



A Guide to the Border Principedom of

El Valle

Eterno

By James Sparrow

Credits and Further Reading

James Sparrow is the somewhat transparent pseudonym of a regular contributor to Warpstone, the unofficial fanzine for WFRP. Unlike his alter ego, Sparrow has been a schoolboy genius, an immortal time-traveller, a freelance investigative science journalist, and squire to a female knight. He has also written controversial guides to werewolf tribes, and unflattering comparisons between vampire clans and the contemporary Order of Hermes.

Border Princes map by Andy Law.

More info on the Border Princes can be found in the Orfeo and Broken Lance novels by the Black Library. Renegade Crowns is the WFRP sourcebook for the Border Princes by Black Industries.

Creating a setting for a campaign is not easy, even if you're describing just one small portion of the Old World. There is any number of ways you might make the task easier, but El Valle Eterno was created taking a very relaxed approach. I decided to spend no more than an hour each evening writing about one particular aspect of the setting. I'd aim for about 500 words – if I wrote more, fantastic, if I wrote less, then I wouldn't worry about it. When I began, the only aspects I had in mind were the prince and the geography, having decided these were vital to defining the setting. After that, I just let what I'd written previously suggest to me what to write about next. Once you start, one idea can often lead to another. I didn't worry about writing well, just on getting ideas down.

If you want to create your own border principedom, I'd suggest a similar approach, first asking yourself about the nature of the prince and the land. Keep yourself focused on elements the PCs are mostly likely to face in the short or longer term. For example, you might get a kick out of statting your prince in great detail, but if your PCs are unlikely to meet him then you're wasting time better spent noting improvements he's made to the roads. That might seem boring, but PCs are initially more likely to meet surly labourers laying stones than to take tea with the prince.

*If you find yourself getting stuck, **Renegade Crowns** does a good job of highlighting the sorts of subjects you need to address, as well as providing specific ideas you can take advantage of.*

An Introduction to El Valle Eterno

El Valle de la Vida y de la Prosperidad Eternas (usually just called El Valle Eterno) is one of the rarer examples of the Border Principedoms in that it has been relatively stable for almost two centuries. In part, this is because the region's current Prince is one Felipe Lopez, a vampire of Estalian origin whose wisdom and experience far surpasses most men. Also, Felipe has shown considerable ruthlessness in the two centuries of his reign, but he has mainly directed his cruelty towards his enemies, rather than the mortals who inhabit and support his Principedom. Felipe's leadership, economic wisdom and the protection he has given from external threats has benefited El Valle Eterno and its people, and they have long supported him, even to the extent of providing him with their own blood.

At least that was true up until about two years ago. Felipe made the most foolish mistake any Prince can make in the Borders: he trusted someone. Ever since he first arrived in El Valle Eterno, Felipe was accompanied and served by an Estalian family, the Morenos. As one generation of Morenos grew old and died, the children took on the roles of their parents, their aunts, their uncles.

After being served so loyally by one generation after the other, Felipe simply became complacent in this one small but vital aspect of his unlife. After he drank a glass of aromatic Tilean wine laced not just with the usual blood, but also powdered warpstone and ground silver in a garlic base, it's hard to say whether he was destroyed by the utter shock of this betrayal or the life-giving blood which was suddenly vomited violently out of every bodily orifice.

The architect of the betrayal was Genoveva Moreno, Felipe's right hand woman for more than quarter of a century. Genoveva's motive was ultimately jealousy. After serving loyally for so long and as head of the family Moreno, Genoveva was hurt and insulted when Felipe became enamoured of a Tilean beauty and chose her to be the first person he ever turned into vampire. Genoveva was insulted as a Moreno, but more significantly hurt personally as a woman who had served her lord with unswerving devotion and affection.

