

The Inaugural Issue of the
Magazine Focusing on
Wyrd Miniatures
and the World of
Malifaux!

Wyrd

CHRONICLES

Featuring

A First Peek into Malifaux

**An Interview With the Man Who Is Wyrd:
Nathan Caroland**

**Meet The Deadly Neverborn:
Who Are They, What Do They Really Want**

In-Depth Hobby Tutorials:

- Basework
- Painting
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MINIATURES

Volume 1



CONTENTS

Volume 1

An Introduction to Wyrd Games and The Wyrd Chronicles - 3

By Nathan Caroland

Malifaux - A Background - 5

By Nathan Caroland & Bryan Emick

Seamus and the Ortegas - 10

By Bryan Emick

Introducing the Neverborn - 19

By Nathan Caroland & Bryan Emick

An Interview With Nathan Caroland - 21

By Jim Gilstrap

A Look at Wyrd Painting Contests - 26

By Jim Gilstrap

Wyrd Miniatures - A Sneak Preview - 28

The Iceman Cometh - 31

A Painting and Basework Article by Rob Cardiss

The Judge - 39

A Sculpting Article by Steve Saunders

Featuring Your Artwork - 44



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AN INTRODUCTION TO



"Word?"

'No, WyrD.'

"Wired?"

'... no ... WyrD.'

"Weird?"

'Yup!'

"Huh, what makes them so odd and weird?"

'No, not Weird. WyrD.'

"That's what I said!"

'No, WyrD, as in Fate Personified.'

"Oh ... that's weird."

(sigh)

I can't tell you how many times I've had this conversation or when people read the logo on a t-shirt or on one of our products they begin to quiz me or fire off rapid interpretations of just exactly what we mean by it. Then again, if they happen to come across our Catacomb Prowler line, I usually hear 'yeah, that is definitely weird' and I don't bother to correct them.

WyrD started out as a fan site, some years back, to showcase my own interests in painting, and it wasn't long before we started to host painting contests which turned out to be quite popular. Soon after that, we began working on our first line of miniatures because my interest in the hobby had for some time, turned into a desire to see my ideas in miniature.

We sprang our first set of miniatures on the hobby community in December, 2005, and they were so well received that it was a natural rush to continue forward with the project. I managed to snooker the wife into giving me the green light! Naturally, we had some help getting to where we are currently, and as much as I would like to stroke my ego and say it was all me, it would quickly be deflated by the people that have helped WyrD both publicly and privately from the beginning. I would name names, but they know who they are, and I'm afraid I would inflate their sense of self worth and that they would start to demand more!

For those of you who have followed WyrD from the start, you can see that we are continuing to grow in a satisfactory manner as well as starting to flex our wings to see where our imagination can take us. This e-zine is just one of the many outlets that we have been discussing for some time now along with the character driven skirmish game we call Malifaux, which is currently in development. When are we going to release it, I hear you ask? Good question, and to that I can only say, 'when it's ready,' as we'll not release something before its time.

What will the future bring? Who knows! For one thing though, the crew has made certain that the Captain is lashed to the wheel, and I can only hope to land on an island paradise instead of going down with the ship. Whatever it is though, it most certainly will be ... WyrD.

Nathan Caroland



*First Look
Into a new world...*

THE ART OF
MALIFAUX



MALIFAUZ

A Background

By Nathan Caroland & Bryan Emick

1787 – The Year of The Breach

Malifaux.

Whether in the whispered rumors of the general populace or the secretive, hushed tones of The Guild, it is a word always spoken with fear.

For years it had grown more and more evident to everyone that magic was clearly in decline within our world; even the greatest of practitioners found it increasingly difficult to perform the most mundane acts. Some argued that we had become too dependent on magic, that we needed to return to a more natural state. On the other side of the debate, it was pointed out that practitioners, especially healers, improved the quality of life.

In 1787, the most powerful practitioners of the day came together and united themselves to discovering new sources of power. Although the process of how they discovered this new power is still a source of debate, they found a world just outside of our existence, a thin barrier separating our world from it, a barrier that could possibly be opened. The raw magical energy that emanated through it was too powerful to resist.

In an unprecedented move – some would say an act of desperation – the sorcerers worked their greatest magic ever and tore a hole through this barrier between the two worlds. The resulting destruction was massive. Many of the weaker practitioners fell lifeless from the resultant explosion that moved between the two worlds. The city where The Breach was opened was flattened, the life force of its inhabitants ripped from their bodies as an equilibrium was established between the two worlds. Those that survived found their powers increased many fold from simply being close to The Breach.

They say that great deeds require great sacrifice; both were accomplished that day.

It was called The Breach of The Great Boundary, a ragged hole that seemed to be torn from the very fabric of reality itself. A darkened tunnel extended thirty meters wide, twenty meters into the air, shimmering as a mirage in the heat, connecting the two worlds. A cold wind blew through The Breach and brought with it the faint smell of old death. Exploratory teams were quickly gathered to scout this new land and bring back some of its secrets.

On the other side of The Breach, these teams found a large city, similar to our own world. Whoever, all of those that crossed The Breach that day knew this world was vastly different. Many of the buildings bore strange writing, some carved into the brick facades, some painted onto the wooden doors. After searching the city for two weeks, not a single living thing could be found, not a trace of human or animal. Also, there was no signs of battle, no corpses, nothing. It was as if the inhabitants had simply disappeared.

The most learned of scholars were allowed entrance to this strange new world to study the signs and symbols in an effort to learn what may have happened. After months of research, they found that the city had been called *Malifaux*. The signs and symbols on the bricks and doorways were simple store signs: mercantile, tailor, blacksmith. Other signs, though, seemed puzzling: *Death Surgeon* and *Mechanical Magics*. Throughout these explorations no records could be found that gave any indication of what had befallen the previous citizens.

Three explorers moved farther out, seeking answers, but also seeking the source of the magical power they felt surrounding them. Several miles from the city they found a small settlement that strongly resembled a mining town. There were a few wooden buildings, many of them crumbling. A large hole was cut into the hillside just west of the town, with a shaft leading down. Their explorations soon turned up a gemlike substance that radiated more power than any practitioner had ever felt. The stones came in a variety of hues, some more powerful than



Malifaux - A Background

others, but within them there seemed to be a storage of latent magical energy that a sorcerer could tap into rather easily.

The scholars found references to these magical stones in old manuscripts. They were called ethar and the manuscripts spoke of great power with them, but also great danger. The practitioners didn't care about any danger, the stones held power. There was a rush to harvest and gather these stones in great quantity as practitioners of all skills and abilities could use them to power their magic. The practitioners also noticed a side-effect with the stones; that as they used the power of the ethar, the stone grew dark, its magical energy depleted. Eventually, though, it was discovered that a stone's magical energy could be replenished when it was brought in close proximity of a person as they died. This curious effect earned the ethar the nickname of *Soulstones*.



After six months of exploration, The Breach was opened to the general populace. A thriving trade was established between Earthside and Malifaux for those daring enough to harvest the Soulstones. The crumbling boomtowns away from the city of Malifaux were rebuilt, and those willing to brave the harsh environment populated them to work the Soulstone mines. Many practitioners moved to Malifaux in order to further their magic, and with them came families, servants, and many others that would cater to the needs of those moving to this new land.

Life in this manner continued for little more than a decade.

The salvation of magic was at hand.



1797 or 10 PF (Post Foris)

The border town of Malifaux became a thriving city over the next decade, growing fat and rich with the harvesting and trading of Soulstones.

However, the dangers of the land began taking their toll on those that moved farther and farther from The Breach. Rumors and stories began to circulate about tombs that held dark secrets and power even greater than the Soulstones. Entering those ancient burial sites had given life to the dead, waking protectors of those dangerous secrets and powers. Exploration teams were sent out, but few returned. Those that did talked about fantastic creatures and beings of mythology and fables that were soon named the *Neverborn*. No one knew where they had come from or why they had only recently begun to show themselves, though it was quickly discovered that man was no friend of theirs.

Some practitioners did discover a couple of those secrets, including the magic of reanimating the dead to use as slaves and drones. Other practitioners found ways to manipulate dead flesh, turning a once living human into a horrible abomination. The practice was seriously frowned upon and these *necromancers* became outcasts of society.

Other practitioners focused their studies on the machines that were found throughout the city and the surrounding land. Although many of these devices were rusted and incomplete, some could still be powered simply by placing a Soulstone inside the metal. Many of the machines were simple things, little more



Malifaux - A Background

than toys. However, there were other machines – great machines with great weapons – that could be brought back to life with the right Soulstones and a practitioner with enough power.

In the winter of 1797, one of the worst blizzards to hit Malifaux during the time of man's occupation arrived, and the Great Boundary suddenly became unstable. Despite the best efforts of the practitioners, The Breach began to shrink in upon itself. All attempts to enter The Breach were rebuffed, as if some force had cut off any access through the barrier. Worse yet, sounds of a fierce battle drifted across The Boundary from Malifaux, accompanied by screams of horror and suffering.

In the early morning hours of that long night, despite the most desperate measures taken, The Breach shrunk to the mere height of two meters and a choking smoke rolled through it from Malifaux. Just before dawn, the practitioners drew closer to The Breach as the screaming and sounds of battle grew silent, fear clearly etched into their faces as they wondered what had transpired in Malifaux. A mangled body came hurtling through the opening and landed with a sickening squelch as The Breach of The Great Boundary closed in upon itself with an ear-shattering howl. The practitioners gathered around the corpse and found a single word carved into the ruined flesh of its torso:

Ours.



1798 or 11 PF (Post Foris)

A time of shock and turmoil fueled the panic that ensued after the Falling of The Great Boundary. Despite the best efforts of the most skilled practitioners, The Breach could not be opened again, even with the assistance of powerful Soulstones. Unfortunately, many of those Soulstones were destroyed in the process.

Magic was once again threatened, and soon wars were launched in order to secure the remaining Soulstones. Depraved and dark acts were enacted to capture additional life forces within the stones to power the workings of spells.

The Guild, a society of ruthless merchants, politicians, and practitioners, was formed to bring some semblance of order to the chaos. It took control of the Soulstones with an iron fist, as well as the area where The Breach had once been. They passed a law that forbade anyone from possessing Soulstones except for official Guild representatives. Breaking that law was punishable by immediate execution.

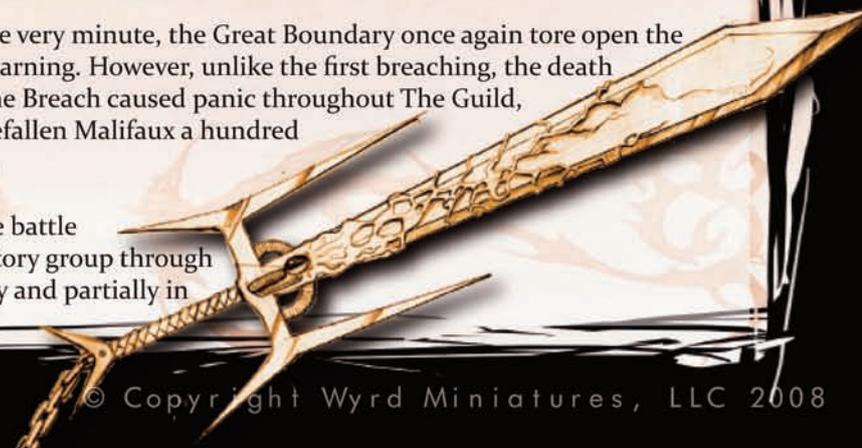
With the number of Soulstones quickly dwindling, their power being completely exhausted, The Guild instituted measures to ensure a way to continue charging them, since society had become too dependent upon them to let their power diminish. Soulstones were routinely renewed at hospitals, prison institutions, and facilities that housed the elderly and sick. Although considered cruel by some, many saw it as a necessary act of preservation.



