THE LOST LANDS



The Blight

Richard Pett's Crooked City

Referee Guide

Swords & Wizardry

FROG GOD GAMES

The Blight

Richard Pett's Crooked City

Referee Guide

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This setting is dedicated to Geoff Tew, a damn fine thief whose spirit still graces our gaming table and whose favourite character still walks these streets.

"In order to know virtue, we must first acquaint ourselves with vice."

Quotations except as noted otherwise are from the **Marquis de Sade (1740–1814)**

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The Blight GM Guide



"... You've just entered the wrong side of town ..."

For the Players

A stitched thing shambles through the night, the smog of the Canker caressing it. Hooded and covered, the thing's head is too large for its body, and it has to lean frequently against the dirt-smeared brick embankments of Sister Lyme and suck in air through broken lips. A stench like rotting vegetables and sugar surrounds it. People move by in the smog, quietly and nervously going about their business. Occasionally, a cockroach crunches under their feet. Some travellers are rich enough to have linkboys, and a ghastly yellow pallor surrounds the conspirators as they flit like will-o'-wisps through the poison air of the street.

The silence is suddenly stabbed by the sound of a carriage clattering along the cobbles — a child's nightmare pulls the carriage yet no one seems to notice; it gulps the air as it lurches by — a slick black thing that hobbles spastically yet with great purpose. Unseen within, a naga pulls at a hookah, her arcane limbs fidgeting nervous. She is reading an ancient cabalistic work that details a ragefire elemental, a hateful thing of such fury that it can consume cities. The naga smiles and blows out a crimson smoke-ring as she puzzles this new weapon that has fallen, or rather been dropped, into her presence. The naga bangs upon the roof of the carriage for the driver to speed on, and within moments, the streets are quiet again.

The hooded thing staggers on, beneath towering walls and sloping gables where great spiders crawl, the arachnids cowering from the spider-catchers who ply their trade in the dark. Both avoid the rooftops where ancient scrimshaw gargoyles call to each other in haunting song. No one climbs to meet the scrimshaw; no one dares.

The figure passes a burnt-out pawnshop and is ignored by a young couple in a doorway; seeing only each other, one of the figures has two mouths full of jutting yellow teeth. The other, possibly a man, is dead, only alchemy keeps his wan body upright. He appears to be ignoring the prostitute's shortcomings, or perhaps is paying for them.

At last the stitched thing reaches its destination, a crooked house lit by the distant lights of the Great Fayre and the peculiar cutting beam of Hobbington's Lamp — the greatest of sea lanterns. Now hobbling down the stairs, it gives a secret knock and is allowed into the alchymic opium den. Entering, it sees something in the mirror opposite, but the thing it sees is not its own reflection, and as it watches the shadow moves out of the looking glass and into the room. The hooded figure bows, and hands over a package to the mirror dweller, who smiles crookedly and moves into the city night, drawing a shining meat-cleaver as it does so. Singing a nursery rhyme under its breath, it breaks into a skip.

Outside, countless other stories are taking place; misery and joy, and lust and sin abound here. This is their home; this is home to many, many things …"



The Blight is vast; it is mad and random and teeming with life. Each doorway conceals a secret, every window a longing, every roof a hope and fear. A million faces stare from its broken soul. Each face hides a story.

In the appendices, you'll find a printable player's introduction to the Blight, its characters, streets and horrors. In essence, the Blight is a dark urban horror fantasy setting that can be used either on its own, or mingled with other areas of your Referee's campaign world.

This player's handbook offers you options to play characters in this setting that are also applicable for many dark fantasy cities.

Many different races can trace their lineage back centuries in the Blight, and these Blight versions of standard races have developed their own unique abilities. In such a vast city, no guide can ever be considered entirely comprehensive, but here is a selection of new and more commonly encountered races. All the standard fantasy role-playing races may be met in the streets of Castorhage, but their environment may change these local characters — as a dwarf living in the arctic or an elf living on a coral reef would change — but they are still unmistakably elves and dwarves.

Presented here are concepts for the core ***Swords & Wizardry*** character races, as well as variations found amongst them and other monstrous creatures in Castorhage. One potential race not included here is left for you and your Referee to decide: goblins. Goblin pets — the latest fad — presently inundate the city, and it is entirely plausible for a player to have a goblin character, if your group wishes to allow it. Other races may also be allowed as you wish. In a city where many things can hide in the open and anything goes as far as this guide is concerned, your Referee is the final judge in your campaign, and what they say goes.

Do not necessarily limit your choice to standard races; a party of ghoul characters makes an excellent change of pace. Skum and wererats also make interesting variations upon character races and enable you to develop a whole new viewpoint for your characters. Your Referee will always point you in the direction they wish the campaign to go, but do not be afraid to make suggestions. The Blight is, after all, a city of a million stories …

Environmental Factors

Thinking about the environment that races come from can be a fun addition to any gaming session — consider a race of dwarves that has lived far below the city in an area of the Underneath that has gone undiscovered until now. Perhaps greedy miners have followed a vein of silver down into the vast caverns beneath Castorhage, or maybe one of the pits has opened up somewhere in the city and the dwarves see the sun for the first time. Do the blind dwarves flee from the warmth or worship it? How do they react to the noise of the city and how do the locals react to them? Are they convenient monsters in the game of some local Streetclerk, or are they taken as freaks to Festival to be displayed and mocked for the delectation of the populace? Perhaps the dwarves are amazingly skilled artisans who begin work in secret for some unprincipled cad who kidnaps some of their number to ensure compliance. Perhaps the characters come upon an escapee one night being chased by constables who claim the blind dwarf is a killer …

Races in the Blight

A curious aspect of life in the Blight is that it subtly, over generations, moulds its inhabitants, exaggerating the effects on their physicalities and mentalities of the ways in which they apply themselves within its confines. For example, descendants of labourers are, on average, noticeably more hulking and brutish than their forebears, while descendants of scholars have, on average, wider eyes and larger craniums.

For the core races, the following character adjustments can help create characters truly unique to the Blight. Characters retain any benefits of the race as already noted in the ***Swords & Wizardry Complete Rulebook*** from **Frog God Games**; these are simply Blight-specific ideas that you might choose to include.

And as with all things **Frog God Games** provides, these suggestions are here for you to pick and choose as you please and as best suits your game. As always, make of them what you will.

Dwarves

The dwarves of the Blight are a varied lot, with some working as expert builders and masons, while others know the city and its architecture so well they can navigate it with their eyes closed. Some are traders, while many turn their simmering hatred of life in the crumbling city toward a known foe, be it an orc, an ogre, or an organisation such as the Justices, Thieves' Guild or Anarchists.

Many dwarves in Castorhage fall into certain categories you can use when creating your character:

Salt-o'-the-Earth: Coming from a respected dwarven family in the city, salts trace their local ancestry back over several generations to the dwarven kingdom said to have first carved the Underneath. They often have an intense hatred for a chosen race that wronged their family sometime in the past.

Sprawlmason: Some dwarves have a particularly strong background in all things connected to buildings and architecture within the city. They are quick to spot new paths through the narrow streets that others might miss.

Toiler: Myriad dwarf families came to Castorhage seeking work, and the reputation of their spirit of toil gained many employment. They are hardworking labourers who know how to cut loose at the end of a trying day. They also are known to hold long grudges.

Elves

The elves of the Blight often desperately try to hold onto the fey nature of their race — and just as often fail miserably. Many throw themselves into the arts (even if their visions are twisted and warped by their dark surroundings), while others find their talent in music, song, dance, or some other form of entertainment. Others delve into the memories of their ancient race, and some spend their lives acquiring a lifetime of knowledge and training.

Many elves in Castorhage share the following common backgrounds:

Forsaken: Old elves come to the city to discover and learn, and these elves are called the forsaken by locals. They have a lifetime of memories and experiences, but memories are fickle and what may have been reality once might now seem like a dream. Some forsaken are bitter that their long lives are slowly coming to an end.

Travellers: These folk are the bright performers of the city who dazzle, amaze, and entertain its citizens. They are often social creatures out to enjoy themselves — but with a decidedly fickle side.

Half-Elves

There is magic in her eyes, and a slight fey look about her. Her features are narrow, and her eyes purple. Her red hair is drawn into a tight pigtail by a deep blue cheesecloth scarf.

Everyone loves Tamarind, her smile, her laugh, her singing — she has broken a hundred hearts they say by refusing the advances of lesser men, claiming she is looking for a wealthy fat lord to live with and spend his money.

Behind those eyes, however, works a brain of evil. A black heart beats in her and Tamarind plots and weaves like a great, sick spider. She knows she is beautiful and knows it well, using what the gods have given her to bring her a better life.

She kills those who come too close to her web.

— Tamarind (Chaotic female charmwell half-elf thief 10)

Half-elves by their nature are torn between two worlds, and the terrible nature of the Blight further divides them, leaving many emotionally remote when encountered in Castorhage. Blight half-elves often grow emotionally distant from those around them. The Blight also suppresses the elven appearance of some half-elves, allowing them more easily to pass as a different race while emphasising a talent for assuming alternative identities.

Charmwells: Charmwells are more elven, and therefore more fey, than other half-elves; some have the stuff of the Old Ones and the dark fey about them. In the crowded city, these half-elves play up their elven predominance and often become performers.

Hidelings: Some say the elves were the first creatures to walk through the mirror but came through from Between. Given this fear, some half-elves prefer to emphasise their human ancestry, and mask their elven heritage. Hidelings often disguise themselves to appear to be human.

Sorrowful: Neither one nor the other, a sorrowful was brought up by one parent and is missing something crucial in their makeup. After the initial love and lust died, their parents' extreme differences made it impossible for them to live happily ever after. Sorrowful favour the parent they lived with but are cursed with either an unnaturally long life or a fleetingly short life in comparison to their parent.

Halflings

Halflings in the Blight often grow up along Sister Lyme, plying their nimble fingers along the riggings of the boats found there. Many are also infused with the rhythm and beat of the city's dark heart, and can be found dancing their way through life. Others use this nimbleness to dance along the riggings in much the same surefooted manner. If you need an expert sailor to navigate the Lyme, look no further than a halfling.

Boatfolk: The river barges are full of these halfling boatfolk who are fiercely insular and come from tightknit families. They have their own festivals, manners, and cant. Often, they speak brazenly and openly in river cant, passing secret messages to one another without fear.

Humans

Some humans instinctually are connected to the city, and they subconsciously move to its irregular beat. Within the city, many can become lost in a trance-like state to subconsciously plumb their knowledge of Castorhage. They thus seem instinctively to know the alleys and byways of the great city, as if they have a mental model in their heads that somehow is kept up to date.

Polluted: More than a few humans grow up choking on the gasses and corrosive chemicals of the city-state, but seem to thrive in these harsh environments (one chosen resistance, for instance, such as acid, fire, cold, etc., 50% damage).

Twilight Sighted: Touched by exotic blood or Between, some humans can see better than their kin in dim light conditions (as low-light vision).

Water-Blooded: They say that blood is thicker than water, but for some Blight humans, the waters of the Lyme seem to run through their veins. They can hold their breath for twice as long as a normal human, and often can swim quicker through the fetid waters.

Non-Player Character Races

The scourge of the Blight does more than simply twist the essence of those unfortunate enough to live there for generations as it creates new traits and variations of existing races. The Blight also has entirely new races — or at least has attracted these otherwise rare races in numbers unknown elsewhere.

Briny (Half-Skum)

Fishermen spit when they hear the name mentioned — briny, fish-bred — born of a forced union between skum and the wives of men. The humans hate the children that flounder in the streets, children more at home in the cold, dark waters than in the lands of the sun and air. They are children that, they say, have some purpose in being on land; children that remind them of the foul act that created them; children that hate the



day, hate the sun, yet are attracted to it, like moths to a flame, their eyes watering painfully as they stare into the glow of the summer orb, praying for someone to turn off the light.

They come from the deep and cold places below, watching the warmth of landmen's wives with greedy eyes, eyes that want to steal. Skum lurk everywhere in this city, and the local strain constantly seek a human mate to take and impregnate. If a skum is not born, the union is cast out — along with the mother — by the skum, who are bound by an ancient ritual not to kill them (some have conjectured that the aboleth expressly forbid such killings to allow their progeny to establish a foothold on land). The women (called "brine mothers" by most folk) often come back — poor, silent creatures that they are, no matter what they were like before. They always bring back what they have been given, these poor taken wives, but they never tell what they saw, or what happened to them. The given thing is called a briny, and hated although it is, it is well-known amongst the fishermen that to kill the child means to also kill the wife, for many have tried. Many have killed the foul infant in the hope of freeing the wife, only to find her hanged a few days later — always by her own hand.

Some are more human than others, but each is deformed in some way, and about a quarter of them slowly change as they age, eventually undergoing a terrible transformation and becoming a skum. However, for a character, this end can be a long way off, or perhaps it never occurs. They always inherit some aquatic feature: bulging eyes, shreds of wan, scaly skin between fingers or toes, or perhaps an unsettling smell of brine and fish.

Briny can see in the dark (darkvision) to a range of 60ft. They are natural swimmers (Swim 9) and resist cold (50%). They take a –1 penalty to hit in sunlight because of their sensitive eyes. Briny characters are most often thieves or fighters.

Briny Thief Bonuses Table

Climb Walls	Delicate Tasks and Traps	Hear Sounds	Hide in Shadows	Move Silently	Open Locks
+5%	—	—	+5%	+10%	—

Coprophagi (Roachfolk)

In a city of social dregs, the coprophagi (or roachfolk as they are more commonly known) are truly the scrapings from the bottom of the barrel. Reviled by all, the roachfolk live almost invisibly within the City-State of Castorhage, restricting their movements and habitats to areas where others wouldn't care to look or to the sheltering darkness of night that hides them from the eyes who might take umbrage at their very existence.

It is thought that roachfolk originally must have hailed from Between or some other vile plane because no records speak of their existence before the rise of the city-state, and they are largely unknown elsewhere on the continent. The fact that they bear a vague resemblance to dwarves, however, speaks of a far closer and more tragic origin, though none amongst the stout folk speaks of such a thing, and they would violently oppose anyone who attempted to lay such a claim. For their part, the coprophagi keep to themselves and avoid contact with others whenever possible for fear or instigating pogroms against their very existence — a circumstance that has occurred more than once in the past. The fact that they continue to survive within the Blight — and in significant numbers — is a testimony to their ruggedness and adaptability.

The coprophagi in all ways resemble a humanoid cockroach. They stand erect on two, thick insectile lower legs with two more sets of limbs extending from their torso, a pair of long insect-like arms extending from their flanks midway between waist and shoulder, and a second pair of smaller insectile appendages that extend from their shoulders. Their hide is brown or black and like a carapace in texture and durability, and a larger, thicker carapace extends down their backs from neck to thigh to provide their own natural armour. Their heads are like those of a large roach, with long antennae extending from the front, but they do have an oddly and unexpectedly humanoid shape to them. Some even have feeble beards growing down from their mandibled jaws, giving rise to the rumour of some mysterious dwarven heritage.



What most do know of them is that they have formed a sort of fraternal order called the Festering Brethren. Of all the roachfolk encountered by other races, it is these who are typically seen and are some of the few who will even go about in the daytime in the view of others. The Festering Brethren largely cover their bodies in rags and winding clothes like lepers, though it does not disguise their insectoid shapes, and many even carry a curved staff with a small bell on the end that rings as they use it to walk. Also like that of a leper, these staves are intended to give the other folk of Castorhage warning that a member of the Festering Brethren approaches so they have the opportunity to relocate elsewhere if they wish to avoid being in the presence of the roachfolk. Roachfolk are tolerated at best and are unwelcome in most establishments within the city.

Coprophagi can see in the dark (darkvision) to a range of 60ft, and gain a +4 save vs. poison and disease. They have two middle limbs and two smaller upper limbs. Both sets are capable of grasping and holding objects or weapons, though the lesser upper limbs cannot hold any object heavier than 5 pounds each. A roachfolk also has a pair of undersized wings tucked beneath his back carapace. It can use these wings to leap 80ft. Their carapace is equal to leather armour. Many coprophagi are thieves, but members of the Festering Brethren are usually monks or clerics. Coprophagi must pay three times the normal costs of armour to have the protective garments specially fitted for their insectile forms.

Coprophagi Thief Bonuses Table

Climb Walls	Delicate Tasks and Traps	Hear Sounds	Hide in Shadows	Move Silently	Open Locks
+15%	+10%	—	+5%	+10%	+5%

Gnomes

The gnomes of Castorhage — and some say they exist *only* in the city — are very similar to dwarves, and are often mistaken as such by unknowing visitors. Their skin colour ranges from browns to grey-browns, while their hair is sandy to a pure white. Their eyes tend toward bluish tints, some quite piercing. Their heritage is like the dwarves, and they live in family clans that can be quite extensive. Many have hooknoses, upon which some of the more business-minded members of the race place rounded spectacles.

They often take roles as alchymysts, crafting whatever potions that their curious minds can conjure. Typically found surrounded by bubbling pipes and jars, frothing jugs of vile-smelling ichor, and tubes connecting to tubes connecting to tubes, alchymysts are admired throughout the city for their nose for the task and their cunning skills with all manner of exotic substances.

Some gnomes find that the Blight enhances their naturally convoluted thought patterns into a talent for the abstract intricacies of high-level business, finance, and law. Many go a step farther and twist fact and fiction as they serve within the city's complicated court system. These lawyerly gnomes often are found rushing about the Capitol as they prepare to defend clients.

One famous (some would say infamous) family of gnomes are the Shortstones, whose reputation often precedes them. This huge, extended family is synonymous with Blight gnomes, and benefit from their seemingly endless relations that dwell in all corners of the city. If you meet a gnome on the streets of Castorhage, they more than likely are connected to the Shortstones via a branch-filled family tree.

Gnome characters can see in the dark (darkvision) up to 60ft. They have a +4 bonus on saving throws against magic and poison. They hate kobolds and goblins, and gain a +1 to-hit bonus against these races. Many gnomes (especially in Castorhage) become magic-users and make a good living selling various alchymical potions. Others with nimble fingers find thieving more to their liking.

Rock Gnomes: Nearly identical to regular gnomes, it is usually the jovial and curious nature of rock gnomes that gives them away. Instead of the mine and rocky places of the Underneath, rock gnomes typically make their homes in the tunnels beneath the woodlands of the world, but frequently venture forth from those dark places to marvel at the land around them. They craft and invent, and have a child-like wonder at how the world works. The despise kobolds, however, and attack them on sight.

Svirfneblin (Deep Gnomes): Deep beneath Castorhage, small communities of deep gnomes hide from the light and the city above. These deep gnomes have skin of deep earth tones, but that range from slate-grey deepening to black. Most are bald, with large noses and ears. They are often chaotic, preferring to work with the other underground races instead of their aboveground cousins. Svirfneblin suffer a –1 to-hit penalty in bright light, but can see in the dark (darkvision) up to a range of 60ft. They often become magic-users, thieves or assassins.

Gnome Thief Bonuses Table

Climb Walls	Delicate Tasks and Traps	Hear Sounds	Hide in Shadows	Move Silently	Open Locks
—	+10%	—	+10%	+10%	+10%

Haven't Gnomes Been Around Awhile?

Gnomes? A new race? While gnomes have been in fantasy role-playing games since almost the beginning, the ***Swords & Wizardry*** rules, while adapting many of those original rules, didn't add gnomes into the mix. For the most part, they've been mentioned here and there in various products, or simply converted into halflings or dwarves in others. But since gnomes play such a significant role in the Blight and can be found in such great numbers, they are presented here again for Referees to use if desired. You may just as well decide not to add them back into your game, however. If you don't want them, simply call them halflings or dwarves and move on.

Half-Orcs

Throughout the world, despicable men (and women) seek to satisfy their lustful natures. On occasion, these wanton trysts are with "less-civilized" races. Half-orcs are the result of one such type of crossbreeding. When seen by civilized races, half-orcs are considered monstrosities, the result of perversion and violence—whether or not this is actually true. Half-orcs are rarely the result of loving unions, and as such are usually forced to grow up hard and fast, constantly fighting for protection or to make names for themselves. Half-orcs resent this treatment, and rather than play the part of the victim, they tend to lash out, unknowingly confirming the biases of those around them. A few feared, distrusted, and spat-upon half-orcs manage to surprise their detractors with great deeds and unexpected wisdom—though sometimes it's easier just to crack a few skulls. Some half-orcs spend their entire lives proving to full-blooded orcs that they are just as fierce. Others opt for trying to blend into human society, constantly demonstrating that they aren't monsters. Their need to always prove themselves worthy encourages half-orcs to strive for power and greatness within the society around them.

Half-orcs live on the fringes even in a city as dangerous as Castorhage. Some Blight half-orcs are skilled at surviving in slums, sewers, and underbellies. They are adept at finding just enough sustenance to survive another day. The Blight moulds some half-orcs toward the darkness, however, emphasising their subterranean heritage. They are often out at night, creeping through the shadows.

Half-orcs average around 6 feet tall, with powerful builds and greenish or grayish skin. Their canine teeth often grow long enough to protrude from their mouths, and these "tusks," combined with heavy brows and slightly pointed ears, give them their notoriously bestial appearance. While half-orcs may be impressive, few ever describe them as beautiful. Despite these obvious orc traits, half-orcs are as varied as their human parents.

Unlike half-elves, where at least part of society's discrimination is born out of jealousy or attraction, half-orcs get the worst of both worlds: physically weaker than their orc kin, they also tend to be feared or attacked outright by humans who don't bother making the distinction between full orcs and half-bloods. Even on the best of terms, half-orcs in civilized societies are not exactly accepted, and tend to be valued only for their physical abilities. On the other hand, orc leaders have been known to deliberately spawn half-orcs, as the half breeds make up for their lack of physical strength with increased cunning and aggression, making them natural leaders and strategic advisors. Within orc tribes, half-orcs find themselves constantly striving to prove their worth in battle and with feats of strength. Half-orcs raised within orc tribes are more likely to file their tusks and cover themselves in tribal tattoos. Tribal leaders quietly recognize that half-orcs are often cleverer than their orc cousins and often apprentice them to the tribe's shaman, where their cunning might eventually strengthen the tribe. Apprenticeship to a shaman is a brutal and often short-lived distinction, however, and those half-orcs who survive it either become influential in the tribe or are eventually driven to leave.

Half-orcs have a much more mixed experience in human society, where many cultures view them as little more than monsters. They often are unable even to get normal work, and are pressed into service in the military or sold into slavery. In these cultures, half-orcs often lead furtive lives, hiding their nature whenever possible. The dark underworld of society is often the most welcoming place, and many half-orcs wind up serving as enforcers for thieves' guilds or other types of organized crime. Less commonly, human cities may allow half-orcs a more normal existence, even enabling them to develop small communities of their own. These communities are usually centered around the arena districts, the military, or mercenary organizations where their brute strength is valued and their appearance is more likely to be overlooked. Even surrounded by their own kind, half-orc life isn't easy. Bullying and physical confrontation comes easy to a people who have been raised with few other examples of behavior. It is, however, one of the best places for young half-orcs to grow up without prejudice, and these small enclaves are one of the few places where half-orc marriages and children are truly accepted and sometimes cherished.

Even more rarely, certain human cultures come to embrace half-orcs for their strength. There are stories of places where people see half-orc children as a blessing and seek out half-orc or orc lovers. In these cultures, half-orcs lead lives not much different from full-blooded humans.

Half-orc characters have a penchant for the dark; the less people see of them in the bright light the better. Half-orc characters take a –1 penalty to hit anytime they are in bright light. Conversely, when in darkness or when striking from hiding, they receive a +1 to hit. Half-orcs can also see in the dark. They have darkvision out to 60 ft. Half-orc characters are limited to Fighters, Thieves, and Assassins. A half-orc who is purely a Fighter may advance beyond 7th level only if the warrior has Strength of 17 (maximum 8th level) or 18 (maximum 9th level). In the Thief and Assassin class, a half-orc may advance with no maximum level limit. Half-orc assassin is a special exception to the rule that assassins are only human.

Savages: Most of the half-orcs in the Blight come from one background: savages. Their parents came to the city to seek their fortune; half-orcs themselves, they found life hard, and joined the growing number of half-orcs who live in dark, rusty ghettoes and hovels — grouped together for fear of attack. Savages — as other city folk call them — are tough, independent, and smart; they have learnt to survive alone in the city.

Night-Slug

None is as naturally capable of the fine art of breaking and entering as the night-slug. Fortunately for society, few are also as cowardly. Night-slugs maintain their existence simply by avoiding notice. Sometimes called the tunnel people by the few folk of Castorhage that run across them in the endless sewer channels beneath the city, these elusive creatures often reside in small crawlspaces or even the hollows between the outer masonry and inner plaster and lathe of a house. They are capable



of maneuvering their bodies through seemingly impossible spaces. Those among their number who are not lucky enough to acquire such grand accommodations typically live in places that allow them to avoid notice — the city dump, a gable hanging over a small alleyway, and so forth.

Night-slugs have a humanoid structure with blotchy grey skin bearing randomly arranged tufts of muddy-brown hair. Their arms are thin and elongated, hanging limply at their sides, and they seem to possess little if any muscle tone in general. Their ligaments and tendons are exceptionally elastic, allowing a night-slug to elongate its arms and legs, in the process pulling what muscle it has closer to its frame. In addition, night-slugs have a "collapsible" skeleton; its bones are composed primarily of cartilage, allowing the creature to squeeze into incredibly small areas. A typical night-slug stands around 3-1/2ft tall and weighs 40 lbs, but can squeeze through spaces as small as half-a-foot wide.

Night-slugs are nimble and flexible. They can see in the dark (darkvision) up to a range of 60ft. The skin of a night-slug constantly secretes a thin fluid most resembling a slightly slimy version of perspiration that leaves an off-color stain on most fabrics and has a musty odor. This secretion also allows them to squeeze easily through tight spaces. Creatures that grab a night-slug have a 50% chance of losing their grip. A night-slug takes half damage from blunt weapons because of their flexible bodies and skeletons. Many night-slugs are thieves or even assassins.

Night-slug Thief Bonuses Table

Climb Walls	Delicate Tasks and Traps	Hear Sounds	Hide in Shadows	Move Silently	Open Locks
5%	+15%	—	+15%	+5%	—

Swyne



"Lord, why can't I get a decent tailor these days? Adjust my cravat, idiot; can't you see it's crooked? How can I go to the lodge dressed like a human? I hope they have those succulent kidneys tonight, the ones that they serve just lightly toasted with sugar. They have fine food at the lodge — not that you'd know about the finer things in life. We'll drink the finest Crava from crystal and eat our fill before talking business over cabb'e and hookahs filled with the finest tobacco and insectum money can buy. We'll trade millions tonight, you know? Millions! Can you imagine a million? I thought not. That's the trouble with humans — no imagination, and little appreciation for the finer things in life — little appreciation of anything, in fact."

Pleasure, pleasure, and pleasure: the three "P's" of swyne philosophy. A swyne lives to enjoy, to eat the finest food, to romance the most beautiful people, to plunder the greatest treasures. A swyne is a voyeur, a pleasure-seeker, a lothario. They do anything and everything to ensure that they get the most out of life.

In essence a humanoid pig, the swyne is usually fat, sallow-eyed, and hungover from excess. Dressed in the best he can buy, a swyne gets what he can out of life — as often and as plentifully as possible. Roughly human in size and shape — and with all the foibles and interests that accompanies — the swyne are often mistaken for fat humans from a distance, until their snouts and piggy eyes come closer into view. Swyne tend to stick together, and refer to each other as brother or sister hog.

Some swyne can pass for human; so subtle are their porcine features. Others resemble humanoid pigs, with hoggish features, clumsy hands, and squealing laughter. They all tend to be fat (a result of enjoying as much fine food as they can, as often as they can), and prone to being clumsy; their porcine ancestry runs deep, and occasionally shows itself in their eating habits.

Swyne are stocky and slow, but very charming with it (Movement 9). Swyne can — and often do — eat almost anything, but they are highly resistant to toxins and sickness; swyne gain a +4 bonus on saving throws vs. disease and poison. They are also notoriously difficult to influence, despite their penchant for excess, gaining a +2 bonus on saving throws vs. *charm person* and *sleep* spells. Swyne are often remarkably selfish magic-users.

Racial Variants

The following section lists variations to core or monstrous races unique to the Blight. Not that they can't be found anywhere else — though that is likely to be rare enough — but rather that wherever they're found, their existence can be traced back to their Blight roots, proving that the Blight is so pervasive — so corrupting — that it changes everything it touches and usually not for the better.

Players may choose to add these racial variants to their characters, if the Referee allows it for his campaign. These variant races are more in name only for characters, although they may see some difference in the ways they are treated — usually negatively — within Castorhage should they choose to adopt one of these for their creation. Of the listed variants — blighted humans, gypsy-soul halflings, lantern folk duergar, primitive elves, shadowlamp half-orcs and tradelord gnomes — blighted human characters will have the easiest time assimilating into Blight culture. They have, after all, grown up there and become one with the city.



Blighted (Humans)

It is a peculiar facet of the Blight that those who dwell there notice a subtle change over many generations, almost as though their deeds truly become tattooed upon their bodies. This is true in general only for those who have several generations of Castorhage in their kin; those who manage to escape, who throw off the shackles even for a few years, or who by good fortune are somehow immune to this effect, are unaffected.

Others are not so lucky, and this kinship manifests in subtle changes within the bodies of those who come from such long lines of locals. For example, those who use their bodies for brute force — the builders, labourers and roofers — can be identified by their peculiarly large hands, or shoulders, or backs. Miners develop wider eyes with larger pupils; chimney sweeps, an unsettling ability to voluntarily dislocate their limbs; nobility may be tainted by generations of envy or lust, and have peculiarly feral or angered expressions. In general, these changes are not monstrous but are all the more unsettling for their subtlety.

Blighted humans are fairly typical of the human folk of western Akados. Their skin tones are usually somewhat pale and range from sallow to ivory to pinkish all the way to the almost pure white of albinism. Whereas most of western Akados tends toward more aquiline features, those of the blighted are usually coarser and somewhat broader. Their hair runs to the same dark browns, auburns, and black of western Akados, and their eyes are a range of blue, grey, blue-grey, bluish-black, dark brown, and pale violet. As noted, their physical features do tend to reflect the sort of occupation their family has held for many generations, though these changes are subtle and fall well within the normal physical morphology found within the population.

No single social stratum fits the blighted. They can be from the lowest of the city's gutters, to the marbled galleries and halls of the Capitol. In fact, a member of the blighted would not even identify himself as such. Being one of the blighted is not a recognised classification; it is simply a physical reality of those whose families have dwelt in the city-state long enough for physical changes to occur. This is reflected in that the one feature they all truly have in common is their ancestry's long residence within Castorhage.

Blighted humans worship many deities, though they have a higher tendency to follow the religions indigenous to the city of Castorhage as opposed to those of elsewhere in Akados. There are many exceptions to this, however, as the folk of Castorhage includes immigrants from across the world of Lleogyr who have brought their native beliefs with them to their new homes. By far the largest human congregation of any god in Castorhage is that of Mother Grace*, the city's de facto patroness deity.

Gypsy-Souls (Halflings)

Consummate traders and tricksters, gypsy-souls are halflings who feel a deep and abiding kindred with the Viroeni gypsy-folk of Akados. Though not related to these wandering tribes by blood, the gypsy-souls have associated with them for so many generations that these halfling bloodlines indeed seem more closely akin to the Viroeni than to their own kind. In fact, the gypsy-souls speak the rama language of the Viroeni and generally keep to their own neighbourhoods, caravans, or encampments rather than mix extensively with others. The exceptions to this are, of course, the Viroeni themselves, who see the gypsy-souls as kindred little brothers and sisters and the halfling boatfolk of Castorhage. Interaction in the city, however, can draw some out of their insular natures, at least for a time. Gypsy-souls support themselves as tinkers, traders, and in the performance of odd jobs whenever possible. Some have small animal herds.

Gypsy-souls in general conform to the physical appearance of their halfling kin. They tend to be a little bit taller — some reaching the outlandish height of 3ft, 6in — and a bit leaner, rarely having the paunch from a life of prosperity and good meals that tends to find its way onto many halflings as they reach middle age. They almost always go barefoot, which is not unusual for halflings in general, and their ears are less pointed, in some cases being completely indistinguishable from human ears in shape.

Like the Viroeni wanderers that they have come to identify with, gypsy-souls spend most of their life traveling upon the roads of Akados

in caravans of small wagons. These are frequently included as part of a Viroeni caravan but not always so. When they are with Viroeni, they are treated as one of their own and answer to the tribes reigning matriarch, just as do her human kinfolk. This arrangement is very egalitarian in that on many occasions the Viroeni themselves answer to a halfling gypsy-soul matriarch if she is the most senior member of the caravan. On the open road or in an encampment, gypsy-souls are prone to music, dancing, and the telling of elaborate jokes. They do not involve themselves in pranks very frequently because they are accustomed to living on few resources and among hostile peoples so that anything that might damage another's property or dignity is seen as detrimental to their survival. Rather, they confine their internal rivalries to clever jests and barbs for the amusement of all, and a gypsy-soul that knows he has been bested enjoys the roast as much as any onlookers and begins planning his future rejoinder almost immediately. Pranks upon non-gypsy-souls, however, is an entirely different matter, and truly legendary members of their families are those who can pull the most outlandish pranks upon other peoples.

If folk look upon the Viroeni as roving skulks and thieves, they look upon the gypsy-souls who associate with them as little better than an infestation of vermin. Only in municipalities of established relation with gypsy-souls do they find any real welcome. In Castorhage, there are entire barrios occupied by gypsy-souls who have made a more permanent abode for themselves, and here they have become enough of a fixture to avoid constant persecution. It is true that the folk of the Blight look upon all gypsy-souls as cutpurses and pickpockets, but then, most other groups are suspected of the same, so the gypsy-souls find an easier acceptance than in most other places. In places not as accustomed to the presence of gypsy-souls, they are usually confined to isolated encampments away from towns and cities, and allowed entry only on market days when their wares and services might be of use. Gypsy-souls harbour some resentment toward this inherent disregard for them, but their own habit of tricks and pranks does not engender them to these communities.

Gypsy-souls are rarely evil though they have a mischievous side. Many of them, in fact, have a heart of gold that is tempered by their impish ways. Their love of freedom and disdain of rules and the shackles of civilization means that they are never inclined toward lawfulness. Their love of the freedom of the road and the irreverent ways of halflings means a great many favour the halfling deity Mick O'Delving[BP] with Pekko[RCFG] almost equal in popularity. Their inherent wanderlust and love of the many hidden twists and turns of life leads many into reverence of Belon the Wise[BP], Moccavallo[BG], Tykee[BG], or Zors[BG]. Some of the older gypsy-souls are devoted to the traditional Viroeni deities of Mert[DD], Vionir[BG], or Lurz-Urcia[LCB]. Very rarely, an evil gypsy-soul might venerate Demogorgon[MM] as the Lord of Fate.

Lantern Folk (Duergar)

Only in a place as dissolute and depraved as the Blight would a race as sinister as the duergar be able to find a home among the surface races. Though even here they are given the name lantern folk rather than go by their more commonly known epithet of duergar. At home in the Underneath, these duergar have lived long enough in the shadow of the great city-state above to have taken on some of its characteristics, much like the blighted humans. While they work and dwell within Castorhage, they remain as sensitive as ever to the light of the sun, but the presence of the Between seems to have drained their enmity toward the surface races. A stable population such as this is unheard of, and has allowed for a peaceful co-existence within the city's bowels.

Lantern folk are short but strongly built, standing about 4ft tall, roughly equal to their dwarven kin, although their skin tones tend toward greys and blacks. Their hair tends to be stark white or silver. Their eyes burn an amber light.

They typically work as miners, craftsmen, traders, tunnel maintenance workers, or gatherers of resources available only in the Underneath or lower subterranean areas. When encountered on the surface in the night markets or well-shaded establishments during the day they sell their rare Under Realms or negotiate contracts with surface firms for the kinds of specialised work that they can provide. A racial propensity for sadistic experiments and poisoning only rarely emerges among lantern folk individuals.



When the dwarves of the Underneath discovered the lantern folk duergar centuries ago, many voices called for their immediate extermination. The depredations of the duergar were well known among the dwarves. However, these duergar demonstrated peaceful contact and did not show the signs of violence and rage so prevalent among that race. In the end, cooler heads prevailed, and the lantern folk were allowed to peacefully assimilate into the society of the Underneath. A compromise made with the hardliner dwarves, who still distrusted the duergar-kin and their inclination for skulduggery in the dark, required them to maintain a light source about themselves at all times when outside their own homes. The duergar, wishing to avoid extermination at the hands of the more war-like and numerically superior dwarves, agreed to this request, and it is from this practice that they came to have the name by which they are now known — though most make use of *light* spells rather than lanterns these days.

The lantern folk have now lived in the Underneath for centuries without causing any problems and continue to follow the decree of keeping a *light* spell on them at all times. However, this decree only applies to when they are in the Underneath, so when they are abroad above ground or in tunnels that are not a part of the Underneath, they are not in the habit of keeping a *light* spell active.

For the most part, the lantern folk have embraced the religion of the dwarves of the Underneath who sponsored them and hold Vergrimm Earthsblood[MM] or Crugas[MM] in high regard. Some revere Dwerfater[MM] or even Grox[MM], but these are much fewer and farther between. Others stick to deities more closely aligned with their race.

Primitives (Elves)

Primitives are elves who have found themselves drawn to the strange, almost otherworldly allure that seems to shine just beneath the surface of the Blight for those with the sensitivity to see it. The result of their long exposure to this strange, intangible presence ever tickling at their minds has led them to devote their lives to its expression in art. They are

fey — almost elemental — creatures inspired and tortured by wildly vivid dreams to the point of obsession over an act of creation to bring their dream visions to life. They may stand for hours immersed in the light play of sun on the gables, entranced by the reactions of an admixture of venoms, or crafting the perfect expression in musical movements about the unique potpourri of odours produced by a particular alleyway.

Primitives tend to stand taller and are more willowy than the typical elf, rarely with an ounce of fat on their bodies as they devote every waking moment and all their energy to the perfection of their art. Some with an epicurean bent lie at the opposite end of the spectrum, representing the shockingly phenomenon of a morbidly obese elf. Their clothing tends toward minimalist ideals and ranges in quality from a few diaphanous veils or scarves to little more than a rough loincloth. They see their bodies as another form of expression of their art and wish to reveal their canvas to as many as can see, regardless of physique, injury, or deformity. Exotic and extravagant tattoos, often covering much of their bodies, are not uncommon. In the cold winters of the Blight, they bundle up in rough, primitive garments of hide and thick fur, channelling the inner nature they sense within the walls of the city. The hygiene of these elves varies wildly, with some taking great pride in their physical aesthetic and others seeing such concerns as mundanely gauche, preferring to revel in a natural state of filth.

Primitives take their name from the fact that they see themselves entirely outside society. In fact, to them society is an unnatural aberration that separates them from the enlightened beauty that they forever seek to capture and emulate in their art. As such, primitives with any political leaning at all tend toward the Anarchist camp. Some may even believe the true expression of their inner eye's beauty lies in watching the entire city burn.

Primitives have poor relations with virtually every other race, including other elves. Only other primitives and the most avant-garde of art patrons within the city who share their bohemian outlook find themselves in the social circles of the primitives, and even then these relationships tend to be short, self-absorbed, and one-sided, the primitive moving on to some new companion in their eternal quest to capture their inner eye in art.

Primitives have all of the emotional capriciousness of other elves but tend to lack much value for kindness or any concept of beauty that lies outside their own personal obsessions. Many primitives gravitate toward agnostic or atheistic beliefs as all other matters are subordinated to their personal obsessions. Some do, however, venerate deities that represent certain types of art, freedoms, or simply hedonism in general. Among the primitives who venerate a deity, some of the more common divine patrons are Dame Torren[BG], Moccavallo[BG], Bacchus-Dionysus[BG], the Queen of Spiders[BG], Pan[BG], Lurz-Urcia[LCB], Pelora[DMC], Eliphaz[DMC], Arialee[GD], Sriasha[K2], Gilyo[K9], Demogorgon[MM], Bast[DD], Tiamat[DD], Shupnikkurat[DD], the Church of Marwan[DD], The Poppy's Chorus[DD], and one of the largest chapters of the Cult of the Unspeakable[TD] in the Lost Lands. A few even call upon the blessings of The Ash Queen* or The Horseman*. Above all, they fear the demon lord Mathrigaunt the Mad[BP], knowing full well even in their indolence that to fully succumb to madness is to lose their vision entirely. There are rumours, however, of some primitives who have done that very thing and now secretly seek to propagate the spread of the insidious cult among their peers.

In addition, it is not unusual to see a new cult spring up among a group of primitives dedicated to some wholly or partially fabricated deity drawn from an exotic land or a prehistoric past viewed as somehow purer or more visceral. Without the backing of a true deity to provide any sort of evidence of divine inspiration whatsoever, these small cults usually dissolve in a matter of days or months at the most. While they exist, though, some of them can become quite dangerous or vicious in their ideals of physical excess at any cost.

Shadowlamps (Half-Orcs)

Shadowlampers — as they are typically called — are half-orcs in the Blight born pale and sickly looking. The light still hurts the enlarged eyes of these half-orcs. Sometimes referred to as vampires, ghouls, or undead by other city folk, they prefer to do their business by night. To many, however, the Shadowlamper is a boon; someone who prefers to work at night can come in very handy, not only for the criminal underclasses, but also amongst more legitimate professions. The Queen's 4th Shadowlampers are a renowned part of the City Watch, with a waiting list of seven years to join and the toughest entry tests in the whole Watch. The Illuminati have made great use of Shadowlampers, and these half-orcs are also ranked amongst some of the most famous spider-hunters in the city's history.

Shadowlamp half-orcs are tall like their more common kin, easily exceeding 6 feet in height for both genders, but lack the sheer muscle mass of their cousins. Their bodies are thin and corded with wiry muscle that makes them look more like scarecrows — or cadavers — than a typical half-orc, and their skins tend to run paler than the dusky or greenish hues more frequently found. They have wide eyes with large pupils that are frequently bloodshot and teary in bright lights. Though their lower canines are less prominent than is normal for half-orcs, they are nevertheless somewhat elongated, and the fact that their upper canines are likewise hypertrophied only adds to the comparisons to some sort of blood-drinking undead beast.

As products of a wholly urban environment, shadowlampers do not suffer the persecution and ostracization seen by the societies of both of a typical half-orc's parents. This is partially because shadowlamp half-orcs are the offspring of mated shadowlamp half-orcs, the initial orc/human crossing having occurred generations in the past. This is also because with so many underclasses in the Blight held with equal disdain by the upper crust of society, it is too much trouble for a lone segment to be singled out for specific prejudice. They receive the hardships and privations of a second-class citizen, but then so do most folk of the Blight, so it seems like no unique burden to shadowlampers.

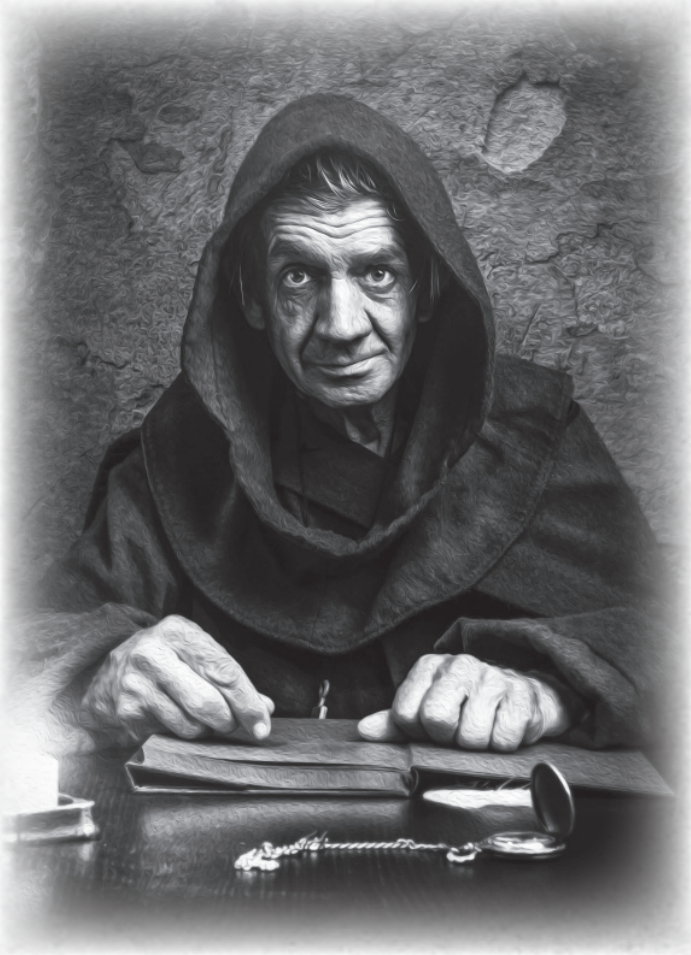
With no special prejudice levelled against them in the city of their birth and a generations-long dissociation from the separate cultures of their progenitors, shadowlamp half-orcs get along with the other races that inhabit the city just as would any other. No special grudges are harboured, and no great blood feuds recognized. A shadowlamper on the streets of the city would have the same possibility to like or dislike an elf he met on the street as he would an orc. Though some folk are put off by their cadaverous appearance and exhibit a prejudice along those lines, the respect they command for the work they do and the myriad of other racial prejudices that swell within the disparate folk of the Blight causes shadowlampers to not feel singled out as a target of vitriol by any particular group.

Shadowlamp half-orcs work hard, do their job, support their families, and at the end of the day enjoy a pint and a cigar. They usually hold no great loyalty to the city or its institutions, but take great pride in their own work ethic and expertise in those areas in which they excel. As creatures naturally suited for the dark of night, those few shadowlampers who do observe a formal religion tend to gravitate toward those that favour the shadows such as Mirkeer[CotSK] and Sister Shadow* or other aspects of the night such as Narrah[SV] or even relating to their occupation such as Vanitthu[RCFG]. A shadowlamper worshipping Grotaag[MM] is unheard of, but most pay no attention to any religion in particular.

Tradelord (Gnomes)

Tradelord gnomes are a common sight amongst the financial areas of the city; they are cunning and astute, good judges of character and risk, and their talents are in demand — by the legal, financial, and speculative professions, as well as the less-legal arms of those groups. In many ways, their reputation resembles that of the street dwarves in other urban areas throughout Akados, but whereas the street dwarves are known for being hard-working business owners and workers, tradelord gnomes are specifically involved as financiers, bankers, commodity speculators, investors, and trade factors at the highest echelons of local and international trade. And while they are known for their business acumen, they are not especially well-regarded for their scruples. A person always feels more comfortable with a tradelord gnome on his side of a negotiating table but much less comfortable with one on the opposite side.

Tradelord gnomes superficially resemble ordinary gnomes in all ways, but all tradelord gnomes are descended from a handful of Castorhage gnome families (no matter how distantly related), and all tend to bear a certain family resemblance. Their hair tends toward muted shades of brown, red, or sometimes green, though grey and silver seem to predominate even at relatively young ages. In addition, there is an unusually high incidence of balding among their numbers. Eyebrows are almost always thick and



bushy, with wide, hooked noses, and large, protruding ears. Thick, brushy moustaches and sometimes sideburns are extremely common, though beards are never worn. Their skin also tends to be more pallid compared with their kin and is frequently extremely thin, almost parchment-like, with a spider web of tiny veins visible on the cheeks, chin, nose, and ears. Eyes tend to be bleary and slightly jaundiced, and myopia is very common, with many tradelord gnomes wearing spectacles before they reach adulthood.

Tradelord gnomes are extremely preoccupied with social class and form. They are extremely proud of their Castorhage lineage from a few well-placed families whose involvement in the politics and finances of the city-state date back for centuries. With family names such as Bothelwaite, Curringham, Evendon, and Shipwright, they feel that they are the true cream of the crop within the city-state, with a name that should open doors and get immediate recognition even among the unwashed Lowfolk. The fact that none of their family names is even remotely as well-known as the upstart parlor magician Shortstones and their seemingly endless progeny irks the families of the tradelords to no end, though they will never let on to being disturbed by a notion so far beneath them.

Tradelord gnomes tend to get on well with most other races, if at a comfortable and coolly indifferent arm's length. They hold ordinary gnomes in utter contempt, however. The city's Lowfolk recognize them as true "movers" within the Blight's social strata, and the Upper Class see them as formidable and respectable professionals, if not particularly friendly or suitable for socializing. The tradelord gnomes' natural standoffishness actually serves them well in their relations with others because it makes them seem stuffy and competent while at the same time masking their inclination toward pompousness biting condescension. The few that manage to get close to a tradelord gnome almost always find them rude and unpleasant but worthwhile companions nonetheless for their astute judgment and considerable skills at the bargaining table.

Tradelords have a tendency toward law and neutrality, being much more concerned with reaching the means to their ends through skilful manipulation of the existing rules rather than with whether or not the ends themselves might be in any way worthy or moral. Favored religions are Sefagreth[BG], Thyr[SV], Dre'uain[BP], Archeillus[BP], and Iskardar[MM], and no doubt more than a few who secretly revere Lord Mammon*. Noticeably absent among the worship of the tradelord gnomes is the worship of Hammer Mittelschmerz[MM].

* See **The Blight Campaign Guide: Part 4, True Gods of the Blight**
[BG] See ***LL8: Bard's Gate*** by **Frog God Games**
[BP] See ***LL5: Borderland Provinces*** by **Frog God Games**
[CotSK] See ***LL4: Cults of the Sundered Kingdoms*** by **Frog God Games**
[DD] See ***Dunes of Desolation*** by **Frog God Games**
[DMC] See ***Dead Man's Chest*** by **Frog God Games/Necromancer Games**
[GD] See ***Glades of Death*** by **Necromancer Games**
[K2] See ***K2: The Diamond Fortress*** by **Necromancer Games**
[K9] See ***K9: Elemental Moon*** by **Necromancer Games**
[LCB] See ***LL2: The Lost City of Barakus*** by **Frog God Games**
[MM] See ***Mountains of Madness*** by **Frog God Games**
[RCFG] See ***Razor Coast Freebooter's Guide*** by **Frog God Games**
[SV] See ***LL1: Stoneheart Valley*** by **Frog God Games**
[TD] See ***Trouble at Durbenford*** by **Necromancer Games**

Fleshing Out Your Character

The following sections offer unique background concepts and ideas to possibly expand upon as you create your character for the Blight. These concepts don't provide any benefits for the character during gameplay; instead, they offer a diverse background unique to the setting. For example, a player might use these ideas to create a criminal dwarf (using the background concept) and then decide that he also ran away from his pursuers and joined the circus (using the background traits). The Referee could then build on this background to create unique villains pursuing the "dwarf clown on the high wire."

These ideas are presented for your consideration. You don't have to use them if you — or the Referee — feel they might intrude upon the game. They are simply ideas closely related to the Blight setting that might help new characters better fit in within the city.

Background Concepts

The following backgrounds can be used to expand on characters you create for the Blight. Characters may use only a single background concept in their creation.

Capitoler: A Capitoler hails from the Capitol, his or her parents mingled with minor gentry or scholars, serving clerks, guards, or any number of other professions and backgrounds. Capitolers can be of the Upper Class or Middle Class. Capitolers may dress more fashionably, have a richer accent, write in a very educated way, and generally have an air of confidence; in other words, they are better educated and slightly more aloof than other locals.

Commoner: The backbone of the city, the common man or woman is a drinker, a laugher, a dancer and a fighter. She is at home in the gin-halls of the city, toasting the Queen, and then readying herself for work the next day. Commoners can be of the Middle Class or the Lowfolk. Her background is born in the streets where the workers toil and earn their bread and butter. Commoners are tougher than the Capitolers; they have had an upbringing in the school of hard knocks.

Criminal: Tramps and beggars, waifs, strays, and crooks, you come from the underclass of the city and make no bones about it; you've had it tough. The streets are unfriendly to those without a home, and you've been bred hard. Criminals of the sort described here can be of the Lowfolk, Invisibles, or Lowest of the Low.

Crooked: Pity those who have been infested with thoughts of Between — for some it is a daily terror, a fear that, at any moment, she is going to reach out and devour them forever. Others fear that their very thoughts of Between are bound to manifest, and come and get them. The wolf



staring into the crib. Some think a war is about to begin, a war that will end everything very, very quickly as Between rises up and devours the grotesque, bloated city of Castorhage.

These are edgy people, yet strangely enlightened. They tend to be more artistic, creative, awakened, or elemental, but not always. They may have a peculiar effect upon animals, or upon people, or upon the things they create: cats may yowl and flee when they enter a room; people give them surprised second glances when they first encounter them, having imagined something different, something changed; or they may create things that are not quite right — works of staggering genius that anger people and can never be sold, or objects that defy explanation yet send a subtle twist up the spines of those who view them, and who can't bear to be near them for any great length of time.

Lyme-Blessed: Ah Sister Lyme, she slithers — or perhaps more rightly oozes — through the city, her veins reaching upstream to taint and choke. None can escape her. She peculiarly affects these humans; they've spent many generations on her back or in her womb, and it has seeped into their pores. Other humanoid races do not seem to take this patina, this infestation — some have pointed out that it shows her disapproval of those who are not human and base a whole range of bigoted beliefs on this thin veneer of reason.

Whatever the true cause, Sister Lyme has a peculiar hold on these folk, be they from fishing, harbouring, shipwright, or any of a host of other maritime and related backgrounds. Somewhere deep in their family tree, the river changed them. Maybe it was an accident? Perhaps the Canker nearly choked them, or they fell in and saw something? Maybe it was just the more common, visceral nightmares that plague those who live by her flanks? Whatever it was, she has a hold of them.

Blight Campaign Traits

We are the result of a thousand factors beyond our control — the factors surrounding our birth, our parents' situation, their friends' stories, and so on. Often our background is entirely ordinary, but even an ordinary story is still a story. A backstory gives your character a beginning to his tale, and the following campaign traits help you to form your character's backstory. How and if you use these backstories is up to you; is it little more than colourful fluff to commence a character's history, or is it much more than that — an entire tale waiting to unfold?

The campaign traits below are deliberately unusual, in keeping with the strange setting you have before you; don't be afraid to make your character extraordinary. You may have this character for a long time to come, so a little forethought can create a tale that may take you in an unexpected direction. As always, try to avoid using the trait as a simple mechanic; make a story, however simple, from the backgrounds below.



Abandoned: Abandoned to live on the streets as a child, you grew up tough.

Alleychild: The narrow defiles and ginnels were your childhood playground and home. You find wide-open spaces a bit distressing.

Almost Killed: You fell in the Lyme, were hit by a runaway or undead horse, or fell from a tall building. You have odd nightmares about the event that somehow manifest themselves in the dreams of others, who find it impossible to save you.

Apprentice: A trader raised you. You have saved twice as much starting money as standard.

Artists' Quarter Born: You were raised or spent some considerable time in the crazy and creative district of the Artists' Quarter.

Bastard Nobility: You bear the hallmarks of an aristocrat's bastard. You can mingle easier than others with different castes.

Between Marked: Whilst very young, a nightmare from Between somehow manifested itself and scarred you, granting you an almost uncanny sixth sense. Furthermore, you are deeply affected by the experience and cannot abide being near mirrors.

Boatchild: You have grown up on the banks of Sister Lyme, and even swum her depths for dares. If you wish, you can choose to gain river cant as a bonus language.

BookTown Born: You were raised or spent some considerable time in BookTown.

Born to Beer Slops: You were raised in the gin houses and taverns of the city.

Brine Touched: There is some briny in your family, a gift that your mother and father tried to hide. You might have webbed fingers, bulging eyes, or rudimentary gills just behind your ears.

Brothel Waif: The child of a harlot, you have grown up tough and independent.

Capitol Born: You were raised or spent some considerable time in the Capitol.

Child of a Famous Beauty: Your mother or father was famous in the city for their looks. However, you were often left alone when young and suffered from nightmares.

Chimney Sweep: When young, you were small and used for cleaning chimneys of the wealthy or those of the Capitol. Confined spaces leave you shaken.

Choir Child: You have an incredible singing voice. However, the brutality for perfection meted out on you has scarred you.

Circus Act: You ran away to join the circus. A colourful life of travelling through Festival and the Artists' Quarter followed, punctuated by trips to other parts of the city. In the tough backstage life you had, you were never fed enough.

Cruel Kin: Cruel parents or relatives raised you, and you left home early. You are independent, but a bit of a loner.

Devotee of Mother Grace: Very religious parents who found great solace in the order of things in the church of Mother Grace raised you. Your inherent faith is strong.

Educated: You attended one of the minor schools in the city. Schools were vile, ordered places, and they have given you a healthy loathing for order.

Festival Born: You were raised or spent some considerable time in Festival, but were not tainted by the place.

Foundling: You were abandoned as a baby, but found. There is something distinctly odd about you. This can be a physical thing such as a minor deformity (an extra finger, mismatched eye colour and so forth), or simply an odd air about you.

Freakshow Touched: You were raised in a freakshow and became close to many acts.

Gable Child: You spent your days up in the gables, where the air was clearer and there was always more to see. Heights hold no fear for you. Climbing is in your soul, however, and you are often tempted to tackle structures and buildings just to see the view.

Gablemaester's Child: Your father was one of the brave gablemaesters who kept the rooftops clean, safe, and free from spiders. You have utmost familiarity with the rooftops of the city.

Guild Child: You were raised as part of a guild and have a benefactor looking out for you.

Guild-Bound Family: Your family is blighted by an agreement they made to a guild before you were born. If you can pay off this fee (1d6+3 x 100gp), you gain 500 XP as a one-time reward. You have a healthy loathing of the Guild system.

Haunted by Between: Between seems somehow to follow you around. Every so often, you hear noises no one else does, feel something move behind you, or see a reflection in a corner of a mirror that cannot be there. Having that strange effect at your back makes you jittery.

Hollow Hills Born: You were raised or spent some considerable time in the haloed and holy places of the Hollow and Broken Hills.

Jumble Born: You were raised or spent some considerable time in the Jumble.

Kissed by Angels: Some people are born lucky, and you're one of them. Cats sit in your lap, children stop crying and laugh when you enter a room, and frosty discussions thaw when you talk. Some petty people find such lucky folk annoying, and become jealous of them, of course.

Link Child: When younger, you worked the dark streets of the city as a link boy (or girl). Your night vision is excellent, and you have an almost sixth sense when operating in darkness. You find daylight unpleasant, and prefer to wear tinted lens when the sun is at its highest.

Messenger: When younger, you were hired by one of the many messenger guilds in the city to pass messages in haste.

Mill Child: You spent much of your childhood working in one of the many mills in the city. You are very adept at getting through small spaces. The noisy mill machinery and treadmills damaged your hearing, however.

One of Many: There were 10+1d6 other children in your family.

Orphan: Raised by an overseer, your early life was incredibly tough. You still have nightmares about your childhood.

Riverchild: You were raised in a boat town along the river; you speak river cant as a bonus language.

Seventh Child of a Seventh Child: There is something decidedly odd about you; odd things happen around you, and occasionally unpredictable events occur — cats bristle and flee from you, plates fall on floors when you enter the room, or a clock strikes thirteen.

Sewer Brat: You spent a lot of time in Underneath, either as a runner for a guild, someone who ran away from home or the orphanage you were raised in, or some other story you deem appropriate.

Sideshow Touched: You were raised in a carnival sideshow and became close to many acts.

Sinks Born: You were raised or spent some considerable time in the Sinks.

Strange Relations: Somewhere in your family line is an anomaly: the hint of an elf, the touch of a gnome, the flicker of a halfling. Exactly how and where this came from is a mystery. Your character is slightly odd in a hard-to-define way. Perhaps the character has a luxuriant dwarvish beard, slightly pointed ears, or woolly feet that indicate that somewhere, far back, something odd happened in the family.

Streetwaif: You were raised on the hard streets of Castorhage. You made an enemy, however; your Referee will develop this bane for you accordingly, and weave it into your ongoing story.

Toiltown Born: You were raised or spent some considerable time in Toiltown.

Thirteenth Child of a Thirteenth Child: There is something decidedly odd about you, and not all of it good. Strange effects follow your character. These are only minor but decidedly strange: horses keel over and die in the street when you walk by; a pyre-beetle lamp goes out; you find two-headed silver coins; or a plummeting magpie crashes into a wall as you walk past. Life, in short, continues to throw oddities about you.

Touched by the Unsea: When young, you were taken to the Unsea, and it had a profound and unsettling effect upon you. The Unsea calls you, and you find it oddly consoling to have objects from there or even odd things from the mundane sea about your home or person. There is something oddly clammy and brackish about you.

Town Bridge Born: You were raised or spent some considerable time in Town Bridge, and can consider yourself a Town Bridge local.

Wicked Stepsisters: Wicked stepsisters who delighted in using you as little more than a slave raised you. This made you resilient, if sad, when young. The stepsisters are still alive and well, and still lurking somewhere in your backstory for your Referee to develop.

Wild Child: You were feral as a child. Your feral nature remains with you and should be developed into your character's story.

