

Drummer Boy

By Tony Lee for Warhammer Magazine

Page 1

Panel 1: Wide view. We are looking at a soldiers camp. Empire soldiers are preparing for battle. Some are sharpening swords, perhaps preparing crossbows - others drinking hot brews before getting ready.

CAPTION: THE SCOUTS ARRIVED IN WISSENBURG IN THE DEAD OF NIGHT, WITH THE NEWS WE **DIDN'T** WANT TO HEAR.

CAPTION 2: THE **ORCS** WERE ON THE MARCH AGAIN – AND **WE** WERE IN THEIR WAY.

CREDITS

Panel 2: Captain Veidt is talking to a couple of his seconds as young Werner comes up behind him. Werner is about fourteen years old and fresh faced, a boy amongst men.

CAPTION: CAPTAIN VEIDT WAS A GOOD MAN – AND A **WISE** ONE. WITHIN **DAYS** HE HAD **ROUSED** US, **FORMED** US, **HELD** US WITH HIS CHARGE.

VEIDT: NOW, THE ORCS WILL HAVE TO COME DOWN **HERE** FROM THE GREY MOUNTAINS. SET UP POSTS AND LET ME KNOW –

WERNER: AHM – SIR? WHEN YOU HAVE A MOMENT?

Panel 3: Veidt turns to look down at Werner, a smile on his lips.

VEIDT: I ALWAYS HAVE TIME FOR OUR LUCKY **DRUMMER BOY**, WERNER. WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU TODAY?

Panel 4: Back to Werner, looking up at the captain.

WERNER: CAPTAIN, I WANT TO **FIGHT**. I WANT TO TAKE UP SWORD OR PIKE AND STRIKE AT THE ORCS TOO. I FEEL SO **USELESS** WITH MY DRUM.

VEIDT: BOY, YOU WILL **DRUM** FOR US TODAY – AND YOU WILL PLAY A BIGGER PART THAN **ANY** OTHER. LET US NOT HEAR ANY MORE TALK OF **FIGHTING** FROM YOU!

(Cont.)

Panel 5: Werner starts to object as Veidt points out off panel, kneeling beside the boy to show him what Veidt is pointing at.

WERNER: BUT CAPTAIN, I REALLY THINK I CAN MAKE MORE OF A DIFFERENCE –

VEIDT: LOOK OUT THERE, WERNER. WHAT DO YOU SEE?

Panel 6: We now see what they are looking at – it's a similar view to the first panel.

WERNER: I SEE SOLDIERS, SIR.

VEIDT: WRONG. YOU SEE MEN. SCARED MEN. MEN WHO WILL FACE A FOE TODAY AND PROBABLY DIE. MEN WHO NEED COURAGE.

VEIDT: COURAGE THAT YOUR DRUM CAN GIVE.

Page 2

Panel 1: Werner looks up at Veidt as he stands.

WERNER: I KNOW THEY'RE ORCS CAPTAIN, BUT LAST NIGHT AROUND THE CAMPFIRE I HEARD THEY WERE REALLY QUITE -

Panel 2: A saddened Veidt interrupts as a messenger arrives.

VEIDT: CAMPFIRE TALES, BOY. NOTHING MORE. NEVER UNDERESTIMATE AN ORC. HE'LL GUT YOU, KILL YOU AND EAT YOU BEFORE YOU'VE EVEN DRAWN YOUR SWORD. NOW GO GRAB YOUR DRUM.

MESSENGER: CAPTAIN! THE ORC ARMY IS LINING UP!

VEIDT 2: IT'S TIME TO EARN OUR PAY, BOYS. LET'S SHOW OUR WORTH.

Panel 3: The soldiers line up against the opposing Orc army – the sides are evenly matched.

CAPTION: AND SO, THIS FATEFUL DAY, ELECTOR COUNT DARQUE'S LAST HOPE FACED OFF AGAINST A FORCE THOUGHT UP IN NIGHTMARES --

Panel 4: Close up of the Orcs. They ain't funny. We're talking the most fearsome and scarey bloody orcs you can think of. They are beating on their shields.

CAPTION: -- AND WHISPERED OF IN SCARED TONES.

S/FX: BAM! BAM! BAM!

Panel 5: Back at the Empire's line, Werner, with drum is looking in terror at Veidt, beside him.

WERNER: I'M SCARED SIR. I – I DON'T WANT TO DIE.

VEIDT: YOU WON'T DIE TODAY, BOY. NOT WHILE I HAVE A BREATH IN MY BODY.

VEIDT 2: TONIGHT WE'LL DRINK TO OUR VICTORY IN OUR OWN HOMES, OR IN THE HALLS OF DEAD HEROES.

Panel 6: Veidt pulls out his shining sword, raising it high as he calls to his men.

VEIDT: FOR WISSENBURG! ATTACK!!!!

Page 3

Panel 1: The battle begins as both forces charge into each other with force, weapons flying.

