

The Devil in the Dark



VICTORIANA

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THE DEVIL IN THE DARK

~INTRODUCTION~

In this chapter, the adventurers are hired by Sir Travis Duquesne, a financier who has been referred to them by fellow Oriental club member Henry Doyle. Through his accountant, Sir Travis asks the adventurers to investigate the strange happenings at a Midlands coal mine. Travelling to Bremerstoke village, they discover that someone has let a demon loose in the mine that has not only sparked a strike but threatens to ravage the countryside.

greatly expanded and includes the historical personage of Pablo Fanque, a well-known circus performer, and his circus. *The Devil in the Dark* is designed for a group of beginning adventurers (or those with only one or two penny dreadfuls under their belts and corsets) of any investigative Association. The Havering Household, the Selenium, the Spiritual Repose and Willowpin & Associates would be most suitable, and with a little finessing the Metropolitan Police, Aetheric Branch and the Star Chamber would also make fine choices.

~ABOUT *DEVIL IN THE DARK*~

Originally published as a first edition penny dreadful, *The Devil in the Dark* has been expanded and revised for the third edition of *Victoriana*. It was originally intended to be incorporated into *Streets of Shadow*, but we couldn't fit it in due to space limitations. *The Devil in the Dark* stands on its own as a complete penny dreadful.

Gamesmasters familiar with the original penny dreadful will find most of the characters and the overall plot recognisable, although the penny dreadful has been

~BACKGROUND~

For centuries, the village of Bremerstoke was part of a small barony firmly under the control of the Bremerstoke family. A few years ago, industrialist Matthew Burke located a coal seam beneath Bremerstoke valley. As the local farming economy was struggling, Burke negotiated a favourable deal with Lord Bremerstoke to tunnel mines beneath his land. This has since created a power struggle in the valley, as the mines have been attracting workers that formerly worked the fields in and around the valley. Thus, Burke is growing richer while the Bremerstoke fortune dwindles.

Using The Devil in the Dark with the Second Edition

While designed with the third edition in mind, *THE DEVIL IN THE DARK* can be easily used with the Second Edition rules. Simply change the year from 1856 to 1867, set the start of the Crimean War to 1866, and you're golden.

There is little change mechanics-wise. You can use the third edition statistic blocks with no conversion. Gone are all the dice pool modifiers; simply decide if the character's action is physical, mental, or social and use the appropriate competence dice pool. Don't worry about the Entropy and Order entries on some statistic blocks; these are ignored for the second edition.

Third edition uses a more Victorian nomenclature for magic, but most of these changes are self-evident. Mana has become Quintessence, ether is aether, runes are sigils, and mediums, petty mages, and sorcerers have become magnetists, conjurers and hermeticists. The three types of magnetists are Clairvoyants (sensate), Spiritualists (channelling), and Goeticists (faith). Also, Beastmen and Halflings are now known as Beastfolk and Huldfolk.



The mines have troubles of their own. Margaret Bremerstoke, a secret dabbler in the occult, has summoned a demon in order to scare the miners and enable her father to retake control of the land. Unfortunately, the demon quickly became unmanageable and Miss Bremerstoke is secretly trying to find a way to destroy it, threatening her sanity in the process.

Meanwhile, the demon is terrorising the miners, spreading fear and dissension. Lord Bremerstoke is quick to exploit this fear; while he has no knowledge of his daughter's dabbling, he is taking the opportunity presented to him. Unfortunately, Burke doesn't give up that easily and, if he believes that a work shutdown and a worker's riot is possible, he will call upon the military to take action. While the soldiers are likely to bring order to the region, it will be at the cost of many lives.

Streets of Shadow

While originally written as a standalone penny dreadful, *THE DEVIL IN THE DARK* is designed to fit into the narrative of the *STREETS OF SHADOW* shilling shocker. Gamesmasters familiar with the shilling shocker will recognise Sir Travis Duquesne and Godwin Cassidy.

Should you include it, *THE DEVIL IN THE DARK* fits comfortably after the first chapter of *STREETS OF SHADOW*, *THE DRAGON IN THE SMOKE*. In this case, it is Mr Doyle that sets up the meeting between Sir Travis Duquesne and the adventurers. Presuming they do an adequate job here, the adventurers will be contacted again by Sir Travis for another problem he's having in *A REVOLUTIONARY MACHINE*, the fourth chapter of *STREETS OF SHADOW*.

~ ACT 1 ~

THERE'S SOMETHING ROTTEN IN BREMERSTOKE

In the first act the adventurers accept a job offer from Sir Travis Duquesne. He employs them to investigate strange happenings at the Bremerstoke mines near Birmingham. The adventurers arrive at the village to discover that the miners are scared and the old squire is keeping the peace.

They also meet members of a travelling circus and the events of **Act 2** are foreshadowed.

Scene 1: A Lucrative Proposition

This penny dreadful begins with the adventurers receiving invitations from Sir Travis Duquesne to meet him at the Old Wessex, a distinguished old pub, at the next luncheon hour in order to discuss a business proposition. He lavishes praise on their previous accomplishments (assuming they have any) and believes that they are perfect for his situation. Presuming that the adventurers are agreeable, they should make haste for the pub.

The Old Wessex is tucked inside the maze of alleys that line Fleet Street and, although it has a rather unassuming façade, the interior is cavernous with many small rooms. The Eldren proprietor of the Old Wessex, Milton Greenbriar, claims that a pub has operated here since the time of the Crusades; his grandfather used magic to save the pub from burning during the Great Fire of London.

Currently the pub caters primarily to the professional middle class, especially bankers, hermeticists, and lawyers. There is a definite lack of natural lighting in the pub, giving it a cosy or gloomy feel based on one's attitude walking inside. Occasionally the candlelight illuminates a sigil or two carved on the many walls and pillars in the pub, a subtle warning not to use magic here.

Once the adventurers enter the pub they meet Horatio Wheeler, a cheerful Huldu who recognises them from Sir Travis' descriptions and warmly greets them. He informs them that Sir Travis is already here, occupying a table in the back. As he leads them to the table the maitre d' suggests that they try the mulligatawny soup, a recipe given to Greenbriar by a Company Colonel that just returned to Britain.

As the adventurers approach the table they find Sir Thomas sipping wine. He stands and greets them warmly as if their mere arrival has lifted a great burden off his shoulders. He is impeccably dressed; an Easy (+4 to pool) Wits + Fashion roll enables an adventurer to realise that Sir Travis keeps abreast of current trends and has the currently fashionable collar, waistcoat and cufflinks of a well-dressed professional.

Sir Travis invites them to join him as Owen, a Beastfolk (Corgi) waiter with a thick Welsh accent, arrives and takes their order. Once everyone is settled with a drink in hand, Sir Travis makes his offer.

Sir Travis is invested in the Bremerstoke Coal Company, which is operating mines in the Midlands. Unfortunately, his investment is currently threatened by a series of incidents at the mines that possibly involve sabotage. The workers are threatening to strike, and, although the Company has invested heavily in the village, Bremerstoke only has a small constabulary. The Company would have to call in the army, which, given past history, would not end well and would seriously threaten Sir Travis' return on his investment. Obviously, Sir Travis would like to avoid that scenario and has convinced the Company owner, Matthew Burke, to accept a private inquiry into the matter.

Sir Travis mentions that the local workers believe that the strange events in the mines are of a preternatural nature, but the Company believes that the causes are mundane. There was Luddite sabotage in the mine's early days and sympathisers still live nearby. The Company believes that someone is attempting to frighten the miners from their work and ruin the Company. At this point Sir Travis invites the adventurers to ask any questions they may have about the Bremerstoke situation. He knows about the mines, their physical location, and the politics driving the mines, but little about what lies beneath.

