

Five Truths about the Beast of Bögen



A Scenario for Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay

by Sami Uusitalo

Five Truths about the Beast of Bögen

"Have you heard the story about the Beast of Bögen, stranger?" One cannot travel the River Bögen without having to answer this question before long. Tales of the Beast of Bögen have been told around those parts for as long as anyone can remember, and everyone who lives by the Bögen or plies their trade on its murky waves knows someone, who knows someone, whose brother actually saw the Beast once. Travelers and outsiders usually consider these stories nothing more than harmless old wives' tales, stories meant to frighten unruly children, or fishermen's drunken yarns. However, Old Worlders are a superstitious lot and many believe unknown things still lurk in the shadows of the world...

Using the Beast of Bögen

Five Truths about the Beast of Bögen is suitable for characters of any experience level. For the purposes of the scenario it is assumed that the Player Characters are travelling in a river boat along the River Bögen, but the events described here could take place along any of the many rivers within Sigmar's Empire and with a little work even the river can be replaced with a road if the PCs prefer travelling by coach. In addition to the core rulebook 2nd edition sourcebook *The WFRP Companion* could be useful, but not mandatory since all the necessary information for running the scenario is provided.

Taking It Elsewhere

Riverfolk are even more superstitious and paranoid than the rest of the Empire and similar stories and beliefs exist in regards to all the major waterways like the Slaughterer of Stir, or the Terror of Talabec, etc. Therefore, the GM can easily take the Beast from Bögen and use it in any other major river crossing the Empire. And Marienburgers probably have their own mythical monsters as well.

As adventurers are wont to travel quite a bit, a colorful distraction is called for every now and then, and *Five Truths about the Beast of Bögen* can be used to make an otherwise uneventful trip unforgettable. During the events of the scenario the PCs hear four different stories about the Beast before coming face to face with the mythical monster themselves and realizing that all lies contain at least a grain of truth.

Five Truths about the Beast of Bögen can be used to compliment the GM's current campaign, it can be included as a side-plot in an ongoing adventure, or it can serve as an evening's entertainment for those times when the GM suddenly needs to pull something out of his hat. However, due to the nature and structure of the story, it probably works best when the events described here are interwoven in an ongoing adventure or used as interludes between other short scenarios.

Written by: Sami Uusitalo (sami.uusitalo1@gmail.com)

Cover and art by: Pasi Juhola (<http://pahapasi.deviantart.com/>)

Thanks to Lauri Maijala, Jay Hafner and Ralph Seller for their comments.

Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay © Games Workshop Limited 1986, 2005. This edition © Games Workshop Limited 2012. Games Workshop, Warhammer, Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay, the foregoing marks' respective logos and all associated marks, logos, places, names, creatures, races and race insignia/devices/logos/symbols, vehicles, locations, weapons, units and unit insignia, characters, products and illustrations from the Warhammer World and Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay game setting are either ®, TM and/or © Games Workshop Ltd 1986-2012, variably registered in the UK and other countries around the world. This edition published under license to Fantasy Flight Publishing Inc. Fantasy Flight Games and the FFG logos are trademarks of Fantasy Flight Publishing, Inc. All Rights Reserved to their respective owners.

A Long Time Ago on a River Far, Far Away...

The River Bögen is a tributary of the might River Reik, and a relatively important one for commerce. Coming from the Reik, one must pass through the Weissbruck Canal in order to get to Bögenhafen. Travel along the canal takes almost three days and the trip on the Bögen another four days. As soon as the PCs arrive in Weissbruck they can't avoid hearing stories and rumors about the horrible Beast of Bögen. It seems there haven't been this many sightings of the beast since the Great Scare twenty years ago.

The scenario is written assuming the PCs are travelling from Weissbruck Canal towards Bögenhafen, but they could just as well be heading the other way. The PCs should hear the following four stories during their trip along the canal or during the first two or three days of their journey on the River Bögen. The Truths are interchangeable; the GM can introduce them in any order.

Telling the Tales

The GM should strive to make the following scenes with the NPCs as engaging as possible. Get the characters involved in the story being told, have them ask questions, have the NPCs ask them what they think happened next, or ask them their opinion regarding the Beast. Let them tell you what they find interesting and what they believe the Beast of Bögen is all about. You could even turn these tales into short cut-scenes, where players play the different NPCs involved in the story (see *Appendix I*).

Additional Rumors

You can use these rumors when the PCs meet NPCs along the Bögen, especially when they inquire about the beast.

- There isn't just one beast, but many.
- The Beast is actually a school of predatory Reikeels.
- Priests of Manann can bless your vessel against the Beast's attacks. Naturally, they will ask for a small donation...
- This scale of the Beast I just bought will bring me good fortune.
- An armor made from the Beast's scales can turn aside all blows.
- They say the blood of the Beast cures all ills. And inhaling powder made from its tusk assures your manhood never goes down.
- The Beast only attacks during the night/day/when Mannslieb is full etc.
- Killing an albatross in flight incurs the Beast's wrath.
- There is no Beast, it is just a bunch of wreckers/followers of Stromfels using these tales to create fear and cover their crimes.
- They say long ago a Sea-elf She-elf was captured by river pirates and suffered greatly. With her dying breath she cursed the river – the Beast is her curse manifest.
- It is not a beast at all, I tells you! It is a contraption that's made of wood and breathes steam. And it can swim under water! And it is operated by rats that walk like men!
- The Beast can attack overland as well! Just last week old Gunther had just one drink, but the Beast came and put a spell on him so that he passed out - and then burnt his sauna.

The First Truth - Mannfried's Tale

This encounter takes place soon after the PCs have cleared the Weissbruck Canal and on their way up the Bögen. After a day or so of travel they stop at a small town to resupply, check the boat for any damages, and spend the night. As the PCs arrive, they figure they should have maybe an hour of daylight left.

The town seems like your typical, lively, Imperial town. Narrow cobblestone streets twist and turn between wooden shanties and one and two-storey timber townhouses. Regardless the fact that the sun is setting and the shadows are quickly growing longer, people are out and about, and small squares here and there are crowded with carts, stalls, and vendors. It seems there is much bustle about town as people are getting ready to celebrate some local festival.

