Magnus The Cautious

The story of Magnus Fon Radavald is not like a life of an imperial noble, nor like a path of a warrior priest of Sunna, many of which burn out heresy across all of Vetia.
Magnus, also called The Cautious, novadays is one of 3 imperial prelates who were entrusted with command of an army by the emperor: he is a prelate-general, and the only priest of Volund to ever receive such honour. Impeccable reputation and a cautious approach to battle and diplomacy allowed His Royal Majesty and the first chancellor to entrust Magnus with difficult and delicate missions across the whole old world. The ascetic way of life and frank reluctance to live in the capital and in the palace have calmed down many aristocrats, who stopped viewing Magnus as a possible rival for attention and love of the Emperor. To the north of the river Folski Magnus is known as a protector, a fair judge and a living saint. And, probably, only the Sunna's priesthood is hostile towards Magnus, which is understandable - a calm and absolutely not fanatical priest of Volund is like an antipode to pompous bishops and zealots of Sunna.

A small town of Radavald is located 90 miles to the north of Folska, and is equally far from three big imperial cities - Ulsberg, Narenvald and Folskagrad. The town lives by trade and craft, dozens of hotels and inns are always full with traders from south and north of the empire, and large deposits of iron discovered to the north-east, closer to the Beast Swamps, have contributed to the development of blacksmithing and weapon production. It's no surprise that the first and only temple in this town is dedicated to Volund, the blacksmith-god. Not belonging to any feudal lord, the town was governed by council and elected elder, basic order and fire control was performed by a small town guard, mostly recruited from the veterans of the imperial militia of Narenvald, settled in Radavald at the end of the draft. No walls, no castle, only a town hall and barracks. And the townspeople had nothing to worry about - it was a hundred leagues to the swamps, the last bandits were trampled by the imperial electoral-cavalry some 20 years ago, and the remains, scattered to the forests, were hunted down by a local militia for the last couple of years.

Magnus was born in Radovald in a family of blacksmith and cooper Ulkas, and spent most of his young life as a blacksmith apprentice and in his father's workshop. His older brother - Brant went to serve the imperial infantry of Folskagrad, but in less than 3 years of service was killed during the siege of a nameless fort of the fire dwarves somewhere to the south of the Barren Mountains - they poured hot tar on him right from the walls. Magnus was sent to serve the priest of Volund. For 5 more years he worked as a blacksmith (as was expected from the priests of this god) and for 2 more has studied texts and rituals, periodically returning to the work in the forge, and was finally initiated into the servants of the cult and received a white-blue mantle of the Volund's priests. His old master soon left this world and Magnus became the abbot of the temple. Maybe he would have stayed there for the rest of his life, but one day they happened...

Invasion of the Beastmen

Hot summer of that year was perceived as a bad omen by the elders. Long showers were succeeded by scorching heat that evaporated moisture from everywhere, clouds of insects flew over flooded lowlands, Beast Swamps have poured over 10 leagues in every direction, to the south river Folske has flooded into a couple of villages and vast wetlands. Old ogre-innkeeper in Radovald, said that the weather has become just like in Sargarik, has quickly packed his possessions, closed his inn "The Ass of the World" and left Radovald to the north. Eastern wind has brought foetid stink of the swamps, followed by the herds of beastmen.

Never before has there been so many, thousands of monsters were moving to the south and west, stomping and burning anything in their path. Dozens of villages and an entire complex of mines were pillaged in 2 days. An entire herd of horselike beastmen has been stomping the fields on the banks of Folska for 3 days already.

Pillars of fire on the horizon have brought terror to Radavald, information from scouts about their origin has panicked the elder of Radavald - he ordered everyone to flee the town. Hunters have reasonably declared that beastmen move faster than humans, and even time spent plundering the town will not allow a caravan of carts, women and children to reach safety. The elder refused to listed and in a quarter of an hour was already in a wagon hastily moving westward(in 5 days his dead body and broken wagon was found 15 leagues to the west). Magnus and Otvald the hunter have convinced most of the town's populace to hide in the only stone building - the temple of Vollund, whose basements were filled with food and wine, and small embrasure windows allowed it's defence. In a couple of hours herds of beastmen have burst into the town and have begun to plunder and destroy it. The siege of the temple has begun.