1897 or 110 PF (Post Foris)

Exactly one century after it had closed, down to the very minute, the Great Boundary once again tore open the veil separating Earthside from Malifaux without warning. However, unlike the first breaching, the death and damage was relatively minor. The return of The Breach caused panic throughout The Guild, as they were certain that whatever calamity had befallen Malifaux a hundred years earlier was about to be played out Earthside.

That didn't occur though. After a month of intense battle readiness, The Guild sent a heavily armed exploratory group through The Breach to Malifaux. They found the city empty and partially in



Malifaux - A Background

ruin, the signs of a battle having been fought. Interestingly, some of the signs of combat appeared fresh, as though the battle still raged on after a century. However, there weren't any remnants of those lost or even any remains to be found of the people that had been caught on the other side of The Breach when it collapsed.

The Guild now had control of a quickly renewable source of power that they had built their foundation upon. Like strong drink to a man that is a slave to his vices, the practitioners quickly demanded access to Malifaux once again, arrogantly believing that they could handle any disturbances that might come along.

Learning from the follies of the past by allowing so many powerful practitioners and skilled laborers to be lost in Malifaux, The Guild instituted a practice where criminals and other undesirables were given a choice: relocate to Malifaux and work for their freedom or face continued persecution. Many took this opportunity, though it is said that The Guild also used this system to rid themselves of problematic individuals and as a form of punishment for those that didn't support the iron-fisted rule of The Guild.

Naturally, where there is opportunity, there are those that will face the unknown, no matter the dangers. Malifaux had an influx of rough, skilled men and women seeking power, treasures, and adventure. These individuals caused The Guild some concern, but they produced, and Soulstones were delivered.

With a work force comprised mostly of social undesirables, criminals, and even anti-establishment radical elements, The Guild put a governing force into place to watch over the collection and delivery of Soulstones back to Earth.

Life is harsh and hard in Malifaux; for those that buck the system or do anything that might halt the shipment of The Guild's precious stones, it is also short. However, there are those though that have garnered enough power or wealth that they are virtually untouchable. This is what every man, woman, and child within Malifaux strives towards, power to live their lives at their will or to buy a return trip through the heavily guarded Breach.



1901 or 114 PF (Post Foris)

Fours years have passed since the reappearance of The Breach. Much to The Guild's displeasure, it has been learned that several other Breaches have been discovered. While none are nearly as large as the main breach, The Guild is now faced with the loss of total control of access to Malifaux. This, in turn, means that they may not have a complete monopoly on the Soulstones, though they do their best to stamp out any competition.

Although Malifaux itself is well on its way to being rebuilt by the Governor General of The Guild, there are large portions of the city that see little, if any, human inhabitation. In these areas, the darkest parts of the ruins, something lurks and has lured and destroyed more than a few work details and security groups. The Governor General has declared these portions of the city off limits to all and has erected walls and bulwarks; many of them cutting across streets and alleys in an attempt to restrict access to – and from – the darker side of Malifaux.

The Governor General has the nearly impossible job of keeping a giant and chaotic city of vying interests under control, while dealing with persistent reports that strange beings are awakening across the continent. He has found the most expedient way to deal with this problem is the issue of writs to various groups and factions across the city and continent. He gives them limited power to police a part of the city or the outer towns and keeps them at each other's throats. After all, if they're fighting each other, they're not fighting against HIM.



Malifaux - A Background

The men and women here hammer out a life amongst the harsh lands they have chosen to work. Towns and other settlements have sprouted up farther from The Breach, ostensibly to work the Soulstone mines, but also to lessen the looming presence of the oppressive Guild and their *for the greater good* laws. However, it has been noted that should you have plenty of Soulstones, influence, or enough combative prowess to give The Guild pause, then you are fairly free to make or break the rules as you see fit.

There are whispers and rumors of covens and other groups that have wiggled out from beneath the thumb of The Guild to forge their own power base. The combative atmosphere has become thick within the last year and more than one skirmish has occurred between competing factions as well as with The Guild itself.

To make matters worse, the Neverborn have resurfaced and are common knowledge to all within Malifaux as they seek to cull a human herd for their own pleasures or bargain unnatural powers to the unwary or the insane. These creatures take on forms of legends, myths, and nightmares deeply ingrained in the human psyche, though its unknown whether or not they are the true source of those old legends. What their goals are and whether or not they were responsible for the loss of the original colonists and the re-opening of The Breach isn't known. The only certain thing is that they've shown themselves to be a danger to all men.

Recent discoveries of powerful artifacts have brought a new interest from the various powers within the land, and there is speculation that one of these artifacts caused the destruction of Malifaux one hundred years ago. Along with the scramble to recover Soulstones, everyone is searching for these artifacts that seem to hold great power within them. However, any attempt at retrieving an artifact has been known to bring the Neverborn down quickly, and it is only the truly strong, or the very lucky, that manage to retain control of an item for long.

The Guild can feel their power slipping away. Entire groups of people are appearing Malifaux without authorization and bringing chaos with them. Mercenaries are renting themselves to the highest bidder, and it isn't always The Guild.

In addition to all of their other problems, The Guild is beginning to find it difficult to gather power since Necromancers began taking control of the dead. Even though The Guild has declared necromancy a crime, and put out a bounty on all the practitioners of the dark magic, they are known to employ a few. However, few are willing to try to capture them since those that have attempted it were either sent back in pieces or became lifeless slaves themselves.

In an effort to retain their power, The Guild has stepped up their already cruel and heavy-handed authority, swearing that they will stop at nothing to completely control Malifaux, along with everyone and everything in it.

Everyone can feel it; they all know it's coming.

In the dangerous and deadly world of Malifaux, things are about to get much, much worse.



SEAMUS

and the Ortegas

By Bryan Emick

Seamus stood at the top of the hill, his eyes moving rapidly as he surveyed the ghost town in the valley below. It was more of a way station than a town really: a few buildings, mostly businesses by the look of their fronts, with a couple on the outskirts that may have been homes.

Behind him, the Belles stood in the shadow of a large tree, their eyes moving randomly, fixating on nothing.

He knew Killjoy was down there somewhere; he had been following the creature's path of death and destruction for days. Now he would finally be able to-

Movement on the far edge of the town drew his attention. He leaned forward slightly, even though he didn't need to; his eyes saw everything, even though the sun was setting behind him and casting long shadows everywhere.

"Ortegas," he snarled. From under the tree, the Belles groaned and started shifting from foot to foot. Seamus closed his eyes, took a deep breath and slowly let it out. The ladies quieted. When he was sure that they would stay put, he looked down to the town once again.

If the Ortega clan had shown up that meant that word had finally leaked about Killjoy; now it would be a damned free-for-all in bringing the monster down. Seamus didn't mind Killjoy being destroyed - he planned on doing it himself - but he needed information about the Neverborn from the creature first.

He reached down and picked up his leather satchel. "My dear ladies," he said, his eyes still focused on the valley, "we're going to town."

As one, the Belles turned to him, a sigh escaping their lips. They knew they would get to feast soon.



Perdita moved so silently and blended into the shadows so well that Francisco didn't hear or see her move up beside him. Still, his grip tightened on his gun as he sensed someone near him.

"Calm, my brother," Perdita said, her voice so low that it was barely a whisper.

"Sí, mi hermana," he whispered back. "I just don't understand why we need to be the ones to bring this monstuo down in this place."

"Because, mi hermano, we can." She smiled, her teeth practically glowing in the fading light.

Francisco sometimes wondered if his sister was touched with the same madness that seemed to infect so many once they came to Malifaux. Between confronting the walking dead and the constant threat of the Neverborn, it was almost enough to drive anyone insane.

He checked his gun once again and then looked down the street to his right. He could see Santiago moving cautiously from shadow to shadow on the other side of the dirt street, closing in on the building where the monster had obviously entered; the wide trail of blood that led through the broken door left no doubt.

Glancing up, he saw Niño move into position on the roof. To his left, Papa walked right down the middle of the street. While Francisco may have had his doubts about Perdita's sanity, there were none about Papa's; the man was completely insane and it was for good reason they called him Loco.



Seamus and the Ortegas

Papa Loco walked along the street as though he were out for an evening stroll, twirling his gun in his left hand, a stick of dynamite in his right. A cigar was clenched between his teeth and the glowing end grew bright for a moment as he inhaled.

"Come, niños!" Papa called as he approached the front of the building. "Let us send this criatura desgraciada to Hell!" Francisco and Perdita looked at each other; this was definitely not the plan. Perdita started to step forward.

"Ortegas!" a voice called from the far end of the street. They turned, their eyes squinting against the dying sunlight. "Killjoy is mine!"

"¿Qué?" Papa Loco said as he turned. Before he could make a complete turn, a gunshot shattered the silence of the deserted town. From his hiding place, Francisco saw blood explode from Papa Loco's shoulder.

"Papa!" Santiago called as he ran towards the fallen man. He fell to his knees and slid along the dirt the final few feet, coming to a full stop beside his elder. "Papa?" he asked softly as he cradled the old man's head in his lap.

Francisco gritted his teeth. He wanted to move to help his padre, but knew that moving out into the street wouldn't help the old man at all. He was so focused on what was happening in the street that he didn't notice that Perdita had moved out of the shadows. She didn't run, didn't dash; there was nothing hurried about her actions at all. By the time Francisco saw her, it was too late to grab her and pull her back to safety.

Instead of moving towards her fallen father, she lowered the brim of her hat and turned to face their attacker. Another shot rang out and Perdita moved ever so slightly. It was obvious to Francisco that the bullet had passed just above her shoulder and through her long hair. Her hand was a blur as she drew her gun and fired two shots.

Niño jumped down from the roof and ran into the street. He grabbed the collar of Santiago's coat, trying to drag him to safety. Santiago's embrace tightened around his father's head.

Papa Loco's eyes sprang open. "Let go of me, niño estúpido." The old man grunted as he rolled away from Santiago and half-walked, half-loped to the safety of a small alley. Shocked, Santiago let himself be dragged by Niño to safety.

Perdita continued to fire her gun and then jumped back beside Francisco.

"Who is it?" he asked her as she reloaded. The voice had sounded familiar, but he couldn't quite place it. She spun the chamber and then snapped it back into place. "The dead," she grunted. She stepped out into the street and started running towards their attackers.

Francisco frowned in confusion and then rolled his eyes as realization sank in: Seamus and his rotten Belles. He snarled and ran after his sister.



Seamus was sure that he had killed the old man, but the crazy bastard had gotten up and walked away. He cursed as another bullet whizzed past his head. He had to hand it to the Ortegas: they could shoot. The only reason he was still standing was because the setting sun was in their eyes, making it difficult to get an accurate shot. However, he knew that the sun would drop below the hill above the town within a few minutes and then he would be a standing target.