For the last two years since this betrayal, Genoveva has secretly ruled in her former master's stead, supported (if only through necessity) by a cabal within the family Moreno who know the terrible secret. She and the family Moreno have used their long-standing position as Felipe's loyal lieutenants, along with various other deceptions, to hide the fact that El Valle Eterno's vampire prince is truly dead. However, there have been slips, stories have circulated, and certain political and tactical decisions have given El Valle Eterno's two neighbouring princes cause to wonder if all is as it has always been in Eye's Needle Castle. It can surely be only a matter of time before the truth is uncovered.

Geography

El Valle Eterno is dominated by the river that snakes its way roughly from the northeast to the southwest, flowing south towards the Black Gulf. It is wide enough and sufficiently deep for two river barges to pass each other comfortably and allow smaller craft to pass between and around them. Surrounding the river is a broad fertile plain where a number of small towns, villages and farmsteads are the basis of El Valle Eterno's successful agricultural economy.

The western and eastern borders of El Valle Eterno are protected by high ridges of hard but heavily fractured rock, lightly forested with fruit-bearing trees and shrubs. The fracturing of both ridges creates many channels and passes through them, but the twists and turns and the ups and downs of these meandering routes means it can take at least a couple of days to pass from one side to the other even along the best routes. These latter passes are guarded by watchtowers, protecting traders travelling to and from El Valle Eterno from bandits and worse hiding in the rock, and protecting El Valle Eterno itself from external aggression.

At the southern border of El Valle Eterno, the land dips into an expansive hollow, a marshy region known as Umidità Nasty, and considered too unpleasant for human expansion. This is not to say there is no life there: a tribe of Goblins and an elusive tribe of ghostly swamp beasts fight to control this pathetic region and claim it as a principedom. These and other beasts have never been considered much of a threat to El Valle Eterno, but early in his reign Felipe Lopez ordered the construction of a simple deterrent: a fence of heavy wooden spikes angled at 45 degree, facing towards the marshes. This palisade is a minor deterrent to an envious prince daring enough to send his troops through dangerous swampland for a serious attack, but it serves to discourage casual raiding and curious marshland monsters.

Coralina has spent the last two years in hiding, moving from place to place. She has stayed in Water Guard and Wood Watch, and in parts of El Ojo where Genoveva and other seniors Morenos rarely, if ever, visit. Coralina has watched as the Morenos have cleverly concealed Felipe's absence using disguise and misdirection. She admires Genoveva's efforts, but of course this will not stop her wreaking her revenge when the time is right. Coralina has spent two years alone, grieving for the loss of her other half and her lover, learning to survive in secret, discovering and developing her powers. Now, she's ready to start planning. (GMs might begin a campaign where the PCs start hearing rumours about a vampire moving around El Valle Eterno, later actively hunting it, and eventually discovering Coralina, perhaps becoming part of her conspiracy.)

Coralina Carella is likely to be a major player in any campaign set in El Valle Eterno. It may well be that the principedom's external enemies and rivals will be the most obvious challenges, but Coralina will always be there working in the background. Her primary goal is vengeance against Genoveva Moreno, and those who knowingly aided and supported her in the murders of Felipe and Caterina. Her fury is lessened towards those Moreno's who supported Genoveva after discovering what she had done – Coralina understands the need to maintain the lie in order to protect El Valle Eterno (at least for now). She also bears no grudge against the wider family Moreno, most of which knows nothing at all after Felipe's murder. What's more, Coralina knows that in order to achieve her second goal – taking over where Felipe left off – she'll need the support of the Moreno family.

If El Valle Eterno is faced with attack from beyond its borders, Coralina is not in a position to start leading El Valle Eterno in defence. However, she will use her abilities and recruit agents (PCs?) to discover what El Valle Eterno's enemies are planning, and attempt to stop or limit their efforts. If the situation becomes desperate, she may attempt something more public in an effort to rally the principedom. However, Genoveva Moreno's response is not likely to be positive, and Coralina has no proof of who she is – she could just be another vampire on the make. At the very least, Coralina would have to recruit at least one of the other senior Morenos and get him or her to condemn Genoveva and confirm her status.

