

Josef Stransky

Baron of Brulefer

AC 1014

By Michael Berry

“Lucky I'm sane after all I've been through. I can't complain but sometimes I still do life's been good to me so far”

I. Appearance

Josef Stransky is rather plain looking but with an impressive physical physique. Never a slave to fashion he feels more comfortable in adventurers or hunting garb than fine robes. Stransky is a lover of the outdoors and nature who makes a point to keep himself in shape with jogs through the Glantrian countryside. His dark hair is kept short and his most remarkable feature are his piercing eyes which give make many uneasy when locked in a debate or discussion with him.

II. Personality & Quirks

A happy and content man is Josef Stransky. Successful in all the endeavors he has undertaken yet not possessed to push his abilities past their limit. Josef has a jovial nature in contrast to what many might think his stern Hattian upbringing might have led him to have. Even while on a dangerous hunt, a passionate debate, or over a card game with a fortune on the table he always has a pleasant demeanor and an unshakeable calmness to him.

When angered the only physical warning before a deluge of deadly spells is unleashed is in his eyes which have been said to appear black and soulless. Thankfully it really takes a lot to make Stransky lose his temper. Stransky is generally well thought of by his fellow wizards as an honorable man but not one easily duped and with enough proven magical ability to make one sorry if they tried. Josef only counts a select few as friends but for those people he would do anything in his power to help, and he expects the same in return. For everyone else he is an approachable and friendly wizard who always seems to be happy with his life. He is content with what he has because his life has not been an easy one and in his mind, the good life he now leads was earned many times over.

III. History & Background

Josef was born in AC 981 the third child of Anselm Stransky and Bettina Kresemer in the Aalbanese village of Baylingen. His father was a proud former member of Jaggar's Division who fought bravely and received the Iron Cross for bravery at the Battle of Two Mountains where Jaggar routed a humanoid force three times the size of his Glantrian force. After retiring from the army Anselm returned to his village and married his childhood sweetheart Bettina who was a low level arcaner and worked for the village alchemist. Josef and his two older sisters had a happy yet strict childhood under their father who

showered them in parental love yet with firm discipline. Anselm after separating from the army he took up a career of hunting and guiding hunting parties through the nearby mountains and young Josef would accompany him on many a trip and grew to love the outdoors.

At the age of 5 Josef had his magical potential tested at the village Temple of Rad and was found to have substantial latent magical abilities. With his parents' permission the local village wizard offered and then took Josef under his wing and taught him the fundamentals of magic over the next several years. Seeing how he was a sponge for the basics he had taught him he spoke to Josef's parents as to sending him to the Great School of Magic in the capital. Knowing as they both did that the true path to success in Glantri was through magic and the Great School was the place to go to learn, they accepted his offer for him to sponsor their son. The separation was tough on Josef for in spite of the hard discipline and 'tough love' he knew that they loved him more than life and he loved his parents as much as any child could. He excelled in his studies however and his jovial nature endeared him to many of his classmates. His talents for magic and innate curiosity served him well and he took to the rigorous curriculum well and advanced well in his studies.

During a break from studies a couple of months after his 14th birthday Josef had an encounter which would go a long ways to defining his 'scholarly' interests. On a brilliant spring morning Josef and his father decided to head off into the mountains and do some deer hunting. Josef was quite keen to show him his skill with a sling and the latest spell he had learned at school 'Etienne's Bolt of Mother Mystara's Fury'. Mid way through the day they were surprised by two Stone Giants coming at them at a full run. An intense fight ensued with the father and son emerging victorious. Josef, in addition to having his first real taste of the practical as opposed to the theoretical power of wizardry, became fascinated by these larger than life 'men' and once he returned to the Great School set about learning all he could about them.

After graduating the Great School at the age of 18 Josef returned home to his village. Though happy to be with his family again he felt the urge to embark upon the life of adventurer and continue his study and hunts of giants of all varieties. Over the following years Josef travelled widely throughout the known world and even once made the trip of a lifetime to adventure in Alphatia. With the onset of the Great War Josef returned home and ended up recruiting and leading one of the more successful hunter-killer groups that tracked down and eliminated Alphatian agents and monsters summoned by the Alphatians. Josef came to attention of the Prince's Council and the nation at large when, due to his expertise, his group was detailed by Prince Jaggar to track down and eliminate a particularly troublesome band of Giants that the Alphatians had bribed to make mayhem on civilized areas of southern Glantri.