He focused his mind on the Belles standing behind him. They moved into the town, going in separate directions. Another shot rang out and his top hat flew off his head. He cursed as he snatched it from the ground and moved behind a building. *My hat. They shot my beautiful hat. They'll pay for that.*

He glanced around the corner, taking in the street. The woman, Perdita, he thought was a block away, walking down the wooden sidewalk with her gun held in front of her. The brim of her hat was so low that he could only see her lips and chin, but she obviously could see him. She fired another shot, splintering the wood near his head. He ducked back, sank to his knees, leaned around the corner again and fired. She moved to one side and pressed her body against the window of the building.

Seamus and the Ortegas



The glass around her shattered as suddenly one of the Belles broke through it and grabbed her. Perdita tried to move as she heard the glass breaking, but the arms, though dead, were still quick and strong. The Belle pulled her through the broken window, cutting her arms and back as she was thrown into the room. As she landed, Perdita rolled and came up with her gun in front of her.

One of the Belles – dressed in a purple dress that had probably been very fine and fancy at one time but was now nothing more than tattered rags – glared at her with eyes that were dead but could still see. The Belle hissed at her, moving from side to side, looking more like an animal than a human being. The purple parasol in her left hand twitched as though she were preparing to attack with it.

Perdita fired a shot into the thing's head, snapping it back. The Belle's eyes came back to Perdita's face, the foul thing still hissing and moving slightly.

"Down!" a voice called out.

Perdita dropped to the dust-covered floor as a loud shot deafened her. The Belle's head disappeared in a shower of blood, bone and brains. The body swayed for a moment, then collapsed in a heap on the floor. Niño jumped into the building.

"You brought Boomers," Perdita said as Niño helped her up.

"Indeed," he answered. He kicked the Belle in the side then spat on it.

"How is Papa?" she asked.

"Alive," he answered as he moved to the broken window. He brought his gun up and leapt out onto the wooden sidewalk. Perdita followed him and the two of them ran up the walkway to the corner where Seamus had been just moments before. Other than some disturbed dirt, there wasn't any sign of the madman.

Perdita glanced around. "Where did Francisco go?"



Francisco had followed his sister part way up the street, but then he had spotted something moving between two of the buildings. He ran into the narrow alleyway, his guns at the ready. At the other end he could see tracks in the dirt. Whatever it was had been shuffling along instead of walking and that meant it had been one of the Belles.

He stepped out of the alley, his eyes moving quickly around the area. There wasn't any sign of the Belle, but the stink of rotting flesh still hung in the air. In fact, the stench was growing even worse. He quickly ducked to the ground and rolled. When he came back up, his guns were pointing at the head of one of the Belles.

It wore a torn and tattered pink dress; an open pink parasol was in one of its dead hands. In its other hand was a large pink fan. Its dead eyes focused on his. It lunged towards him, arms outstretched. He stepped to one side and fired both guns once.

The bullets punctured the Belle in the right side, but didn't slow it down. With amazing speed it spun around, hitting him in the face with the parasol. He grunted in pain as one of the wire supports cut his face. He stumbled briefly and hit a wall with his shoulder, his left arm tingling from the impact.



Seamus and the Ortegas

He glanced over his shoulder as the Belle approached him again. He kicked out with his right foot, catching the undead creature in the stomach. It took two shambling steps back and paused for a moment. It was all the opening he needed.

Francisco turned, brought his guns up, pushed away from the wall and started firing. Bullets tore through the thing's head, destroying it. He breathed heavily as the undead thing fell to the ground. He was so focused on it he didn't hear another Belle come up behind him.

It brought its parasol up and drove the point down into his back. Francisco screamed as the sharp metal tip tore through his clothing and sank into his flesh. He fell forward and the Belle fell on top of him, her fingernails tearing through his coat and shirt. Francisco struggled to get it off of him, but the dead weight combined with the way it was writhing on top of him made it impossible for him to turn over.

He could feel his blood running freely, soaking his shirt. In a final, desperate attempt, he bucked as hard as he could to free himself from the thing's grasp. The Belle's hold slipped momentarily. Francisco started to turn over, but a sharp blow landed on the back of his head. The only thought that went through his mind before the world went dark was *I hope I stay dead.*



Seamus looked down at the unconscious Ortega as Mary pulled her parasol from his back and retrieved her fan before opening her parasol and letting it rest lightly on her shoulder.

"Bring him," Seamus said as he walked away. Mary looked from one hand to the other, uncertain what she should do. Seamus sensed her momentary confusion. He turned around and gently took the fan from her. A look of sadness crossed her face until he showed her that he was only folding it and putting it in one of the lesser-torn pockets of her ragged dress.

She bent over, grabbed one of Francisco's legs and dragged him as she followed Seamus down the alley. At the other end, Seamus looked around. There wasn't any sign of the other Ortegas, but he knew he still had to be careful. Just a few feet away to his left stood an open doorway to one of the buildings.

Sybelle, he thought, *I need you here. Now.*

Within minutes, the large bald woman, perhaps pretty when she still lived, walked up behind Mary. Another quick look at the street told him that it was now or never. If any of the Ortegas were able to spot him in the growing darkness, then he would have already been shot. He moved down the sidewalk towards the open door, Sybelle directly behind him while Mary brought up the rear dragging Francisco.

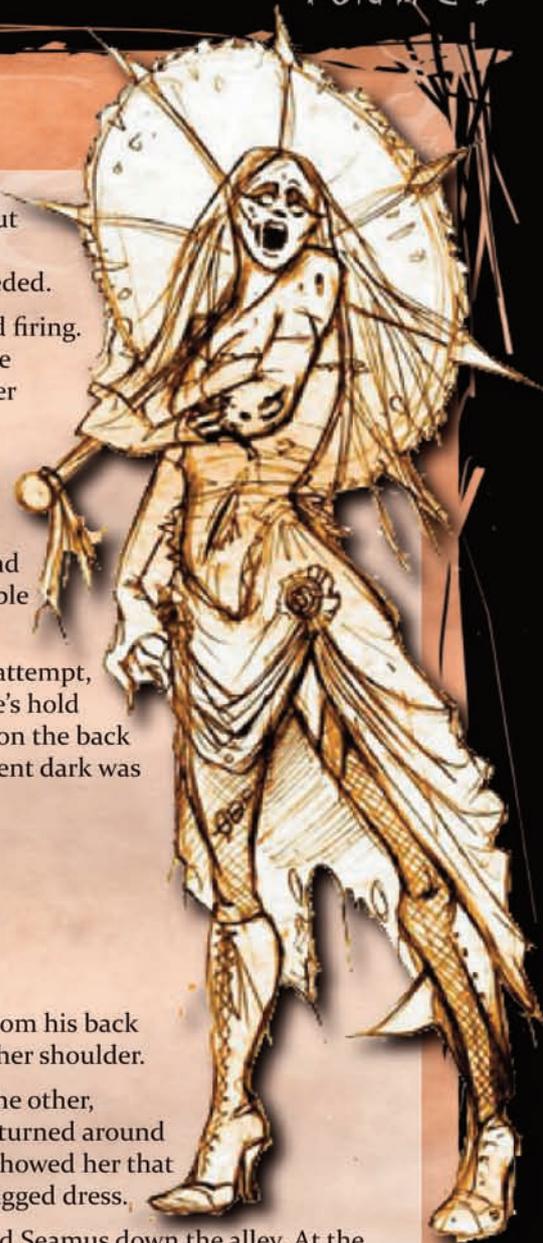
They ducked inside the building. It had obviously once been a store of some kind: there was a counter to the right of the door and several empty shelves were along the far wall. In the far corner to the left was a small round table with two chairs beside it.

"Put him there." Seamus pointed to one of the chairs.

After Mary shuffled over to the corner, she tried to pick Francisco up; however, his weight was too much for her lifeless arms. Sybelle moved over, picked him up with one hand and dropped him in the chair. As Sybelle moved back towards Seamus, a gunshot rang out. The bullet grazed Sybelle's head just above her left ear, flaying open her scalp. Seamus yelled as he spun around and brought his gun up. The long blade on the end his pistol caught Santiago on the side of his head, slicing open the skin. The wound was almost a mirror image of Sybelle's.

Santiago fell to the floor behind the counter, his hands clutching his torn skin. He didn't scream or yell, but his breath came in ragged gasps.

Seamus leapt over the counter. He considered simply shooting the man, but a thought came to him before he



Seamus and the Ortegas

could pull the trigger. He raised his foot and then brought it down on the man's face, shattering his nose. Santiago slumped to the floor. Beside him lay the elder Ortega. The wound in Loco's shoulder had stopped bleeding, but it looked like he had lost a great deal of blood and lost consciousness as result of it.

Seamus walked around the counter and inspected Sybelle. The wound was bad, but Sybelle had suffered worse. "Put them over there as well," Seamus said to the large woman, as his grin grew wider. "We will have a little fun with them."



Perdita and Niño peered over the edge of the roof. Below them a faint light came from a window of the building across the street. They had searched through the town as quietly as they could, not daring to enter any of the buildings if they could help it. Confronting Seamus was one thing and the two of them were sure they could handle that madman; what concerned them was Killjoy. They weren't sure if they could bring down the creature on their own.

Seamus stepped in the doorway and called out. "Ortegas! I know you're out there somewhere!" He pointed to the building behind him. "I have your family in here! I don't want to kill them, but I will if you don't show yourselves!"

His voice echoed slightly through the buildings. The two Ortegas looked at each other. "It's a trap," they whispered together.

"I only want Killjoy!" Seamus continued. "If you come down and agree to leave this place immediately, then no harm will come to any of you! You have my word!"

The two nodded at each other and stood up. "Hatter!" Niño called out. Seamus' head snapped up. "We're coming down."

Seamus grinned and went back into the building.

They made their way down the side of the building and fell into step beside each other as they crossed the dirt street; Niño on the left and Perdita on the right. They entered the building, their guns in front of them.

"Please, good people," Seamus said, smiling, "there isn't a need for your weapons. See here?" He pointed to the corner. Francisco and Santiago were slumped in the chairs with Papa Loco on the floor at their feet. A fat bald woman stood to the right, a long serrated knife in her left hand was against Francisco's throat while her right hand held a pistol with a long blade pointed at Santiago, his face and beard covered in blood. To the left, a Belle dressed in blue had the point of her parasol pressed against Papa Loco's chest over his heart.

"It looks to me like you've already harmed them and mean to do more, pendejo," Niño says, his gun moving between Sybelle and the other Belle. Perdita's gun was aimed directly at Seamus' head.

Seamus smiled broadly and spread his hands. "I just wanted to make sure that I wouldn't be harmed. Seeing them like this may have caused you to want to take revenge."

"Considering that you were probably the one that harmed them, the thought had crossed our minds," Niño replied.

"True, they did get hurt fighting my Belles, but I don't see why we can't just

Seamus and the Ortegas

go our separate ways and be done with each other.”

Perdita's glare told him that wasn't going to happen.

“Please understand, I only want Killjoy for my own purposes,” Seamus said.

“And what would those be, Hatter?” Perdita asked, her voice cold.

Seamus' smile never faltered. “It's a secret.”

“Where's the other one?” Niño asked.

“Other...?”

Niño gestured at Mary with his gun. “The other thing.”

