

Two Knights From Carcassonne

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Introduction

This scenario is a relatively straightforward one suitable for any number of characters, whether starting their first career or completing advanced ones. Although skill and numbers will certainly help, success is dependent on investigation to discover what happened in the past to bring about the current problems.

As the scenario begins, the characters are travelling through Bretonnia. Perhaps they are delivering a message for a noble patron or wealthy merchant, with a bonus offered for swift delivery. The reason doesn't really matter and can be tailored to suit the group and their previous exploits; all that matters is they have enough reason to hurry to decide to take a shortcut down the Forest Road. If the player characters are just starting out, or have no reason to make this journey quickly they should take the job detailed in the section **A Simple Delivery** to the right.

The chosen location for this adventure is a small village called Guidel on the edge of the Forest of Arden, but any Bretonnian village near a forest will do just as well. With a few name changes, the scenario could even take place in the Empire. It is suggested that wherever the scenario is set, the identities of the eponymous knights do not change; knights from Carcassonne are peculiarly attached to the swords they grew up with (called their birth swords) and this will give the player characters a powerful weapon against them. But I'm getting ahead of myself...

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A Simple Delivery

The characters are in the city of Larret in Artois when a stranger contacts them with a simple courier mission. They are to take a small locked chest and transport it to a small town in southern L'Anguille called Roche, near to Grasgar Castle. The chest is small enough to fit in a backpack if necessary. Once there they should find a tavern called Le Lion Rouge, where a contact recognisable by an extravagant green hat will pay them each 10 *ecus* (Bretonnian gold crowns) for the chest. If they can get it there in fourteen days or less they will receive an additional 10 *ecus* each.

Anyone who knows the route can work out that using the Forest Road to cut through the western edge of the forest they should be able to make the trip in eleven days. Going around the forest would take fifteen days; to get the bonus they will have to use the Forest Road. After completing **Two Knights from Carcassonne**, how this courier mission ends is up to you. Maybe the job goes to plan and they get paid. Maybe the chest gets stolen along the way. Maybe the contact isn't there and the characters are left holding the mysterious chest and its contents, or maybe they're the curious type that open it up and look inside before they get there....

Synopsis

This story starts over sixteen years ago, with the tale of two knights from Carcassonne. Louis and Roland were twin brothers, knighted together and constant travel companions as Knights Errant. To outsiders they were the perfect picture of chivalry, but between themselves they were wicked men with dark hearts. They committed whatever crimes they pleased against peasants, women and fellow knights, and made sure that none lived to tell of their true natures.

Their lives came to an end in the village of Guidel, while staying at the inn. The innkeeper Orderic and his young wife Isabel ran a popular inn for travellers passing through the village. Guidel was on the edge of the Forest of Arden, and the Forest Road that started there was a popular shortcut across one corner of the forest. Those looking for a quick journey could pass directly through the forest in a couple of days rather than skirt around the edge taking six. The knights planned to take the Forest Road because it seemed the more exciting route. However, once they arrived at Guidel, they both took a fancy to the innkeeper's young wife, Isabel. After dark one night, they accosted her in their room when she brought them fresh blankets. Unluckily for them, her husband Orderic became concerned at his wife's sudden disappearance at a late hour. He went to the upstanding young knights to help him search the village, and what he found left him dumbstruck! He picked up Louis' sword as it lay carelessly nearby and struck

down both knights without a thought. After consoling Isabel as best he could, he knew he must dispose of the bodies or die for his crime. He loaded their bodies and equipment atop their horses and took them a mile along the Forest Road, where he dumped them in a marshy pool.

It soon became apparent that no one suspected Orderic of his crime, and no one came looking for the knights. Isabel began to recover from the ordeal; even when they realised she was pregnant with the child of her attackers, they thanked Shallya that they were both alive and free. Nine months later Isabel gave birth to a daughter, but complications meant the mother was too weak to survive. Orderic named the child after his beloved wife and raised her alongside his own two daughters, treating her equally in every way.

More than sixteen years later, the player characters are travelling through Guidel when a pair of mysterious knights blocks their path at the entrance to the Forest Road. Conflict reveals that they are not earthly knights, and cannot be defeated though strength of arms alone. Beaten back and possibly wounded, the characters retreat to the nearby village where they must discover the history behind these spectral knights. Armed with information about the knights' deaths and an unlikely ally in their daughter Isabel, the characters venture back into the forest to recover the knights' own birth swords that can vanquish their dark spirits forever.

Scene 1: Welcome to Guidel

A Fork in the Road

The adventure proper begins with the characters journeying north towards the forest on the main road that skirts along its western side. It is early afternoon and a pleasant day. They have passed few travellers on the road. As they crest a rise, they see the western spur of the forest before them. Soon, the main road will bend northwest to avoid the trees while the Forest Road cuts straight through them. Any commoner they pass can tell the characters that the Forest Road is a good shortcut, quick and relatively safe. No one remembers the last time Beastmen or Orcs were seen nearby. As they look down the rise towards the fork in the road, a large merchant caravan struggles up the hill towards them. As they pass, the characters will notice that most of the carts are empty. In fact, wounded guards seem to be their principal cargo. If they ask any of the cart drivers or guards what happened, they will readily explain:

"We were attacked by bandits on the main road two days ago. They were a big group, with lots of bowmen. They killed six of our lads and ransacked most of the carts; we were forced to run for cover and even now I thank Shallya they didn't come after us. Take my advice and go the Forest Road way. Those outlaws are dangerous and it'll take days for the nobles to get enough men together to scare them off."

