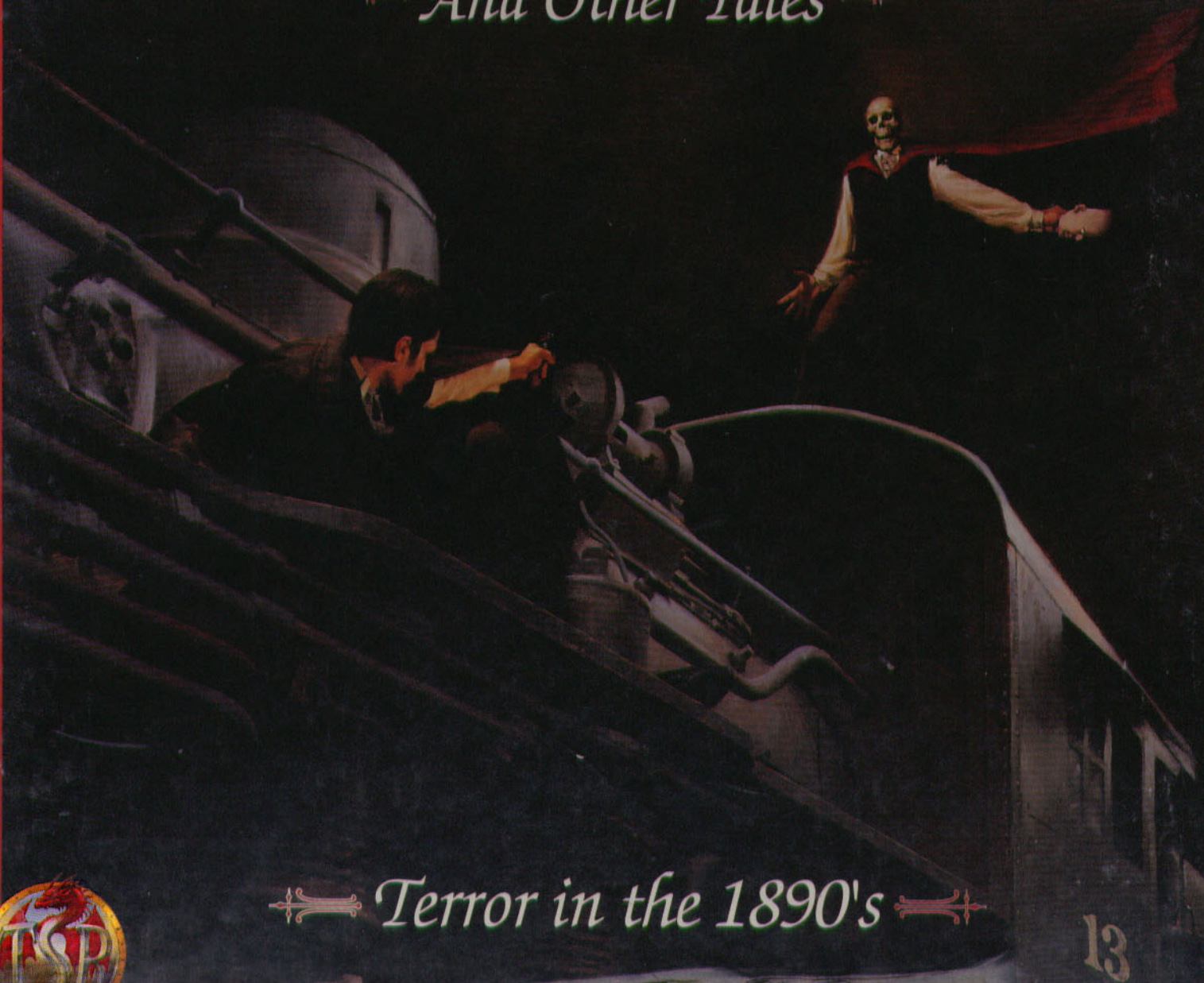


Ravenloft[®]

Campaign Expansion

Masque *OF THE* Red Death

— *And Other Tales* —



— *Terror in the 1890's* —



Ravenloft[®]

Campaign Expansion

— A Guide to Gothic Earth —

by William W. Connors



A GUIDE TO GOTHIC EARTH

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Masque of the Red Death is warmly dedicated to Anne Brown, who worked long and hard to make me look good. Thanx.

WWC

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INTRODUCTION: A NEW AGE OF TERROR



s the Orient Express thundered into the night and the European countryside raced past, I could not draw my attention away from Van Helsing. The colour had faded completely from his face. Clearly, he was anxious—even more so than our coming confrontation with the Count would merit. At last, I could contain my curiosity no longer and begged him to explain his mood.

"Ah, my friend John, you are indeed perceptive. I fear

much that I dare not speak of before the others."

"Why is that?" I inquired. "Certainly, Dracula is an enemy unlike any we might have faced before, but our cause is just—and we shall not fail."

"That may be," Van Helsing said. "But think you not that this will be the end of our battle, my beloved friend. If only we should be so lucky. Certainly, we think to pursue the Prince of Darkness himself—the root of the evil—but it is not as we perceive. For all his evil powers and sinister ways, Dracula is but a symptom, and not the dreaded disease itself."

This news filled me with revulsion. How could it be? What force might be so terrible as to claim mastery of the vampire we pursued? When I demanded answers to these questions, Van Helsing seemed at first reluctant to respond. After a moment's hesitation, however, his teacher's blood awoke and he adopted a paternal look. Placing a weathered hand on my shoulder, he told me a tale that froze the blood in my veins.

"You know now that there are things in the world beyond the ken of mortal men—is that not so, my friend?" he asked. After all that had transpired in recent months, I could do nothing but nod in agreement. A year ago, before my ill-fated travels in Transylvania, I might have challenged the man on this point.

"Believe me now when I say that the matter is far more grave than even our beloved Quincy, with his oh-so-keen marksman's eyes, could perceive.

"Long ago, in the time of the ancient pharaohs and their great pyramids, a force seeped into the world. As centuries have passed, it has not died. No,

indeed—it has grown more and more terrible with each year. This is our true enemy—not the vampire that we chase.

"As the years have rolled past, this malevolent thing has grown in power and evil. Dracula, and the countless creatures that call him brother, are as nothing to that one great evil. To be certain, friend John, all the things of the night are its children, for without this menace, they have no power.

"When we confront the vampire and battle it, we face not the source of the evil—only one of its vile offspring. When we triumph, as we surely shall if God be on our side, we shall do no more than alert this foul thing to our presence. In striking down the Count, we may be only drawing the attention of this greater fiend. Perhaps we, who fancy ourselves the hounds now, will be as the hunted fox before this affair is ended.

"When all this is done, my dear friend, I will tell you more. It may be that I will demand of you a service and an oath greater than that which I have already exacted. When the time comes, Jonathan, I will ask you to share with me a secret that is known to no more than a dozen others—a secret so great and so terrible that it will require all your trust to accept and all your faith to endure. When that time comes, my friend, will you be ready to join me in my ceaseless struggle against this thing that only a few of us call the Red Death?"

I did not hesitate, but responded at once in the affirmative. Keeping in mind all that Van Helsing had done for my wife and I already, there was no way that I could refuse his ominous request.

With that, the Dutchman fell silent. He offered no word or smile of thanks, but merely nodded in acknowledgement and gazed solemnly into the night beyond our window. For my part, I could think of nothing more to say. Could this be true? Was all that we had done and all that we would do for nothing?

Despair seemed eager to claim my heart, but I fought it off. No matter the truth of Van Helsing's words—I could not allow them to cloud my judgement. For the moment, all that mattered was our quest to destroy the great vampire and save my beloved Mina. What happened after that I would face when the time came—if I still lived.

—From Jonathan Harker's Journal,
15 October

INTRODUCTION: A NEW AGE OF TERROR

The ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game is known for its tradition of adventure and excitement. With the addition of the RAVENLOFT® campaign setting, the game's rules were stretched to allow Dungeon Masters and players to experience a new type of fantasy adventure; never before had the elements of gothic horror and heroic fantasy been so smoothly blended. Now, the borders of Ravenloft are expanding again—moving AD&D® game heroes to a new time and terrain.

Welcome to Gothic Earth

All *Masque of the Red Death* adventures take place in the macabre realm of Gothic Earth. At a glance, this world is nearly identical to our own planet Earth in the year 1890. The American West is a sprawling frontier only recently bridged by the great transcontinental railroad. In Africa, the European powers are struggling to claim land in an undeclared war of colonization. And on the foggy streets of London, Sherlock Holmes and Doctor Watson stalk the most nefarious of criminals in an unending quest for justice.

Under closer scrutiny, a sinister and terrible entity can be glimpsed that is unknown outside Gothic Earth. The explorers of the American West find themselves stalked and killed by spirit creatures that have long been feared by native inhabitants. In the darkest jungles of Africa, supernatural beasts spawned in the time of the pharaohs hunger for the flesh of men. Within the drifting fog of London hide not only the killers and criminals that Holmes stalks, but also a certain Transylvanian Count whose thirst for blood has enabled him to live beyond the bounds of time.

Gothic Earth is not cloaked by the mysterious mists of Ravenloft. There are no dark lords cursed to live out their unnatural lives trapped in domains that are at once home and prison. Are there ties between this realm and the Demiplane of Dread? That is impossible to say. Certainly, the two places have much in common, but they are also different in some important ways.

Long ago, Gothic Earth was awash with magical essences. In many ways, it was not unlike the worlds that evolved into the Forgotten Realms or wondrous Land of Greyhawk. This was long before the advent of the written word, the wheel, cold steel, or many of the other features that mark the typical AD&D

game. It is said, although this might be untrue, that Gothic Earth was something of a paradise in those long-forgotten days.

Then, as the blocks of Stonehenge were raised into place and the pyramids of Egypt underwent design, a sinister presence found its way into the world. Fleeing whatever terrible place it once called home, the creature adopted the paradise that was Ancient Earth and began to cultivate its seeds of evil.

One by one, nightmarish alterations took place; twisted mockeries of the once good and vibrant things that lived on the planet spread their tendrils and essences. By the time of this campaign setting (the 1890's of our Earth), no corner of the globe is left untouched by the sinister hand of the Red Death.

Learning the Rules

Masque of the Red Death is designed to use most of the rules presented in the RAVENLOFT Campaign Setting boxed set or the *Realm of Terror* and *Forbidden Lore* boxed sets. New players and Dungeon Masters should have little trouble learning to play.

To get a feel for the peculiar nature of Gothic Earth, read the next chapter, which presents a history of this afflicted land. In so doing, a reader may acquire a basic knowledge of all that has happened to shape the world of Gothic Earth.

With such knowledge, the reader can move on to the chapters defining the rules for play. The best way to master these rules is to generate some characters and then fight a few mock battles with them. Once that is done, players and DMs will be ready to start exploring the strange realm of the Red Death.

"The day she was buried there came a fall of snow," Heathcliff said. "In the evening, I went to the churchyard. It blew bleak as winter . . . I didn't fear that her fool of a husband would wander up. Two yards of loose earth was the sole barrier between us. I said to myself . . .

"I'll have her in my arms again! If she be cold, I'll think it is the north wind that chills me; and if she is motionless, it is sleep."

—Emily Brontë,
Wuthering Heights (1847)

Chapter I: A HISTORY OF GOTHIC EARTH



The next pages will provide a detailed look at the history of the Red Death's interaction with humanity. The information presented is certainly not understood by the common man or even the average scholar. What follows is a brief history of the world in which countless layers of secrecy and veils of mystery are swept aside. No group of adventurers can travel to a library, university, or other mundane establishment and learn the things revealed in this chapter. The lore that

follows is intended only for the eyes of Dungeon Masters and should be used to establish background material for *Masque of the Red Death* campaigns.

Much is left unsaid in this section; much is only hinted at. This is done intentionally, as it allows each Dungeon Master to sculpt the history of a campaign to suit individual needs and story lines.

Author's Note

I wish to point out that I have taken a great many liberties with what we know as the history of our Earth and the interpretation of various events. The reader, as well as the player, should keep in mind that *Masque of the Red Death* is a work of fiction, and that Gothic Earth is a fictitious place. While the dates given in this chronology of Gothic Earth are more or less in agreement with the events of our Earth, the motivating forces described on Gothic Earth and the resulting changes in society are wholly manifestations of my imagination.

Readers will note a European focus in this section. Most events described will relate directly to the history of Europe and, later, the Americas. This should not be seen as an intentional or accidental dismissal of cultures in Africa, the Orient, or elsewhere. The simple truth is that *Masque of the Red Death* is intended to allow DMs and players to enjoy adventures founded upon the gothic traditions and literature of the Western World.

With that in mind, I hope no one will complain about any historical "inaccuracies" in the following

material or the presentation of any historical figure as too heroic or villainous. I hope that DMs and players enjoy Gothic Earth in the spirit in which it was created.

Nightfall

The golden age of magic peaked sometime around 2700 B.C., in the rolling grasslands of northern Africa. Under the auspices of Djoser, the second Pharaoh of the Third Dynasty of Egypt, the mysterious priest Imhotep began to weave his spells into the construction of a great step pyramid intended to serve as Djoser's tomb. His attempts to protect the spirit of Djoser in the afterlife were destined not only to fail, but to taint magic on Gothic Earth for all time. Of course, Imhotep had no idea of the disaster his actions were about to bring to his world.

As Imhotep worked his spells to protect Djoser's body and spirit when they eventually separated in death, the distinction between life and death temporarily blurred. Gradually, Imhotep's magic weakened the natural structure of the universe enough to allow an outside entity to enter the world. Centuries later, this mysterious essence would come to be called *the Red Death*, but to Imhotep, it was a nameless horror.

With the arrival of the Red Death some three and a half thousand years ago, magic began to change. So evil and dark was this sinister creature that the very energies of the supernatural world were tainted. Although this magical plague spread slowly, requiring centuries to creep around the world, it was unstoppable. No longer could magic be used with impunity. Any spell, whether cast for good or evil, had a chance of drawing the evil attention of this mysterious and terrible presence, just as the most minute twitch of an insect in a web attracts the lurking spider. Only the mysterious gypsy bands known as the Vistani seemed immune to the corruption that followed the influence of the Red Death.

The Twilight

In the early centuries after establishing itself on Gothic Earth, the Red Death was content to watch and learn. Just as its evil aura was too great to escape detection by the most learned of scholars, its

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A HISTORY OF GOTHIC EARTH



Chapter I: A HISTORY OF GOTHIC EARTH

influence over magic could not help spreading. Throughout the Mediterranean, long-employed rituals and spells began to falter. Spellcasters gradually began to succumb to the sinister vibrations of the Red Death, and transformed into hideous minions of darkness.

During this time, the Red Death prompted numerous wars. Some were small and of little historical importance, while others were great and terrible clashes that shattered empires and claimed countless lives. Through each and every confrontation, skirmish, and battle, the Red Death watched its experiments with the same extreme care that a modern scientist might employ in proving a most important hypothesis. The Red Death learned of the best and worst that mankind had to offer. It studied the actions of heroes and villains alike. It came to know mankind far better than it knew itself.

In addition, the Red Death began to create the first of the army of horrors that it was to bring into the world. By corrupting the magic of Imhotep's spells, the vile power cursed the spirits of several Egyptian nobles, including Imhotep and Djoser, with eternal life. Thus were born the dreadful mummies that are said to protect the land of the Great Pyramids even in the 1890's.

Most Earthdwellers took no notice of these changes. So gradually did these events unfold, often over the course of centuries, and so tumultuous was the nature of those times that precise records and reliable accounts of history were all but impossible to locate by those who might make sense of them. But as the Red Death increased its activity and spread its power over greater portions of the world, isolated people and groups began to theorize its existence. Some founded their understanding of this purely evil entity in religious terms, while others attempted to define it through philosophical or scientific means.

Most groups of scholars, adepts, and mystics began their work in secret, fearing not only the reactions of their peers, but also the attention of the evil thing that they hoped to discover. In this manner, the first of the mysterious qabals were born. For all their efforts at discovery and eradication, however, the scattered qabals lacked the power and knowledge to halt the spread of the Red Death's influence, much less to confront and destroy so malevolent a creature.

The Burning Empires

From its slightest ripples to its mightiest surges, the Red Death went unchallenged. It took greatest care to prevent the terrors it was beginning to seed in the cities of mankind from being linked to each other. From time to time, however, it saw the rise of great nations that might pose a challenge to it. For all the sinister power of this macabre entity, the Red Death was not without weaknesses, and fully recognized this fact.

The truth in those days was the same as the truth now; no extreme of military might could confront and destroy this greatest of evils. The vulnerability of the Red Death lies not in physical strength, but in the powers of good magic together with the kindness and compassion found at the heart of the purest human spirits. In a few enlightened places, this ultimate weapon against evil was recognized. Almost without exception, the Red Death carefully prodded these empires to destruction. Noble leaders were succeeded by worthless incompetents; great heroes were slain in apparent accidents (carefully staged to eliminate the possibility of martyrdom); countless innocents were corrupted before their purity could contribute to the war against evil. While not always successful, the overwhelming power and cunning of the Red Death made the uprising of any serious threat almost impossible.

Perhaps the most vile tactic of the Red Death at this time was the substitution of good and noble folk with shapechanging doppelgangers and other abominations. Under the leadership of presumably trustworthy persons, entire armies marched to annihilation. Even today, the ranks of the doppelgangers have never been as deadly as they were during that time.

The Defiance

Thousands of years after the appearance of the Red Death on Gothic Earth, the practice of magic had become so dangerous and difficult that it was an all-but-forgotten art. Legends of sinister wizards and evil warlocks were still whispered in all corners of the world, but by now all of Africa, Europe, and Asia had fallen under the influence of the Red Death.

Still, not far from the place where the Red Death had first entered the realm of the living, a new order

Chapter I: A HISTORY OF GOTHIC EARTH

was forming. Working in absolute secrecy and calling themselves The Defiance, this coalition of adepts and mystics employed the great resources of the library at Alexandria to piece together the history of the Red Death and to trace the spread of its power.

After nearly a century of work, members of The Defiance were ready to take a stand. Their power was great and they had managed to work in secrecy, or so they thought. Mere weeks before they were to weave a spell that would have driven the Red Death back into the nightmarish land in which it had been spawned, the order was destroyed.

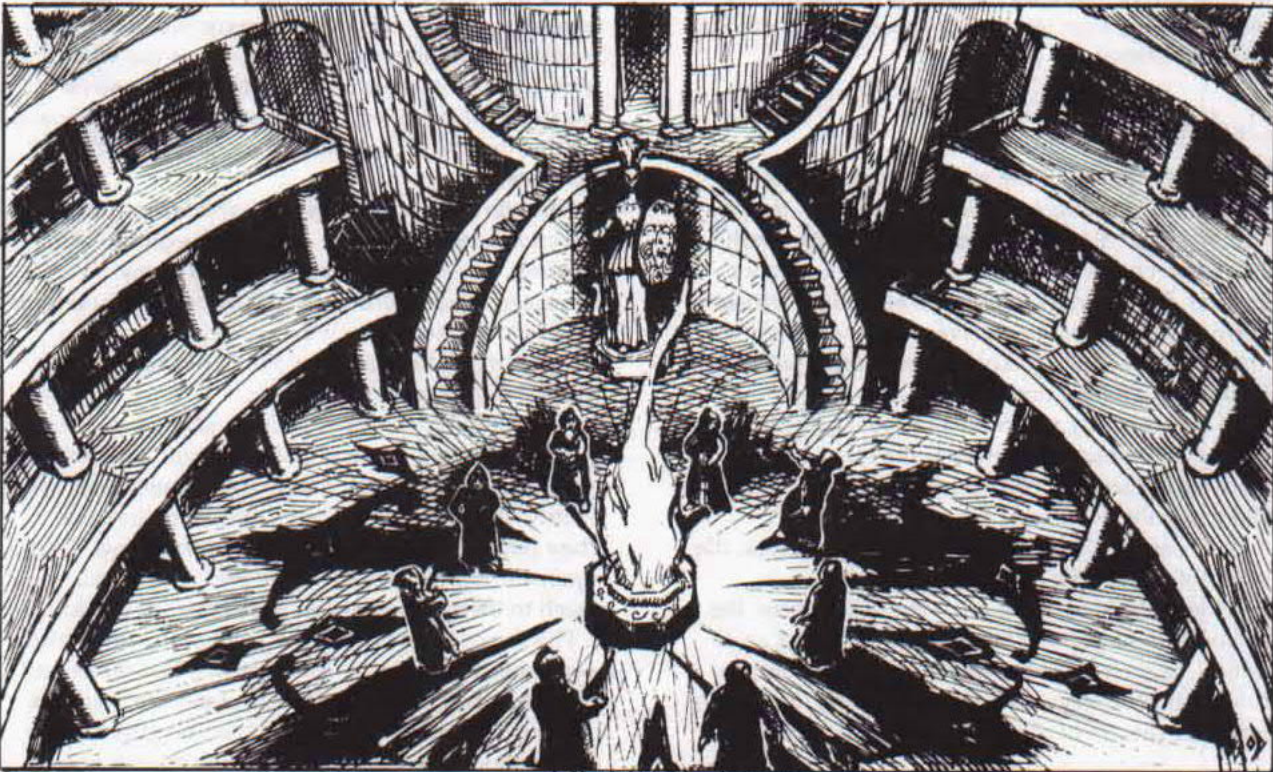
For all their covert efforts, the Red Death had penetrated the order's cloak of secrecy and learned everything of its plans. Fragments of evidence suggest that one of the number, a female mystic by the name of Inclavia, was actually a disgusting red widow, although no one can prove this for certain. Working with the protection of carefully laid magical disguises and wards, she saw all of the plans devised by The Defiance. And what she saw, the Red Death saw as well.

When the time came for The Defiance to act, the Red Death focused its power on the city of Alexandria, and one of the entity's puppets twitched

to life. A respected theologian known only by the name of Cyril had traded what goodness once lay in his heart for power, prestige, and adoration. He had responded to the voiceless commands of his master to fulfill his secret and petty wishes. He gathered up his followers and they fell upon the library. In short order, the leader of The Defiance, a scholarly woman named Hypatia, was slain and the day was lost. Evil had triumphed.

As the minions of darkness burned the great library and many members of The Defiance died in countless terrible ways, the Red Death's power over the realm of man was assured. Without the knowledge held in the library of Alexandria and the devoted studies of The Defiance, it became all but impossible for mankind ever to free itself from this yoke of evil.

With the passing of the order, the power of the Red Death expanded. By the end of the 5th century, its sinister shadow had fallen across all of the Orient. Only the Americas and the Pacific Basin remained free of its corrupting presence. As the power of the European, Arabian, and Oriental nations grew, often under the subtle control of the Red Death, the last hopes of its destruction faded.



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The Shadow Orders

The destruction of The Defiance was not absolute. While the qabal was certainly shattered and its power broken beyond repair, individual members lived on.

Fleeing Alexandria, many survivors sought to establish new societies. All worked toward slightly different goals, but all hoped to keep the practice of magic alive, even under the shadow of the Red Death. Some of these groups flourished for a time, only to fail eventually and vanish, often without trace. But many live on to this day.

Over the centuries, many of the "shadow orders" became corrupted. Some simply forgot the goal of overthrowing the Red Death and devoted themselves to the acquisition of personal power. Others fell utterly under the power of the Red Death and became wholly evil. For all their divergent motivations, however, nearly every modern qabal can truthfully claim to be descended from The Defiance.

A common theory, at least in some circles, is that many of the first monastic orders founded in and around Egypt following the destruction of the library of Alexandria were refuges for the various members of The Defiance.

Darkness

With the fall of the western expanses of the Roman Empire in the 5th century, the power of the Red Death flourished. As the Dark Ages saw chaos and anarchy spread throughout Europe, foul agents of darkness and supernatural horrors established themselves in all corners of the known world. Through some inexplicable twist, Byzantium and the great empire that it ruled survived with only minimal interference from this evil plague in the early centuries of the Middle Ages. Many of the shadow orders faltered and vanished or slid gradually into corruption.

Still, even in this garden of evil and darkness, the seeds of mankind's goodness could not be destroyed. Hidden in the enclaves of monastic life, secluded in forgotten caverns at the heart of dark forests, and cloistered in the libraries of countless rulers who had long been puppets of the Red Death were the secrets of mankind's inner strength.

The Stone

Despite the popular beliefs of modern laymen, King Arthur and his noble followers were not a product of the Renaissance and the Age of Chivalry. Rather, these people, upon whom so many legends have been based, lived in the early years of the 6th century. It was in roughly 520 that King Arthur rallied his followers to defend Britain against the invading Saxons. Perhaps more famous than Arthur himself, however, is the mysterious wizard Merlin.

At the height of Camelot's glory and the reign of King Arthur, a well-organized and very learned qabal known as The Stone is rumored to have existed. From the perspective of modern researchers, Merlin himself was almost certainly the head of this shadow order.

At the same time, many other shadow orders existed in Europe and throughout Arabia and northern Africa. Whether by chance or design, many of them came to be headed by powerful adepts and mystics who were largely untainted by the powers of the Red Death at this time. Unfortunately, there were easily as many corrupted orders in these lands at the same time. What makes the emergence of these leaders (who referred to themselves as the White Wizards) important is that they took major steps toward breaking down the boundaries of secrecy and distrust that had stood since the collapse of The Defiance.

Through magical means, the White Wizards communicated with each other and began to work together. They sought and destroyed many corrupted shadow orders and salvaged a fair number of orders that seemed on the verge of falling into evil. It is almost certain that Merlin himself was the head of this loose confederation.

Throughout the Dark Ages, this alliance of qabals worked to shape the future of mankind. Without being fully aware of the nature of their ultimate enemy, they fought its agents and machinations. They pitted their human cunning and intellect against the great powers of the Red Death and, much to their own surprise, were very successful.

This is not to say that the agents of the Red Death were utterly stymied by the efforts of The Stone and its related orders; that is far from the truth. Perhaps the most shocking disaster that can be attributed to the entities of the supernatural is the spread of a

Chapter I: A HISTORY OF GOTHIC EARTH

great plague throughout Europe. Around 540, packs of wererats spread through the cities of Europe, carrying the foul bubonic plague. This terrible disease swept across the continent for nearly 50 years, and easily halved the population of Europe.

Metaphysicians and parapsychologists are quick to point out that this event marks the first verifiable appearance of lycanthropy in the world. While it is impossible to rule out the existence of such creatures in earlier times, much evidence exists to support the belief that the Red Death felt the time was right to introduce a new horror into the world.

The New Empire

On Christmas Day in the year 800, Pope Leo III crowned the Frankish king Charlemagne, son of Pepin and heir to the Carolingian Dynasty, deeming him Emperor of a new Roman Empire. Curiously, the actions of the qabals and the agents of the Red Death both contributed to this historic event.

For the allied qabals, uniting all of Europe under a single power made sense. In this way, mankind's

efforts against evil could be focused and the darkness of the last few centuries driven off. By engineering this solid union of secular and church power, it seemed certain that the forces of good would be unstoppable.

The minions of darkness had a similar plan, though they worked toward far less noble ends. By uniting church and state into a single massive structure, the affairs of mankind could be consolidated. The efforts of an individual, no matter how noble he or she might be, could easily be countered by the economic, theological, and political juggernaut of this vast European empire.

In the end, neither side was triumphant. Each managed to accomplish some of its goals while failing in others. With the schism that rocked the church in 867 and the division of Europe among Charlemagne's three grandsons in 870, the unity of Europe was broken. Over the course of the next century, both sides fully realized that they had failed.

For the followers of darkness and the minions of the Red Death, this was considered only a minor setback. The evils that they envisioned as dominating mankind could be repositioned and



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reforged. The menace of the qabals became obvious, however. The Red Death saw that it had seriously underestimated the ability of men to discern and disrupt its plans.

For the shadow orders, the partial failure of their plans allowed them to make some vital observations. The most important of these was an improved understanding of the enemy. Not since the destruction of the library at Alexandria and the scattering of The Defiance had mankind understood the nature of its greatest foe. Now, with all that the shadow orders had learned over the last few centuries, the qabals saw clearly that they faced no earthly menace. With this information, they began to plan again.

The Stone Cracks

Recognizing the hazard of the united shadow orders, the agents of darkness began to focus their attention on this great threat to their master. Throughout the world, dark and sinister things infiltrated and attacked the qabals. Countless new terrors appeared, each crafted by evil hands to fulfill a specific mission. Once their tasks were completed, many of these things faded and vanished. Others lived on, and sadly, came to be quite prolific.

One by one, the organizations that had come together under the wise guidance of the wizard Merlin centuries before became distrustful of their allies. The qabals were reminded of the legends of the days after the destruction of The Defiance, when each qabal trusted none but its own.

Eventually, all that Merlin and his peers had worked for was lost. By the close of the 10th century, the qabals existed in as much fear of each other as of the Red Death. With surprising rapidity, groups that had been strong defenders of all that was good and right slipped over the edge and fell under the subtle control of the Red Death.

With the passing of the first millennium A.D., the first Crusade marked the beginning of centuries of conflict between the predominantly Christian states of Europe and the largely Muslim Arab nations. Had the qabals still been a unified force, they might have prevented these terrible clashes. In their disrupted state, however, they could do nothing. The Crusades and all the suffering they brought to Europe and Arabia went unchecked.

The Horseman Descends

The agents of the Red Death have always been many and varied. Some, such as the ghoul and werewolf, stalk the night to feed upon the innocent and helpless. Others—the doppelganger and rakshasa, for instance—move about during the day, taking the form of mortal man and luring him into despair and ultimate destruction.

Each type of minion has its terrible powers, but all have weaknesses as well. A properly educated and prepared mortal can face these creatures evenly. With luck, wisdom, and faith, a mortal can triumph, and in at least a minor way, drive back the entropic darkness that is the Red Death. But when agents of the Red Death unite in their efforts, as they have done at a few strategic points in history, mankind can do little more than stand helplessly by and wait for the powers of darkness to wane.

While the Crusades worked to sap the energies of the Arabian and European worlds, a new menace arose. Delivered from eastern Asia and the Orient, this horror decimated western Asia and most of Europe. Planning, wisdom, and other defenses were meaningless. The evil minions of the Red Death were loose in the world, and carried in their wake the Black Plague.

Sweeping in like a grim horseman of death, the Black Plague first manifested in southern Russia in 1345. Leaving an inconceivable wake of death and suffering behind, this rider of the apocalypse thundered through the Byzantine Empire, Italy, France, and Spain, and finally reached England in 1349. For all its feeble efforts, mankind was helpless before this terrible shadow of the grave.

The Phoenix

Despite heavy losses through dissolved orders, loss of trust and interaction between orders, and the many individuals that crossed to the dark side, the efforts of the remaining good qabals were not in vain. While the Crusades and Black Plague brought suffering to countless innocents, and the forces of darkness seemed ever closer to their goal of absolute corruption, all hope was not lost. Early in the 15th century, a new qabal spontaneously arose in Italy.

Calling itself The Phoenix, this group apparently formed independently of the influence of any other

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qabal. This is probably untrue, of course, for it seems impossible that such a group should evolve at this time without the patronage of at least one other qabal. Some evidence indicates that this organization was formed by one of the Red Death's own minions that turned upon its evil master and sought to save mankind from the almost certain desolation that loomed in its future.

Whatever its roots, The Phoenix rose with great speed and was almost single-handedly responsible for sparking many of the most impressive feats of the early Renaissance. It is possible, although far from proven, that many now-famous people, perhaps even Leonardo da Vinci, were important members of this order.

As the Renaissance infiltrated Europe, the agents and power of The Phoenix went with it. They recruited the finest, most noble minds of the time and formed a powerful coalition intent on the reformation of a superstitious world and the elimination of evil.

The Phoenix was not without enemies, of course. Both human and supernatural forces strove to seek out its agents and destroy the order. Perhaps the

most infamous of these opponents was Vlad the Impaler, who made countless terrible pacts with the Red Death and became not only the Prince of Walachia in 1456, but upon his death, rose to become the father of all modern vampires. Other enemies, including the fiend who moved among humanity in the guise of Niccolo Machiavelli, battled members of The Phoenix and eventually brought about the collapse of that order.

Although it survived for only a few hundred years, the contributions of The Phoenix to the survival of mankind and the eternal war against darkness cannot be overstated. At a time when even the strongest of the shadow orders were all but crippled by the chaos that ravaged the world, this mysterious order may well have prevented the absolute corruption of the human race.

The New World

As the tide of the Renaissance swelled through Europe, the efforts of the Red Death were greatly hampered. Ancient superstitions, fuel for the fires of fear that this ancient evil fed upon,



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were gradually replaced by the analytical light of science and the reassuring warmth of hope. At the same time, however, the dimensions of the world changed.

As the European nations began to move westward to the Americas, the agents of darkness followed. In these new lands, they found peoples almost untainted by the fringe energies of the Red Death. It was not long, however, before these uncorrupted folk became unwitting fodder for the hunger of that eternal evil.

Of course, the qabals did not ignore these new lands. Many of the orders that had been founded in Europe, Arabia, and Africa left their homelands behind and sought safety in the New World. In the end, countless new battlefields were created where those who sought to preserve mankind were set upon by those who would destroy it.

The Circle Broken

The first two centuries of European influence in the New World were marked by cruelty, violence, and cultural clashes. Almost without exception, the people who suffered most from these incidents were the natives of the New World. This is not to say that either side was wholly good or evil. Both sides could claim men of virtue as well as those cast from a less noble mold.

One of the greatest tragedies of the New World occurred in New England, among the Puritan settlements of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Hidden among the Puritans were members of a qabal known as the Circle. Considerable evidence exists to suggest that the Circle, which drew its name from its original meeting place near the Aubury Circle in England, was a descendant of the ancient order of The Stone. Whether or not that was the case, the Circle had gone to great lengths to establish itself in New England and escape the countless enemies it had garnered in Europe.

In the waning years of the 17th century, the members of the Circle came into direct conflict with an ancient and terrible power known only as Zmlak the Destroyer. Nothing is known of the nature of this diabolical creature, save that it was pulled into Gothic Earth from another realm in much the same way that the Red Death arrived thousands of years before. When the Circle attempted to defeat this ageless fiend, it found itself

horribly underpowered.

Somehow, Zmlak learned the identities of the qabal's members and turned the rest of Salem's populace against them. Over a period of several months, the agents of the Circle were branded as evildoers and then put to death. Little did the innocent folk of Salem realize that they were doing the bidding of a dark force beyond their comprehension. With each new death, their chances of salvation and survival dwindled. The Circle was soon broken; the fiend that the order had sought to destroy was unharmed; and the power of the Red Death in the New World grew.

The Wakening

Of the many evils that flourished in the New World, slavery was perhaps the greatest. The buying and selling of slaves was certainly not an invention of the European powers or their colonies in the New World, but it must be noted that never before had slavery reached the despicable levels to which it ascended in the Americas.

In the early phases of commerce, the European powers traded with the coastal nations of Africa for exotic goods such as gold, ivory, and pepper. Slaves were also part of this trade, but such trade was for criminals for whom slavery was a punishment. By the 18th century, however, the demand for slaves by the colonial powers was so great that vast numbers of slaves were kidnapped or purchased from the whole of Africa. The effect on these nations was devastating. The population of Africa dwindled and almost every nation on the continent was greatly weakened.

As Europeans moved deeper into southern Africa, they encountered strange and mysterious things. No white man could have guessed that this continent was washed with magical energies when the Red Death came to the land of the living. Things long forgotten and undisturbed began to stir and rise as unknowing Europeans violated ancient taboos and broke magical bonds, freeing an unimaginable host of creatures to roam the world.

The African states, whose mystics and adepts had kept these creatures at bay for centuries, were too badly weakened by the devastation of slave traders and colonists to fight them back. A new generation of evils was unleashed upon an unsuspecting world.

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The Enlightenment

The middle of the 18th century saw a powerful movement arise in Europe and her colonies.

Known simply as the Enlightenment, this awakening seems almost certainly to have been the culmination of the efforts of three united qabals. Known individually as the Alliance, the Society of Keepers, and the Sisterhood, these orders joined together under the sigil of the Enlightened.

Many of the leaders of this organization were scientists and philosophers. Their belief was that the keys to ending human suffering lay in conquering ignorance and superstition. To that end, the Enlightened began to assemble vast libraries and attempted to quantify all that they could. Every aspect of human thought and behavior was examined carefully and every element of human history scrutinized. Among the most influential members of this qabal were the French philosopher Diderot, who worked diligently for over a quarter of a century to compile his great encyclopedia of all human knowledge, and Descartes, whose understanding of the importance of contemplation and thoughtfulness laid the groundwork for much that was to come in the next hundred years.

The work of this great qabal survives into the time of the *Masque of the Red Death* campaign. The organization itself is still said to exist in France and the surrounding countries. Its current membership is unknown, but given the group's preference for members of the intelligencia, it is not unlikely that a clever and industrious group of adventurers could locate and contact the Enlightened in the event of extreme need.

The Dark Side

As the agents of the Enlightened and the scores of unknowing followers they attracted spread their philosophy through the world, the forces of darkness did not rest. While the nations of Gothic Earth appeared to openly embrace the principles of education, philosophy, and human compassion, the evils that had so long haunted the night set about to weaken these pillars of the Enlightenment.

In the dark corners of Eastern Europe, sinister creatures of the night like the vampire and werewolf haunted the dreams and lives of the innocent. On the high seas, spectral vessels appeared out of



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rolling banks of fog and left the ships they encountered mysteriously devoid of crew and cargo. Throughout a world bathed in the light of new learning, cruel and terrible creatures gathered their might and plotted the downfall of mankind and his offensive virtues.

On the Brink

Even a casual review of this chapter will reveal that the course of human history has been far from straight and true. Mankind has stood atop lofty peaks of civilization—eras dominated by mercy, compassion, and a rejection of the darkness. For each of these crests there has been a trough—a period when the evils of the earth held sway.

The 1890's, the decade in which all *Masque of the Red Death* campaigns are assumed to take place, is a crucial juncture in the history of the human race. A new age of exploration and humanism sweeps the globe, marked by the work of people such as Sigmund Freud, Marie Curie, Joseph Lister, Florence Nightingale, Louis Pasteur, Thomas Edison, and Max Planck. Groups like the International Red Cross work to raise human compassion to unprecedented levels. Governments recognize the need for fairness and restraint even in times of war, as indicated by the signing of the Geneva Convention in 1864.

In the shadows of these glowing accomplishments, however, are two types of dark forces: those who would exploit new technologies and learning for personal gain and acts of evil, and those who seek to stifle new ideas and promote ancient prejudices and superstitions. These range from the grim exploits of individuals, such as the slayings of Jack the Ripper in 1888, to horrible atrocities like the massacre of Sioux Indians at the Battle of Wounded Knee in 1890, to the genocidal slaughter of Armenians in Turkey in 1894.

A Time for Heroes

If evil is allowed to spread unchecked, the world is headed for an era of global war and suffering. Before the close of the 19th century, the Boer War will erupt in Africa, the Spanish-American War will ignite following the destruction of the battleship *Maine* in Havana Harbor, and the foundations for a global conflict will be in place.

These major clashes will be reflected in smaller scale throughout the world. When times are troubled, the forces of darkness are strong. The creatures of the night thrive in an environment of fear, chaos, and superstition. When gloom and despair are the rules of the day, evil grows ever stronger, exploiting the darkness that lurks in the hearts of men. When hope and faith prevail, evil is kept at bay.

If the Player Characters are able to stand against the various evils they will encounter, the future may well be one of promise and enlightenment. The efforts of the qabals and these scattered heroes might be enough to usher in a global renaissance in which all mankind is bettered.

A few individuals might even discover that the means by which the Red Death can be destroyed or driven off rests within reach of the scientists, artists, and philosophers of the 19th century. Perhaps the failure of The Defiance so long ago in Alexandria can be set right. Certainly, many of the qabals believe this to be true. Some struggle to fit together the pieces of an ancient puzzle, all the while afraid that they will be discovered and destroyed by their countless real or imagined enemies.

There is hope that these groups will triumph. Some precognitives have reported seeing visions of such a new world. They describe medical and psychological processes that can arrest or even cure many of the terrible diseases that have haunted mankind through the ages. Flashes of insight have been reported describing mysterious technologies that allow men and women from all over the world to exchange ideas and opinions openly and quickly, all uncorrupted by the magical energies of the Red Death.

If those few heroes fail, then the inhabitants of Gothic Earth may well be doomed to an age of darkness and war more terrible than any before. Divinational magic used to snatch glimpses of the 20th century has shown horrible wars, cities suddenly consumed by fire, and obscene death camps. Clearly, that is an age in which the wonders of science have led to the most tyrannical and horrible of worlds.

Which of these futures is the true destiny of mankind? That is impossible to say. Only the efforts of the Player Characters can decide that. If they are brave and true, then it shall certainly be one of promise. If they are not resolute in their quest to rid the world of its sinister elements, then destructive events and a desolate future are not far off.

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In *Masque of the Red Death* campaigns, as in standard RAVENLOFT campaigns and all AD&D 2nd Edition games, characters are defined by six numeric ratings called *ability scores*. Only slight differences exist between the way these scores are typically used and the way they are used in *Masque* campaigns. Refer to the rules governing ability

scores presented in the *Player's Handbook* and DUNGEON MASTER® *Guide*. The changes for rules in the *Masque* campaign will be identified in the rulebook you are now holding as the explanation of game mechanics proceeds.

Generating Ability Scores

On Gothic Earth, the home of all *Masque of the Red Death* adventures, inhabitants are similar to the populace we recognize from our own world. Unlike the typical AD&D game, in which characters are assumed to be great heroes similar to those of myth and legend, players in the Gothic Earth setting are much more like ordinary human beings.

Character ability scores are rolled according to Method VI described in the *Player's Handbook*. To review, a character automatically receives a score of 8 in each of the six ability scores. The player then rolls seven six-sided dice. The resulting numbers are added to the base scores as the player chooses, within the parameters of the three rules that follow.

1. The points shown on any one die must be added to a single score. Thus, if a 5 is rolled, all 5 points must be added to a single ability score. The 5 could not be used to add 3 points to one ability score and 2 points to another.
2. Any number of dice may be added to a single ability score, but no score can be raised above 18. Conversely, a player may decide not to add

any points to an ability score, allowing the character to begin the game with a score of 8.

3. Any ability score of 18 must be reached by exact count. If several dice are used to increase one ability and the number of points on the dice would increase the ability score beyond 18, one die must be excluded from the total. The points beyond 18 cannot simply be ignored.

Ability Checks

The *Masque of the Red Death* campaign setting makes extensive use of *ability checks*. While these are described briefly in both the *Player's Handbook* and DUNGEON MASTER *Guide*, some players and DMs may not be familiar with this procedure. A quick summary follows.

An ability check is used to determine whether a character succeeds at an important feat. The Dungeon Master decides when an ability check is called for, and chooses an ability that is most relevant to the activity. The player simply rolls a 20-sided die and compares the roll to the ability score being tested. If the roll is equal to or less than the ability score, the check is successful.

For example, Dr. Benedict Chase has been pursued to the edge of a 10-foot-wide gorge by a strange, phantom hound. In order to escape, Chase must leap to the other side. The Dungeon Master asks for a Dexterity check. Chase's player rolls a 20-sided die, with a result of 8. His Dexterity score is 13, and therefore, Dr. Chase makes good his escape.

Depending on the difficulty or ease of the attempted activity, the Dungeon Master may assess a penalty or bonus to an ability check. For example, if Dr. Chase had sprained his ankle earlier in the day, the DM might require the check to be made with a penalty of -2. The player would subtract 2 points from the character's ability score, meaning that Dr. Chase would succeed on a roll of 11 or less.

What the Numbers Mean

As mentioned earlier, the *Masque of the Red Death* campaign setting uses the six ability scores used in the standard AD&D game. There are, however, a few differences in the way these scores are used in the course of play. The following section will discuss these important considerations.

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Strength

The purpose and use of this ability are largely unchanged. It remains a measure of raw physical power and, as such, is important for determining the ability to lift heavy objects and inflict damage in close combat. Strength is the prime requisite for all characters of the soldier class.

The technology available on Gothic Earth makes the physical demands on characters quite different from traditional AD&D or RAVENLOFT games. Because of the prominent use of firearms and the obscurity of large melee weapons, the Strength score plays a less important role than experienced gamers might expect.

Exceptional Strength

Characters on Gothic Earth are divided into four classes, just as they are in the AD&D game. Only *soldiers*, the Gothic Earth equivalent of the warrior class, qualify for Exceptional Strength and its associated benefits.

Hit Probability

This modifier functions in exactly the same way for characters on Gothic Earth as it does for characters in other AD&D campaign settings. A strong

character gains a bonus to hit enemies in close combat, while a weak character suffers a penalty.

Damage Adjustment

This modifier functions in much the same way as in standard AD&D rules; it applies to all damage inflicted with hand-held weapons. It also applies to spears, specially made bows, and similar ranged weapons which might benefit from the strength of the user. Weapons such as crossbows and handguns never receive such a bonus or penalty.

Weight Allowance

These statistics function as described in the standard AD&D game.

Maximum Press

As in the AD&D game, a character's maximum press rating indicates the greatest amount of weight (in pounds) that can be lifted above one's head in a military press. Movement is almost impossible while supporting such an extreme weight.

Open Doors

This attribute is likely to be used less often on Gothic Earth than in other campaign settings. It



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functions as in the standard AD&D game and is useful to note on the character record sheet.

Bend Bars/Lift Gates

For use on Gothic Earth, this entry might be better described as *Feat of Exceptional Strength*. It is used in the same manner as in the AD&D game. Ability checks should be used for most tests of physical Strength. A *bend bars/lift gates* roll should be reserved for only the most heroic of situations.

Dexterity

Dexterity measures both hand/eye coordination and natural agility. For characters on Gothic Earth, a world in which handguns are not uncommon, the Dexterity score also provides an indication of general marksmanship. Dexterity is the prime requisite for all tradesman characters.

Reaction Adjustment

This rating serves as an indication of the character's quickness of action in a surprise situation. As in the AD&D game, it modifies the surprise roll made at the start of some encounters.

Missile Attack Adjustment

This modifier reflects the accuracy with which a character can make missile attacks. It is used with all rolls made for thrown weapons (such as spears or knives), missile weapons (such as bows or crossbows), and firearms (revolvers and rifles).

Defensive Adjustment

This rating modifies a character's Armor Class in the same manner as in the standard AD&D game. On Gothic Earth, this defense adjustment is especially important. Since firearms have made the wearing of metal armor obsolete, a character's Defensive Adjustment is virtually the only protection available. Of course, it offers protection only against attacks that can be dodged, such as a thrown spear or a gunshot. If a character is unaware of a coming attack and has no opportunity to dodge, then no adjustment is made to the base Armor Class.

Constitution

The medical sciences of Gothic Earth are far superior to those on other AD&D game worlds. Still, the best way for a character to avoid death is to be resistant to injuries and illnesses. This quality is indicated by the Constitution score. Constitution is important to all characters, and is not a prime requisite for any single class.

Recall that a character's initial Constitution score indicates the number of times that the character may be successfully resurrected if killed. However, such things happen so infrequently on Gothic Earth that this rule will rarely, if ever, be needed.

Hit Point Adjustment

As in the standard AD&D game, a character's health is judged by hit points. The Constitution score plays an important part in the determination of the number of hit points an individual has.

Only soldiers are entitled to a bonus of +3 or +4 hit points per Hit Die. All other characters are limited to a maximum bonus of +2 points per Hit Die. Refer to the descriptions of individual Character Classes for further explanation.

System Shock

While characters in traditional AD&D game settings make fairly frequent use of this rating, the types of events that call for System Shock checks are far less common on Gothic Earth. Still, they are not unheard of, and this number is important to note on the character sheet.

Resurrection Survival

As mentioned, a character's initial Constitution score serves as a maximum limit to the number of times a character may be resurrected from death. Similarly, the Resurrection Survival number indicates the percentage chance that a character will survive such a physically traumatic experience, even though resurrections are far less common on Gothic Earth than in other campaign worlds.

Poison Save

In addition to the myriad toxins found in nature, the chemical sciences of the 1890's provide countless poisons unheard of in previous centuries. For that reason, a character's natural resistance to toxic substances, as indicated by the Poison Save number, can be quite important.

Regeneration

The use of this rating is identical to its use in traditional AD&D games. Normal human characters are not able to quickly regenerate lost hit points. In some creatures—generally, the evil entities that heroes will be called upon to confront—this super healing is taken for granted.

Damage caused by fire or acid is almost never healed by regeneration. This is especially important

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to remember, since flammable chemicals, explosives, and highly caustic chemicals are more common on Gothic Earth than in other realms.

Intelligence

Intelligence is a measure of natural reasoning, logic, and memory. It represents the ability for concentrated, organized thought processes so vital to both science and spellcasting. On Gothic Earth, wizardry is all but unknown. On the other hand, the magic that dominates other AD&D game worlds is replaced by an 1890's equivalent: science.

Intelligence is the prime requisite for all characters of the adept class.

Number of Languages

The *Masque of the Red Death* setting functions best when the rules for nonweapon proficiencies are used. The Number of Languages rating therefore may be used as bonus proficiency slots rather than actual languages. Of course, these slots can be used for the acquisition of languages, but they can also be used for any of the proficiencies described later in this book. A character is always assumed to be naturally fluent in his native language, and therefore need not spend a proficiency slot to speak that language.

Spell Level

The ability to learn and cast spells in *Masque of the Red Death* campaigns is a rare and dangerous talent. Only characters of the adept and mystic classes are able to cast spells. Soldiers and tradesmen can never learn to cast spells and need not record any information regarding spells.

The Spell Level number indicates the highest level of spell that can be cast by an adept.

Chance to Learn Spells

This rating is not used by adepts on Gothic Earth. The success or failure of learning a spell is determined through proficiency checks.

Maximum Number of Spells per Level

Because spellcasting is so rare on Gothic Earth, the Maximum Spells rating is all but unused. Adept characters will seldom learn enough spells to need to worry about reaching this limit. Still, adepts are encouraged to record this number for later reference.

Spell Immunity

Because characters are likely to confront creatures that employ terrible magical powers, it is important

that Spell Immunity information be recorded. Since a character must have a minimum Intelligence score of 19 in order to gain such benefits, only the most unusual heroes will gain this advantage.

Wisdom

Wisdom is as valuable in *Masque of the Red Death* campaigns as it is in our own world. Wisdom is most important to the priest class in the core AD&D game rules, and is thus important to the modern counterpart—the mystic class. Wisdom is the prime requisite for mystic characters.

Magical Defense Adjustment

This modifier is treated in the same manner as in the standard AD&D game. It applies to saving throws versus spells that attack the mind, reflecting a character's willpower.

Bonus Spells

This statistic is not used for PCs in *Masque of the Red Death* campaigns. Even if a DM chooses to introduce an NPC with the traditional powers of a priest, no native of Gothic Earth will ever have enough understanding of magic to earn bonus spells.

Chance of Spell Failure

This is used only by those very rare mystic characters who have learned to cast priest spells. It serves the same function as in traditional AD&D games.

Spell Immunity

Because characters are likely to confront creatures that employ terrible magical powers, it is important that Spell Immunity information be recorded. Since a character must have a minimum Wisdom score of 19 in order to gain such benefits, only the most unusual heroes will gain this advantage.

Charisma

As in AD&D core rules, Charisma is a measure of personality and leadership ability. A high Charisma score is important for all characters who must deal regularly with strangers. Charisma is not a prime requisite for any class.

Maximum Number of Henchmen

This indicates the greatest number of nonplayer characters who, without payment from a character, will enter the service of that character. It is treated in the same manner as in standard AD&D games.

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Loyalty Base

This score modifies an NPC's basic morale, based on the character's leadership. It is as important on Gothic Earth as it is in other game worlds.

Reaction Adjustment

This bonus or penalty modifies a stranger's initial reaction to the character. This adjustment is unchanged from the AD&D core rules.

Character Race

Gothic Earth is not blessed with the great diversity of humanoid and demihuman races found in traditional game worlds. Humans are the uncontested masters of this world. Thus, all player characters in a *Masque of the Red Death* campaign must be human.

This does not prohibit elves and dwarves from existing on Gothic Earth. If such races exist, they will not be encountered in great numbers or in proximity to human settlements. An expedition into the rainy forests of the Pacific Northwest might stumble across an enclave of elves or halflings fighting to survive and remain hidden from man. A team exploring a long-forgotten diamond mine in southern Africa might find itself suddenly in the midst of a secret colony of dwarves or gnomes.

Still, these wondrous creatures are so rare that they may as well be considered monsters. The sight of an elf on Gothic Earth would be no less a surprise to its citizens than the sight of a vampire or ghoul.

Character Nationality

The late 1800's was a time of nationalism, exploration, and colonization. It was the dawn of an age of scientific wonders unlike any that had come before. With those elements in mind, a character's ancestry and origins become extremely important. When creating a character of Gothic Earth, a player should select and detail a nationality for the character. Specifics such as a home state, city, or neighborhood may be included if the player desires, or if mandated by the Dungeon Master.

Character Classes

Four character classes are available to characters in *Masque of the Red Death*. Two of these—soldier and tradesman—are closely

modeled after the AD&D game classes of warrior and rogue. The other two classes—adept and mystic—are distantly related to wizards and priests, their AD&D game counterparts.

Before describing each class in detail, some general rules that affect character creation are discussed. These rules explain some of the rationale that affects the character classes, and detail some of the differences from the AD&D core rules.

Weapon and Armor Restrictions

In the standard AD&D game, characters are easily recognized by the weapons, armor, and equipment they employ. The widespread use and availability of firearms on Gothic Earth has all but eliminated this differentiation. Large melee weapons have fallen out of use in favor of the accuracy, range, and portability of firearms. Metal armor is obsolete as a result of its ineffectiveness against bullets. Handguns, unlike swords, bows, and other weapons requiring training and practice for effective use, are usable with reasonable success by persons without formal training. Thus, no restrictions based on character class are placed on the use of weapons or armor.

Followers

In the AD&D game, characters at specified levels begin to attract followers. On Gothic Earth, this rule is not used. No character is assumed to attract followers simply because of experience level.

Alignment Within a Class

The four character classes on Gothic Earth are open to persons of any alignment. No alignment restrictions are placed on the classes or kits that a character may choose.

Characters who undergo a shift in alignment suffer all the normal penalties associated with such a transformation in the standard AD&D game rules.

Multi- and Dual-Class Characters

Because all of the characters played in a *Masque of the Red Death* game are human, multi-classed characters are not allowed. If a Dungeon Master brings players into contact with demihuman races,

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the class and race combinations allowed by the *Player's Handbook* might be encountered.

Player characters are allowed to become dual-class characters as described in the *Player's Handbook* and *DUNGEON MASTER Guide*. All rules and restrictions presented in the AD&D core rules apply to dual-classed characters on Gothic Earth.

Proficiencies

Adventures on Gothic Earth are most realistic when proficiencies are used. Many of the basic skills associated with character classes (such as a thief's backstabbing ability) are treated as proficiencies in *Masque of the Red Death* games. DMs and players who are not familiar with these rules should read them before generating a Gothic Earth character.