- The mines are located on the edge of Bremerstoke village (population: 5000).
- Until five years ago the Bremerstoke economy was based around farming wheat crops and trading cattle, but that changed when Mr Burke, an engineer from Birmingham, determined that a coal seam ran beneath the valley. Mr Burke raised capital, bought land from the local squire, and began work.
- The majority of the men and children over six living in Bremerstoke work in the mines, working two shifts of twelve hours each. The mines make a tidy profit, which Sir Travis believes is a source of jealousy for the Bremerstokes, whose waning fortunes have been badly affected by the influx of local workers to the mines rather than in the Bremerstoke's fields. As a result there is no love lost between his lordship and Mr Burke.
- Sir Travis does not know if Mr Burke has any old enemies who would like to see him ruined, not counting the Bremerstokes.

The Luddites in *Victoriana*

In our world the Luddites were textile craftsmen who destroyed the machines that they felt were replacing them in the early 19th century. Luddites took their name from 'King Ludd,' a codename for their leadership. They were ultimately crushed by a combination of harsh military and political action as well as a recovering economy. In *VICTORIANA*, where the old ways are buttressed by magic and the fear that 'soulless' technology is trying to replace it, the Luddites have become something much bigger.

True Luddites are heretics, as they have largely abandoned the Aluminat Church in favour of the old ways (particularly Celtic Aluminat teachings). 'King Ludd' is equated with the Celtic archon Nuada (using his Welsh name of Lludd) and his silver arm as a symbol of technology replacing humanity (it's worth noting that, in the legends, Nuada did not regain his kingship until his flesh-and-blood arm was restored). Many conjurers are flocking to the Luddite cause, spurred on by the ideal of the pastoral past against the tendrils of railways and cities expanding into formerly rural areas and imposing a new order.

In 1856, Luddite groups still exist, but they are isolated from each other; there is no unified movement. Typically, new groups spring up whenever industry first comes into an area and slowly disappear as the locals get accustomed to the new technologies. Some Luddites, bowing to the inevitable, refocus their efforts on bettering working conditions and ensuring that the new industrialists remember that their workers are people. Interestingly, while they have many points in common, Luddites and communists typically see each other as enemies. Communists note that Luddite sabotage usually affects workers more than owners, while Luddites see communists as part of the growing industrial machine that would not end if they came to power.

For more information on Luddism see *FACES IN THE SMOKE 2: SHADOWS AND STEEL*.

- Luddites damaged the initial attempts to build the mine. One of their favourite techniques was to cut the crane wires and damage the supports, causing the crane to collapse. They did not care who they hurt.
- If asked about what is haunting the mines, Sir Travis tells them that, according to the miners, there is some sort of creature below. There have been accidents and people injured, but no deaths thus far. Mr Burke blames the injuries on the carelessness of the workers, who are panicking at shadows.

If the adventurers accept the job, Sir Travis thanks them for their indulgence and informs them that he'll have his accountant, Mr Cassidy, escort them to Kensal Green, where a private train can take them directly to Bremerstoke.

He also says that Mr Cassidy is available to answer any questions they have; Mr Cassidy is waiting in a carriage outside for the adventurers to take them to the station. At this point he checks his pocket watch and thanks the adventurers for accepting the job. Now that business is satisfactorily concluded, he needs to get to the fencing club for some exercise before returning to his office.

Note that Sir Travis didn't mention compensation; it would be ungentlemanly to do so. He expects Mr Cassidy to handle the details while they are en route. The Gnome accountant meets them outside and leads them to the carriage; he is also well-dressed, although not quite as fashionable as his employer. Once inside the carriage Cassidy discusses remuneration. Each adventurer is offered £50 to investigate and another £50 if they uncover the source of the troubles.

Sir Travis Duquesne Eldren Financier

Physical: 9 Initiative: 8
Mental: 8 Health: 8
Social: 10 Quintessence: 12

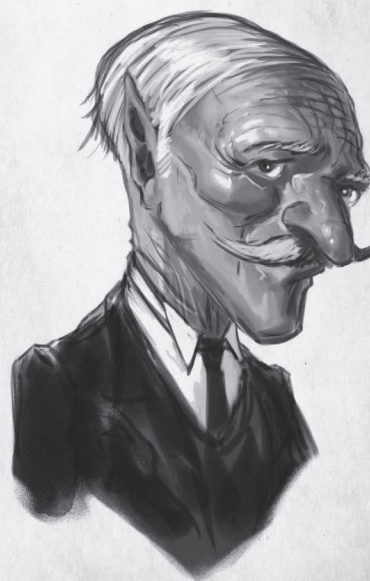
Armour Value: 2 (lined waistcoat)
Special Traits: Ancestral Sword (rapier, +2 accuracy, +1 damage), Clairvoyant (*magic sense*)
Complications: Optimistic
Damage: Rapier (10), Allen & Thurber . 36 (8)



Godwin Cassidy Gnome Accountant

Physical: 4 Initiative: 7
Mental: 7 Health: 6
Social: 6 Quintessence: 18

Armour Value: 3 (lined jacket)
Special Traits: None
Complications: Secret (affair)
Damage: Weighted cane (3), Sharps 4-shot derringer (4)



He makes a point of telling wealthy adventurers that £50 is more than the miners can hope to make in a year.

Mr Cassidy is happy to make whatever stops the adventurers need before escorting them to Kensal Green. Once they arrive at the station Cassidy looks on with envy at an aerostat taking flight, noting that the Company hopes to be profitable enough to purchase its own aerostat so that investors can arrive in style.

Cassidy leads the adventurers to the mid-gauge train with huge cars for coal transport. There is a comfortable carriage with leather-upholstered armchairs, a divan and a well-stocked bar. Cassidy notes that the carriage used to be the property of Lord Bremerstoke, hence the fine appointments. Mr Burke used his new-found wealth from the mine to purchase the carriage from Lord Bremerstoke when he needed some money. Cassidy wishes them luck and sees them off. The trip takes the adventurers just over eight hours, depositing them, after dark, at the mouth of the mines.

Scene 2: An Unfortunate Welcome

It is dark and muggy when the train comes to a halt, but fortunately the rain seems to have subsided. As the locomotive pulls into a rail siding at the mines, the adventurers can see a group of people milling about. Voices are raised in anger, and under the gas lights in the yard, the scene takes on a hellish quality. The damned, it seems, are striking...

The adventurers disembark from the train and must push through the press of dirty, stinking miners, many shouting abuse at the figures standing on a handcar, trying to shout over the crowd. A booming voice, which belongs to local wise woman Moriah, accuses, "You did this! You drove the mines deeper into the ground than before and now we've paid the price! You've uncovered spirits of the dead, disturbed the rest of the ancients!" This drives the miners into greater frenzy and violence seems imminent.

Many of the miners carry picks, spades or torches. It is obvious that whoever is the target of the mob's ire does not stand a chance unless they have a regiment backing them up.

The miners take little notice of the adventurers, unless a member of the group is an Eldren. Any miner near the Eldren adventurer sucks in his breath and takes a step back. They have never seen anyone this beautiful and are momentarily stunned. This effect ripples through the crowd as each person wonders why the person next to them suddenly fell silent. This only causes a brief respite, however, as the miners' anger at their boss is infinitely greater than their excitement at seeing a real, live Eldren.

On the handcar, Matthew Burke – a surprisingly fit and harsh-looking Dwarf, and his foreman, Skeet, a Shrewman – are trying to be heard. On seeing them, Burke motions them up onto the handcar in front of the assembly of miners. One of the miners throws a half-rotten fruit. Skeet catches it, inspects it, and then takes a big bite out of it. Burke motions for the adventurers to join him.





Burke calls for quiet. "You say I'm not interested in your welfare, eh? You think I don't care about your devil in the dark, eh? Your fortunes are my fortunes... and vice-versa. We are all in this together, lads! Here are people I've hired special from London – people who know all about the mystic and sorcerous. They are here to find out what this creature is and put a stop to it! But we must work together on this, lads, otherwise we will all suffer for it!"

