

# GRIMM IRONFIST'S MEISTERWERK

## GM's Introduction

Isembard's uncle Grimm has been blackmailed for a number of years ever since thieves broke into his workshop one night and stole amongst other things a scale hauberk that he had created in his youth. Inscribed with powerful runes, the suit of armour is clearly magical. The blackmailers threatened to reveal his magical dealings in open court before Lord Karick unless he paid them a monthly fee of 5 Crowns. Proving that Grimm made it would not be a problem; he uses a distinctive stamp to mark all of his ware and the armour is obviously very finely made.

With the appearance of Isembard, the blackmailers have seen the potential for additional profit and have recently upped the demand to 10 Crowns per month.

The thieves are lead by an unpleasant character by the name of Scunlock. On his own, he would not have come up with this scheme, but Scunlock is in turn in league with Guildsman Goode, an ostensibly upright citizen of Karickbridge who essentially leads the town's criminal underground.



Karickbridge: Castle Street

Karickbridge is a small town and the party's actions will generally be noticed and have consequences. It should also be emphasised that there is no hurry for most of the adventure; the party is entering a situation that has been ongoing for years. If, for example, they miss the first money handover, they can always wait until next month (possibly with further adventures inbetween...).

## Players' Introduction

When the party returns to Karickbridge from Saxton, it will be apparent to Isembard that his uncle is even more short-tempered than normal and seems to be spending 18 hours a day working the forge, even though there is no apparent need for additional weapons.

Grimm is working day and night to make weapons to sell in order to meet the blackmailer's demands.

One evening in his uncle's home, Isembard accidentally knocks a ledger off a table. Picking it up a piece of paper falls out. It is obvious that it had once been screwed up into a ball but has now been folded carefully. His curiosity gets the better of him and he decides to read it:

*Dear Grim,*

*my associates and I would like to thank you warmly for your continuing contributions. Needless to say, your "Meisterwerk" continues to be perfectly safe in our hands. However, with your relative in town it would be doubly regrettable if your fine work were to come to the attention of Lord Karick. Would it therefore not be doubly important to you to ensure that this doesn't occur? Unless you wish the sins of your youth to come to light, we suggest that you now leave 10 Crowns in the arranged place each month. As ever, any attempt by your good self to determine our identity could result in the most unfortunate consequences...*

*With kind regards. ?*

If Isembard decides to confront Grimm with this, his uncle will become very angry and refuse to talk about the issue and insist that Isembard keeps out of his business.

Once the party comes into contact with Scunlock they should realise that the language used in the blackmail letter could never have come from him and that someone of a higher status in the town is also involved.

### **Alternative Hook**

An alternative hook if there is no direct connection between Grimm and the party would be to have Grimm hire the party to oversee the transport of a load of weapons and armour to a nearby town only to be ambushed somewhere en route. Going back to Grimm empty handed will result in Grimm explaining to the party why this is such a huge disaster (he's being blackmailed) and the party's pennance should be to stop this.

### **Possible Party Actions**

Obviously a lot of detective work is going to be involved in this adventure. There will be much use of perception and stealth – sneaking around Karickbridge under cover of darkness will cause the night watch to be suspicious. It should be put upon the party that combat should only ever be a last resort – getting caught will almost certainly end in capture and execution. The town is small – 2,500-3,000 inhabitants in all. The party will not be anonymous; previous dealings with the castle will be known about, as will reputations. Scunlock has a small army of urchins at his beck and call – working as messengers, couriers and spies, one of which is responsible for bringing the blackmail stakes to him. Unless the party is careful, their actions will also get reported back to him.

### **Karickbridge by Night**

In addition to the watches at the various gates around Karickbridge, there are four patrols that will be walking round town at any one time. Lantern law dictates that anyone breaking

kurfew must be carrying a lit lantern and either be known in the town or if a foreigner (i.e. non-native Karickbrider) carry a night pass (obtainable by honourable characters from Bailiff Aylward for 5 Florins each).

Walking around at night without a lit lantern (or pass) is a lockable offence – the party will be arrested and held overnight at the castle. Every 15 min of gametime there is a 25% chance of the night watch coming by. With a PERCEPTION of 5, however, they should be relatively easy to avoid.

### **Following Grim**

Grimm is under standing instructions to deposit his gold in a niche in a courtyard in Rosemary Lane which he will do after nightfall. For storytelling purposes this should happen a day or two after Isembard finds the blackmail note. The GM should roll three perception checks for the route between the castle and Rose Hill Street (a journey of approx. 15 mins on foot).