The Forest Road branches off the main route about two miles from the forest edge. Guidel lies half a mile outside the

forest, and the characters will pass through it on their journey. At this point, there is plenty of daylight left so they will probably want to press onwards. If they consider staying there the night, they quickly see that the inn is old and run down. If that doesn't dissuade them, let them stop for lunch or stay the night; they will soon hear about the mysterious knights blocking the road ahead (see **Scene 3: Resting in Guidel** below for details of the inn and the local inhabitants).

Passing through the village, all seems to be well at first. The peasant men are working in the fields, the women work industriously within the village itself, sewing and cooking and tending to the pigs. However, as the characters move away from the village and the fields immediately outside it everything becomes quiet. No one is working these fields, and any characters that grew up in the countryside can see there is work to be done. Ask characters to make a **Perception Test** (with the usual bonuses for Acute Hearing and Excellent Vision). Tell those that are successful that they can neither see nor hear any sign of animal life. It is quiet; too quiet. All the characters will realise this as they get closer to the forest, but having to roll for information tends to make players more nervous and/or excited. You might even want to ask exactly what score they all got, then study the page carefully before giving them the information about no animal life, as if there were other, vital facts they could have learned. Just to keep them on their toes. As they get closer to where the road meets the forest, they see two dark figures standing in the road. Armed and armoured, they stand motionless blocking the path ahead.

Scene 2: The Knights

As the characters get closer to the two knights, read the following description.

The two men before you stand side by side, effectively blocking the road just inside the forest. Tall knights wrapped in battle-damaged grey cloaks, they stand motionless, with no acknowledgement to you. You were aware of the silence as you neared the forest, but now it is intense, almost pushing you away. Something about these men or this place is greatly unsettling.

The knights will not talk under any circumstances, and will not be affected by taunting or threats. If the characters move within ten yards of them, for whatever reason, they do react:

The knights raise weapons from beneath their cloaks and hold them ready; one carries a mace, the other an axe. Their shields display a gold eagle rising on a red and blue background. As you approach, they raise their weapons ready to strike.

Ask characters to make a **Challenging (-10%) Perception Test**. Anyone who is successful notices that beneath the knights' cloaks they both have scabbards for swords, but these are empty. A successful **Academic Knowledge (Genealogy/Heraldry) Test** informs the character that the knights' heraldry is from Carcassonne. Anyone who passes both tests will find it odd that knights from Carcassonne are without their birth swords, their most treasured possessions since childhood.

If the characters choose to back out of conflict with the knights, go to **Scene 3: Resting in Guidel** as they find out more about the situation from the locals. If they attack the silent knights, run the combat as normal (see Spectral Knights' profiles on page 15). The knights are a type of spectre, but differ from the norm in some ways. They are ethereal, but their armour and equipment is real, so they cannot move through physical objects or become invisible. They are immune to damage

except from magical weapons. This adventure assumes the characters do not have magical weapons; see the **Dealing with Magic** section on page 14 if they do. The knights use only their hand weapons, not their touch. The characters will only know the knights are not human when a character manages to damage one beneath its armour. They will then realise that there is no body beneath the metal, just emptiness and they may want to reconsider their plan. If they retreat, or anyone is badly injured, the knights will not press the attack and allow them to retreat or be recovered by their friends.

A Friendly Face

At this point, a friendlier encounter will point them in the best direction:

As you ponder your next move, you see a poorly dressed figure crossing the fields, circling around the village to the side nearest you. They evidently spot you and change direction, walking straight for you. Judging by the animal traps they carry, they have been hunting in the forest; only as they get closer do you notice that this hunter is a woman, perhaps in her early twenties.

"You will not pass through the forest that way. Those knights have closed the road," she calls out as she comes within speaking distance. "The whole village is at their mercy and they move aside for no one. My father is Guidel's innkeeper; I can take you there if you need a place to revise your travel plans."

If she sees that any of the party are wounded she will add:

"My sister is a Shallyan healer, she can tend your wounds if you wish."

If they take the woman's offer, she will lead them to the inn, introducing herself as Eleni on the way. If they decline, she will point out the inn, in case they change their minds later.

Should this scene end with all the characters rendered unconscious/immobile by the knights (very possible if they are few in number), Eleni will spot them and with assistance from other villagers get them moved to the inn where they can recuperate.

Once the characters realise their opponents are not human, they will probably look for a Plan B. If they follow Eleni to the village, go to **Scene 3: Resting in Guidel**. This is the sensible route for the characters to find out more and come up with a better plan. Don't penalise characters for retreat or avoiding combat.

Other Possible 'Plan Bs'

Your players are likely, almost certain, to come up with a far more devious Plan B, so below are the knights' reactions to likely strategies.