The battle of Radavald

During the day hundreds of wildgors and mongrels have attempted to break into the temple, storming it three times. Magnuses' hammer has split many skulls, and his armour and robes were plack with blood, but the key was not his courage or hardness of armour, but his ability to call unto his god and bless the arms of the defenders with might and accuracy, their weapons burned with holy fire, and they themselves were endowed with divine protection which diverts even a mortal strike. The town was pillaged, many defenders have fallen, but the herds left to the west. The next day a new wave has reached Radavald, and the temple once again became a place of bloodshed. Again and again wildhorns and centaurs tried to break inside, but were thrown back by Magnus and the defenders, unsuccessful was also an attempt to smoke them out. At the end of the second day the last archers fell in a skirmish with mongrels and the temple was left with less than 20 men to defend it. On the third day the wildhorns and mongrels were joined by minotaurs, giant, gortach and a cyclops. There was no doubt that they would leave no stone standing. Giant has already collapsed a part of the wall when suddenly a sound of cannons firing was heard from the south, and the air was cut by flying rockets - the army of Folskagrad has came to the destroy the beastmen. A couple of rockets and a cannonball of a massive mortar fell on the besiegers, one of the cannonballs has hit the giant in the head, killing him on the spot. Beastmen regrouped and rushed towards the new threat. Magnus and the survivors have watched the course of battle.

The army of Folskagrad was outnumbered, but due to the element of surprise has managed to quickly move in the centre, and marksmanship of the artillery and crossbowmen has almost destroyed the minotaurs. In the meantime the herd was joined by the beastmen commanders on giant chariots who managed to stop the retreating beasts and re-establish control over the herd, after which the centaurs and the chariots have rushed at the imperial shooters, diverting all fire to them and blocking the firing sector - gortach, cyclops and infantry became difficult targets and the imperial artillery made several fruitless volleys. Cyclop hurled a massive stone, turning a group of approaching halberdiers into a bloody mess. The next boulder found its mark in a squad of militia, killing dozens and turning the rest to rout. The situation became critical for the imperial army. Magnus, left without the beasts attention also saw this from a hole in temple's wall. Less than a half-a-hundred ells separated him from a cyclop looking for another boulder to throw at the imperial soldiers. Calling remaining temple defenders to him Magnus, without making any noise, rushed towards the cyclop. Alas, only a few spears penetrated the beast's thick hide, and the monster angrily squashed the small squad. Only a holy word has saved Magnus from a boulder-sized fist, sparing his life and only knocking him down. Picking up a dead minotaur's axe and taking it in both hands, Magnus made a prayer to Volund asking to show the cyclop's weakness, as he rushed towards the monster. Dodging several attacks, Magnus hit the cyclop with all his might and cut its leg in half. With a wild roar the beast fell to the ground, but Magnus kept striking it until it died. Wrath of Magnus and death of a cyclop has scared a group of mongrels so much that they fled the battlefield, followed by a couple of groups

of wildhorns. No longer under fire, the imperial infantry locked shields and began to push back the beastmen. A unit of imperial knight, led by a knight commander has slayed the gortach, and then the beastlord on his chariot. The battle of Radavald was won.

Commander Rehau was very impressed by Magnuse's courage and offered him to join the imperial army as a prelate, and the young priest agreed.

On his majesty's service

After half-a-year service in Folskagrad, during which Magnus learned the military service and basics of tactics, commander Rehau and his knight were called back to a province north of Alfhoven and Ulsberg - Tasland, located on the coast of the Sea of Storms. To the east of the province stood the famous Beacons - fortresses, 2 of which were located in Tasland. The province was constantly under attack by the warriors of the dark gods from the northern wastelands, thus it contained a powerful regiment in addition to the Beacon's garrison. Commander of the field army - marshal Brinhildt, fell in battle against warriors of chaos, he and his griffon were cut by an enormous feldrak. Feldrak was killed by the cannons and the army of chaos was scattered, but the losses were heavy, and to replenish them commander Rehau was sent here. Upon arrival Magnus was placed under the command of theogonist Brazus - priest of Sunna and prelate of the northern field army.

Prealte Brazus was a typical fanatic - he rode an altar, led a mod of fanatics into the thick of battle, vehemently preached and sought out heretics. His mob of fanatics was regularly reinforced due to his active theogonic activity. With no regard of losses he preferred Unerring Strike above any defensive spells. He viewed the priest of Volund as second-class and designated him to an infantry regiment of imperial guard under the command of the armies bannerman Lothar von Richten.

Magnus fit well in the infantry squad. Disciplined and experienced warriors, they relied on their skills, shield formation and a magical altar that always was by their side. Infused with the prayers of Magnus and spells of cosmologer Uttio from Mira, the squad of guardsmen became an anvil, that held and broke their enemies, the cavalry of Rehau was a hammer that finished them off.

Magnus earned the respect of the guardsmen and the bannerman with his modesty, complete absence of fanatizm, military skills, and, of course, his war-prayers. It was he who ignited the weapons of the guard, so they devastated a band of trolls with minimal losses, it was his prayer in unison with the protective magics of Uttio allowed them to cut to pieces two feldraks and a chimera.