“Oh, Lucille.” Seamus shook his head slightly and sighed heavily, then nodded at Francisco. “I am afraid that your brother was able to dispatch her.” His gaze fixed on Niño. “Much like you did to Sarah.” For the first time, his smile fell just a bit and his eyes grew cold. He seemed to give himself a mental shake and the smile returned. “But, it's no matter to the Hatter,” he chuckled slightly at his small rhyme, “there are plenty of women to be my Belles of the Ball.” His eyes flickered briefly to Perdita.

“You're insane,” Niño said.

The smile finally disappeared. “And you are testing my patience,” Seamus snapped. He stepped back, his arms still spread. “Take your family and go. The offer will not be repeated.”

Niño sighed. He stepped towards his fallen family members as Perdita fell in step behind him, her gun still trained on Seamus. Niño suddenly stopped, his eyes narrowing. He dropped to one knee, causing Mary to press down on her parasol and threatening to puncture the old man's chest. Niño placed his hand to the ground and then stood back up.

“The creature is coming,” he said.



Damn it! Seamus thought. Just a couple more steps and he would have had them. He didn't care so much about the men – he was going to kill them, but slowly – as he did about the woman. She wasn't all that pretty at the moment, but he would fix that and make her into a beautiful Belle.

Now what do I do? Seamus' mind worked quickly. He was sure that the man was bluffing. If Killjoy was truly still in the area, then all of the fighting from before would have-

The thought stopped as the ground trembled under his feet. Dust fell from the ceiling, the motes dancing in the light from the lantern on the table. Seamus looked up, half expecting to see the ceiling caving in from the massive weight of the creature.

The back wall exploded in a shower of dust and splinters. Seamus jumped backwards, landed on the counter and rolled off behind it. He peeked over the counter top.

Standing in a large hole in the back wall was Killjoy.

He was completely nude, his flesh a putrid pink and green color. A long chain was wrapped around his right arm, his hand grasping the large metal hook on the end. His other hand held a large meat cleaver. A wound ran down length of his abdomen, held closed only by metal staples. Even with those in place, Seamus could see intestines straining to push through.

Killjoy roared and the foul stench emanating from him doubled.

All of the Ortegas except for the old man were conscious again; all of them looking at the monster. The bearded one began retching and proceeded to vomit. Seamus snorted in derision; the fool had a weak stomach. Unfortunately, the sound of Seamus' chuckling attracted Killjoy's attention. One heavy foot came down and splintered the wood floor as he made his way into the room. He brought the cleaver down, cutting deep into the counter several feet away from Seamus.

Seamus and the Ortegas

Sybelle, sensing that her master was in trouble, moved towards Killjoy. The monster saw her coming and with one massive sweep of his arm knocked her through the far wall.

"Sybelle!" Seamus yelled and jumped up. Mary moved in, her parasol raised high and brought it down into Killjoy's incredibly fat thigh. It didn't seem to do any real damage, but it was still enough to draw his attention. He reached out and grabbed the Belle with his chained hand. She struggled briefly in his grasp as he brought her closer to his face, but his massive hand crushed her skull, her blood and brains oozing through his fingers.

Shots rang out as the Ortega woman opened fire, the bullets piercing his body in several places. An even louder gunshot came and part of Killjoy's right shoulder disappeared. He screamed in pain and anger. In one quick motion he grabbed one of Mary's legs and pulled it from her body. He tried to shove the whole thing into his mouth, but only part of her thigh would fit. He tossed her useless body to the side and began chewing on the leg, the lower part making small kicking motions.

Killjoy moved forward, his bulk making the room seem so much smaller. With the creature focused on the Ortegas, Seamus knew it was a perfect time for him to leave. His Belles were destroyed, his satchel was missing and his gun had flown through the wall with Sybelle.

When Killjoy had completely turned towards the Ortegas, Seamus slipped along behind the counter towards the hole that Killjoy had made. When he was only a few feet away from the back wall, Seamus took a deep breath and jumped through.

His ears still ringing, he ran a short distance from the building, hoping that perhaps Sybelle had survived the blow from Killjoy and the resulting impact. He willed her to come to him and, within moments, she appeared at his side.

It was hard to tell just how badly she was wounded, but he knew she would survive. He took his gun from her, "Come, my dearest," he said to her as he took her hand, "there will be another time to confront this one."

Sybelle groaned and drooled.



Perdita's gun clicked. She cursed and snapped the chamber open as Killjoy brought his heavy cleaver down again, missing her and cutting into the wood floor. Niño's gun fired again, the Boomer blowing away part of Killjoy's right arm.

As the monster had approached them, they realized that they had almost walked into Seamus' trap. Killjoy's foot had come down on the floor just a couple of feet away from where Niño had been standing moments before and the floor had completely caved in. The nearby support beam fell with the floor and part of the ceiling collapsed. While it hadn't seemed to do any real damage to the foul thing, the extra weight had shoved his other massive foot through the floorboards. When he had tried to extract his feet, the broken boards dug into his ankles and stopped him from moving forward.

With their path to both the door and the hole in the rear wall blocked off, Santiago and Francisco were trying to pull Papa to safety through the hole that the Belle had made after being hit by Killjoy. Santiago, however, was having trouble moving. The rancid odor coming from the monster was too much for him; he kept retching. Francisco, looking as though he was terribly wounded, was having trouble moving Papa and helping his brother. Perdita could see that both of them were missing their guns, so they wouldn't be much help in this fight.

"We must go!" she yelled. Killjoy screamed at them. He brought the cleaver down, narrowly missing Perdita's



Seamus and the Ortegas

foot. Her gun now reloaded, she emptied it into the thing's hideous face.

One eye blew apart and bits of flesh and bone flew from the back of his head; the cabrón still wouldn't die. She knew as well as the others that they were seriously outmatched here. If that puta Seamus hadn't shown up and made a mess of things, then they might have actually had a chance.

Before Francisco could shove Papa outside, Perdita stepped over to him and grabbed a stick of dynamite from the old man's belt. She grabbed his lighter, lit the fuse and tossed it between the monster's legs.

"We're going! NOW!" she yelled. Francisco pushed his father outside and then followed him. She grabbed Santiago and shoved him through the hole as Niño fired another round into the creature's belly. Perdita grabbed the collar of Niño's coat and dragged him behind her towards the exit. He screamed as their progress stopped. She looked over her shoulder and saw the long curved blade impaled into his calf. She dropped him and reloaded as fast as her hands would allow. Killjoy yanked the chain and tore away part of Niño's calf.

She brought her gun up once again and emptied it into the thing's other eye. Now blind, Killjoy howled in pain and rage. Perdita grabbed her brother, picked him up and shoved him unceremoniously through the hole in the wall as Killjoy wildly swung both the cleaver and metal hook. She jumped through and fell on top of her brother as the dynamite went off. Shards of wood rained down on her.

She didn't look back to see what the damage had been; it wasn't the time. They were all badly wounded and she knew that they were no match for this abomination if he still had any fight left. If they were well enough in a couple of days, they could come back here and see if the creature was truly dead.

They quickly gathered together and made their way off into the night.



Killjoy sank to the floor. He had been so close to so much sweet, sweet meat. The one snack that he had eaten had been sour and rancid.

The bullets, the explosives, the wounds, his eyes; none of it mattered. Those things would heal after a fashion over time. The only thing that mattered was the hunger; a hunger that seemed to never be satiated, no matter how many treats he ate.

Treats.

Yes.

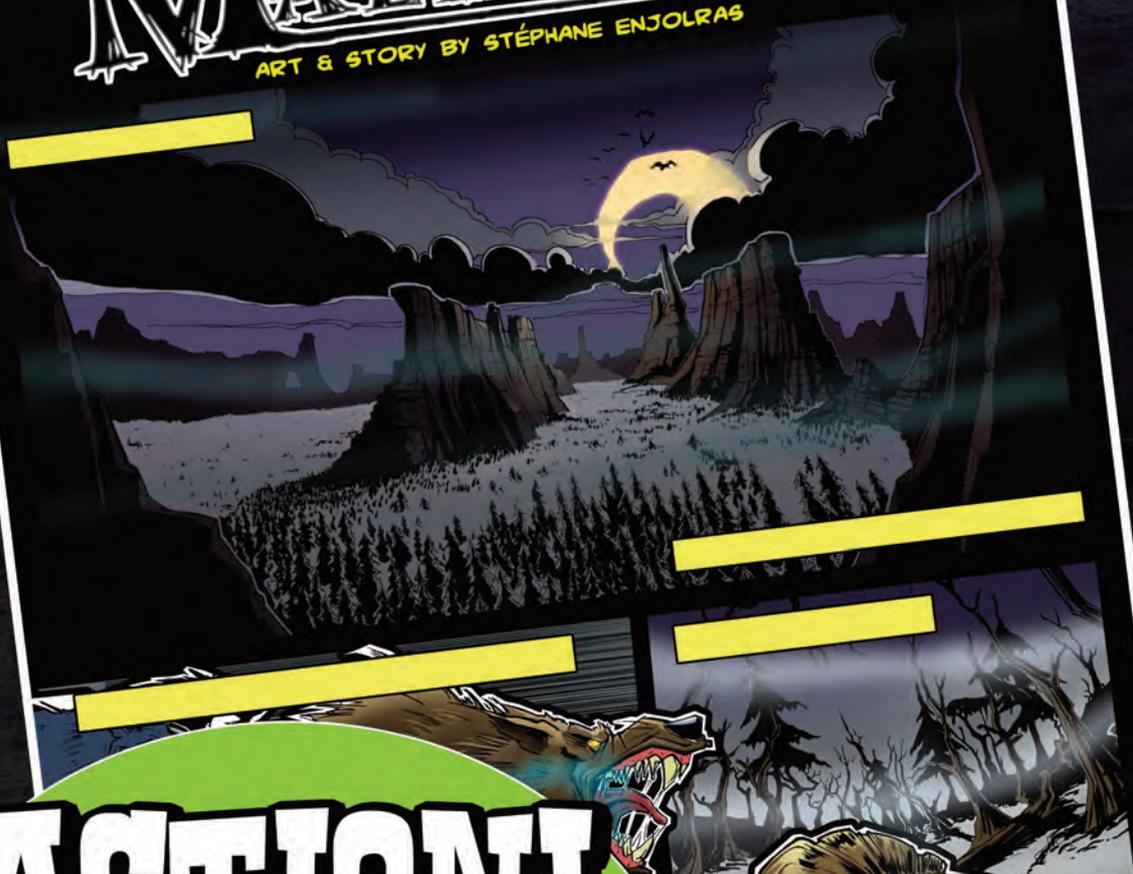
He knew what his next treats would be.

He would make sure that they lived as he devoured them.

Coming Soon!

MALIBOX

ART & STORY BY STÉPHANE ENJOLRAS



**ACTION!
GUN FIGHTS!
HORROR!**



ANOTHER

Wyrd

EXTRAVAGANCE

IN A COMIC LIKE YOU'VE NEVER READ BEFORE!

