

# Ballaume le Brave, Exiled King

by Roland Menskus

*Ecoutez de le roi maudit,  
Un riche homme et fort hardi,  
Mais son regne fut fini,  
Pour sa villainie!*

*Fi, fi, le roi maudit!  
Son nom et temps sont dans l'oubli,  
Fi, fi, le roi maudit!  
Jamais heureux dans toute sa vie!*

*L'Enchanteresse vient à lui,  
Et lui dit: „Vas t'en, ennemi!  
Tu es de la Bretonnie  
Éternellement banni!“*

*Fi, fi, le roi maudit!  
Maudit son nom et gent aussi,  
Fi, fi, le roi maudit!  
Qui, comme on dit, jamais a ri!*

- „The Ballad of the Cursed King“, the only song disparaging a king (!) legal to sing in Bretonnia. Depending on version, the song then either gets incredibly repetitive or incredibly swinish.

The times and origins of Ballaume the Brave are unclear, as the Bretonnian *damnatio memoriae* against his legacy was more than thorough. The only facts that can be considered certain are that Ballaume was once a highly regarded King of Bretonnia, who was spectacularly stripped of rank and title by the then Fay Enchantress and banished from the realm.

Ever since, speculation and myth-making have abounded. Stories have spread about him having been a disguised Skaven, exposed and fled to Skavenblight. Others claim that he yet lives as a penitent hermit in the Border Princes, devoutly awaiting to be called back to Bretonnia to his throne. Yet other tales have

him turning to Chaos, roaming the Northern Wastes as a benighted Champion of Khorne, amassing power until he thinks himself strong enough to take his revenge on the land that threw him out so ignominiously.

The truth, as can be ascertained, is a lot more complicated. Ballaume did indeed leave Bretonnia, accompanied by his brother and standard bearer, Duke Geoffroy. Geoffroy himself is a curious figure, as the purge of his memory has been even more thorough than in the case of his royal sibling. Few of the popular tales acknowledge his existence, and none who know his name can say which dukedom he held at the time. It is not even clear if he was banished too, or just left out of a sense of dogged loyalty, or fear of being targeted next.

Verifiable accounts are also in accordance over the fact that Ballaume swore to not ride a horse again until he had reclaimed his throne, and that he replaced his personal coat-of-arms with a simple device of a crown and scythe - a visualization of his personal motto „*La couronne ou la mort*“. Geoffroy simply bears his brother's Classical monogram as heraldry: „BRB“ = „*Balleamus Rex Bretonniae*“. The exiled king is also said to carry a replica of the Grail of Bretonnia, though it is unclear whether it is a simple keepsake, an enchanted artefact, or an item destined for a much darker purpose. One apocryphal tale, referring to it as the „Chalice of Fate“, claims that it grants Ballaume glimpses into the future, but always at a price which the power inhabiting the vessel will exact at the most inopportune times. But surely, this is only dark gossip.

The pair did definitely try and rally support in expatriate Bretonnian communities in the Border Princes for some years, though with little enough success. In the end, it came down to lack of funds, as even the most loyal supporter can do little enough when faced with an inability to feed and equip an army. Ballaume needed money, vast sums of it. And there was one place where, rumour had it, even the meanest hireling could soon make a fortune to rival the Dwarf Lords of the Everpeak. A haunted ruin of a city in Ostermark, laid to waste by a purportedly divinely ordained disaster...

It is not remotely clear when Ballaume entered Mordheim. While reports of him fighting alongside warbands exist since soon after the cometfall, that does not mean anything, for time in Mordheim does not pass in a manner that anybody but maybe a Lord of Change could understand. Ballaume, whenever his time in the mortal world may have been, could have entered Mordheim decades later, and simply taken a wrong turn that not only took him down a wrong path, but also a wrong time. What is clear is that he and Duke Geoffroy have been hiring out their considerable fighting power and strategic abilities to the highest bidder, forming a network of warbands in their debt (and leaving a trail of dead people who tried to cross them). In truth, Ballaume could already raise a small army with the people who owe him a favour and/or money. Bretonnian adventurers, Imperial mercenaries, Tilean Free Companies, even Dwarves and Elves would (if grudgingly) answer his call. But the exiled king knows he will need more than a small army to tip the scales in his favour if he is going to win back his crown. His objective is no less than amassing a fortune large enough to raise the biggest mercenary army the Old World has ever seen - a daunting task, given how costly maintaining his existing network of contacts has already become. But, his determination nothing short of obsessive, there are few who doubt he could achieve his objective.