The crowd remains angry and boisterous. Some start throwing small rocks and rotten fruit. If the adventurers are on the handcar with Burke and Skeet, then they may be hit. Although the small rocks and rotten fruit are not enough to cause damage, they do sting and being covered in rotten apples is both unpleasant and embarrassing. If the adventurers wish to quiet the crowd, they can

attempt an Incredibly Difficult (9 black dice) Presence + Bull or Charm roll (Wits + Politics may be used as a complementary skill), unless an Eldren attempts to quiet the crowd, in which case it is only a Very Difficult (6 black dice) roll. If the adventurers fail to calm the crowd, then the crowd only gets more riled up, screaming that the adventurers are out to get the miners and that they don't care about their welfare.

Skeet informs the adventurers that they've had their first death tonight; a young boy was trampled by workers panicking at the sight of the Devil in the mine. He motions to a tarp-covered figure, not far from the handcar, lying on the platform where the steam engines that run the water lines are chugging away. If they look over the boy, the most obvious feature is the look of abject horror on his face.

Matthew Burke Dwarf Engineer

Physical: 5 Initiative: 5
Mental: 10 Health: 8
Social: 8 Quintessence: 12

Armour Value: 3 (lined jacket)
Special Traits: Order 1
Complications: Rage
Damage: Punch (2), Mariette 4 shot pepperbox (8)



Skeet Beastfolk (Shrew) Foreman

Physical: 7 Initiative: 5
Mental: 5 Health: 8
Social: 4 Quintessence: 6

Armour Value: 1 (greatcoat)
Special Traits: Echolocation*, Enhanced Smell
Complications: Little Legs
Damage: Small club (2)

*When speaking, Skeet ignores any modifiers for poor lighting. If he remains silent, 3 black Dice are added to all sight-based Perception rolls.



Angry Beastfolk Miner

Physical: 4 Initiative: 2
Mental: 2 Health: 6
Social: 2 Quintessence: 0

Armour Value: 1 (greatcoat)
Special Traits: None
Complications: None
Damage: Punch (3), small club (4), pick (6 – ignores 3 points of AV)

Enter Lord Bremerstoke

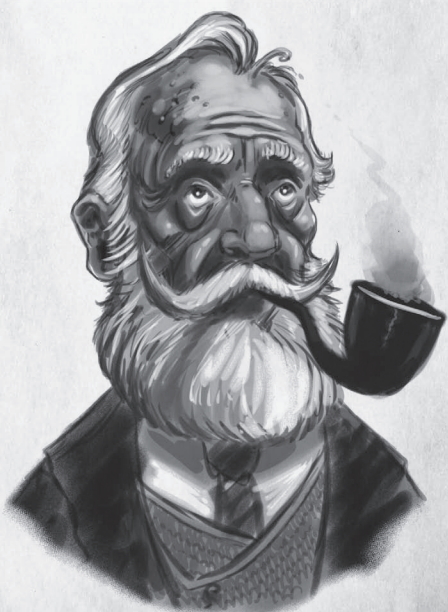
Even if the adventurers are unsuccessful at quieting the crowd, the mob grows very quiet on its own and turns collectively toward the town. Three horses and human riders are coming up the dirt path; Lord Bremerstoke and his children, John and Margaret, have arrived. Though portly and florid-faced, his Lordship has undeniable charisma; his very presence seems to have a restraining effect on the people. Speaking quietly to the workers, he warns them of the dangers of army involvement and the effect that violence has on the mines... and their livelihood.

John Bremerstoke, age 22, eyes the miners and Burke with barely concealed contempt. Margaret Bremerstoke is a beautiful young lady of 19. She causes quite a few heads to turn, which makes her blush, although she does react with

Lord Arthur Bremerstoke Human Landowner

Physical: 6 Initiative: 6
Mental: 8 Health: 10
Social: 12 Quintessence: 12

Armour Value: 3 (lined jacket)
Special Traits: None
Complications: None
Damage: Sword Cane (6), Cogswell .47 pepperbox (10)



John Bremerstoke Human Country Gentleman

Physical: 8 Initiative: 6
Mental: 8 Health: 10
Social: 8 Quintessence: 12

Armour Value: 3 (lined jacket)
Special Traits: None
Complications: None
Damage: Smallsword (8), Tranter revolver (10)





a little envy if one of the adventurers is female, especially if Eldren, and siphoning some of the attention. She spends most of the time calming her brother, telling him that the miners are simply afraid and that "Father will sort this."

Indeed, the miners begin to disperse, prompting an argument between Burke and Bremerstoke. Burke wants to know how he could order his workers home; the mines are lying idle! Bremerstoke points out that the other option is a full-scale riot...and Burke's possible injury or worse. Burke accuses Bremerstoke of engineering the crisis with the intent of gaining back the mines. His Lordship sharply denies the accusation, "If you cannot tend your business, Mr Burke, then you too will experience those 'market forces' that lost me these holes in the ground." With that, Lord Bremerstoke rides off with his children, leaving Burke fuming.

Margaret Bremerstoke Human Dabbler in the Arcane

Physical: 4 Initiative: 5
Mental: 9 Health: 6
Social: 10 Quintessence: 24

Armour Value: 3 (lined jacket)
Special Traits: Entropy I, Demonology
Complications: Vow (revenge)
Damage: Concealed knife (4), Sharps derringer (4)



Burke finally speaks to the adventurers, apologising for not having a proper reception for them, and indicating the crowd, points out how important it is for them to bring this incident to a close as quickly as possible. He invites them to breakfast at his house tomorrow, and then has them and their bags taken by wagon to a local house where they are put up by a local widow, Mrs Smith. Their route takes them past the circus.

Scene 3: The Circus

The new circus is currently being built at the request of Burke, who wants to have happy workers. Toward that end he's retained the services of Pablo Fanque, a well-known circus owner currently touring Birmingham. Fanque is only overseeing the preparations, as he generally performs with his main company. Unfortunately the beginning of the latest mining troubles coincided with the arrival of the circus, casting unfair suspicions on the circus troupe.

Burke leads the adventurers past the circus grounds on their way to the Smith residence. A number of railroad cars atop temporary tracks sit just off the main line beyond the grounds (the Company laid them to accommodate Pablo). There are quite a few workers, some part of the circus, others temporary, constructing stages, seating areas, and props.

Pablo Fanque is admonishing some of the workers to get back to work, as they'd halted to watch the goings-on at the mine. Two of the performers, Sharpshooter Sam and the Snake Lady, practice their acts near the adventurers and give them sideways glances. They are suspicious of the newcomers but maintain a professional, courteous demeanour. Perhaps as a subtle warning, Sam fires off several impressive trick shots as the adventurers pass.

Burke tips his hat to Fanque and slows the wagon as the circus owner approaches. Fanque is of African descent and looks quite spry at 60. He smiles behind a bushy moustache and sports a full head of hair, although both are turning white with age. Pablo has some girth to his frame although some of this can be attributed to the extra clothing he wears to keep warm in the Midlands spring. He is quite accommodating, especially to Company men, as it's the Company's money that makes this venture profitable.

After quick greetings, Fanque asks Burke if everything is okay at the mine. Burke tells him not to worry and introduces him to the adventurers. Burke says that he has

full confidence in their abilities. Fanque greets them and tells them that he's happy that the Company is taking this thing seriously. He admits that he's a bit worried, especially for the safety of his employees. If the Company is not adequately treating the workers then no amount of entertainment is going to satisfy them. Pablo fears that the circus may become a symbol of Company shenanigans and a riot could threaten the lives of his employees, all good people.

If there truly is a Devil in the mines, then Pablo hopes that the adventurers uncover and destroy it. He also tells the adventurers that, should they stay long enough, he'd be happy to have them as his personal guests when the circus opens.

While the adventurers converse with Fanque, they see two other performers getting into an argument. Tottie approaches Indira and asks her if she's seen Sininen. When Indira says no, Tottie accusingly asks if any of her snakes have seen Sininen. Indira looks offended and says that her snakes have better taste. Pablo intervenes before things heat up between the two women. He tells Tottie that this isn't the first time her cat has wandered off and she's wasting valuable practice time. He also chides Indira for teasing Tottie, knowing how much she loves her cat.

