



BROKEN CROSS

An ITB aftermath

This timeline's purpose is to help a DM wishing to involve his players in the events following the immediate end of ITB. It was designed with a very diverse group of players in mind, for instance said group comprises African cults, and this particularly reflects in the cast of NPCs. With that being said, it can be altered pretty easily.

There are also several hints at events and characters from the following expansions. Beware with theses ones, as it can be very easy to show too much too soon and unveil what should have remained hidden. For example, considering the proximity of Cremant, having the Red Pack come to check on the cloister is not absurd, but it is important to keep Vatenguerre and Bascule away, as their presence in Lucatore could render their next encounter a bit dull, less interesting.

Without further ado, let's roll.

Day of Barghest+1:

The morning after the Psychokynesisist's attack, the people of Lucatore remain in shock. Tens, maybe hundred have perished, devoured by the swarm or burnt alive in the fires that spread around town. Worst, the cloister is no more, the fortress that had stood watch over the town for ages is nothing but a pile of rubbles.

When the players finally descend from Mount Borreo's slopes, the inhabitants of Lucatore roam the city, haggard, distraught. They seek their relatives among the corpses, they've been through hell. It's up to the players to do what they can to provide any help.

At noon, a column of Hellvetic vehicles reaches the western outskirt of Lucatore. An entire company of professional soldiers led by Captain Ivana is deployed in the valley. They provide food and first aid to the people and restore order. But they also want to know what the hell happened there.

Depending on how they introduce themselves to the solders, the players will be interrogated in a more or less friendly manner. The wounded are treated no matter what.

Day +2:

Security is enforced by the Hellvetic. The wounded are tended to, basic needs are provided, but tension arises. The surviving Anabaptists and their families are the target of popular anger. Folks are too tired and too traumatized to riot, but their anger grows. The Flayers were right, the Anabaptists have brought doom upon them, blaming the rightful ruler of this town. They ask for their governor, but he's nowhere to be found.

If the players managed to satisfy Ivana's and Blaise's curiosity, they're free to go as they please. Should they decide to remain in town, they will have to assist the Hellvetic in their peace keeping missions.

A group of Famulancer from Vivaco finally reach the city. The issue is that they're a simple squadron of very young and inexperienced Famulancers. At first, they're unable to assess the situation or to react adequately. If motivated, they may assist the soldiers with the wounded and those infected with the sepsis. The mollusks move from time to time, but Noumenon vocalizers act crazy. The Spitalians are frightened, especially since their leader Carmino has been killed, *or so say the strangers...*

Day+3:

Prime Commando Charcutier has heard the news about Lucatore on the Hellvetics' frequencies, and there's no way he would allow for an aberrant to run amok so close to his training facility, not now, not ever. He intercepts the distress call and dispatches Trancheur and Grâce with a couple of other Preservists from the Red Pack to investigate and take measures if necessary. Extreme prejudice is obviously acceptable.

The Red Pack reaches the city during the day. Trancheur immediately assumes command of the Famulancers' detachment and mobilizes resources to comb the cloister's ruins. Ivana doesn't appreciate his meddling but lets the Preservists do their thing, after all, one of their own is unaccounted for.

Players will be interrogated a second time by the Red Pack, this time more vehemently. The way it ends depends on their will to cooperate.

Tensions keep rising in town, as the departed are buried and grief turns into resentment, brawls erupt between locals and Anabaptists' kin. The Hellvetic proceed to lock the remaining cultists with their relatives in a secured neighborhood, but this is only a temporary solution.

Strange looking individuals show up on the southern path from Cavalese. They vanish before the soldiers can dispatch them.

Day+4:

The Red Pack's investigation of the ruins excavates a chamber where Lucio and several of his guards had managed to survive. They are extracted and placed under surveillance.

Lucio can be questioned as soon as he's out of his surgery. Should a player be candidate for the ranks of the Preservists, he will be put to the test by Trancheur.

Depending on what the players told them, the Preservists can order a quarantine on the Anabaptists before force feeding them EX, or simply banish them from town after seizing all their Elysian oil flasks, or start tracking the burn's source, or simply do nothing. It's all up to the players and their ability to present facts the way they want.

Later in the day, a force of 40 Lombardi soldiers led by Commandante Antonio, the personal commander of Vespaccio's guard, arrive in town. The Hellvetic show some distrust at first, but when they produce a letter bearing the seal of Clan Benesato, the alpine soldiers give them free passage in town. The Lombardi swordsmen quickly spread in the streets and gather the people on the market's place. Here, they announce that Ennio and Gala are safe and sound in Bergamo under the white wolf's protection. They are both recovering from the wounds they received during the attack of maddened Anabaptist, and until their return, Antonio and his guard are given authority on the town and its inhabitants, by Ennio's decree.

The players can intervene to moderate the words of the officer, or not.

The statement further angers those among the people who got convinced by the late Flayers. A mob begins to riot and tries to force its way into the Anabaptist's neighborhood. It demands the Hellvetic all their knowledge in crowd control to prevent any bloodbath.

The Anabaptists fortify their position and prepare to defend their lives dearly.

Day+5

Tensions from the eve are still high. The Lombardi soldiers help rebuild the town with the sappers, but they also spread ill words about the broken cross, further widening the divide within the community.

Ivana, without asking anything to Antonio, orders the evacuation of the Anabaptists to a camp of tents pitched amidst the ascetic farmsteads. The rest of the community attempts to mug them as they empty their homes, but the three-dotted men do not let go down easy and the white-armored soldiers promptly restore order.