Character Kits

Character kits are special templates that can be used by players to customize their characters. The use of character kits is optional, but it is encouraged. A Dungeon Master will find that the kits included in these rules, as well as any kits the DM or players invent, will give the campaign added spice that can result in better role-playing.

An example of a character kit is the Sailor, which is a type of soldier. A player who opts to play a Sailor in the *Masque of the Red Death* campaign uses the rules for this kit when generating the character. Such a character will have certain advantages when undertaking nautical adventures (such as avoiding seasickness or being able to navigate by the stars), and will suffer some restrictions in other escapades (perhaps lacking skill in etiquette). These bonuses and penalties usually balance out over the course of a campaign.

Specialist Adepts

The adept character (Gothic Earth's closest approximation to a wizard) is not assumed to specialize in a school of magic. If the DM wishes to permit players to become Specialists (as described in the *Player's Handbook*), this may be allowed. Common sense and a careful review of available spells should dictate the schools open to such characters. An adept necromancer is not likely to resist the power of the Red Death for very long; an abjurer might be a valuable addition to a campaign.

Alignment

As in traditional AD&D games, all characters have a specified alignment. In choosing an alignment, players should keep a few important things in mind.

First, 1890 is a time of legislative and judicial government and colonial expansion. While in some circles, talk of anarchy and revolution is stylish, few indeed are the truly chaotic souls willing to give pursuit to these goals.

Overall, chaotic characters are rare on Gothic Earth. A player who wishes to generate a chaotic character is advised to consider a figure whose past has kept him out of the mainstream of global culture, perhaps from the American West or the frontiers of the African Colonies.

Second, evil acts demand careful consideration. In general, persons who act in an evil manner will be seen as enemies of society. Such persons are unlikely to be viable PCs. Furthermore, this is especially true for adepts and mystics. Those who would wield magic with an evil heart run the risk of transforming into foul minions of the Red Death (see *Chapter V: Magic*). Thus, just as the playing of an evil character is not recommended in *any* AD&D game environment, it is especially discouraged in the Gothic Earth setting. The minions of the Red Death are everywhere, and they will act quickly to recruit others into their dark and mysterious orders.

At first glance, these guidelines might seem limiting. Must all characters be of *lawful good* alignment? Not at all. A good

guideline, however, is that no *Masque of the Red Death* player character may have the word *evil* in the alignment. In this

way, the DM is spared most concerns about disharmony in the adventuring party. Further, the players know that their PCs can count on *all* of their comrades to stick together in a time of trouble.



Chapter II: CHARACTER CREATION

Soldier

Ability Score Requirement: Strength 9
Prime Requisite: Strength

Members of the warrior class are most commonly thought of as the heroes who spend nearly every waking hour training for battle. Although such warriors are not known on Gothic Earth, professional soldiers are found on every continent and in every culture. Soldiers are nearly identical to warriors, but a few basic differences must be considered.

Hit Points

Soldiers roll 1d10 for starting hit points. (The result of this roll may be modified by the Constitution bonus and may be increased by as many as 4 points. Refer to *Table 3: Constitution in the Player's Handbook*.)

At each additional level up to and including the 9th, an additional d10 is rolled, modified by the character's Constitution bonus if appropriate. That result is added to the hit point total. After the 9th level, the character no longer rolls for hit points with each new level, but gains 3 points per level. Constitution bonuses do not apply after the 9th level.

Level Advancement

A soldier uses *Table 14: Warrior Experience Levels* for determining experience level, just as in the AD&D core rules. This table is reprinted at right for convenience. Thus, a soldier attains the second level upon earning 2,000 experience points, and advances to the third level after accumulating 4,000 experience points.

A soldier who has a Strength score of 16 or greater receives a 10% bonus to the number of experience points that the DM awards. This allows soldiers with high scores in the prime requisite to advance in level more rapidly than their peers.

Saving Throws and Attack Rolls

Soldiers calculate saving throws and attack rolls in the same manner as fighters in the AD&D core rules. Saving throw numbers appear in *Table 60: Character Saving Throws* in the *Player's Handbook*. Attack rolls, also known as THAC0, appear in *Table 53: Calculated THAC0s* in the *Player's Handbook*.

Specialty Weapons

Like paladins and rangers in traditional AD&D games, soldiers **are not** permitted to specialize in the use of favored weapons. The degree of devotion and training required to so fully master a weapon is not consistent with life on Gothic Earth.

Proficiency Slots

Like a warrior in the AD&D game, a soldier begins a career with four weapon proficiencies and three nonweapon proficiencies. One additional weapon and nonweapon proficiency slot is gained with every third experience level attained. When using a weapon with which he is not proficient, a soldier suffers a -2 penalty to the attack roll.

Multiple Attacks

As a soldier increases in level, he gains the ability to make multiple attacks per combat round. This is played in a manner identical to the ability of fighters in the standard AD&D game.

Soldier Level	Attacks per Round
1-6	1 per round
7-12	3 per 2 rounds
13 and above	2 per round

Soldier Experience Levels

Level	Exp. Pts.	Hit Dice (d10)
1	0	1
2	2,000	2
3	4,000	3
4	8,000	4
5	16,000	5
6	32,000	6
7	64,000	7
8	125,000	8
9	250,000	9
10	500,000	9+3
11	750,000	9+6
12	1,000,000	9+9
13	1,250,000	9+12
14	1,500,000	9+15
15	1,750,000	9+18
16	2,000,000	9+21
17	2,250,000	9+24
18	2,500,000	9+27
19	2,750,000	9+30
20	3,000,000	9+33

Chapter II: CHARACTER CREATION

Adept

Ability Score Requirement: Intelligence 9
Prime Requisite: Intelligence

As mentioned previously, magic is all but unknown on Gothic Earth. Still, a few individuals have secretly kept alive the ancient knowledge of spellcasting and magical lore. While many frauds might claim knowledge of the arcane arts, truly talented people are few and far between.

Hit Points

Adepts roll 1d4 to generate starting hit points. (This roll can be modified by a Constitution bonus, but adepts are limited to a maximum bonus of 2 hit points per level. Refer to *Table 3: Constitution in the Player's Handbook*.) At each additional level up to and including the 10th, an additional d4 is rolled, modified by the character's Constitution bonus if appropriate. That result is added to the hit point total. After the 10th level, the character no longer rolls for hit points with each new level, but gains 1 point per level. Constitution bonuses do not apply after the 10th level.

Level Advancement

Adepts use *Table 20: Wizard Experience Levels in the Player's Handbook* for determining experience levels. This table is reprinted at right for convenience. Thus, an adept with 2,500 experience points is considered 2nd level. An adept who has an Intelligence score of 16 or greater receives a 10% bonus to the number of experience points that the DM awards. This allows adepts with high scores in the prime requisite to advance in level more rapidly than their peers.

Saving Throws and Attack Rolls

Adepts calculate saving throws and attack rolls in the same manner as wizards in the AD&D core rules. Saving throw numbers appear in *Table 60: Character Saving Throws in the Player's Handbook*. Attack rolls, also known as THAC0, appear in *Table 53: Calculated THAC0s in the Player's Handbook*.

Proficiency Slots

An adept begins a career with two weapon proficiency slots and five nonweapon proficiency

slots. An adept gains one additional weapon proficiency slot with every fifth experience level. An adept gains one additional nonweapon proficiency slot at every third level.

An adept who uses a weapon with which he is not proficient suffers a -4 penalty on the attack roll. An adept must devote at least one nonweapon proficiency slot to the Spellcraft proficiency.

Spell Use

Adepts are the only characters able to learn wizard spells on Gothic Earth. When first created, an adept has the ability to cast only the *cantrip*, *detect magic*, and *read magic* spells. While this may seem like nothing to an experienced AD&D game player, this represents an inconceivable mastery of the supernatural on Gothic Earth.

An adept who wishes to master other magical spells must seek them out or invent and research them. Both processes are difficult and full of danger. The actual learning and practice of the spell, however, may be far more perilous than anything the character did to find it. This subject is discussed in greater detail later in this book (See *Chapter V: Magic*).

Adept Experience Levels

Level	Exp. Pts.	Hit Dice (d4)
1	0	1
2	2,500	2
3	5,000	3
4	10,000	4
5	20,000	5
6	40,000	6
7	60,000	7
8	90,000	8
9	135,000	9
10	250,000	10
11	375,000	10+1
12	750,000	10+2
13	1,125,000	10+3
14	1,500,000	10+4
15	1,875,000	10+5
16	2,250,000	10+6
17	2,625,000	10+7
18	3,000,000	10+8
19	3,375,000	10+9
20	3,750,000	10+10

Chapter II: CHARACTER CREATION

Mystic

Ability Score Requirement: Wisdom 9
Prime Requisite: Wisdom

While some intellectuals cloister themselves and devote their lives to meticulous study at the cost of real world experience, members of the mystic class tend to gain the majority of their knowledge from systematic studies of the universe. They are a worldly, hardy folk, nearly as stalwart as soldiers.

Hit Points

Mystics roll 1d8 for starting hit points. (The result may be modified by the Constitution bonus and may be increased by as many as 2 points. Refer to *Table 3: Constitution* in the *Player's Handbook*.) At each additional level up to and including the 9th, an additional d8 is rolled, modified by the character's Constitution bonus if appropriate. That result is added to the hit point total. After the 9th level, the character no longer rolls for hit points with each new level, but gains 2 points per level. Constitution bonuses do not apply after the 9th level.

Level Advancement

Mystics use *Table 23: Priest Experience Levels* in the *Player's Handbook* for determining experience levels. This table is reprinted at right for convenience. A mystic who has a Wisdom score of 16 or greater receives a 10% bonus to the number of experience points that the DM awards. This allows mystics with high scores in the prime requisite to advance in level more rapidly than their peers.

Saving Throws and Attack Rolls

Mystics calculate saving throws and attack rolls in the same manner as clerics in the AD&D core rules. Saving throw numbers appear in *Table 60: Character Saving Throws* in the *Player's Handbook*. Attack rolls, also known as THAC0, appear in *Table 53: Calculated THAC0s* in the *Player's Handbook*.

Proficiency Slots

A mystic begins with two weapon proficiency slots and five nonweapon proficiency slots. A mystic gains one additional weapon slot with every fifth experience level. A mystic gains one additional nonweapon slot at every third level. A mystic who

uses a weapon with which he is not proficient suffers a -4 penalty on the attack roll. A mystic must devote at least one nonweapon slot to Spiritcraft.

Spell Use

Mystics are the only characters able to learn priest spells on Gothic Earth. Like adepts, they have spent many hours in the study of lore thought to be forgotten or mythical. The magic they have mastered, while insignificant in terms of standard AD&D games, represents the command of powers few mortals would dream of on Gothic Earth. A mystic begins the game with the ability to cast *bleed*, *detect evil*, and *detect magic*. A mystic who wishes to master other spells must seek them out or invent and research them. Both processes are difficult and dangerous. Information on the use of magic by mystics is found in *Chapter V: Magic*.

Turning Undead

A mystic's knowledge and understanding of the afterlife enables him to focus energy and turn undead, following the rules in the RAVENLOFT Campaign Setting. A mystic derives this power not from great faith in a deity, but from knowledge and experience of undead.

Mystic Experience Levels

Level	Exp. Pts.	Hit Dice (d8)
1	0	1
2	1,500	2
3	3,000	3
4	6,000	4
5	13,000	5
6	27,500	6
7	55,000	7
8	110,000	8
9	225,000	9
10	450,000	9+2
11	675,000	9+4
12	900,000	9+6
13	1,125,000	9+8
14	1,350,000	9+10
15	1,575,000	9+12
16	1,800,000	9+14
17	2,025,000	9+16
18	2,250,000	9+18
19	2,475,000	9+20
20	2,700,000	9+22

Chapter II: CHARACTER CREATION

Tradesman

Ability Score Requirement: Dexterity 9
Prime Requisite: Dexterity

Tradesman characters make up the majority of the world's population. Corner merchants, laborers, and all others who make the civilization of Gothic Earth run smoothly fall into this class. The class also includes those few individuals who opt to make a living through the pursuit of criminal activities. Characters with talents similar to the rogue in the AD&D game also qualify as tradesmen:

Hit Points

Tradesmen roll 1d6 for starting hit points. (The result of this roll may be modified by the Constitution bonus and may be increased by as many as 2 points. Refer to *Table 3: Constitution* in the *Player's Handbook*.)

At each additional level up to and including the 10th, an additional d6 is rolled, modified by the character's Constitution bonus if appropriate. That result is added to the hit point total. After the 10th level, the character no longer rolls for hit points with each new level, but gains 2 points per level. Constitution bonuses do not apply after the 10th level.

Level Advancement

Tradesmen use *Table 25: Rogue Experience Levels* in the *Player's Handbook* for determining experience levels. This table is reprinted at right for convenience. Thus, a tradesman with 1,250 experience points is considered 2nd level.

A tradesman who has a Dexterity score of 16 or greater receives a 10% bonus to the number of experience points that the DM awards. This allows tradesmen with high scores in the prime requisite to advance in level more rapidly than their peers.

Saving Throws and Attack Rolls

Tradesmen calculate saving throws and attack rolls in the same manner as rogues in the AD&D core rules. Saving throw numbers appear in *Table 60: Character Saving Throws* in the *Player's Handbook*. Attack rolls, also known as THAC0, appear in *Table 53: Calculated THAC0s* in the *Player's Handbook*.

Proficiency Slots

A tradesman begins a career with three weapon proficiency slots and six nonweapon proficiency slots. A tradesman gains one additional weapon proficiency slot with every fourth experience level. A tradesman gains one additional nonweapon proficiency slot at every third level.

A tradesman who uses a weapon with which he is not proficient suffers a -3 penalty on the attack roll.

Specialty Skills

Just as the art of weapon specialization has disappeared in the world of Gothic Earth, so too have the traditional Thieving Skills of the AD&D game. This is not to say that characters are no longer able to pick locks or climb walls. These skills are now handled as proficiencies. Complete information on proficiencies is presented in *Chapter III: Proficiencies*.

Similarly, the Backstabbing skill is considered a nonweapon proficiency for *Masque of the Red Death* campaigns and is also discussed in more detail in *Chapter III: Proficiencies*.

Tradesman Experience Levels

Level	Exp. Pts.	Hit Dice (d6)
1	0	1
2	1,250	2
3	2,500	3
4	5,000	4
5	10,000	5
6	20,000	6
7	40,000	7
8	70,000	8
9	110,000	9
10	160,000	10
11	220,000	10+2
12	440,000	10+4
13	660,000	10+6
14	880,000	10+8
15	1,100,000	10+10
16	1,320,000	10+12
17	1,540,000	10+14
18	1,760,000	10+16
19	1,980,000	10+18
20	2,200,000	10+20



Chapter III: PROFICIENCIES

In the traditional AD&D game, proficiencies are presented as an optional rule that can be used or ignored as the Dungeon Master desires. *Masque of the Red Death* rules, however, assume that proficiencies are used. As such, players and Dungeon Masters who are not acquainted with

proficiency rules should take some time to become familiar with them.

Acquiring Proficiencies

The process by which a player selects a character's starting proficiencies is identical to the procedure described in the *Player's Handbook*. Unless otherwise noted, all of the rules presented in that book and the *DUNGEON MASTER Guide* apply to campaigns set on Gothic Earth.

The table below summarizes information about proficiency slots presented in the character class descriptions. This chart resembles the chart in Chapter 5 of the *Player's Handbook*, but the values are adjusted to reflect the people of Gothic Earth.

Proficiency Slots

Class	Weapon			Nonweapon	
	Slots	Add'l	Pen	Slots	Add'l
Soldier	4	3	-2	3	3
Adept	2	5	-4	5	3
Mystic	2	5	-4	5	3
Tradesman	3	4	-3	6	3

In addition to the proficiencies listed, a player character gains bonus proficiencies based on the Intelligence score. This is detailed in the Number of Languages column in *Table 4: Intelligence* in the *Player's Handbook*, and in Chapter II of this rulebook.

Training

As detailed in the AD&D core rules, a character may attempt training to gain proficiencies. A DM is always free to rule that some proficiencies are unavailable to characters even with training.

Weapon Proficiencies

The rules governing weapon proficiencies on Gothic Earth are nearly identical to those presented in the *ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS* rules. Important exceptions are noted below.

Rare Weapons

In traditional AD&D games, great diversity exists in the type and quality of weapons available to player characters. In the latter years of the 19th century, the time in which *Masque of the Red Death* games take place, the majority of these arms were completely forgotten, or at the least, very rare. A good example of such a weapon is the two-handed sword. By the year 1890, these weapons were museum pieces, just as they are today. Smaller swords, particularly items like cavalry sabers, were still somewhat common.

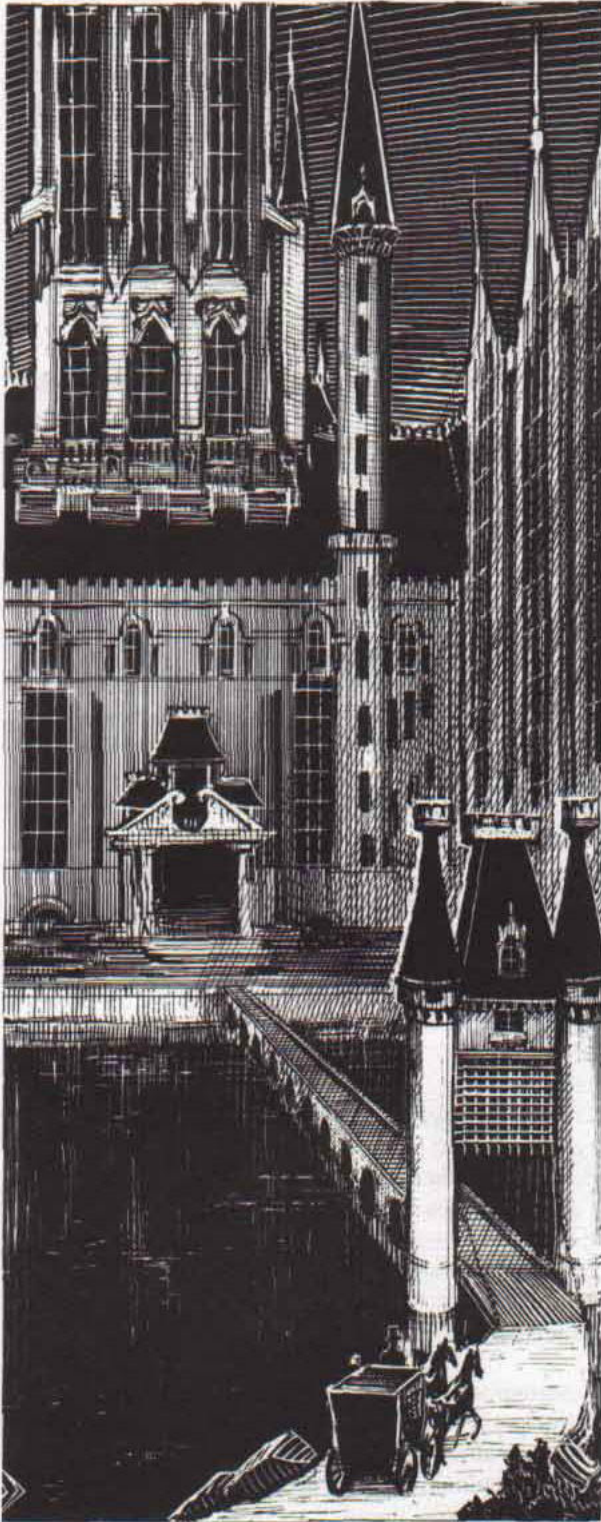
To reflect this, any player who wishes to give a character a proficiency in one of the rare weapons listed below must allocate *two* weapon proficiency slots to that choice.

The following weapons from the *Player's Handbook* are considered rare:

Arquebus	Mancatcher
Battle axe	Morning star
Blowgun	Polearm (any)
Crossbow (any)	Quarterstaff
Footman's flail	Scourge
Footman's mace	Sling
Footman's pick	Spear
Horseman's flail	Sword, bastard
Horseman's mace	Sword, two-handed
Horseman's pick	Trident
Lance (any)	War hammer

Statistics for unusual weapons are sometimes listed in various AD&D accessories and reference books. If such weapons are proposed to be incorporated into the campaign, the DM must rule whether to allow them.

Chapter III: PROFICIENCIES



Related Weapon Groups

As mentioned in Chapter 5 of the *Player's Handbook*, many weapons are so similar to other weapons that a character familiar with one will not suffer the full nonproficiency penalty when using a related weapon. A character who is proficient with a long sword, for example, can apply some of that knowledge and practice toward the use of a cutlass. Such a character will have better success fighting with a cutlass than a character with no sword proficiency.

Normally, a character suffers a nonproficiency penalty when using a weapon for which he has no proficiency. In the case of weapon groups, however, a character suffers only *half* the nonproficiency penalty when using a weapon for which he has a related proficiency. Thus, a soldier proficient with a long sword suffers only a -1 penalty when using a cutlass, rather than a -2 penalty.

Following is a list of related groups of weapons pertinent to Gothic Earth.

Axes: battle, hand axe

Bludgeons: baton, club, flail, footman's mace, hammer, horseman's mace, morning star

Bows: short, long, composite

Crossbows: heavy and light

Handguns: derringer, army revolver, navy revolver

Knives: all daggers and knives

Polearms, Heavy: bardiche, glaive, glaive-guisarme, guisarme, guisarme-voulge, halberd, voulge

Polearms, Light: military fork, partisan, ranseur, spetum

Rifles: carbine, rifle, repeating carbine, repeating rifle

Shotguns: scattergun, shotgun

Slings: sling, staff sling

Spears: harpoon, javelin, spear, trident

Swords: bastard sword, broadsword, cutlass, foil, kopesh, long sword, machete, rapier, saber, scimitar, short sword

Weapons that are not categorized above are considered unique.

Weapon Specialization

This ability is not available to player characters generated under *Masque of the Red Death* rules. The Dungeon Master always has the option to create an enemy or NPC with such an ability, but that is certainly an exception to the rule.

Chapter III: PROFICIENCIES

Nonweapon Proficiencies

In general, nonweapon proficiencies are treated in exactly the same manner as in the traditional AD&D game. The table on the previous page provides a complete list of the skills available to *Masque of the Red Death* game characters.

While some proficiencies will be familiar to players of the AD&D game, many have been altered or renamed. Several new skills have been added. The proficiencies have also been grouped in a different manner from the AD&D core rules, in order to better reflect the world of Gothic Earth and the 1890's.

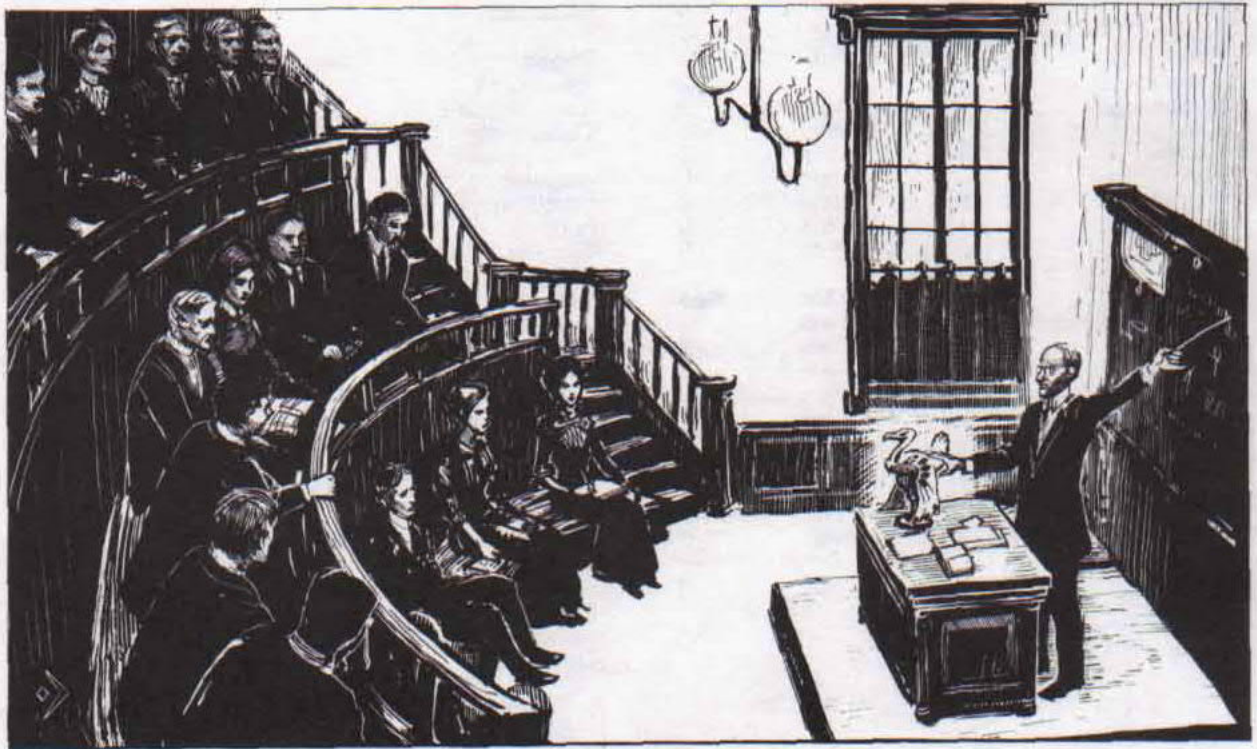
Note that each character class has access to two proficiency groups at the cost listed in the tables. If a player wishes to give a character a proficiency outside those groups, such a proficiency costs *one slot more than* the number of slots listed in the table. This follows the AD&D core rules. Each proficiency group will be available to one or more of the character kits described later in this rulebook.

Nonweapon Proficiency Descriptions

Although many of the proficiencies set down in the original AD&D rules are unchanged in *Masque of the Red Death*, several need further explanation or slight modification for use on Gothic Earth. In addition, new proficiencies need to be fully defined. A careful study of the proficiencies table will also reveal that some proficiencies have been deleted because they are not used on Gothic Earth (airborne riding, for example).

Academician

This skill identifies a character who is a trained educator and who is familiar with the scholastic environment. If the Dungeon Master chooses to use the rules for training in proficiencies, a character with the Academician skill can serve as a teacher—provided, of course, that he is knowledgeable in the skill which is to be learned. If the training rules are not used, the Academician skill can be used as a general check whenever an institution of learning must be used by the PCs to obtain information.



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Agriculture

This proficiency identifies a character as a skilled farmer. Such a character will be able to find work as a farm hand far more easily than another character might. This skill also bestows a knowledge of growing cycles, crop pests, harvest techniques, and the like.

Alchemy

This proficiency is the supernatural equivalent of the chemistry skill. It provides a character with a chance to identify the effect of magical potions that may be encountered in the course of adventuring. Whenever such an unknown potion is found, the character can spend one turn (10 minutes) examining the elixir. The DM then makes a proficiency check.

If the check is successful, the character learns the general nature of the potion. The DM should always couch the potion's effects in arcane or mystical terms. For instance, a *potion of healing* might be identified as "an uncommon elixir which is beneficial to the flesh of heroes." Of course, the same terms might be used to describe a *potion of heroism* or *strength*.

If the die roll is an unmodified 1, the character exactly identifies the potion and may be told the potion's precise effect.

If the check is failed, the character is unable to identify the potion. The DM can simply inform the player that the attempt failed. If the die roll is an unmodified 20, however, the character misjudges the potion and believes it to be something other than it is. If the potion is hazardous or even toxic, this can be a crucial blunder. The DM must decide whether to describe the misjudged potion in general terms or to identify it as a specific concoction.

Animal Husbandry

This skill indicates that the character is conversant with both the training and handling of domesticated animals. As such, it combines and replaces the skills of Animal Handling and Animal Training in the *Player's Handbook*.

Dungeon Masters should be aware that the knowledge associated with this skill primarily regards domesticated animals. Attempts to train mature wild animals should suffer a -2 penalty per Hit Die of the creature. The DM may adjust this modifier based on the age, intelligence, and ferocity of the creature.

Appraising

This proficiency is only slightly different from the description in the *Player's Handbook*. If an appraisal check is successful, the value of an item is estimated within 10% of its actual value (actual value is determined by the DM). If the roll is failed, the character's estimate is incorrect by 50% of the item's actual value. On an unmodified roll of 20, the character is wildly off in the estimation of the value (DM's determination). On an unmodified roll of 1, the character's estimate is within 1% of the actual value.

Archaeology

In the 1890's, the study of the ancient world is very much in fashion. This includes all topics and eras, from the excavation of dinosaur bones to the exploration of tombs in Egypt. The archaeology proficiency indicates that a character is familiar not only with the study of the past, but also the techniques by which such information is acquired.

Artillery

This proficiency is similar to the Gunnery skill that was introduced in the historical reference book *A Mighty Fortress* (9370). It allows a character to operate the artillery of the period—primarily cannons and Gatling guns. A character who devotes one slot to the study of artillery is able to load, clean, and otherwise care for such a weapon, but is not sufficiently skilled to actually aim it with any great skill. With the devotion of a second slot, the character becomes a fully qualified gunner who may direct the fire of heavy weapons against enemy positions.

Artisan

This skill is based on the description for Artistic Ability presented in the *Player's Handbook*. When this proficiency is selected, the player must choose a specific form of artistic expression for the character. Art forms might include painting, drawing, sculpting, needlecraft, poetry writing, or other media of the player's choice.

The artisan proficiency might also be combined with another proficiency, such as photography or weaving, to indicate that the character is not merely competent in such a field, but is so skilled as to create works of art.

Chapter III: PROFICIENCIES

Astronomy

This proficiency indicates a solid knowledge of the rapidly growing science of stellar observation. While mankind has watched the stars for centuries, a great deal of mystical lore has always been associated with the heavens, to the point that the average citizen can barely distinguish fact from myth.

This skill allows a character to identify celestial bodies and to predict upcoming stellar events such as eclipses and meteor showers. Characters with this skill gain a bonus to the Navigation proficiency, adding a +1 bonus to a Navigation check.

Athletics

This proficiency requires that the character select a specific sport or skill as the basis of the proficiency. The exact benefits of the selected sport, as well as the ability score upon which checks will be made, is up to the Dungeon Master. The DM should keep in mind that many sports considered common on modern-day earth have not yet been invented in the 1890's, and others (such as baseball) are just starting to become popular on a national scale.

Backstabbing

This proficiency replaces the special ability of the same name normally associated with rogues in the AD&D game. A character with this skill gains a +4 bonus to all attack rolls made with surprise against the opponent's rear. In addition, a backstab inflicts a greater amount of damage depending on the character's level, as shown on the following chart:

Character Level	Damage Multiplier
1-4	2x
5-8	3x
9-12	4x
13+	5x

All of the normal considerations and restrictions laid down in the *Player's Handbook* apply to characters using backstabbing attacks on Gothic Earth.

Blacksmith

This skill functions as described in the *Player's Handbook*.

Blind Fighting

This skill functions as described in the *Player's Handbook*.

Biology

While botany involves the study of plants and zoology involves the study of animals, biology involves the study of all living things, including humans. A character with the biology skill will have a general knowledge of plants and creatures and the interactions between them. Such a character will have a working knowledge of the human body, and may be able to diagnose simple common diseases. A character with the Biology proficiency gains a +1 bonus to attempts to render first aid (as determined by the DM),

Botany

Characters with this skill have extensive knowledge of plant anatomy, varieties, byproducts, propagation, hybridization, and diseases. A character who has an understanding of botany may attempt a proficiency check to identify any species of plant encountered.

This proficiency also provides a +1 bonus to any attempt by the character to create a poison (see Toxicology) that is derived from a plant.

Brewing

This skill functions as described in the *Player's Handbook*.

Carpentry

This skill functions as described in the *Player's Handbook*.

Chemistry

A character with a proficiency in chemistry is able to identify and create chemical compounds. This includes the ability to run tests that will identify the composition of a substance, so that a blood spot might be identified as something other than dark red paint.

In addition, chemical compounds such as explosives or poisons can be manufactured (assuming that the character has sufficient materials, lab equipment, and time to work).

The initial purchase of this skill allows a character to perform chemical analysis of existing compounds and mix chemicals according to predetermined

Chapter III: PROFICIENCIES

formulae. If the character hopes to successfully concoct new compounds, an additional slot must be allocated. The DM must regulate all fabrication attempts to insure play balance.

Climb Walls

This proficiency replaces the thief skill of the same name. When used successfully, it allows a character to scale virtually sheer walls. Characters with this skill are able to climb at the same rate as an AD&D game thief (see *Time and Movement* in the *Player's Handbook*).

Whenever a thief character would be called upon to make a roll against his Climb Walls ability in an AD&D game, a character in the *Masque of the Red Death* campaign must make a proficiency check. When making this check, the DM will need to apply the modifiers listed in *Table 66: Climbing Modifiers*. Since these are given as percentages, a quick conversion must be made, so that every 5% bonus or penalty equates to a 1-point modifier to the proficiency check. Thus, a character climbing a crag with abundant handholds (+40% modifier) gains a +8 bonus on the proficiency check.

Clockwork

A character with this proficiency is skilled with small mechanisms similar to those used in clocks and music boxes. With the right tools, the character can use this talent to construct clocks, watches, or similar timing mechanisms.

In a case in which a trap is fashioned from such components, the DM may allow a character with this skill an attempt to disarm it (possibly with a negative modifier to success).

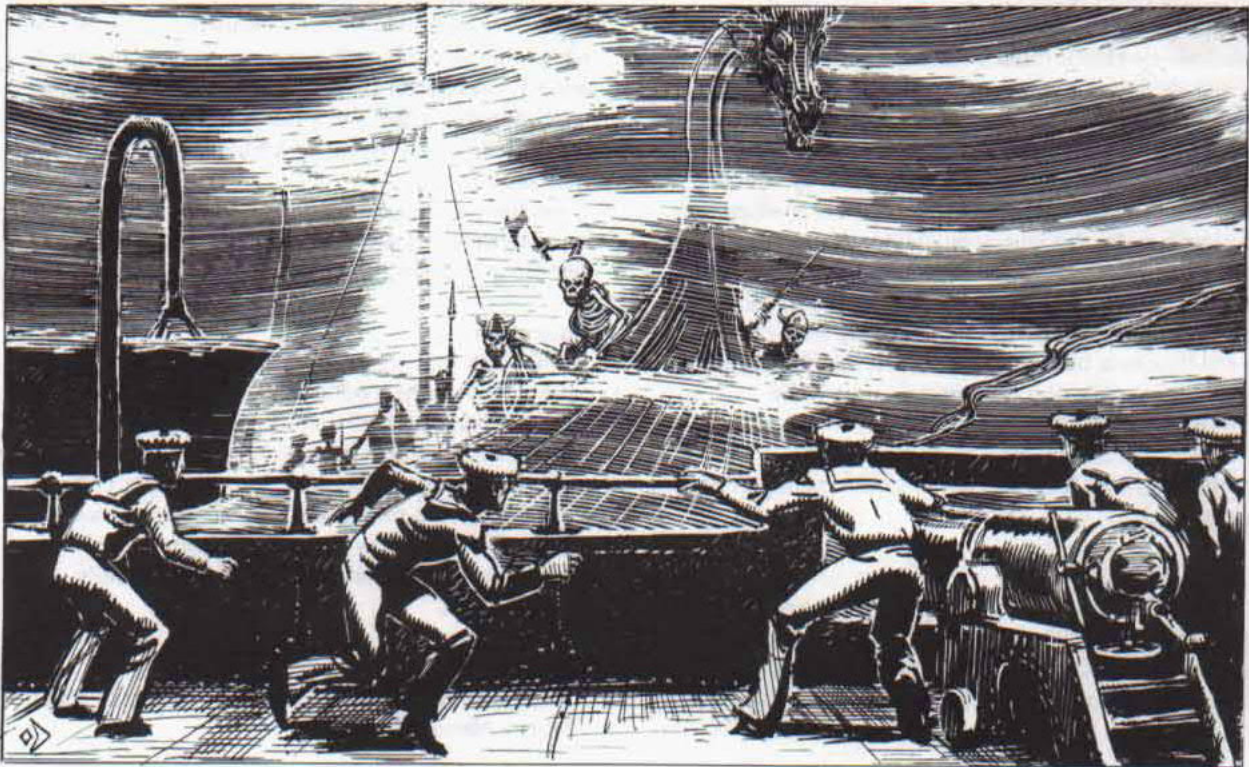
The initial allocation of one slot to this skill allows the character to maintain and repair devices of this nature. If new devices are to be designed and built, an additional slot must be allocated.

Cobbling

This skill is unchanged from the description in the *Player's Handbook*.

Cooking

This skill is unchanged from the description in the *Player's Handbook*.



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Criminology

The study of crime and its history can be of great importance to an adventurer on Gothic Earth. While the first use of fingerprinting in law enforcement has not yet occurred, and the FBI will not be formed for another 30 years, anyone can learn much from a careful study of criminals and their techniques. At a crime scene, a character with this talent will generally be able to notice clues that others may miss (if such clues exist, of course). Such a character may also have an advantage in working with local law enforcement agencies.

Dancing

This skill is unchanged from the description in the *Player's Handbook*.

Demolition

Explosives are far more common in the *Masque of the Red Death* setting than they are in a traditional AD&D game. Characters skilled with the use of dynamite and similar explosive devices can use them to collapse bridges, houses, and other structures with great efficiency. Whenever a character attempts to set an explosive charge, a proficiency check must be made to avoid mishap. A nonproficient character using explosives must make an Intelligence check with a -4 modifier to perform the same feat.

If a check fails, the number of points by which it was missed indicates the severity of the mishap, as determined by the Dungeon Master. If the check fails by only 1 or 2 points, for example, the charge may simply fail to detonate. A roll that fails by 3 or 4 points might indicate unforeseen collateral damage; a roll that fails by 5 points or more might indicate a premature explosion that injures or kills the character setting the charge.

Additional information on the use of this proficiency can be found in the *Combat* chapter of these rules.

Detect Noise

This proficiency is used in place of the thief skill of the same name. The Dungeon Master is free to apply modifiers to the check for such things as background noise, physical obstructions, and similar conditions.

Disguise

This skill is unchanged from the description in the *Player's Handbook*.

Electricity

The wonders of electricity are sweeping through the world of Gothic Earth. Hardly a day goes by that a new use is not found for this recently harnessed power source. With this skill, a character can understand and design various machines that depend upon electricity for their operation.

The initial purchase of this skill allows the character to understand and repair such machines. If the character wishes to design and build electrical devices, an additional slot must be allocated to the skill.

Endurance

This skill is unchanged from the description in the *Player's Handbook*.

Engineering

A character with this skill is assumed to be able to understand, design, and build complex machines using the most modern advances of 1890's science. For the most part, these devices will be powered by steam engines or similar mechanisms such as water wheels or windmills. The initial purchase of this skill allows a character to maintain and repair complex mechanisms. If the character is to undertake design and construction tasks, an additional slot must be allocated.

Persons wishing to be skilled in the manufacture and operation of electrical machines will need to purchase the Electricity proficiency.

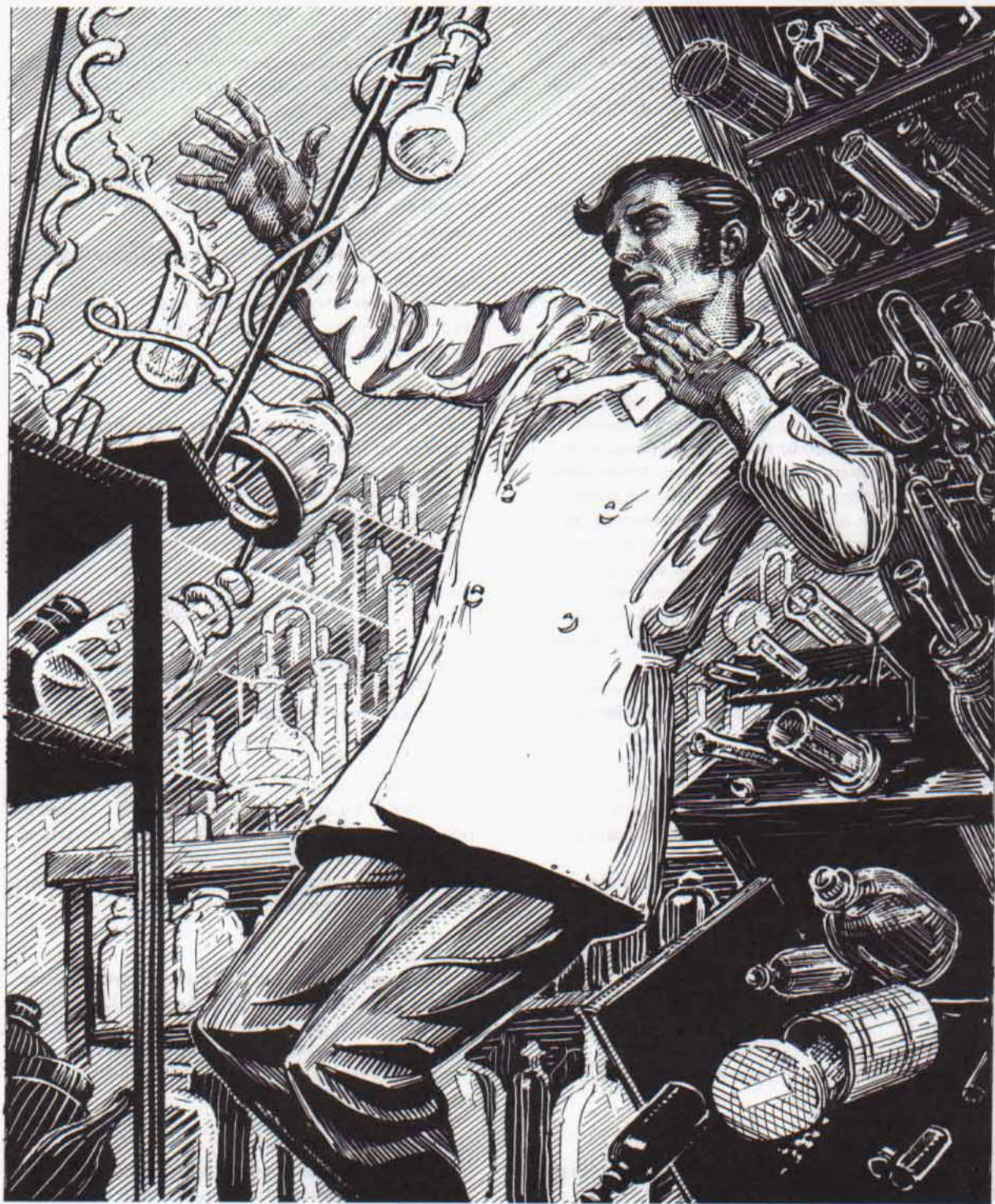
Equestrian

This skill replaces the Land-based Riding proficiency. Unless otherwise stated by a player at the time the slot is allocated, the Equestrian proficiency includes only horses, camels, and similar animals. A player who wishes a character to be proficient in the riding of pachyderms or other unusual mounts may do so by defining the skill and allocating an additional slot to it when initially purchasing it.

Etiquette

This skill is unchanged from the description in the *Player's Handbook*.

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Find and Remove Traps

Like the other skills normally associated with thieves, the ability to find and remove traps is treated as a proficiency in *Masque of the Red Death* rules. It is otherwise adjudicated just as its AD&D game counterpart.

Fire Building

This skill is unchanged from the description in the *Player's Handbook*.

Fishing

This skill is unchanged from the description in the *Player's Handbook*.

Forbidden Lore

Like the History proficiency, this skill indicates a knowledge of events long past. While the former proficiency is intended to show that a character is familiar with written, documented facts, those who carry the Forbidden Lore proficiency are assumed to have studied the sinister and macabre secrets that mankind has chosen to forget. While a character with the History skill might well know a great deal about Vlad Tepes and his terrible rule in eastern Europe, only someone versed in Forbidden Lore would know that this vile individual transformed into the master vampire, Dracula.

Initial selection of this skill indicates a general familiarity with things foul and sinister. Additional slots can be allocated to make the character an expert in some field. For example, the noted metaphysician Van Helsing is well versed in battling the supernatural evils of Gothic Earth, but is especially devoted to (and knowledgeable about) vampires.

Characters with the Forbidden Lore proficiency have a greater understanding of the dark and macabre side of the universe. As such, they make all fear and horror checks with a +2 bonus. If the check is directly related to some area in which the character is an expert, that bonus increases to +4.

Forgery

This skill is unchanged from the description in the *Player's Handbook*.

Gaming

This skill is unchanged from the description in the *Player's Handbook*.

Geology

A character who is proficient in Geology has a good working knowledge of the processes by which the features of the earth's surface are formed and has a good recognition of various rocks and minerals. Such a character may be able to estimate the relative safety of travel in a subterranean environment or determine the likely source of a rock or soil sample (provided that the sample is significantly uncommon).

This proficiency includes a working knowledge of mineralogy and topography.

A character who has both this skill and the Mining proficiency gains a +2 bonus to any checks in which the two areas overlap.

Gunsmithing

The availability of inexpensive and reliable firearms on Gothic Earth has greatly changed the nature of combat. Characters with this proficiency are able to clean, maintain, and repair such weapons with great skill. A second slot allocated to this skill would allow a character to manufacture a firearm, but such an ability would be rare. The abundance of mass-produced firearms available in the world would make such an ability somewhat useless.

Perhaps the most valuable aspect of the Gunsmithing proficiency, other than gun repair, is that it gives its owner the ability to manufacture ammunition (if materials are available) and to arm weapons with special loads (silver bullets, for example).

The initial purchase of this skill enables a character to repair and maintain firearms, as well as reload spent cartridges and fashion special types of ammunition. If the character wishes to design and build new or unique firearms, an additional slot must be allocated to the skill.

Healing

This proficiency reflects a familiarity with first aid, natural remedies, and the like. As such, it functions as in the AD&D game rules. Players who wish to have characters skilled in the more modern medicine of the day should consider the Medicine proficiency.

Heraldry

While this skill functions in a manner similar to its use in AD&D games, players and Dungeon Masters

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should understand that it reflects the modern flags of the world, military insignia, and various important icons of the 1890's.

Herbalism

This skill is unchanged from the description in the *Player's Handbook*.

Hide in Shadows

This skill replaces the thief skill of the same name. It is used in the same circumstances as the thief skill, replacing the percentage roll with a proficiency check.

History

This skill is similar to the ancient history proficiency in the *Player's Handbook*. When the proficiency is chosen, the player must select a specific area or period of history to be the character's area of expertise. The Dungeon Master must approve any choice, and may broaden or narrow any selection that may seem inappropriate. For example, the history of winemaking in Europe might be an appropriate choice; the history of Europe would not be appropriate; the history of a single vineyard in the Burgundy region would also be inappropriate.

It is important to make a distinction between this skill and the Forbidden Lore proficiency. The player and DM should read the description for that proficiency before making any decisions.

Hunting

This skill is unchanged from the description in the *Player's Handbook*.

Jeweler

This skill replaces the Gem Cutting proficiency described in the *Player's Handbook*, and is expanded to include the fashioning of jewelry from precious metals and other valuable substances. It otherwise functions as described in the *Player's Handbook*.



Journalism

This skill reflects a talent for writing and a familiarity with the business of publishing. It might indicate one of a number of occupations: a character employed as a writer or editor by a newspaper or magazine; a character working as a freelance writer or photographer; or a character who writes fictional stories or novels.

Attempts by a character to sell written work will be governed by proficiency checks and the DM's estimate of the quality and interest of the work. In any case, an unmodified roll of 1 indicates that a work is hailed as masterful by critics, while an unmodified roll of 20 indicates that a work will be scorned and ridiculed.

Language, Ancient

When a player selects this proficiency for a character, a specific language must be chosen. Languages that qualify as ancient include ancient Egyptian, Babylonian, Greek, and Sumerian. Due to the frequency with which Latin is used on Gothic Earth, it may be selected as a modern language.

This proficiency bestows knowledge of both written and spoken elements of a language, if both exist. For example, a proficiency in Egyptian hieroglyphics does not allow a character to "speak" hieroglyphics.

The DM is free to disallow any language that seems inappropriate.

Language, Modern

Like the Ancient Language proficiency, a character is required to select a specific language. This skill allows the character to both speak and write the selected language. As noted in the Ancient Language description, Latin is considered a modern language on Gothic Earth because it is so commonly used in church services, medicine, and science, and is taught almost routinely in grammar schools. It is not, however, used for conversation.

Marksmanship

This skill indicates that the character has devoted a great deal of time and effort to the mastery of a specific firearm. A firearm must be selected when the skill is purchased. A marksman may be skilled with more than one weapon if a proficiency slot is allocated for each weapon.

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Every slot (including the first) expended on this proficiency gives the character a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls when using the selected weapon for Aimed Fire. If the character employs Rapid Fire, the character receives the bonus to attack rolls, but not to damage rolls. If engaged in Panic Fire, no bonus to the attack or damage roll is allowed.

Masonry

A character with this proficiency is skilled in all manners of construction involving stone, brick, cement, and similar building materials. This proficiency is similar to the Stonemasonry proficiency in the *Player's Handbook*.

Medicine

A character with this proficiency is a physician who has attended a medical school or has studied closely and for many years under a skilled physician. Such characters are well versed in the scientific healing methods of the 1890's.

Physicians are able to tend the wounded, as are characters with the Healing skill. A successful proficiency check by a physician, however, restores 1d4 hit points. In addition, a physician is able to render first aid to any character once every 12 hours rather than once per day.

Characters placed under the care of a physician heal more rapidly than those not cared for by a doctor. Such characters recover 1 hit point per day if engaging in normal activity; 2 hit points per day of nonstrenuous activity; 3 hit points per day of complete rest; and 4 points per day if placed in a hospital or similar medical facility.

A physician attempting to help a poisoned character grants the character a +2 bonus to saving throws versus poison (regardless of how the poison entered the system). If the physician has access to a reasonably equipped store of medical supplies (such as a ship's infirmary or doctor's office), this modifier increases to +3. If care is given in a hospital or similar facility, the bonus increases to +4.

Physicians are able to diagnose and treat diseases. Treatment does not always indicate an immediate cure (or *any* cure). It may constitute the easing of symptoms through herbs, drugs, poultices, or other therapy. Treatment may shorten the duration of an illness depending on the severity of the disease.

To administer successful treatment, the physician must make a proficiency check. If the physician has

access to reasonable medical supplies, this check is made with a +2 bonus. If care is given in a hospital or similar facility, the bonus increases to +4.

Note that the average physician has no knowledge of magically created or transmitted diseases. For treatment of such ailments, characters must seek out an individual with both the Healing and Herbalism proficiencies. Note also that the Medicine proficiency is rarely combined with either of those skills.

Mesmerism

The powers of the mind are only beginning to be understood in the 1890's. The mysteries of hypnosis are still beyond the comprehension of science.

A character with this skill is able to place a willing subject into a trance. This enables the mesmerist to explore the inner reaches of the mind with carefully phrased questions. Unwilling characters or those who are unaware of the attempt are impossible to entrance. An individual may be mesmerized only once per day.

Establishing the trance requires 1d4 minutes. During this time, the mesmerist and subject must be in a quiet place with no obvious distractions. The mesmerist must supply some object upon which the subject can focus his concentration, such as a burning candle, gleaming ring, or polished pocket watch. The combination of the focused attention and the soothing words of the mesmerist lull the subject into a sleeplike trance.

Once the subject has been mesmerized, the character can begin to ask questions. With each question asked, the PC must succeed a proficiency check. A cumulative -1 penalty is applied to all questions after the first. Failure indicates that the trance has faltered and the subject has awakened.

The questions asked must be fairly simple and straightforward. It is impossible for the mesmerized subject to lie or deceive the character in any way, although the answers given may be tainted by the emotions or beliefs of the subject.

A mesmerized character has almost total recall, so this skill is useful for recovering information that may have been lost to the conscious mind. For example, a subject who witnessed a werewolf attack in the foggy alleys of London might well have been so shocked and horrified by the sight that he blocked out nearly all memory of the event. Under the influence of a skilled mesmerist, the subject

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could be made to recall many of the specifics of the scene which he was unable to recall consciously.

Mining

This skill is unchanged from the description in the *Player's Handbook*.

Mountaineering

This skill functions as described in the *Player's Handbook*.

Move Silently

This proficiency is used in the same circumstances as the thief skill of the same name. The percentage roll normally used for the thief skill is replaced with a proficiency check.

Musician

This proficiency functions as described in the *Player's Handbook*. The player must select a specific instrument for the character at the time the proficiency is chosen. The proficiency may be taken more than once to gain proficiency in multiple instruments.

Navigation

This skill is similar to the description in the *Player's Handbook*.

Navigation is much more exact on Gothic Earth than it is in most fantasy campaign worlds. A skilled navigator with the proper equipment (maps and a compass, at the very least) can find his way across any stretch of land or sea with relative ease.

Open Locks

This proficiency is used in the same circumstances as the thief skill of the same name. The percentage roll normally used for the thief skill is replaced with a proficiency check.

The modifiers normally applied to the roll for available tools, lock construction, and the like are applied to this proficiency as well. Every 5% bonus or penalty to the thief skill check indicates a 1-point adjustment to the proficiency roll.

Photography

A character with this proficiency is skilled in the use and repair of camera equipment. In addition, this talent allows a character to develop



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photographic plates and print pictures if the proper equipment is available. If combined with the Artisan proficiency, the character can produce photographs that are considered artistic rather than merely competent.

The 1890's is a time in which the wonder of photography is spreading rapidly through the world. Stereoscopes are considered stylish novelties and have enamored the middle class. George Eastman has recently invented the Kodak camera that uses film instead of glass plates (1888), but such cameras are not yet commonly available.

Physics

A character with this skill is familiar with the forces of nature and the physical laws and structure of the universe. Physics in the 1890's was radically different from the physics of our modern Earth. Concepts of quantum mechanics, molecular bonding, and even electrons were unknown.

This proficiency includes a knowledge of forces and motion, gravity, heat, light, magnetism, and properties of matter and energy. The Physics proficiency provides a good understanding of electricity and may provide a +2 bonus on attempts to use the Electricity or Engineering talent if the DM deems this appropriate.

Pick Pockets

This proficiency is used in the same circumstances as the thief skill of the same name. The percentage roll normally used for the thief skill is replaced with a proficiency check.

The chance that a failed attempt is noticed by a victim is applied as described in the *Player's Handbook*.

Pottery

This skill is unchanged from the description in the *Player's Handbook*.

Prognostication

With this skill, a character is able to catch fleeting glimpses of the future. When this proficiency is selected, the player must select a method by which the character attempts to read the future. Possible techniques include astrology, palm reading, tea leaf reading, and numerology.

This proficiency functions in the same manner as the Astrology skill defined in the *Player's Handbook*.

For the most part, individuals who practice prognostication on Gothic Earth are frauds or fools. They learn nothing from their efforts and know nothing of the true magic associated with fortune telling. Player characters who take this proficiency are assumed to have an understanding of the true mystical nature of their craft, however, and can use this talent to accurately predict the future (although to a limited degree).