THE NEVERBORN

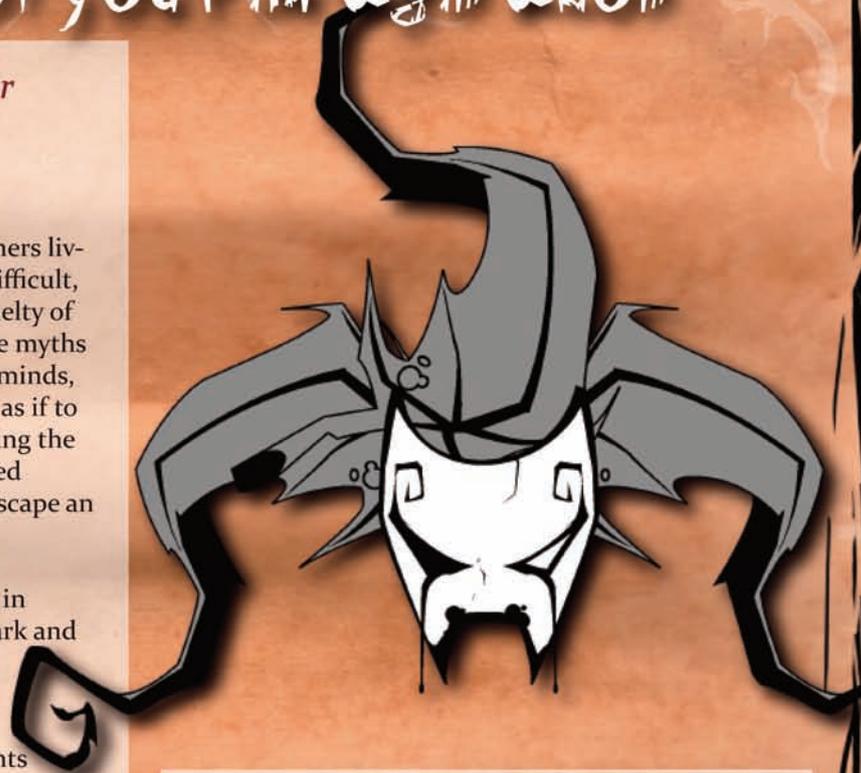
a figment of your imagination

"I am not a figment of your imagination, you tasty little snack."

Although the criminals and rogue practitioners living in Malifaux make life there rough and difficult, nothing compares to the deadliness and cruelty of the Neverborn. Given shape and form by the myths and nightmares buried deep inside human minds, the Neverborn seek to destroy all humanity as if to inoculate against a plague. Simply mentioning the Neverborn can cause even the most hardened criminals to pale with fear, as most do not escape an encounter.

The Neverborn are creatures brought to life in Malifaux as a side effect of the practice of dark and horrible magic many centuries ago by the original inhabitants. Each malicious and destructive spell cast caused more evil to enter the world, until finally, the evil thoughts became all too real Neverborn. At first, the Neverborn were small, weak, and without any physical form, unable to inflict damage. Over time, however, they found that they could tap into the darkest recesses of a person's mind and take on physical forms inspired by the nightmares, myths, and legends.

The original inhabitants of Malifaux, who saw them as great demons and creatures of living fire, worked powerful spells to contain them. However, the spells grew weak over time, and the Neverborn



were eventually able to escape their prison. After destroying every living thing in Malifaux, the Neverborn retreated and became dormant.

The Breach of the Great Barrier awakened some of the Neverborn. After finding humans repopulating Malifaux and observing them for some time, the Neverborn attacked and destroyed them all. As a warning to the people on the other side, the Neverborn sent a corpse through the Breach with the word *Ours* carved into the ruined flesh.

When the Breach re-opened a hundred years later, the humans were better prepared with powerful spells to help protect Malifaux and the various mining towns. Although the spells are mostly effective, the Neverborn have become even more powerful, and their numbers continue to grow.

The Neverborn regard Malifaux as their domain and will stop at nothing to eradicate every living being that dares set foot in their world. Although they despise humans, there are some Neverborn willing to bargain power and knowledge with humans in exchange for sacrifice and services, though often at the cost of the individual's sanity.

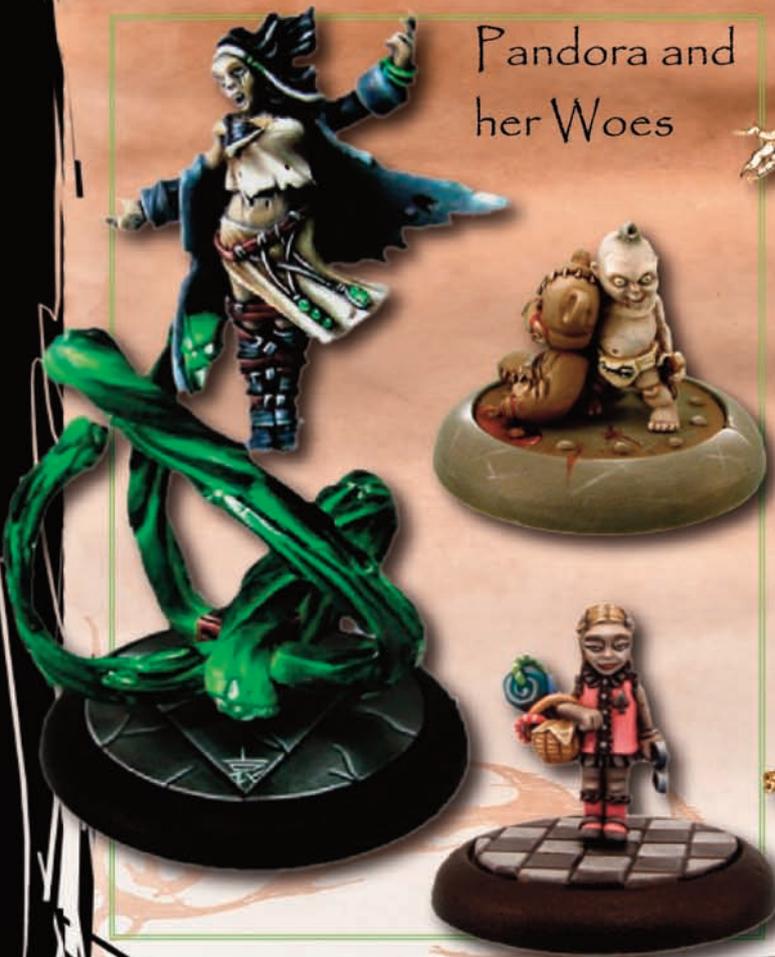
By Nathan Caroland & Bryan Emick

The Everborn

Lillith and her Nephilim



Pandora and her Woes



Zulikha - The Hag



Coming Soon!

AN INTERVIEW

with Nathan Carolan

By Jim Gilstrap

Tell us a bit about how you started in miniatures?



I found miniatures ages ago when I was a kid and a friend of mine introduced me to gaming. She bought miniatures which were to represent us on the game map and I thought they were the neatest little things.

I remember my first miniature was a Ral Partha and was a fella holding a sword and a lantern. If I recall correctly, I was inordinately proud of the sloppy paintjob I had labored over.

Like many things though, gaming and miniatures got put on the shelf as I grew older, went to school, married and had a family. It was about twelve years later that my wife pulled out a dusty box that had been traveling with us for years and found these little toy soldiers, frazzled paint brushes and a surprising number of paints that hadn't dried up in their pots yet. As my wife was painting canvas and porcelain at the time, she suggested I spend some time with her and paint my 'little guys'.

I'm pretty sure she wishes she had thrown that box out now!

What drove you to start your own Web site?



Actually I've had several websites over the years so when I got back into miniatures it was only the natural thing to do in my eyes. I liked to write stories and get a touch more creative, and then I decided to run a painting contest amongst some online friends that I had met shortly after getting back into painting.

The contests sort of took off and after the first big contest we had and having to enter everything in by hand, tallying the votes, editing the photos and pouring over e-mails, I swore that I would never do that again and went in search of software that would meet my needs. The site and interest sort of ballooned from there.

The next step was into your own mini company. How did that come about?



By this time I had 'really' gotten into miniatures and painting again, buying paints, brushes, minis, magnifying lights, light tents, cameras ... if I thought it was part of the hobby in one form or another, I intended to jump feet first into it.

I started asking questions, finding out how miniatures were made and generally getting more of an interest in sculpting which I decided I would take a crack at myself as that seemed to be the next step in the hobby that had captured my interest. Of course, I found out that I couldn't sculpt a pumpkin, much less anything heroic and interesting!

I said the heck with it though as, by this point, the contests had taken off, the site was getting quite a bit of traffic and I really thought 'you know, I can do this ...' Naturally I didn't have a clue as to what I was actually getting myself into.

You've a unique perspective on many facets of the hobby. Do you sometimes wish you could just go back to being a gamer or a painter? I mean do you miss the simplicity of it?



Sometimes.

Anyone that says running a miniature or gaming business is easy has obviously never done it nor given it a ton of thought. There are so many pitfalls and cutthroats out there in this small industry (and believe me, it is small) that it is no small wonder that nine out of ten startup companies that decide to make a go at it collapse within the first year. This is a business, not a hobby, and if you treat it as one, you'll just be throwing your money away and upsetting some people while you're at it.

That's not to say that it isn't a blast. I've really enjoyed the time that I've put into Wyrd and in growing the company, meeting the many unique and varied individuals out there and essentially taking a hand in something that really captures my attention.

Still, you know what they say about don't turn your hobby into your business right? I haven't been able to pick up a paint brush in almost two years now! Not for lack of wanting to, but lack of time.

An Interview with Nathan Carolan d



What do your friends and family think of all this?



My kids think I'm the coolest which I have to say is always a good feeling. My wife sometimes has to shake her head when the kids come running up with 'great miniature ideas' and wonders what her husband has done to her children that they are talking about tentacles and swords.

Naturally my wife at first thought she was just indulging me in a bit of fun, something she hoped I wouldn't waste too much money on, and then when she realized I was actually selling these miniatures and putting more time and funds into them she had that 'oh no!' look in her eyes. Bless her though, she simply cautioned me not to bankrupt the family and to be smart about it and has been a big help and comfort with the growing pains that we've had.

As for the rest, I get a large group of varied responses, some just smile and nod and act like they know what I'm talking about. Others give you that 'oh lord, one of THEM' looks and then there are the genuine few who actually have an interest in hearing about what I'm doing and wishing us well even though they aren't into gaming and miniatures themselves.

Do you have another job? How has Wyrd impacted that, if at all?



Certainly do. I'm a Defense Contractor for Lockheed Martin and the U.S. Government.

As for impact, whew, well, I'm working two jobs now, Lockheed and Wyrd. I average three to five hours of sleep these days and hope that in the next year or two I'm able to actually pick up a solid eight on a regular basis!

Where do you want to take Wyrd Miniatures next? Do you have an overall plan, or is it more of an organic growth?



We started out very grass roots and organic, just moving as the funds were available and seeing where the interest was. I've always managed Wyrd like a business and it soon became apparent that it was time to get organized in a serious manner. Since then we've put in a structured growth plan and have brought on several individuals to ensure its success.

We sold our first miniatures in December 2005, continued to grow in 2006 and more than doubled our line in 2007. Since then we've brought on an additional ten people to work with Wyrd and we are currently developing our own character driven tabletop skirmish game which we hope to have released the fourth quarter of 2008.

We're going to be busy.

Has there been things that took you by surprise as you have moved forward? Things you just didn't expect?



So many things I wouldn't even know where to begin and more than a few I wouldn't speak about publicly either were I to start that rather long list.

Let's just say that if you are going to get into this business, you'll have to be quick on your feet and willing to look at the big picture. If you're short sighted or slow to react, you'll be that company that someone asks 'whatever happened to ...'

Any favorite gaming systems?



