

# *Silence is Golden*

*An Itzacon T&A Scenario  
for 5 Brothers of Surin*

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## **Blurb**

The peasants talk of this and that in the night. The Brothers listen and make sure that there is nothing to their stories. This time however, there might be more to their tales than meets the eye.

On the first day, the ground shook. On the second day, the sky turned black at midday. It was then the villagers started to go missing...or so claimed the peasant before Brother Marcus gave him his final blessing.

Now Brother Marcus is sending you to investigate these claims and has given you the medallion of Surin. You are to get to the bottom of this by any means.

Such things cannot happen so close to the capitol and if vile sorcery is involved it must be rooted out and destroyed.

Walk in the light of truth Brothers.

An Itzacón 9 scenario for 5 Brothers of Surin powered by GURPS

## System

This scenario uses Generic Universal Role Playing System (Gurps). It requires 3d6 per player.

[Note you can hand out the system and setting pages as Handouts for the Players, just double check to make sure there is nothing that should be GM's eyes only on them!]

You don't need to be too familiar with Gurps or have a copy of 4<sup>th</sup> ed Gurps lite or the main rule book – 'Characters' because I will explain the basics here, however if you are familiar with the system, skip this whole section!

Essentially there are the 4 main stat blocks and their secondary derived stats:

ST, DX, INT, HT (strength, Dexterity, Intelligence and Health) – and the secondary stats Hit points, Perception, Will and Fatigue points. .

This is a convention so you shouldn't have to worry about learning a whole new system.

**The gist of it is:** Roll under or equal to the number listed. Sometimes a player might 'take their time'. If that's the case, consider giving them a +4 bonus, other times equipment would give a similar benefit e.g. Climbing is one thing but taking your time and using a rope seem the sensible option so you could offer the player a total of +8, of course sometimes it's tougher than normal because of environmental conditions e.g. its slippy, windy, foggy etc. This might be a -2 penalty to skills or -5 if it's really bad. Rarely would a penalty be so severe it would be -10. Perception rolls in 'total darkness' would be at -10, or trying to shoot someone in the eye from across the street. That should give you a range to work within.

No one wants to get bogged down in the minutiae at a convention, so for situation modifiers you can be fluid as long as you are consistent.

Each player will have an item which will not be found in the book as this game is set in a campaign setting of my own design. Unusual items will be described [along with their mechanics] on the PC's character sheet.

### Who goes first?

This is based on your initiative (called speed in the book); he who goes first in GURPS often goes last. I call it initiative here because more people are familiar with that term.

### Damage

Muscle powered damage i.e. swords, axes, knives etc. Depend on the strength of the wielder and the weapon being used. First start with the character's ST then decide if its swing or thrust damage, then add the damage modifier of the weapon (a punch will be -

3...ish, a knife -1 and a large weapon about +2). A knife does impaling damage which means it doubles after armour or other reductions are resolved, this represents that a knife is obviously more dangerous to the human body than a fist. Other forms of damage can be looked up in the book.

**Damage Table**

**ST Thrust      Swing**

9 1d-2	1d-1
<b>10</b> 1d-2	1d
<b>11</b> 1d-1	1d+1
<b>12</b> 1d-1	1d+2
<b>13</b> 1d	2d-1
<b>14</b> 1d	2d
15 1d+1	2d+1
16 1d+1	2d+2
17 1d+2	3d-1
18 1d+2	3d
19 2d-1	3d+1
20 2d-1	3d+2

**Distance/time Penalty**

10 yards/1 second 0
20 yards/ 10 seconds -1
100 yards/ 1 min -2
500 yards/10 min -3
2 miles/ 1 hour -4
10 miles/ 1 day -5
100 miles/ 1 week -6
1,000 miles/ 1 month -7 etc

**Important!** A roll of 3 or 4 is always a critical success so make up something good! A critical attack can't be dodged.

A roll of 18 is always a critical failure. 17 is a critical failure if the skill is lower than 17.

Here are some advantages important in combat:

**Combat reflexes:**

You have extraordinary reactions, and are rarely surprised for more than a moment. You get +1 to all active defence rolls, +1 to Fast-Draw skill, and +2 to Fright Checks. You never "freeze" in a surprise situation, and get +6 on all IQ rolls to wake up, or to recover from surprise or mental "stun." Your *side* gets +1 on initiative rolls to avoid a surprise attack – +2 if you are the leader).

**High pain Threshold:** You are as susceptible to injury as anyone else, but you don't *feel* it as much. You *never* suffer a shock penalty when you are injured. In addition, you get +3 on all HT rolls to avoid knockdown and stunning – and if you are tortured physically, you get +3 to resist. The GM may let you roll at Will+3 to ignore pain in other situations.