New Equipment

Equipment and Things to Part You From Your Lucre — Castorhage Goods

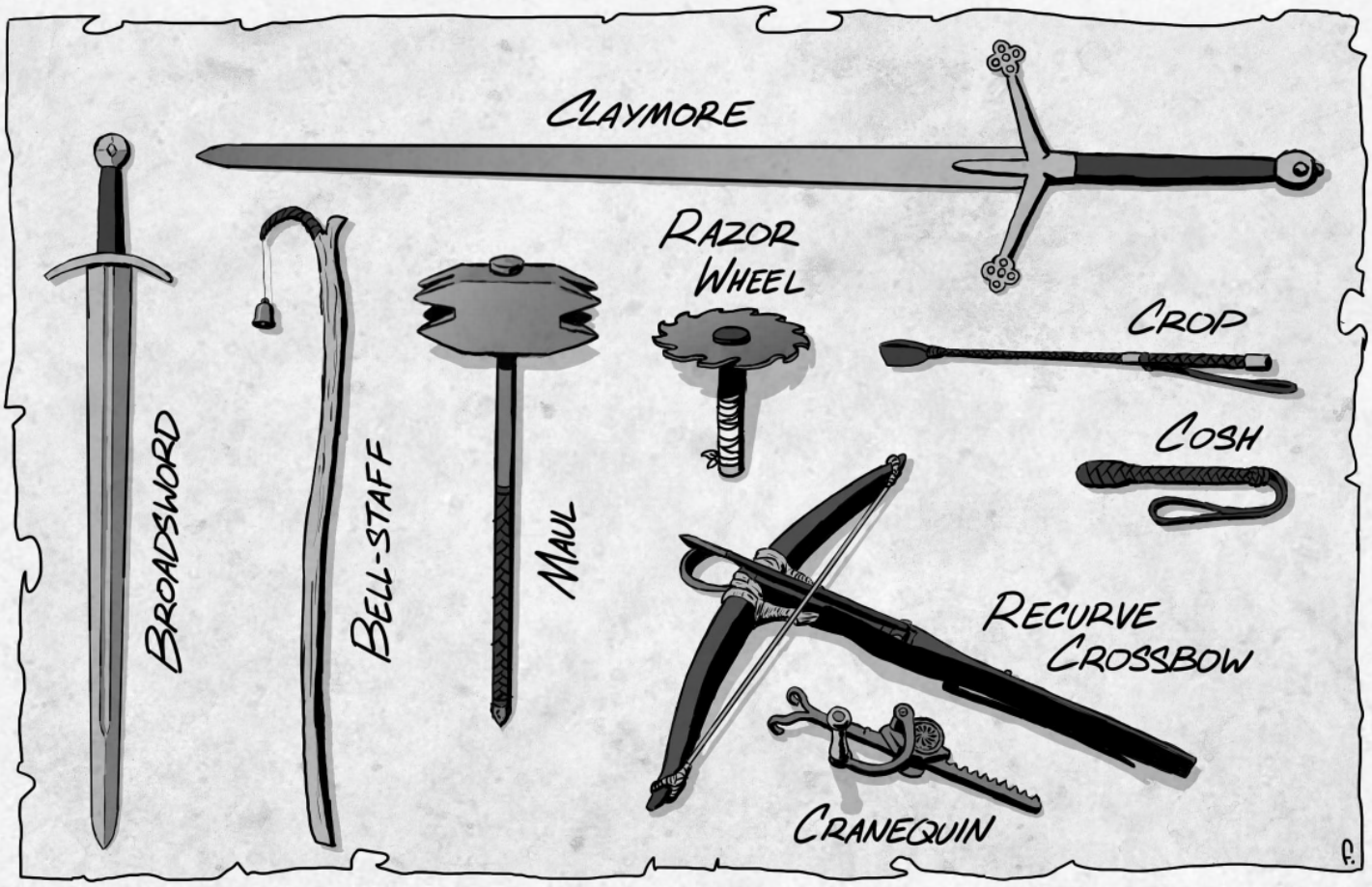
A short walk in the Blight avails one of the sheer volume of goods for sale, from Aarckle, Budge & Sons Gentlemen's Outfitters, to Zyn, Ripple & Wade, Pipe Makers to the Aristocracy. The wares are advertised across every available space; no wall is without a painted sign or hoarding, sandwich boards are carried by down-at-their-heels men eager to earn a tanner, and shop windows often show elaborate displays of wares. With so many people in such a small space, competition is stiff, and beyond their gaudy adverts, traders stop at nothing to be the best — and the richest — in the city-state.

Weapons of the Blight

Along with most other weapons, the following new weapons are used by the denizens of Castorhage.

Melee Weapons

Weapon	Damage	Weight (pounds)	Cost
Bell-staff (two-handed) (coprophagi)	1d6	5	1gp
Claymore (two-handed)	1d10	9	20gp
Cosh	1d3	3	1gp
Cosh, folding	1d4	2	2gp



Weapon	Damage	Weight (pounds)	Cost
Crop	1d2	1	1gp
Crop, loaded	1d3	1	2gp
Maul (two-handed)	2d6	14	15gp
Razor wheel (coprophagi)	1d6	1	1gp

Bell-staff, coprophagi: This is a simple walking staff usually of hornbeam or some other hardwood capped with a curving arm from which dangles a small bell. When the staff is carried, the bell rings. The coprophagi and sometimes lepers or other diseased individuals typically use these staves to give warning of their approach to others so they can be well away before they reach them. A coprophagi uses the bell-staff as a staff, with the option of tripping an opponent (25% chance) with the bell end rather than doing damage.

Claymore: The claymore is a heavier, two-handed version of a falcata. It is 4-1/2ft to 5ft in length.

Crop: A stout leather crop used to spur on a mount or punish a peasant.

Crop, loaded: A loaded crop is a crop in which the shaft and head have been weighted with lead to provide some heft.

Cosh: This small, flexible club, also known as a blackjack, consists of a leather-wrapped lead weight attached to the end of a wooden shaft via a leather-wrapped coil spring.

Cosh, folding: This smaller, lighter cosh folds to make it easily concealable. The gentleman's version — a handy weapon for the discerning person of quality to have in a tight spot, or on the rugged streets of the Blight — is usually rimmed with metal, and is readily transportable in a handy leather holder.

Maul: This massive hammer's head ends in multiple blunt spikes that concentrate the force of a swing, allowing it to deliver crushing blows. Due to the size and weight of its head, a maul is poorly balanced and requires two hands to wield.

Razor wheel, coprophagi: This weapon is made from a thin sheet of scrap metal that has been fashioned into a circular shape and given a serrated edge. A wooden handle is set in its centre at a perpendicular angle so that it can be gripped with the blade parallel to the wielder's arm and used in battle as a slashing weapon.

Blight Gear

Adventuring Gear

Item	Cost	Weight
Cage, pyrebeetle	1gp	5 lbs.
Everburning candle	5gp	—
Everburning lamp	25gp	1 lb.
Fishing tackle, basic	1sp	—
Fishing tackle, luxury (Tugg, Wilmott & Son)	1gp	2 lbs.
Gable bridge, clockwork	40gp	15 lbs.
Ladder, clockwork	60gp	10 lbs.
Lantern, pyrebeetle	4gp	3 lbs.
Pyrebeetle, live	5cp/ pound	—
Pyrebeetle carcass	1cp/ pound	—
Siklight cockroach	8cp	—
Siklight sconce	5sp	1 lb.
Siklight sconce, candelabra	1–3gp	5–8 lbs.

Cage, Pyrebeetle: This is a small, portable cage capable of holding up to 5 lbs. of pyrebeetles. If properly cared for and fed, pyrebeetles can survive in these cages for up to a week.

Everburning candle: This otherwise normal candle has a *continual light* spell cast on its wick. Due to the small size of its wick, it sheds light only as an ordinary candle, but it does not emit heat or deal fire damage. If the candle is broken, its *continual light* no longer functions.

Everburning lamp: Everburning lamps are oil lamps bearing a *continual light* spell. An everburning lamp is partially made of glass and is, therefore, fragile. If an everburning lamp is broken, its *continual light* no longer functions.

Gable bridge, clockwork: Similar to a clockwork ladder, a gable bridge extends to 20ft in length at the pull of a lever, enabling it to be used as a bridge, provided support is available at both ends. These objects, which weigh 15 lbs. and are structurally stronger than the ladder, are frequently used by Gablemaesters on their hunt for spiders and other horrors in the rooftops.

Ladder, clockwork: A collapsible ladder able to extend up to 20ft in length in a single round. A clockwork ladder collapses back to 4ft in length and weighs 10 lbs.

Lantern, pyrebeetle: This sturdy lantern comes equipped with a fireproof wire cage capable of holding a pound of pyrebeetles in its interior as well as built-in reflectors to magnify its light to equal that of a torch.

Pyrebeetle, live: These cockroach-like beetles have an extremely hardy carapace and produce a natural slow-burning oil from glands within their bodies. They are not especially incendiary, but burn readily if exposed to fire. Typically, they are set alight after being held within small fireproof cages or bags of tough fibres. A pound of burning pyrebeetles emits light in a 10ft radius, but reflectors mounted on street lamps or within lanterns doubles this area of illumination to an area equal to that of a torch. A pound of live pyrebeetles burns with a largely smokeless fire for 12 hours. A single live pyrebeetle is insufficient to provide a light source, quickly burning out and crumbling. Burning pyrebeetles are not suitable to serve as flaming weapons because they do not burn particularly hot and readily crumble to ash if treated too roughly while burning.



Pyrebeetle carcass: As live pyrebeetles, the carcasses of pyrebeetles can be lit for use as a light source. They give off the same illumination as live pyrebeetles, but the oil-producing glands of a pyrebeetle break down soon after death. A pound of pyrebeetle carcasses burn for only 2 hours. A single pyrebeetle carcass is insufficient to provide a light source, quickly burning out and crumbling.

Siklight cockroach: These small, pale-grey roaches gives off a soft, greyish light equal in illumination to candle when awake. They eat garbage and if properly cared for, will live for a year or more. They also gives off a distinctive unpleasant odour. Siklight cockroaches have a hard chitinous shell. If their shell is pierced, the cockroaches explode, dealing 1 point of damage to all characters within a 5ft radius. However, they do burn for 1 round thereafter and deal 1 additional point of fire damage, so flammable objects and structures can easily be set alight by such an explosion. The cockroaches are also prone to rupturing their carapace under certain weather conditions and are known to start many small fires in Toiltown and in the hovels along the Great Lyme River (conditions for such a spontaneous explosion are at the Referee's discretion). Fortunately, cumulative exploding siklight cockroaches do not cause additional damage or duration of burning. However many of them explode in a single square, they still only deal a total of 1 point of fire damage and another point of fire damage on the following round before they burn out. For this reason, they have found no practical application as weapons, though they can make good detonators.

Siklight sconce: This is a small candle sconce of tin, brass or some other non-flammable substance. The candleholder portion has a wire covering and allows space for a single siklight cockroach to be caged within. Beneath this is a small, connected repository that can hold a small amount of organic garbage upon which the caged cockroach can feed. As long as the food repository is kept stocked with garbage and the sconce is shielded from extremes in temperature or violent handling, a siklight cockroach can live in the sconce for up to a year or more. A siklight sconce can be set on a table or other surface as a candle stand or mounted to a wall.

Siklight sconce, candelabra: This functions in all ways as a siklight sconce but can have individual sconces for anywhere from 3 to 12 siklight cockroaches.

Animals, Mounts, and Related Gear

Item	Cost	Weight
Animal Sentinel (canary)	1sp	—
Cage, canary	1gp	5 lbs.
Camel	75gp	—
Camel (combat trained)	11gp	—
Canary	2gp	—
Dog, fighting (blight-bull)	20gp	—
Dog, fighting (pit-mastiff)	80gp	—
Dog, terrier	2gp	—
Elephant	450gp	—
Elephant (combat-trained)	530gp	—
Hyme	2500gp	—

Animal sentinel (canary): An animal sentinel is a normal animal used (normally by humanoids) to detect hazards before they can affect the animal's owner. Many types of animal sentinels exist, but the type most commonly encountered are the caged canaries used by miners. The caged canaries are carried into new or deep tunnels to detect the presence of carbon monoxide or coal gas or methane. When a canary sentinel is exposed to these types of bad air, the bird becomes sickened for 1d4 rounds before its owner becomes affected. When the owner is exposed to the levels of gas that would cause negative effects to him, the canary becomes unconscious and dies in 1d4 rounds. After an exposure to such a hazard, there is a 50% chance that the bird dies regardless of whether it was removed from the hazard in time or not.

Camel: This camel is trained as a mount or pack animal. A combat-trained camel can be ridden into combat without danger.

Dog, fighting: See **The Blight Campaign Guide: Part 6, The Blight Bestiary**

Dog, terrier: See ***The Tome of Blighted Horrors*** by **Frog God Games**

Elephant: An elephant trained as a mount or pack animal. A combat-trained elephant can be ridden into combat without danger.

Hyme: A hyme is an unpleasant but loyal draft animal detailed further in **The Blight Campaign Guide: Part 6, The Blight Bestiary**

Transport

Item	Cost	Weight
Boat, Bilges narrowboat	1000gp	varies
Caravan, gypsy	150gp	900 lbs.
Carriage, fancy	500gp	700 lbs.
Fare, coarse cab	1gp/mile	—
Fare, elephant-wallah	2sp/mile	—
Fare, gable palanquin	10gp/mile	—
Fare, sedan chair	1sp/mile	—
Fare, treadmill ferry	2sp	—

Bilges Narrowboat: A horse or other dray animal pulls this 30ft- to 100ft-long ship. It is 10ft wide and has a living space. Sometimes the whole boat is given over to a living area, but costs are tripled for such vessels. In general, they travel at 1 mph along the city's lock-laden canal ways and 2 mph on rivers.

Caravan, Gypsy: A richly decorated and enclosed wagon used for living and travel. A family of 4 can easily live in a gypsy caravan. They are almost always drawn by a single horse.

Carriage, Fancy: A four-wheeled luxurious transport able to carry as many as four passengers in leather-clad luxury. Often, details are added to the carriage such as potion stores, armoured doors, and magical accessories.

Clothing

Item	Cost	Weight
Cummerbund, silk	4sp	1/2 lb.
Boots, farmer's heavy duty	1sp	3 lbs.
Boots, gentleman's luxurious, (Forbes Winter; Grugg & Sons)	1gp	2 lbs.
Boots, ladies' calfskin and crocodile hide, luxurious	2gp	1-1/2 lbs.
Boots, ladies' wolverine and ermine, luxurious	10gp	2 lbs.
Boots, wading, leather	5sp	5 lbs.
Boots, workman's heavy	5sp	3 lbs.
Fisherman's coat, heavy waxed	2gp	6 lbs.
Gauntlets, black leather	2gp	1 lb.
Gauntlets, owlbear hide	3gp	1 lb.
Gloves, winter, gentleman's luxury (Forbes Winter; Grugg & Sons)	1gp	—
Hat, stovepipe	10sp	1 lb.
Hat, tophat, basic	1gp	1/2 lb.
Hat, tophat, fancy ermine-lined (Forbes Winter; Grugg & Sons)	25gp	2 lbs.
Hatpin, basic	1sp	—
Hatpin, jewelled	2+gp	—
Jacket, insectum, luxurious (Aarkle, Budge & Sons)	3gp	3 lbs.
Jacket, smoking, luxurious (Forbes Winter; Grugg & Sons)	4gp	4 lbs.
Keff	5cp	1/2 lb.
Muff, basic	5sp	1 lb.
Muff, ermine or beaver	10gp	1 lb.
Overcoat, basic	5sp	5 lbs.
Overcoat, luxurious, fur and silk lined (Maxim's)	8gp	6 lbs.
Overcoat, waxed (Aarkle, Budge & Sons)	1gp	5 lbs.
Tailcoat, luxurious (Forbes Winter; Grugg & Sons)	2gp	4 lbs.
Veil, mourning	2sp	—
Veil, white	3sp	—
Wrap, ladies winter	4sp	4 lbs.

Fisherman's coat, heavy waxed: This heavy long coat is made of canvas and carefully waxed to seal it against moisture. Because of its excellent insulating qualities, it grants a +2 save vs. cold.

Keff: This is a thin, black full-face scarf. It is light enough with a loose enough weave to be worn in the summer months without being stifling or limited vision, but provides some protection against biting flies.

Personal Grooming and Accessories

Item	Cost	Weight
Dubbing (Mompeson's Finest)	3cp	1/2 lb.
Flask, hunter's, plain	7sp	1-1/2 lbs.
Flask, hunter's, silver	2gp	1-1/2 lbs.
Grooming case, gentleman's (Watt, Simpin & Dodd)	1gp	2 lbs.
Hair oil, gentleman's (Forbes & Son)	1sp	—
Hair oil, musked (Forbes & Son)	3sp	—
Hipflask, fancy	3gp	1/2 lb.
Hipflask, plain	1gp	1/2 lb.
Hookah, fancy	3gp	10 lbs.
Insectum container, fancy	2gp	—
Insectum container, armoured	4gp	1/2 lb.
Lucky rabbit's foot	1sp	—
Monkey's paw, mounted on silver chain	2gp	—
Moustache oil, basic	2sp	—
Moustache wax, luxury (Hobb & Darkler, Gentleman's Groomers)	7sp	—
Muscle balm (Colcott's, "Eases stiffness")	2sp	—
Pipe, smoking, briar	2sp	—
Pipe, smoking, clay	1cp	—
Pipe, luxury smoking, calabash	1gp	1/2 lb.
Polish, boot (Mompeson's Finest Tan)	5cp	1/2 lb.
Razor, cut-throat (Hoppin & Sons)	2sp	—
Razor, cut-throat, superior (Forbes & Son)	5sp	—
Scrip, luxury leather	1gp	1/2 lb.

Item	Cost	Weight
Scrip, plain	1sp	1/2 lb.
Shaving stick, military	2cp	—
Shaving stick, perfumed	1sp	—
Snuffbox, gentleman's	1gp	—
Tantalus lock, walnut; average	10gp	1/2 lb.
Travelbag, gentleman's	1gp	3 lbs.
Travelbag, lady's	1gp	3 lbs.
Umbrella, fancy	5sp	1 lb.
Umbrella, plain	1sp	1 lb.
Walking cane, fancy	1gp	2 lbs.

Insectum container, fancy: A richly decorated container in which to keep live insectum.

Insectum container, armoured: As above, but made of steel.

Scrip, luxury leather: A small decorative pouch or wallet for carrying small amounts of coinage and important papers or calling cards.

Scrip, plain: As above, but without decoration.

Tantalus lock, walnut: A tantalus lock for a liquor bottle encased in walnut (Open Locks –10%).

Food and Drink

Item	Cost	Weight
Ale (Tolly's Bottled Brown)	1 sp	1 lb.
Chocolate	10 gp/1b.	1 lb.
Cabb'e (coffee) beans	2 sp/lb.	1 lb.
Gin (pint)	2 sp–5 gp	1 lb.
Tea & Accoutrements		
Tea, common, brick or loose leaf	5 cp/lb.	1 lb.
Sieve, bland	2 cp	—
Sieve, fancy	1 sp	—
Sieve, silver	2 gp	—
Tea, Arrath Green Leaf	6 gp/lb.	1 lb.
Tea, Dazeel	1 sp/lb.	1 lb.
Tea, East Dominion Between Leaf	25 gp/ 1/4 lb.	1 lb.
Tea, Mugreebb Finest Quality (Gruss & Daughter)	4 sp/lb.	1 lb.
Teapot, earthen	1 sp	2 lbs.
Teapot, silver	15 gp	1 lb.
Tea set, common	5 sp	5 lbs.
Tea set, luxury silver (Hobbington & Daughter)	50 gp	7 lbs.
Tippling stock, luxury	20 gp	—
Tonic (Ad's, "Guaranteed to lift your spirits")	4 sp	—

Drugs

Item	Cost	Weight
Opium tincture	25 gp	—
Snuff, tobacco (1 pinch)	1 sp	—
Tobacco, rough shag	5 sp/lb.	1 lb.
Tobacco, Turkad	8 gp/lb.	1 lb.
Tobacco, personal mix (Tott & Grimwell, Royal Tobacconists)	2 gp/lb.	1 lb.

Opium tincture: This small vial of liquid contains a single dose of ingestible opium.

Snuff, tobacco: Typically carried in decorative silver boxes, snuff is a form of tobacco that does not require chewing or smoking. Instead, it is snorted into the nostrils with the effects experienced as swiftly as inhalation.

Insectum

Insects are everywhere in the Blight, a peculiarity even the wisest find difficult to explain. In summer, the night air boils with them, and even in the depths of winter, a hive of enormous elephant cockroaches may be seen huddling behind a hearth, or a black batmoth fluttering around a pyrelantern's glow in the snow. The Blight, which is host to many unique species, seems to nuture them, and many grow to uncommon, even giant, sizes. They have an alarming habit of forming swarms that — if not dealt with swiftly — may amass in quantities large enough to kill domestic animals and even people.

The preponderance of large and unique insects, as well as other types of vermin, in the city has led to a unique industry that combines alchemy, toxicology, and insect husbandry to produce a range of alchemically enhanced drug-like insect venoms. The purpose-bred species that result are known as insectum, and their use is tightly controlled by the corrupt and ruthless Insectum Guild, which issues licenses to only a handful of official dealers to collude on supply, and who respond swiftly to spikes in demand with commensurate price rises. A host of illegal street dealers fill out the market for insectum, but most are unpredictable in quality, with many of these disreputable dealers selling inferior, sick, or even dangerous insectum. While guild members are not spotless, the value of their official status and a fixed address tends to ensure that the effects of their products can be relied upon.

An insectum is typically used by ingestion or injury: eating it, or applying its bite or sting, sometimes to a particular body area, where it may remain attached for the duration of its effects. Usually, the user must willingly succumb to the effects of the toxin in order to also benefit from the alchemical boon it contains. Insectum are sold live and sterile, and die within a week of purchase. An insectum must be alive when used, and unless otherwise detailed, dies once it has been used. The price reflects a single dose of insectum.

Insectum	Type	Price
Angry weevil	injury	15gp
Auceps scarabaeus	injury	8gp
Bite spider	injury	20gp
Blake's sanguisuga	injury	70gp
Bloatfly	ingested	1gp
Callus fleas	injury	10gp
Cockerel spider	ingested	8gp
Darkwasp	injury	35gp
Dolor crabrao	injury	55gp
Eyeleech	injury	25gp
Festerfew	ingested	15gp
Fingerlice	injury	7gp
Fire bite lice	injury	8gp
Gadfly ambrosia	ingested	3gp
Howling nightshade grub	ingested	8gp
Hungering wasp grub	ingested	50gp

Insectum	Type	Price
Joy scarab	injury	2gp
Jubb's nasal lice	injury	28gp
Kothrington's swan fleas	injury	30gp
Lobotomy hornet	injury	190gp
Lucius spider	injury	8gp
Misery slug	ingested	6gp
Ochre lice	ingested	20gp
Screaming maggot	ingested	25gp
Speed weevil	injury	8gp
Thistle frenzy bug	injury	8gp
Wart lice	ingested	35gp
Water crane	ingested	22gp

Angry weevil: This black-and-red giant weevil injects a toxin that deals 1d2 points of damage and causes the user to fly into a rage for 1d4 rounds, gaining +2 to hit, but taking a –2 penalty to AC. When the user kills a creature, they must make a saving throw or become confused and attack the nearest creature other than themself. On the following round, refer to the *confusion* spell to determine the next action. At the end of this round, and each round thereafter, they can attempt a new saving throw to end the confusion effect.

Auceps scarabaeus: The bite of this golden scarab contains a poison that causes 1d6 points of damage. The user becomes very alert, and is tougher to surprise (1-in-6 chance) for 2 hours.

Bite spider: The bite of this spider injects a toxin that deals 1d3 points of damage and causes the user's skin to gradually harden over the course of 1 minute, providing a +2 AC bonus for 1 hour. When the effect ends, angry boils and warts cover the user's skin for the following 1d6 days.

Blake's sanguisuga: When this mottled brown leech is first attached, the user must succeed on a saving throw or be nauseated for 1 minute. The leech remains attached for 1d3 hours in which time the user's pain threshold is greatly elevated. The user shrugs off 1d2 points of damage from each successful melee attack.

Bloatfly: Consuming this 2in-long fly provides creatures sufficient nutrition for 1 day. The user must make a saving throw or be sickened for 1 hour.

Callus fleas: The bites of these fleas cause the user's skin to harden gradually over the course of 1 minute. This deals 1d4 points of damage but provides a +1 bonus to AC for 1 hour.

Cockerel spider: Ingesting this spider causes the user's voice to deepen and become more threatening.

Darkwasp: The sting of this wasp injects a venom that deals 1d8 points of damage and numbs the user's ability to feel pain. The user can shrug off 1d4 points of damage from each melee attack for 1 hour.

Dolor crabrao: The sting of this wasp injects a venom that deals 1d6 points of damage. The user enters a rage that lasts for 1d6 minutes. While in a rage, the user gains a +2 bonus to hit, damage and saves. In addition, she suffers a –2 AC penalty. The user is fatigued for 1d4 minutes after the rage ends.

Eyeleech: When this black leech is attached to the eyelid, it injects a toxin that deals 1d3 points of damage but the user gains darkvision (60ft) for 1d3 hours.

Festerfew: A user who eats a handful of these live lice gains a +5 bonus on all saving throws vs. disease and poison for 1d4 hours but must also succeed on saving throw or be sickened for 1 hour, suffering a –2 penalty to all rolls.

Fingerlice: A user whose hands are bitten by these lice gains exceptional dexterity but tiny maggots writhe under their skin. The user gains a +20% bonus to Delicate Tasks and Open Locks checks for 2 hours, but suffers extreme itching and 1d4 points of damage afterward as the lice wriggle out of the skin.

Firebite lice: A user bitten by these lice gains exceptional agility but the toxins cause the user to feel like they are on fire. The user takes 2d3 points of damage, but gains a +50% Climb Walls bonus for 1 hour.

Gadfly ambrosia: Consuming a paste made from the crushed remains of this fly provides a creature with sufficient water for 1 day. The user must succeed on a saving throw or be sickened for 1 hour.

Howling nightshade grub: This sausage-sized grub tastes disgusting and howls when eaten. For the following day, the user gains a +5 bonus on saves made to resist damage from exhaustion, starvation, thirst, a forced march, or hot or cold environments, but becomes sluggish for the duration.

Hungering wasp grub: When eaten, this orange-and-black-striped grub provides the user with a +2 bonus on saving throws vs. poison for 1d2 days. At the end of the duration, the user is nauseated for 1d10 minutes and must succeed on a saving throw or be sickened for 1d2 days, suffering a –2 penalty to all rolls.

Joy scarab: The bite of this green scarab beetle injects a toxin that instils intense feelings of elation and joy. The user gains a +3 bonus on saving throw vs. *charm person* or *suggestion* effects for 1d4 hours. However, for the duration, the user fights only to defend themselves. If questioned while under the effects of this spell, any advice or answers the user gives may be disjointed due to their euphoric state.

Jubb's nasal lice: These lice must be snorted into the nasal passage where their bites grant the user a greater sense of smell and make them harder to surprise (1-in-6 chance) for 2 hours. For the duration, the user also takes a –4 penalty on saving throws vs. stench and inhaled poisons.

Kothrington's swan fleas: The bites of these fleas inject a toxin that deals 1d6 points of damage but the user gains a +4 bonus to strength for 1d6 minutes (and any resulting to-hit and damage bonuses). At the end of the duration, the user must succeed on a saving throw or take a –4 penalty to strength for the following hour. Usable only by fighters.

Lobotomy hornet: The sting of this hornet injects a venom that grants the user a +2 bonus to strength for 1d4 hours (plus any to-hit and damage bonuses), but the user also takes a –4 penalty on saving throws vs. any mind-affecting spell (*sleep*, *charm person*, *suggestion*, etc.) for the duration. Usable only by fighters.

Lucius spider: This fist-sized grey spider's bite delivers a toxin that deals 1d6 points of damage for 1d3 rounds, but a user so affected gains a +50% Climb Walls bonus for 1d3 hours.

Misery slug: Eating this slimy, black finger-long slug cures 1d4 points of damage each round for the following 1d4 rounds, but the user is sickened for the duration, suffering a –2 penalty to all rolls. At the end of the duration, the user must make a saving throw or be nauseated for 1d4 rounds, suffering a –1 penalty to all rolls.

Ochre lice: Eating a handful of these fat lice grants a +20% bonus on Move Silently checks for 1d3 hours, but the user must make a saving throw after each attempt or retch violently (and noisily) for 1d3 rounds.

Screaming maggot: This writhing, bulbous maggot screams when eaten, dealing 1d4 points of damage to the ingester, who must also succeed on a saving throw or be deafened for 1d10 minutes. The user gains a bonus 1st-level spell for 1 hour. Usable only by magic-users.

Speed weevil: The venomous bite of this white weevil is applied to the chest near the heart, dealing 1d8 points of damage and granting the user a +10 Movement bonus for 2 hours. The user collapses in exhaustion for 1d4 hours after the frantic speed increase, however.

Thistle frenzy bug: If this insect is attached to the user's neck, its sharp claws inject toxins that deal 1d4 points of damage per hour but the user gains a +1 AC bonus while the bug remains attached. The bug remains attached for 1d3 hours before dropping off. If it is forcibly removed before this time, the user must make a saving throw or fall unconscious for 1d3 hours from a concentrated burst of venom.

Wart lice: Ingesting these lice causes the user's skin to become malleable and flexible, allowing them to mould their features into other shapes. At the end of the duration, the user's skin forms ugly warts for 1d4 days before they disappear.

Water crane: Eating this long-legged water insect grants the ability to breathe underwater for 1d4 × 10 minutes. Once the user has breathed underwater, though, they must make a saving throw to be able to breathe air again so long as the water breathing duration is still in effect. If the user fails this saving throw, they can only breathe underwater for the next 1d10 minutes or until the duration ends, whichever is sooner. After this time, if the water breathing duration is still in effect, the user can attempt another saving throw to be able to breathe air again.

Common Names of the Blight

Lists of names are provided below for males and females of the various races (as well as surnames for typical humans). There are many more names to found within the city, but these can serve as a guide for capturing the feel of the average names spoken on the streets and in the gin houses of the city.

Briny

Male Names: In an effort to blend in, briny often take human names, although those with an inherent favouring of their own racial language may take a darker name more in keeping with their past. See the list of human names for examples found in Castorhage.

Female Names: Like the males, the less common females also tend to take names from societies in which they find themselves. See the list of human names for examples found in Castorhage.

Coprophagi

The names of the coprophagi are unpronounceable to most humanoid tongues. They, therefore, habitually take simple names borrowed from the predominant cultures around them irrespective of gender or meaning. However, they hold no special connection to these names and frequently take a new name whenever they next must deal with folk who are not of their own kind. Some common names include Abe, Ban, Bell, Bob, Cane, Cob, Dock, Duke, Guv, Jud, Lob, Lord, Mab, Nob, Pod, Prince, Queen, Rose, and Tune.

Gnomes and Tradelord Gnomes

Somewhat stuffy and grand, the tradelord gnomes' names always seem to demand attention.

Male Names: Bates, Cumberlin, Huffingham, Jomas, Myles, Perrington, Tomorj, Trevor, Willin

Female Names: Agathra, Agned, Delorys, Gertrand, Myllicent, Myrtle, Pennifor

Gypsy-souls

Male Names: Gypsy-souls have abandoned the typical naming conventions among halflings in favour of those of the Viroeni. Common male names include Alfonso, Andrej, Baldo, Hanzo, Luca, Marko, Stefan, and Toman.

Female Names: Esmara, Eva, Mirella, Nuri, Riva, Tabita, Violca

Humans

Male Names

Barbel	Joshua	Sorrel
Bathsedomil	Kale	Spurge
Bedomile	Kotlin	Sturgeon
Borage	Loam	Tanner
Breck	Longhorn	Toadflax
Carbuncle	Luther	Tog
Carder	Natter	Tomlin
Cleg	Mab	Turnip
Cole	Mox	Turnstone
Crig	Oscar	Tussock
Droll	Padge	Uriah
Ekrin	Pleasant	Weald
Flax	Quarrel	Weld
Gideon	Qogg	Welt
Grund	Rudge	Woad
Henbit	Seth	Wrack
Jacob	Silas	Wryneck

Female Names

Ancona	Elisa	Mercy
Bernice	Elisabeth	Murnifell
Blackberry	Ettie	Nan
Briney	Fogou	Nightscent
Broom	Grace	Poppy
Brudella	Happiness	Primrose
Bunting	Hazel	Rull
Buttercup	Hemp	Shanny
Catkin	Hempy	Shanny
Celeress	Hope	Sheepsbit
Chastity	Hornet	Tansy
Chen	Humrineller	Teasel
Constance	Ivy	Thenna
Curlew	Juniper	Uneria
Dandelion	Katkin	Vellia
Dulse	Lettuce	Weft
Ella	Mallow	Zydora

Surnames

Alderfly	Grindylow	Pumple
Bedstraw	Gutter	Rake
Blackfly	Hartwill	Rast
Blackhemp	Hogweed	Rowgate
Bladderwort	Humpless	Sedge
Botfly	Kumblecramps	Slyne
Brompton	Kumblekumble	Sough
Butterly	Linton	Stoat
Catchpenny	Lucksikard	Stotter
Cornuwell	Mine	Tangle
Cotter	Mowthorpe	Thornholme
Crump	Mumblechump	Tredge
Crush	Mumpsy	Troff
Dogerell	Pedimine	Turnkey
Flixton	Podge	Wodge
Frim	Pollard	Wold
Grindalythe	Porter	Zander

Lantern Folk

Male Names: Bariom, Caedimus, Cassius, Filo, Luciliun, Tiberonus

Female Names: Andromeda, Caliopa, Gratica, Koryola, Veran, Vesta

Night-Slugs

As loners and outcasts, most night-slugs don't bother with names at all. Their lack of interaction with most others prevents any sort of need for one. A night-slug identifies everyone as either "self" or "other/danger." Of the few that do take names, they are usually a single word — bereft of context — borrowed from another language or a monosyllabic name that sounds pleasing to a particular night-slug's ear. They make no distinction between male or female names. Examples include Bloo, Fancy, Glugh, Plop, Spoon, and Tater.

Primitives

Male Names: Primitives eschew the names of their elven heritage and those of the surrounding human culture alike. They prefer to take on monosyllabic mononyms that they feel portray the underlying truth of their being or poetic descriptions that seek to do the same. To most others, their names seem pretentious, nonsensical, or both. Male names include Chak, Durst, Flower-Fire, Pum, Quell-The-Stone, Ran-The-Side-Fall, Son-Of-Nos, Slay-Made-Blue, Tak-tak, Thorn, Tutho, Uch, Willow, and Whole-Wind.

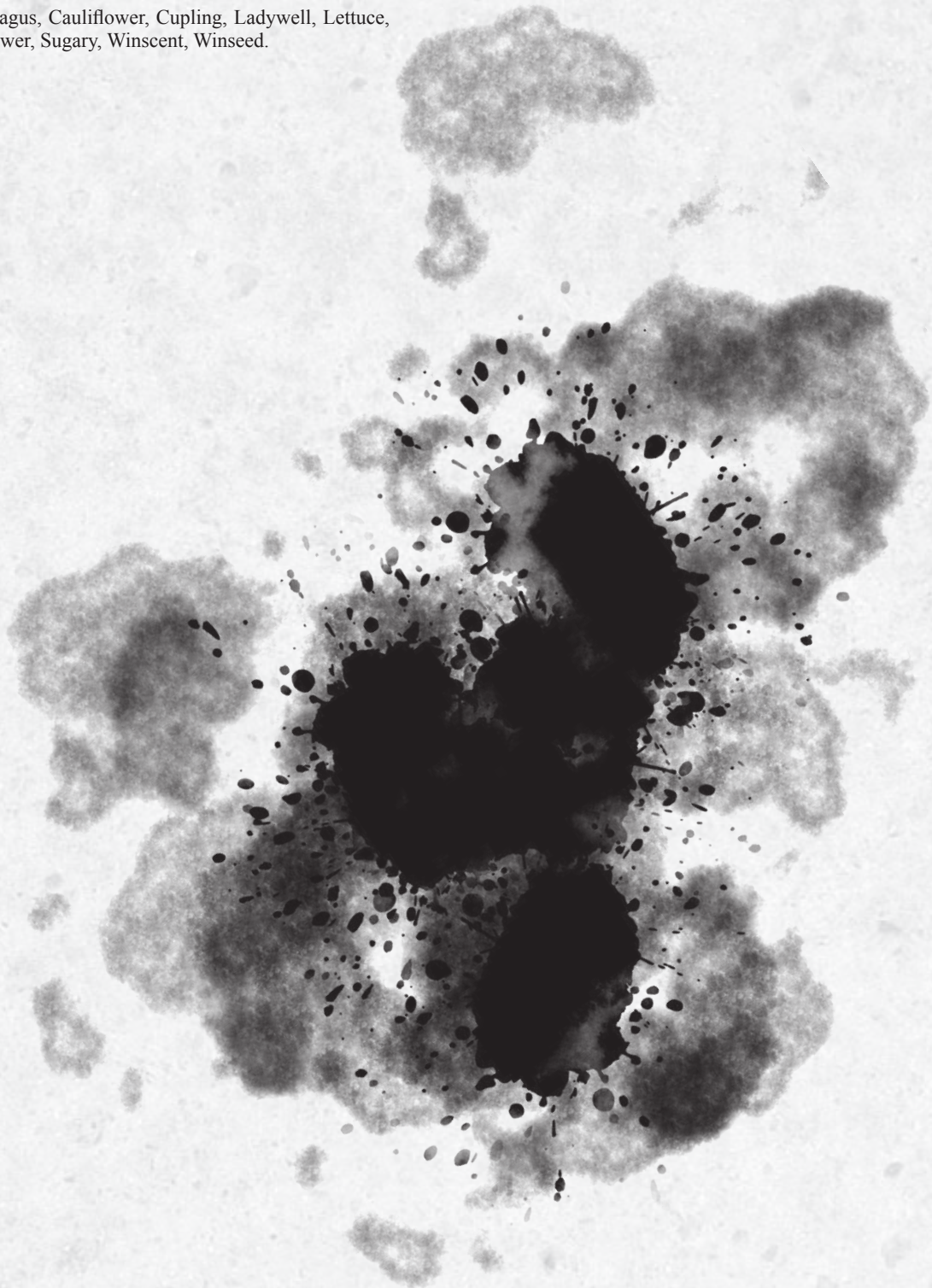
Female Names: Females use a similar naming convention as the males, but their names tend more toward the more poetic phrasing or individual words that they feel represent their moment. Such names include Abundance, Encounter-Upon-Green-Radiance-Of-Night, Light-In-Ever-Noise, Perfect, Pain-For-Promise, Rain, Sash, Two-Sides-Through, Under-Lives-Peace, and Willow.

Shadowlampers

Male Names: Borkil, Daga, Hurk, Kultak, Merrik, Tarik, Yasg
Female Names: Borlea, Dresa, Morfuda, Shevzu, Tulik, Yada

Swyne

Male Names: Boarbrand, Bogslob, Grund, Grork, Hobb, Hogwell, Hoglard, Pikskin
Female Names: Asparagus, Cauliflower, Cupling, Ladywell, Lettuce, Pigmella, Porcinia, Porflower, Sugary, Winscent, Winseed.



For the Referee

"Happiness lies neither in vice nor in virtue"



The advice given herein is aimed specifically at the Blight and running a rich, story-driven experience for you and your players. However, the themes within could fit well into any urban adventure path or other campaigns. Rich relationships and family are at the centre of many adventures set in out-of-the-way places, betrayal can occur in the most remote spots, and complex groups can stretch across the countryside, not just streets.

These rules and ideas won't suit every group, so use only what you think you and your players will enjoy.

Finally, not everyone wants the complexity of followers, friends, powerful enemies, and shadowy sponsors. The Blight lends itself beautifully to the more classic role-playing campaign too, with opportunities for adventuring at every corner. Whether it's robbing a cruel merchant, exploring the shifting jungles of the Between, or fighting in the bear pits and sweat vats of the city's underbelly, a city is a wonderful place to adventure.

Using the Blight as a base for other adventures gives your players the opportunities to spend their hard-earned cash on pleasure, and on the dubious goods for sale here. Each Blight adventure and District includes options to further develop stories as sidebars, but has simple adventure at its core.

Bringing the Blight to Life

The best campaigns and adventure paths are merely text without the input of a great Referee and players to guide it and make it grow into something more. These groups often share their experiences on message-boards and get into character in a way actors might be proud of, immersing themselves in detail. On one occasion I recall with particular fondness, actual food was prepared for part of the adventure.

An adventure is not unlike that food that served as part of our game. A great adventure is not just about words but deeds, and a good Referee adds flavour to the words, spicing up descriptions with sounds, sights, and smells to bring the whole to life in a satisfying and fulfilling way.

Castorhage pays serious attention to these senses, and each district of the city has a "Sight, Sound, and Smell" section as a part of it. Also included in each district is one additional section — what the place *feels* like. Is it crowded or oppressive? Have an air of nervousness? Excitement? Some Referees may find this detail too much, and wish simply to play out events and areas as written. However, I again include such detail because for many Referees (myself included), this can transform a game into an experience. Strong feelings leave an impression on the adventure, and as such may lead to a more satisfying experience. I can recall when simply the banging of my hand on a radiator to define an echo from below suddenly created an air of menace, and when a tap on the underside of the playing table to define a sudden thump below the characters' feet pulled everyone's gaze downward.

Again, as with all the Blight, the city is yours to do with as you please. Use as much or as little as you wish.

The Blight: Mundane, Magic or Mythic

The Blight is a place like no other; it bleeds into other realms, it bludgeons its way into narrow alleys, and it slithers its way beneath other cities. The insidious, twisted domain of Between has a peculiar effect upon the place, and one you may wish to think about before you run anything in and around the Blight: How does it work? As written, the Blight is a single place; a city made up of many parts to create a whole fantasy setting perched on the borders of reality with an extraordinary place — Between.

You might not want that, however. You might want a district, a shop, or an NPC to come from here, and nothing else. These places and people might be mundane parts of a whole, simple passers-by or districts that have always existed in your city. You can, however, go for a more extraordinary answer. The Blight can literally exist *Between* other places: a door in your city leads to the Blight, a shop front backs onto Between, or a tramp wanders the streets of your city *and* the Blight. If using this more magical approach, be careful how you choose to explain it; the Between is, in effect, similar to a *gate* spell, allowing access between, but it is much more fickle than that. You might not want such an explanation, however; *gate* spells are generally very rare, and having too many presents its own problems. Instead, you might wish for the simplest of explanations — it's a mystical place whose very nature is inexplicable. Doors exist that connect to unusual places, but they simply are; occasionally a view from an otherwise mundane window gazes across the Capitol; a character falls down a seemingly endless tunnel and ends up in the Between and thence the Blight.

A City for Anywhere

The remarkable thing about running a fantasy role-playing game is the flexibility you have in determining detail. You can create vast volcanic ranges, deep ocean trenches, and huge flood plains. In short, you determine whole geographies. Once these ideas have been generated, you're then free to get into the details — how high, how deep, how wide? The same goes for any fantasy city, and Castorhage is no different. I've presented Castorhage as having a temperate climate with extremes of winter and summer; however, it would be an easy task to adjust this — some sections such as the Black Ice Fayre of winter (see **The Blight Campaign Guide: Part 1**, **Seasonal Districts**) — would need to be reconsidered or removed, but basic details could be altered quite simply.

Castorhage could be at the equator of your world — in such a case the heat and squalor should be emphasised. Litter the narrative with crushing ivy growing up the sides of decaying buildings ravaged by the peculiar Castorhage stonemite (whose bite, of course, is painful and can kill babies). The river is sluggish and could become mudflats lasting many months in the dry seasons.

Flip the idea on its head and Castorhage becomes a sub-arctic hell; the black waters frozen for many months. Here the city dwells in a comatose frozen canker-shrouded blanket throughout the long, harsh winter.

Other ideas can easily be weaved into the mix, even the exotic such as Castorhage standing on the edges of a vast waterfall falling into nothing, or being the last point of call before the Burning Ocean. Use the text as a canvas, not a script.

Size Isn't Everything

One of the most important decisions you may wish to make is how Castorhage fits into your world: Is it the basis for an ongoing campaign and thus the centre of everything?

Castorhage is presented herein as a huge city, an impossibly massive population at complete odds with a typical fantasy game setting. Its population density as presented here is a little greater than that of the borough of Manhattan at ~77,000 people per square mile. However, despite its advanced technological state compared with much of the world, Castorhage is by no means a "modern" city. It lacks the towering skyscrapers, though it has a multitude of precariously tall tenement buildings and a propensity to stack new construction haphazardly atop old construction as in the Jumble and Festival. Though Festival and TownBridge are not technically a part of the city in the legal definition, their population numbers are included in the census here. In addition, though Manhattan has a multitude of skyscrapers, a great portion of that real estate is office space rather than residential space, of which Castorhage has only a fraction by comparison. In fact, the typical apartment or residence of Manhattan would be considered luxuriously roomy by better than 90% of the population of Castorhage who settle for a single cramped room, garret, undercroft, stairwell, or door stoop that they call home. The Blight, of course, has only a ghost of the infrastructure of a modern Manhattan or London.

However, even with the above considerations, the Blight's size is still virtually unbelievable (always an interesting concept in a fantasy roleplaying game) in a contextual sense, like a swollen blood-gorged

tick always on the verge of rupture. This is greatly accounted for by Castorhage's own unique quality hinted at in the "Between tessellation" description in the sidebox. In short, the city's proximity to Between creates a sort of vortex of sentience (I would say humanity, but humanity is only a majority representative of the beings found here).

This unique vortex of sorts consists of two principal features. Despite the appalling mortality rates and constant threats of danger and disease, Castorhage enjoys a subtle fecundity that ensures that the population can renew itself and not only sustain its numbers but even grow despite the plagues, pestilence, and famine that frequently afflicts the population on some scale. In addition, it seems to possess a strange form of unconscious mental attachment (as well as physical when you consider the blighted human subtype in **The Blight Campaign Guide: Part 3**, **Racial Variants**). Those who are born in the Blight seldom leave — even those who travel far away to the city-state's many colonies usually end up finding their way back home before all is said and done. This is no conscious compulsion; it just seems to work out that way more often than not. In addition, foreigners who travel to Castorhage and remain for any extended period frequently stay permanently as well, start a family or raise the one they brought with them and become a part of the city's ever-burgeoning populace. Again, this is not a conscious compulsion, and most anyone asked about it as a motivation would outright deny such a thing, but often that is how things turn out.

It seems that the Blight is hungry and never sated.



If the population scale of Castorhage is simply too large for your campaign use, however, simply drop the number by an order or magnitude or only adopt the parts of the city that you really need. Just because the Blight is a growing, ravenous beast doesn't mean that it must be for your campaign world.

The Flavour of the Blight

"The imagination is the spur of delights ..."

The descriptions of people and places gives you an overview of the city — its decaying parts and its twisted alleyways — but these are merely the main components to the dish. The true essence of the Blight lies also in its flavour, its smells, its atmosphere … its spice.

The Blight Campaign Guide: Appendix A includes several random lists included to give you some inspiration if you need any for the strange locales and locals found in the city but also to give you a taste of what is lurking there. It is hoped these lists inspire you to set up adventures, encounters, or even perhaps simple conversations in your own game. In addition, **The Blight Campaign Guide: Appendix B** includes a lexicon of terms common to the folk of the Blight so you can sprinkle it liberally throughout your campaign and create that living-city feel.

How It All Began

One of the most useful and inspiring RPG articles I've ever seen appeared in the pages of *Imagine Magazine* — TSR UK's roleplaying periodical that was published during the decade of the '80s. *Imagine* featured articles about a homegrown campaign called Pellinore and in some articles The City League — so called because it was "a league across." These city articles fascinated me in their level of detail. They would describe everything from entertainments in the city to obscure corners and plazas with an incredible depth of character and interaction. To me, they were the consummate way to describe a city — down to every street corner, every persona, and every obscure fact but always leaving space for development if the Referee wished. This place lived. Yet always with such a place, there was room for expansion.

A long time ago I was lucky enough to have an adventure published called "The Styes" (*Dungeon Magazine* #121). I intended the place to be a simple one-off location for a single adventure, and as such, the setting was fairly small, and provided scant details. I'd read China Miéville's incredible *Perdido Street Station* shortly before writing it, and the amazing dark atmosphere Miéville created soaked into me. Reaction to the adventure was good, and James Jacobs suggested a sequel. I threw several ideas around, one of which eventually became "The Weavers" in *Dungeon* #135. However, at about this time I also began an adventure path with my own group, based upon the Styes' setting. This adventure path, loosely based around *The Maltese Falcon*, greatly expanded upon that original setting, and I soon realised that the Styes was not big enough for the players to explore so other regions such as Festival Town and the Spice Islands were incorporated. These in turn expanded into what became a schizophrenic madness, an endless development that has been fed and nurtured in a dark attic as it slowly became the City-State of Castorhage.

That the Styes now languishes unused by its owners frustrates me, but it has given birth to a new monster — The Blight — so in many ways I'm grateful for its torpor.

Above all, the idea for this vast work owes itself to encouragement in my writing, both from message-board posters and especially from the wonderful people at Paizo and Frog God Games. For without that, and the kind words of many others, I would never have had the courage to undertake this project. It's also very important for me to thank people who have taken the time to review my work, edit it, and suggest changes. I've looked at everything they've done, and I hope learnt from them. Your suggestions and annoyances and likes have helped me to improve in the past, and continue to improve in the future I hope.

This project is therefore yours, and I hope that I can repay you by creating something to savour.

Bear in mind also that the Blight is of course more than the sum of its parts and that any twisted dark fantasy setting could have these elements. Over and above these flavours, here are a few more ideas to give you a taste of the city.

I started titling this next section "Mature Campaign Themes," but I'm not sure if that's the exact phrase I wanted. Mature can mean many things, but initially comes across as sex, violence, drugs, and other morally ambiguous themes. Those issues certainly have their place in the Blight, as it's a dark fantasy setting, but that's not all it's about. The optional rules and ideas that follow are for you to judge. Do they suit your style, are they unacceptable to your group or would they have a place with a slight alteration?

Campaign Themes and Styles

Some groups play an incredibly deep and absorbing campaign; others like to relieve the stress of their daily lives by beating up orcs. Most games (ours included) prefer a balance of both; unmasking a politician

The City-State of Castorhage

CITY-STATE OF CASTORHAGE
Neutral metropolis
Corruption +8; **Crime** +9; **Economy** +10; **Law** +6; **Lore** +5; **Society** +4
Qualities academic, colonial power, holy site, magically attuned, notorious, prosperous, racially intolerant (lowest caste), strategic location
Disadvantage Between tessellation, impoverished, overpopulation
Danger +40

Government secret syndicate
Population 3,285,000 (2,225,615 humans [1,436,615 Castorhagers {985,200 blighted humans}, 480,000 Xi'en, 113,600 Foerdewaith, 67,100 Gtsang, 55,000 Ashurians, 33,400 Oceanders, 15,000 Heldring, 10,700 Shattered Folk, 7,300 Jaata, 3,100 Khemitites, 1,400 Uplanders, 990 Mulstabhins, 900 Viroeni, 510 Daanites]; 177,000 mongrelfolk[TOHC]; 173,300 ratlings[M]; 145,140 gnomes [62,500 tradelord gnomes[***], 82,000 rock gnomes, 640 svirfneblin]; 131,800 dwarves [120,000 street dwarves[BG], 11,800 hill dwarves]; 93,000 half-elves; 57,000 goblinoids [53,000 goblins, 4,000 hobgoblins]; 52,000 half-orcs; 43,200 brinies[**]; 42,800 orcs [42,000 orcs, 800 orog[TOHC]]; 35,200 elves [33,800 high elves, 1,380 primitives[***], 20 wood elves[BG]]; 28,400 swyne[**]; 26,000 other; 24,500 halflings [14,000 halflings, 10,500 gypsy-souls[***]]; 22,500 tengus[LL5]; 2,100 inphidians[TOHC]; 1,000 tabaxis[TOHC].t

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Notable NPCs

Demoriel the Twice-Exiled Seductress, Hidden Despotrix of Castorhage (Chaotic female arch-devil [TOHC])
Her Royal Highness Queen Alice, Monarch of Castorhage (Chaotic female demonvessel[M])
Her Royal Highness Princess Alicia, Heir Apparent (Chaotic female Between-sired[*] MU2)
Clovis, Crown Prince of the Capitol (Chaotic male aranea[M]: HD 8, abilities of MU9)
Elaine of Aldwark, Queen's Lady-in-Waiting (Chaotic succubus: HD 8, abilities of MU8)
His Resplendent Grand Justice Braken, Crown Justice, Master of Courts (Chaotic male doppelganger: HD 9, abilities of Asn 4/MU1)
His Resplendent Grand Justice Korsk, Crown Justice, Master of Trade (Chaotic male swyne[**] MU3)
Her Resplendent Grand Justice Ashleia, Crown Justice, Mistress of Commons (Neutral female gynosphinx[M]: HD 10, abilities of MU10)
His Grace Duke Malice, Captain-General of the City Watch and the Royal Armies (Chaotic male human fighter 10)
His Grace Duke Taim, Master of the Capitol (Neutral male human fighter 6)
Kevel Durmast, Watch Commander (Neutral male doppelganger: HD 8, abilities of Asn6)
Prester Haft, General of the Royal Army (Chaotic male human fighter 11)
His Holiness Umbertine IX, Father of the Church of Mother Grace (Lawful male human cleric of Mother Grace[#] 11)

Military and Law Enforcment Royal Army (17,000); **City Watch** (2,100); **Secret Police** aka "Knockers" (1,000+?)

Between Tessellation The area of the city of Castorhage has the unique property of being exceptionally "close" to a physical "other reality" called Between. This creates all manner of unpredictable and dangerous manifestations within the city and its inhabitants.
Colonial Power Castorhage possesses a vast network of global colonies from which it can draw economic and labour resources.
Overpopulation Castorhage has a massive population for the area it encompasses unparalleled elsewhere in the world. Its massive economic, colonial, and magical resources are the only things that stave off massive starvation. However, it also creates an unprecedented diversity, innovation and labour base causing a contradictory dichotomy of prosperity and poverty.

[*] Alicia is not the only child sired by something from Between, but the long-term effects of this rare coupling are presently unknown.
[**] See **The Blight Campaign Guide: Part 3**, **Non-Player Character Races**
[***] See **The Blight Campaign Guide: Part 3**, **Racial Variants**
[#] See **The Blight Campaign Guide: Part 4**, **True Gods of the Blight**
[BG] See ***Bard's Gate*** by **Frog God Games**.
[M] See ***Monstrosities*** by **Frog God Games**.
[LL5] See ***LL5: Borderland Provinces*** by **Frog God Games.**
[TOHC] See ***The Tome of Horrors Complete*** by **Frog God Games**.

one week, and slaughtering a group of goblins without dialogue the next. Linking adventures into themes through the characters is one way to bring your characters realistically together under a common bond. It's not for everyone; some groups like to start and roll characters with total freedom — an elf monk here, a dwarf barbarian there — but sometimes a change of pace is good. It may not always be appropriate to do so, but occasionally, ideas like the two below can offer a welcome change of pace.

The Player Characters as Part of the Story

Having a theme to a group of characters can be a great way to commence and find a thread through a campaign. Are the characters all associated with a thieves' guild? Are they all pirates or members of the same holy order?

While theming a group is a powerful way to start a campaign, restrictive themes can soon become tiresome, so whilst using these themes, try to vary them. Perhaps one group of characters is indeed part of a holy order, but even such an order has its more dubious associates. Isn't it true that even the best and most spotless law enforcers must associate with and occasionally (or perhaps often) deal with more dubious characters? Such a party could easily be made up of clerics of the order, supported by fighters who though initially allied to the order could be disillusioned with it or have a more selfish, profit-driven motivation for their alliance with a powerful religion. A thief could easily be "persuaded" to join the order to assist in the more dubious of activities when nimble hands and a head for heights is crucial.

Having limitations of race is occasionally interesting, and an all-elf or dwarf party can make for an interesting campaign, but players often play their characters for a long time — sometimes many years — so be sure *all* your players are happy with this option before you consider it.

Below are two potential options for themed character groups, and how they may be involved and evolve in your campaign.

The Shadow of Freedom

Vile politicians, twisted royalty, and greedy thugs rule the city. Against this background, a movement is rising — **the Shadow of Freedom**. Word spreads amongst the underclasses, and charismatic locals are sought to further the group's ends. This group doesn't want anarchy; they want

freedom. Working-class heroes; any class could feasibly be represented here, and thieves, fighters, and rangers could join forces with clerics, magic-users, and a multitude of races. The binding arc for this party is to strike at the ruling classes in their corruption and unmask them. Adventures in this theme focus upon unmasking cruel overseers who use slaves and undead to work mills, revealing secret cults hidden within the aristocracy, and stopping the filthy trade of golem-making.

The characters face the entire weight of the law in this campaign, which sees them as fugitives operating in the underclasses, and yet they are glorified as heroes by the working folk who do all they can to help the legendary Shadows.

The Guild and Demelza

This party is more ambiguous and operates from a thieves' guild. This guild could be a group of swarthy but kind-hearted Dickensian rogue-thieves or a bunch of street thugs who use brutality to achieve their ends: wealth and power. The power they seek is an object, a mask that grants incredible charisma and magical power to whoever wears it. Sadly, the wrong person has it, a young magic-user by the name of Demelza. As the campaign artc begins, her actions within the Great Coven, which is threatening to burst apart, are but small ripples in the great pool of the city.

The binding theme here is greed and power; the characters face the wrath of the law and rival gangs as they seek to establish their own patch of the city — perhaps even their own guild eventually. Adventures focus on daring heists, dashing rooftop chases from sadistic guards, and working in a city district to establish a base of operations. As the campaign begins to take on more of a structure, the characters learn that Demelza's cohorts are thriving right under their own feet in the Underneath. She has fled from her own kind and has entered the bowels of the city to regroup.

The Great Coven cares nothing about who gets in the way, and the locals are suddenly frozen with terror as night visitors and other *things* cavort across the rooftops. Unfortunately, the characters are caught between the two factions, and whatever action they take is construed by the other as treachery. As Demelza becomes more desperate, she dabbles with darker and more powerful devils, and soon these too are at large in the characters' patch. More powerful aspects of all the diverse groups are brought together for a final confrontation in the vast spaces below the city.

The Characters as the Whole Story

Another option is to modify the character's background (detailed in **The Blight Campaign Guide: Part 3, Background Concepts**) to be something extraordinary. In this way, a group of characters may become the focus of the campaign. This option lends a very strong connection between the characters and the setting. It may, however, require the Referee to flesh out the adventures accordingly, or modify published adventures with his own theme. In taking this approach, it is vital to raise questions at each turn, justify why events are happening, and seek answers.

Following are two sample backgrounds used as examples for this process:

Noble's Bastard: Far from being just any noble, it is a highborn priest who has fathered the character. The character is the bastard offspring of Justice, the Lord Alfor Quent, Master of Humours. The characters are brought together for some collective reason, perhaps to aid the unwanted father or to thwart him. How do events proceed from here? Does the Justice know of the characters and judge them irrelevant or crucial? Do the Justice's enemies know of the characters and consider them valuable tools for future plots? Does the character hate the Justice, having been brought up as an orphan?

Child of a Famous Beauty: Famous beauty the character's parent may be, but looks are only skin deep. The character is a child not of one beauty, but many, a cult of witches that were each burned at the stake long ago. Now the characters have been brought together for some reason. In truth, the witches' child has already infected his friends — the other characters — with his arcane sickness, and their fates are now intertwined.

The cult mothers sold the souls of their children to the Devil, whose cohorts come collecting on the first child's name day. The first child is an NPC who brings her kin together to fight back against the Devil. She tells the characters that they must stick together or risk a fate worse than death, but soon after the campaign begins she vanishes, and soon the Devil's cohorts begin to appear.

You can modify these backgrounds to certain characters, or all of them as you wish, giving the characters a ready-made focus and enemy at the start of things to hang your campaign on or to add to existing adventures to give them a personal touch. Characters of different races and ages present different challenges, but having the group begin as friends or subjects of a particular NPC is always a good starting point.



Real Places with Blight Flavour

Though the Blight is a fiction, a sheer folly of the improbable, its roots run deep in the real world. I can't help but picture those places from which her inspiration has been drawn when I crack open the pages or dust off the keyboard to revisit the old girl. The main places I always have at the back of my mind when delving into the Blight are Fes in Morocco — one of the few true medieval cities left in the world — and, of course, London. Venice, York, and Cambridge all also lurk somewhere in the streets of the city-state as well.

Fes is a meandering confusion of alleys and footpaths, steep narrow streets, and the resonance of human work. The call to prayers is something to be experienced as they echo across the city.

It would be churlish to deny that there is a lot of London in the Blight; many names and inspirations are from the city, twisted and spat down on this setting for your amusement. Peter Ackroyd's incredible *London: The Biography* is the best book I've ever read about the capital and is a goldmine of great ideas.

Castes

Caste is about birth and breeding, and it's something that a clever person can easily use to her advantage. How you play this option depends on how much you wish to make of caste issues. Some find them abhorrent, and prefer to play with them out of the way. That's fine. Just have it playing along in the background: royalty looks down on upper caste, who look down on middle caste, who frown on low caste. Caste may be a good way to enhance role-playing situations, but it may also not be your cup of tea. As ever, use it or not as you wish.

The bottom line with this and many other fantasy settings is that power rules. If the characters get caught in the Royal Palace and end up before Alicia — the little queen — and she yells, "Off with their heads!" then unless the characters escape, and escape quickly, they've had it. That is not to say, however, that a lord ordering a serf to chop his hand off expects him to do so. Making an enemy of a sir or lord may bring the characters trouble in a different way, however; he's likely to have plenty of powerful friends, plenty of money, and plenty of influence. Perhaps he's friends with the local Watch Captain, and can ensure that the characters are harassed or followed, or his house is better guarded.

If you do decide to try some class/caste interactions and social duelling, please see the wealth of information provided in ***Bard's Gate*** by **Frog God Games**.

The Caste Levels of Castorhage

Royal
Upper Class
Middle Class
Lowfolk
Invisibles
Lowest of the Low

Duels

Duels are common in the Blight amongst all classes and castes, and are an effective way to settle matters without them getting messy. They are a commonplace way to resolve issues that are likely to otherwise result in a protracted campaign and, ultimately, death. They can also be very exciting to role-play.

Duels are illegal (but then, theoretically, so is murder) but follow a very strict set of guidelines. Duels are to "First" (the first wound to a participant ends the duel), "Second" (where the suffering the loss of 75% of hit points ends the duel), "Third" (where the fight goes on until one person is rendered unconscious), or "Fourth" (to the death). Duels are always fought on neutral ground, and weapons are either melee or ranged. Sometimes magical duels are fought.

Seconds are used to act as assistants to the duellists, and sometimes (particularly in Third or Fourth duels) it may be agreed that seconds also participate. All duels require the services of a Referee.