Characters find a way through the forest:

The characters may decide to travel through the forest, around the knights. In this case, they should meet Eleni before they get too far. She will greet them, explain the situation (what little she knows) and ask for the characters help. Her family's livelihood is at risk, so she is willing to lie and claim that everyone who tries to bypass the knights is killed by them. In fact, if they absolutely insist on bypassing the knights then it's probably best to let them; players won't thank you for forcing them into a situation. Next time the characters travel this way, they might hear tales of the massacre at Guidel where most of the men-folk were killed by two mysterious knights, who then disappeared without trace.

Characters try to rush past the knights:

The characters may figure they can dodge past the knights and outdistance them. This tactic won't stand a chance (the knights have a Movement of 6!) unless the characters are all mounted. Horses will recognise the knights are supernatural from the start, so will be subject to Fear tests before they approach (with their low Willpower around 10%) Failure will not allow the horses to move around or dodge the knights. The knights may attack the horses of those trying to escape past them. This will tactic will probably end in combat, but if they succeed somehow refer to the situation above.

Characters use ranged weapons from a safe distance:

If the characters use missile weapons or magic from a distance, the knights will not be able to fight back. Instead, they will turn and disappear into the forest safe from 'harm'. Anyone pursuing into the forest will be ambushed by the quiet knights. Otherwise, the knights will be waiting further down the Forest Road to attack anyone who tries to use it. There they will be able to get into close combat from behind trees and bushes before the characters can retreat and use ranged weapons again. If for some reason the characters use ranged weapons but then don't continue down the Forest Road, the next group of travellers will be ambushed and killed instead.

Characters scout around the knights:

If the characters go through the forest, they may try to rejoin the road further along. The knights' area of 'influence' is about 200 yards either side of the road for about a mile and a half along it. If the characters enter this area, the knights will sense them and move to attack. You should allow **Perception Tests** (with a bonus for Acute Hearing) to hear the clank of armour heading their way and give them time to run to safety. More cunning characters will listen for birdsong and be able to discern where the knights 'influence' begins when the birds stop singing. This might give the characters an idea that there's something on or near the road important to the knights, but they'll need Isabel to get there (see **Scene 5**).

Don't worry; the fact that I've detailed these four options here just means that your players will come up with something else much worse.

Scene 3: Resting in Guidel

Characters wanting to stay in Guidel will need to go to the inn. No other peasant households are big or pleasant enough to take guests. Characters who have encountered the knights (in Scene 2) can be shown there by Eleni. Those who decided to stay there earlier (in Scene 1) will be pointed in that direction by any villager they ask. The inn is the biggest building in the village so it's easy to find (see pages 18-19 for details of the inn's layout and plans). The purpose of this scene is to provide a place to stay while the characters investigate the situation and get healing for anyone that needs it. It is also important that the characters become familiar with Orderic and his family, as they are integral to what is going on.

The inn is run by Orderic and his daughters. Orderic will welcome travellers to his inn and offer them the available rooms (see **Prices at the Inn** below). Knights will meet a polite but cool reception from Orderic. If some characters are badly wounded Orderic will act swiftly, finding them beds without worrying about payment until later. He will call for his eldest daughter, Benerice, to treat them. She will arrive quickly and treat the wounded in order of seriousness. If anyone is heavily wounded she insists they remain in bed for a day or two at least.

Prices at the Inn

Sleep in Common Room	2/-
Single Room	10/-
Double Room	15/-
Large Room	25/-

All prices include breakfast and supper.
Lunch is available for an additional 3/-.

Characters that have not yet met the knights will be told all about them by one of Orderic's daughters, although they don't know much. The only facts the villagers know is that two knights are blocking the Forest Road, preventing anyone travelling it. They have been there for five days now. Eleni says that she remembers this because they appeared the morning after Isabel's coming of age party, when she turned sixteen. Whenever someone goes to the edge of the forest the knights are waiting on guard. Once or twice villagers have

ventured out at night to check on them; each time the knights were there, waiting. Eleni is quite excited by the mysterious knights and is eager to speculate about them outside her father's earshot.

If the subject of the two knights is raised around Orderic, he will not say much. If any characters suggest the knights might be supernatural in some way he will discount the idea without being rude to whoever suggests it; secretly though he is worried about exactly that. Characters need to make a **Gossip Test** to engage him in further conversation on the subject. He tells them that everyone is avoiding the Forest Road which is bad for the village economy, him as innkeeper especially. Passing the test by two degrees of success or more will inform the gossip that Orderic is very uncomfortable talking about the knights.

While staying at the inn, characters will mostly be served by Orderic and Isabel, his youngest daughter. Eleni spends much of her time hunting in the forest, but occasionally helps out with the cooking and cleaning. Benerice is kept busy by her hospital patients, but will spend plenty of time with wounded characters. She will not charge for her healing abilities, although will accept donations to Shallya gladly.

Isabel's Painting

Hanging on the wall of the common room in the inn is a large painting of a beautiful blond woman. The name plate at the bottom of the frame reads 'Isabel', and at first glance the picture seems to be of Orderic's youngest daughter. However, if regarded more closely, the woman in the painting is definitely more mature than sixteen, perhaps almost twice that age and has a noticeably fuller figure.