No Sea Legs?

If the party is travelling by coach or foot, the GM can still feed them the tales in Weissbruck as well as in the coaching inns and taverns along the Bögenhafen road. And when they have to take a ferry to cross the river the Beast emerges. Or the roads could be closed because of brigand attacks and the PCs have to board a barge...

Finding lodging can prove a bit tricky under the circumstances, but the PCs should be able to find lower class accommodation, maybe after a successful **Average (+0%) Haggling Test**. Asking any locals will quickly inform them what the fuss is all about: the locals are celebrating their annual Flood Festival.

Around half a century ago, the towns in this part were almost completely drowned as the Bögen experienced unprecedented flooding. After the towns and villages were rebuilt, the people started celebrating an annual Flood Festival. It

started as small gatherings of people praying and making sacrifices to the gods in order to appease them and be spared from facing such a calamity again. Since then the event has transformed into a merrier time of celebration, although the initial meaning has not been completely lost.

The Flood Festival

The Flood Festival starts at sunset, when the villagers gather at the riverbank. Families light candles and place them on beautiful, skilfully carved wooden icons of Manann, Taal and Rhya, and Sigmar. Then, with prayers to these gods, they gently set the icons down and let the receding current carry the floating candles down the Bögen. This custom is believed to ensure good fortune for the coming year. Then, drinking, singing and dancing commence and continue throughout the night.

The PCs are encouraged to take part in the festivities by the welcoming locals. They are free to partake any way they see fit, but the GM should make sure that at least one or two of them see the following. A burly, thick bearded fisherman makes his way through the crowd with a skinny friend in tow. Both men are clearly enjoying themselves as they are stinking drunk and singing obnoxiously. A short moment later two foreign men, Cathayans, who are not drunk in the least, make their way through the crowd slowly but with determination. An **Average (+0%) Perception Test** reveals that their gaze is fixed on the two drunken fishermen and that they are armed. If the PCs decide to follow, the GM should use a group of revellers, a fetching wench or any such ruse to intercept them just long enough for the men to disappear from sight. They get to meet them soon enough, though.

The Morning After

As the next morning dawns, the PCs will at some point make their way towards the pier and their boat. On the way there they run into the skinny fisherman from last night, who is still drunk. The man, Frantz, is calling out to his friend Mannfried, trying to find him (*for stats se p. 16*). If the PCs ask him about it, he, drunkenly and at length, explains that his friend just disappeared last night and has been missing since.

If the PCs decide not to help Frantz, skip directly to *Suspicious Foreigners* below. However, if they choose to help Frantz, have them decide where to start looking for the missing fisherman. His friend is totally useless, and will only lead them randomly from one place to the next while recounting their debaucheries from last night. The GM should play up Frantz as an annoyance as well as a source of some humour (if that suits your style). Have the PCs make some **Easy (+20%) Search** or **Gossip Tests** to learn hints where Mannfried and Frantz have been spotted last night. With a success of two or more degrees they learn, from a tavern keeper or a maid perhaps, that some suspicious foreigners seemed to be interested in the men last night. The clues should eventually lead the impromptu search party to the warehouse district near the docks.

Suspicious Foreigners

The warehouse district is a maze of narrow streets and back-alleys that twist and turn without rhyme or reason. Furthermore, the dilapidated, shabby warehouses have been built without any general plan or design, with some of them built on top of the old ones and many leaning precariously over the streets, casting the whole area in shadow.

Here the PCs run into the Cathayans (*for stats se p. 16*) that followed the two fishermen last night (by accident, if they decided not to help Frantz). The men are dressed in flowing black silk shirts

with frog buttons and high collars traditional to their native land. Both are clearly armed. The men are pulling a cart with a tarp covering its cargo – dead bodies and Mannfried, who they think is dead (see *What are the Cathayans up to?*).

If the PCs confront the Cathayans, they will not under any circumstances reveal their cargo to the PCs. If the PCs try to force them, a fight ensues unless the Cathayans are clearly outnumbered in which case they try to flee.

If they seem at a loss what to do, or if they decide not to interfere, or if the situation drags, Mannfried (who is under the tarp having been knocked out and believed dead) suddenly comes to and tries to escape from under the tarp. The same thing happens after a block or so if the PCs decide to shadow the Cathayans. Mannfried's sudden resurrection surprises his captors as much as anyone else and they try to knock him out again. Frantz tries to interfere. A fight ensues unless the Cathayans are clearly outnumbered in which case they try to flee.

What are the Cathayans up to?

The Cathayan Trading Company is a front for a group of sorcerers and necromancers exiled from Cathay. These vile men have made the Empire their new home to continue their foul experiments in dark maleficium. They use *the Cathayan Trading Company* to smuggle equipment and corpses for them. One of their secret cabals operates in Bögenhafen.

Once the PCs have saved Mannfried, he and Frantz want to show their gratitude by treating them to a round at a local tavern (which the PCs may very well end up paying for). While having the drinks, Mannfried tells them how one of the Cathayans suddenly appeared in front of him last night, blocking his way. He was about to punch the guy in the face when someone knocked him out cold. The next thing he knew, he woke up on a pile of dead bodies. More importantly,

Mannfried also shares his story about the Beast of Bögen with them.

Mannfried's Tale

Mannfried breaks into a long and winded story that often gets tangled up in insignificant detail (another pint will help get the story going again). His story goes like this...

It had been a long day for Mannfried and his father in one of their favorite fishing spots near the Seat of Manann, a huge statue that sits in the middle of the river. It is a place where rhombus (fat fish with hairy backs) really take the bait. The sun was already setting and they were getting ready to return when, without any warning, the river turned pitch black and tarlike, and a horrible stench made them retch. They hadn't seen anything like it before. But that wasn't the end of it. Just then, a huge fishlike behemoth burst from the depths! It was a huge, gray-black monster with teeth like a shark's, just ten times bigger and razor-sharp! It crashed against their boat, almost upending the vessel, and Sven, the third member of their small crew and as honest an Averlander there ever was, fell into the river. The men fought to pull Sven back in, but the thing yanked him under.

