you loses his nerve, or you run out of money.'

Berger looked at the disappointment in the Arabyan's eyes, the first genuine emotion, he felt, that the man had showed all night. He threw his cards to the table, three tens. 'You saved me some money then,' Berger said, as he revealed his three sevens.

'We can all play,' Bueller said slowly - he already had their attention, but the pause drew it in further. 'And I don't mean cards.' He raised his eyebrows and waited for the nods that confirmed his guess. 'There is a greater game,' he said, 'And Bergsburg is a big table.'

'They say in Mirabel,' Abdullah agreed, 'that the sky is bigger than the raw-hawk's wings.'

'But you must bring your own stake,' said Berger trying to sound doubtful, but in fact he was intrigued by what he felt Bueller was going to propose. 'And a big table needs a big stake. A table the size of a city is going to require something special.'

Bueller pulled up the chest he had put beneath his chair at the start of the evening, put it on the table and threw the lid open. 'That's my ante.' The chest was full of

of precious stones that caught the dim light and threw it out again in a myriad of hues. Berger could see instantly that they were genuine, and of exceptional quality. Abdullah grabbed a handful and let them fall through his fingers back into the box.

Berger took out his tattered leather book. This was against his nature; he had always worked alone, and when he had been forced to work with others, he was always undoubtably the senior partner. He prayed that he was not making a mistake as he threw the book onto the table. Bueller picked it up and flicked through its pages. 'A book full of nonsense? What is this? Spells?'

Berger shook his head, perish the thought. In his head, he decrypted the page at which Bueller had randomly left it open. 'That's Peter Verlinden. He owes me thirty-six crowns. At the rate he can afford to pay me, it's gonna take him about six months. He works at the Prospectors Guild. He informs me of any hard-up prospectors who need an urgent loan. He also tips me off if one of the prospectors I am interested in has had a bit of luck. For everything he tells me, I knock a couple of crowns off his debt.'

Bueller thumbed through the book again. 'And everyone in here owes you something? This is a pretty valuable book,' he said, 'Don't lose it.' Then he turned to Abdullah. 'And you sir, can you sit at our table?'

Abdullah looked back at him, 'It is written, he who opens his heart to the people is thrice blessed.'

'And are we thrice blessed?' asked Berger, hastily tucking his book back into his clothes. 'Is your magic a blessing or a curse?'

'Do not be hasty,' replied the Arabyan, 'For I may be a blessing in disguise. I will show you my particular magic. Stay here.'

The two looked on as Abdullah went to a window and opened it, and looked out. 'Be quite still,' he said. After a minute nothing had happened, Abdullah had not moved a muscle, his back still to the others.

'We can all stand still,' called Berger.

'But I have not been standing still,' replied Abdullah. The voice came from behind them. They turned to see a scrawny looking youth with few clothes on. But his voice had definitely been Abdullah's.

Berger turned back to look at the pile of clothes in the opposite corner, still in the shape of the Sultan of Mirabel, and laughed loudly. 'So you're not from Araby then, and you're not a mage?'

'I haven't been outside the walls of Bergsburg in my life.' he said happily, 'And this is my only magic.' He tossed a handful of gems that he had palmed earlier back into Bueller's chest.

Bueller turned back to the table. 'We can be kings of this town, we three. If we stick together, no-one will be able to touch us. It's all here for the taking,' and he turned over the cards of the hand he had dealt himself earlier, three kings.

Adventure Hooks

The Mighty Fallen

If the PCs are successful chaos-scheme-thwarters, then the three kings might fabricate an entire chaos cult for them to expose, making them look spectacularly foolish at the end.

Blue Lines

The Three Kings wish to get their hands on the rest of the Gold Receipts. As the PCs become involved with the plot, they try to influence them towards their cause. (See Adventures)

House of Games

The party are drawn into an intricate confidence trick to relieve them of their money. (See Adventures)

Little Black Book

If the PCs have a unique skill or position the Three Kings will delight in making them their subjects. Generally, they will try to avoid ruining their subjects or driving them to desperate measures, but they can require small favours, and often.

