

To Love and Die in Marienburg

“They say you can buy and sell anything in Marienburg, if you know the right people and the right price. Anything. Or anyone.”

Introduction

Life is hard in the Old World, and it’s hardest on those least able to protect themselves – the old, the poor, the mentally feeble, and the young and naive. Without family or trusted friends to look after them, these people on society’s fringe are exposed to many, many dangers – as much from the cold bite of Winter or the lack of food as from a Chaos Warrior’s ax. Alone and frightened of the world around them, they are easy prey for criminals and worse. Charlatans, footpads, burglars, slavers...even things that should walk only in nightmares.

The most vulnerable are the children on their own, the orphans and runaways found in every Old World city. Smart enough to see an opportunity and dumb enough to take it at face value, they’re like sheep among wolves. Some survive and harden themselves into an early adulthood, but others are simply never seen again. And there are so many loose children that, even when someone who cares does miss one, he hasn’t the time or the stamina to really look for him.

“To Love and Die in Marienburg” tells the story of one such child, an orphan from St. Rutha’s, who thought he was ready for the adult world. Instead, he fell in with people for whom he was nothing but a commodity – a thing to be bought and sold. Lucky for him, there is someone who cares enough to find him.

For the GM

This is background information for you, the Gamemaster. Don’t reveal it to your players unless they earn it through their efforts.

The Body Trade

Of all the crimes that occur in the Old World, perhaps the most loathsome is the trade in smuggled bodies. This trade doesn’t supply corpses for a doctor’s table or even a necromancer’s ritual – it deals in living, breathing Humans (and the occasional Dwarf, Elf, or Halfling) who are kidnapped and sold abroad as pleasure slaves or sacrifices to the dark gods.

The “Trade,” as it is called, is most active in the sea and river ports of the Old World, places where many people pass through and are never seen again. It also extends inland, sometimes passing through towns and villages as part of a traveling circus or a merchant’s caravan, sometimes operating almost openly among local outlaws. They pick their victims carefully from those least likely to be missed. Whispers have it that some black souls even sell troublesome spouses and children to the slavers, getting rid of a problem and making a tidy profit. Whatever the truth, the victims soon find themselves on a boat with their fates sealed.

There is no central organization to the Trade, no thieves' guild that oversees the whole operation. Nothing for a group of heroes to wipe out with one solid blow. Rather, it is a network of middlemen ranging from Araby to Kislev – each knows a few others, who in turn know a few more. They pass along orders and help conceal the illicit cargoes, making a bit of profit from every transaction, making money from every person whose life is destroyed.

It shouldn't be a surprise anyone that Marienburg is a crossroads for this evil trade. Not that the city condones it – most people haven't even heard of it – but the city-state's position makes it a natural clearinghouse for the Trade. There are several “merchants of misery” in Marienburg who engage in the Trade to a greater or lesser extent. One or two are even respected members of the ‘Change, though they'd be hung at Rijker's if this part of their business became known.

Most, though, are completely clandestine, cloaking their commerce under other legitimate professions. One such is the respected Dr. Karl von Hoffman, owner of the Deedesveld graveyard in Kruiersmuur and a priest of Kháine.

Tom's Tale

Tomas Huisdynck van Breeschooten became an orphan at the age of six when his parents, wealthy artisans in Guilderveld, drowned in an accident while crossing the Rijksweg. His only surviving relative was Captain Clara van der Sande, a mercenary who had no desire to settle down and raise her sister's child. She instead placed the boy in St. Rutha's orphanage in Suiddock, which she pays yearly for his upkeep and education. She also took the proceeds from the sale of the van Breeschooten business and possessions, combined it with a few hundred Guilders of her own, and left it in the care of Brother Albertus Cobbius, the headmaster of St. Rutha's. Tomas was to receive it when he came of age and found a respectable apprenticeship.

By the time of his fifteenth birthday, though, it was clear that young Tom had a problem. Most of the other children of his age had either already been adopted or found an apprenticeship. He despaired of ever finding a family (while he loved his aunt dearly, she rarely came to visit) and, wanting a life more exciting than that of a tradesman's apprentice, he began sneaking away from Brother Bert's “collection gangs.” Tom took to hanging out with rough types – stevedores and seamen – in the vague hope that this would lead to something exciting, like a life of adventure at sea.

It led to something exciting, all right. So exciting it might cost him his life.

It was one night, several weeks ago, that Tom sneaked out of the orphanage to meet his new friends at the Seventh Veil, a sleazy “club” near the West End of Stoessel Isle. There he saw “Flame,” a singer and exotic dancer of incredible beauty. Tom was absolutely entranced. With the ardor only a fifteen year old can muster, he went to her after her show and proclaimed his love. She returned his pledges of love with peals of derisive laughter, and his face burned red as he slunk away under the jeers of the crowd.

But, he was a determined lad. As Flame was walking home that night, a drunken sailor attacked her in an alley. Out of nowhere, Tom leaped on the brute and beat him unconscious with a bottle. Confessing that he had followed her from the club, he again swore his undying love. Instead of laughing at him this time, she told him her name, “Corinne,” and talked with him. Tom told her

of his life as an orphan, of his big plans, and of the 2,000 Guilder endowment that would be his as soon as he found an apprenticeship.

That was his fatal mistake, for Corinne de Maris du Brionne was more than a dancer – she was and is a vampire, and the lover of Dr. Karl von Hoffman.

The Good Doctor...

When Corinne told her lover her adventures the night before, he was dumbstruck. As part of his cover as a kindly but reclusive physician, he had been making twice-monthly calls at the orphanage to tend to the children's health, alternating visits with those of Dr. Vesalion. But the existence of Tom's huge inheritance had escaped him completely. It was if his Lord Kháine was sending him a gift! The money would pay for the many rare alchemicals and artifacts he needed for his researches into immortality and Tom himself might fetch a fine price from some cult in need of a sacrifice.

Dr. von Hoffman ordered Corinne to seduce Tom and gradually lead him away from the orphanage. She did so with pleasure, encouraging him to come see her at the Seventh Veil and visit her in her room at the Golden Lotus. She told him a lie about how she didn't want to do the things she did, but the powerful bawd who owned her forced her into this humiliating life. Tom was her only friend, and, yes, she would run away with him. All the time, she was using her vampiric powers and the drugs the Lascar provided to bend his will to hers. Though people at the orphanage worried about Tom, they knew almost nothing of Corinne and never suspected a vampire, for she licked the wounds closed each morning.

The Trap Closes

After a few weeks, Dr. von Hoffman received word that a cult in Erengrad needed a sacrifice for an upcoming "festival." While waiting for the smugglers' ship to arrive, they put the next stage of their plan into motion: acting through an agent, the grave robber Erasmus Gouma Goedbloed, Dr. von Hoffman blackmailed the wizards Haan into signing fake papers testifying to Tom's apprenticeship to Sybo. Tom then went back to the orphanage, claimed his inheritance and left to take a flat and set-up on his own. Since all seemed legal, there was nothing Brother Bert could do but help him settle in and wish him well. Under Corinne's influence, Tomas placed the money on account with the van Haagen bank in Goudberg. Here the funds were personally "handled" by Crispijn van Haagen himself, the heir to House van Haagen and an occasional partner of Dr. von Hoffman in the body trade.

For two weeks, Tom lived at the flat on Graaf Rikkertsplein in Suiddock, seeing almost no one but Corinne, alienated from his friends. Then, Corinne took him to the Golden Lotus one last time. The doctor had received word that the smugglers' ship, the Magrattan caravel *La Paloma*, would soon arrive on its way to Erengrad. The Lascar slipped Tom a potent Lustrian drug that placed him in a state of near-total suspended animation. Occasionally renewed, the drug would keep him alive but helpless for months.

The powerless boy was bundled into a sack and carted by Goedbloed and some thugs in the pay of the League of Gentlemen Entrepreneurs to Dr. von Hoffman's townhouse in Kruiersmuur. To cover Tom's tracks, the Doctor and Corinne turned to a forger they had used before, a small-time

operator named Sander van Okker. They paid him to make two documents: the first was a fake death certificate for the “Jaan Douw” who died at the Golden Lotus and was scheduled for a pauper’s burial in Deedesveld. The second was a license to ship a coffin containing the body of one Volodymyr Hanchuk back to his home in Erengard after his unfortunate death –shipped from Deedesveld Graveyard on the *La Paloma*. They sealed Tom in a specially-made coffin that would allow him to breathe through concealed air holes. As far as anyone outside the plot is concerned, Tom has simply vanished, one of many who disappear every year in Marienburg.

And this is where the heroes come in – the *La Paloma* has docked and will be leaving for Erengard after three days of repair and resupply. Unless the PCs act swiftly, young Tom may wish he had died with parents.

Think Before You Run...

“To Love and Die in Marienburg,” is an adventure meant for characters well into their second careers. PCs will do best if they sport a broad mix of social, combat, and magical skills. Pare down the opposition if the PCs are considerably weaker, or strengthen it if they are quite strong. Given that their foes include a vampire, a necromancer, and a graveyard full of undead, a few minor magic items would be handy before this begins –perhaps some armor, a weapon, and a healing potion or two.

The adventure begins as an investigative piece, with the PCs trying to figure just what happened to poor Tom. Gradually, however, it should dawn on them that he has gotten himself into deep trouble and that only decisive action on their part stands a chance of saving him. Once Dr. von Hoffman and Corinne realize that the heroes pose a real threat, you should speed up the pace and build towards the climax. These two are experienced survivors, and they won’t stand idly by while the PCs run roughshod over them. Neither will the other actors in this drama – they may be NPCs, but never forget that they have schemes, hopes, and fears of their own. What follows is one likely path – your players will no doubt vary from this. It’s your job to be ready for anything.

Enter the Heroes

PCs can enter the scenario in one of several ways. They might be new to Marienburg, having come by river or road from the Empire. Perhaps they carry a gift for Tom from his Aunt, who asked them to look in on her kin. Maybe they encounter some of Brother Bert’s children seeking donations, become intrigued, and visit the orphanage. However you arrange it, they meet Brother Bert and he, assuming he comes to trust them, tells them of Tom’s disappearance and asks them to investigate.