The Beast disappeared into the black waters, but the tarlike substance prevented them from moving. After the longest moment of dead calm

and without any advance warning the Beast attacked again. It landed on the aft of the boat, its weight forcing the stern under. Mannfried was able to get a hold of the mast, but his father fell and slid down the slippery deck right towards the Beast. He kicked at the monster and struck it with his knife, but the blows just glanced off its iron hard scales. The Beast caught his father and bit the kicking and screaming man in half with one snap of its huge jaws – and he was no small man either!

Its eyes, black and gleaming on stalks, turned towards Mannfried and its blood drenched jaws snapped in anticipation. Mannfried's eyes caught sight of a torch they used to light their way in the dark. Mad with panic, he did the only thing he could think of and swung the torch at the Beast. To his complete surprise it let out a long, loud shriek and disappeared under the waves. Mannfried doesn't remember how he got back, but the Beast did not return. He must have frightened it off.

What others say about Mannfried's story?

The poor man's father was a drunkard and a fool. They probably got wasted on the river, run their boat on the rocks, and the fool managed to drown himself.

The Second Truth – Tomas Spanner’s Story

This encounter takes place in Weissbruck or any other larger town along the way. While the PCs are making their way about the town they are alerted by angry shouting. Just as they see a gathered crowd, have one or two of the PCs make an **Average (+0%) Dexterity Test** to dodge a few cabbage heads suddenly flying their way over the curious onlookers (hits do not cause any damage).

As they push through the crowd the following scene opens before the PCs. At the feet of an old, crooked bell tower two scrawny scribes try to protect themselves against an onslaught of cabbage heads, tomatoes and apples while trying to prevent their attacker from entering the tower. The man pelting them with edibles is a red faced Noble, who hurls insults at someone called Spanner, insisting that the man comes down to face him for disgracing his daughter’s honor. While shouting angrily at Spanner, the Noble continues to grab more ammo from the wares of a helpless vendor. The target of the Noble’s wrath stands on a balcony at the top of the bell tower trying to make his voice heard to plead innocence of any wrongdoing.

As soon as the vendor sees the PCs emerging through the crowd he pleads them to stop this madness. The vendor quickly explains that the Noble, Kastor von Steinhofer, accuses Spanner of using his spyglass to spy on his daughter from atop the bell tower. Allow the PCs to get creative and roleplay out how they defuse the situation.

Defusing the Situation

Calming down von Steinhofer requires a successful **Challenging (-10%) Charm, Haggle** or **Blather Test**. Trying to subdue the elderly Noble would not be too challenging were it not for his Champion who stands by, watching the show

with an impassionate expression. The PCs can try to convince Spanner to come down with a successful **Average (+0%) Charm** or **Intimidation Test**, providing that they can convince him he will not be harmed. The scribes, Spanner’s assistants, will try to bar anyone entry into the bell tower, but will make way at first sight of true violence. For all stats, *see p. 18*.

Spanner is a cartographer and he claims he is doing important observations. If the PCs visit the top of the tower they can see that there indeed is a view to Kristina von Steinhofer’s bedroom from the balcony. The spyglass points to the river at the moment, but a closer inspection (and maybe a **Routine (+10%) Perception Test**) reveals signs in the dirt/dust that the spyglass was previously placed in a spot with a clear line of sight into the girl’s bedroom. What the PCs do with this information is up to them.

After a while, the PCs should be able to defuse the situation, maybe by convincing von Steinhofer that nothing happened and that Spanner will continue his observations in a different location in the future. One of them could also face the Noble’s Champion in a duel to see honor restored. Spanner will be grateful if he is not thrown into jail or his equipment isn’t ruined and he will offer to treat the PCs to a dinner at a local restaurant as a sign of gratitude. If you want to make things interesting during the dinner, you can have Kristina von Steinhofer make an appearance. During dinner Spanner will tell them his Beast of Bögen story.

Tomas Spanner’s Story

Tomas has been obsessed with charting the River Bögen ever since his encounter with the Beast. Here is his story...

Spanner was travelling the river towards Bögenhafen when their vessel reached a strange pass at nightfall. The ship slowly glided between the imposing rockwalls rising on both banks. Spanner and the ship's crew could see several caves on the walls on both sides and sharp rocks jutting from the river just above the waterline were decorated with numerous sculptures of unknown creatures that sent shivers down their spines. Under the quickly growing shadows it seemed to the cartographer like some of the rock formations and cave mouths had almost bestial features to them, like huge, distorted faces leered at them from all sides.

Suddenly and without any warning, storm clouds rolled in and darkness enveloped them. Spanner could hear thunder roar in the distance and lightning struck somewhere in the clouds. The crew looked around nervously and many made signs of Manann. Some even whispered the name of Stromfels, before the first mate struck one of the men on the mouth.

Despite of the strong winds, a horrible stench filled the pass. And then, just as lightning lit up the sky, Tomas saw purple-blue tentacles burst forth from beneath the waves. They grabbed several men and dragged them kicking and screaming into the river. The men drew weapons and captain Stübing tried to organize the panicking men into a desperate defense. They hacked at the tentacles, managing to make them bleed and even cut one of them off, but again and again the monstrous things attacked.



As the ship was coming all the way from Marienburg, they had one of the Priest-Navigators of Manann from the Order of Albatross with them. The navigator gathered the men around him at the bow. Shouting into the wind he led them all in a prayer to Manann. Tomas hung on to the man's leg and prayed like never before. In a fierce protest the winds howled maddeningly in the caves on both sides of the pass and still the tentacles dragged men, including the captain, into their deaths. In a desperate last effort, the Priest-Navigator threw his amulet of Manann into the river and the river started boiling and hissing angrily - and suddenly the tentacles withdrew. Soon the storm clouds cracked and Bögen settled like nothing had happened.

Since then, Tomas Spanner has been charting the River Bögen, trying to find that eerie pass again. It is not marked on any maps, and although some claim to have heard of it, no one has actually seen it. Tomas is obsessed with finding the Pass of the Beast and has been travelling up and down the Bögen in a desperate attempt to find it.

What others say about Spanner's story?

The man is a known Black Snuff addict. That damned poison probably made him see all kinds of things. He has been in the clear ever since his encounter with the Beast, though. Probably explains why he hasn't seen it since, if you know what I mean.