CAPTION: THE BATTLE BEGAN AND I SOON REALISED THAT MY BLINKERED VIEW OF THE GLORIES OF WAR WERE WRONG.

S/FX: CRASH!

Panel 2: Close up of an Orc killing a soldier with a huge, double headed axe.

CAPTION: EVERYWHERE I LOOKED, I SAW BLOOD AND DEATH.

S/FX: THUNK!

SOLDIER: AIIIEEEE---uuggghh

Panel 3: Arty panel. On a hill we see the silhouette of an Orc decapitate a soldier (or as close as you can allow)

CAPTION: SEEN UP CLOSE, I COULD SEE THE RAW ANIMAL STRENGTH OF THESE MALFORMED CREATURES.

Panel 4: A soldier screams whilst an Orc saws into his neck (not shown as explicit, but designed to leave now doubt to the act) with a sharp shield/buckler thing.

CAPTION: WE FEARED THEM – AND THEY HATED US.

SOLDIER: HELP ME! HELP ME!

Panel 5: Werner staggers through the carnage, drum in his hand, arms slack, seemingly untouched as he stares in fear.

CAPTION: I WALKED FOR NO MORE THAN AN HOURL THAT DAY – BUT I AGED A YEAR.

Panel 6: Close up of Werner's wide eyes as he sees something.

CAPTION: AND THEN I SAW IT.

WERNER (SMALL): SIGMAR'S BREATH –

Panel 7: Veidt lays on the floor, pinned by an orc sword. The orc is about to finish him.

CAPTION: CAPTAIN VEIDT HAD FALLEN.

Page 4

Panel 1: Werner charges the orc with only his drum, barrelling into the orc, stopping the killing blow.

WERNER: NOOOOOO!!!
CAPTION: I HAD NO WEAPON. I HAD NO PLAN.

Panel 2: He brings the orc to the floor, scrabbling for a fallen sword as the orc grabs him.

ORC: HNNRRRRRRRR!
WERNER: HNF – HNF-
CAPTION: I HAD NO HOPE. I WAS GOING TO BE KILLED --

Panel 3: The orc looks shocked as Werner rams a sword through his chest.

ORC: GRRRRRWWLLLLL – HHHHRRGG!
WERNER: SHUT UP AND DIE!
S/FX: THUNK!
CAPTION: BUT NOT BY THAT ORC.

Panel 4: Werner runs over to the dying Veidt.

CAPTION: BUT VEIDT WAS BEYOND HELP.
VEIDT: WERNER... I MIGHT HAVE BEEN... WRONG... ABOUT YOU.
WERNER: WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Panel 5: Veidt leans closer.

VEIDT: THEY CANNOT MAKE IT THROUGH THE LINES. AT...ANY COST.
VEIDT 2 (FADING): YOU MUST HOLD...THE...LINE...

Panel 6: Silhouette. Werner kneels beside the body of Veidt, head hung low.

NO CAPTION

Page 5

Panel 1: Werner is rising to his feet as three others, having seen this action are grouping to him.

CAPTION: I HAD KILLED MY FIRST ORC. AND TO OTHERS, THAT MADE ME SPECIAL.

YOUNG SOLDIER: WHAT DO WE DO, SIR?

WERNER: YOU HEARD HIM. WE CAN'T LET THEM WIN. EVERYONE READY YOUR WEAPONS.

Panel 2: The four youngsters stand in the foreground watching the bloody background

WERNER: WE'RE GOING TO FINISH WHAT WE CAME HERE FOR.

CAPTION: IT'S SURVIVAL. YOU STAND CLOSE TO THE ONES WHO LOOK IMMORTAL AND HOPE THEIR LUCK RUBS OFF.

Panel 3: One of the other young recruits looks at Werner in fear.

CAPTION: I HAD DONE THE SAME WITH VEIDT AS THEY NOW DID WITH ME.

RECRUIT: I'M SCARED SIR. I – I DON'T WANT TO DIE.

CAPTION 2: BUT VEIDT WAS DEAD AND I NO LONGER BELIEVED IN LUCK --

Panel 4: Werner places a reassuring hand on the drummer's shoulder.

CAPTION: -- ONLY FATE.

WERNER: YOU WON'T DIE TODAY, BOY. NOT WHILE I HAVE A BREATH IN MY BODY.

WERNER 2: TONIGHT WE'LL DRINK TO OUR VICTORY IN OUR OWN HOMES -

Panel 5: Werner leads the boys into the quite obvious death waiting them.

WERNER: - OR IN THE HALLS OF DEAD HEROES.

CAPTION: *'AND THOUGH I STAND IN BATTLE LINE AWAITING FOR MY DEATH -'*

CAPTION 2: *I'LL HOLD THAT CURSED BATTLELINE UNTIL MY FINAL BREATH.' – SOLDIERS PRAYER*