An hour or so after Grimm deposits the money, one of Scunlock's urchins will appear in the courtyard, take a cursory look round to make sure that nobody is watching (make a perception check) and then take the coins to Scunlock in the Tar and Feathers. The urchin will take the back streets and alleyways to the inn; being caught by the watch with that much money on him will certainly result in an embarrassment for Scunlock. This route will make it more difficult to follow the youngster – though he will also be moving quite quickly.

#### **DRAMATIC PERSONAGE GRIMM IRONFIST:**

It's unclear whether Grimm Ironfist is his name or a description of this dour dwarf. He came to Karick-



bridge some 60 years ago, leaving behind his native clan lands in the Pagan Mountains, entering service with the present Lord Karick's grandfather. Not an easy person to get along with by any stretch of the imagination. Gruff bordering on rude, he is, however, an excellent smith in the great tradition of the dwarves.

### **The Tar and Feathers**

The Tar and Feathers is a disreputable spit-and-sawdust drinking establishment at the bottom end of town. It is noisy, poorly lit and there are constantly people coming and going. The GM should ask the players to describe how far behind the urchin they are whilst trailing him. The further away they are, the harder it will be to spot the handover. The party should make a new perception check on entering the inn to determine who the money is handed over to. If they are close on the urchin's heels, add 2 to the perception check, if a medium distance away no modifier, if they are a long way behind, there should be a -4 modifier.

If the party fails to identify who the money is given to, they will have to establish for themselves who the local lowlives are – hanging around the low end of town to try to spot the protection racket or loan sharking might lead them to Scunlock for example. The GM will have to be a little creative here. Scunlock will become suspicious if he catches wind of the fact that someone is asking around or asking questions about him.

### **Scunlock**

Scunlock is about as disreputable a man as you can find in Karickbridge. If there are criminal goings on in the town, it is as likely as not that he has a finger in them, be it smuggling, extortion, moneylending or whatever. He and his bully-boys (Leof, Cadman and Ham; see below for stats) are not afraid of breaking a few heads and their reputation is

usually sufficient to mean that it's not necessary to resort to physical measures. Business is going well for him at the moment, and so he is generally in a good mood. In the absence of any serious opposition and knowing the protection he enjoys through his contacts to Guildsman Goode, he is more likely to be taken in by any approach that the party might make.

Just how they make their initial contact with Scunlock will be up to the party. They might want to put on a show of force to impress him, they might want to approach him saying that they've been told that he's the man to ask about employment for a stranger in town. He knows Isembard by sight, and so he will become immediately suspicious should he show his face at this stage, unless he can somehow persuade Scunlock that he and his uncle have fallen out and have nothing to do with one another. Taking him on directly will bring several problems, not least of which is that except under extreme duress he will be very unwilling to reveal his connection to Goode and thus the location of the armour.

Once the contact is established, the party will have to gain his trust. One of them will probably have to help out on a couple of jobs – two will probably do; collecting debts from a widow in the poor quarter of Karickbridge, getting in protection money from a market stall. Once the characters establish their competence, Scunlock will ask them if they would like to try something a bit more risky...

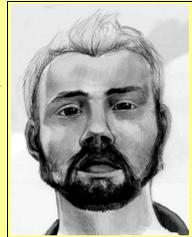
### **Bailiff Aylward**

Guildsman Goode has ambitions. If he can assume the title of Bailiff he can run his scams with even more impunity. Unfortunately, the present Bailiff, Thomas Aylward is a man in the best of health and there does not appear to be any way for Goode to step up. Aylward is also not taken in by Goode's public persona. There are too many trails leading to Goode's door. Unfortunately he has nothing in the hand against the man. Taking Aylward out of commission would kill two birds with one stone. Using the party also adds a layer of deniability to Goode's plans – unlike Scunlock who knows too much about Goode's business, the party know nothing at this stage and should they get caught they wouldn't be in a position to do much damage.

Scunlock will tell them that Bailiff Aylward is causing problems for a friend of his and would like him to disappear. Permanently. If the party can pull this off there would be a large reward in it for them. The details will be left to the party but Scunlock will put a surreptitious watch on Aylward's house to make sure that the party doesn't collude with him. Scunlock will demand proof in the form of Aylward's ring. He will also keep an ear out for the hue and cry raised by the

#### **Scunlock:**

Scunlock is a ruffian and a bully. A thoroughly unpleasant and generally nasty character.