If one or more of the PCs live in Marienburg, they may already be familiar with St. Rutha’s Orphanage. In this case, Brother Bert might contact them directly or, if they have connections with the Stevedores' and Teamsters' Guild, he might swallow his pride and ask his brother Lea-Jan Cobbius for help. Maybe, even, they are left an anonymous note from Claudia Kilsch (cf., Tarnopol’s Clock Tower) telling them Tom’s in trouble and to “please talk wif Brother Bertie.”

In any event, the adventure starts at St. Rutha’s orphanage on a day of mixed fog and drizzle, typical for Marienburg.

Investigations

St. Rutha's Orphanage

As soon as the adventurers arrive at the orphanage, they are swarmed by a gaggle of laughing, screeching children aged four to eleven who are delighted to see visitors – maybe they're prospective parents! They ask all sorts of questions (“Are you a wizard? I saw a wizard once. He pulled a rabbit from his hat!” “Did not!” “Did too!” “Pull a bunny from your hat, please!” or “Oooh! You're a soldier! Did you ever kill anyone with that? Can I touch it?” and points at the biggest weapon on the PCs). Several have cups out and ask the “rich sirs” for just a shilling or two...

After a short bit, perhaps when the PCs are about to lose their tempers, they are rescued by Jozef and Julius Krabbenbos, who rush over to make the children behave. “Ere now, mind yer manners! Don't go pesterin' such fine folk! Sorry, guv'ners, but they don't mean no harm. What brings you to St. Rutha's on this fine day?” If the heroes mention Tom, or show any interest in the orphanage, the handymen will immediately take them to Brother Bert.

True to form, Brother Bert will show them around the building and describe the mission's goals and needs to them. In the small classroom, they'll see Haam Markvalt giving a lesson in Geography. In the makeshift infirmary, Dr. von Hoffman is tending to a couple of sick children. Eventually, the subject comes around to Tom:

“Frankly, I'm worried about the boy. He was always a bit of a problem, especially as time passed and he wasn't adopted, but the last few weeks have been especially difficult. You see, Tom wasn't happy with any of the apprenticeships we found him, though they were very respectable – tailor's apprentice, merchant's clerk, stable boy—none of them appealed to him. We'd find him one and then he'd be back in under a week. He has a very bright mind and, to be honest, these were beneath his talents. He showed an interest in medicine, but Dr. von Hoffman wasn't taking students – he and his wife live as recluses in Kruiersmuur—and I wasn't about to trust him to the quacks around here! But nothing better came along.

“Then he began sneaking out at night, hanging out with a bad crowd – dock workers and sailors. I think he began to visit “dream houses.” We restricted him and punished him, but he always found a way out. One day, a month ago, he walked into my office grinning like a fool and showed me apprentice papers from Sybo Haan, the wizard! I was shocked! Tomas had never shown any magical talent. But the papers were legal and, being 15, he could make his own arrangements and take his inheritance. It was quite substantial, 2,000 Guilders. I had hoped to use it to set him up in a trade. So, I gave him my blessing and had Julius and Jozef help him move into his new flat. It's on Graaf Rikkertsplein, a rough neighborhood, like the rest of Suiddock.

“We didn't see him after that. I meant to look in on him, but there's been so much to do – many of the children and the staff came down with Bilbali Bowels, and then the roof sprang leaks in several places. You know how it goes.

“A week ago, I had Julius go over to Graaf Rikkertsplein to look in on Tomas. He was gone. Vanished. None of the neighbors had seen him for a week! There's something wrong here, and

I'm afraid for him. I paid the landlady to keep the flat undisturbed till I had a chance to look it over myself, but...well. Will you help me? Perhaps he's just moved on, but I want to know. I have the keys with me, if you agree."

Several clues await the PCs here, depending on the questions they ask:

"What happened to the money?" Brother Bert says Tom took it with him. The priest advised against it, but it was Tom's money and he was legally entitled to it.

"Dream houses?" A nice name for a drug den. Before he left, Brother Bert began to suspect Tom had been using opium. "I should have just tied him to the bed."

"Who were these 'friends?'" The brother doesn't know, other than that they were stevedores and sailors. Perhaps inquiring at the Stevedores' and Teamsters' or the Pilots' and Seamen's Guild would help?

"And Sybo Haan?" The wizard lives and works in an upscale part of Guilderveld. One usually needs an appointment to see him. (PCs making an INT test at -10, +10 for a wizard or wizard's apprentice, will know that it's most unusual for apprentices to live apart from their masters.)

Interviewing the other children. In general, the children looked up to Tom – he was the oldest and biggest, after all. Many know that he has a girlfriend, but none have met her. They just know she lives "on the streets...wow!" One lad, a shy boy of ten named Anders, will confess on a successful FEL test that Tom had bragged about "getting it" from an older woman just before he left. He doesn't know who she is, but "she must be rich and beautiful."

The Krabbenbos Brothers. Neither are very observant, nor have they much to add, except that, when they went to Haan's to inquire about Tom, the wizard said the boy quit the next day. He hadn't seen him since.

Haam Markvalt. He knows nothing, other than remembering Tom as a bright student who was yet another victim of the oppressive system.

Dr. von Hoffman. He agrees that Tom had been interested in medicine, but he himself wanted no students. "My wife is an invalid and, between caring for her and running Deedesveld cemetery, all I have time for is a bit of charity work such as this. Perhaps I should have been more open to the lad."

No. 33A, Graaf Rikkertsplein, Luydenhoek West

The PCs are likely to examine Tom's flat, first. Graaf Rikkertsplein is like many of the squares around which buildings crowd in Marienburg – perhaps 30 yards on a side, the buildings leaning at crazy angles over the open spaces, they look like they're ready to tip over at any moment. Laundry hangs between the windows and children are noisily playing in the dirty water of a nearby small canal. As the PCs enter the square, a goodwife argues prices with a soap peddler while chickens scratch for seed among the cobbles.

Number 33 is an old three-story building of half-timber and plaster construction, whose shingle roof sorely needs patching. The heroes have the keys to flat “A,” which Tom rented under Corinne’s influence. Built into the island’s foundation, the PCs have to go down a narrow stairwell to access the door, a weather-beaten thing with a tin letter “A” hanging loosely on it.

Gaining access, the PCs are struck by an incongruous sight – the place is neat, with a definite “homey” touch to it – there are curtains on the transom windows, old flowers in a vase, even plain cloth to make a cover for the lone table. (INT test, success means that the PCs realize Tom was serious about making this a home. Some of the furnishings indicate a woman’s touch) The flat has but one room. Searching it will reveal the following. Each requires a successful I test.

--*A fine dagger.* It’s a beautiful piece of work, one of a matched set given him by his Aunt. Asking at the orphanage about this will reveal that this was his most prized possession – surely he wouldn’t abandon one of the pair? (In the armoire)

--*Apprenticeship papers.* A license for the apprenticeship of Tomas van Breeschooten to Sybo Haan, wizard of Guilderveld. Seemingly in order, a test vs. INT (+10 for the skills Art or Law, -10 otherwise) will reveal on examination that the document is a forgery, albeit a good one. (Among some fish-wrapping papers on a counter)

--*A deposit note.* From the van Haagen bank, acknowledging the receipt of 2,000 Gu. The assigned agent is Crispijn van Haagen. (Hidden in the lining of a cap, -20 on an I test to find it. INT test, -20 for non-Marienburgers, to know who Crispijn is)

--*A token.* A worn chit with the faded symbol of a yellow lotus on one side, and “The Golden Lotus. Admit one free” stamped on the other. (In the chamber pot)

--*Scrawled on the wall.* A note in charcoal, hidden by a pillow on the bed: “I love Kory.” (It’s true, Tom didn’t know how to spell her name.)

There is no sign of a struggle nor of the money. All Tom’s clothes are still here.

Asking the neighbors

Inquiring with the neighbors will turn up little – most either saw nothing and will tell the PCs to go away, or they’ll want a bribe first before telling them they saw nothing and to go away. One elderly lady, Geertruida Terlaak, makes it her business to know what goes on in Graaf Rikkertsplein. She’s also the landlady. On a successful FEL test, she remembers Tom and speaks very well of him, “Oh, he was always very polite, a well-mannered young man.” She’ll serve the adventurers tea and, over the course of a polite conversation (FEL test, +10 for Charm or Etiquette, -10 for any brutish behavior) in her musty-smelling third floor flat will reveal the following:

--*Tom’s lifestyle.* “He didn’t seem to have no job, dearie. Just slept all day and saw that fancy woman at night.”

--*Fancy Woman?* “A right beauty she was! Pale skin, brassy red hair in big, billowy curls. Nice clothes. Foreigner, I think. A Brettie. She seemed very fond of the him.”

--*And his friends?* “He didn’t appear to have many, besides the redhead. There were those two ruffians. I think their names were ‘Herman and Max.’ One had a tattoo of a snake coiled around an anchor. And there was another girl, a tough young thing with short dark hair. I heard them arguing quite loudly one afternoon before he left. I’m sorry, I don’t know her name. Does Brother Bert want me to hold the room any longer? I’m afraid Tom’s rent is up this week, and times haven’t been very good...”

I’ll be watching you...

As the PCs leave the building, make an INT test for those with Sixth Sense. Those who succeed have the feeling of being watched. If they look around for the watcher, make a Hide test for Claudia Kilsch (88% - the highest I among PCs looking for her). Failure means they see her. She will flee and escape, but another I test will note that she matches the description of the girl Tom was arguing with.

From now on, the PCs will be shadowed by members of the “Captains,” the children who hide out in Tarnopol’s Clock Tower. Claudia was Tom’s girlfriend, and she is anxious to find him. However, past experience has made them very wary of strangers.

The Stevedores' and Teamsters' Guild

The PCs can also travel to the Stevedores' and Teamsters' Guildhall, located on rundown Riddra Isle. Getting past the mangy cur on the stoop is no problem, but finding someone who will help is more difficult – these people are a close-knit group, always suspicious of excise agents. In the end, some act of good faith, such as a 1 Gu donation to the “Widows and Orphans Fund” will send the heroes upstairs to see Bart Blaak, the Guild’s membership secretary and a lieutenant of Guildmaster Cobbius.

Bart’s a busy man and simply asking about stevedores who hang around young boys will get them thrown out. But, mentioning the names and tattoo provided by Frau Terlaak will reveal that the two are Maximiliano and Hermandad Escobar, Estalian brothers who regularly work the docks. (FEL test, +10 for a successful bribe or use of a social skill, -10 for suggesting a relation between Lea-Jan and Albertus Cobbius.) “You’ll find them working nearby, on the old docks at the end of Winkler’s Bath canal.”