The Third Truth - Sergeant Winterhalter's Version

This scene takes place when the PCs are visiting a settlement and they have gone ashore. It might make things more interesting if one or two of them stay behind. As the rest of them are about to return, a group of wildmen storm their vessel. These Wreckers are cultists of Stromfels and they are here to steal the PCs' riverboat (for stats, see p. 17).

If some of the PCs stayed behind in the barge, have them take a few **Silent Move Tests** to stay hidden. If they are found or try not to hide in the first place, the Cultists close in on them with thirst for murder in their eyes and rusty, wicked looking blades held aloft. However, they are interrupted by the arrival of the authorities. Riverwarden Sergeant Winterhalter arrives just before the rest of the PCs and opens fire on the Cultists before taking cover behind a row of barrels (for stats, see p. 18).

The PCs hear the rapport of the gun shot and see both Winterhalter and the Cultists as they arrive at the scene. With the help of the Sergeant the PCs have to reclaim their boat. If the Cultists have captured any PCs who were aboard, they will use them as hostages to flee when things turn sour for them. If things take a turn for the worse for the PCs, more Riverwardens arrive at the scene in d10/2 rounds.

After the Wreckers have been defeated, Sergeant Winterhalter helps the PCs to clear up the mess. He tells the PCs that the men were Cultists of Stromfels and they worship the Beast of Bögen. He will then, at a suitable moment, share his own Beast of Bögen story with them.

Sergeant Winterhalter's Version

Sergeant Winterhalter came face to face with the Beast several years ago, when he was still a young man learning the ins and outs of his

profession. During a routine patrol down the river his patrol came across a small flotilla of brightly painted, poorly maintained boats cluttered with pots, pans and all kinds of random paraphernalia. It was exactly the kind of typical small boat community the river Strigany are usually moored in. The riverwardens often received complaints how the Strigany sold fake charms and potions to the superstitious riverfolk.

Usually such communities are lively places, but this one seemed eerily quiet. A horrendous stench hung in the air above the flotilla. Suspecting the worst, the riverwardens boarded one of the ships. They found the canvas covering the boat torn and the interior stained with blood. Pistols at the ready, they started along the gangways, moving from ship to ship, pushing aside bloody and torn clothes left hanging on lines drawn between the boats.

Finally, they came to a boat at the center of the community. There, on the deck of that bright red ship was something that Winterhalter can only describe as if the riverbed itself had come alive and dragged itself aboard the ship. The hulking mass was ripping the arms of one of the Strigany to eat it. The sight and the stench were so unbearable that several of the riverwardens threw up.

The Beasts was alerted to their presence. It cast the Strigany's body aside and charged the wardens. The men fired. The shots ripped apart sediment and rotting vegetation, but did little to slow the monster down. It charged their sergeant and with one swing of its huge arms sent the man's broken body flying from one boat to the next. Right then, the rest of them fled.

What followed was a horrible game of cat and mouse inside the flotilla. The Beast chased

Mannricht from one boat to the next. He tried to dodge pots and pans hanging in his way and avoid rotting floorboards. He could hear the Beast closing in on him. Somehow, Winterhalter managed to hide behind a sheet left hanging out to dry. He heard the Beast stomp around the deck, rummaging through possible hidey-holes. Suddenly it tore down the sheet and stared right at the riverwarden. The Beast looked straight at him and Winterhalter found himself frozen in fear, unable to even lift his pistol. The Beast just stood there – and then slowly moved away in what seemed to Mannricht like slight confusion. He hadn't moved, and the beast had not seen him.

Once he could hear the beast on the other side of the flotilla he dashed to their patrol boat. Again, he could hear the Beast start after him. He got aboard, ran to the heavy blunderbuss mounted on the prow and fired just as the Beast was climbing aboard. The shot drove the Beast into the river and it disappeared under the waves.

What others say about Winterhalter's story?

The riverwardens in these parts are especially brutal and suspicious towards the Strigany. This story is just an attempt to cover up their massacre of those pariahs.

The Fourth Truth - Marius Raab's Recollection

The characters can meet Marius Raab almost anywhere along the river as he is a riverboat captain. As the PCs pass Raab's ship along the river, the Captain waves them over. His barge, *Beast of Bögen*, has grazed an underwater rock and they are taking in water. Captain Raab asks for help with repairs and possible needs them to tow the *Beast* to the nearest town. As per the laws of the river, they really have no other option but to help him.

To help with the repairs the GM should have the PCs use any relevant skills and tools they at their disposal. There could be an injured sailor or two. Or if one of the PCs is a Priest, one of the sailors could have deceased and his body needs to be blessed.

In his younger days Marius Raab was a smuggler and a fiend (for stats, see p. 19). Although mostly law-abiding nowadays, he hasn't completely abandoned his old ways. Raab has four long wooden boxes partly hidden in the cargo hold. These boxes contain dead bodies wrapped in shrouds, and he is smuggling them for *the Cathayan Trading Company* (see *What are the Cathayans up to?* p. 5). If the PCs want to snoop around to find out what is in the boxes, they have to succeed in an **Average (+0%) Silent Move Test** and a **Routine (+10%) Strength Test** to open the boxes unseen.

Confronting Captain Raab about the corpses could very well lead to trouble unless the characters are very careful with how they handle things. In such a case, any confrontation should wait until after Raab has had a chance to share his *Beast of Bögen* story with the PCs.

During the repairs, or when they get ready to tow the *Beast*, Marius Raab tells the PCs his *Beast of Bögen* story. It could come up as they discuss the

name of the vessel, or the PCs could mention one of the many rumors they have heard about the mythical creature etc.

Marius Raab's Recollection

Marius and his crew of thugs and miscreants were smuggling a shipment of Bretonnian brandy from Altdorf to Bögenhafen. In the capital a pale She-Elf approached the smuggler and offered to pay good money for a passage of the no-questions-asked variety. He had taken the deal, and would later be glad that he did.