Many Duels to First and Second are accompanied by a wager — often a considerably large wager — that the loser hands over the sum without complaint. Cheating, reneging on a wager, or other such despicable acts soon lead to an establishment of a reputation, and there are some duellist clubs and guilds — most notably the Royal Duellists — who seek out cheats and duel them … or simply murder them.

Those who play fairly and honour the traditional rules of duelling are respected, even by their enemies.

The Honourable Guild of Duelling Referees

This august body, of course, does not exist in the city. However, clever investigation around town always avails one of a local member of the unspoken guild. These Referees ensure fair play and that honour is satisfied, and operate on a strictly controlled hierarchical wage system. A Referee for a Duel to First costs the participants 50gp; a Duel to Second costs 100gp; a Duel to Third costs 200gp; and a Duel to Fourth costs 300gp. Not using a Referee may raise awkward questions afterward: If the duellists had nothing to hide, and if the winner was "so honourable" and didn't need to cheat, why wasn't there a Referee? It is considered gentlemanly, for the challenger to pay for the Referee, but this is not always the case, and for those of lower castes, there are always folk nearby who might act as an arbiter in a tight spot or, if not, a baying crowd who otherwise suffice.

Enemies

Great enemies make a great campaign. A recurring villain can generate stronger feelings than the toughest monster, and having someone who can outsmart the characters from time to time is a good way of levelling the playing field of your campaign. However, recurring villains come with some warnings: Don't overdo them, and don't make them omnipotent, omniscient, or omnipresent. Base your villain on logic, bound by the same rules your characters have, and they'll work fine. A good recurring villain should have a way out, but one based on sound game sense. A *potion of gaseous form* or a *scroll of fly* are good methods to use, but hold your master villain to the same rules the characters have and be prepared for your characters to come after them. The predictable garbage truck pulling out of a side alley at the last minute to unintentionally block a pursuit should be reserved for only your worst game sessions. Ergo, always be prepared that the villain may be caught or killed.

In the same way that a master villain makes a powerful addition to some campaigns, so do more mundane enemies. Enemies great and small — from individuals to guilds, cults and monsters — bring another dimension to play. However, they come at a cost: more work for you as the Referee.

Enemies have actions, lives, lairs, and probably friends and enemies of their own, and you must decide early on how much work you're prepared to do. A simple basic villain such as a cult is an easy way to start; as the characters kill the cultists, other more powerful cult leaders hear about it and try to eradicate the characters. Eventually, clues lead to a showdown and a satisfying campaign ending. A more complex issue would be a group of Anarchists; the relationships within that group are complex, and perhaps some allies are also partly enemies. The characters could even side with their enemies temporarily to attack a greater mutual foe, although can anyone be trusted in such a complex situation?

Optional Rule: Enemies as a Penalty

The Blight offers the possibility of introducing enemies into the character's lives and the idea of enemies as a penalty. In a thriving vibrant place like a city, there is generally no cause without effect: You almost always reap what you sow.

You may wish to allocate enemies to characters at the start of their careers, in the same way that they come into the story with friends. Bear in mind the relative strengths and importance of starting-level characters when deciding their enemies, and again don't just think of individuals alone. Perhaps the character is part of a family that wronged an NPC, or maybe what he stands for and whom he works for are abhorrent to an NPC who was once a friend.

You might occasionally wish for such an enemy to be incredibly powerful, however. Starting off a campaign being hated by Duke Taim makes for an interesting twist to any campaign. Taim is not omnipotent but has tough friends, and an adventure starting with a group of constables kicking in the characters' door to arrest them for heresy could provide some lively play. However, it requires additional work on your part to either explain why Duke Taim doesn't continually pursue the characters once they escape or explain how the characters are repeatedly able to avoid his efforts.

Another, less front-heavy option is to never throw away a good villain. If the characters defeat a villain on an adventure but don't make sure that he's dead, it's very easy to again use that same villain (now with a revenge motive against the characters). Likewise, even if they are more thorough in their administrations against said villain, perhaps she has some well-connected friends of her own who might spring to have her raised or perhaps saved at the very brink of death only to be transformed into an undying (see **The Blight Campaign Guide: Part 6, The Blight Bestiary**). In a place like the Blight, the options for a long-term villain reappearing from a past adventure are almost limitless. And as the characters advance in level, power, and influence, a good villain should do the same with the expansive resources and alliances to be found in the city.

For instance, if during an adventure the characters kill Rammen the Wererat cultist, unless they take precautions to keep his death secret, his sister Campion hears about it 1d4 days later. **Campion** (a.k.a. the **Mistress of the Ashen Lantern**) (Chaotic female wererat: HD 5) is part of the Cult of the Elder One, and commands followers, most of whom are wererat clerics. Campion loved her brother and immediately becomes an enemy of everyone who took part in the raid that ended in his death. Based in Festival, her lair is a festering vat of filth filled with her victims. Campion begins her enmity by stalking individual characters, finding their homes and preparing to attack the ones who live alone.

And of course, all of this plays out as the backdrop to whatever new adventure the characters happen to be undertaking.

Fads of the Blight

"It is always by way of pain one arrives at pleasure."

Fashions shift almost daily within the chic circles of the Blight, and one day's fad is tomorrow's cast off. The most current fads are listed below, although they can change as quickly as the wind.

Art as Cruelty/Cruelty as Art

The Surrealists Club delights in using pain as art, and whilst some of these groups are little more than sadomasochists, others are much more sinister. The use of flesh for art is unsettlingly common in the Blight, and is fast attaining a cult following. The creation of art from broken, living flesh is something that has coincided with the rise of the Cult of N'gathau within the city, who are able to keep victims alive whilst lacerating and filleting them. A scattering of notable groups, including the revolting Panacea, have risen in recent times to indulge in this travesty.

Of course, there are always those who imitate art, and the rise in sadistic serial killings involving the lacerating of flesh has soared recently.

Goblin Pets and Awakened Animals

The latest fashionable accessories to be seen with — goblin pets and awakened animals (almost always dressed in imitation of humans) — are seen frequently in the Blight and command a high price. Kept on a chain and regarded with some amusement, the creature has learnt that if it behaves to amuse, it is not hurt. Awakened animals learn very quickly, and some have surmised that every single cat in the Blight is awakened. Goblins tend to be slower to learn but are no less comedic in the eyes of the elite as they make their ineffectual attempts to resist or win their freedom.

A good goblin pet or awakened animal able to perform tricks fetches at least 100gp; those who do more astounding things fetch even higher prices. The *Garbled Poet*, a goblin that quotes poetry, was recently the subject of a 1000gp bid from a collector; a bid refused by its current owner.

The whispered idea that these goblins somehow steal out of their homes at night and meet below the streets of the city has been roundly ridiculed by all parties, but it's only a matter of time before the truth of the situation comes to light in a most disagreeable spectacle.

Awakening

In the Lost Lands, and in Castorhage in particular, circumstances and environment sometimes coalesce around mundane animals, and in some even rarer instances, plants and stones, changing and enhancing them. Such things shed their base intelligence and animal desires, if any; they evolve, in a fashion, and take on the intellect, drives, and motivations of their two-legged "masters". Such beings are now considered Awakened; they possess human-level intelligence, reasoning, and agendas as well. Awakened are typically as intelligent as children, or rarely a grown adult. However, it is not unheard of for some longer-lived Awakened to study, to learn, and to advance their own intellect to genius-level prowess. How much knowledge could a tree absorb over its lifespan? How much a stone?

Awakened may roll 3d6 for intelligence, wisdom, and charisma scores just as player characters. In most cases, Awakened gain the ability to speak one or two languages, typically local languages or a common trade language based on the being's background. Awakened maintain their racial norms, with advanced mental capabilities. For example, while an awakened cow may be able to tell the ranch owner that it needs more hay, it will do so in a slow drawl, with a local accent, and speak the same language it has heard the owner use, just like any other ranch hand. An awakened mouse, on the other hand, may speak very quickly, on a number of subjects, appearing quite scatter-brained, especially if the scent of cat is in the air…An Awakened boulder, lazy with the noon-day sun on its back, may speak slowly indeed, if at all. Time stalls when you're a stone.

If the Referee chooses not to accept the concept of awakened, intelligent animals and objects in their campaign, just disregard this designator. Awakened can be exchanged for trained just as easily, or removed entirely.



Macabre Fashions

Aristocrats get bored very quickly and require the very latest indulgences and fashions, partaking in an almost frenzied desire to be seen in the right places by the right people wearing the right clothes. A macabre fashion has grown recently that is accentuated by the wearing of undead objects as clothing or accessories. Animated insects are the usual choice, but unliving stoles are also seen as de-rigour amongst the higher families. A small selection of such objects follows.

Item	Cost
Earrings, unliving, undead moths set on silver hasps	40gp
Stole fox fur, composed of torpid, undead fox	400gp
Cape, ghoul-flesh	200gp
Gown, wedding, egret feathers accented by carved monkey-bone swans	400gp
Scarf, human hair	5gp

Clubs, Guilds, Cults and Gangs

Making a foe of an individual can be dangerous; cunning or powerful individuals may stalk and attack characters when they are at their most vulnerable or hire assassins and other killers to do so on their behalf. Far more dangerous, however, are cults, groups, kinsmen, and gangs, for these are likely to have deeper resources and can make multiple attacks upon their enemies.

On the other hand, membership in such groups can make for powerful allies — or perhaps, not-so powerful allies that create more of a hassle than a benefit. Most groups don't necessarily advertise what weaknesses and liabilities they possess while certainly overselling their strengths. In any case, whether friend or foe, the myriad groups that the characters could become associated with provide you with endless opportunities for mayhem, mystery, and even some mirth.

Some cults may also operate as clubs and some guilds may operate as gangs or — as in the case of The Guild — be composed of many, many different gangs. You should typically determine whether a group stands opposed to a character or as an organisation that a character could potentially want to join and then handle the representation of that group accordingly based on the information provided in this section. For general purposes here, cults and gangs (and the Great Houses — see below) are presented as adversarial groups and clubs and guilds as organisations that might be something the characters would be interested in gaining membership.

Clubs

Unlike guilds, clubs are relatively easy to join, rise within, and leave. They are simply structured in a format with a prerequisite, a benefit, sometimes (but not always) a special feature, and with the addition of an advancement protocol. Unless otherwise noted (or as in the case of some secret clubs), an individual may not be a member of more than one club at a time. While a member in good standing, the character gains all of the benefits of club membership, but these are lost as soon as that membership dissolves. However, at that point the individual is free to begin membership with a new club. Many clubs require an annual fee. If that fee is not paid, the member is placed on probation and no longer gains the benefits of the club (though any special penalties still apply). The individual can come off of probation simply by paying any overdue membership fees and become a member in good standing again with all the normal benefits.

There are thousands of different clubs within the City-State of Castorhage — some enormous and influential, some small and virtually unknown. A few sample clubs are provided below to use or to serve as a template for other clubs that you may wish to introduce to your campaign.

Amateur Mendicants Society (Club)

A group of deluded aristocrats, wealthy individuals, and the curious who wander the streets dressed as beggars.

Prerequisite: Seeking out a member of the Mendicants is not easy; unless assigned as a reward or occurring as an encounter, it requires an introduction form a member in good standing, and then the petitioner must convince members they are an asset, worthy of joining their group. Other methods of entry are at your discretion. For example, someone who spends months dressed as a beggar at a place known to be frequented by members of the mendicants may impress them sufficiently to approach that individual.

Benefit: The Mendicants Society has an incredible network of spies and knowledge of the city. Twice per month, a member can ask a question of her fellows about the city with a 75% chance of accuracy. This does not apply to special areas of the city were commoners simply would not know the answer (Referee's discretion on knowledge).

Special: A member must spend at least one day out of each week dressed as a beggar and living on the streets of the city. This is a risky endeavour, however, and all members face one random encounter per month (as determined by the Referee) that starts out hostile.

Advancement: Roll 1d20 once per month for an opening. On a 20, a position of local Mendicant Clerk for a particular district opens up. This position earns 50gp per year and allows the Clerk to request information as above once per week rather than twice per month. In addition, while researching her own district, she can make such checks daily.

Arcanum Infernus (Club)

A small group of like-minded people who find death fascinating.

Prerequisites: Ability to cast magic-user spells. Initiation is by invitation only; a character can make one attempt per month at a cost of 100gp to bribe and try to impress members. A character must roll a 1d20 below their level to be invited. If invited, there is a one-time fee of 250gp for a lifetime membership.

Benefit: A member can access the Infernus Library at will, which contains all spells up to 4th level (Referee's discretion).

Special: Unpopular: Club members are often targeted by religious orders determined to remove their stain from society. In encounters with lawful religious orders or churches, all starting attitudes are very hostile.

Advancement: Members of 9th level or higher are offered access into the Inner Quorum. For a one-time fee of 1000gp she gains access to all spells up to 5th level. Those of 12th level or higher and who are part of the Inner Quorum are automatically appointed to the Inner Council, where they have access to the whole library of all known spells up to 7th level (Referee's discretion).

Brothers of the Gables (Club)

Climbers, explorers, and daredevils, the Brothers of the Gables delight in finding the highest buildings to climb, and reaching the most remote parts of the rooftops of the city. Many gablemaesters are members of this club.

Prerequisites: A petitioner to join must climb a prominent building within the city of at least 150 feet without ropes or other aids. The petitioner's effort must be seen by at least one member of the gablemaesters.

Benefits: Membership opens doors to other routes, methods, and ways up famous buildings, as well as knowledge of those places. Members gain knowledge regarding any tall building or high part of the city such as the Jumble or the Capitol.

Advancement: A member can attempt one qualifying climb (whether successful or not) per month as under Prerequisites above but with a minimum height of 200 feet. If successful she can increase her standing in the brotherhood by making an immediate donation of 1000gp after making the attempt. Succeeding on this check indicates enrolment into an inner circle where further techniques of climbing buildings are shared, as well are more in-depth knowledge of the spires of Castorhage.

Fame or Infamy: There are those in the club who seek out multiple climbs of astonishing danger. A member making a climb that is particularly legendary at the Referee's discretion (such as the outside of the Great Royal Cathedral [**C9**]). Such famous members command respect anywhere in the city where they announce their fame. Starting attitudes with other members of the club when encountering these famous individuals are always at least friendly.

Hedonists (Club)

Carousers and gluttons, the Hedonists are a loose affiliation of those who like the finer things in life and indulge in them heartily.

Prerequisites: Various arms of the group are seen in the rowdier or more fashionable holes of gluttony and excess in the city. One need simply appear at one, and spend money trying to impress one's would-be peers. Once per week a petitioner can spend 200gp, and make an impressive show of excess to gain membership. Swyne* automatically make a successful showing. Membership requires the spending of 100gp per month minimum, but for each 50gp spent in excess of that, the skill checks described below receive a +1 circumstance bonus.

Benefits: Once per week a member can ask a fellow Hedonist to answer a specific question about the city (Referee's discretion). A Hedonist also has access to money since so many swyne* loan sharks are members. Loans of up to 500gp are always available, subject to a 7-day term of repayment at 10% interest. If not paid within the specified time, the weekly interest rate doubles. If a member defaults on a loan for 4 weeks in a row, she is kicked out of the club and hired thugs are likely to come knocking looking for the money (Referee's discretion). Only one loan may be taken out at a time.

Special: Each month, a Hedonist faces a random city encounter with an unfriendly starting attitude.

Advancement: Roll 1d20 once per month for an opening. On an 18–20, the position of Honoured Glutton opens after another member dies. The position costs 100gp per month, but allows access to a twice-weekly request for information about the city and loans of up to 2500gp can be given. Honoured Gluttons can make a check once a month to see if the position of Hoglord becomes available. On a 20, the position is available; it costs 250gp per month but grants legal access to the Capitol and the Sanctuary as an "honourary noble." Loans of up to 10,000gp are available to Hoglords.

* See **The Blight Campaign Guide: Part 3, Non-Player Character Races**

Physiciana Insectum (Club)

The Physiciana experiment with compounds and breeding techniques for standard insectum* to try to enhance their effects.

Prerequisites: Cleric, druid, or magic-users only. Fees are 100gp per year.

Benefits: The member is able to purchase insectum at 80% of normal price and once per week, can purchase a specially enhanced version of any insectum, at a 50% increase in cost that has either no associated penalty or double the duration (buyer's choice).

Advancement: Members of 5th level or higher learn to enhance insectum themselves, enabling her to produce the variant insectum above with only a 25% increase in cost. At 10th level, the member's insectum is always enhanced when she breeds it (which she is able to do once per week).

* See **The Blight Campaign Guide: Part 3, New Equipment**

School of Hard Knocks (Club)

A group of duellers who enjoy wrestling, a boxing match, baiting, and generally watching or participating in melees for pleasure. They are based within various establishments across the city and are profligate.

Prerequisites: Fighters, monks, or thieves. Fees for carousing and instruction by experts and oddsmakers are 250gp per year.

Benefits: Once per month a member can place a wager on a match with advance knowledge. Matches have odds of 20:1, 12:1, 10:1, 8:1, 6:1, or 4:1 (member's choice). Members can reduce the odds of this match by one die category (20:1 becomes a d12, 12:1 becomes a d10, 10:1 becomes a d8, 8:1 becomes a d6, 6:1 becomes a d4, and 4:1 becomes a d3). On a roll of 1 on the appropriate die the member is a winner and the pay-out is at the original odds (not the adjusted odds received by the member). The maximum bet a member can make on one of these matches is 50gp.

Special: Because of their penchant for winning long odds and taking other people's money, club members face at least one hostile random city encounter once per month.

Advancement: Roll 1d20 once per month for an opening. On a natural 20, the position of Club Secretary opens up with a one-time cost of 1000gp in addition to the standard 250gp per year club fees. Secretaries have access to better tips and can wager once a month as above but either with a reduction in odds by two die categories (d3 minimum) or with a cap of 100gp instead of 50gp. In the latter option, the Secretary can split the bet over two bets of 50gp if she so chooses.

Club Secretaries can check each month to see if the post of District Secretary turns up (also on a roll of 20), which has a one-time cost of 2500gp on top of the 250gp annual fees. District Secretaries get even better tips and each month can choose to either reduce the odds against them by two die categories *and* have a 100gp monthly cap (divisible into 2 bets if she chooses) or instead have a 200gp monthly cap which is divisible by up to 4 50gp bets). District Secretaries oversee admission of new members.

Warreners Club (Club)

The Warreners Club are amateur explorers of the Underneath. They meet up to talk and discuss and swap information about subterranean places and enthuse about all matters below. Many are also members of the Royal Underneath Society.

Prerequisites: Locating a member of the club requires a thorough search of the Underneath to find a member underground, and one attempt may be made each week. Membership in the club is free, but the member must pay 25gp per year in social dues.

Benefits: Experts on the Underneath and Great Dark beyond allow a member of the club to request knowledge of the Underneath as long as fellow club members are accessible (i.e. the member isn't currently in the Underneath far away from any other Warreners she could ask). This limitation on accessibility can be modified at the Referee's discretion based on any means of remote communication by spell or magic item that a member may possess.

Special: Chaotic creatures whose environment includes underground terrain have a hostile attitude when encountering a Warrener because of the club's reputation.

Advancement: Warreners of 5th level or more are invited into the inner circle of select members known as the Descent and can access the club library and museum. Members of the Descent using the museum and library as a research tool related to subterranean matters gain insight to the obscure nature of underground travel. Descent members are expected to pay 100gp per year in upkeep for the library, as well as the social dues, but can invite other members into the club as they wish providing they meet the necessary prerequisites.

Guilds

While clubs can be difficult to enter but easy to leave, one is a member of a guild for life. They are an altogether more serious path, and while bound by the one crucial rule — financial — they are in general a closer-knit group. Just as there are thousands of clubs within the Blight, there are many hundreds of guilds ranging in size from large and mighty to small and virtually insignificant. Also as with clubs, an individual can generally be a member of only one guild (though leaving them tends to be much more difficult and, after doing so, gaining membership to another virtually impossible).

Because of the detailed nature of guilds and the sheer number of them throughout the city, only two sample guilds are given below (and even they are related). A list of some of the guilds within the city is provided in **The Blight Campaign Guide: Chapter 1**, but even it is not exhaustive. Rather than list them all, this sample should serve to provide you with the means to construct any sort of guild to suit your campaign.

In addition to the normal means of gaining prestige within a guild, you can also award prestige to guild member characters as rewards or for characters who achieve personal goals related to matters pertaining to the guild. See **Personal Goals** below.

The Castorhage Arcane Society

Magic-users who seek to advance within the Blight often find that their somewhat despised craft brands them (unless they are Upper Class and therefore entitled). By gathering together, and seeking to further their collective aims as scholars, the Castorhage Arcane Society has grown in strength and influence. Guild members are marked with a secret and permanent mark (rather than a typical guild tattoo), the mark growing as ranks are achieved within the guild. Any other member of the guild automatically recognises the mark if she sees it, and is better disposed to her fellow member.

Goal: Magic Protected and Advanced

The spellcasters of the Society seek membership in its ranks for personal protection and to gain greater mastery of their magical powers. They recognise the doctrine of safety in numbers, and the Society has enough of a reputation within the city that a member mentioning her affiliation during an encounter with folk who are hostile to magic-users (read: virtually everyone) has a decent chance of defusing the situation and being allowed to depart unmolested.

Alignment: Neutral

The Society is practical and understands that its fundamental role is preserving the practice of magic through the advancement of the field and the preservation of its practitioners. They generally try to stay out of each other's business and avoid overtly attracting attention to themselves. They do not espouse tenets along the lines of law or chaos, and do not require any particular ideology of their members. They rally against individuals or enterprises that threaten the Society or the city through outrageous or excessively wicked activities, but in general practice follow a live-and-let-live philosophy toward fellow members. In general, the more flamboyant a member is in her arcane practices, the less well received she is by fellow Society members.

Leader

Artemi Nightshade (Chaotic male human magic-user 11) serves as the Grand Cabalist of the Castorhage Arcane Society. As a scion of that Great House (see below), Artemi commands both a great deal of wealth and a great deal of political influence. He has learned that to best serve the Society as a whole (as well as to line his own pockets without interference) it is better to remain apolitical in the constant tug-of-war for power between these houses and the Royal Family. He is neither an ally nor an enemy of any, though he certainly tends to favour Nightshade agendas if they are not at odds with his goals for the Society. His greatest fear is that **Ticcia Borxia** (Chaotic female human magic-user 12), the most recent Master Cabalist (the circle of 12 senior members just below the Grand Cabalist), is not so neutral toward her own family name as she claims and secretly plots to suborn the Society itself and eliminate Artemi in the process. His suspicion is not incorrect.

Headquarters

The headquarters of the Castorhage Arcane Society is a secret known only to its members. The Society meets in one of the Inner Libraries at the **Great Library** of BookTown (**B8**). Master Temmil, the Curator, prepares the necessary rooms at times when the Society is meeting and lets members into the locked building when such meetings are held after hours. Temmil is not a member of the Society, but he is a respected supporter of it.

Joining

Membership of the guild is sponsored by an existing member in good standing and largely dictated by character wealth. Individuals seeking the friendship (and sponsorship) of a member must first locate one. Once located, the petitioner can attempt a bribe of 200gp once per month which, if successful, is followed by an audition. Failure at the audition results in refusal, although further attempts can be made in following months. The audition should include some show of spell use, and good roleplaying on the player's part. The details of the audition are subject to Referee approval.

If a character is successful in these efforts and wishes to join the Society, she must then pay a one-time 100gp membership fee. Once this has been done, the individual receives the guild's mark and is inducted at the rank of Apprentice of the Society.

Special Note: Because the Society is open to all magic-users with the financial means to join, it is one of the few groups that doesn't mind if its members are also members in other guilds as well.

Gaining Prestige

Gaining prestige in the Society is always a matter of buying it. She takes the form of increased fees paid to the Society to gain greater access to rank and resources. Society rank is determined by Total Prestige Award (TPA), and the benefits of the Society are likewise defined by these ranks. The various ranks of the Society and the one-time monetary cost to achieve them is listed below. It is not possible to move up in the Society more than one rank per month unless some extraordinary circumstance dictates otherwise (as determined by the Referee).

TPA	Society Rank	Cost
1	Apprentice of the Society	100gp
2	Minor Scholar	200gp
3	Lesser Scholar	400gp
4	Arcane Caster	600gp
5	Arcane Scholar	800gp
6	Maester	1000gp
7	Spellbinder	1200gp
8	Maester Scholar	1500gp
9	Arcane Maester	1800gp
10	Master Spellcaster	2100gp
11	Cabalist*	2400gp

* After achieving the rank of Cabalist, every additional payment of 3000gp earns 1 additional CPA but without a corresponding increase in TPA.

A member's CPA (Current Prestige Award) is normally equal to her TPA unless she has achieved the rank of Cabalist and then purchased additional CPA beyond that. However, if the member does anything to lose CPA (such as betraying Society secrets, causing the death of a member, etc.), her TPA is also reduced to the current CPA level. The only way to recover this lost TPA is by purchasing it again as described above. If a member's TPA is ever reduced to 0, she is no longer a member in good standing and no longer gains any benefits of membership. All encounters with Society members are hostile. It is up to the Referee whether a member can buy her way back into good standing or not, depending on what caused it to be lost in the first place.

Resources

It is known within the Society and without that some unscrupulous casters, when confronted with hostilities, may claim to be members of the Society even when that is not actually the case. The Society combats this by actively policing those who make such claims in order to suss out the pretenders. In any city encounter where membership in the society is claimed and it succeeds in defusing the situation, there is a base 20% chance that another member of the Society or a thrall of a member is within earshot who will cast *detect magic* to confirm the membership. Society members always recognise the distinctive appearance of one of their marks through the use of *detect magic*. If the person claiming membership proves to be false, the Society member immediately calls them out on it and demands their surrender for Society judgment. Whether an actual fight ensues depends on the relative strengths and confidence of the member making the accusation. In any case, such a perpetrator is marked for further investigation by the Society.

The public is aware of the Society's work in weeding out imposters and is generally amiable if not exactly helpful to such endeavours. However, if the claim of being a member of the Society does not diffuse the hostility in a situation, any Society members nearby will not intervene, preferring to avoid notice themselves in such dangerous surroundings.

In addition to this general protective reputation provided by the Society, membership also provides other benefits based on the member's TPA.

1 TPA: Able to purchase magic scrolls from the Society of up to 2nd level with 1d4 scrolls available every 1d6 months. Scrolls cost 100gp per level.

2 TPA: Gain the ability to use the Society's library to research magical questions.

3 TPA: Gain one bonus spell of up to 2nd level to add to your spellbook.

4 TPA: Able to purchase magic scrolls from the Society of up to 3rd level with 1d4 scrolls available every month. Scrolls cost 100gp per level.

5 TPA: Able to purchase magic potions from the Society with 1d4 potions available every 1d4 months. Potions cost 1d6 x 100gp each.

6 TPA: Able to purchase magic scrolls from the Society of up to 3rd level with 1d6 scrolls available every month. Scrolls cost 100gp per level.

7 TPA: Gain one bonus spell of up to 3rd level to add to your spellbook.

8 TPA: Able to purchase magic potions from the Society with 1d4 potions available every month. Potions cost 1d6 x 100gp each.

9 TPA: Gain one bonus spell of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd level to add to your spellbook.

10 TPA: Able to purchase magic scrolls from the Society of up to 4th level with 1d2 scrolls available every month. Scrolls cost 100gp per level up to 3rd, 800gp per level at 4th.

11 TPA: Establish your own personal cabal that pays fealty to the Castorhage Arcane Society. Gain followers as if you were an 11th level magic-user. If character is already 11th level, gain the services of a familiar, a magical creature bonded to you that serves without hesitation (Referee's discretion on what creatures make good familiars. Familiars have 1/2 the magic-user's HD)

11 TPA, 1 CPA: Able to borrow one lesser miscellaneous magic item per month. The item must be replaced before another item may be borrowed. The item must be returned within 6 months.

11 TPA, 2 CPA: Able to borrow one Medium miscellaneous magic item per month. The item must be replaced before another item may be borrowed. The item must be returned within 6 months.

Master Builders of the Edifice of Royal Engineers, a.k.a. The Royal Arcane Engineers Guild

The secretive guild of Royal Arcane Engineers are the only group allowed on major building projects, especially those in the Capitol. Members have access to new spells, a grand library of the city, and receive a royal stipend. The guild has developed specialised spells that are used to enable buildings to be safely built atop buildings, and although many cannot afford their services, the guild pride themselves that all buildings lashed onto others without their help collapse. Some say sabotage is at play, but guild members laugh at such suggestions, claiming their time is far too valuable to waste on undermining the shoddy work of others. Their guild tattoo displays a plumb bob and trowel over a shield bearing the numbers II, VII, IX, and X.

Goal: Building the Empire in Our Image

The guild knows that the works of other builders in the city are inferior; in fact, most of them are downright dangerous. The guild knows that it lacks the resources and time to oversee all construction within the empire, but that doesn't mean it thinks that it shouldn't. With one project at a time, the guild seeks to project its influence over the construction practices of the city-state. Most citizens who seek to build within the city cannot afford the services of the guild, but the guild believes that they should therefore not build. They do not acknowledge the necessity for building beyond what they are able to accomplish, which makes them completely unrelatable to the common folk and has helped ensure that even after more than a thousand years of presence within the city, they are still no closer to achieving the standardization of architecture that they seek.



Alignment: Lawful

Ever since the tragedy of 643 when a portion of the Capitol collapsed from earthquake damage sustained more than a century earlier, it has been evident that some sort of order and oversight was necessary to successfully achieve the architectural balancing act of maximizing upward expansion in the city's limited area while maintaining the structural integrity of the older structures below. The Blight has long been undertaking this in a haphazard, chaotic manner, but the Royal Arcane Engineers' Guild are who set about to make that a reality. By strict adherence to carefully contrived standards of materials and methods (and no small amount of magical augmentation), the guild has spent the last millennium achieving something that is all but unheard of in the Blight: Where they have been, the guild has managed to create stability.

Leader

The Royal Arcane Engineers are ably managed under the stern eye of **Grand Master Creator Permenya Tundlestoke** (Lawful female Sprawlmason dwarf expert 10). Permenya, of the Underneath Tundlestokes, followed in the footsteps of her grandfather Sheffer as leader of the guild. She has a basic knowledge of the application of magic in the unique building conditions of the Blight but received a very thorough business education in her youth. The fortunes of the guild have only improved during the three decades of her tenure so far.

Headquarters

The Edifice of Royal Engineers is said to lie somewhere in the Capitol, though its exact location is unknown. Whether this is a matter of security or because it is constantly being moved (some rumours say due to instabilities in the Capitol's foundations that they are continually forced to shore up to preserve the reputation of their order). Whatever the reason, it is said that a system of secret knocks and passwords at the Great Door (**C1**) results in being escorted to the proper location. Rumours also mention, however, that the wrong password or knocks result in being escorted to a secret oubliette for a stay of indeterminate length.

Joining

Joining the Royal Arcane Engineers requires that a candidate have the ability to cast 3rd-level spells. The petitioner must then bribe a minor Capitol official with 2500gp and then make a good showing during an interview to successfully identify the techniques for certain relevant spells. Only one attempt at this process can be made per month. Though magic-users are by far the most common members of the guild, there are clerics (particularly clerics of certain lawful religions) that demonstrate sufficient mastery of the requisite spells to qualify as well.

The spellcasting ability of the member determines her rank in the organisation. The initial rank within the guild is Royal Arcane Engineer. Upon achieving the ability to cast 5th-level spells, the member can advance to the rank of Arcane Contriver after paying a fee of 5000gp. The ability to cast 6th-level spells and a 10,000gp fee bestows the rank of Master Creator, and castor of 7th-level spells and a 15,000gp payment bestows the title of Minor Grand Master Creator.

Gaining Prestige

Gaining prestige with the Royal Arcane Engineers is usually accomplished by securing and completing a prestigious building project (1 or more PA upon securing the bid for the guild and 1 or more upon its successful completion). If a project that a member of the guild was involved with is later destroyed, that guild member loses a TPA. Likewise, the discovery or development of new spells with application in engineering and building gains prestige for the discovering. Finally, 1 PA is gained by a member each time she achieves a new rank within the guild.

Resources

The guild has a vast library of information on building and the building application of the magical arts that it has amassed for over a thousand years. Members are given access to these materials and other perks based on their TPA within the guild.

1 TPA: When in the guild library, answer 1 question about the city per month. Neutral (at worst) or Friendly (at best) reaction when dealing with the Royal or Upper Class castes.

2 TPA: Gain one bonus spell of 1st level to add to your spellbook.

3 TPA: When in the guild library, answer 1 question about the city per week.

4 TPA: Able to purchase scrolls (clerical or magical) from the Society of up to 2nd level with 1d6 scrolls available every month. Scrolls cost 100gp per level.

5 TPA: When in the guild library, answer up to 3 questions about the city per week.

6 TPA: Gain one bonus spell of 2nd level to add to your spellbook. Clerics may speak with stones (as *speak with plants*) 1/day. The stone to be spoken with must be brought into the guild library.

7 TPA: Able to purchase scrolls (clerical or magical) from the Society of up to 3rd level with 1d4 scrolls available every month. Scrolls cost 100gp per level.

8 TPA: When in the guild library, answer 1 question about the city per day.

Cults and Gangs

In dealing with organisations that stand opposed to the characters (usually cults and gangs), the Blight uses an abstract system to measure the relative strength of these groups. Such groups are assigned a level (although some groups — such as the Illuminati — are off the scale as far as resources go; they are a core friend or enemy of the Blight and as such are effectively ever-present). These groups may become friends or foes of the characters at some point through an adventure, reputation, or even accident and require a gauge of their power for you to work from.

The relative power of a gang or cult is represented by its level. The level of a group gives an indication of the strength of the leaders, and the relative strength in levels of their members. The level of a gang is usually the leader's character level (though there are occasional exceptions to this), and the level of the group is squared to approximate the total class levels of its membership. Gang levels in general range from 5 to 20, although higher- and lower-level gangs are out there. A group is also detailed by



a general alignment, its primary location, its leader(s), motivation(s), friends and foes, tactics and morale.

Many groups are not easy to defeat since, unlike organisations such as the Watch or the Royal Army, they rarely operate in large groups or from a single location, but as a disparate mass spread over an area. Members of a group, for example, could be brought together for an activity, and the leader may decide that several members are required. Some gangs, cults, and groups do operate from a single base, and the choice ultimately is yours — using the examples provided, do you want a covert adventure of hit-and-run tactics with the characters having to seek out various factions of the coven, or do you prefer the idea of a fixed coven base?

A group, like any encounter, should have tactics that represents their typical *modus operandi*, and morale. The morale gives the general likelihood of the gang retreating from any given combat encounter based on the table below. The morale should also list under what circumstances the group is entirely disbanded; these circumstances may not match the same qualifiers as given for encounter morale but usually follow along the same lines. For example, a mad group of cultists who seeks to eat the moon may never give up until each one of them is slaughtered, every member always seeking new members over time so that unless purged, the threat is always there. A less-desperate group such as a smaller thieves' guild may be disbanded if half or even a quarter of its number is destroyed, capture or slain.

Unless otherwise noted, groups that are not defeated are able to recruit new members by various means to replace lost members and even grow a bit over their baseline level at your discretion, varying their numbers and otherwise being dynamic, living organizations. As a general rule, lawful groups (who operate in a more orderly fashion) can recruit new members at a rate of 1 new class level for each level of the group per month. Chaotic groups recruit at a rate of 1 new class level per group level per week but have a 50% chance to lose a similar number of class levels instead, though never for 2 weeks in a row. So the 9th level opium-dealing Irthren Gang (Chaotic) under attack from characters of a holy order can regroup and recruit 9 class levels of new members in a week — through bullying, intimidation, or other methods such as bribery. However, in any given week there's a chance that they lose that number of class levels instead.

Morale Levels

Percentages indicate the chance that the group or individual will retreat from an encounter. This check is made each time one of the listed criteria is fulfilled. If a group is outnumbered by 2-to-1 or more or face opponents with a clear tactical advantage or dire reputation (Referee determines), its morale level is reduced by one for the purposes of that encounter. If a group is in its headquarters or some other location it considers to be a major stronghold, its morale is increased by one level for that encounter. All numbers are in reference to the number of group members present for the encounter rather than for the group as a whole.

Breaking: 50% when faced with the prospect of battle regardless of group size. 100% if demoralized by a successful Intimidate check or one of their number is killed or incapacitated.

Low: 50% when faced with the prospect of battle while outnumbered or if demoralized by a successful Intimidate check. 75% each time a member is killed or incapacitated. 100% when reduced below half their numbers.

Cautious: 35% when faced with the prospect of battle while outnumbered. 50% when the first member is killed or incapacitated. 75% when reduced below half their numbers. 100% when reduced to one-quarter their numbers.

Average: 20% when faced with the prospect of battle while outnumbered. 35% when the first member is killed or incapacitated. 50% when reduced below half their numbers. 75% when reduced to one-quarter their numbers and each death or incapacitation thereafter.

Hardy: 10% when faced with the prospect of battle while outnumbered. 25% when the first member is killed or incapacitated. 35% when reduced below half their numbers. 50% when reduced to one-quarter their numbers and each death or incapacitation thereafter.

Courageous: 10% when the first member is killed or incapacitated. 25% when reduced below half their numbers. 35% when reduced to one-quarter their numbers and each death or incapacitation thereafter.

Very Strong: 10% when reduced below half their numbers. 25% when reduced to one-quarter their numbers and each death or incapacitation thereafter.

Fearless: Fanatics who never retreat from an encounter and will fight to the last.

Sample Gang: Hood Street Vandals (Level 7)

Alignment: CN
Location: Artists' Quarter
Leader: Edwin Sedge (Chaotic male blighted* human thief 5)
Motivations: Smash the mills
Friends: The Family (Festival), Anarchists (sometimes), lower-caste workers
Enemies: Royalists, City Watch
Tactics: Operate by night. Sedge can gather up to half the group in 4 hours, or the group as a whole with a day's notice. The group use hit-and-run tactics, attacking lone targets and then vanishing into the night.
Morale: Hardy; the leader, all three of the Brothers, and half the group must be slain or captured before the group breaks and ceases as a viable entity.

*See **The Blight Campaign Guide: Part 3, Racial Variant**

The Hood Street Vandals are a group loosely allied to the Anarchists and are based in the Artists' Quarter. Their leader, Edwin Sedge, a former workhouse orphan, was so badly abused during his youth that he grew up with a hatred of all things "establishment." The group is a covert gang that aims to smash mills, factories, and workhouses near the Artists' Quarter. Membership is secret, and a matter of caste, with Lowfolk workers forming the bulk of its membership. Instructions are spread through word of mouth, with lesser members being aware and following instructions from a trio of brothers (called "the Brothers" by members of the gang), any one of which knows approximately 50% of the lesser members by name. The Brothers in turn act under direct instruction from Sedge.

The Four Great Families

There are four great families in the City-State of Castorhage: the Castorhage Family (the Royal Family), the Borxia Family, the Nightshade Family and the Tredici Family. Below them are a swarming mass of other houses, great and small, all wielding various levels of power and influence. As a subsection of Gangs, the rules can be applied to these politically and/or nefariously connected houses as well to create a gauge of their power and influence.

Blood runs thicker than water, they say, and unlike gangs, ties of blood are often intricately woven into others through marriage. The relative strength of each family is given in a simple stat block, designed to reflect not only their power, but their allies and enemies, as well as their elders.

Sample Family: House Wether (Level 9)

Alignment: N
Location: Capitol
Family Head: Lilly Wether (Neural female human thief 7)
Primary Motivation: Loyalty to the Royal Family
Friends: Secret alliance with the Clan Sullage (BookTown) aimed at bringing the Borxias down, their deals swinging on property and business ventures; the Royal Family (Capitol)
Enemies: Outrage and condemnation of House Shibboleth over attempts to frame an (allegedly) innocent senior family figure over a fair duel results in frequent duels between the sons of both families; hatred of the Borxia Family over property disputes and unpaid loans as well as deaths of family diplomats at their hands
Tactics: Spying, brokering information and secrets
Morale: Very strong; exiles flock to their banner, and the family name is arrogantly bandied about throughout the city; the support of the Royal Family secures their future so long as the Castorhages are in power.

Although giving a good indication of the family, these statistics are also slightly abstract; they do not go into great detail about the family members or alliances but can be used to judge who is more powerful than whom. Unlike gangs (see below), family runs deep and can count upon lesser families as allies. A family has a number of class levels among its members equal to the square of the family level as well as a number of class levels from allied or loyal lesser families equal and to the square of every level below it in a descending sequence. Therefore, with the Wethers family, they have 81 class levels in their extended family and can in theory call upon 204 additional class levels from allied families for 285 total class levels ($\Sigma = 9^2 + 8^2 + 7^2 + 6^2 + 5^2 + 4^2 + 3^2 + 2^2 + 1^2 = 285$), making them a fairly strong family of the city. This should be treated abstractly, however, since it includes family members and trusted personal retainers but not standard employees, security guards, mercenaries, etc. Most of these class levels are divided among lower-level individuals (level 5 or less with only a very few members of higher levels). If you want a rule of thumb for hired staff, servants, and ordinary guards, consider using the square of the family level (so 81 in this case) as a minimum number of class levels of employees.

Magic

There are thousands of independent magic-users operating in the city, but in general access to the higher-level spells (5th-level and above) are controlled by guilds, who guard them jealously — even going to so far as to burn copies of spells in their libraries if they discover them.

Higher-level cleric spells are even more strictly controlled, and generally only deemed suitable for Royals or those of great importance. As such, spells such as *raise dead* are not generally for sale to the ordinary character unless they have powerful connections. If you wish, you can ignore this rule. However, its basis is in the logic of the city: The nobles wish to keep such miracles for their own use. "Dish them out to the Lowfolk," they say, "and everyone will want them." This does not rule out high-ranking clergy or those who serve them being given access to such spells as rewards, for example.

The Illuminati are of course rumoured to be the depository of hundreds of unknown spells, taken by their spies, unearthed by their explorers, and ripped from alien hands by their adventurer-agents. Tales of countless new spells are speculated upon by conspiracists. Of the few known to be truth, the foul *birth magic*, where children are the focus of magical power whilst still in the womb, has evidence walking and staggering across the city. Tales of spells that can unmake a person's biology, of magical powers that can control parts of the Between, and those that are able to break and bend the will of men to unspeakable acts continue to be whispered.



How Magic is Viewed in the Blight

This is very much a matter of personal taste, but the general assumption in the city-state is that magic is power, and power should not fall into the wrong hands. How you run this is a matter for you and your players, but some increasing scales of control are given below. Each requires you to decide — if you even wish to — how to tweak the way magic is viewed in this campaign. This is not for everyone; many people love high-magic campaigns, in which case simply ignore these rules.

1. Magic is Not Generally for Sale

This is the mildest of the aspects and the one suggested to be used when running this campaign. Magic is simply so rare that it has fallen into powerful hands and only appears when an obscure item turns up at an auction, is stolen, or a treasure trove is found. Potions and scrolls do not generally fall into this category since they are relatively weak, but casters who make a habit of supplying scrolls to revolutionaries may not last long.

When spellcasters are seen in the street who do not clearly represent a recognised god, their presence creates a spectacle. Any members of the Watch report such matters or may even try to capture such casters for a reward. It should generally only affect the game when such characters are captured by the Watch, in which case they are hastily tried for witchcraft (usually when an under-justice can be called in 1d4 days), and executed by pyre.

As a result of this, many spellcasters take to donning ecclesiastic attire to disguise their abilities from the ignorant masses, playing their magical abilities off as clerical in nature. How the various NPCs in your campaign react to this is left to you.

2. Magic is Dangerous

Not only is magic not for sale, but those who command it are to be feared. When magic is used, it has that effect upon the ignorant, who fear it accordingly. This isn't necessarily a mechanical game effect; a magic-user sending a *fireball* across a street at some foes would be held in awe and terror. Perhaps ignorant City Watch officers flee or become frenzied in their wish to kill or to escape.

In this version, magic is something to try to keep secret, and when discovered being used, should have an ongoing campaign effect. Perhaps a subtle effect, such as NPCs fearing certain spellcasters or treating them with undue respect, or perhaps the characters pick up a few pursuing witchhunters.

3. Magic is Evil

In this final version, magic is seen as positively wicked, and all spellcasters that are not clerics are clearly witches, unless they belong to the right guild and can prove their aristocracy. Magic-users may be discriminated against and feared.

Do not use this version to belittle or isolate magic-users, but to add an aspect to them that is both good and bad. They are feared for their gifts. If they repeatedly use them boastfully or in prominent places, there should be consequences; maybe a Guild member seeks them out for a task, or a witch-hating peasant or priest comes hunting them.

Personal Goals

Personal goals are life aims that are given an XP reward when achieved by a player character. These goals can be identified when the character is generated, or acquired like power and friendships as the character progresses through a campaign.

Personal goals are usually selected by the player with the Referee's agreement, but occasionally a Referee may wish to add one. For example, if the Referee wishes a character to begin his career already hating wererats, he assigns a modified background (see **The Blight Campaign Guide: Part 3, Background Concepts**) of his own devising that stipulates that during his childhood, one of the character's parents was killed by wererats, but more than simply murdered, they were eaten alive by the wererats' pack. The character witnessed the event and only escaped through sheer luck. The character's personal goal is to kill 50 wererats, and she receives an XP reward (see below) when it is achieved.

Be imaginative with the goals you choose, and if you don't want one, that's fine; not everyone has such motivations in life.

Personal goals are judged just as standard encounters, and XP is awarded accordingly when the goal is achieved. The XP goes directly to that character and that character alone, although constituent aspects of the goal inevitably lead to other XP on the way for her friends (the actual slaying of the wererats, for instance). It should be noted that the character does not need to be directly responsible for the achievement of the goal (i.e. the character does not have to personally slay all 50 wererats), but the character must be involved as at least a motivating force behind the achievement of the goal, if not an actual participant. Therefore, the character can be a member of a wererat hunting party, the character can be a lone wererat stalker, or the character can hire a group of mercenaries to carry out his wererat program. In all cases, when the 50 wererats have been killed, the character receives the personal goal's achievement XP reward.

With this in mind, you can see how individuals (especially villainous NPCs) might achieve level advancement without actually dirtying their hands, which fits in well with the concept of conspiracists and secret movers-and-shakers behind the scenes that is so prevalent in the Blight. It also gives credible explanation how someone with clearly limited direct combat capabilities such as an Ernst Stavro Blofeld type of character can lead an organization of henchman of its calibre and be a suitable match for a high-level character such as Bond. This mechanic works especially well in a campaign that is more than simple blood-and-muscle combat encounters.

A list of possible goals and their potential levels are assigned below; the Referee must be careful to ensure that rewards are not too high for the goal assigned or chosen, and that the story can have an end: a personal goal of bringing down the monarchy, for example, is unrealistic; a personal goal to join the Anarchists is not.

Characters in general only have one life goal at a time, although as Referee you may assign as many as you wish. Where a personal enemy is assigned, the character must only play a role in their demise, so a character group attacking 25 members of the *Cult of the Rusted Henge* would be enough to fulfil a level 5 goal on behalf of a character hating or opposing them.

As a final caveat for the use of personal goals in your game, the players should be aware that if the character unwittingly fulfils some major aspect of her life story, she does not receive the XP reward. In the example above, if the character kills 50 wererats, only the enemies that she knew (or at least had good reason to strongly suspect) were wererats contribute to the goal. Killing the henchmen of the wererats — who were not themselves wererats — does not contribute to this goal, and if the character kills some thug on the street who also happens to be a wererat without the character being aware of it, likewise it does not contribute to this goal. This could lead to some need for reasonable adjudication on the part of the Referee if the character at a later date discovers that someone she had previously killed was, in fact, a wererat and how this will apply to the goal. In general, applying the XP with the discovery of the knowledge retroactively is probably not an issue. But if the knowledge would be sufficient to reveal that the goal should have been met and the XP awarded at some prior point, it may not make for a satisfying game solution. It may require the Referee to extend the goal slightly so that the character can achieve it with an active effort rather than backing into it unknowingly and then suddenly reaping the benefits of its rewards. Back to our cinematic example, it would be a singularly unsatisfying moment if during the assault on Blofeld's stronghold Bond suddenly realized as he finally reached Blofeld's inner sanctum that the archvillain had been killed by an errant piece of shrapnel during Bond's opening volley.

The achievement of the personal goal and XP reward should feel like an achievement for the player as well as the character, so you should strive to make it so even if that means a slight jury-rigging of matters at the end.

Character Level	Sample Goals
1	Join a club or avenge a death by slaying a petty official. Marry a childhood sweetheart, have children. Defeat a specific personal enemy of your level.
5	Destroy a petty guild or club, or unmask an organisation of minor repute by providing evidence to a holy order of wrongdoing. Slay a minor noble, purchase a particular property that has been taken by others illegally, raise enough money to free a relative from a terrible gaol or break them out of same. Marry a famous beauty, perform to royalty. Defeat 5 specific personal enemies of your level.
10	Destroy a moderately powerful guild or club, avenge a childhood wrong against nobility by tracking down the noble and either killing or ruining him. Rise to the rank of guild leader in a major guild, track down and kill a serial killer of great repute. Build a church or purchase a manor house. Create a new spell, explore Between or other exotic lands and have a significant geographical feature named after you. Amass a personal fortune of at least 50,000gp (not including magic items possessed). Defeat 10 specific personal enemies of your level.
12	Unmask a devilish, demonic, or n'gathau cult and slay its leader. Bring down a major guild or club, rule a parish, establish a dynasty, establish a powerful business garnering 20,000gp per year. Amass a personal fortune of at least 100,000gp (not including magic items possessed). Build a cathedral. Defeat 150 HD of personal enemies.
15	Bring down a major cult, become a Justice, rule a district, establish a powerful club or guild. Go on a quest to recover a holy artefact, marry into the upper echelons of the Royal Family. Defeat 300 HD of personal enemies.

Power

Power in role-playing games comes in many shapes and sizes but generally revolves around a statistical basis: What are the highest-level spells you can cast? How many hit points does the monster have? What special abilities can your character use?

However, it is also true to say that it is not always *what* you know but *who* you know that defines power.

Power as a Reward

As an alternative or addition to money, you may decide to reward your characters with power. Rewards can range from trivial — the characters earn the respect of locals in the parish of Dern Bridge — to the profound — the character is invested with the title of Lord Under-Justice of Trade, a position of great import and that pays 25,000gp per anum.

Example Power Reward: Fetch Destruction

If the characters rid a portion of the city of Fetch, they are installed as parish undead hunters, positions that bring in 1000gp per year. The parish installs 6 fighter 2s as underlings of the characters and replace dead underlings at a rate of one per year.

The characters are treated as heroes within the parish. If they wish, once per month, the characters can push local traders for extra tax, bringing in a further 200gp. However, at the same time the use (or overuse) of this tax bullying should likewise have consequences for you as Referee to decide.

Be careful when offering power as a reward, though, because as the saying goes, with it comes responsibility. If you wish to keep things simple, reward the power as a simple bonus to income, opportunities, or as followers. More complex power rewards could involve interaction with other powerful individuals, opportunities to influence important decisions and possible trade and/or nefarious activities. An interesting campaign could revolve around various powerful houses that vie for the illicit trade in contraband, with interaction at a political and covert level. The characters build up power rewards by influencing aspects of these families and rise in power accordingly.

Power as a Goal

The Blight is rotten to the core, and power is something almost everyone strives for. The characters can take part in this corruption or perhaps seek to better things by working toward obtaining their own power. As discussed under **Personal Goals** above, some characters may seek an entry into the ranks of power in the city as part of their background aspirations. As such, power, as presented here, can be used as a part of a character's personal goals as described above.

The guilds (detailed in **The Blight Campaign Guide: Chapter 1**) offer one avenue into the establishment. Generally, to obtain such power the characters must remove the incumbent (who is invariably corrupt anyway) by bribing his immediate superior to remove him or by securing the position in some other way (perhaps as a reward, or perhaps by carrying out a duty for a guild, aristocrat or other influential person).

Example Power Goal

To achieve this goal, the character must bribe the commander of the local Watch Station, **Hmandus Quade** (Neutral female gnome* thief 6), with a bribe of at least 1000gp and make 3d6 roll below the character's charisma score. Only one check is allowed per bribe, and only one bribe attempt is allowed every month (the bribe is still taken whether the check is successful or not). The first character to succeed in the check is offered the position of UnderMaester of the South Street Docks.

The position of UnderMaester of the South Street Docks allows the character access to all imported goods coming into the city. These docks are notorious for illicit goods, and each month the character brings 1d6+4 x 15gp into his own purse from his take of the taxes.

Cutthroats, pirates and smugglers are at tough lot, and it is up to you as Referee to decide if and when the character's actions result in a tiff or other, perhaps more serious, discussion involving cutlasses and dirks.

* See **The Blight Campaign Guide: Part 3**, **Non-Player Character Race**

Relationships as Rewards

One way that is entirely at the discretion of the Referee is using friends as character rewards over and above whatever friends they may have started out with.

Consider that the characters' actions always have effect; the characters can act selflessly, perhaps saving a hostage or commoner from danger, perhaps they save a merchant's daughter and gain her father's undying gratitude. Such actions could reap new relationships, which may also increase their power (as detailed above).

For example, the characters unmask a plot by cadaver snatchers to harvest parts from beautiful young people for local golem-stitchers. These people are all the offspring of commoners, and no one but the characters stand up for them. At the close of the adventure, you may decide that one of the young people is a potential partner for a character. You may decide to grant this friendship as given, and hand the character the details, or you may decide that if a character performs a certain action, the character can develop a relationship with that individual.

Example Relationship Reward

Characters successfully completing the adventure and saving at least 75% of the captured NPCs receive a relationship reward:

Hamtren, the grateful parish constable (Neutral male human fighter 4), is considered a friend of the character who, in the Referee's opinion, acted the most heroically or who performed the single-most heroic act in the adventure in Hamtren's presence. The Referee should also allow every other character present a chance to befriend the constable. Those succeeding on a charisma check (rolling 3d6 below the character's charisma score) also benefit from his friendship. All other characters who took part in the adventure find that Hamtren is friendly in attitude to them from its conclusion.

Advancing Relationships

You can make the friendships as complex as you like, keeping track of NPCs as individuals who sometimes accompany characters or who have adventures of their own that are referred to in passing or which could lead to other adventures. You may also decide that such NPCs are static, and stay at the levels initially generated, happy with a quieter life. Or you could decide to advance the NPCs at a rate relative with the characters — either half, one-quarter or one-eighth for example, depending on how useful you wish these friends to be and how powerful your campaign is in terms of levelled characters.

Technology & Firearms

Technology levels of the **Lost Lands** are defined in **The Blight Campaign Guide: Chapter 1**, but a short discussion of technology as it applies to the Blight is warranted here in **The Blight Campaign Guide: Part 4, Technology & Firearms**. The technology level for Castorhage as given in Chapter 1 is "Industrial Revolution," which in the Lost Lands means the folk of the Blight have access to or are at least exposed to steam power, clockworks, and manufacturies on a regular basis. In fact, Castorhage is the most technologically advanced society in the entirety of the **Lost Lands'** campaign setting. Even dominant global powers such as the Empire of Oceanus that rose from its simple island roots and brought the entire Foerdewaith empire to bay can only claim an "Age of Sail" technology level, while cosmopolitan Bard's Gate barely makes it to the level of a Renaissance technology.

Why Castorhage possesses this unique technological advantage is wrapped in a combination of its relative seclusion while still maintaining the full innovative support of the great empires of the world throughout its existence, the uninterrupted will of its government to seize and exploit every possible technology available without the typical concerns of political and moral restraint, as well as its unique position in relation to the otherworldly influence of Between upon the minds, bodies, and souls of its populace. In short, Castorhage is a place that has been "touched" (or "blighted" if you will) and has had the resources and unimpeded political will to explore a myriad of lines of scientific query to their logical, illogical, and often even catastrophic conclusions. The Blight is the mad scientist's lab where he never had to worry about a mob of villagers with torches and pitchforks coming to end his unnatural experiments. The sciences, pseudo-sciences, and meta-sciences have benefited from this unbridled excess, but the city has certainly suffered for it.

But though the City-State of Castorhage has long had access to steam power and clockworks (the former was tinkered with on Earth as early as the 1st Century AD by Heron of Alexandria and the latter startlingly exhibited in the Antikythera mechanism believed to date as far back as 150 BC), the Blight is no steampunk campaign. Because where traditional steampunk settings harnessed the power of steam into all sorts of mechanical wonders, in Castorhage it never became more than an auxiliary source. For in Castorhage, the experimenters discovered the possibility and cheap availability of necromancy, not simply in the obvious sense of animating legions of zombie labourers, but rather in its application through necrocraft and golem innovation. While the many technological innovations that power Castorhage incorporate steam power or clockworks, at the core is their reliance preservation and animation of once-living flesh to supply their labour and energy needs. (See **The Undead, the Broken, the Made, and the Unliving** below for more information on these crafts.) It is much cheaper and easier for the magic-users of the city to harvest the limbs of the dead or dying and craft them into an animated bucket brigade than forge and install an expensive and heavy steel pipe to carry water up a slope, and it is this philosophy that has driven the city's innovation for centuries.

Of course, the important question, though, is how does the city's technology level impact your own campaign? And the answer, as with all **Lost Lands'** products from **Frog God Games**, is that its impact is as much or as little as you prefer. Much of the technology is presented in a neutral manner. It is described in the background without detailed explanations as to which portions are magic versus which portions are technological. In the Blight, there's little distinction and little need for one. The technology need not play a significant role in your campaign unless you want it to.

Perhaps the biggest point of contention is the presence or absence of firearms. Many Referees and players enjoy adding them as an augmentation to their games to give them a more swashbuckling feel, but just as many despise them and want no part of them. Firearms have been presented as a part of the **Frog God Games'/Necromancer Games'** campaign setting since as early as 2005, so their appearance in the Blight is nothing new, but will be handled in much the same way as every other instance. There are firearms in the Blight as part of the base assumption of the setting, but they are not integral to it, and you can absolutely ignore it entirely without ramifications or the need for substantial rewrites for your own running of the campaign.

The City Watch, the Royal Army, and many criminal elements in the city undoubtedly have access to firearms, but magic is cheaper and easier to control access to, so their use has not spread broadly and may never even be noticed by your players if you don't want them to. In general, encounters and NPCs are not built around the use of firearms, so it should be relatively easy to excise them altogether without a second thought if you so wish.

It is assumed that the Capitol is undoubtedly bristling with mounted cannon that overlook the river (and the surrounding city!), but they do not play a role in any of the published materials and need never be mentioned. The ships of the Royal Navy are black ironclad paddlewheel steamers that add their belching fumes to the smudged air above the city, but they add only a pittance to that put off by the countless cook fires, trash fires, funeral pyres, and general arson that occurs in the city on a daily basis. And while these same navy dreadnoughts have shipboard cannon (side mounted, not turret mounted as in modern warships), they are equally likely to use their cannon to fire secretly conducted experiments involving the enslavement and deployment of elementals through a Byzantine projector. In any case, access to these vessels of the Royal Navy is highly restricted, and they need not play a part in your Blight campaign unless you wish them to do so.

The Undead, the Broken, the Made, and the Unliving

One curious sight that surprises many visitors is the presence of broken creatures and the many forms of undead, nearly dead, or unloving creatures that walk the streets of the city. In an amoral city-state built upon the backs of cheap labour, it is perhaps not surprising that they find a way to work their lower classes even beyond the bounds of life.

Broken creatures are the most frequently encountered example, and seeing a pair of broken trolls carrying great baskets of stones or other unbelievable loads is, while not commonplace, not altogether unusual.

Broken Creatures

Broken creatures (creatures that have had their wills broken to such a degree that they are completely subservient to their masters) take the concept to a wholly deplorable degree. While the typical act of "breaking" an animal is a bit of a misnomer; it is normally a prolonged process that begins with the trainer instilling confidence and respect into the subject from the time it is a newborn. Repetition and rewards are key to a subject learning basic commands and learning to be comfortable with the tasks being asked of it.

However, the Blight trains in a very different manner. It punishes, rather than rewards its subjects, to such a degree, and for a such a long time, that any thought of refusal or rebellion is completely eradicated. If a regular person attempted to train an animal in the fashion, there would be rebellion, constant struggle, and no way to rely on the beast. The Blight does not suffer these failures; it strips away all will, save that of obedience.

The general outward demeanor of broken creatures is that of an almost stoic silence. They speak only when spoken to, and always in deferential tones, even averting their gaze if possible. The inner torment such creatures feel is beyond mortal compare. They feel nothing, no longing, even for release or freedom. The truly have no expectations, desires, ambition, or passion. They are the ultimate is service-beast.

Similarly, skeletons or zombies are used by the wealthy or particularly insensitive to fetch and carry, obeying simple instructions, and doing menial tasks. Although not as common as broken creatures, they are generally seen at least monthly by locals. Many patrons have taken to dressing their skeletons in hooded livery to disguise their horrific appearance.



And if the use of zombies and other lesser undead as menial labour goes on unchecked, then so does the creation of golems, homunculi, fleshgines, necrocraft, and other constructs incorporating the components of one or more individuals who once counted themselves among the living (see

The Blight Campaign Guide: Part 6, The Blight Bestiary). Commonly known as the "Made," any of these can be seen openly walking, slithering or flying the streets of the Blight, and many take the form of commonly employed services such as the undead-drawn coarse cabs and fleshgine-animated Dungier's buggies.

Finally, there are the undying, those who either through their own choosing or by the will of others who had the power of life and death over them partook of the magical philtre known as the *elixir of life*. Those who take the draught successfully find themselves with a new lease on life — or near-life to put it more accurately — released from the shackles of aging and finding the physical needs of the body much diminished all around. These folk are more commonly referred to as "Reborn." Of course, that the physical sensations of the body are diminished just as much if not more causes some to consider this form of near-immortality as much more akin to near-Hell. Normally those who are exposed to the *elixir of life* are those who can afford it and have a morbid fear of death or those who possess some valued skill that their overseers are not willing to let perish simply because the physical body might do so.