After a few tense moments, a beaming Ogre, Tupp the Amazing Eye, walks up gently holding Sininen in his arms. An adventurer may spot Tupp first, if not, Indira does so with her snake. Tottie squeals and eagerly takes her pet. Fanque chuckles, "The Amazing Eye indeed!" Tupp seems very pleased he could help Tottie.

Pablo Fanque

Pablo Fanque keeps his personal history close to his chest; whether that's because he wants to maintain the mystery or because he simply doesn't remember it is anybody's guess. He was born in Norwich and his real name is William Darby, the name he first used when he joined William Barry's circus forty years ago. He became the first black circus proprietor a decade later and is quite popular, especially in the Midlands. He was an accomplished equestrian and tightrope walker in his heyday; but now he's primarily a ringmaster.

While married he is also a widower; his first wife died during one of his shows when a gallery collapsed on her. He has four sons, two from each wife, and all of them have performed in his circus at one time or another.

Pablo Fanque Human Circus Owner

Physical: 11 Initiative: 7
Mental: 9 Health: 12
Social: 12 Quintessence: 18

Armour Value: 1 (padded clothing)

Special Traits: None

Complications: Show Off

Damage: Punch (3), Club (4), Blunt & Syms 0.32
pepperbox (7)



Totte 'Tottie' Parpola

Totte 'Tottie' Parpola is a beautiful Finnish acrobat whose 'revealing' costume attracts many male patrons. Indeed, she is usually the star of the show. While flirty, Tottie doesn't let anyone get too close for fear of revealing her past, which involved an unfortunate incident with a Russian noble that had the Tsarina's favour. She absolutely dotes on her Russian Blue cat, called 'Sininen' (Finnish for 'blue'). Tupp amuses her, and she finds it very cute that he pronounces her cat's name 'Sinner.'

Totte 'Tottie' Parpola Human Tightrope Walker

Physical: 12 Initiative: 7
Mental: 7 Health: 12
Social: 10 Quintessence: 12

Armour Value: 0
Special Traits: Clairvoyance (*aura reading*)
Complications: Narcissist, Secret
Damage: Kick (6), Staff (10)



weapons are the Whitworth revolvers and rifles, which use hexagonal bullets.

Sharpshooter Sam Huldufolk Marksman

Physical: 12 Initiative: 11
Mental: 8 Health: 12
Social: 6 Quintessence: 12

Armour Value: 0
Special Traits: Nahuatl Hunting Sigil (+3 dice to sharpshooting)
Complications: Show-off
Damage: Whitworth .45 (11), Whitworth Rifle (13)



Sharpshooter Sam

An ancient Huldu in his fifties, Sharpshooter Sam should, as typical for his race, already be dead. Those that know him simply shrug and say he's too stubborn to die. He claims to have fought in all the major battles for Texan independence (he still refers to himself as a 'Texian') and no one dares challenge his claim. He is a friend to several Native American chieftains and carries a bark-carved 'rune' given to him by a medicine man.

Sam wears a frontiersman outfit that incorporates American, Mexican and Native American motifs. He wears a raccoon hat that should have been replaced a decade ago. Perhaps most interestingly, Sam is a Tejano and often resorts to his native Spanish when frustrated or upset. His preferred

Indira Hollingsworth - The Snake Lady

Indira Hollingsworth is an enigmatic soul. She is the daughter of an East India Company civilian and an Indian woman. Largely ignored by her father growing up, Indira learned the secrets of snake-charming from her maternal uncle Sanjay. Her father left her and her mother in India when he returned to England. Not long thereafter her mother died, making Indira promise to see her father. Indira fulfilled her promise and joined many travelling circuses to pay her way to England. Once she got here, she discovered that her father wanted nothing to do with her. So far, Indira has remained with Fanque's circus, her latest employer, but she wonders whether she should go back to India.

Indira keeps a number of snakes and always has one or two draped about her. Some whisper that she is an Apophid (or its Indian cousin, the Naga), but there is no truth to the rumours. Despite Indira's Indian heritage, Pablo encourages her to don Egyptian costumes as he feels that most patrons are familiar with Ancient Egypt (she drew the line at renaming herself 'Cleopatra'). Indira has many trust issues and keeps her thoughts to herself. She speaks to her snakes more than other sapients. She is loyal to the circus and would aid it whenever necessary, although she knows that she's likely to be one of the first targets due to her background.

Scene 4: The Smith Residence

After stopping at the circus, Burke leads them to the Smith residence, a large house that, in addition to the adventurers, houses several circus workers as guests. Mrs Smith is a kindly Gnome whose husband passed away three winters ago. They ran the closest thing to an inn that Bremerstoke has and Mrs Smith continues to run it after his death. She avoids talking about the situation in town and the mines. Burke will not answer any questions now, saying he will do so later in the sanctity of his own house.

The Snake Lady Human Snake Charmer

Physical: 9 Initiative: 7
Mental: 8 Health: 10
Social: 8 Quintessence: 24

Armour Value: 0
Special Traits: Conjure (*animal companion, cat nimble, liken shape, sleep*)
Complications: None
Damage: Kick (5), Katar (punching dagger, 8)



Snake

Initiative: 6 PC: 6
MC: 6 Health: 8
Armour: 0 Damage: Bite (2 + poison)

Adelaide Smith Gnome Innkeeper

Physical: 6 Initiative: 7
Mental: 6 Health: 8
Social: 6 Quintessence: 12

Armour Value: 0
Special Traits: None
Complications: None
Damage: Broom (2)





Scene 5: The Wise Woman

It's possible that the adventurers may want to meet Moriah after they've settled in at the Smith residence. They may even want her guidance later in the adventure. In any case, they likely find her at her home.

Moriah Bartlewick lives just outside the village in a modest home with a thatched-roof that looks straight out of the Tudor era. Many different types of herbs and plants grow around it with no apparent organisation, although Moriah knows it so well that she can retrieve the herbs she needs in seconds. A small, winding stone path leads through the flora to her home. There's always something cooking in Moriah's pot, and the smell emanating from her chimney is as often horrid as it is delicious.

Moriah Bartlewick is an old woman who's lived in Bremerstoke valley for all of her 77 years. Moriah is an enchanter and has been the de facto healer, pharmacist, and guidance counsellor for the villagers for most of her career. Only the recent hiring of Dr Philmont Pepper by Mr Burke has slowed the pace of villagers coming to her for cures. Even Father Nathan Danvers, the Aluminat parish pastor, leaves Moriah to her craft.