Growing up in the gutter in Karickbridge he resents his lowly origins and feels that the town and its lord owe him. He is feared in the Tanners Quarter by the weak upon whom he preys. His cunning opportunism brought him into a sort of partnership with Guildsman Goode a number of years ago when Scunlock recognised his character and saw the benefits to be had from someone like-minded but having a more respectable appearance.

#### **BAILIFF AYLWARD:**

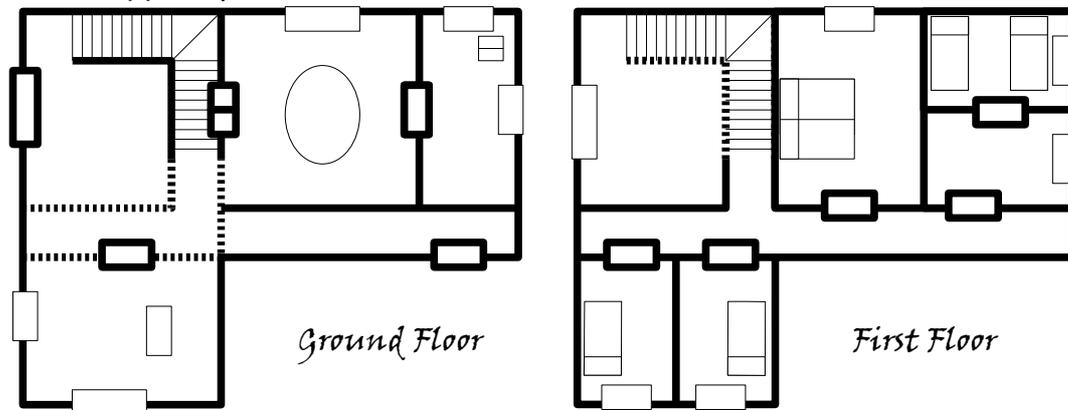
Bailiff Aylward is the very embodiment of honesty and honour. His only possible fault is that he is too trusting of the



local riff-raff. He has been Bailiff of Karickbridge for 12 years. Aylward. He is very insistent about arresting the right person and will not do so merely on suspicion of a crime – the evidence needs to be there too. Hence although he has long been suspicious of Scunlock and also of Goode, without anyone to speak out against them (they are mostly too scared), he has never had sufficient evidence in hand to make an arrest. He is intelligent enough however to believe the party should they tell him of Scunlock's arrangement to have him disposed of and to play along with any plan to have his assassination staged.

family servants the following morning. If nothing happens then Scunlock will be extremely suspicious.

### *Bailiff Aylward's Residence*



Optimally the party will sneak into Aylward's house late at night, persuade him that their intentions are innocent, get his wife to play along and fake a murder.

### **Just Deserts**

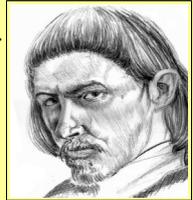
As a reward for their faithfulness/nefariousness, Scunlock will invite the party to a meeting with his partner in crime, Guildsman Goode, who will congratulate them for a job well done. As well as giving them 200 F (each if both were involved), he will offer them further employment if they are interested.

The party now has all the information necessary to bring Goode, Scunlock and their associates to their deserved conclusion. They will need to break into Goode's house at a time when it is empty or he is asleep, get into his office, unlock his chest and study the armour sufficiently well to be able to make a copy. Once a copy has been made the armour can be replaced. Grimm will at first be unwilling to play along in reconstructing his Meisterwerk, but if Isembard starts off trying to hammer something together, his impatience will get the better of him and he will insist on showing the party how the original was made. Of course the Meisterwerk armour can also simply be 'disappeared', but this wouldn't be as much fun ;).

All that is required now is that Grim's payments be interrupted. This shouldn't be too tricky now that the party knows where the money is deposited. Doing this will result in an extra letter to Grimm reminding him to pay up within two days and threatening him with exposure at the next week's assize if he doesn't.

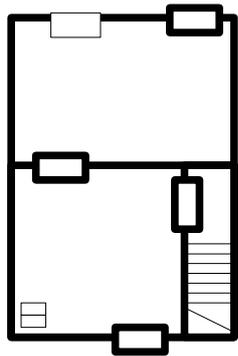
#### **GUILDSMAN GOODE:**

No-one thinks more highly of Roger Goode than Roger Goode. He honestly believes that he deserves the highest office of the town, or at least that he deserves it as much as anyone else, so it may as well be him. His bitter ambition means that he is prepared to go to any lengths to get there. On his way he cut a few corners, some of which weren't quite legal. In the meantime he's developed a taste for the criminal, particularly if he thinks he can get away with it. His moderate success until now has lead him to believe that he is cleverer than all his adversaries and untouchable. This has only been reinforced by his association with Scunlock. He now sees nothing in the way between him and the position of town Bailiff. If this were to happen then Scunlock and Goode would be able to continue their criminal activities in Karickbridge with virtual impunity.