Hanging with Herman and Max

These two burly stevedores are found as part of a small gang unloading a Norse cog, the *Fjetland*. The PCs arrive at the ratty wharf as the gang is taking a break. Max and Herman are easily found, but reluctant to talk with strangers who might just happen to be excisemen (both are small-time smugglers, and both have been fined before). Any attempt at intimidation will have the party swiftly facing eight stevedores plus another half-dozen sailors from the Norscan crew, all armed with knives, boat hooks, and improvised clubs – and very willing to work-off some stress with a dust-up.

More sensible adventurers will try the time-honored Marienburg tradition of a bribe, either in the form of cash or, more appreciated by the brothers, a round of beers in a nearby dive, the “Weasel at the Trough.” Success here earns the following, first from Herman:

“Oh, si, we know him – He’s a good kid. We call him *El Machaso*, since he thinks he’s a real lady’s man. But after that night in the club, maybe he deserves the name, eh, Max?”

“Si, amigos, she is a real *guapa* – such a beauty! I no know why she work in a dive like that, or why she walk along Red Lantern Canal. She could work in one of the good houses, over by Elftown. And El Machaso stole her heart! *Ai!* But I guess it’s better for us poor *peones* this way. At least it is now that, as you say, Tom has gone away. ”

Relating Frau Terlaak’s description will confirm that this prostitute is indeed the same woman who visited Tom in the flat. The brothers don’t know where she can be found, but they’ve heard she has a room somewhere on Riddra or Stoessel. They will hand over an old playbill from the night they went to the club with Tom: “Live tonight in a rare appearance, FLAME!!” The address is given as the Seventh Veil, Godolphin Canal, Stoessel.

If asked by the PCs about the apprenticeship, they will mention that Tom asked about finding a forger. Whether he found one and who it might be, they don’t know. “Maybe you should ask a Gentleman, señores.”

The Golden Lotus

If the PCs found the chit in the chamber pot, they may go to investigate the Golden Lotus Dreaming House. The entrance is down an alley off the Red Lantern Canal, and PCs going there will pass derelicts huddled over small wood fires, trying to keep warm. The beggars will ask for charity and, if given more than a few pennies, will follow the PCs and pester them for more. Giving none or little earns a few rotten vegetables tossed at the PCs backs.

At the door, a Nipponese face peers at them through the small panel, suspicion in every line around his eyes. Bribes won’t work, but a successful FEL test (-20, unless showing a token) will get the hulking bouncer to open the door. He will motion them downstairs into the filthy common room (T test to avoid a coughing fit), where old Kroeller refills the slack-jawed patrons’ pipes and takes the money from their limp hands. If they inquire about Tom, Masahito will send Kroeller up to the second floor. When he comes back, he says the Lascar will see three of them in his office. The rest must wait outside in the alley. At all times, he is closely guarded by his Nipponese assassin, Toko

If the PCs ask directly about Tom, Venk, the “Lascar,” professes to know nothing of him: “The name means nothing to me, but many of my clients prefer not to give their names. Discretion is the soul of my business, you understand, so I don’t ask.” If they press by describing Tom, Flame, or offering a bribe (which the Lascar will automatically accept), Venk’s memory will suddenly improve. “Ah, yes. There was a young gentleman as you describe, and he did come here occasionally in the company of a prostitute, a dancer named ‘Flame.’ He never gave his real name. I am indeed sorry, but his constitution was not equal to his pleasures. He died roughly two weeks ago – his heart just stopped. It is sad, but it does happen. A doctor certified the death for the Watch and the body was taken away. Was he a friend of yours?”

At this news, the PCs might have a few questions...

--*About that dancer...?* “As you know, good sirs, few people on Riddra give their real names. ‘Flame’ is the only name I know her by. She rents one of our upstairs rooms, but I am sure it is not the only one in Suiddock. I do know she was not here the night the boy died, and I have not seen her in several weeks.”

--*May we see her room?* “No, good sirs, I am afraid not. She has been a good client and it would violate my honor to let you in there. I must insist.”

--*Who was the attending doctor?* “I do not know. Just a local hired by the Black Caps, I presume.”

--*Who took away the body, and where did it go?* “Again I am saddened to disappoint you. The carter was one of many locals hired by the Watch for body disposal. I did not deal with the matter myself, and, frankly, all Suiddockers look alike to Masahito and Toko. The body would likely have gone for a pauper’s burial, or perhaps even disposal in the crematorium in Doodkanaal.”

Breaking and entering

Adventurers being what they are, the PCs are at some point likely to break into the Golden Lotus, suspicious of Kataswaran’s vague answers. Refer to the description in the chapter on Suiddock for a general feel for the place. For this adventure, two rooms are likely to be of consequence:

Venk’s Offices. The offices have no windows, and are accessible only through a locked (CR-30) heavy door at the end of the second floor hall. If the PC's somehow gain access, they will find on a successful search (I -20) a concealed panel in the floorboards under an Arabian carpet. The space beneath the floor holds instructions to the Lascar from the Doctor. He was supposed to destroy these, but was saving them in case he needed a shield from the Doctor's wrath. They mention no names, but clearly state that “C. will bring a special client tonight. See that he is ready.” One note matches a night one week before Julius went to see Tom. It specifies that the victim has been sold to clients in Erengrad and will ship in about two weeks on the *La Paloma*. It is signed “v.H,” and bears a wax seal impressed with a striking scorpion (INT test, -10 for anyone other than a priest, to recognize a symbol of the cult of Kháine). There also will the investigator find Ksariq, an herb imported from Lustria that simulates death while holding the victim in a deathlike trance. An INT test by a doctor or someone with Herb Lore will be needed to identify this. Ground, it could easily be mixed with opium. Finally, another search will reveal a small shrine to Kháine in a concealed closet. On it will be the other gift dagger Clara had given Tom as a birthday present on her last visit two years ago. These are known only to the Lascar.

Corinne’s room. This is at the end of the third floor hallway, and hangs over the canal. The door is surprisingly sturdy and bears a heavy lock (CR-10). The room is sparse, containing only an empty armoire, a cot, a chair, and a chamber pot. There is no evidence that Tom was here, though an I test will indicate that the room has been “sanitized.” If Corinne is pursued here, she will open a trap door in the floor and drop a bundle into the canal, making a splash that will give the impression she has dived into the water. Then, she will change into bat form and fly through the window. Sharp-eyed observers who are quick to the window might notice (I-30) a small bat flying away to the East.

Masahito, hulking bodyguard and bouncer

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
3	48	40	5*	5	9	50	2	29	35	29	39	29	29

Skills: Disarm; Dodge Blow; Specialist Weapon – Fist Weapon; Street Fighting; Strike Mighty Blow; Strike to Stun; Very Strong*.

Trappings: Mail shirt (1AP, body), broadsword, dagger (I +10, D -2, P -20), knuckledusters (WS -10, D -1)

Toko, loyal assassin

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	63	63	4	4	11	66	3	49	39	39	57	53	39

Skills: Concealment Rural and Urban; Disguise; Marksmanship; Prepare Poisons; Scale Sheer Surface; Silent Move Rural and Urban; Sixth Sense; Specialist Weapons – Blowpipe, Fist Weapons, Flail, Lasso, Parrying, Shuriken (throwing knife skill), Two-Handed Weapons.

Trappings: Garrote, 4 shurikens (each coated with 3 doses of Manbane; 4/8/20, ES C, Rld 1), grappling hook and 10 yards of rope, mail shirt (1 AP, body), net, shield, short sword.

The Suiddock Watch Barracks

Suiddock's fort-like Watch Barracks are located near the Beulsplaats on Luydenhoek Isle. Inquiries about a missing person will lead the PCs to the duty sergeant, Gustaaf Bosman. Requests to examine records will be turned down unless the players make a successful Bluff test (-20, unless a PC has the Law skill or has followed a Watchman career). After 1d6 hours, a search of the haphazard records will produce a death certificate for one "Jaan Douw." It is signed by a Dr. Smits and records that the body was taken to Deedesveld for a pauper's burial by one "E.G.G." The sergeant will, if asked, recall that the initials refer to Erasmus Gouma Goedbloed, a Suiddocker who contracts with the Watch for body disposal. No, the sergeant doesn't know Goedbloed nor where to find him. Seemingly in order, (INT test, +10 for the skills Art or Law, -10 otherwise) a close examination will reveal that the document is a forgery, albeit a good one. A further INT test will suggest that the forgery was done by the same hand as the apprentice papers. There are several "Dr. Smits" in Suiddock, and checking each one out will take several days.

For a small tip (Bribe test), Sergeant Bosman will look up the records himself. After 24 hours (3, if the PCs mention the date of Tom's "death" at the Golden Lotus), he will find the certificate mentioned above. If asked, he will mention that there have been several odd disappearances over the last couple of years – odd, but not alarming: "There are plenty of reasons why someone

might want to vanish. Debts, bad marriage, cruel parents. There's no law that says you have to tell anyone when and where you go."

The Suiddock Black Caps are overworked and underpaid. At no time will they take wild stories of kidnapping and cults seriously, unless the PCs can produce hard evidence (such as proof of forgery). Even then, it will take 24 hours to get a magistrate's warrant to search a location in Suiddock. If they wish the Watch to investigate Deedesveld, they will be referred to the Kruiersmuur Watch. "Deedesveld is out of our jurisdiction."

Erasmus Gouma Goedbloed

Checking around the watering holes of Suiddock will let the players eventually (2d6 hours) find the disreputable Erasmus Gouma Goedbloed at the Pelican's Perch, drinking his supper and tossing fish at Beaky. For the price of a drink, the heroes may talk to him. The owner, Boorsevelt, will not take kindly to strangers harassing his customers and any attempt to harm or remove Goedbloed will result in Ishmael drawing his blunderbuss and 3d6 customers coming to the old man's aid.

Goedbloed will seemingly cooperate with the PCs:

--*The body?* "Yes, m'lads. I picked up a body at the Golden Lotus, all perfectly legal. Didn't know who he was, though. Sadly, I recover several corpses every week."