Hunters' Trophy

Situated in the Grossplatz district of Bergsburg, The Hunters' Trophy is a reasonably large and prominent building of recent design. The name of the shop is proudly stamped in gold lettering on a large wooden sign above the double doors. Inside there is a faint smell of fircones; the small brazier in the corner is burning them. The shopfloor is spacious, but the walls are stacked high with all manner of equipment and trophies. Visitors will be greeted by Oswald Kern, an amiable and straightforward, if slightly servile, guy, with one hand, who, after a moment's examination will enquire as to how he may be of service.

Oswald Kern

"Yes sir. And may I humbly suggest the three foot willow arrow with genuine hawks tail feather fletchings, suits you sir."

Oswald used to be a poacher, of some notoriety, during his turbulent youth in the land around Garssen, a

Oswald Kern							
Male Human							
Merchant (ex- Hunter)							
Main Profile							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
42	57	46	42	46	35	40	32
Secondary Profile							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	12	4	4	5	0	6	0
<p>Skills: Concealment, Follow Trail, Outdoor Survival, Perception, Ride Horse, Secret Language (Ranger Tongue), Secret Signs (Ranger), Silent Move</p> <p>Talents: Marksman, Orientation, Rover, SWG (Long Bow)</p> <p>Armour: None</p> <p>Armour Points: Head 0, Arms 0, Body 0, Legs 0</p> <p>Weapons: Dagger, Good Selection of Bows</p> <p>Trappings: Art Pieces, Drawings, Tools of Trade</p> <p>Insanities: The Fear (Open Spaces - Mild)</p>							

nearby village. Very skilled with a bow and knife, and a tracker in a class of his own, it was some years before the authorities could track him down. As it was, it took a price on his head and the betrayal of his friends to bring him to justice. The Baron of Garssen at the time, Fredo Gluck-Witt, a young boisterous lout, was intrigued by Oswald's reputation as a hunter. He decided to offer him a deal. If Oswald could track down the great boar of the forest, and the Baron could kill it, then Oswald would be pardoned.

Oswald accepted, thinking that he would be able to make a break for it once in the forest. The hunting party was gathered and the chase began. To Oswald's surprise, he picked up a huge trail quickly, and began to track a boar. As the hunt continued Oswald realised he was in fact pursuing a boar of some gigantic size. Realising he could not pass up an opportunity like this he stayed with the Duke and his entourage and led them to the boar. The chase was almost mythic, the battle terrible and heroic.

The boar turned and charged them, scaring the horses and slaying four of the hunting party. The great boar only fled when Oswald blew his hunting horn, and thrust a burning torch at it. The duke was outraged that he had been denied the kill, and brought his sword down upon

Oswald. Oswald raised his arm instinctively to stop the blow and his hand was severed. Helplessly, he waited for the Baron's next blow. The Baron's brother Hans took this opportunity and dispatched his brother from behind.

Hans had been waiting for an opportunity to murder his hated sibling and take the Barony. With only two of his most trusted squires, along with Oswald and one of Fredo's men to witness the deed, he decided that he would blame his brother's death on the great boar. As he had saved Oswald's life, and pardoned him, Hans reckoned he could trust Oswald to keep his secret, and to recompense him for the loss of his hand, as he put it, he gave Oswald a sum of money to set himself up in business. Since that day, his hunting career effectively over, Oswald has turned to the merchandise and tools of his trade and opened the Hunters' Trophy in Bergsburg. He now makes a tidy profit selling weapons, nets, traps, baits, and so forth to woodsmen, hunters, prospectors and adventurers. He has also become proficient in the art of taxidermy, and has many stuffed creatures prominently displayed in his shop.