But not all is going as planned for the vengeful erstwhile monarch. Indeed, it seems that whenever his objective seems within arms' reach, some obscure power intercedes to just throw him back enough that he remains stuck within Mordheim's walls. But few realize this is actually the case, for there is one power greatly interested in frustrating his efforts.

The terrible truth is that Ballaume could not leave if he wanted to. For too long has he wandered through the torn threads of time of the City of the Damned that he could ever find his back to the events unfurling outside its shattered walls. No mortal ever could... but there are immortals who could. In the void of his arcane cage, Be'Lakor has taken notice of the mighty warrior struggling to return to regal greatness. But not only is it Ballaume's struggling that the Shadowlord has noticed, but a flaw in the mortal's soul; a weakness woven of minute doubts and threads of arrogance (and possibly a few sips too many from the Chalice of Fate). Indeed, it is strong enough for an astute minion of the Ruinous Powers to make the fallen king susceptible to turning to darker causes in his bid for power. It was this flaw that caused the Fay Enchantress to cast him out pre-emptively, as she could not risk having a king of Bretonnia whose loyalty could not be counted upon. It was also this flaw that made Ballaume ignorant of the notion that his banishment was anything other than a wilful display of power from a sorceress seeking to diminish the crown. And it is within this festering bitterness that Be'Lakor hopes to gain a foothold. In the centuries that the king has hacked his way through streets of Mordheim, his fundamental belief in the Lady and Bretonnia has held firm so far. But the Shadowlord is a patient player. Few things make a mortal crack more easily than the thought of having to spend eternity in futile struggle. And who knows what whisperings Ballaume might find himself open to, if he is presented with an offer of power and safe exit from the City of the Damned?

**May be Hired:** Any non-Chaos Human (except Sisters of Sigmar and Witch Hunters), Elf, or Dwarf warband may hire the two.

**Hire Fee:** 120 gold crowns to hire + 35 gold crowns upkeep.

**Rating:** Ballaume and Geoffroy increase the Warband rating by +90 points.

### **Ballaume le Brave, Bretonnian King-in-exile**

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Ballaume	4	5	3	4	3	2	4	2	9

**Weapons/Armour:** Heavy armour, helmet, shield, Tears of Shallya, The Beastslayer of Fronsac, The Chalice of Fate.

**Skills:** *Expert Swordsman, Fearsome, Streetwise, Haggle, Wyrdstone Hunter.*

**The Beastslayer of Fronsac:** *A legendary heirloom of Ballaume's forgotten house, this sword only unleashes its full power in the hands of the one deemed worthy... which Ballaume is not.*

Were Ballaume not a cursed outcast and banished by decree of the Fey Enchantress, this sword would grant him +2 WS, +4 S, an automatic *Master Strike* result on any *Critical Hit* rolls, and *Strike first*. However, with the Blessing of Bretonnia's deity a faint memory to him, the weapon counts as a *Magical* sword that grants a +1 bonus to any *Parry* roll (note that in this case, he can actually block an enemy *To Hit* roll of 6).