--*What did you do with it?* "Let me think...hmmm. Yes, that particular load was deposited at Deedesveld graveyard – it was their turn. A quick pauper's burial, I presume."

--*The death certificate was a forgery!* "Slander! Everything was in order! I do not have to put up with these smears on my honor! Innkeeper! INNKEEPER!!"

Erasmus Gouma Goedbloed, courier. Grave Robber, ex-Scholar, ex-Student

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
3	43	39	4	4	8	37	1	35	33	51	42	54	42

Alignment: Neutral (Verena, lapsed)

Skills: Arcane Language – Magick; Astronomy; Cartography; Consume Alcohol; History; Identify Plants; Magic Sense; Numismatics; Read/Write; Rune Lore; Secret language – Classical; Silent Move Rural and Urban; Speak Additional Language – Norscan dialect; Spot Trap.

Trappings: Wagon and old horse, shovel, large sack, lantern, dagger (I +10, D -2, P -20), large cloak and average clothes, bottle of cheap wine.

Insanity: Alcoholism.

Appearance: Portly, ragged, and dirty, his veined face and rheumy eyes bear the obvious marks of his addiction to drink. His breathing is ragged and it is clear he is not in good health. Though only in his middle 50's, he looks ten years older.

Personality and motivations: Intellectually dishonest and a coward, his career was ruined when he plagiarized the work of a colleague at Baron Henryk's. Depression drove him to drink, and his downward spiral took him from his beloved Tempelwijk to the back alleys of Suiddock and Kruiersmuur. He has pretensions to respectability, still, and often embellishes his speech with florid language. He had thought the Doctor was a simple physician examining corpses who also engaged in a bit of blackmail, but the PCs questions will confirm his suspicions that von Hoffman is part of the "body trade." He suspects Corinne's true nature, but is too much of a coward to do anything about it. He may, at the GM's discretion, be one of the three people who tries to betray the Doctor and pays with his life.

We're off to see the Wizard...

Sybo Haan is an (almost) innocent victim in this affair. Somehow, Dr. von Hoffman found out about Leo Haan's affliction and blackmailed the brothers through Erasmus Gouma Goedbloed. (For details of the Haans, see Sybo's Mystic Emporium, p.XX). A letter to Sybo asking for an appointment will result in a note naming a time two days hence. Mentioning Tom at all will frighten Sybo— he will not reply and will do his best to avoid the PCs.

If the PCs visit the Haans' shop unannounced, they will happen to catch Sybo leaving for an appointment. Questioning him will produce the same story Brother Albertus related – that Tom had worked for a day and left. Mentioning the unusual living arrangements for an apprentice will fluster him, but he will insist all was in order (PC wizard's will know that it is unusual, but possible). Confronting him with the forged papers will frighten him – he will call for the Watch, and they will rush to the aid of this respectable citizen. The Watch will warn-off the PCs, and provide Sybo with a guard for a day. In the meantime, Sybo and Leo will decide the risks are too great to remain in Marienburg and will flee in secret that night, making use of an arrangement Sybo has with Donat Tuersveld. They will leave by riverboat for the Empire and thence to Bretonnia. They will not be seen again.

The best way to learn what the Haans know is to break in and discover their dark secret. By threatening to expose them to the Witch Hunters, the heroes can themselves blackmail Sybo into revealing that it was Goedbloed who came to him, seemingly knowing everything, and demanded his acquiescence to the charade involving Tom. He never actually met the boy. Describing Corinne will jog his memory – nearly a year ago, he had gone out for "entertainment" and wound-up at the Golden Lotus in her company. He doesn't recall what he said that night, but he has not seen her since.

While this can be a dangerous confrontation, neither brother wants a fight. They will plead with the party that they have told all they know and beg to be left alone. Whatever the party says, when they leave, the Haans will flee for parts unknown. Any immediate attempt to harm them by attack or exposure will lead to a battle.

The Seventh Veil

Inquiries about the redhead seen with Tom are likely to lead to the Seventh Veil. The small club is located on the waterfront at the western end of Stoessel Isle. It is on the ground floor of a residential slum, mainly flats for sailors, laborers, and other transients. The club is popular with the rough crowd that works the docks in this part of Suiddock, and any night will see the place crowded with 3d10+10 thuggish customers, served by a tough bartender and several harried serving women. Entertainment consists of singers, comedians, and other more exotic performers. There is also a pit that is kept covered with planks, except for the weekly pit fights. Prices are 10% above the normal for Suiddock.

Asking the bartender about Tom will, after a suitable bribe, produce a chuckling response. “Yeah, I remember the kid. Made an ass of himself his first night here, but he showed himself to be an okay bloke. He was real taken with Flame, but who isn’t, eh? Seems like she was getting fond of him – more than business, if you know what I mean. Haven’t seen him around in a while, though.” Other questions get them little – the barman is a busy man, and hasn’t got time for nosey-parkers!

--*Where is Flame?* “How would I know? I’m not her bawd. She usually comes in when she wants to – doesn’t often give me advance notice. Hang around and have a drink. If you’re lucky, she might show up.

--*Know anything about forgers?* “Are you saying I’m a crook? This is a respectable place! You want a forger, go ask a Gentleman.”

--*Know anything about the Golden Lotus?* “Dream House. There are lots of them.”

GMs should note that Corinne has used her vampiric abilities to make herself very popular at the Seventh Veil – several of these people have provided her with food, though no one suspects what she really is. Any attempt to attack her will result in the entire tavern rising to her defense.

Introducing Flame

The adventurers will encounter Corinne at night, either at the Seventh Veil or by searching for her along the Red Lantern Canal on Riddra. If at the club, they can talk to her at a private booth for no less than 20 Guilders after her performance. If they seek her along the canal, it will take them 1d4 hours to find her, talking to a sailor who really resents the interruption. Again, if they pay for her time (and get rid of the drunken Bretonnian sailor), they can talk to her in a nearby pub.

Mention of Tom will set off alarm bells in her head – she will feign cooperation with the party, trying to find out all they know without giving herself away. The possible answers below should serve as a general guide to her approach.

--*What happened to Tom?* “He was a dear, sweet boy – the only friend I really had! I should never have taken him to the Golden Lotus, but it was the only private place we could find. I miss him dearly. Do you suspect the Lascar of foul play?”

--Where did his money go? “He deposited it in the Haagen Bank, until we could find a way out of here.”

--These papers are forgeries. “I know nothing of that, mon cher! Tom took care of all the arrangements himself. How do you think he got them?”

--What do you know about Goedbloed/van Okker/Sybo Haan? “Nothing mes amis! I have never met them. Do you think they were involved in some horrid plot to get Tom’s money?”

...and so on.

Corinne will use all her skills to seem as charming and vulnerable as possible, though she will not use any vampiric talents, lest she expose herself. Once the conversation is done, she will leave and take a watercoach, letting it be heard that she wants to go to Tempelwijk. On a dark part of the canals, in the privacy of the boat’s shelter, she will turn to mist and float away. The Watercoachman will be hypnotized to not remember her.

If a PC is so reckless as to try to get Corinne alone under the pretext of “hiring her services,” she will use her gaze attack to enslave the fool. First she will learn all the PC knows and suspects. Then she will then plant in his mind false memories of a “wonderful time,” which the PC will repeat convincingly to his friends.

Corinne de Maris du Brionne (“Flame”). Vampire. Ex-Pickpocket, ex-Thief, ex-Entertainer.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
6	63	55	6	5	12	57	3	53	51	52	54	47	45

Alignment: Evil (Kháine, devout)

Magic points: 40 (has to spend 10 to rise each night)

Skills: Acting; Acute Hearing; Charm; Concealment Urban; Dance; Dodge Blow; Flee!; Mimic; Palm Object; Pick Pockets; Scale Sheer Surface; Secret Language – Thieves’ Tongue; Secret Signs – Thieves’ Signs; Seduction; Silent Move Rural and Urban; Sing; Specialist Weapon – Fist Weapons; Street Fighting; Wit.

Spells: none

Trappings: Elegant gown and ladies’ heavy cloak and hood, dagger (I +10, D -2, P -20), 4d10 Guilders. Multiple Spell Ring, two spells: Summon Zombies (same as Necromantic 1 spell Summon Skeleton) and Summon Skeleton Minor Hero. (16 MPs, command word is “scorpion.”)

Appearance: A stunning beauty. Long red hair in exquisite curls, green eyes that can mesmerize (literally!). She carries herself with elegant seductiveness that most find irresistible. She appears to be in her early 20’s, though she is really 78 years old.

Personality and motivations: Half a century ago, Corinne was a small time pickpocket and entertainer in Brionne, the Bretonnian city of thieves. She chose the wrong pocket to pick one evening and found herself waking the next night as one of the Undead. To her good fortune, she was free-willed, for her maker had been killed that day when his lair was found. Rather than be disgusted at her new state, Corinne reveled in it, glorying in her new-found power. Vampirism became her instrument of revenge against all the high-class men and women who offended her over the course of her life. Brionne eventually became unsafe for her, so she began a wandering that took her to the Empire, where she met a kindred soul in Altdorf, Dr. von Hoffman. Both worshippers of Kháine, they became lovers and she joined him in his plan to relocate to Marienburg and re-establish his business in the Body Trade.

Corinne is like a cat toying with bugs in her nightly games along Suiddock's canals. Some of her clients—and meals—have included very wealthy and respectable Marienburgers! Information she gains she passes to Dr. von Hoffman, who sometimes uses it for blackmail, otherwise he files it away for future need. She also provides him with many of the victims he sells in the "Trade." No one misses the occasional sailor or foreigner...

Corinne, in her own black way, is deeply in love with Dr. von Hoffman, and she dreams of being his queen in a kingdom of wickedness. She will fight to her final death to protect him and, should the PCs fail to destroy her, she will spare no efforts in her revenge.