Just a day or two before they were scheduled to reach their destination, Raab and his crew arrived at a small skerry just as the sun was setting. On the small, rocky island stood a crooked, abandoned lighthouse long since fallen into disrepair and ruin. They moored at the rotten and precarious looking jetty to investigate. Some of the men ventured to the bottom of the tower and reported curious, weather-beaten and rusted gibbets hanging inside the lighthouse. Despite the eerie ruins, the smugglers reckoned this was a good hiding place and decided to stop for the night.

Raab woke up to the sound of eerie chanting echoing inside the lighthouse. For a minute, Marius wondered whether he should send some of his men to investigate, but then a horrible stench filled the air, and they could see hooded figures moving with a strange gait about the tower. Immediately, Marius gave the order to cut the ropes, and they separated from the jetty.

As their barge slowly drifted farther, they watched how the hooded figures threw what they thought was fish innards into the river from the top of lighthouse. Just as the lighthouse was disappearing from sight, a sinister green light

shot from its top. Its ominous gaze followed them all the way to the next bend in the river.

About an hour later they suddenly heard Old Jans screaming in the cargo hold. Upon investigating, all they could find was bloody drag marks leading to a port hole. Soon another man screamed in the stern and vanished into the river. After minutes of nervous searching they found wet claw marks on the deck.

It was then that the Beast charged from its hiding place. It had sleek features, jagged shark-like teeth and black, lifeless eyes. Its fingers ended in long, sharp claws and its slimy skin was covered in scales crisscrossed with scars. With a gurgling howl the Beast tore into the men, clawing and biting at them viciously.

The creature slashed Marius across the face. Piercing pain filled his senses and he could feel warm blood running across his face. The creature opened its jaws to go for the kill – but the she-elf stopped it by stepping in front of it. She just stood there, and said something to the creature in that language of theirs. Spitting and hissing viciously, its gills opening and closing rapidly, the Beast cowered and slowly withdrew back into the river.

What others say about Raab's story?

The She-Elf was a sorceress. Clearly, she cast some kind of spell on the crew. That is, if there ever was an Elf to begin with. Raab probably just got into a fight with his crew and made up a story of the beast and the She-Elf to cover up the murder of his men.

The Fifth Truth - Facing the Beast of Bögen

Once the PCs have heard all the stories it is time for them to come face to face with the Beast of Bögen to have a story of their own to tell. The idea here is to take all the feedback you have received from your players earlier about what they think the Beast of Bögen is all about and use it in this scene.

This scene should fall upon the characters when they least expect it. The Beast usually attacks just after sunset. Storm clouds suddenly roll across the sky and lightning strikes. Or not. The Beast could attack in the early hours of the morning, with clear skies. Using some element in setting up the last scene that would make it possible for players to later pin their experience on should also be considered (like heavy drinking, sleep/dreaming etc.).

If the GM thinks his players are willing and able, he can actually hand over the narrative reins of this last scene to them. Ask them to choose elements from all the stories they have heard so far and use the ones they liked the most, or make their own variations of them. The players can narrate the location of the encounter; describe the beast's appearance and form of attack. It is then up to the GM to select a weakness for the Beast.

However, if the GM is not willing to relinquish all narrative power to his players, he can let them choose from the options below, choose them himself, or randomly determine the various factors (see the table on *p. 15*). A profile for the Beast is provided for all the four Truths (see *p. 14*). The GM should mix and match these profiles and the different aspects of the four Truths to come up with a version of the Beast for the players to face (It is useful to have one NPC ready to die to display the Beast's power to the PCs).

The point is that the last scene should include elements from several of the stories the PCs have heard and thus make them realize that stories such as these are never the whole truth, but more often than not contain at least a small part of it.

Slaying the Monster & Further Adventures

It would perhaps be more fitting that the Beast is defeated but manages to retreat. Of course, the PCs could slay the Beast, but who is going to believe them?

The purpose if the final scene is to give the players a Beast of Bögen story of their own. Facing the Beast is a dangerous endeavor and their goal should be to find a way to escape with their lives. The different profiles provided here for the Beast are meant to represent a mythical monster that has survived dozens of encounters with men and facing it in battle is truly a dangerous ordeal. If the PCs decide to try and kill the Beast, then they should really have to work for it and be smart how they go about it.

For further adventures, the Cathayan Trading Company might have some unfinished business with PCs. Some of the NPCs they have encountered during their journey down the Bögen might have some further adventures for them.

Awarding Experience

Completing The Four Truths	30 xp per Truth
Completing The Fifth Truth	50 xp
Good roleplaying	10 – 50 xp

The Beast of Bögen - Constructing the Final Scene

Mannfried's Tale

Main profile							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
69	0	70	60	28	28	35	-
Secondary Profile							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
2	35	7	6	8	0	0	0

Skills: Navigation, Perception, Swim

Talents: Natural Weapons, Strike Mighty Blow, Terrifying, Unstoppable Blows (-30% to Parry attempts)

Armour: Hide

Armour points: Head 1, Body 1

Weapon: Jaws with razor-sharp teeth (counts as Armour-piercing)

Fears Fire: The Beast must take Fear Tests against fire. Even seeing fire is enough to cause a test. Any Wounds caused by fire, after deduction of Toughness and Armour, are doubled.

Tomas Spanner's Story

Main profile							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
35	0	75	55	55	20	50	-
Secondary Profile							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
4	30	7	5	2	0	0	0

Talents: Terrifying, Unstoppable Blows (-30% to Parry attempts)

Armour: Thick Hide

Armour points: Tentacles 2

Weapon: Tentacles: Each Tentacle has 6 Wounds and 2 Armour Points. Once 5 Tentacles are cut off, the Beast flees. Each tentacle has the Impact Weapon quality.

Drowner: If the Beast successfully grapples a victim, it tries to drown him. If the victim loses an Opposed Strength Test, he is dragged under the waves (see p. 136 of the *WFRP Core Rulebook*). It releases the victim if that tentacle is wounded.

Holy Terror: Divine Spells cause the Beast double damage after deduction of Toughness and Armour. Holy symbols and the like work as a Hand Weapons with the Impact and Armour Piercing qualities against the Beast.