There are also those who take the *elixir of life* but whose bodies do not react well to the unnatural infusion. Instead of shedding the shackles of ordinary mortality as undying, these unlucky souls instead find themselves cursed with a progressive form of undeath that not only steals away their vitality and ability to experience sensation, but also their very reason and personality as well. These cursed folk are the unliving, and when their curse becomes advanced enough, they lose every last shred of who they were and become simply one more zombie shuffling mindlessly to its master's commands. See more details about the Undying and Unliving in **The Blight Campaign Guide: Part 6, The Blight Bestiary**. More information is available about the *elixir of life* in **Appendix D**.



The Weight of the Law

"The law which attempts a man's life is impractical, unjust, inadmissible. It has never repressed crime — for a second crime is every day committed at the foot of the scaffold."

The law is tough and well organised in the Blight. Making an enemy of it is unwise but perhaps inevitable for some groups.

Having a viable law in a city is the only way to keep order, and as a Referee you should not hesitate to call upon high-level officers and minions to see it carried out. Third-level characters who wantonly burn down a Royal palace should not be surprised soon to find a group of 6th–8th level fighters tracking them.

Law in the city-state of Castorhage is maintained by its venerable, respected and feared Office of the Watch — Queen's Men as they are often referred to colloquially. From parish Watch Stations, these thousands of constables, inspectors, and other officers oversee the safety and the orderliness of the streets — well, the orderliness at least. The Watch, as an official instrument of the government, is much more interested in maintaining order; it is order that allows the workings of the city to continue and the trade, taxes, and bribes to continue to fill the Royal coffers. Therefore, maintaining an orderliness to facilitate that trade is of utmost importance. That a modicum of safety arises for the benefit of the citizens is merely a secondary gain that is of little concern to those at the highest levels of the City Watch.

This attitude is not necessarily reflected at the street level of the Watch — folk who, after all, have to live on those same streets — but while it is not guaranteed that a constable walking his beat is corrupt and/or blind to the plight of the commoners around him, there is still no shortage of corruption even in the lower ranks. Regardless of whatever indirect benefits to the commoners of Castorhage may arise through the ministrations of the City Watch, no one would make the mistake of declaring the streets of the city safe by a long shot. Still the presence of the Watch and its patrols undoubtedly make them at least *safer* for the most part.

The standard City Watch patrol is made up of **5 Constables of the Watch** (Neutral Male or female warrior 1–3) and a **Sergeant of the Watch** (Neutral male or female fighter 5–6). However, this is only the *standard* Watch patrol; there are some places in the city where the Watch just dare not go, and some places (such as the Capitol) where patrols are two, three, even four times larger.

The Watch has not only warriors, fighters, and (rarely) rangers in its employ but thieves, clerics, and magic-users amongst their number that serve in special capacities. Many Watch clerks are experts or commoners, and most inspectors have at least a few levels of expert to complement their more martial coworkers. Higher-level officers quite frequently are aristocrats, being political appointments through family influence. Far from a homogeneous organisation, the Watch represents hundreds of points of view and scores of agendas. Nevertheless, the sheer crush of its bureaucracy tends to keep it more or less on course in the execution of its duties. The Office of the Watch oversees a city of millions of people, however, and crime is rife.

What does or does not cause the Watch to become involved in a situation depends on the political capital at play. In general, a parish tiff where a cult temple is burned to the ground by adventurers is not a cause for concern in the eyes of the Watch, whereas bumping off an aristocrat most assuredly is. The more "respectable" (read: powerful) an individual is, the less likely he is to be troubled by the law, and certainly a bribe of 500gp in the right hands can get the aristocrat criminal off all but the worst of charges.

How you adjudicate this is very much a matter of personal taste — the Watch is there for you to use as an ally or foil, but having it regularly swoop in to save characters in over their heads does not make for a very fulfilling game, while it could also soon become very tedious having to deal with the tenth cultists' body by dumping it in the river for fear of hanging. Likely, a balance will need to be struck in your campaign between the usefulness and the antagonism of the Watch toward the characters. In any case, the players should not be allowed to become entirely dismissive of the Watch, and characters who march up to the Capitol singing Anarchist songs are unlikely to be seen again.

The **Knockers** (the Castorhage Secret Police) is also a force to be feared. This group turns up at night and takes people with them without warning or explanation. Those that go with them are rarely seen again. There are many classes within the ranks of the Knockers, but their numbers and membership are so secretive, and their activities are so clandestine, that there is no such thing as a "standard" Knocker patrol.

As with all in this setting, judge the level of law the characters must deal with however you wish. If you want a very strictly legal campaign, have the City Watch be a constant issue for the characters, perhaps at the core of some adventures where it's not just about killing a powerful and aristocratic enemy but covering up any evidence of their involvement as well. Conversely, in some streets murder is commonplace, and with a city of countless serial killers, the law is clearly failing somewhere.

Throwing an unexpected Watch patrol into an adventure is a great way to test your player's mettle, and if they happen to kill some constables, then so much the better; everything, as has been said before, has a cause and effect in a place so crowded. There are always so many eyes everywhere; looking greedily to make a coin or use information to seize some power. A party that takes down a few corrupt Queen's Men, must simply learn to play this game in order to survive.

In general, hanging or beheading is a punishment meted out for anything from simple theft and upward in regards to the seriousness of the crime — though deportation to one of the Between colonies is always possible for those who might receive a commuted sentence. Crimes of a lesser severity than theft usually warrant being tossed into the city gaols or, worse, the sanatoriums for the mad. There are also still some prison hulks floating in the Lyme, and these are terrible, diseased places without hope where those whose betters may still wish to talk to them at some future time are incarcerated for "safekeeping."

Thralls

Any moderately fashionable magic-user in the Blight must have his thrall — and the more powerful the thrall, the more respect the spellcaster is afforded by his colleagues. A thrall is a physical guardian of its master; spellcasters generally prefer not to lower themselves to fisticuffs of any sort. A common situation between warring spellcasters is to settle their dispute by thrall duel in which their thralls battle it out in a final combat to decide which thrallkeeper was in the right. The losing spellcaster is bound by a sacred and ancient pact to acknowledge the victor as being correct in the matter.

Calling a thrall is a complicated task. A magic-user must find their thrall through a modified *summon monster* spell and with the help of the Pactmakers, a guild of magic-users who specialize in calling and brokering deals between thrall and their aspiring keepers. Thralls are demons, devils, genies, and other beings of lesser power and of an alignment and philosophy compatible with that of the spellcaster who is negotiating for their services. The Pactmakers have conjurers of all alignments, so they have no trouble finding the right kind of thrall for the spellcasters who come to them.

The spellcasters get a loyal being to serve as servant, messenger, and guard, and what the thralls themselves get is not exactly clear. It is possible that they receive a portion of the fee paid by the spellcaster, but it is more likely that the Pactmakers have connections with powerful beings who can command the allegiance of their lessers and send them to the Material Plane to serve for a time. This theory is supported by the fact that these thralls are almost always bound to a standardized pact wherein they agree to serve the spellcaster for a period of 40 years and a day. During that time, they serve their master to the best of their abilities, fight for her if called upon, and even die for her if necessary. It should be noted that thralls are extraplanar beings, so if slain on the Material Plane, they are truly dead, making their loyalty all the more surprising. Whatever deals the Pactmakers are able to broker with the masters of these creatures, they clearly are offering something of great value to them — though what, exactly, has yet to be discovered by the public. When the pact is completed, the thrall, if still living, immediately returns to his home plane. Some particularly unscrupulous spellcasters even slay their thrall before the pact is up to prevent it from carrying any secrets back with it, though this has been known to draw the ire of more powerful beings seeking to avenge the arbitrary execution of their servitors by mortal thrallkeepers.

The relative power of a thrall is determined by the level of the spellcaster seeking the thrall and the price he is willing to pay for it. However, a spellcaster cannot have thrall whose HD is greater than one-third of the spellcaster's HD. She simply lacks the power to compel the thrall to agree to the pact. In addition, the thrall can be no more than one step away from the spellcaster's alignment. Referees should work with the players to determine a thrall that is both mangeable and fun to play.

A thrallkeeper can end the pact with her thrall at any time and free it to return to its own plane, but will need to complete a new pact to obtain a new one. If a thrall is killed, the spellcaster can likewise enter a new pact to obtain a new one, though if it becomes suspicious that the thrallkeeper killed the thrall herself in order to get rid of it and obtain a new one, there could be repercussions from the thrall's master and/or the Pactmakers themselves at the Referee's discretion.

Thralls generally get along well with servant creatures such as homunculi, seeing them as an extension of the thrallkeeper more than anything. This is of course largely dependent upon the thrallkeeper herself and how she treats her thrall versus other magical servitors. In addition, though most spellcasters have only one thrall, there is no actual limit on the number one can possess other than that their combined total HD cannot exceed one-third of the spellcaster's HD. Therefore, some of the most powerful of spellcasters within the city occasionally have more than one thrall, but unlike with the thrallkeeper's other servants, the thralls tend to squabble among themselves over the affection of their master and often end up jealously killing one another.

The only other requirement for being able to obtain a thrall is that the recipient have the ability to cast magic-user spells. Therefore, a high-level ranger could potentially have a thrall as well. These situations are just much less common than the more typical magic-user.

True Gods of the Blight

While the "gods" of the Blight are a constant presence in the minds of many Castorhagers and even occasionally walk the street, there are still countless other older deities whose names are invoked on a daily — sometimes momentary — basis. These gods have their own local names, but as with any icons, scholars have surmised that many are only local aspects of more widely named or quoted gods. The more commonly revered gods of the Blight are listed here, but in a city so large, it seems that whatever god, saint, or angel one worships, there is bound to be a shrine to them somewhere.

Many of the main deities presented below appear in other areas of the Lost Lands as well. However, their complete description covering those other representations is not included. Rather, the list here details them in a shortened version based on their relevance to the Blight itself.

Baphomet

The Rage Storm; Demon Lord of Anarchy, Beasts, and Anger

Greater God (Demon Lord)
Alignment: Chaos
Symbol: Goat's head with a candle between the horns or a simple stylized bull's head (Aleph)
Garb: Rich, royal robes or filthy nakedness
Favored Weapon: Polearm (halberd)
Form of Worship and Holidays: Full moons for worshippers with lycanthropy who tend to engage in wanton slaughter. Non-lycanthropes hold secret rites with desecration of symbols of Thyr and Muir and blood rituals.
Typical Worshippers: minotaurs, lycanthropes,

therianthropes, chaaors, the Alcaldrich Order of Knights Templar in Exile

While revered in a more urbane and civilized manner in some other lands, in the Blight this demon lord is a god of fire, of the raging storm and the thunder and lightning who destroys. Even his more civilized followers who meet in secret cabals for their carefully hidden dark rituals revel in the destruction he promises to bring to the world. Hymns to Baphomet speak of the End of Days, the coming Apocalypse, or the ruin of the world through anarchy. Of late, rumours among Baphomet's faithful speak of a new weapon wielded by the Royal Navy, a powerful new advancement that has seen limited use only in the far colonial corners of the empire. When they whisper of this tantalizing new development, they use only one word: ragefire.

Baphomet previously appeared in ***LL4: Cults of the Sundered Kingdoms*** by **Frog God Games**.

Brine

Ocean's Anger; Fish-Brother; God of Sea and Unsea

Greater God
Alignment: Neutral
Symbol: A crashing tidal wave devouring the towers of a city
Garb: Salt-crusted fishing nets and seaweed drapings symbolising tentacles
Favoured Weapon: Staff
Form of Worship and Holidays: Full moon nights when the high tide is highest, new moon nights that coincide with unknown aboleth rituals in the deeps. The Brine Sea celebrated at midsummer with a flotilla of boats upon the sea make offerings and feast on fish. Cradle-Song ceremony when a human woman is returned to the surface world with a briny infant in tow to welcome them into the briny community. The Culling when a briny transforms fully into a skum and is caught by his briny kin before he can escape into the sea and euthanized in a sacred bloody ritual upon the benighted waves.
Typical Worshippers: Briny, brine mothers, fishermen, locathahs, some sahuagin

One day, Brine's worshippers say, the world will be swallowed by a vast tidal wave that will wipe it clean and create it anew as has happened many times before. Until such time, those who worship and work the sea give offerings to the god and the creatures that live from it seeking their favour. To the briny race in particular, Brine is held as patron and a sort of protective older brother that sees to their needs and promises them a new life of justice and equality once the wicked world that they live in finally passes away.

Father Canker

Brother Choke; The Silent Assassin; God of Poison, Silence and Smog

Lesser God
Alignment: Neutral
Symbol: A smoking brazier or a shard of opaque glass
Garb: None, usually beggar's wrappings or mourning veils
Favoured Weapon: Any poison or poisoned weapon
Form of Worship and Holidays: Night vigils where rats or other small animals are sacrificed as burnt offerings when the Canker is especially thick. Burning of thick incense for Feast of Fools to hide presence from Father Canker. Grieving mothers set cornhusk dolls alight and cast them into the Lyme as votive offerings.
Typical Worshippers: Beggars, grieving mothers and fathers, some undead and psychotic thieves/murderers

He is at your window, he swallows the breath of your children as he chokes them, sobbing as he does. Father Canker seems to be a god wholly of Casterhagi origin. He represents the ever-present danger to be found in the noxious fumes of the Canker and the choking smog of the city. Jack's Candle is said to be his manifestation. Father Canker is not so much revered as placated, and many beggars and those forced to live in the lowest parts of the city along the banks of Sister Lyme where the mists rise highest and the sea breezes are at their weakest live in constant fear of the choking miasma that can come without warning and leave all it encounters dead where they lay. Parents of young children who die of crib death, the Canker's suffocating fumes, or virtually any other cause often see Father Canker as the protector of their lost child's soul and make votive offerings into the Great Lyme River during their grieving period, a time that can sometimes last years or decades. The authorities sometimes have to keep a careful watch for these activities on days when there is a high fire danger on the river.

There is a local rumour — or fairy tale — that floats around Castorhage. Some people say that Brother Choke has a weakness, that he is afraid of birdsong. Whether there is any truth in that, many locals keep a canary in their homes hopefully to ward him away. They have come to know that when the bird stops singing, he is at hand, and it is time leave quickly.

Geryon

The Liar; The Great Serpent; Lord of the Fifth; Patron of Betrayal and Deceit

Arch-Devil
Alignment: Chaos
Symbol: A fanged serpent
Garb: Ordinary clothes, no special garb other than a gold serpentine crown and pectoral when conducting rituals
Favoured Weapon: Polearm (glaive-guisarme)
Form of Worship and Holidays: True followers of Geryon seek to attend the worship rituals of other deities under the pretence of being true believers and secretly desecrate



them. Actual services to Geryon take place in deep, hellishly lit caverns and involve blood sacrifice, the summoning of infernal snakes, and the ritual blowing of shofar.
Typical Worshippers: Politicians, con artists, barristers, justices, mongrelfolk, serpentfolk, lizardfolk, inphidians

The arch-devil Geryon is the Great Serpent and master of the Fifth Circle of Hell where he rules from a great iron fortress. He commands many followers in the city who seek his favour through lying in his name and to further his cause. Many of Geryon's faithful are casual followers who seek his blessing only to cover their dishonest dealings and have determined that such efforts made to his glory are less likely to be discovered for the falsehoods they are. For his part, Geryon does not care whether his followers are formal worshippers or mortal fools who inadvertently bring him power. The majority of his formal worshippers in the city are mongrelfolk (those with reptilian heritage are considered particularly blessed) who seek to curry his favour and use their natural aptitude for deception and obfuscation to further his cause.

Geryon's formal worshippers revere serpents of all kinds, and lizardfolk are found throughout the city who serve his cause. The inphidians of the city who worship Hassith-Kaa seek out the reptilian peoples who venerate the Liar and seek to exterminate them at any cost. Geryon's most devout followers are called Serpent Masters and must sign a pact of evil with him to obtain greater power.

Geryon previously appeared in ***The Tome of Horrors Complete*** by **Frog God Games**.

Jubilex

The Faceless Lord; Lord of Corruption and Decay; Demon Lord of Slimes and Oozes

Demon Lord
Alignment: Chaos
Symbol: An amulet portraying an amorphous mass covered in eyes or a splatter of paint with an eye drawn in the centre
Garb: Filthy rags
Favored Weapon: Warhammer (called a "pulper" by the faithful)
Form of Worship and Holidays: Outbreaks of disease are considered to be signs of the Faceless Lord's favour; otherwise, there are no real holy days or organised worship other than random sacrifices and eviscerations.
Typical Worshippers: Insane humans, lepers, intelligent oozes, ooze demons, spawn of Jubilex, slime nagas, some chaotic dragons

The Faceless Lord is a powerful demon lord, sometimes worshipped as a deity, though it does not generally behave as such. It is considered by its worshippers to be chaos personified and a return to a simpler, purer state of existence. Jubilex is said to sow chaos and discord throughout the planes, though it is possible these are simply the instinctive actions of a mindless monstrosity rather than a calculated stratagem. It is doubtful that Jubilex even recognizes that it has worshippers, or cares.

Disliked even by other demons lords, Jubilex is often depicted as an enormous amorphous blob with eyes in random locations that spews forth foul and deadly slimes of many varieties. During a dispute with the dwarven god Dwerfater thousands of years ago, Jubilex was imprisoned in some hidden location rumoured to be on the Material Plane and the world of Lloegyr. His physical absence has not seemed to affect his few deranged cultists over this time, and if his name has been forgotten to the point of being little more than a whispered rumour in the world, then it likely has only helped his cult to remain hidden from the powers that would otherwise seek to destroy it.

The Faceless Lord is the ruler of slimes and oozes, things that slip beneath the streets of the Blight and find an ideal setting for birthing and growing his kin and progeny. He is also the Lord of Decay and is said to slither the streets of the Blight at night by his mad faithful. His followers are called Masters (or Mistresses) of the Ooze, and they often sacrifice a limb to green slime to gain their lord's favours. They are feared by even the vilest things in the city for their cruelty.

Jubilex previously appeared in ***LL4: Cults of the Sundered Kingdoms***, ***The Tome of Horrors Complete***, and ***Marshes of Malice*** by **Frog God Games**, and ***G5: Chaos Rising*** by **Necromancer Games**.



Lord Shingles

The Shadow on the Rooftop; Sovereign of the Heights; God of Builders, Gables, Rooftops, and the Sky

Lesser God
Alignment: Lawful
Symbol: A spire
Garb: Ceremonial work apron and headdress with a ceremonial trowel and hammer
Favored Weapon: Warhammer
Form of Worship and Holidays: Formal ceremonies held at dawn on the four High Holy Days and at sundown of the solstices and equinoxes. Ceremonies include ritual chants, bonfires, and oaths.
Typical Worshippers: Architects, builders, gablemaesters, sprawlmasons, spider-hunters, daredevils, some burglars and vigilantes

No city has a skyline like Castorhage, so it is no surprise that the city's unique rooftop culture with its ubiquitous features and threats should spawn an awe in the people who live and work upon it. It is possible that Lord Shingles was originally just an obscure sky deity or perhaps some lesser builder deity associated with Dre'uain the Lame, but whatever the case, something about the Blight's urban sprawl and ever-more precarious skyward expansion called out for a God of the Heights, and one appeared. He is sometimes glimpsed at dusk and dawn, and there are many gablemaesters and spider-hunters who have claimed to have spent time with the god, though none can remember any details with which to describe him, other than that he feared no precipice or drop and somehow made them feel strangely calm and safe as well. Oddly, many thieves pay him heed and make offerings on rooftops for luck in their second-story endeavours, flowers, coins, and personal possessions, and the gables and spires of the Blight are festooned with his shrines.

Lucifer

Prince of Darkness; Prince of Lies; The Adversary; The Prince of Light; Lord of Infernus; The Falling Tower; Satan

Greater God (Arch-Devil)
Alignment: Chaos
Symbol: Leviathan Cross (alchemic symbol for sulfur)
Garb: Red or black silken robes with tall pointed hoods that either cover the face or with deep cowls and with white, featureless masks
Favored Weapon: Spear (Trident)
Form of Worship and Holidays: Blood sacrifices at Samhain (the last night of autumn) nights of the Dark Moon (when Sybil is full), and Walpurgis Night.
Typical Worshippers: Witches, corruptors, politicians, revolutionaries, the disaffected

The Prince of Darkness is worshiped by countless in the city, and many good people have been tempted by lust or greed or hunger into serving him. In fact, his worship is so insidious that there's no way to determine what their true numbers might be. However, the astute and very observant are aware that many symbols of other divinities (deities and arch-devils alike) are usurped and used in worship to the Prince of Lies, and doubtless many prayers so intended for other powers fall pleasingly upon his ears in Infernus instead. Though not much is known about any organized cult of Lucifer, his most devout followers, the Dark Cardinals, bear marks of the touch of their master. Sometimes this mark may be a simple blemish, other times it is a change of body into something monstrous, bestial and lustful.

Lucifer previously appeared in ***The Tome of Horrors Complete*** by **Frog God Games**.

Mammon

Lord of Avarice; Lord of the Third

Arch-Devil
Alignment: Chaos
Symbol: A coin with the arch-devil's face upon it
Garb: Rich robes of the finest materials, bedecked with gems and thread of precious metals
Favored Weapon: Spear
Form of Worship and Holidays: Few formal rituals beyond the accumulation of wealth and tithing to cult leaders who maintain contacts for business deals and shady deals alike and organize smaller services where key figures can meet to strategize plans for profiteering
Typical Worshippers: Bankers, royalty, business owners, thieves, swyne, many Castorhagers (covertly)

Perhaps the most commonly invoked god of Castorhage, Mammon is said to be interested only in the spreading of his own name and that even his name is a lie. It is said Mammon's name is pronounced in the clink of every coin and the cry of every slave. If there is something that generates income, directly or indirectly, Mammon has a hand in it at some level. Mammon is invoked by those who wish for good luck and fortune, as well as those in power or those who have nothing. His touch caresses priest and pauper, queen and whore alike and brings to all dreams of limitless wealth and power. Worship of Mammon is somewhat unique in that there are relatively few followers of Mammon who revere him as their primary deity but a great many who invoke him on the side in order to achieve success in some financial endeavour. Even the lawful-aligned followers of gods of law are not immune to the temptation to beseech Mammon's blessing from time to time. As a relatively shadowy figure, even in the politics of Hell where he is lord of an entire Circle, Mammon seems to prefer this pseudo-anonymity.

Mithras

Lord Storm; The Battle; The Soldier-God; Mithrae Invicto; God of War, Battles, and Soldiers

Greater God
Alignment: Lawful
Symbol: A bull, warrior in a Phrygian cap, or a raven
Garb: Military dress uniform or battle armour with Phrygian cap
Favored Weapon: Short sword
Form of Worship and Holidays: Worship services are held in caves and grottos on nights of sacred celestial alignments. The autumnal equinox (the Cusp of Mithras) is his sacred day and involves public daylong ceremonies from first light until moonset with sacrifice of bulls and military parades. On the eve of great battles, secret underground ceremonies are held (frequently attended by combatants from both sides of the coming battle) to ask for favour in battle, beseech Mithras to bring honour in battle, celebrate past battles, and promote cult members to higher grades of Mithraism; if a ceremony finds favour, a celestial bull may materialize for the cult leader to slay in commemoration of Mithras' deeds.
Typical Worshippers: Soldiers, generals, warriors, statesmen

The great Cult of Mithraism is one of the most widespread religions in the world. The universal appeal as the god of all soldiers and roots that predate even the Legions of Hyperborea when his worship was first spread far and wide make Mithras perhaps the most commonly revered god in the Lost Lands. He brings luck in battle, he is the parting mist, the coming storm, the changing wind; he aids those who trust to him. That he is principally a god of soldiers — and soldiers only — is probably all that prevents the cult from becoming the dominant religion in the world.

Founded in the early days of Hyperborea, the soldiery of Castorhage is no exception to the god's wide appeal. However, his cult takes on a slightly different edge, perhaps, in the naturally blighted surrounds of the city-state. In Castorhage, Mithras is revered more as the unstoppable victor in battle as opposed to the honourable warrior. He is often referred to as Old Iron Hand or Lord Storm among the Royal Army, and his worship within the city's military is encouraged and in some cases compulsory. The Cult of Mithraism outside Castorhage has looked askance at that city's branch for some time and often see it as a tainted form of worship. Every few years there is always talk of excommunicating the Castorhage sect, though the Heliodromus of Mithras has quashed such talk on every occasion so far. However, troubling rumours coming out of the Libynosi colonies of high-grade Casterhager cult members siding with followers of the barbaric war god Thursis in battle may at least be the straw that breaks the back of the Soldier-Gods cult in the Blight. Whether this is true or not remains to be seen, but many Paters and Coraces of Mithras across Akados wait expectantly to see what sort of decree may come down from the Heliodromus.

Mithras previously appeared in ***LL3: Sword of Air*** by **Frog God Games**.

Mother Grace

The Holy Mother; Mother of All; Goddess of Family, Order, and Tradition

Greater God
Alignment: Lawful (special)
Symbol: A mother holding a child and a distaff
Garb: Black robes trimmed in silver with red collar and accents, silver and red mitre and ceremonial distaff
Favoured Weapon: Light mace
Form of Worship and Holidays: Minor services in the form of multiple times for prayer or meditation are daily in cathedrals and churches throughout the city with longer, formal services held every Sunday (all-day affairs) and Wodesday (evening services). The High Holy Days are all considered sacred to Mother Grace and hold services accordingly, and seemingly every other day in the calendar is designated as a feast day for one or more of her saints.
Typical Worshippers: Castorhagers

The most widely worshipped god in the City-State of Castorhage, the shrines, churches and cathedrals outnumber those of other gods by a dozen to one and are unequalled in their magnificence. Mother Grace is the goddess of the Royal Family and the official religion of the State. Other gods, saints, and religious figures are tolerated, and yet even this tolerance is occasionally tested with persecutions launched by the religious leaders of Mother Grace's church with the backing of the Crown. Crusades on foreign shores — especially in and around Castorhage's many overseas colonies — are regular and by no means driven by goodness, with many similar activities occurring on a smaller scale locally. Pillaging Between in her name, burning witches to her glory, and assorted murder and mayhem under the auspices of divine authority are her all-too-regular consorts. Throughout all of it, only one thing matters: order.

Outside of Castorhage and its colonial possessions, Mother Grace is a very intriguing goddess. For despite her clear and present power as a major divinity and her near monopoly on religious influence throughout Castorhage's empire (she is equally worshipped by all 3 alignments), she is virtually unknown beyond its boundaries. Nowhere else can be found organized congregations or temples in the name of Mother Grace, and no known culture or ethnicity lays claim to her origins. Her religion seems to have appeared as if from nothing at some point early in the creation of Castorhage, and went on to obtain and keep a position of religious supremacy. Some learned scholars hypothesize that her church in Castorhage may represent some organized remnant of the prehistoric deity once revered almost universally among early humans and known usually as only The Goddess. But even that is base speculation derived from little more than her apparent affinity for humans and a vague resemblance between the shape of the head of her distaff in religious depictions and the ancient imagery of the Tesseract long associated with worship of The Goddess. What truth may lie in this connection has yet to be definitively determined.

Three Aspects of One God

Mother Grace is a good example of the extremities of religion in the Blight. Three aspects of her teachings are taken up and worshipped with equal fervour by groups with three very different philosophies.

The Beatific Quest: This aspect of the worship of Mother Grace follows her teaching that knowledge is all, that mistakes of history cannot be repeated with proper study and prudent thought, and that only through awakening the desire to know will the world be pure and advance.

The Rule of Order: The Rule of Order focusses on the words of the Mother of All when teaching infants and the ignorant — that fairness is only good when firmness is behind it, a clenched fist in a velvet glove. Order and discipline are paramount. This aspect of the Mother's worship is the most rigid; it follows set laws and ranks and patterns of worship established centuries ago and still clung to with dogged attention to detail. It is as inclined to use the weapons of the wicked to destroy them and preaches that the only thing that truly matters in a chaotic world is the preservation of the status quo.

The Fair Fist: This sect preaches that only order can bring the world out of the darkness of anarchy, and only those who worship the Mother Grace are the truly enlightened capable of bringing about this order. This aspect of the goddess focusses entirely upon scare mongering of the teachings of the Holy Mother — that unless properly educated as to the dangers of the present age, the world will fall into absolute chaos. Missionaries, bigots, and fear-mongers, the Fair Fist (one of this sect's many names) believes in worshipping Mother Grace and nothing else (all other religions being blasphemous) and historically is the group behind most of the Mother's crusading activities. They wish only to extend order in the Mother's name (whether the world wishes it or not).

Mother Grace accepts all alignments to her worshippers. Chaotic and Lawful parishioners sit side by side in their prayers, then go off to perform their deeds as they see fit, and as Mother Grace guides them. Clerics of Mother Grace may be of any alignment, and while all worship the same goddess, not all see things the same way. Such is the nature of faith.

Papyri

The Archivist; The Quiet One; The Lost Apprentice; The Thoughtful Silence; Goddess of the Written Word

Demigod
Alignment: Neutral
Symbol: A quill superimposed on a shield
Garb: Scholars robes, usually with ink-stained cuffs. There are many different collars, tassels, and hats worn with these robes to denote different roles, ranks, and specialties among followers of Papyri.
Favoured Weapon: Spear (always with a shield)
Form of Worship and Holidays: Solemn periods of silent meditation, prescribed readings of holy books and approved literature. Public readings from Papyri's *Escutcheon Di Epistemos Primo* are held every Thyrsday evening.
Typical Worshippers: Scholars, teachers, magic-users, alchemists, nagas, liches

The quiet Papyri is seldom depicted in religious art, but when she is, it is always as a studious, unassuming woman hunched over a scribe's lectern. Her true name is unknown, and she is now named for the earliest medium associated with her worship. The church of Papyri claims that Papyri was

originally apprenticed to Yenomesh, the ancient God of Glyphs and Writing. Papyri doctrine states that she served Yenomesh since the beginning of his creation of writing but either ran away or was banished by him for unknown reasons after discovering something among his writings. For their part, the followers of Yenomesh deny any such association.

She is invoked by those who hunger for knowledge at any cost, and the greatest tenets of her church is that all knowledge is neutral (no matter how much harm could be caused by those who misuse it) and that all knowledge should be preserved by the constant creation of new copies. Throughout history this has been accomplished by virtual armies of painstaking scribes, though with the modern innovation of the printing press in Castorhage this tedious practice has been largely relegated to the typesetters who need only assemble a book's words once. Despite her seemingly benign focus on scholarship and education, Papyri's support of unregulated knowledge acquisition can often lead her adherents onto paths that culminate in exposure to dark truths and darker gods. For those with a greater understanding of the Quiet One, they know her consorts are gods of madness, things without names, and fey gods of old that have been imprisoned and should never again see the light of sun. The liturgy of her faithful, however, is that the knowledge of Papyri is a shield for those who would use it, and those who would use the knowledge are likewise a shield for its preservation. It is whispered that many of the highest-placed members of the almost-mythological Fraternal Order of the Secret Flame.

Sister Shadows

The Unseen; Goddess of Alleys, Streets, Piers, and Pathways

Demigod
Alignment: Neutral
Symbol: A twisting wynd (alleyway)
Garb: No special garb
Favoured Weapon: Dagger
Form of Worship and Holidays: No formal services or holidays; most followers offer a simple prayer before going about their daily chores and another before sleep
Typical Worshippers: Beggars, thieves, dock labourers, street sweeps, commoners, ratlings, mongrelfolk, skulks

In a city contorted by countless pathways and alleys, this goddess's name is said almost as widely as Mother Grace's. Her name is uttered by those who walk the broadest streets to those who dwell beneath the rankest piers closest to the Kiss of the Lyme and who have to "dance daily with Sister Lyme," an old Blight phrase meaning to fall into the Great Lyme River, an act that is often a person's last.

Largely unknown outside the Blight, some suppose Sister Shadow to be an aspect or divine servant of the shadow goddess Mirkeer. However, despite The Unseen's similar affinity to the dark corners of the world, their similarity ends there. Sister Shadow is not a deity of the night and nefarious dealings in shadow, she represents the endless shadows, nooks, and crannies and the endless possibilities they represent for survival, success, and even satisfaction. She is a goddess of not only those innumerable hordes that dwell within the corners of the city, but the potential that the city represents for those same people she embraces. Many folk see her simply as a goddess of thieves and street gangs, but those who truly revere her see her as protector and inspiration for their lives and the chance — however slight it may be — to better them.

The Ash Queen

Queen of Whores; The Hunger; Goddess of Lust, Nature, and Witchcraft

Greater God (Outer God)
Alignment: Neutral
Symbol: A naked woman silhouetted before a full moon
Garb: Nudity smeared with mud, blood, and placental tissue (usually animal but humanoid when available)
Favoured Weapon: Hand Axe
Form of Worship and Holidays: Blood sacrifices and rituals held on every new moon with special fertility rites held every Modraniht and on the eve of Beltane
Typical Worshippers: Druids, mothers, fertility cults, satyrs, witches, hags, atavistic serpentfolk, nocturnals, intelligent plant creatures, bholes, dark young, living monoliths, some mongrelfolk

The Queen of Whores and the eldest god, The Ash Queen's name is screamed by hunters as they take their prey and courtesans as they take their lovers. She is all things lust and like all hungers, can be a force of good — of the creation of life — but also of evil — betrayal, lies, and perversions. And sometimes there is less than a knife blade's thickness of difference between the two. The Ash Queen is savagery and the wanton celebration of Nature at its most brutal and unrestrained. Her rites are usually performed at night under a new moon and starlit skies and involve orgiastic feasts accompanied by wild music and ecstatic dancing. The priests and priestesses, who are said to be unusually fanatical, are naked but for smears of thick marsh mud, clotted blood, and the placental blood and tissues of recently birthed animals or even humanoids when available. For those who follow the Queen of Whores and are sane enough to realize it, her worship and religion are merely a thinly veiled front for the mad cult of the goddess and Outer God, Shupnikkurat

Shupnikkurat previously appeared in ***Dunes of Desolation*** and ***Marshes of Malice*** by **Frog God Games** and ***Ancient Kingdoms: Mesopotamia*** by **Necromancer Games**.

The Horseman

End of Days; Lord of Disease; Supreme of Daemons; The Oinodaemon

Greater God (Daemon Lord)
Alignment: Chaos
Symbol: A skull and scythe or a diseased and rotten ram's head
Garb: Hooded black robes without footwear
Favoured Weapon: Polearm (scythe)



Form of Worship and Holidays: Blood sacrifices anywhere there is death or imminent death, including battlefields, plague-stricken cities, regions of famine and social upheaval
Typical Worshippers: Daemons, doomsayers, the insane, plague carriers, ghouls, some wererats

"The end is nigh!" proclaim his followers. The End of Days is here, and soon the Horseman shall ride down upon the city to reap his harvest. He will turn his four faces upon all, laying the city low with his disease, burning its ruins to ashes, and starving the handful that have the ill fortune to survive. His name is Death and his only promise is ruin and destruction. Outside the city of Castorhage, The Horseman goes by his more commonly known name: the Oinodaemon. His ultimate goal is to bring ruin upon all mortals, and he is patient in his efforts. Though only the insane favour The Horseman's worship, all peoples fear his inevitable arrival.

The Oinodaemon previously appeared in ***The Tome of Horrors Complete*** by **Frog God Games** and ***K2: The Doom of Listonshire*** and ***H1: The Bonegarden*** by **Necromancer Games**.

The Gods of the Swyne

It is difficult to categorize the gods worshipped among the race known as the swyne* as a true pantheon, just as it is difficult to categorize them as even true gods. Nevertheless, these deities find veneration among the swyne population and seem to be capable of granting spells to clerics who worship them, so they are included here in abbreviated format. In truth, they seem less like an actual pantheon and seem more like lesser godlings or powerful extraplanar beings that managed to find a home for their extremely specific and limited areas of influence and simply latched onto whatever veneration they could.

Deity	AL	Area of Concern	Favored Weapon
Hork	C	Goddess of Musk	Dagger
Porfask	N	God of Wine Cellars	Club

***** See **The Blight Campaign Guide: Part 3**, **Non-Player Character Races**

[DD] See ***Dunes of Desolation*** by **Frog God Games**

Twisted Campaigns

To some classes, alignment is at the core of their nature — whether you are a righteous paladin, a despicable thief, or a neutral druid, your alignment guides you. Not everyone, however, is so clearly morally righteous or despicable. A festering hotbed of backstabbing, liars, political greed, and hunger for power offers you a useful backdrop to events for your adventures. These themes can be developed into powerful campaign threads.

Twisted campaigns thrive upon darker subject matter: prostitution, slavery, addiction, suffering, and misery, but this does not mean your players have to be part of them. They may, in fact, be abhorrent to the characters and act as a catalyst to their adventures. Two samples of the same campaign are given below, but one is given the features of a twisted Blight campaign.

The Price of Flesh — Standard Campaign

This campaign is set in Festival, the island of pleasure in the Great Lyme River. Cother's Pleasure Palace caters to all sins, they say, although it is difficult to become a member of this exclusive club — membership is strictly by invitation.

The characters are sponsored — be it by a religious group, cult, or guild — to investigate the disappearance of **Lady Heather McCall**, a disowned noble and lover of **Horace Grove**, a well-to-do snuff merchant. Grove arranges for the characters to enter the palace incognito and learn what is happening. The characters discover that Cother is a member of the **Family**, and the wererat has been abducting speciality victims for his more discerning customers to infect with lycanthropy. He has used the services of a notorious ogrillon[TOHC] abductor known only as the **Stalker** to snatch his victims. The characters unmask the plot, free Heather, and all seems well.

However, the Family are extremely angry about the event; Cother was a promising young businessman who was a favoured cousin of one of the organization's more senior members. An attempt is made upon the characters' lives, and clues point back to Festival. Furthermore, threats are made to the characters' sponsor, and the matter quickly swells into a ground war between the Family and the characters' sponsoring group. This escalates, and the characters become involved in hit-and-run tactics against the Family, which culminates in a pitched battle under the piers between the characters, their sponsors, and the Family.

In the meantime, Heather has been infected with lycanthropy, and the aspect of her character and her misery at the event is laid bare; attempts at cures fail and she ends up in the Asylum. Her lover Horace offers a fortune for the characters to embark upon a crusade against the rats.

[TOHC] ***The Tome of Horrors Complete*** by **Frog God Games**

The Price of Flesh — Twisted Campaign

In this version, events follow along as before, but the characters have a more ambiguous background. The sponsor, it transpires, is the covert ally of a rival wererat family from foreign shores (the Nettles) intent upon establishing their own pitch on Festival. These sponsors know that Cother is the favoured cousin of one of the senior Family members. The adventure runs as written above, but this time if the characters do not kill Cother, he is killed immediately after the adventure by the rival wererats.

The characters are then caught in the middle of this pitched battle — with the two rival wererat groups both after their blood — the Family blame them for the death of Cother, the Nettles intent upon burying any evidence. The characters must overcome both groups, or find a way of playing one off against the other, clearing themselves, and securing their future.

Vermin of the Blight

It has been said before that the crawling, creeping, and flying vermin that infest the Blight are virtually ubiquitous — especially in its summer months. And though the Blight gains its nickname from the lichen-like fungus of that name that proliferates in the darkened corners of the city (see **The Blight Campaign Guide: Part 6, The Blight Bestiary**), most folk assume that it comes from the blight of these vermin that are to be found virtually everywhere and welcomed nowhere.

Swarming insects are a constant problem at certain times of the year when weather conditions are just right, but there are some particular types of insects that seem to be unique to the city of Castorhage or at least never recorded in other locations.

Most people think of the spiders when the subject of Blight vermin is discussed. The rooftops and gable, soffits and spires are overrun with them — and many of monstrous sizes. Two varieties of spiders, however, are exclusive to the environs of the city. These are the gable spiders, who don't spin webs but rather construct their elaborate lairs and hunting grounds from the garbage and debris produced by the city itself; and the chymic spiders, acid-spewing dreamstalkers that seem to physically embody the fear of spiders shared by most folk of the city. The fact that the city is not a web-shrouded mausoleum of humanoid carcasses can largely be attributed to the neverending efforts of the gablemaesters, a guild of rooftop spider hunters dedicated to battling the ever-growing scourge that creeps above the heads of the citizens.

Insectum are another example of myriad species of vermin that appear to exist solely in and around the Blight. They are covered in considerable detail in **The Blight Campaign Guide: Part 3, New Equipment**.



In addition to insectum, other less-monstrous bugs that seem unique to the city are the midden-angels, great black biting flies that make their home in the Bilges and require the workers there to don special protective scarves in order to avoid having their faces disfigured by the painful bites, and the stonemites, large, red, termite-like insects that gnaw on the stone and mortar of masonry for their sustenance rather than wood and paper like their lesser cousins.

Lighting the streets and many of the homes and businesses in the Blight is also done thanks to vermin. Thought there is some usage of gas lamps around the city, as with many areas of technological advancement the necessary infrastructure was largely deemed too costly and difficult to install and maintain with other cheaper, easier options available. To this end, the discovery of the burning properties of pyrebeetles revolutionized the old torches and expensive oil lamps that had previously been used. Pyrebeetles are a type of small beetle indigenous to the swamplands surrounding the city that have peculiar flammable properties and make for excellent torches and lanterns. Pyrebeetles are detailed more fully **The Blight Campaign Guide: Part 3, New Equipment**.

Siklight cockroaches are the smaller, more nauseating cousins of the pyrebeetle. These creatures feed on waste and give off an insipid, pallid light when they are awake, though they also extrude an unpleasant odour at all times. Many folk ascribe the unhealthy vapours given off by these insects as the cause of many illnesses among the poor. Siklight cockroaches are a common sight in poorer parts of the Blight where, if properly cared for, they can live for up to a year. Unfortunately, they have the alarming habit of exploding if their hard carapace is pierced or sometimes even from just sudden changes in temperature and certain conditions of the Canker. For this reason, small explosions and fires are commonplace in areas lit by them in the poorer areas of the city, and has earned them several nicknames among the populace including Devil's Spark, Trust-Me-Not, Tricklight, Mother's Misery, Beltane's Fart, and a host of other, less-polite curses and cant-words. Siklight cockroaches are also covered in more detail in **The Blight Campaign Guide: Part 3, New Equipment**.

Finally, no discussion of Blight vermin would be complete without mention of the coprophagi and night-slugs. The coprophagi (see **The Blight Campaign Guide: Part 3, Non-Player Character Races**) are roachfolk endemic to the dumping sites of the Bilges and other out-of-the-way corners of the city's slums. They are little understood by the citizens of Castorhage and largely ignored, though their presence is far from welcome. On the other side of the coin are the night-slugs (see **The Blight Campaign Guide: Part 3, Non-Player Character Races** and ***The Tome of Blighted Horrors*** by **Frog God Games**), a race of wormlike humanoids that makes its home between the walls and in the crawlspaces of buildings and houses all over the city. Night-slugs, when discovered, are treated like any other vermin, and attempts are made to exterminate them while they attempt to retreat and hide in the nooks and crannies from whence they came. The constant battle against night-slug infestation would be horrifying were it not so disgusting and frequently unintentionally comical.

Blight Adventures

Although specifically focused on this setting, many elements of the adventures proposed below fit into any dark urban campaign. The themes of betrayal, paranoia, political intrigue, and high dark magic could easily be adapted to your own setting, of course, or to your own corner of the Blight, however large or small that may be. Of course, you'll have your own ideas as to the type of adventures you wish to play, whether that be your own work or bought adventures, and these ideas are offered simply as suggestions to the type of adventures that could work particularly well in the Blight.

Anarchist Adventures

Placing the characters in a position of peril at some stage in a campaign is a good trick to use to add a sense of menace. There can be few more menacing situations than being a fugitive, and while the characters may spend their whole careers as anonymous enemies of the state, they may suddenly find themselves unmasked, discovered, or worse, betrayed at any moment.

Between-Heavy Campaigns

One drawback a city setting has is that it can sometimes be difficult to introduce a wilderness element. Castorhage has the surrounding Lych Fens and even the rest of the island of Lymossus, but the focus is very clearly on the events and places within the confines of the city itself. Between gives you an ideal link to a wilderness adventure on the very doorstep — or threshold. One minute the characters can be exchanging pleasantries at the Throttled Bull Gin House, the next they are sailing down a hellish jungle river aboard an Illuminati-sponsored barge.

Between also gives you a good starting point for a feeling of unknown menace: Do the characters become aware that things from beyond the mirrors are slowly leaching into the city? Are these creatures led by an intelligence that is a harbinger of an invading force?

You can also use Between to introduce any aspect of the surreal into your adventure. For example, you could create a nightmare *Twilight Zone*-type situation by having Between draw characters unknowingly through reflections in mirrors, puddles, or even shop windows. You could even use Between to introduce a whole series of events based when the characters sleep in a very Lovecraftian/Dreamlands kind of campaign.

Between, as we shall soon see, is your canvas to paint any kind of surreal adventure upon.

Conversely, you may wish Between to be a magical place of great menace, a place that sheds no light or shadows, but is within touching distance. Are the voices in the characters' minds real or imagined? Is that shiver down the spine a simple chill or is it something reaching out to touch, to covet, to hunger?

Destroy-or-be-Destroyed Adventures

Having so many people about — and using the links of enemies, friends, and power — gives you another option to stretch the destroy-or-be-destroyed adventure. Perhaps the characters begin with a simple attack upon a local gang, only to find that the gang is actually a training ground for some of the most promising talent the Guild has to offer, and the characters have just slaughtered a relative of one of the bosses of that Guild.

The characters may spend their careers at odds with the Guild until a final showdown takes place; perhaps a character's personal goal (see above) is to finally be rid of the endless, unsleeping menace.

Cults and the Fetch make two more possible foes for such adventures, but in a place of great size and diversity such as the Blight, you have a choice of almost endless enemies at your fingertips.

Law vs. Chaos

A n'gathau cult, a devil-worshipping arm of the Illuminati, a festering boiling mass of rats that hungers constantly; the city is a bad place, and bad things invariably need destroying or they become too strong to overcome. The holy orders and churches of the city are constantly vigilant against such chaos but hunt it out whenever they can. The characters could spend an entire campaign pursuing a particular cult or demon on the loose in the city and using human flesh to hide itself. The law vs. chaos theme makes for a particularly simple but powerful and iconic campaign or focus for adventure.



Guild- and Club-Based Adventures and Political Campaigns

Politics are nasty: one minute the characters' sponsor is sweetness and light, delighting in their exploits, the next she is seething with jealousy or is revealed to have always been using the characters as dupes. Political adventures are challenging because the enemy and her home may be known to the characters, and the temptation is to wade in regardless of the consequences. Get such a story right, however, and the results can be extremely satisfying from a campaign perspective.

A powerful NPC swarming with guards and distributing orders makes for a good ally and a dangerous enemy. Perhaps the characters are sponsored by someone else to infiltrate such a group, maybe initially getting their hands bloody in the name of a greater justice. Adventures such as this may lead to destroy-or-be-destroyed campaigns as discussed above, with the characters operating furtively or perhaps under the protection of a holy order or some other patron — who may be using the same kind of twisted political double dealings.

Royalist and Loyalty Adventures

The use of background, relationships, and enemies gives you scope to expand upon the characters' loyalties and make them more personal than say simply a hatred of a particular cult. Perhaps the characters' friends are struggling against a ruthless Justice who delights in hurting or otherwise persecuting them for some reason. Alternatively, the character could be neutral or chaotic characters working for the Royal Family as loyal guards, retainers, or spies. Maybe lawful characters operate covertly in the Capitol or other places of power. These characters receive knighthoods, power, or loyal followers as rewards but tread a dangerous path against their many enemies and "friends" alike. These characters can become beacons of hope and pride, living a truly heroic life of idolisation and envy, held up as icons for the people. And of course, few things make for a more tempting target …

Standard Fantasy Adventures

A city is a great location for a host of adventures, and the Blight, with its seething underbelly of rot and vice, gives you endless potential. Are the characters dashing thieves and duellists out to rob the rich? Are they driven by a desire to hunt the Fetch or humiliate the corrupt and villainous local Justice? Or are they simply adventurers, hiring their services out for the most excitement and coin? Never underestimate the fun of stress-free adventuring and the fun that a good swordfight, discovery, or simple heroism can be.



Between

That first fateful day it had been raining, I recall, and I'd passed a miserable afternoon in the offices of Cooper, Cooper, Cooper and MacThane where I had a commission. The office was plain and windowless, but to give the illusion of size a huge mirror ran directly across opposite my desk. I spent many idle moments gazing into that mirror, wishing only to be away from that dreadful office and back to my study of optics.

Then it happened — the fateful moment — the moment my own, and many others' lives changed; some say for good, but not as many as say for bad.

The figure in the mirror was so slender I barely noticed it move, yet move it did, behind my reflection. So startled was I that I leapt from my desk, spilling ink over my day's work in an effort to escape the thing behind me. But I was utterly alone in the office, there was no "thing" behind me. The thing I saw was still in the mirror.

And it stared at me …

First Recorded Contact with Between
Hetherington Quarrus Mabe
Lyme District Offices, Cooper Building
Toilsday 11th Grey, 1637





What is Between Like?

It is as much a feeling as place, this strange echo-land; it is a place where emotions and surroundings leech into the creatures that live there so that both may become one. It is a land of incredible extremes, where snow falls into jungles, where places loop and coil back upon themselves to create an endless nightmare, and where eyes watch from living walls. This place has an inner logic, and travellers speak in hushed terms of Fowler's Endless Stair, Corrun's Labyrinth, and Pech Pit. These are places of legend in Between, places few have seen and escape.

Some say it is the land of the fey, others that it is Heaven, or Hell.

It is none of those things, and yet all of them.

For you, Between can be the setting for any surreal, mad or twisted adventure you wish, an adventure of dreams, an adventure of twisting endless corridors that slope away at impossible angles, a place where creatures that cannot walk do so, and are always hungry. Hints on Refereeing Between are given later in this section.

Of Curious Mirrors

The first few incursions into Between were brought about by accident; a normal mirror or reflection in an extraordinary magical place creating a portal *between* two places, hence the name that has been applied to the lands beyond the magic mirror. However, once properly understood, the art of fashioning magical mirrors — often called *mirror-portals* — sometimes big enough for a person to slip through, was born. These mirrors are infamously fickle, and while certain brave (read: foolish) individuals see Between as a place they have a modicum of control over, in truth they have none. Master Between thieves can come and go into Between, but their entrances are like wounds, soon healing and potentially leaving the visitor stranded.

The manner of the creation of these mirrors is jealously guarded to an almost insane degree. The *Royal Between Reflectory Society and Guild*, themselves in thrall to both the Illuminati and the Thieves' Guild, hold the key and materials to their creation — something any Between thief would give his front teeth for. However, everything has its price, and these mirrors have occasionally ended up in the hands of less scrupulous characters (if that is possible) than the aristocrats and greedy merchants.

These *mirror-portals* are not created so much as found and enhanced. Travel into Between is an incredibly risky process; the thresholds are fickle. They also touch on the fact that *mirror-portals* are not the only types of portals that exist. There are other types of apertures between the mundane and the surreal. Sometimes they are a tear or weakness in the fabric of reality, sometimes they are a passage fashioned by means beyond the ken of the finest minds and most powerful of Castorhage, and sometimes they appear to simply be spontaneous manifestations that allow unexpected (and often unwelcome) transport from one side to the other. The general term gateway is usually used to describe these different sorts of access points, so that all *mirror-portals* would be considered gateways, but not all gateways are mirror-portals. They do, nevertheless, seem to have at least some propensity to form in mirrors or other reflective surfaces, though. Most importantly, though, these fickle gateways, whether spontaneous or crafted *mirror-portals* have so far appeared and/or functioned only in Castorhage proper. Whether this is some property of the city or of Between or both has yet to be determined.

There was an old lady who swallowed a cow,
I don't know how she swallowed a cow;
She swallowed the cow to catch the dog,
She swallowed the dog to catch the cat,
She swallowed the cat to catch the bird,
She swallowed the bird to catch the spider,
She swallowed the spider to catch the fly;
I don't know why she swallowed a fly — perhaps she'll die!

There was an old lady who swallowed a horse...
She's dead, of course.

— Nursery Rhyme allegedly inspired by an encounter with the Hag of Many Voices and Hungers from Between, thought to still be at large in the city slums

A Between Empire

Hot on the heels of the discovery of Between came the explorers — people eager to make a fortune by harnessing this new land as a Royal empire. The Royal Between Company was formed in 1638.

Sir Donnan Grabe is the most (in)famous explorer of Between. He began making frequent voyages of discovery, firstly by foot, then with pack animals, and finally by boat after discovering the Unsea in 1639, an occasion marked by Grabe's loss of a troop of men led by Captain Corrun in the frightful Corrun's Labyrinth.

As the land yielded up its secrets and wealth, the rulers of Castorhage realised that they had a cornucopia upon their doorstep and took extreme precautions against its being exploited by others. They flooded the land with troops and colonies, the most infamous of which was Fort Toil on the Greensward Hell border. The 5000 souls of this settlement vanished in a single night in 1647 — food lay uneaten on tables, kettles boiled on stoves, all as though everyone went in a single instant. This event is still referred to as the Fort Toil Massacre by members of the Royal Between Company, who set out upon a zealous quest of revenge and conquest. Unfortunately, it led directly to the beginning of the Greensward Hell War was followed in only a few short years by the Massacre of Ste. Anne's Field. Since then the powers-that-be have taken a slightly less obtuse approach to their colonisation efforts. They still reinforce and strengthen

their position in the strange nether realm of Between, but they do so with the knowledge that they are not alone in that realm and not altogether welcome. They have learned the hard way that to push too hard too fast provokes an asymmetrical response that has proven to be beyond the abilities of their brute application of force. Rather a slow but steady colonisation and exploitation seems to have proven the better course and is one of the primary reasons why vast military formations of Castorhagi troops are not seen marching across the Betweenlands — Between simply won't tolerate it.

Despite this institutional paranoia, the entrances to Between that were discovered continue to remain only within Castorhage herself, now established as a "legitimate" component of the Empire of Castorhage, Between is giving up more of its secrets on a daily basis, and yet with each new discovery some new terror emerges, or some new thing staggers from the dark corners and into the city itself. The alarming increase in creatures from Between walking the city streets of Castorhage has been kept mostly secret by the powers that be, though rumours are beginning to circulate on the streets.

Between realms seem to be fractious, and whilst intelligent creatures inhabit some, others are completely wild. However, even in those places where intelligent creatures are found, they tend to hunt in packs and can mock or imitate the invaders. Civilised creatures that are organised into a true society have yet to be encountered. Rather, the most advanced Between creatures seem to be mocking echoes or caricatures of men and other humanoids — almost as if distorted reflections seen in a flawed mirror.

What traces of older civilisations have been found so far in Between have been in the form of decayed monuments or disjointed tales so fractured and superstition-driven as to pose no serious threat to Castorhagi colonial ambitions.

More troubling to the city is that things that are coming out of Between seem to be leaching the very thoughts and essences of the Blight and its inhabitants into mocking manifestations of their animating spirit. This is all the more disturbing as it seems to be only the dark side of humanity that is manifested.

The Illuminati and Between Companies

Their tentacles and claws grip every part of the city, and Between beyond. The Illuminati have been quick to seize opportunities to set up their own secret colonies in Between, and it is speculated by those few that know that their unbirth magic known as *The Staff of Life* and *The Elixir* (see **The Blight Campaign Guide: Appendix D**) has its origins in the dark places of Between. In addition, the rise of a new group of Between-savvy magic-users called mirror mages (see sidebox) is likely the result of the influence of the Illuminati, and it is thought that most, if not all, mirror mages are in the direct employ of the Illuminati.

That the Illuminati has control of parts of Between is not in doubt; the questions are which parts and why? Their efforts focus at the Barnacles and Great Docks, where the transient gateways come and go with incredible and alarming regularity. Lurking behind its great levee wall, the Barnacles is seething with industry and greed.

Mirror Mages

Specialists in magical exploration, mirror mages are a selective and insular sect of magic-users that devote themselves to unravelling the mysteries of Between. Their primary focus is understanding the land's and its creatures' ability to leach memories and manifest them in a physical form, an ability that they would like very much to be able to command.



The official Castorhage presence in Between is represented in two primary companies and their subsidiaries, though without a doubt the Illuminati secretly exercise partial or even total control over these consortiums.

The **Royal Between Company** was the first entity to be licensed by the Crown to investigate, explore, colonise, and exploit any valuable resources of Between. The Royal Between Company is headquartered out of the Capitol and chaired by **Lucas Nathaniel Nightshade** (Neutral male human aristocrat 10) under license from Queen Alice. The Royal Between Company directly administers the Castorhage Western Province and Slave State, but that proved challenging and taxing on resources enough that it has calved off the **Castorhage East Dominion Company** in order to oversee the so-called Land of Saffron with a more personal eye. Though ostensibly a subsidiary of the Royal Between Company and therefore under the jurisdiction of Lord Nightshade, in truth **Chief Factor Aldrege Butterknuckle** (Neutral male tradelord gnome* expert 6) wields almost absolute control over the activities of the East Dominion.

A mysterious group of zealots wield true power over the Royal Between Company, whose remit is to explore, exploit and enslave any aspects of Between that might prove profitable. In going on for a century of pillage, the company has swelled the Royal coffers beyond imagining, and whilst the cost in human life is high, it is considered a worthy risk by those whose only risk is financial. Company livery consists of a banner or herald depicting an iron fist smashing a circular mirror, the uniform is violet with gold trim and troops from the Royal Between Corps are tough. True power in the company is almost impossible to unravel; a clever ruse by its members to achieve a level of anonymity, but dozens of high-level nobility make up its ranks

The **Royal Unsea Whaling Company** is an entirely separate entity based out of the port of Scrimshaw. It was founded after the lucrative discovery of the abundant whales of the Unsea that called for a more specialised touch than simply another arm of the ponderous Royal Between. The history of the Royal Unsea Whaling Company is more tumultuous in that the control of the company regularly slips between certain powerful "families" of Town Bridge through political manoeuvre and counter-manoeuvre, and more frequently downright skulduggery and thuggishness. It recently passed into the hands of the **Darnell** family of Town Bridge, but that oversight seems destined to be short-lived. Despite the constant change in family control, through it all the company has been

capably managed by the Governor of Scrimshaw, the **Lady Constance Thorn** (Neutral female human magic-user 3).

* See **The Blight Campaign Guide: Part 3, New Racial Subtypes**

Outposts and Colonies

Whilst various groups — most notably the Illuminati — have established several secret outposts, the following are the most notable Between locations that have seen the stamp of Castorhagi habitation.

Castorhage East Dominion (a.k.a. the Land of Saffron)
Castorhage Western Province and Slave State (a.k.a. Hope)
HrondHuss
Mallen and Between Mine No. 1
Scrimshaw
The Myre-Between

Each is detailed further under either **Betweenlands** or **The Unsea** below.

Betweenlands

"My first glimpse of the Betweenlands almost left me insensible; here indeed was Cornucopia — the Land of Plenty, the Place of Milk and Honey. The far side of the mirror was like a place of impossible life and noise and scents; my senses were assaulted from all sides. I first entered a mirror of the room I set forth from; this was an ordinary looking replica of the room from which I departed, save that it was aware … I cannot describe it even now; it seemed as though it was watching me, as though everything was watching me. I found a door that, in the chamber I had left, led into a hallway and thence my own small walled garden. Grasping the doorknob, which if my senses hadn't betrayed me I could have sworn complained at being moved, I stepped into the next room. It was not my garden; rather it was a garden room such as the Royals have — a glass chamber full of light and flowers. And such flowers! Colours and blooms that I had scarcely even dreamt of were there, and the air was alive with buzzing of bees. An open doorway led onto a green lawn by the side of a tumbling brook.

"Little did I know then, what was out there watching me enter this garden …"

— The Chronicles of Hetherington Quarrus Mabe
Volume 1, Chapter 11

Between realms do not seem to obey standard geography; whilst some domains seem endless, others are very small. There seems to be no logic where one ends and another begins, although inevitable bleeding of the two places occurs; an icy land with freezing jungle trees for example. Attempts have been made to map Between, but the results have been imperfect at best and sometimes dangerously inaccurate. In addition, there are no true directions. North, east, south, and west are all given arbitrary values by the explorers who have come to Between, but none holds any true relevance and oft-times the designations of direction for different explorers has differed.

Broken Land, The

"If the Devil could create a beast and give it breath and anger, the creatures I glimpsed would be his masterpieces. The things lurched about on three legs, but not with any great speed, almost as though they were injured in their movements; they were things of thorns and iron and might, each taller than a cathedral and each with hateful fire in their bellies. I saw these dragons lay waste to the lands they ruled — great lines of white fire belching from their mouths and destroying men, almost as though for amusement. This land was red with weed and sickness and resignation, and the dragons ruled here in this Broken Land."

—Pramus Quith, Expeditionary Captain
Royal Between Company

A large stretch of dragon- and worm-infested wasteland extending along one of the borders of the known areas of Between, this blasted and dangerous region seems to defy all attempts at exploration. Most who enter don't return alive, and none has been able to discover the far side where its desolate expanse ends — if indeed it has an end.

Azure

Beyond the eastern borders of the Castorhage East Dominion is a vast unexplored mountainous jungle land full of active volcanoes and alien things that seek the destruction of any interlopers. To the knowledge of the Castorhage East Dominion Company and the Crown it is wholly uncharted. Unbeknownst to them His Holiness the Father of Castorhage has begun his own exploration of them from the far side by means of a stable gateway recently discovered beneath a monastery in the Hollow and Broken Hills (see **HBH15** in **Chapter 7**). This gateway gives ships access onto a sargasso sea called the Sea of Mists and Creeping Things after which a week's voyage in any direction brings the vessel to the eastern shore of the Betweenlands at the foot of the mountains where a small port and outpost called Providence has been established. The first administrator of this outpost, Friar Lyme, disappeared only a few weeks after its establishment, though it is now overseen by **Prior Cleg** (Neutral male human magic-user 10) when he is not busy with his duties at the monastery.