Battle of Ranhorn cape

Late spring an enormous flotilla of warriors of Trimferd has landed on Ranhorn cape in northern Tisland. Hundreds of northern barbarians with monsters and demons have plundered surrounding hamlets and began to make its way south. Rehau's army advanced to meet the enemy and occupied flatlands in a semicircle, cutting away the cape from mainland of Tisland. Early spring morning horners of the barbarians have signaled the beginning of a bloody battle. Centre of the imperial positions was, as always, occupied by the guard, right flank was covered by Brazus and his band of fanatics, left flank was occupied by the artillery and the shooters. Behind them stood the knight of Rehau, who had to appear from behind the shooters when the enemy approaches.

Lord of the chosen Tronhir and a daemon prince - the banished herald Hromagus led the army of the dark gods, on the left flank they brought the fallen - warriors who stepped on the path of mutations, the centre was occupied my barbarians with a giant in their ranks, and the right flank was taken by the chosen lord on a daemonic steed, knights and chosen warriors. Before the artillery could open fire the skies darkened an a giant stone fell from the skies, it was Hromagus who summoned the wrath of the gods, despite all efforts of Uttio to stop the spell he failed - the daemon was too strong. The impact shattered the artillery and threw the crossbowmen like toys, and while most of the knights survived the blast, a couple of horses and riders were left to lay on the edge of a crater. Daemonic laughter filled the air, and a unit of chaos knight began to move on Rehau's position.

On the right flank theogonist and the fanatics, seeing the fallen warriors, were overwhelmed with anger and rushed towards the hated mutants, with no regard to the fact that they have taken a position in a ruin. Lothar yelled them to stop but to no avail, battle hunger has already filled their minds. But the holy protection left Brazus, the altar has crashed and flipped in the ruin and the prelate was thrown to the mutants, who ripped him to shreds in a heartbeat. Fanatics clashed with the fallen and fought with no regard of pain or injury, but the speed of monsters and their numbers played their part - the fanatics were killed with no mercy to the last. However the joy of the fallen was not long, sending the reiters and the militia to bait out the barbarians, Lothar von Richten, Magnus and the guardsmen quickly approached the mutants, and with a swift counter-attacks cleared the flank.

In the meantime a fierce fight between commander Rehau and the chosen lord ended. Imbued with inhuman strength and fantastic skill Tronhir has killed the lord-commander, and his knights, while suffering losses, have scattered the remains of the imperial cavalry. Losing both flanks and their commander, the imperial army, except for the guardsmen and the wizard, turned to rout. The guard have locked shields and clashed with the barbarians, knowing that not long until the chosen lord will flank them. The figure of the daemon prince could also be seen behind the barbaric horde.

Magnus knew that the army could only be saved by a miracle. Quickly explaining his plan to the marshal he left the guard and ran to the flipped-over altar. Strength of the blacksmith allowed him to lift the altar and turn it towards the daemon. A short prayer caused a beam of light to

strike the chosen herald in the chest with such force that no protection could defend him from being sent back into the void with a deafening roar.

Shocked, Tronhir has turned his steed towards this new threat, faster, before the next spell strikes him. One more second and he will rip the head off of this upstart. Tronhir did not know that the Brazuse's altar contained a shard of Sunna's mirror, which turns a warriors skill and strength against himself. Brazus bragged a lot about possessing such a powerful and holy artefact, so Magnus knew about it. He quickly took the shard and pointed it at the incoming lord, shouting a challenge. The light reflected by the mirror merely touched Tronhir, when he felt himself weaker and slower. Yet Magnus, on the other hand, moved with incredible speed and dexterity, his muscles were filled with inhuman strength. In a mere minutes Tranhir's breathless body was thrown to the ground. And while the chaos knight observed the death of their lord, Uttio has managed to cast a spell that melted their armour on them, forcing them to die a terrible death. Watching as victory turned to death of their elite, the northerners lost all will to fight, they retreated orderly with almost no panic back to their ships. Saved by a miracle, the guardsmen did not pursue.

For a couple more moth Magnus commanded Rehau's army, he found and returned the runaway soldiers, bolstered the ranks with militiamen and hunters. Marshal Lothar, even though held a higher rank, unconditionally passed the right to command to the young priest. With the arrival of a new general and a corps of halberdiers, Magnus was summoned to the capital for an audience with the emperor.

Prelate-general

During the audience Magnus has told the emperor his story, his words supported by Lothar, Uttio and a couple of surviving sargeants. The emperor granted him the title of imperial general and ordered to collect and train a legion. Magnus chose Radavald as his headquarters, Lothar and Uttio joined him. For 10 years now Magnus serves the crown, and has for many times defended his land from beastmen and orcs, bandits and impudent knights of equitaine, he sought out trails of vampires to the north, besieged and destroyed their lair with the inquisition. Magnus protects his troops and never fights without a reason, earning him a title Cautious. His victories bring glory to the empire, and he is a trusted figure of the emperor.