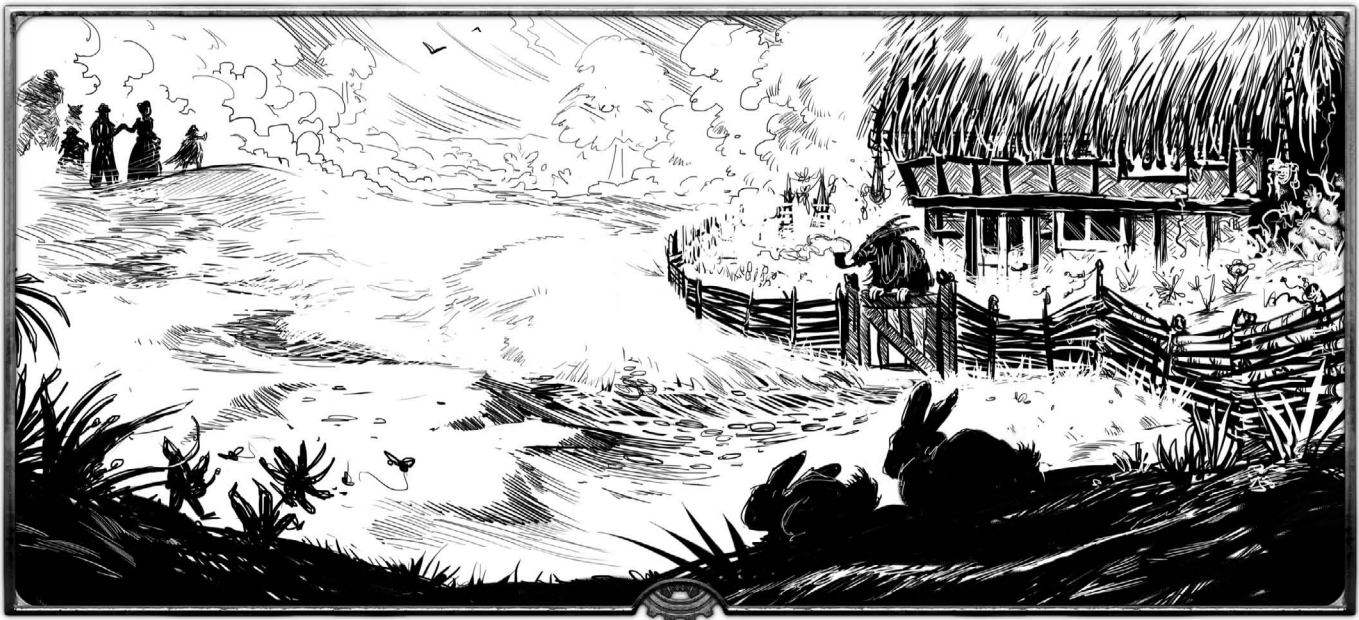
Moriah is slightly bent in her old age and calls for the adventurers to come in while she's hunched over her fireplace, stirring something into a cooking pot. The walls of the room are lined with shelves of ingredients, cookware and instruments. Without turning Moriah asks them why

they've come. She assumes they are villagers looking for a cure; when it's obvious they are not, especially if they identify themselves as working for the Company, she puts her stirring spoon aside, grabs her walking stick, and spins around, giving them a sinister glare. She then demands to know why Mr Burke won't let the dead lie.

As a practitioner of the Old Ways, Moriah finds the concept of mining the lifeblood of the earth to power infernal machines demonic. She also believes that the valley is the final resting place of fallen warriors of many cultures, and that digging tunnels risks disturbing the peace of the dead. The sightings of the Devil in the Dark have only confirmed her beliefs, and now that Devil has claimed its first blood price.

Moriah is a bit of a red herring, as she seems an obvious choice for the power behind the Devil. In truth she is just as mystified as everyone else but allows her beliefs to colour her judgment. In Moria's mind the Devil is either an old spirit of the deceased or an agent of an old archon, possibly Woden. Moriah had nothing to do with the Luddites either; she sympathised with their cause but would not endorse violence. All the Luddites got for their trouble was a hanging, except for John Bremerstoke. Moriah explains that several Luddites implicated him when they were interrogated, as the young man wanted the mines to fail. Only his young age and his father's position kept him from being implicated.

While she has nothing to do with the Devil or the Luddites, Moriah can be a source of charms or healing poultices for the adventurers.



Moriah Bartlewick

Moriah is a bent goatwoman that leans on a gnarled walking stick for support. She wears too many layers for the weather and still shivers as if her bones are frozen. She carries a number of charms on her person and makes no attempt to hide them, even if one of the adventurers is a hermeticist. She lives in a ramshackle hut on the outskirts of the village, where she has many cauldrons brewing outside.

Moriah Bartlewick Beastfolk (Goat) Wise Woman

Physical: 6 Initiative: 8
Mental: 12 Health: 10
Social: 12 Quintessence: 36

Armour Value: 0

Special Traits: Entropy 2, Conjure (*all, including Thunor's anger*), Perth Sigil (+3 to Conjure rolls)

Complications: None

Damage: Staff (9), Thunor's Anger (8)



Thunor's Anger (Enchantment)

Ritual Cost: 1

Difficulty: 0

Ritual length: 2 hrs

Activation range: Touch

Activation cost: 1

Duration: Rounds

To enact this ritual, the conjurer must collect rainwater from a raging thunderstorm. The water must be gathered into a small sheepskin bag about the size of a hand. The conjurer then sings hymns to Thunor (or any appropriate storm god) and at the end of 2 hours the ritual is enacted.

Once activated, the bag explodes into electrical energy when touching its target (this may be a melee attack, or thrown; it can be combined with another weapon). The electricity itself does 8 dice damage. Once the hit is successful or the duration ends (whichever is sooner) the enchantment is dissolved.

~ACT 2~

TROUBLE IN THE MINE

The adventurers breakfast with Burke and learn a bit more about the goings-on at the mine. When the adventurers tour the mine the Devil strikes. The adventurers enter the mine to search for it, only to follow it back to Bremerstoke Village. They soon discover that it seems to be Tupp, a simple-minded Ogre who doesn't appear to have an angry bone in his body. Unfortunately, he is captured and sent to Lord Bremerstoke for judgement.

Scene 1: Breakfast with Burke

In the morning, the adventurers awaken to the smell of fresh biscuits and eggs. Skeet appears outside Mrs Smith's house to guide the adventurers to Mr Burke's residence. Burke's house is a nicely apportioned two storey on the edge of town. While the general decrepitude of the town behind them dampens the overall image, it is still clear that Burke has money and likes to spend it. Skeet takes the adventurers



to a study, where they can wait for breakfast. The study walls are covered in framed engineering drawings and maps of the surrounding land. Anyone looking at the maps can easily locate the mines. The books are all technical works which would be of interest only to engineers and others of their ilk. On the desk, should an adventurer look, is a proposal for expanding the mine. Comparing the proposal with the maps on the wall requires a Difficult (3 black dice) Wits + Perception roll (Navigation can be used as a complementary skill). A success reveals that the new shaft will undercut part of Lord Bremerstoke's land.

After about ten minutes, Skeet returns and says that breakfast is served. He leads them into a large dining room where Burke is seated at the far end in a clean suit, looking incredibly well manicured. He rises and invites the adventurers to sit. Skeet takes up a seat at the opposite end. A Dwarf serving maid brings plates heaped with eggs, cold chicken and several other dishes. A Difficult (3 black dice) Wits + Perception roll allows an adventurer to notice that Burke and the maid exchange several knowing glances, and the maid smirks before scampering back off through the kitchen door.

If the adventurers try to ask questions about the mine, Burke shushes them and tells them to enjoy breakfast before getting down to business. There will be enough time later to ask questions. Once the meal is concluded, Burke looks at the adventurers and asks them to fire away with the questions. Any answer that Burke gives stresses the importance of technology and advancement over tradition. It is technology that will break the workers free from their bonds as chattels of the landed gentry.

- Burke thinks Lord Bremerstoke is behind this. The town was dying when Burke found the coal seams and now the workers are growing wealthy because of Burke, and not wasting their time toiling for the lord on his farms.
- Any mention of ghosts, demons or anything else supernatural is pshaw-ed away. Burke feels the agency behind his tragedy is wholly corporeal.
- If the workers strike, he will have no choice but to call in the army. That will lead to nothing but deaths and the closure of the mine, at least temporarily. The local constabulary is too small and under equipped to deal with an uprising of that magnitude.
- The mine is one of the most advanced and safest in England. He designed it and oversaw the construction himself.

- The construction was hampered by some Luddites who continually tried to undermine the construction. He believes the constabulary rounded all of them up, however. Besides that was years ago. He doubts they'd be back.
- There's only one way into or out of the mine, and he has that watched all day every day.
- He cannot think of anyone in the town, other than the Bremerstokes, who would want to see the mine fail. The majority of the town earns its livelihood either directly or indirectly from the mine. If it were shut down, the town would almost have to shut down as well. As he muses, he recalls Moriah Bartlewick and believes that she may have ties to the Luddites, as she is very vocal around the miners. The judge in the Luddite case 5 years ago dismissed her involvement, but that may have been due to the witch's curse or some-such.
- Noted circus proprietor Pablo Fanque is building a circus in the village. Burke saw no harm in allowing it, as his workers could use the entertainment. With the strange happenings in the mines, though, Burke wonders whether the exotic circus troupe has something to do with it.
- There are three Bremerstokes: Lord Arthur Bremerstoke and his two children, John and Margaret. Of the three, Margaret is the easiest to deal with, perhaps because she is the youngest and seems to take an interest in the plight of the workers. John is angry at Burke because Burke is slowly taking away John's inheritance. Every piece of land the Bremerstokes have to sell to Burke to remain solvent is one piece of land John cannot inherit. Come to think of it, he would not be surprised to find out that John is the real culprit behind the problems at the mine.