The use of this skill is not without hazard. Because this ability taps the magical energies of the world—energies long ago fouled by the arrival of the Red Death—any use of this proficiency requires a powers check.

The chance of failing a powers check is based on the nature of the information sought by the prognosticator. If the character seeks only trivial or vague knowledge (for example, *will I be lucky at cards this month?*) then the check has only a 1% chance of failure. An attempt to glean more specific information (for example, *will our battle against the vampire be successful?*) carries a 2% chance of failure. More precise questions, if the DM allows them to be asked, can result in more difficult checks. Note that this check must be made *each time* the proficiency is attempted, regardless of whether it is successful. Also, the DM may increase the difficulty of the powers check if the information sought is to be used for an evil or malicious intent.

Psychology

The modern sciences that study the human mind are still in their infancy in 1890. Sigmund Freud, the father of modern psychiatric practices, is laboring in Vienna, performing the research that will eventually change the way humans think about mental health. The majority of Freud's important early research will not be published for at least five years. Not until 1905 does the scientific community begin to take his work seriously.

The acquisition of a Psychology proficiency indicates that a character is trained in the care and handling of persons suffering from varying types of mental illness. This includes the effects of failed horror or madness checks.

This proficiency has no effect on failed fear checks. More information on the use of this proficiency is found in *Appendix III: Adventuring on Gothic Earth*.

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Psychometry

A person with this proficiency has a limited psychic gift that enables the individual to detect the faint impressions attached to items involved in traumatic events. For instance, if a psychometrist were to attempt a proficiency check on a knife that was suspected as a murder weapon, a successful check might reveal great pain and terror linked to the weapon. If the object had no traumatic event associated with it, or if the roll failed, the character would sense nothing.

In such a case, if the roll is an unmodified 1, the character will relive the traumatic experience as if he had been present at the event. In a severe case, this could result in a fear or horror check or even a System Shock roll to avoid death or coma.

In order to use this skill, the character must hold the object in question and spend one complete round concentrating on it.

Pugilism

Characters with this proficiency are highly skilled in unarmed combat. More than one slot may be devoted to the proficiency, and every slot dedicated provides a +1 bonus to the character's attack roll when punching, wrestling, or overbearing. This is in addition to all other modifiers.

Quick Draw

A character with this skill is able to quickly aim or prepare a weapon in combat. A specific weapon type must be chosen when the proficiency is chosen. Thus, a character may have a Quick Draw proficiency with a handgun, but the proficiency does not apply to knives or clubs.

More than one slot may be devoted to the proficiency, and every slot dedicated provides a 1-point bonus to the initiative roll when the character reaches for the chosen weapon. Since the modifier applies only to a single character, that character may need to roll initiative separately from the rest of his party.

Read Languages

This ability applies to nonmagical languages that originated on Earth. The proficiency functions as the thief skill of the same name.

Characters with this proficiency are unable to read dead or ancient languages such as Babylonian, languages with magical powers, and obscure shorthands and arcane script.

Read Lips

This skill is unchanged from the description in the *Player's Handbook*.

Religion, Ancient

This proficiency provides a character with a general understanding of ancient religions that are no longer practiced openly on Gothic Earth. Additional slots can be devoted to this proficiency to make a character an expert on the tenets and beliefs of a specific lost religion.

This skill tends to provide macabre and unusual information about "the dead gods" and similar sinister-sounding concerns. Some small crossover exists with the Modern Religion proficiency.

Religion, Modern

This skill is similar to the Religion proficiency in the *Player's Handbook*. It grants a character a general familiarity with religions currently practiced on Gothic Earth. Additional slots may be allocated to allow a character to be an expert in the tenets and history of a specific faith. A small amount of crossover exists with the Ancient Religion proficiency.

Rope Use

This skill is unchanged from the description in the *Player's Handbook*.

Running

This skill is unchanged from the description in the *Player's Handbook*.

Savoir-Faire

A character with this skill has the ability to smoothly and quickly adapt to any situation in any type of company. A male character suddenly confronted by a pack of angry thugs might make a Savoir-faire check to strike up a conversation and pass as one of their own. A female character in the same situation may be able to charm her way out of danger. Conversely, such characters can exhibit all the grace and nobility shown in the great courts of Europe, perhaps garnering the finest tables in restaurants or the best suites in hotels.

In addition to any effects called for by role-playing and DM's judgment in specific situations, a successful Savoir-faire roll applies a +2 bonus to the Reaction Adjustment and Loyalty Base modifiers as determined by a character's Charisma.

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A character with the *Savoir-faire* proficiency is able to blend into a setting and learn customs by observing the natives. The DM may impose a penalty of 1, 2, or 3 points to the die roll in cases of unusual or obscure customs in foreign lands.

Seamanship

This skill is unchanged from the description in the *Player's Handbook*. It reflects a knowledge of and familiarity with the more advanced types of ships employed in the 1890's.

Set Snares

This skill is unchanged from the description in the *Player's Handbook*.

Singing

This skill is unchanged from the description in the *Player's Handbook*.

Sixth Sense

A character with this proficiency is sensitive to the presence of the supernatural in its many manifestations. If such a character spends one round clearing his mind and making himself receptive to the ambient energies of the area, he can sense the presence of spell use and undead or supernatural creatures. (The DM must determine whether a creature falls into this category.) The sensation is only a tingling awareness that supernatural energies are near, and gives no clue as to the nature of the energies, but it may provide a character with sufficient warning to take special precautions.

Special Interest

This skill can be defined by the DM and player to simulate any of the wide range of talents available to characters in the 1890's. For example, a player might wish to have a character who is a skilled bicyclist or an experienced deep sea diver. In either case, the DM could require that the player allocate a Special Interest proficiency slot to account for the desired talent. When this skill is selected, the DM must assign a related ability score; for example, Dexterity would apply to the bicyclist, while Constitution would apply to the deep sea diver.

This proficiency is intended primarily for activities that might serve as casual hobbies or interests. Such areas are typically those that a character can learn without spending extended time in a classroom or

under the tutelage of a recognized master. If the DM feels that the skill is complicated, he may ask that a character allocate two slots to it. If a character wishes to make a profession of an activity typically thought of as a hobby, for example, serving as a stamp or coin dealer instead of simply a collector, or as a wine steward instead of a connoisseur, extra slots may be required as deemed by the DM.

Spellcraft

While this talent closely resembles the description in the *Player's Handbook*, it must be refined for use on Gothic Earth. As in standard AD&D rules, the first slot spent on Spellcraft indicates a general knowledge of magical lore and spellcasting. Additional proficiency slots can be applied to indicate expertise with a specific school of magic.

A character gains a +2 bonus when making checks that involve one of the schools he has studied. This is similar to the bonus for specialist wizards and, likewise, specialist adepts. If a character is both an expert of and a specialist in a particular school, and he is faced with a die roll against something involving that school, a +4 bonus is applied to the roll.

Note that Spellcraft recognizes only the magic associated with adepts (or AD&D game wizards). Characters wishing to be familiar with the magic of mystics should refer to the Spiritcraft proficiency.

Spiritcraft

This skill operates in the same manner as the Spellcraft proficiency. Instead of applying to wizard and adept spells, it applies to priest and mystic spells. Characters wishing familiarity with the spells cast by adepts should refer to the Spellcraft proficiency.

Spells cast by mystics operate differently on Gothic Earth than do priest spells in standard AD&D rules. In order to cast mystic spells, a character must be familiar with appropriate mystical procedures and lore.

Selection of one slot for the Spiritcraft proficiency indicates a general familiarity with the nature of mysticism and the procedures by which spells are cast. Additional slots can be devoted to give a character expertise in the lore associated with one specific sphere of magic.

Many modifiers may be applied to Spiritcraft checks. A mystic character with minor access to the

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sphere involved in a check gains a +1 bonus to the roll. A character with expertise in the sphere involved in the check gains a +2 bonus to the roll. A mystic character with major access to the sphere involved in the check gains a +3 bonus to the roll.

A character who is an expert in the sphere in question and also has minor access to that sphere gains a +3 bonus to checks against that sphere. If a character is an expert in and has major access to a sphere, a +4 bonus is applied to checks against that sphere.

Survival

This skill is unchanged from the description in the *Player's Handbook*.

Swimming

This skill is unchanged from the description in the *Player's Handbook*.

Tailor

This skill replaces the Seamstress/Tailor proficiency in the *Player's Handbook* and includes competence with all the modern sewing techniques and devices of the 1890's.

Tanning

This skill replaces the Leatherworking proficiency in the *Player's Handbook*.

Taxidermy

A character who chooses this skill is able to dismember and successfully reconstruct the carcasses of animals for display purposes. Such a character may be employed by a museum or may work independently, possibly as a hobby.

When this proficiency is chosen, the player must designate the skill to apply to mammals, birds, or reptiles and amphibians. If additional slots are allocated, an additional category of animal may be selected.

Teamster

A character with this proficiency is able to skillfully drive wagons, carts, and similar animal-drawn conveyances. In general, no proficiency check is required for this activity unless an unusual situation arises, such as bad weather or frightened animals. In such cases, the DM may assign bonuses or penalties to the roll as appropriate.

Tightrope Walking

This skill is unchanged from the description in the *Player's Handbook*.

Tracking

This skill is unchanged from the description in the *Player's Handbook*.

Tumbling

This skill is unchanged from the description in the *Player's Handbook*.

Ventriloquism

This skill is unchanged from the description in the *Player's Handbook*.

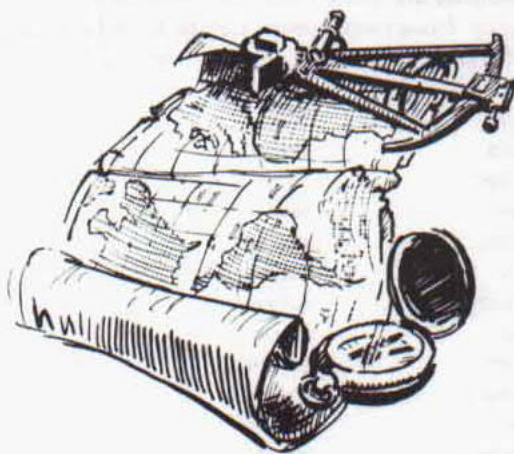
Weaving

This skill is unchanged from the description in the *Player's Handbook*.

Zoology

A character with this skill has a working knowledge of the world's known animals and their habits. This skill does not permit a character to train wild animals, but it can be used with the Animal Husbandry skill to eliminate the penalty normally associated with such attempts.

This proficiency might allow a character to tend a minor injury or recognize an ailment in an animal, but it does not confer the ability to perform surgery or diagnose complex diseases. Multiple slots may be devoted to Zoology to improve this ability if the player and DM so choose.



Chapter IV: MONEY AND EQUIPMENT



While styles and technology change over time, much of the equipment listed in the *Player's Handbook* (or equivalent items suitable to the 1890's) is commonly available on Gothic Earth. No matter how many years pass, a belt is still a belt and a horse is still a horse. Details about specific equipment are found later in this chapter.

All financial transactions in the *Masque of the Red Death* setting are assumed to be handled in United States dollars. The use of this unit of

currency is strictly for the sake of convenience. If an adventure (or entire campaign, for that matter) is set in a country other than the United States, the DM may simply call the money by a more suitable name. Thus, if adventurers travel to Berlin in search of an otherworldly creature passing as an officer in the German army, they can expect to pay a number of deutsche marks equal to the dollars they would spend at home.

Rather than spending time with conversion tables, the Dungeon Master should simply replace the term "dollar" with the term for the local currency. While this may not be realistic, it provides the necessary atmosphere without requiring complicated conversion rules. As a RAVENLOFT campaign setting, *Masque of the Red Death* depends more heavily on mood and flavor than minute details.

Following are some terms for common foreign currency. More exotic terms can be found in nearly any dictionary under the entry for *money*.

Arabia	riyal
Austria	florin
Belgium	franc
Bulgaria	lev
Canada	dollar
China	yuan
Denmark	krone
Egypt	pound
England	pound
Finland	markka
France	franc
Germany	mark

Greece	drachma
Hungary	forint*
India	rupee
Ireland	pound
Italy	lira
Japan	yen
Luxembourg	franc
Mexico	peso
Netherlands	gulden
Norway	krone
Persia	dinar
Portugal	reis
Rumania	leu
Russia	ruble
Spain	peseta
Sweden	krona
Switzerland	franc

* Hungary changed to the korona in 1892.

The Price of Gold

The many worlds of the AD&D game regard the gold coin as the standard unit of exchange. On Gothic Earth, however, paper currency has replaced gold for standard business and commerce. On occasion, players may need a standard conversion rate between gold pieces and dollars. A circumstance may arise in which Gothic Earth players wish to purchase equipment listed in an AD&D game source.

Three things must be considered when converting gold piece values into dollars. The first is the direct conversion value and the division of the dollar and the gold piece into smaller units. For simplicity, assume that a gold piece is roughly equal to one dollar. This makes a copper piece equal to one penny, a silver piece equal to one dime, an electrum piece worth fifty cents, and the rare platinum coin worth five dollars. Note that these values do not accurately reflect the physical value of gold on Gothic Earth. A coin minted of one ounce of pure gold would be worth about \$5.00 on the open market for the gold alone; it would be worth much more if it were a rare coin or an antique.

The second matter to consider when converting gold piece values is availability of goods. The industrial revolution and resulting mass production on Gothic Earth have created great differences between Gothic Earth's economy and the economies of typical AD&D game worlds. When determining

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prices for items listed in the *Player's Handbook* or other game products, the DM should consider the difficulty in manufacturing an item. While an ordinary kitchen knife is probably a mass-produced item on Gothic Earth and therefore inexpensive, such a knife in a medieval setting would be the work of a skilled craftsman and probably fairly costly. To help in this determination, the DM may classify items according to the following categories:

Common: Most items of clothing and food, and also lodging and services fall into this category. The production costs of these items are considered to be comparable in both campaign settings. Their costs can be calculated by converting gold pieces directly to dollars.

Uncommon: Items such as sword scabbards, barding, and rare weapons (see *Chapter III: Proficiencies*) are difficult to purchase on Gothic Earth. In most cases, a character must locate and commission a craftsman to fabricate such an item. Any item in this category costs double the price in the *Player's Handbook*.

Mass Produced: While manufacturing assembly lines are still several decades in the future, mass

production of goods is common on Gothic Earth. As such, many objects that were once difficult, costly, or time consuming to construct have become affordable, including furniture, household goods, and many items of clothing. Items in this category cost half the price listed in the *Player's Handbook*.

The DM and player should also consider the choice of mass-produced goods versus handcrafted wares. A mass-produced suit of clothing, for example, may be comfortable, attractive, and inexpensive, but a made-to-order, tailored suit, while more expensive, may be made of finer fabric, fit more properly, and serve as a show of taste and financial status. Players should have the option of outfitting their characters according to the image or taste they wish to portray, with the DM assessing costs as appropriate.

Finally, a third element should be considered when determining the cost of goods: antique value. While a long sword is assigned a value of 15 gp in the *Player's Handbook* and such a sword manufactured on Gothic Earth would sell for roughly 30 dollars, a medieval sword that once sold for



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15 gp might sell on Gothic Earth for three or four times its original price (or much more!). Remember that Gothic Earth prices reflect modern goods made on Gothic Earth. Never assume that a character could acquire an authentic medieval sword at a price given in these guidelines. The price of such an item, unless purchased from an unsuspecting individual, should reflect the antique value of the item. The DM must use discretion in determining such information.

Starting Money

Masque of the Red Death characters are not forced to begin their adventuring lives as penniless beggars. All characters start with some cash to allow the purchase of equipment and weapons. The character's class determines starting money.

Character Class	Starting Money
Soldier	3d6 × \$10.00
Adept	2d6 × \$10.00
Tradesman	4d6 × \$10.00
Mystic	2d6 × \$10.00

Exceptional Funds (Optional Rule)

This optional rule is intended for players who wish to have characters that are not rank amateurs in their careers. A character could certainly be designed to have an established retail business or clientele, or could be old enough to have had the chance to accumulate more starting cash than listed on the table.

Under the exceptional funds rule, a character's starting cash is multiplied by one-tenth of his prime requisite score. Thus, an Adept with 18 Intelligence would receive 1.8 times the cash generated by the dice.

The use of this rule is entirely up to the discretion of the DM.

Modern Equipment

Many things are available to the people of Gothic Earth that do not exist in the Middle Ages setting of the average fantasy role-playing game. The equipment tables on the next page provide players and DMs with lists of items commonly found on Gothic Earth. This list is by no means complete, but it does provide a good basis from which DMs can estimate the costs of other items.

The Daily Food and Lodging, Household Provisioning, Animals, and Services tables presented in the *Player's Handbook* contain many items that are still available to adventurers on Gothic Earth. In the interest of space, those tables have not been reprinted here. Players wishing to outfit their characters with items found on these tables may do so at a cost of \$1.00 per gold piece value.

A few exceptions exist, but common sense should allow the Dungeon Master to recognize these. For example, barding probably exists nowhere on Gothic Earth; war horses simply do not exist.

Other Common Items

Players will almost certainly express the desire to purchase items that are not on the equipment list in this book. If the Dungeon Master is uncomfortable setting prices for such things or determining what is or is not available, several resources can be called upon.

An invaluable resource for period equipment can be found in reprinted mail order catalogs of the era. A few publishers have issued these catalogs for the sake of nostalgia. Most contain reprints of the original catalog pages complete with prices and illustrations, rather than reconstructed information. Such books were invaluable to the construction of the equipment lists for Gothic Earth. By hunting around in local bookstores or libraries, the DM should be able to find more than enough information about items commonly available in the 1890's.



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Clothing	Cost						
Belt, leather	\$3.00						
Blouse	\$1.25						
Bonnet	\$2.25						
Boots, riding	\$3.00						
Boots, soft	\$1.50						
Boots, rubber	\$1.25						
Cap	\$0.50						
Cape, Opera	\$1.00						
Dress, common	\$4.00						
Dress, woman's fancy	\$7.50						
Gloves, kid	\$1.00						
Hat, Bowler	\$1.00						
Hat, Deerstalker	\$1.25						
Hat, Ten Gallon	\$1.75						
Hat, Silk Tophat	\$4.00						
Overalls	\$2.50						
Overcoat	\$11.00						
Pants	\$1.75						
Petticoat	\$1.00						
Raincoat (oil slicker)	\$4.00						
Shirt	\$0.75						
Shoes	\$1.00						
Skirt, dress	\$3.50						
Skirt, walking	\$2.50						
Suit, ladies' dress	\$12.00						
Suit, men's business	\$5.00						
Suit, men's dress	\$9.00						
Union Suit, wool	\$2.00						
Services	Cost						
Oceanliner (per 100 miles)	\$2.50						
Railroad (per 50 miles)	\$1.50						
Riverboat (per 50 miles)	\$1.00						
Horsedrawn Cab (per mile)	\$0.10						
Telegram (per word)	\$0.05						
Telegram (per word, internat'l)	\$0.25						
Tools & Kits	Cost	Weight					
Blacksmith's Kit	\$12.50	25					
Carpentry Kit	\$15.00	15					
Watchmaker's Tools	\$30.00	2.5					
Cobbler's Tools	\$3.00	10					
Gunsmith's Kit	\$5.00	2.5					
Photographic Kit	\$25.00	5					
Physician's Bag	\$12.50	6					
Sewing Kit	\$2.50	1					
Transportation	Cost	Weight					
Bicycle	\$10.00	15					
Bicycle Tire	\$1.50	1					
Tire pump, foot	\$0.30	2					
Boat, folding canvas	\$20.00	35					
Buggy, open	\$30.00	—					
Buggy, covered	\$40.00	—					
Sleigh, open	\$22.50	—					
General Equipment	Cost	Weight					
Alcohol (fuel)	\$0.10	1					
Backpack	\$2.00	2					
Banjo	\$4.00	5					
Baseball mitt	\$2.00	1					
Binoculars	\$10.00	2					
Book, cloth cover	\$1.00	0.5					
Book, leather cover	\$1.50	0.5					
Book, paper cover	\$0.50	0.25					
Bugle	\$2.50	1					
Burner, Bunsen	\$0.75	1					
Button hook	\$0.40	0.1					
Cabinet bag	\$3.00	2.5					
Calling cards, 50	\$0.10	0.1					
Camera, box	\$3.00	3					
Camera, folding	\$8.00	2					
Camera, stereo	\$4.00	3.5					
Clock, alarm	\$1.50	1					
Club bag	\$3.00	2					
Compass, magnetic	\$1.00	0.1					
Graphophone cylinder	\$0.50	1.5					
Graphophone (player only)	\$25.00	10					
Graphophone (recorder)	\$45.00	15					
Goggles (tinted or clear)	\$0.75	0.1					
Guitar	\$9.00	3					
Handbag	\$1.25	1					
Handcuffs, double lock	\$3.50	0.5					
Handkerchief	\$0.05	—					
Harmonica	\$0.30	0.1					
Hourglass	\$1.00	1					
House paint, gal.	\$1.00	10					
Ink, 1 ounce bottle	\$0.50	0.1					
Inkstand	\$0.35	1					
Lantern	\$2.00	2					
Lightbulb	\$0.30	—					
Lunchbox	\$0.25	1					
Magic Lantern	\$4.00	5					
Magic Lantern slides (10)	\$1.00	0.1					
Magnifying glass	\$1.75	0.1					
Marbles, 50	\$1.00	1					
Matches (25/box)	\$0.05	0.1					
Match box, silver	\$1.15	0.1					
Measuring tape (5 feet)	\$0.25	0.1					
Microscope	\$18.00	5					
Monocle	\$1.25	0.1					
Music Box	\$4.50	1.5					
Notebook, pocket	\$0.10	0.1					
Notebook, tablet	\$0.25	0.2					
Ocarina	\$0.25	0.1					
Opera glasses	\$2.50	1.25					
Pen, writing	\$1.00	0.1					
Pencil	\$0.01	0.1					
Photographic plate	\$1.00	1.5					
Pipe, Meerschaum	\$5.00	0.25					
Pocketbook	\$0.75	0.1					
Scale, counter	\$2.00	2					
Scissors	\$0.75	0.5					
Soap, bar	\$0.03	0.25					
Spectacles	\$2.75	—					
Spyglass	\$7.00	1					
Stepladder, 5 ft.	\$1.00	5					
Stereoscope	\$0.50	0.25					
Suitcase	\$2.00	1					
Tambourine	\$1.50	1					
Telescope	\$12.50	2					
Tripod, wooden	\$1.50	5					
Trunk	\$2.50	5					
Typewriter	\$25.00	10					
Violin	\$6.00	1					
Wallet	\$0.50	0.1					
Watch, pocket	\$2.50	0.1					
Watch chain	\$6.00	0.1					
Watch fob	\$0.75	—					
Whistle, police	\$0.75	0.1					
Zither	\$3.00	3					
Firearms	Cost	Weight					
Carbine, breech loading	\$3.50	7					
Carbine, lever action	\$12.50	7					
Pistol, army	\$3.50	3					
Pistol, derringer	\$5.00	1					
Pistol, navy	\$2.50	3					
Rifle, breech loading	\$5.00	9					
Rifle, lever action	\$15.00	9					
Scattergun (sawed-off shotgun)	\$2.50	7					
Shotgun	\$3.00	8					
Ammunition	Cost	Weight					
Pistol, Army (box of 25 mds)	\$0.25	0.5					
Pistol, Derringer (box of 25)	\$0.20	0.4					
Pistol, Navy (box of 25 mds)	\$0.25	0.5					
Rifle (box of 25 mds)	\$0.30	0.5					
Shotgun (box of 25 mds)	\$0.35	0.75					
Explosives	Cost	Weight					
Dynamite (per stick)	\$1.50	0.5					
Gunpowder (per keg)	\$2.50	6					
Nitroglycerine (per vial)	\$2.00	0.1					
Gunpowder Fuse (50 feet)	\$5.00	5					
Detonator, Plunger	\$10.00	10					
Wire (50' coil)	\$2.50	5					
Melee Weapons	Cost	Weight					
Baton	\$0.75	2					
Blackjack/Sap	\$0.25	1					
Brass knuckles	\$1.50	1					
Club	free	3					
Cutlass	\$12.00	4					
Dagger (Hunting knife)	\$2.00	1					
Hand Axe	\$1.00	5					
Knife, pocket	\$0.75	0.5					
Machete	\$2.50	4					
Rapier/Foil	\$15.00	4					
Sabre	\$17.00	5					
Sword cane	\$25.00	4					
Whip	\$0.25	1					

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Equipment Descriptions

Most of the items listed in the equipment tables need no explanation. Some are sufficiently unusual to merit further definition. In this section, descriptions for unusual items are provided. Items in the *Firearms & Explosives*, *Ammunition*, and *Weapons* tables are described following the general equipment descriptions.

Binoculars: These are popular among explorers and adventurers for their ability to magnify distant objects. Binoculars are invaluable in surveillance situations and for observing dangerous persons or creatures.

The binoculars listed on the equipment table provide a magnification factor of 10. This means that an object 100 feet from the viewer would appear to be only 10 feet away.

Binoculars are extremely fragile and make all saving throws from the glass or thin wood category, taking the *worse* of the two options.

Blacksmith's Kit: This large, heavy kit contains a wide assortment of metalworking tools including hammers, chisels, and tongs. For practical reasons, the kit does not include items such as a forge or anvil. In order to use these tools safely and effectively, a character must have the Blacksmith or Artisan skill.

Button hook: This small object is used for lacing the fashionable high-top boots of the period. It is simply a small, curved metal hook about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch in diameter on a handle about four inches long. It is also useful for retrieving small items in tight spaces.

Cabinet Bag: This bag resembles the stereotypical "doctor's bag." It has stiff leather sides and a soft leather, hinged top which opens wide to provide easy access to the objects within.

Calling Cards: A convention of etiquette, a calling card bears an individual's name, name and title, or name, title, and address. Women's cards typically bear only the name. The card is handed to a butler or secretary so the individual may properly announce the caller. In the absence of the object of one's call, the card may be left as a reminder of the call.

Camera, Box: Perhaps the most commonly used camera of the period for landscape and studio photography, this item is bulky, cumbersome, and fragile. Box cameras make all saving throws from the glass or thin wood category, taking the *worse* of the two options.

To take a picture, a photographic plate must be inserted into the camera. Once exposed, the plate must be developed with the photographic kit described later.

Camera, Folding: Similar in operation to the box camera, a folding camera has a soft body with accordion folds that can be collapsed for easy storage and transportation. It makes all saving throws from the glass or leather category, taking the *worse* of the two options.

Camera, Stereo: This is similar to a box camera in size and appearance. It produces two images of the subject, each slightly different in perspective from the other. When such photographs are developed and viewed with a stereoscope (described later), they create a three-dimensional image.

Stereo cameras are delicate, and make all saving throws from the glass or leather category, taking the *worse* of the two options.

Carpentry Kit: This assortment of woodworking tools may enable a character to make repairs to wooden objects or fashion new items. In order to use these tools safely and effectively, a character must have the Carpentry proficiency.

Club Bag: This is a cross between the modern duffle bag and the briefcase. It is fashioned of canvas, leather, or alligator hide and has soft sides, a metal frame, and a metal clasp.

Cobbler's Tools: These tools, including knives, punches, and awls, are used for the care and repair of items made of leather. Shoes, boots, gloves, leather backpacks, suitcases, bags, and more may be mended with this equipment. The kit is also likely to contain shoe polish, saddle soap, and leather cream. To use these tools safely and effectively, a character must have the Cobbling or Tanning skill.

Gunsmith's Kit: In addition to the items needed to clean and properly maintain firearms, this kit includes tools and parts that allow for minor repairs to damaged weapons. In order to use these tools safely and efficiently, a character must have the Gunsmithing skill.

Handcuffs: The price given in the equipment list is for steel handcuffs with double locks. Each cuff can be locked and unlocked independently of the other.

Microscope: This optical device is used to examine minute objects and is useful in many scientific pursuits. It is fragile and can be easily damaged; thus, it makes all saving throws under the heading for glass.

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The materials required to make slides for viewing under the microscope accompany the device when purchased.

Opera Glasses: These are ornate, less powerful versions of common binoculars. Opera glasses generally magnify at a power of 2 or 3 times, limiting their use outdoors. They are very fragile and make all saving throws under the heading for glass.

Photographic Plate: Early photography is a challenging pursuit. Photographers on Gothic Earth must use heavy, fragile glass plates treated with chemicals in order to take photographs. The chemicals for developing the plate after a picture is taken are included in the photographic kit.

Photographic Kit: This kit contains all the chemicals needed to produce good quality photographs, including flash powder and the various chemicals used in developing and printing pictures. Only a character with the Photography proficiency is able to produce photographs with this equipment.

Physician's Bag: This includes bandages, gauze, cotton, carbolic acid, ether, silk thread and needles for sutures, a stethoscope, and an assortment of medications common to the period. It is intended to serve a physician for diagnosis and treatment in emergencies. A physician attempting to practice his art without this or equivalent supplies suffers a -4 penalty to all proficiency checks. Using the drugs in this kit without the Medicine proficiency is illegal.

Sewing Kit: This handy kit includes a thimble, small scissors, emery bag, needles, thread, buttons, patches, hooks and eyes, tailor's chalk, and other useful things to keep clothing and other fabric items in good repair. These supplies may be sufficient to

manufacture new items. It is used most successfully by a character with the Tailor proficiency.

Stereoscope: This is a hand-held device used for viewing photographs taken with a stereo camera. It is made of thin wood and fragile metal parts and is therefore fairly delicate.

Firearms

By the 1890's, handguns and rifles had evolved to become quite accurate and reasonably safe to the user. Mass production made them readily available at low prices. As such, they became the most popular weapon of the day.

Any adventurer who hopes to survive when confronting minions of the Red Death would do well to keep a weapon loaded and in good condition.

Firearm Descriptions

Across Gothic Earth, hundreds of types of firearms exist. A comprehensive list of all such weapons would easily fill this book but would add little to the flavor of the game setting. For this reason, handguns and rifles have all been grouped into broad categories. The DM and players are free to refine this list or add specific weapons if such detail suits their taste.

Rifle: The rifle is the standard long arm on Gothic Earth. It exists in a variety of styles ranging from the military designs to those used for hunting, target shooting, and law enforcement.

A rifle is a breech-loading weapon, in which a shell is inserted manually into the base of the barrel

Firearms Chart

Firearm	ROF	S	M	L	Rnds	Size	Type	Spd	Dmg ¹
Carbine	1/1	10	25	30	1	M	P	7 ²	2d6-1
Carbine, Repeating	4/1	10	25	30	12	M	P	4 ²	2d6+1
Pistol, Army	6/1	6	15	25	6	S	P	3 ³	2d6+1
Pistol, Navy	6/1	6	15	20	6	S	P	3 ³	2d6-1
Pistol, Derringer	1/1	1	-	-	1	S	P	2 ³	1d6
Rifle	1/1	12	30	40	1	M	P	8 ²	3d6-1
Rifle, Repeating	4/1	12	30	40	15	M	P	5 ²	3d6+1
Scattergun	2/1	1	2	3	2	M	P	4 ²	3d6-2
Shotgun	2/1	1	4	10	2	M	P	5 ²	3d6

¹ Add and reroll any die roll of 6; ² If loaded and ready, speed factor is 2; ³ If loaded and ready, speed factor is 1

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prior to each shot. The user must reload after each round is fired.

Repeating rifles house multiple rounds inside the weapon. A new round is brought into firing position after each shot with a mechanical lever; thus, these weapons are commonly called *lever action* rifles. Only after all the rounds in the weapon are expended is reloading required.

Carbine: A carbine is a lighter version of a rifle. It has a shorter range and causes less damage, but uses the same ammunition as a rifle. Like a rifle, a carbine can be either a single-shot breech loader or a lever action repeater.

Pistol: The most commonly used pistols are revolvers that hold six rounds. In *Masque of the Red Death*, all such weapons fall into one of three categories: derringers, navy pistols, and army pistols.

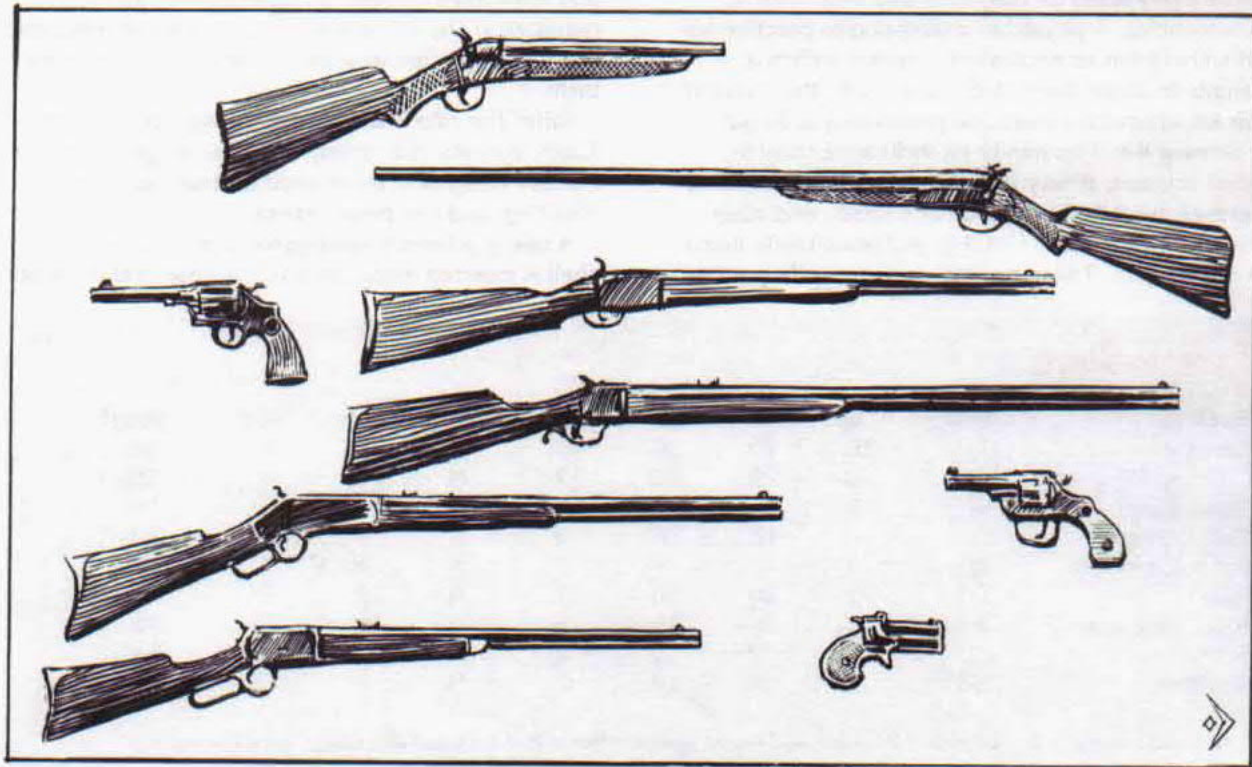
A *derringer* is a very small weapon that holds only a single round. Although not as deadly as larger pistols, a derringer is easily concealed and may allow a character to carry a gun without notice. Derringers are popular among the gentry and are commonly referred to as *ladies' pistols* or *purse pistols* because they fit easily into small handbags.

Navy pistols are lightweight six-shooters that generally use .38 caliber ammunition. They are more dangerous than derringers, but lack the stopping power of army pistols. Navy pistols are found most commonly in urban areas and are considered by most city dwellers to be accepted standard firearms. The larger weapons carried by settlers on the frontiers (army pistols) are regarded as vulgar and uncivilized for city use.

Army pistols are large weapons, generally .45 caliber, that can be quite deadly. Like navy pistols, they hold six shots. These are the weapons of cowboys, explorers, and other rugged individuals. To such characters, nothing else is worth carrying.

Shotgun: This weapon is a double-barreled breech loader that has limited range but can inflict a great deal of damage if used properly. The shotgun fires a spray of small pellets instead of a single slug, but the dispersal of these pellets is seldom wide enough to strike more than one target at a time at any effective range.

Scattergun: This is a short-barreled version of the shotgun, or often a sawed-off shotgun. It is designed to fire a barrage of pellets that can strike multiple targets in a group. When a scattergun is fired, it strikes



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targets in a cone-shaped area that begins at the end of the barrel and expands to a width of 15 feet at the limits of the gun's range. The person firing the scattergun rolls a separate attack die for all targets in that area.

Explosives

Explosive devices are intended primarily for use in demolitions and similar engineering pursuits, but they are sometimes pressed into service as combat weapons. While this is generally not a safe tactic, desperation can often make such considerations secondary.

Explosives Descriptions

In *Masque of the Red Death*, three types of explosives are commonly available: dynamite, gunpowder, and nitroglycerine. All have specific uses, advantages, and hazards. Only a character with the Demolition proficiency should attempt to handle explosives, especially in a crisis situation.

Unlike firearms, explosives have a blast radius that can potentially injure or kill several people. To reflect this, each of the three explosives is rated for damage and blast radius. Anyone caught within the blast radius at the time of detonation suffers damage. Victims are allowed a saving throw vs. breath weapon to suffer only half damage.

Dynamite: This is the best all-around explosive for Gothic Earth adventurers. It is fairly stable, meaning that it is not easily detonated by accident; it delivers a good kick when exploded; and it is fairly easy to conceal and transport. In combat, a character is allowed to light and throw one stick of dynamite per round, using the standard rules for grenadelike weapons in Chapter 9 of the *Player's Handbook*.

Gunpowder: When used for demolition, gunpowder is employed in five-pound wooden kegs. It is more cumbersome and less efficient than dynamite, but is somewhat cheaper. Gunpowder is too clumsy to be used in combat unless special preparations have been taken in advance.

Nitroglycerine: While nitroglycerine is an efficient explosive, it is so dangerous that few adventurers will use it except in desperate situations. Vials of nitroglycerine may be used as grenades in combat, but this presents nearly as much danger to the user as to the victim. Nitroglycerine is susceptible to exploding in extreme temperatures or when jostled.

Fuses

An explosive device is generally detonated with a blasting cap connected to a lighted fuse. Other mechanisms, both mundane and magical, can be used to set off explosions. The most common of these is a plunger detonator (a description follows).

Successful use of a fuse or detonator requires a proficiency check when the device is set. If the roll is successful, the charge explodes as expected. In less than ideal conditions, penalties or additional rolls may be required.

Fuse: This is a length of flammable cord that is wired to a blasting cap. When the cord burns down to the cap, the cap ignites and sets off an explosive device. It is by far the most common method of triggering demolition charges because it is safe to transport and fairly reliable to use.

Because such fuses burn unevenly and at differing rates, precision timing of an explosion is not possible. As a general rule, a one-yard length of fuse burns in one round (one minute). A deviation of plus or minus 10% is considered average. A careful demolitionist will plan for this variance.

Plunger Detonator: When precision timing is required, this type of detonator is a must. When a charge is placed, a length of wire is laid to connect the charge to the plunger. The demolitionist can then choose the precise time of the explosion, depress the plunger on the detonator, and send an electrical charge down the wire to set off the explosives.

When purchased, a detonator of this type includes 50 feet of wire. Additional cable is available to allow detonation from greater distances.

Melee Weapons

Most melee weapons are familiar to AD&D game players. Combat statistics for appropriate weapons are listed below. Those that require explanation are described in detail.

Baton

This is a light club similar to the type carried by police officers. The statistics listed for baton may be translated to any improvised bludgeoning object such as a bottle in a bar fight or a branch in a forest.

Blackjack/Sap

These weapons exist in countless varieties and are easily manufactured. The statistics represent a small,

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shot-filled, canvas pouch wielded like a bludgeon.

A skilled user (i.e., anyone proficient with the weapon who also has the Backstabbing proficiency) can try to knock a surprised enemy unconscious. If the attacker states this attempt, the victim is entitled to a saving throw versus paralysis. Failure indicates that the victim has been knocked out; success means the victim simply suffers appropriate damage.

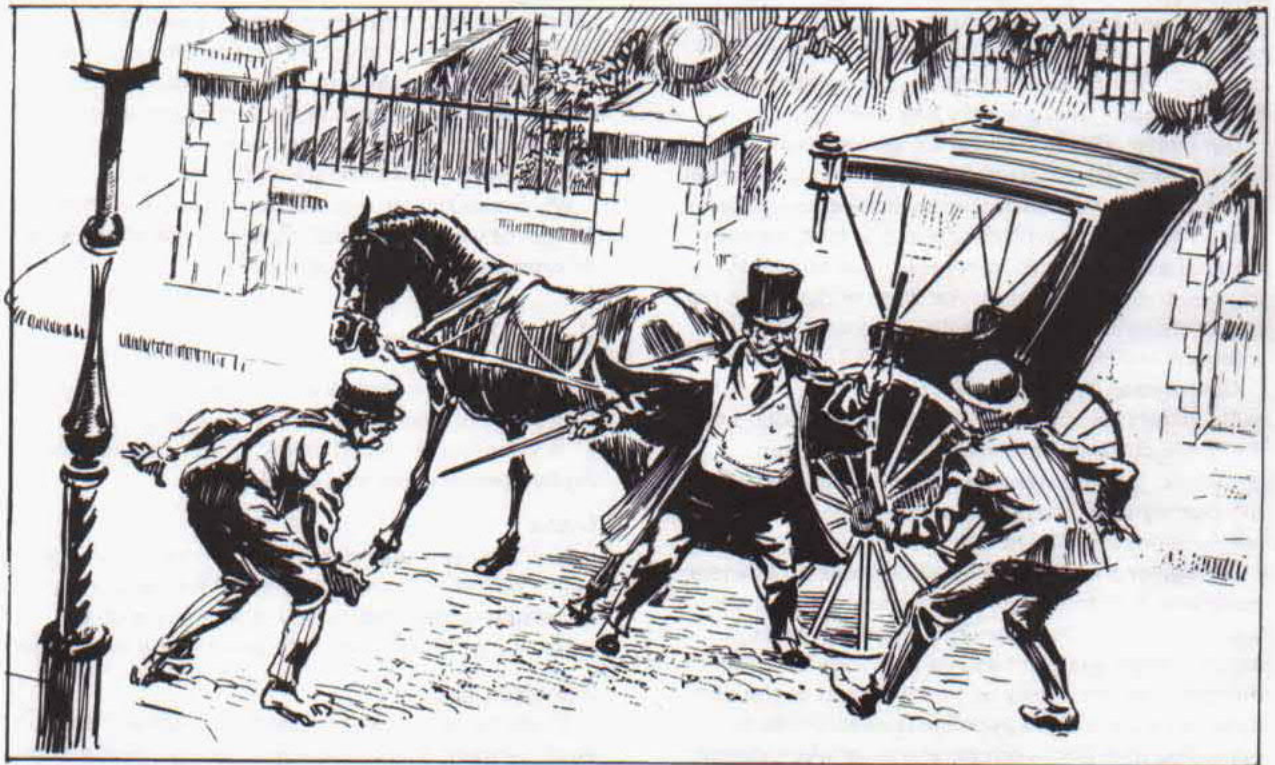
Brass Knuckles: This item adds 2 points to unarmed melee damage vs. small or medium creatures. It adds 1 point to unarmed melee damage vs. large creatures.

Dagger/Bowie Knife: These are far heavier than the knives found in workshops or kitchens. They are intended for hunting, self defense, and wilderness survival. The blades are 8 to 12 inches long and may be double edged, with one them serrated.

Knife, Pocket: This knife is usually regarded as a tool rather than a weapon. Blades average six inches in length and fold into an enclosing handle. The casing is often ornate. Although such a knife can be used for self defense, this is not its primary purpose.

Sword Cane: This looks like an ordinary walking stick. It consists of a rapier-type blade mounted on a cane handle and inserted into a case that looks like a cane. A sword cane can be plain or decorative depending on the user's desire. When necessary, the sword can be pulled free of the shaft. This is very much a gentleman's weapon. Anyone using such an item on the frontier is likely to be branded a dandy.

Melee Weapon	Size	Type	Spd	Dmg	
				S-M	L
Baton	S	B	3	1d4	1d2
Blackjack/Sap	S	B	2	1d2	0
Brass Knuckles	S	B	1	2	1
Club	M	B	4	1d6	1d3
Cutlass	M	S	5	1d6	1d8
Dagger/ Bowie Knife	S	P	2	1d4	1d3
Hand Axe	M	S	4	1d6	1d4
Knife, pocket	S	P/S	2	1d3	1d2
Machete	M	S	5	1d4	1d6
Rapier/Foil	M	P	4	1d6+1	1d8+1
Sabre	M	S	4	1d6+1	1d8+1
Sword Cane	M	P	3	1d4	1d6
Whip	M	-	8	1d2	1



Chapter V: MAGIC



Untold centuries ago, magic was common on Gothic Earth. In its infancy eons past, magic existed in its purest, most potent, most reliable state. The evolution of magic over time is important to the conditions on Gothic Earth.

Ancient man lived in a world of mysticism and magic that can hardly be understood by people of the

modern world. Indeed, so alien are the tenets of this world to the civilization of Gothic Earth that they are regarded as mere legends and myths. Only a few enlightened individuals recognize the truth of the matter.

Thousands of years ago, the ancient Egyptians unwittingly allowed an unspeakable evil into the world. It was not their intention to tarnish the magic they sought to perfect or to deliver an evil force unto mankind. As is too often the case, however, their noble intentions were not enough to protect them.

Already banished from the netherrealms it called home for its acts of unspeakable darkness, the entity that learned men now call the Red Death found itself trapped somewhere between life and death. When ancient priests of Egypt attempted to sunder the barriers between those realms, the diabolical creature slipped through the temporary rift and into Gothic Earth.

As the powers of the Red Death grew in the world, magic became corrupted. Accomplished spellcasters found themselves confronted with unexpected and often disastrous results. Eventually, the use of magic became so dangerous that no sane person would attempt to use it. Those who dared to practice the arcane arts were forced to work only the most minor of spells lest they fall victim to the corruption of the Red Death.

In the 1890's, magic is a lost and forgotten art. The stories of ancient wizards like Merlin or great societies like Atlantis are dismissed as fictional stories meant to delight children and entertain the

masses. Few people recognize that virtually all such legends are rooted in fact. Adepts and mystics, the two player character classes able to harness magical power, are the last of a dying breed. Although countless evil creatures, as well as the mysterious Vistani, seem able to wield spells, few mortal men dare to do so.

Understanding the Supernatural

Gothic Earth is infused with many energies. Most, such as light and heat, are easily measured and observed by science. Supernatural energies, however, defy explanation. Only the efforts of a rare few great minds are able to harness these forces and direct them to create magical effects.

For the most part, scientists and the general populace of Gothic Earth scoff at the concept of the supernatural. The 1890's are an age of science and enlightenment with little room for the outdated superstitions of the primitive past.

In some circles, dabblings in the supernatural, such as seances, have become a fashionable pastime. These activities, while regarded as mere parlor games by those who participate, present a danger of incalculable magnitude—attracting the attentions of the Red Death.

Those rare individuals who know better, however, see more deeply into the supernatural. They know that magic is not only possible, but actually present on Gothic Earth. Further, they acknowledge that two types of magic exist: *wizardry* and *mysticism*. Although similar results can be created with both forms, the ways in which these spells derive power and manifest effects are very different.

General Guidelines

Magic is the most wondrous of all forces. Although its use threatens great peril, it can create results that science cannot begin to explain. Whether used for good or evil, magic is a force that deserves attention.

Still, magic is not all powerful. It has limitations, and no creature, not even the Red Death itself, can bend it toward every desired result. Therefore, some guidelines have been created that should always be considered when evaluating the use of magic on Gothic Earth.

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Planar Travel: Unlike the lands of Ravenloft, seated in the Demiplane of Dread, Gothic Earth spins through the prime material plane. When Imhotep opened the door through which the Red Death entered, he forever altered the magical nature of the world. Since that fateful day, travel from Gothic Earth to other planes of existence has been all but impossible. While certain creatures can travel to Gothic Earth from these nether regions, they invariably find themselves permanently trapped. No spell that allows creatures to travel to another plane of existence functions on Gothic Earth.

The only exception to these inaccessible planes is the Border Ethereal, which may be reached by use of certain spells. Characters on the Border Ethereal cannot pass beyond that realm, however, and may exit only to Gothic Earth.

Divination: Like the evil permeating the domains of Ravenloft, the radiant energy of the Red Death completely prevents the use of spells for detection of good or evil. Law and chaos can be sensed magically, but only careful observation of a subject can reveal whether it is good or evil.

Powers Checks: As many wise adepts have observed, the magic of this world is arrayed like a great spider web. At the heart of this web, waiting to strike like a ravenous spider, crouches the Red Death. Any use of magical energies sends minute vibrations through the web that can be sensed by this mysterious presence. The casting of any spell, especially one used for evil or selfish results, has a chance of drawing the attention of the Red Death. The more magic an individual uses, the greater the chances of becoming an evil pawn under the malignant hand of the Great Evil itself. Powers checks demand special attention in this campaign setting.

Necromancy and the Undead: Aspects of magic that deal with the undead and their sinister powers have been *enhanced* by the arrival of the Red Death. All such spells carry something of an evil twist, even if used for beneficial purposes, and require the caster to make an especially risky powers check when using them.

The Enemy's Lair: In the lands of Ravenloft, no magic used by player characters can ever equal the specific powers of a domain lord. Gothic Earth, however, is not divided into domains and does not have lords.

This is certainly not to say that areas of corruption do not exist on the planet. The most powerful of the

planet's supernatural creatures have established lairs (a vampire's castle, a werewolf's forest, or a ghost's cemetery, for instance) where their powers are assumed to be maximized.

In these places, the magic of the lair's master always supersedes the powers of the characters. For example, if a vampire has the ability to shroud his castle in fog, no magic used by the player character can dispel those mists.

Visual Effects: Many of the spells listed in the *Player's Handbook* have pronounced visual elements associated with their casting, such as *color spray* and *magic missile*. On Gothic Earth, the visual elements of these spells are either muted or eliminated entirely; for example, the *magic mouth* spell produces a disembodied voice that seems to come from nowhere.

Casting a Spell

Many changes have been made to the way spells are used in this campaign. For the most part, these allow the Dungeon Master to generate an aura of danger and mystery surrounding the use of spells by the player characters.

Proficiency Checks

Magic used on Gothic Earth is by no means the "exact science" that it is in many other AD&D game worlds. To reflect this, characters are required to make Spellcraft checks (for adepts) or Spiritcraft checks (for mystics) each time a spell is attempted. This check suffers a -1 penalty for each level of the spell, so that a 4th-level spell is cast with a -4 modifier. A character who has allocated an additional proficiency slot to the magical school or sphere from which the spell is drawn suffers no penalty for the spell level.

In most cases, if the check fails, the spell fails—no effect, desired or otherwise, takes place. An unknown element of the casting was performed incorrectly, and the adept or mystic has simply wasted the effort.

If the caster's roll is an unmodified 20, however, some tragic mistake takes place. A spell effect is created, but the result is not what the caster intended. The guidelines that follow can be used to approximate the nature of the calamity. The DM is free to improvise other results.

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If the spell was an attack spell, it boomerangs onto the caster's party. The DM selects the new target of the spell or rolls randomly to determine it.

If the spell was of a defensive nature, its powers are reversed so as to make the caster more vulnerable to attacks by enemies.

All other spells have their effects perverted in some manner determined by the Dungeon Master. For example, a *create food and drink* spell might produce a meal that is putrid and inedible or even poisonous.

Powers Checks

In the dread domains of Ravenloft, all spells require the caster to make powers checks. This is especially true of magic from the Necromancy school and Necromantic sphere, or any magic used for an obviously evil purpose.

On Gothic Earth, no one casts a spell without alerting the Red Death to his presence to some degree. In most cases, that malevolent entity will not respond to the vibrations within its web. Still, the danger associated with magic is ever present and must be considered each time a spell is cast.

To that end, the casting of *any* spell (even something as honorable as *cure light wounds*) requires a powers check with a percentage chance of failure equal to the level of the spell. If a spell is cast for an evil or sinister purpose, or the spell is from the Necromancy school or the Necromantic sphere, this chance is doubled. As a rule of thumb, most of the spells cast by characters during the course of an adventure for defense, information gathering, or other passive effects are assumed to require the spell-level powers checks.

Thus, a character casting a 1st-level *bless* spell to aid an ally in combat against an evil creature must roll a 1% powers check. If the spell were a 5th-level *atonement* cast with the intent of easing a repentant person's suffering over some transgression, the check would be made at 5%. On the other hand, an attempt to employ the 7th-level *creeping doom* spell for evil or selfish ends would result in a 14% powers check; use of the 7th-level *finger of death* spell (from the Necromancy school) for evil purposes would result in a 28% powers check.

A failed powers check indicates that the caster has drawn the attention of the Red Death. With each



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failed powers check, the caster becomes increasingly more tainted by the sinister aura of the Red Death. Details on failed powers checks are described in the RAVENLOFT Campaign Setting boxed set. When a check is failed, the DM may simply choose the nature of the punishment given to the character, or may roll 1d6 on the tables following this section.

Atonement

Once a character has begun to fall under the malevolent influence of the Red Death, altering his steps to avert total destruction and conversion into a creature of the night is almost impossible. An individual who has knowingly and willingly acted in an evil manner will find the road of evil easy to travel; following the path of goodness will become increasingly difficult. Those unfortunates who have stumbled onto the dark path through ignorance or mishap will find reformation slightly less difficult, but no simple task.

Complete rules for slipping the bonds of evil are presented in the RAVENLOFT Campaign Setting. Additional information on this subject can be found in *Appendix III: Adventuring on Gothic Earth*.

Casting Times

The depleted and twisted magical energies of Gothic Earth are harder to tap than the energies in other AD&D game worlds. In order to access these powers, an adept or mystic must spend a great deal of time performing arcane rituals and speaking mystical phrases. To reflect this, all casting times listed for spells are increased.

Spells in the AD&D game reflect casting time in one of two ways: as a modifier to the initiative round, or as a specific number of game rounds or turns.

Casting times that indicate a modifier to the caster's initiative round are converted directly to rounds under *Masque of the Red Death* rules. Thus, a *burning hands* spell takes a full minute (1 round) to cast, while a *fumble* spell (casting time of 4) requires four minutes to weave.

Spells listed as taking one or more rounds (minutes) to cast are adjusted to take a number of turns to cast. Thus, a *read magic* spell that takes 1 round (one minute) to cast in standard AD&D rules requires one turn (10 minutes) to cast on Gothic Earth.

Spells such as *fire trap* and *enchanted weapon* list casting time in turns. These times are converted into

hours on Gothic Earth; one full hour is required to cast a *wizard eye* spell.

Finally, a few spells (*find familiar*, for example) list casting time in hours. These require a similar number of days to cast.

In unique cases, similar increases in casting time are mandated. A spell with a casting time listed in days would take one or more weeks to cast.

In cases in which a spell requires more than one day to cast, a character is assumed to be allowed a few brief breaks for food, drink, and other natural needs. Anything other than these minimal distractions, however, results in spell failure.