As the war entered its 4th year and it had become apparent that the Alphatians were coming, not summoned monsters but the Grand Alphatian Army itself. Josef and several other adventurers and wizards volunteered to go to Thyatis to help their beleaguered ally. Josef served with the crack GEF, Glantrian Expeditionary Force, which provided some much needed magical firepower to the Thyatin Army as they attempted to fight off the invading Alphatians in the great battles of Kantridae and Retebius. During the latter battle Josef was part of the group, led by his best friend and fellow adventurer Michel Leconte that ambushed and brought down an Alphatian Man-of-War and captured a 2nd one. While Alphatian lost many Ski-Ships during these vicious and bloody battles the Man-of-War brought down in flames was no normal one. It was the flagship of the Alphatian 3rd Fleet, a newly commissioned ship, the Eriadna, christened by the Empress herself. Bringing the Empresses' 'nameship' down was a great propaganda coup for Thincol and a great morale booster the Thyatian nation after another military setback and bloodbath that was the Battle of Retebius. Stransky and the rest of the

strike team became the toast of all Thyatis, as well of Glantri, and even had a private audience with the Emperor himself who richly rewarded them for their valor.

After the battles, which bloodied them severely and stopped the Alphatians advance temporarily but which did not throw them off Thyatin soil most saw that Thyatis was doomed. Josef and the rest of the group returned to Glantri to help prepare for the now seemingly inevitable invasion by Alphatia. Soon Thyatis surrendered and Alphatia finally had, after 4 years of war, a clear path to invade Glantri directly. However Alphatia never would make it into Glantri and after Glantri attacked Alphatia directly using a last ditch doomsday weapon, Alphatia sank beneath the ocean and Glantri emerged victorious and Josef and other war heroes became national heroes. Josef retired from adventuring after the end of the war and became a leading member of the Sage's League and the Monster Hunter's Union. However soon after retiring he was called upon by his friend Michel Leconte and told that Leconte was having a Viscounty created for him, for his services to Glantri during the war, and Leconte asked if Josef would be interested in becoming a noble and running for the soon to be vacant Barony of Brulefer which was the Barony Michel had created and ruled since its creation. Though not especially interested in politics Josef agreed and with the support of the Averognians and with the good will show war heroes, especially those of the GEF, he easily won the Awards Festival for Brulefer after Leconte became the Viscount of Amboise.

Since becoming Baron of Brulefer Josef has enjoyed ruling and spending time in his frontier dominion. He brought his family west into the borderlands and mountains of western Glantri and has enjoyed the peace and quiet of a peaceful and well run dominion. He is often engaged in leisurely hobbies like hunting and mountain climbing and occasionally finds time to continue his magical studies. Though he has enjoyed the peace and quiet he does sort of yearn for the days of being an adventurer and secretly hopes one day to adventure again with his old friends.

IV. Web of Intrigue

Josef is quite close with many of the adventurers that became national, and in cases like him, international heroes. He has mainly been involved in intellectual pursuits, and ruling his Barony since retiring from adventuring. His easy-going demeanor has meant he has not acquired any personal enemies. He has directed his representative to cast his votes in accordance with the needs and desires of House Ritterburg. Since he has to this point not involved himself in Glantrian politics he has acquired no political enemies other than the traditional enemies of House Ritterburg.

If he does make it into the political arena he would quickly learn that a pleasant demeanor, and respect due a war-hero, means nothing when it comes to the cut-throat world of Glantrian politics. Those who know Josef think those who would see his think honorable nature a weakness to be exploited, would soon learn he was capable of turning that perceived weakness back into his advantage. Having succeeded in all he has done, his friends would fully expect Josef to succeed at politics at well. However to date he has expressed no interest in moving to Glantri City and getting involved in politics.

V. Statistics & Style of Magic

Statistics: 15th level Wizard;
Str 14, Int 16, Wis 17, Dex 12, Con 9, Chr 12; AL - Lawful

Languages: Thyatian (Hattian dialect), Giant, Alphatian

Weapon Proficiencies: Sling (master), Dagger (skilled), Staff (basic)

Skills: Alchemy (16), Alternative Magics (16), Magical Engineering (16), Hunting (16), Knowledge of Giant Lore (16), Dominion Administration (16), Bravery (17), Nature Lore - Mountains (18), Tracking (18)

Josef is a master of the sling and is blunt and direct in his spellcasting. True to his personality he is not interested in earning 'style points' with his wizardry. All he cares about is making most efficient use of his spells. If he means to kill, he uses the most efficient spell to kill. He is an intelligent spellcaster who has a lot of combat experience and is cool and calm in the heat of combat.

'now that is a wizard who has his spellbook open to the right page'

(Nousoir du Marais)