His Holiness is calling this land Azure in hopes that if word of it leaks, such a moniker will lend confusion about what it is referring to, but of course the Illuminati are already well aware of its existence and include Prior Cleg among their top agents. From the tiny settlement of Providence, the investigation of these largely unknown heights and the warm sea below is being conducted on a small scale by the Brothers of Saint Jull, the small monastic order of the Hollow and Broken Hills that unexpectedly found a Between *gateway* beneath their priory.

Castorhage East Dominion, a.k.a. The Land of Saffron

Administered from the bastion of Fort Labour on the banks of Queen Alice's Maw, the place boils with insects, its humidity making the air like water as the Eastern Jungle rises towards distant mountains. All around is the noise of insects, and the anger of the land itself. Volcanoes growl in the night, their deep roots pulling at the very earth itself. Here and there, a hastily constructed stockade fort clings to the place, its presence like a scab on a wound. Folk of Castorhage dwell and work here, afraid of the very place they live. Tales of flash floods the size of mountains that sweep down the river, of volcanic eruptions, of distended creatures lurking on the edges of the jungle, and of the Fort Toil Massacre are keenly known. Yet the spices here are the purest ever seen, and boats groaning with unnaturally heady saffron, of cinnamon and of cumin, regularly wallow through the Between *gateway* canal to reach home. Some, of course, never make it back. They all hope to see a new day, hope that they will never witness a massacre, or a great flood, or the boiling anger of the volcanoes.

The infamous Land of Saffron is run by the Royal Between company via its Castorhage East Dominion Company arm. This place has a terrible reputation for brutality, and the masters cannot get enough labour to run their spice plantations. Presently, criminals are being deported to this land and being proffered freedom (which, of course, never transpires). It is a concern of those who truly know the place that it is on the brink of revolution, and could, if things went badly, see the establishment of an independent Between state; something no one in authority in Castorhage wishes to ever see.

A monstrous tyrant and close relative of Duke Taim, **Lord Thresh** (Chaotic male blighted* human fighter 7) has recently taken over the running of the East Dominion. His Paladins of Order, a grotesque bunch of rapists and murderers, are gripping the dominion in a vice and throttling anyone who dares disagree.

* See **The Blight Campaign Guide: Part 3, New Racial Subtypes**

Castorhage Western Province and Slave State, a.k.a. Hope

A disgusting industry blights this place, a land where man has lashed the land into some sort of temporary submission. Cotton plantations, rampant growths of white as far as the eye can see, are being harvested by bands of sickly looking people. Their hands and eyes and frames tell that they were once from Castorhage, but their tale is all too common. A harsh sentence for a petty crime mandated years of labour; predatory lenders have gripped them in an impossible fist of indentured servitude, and they work to repay debts they and their descendants can never hope to cast off; they ran afoul of a press gang and had not the family or influence to see them freed before being transported. These are the stories of those who labour in Hope.

They call it Hope in cruel jest or irony, the Western Province and Slave State is basically a large prison without walls, a place cast-offs are given the hope of redemption and sanctuary by Under-Justices and judicares — no matter how trivial their crime. If they happen to be caught when a ship is ready at the Great Docks, chances are they will be on it — or face the gallows. Settlements scatter away from Point Hope, the bay where new ships arrive and disembark their passengers from the fickle *gateway* beneath an overhanging tor of rock bearing the ill-named township of Port Welcome, itself the home of a great lantern to welcome shipping by night. Hope is a den of thieves and slavers and greed and wallowing sin. The imposing walls of Fort Industry overlook the town and sprawling plantations of the surrounds, keeping a grim eye over its charges.

The Queen has a personal fetish for this place, having once visited it in her younger years, and has decreed that it will succeed and be an example to heathens across the lands that Castorhage and Mother Grace are the only true faiths worth aspiring to. The main outer colony, Grace, lies a few days sailing

The Western Province and Slave State is less explorer-centric than its sister settlement of the Castorhage East Dominion and far more ordered. Visitors are not welcome, and intruders (called "stowaways" by Duke Mandrake who rules from his seat at Fort Industry) are hunted. Thirteen overseers rule the outer plantations here under the authority of Duke Mandrake, and these plantations are separated by perhaps fifty miles apiece. Beyond that is nightmare of the Greensward Hell. However, between these great cotton plantations the land is not much more forgiving. Here is found miles of green sawgrasses as tall as a man, high wild corn and gods know what. Often labourers disappear from the edges of the plantations, and some overseers — particularly the perverse **Overseer Lucas Clover** (Chaotic male human thief 4) — delight in exiling wrong-doers to the vast wild fields between these outposts of civilisation. Clover is barely able to conceal his perverse delight when he sends a slave out into corn beyond the plantations, and garners a sick glee in their imagined sufferings.

Rough roads link the outlying settlements to Grace, the high wild corn encroaches constantly, and small armies of men toil to keep the wild undergrowth at bay. Their task focusses solely on the few pathways, what lurks beyond is left alone. While clearing the pathways is relatively easy work, there are those who are snatched while they toil and never seen again. There are all kinds of tall tales about what lurks in the cornfields; people mention long knives, scythes, hoods, things made of sack and voices that sing sad songs of homes lost and travellers who go missing.

Eastern Jungle

Little enough is known of the vast rainforest that is known simply as the Eastern Jungle. It is beneath the dense green canopy of this expanse that the Castorhage East Dominion Company harvests its wealth in spices and rare woods. Small plantations manned by convict labourers and indentured slaves work under the eaves of this jungle, and if turnover of the work force is high due to the back-breaking labour, incessant mosquito-borne disease, and shadowy, cannibalistic things with too-long limbs and sharp-filed teeth that lurk beneath the heavy green boughs, then it is a small price to pay in the name of profit. The Under-Justices and Judicares send a constant stream of convicts sentenced to transport to work the Land of Saffron, cheap resources to feed the ever-hungry jungle.

Many villages and work settlements spring up along the languid flow of the Queen Alice's Maw river, though they disappear almost as quickly and are soon buried beneath the unnaturally fecund plant growth that typifies this forested land. Also hidden beneath this green shroud are many stone temples and pyramids of seemingly great age. Who or what built them remains a mystery, but the oft-repeated motif of hexagonal honeycomb structures among their artwork and architecture leads many to point to the Leviathan Graveyard also said to be buried within the jungle's depths. The jungle's eastern border climbs the lower slopes of a chain of sharp-edged mountains, many of which have peaks that emit a constant stream of smoke and a hellish glow from their rumbling interior. Earthquakes are not infrequent and sometimes devastating to the communities along the river and mountain slopes as flash floods and rockslides quickly do what the denizens of the jungle tend to handle in a slower fashion — the eradication of interlopers.

Fort Industry

More commonly referred to as "Old Blood, Sweat and Tears," Fort Industry serves as the hub for administration of the township of Hope and the plantations of the Castorhage Western Province and Slave State. It is the hastily constructed replacement for the ill-fated and abandoned Fort Toil Here rules **Duke Mandrake** (Chaotic male human fighter 9), the Queen's third cousin once removed. He is a vile, religious madman, who adheres to the harshest doctrine of Mother Grace — order, honour, country and goddess. His clan (a group of vicious murderers, zealots and clerics) follow his calling — to create a new Heaven in the world here in the Western Province and Slave State. Worship, work and obedience are all he asks for, and expects, of his followers and subjects. The duke sets a high standard, however, he punishes the most trivial acts with brutal breakings on the wheel and for the most wicked acts — fornication outside wedlock, lewdness and whore-mongery — his punishments are the most heinous; burnings are his favourite way of cleansing his sinful flock, but he realises the power of acts of even greater brutality, pulling sinners apart with wild horses for example.

Fort Labour

A monstrous tyrant and close relative of Duke Taim, **Lord Thresh** (NE male blighted* human fighter 7) has recently taken over the running of the East Dominion under authority of Chief Factor Butterknuckle. His Paladins of Order, a grotesque bunch of rapists and murderers, are gripping the dominion in a vice and throttling anyone who dares disagree. The group operate out of Fort Labour, little more than a timber torture chamber in constant need of repair, aimed solely at ensuring the efforts of those here to toil and profit and explore in order to further the fortunes of their betters. Independent explorers are welcomed here, simply because of the death rate, and while most are never seen again, some return with wild tales of temples and mountain passes and cities built upon mountaintops. Thresh is a serial madman, his black moods are almost as legendary as Duke Taim's are, and in a fit of pique he has been known to send dozens of men, women and children to their deaths on some wild goose chase. Yet Thresh knows he will be judged on one thing and one thing alone — profit. Thresh is a zealot on colonisation and a steady streak of settlers are sent on their way, looking bleakly at the mountains crushing the sky ahead and wondering at the chances of their survival.

* See **The Blight Campaign Guide: Part 3, New Racial Subtypes**

Fort Toil

The first outpost of Castorhage in Between, Fort Toil long held the record for being one of the shortest lived until the settlements along the eastern river began to spring up and disappear with regularity. Constructed in 1644 at a point midway between the *gateway* at Point Hope and the Greensward Hell, Fort Toil was a reinforced stockade burgeoning frontier town that eventually boasted a population of 5,000 souls. It was intended to serve as a bulwark of defence for the newly forming Port Welcome and as the spear tip for expansion into the resource-rich environs of the nearby forest. That is…

until its entire population vanished in a single night in 1647. Not a soul was left after travellers discovered the disappearance the following morning… with no signs of struggle or clues as to where everyone went. The incident became dubbed the "Fort Toil Massacre" in a move to inflame the Royal Family and other prominent movers and shakers of Castorhage and resulted in the creation of the Royal Between Corps and a programme of military build-up in Between. It also ultimately led to the Massacre of Ste. Anne's Field and a reversal of that hawkish policy.

Today, Fort Toil stands largely as it was. It has long since been looted of any valuables or useful equipment, but the log blockhouses and stockade still stand, largely untouched by the weather and environment, in mute testament to the folly of greed and colonialism in Between — a lesson that if not exactly learned has been duly noted in the current policy of Between colonisation.

Fowler's Endless Stair

Believed to be one of the first landmarks discovered in Between after Mabe's initial discovery in 1637 (largely because of a diary found some 50 years later that spoke of it), Fowler's endless stair gains its name from the early explore Desteryn Fowler, a famed Libynosi big-game hunter and traveller. Taking a commission from the newly forming Royal Between Company, Fowler and his troop of 27 hunters, porters, trackers, and soldiers entered through the Mabe *mirror-portal* of BookTown and were never seen again. Only a few short weeks later that *mirror-portal* had shut as well. The diary of one member of the Fowler expedition was found some five decades later by a Royal Between Company expedition to the Great Between Forest and brought back what little news of Fowler's fate that is known. The diary described visions of a miraculous stair that had occurred sporadically and that Fowler himself had apparently become obsessed with finding.

The actual location of Fowler's Endless Stair is unknown, if indeed it is not altogether transient to begin with. It is usually associated with The Wall both as a convenient geographical context and because the diary was discovered in the not-too-distant Great Between Forest, but nowhere in the description of the stair was The Wall mentioned. Some scholars speculate that it was actually a free-standing stair that ascended to the sky to destinations unknown like some kind of heat mirage, and this actually matches the diary's furtive descriptions better. But even that is truly speculation as well, as is what caused the explorer to obsess so over it or his traveling companions to so willingly go along. That the stair is "endless" is simply derived from the fact that if they found it, the exploring party never left it and some contend that they climb it still in a vain effort to find what glorious reward or secret it holds at its undiscovered summit. Other than occasional claimed sightings of the vision, there have been no confirmed reports of anyone ever actually finding it.

Great and Secret House, The

A few travellers have reported a house somewhere deep in the Betweenlands. They say it is of endless size and seemingly infinite chambers. Some travellers have reported being unable to enter it, either finding no doors or accessible windows or finding that doors and windows are completely impervious to penetration. Others have reported being able to easily enter it and explore some of its vast interior, though these report doors within appearing or disappearing in its confusion of halls and chambers and causing their parties to inevitably split up. In each of these cases, one or more members of those groups never emerged again. No one has been able to determine why some groups are able to enter and why other cannot, but speculation runs toward the subsequent disappearances having a strong connection — as if the house sought to claim certain individuals and allowed them the means to enter. Ultimately who is master of this house and what its purpose is remains just one of many mysteries of Between.

Great Between Forest, a.k.a. The Unquiet

The Great Between Forest, or the Unquiet as it is known to those who have had the misfortune to spend a night encamped within is a vast swath of woodland that covers what is often approximated southern extent of the Betweenlands. The forest's depths are unplumbed and unknown and are rumoured to hold all manner of creatures and horrors from wolves that talk to dead that hunt. And anyone who has experienced the forest at night has made mention of the susurrus of the trees, a constant whispering sibilance as if each trunk was awake and watchful, sharing its secrets and murderous desires with its companions. That many kinds of intelligent plant life including treants[M], kampfults[TOHC], and quickwoods[TOHC] have been encountered within only adds to this feeling of the forest as a single waking entity only biding its time until it turns against all who would dare encroach upon its borders.

[M] See ***Monstrosities*** by **Frog God Games**

[TOHC] See ***The Tome of Horrors Complete*** by **Frog God Games**

Greensward Hell

This jungle is said to be alive in a singular sense, a fact possibly borne out by the tragedy of Fort Toil, the original outpost linking Between and the Blight. Explorers head off weekly into the green depths to seek wealth, to search for fabled cities of secrets, and to hunt. Many never return, and those that do are sometimes broken men who swear to never venture into the Green again. Yet still more go, for every expedition is driven by the tales of wealth.



Formally claimed as territory by Castorhage, the fringes of the jungle now has several cotton plantations established, and these in turn are manned by slaves under the protection of the Illuminati via the Royal Between Company and the Castorhage Western Province and Slave State. If the insects and the sickness do not get you, if the strange creatures that plague the lands don't take you and consume you, and if the greedy does not stab you in the dark for your shoes or the want of a waterskin, you might live another day here. And each day can be worth a fortune.

HrondHuss

The HrondHuss is considered the last mark of civilisation upon the Betweenlands beyond which lies only endless wilderness and madness. This inn is constructed in the elaborate alpine style of the Yolbiac Vale and is owned and operated by the ex-patriot Valesman **Yudr György** (Neutral male human fighter 5) who has managed to live in the shadow of the Wall largely unmolested for nearly 20 years. The Huss is staffed solely by Yudr's wife and 3 children and one Ashurian slave named **Khelmut** (Neutral male Denizen of Leng[M] [disguised as a normal human]). How he managed to build this establishment and how he supplies it is a mystery to the few folk who come this far, as is the lone guest who has resided here for the last 14 months, a thin, pale stranger calling himself **Etumo** (Chaotic male vampire: HD 7), but most assume that the Valesman must be running from something. Only the very astute notice the lingering looks that occur between the wan guest and Yudr's young wife Ingred.

Yudr will keep any guest who can pay and abides by the rules of peace within the Huss but has been known to bring in those in need who could not pay at the time but were in dire straits. Though in these cases he always extracts a promise of a future service, none of which have been called in to date. The Huss has rooms to accommodate 40 guests and a stable for a score of mounts. The fare is simple but good with a plentiful supply of good Yolbiac beer. Etumo hires out as a guide for any who wish to explore the nearby Wall of the forest at the rate of 20gp per day, but few take the intense man up on the offer.

[M] See ***Monstrosities*** by **Frog God Games**

Land of Hateful Things

This place is said to be a dark fairyland, a place where the essences of children's nightmares are taken and given flesh. The few who have managed to glimpse it from afar report having seen a number of children wandering within its sometimes-idyllic-sometimes-horrifying landscape. Some of these children have been recognised as missing persons who disappeared from their homes in the night. The fact that some of these children disappeared decades or more ago and yet seem to have not aged at all when spotted again causes great concern and speculation among those who have received these reports. None of the reports of the missing children's whereabouts has yet been made public knowledge through any official channels, though street rumours sometimes run rampant. In addition, no attempt to make contact with these children has succeeded, and those who have tried have invariably disappeared.

The truth of the matter is that the Land of Hateful Things is the demesne of the **Harvester of Cribs** who brings those that he does not immediately devour to this place to dwell thereafter. Why he should do so or if he is even the actual ruler of this domain remain very much in question.

Land of Long Night

This realm is a place perpetually shadowed where the dead walk under a black sun. It is a place haunted by ghosts and tragedy, where the land itself is an undead spirit that aches for rest and longs for vengeance, against whom, and for what, it cannot even understand.

Lands of the Echo Queen

Travellers report that somewhere within Between there exists a kingdom that is a dual — yet mocking — version of Castorhage and its environs. Herein, a grotesque queen rules her subjects with an iron fist, and has a fanatical group of loyal soldiers at her call. This land is occupied by a plethora of enlarged and awakened animals, trees, and other horrific creatures. A great forest extends around the borders of this kingdom and twisted creatures live therein; these creatures, despite their horrific and multiple forms are also intelligent. Some wonder which is the image of which, so dreadful is the royal court of the Blight. Regardless, this land remains frustratingly elusive and has yet to be discovered by those who are seeking it, rather than those who just happen to stumble upon it.

Leviathan Graveyard

Little enough is known of the Leviathans, great indescribable beasts of the mundane world's distant past. Also sometimes known as Ancients, the role of these vast behemoths is unclear in the history of the world as they do not appear to appear to have been a type of dragons nor do they conform to the physiology and structure of the great "thunder lizards" still found alive in some parts of the world today. They appear to have been a wholly different type of creature, equally as primordial as both of those others but much more alien with a greater diversity of form. The fossilised remains of such creatures have been found throughout the known world, but the city-state of Castorhage produces the highest concentration of discoveries of anywhere. Part of the mystery as to why that is may be answered by the sunken valley that lies along one oxbow of the jungle river here.

The fossilised remains of hundreds of the creatures known as Leviathans can be found in the eroded embankments and gullies of this stretch of the river and in forms more varied and sizes unequalled by any finds in the mundane world. Whether the creatures came collectively to this spot to die untold millions of years ago or were merely present at this location when some catastrophic event occurred that caused their simultaneous deaths is uncertain, but the few members of the Royal Underneath Society who have braved the journey downriver to reach this site have located numerous examples of the honeycomb-clustered fossils so often associated with the Leviathans. That only about half of those scholars and their parties have returned to tell the tale seems to have done little to diminish the appetite for more discovery. That some of those who did not return were later found on the site as little more than bags of rotting skin, their bones, organs, and musculature having been somehow meticulously removed with only a few small incisions has had at best a modest effect on diminishing the scholars' ardour. Perhaps most telling of all in reducing efforts of the savants of the society to obtain company permission to make the journey has been the faces of the victims whose remains have been found — faces that though now nothing but hollow skin remain perfectly intact and recognizable and forever etched into an expression of surprised joy.

Mallen and Between Mine No. 1

This mine is miles deep, and 400 workers (mostly dwarves) work its faces for Between gold. It is a strange place with an outpost town at its head called Mallen. This settlement (originally simply named Settlement 34) is a rambunctious place where miners come to stake their claims and face the things that slither in the mines beneath them. It is overseen by Royal Between Company foreman **Boss Rath** (Chaotic male hill dwarf fighter 6), a surly and cruel dwarf who astonishingly claims hobgoblin ancestry and gets into many bloody brawls with those who dare mock his claim or deny it. If anyone causes too much trouble, he directs his company toughs to apprehend the troublemaker in the dead of night and introduce him forcefully to one of the mine's deeper shafts.

The Between mine is a terrible place, a shifting series of faces that birth out stones and ores unpredictably, but has yet to end. Thousands of work faces (many mined by workers suspended in space on harnesses), side-corridors (some that grow ever lower and narrower regardless of whether the miner crawls forward or backward), and endless depths lie beneath the precarious chain conveyor that lowers the workers half a mile and more to the main worksites themselves.

Even though Mallen appears to sit by itself among these broken hills with only its own tailings for company and no road leading to or from it, it is only half of the settlement with the other half lying in the Underneath below Castorhage and still known as **Settlement 34**. Mallen is usually

reached by crossing over from this location, and anyone approaching from overland in Between is immediately considered a hostile threat and all steps necessary are taken to either eliminate the intruders or to exterminate the miners while Rath and his guards bunker down in their blockhouse and await for reinforcements from Underneath. For more information on Settlement 34, see **The Blight Campaign Guide: Chapter 10**.

Mockery, The

This hidden place is a haven, a retreat for the vampires of the Fetch, where undead can find peace and tranquillity can be for a time. Called the Mockery, the place at first looks like a small ghost town abandoned in the depths of the forest, but that is before the visitor notices the talking flowers or the many vampires sleeping in the sunlight. In the Mockery, death and life are mingled, spirits rise and fall, and those cursed to walk the night can for a time be freed from the limitations of their curse and live like the living, like the mortal lives they left behind to come into their inheritance of undeath — for a time. But even the Mockery cannot be tolerated for long by a visiting vampire, for the longer one stays the more one is changed. The spirits of the place speak through the soil and the plants, making promises, stripping away their minds, their wills, and their personalities. A vampire who stays too long in the Mockery "goes to root", they say. His flesh becomes grey and hard, his joints stiffen into gnarled poses, and the light of awareness leaves his eyes. Some of the tangled trees around the town have strangely humanoid forms, and the Fetch point to these as examples of those "gone to root". That some of these grow new green shoots is a mystery to even those most well-versed in the place. The ruler of the Mockery reigns from a courthouse overgrown with vines and old trees. She wears the robes and wig of a Crown Justice of Castorhage and sometimes refers to herself as the Fourth Bench. She is **Perdition, Dread Queen of UnBirth** (Chaotic female human vampire: HD 9), and she rules the Mockery in the name of her master Beltane and guards the secret of the gateway that connects this place to the Artists' Quarter of the city-state. That this ancient vampire has proven immune to the influence of this place is well known to the Fetch and accounts for her position of authority. That secretly she is not at all immune but rather has become a puppet vessel for the powerful animus spirit that infests this place is not known by the Fetch, nor even by herself. Only the strange dreams of dominion and sunlight that she sometimes experiences provide her any clear that all is not what it seems.

Further detail on the Mockery and Perdition can be found at **AQ42** in **The Blight Campaign Guide: Chapter 2**.

Myre-Between, The

It's almost passé to say this soggy marshland is alive. Certainly, the standing stones within its green, fetid depths are known to speak as they sway in the colossal floating bog. Things live in the Myre-Between — bad things, although the present regional governor, **Lord Henry Bragmye** (Neutral male doppelganger; HD 6, abilities of MU4), laughs off such tales. His manor house sits at the edge of the Myre-Between, its wooden siding gouged by the effects of the damp air and frequent mists. Out in the Myre-Between beyond the grounds of his estate are hidden tombs, tombs whose contents have made men rich. Lord Bragmye charges a high price for his hospitality and guides into the mire, but without them, successful entry is nigh impossible.

Pech Pit

Like the Fort Toil Massacre and the Massacre of Ste. Anne's Field, the Pech Pit is the sight of a tragic loss of life early in the exploration of Between. Intrepid explorers managed to blaze a trail across the uncertain terrain between the Castorhage Western Province and Slave State and the Castorhage East Dominion. When the rise of the first Greensward Tyrant, the mad monk Eglund of Sanctuary arose and threatened the plantations of the Western Province with annihilation, a lone rider managed to make it past the cordon of the monk's skirmishers and the natural dangers of the great Betweenlands plains. Bringing his urgent message or dire peril to Fort Labour, Castorhage East Dominion Company assembled its levies, slave militia auxiliaries, and Royal Between Corps companies and set out at a forced march to relieve its beleaguered parent company. Unlike the Ste. Anne's Field travesty of decades earlier, no Between horde rose to meet them, and the very ground seemed to tremble beneath their tread. The marching host was unstoppable — until the ground opened beneath their feet and swallowed them.

The great sinkhole opened too quickly for the mass of the army to escape, and only the vanguard and baggage train survived. Witness accounts reported the vast pit's depths being shrouded in unnatural darkness and the sounds of inhuman bellows and all-too-human screams arising from it for hours. By nightfall all was silent and all the remained was the sinkhole now known as the Pech Pit. Since that time, by contractual agreement, the too arms of the Royal Between Company do *not* send military assistance to one another. The result has proven far too costly.

The few travellers who make the journey today between the Castorhagi dominions attempt to avoid the pit, but somehow always end up finding it. Even attempts to make a new road had failed as even the new course found itself blocked by the pit and requiring travellers to skirt its dark depths. Strangely reports on the size of the pit vary and those who travel overland without even following the road still come across it, almost as if it seeks travellers out. Most folk are able to safely go around it, though some parties have disappeared in its vicinity, and those who come upon it unexpectedly at nightfall fear the worst, for it is always most active at night. Tales of vast tentacles, creeping monstrosities, or cannibal humanoids skulking in the dark have all emerged from travellers braving the land road, and perhaps they are all true. None of braved the depths of the pit to know for certain what dwells within or how deep it goes, but all assume at the very least there waits an undead army whose marching tread can still sometimes be herd echoing from the mouth of the shaft — an army that should it ever find a way out will undoubtedly continue its march to the Western Province and bring sword and flame to a war a century over.

Queen Alice's Maw

Flowing through the forest bordering the Castorhage East Dominion, a score of small, newly established villages follow the banks of this gruesome green snake of a river almost a mile across. These colonists are almost all forcibly settled here by Lord Thresh and have adopted a dark fatalism as the river of the woodlands take them one by one through unbelievable acts of horror or insanity. Only the newest of settlers still share the original spark of adventure and dreams of striking it rich that first drew them to trying their fortune in Between. For the rest, stuck as they are between the nightmare reality of their present circumstances and the assured death at the hands of Lord Thresh's "paladin" order, most simply hope that when the inevitable ends comes that it comes quickly and as painlessly as possible. None of these villages is large enough or lasts long enough to warrant an official name or map notation, but most of the inhabitants enjoy sardonically giving them names as far from the true nature of their reality as possible, names such as Joy, Beginner's Luck, Double-Or-Nothing, and Can't Miss.

Sea of Mists and Creeping Things

Not truly a part of the Betweenlands but generally agreed to also not be a part of the Unsea, this sargasso sea is perpetually cloaked in an obscuring bank of fog that prevents vision beyond a few dozen yards. A waterborne gateway from the Hollow and Broken Hills (see **HBH15** in **The Blight Campaign Guide: Chapter 7**) opens into this sea and is used to access the small port of Azure on its western shore. Oddly, regardless of which direction a ship travels from this gateway, a voyage of roughly a week always brings it to the shore near Providence. Why this is has yet to be determined but further investigation has been stymied by both small numbers of the Brothers of Saint Jull who are undertaking this exploration and the nagging habit of ships occasionally disappearing without a trace in the seemingly endless mists. Sailors try to reach shore as quickly as possible through murky tangle of the sargassum and thank their lucky stars when they see the fog break ahead and land on the horizon.

Spiral Fable

The Spiral Fable is a mystery site where reality seems fluid and can follow the imagination of the viewer, though usually in a way that distorts and endangers viewer. It is known in the Artists' Quarter of Castorhage as a place where the storybooks come to life and allow their fanciful ideas to manifest in reality. There has to be a gateway connecting somehow to the city, but no one has discovered it for certain. All they know is that sometimes stories come to life and run rampant among the living, and the bloodier the story the more likely it is to happen. On the Between side it is little more than a nondescript valley among rugged hills with nothing to mark itself as such a place of chaos made real. There have been reports of an unusual concentration of chaos beasts inhabiting the region, but so few folk have dared to try and explore that this could easily be a chicken-or-egg tale. More information on the Spiral Fable is given at **AQ41** in **The Blight Campaign Guide: Chapter 2**.

Ste. Anne's Field

The site of the second-greatest massacre after that of Fort Toil, Ste. Anne's Field is a meadowland not far from the fringes of the Greensward Hell. Here a full regiment of more than 3,000 Royal Between Corps regulars drew up their battle lines to face the brunt of the malignant forces they were facing in the Greensward Hell War. What emerged from the forest to engage them was like no army ever seen before or since. A vast, disparate horde of creatures, humanoids, madmen, indescribable horrors emerged and crashed into the carefully arranged ranks of the waiting soldiers. It was over in minutes, the field nothing more than a litter of broken bodies. It was as if Between flexed its muscles and showed what the might of the Royal Between Company was up against. It changed the course of Castorhagi policy from one of military conquest of Between to one of careful expansion and localised exploitation rather than risk the ire of the entire land like that again.

Today the field is still a pleasant green meadow. At its centre stands a crooked marble statue of an angel with broken wings representing Saint Anne, Patroness Saint of Martyrs, erected in honour of the many lives lost. One of the statues arms is broken off, and the other still reaches beseechingly out towards the distant wood line in an expression of contrition? A plea for mercy? No one alive knows. However, it known that at night the statue weeps blood and the dead walk seeking vengeance against any among the living who dare pass by. As a result, the field is almost universally avoided.

Theatres Obscura, The

A dark theatre district of shadows and crooked streets springs here in a small vale among desolate hills. It seems to have a life of its own as those who find entrance to it in the Artists' Quarter come here to partake of its otherworldly offerings. The dark fey hold sway here and control the *gateway* to the mundane world, and the god known as the Leper King is said to stalk its always-twilight streets. More information on the Theatres Obscura can be found at **AQ9** in **The Blight Campaign Guide: Chapter 2** and in ***L6: The Susurrus Theatre*** in ***The Levee Adventure***.

Tyrant Kingdoms

A small number of tyrants have set up so-called kingdoms within the forest beyond the plantations of the Western Province and Slave State and far away from any kind of laws of men. Characters such as **King Flesh** (Chaotic male human expert 5) and an insane halfling missionary called **Mistress Lydia Scathel** (Chaotic female halfling wererat: HD 5, abilities of Thf 5), madly convinced that she is a new Rat Queen and must transform this place into a haven for the Family populated only by wererats, set up their short-lived fiefdoms beneath the jungles' eaves. Loners, miners and hunters are inching across the place, and although they seem to be taming it their efforts are doomed; this place grows at an impossible rate, is brimming with lurking horrors and can even get into the skin of those who live here — as an insect called the **feasting mite** slowly eats its victims alive beneath the cover of their own hide.

Wall, The

Here stretches a howling mountainside at the foot of which rests the HrondHuss, the last inn before its massive expanse. Whether mountain range of virtually sheer cliffs or simply a vast wall across the Betweenlands, none knows for sure as none has ever reached the top to determine the truth. The Wall draws explorers to its upper reaches, but none has ever succeeded, even those who try to *fly* in its wild gales. Those who return from attempts at its upper reaches tell of finding signs of civilisation, of maddening echoes in the wind, and gales that flay the skin off a man. The relics they return with sometimes fetch fortunes back in the city. And the Ashurian manservant at the HrondHuss always listens to such tales with a keen ear, though he keeps his own counsel as to his interest.

Winter Wood

A portion of the Great Between Forest that grows thickly with evergreens, the Winter Wood is known to lie relatively close to the HrondHuss but far from anywhere else. Unlike the rest of the great forest, this portion is perpetually blanketed in snow, though few snowfalls or blizzards actually occur, and it is renowned for the iridescent bubbles that frequently float gently upon a cool winter breeze. Voracious wolves (many long since dead) haunt these woods along with spiders, and worse things, and great flapping creatures are known to soar above the treetops in the night sky. At least one gateway is known to open into this woodland from the Theatre District, but its Castorhage end is a closely held secret by the city authorities who monitor it to see what kind of abominations it might spawn and what might be learned from them.



The Unsea

A vast, uncharted ocean, the Unsea is a place of incredible storms and nightmarish gales that has proven difficult to explore. It is always overcast and gloomy in the best of conditions, and often fogs are so thick that a helmsman can't see his own masthead. The outpost of Scrimshaw lies beneath a huge ragefire-powered lighthouse that casts a beacon to draw ships home. Whaling in the Unsea is the most plentiful, and is a draw to the fleet of fishermen and whalers who now operate its dark waters. Rumour has it that not all the catch is passed into the Castorhage markets, and that often things that talk are found in nets.

The Unsea has many unique and interesting features and locations of its own, a selection of which are detailed below.

Brittle Ice, The

An endless ice field emerges here from the freezing waters of the Unsea. It seems to stretch into eternity but offers tantalizing glimpses of fanciful spires and dreamlike palaces upon the distant horizon or reflected as mirages upon low-hanging clouds in certain weather. Rumours say that the legendary Tu Chai Palace stands somewhere in that vast expanse, but exploration is limited because the ice field is rotten and brittle and collapses into sinkholes and hidden crevasses with alarming frequency. Only the enormous horned, six-legged polar bears that haunt its landscape seem to be immune to the effects of these hazards, and they are known for being extremely aggressive and always hungry.

The eastern flank of the ice shelf abuts the sweating expanse of the Greensward Hell, where a massive ice cliff looms, apparently untouched by the sweltering heat, above the verdant jungle expanse, seemingly untouched by the cold. As elsewhere, the ice here is too brittle to support much in the way of exploration, so for now the Brittle Ice holds its secrets close.

Carrion

"The reason for the stench besetting our deck finally became apparent; the dogged nidorous odour that has been plaguing us for days has revealed a source. It is the floating carcass of a whale, a vast creature whose mouth is pulled back in a permanent dreadful grin the size of a cliff. There are living things amongst the rot, and signs of habitation; bones have been splintered and broken and lashed, and parts of ships pulled and stitched into place to make a revolting floating town."

—Last Known Journal Entry of Abriath Wayde,
First Mate of the whaler *Lyric*

Carrion has been spotted upon the waters of the Unsea by many; a mobile, floating town ruled by aboleths. The aboleths' slave creatures tend the revolting carcass as they pay fealty to twisted sea gods who drive the settlement upon its way, taking it to the next holy place for its inhabitants to invade.

Carrion is more than a floating island, it is a vessel, and when the wind is up, great sails can be stretched to drive it onward at a ponderous pace. The aboleth of Carrion are served by an array of slaves taken from their voyages — voyages that expand the aboleths' minds and powers. The aboleths have an incredibly sophisticated social structure, and are governed by a rigid caste system. They are led by the **One of the Carcass, The Great and Only** (Chaotic aboleth[M]; HD 11, abilities of druid 6) who is attended by its 8 beloved kin **The Prime** (Chaotic aboleth[M]; HD 9, abilities of druid 3). The aboleths have voyaged the Unsea for all time it seems, and the immortal skum that tend them can remember histories so vast that mortal minds would struggle to comprehend their telling.

[M] See ***Monstrosities*** by **Frog God Games**

Cataclysm, The

There is a place where the Unsea falls into the nothingness of night and void, and that place extends its icy fingers to the seas for scores of miles around. Once in the grip of its current, there is no escape from its inexorable grasp. Few people have ever glimpsed the Cataclysm, and no one has voyaged close enough to significantly explore it in any way. A few have tried and been drawn into whatever lies beyond; the odd, vain magic-users who have sought to *fly* or use other magical means to see what lies below, have all been drawn by great gales into the fury of the Cataclysm which likewise defies all attempts at *scrying*. Only stories exist about the place, and they are all bad.

Cloven Sea, The

The Unsea in this region is torn, a huge slash between two great walls of water creating a slowly shifting land exposed from beneath the waves. The tear is a seething, moving mass of water usually a hundred yards across and deep, but sometimes much wider or even narrower to the point that its watery walls almost seems to touch. Perched precariously upon one of its upper walls is the skum city of Thry'ss where homage is paid in equal parts to the aboleths of Carrion and the long-missing Madness of the MirrorStorm, the great Between kraken who once made her home within the waters around the Cloven Sea but has been banished to the mundane world for many years now.



Corrun's Labyrinth

Shorlty after the discovery of the Unsea was the discovery of the Brittle Ice and the discovery of Corrun's Labyrinth. It is called labyrinth because that is the best description that sailors and cartographers can come up with to describe it, but in reality it is simply a section of the northern Unsea much like the rest. If anything, the waters here are unusually gentle and very rarely lashed by storms and perhaps with a somewhat higher frequency of crabs and other sea crustaceans, but not large or harmful ones. It's almost as if the sea is particularly safe and pleasant here by design, an invitation for the lost, storm-tossed or wayward voyager to sail within and find a moment's rest from the dangers of the Unsea.

Of course, once a vessel is piloted within the sea haze gradually increases so that eventually the ship sails through a nearly impenetrable fog, a fog that seems to give a suggestion of hiding actual walls water as if the ship was actually sailing down hidden lanes into the deeps. Those who don't immediately come about when the mists first rise are lost in the endless maze of fog-shrouded waters heading ever deeper into what, exactly, no one knows. But all know that they are never seen again, as so famously happened in 1639 to Commodore Grabe's subordinate Captain Corrun and

his entire schooner the *Wreath*. Even ships that do immediately come about when the mists arise don't always make it out, for sometimes the mists rise quickly and thickly and a ship that's lost from view is rarely seen again.

Edge of Ruin

The lightship *Edge of Ruin* remains anchored as a warning on the very border of the Edge of the World. Beyond is the vast area of Unsea that no one has successfully explored. Though lightly crewed, she is a massive vessel; wide-bodied for stability, with a towering pinnacle constructed upon her superstructure atop which burns a fiercely blazing magical beacon. Her captain, **Ada Moathreer** (Neutral female human fighter 6), and her small crew are frequently visited by the curious, the lost, or by those drawn by the astonishing harvest of whales and strange fish here.

The *Edge of Ruin's* crew appreciates visitors as they bring supplies and cheer to Ada, who for some curious reason loves it here. The combination of Ada's lively spirit and broad smile combined with the desperate location bring a curious calm to this frightfully elemental place. It is likely — those who have been here often say — that Ada has influenced the very nature of Between and created her own calm on the very edge of the storm.

Edge of the World, The

There is a point in the Unsea where the sea angers — a place that simply cannot be navigated. At its edge, a battered lightship of great size called *Edge of Ruin* heaves with an angry beacon at its top. The sea beyond the ship boils, a churning seething mass of whirlpools, tearing and grappling the ocean. It has been compared by many mariners with the great Tempest Meridians that separate the oceans of Lloegyr in two. A type of Between fish called query is a delicacy that is rarely caught but often seen here. Its presence draws many sailors who come for many miles to lay their nets out here on the verge of these destructive waters.

Great Whale, The

Not so much a place as a thing that is the size of a place, there is a creature of corrupt flesh that swallows ships and in whose belly sailors rot. Its gut is said to be larger than a town, and sailors are said to call out from within its colossal gullet as they slowly die or strive to live on the scraps of flesh and food devoured by the endless consumption of the Great Whale.

The Great Whale is indeed big enough to accommodate people living inside it, and these unwelcome squatters live within the rear parts of the vast whale's mouth, dwelling in safe havens they have fashioned into crude fleshy dwellings that form air pockets whilst the whale is beneath the sea. They are not alone. So vast is the thing that lacedons — the undead remains of sailors who have lived and died here — also dwell within it. The sailors trapped in here have tried to escape the maw many times, but have always given up when confronted with the vastness of the Unsea. They pray that the creature one day will swallow a rowboat or enough timbers to lash together a raft so they can initiate plans to escape.

Scrimshaw

This maritime outpost sits upon (and within) a massive sea stack that rises from the waves of the Unsea. It has many connections to the city district of Town Bridge and serves as the headquarters of the Royal Unsea Whaling Company administered by the **Lady Constance Thorn, Governor of Scrimshaw** (Neutral female human aristocrat 6) under the authority of the Darnel family of Town Bridge. In truth, Scrimshaw is considered a city district of Castorhage in its own right. Scrimshaw is detailed further in **The Blight Campaign Guide: Chapter 9**.

Scrimshaw Lamps

The Scrimshaw lamps are lighthouses constructed of whale bones — one of the most readily available building materials in the Unsea. They



are four in number, and mark the edges of the thoroughly explored and relatively "safe" part of the Unsea. Each is lit by a bound ragefire elemental and manned by a keeper.

Frostrime

The north lamp bears an almost-constant patina of ice from the blowing spray of the turbulent seas. The frigid post is manned by **Keeper Dobbs** (Neutral male street dwarf[BG] expert 3) who was exiled here for crimes in the Capitol and given the choice of manning the lighthouse or being burned alive. Dobbs is slowly going mad and is being courted by the cult of the Madness of the MirrorStorm. One day soon, they intend to extinguish the light and destroy the place.

The Choir

A small family occupies the western lamps. **Uril Quod** (Neutral male human druid 3) and his wife **Ela** (Neutral female human expert 3) have 5 children and are happy to bring them up away from the foul influences of civilisation. Loathe to see visitors, Quod does all he can to prevent contact with the outside world.

The Penance

The largest lighthouse is manned by the **Sorrowful Man**, a creature of twisted appearance that, like Quod, is happy in isolation. The Sorrowful Man does not loathe company, however; it loves it, but does not allow its sadness to consume it. Some captains love the twisted creature, which shows glimpses of a soul and which loves to read the books they bring.

The Sorrowful Man, Lesser Flesh Golem: HD 4; **HP** 23; **AC** 9[10]; **Atk** 2 slams (1d6+2); **Move** 8; **Save** 13; **AL** N;

CL/XP 8/800; **Special:** berserk (1% chance per point of damage each round), healed by lightning, immune to most spells, +1 or better weapons to hit, slowed by fire and cold. (***The Tome of Blighted Horrors*** 18)

Hope

Hope is the most southerly lamp and has been bent into a strangely curved shape by the storms that constantly pound its flanks. It seems like only a matter of time before it finally gives out and collapses. Its keeper, **Dabrin Hodd** (Chaotic male human magic-user 5), is a lunatic and killer who preys on lone travellers and castaways. Hodd kills anyone he gets a chance to, seeking to add them to his Gift, which he is constructing in his cellar. The Gift is a living statue made of animated portions of multiple bodies, and which cries out and sobs for release or death.

[BG] See ***LL8: Bard's Gate*** by **Frog God Games**

Ships' Necropolis

At this slowing drifting location, the sea is choked with ships, an expansive, crushing mass of timbers and masts and prows making one place that stretches and rises across the sea swells. Mangy gulls call from its higher places, whilst its cliffs of wood are endlessly consumed by the sea and repaired, somehow remaining a single tangible thing. A beast known as **The Brackish King** (Chaotic Between vampire: HD 9) rules the Ship's Necropolis. He is tended by his crew, some of whom are vampires, but many of which are lacedons or brine zombies[TOHC]. Undead seagulls and vargouilles stalk its seaweed-throttled cliffs, and other more terrible undead lurk in its holds and bilges. Skulking far below the decks, hiding from the sight of men, is an aquatic corpse orgy[TOHC]. The Brackish King is able to draw ships from the bottom of the Unsea at will, doing so when he needs fresh corpses and new structures to twist and lash. His motives are otherwise unknown.

[TOHC] See ***The Tome of Horrors Complete*** by **Frog God Games**

Turmoil, The

The greatest whirlpool in the Unsea, the Turmoil is more than just a natural phenomenon; it is, like many whirlpools here, alive. A bound swarm of dozens of elder Between water elementals, the Turmoil occasionally drifts across the waters to hunt, only to return to its usual place a year or so later.

Sailing the Unsea

The Unsea is a seething mass of storms, whirlpools, waterspouts and natural (and unnatural) terror. The weather itself here is an aspect of the Between; in other words, in places it is a living, thinking thing. Storms are genuinely malevolent; waves do indeed deliberately try to swamp vessels, and hurricanes pluck sailors from ships. St. Elmo's fire dances off masts and annihilates whalers, and vast whales swallow ships whole.

Do not make the mistake, however, that the Unsea is cohesive or omnipotent. It is not, nor is it one single entity. The weather can slumber, its moods changing from fury to calm in an instant. The weather also sometimes works against enemies and monsters. The fractious nature of the Unsea gives you a complete guiding hand in events. If you want a whirlpool to open up beneath your characters' ship and drag them to gods' know where, then do so. If you want a vast tidal wave to swallow Scrimshaw at the end of your campaign, do it.

Tales of the Unsea

There are always stories, but when the place is as wild and endless as the Unsea, and when the place is Between — a land that soaks up thoughts and fears and tales — it is always possible. That which is imagined becomes truth, and what is given a life in a story is given breath. Dreaming is dangerous here, almost as dangerous as imagining.

The stories below are the tip of the iceberg for such tales in the Unsea and are further detailed above. The tales are read aloud or paraphrased text that the characters may overhear in the Precarious (see **S3** in **The Blight Campaign Guide: Chapter 9**), learn about whilst visiting or sailing the Unsea, or even learn from the old songs of bards and storytellers in the city streets.

The Unsea is an elemental place that allows you to draw upon any folk, fairy or other tale you wish. A quick whisk through a group of legends of the sea could give you inspiration if it is needed. Here are a few ideas to give you some options.

Ships' Necropolis

"It is said that ships that sink in the Unsea surface a year or so later with their crews still aboard, and sail toward the Ships' Necropolis. Imagine a sargasso of broken ships that gather as a vast, sick island reeking of undeath, brine and misery. The ships — so those unlucky enough to have seen the place say — go on forever, slowly rotting in the grip of seaweed and barnacles and blasted by brine.

"It has a king, but no ordinary ruler, his blood is as cold as his heart, and he sucks the marrow from sailors who cross him, taking their flesh, their souls, and even their memories to his table. The Brackish King, they call him, a Between vampire king. The King sends the fronds of his terrible kingdom into the Unsea, looking for other ships to swell its population. If you come upon a cliff where there's no land, or the stench of brine and blood, or the call of lost sailors, set full sail and head away, for it could be the Ships' Necropolis."

The Turmoil

"Aye, the whirlpools in the Unsea are more than natural; they don't rise on high tides or anywhere you'd expect 'em. They appear where they want to, when the sea gets in a bad mood or the storm spoils for trouble. There are no whirlpools like those in the Unsea, vast black chasms that roar so loud that those who get too close go deaf or mad.

"The Turmoil, well that's one of the worst ones. The Turmoil is mad itself, you see, an insane spiralling madness of water a mile deep. Those that look at it die of fright, they say, and those that have heard it swear it calls out to them. He has his brides, does the Turmoil, twisted sick things that dance in the walls of water, screaming at those who can taste the clean air above."

The Great Whale

"Nothing is as big as the Great Unsea Whale; like a storm it is, like a great dark cloud dancing with waterspouts and tornadoes. They are her children, see. Those and the things of teeth and decay that circle the nadir beneath her gown of fetid water. Her bridal train is poison, and her hunger insatiable."

The Cataclysm

"The Cataclysm, oh yes, it's real, lass. There is a place where the Unsea falls into the nothingness of night, and that place extends its icy fingers to the seas for scores of miles around, once in its grip, there is no escape from the tides and storms."

Where are the Random Weather Tables?

Some people love to have charts of random weather effects, and the charts within *Dead Man's Chest* from **Frog God Games** are useful. However, I've decided not to include random weather charts, nor chances for things like capsizing or being crushed by tidal waves here. The simple reasoning behind this is that if you want the characters to be capsized and end up washed onto some random ship full of intrigue and cutthroats, or if you wish the players to be washed under a tidal wave and thrown into gods know where, then do so. Randomly assigning chances at a gaming table for something that has such a major effect seems counter-productive to me.

Never overplay your powers, however. Giving character's a slim chance through skill to save NPCs, cargo or avoid encounters is good; driving characters in a direction you wish could quickly become boring.

If you like the implied randomness of such charts, then plenty are available out there, they just don't form part of my thinking. Don't ignore the effects of weather, however; battling a dragon turtle in mountainous seas or in thick fog adds another dimension to an otherwise potentially bland encounter.

—Rich

Unsea Weather

Unpredictable in the extreme, Unsea weather can change in an instant. One thing, however, is always consistent; the sun never glimpses through the clouds. It goes dark; sometimes achingly, cloyingly dark, but the sun never shines directly on the Unsea.

Storms of incredible fury whip out of nowhere, driving ships off course, not that most ships have a course — captains simply follow their instincts. Ship loss rates are incredibly high, and were it not for the ease of the harvest here, the sea would be considered un-navigable.

In the Unsea, weather tends to follow fairly set types, ranging from overcast skies where rain, hail, sleet, and snow are regularly encountered. Powerful storms can occur at any time, and waterspouts are commonly seen. Fog is a constant problem on the Unsea, and banks of it can settle on ships for weeks. Temperatures are always at least cold, and often much lower, and occasionally the sea freezes or strange isles of ice race past, or into, ships.

Unique Weather Encounters

A place driven by forces of nature and thriving upon moods gives you another angle to approach adventures on the Unsea: the bizarre weather event. A quick check of the internet brings up some inspiring video and photographic footage of some incredible things. Magnify them in the Unsea. A couple of possibilities are presented below.

Frozen Sea

The sea becomes progressively icier until it eventually freezes. Does the ice herald the arrival of some creature come to hunt, or does the morale of the crew, or any hidden NPC troublemakers (or monsters), suddenly take front stage, bringing a totally unexpected twist to an adventure that could be about hunting, exploration, or curiosity?

Eye of the Storm

The storm goes on for days, but suddenly the ship enters the eye, a vast calm region of sea. Something exists in this eye: either a floating ship town, a creature, or perhaps something stranger.

Navigating the Unsea

Most sailors know an old tale about the best way to navigate the Unsea, carrying a potato or fish head or cork for luck and then, if they get lost, tossing it into the sea and seeing which way it floats. That way is sure to be home.

The Between compass (see **Unsea Equipment** below) is a relatively new invention and has been of limited success. *Speak with animals* (if animals can be found) is sometimes useful but often infuriating. Most wise captains rely on magic. Spells such as *find the path* used to chart a course are a lifesaver here, and those rare spellcasters of high enough level to cast useful spells are sometimes found amongst Unsea whaling crews and paid well for their services. Spells, or combinations of spells, have been used to assist in navigation, and the art of navigation on the Unsea (and anywhere in the Between for that matter) is the subject of magical research. *Weather summoning* tends to be useless in a place that changes so frequently; flying or teleporting have inherent risks of weather or landmass changes and the chance of ending up somewhere unintended.

Land in the Unsea

There are several tidal stacks rising from the Unsea to soar high over the waves. Scrimshaw arguably occupies the most famous of these. Other examples of these rocks are often impossible to land on and are home to vast flocks of mangy gulls. Occasionally, strange and alien structures suffocate these isles. These structures are often surrounded or within great henges.

Sometimes an island rises from the sea and stays for a night, a day, a season, or a hundred years. The whaler's call these places the "Land of the Young." Sometimes they are occupied by Between creatures; sometimes they are abandoned and empty of all life.

Unsea Equipment

The unique and hostile nature of the Unsea calls for many types of specialised equipment in order to successfully navigate its waters. Typical types of equipment used by Unsea sailors as well as innovative devices developed specifically for navigation are described below. These items can be obtained in Scrimshaw and frequently in Town Bridge as well.

Item	Cost	Weight
Ambergris	50–500gp/lb	—
Ambergris, memory	1000–1500gp/lb.	—
Bell, ship's great	200gp	100 lbs.
Compass, Between	1000gp	4 lbs.
Fishing tackle, Unsea	25gp	10 lbs.
Foul-weather gear	20gp	8 lbs.
Harpoon ballista	800gp	70 lbs.
Lantern, ship's great	75gp	20 lbs.
Lodeprow	10,000gp	60 lbs.
Shipskin, Unsea	varies	varies
Spermaceti	10gp/gallon	varies
Spyglass, greater	2500gp	1 lb.
Waggoner, Unsea	500gp	5 lbs.
Whaler's longcoat, whale-wax	200gp	8 lbs.

Ambergris: A waxy substance produced in the intestinal tract of whales, ambergris is used in perfumery as a fixative and occasionally in cooking.

Ambergris, memory: Some ambergris harvested from certain Unsea whales somehow contains the memories of the beast it was taken from and when properly distilled is similar in function to a *Between vessel*.

Memory ambergris described in **Appendix A** of ***L3: Sea's End*** of ***The Levee Adventure***.

Bell, ship's great: A great bell is mounted to the deck of a ship and when struck can be heard over 3 miles. It is heard over greater distances when struck multiple times (each strike doubles the distance heard). Weather conditions affect the audibility.

Compass, Between: Created as a pair of heavy brass and gold instruments, the compass and the lodestone. A Between compass does not show normal directional bearings but rather has a single indicator noting the direction of that compass's paired lodestone. The lodestone is usually left at port to allow a course home to be charted. Beyond 100 miles, the reliability of the compass diminishes with a 20% chance at any given time of a reading being incorrect by several degrees for 1d4 hours.

Fishing tackle, Unsea: A bewildering array of rods, large nets and things with hooks that are used to catch fish in the Unsea. Such tools are for use in the Unsea only, and are in general too large to be used on more mundane seas.

Foul-weather gear: Heavy waxed clothing including an overcoat, hat and waterproofed trousers that provide some water and wind resistance, with some protection from the cold as well.

Harpoon ballista: This is a standard ballista modified to fire harpoons with attached chains. The chains are usually 2in thick and 100ft long. They are anchored to the ship's deck by an iron hook.

Lantern, ship's great: Usually mounted to a ship's mast or deck, a ship's great lantern projects a cone of light over a distance of a 120-foot cone and provides dim light beyond that out to a 240-foot cone. A great ship's lantern burns for 1 hour per pint of fuel oil and has a 1-gallon reservoir.

Lodeprow: Storms of the Unsea are extremely violent and electrically charged. To save their masts, Unsea captains travel with a lodeprow. A lodeprow is a sheaf of lead and iron attached to the prow of a sailing ship that draws lightning strikes to it and then harmlessly disperses them into the surrounding sea by means of a series of conducting channels along the ship's hull. *Lightning bolt* and other electricity spells are drawn to the hefty lodeprow only if cast from in front of or above the ship.

Shipskin, Unsea: Shipskin is special outer attachments designed to prevent capsizing during the worst Unsea storms (see sidebox).

Spermaceti: A waxy substance produced in a cranial organ of Unsea whales and some other species as well. When harvested, spermaceti is used in a variety of ways from clean-burning lamp oil to soothing ointments and candle wax.

Spyglass, greater: Objects viewed through a greater spyglass are magnified to eight times their size.

Waggoner, Unsea: A collection of captain's notes and nautical charts of the Unsea, an Unsea waggoner is indispensable to an Unsea ship. Created by the Royal Unsea Whaling Company and sold only to those captains licensed through their auspices, the waggoner is the most accurate means of navigating the perilous geography of the Unsea. When using an Unsea waggoner, the chance of being misled by a Between compass (see above) is reduced to 10% at the time of the check. With a waggoner alone, the chance of plotting an accurate course in the Unsea is 75%.

Whaler's longcoat, whale-wax: The finest quality seal fur treated with an alchemically enhanced spermaceti, this bulky longcoat protects a sailor from both the cold and the wet of a sea voyage. It provides some protection from cold, and items placed in its inside pockets are protected from water exposure as long as the coat is not fully immersed. In addition, though it is not considered armour, it also provides protection equal to leather armour –2[+2].

Unsea Shipskin

The threat of being swamped with the Unsea's violent waves or tipped to such a degree that the deck is directly exposed to the crashing surf are all too real when sailing upon the Unsea, and both hazards bring with them the danger of a ship foundering as its decks fill with seawater. As such, no self-respecting Unsea captain would venture onto the belligerent waves without the precaution of an Unsea shipskin.

This unique nautical construct is a cover of waxed tarpaulin stretched on a durable frame of wood and iron that is custom crafted to cover much of the main deck of a ship. The cover is specifically designed to close off exposed portholes, hatches, and gangways without interfering with movement by sailors upon the deck itself, though crawling into one of the covered points of entry requires a full-round. In rough seas, gaining access to one of these entrances requires a save *and* a full round.

The utility of the shipskins, though, is that they severely inhibit the ability of large amounts of water to gain access through these points of ingress. In rough seas, with waves that routinely reach peaks of 20–30ft or more, the chance of taking on too much water and beginning to sink is 40% for an unprotected ship. A ship with an Unsea shipskin reduces this chance to a mere 5%. Even a ship capsized by weather or the attack of some large sea creature has a 35% chance to right itself in the round following the attack.

An Unsea shipskin is normally stowed in a locker on the main deck and can be put into place by 2 crewmen in 10 rounds –1 round/extra crewman assisting in the job (minimum 4 rounds). Smaller ships (20ft or less) or open-bowed ships are not designed for a shipskin to be effective.

The construction of an Unsea shipskin costs one-tenth of the price of the entire vessel when built, and takes 1 week per 1000gp to fit. Only a few noted shipwrights in Scrimshaw have the knowledge to create these specialised covers.

Unsea Menagerie

The Unsea teems with life — very strange life. The Between twists the form of those things within it, and the environment around the creature affects it in a greatly accelerated way. **Part 6: The Blight Bestiary** and ***The Tome of Blighted Horrors*** by **Frog God Games** contain a number of creatures' stat blocks, while the following Unsea inhabitants are given a more general treatment. In general, the creatures below conform to their standard stats in the various source materials, many with the modification of living in the Between. It is all too true that the variety of creatures encountered in the Between is uncountable, and the Unsea is no exception.

Aboleths

Aboleths[M] are, unfortunately, commonly found throughout the Unsea. The aboleths come in a variety of types and sizes, and their growth in the Unsea does not seem to be something that ends. The **spiboleth**[TOBH] is one horrific example of their variety that has its origins in the Unsea. As an aboleth's intellect increases, so does its size and the effects that its specialised knowledge has upon its physiology. An aboleth from the Unsea that studied necromancy, for example, would likely be partially rotted with large areas of necrotic flesh on its hide — a creature that should not and possibly cannot live.

[M] See ***Monstrosities*** by **Frog God Games**

[TOBH] See ***The Tome of Blighted Horrors*** by **Frog God Games**

Afancs

Afancs[TOHC] are very likely the cause for some of the lesser whirlpools in the Unsea, and bold Unsea captains have killed at least three afancs here. In other confrontations with the creatures, ships have been less lucky, and those afancs continue to roam the Unsea holding a grudge against the harpoon-firing interlopers that sail above.

[TOHC] See ***The Tome of Horrors Complete*** by **Frog God Games**

Anglers

Lurking just below the surface of the water, anglers come in all shapes and sizes. From the tiny parasitic choking angler that seeks to enter the throats of its victims to feed and expand until it suffocates its prey, to the rumours of glimpsed horrors of the deep such as the wretched shadow angler that casts a black globe of pure darkness. Or the vile endemic angler, whose light causes those who glimpse it to sicken, allowing the fish to attack them, and even the vast goliath angler, said to be twice the size of the biggest whalers. Some are convinced that the various anglers

are the pawns of aboleths, and many believe that Castorhage's own unique **Lyme angler*** is merely one more offshoot of this prolific genus.

* See **The Blight Campaign Guide: Part 6, The Blight Bestiary**

Gulls, mangy

The air on the Unsea is alive with vast flocks of ugly, mangy gulls who appear to be half-starved and missing many of their feathers. They eat anything organic in nature, and if they get very hungry, have been known to infest whaling vessels and attack their crew or even chew on the tough wooden planks of their hulls if they can find a secluded spot within which to nest. Gull hunts through the lower decks are something that every wise Unsea captain orders at least once a year to ensure that none of the pesky intruders have compromised the integrity of his ship's hull.

Mangy Gulls: HD 1+1; **AC** 7[12]; **Atk** peck (1d2); **Move** 3 (Fly 18); **Save** 17; **AL** N; **CL/XP** 2/30; **Special:** +2 to hit bonus, rend (if a mangy gull's peck hits, the gull continues to hold, automatically inflicting 1d3 points of damage on subsequent rounds until driven off or killed).

Mermen

Remains of mermaids occasionally wash up in and around the Unsea, so mermaids must exist somewhere although no one has encountered one. Mermen[M] do, conversely, appear in the Great Lyme River, though whether they have entered it and ultimately the Unsea from the seas beyond Castorhage or vice versa has yet to be determined.

[M] See ***Monstrosities*** by **Frog God Games**

Sahuagin

The sahuagin[M] of the Unsea are reticent about contact. Evidence of their presence has been seen by experts and explorers, but so far they have not been encountered in any significant numbers. On the few occasions that they have been encountered, it has been seen that the incidence of multi-arm mutation within their population is high. Whether this propensity for mutation extends to a higher incidence of sea elf mutations is unknown, but so far, sea elves have yet to be encountered in the Unsea. If there is a sea elf-like mutation for the Unsea sahuagin, it's possible that it takes some other humanoid form.

[M] See ***Monstrosities*** by **Frog God Games**

Sea Serpents

Vast sea serpents are often seen on the Unsea and come in all shapes and sizes. **Brine sea serpents**[TOHC] are regularly spotted, and **fanged sea serpent**[TOHC] has been on the menu at the Precarious (see **S3** in **The Blight Campaign Guide: Chapter 9**). **Deep hunter sea serpents**[TOHC] and **shipbreaker sea serpents**[TOHC] have so far, mercifully, been the subject of sailors' stories rather than verified encounters — unless those encounters have all ended with the complete loss of the ship and its crew, which of course is always a possibility when dealing with these monstrosities.

[TOHC] See ***The Tome of Horrors Complete*** by **Frog God Games**

Sharks

Sharks[M] of all sizes, but generally very large sharks and giant sharks, are seen in the Unsea. The physiology of sharks is curiously altered by Between and almost all have some terrifying modification.

[M] See ***Monstrosities*** by **Frog God Games**

Skum

Skum* are common in the depths of the Unsea. They are the slaves of the aboleths who created them and regard the men who have arrived in the Unsea as invaders who must be destroyed. They regularly attack ships and occasionally land-bound outposts. Curiously, the Unsea skum almost never demonstrate the effects of the Between, as if their artificial creation at the hands of the aboleths has somehow resisted the normal influence of Between.

* See **The Blight Campaign Guide: Chapter 9, The Cult of the Madness of the MirrorStorm**



Squids

Squids[M] are a regular sight in the Unsea, from the more commonly seen smaller varieties to vast ship-crushers of impossible size and twisted bodies. Giant squids are common, and even larger creatures are regularly reported by whalers. Squids show a worrying cohesion and sophistication of tactics unusual for their species. Ordinary squids frequently swarm onto sailors who fall into the Unsea, tearing them to pieces in a frenzy. And sometimes they sacrifice themselves in huge numbers to fulfil some unknown purpose or even to carry out some act of seemingly appalling cruelty on other sea creatures as if they bore a sentience and evil far beyond that expected in a cephalopod. Unsurprisingly, the Unsea whaler is convinced that there is more to the local squid than meets the eye.