Coralina still has the ashes she collected of Felipe and Caterina. It's more of a dream than a goal, but Coralina hopes she might find some magical ritual that could restore the ashes to life, or at least undeath. She knows vampires are renowned for their ability to cheat death, so she doesn't think it is outside the realms of possibility. If the GM decides to create a campaign where El Valle Eterno is slowly torn apart by attack by other princes, and/or civil war if Coralina goes public and challenges Genoveva, especially following the revelation that Felipe is dead, then the PCs could become important in any plot involving the discovery of a ritual, and its ingredients, to restore Felipe to undeath.

Defending the river just within the borders of the marsh is Water Guard, which takes the simple form of two walled semicircles either side of the river. Water Guard serves to defend El Valle Eterno from enemies travelling by boat. Key to its defence are the fire catapults – the prospect of being burned alive on troop ships has a marvellously discouraging effect on enemy soldiers. Any attempt at attacking El Valle Eterno by river from the south would require the catapult towers to be disabled. The river entrance and exit to Water Guard can be closed by raising huge heavy nets that span the river – heavy weights descending rapidly raise the nets, horse-power raises the weights to lower them again. Dealing with this mechanism would also be necessary to make any invading ship less vulnerable to fire catapult and more conventional assaults by defenders.

The northern boundary of El Valle Eterno is heavily forested. Over the last two centuries, its edge has gradually crept further north, as trees are felled for construction, fuel and a small logging industry. Throughout the Princes there are areas sparse in trees, so there is a demand for timber, as well as large finished wooden items built to order, such as battering rams, catapults, trebuchets, and heavy wooden castle doors. El Valle Eterno's engineers have become well known in their corner of the Border Princes.

At the heart of El Valle Eterno is El Ojo en el Agua, or just El Ojo. El Ojo is the largest town and capital of El Valle Eterno, and it rests mightily on a prominent rocky island around with the river bulges, the iris of an open watery eye. High-walled, with extensive docks on either side (western side for south-bound ship, eastern for north-bound), this is the political and economic hub of the principedom. At its centre lies Eye's Needle Castle, the home of the vampire prince, Felipe Lopez.

Inhabitants of El Valle Eterno

The people of El Valle Eterno are predominantly humans of Tilean or Estalian origin. Prior to Felipe Lopez's take-over two centuries ago, the valley had been centre stage for conflict between various Tilean princes and their followers. However, after Felipe dispatched the main protagonists he and his followers (the extended Moreno family and disciplined Myrmdian mercenaries) treated the Tilean peasantry and soldiery with considerable decency. After a few months of initial wariness and some Tileans fleeing with their families, the remaining people realised things might be better with a vampire for a prince after all. Very quickly, Felipe had a fairly loyal population, and he absorbed much of the existing Tilean military into his own.

Over the years, an increasing number of Estalians have come to El Valle Eterno seeking new lives. The presence of the Moreno family and an Estalian prince (even if he was a vampire) was part of the attraction in the early decades of Felipe's rule. Today the fairly even mix of Estalian and Tilean cultures makes the principedom attractive to those folk of both nations who feel the need to move to another land for whatever reason.

The mixing of people has led to a mixing of cultures, with food, festivals and language blurring together to varying degrees. Inter-marriage is common, with the result that many families are called Moreno, due to the Moreno family's insistence that men marrying Moreno women change their names rather the other way round. This has had

the beneficial effect that whilst the Moreno family is still associated with Felipe's rule, they are not seen as privileged minority.

Other nations are not heavily represented in El Valle Eterno, although there is a small Bretonnian presence in the north of the princedom. These Bretonnians are mostly the descendents of a large band of Herrimaunts who left their homeland about fifty years ago, despairing of ever bringing change to their homeland. Felipe Lopez accepted their presence, offering them a village that had been depopulated by a large flock of harpies, on the condition they dealt with the winged fiends. Impressed with their bow skills, Felipe further charged them with improving the defences of the northern border. Today, Bretonnian archers commonly man the northern watchtowers.