## Setting and Mood

The scenario is set in a world where the only race is human. The country is called SaSurin. It is a little smaller in size than France. The main religion is the worship of the Lord of Light and the church is named the Church of Light, so fairly standard stuff.

SaSurin is divided into Duchies, counties etc ruled over by Dukes, Earls etc. At the head of all this is a hereditary King. It's climate is quite warm in Summer and dry and cold in Winter. Spring brings pleasant temperature and rainfall. SaSurin is in a Southern hemisphere so the midday sun is in the North which is important to note.

The country has a more medieval Germanic/English feel but there are no peasants per se (though the term is used by those who hold quite high station, it can be used the way we might use the term 'pleb'). There are however very poor people but by law they are all free men and women are treated much as they were in medieval Europe, if a little fairer. The system of governance (particularly the church) heavily favours law and order in almost every facet of life, from personal cleanliness to the layout of towns.

Sorcery does exist but is viewed by the Church of Light as evil. Those who practise it are referred to as 'the cursed' and practising sorcery will see you burned at the stake before you can spell your name backwards.

Some neighbouring countries have different views on the matter but keep them to themselves because SaSurin tends to get belligerent about any such mutterings.

Life may be fairer than the medieval equivalent but disease still kills most children before they reach the age of 3 and many women still die in child birth. A few very, very, very, very rare people have unusual abilities. Most are killed on discovery. Some however are 'gifts from the Lord of Light', such as healing abilities or the ability to see ghosts (many people also pay homage to their ancestors as well as the Lord of Light which is perfectly acceptable). Those who have such favoured abilities are named 'the blessed'.

Technologically speaking, SaSurin is Gurps Tech Level 3 or 4 in some places at this time and can vary from village to town etc. It is a landlocked country so a compass is rare as are telescopes. Most people are semi-literate as learning is part of the religion and to be illiterate (or consistently dirty) is a great disgrace. If you are injured your best bet is drugs and some bed rest as most doctors, despite great learning are quacks at best. Weapons are mostly swords and crossbows, spears etc. Knights fight from horses using stirrups. Pattern welding is well developed and steel making in general.

The very rich have glassware which is a highly developed art. Book binding, glassblowing, papermaking, bee keeping and candle making are all highly respected crafts.

Society is centred on the extended family, often 3 generations will live together. Sons either add another storey upwards or sideways to the house.

## **The Church**

As mentioned the church is called the Church of Light and worships the God or Lord of Light called various different names in different places. He is also a God of knowledge, learning, protection, the sky in some places, revelations, freedom and roads and farming.

His symbol is a burning golden circle. Priests and worshippers trace a circle in the air when blessing themselves or others or when extending good wishes to each other. Candles, fire and mirrors are an important part of service, which are mostly held at dawn, midday and Sunset. Churches are circular and often have large parts open to the sky. Cathedrals are huge structures more like a modern stadium or the Coliseum in Rome. Singing is also prominent in the religion. Mirrors which are constructed high up are used to reflect the sun (or another light source on a cloudy day)

The church prizes structure, order, law, learning, commerce, freedom and family. The bond between two brothers or two sisters is particularly revered.

There are certain 'catholic' similarities but there is no specific afterlife, some spirits look over their mortal descendants some 'return to the light'.

As mentioned, ancestor worship is widespread and compatible with the Church of Light. Spirits, wraiths and ghosts are seen by a few but believed by all. 'Evil' spirits exist in dark places, untouched by man or the grace of the light.

The worship of other Gods is tolerated as long as nothing that could be construed as Sorcery is pursued. Common 'foreign' deities include the usual; Lord of Death, Sky-god, Mother earth, God of Storms and Seas, the Wolf of Winter etc and some beliefs centre around animism though most of these involve practise too close to sorcery and are generally prohibited.

## **Surin and his order**

The most famous prophet was Surin. Long ago the human race was enslaved by inhuman tyrants. Surin broke free and slew his slavers, freeing his birth brothers from the darkness they were kept in. The Lord of Light imbued him with fearlessness and immunity to the sorcery of the tyrants. With his brothers, he freed the entire human race which grew and prospered. Surin and his brothers' direct descendants became rulers and priests.

The Order of Surin (aka the Brothers of Surin, The routers of corruption, The burning blades, the green light, the green inquisition etc) take their sacred mandate directly from Surin's own mission – ie they hunt down sorcery, evil spirits, witches, warlocks, demons and magical artifacts, which they destroy on the spot. They do not believe in letting such things exist, there is no middle ground. Their view is black and white because they can trace their order directly back to the days when the Human race was enslaved by sorcery. As such they are given broad powers, politically and militarily.



In general if they show up beyond the capitol or their local chapter house, its viewed with trepidation, caution and respect by the population.

The dark green cloak and bright mail of the inquisition is instantly and universally recognised and people afford the Brothers a wide and respectful berth.