Special abilities and weaknesses: (The influence of Chaos has made for infinite variety of Undead in the world. Corinne varies from the standard WFRP vampire, as her powers came from Kháine directly, who chose his gifts to her.) She follows the standard description on page 250 of the WFRP rulebook except as follows:

- She may only change into a normal bat, a normal wolf, or a formless ethereal mist. She has no magic spells.
- She has no fear of mirrors, and she casts a reflection in smooth surfaces such as water, metal, and mirrors.
- As a blessing from Kháine, she resists any attempts to detect her undead nature, unless she is studied by a priest of Morr, who must successfully test against WP. She will avoid any contact with these. Her incisor teeth are retractable and are only visible when she feeds. With the expenditure of 1 magic point, she can heal a wound made by her teeth by licking it.
- She has no spells but, with the expenditure of 2 points, Corinne can add +20 to any skill test she makes. Each new test requires 2 more points to obtain the bonus.
- She does not require a coffin lined with her native soil, but must sleep between sunrise and sunset. If the Sun rises while she is abroad, she falls to the ground helpless and is destroyed by the Sun's rays.
- She is vulnerable to holy relics and symbols of Khaine's arch-enemy, his brother Morr. She must make a Fear test when confronted with one, and must make a WP test to approach within 12 yards. Striking her with a blessed cult object does d3

wounds of burning in addition to any other damage meted out. These additional wounds can never be healed

The Haagensbank

At some point, the players are likely to wonder just what became of Tom's 2,000 Guilder inheritance. If they have the deposit receipt or the information from Corinne, they can proceed directly to the Haagensbank in Goudberg. Lacking either, they have little chance to find the money, though a kind-hearted GM might let a payment of 50 Gu to one of Marienburg's information brokers turn up a lead after d12+12 hours.

The Haagensbank is the financial headquarters of the extremely wealthy van Haagen family, whose head, Leo van Haagen, is also a Director. The interior is richly done in dark woods and velvet hangings, projecting an image of opulence and success that is also conservative and stable. The Haagensbank serves a respectable clientele, both individuals and businesses. PCs entering dressed in anything but their tasteful best will be pointedly watched by suspicious guards carrying halberds and short swords. Sauntering armed and armored into the Haagensbank is not a good idea!

The heroes will be met by a supercilious junior clerk whose mannerisms (unless one of the PCs is obviously of professional or upper class stature) will make it clear that he in no way believes they could have any legitimate business at the Haagensbank. Unless the PCs can produce the deposit receipt with Crispijn van Haagen's signature or pass a relevant test (see below), they will not make any progress: "Those records are private and confidential, and cannot be released without the written authorization of the account holder." Pointing-out that the account holder is missing will have no effect.

Producing the deposit receipt or succeeding at a Bargain or Bluff test (Law +10) will elicit a request to "wait a moment, please." Thirty minutes later, the clerk will return and escort the PCs to the offices of Crispijn van Haagen, Executive Director of the Haagensbank.

Settling accounts

Van Haagen's office is of the same expensive but tasteful decor as the rest of the establishment. As the heroes enter, Crispijn van Haagen rises from behind an immense desk made of imported Kislevan black pine. Marienburger PCs will have an INT-20 chance of knowing his reputation for decadent living. His confidential secretary, a thin young man by the name of van Oesterlie, sits quietly at a writing table behind the desk and takes copious notes of the entire meeting.

Crispijn van Haagen calmly asks what business brings the PCs to his father's bank and what their connection is with young Master van Breeschooten. Apparently concerned, he reassures the adventurers that "the young master's account was handled with the utmost probity and rectitude," all the while carefully probing them for what they know and suspect. When the PCs produce the deposit receipt or ask directly about the 2,000 Guilders, van Haagen will have a clerk bring in the signature card for Tom's account. The PCs will be allowed to examine it in the office, but may not take it with them under any circumstances. Examining it reveals the following:

- the expected signatures for both Tom and van Haagen marking the account's opening, dated almost two weeks (15 days) before his disappearance.
- another signature for Tom, closing the account and withdrawing the money, dated the day he disappeared and countersigned by Crispijn van Haagen. An INT test (+10 for the Art skill) shows this latter signature to be a clumsy forgery – there are several differences with the handwriting of the first. An INT test (-10 without the Art skill) will indicate a woman's handwriting in the latter signature. A final INT test (-20, -10 with the Art skill) will hint at a Bretonnian style to the letters.

Van Haagen will insist that Tom came that day to close his account. When asked if Tom said where he was going or what he would do with the money, Crispijn will claim not to know – that he makes it a point not to pry into his clients' business. He will deny any knowledge of the Golden Lotus, Flame, Erasmus Gouma Goedbloed, or any criminal activity. On a FEL roll (-20), a perceptive adventurer will notice subtle clues that questions on these matters make van Haagen very nervous. Any overt mention of the forgery on the signature card will lead to a hot denial: guards will arrive within moments (summoned by the ever-present van Oesterlie via a bell-pull) and van Haagen will have them thrown out. They will not be admitted to the bank again, and van Haagen will have marine bodyguards with him at all times, wherever he goes.

If he hasn't had them thrown out yet, van Haagen will conclude the interview once he feels he has a good sense of what the adventurers know. He is, after all, a very busy man and there are many pressing calls on his time. He will try to keep the deposit receipt, but will not insist. After the PCs leave, he will send an urgent message via van Oesterlie to Dr. von Hoffman, warning him of the danger.

What's van Haagen's role? Crispijn van Haagen is the occasional partner of Dr. von Hoffman in the Trade. A cold-hearted sybarite in his private life, he became involved in the trade in bodies because it offered much more of a thrill than plain smuggling. His only role in Tom's case, though, was to launder his inheritance money for the doctor and Corinne. Corinne came to collect the money the same night Tom was disposed of, and signed his name for appearance's sake. She then took the agreed-upon 1500Gu, leaving van Haagen his "cut" of 500Gu.

To Find a Forger

The PCs may come upon several clues that point to the existence of a forger. The trouble is, how to find the right forger?

Asking around

The quickest, but perhaps most dangerous way to find the forger is to ask the League of Gentlemen Entrepreneurs, the great syndicate that regulates crime in Marienburg. This entails a trip to the "Marienburg Gentlemen's Club" on Riddra, deep in the rotten heart of Suiddock. PCs who are not "Gentlemen" will have trouble getting a straight answer there: failure on a FEL-20 test will have the party directed to the "surprise room," if they're lucky! Success on the test, or an inquiry by a PC who is also a "Gentleman," will allow two PCs *at most* to meet "Casanova" Henschmann himself.

Henschmann is guarded at all times by three burly thugs, all ex-Pit Fighters. (WS 45, S 4, T 4, W 9, I 50; chain shirt (1 AP body), hand weapon, knuckledusters (WS -10, D -1)) He will bluntly demand to know all the PCs know about Tom's fate. While he suspects the Lascar and the doctor of being involved in the Trade, he will not reveal any of this to the party. Instead, he is filing the information away for his own benefit. If the PCs are honest with him, he will slip them a piece of paper with the name "Sander van Okker, Dog and Crown tavern" written on it. With that, the interview is over. Henschmann will dismiss them with the reminder that they are now in his debt. If they are not honest, Casanova will tell them to wait while he gathers the information and have the two escorted to a private room, where they will be given a severe beating (reduced to 2 wounds, each) before being tossed back to their friends. Naturally, they don't get the name in this case.

A safer, but slower, way is to make the rounds of the Suiddock taverns, letting it be known that they are looking for someone good at forging official documents. After 2d12 hours, a street urchin delivers a note telling them to meet Sander van Okker at the Dog and Crown tavern, near the Kruiersmuur end of Suiddock.

Sander van Okker

Thinking the PCs want to hire him, van Okker will become immediately wary and defensive when they start questioning him about Tom. A greedy, small-time crook, slipping him at least 20 Gu in advance will get him talking, nevertheless. Threatening to expose him to the Watch will also loosen his tongue, but he will be far less forthcoming. In any event, most of what he says is a lie.

--*The apprentice papers.* "Kid came to me and said he wanted to get out from under the thumb of the goody-two-shoes that runs that orphanage. His money was good, he told me what to write, and I wrote it. Didn't see him after that – no need to." (False)

--*The death certificate.* "Glory be! Was that him? Now there's a coincidence. Sure, I did that for that old rummy, Goedbloed. I charge half what a real doctor would to sign the damned things. He gets to keep more of the money the city pays him, that way. I make up a stack for him, and he comes back to me when he uses them up. But I didn't know it was the same kid, honest." (False)

--*The money.* "Don't know anything about that." (True)

--*Flame.* "Who? Never heard of her. Sounds like a looker, though." (False)

The truth is that van Okker knows that Corinne is the doctor's wife, though he doesn't know she is a vampire. She came to him to arrange both the death certificate and the apprentice papers for Tom – he has worked for her and the doctor before. Based on what the PCs tell him, he will piece together that von Hoffman is involved in the Trade. Though he won't reveal this to the PCs, he will consider blackmailing von Hoffman. Should the GM wish, he will do this and, in losing his life, become the bait in a trap for the heroes.

Sander van Okker, Greedy Forger. Ex-Scribe.

M WS BS S T W I A Dex Ld Int Cl WP Fel

Alignment: Neutral (Ranald)

Skills: Arcane Language – Magick; Art; Blather; Read/Write; Secret Language – Classical; Speak Additional Language – Bretonnian dialect; Super Numerate.

Trappings: Engraving tools, magnifying glass, sword, writing equipment, 2d4 fake seals and sealing wax of various colors.

Appearance: Van Okker is a short thin man who dresses in a garish mix of fashions that he thinks is daring, but is really just poor taste. A day’s worth of stubble dirties his cheeks and weak chin, while a thin brown mustache struggles to survive on his upper lip.

Personality and motivations: A petty crook with all the soul of a used-horse salesman, van Okker is always scheming and scamming, looking for the big strike that will make him rich. His lack of judgment, though, will forever keep him just a minor player in Suiddock.

Van Okker’s Flat

The PCs may eventually find and search van Okker’s flat in Suiddock’s East End. Amidst the squalor, a search (I-20) will reveal a loose floorboard. In a locked strongbox (CR -20, the lock has T6 and W10), they will find a ledger and a diary that mentions doing “jobs” for various clients, including Lea Jan Cobbius. A recent entry in the diary reads “The Plowman – why? What’s his play? Coffins – people?? Smuggling by a greenskin’s arse – sacrifices!” The ledger entry for the same date refers to a permit for shipping the body of “Volodymyr Hanchuk” to Erengard on the *La Paloma*. Should van Okker also have had time to blackmail the doctor, thus getting himself killed and the PCs ambushed in his flat, they will find a note in the desk drawer that reads, “It is blackmail, but I shall pay. I shall come to your rooms tonight. –vH.”