Sergeant Winterhalter's Version

Main profile							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
40	12	54	51	20	20	28	7
Secondary Profile							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
4	32	5	5	6	0	0	0

Skills: Intimidate, Swim +20%, Speak Language (Dark Tongue)

Talents: Fearless, Frightening, Natural Weapons (Claws), Specialist Weapon Group (Two-handed), Unstoppable Blows (-30% to Parry attempts)

Armour: None

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

Weapon: Great Weapon

Vomit Attack: Full Attack that automatically inflicts a Damage 5 hit that ignores all Armour Points (may not be Parried, but may be Dodged).

Poor Vision: The Beast has trouble seeing targets that are not moving. It must make an Intelligence Test to detect an unmoving target. If it is attacked the test becomes Easy (+20%).

Regeneration: The Beast regenerates 1d10 Wounds at the start of each Round.

Marius Raab's Recollection

Main profile							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
50	35	42	41	50	45	40	10
Secondary Profile							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
2	22	4	4	4	0	0	0

Skills: Concealment +10%, Dodge Blow, Heal, Intimidate, Navigation, Outdoor Survival, Sail, Silent Move +20%, Swim +20%, Speak Language (Eltharin)

Talents: Ambidextrous, Amphibious, Frightening,

Natural Weapons (Teeth, Claws), Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Injure

Armour: Scaly Skin

Armour points: Head 2, Arms 2, Body 2, Legs 2

Weapons: Claws and Teeth (counts as having Armour Piercing quality).

Aquatic: The Beast can breathe underwater. It has Movement 6 in water.

Drowner: If the Beast successfully grapples a victim, it tries to drown him. If the victim loses an Opposed Strength Test, he is dragged under the waves (see p. 136 of the WFRP Core Rulebook). It releases the victim if it is wounded.

She-elf's Curse: The Beast cannot attack Elfs (or women, or Wizards, or a type of your choice).

Use this table to select or randomize elements from the four different Truths about the Beast.

	Location	Appearance	Attack	Weakness	Truth
Mannfried's Tale	The Seat of Manann A huge statue of Manann sits in the middle of the river. It is difficult to say whom the weather-beaten statue actually depicts. It could be Manann, but some say it could be Stromfels as well...	<i>A behemoth of a fish-monster. It has huge jaws with rows razor-sharp teeth, black eyes on stalks, and steel hard scales. The stench is awful</i>	<i>It attacks from below and chews through everything. It can destroy a river boat in mere minutes. Its tail is capable of raising tall waves and smashing roving boats to cinders. It releases a tarlike, stinking substance that prevents its prey from escaping.</i>	<i>The Beast fears fire. Fire causes it double damage.</i>	<i>The Beast is an ancient river monster that has lurked in the River Bøgen for centuries. It could be a creation of magic, Chaos, Stromfels or Manann even.</i>
Winterhalter's Version	The Crime Scene The PCs come across a river boat, ferry, flotilla, or river lock that is a scene of a horrendously bloody murder.	<i>It looks like the riverbed had crawled up. It is a hulking, humanoid mass of rotting vegetation, fish carcasses, slime and sediment.</i>	<i>Huge hands, possibly a huge weapon, an awful stench, and a vomit attack.</i>	<i>It is a stupid creature that quickly forgets what it was doing. Therefore, it often ignores non-moving targets, or gives up the chase.</i>	<i>The Beast is a River Troll that lives in the Bøgen and periodically attacks people. Being territorial creatures, if it dies another one will eventually claim its territory.</i>
Tomas Spanner's Story	The Abandoned Lighthouse An abandoned lighthouse stands on a small rocky isle in the middle of the river. The crooked tower has fallen into disrepair and ruin, and rusty gibbets can be seen hanging inside.	<i>A sleek, sharklike mutant, or an avatar/daemon of Stromfels. Large jaws filled with sharp teeth, black, lifeless eyes.</i>	<i>Melee attacks with sharp shark's teeth and claws. It drags its victims under water to drown them. Prefers sneak attacks.</i>	<i>The Beast cannot attack Elfs (or any non-humans, women, wizards, etc.)</i>	<i>The Beast is a mutant-champion of Stromfels summoned by the Stormgod's followers. The summoning requires sacrifices and there is always a price to pay....</i>
Marius Raab's Recollection	The Forgotten Pass High walls border this dark pass, where wind howls in the caves and sharp rocks jut from the black water. Small idols depicting a strange god can be seen everywhere.	<i>A huge, ancient monster, a daemon or a river-god. All that is visible are the purple-blue tentacles. Was it to ever rise from the depths, its appearance would shatter the minds of any and all laying their eyes upon it.</i>	<i>Tentacle attacks. The tentacles drag sacrificial victims into the river where, if they are lucky, they drown before being devoured.</i>	<i>The Beast is banished by prayers to Manann (or some other deity). Holy symbols do it harm.</i>	<i>The Beast is an ancient river-god that existed long before man learned to walk upright.</i>

Dramatis Personae

Mannfried (use for Frantz as well)

Career: Fisherman

Race: Human

Main profile							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
30	32	30	35	28	28	30	27
Secondary Profile							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	13	3	3	4	0	0	0

Skills: Common Knowledge (the Empire), Consume Alcohol, Navigation, Outdoor Survival, Perception, Row, Sail, Swim, Speak Language (Reikspiel)

Talents: Hardy, Orientation

Armour: Leather Jack

Armour points: Head 0, Arms 1, Body 1, Legs 0

Weapons: Dagger

Trappings: Fishhook and line, rowboat

Mannfried is a fisherman like his father, and his father's father, before him. He is a burly man with a thick, black beard, a weather-beaten face and a booming voice. A doublet covered in fish-hooks, the various cutting knives on his belt, and the pungent fish smell wafting around him are dead giveaways regarding his trade. He plies his trade on the Bögen every day, and every evening he is in his cups in one of the many taverns.

Cathayan Trading Company Thugs (2)

Career: Thug

Race: Human (Cathayan)

Main profile							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
42	30	34	35	34	26	27	26
Secondary Profile							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	12	3	3	4	0	0	0

Skills: Common Knowledge (Cathay), Consume Alcohol, Dodge Blow, Gamble, Intimidate, Secret Language (Thieves' Tongue), Silent Move, Speak Language (Cathayan, Reikspiel)

Talents: Lightning Reflexes, Disarm, Resistance to Poison, Wrestling, Strike to Stun

Armour: Leather Jerkin

Armour points: Head 0, Arms 0, Body 1, Legs 0

Weapons: Cathayan longsword (Best Quality +5% to WS, included in the profile)

Trappings: Cathayan clothing, 4 gc

These men are dressed in flowing black silk shirts traditional to their native land with frog buttons and high collars. Both are armed with rare Cathayan longswords, blades of high quality.