El Valle Eterno has few settled non-humans aside from Halflings, who are mostly farmers. Most Dwarves care little to visit a land ruled by an undead blood-sucker, although the more adventurous or financially pragmatic pass through El Ojo often enough. There are rumours of Elves in the northern woods, but then there are *always* rumours of Elves in the woods; it comes with the territory. Nevertheless, the foresters have a tradition of marking any tree they plan to cut down with a red cross – if the red cross has vanished by the following morning, then the tree is left alone (though it is uncommon for such a cross to vanish). Although the edge of the woods has moved slowly north, foresters have made the effort to replant trees, knowing the woods represent both defence and valuable resource. In addition to rumours of Elves, there are also rumours of Gnomes living in hidden caves and tunnels within the rocky ridges on the east and west flanks of the princedom. Most of the stories come from merchant caravans passing through the channels of the ridges, and usually involve the theft of small items from wagons or small figures darting out of sight.

Probably uniquely in the Border Princes, El Valle Eterno has a small tourist industry, catering almost entirely to the wealthier citizens of the Old World. A small stream of nobles, from the bored to the jaded to the curious and scholarly travel, usually by river to visit, El Ojo, more commonly referred to by the visitors as the City of the Vampires. Such visitors may be disappointed to discover that there are not really vampires on every corner, but bawds are happy to take them round the sites of many alleged bloody atrocities (curiously taking place most often in taverns and brothels). Many noble tourists return home with excited, whispered tales of their almost fatal encounters. Along with tourists, foreign merchants, mercenaries and adventurers are commonly met passing through El Ojo.

Other vampires, undead and necromancers have never been welcome El Valle Eterno. Felipe Lopez made that very plain, often very personally.

Military Matters in El Valle Eterno

The best and blindingly obvious defence of El Valle Eterno has always been the landscape that borders it: forest to north, swamp to south, and the high rocky rides on the eastern and western flanks. When Felipe Lopez deposed the would-be princes fighting for control of the land two hundred years ago, he did not wage conventional warfare, recognising that trying to get an army through the defences would cost lives he

purposes, treat it as a raven. However, it is limited to low flying, and can only fly for two rounds before it must land; it cannot fly again for another two rounds. Treat it as having the Iron Hard Skin mutation all over its body (+3AP everywhere).

PCs can capture the chicken by beating it up or catching it in some sort of trap, possibly involving a net or a basket (perhaps Old Jorg's fruit basket) propped up with a stick that can be pulled away with string. Beating it up is liable to damage it – drop this hint to the players to force them to look for more ingenious and amusing schemes. Additional complications are NPC adventurers and the possible arrival of a highly aggressive iron cockerel (higher WS, S and T). If you want to develop the scenario, then the rumours of Gnomes in the rock ridges turn out to be true. The iron chicken is an invention of theirs. It escaped, and they'd really rather have it back, please. Or else.

A further complication can arise, which can be introduced at any time, but if the PCs are working for Gustavo the Chef then wait until they give him the chicken. The complication is this: the chicken lays eggs. Iron eggs. When you crack them, they go boom. Suddenly, the chicken has military applications, and angry people with swords pop up everywhere wanting it for their own purposes. The family Moreno also takes an interest.

Meanwhile, Old Jorg wants to know where his fruit basket is, and he's not accepting any excuses.

Vengeance and Restoration

Let's go back to the beginning.

This started with jealousy and murder. Felipe Lopez was poisoned by his most trusted servant, Genoveva Moreno, because he chose to vampirise and take as his bride a young Tilean woman. The bride-to-be's name was Caterina Carella, and she was brutally destroyed in her private chambers by Genoveva and a few of her most trusted Moreno brethren shortly after Felipe was killed. Still young as both human and vampire, Caterina was no match for the Morenos, who knew exactly how to deal with a vampire.