If the characters mention the painting, Orderic (or one of his daughters) will explain that it is of their mother, also called Isabel. She died in childbirth when Isabel was born. Listening to anyone talk about Orderic and his wife, it is plain that he has never truly got over her death.

Scene 4: Finding Out More

Once the characters have settled into the inn, they will probably try to find out more about the knights. Even if they don't, events should take a turn that will attract their interest.

Talking to Villagers

Characters making a **Gossip Test** when talking to peasants can get a conversation going and learn that peasant's thoughts on the current situation. Fortunately there are plenty of peasants in Guidel, so there are lots of opportunities to find out information. Unfortunately all the peasants have different ideas about what's going on, only some of which are based on fact. Some of the views expressed by the locals are as follows (with the extent of truth to the story given in brackets afterwards):

- *"The knights are knights errant who have fallen on hard times, and seek to tax merchants passing down the Forest Road."* (False – nothing more than a guess.)
- *"No one noticed exactly when they arrived, because Orderic threw a big party at the inn the night before. It was his youngest's sixteenth birthday".* (True.)
- *"Clovis, one of the younger village boys threw stones at the knights and fell sick the next day."* (True, but he also fell in a river the day before that, which is responsible for the cold he caught.)
- *"The Duke is conducting raids on beastmen camps in the forest and has posted knights here to protect the village from stragglers."* (False – another guess.)
- *"Waldon, the village elder went out to talk to the knights when they arrived, but they refused to talk to him."* (True.)
- *"The nobles are holding an unholy ritual in the forest and have posted guards to prevent the common folk finding out."* (False – conspiracy theory. Note that this view won't be shared with anyone the least bit noble-looking.)
- *"I've heard screams coming from the inn at night, from one of the girls I'd wager. Sounds like someone's having some terrible nightmares."* (True, it's Isabel.)
- *"The knights are standing there all day and all night. Either there's a large group of them and they take turns, or there's something not right about them."* (True,

there is indeed something 'not quite right about them'.)

- *"Orderic's inn must be losing the most business from the knights being there, but he isn't among those villagers complaining to the elders to do something. Strange..."* (True, but the villager can't hazard a guess as to why he's silent on the matter.)

The characters are unlikely to gain important information from the villagers, but if they sift out the nonsense they will find several clues pointing back to Orderic, Isabel and the inn.

Visiting Waldon

Characters who have heard that the village elder Waldon tried to talk to the knights may wish to visit him. Also, any characters making enquiries about a possible reward for dispatching the knights will be told to see him. Waldon is too old to work out in the fields, and can usually be found in the modest house he shares with his son's family.

Waldon can't really shed much light on what they already know. He went to the knights to ask them their business and they didn't respond. With regards to a reward, he will ask the other villagers, but in truth the only one who is financially affected is Orderic; the peasants don't travel much and they don't take their produce through the forest. Nobody wants to see the village's inn disappear, but they can't afford to pay reward money to keep it either. Hopefully the nobles will do something about these rogue knights soon.

Jacen

One villager does have some information useful to the characters. Two nights before the characters arrived, a young man called Jacen saw Isabel walking through the village in the middle of the night, dressed in her night gown. Curious, he followed her and saw her walk right up to the knights. More surprising was when they stepped aside for her and let her past! He waited there for over an hour before she came back and again the knights let her pass. At that point he ran back home. Jacen hasn't told anyone this information yet because he was returning from an illicit meeting with a

married woman at the time. He's sure that if he told any villagers it wouldn't be long before people wanted to know what he was doing out at that time. He will however be willing to tell outsiders provided he can trust them to keep his identity secret; he won't tell them why this is important unless he has to. How the characters come across Jacen is up to you. They may happen to talk to him during their investigation, or if word gets around that they are trying to get rid of the knights he may approach them with the information.

Isabel's Dreams

Isabel has been having bad dreams since the knights arrived. Initially she didn't think too much about them, but they are getting increasingly vivid and upsetting. Two mornings before the characters arrived, she woke up with muddy hands and feet, and her nightgown was dirty and ripped. The following night, she got her sister Eleni to tie her to the bed claiming that she was flailing around when dreaming and hurt herself. Eleni believed her and was happy to help. The following night Isabel had terrible dreams that she has no memory of and is worried they will keep getting worse. She is worried that the things she has been seeing in her dreams are somehow real and that if she discusses them with anyone they'll think she's possessed or some kind of witch.

The characters may hear about Isabel's dreams from a gossiping villager or first hear about her sleepwalking from Jacen. Any characters friendly with Eleni may hear her casually comment that her sister is having nightmares. Alternatively, if they pay any attention to Isabel herself they may notice that she always seems tired, even first thing in the morning.

If the characters question Isabel about her nightmares or nocturnal wanderings, she will just say (truthfully) that she has been having bad dreams. They will need to coax more detail out of her. Isabel can be persuaded to talk about her dreams by the characters but they will need to both reassure her and make her see the importance of talking to them. Rather than rely on a **Charm Test** to achieve their goals, they should convince you (in the role of Isabel) that the best way forward is to tell them everything.