I haven't gamed in a VERY long time but I always did like reading the books, something that drove my wife crazy that I would pick up a game series and never actually play the game.

I have to say the two that I liked the story and background behind the most were Shadowrun and Hunter the Reckoning. Not that I've ever played a game in either of them mind you.

An Interview with Nathan Carolan d

The Wyrd line up is filled with unusual minis. Minis you just don't find elsewhere. What is the inspiration of this? Is that something you keep in the back of your mind (to be unusual) or is it just because those things appeal to you?



Both. We're trying to do something different with Wyrd and in order to do that we have to take a path that hasn't been trod by the others.

Stephan Enjolras is our head artist and with his twisted mind along with my input and a few others, we're able to come up with something that I think will capture your attention. We have only recently really settled on a style for Wyrd and I think 2008 will be a very telling year for us.

How often are you checking out the competition?



Daily.

There isn't a one of us, large or small, that doesn't keep a close eye on the other, particularly if we have a product line that is similar to another. This industry really isn't that large, particularly if you put it up against something like, say platform gaming or the like.

Tiny really, and we're all competing for the consumer.

What is your credit card number? Expiration date?



It's maxed, don't waste your time.

What are your other non-mini related interests? Or do you even find time for that anymore?



I had some at one time I'm almost positive!

Seriously though, I just don't have time for much of anything these days. I take time out for the family naturally, but beyond that, my free time isn't very free these days. I might manage about four hours of TV in a month, the theatre twice a year, a concert ... well, huh ... okay, so I've missed out on those for two years now.

Okay, that's just depressing ... next question!

What can you tell us about the mystery of Malifaux? How soon can gamers get their hands on it?



Not much, but that's mainly cause I'm a cruel bugger and I don't like to give up things prematurely. Still, you should find a few things here in this e-zine that will wet your whistle and here in the near future you'll see more and more coming to light as the writers release additional fluff and teasers.

We'll be doing an alpha testing of the rules here in mid-late February of this year and after a bit more fooling with the rules, then we'll go to a closed beta, followed by an open beta and then public release. 2008 is going to be a very busy year for us, and hopefully we can attain all the goals that I have set, but in the end, I find it a better idea to learn to walk before running, as frankly, I don't have the luxury of putting out a poor product. We've tried to make quality a big portion of Wyrd, and I would rather folks have to wait instead of hurrying it to market before its ready.

Will all the minis you've previously released fit into that gaming world?



Oooh, you just had to corner me with this one didn't you ...

Right now, yes. We had a bit of shoehorning with some of the miniatures but things sort of fell in place here recently that really had everything fitting nicely. Now obviously the weapon sprues aren't proper pieces in themselves for the gaming table and those are basically add-on pieces and won't have a proper place or gaming stat within Malifaux.

It seems you have folks across the globe working on this project. How do you feel that helps out in the long run?



Good and bad. If I had everyone together in a local office, I think things would get done a good deal faster as I could lock everyone in a room and reasonably expect things to get taken care of in a speedy manner.

Dipping into the talent pool across the globe unfortunately doesn't allow for that, yet, but one of the perks is that it certainly allows for me to find folks that are suited to working one aspect or another and I'm able to really work with folks that are best suited for the job. I honestly don't think Wyrd would be half the company it is right now if it wasn't for the ability to work with such a wide variety of people.

An Interview with Nathan Carolan d

Can you even imagine trying to pull off what you are doing without the aid of the internet?



Not in the least! Opening up a business, bringing people on board to work the various needs of Wyrd, and then putting out a product which would pretty much be at the whim of distributors and retailers? No way!

The internet has allowed Wyrd to move beyond an abstract idea and to advertise and appeal directly to the people interested in the hobby around the world. You might be surprised at some of these places we're shipping product too. I was!

You have a couple of GENCON's under your belt now. Is the convention circuit something you will pursue more? Why or why not?



Very much so, and we're currently looking at several other conventions at the moment and even considering some smaller venues as well. They are spendy, and take a lot of time and effort, but they have been well worth the effort for us so far.

The Wyrd Site itself has a fantastic community and it is something you have fostered from the start. From the forums, to the painting contests, to the arcade games, it is far more than just an online store for your products. Why is that so important to you?



I think having a thriving and growing community is as much a key to success these days as the product that you are presenting. In this manner you get new

content, conversation and an overall together feeling of community and it just makes doing this so much more enjoyable as well.

We've met a lot of great people since we've started Wyrd and I have to say I am really looking forward to meeting each and every one that I'm able. I always get a tickle out of how many people we've met for dinners, get-to-gathers and conventions and it is a very varied group of people that are interested in this hobby.

Its good stuff, I wouldn't have it any other way!

Any changes in store for the site?



Actually, a fair many. We'll be doing a complete site overhaul in 2008, hopefully sooner than later, and this will entail a complete visual makeover as well as how the site is presented and its usability. We're still working on the early stages of it, but thankfully we've got some folks that really know what they're doing in that department!

Will the painting contests continue?



Most definitely. We'll probably have a few changes here and there, as you always need to mix things up in order to keep interest, but we'll most certainly keep them up and hope to bring a few special pieces out for them in particular.



Special thanks to Nathan's true love for allowing him time to make Wyrd happen.

MALIFAUX

The Game



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playtesters for the upcoming
miniature skirmish game

Apply by email
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PAINTING CONTESTS

on wyrd-games.net

By Jim Gilstrap

Painting contests have been an integral part of the Wyrd world from the beginning and are still thriving happily along in the current incarnation of the site. Being more than just a showcasing of some of the incredibly talented artists that frequent the site, the contests are community and skill builders. Currently the contests take on a couple of different forms, giving painters the opportunity to be both challenged and inspired.



The Wyrd Painting Contest got its start way back at the beginning with everyone painting the same miniature and other than that stipulation, the artists were left to their own devices. Some incredibly innovative, humorous, and downright breathtaking submissions came out of that contest, but those were just a precursor to some of the great things to come.

Running Now!

Minatures Presents
Femme Fatale
Miniature Painting Contest
January 5th - February 25th

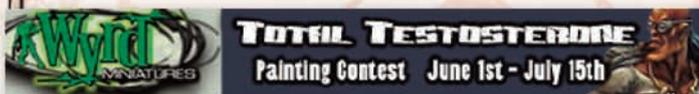
Subsequent contests began to take the form we have today. Instead of limiting a contest to a specific miniature, these new contests began to run with themes. For instance, **Total Testosterone** left artists to choose a mini that fell within those 'manly' parameters. Different categories - such as Sci-Fi, Duel, or Fantasy - allowed painters to stick with a genre that they liked.

One of the features of the Wyrd Painting Contests has been requiring the painter's anonymity. Sharing your submission publicly would promptly get you disqualified, at least until the voting had finished. Being a true people's choice contest, it was important to emphasize the art and not the artist's personality or popularity.

Voters determine such things as the best of each category, Best Base or Diorama and the Best of Show. Adding a fun dimension to the voting was the inclusion of the 'Voting Schmuck' awards, which would find the voters themselves eligible for some of the great prizes. Random Schmucks, Best of Wyrd and other prizes are given out as well, making the contests fantastically fun for all involved.



Themed Wyrd Painting Contests that show up on a regular basis are **Femme Fatale**, **Total Testosterone**, **Simply Wyrd** and **The Rotten Harvest!** The contests are run quarterly and odds are by the time this is published, there will be another one in the works.



Painting Contests on wyrd-games.net

The Wyrd Painting Contest is coupled nicely with the **Iron Painter**, a unique challenge that is becoming increasingly popular with each passing 'season'. The Iron Painter started off purely as a community activity for the forum regulars, but has become much more. The premise of the Iron Painter is a bit more complicated but in essence it is this: Painters volunteer and are randomly paired against each other. A random theme ingredient is announced and the contestants then have two very short weeks to choose, prepare, and paint up a miniature incorporating that theme. During those two weeks, painters are encouraged to show work in progress (WIP) pictures, discuss ideas or, best of all, talk smack with their opponent.

After the submissions are posted, a panel of judges reviews each one and scores them accordingly. The higher scoring participant of each pairing moves onto the next round, where once again they are randomly paired and a new theme is announced. The contest continues until there is a single champion: The **IRON PAINTER**.

The unique challenges, other than the grueling time constraints, are incorporating the theme, pleasing the judges, and just surviving until the end. One of the biggest strengths of the contest is the random pairing. Painters don't have to compete against the entire field of painters, just the one they are matched against. It's surprising how much attrition takes hold and sometimes fantastic painters don't advance past

the early rounds or even more entertaining, less skilled painters manage to nail the theme just right and find themselves deep into the contest, hoping for a favorable theme.

Those that lose to their opponent are asked to forward a miniature or a loser's fee to their opponent with those advancing to the final rounds and the one finally claiming the title of Iron Painter wins gift certificates, t-shirts and cold hard cash for their skill and perseverance through what can be a grueling contest.

The theme ingredient can be anything from something as simple as featuring a single color, using a particular painting technique such as NMM (non metallic metal) or something as esoteric as conveying an emotion. Many of the participants have commented on how the themes have forced them to try new techniques and develop new skills that have been instrumental in their push to become better painters.

The Iron Painter hasn't followed any sort of schedule and has been more of an organic process about when they have started. Check the site to find out when you can participate!

Past Iron Painter Champions are:

Season 1 - Noel Meyer (skya)
 Season 2 - Rhonda Bender (wren)
 Season 3 - Cindy Dukino (cdukino)
 Season 4 - Noel Meyer (skya)

The two contests form a sort of yin and yang of online painting contests. The Wyrd Painting Contest and the Iron Painter, while being very different, both accomplish the same goal: bringing challenge, inspiration and fun to the Wyrd experience. Join us!