However, there is a twist to this tale. One thing Felipe never told any Moreno was that he had not taken just one bride to share his long life in El Valle Eterno, but two. Caterina had a twin sister, Coralina, and Felipe decided that the twins would become as one person. Save when the three of them were alone together, one of the sisters would always stay hidden, out of the public's gaze, secret even from the Morenos. Perhaps this was nothing more than an idle amusement for a jaded vampire; perhaps he had other plans, but Felipe never explained to either twin.

The consequence of this was that Genoveva Moreno unknowingly left a loose end. Coralina Carella watched from a hiding place as her sister was impaled and hacked to death in a bloody attack, fleeing her and her sister's chambers as soon as she could. She did not flee far, however, but watched to see how the traitors would dispose of the two vampires' corpses. Eventually, both bodies were taken to a small secluded courtyard normally used to deal with those unfortunates who 'had supper' with Felipe. Here they were burnt, their ashes left to the winds. However, Carolina made sure to gather a quantity of the ashes of each before she fled from Eye's Needle Castle.

A Spot of Chaos

As with just about anywhere else in the Warhammer World, El Valle Eterno is occasionally touched by Chaos. This is one of the stranger incidents that PCs might become embroiled in.

Attack of the Iron Chicken!

There is a town just inside the western border, sitting by the opening to one of the main passes through the rocky ridge. It is built for defence and commerce, with barracks and watch towers, alongside stabling, markets, warehouses and inns. It is busy and friendly, and a good base of operations for PCs.

The possibility of adventure begins when Old Jorg staggers into town, blood dripping from numerous small wounds. As the venerable but wiry old fellow is revived and his wounds are dabbed stingingly by young women (strong alcohol is involved in both cases), he relates his tale of terror. Old Jorg, it seems, was out up on the ridges collecting fruit. He will take the time to explain about the jam he was planning to make, much to the frustration of those who want him to get on with his story, but Old Jorg won't be rushed. Eventually, after describing his tortuous journey through paths crooked and narrow to where the best fruit trees grow, he will describe being attacked by a monstrous metal bird! "What sort of bird," a girl asks (or a PC asks). "A chicken," says Old Jorg. At the first snigger (perhaps a PC), Old Jorg eyes the culprit and says, "And it was ten feet tall, with eyes like fire!" And to stifle anymore giggling, he reaches into his pocket and pulls out a shiny metal feather, so lifelike that individual barbs can be ruffled out of alignment.

If the PCs don't immediately set out on the trail of the metal bird of their own volition, then NPCs will start hiring them or other adventurers, offering cash on delivery. Gustavo the Chef wants the chicken either live for its eggs or dead as a table decoration (the former condition pays considerably more). The Extraordinary Vivaldi wants the live chicken for his travelling carnival. Renowned scholar (in his own head, anyway) Ludovic Derwin (nephew of the genuinely renowned Claus Derwin of Marienburg) wants the chicken to study for his 'definitive' work on the flora and fauna of the Border Princes. If the PCs are hired by any one of these three, they will be in a race to catch the chicken with adventurers working for the other two.

Anyone asking can get needlessly detailed and long-winded directions from Old Jorg, who will also ask them to bring back his big fruit basket for him (and the fruit, too).

The journey through the narrows and slopes of the rock ridge will be difficult and tiring. No doubt at least one of the other groups of adventurers will try to bump off the PCs, although they might be sensible enough to wait until the PCs have caught the chicken and then nick it off them (the PCs might think of this approach themselves).

When they first catch sight of it, Jorg's ten feet tall chicken is in fact a normal sized chicken pecking about in the dust. It is, however, made of metal just as described, and very, very lifelike. It can fly, and will do so just when the PCs start getting close. However, because it's made of metal, it's heavy and gets tired easily. For rules

would need later to consolidate control. Instead he became an enemy within, infiltrating members of the Moreno family into key positions, bribing opposing mercenaries, and making sure loyal courtiers vanished, until he was in a position to easily assassinate his rivals.