The Brothers are not a lay order, they can perform important ecclesiastical duties e.g mass or the ritual of the first Dawn – a naming ceremony equivalent to a baptism. Mostly they just hunt witches.

They are afforded an unofficial but undisputed status equivalent to a minor Lord. They are not outside the system nor above the law and must afford the Nobility respect and the small folk protection and spiritual guidance if required.

When joining the Brotherhood, the whole chapter gathers and the acolyte's blood is mixed with that of the Brothers of his chapter. This is then brought to the Capitol where it is mingled at dawn, with the blood of all those who have ever served in the order in the Receptacle of Light. On the following Dawn the acolyte must taste the blood of his brothers where he becomes one of them. The Vinculum (latin for bond/tie) as it is called is sacred and draws him closer to his Brothers in his new 'blood family'. See the template for more on this.

The Brothers of Surin take no property, no wives and own no possessions but what the church affords them, even these items are returned to the order when the Brother dies. Family always remains important and Brothers visit their 'birth family' when they can.

The favoured weapon of the Order is the long-sword. The church has an acre of smithies in the capitol city, some of the finest anywhere.

Once sworn, all Brothers are considered equal. For certain tasks one Brother might be considered 'first among equals' e.g. in a combat situation, Brothers will normally follow the instructions of a Brother well versed in combat. When dining with Lords, the Brothers will normally follow the lead of their most diplomatic Brother etc.

Four Brothers hold over-all responsibility for the Order. These four are titled the Swords of Light. They over-see political decisions, daily logistics, important rituals, artefact inventory etc. One of these, Br. Marcus is nick-named the Hammer of Light. See Protagonists.

An internal department of Brothers are responsible for 'interrogating' heretics etc. They are called the Grey Brothers because they wear grey when conducting their art so as not to stain the sacred green of Surin with the blood of Heretics. They rarely leave the capitol.

## **The Medallion of Surin**

There are a number of holy items of power in the Church. A number of Surin's own trappings are in the possession of the Order. They were returned to his own Brothers on his Ascension (hence the tradition of non-ownership of items). Of these, the Medallion of Surin is the most revered and feared. It is not clear where Surin made the Medallion but it is imbued with the power of the Lord of Light. It has symbolic, political and celestial powers.

The Medallion only displays celestial powers when in the hands of a sworn Brother of the Order. It sheds light equivalent to a 100w light-bulb. This light casts no shadows, burns demons and wards against some otherworldly creatures, demons and wraiths etc but not mortal sorcerers. Once per day it can heal any believer 1d6+1 wounds (it doesn't cure disease, restore limbs, sight etc). It works on each person, once per day.

Through the generations it has been known to exhibit unusual powers.

Perhaps one its most important powers is political. Once revealed, the Medallions can compel anyone save the King and his Family, Grand High Deacons (head of the faith in a country), Prelates (equivalent to Cardinals) or the four swords of light to aide the Brothers, give them equipment, men, resources. It grants the bearer nearly unlimited temporal and legal power. With it they can arrest whom they choose, burn villages and towns to the ground without accounting for their actions, open any door and do most anything save violating their duty, mission or fellow Brothers.

The Medallion does not tarnish, stain nor has it ever broken (no one is sacrilegious enough to try) or failed to shed light or heal. It rarely leaves the capitol and only does so for the most grave of reasons, such as in this scenario.

### **The Scenario Overview** (or plot in a nutshell).

In the blurb we see the fallout from a massive ritual that has been enacted by a powerful Necromancer and sorcerer. This sorcerer is actually a Lord of the Realm named Kiesling, a minor Lord albeit but an influential one all the same. His shire (sometimes referred to as county) is south of the Capitol at a nexus point between the influential, powerful and very old Duchy of Faemore and the triumvirate of hereditary Earls' lands which have the pre-fix 'Is-' which means 'seat of'.

Lord Kiesling began dabbling in dark arts many years ago and successfully kept it from even his family. He has long dabbled in alchemy in an attempt to attain immortality. He obsessed over the idea of life eternal. He then discovered a tome of necromancy and certain dark spells, rituals and techniques that could either halt aging or trick death altogether but there was a problem – he is a mere man, no witch or wizard so they were useless – he needed to gain the rare ability to cast spells.

He struck a deal with a demonic entity known as Vormack. This creature was once a servant of the Lord of Death (and envy) but betrayed him and fled to another realm. Such creatures strayed too far down the path of Envy, which leads to murder and a lust for power. They become known as Lords of Waste. Envious of life, warmth and all that they left behind they seek little but destruction.