Reversible Spells

Many spells in the AD&D game can be reversed to produce opposite effects; *cure light wounds* can be reversed to *cause light wounds*, for example. In standard campaigns, knowledge of one version of the spell automatically confers knowledge of the reverse. In *Masque of the Red Death*, however, this is not the case. It is important that players of adepts and mystics keep careful track of which versions of reversible spells their characters have learned.

Magical Items

Unlike most campaign worlds of the AD&D game, Gothic Earth is not littered with magical items. The idea of adventurers hefting a *sword +1* or wearing *chainmail +3* is not compatible with the genre of gothic horror in the 1890's.

Magical items should not be impossible to obtain, but they should be appropriately rare. The object of this rule is not to eliminate them from play, but simply to give them the sense of wonder, awe, and value that they should rightly have in a "modern" setting.

Monsters Immune to Nonmagical Weapons

Many monsters exist that can be hit only by magical weapons. Since few, if any, adventurers will have access to magical weapons, this can pose a problem. After all, if a party is attacked by a banshee (hit only by +1 or better weapons), characters have almost no way to defeat it.

In cases in which a secondary vulnerability exists, this is less of a problem. For example, werewolves are vulnerable to silver as well as magical weapons.

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If the PCs obtain some silver bullets, they should have a reasonable chance of winning in combat. They may get a little scratched up before they learn exactly which type of weapon they'll need to defeat a certain monster, but that's what this type of adventure is all about.

If a creature has no secondary weakness, the DM may need to introduce one in order to give the PCs a fair chance. The best vulnerabilities have some tie to the history of the creature. For example, a banshee haunting a castle in Ireland might be vulnerable to weapons fashioned while it was alive. Weapons of

this type might be found in a local museum or antique store, but the PCs will have to put forth some effort to purchase, borrow, or otherwise obtain them. Making such an essential weapon difficult to obtain is part of the game, but such an item should not be impossible to reach, and sufficient evidence must be provided for the players to deduce the correct weapon. Unique weapons should be reserved for long-term campaigns against prominent or important creatures.

There's always a chance that a DM will be caught off guard by an unusual situation. A good rule of

Suggested Results for Failed Powers Checks

Stage One

1. Victim grows small fangs and develops putrid breath (-1 Charisma, +2 damage in unarmed combat)
2. Victim's fingers grow fur and short claws (-1 Dexterity, +2 damage in unarmed combat)
3. Victim develops cat's eyes (-1 Charisma) and is able to see normally at night
4. Voice becomes a hoarse whisper (-1 Charisma); character can use *ventriloquism* once per day
5. Ears become pointed and furry (-1 Charisma) but very keen (+4 on rolls to hear noise)
6. Skin becomes cracked and hard (-1 Charisma, base AC is 8)

Stage Two

1. Victim grows long fangs; breath becomes a visible, reeking cloud (-2 Charisma, +4 in unarmed combat)
2. Arms grow thick fur; fingers develop long claws (-2 Dexterity, +4 damage in unarmed combat)
3. Pupils glow like embers in the dark (-2 Charisma in darkness); gains infravision to 60 feet
4. Skin is cold and clammy to the touch like a corpse; suffers only half damage from all cold-based attacks
5. Legs become bent and twisted (normal movement reduced by half, able to *jump* 3 times/day)
6. Face becomes twisted and ugly so that all who view it must make a fear check

Stage Three

1. Tongue becomes very long (-3 Charisma); bite confers type F poison
2. Surrounded by foul stench (as per *stinking cloud* spell) at all times
3. Gills develop on throat (-4 Charisma); victim can breathe air or water

4. Character must consume one pint of fresh blood per day but needs no other food or drink
5. Skin becomes scaly like a lizard (-2 Charisma, base AC is 6)
6. Flesh begins to decay and rot; all who look upon victim must make a horror check

Stage Four

1. Tongue becomes forked; bite confers type E poison
2. No animal will venture within 25 feet of the victim
3. Eyes melt away, leaving empty sockets (-4 Cha); victim gains permanent *true sight*
4. Skin becomes chitinous like an insect (-2 Charisma and -2 Dexterity, base AC is 4)
5. Victim's touch drains 1 level from others; victim cannot increase in level
6. Eyes burn like fire; all who look upon victim's face must save vs. death magic or die

Stage Five

At this stage, the victim is transformed into some fiendish creature of the night, such as a vampire or werewolf. His alignment must be changed to evil (if it is not already) and all of the penalties for an involuntary shift in alignment must be applied.

Characters who reach the fifth stage of corruption are not yet anchored to a lair. Any player character who reaches this point becomes an NPC under the control of the Dungeon Master.

Stage Six

By the time a victim progresses to this level, the evil within him is so intense that the Red Death itself dictates his actions. At this stage, when the character has become the epitome of all that is evil, he becomes anchored to a lair.

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thumb is this: don't put monsters into a game if the PCs have no way to battle them. This may seem obvious, but novice DMs (and even a few experienced ones) may overlook this fact.

Unique Magical Weapons

On Gothic Earth, there is no such thing as a *dagger +1*; that is, a generic dagger of unknown origin that provides a combat bonus. This is not to say that there are no magical daggers that provide a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls. Such weapons exist; however, no two such weapons are alike. Each has its own history and special characteristics.

Every magical weapon must be designed individually. The history and abilities can be as simple or complex as the DM desires. The PCs should learn about such a weapon only through research. It does not matter in the least whether the weapon is researched and then discovered, or if the weapon is acquired and then researched. Bits of information about such a weapon are likely to reach the PCs throughout their adventuring career.

As a sample, consider a weapon of oriental design. It might be known as *fire of the morning sun*; some research might reveal that it is said to have belonged to the first Emperor of Japan. Even this small bit of lore makes the weapon memorable to the players. If the DM goes further and adds a few special effects, so much the better. For example, the dagger might confer a +2 bonus if used within the borders of ancient Japan or in the hands of a Japanese character.

The Painted Web

Just as spells have been corrupted by the presence of the Red Death, so too have magical items been tarnished. Any weapon, even the dagger presented in the last paragraph, carries a lingering curse. This might be as simple as forcing the weapon's owner to wake abruptly at sunrise every morning. For more powerful weapons, the consequences could be considerably worse.

An important exception to this rule exists for items crafted before the arrival of the Red Death. Such ancient objects have not been tainted by the evil presence. Of course, such artifacts are extremely rare, and a player character will have to look long and hard to find one.

Wizardry

Wizardry refers to the magic employed by adepts. It is fueled by the caster's own life force and directed by the strength of his will and the force of his intellect. When an adept casts a spell, he is commanding the universe to change in some way, and fueling this reaction with a small fragment of his own life.

This process obviously poses a risk to the life of the spellcaster. With each spell cast, the adept becomes gradually consumed by the magic he has mastered. In the end, he may have great supernatural powers, but will be physically weak and decrepit.

This aspect of adept magic is especially important when a character attempts to learn a new spell. At such a time, while the character attempts to harness the mightiest of magical energies and knowledge, he is at the greatest risk. Thus, any time a character attempts to learn a new spell, a System Shock roll must be made. If the roll fails, the adept loses 1 point of Strength or Constitution. The player can select which attribute to reduce or can roll randomly to decide.

Schools of Wizardry

All the wizard spells in *Masque of the Red Death* are divided into nine schools as in the ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS rules. Dungeon Masters wishing to use the spells and schools described in *Tome of Magic* should have little trouble blending them into this campaign.

Initial Spells

Adepts must maintain spellbooks just as AD&D game wizards do. When a character is first created, this book will contain only a few spells. As the character explores the world and learns more about the supernatural, he will acquire new spells and become more skilled in their use.

All adept characters begin the game with the *cantrip*, *detect magic*, and *read magic* spells. In addition, a character is assumed to know two other spells, for a total of five. One spell must be a defensive enchantment, while the other may be an offensive one. The DM may use the following chart to assign the spells, or may allow the players to select the spells their characters know, or may mandate them personally.

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1D6 Roll	Offensive Spells	Defensive Spells
1	<i>Burning hands</i>	<i>Alarm</i>
2	<i>Charm person</i>	<i>Armor</i>
3	<i>Chill touch</i>	<i>Detect undead</i>
4	<i>Shocking grasp</i>	<i>Hold portal</i>
5	<i>Sleep</i>	<i>Protection from evil</i>
6	<i>Spook</i>	<i>Shield</i>

A Dungeon Master is free to let a character begin with additional spells as might suit the campaign or background established for the character. It is recommended, however, that no character begin the game with fewer than five spells.

Learning New Spells

Role-playing games are built around the concept of character development. Adept and mystic characters usually advance by learning new spells.

Magical Studies

Whenever an adept character attains a new level, he gains the ability to cast a new spell. This is attributed

to the metaphysical researches the character is assumed to undertake when he is not adventuring. The specific spell acquired is the decision of the player, subject to the approval of the Dungeon Master.

Initial Studies

When a character is created, the player must select a 1st-level spell for the character to research. The research and mastery of this spell is assumed to dominate the character's free time. When not exploring the world and facing the evils of the Red Death, the character should be reading arcane books, studying forgotten manuscripts, and undertaking investigations of magic. When the character attains second level, he may record the spell in his spellbook and cast it in the manner of any other spell he knows.

Subsequent Studies

Once the character reaches second level, a new spell is selected for study. The new spell becomes the object of the character's devotion and research. As each subsequent level is attained, a new spell is selected for study.



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The spell selected is subject to restrictions. It must be from a level and a school that the character has access to at the time the choice is made. Thus, a 2nd-level adept would not be able to study a 2nd-level spell, even though he would gain the ability to weave such an enchantment when he reaches 3rd level. The spell selected for research could only be a 1st-level spell.

Discovering Spells

As characters explore Gothic Earth, they will be forced to confront things man was never meant to face. In the course of these endeavors, they will occasionally discover mystical tomes and arcane lore. In rare cases, they will encounter magical formulas that teach the casting of new spells.

Learning an Existing Spell

For a character to learn a spell discovered in a spellbook, three steps are necessary:

- A proficiency check must be made for the character to determine the spell's level and school.
- The PC must copy the spell into his own spellbook, then roll a proficiency check to determine whether the spell was copied correctly.
- If the spell was copied successfully, the character may attempt to cast the spell; all normal proficiency checks apply.

Note that this procedure is different from the description above for casting a spell following research, and different from the description in the *Player's Handbook*. The steps to learning a new spell are detailed below.

Determine level and school. To determine the nature of a spell, a Spellcraft proficiency check must be made by the character.

If the roll fails, the character has no idea what the spell will do when cast. No subsequent roll may be made to learn the nature of the spell until the character has advanced one level. Failing the proficiency check does not prevent the adept from attempting to copy the spell into his spellbook and then cast it, but casting a spell whose results are unknown can be incredibly dangerous. An adept who copies a spell following a failed proficiency check suffers a penalty to the proficiency roll for copying the spell. This is detailed in the next section.

If the roll is successful, the caster learns the level of the spell and the school to which it belongs. No amount of research or study will reveal the exact

effects of the spell. Only when a character casts the spell will the precise nature of its magic be revealed. Obviously, this can be hazardous.

Copy the Spell. Once a character has attempted to understand the newly discovered spell, he may record it in his spellbook. The translation of the formula into a format that is usable by the character is not difficult in game terms, but it represents a great deal of time and effort on the part of the character. As such, it is generally not attempted during the course of an adventure.

In order to record a new spell in the spellbook, the PC must carefully copy its casting instructions. This takes one day (16 hours) of uninterrupted work per level of the spell. At the end of that time, the player makes a proficiency check to determine whether the formula was copied accurately.

A character who failed the initial roll to evaluate the spell suffers a penalty to the proficiency check for copying it. The penalty is equal to the level of the spell. Thus, an adept who copies a 5th-level spell after failing the initial proficiency roll suffers a -5 penalty to the roll that is made after the formula has been copied.

If the proficiency check to copy the spell fails, the enchantment is beyond the character's current ability. The character may try to copy and learn it again after advancing to the next experience level.

Cast the spell. If the roll succeeds, the adept has copied the spell correctly and may attempt to use it at any time, following the instructions for spellcasting in this rulebook.

Following is a list of spells from the *Player's Handbook (PH)* and the changes in their effects when cast on Gothic Earth.

First-Level Spells

Alarm

This spell produces no audible alarm when cast on Gothic Earth. When the warded area is violated, the adept who cast the spell is instantly aware of an intruder. In all other regards, the spell functions as described in the *Player's Handbook*.

Audible Glamer

The volume of noise produced by this spell is

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limited on Gothic Earth. The caster can produce only 10 decibels (dBs) of sound per level. Sounds above 120 decibels are painful to the human ear. Examples of sounds and their approximate decibel levels follow.

dBs	Sound Equivalent
10	Whispering voice
20	Quiet conversation
30	Hushed conversation
40	Average conversation
50	Loud conversation or argument
60	Shouting
70	Screaming
80	Gunfire
90	Railroad engine
100	Dragon roaring
120	Sound becomes painful
140	Sound causes temporary hearing loss
200	Sound can cause deafness

Burning Hands

This spell causes the caster's hands to become very hot, but does not allow the caster to send forth a sheet of flames. Damage caused by the spell is calculated as listed in the *PH* (1d3+2 per level), but the victim must be touched to suffer injury. An attack roll may be required to determine whether the caster successfully touches the victim.

Chill Touch

This spell functions as described in the *RAVENLOFT Campaign Setting*. A victim of the touch who fails a saving throw vs. spell suffers 2d4 points of damage and loses 1 point of both Strength and Constitution. If the save is successful, the target suffers 1d4 points of damage and loses 1 point of Strength. Lost ability score points return at the rate of 1 per hour.

Color Spray

This spell functions as described in the *Player's Handbook*, with one important difference that affects only onlookers. Only the adept and his victims actually see the fan of vivid colors produced by this spell. To everyone else, no effect is visible.

Detect Undead

This spell functions as described in the *RAVENLOFT Campaign Setting*.

Enlarge

This spell functions as described in the *Player's Handbook*, with one exception. On Gothic Earth, all targets of the spell must make System Shock checks when it is cast. Those who fail die during the transformation. A second System Shock check is made at the end of the spell's duration. Those who fail die in the reversion to their original form.

Feather Fall

This spell affects only a single man-sized creature (the caster or a designated target) and any objects carried by that individual (up to the maximum capacity of the spell). If that limit is exceeded, the spell fails.

Find Familiar

This spell functions on Gothic Earth as described in the *Player's Handbook*, not as described in the *RAVENLOFT Campaign Setting*. Familiars are always nonmagical creatures of no greater than semi-intelligent status, and are indigenous to the area in which the summoning spell was cast.

Gaze Reflection

This spell functions as described in the *Player's Handbook*, but its physical manifestation is altered. Instead of producing a mirrorlike plate interposed between the caster and his enemies, this spell causes the adept's eyes to become gleaming silver orbs that appear to be perfect reflectors. This change does not affect the adept's vision.

Hypnotism

This spell affects only one target when cast on Gothic Earth. If the caster has the Mesmerism proficiency, the victim must apply a -4 penalty to his saving throw in addition to the modifiers described in the *PH*.

Light

This spell must be cast on a physical object and is unable to affect living matter on Gothic Earth. The target of the spell must be a solid; it cannot be cast on air or a pool of water. Because of these limitations, the spell cannot be used to blind an enemy as described in the *PH* unless the spell is cast on a victim's helm or hat.

Once an item has been illuminated, the spell effect remains on the object regardless of where it is moved.

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Magic Missile

This spell does not exist on Gothic Earth.

Mount

This spell does not conjure a mount for the caster to ride. However, when a suitable animal is present, the spell may be cast upon it with the effects described in the *PH*. At the end of the spell's duration, the animal reverts to its original state, although the spell may be cast again to continue the effects.

Phantasmal Force

This spell functions as described in the *Player's Handbook*, but the image created may not be larger than man-sized. Any physical contact with the phantasm causes it to vanish, as does any disruption of the adept's concentration.

Shield

This spell functions normally. It provides Armor Class 4 versus firearms.

Tenser's Floating Disc

This spell does not exist on Gothic Earth.

Unseen Servant

This spell's duration is reduced to 1 round per level, but is otherwise unchanged.

Second-Level Spells

Alter Self

This spell allows the caster to assume the external appearance of any man-sized creature. However, it does not grant the adept any special powers (flight, for instance) which the imitated creature might possess.

Continual Light

This spell must be cast on a physical object and is unable to affect living matter on Gothic Earth. The target of the spell must be a solid object; it cannot be cast on air or a pool of water. Because of these limitations, the spell cannot be used to blind an enemy as described in the *PH* unless the spell is cast on a victim's helm or hat.

Once an item has been illuminated, the spell effect remains on the object regardless of where it is moved.

Detect Evil

This spell functions as described in the *RAVENLOFT Campaign Setting*.

ESP

This spell functions as described in the *RAVENLOFT Campaign Setting*.

Flaming Sphere

This spell does not exist on Gothic Earth.

Fool's Gold

This spell functions as described in the *Player's Handbook*. The elimination of gold coins as a standard form of currency may reduce its usefulness.

Forget

This spell affects only one target when cast on Gothic Earth. However, this reduction is balanced by an increase in duration. When this spell is cast, the target must succeed a save vs. spell or forget all that has happened for a number of turns equal to the level of the caster.

Know Alignment

This spell can detect lawful or chaotic tendencies, but not good or evil when cast on Gothic Earth.

Levitate

When cast on Gothic Earth, the subject of this spell can rise into the air to a maximum height in feet equal to twice the level of the adept. It otherwise functions as described in the *PH*.

Magic Mouth

This spell has no physical manifestation on Gothic Earth. The words spoken by the *magic mouth* seem to come from nowhere.

Mirror Image

On Gothic Earth, only a single duplicate image is created by this spell.

Ray of Enfeeblement

This ray has no visible element when cast on Gothic Earth.

Shatter

The sounds created by this spell are so high-pitched that normal men cannot hear them. Some

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animals, however, might be alerted by the sound of this spell if the DM desires.

Spectral Hand

This spell functions as described in the RAVENLOFT Campaign Setting.

Third-Level Spells

Clairaudience

This spell functions as described in the RAVENLOFT Campaign Setting, except that no physical manifestation occurs.

Clairvoyance

This spell functions as described in the RAVENLOFT Campaign Setting, except that no physical manifestation occurs.

Fireball

This spell is less effective on Gothic Earth than in other realms. When cast in a *Masque of the Red Death* campaign, the explosion fills only a 10-foot cube per level of the caster.

Hold Undead

When cast on Gothic Earth, this spell operates as described in the RAVENLOFT Campaign Setting.

Leomund's Tiny Hut

This spell does not exist on Gothic Earth.

Lightning Bolt

Although similar to the spell described in the *Player's Handbook*, some minor changes must be noted for Gothic Earth. The source of the bolt must always be the caster's outstretched hand; it cannot originate at a distance. In addition, *lightning bolts* cast on Gothic Earth do not ricochet when they strike a solid surface.

Monster Summoning I

This spell and its higher level counterparts do not exist on Gothic Earth.

Protection From Normal Missiles

This spell provides complete protection from normal gunfire, just as it does for arrows and other missiles.



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Sepia Snake Sigil

Instead of engulfing a victim in a shimmering amber aura, the strike of the sepia snake causes the victim to save vs. poison with a -4 penalty or fall into a coma as per a *feign death* spell. The victim remains in this state for 1d4 days+1 day per level of the caster or until the effect is *dispelled*.

Vampiric Touch

See the entry in the RAVENLOFT Campaign Setting.

Fourth-Level Spells

Enervation

This spell functions as described in the RAVENLOFT Campaign Setting.

Remove Curse

This spell and its reverse, *bestow curse*, function as described in the RAVENLOFT Campaign Setting.

The following spells do not exist on Gothic Earth.

Leomund's Secure Shelter

Monster Summoning II

Fifth-Level Spells

Contact Other Plane

This spell functions as described in the *Player's Handbook*. The only modification is that the chance of insanity listed in the *PH* is doubled when the spell is cast on Gothic Earth.

Dismissal

This spell cannot force an extraplanar creature off Gothic Earth. Thus, the spell functions as described in the RAVENLOFT Campaign Setting.

The following spells function as described in the RAVENLOFT Campaign Setting.

Animate Dead

Magic Jar

Conjure Elemental

The following spells do not exist on Gothic Earth.

Bigby's Interposing Hand

Leomund's Lamentable Belaborment

Leomund's Secret Chest

Monster Summoning III

Mordenkainen's Faithful Hound

Sixth-Level Spells

The following spells function as described in the RAVENLOFT Campaign Setting.

Death Spell

Reincarnation

True Seeing

The following spells do not exist on Gothic Earth.

Bigby's Forceful Hand

Monster Summoning IV

Mordenkainen's Lucubration

Tenser's Transformation

Seventh-Level Spells

Banishment

This spell cannot be used to drive a creature off Gothic Earth. Otherwise, it functions as described in the RAVENLOFT Campaign Setting.

Delayed Blast Fireball

Like its lesser counterpart, this spell is less effective on Gothic Earth than in other realms. When cast in a *Masque of the Red Death* campaign, the explosion of the *fireball* fills only a 10-foot cube per level of the caster.

The following spells do not exist on Gothic Earth.

Bigby's Grasping Hand

Drawmij's Instant Summons

Monster Summoning V

Mordenkainen's Magnificent Mansion

Mordenkainen's Sword

The following spells function as described in the RAVENLOFT Campaign Setting.

Control Undead

Finger of Death

Limited Wish

Shadow Walk

Teleport Without Error



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Eighth-Level Spells

The following spells do not exist on Gothic Earth.

Bigby's Clenched Fist
Monster Summoning VI
Otiluke's Telekinetic Sphere
Otto's Irresistible Dance
Serten's Spell Immunity

Ninth-Level Spells

Succor

This spell functions as described in the RAVENLOFT Campaign Setting and cannot be used to escape from Gothic Earth.

The following spells do not exist on Gothic Earth.

Astral Spell
Bigby's Crushing Hand
Monster Summoning VII
Mordenkainen's Disjunction

The following spells function as described in the RAVENLOFT Campaign Setting.

Energy Drain
Gate
Wish

Mysticism

Mysticism is the branch of magic used by mystic characters. When such a character casts a spell, he draws upon ancient lore and long forgotten commands to force the unseen spirits of the world to obey his bidding. As such, a mystic expends none of his own life force to manifest spell effects.

Although mystics do not run the risk of physical decay that adepts face, they do tend to become less and less connected to what we perceive as the material world. As the realm of the spiritworld becomes more and more real to a mystic, that character's attention tends to be drawn away from the world, making him slow to react to sudden threats and changes in the environment. To reflect this, a mystic character suffers a penalty equal to his level every time he rolls for initiative. Thus, a 5th-level mystic applies a +5 penalty to all initiative rolls.

This modifier does not apply to other members of the adventuring party. To reflect this, mystics must

always roll initiative individually, even if the DM uses the group initiative rules. In such cases, the mystic is essentially a third party.

Spheres of Magic

The spells of Gothic Earth's mystics, like the spells of priests in RAVENLOFT and other ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS campaigns, are grouped into spheres. These groupings are identical for *Masque of the Red Death* games.

Because mystics are devoted to the study of the transcendental world in general and not to any single supernatural being, they are not limited to access to a specific set of spheres. Each character is free to follow whatever areas are most appealing.

Initial Spheres

Mystic characters do not keep spellbooks. They depend upon rituals and ceremonies to create magical effects. It is the knowledge of these rituals that gives them their power over the supernatural.

All mystic characters begin the game with minor access to the All sphere. At first level, this enables the character to memorize and cast *bless*, *combine*, *detect evil*, and *purify food & drink* spells.

Accessing New Spheres

A mystic spends most of his leisure time studying mystical lore and the unseen realm of the spirits. With the attainment of each new level, a character gains a greater understanding of the spirit world.

Whenever a mystic attains a new level, his ability to cast spells increases. The exact nature of the character's improvements is up to the player and, of course, subject to the approval of the Dungeon Master.

Initial Studies

When a character is created, the player must select one sphere as the character's sphere of research. This may be a sphere to which the character has no access, or it may be a sphere to which he has access. This decision is made by the player, although the DM may veto the selection.

If the character continues study in a sphere to which he has minor access, the PC gains major access to that sphere when he reaches the next experience level.

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If the character researched a new sphere, the character gains minor access to that sphere at the next experience level.

This procedure is followed every time a character gains a new level. The player must decide whether the mystic will research a new sphere in order to gain minor access to it, or whether the PC will research a sphere to which he has minor access, in order to gain major access.

Breaking off Studies

If a mystic discontinues study of a specific sphere, he can never study that sphere further. Thus, if a character opts not to pursue study of the All sphere while advancing from 1st to 2nd level and chooses instead to gain minor access to another sphere, he can never attempt to study the All sphere further. He will never gain major access to the All sphere.

Following is a list of priest spells from the *Player's Handbook* along with instructions for modifying these spells for mystics on Gothic Earth.

First-Level Spells

Detect Evil

This spell detects only law or chaos on Gothic Earth.

Faerie Fire

This spell affects up to one man-sized object per level of the caster.

Light

This spell functions as the 1st-level adept spell of the same name.

Shillelagh

A mystic can cast this spell on any bludgeoning object.

Second-Level Spells

Charm Person

This spell functions as the adept spell of the same name.



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Know Alignment

When cast on Gothic Earth, this spell reveals only chaos, law, or neutrality. It does not enable the mystic to detect good or evil.

The following spells do not exist on Gothic Earth.

Flame Blade

Spiritual Hammer

Wyvern Watch

Third-Level Spells

Animate Dead

This spell functions as described in the RAVENLOFT Campaign Setting.

Continual Light

This spell functions as the adept spell of the same name.

Fourth-Level Spells

Abjure

This spell functions as described in the RAVENLOFT Campaign Setting. It cannot send a creature to another plane; the fiend is teleported to a randomly determined point on Gothic Earth.

Animal Summoning I

The animals summoned by this spell do not magically appear. Rather, they journey to the caster through their normal means of locomotion.

Call Woodland Beings

This spell does not exist on Gothic Earth. Even if it existed, its use would be limited.

Fifth-Level Spells

Air Walk

When cast on Gothic Earth, this spell cannot affect any creature larger than man-size.

Animal Summoning II

This spell operates in the same manner as *animal summoning I*.

Commune

When cast on Gothic Earth, this spell functions as described in the *Player's Handbook*, not as in the

RAVENLOFT Campaign Setting. This magic places the character in contact with some random extraplanar spirit, not a specific divinity.

Plane Shift

This spell does not allow travel off Gothic Earth.

The following spells function as described in the RAVENLOFT Campaign Setting.

Magic Font

Quest

Raise Dead

True Seeing

Sixth-Level Spells

Animal Summoning III

This spell has the same limitation as *animal summoning I*.

Blade Barrier

This spell does not exist on Gothic Earth.

Find The Path

This spell functions as described in the RAVENLOFT Campaign Setting.

Seventh-Level Spells

Astral Spell

This spell does not exist on Gothic Earth. It would fail even if imported by a planar traveler.

Chariot of Sustarre

This spell does not exist on Gothic Earth.

Fire Storm

This spell functions as described in the *Player's Handbook*, with the following exception: the area of effect is reduced to one 5-foot cube per level of the caster.

The following spells function as described in the RAVENLOFT Campaign Setting.

Gate

Holy Word

Reincarnation

Restoration

Resurrection

Succor

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ombat in the *Masque of the Red Death* setting follows the same general procedures given in the *Player's Handbook* and *DUNGEON MASTER Guide*. While melee combat is virtually unchanged, the advent of modern firearms and the demise of armor mandates some modifications to the existing rules.

The time increments set down in the AD&D core rules—the one-minute round and the ten-minute turn—remain the basis for orchestrating combat in *Masque of the Red Death*.

Firearms

By the 1890's, firearms improved significantly over the ancient arquebuses introduced centuries earlier. Older weapons such as the flintlock, matchlock, and wheel lock still exist in this decade, but these firearms are owned mainly for antique value rather than for regular use.

Resolving Multiple Attacks

In a one-minute AD&D game combat round, a typical handgun or rifle can be fired many times. The rules for combat on Gothic Earth assume that a character can empty a pistol in one round, making all manner of firearms truly dangerous weapons. While such quick shots might not be entirely accurate, the gun user is likely to hit the target at least once.

In order for combat to realistically reflect the use of firearms, the combat round is split into two parts. Characters make half their attacks (rounded down) based on their initiative, then make the remaining attacks at the end of the round.

Thus, a character with initiative who panic-fires a navy pistol could discharge the gun three times at the beginning of the round, then three times more after all enemy characters have acted. The enemies would then complete their shots at the end of the round. If the character had lost initiative, the enemies could fire three shots, then the PC could fire three shots, followed by another three shots from the enemy, followed by another three shots from the PC.



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Rates of Fire and Reloading

Modern firearms can be discharged and reloaded quickly. The rate of reloading depends upon the number of shots held by the weapon and the type of loading mechanism in the weapon.

Breech Loading Rifles & Carbines

In most cases, a breech loading rifle or carbine holds only one shot and is therefore able to fire only once per round. This allows a character to reload the weapon in the same round that it has been fired. As such, a character with a breech loading rifle is able to fire his weapon each round without penalty.

Aimed Fire

A character using a breech loading rifle or carbine can elect to use aimed fire. The character spends the entire round lining up the shot for maximum accuracy. When this is done, the attack roll is made with a +4 modifier. The shot is timed according to the character's normal initiative.

On the next round, the character must reload the gun. If he wishes to fire on that round, the shot must be rushed and the PC suffers a -4 penalty to the attack roll. On the following round, the character can fire normally (one shot with no attack modifier) or take another aimed shot.

Shotguns and Scatterguns

Both shotguns and scatterguns are double-barrelled weapons, and can thus fire twice before reloading. Both shots may be fired in a single combat round with no modification to attack rolls. This routine includes reloading time so the weapon can be used freely on the next round. Shotguns and scatterguns gain no bonus for aimed fire.

Repeating Rifles & Revolvers

A character employing a repeating firearm begins a combat round by selecting *aimed*, *rapid*, or *panic* fire as the mode of attack for the round.

Aimed Fire

Aimed fire involves using the majority of a combat round trying to line up a perfect shot. In this case, only one shot is fired and the attack roll is made with a +4 bonus. A character attempting aimed fire cannot move during the round. If movement is necessary, a shot can be made, but the bonus is forfeited.

Rapid Fire

The most common attack mode for repeating rifles and revolvers is rapid fire. This allows a character to take reasonable aim and fire the weapon three times over the course of the entire round. Two shots are made during the character's initiative, and the remaining shot is made in the second half of the round.

All shots are made with no modifier to the attack roll. A character employing rapid fire may move up to half normal movement before or after discharging the weapon.

Panic Fire

In desperate situations, a character can repeatedly pull the trigger of a weapon and fill the air with a shower of lead. When this option is taken, the character can fire a total of six rounds. Such shots are not accurate; a -4 penalty is applied to all panic fire attack rolls. In addition to that penalty, a character using panic fire loses any bonus he may have for a high Dexterity score.

Before or after fully discharging the weapon, a character using panic fire may move up to half the normal rate with no penalties on the attack roll. A PC may move at full rate and take panic fire, but this doubles the attack penalty to -8.

Blind Fire

A character with a revolver or repeating rifle may simply fire the gun blindly into an area in an attempt to force enemies to take cover. When this is done, the character is assumed to empty the weapon and must spend 1 round reloading it before it can be fired again. Only a player whose character has a fully loaded weapon can announce blind fire.

The odds of hitting an enemy when firing in this manner are poor. An enemy character is hit only if an unmodified 20 is rolled on the attack die.

When rolling damage for firearms, any roll of 6 is added to the damage total, then rerolled and added again. However, wounds from blind fire are generally less severe than those from aimed fire. To reflect this, damage dice that come up 6 are not added and rerolled.

Because characters taking blind fire do not bother to aim at anything more specific than "that half of the room," they may move at their normal rate.

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Attack Roll Modifiers

In addition to their high rate of fire, the power of guns is so great that several changes to the normal rules for combat resolution are necessary.

Armor

The most important change mandated by the introduction of guns into the AD&D combat system involves the physical protection offered by armor. Formidable defenses such as plate armor and chain mail offer little or no protection against bullets. The effect of armor is based upon the range from which a weapon is fired; these effects are described below. Weapon ranges are listed in Chapter IV under the descriptions for firearms.

Short Range

Armor offers no protection whatsoever against firearms used at short range. Thus, a character wearing field plate armor (Armor Class 2) is treated as AC 10 (as if wearing normal light clothing) when attacked at short range with a gun.

Medium Range

Armor has reduced effectiveness against firearms used at medium range. At this range, the effective armor class of any type of armor is reduced by 5 points (to a minimum AC 10). Thus, a suit of field plate armor (normally AC 2) gives its wearer AC 7 against guns at medium range.

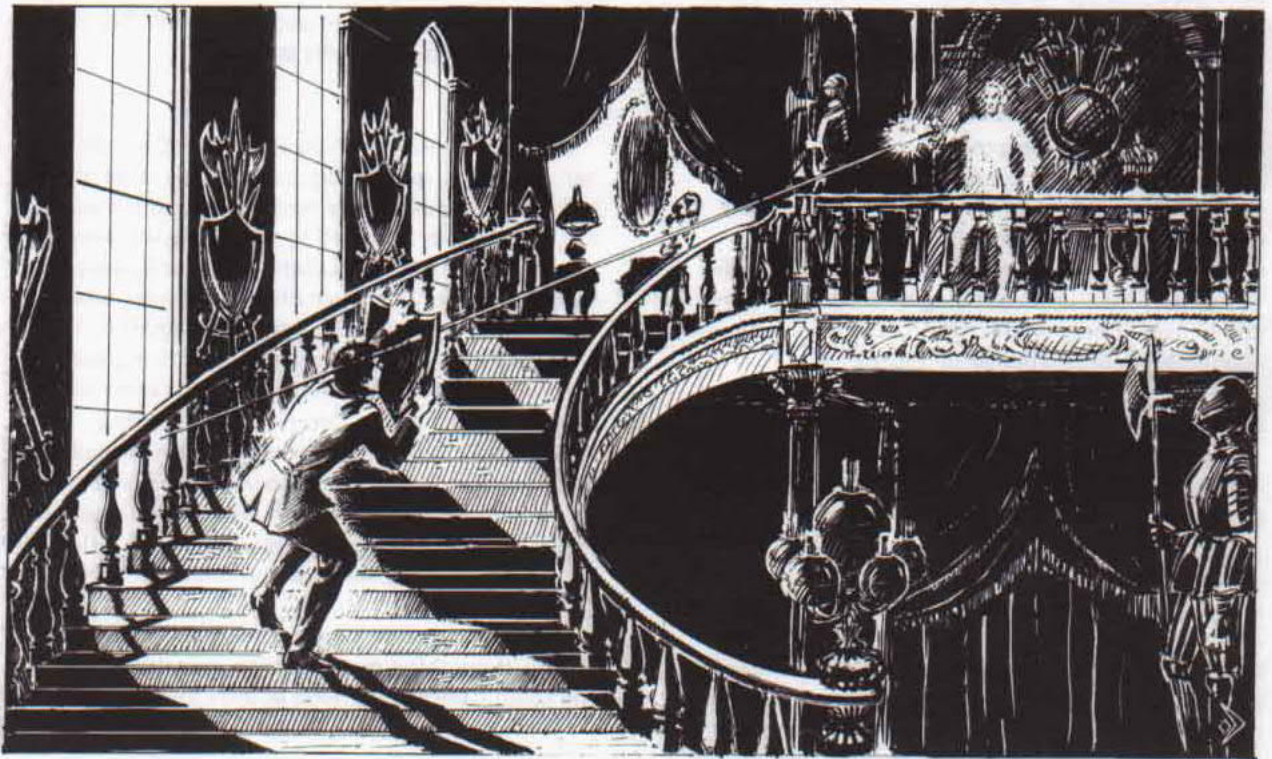
Long Range

Guns that are used at long range lose just enough power to be affected by armor. At this range, the armor class of any type of armor is reduced by 4 points. Thus, field plate offers its wearer AC 6 against shots fired from long range.

Shields

Shields, like armor, provide almost no protection against modern firearms.

If the DM feels that a character is able to wield a shield effectively, the shield provides no bonus at close range, and a 1-point AC bonus at medium or long range.



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Dexterity Modifiers

When a defender is aware that he is the target of gunfire and is able to dodge effectively, normal Dexterity modifiers apply.

Magical Protection

Any magical protection device that would normally improve a character's Armor Class functions equally as well against firearms as it does against other attacks.

Weapon Type vs. Armor Modifiers

If this optional rule is used, the DM should note that all firearms are considered piercing weapons. However, any modifiers from these charts are applied only at medium or long range.

Damage Rolls

The damage caused by a gunshot can vary greatly. A bullet that grazes the skin is generally little more than painful, while a shot to the arm or leg can be debilitating; a head wound may well prove fatal. While this is also true of blows landed in melee combat, the nature of AD&D combat assumes that those attacks are averaged over a one-minute combat round.

To reflect this, damage from firearms is resolved in a special fashion. When a target is hit by a bullet, the attacker rolls damage dice appropriate for the type of weapon. For example, a shot fired from an army pistol inflicts 2d6+1 points of damage.

When the dice are rolled, any die that shows a 6 is added to the damage total and is then rerolled. The result is added to the damage total. If the second roll of a die also comes up a 6, the die is added and rolled again. Thus, dice that continuously show 6's can be rerolled any number of times. If all the original rolls come up 6's, they are *all* totaled and rolled again.

Modifiers to the damage roll, such as the +1 applied to the army pistol's two damage dice, are figured in only after all damage dice have been rolled and (if necessary) rerolled.

Consider the following example: Jonathan Harker is under attack from a pair of thugs in the service of Count Dracula. He draws his navy pistol (2d6-1) and fires, hitting the nearest thug. Harker's player rolls the damage dice: a 3 and a 6, for a total of 9. The die that showed the 6 is rolled again, yielding a

5; damage now totals 14 points. Only after all dice have been rolled and totaled is the -1 modifier applied to indicate a damage total of 13.

Covering Fire

Instead of shooting directly at an enemy during a combat round, a character with a loaded firearm or other ranged weapon can "cover" a target. The exact interpretation of a "target" is up to the Dungeon Master; the situation in which the adventurer finds himself is an important consideration. In general, two things may be covered: a person or a place.

Covering a Place

In many cases, a character will wish to take up a defensive position and keep a careful eye on a specific area. For example, an adventurer might hide in the back of a tool shed, keeping his gun trained on the door so as to fire at anyone who attempts to enter. A character who chooses to cover a place (often a door or window) is assumed to take no other action (even when his initiative comes up) and cannot move.

If a target moves into the covered area before that character's initiative, the normal combat sequence is interrupted; the character may attack the target immediately. This attack consists of a single shot from whatever weapon the attacker has ready. No firing modifiers apply to this attack. Once this attack is resolved, the normal combat sequence is resumed and the covering character can continue his turn.

For example, Rupert trains his rifle on the cellar door while his comrades fight zombies. When his party has initiative, Rupert makes no attack; his action is covering the cellar door. Seconds later, however, a zombie bursts through the cellar door. All other combat is temporarily frozen while Rupert's attack is resolved, then combat continues normally. Had the zombie burst through the door *before* Rupert's initiative, Rupert still could have fired at the zombie. Then, on his initiative, he could decide to attack a zombie or to continue to cover the cellar doorway.

If more than one character is covering a location, all are entitled to fire at the newly presented target.

A character who is covering an area must stop this activity if attacked and harmed in any way, or if otherwise hampered or distracted. The exact interpretation of this is left to the DM.

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Covering a Person

A character may cover another person (or a small group of people if this seems reasonable to the DM). As soon as the covered person takes an action (such as drawing a weapon or moving into view), the covering character can interrupt the normal combat sequence to fire on that individual.

Like the rules for covering a place, the attacking character is allowed a single shot with no firing modifiers to the attack or damage rolls. If the character is covering more than one person, only one individual can be fired on.

A character who is covering a person must stop doing so if he is attacked and harmed in any way, or otherwise hampered or distracted. The exact interpretation of this is left to the DM.

Explosives

On Gothic Earth, three types of explosives are commonly available: dynamite, gunpowder, and nitroglycerine. All have specific uses, advantages, and hazards. As a rule, only a character with the Demolition proficiency should try to handle explosives, especially in a crisis situation.

All explosives have a blast radius and can potentially injure or kill several people. To simulate this, each explosive is rated for damage and blast radius. Anyone caught in this zone at detonation must make a saving throw vs. breath weapon or suffer the appropriate damage. A successful save indicates a victim suffers only half damage.

Mines

The safest (and thus preferred) method of placing explosives is through a set charge or mine. In this case, an explosive is placed in the desired location and then wired so it can be detonated by a trigger mechanism from a distance. Such a charge is essentially a trap, and should be treated as such in all ways.

Dynamite

This is the best all-around explosive for a party of adventurers to carry. Dynamite is not easily detonated accidentally, it delivers a good kick when exploded, and it is fairly easy to transport. In combat, a character can light and throw one stick of dynamite per round, using the normal rules for grenadelike weapons.

The damage inflicted by an exploding stick of

dynamite comes primarily from the concussion of the blast. When a stick of dynamite explodes, it causes 1d6 points of damage to everyone within 5 feet. A saving throw vs. breath weapon is allowed for half damage. Doubling the number of sticks in the charge increases the blast radius by 5 feet and adds 1d6 to the amount of damage caused. The chart that follows summarizes the effects of some common dynamite charges.

Number of Sticks	Blast Radius	Damage
1	5 feet	1d6
2-3	10 feet	2d6
4-7	15 feet	3d6
8-15	20 feet	4d6
16+	25 feet	5d6

Gunpowder

When used for demolition, gunpowder is assumed to be employed in 5-pound wooden kegs. It is more cumbersome, less efficient, and somewhat cheaper than dynamite. In most cases, gunpowder kegs are too clumsy to be used in combat unless special preparations have been taken in advance.

Each keg of gunpowder has the explosive value of one stick of dynamite, giving each keg a blast radius of 5 feet and causing 1d6 points of damage to anyone in range. Like dynamite, a saving throw vs. breath weapon is allowed for half damage. The chart that follows gives the damage and blast radius for gunpowder charges.

Number of Kegs	Blast Radius	Damage
1	5 feet	1d6
2-3	15 feet	3d6
4-7	20 feet	4d6
8-15	25 feet	5d6
16+	30 feet	6d6

Nitroglycerine

While nitroglycerine is an efficient explosive, it is so dangerous that few adventurers willingly carry it. Vials of nitroglycerine can be used as grenades in combat, but this runs the risk of causing as much damage to the wielder as to the potential victim. Rules for nitroglycerine grenades are presented later in this section.

Each 1-ounce vial has the explosive force of one stick of dynamite. The table that follows gives the blast radius and damage for nitroglycerine charges.

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Number of Vials	Blast Radius	Damage
1	5 feet	1d6
2-3	10 feet	2d6
4-7	15 feet	3d6
8-15	20 feet	4d6
16+	25 feet	5d6

While gunpowder and dynamite are fairly safe to transport and use, nitroglycerine is incredibly dangerous. Whenever a character carrying nitroglycerine is subjected to any physical shock (thrown from a horse, punched, shot, or the like), a saving throw must be made for each vial carried. For every save that fails, a vial detonates, possibly setting off a chain reaction of the other vials. For every vial that detonates, a new saving throw is required for each surviving vial.

Demolition Proficiency

A charge of explosives that is placed by a character who has made a successful check with the Demolition proficiency has the potential to cause far more damage than a charge placed by a novice. To

simulate the ability of the explosives expert to place the charge for maximum effect, a bonus to the damage die roll is possible. Whenever a damage die for a set charge comes up a 6, it is added to the damage total and then rerolled for additional damage. A charge that is not placed in advance, such as a thrown stick of dynamite, does not gain this bonus.

Example: A charge of eight sticks of dynamite is placed by an explosives expert and is set off when a ghoul wanders near it. The ghoul fails its saving throw and suffers full damage (4d6 points). The dice come up 1, 2, 6, and 6, for a total of 15 points of damage. Because the charge was well placed (the character succeeded the Demolition proficiency check) and packed with stones to provide lots of shrapnel, the 6s are rerolled and come up 3 and 4. Seven points are added to the original total of 15 to provide a total of 22 points of damage.

Structural Damage

Explosives are primarily intended for use as placed charges. When employed in this fashion, they are effective at shattering walls, collapsing bridges, and otherwise destroying property.



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If an explosion is used to collapse a structure, the DM must determine the minimum charge required for the job. The table that follows lists the minimum charges (rated in sticks of dynamite) required to breach three inches of various materials.

If a successful Demolition proficiency check is made, the quantity of explosive required is halved.

Target Material	Minimum Charge	Saving Throw
Soft Wood	1	20
Hard Wood	1	18
Earth	2	15
Soft Stone	2	10
Hard Stone	3	8
Metal	4	5

Once a charge has been set and detonated, the object is entitled to a saving throw as indicated on the table. The charge can be multiplied to provide a penalty to the target's saving throw. With each doubling of the charge, a -4 penalty is applied to the saving throw.

If the explosive charge used is below the minimum (but no less than half of it), the saving throw is made with a +4 modifier. Charges of less than half-strength are considered useless.

Example: A great stone door must be breached to provide access to an ancient Egyptian tomb. The door is fashioned from hard stone and measures 12 inches thick, requiring a minimum charge of 12 sticks of dynamite. A character with the Demolition proficiency then makes a successful check, and the explosion can be accomplished with only six sticks of dynamite. The charge is placed, the party takes cover, and the dynamite is detonated. The DM rolls a saving throw for the door (hard stone=8); the result is a 5. The saving throw has failed, the door is shattered, and the tomb is open.

Grenades

An adventurer's hectic life does not always allow for the careful planning required to use set charges. As a result, explosives are commonly used as grenades to be thrown at an enemy. This is extremely dangerous, especially to other persons (possibly allies of the attacker) who might be near the target.

Dynamite

A charge of dynamite can be lighted and thrown by a character in a single combat round. Most often,

this will involve only a single stick of dynamite. Still, larger charges could conceivably be assembled. The DM will need to rule on the time involved in assembling such a charge. The bundle will cause damage as indicated on the chart for dynamite mines listed previously.

Predicting the exact instant when a lighted charge will explode is impossible. Therefore, most thrown charges of dynamite are assumed to bounce, roll, or drift before they explode. A normal attack roll is made when the charge is thrown. Only on a roll of an unmodified 20 does the dynamite explode on its intended target. If the roll otherwise succeeds, the site of the explosion is calculated using the scatter rules. If the roll fails, the charge bounces and scatters *twice* the normal distance. Complete rules for determining where a charge lands are presented in *Chapter 9: Combat* of the *DUNGEON MASTER Guide*, under the heading "Grenade-Like Missiles."

Gunpowder

Characters may attempt to light a fuse on a keg of gunpowder and fling it at an enemy or roll it down a flight of stairs, but this is rarely effective. Like dynamite charges, the instant of the explosion cannot be predicted. Such weapons are therefore assumed to scatter before detonating. A normal attack roll is made; an unmodified roll of 20 indicates success; a successful roll indicates normal scatter; and failure indicates that scatter distance is doubled.

Most kegs are made of wood, although clay pots also exist. Chances are good that a keg will break upon impact and thus fail to detonate; a thrown keg must make a saving throw vs. fall or break open. If this happens, the charge does not explode and no damage is caused. If the save is successful, the keg remains intact and explodes. When a keg of gunpowder detonates, it causes damage as indicated in the previous section on mines.

Nitroglycerine

Certainly the most spectacular of the grenadelike explosives, nitroglycerine is nearly as dangerous to the wielder as it is to the target.

When a vial of nitroglycerine is thrown, a normal attack roll is made. If the attack is successful, the vial strikes its intended target and detonates.

If the roll fails, the weapon scatters as described in

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the DUNGEON MASTER Guide. If the attack roll is an unmodified 1, the nitroglycerine detonates as it is being thrown. A normal scatter roll is made with the thrower himself as the intended target. The position indicated by a roll of 8 to 10 indicates the bearing of the intended target.

Turning Undead

Mystics have the ability to turn undead in the manner of priests in the AD&D game. The malignant energies with which the Red Death has infused the world make turning as difficult on Gothic Earth as it is in Ravenloft. Because of this, all attempts to turn undead (or command them, in the case of evil mystics) are resolved as described in the RAVENLOFT Campaign Setting.

Commanding Undead

Evil mystics have the ability to seize control of undead creatures. This is resolved in accordance with the rules presented in the RAVENLOFT Campaign Setting. Any attempt to control undead creatures

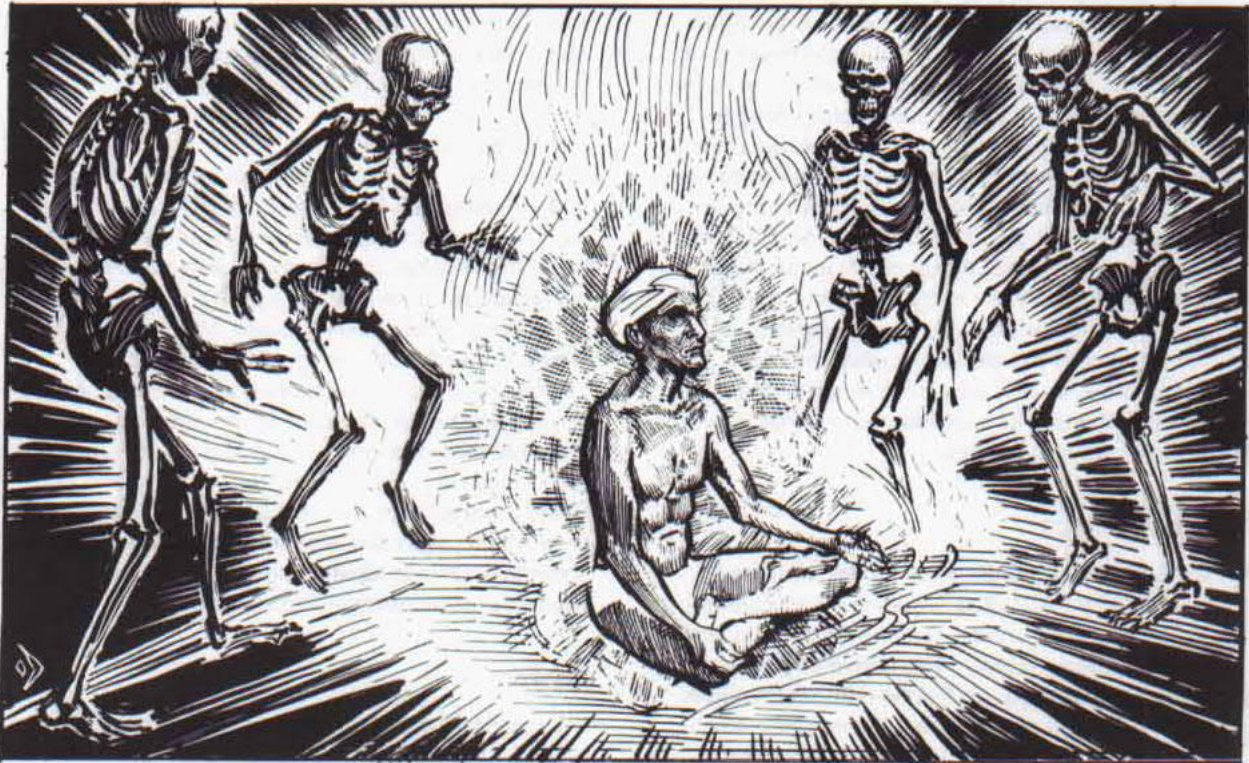
requires a powers check with a chance of failure equal to the hit dice of the most powerful creature confronted.

Healing

Rules regarding wounds and healing are much the same for Gothic Earth as they are in standard AD&D games. Advances in modern medical science, as reflected in the Medicine proficiency, make nonmagical healing an important aspect of the campaign. Adventuring parties that include a doctor will be in a much better position to survive the adventuring life.

A wounded character traveling in the company of a skilled doctor recovers from wounds faster than normal. Details on this are found in *Chapter III: Proficiencies* under the Physician proficiency. The general cost of medical supplies for an injured character is \$1.00 per point of damage recovered.

In an urban environment, an injured character might be placed in a hospital or other medical facility. If this is the case, the cost of care is \$10.00 per point of damage healed while in the facility.



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he misty realm of Ravenloft is divided into numerous distinct regions: the domains ruled by dark lords, each unique in its terror. On Gothic Earth, such divisions are unknown. No domains exist in which a single creature has absolute power over all that transpires. National boundaries exist, but only on maps and in the minds of men. To the supernatural horrors of the Red Death, they are meaningless.

Despite the spread of the Red Death's power, Gothic Earth still belongs to

mankind. For all the evils that dwell in the darkness, the tenacity of humanity has allowed man to retain mastery of the world; he has spread to almost every corner of the globe. And those regions which man has not yet conquered beckon to him irresistibly. Before long, even the polar ice caps will know the tread of humanity.

But the dominion of man is not absolute. In many regions that humanity has never explored lie hidden horrors unimagined by the domesticated masses of the cities. The pastoral countryside, looked upon by all as a gentle and kind place, often plays host to mysterious and terrible things best left unmentioned. Indeed, even the great metropolises of the world are not safe, for even there, dark and sinister creatures feed on the blood of unsuspecting men and women.

This chapter will detail many of the locales where mankind dwells and the variety of horrors with which it coexists. While the list is far from complete, it describes many of the world's largest and most important cities. In all cases, preference is given to places with a history of supernatural activity, even to the exclusion of larger cities.

North America

In the 1890's, the continent of North America is dominated by the United States of America and the provinces of Canada. Trading centers on both coasts are growing rapidly. The native population is gradually being overrun or forced onto reservations with the expansion of the former European colonies. Much of this continent is only partially explored.

Atlanta

Positioned at the foot of the Blue Ridge Mountains, the city of Atlanta has long been a nexus of trade and culture in the southern United States.

History

The first European settler of the Atlanta region was Hardy Ivy, who built a home for himself in 1833 on land that then fell under the claim of the Creek Indians. In 1837, the town of Terminus was founded at the same location. It later became known as Marthasville, and, in 1845, was finally named Atlanta. Historically, this name was given to the city by J. E. Thomas, a renowned railroad tycoon who saw the city as the easternmost station of his Western and Atlantic Railroad.

During the American Civil War, Atlanta was of vital importance to the Confederacy. As such, it was considered an important objective for Union armies advancing into the south. On September 2, 1864, the city fell to the forces of General W. T. Sherman. On November 15th, the city was put to the torch and almost utterly destroyed. During the reconstruction period that followed the war, the rebuilding of Atlanta became a symbol of the reunified nation. In 1868, four years after it was destroyed, the city became the capital of Georgia.

Forbidden Lore

Just as the ghosts of the Revolutionary War cling to the battlegrounds of New England, so too do the departed souls of the Confederacy and the Union linger in the areas in and around Atlanta. From phantom charges of confederate cavalry to spectral Union troops attempting to set the new Atlanta alight, this region is awash with the incorporeal dead.