[M] See ***Monstrosities*** by **Frog God Games**

Sunfish, Terrible

The terrible sunfish is always at least the size of a house and often much bigger. These creatures are unlike their more mundane kin; they have much larger mouths and more ferocious appetites. They are also as dark as shadows, and attacks by them often occur without warning.

Turtles

The largest turtles spill into the Unsea, and like everything in Between, these creatures are expanded to almost ridiculous size and cunning. **Dragon turtles**, **giant bog turtles**[TOHC] and **turtle sharks**[TOHC] have all been reported and, less commonly, cooked. Such turtle meat commands a very high price back in Castorhage. A curiously sad creature known as the **mock turtle** has also been encountered in the Unsea; this creature has an almost human countenance and is able to spread misery and despair with its mere presence.

[TOHC] See ***The Tome of Horrors Complete*** by **Frog God Games**

Walrus, Fearsome

The rarely encountered but formidably large walrus has a vile temper and has been known to even attack ships when provoked. These creatures

are believed to be a larger, aggressively atavistic version of the equally rare **Lyme walrus***.

* See **The Blight Campaign Guide: Part 6, The Blight Bestiary**

Weird Fish

There seems to be no end to the shape, size, and hue of the different species of Unsea fish. Things with several heads or bloated bodies like balls, things without mouths, and things that are manic thrashing hordes of tentacles are so regularly seen by Unsea whalers that they become inured to the effects of seeing yet another thing that should not actually be able to live. A particular favourite is the **query** that swims in schools in the vicinity of the Edge of the World. Though they resemble a 2-foot-long fluke-tailed cricket with spiky, prehensile antennae and an external intestinal sac, the disgusting-looking fish are delicious and considered a rare delicacy in Scrimshaw and Castorhage alike (though customers are rarely allowed to see them unfilleted and in their natural state for the sake of business).

Whales

Whales[M] are the reason the Unsea is so busy with invaders from Castorhage. They are of great variety but generally conform in one common aspect: their size. Unsea whales are massive, and massive whales are profitable to the ship captains that harvest them and the rendering plants that sell their constituent parts. Types of whales encountered here include **baleen whales**, **sperm whales**, **great white whales**, **killer whales**, and the extremely dangerous **wallow-whale***. There are even rumours of the extremely rare and elusive **deep singer whale**[DMC], though these have yet to be confirmed. One more commonality is that Between whales are intelligent, and proving to be an increasingly elusive — and more often aggressive — prey.

[M] See ***Monstrosities*** by **Frog God Games**

* See **The Blight Campaign Guide: Part 6, The Blight Bestiary**

[DMC] See ***Dead Man's Chest*** by **Frog God Games**

Wyverns

Despite the relative lack of land, wyverns are regularly seen and often attack ships. They seem to have an innate ability to locate and colonise the many sea stacks scattered across the sea and use them to nest and hunt. Most wise whalers carry at least one ballista aboard with normal ammunition rather than harpoons in order to deal with the unwanted attentions of a wyvern or the dreaded flight of wyverns.

Awakened Creatures

Bear in mind that spontaneously awakened animals, and even plants are common in the Between as an extension of the land's (and sea's) own heightened awareness. All such creatures display an extremely high cleverness and attendant cruelty.

See **The Blight Campaign Guide: Part 4, Fads of the Blight**, for more information on awakened creatures.

Through the Glass Darkly: Refereeing Between

Travel By Magic

"But I don't want to go among mad people," Alice remarked.

"Oh, you can't help that," said the Cat: "We're all mad here. I'm mad. You're mad."

"How do you know I'm mad?" said Alice. "You must be," said the Cat, "or you wouldn't have come here."

— Lewis Carroll, *Alice in Wonderland*

Between is a curious thing, perhaps even a curious entity; despite several attempts to tame the methods of travel to the place, access to this netherworld remains annoyingly unpredictable.

Travel to Between using spells such as *gate*, *plane shift*, and *astral spell* fail to penetrate its heart, and even those mirrors that usually offer reliable access to Between can fail (sometimes with catastrophic results for the user). The simplest way to enter Between is to know a threshold, or to enhance it by use of special mirrors and techniques known only to a handful — and even those experts very often fail, with terrible results.

Travel within Between is similarly unpredictable, and use of spells such as *dimension door* and *teleport* have led to appalling tragedies. All spells of this nature cast to travel within Between operate with the same chances of failure as a *teleport* spell, with the caster assumed to be heading for a "seen but not studied destination." Results on the percentile dice of 80% or below indicate the spell has functioned normally while those of 81% or more suffer the effects indicated. Known affected spells included *astral spell*, *dimension door*, *gate*, *phase door*, *passplant*, *plane shift*, *teleport*, *transport via plants*, and *word of recall*. Other spells are affected at your discretion.

Casting spells such as *rope trick* may also have their inter-dimensional space affected by this quality, and where a mishap is indicated, either have an unexpected occupant already in the space (a monster of equivalent HD to the spell cast) or have the space become something twisted and useless, perhaps even dangerous.

Some areas of Between are subject to localised effects as well. For example, some casters find it impossible to use *wind walk* in given areas due to storms; others find summoning monsters either brings twisted dead things or ravenous killers that obey no one.

The exception to these rules are Between thieves. These daring (some would say foolhardy) rogues use Between as a way of travel and escape, and their Between-related powers always work as indicated. However, even a Between thief who attempts to cast one of the above-mentioned spells from a scroll is subject to the warping of its effects.

The Mirror Voyager: What Between is Like

Between is as much a feeling as a place, and when emotions become the fabric of a curious land the possibilities for danger are greatly enhanced. Sailors, anxious as they voyage the Unsea, report several curious phenomena: storms appearing from nowhere, dark shapes beneath the bow of a ship, or a sudden dreadful calm. Between is a place that changes like a person's mood, and it has been conjectured that even nightmares are able to breathe life from those explorers foolhardy enough to come there.

Although it has geography, that geography is fluid; sometimes no logic exists for the way the place changes, where a vast rainforest abuts a glacier, which in turn hides a warm ocean. The geography within these areas is also able to change to a limited degree, and some have suggested

The Mirror Knights

Sworn to protect Castorhage from horrors of Between, several groups of valiant, and perhaps not-so-valiant but sufficiently greedy knights, warriors and duellists have come together to form societies aiming to protect the people of the city-state from supernatural invasion. The most famous of these groups, the Mirror Knights, is made up of rangers and fighters who fearlessly track creatures that come from Between. Aided by Between thieves, these warriors track and kill the creatures mercilessly using a variety of hunting methods, from subtle stalking to packs of bloodthirsty mastiffs.

that Between is like a living dream or nightmare of itself, where logic sometimes follows, but not always.

Between is like an adult fairyland, a place of nightmares and dreams that has its own thoughts and wants. It is alive, and everything in it is alive, constantly leaching thoughts and dreams and hungers and fears from around it, becoming one consciousness broken by a thousand madnesses.

Here are a few other suggestions to bear in mind for Refereeing an adventure here:

The Awakened Land: Think of Between not just as a place, but as an extension of everything within it. A jungle, for example, in Between is not just an ordinary jungle; it is a collage of all of its lifeforms: the hunger of the predator, the fear of the prey, the boiling heat of the day, and the power of the monsoon. It is like nature, but nature *exploded*.

Dreams and Nightmares Come True: Play upon a visitor's fears; they hear noises nearby, the night air boils with strange calls, a Between ruin echoes with ghosts that whisper and cry in misery.

Everything Is Alive: Play this how you wish. Do the plants in Between become dangerous? Are the trees thinking? Do awakened animals or strange monsters plot against intruders?

Have Some Disturbed Internal Logic: Night should follow day, but is the day unnaturally short? Does the night last a day, a week, a month?

Twisted Geography: Think of Between as a jumbled jigsaw, where some pieces do not fit together. Some pieces do not link, so travel between them is impossible under normal circumstances. Think about how such a place ends? Does a jungle simply end at cliffs that vanish into haze, or does a sick mist settle upon the jungle, drawing characters back to where they started? A rudimentary map of sorts of Between is provided in ***The Blight Map Folio***, but its layout is a best guess by the often-conflicting tales of various explorers. It serves as a suggestion of an "averaging" of the geography of the realms of Between and is by no means intended as an accurate depiction of the exact topography.

Tragedies of Between

In addition to the many dangerous encounters to be had in Between, the strange realm brings its own inherent dangers that simply seem to manifest merely by extended (or sometimes not-so-extended) contact with its strangeness

'Tween Blight

The most terrible of ailments can be drawn through the tiny threads of *mirror-portals* and into the city, terrible diseases that permanently bend the human form into a twisted caricature, much like the nature of Between itself.

The whispered names of diseases such as strickenback, slynesplinters, or madlands regularly make the rounds of gossip, but none of them has yet been isolated by the physikers of Castorhage and proven to be truly a preternatural illness from beyond. It is supposed by many that such known maladies as derange*, dislocating larva*, and second-head fluke* must surely have originated in the twisted womb of beyond. Even the eponymous blight* seems highly suspect to be of something other than mundane terrestrial origin. One ailment that is known to have originally been introduced to Castorhage from Between is the boiling pox. Though rare, its manifestation is distinct and always tragic. *Cure disease* does not work upon it, and it is so infectious that the merest hint of its taint is likely to draw a group of Mirror Knights to isolate or even — if the victim is lucky — despatch the afflicted poor soul.

*** The Blight Campaign Guide: Part 6, The Blight Bestiary**

Between Disease: Boiling Pox

Victims develop a covering of red angry sores over their whole body, which are agonising to touch and make every movement painful. As the disease progresses, it permanently scars the victim's skin and psyche and even slowly infects his bones as well, causing permanent contortions and disruptions. Every day the victim suffers 1d4 points of damage; there is a 25% chance that 1 point of dexterity is lost as well. Unfortunately, boiling pox has proven to be completely resistant to *cure disease*.

Long-Term Effects of Between Exposure

A final note is warranted regarding the hazards of braving the perils of Between. Sometimes its long-term repercussions are a bit more insidious, though no less dangerous. Some frequent Between travellers have reported catching a glimpse of doppelgangers of themselves, of being stalked by a sinister twin or of waking up with a shadowy figure at the foot of their bed. In fact, some more learned on matters Between have suggested that Sir Donnan Grabe confessed on his deathbed to being a Between impostor.

The Spiteful

The Spiteful is a conspiracy of Between fey and foul shapechangers who wish to invade and conquer Castorhage right under the noses of its people. They seek to do this through subversion by means of introducing changeling **spite-waifs*** into the cribs of certain of the city's new parents as a means to breed a generation of **Between doppelgangers** who control the reins of power within the city. It is entirely possible that The Spiteful play some role in the mysterious motives of the Lands of the Echo Queen (q.v.) but no substantive connection has yet been found.

Coincidentally, one of the only groups within the city that is aware of this secret group and its motives are doppelganger spies of **The Veil**. They have reported the machinations of this group to their master, Crown Justice Braken, but he has yet to move overtly against their incursion. It should be noted that certain other individuals of Castorhage have become aware of The Spiteful menace at times in the past and have seen fit to declare their own crusades against its corrupting influence upon the city (see ***TB3: Bloody Jack*** by **Frog God Games** for more information on The Spiteful and their activities within Castorhage).

* See **The Blight Campaign Guide: Part 6, The Blight Bestiary**



The Blight Bestiary



Things: The Creatures of Castorhage

Many "common" monsters are to be found cowering in the gloom of the city — sea devils and wererats are some of the most common — but here one may encounter nagas and rakshasas, sphinxes, hags, bugbears, golems, ghouls, chokers, chaos beasts and demons as well as many others. Some creatures walk the streets wearing human form, others skulk beneath piers and in the Underneath waiting for the sun to set before walking the streets, and some are little more than nuisances or even valuable servants or pets.

A Blight Pet Gone Bad

Wicked Gren (Chaotic male goblin) is a wretch who escaped his servitude of serving as a playmate to a wealthy streetclerk's spoiled child. He has taken to hiding in the gables by day and wandering the streets by night. He has befriended a pair of **giant spiders** in the gables above Shorefield Market and works with them at night — luring strangers to them by pretending to be helpless or injured. Gren lurks behind taverns to trick drunks into following him, leads orphans into the night, and takes advantage of those who take pity on him. Then Gren takes the spoils whilst the spiders take the flesh.

Animals

As the city teems with life — both human and unhuman — so too it teems with animals, be they beast for fodder or companionship, watch, or pest. Birds soar above gables, from the great black Blight albatross[TOBH] and the gable hate-owl[TOBH] to the hooded ravens[TOBH] and blindingcrows[TOBH] to the smaller birds, particularly the ever-present canaries[TOBH] with their singing voices, which warn of death, the Lyme thrush, the gable-sparrow, and the tiny moth-wren. Dogs are a common pet, particularly in the rougher areas of the city. Among the most prized are the terriers[TOBH], which come in a hundred shapes and breeds and are much prized for killing rats and other vermin. Every gentleman or crook these days seems to have a fighting dog on a leash — from the Blight-bull* to the huge pit-mastiff*.

Cats are seen less, and certain fanciful dim-witted individuals have even gone so far as to say that all the normal cats were killed in a single night by an army of cats from Between. These Between-Cats* are, allegedly, ruled by an emperor who has some alien plot in mind for the city. Clearly, this is so much hokum. Despite the many cats, rats are everywhere, and come in all shapes and sizes as well, from the vile Festering Lyme rat* with its manged body covered in lice to the much feared (almost legendary) Giant Rat of Shabbis[TOBH], a mercifully rare foreign visitor to the shores of Castorhage who brings plague in its wake.

Strangely, apes of all types are seen in the city — no doubt due to its long and extensive history of trade with and colonisation of Libynos — and so many have escaped from collectors that monkeys and apes are now common. The Blight apes* and Blight monkeys* are uncannily alert, and many are able to perform incredible feats of intelligence. In addition, no self-respecting organ grinder is without his monkey, or vice-versa.

Stock animals are plentiful — cattle, sheep and goats — as well as chickens, geese and dodos, which are often seen in city knackers-yards

The City of Thinking Animals

One of the many anomalies given to the city of Castorhage is a proportionally huge populace of awakened animals. Some have conjectured that the awakening has some connection to the Between, and that the frequent violations into that domain by locals have led to a bleeding of the essence of this land into the city. This has also been blamed for the rise in sentient animated objects — clocks that refuse to chime, mortomata** that kill the children they are supposed to entertain, and fleshgines* that mysteriously crush their masters or pull all their limbs off. Others attribute the unusual manifestation of intelligence to centuries of breeding and training, stating that some great evolutionary advance in animal intellect may one day take place because of this.

** See **The Blight Campaign Guide: Appendix B** for more information



Broken Creatures

Broken creatures (creatures that have had their wills broken to such a degree that they are completely subservient to their masters) take the concept to a wholly deplorable degree. While the typical act of "breaking" an animal is a bit of a misnomer; it is normally a prolonged process that begins with the trainer instilling confidence and respect into the subject from the time it is a newborn. Repetition and rewards are key to a subject learning basic commands and learning to be comfortable with the tasks being asked of it.

However, the Blight trains in a very different manner. It punishes, rather than rewards its subjects, to such a degree, and for a such a long time, that any thought of refusal or rebellion is completely eradicated. If a regular person attempted to train an animal in the fashion, there would be rebellion, constant struggle, and no way to rely on the beast. The Blight does not suffer these failures; it strips away all will, save that of obedience.

The general outward demeanor of broken creatures is that of an almost stoic silence. They speak only when spoken to, and always in deferential tones, even averting their gaze if possible. The inner torment such creatures feel is beyond mortal compare. They feel nothing, no longing, even for release or freedom. The truly have no expectations, desires, ambition, or passion. They are the ultimate is service-beast.

awaiting slaughter. Dodo is very much an acquired taste, either being loved or loathed, and some eating-houses specialise in preparing the bird with a whole raff of available recipes. The awkward birds are also raised for their large eggs. And there are pigs, a vast number of pigs, some of which, like the Great Fayre pig racers, are said to be able to talk and reason among men.

The popularity of private menageries in the latter 17th and early 18th-century R.C. assured that escapees were common, and a whole host of bizarre creatures still hunts in the night. Some of these have developed local legends: the BookTown Panther*, the Great Canal Python[TOBH], and the Hollow and Broken Hills Crocodile[TOBH] are but a few of the hundreds of beasts that stalk the city.

Dark Fey

Though not a part of the natural world, Between is certainly a reflection of it. This includes a propensity toward attracting the sylvan creatures of the natural world and the presence of many fey within its strange borders. Whether these fey are unnatural manifestations of Between itself, examples of the darker types of fey in the natural world that are just attracted to Between's presence, or simply fey who have become trapped in Between and warped by its dark presence is unclear. Perhaps it is all of the above. In any case, the presence of these dark fey is indisputable and they exist in a relatively large concentration in and around the city of Castorhage as a result. Examples of these foul creatures includes many types of gremlins[TOHC], forlarrens[TOHC], baccae[TOHC], korreds[TOHC], sinister leprechauns[TOHC], redcaps[TOHC], grimstalkers[TOHC], lecherous satyrs, quicklings[TOHC] and tombstone fairies[TOHC].

[TOHC] See ***The Tome of Horrors Complete*** by **Frog God Games**

Inhabitants of the Lyme

That anything lives in the dead, alchemically seething waters of the polluted heart of the city is remarkable in itself. However, the river teems with aggressive predators that feed upon the slops and flotsam, peelings, and corpses of cats, rats, dogs, and people that fall into the Lyme daily. Sough-eels* with their slick white bodies and gnawing secondary jaws are frequently seen, Lyme anglers* — more commonly known as slop-sharks — with their terrible diseased bites and bodies like sacks of flesh waiting to burst hide in the shallows. Wallow-whales* swim the deepest areas, their cathedral-like wan bodies searching for prey, their throats lined with ragged bone beyond which lies the Church of Jobe — the stomach maw of the whale allegedly once home to a sea devil. Bog lanterns[TOBH] wriggle in the gloom, their luminescent bodies like the lamps of the Lyme anglers. The seldom seen Lyme walrus*, with its barbed tusks and sinful lies, a creature that sheds its skin and becomes human when it attempts to secure a bride, is just one more predator that watches the shore from the river's depths.

Monsters Unique to the Blight

The fungi of Castorhage is more alive than it ought be. Bestial polypore grow in the evening and spend the night looking for people to infest. More terrible is blight* itself, a peculiar intelligent lichen able to take over whole streets in a single night and suffocate them, and only kept at bay by the constant vigilance of brave Blight Knights — hunters who walk the streets at night armed with alchemic fire bellows. Some say blight originally inhabited the city but was driven deep below; some believe that the blight will rise again en masse and absorb the entire population. One thing is sure, the city gained its nickname for it, whether she likes it or not. It is also the more common name of a creature known simply as the Body Snatcher*, a hive thing that dwarves say lurks in the Between roots at the very bottom of the Underneath.

The most uncommon dray is a hyme*, which the cab companies find to be fast, tireless, and above all obedient. And whilst occasionally hymes go on the rampage and eat a few people, mostly these matters are hushed up by the guilds and masonic groups. A hyme resembles a child's nightmare; it is only passingly equestrian, a slick creature of blackness that walks in a lopping stride but which is capable of great speeds when needs be. More importantly, everything gets out of its way.

There are many, many creatures unique to the Blight, from the foul Blight naga* to the night-slug*, humanoids that dwell between walls. Not all things have a name and it is sure that many, many things are yet to be discovered and catalogued.

Pestilences and Parasites

The most common monsters are the smallest in the city — the lice and infestations, sicknesses, and disease. In so crowded and twisted and filthy a city, naturally they thrive. Couple that with the abnormal proximity of Between and illness becomes something even worse than those usually encountered. A few of the better known and understood of these hazards are derange*, dislocating larvae*, and the alarmingly grotesque second-head fluke*.

Double-Headed Dran

Second-head fluke is a horrible thing to look upon, with a cankerous second pseudo-head sprouting next to the victim's own head, and urban myth states that some of these pseudo-heads develop their own minds and learn to talk. The most famous of these legendary second-head fluke cases is said to be **Double-Headed Dran** (1672–1699). This poor sailor developed a pseudo-head which was so vile and vicious that it would attempt to attack anyone who came within reach, even spitefully gnawing upon the side Dran's own head from time to time. In an attempt to rid himself of the foul growth, Dran cut off the head with a knife, only to bleed to death shortly thereafter. Dran's pseudo-head is preserved in the Royal University of Surgeons in the Seminary.

Scrimshaw Gargoyles

In its heyday, Castorhage was famed for many things, and the scrimshaw gargoyles* were one of them. These delicate figures are thought to have been created centuries ago as watchers to aid the local constabulary — spies and guards — whispering in their eyries. Time has taken its toll on the whalebone constructs, and now they number fewer than 50, having been taken, destroyed, or worn to nothing by the constant wind high above the city. Each scrimshaw gargoyle is different, both in size and design, but they share some features: They are carved from delicate whalebone covered in strange sigils, many of the writings have faded, and now lichens and grime cling to their once statuesque bodies. They are also very much aware.

Shapechangers

There is a wererat plague within the city, and in places, the predominant population is these lycanthropes and their rat allies, which come in a dizzying array of varieties and sizes. The rats are by far the most prodigious of shapechangers, but there are many, many others lurking unseen in the glare of the city streets.

Spiders

Many types of arachnids call the sprawl of the city home. Gable spiders* are common, as are the more mundane breeds of monstrous spiders, with the much rarer chymic spiders* and phase spiders being reported only occasionally. Regardless of breed, all the spiders of the city tend to have two things in common: They are almost always invariably big and fast, and they generally live among the city's gables and rooftops. Occasionally, great webs or skeins of cords, rags, and less pleasant things spring up between buildings, and steeplejacks and roofers, or more usually gablemaesters, are paid great sums in comparison to other labourers because of the nature of their jobs and the danger the spiders pose.

Stitched Things

Easily the most common type of "thing" seen in the city are the stitched and remade creatures: golems, homunculi, fleshgines*, and other created creatures. They are a daily sight, lifting, carrying, and guarding.

The Tome of Horrors Complete Creatures

Eneerg the Keeper's seminal work — the *Infernal Tome*, or *The Tome of Horrors Complete* — lists many terrible creatures that can be found above, below or upon the streets of Castorhage. A few of the more commonly known are listed here.

Bone cobblers are said to make up an entire caste of the Fetch, and their many lairs have inspired some of the more perverted and wicked artists in the city. Some speculate that these artists encourage the cobblers in their collecting.

Dark creepers and **dark stalkers** seethe in the Underneath and are sometimes found living in the city, wearing tinted lenses and heavy clothing to disguise their nature. Rumours of a Stalker King refuse to go away. The **King Without Shadow** (Chaotic male dark stalker: HD 12, abilities of Thf12) plays his doleful songs, they say, whilst his guillotine beheads those who set eyes upon his kingdom.

Countless gargoyles festoon the gables of the city, and amongst these are continuing sightings and encounters with **four-armed gargoyles**, **fungus gargoyles** (who are credited with spreading a particularly vile blight that rots hands and feet), **green guardian gargoyles**, and **margoyles**.

Golems and constructs are common, of course, with **flagstone golems** and **furnace golems** being somewhat rarer. However, even such strange constructs as **iron maiden**, **mummy**, **ooze**, **rope**, **stone guardian**, **tallow** and **wood golems** can be encountered. The foul **witch-doll golem** is often used by the Great Coven.



Graymalkins are seemingly everywhere, and are suggested as possibly related somehow to the Between-cats. They are known to hunt night-slugs whom they find to be delicious.

The superstitiously dreaded **midnight peddlers** make up some of the Fetch. Some are so infamous for their deeds that they have well-known nicknames: **Rickety Rose** collects heads in her cart, whilst the **Slithering Peddler** collects hands. **Blind Bethen** collects eyes, said to be removed from living victims and will trade one to an unlucky soul who encounters her but is willing to make a one-for-one swap. **Peg-Leg Jabe** often has some Between creature or other riding in his hand cart from his frequent trips beyond.

These monsters, of course, are merely the tip on the diabolic iceberg of horrors that lurk in the Blight.

Unliving and Undying Alchymic

Those who wish to live forever sometimes take this dark path through use of the proprietary means available with the *elixir of life* (see **Appendix D**). Those who take this draught by choice hope to join the undying; those who fail in this endeavour are cursed to become the unliving. Those who are forced to take the elixir by cruel masters or terms of indenture almost invariably end up among the unliving.

* See **Monsters of the Blight**

Unliving as Art

There is a revolting trade that is growing in the Castorhage: the use of lower-grade elixirs to bind different components of certain creatures together to form a new thing, a thing in many cases totally unique. For some, the methods used are crude: the scalpel, the stitch, the saw. Subjects are injected with *low-grade elixir of life* and then the pieces are removed and subsequently sewn together. More often than not, the resulting creature is either horribly disabled or physically unstable and decays quickly. It does not always then die, however.

The quality of the work depends upon the grade of the elixir and the skill of the artist, but these vile surgeons are growing in number and infamy. More advanced artists and experimenters use complex crucibles and procedures to bind the pieces together. These crucibles are made with necromantic magic, and these artists claim to be using techniques discovered by the creators of the first owlbears and gorilla bears[TOHC], as well as those who first brought abominations[TOHC] into being. The latest, great visionaries of this sort of rebirth extol the (so far) secret and unseen experiments of the great surgeon-artists whom they claim have succeeded in forging new life from Between creatures and mortal flesh.

[TOHC] See ***The Tome of Horrors Complete*** by **Frog God Games**

Monsters of the Blight

Between Cat

Vaguely feline, this hairless, pale creature has wrinkled, flaccid skin, a pair of stunted vestigial limbs extending from its flanks, and a ring of small tentacles around its neck. Its clawed forepaws each bear one wickedly hooked claw much larger than the others. Its eyes are dark voids, and a long, prehensile tongue extends from its mouth.

Between-Cat

Hit Dice: 2
Armor Class: 5 [14]
Attacks: 2 claws (1d3)
Saving Throw: 16
Special: immunities (disease, poison), nulltropic scratch, resist cold, spell-like abilities
Move: 12/9 (climbing)
Alignment: Neutrality
Number Encountered: 1, 2, 1d4+2 (pack), 1d4+6 (hunt), council (30+)
Challenge Level: 4/120

Vaguely feline, a Between-cat is a hairless, pale creature with wrinkled, flaccid skin, a pair of stunted vestigial limbs extending from its flanks, and a ring of small tentacles around its neck. Its clawed forepaws each bear one wickedly hooked claw much larger than the others. Its eyes are dark voids, and a long, prehensile tongue extends from its mouth.

A Between-cat exists simultaneously in Between and in the mundane world, and is capable of traveling back and forth between them. Each round before making its attack, a Between-cat can designate one of its claw attacks to cause nulltropic damage rather than normal damage. This unique damage induces a loss of order and energy in the target, producing an overall breakdown of its substance toward nothingness. More than mere entropy, which simply describes the loss of order and cohesion, the nulltropy of the Between-cat brings about a complete loss of existence in any form, albeit on a minuscule scale.

A single Between-cat's nulltropic scratch deals only 1 point of nulltropic damage. However, this damage scales upward in the presence of multiple Between-cats. If more than one Between-cat is present, any others within 100ft of the attacking Between-cat can bolster the nulltropic damage of the designated attacker. Every Between-cat that opts to do so provides a cumulative +1 bonus to the attack roll of the nulltropic scratch and increases the damage dealt as indicated in the table below. More than one Between-cat in a battle can have its nulltropic attack bolstered in this way, but each Between-cat present can bolster only one nulltropic attack per round.

# Between-Cats	Nulltropic Damage
1	1
2	1d3
3	1d4
4	2d3
5–6	2d4
7–9	2d6
10	3d6
11–14	3d8
15	3d12
16	5d10
17–30	6d12
31–55	10d12
56+	20d10



A creature slain by the nulltropic scratch of a Between-cat (or cats) can return to life only with a *wish* spell.

While their full agenda is not known, two facts about Between-cats are recognized among the most learned of scholars. First, they ceaselessly search through venerable tomes, petroglyphs, and other ancient writings in search of some unknown secret or secrets that they have revealed to no one. Second — whether related to the first item or not — Between-cats seek to completely unmake reality for their own hidden reasons. Because Between-cats possess their strange nulltropic attack, they are literally able to accomplish this latter goal one tiny piece at a time. Fortunately for the sake of reality and all who live in it, the nulltropic damage caused by a single Between-cat is minuscule, and they are loath to use it indiscriminately. They instead save it for enemies in battle or for certain artifacts and writings they have found over the years, as well as for aboleths, whom they consider bitter enemies.

Between-Cat: HD 2; **AC** 5[14]; **Atk** 2 claws (1d3); **Move** 12 (climbing 9); **Save** 16; **AL** N; **CL/XP** 4/120; **Special:** immunities (disease, poison), nulltropic scratch (damage scales with multiple cats), resist cold (50%), spell-like abilities.

Spell-like abilities: at will—*read magic*; 1/day—*read languages*.

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Bileborn

This revolting creature appears to be formed of a tangle of limbs and pieces of rotting corpses that splay in all directions like some kind of demented sea urchin. The many appendages flail about spastically as it moves with a disturbing rolling motion. Barely discernible amid this tangle are a number of severed, rotting heads, their eyes open and watching, their lips wordlessly mouthing unheard imprecations.

Bileborn

Hit Dice: 8
Armor Class: 3 [16]
Attacks: 4 slams (1d6 plus grab)
Saving Throw: 8
Special: babbling scream, coordinated burst, incorporate body
Move: 12
Alignment: Chaos
Number Encountered: 1
Challenge Level: 11/1700

Once ever 1d4 rounds, a bileborn can scream in incoherent babbles. All creatures within 60ft must make a saving throw or be affected as the *confusion* spell for 1d4 rounds. Once every 1d4 rounds, a bileborn can synchronize its flailing motions into a coordinated movement. During this time, it moves as if affected by a haste spell for 1 round.

If a bileborn hits a victim with 2 slam attacks, it grabs the creature. On the next round, it attempts to plunge the creature into its body (save resists) to absorb it.

A victim pulled inside the bileborn can attempt an Open Doors check each round to escape. If the victim fails to get free, it must make a saving throw each round (with a cumulative –1 penalty for each round it is inside the bileborn) or suffer 1d4 points of damage per round as the many mouths within feed on the victim in his helpless state. Once the victim is dead, it is fully incorporated into the whole and is forever lost.

Bileborn: HD 8; **AC** 3[16]; **Atk** 4 slams (1d6 plus grab); **Move** 12; **Save** 8; **AL** C; **CL/XP** 11/1700; **Special:** babbling scream (60ft radius, *confusion* for 1d4 rounds, save resists), coordinated burst (every 1d4 rounds, *haste*, 1 round), incorporate body (pull into body after grab, 1d4 damage/round, Open Doors to escape, save with cumulative –1 penalty to resist ongoing damage).

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Body Snatcher

A massive lump of shadow, like a gargantuan hillock, shifts in the darkness and reveals itself to be a living creature. Its body is mostly torso and is roughly barrel shaped, with four elephantine legs and two long arms ending in three-fingered hands. A massive mouth-like opening dominates the top of its frame, from which extends a long, prehensile tongue studded with spiky outgrowths at its tip. The entire beast appears to be covered in — or perhaps made of — a lumpy, lichen-like substance with tiny, leafy growths.

Body Snatcher

Hit Dice: 20
Armor Class: 0 [19]
Attacks: 2 slams (2d8), bite (4d6)
Saving Throw: 3
Special: absorb cadaver, regenerate, spore burst, swallow whole, vulnerabilities (fire, light)
Move: 15/12/12 (climbing, swimming)
Alignment: Chaos
Number Encountered: 1
Challenge Level: 25/5900

Known only as the body snatcher by the dwarves of the Underneath, this massive overgrowth of ambulatory blight lichen lurks in the deepest caverns where the boundaries between the mundane world and Between





are thinnest. The creature somehow possesses sentience — likely from its long exposure to the strange influence of that other-realm — and shares some traits of Between creatures. The conglomeration of lichen growths has taken on the form of a massive quadruped, but it shares no special affinity with that form and, in truth, its body possesses no internal organs or structures other than the undifferentiated blight of which is it composed.

The body snatcher stands 25ft tall. Even though it is made only of tiny lichen growths, these conglomerate quite densely so the creature weighs more than 30,000 lbs. It is well over a thousand years old and is probably much older, and it may well be immortal. Its body is mostly torso and is roughly barrel shaped, with four elephantine legs and two long arms ending in three-fingered hands. A massive mouth-like opening dominates the top of its frame, from which extends a long, prehensile tongue studded with spiky outgrowths at its tip. The entire beast appears to be covered in — or perhaps made of — a lumpy, lichen-like substance with tiny, leafy growths.

A body snatcher attacks with 2 leafy slams, or with its horrible bite. If it rolls a natural 20 with its bite attack, it swallows the creature whole. Any creature swallowed whole does not take damage, but immediately begins to suffocate. If a body snatcher kills a creature, it absorbs its body in the next round. The body is irrevocably destroyed unless a *wish* or *resurrection* spell is used.

A body snatcher can also cause a pustule of spores to burst forth from its body as a concussive blast at a target within 40ft. This attack deals 3d6 points of damage (save for half). The body snatcher can use this attack every other round.

A body snatcher is vulnerable to fire (double damage). In bright light, it is affected as if by a *slow* spell. While in darkness, a body snatcher regenerates 3hp.

Body Snatcher: HD 20; **AC** 0[19]; **Atk** 2 slams (2d8), bite (4d6); **Move** 15 (climbing 12, swimming 12); **Save** 3; **AL** C; **CL/XP** 25/5900; **Special:** absorb cadaver (irrevocably destroyed in 1 round), regenerate (3hp/round in darkness), spore burst (40ft range, 3d6 damage, save for half), swallow whole (natural 20 with bite, target begins to suffocate), vulnerabilities (fire [200%], light [*slow*]).

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BookTown Panther

This black-furred panther would not seem overly noteworthy were it not for its exceptional size and six legs, one of which has a twisted and mangled paw from some past hunter's trap. The beast seems to bear a perpetual snarl as one side of its face is badly scarred, pulling its mouth up and its eye into a puckered squint.

BookTown Panther

Hit Dice: 8
Armor Class: 4 [15]
Attacks: 3 claws (1d4), bite (2d6)
Saving Throw: 8
Special: pounce, rear claw rake, spell-like abilities
Move: 18/9 (climbing)
Alignment: Neutrality
Number Encountered: 1
Challenge Level: 11/1700

This creature is a legend in BookTown. Allegedly, a panther of great size originally imported from the distant swamps of southern Akados for the private gardens of a dabbler in the arcane arts, it is said that this magic-user worked magic beyond his abilities, causing the panther to mutate, grow additional limbs, and, ultimately, develop a malign intelligence of its own. Each tale of the BookTown Panther describes tortures visited on the creature at the hands of its demented master, each more horrible than the previous. The truth of these tales remains in question, but what is not in question is that a black panther of prodigious proportions does lurk among the roofs and gables of BookTown, stalking the unwary. Eyewitnesses report that it indeed has an extra set of limbs, though one has been badly injured at some point in the past. Efforts to hunt the beast have failed, as it proves to be incredibly elusive, and it seems to have a great knowledge of where the many nests of wasps, centipedes, and other vermin can be found among the gables. The few times hunters have even gotten close to it, they have run afoul of swarms of such insects while the beast itself made its escape.

The truth of the matter is that a demented urban druid of BookTown indeed tortured and experimented upon the panther. The panther merely awaited an opportunity when the druid's guard was down and its cage left unsecured before striking and messily devouring the fool. The panther did not escape unscathed, as traps left as contingencies by the druid severely injured the beast and crippled one of its legs as it disappeared into the night.

Rather than try to flee the city where it knew that it would be hunted down, the BookTown Panther chose instead to lair among the dangers of the city's rooftops where few dared to venture. Its great size and strength provided it with some protection from the myriad dangers to be found there, allowing it to turn its newfound sentience toward its survival and revenge against all humanoids as it pursued the path of the hunter. In doing so, it learned to harness the ubiquitous vermin that continually swarmed among the spires and rooftops of the city, eventually even gaining a giant wasp as a companion.

The panther has shed the name given to it by its former master as a mark of its past shame and captivity, and instead prefers to remain nameless. It has heard the moniker of BookTown Panther given to it, and doesn't care one way of the other. It simply sees the soft, fleshy humanoids as further prey to sate its hunger for revenge. It likewise doesn't name its wasp companion, seeing it as nothing more than an expendable resource to be used for assistance and protection, and indeed is already on its seventh giant wasp companion, the prior six all having fallen in the panther's wake as it abandoned them to effect its own escape. The BookTown is a remorseless killer, but it is careful and cunning. It has lived many years atop the tenements of BookTown and has no intention of meeting its end any time soon. It is patient and cautious in its hunts, willing to stalk a chosen victim for days, maybe even harassing him with swarms of vermin before moving in to make its kill.

The city of Castorhage has offered a 15,000gp reward if this creature is captured or killed.



BookTown Panther: HD 8; **AC** 4[15]; **Atk** 3 claws (1d4), bite (2d6); **Move** 18 (climbing 9); **Save** 8; **AL** N; **CL/XP** 11/1700; **Special:** pounce (30ft leap), rear claw rake (additional 2d4 damage after leap), spell-like abilities.

Spell-like abilities: at will—*create water*, *detect magic*, *pyrotechnics*; 5/day—*dimension door*, *protection from fire*, *protection from normal missiles*; 1/day—*insect plague*, *protection from lightning*.

Giant Wasp: HD 4; **AC** 4[15]; **Atk** sting (1d4 plus poison), bite (1d8); **Move** 1 (fly 20); **Save** 13; **AL** N; **CL/XP** 6/400; **Special:** larvae (*cure disease* kills), paralyzing poison (1d4+1 days, save resists). (***Monstrosities*** 505)

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Caul Cuckoo

This is no ordinary human child, but an infection, something that leeched upon a living babe whilst in the womb and smothered it, becoming something partly human and partly from Between. Its form is fluid, oily almost, and the disturbing mixture of human and slug is revolting to behold.

Caul Cuckoo

Hit Dice: 4
Armor Class: 6 [13]
Attacks: 3 tongues (1d4 plus 1d6 acid)
Saving Throw: 13
Special: change shape, lullaby, spell-like ability, vulnerable to salt
Move: 9/6/9/9 (burrow, climb, swim)
Alignment: Neutrality
Number Encountered: 1, 2, 1d6+2 (gang)
Challenge Level: 6/400

Creatures within 30ft who see a caul cuckoo in its natural form are sickened for 1d6 rounds (–1 to hit and saves, save avoids).

Caul cuckoos are the tragic result of an unborn child corrupted by a caul cuckoo syre while still in its mother's womb. A caul cuckoo has a 50% chance of being in either of its two forms at birth. If in its human form, it usually waits until after nightfall to either escape into the night, or murder its sleeping parents and then escape into the night. If born in its slug-like form, it immediately attacks its mother and any others present in an attempt to escape. Though the birth of these creatures is a rare occurrence, there is a reason that many old midwives carry a bag of salt with them whenever they attend a new delivery. A handful of salt burns a caul cuckoo, dealing 1d6 points of damage on the first and following rounds.



A caul cuckoo can take the form of a humanoid. A caul cuckoo's humanoid form is fixed by its humanoid mother — it cannot assume different humanoid forms. A caul cuckoo retains its tongue attacks while in its humanoid form. Equipment worn or carried in its humanoid form melds with its body when assuming its natural form.

Caul Cuckoo: HD 4; **AC** 6[13]; **Atk** 3 tongues (1d4 plus 1d6 acid); **Move** 6 ; **Save** 13; **AL** N; **CL/XP** 6/400; **Special:** change shape (*polymorph self* into humanoid), lullaby (300ft radius, save or *confusion*), spell-like ability, vulnerable to salt (1d6 damage for 2 rounds).

Spell-like ability: constant—*ESP*.

Caul Cuckoo Syre

This creature is a pallid pupa, no larger than a finger, with a tiny, twisted humanoid face.

Caul Cuckoo Syre

Hit Dice: 1
Armor Class: 5 [14]
Attacks: none
Saving Throw: 17
Special: implant, lullaby, spell-like ability, vulnerable to salt
Move: 6/6/6/6 (burrow, climb, swim)
Alignment: Neutrality
Number Encountered: 1
Challenge Level: 1/15

A caul cuckoo syre is a pallid pupa no larger than a finger, with a tiny, twisted humanoid face.

Caul cuckoo syres are the progenitors of caul cuckoos. They spend the majority of their lives stealthily searching out pregnant humanoid females to infest, corrupting their unborn children into caul cuckoos.

A caul cuckoo syre can crawl into the birth canal of a helpless (including sleeping) humanoid female and implant itself into her womb. Once implanted, each time the host sleeps for a full night, the syre bathes the host's developing embryos or fetuses in unnatural hormones and other chemicals leeched from its own body. As a result of this process, every following morning, the host is automatically sickened for 1 hour. After 5 nights of this process, the host's developing embryos or fetuses are transformed into caul cuckoo fetuses (which take the subtype of the host as their alternate form), and the syre fully dissolves and is destroyed.

A *cure disease* spell cast on the host creature automatically renders the syre unconscious for 1 minute. If the syre dies or becomes unconscious, it is immediately ejected into the birth canal, where it is automatically detected by the host and from where it can be removed safely. While implanted, a syre is considered helpless.

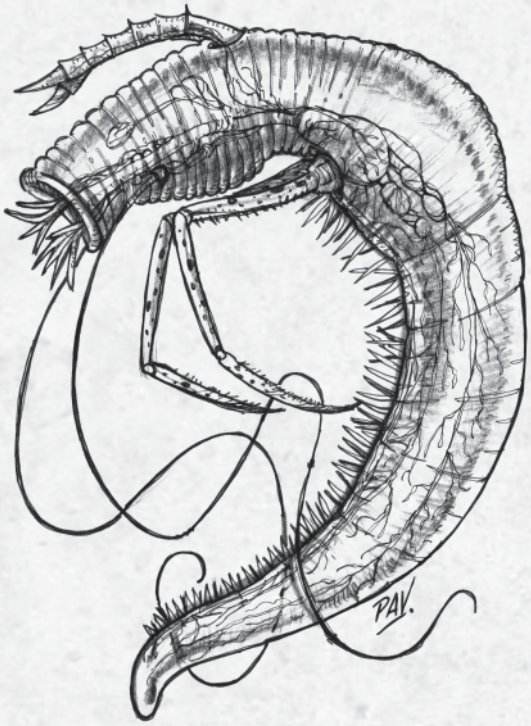
When a caul cuckoo syre sings, it may target one creature within 30ft that must make a saving throw or fall asleep for 1 minute, as per the *sleep* spell. Creatures with more than 4 HD are immune.

A handful of salt burns a caul cuckoo syre, dealing 1d6 points of damage on the first and following rounds.

Caul Cuckoo Syre: HD 1; **AC** 5[14]; **Atk** none; **Move** 6 (burrow 6, climb 6, swim 6); **Save** 17; **AL** N; **CL/XP** 1/15; **Special:** implant (sleeping victims), lullaby (30ft radius, save or fall asleep for 1 round), spell-like ability, vulnerable to salt (1d6 damage for 2 rounds).

Spell-like ability: constant—*ESP*.

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Crathog

This creature draws its leech-like body along by great barbed spindly tentacles that glisten with fluid. Somewhere inside its cluster of spines and sharp bones lurks a great maw that distends itself outward.

Crathog

Hit Dice: 10
Armor Class: 5 [14]
Attacks: bite (2d6 plus 1d6 acid)
Saving Throw: 5
Special: acid, camouflage, distended bite, immune to acid
Move: 12/12 (swimming)
Alignment: Chaos
Number Encountered: 1
Challenge Level: 12/2000

Crathogs are octopod horrors that had their origins in the exits of large cities' sewers emptying into the sea. The mixture of alchemical fluids, waste products, and other toxins caused mutations within the sea life that grew in the area until a new species spawned and bred true. The crathog began to gain an incessant drive to reproduce, a deeper understanding of their surroundings, and a greater intelligence.

A crathog seeps a corrosive acid from its porous flesh. Its tentacles move with eerie quickness to grasp its prey and pull it toward its distended jaw. These jaws are hinged on a flexible tendon that allows the crathog to contract a coiled muscle and launch this set of jaws outward up to 25ft to attack prey. The creature is able to blend into its surroundings like a chameleon (10% chance to notice when motionless). It moves silently, but leaves a slimy trail which in itself is acidic and dangerous. This acid deals 1d6 points of damage to anyone it touches. A crathog is incredibly strong and stealthy, known to climb onto ships to feed on unsuspecting sailors, dissolving their flesh with its acid. The crathog is immune to acid.

Crathogs tend to hide in crooks of old harbors and lie in wait until a fisherman ventures past. Crathog are not only cunning, they are incredibly cruel; they delight in mutilating or tormenting prey, and disfiguring their opponents with their acids. Why they do this is open to conjecture, but many scholars believe that crathog are somehow spawned by the influence of Between and that they seethe with the inherent injustice of those who have died in the river, particularly those who have suffered from its acidic toxins.

Crathog: HD 10; **AC** 5[14]; **Atk** bite (2d6 plus 1d6 acid); **Move** 12 (swimming 12); **Save** 5; **AL** N; **CL/XP** 12/2000; **Special:** acid (touch, 1d6 damage), camouflage (10% chance to notice while motionless), distended bite (25ft radius), immune to acid.

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Dog, Blight-Bull (Light Fighting Dog)

Hit Dice: 2
Armor Class: 6 [13]
Attacks: bite (1d6 plus jawlock)
Saving Throw: 16
Special: jawlock
Move: 15
Alignment: Neutrality
Number Encountered: 1, 2 or 1d10+2 (pack)
Challenge Level: 3/60

This vicious-looking dog is heavily muscled and scarred from many battles. They are often outfitted with leather barding. A blight-bull locks its jaws when it bites its prey, doing automatic bite damage each round until it lets loose or is killed.

Blight-Bull (Light Fighting Dog): HD 2; **AC** 6[13]; **Atk** bite (1d6 plus jawlock); **Move** 15; **Save** 16; **AL** N; **CL/XP** 3/60; **Special:** jawlock (automatic bite damage after hit).

Dog, Pit-Mastiff (Heavy Fighting Dog)

Hit Dice: 4
Armor Class: 6 [13]
Attacks: bite (1d6+2 plus jawlock)
Saving Throw: 13



Special: jawlock
Move: 15
Alignment: Neutrality
Number Encountered: 1, 2 or 1d10+2 (pack)
Challenge Level: 4/120

Dogs bred and trained specifically to fight are much tougher than normal breeds. They are typically garbed in light barding and have been taught to lock their jaws to bring opponents down (dealing automatic bite damage). Their training has suppressed some of their natural instincts and rendered them quite specialized; consequently, they aren't of much use for other activities such as tracking, but continue to fight well past the point when other dogs would no longer be able to continue.

Pit-Mastiff (Heavy Fighting Dog): HD 4; **AC** 6[13]; **Atk** bite (1d6+2 plus jawlock); **Move** 15; **Save** 13; **AL** N; **CL/XP** 4/120; **Special:** jawlock (automatic bite damage after hit).

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Elemental, Ragefire

The rage and hatred that emanate with the white-hot heat from this demonic fire are palpable.

Elemental, Ragefire

Hit Dice: 8, 12, or 16
Armor Class: 2 [17]
Attacks: strike (3d8)
Saving Throw: 8, 3, or 3
Special: feed, immune to fire, +1 or better magical weapons to hit, vulnerable to cold and water
Move: 12
Alignment: Chaos
Number Encountered: 1, 2 or 1d6+2 (inferno)
Challenge Level: 8 HD (10/1400), 12 HD (14/2600), or 16 HD (18/3800)



Ragefire elementals embody the chaos and evil of their Abyssal heritage, manifesting in demonic forms of living flame, smoke, ash, and cinders. They exist to incinerate life and, in so doing, grow stronger and more destructive.

A ragefire elemental can incinerate any creature it kills to increase its mass. Every time a ragefire elemental incinerates a victim, it has a 5% cumulative chance of growing into a more powerful elemental (an 8HD elemental becomes a 12HD monster, while a 12HD turns into a 16HD monstrosity). A 16HD ragefire elemental does not advance in this way, but instead regenerates 1d8 hp per creature it incinerates.

A ragefire elemental cannot enter water or any other nonflammable liquid. A body of water is an impassible barrier unless the ragefire elemental can step or jump over it, or if the water is covered with a flammable material (such as a layer of oil). Water and cold attacks deal double damage to ragefire elementals. They are immune to fire and can only be hit by +1 or better magical weapons.

Elemental, Ragefire (8HD): HD 8; **AC** 2[17]; **Atk** strike (3d8); **Move** 12; **Save** 8; **AL** C; **CL/XP** 10/1400; **Special:** feed (5% cumulative chance per victim incinerated of becoming 12HD elemental), immune to fire, +1 or better magic weapons to hit, vulnerable to cold and water (200%).

Elemental, Ragefire (12HD): HD 12; **AC** 2[17]; **Atk** strike (3d8); **Move** 12; **Save** 3; **AL** C; **CL/XP** 14/2600; **Special:** feed (5% cumulative chance per victim incinerated of becoming 16HD elemental), immune to fire, +1 or better magic weapons to hit, vulnerable to cold and water (200%).

Elemental, Ragefire (16HD): HD 16; **AC** 2[17]; **Atk** strike (3d8); **Move** 12; **Save** 3; **AL** C; **CL/XP** 18/3800; **Special:** feed (regenerate 1d8hp per victim incinerated), immune to fire, +1 or better magic weapons to hit, vulnerable to cold and water (200%).

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Fleshgine

Fleshgines are constructs of flesh combined with other materials designed for a specific purpose. They might pump water from a city's reservoirs into rooftop cisterns to supply the inhabitants with running water, or they may lift or pull — anything a humanoid body can do. But fleshgines are built to improve upon a humanoid's ability through modification and vast strength. While they are not uncommon in Castorhage, they often operate out of sight; their disturbing appearance being something the civilized locals choose not to acknowledge. They can be heard though — their steady stormy breathing, the asthmatic wheeze behind a grate, the slithering of flaccid limbs between floors. They also have a strong odor — a sort of organic sweatiness that can smell of many other things as often they absorb and amplify the smells of the things they work in and around.

Fleshgines come in all shapes and sizes, and while no two are ever alike, they often fall into a set pattern. Each is very strong, and many — an uncannily large amount — are sentient creatures in their own right. Different fleshgines tend to have different abilities; some are simple brutes that occasionally go mad, some are more cunning, lurking and growing behind plaster and wainscoting and brooding their dark, strange dreams and wants.

While most fleshgines are simple, mindless servitors made of flesh stitched and grown to inorganic parts and contraptions, some grow into something altogether different. Sentient fleshgines take on aspects of their humanoid neighbors that seep in from their close proximity on a daily basis. These aspects include tics, habits, language, and even some of their vices. These creatures are often bloated by the desires and



madness of Between and become enraptured by it, seeking new directions and becoming fixated in disturbing ways. These constructs often form complex alliances with those who dwell behind the veneer of the Blight, particularly with the ghouls of the Fetch (who have enough inert humanity to understand and fear the construct). Some say the thoughts of the Crooked Promethean violate their dreams and awaken them; others say that it is a simple accident of nature. These sentient constructs lurk in plain sight and are driven by whatever twisted needs or goals that have grown within their warped consciousness.

As more complex fleshgines are grafted from darker sources of flesh and bone, so too the risk of disaster becomes greater. Philosophers within the city-state already worry what fleshgines might do if they rebelled *en masse*. They point to the curious whale-song that occasionally haunts certain nights, and which seems to come from the fleshgines calling to each other across the city. What are they saying or planning, they wonder? The golem-stitchers and homuncule wives laugh at such suggestions; their creations are simple flesh-and-blood machines after all. What maliciousness could possibly lurk within this humble framework?

Sentient fleshgines that have gone berserk at least once in the past have fundamentally broken some aspect of their creation and gain the take ability. Occasionally the fleshgine's habits and needs manifest themselves in a destructive way, and the construct pulls a victim into itself. The fleshgine is always cunning in this action and manipulates its manifold parts and surroundings to camouflage its attack. A fleshgine rarely uses this ability, as it is aware that discovery ultimately is likely to lead to destruction. It therefore carefully watches its chosen victim, often for weeks or months before striking, but if sufficiently roused can use this ability immediately.

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Three sample types of fleshgines are included below.

Dungier's Buggy

The rumble of a coach's wheels upon the cobbles comes out of the misty night, but it is not accompanied by the clip-clop of hooves. Rather, there is a soft slapping of skin upon the hard stones. Emerging from the fog is a hansom cab drawn not by a team of horses but rather by the upper torso of some ogre melded to the front of the conveyance. It walks upon its massive hands and its head looks forward, the eyes alert but somehow vacant.

Hit Dice: 8
Armor Class: 5 [14]
Attacks: slam (2d8), bite (1d4)
Saving Throw: 8
Special: berserk, +1 or better magical weapons to hit, resists cold, trample
Move: 15
Alignment: Neutrality
Number Encountered: 1
Challenge Level: 12/2000

A Dungier's buggy is a hansom cab drawn by the upper torso of some ogre melded to the front of the conveyance. It walks upon its massive hands, and its head looks forward, its eyes alert but somehow vacant.

Dungier's buggy attacks with a meaty fist and a bite. The buggy can also trample creatures by rolling over them. If the creature fails a save to get out of the buggy's way, it takes 4d6 points of damage. While the buggy cannot attack creatures behind it with its bite or slam, it can trample them

by moving backward. When moving backward, the fleshgine moves at half speed.

If a fleshgine is injured in combat, there is a cumulative 1% chance per point of damage that its elemental spirit breaks free and the fleshgine goes berserk. The uncontrolled fleshgine goes on a rampage, attacking the nearest living creature or smashing some object smaller than itself if no creature is within reach, then moving on to spread more destruction. The fleshgine's creator or designated operator, if within 60ft, can try to regain control each round by speaking firmly and authoritatively to the construct (1-in-6 chance). It takes 1 minute of inactivity by the fleshgine to reset the creature's berserk chance to 0%.

Perhaps the most successful of Castorhage's many fleshgines are the hired coaches of the golem-stitcher Dunaven Dungier. His method of crafting a hansom cab with the animated upper torso of a giant (usually an ogre or a hill giant) fused to its front in place of a team of horses proved both practical and popular in a city as vast and populous as the Blight. Soon Dungier's buggies were traveling throughout the city providing swift, reliable transportation for the noble and common alike and for only a modest fare. Dungier's popularity with the other cab drivers and owners of hacks proved to be less than stellar, though, and only three years after the introduction of his ingenious cab, portions of his body were found floating in the Great Canal. It is assumed that sough-eels or some other denizen devoured the rest. Fortunately for his legacy, Dungier's methods were fairly easy to reproduce, and now hundreds of these coaches — still known colloquially as Dungier's buggies — travel the streets of the city.

Fleshgine, Dungier's Buggy: HD 8; **AC** 5[14]; **Atk** slam (1d8), bite (1d4); **Move** 15; **Save** 8; **AL** N; **CL/XP** 12/2000; **Special:** berserk (1% cumulative chance per point of damage), +1 or better magical weapons to hit, resists cold (50%), trample (4d6 damage, save for half).

Hobbreth's Mighty Pump No. 87

The stench of sweat and the distant sounds of heavy breathing engulf you — whatever it is, you are catching the merest glimpse of the whole. In the oily dark you can see sickly appendages gulping, a horrible sense of brooding vastness, and a glowering cluster of eyes filled with misery just below a vast, idiot, crooked mouth.

Hit Dice: 14
Armor Class: 3 [16]
Attacks: 9 tentacles (1d8), bite (4d6)
Saving Throw: 3
Special: berserk, constrict, +1 or better magical weapons to hit, take
Move: 9/9 (climbing)
Alignment: Neutrality
Number Encountered: 1
Challenge Level: 15/2900

Hobbreth's Mighty Pump No. 87 is a massive fleshgine anchored in Castorhage's dark spaces. It smells of sweat, and its heavy breathing can be heard in the walls. It attacks with 9 massive tentacles that grab and constrict prey. It has a glowering cluster of eyes filled with misery just below a vast, idiot, crooked mouth.

The fleshgine is quiet and stealthy, attacking straggling victims when they are alone in the city's dark alleys. It grabs prey with its massive tentacles. If it hits a victim, it has a 50% chance to grab them and constrict. The prey can break free with an Open Doors check to escape the grasp; otherwise, they suffer 2d8 points of damage each round they remain in the fleshgine's embrace. Each round it holds a victim, the fleshgine has a 2-in-6 chance of moving the creature to its mouth to automatically bite (4d6 damage). Instead of biting, the fleshgine can also take the creature into its body, absorbing it for 3d6 points of damage each round.

If a fleshgine is injured in combat, there is a cumulative 1% chance per point of damage that its elemental spirit breaks free and the fleshgine goes berserk. The uncontrolled fleshgine goes on a rampage, attacking the nearest living creature or smashing some object smaller than itself if no creature is within reach, then moving on to spread more destruction. The fleshgine's creator or designated operator, if within 60ft, can try to regain control each round by speaking firmly and authoritatively to the construct (1-in-6 chance). It takes 1 minute of inactivity by the fleshgine to reset the creature's berserk chance to 0%.

"You can't see her all, of course, even I never did when I was stitching her and moulding her, making her flesh and breathing life into my baby. I recall her formation though, her crisp newness — the endless flesh, and the stench of pigs — for it was pig-flesh I grew and nurtured, and spread across her carcass like a great sail on a vast living sailing vessel.

In her base she is all purpose — her many sucking mouths, which in truth I suppose you'd call tentacles (if such a crude word could be used for such grace), with so many eyes clustered together so she can see from her sweaty groin below that pointless mouth — she must have a mouth, of course. Her flesh engorges above, like some vast flaccid organ that could fill a great hall, bloated, booming, pumping. Veins cross her every inch — you can see the swelling blood pumping as she draws her harvest upward through her cathedral mass far, far above.

She rises then, reaching high into the city, her pumping limbs extending endlessly upward with surprising — some have said alarming — strength to the digits that grasp her farthest reach. Some have likened the digits to fleshy spiders, but I think that's simple scare-mongering to frighten children; they simply grip the vessel they spend her harvest into. And here her harvest is drawn, the life-giving water that sustains those in the streets high above pumped from sphincter mouths between each cluster of thin many-jointed hands.

It may taste a little of her sweat — her feral porcine nature — but it is water, saving the lower city from drowning and keeping the upper city drinking.

How many have I made? Oh, hundreds, no two quite alike. The stories about them going berserk? Rubbish put about by those with a grievance — anarchists would say anything to cause discontent amongst the ignorant.

I do sometimes wonder if they have a soul, though, my fleshy babies lurking between walls and dreaming. What do they dream of, I wonder?"

— Emilia Hobbreth, Homuncule Wife

Fleshgine, Hobbreth's Might Pump No. 87: HD 14; **AC** 3[16]; **Atk** 9 tentacles (1d8), bite (4d6); **Move** 9 (climbing 9); **Save** 3; **AL** N; **CL/XP** 15/2900; **Special:** berserk (1% cumulative chance per point of damage), constrict (50% chance after tentacle hit, Open Doors check to escape grip, 2d8 damage/round), +1 or better magical weapons to hit, take (3d6 damage/round), take (absorb into body, 3d6 damage/round).

Macabre Lift

The dark shaft of the vertical tunnel appears to be empty until its wooden floor suddenly lurches and rises from where it rested. Beneath the planking of the floor, you can see that a great fleshy organism has grown upon it like a distended bladder that covers the entirety of its underside. From this sweaty, rugose sac extend four muscular limbs that grasp the walls of the shaft with their multi-fingered appendages and begin to climb, carrying the cargo of its wooden flooring smoothly up the shaft.

Hit Dice: 8
Armor Class: 6 [13]
Attacks: 4 slams (1d8)
Saving Throw: 8
Special: berserk, crush, +1 or better magical weapons to hit
Move: 6/12 (climbing)
Alignment: Neutrality
Number Encountered: 1
Challenge Level: 10/1400

One of the first fleshgines envisioned by the golem-stitchers of Castorhage, the macabre lift has found widespread usage among government buildings and other large, multilevel structures with the budget to install such amenities. These constructs are rather simple in

design, with a fleshy, leathery hide grown on the underside of a 10ft-by-10ft deck of heavy wooden planks. Four stocky limbs extend from the underside of the creature at its four corners and end with club-like pseudopods surrounded by a fringe of grasping fingers with thick, coarse nails. The entire fleshgine is no more than 2ft thick but weighs 1500 lbs. or more (3500 lbs. if constructed with an iron deck).

Macabre lifts are designed to be placed in vertical shafts whose dimensions match those of the fleshgine. The fleshgine then lies flat at the base of the shaft and allows passengers to step upon its decking. Upon a signal —usually the ringing of a small bell set into the side of the shaft — the macabre lift begins to climb the shaft while keeping its deck level and stable. Handholds are often built into the walls of the shaft to make the climb easier for the fleshgine, but its climbing pseudopods are so adept that it rarely needs any sort of assistance. The number of times that the bell is rung indicates to what floor the lift is supposed to carry its passengers. Likewise, bells set into the shaft at floors above summon it from below to pick up passengers. The rise and fall of the climbing fleshgine is so smooth that most passengers easily forget that they are riding upon the back of an animated construct.

If a macabre lift goes berserk, its usual tactic is to tip itself over to try to dump any passengers to the floor of the shaft below. Anyone riding the lift when it does this must make a saving throw to try to remain on the fleshgine's deck without falling. If a macabre lift manages to clear its deck, it then rushes down the shaft to crush those below for 2d8 points of damage per round until the lift rises again (save for half). If unable to clear its deck of passengers, the lift may instead try to rise against the top of the shaft to crush the riders.

Anyone trying to attack the lift from above must first deal with the platform that covers the fleshgine. Until the platform is removed (or destroyed), the fleshgine takes no damage from those attacks.

Fleshgine, Macabre Lift: HD 8; **AC** 6[13]; **Atk** 4 slams (1d8); **Move** 6 (climbing 12); **Save** 8; **AL** N; **CL/XP** 10/1400; **Special:** berserk (1% cumulative chance per point of damage), crush (save or take 2d8 damage/round), +1 or better magical weapons to hit.

