

Bacon Butties

A one-sheet WFRP Scenario
by Gaz Bowerbank

What Would The Smart Party Do? Podcast

A would-be wizard cast out from the College of Magic has come home to find his family gone without telling him where to. Embittered and ambitious, he turned to Ruinous Powers to gain advancement where skill and mettle were missing. Now Do'Nahled consults his dark god and labours to produce an army of hogs to rule the world – an abject lesson in the perils of meddling with the chaos gods.

Foe one reason or another, our intrepid heroes find themselves travelling through The Reikwald woods. Perhaps scouts for the Reikland State Army – helping to plot where next the Emperor's finest might push back the dark forces within the forests' arboreal bosom. Mayhap they are on an important quest from a wealthy patron, or are lost fleeing a greater danger; or enticed by rumours of magical treasure and guided by an old soak with a convincing map? Whatever the reason, as night draws in the adventurers spot the golden glow of firelight bleeding through windows of the only inn for miles around. The Hogshead Pub rests on one of the more travelled routes in Reikwald, close to a tributary of the Reik and as near to civilisation as it gets in these parts.

The Hogshead Pub

More a collection of buildings than a pub, Dirk the Nice (an ironic title which only infuriates the barkeep even more than his irritable default position if used) is the proprietor. He earns a very comfortable living with a dry goods store, livery of ostensibly fresh horses, rooms to rent by the night and so forth. It's run by himself and his extended (and extensive) family. The Hog is centre of all life for anyone within walking distance and so well-thought of by everyone, despite the owners' demeanour. Itinerant workers, blade sharpeners, minstrels, people looking to barter or tell tall tales, all can be found by the welcoming fire.

As the heroes enter, the warm hubbub of chatter dies and suspicious eyes stare at the newcomers through a thick miasma of tobacco smoke. A coin pings and skitters off the flagstone floors as a bald ferryman is put off his game of Shove Ha'penny by the disturbance. *"You made me miss..."* he intones, staring accusingly at the heroes. Play the scene out depending on how the characters respond. Attempts to placate the ferryman are an **Average (+20)** Test – he can be easily bribed, charmed, intimidated and so forth. Once the initial awkwardness is dealt with, Dirk's tall and welcoming wife Blythe will call out *"Born in a barn were you strangers? Put t'wood in th'hole and let me get you some ales."*

The characters can easily arrange beds for the night, food, ale or other amenities. Being somewhat out of the way, prices for anything other than Common goods and services are 30-50% higher at the Hog than elsewhere, but Dirk brooks no haggling, as there's simply nowhere else to go. At

irregular periods during the evening weird high-pitched (and yet strangely disturbing) squeals can be heard in the forests beyond the pub walls. Locals look sideways at each other, but then continue as if nothing strange has occurred. If and when questioned, folk will initially deny hearing anything odd, until a squeal occurs just as they make another denial – at which point they'll talk of foxes mating or cutthroats mugging a merchant. A **Challenging (+0) Gossip** Test reveals that the local area is being menaced by a sounder of viscous hogs. Initially seeming humorous perhaps, the drinkers at the Hog will get serious and spill all kinds of real and imagined details – Beastmen-bred sent down from the mountains, whispered tales of Ruinous Powers, monsters from pre-Sigmar times. All agree they are a menace though and best not talked of lest they are summoned.

RANDOM PUB-GOER TABLE (Roll 3d10 and combine)			
d10	A...		is...
1	Frisky	Ferryman	Drinking too much
2	Drunk	Farmer	Gambling
3	Sleepy	Swineherd	Shoving Ha'Penny
4	Boring	Maiden	Amorous
5	Loud	Peddler	In need of cash
6	Youthful	Merchant	Eager for gossip
7	Deaf	Charlatan	Selling something
8	Funny	Coachman	Falling asleep
9	Smelly	Entertainer	Telling stories
10	Fragrant	Messenger	Eating heartily

One way or the other Dirk will catch wind of the talk – or even straight-up call the adventurers to one side if they prove incurious. Originally from Broekwater, north west of Marienburg, Dirk talks with an unusual accent but woe betide those mocking him. Business is a tenuous thing in the wilds, and he's happy (everything's relative) to pay to have the hog problem ended. He offers up free food, beer and lodgings, supplies, horse rental (and failing everything else; cold, hard cash) to get the heroes to investigate and put a stop to the insufferable squealing and destruction of property.

Backdoor Action

After around 3-5 minutes of negotiation, a cry comes from Blythe, with the sound of dropped plates drawing everyone's attention. From the kitchen window she has spied that a small group (one per character) of boars has broken into the corral at the back of the pub, where some of her children were seeing to the goats. Dirk turns to the heroes and implores them to help. While the locals rush to aid the kids (both goat and human), it's up to the characters to deal with the rampant hogs. Use the stats from WFRP p314 – they are Belligerent and Infected with Packer's Pox. Once half the creatures are down or heavily wounded the pigs will flee back to the woods, eager for easier prey.