Certainly, any city as bathed in the blood of battle as Atlanta should play host to more than its share of macabre things. Rumors tell that a great leader of the confederacy lingers undying in this proud city. While reports differ as to his identity, all agree that he works to assemble a sinister army of ghosts to someday ride out against those who betrayed his cause by surrendering to Sherman's army.

Boston

Located on the shores of the Massachusetts Bay between the Neponset River and the mouths of the

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Charles and Mystic Rivers, Boston is one of the oldest cities in North America and has a long and historic past. Boston is very much the heart of New England.

History

Boston was founded in 1630 by Puritan colonists fleeing repression in England. As Europeans migrated to the New World, Boston became a cultural center, although it never completely lost its puritanical philosophy.

In 1635, the city saw the opening of the Boston Public Latin School and, one year later, the founding of Harvard University. These were the first formal schools established in the Americas.

Boston is best known for its role in the American Revolutionary War. By that time, the city had grown into a major harbor and trade center. When the 13 colonies rose up and threw off the yoke of British rule, Boston was in the forefront.

In the years following that war, Boston continued to grow in power and prestige. During that time, prominent families like the Cabots, Lodges, and Lowells made fortunes in industries such as shipping

and textiles. With its combination of wealth and conservative political philosophy, Boston became known as *the Athens of the Americas*.

Prior to the American Civil War, the city became a hotbed of abolitionist movement. The city's contribution to the efforts of the Union Army during that great conflict cannot be overstated.

Throughout the 19th century, Boston served as host to a large wave of immigrants from Europe, especially travelers from Ireland. This infusion of people (and a source of labor) helped to cement the city's status as an industrial metropolis as well as a major port and center of cultural and educational development.

Forbidden Lore

The city of Boston and the lands around it are steeped in history. Dungeon Masters will find countless adventure ideas based on the lore of the Salem Witch Trials of 1692 or the Revolutionary War.

The back roads and ancient houses of New England are infused with the ghosts and spirits of the restless dead. For some reason, this area of the



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world is unusually hospitable to the incorporeal undead. Would-be ghost hunters will not have to search long for evidence of the supernatural in and around Boston.

New Orleans

Near the mouth of the majestic Mississippi River and not far from Lake Pontchartrain lies the great city of New Orleans. One of the world's largest ports, New Orleans provides a link between the central United States (via the Mississippi) and the Atlantic Ocean (via the Gulf of Mexico).

History

Named for Philippe II, Duke of Orleans, this city was founded in 1718 by Sieur de Bienville. Less than half a decade later, it became the capital of French Louisiana, and in 1762, fell under the control of Spain while remaining culturally a stronghold of French values and customs. In 1800, the territory was returned to the control of the French, but was sold to the United States as part of the Louisiana Purchase in 1803.

As a United States city, New Orleans developed into a major cotton and slave trading center. Following Andrew Jackson's defeat of the British here early in 1815, the city flourished and became known as a center of trade and cultural elegance.

Although the city was conquered and occupied by Union forces during the American Civil War, New Orleans retained its strong French traditions. While the period of reconstruction has been slow to restore the city to its previous grandeur, New Orleans remains an important port as well as a major producer of sugar.

Forbidden Lore

The first images that come to mind when one thinks of New Orleans are the great swamps of the Mississippi Delta and the dark corners of the city. Over the centuries, many supernatural forces have been drawn to this great port.

Perhaps the most dominant of the mystical powers in New Orleans are the ancient, hidden practitioners of long forgotten magics. For the most part, these are adepts who practice the arts of Necromancy. While everyone in the region knows these individuals exist, only a rare few can claim to have seen evidence of their dark magic.

Because of this influence, the dark and overgrown areas outside of New Orleans are rumored to have large numbers of the living dead lurking about. A group of characters exploring these regions is liable to encounter things ranging from a handful of ghouls on a hunt to a foul zombie master at the head of a pack of walking dead.

San Francisco

Located on a peninsula sandwiched between the Pacific Ocean and San Francisco Bay, this city is one of the most important ports on the Pacific Coast.

History

This region was first explored by Europeans in 1579, when Sir Francis Drake visited the area on his voyage around the world. It was not until 1776, however, that a permanent European settlement was established. Known as Mission Dolores, this community (and its accompanying fort) were founded by Juan Batista de Anza. As the years passed, the population of the region grew. The city eventually assumed the name Yerba Buena.

In 1846, during the Mexican War, forces of the United States Navy under John Montgomery captured the city. The following year, the city was named San Francisco. According to tradition, this name had been given to the bay in 1595 by Spanish explorers in honor of St. Francis of Assisi.

In 1848, following the discovery of gold in California, the region became a mass of lawless adventurers and fortune seekers. During this time, the city's waterfront districts became known as the now-infamous Barbary Coast.

Vigilante groups fought to restore order to the area. Immigrants flooded into the city from around the world. In addition to Europeans, large numbers of Chinese came to the area and the city developed a cosmopolitan air.

With the completion of a railway link to the east coast in 1869, the city continued to develop into the major metropolis that it is in the 1890's.

Forbidden Lore

The stories told by sailors and the darker elements of San Francisco's culture might easily lead one to believe that a major evil had recently come to the city. The waterfront district is noted for disappearances, but whether these are the result of

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the preying of some infernal beast or the press gangs of the many ships that pass through the harbor is impossible to say.

Still, the Chinese who have settled in San Francisco throughout the 19th century claim that more than one ancient evil crossed the Pacific with them. Whether these stories are true is unknown, but wise individuals are not quick to discount the traditions and stories of these people. Their civilization is as ancient and wise as any on Gothic Earth.

Vancouver

Located on an expanse of flat land alongside the Burrard Inlet on the Strait of Georgia, this city lies opposite and is sheltered by Vancouver Island. Although far to the north, the climate is fairly mild and the harbor remains free of ice year round.

History

In 1778, the famous explorer James Cook was the first European to visit the land mass that would eventually be called Vancouver Island. Not until 1792, however, did George Vancouver explore the Burrard Inlet and claim the region for England. The first settlement, called Granville, was not established until 1875. Following the connection of the Canadian Pacific transcontinental railway in 1886, the city changed its name to Vancouver.

Once linked to the world by sea and rail, Vancouver's population and importance grew rapidly. Still, while the city would one day become one of the most important in Canada, it is very much a frontier town at the time in which *Masque of the Red Death* adventures are set.

The largest industries in the area are logging and fishing, although the city's growing importance as a port cannot be understated.

Forbidden Lore

The Pacific Northwest is a sprawling land of temperate forests and towering mountains. Vancouver rests in the center of this unexplored territory like an island in the midst of a great sea.

Locally, stories of strange creatures lurking in the forests near Vancouver abound. Some men claim to have seen great beasts like giant, hairy men. Others speak of creatures resembling great white apes that move through the forest with the speed of a charging wolf. Some "witnesses" even assert that the beasts

can change shape, taking on the appearance of local Indians or even European settlers.

Indeed, the native Americans, who lived in this area for centuries before the arrival of the Europeans, speak only in hushed tones when they talk of the wild, howling spirits of the forests. To hear their stories, one would think that the whole area was infested with diabolical creatures delivering madness and death upon any who disturb them. Of course, the people of Vancouver know better than to believe these primitive people.

Central America

In ancient times, this region was the home of the mighty Mesoamerican empires: the Aztecs and the Mayans. Following their discovery by the European powers, the native civilizations were ruthlessly dominated. Fortunately, try as they might, the Europeans have been unable to destroy the proud heritage of these ancient people.

Mexico City

The current capital of Mexico, this great city was built on a wide plain that was once a lake. Although Mexico City certainly lies in a tropical region, its extreme elevation (6,900 feet) gives it a relatively cool climate. Of particular interest are the distant, snow-capped peaks of the Sierra Nevada mountains and the smoldering caldera of the volcano Popocatepetl.

History

Mexico City was founded by Hernán Cortés in 1521 following the destruction of the Aztec capital Tenochtitlán. Prior to its devastation, Tenochtitlán was the largest city ever built by native Americans. With a population of some 700,000, it served as the capital of the Aztec Empire since 1325.

With the arrival of the Europeans, Spanish settlements grew outward to completely cover the Aztec capital. In 1530, Mexico City became the seat of a viceroy and bishop. In 1551, a university was founded in Mexico City, one of the oldest such establishments in the Americas.

In 1821, the city was seized by revolutionaries and, one year later, the first Mexican Congress was held there. In the autumn of 1824, Mexico City became the capital of an independent Mexico.

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The heart of the city is a great common known as the Zócalo or Plaza de la Constitución. Many important buildings, including the National Palace, are located here. The 18th century castle of Chapultepec, traditional home of the President of Mexico, lies southwest of the city along the Paseo de la Reforma.

Forbidden Lore

The ancient heritage of the Aztecs and Tenochtitlán is far from dead in Mexico City. Of course, the modern government would like the inhabitants of this thriving city to believe that all is calm and quiet, but that is far from true.

The native population, many of whom can trace their ancestry back to the great kingdoms of Mesoamerica, will never forget stories of the suffering of their ancestors at the hands of Cortez and the Conquistadors centuries earlier. Many secret societies and dark cults are rumored to keep alive the magic of the Aztecs, especially the mystic devotions of the Sun, Combat, and Weather spheres.

Countless stories exist of underground chambers, lost temples, and numerous forgotten treasures of the Aztecs. To the ancestral inhabitants of these

places, such things are to be respected and honored. Any European who would defile these ancient structures is believed to risk death at the hands of ancient spirits.

Port-au-Prince

Located on the island of Hispaniola in the Caribbean, Port-au-Prince is the capital of Haiti. Port-au-Prince lies at the junction of the two mountainous peninsulas that make up the island. With easy access to the Caribbean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean via the Gulf of Gonaïves, Port-au-Prince is an important, if somewhat lawless, city.

History

The island of Hispaniola was first discovered by Europeans when Christopher Columbus sailed the region in the late 1400's. French pirates established themselves on the island's western coasts in the 17th century. In 1697, the French government took official control of the island, calling it Saint Dominique. The city of Port-au-Prince was founded by the French in 1749.



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With a climate well suited to growing sugar cane, Saint Dominique became home to thousands of slaves imported from Africa by the French colonial government. When word of the French Revolution reached the island in 1789, a violent civil war erupted. In 1803, with the help of British troops, Jean Jacques Dessalines drove the French from the island. He declared the colony an independent state and gave it the name Haiti, or *mountainous place*.

Still imbued with the atmosphere of the French pirates who came to the island two centuries earlier, Port-au-Prince is a wild seaport. With extensive coffee, sugar cane, and cotton crops providing valuable exports, the island is struggling to survive as an independent state.

Forbidden Lore

The ancient magics of Africa still survive among the people of Port-au-Prince. The adepts who live in the city are rumored to have the power to sap a man's will and cause him to serve without question. These masters of enchantments and charms are said to have sources of information closed to others of their ilk, and nothing that transpires in Port-au-Prince can be assumed to escape their notice.

South America

Home of the Chimu, Nazca, and eventually the Inca civilizations, South America fell under Spanish and Portuguese control following its exploration by Europeans in the 16th century. A vast continent covered with great mountain ranges, lush rain forests, and the remains of many ancient cultures, much of South America remains unexplored by the Europeans who brought disease and suffering to the indigenous people.

Buenos Aires

Buenos Aires was originally founded by the Spanish as a convenient landing point at the 45-kilometer-wide estuary of the River Plate. With a mild and hospitable climate all year round, Buenos Aires is easily one of the most important ports in the southern hemisphere.

History

Although the first European settlement in this city was founded by the Spanish in 1536, it was

abandoned after extensive native attacks in 1541. In 1580, the colony was reestablished by Juan de Garay, although it was largely neglected by Spain until 1776. At that time, Buenos Aires became the capital of a Spanish vice-royalty that included modern Argentina, Paraguay, and Uruguay.

Early in the 19th century, the people of Buenos Aires and the surrounding lands gained independence from Spain. Although the region successfully resisted British attempts to replace the ruling Spanish, disputes between the agricultural barons of the provinces and the urban power of Buenos Aires prevented Argentinean unity. Indeed, not until 1880 was the nation of Argentina finally united with the great port city as its capital.

In recent years, Buenos Aires has become an important center for meat packing and shipping. In 1882, the first *frigorífico* (meat refrigeration plant) was established in the city, and by 1887, nearly 60 refrigerated ships carried meat from South America to Britain.

Forbidden Lore

As in Mexico City, the Europeans who founded Buenos Aires did everything in their power to stamp out the culture of the native peoples. While they may have been successful on the surface, they could not destroy the roots of a society that easily predated Christianity.

Rumors abound of men in the wild lands around Buenos Aires who can assume the shape of *el tigre*, the mighty jaguar. Tales of winged serpents and other horrors dating back to the days of the Inca and even Chimu civilizations permeate South America, but many seem to focus on this sprawling port city.

Lima

Located on the Pacific Coast of South America, the city of Lima lies at the base of the Cerros San Bartolome fringe and on the left bank of the river Rimac. Lima is hot and dry throughout the year, being a little more than 10° south of the equator.

History

Prior to discovery by the Europeans, all the area that is now Peru was settled by the wealthy Inca civilization. The earliest encounters between these people and the Spanish invaders were far from

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congenial. Early in the 16th century, the Spanish explorer Francisco Pizarro summoned the Incan king Atahualpa to meet with him. When Atahualpa arrived, Pizarro slaughtered the thousands of men in the king's retinue and took him hostage. Eventually, he ordered Atahualpa's death and conquered their capital of Cuzco without resistance.

Founded on Epiphany in 1535 by Pizarro, Lima was originally named Ciudad de los Reyes or *City of the (Three) Kings*. The current name of the city is a derivation of the name of the river that flows nearby. The site was chosen for a settlement because of its good food supply (due to irrigated farm land) and the sheltered port of Callao just north of the city.

In 1543, the city was made the capital of the viceroyalty of Peru, and in 1545 it became an archbishopric. In 1551, the University of San Marcos was established by decree of Emperor Charles V. At the time, it was the first such facility in South America and only the second in Latin America.

In the early 19th century, with most of South America struggling for independence from European powers, Lima was one of the last Spanish strongholds to surrender to nationalist forces. Finally, in 1821, the city submitted and José de San Martín stood in the Plaza de Armas and declared the independence of Peru.

The city of Lima stands on a dangerous fault line and is often shaken by earthquakes. While these are usually minor, the city was all but destroyed by disastrous tremors in 1687 and 1746.

Forbidden Lore

The conquering of the Incas left the lands around Lima soaked in blood. Like much of the rest of South and Central America, the heritage of the Mesoamerican Empires is not lost in Peru.

The supernatural remnants of this fallen civilization are not the only metaphysical perils that adventurers will face in Lima. As already noted, the Pacific coast of South America is an uneasy land subject to earthquakes and volcanoes. Many accounts, often from reliable witnesses, tell of strange creatures here that have clawed their way to the surface of the earth from deep beneath its crust. Some describe these horrors as great spirits of fire, while others tell of them as great beasts of living stone or magma. Whatever the truth, little doubt remains that these creatures are unlike any others known to man.

Africa

In the eyes of the European powers, Africa is a newly explored land waiting to be conquered and colonized. Although its existence was known long before the discovery of the New World, European powers are only beginning to colonize this great continent in earnest. As the 1800's draw to a close, the entire continent is being divided up without any regard for the rights of those who have lived here since the dawn of time.

Alexandria

Located at the extreme northwestern tip of the Nile Delta, Alexandria was founded on the slender strip of land that separates Lake Maryût from the Mediterranean Sea.

Just offshore is the island of Pharos, upon which was built an ancient lighthouse that stood nearly 120 yards high. Long ago, this island was connected to the mainland by only a narrow stone mole. Over the centuries, silt built up, turning this barren stretch of stone into a broad peninsula.

History

As one might guess, this city was founded by Alexander the Great. Almost from its birth in 322 B.C., Alexandria replaced Memphis as the capital of Egypt. Indeed, it was not long before it became the center of commerce and culture for the entire western Mediterranean Sea. At its peak, Alexandria was one of the wealthiest and mightiest cities of the ancient world.

For a long time, Alexandria was the hub of Hellenistic culture. Fully one-third of its area was occupied by the Royal Sector, which contained biological and zoological gardens as well as royal tombs dating back to the time of Alexander himself.

The city remained a vital element of Mediterranean culture for over a thousand years, playing host to the Romans, Greeks, and Arabs. Its power and prestige began to decline in the 16th century with the development of trade routes around the Cape of Good Hope.

In 1801, British forces under General Ralph Abercromby scored a major victory over the French army near Alexandria, thwarting Napoleon's Egyptian expeditions.

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Early in the 19th century, Mehemet Ali (the Viceroy of Egypt from 1805 to 1840) began efforts to restore the city to a position of economic power in the region. With the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, the city regained even more of its might.

Following a massive slaughter of Europeans in 1882, the city was bombarded by an Anglo-French naval unit. Shortly thereafter, it was occupied by the British, who later moved in and took control of all Egypt. In 1890, both the city of Alexandria and the whole of Egypt are still under British rule.

Forbidden Lore

Much of modern Alexandria has been built atop the ancient ruins of the original city. Countless tales speak of lost catacombs beneath this metropolis, housing the lost secrets of the ancient pharaohs.

Indeed, some claim that the most valuable bits of lore from the famous library of Alexandria were removed from that ill-fated place even as it burned, and were hidden away for safe keeping. Whether this is true remains unknown.

Whatever secrets might be hidden in the darkness beneath Alexandria, it is worth remembering that

mankind's first dealings with the Red Death occurred in the ancient kingdoms of Egypt. While hidden treasures and lost powers may well await discovery in Alexandria, the danger of great evil and overwhelming corruption is always near at hand.

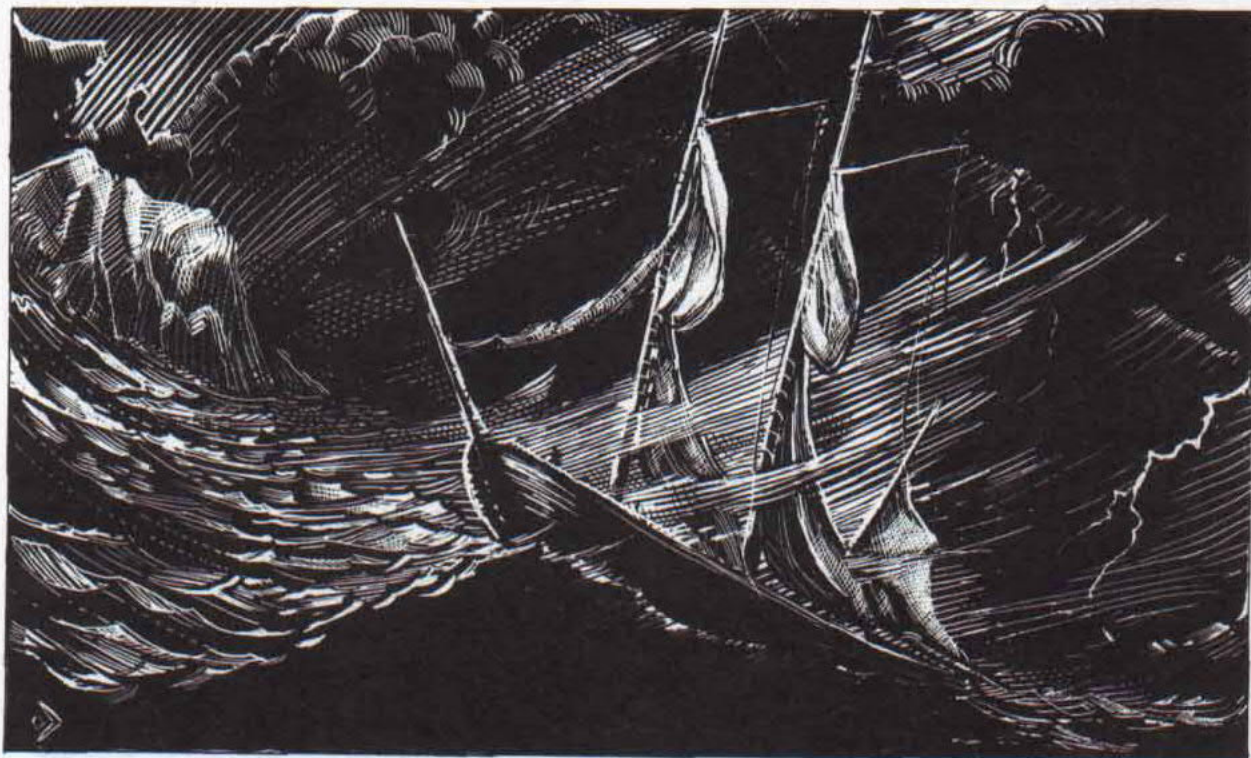
Cape Town

Nestled beneath the distinctive plateaus of Table Mountain on the shores of Table Bay, Cape Town is some 31 miles north of Africa's Cape of Good Hope.

History

Cape Town was founded in April of 1652 by Jan van Riebeeck as a base of operations for the Dutch East India Company. Over the next few years, the settlement expanded rapidly.

Throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, the majority of Cape Town's economy revolved around the provisioning of ships bound from Europe to the Far East and back again. The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 diverted much of this traffic, however, sending shockwaves through the city and greatly disrupting its commerce.



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In 1890, the city is in the process of rebuilding its economy and looking toward a future when it will serve as one of the most important seaports on Africa's southern coast. The city serves as a crucial point for travel and trade inland.

This is a time of political tension in the region around Cape Town. The Boers and the British are struggling for domination of the area, and the Boer Wars are less than a decade away.

Forbidden Lore

As in the Americas, incursions of Europeans on the ancient cultures of Africa have not been subtle. With the deplorable slave trading of the past several decades and a general disregard for the traditions of their so-called colonies, the European nations have greatly disrupted the lives and ways of the entire African continent. In so doing, there is no telling what ancient spirits and horrors these activities may have angered, or what new spirits have been added to these numbers.

While the deepest jungles of Africa remain unexplored by Europeans, many expeditions are being mounted to venture into these dark and mysterious places. From time to time, stories of creatures long thought to be extinct trickle out of the jungles of Africa. Whether these reports are true will remain unknown until some hardy group of explorers returns with definitive proof one way or the other.

In addition to these mysteries, one cannot overlook the importance of Cape Town's location in the consideration of its supernatural side. The city is not far from the Cape of Good Hope, the traditional home of the infamous *Flying Dutchman*. Few sailors are as familiar with the phantom ships of the seas as those who make their homes in Cape Town.

Australia and New Zealand

Tucked away in the South Pacific are countless islands that have only begun to feel the weight of European influence in the 1890's. While these lands will one day be cultural and economic centers of the region, they are looked upon by most westerners as wild and lawless frontiers in the 19th century.

Brisbane

Positioned on both banks of the Brisbane river some 19 miles from its mouth at Moretown Bay, the city of Brisbane is roughly 500 miles north of Sydney.

History

Named for Thomas Brisbane, the Governor of New South Wales, Brisbane began as a penal colony in 1824. Slightly over a decade later, in 1838, normal settlement began. In 1839, the convicts were withdrawn and the city became the capital of Queensland in 1859. By 1861, the population had reached roughly 6,000.

Brisbane continues to grow rapidly in the 1890's thanks to its booming ship building, meat packing, and wool scouring industries. The city also serves as a secondary port and trading partner to neighboring Sydney.

Forbidden Lore

Brisbane is an unusual place that has come to play host to some distinctive and unique types of supernatural activity. The arrival of the Europeans has resulted in the violation of old taboos and the disruption of countless traditions. The exact nature of these trespasses and their repercussions may not be known for decades to come. Interviews with the native population of Australia tend to be less than informative, for many of the taboos forbid even the discussion of them.

Christchurch

Christchurch rests upon the smooth Canterbury Plains of New Zealand's South Island. Located near the east coast of Pegasus Bay, the region is separated from its port (Lyttelton) by the Port Hills.

History

Christchurch was founded primarily by four ships of settlers that arrived in 1850 under the guidance of John Robert Godley. For the most part, the efforts of these people were directed from Britain by Edward Gibbon Wakefield and the New Zealand Land Company. Indeed, the city itself was named for an element of Godley's own Oxford College.

One of the central aims of the settlers was to create a city with the flavor of old England. While the

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streets were laid out in a clean grid pattern by Edward Jollie, much of the architecture imitated the British Isles. Examples can be found in the design of the city's great cathedral and other buildings; the street names (which are largely English Bishopricks); and the abundance of plantlife imported from Britain.

In addition to its importance as an agricultural port that services the farms of the Canterbury Plains, Christchurch is an important part of New Zealand's rail system.

Forbidden Lore

The seas of the South Pacific are rough and dangerous. Only the best ships and hardiest of sailors can survive for long on this endless expanse of blue. The people of Christchurch have seen more than their share of ships leave port, never to be heard from again.

This may be the reason that stories of strange creatures lurking beneath the waves and phantom ships running in the night come so readily to mind in Christchurch. Seldom is there a night when lookouts on the coast fail to spot distant lights at sea that flicker and fade mysteriously, leaving one to wonder if they were ever there at all.

Europe

The 19th century is a time of colonial expansion for the traditional powers of Europe. Italy and Germany have been striving for unification, the Ottoman Empire is in the last stages of a lingering dissolution, and the rival British Empire is at its peak of strength. Europe is the economic and cultural heart of Gothic Earth. Still, for all its wonders, Europe is rife with the minions of the Red Death.

Bucharest

Located primarily on the left bank of the river Dimbovita, Bucharest stands in an exposed position on the great plain north of the Danube. Because of this, the city is often subjected to extremes of temperature with chilling winds sweeping through in autumn and winter.

History

By European standards, Bucharest is a relatively young city, dating back to roughly the 15th century.

At that time, it was the seat of the Walachian princes. In the years since then, Bucharest has been variously controlled by the Turks, Serbs, Russians, and Austrians.

In 1859, Bucharest became the capital of Walachia. Two years later, when that state united with Moldavia to form Rumania, Bucharest became the capital of that newly-formed republic.

The area around Bucharest has long been a region of conflict and strife. While there are many churches dating back several centuries, these were the only buildings sturdy enough to survive seige. The majority of buildings in the city are relatively modern. Despite massive fortifications built to protect the city, it repeatedly fell to invaders over the centuries.

Forbidden Lore

The lands around Bucharest are some of the most feared in all the world. In this region, the most infamous of vampires, Dracula, is said to make his home. Certainly, the scattered bits of information that have come to light about this sinister creature all point in this direction, but so cunning is that master of the undead that extreme care must be taken in researching him. All these reports may easily be mere fabrications created by that most diabolical of fiends to mislead his enemies.

Even if legends of Dracula dwelling in this region are false, one cannot so easily dismiss the supernatural heritage of these lands. It is said that every superstition ever to manifest in the world is represented somewhere in this area. If so, then it is not without reason or cause. Even if Dracula himself is not to be found here, certainly other evils lurk in and around Bucharest.

Dublin

Situated at the mouth of the river Liffey on Dublin Bay, this city's true Gaelic name is Baile Atha Cliath or *town of the hurdle ford*. Its more familiar, modern name comes from the Gaelic Dubh Linn, which means *black pool*. By whatever name it is known, Dublin is one of the most important cities in Ireland.

History

The earliest roots of this city can be traced back to the Vikings of the 9th century. In 1170, the Anglo-Normans drove out the Danes, and in 1172, the city

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was awarded to the men of Bristol by Henry II. At that time, the city was the seat of English government and the center of the Pale, a fortified area controlled by Anglo-Norman barons.

For all its history, it was only with the dawning of the 18th century that the area began to greatly increase in population and importance. By 1841, the city of Dublin was the capital of a country with more than eight and a half million inhabitants. At the same time, the government began to reclaim large areas of the bay, providing new lands for the city to expand upon.

In the 1890's, Dublin is very much the second city of the British Empire. Second only to London in importance, this magnificent city is noted for its wide streets and beautiful Georgian houses. Few travelers to this place can avoid being charmed by the people and character here.

Forbidden Lore

Stories of faerie kingdoms and the ancient spirits of Ireland are not forgotten, even in the heart of Dublin. From the sorrowful banshees said to lurk in the fogs that sweep across this coastal community

to the twisted villages of brownies, elves, and pixies said to linger just out of sight, Ireland is a land of perpetual enchantment.

Over the years, many of the supernatural creatures that lurk on the Emerald Isles have acquired a reputation as cute and helpful. In the minds of many, they are, at worst, mischievous pranksters. Adventurers must keep in mind that this is not always the case. No matter how harmless these creatures might seem, they are almost unquestionably malevolent and dangerous.

London

Spanning the mighty Thames in southeastern England, London is certainly the greatest metropolis on Gothic Earth. With a long heritage and a level of cultural sophistication unmatched anywhere on the globe, there can be little doubt that this great city is the beating heart of human civilization.

History

The first settlement to appear in the lands on which London now stands was almost certainly a



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fortification established shortly after the Romans came to Britain in A.D. 43. From these beginnings, the city of Londinium grew to become the largest city in Roman Britain. Serving as an important port, road nexus, and military center, the city was surrounded by a wall in about A.D. 200.

After the Romans left Britain in A.D. 410, the city may have been abandoned for a time. The Saxon settlement that grew on the site was destroyed by invading Danes in the 7th century, but was rebuilt by King Alfred in 886. Since that time, the city has grown and prospered continuously.

Following the discovery of the New World and the subsequent creation of countless new trade routes, London's importance increased drastically. During the reign of Elizabeth I (1558-1603), the population of the city rose from 100,000 to nearly 250,000.

In September of 1666, a great fire swept through the walled city. Some eighty percent of the city's buildings were destroyed in this catastrophe. Over the course of the next several years, the city was rebuilt, with the twisting paths of the original roadways being retained almost completely.

Gradually, the city grew to connect with Westminster, which effectively became a part of London. By the 18th century, the city had engulfed many surrounding communities and had grown to the sprawling metropolis that it is in the 1890's.

The demands of the growing city called for the construction of several bridges across the Thames, further linking the city to such communities as Lambeth, Kennington, and Vauxhall. In 1750, the impressive Westminster bridge was built, and in 1769, Blackfriars Bridge was added. In the early part of the next century, the Vauxhall, Waterloo, and Southwark bridges were also built.

By the early 19th century, the population of London had grown to roughly four and a half million people. With the development of an inexpensive railway system in the early and middle 1800's, working class suburbs sprang up and the city spread even further.

Forbidden Lore

One can easily imagine the draw that a metropolis like London would hold for any evil creature. With its great population of potential victims and unlimited connections with the rest of the world, there might be no better hunting ground than this mighty city. For this reason, such horrors as Dracula and the

sinister Jack the Ripper have visited this city in recent years.

In the past decade, the city has begun importing archeological treasures from all corners of the globe. While these fill museums and shops with any number of wonders and delight the city's masses, they bring with them the supernatural lore of their homelands. There can be no doubt, for example, that the treasures brought to London from the tombs of Egypt are tainted by the evil that came into the world in the land of the pharaohs so many centuries ago.

The city is not without its defenders. Few people in the western world have not heard of the relentless Sherlock Holmes or the indomitable Professor Challenger. With men such as these keeping a constant vigil over the foggy streets of London, it seems unlikely that any fiend who comes to the city will find his victory assured. Still, even men of this ilk cannot be depended upon to stand against the many horrors of the Red Death. They may have been spared to this point only because they have not yet seriously inconvenienced the dark and sinister things of the world.

Paris

Located on the River Seine, this great city of France rests some 230 miles from Le Havre, where that historic waterway empties into the Atlantic. The land on which the city stands is a low basin that rises gradually to a ring of low hills that mark the boundaries of the metropolis.

History

The earliest inhabitants of this region were the Celtic Parisii. Around the 3rd century B.C., they fortified the Île de la Cité and called the site Lutetia. In 52 B.C., the Parisii set fire to their island fort and withdrew from the area, leaving it to be claimed by the advancing legions of Rome.

To the Romans, this city became known as Civitas Parisiorum or, more simply, Paris. Located in Roman Gaul, this city was never of great importance to the Empire.

Christian history tells that St. Denis, the city's first bishop, brought the faith to the city in the 3rd century A.D. Other lore claims that St. Geneviève, the city's patron saint, inspired Parisian defense against the Huns in A.D. 451.

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Rome's control of the city was broken in 508 when Germanic tribes swept through the city. The citizens of Paris welcomed the rule of the Frankish king Clovis. Following destructive Viking raids in the 9th century, the successors of Clovis made Paris the capital of France and rebuilt the city. Such important and historic structures as Notre Dame (1163), Sainte Chapelle (1248), and the Royal Palace (1301) were built in the centuries following.

From 1422 to 1439, during the tumultuous Hundred Years War, the English controlled the city. With the passing of this period, peace and prosperity returned to Paris during the second half of the 15th century. In the 16th century, Francis I ushered in the French Renaissance with the building of the Hôtel de Ville and the renovation of the Louvre.

Religious strife swept through the city at this time, with conflict between the Roman Catholics and the Huguenots (Protestants) slowing urban rejuvenation. In 1572, the city played host to the dreadful St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre when the dominant Roman Catholics killed thousands of Protestants. So great was the conflict between the two sides that peace was not restored to the city until 1594, when the Bourbon king Henry IV entered Paris.

Under the absolutist rule of the Bourbon kings, Paris was a city of classical architecture and an enforced peace. The desire of these rulers to make the city a new Rome is evidenced by the building of such structures as the Pont Neuf bridge, Luxembourg Palace, and the Place des Voges. The rule of Louis XIV brought about the nighttime illumination of the city as well as a vast increase in city services and water supply. With the crowning of his successor, Louis XV, the wondrous Place de la Concorde was constructed.

Political turmoil is a recurring theme in Paris, for the citizens of the city have risen up against their kings on many occasions. In 1588, they rebelled against Henry III, and in 1648, against Louis XIV. In 1789, the monarchy was utterly swept away and the French Republic established.

Throughout the French Revolution and under the subsequent rule of Napoleon, the dominance of Paris over the rest of France increased rapidly. Throughout the 19th century, the city has remained as turbulent a place as ever. In 1844, a new defensive wall was built and in 1852, Emperor Napoleon III radically transformed Paris with the construction of numerous parks and wide

boulevards that provided easy access to the center of the city.

The outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War (1870-71) brought great hardship to the city. While the war itself delivered only minor damage to Paris at the hands of the Prussians, the infamous revolt of the Paris Commune saw much of the inner city destroyed by a great fire. All told, 20,000 Parisians died defending the city against the troops of the Third Republic. The mending of political ties and the rebuilding of the city in the wake of this great disaster continues even into the 1890's.

Forbidden Lore

Throughout the centuries, Paris has played host to countless horrors. The vast sewer complex that spreads beneath the city has been called home by men who were truly monsters in their souls; the twisted creatures that dwelt there preyed upon the citizens above. Stories of men able to assume the shapes of giant rats, or rats that could take the form of men, persist to this day.

With all the art and culture that has made Paris one of the most cosmopolitan cities on Gothic Earth, those persons exist who find it difficult to believe that anything evil could live here. Indeed, most people who live in this city have no need to fear such things. Such stories are nothing but the fanciful tales of children and lunatics. Still, for those who have seen the true darkness of the Parisian night, sleep does not come easily in this so-called City of Romance.

Rome

Perhaps the most important city in the development of western culture, Rome is located on the banks of the Tiber river near the Tyrrhenian Sea. With a long history of military, cultural, and economic might, and the tradition of serving as the seat of the Papacy and the Roman Catholic Church, it is no wonder that this ancient place is known as *The Eternal City*.

History

Despite legends that would have modern man believe that Rome was founded by Romulus and his brother Remus in 753 B.C., archaeological evidence indicates that extensive settlements were already present in the area before that time. Evidence exists,

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for example, of an Iron Age village on Palatine Hill that dates back to the middle of the 8th century B.C.

The earliest true Roman culture was divided into two distinct classes: Patricians (nobles) and Plebeians (commoners). All were ruled by a senate, called the Council of Elders, and their elected monarch.

From the 7th to the 6th century B.C., Rome was ruled by the Etruscan Kings. At the end of that period, the monarchy was overthrown and a true republic was established. Following this historic event, Rome began to spread and absorb surrounding settlements. The Servian Wall was built to defend the city following a Gallic invasion in the early years of the 4th century.

In 312 B.C., the city built the first of its famous aqueducts. At the same time, the great road known as the Via Appia (or Appian Way), linked the city with southern Italy. Even the Punic Wars (264–146 B.C.) did not stop the expansion of this great city, which continued to amass economic, military, and cultural power.

Following the assassination of Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus, powerful brothers who sought to institute land reforms in the Republic, Rome fell into a period of instability that climaxed in a great civil war. By the end of the 1st century B.C., Julius Caesar had arisen as dictator with almost absolute power. His successor, Augustus, was the first to claim the title "Emperor of Rome."

Located at the nexus of a great road network and by far the heart of Imperial culture, Rome was, for all intents and purposes, the center of the world. Although great clusters of low income housing posed a constant fire hazard, the city continued to grow. In an effort to combat this problem, Augustus founded the *vigilis*, a group of fire fighters with policelike powers. Despite this and other precautions, however, the city was swept by a great fire in A.D. 64, destroying much of the inner city. To Nero, emperor at the time, this tragedy was merely an opportunity to build his great Golden House.

The end of the 1st century A.D. saw Rome under the reign of the Flavian dynasty, which implemented a great series of public works programs designed to win the favor of the populace. These projects included the construction of the great amphitheater known today as the Colosseum. Activities in the great theaters, as well as handouts of food, were implemented to keep the people of Rome happy

despite rampant unemployment and generally poor living conditions among the lower class.

By the 4th century A.D., the city could no longer serve as the capital of the Roman Empire. In order to function effectively, a new site needed to be chosen that was nearer to the state's borders. To that end, Emperor Constantine moved the capital to the newly created Constantinople. The history of this city, which he called the Christian *New Rome*, is detailed elsewhere in this chapter. Also during this time, the first of the major Christian Basilicas (including the original St. Peter's) were built in Rome.

For Rome, this was the beginning of a long period of hardship and decline. In 410 and 455, the city was sacked by Germanic tribes. Despite attempts to bolster the city, it was clearly lost. In the 6th century, Rome was occupied by the Ostrogoths. Eventual reoccupation by the Byzantines and concomitant destruction brought about a terrible period of chaos and decline.

Still, for all these hardships, Rome remained the seat of the Papacy and, as such, the heart of the Roman Catholic church. Despite a valiant attempt by Pope Gregory I to halt the decline of the city, Italy became a battleground again in the 9th century. With the coming of Arab raiders, the city reached a cataclysmic low that lasted until the Middle Ages. Indeed, at this time, only one of the city's great aqueducts still functioned.

Rome's fortunes began to improve in the 11th century. While this advancement was halted at the start of the 14th century when the Papacy moved to Avignon, it resumed anew when the Papal seat returned to Rome in 1377. After the middle of the 15th century, Papal patronage of the arts was so great that Rome eventually supplanted Florence as the heart of the Renaissance.

The reign of Pope Nicholas V saw the reconstruction of the city's defensive walls and the construction of numerous churches and palaces. Even the sack of the city by Hapsburg mercenaries in 1527 could not halt the rebirth of the Eternal City.

During the 16th century, artists such as Michelangelo, Raphael, and Bramante labored to improve the city. While some worked willingly for the church, others did so under threat of reprisals or even excommunication. In any event, the wonders that they brought to the city cannot be disputed.

The rule of Pope Sixtus V (1585-1590) introduced modern city planning to the ancient metropolis. New

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roads were laid out in a defined pattern, and a trio of major streets was created to provide access to the center of the city from the *Piazza del Popolo*. In addition, Sixtus oversaw the repair of the aqueducts and completion of St. Peter's dome, which dominates the skyline of the city to this day.

In the 17th century, the city was enriched by the work of sculptors and architects like Gian Lorenzo Bernini and Francesco Borromini. This continued into the 18th century as the city enjoyed a period of quiet order under papal rule.

In 1797, Napoleon Bonaparte stormed Rome and seized many of its art treasures. While the Congress of Vienna in 1815 saw the city restored to the papacy, Napoleon's occupation stirred up nationalist sentiments throughout Italy. Indeed, the House of Savoy acted upon this mood and reunited the fragmented country in 1861. The papal rulers of Rome resisted absorption into the state, and the city had to be forcibly taken in 1870. At this time, the pope remained opposed to the invaders and declared himself a *prisoner of the Vatican*.

As the capital of the reunified Italy, Rome grew at a frantic pace. Whole new quarters were added to the city. In the age of the 1890's, Rome is again the most important city in southern Europe.

Forbidden Lore

No one can be certain of the horrors that have been drawn to a city as old and majestic as Rome. In the past, this city has certainly seen all manner of creatures, from horrible fiends to sculptures and paintings animated by the feverish will of their creators. Many of the city's oldest buildings are said to be haunted or cursed with the powerful spirits of their long-forgotten inhabitants.

In considering the nature of Rome's macabre forces, one must remember the long history of this city. Many modern buildings are built upon the ruins of structures built long before the founding of many modern countries. Almost certainly, the labyrinthine chambers that lie beneath the streets of this city contain wonders (and horrors) the likes of which no modern man has seen.

Vienna

Located primarily on the right bank of the Danube at a point where the river flows from northwest to southeast, Vienna is an old and elegant city. Over

the centuries, this ancient metropolis has been home to such famed personalities as Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Freud, and Kokoschka.

History

While the earliest origins of this city are lost to history, this location is known to have been occupied by Celts and later by a Roman garrison known as Vindobona.

By the early 12th century, the city was known as Wien and became the capital of the Badenbergs. The dawning of the 13th century found the city ringed with mighty walls and a center of courtly patronage. This tradition survived and prospered even after the region fell under the control of the Hapsburgs in 1278. Ever since that time, the city has been an important metropolis, serving as the capital of the Holy Roman Empire, the Austrian Empire, and the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

In 1365, the city's university was founded and was quickly established as one of the most important such facilities in Europe and as a stronghold of ecclesiastical studies.

When the Turks invaded the Balkans in the 16th century, Vienna stood against them as a bastion of Christianity in eastern Europe. The city withstood two great sieges in 1529 and 1683. During the latter attack, the city might well have fallen if not for the efforts of Poland's King Sobieski. Following this, Vienna was the nexus of Counter-Reformation in southeast Europe and was important as such during the Thirty Years War (1618-1648).

Following a long period of relative peace, Vienna was occupied by the French in 1805 and 1809 as part of the Napoleonic Wars. Napoleon himself lived in the city for a time.

In 1848, revolution in Vienna swept out to shake all of the Austrian Empire. In 1866, with the arrival of German troops at the gates of the city during the Seven Weeks War, Vienna was again the center of a great international conflict.

Forbidden Lore

In the centuries that have passed since the founding of this great city, countless reports of macabre or supernatural activity have arisen. Some say this place is home to those greatest of undead, the vampires, but that seems unlikely. The great genius this city seems to foster points to something other than the dread nosferatu.

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Speculations have been offered to explain the long and varied list of supernatural events linked with the past of this great city. The most likely theories suggest that one or more of the ancient qabals had headquarters here. There are those who claim that such an organization might well be headed by an ancient and undying wizard who has mastery over death.

Some have speculated that this supernatural presence is the most terrible of evils—the Red Death itself. This seems unlikely, though, for the idea of that elusive entity anchoring itself to one physical location is difficult to accept. While it might be true that Vienna hosts some great minion of this fiend, it is almost certainly just that—a minion—and nothing more for all its power.

Western Asia

Trapped between two worlds—the sprawling colonial states of Europe and the stoic Russian Empire—Western Asia is a land of great contrasts and a melting pot of cultures. Only in the nations of the New World are the values and

traditions of so many different cultures so well represented.

Constantinople

Originally known as Byzantium, this great city stands on both banks of the Bosphorus, a narrow strait that divides Europe from Asia. At the time of *Masque of the Red Death* campaigns, Constantinople is the capital of the Ottoman Empire as well as a major seaport with ready access to both the Black Sea and the Sea of Marmara. The city's Golden Horn is a magnificent natural harbor carved by the waters of the Bosphorus.

History

The modern history of Constantinople began in A.D. 324 when the Roman emperor Constantine selected the site of the ancient city of Byzantium as the new capital of the Roman Empire. The reasons for his choice were many, but the proximity of Byzantium to the Imperial frontiers was by far the most important. Like Rome, Constantinople is built on an area of seven hills and, at one time, was



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surrounded by massive walls. The oldest section of the city is Stambul, which stands west and south of the Golden Horn and was built on the very ruins of ancient Byzantium.

Among the many splendors of the city is the imposing Hagia Sophia (Holy Wisdom), built as a church in the 6th century and converted to a mosque in the 15th century. Other impressive structures include the Mosques of Suleiman the Magnificent and Bayazid II. These structures, and many others in the city, are a fusion of the classical architecture of the Romans and the unique stylings of the Ottoman Turks.

Throughout the centuries, this city has provided the world with many great cultural innovations. The importance of Constantinople's influence on Roman law, Greek philosophy and art, and the theology of the Christian faith cannot be overstated. As the headquarters of the Patriarch of the Eastern Orthodox church, the city is a stronghold of Christian faith and has nearly 200 Christian churches.

Over the course of history, Constantinople was one of the most oft-besieged cities in the world. Before falling to the Turks in 1453, it was attacked by the Arabs from 673 to 678 and again in 717 and 718; by the Bulgarians in 713 and 813; and by the armies of the Fourth Crusade, who took the city in both 1203 and 1204. This long and terrible history has left its mark on the city in many ways.

Forbidden Lore

To the European mind, Constantinople stands at the frontier of the world. Beyond this great city spreads the vast expanse of Asia, in which unknown horrors abound. While this is certainly an example of paranoia on the part of Europeans, it is understandable. After all, the customs of the Asian world differ greatly from those of the so-called civilized world.

The wilds of the Ottoman Empire in Western Asia are rumored to be full of werewolves, vampires, and countless other horrors. The prominence of gypsy tribes, among them one known as the Vistani, in these regions may well play some part in the foundation and spread of these rumors. Even the most seasoned of adventurers cannot help being swayed by the air of mystery and darkness that hangs about these gypsies.

Saint Petersburg

Built on the site of an ancient Swedish fortress that commanded the approaches to the Neva River, the city sprawls on both sides of the river and occupies the islands in its middle. Saint Petersburg is a major port with access to the Caspian and White Seas, the Dnepr and Volga Rivers, and the Gulf of Finland. The harbor is generally frozen over from November to April.

History

In 1703, Peter I captured this site and built the Fortress of Peter and Paul and the fortress at Kronshtadt. He further ordered that a city be raised, which he named Saint Petersburg after his patron saint. He vowed that the city would have a western flavor, and looked upon it as his *window on Europe*. In 1713, the royal family moved to Saint Petersburg, bringing with them the Russian capital.

In the 18th century, the population of the city grew rapidly. As Peter would have wished, Saint Petersburg became one of the cultural centers of Western Europe. Emperor Alexander I ordered many of the marshes in the area drained. This expansion in building space allowed the population of the city to double. This, in addition to the development of harbor facilities in the 19th century, resulted in the rapid industrial development of the city.

The great contrast between the luxury of the Russian Court and the poverty of the city's factory workers led to unrest. This was one of the main forces driving the Russian revolutionary movement, and resulted in the Decembrist uprising of 1825.

Forbidden Lore

While Peter I may have sought to forge a western city in the founding of Saint Petersburg, he could not escape the Russian heritage of the people who would live there. While he may have wished this city to be his *window on Europe*, he may have forgotten that windows allow viewing from both sides. At night, creatures in the darkness can no doubt see through them, while those inside are often blind to what transpires beyond the glass.

The horrors of the Russian night, many of them dark and sinister creatures described only in the scattered accounts of farmers and peasants, have come to Saint Petersburg and, from there, hope to gain access to the rest of the world.

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Rumors also tell that the Russian nobility came to live in Saint Petersburg not because of a desire to bring prosperity and importance to the young city, but in an attempt to escape something terrible in Moscow. Various accounts would indicate that the heirs of Peter I are haunted by ghosts or stalked by vampires, but who can say for certain? The ruling family of *any* nation has enemies in its past, but whether those of the Russian court are supernatural remains to be seen.

Far East

To many residents of Europe and the Americas, the Orient is a mysterious and frightening land. Even as the colonial powers spread and consolidated their influence in this region, the ancient histories of these diverse nations remained hidden in mystery.

Bangkok

Standing near the Gulf of Siam on the east banks of the Chao Phraya River, Bangkok is a major commercial and railroad center. The city is laced with canals and is known for its many beautiful *Wats* or temples. The most impressive of these is certainly the Wat Phra Kaeo or Chapel of the Emerald Buddha, which was completed in 1785 and stands within the walls of the Royal Palace.

History

Modern Bangkok (originally Krung Thep or the City of Angels) was founded when Chakri assumed the throne of Siam in 1782 as Rama I, and moved the capital here from Thon Buri on the west bank of the Chao Phraya where it had been since 1767.

The city was designed around a network of canals. It features some of the most interesting architecture in the Far East. It is said to resemble Ayutthaya, the ancient capital of Siam.

Forbidden Lore

The hidden terrors of Gothic Earth are found not only in the lands of western cultures. Indeed, the Orient is home to a unique brand of supernatural creatures that reflects the fears and nightmares of these ancient people. To European minds, the foreign nature of these tales makes them only more sinister and alien.

Singapore

Nestled on an island flanked by the Johore Strait and the Strait of Singapore, this city is one of the most fascinating in Southeast Asia. Poised almost exactly on the equator (1° north latitude), Singapore has a hot climate throughout the year, with heavy rains quite common.

History

Once known as Singapura, the great city of the lion, this area prospered in the 13th and 14th centuries. After that time, however, it sank into a long period of great decline. When first drawn to the attention of the European Thomas Stamford Raffles in 1819, it was nothing more than a fishing village of roughly 150 persons. Less than half a year after Raffles founded his settlement on the island, the population had grown to 5,000, and within five years, it had reached 10,000.

In the decades since, Singapore's location at the junction of the Indian and Pacific oceans, a site of great military and commercial importance, has resulted in unending growth. In the waning years of the 19th century, the population stands at roughly 200,000. Most of Singapore's inhabitants are of Chinese descent.

Forbidden Lore

The reason for the decline of Singapura's population has never been adequately understood. Numerous theories involve such things as economics, cultural changes, and the like. These are certainly the generally accepted explanations. The truth, however, is far more sinister.

The actions of a renegade adept or mystic appeared to cause this area to become infested with some manner of tiny, but very deadly, supernatural creatures. The preying of these beasts resulted in the rapid depopulation of the area in the 15th century. Without a large human populace to feed upon, these creatures appeared to enter a dormant state. With the return of a large number of people to the area, they will in all likelihood become active again.



Appendix I: CHARACTER KITS



o two *Masque of the Red Death* characters are ever exactly the same. A great deal of difference exists between the way in which a soldier might solve a problem and the means by which an adept or mystic might overcome the same difficulty. To put it simply, the soldier's solution will almost certainly be more, shall we say, *blunt*.

Furthermore, within a class, almost as much diversity can exist. After all, the differences between an enlisted infantryman and the

commander of a naval frigate are nearly as great as those between a soldier and an adept.

This chapter presents a number of kits that will allow players to create characters with specific personalities and traits. The use of kits in a Gothic Earth campaign is not mandatory, but it is recommended. DMs and players are encouraged to create new kits when generating characters.

The DM must determine whether certain kits are available to both sexes. For some kits, such as detective or journalist, this is hardly an issue. For kits such as sailor, however, the DM and player should decide whether the kit is appropriate to a female character. The 1890's were an age of discrimination between the sexes. The DM may choose to treat the kits in a historically accurate fashion, or may choose not to enforce gender discrimination. The latter option will undoubtedly provide no end of interesting role-playing situations.

Each kit description includes a table of information at the beginning of the entry. Most of this data is self-explanatory, but a few items must be explained further.

Attack as, Save as, Advance as: These entries refer the player to the appropriate chart for attack rolls, saving throws, and level advancement.

Depending on the nature of a kit, a character might exhibit traits from more than one character class. For example, the dandy kit falls under the tradesman class, but the dandy is a poor fighter and makes attacks as an adept. He makes saving throws and advances in level as a tradesman.

Exceptional Strength: Indicates whether the kit allows a character to use exceptional strength as per the soldier class.

Spell Ability: Indicates whether the kit allows a character to use spells, and whether spell use follows the rules of the adept or mystic class.

Exceptional Constitution: Indicates whether the character is allowed bonus hit points as per the rules for the soldier class.

Soldier Kits

Cavalryman

Class:	Soldier
Ability Reqs:	Dex 12 Int 12
Prime Req:	Strength
Hit Die:	d10
Attack as:	Soldier
Save as:	Soldier
Advance as:	Soldier
Exc Strength?	No
Spell Ability?	No
Exc Constitution?	Yes
Starting Cash:	3d6

Proficiencies

Weapon Slots:	4
Additional Slot:	3
Nonproficiency Penalty:	-2
Nonweapon Slots:	3
Additional Slot:	3
Available Categories:	General, Military
Bonus Proficiency:	Equestrian
Recommended Proficiency:	Animal Husbandry



Description: The cavalryman is a mounted soldier, skilled in riding and fighting from horseback. Many think of themselves as elite troops, descended from the knights of old. In truth, the availability of reliable firearms has made these warriors less and less important in 19th century conflict. The vulnerability of cavalry units was demonstrated in the American Civil War, but has not yet been fully accepted by traditionally conservative military minds of the 1890's. Many of Gothic Earth's cavalry units are strictly ceremonial, with their members being more devoted to pomp and circumstance than actual military action.

Role-Playing: The cavalryman is proud and noble. To him, nothing in life is more important than his service and dedication. Players who choose the cavalryman kit should consider playing their characters as smug and regal.

Appendix I: CHARACTER KITS

Special Benefits: All cavalrymen are assumed to be skilled horsemen. As such, they receive the Equestrian proficiency without devoting a slot to it. Additional slots may be used to improve this skill following the normal rules.

A cavalryman's familiarity with mounted combat gives him a +2 bonus to all melee attack rolls made against an unmounted opponent.

Special Hindrances: A cavalryman's training emphasizes agility over brute strength. As such, characters of this kit are *not* entitled to roll for exceptional Strength as other soldiers do.

In addition, at least one of the cavalryman's weapon proficiency slots must be allocated to the saber. A second slot must be devoted to army revolver. These are the traditional weapons of the cavalry and all such characters are expected to be familiar with their use.

Explorer/Scout

Class: Soldier
Ability Reqs: Con 12
 Int 10
 Wis 10
Prime Req: Strength
Hit Die: d10
Attack as: Soldier
Save as: Soldier
Advance as: Soldier
Exc Strength? Yes
Spell Ability? No
Exc Constitution? Yes
Starting Cash: 2d6



Proficiencies

Weapon Slots: 4
Additional Slot: 3
Nonproficiency Penalty: -2
Nonweapon Slots: 3
Additional Slot: 3
Available Categories: General, Wilderness
Bonus Proficiency: Survival
Recommended Proficiencies: Hunting, Navigation

Description: The waning years of the 19th century are a time of exploration and adventure. Large sections of Africa, Australia, and the Americas are savage and untamed, the polar regions are all but unexplored, and the mysterious Orient holds unlimited wonders for individuals brave enough to seek them out.

