

Finsterland

THE TYRANNY OF THE FATHERS

A Finsterland adventure

by Georg Pils

This is part four of a campaign for Finsterland which will be published over the next weeks.

SUMMARY

The third key is supposed to be in the Ebnitz Forest. Since this is rather vague, it seems reasonable to visit a town in the area. The characters reach Varanice after a lengthy train ride. The locals prefer to keep to themselves and certainly don't know anything about keys. Only by gaining their trust can the characters learn that there is a local legend about a stranger who came to town a long time ago, bearing a strange key. He was looking for a place to hide it. Eventually, he built a cabin in the woods and moved there. After a while, he disappeared.

As the characters search the ruins of the house, they are attacked by the Hunter. The fight leads them into the forest, where they find a strange, rune-carved standing stone. Night has fallen and the full moon is out. The runes begin to glow. The sound of ghostly drums rises. From nowhere, a gate appears, revealing several riders. The fight with the Hunter stops. The riders' leader asks the group what they want. Should they mention the key, the leader will smile and say that he has the key's guardian with him. Paul Ribař is brought to them. He has the key with him. The leader explains that they can keep the key should they manage to stay alive until sunrise. They also get a small lead, but then, the wild hunt closes in on them. If they cooperate with the Hunter, they might defeat the Erlfathers or at least occupy them. As they escape, the hunter is caught. If the characters save him, he is willing to tell them what he knows about the key. He is looking for it for a man who only communicates with them by telegraph. He tells them which message will make him reveal himself: "Behold the key." The answer is "The door will soon open." Then, he flees on his own. As soon as the characters return to reality, they receive the key and Ribař's body disintegrates into dust and bones. His house finally collapses.

STORY STRUCTURE

First scene: The edge of the woods

Second scene: Closed doors

Third scene: The sound of drums

Fourth scene: Another world

Fifth scene: The key

CHARACTERS

Paul Ribař: The key bearer – A skinny, unkempt man with sunk cheeks and dead eyes. He is desperate, his voice breaks as he speaks. He is so weak that people have to carry him.

The Hunter: The savage – A hairy giant with long brown hair and enormous beard. He wields a massive club and a shotgun. He doesn't talk, he shouts.

The Master of Oak and Bloodgorse: The leader of the Erlfathers – A large, wiry warrior with deep blue eyes and untamed hair. His skin is ebon and his laughter is melodious and cruel.

His retinue: Noble warriors, huge dogs, bloodthirsty, frothing horses, falcons and eagles.

THE TOWN

Varanice is a small town in the Ebnitz Forest. Most of the people here are woodcutters or work at the local sawmill. The area produces most of the timber for the Finsterland. The town is known for its half-timbered houses and its beautiful snakewood temple. Visitors can marvel at the woodworkers' skill and the fancy cuckoo clocks. Varanicians are friendly, but rather aloof.