Sidebar: The La Paloma

If the PCs are thorough in their investigations, they may come across evidence that points to the *La Paloma*. Rather than pursue von Hoffman directly, they may instead decide to stakeout the ship and wait for Tom to come to them. They might even decide to infiltrate the crew of the *La Paloma* or confront Captain Jacobus with their suspicions.

This would be a mistake, possibly one fatal to poor Tom’s chances.

These are experienced smugglers. They have not survived this long without being very careful: sailors and officers on watch will keep a sharp eye out for suspicious characters – such as PCs trying to “act natural!” Assume one mate on watch and 2d4 seamen in the area of the ship each hour at an average I of 50 to account for their heightened watchfulness. The PCs must pass a Hide test each hour they are on stakeout, -5% for each PC in excess of two on the stakeout.

If the crew spots watchers, Captain Jacobus will send a message to von Hoffman via intermediaries, canceling the shipment. The ship will load normal cargo and leave as scheduled. Since the Captain and crew of the *La Paloma* have committed no crime –yet— the authorities

will have no grounds for stopping them. In the meantime, von Hoffman and Corinne will decide that the players have become too much of a threat. Use the information detailed under “A Betrayal and Trap” as a guide to their actions.

Should the players confront Captain Jacobus directly, he will hotly deny knowledge of any plot or even of Dr. von Hoffman. Claiming to be a victim himself, he will order the PCs off his ship and have the Watch summoned. Without proof of criminal action on his part, the Watch will take the Captain’s side, arresting the PCs if necessary. As soon as he is able, Jacobus will send word to the Doctor, who will then move against the PCs.

Wild cards: the Captains of Tarnopol’s Clock Tower.

As mentioned above, the PCs may have noticed that they were being watched by street urchins – children—while investigating Tom’s flat on Graaf Rikkertsplein. All through their investigations, they will occasionally notice children watching them, though never the same one twice. These are “the Captains,” a band of children who make their home in the decaying edifice of Tarnopol’s Clock Tower (cf., *Kruiersmuur*, p.XX). Their leader is Claudia Kilsch, a rough girl who was Tom’s girlfriend before he fell under Corinne’s malign influence. At fourteen, she is the oldest of the Captains, and acts as a combination elder sister and foster mother to the rest, who range in age from five to twelve.

The Captains’ role has been left undefined so that they might serve the GM as a tool to keep the adventure on course: if the adventurers are lost for a course of action, perhaps a well-placed if illiterate anonymous note sets them on the right path. If they have no idea where the Doctor and Corinne have fled, or if they are wasting time fighting the Undead in *Kruiersmuur*, perhaps one of the Captains – maybe Claudia herself—shouts at them to hurry to Pier 1 “before ‘e gets away!”

The GM might even allow the PC’s to gain the Captain’s trust and use them as agents –“Canal Street Irregulars”—though this should be difficult to achieve. Or perhaps they provide some small but decisive aid during the fight on the *La Paloma*, when the rest of Suiddock has fled. In any case, Claudia will be there when Tom is rescued.

Claudia Kilsch, Street-thief and loyal friend. Pickpocket, ex-Thief.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
5	36	33	2	3	6	48*	1	31	37	37	39	32	36

Alignment: Neutral (Ranald Protector)

Skills: Concealment Urban; Dodge Blow; Evaluate; Flee!; Lightning Reflexes*; Luck; Palm Object; Pick Pocket; Scale Sheer Surface; Secret Language- Thieves Tongue; Secret Signs- Thieves; Sixth Sense; Silent Move Rural; Silent Move Urban.

Trappings: leather jerkin (0/1 APs, body), purse with 2 shillings and 2d10 pennies, knife (I+10, D -2, P -20), bag of minor items (marbles, handkerchief, string, etc.).

Quote: Well, sir, I do know where you can get some lanterns at a reduced price. Its my uncle, sir, he hasn't had the heart for business since my poor aunt died of the scrofulous quinsy, and he's selling up all his business, poor man. No, sir, he doesn't care for folk to visit his shop, so black is his mood after his tragic loss. Meet me at ter Naak's wharf in two hours and you shall have your lanterns.

Appearance: Claudia is 14 years old, although she can look a couple of years younger or older as she wishes. She usually has dirty brown hair, close-cropped, her eyes are blue-grey and she has somewhat sallow skin. She is pretty after a fashion, but with a hard edge.

Personality and motivations: Claudia's very wise in the ways of the streets of Suiddock and Kruiersmuur and doesn't tolerate fools (she robs them). She's also very firm in her loyalties and convictions: the other Captains are her family, Tom is her beau, and the ghost of Wim Masaryk is her friend. Woe betide the fool who harms any of them!

The Captains, light-fingered children. Pickpockets, ex-Thieves.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	27	29	2	3	5	33	1	35	28	32	28	28	34

Alignment: Neutral

Skills: Concealment Urban; Flee!; Palm Object; Pick Pocket; Silent Move Rural; Silent Move Urban.

Trappings: Leather jerkin (0/1 APs, body), purse with 2 shillings and 2d10 pennies, knife (+10I, -2D, -20P), slingshot (treat as sling), bag of minor items (marbles, handkerchief, string, etc.).

Quote: "Willi, stop crying! You're six now, act like a big boy! I'm sorry, sir. But he's 'ungry. Couldja mebbe spare a shillin' or two, just for a crust of bread?"

Appearance: Raggedy clothes, sooty faces, and perpetually runny noses. But behind each set of eyes is the look of a survivor.

Personality and motivations: To stick together and make it through each day. Older than their years in many ways, the friendship they share with each other and Wim's ghost keeps the core of a child's innocence and hope alive in each. But they are still very suspicious of outsiders. Claudia is their unquestioned leader and, because she wants to help Tom, they do, too.

The First Warning

Roughly 12 hours after the PCs have spoken to any of Goedbloed, the Lascar, Corinne, van Haagen, or van Okker, the doctor will use his contacts to have ten thugs ambush the heroes in an isolated place – any place will do, for in Suiddock, most people know better than to get involved. They will surround the adventurers and the leader will deliver a message: “This is just a friendly lesson to stay out of other folks’ business.” With that, the thugs will close to deliver a sound thrashing – their objective is not to kill, but to warn. If any are killed or more than four seriously wounded, all will flee. Any captured will only be able to say that they were “contracted for a job” and don’t know who the client is. This is true – von Hoffman used several layers of intermediaries. Tracing the path back will take more time than Tom has.

Ten thugs. Muscle for hire.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
3	33	25	3	4	8	40	1	34	28	33	30	32	29

Skills: Flee!; Street Fighter; Strike Mighty Blow.

Trappings: Chains, boat hooks, iron bars (improvised weapons I-10, D-2, P+10), d10 shillings.

Digging Deeper

Why so many disappearances? (“My, what a coincidence.”)

The various clues the PCs find may well lead them to believe that Tom is not the first victim. Returning to the Suiddock Watch Barracks will prove fruitful, provided they make it worth the duty sergeant’s while to let them go thoroughly through the Records Room. (Bribe test, minimum 5Gu, Law skill gives a +10). Knowing what to look for speeds the PCs search: after d4+1 hours, they will be able to document seven separate “Jaan Douws,” all of whom died at the Golden Lotus, and all of whom were buried as paupers at Deedesveld, carted there by Gouma Goedbloed.

Unfortunately, the sergeant is an unimaginative sort, who will dismiss the PCs as “nutcases needing a rest in Heiligdom. Lots of transients meet their ends in dream houses – and lots more get killed in taverns!” His only answer is to come back and see the Captain tomorrow – if he’s in!

As the PCs leave the barracks, undoubtedly cursing thick-headed Black Caps, they are approached by an Elf, a Wood Elf by his dress, who wishes to speak with them.

Introducing the “Body Trade.”

Tall with short-cut brown hair, the Elf walks up to the PCs and stares at them appraisingly, as if deciding whether they’re trustworthy, or maybe if they’re even worth wasting time on. After a moment, he nods to himself and begins,

“My name is Pdraigh, and I overheard your conversation. I see you had no better luck with the fool inside than I did. While I doubt I know anything about your missing loved one –I’ve only just arrived in Marienburg myself, following a lead—I may know something of the context. I’ll make you a deal: I’ll tell you what I know of the “Body Trade,” if you’ll tell me what you found inside. Agreed?”

Should the players not agree, Pdraigh will look as if his contempt for Humanity has been justified and leave, never to be seen again. But, if they agree to his offer, he will tell them what he knows of the Trade (summarize the section “The Body Trade,” above). He himself has been searching for fifteen years for a little Human girl from Kreutzhofen in the southern Empire. She touched his heart then but, when he came back to visit a year later, she was gone, kidnapped in the night. With barely controlled anger, he says “I’ve dedicated my life to finding her. She’d be 21 now, and I’m certain she’s still alive. Don’t ask me how I know – I just do. I’ll look for her until I’m certain she’s dead, and then I’ll spend the rest of my life destroying this filthy commerce!” He chuckles a bit and shakes his head ruefully. “That may take more years than I’ve got. You wouldn’t know where I could buy immortality, do you? No, I didn’t think so.”

Once he has told his tale, he will ask the PCs if they saw any mention in the records of a woman named “Lette Muurbaum,” or of a corpse with an unusual birthmark on her shoulder that looks like an oak tree and a star. They haven’t, and should say so. He will look disappointed and his attention will clearly wander elsewhere. He will turn and leave and, if the PCs try to mention suspicions about von Hoffman to him, he will brusquely reply “I don’t know. Perhaps. But my path goes a different way, to Bretonnia, and I’ve no time to waste. Goodbye.” No amount of persuasion will get him to join them.

Checking out the Doctor

Several clues also point to Deedesveld Graveyard in Kruiersmuur, operated by the same Dr. von Hoffman the PCs likely met at St. Rutha’s. There are several possible paths of enquiry:

--*Talking with Brother Bert.* Brother Albertus is too worldly-wise to dismiss the idea that Dr. von Hoffman could do anything wrong, but he will still be shocked that he might have anything to do with something so horrible as the Trade. He can tell the PCs that von Hoffman came from the Empire about four years ago. He doesn’t practice medicine much, just some charity work, and he seems to draw his income from holdings in the Empire and the fees provided by the Cult of Morr for his operation of Deedesveld. Brother Bert assumes that he spends much of his time caring for his wife, who was horribly injured and crippled in a fire before coming to Marienburg. She’s Bretonnian, he thinks. No, he has never met her – she has never left the house, as far as he knows. His behavior at St. Rutha’s has been perfectly correct – admirable, even.

