



Graeme McKellar found his ideal army last year when he saw the newly released Epic Hive War supplement. He now has a swarm of around 8000pts and it frequently battles with the local Ork Warlord (where they find that one thing that the Hive Mind can't absorb is Bolter rounds!). Graeme's Delaque gang is profiting from a convenient deal with the resident Arbitrator (who just happens to be him!).

Having known for a few years now that he only wanted to be a writer, he gathered together some of his best pieces and sent them in to us here at the Journal and then pestered us to death for our comments. After several submissions we found that his worked had steadily improved and the following short story is the result of Graeme's perseverance....

The man glanced from side to side as he hurried across the road. He shielded his cheeks by raising his collars and sunk his head down low behind them. Stopping at the corner suddenly, he turned and looked back down the road. He saw no-one, and quietly stepped back into the shadows.

He had been there a few minutes when the hairs on the back of his neck suddenly straightened. He instinctively went to turn, but a cool voice broke the silence of the night "Don't turn around."

"Sorry," the man apologised behind him, raising his eyes to look away.

"Were you followed?"

"No, no I wasn't," he insisted. "I came the long way..."

"Don't talk" the voice cut him off. "Just listen." Its volume quietened. "I have the information you requested. Word is that the caravan will be heading through the night after next, and there's a whole pile of creds aboard."

"Right, right- the night after next."

"Yeah."

"Whereabouts?"

A pale hand slipped from the shadows, palm upwards with fingers bending and straightening. The man reached into his pockets and dropped a handful of credits into the palm. The fingers closed around them and the hand withdrew into the darkness.

"Passing by Acid Marsh to go on to Fallen Wall. The guards get changed at Acid Marsh- that's where you should hit it."

"Right, thanks." The man stuck his hands into his pockets. "I'll be in touch." He went to move off but a strong arm grabbed his arm.

"No," the voice corrected sternly "I'll contact you."

"Sure, no problem."

"Good. Then I'll be on my way."

The hand slid off his arm and disappeared into the shadows. The man heard boots grind into the dust and a shadow flicked across the ground. He turned towards the far street and bent his head against the wind as he moved off

Around the corner, the Delaque informer stepped into the pale orange light at the doorway. A voice sounded from the shadows behind him "Did you tell him?"

"Yeah I told him. They're going to hit the 'van at Acid Marsh - just like you wanted."

"Good, good. You've done well." A metal pang echoed through the air and some credits spun into the light. The Delaque caught them from the air and slid them into his pocket.

"I do what I can."

"I'll see you around," the voice chuckled.

"No you won't." The Delaque corrected, lifting a shotgun from the folds of his overcoat. Sparks burst from the barrel and the shot echoed around the streets. Something collapsed heavily in the shadows. The Delaque re-slung the weapon and glanced round before moving off to collect his next payment.

Graeme McKellar