In the aftermath, everyone will be grateful for the help received (or suitably scornful of cowards) and this may be an opportunity to renegotiate a deal. Regardless, as long as the group acquitted themselves well, they don't have to buy a drink all night and will get a slap-up breakfast in the morning after sleeping in the finest rooms the pub can muster. Presuming the players have accepted the job from Dirk (and if they haven't, the adventure ends here, thanks for playing), it's up to them to decide where to start. The most obvious clue is the massive trail of destruction leading out of the back of pub grounds. Craven characters may suggest waiting in the Hog, drinking free beer all day in case the pigs come back, but they will be met with derision and an unimpressed Dirk if this appears to be happening.

Meanwhile, Back at the Ranch

Hunting the hogs is initially easy, as the trail is trivial to follow. However, once the characters are swallowed by the dark forestry of Reikwald, things become more challenging. The forest canopy turns day to night, and the floor is covered with obscuring ferns, snagging brambles and twisted roots that seem to grab at cloaks and ankles. The heroes must make an **Extended Challenging (+0) Track** Test. One roll is made per hour of travel and the character need to accumulate 5 success levels within 3 hours, or hogs will encircle them and the hunters become the hunted. If the characters have failed, they are set upon – each must make a **Difficult (-10) Perception** Test to avoid being surprised, as (one per character) boars rush from the black, tangled undergrowth to feast on man-flesh (Surprise p157). Once dealt with, the characters proceed as below.

If the heroes were successful in their endeavours however, they track the hogs back to a clearing in the woods. Careful examination from the eaves of the trees reveals what was once perhaps a stone circle, or perhaps more robust building – now swallowed in moss and braced by fallen trees and choking vines. Sunlight, banished from the rest of the forest, lends an almost magical quality here, stinging the eyes and lending odd movement to the arboreal scene. Among the ruins are 30-50 hogs. Viewed in the daylight, they are seen to be somewhat twisted and deformed, with blood-red eyes and distended features.

A **Difficult (-10) Perception** Test (made merely **Challenging (0)** if the characters are cautious and take their time) reveals a shrouded figure moving around in the heart of the site. Do'Nahled prays here to his dark master and magically experiments on his porcine charges. The area within the loose stone circle is free of hogs – even twisted by Ruinous experiments they shun it's fell aura – except for an unfortunate individual pig which Do'Nahled has snared to Change For the Better.

Brave adventurers will no doubt wish to put an end to whatever foul sorcery is taking place here. A full frontal assault seems unwise, given the area is infested with hogs, but it's one approach. Being inveterate arsonists, someone may suggest torching the forest – but the vegetation is lush and verdant, thick with sap and twisted, unnatural juices.

Sneaking upon the circle is probably the wisest choice and thankfully (from the heroes' perspective) the until-now annoying undergrowth provides excellent cover. An **Average (+0) Stealth (Any)** Test will get the characters within close proximity of the villain, despite the presence of inquisitive pigs.

Taking Back Control

As the heroes get in position to assault Do'Nahled and end his foul acts, the forest goes silent. The struggling hog he was "investigating" turns it's once madly-rolling eye in their direction and the characters could swear they hear their names being susurrated on the wind blowing through the trees. Do'Nahled's foul magics alert him to their presence and he curses the group. "I knew I should have built a wall!" he screeches, "Go back to where you came from!".

With this he darts among the under growth, ruins and fallen trees - trying to stay in cover and ahead of the characters. This area is Corrupted (p182) and counts as Moderate Exposure for those that stay a short period (say 3-5 minutes). A **Challenging (+0) Endurance** Test is required to resist ill effects. Do'Nahled refuses to leave his lair, decrying curses and calling on his Dark Lord for assistance. At random intervals adventurers may stumble upon a roving hog (or several) – this is the boss fight, make it count. Enterprising GMs may consider a Pursuit first, before the group can finally corner the villain.

Once Do'Nahled is dead (or the characters – in which case, enjoy your feed, hogs!), the remaining boars are released from their chaotic mind-control that's been hounding their every waking moment. Now quite insane, the poor creatures run in all directions as far away from this cursed place as possible. Later they may breed and grow more numerous, causing other problems. But that is for another adventure. Searching among the ruins may garner some coins, items of note, clues to an abandoned culture or other things as the GM wishes.

On return to The Hogshead Pub, presuming success (of sorts at least), the heroes will be feted by all and sundry – never having to put their hands in their pockets. A hog roast is on the go, glistening fat popping and hissing as it hits the fire. Tippy characters may fancy they see blue-green flames lick occasionally at these points, but that's probably just the beer goggles. Probably.

Statistics

References refer to the Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay rules by Cubicle 7.

30-50 Hogs (use Boars, p314)

Do'Nahled (as a Wizard p60, attributes are magically-enhanced 50 across the board; he has been granted all the *Lore of Beasts* magic, along with *Treason of Tzeentch* by the Lord of Change)

Everyone Else (use the People's of the Reikland, p311)