From this underworld Vormack came into contact with Kiesling. A deal was struck. Vormack grants him the gift of sorcery, in return he begins to help Vormack create a Hell-mouth, A gate to the realm Vormack was hiding in. Vormack, being extra-planar to begin with needs to be summoned but a portal sealed with Kiesling's approval will allow him come and go. Of course such a portal would need to be defensible. Kiesling decides to raise the whole of his Shire-lands upwards, creating an island of near impenetrable mountain, with his townland at the centre.

He begins by rounding up 100's of villagers, vagrants and others that won't be noticed then kills them all in massive sacrificial ritual in various pits. The whole area is thrown literally sky high. (The blurb mentions that the peasants only notice people going missing after the event – this is true but in the beginning Kiesling only orchestrated the kidnapping of outsiders who wouldn't be missed, more on this in a bit).

This titanic upheaval throws up a cloud so dense, it blocks out the light. You can imagine that kind of omen that is.

Kiesling knows however that the inquisition – the Brothers of Surin will be sent after him and has a fair idea the kind of level of mercy he can expect. He has prepared for this. Part of his preparations was the construction of 8 phylactery surrounding his estate and the town he lives in (which is mostly levelled). If killed, his soul will split into 8 pieces, one for each phylactery.

He originally explained these to Vormack as markers to define the perimeter of the Hellmouth – which they are but they have a dual purpose.

Kiesling is no fool, he intended to betray the Lord of waste all along. He suggests the design of the whole thing. Vormack demands that he tie the permission to Kiesling's blood line one he dies. Kiesling agrees seemingly under duress. He cares not about his line. He won't truly die if his plan goes according to plan and Vormack has over looked the fact that Brothers of Surin will probably kill all of this family.

So there it is, as the scenario begins an ancient evil is literally in the process of entering the mortal world to lay waste to it, a deranged necromantic Lord of the realm is hoping to buy a ticket to immortality by betraying a creature that betrayed Death himself and see his family murdered by fanatics while he is at it, leaving a massive trail of sacrificed corpses behind him.

Now to stop the pair of them!

## **Scene by Scene**

### **Scene 1: Bloody footprints**

We begin right where the blurb left off...as Brother Marcus stands over the corpse of the unfortunate messenger (Surinians – which is the correct demonym - believe killing the messenger sends a strong message i.e. no news is good news), whose blood now pools at his feet and is quickly spreading towards the feet of the PCs. Knife in hand, he turns to the PCs he had gathered to hear this news. Br. Marcus is of less than average height but somehow seems taller than he is. Pale skin, raven hair and ice-blue eyes lend him the appearance of a man who has never seen the light of the sun.

“Something tells me that vile sorcery has been allowed to flourish like a loathsome fungus right on our doorstep. My Brothers we must find the source of this phenomenon, come with me.” He walks out a side door of the room you are in (in the primary chapter house in the capitol), leaving bloody footprints in his wake.

Down several flights of steps he leads the players through several stout doors for which he holds the keys up a voluminous sleeve. Keys and his chainmail rattle. They enter a room lit by a soft glow. It emanates from a glass case in the centre of this small room. There hangs the fabled Medallion of Surin, draped over a marble Bust of the Prophet. He drops to one knee and bows his head quickly and then opens the glass case.

“Brothers, I believe that you may need this. When the sky turns black and blots out the light of the Lord then we know that a darkness worse than night is upon us. Take this and use it wisely. Find out the truth of this and make sure no stories spread, for as Br. Enoch always says, ‘Silence is Golden’”. He will offer it to Br. Johann unless someone steps up to take it,

for no particular reason other than he is less likely to be in a fight and drop it, though he offers it to the group.

Br. Marcus tells them that they must leave within the hour and ride hard till they reach Lord Kielsing's lands and investigate. Haste is extremely. He will burn the messenger (which is a the standard, honourable ritual) dispatch other brothers to block the roads and prevent tales from spreading and send more brothers as soon as he can call a council and inform the Order at large. If they like they can commandeer horses from the King's messenger corps which are the finest, fastest mounts in the land. There is no time really for shopping for gear. They can take whatever standard stuff is reasonable available and procurable within an hour. Weapons aren't a problem and chainmail and cloak is part of their holy vestment as is a sword.

Should they decide to head to the palace and acquire horses, you can play that out a bit. Pretty much everyone hesitates at their approach and wilts if they produce the Medallion.

## **Scene 2. A Black Sky**

It takes 3 days normally to reach Lord Kiesling's lands if one rides at a regular pace. The roads are mostly excellent and there are Travellers' taverns at intervals. Should they ride their horse into a lather they can do it in half (assuming 6 hrs sleep or so). If so, then a day later they see a black stain on the horizon. As they ride closer, it seems to fill the sky and the good road disappears gradually (it turns towards Faemore). The air becomes heavy with dust and debris and it is very warm here. The horses have trouble breathing as the poor beasts are already worn out. It is clear that the epicentre of all this seems to lie where the messenger's town was – the ancestral lands of Lord Kiesling. As they venture forward it becomes difficult to see more than 10 or 15 metres and dust becomes choking. Make a HT-3 if they PCs exert themselves a fail means choking.

