

SOULBOUND BLACKENED EARTH



EXPLORE THE BESIEGED INDUSTRIAL CITY OF GREYWATER FASTNESS,
AND DELIVER ITS PEOPLE FROM THE FIRES OF WAR.

CREDITS

Writing: Cat Evans, Elaine Lithgow, Martin Lloyd, Jacob Rodgers, Jessica Marcrum, KC Shi, Sam Taylor

Editing: Brian Johnson

Producers: Emmet Byrne, Elaine Lithgow

Cover: Johan Grenier

Illustration: Jog Brogzin, Runesael Flynn, Dániel Kovács, Sam Manley, JG O'Donoghue

Graphic Design and Layout: Diana Grigorescu, Noora Stubb

Proofreading: Lynne M. Meyer

Cubicle 7 Business Support: Tracey Bourke, Elaine Connolly, Jennifer Crispin, Matthew Freeman, Paula Graham, Andrena Hogan, Fiona Kelly, Kieran Murphy, and Cian Whelan

Cubicle 7 Creative Team: Dave Allen, Emmet Byrne, Alex Cahill, David F Chapman, Walt Ciechanowski, Chris Colston, Josh Corcoran, Zak Dale-Clutterbuck, Runesael Flynn, Elaine Lithgow, TS Luikart, Dominic McDowall, Sam Manley, Pádraig Murphy, Ceire O'Donoghue, JG O'Donoghue, Laura Jane Phelan, and Sam Taylor

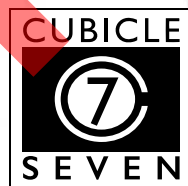
Creative Director: Emmet Byrne

Publisher: Dominic McDowall

Warhammer Age of Sigmar: Soulbound Designed by Emmet Byrne and Dominic McDowall

Special thanks to Games Workshop

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise without the prior permission of the publishers.



OFFICIAL
LICENSED
PRODUCT

Warhammer Age of Sigmar Roleplay: Soulbound © Copyright Games Workshop Limited 2022. Warhammer Age of Sigmar Roleplay: Soulbound, the Warhammer Age of Sigmar Roleplay: Soulbound logo, GW, Games Workshop, Warhammer, Stormcast Eternals, and all associated logos, illustrations, images, names, creatures, races, vehicles, locations, weapons, characters, and the distinctive likenesses thereof, are either ® or TM, and/or © Games Workshop Limited, variably registered around the world, and used under licence. Cubicle 7 Entertainment and the Cubicle 7 Entertainment logo are trademarks of Cubicle 7 Entertainment Limited. All rights reserved.

Last Updated: 21st September, 2022

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Running Blackened Earth	5
The Road Ahead	6

GREYWATER FASTNESS

A City of War	9
Major Players	9
Defences	13
Economy and Trade	14
Places of Interest	14
Guide to Greywater Fastness	16
City Infrastructure	16
The Great Axle	19
The Inner Circle	24
The Outer Circle	29
The Ghoul Mere and Beyond	34
Greywater Markets	36
Greywater Fastness Endeavours	39

HARBINGER OF TROUBLE

Getting Started	42
Part 1: The Long Road to Greywater	43
Permission To Come Aboard	43
Ghyran, the Realm of Life	45
Abandon Fort	49
Part 2: Ghyran to Ghoul Mere	50
Ghyran Jungle Exploration	51
Ghoul Mere Exploration	54
Charred Yew	57
Back on the Road	59
Part 3: The Siege of Greywater Fastness	60
Enter the Fray	61
Roused by Cannonfire	64
Greycap Rescue	65
Aftermath	67
Rewards	67

THE PRICE OF VICTORY

Getting Started	68
Part 1: It Starts With a Bang	68
Explosion at Coldrock Ironworks	69
Investigating the Explosion	70
What's Going On?	72
Powderkeg Lane Watchhouse	72
The Battle at the Guildhouse	74
When the Dust Settles	75
Take a Breather	76
Part 2: Fallen Leaves	77
A Request for Aid	77
A Dryad's Tale	78
Sylvaneth Smuggling	80
Returning Mottled Leaf	81
The Sylvaneth Respond	82
Part 3: The Bloody Farm	83
Finding the Cult	84
The Ghoul Mere Pioneers	85
Entering the Farm	87
Aftermath	88
Rewards	88