Role-Playing: Explorers take many appearances

and roles. Some are professional scouts who serve as guides for hire. Others pursue their own explorations, seeking the fame and prestige of being the first human to set foot in a remote, dangerous place. Despite any differences, however, all characters built with this kit have a love of the wilderness and the sense of wonder that comes with the discovery of nature's hidden secrets.

Explorers are self-reliant. They do not seek the company of others, but recognize the necessity of companions at times.

Special Benefits: All explorers receive the Survival proficiency automatically; however, each character must select a climate and terrain as the focus of the specialization, such as *African jungle*, *North American badland*, or *arctic tundra*. These characters have the ability to recognize poisonous plants or tainted water simply by making a Wisdom check.

Special Hindrances: Explorers are rugged folk who have grown accustomed to the rigors of the wilderness. They tend to regard city dwellers as soft and pampered. As such, they tend to be uncomfortable in social settings. To reflect this, all such characters suffer a -4 penalty to Charisma checks or similar rolls when dealing with so-called "civilized" folk.

Sailor

Class: Soldier
Ability Reqs: Dex 12
 Con 12
Prime Req: Strength
Hit Die: d10
Attack as: Soldier
Save as: Soldier
Advance as: Soldier
Exc Strength? Yes
Spell Ability? No
Exc Constitution? No
Starting Cash: 3d6



Proficiencies

Weapon Slots: 4
Additional Slot: 3
Nonproficiency Penalty: -2
Nonweapon Slots: 3
Additional Slot: 3
Available Categories: General, Military
Bonus Proficiency: Seamanship
Recommended Proficiencies: Climbing, Navigation, Swimming

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Description: The great fleets of the world are a major force in the late 19th century. The United States and the great nations of Europe maintain large navies to protect their interests at home and abroad. The backbones of these armadas are the iron men who crew these majestic ships.

Role-Playing: The sailor is a multitalented individual. In addition to his knowledge of the seaman's trade, he must be a rugged and hardy individual. At any moment, he may face an attack by an enemy craft or be confronted with the savage fury of a hurricane. Whether he serves aboard a majestic windjammer or a rugged ironclad, few folk in the world are as robust the sailor.

Special Benefits: The sailor is assumed to be a skilled seaman, and receives that proficiency without allocating a slot to it. Additional slots may be devoted to improve this skill.

In addition, the sailor is accustomed to the rolling and pitching of a ship. These "sea legs" give a bonus of +2 to any Dexterity check or saving throw that requires agility when on a ship.

Special Hindrances: A sailor must allocate one weapon proficiency slot to the navy pistol and one nonweapon proficiency slot to the Rope Use skill.

Sailors lack the physical training that other characters of the soldier class possess. As such, they are limited to a maximum of +2 hit points per Hit Die, regardless of Constitution score.

Tradesman Kits

Dandy

Class: Tradesman
Ability Reqs: Cha 14
Prime Req: Dexterity
Hit Die: d4
Attack as: Adept
Save as: Tradesman
Advance as: Tradesman
Exc Strength? No
Spell Ability? No
Exc Constitution? No
Starting Cash: 6d6



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Proficiencies

Weapon Slots:	3
Additional Slot:	4
Nonproficiency Penalty:	-3
Nonweapon Slots:	6
Additional Slot:	3
Available Categories:	General Professional or Rogue (choose one)
Bonus Proficiency:	Etiquette
Recommended Proficiencies:	Dancing Gaming

Description: The upper crust of society has more than its share of people who have no experience with everyday life in the *real* world. These pampered folk have spent their days in the lap of luxury, never knowing work, want, or suffering. All too often, they are little more than spoiled children with bottomless bank accounts and unending narcissistic desires.

Role-Playing: Characters of this kit are best portrayed as vain and perhaps foppish. They will devote their energies to enjoying themselves and experiencing the many pleasures that the world has to offer. Serious work, especially of a physical nature, should be avoided at all costs. These characters might be portrayed as harmless eccentrics, parasitic leeches, or socially worthless sloths.

Special Benefits: The dandy is assumed to come from a wealthy family, and as such, to draw a regular income from a trust fund or similar source. At the beginning of each month, the character receives a cash stipend equal to that rolled for starting wealth.

In addition, the DM should remember that the dandy's family is almost certainly well connected and respected. Once per month, the dandy can use this influence to acquire some favor or exert some influence in official matters. The DM should carefully consider the request and, if it seems reasonable, allow the player to make a Charisma check. A successful check indicates that the favor will be granted.

Special Hindrances: Because of the pampered lifestyle that the dandy leads, he uses 4-sided Hit Dice instead of the 6-sided dice normally allowed to tradesman characters. In addition, the dandy is not a skilled combatant, and therefore attacks as an adept.

Detective

Class:	Tradesman
Ability Req:	Int 14
Prime Req:	Dexterity
Hit Die	d6
Attack as:	Tradesman
Save as:	Tradesman
Advance as:	Tradesman
Exc Strength?	No
Spell Ability?	No
Exc Constitution?	No
Starting Cash:	2d6



Proficiencies

Weapon Slots:	3
Additional Slot:	4
Nonproficiency Penalty:	-3
Nonweapon Slots:	6
Additional Slot:	3
Available Categories:	General Educational or Rogue (pick one)
Bonus Proficiency:	Criminology
Recommended Proficiencies:	Chemistry, Marksmanship, Pugilism, Quick Draw

Description: The detective kit represents all manner of law enforcement agents, from the constable strolling the foggy banks of the Thames to the sheriff on the dusty streets of Dodge City. This kit serves official police officers as well as their unofficial counterparts, like the much-renowned Sherlock Holmes. In short, any person whose central occupation is tracking criminals may fall into the detective kit.

Role-Playing: The actions of a detective are dictated by the desire to end the careers of criminals and law breakers. Some detectives are intense and dedicated, perhaps seeking vengeance for a wrong committed in the past. Others pursue criminals as an intellectual matter, matching their wits against those of their enemies. Still others maintain a vigilante approach.

Special Benefits: The detective character is intimately familiar with the criminal mind and therefore automatically begins the game with the Criminology skill.

Characters based on this kit are assumed to have close ties to local law enforcement agencies. As such, they will have some level of access to police files and similar sources of information. Once per

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month, the player may make a Charisma check to obtain some special favor from the police. The specifics of this contact may be limited by the DM. The DM may also require the detective to pay back such favors, possibly at inopportune times.

Special Hindrances: An affiliation with the police can limit a character's ability to take actions that are against the law, even in the pursuit of great evil. To reflect this, all detective characters must choose a lawful alignment.

In addition, as a character's fame grows, he is likely to become known to the criminal element. As time goes by, he will gain more and more enemies, including some of great power. Thus, any successful detective will have a price on his head.

Journalist

Class: Tradesman
Ability Reqs: Int 12
 Wis 12
Prime Req: Dexterity
Hit Die: d6
Attack as: Tradesman
Save as: Tradesman
Advance as: Tradesman
Exc Strength? No
Spell Ability? No
Exc Constitution? No
Starting Cash: 4d6



Proficiencies

Weapon Slots: 3
Additional Slot: 4
Nonproficiency Penalty: -3
Nonweapon Slots: 6
Additional Slot: 3
Available Categories: General, Professional
Bonus Proficiency: Journalism
Recommended Proficiencies: Academician
 Photography

Description: The popular press is a rapidly blooming industry in the 1890's. Every major city has at least one newspaper; monthly magazines bring stories of global events to an eager public; and the works of popular novelists are purchased as quickly as they can be printed. The world's authors, whether they be newspaper reporters, fiction writers, or poets, document all that happens on Gothic Earth.

Role-Playing: Journalist characters are constantly on the watch for events that can be documented and reported. Most recognize their place as historians, recording every incident so that others can vicariously expand their knowledge and experience. A good journalist is dogged and relentless in the quest for a story.

A journalist might be motivated by a desire for personal fame, the noble belief that he is serving his fellow man, or the simple joy of revealing that which others would prefer to keep secret.

Special Benefits: The journalist has a diverse network of contacts who can supply information on a great variety of topics. To reflect this, the player should select a city to serve as *home base* for the character. Whenever the character conducts research in his home base, he receives a +2 bonus to all related ability or proficiency checks.

Special Hindrances: The journalist is subject to the whims and desires of his employer. Even a freelance writer must have a market in which to sell his work if he is to earn a living. The DM can use this dependence to motivate a character or start adventures. After all, the most interesting news stories will come out of the most dangerous places.

While the DM shouldn't start every adventure by assigning the journalist to cover a mystery, it is certainly a valid technique. Furthermore, while newspapers will buy stories about breaking news, most publishers will not accept incomplete stories. Journalists are expected to learn every detail of a story.

Parson

Class: Tradesman
Ability Reqs: Wis 12
 Cha 12
Prime Req: Charisma
Hit Die: d6
Attack as: Adept
Save as: Tradesman
Advance as: Tradesman
Exc Strength? No
Spell Ability? No
Exc Constitution? No
Starting Cash: 2d6



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Proficiencies

Weapon Slots:	2
Additional Slot:	4
Nonproficiency Penalty:	-5
Nonweapon Slots:	6
Additional Slot:	3
Available Categories:	General
	Professional or Educational (pick one)
Bonus Proficiency:	Religion
Recommended Proficiency:	History

Description: In this context, the term *parson* is used to refer to any devoutly religious man or woman. Whether such a character is a Christian or Jew, a Moslem or Buddhist, his devotion to the church is unshakable. While such characters lack the spellcasting ability associated with the AD&D game's priest class, they can do much to raise the morale of any adventuring party. Parsons are among the greatest enemies of the Red Death, for they feel a deep compulsion to rid the world of its dark and sinister agents.

Role-Playing: Parsons range from soft spoken, fatherly gentlemen to adamant believers gripped with a missionary fervor. In any case, they are assumed to be knowledgeable about their faith and the teachings of their church. The parson is just as quick to pray for divine favor before undertaking a hazardous task as he is to offer thanks for its successful completion.

Special Benefits: While parsons on Gothic Earth lack the spellcasting ability of their counterparts in other game worlds, their faith does not go unrewarded. The parson's devotion gives him the willpower to resist spells such as *charm person* and other spells that attack the mind. Because of this, the character's Magical Defense Adjustment (as determined by his Wisdom score) gains a +2 bonus. Thus, a parson with a Wisdom score of 16 gains a +4 bonus against mind-affecting spells.

Special Hindrances: These characters devote much of their time and energy to the study of their faith and in silent prayer. Further, they are peacemakers who will do everything in their power to avoid violence. As such, parsons make attacks as adept characters and are allowed a limited number of weapon proficiency slots.

Physician

Class:	Tradesman
Ability Reqs:	Dex 14
	Int 14
Prime Req:	Dexterity
Hit Die:	d6
Attack as:	Tradesman
Save as:	Tradesman
Advance as:	Tradesman
Exc Strength?	No
Spell Ability?	No
Exc Constitution?	No
Starting Cash:	4d6

Proficiencies

Weapon Slots:	3
Additional Slot:	4
Nonproficiency Penalty:	-3
Nonweapon Slots:	6
Additional Slot:	3
Available Categories:	General
	Educational
Bonus Proficiency:	Medicine
Recommended Proficiencies:	Chemistry,
	Biology, Zoology, Botany



Description: Healers have a long and notorious history in the world. Working with the most current scientific methods and the highest of ideals, healers seek to bring comfort and health to the suffering and dying.

In a general sense, the physician is a spokesman for the scientific revolution of the late 19th century. He is a familiar figure, trusted and beloved, who must do his best to remain in touch with the latest news from the medical community.

Role-Playing: Most physicians have sworn an oath to ease the pains of man at every opportunity, and further, to cause no harm to a patient. Players of physician characters should keep this in mind as the character's constant motivation. This is especially important in combat. The physician is a healer, not a killer, and will be reluctant to use force where cleverness and logic will suffice. He will not hesitate to take measures to protect his allies from harm, and will tend the wounded (even injured enemies—of a nonsupernatural nature, at least) as soon as gunplay is over.

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Special Benefits: The specific benefits of healing under the care of a character with the Medicine proficiency are detailed in the *Combat* chapter of this book.

In addition, physician characters may write prescriptions. They generally have access to medicines and chemicals not normally available to adventuring parties, including type O and P poisons. The DM determines which chemicals may or may not be available.

Special Hindrances: The physician character operates under a strict code of conduct. He must give aid to all who need it, regardless of personal risk. A physician who ignores this duty may be investigated by a governing medical body and stripped of the license to practice medicine. Such characters lose all access to prescription medicines, and are unable to place patients in hospitals or similar facilities.

Laborer

Class: Tradesman
Ability Reqs: Str 12
 Con 12
Prime Req: Dexterity
Hit Die: d6
Attack as: Tradesman
Save as: Tradesman
Advance as: Tradesman
Exc Strength? No
Spell Ability? No
Exc Constitution? Yes
Starting Cash: 3d6

Proficiencies

Weapon Slots: 3
Additional Slot: 4
Nonproficiency Penalty: -3
Nonweapon Slots: 6
Additional Slot: 3
Available Categories: General, Professional
Bonus Proficiency: Endurance
Recommended Proficiency: None

Description: The laborer is the common individual of the world. Whether he works the land as a farmer, hammers iron into horseshoes, or lays the bricks that build cities, he is strong of will and body. A determined worker, he is proud of his craft and strives to see that his efforts are unequalled.



Role-Playing: The laborer is often overlooked by the rest of society. Far too often, his humble contributions go unrecognized, despite their importance to the operation and growth of any city or village. The same is often true in an adventuring party.

For the good-hearted, hard-working laborer, however, the lack of attention means little. His reward is the test of his mettle against a task and the ability to complete it. No satisfaction is greater than the sense of accomplishment.

Special Benefits: The great stamina and dedication of the laborer entitle him to bonus hit points based on Constitution according to rules for the soldier class (up to +4 bonus).

Laborers are entitled to a +2 bonus on all saving throws based on physical stamina. This applies to all saves vs. paralyzation, poison, or death magic, and those vs. petrification and polymorph.

Special Hindrances: The laborer does not enjoy the same educational opportunities as many other characters. As such, he is prohibited from selecting proficiencies in the Educational or Arcane categories. This applies to both the initial creation of the character and the acquisition of additional proficiency slots as he progresses in levels.

Scholar

Class: Tradesman
Ability Req: Int 14
Prime Req: Intelligence
Hit Die: d4
Attack as: Tradesman
Save as: Tradesman
Advance as: Tradesman
Exc Strength? No
Spell Ability? No
Exc Constitution? No
Starting Cash: 3d6

Proficiencies

Weapon Slots: 3
Additional Slot: 4
Nonproficiency Penalty: -3
Nonweapon Slots: 6
Additional Slot: 3
Available Categories: General, Educational
Bonus Proficiency: Academician
Recommended Proficiencies: History, Modern Language



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Description: The scholar is an academic who has devoted his life to the pursuit of knowledge and education. As a rule, such characters are almost always affiliated with a college, museum, or similar institution devoted to research and learning.

Role-Playing: Scholars tend to be bookish individuals who prefer the comforts of the lab and library to the rigors of field research. Other bold souls may be suited to go into the world and discover things; the scholar prefers to remain in his study to catalog and analyze the findings when they return. Of course, from time to time, even these folk are forced to leave their comforts behind to examine something firsthand.

Special Benefits: Scholars are skilled researchers and are experts in the use of libraries, archives, and historical records. They can quickly assemble coherent lists of relative information from a large and seemingly chaotic assortment of reports, accounts, and papers.

Because of this, a scholar who has access to a well-stocked library or similar pool of reference material gains a +4 bonus on any proficiency checks that might benefit from its use. The DM must make the final decision to whether the reference works available are appropriate to the task at hand.

Special Hindrances: The scholar tends to be focused almost exclusively on mental pursuits. As such, these characters are not as robust as other tradesmen. This is reflected by their use of 4-sided Hit Dice (as opposed to the 6-sided Hit Dice used by other tradesmen).

Adept Kits

Charlatan

Class:	Adept
Ability Req:	Dex 14
Prime Req:	Intelligence
Hit Die:	d4
Attack as:	Adept
Save as:	Adept
Advance as:	Adept
Exc Strength?	No
Spell Ability?	As Adept
Exc Constitution?	No
Starting Cash:	2d6



Proficiencies

Weapon Slots:	2
Additional Slot:	5
Nonproficiency Penalty:	-4
Nonweapon Slots:	5
Additional Slot:	3
Available Categories:	General, Arcane
Bonus Proficiency:	Pick Pockets
Recommended Proficiency:	None

Description: Gothic Earth is filled with stage magicians, prestidigitators, and illusionists. For the most part, these people know nothing of the Red Death or the long-forgotten art of magic. Every now and then, however, a charlatan stumbles upon the truth. If that unfortunate soul survives the discovery of real magic, he quickly learns a new respect for the supernatural, and gradually begins to master the hidden energies that he has tapped.

Role-Playing: Unlike other types of adept character, the charlatan is still learning the nature of his powers. More often than not, these characters are haunted by a doubt in their abilities or even a belief that they are somehow tainted by them. It is not unusual for charlatans to become consumed by the Red Death before they perfect their magical abilities. For these characters, life is a constant struggle to master the powers of the adept before they are mastered by the most ancient of evils.

Special Bonuses: The charlatan is a skilled stage magician and an expert in sleight of hand. As such, he begins the game with the Pick Pockets proficiency.

The natural manual dexterity of the charlatan gives him an advantage in learning spells that have somatic components. Whenever the character tries to learn such a spell, he gains a +10% bonus to his proficiency roll to learn the spell.

Special Hindrances: Magic is extraordinarily dangerous for the charlatan. He is not yet sure of the limits of his powers and does not fully understand the repercussions of his actions. Whenever a charlatan casts a spell, he must make a Constitution check. If the check fails, the character is temporarily drained by the spell, leaving him too weak to act and bordering on unconsciousness. On each subsequent round, the charlatan may make another check. Failure indicates that the exhaustion continues for another round. A successful check means that the character is able to resume normal activity.

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Metaphysician

Class: Adept
Ability Req: Wis 14
Prime Req: Intelligence
Hit Die: d4
Attack as: Adept
Save as: Adept
Advance as: Adept
Exc Strength? No
Spell Ability? As Adept
Exc Constitution? No
Starting Cash: 2d6



Proficiencies

Weapon Slots: 2
Additional Slot: 5
Nonproficiency Penalty: -4
Nonweapon Slots: 5
Additional Slot: 3
Available Categories: General, Arcane
Bonus Proficiency: Academician
Recommended Proficiencies: Forbidden Lore, History, Ancient Language, Ancient Religion

Description: The metaphysician is an expert in the occult. He views the practice of magic and the study of all that is supernatural as a scientific endeavor. His hope is that application of scientific method to the macabre will result in a complete understanding of that which seems to defy explanation.

Role-Playing: In all dealings with the supernatural, the metaphysician remains cool and calm. He tries to examine every encounter with the dispassionate eye of the scientist. To his mind, no mystery is so dark and no creature is so fantastic that it cannot be mastered through application of the scientific method. Observe, hypothesize, and test; that is the motto of the metaphysician.

Special Benefits: The metaphysician is well versed in the theory and practice of magic. His knowledge of the supernatural is practical and well reasoned. This methodical approach to spellcasting permits the character to memorize additional spells; each day, he can memorize one additional spell of each level that he can cast. Thus, a 5th-level metaphysician can cast five 1st-level, three 2nd-level, and two 3rd-level spells per day.

Special Hindrances: With all his efforts toward analytical thought, the metaphysician has a difficult time accepting that which he cannot explain. The

powers of the Red Death, so far beyond those of mortal man, defy explanation in his mind. Because of this, the metaphysician is unusually vulnerable to mind-affecting magic. This is reflected in a -2 penalty to his Magical Defense Adjustment (as dictated by his Wisdom score).

Qabalist

Class: Adept
Ability Req: Cha 14
Prime Req: Intelligence
Hit Die: d4
Attack as: Adept
Save as: Adept
Advance as: Adept
Exc Strength? No
Spell Ability? As Adept
Exc Constitution? No
Starting Cash: 2d6



Proficiencies

Weapon Slots: 2
Additional Slot: 5
Nonproficiency Penalty: -4
Nonweapon Slots: 5
Additional Slot: 3
Available Categories: General, Arcane
Bonus Proficiency: Forbidden Lore
Recommended Proficiencies: History, Ancient Language, Ancient Religion

Description: Although the formal practice of magic has been dead on Gothic Earth for many centuries, tiny clusters of individuals still exist to study the secrets of this forbidden art. The exact number of these societies is unknown, but certainly not more than a dozen can exist. The qabalist is a member of such a society.

In most cases, the qabalist knows almost nothing about his order. He knows a few important details: how to contact his superior; the meeting place of his group or cell; the specific rituals practiced by his cell; the identity of 1d4+1 members of his cell; and the *purported* goals of the organization (although this may be only a tiny fraction of a larger goal). The only thing he can be certain of is that his organization has enemies (who will gladly kill him) and that he must act on any instructions given by his superiors.

Role-Playing: The qabalist's membership in a dark and secret order requires a great deal of care on the part of the player. The character must always guard

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what he says and does. Outsiders can not be allowed to learn anything about the society, its goals, or its actions. A qabalist never introduces himself as such; to others, he is simply an adept. Other characters in his party and perhaps even other players may not realize the qabalist's true loyalty.

Special Benefits: The qabalist has ready access to information about magical power and the history of spellcasting. As such, this character is able to research two spells at one time. Both spells must be of the same school and meet the requirements discussed in the section on adept characters.

Special Hindrances: The aura of darkness and magic that hangs about a qabalist is noticeable, at least on a subconscious level. To reflect this, the character's Reaction Adjustment and Loyalty Base ratings (as determined by his Charisma score) are always treated as negative numbers. Thus, a qabalist with Charisma 16 has a Reaction Adjustment of -5 and a Loyalty Base of -4. As the Charisma score increases beyond 14, a qabalist seems more and more "unusual" to those he meets. Animals tend to be skittish around qabalists with high Charisma scores, and reaction checks may be necessary depending on the circumstance. Some animals, such as pets or creatures of a sinister breed, may be unaffected by the qabalist's aura.

Mystic Kits

Medium

Class: Mystic
 Ability Req: Cha 12
 Prime Req: Wisdom
 Hit Die: d8
 Attack as: Mystic
 Save as: Mystic
 Advance as: Mystic
 Exc Strength? No
 Spell Ability? As Mystic
 Exc Constitution? No
 Starting Cash: 2d6

Proficiencies

Weapon Slots: 2
 Additional Slot: 5
 Nonproficiency Penalty: -4
 Nonweapon Slots: 5
 Additional Slot: 3
 Available Categories: General, Arcane



Bonus Proficiency: Prognostication
 Recommended Proficiency: None

Description: The medium is rather an unfortunate soul. This individual may have no desire to possess or employ magical powers, but is blessed (or cursed) with them regardless. While other mystics might spend years mastering their craft, the medium's powers develop spontaneously.

Role-Playing: The medium is a tortured soul, for the burden of his powers is great. In some cases, the medium has accepted his lot in life and uses his powers willingly. Others are reluctant to use their magic out of fear that they are tapping into something beyond their control. In either case, the medium takes the practice of magic as a very serious responsibility.

Special Benefits: Because of his natural reception for magic, the medium is able to cast additional spells. Each day, he may cast one additional spell per level available to him. Thus, a 3rd-level medium can cast three 1st-level and two 2nd-level spells per day.

Special Hindrances: The primary sign of a medium's gift is the ability for divination. For that reason, the medium must expend proficiency slots to purchase either the Psychometry or Sixth Sense proficiency. In addition, the medium's first studies (after abandoning or completing study of the All sphere) must be the Divination sphere. The medium can begin to study other spheres only after he has acquired major access to the Divination sphere.

Spiritualist

Class: Mystic
 Ability Req: Int 14
 Prime Req: Wisdom
 Hit Die: d8
 Attack as: Mystic
 Save as: Mystic
 Advance as: Mystic
 Exc Strength? No
 Spell Ability? As Mystic
 Exc Constitution? No
 Starting Cash: 2d6

Proficiencies

Weapon Slots: 2
 Additional Slot: 5
 Nonproficiency Penalty: -4
 Nonweapon Slots: 5



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Additional Slot:	3
Available Categories:	General, Arcane
Bonus Proficiency:	Academician
Recommended Proficiencies:	Forbidden Lore, History, Ancient Language, Ancient Religion

Description: The spiritualist is a scientist devoted to the study of mystical powers. Like the metaphysician, he applies scientific method to every endeavor. Before he undertakes any new venture in magic, he carefully weighs the variables and tries to predict the outcome. To the spiritualist, magic is simply a field of science that has yet to be explored.

Role-Playing: The spiritualist tends to be arrogant. His vision of the spirit world makes him feel superior to the blindness of the common man. Those scientists who do not recognize the supernatural as a valid area for research he considers to be ignorant fools. A player of a spiritualist should adopt an attitude of "I know something you don't know."

Special Benefits: While he may appear to be a boastful fraud, the spiritualist is every bit the expert that he claims. As such, any spell cast by such a character is especially effective. The great amount of time that he spends studying his spells imposes a penalty of -2 on any saving throws made versus his magic.

Special Hindrances: The spiritualist's methods make him a perfectionist. He takes his time when casting a spell and devotes every thought to making sure it is cast exactly right. The result of this dedication is that spells cast by a spiritualist take 50% longer to cast than those employed by other mystics. When this rule comes into play, the DM should round fractions up. Thus, a *bless* spell cast by such a character would take 1½ hours to weave.

Shaman

Class:	Mystic
Ability Req:	Con 12
Prime Req:	Wisdom
Hit Die:	d8
Attack as:	Mystic
Save as:	Mystic
Advance as:	Mystic
Exc Strength?	No
Spell Ability?	As Mystic
Exc Constitution?	Yes
Starting Cash:	2d6



Proficiencies	
Weapon Slots:	2
Additional Slot:	5
Nonproficiency Penalty:	-4
Nonweapon Slots:	5
Additional Slot:	3
Available Categories:	General, Wilderness
Bonus Proficiency:	Survival
Recommended Proficiencies	Any wilderness

Description: The shaman is a representative of a so-called primitive people. The typical citizen of the 1890's, in branding the shaman as primitive, has no idea that the shaman's affinity for nature and the wild is a far greater talent than the supposedly civilized people of Gothic Earth could ever guess. This affinity for wild things and the vibrant energies of life give the shaman his power.

Role-Playing: Whether a native American, an Australian aborigine, or an African tribesman, the shaman is a force not to be underestimated. His outlook on life is not tainted by the creature comforts common to the inhabitants of Europe and the United States. Indeed, he looks at these people with pity, for they have broken their ties with nature. To live like they do would certainly kill him, for theirs is a discordant culture.

Special Benefits: The shaman's ties to nature are strong enough to be sensed by man and animal alike. A comforting aura permeates this character that strikes a chord in even the most hardened city dweller. As such, a shaman's normal Reaction Adjustment and Loyalty Base (as determined by his Charisma) are given a bonus of +2.

In addition, the shaman is entitled to make reaction checks even when encountering creatures of animal or semi Intelligence.

Special Hindrances: The shaman does not fully understand the so-called civilized people of Gothic Earth. As such, he is unable to learn any of the Educational proficiencies. The proficiencies in the Arcane group are not considered available categories (he must allocate extra slots to learn them) and thus are more difficult to acquire, but he must still purchase the Spiritcraft proficiency.

Appendix II: VILLAINS OF GOTHIC EARTH



he dark shadows and ebon nights of Gothic Earth are no less terrible than those in the Demiplane of Dread. One might even argue that the minions of the Red Death are more deadly than the denizens of Ravenloft, for the inhabitants of this realm have almost no magical power with which to confront evil or protect themselves.

This chapter presents the types of creatures that adventurers are likely to encounter as they explore Gothic Earth. If there is a hope for mankind, it lies in the regions of knowledge, compassion, and hope, which cannot be corrupted by the power of the Red Death. Any heroes who would hope to face the shadows of evil would do well to understand the enormity of their foes.

The Red Death

Mankind has sought answers to many questions over the centuries. Some are philosophical or theological, and probably will never be resolved. Others are of a scientific nature and, given time, might be answered with research and experimentation. There are a few, however, upon which the future of the human race depends, and which are almost impossible to answer. Perhaps the most important question of the last category is this: *What is the Red Death?*

The ranks of the qabalists have devoted countless hours to the resolution of that one great riddle. This secret is said to have been understood within the confines of the great library of Alexandria, but the destruction of that ancient wonder destroyed any chance mankind may have of driving out this greatest of evils.

Through the centuries since the shattering of The Defiance and the destruction of the great library, many have claimed to have learned the nature of the Red Death. Among them are well-known personages such as the great adept Merlin, and

lesser known scholars such as the almost anonymous Señor Pontanegro of Madrid. Whether these diverse theorists were correct may never be known.

Despite the cloak of mystery in which the Red Death has shrouded itself and its operations, a few facts have come to light. Some of the most commonly asked questions about the Red Death follow.

What is the Red Death? The most important thing to understand about the Red Death is that it is the embodiment of evil. This is not to say that it pursues an evil goal or that it desires to perform evil acts. Anyone who would undertake the task of battling the minions of this great menace must understand that all evil done in the world, from the most minor slight to the greatest of betrayals, traces back to the Red Death. No evil happens in the world that is not controlled and manifested at some level by the Red Death. By its very nature, the Red Death is the epitome and definition of evil. No good exists anywhere within this sinister power, and no good can ever result of its actions.

The world may have been so devoid of evil and corruption before the coming of the Red Death that no modern man would recognize it. Certainly, magic was freely used in those days, and much modern suffering was unknown. Who can say what life was like in that virtual paradise?

From whence does the Red Death come? This question will probably remain unanswered for all time. Those who know some of the secrets of forbidden lore will toss about high and mighty theories that the Red Death descended upon Gothic Earth from some netherrealm of the dead. They may speak of an afterlife that they cannot define, and support their belief with evidence that the Egyptians, who are believed to have brought the Red Death into the world, sought to master the crafts of necromancy. *The truth is that none can say for certain what strange place the Red Death might call home.*

The most interesting of theories comes from the pen of that most noted metaphysician, Professor Abraham Van Helsing. Van Helsing puts forth the theory that the Red Death was cast out from its native realm. He believes that the mystical borders between the many realms of the universe are so strong that the Egyptians never could have reached beyond the border and plucked it forth. The worst

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they could have done, he argues, was to dissolve the magical fields that surround Gothic Earth and allow this already banished creature to enter our world.

If this is indeed the case, a number of most interesting questions follow. For example, what is the nature of the realm from which the Red Death was banished, and by what means was this powerful creature driven from its home? What *other* entity had the power to drive it out? Perhaps it is simply wishful thinking to believe that the creature was exiled. Perhaps it destroyed its previous home, then set out to seek out new prey. Even worse, what if the Red Death were a scout sent from its native land to find other realms for the rest of its sinister folk to descend upon?

Where is the Red Death now? Like so many of the questions that men ask, this one is without meaning. The Red Death is not a physical entity. The Red Death can manifest its will anywhere in the world at any time it chooses.

This may not have always been the case. The power of that most fiendish of things appears to spread only at the rate at which its minions travel. Thus, prior to the first appearance of the Red Death's underlings, a region might be wholly free of true evil. In centuries past, there may have been many areas of the world over which the powers of evil did not hold sway. In the world of the 1890's, however, it is doubtful that any place in the world exists that the powers of the Red Death have not yet touched.

How does the Red Death operate? Most people ask this without fully understanding or defining what they wish to know. Further, so little is known about the nature of the creature that even more precise questions cannot be answered with any degree of certainty. If a question is meant to discern the means by which this evil enacts its profane will, however, some bits of information are available that seem to carry some truth.

The Red Death appears to have difficulty corrupting creatures, objects, and places that are purely without evil. While utterly innocent people are few and far between, those who *are* pure of heart and pious of spirit seem to be more successful in turning aside the will of the dark one.

In game terms, this aversion of the Red Death's influence refers to powers checks. If a character has never been in a situation that required a powers check, he is considered an innocent. An innocent

makes any saving throw to resist the powers of an evil creature with a +2 bonus. Any character who must roll even a single powers check, whether that check succeeds or fails, is no longer an innocent and loses this bonus. Once lost, innocence can never be regained.

How are minions of the Red Death created? The majority of the creatures who do the bidding of the Red Death do not fall under its influence by accident. Rather, they freely choose or even seek to serve this evil thing. These individuals may not always fully understand what they have done, or may not recognize the nature of the power that they serve, but there is an element of desire on their part. Each lord that serves the Red Death has its own story, but all follow similar threads to arrive at the same ending.

Consider the example of the dark tale of Rodrigo Polonté. Polonté was a minor official in the Portuguese government who desired nothing more than the power to make his superiors crawl beneath him. He was a petty man, but his greed and aspirations were without limit. When his incompetence led to his disgrace and dismissal from his government position, Polonté vowed revenge. He planned his retribution, vowing that he would pay any price for the chance to avenge himself.

Shortly thereafter, a mysterious presence made itself known to the petty man and struck a bargain with him. During the next two weeks, the people of Coimbra grew more and more horrified as a half-dozen government officials were slain in a series of terrible murders. The police were at a loss to explain the crimes. The investigation might have gone differently had officials known that the villain they sought was not an ordinary man, but a man who had been transformed into a grimlock with the unique ability to cast a cloak of absolute darkness about itself.

This case demonstrates one of the Red Death's most common methods of acquiring minions. In most cases, the means by which the Red Death (if that was indeed what Polonté saw) makes itself known is quite subtle. Some victims hear voices in the wind, others see strange shapes in a flickering fire, and still others are contacted in their dreams. Whatever the case, the magnitude of this contact cannot be denied. The most powerful of the Red Death's minions seize the power offered to them and make the most of it.

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Ranks of Terror

Most metaphysicians and parapsychologists group the horrors of the world (the Red Death's minions) into several classes to try to better understand them. The most powerful creatures are referred to as *lords*; the lesser beasts that serve the foul lords are called *underlings*. These two categories qualify nearly every creature ever brought to the attention of the qabals or other scholarly bodies. A few other terms must also be mentioned in order to best understand the hierarchy of the Red Death's operatives.

Mites

These lowly creatures are generally unintelligent minions that obey the various agents of the Red Death. They are not especially evil; they are simply versatile. While some might have limited magical powers or might be physically unusual, they are still of little consequence to the world. Mites are sometimes encountered in great number, however, and cannot be discounted as a threat in such a group. A single piranha may be only a mild danger, but even the most hardened adventurer is unlikely to survive a 50-foot swim across the piranha-filled Amazon River.

Mites include such things as the rats and wolves that respond to the summons of the great vampire Dracula, and the scorpions of the desert that are said to swarm after the mummy Djoser. These creatures obey the commands of their masters, certainly, but in the battle against evil, they are little more than a nuisance. Once the power that controls them leaves or is destroyed, they quickly return to their mundane lives and forget the great war between good and evil into which they had been drafted.

Underlings

This class of creature includes the potentially dangerous followers of demilords or lords. In traditional game terms, this category includes the monsters and creatures that adventurers encounter as they seek the object of a quest. Many of these creatures are intelligent, and some have very potent methods of attacking and destroying enemies. Indeed, the underlings who serve the most powerful lords will themselves be more powerful than certain other lords. The important element in the definition

of an underling is its place in the hierarchy of evil. If a creature willingly and obediently serves another beast, it is considered an underling.

Underlings include the vampire-wives reported to inhabit Castle Dracula in Transylvania, and the mysterious cult of jaguar-men who are reported to follow the Aztec King of the Amazon regions.

Demilords

Demilords share some of the abilities but lack the true power of the lords of Gothic Earth. Demilords are very powerful, highly intelligent, and have an assortment of underlings to help them in their evil pursuits. When first encountered by adventurers, they will likely be mistaken for true lords (described below). However, demilords obey the commands of a true lord. Because these creatures are so strongly willed, only the most powerful of lords are able to control them.

Demilords are sometimes encountered in the company of the powerful lords they obey. Still, such encounters are extremely rare. In general, a lord will direct a demilord's actions to give the appearance that the demilord is absolute master; as a result, heroes who destroy the demilord will be unable to trace the true line of the evil any further.

In the event that a lord is killed, a demilord will likely leap forward to claim the position. The underlings may gravitate to a different lord or may follow the new lord.

Renegades

From time to time, a demilord breaks free of its master. If it takes along one or more underlings, the creature becomes a new lord. If it opts to act on its own, however, the beast is considered a renegade. Some creatures favor the freedom that comes from acting alone.

Renegades are generally more ferocious than other types of creatures. They often seek to spread chaos, fear, and death without any master plan. Because of this, they can be the most difficult of creatures to pursue.

Lords

Lords are among the most powerful creatures on Gothic Earth. They always command a significant number of underlings, and may (if they have

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acquired sufficient power) even direct the affairs of one or more demilords. Most *Masque of the Red Death* adventures center on the efforts of an adventuring party to track down and destroy a lord.

Lords seem to possess a special power that enables them to gather underlings to them. No one has been able to define this, but it is perhaps the most dangerous ability that lords wield. The most plausible theory is that underlings can sense their masters' macabre ties to that single great evil.

Overlords

Many scholars discount the existence of overlords. Indeed, no reliable report of an encounter with such a nightmare exists. Should one be encountered, however, the terrible entity would almost certainly have direct access to the powers of the Red Death itself.

Those who believe in the existence of these creatures find their evidence mostly in the lore of the mysterious Vistani and in the writings of various qabals. While the evidence that has been acquired about these creatures varies, a few elements are common enough to merit concern.

The Spanish mystic Pontanegro, who vanished in 1847, purported to have discovered Vistani writings that told of a group calling itself *El Siete*, or The Seven. While many forbidden lore scholars believe that this is a reference to some unknown qabal, Pontanegro made a strong case to the contrary. His belief was that *El Siete* referred to a group of fiends answering directly to the Red Death. He further put forth the belief that these creatures were drawn into the world from the terrible land the Red Death called home, and that they are little different from it in composition, corruption, and malignance.

We can only pray that Pontanegro was wrong.

Lairs of Evil

When a creature of sufficient evil takes up residence in an area, the aura of corruption that surrounds him becomes concentrated in that region. As such, the creature is more powerful when he is in this base area. While the properties of any lair adapt to the creature that dwells there, all lairs have a few elements in common. Properties of specific lairs may expand upon or contradict these features, but in most cases, the following features apply.

- Any character called upon to make a fear, horror, or madness check while within a lair of evil suffers a -2 penalty to the roll.
- Any attempt to turn undead within the confines of a creature's lair suffers a -2 penalty. This increases to -4 if the master of that lair is aware of the attempt and wishes to thwart it.
- Any character called upon to make a powers check in so corrupt a place finds his chance of failure increased by half. Thus, an action normally requiring a 10% powers check would require a 15% check within the lair. Fractions are always rounded up.

Villains of Gothic Earth

The nefarious creatures that inhabit Gothic Earth are a diverse group. The entries that follow detail some of the more well-known or unusual creatures. In addition to serving as antagonists for a Dungeon Master's adventures, they can serve as examples for the creation of new and unique fiends.

Bronwyn

Darkling, Chaotic Evil

Strength:	12
Dexterity:	14
Constitution:	11
Intelligence:	16
Wisdom:	17
Charisma:	13
Armor Class:	8 (10)
Movement:	12
Hit Dice:	2
Hit Points:	14
THACO:	19
No. of Attacks:	2



Damage per Attack:	2 silver daggers +2 (1d4+2/1d4+2)
Special Attacks:	Poisoned weapon (type E), foreseeing
Special Defense:	foreseeing
Magic Resistance:	Nil

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Combat: Bronwyn has the innate ability of *foreseeing* which makes attempts to surprise her impossible, imposes a -2 penalty on the surprise rolls of her enemies, and assures that she never fails a saving throw.

Bronwyn relies upon a brace of slender, silver-bladed daggers in melee combat. These are enchanted, providing a +2 bonus, and are always coated in a type E poison (injected; immediate; death/20).

Bronwyn is able to employ the *evil eye*—the traditional cursing power of her kind. Whenever she gains surprise on an enemy, she may attempt to meet the gaze of one of them. The target of this attack must save vs. spell or suffer a -2 penalty on all attack rolls and saving throws until a *remove curse* or similar spell is cast upon the victim.

When Bronwyn was forced to leave the ranks of the Vistani, she carried with her much of their lore. Unknown to her kin, she retains the ability to cast mystic spells. She has the abilities of a 2nd-level mystic, with minor access to the All and Divination spheres. She can also command undead as a 2nd-level Mystic.

Lair: Bronwyn and her elite circle of 13 assassins make their home in a fine old manor overlooking the Mississippi River some twenty miles from New Orleans. Her main reason for selecting this site was the extensive network of tunnels that runs beneath it. Originally built during the Civil War, Bronwyn has expanded the complex and augmented it with sinister magics and traps.

Bronwyn has no special powers while on the grounds of her estate or within the walls of the mansion. Despite the fact that she lives within these walls, this place is not truly her lair. Beneath the surface of the earth, within the confines of the mysterious catacombs, Bronwyn's power is magnified by the evil of the Red Death.

Adventurers traveling in these dark tunnels will find that they have no ready way to tell direction. Scientific methods, such as a compass, and even spells will direct intruders in whatever direction Bronwyn desires.

In addition, Bronwyn can snuff all nonmagical light sources within these catacombs at will. Unless truly desperate, she employs this power only after making certain that all of her own followers are ready to function in darkness. Bronwyn is able to see perfectly in her tunnels, with or without light.

Background: Although she looks no more than thirty years old, Bronwyn is actually almost 150 years old. Even among the long-lived Vistani, the longevity of her beauty is remarkable.

After living among a Vistani band in Eastern Europe for the first five decades of her life, Bronwyn became interested in the most secret and sacred of their rituals. When she was refused permission to study these in greater depth, Bronwyn vowed to do so regardless of this forbiddance. In the dead of night, she broke into the wagon of the tribe's eldest female and stole many tomes of forbidden knowledge and arcane spells. When her crimes were discovered and she was confronted with her actions, Bronwyn was cast out from the Vistani.

Now a darkling, Bronwyn spent four decades wandering through Europe. In that time, she assembled a small band of assassins, known only as the Order of the Scorpion, which faithfully does her bidding. Although little is known about these men and women or the way in which she recruits them, they are clearly fanatical in their devotion to her and highly skilled in their deadly craft.

Recently, Bronwyn moved to the United States. Making her way to New Orleans, she took possession of an old, somewhat neglected manor overlooking the Mississippi River. From this viper's nest, she has begun to consolidate an intricate organization of killers, each familiar with the mystic arts but unaware as to their mistress's final goals.

Coeticrota the Undying

Zombie Lord, Neutral Evil

Strength:	20
Dexterity:	8
Constitution:	18
Intelligence:	10
Wisdom:	10
Charisma:	12
Armor Class:	6
Movement:	6
Hit Dice:	6
Hit Points:	40
THACO:	15
No. of Attacks:	2



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Damage per Attack:	Fists (2d4/2d4)
Special Attacks:	Stench, command undead, <i>animate dead</i>
Special Defenses:	Immune to mind- & life-affecting spells
Magic Resistance:	Nil

Combat: As a zombie master, Coetlicrota is a terrible and deadly opponent. Like others of his ilk, he is surrounded by a putrid cloud that smells of rotting flesh and corrupted graves. Anyone who approaches within 30 yards of him must make a saving throw vs. poison or be affected by this stench. The DM rolls 1d6 on the following table to determine the effect of the cloud on each character.

D6	Effect
1	<i>Weakness</i> (as per the spell)
2	<i>Cause Disease</i> (as per the spell)
3	-1 Constitution (permanent)
4	<i>Contagion</i> (as per the spell)
5	Character unable to act for 1d6 rounds due to nausea and vomiting
6	Character dies; becomes a zombie under the control of Coetlicrota

Any zombie that ventures within Coetlicrota's sight instantly falls under his control and obeys his mental instructions without hesitation. This includes monster and ju-ju zombies, but not yellow musk creepers or similar false zombies. In addition, Coetlicrota can gather information by tapping into the senses of any zombie within one mile.

Once per day, Coetlicrota can employ an *animate dead* spell to create a zombie from a corpse. In addition to the spell's functions described in the *Player's Handbook*, this spell can be used directly on a living person. Any creature with fewer than 6 Hit Dice (creatures with 6 or more HD are immune) may be subjected to this effect; the victim must save vs. death magic or be instantly slain. In 1d4 rounds, the body of this unfortunate character rises as a zombie.

Coetlicrota is able to *speak with dead* at will, enabling him to learn much from the bodies of those he slays. No corpse can refuse to answer this fiend truthfully and fully. Coetlicrota can converse freely and telepathically with any and all living dead within his view.

While Coetlicrota is immune to all manner of mind- and life-affecting magics, such as *charm* and *sleep* spells, he is not invulnerable. Holy water and holy symbols burn him for 2d4 points of damage. He can be turned as a vampire. In addition, he can be held at bay with the sacred gold of the ancient Incan Empires. It is impossible for Coetlicrota to cross a line of powdered Incan gold; any weapon fashioned by those long-vanished people causes double damage to him. While other weapons can harm him, they cannot destroy Coetlicrota. If even a single hit point is lost to a weapon that was not crafted by the Incas and he is slain, Coetlicrota will rise again at the heart of his sacred pyramid and hunt down those who dared attack him.

Lair: Coetlicrota makes his home in an abandoned Incan temple hidden in the dense jungles of South America. Within this mighty step pyramid, he is the absolute master of life and death. Each combat round, he may speak a terrible and ancient word that causes all living creatures who hear it to save vs. death or be slain instantly. By a simple gesture, he can also restore life to any slain character while within that macabre structure.

The foul stench that surrounds all zombie lords pervades this pyramid. Any who enter the pyramid are affected as if they were within 30 yards of Coetlicrota (see above). Should an individual later approach within 30 yards of the zombie lord himself, the intruder must roll another save versus the zombie lord's stench.

Background: Coetlicrota was a mystic in the company of the Incan king Atahualpa when his retinue met with the Spanish explorer Piazco near the modern site of Lima, Peru (see Chapter VII: An Atlas of Gothic Earth). Coetlicrota escaped the Spaniard's betrayal and, accompanied by a small band of acolytes, fled into the jungles. Helpless to save his people, Coetlicrota watched in horror as the natives of South America were smothered by the European invaders. With the coming of the next full moon, Coetlicrota performed a dark and evil magic ritual in which he vowed that he would gladly trade all of his magical powers for the chance to avenge his people. The Red Death, or some element of it, heard his pleas and acted upon them. As the ceremony was completed, Coetlicrota and all his followers fell dead, only to rise again at the next full moon as a pack of zombies under the absolute control of the zombie master Coetlicrota.

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Frankenstein's Monster

Flesh Golem, Neutral Evil

Strength:	19
Dexterity:	18
Constitution:	19
Intelligence:	15
Wisdom:	15
Charisma:	3
Armor Class:	7
Movement:	18
Hit Dice:	9
Hit Points:	45
THACO:	11
No. of Attacks:	2



Damage per Attack:	2d10/2d10 (fists)
Special Attack:	Surprise
Special Defense:	Immune to electricity
Magic Resistance:	Nil

Combat: This terrible creature is a savage foe. While he is keen of wit in all situations, an inner ferocity erupts when the golem begins fighting. This great rage makes the creature immune to pain and fear.

Because of his natural agility and grace, the monster is often able to surprise his enemies. In any wilderness encounter, an enemy of the beast suffers a -2 penalty to surprise rolls.

The creature attacks by delivering a hail of tremendous blows from his mighty fists. If both attacks hit and either roll is an unmodified 20, the monster gains a solid grip on his foe. When this happens, the monster lifts any man-size or smaller enemy into the air and hurls him away. If a precipice or other hazard is near, the victim is thrown in that direction. Otherwise, the golem simply dashes the enemy upon the ground for 2d8 points of damage. Creatures larger than man-size cannot be gripped regardless of the attack roll.

The monster is vulnerable to attack by normal weapons, but he is difficult, if not impossible, to destroy. He is immune to damage from electricity and cold, but can be burned by fire or heat. Spells cannot harm the monster, even those as terrible as *finger of death*. Spells that cause indirect harm, however, such as a fire following the explosion of a *fireball*, may harm the creature. The creature is immune to mind-affecting spells such as *illusion* and *charm*.

Lair: The monster that was first created by Victor Frankenstein has no permanent lair. He travels throughout the wilds of Europe and the world, hoping to find some brilliant individual able to duplicate Dr. Frankenstein's work and create a golem mate.

Background: This poor creature, often called simply *The Monster*, was brought into the world by the infamous scientist Victor von Frankenstein during the middle of the 18th century.

Frankenstein was one of the finest minds ever to study medicine. During his research, he became obsessed with the origins of life. What energy was it that gave vitality to all the creatures of the world? Once his mind had asked this question, it was forever locked into the search for an answer. Nothing else mattered to him; he often said that he would give all that he possessed to discover the secret he desired. Little did he suspect that he would pay no lesser price in the end.

Eventually, Frankenstein discovered not only the forces that powered life but also a method to infuse unliving flesh with these energies. With this information at his disposal, Frankenstein crafted for himself a great beast of a man. Assembled from the remains of countless dead men, it was taller and more powerfully built than any man ever to have walked the earth. When his work was completed, Frankenstein used his great knowledge to give life to the obscene assemblage. Perhaps if Frankenstein had known that the force that was to give life to his creature was provided by the Red Death, he would have halted his experiments; perhaps not.

Jacobi, Tanner Edmund

Heucuva, Chaotic Evil

Strength:	10
Dexterity:	13
Constitution:	15
Intelligence:	9
Wisdom:	12
Charisma:	7
Armor Class:	3
Movement:	9
Hit Dice:	2
Hit Points:	16
THACO:	17
No. of Attacks:	2



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Damage per Attack: Claws (1d6/1d6)
Special Attacks: Disease & Polymorph
Special Defense: Hit only by silver or +1 weapon
Magic Resistance: Special

Combat: As a heucuva, Tanner Jacobbi is a deadly enemy for low-level adventurers. He attacks by slashing with his clawlike fingers, which are keen enough to splinter wood. Anyone hit by his claws suffers 1d6 points of damage and must make a saving throw vs. disease. A failed saving throw indicates that the victim contracts a disease not unlike scurvy; the victim loses 1 point from both Strength and Constitution each day. If either score reaches zero, the victim dies. The loss of ability scores is halted *only* by the casting of a *cure disease* spell. Lost Strength and Constitution points are then regained at the rate of one point *each* per week.

Like other undead, Jacobbi is immune to all mind- and life-affecting magic. If he ventures outside of his lair, he can be turned as a wight. Within his lair, he has special resistances (see below).

While most heucuva are able to assume many forms, Jacobbi is limited to only two forms. He may appear in his true shape, that of a skeletal corpse with eyes that smolder a cool sea green, or as a withered old hermit. In the latter form, he has deeply wrinkled skin, tufts of wild gray hair, and a gaunt, shriveled body. In this form, he retains all of his normal abilities and imposes a -2 penalty on an enemy's surprise rolls if he attacks.

Lair: Just off the eastern coast of Canada, in the Cabot Strait south of Channel-Port aux Basques on Newfoundland, lies a stormy cluster of islands important only for the hazard they present to ships passing into and out of the Gulf of St. Lawrence. On the largest of these splinters of jagged stone stands a ruined lighthouse and a monastic compound. Once the home of a holy order, this is now the lair of Tanner Jacobbi.

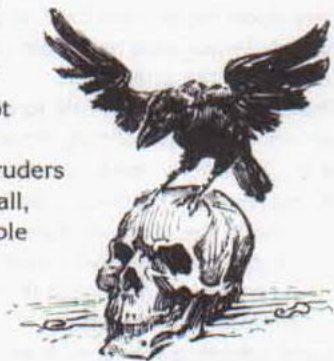
Within the walls of the monastery and lighthouse, Jacobbi has great power. He is immune to turning; he cannot be affected by any form of magic from the Necromancy school or the Necromantic sphere; and he is able to regenerate lost hit points at the rate of 2 per round. All creatures who die within the confines of Jacobbi's lair rise again as zombies under his command in 1d4 rounds. Because of this, the foul heucuva has assembled a group of some 25 zombies that serve him.

Background: In the late 1700's, a lighthouse and monastery were built on the largest of the fragmentary Gull Islands. Construction was difficult due to bad weather and the uneven terrain of these rocky outcroppings, but the workers were indefatigable. Shortly thereafter, 25 members of the Order of the Flame of Saint Nicholas took up residence on the island.

One of the monks was a young man named Tanner Jacobbi, new to both the order and the strict devotions of the monastic life. Despite this, he found himself charged with manning the lighthouse one stormy night in January of 1775. The winds of a great nor'easter ripped at the dark sea, and an endless blanket of rain and snow made it all but impossible to see. Jacobbi sat at his post, watching the sea and maintaining the beacon of the lighthouse. It was not long, however, before the monotony of his duty and the almost hypnotic gale outside caused him to drift into a deep sleep.

Within an hour, the beacon of the lighthouse failed. Not far away, the British frigate *Resplendent* fought to keep afloat in the mighty storm. Bound for New England, she was destined to end her journey that night on the rocky coasts of the Gull Islands. When the frigate ran aground and shattered, her cargo of black powder ignited and exploded. Fire swept across the island, destroying the monastery and killing its inhabitants.

For Jacobbi, who died in the disaster, this was the beginning of an endless torment. In life, he was not an evil man—simply one who made vows he could not keep and who lived under an inner shadow of insecurity. In death, he now finds himself compelled to wait eternally for the next ship to run aground on his barren islands. Although he may have felt pity for the survivors of such tragedies when he was a man, as a heucuva he now feels only hatred for them. As soon as they set foot on his islands, he regards them as intruders and enemies. After all, was it not such people who brought death and destruction to his brothers?



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LeDuece, Lady Michelle

Werefox, Chaotic Evil

Strength:	12
Dexterity:	17
Constitution:	13
Intelligence:	14
Wisdom:	16
Charisma:	19
Armor Class:	2, 4, or 6
Movement:	24, 18, or 12
Hit Dice:	8+1
Hit Points:	51
THACO:	13
No. of Attacks:	1



Damage per Attack:	bite as silver fox (1d2); bite as vixen (2d6); as human (by weapon)
Special Attack:	Charisma
Special Defense:	Hit only by silver or +1 weapons
Magic Resistance:	Nil

Combat: Lady Michelle is able to assume three distinct forms; each has different combat abilities.

The first of these forms, the silver fox, is indistinguishable from a normal creature of the variety. In this form, she is Armor Class 2 and can bite for 1d2 points of damage.

Her second form is a hybrid of human and silver fox. In this guise, she is AC 4 and her savage bite inflicts 2d6 points of damage. While most werefoxes are able to spread the disease of lycanthropy with the bite of their vixen form, Lady Michelle can not.

When in her stunningly beautiful human form, she is AC 6 and must depend upon mundane weapons to defend herself. She generally employs a small, ivory-handled derringier. Only in this guise, however, can she use her spellcasting ability (see below).