Again, the players can intervene to prevent any escalation.

In the early afternoon, as the Anabaptists settle in their camp, Emissary Octavia, leading a war band of nearly twenty Orgiastics and Furors, reaches the battle tower. The Hellvetic guarding the place, sensing trouble, tries to prevent her from entering town, but the strong-willed woman cannot take no for an answer. As she enters the city, a scuffle almost immediately explodes between her followers and the Lombardi guards. Once more, the Hellvetic must prevent more violence, but they barely manage to save lives this time.

Angered, Ivana expulses the Emissary from town and orders her first adjutant to watch over the camp.

It's up to the players to reach out for the Emissary and try to cool down things. However, depending on what they revealed to the Spitalian, they might intervene to hasten the Emissary's departure.

As sun sets, things calm down a bit but the Emissary is ready to take the city back, by force if necessary, and begins to plan her attack.

Day+6:

Octavia demands that those of her people still under Spitalian's scrutiny are handed over to her as quickly as possible. The Red Pack, having no further use of the Anabaptists, gives in to her request. Lucio is immediately arrested to be questioned, being the highest ranked still alive, he's held responsible for the fiasco that happened.

If nothing new is brought to their attention, at the end of the day, the Red Pack stops its exploration of the ruins and departs from the valley in the evening. Trancheur deems their number too thin to track down Barghest, but he will bring back the information about the Psychokynesis to his Commando Prime who will undoubtedly order a hunt.

If a player has checked the requirements to become a Preservist, and depending on his behavior (absolutely ruthless vs. cautious and thoughtful) Trancheur and Grâce will lead him to Crémant to receive his training and new instructions, or send him to Arnsberg with a recommendation. He may not have what it takes to join the Red Pack but still survived Barghest...

After the Preservists' leaving, brawls begin to erupt at the city's gates between Anabaptists' muscles and the rest of the locals assisted by the Lombardi. Soon enough, the scuffles spread beyond those friction points and the Hellvetic are too stretched thin to quell all the fighting.

If nobody is to die, the players have to step in and separate the brawlers. They won't avoid people from getting hurt and wounded, but as long as nobody dies, the point of no return won't be reached.

It's also up to them to convince the Emissary to stop the aggression, should they fail they'll have to intervene on a regular basis and assist the Hellvetic in stopping any other strife until the arrival of Ennio and the end of the deadlock.

The situation remains extremely tense for the upcoming days, it's even possible people from one or the other faction will die during the infighting.

Day+10:

Ennio returns to town, accompanied by Gala and 30 more guards from the best swordsmen Vespaccio could muster to escort his daughter and son-in-law to be. The crowd gathers in the street and cheer for the old man. In this time of hardship, the name Benesato resonates as an unbreakable stone upon which order could very well be restored.

The Ancient calls for a meeting in his house of all the factions' leaders still present in the valley. He softly, and with great sorrow, expresses his wishes. Still being governor, and with the backup of his father-in-law elite soldiers, his word is command in this town.

The players having supported him and earned his trust during the events of ITB, they're invited to attend to the discussions, and they're welcome to intervene as long as they don't undermine his authority. Should they do so, they'll be gently but firmly asked to step out the debate. Of their involvement results not the outcome but how it unfolds, meaning things end up more or less violently and orderly.

No matter what happens in House Benesato, the Anabaptists and all those related to them by blood are banished from Lucatore forever. Octavia fulminates, but she's outnumbered and outgunned, and she knows better than to sacrifice women and children for a lost cause. She organizes the exodus of her people. Two groups form, those wishing to remain in Purgare who will go with her to Santiago or to Cruces, and the others who will traverse the Alps to go back to Borca, carrying with them Lucio as a disgraced prisoner.

Depending on the actions of the players, the Rust Falcons will choose to strike the caravans during the exodus, abduct and kill those of Lucatore's Anabaptists who used to work in the cloister and bury them in a mass grave in the Lombard Bog.

The players are welcomed to stay as long as they wish and Bergamo's gates are wide opened to them.

Day+21:

The majority of the Hellvetic's company departs from Lucatore, leaving only a platoon led by Hans behind to ensure a smooth transition with the Lombardi, the new de facto rulers.

Things that can happen anytime, depending on the needs of the GM or the actions of the players

The Rat, a mean and vicious Scrapper Alpha, leads his band to Lucatore and starts digging around aggressively. His people are no good and trigger a lot of strife in town. Making them leave will not be easy.

Rachid Ibn Mahmoud, the Neolibyan cult's ambassador to the Lombardi clan and administrator of Bergamo's concession, is a sharp diplomat but not a very business oriented mind. Having him expand the concession by investing in Lucatore will demand wits from anyone trying to convince him, and a very keen mind to persuade his principal manager, Aïcha, not to fly solo and under his radar on this affair.

The Manteufel family, a powerful Advocate family from Justitian, dreams of expanding its influence, the Advocate way. To this end, the family leaders dispatched one of their more promising offspring to Bergamo in order to negotiate a treaty, or better yet, an alliance, with Vespaccio himself. Escorting this young prodigy is the family's reliable black sheep, one that proved more skillful with a hammer than with the codex, his cousin Ulrich Manteufel, a young Protector. After Ulrich completes his mission by reaching Bergamo, the echoes of Lucatore's events might trigger his curiosity, especially if another Judge was involved...

Merenptah, Bergamo's embalmer might find an interest in the Elysian garden exceptional seeds.