THE RIVEN BRIDGE

Getting Started	89
Part 1: The Fraying Road	90
What Broke the Bridge	90
The Defender of Monsters	91
Maintaining the Cycle	92
Night by the Road	93
Part 2: Heavy Burdens	93
Encounters in the Ghoul Mere	94
Into the Jungle Once More	96
Part 3: Corrupt at Heart	98
Sower, Meet Reaper	98
Reaching Pale Oak	99
Old Friends	99
Part 4: One Reckoning or Another	101
Speaking With Power	101
The Hateful	102
To the Bridge	102
Part 5: The Fragility of Peace	103
A Tree Without Roots	103
The Lamentiri Burn	104
The Battle of the Riven Bridge	105
Aftermath	107
Rewards	107

BLOOD RED ROOTS

Getting Started	108
Part 1: No Rest for the Wicked	109
War of Words	109
Diplomacy's Last Stand	110
Part 2: The Tower of Blood	111
Entering the Tower	111
Traversing the Tower	112
The Tower Layout	112
The Chapel of Slaughter	114
Part 3: Greycaps Stained Red	116
The Greycap Western Barracks	116
Entering the Barracks	117
Traversing the Barracks	118
The Barracks Layout	119
Murderer's Reward	120
Part 4: The Executioner's Axe	121
An Offering of Blood	122
To the Death	123
Aftermath	124
Rewards	124

NIGHT OF A THOUSAND FANGS

Getting Started	125
Part 1: To Forgehaven	126
The Order of Events	127
Allied Forces & Delegating Threats	127
The Ebb and Flow of War	129
Part 2: Greywater in Flames	129
Part 3: The Morning After	145
Aftermath	147
What Next?	147
Rewards	147

APPENDIX: ALLIES AND ENEMIES

Residents of Greywater	148
Skaven of Clans Skryre	151
Sylvaneth of the Choirhall Grove	154
Creatures of Ghyran	157



INTRODUCTION

'The Everqueen may have forced all but one of our gates sealed, thinned our supply lines down to a single artery, but we the people of Greywater Fastness will not falter. For Sigmar's realms, our factories will not halt; for the continued glory of Order, the cogs will turn!'

— Valius Maliti, Treaty Day Speech

Deep in the Realm of Ghyran, within the Jade Kingdom of Verdia and its vast jungles, lies a scarred land crowned by a Free City of several million mortal souls, an immense military industrial complex armed to the teeth and packed with factories. But under the surface it is home to devoted and hardworking citizens, dense populations of Duardin, Humans, and a scattering of Aelfs who proudly call themselves 'Grits'. They work long shifts and make a modest living, filling quotas of arms and munitions that the forces of Order desperately need.

Life is hard to maintain here; the city and the lands around it choke on its pollution. Farmland is all but unsustainable. Livestock is imported from lands beyond, and all but a few pack animals have been replaced by mechanical imitations called Rattletraps. The Fastness sits atop a vast deposit of cyclestone ore, which it continues to mine and refine into a potent power source. The runoff from this process, as well as the rest of its industrial waste, is discarded into the Ghoule Mere, a steadily growing toxic swampland that surrounds the city.

The Treelord Pale Oak seeks to rejuvenate the Ghoule Mere and reclaim it for the Sylvaneth, aghast at what the Grits have done to the land. But a treaty forged between Alarielle and the Steam Lords keeps him at a branch's length. Greywater Fastness shall grow no further, and only one road is sanctioned in and out of the city. Pale Oak keeps this peace for the time being, watching for those who leave the One Road and trespass upon Sylvaneth lands. But as Greywater's poison continues to spread, he is one last straw away from marching upon the city once more.

Meanwhile, the rats of Clan Skryre see Greywater Fastness as an ever growing treasure trove of technology that would be better off wielded by their own covetous claws.

They are a bane on the city and its denizens, stealing and murdering as they wish, conducting sorties against the walls and constantly seeking a way to circumvent its bristling defences. But when Clan Skryre's true plans come to fruition, a plucky band of ratcatchers have no chance of holding back the Vermintide.