**The Chalice of Fate:** *This item, salvaged from cursed Moussillon, is evil, plain and simple. Yes, it grants you rather accurate visions of the future, but whatever gives this chalice its power also has a nasty sense of humour. The fact that Ballaume hasn't realized this (or refuses to acknowledge it) says more about him than the item.*

Whenever Ballaume is not bound in close combat, he may drink from the Chalice of Fate once per turn, granting him one (1) D6 re-roll which he can use at any point. However, for every re-roll that Ballaume uses, the opposing player may force the player controlling Ballaume to re-roll any other D6 roll in the game (except re-rolls); this result cannot be modified in any way and must be accepted. (*Note: Best keep score of how many re-rolls each side has left*)

### **Geoffroy, Duke of the Nameless Dukedom**

Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Geoffroy	4	4	3	4	3	2	4	2	8

**Weapons/Armour:** Heavy armour, helmet, shield, The Banner of the Exile.

**Skills:** *Unstoppable Charge, Resilient, Combat Master.*

**The Banner of the Exile:** *Once the personal pennant of King Ballaume, this fine silken banner has lost nothing of its rallying power... and the spear it is affixed to nothing of its keenness.*

This item combines both the rules of a banner (Friendly warriors within 12" may re-roll any failed „All Alone test“) and a spear (*Strike first*, bearer can only carry a shield or buckler in the other hand) that also counts as *Magical*.

### **SPECIAL RULES**

These special rules apply to both Ballaume and Geoffroy, unless specified otherwise.

**Armour Proficient:** *Few can match the martial prowess of a heavily armoured Bretonnian lord.*

Ballaume and Geoffroy do not suffer any movement penalties for their armour.

**Unbreakable Ties:** *With none to count upon but each other, King Ballaume and Duke Geoffroy are virtually inseparable comrades.*

The two warriors must be hired as a pair and remain within 4" of another. Should either be taken *Out of Action*, the other will stand guard over his fallen comrade. He may either remain immobile or move at half speed (while dragging along the bulk of his slain brother). Either way, the lone guardian may not attack, but will defend himself as normal.

**Doomed To Entropy:** *Whatever strands of time the cursed duo have clung to for guidance in the abominable chaos of Mordheim may have kept them safe from harm, but at a terrible price.*

Ballaume and Geoffroy are immune to any effect from the injury table, curse, special rule, or any other effect that lasts for more than one game. Their equipment can never be permanently lost or stolen (should they suffer any such effect during a game, their gear is returned after the game). However, this also means they can never gain *Experience* or new *Skills*, and may never receive new equipment of any kind. They may also not take part in any scenario set outside the walls of Mordheim, as they are too caught up in its fell twistings and turnings of reality.

**Oath of Penitence:** *As penance, Ballaume denies himself the ultimate status symbol of a Bretonnian knight... though it does little to truly convince him that he may have been in the wrong.*

Ballaume and Geoffroy may never ride a horse. Should a scenario only allow mounted models, the two must miss the game.

**I Might Know Someone:** *Ballaume did not achieve his remarkable success as a major player in the warrens of the City of the Damned without an extensive network of contacts and favours owed.*

Any warband which includes Ballaume may add +1 to any rolls to seek out *Hired Swords/Dramatis Personæ*.

**Outcast:** *It is moot to wonder whether Ballaume has forsaken the Lady, for the Lady certainly has forsaken him and his kin.*

If Ballaume and Geoffroy are part of any Bretonnian warband, they may never benefit from the *Blessing of the Lady*.

**You Owe Me, You Serve Me:** *Ballaume cannot be bartered with when it comes to the sums he demands... and those who try to stop him will be given a harsh reminder of the extent of their folly.*

Should a warband ever fail to pay Ballaume his upkeep, he and Geoffroy will exact their tribute through service, and will stop at little to enforce it. If this happens, the warband leader must immediately roll on the *Injury* chart (re-roll results of „Dead“, „Robbed“, „Bitter Enmity“, „Captured“ and „Sold to the Pits“). Until the total of the upkeep owed is paid, Ballaume counts as the leader of the warband. Note that this may cause a warband to exceed its maximum of heroes. The erstwhile warband leader is treated as a normal hero until Ballaume is paid off.



In the benighted alleys of Mordheim, Ballaume and Geoffroy move forward undaunted.