However, despite being acutely aware that the most serious threats to his rule came from his enemies' spies and assassins rather than their armies, Felipe was never complacent when it came to border defences. Key elements on all borders are fortified watch towers, all bearing signal pyres ready to be lit at a moment's notice. All are manned with archers and soldiers barracked within the body of the towers. Watch towers overseeing the northern forest and southern swamp also have stabling for light cavalry. (Actual troop numbers are up to GMs, who will have different in-game needs, as well as personal opinions.) On the flanking ridges, there is a line of watch towers running north to south, but on key passes through them between El Valle Eterno and the outside world there are watch towers following the twisting paths to guard and protect them.

Water Guard, protecting the river on the southern border, has already been mentioned. Its twin, Wood Watch, is found at the northern border, and also relies on fire catapults and strong nets. A key difference between the two is that Wood Watch's ability to see potentially invading troops is limited by trees. Consequently, Wood Watch's commander sends far more patrols into the forest than her equivalent in Water Guard sends into the more easily observed swamps. Both Water Guard and Wood Watch have barracks and stabling for archers, soldiers and light cavalry.

El Ojo, as the capital of the principedom, is well defended. Clearly, it benefits enormously from being on an island, but beyond the docks built around the edges it has high stone walls, with towers mounted with stone and fire catapults. Enemy troops would have to land on the docks by ship, concentrating them and making them highly vulnerable to attack from above.

El Valle Eterno relies very little on foreign mercenaries. Felipe Lopez knew from his own activities how unreliable such men and women could be. Instead, he relies on troops recruited and trained within El Valle Eterno. Many troops are part-timers, perhaps serving on the watch towers or on patrols for a night or a day before returning to their families. Perhaps such people are not the most highly trained or as experienced, but at the same time they know well that the Border Princes have a very personal stake in maintaining the principedom's security. Full-time troops and the more trusted Myrmidian mercenaries serve alongside the volunteers and it is hoped that attitudes and experience rub off on each other.

No other prince has made an overt attempt to attack El Valle Eterno for a long, long time. In order to maintain troop fitness, Felipe has his military commanders conduct regular war-games. These have focused on combating guerrilla tactics, such as defending the watch towers or fighting in the passes. Wooden swords and padded arrows are clumsy practice weapons, but allow for some measure of safe realism. For more serious practice, troops periodically venture forth to challenge the goblins and other beasts of the southern swamp.

Felipe Lopez has never shown any inclination to challenge for territory beyond his borders, seemingly content to ensure the security and prosperity of El Valle Eterno. However, the resources and economic success of his principedom makes it a very tempting prospect to surrounding princes. Most realise a direct assault is unlikely to succeed, at least not in the initial stages of any campaign, and have spent more time attempting to infiltrate the Moreno family and on espionage.

Economical Matters and Others

The people of El Valle Eterno are very money-minded. Their continued security and way of life are as much dependent on gold as their strong borders and vampire prince. The majority of the population are farmers or farm labourers. Their first aim is produce enough food to see their families and immediate communities well-fed. Their second aim is to produce enough food to see that other citizens of El Valle Eterno are well-fed, charging a fair price for it. Their third but no less important aim is to produce enough food that can be sold to markets beyond the principedom, charging whatever the market will let them get away with.

To some extent, El Valle Eterno is the breadbasket of its small area of the Border Princes. With so many of the other principedoms in a near perpetual state of conflict, food production is unreliable at best, with farms and fields burned, farmers and their families killed or driven away by their current prince's enemies. Troops need to be fed if there is any hope of victory, and post-victory looting and pillage uses up a conquered principedom's stored resources fast. Food has to come from somewhere, and El Valle Eterno aims to oblige.