Isabel can remember this fragment from an early dream:

"I dreamed I was walking up the stairs in the common room, hearing crying, screaming and shouting coming from the second room along. As I walked along the balcony the shouting stopped and there was only crying and soft voices. I looked in through the door and saw myself and my father. I was crying and my father was comforting me. A young man in noble clothes and another half dressed lay dead on the floor in pools of blood. Then my father closed the door..."

Note that if the characters look for physical evidence of these events it will be hard to find; this occurred over sixteen years ago and Orderic cleaned up well. However, a successful **Search Test** will reveal that if there were 'pools of blood', some may have seeped down between the floorboards. Pulling a few floorboards up will reveal dried blood where the bodies lay.

Isabel remembers the dream she had two nights before the characters arrived clearly:

"I remember getting up and walking to the outskirts of the village. I could see the knights on the Forest Road. I started to walk towards them, and they stepped aside to let me through. As I passed, they hissed "The swords..." at me. I walked down the Forest Road and came to a bend where a man was hauling large sacks off two horses. As I got closer, I could see that two of the sacks were the shape of bodies, human bodies. The man threw the bodies into the marsh, and the other sacks along with them. Then he took a sword from one of the horses' saddlebags. It glittered in the moonlight as he threw it far into the marsh. He took another sword from the saddlebags that glittered the same way, except for the blade. As I got closer I could see why; the blade was covered in blood. The man flung that sword into the marsh alongside the first, then let the horses loose along the road. As he turned towards me, both he and the fleeing horses disappeared. That's all I remember."

Orderic's Story

As the evidence and suspicion mounts, the characters may accuse Orderic of killing the knights. Isabel's dreams contain enough clues to the killer and his motive, although they probably have little if any evidence. Orderic will initially deny any accusations and try to sound outraged. However, characters making a successful **Perception Test** will spot the guilt in his expression. If the characters continue to insist on his guilt he will not keep denying it. Although he does not want to face punishment for the murders, he is more concerned about the welfare of his children. He is anxious to avoid his daughters finding out that their mother was raped and that Isabel is the product of that terrible event. If it is unavoidable that they find out, he may come

clean just so he can break it to them gently. If the characters seem interested in banishing the knights rather than bringing him to justice he will more readily help. Characters who take care to safeguard his daughters' feelings will also earn his respect. He may offer them a reward for them to get rid of the knights; 60 *ecus* will be his initial offer, but he could double that if necessary. He will relate the events of that terrible evening as they occur in the **Synopsis** on page 3.

It is possible that the characters set off to investigate the knights' marshy graves without the full picture of what happened. Don't worry if this is the case, they will realise the whole truth once they get there.

Scene 5: Sword Quest

At this point the player characters should be ready to brave the Forest Road again in search of the knights' swords. They will probably want to take Isabel with them, and Orderic will need persuading that this is necessary. He will make them promise to protect her at all costs. He and his daughters will walk them to the edge of the village. Other peasants will stand and watch, aware that something important is going on, even if they're not sure what.

Passing the Knights

As they near the edge of the forest they see the knights standing guard as before. If they didn't notice the knights' empty scabbards before, they do now. As the characters get within about ten yards of the knights they each back off to their side of the path, as if in reverence. They watch Isabel and the characters go by as if lining a parade route. As the characters pass by, the knights call out to them in a hissing whisper "*The swords...*". Only if the characters are foolish enough to attack them will they fight, and as usual they will not press the attack. Anyone looking back once they've passed the knights will see them step back into place to prevent others using the road.

The journey to the knights' marshy graves will take just over half an hour unless slowed down by heavy wounds. Even though the knights are left behind the characters can neither see nor hear any wildlife around them. The forest is still dark and foreboding, but not to the extent it was in the knights' presence.

A Marshy Grave

The marshy area where Orderic dumped the knights can be spotted from the Forest Road by anyone looking for it. A thin curtain of trees separates the road from the marshy ground, where trees become much less frequent. As the characters leave the road to locate the spot where the knights are buried, an **Easy (+20%) Perception Test** should be made by all characters (with Acute Hearing bonuses applicable). Success indicates the character hears a woman singing nearby. With a higher degree of success, the character hears an

unearthly quality in the voice they can't quite place.

Investigating the singing (or searching the marsh) will lead the characters to the source; the head and shoulders of a beautiful dark-haired woman can be seen in a marshy pool, apparently bathing. Her pointed ears and the green tinge to her skin mark her as inhuman. Unless they tried to sneak up (and all succeed in a **Challenging (-10%) Silent Move Test**), she spots them at the same time they see her. Her first impulse is to laugh:

"Well, I suppose it was too much to hope for that the peace and quiet would last. Tell me, how did you get past those troublesome spirits, hmmm? With a spell, or a clever trick?" She pauses to look at them. "I'm thinking not judging by the look of you."