Presently they come to a tumble down settlement, parts of which are still burning slowly. There are so many rocks and boulders its hard to tell what size the town was originally. Here and there are found corpses of humans and livestock buried under rocks or which have died from smoke/dust inhalation. The once town appears to be at the foot of a steep mountain that rises up into the blackness.

Roll PER -3 to spot a wight that suddenly lurches from the roiling dust and smoke. (See the Wight Stats in protagonists). They must also roll for fright (Will roll +2 for Combat reflexes and +1 because they are bad ass, Rule of 14 in operation – i.e. 14 or more is a fail). The creature had not been dead long, its suppurating eyes are blood shot red and it's swollen tongue lolls to one side. It's head rolls slightly as it clutches at a random PC. It was clearly killed my means of throat slitting. One assumes the PCs can dispatch with a single undead creature but doing so counts as exertion, as indeed does failing the fright roll (catching your breathe is hard enough in the thick, cloying air but then add an undead creature to that). It's

tracks lead further into the mountain to a mass grave where Wights are lurking about. There are 15 in total and these represent the missing town's folk. The PCs can kill them or go around them as they please.

### **Scene 3 – A steep Climb**

At this point, a crashing sound as of thunder can be heard from further up the mountain. The 'feel' of the air changes within a span of 5 minutes. It feels more tense, like a fisher man whose small craft has drifted right between two huge war galleys in the black of night. It's a pressure almost.

Whatever is was has caused small rockslides here and there further up the mountain. These are of no danger to the PCs but merely serve to illustrate that the way forward is up.

As you might imagine for a newly magically created mountainous area, there are no trees, plants or life of any kind.

If the players brought rope, the going is much easier. As they climb, they notice the wind is picking up. While this makes climbing harder (-2 to climb skill), it has the benefit of slowly clearing away the thick smoke and dust. So that after a few hours they don't need to make HT rolls for climbing.

As they climb PCs who roll successfully against the Naturalist skill can notice flocks of strange black birds. They seem like crows but as they climb their numbers grow larger. Indeed they are not crows [see the picture]. They are twice as large as a raven and have red beaks. A very good roll reveals they are not native to this land.

You can imply that it feels as if they are watching the PCs.

Successful PER rolls reveal random debris strewn about the mountain or half buried; the odd corpse is visible in a crevice and here and there, tools, clothing or other daily objects cling to the mountain side. They seem bereft on the raw, near living rock of this demonic mountain.

### **Scene 4. Kieslington**

After several hours of climbing and hiking they reach a plateau-like area at the foot of this mountainous terrain's highest peaks. A corrie-like, shallow geological basin stretches before them where, bizarrely there is a nearly intact town. A successful Area Knowledge reveals it to be part of what was once Kieslington town...except that town was on a rolling plain of rich agricultural pastures. Now it is so high up that one expects to see eagles.

Parts of the town have collapsed including the town temple of light, whose dome is staved in and whose circular walls have tumbled down. Mostly the townsfolk's houses are intact. There are 9 new structures/edifices that seem very out of place and were not there before.

Surrounding the town, are 8 obelisks or stalagmite like structures, perhaps 12' in diameter at their bases and over 20' tall. In fact they look more like giant stalagmites on close inspection. Should the PCs exam the structures (but only if they think of it in character) they find the base of each is carved with a glyph. It is not glowing and it appears smooth and doesn't appear to have chisel or other tool marks.

In the centre of the town, there is a 9th very similar structure but this one appears taller and has window-like portals and outhouses crouched at its base. It was once Kiesling's Manor but has warped into a bare protrusion of rock. There is movement down there. As they step beyond the perimeter of the 8 stalagmite structures, the air shimmers but nothing else happens. The next part assumes the PCs begin to walk into the town.

### **Scene 5 The Hell Mouth**

Unlike the rest of the mountain, the area within the boundary of the Hellmouth seems mostly smoke free bar the area around the temple where the smoke and dust seems especially black

Even from the Stalactite boundary, screams can be heard. The surviving inhabitants are all terrified and hiding. If the PCs dig them out, every one of them looks as if they were covered in cobwebs, slightly aged, greyer than normal, even the children.

In the centre, the town fountain's waters have turned inky black. White statues of famous scholars who were patrons of the arts once stood by the pool but now those statues have become crouched somehow, their faces carved in a snarling, sneering demeanour. The stone is blackened and grimy. The inky liquid is enchanted. It was designed to counter the unnaturally rapid aging of the villagers which Kiesling knew would occur when the Lord of Waste crossed over. Everything in the town is corroding, rotting faster than it should.