However, Oswald still dreams of the great boar, and of the injuries it received. He wonders if it still survives, lurking in the depths of the forest, waiting for him to venture out. Accordingly he grows slowly agoraphobic, and will not venture far from the city gates. Though he has skills that could be better employed elsewhere, Oswald's lingering memories of the carnage have transformed him. The strong, defiant, lawbreaker of his youth, has become a crippled, subservient and meek old man. Perhaps one day Oswald's courage will return, or another hunt will be called, or perhaps he will die an old and bitter man, his true calling forever denied him.

Oswald is in a curious position with regard to the law, having been pardoned, and also with the nobility, being under the protection of Hans Gluck-Witt, whose estate he still supplies. He also has connections to the Garssen underclass of Bergsburg but many of Oswald's old contemporaries and friends accuse him of selling out, and





he feels increasingly isolated. His physical injury is quite severe, and combined with the loss of his old hunting spirit, his health had deteriorated, and he looks forward to death.

If the customer desires Oswald will stuff and mount any carcass they bring to him, usually in a suitably aggressive pose. He has a lot of experience of stuffing bears and wolves and other common beasts, and a little experience with other, more exotic creatures. One beastman stands in the corner of his shop, fully 7 feet tall, with the legs of a giant goat, the head of a rat, and a shrivelled deformed left arm. Some people claim the creature is a creation of Oswald's, pieced together from bits of other animals, but it seems very lifelike.

One of the things that mark Oswald's shop out from the others like it is the quality of his advice. When buying bows Oswald will happily and accurately choose the right weight and type for his customer, recommending certain length arrows for certain bows, or special feather tips for extra range. The in-game effect of this could be as minor as 10 exp to put towards an advance in BS (assuming the player takes the advice) or as major as an extra point of damage when firing your bow.

Oswald lives in a tiny flat in a nearby street, and every night he carefully locks up the shop and heads home. The shop has no real defences, apart from the lock on the front door (CR 45) but Oswald relies on its position to deter thieves. Few would dare break into a shop on Grossplatz.

Henri Joachim

Oswald has one assistant, a heavily overworked youth called Henri Joachim, who lives in Helmsberg. Oswald only employed Henri due to his disability, a missing arm, as he felt a certain empathy for the lad. Unknown to Oswald, Henri lost his arm when at the age of 13 it mutated into a brown, bony mass of hair and pus.

Abandoned in the forest outside Talabheim by his family, he was left to survive on his own. Desperate to avoid the fate he knew awaited him, he went to a nearby village, broke into the local blacksmiths, cut off his arm, and cauterised the wound. He barely made it to the edge of the forest before exhaustion and pain overwhelmed him, and the next three weeks he spent on the verge of death. When his strength finally recovered he made his way to Bergsburg, hoping to start life anew. New horrors greeted him. He was quickly sucked into the criminal underworld, beaten, abused, tortured. As a homeless, orphan cripple, he could make no friends, and suffered at the hands of cruel men.

Eventually, just as he was considering a return to the forest, Oswald took him under his wing. Over the last few years he has found peace, and grown to respect his benefactor. But, three months ago a local mercenary brought back the carcass of a beastman he had killed in the forest. Oswald was employed to stuff and mount the creature, and did so. The mercenary was killed a week later in a drunken brawl, and the beastman was put on display. Each day as he works, Henri watches the trophy, studying its huge frame, its strong muscles, and its proud eyes. He studies with ever growing interest the marks of Tzeentch tattooed into its fur, and he begins to dream of the forest....

Adventure Hooks

Old Ghosts

Only Oswald, Hans and three other men, know what really happened on that expedition. The other three, necessarily, would now have influential positions in the Barony of Garssen. Perhaps two or three of them turn up dead in quick succession, and Oswald hires himself some protection, or someone to find some evidence of who killed them. He realises that if word got out that the old Baron had been murdered, not killed by the boar as currently maintained, then Oswald would be an accessory to murder, and sure to hang.

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