--*The Physiker’s and Barber’s College.* Marienburg’s physician’s guild is headquartered in Rijkspoort. For a fee of 2Gu, the heroes may examine von Hoffman’s records (an old law makes

physician’s guild records in Marienburg open to the public). They will find little here, save that he came from Talabheim with his wife and his practice is listed as “inactive.” Examiners will also see that he has a concurrent membership in the Mourner’s Guild, the official agency of the Cult of Morr in Marienburg.

--*Underworld connections.* Checking with criminal contacts reveals that the doctor is rumored to engage in small-scale smuggling (like most Marienburgers) and that some of the corpses he receives may not be ending up in their Deedesveld graves. The assumption is that he is engaged in illegal medical research. No one has tried breaking into the house since “Filthy Louis” tried it over three years ago – and he hasn’t been seen since.

--*The Mourner’s Guild.* Morr’s temple in Marienburg is the only main temple of a Marienburg cult not located in Tempelwijk. Instead, the somber dark stone building rests in a quiet Ostmuur neighborhood. While the temple officials will be reluctant to discuss the affairs of one of their lay-Initiates (von Hoffman fooled the Board of Examiners when he arrived and applied for the position at Deedesveld), a convincing story of being interested in the history of Deedesveld (Bluff test, +10 for following an Academic career) will allow the PCs to examine the records relating to the graveyard itself. This will produce a summary of the information from the Deedesveld section of the Kruiersmuur chapter. The document that assigns the care of Deedesveld to him mentions not only his name, but that of his wife: “Corinne de Maris, van Brionne.”

Wild tales of body-snatching and improprieties at Deedesveld will produce a bureaucratic response: Brother David will take a statement and promise to refer it to the Temple’s Board of Inquiry, headed by Brother Jaap. He thanks the adventurers for their concern and public-mindedness and sends them on their way. References to Tom’s plight will produce a sincere but unhelpful suggestion to speak with the Watch.

“Doctor, Doctor! Give me the news...”

The heroes may also decide to speak to the Doctor directly. As he is not scheduled to return to St. Rutha’s for another two weeks, they will have to seek him out at Deedesveld. The graveyard itself is detailed in Chapter Ten, and asking for von Hoffman there will get inebricated instructions from Pal Koster to “ashk a’da big housh.”

The von Hoffman residence is next door, a three-story townhouse about 400 years old. It has clearly seen better days – the plaster has peeled and the mortar is cracked in several places, while some of the windows have been boarded up. The slow decay of the rest of Kruiersmuur is reflected in its walls. Rapping the gargoyle clapper will bring the elderly butler, Tobias Beekhuijsen, to the door. Stooped and slow, he will admit the visitors and ask them to wait in the parlor. He will then go to fetch the Doctor and bring tea.

Tobias “Old Toby” Beekhuijsen, devoted butler. Servant.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
2	31	26	2	4	8	38	1	29	29	29	29	29	29

Skills: Blather; Cook; Dodge Blow; Etiquette; Heraldry; Read\Write; Sing.

Trappings: Keys, servant's clothes, flask of brandy, cudgel (club), kitchen cleaver (treat as an axe).

Personality and motivations: Seventy years old, Tobias was entranced and mentally enslaved by Corinne's powers soon after the von Hoffman's moved in. He has been under her spell so long that there is no hope of recovery. He is devoted to the evil couple, will not betray them in any way, and will fight to his death to defend them.

After a few minutes, Tobias will announce Dr. von Hoffman and serve tea. The Doctor will appear pleasantly surprised to see his acquaintances from St. Rutha's. However, a FEL test at -20 will reveal that he is angry inside. (He expected the ruffians to scare the PCs off).

"Welcome to Deedesveld, gentlemen. It's not often that we have visitors. I will confess my surprise to see you, though. I hope you have good news about young van Breeschooten."

Von Hoffman will applaud the heroes efforts or commiserate with their troubles, as need be. Subtly, he will try to learn what they know. He will deny any knowledge of any of the principals in the case, other than Goedbloed. "Yes, the old man does bring the corpses of unfortunates here for burial – he does so at several graveyards." Following are several responses to possible questions.

--*May we speak with your wife?* "With apologies, I must refuse. She was horribly burned in a house fire several years ago and is terrified of visitors. I have retired here to Deedesveld to devote myself to her care. I hope you understand."

--*The signature of a Bretonnian woman on the account card at the Haagensbank.* "Surely you realize there is a large Bretonnian community here in Marienburg? I'm sure many of their women are less than reputable! My wife is an invalid, gentlemen, and I resent the implications in that question!"

--*A character with Magical Sense detects his power.* "Yes, I was training to be a Wizard before I found my calling in medicine. But that was many years ago."

--*The Body Trade.* "I have heard rumors of it, but I thought they were only that. It's hideous if true. Do you suspect Goedbloed or this drug dealer of being involved in something so monstrous?"

--*Tom was brought here!* "What?? Are you sure? No, I never saw the body. Paupers are given no special treatment, other than having quicklime put in the sack, and the corpse was in a sack when it was brought here. Koster would have added the lime."

--*May we exhume the body?* "Of course. Let us go now. Koster will dig it up. I hope you are wrong."

Exhuming the body will take the alcoholic Koster four hours, one-and-half if a PC helps. Opening the coffin will reveal a rotting sack and an even more rotten corpse (T-2 test for any PCs present. Failure leads to vomiting.). The corpse is far too gone to recognize, thanks to the action of the quicklime – but it is roughly the size of a teen-aged male and wears men’s clothing. (The Doctor had the corpse of another youth in his lab – it was dressed in Tom’s clothes and placed in the coffin.) The Doctor will be sad and resigned:

“I am indeed sorry my friends. It seems young master van Breeschooten met a dismal end. I have already broken minor regulations of the Mourner’s Guild by conducting this impromptu exhumation. Out of respect for the dead, the grave must be filled again. Koster will see to that, while I must attend to my wife. I bid you adieu.”

The Doctor will refuse to answer any more questions, pleading a lack of knowledge. If the players persist or even threaten him, he will summon the Watch. Von Hoffman is a respected member of the Kruiersmuur community, and many of his neighbors will come to his aid against “strangers and hooligans.”

Dr. Karl von Hoffman, curator of Deedesveld Graveyard and Priest of Kháine. Necromancer (lvl 2), ex-Wizard, ex-Physician, ex-Physician’s Student, ex-Grave Robber, ex-Wizard’s Apprentice.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
3	42	39	3*	4	7	49	1	62	47	65	49	54	45

Alignment: Evil (Kháine, devout)

Magic points: 29

Skills: Arcane Languages – Magick, Necromancy; Cast Spells – Petty, Battle 1, Necromantic 1 and 2; Cure Disease; Demon Lore; Heal Wounds; Identify Plants; Identify Undead; Magical Sense; Manufacture Drugs; Meditation; Prepare Poison; Read/Write; Rune Lore; Scroll Lore; Secret Language – Classical; Silent Move Rural and Urban; Spot Trap; Surgery; Theology (cult of Kháine).

Spells: Petty—Curse, Gift of Tongues, Glowing Light, Magic Alarm, Magic Flame, Magic Lock, Marshlights, Open, Protection from Rain, Reinforce Door, Sleep, Sounds, Zone of Silence, Zone of Warmth; Battle 1 – Aura of Resistance, Flight, Steal Mind, Wind Blast; Necromancy 1 – Hand of Death, Summon Skeletal Champion, Summon Skeletons; Necromancy 2 –Hand of Dust, Stop Instability, Summon Skeleton Minor Hero.

Trappings: Elegant but somber clothes, sword, cane topped with a silver wolf’s head, pair of silver rings set with rubies – one is a Ring of Protection from Swords, the other is a plain ring worth 50 Gu. Potion of healing, Blackwand (cf., *Apocrypha Now*, p. 46. Cloak of Darkness spell once per day for no cost. Fires d6 Arrows of Weakness once per day. They take the form of yellowed skeletal fingers and are released one per round, having the same range and damage as a

longbow. Each is coated with 1d3 doses of Manbane. There are 16 “arrows” left.) Various drugs to stave-off the effects of Cadaverous Appearance.

Insanity Points: 4

Insanities and disabilities: Cadaverous Appearance; Morbidity; Strength Loss*.

Appearance: Tall, spare, and elegant, of indeterminate middle age. Salt and pepper hair adorns a beardless face. He rarely smiles, a product of his morbidity. Because of the drugs he takes, he shows no physical signs of his devotion to Necromancy. He speaks in measured, cultured tones.

Personality and motivations: Karl von Hoffman fled to Marienburg after barely avoiding the Witch Hunter’s pyre in his native Talabheim, where he was known by his real name, Karl von Dittersdorf. Fascinated by death, dying, and the dead since he was a young boy pulling the legs off spiders, he undertook the study of medicine to further his interests. Eventually he turned to grave robbery and Necromancy to better understand the mysteries of Life and Death. It was during these latter days that he was recruited by a local cult of the Lord of Murder and the Raving Dead, soon becoming their leader and chief priest.

It was in Altdorf that he met and fell in love with the vampire Corinne. She followed him to Marienburg, where he took over the administration of Deedesveld Graveyard after the unfortunate “heart attack” of the previous curator. Here he has continued his researches, funded by blackmail and the money he makes in the Trade. As he grows older and his blasphemous practices take their toll, he has redirected his efforts from a simple quest for power to a desperate search for immortality and health. He is devoted to his Bretonnian lover, wishes to live forever with her, and will die to defend her.

A Betrayal and Trap

When the GM feels the moment is right, the von Hoffmanns will be betrayed by one of their “ring.” Either the Lascar on the one hand, or Gouma Goedbloed and van Okker on the other will decide to blackmail the Doctor, threatening to reveal his role in the Body Trade unless he pays substantial moneys. Combined with the heroes’ persistent investigations, the pair will conclude that their game is up in Marienburg and it is time to flee to another city. They will flee aboard the *La Paloma* to Erengrad, taking Tom with them to earn funds to reestablish themselves. But first, they have to take care of some pesky traitors and adventurers here in Marienburg.