As a human female, she radiates a mystical aura that forces all male characters who see her to save vs. spell or be *charmed*. Unlike werefoxes in other campaigns, Michelle has a human form rather than an elven form, and has no special resistance to *sleep* or *charm* spells.

In addition to her powers of lycanthropy, Michelle LeDuece is a skilled spellcaster. She casts spells as an 8th-level adept. Her ability is limited, for she can use only spells from the Enchantment/Charm school or the mystic's Animal or Charm spheres, which she

also casts at the 8th level of ability.

Lair: Lady Michelle makes her home in an elegant mansion that overlooks the Rhine River from a slender plateau in the Jura Mountains. This magnificent estate dates back to the late Renaissance. The estate includes a dozen square miles of land ringed by a sinister iron fence.

The lands of the LeDuece estate are heavily wooded and are filled with a great diversity of animals. As might be expected, the majority of these are silver foxes and their prey. From time to time, however, trespassers find themselves facing unexpected beasts. Any animal on the grounds of the estate, whether wild or domesticated (but not *charmed*), is under the absolute control of Lady Michelle. She can telepathically sense all that an animal sees, hears, or smells, and can direct the actions of that animal. As a rule, she will not turn adventurers' own animals against them unless some manner of final showdown occurs.

Background: The LeDuece family is an old and respected one. Since the fall of the Roman Empire, this clan has dominated the often fluctuating borders between Germany and France in the Jura Mountains. Noted for its elegance and grandeur, the LeDuece family has always been popular among the common citizenry.

When the French Revolution swept the nobility from power in the 18th century, the LeDuece family sheltered many members of royalty who were trying to escape to Germany and Switzerland. The head of the family at that time, Andrea LeDuece, was certain that the good will he and his progeny enjoyed would spare them from the wrath of the revolutionaries. Indeed, he assumed that the LeDuece family would play a very important role in the formation of a new government after the chaos of those days died down.

When it became clear, however, that he and his family would be put to death, Andrea struck a bargain. In exchange for the members of the nobility sheltered on his estate, he and his family would be spared. Enraged at this betrayal, Jean Duvall, one of the doomed nobles, sought out Andrea LeDuece, even as the representatives of the revolution were rounding up the refugees. After a heated argument, Duvall killed LeDuece and, as he was being dragged away to his date with Madame Guillotine, laid a dreadful curse on the traitorous house of LeDuece.

Since that day, the women of the LeDuece family have been noted not only for their exceptional

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beauty, but also for their blood-thirst. Michelle LeDuece is the last of her line, and seeks a husband worthy of her beauty and status. She has considered countless potential mates, only to tire of them and take a final pleasure in their painful deaths.

Moriarty, Professor James

Greater Rakshasa, Lawful Evil

Strength:	12
Dexterity:	16
Constitution:	15
Intelligence:	18
Wisdom:	16
Charisma:	17
Armor Class:	-4
Movement:	15
Hit Dice:	7
Hit Points:	40
THACO:	13
No. of Attacks:	3



Damage per Attack: Claws (1d3/1d3); Bite (1d4+1)
Special Attacks: Illusion & Spellcasting
Special Defense: Hit only by +1 or better weapons
Magical Resistance: Immune to spells below 8th level

Combat: James Moriarty (his true name is unknown) keeps his true appearance, that of a fierce tigerlike humanoid, masked by a powerful illusion. While he dislikes involvement in physical combat, preferring to leave such unpleasantness to his army of underlings, he is sometimes forced to engage in such matters. When this happens, his power of *illusion* enables him to get quite close to a potential victim before revealing his true nature and attacking.

Moriarty is a master of magic, casting spells as a 7th-level illusionist. His extensive library of spellbooks almost guarantees that he has a spell in his repertoire appropriate to almost any encounter.

His magical nature gives him immunity to mundane weapons. Weapons of less than +3 enchantment cause only half damage to him. Moriarty is immune to all spells of 7th level and below.

Because Moriarty left his mother behind in India, he has become vulnerable to weapons of that origin. Any arrow or crossbow bolt tipped with metal originating from India can harm him as if it were a +1 weapon. Weapons tipped with Indian silver affect

him as if they carried +3 enchantment. Any arrow or crossbow bolt tipped with silver from India and *blessed* by a mystic in that land slays him instantly if it so much as breaks his skin.

Lair: Moriarty makes his home in an inconspicuous building somewhere in London. It appears to be a fine and respectable dwelling from the outside; nothing marks it as anything out of the ordinary. Within this building, no spells of the Illusion school (other than his own spells) can function. In addition, many of the walls and doors of this place are phantasmal. Thus, Moriarty can move them about and pass through them at will. An adventurer who closes a door behind him and then tries to leave by the same portal may find that it leads into a room that wasn't there a moment ago.

Background: For untold centuries, the rakshasa have haunted the people of southeast Asia. Although few in number, these creatures have always been fiercely loyal to each other. They work their terrible plans in tandem, spreading evil and corruption wherever they live. Among these creatures, no crime is more foul than betrayal of their own kind.

During the time that the British came to India, Moriarty became fascinated by English culture. The more he learned of its society and history, the more interested he became. The desire to leave India and explore the distant capital of the British Empire became too much to resist.

Although he found his new hunting grounds wondrous at first, Moriarty soon tired of the strange people and their unfamiliar ways. He vowed to return to India. Upon his arrival in Bombay, however, he found himself stalked and attacked by those he had once called brethren. Having left the ranks of the rakshasa, he was not welcome to return.

Moriarty fled, barely escaping with his life, and returned to England. As the years passed, he began to look upon the other rakshasa as traitors who had turned against him for no reason. He vowed never again to have any dealings with them, and to destroy any of his kind who followed him to England.

Over the decades, he has established a fictional identity for himself and made the best of his life in England. He has assembled a great web of criminals about him, forming a network in which absolute loyalty to him is the most important quality. None of his underlings know the true nature of their master.

In recent years, Moriarty has run afoul of the master detective, Sherlock Holmes. After their first

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few skirmishes, he has come to respect Holmes as a worthy adversary. Of late, however, Holmes has begun to bore him, and Moriarty has set about finding new enemies to torment.

Tepes, Vlad (Dracula)

Vampire, Chaotic Evil

Strength:	19
Dexterity:	18
Constitution:	19
Intelligence:	13
Wisdom:	12
Charisma:	14
Armor Class:	-4
Movement:	12, Fl 18 (A)
Hit Dice:	13
Hit Points:	90
THACO:	7
No. of Attacks:	1



Damage per Attack:	1d6 (+7 for Str)
Special Attacks:	See below
Special Defenses:	See below
Magic Resistance:	25%

Combat: In all the world, no creature is more feared than the vampire Dracula, known by some as the Prince of Darkness. In addition to his tremendous combat ability, the master of the undead has an animal cunning and a wealth of experience to draw from in battle. While it is possible to deceive and even defeat him, he never forgets an enemy and never falls victim to the same trap twice.

In many ways, Dracula is identical to the vampire presented in the *Monstrous Manual*[™]. However, some important differences exist.

Dracula is stronger than the common vampire, having Strength 19. This adds a +3 bonus to his attack rolls and a +7 bonus to his damage rolls in melee combat. Thus, every blow that Dracula lands in combat inflict 1d6+7 points of damage.

Dracula is more resistant to magical weapons and spells than his lesser kindred. He has a base 25% magic resistance, and is hit only by weapons with +3 or greater enchantment.

The same supernatural force that protects him from magical harm improves his ability to *charm* victims. Anyone who meets the vampire's gaze is

subject to this attack. Dracula's *charm* is so powerful that a victim suffers a -4 penalty to the saving throw.

One of the most terrible of Dracula's abilities is his incredible speed. While he seldom displays this power, preferring to save it as a surprise for his enemies, Dracula is always able to act as if under a *haste* spell. He gains a -2 bonus to his initiative rolls and can double his normal movement and attack rates. Dracula's ability to regenerate lost hit points also improves; he regains 6 hit points per round.

Dracula is more resistant to running water and sunlight than other vampires. If he is immersed in rushing water, it takes 5 rounds for him to die. Sunlight poses no threat of death to the vampire; he can walk about freely during the day. While he must spend eight of every 24 hours sleeping in his coffin, these need not be daylight hours. When moving about between sunrise and sunset, Dracula is severely limited. He cannot change shape, summon animals, or employ his ability to *charm*. He has no magic resistance, and he can be harmed by normal weapons. However, he retains his great strength and is by no means helpless at such times.

The most important difference between Dracula and the traditional vampire in the AD&D game is that the Prince of Darkness does not employ a level-draining attack. Rather, he subsists on the blood of the living, like the *nosferatu* in the RAVENLOFT Campaign Setting. Dracula's blood draining attack is identical to that of the *nosferatu* in every way. Dracula also has the ability to exert hypnotic control over his victims, just as the *nosferatu* does.

Dracula's appearance changes markedly, although these cosmetic alterations have no effect on his game statistics. While the Count is able to survive indefinitely on the blood of rodents and other animals, this is barely enough to sustain him. When forced to do this, Dracula appears to be elderly (although certainly not frail). When he has an unlimited supply of human blood, he appears vital and robust. When asleep in his coffin, Dracula bears the pallor of the dead; no examination of his body will reveal that he is anything but a corpse. Dracula sleeps with his eyes open and sees all that transpires about him while he rests.

Lair: The ancestral home of the Prince of Darkness is Castle Dracula, high in the Carpathian Alps. Within the confines of this terrible fortification, Dracula is the absolute master of all.

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No door within the castle opens to a stranger's hand unless Dracula allows it. In game terms, all doors are treated as if *wizard locked*. Should any intruder force his way past a sealed door, the dread vampire is instantly aware of the event.

The mystical powers of this nexus of evil greatly enhance Dracula's magical powers. Upon entering the castle, visitors forfeit their saving throws against the vampire's *charm* gaze. Creatures that have already been bitten by the vampire (as described for the nosferatu) instantly become Dracula's pawns and must obey his will without question until his mark is removed from their necks or they escape the castle.

Background: The earliest history of the beast that is Dracula is often forgotten and replaced by rumors, legends, and nightmarish tales. To understand the vampire who haunts the 19th century, one must understand the man who lived in the 15th century.

Originally known (and feared) as Vlad Tepes (pronounced TSE-pesh), Dracula was born in 1431 and died, so to speak, in 1476. Tepes takes his name from his father, Vlad Dracul, who died in 1447. Despite all the atrocities credited to him, it is worth noting that while he was Prince of Walachia, Tepes drove the Ottoman Turks from his homeland and stood against the whims of Hungarian ascendancy.

Both Tepes and his younger brother, Radu, spent several years living among the Turks as hostages. During this time, the young prince learned more than he cared to know about terror and oppression.

In 1448, Vlad Tepes assumed the throne of Walachia, but was later overthrown. He fled to Moldavia, where he sought safety among the Hungarians. In 1456, Tepes returned to his native land, again taking the throne which he would hold until 1462. During this half-decade of despotism, Tepes slaughtered thousands of Turks, invented countless cruel tortures, and built the dreaded Castle Dracula, which serves as his lair to this day.

Finally, in 1462, the Ottomans struck at Walachia and drove Tepes from his home. The fleeing prince escaped across the border into Hungary, where he was imprisoned by King Matthias Corvinus. In 1474, after twelve years of captivity, Tepes was released. Within two years, his almost countless enemies were able to reach and destroy him.

Of course, this was not the end of the fiend. With his dying breath, he vowed that he would trade all that he held sacred for the chance to avenge himself. The Red Death heard his plea and

responded. Dracula become one of the most dangerous and devoted servants of evil on the face of Gothic Earth.

For the next several centuries, Dracula was as loyal a minion of the Red Death as any creature of the shadows. He spread suffering and terror throughout the Balkans. So dreadful were the deeds of the great vampire that to this day, residents of the Carpathians cannot resist the urge to cross themselves when they hear the name Dracula.

Early in the 19th century, Dracula discovered that his nightly feasts of blood had drawn the attention of a qabal known as *Die Wächtern* or *The Watchers*. Try as he might, Dracula was unable to detect the masters of this order, although he did learn that the group was headed by a triumvirate of occult scholars. Although he damaged the lesser ranks of the order greatly, he was eventually forced to fall back from their efforts.

Pressure from *Die Wächtern* drove Dracula's recent attempt to leave his native land and travel to England. Eventually, the ranks of that qabal discovered his actions when Abraham Van Helsing, an important member of *Die Wächtern*, learned of his plans. Van Helsing led a cadre of vampire hunters against the count and, in the end, very nearly destroyed the Prince of Darkness. Indeed, so total was the vampire's defeat that Van Helsing and the other members of the qabal believed wholeheartedly that the world was free of Dracula once and for all.

For now, Dracula waits and plots. Gothic Earth has not heard the last of him.





Appendix III: ADVENTURING ON GOTHIC EARTH

Adventures on Gothic Earth are both similar and dissimilar to those run in a traditional RAVENLOFT campaign. Both rely heavily on the Dungeon Master, calling upon that individual's talents to create an atmosphere of mystery and fear unlike that required in the average fantasy role-playing game. This is a great challenge, but some extra planning and

effort on the part of the DM will certainly result in a richer, more exciting game for the players and referee alike.

Much valuable information on this topic has been provided in other RAVENLOFT game products, especially the *Realm of Terror*, *Forbidden Lore*, and the RAVENLOFT Campaign Setting boxed sets. Other useful sources of information and inspiration include the *Van Richten's Guide* books, *Dark Lords*, and the various *Monstrous Compendium*® appendices devoted to the RAVENLOFT game universe. Because of the wealth of such information available elsewhere in the game line, this chapter will focus on the elements that make *Masque of the Red Death* adventures different from those set in the Demiplane of Dread.

A Window on the Past

One of the most interesting elements of adventure design in a setting like *Masque of the Red Death* is the broad scope of information available to the Dungeon Master. A little research at the local library, in even a mediocre set of encyclopedias or an almanac, will allow the referee to come away with a wealth of adventure ideas.

While paging through such resources, the DM should make a quick list of ideas that seem like good adventure seeds. With application of dramatic license and creativity, almost anything can bloom into an evening of terror for the DM and players.

Let me relate an example from my own experience. When I started to design the *Masque of*

the Red Death rules, I asked myself, "What cool things happened in the late 19th century?" The first thing my brain conjured up was "Well, the Statue of Liberty was built in 1886." I don't know why, but that was the first thing I thought of. Honest.

So, taking that event, let's consider how it might be turned into a *Masque of the Red Death* adventure. My first idea was that the statue was originally built by the French in honor of the French Revolution, not as a gift for the people of the United States. Discovering that the statue was haunted, the French packed it up and shipped it off to America.

Eventually, a team of adventurers in the New World sets about to solve the mystery of the haunted statue and discovers that the statue's creator, Frederic Bartholdi, had walled up several women who once scorned him into the massive body of the statue. Only by traveling to France and bringing the artist back to New York to face those he murdered can the curse be lifted from the statue. (I suppose the adventurers could also transport the statue to France to confront Bartholdi with it, but that seems like an awful lot of work.)

Of course, a lot more than this will happen in the adventure. The DM must establish the nature of the haunting, arrange for the players to become involved in its resolution, and construct the encounters by which they will complete their task. Still, with this brief description of the scenario in mind, the DM should be able to piece the rest of it together with little trouble.

Other elements might be added to spice things up. Perhaps one or more of the murdered women was a member of the qabal that calls itself The Enlightened, and the PCs will be forced to deal with them before the adventure draws to a close. The possibilities are endless.

Adventures built around actual historical events carry several advantages. Perhaps the most obvious is the air of realism that the event adds to the game. In the aforementioned scenario, for example, the players are instantly able to form a visual image of the Statue of Liberty. After all, even players who have never been to New York City know what Lady Liberty looks like. For the DM's part, a diagram of the statue's interior can be found in most encyclopedias.

Scenarios built around actual historical events need not reflect only the most monumental happenings of the day. Certainly, famous events are easily

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referenced and researched but, by the same token, they are likely to be known by the players.

An ideal solution is for the DM to use a little stage magic in the creation of the scenario. Professional magicians (those in the real world, not on Gothic Earth) often make flamboyant movements with one hand to distract subtle actions made with the other. The same technique can be used when scripting historical adventures. If the DM sets his adventure in December of 1890, near Wounded Knee Creek in South Dakota, a little thought (and maybe research) by the players will probably convince them that their adventure will involve the upcoming clash between the United States Army and the followers of Sitting Bull. If the scenario employs these events only peripherally (or not at all), the players will be completely caught off guard.

The Past Imperfect Tense

Of course, if one or more of the players is familiar with the events around which a scenario is built, this can present a minor problem for the Dungeon Master. Such a player might try to use information that his character would not have. Most experienced role-players won't take advantage of such knowledge. If a player does, however, the DM can thwart this disruption in several ways.

The most important thing for a DM to remember is that the events unfolding on Gothic Earth are *similar* to the history of our own world, but not identical. A few changes to the events that the PC expects to happen will miraculously shake his confidence and make him think twice before acting on "illegal" information again.

Another clever way to deal with players who act upon privileged information is to, as they say, *send in the qabals*. A person who seems to know far more than he should will certainly be perceived as a threat by any of Gothic Earth's secret organizations, whether they serve good or evil. Since the nature of these groups demands that they remove potential enemies quickly, the PC of the bothersome player will almost certainly find himself stumbling upon some very powerful, highly skilled foes.

Both of these solutions to the know-it-all player involve manipulations of the adventure itself. For the most part, they can be used without disrupting the flow of the scenario. Indeed, the latter can even enhance an adventure.

Sometimes, however, these subtle solutions aren't enough. If a player still refuses to tow the line and becomes disruptive, the DM can simply award the character no experience points for the completion of the adventure. After all, these points are meant to reward the skills of the player in overcoming obstacles within the limitations of the character. Clearly, this player has failed in that task and should receive no such reward.

The Minions of Evil

It has been said that heroes are defined by the villains they face. In the same light, we can see that an adventure will often be judged by the villain at its heart. If the foe that the heroes must battle is sinister, menacing, and worthy of their attention, then the scenario will be well received and the game session will be a success. If the enemy fails to convey these qualities, is too easily thwarted, or seems to have no motivation for his actions, the players will be unable to escape the feeling that something is missing.

In a Darkened Glass

It is easy for a villain to be perceived as frightening and terrible. What makes a villain fascinating, however, is the element of the sympathetic. The players will feel greater horror toward a villain if they recognize some element of his nature as familiar.

To illustrate the point, consider Sherlock Holmes. He represents all the logical powers of the human mind. It should come as no surprise that his greatest enemy, Professor Moriarty, embodies the same traits. Both are analytical masters, but one uses his gift for good and the other for evil.

The same is true of Dracula and that greatest of vampire hunters, Abraham Van Helsing. Both understand that far more exists in the world than those things recognized by science. Van Helsing is as much a master of the macabre as the infernal Count himself. The difference between the two, however, is the basic core of their beings. Van Helsing is a noble, pious soul who will do all in his power to rid the world of fiends such as Dracula. He sees all of the world's people as wonderful treasures that must be protected from the evils of the night, even at the cost of his own life. His attitude is like a protective father looking over his children.

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For his part, the great vampire sees mankind as nothing more than cattle—inferior creatures that might serve to satisfy his hunger, but which are otherwise worthless. If not for his inherent humanity, Van Helsing might well become as cold and cynical a creature as Dracula.

The Bare Bones

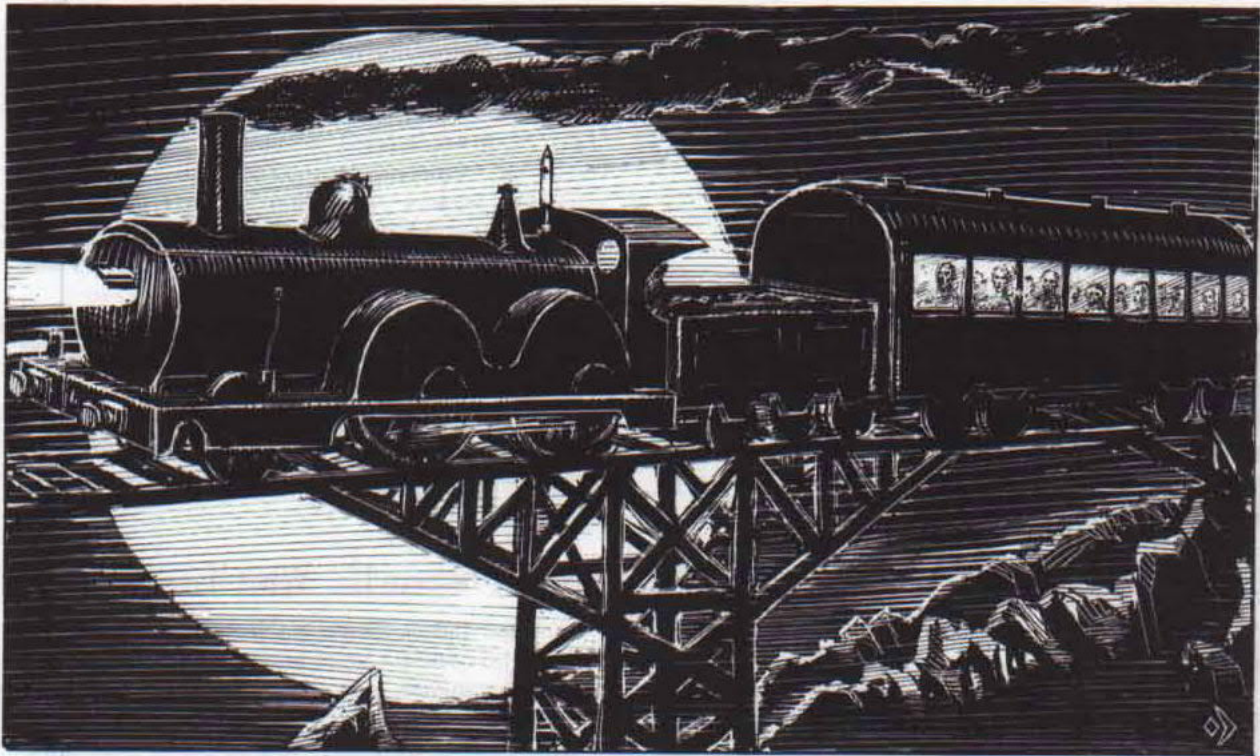
All of the creatures found in traditional RAVENLOFT campaigns can be counted on to appear in *Masque of the Red Death* adventures. The world of Gothic Earth is replete with vampires, werewolves, ghosts, and the other monsters that lurk throughout the Demiplane of Dread. With a little imagination, almost any creature from the various *Monstrous Compendium* appendices can be transformed into a horrible thing about which an entertaining (and hopefully terrifying) adventure can be built.

All the elements of adventure design laid down in past RAVENLOFT game products hold true for games set on Gothic Earth. While it would be redundant and greatly wasteful of space to recount all of the tips and methods described in previous products, a brief

summary of some of the most effective of these techniques of terror is in order.

One of the most important considerations is the elimination of *gamespeak*. Dungeon Masters (and players, for that matter) should avoid calling monsters by name or speaking in game terms when describing an encounter. Telling players that their characters face a shambling mound is far less dramatic than describing the dripping, shapeless horror that has risen up to block their path through the marshes.

The dramatics of the *players'* setting and mood in an adventure cannot be overemphasized. If the characters are exploring an ancient crypt, then dimming the lights around the gaming table or playing by candlelight can add a great deal to the mood of the party. Similarly, a sound effects recording of a thunderstorm, crashing surf, or rumbling locomotive can heighten the atmosphere around certain adventures. The addition of props (a scrawled note or piece of jewelry) can add a great deal to the adventure as well. Describing a potentially cursed ring verbally isn't nearly as interesting as handing the players a real ring that they could slip onto their fingers.



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The Frontiers of Science

The latter years of the 19th century are a time of wondrous advancements in technology. The efforts of The Enlightened and other groups to bring about a scientific renaissance are proceeding successfully, forcing the civilized world to accept new wonders and discoveries on a regular basis.

Of course, not every aspect of the technology revolution is for the betterment of mankind. Much of it is either very dangerous or downright horrific. For some, the pursuit of science has become an obsession. Knowledge must be gathered at all costs (human or otherwise); new discoveries must be made regardless of the risks involved. For many, science and the pursuits of technology have become an almost religious passion. As is generally the case when such things happen, foresight and wisdom are sacrificed in the quest for fame and power.

Of course, the idea of the mad scientist exists in traditional RAVENLOFT game adventures. After all, who could deny that Victor Mordenheim falls into this category? The *Masque of the Red Death* universe, however, lends itself especially well to the creation of adventures that revolve around such characters. Science is so much a part of life in the 1890's that the corruption of it is far more likely than in a normal AD&D campaign.

At this point, let us consider the various types of adventures that can be constructed around scientists, their works, and their mishaps.

Secrets Man Was Not Meant to Know

The most traditional mad scientist adventure centers on the actions of an individual who is attempting to learn things that, we are told, no man should understand. This judgment is often defined in theological terms. The dividing line between what is right and wrong is almost always arbitrary and based upon the views of the community or other onlookers. The scientist almost certainly feels that he is doing nothing wrong.

Inspiration for these adventures can be found in works like Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* or Stenenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. In each of these works, a scientist suffers for pursuing knowledge that mankind was simply not meant to have.

In the former work, Victor Frankenstein's obsession with the creation of life leads him to undertake experiments that result in the greatest of tragedies. For his

part, Frankenstein ends up a tortured and haunted man seeking to destroy the thing he created.

The latter book presents Dr. Henry Jekyll's attempt to isolate that which is good in a man from that which is evil. His assumption is that the elimination of the evil element will result in a utopian society. In the end, however, Jekyll's experiment is a failure, for his evil side—the nefarious Mr. Hyde—becomes impossible to control. Jekyll himself must die to rid the world of Hyde.

An adventure along these classic lines must be carefully constructed, for the actions of the scientist must be such that the players will not condone them. If PCs encounter a noble and just soul attempting to attain some goal that seems universally acceptable, the DM will have a difficult job fabricating an interesting horror story around this character.

To illustrate this type of adventure, consider the following scenario. Professor Anna Mesmer, the great-granddaughter of Friedrich Anton Mesmer, stumbles across her grandfather's notes. She becomes convinced that his discovery of mesmerism, which was once dismissed by Benjamin Franklin as insignificant, was wrongly neglected by the scientific community. She envisions a world in which the minds of people are laid bare and their undesirable traits stripped away. Of course, the fact that her process also removes most of a subject's free will and personality means nothing to her. In her eyes, her experiments have made her isolated hometown a paradise; there is no crime, no disorder, and no want for anything. To outsiders, however, the village is little more than an enclave of zombies under her control.

In this example, it is unlikely that the players will find anything beneficial in Anna Mesmer's work. Their characters will be compelled to attempt to end her work, and the DM's adventure should flow easily from their initial discovery of this horrible town, through their investigation of its cause, and finally to the discovery and confrontation with Anna Mesmer, a woman whose hypnotic powers make her a deadly enemy.

Saints Preserve Us! What Have I Done?

Another classic theme in this genre involves a scientist who makes a great breakthrough in science. At the last minute, however, he discovers that something has gone unexpectedly and horribly wrong. This may have been an oversight on the part of the

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scientist, or simply a misunderstanding of the way in which the world would regard his work.

Consider the example of a physician who seeks to accelerate the rate at which men heal from injuries. He gives an experimental drug to his subjects and, as expected, they become biological supermen. Not only do they heal much faster than normal men; they become stronger, more agile, and more intelligent. Everything seems to be going well until the common folk learn of the research. They regard the test subjects as freaks and aberrations who will, no doubt, decide to destroy the rest of the human race. The villagers attack the professor's laboratory and demolish the place, perhaps even killing the scientist (thus making duplication of the formula impossible). The handful of supermen react to the death of their creator with shock and horror, and decide to seek vengeance by terrorizing the community. The PCs, perhaps friends of the original inventor, must deal with the wrath of these incredible creatures who are now twisted and evil mockeries of the dream their creator once had.

A second variation on this theme involves an imperfection in the research or labors of the scientists; this flaw leads to an unexpected side effect. While the breakthrough *seems* to promise great benefits, it is tragically flawed and will bring only heartache and suffering.

Consider a scientist who believes that he has perfected a drug that will cure hemophilia. This is certainly a noble goal, one to which PCs will hardly object. Imagine the grief and horror of the scientist, however, when he discovers that his drug also turns patients into vampires.

In both of these cases, the scientist is not the villain. His motivation was for good, and he sought to benefit mankind with his work. Perhaps he was too eager and rushed some of his experiments or neglected a few safety tests, but he is certainly not evil. The villain in this type of adventure might be the victim of the scientific process that has gone awry, or even that process itself. The PCs in this sort of adventure assume the roles of troubleshooters who must correct the mistakes made by the scientist and end the effects of his terrible mistake.

The Hand of Evil

A third category into which the mad scientist adventure can fall includes those tales in which a

well-meaning inventor creates some beneficial device or process that, sadly, can be used for great evil. In the hands of good and true men, this discovery will make the world a better place. Of course, it wouldn't be much of an adventure if evildoers didn't come into possession of the true discovery.

In these adventures, the scientist is often perceived as a naive fellow who underestimates the evils of the world. The thought that anyone would take his invention or discovery and use it for evil purposes is utterly alien to him. He is certainly not the villain in the adventure; that role belongs to the persons who abscond with the scientist's work.

An adventure along these lines might be based upon the work of Wilhelm Roentgen, the German scientist who discovered x-rays in 1895. Perhaps one of his assistants is actually an agent working for an evil qabal. At some point in his labors, Roentgen discovers that a variation of his invention projects beams that can destroy a body's immune system, causing the target of the ray to die as if from a deadly plague. With this terrible weapon in its hands, the qabal begins to exterminate its enemies. Perhaps the members even use their magical abilities to raise the festering corpses again, creating a small army of plague-carrying zombies to menace the world.

Common Technologies

Citizens have many interesting devices available in the 1890's that did not exist in earlier ages. Electric lights are being installed to brighten the darkest corners of cities, railroads carry people quickly from city to city, and seafaring ironclads have revolutionized naval warfare. Nearly a century has passed since the invention of the cotton gin (1793), and the world has been swept up in the great Industrial Revolution that began in Great Britain some 150 years earlier.

In only two short decades, the world has seen the invention of countless things that will change life on Gothic Earth forever. Edison and Swan have produced the light bulb (1880), Karl Benz has constructed the first automobile (1885), and the German Heinrich Hertz has discovered radio waves (1888). The world is full of inventors, some working with the hope of benefiting mankind, others seeking personal fame, and an ignoble few seeking personal power and glory.

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The Telegraph

The commonly available technologies of the 1890's can go far to comfort a party of adventurers. Should they discover that the villain they are facing is the spectral remnant of a Confederate general, they can learn about his life with a quick visit to the local telegraph office. If the town they are in is in danger of being overrun by zombies, wiring for the army can bring in useful reinforcements.

A good example of characters' use of the telegraph lies in Stoker's *Dracula*. In addition to tracking the vampire's position by telegraphs to and from Lloyd's of London, the hunters kept in constant touch with each other by telegraph. Indeed, it was a wire from one of their number that brought the indomitable Van Helsing into the chase.

A party may be forced to wait a day or two to receive a response to its wire, but this is the result of the delays of human handling and related labors. The actual transfer of information is quite swift. Even a message that must be relayed through several stations to reach its final destination will proceed quickly.

The global network of telegraph stations is quite extensive on Gothic Earth in the 1890's. A wire can

be sent from Los Angeles to Paris and back again with little trouble. Inquiries of foreign police forces and government offices will almost certainly become routine to any party of adventurers on Gothic Earth.

Railroads

The great railroads of the 19th century will play a role in almost any adventure in a *Masque of the Red Death* campaign. By the 1890's, all of Europe and North America were wrapped in a web of railways that allowed for rapid travel at low cost. At this point in history, trains can reach speeds of over 100 miles per hour across level terrain.

Many frontier trains provide service for passengers, but are intended mainly for freight. Others, like the famous Orient Express which began running between Paris and Constantinople in 1883, provide luxurious travel over great distances.

The utility of the great railroads is well illustrated in the tales of Sherlock Holmes. The fact that his adventures carried him throughout England mattered little, for the British railway service was second to none in the world. For Holmes, as for any character adventuring in an urban setting, transportation is rarely a problem.



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Photography

Since the invention of the modern camera in 1826, photography has grown in popularity and importance. Through subsequent developments by people like Daguerre and William Fox Talbot, photography has become more and more like the craft we know today. Indeed, the invention of photographic film in 1888 by George Eastman finally revolutionized the camera. Prior to that time, glass plates were used for taking pictures. These were both bulky and fragile, making it difficult for adventurers and frontiersmen to use them.

The camera's primary role for adventurers in *Masque of the Red Death* campaigns is likely to be as an aid for record keeping and for verification of claims or suspicions. More important, the camera has unique abilities in dealing with the supernatural.

Many spectral entities do not show up on photographic plates or film, just as they are invisible in reflections. The DM may use the rule of thumb that any creature that can be harmed only by magical or silver weapons *cannot* be photographed. The chemicals used in the process of developing pictures, primarily silver compounds, simply strip away the images of such creatures.

On the other hand, the camera *can* photograph certain invisible things. Any invisible person, creature, or item that can be injured with normal weapons *will* show up on photographic film or plates. The image of an invisible thing will seldom be sharp and clear, however. As a rule, such things will look blurred and dim, and might be noticed only by someone actively looking for them.

A final note about photography and the supernatural is in order. Persons cloaking their true identities beneath a veil of illusions and phantasms will find that the camera sees through these guises. A photograph of the sinister Professor Moriarty would show him as a rakshasa, not a human. Spells that change the nature of the subject, such as *polymorph* and *shape change*, have no effect upon photography.

Literacy

By the late 19th century, almost five centuries have passed since the invention of the printing press in 1438 by Johannes Gutenberg. The recent invention of power-driven presses has resulted in a tremendous supply of printed materials available at

reasonable costs. Improvements in education, lighting, and the general standard of living in the world has allowed a sharp increase in literacy in the 1890's. While persons raised in rugged areas and frontiers may be unable to read, or may do so very poorly, the average city dweller is at least nominally proficient with the written word.

For individuals who must confront the agents of the supernatural on a regular basis, the spread of literacy can be of profound importance. Information that might once have been lost upon the death of its owner might now be preserved in journals, letters, or other accounts. Newspaper reports carry not only word of events vital to the PCs, but advertisements that might attract useful information or skilled assistants with a minimal outlay of personal cash and effort.

The rise of public libraries, first introduced by Benjamin Franklin, has made a great deal of information available to the public. In addition to stores of books, most libraries keep out-of-date newspapers, recent and back issues of magazines, public records, and numerous other forms of printed matter.

When the Lights Go Out

Characters battling evil on Gothic Earth can take a great deal of comfort from modern technology. Their technological weapons against evil include the ability to send and receive messages quickly, fast and efficient modes of travel, vast amounts of easily accessed reference materials, and defenses in the form of weapons both lethal and reliable. With such power in the hands of characters, how can any Dungeon Master hope to create an atmosphere of isolation, helplessness, or dread?

Each of these benefits turns out to be a double-edged sword. Certainly, PCs will feel confident that they can send and receive important messages via telegraph. If the DM has allowed them use of this technology in the past, he can turn the tables on players by suddenly depriving them of it.

Imagine a small mining town in the wilds of California. Its only contacts with the outside world are the telegraph office and the rail lines. The PCs have been working to explain a series of mysterious killings, and believe that the trail leads to a trio of young women living just outside of town. They are correct, of course, for these ladies actually comprise a covey of hags. Seeking to call in help or gather information from an outside source, they make their

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way to the telegraph office. To their surprise, the operator has been murdered and the equipment destroyed. Even if they manage to repair or rig another telegraph system, they find that the line appears to have been cut. Suddenly, something that brought them great comfort now indicates that they have become the hunted.

Similar twists can be used by clever DMs to keep players guessing in other situations. Perhaps library research reveals not only the information that PCs were looking for, but something else that indicates their enemy is far more powerful and evil than they had expected. Worse yet, maybe the books the PCs intended to consult have vanished, with a note addressed to the PCs left in their place.

The minions of the Red Death need not shun technology as a weapon. Imagine a scenario in which the PCs are forced to confront a Japanese nobleman who, in addition to being an eastern vampire, has a fondness for modern firearms. Perhaps he happens to be an expert marksman who is equally as happy removing his enemies in duels as he is in making long-range shots from a secluded post in the dead of night. Such a combination of ancient evil and modern technology can lead to a unique adventure for the players. Of course, DMs must be careful to avoid obviously silly encounters. Shouts of "Look out, it's King Kupratet's mummy . . . and he's got a shotgun!" will invoke only laughter, not frightened shivers.

Traditions of Terror

The *Realm of Terror*, *Forbidden Lore*, and RAVENLOFT Campaign Setting boxed sets all contain a great assortment of guidelines for creating an atmosphere of fear and horror. Many of these were tips, techniques, and other elements of storytelling. The following section will examine some of the actual rules in those books and how they are employed in the *Masque of the Red Death* setting.

The Powers Check

The powers check originated in the *Realm of Terror* boxed set and was then expanded in the *Forbidden Lore* accessory. The powers check is a means by which player characters can be prevented from (or, at least, discouraged from) performing evil deeds, even if done in the name of good. These rules are intended especially to stop those who would per-

form evil while claiming good intentions in the end. History has shown that many of mankind's greatest evils happened under the guise of so-called good. This is one of the Red Death's most seductive ploys, and PCs must be ever watchful, lest they, too, fall under the influence of the Great Evil.

For the most part, powers checks work the same way on Gothic Earth as in other campaigns in Ravenloft. The important difference, however, is that they are also required every time a character casts a spell. Even if the spell in question is of unmistakably good intent and involves only the purest of motivations, its casting requires a character to tap into the magical energies of Gothic Earth—energies long ago tainted by the evil of the Red Death. Rules for powers checks subsequent to spellcasting are detailed in Chapter V: Magic. As the character casts more and more spells, whether for good or evil, he risks drawing the attention, and possibly incurring the wrath of, the Red Death. As described in the *Oaths of Evil* book of the *Forbidden Lore* boxed set, the process of redemption from the effects of failed powers checks is not an easy one.

For spellcasters, however, a gray area exists. After all, even the most noble adepts and mystics could fail a succession of powers checks for casting spells in support of a just and noble cause. If this is the case (the DM has the final say in such matters, of course), then redemption may be easier to obtain.

The chart below provides a possible means by which wrongly burdened characters can escape the evil of the Red Death through certain mystic spells. This assumes that a mystic calls upon the spirits of the world to assume the subject's burden of evil. Dungeon Masters are free to devise other methods by which the taint of evil may be lifted from a character.

The steps between stages of corruption are not considered to be steps of equal magnitude. The leap to the first stage of corruption is relatively small; the leap from the third to the fourth stage is a much greater jump toward the side of evil. Consequently, stepping back from the fourth stage of corruption requires greater effort than stepping back from the second stage to the first stage.

Stage of Corruption	Curative Spell
One	<i>Bless</i>
Two	<i>Remove Curse</i>
Three	<i>Atonement</i>
Four	<i>Restoration</i>

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If a character finds a mystic to weave a curative spell over him, one stage of corruption is lifted. Thus, a *restoration* spell cast upon a truly good character who finds himself at the fourth stage of seduction will reduce him to the third stage of corruption. A subsequent *atonement* spell would reduce the character's burden to the second stage, and so forth. Characters beyond the fourth stage of corruption are lost; nothing can be done to diminish their corruption. Unless exceptional means are employed, such a character is doomed to become a minion of the Red Death.

Ironically, the casting of a spell to purify another's karmic essence is not without risk. Those who work such magics must make the normal powers check for spellcasting, even though the spell would certainly be considered to be for a noble cause. No character can cast a redeeming spell upon himself.

No redemption is gained if one of the four redeeming spells is cast for a different purpose in game play. Thus, if a *bless* spell is cast to aid characters in combat, no redemption is gained. The spell must be cast for no other purpose than redemption in order for it to succeed at that purpose.

Fear, Horror, and Madness

The fear and horror checks described in the original *Realm of Terror* boxed set, and the madness checks offered in the *Forbidden Lore* boxed set are intended as tools to promote good role-playing. (All three checks are described fully in the more recent RAVENLOFT Campaign Setting.) In campaigns in which the players are especially good role-players, these rules might not even be used.

Assuming that these checks *will* be used, however, they can be employed in *Masque of the Red Death* campaigns in exactly the same way that they would in a traditional RAVENLOFT game. Because of the cultural differences between the medieval world of Ravenloft and the Victorian realm of Gothic Earth, the conditions under which such checks might be made are a little different. But the basic differences between fear and horror checks, as laid down in the RAVENLOFT Campaign Setting boxed set, are unchanged. DMs are encouraged to review the rules in the campaign set and then read the modifications given in the following section.



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Fear Checks

In addition to the three primary conditions under which a character might be required to make a fear check, the *Masque of the Red Death* setting calls for a fourth trigger.

Any time characters are forced to confront some great power whose *nature* they understand but whose *scope* they cannot fathom, a fear check should be required. However, such a thing must be presented to the characters in a frightening or threatening manner. Few people ran away screaming, for example, when Roentgen demonstrated his x-ray machine in 1895, because the machine was presented as a marvel of modern science.

A situation that would require such a fear check may be found in the laboratory of a mad scientist. Nearly everyone in the 1890's has a cursory understanding of some basic principles of science and the application of forces such as electricity. Coming face to face with a hulking humanoid that radiates high voltage discharges is another matter; the average citizen is likely to be very frightened by such a thing.

Horror Checks

The distinction between the need for a fear check or a horror check is often difficult to make. One important difference between the two is that characters making fear checks are almost always exposed to some physical threat. Further, a fear check is typically called for when a character is immediately frightened by something, but the fear wears off after the character has a chance to assess or conquer the object of that fear. A horror check, on the other hand, is made by someone who has stumbled upon something that human eyes were never meant to see, or that is so terrible as to cause physical sickness. A horror check is indicated when a character becomes *more* horrified as he has more opportunity to understand the object of that horror.

For example, a character exploring the catacombs of a vampire's lair would be required to make a fear check if the undead master of that labyrinth suddenly sprang up before him. If the character slips through a curtain to escape a wandering sentry and finds himself facing row upon row of living victims being gradually drained of blood to satisfy the monster's hunger, a horror check would be in order. Of course, if the vampire were in this room as well, the character might be required to make both checks.

The average citizen of the 1890's has had little or

no *real* exposure to the supernatural. As such, many of the things that a character in the AD&D game would take for granted will frighten or horrify a resident of Gothic Earth. The sight of a lycanthrope changing shape, for instance, might go almost unnoticed in a fantasy game. For the average citizen of Gothic Earth, however, this will almost certainly require a horror check. A good DM will encourage players to react properly when they find their characters in such situations.

Some important differences must be noted regarding the way in which failed horror checks are resolved in *Masque of the Red Death*. These differences are due primarily to the introduction of the Psychology proficiency.

Revised Rules

If no character with the Psychology proficiency is nearby, horror checks are resolved as described in the RAVENLOFT Campaign Setting rules. To summarize, the character who is horror struck is stunned for 1 round and must then roll 1d6 on the Failed Horror Check Results table in the rulebook.

If a character with the Psychology skill can freely converse with the character during this time without being disturbed (and the skilled character makes a proficiency check), the Failed Horror Check Result roll is delayed. (If the check fails, the horror struck character must roll on the Failed Horror Check Results table immediately.) As long as the character remains with the psychologist, he will not lapse into a Horror Struck state. During this time, the Horror Struck character is in a state of controlled shock and makes all attack rolls, saving throws, and proficiency checks with a -4 penalty.

A shocked character who loses sight of or contact with the psychologist for more than 1 round immediately rolls on the Failed Horror Check Results table. Even if the object of the horror check is gone, its image is so vivid in the character's mind that he reacts as if he were living through the encounter again.

When the danger has passed or after 1d4 hours have elapsed, the horror struck character must roll on the Failed Horror Check Results table.

Note: If a character lingering under a delayed horror check result is required to make a second horror check for a new danger, no Psychology check is allowed to delay the effects of a second failed horror check.

Once the result of the failed check has been determined, little can be done to alleviate the resulting con-

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dition except for extended psychological therapy. At the end of every week that the character spends in the care of someone with the psychology skill, the psychologist makes a proficiency check (modified by the *patient's* Magical Defense Adjustment for his Wisdom score). If the psychologist also has the Mesmerism proficiency, he gains a +2 bonus to this check.

Following the horrifying incident, if the patient cannot be removed to a quiet, secure setting for a week, a -2 penalty is applied to the check. If the therapy must take place while the patient and psychologist are engaged in adventuring (for example, if they are marooned on an island or trapped in a dungeon cell), a penalty of at least -2 is applied, with higher modifiers being assessed in more violent or dangerous environments.

If the proficiency check is successful, the effect of the failed horror check dissipates. If the roll fails, the effect persists for another week. Failed horror check results do not simply fade away after one month as stated in the *RAVENLOFT Campaign Setting*. This rule replaces the one presented for Removing Horror in the boxed set.

Madness Checks

The infrequent occurrence of magical creatures and mystical or psionic powers on Gothic Earth means that madness checks will be made less frequently than in other campaign worlds. Of course, this is little comfort to someone confronting an invading mental presence that threatens his sanity.

The rules for madness checks in *Masque of the Red Death* are slightly different from those presented in the *Forbidden Lore* boxed set. The science of psychology, unheard of in the Middle Ages, is beginning to bloom in the waning years of the 19th century. Because of this, a closer look at the subject of mental illness and its treatment on Gothic Earth is in order.

A Brief History of Psychology

In the Middle Ages, madness was thought to be the will of God or an invasion by evil spirits. As such, mental flaws were seen as evidence of sin. The only cure for such a condition was prayer and repeated religious rituals. If these failed, a patient was often judged to be evil or in the service of the devil. Witch hunts and executions were not an uncommon *cure* in those dark days. Indeed, the last execution for witchcraft of a person suffering from mental illness on Gothic Earth occurred in Switzerland in 1782.

While understanding of the mental condition has improved greatly, psychological care for the mentally ill is far from ideal in 1890. Modern views of psychology have been developing since the opening of specialized hospitals for the mentally ill in London (1547), Paris (1641), Moscow (1765), and Vienna (1784). Sadly, the treatment of patients at these facilities was nothing short of barbaric. Patients were chained and confined in cells that were no more pleasant than those used to house criminals. Londoners were even permitted to tour the facility in their city, viewing the patients like animals in a zoo.

A decade or so before the French Revolution, Dr. Philippe Pinel revolutionized care for the mentally ill at his facility in Paris. Removing patients from their chains and cells, he instituted a sweeping series of humane treatments that proved remarkably successful. Pinel, an important member of a qabal known today as The Enlightened, began a reformation in the treatment of the mentally ill that was to forever change the way in which these poor souls would be treated.

Following Pinel's guidelines, an English Quaker named William Tuke established York Retreat. This facility provided a small, pleasant environment where mentally ill patients could be treated in an atmosphere of compassion. Tuke's work led to the creation of such facilities throughout the world.

In the first half of the 19th century, Dorothea Dix devoted half her life to the creation of mental hospitals that provided the kind of care indicated by Pinel and Tuke, but on a much larger scale. Sadly, her efforts were quickly corrupted and the legacy of this well-intentioned woman became the large, impersonal asylum. The majority of these facilities became little more than prisons for the mentally ill, with actual therapy limited by the great number of people confined in them.

This, sadly, is the state of affairs for those in need of mental health care on Gothic Earth. The type of care available ranges from the small clinics established by Pinel to the larger scientific institutions dreamed of by Dix, to the abominable asylums. Gothic Earth characters who need psychological help will be grateful that electroshock therapy won't be introduced for a few more decades.

Revised Rules

The conditions under which a madness check is made and the procedure for making such checks are identical to those presented in the *Forbidden Lore*

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boxed set. The major difference comes in the attempt to restore sanity to a character who has failed a madness check.

The road to recovery from a failed madness check is both long and arduous. This is especially true on Gothic Earth because of a lack of psionicist characters. The only way a character can hope to recover is through extensive psychotherapy.

This process is described in the preceding section on horror checks. The period of time between checks, however, is measured in *months* rather than weeks, and an automatic -4 penalty is imposed on all proficiency checks made to cure a patient who has failed a madness check.

Curses

Curses are a far greater threat in the misty domains of Ravenloft than they are on Gothic Earth. With a reduction in superstitious beliefs and the number of characters able to employ magical energies, far fewer persons actually have the strength of will and presence of mind to employ a curse. This does not mean that curses are any less dreadful—only that they are encountered less often.

When a curse is employed on Gothic Earth, it is less likely to be recognized for what it is. After all, the people of the 1890's are greatly distanced from the days of chivalry and sorcery. Therefore, the chance that a cursed person will be able to find magical relief from his burden is not good.

Aside from these factors, the role of curses in the game is unchanged, as are the rules governing them.

The Wandering Gypsies

Gypsies are known far and wide on Gothic Earth. While commoners are unlikely to notice a difference between gypsy bands, one particular faction of gypsies requires mention.

The infamous Vistani, the gypsies of Ravenloft, seem to have a counterpart on Gothic Earth. Whether these nomadic folk are related to the Vistani who dwell on the Demiplane of Dread is a mystery that may never be resolved. Certainly, no Vistani has ever mentioned the realm of Ravenloft to an outsider, but whether this is due to a lack of knowledge or extreme secrecy is unknown.

Many similarities exist between the two peoples. Both are mysterious folk who have a love of song,

and story. In physical and cultural terms, they are almost identical, although the Vistani of Gothic Earth embrace elements of the modern world such as the shotgun and repeating rifle.

Just as the gypsies of Ravenloft have special powers that set them apart from the PCs and natives of that dark realm, so too do the Vistani of Gothic Earth.

Spellcasting

The presence of the Red Death on Gothic Earth has not gone unnoticed by the Vistani. Their stories and songs often speak of a great evil presence, although they never name it. No Vistani will discuss this subject with an outsider except in tales and songs. If pressed, a Vistani will shrug it off as superstition and chuckle at the gullibility of the listener.

The Vistani continue to practice the arcane arts that mankind abandoned so long ago. Throughout this race of people, both adepts and mystics are found. The former are almost exclusively qabalists (their clan is considered to be the qabal they serve) and the latter are generally mediums. Curiously, they seem immune to the negative effects of the Red Death. They are not required to make proficiency checks when casting spells, and suffer no powers checks for the use of magic.

Fortunetelling

Vistani live and travel in extended family groups or clans of up to 50 people, though they may be encountered in lesser numbers. This number will usually include one or two adepts, a like number of mystics, and an assortment of folk with the Prognostication, Psychometry, Sixth Sense, or Mesmerism proficiencies. This great assortment of powers gives the Vistani a keen ability to foresee the future, clearly view the past, and gather accurate information quickly.

Rarely, they may be persuaded to use these skills and powers for the service of others. When characters seek the services of Vistani fortunetellers, they would be well advised to do so respectfully and discreetly. Although the Vistani have been persuaded to share their abilities with outsiders, they take a dim view of those who abuse or mock their trust.

The fortunetelling methods used by the gypsies, and the results they obtain, are similar to those described in the *Forbidden Lore* or *Realm of Terror* boxed sets, or the RAVENLOFT Campaign Setting.

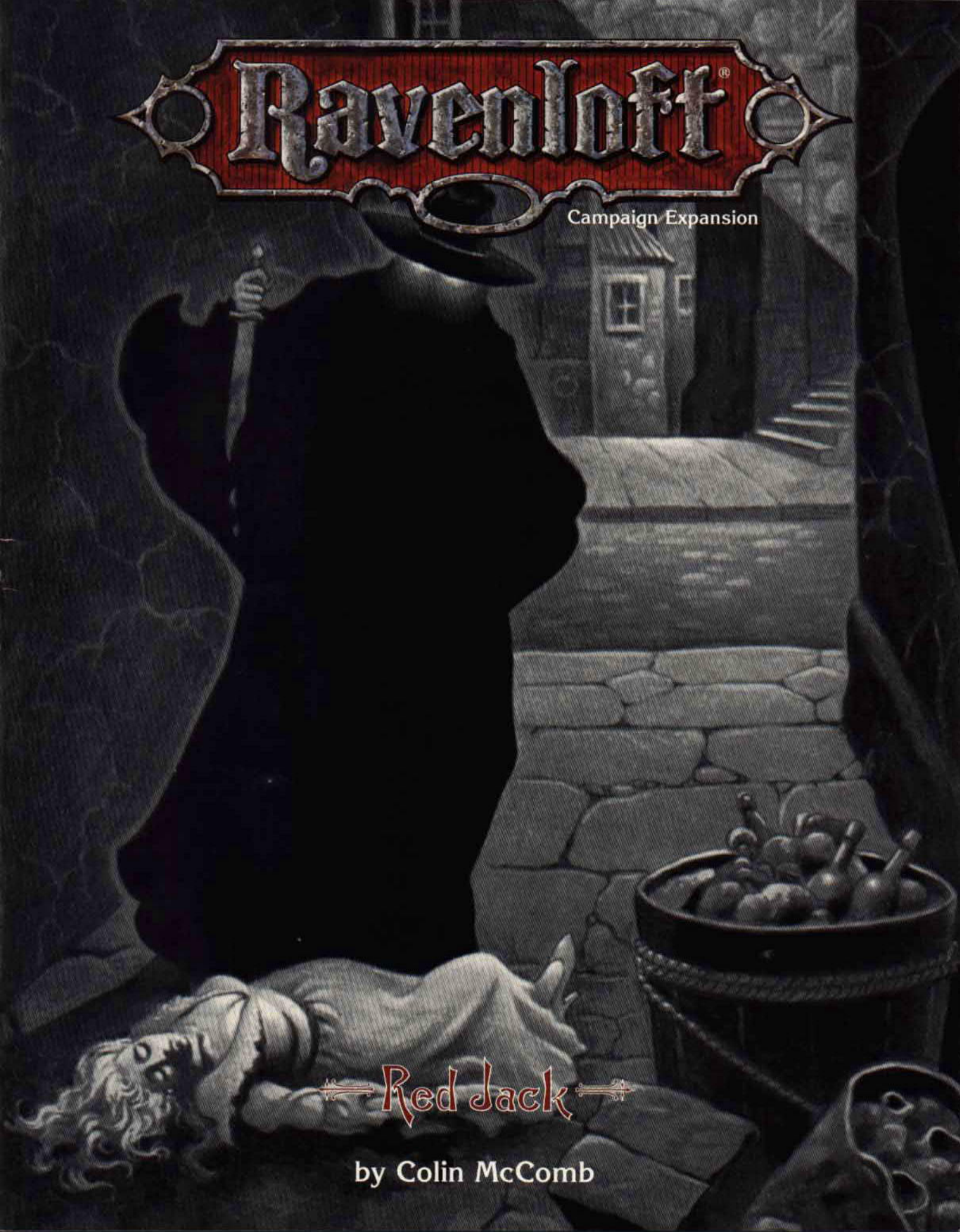


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Ravenloft®

Campaign Expansion



Red Jack

by Colin McComb

RED JACK

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HISTORY



In 1866, Charles Witherspoon moved from Exeter to London to pursue his dream of becoming a doctor. After years of arduous training and internship, young Charles Witherspoon at last became *Doctor* Charles Witherspoon, physician.