Scene 2: Trouble in the Mines

Burke and Skeet also accompany the adventurers when they go to the mines. As they approach, miners burst out of the mines, screaming that they quit. The guards and Mr Tibbs, the assistant foreman, are trying to stop the miners to no avail. Burke rushes up to Mr Tibbs and demands to know what is happening. Mr Tibbs shrugs and says that the miners heard the Devil below, calling out their sins. They quickly fed on each other's fears and now Mr Tibbs fears a strike is imminent. Burke shouts "balderdash!" and tries to stop some of the workers, threatening to call in the army, but the frightened miners are unmoved. A Difficult (3 black dice)

Presence + (Bull or Charm) roll against Burke's (Average) Mental Competence roll is necessary to keep him from doing that right now.

New Rule: Affecting a Group

Sometimes an adventurer may wish to affect an entire group of people. A peddler may be enticing customers to purchase her wares, an actor may be performing on stage, or a political activist may be trying to sway the crowd to her side. There are many skills that accomplish these goals and any of them (see *MAKE ME AN OFFER* in the *VICTORIANA CORE RULEBOOK*) can be used on a crowd.

To simulate this, a 'crowd' is the same as a 'mob.' In order to succeed, the adventurer must make an opposed roll using his skill against the mob's mental competence. In some cases, a full success (2 successes) is enough, with the degrees of success modelling how entertained or enraptured the 'mob' is. If persuading a portion of the crowd is significant (such as duelling debaters), then each success persuades 10 people.

If there are significant characters in the audience, then they may make separate rolls to see if they are individually persuaded, rather than being lumped in with the mob. This could result in interesting circumstances where an adventurer's impassioned plea causes a criminal mastermind's minions to back down, leaving the mastermind exposed and alone to face the adventurers.

Once Burke has calmed down, he orders the adventurers into the mine with Skeet to look for this creature. After all, what is he paying them for – not for having breakfast! He confirms with his guards that the hatches to the mine were closed after the incident and only opened this morning. Skeet ensured that no one remained in the mines last night and Mr Tibbs kept an eye on who was going in and coming out this morning. There is no other way out, so Burke logically thinks that whoever killed the boy must still be in the mines. Burke still dismisses the idea that the Devil is a ghost.

The mine is typically entered by a handcar or ore car that goes to an upper assembly area. The mine is vast enough

that walking its entirety could take a long time. At the upper assembly area there is a steam-powered lift cage for the workers, and another to bring ore up to be dumped into ore cars. A ride in the lift can be disconcerting; it does not descend smoothly. It moves in fits and starts and can occasionally sway from side to side giving the impression that it is getting ready to fall out of control. If anyone gets nervous, Skeet tries to calm them by telling them that it happens all the time; the cage only fell once and some people even survived!

At the bottom of the lift, 200 feet below the surface is the lower assembly area. Here is where the foreman organised the ore cars going up and down the various lines and where the ore is dumped into the lift buckets to go to the upper assembly area. There is a little overseer's shack in this area, with gas lamps for the foreman. The respective lines run off from this assembly area.

Skeet points out the things of note here: the air hoses that are connected to a steam engine on the surface that pumps fresh air into the mine and helps keep the water table from rising into the mine. He adds that an unfortunate side effect of the increased quality of air is the lower flashpoint for the coal gas and dust in the air. A stray spark could result in a bad explosion. To deal with the risk of unnecessary sparking from the use of picks and spades, water hoses provide a new method of burrowing the coal out of the walls. High pressure water knocks down sections of the tunnel walls without risking sparks and 'flashouts' – explosions caused by the coal gas and dust in the air.

Once into the tunnels, the atmosphere of the place is surprisingly warm and damp. The darkness, even with the lamps, is near complete. Adventurers can see no more than a few feet in front of their light (even Night Vision is of little use down here). The mines are noisy, even with no people or work – the groaning of the earth, the creaking of the support beams, and the crumbling of the walls. In numerous places, the walls and support beams bow dangerously, making heading down a given shaft a dangerous proposition.

Scene 3: The First "Devil"

After about an hour of searching, Skeet is ready to give up and consign the attacker to the world of the supernatural. With a Difficult (3 black dice) Wits + Perception roll, an adventurer hears something further down the shaft, the loud wailing of "Sinner! Sinner!" If they succeed, they see what looks like a burly man moving toward them. The GM

should secretly make a Difficult (3 black dice) roll for any adventurer with the Clairvoyance skill, if the roll succeeds; the adventurer has a sense of impending, infernal evil (this is caused by the actual demon and not related to Tupp).

If they do not succeed at their Perception roll they suddenly see a flash of two large red eyes, which dim as the adventurers find themselves face-to-face with neither a man, nor a ghost...but a massive, burly figure – blackened from the coal dust – that barrels into them from the direction of where the red eyes flashed. There is also an animalistic screech (Sininen is scared).

Unbeknownst to the adventurers, Tupp has entered the mine through a secret entrance, following Tottie's cat. In his desire to make Tottie happy he continued to follow Sininen until he finally caught her, accidentally spooking miners along the way. The Devil has also been active and, once Tupp finally scooped up Sininen, the Devil spooked Tupp. He is now fleeing the mines the way he came and the adventurers are unfortunately in his way.

Skeet bolts. He grabs his lantern tightly and runs back toward the lift. In the fray, a Difficult (3 black dice) Dexterity roll is necessary to keep from dropping their lamps. If a lamp is knocked from an adventurers grasp, there is a 1 in 6 chance of a flashback, causing 6 dice of fire damage and leaving them to stumble around in the dark for several rounds because of the blinding flash. Their assailant does not attack to kill however; he is merely trying to push his way through. In the advent of a flashback, or two successful attack rolls by the creature, it pushes its way past the adventurers and on into the dark.

Tupp should make his escape at this point (the Gamesmaster can call a Scripting Die here; it's actually not being used by Tupp, but the Devil itself!). Characters that make a Difficult (3 black dice) Wits + Tracking roll follow their assailant into an area where fresh air is coming into the mines. It takes approximately half an hour reach this disused series of tunnels, where the coal played out several years ago and the shaft forgotten. There is another entrance into the mines!

They also find tracks leading back to the village; they are massive, indicating that their target is at least eight feet tall. Unfortunately, the tracks are too muddled as the adventurers get near the village to follow.

Arthur Tibbs Gnome Assistant Foreman

Physical: 6 Initiative: 7
Mental: 6 Health: 8
Social: 6 Quintessence: 12

Armour Value: 2 (lined waistcoat)
Special Traits: None
Complications: None
Damage: Small Club (2)



Tupp

Tupp is a large Ogre with a photographic memory, although he understands little of anything complex. Born Robert Hill and dubbed 'the Amazing Eye' for his first few acts, Tupp earned his nickname when Pablo began betting people two pennies, or tuppence, that the Amazing Eye could recall something quickly seen or recite long poems. His fellow performers soon dubbed him 'Tupp' and the name stuck. He's now billed as 'Tupp, the Amazing Eye.'

Tupp is sweet on Tottie and she treats him like a little brother. It's this relationship that gets him into trouble when he runs into the mines to retrieve her cat. He knows that he can't pronounce Sininen's name so he just shouts "Sinner!" when calling for her.