What was once the Town Temple of Light is now the epicentre of a malevolent, visible breath of corruption seeping out from its cracks.

Before the temple, in chains are more than 20 women - all of child bearing ages. Part of the Temple wall collapses further and a massive grub or slug of some sort is visible through the wall, its segmented white body pulses grotesquely. From it's midriff, folds of gelatinous flesh house a grotesque penis. It is pre-occupied mounting a hapless townswoman who seems to have screamed herself hoarse and is covered in the creature's bodily fluids and her own bile.

The chained women who are not vomiting are screaming and huddled together. Closer inspection reveals some of them seem smeared from the waste down in a dark fluid of some sort.

A man's voice can be heard from somewhere within the crumbling temple. "Vormack, the deal is done, you are free to come and go and I have what I want, you get these women and no more".

The creature turns to Lord Kiesling, “You wanted to rule forever over this ants. I have laid waste to loins of your females, they shall not reproduce, you WILL bring the others to me and when I am done you will rule over a barren fiefdom of ashes. You have visitors and I believe they mean us harm.”

### **Scene 6 Routing of Corruption.**

One assumes a fight ensues, this will take a while and deserves its own scene.

The Lord of Waste’s stats are in Protagonists. This fight assumes the PCs have probably destroyed at least one of the Glyphs on the Stalagmite type structures. If they haven’t then killing Vormack means he is merely banished for now but he can return to the Hell-mouth at Sundown. In Addition he has +5 ST, +2 DX and +15 HP plus an additional attack at full value.

If defeated after the circle’s Glyphs have been destroyed or tampered with then he remains gone.

If ‘killed’ Kiesling’s spirit divides into 8 translucent parts [PER -5 to notice this if the PCs even happen to be looking the right way] and each piece instantly explodes outwards and uphill to a Stalagmite structure. This happens in a heartbeat.

### **Conclusions**

So at the end the map of SaSurin has literally been changed – a new island of mountains has exploded into being.

The Brothers of the Order of Surin are left to cover up the demonic incursion. Do they kill all the witnesses?

Kiesling has many children by two wives the last of who are babes. Kiesling tower (if searched) also turns up a Tome. This tome has many vile secrets and more on this can be read under ‘Protagonists – Vormack’.

Do the Brothers eliminate all the witnesses? What of the women who were assaulted by the Demon Lord of Waste?

Certainly they can if they want and no one will second guess them. Then there is the small matter of a cover-up story and the report that must be delivered to Brother Marcus (he’ll also want the Medallion back).



## Protagonists

### Brother Marcus

In appearance he is a skinnier, shorter and blued version of Snape from the HP franchise. To give him stats would be to define the indefinable, as even within the Order, Marcus seems to be something of a mystery.

He will defend his Brothers to anyone on any count not matter what the charge unless they have broken faith with their Brothers, forsworn their vows or wilfully jeopardised their mission, in which case he will kill them himself. Not know for his charity or smiles, Br. Marcus is known as an iceman and to those not in the order who know him, he feared even reviled.

Assume he has: Combat reflexes, Reputation 3 (feared inquisitor), Administration 18 and broadsword 15. In addition Br. Marcus has a number of blessings and prayers similar to the PCs. In addition he has the uncanny ability to know pretty much everything the PCs or anyone else has been up to, so its assumed he has a massive spy network.

### City Guard/King's Messenger

A guard has all stats at 10 with perhaps DX or HT of 11. They have good knowledge of the City, Current affairs and Streetwise in addition to having the skills; Spear, Shortsword and Brawl at 11.

The King's Messenger corps are elites, trained from a young age. They have DX 14+, IQ 12+ and Ride [horse] 16+, Area Knowledge 13+, Survival 12+.

In addition they have various techniques, perks and advantages involving horse riding e.g. Bond [with their horse], Dressage tricks etc. and swear personal oaths to the King's standard. Their horses are the finest anywhere.

### Lord Kiesling – Earl of Kieslington

A tall well groomed Noble man with a prominent nose which makes him appear haughty. He is thin with a certain grace to his movements. ST 10, DX 13, IQ 16, HT 12

As a Lord he had status +2, Wealth +1, one can assume that is all behind him. Personally he has Magery +3, High Pain Threshold, Doesn't age, Doesn't sleep, Doesn't eat/drink. He is delusional [-10], sadistic [-15] and callous [-5]

He is quite literally on the cusp of immortality, all he need do is die! Assume he has been granted 100 pts of spells in the Earth, Knowledge and Necromancy schools. The gate spell was 'Loaned' to him by the Demon, many of his other feats and rituals he learned from a tome which is in the basement of his tower. This tome is not one of spell-craft but a more primal form of magic involving blood sacrifices and rituals, though in many ways the effects

are more impressive than regular spells. Its the kind of abomination that any self respecting Brother of Surin would burn on the spot.