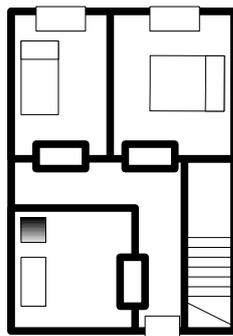


Assuming the party can again interrupt the payment, Guildsman Goode will bring the case against Grimm Isembard at the next court session. He will be very apologetic and polite about it, but believes his present situation to be very secure, particularly now that the suspicious Bailiff Aylward has supposedly been done away with. He will present a Laen Glass (Fey blood) vial which is known to glow blue in the presence of magic - a generally accepted proof and will try to use it to show that the armour is magical and that therefore Grimm is guilty of sorcery and should be banished. In fact what better way to establish his credentials before Lord Karick as the new Bailiff? He will have Scunlock with him at the hearing as an 'associate'.

### *Guildsman Goode's House*



*Ground Floor*



*First Floor*

How the court session will run will depend on the party; are they both present? Openly or in disguise? Have they tipped Lord Karick off ahead of time? Has Grimm been appraised of the situation, or will he appear deathly pale and quaking before Lord Karick? Is Bailiff Aylward present, and if so openly or in disguise?

If Nab'han is present, when Goode's accusations against Grimm prove unfounded, in desperation he will turn on him, making wild accusations of having heard that he was seen at Aylward's home

on the night of the murder, or perhaps that he saw him murder Aylward but has not spoken up because Nah'ban had threatened him to silence and he only feels free to speak out now because of all the guards to protect him.

Once both accusations turn out to be unfounded, Goode will give up and allow himself to be arraigned. Scunlock, however, will attempt to make a run for it. Nab'han can then explain the activities of the pair and point out the people involved at the Tar and Feather.

### ***Some possible events during the assize***

*When the Laen Glass doesn't work:*

"Ah well. Yes. Well it worked before. Perhaps my Laen Glass is a little old my lord. I don't suppose you have one to hand do you?"

Lord Karick sends for a Laen Glass which also shows up negative. "Well that's most unusual sire, I could swear that this armour was magical when it first came into my hands." „And when might that have been Guildsman?“ „Ah, a little while ago sire. I wanted to be sure of the evidence before I brought any, er, unfounded accusations sire.“

*On seeing Nah'ban:*

"Sire, in the safety of your courtroom it is possible for me to reveal to you that this man is responsible for the heinous murder of your faithful Bailiff Aylward. I was present at the time my lord and would have spoken up sooner but for the fact that I was sworn to secrecy on pain of death. Guards, arrest this man!"

*If Aylward is present:*

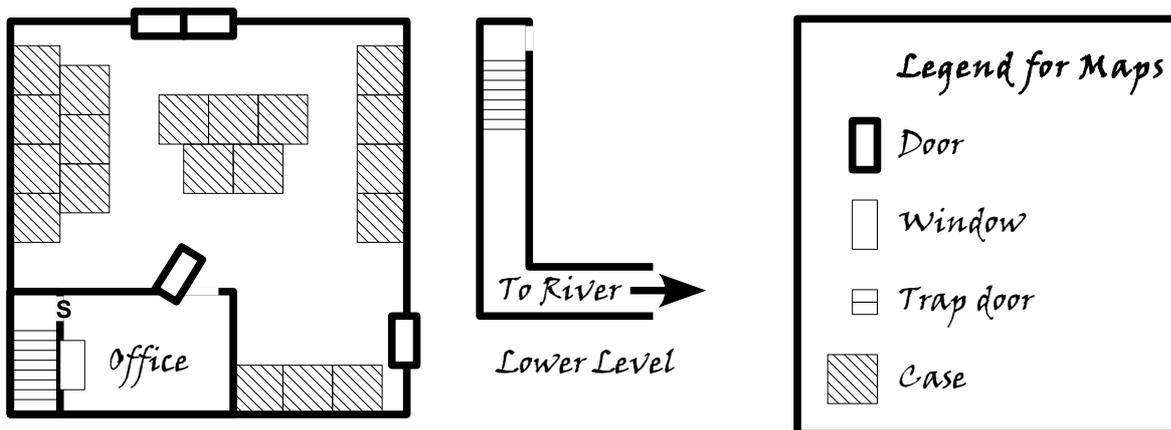
"But, but, but that's impossible. I have your ring. I paid to have you killed..."