And there are those within the walls who have been led astray, tempted by the power that the Blood God offers, believing that Khorne's methods are the only way to save their homes. They practise their rites and rituals in secret, seeing Greywater Fastness as one massive temple to the Lord of Slaughter. They pray that his day of reckoning is soon on the horizon, when Greywater Fastness can truly live up to its name as a city of war.

Sigmar accepts the disfigurement the city has rent into the Realm of Ghyran, and the political rifts it has widened between himself and the Everqueen, but only because the Redeemer knows how vital the city's output is to maintain his armies with weapons and munitions across the realms. Without Greywater Fastness, the forces of Order may falter and suffer immeasurable losses.

Sigmar has decreed it. Greywater Fastness must stand at all costs.

Blackened Earth is a five-part campaign set in and around the Free City of Greywater Fastness. Over the course of the campaign, the player characters are instrumental in deciding the fate of this great city. They experience the deadliness of the Ghyran wilderness, travelling by Cogfort through ever growing jungles and the pollution-tainted Ghoule Mere. They investigate the city's smog-filled streets in search of Clan Skryre assassins, and root out betrayers of Order. They encounter an army of vengeful Sylvaneth and see first hand the true cost of the city's war economy. And when everything comes to a head, they must defend the city on all fronts, deciding where to level their justice, where to forge allegiances, and making hard decisions that alter the fate of Greywater Fastness forever.

This book, combined with the **Warhammer Age of Sigmar: Soulbound** corebook, provides everything a GM needs to tell the legendary tales of this crumbling metropolis.



Blackened Earth also contains a detailed city guide for the Greywater Fastness setting, filled with unique locations, goods and services for the party to use, and a host of city-specific Endeavours for characters to invest in between adventures. A new cast of allies and enemies, complete with stat-blocks, keep your players on their toes as these characters vie for control of the city. Are you ready to save the Grits from the opposing forces of Skaven, Slyvaneth, and hidden Khorne cultists?

MORE OPTIONS

Greywater Fastness is a major industrial city that attracts all manner of engineers, alchemists, and traders. If your players want to get involved in the creation of powerful equipment, the following supplements offer additional options.

The *Steam & Steel* supplement includes rules for crafting equipment, rules for vehicle operation, and Talents and Endeavours for crafting-focussed player characters.

The *Artefacts of Power* supplement provides details on crafting magical items with realmstone, as well as a vast collection of weapons, armour, and artefacts characters can source within the city's markets.

RUNNING BLACKENED EARTH

Blackened Earth sees the party thrust into the powder-keg of Greywater Fastness, and tasked with solving one city-wide crisis after another. They arrive after a long and perilous journey to investigate why weapon exports have stopped, only to find the city under siege by Skaven forces. When the ratmen find their way inside the walls, the party must try to stay one step ahead of them as they attempt to assassinate key city leaders and destroy infrastructure.

Later they encounter the Sylvaneth, and experience first hand what the city's mass pollution has wrought upon the people of the forest. Unless the party can bring about peace, the Sylvaneth seek vengeance and march to wipe Greywater Fastness off the map.

Yet much of this animosity has been fabricated by secret cults of Khorne worshippers who have been dreaming of this day, pushing for war and plotting in the dark as the city is brought to a boiling point.

All this culminates in a great urban battle set against a ticking clock, that sees the party set upon by all three opposing factions at once. They must use everything at their disposal to save the city.

Before beginning this campaign, we recommend you read the **Greywater Fastness City Guide**, starting on page 8. This introduces you to the factions, characters, and locations featured throughout the campaign, and gives you a strong foundation for crafting your own adventures within the city and its surrounding areas.

THEME, TONE, AND FEEL

Blackened Earth uses specific tones and moods to explore the campaign's themes. Below are a number of tips to help you best evoke these aspects and bring the campaign to life. You should discuss the theme and feel of the campaign with your players at the outset of their adventure, as it will help them to fully embrace the story that you are going to build together.

INDUSTRY VERSUS NATURE

The main theme of conflict in **Blackened Earth** is between industry and the sanctity of nature. It's at the crux of everything. Directly, the Grits' unrelenting pollution of the surrounding forests causes the Sylvaneth to attack and blockade the city. The continuous mining and industrial expansion gave the Skaven a place to fester beneath the city. The presence of both these opposing forces caused enough desperation that some citizens have turned to Chaos to save themselves, rather than trust in Sigmar.