Graylin

She will encourage them to relate who they are and how they got here. If they relate how Isabel got them past the knights she will be very entertained. While they talk, she will sound like she knows much of the knights' history already; if they are reluctant to talk she will claim to have information they need. The knights' spirits have lurked in the marsh where their bodies lay since their death, powerless to do anything but watch travellers go by on the Forest Road. Over time, their frustration at being forgotten by the world and their hatred of the peasant who murdered them grew. She would often visit the marsh just to taunt them. One day they finally gained enough power to leave the marsh, clad in the trappings of their life. Most likely, they sensed Isabel coming of age in the village and her life force drew them to the edge of the forest. By blocking the road, they both harm the village where they were killed and bring attention to their fate. Graylin now bathes in the very pool where their bones lie. All their trappings were taken by their spirits, except their swords. Their killer threw these further into the marsh, and the spectral knights could not find them.

This mysterious woman will tell them only a little about herself; her name is Graylin, and she was having a relaxing bath when they interrupted. Is she a Dryad or a similar spirit of the wild? She will not say. At the first sign of violence she will dive underwater and swim away quicker than the characters can do her much harm. If you really want to turn this into a combat encounter, Graylin could take offence at the intrusion and attack. In this case, use the stats for a Dryad from the **Old World Bestiary** to represent her. However, the main purpose of this encounter is an explanation of the story behind the scenario. Graylin has an understanding of the knights' spirits and can fill in any story gaps the characters are curious about. The more the characters

understand of what is going on before the climax in **Scene 6: Confrontation**, the better.

Marsh Diving

Characters can make one **Challenging (-10%) Search Test** per hour of searching the marsh for the knights' swords. Searching involves wading through dirty marsh waters, feeling around for any sign of metal. However, once the first sword is found, the other will be easily found nearby. Dirty and wet, the characters should be ready to make their way back to Guidel. If Graylin is still around (she will have enjoyed watching the characters flailing around in the mud), she will wish them well in a mocking tone.

Scene 6: Confrontation

The route along the Forest Road will seem quicker on the return journey, as the characters make their way back to Guidel and the knights. This would also be an ideal time to plan what they'll do when they arrive. If the group don't think to discuss it, then Isabel will certainly ask.

As they arrive at the edge of the forest, they can see the knights standing in place, blocking the road. The characters might try to get past the knights again, so they are closer to aid if the fight goes badly. The knights will clear the road for Isabel as before, but when the character(s) carrying their swords try to pass they will step towards them, hand outstretched.

The knights will not allow the sword-carriers to pass without handing over the swords; if the character tries to push past or go around, the knight will attack that character. The characters will need to fight at this point unless they relinquish the swords. The knights concentrate their attacks on those who have their swords, but will attack anyone else that attacks them. If they should incapacitate a character that has one of their swords, they will pick it up and use it from that point on. Only the two swords will banish the two spectral knights easily (both swords work on both knights); the first hit with a sword that gets through their heavy armour to do at least one point of damage (ignoring Toughness) will banish a knight. A

banished knight lets out a scream which becomes a shrill cry and then a whistle as their essence is sucked through their visor and up into the ether. Their armour collapses into a pile and the rust that had accumulated over sixteen years under water returns. Other magical attacks could also banish the knights, but the characters will have to remove all 20 wounds in the normal way to destroy them.

Handing Over the Swords

The characters might choose to give the swords to the knights. After all, maybe if they get what they want they'll leave everyone in peace? Well, not exactly. The knights do want their swords back, and getting them will indeed free them from the forest. Unfortunately, the other thing they want is revenge on Orderic and once they're free of the forest they will seek him out. If the characters hand over the swords, the knights will head into Guidel to look for Orderic. They won't have far to look either, as Orderic is on the outskirts of the village waiting for Isabel to return. In short, the characters will have handed the knights their revenge and given away the only means they had to stop them. If the knights kill Orderic they will leave as if banished, their quest fulfilled. Their rusty armour will clatter to the ground across Orderic's dead form. Not a happy ending, but an ending nevertheless.

Scene 7: Aftermath

Once the spectral knights are banished or gone, all that's left is to pick up the pieces. Trade and travel through Guidel will quickly go back to normal, and the villagers will be thankful to the characters for this. They can't spare much to give in thanks, but they will hold a celebration in the characters' honour if they hang around long enough.

Assuming that the characters don't go to the authorities with details of the knights' murders, Orderic and his family will be eternally grateful to the characters for what they've done. They can always count on free food and board when in the area. Even if Orderic was killed, his daughters will still appreciate the attempt to help and not hold the characters responsible for his death. They will extend the same offer of lodging in the future, but the characters' return here will probably be a sad reminder for them.

No matter how many times the characters travel the Forest Road, they won't see Graylin again; she doesn't like to be disturbed. That is of course unless you, the GM, can think of any business she might have with them. She is unpredictable that way.

Experience Awards

Recommended Experience Point awards for this scenario are as follows:

Banishing the Knights	75
Avoiding Orderic's death	50
Getting information from Graylin	10
Good, in character roleplaying	10-30

Dealing with Magic

Central to the plot of this scenario is the characters' quest to find special weapons capable of ending the threat posed by the spectral knights. If the party have powerful magical abilities or weapons, they may be able to avoid the investigation and climax of the scenario by banishing the knights straight away in Scene 2. If you think this is likely, you should decide that 'normal' magic weapons and spells cannot affect the knights, only their own birth swords. Denying players the use of their hard-won magical equipment and abilities might annoy them a bit, but better that than the scenario be over in five minutes flat!