## At the Warehouse

Scunlock has snuck out to the warehouse on Castle Street where he is busy with his henchmen packing a couple of saddle bags with money from their various rackets. He is about to leave town. Leof will be watching the door, Cadman is helping Scunlock to pack the loot and Ham is in the secret passage getting the boat ready.

Scunlock will have the band's ledger detailing the loan-sharking side of the operation. They will also have the week's takings, amounting to around 1,800 F.

### *Warehouse on Castle Street*



## Wrapping Up

Isembard and Nab'han will have established themselves as faithful servants in Karickbridge and will be given the freedom of the town. Grimm will see his nephew in a new light and is likely to want to entrust his Meisterwerk to him for safekeeping. He will also want to reward Nab'han in some way.

The armour itself is designed for a dwarf and is effectively +1. The scale armour has however been inscribed with the Algiz rune (Ÿ), protecting the wearer against certain forms of magic. Effectively the armour gives the wearer increased resistance against magical attacks. In game terms the wearer has a five-point higher magical defence against direct magical attacks that are not mind-targetted (effective e.g. vs. Inflict Wound, Curse or Fossilize, but not against Command or Transfix).

Lord Karick will send a small troop off to round up any of Scunlock's men that can be found as well as to Guildsman Goode's house to confiscate his funds.

### **Experience points:**

Successfully following Grimm to the courtyard in Rosemary Lane	1
Successfully identifying Scunlock as the leader of the thugs	1
Winning Scunlock's trust	1
...without actually hurting or robbing anyone	2
Arranging the false assassination of Thomas Aylward	2
Exposing Goode as a fraud	1
Persuading Karick that Goode wanted Aylward killed	2
Total	10

## Annex I: Following a Suspect

Determining the success or failure of following someone relies on stealth and perception. From the basis of the follower, success is indicated by rolling  $\leq$  [Stealth] - [Perception] on 2d10. The check should be made every 5 min. Many of the NPCs being followed will in turn be careful that the night watch does not spot them and as a result they may be more concerned about avoiding the watch than being worried about being followed. This could be reflected by a -3 PERCEPTION modifier.

- What an NPC does when he notices that he is being followed will depend on who they are. If Grimm realises that he is being followed by someone he recognises, he will confront him immediately, instruct him to go away and then continue
- The urchin who picks up Grim's gold is likely to simply become suspicious after the first time he notices that he is being followed. The second time he is likely to make a run for it. Now it is the follower's turn to make a successful perception roll (roll > [STEALTH] - [PERCEPTION] on 2d10 to notice).

Having a mystic who can cast Pursuit would be of great help.

Name	Grimm	Street Urchin	Generic Guardsman
Rank	3	1	1
Perception	6	9	5
Stealth	13	20	13

## Annex III: NPCs

<b>Name:</b>	<i>Scunlock</i>	<i>Leof</i>	<i>Cadman</i>	<i>Ham</i>
<b>Profession</b>	Thief	Armsman	Armsman	Armsman
<b>Rank</b>	2	2	1	1
Attack	15	15	14	14
Defence	5	11	8	9
Health Points	10	11	10	10
Armour	Thick Leather Jacket	Scale Hauberk	Mail Vest	Scale Hauberk
AF	2	3	2	3
Weapon 1	Staff: d6,3	Sword: d8,3	Mace d6,4	Sword: d8,3
Weapon 2	Dagger: d3,3	Bow: d6,3	Dagger: d3,3	Bow: d6,3
Treasure	32 F Loans Ledger	47 F	23 F	35 F
STR	10	8	9	10
REF	12	18	12	13
INT	13	13	13	12
PT	10	12	9	9
LKS	7	12	14	9
Evasion	5	6	4	5
Stealth	20	14	13	13
Perception	10	5	5	5
M. Def	5	5	4	4



## Annex V: Map Key

- |                          |                               |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ① Guildsman Goode's Home | ⑨ Karickbridge Castle         |
| ② Warehouse              | ⑩ Mill Gate                   |
| ③ Scunlock's House       | ⑪ Bailiff Aylward's Residence |
| ④ Chapel                 | ⑫ Courtyard                   |
| ⑤ Lower Gate             | ⑬ Upper Gate                  |
| ⑥ Poster Gate            | ⑭ St. Martha's Church         |
| ⑦ Dromeir's House        | ⑮ Bishop's Residence          |
| ⑧ Ironfist Residence     | ⑯ Tanner                      |

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