These thugs are working for *The Cathayan Trading Company*. The company is a front for a group of sorcerers and necromancers exiled from Cathay who have made the Empire their new home to continue their foul experiments of dark maleficium in. They use *the Cathayan Trading Company* to smuggle equipment and corpses for them. The Thugs will not reveal the identity of their hidden masters at any cost, not even under torture.

Sergeant Winterhalter

Career: Riverwarden

Race: Human

Main profile							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
40	42	35	30	35	33	30	30
Secondary Profile							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	15	3	3	4	0	0	0

Skills: Common Knowledge (the Empire), Gossip, Navigation, Sail, Perception, Row, Search, Secret Signs (Scout)

Talents: Orientation, Specialist Weapon (Gunpowder)

Armour: Leather Jack

Armour points: Head 0, Arms 1, Body 1, Legs 0

Weapons: Pistol (10 Shots), Hand Weapon, Shield

Trappings: Uniform

Mannricht Winterhalter is a Riverwarden Sergeant, a grizzly veteran of many years patrolling the Reik and now the Bögen. This friendly and jovial man has shaken down his fair share of smugglers, been slashed in the face by a frenzied wrecker, and emptied his fish-shaped pistol at fleeing river pirates. He has seen and heard it all, but he still gets the chills when he recalls his one and only meeting with the Beast.

Cultists of Stromfels (the number of PCs)

Career: Wrecker

Race: Human (mutant)

Main profile							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
36	32	40	40	38	26	27	24
Secondary Profile							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	12	4	4	4	0	0	0

Skills: Consume Alcohol, Dodge Blow, Gossip, Perception, Intimidate, Row, Sail, Scale Sheer Surface, Speak Language (Reikspiel), Silent Move, Swim

Talents: Street Fighting, Seasoned Traveller, Resistance to Poison, Strike Mighty Blow, Warrior Born, Very Resilient

Armour: Leather Jack

Armour points: Head 0, Arms 1, Body 1, Legs 0

Weapons: Knuckle-dusters, Hand Weapon (Club)

Trappings: Symbol of Stromfels made from fishbone, ragged clothing, 1 gc

Mutations:

Cultist 1 – Scaly skin: 1 AP on all locations.

Cultist 2 – Gills: The mutant can breathe under water.

Cultist 3 – Webbed hands and feet: The cultist has Swim +20%.

These Stromfels worshipping Cultist-Wreckers wear stained shirts and their armour and weapons are fashioned from fishbone, scales, and fins. They smell of rotten fish guts. Three of them have mutations.

Tomas Spanner

Career: Cartographer

Race: Human

Main profile							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
32	25	30	30	28	38	35	30
Secondary Profile							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	13	3	3	4	0	0	0

Skills: Academic Knowledge (geography), Common Knowledge (the Empire), Navigation, Outdoor Survival, Perception, Read/Write, Speak Language (Tilean, Cathayan), Trade (cartography)

Talents: Excellent Vision, Orientation, Super Numerate

Armour: None

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

Weapons: None

Trappings: Writing Kit, Dozen Scroll cases with maps of Bögen, Pony with saddle/harness

Tomas Spanner is a cartographer. This tall, thin man with greying hair has a nervous habit of repeatedly correcting the position of the spectacles on his nose. Wherever the man is he clearly stands out with a dozen map cases hanging on his person and a look about him that says he doesn't belong there. Tomas has been obsessed with charting the River Bögen ever since his encounter with the Beast.

Kastor von Steinhofers

Career: Minor Noble

Race: Human

Main profile							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
42	25	30	30	30	38	35	38
Secondary Profile							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	12	3	3	4	0	0	0

Skills: Blather, Common Knowledge (the Empire) +10%, Consume Alcohol, Charm, Gamble, Gossip, Read/Write, Ride, Perception, Read/Write, Speak Language (Tilean, Reikspiel)

Talents: Etiquette, Public Speaking, Specialist Weapon Group (Parrying, Fencing), Suave

Armour: None

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

Weapons: Rapier

Trappings: Noble's Garb, Purse with 30 gc, Jewellery worth 20 gc, Horse with saddle/harness

Kastor is a minor Noble who has some influence in these parts and an impeccable taste in very large hats. The man tends to get extremely red in the face when agitated in the slightest. And Kastor has been very red recently, because his teenage daughter is the most sought after young woman along the Bögen at the moment, and this has the father tied up in knots. He has been trying to find a proper match for her to get the most benefit out of the marriage and he doesn't need any would-be-suitors who do not come with a nice title and huge tracts of land to make matters more difficult with some foolish notions of love.

Kastor von Steinhofers Champion

Career: Duellist (ex-Pistolier)

Race: Human

Main profile							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
45	45	40	40	42	38	35	33
Secondary Profile							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
2	14	4	4	4	0	0	0

Skills: Blather, Common Knowledge (the Empire), Charm, Dodge Blow, Gossip, Gamble, Intimidate, Perception, Ride

Talents: Disarm, Etiquette, Mighty Shot, Quick Draw, Specialist Weapon Group (Parrying, Fencing, Gunpowder), Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Injure, Sure shot

Armour: None

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

Weapons: Rapier, Main Gauche, Pistol (10 shots)

An imposing man who is here to defend von Steinhofers honor. He will fight honourably and according to proper etiquette, unless his master is in immediate danger.