Yet no one is blind to these problems. Though the walls are high enough to hide most Grits' view of the Ghouls, the stink permeates through the ground and over the walls. The pollution, combined with unrelenting factory shifts, negatively affects their long term health. But the constant noise of industry, the wealth coming their way, and the simple distractions that surround them, are enough to drown out the voices of the few who would stick up for the better of the realm, rather than perpetuate Sigmar's war economy.

It's a common mortal attitude for people to get used to problems rather than try to properly solve them. The Rattletraps are a key example of this way of thought. Rather than clean up the pollution and bring living animals back into the city, the Steam Lords created mechanical automatons instead.

In the eyes of Sigmar, the city itself is a necessary evil. What damage it does to a small stretch of land in the ever expanding Realm of Ghyran is a small price to pay to keep his armies fighting the existential threat of Chaos across the realms. But not everyone agrees with the Starlit King's opinion, especially those affected directly by the city's unrestricted pollution. The party may relate to this attitude, or perhaps they will contest it. They should have ample opportunity to voice their opinions, seeing the wonders the city creates posed against the destruction they cause. Sylvaneth characters in particular should have a powerful connection to this theme, as it may even cause them to clash ideologically with the city itself.

THE CITY OF STEAM AND STEEL

Like the large cast of NPCs the party encounters, the city of Greywater Fastness itself should feature as a major character in the campaign. The four major sectors of the city, divided up by its massive defensive walls, all have very different and contrasting tones and appearances; the party should know where they are in the city at any given time by how their surroundings are described.

The **Great Axle** is a tall, towering citadel, home to the city's wealthiest Steam Lords, most powerful wizards, and greatest engineers. All the city's wealth flows out of the Great Axle, and returns with dividends. It's a district that is as high as it is wide, all the towers and buildings packed tightly together, one on top of the other, as if the dazzling architecture is trying to touch the ceiling of the realmsphere.

The **Inner Circle** is one vast industrial complex, the main source of the city's physical pollution, but also its noise pollution. The realmstone-powered factories never close, the forges are never cold, the roads and railways are always filled with goods going in and out. Workers hear the rhythm of industry even as they sleep, and due to the smog that hangs over this sector and the shifts they take, some may not see the sun for weeks.

The **Outer Circle** is a bustling warren of housing and tenements. No building in this district is far from ramshackle or in need of some kind of repair. The stench of mortality is as strong as the olfactory impression of industry. Here the workers reclaim some life for themselves, where they blow off steam, love and laugh, and spend their meagre coin to make themselves feel alive.

The landscape beyond the walls offers the greatest contrast of all. The **Ghoul Mere** is a wasteland where little life of any kind can survive, and what does has become deadly and twisted. It is the consequence of achievement that no one wants to think about.

HOPE AGAINST THE ODDS

Even though by the final adventure all may seem lost, with the people of the Fastness confronted by death from all sides and even within, the party and key characters they meet should represent hope for the redemption of the city and its future.

Groups like the Cherished Weald, lead by **Anastasia Everlark** (page 78), actively fight against the establishment within the Great Axle, and wish to bring green spaces back into the city. Through their adventures the party will encounter **Charred Yew** (page 57), a Sylvaneth who, against all odds, is ardent in maintaining peace between the forces of Order. There are some on the Grand Conclave like **Onduran Emblyn** (page 83) who strive to make the city a better place for everyone, and root out the forces of Chaos.

During play, be sure to contrast the dirt and darkness with moments of levity. Show an inn full of rowdy workers singing in merry unison. Make mention of a pair of lovers meeting on the workways above. Show a scarred and mean-looking Greycap helping a lost child find their way home. By propping up these hopeful moments, contrasted against the grim industrial backdrop, you can show the party that the city is worth saving, and that people's attitudes could genuinely change.

THE ROAD AHEAD

To allow GMs to prepare for running the campaign, below is an overview of each of the five adventures that make up **Blackened Earth**. Each summary concludes with a rumour that can be seeded early in the campaign to foreshadow future events. For more information on how to best use Rumours, Fears, and Threats in your campaign see **Soulbound** page 294.