Gargoyle, Scrimshaw

The eerie humanoid-shaped creature is perched precariously on the edge of the building. The light from the full moon glints off its alabaster-colored body, revealing intricate etchings along the surface. As it surveys the land, the creature throws back its head and emits a piercing howl into the night.

Gargoyle, Scrimshaw

Hit Dice: 7
Armor Class: 5 [14]
Attacks: 2 claws (1d4), bite (1d6)
Saving Throw: 9
Special: shrieking howl
Move: 9/15 (flying)
Alignment: Chaos
Number Encountered: 1, 2 or 3d4 (wing)
Challenge Level: 8/800

A scrimshaw gargoyle is an

The origin of these strangely carven sculptures in the city of Castorhage is shrouded in the mystery of the past, but their existence is now well known through its entirety. Originally created as mere constructs lacking the status of truly living creatures, their exposure to eddies and currents of malevolent energy among the city's high places over the years somehow granted the missing spark of life.

A scrimshaw gargoyle is meticulously crafted from painstakingly carved whale bones joined together at the joint articulations. However, these craftings were all completed centuries ago, and no new ones have been constructed in the long years since. The existing scrimshaw gargoyles are, therefore, all old, their whale bones weathered and discolored by time and climate. Though it is thought that thousands of these creatures existed upon the city's rooftops in the



distant past, it has been estimated that fewer than 50 of them are now in existence, each of them recognizably distinct with their individual unique markings. However, the thinking on this is beginning to change as in recent months several new specimens have been spotted upon the rooftops. These new gargoyles are clearly composed of parts cannibalized from previously destroyed gargoyles. Most believe the scrimshaw gargoyles, taken as a whole, are too dimwitted to produce new members of the species. Some contemplate a secret cabal of magical practitioners as responsible for this change; others theorize that certain scrimshaw gargoyles have advanced much farther in their power and understanding of magic and are somehow responsible. Whatever the cause, it appears that the scrimshaw gargoyle population is on the rise for the first time in living memory.

It is thought that the scrimshaw gargoyles' original progenitors built the creatures to serve as guardians. To this end, the horrific shriek the gargoyle emits probably originally served as an alarm. The gargoyle generates the sound through careful fluting of the bones around its mouth, and a supernatural means of passing air — even on still nights — through the narrow structure. As the gargoyle evolved from a simple guardian to a menace, however, its shriek also evolved. No longer a loud noise to alert those nearby, now the shrieking howl is capable of striking fear into the heart of the bravest man.

By tilting its head up and allowing the wind to blow through its weathered bones, a scrimshaw gargoyle has the ability to emit a high-pitched shriek. The scrimshaw gargoyle can use this ability even on windless days. Those within 150ft who hear the shriek must make a saving throw or be shaken (–1 to hit and saves) for 1d4+2 rounds. Creatures who are already shaken instead become frightened, as per a *fear* spell. Any creature within 30ft who can also see the scrimshaw gargoyle suffers a –2 penalty on its save. There is a 30% chance another scrimshaw gargoyle hears a howl and decides to investigate. Any character who successfully saves is immune to that specific gargoyle's howl for 24 hours.

A scrimshaw gargoyle stands just over 5ft tall and weighs a mere 80 lbs.

Gargoyle, Scrimshaw: HD 7; **AC** 5[14]; **Atk** 2 claws (1d4), bite (1d6); **Move** 9 (flying 15); **Save** 9; **AL** C; **CL/XP** 8/800; **Special:** shrieking howl (150ft radius, save or be shaken [–1 to hit and saves] for 1d4+2 rounds; if shaken, become frightened as *fear* spell. If within 30ft of gargoyle, victim suffers–2 penalty on save).

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Hazards

Blight (Hazard)

This peculiar lichen is ubiquitous to the city of Castorhage, and reports of large infestations of it occur in the earliest city records, and it is from this constant presence that the city has obtained its nickname. It is a leafy foliose lichen with a dull gray coloring that is darker on the underside. Its drab coloration makes it difficult to see (1-in-6 chance) from distances greater than 10ft in any conditions other than bright light. Like most foliose lichens, blight grows only slowly — except in total darkness. In total darkness, it grows extremely rapidly and can cover hundreds of feet in only a few hours. Infestations of the lichen tend to pop up in the darkest of alleys or on heavily overcast or moonless nights. The dwarves of the Underneath warn of caverns where the stuff grows unchecked, forming drifts dozens of feet deep. Furthermore, some scholars speculate that the lichen possesses some form of intelligence. They base this on the fact that when options for growth exist toward and away from some living victim that the blight can grow upon, it always grows toward the living victim.

Blight is generally considered to be harmless when encountered, but it grows very densely over whatever surface it encounters. That, combined with its extremely rapid growth in total darkness, makes it very hazardous to a helpless creature. If a helpless creature (asleep, drunk, paralyzed, unconscious, etc.) is in an area of total darkness that blight has access to, it quickly grows over the creature with a thick, impervious layer of lichen. This does no direct harm, but breathing creatures are immediately subject to the effects of suffocation. Likewise, if a creature regains consciousness or mobility after being overgrown with blight, it is considered entangled and must make an Open Doors check to break free. As long as a victim remains entangled, he continues to suffocate. Blight is extremely vulnerable to fire, which deals double damage to it.

If a victim is slain by blight or if it grows over the corpse of a living creature, a truly remarkable quality of the growth is revealed. The corpse of a living creature is absorbed in short order and is completely gone within hours, leaving nothing behind but inorganic remnants such as belt buckles, swords and armor, gold fillings, etc. A creature absorbed by blight cannot be returned from the dead by anything less powerful than a *resurrection* or *wish*.

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Derange (Hazard)

Derange is blamed for much of the unsavory behaviors to be found in The Blight, or at least folk find it convenient to believe it to be the source. Derange is a condition brought on when the tiny earwig spider lays its egg in the ear of a sleeping victim. The warmth of the victim's body causes the egg to hatch and the tiny earwig larva to burrow through the eardrum and inner ear into motor control centers in the victim's brain. Once the larva has nested in this area, it creates a small cyst and begins to draw nourishment from the hormones and chemical interactions within while bathing these centers with chemicals of its own. The result is that the victim's personality changes, his alignment randomly shifting each morning when he awakes (see table). The victim is still in control of his actions, but these actions reflect the priorities and methods subscribed to by this new alignment. At night, the victim often awakes in the midst of sleep with a return to his original alignment and a full and sickening awareness of the things he has been doing.

This condition can be removed with a *cure disease* spell. Likewise, each morning upon awakening the victim is able to make a saving throw to resist the alignment-altering effects of the manifestation and function with his normal alignment. After 1d3 weeks, the derange larva matures into an earwig spider and exits the victim to begin the next stage of its lifecycle. When this occurs, the victim must make saving throw. If successful, he fully recovers from the effects of the derange, though often with serious repercussions from the alignment shifts. Many victims of derange find themselves dead, badly injured, or imprisoned as a result of their previous



actions, and derange is not recognized as a legal defense before the Courts of Castorhage. If the victim fails the save, then the departing earwig spider ruptures a major blood vessel as it clambers out through the ear, and the victim dies in his sleep unless immediate magical interventions occur that are capable of saving his life.

1d8	Alignment Shifts To
1-2	Lawful
3-4	Neutrality
5-6	Chaos
7-8	Same as previous day

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Dislocating Larvae (Hazard)

These tiny green larvae resemble tadpoles no larger than a pinhead but can spawn in sufficient numbers in small pools of stagnant water to give it a greenish tint. When ingested, the larvae colonize the stomach of the victim and begin to feed and reproduce in his digestive tract. A full-grown dislocating larva resembles a green hair no more than 2in or 3in long. As they reach maturity, they feed on the colonized tissues and migrate to other tissues as they lay thousands of eggs. These hatch into even more of the larvae. The pain caused by this process causes terrible convulsions in the victim that can even be forceful enough to dislocate joints.

Each day that the larvae infest their victim, they deal 1d4 points of damage, and have a 5% cumulative chance per day of causing sudden spasmodic fits for which the ailment is named. These deal an additional 1d6 points of damage per day as the victim's joints twist and snap. In the final stages of the infestation, the victim begins to feel an uncontrollable urge to seek out a body of water (preferably stagnant) and does anything in his power to seek one out in order to die in it and allow the larvae colony

within his body to continue to survive rather than dying with their host. A *cure disease* spell cast on the victim kills all larvae and eggs infesting the victim.

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Second-Head Fluke (Hazard)

This dreaded microscopic parasite is relatively common in the Lyme River, and many fishermen have caught the sickness after accidentally swallowing Lyme water. It is also able to spread by physical contact with those already afflicted. This foul sickness manifests as a large swollen tumor that appears on the victim's shoulder that over a period of a few days grows into a second, cankerous head. This head is a most horrible thing to look upon, consisting of disfigured and distorted features, random tufts of hair, misplaced teeth, and dark patches of melanoma. Despite its obvious disease origin, this head-like growth often uncannily resembles the victim, even in its distorted and horrifying state.

Once a case of second-hand fluke is contracted, madness and a physical decline are sure to follow. Once the second head fully manifests after the first week, each day thereafter requires a saving throw or the victim becomes delusional and dangerous from the mental and emotional stress caused by its manifestation (as per a *confusion* spell).

After 1d6+2 days, the effects of the second-head fluke begin to have a more pronounced manifestation. The pseudo-head growing on the victim's shoulder begins to utter nonsensical vocal sounds as if attempting to talk, and the head spasmodically flops about at random times. Anytime anyone is adjacent to the victim once the infestation has reached this stage, there is a 1-in-6 chance that the pseudo-head flops toward them to bite (using the creature's attack roll) for 1d4 points of damage. If the pseudo-head's attack is successful, the bitten individual must make a saving throw or contract a second-head fluke infestation as well.

Once second-head fluke is contracted, it becomes increasingly difficult to remove. During the initial days before the pseudo-head grows, a *cure disease* cures the victim and reverses its progress. Once the pseudo-head fully forms, the pseudo-head itself must also be physically removed. This deals 1d6 points of damage to the victim. Once the pseudo-head is removed, a *cure disease* spell is still necessary to complete the cure or another pseudo-head regrows after 1 week.

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Hyme

Superficially it could be a horse — certainly there is some horse in it — but the resemblance is unnatural. It is a dark thing, a thing the eye finds difficult to rest upon, with the anger and musk of a horse, but the shape is wrong. Its head is dark and long, and slaver drools from it onto the ground. And though it tosses its head like a horse, it has barbed teeth within its jaw.

Hyme

Hit Dice: 6
Armor Class: 5 [14]
Attacks: bite (1d8), 2 hooves (1d6)
Saving Throw: 11
Special: bray of terror, musk of fear
Move: 18
Alignment: Neutrality
Number Encountered: 1, 2, or 3d4 (herd)
Challenge Level: 7/600

The first hyme came about one terrible night when a creature from Between was captured and held in a stable. Whilst the greedy captors sought to sell their prize to those who collect such creatures in peculiar menageries, something terrible happened, and when the greedy hunters returned they simply found



the creature gone and the horses within mad with terror. Cursing their bad luck, the hunters looked for new prey. A few months later, each mare in the stable birthed a horrible dark thing that resembled a foal but was certainly not of this world. The hunters went back to their original purchaser with their new creatures and sold them. These were the first hymes.

A bastard union of the Between and the horse, the hyme combines the qualities of a horse with the aggression of a Between creature. They are hard to tame, but not impossible, and broken ones now regularly pull coarse cabs around the city. Initially, such terrible dray were the exclusive property of those aristocrats who could afford them, but their prodigious appetites created more hymes from unions with mares (hymes are born to both hyme-hyme and hyme-horse parents). They are now seen regularly, but most often on dark nights.

Hymes command very high prices, and are extremely rare to find for sale. Occasionally, one becomes available, but generally only particular dealers — such as Groppit, Swift & Humb: Hyme Dealers by Royal Appointment — sell them. A hyme sells for 6500gp.

Amake a ing throw(–1 to hit and saves) for 1d4 minutesThey can also emit a bray of terror that causes any creature within 60ft to make a save or be affected as if by a *fear* spell.

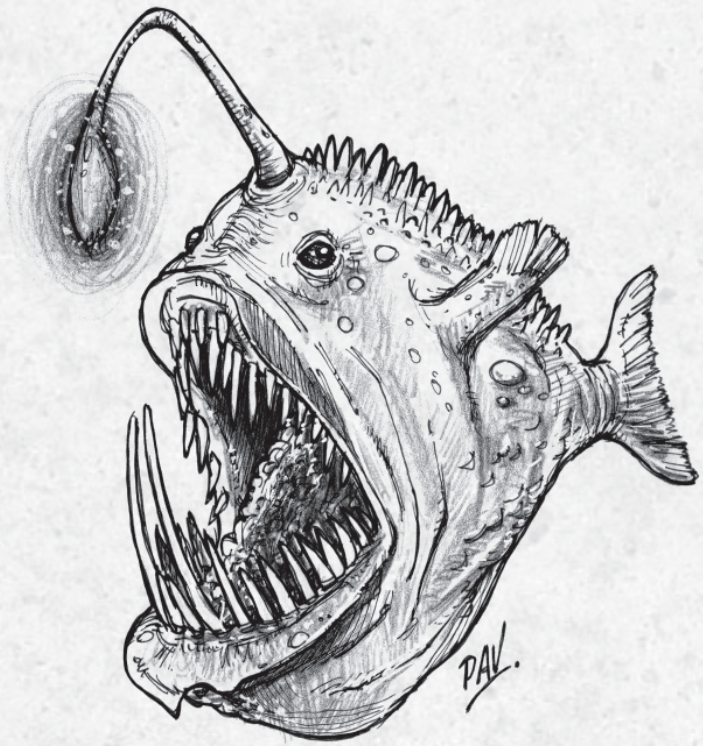
Hyme: HD 6; **AC** 5[14]; **Atk** bite (1d8), 2 hooves (1d6); **Move** 18; **Save** 11; **AL** N; **CL/XP** 7/600; **Special:** bray of terror (60ft radius, save or affected by *fear* spell), musk of fear (60ft radius).

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Lyme Angler (Glop-Shark)

Hit Dice: 6
Armor Class: 6 [13]
Attacks: bite (2d6 plus disease)
Saving Throw: 11
Special: disease, lantern lure
Move: 12 (swimming)
Alignment: Neutrality
Number Encountered: 1, 2 or 1d4+2 (school)
Challenge Level: 8/800

A lyme angler is a bloated fish with a glowing, fleshy protrusion that extends from the top of its skull and dangles in front of a wide mouth filled



with needlelike fangs. The bite of a lyme angler carries the risk of contracting brine misery (save resists), which causes an extremely irritating itching at the point of the wound (–1 to hit, saves and damage until healed).

Also known as slop-sharks along the River Lyme, the lyme angler can also illuminate the dangling lure on its forehead with a phosphorescent glow equal to a candle. Any creature seeing the lighted lure must make a saving throw or become mesmerized by the bobbing glow. Mesmerized creatures automatically lose initiative when the lyme angler strikes. One of the most notorious man-eaters of the river, the immense Lyme angler can reach lengths of more than 20ft and weigh up to 5000 lbs.

Lyme Angler (Slop-Shark): HD 6; **AC** 6[13]; **Atk** bite (2d6 plus disease); **Move** 12 (swimming); **Save** 11; **AL** N; **CL/XP** 8/800; **Special:** disease (brine misery, save or extreme itching, –1 to hit, saves and damage until healed), lantern lure (save or mesmerized, automatically lose initiative).

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Lyme Walrus

Thick folds of fleshy blubber encase this massive sea creature. Yet despite its bestial appearance, its eyes reveal calculating intelligence, and it holds itself upright with unusual dignity. The illusion of a man would almost be complete were it not for the long tusks that protrude from its whiskered mouth.

Lyme Walrus

Hit Dice: 7
Armor Class: 3 [16]
Attacks: bite (2d6)
Saving Throw: 9
Special: fascinating story, polymorph self (human and walrus), spell-like abilities
Move: 9/15 (swimming)
Alignment: Neutrality
Number Encountered: 1 or team (1 Lyme walrus with 1d3 Thf4–8)
Challenge Level: 10/1400

A Lyme walrus has thick folds of fleshy blubber that encase this massive sea creature. Yet despite its bestial appearance, its eyes reveal calculating intelligence, and it holds itself upright with unusual dignity. The illusion of a man would almost be complete were it not for the long tusks that protrude from its whiskered mouth. A typical Lyme walrus weighs 1 to 2 tons and measures 10ft in length with tusks up to 3ft long. A Lyme walrus can polymorph at will between its human and walrus forms.

Named for Sister Lyme where these creatures were first encountered by the humanoid races of the mundane world, Lyme walruses can be found in other locales though they prefer to remain near a body of water to which they can retreat and move with the most freedom if necessary. The Lyme walrus often seeks out the company of people to learn tales and stories from them and to indulge in their appetites — particularly those of feasting.

A Lyme walrus can manipulate its guttural voice to weave an oral story that can charm one or more creatures within 60ft. The listener does not, however, have to be able to understand the language that the Lyme walrus speaks, as the magic lies in the creature's voice modulation rather than the actual substance of the story. The Lyme walrus must have at least 1 minute in which to tell its story uninterrupted. Distraction caused by nearby combat or other dangers prevents the ability from working. The listener must make a saving throw or sit quietly and

listen to the tale for as long as the Lyme walrus continues to speak. Any obvious threat, such as someone drawing a weapon, casting a spell, or aiming a weapon at the target, automatically breaks the effect.

Once per day, a Lyme walrus can cast *phantasmal force* and *hallucinatory terrain*.

Lyme Walrus: HD 7; **AC** 3[16]; **Atk** bite (2d6); **Move** 9 (swimming 15); **Save** 9; **AL** N; **CL/XP** 10/1400; **Special:** fascinating story (60ft radius, save or sit quietly and listen), polymorph self (at will, human and walrus), spell-like abilities.

Spell-like abilities: at will—*hallucinatory terrain*, *phantasmal force*.

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Moon Angel

This thin, stretched creature has gangly, long limbs that bend in unusual ways. Its skin is pale and sickly with its face shrunken in its drooping, hairless head. Pointed ears rise high above the crown of its head, and its eyes are sunk deep beneath its brow like two bottomless pits. Its toothless mouth hangs open, jaw slack, as it incessantly licks its withered lips.

Moon Angel

Hit Dice: 8
Armor Class: 5 [14]
Attacks: 2 slams (1d6 plus 1d4 cold and paralysis)
Saving Throw: 8
Special: drowning kiss, hypnotic song, immunities (cold, disease, poison), paralysis, vulnerabilities (fire, sunlight)
Move: 12/12 (swimming)
Alignment: Chaos
Number Encountered: 1
Challenge Level: 12/2000

A moon angel is a thin, stretched creature with gangly, long limbs that bend in unusual ways. Its skin is pale and sickly with its face shrunken in its drooping, hairless head. Pointed ears rise high above the crown of its head, and its eyes are sunk deep beneath its brow like two bottomless pits. Its toothless mouth hangs open, jaw slack, as it incessantly licks its withered lips. Extremely tall and awkwardly gangly, the moon angel stands 8ft in height but weighs barely 250 lbs.

The moon angel is a rare creature that lurks in the deepest, coldest waters of the Lyme, fond of rising to the surface and quietly watching the goings-on ashore, waiting for the unfortunate soul who loses his footing or is more drunk than careful and falls into the dark waters of the river. When it locates such a victim, it quickly moves to hypnotize him with its song and draw him deeper into the waters where it can feed at its leisure. All creatures within 300ft who hear a moon angel's song must make a saving throw or become hypnotized and unable to move. This effect continues for as long as the moon angel sings and for 1 round thereafter. Also, the touch of the moon angel paralyzes it victims for 1d4+1 rounds unless the creature makes a saving throw.

A creature of the coldest fathoms of the river where depth and pollution block the sun, a moon angel cannot stay long near the warm surface while it waits for prey. It becomes uncomfortable from the heat and light, and can even develop severe sunburns on its pale skin when remaining too close to the surface for long. They take double damage from fire, and 2d6 points of damage per round while in sunlight.



Occasionally on moonless nights, a moon angel may leave the river under the cover of darkness to hunt additional victims on land. At these times, such a creature tends to clamber along the rooftops to find open windows to take meat from within, with any household survivors the next morning describing only dreams of a strange crooning song echoing through their sleep. As with those who disappear into the river when a moon angel pays a visit, the unfortunate soul that has garnered its attention is never seen again. It for these incidences that the twisted fey known as moon angels gain their name, though few if any folk have made a connection between these nighttime disappearances and those that occur more frequently in the river.

A moon angel can flood the lungs of a willing, sleeping, helpless, or hypnotized creature by touching it (traditionally by kissing the creature on the lips). If the target cannot breathe water, it immediately begins to drown. On its turn, the target must make a saving throw to cough up this water, which snaps the victim out of a hypnotic trance; otherwise, it falls unconscious. On the next round, the target dies.

Moon Angel: HD 8; **AC** 5[14]; **Atk** 2 slams (1d6 plus 1d4 cold and paralysis); **Move** 12 (swimming 12); **Save** 8; **AL** C; **CL/XP** 12/2000; **Special:** drowning kiss (save to cough up water or die), hypnotic song (save or stand immobile), immunities (cold, disease, poison) (50%), paralysis (1d4+1 rounds, save resists), vulnerabilities (fire, 200%; sunlight, 2d6 damage/round).

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Naga, Blight

An exotically featured woman's head tops this snake-like creature. Its scales range in color from deep purple to black, with the creature's underside colored a lighter shade of violet. Ten arms protrude from the snake body's flanks, though they are spindly and frail in their musculature.

Naga, Blight

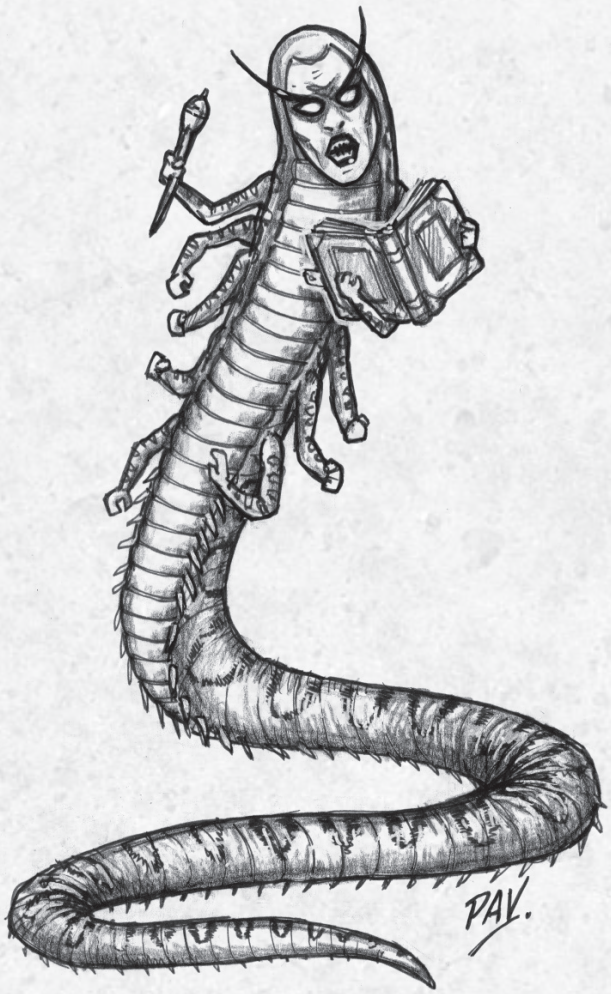
Hit Dice: 10
Armor Class: 5 [14]
Attacks: bite (1d8 plus poison)
Saving Throw: 5
Special: disease, polymorph self, spell-like abilities
Move: 12
Alignment: Chaos
Number Encountered: 1, 2 or family (1d3+1 adults and 1d3 young)
Challenge Level: 14/2600

A blight naga's bite delivers a wasting poison that deals 1d6 points of damage per hour until healed (save avoids). A blight naga also has a number of spell-like abilities it can draw upon. At will, it can cast *detect magic* and *read magic*. Three times per day, it can cast *dispel magic*. Once per day, it can cast *fear*. The *polymorph self* spell lasts only for 10 minutes each day.

Naga, Blight: HD 8; **AC** 5[14]; **Atk** bite (1d8 plus disease); **Move** 12; **Save** 5; **AL** C; **CL/XP** 14/2600; **Special:** poison, *polymorph self* (10 minutes/day), spell-like abilities.

Spell-like abilities: at will—*detect magic*, *read magic*; 3/day—*dispel magic*; 1/day—*fear*.

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Night-Slug

The creature is roughly the size of a halfling. Its skin is a blotchy gray color with a few sporadic tufts of muddy-brown hair. The scraps of ragged clothes it wears are covered in filth, clearly not having been washed in weeks — if ever. Its arms are thin and elongated, hanging almost limp.

Night-Slug

Hit Dice: 1
Armor Class: 7 [12]
Attacks: dagger (1d4) or thrown dagger (1d4)
Saving Throw: 17
Special: slime coat, thieving skills
Move: 9
Alignment: Neutrality
Number Encountered: 1, 2 or 1d4+2 (gang)
Challenge Level: 2/30

A typical night-slug stands around 3-1/2ft tall and weighs 40 lbs.

A night-slug also secretes a thin fluid resembling a slimy version of perspiration that leaves an off-color stain on most fabrics and has a musty odor. This slime allows the creature to squeeze through seemingly impossible spaces.

Night-slugs often reside in small crawlspaces or even the hollows between the outer masonry and inner plaster and lathe of a house. Those who are not lucky enough to acquire such grand accommodations typically live in places that allow them to avoid notice — the city dump, a gable hanging over a small alleyway, and so forth.



Night-Slug: HD 1; **AC** 7[12]; **Atk** dagger (1d4) or thrown dagger (1d4); **Move** 9; **Save** 17; **AL** N; **CL/XP** 2/30; **Special:** slime coating, thieving skills.

Thieving Skills: Climb 85%, Tasks/Traps 15%, Hear 3 in 6, Hide 10%, Silent 20%, Locks 10%;

Equipment: leather armor, 2 daggers, thieves' tools

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Primate, Blight

Two different species of primate call the streets and rooftops of the city of Castrohage home. Whether they were once truly wild animals or not is unknown, but what is known is that, whether through the corruption or the sophistication of the city, each has developed very differently into something else.

Blight Ape

Hit Dice: 2
Armor Class: 7 [12]
Attacks: 2 slams (1d3)
Saving Throw: 16
Special: vulnerability (blight monkey mange)
Move: 9/9 (climbing)
Alignment: Neutrality
Number Encountered: 1
Challenge Level: 3/60

Blight apes are especially susceptible to the mange carried by Blight monkeys.

If a Blight ape becomes infected with Blight monkey mange, it loses great patches of its fur as the disease's characteristic rash spreads across its body, even infiltrating the ape's respiratory system.

Blight Ape: HD 2; **AC** 7[12]; **Atk** 2 slams (1d3); **Move** 9 (climbing 9); **Save** 16; **AL** N; **CL/XP** 3/60; **Special:** vulnerable to Blight monkey mange.

Blight Monkey

Hit Dice: 1
Armor Class: 6 [13]



Attacks: bite (1d3 plus disease) or excrement (disease)
Saving Throw: 17
Special: disease, enraged screech
Move: 12/12 (climbing)
Alignment: Chaos
Number Encountered: 1, 2, 2d4+1 (band), 1d4x10 (troop)
Challenge Level: 2/30

The monkey's bite and excrement carries Blight monkey mange. The mange causes a red, scaly rash in the crooks of elbows and knees and in the armpits. The rash is itchy and raw, causing pain and limiting movement until it clears up. A creature failing a saving throw after coming in contact with the monkey begins itching all over (–2 to hit and saves) and has its Movement halved until healed. The monkey is known to fling its excrement up to 30ft at foes.

When angry or frightened, a Blight monkey emits a harsh, grating screech. Any creature within 30ft must make a saving throw or be shaken for 1d3 rounds (–1 to hit, damage and saves). An individual who makes a successful save against the Blight monkey's screech is immune to the effects of any screech for 1 day

Like the Blight apes, these little beasts are believed to have originated in distant Libynos and were originally brought to Casterhage as part of menageries, but unlike the apes no one wanted to continue importing the creatures after their nasty disposition was discovered. Somehow, it seems, they just kept creeping unseen onto ships in Libynosi ports and disembarking upon reaching the city. There was a time when seeing dozens of the things scampering across yardarms and hawser lines to reach the docks from ships newly arrived from the East was a common sight. When the true extent of their colonization of Castorhage was realized and their disease-ridden nature fully grasped, the city took steps to curtail this mass immigration. However, despite its best efforts the city's efforts were far too late, and now thousands, if not tens of thousands, of the creatures clamber unseen — though certainly not unheard — across the city's maze of rooftops.

Something about the city's influence appears to have corrupted the creatures and changed them from previously mischievous and unruly animals to actual beasts with just enough intelligence to have a taste for cruelty and a strong penchant for chaos. Despite their nimbleness and glimmerings of intelligence, all attempts by folk to domesticate them have failed as they invariably turn against their would-be masters at the first chance. They routinely destroy books and valuables, and attack family pets. Their habit of biting off the fingers and toes of humanoid infants sleeping in their cribs has earned them the eternal ire of Blight apes everywhere who always attack them on sight. Blight monkeys share this animosity, going out of their way to ambush or abuse Blight apes at every opportunity even flinging themselves into suicidal attacks in their attempts to bring harm to the apes.

Blight Monkey: HD 1; **AC** 6[13]; **Atk** bite (1d3 plus disease), or excrement (disease); **Move** 12 (climbing 12); **Save** 17; **AL** C; **CL/XP** 2/30; **Special:** disease (itching, red skin, –2 to hit and saves, save avoids), enraged screech (30ft radius, –1 to hit, damage and saves for 1d3 rounds, save avoids).

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Rat, Festering Lyme

This revolting, diseased-looking rat is the size of a small dog. It is covered in lice that visibly swarm in its filthy, matted fur.

Rat, Festering Lyme

Hit Dice: 1
Armor Class: 7 [12]
Attacks: bite (1d4 plus disease)
Saving Throw: 17
Special: delusional infestation
Move: 12/9/9 (climbing/swimming)
Alignment: Neutrality
Number Encountered: 1 or 2d10 (pack)
Challenge Level: 2/30

A festering Lyme rat is arodent.

Festering Lyme rats inhabit the sewers, canals, and subterranean waterways of the blighted city of Castorhage. The Lyme rat, possibly through the Blight's proximity to Between, can affect those who see it with a short-lived delusion of parasitic infestation.

Living creatures who see a festering Lyme rat must make a saving throw or be nauseated (–1 to hit and saves) for 1d4 rounds as they suffer the hallucination of bugs crawling over and under their skin. The bite of a Lyme rat carries a wasting disease that does 1d4 points of damage per hour unless the target makes a saving throw.

Rat, Festering Lyme: HD 1; **AC** 7[12]; **Atk** bite (1d4 plus disease); **Move** 12 (climbing 9, swimming 9); **Save** 17; **AL** N; **CL/XP** 2/30; **Special:** delusional infestation (5ft, anyone seeing rat must make save or suffer hallucinations of bugs crawling



on skin for 1d4 rounds), disease (1d4 damage per hour, save avoids).

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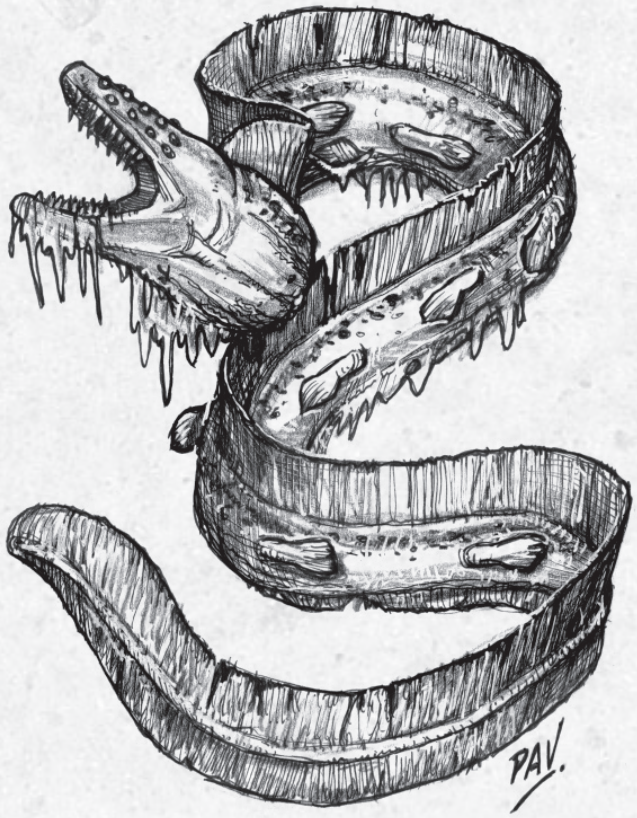
Sough-Eel

Hit Dice: 8
Armor Class: 5 [14]
Attack: bite (2d6 plus disease)
Saving Throw: 8
Special: disease, grab, swallow whole
Move: 6 (swimming 15)
Alignment: Neutrality
Number Encountered: 1, 2 or 1d6+2 (school)
Challenge Level/XP: 10/1400

A sough-eel is nearly 20ft long with a pale hide almost translucent like a fish's belly but marred by great areas of sloughing flesh that hang loose in rotten folds. It is eyeless, with a row of small black nodules extending back from its snout. Several small vestigial fins grow sporadically along the length of its body. Its mouth, however, is the most noticeable feature, occupying nearly a quarter of its length, and splayed wide with a crowd of jagged fangs.

These vile predators are found exclusively in the dark, filthy waters of the Great Lyme River and Fetid Sea in the vicinity of the City-State of Castorhage. Some have speculated that they were once a temperate water variety of moray eel that was indigenous to the area until the Lyme was tainted by the noxious effluvia from the metropolis known colloquially as The Blight. Unlike most aquatic species that were unable to survive the poisoning of the waters, the sough-eel population managed to endure the deadly waters but were changed in the process. Their hide is in a constant state of dying and sloughing off in large swaths and layers.

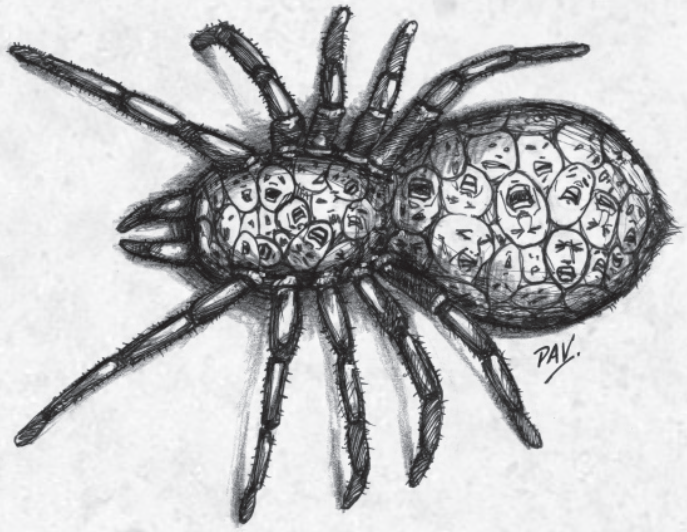
If a sough-eel bites a victim, it grabs hold and automatically inflicts 1d8 points of damage from a second set of jaws in its throat that aid in swallowing. After a sough-eel bites with its second jaws, it has a 2-in-6 chance of swallowing the victim on the next round. Any victim swallowed takes 4d6 points of damage from the acids in the eel's stomach.



The creature's bite also causes a victim's flesh to rot, dealing 1d4 points of damage and a loss of 1d2 charisma each round until the victim makes a saving throw.

Sough-Eel: HD 8; **AC** 5[14]; **Melee** bite (2d6 plus disease); **Move** 6 (swim 15); **Save** 8; **AL** N; **CL/XP** 10/1400; **Special:** disease (1d4 damage plus 1d2 charisma until successful save), grab (automatic 1d8 damage after bite), swallow whole (2-in-6 chance after grab and bite, 4d6 damage).

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Spider, Chymic

The body of this spider-like creature is a mass of humanoid faces caught in drawn-out hideous screams. Ten spindly legs rise unevenly from the bulbous mass. Between tufts of bristly hair hang needle-sharp fangs that drip with a bitter-smelling, thick red liquid.

Spider, Chymic

Hit Dice: 6
Armor Class: 3 [16]
Attacks: bite (1d6 plus poison)
Saving Throw: 11
Special: chyme spray, egg implantation, nightmare projection, poison
Move: 12/12 (climbing)
Alignment: Neutrality
Number Encountered: 1
Challenge Level: 9/1100

The body of a chymic spider is a mass of humanoid faces caught in drawn-out hideous screams. Ten spindly legs rise unevenly from the bulbous mass. Between tufts of bristly hair hang needle-sharp fangs that drip with a bitter-smelling, thick red liquid. Chymic spiders are not true spiders, but rather are born from the fear that spiders instill within many intelligent humanoids. These spiders sneak through the city rooftops and await their prey for days on end.

These rare creatures lurk along the edges of Sister Lyme, hiding in gables, chimneys, and under eaves and seemingly found nowhere else in the world. Composed from the latent fears of arachnids somehow given life, the creature is able to project these primal fears into any living creature. It simply prefers to stalk and prey on those who fear it most. It is able to project these nightmares and can cause victims to be paralyzed while it enters their lairs, and lays its eggs within them. The baby spiders within whisper to their new host, wanting to be fed, obsessing about food, and within 24 hours they erupt to feed on their host before separating to make their own lairs.

The bite of a chymic spider delivers a neurotoxin that paralyzes the target for 1d6 rounds unless the target makes a saving throw to throw off the effects.

also 4 (save for half)1

A chymic spider does not simply devour a paralyzed victim, but instead implants a clutch of eggs within its abdominal cavity. Implantation delivers 1d4 eggs that can be removed from the host body only by cutting them from the victim (dealing 1d2 points of damage each) or by spells such as *cure disease*. After 24 hours, the eggs hatch inside and begin feeding. Each round these newborns remain inside the victim they deliver a dose of chymic spider poison, attempting to paralyze the host as they feed for 1d8 points of damage per round. When the host dies, 1d4 new chymic spiders emerge from the corpse.

Anyone who wanders into the chymic spider's 1-mile radius that might be the least bit fearful of spiders is quickly identified. The chymic spider begins methodically stalking the victim, waiting for its chance to make dream contact. A chymic spider can project a nightmare into any sleeper. This nightmare is so powerful that it can paralyze its victim for 1d4 rounds unless he succeeds on a saving throw. The victim is allowed a new save each round.

Spider, Chymic: HD 6; **AC** 3[16]; **Atk** bite (1d6 plus poison); **Move** 12 (climbing 12); **Save** 11; **AL** C; **CL/XP** 9/1100; **Special:** chyme spray (once every 1d4+1 rounds, 15ft cone, 4d6 damage, save for half), egg implantation (1d4 eggs, 1d2 damage to cut out or cure disease, 1d8 damage per round), nightmare projection (1-mile radius, save or paralyzed for 1d4 rounds), poison (paralysis 1d6 rounds, save resists).

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Spider, Gable

A spider the size of an alley cat scampers up the side of a tenement building. In its mandibles, it drags what appears to be a clothesline, with many of the garments still dangling limply behind.

Spider, Gable

Hit Dice: 1, 3, 5
Armor Class: 8 [11] (1HD); 6 [13] (3HD); or 4 [15] (5HD)
Attacks: 1HD: bite (1d4 plus lethal poison); 3HD: bite (1d6+1 plus lethal poison); 5HD: bite (1d6+2 plus lethal poison)
Saving Throw: 17, 14, or 12
Special: poison, sticky globule
Move: 9/6 (climbing)
Alignment: Neutrality
Number Encountered: 1, 2 or 1d8+2 (colony)
Challenge Level: 1HD: 2/30; 3HD: 4/120; or 5HD: 6/400

Gable spiders are different from other varieties of giant spiders, and it is for this reason that the whole of the city isn't shrouded in endless sheets of webbing. Gable spiders are not web spinners. The size of an alley cat, they are still agile climbers like normal spiders and still live in web-like structures, but they lack spinnerets of their own. Rather, they are instinctively master builders when it comes to stringing together the detritus found in the city's dumps and alleys: frayed ropes, sail cordage, clotheslines, lengths of twisted rags, curtains, sailcloth, and more. Even lengths of chain and bits of lumber construction can be found in the web-like contrivances that the gable spiders build. They combine these myriad materials in twisting, knotted mazes of suspended lines that can shame the largest of spider webs for complexity. They knot and anchor these mismatched lines among the rooftops and with each other to create these swaying-but-stable webs of junk.

However, just because they are not web spinners does not mean the gable spiders are not masters of their domain. Rather than spinnerets, gable spiders have large swollen glands that secrete a sticky fluid they use to coat their rope and cloth constructions to provide the same benefits of



a natural web. Creatures stuck within their depths become easy prey for the gable spiders who are able to move in and among these artificial webs with great agility and speed. Any creature falling into a gable spider's web must make an Open Doors check to escape before the agile spider descends to feed.

The bite of the gable spider delivers a lethal venom.

The spider can project this globule up to 30ft to hit targets. Any creature struck must make a saving throw or find itself covered in the sticky web fluid and slowed to half speed.

Spider, Gable (Small): HD 1; **AC** 8[11]; **Atk** bite (1d4 plus lethal poison); **Move** 9 (climbing 6); **Save** 17; **AL** N; **CL/XP** 2/30; **Special:** poison (save or die), sticky globule (30ft range, save or movement halved).

Spider, Gable (Medium): HD 3; **AC** 6[13]; **Atk** bite (1d6+1 plus lethal poison); **Move** 9 (climbing 6); **Save** 14; **AL** N; **CL/XP** 4/120; **Special:** poison (save or die, +1 to save), sticky globule (30ft range, save or movement halved).

Spider, Gable (Large): HD 5; **AC** 4[15]; **Atk** bite (1d6+2 plus lethal poison); **Move** 9 (climbing 6); **Save** 12; **AL** N; **CL/XP** 6/400; **Special:** poison (save or die, +2 to save), sticky globule (30ft range, save or movement halved).

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Spite-Waif

The figure is child-like, but any sense of innocence is immediately overshadowed by the aura of malevolence that seems to almost palpably exude from it. Its flesh is gray and pasty, seemingly too loose for its body. Its head is hairless with a wide mouth and distended jaw full of needle-sharp teeth, and, though humanoid in shape, when it moves it scuttles about on all fours like some kind of insect with too many joints.

Spite-Waif

Hit Dice: 3
Armor Class: 5 [14]
Attack: bite (1d6), 2 slams (1d4+2)
Saving Throw: 14
Special: create *mirror-portal*, immunities (*charm*, *sleep*), shape change, spell-like ability
Move: 9
Alignment: Chaos
Number Encountered: 1 or 1d4+2 (gang) **Challenge Level/ XP:** 5/240

Spite-waifs are gray and pasty, its skin seemingly too loose for its body. Its head is hairless with a wide mouth and distended jaw full of needle



sharp teeth, and, though humanoid in shape, when it moves it scuttles about on all fours like some kind of an insect with too many joints in its limbs. Spite waifs are immune to *sleep* and *charm* spells. Once per day, they can cast *sleep*.

Spite-waifs are insidious changelings and infiltrators from Between. They are an immature stage in the development of a doppelganger that are native to that bizarre realm. While they have the doppelganger's ability to change shape, they lack its physical power. As a result, they are used primarily as changelings to replace children of the Material Plane and then grow up within that child's household and live its life. The spite-waif usually devours the child at the time of the switch. If a spite-waif is killed, it remains in the shape of its assumed body. A *dispel magic* cast on its corpse reveals its true nature.

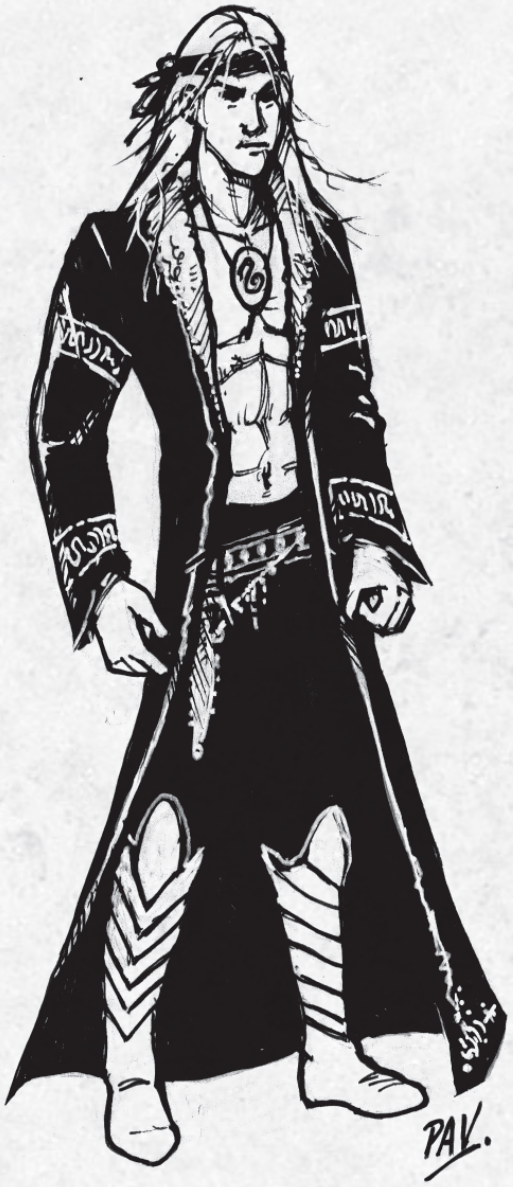
When a spite-waif reaches physical maturity (usually within 10–12 years), it completes its transformation into a full doppelganger, losing its bite and swallow whole abilities as well as its innate ability to create *mirror-portal*s.

Once per day, a spite-waif can turn a normal mirror in the Between into a portal to a mirror in the Material Plane. The portal can be opened from either end by sliding the chosen mirror aside and revealing an extradimensional portal. Anyone can pass through the *mirror-portal* if he can fit through the mirror's pane. Once created, a *mirror-portal* remains open until closed. If either mirror is destroyed, the *mirror-portal* is closed permanently.

Spite-waif: HD 3; **AC** 5[14]; **Melee** bite (1d6), 2 slams (1d4+2); **Move** 9; **Save** 14; **AL** C; **CL/XP** 5/240; **Special:** create mirror-portal (portal to Between), immunities (charm, sleep), shape change, spell-like ability.

Spell-like ability: 1/day—*sleep*.

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The Undying

More commonly referred to as the "reborn," undying creatures are living creatures infused with the gifts of undeath through exposure to the mysterious *elixir of life*. Any living, humanoid creature can become an undying, although sentient creatures with some driving ambition, or subservient beings with some heightened skill or talent are the most frequent examples. Undying, while rare, do share similar traits: An undying creature reacts to positive and negative energy as if it were undead — *cure* spells harm it, while *cause wounds* spells heal it; an undying creature cannot have its levels drained; they receive a +4 bonus on saving throws against death magic, disease, paralysis, and poison; and an undying is immune to exhaustion, fatigue, physical aging, sleep, and starvation.

An undying creature does not need to sleep. It needs to eat and drink but requires only one-tenth of the usual food and drink required by a creature of its type, enabling it to go long periods without sustenance. It needs to breathe but can hold its breath for a number of rounds equal to 10 times its constitution score. It is immune to the physical effects of aging — it is not at risk of death from old age. All undying have a low-grade regeneration effect. All undying regenerate 3hp/day. Given time, even after death, and undying creature will return. Fire and acid negate the regenerative effect.

In addition to these abilities, the more information can be found about the undying in **The Blight Campaign Guide: Appendix D, New Magic of the Blight, The Staff of Life (a.k.a. The Elixir)**



The Unliving

The unliving are creatures tainted by the curse of undeath through exposure to *elixir of life*. Those who partake in the forbidden fruits of such alchymic experimentation face a dismal future. It is true that death, or at least mortal death by aging, is no longer a concern, but the life left is bleak and bereft of any of the joys of the living. Any living, humanoid creature can become an unliving, by pursuing the *elixir of life* and Undying. Unliving, while less rare and more diverse than unliving, do share some similar traits: an unliving creature reacts to positive and negative energy as if it were undead — *cure* spells harm it, while *cause wounds* spells heal it; immunity to bleeding, death magic, disease, level drain, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, and stunning; immunity to damage to its physical ability scores (Constitution, Dexterity, and Strength), as well as to exhaustion and fatigue effects; is immediately destroyed when reduced to 0 hit points — they are not affected by *raise dead* and *reincarnate* spells. A full *resurrection* or *wish* spell can affect unliving creatures. These spells turn the unliving creatures back into the living creatures they were before becoming undead. Unliving can be affected by a cleric's turn undead ability.

An unliving creature does not need to sleep. It needs to eat and drink but requires only one-tenth of the usual food and drink required by a creature of its type, enabling it to go long periods without sustenance. It needs to breathe but can hold its breath for a number of rounds equal to 10 times its constitution score. It is immune to the physical effects of aging — it is not at risk of death from old age. All unliving have a low-grade regeneration effect. All undying regenerate 1hp/day. Given time, even after death, and undying creature will return. Fire and acid negate the regenerative effect.

An unliving creature's undeath sustains it physically but not mentally. Each month, an unliving creature must succeed on a save (–1 per previous success) or permanently lose 1 point of intelligence. If the unliving reaches 0 intelligence, it loses all anima, and turns into a normal zombie.

In addition to these abilities, the more information can be found about the undying in **The Blight Campaign Guide: Appendix D, New Magic of the Blight, The Staff of Life (a.k.a. The Elixir)**

Something stirs in the sludge beneath, swimming through the arsenic poison that passes for water. It is vast, a seething globe of flesh, a mountain of rotting skin that hangs like a bridal train behind its back. It has at least a dozen eyes oddly spaced on its foul body, and a vast maw capable of swallowing a ship.

Wallow-Whale

Hit Dice: 15
Armor Class: 3 [16]
Attacks: bite (2d8 plus disease)
Saving Throw: 3
Special: capsize, disease, swallow whole
Move: 15 (swimming)
Alignment: Neutrality
Number Encountered: 1 or 2
Challenge Level: 16/3200

Originally found only in the Unsea of Between before some of these great cetaceans somehow escaped and began reproducing in the mundane world's oceans, wallow-whales are now the terror of the Fetid Sea and one of the primary threats for which the Castorhage Navy diligently patrols those waters. Wallow-whales are offal, carrion, husks, leavings, and scum given life. Stirges are frequently seen circling them when they surface to launch a spume of oily brine, purulence, and clotted fluids from their blowholes, and oozes capable of surviving in the acidic environment can sometimes be found infesting their cathedral-like stomachs. Wallow-whales aren't afraid to venture close to the city to feed upon the excrement, rot, and flotsam that seethes like a gyre around its foundations. Yet despite their foul body habitus, the ambergris of a wallow-whale is a thing both rare and highly valuable, selling for as much as 100gp/pound. Daring or foolhardy whalers armed with cold-iron harpoons hunt these beasts upon the oceans, and in some cases upon the Unsea, with specimens typically yielding 1d6x10 lbs. of the substance, while some have reported whales yielding 3d6x10 lbs.

If a wallow-whale rolls a 15 or above on its bite attack, it grasps a victim in its maw and swallows the creature whole during the next round. A creature swallowed whole automatically takes 3d6 points of damage each round. Anyone bitten or swallowed by a wallow-whale must also make a saving throw or contract a wasting disease from the myriad infections loosed on its body. This disease breaks down the victim's body, doing 2d6 points of damage every hour until cured.

A wallow-whale can rise its massive body below ships to capsize them.

Wallow-Whale: HD 15; **AC** 3[16]; **Atk** bite (2d8 plus disease); **Move** 15 (swimming); **Save** 3; **AL** C; **CL/XP** 16/3200; **Special:** capsize, disease (2d6 damage/hour), swallow whole (15 or above to hit, automatic bite damage and 3d6 damage each round).

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Appendices



Appendix A: Useful Lists

Lists can be useful in many ways. They can add dressing to a scene, give a taste of the mood of a place, or they can be used as inspiration for adventures.

The lists that follow detail 100 Sights on the Street, 100 Echoes of Between, 100 Freakshows, 100 Strange Shops and Markets, 100 Street Traders, and finally 20 Locals for you to use easily to add a sense of depth to your campaign with minimal effort on your part. In and of themselves they provide only a barebones description or idea, but you can flesh them out as you see fit into a full-fledged encounter, event, or character. They can even be used to provide hooks to other adventures.

100 Sights on the Street

With streets that never sleep, an astonishing array of people pass by in any given day. Most are mundane encounters — people on their way to work, goodwives on their way to market, or traders plying their wares. This list is designed to give you an idea of the types of encounters that may be had in the twisted streets of the Blight, as well as to add colour into your adventures as encounters, informants or even enemies.

1. A man wearing a top hat is having a furious argument with himself.
2. A passing dog's back is dancing with lice.
3. The man in the sedan chair has a wig on that is so big that it flows out of the windows.
4. A line of mourners passes by, laughing hysterically.
5. "The End is Near!" exclaims the corner prophet.
6. The crawling nuns are sobbing as they toss flowers to the ground around them.
7. The two men hustle past carrying a harpsichord between them.
8. A trio of monkeys runs past, one after the other, each wearing a fez.
9. The priests are wearing black gowns that cover their whole bodies as they march past chanting solemnly.
10. Three harlots pass by singing loudly and off key.
11. The sweating, red-faced dwarf is stripped down to his kilt, and blows furiously into his bagpipes that make no sound whatsoever.
12. The sadhu sits cross-legged on a straw mat and smiles as he prays; his hair must be 12 feet long and coils in huge lengths about him.
13. He wears a pirate's coat and a stirge perches on his shoulder.
14. He struggles by carrying a bundle of a dozen pikes in his arms.
15. She wears a mask designed to look like a swan and makes a strange cooing sound as she walks.
16. Three dark clowns tumble by, each dressed as a raven. Behind them stalks a tengu in greasepaint.
17. A man on stilts walks past juggling cheerfully yapping puppies.
18. An old lady is knitting as she rides by in a coarse cab.
19. Four small children sit on a camel's back as a turbaned merchant leads them through the streets.
20. He has six sheep on leather leads; a mangy sheepdog slinks behind in disgrace.
21. The colourfully dressed woman has a glove-puppet crocodile on one hand, and a glove-puppet black pudding on the other.
22. The man in black screams out words of a tortured poem about death and pacifism.
23. A small troupe of actors is performing a morality play about saintly goats.
24. An empty hearse passes by, her undertakers smiling and joking at the empty wagon bed.
25. A horse has collapsed and is dying on the street; a crowd of people has gathered and they stare curiously.
26. A butcher guts a pig, splashing blood on some passers-by who take no notice.
27. A man sells kittens out of an old great helm.
28. A gnome in a jester's outfit cries hysterically.
29. The dwarf sits grumbling and swearing loudly to himself.
30. A huge crowd gathers around a bull-baiting.
31. A cat dashes by in the alleyway, chased by something with too many legs to see clearly.
32. An old man in a pillory snores away obliviously while a blindingcrow pecks at his ear.
33. A lion in a cage paces warily, watching everyone. There is no sign of its keeper.
34. A dancing bear performs to a crowd of children screaming in glee.
35. A vicar atop an apple crate screams that you are sinners.
36. A squealing pig dashes down a side street, an article of underclothing caught on its ear.
37. A gnome covered in white grease paint and wearing all-white clothes screams that the angels are coming to punish the city.
38. Somewhere high above, a scrimshaw gargoyle call echoes.
39. A child walks past clutching a repulsive reptilian doll without eyes.
40. A pile of coffins lies by an open door. A night-slug picks at the broken end of one.
41. The smell of burning fat comes from a nearby alley.
42. The footpath ahead has a deep hole filled with collected sewage.
43. A Crackling and Salt puppet show begins on a nearby corner.
44. A dog runs by growling, an unidentifiable bone of great size held in its mouth.
45. A man dressed as a vampire urges you eagerly to visit the Theatres Grotesque tonight.
46. A crimson skull-faced clown eats fire for crowd of onlookers.
47. A trader with a cart sells leather animal masks.
48. A woman chalks magnificent pictures of angels on the pavement.
49. Piles of rubbish lie at the side of the road where rats wander about in broad daylight.
50. "Everyone who lives in this city is a wererat!" screams a hysterical washerwoman.
51. Temple bells across the city begin to call people to prayer.
52. A completely naked sadhu strides past you purposefully.
53. A fight starts nearby between three men; one transforms into a doppelganger and runs.
54. Two carts block the road, each owner refusing to back up.
55. The house nearby has four fresh heads mounted on iron spikes above its gables.
56. A harried-looking dwarf rushes past pushing a handcart filled with breastplates still smoking from the forge.
57. The smell of burnt hair and peppermint wafts in your nostrils.
58. Drying laundry hangs from the windows above, blocking out the sunlight in this alley.
59. A trio of thick-shouldered workmen leaning on their shovels sits around a smouldering brazier.
60. A burnt-out shell of a building stands nearby. Somebody has scribbled "that's wot u git" on it with a piece of charcoal.
61. A sobbing man stares into the sky.
62. An old sewer tunnel has collapsed here, narrowing the street to less than a yard.
63. A church clock clangs its cracked bell pathetically nearby.
64. The caustic odour of alchemy and decomposition nips at the back of your throat.
65. A dirty-feathered albatross sits on a windowsill swallowing a most peculiar-looking fish. Was that a hand?
66. Shouting traders and their carts pack the streets today.
67. A girl walks past selling sweet-smelling roses. Both of her eyes are nothing more than old burn scars.
68. A man's wooden false teeth have fallen into an open sewer nearby.
69. A long line of sombre pilgrims clad in burlap robes walks by singing hymns.
70. Six drunken sailors stumble along singing obscene sea-chanties.
71. A hideous corner-doxy propositions you with a wink and a leer.
72. A group of children walks by marching in step. They are following a rotund little boy beating a drum.
73. The stench of rotting vegetation is getting worse by the minute.
74. Three hanged men twist slowly in the breeze from an impromptu gallows.
75. A gibbet containing a rotting corpse swings beneath a tall pole bearing the seal of the Crown Justices.
76. A sad-looking night soil collector pushes his cart along the street. He has forgotten his shovel.

77. A street crier walks by ringing his bell and announcing the daily news.
78. A man is baiting a chained owlbear with a trio of pit-mastiffs. A crowd places wagers on the outcome.
79. Old men smoke long pipes and complain about the street noise as they yell at each other to be heard.
80. A woman wearing the black veil of a mourning widow announces she's going to the river.
81. A group of pallbearers is taking a rest while sitting on the coffin.
82. Nuns dressed in the grey habits of some obscure order walk past blessing passers-by.
83. A group of sweating dwarf sprawlmasons walk by lugging buckets of stones.
84. From scaffolding high above, someone shouts abuse at you about something you can't quite make out.
85. Slops hit the street not far from you from an overhead window.
86. A rooftop chase clatters by far above you. Someone is shouting, "Halt!"
87. A pox-ridden beggar throws himself at your feet and pleads for alms.
88. The wind is coming from the river today, unfortunately.
89. Two Shortstone gnomes walk past grinning broadly. They carry a stuffed crocodile between them.
90. A camel train slowly plods past on its way to market; a mysterious robed man in turban and veil guides them.
91. A sign has broken loose from its mounting above and fallen on a passer-by, killing him. The crowd is stepping around his still-twitching corpse as they continue on their way.
92. A man leads an elephant with a large hooked goad. He nods his head sagely at everyone he passes.
93. An armoured knight rides a huge Shire horse through the streets.
94. The odour of rotting fish sitting too long in the sun suddenly envelops you.
95. Two drunken brothers argue over a woman who smiles at another man nearby.
96. A wedding party walk past smiling and laughing. The groom is hollow-eyed with fright.
97. A renderer walks down the street beneath a cloud of flies. His apron and work leathers are slick with blood and smeared fat.
98. An old woman kneels and loudly prays in the middle of the street. The crowds and carts maneuver around her without a glance.
99. A street vendor rushes by with a handcart full of delicious-smelling pies.
100. The street ahead is being prepared for a witch burning.



100 Echoes of Between

With the city on so dangerous a frontier, the horrific Between occasionally bleeds into the more mundane city. Effects listed below are trivial and may last little more than the blinking of an eye, or could be a precursor to a longer and more dangerous encounter. Not everything is as it seems, however, and some of these encounters are more flesh and blood than the stuff of Between. *Do not use such effects too often; if they become expected, they may become mundane. Use them instead to spice up the occasional boring rest day, to remind characters dashing through the city that all is not quite right, or to be a genuine precursor to an adventure in Between.*

1. A shadow falls the wrong way in an alley.
2. A puddle at your feet reflects a grinning face with tusks.
3. A starling on a gable stares at you disturbingly before flying away.
4. You're sure the cat that leapt over the fence said something.
5. Somewhere in the city, a clock strikes fifteen.
6. Your shadow is momentarily monstrous but then returns to normal
7. Your hands begin to shake uncontrollable and feel intensely cold; then you suddenly return to normal.
8. A horrific face forms in the clouds high above and then drifts away.
9. You keep seeing something out of the corner of your eye, some sort of insect scuttling about the gables, but every time you look, it's gone.
10. The smell of burning sugar is strong here.
11. You're sure someone called out your name, but there's no one around.
12. You're apparently the only one that hears the terrible scream.
13. Your reflection in the shop window is of something terrible; then when you glance again, it's back to normal.
14. You keep hearing the same word in your ear all day: "Soon."
15. The same man in a top hat keeps waving to you from the distant rooftops
16. An enormous cobweb entirely covers a doorway
17. What is that strange flute music from the sewer grate?
18. You pass the third window in a row and see the same sobbing woman inside.
19. The buzzing continues in your head — sometimes louder, sometimes softer, but always menacing.
20. The ground beneath your feet suddenly jolts, but no one else seems to notice.
21. The man that just walked past you just had no face.
22. Suddenly, the street performer's song goes eerily off key and picks up an unearthly cadence, but only you seem to notice.
23. You feel something trickle down the back of your throat and then crawl downward and disappear.
24. For no reason, in broad daylight in the middle of the street, the hairs on the back of your neck raise as if you'd just seen a ghost.
25. An overwhelming feeling of déjà vu washes over you, followed immediately by a dreadful anticipation.
26. Your nose suddenly starts dripping blood.
27. The crying baby behind the curtained window stops abruptly … almost unnaturally.
28. Just behind the susurrus of everyday street noises, you can hear soft whispers.
29. Why does all of the laughter in the street seemed aimed at you?
30. You just saw flies come out of that man's mouth.
31. The distant noise sounds like nails being scraped over a blackboard.
32. Momentarily, none of the street signs have any meaning.
33. When you glanced in the mirror, something tall and dark stood behind you, but when you turned around, it wasn't there.
34. It's as though everyone keeps staring at you and looking quickly away.
35. There it is again, the feeling that this is all a dream.
36. The steps up the side of the house vanish back on themselves somehow
37. The same hooded raven keeps following you.
38. You see a speeding carriage hit a baby's crib in the street, and then both are gone
39. The fruit on the stall is momentarily rotten and alive with flies and maggots.
40. The line of mourners are all smiling as they follow the casket.
41. In amongst the cart full of pigs being taken to slaughter you can hear a baby crying.