Captain Marius Raab

Career: Riverbarge Captain (ex-Smuggler, ex-Mate)

Race: Human

Main profile							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
50	42	45	40	42	38	40	30
Secondary Profile							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
2	17	4	4	4	0	0	0

Skills: Command, Common Knowledge (the Empire, Bögen, Criminal organisations), Dodge Blow, Evaluate, Gossip, Navigation, Perception, Row, Sail, Secret Language (Thieves' tongue), Search, Silent Move, Swim, Trade (Shipwright),

Talents: Dealmaker, Orientation, Seasoned Traveller, Specialist Weapon (Gunpowder)

Armour: Leather Jack

Armour points: Head 0, Arms 1, Body 1, Legs 0

Weapons: Pistol (10 Shots), Hand Weapon, Dagger

Trappings: Telescope, *Beast of Bögen* + crew

Marius is a hardened old salt that wears a rag to cover his blind eye and has a peg leg made of bone. He bought it from a peddler who claimed it was carved from the tusk of the Beast of Bögen. Little did the peddler know Marius had come across the Beast back in his days as a smuggler.

Marius Raab's Crew (10)

Use stats for **Wreckers**, *WFRP Core Rulebook p. 235*.

Appendix I

Running the Five Truths as Cut-scenes

Cut-scenes are a way for the GM to get players directly involved in telling of the four truths about the Beast. Give each player a role to play and give them a few minutes to get acquainted with their new characters and discuss them with each other. Then lay out the scene, give them the goal of the scene and the elements to be included.

Then it is up to the GM to describe the scene and events and control the Beast as well as any extra NPCs as usual. As soon as the goal is reached you end the scene and turn the focus back to the real characters and the NPC telling the story. These cut-scenes are all about the narrative and very few if any die rolls are called for. If you need to roll the dice than the simplest way is to use suitable NPC stats from those provided here in *Dramatis Personae* or choose from the ones provided in the WFRP core rulebook.

Mannfried's Tale

Start the scene with description of the fishermen near Manann's Seat as the sun is setting.

Goal of the cut-scene: Mannfried witnesses the Beast's attack and survives

Elements to be included in the cut-scene:

- The death of Mannfried's father and/or the death of Sven to display the Beast's bite attack.
- The Beast's fish-monsterlike appearance.
- The stench and the tarlike substance.
- Mannfried's fire attack drives the Beast away.

GM's role: The Beast

PC roles during the cut-scene:

Mannfried - When his story takes place, Mannfried is a young fisherman who goes out every day with his father. He believes he is already a better fisherman than his old man ever was, and is thinking about buying the small boat from him. He despises his father for his alcoholism and the way he treated his mother.'

Mannfried's Father - An experienced fisherman who knows the river like the backs of his hands. Rude, condescending towards his son. He is also a mean drunk and often gets into fights when he is in his cups.

Sven – An honest Averlander. The third man in this party. Sven moved into Weissbruck just a few months earlier. Why?

Tomas Spanner's Story

Start the scene with a description of the barge gliding into the strange pass just as the sun is setting.

Goal of the cut-scene: Tomas Spanner witnesses the Beast's attack and survives.

Elements to be included in the cut-scene:

- The Beast's tentacle attack.
- The stench.
- Unknown nature of the Beast.
- The fact that prayers to Manann (or some other deity) can drive the Beast away.

GM's role: The Beast, extra crew members

PC roles during the cut-scene:

Tomas Spanner – Tomas Spanner is a cartographer. A tall, thin man with greying hair who has a nervous habit of repeatedly correcting the position of the spectacles on his nose. He is excited to be here and map the area.

Navigator-Priest - An experienced and respected member of the Order of the Albatross. A devout Mananite who has the courage to face the Beast relying on his faith alone.

Captain Stübing – An elderly captain who is known to be harsh but fair. Feared and respected by his crew. Will do what he can to rally his men and face the beast. May very likely end up killed by the thing.

Crew Members - Members of the crew. Some more experienced than the others. Decide what your role on the ship is; give your sailor a name and one defining feature/trait. Very likely to die during this encounter.

Sergeant Winterhalter's Version

Start the scene with description of the patrol coming across the Strigany flotilla.

Goal of the cut-scene: Sergeant Winterhalter witnesses the Beast's attack and survives.

Elements to be included in the cut-scene:

- The Beast is unable to see a target that does not move, or quickly forgets what it is doing.
- The stench.
- The Beast has devastating melee attacks. It can board vessels.

GM's role: The Beast, possible extra Riverwardens or Strigany

PC roles during the cut-scene:

Young Winterhalter – A young rookie Riverwarden who is eager to learn the ropes of his chosen profession. A brave man, but not a foolhardy one. Quick to think on his feet.

Sergeant – An experienced riverpatrol sergeant who is respected by his men. Long years patrolling the river have left him a bit jaded. Sometimes hesitates in tight situations and is reluctant to give orders that could land him in hot water. Very likely to die in this scene.

Riverwardens – Give your Riverwarden a name and one defining feature/trait. New to the job or an experienced veteran? Is he an honest man of the law, or a corrupt official? Very likely to die in this scene.

Strigany Survivor - A Strigany who has just seen his friends and family butchered. Has been in hiding and is terrified beyond words. Happy to see someone come to his rescue, but afraid to approach the wardens in fear of attracting the beast.

Marius Raab's Recollection

Start the scene with a description of the smugglers' boat arriving at the lighthouse.

Goal of the cut-scene: Marius Raab witnesses the Beast's attack and survives.

Elements to be included in the cut-scene:

- The summoning of the Beast and the eerie nature of the lighthouse.
- The stealthy nature of the Beast.
- The death of several crewmen to display the Beast's melee attacks.
- The Beast fears Elfs (or Dwarfs, Halflings etc.).

GM's role: The Beast

PC roles during the cut-scene:

Marius Raab – A cunning and ruthless smuggler captain. You are interested in two things: making a profit, and not getting caught doing it. If things get nasty your number one priority is yourself, then your cargo, and lastly your crew. You will lose your eye to the Beast in this encounter.

Smugglers – Give your smuggler a name and one defining feature/trait. Is he/she a newcomer or been doing this for a while? What is your weapon of choice and your willingness to use it? Are you loyal to Marius Raab? You are very likely to be killed in this encounter.

She-Elf - Play her as a mysterious passenger who has her secret agenda. Aloof and not very willing to speak with humans (especially Dwarfs). When the action starts, you are cool, poised and in control. You could even be a Dark-Elf posing as a High-Elf. The humans can't tell the difference anyway.