The following assumes that Goedbloed and van Okker decide to blackmail the pair. Should Venk Kataswaran be the more logical candidate, stage the battle at the Golden Lotus and adapt Corinne’s actions as needed.

After sunset, the PCs will receive a letter that reads as follows:

“Should you desire to know the truth about Tomas van Breeschooten, missing Guilders, and the Doctor’s ‘Trade,’ then come to my flat where Mijn Heer Erasmus Gouma Goedbloed and I shall explain all to you. For 100 Guilders each, of course.”

Sincerely,

Sander van Okker
Erasmus Gouma Goedbloed

An INT test (-10 without the Art skill) will reveal the signatures to be genuine. Corinne forced van Okker to write it under entrancement before killing him and Goedbloed.

When the party arrives at the flat, which is above a shop inhabited by a Trader and his family, the only visible illumination will be a small candle in a window that corresponds to van Okker's rooms, and a small lamplight from the back rooms of the ground floor, where the shop owners live. Knocking will not get a response from the shop: that is because Corinne has killed everyone within – parents, grandparents, and the two boys, using her ring to raise them as zombies and summoning a Skeleton Minor Hero to command them. Van Okker and Goedbloed have also become zombies. They sit patiently within the flat with their throats torn open, waiting to attack the heroes.

When the PCs knock at van Okker's door on the landing, a muffled voice (Corinne) will call out "come in." As the door opens, the room will be dark save for the one candle by the window. Corinne, using magic to enhance her talents (Bluff test. +10 for Acting, +10 for Mimic, +20 for 2MPs spent) and concealed in a corner, will call out in Goedbloed's voice "Come in, Good Sirs! I hope you have brought drink with you as well as gold to celebrate this night!"

Whether the PCs enter or not, Corinne will spring her trap. Goedbloed and van Okker will rise and attack – but it's now obvious they're dead. Moving into the light, Corinne will laugh maniacally and stare straight at a leading PC (choose the one with the lowest WP – she can sense it): "Defend me from them" she calls out, pointing at the PCs. She will spend another 5 MPs to reduce by 25% the victim's chance to resist her hypnotic gaze. Whether it succeeds or not, she will next turn to gas and flee out the window to rejoin her lover. After the first round, allow the hypnotized PC a chance at normal WP each round to break free of Corinne's power.

At the same time, the zombie family downstairs will come forth and, lead by the Skeleton Minor Hero, will attack up the stairs at the adventurers rear.

Skeleton Minor Hero, one of the raving dead.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	45	37	4	4	9	40	2	28	28	28	28	28	-

Skills: Chatter teeth.

Trappings: helmet, tattered chain shirt and shield (2 APs head, body and arms), fouled sword.

Special rules: Causes *fear* in opponents.

Eight Zombies: two pathetic criminals and one pitiable family.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
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Skills: Wail and moan. Eat brains.

Trappings: None.

Special rules: Cause *fear* in opponents.

The Rescue

Presuming they survive the ambush at van Okker's, the heroes will undoubtedly want to make for Deedesveld to take out the Doctor and Corinne and rescue Tom. If they want extra help, they will finally be able to convince the Kruiersmuur Watch that something is seriously amiss – ten Black Caps (8 regular Watchmen and 2 Watch Sergeants) will accompany them to Deedesveld. The evidence in either van Okker's or the Golden Lotus is enough to arrest von Hoffman on "suspicion." If they go elsewhere than the Kruiersmuur Watch Barracks –to the Suiddock barracks, for example, or even get Brother Bert to swallow his pride and ask his brother Lea Jan Cobbius for Stevedore "muscle" – they will get an equally good response. Let them have the satisfaction of feeling they are going to kick "necromantic butt" on the way to Deedesveld, because...

"In the city, the mighty city, the dead will walk tonight..."

For four years, Dr. von Hoffman has been planning for the moment he would have to flee Marienburg. Over the years, he has accumulated magical power and developed a ritual that would raise all the dead of Deedesveld and send them on a rampage of destruction through Kruiersmuur. Making a living sacrifice of the enslaved Tobias, he has cast a Khainite ritual that has raised nearly 100 Zombies and Skeletons, and 5 Skeleton Minor Heroes. As an added precaution, von Hoffman has secretly scribed symbols of Kháine in many of Kruiersmuur's buildings. This was done while ostensibly performing charity work in the area. The symbols have a stabilizing effect on the Undead, requiring that they test for instability only once every 30 rounds (5 minutes). As the PCs head down the lane that leads to the gates of Deedesveld, they see the following nightmare scene:

"From out of the gates of the ancient graveyard an unnatural parade snakes forth onto the streets of Kruiersmuur – a parade of the living dead, dozens of rotting corpses and fleshless skeletons, lead by more of the hideous undead officers like the one you faced earlier tonight. At their head is the sexton, Pal Koster – or, rather, his head is at their head, carried by the zombie that tore it from his body.

Panic and chaos – screaming mothers drag their children off the streets, desperate to get them inside and bar the doors. From somewhere a townsman with an axe attacks a walking corpse: he misses, and his skull is crushed with one blow from a decaying hand. A desperate woman has doused one creature in oil and set it alight but, instead of conveniently "dying" on the street, it stumbles into a building and sets it alight – the flames spread like wildfire. As more of the undead pour forth, they flow down all the available streets, spreading like a wave of insanity."

Whoever accompanies the PCs will forget about investigating Deedesveld to deal with the emergency. Nor will the PCs find any help from any other authorities who come aid Kruiersmuur in its hour of need. Word of the crisis has spread quickly, and additional Black Caps, wizards and priests are rushing towards the embattled ward. None will stop to worry about the plight of one young boy, nor will any realize that the greater threat is escaping – there's too much confusion. If Tom is to be saved, the PCs must do it on their own.

The chase

The PCs will have little trouble getting past the Undead, who are busy killing Kruiersmuurers. Breaking into the von Hoffman mansion will reveal evidence of a hasty exit. Searching upstairs will find that the Doctor's wife lived in a separate room – and that the only furnishings within were a coffin surrounded candles of black tallow...

A hitherto concealed door in the parlor leads down to a laboratory, adapted from the old smugglers' tunnels from the area's days as Breedmoers. The symbols painted on to the walls and floors, the altar along one wall, the body of the freshly dead Tobias in the pentagram – all mark this as a shrine to Kháine and a Necromancer's retreat.

This underground chamber has access to the lower levels of tidal drains and cisterns – the old paths of the smugglers in days gone by. An open coffin lays by the water. Examining it finds small holes drilled to admit air, and an I test shows that a boat pulled out recently.

There is no other boat to take, and the von Hoffman's have an obvious head start. If the PCs have found the right clues, they'll know to make for Suiddock and the *La Paloma*. If not, one of the "Captains" can provide them with a quick lead. Either way, the PCs should be lead to believe that every minute counts. Whether they dash through the panicked streets or row like mad along the canals in a commandeered watercoach, build the tension till they arrive at Suiddock – the general commotion coming from the wharves will head them towards the Rijksweg side of Stoessel Isle and the final confrontation.

Battle and rescue, or...?

The upheaval along the docks will led them to Pier 1, Stoessel North. There the *La Paloma* is docked, and all the locals are giving it a broad berth – that's because Corinne and Karl von Hoffman have killed most of the crew and revived them as undead after the ship's master, Captain Jacobus, refused to go along with their failing scheme. As the adventurers arrive, von Hoffman kills Jacobus and orders the zombie crew to "cast-off." Given their clumsy natures, it takes longer than usual and the PCs have time to board and attack, though von Hoffman will see them and use the Blackwand from range.

There are too many possibilities here to try and list them all for the GM. Suffice it to say that Corinne and Doctor von Hoffman will use all their resources to survive, but neither will leave the other behind if at all possible. Assume that ten of the crew are zombies, and the Corinne and von Hoffman have 25 and 16 MPs left, respectively.

Presuming the PCs are victorious, Tom can be found below decks on the crew deck, his remaining 1500 Gu in a chest next to him. It will take two weeks of devoted care for him to

recover his mind. Deedesveld Graveyard will be plowed under, salted, and exorcised before being re-dedicated and directly administered by the Cult of Morr.

Further on

The following are some possible continuations from this adventure.

A chase to Erengard?

It's quite possible that the PCs will be so tardy that the von Hoffmanns will escape on the *La Paloma*, with Tom as their hapless prisoner. If so, Brother Albertus will play his utmost on their collective sense of responsibility to go to Erengard, rescue the boy, and put an end to the menace of the Necromancer and the Vampire.

What do they find in the Kislevan city? Has Tom been kept alive? Have the von Hoffmanns re-established themselves in society? And what are these rumors of a new, mysterious mistress for the city's Prince?

Revenge of the van Haagens?

Crispijn van Haagen is a vindictive soul. Though no evidence will be found among the ruins of Deedesveld to implicate him, the van Haagen heir will blame the PCs for "spoiling a good thing." That, and he will fear their suspicions of him. Though he can muster enough influence to keep himself out of court, he cannot feel secure till the adventurers have been neutralized. At first, he will simply harass them with the goal of forcing them out of Marienburg but, if they fight back, he will eventually resort to murderous means. And, should Crispijn be seriously threatened, old Leo himself will take a hand. Defeating the van Haagens will be very difficult, as it would likely mean the downfall of the House.

Pursuing the "Trade"

The Body Trade is a diffuse and amorphous organization – there is no one head. Among the papers found in the wreckage of the von Hoffman townhouse, however, are notes that indicate a network that extends up the Reik, through Carroburg to Altdorf, Nuln, and beyond. The one solid lead is to "Anneka da Avila Feroz," the eldest daughter of the leading Estalian crime family in Altdorf. The problem is that she is also the mistress of the head of the Emperor's personal intelligence service.

Experience Awards

While no Fate Points are given out for this adventure, use the following awards as a guideline.

For each clue found in Tom's flat:..... 10 ep

For each clue successfully followed-up on..... 10 ep

For cooperating with Pdraigh the Elf..... 5 ep

For good roleplaying.....20 ep
For surviving the Marienburg Gentlemen's Club.....10 ep
For defeating Corinne and the Doctor.....15 ep for each
For killing Corinne and the Doctor.....30 ep for each
For rescuing Tom alive.....30 ep
For giving him back what's left of his money.....15 ep