Tupp, 'The Amazing Eye' Rank 8 Ogre Performer (Focussed)

Physical: 8 Initiative: 0
Mental: 3 Health: 28
Social: 4 Quintessence: 0

Armour Value: 0
Special Traits: Photographic Memory
Complications: 0
Damage: Punch (7), large club (12)



Scene 4: Terror & Tensions in the Village

There is only one creature of that size in town, and anyone asked points the adventurers toward the circus, where an Ogre goes by the name of 'the Amazing Eye.' As if by magic, or a frightened Skeet, Burke hears about the adventurers' findings. Other villagers have spotted Tupp returning to the circus and the information is spreading.

The Amazing Eye, or Tupp, is now back in his wagon, removing the soot with a wet sponge and tending to any wounds. Sininen is back with her mistress. He opens the door if the adventurers knock; he is quite pleased with himself for finding 'Sinners.' He admits to going into the mines late last night and not coming back until he found 'Sinner.' In spite of being of low intelligence, he remembers

every detail of being in the mines and says that "there's something scary in there."

Unfortunately, the adventurers don't have much time to clear things up. Within a matter of minutes after they arrive, Burke, Skeet, and several burly miners arrive with chains. Tupp doesn't resist; he thinks he's being arrested for trespassing in the mines and that "Mr Fanque will clear this all up." If the adventurers try to intercede Burke reminds them who they are working for and that they can appeal their case to Lord Bremerstoke.

Pablo Fanque rushes over to protest but Burke intercepts him. It's obvious that Burke feels embarrassment for inadvertently bringing 'the Devil' to the mines and causing all of the trouble. He wants Lord Bremerstoke to see the culprit to assuage the hard feelings that have built up over the incident and to seek justice for the young boy's death. An adventurer making a Difficult (3 black dice) Wits + Perception roll sees Tottie petting her cat. She's obviously upset at what's going on and whispers tearfully to her pet, "don't worry, Sininen, I'm sure Tupp will be okay." If approached, Tottie admits to the adventurers that Tupp had just returned her cat to her, both of them covered in soot.

If asked about the back entrance, Burke denies any knowledge, telling the adventurers that the Bremerstokes probably dug it on their own to skim some coal out of him mine. He assures them that, once this matter is settled, he'll make sure that shaft is dynamited and shut down forever. Burke asks them to accompany him to the nearest thing to a justice of the peace - Lord Bremerstoke is the Minister of Parliament for the village.

~ACT 3~ THE REAL DEVIL

The adventurers further discover that Lord Bremerstoke's daughter has been looking into ancient creatures and curses that have been haunting the area. Suddenly, the true horror once again rears its head and the adventurers must destroy it before it claims more lives.

Scene 1: Stoking the Bremerstokes

His lordship is still asleep when the adventurers and the angry procession arrive at his grand, gray stone mansion. As soon as a Clairvoyant steps through the gate, he or



she gets a drumming headache. The lands are still well-manicured, the house clean and neat; a sharp contrast from the dirty, dank atmosphere of the village. They are asked to wait in the library until Bremerstoke can join them.

At this point, one of the adventurers should notice an ancient wood and leather-bound book on a reading table. It is in sharp contrast to all the other books in the library, which are fairly new. If someone opens the book, he sees that the language inside is an ancient form of Gaelic. A Clairvoyant that succeeds at a Difficult (6 black dice) Resolve + Clairvoyance roll detects a palpable aura of magic that practically rolls off the pages.

An adventurer that makes an Average Wits + Lore roll recognises it as a grimoire of some sort. An adventurer that makes a Difficult Wits + magical skill roll recognises the patterns in the writing as some type of evocation ritual. They don't get far before the door opens and Margaret Bremerstoke enters the room.

Margaret is quite upset that Tupp is in chains and demands that they be removed. Burke politely declines, claiming that only Lord Bremerstoke can exert that privilege. Margaret claims that the mines are haunted by an actual spirit and a living Ogre hardly qualifies.

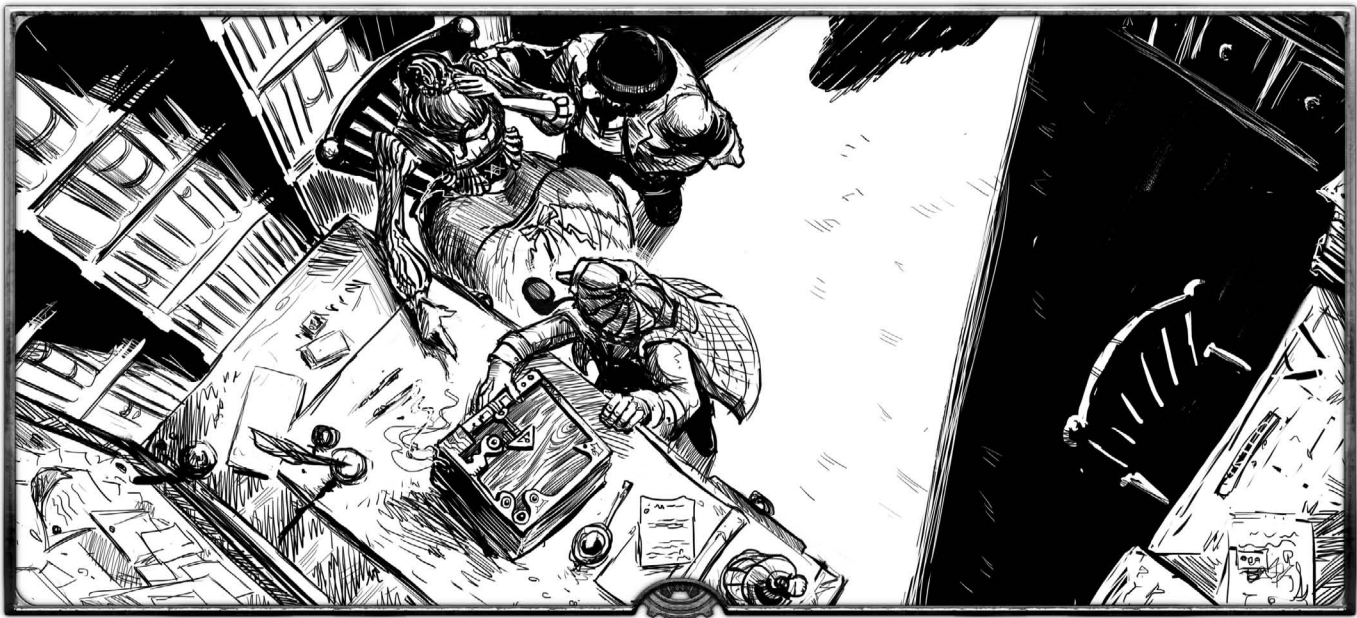
If directly asked about the book Margaret sighs and slides it back onto a shelf. She explains that Moriah got her thinking that maybe an old spirit was haunting Bremerstoke and that she's been reading about old local legends to see if she

could uncover anything. So far, she has several ideas but nothing firm (it takes an opposed Empathy roll against her Mental Competence to realise that she is lying).

Any further inquiries about Margaret have to wait as John Bremerstoke strides into the room, allowing the door to crash behind him like a conquering warlord. He's practically gloating, as he isn't surprised at all about Tupp. John figured that the source of the fear had to be something mundane. The poor miners were duped by a stupid Ogre! Margaret jumps to Tupp's defence and claims that he'd never hurt anyone, unlike John's involvement with the Luddites a few years back. This accusation causes John's cheeks to flush.

Just as John is preparing a scathing retort the door is thrown open again, crashing into the wall a second time. His lordship bellows for both his children to be quiet and leave him with the prisoner, the esteemed Mr Burke and his guests. Both children harrumph and storm for the door. Lord Bremerstoke is obviously hung over, but he manages to be civil to the adventurers.

Burke demands that Bremerstoke hear the case against Tupp, but Bremerstoke refuses. He says that he is neither a judge nor a justice. Perceptive adventurers (an average Wits + Perception roll) notice that Bremerstoke's constant refusal of Burke's demand for justice is making the old man smile. Anything he can do to deny Burke pleasure brings Lord Bremerstoke pleasure. He spends a good half hour thwarting all of Burke's demands, watching Burke grow redder and redder.