Kiesling is obsessed with living forever and will stop at nothing to do so.

### **Vormack – Demonic Lord of Waste**

Vormack is an almost primordial entity from a time before the Human race existed. Or at least that's what Kiesling's translation of the vile tome says.

It is a giant grub or white segmented worm. It's grotesque, bulbous body looks soft and squishy but is far from it. It's 'head' is a brownish colour festooned with eyes and pincer like appendages.

It was one of the servants that betrayed Finx, Lord of Death and Envy after delving too much into the paths of envy where it became corrupted and desired the power of death for itself. When Finx realised his servants were corrupted he slew them but the most cunning of them escaped his wrath by fleeing to another realm. Their power is not one of death and natural endings but of rot, waste and corruption. They are the white worms that appear in the flesh of the dead.

The translation of the Tome also explains that when a white worm or Lord of Waste crosses into the mortal realm, flocks of 'Death Vigils' cross over with him. The more powerful the Lord of Waste the more that accompany him. These creatures are mortal with no particular power but a Wastelord can see through their eyes. They have an innate sense of death and often arrive at the scene of a person or animal's death hours before the death.

Vormack has ST 25, DX 12, IQ 20, HT 20

It has 50 HPs normally - unless the PCs don't remove the glyphs then: he has +5 ST, +2 DX and +15 HP plus an additional physical attack at full value.

It has Damage Reduction 2.

**Perception** [20, in addition it can see through the eyes of the crow like birds – Death Vigils. It can also sense ground and air vibrations

He has Brawl [16], Dodge [ 9], Move [10], Initiative [8]

Special Abilities and Attacks:

All of Vormack's bodily fluids destroy or corrupt in some way. Its' 'blood' splashes when its flesh is cut, corroding metal for 1d6damage (reducing its hardness by 1 per 5pts damage) and causing 1pt of damage to human skin.

It's seminal fluid causes sterility.

It can swipe with its body/tail end for 5d-1 crushing damage and or cut with its pincers for 3d-1.

#### Cloud of Corruption:

Scores of spiracles are dotted all over its pulsing form, these can spray a cloud of corruption which is a toxin that irritates eyes, nose and throat and can cause blindness and choking. Roll HT -2 twice, one for choking and one for blinding. This is a Wastelord's favoured opening attack.

If a player fails choking roll they are merely at -3 to DX and -1 to IQ and may roll again next round but if they fail again they are choking – they cannot breathe or speak and drop. A failed blind roll indicates irritated eyes and the victim is at -2DX and PER. A second failed roll indicates the victim is temporarily blinded.

#### Spells:

A waste-lord has access to old and powerful magic but for our purposes, prefers to use Mind magic that strips the victim of its free will. Mass stun, Mass Daze and foolishness are favourites. It casts at 16 skill level but favours physical attacks.

Players can resist with Will -2.

Vormack automatically speaks the language of the realm it enters but it's inhuman physiology makes the voice distorted, guttural and eerie.

## GM's Character cheat sheet:

**Br. Lorenth** – once trained knight, diplomatic, combat skills, ST DX Gear – A blade of Arling/Surin

Brawl, Broadsword, Climb, Crossbow, Current affairs, Dancing, Detect lies, Diplomacy, Etiquette, Heraldry, Knife, Politics, Ride [horse], Savoir faire [Church], Shield, Spear, Theology

**Br. Arno** – once woodsman, outrider and scout ST, DX Extra high stats and skills. Resistant to sorcery. “Blessed resistance”.

Area Knowledge [saSurin], Bow, Brawl, Broadsword, Fishing, Hunting, Knife, Naturalist, Repair, Ride [horse], Savoir Faire [church], Savoir faire [military], Survival [mountains], survival [woods], Theology, Tracking, Traps,

**Br. Johann** – expert on the dark lores, theology and politics. IQ, HT. Dawn Prayer – Just as the Dawn clears the dark and begins a new, so too can the celebrants of these prayer renew his vigor as if arising at dawn. recuperate up to 2d6 Fatigue points between you and those who join you in prayer. Takes a full half hour, can be done at Dawn, Midday or Sunset despite the name. (but only one of them per day)

Area knowledge [15], Broadsword, Current affairs, Detect lies, Diplomacy, Etiquette, Fast talk, Heraldry History, Lore [dark], Lore [spirits], Occult, Poisons, Politics, Ride [Horse], Theology

**Br. Onric** – once of the Reddson clan, archer and skirmisher, DX ST Reddson Bow. Can sense sorcery.

Area Knowledge, Armoury [Bows], Bow, Broadsword, Craft [fletch], Fast draw [arrow], Fast draw [knife], Fast draw [sword], Hiking, Hunting, Savoir Faire [church], Savoir Faire [military], Survival [woods], Stealth, Throw [Knife], Tracking