If the characters have access to some magic, then there's no need to restrict them. More weapons usable against the knights will allow more character to get directly involved in the climax of Scene 6. Remember the spectral knights have 5 Armour Points everywhere and 20 Wounds each to overcome with regular magic, so the birth swords will still be invaluable for success.

Once the adventure has ended, the characters may be excited to keep the knights' birth swords to use against other spirits. These blades are not magical at all and will have no effect on other spirits. Their effect on the spectral knights is purely due to the close attachment between the knights and their birth swords (see **Knights of the Grail** pages 65-66 for more information on this Carcassonnian custom). The fact that the swords become rusty once both knights are banished should suggest to characters these aren't going to have the same effect in the future.

Non Player Character Profiles

The Spectral Knights

The Spectral Knights are a type of spectre, although different in ways that should confuse players who have scoured the **Old World Bestiary**. They are ethereal but their armour and weapons are not, their frustration and hate from beyond the grave allowing them to retain these mortal things.

Main Profile							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
45%	0%	40%	43%	30%	18%	18%	30%
Secondary Profile							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
2	20	4	4	6	0	0	0

Skills: Academic Knowledge (Genealogy/Heraldry), Common Knowledge (Brettonia), Perception +20%, Ride, Speak Language (Breton)

Talents: Birth Sword (currently missing), Ethereal*, Frightening (once people realise what they are), Night Vision, Specialist Weapon Group (Cavalry), Undead.

Armour: Full Plate Armour

Armour Points: Head 5, Arms 5, Body 5, Legs 5

Weapons: Hand Weapons (Louis has a Mace, Roland an Axe)

Trappings: Empty Scabbards

Appearance: The knights wear full plate and chain armour of the style worn by Bretonian Knights of the Realm. They still wear the empty sword scabbards although the birth swords they held are lost to them. Their grey travel cloaks are worn and ragged, but not dirty; the same energy that brought the knight's spirits back to the

physical world cleaned the rust from their armour and mould from their clothes. The knights' armour covers their bodies completely, from helmet to gauntlet and boot. This prevents onlookers from realising the knights have no form, only an invisible spirit with no substance. Stabbing the knights with mundane weapons feels just like the armour is empty.

Background: The spectral knights are the restless spirits of Louis and Roland, the two cruel knights killed by Orderic sixteen years ago. Their hatred of their killer is only matched by their frustration at being slain by their own birth swords, weapons they trained with since childhood. Now Isabel's growth to maturity has somehow called their spirits back to the physical world. They don't understand how or why this has happened but seek to punish those responsible for their deaths. However, they have found themselves restricted to the forest and a section of the road that runs through it; without the return of the swords that embody their honour (however tarnished it was), they cannot return to Guidel. Louis finds himself able to contact his daughter in her dreams, and uses this to open her eyes to the truth...

*The Spectral Knights wear real armour, so cannot be silent, nor pass through walls etc. However, they cannot be damaged by normal weapons, which just pass through them.

Name: Orderic
Careers: Innkeeper (ex-Servant)
Race: Human (Bretonian) **Age:** 49

Main Profile							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
42%	28%	38%	40%	47%	36%	39%	47%
Secondary Profile							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	15	3	4	4	0	0	0

Skills: Animal Care, Blather, Charm, Common Knowledge (Bretonia), Dodge Blow, Drive, Evaluate, Gossip +10%, Haggle, Perception +10%, Read/Write, Speak Language (Breton, Reikspiel), Trade (Cook).

Talents: Acute Hearing, Dealmaker, Etiquette +10%, Strike to Stun, Very Resilient (included in profile).

Weapons: Hand Weapon (Club)

Trappings: Peasant Clothes, Storm Lantern and Oil.

Appearance: Orderic is a tall, vital man in the middle of his years. His eyes are a dark brown but his brown hair turned silver grey years ago. Many guests mistake him for a young looking elder rather than middle aged veteran of too many hard years.

Background: Much of Orderic's background is explained in the Synopsis section at the beginning of this scenario. Orderic currently runs the inn with assistance from his daughters (mostly Isabel). He is normally a cheery soul who enjoys life despite the hardships it has given him and loves his three daughters very much. The current circumstances have him worried, which he tries badly to hide. As well as a fear of what may happen if his crime comes to light, he desperately wants to keep the truth of Isabel's parentage from her and others who would judge her.

Name: Isabel
Careers: Servant
Race: Human (Bretonian) **Age:** 16

Main Profile							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
30%	27%	26%	30%	35%	31%	33%	37%
Secondary Profile							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	10	2	3	4	0	0	0

Skills: Blather, Common Knowledge (Bretonia), Dodge Blow, Gossip +10%, Haggle, Perception, Read/Write, Search, Speak Language (Breton), Trade (Cook).

Talents: Acute Hearing, Etiquette, Lightning Reflexes (included in profile), Resistance to Disease, Sixth Sense.

Trappings: Nice Dress, Tinderbox, Storm Lantern and Oil.

Appearance: Isabel stands out from the rest of her family with long blond hair and deep blue eyes, although the former is often covered by the traditional scarf. "She takes after her mother more" is Orderic's comment if this is mentioned and many of the villagers agree she looks much like her namesake. She wears nicer clothes than her sister Eleni due to working in the inn more often.