El Valle Eterno is a major exporter of preserved foods, such as salted meat and fish, pickled eggs and vegetables, and a blended campaign biscuit of a standard almost unheard of elsewhere. Genuine El Valle Eterno wax seals on products have a good reputation in the Border Princes, one that is starting to spread elsewhere in the Old World. In fact, those taking ship to and from Marienburg are quite likely to find themselves eating El Valle Eterno Ship-Board Vittles. However, the wax seal used as a standard of quality bears a fanged mouth, and this has led to a couple of incidents in the Empire where witch-hunters have burned out ship-holds or accused those who ate any of the foods of turning into vampires.

Due to its preservation industry, EL Valle Eterno imports a significant amount of salt. A few years ago, the workers at one of the salt warehouses in El Ojo became heroes when they successfully dealt with a gigantic mutant slug that burst from the hold of ship one wet day in late summer (although there were always rumours of a mass of eggs seen bursting from its body and floating down river).

In parts of the south, large orchards of various types are mixed with a great many bee-hives, producing fruit, jams and honey. Unsurprisingly, wine, cider and mead are also made. Much of the wine stays in El Valle Eterno, with more of the cider and mead exported.

El Ojo's reputation as 'city of vampires' has already been mentioned with regard to tourism and the Old World's thrill-seeking nobility. However, the city attracts tourists

from closer to home, having become a small bastion of culture and civilisation in a land otherwise torn by war. When not actively embroiled in conflict, princes, would-be princes and anyone with a few crowns to rub together can visit El Ojo's (small) opera house, its two theatres or its concert hall (which also holds dances). While it may not be able to compete with the great cities of the Old World, Felipe Lopez, as a cultured Estalian vampire, made sure that there was some sort of civilising influence in his capital. Also, it meant that princes, rivals and otherwise, would be tempted to visit in order to plot with one another in an environment Felipe could have his agents spy on and manipulate. And, what's more, he could charge them for the privilege.

Elo Ojo is also a recruitment centre, with princes come to make deals with mercenary captains. Mercenaries also travel both ways along the river to get to other principedoms. However, despite the money that can be made from them, Felipe has always remained wary of mercenaries, and his laws tightly control their movements. Ships carrying mercenaries are recorded by Wood Watch and Water Guard, and word dispatched to their opposite number and El Ojo, and their progress observed. At Wood Watch, Water Guard and El Ojo, only a mercenary band's captain and up to four bodyguards are permitted off ship (for business dealings), although obviously this is relaxed for mercenaries who have been hired by Felipe for El Valle Eterno's defences (and these are usually Myrmidian mercenaries or those with a reputation for honour). Despite these restrictions, El Valle Eterno has found a way to get any loose change out of the pockets of mercenaries on passing ships. There are two points in the river, one north and one south of El Ojo, where the river bulges. Here can be found several large barges moored in the middle of the river. Mercenaries can leave their ships here to take advantage of all the sorts of entertainments mercenaries generally enjoy, without ever getting onto land. Weapons are not permitted and ogre bouncers, as well as archers in watch towers, keep control.

Crime, Felipe Lopez decided, is inevitable, part of the human condition. For that reason, he decided he better be the one controlling it in El Valle Eterno, and more specifically El Ojo. He handed the task to the Moreno family, with strict instructions on the limits of what was acceptable and what wasn't. In general, this means the people of El Valle Eterno are not to be taken advantage of more than they can cope with and be protected from their own worst inclinations where necessary, but foreigners are fair game, but should not be discouraged or inclined to discourage others from bring their money to the principedom. The branch of the family dealing with matters of criminality are known as the Black Moreno's, and are known for ruthlessly dealing with unauthorised criminal activity. Natives of El Valle Eterno are discouraged verbally or recruited; non-natives beaten up or have their knees smashed if they don't take the hint; and it is well known that persistent troublemakers 'have supper with the prince' as the euphemism goes. Of course, there is no prince now, although troublemakers still go to supper with him if only for the sake of appearances. A GM might use the discovery of the body of someone said to have gone to supper, still full of congealed blood, as a way of indicating that the vampire prince of El Valle Eterno seems to have lost his appetite.