At the end of the half hour, or if the adventurers intervene, Lord Bremerstoke explains that if the Ogre is the guilty party, then there should be no trouble this evening if the Ogre remains in chains. He then dismisses everyone. If the adventurers advocate for Tupp, Lord Bremerstoke says that, until a magistrate can get here, the safest place for the accused to be is in custody; otherwise someone may try to take the law into his own hands.

As they head down the walk, Tupp in tow, Burke turns to the adventurers, saying that events in the mansion just cemented his belief that the Bremerstokes are behind the problems in the mine. When he finds out exactly how they are disrupting his livelihood, he will make them pay dearly. He brags that he will be living in the mansion before the summer is over if he gets his way. There is only one way to prove the Bremerstokes are behind it, though; he needs to get the workers back into the mines. Ominously, dark clouds and heavy rain move through the village.

Scene 2: The Horror of Bremerstoke Mines

Burke invites the adventurers to attend the reopening of the mine tonight. Once that night's shift starts, Burke promises to pay the adventurers their fee and arrange for a comfortable locomotive ride to take them back to the city. They even have the option of spending one more night at Mrs Smith's if they wish.

As they arrive at the mine, miners are heading through the large doors. Burke's men have informed the workers of the arrest of Tupp and the miners report for work at six that evening, embarrassed and angry that they were frightened by a circus Ogre. The miners treat the adventurers with grudging respect. Sure, the adventurers saved their jobs, but they also pointed out that the miners were afraid of something mundane.

If the adventurers inquire to the whereabouts of Tupp, they are told he is being held in a shed near the mine entrance. Anyone who goes near the mine entrance easily hears his plaintive cries and sobbing. Occasionally, sob-choked cries of "What did I do?" and "I have to perform in the show!" are heard. He is a pitiful creature and the adventurers should be made to feel sorry for him. Anyone who approaches the shed is threatened by a miner wielding a stout hammer.

As the last of miners head into the mines and Burke reaches for his purse, the skies finally open and a deluge of biblical proportions crashes down on the adventurers. As Burke

yells at the adventurers to head for his office, there are screams of terror coming from out of the mine! Miners once again stream out of the mine, running as fast as they can. When they hit the rain-slick ground, they begin to slip and slide, ending up a muddy pile of people thrashing to get away. As the adventurers run through the mud to reach the mine, they need to succeed at Difficult (3 black dice) Dexterity + Athletics rolls or end up sliding in the mud, slowing down their approach. They also need to force their way through the throng of miners still pouring out of the entrance.

Any Clairvoyant is overwhelmed by the feeling of pure evil crawling out of the shaft. There is no need for a Medium to roll their Clairvoyance skill.

Inside, they see Skeet at the controls of the steam lift, yelling down the shaft for people to get off the lift. There are too many people on there. The passenger lift is unable to move; the miners have swamped it and the engine cannot lift the cage. Skeet looks up as the investigators come running in. He tells them that if they want to go down, they can do so by riding in the coal buckets on the other lift. Riding in the buckets is a risky proposition. Only two human sized adventurer can fit in a bucket. Three smaller adventurers or one larger adventurer can ride in a bucket, if the party contains any Ogres, Dwarves or Gnomes. To add a further element of danger, the buckets swing and an Average Dexterity + Athletics roll is necessary to keep them from capsizing and flinging the adventurer down the shaft where they take damage for falling.

Scene 3: Facing the Devil in the Dark

At the bottom, they find something no one could expect: a dark shadowy figure with glowing eyes. Black smoke rises from the beast as it batters the miners and howls in a voice that sounds like it is coming from a thousand opened graves. The broken bodies of several miners lay crumpled on the ground at its feet. This monstrosity is obviously some kind of spirit from the Pale, dragged into the world. With a successful Very Difficult (6 black dice) Wits + Lore roll, an adventurer recognises the beast as a demon. They also know that the only way for a demon to appear on this place is to be summoned up by necromancy or demonology!

They can battle the creature, but it eventually flees through the mine and out the entrance that Tupp used. If the adventurers give chase, bystanders can inform them that it is seen headed for the Bremerstoke residence!



The Devil in the Dark

Physical: 15 Initiative: 9
Mental: 9 Health: 20
Social: 12 Quintessence: 30

Armour Value: 6 (aetherial nature)
Special Traits: Entropy 6, Aethereal Nature, Aethereal Strike (Armour ratings are halved against its attacks), Regeneration (4 pips per round)
Complications: None
Damage: Claws (8), Bite (10)



The Devil in the Dark

The Devil in the Dark looks like a partially manifested humanoid with loose, pasty skin and blood red glowing eyes. Parts of its body flicker in and out of existence and it constantly wails in pain with a jaw too large for its face (like a snake). The demon is wrapped in a smoky haze.

Scene 4: The Villain Revealed

As the adventurers arrive at the mansion the servants are fleeing the building. The screaming and wailing of the beast echo from all the windows, shattering several of them. As they enter, they find John Bremerstoke, battered but resolute, armed with a shotgun. He looks up at the adventurers and yells over the screaming that his sister is trapped in the library with the creature. He intends to blow its brains out! His father is outside the library, either knocked out cold or dead, a halo of blood around his head. He tried to save his daughter, but the beast was stronger. An Average Wits + Medicine roll indicates that he is still alive and in no danger of dying. They must either force the doors with a Very Difficult (6 black dice) Strength + Might roll to break down the doors. Alternatively, they can sneak around outside and enter by a window.

Inside, the library, they find Margaret, cowering inside a hastily drawn circle of protection, trying to desperately control the monster! As she sees the adventurers, her hair flies wildly as she screams, "Keep it busy ... maybe ... can ... send it ... back..." while she flips through the

book they saw in the library earlier. The spirit is insane, angry and hungry; it turns on the adventurers and away from Margaret, who it cannot currently reach because of the circle of protection. A sorcerer in the party would be able to lend a hand in dismissing the demon if he knows an appropriate spell, such as Quiet.

As the beast advances on the adventurers, it opens its maw and saliva drips out, burning holes in the oriental carpet. The adventurers must distract the beast for ten rounds while Margaret finds and casts the appropriate spell. A sorcerer in the party can shorten the necessary time by three rounds. If they are successful, the beast lets out a horrible, gut wrenching scream and almost melts into the carpet.

If the beast is banished, Margaret immediately starts crying and confesses that she has been playing the demonologist. Margaret hated what Burke was doing to her father's land and the industrialist made matters worse by trying to court her. She called up a demon to spook the miners. She'd hoped that a general strike and haunted caves would be enough to make the Company leave.

Last night, she learned that she could not control the creature when it killed the boy. She's been trying to banish it ever since and must have really angered it this time. Adventurers reading the tome soon discover that the creature feeds on death and used the boy to break the bond by scaring him into a fatal accident. With the deaths of several miners, Margaret was no longer in control.

When Lord Bremerstoke is roused (he was only knocked out) he orders Tupp released and his daughter held until she can be properly seen to – the Guild either sends a hermeticist with a Dark Arts licence to take her and the book into custody or requests that any card-carrying members amongst the adventurers do so.

~CONCLUSION~

The next couple of days are busy as the town returns to order and things are set right. Tupp is cleared and allowed to rejoin the circus. Burke asks the characters to accompany him as witnesses when he goes to demand restitution from Bremerstoke. It was his family that killed his miner and caused his mine to be shut down. Bremerstoke hems and haws, but sends a servant for his cheque book.

Burke profusely thanks the adventurers for their derring-do and ensures their free ride back into London in the comfortable train carriage. They soon receive payment from Sir Travis through Cassidy for their services.

Depending on how the adventurers do they may receive a Propriety (Reputation) die, especially given that Sir Travis is sure to extol their abilities. Sir Travis will also keep them in mind for future services, whether for himself or anyone within his circles. Of course, should they perform miserably, then a Notoriety die is probably in order.