**Br. Emers** – once known as mouse, orphaned young and grew up on the street DX ST - Prayer of Clarity, grant +1 bonus to anyone roll. The roll doesn't need to be declared at the time of prayer, insight comes in the moment of clarity. The prayer takes ½ hr and can be said at Dawn, Midday or Sunset (but only one of them per day)

Acting, Area Knowledge [King's end slums], Area Knowledge [SaSurin], Brawl, Broadsword, Carousing, Climb, Crossbow, Detect Lies, Escape, Fast-talk, Filch, Forgery, Gambling, History, Holdout, Jump, Knife, Occult, Savoir Faire [church], Scrounge, Shadow, Stealth, Streetwise, Theology

## Handouts

### Wastelord Vormack



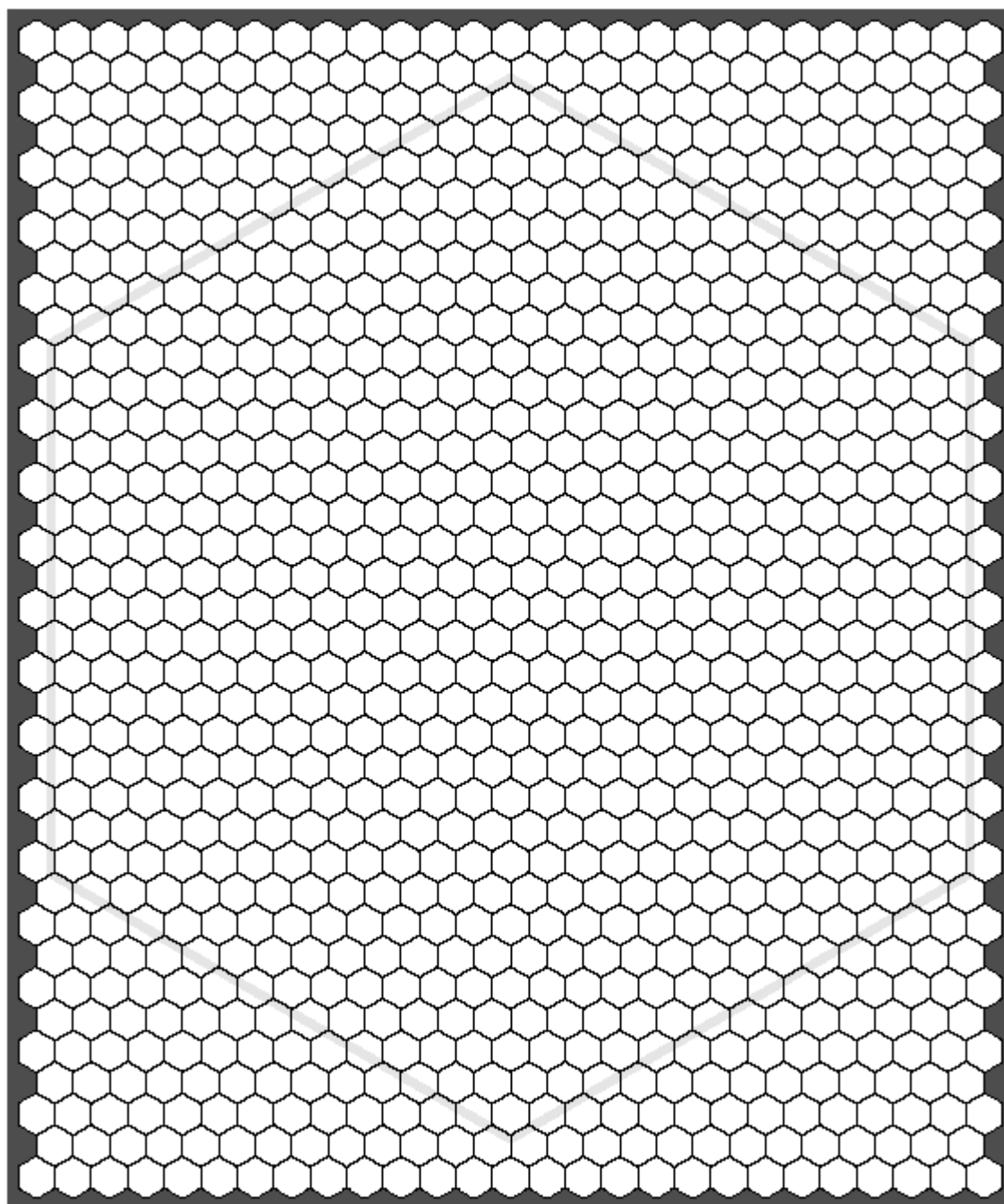






Figure 1 Death Vigil



Figure 2SaSurin Political boundaries