42. You get the feeling something bad is about to happen.
43. A babe in swaddling clothes falls from a high window, but as it drops, it becomes falling leaves that drift away on the breeze.
44. In a window, moths are being burnt alive by the lantern flame.
45. From the corner of your eye, you see a long-dead dog chasing a cat.
46. The front of the building swells pregnantly.
47. The smoke from a stove drifts down in a gust and momentarily you think you hear something screaming on the fire.
48. The colour of the ivy on the wall is wrong somehow.
49. A gravestone lies in the cobbled street claiming this is the spot where Ferris Harm the Awakened Cow died.
50. Something big runs up behind you, but when you turn, nothing is there.
51. The shutters on one window nearby bang in the still air.
52. Through the closed shop window, you swear you see something with huge, gossamer wings vanish up the chimney.
53. The smell of brimstone pervades this part of town.
54. The beggar looks just like your father.
55. A thick smog suddenly settles over the street.
56. A window in a nearby shop suddenly shatters from no apparent source.
57. The mouse clearly screams "help" as the cat devours it.
58. The lobster thrashes in the pot for much too long as it's boiled alive.
59. The snakes are skinned alive before they are roasted by the street vendor.
60. The woman in the pillory is long dead, but no one seems to care.
61. On the gables above, you see a heron being eaten by a great spider.
62. The man is so fat it takes twelve men to bear him along in his sedan chair.
63. The scars on the mangy cat's back resemble a necromantic rune.
64. Fungus grows abundantly down the alleyway.
65. The smell of perfume is overpowering.
66. Something monstrous howls from below the streets.
67. Someone kisses you, but there is no one in sight.
68. A man runs down the street claiming everyone is a demon in human skin.
69. The blood runs from the abattoir into the gutter, the sound of laughter and distraught animals causing you to retch.
70. Water drips skyward from a puddle but stops the second you stare at it.
71. A deep, fuming hole has opened up in the street. People stare down into its depths nervously.
72. A whole block of buildings has collapsed.
73. The sound of following birds continues but every time you glance over your shoulder, there is nothing.
74. In a basket, a chick hatches that looks like a grotesque human child before the hen settles back down on its brood.
75. A dust devil tears down a wynd.
76. The passing woman stares at you, and she momentarily has eight eyes.
77. In the distance, a priest sets fire to himself.
78. She scratches at herself madly, claiming the Between spiders are eating her alive.
79. The silhouette in the window resembles a clawed man wielding a meat cleaver.
80. The eyes of the portraits in the window display stare at you knowingly.
81. There wasn't an alley there yesterday.
82. That door wasn't there yesterday.
83. That shop wasn't there yesterday.
84. That distant church spire wasn't there yesterday.
85. Whatever is in the sealec crate, it's angry and not human.
86. Beneath those heavy robes, it's a walking skeleton.
87. The tribal masks in the souk stall momentarily chant at you in an unknown language.
88. You can smell the fear of the dying animals as the butcher sells his meat.
89. Someone died in that wynd. You don't know how you know, but you know.
90. The door is covered in gouges from being repeatedly stabbed with a sharp instrument.
91. The shutters on every house on this street are thick and set with iron spikes facing outward.
92. The puppet show features grotesque characters with inhuman faces and animal claws. They seem somehow familiar to you.
93. The children eat rotten fruit and look at you gleefully.
94. The man has fallen from the roof directly onto the spiked railings of the balcony below. His body twitches a few times as people pass by below.
95. The graffiti claims that a "Thing" stalks the night in this ward.
96. The graffiti says the Queen is a ghoul.
97. The graffiti says that everyone in the city is a wererat.
98. The old statue in the square is gone, and a ring of bloody palm prints is all that remains in its place.
99. From the clock face above, a gable hate-owl emerges, beats a drum, and stares at you as if waiting for something … or someone.
100. The rooftops here are lined with pumpkin-faced scarecrows, but all have their heads put on upside down.

100 Freakshow Exhibits

It seems that every street corner in the Blight has its resident freakshow. Sometimes these shows are run by cruel owners who treat their exhibits abominably; some are run by the exhibits themselves. Often, groups of special people get together to form travelling troupes, special shows, or they may settle in a particular location and work from there. The **Strangers' Fayre** runs the 1st week of every spring. This special show is a gathering of all the unusual people of the city and takes place in Festival.

Some exhibits at these shows are so famous that people come to their homes and meet them; such special persons can make good livings at their trade and become the darlings of the aristocracy. Unscrupulous types stop at nothing to attain the services of the physically unusual and whole adventuring companies devote themselves to pursuing and capturing interesting specimens for the shows.

Provided below is a list of 100 of these special persons. Bear in mind that each person or creature below has a story. Some of them are fakes; some are not. It is up to you to decide who is or who isn't, but generally a secret doors check at –1 is required to unmask them, and such exhibits will try not to allow themselves to come under such close scrutiny.

1. Meet the Revolting Starling-Boy and Listen to him Lament his Dead Mother
2. Join the Incredible Salmon-Nun in Prayer
3. Zond, Crown Prince of the Hirsute, Awaits
4. Rose and Elizabeth — the Twins of One Body
5. Crarv the Ape King of Libynos
6. Meet the Astonishing Snake-Child
7. Ephinar — the Elf with Two Heads
8. Misfortune's Mistress
9. Fear the Festering Basilisk Dwarf
10. Meet Tom, the World's Smallest Sailor, who Sailed a Hat around the World
11. Corpulent Caress, the Princess of Girth, who Weighs a Tonne
12. The Queen of Three Faces
13. Turbot Thorran the Living Merman
14. The Amazing and Revolting Lord Otyugh, Crown Prince of Flotsam
15. The Incredible Headless Gnome Thadius Shortstone
16. The Terrible Two-Headed Amphisbaena Boy
17. Faceless Quade
18. Edran Mand, the Bat Gnome of the Malagro Jungle
19. Missela the Weeping Mermaid
20. Hagun and Grorft, the Half-Orc Conjoined Twins: One is Orc; One is Man
21. The Howling Worg-Boy
22. Tobus the Obscene Colossus
23. Murg the Dwarf with a Giant's Head
24. The Dreadful Kraken Baby
25. The Boil Boy
26. See the Remarkable Half Dwarf-Half Tree
27. The Ettin Wife
28. Behold! The Three-Headed Wolf
29. The Goblin Scholar
30. Mercy, the Princess of the Seelie Court
31. Joshua Cole the World's Tallest Man
32. The Slug Wife

33. Uriah Mabe, the Man with Two Mouths
34. Maxwell, the Incredible Flat Man
35. Torris the Rhino-Child
36. Garrett the Cloaker Man
37. The Impossible Head
38. The Lord of Seven Hands
39. The Astonishing Pig-Gnome
40. Karg the Singing Bear
41. The Quill Man
42. The Blood-Drinking Savage of the Razor Coast
43. The Albino Ostrich
44. The Lonely Centaur
45. Jacob Quane's Singing Stirges
46. The Green Man
47. Marius, the Man who has One Giant Leg
48. Genevieve the Mongrel Mistress
49. The Poetic Lizard Man
50. The Appalling Zar
51. The Performing Kobold Twins Mang and Mant
52. Chimera Girl
53. The Hydra Boy
54. The Angel of the Slums
55. The Black Harpy
56. Lady Two-Skins
57. The Choir of Deformed Puppies
58. Grache: Half Orc-Half Goblin
59. The Troll's Daughter
60. Jephtha the Incredible Boneless Man
61. Sad Eudora
62. The Spider Queen
63. Jebbington the Rat Boy
64. Laura the Frog's Daughter
65. Bessie Vast-Flesh
66. The Rotting Man
67. Dare you visit the Cockatrice Spinster?
68. Karl the Man-ticore
69. Long Widow Charlotte, the Tallest Woman in the Blight
70. Horace Habe the Mouse Man
71. The Crocodile Man
72. Three-Legged Enoch
73. Murmond the Halfling Goat-Boy
74. Madrigal the Dismaying
75. Burg the Bald Bugbear
76. The Terror of the North
77. Gooseflesh Gideon
78. The Mock Man
79. Marlwell the Moth Man
80. Bloody Bones
81. The Broken Satyr
82. The Doppelganger
83. The Screaming Ogre
84. Mother Pig-Wife
85. Sister Morlock
86. The Gargoyle Baby
87. Octavia the Leech Girl
88. Minitar the Mite-Child
89. The Three-Faced Hag
90. The Ugly Mermaid
91. Dare you meet the Howling Dog-Boy?
92. Lydia the Octopus Mother
93. The Eight-Legged Spider Piglet
94. The River's Daughter
95. The Coiling Worm Whore
96. Pagg the Kobold Man
97. The Double-Cockerel
98. Scaly Jabe
99. The Five Sisters of Misery
100. Slithering Habb the Lamprey Man

100 Strange Shops and Markets

They say that everything has a price in the Blight, and conversely, everything seems to have a seller: from the child selling bootlaces to the renowned antiquarians of BookTown. Here is a list of 100 such entrepreneurs to add into your adventures to provide a little background or to include as a location for further adventure. Some may be collections of shops where competition will literally be fierce; some are little more than junk shops peddling rubbish.

1. Kennington Smythe's Snuffery
2. Tarquin Splain's Hatpin Emporium
3. Aled's Taxidermy — The Bigger the Better!
4. All Things Russet
5. Cloaks of Monstrous Furs
6. P. Quibble Luxury Coach Fitters
7. The Boneyard
8. Jessabel's Hooks
9. The Butterfly Collector
10. Drums of Strange Flesh
11. Lugg's — The Gentleman's Tailors
12. Mancom's Minute Flea Market
13. Rooftop Bridges
14. The World's Rarest Seeds
15. Jacob's Chain Ferries
16. Door Guardians
17. Paintings of Between by Thrade
18. The Luxury Helm Padding Mart
19. L. Pudd, Travelling Set Makers by Royal Appointment
20. Tremer's Grotesquery and Strange Statues
21. The Ink and Paint Quarter
22. Marcus Foll Canvas Stretcher
23. The Scrimshaw Quarter
24. The Unwanted Auctionroom
25. Great Candles
26. The Gentleman's Syringe Shop
27. Exotic Perfumes and Unguents
28. The Coriander Shop
29. T. Webb Land Agent and Property Purchaser
30. Only Black Cats
31. Rhino Horn, Tiger Eye and Salmon Bladder
32. The Rookery Copper Coin Mart
33. H. G. Rutred Mandolin Makers by Royal Appointment
34. J. Reds Tobacconists
35. Pavilions and Tents
36. The Halfling Pie Shop
37. Hobb Quiffwell — Luxury Feather Bed Makers by Royal Appointment
38. Harper, Torb, and Stiff: Plaguemask Makers to the Aristocracy
39. Unusual Skins
40. The Scorpion Market
41. Oils of Pleasure
42. Potion Bottles of All Sizes — Leaded Glass Guaranteed Unbreakable
43. The Rare Dog Market
44. Hair Oils and Wigs
45. The Codpiece Mart
46. Buckles and Dog's Paws
47. Trendtam's Ship Hire Company
48. The Cabb'e Courtyards
49. The People Breakers — Torture Implement Makers by Royal Appointment
50. The Junk Yard
51. The Clockery
52. The Crockery
53. J. Poultryman Organ Maker by Royal Appointment
54. Marl Feather — Luxury Narrowboat Fitters
55. The Chitin Museum and Workshop
56. Ambergris
57. Spectacles, Monocles and Tinted Eyeware
58. Rufftall's Familiaral Suppliers
59. The Absinthe Quarter
60. The Rarest Bibliophiles

61. The Clothing Flea Market Quarter
62. Golden Eggs
63. The Harpsichord Warehouse
64. Strange Leather
65. The Renders
66. Elizabeth Pegg — Tapestry Weaver
67. Silk Underthings
68. The Secret Scroll Case Workshop
69. Bubble Pipes and Hookahs
70. Astronomical Spyglasses
71. J. Harris Towd's Leechery and Physikers
72. Y. Collic's Barbers and Surgeons
73. The Thrall Obedience Shop
74. Carved Doors and Portals
75. The Lych Gate Maker
76. Screens and Lacquer Panels
77. Gargoyle Chandeliers
78. Strange Woodwinds
79. The Handcart Market
80. Hutt's Armour Enamelers
81. The Alchymic Supply District
82. Materials and Other Magik Components
83. The Down-at-Heel Sword Mart
84. Kaptwell Wine Importers
85. The Leaded Window Workshop
86. Sebb's Writing Boxes by Royal Appointment
87. Jobb's Alchymic Snuff
88. Gerin's Talking Mynah Birds
89. Rooftop Scarecrows
90. Urched's Masterwork Crossbow Craftsmen
91. J. Chard — Peacock and Rare Poultry Importers
92. G. Rubb — Goblin Pet Trainers
93. N. Pearsly Undertakers and Stone Monument Makers
94. Antiquities
95. Strong Nome Grog
96. The Toby Jug Quarter
97. The Old Shop Auctionhouse
98. Quadd and Ruptuk — Masterwork Topiarists
99. Gnome Thrones and Luxury Chairs
100. The Lightning Rod Highrooms

100 Street Traders

As well as those lucky enough to have shops, windows to sell goods at, or alleyways to work from, there are a countless host of traders who work out of carts, carry their wares in wheelbarrows, or lay them out on cloth mats on the streets. These people are variously referred to as **costermongers**, **hawkers**, or, more rudely, **screechers** on account of their ceaseless cries to tout their goods. Several streets echo to the sound of running battles between traders — who is loudest, who has the sweetest singing voice, who is the funniest — and often-successful traders can gather huge crowds.

Often, traders are more concerned with their Perform checks than their professional skills.

By far the most successful of street traders are those who sell food; people in the city are always hungry, and having food close at hand makes that hunger all the more during the day. All the objects on this list are intended to be available to the general populace. They should almost all cost a copper piece or thereabouts. Foods generally are cooked in big pots on site.

1. Boiled beef and cabbage
2. A crow seller
3. Pickled cabbages and meat pie
4. Fish and fry
5. An armour polisher
6. Toffee apples
7. Hot chestnuts
8. A faith healer
9. Rice balls
10. A young lad selling saddle soap
11. A hawker selling goat meat
12. A man selling lucky horseshoes
13. A kettle seller
14. A man selling large wooden badgers
15. A woman selling lucky rabbit's feet
16. Dried apples
17. A charcoal seller
18. Pork pies
19. A basket weaver
20. Apple fritters
21. A beautiful woman selling perfumed oils
22. Eel pies
23. A foreign sock seller
24. Plum pudding
25. A rope splicer
26. Spiced ale
27. A very fat man sells pickled lemons
28. A betel nut seller has his wares on a carpet at his feet
29. Fresh turnips
30. A goodwife selling feather pillows and quilts
31. A bucket maker
32. A fortune teller and her tarot cards
33. A fishwife sells fish from a basket
34. A dwarf sells ropes of onions
35. Jellied eels
36. A young woman sells hot codlings (baked apples)
37. Mulled small beer
38. A fishmonger
39. An old woman sells elderberry hair dye
40. Two children sell cotton bootlaces
41. A woman with a cow sells fresh milk
42. A young chimney sweep looking for work
43. A dwarf sells coal from a barrow
44. A tikka seller, his colourful wares spread out in jars before him
45. Charcoal cooked corn
46. Candied Fruit
47. A man cooks noodles in a giant wok
48. A trio of goodwives take in laundry
49. Fried chaap (potato) with onions and beet slices
50. An old woman sells garlic
51. A line of seamstresses repair clothing
52. Baskets of wool are sold by goodwives
53. Wurst sausage and sauerkraut
54. Garlic snails
55. A gnomish chandler (wax, soap and candle goods)
56. Spiced scrumpy
57. A young girl selling mint, parsley and other herbs
58. A failed apothecary
59. A snuff seller
60. A barber
61. Cockles and mussels
62. A salt seller
63. Incense trader
64. Goosefat seller
65. Horse meat for sale
66. Clay pipes
67. Tool repairs
68. Hare soup
69. Quill seller
70. Hot cross buns
71. Corkscrew maker
72. Neatsfoot oil
73. A knife sharpener
74. A man selling puppies
75. A cobbler repairs shoes
76. Cold mutton
77. Spice cakes
78. Lark pie
79. Wreaths and garlands



80. A thimble seller
81. A man sells calvados
82. Hot crabs
83. A man selling his pig
84. Tallow candles
85. A silk seller
86. Shinbone dice
87. Fresh vegetables
88. Rollmop herrings
89. Salted fish
90. The muffin man
91. Tripe and onions
92. A tea merchant fallen on hard times
93. A trio of very old women sell pickled oysters
94. Dodo stew
95. Pork sausages and onions
96. Lavender seller
97. A canary seller
98. A woodcutter selling logs
99. A bootblack
100. Lard seller

20 Blight Locals

These NPCs have a little more flesh on their bones so to speak. They are given better descriptions, some character traits, and motivations to enable you to use them in your adventures on short notice. When using NPCs, try to give them a little backstory and motivation to explain the reasons for their actions. A small effort can create memorable friends and villains from the most unlikely sources. The author recalls in particular Petal the pit-bull, pet of one character, who had a pathological hatred of one of the other characters. This caused all kinds of issues as the party were pirates on the same ship.

1. Jack Slack: The Street Spiv

Jack Slack (Neutral male human thief 5) wears a black longcoat and has high leather boots of good quality. He has tinted spectacles and an overly long nose. His walk is hurried and furtive, and he speaks in the same way with a slight nasal quality to his voice from a frequently broken nose. Jack prides himself that he can get hold of anything given enough time. He once arranged for the purchase of a singular set of ashes — those of a sphinx — for a rich client of necromantic abilities and questionable motives. Given 1d6 days, Jack can usually arrange for the delivery (often from a theft) of items up to a value of 1250gp. For this service, he charges a 20% commission.

You could use Jack as a way to get characters rare and unusual components, as a link to adventures, or as a fence for more dubious items they wish to sell.

2. Habb: The Street Crier

The dwarf **Habb** (Lawful male street dwarf[BG] expert 3) carries an enormous megaphone with him at all times. He is dressed in the livery of a city official, and his hair and beard are neatly trimmed and oiled. Sadly, his voice is irritatingly high, but the city officials think it is — on the face of things — distinctive enough to draw the requisite attention from the crowds (and secretly they find its grating effects on all who hear as highly amusing). Habb has a morose disposition and seems genuinely gladdened by bad news. He is a good source of local gossip, though he requires a small consideration of 5gp for this information.

Habb makes a great way to introduce characters to an adventure, or he could be a secondary source of useful information if a trail in another adventure goes cold.

3. Lucy: The Lavender Lady

Growing old but still beautiful, **Lucy** (Chaotic female wererat) carries her baskets of lavender into the inns and shops and businesses of the city. She takes great pride in her appearance and always wears expensive perfume made from her wares. She's also one of a great many wererats in the city who were cast out by their families. She has the air of a down-at-the-heels noble, which is essentially what she is. Her line of illicit work is as a confidence (wo)man; she reels in victims and then ruins them, or ruins them and then kills them, or just kills them and eats them. Lucy keeps her wererat ancestry secret and works covertly for the Anarchists within the city.

A great wolf-in-sheep's-clothing, Lucy could be a deadly enemy, a sinister friend, or a surprising accomplice.

4. Tupper: The Honest Cabbie

Tupper (Neutral male gnome* expert 1) is a scruffy cabbie who drives a small open-topped carriage about town, dragged by a horse one step from the knackers-yard. He wears a top hat and once-fine clothes. He never shuts up from morning to night and beyond, and has an opinion about everything and everyone in the city. Tupper is truly a coward and is being used by various groups as a spy. He's easily bullied and soon complies with any reasonable suggestion, providing it doesn't cause him pain.

Tupper could be a useful (though unreliable) informant or spy for the characters, or perhaps someone who is spying on them (who could likely be turned with suitable incentive).

5. Unnamed: The Invisible Tramp

Something wheezes beneath a tramp's clothes as it leans upon a heavy staff. It has a mangy **terrier**[TOBH] at its side and a begging bowl in its hand. This is **Unnamed** (Neutral female mongrelman[TOHC]), a beggar of the Invisibles caste. If unmasked, she is revealed to have a scaled, lizard-like head with a tuft of fur on the right side and tusks on the right side of her mouth. She says nothing, for fear her garbled voice would give her away, and she has no wish to be back in the freakshows from which she so recently escaped. She has no name, but she knows the shows and pleasure piers of the city from bitter personal experience. Her dog is well trained and exceedingly loyal to her.

The unnamed tramp mongrelman is a good friend to be eyes and ears among the lower castes or perhaps as an insight into the worst side of the city as she is set upon by a band of young roughs for no reason other than her race.

6. Hassibelius Joppi Shortstone IV: The Would-Be Merchant

Joppi Shortstone (Neutral male gnome* expert 6) is ugly, but you cannot truly hold that against him. He wears ridiculously flamboyant attire, which is probably easier to hold against him, especially the hat, which is nearly 4ft tall and has all the colours of the rainbow in an eye-searing pattern. Trade and commerce, commerce and trade, one day Joppi knows he'll be rich — one day. He has a different trade each week; this week it's tortoises — the buying, selling and cooking thereof. Next week it could be scarves or mittens, or maritime insurance, and so on. One of life's eternal optimists, Joppi is annoyingly cheerful but has great contacts in trade. He also has an unrivalled knowledge of the local markets, and one day he'll cotton to the fact that guiding is much more profitable than selling. Until then, he'll undoubtedly be a fixture in the various markets and souks of the city.

With such a fantastic knowledge of the city, Joppi would be useful as a guide, leading the characters to places they never knew existed below or above them.

7. Maid Muggwood: The Insane Elf

The **Maid Muggwood** (Chaotic female high elf fighter 4) is a sad case. This elven lady has gone to seed. She looks as though she's slept rough forever, and her hefty blanket is wrapped about her shoulders, covering her painfully thin clothing and body. Maid Muggwood has seen something that unhinged her; she talks in strange rhymes, and sobs uncontrollably at the sight of a bird eating a worm or a character staring at her. She has lucid moments, and occasional bouts of incredible violence. She is often taken for an easy victim, something many an attacker soon regrets.

What has she seen that has unhinged her so? Maid Muggwood could be one of many elves who lose their way in the city that have been exposed to something terrible or is stalked by something impossible. Has she been affected by Between and may happen to know a way to reach that strange land?

8. Bok: The Bouncer

Bok (Neutral male half-orc* fighter 5) is one of the most massive half-orcs the characters have ever set eyes on. He favours his human side, and it's only his claw-like nails that give him away — that and his eyebrows which meet on his prominent forehead. He seemingly has more tattoos than skin. Bok has little to say, but when he does say something, it's best to listen. Bok is surprisingly gentle, unless pushed, in which case he's downright sadistic. He's been in too many fights, however, to enjoy them, and just gets on with his job, acting as a bouncer or security guard at various city events. Bok prefers to talk music these days, and is a first-rate mandolin player.

Bok could make a useful friend, assuming characters don't judge him by his cover as everyone else does. Once he is befriended, he is unlikely to give up on the friendship.

9. Rodwell: Officer of the Watch and Smuggler

Constable Rodwell (Chaotic doppelganger; HD 5, abilities of Thf4) has one of those forgettable faces, ordinary in every way. Even his voice is so ordinary that it's boring to listen to, and he has so little to say.

Rodwell, however, is a consummate villain, operating as he does within the law as a low-ranking city constable as well as a smuggler. He has contacts along both banks of the river and countless henchmen. The doppelganger is obsessive, however, and once he makes an enemy, he never forgets.

To the Referee, Rodwell is one of those recurring villains that could be encountered many times in many different forms, always lurks just out of sight, never risking open assault but stirring up enemies seemingly from nowhere. You could use him as an unusual addition to a campaign where, having thwarted one of Rodwell's smuggling operations in their first adventure, the characters spend the rest of the campaign being occasionally harassed by the obsessive doppelganger.

10. Tammin the Shopkeep

Tammin (Chaotic female gnome* expert 2) is very petite and quiet. She dresses plainly and tries not to attract attention. Her shop sells all manner of interesting bric-a-brac, and occasionally something rare or of great value appears inexplicable among her wares. Tammin doesn't seem to know the value of her goods, and her slight frame and easy nature make her a prime target for villains.

Tammin has something in her cellar, something that needs feeding regularly. She acts the innocent feeble woman, but in truth, she is nothing of the sort. She uses her innocent nature to lure lone visitors into her cellar to "see something new that's just come in." Down in the cellar is her lover, a **drider**[M] named Sakkarriss. He makes sure to clean up any scraps left over from the victim.

You could use Tammin as an adventure seed. Perhaps the characters learn that several people have gone missing near her shop and the finger of guilt points at her. Maybe Sakkarriss grows hungrier; his corpulent frame needs endlessly feeding, and his hunger could become unbearable from the infrequent scraps he's fed. Tammin cannot bring enough food to him, and he starts to stalk the city at night to look for prey — likely inadvertently leaving a trail of clues back to his abode beneath the shop.

11. Vros Harbstorl: The Gablemaester

Vros Harbstorl (Neutral male human thief 7) has a sword on his back and dresses in a heavy waxed coat. Under this coat are an array of magic knives and daggers. Vros is grim, a man of few words — unfriendly, some would say — but he has a heart of gold, just no words to match. Few professions are more dangerous than gablemaester, the people that take to the gables above the city to keep them free from gable spiders and worse.

Vros could lead the characters into many adventures, as a guide across rooftop paths and ropeways, a henchman to help root out evil, or as a hunter of the scrimshaw gargoyles and beasts that haunt the upper spires of the city.

12. Saluk: The Foreigner

She dresses strangely, with veils and silks and furs, gold drips from her fingers and bells ring from her toes. Hidden beneath her veil, **Saluk** (Neutral female Ashurian magic-user 4) has no lower jaw, and she has come to the city to try to find a magical cure for this hideous injury obtained during a fight with a demon she accidentally summoned. Saluk cannot talk but is a master at pantomime, and uses her foreign looks to her advantage in communication. Some of the more bigoted locals often hurl abuse at her out of either anger or fear.

Perhaps Saluk hires the characters to help her, or maybe the demon that injured her torments her still.

13. Honest Jobe: The Sprawlmason in the Know

Honest Jobe (Lawful male sprawlmason** dwarf thief 6) is lithe and muscular, his head clean-shaven. This dwarf squints in the sunlight and spits far too frequently. He has a hoarse voice (caused by shouting up endless scaffolding), and loves money more than anything. He whistles all day, and has a pet parrot he refers to as Mother. Jobe knows the city well, and has an excellent working knowledge of both the below and aboveground portions. His knowledge of Underneath, however, is truly superior, and he's been hired on many occasions to draw maps for adventurers. However, he charges a premium: his fee is a base 50gp, with step upcharges based on the area requested (Referee discretion).

Jobe could be used to bring the characters into an adventure below ground. Perhaps someone has been taken by ghouls, and the characters are hired to go into the Underneath immediately and need to get information fast.



14. Mother Witchram: The Landlady

Bedridden **Mother Witchram** (Chaotic human undying*** expert 4) is a tyrant who runs her lodgings with an iron fist. She is enormous and hasn't left her bed in 17 years, preferring to feast on sweetmeats and cakes and just-cooked meat. Her tongue is the foulest in this area of the city, and her temper is legendary. Her screaming insults can often be heard from several streets away. There seems to be no end to the number of brutish sons she has at her disposal nor the various cousins and family at their call. Crossing Witchram is dangerous indeed.

Perhaps the characters rent rooms or a building from her and accidentally earn her ire with her confusing and endlessly increasing prices, or maybe they kill one of her tenants or damage her property in an unrelated fight. She can become a good foil for the characters, who may be deterred from physically attacking her due to her disabilities or the threat of endless sons and friends in high places.

15. Slender Somwell: The Tragic Innkeeper

He looks dead does **Caspice Somwell**, or **Slender** (Neutral male halfling fighter 4) to any friends he still has. His eyes are hollow and rheumy, his mouth slack. He stares … simply stares. Somwell ventured into Between 7 years ago to find a friend's daughter who had vanished and came back changed. His wife, **Patty Somwell** (Lawful female halfling expert 2), who loves him dearly, runs the tavern they own, The Distressed Lamb, and helps him as much as she can. Feebleminded by the experience, Somwell is beyond mortal cures. Occasionally, however, he fixates upon customers, sitting with them and attempting to play cards (which he frankly can't manage).

Use Somwell as a warning of the dangers of Between and as an unusual and slightly sinister NPC presence.

16. Capid Munsange: The Treacherous Street Juggler

Dressed in peculiarly bright clothing, this jester-juggler is seen at many street corners. He says little but smiles often. **Capid Munsange** (CE male gallu-demon[TOHC]) is a disguised gallu-demon employed by a balor demon as a spy within the city. Covertly, he passes his information (often the locations of targets) to a small cult called the **Brotherhood of the Impossible Angel**, a group of demon-worshipping kidnappers and extortionists.

For Referees, the sadistic gallu-demon could be used either as the focus for a whole adventure or an agent as part of a wider plot. He particularly enjoys using an alluring shape to trick a witless pervert into the clutches of him and his sisters who dwell in a twisted abyssal corner of Between that hangs on the edges of the city itself.

17. Fenis: The Corner-Doxy with a Secret

What a beauty! With cascading blonde curls and a voluptuous figure, **Fenis** (Chaotic female wererat: HD 5) smiles knowingly as she walks the streets. Her voice may be coarse, but she says pretty things, and her attire is revealing and pleasing to look upon. She knows she's beautiful and uses it to her advantage. As an agent of the Family, Fenis is a corner-doxy of the highest calibre, a honey trap that has caught hundreds of willing victims over the years. She's married to the Family, and her appallingly huge husband **Tam** (Chaotic male wererat: HD 6) is never far away.

Fenis gives you several options for adventure. If the character's work with the Family, she makes a useful and colourful ally; as an enemy, she makes a beautiful and dangerous foe.

18. Ollman: The Jaded Fisherman

Looking older than the sea, **Ollman** (Lawful male briny* fighter 5) hauls at his nets, his hands calloused to leather. His face is unmistakably and disturbingly fish-like, his wide eyes seemingly lidless. Ollman has plenty to say; he's a source of the best fishermen's tales and stories of beasts on the high seas. Ollman is a good man, although half-skum have a tough time in many parts of the city and tend to keep to their own. He's an expert on the seas hereabouts, and knows what lies above and below the seas within a month's journey from the city.

Ollman could serve a potential ferryman or as an expert on the river. He is distrustful, however, and getting information out of him won't be easy. He lives and eats and drinks in the briny taverns and markets by the Lyme, places where being anything other than half-skum can make life difficult.

19. Rudd Ruddwell: The Master Smith

The sweat glistens on **Rudd Ruddwell's** (Lawful female hill dwarf fighter 4) brow and drips down her goatee. She wears very little beyond sturdy shoes and a leather smith's apron, and her cinder-scarred musculature is absolutely frightening. Rudd is a colourful character: she swears, she spits, she belches. When she drinks, she doesn't stop until she falls over. Full of tall tales, most of which are embellished, Rudd remembers when adventuring was proper adventuring, when owlbears were 20ft tall, and girallons hunted in packs of 40, minimum.

Rudd could make a useful ally, as a henchman or as a weaponsmith. She may drink in the same tavern as the characters, where her loud jokes and belches bring her to everyone's attention.

20. Number Six: The Dead Messenger

No matter how much padding the hefty coat has, it's still obviously a skeleton underneath. **Number Six** (Neutral female human skeleton) obviously has nothing to say and merely acts as a delivery messenger, operating between two points in the city. Her owner, the **Merchant Gernwell** (Neutral male human aristocrat 3), uses animated skeletons, as many aristocrats do, to fetch and carry and deliver. Some strangers find this use of the undead abhorrent and destroy them — something that carries a fine for destruction of property in Castorhage. In general, sensitive owners send out their undead servitors by night or heavily disguised.

Are the characters approached by a skeleton bearing a message to begin an adventure? Do skeletons operate in other more mundane jobs or does the destruction of one undead cause problems for the characters? All are ways that Number Six can figure into a Blight campaign.

[BG] See ***LL8: Bard's Gate*** by **Frog God Games**

* See **The Blight Campaign Guide: Part 3**, **Non-Player Character Races**

** See **The Blight Campaign Guide: Part 3**, **Races in the Blight**

*** See **The Blight Campaign Guide: Part 6, The Blight Bestiary**

[TOHC] See ***The Tome of Horrors Complete*** by **Frog God Games**

[TOBH] See ***The Tome of Blighted Horrors*** by **Frog God Games**

Appendix B: A Blight Lexicon

Many terms and phrases are commonly used in the Blight that may be less well known beyond its crowded streets. A sampling of some of these terms is provided below that you can use to sprinkle throughout your game to add a measure of local flavour to the NPCs.

Æ – abbreviation of ævum, meaning "Age at Time of Death" (High Boros)

Ancients, The — giant and monstrous creatures of prehistory sometimes found in fossilised remains in the vicinity of Castorhage; more proper term is "Leviathans"

Astromancer — magical practitioner who combines astrology with the physical laws of astronomy (common term outside of Castorhage as well)

Bibliomerchant — BookTown bookseller

Blight, The — city of Castorhage, usually disparaging

Blighter — resident of Castorhage, always disparaging

Boater — water-gypsy boatman, usually Viroeni or halfling

Burke — to smother

Canker, The — thick fogs that arise off the river and envelop parts of the city that have a reputation for choking the life from the sleeping, the weak and the helpless

Coolie — a servant/labourer (usually indentured)

Corner-Doxy — a street prostitute; a harlot (usually cheap)

Costermonger — also hawker or screecher; a street vendor

Deadbook, The — death, usually by murder or other violence; to be "put in the Deadbook" is to be killed

Esquire — common title of gentry, barristers, and the well-to-do; often shortened to Squire

Fetch, The — secret undead inhabitants of the city serving the vampire-god Beltane

Fireman — a labourer employed to stoke the furnaces of manufacturies or seagoing vessels with steam-driven paddle wheels

Flagonfist — a tavern server (common term outside of Castorhage as well)

Gablemaester — folk employed to patrols the rooftops of the city and keep the worst of the vermin and riffraff under control

Ghat — river temple composed of stone steps, of Jaata origin

Gill – a quarter pint

Gong — night soil wastes thrown into the gutter

Gong Farmer — a night soil collector who pushes a cart along the street each morning

Great Dark — unexplored subterranean realms below the Underneath

Hege – adjectival demonym for something of Xi'en manufacture or tradition, short for Xi'en Hegemony (usually used in Castorhage for items of Gtsang origin as well)

Insectum – addictive insect-based drugs used by many in Castorhage

Jack's Candle – a rumoured part of the Canker thought to be intelligent and responsible for burking many of its victims

Knackers-Yard — also knackery; a slaughterhouse for horses and other animals that have been retired due to age or infirmity and are intended for rendering rather than consumption

Knight of the City (K.C.) — a minor and relatively obscure noble title occasionally bestowed by the Queen or Crown Justices

Legalese – also turnees; the minor legal clerks employed by the courts and barristers for the endless paperwork and procedure of the Courts and particularly BookTown

Little Sis – also sis; a gold shekel (1gp)

Lowfolk — primary commoner caste of the city

Lych Field — cemetery

Made, The — commonly encountered forms of lesser undead and constructs cheaply made and used for mindless labour

Milliner — a maker of women's boots

Mortimata – also mortomata; simple automata made of flesh and bone and muscle preserved and animated by alchemy and/or necromancy

Navvy — a labourer employed in construction of a road or canal

Old Ones — semi-mythical ancient peoples thought responsible for leaving stone circles and cave paintings behind, often conflated with Ancient Ones/Andøvan culture

Physiker — a physician, a doctor; a professor employed as a private tutor (common term outside of Castorhage as well)

Pil – a silver pilaster (1sp)

Prahu-Punter — also punter; narrowboat pilots of the Lyme and the Sinks hired to ferry passengers and renowned for their singing ability

Punkahwallah — a servant employed to manually operate a punkah ceiling fan; a practice originally imported from Far Jaati

Punter — also prahu-punter (see above); a patron of prostitutes (derogatory)

Queen's Men — officers of the City Watch

Sadhu — a holy man, likely of Jaata origin

Savant — high-ranking university professor position

Steeplejack — a worker specialised in constructing or repairing steeples and other precarious roof features

Tanner – a copper common (1cp)

Triad – a Xi'en criminal organization or thieves' guild

Tongawallah – driver of rickshaws and handcarts

Tout – a street seller who pesters and cajoles passers-by

UnderMaester — local ward political position appointed by parish watch commanders

Urger — a person who sells horseracing tips on the street

Waggoner — a book of nautical charts and notes

Wynds — winding, often steep alleys of the city

Yīshī — honorary Xaon title for the mistress of an apothecary

Appendix C: Sample Encounters in the Blight

The types of encounters that can occur in a city such as Castorhage — sitting as it does on the edge of Between — are virtually limitless. However, some are more unique to the city than others. Below are provided a bare-bones sampling of some of the types of encounters to be had in the Blight so they can be lifted whole cloth or simply to serve as the basis for other encounters of your own devising.

Note: The sample encounters include those that appear in the ***Blight Maladies Card Deck*** as **13 Unwanted Attentions and Deviancies.** We included them here for those who did not purchase that supplement, but also because we had more than 13 such encounters that we wanted to provide for Referees to use in bringing their Blight campaigns to life.

Magic Fingers

Lucinda Farenthol, an attractive masseuse with nimble fingers, strong hands, and an aura of sensuality, offers invigorating massages for weary travellers and uptight adventurers. She insinuates that she can offer more than her healing hands and attentive ear for the right price. If someone takes her up on offer, Lucinda leads that person to her private quarters for an intimate session. She barters almost anything, most notably information from previous clients. When she gains her mark's trust, she drops all pretences and assumes her true form as a **succubus**, using her kiss to sap her quarry's strength.

The Ripper

A blood-curdling scream from an adjacent alleyway momentarily drowns out the cacophony of voices in the claustrophobic streets. A quick peek into the dank alley confirms the worst suspicions. Torrents of blood pour from a young woman's throat torn asunder. A gentleman with a black wool overcoat, ebony cane, black shoes, and vicious, unnatural claws stained wetly crimson hurriedly races from the scene and then inexplicably vanishes into thin air. Dissatisfied by the unwelcome intrusion, the serial killer **bogeyman** (Chaotic doppelganger: HD 9) stalking Castorhage's streets resumes his search for another victim.

The Wailing Willow

An unnatural weeping willow tree growing in this dungy cul-de-sac takes its name to extremes. It bleeds whenever somebody cuts a branch or twig. Even more disconcerting, it wails in agony, sobbing for hours after the damage. Children goad one another to cut branches from the tree to prove their bravery. Recently, **Erza Manni** (Neutral female human druid 2) has taken it upon herself to defend the tree and has made her home under the tree's drooping branches. Erza has quickly assumed the role of a stern, militant guardian. She currently holds a younger **boy** (Neutral male young human commoner 1) prisoner, claiming he has committed crimes against Nature. Erza plans to hang him at dawn.

Market Mayhem

The market bustles with activity as vendors look to sell all manner of items — clothing, baskets, fruit of questionable quality, and more — and shoppers look for the best deals. A clamour of voices, each person shouting over the next, makes normal conversation all but impossible. In one of those bizarre moments where everybody seems to stop speaking at once, a pain-filled scream rises. A crudely made iron sword protrudes outward from the side of a large covered basket and pierces the thigh of a burly man next to it. Almost immediately, **28 goblins** erupt seemingly from everywhere, grabbing merchandise, stabbing vendors and customers alike, and smashing anything they can't carry with them.

We Three Things

The party notices a group of three men dressed in soot-stained overcoats, each bearing two dark valises. **Hideous**, **Murk**, and **Snurg** (Chaotic male human rogue 4) are small-time thugs and couriers for some of Castorhage's seedier groups. The brutes could not appear more different: Hideous is tall and lean with sallow eyes and a vapid expression; Murk is of medium height and build but appears almost insubstantial; and Snurg is short and squat, nearly as wide as he is tall, with a vicious look about him. What the men carry in their satchels is up to the Referee; it can be anything from sensitive stolen trade agreements to body parts heading for disposal or delivery as warnings.

Jack's Candle

A fog bank of the Canker roils down the street. Wispy tendrils seem to snatch and grab at buildings as it moves quickly down the lane at a speed of 40ft. Anyone enveloped by the cloud finds all sound muffled as if under a *silence* spell. Within the characters cannot see more than 5 feet. A shape seems to move purposefully towards the characters within the fog; there is an **ethereal shade**[M] hunting in the unnatural cover. The shade never leave the greater cloudbank but attack anything that comes within its vaporous confines. The cloud passes on after 1d6 rounds, taking the shade with it.

The Cat

A mangy tabby sits in the middle of the alleyway ahead. It does not appear afraid or intimidated in any way by the party. If the cat is treated kindly, it meanders its way through the entire party, rubbing against legs and walking between feet and generally making a nuisance of itself. This creature is a **Between-cat**[TOBH]. Any characters treating it well or feeding it gains a +2 bonus to one roll, usable within the next 24 hours (the choice to use it must be made before the roll). Should any character mistreat or attempt to frighten the cat away, it hisses loudly, turns its head and walks around a corner, completely vanishing if searched for. Any such character who frightens or attacks the can suffers a –1 penalty to all rolls for 24 hours.





Child's Play

In an adjacent alley, a child's cries can be heard along with the shuffling of feet and rustling of trash. If investigated, the party discovers a man dressed in dirty clothes who smells like rancid wine trying to strangle a small child. Assuming they intervene, they are in for a nasty surprise. The man is a vagrant who has been charmed by the **vampire** (Chaotic male vampire: HD 7) into his current actions. While the characters deal with the **vagrant** (Neutral male human commoner 2), the vampire tries to charm the strongest-looking character, turning to gaseous form once its ruse is discovered. It orders any charmed character to attack the rest of the group.

Down the Rabbit Hole

A large white rabbit appears from under a hedge and scampers off into an open manhole in the street. The hole drops 10ft down into the sewers. The rabbit seems to have disappeared, but a black top hat sits on the walkway adjacent to the sewer flow channel. Inside the hat are a wand (non-magical), a carefully folded, 20-foot-long chain of knotted coloured scarves, a deck of trick cards that always reveal an ace of spades, and 3 *magic carrots*. The carrots each summon a large white rabbit (use giant rat stats but without disease) for 10 rounds if broken in half and placed in the hat.

Cold Case

A heavy rainstorm has eroded the soil from the weed-choked yard of a small house. In the yard is a small, overgrown vegetable garden. Within the garden, an exposed skeletal human hand pokes through where the soil has washed away. Examination reveals a full, buried skeleton dressed in the rotting remains of a once-fine dress. The skeleton still wears a small silver ring (2gp) and a set of garnet earrings are caught in the folds of its collar (100gp). A despicable nobleman buried this woman here after murdering her more than a year ago. The house owner is entirely innocent of any crime but may have witnessed something. Specifics are left to the Referee.

Drunken Sailor

In a dockside tavern, a drunken mariner challenges the largest character to a fight for some imagined slight. **Urthgar** (Neutral male Heldring fighter [level equal to the character's level]) wears leather armour and is armed with a dagger and a club. He offers the option of fighting with fists or clubs. If he is refused, he attacks with his club anyway. Urthgar suffers a –1 to hit penalty due to his intoxication. If Urthgar is defeated but survives, he offers to serve as a henchman to the character for 1 month. If victorious, he passes out shortly thereafter.

Riddle Me This

A large sedan chair comes to a stop next to the party, and the curtain is pulled back by one of its **8 burly chairmen** (Lawful male human warrior 3) to reveal a **sphinx**[M] reclining inside. The sphinx informs that party that a sidereal oracle has determined that they must pass a test of wisdom. She asks them, "What makes the crooked right?" If they answer "90 degrees," she commends them and provides them with some valuable clue to an adventure or a monetary reward of 1000gp. If they fail to answer correctly, she orders her guards to attack and beat them into unconsciousness for their lack of perspicaciousness.

Seafood Special

A weathered old man wearing the waxed overcoat of a fisherman lurches unsteadily down the street singing a sea chanty between swigs from a bottle. Upon sighting the characters, he stops and proclaims that they have the smell of the sea about them before transforming into a **wereshark**[RC] and attacking. If he is killed, inside his coat can be found the jawbones of 7 fishermen he has killed and collected trophies from. Among these are a total of 15 teeth with gold crowns worth 5gp each.

A Tangled Weave

An alleyway between two sagging tenements has been completely curtained off like a grand stage. A **barker** (Neutral male halfling thief 2) stands outside and calls for passers-by to step right up and see the Beautiful Esmel perform her exotic dances for only the discriminating eye for the low, low admission price of only 2sp. The barker takes the admission and allows entrants (no more than two at a time) to step behind the curtain to see the spectacle and tells them to exit out the back when they're done. Behind the curtain, the alleyway is filled with the web constructs of **2 Large gable spiders**[TOBH and an] **ettercap**[M] who is in league with the barker. They attempt to quickly silence and subdue spectators before the next are allowed in.

Pub Crawlers

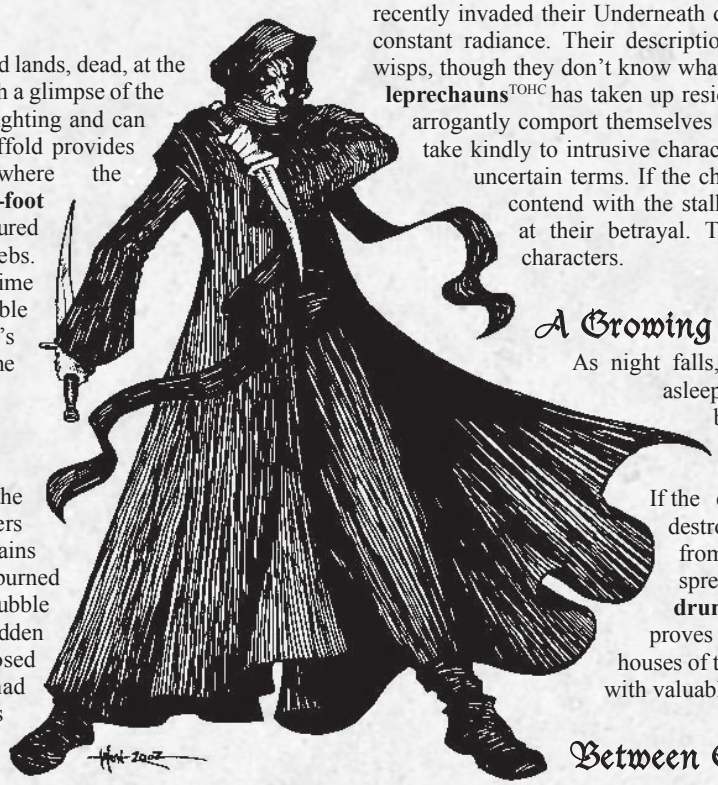
A barroom brawl spills out into an alley and knocks over a large stack of barrels. As the barrels tumble into the street, night-slugs spring out of them and scatter in all directions looking for cover with **4 night-slugs** (Neural male night-slug*: HD 3) armed with clubs and rusty daggers charging straight for the party. The characters happen to be standing directly in front of a sewer grate that the creatures are heading for, and they are willing to fight their way through in their desperation to escape. If the characters think to step out of the way, the night-slugs charge harmlessly past and disappear into the sewer. Otherwise, they fight viciously in their attempt to escape.

Hellish Hack

A coarse cab being drawn by a **hyme**[TOBH] pulls up next to the party. The driver, a **tormenter devil**TOHC, offers the characters a ride to anywhere they want — at a steep discount. Of course, anyone foolish enough to get into the cab is soon beset by the devil and the pack of **6 hell hounds** that lurk in hiding nearby. If the devil is defeated but the hyme survives, the characters can take possession of the foul-tempered beast and its cab for their own use.

On the Rooftops

A gablemaester falls from above and lands, dead, at the characters' feet. Looking up, they catch a glimpse of the arachnoid forms he was apparently fighting and can hear screams of terror. A nearby scaffold provides access to the rooftop 70 feet above where the characters find a **drider**[M and] **2 6-foot diameter giant spiders** that have captured a pair of gnome children in their webs. The characters have just enough time to step in to save them from a horrible fate. If searched, the gablemaester's corpse has a gablemaester's kit that the characters can claim if they like.



Fire in the Hole

As the last rays of the sun touch the city's rooftops, a group of city workers picks through the smouldering remains of a building that has recently burned down. One of them causes a pile of rubble to shift and exposes a formerly hidden subbasement. Pouring from the exposed cellar are the Tunnel People who had set the fire from below the previous night. These **7 grimlocks**[TOH4] attack for 3 rounds and try to drag as many people as possible with them back into the uncovered tunnel.

Lovers' Lane

A well-to-do couple sits together on an ornate iron bench overlooking the river below as the moon reflects off its dark surface. However, even a cursory inspection reveals that they are entirely unmoving — they don't even breathe. Examination reveals that they appear to have recently drowned, though their clothes and hair are completely dry. A **moon angel**[TOBH] lurks at the edge of the river not far away and recently killed this couple. It uses its hypnotic song to try to entrance the characters as well.

Gentlemen's Wager

A **Blight naga**[TOBH] and a **rakshasa**[M] have a bet over which character will die first. They have found a portal to another land, and are bringing creatures through it. They begin alternately sending summoned creatures against the characters while they watch through *a crystal ball*. Use the *summon monster* tables to determine each attack, starting with *summon monster I* and increasing by 1 level with each successive attack. The attacks end if one of the characters is killed or the characters survive all the way through a *summon monster IX* attack. Each summoned monster remains for 18 rounds before disappearing.

Gamecocks

The characters arrive at a tavern where cockfights are being held. They have the opportunity to wager on these fights if they want. Eventually, someone accidentally overturns a table lamp and starts a small fire. In the panicked confusion that follows, the characters find themselves facing **3 Blight cockerels**[TOBH] still wearing their fighting spurs that have escaped from their handlers. If the characters kill the cockerels, they must still contend with **Mot Porkchop** (Chaotic male half-orc fighter 5), the owner of the establishment and the birds. He demands 100gp for each cockerel slain or injured and attacks with his **2 bouncers** (Chaotic male human fighter 4) if his demands aren't met.

Dark Dealings

Two dark stalkers[TOHC] approach the party and try to hire them for 100gp per person to destroy a pack of floating balls of light that have recently invaded their Underneath domicile and hurt their eyes with the constant radiance. Their description sounds a great deal like will-o'-wisps, though they don't know what they're called. In truth, a squad of **9 leprechauns**[TOHC] has taken up residence in the dark stalkers' home and arrogantly comport themselves as if they own the place. They don't take kindly to intrusive characters and tell them to shove off in no uncertain terms. If the characters refuse to fight, they have to contend with the stalkers and **11 dark creepers**[TOHC] angry at their betrayal. The leprechauns will not assist the characters.

A Growing Blight

As night falls, the characters spot a drunk lying asleep in a darkened alley. Barely visible beyond him is a growing expanse of spreading **blight**[TOBH] that overtakes the insensate wino at any moment. If the characters attempt to save the man or destroy the blight, they come under attack from **6 vegepygmies**[TOHC] allied with the spreading fungal growth. If saved, the **drunk** (Neutral male human aristocrat 4) proves to be connected to one of the noble houses of the city and can provide the characters with valuable contacts and adventure hooks.

Between Standoff

The party comes upon a standoff between **5 constables** (Neutral male human warrior 3) and **9 Between-cats**[TOBH]. The constables seem to be intent on rounding up the cats and placing them in a few small cages they have piled nearby, and the Between-cats seem equally determined to avoid being captured. Both sides are intent on standing their ground, and neither retreats. Unless the characters depart immediately, they can choose to side with one group or the other but will be drawn into the combat that starts immediately. If the characters linger but do not join a side, each side attacks them, assuming they are in league with the other.

Agent Provocateur

A shopkeeper or some other local NPC the party knows approaches and tells them that he just saw a monster transform into a man in a nearby alley and start spying on the nearby market. He points out a nearby Xi'en man who does look rather suspicious. If approached, the man proves to be a **Triad collector** (Chaotic male Xi'en thief 3) out collecting protection money from local merchants and immediately attacks the characters, assuming they are from a rival gang. He is joined by **3 Triad thugs** (Chaotic male Xi'en fighter 3) who join him from the nearby crowds. The shopkeeper who sent the characters is a **doppelganger** of the Veil who wanted to send a warning to the local Triad.

The Walrus and the Carpenter

Behind a pile of lumber at a construction site near the river, the party stumbles upon a **Lyme walrus** (***The Tome of Blighted Horrors***) devouring the corpse of a construction worker he just killed. It immediately tries to spin a tale to explain itself. If successful, it attempts to lead one or more character into the river where it can slay them at its leisure. If it is unable to subdue the characters in this way, it whistles and alerts the **3 cutpurses** (Chaotic male human thief 3) it has been working with. They arrive to help in 1d3 rounds.

[TOHC] See ***The Tome of Horrors Complete*** by **Frog God Games**
[TOBH] See ***The Tome of Blighted Horrors*** by **Frog God Games**
[TOH4] See ***Tome of Horrors 4*** by **Frog God Games**
[M] See ***Monstrosities*** by **Frog God Games**
[RC] See ***Razor Coast*** by **Frog God Games**.
* See **The Blight Campaign Guide: Part 3**, **Non-Player Character Races**

Appendix D: New Magic of the Blight

Following are some of the more unusual magic items that are found in the Blight.

Between Ring

This plain, unadorned ring is typically made of iron or some other common metal and bears signs of tarnish, rust, or some flaw that cannot be polished away or repaired. It also includes something of the tainted essence of Between in its composition, giving it a slightly greasy feel to the touch. When a *Between ring* is worn, the wearer must make a saving throw or be unable to voluntarily remove it. It never fits well: sometimes it feels too loose (though it never falls off), and sometimes it squeezes much too tightly, causing pain and a discolouration in the finger. Each day there is a 1-in-20 chance that it tightens, causing 1 point of damage from the constriction. If a *Between ring* ever constricts for 5 days in a row without the wearer receiving any magical healing, the finger it is worn on dies and becomes necrotic, eventually falling off in 1d4+4 days. The loss of this finger deals 2d4 points of damage but is one way for a wearer who has failed his saving throw to remove the ring.

A wearer of a *Between ring* gains a +2 AC bonus against any creature from Between. In addition, the wearer can make an unarmed attack against such a creature with the hand that is wearing the ring, dealing 1d6 points of damage and having a chance of being a lethal hit three times per day if the attacker rolls a natural 20. The target can make a saving throw to avoid being instantly killed, but still take 3d6 points of damage from the strike.

Plague Scarab

Used primarily to prevent information being tortured out of them by a clandestine group calling themselves the Hidden Knights of the Capitol, this small item appears much like a typical insectum scarab. However, when swallowed, it lodges in the individual's stomach and remains in place. Thereafter, the swallower can activate the scarab on their turn. Once activated, the *plague scarab* burrows to the swallower's heart, killing him in 1 round. However, in the following round it then bursts through into the oesophagus and unleashes a **centipede nest (swarm)**[M] that pours forth from the victim's mouth and attacks anyone present.

If a swallower chooses, he can discard the plague scarab before it activates by regurgitating it, requiring one full round. Once a plague scarab has been activated, it is destroyed and cannot be used again.

[M] See ***Monstrosities*** by **Frog God Games**

Spying Pane

This polished mithral mirror with an ornate copper frame is 4ft long and 2ft wide. It can be hung or placed on a surface and then activated or deactivated by speaking a command word. The *spying pane* forms a link with any mirror or framed art object such as a painting that it touches while activated, up to a maximum of 20 such objects. Each such link permits the user to look through the linked object's frame as though it was a window. Touching the object to the *spying pane* a second time cancels the link, and if the maximum number of links has been reached, linking a new object to the speculum breaks the oldest existing link. A link is also broken if the distance between the *spying pane* and the object exceeds 600ft. When activated, the surface of the *spying pane* displays a grid of the currently linked views; touching one of the views enlarges the window to its actual size or the size of the mirror, whichever is the smallest. Touching it again restores the grid. A *spying pane* can be used for as long as 10 minutes a day, in increments of 1 minute. These increments do not need to be consecutive.

The Staff of Life (a.k.a. The Elixir)

"More a curse than a blessing…"

For some, life must go on no matter what the cost. The dabblings of arcane physicians into the stuff of life was always going to be dangerous. *Elixir of life* — "The Elixir" or "Staff of Life" as is it sometimes known among the whispers of the Lowfolk — comes from feeding a particular species of Between worm with flesh and blood of the mundane world — living flesh and blood, and the healthier and fresher the blood used, the better the quality of elixir. Worms are then either injected (in many cases) or held in an artificially made womb known as the Cuckoo Womb into which the subject is immersed.

The Cuckoo Womb is used in general to create new forms or hybrid creatures from the parts of others harvested using a particularly unpleasant ritual involving injecting the creature with elixir and farming off the parts that are required. The parts are crudely sewn or affixed together in hopes that the Cuckoo Womb and the elixir do the rest — although they often do not. The minor works of many celebrated golem-stitchers slither or drag themselves through the city as a result of this process, unable to die without destruction. Theirs is a pitiful existence, and one that often leads to diabolic revenge. Artisans of this trade — Golem-Stitchers and Homuncule Wives and Cadaver-Surgeons — are usually drawn into the profession through reading or through association; there is no level requirement to carry out such work, only a steady hand and brutal soul.

The true and purest *elixir of life* commands a high price, at least 10,000gp per dose, and even this price comes with no guarantee of success. Of course, where every genuine artefact is found, fakes soon follow, and cheaper and less-stable versions of the elixir have flooded darker parts of the market. That the undeath that follows is agonizing or that some subjects are prone to appalling unmaking as the threads of the elixir dissolve, taking their hosts with them, makes the elixir not merely a boon, but a weapon in some eyes. Many see the forced injection of the elixir into workers as being of incalculable benefit; true, the servant withers in terms of their personality and vital spark and living relationships, but their skills remain! What price for a manufactury of unliving workers who toil day and night and never need rest yet have the intelligence and abilities that typical examples of the animated dead do not. Some call this concept the "New Utopia." Many in the city claim that such manufacturies not only exist already but are thriving, and it can only be a matter of time before everyone in the city is aware of an unliving. Forced undeath is becoming more common by the day, as are the poor wretches who drag their rotting and failing carcasses into the dark places away from sight and seems likely only to expand with the recent *Corpse Act of 1770*.

The latest great visionaries of such rebirth extol the (so far) secret and unseen experiments of the great surgeon-artists who, they claim, have succeeded in forging new life from Between creatures and mortal flesh.

ELIXIR OF LIFE

A living humanoid creature that is injected with *elixir of life* (an infusion process that takes an hour and requires either a helpless or willing recipient) must make an immediate save based on the quality of the elixir. Creatures that are immune to poison are not affected by the elixir. If the save is successful, the creature dies and rises again in 1d4 hours as a "Reborn"; an undying creature. If the save is failed, the individual immediately dies and rises in 1d10 minutes as an undead creature as an unliving creature.

If the elixir is applied to a creature that has died within the last 24 hours but whose corpse is still relatively intact, the creature still gets a save as if it were alive with the outcome of becoming either an undying or an unliving creature, but the saving throw is made at a cumulative –1 penalty for every 2 hours since it died (not including the hour required for infusion).

If used in conjunction with a Cuckoo Womb, and pieces of only partial cadavers in order to create a new-made form of life (as adjudicated by the Referee), the elixir likewise has a quality-based saving throw to determine the stability of this outcome. If this saving throw is successful,

the resulting creature is stable as a new type of creature. If the save is unsuccessful, the new-made creature is unsuccessful, is in extensive pain, and dies in 1d4 days as its body literally falls apart.

Anything of *medium-grade elixir* or lower is unpredictable, short lived, and prone to sudden violent unravelling. For each year of life or unlife for *low-grade elixir*, each month for *pig-grade elixir*, and each week for *street-grade elixir*, the initial save must be made again or the creature rapidly (and often revoltingly) unmakes itself just as if a new-made creature had failed its initial saving throw. There are some exceptional cases (again at the Referee's discretion), where such an unmaking does not fully destroy the creature but instead forces it to live in a pain-filled, half-life of indeterminate length and horror.

Elixir of Life

Elixir Quality	Price (per dose)	Reborn Creature Save*	Newly-Made Creature Save*
True Elixir	10,000 gp	-2	-4
Medium-Grade Elixir	5,000 gp	-5	-8
Low-Grade Elixir	1,000 gp	-10	-10
Pig-Grade Elixir*	500 gp	—	-12
Street-Grade Elixir	100 gp	—	-15

* A roll of 1 is always an automatic failure.
** Made from actual pig blood and flesh rather than humanoid.





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