Background: Isabel works in Guidel's inn alongside her father. She does most of the cleaning and cooking, and has a very close relationship with Orderic. She is less hardy than her sisters, but very hard working and is more refined than the others. Orderic keeps a careful watch on her while she works in the inn.

Name: Eleni

Careers: Peasant

Race: Human (Brettonian) **Age:** 21

Main Profile							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
32%	31%	27%	30%	31%	29%	26%	33%
Secondary Profile							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	11	2	3	5	0	0	0

Skills: Animal Care, Common Knowledge (Brettonia), Concealment, Drive, Gossip, Outdoor Survival, Performer (Dance), Set Trap, Silent Move, Speak Language (Breton), Swim, Trade (Cook).

Talents: Fleet Footed (included in profile), Night Vision, Rover, Specialist Weapon Group (Sling).

Weapons: Sling.

Trappings: Peasant Clothes (Male and Female), 2 Animal Traps.

Appearance: Of medium height and athletic build, Eleni always seems to be in motion. Her brown hair is cut short and covered with a scarf in typical peasant fashion. She wears trousers more often than a dress, necessary when traversing the fields and forest; when working at the inn a dress is more proper. She has her father's brown eyes and a positive outlook which frequently leaves a big grin on her face.

Background: Eleni is a tomboy and shows little interest in a life indoors. She sometimes works in the kitchen with Isabel, but can more commonly be found outdoors tending the family's small patch of land. She also hunts with traps in the outskirts of the forest, and normally along the Forest Road. Eleni is a vivacious young woman and her father worries she will never settle down to a more domestic life.

Name: Benerice

Careers: Initiate of Shallya

Race: Human (Brettonian) **Age:** 24

Main Profile							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
32%	33%	31%	34%	37%	44%	35%	43%
Secondary Profile							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	12	3	3	4	0	0	0

Skills: Academic Knowledge (History, Theology), Charm, Common Knowledge (Brettonia), Gossip, Heal +10%, Perception, Read/Write, Speak Language (Breton +10%, Classical).

Talents: Coolheaded, Lightning Reflexes (included in profile), Public Speaking, Resistance to Disease, Suave (included in profile).

Trappings: White Robes, Dove Pendant, Satchel of Herbs and Healing Poultices.

Appearance: Benerice is tall like her father, with fair features and gentle demeanour. She is quite imposing in her white robes despite the brown tinged edges that betray her rural environment. With her hood down, her mid brown hair falls below her shoulders. Many patients have been comforted by her smile and warm brown eyes.

Background: Stunned by her mother's death while still a child, Benerice sought to join the Shallyan order from an early age. From age eighteen she studied at the temple in a nearby town but longed to bring healing to her own people. When an opportunity to tend Guidel's small shrine became available, Benerice fought to be given it. Her superiors judged her not ready for such an assignment, but she was determined. In the end they relented, but her insistence has put an end to her career in the temple. Benerice only cares about healing those in need, and is happy with her position. Her father gave her a section of the inn that was a dormitory to use as a hospital, as Guidel's Shallyan shrine has no room for the sick. There are usually a few sick villagers from Guidel or nearby resting here at any given time; Orderic is careful to keep them separate from the inn's patrons.

The Inn

Guidel's inn began as a large peasant hovel. Many decades ago, an enterprising owner decided to build a dormitory on the side that could house paying travellers and provide him a fine income. The plan worked well, and so the owner built a more extensive expansion on the other side of his home to provide a common room for guests to eat and drink, plus some smaller rooms for guests that valued their privacy. Since then the inn's fortunes have risen and fell. A further expansion of more private rooms on top of the original dwelling proved unsafe and collapsed a few years after.

The inn now reflects its current owner. Due to lack of guests and ambition since his wife's death, Orderic has scaled back the business so that it provides just enough income for his family to live on. The knights have upset this delicate balance and threaten his family with poverty.

Locations

- 1. The Common Room:** The majority of guests sleep in this common area. Food is also served here by Isabel and Eleni. There is no bar, but guests can be served drink as well as food at their tables by Orderic or Isabel. Stairs lead up to a balcony from which the upper private guest rooms are accessed.
- 2. Safe Storage:** This room is used to store any valuables or equipment that guests do not want to leave in the common room or their private rooms. Orderic keeps the only key on him.
- 3. Kitchen:** Used by Isabel and Eleni to cook meals for guests and their family.
- 4. Guest Rooms:** Private guest rooms are available as singles, doubles and large (two single beds and a double).
- 5. Store:** Filled with barrels and foodstuffs.
- 6. Family Room:** The main living room for Orderic and his family. Orderic sleeps here at night.
- 7. Girls' Room:** Eleni and Isabel's room.
- 8. Benerice's Room:** Orderic's room before his wife died. Benerice sleeps here now to be close to patients.
- 9. Dormitory:** Now a hospital for Benerice's patients.
- 10. Outhouses:** Toilets used by all guests and staff.



First Floor

First floor guest rooms are directly above ground floor guest rooms (see next page).

Ground Floor

See previous page for key.



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