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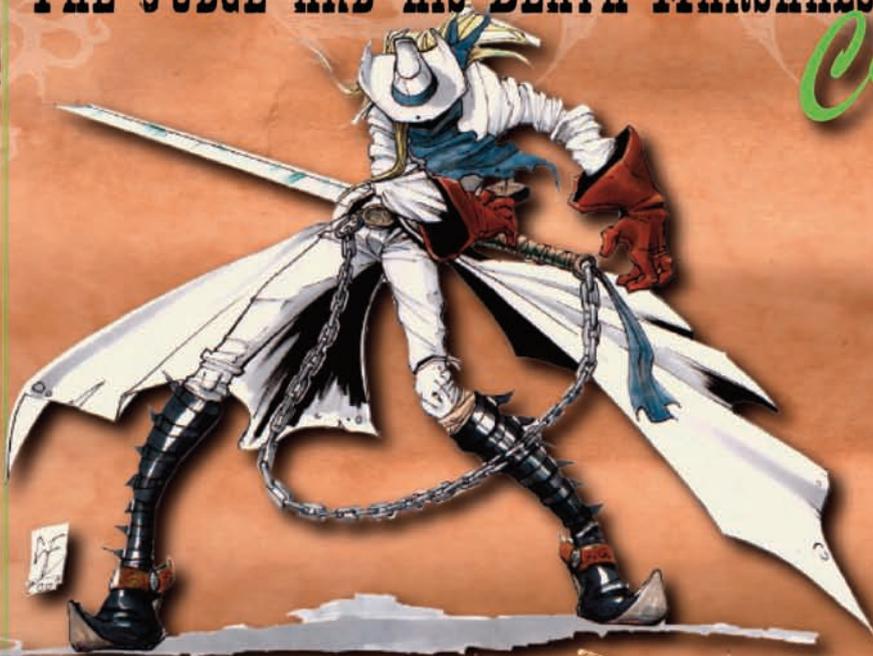
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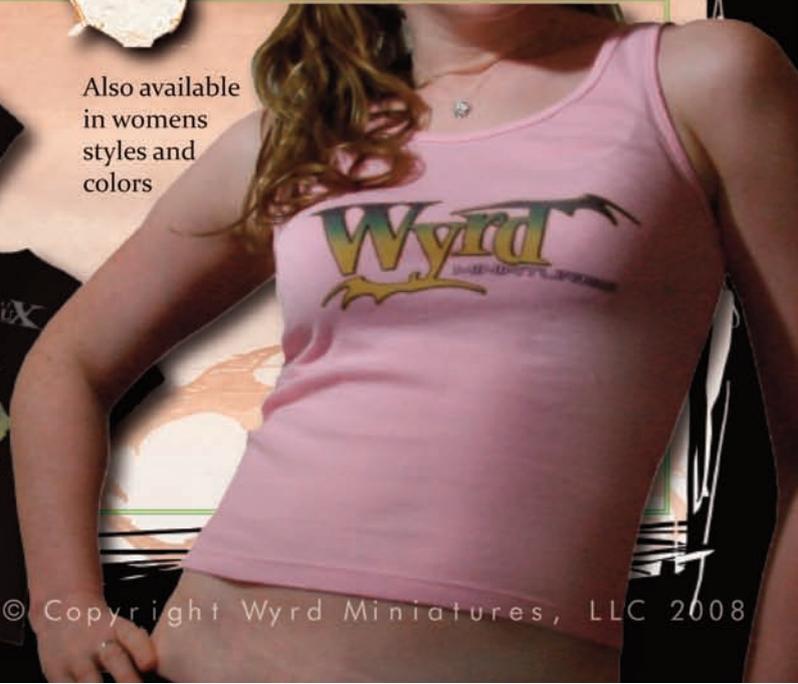


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THE ICEMAN COMETH

Painting and Basework

By Rob Cardiss

Well I'm happy to be putting together an article here on my take on the fantastic Ice Golem from Wyrd. A few people contacted me after round one of the Iron Painter for advice on ice and snow and, in particular, the use of resin. The Golem release is the perfect excuse to show some of the methods involved, so I hope you enjoy it. I will cover as much as I can, but if you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to contact me [demonherald] via private message at Wyrd. I'll be happy to help.

Scenic vs. Display Basing

These two terms are often confused, but there is a simple rule of thumb. A scenic base is where details are added to create character within the confines of its gaming size. A display base is where the base is larger than the gaming size and intended for display purposes. Generally display bases are a lot more elaborate, but I see no reason why the same amount of work can't be put into a scenic base for gaming. This article is an example of a scenic base; I will put together another article for making a display base in the future. So here goes.

Constructing the base

First of all, take the correct sized base and place the model on it to get an idea of how much room you have to play with. The Golem takes up quite a large space on the base, but with a little creativity we can still gain a fair amount to play with. The idea I had for this particular base was to create an area at the front that represents a pond that the Golem is freezing as he steps onto it.

The first stage after deciding the position is to build up the groundwork. For this I use Fimo as I find it allows me to play around and fine tune things as much as I like before putting it in the oven. It also sands down well after curing, which is useful later on.

First, wet the base and then shape the Fimo accordingly, remembering to stay inside the base dimensions. The area at the front that will be our pond is textured slightly by digging into it with a sculpting tool or something similar. Gently remove the Fimo from the base to avoid warping and cure it in the oven (please do not put the base in the oven this would be rather silly, not to mention dangerous)

After curing, sand the edges until smooth and attach it to the base using PVA glue, giving you something like the picture below.



Now we attach the Golem and create the first level of texture. I pinned the Golem in the back leg, drilling on an even level with the heel up into the leg and using a paper clip to pin it into the base. The Golem's feet are joined by a textured base piece and I used Milliput to roughly recreate the texture in order to blend this into the base work.



Also at this stage a layer of Milliput is used to create groundwork and sink in a couple of pieces of slate. I stabbed the Milliput with a sculpting tool to create a textured base for adding the next layer, like so:



Now we start to create our area for putting in resin. The key here is to produce a watertight seal and a little effort now can save a whole lot of mess later. Take a piece of blister card and cut it so that it just slightly overlaps the area that will be filled. Hold it in place with a little sellotape (packing tape) then wedge it firm with Plasticine. Make sure you get as tight a seal

The Ice and Cometh

as possible and that the curve naturally follows the base. I use blister card for this as it is thin enough to curve gently and strong enough to hold its shape.



Now I use Vallejo Texture Paste to add texture and create a seal. Run the paste around the inside edges of the seal using an old brush, then run a little PVA glue mixed with water around this to complete the seal. Take your time and apply a couple of layers if necessary; just check each time to ensure that the seal remains fixed. Once it's all dry, carefully remove the Plasticine and blister card to avoid tearing.



Now that we have the seal, it is time to finish texturing the base. Again I use Vallejo Texture Paste for this as I find it quick and useful for providing base texture. It also has an adhesive quality and you can add any extra pieces of slate, twigs or whatever else takes your fancy at this stage. Paint over the edge of any materials where they meet the base, as well as around the edge of the Golem's moulded base, in order to get things to blend naturally. A little sprinkle of sand here and there provides a variation in texture.



After clearing away any excess material and re-sanding the edges of the base, it's ready for priming. When it comes to priming I used spray in two stages: first I spray black from below the model and then white from above. This leaves some of the deeper shadowed areas black and starts to define the shadows like so:



I should mention at this point that a lot of the time I will paint my model separate from the base. However, with the Golem having some pre-moulded detail on his feet I needed to paint it attached to the base so I could texture it to blend in the detail.

Painting the base

Resin is basically clear and colourless. I have found that the colours you paint the base can have an impact on the finished effect. As we are going for frozen then we will use an icy palette.

First, wash the base colours on. This is a thinned down layer of colour that runs into the cracks and covers easily. For the ice part I used GW Scaly Green, for the soil I used GW Scorched Brown and the rocks are GW Codex Grey with a touch of Snakebite Leather.



The Ice and Cometh

Next, the ice area is dry brushed with GW Hawk Turquoise followed by a further dry brush with GW Rotting Flesh. The soil is dry brushed GW Vermin Brown followed by GW Bleached Bone. The rocks are dry brushed GW Codex Grey followed by GW Fortress Grey.



Now we tone the colours back down and add a bit of variety to the shades; this is accomplished by washing thinned colour onto the areas. Create the wash by mixing the colours on a tile and diluting with clean water to ink-like consistency. The wash colours are as follows:
Ice area: GW Scaly Green with a touch of GW Liche Purple
Soil: GW Scorched Brown with the odd patch of Scaly Green, particularly near the Golem's feet.
Rocks: GW Snakebite Leather with a touch of Chaos Black.
You can use these washes in different mixes to create variety and shading on the textured areas.



After this has dried, a light dry brush of Rotting Flesh finishes the effect. Paint the base edge at this point to tidy up and give you a guide for painting the rest of the model.



PAINTING THE GOLEM

I wanted to paint my Golem with an ice like quality. So, to me, that is turquoise greens with sharp highlights to give a crystalline feel. Because the Golem is one big piece and basically one colour, it is important to break it up and paint it in sections. One of the problems that can come from doing this is keeping the colour consistent. To help this it is vital to keep the colours simple and, where possible, build up from the pot colour so you have a benchmark each time. I painted the Golem in the following segments:

Torso front, torso back, left leg, left arm, right leg, and right arm. I left the head until last since this was the point where I would be holding the model - thumb on the base and finger on the head.

I also use a latex glove on my left hand to stop sweat and grease from my skin transferring onto areas of the model that I am handling.

Each area is built up to a finished highlight using the following technique.

First, base coat the entire model using a mixture of three parts GW Scaly Green to one part GW Liche Purple.

Paint the raised flat areas Scaly Green.

For the first highlight, apply 50/50 Scaly Green / Hawk Turquoise. Paint from the bottom edge of the blocky shapes, feathering upward towards the middle, then paint inside this with Hawk Turquoise alone.



The Iceman Cometh

Next, apply 50/50 Hawk Turquoise and Ice Blue, painting inside the last highlight and developing the shapes of the Golem as seen in the picture. Follow this with pure Ice Blue. You can also see at this stage where the odd streak has been added here and there to emphasise the crystalline structure. Be creative here, but remember not to cover all the dark areas and try to keep the shapes defined.



The next stage is 50/50 Ice Blue and Space Wolves Grey. Again, stay inside the last highlight and neatly pick out the edges.



The final stage is to pick out the highlight edges in Skull White, concentrating on corners and sharp edges to emphasise the shape of the sculpt. Little streaks of white here and there in the dark edges help emphasise the icy quality.



Once each area is done, a quick check of the whole model, adding the odd white highlight here and there to tidy things up gives us something like this:



It may seem like a lot of work and seem fairly complex, but when you get going it is actually fairly quick. Just remember to pick out the shapes of the sculpt as you go and you can't really go wrong.

The Ice and Cometh

Now, to tidy up the highlights and blend the whole thing together I do a thinned glaze of ink. Mix two parts GW Dark Green Ink with one part GW Blue Ink thinned until almost clear with CLEAN water. This is applied in several light layers to darken and tie the highlights together, avoiding any kind of pooling of colour as I go. A touch of Purple Ink is added to the glaze mix to give it a slightly darker tone in deeper recesses around the torso and the leg and arm joints.



Carefully pick out sharp edges and highlights with Pure White to finish the effect. If you want to seal your model with varnish, do so now. Mask the ice area to prevent varnish reaching it as varnish and resin can often react and turn a cloudy yellow.



BRING ON THE WINTER

Finishing the base

Now that we have our painted Golem and base, it is time to start creating the wintery effects.

The first stage of this is the resin ice pond. To do this, we first have to create the mould. This is done using plastic blister card as before. Take your time and place the plastic around the shape of the pond section and hold either side with sellotape.

Surround the piece and hold it firmly in place with Plasticine. Do this on a flat clean surface like a tile or, in this case, a piece of wood. Now seal around the inside of the mould with PVA glue (you'll need a couple of layers of it). The trick is to completely seal the inside bottom edge and up the sides of the mould with the PVA, being careful not to build up a thick layer. Taking your time now is vital; just make sure you have a nice solid seal with no little holes appearing as PVA runs off somewhere. Set the whole thing off to the side to dry thoroughly.



The resin I use is Deluxe Materials Solid Water, a two-part mix that sets errr...solid. There are many makes out there, but through trial and error I have found this the most useful for several reasons:

1. It is low odour. Some of the resins out there are made with fairly nasty materials that have powerful solvents in them and using them indoors is always a risk.
2. It dries almost perfectly transparent. Very useful since the way you paint the base material shows through and it doesn't become tainted by any yellowing or browning.
3. It is easy to mix and use. Simple instructions without calculating percentages like some formulas have.
4. So far it hasn't reacted with any paints or model components. I have had resins that have melted plastics, dissolved glues and leached paints. Obviously these are all things that we want to avoid.

The Ice and Cometh

5. It is fairly cheap and easily available here in the UK. It's amazing how little you need. One pack will do approx. 10 - 15 of these bases.



Mix up the resin according to the instructions. A few tips here:

1. Buy yourself some spare syringes. I use three per session: one for resin, one for hardener and one for the completed mix
2. Get yourself some spare mixing pots. I use cleaned out empty paint pots. Small pots are better for the amounts that we are mixing. These first two tips save you trying to clean the totally waterproof resin off of the syringes and pots. Trust me, the small outlay is more than worth it.
3. Mix the resin slowly and avoid trapping air in it. Trapping too much air causes it to go cloudy which may be useful for some effects, but not for what we are doing here.
4. After mixing, allow it to settle for a while to release any large bubbles. This particular resin has a 24-hour dry time, so there really is no rush.

After mixing, fill the mould using a syringe. Make sure that the piece is on a flat, secure work surface and lay down paper in case of spillage. Take your time and have a pin handy to pull out any large air pockets that form as you fill around any base structure. Fill to the top of the textured area. Add the resin a little at a time up to the level of the ground structure. As it dries, it will form a thin meniscus layer caused by surface tension as it shrinks slightly. Just don't fill it up too far as resin will be running everywhere. Keep a close eye on the piece for the next hour or so. It is natural for the level to drop slightly as it fills around the texture and air bubbles escape. This can be topped off with some of the leftover mix. If, however, it drops rapidly then there is a problem and the only thing you can do is syringe out the mix and leave it to dry. When it has dried, it will have filled any gaps and you can fill

again. Don't worry about taking the thing apart at this stage since it is easier to clean up when dry than when wet. Just make sure any excess isn't leaking all over your work surface.

Set the whole thing aside and cover it with a container to stop dust and dirt falling in. Check it occasionally to make sure that leaks haven't developed. The drying time for this particular product is 24 hours at room temperature. I generally let it set for 48 hours to be on the safe side. Patience is indeed a virtue and while drying I set about doing some of the other stages.

After the first 24 hours, I mixed a little resin with Vallejo Metallic Medium to create a cloudy, frozen ice effect. I placed this around the Golem's feet on the pond area and in between his feet on the ground texture to give the impression that he is freezing surfaces as he comes into contact with them. After letting the resin cure completely, it is carefully removed from the mould and excess resin is carefully trimmed away. Any Plasticine is removed before repainting the black edges, leaving you with this:



Icicles

I wanted to add icicles on the base and this was another thing people asked about my IP entry. First I needed something to attach the icicles to, as well as add a little height to the base. This was done simply by adding a piece of twig.

Find an interesting little piece with the odd fork in it and attach a pin into the bottom of the twig. Hold it in a vice and paint. After spraying it black, I first painted it GW Scorched Brown, then dry brushed it with 50/50 GW Scorched Brown and GW Bestial Brown, then with GW Graveyard Earth and finally with Bleached Bone and then washed it with thinned Scaly Green.

The Ice and Cometh



Leave this to dry and proceed with making the icicles. This is done simply by mixing up two-part Araldite (epoxy glue). There are several brands, each with their own mix and drying times. The one I use sets in shape in about five minutes and is dry to the touch in 4-5 hours.

Mix it on a piece of flexible plastic (again, I use blister packing; might as well use it for something). While it's still wet, spread it with a cocktail stick or something similar, creating streaks and random shapes as shown in the pic below. Leave it to dry thoroughly (preferably overnight).



Pin the tree to the base and proceed with making the icicles. These are made by first cutting small triangular pieces from the dried epoxy glue. Some of the streaks will naturally make icicle shapes and it is best to use these first and then add the other pieces. Attach them with a small amount of superglue that is applied carefully with a pin to stop the glue from fogging up the ice. Be creative. Use different sizes and thicknesses to represent icicle clusters. I placed them down the edge of the base at points, as well as off of the rock edges and the branches.



As you can see at this stage the icicles are rather flat looking. To remedy this I use Vallejo Water Effects. There are several other brands of wet effect. Basically it is a white paste that dries clear. Paint it on the flat surface of the icicle as well as well as on the top edges where the icicles are attached to the various surfaces. You may need to do several layers in some places to sell the ice effect.



After drying, trim any non-icy looking or curled up pieces with model clippers.

Let it snow

The final thing to do is to add the snow. There are many ways and many materials out there to create snow, but for me the stand out method for creating deep piled, natural looking snow is with resin and Micro Balloons. These have become more and more easily available. Again, mine are from Deluxe Materials.

The Iceman Cometh

SAFETY FIRST!

Micro Balloons are tiny glass / silicate particles. In their powdered form they are light and produce a fine dust that if inhaled can cause damage to your lungs. I would always advise wearing a facemask and goggles when using them in powder form. This may sound extreme, but in fairness the same can be said of any snow scatter or indeed static grass for that matter as they can all be pretty nasty. Don't say I didn't warn you.

If you are really unsure about using Micro Balloons, the same method can be used to create snow with snow scatter such as GW or Woodland Scenics.

Mix up the resin as before and into this mix the powder. Add the powder element until you have a consistency approximately that of toothpaste. Use an old brush (trust me, you probably won't be able to rescue it) and apply the mix onto the surfaces where you want snow. On the upper edges of the branches, on the top edges of icicles and around the base I added a line of it down the front of the base just to provide a bit of a frame at the front. As it dries you can add a little more. Don't go mad, as it will run ever so slightly.



Cover the piece and leave it until the snow is thoroughly dry. All that remains is one last tidy up around the base edges and dust of any excess snow. Your winter base is complete.

Reading through this may seem like a complex and long process, but other than the drying times for the resin, it is all fairly quick and I feel well worth the effort to get a stand out finished scenic effect to your base. So have a go, good luck and if you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to ask.

Hope you've enjoyed reading.

Thanks!

Rob (demonherald)



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THE JUDGE

Sculpting

By Steve Saunders

In this inaugural issue we want to give a quick annotated look into the sculpting of an upcoming character known as The Judge. The Judge, along with his partner Justice, leads the Death Marshals as the Guild Hunters of Necros. This piece is based on concept art by Stephan Enjolras.

The first stage shows the basic posing of the armature that I will sculpt on. In this case I've used a pre-cast pewter armature that I can carve & stretch out to meet the proportional needs of the design. Smooth jawed needle nosed pliers are used to pinch areas of the armature to make it stretch out.



As in most cases, I start sculpting from the feet up putting in the majority of details as I go along. I'm using a brown epoxy putty that cures to a harder state than the typical green putty. I also mix in Apoxie-Sculpt in smaller amounts to give additional firmness. Here we jump ahead to show the legs mostly complete.



Next I begin to set up the under laying shape for the free flowing coat flaps. I'll focus a little more here to show a technique I use where the putty is its own underpinning. The brown putty has the advantage that it can support itself in moldmaking without breaking or losing form and I can carve and reshape it as



The Judge

needed when cured. First I take a flattened out section of putty and press it into the figure where the coat touches the body.



I then stretch and curl this piece with my fingers & round jawed needle nose pliers to give the basic form for the cloak. I let this air dry a bit & add some support with a wire so the putty stays in position.



Once the putty is fully cured I can remove the support wire. I start adding rolls and sections of putty to build out the final shape. I also cut away any areas that didn't work exactly or just needed a sharper edge or deeper recess.



I've completed the coat flaps, sharpening the edges of it with needle files and scalpels. The folds get sanded & scraped to smooth out any roughness in the putty as well.



The Judge

After sculpting the torso, the arm, which previously was kept out of the way for ease of sculpting, gets bent across the body into its final pose & sculpted in as well.



The left arm is done and some rough bulking to where the face is to be sculpted.



This Judge's face is obscured so I sculpt in the goggles & overlay the kerchief. The left hand is also added. Next to the figure is the start of the sword which is made from a rough slab of putty over a thin brass wire that is filed into shape. The wire is long enough to sculpt the chain section onto as well.



The rest of the head makes its appearance with hat & hair. The wire on the sword end gets bent into shape for the chain after making the hand & some of the details on the hilt that ensure where it will fit on the figure.



The main part of the figure is now completed and the first stage of the chain sculpting is begun. The chain has to be strong and thick enough to cast & can't have any undercuts or thin areas. One layer of flat links formed with flat discs is done first and after curing the joining links are added to either side of this.



The Judge



The Judge has been finalized with the sword in place temporarily for showing. Having to stay in a flat plane for production, the chain will need some bending to achieve more dimension & exact placement once cast in metal.



Did I say finalized? As sometimes occurs, it is decided that it would be desirable to have flowing hair as opposed to a hat and that the sword needs to be a gun-blade. Some sawing, cutting, and re-sculpting later, the Judge is now complete!



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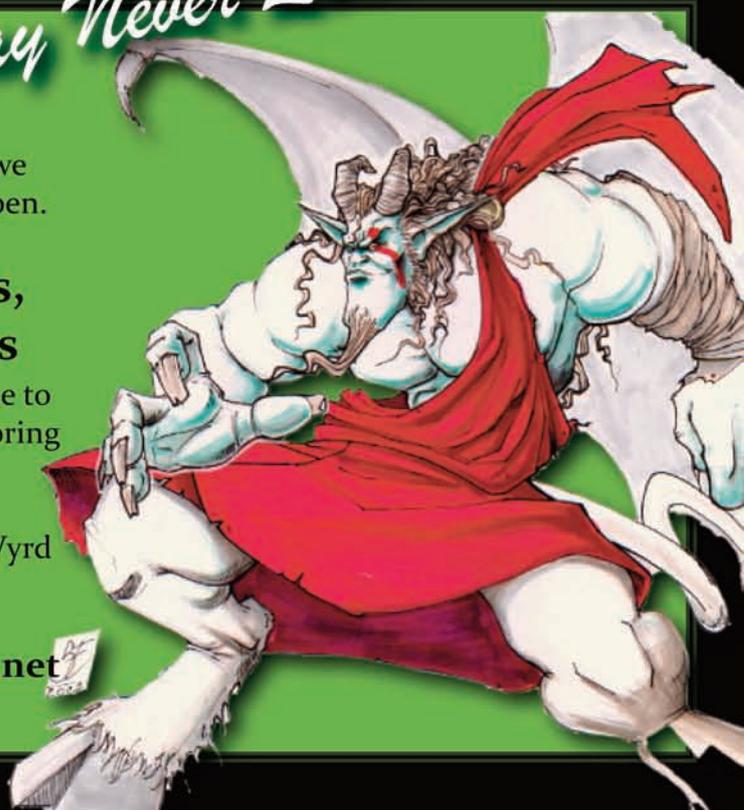
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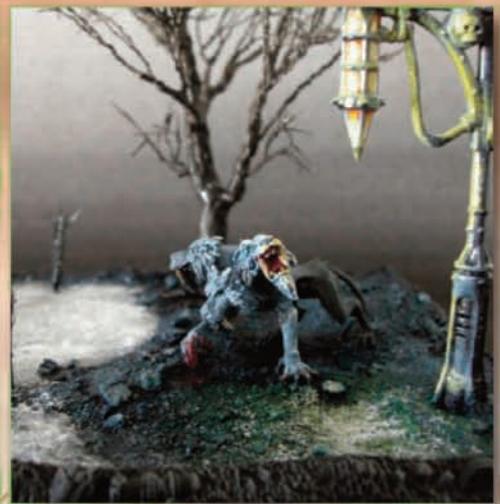
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