Shortly after establishing his first clinic in late 1878, he met the beautiful Jeanne

Worthings, a poor girl making her living as a singer in a second-rate opera house. Charles was immediately smitten, and proposed marriage after only a few months. To Jeanne, who was truly in love with Charles, this offer was too good to be true. Eager to be rid of her current existence and excited by the forthcoming elevation in her status, she accepted his proposal immediately.

The two were married in a small but lavish ceremony a few weeks later. Charles's family and closest friends made up the majority of the guests; Jeanne was too embarrassed by the lowly status of her family and friends to invite more than a handful of relatives.

Charles and Jeanne moved to one of the more expensive areas of London, buying a fine house. Charles's medical practice grew, and his fortunes with it. Jeanne kept a careful eye on his expenditures, for she had quickly grown accustomed to this standard of living and wished to ensure that she would never return to her previous existence.

By 1887, little doubt remained that Jeanne would never bear Charles any children. Although he claimed that her barrenness made no difference to him, Charles threw himself more fully into his work. Later that year, he opened a clinic in Whitechapel to minister to the indigents and strumpets there.

The impulse that led him to do this was a mystery to Jeanne and Charles's family. Perhaps it was the same whim that led him to marry a singer. Perhaps Charles held some secret desires of a nature best left unspoken.

Jeanne began to view Charles's new patients as substitutes for her own barren body, perhaps even competition for her affections, and she grew increasingly jealous. Her anger simmered and seethed for a year before it reached the boiling point.

Jeanne spied on her husband's clinic daily, carefully observing the comings and goings of his patients. She noted several women who visited far more frequently than others. Her hatred for these women grew deep in her breast. In October of 1888, she conceived a plan that would rid her of these women once and for all.

That same November, the first of Whitechapel's fallen women were murdered, their bodies horribly dismembered and disemboweled. A panic ensued, and the populace deserted the streets when night fell and the fog rolled in from the Thames. Still, women who were forced to earn a living dared the streets. Some of these women never came home alive.

Speculation ran wild among the people of London about the mysterious creature behind the killings. The papers dubbed the murderer "Jack the Ripper." Some thought he might be a royal stalking the streets, while others surmised he was a creature of supernatural origin. None of them suspected the killer might be a doctor's jealous wife.

The closest guess was made by Scotland Yard. The Yard discovered a common link between the victims and Dr. Charles Witherspoon; the women killed were all clients of the good physician. The detectives were never able to prove anything, however, for the doctor had an alibi for every evening that the women were killed.

The last victim of the November killings was one Jeanne Witherspoon, the only victim who

HISTORY

was not a harlot. One night, as she was secreting her killer's disguise in a heap of trash, something unnamed came upon her and tore her apart.

Following Jeanne's funeral and the cremation of her body, Charles Witherspoon moved to the United States. He sold his home and two London practices and bought a beautiful house on Beacon Hill in Boston, bringing only a few choice heirlooms to his new abode. Among his belongings were his wife's ashes, which he placed on the mantel above his fireplace.

Charles quickly established a practice catering to the well-to-do. About a year later, in early 1890, he founded a clinic in the slums to work with the poor of Boston and the wantons of the city. Had he known what this would bring, he might never have done it.

In the year between her death and the time that Charles established his clinic, Jeanne's spirit had languished, anchored to her ashes. As long as Charles worked with the wealthy and appeared to be a properly devoted husband, she rested easily. When he began to treat the scarlet women who came to his clinic, however, her spirit was roused. Incensed that Charles would have the audacity to dishonor her memory by associating with those *tramps*, Jeanne forced her slumbering spirit to the task.

Jeanne's first attempts to release her spirit from its ash prison were unsuccessful. She mustered her strength and thought of the vengeance she would wreak on those she thought had led her husband astray. In a little more than a month, her desire for revenge had grown so strong that she was able to escape the ashes that bound her.

She immediately directed her spirit to her husband's clinic, seething furiously as she imagined the tawdry scenes taking place inside. Her essence hovered fretfully in an alley outside the clinic, waiting for some harlot to emerge to suffer her wrath. She discovered an old drunk passed out in the filth of the alley. Jeanne poured her spirit into the old man's body, and

procured half of a broken surgical scissors from one of the trash bins in the alley.

The police officer who found the woman's body the next morning became violently sick at the scene. So too did the officers who came to assist him. Farther down the alley, they discovered the body of the old man, spattered in blood and still clutching the gory scissors. The bulk of the story was kept out of the press, though word of the murder spread quickly through the neighborhood.

Jeanne was pleased with herself. Not only had she removed an imagined rival, she had gone undetected. Nonetheless, anger still raged within her breast. Jeanne knew she would not be satisfied until she had eliminated all those she imagined to be competing for her husband's affections. The thought that she had no more claim to her husband's love never occurred to her. She only imagined that he was unfaithful to her hallowed memory; her spirit hungered for revenge.

The gruesome deaths continued as Jeanne hunted Charles's female patients through Boston on the misty nights she loved. Whenever she caught one of the women alone, she would take control of a drunk or sleeping indigent and let her rage do the rest. When she had finished, she abandoned the body she had controlled. These poor fellows invariably died, the shock of sharing their bodies with so malevolent a spirit too much for their already fragile psyches.

Aware that her husband had been questioned by Scotland Yard while in London, and unwilling to harm his reputation, Jeanne orchestrated her murders only when she knew that Charles had an unassailable alibi. And so the string of killings has continued. Now, in April of 1890, the PCs face a great challenge.



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he fog rolls in from Boston Harbor, filling the night air as it creeps up Beacon Hill and drifts across the Common, sliding its damp fingers into every nook and cranny. Soft moonlight filters through the gray curtain. The fog hangs on the Common like a shroud on this April night—a fitting metaphor, for death is in the air. A woman's scream pierces the fog over Boston Common—and is

suddenly severed. Silence once again reigns over the grassy field.

Red Jack is the first in a series of adventures designed for characters of Gothic Earth. The DM must be familiar with *Masque of the Red Death* rules before beginning play. In this adventure, Jack the Ripper has been transplanted to Boston from England. The PCs must face him and discover his awful secret. The adventure is designed for four to six characters of levels 1–3. Although the threat in this adventure is horrible, it should not ultimately prove fatal to the PCs.

As with all adventures, the DM should read through this material thoroughly before presenting it for play. Several opportunities exist for the PCs to deviate from the main course of the adventure. Suggestions are included to ensure that the adventure does not get too far off track. Furthermore, Jeanne Witherspoon has powers that must be thoroughly understood by the DM; her description is found at the end of this adventure. Several NPCs also appear in this adventure, and their descriptions are also at the end of this booklet.

The DM is encouraged to research the late 19th century to get a feel for the mood of the times. A good encyclopedia or American history text can help the DM add an extra dimen-

sion of realism to the game. The DM might also seek out old Boston newspapers (available from most libraries on microfiche) and give articles to the players for an additional bit of flavor.

A Quick Tour of Boston

Boston is one of the oldest cities in the United States, dating back to 1630 when it was settled by English Puritans. Although a young metropolis compared to the cities of Europe, which have histories spanning thousands of years, the past has left an indelible impression upon Boston, conferring upon it a dignity rivaling that of the capitals of Europe.

Often called “The Athens of the Americas,” Boston has consistently supported men and women of learning, fostering an atmosphere of intellectual kinship and stimulation. The literary tradition of the city peaked in the 1840’s, but that brilliance shines on in 1890’s Boston. James Russell Lowell, Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr., William James, George Santayana, William Vaughn Moody, and John Greenleaf Whittier still maintain residences in Boston.

Literature is not all that Boston is known for. It was the birthplace of the Revolution that freed the colonies from British rule. Hundreds lost their lives for the cause of freedom in this city, and hundreds more died in the surrounding towns and countryside. The memory of their sacrifices lingers still in this proud city.

Boston has remained the most populous state capital in the union (about 365,000), and is the largest city in Massachusetts, primarily because it is home to so many Eastern seaboard businesses.

In addition to textile manufacturing, Boston is also a leader in shipbuilding, finance, culture, and education. These features are responsible for the burgeoning population of Irish immigrants and numerous others in the city. Players who want to base characters in Boston need not look far for character backgrounds and histories.

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Famous Sites in Boston

Boston has no shortage of places for PCs to visit. If the DM is willing to do a little research, each place will come alive for the players. What follows are short descriptions of many historic Boston sites. Of course, as any investigator of the paranormal knows, places of great emotion attract ghosts like flies to chamberpots, and Boston has always been filled with great emotion. Therefore, some of the descriptions below also include the supernatural history of the site.

Old North Church: The oldest house of worship still standing in Boston, the Old North Church will forever be remembered as the signaling point of Paul Revere's famous midnight ride. It was from the belfry of Old North that Revere was given the signal that the British would invade Charlestown by sea. On cloudy, moonless nights, it is said that lanterns emitting strange, greenish light sometimes burn in that same belfry tower.

Brimstone Corner: Brimstone Corner is at the intersection of Park and Tremont Streets, across the Common from the Park Street Church. The name is, in part, a tribute to the many hellfire-and-brimstone sermons delivered from Park Street's pulpit. The name also recalls the War of 1812, during which kegs of gunpowder were stored in the church basement.

Parker House Hotel: The oldest continuously operating hotel known in America is thriving in 1890, and in recent years has hosted meetings of the Saturday Club, a group of distinguished literary figures that once included Longfellow, Emerson, and Hawthorne. It is said that on certain Saturday evenings, the ghosts of these fellows still sit in their accustomed places, engaged in learned discourse. None can hear what the figures say, and no one has been brave enough to interrupt.

Symphony Hall: Boston's Symphony Hall is the first auditorium intentionally built to



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conform to the principles of acoustics. Some people say sounds linger in hidden nooks and crannies, rebounding and intensifying in these places. People whisper that Symphony Hall seems to hum with a quiet but powerful noise even when the symphony is not in concert.

Old Granary and Copp's Hill Burying Grounds: These two cemeteries are the resting places of the bodies of dozens of famous Bostonians, including Paul Revere, victims of the Boston Massacre, Samuel Adams, and John Hancock. Naturally, these two places are important gathering points for spirits and other supernatural manifestations. Though the people of Boston are not superstitious by nature, something makes them instinctively avoid these places after dark.

Beacon Hill: Beacon Hill, designed in part by Charles Bulfinch, is one of the poshest areas of Boston. Here, Charles Witherspoon makes his home, and here the other well-to-do of Boston look down their noses at the rest of the city.

Bunker Hill: The granite obelisk that stands here actually commemorates a battle fought on nearby Breed's Hill. On this site, the Yankee militia first proved its mettle against the British regulars in the Revolution. Though the battle was ultimately lost, the order associated with this skirmish—"don't shoot 'til you see the whites of their eyes!"—has become part of American folklore. Having been a fiercely contested piece of land, the hill has its share of ghosts. Every third full moon, the battle of Bunker Hill is reenacted by a ghostly troupe. The silence of the guns makes the effect all the more eerie. Yet more than one investigator into this phenomenon has found those ghostly bullets to be all too real.

Boston Common: The Common is a large open park with a history all its own. From the earliest days of Boston, the Common was set aside as public pasture. Later, in the months just prior to the Revolution, British soldiers bivouacked and drilled here to cow the local residents. As history has shown, this was entirely unsuccessful.

In recent months, several murders here have lent an aura of the eerie and supernatural to the

area, and few come here after dark. If the PCs come to this area after nightfall, they might find themselves facing ghostly settlers, spectral British soldiers, or any number of other ghosts.

U.S.S. Constitution: Arguably the toughest wooden vessel ever built, "Old Ironsides" was launched on October 21, 1797. She first saw action in an undeclared war with France in 1803 during the bombardment of Tripoli. The ship achieved her greatest distinction during the war of 1812, when British cannonballs bounced off her oaken sides. Never beaten and never boarded, she is now berthed at the Charlestown docks, a tired monument to a troubled past. The ship's restoration and refitting will not be achieved for another 40 years. Her decks still hold the memories of the men who served and died aboard her. Spectral fire plays about her riggings on stormy nights, and the sounds of cannon echo from the spirit world.

Boston Harbor: Located on the northeast side of the city, Boston's deepwater harbor made her one of the colonies' prime trading cities. It is also the location of the Boston Tea Party, in which colonists dressed as Indians sneaked aboard the tea ships of the East India Trading Company and dumped the cargo into the bay. This led to increased British presence in the colonies, which ultimately led to the Revolutionary War. Other acts not as historically noteworthy have also taken place here, including murders and smuggling. Oddly, no rumors of supernatural incidents surround Boston Harbor.

Faneuil Hall: The historic meeting place of the Fathers of the Revolution, Faneuil Hall was burned in 1761, rebuilt in 1763, and is now a museum, marketplace, and public meeting hall. A place as charged with emotion as this cannot help but generate spectres of one variety or another. No one has actually witnessed a supernatural occurrence in Faneuil Hall, but rumors tell of creaking boards and footsteps in the empty building, doors opening and closing of their own accord, and other ghostly phenomena that have been dismissed by investigators as either hoaxes or the settling of an old building.

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Plot Overview

Chapter One describes several means by which the characters can be drawn into this adventure. Regardless of how they become tangled in this web, they eventually witness a savage murder. As witnesses, they are soon stalked by the killer.

The PCs must then investigate their leads, all the while avoiding the killer. Clues will take them through the slums of Boston and the richest parts of the city. Eventually, they will discover Charles Witherspoon, a physician who has recently emigrated from London. The PCs will learn that he opened a clinic in Whitechapel just before the Ripper murders began, and that his newest clinic was established shortly before the new series of murders began. All of the dead women were his patients, but the good doctor has ironclad alibis for every night of the murders.

Immediately after the PCs leave the doctor's home, they are set upon by one of his neighbors returning home after a night of carousing. The fellow attacks with seemingly mindless fury, and the PCs are forced to defend themselves. If the PCs kill the man, they are taken into custody by the police; if the PCs knock the man out, they may see a faint mist leave the body and seep through a window of Charles's house.

The following night, Jeanne Witherspoon seeks out the PCs to silence them permanently. Her unwilling servant attacks relentlessly, his fury increasing if the PCs seek out Charles Witherspoon. Eventually, when the PCs reach his house, they must confront the spirit of Jeanne and lay her to rest. Whether they arrive during the day or night, Jeanne is in her lair and ready to confront those who would destroy her spirit. One way or another, the adventure ends there.

With that said, welcome to the misty streets of Boston. It isn't quite London, but when the fog rolls in from the Atlantic and the murders begin, one might hardly know the difference.



Chapter I: DEATH IN THE MISTS



Several methods exist by which the party can be brought into this adventure. If necessary, the DM may combine these suggestions if the PCs are not already a cohesive adventuring group.

The first method involves contact by acquaintances of the PCs who are involved with the police in some manner, or are police officers themselves. The recent murders

have the police baffled, and the PCs, because of their interest in things bizarre and macabre, may be invited to assist in the investigation.

The PCs might also become interested in the case by reading the newspaper. One character should discover an article buried in the middle of the paper (in an attempt to prevent a panic). The article reads:

SOUTH END MURDERS CONTINUE

Not everyone is enjoying this unseasonably warm spring. Indeed, it has been a season of death for those on the South End, as a recent series of gruesome murders continues. The most recent victim was found this morning near Atlantic Avenue. This victim appears to have been a prostitute. The police are releasing no further information. Residents of the South End are advised to stay indoors at night until the killer is caught.

The article makes no mention of the exceptional gore of the killings, nor of the method used to kill the women. This lead will allow characters with the Journalist kit to follow the case, perhaps assigned by an editor to cover the story.

A mystic PC might suspect heavy activity in supernatural Boston. No mystic is likely to turn down an enticing lure like this!

An adept, especially a member of a qabal, might be assigned to this case by his superiors to investigate this suspected manifestation of the Red Death. As a result of such an assignment, the character will know the basics of the story: that murders of exceptional savagery have been committed in Boston, and that no two victims seem to have been killed by the same person, in spite of similarities among the killings. The only known facts in the case are that the “frail sisters” are being set upon, one at a time, by the homeless and indigent of the area, and that in all cases, the supposed killer has been found dead a few paces from the victim.

Strangers in the Night

The DM should devise a reason for the party to cross Boston Commons in the late evening.

It is a fine night for a walk through the Common. The full moon shines brightly, lending a glow to the fog that has seeped in from the Atlantic. The sounds of a spring night surround you—the gentle step of a dog and his master out for a stroll, and the occasional call of a nocturnal bird. The gaslights and city noises are pleasantly muffled by the mist, and the baritone hum of a foghorn reaches you with its soothing tones. The dampness wraps about you comfortably, a welcome contrast to the biting winter winds that abated only a month ago.

The rustle of your footsteps on the grass is suddenly drowned out by a piercing scream slashing through the fog like a well-honed scalpel. A peal of maniacal laughter follows. Another scream, coming from everywhere and nowhere, rips through the night and is abruptly silenced. Panting and grunting sounds reach you, along with a sloppy noise like a knife cleaving fresh meat.

Chapter 1: DEATH IN THE MISTS

Despite the fog, the PCs can determine the direction of the sounds. They seem to originate beneath the spreading branches of an oak tree some 70 feet away. Shadows pool more darkly under the tree, and the moonlight does not penetrate here. If the PCs rush to the site, read the following.

Under the oak, you can barely make out the shapes of two bodies. One lies sprawled in a twisted pose. The other is a tattered silhouette clutching a cleaver. In the shadows beneath the tree, you can see that the second figure's eyes glow lamently, independent of any reflection. With a snarl, the creature leaps at you, slashing with its dripping weapon.

The creature is Jeanne, who has taken control of a homeless man. She attacks the PC who appears to be the most powerful, mindlessly slashing with her knife. Because of the darkness, the PCs make all melee attack rolls with a -2 penalty. Missile attacks and gunfire are made with a -4 penalty, and will attract the unfriendly attentions of the police who are even now responding to the scream.

Jeanne-Dominated Tramp (1): Int Very (12); AC 10; MV 9; HD 5+5; hp 35; THACO 15; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d4+1; SA Knives; SZ M (6'); ML 14; AL CE; XP 270.

If the tramp suffers any wound, Jeanne discovers that, in addition to dominating the bodies, she also feels their pain. At the beginning of the next round, she abandons the tramp. The light immediately dies from his eyes, a low moan of surprise escapes his lips, and he falls to the ground and dies. The faint mist that is Jeanne's spirit vanishes into the fog. Any character who succeeds a Wisdom check with a -6 penalty may spy Jeanne's essence pouring from the man's mouth. Otherwise, the PCs see their attacker suddenly slump to the

ground, his eyes rolling back in his head.

Since this is the first time she has ever been challenged, Jeanne does not try to counter the attack. Instead, she flees back to her lair—but not before marking the PCs as potential threats.

Within 1d4 rounds of Jeanne's departure, the police arrive. Having heard the screams (and any gunshots from the PCs), they are alarmed. If the PCs flee, the police blow their whistles, draw their pistols, and give chase. Chances are good that a PC who stops or crouches in the fog (even without cover of a building or tree) can escape notice, since the police are searching for fleeing figures. Characters hiding in the open fog avoid notice on a roll of 12 or less on 1d20.

PCs who are not familiar with the area and who do not find a hiding place may be caught in the police cordon that tightens around the park (50% chance). A PC familiar with the area is only 10% likely to be caught in the foggy night.

Any character caught fleeing the park will be brutally arrested (a minimum of 1d3 points of damage if the character does not resist; a maximum of 2d6 points otherwise). This incident is likely to negatively influence the police. After all, the police think they have caught a murderer (or perhaps a band of them), and they will not be gentle.

If the PCs linger at the murder scene, they will be taken to a police station for questioning. Someone standing over a body is a likely perpetrator, but cooperation with the police will earn the PCs easier treatment.

Five rounds after the police arrive, Detective Sergeant David O'Neill arrives to take charge. If the PCs are behaving (and not trying to escape or tamper with evidence), he assesses the scene at a glance, his eyes lingering a moment on the body of the tramp and the mutilated woman. Then he begins questioning the PCs, taking copious notes of their testimony.

O'Neill invites the PCs back to the station to discuss the crime in more detail. This is not so much an invitation as a polite command, as the PCs will find out should they decline his request.

Chapter I: DEATH IN THE MISTS



The Precinct House

At the precinct house, O'Neill assigns a rookie to check out the characters' backgrounds. He leads the PCs, one at a time, into an interrogation room. The room is a dingy white and is empty except for a scarred wooden table and four chairs. The detective resumes his questioning in more detail, talking to each character personally so there can be no collaboration of answers.

The DM should roleplay O'Neill and question each PC intently. What were the PCs doing on the Common? What did they see? How did they react? Can anyone else back up this story? Would they swear to this story under oath? The DM should feel free to add any pertinent questions to the case.

O'Neill runs the gamut of questions several times with each character, watching for any inconsistencies between the tellings. He is more

brutal with any characters who have resisted arrest; he has no trouble slapping them around a bit to loosen their tongues. (Journalists are exempt from this treatment, since O'Neill knows the power of the press.)

If the detective gains no satisfactory leads from the characters (and he should not, since the PCs are innocent), he calls them together and asks one question per character. After hearing the same story from several characters, he leans back and sighs.

O'Neill runs a hand through his sandy hair, making it slightly more unkempt than it was. He sighs deeply, then leans forward. "This isn't exactly procedure, but I'm going to tell you some of the facts of this case. Your stories match up pretty well, and I can't prove that any of you is a murderer. The killer should be splattered with blood, after all.

Chapter I: DEATH IN THE MISTS

"So, since none of you are obviously guilty, I hope I can trust you. You're the only live witnesses we have to any of these murders. Maybe you can fill in some of the pieces of this puzzle. But nothing I'm about to tell you leaves this room. Understand?"

O'Neill waits until everyone agrees.

"Good. There've been several brutal murders in Boston over the past couple months. It hasn't been in the papers much; we're trying to keep this quiet to avoid the panic that swept London. The Ripper near paralyzed the Brits, and I don't want to see my city like that.

"You've no doubt heard of Red Jack. There's an eerie similarity between our killings and the London murders. All the victims have been ladies of a lower class, and they've all been torn up pretty badly, too—like the body you witnessed tonight. Except for one thing, all the murders look like they've been done by the same person. Trouble is, there's always *another* body clutching the murder weapon.

"Unfortunately, we can't question the alleged killers. They're always found dead at the site of the murders—always a vagrant covered in blood, clutching the murder weapon, and always stone cold dead. We haven't gotten wind of a conspiracy among the city's bums to kill the prostitutes; the two generally seem to get along. But facts are facts. These drifters are killing the women, and always in exactly the same fashion. They never use a gun or a club or a broken bottle—it's always some kind of knife.

"I've got my own ideas about where to look next, but that's my secret. I need you to think. Did you see anyone running from the scene? Did either victim say anything? Did you see any kind of madness we could track and eliminate? What's going on here? What do you think?"

O'Neill listens to the PCs, asking probing questions to investigate every scrap of information. If the characters suggest a supernatural explanation, O'Neill scoffs at this, discounting such things as tales from the old countries. He mentions that the PCs ought to meet his sister, who is herself fascinated by such nonsense.

After any further speculation on the PCs' part, the detective says, "I hate to let my most promising leads go, but I got no choice. Remember—you can't say anything about this to anyone. And always watch your backs. If you see anything out of the ordinary, let me know at once."

With that, Detective O'Neill releases the PCs. He doesn't abandon them, however; he sends a pair of detectives after them to make sure he is informed of the PCs' actions regularly. If anyone attacks the PCs, the detectives are ordered to merely watch unless it appears that the characters can't handle the fight. If a fight goes badly, the DM may send in the detectives to rescue the PCs. If the DM doesn't wish to provide this intervention, he can make an excuse for the detectives' whereabouts.

Detectives (2): Int High (13); AC 9; MV 12; Tradesman 2; HD 2; hp 10, 9; THAC0 20; #AT 3/1 (Rapid fire); Dmg 2d6-1; SZ M (6'); ML 12 (Steady); XP 65 each; AL LN.

The detectives also watch to ensure that the PCs do not become involved in anything illegal. Since the characters are already under suspicion of murder, the detectives are under orders to bring them in if they commit any act outside the bounds of the law.

The PCs should proceed with their investigation, likely beginning in the slums of Boston. If they begin elsewhere, the DM can steer them in that direction through a chance encounter with a vagrant heading toward the South End. An offhand remark from the man might convince the PCs he knows something.

Chapter II:

THE SOUTH END OF THE WORLD



n this section, the PCs should begin looking for clues in the South End. If the characters begin their investigation elsewhere, they should be steered this way by those they question.

The killings have attracted the attention of those who knew the victims; the police have been all over, looking for clues. Little has appeared in the papers about the

killings. This is cause for some concern among the denizens of the poorer areas of the city who know of the murders. They consider this proof that people in the rest of the city do not care about their plight. The mood among residents of the South End is ugly toward those who have a better life, and, though eager to have the killer captured, they are not happy to cooperate with the police who seem to be so useless.

If the PCs take their time investigating or spending the day in other pursuits, Jeanne seeks them out immediately after nightfall. This may seriously hamper the PCs' efforts; if they do not travel during the daytime (before the fog rolls in and twilight arrives), they may have a hard time finding anyone willing to talk to them.

The investigation proves fruitless at first. Many residents know nothing of the deaths. If the characters approach factory workers or other more honorable citizens, they receive no answers, for these folk do not associate with the criminal element or the vagabonds. All these folk know is that they are harassed daily by the police, and that the area is fairly crawling with cops. These people know nothing, but gossip is flying among them. At last, one of them suggests a local bookie as a good starting point.

The factory worker looks at you sideways and spits a wad of soggy tobacco into the gutter. "I dinna know spit about yon murthers, mates. But ye know who ye might ask? There be a bookie works up on Washington Avenue, name o' MacFinn. I dinna go there meself, mind, but I hears things. Harvey MacFinn. He's the one to ask."

The Bookmaker's Shop

All conversation ceases when you enter this smoke-filled establishment. The coarse individuals seated around the table in the center of the room look at you askance, as if weighing your fighting capabilities. Somewhere in a back corner, someone sniggers, but you can't tell if it's directed at you or at a muttered comment from one of the other denizens of this place.

Slowly, a massive tattooed man steps forward. His head is shaved, but he sports an impressive beard and moustache. He swaggers up to you, reeking of stale tobacco and cheap liquor, and says, "What're ye doing here? Dontcha know this ain't no place fer people like yerselves?"

He leans back a bit and folds his massive forearms across his huge chest. The tension in the air is palpable—these people want to see you fight the brute, and they want to see you pummeled by him. Someone in one of the smoke-shrouded corners shouts, "Get 'em, Jenkins!" The massive man smiles cruelly, massaging his right fist.

Arnold Jenkins: Int Low (7); AC 8; MV 12; Soldier 2 (Sailor); hp 16; THAC0 19; #AT 3/1 (rapid fire with navy pistol) or 2/1 (fists); Dmg 2d6 -1 or 1d2+2; SZ M (6'4"); ML Average (10); AL NE; XP 120.

Chapter II: THE SOUTH END OF THE WORLD

If the PCs do nothing, Jenkins punches the largest character without provocation. That character can then fight Jenkins without inciting the rest of the crowd into battle.

Jenkins uses his gun only if a PC pulls a gun. If a PC gets his gun out before Jenkins can react, the whole bar falls silent, and Jenkins surrenders. When the characters leave, they had best be looking over their shoulders to make sure no one comes after them—for this breach of etiquette, the patrons of the bar are willing to kill.

If other characters join the fight, the whole establishment bursts into a small riot. Too many people are in the bar for the PCs to take on by themselves. Before any PC engages in combat, however, he or she should be allowed a Wisdom check with a +4 bonus to notice that the other patrons of the shop are tensed and ready to leap into the fray. If an all-out melee ensues, only the arrival of the police in 20 rounds breaks it up.

Patrons (20): Int Average (8); AC 10; MV 12; Tradesman 2 (Laborer); hp 9 each; THAC0 20; #AT 2/1 (fists or knives); Dmg 1d2 or 1d4; SZ M (5'10"); ML Average (10); XP 35 each; AL CN.

If the rest of the PCs watch the brawl between Jenkins and the chosen character, no one else intervenes. If Jenkins wins, he spits on the fallen PC and kicks him once after he's down. He then growls at the rest of the party, "Any of you milksops wanna piece o' me?" If anyone cares to, Jenkins will fight him or her as well. Otherwise, the brute heaves the unconscious PC out into the street and motions for the rest of the party to accompany their companion.

If the PC wins the fight, the rest of the patrons turn studiously back to whatever was occupying their time—drink, dice, cards, or betting forms. They ignore the PCs unless spoken to, and none of them checks the state of the unconscious Arnold Jenkins.



Chapter II: THE SOUTH END OF THE WORLD

Behind the bar stands a portly man in a red-striped shirt and a stained apron. Sweat rolls down his meaty face. He gives a brief nod toward the PC who bested Jenkins, and says, "How do. I'm Harvey MacFinn, and this is my place. What can I do for ya?"

If asked about the murders, Harvey clams up. A "gift" of two dollars or more will loosen his tongue, but he avoids speaking loudly, fearing that he will draw the attention of the killer. He leans across the counter to whisper some information.

"No one knows who done it. But ever'one knows that the dead are turnin' up in pairs—one woman, one man. Way I figger it, the pairs're lovers, and they got some sort of dark deal goin'. Maybe they got some pact or somethin', you know? She breaks it, and he ends up killin' her, and then killin' himself to fill the rest o' the pact. O' course, that's just my way o' lookin' at it. If you want the dirt from the horse's mouth, so t' speak, go to the corner of Baldwin and Granite, and look for a blonde woman name of Stella." In a louder voice, he says, "Ya wanna place any bets?"

Harvey has no other information, regardless of persuasion by the PCs. If they wish to place bets, they can bet on horse or dog races, or on illegal sporting matches. The odds are all dramatically in favor of the house, and all of the games of chance here are rigged. The PCs have only a 10% chance of winning at anything, but if they do, they rake in 1d20 times their original bet!

The Dark Side of Boston

The area in which Stella plies her trade is extremely run down. Not all the residents are bums; many stay here because they cannot afford to live someplace better. The area

is dominated by derelict buildings and burned-out tenements. Homeless people live under the nearby railroad trestles and take refuge in buildings condemned long ago.

The people here are well aware that someone is stalking their kind, and they are terrified. If the PCs ask passersby about the murders, the people express various opinions about the killer.

A wild-haired gentleman in a cheap suit stands outside a tenement expounding loudly and at great length on the causes of society's ills. He clutches a copy of *Das Kapital* as if it could save his life. He obviously hasn't had a bath in days. When asked about the murders, he replies, "It's the government, my brothers. The capitalistic pigs seek to oppress the proletariat by setting them against each other. Arise, my brothers! Fight the petty bourgeois swine!"

A bandy-legged factory worker with an unruly shock of red hair makes his tired way home. "If ye ask me, mate, it's the Ripper. He stowed on a boat from England when the coppers got too close. Now leave me be."

This large black woman has seen much of the streets. Her eyes are weary; the creases in her face are etched deeply. She wears a cheap housedress and dirty apron, and a kerchief over her hair. "It's the spirits, don't you know?" she whispers. "The spirits of the dead are walking the land and using the bodies of the living to work their evil."

This poor wretch has obviously seen better days. His eyes dart wildly, as if unable to focus on anything for more than an instant. His tattered clothes speak of a lifetime on the street. "They're not really dead," he whispers hoarsely. "They're just pretending to be dead to cause a panic."

Chapter II: THE SOUTH END OF THE WORLD

Local residents will soon determine that the PCs are taking the murders seriously. In a short time, a crowd will gather, with each person shouting an opinion. There is a 50% chance that someone near the PCs will try to pick a character's pocket. The pickpocket has a 60% chance of success.

If the PCs ask about the woman named Stella, most residents shake their heads or shrug their shoulders. A distinct difference exists between the folk who go about their lives in the sunlight and those who wait to come out until after dark. Finally, though, a tattered young man points out a tavern where he thinks he has seen Stella.

If the PCs linger into the evening, as the sun sinks, a thick fog pours in from the Atlantic, blanketing the area in a swirling white shroud. Any residents who are still on the street look around nervously, then disappear into their homes. Obviously, they are uncomfortable with

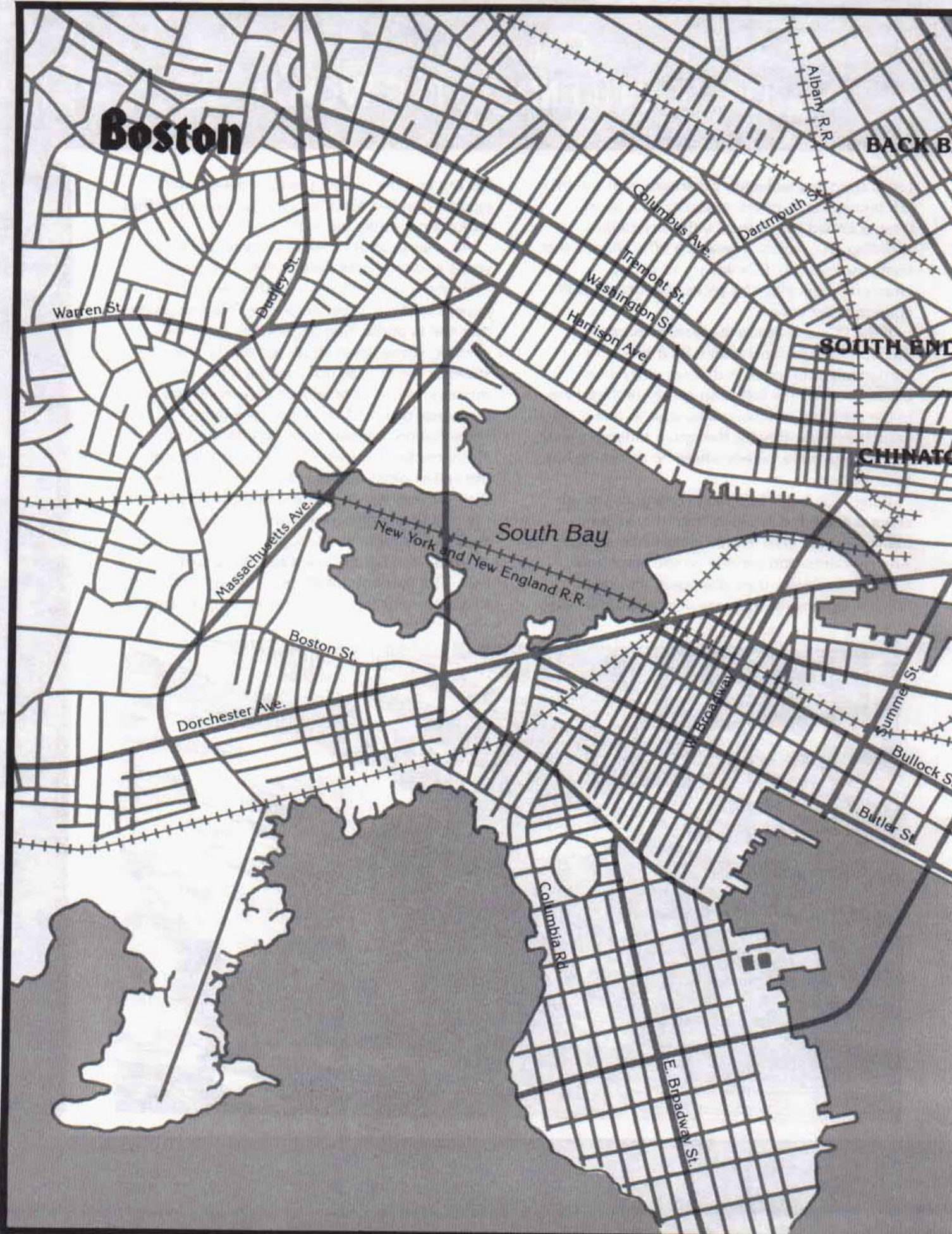
the fog and the evening, and, if asked, will explain that few folks linger after dark, now that a murderer stalks the night.

As a lamplighter makes his way down the street and the lights flare to life, a woman in a frilly gown emerges from a tenement and pauses under a streetlamp. The PCs can guess that she is Stella. She lingers, taking in the evening scene, then strolls aimlessly down the street. If the PCs do not approach her within 1d4 minutes, she is approached by a man who is obviously drunk. After a brief whispered consultation, the two head off into the fog. Moments later, a piercing shriek rips through the veil of night. Should the PCs investigate, they witness a reenactment of the scene from the previous night, except that this killer is stouter and lame in one leg.

"You!" the figure hisses as it lunges at the PCs. The combat unfolds exactly as it did on the Common, but this time, Jeanne's spirit remains



Boston



BACK B

SOUTH END

CHINAT

South Bay

New York and New England R.R.

Warren St

Dudley St

Columbus Ave

Tremont St

Washington St

Harrison Ave

Albany R.R.

Dartmouth St

Massachusetts Ave

Boston St

Dorchester Ave

W Broadway

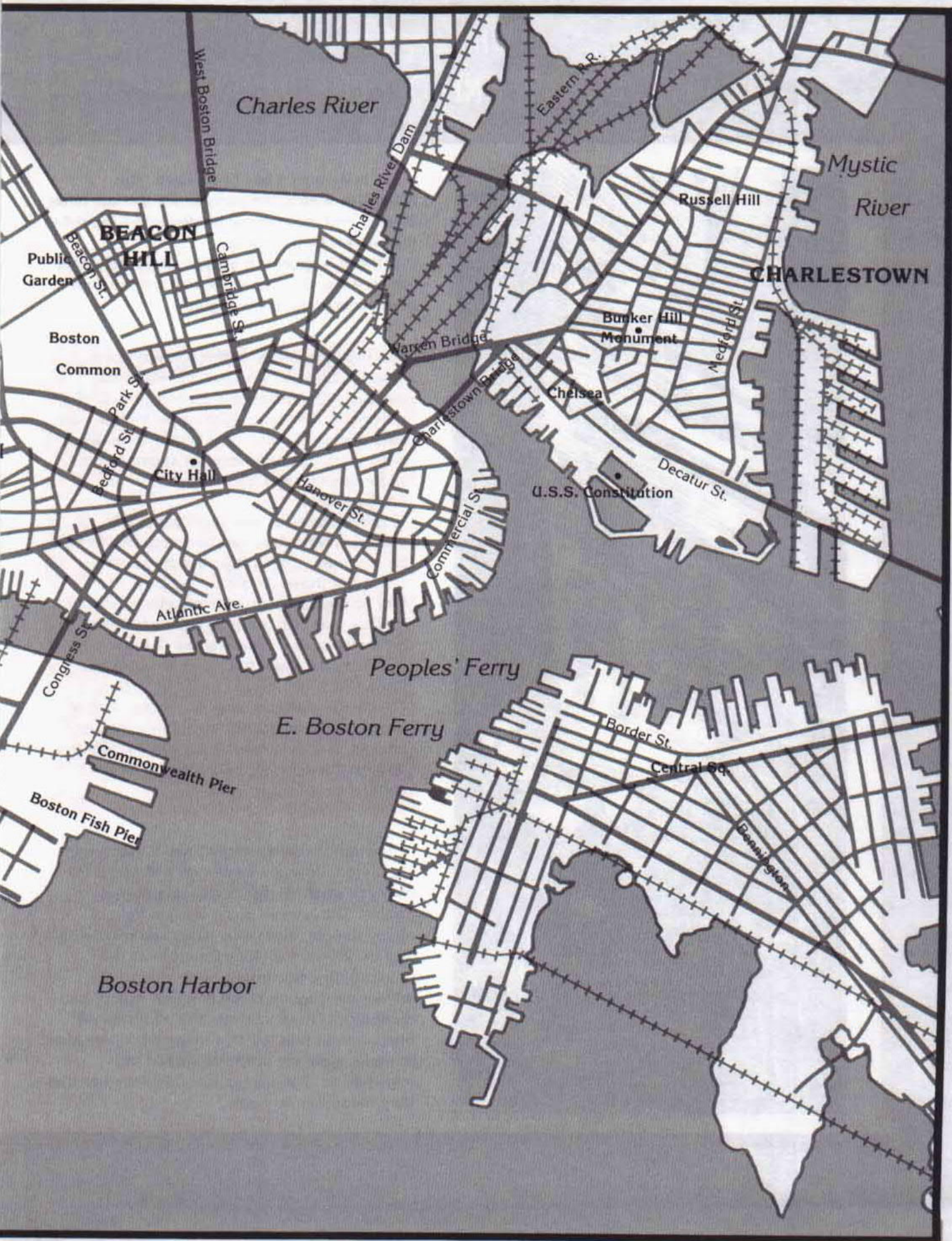
Summer St

Bullock St

Butler St

Columbia Rd

E Broadway St



Charles River

Mystic River

BEACON HILL

CHARLESTOWN

Public Garden

Boston Common

Bunker Hill Monument

City Hall

U.S.S. Constitution

Atlantic Ave.

Peoples' Ferry

E. Boston Ferry

Boston Harbor

West Boston Bridge

Charles River Dam

Eastern R.R.

Russell Hill

Beacon St.

Cambridge St.

Warren Bridge

Charlestown Bridge

Nedford St.

Boston Park St.

Bedford St.

Hanover St.

Commercial St.

Decatur St.

Congress St.

Commonwealth Pier

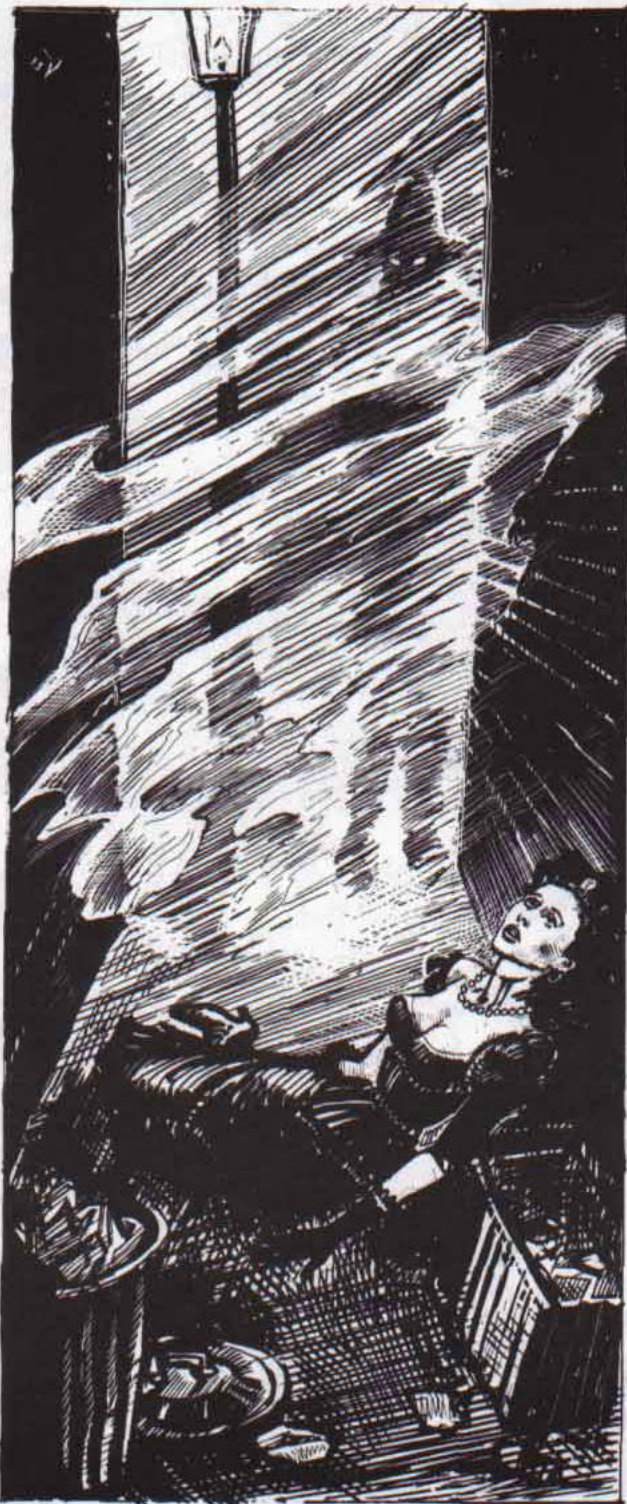
Boston Fish Pier

Border St.

Central Sq.

Bannington

Chapter II: THE SOUTH END OF THE WORLD



in the body until it has been killed. The detectives trailing the party arrive too late to be of help, and thus remain hidden in the fog rather than reveal their slowness.

If the PCs approach Stella immediately after they see her, the encounter with the drunken man occurs later in the night.

The fog completely enshrouds the street now, limiting vision to twenty feet in any direction. Unlike last night's mist, the fog here feels unsettling—somehow, you are not surprised at the violent acts that have taken place here. An evil presence seems to lie within the fog. But no, it must be your imagination.

Stella stares at you saucily, yet with some contempt for people she thinks must be slumming. She may have been pretty once, but those days are long past. Her blonde locks are obviously a cheap wig, and she has lost many of her teeth. The tight red dress she wears hasn't been laundered in some time and is much too tight. She has tried to cover her years on the streets with makeup, but no amount of rouge can disguise the pockmarks on her cheeks. Her eyes narrow as you approach, and her hand disappears into the large satchel at her side.

Though the party cannot see it, her fingers are curled around a derringer. She takes no chances when confronted by a group of people. She is even more wary in light of recent events, especially when she discovers that the PCs are looking for clues to the murders. She has information vital to the adventure (though if she is killed, one of her compatriots must convey this information). She is afraid that the PCs might be killers hired to make sure she does not spread her information. The party must convince her that they mean her no harm.

Chapter II: THE SOUTH END OF THE WORLD

Stella: Int Average (8); AC 10; MV 12; Tradesman 1 (Laborer); hp 4; THAC0 20; #AT 1 or 2/1 (fists); Dmg 1d6 or 1d2; SZ M (5'5"); ML Unsteady (7); XP 35; AL CN.

If the PCs convince her that they do not have hostile intentions toward her (this can be accomplished by offering her at least \$5), she relates the following in her thick Boston accent:

"Yeah, I knew the dead girls. They was friends o' mine. Most of us grew up around here, so I was shocked when I heard they was dead. We all went our separate ways, but we kept in touch—like sisters, you know?"

"Well, anyways, when this English doctor opens up his new clinic, they all start goin' there all the time, even when they ain't sick. I figger it's 'cause his wife's dead, an' he's new here. He's rich; he's good-lookin'. You just can't turn down that kind of life if you happen to strike his fancy.

"All the girls who got killed been to his clinic. Way I look at it, he's the one bumpin' 'em off. I heard he was from Whitechapel or Whitecastle or wherever Jack the Ripper worked. Name's Charlie—uh, Withers or Wartherspoon or somethin' like that. His clinic's over by Chinatown."

Suddenly, her expression changes. A look of shocked horror crosses her features, and a trickle of blood oozes from the corner of her mouth. Her eyes roll back in their sockets, and her head jerks backward, then rolls forward limply. Only then can you see the tip of what must be a long knife protruding from the side of her throat.

Behind her, you see a face both familiar and strange at the same time. Though the features are different, the glowing yellow eyes and the cruel smirk that twists the countenance can only belong to the killer from the Common!

This, again, is Jeanne, trying to clean up the loose ends from the night before. This time, she fights until the body she uses wears out, laughing gleefully every time she or the PCs score a hit. Even when she falls before the party, she laughs. The PCs may make a Wisdom check with a -6 penalty to notice the mist seeping from the mouth of the dead tramp.

Jeanne-Dominated Tramp (1): Int Very (12); AC 9; MV 12; HD 5+5; hp 35; THAC0 15; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1-4+1; SA Knife; SZ M (5'); ML 14; XP 270; AL CE.

Even after the tramp dies, you hear a faint, mocking laugh echoing on the wind. It swirls around you, shifting direction several times. The laughter suddenly takes on a different, deeper tone, then a burly man staggers out of a nearby alley. He carries a carving knife and he lurches toward you. Suddenly, the man is seized by an uncontrollable shudder. The knife drops from his nerveless fingers as he falls prey to a fit of palsy.

The laughter abruptly ceases, and the man curses as he falls to the ground. His muffled curses end as he looks up at you and says in a strangely feminine voice, "Maybe not in this palsied body, but I will kill you all!" With that, the man keels forward, his eyes rolling back in his head. His forehead cracks sharply on the cobblestones, and a faint sigh escapes him.

The PCs may make a Wisdom check to see if they spot Jeanne's vaporous form escaping from the man's body. If the PCs check for a pulse, they find that the man has expired before their eyes.

Jeanne bothers the PCs no more this night, having claimed her victim. She returns home to plot the downfall of those who would hunt her husband. The PCs have the rest of the night to plan their next move. If they go to the clinic, they find it closed.

Chapter III: A VISIT TO THE DOCTOR



he events in this chapter take place any time the PCs decide to pay a visit to the good doctor, or when they begin investigating the clues that point to him. Since they have no method of locating his home, the characters must seek out his practice.

Dr. Witherspoon works at his Chinatown clinic in the mornings and moves to his more profitable Beacon Street office in the

afternoons. The Chinatown office is easy to find; anyone on the streets can direct the party to it (the doctor has become well known because he works cheaply and is new in the area). Even with the mispronounced name given them by Stella, the PCs should locate Witherspoon's place easily.

The outside of the building is dingy and run-down, but the windows show that the interior is clean and well kept. As you enter the building, you find a spotless waiting room guarded by a matronly nurse seated behind a heavy oak desk. A faint disinfectant smell hangs in the air and several patients seated about the waiting room gaze at you disinterestedly. The nurse looks up from her charts and greets you pleasantly, but with some reserve.

"Good morning. May I help you?"

If the PCs ask to see the doctor, the nurse informs them that the wait will be about two hours. Otherwise, they may make an appointment later in the week.

The nurse can confirm that the doctor has recently moved from London and is a widower. She will not give any information about his residence or the details of his wife's death.

When the PCs eventually meet the doctor, Witherspoon comes out to greet them and ushers them into his office.

The office is immaculate. You can see that the furnishings, despite their simplicity, are of high quality. Several file cabinets stand in the far corner of the room. An examining table occupies most of the floor space in the center of the office, and Dr. Witherspoon's roll-top desk is against the back wall. He looks faintly worried at the number in your party, but hides it well beneath his professional face. When the conversation turns to the killings in town, his face hardens.

"I freely admit that I had a practice in Whitechapel at the time of the Ripper murders, just as I have a practice here in the slums. I like to help the poor—I find it gratifying beyond the monetary compensation I receive in my regular practice.

"It's true that I came here from England after the murders. Would you like to know why I left? My beloved wife was the killer's final victim; her body was horribly mutilated. I was constantly haunted by the brutality of her death, and left England to escape the memories.

"I was investigated in connection with the Ripper murders by a team from Scotland Yard. They found absolutely nothing to incriminate me. I am horrified by the similarities between these events—do you have any idea how it feels to escape one string of murders and land in the midst of another? I'm terrified! Have I done something to trigger this? Am I to be the next victim? I can barely sleep some nights envisioning those poor women. Why my patients? What in heaven or hell is the connection? It's a terrible extreme if someone is out to sully my reputation.

Chapter III: A VISIT TO THE DOCTOR

"But I am innocent in the killings, as heaven and earth are my witnesses, and I will swear to that until my dying day.

"Now please—I've been through enough. If you can help find the murderer, I'll be grateful. But I'd rather not be troubled by this further.

"You'll forgive me if I don't see you out. Good day."

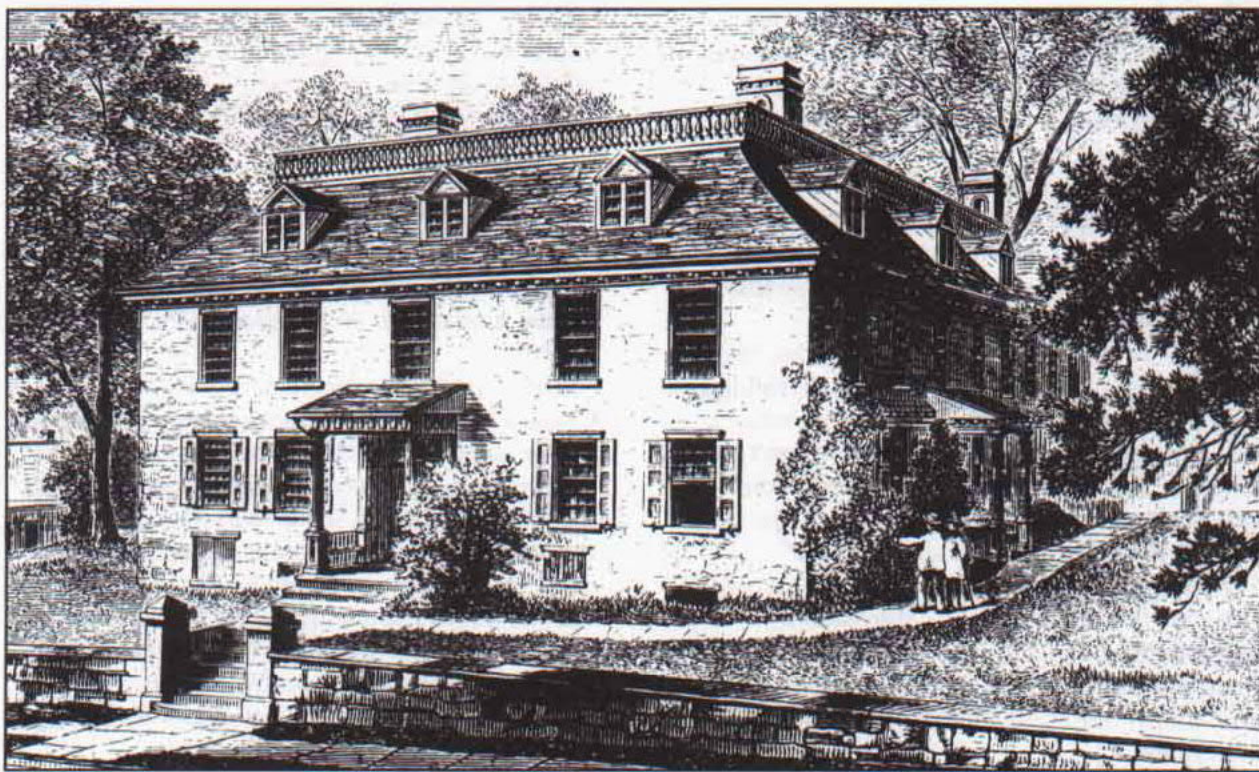
Charles turns his chair to the wall and ignores the PCs until they leave. Unless the PCs can think quickly and gain his confidence, he will not even acknowledge their presence. He is of two minds regarding the whole investigation. On one hand, he is frightened that the killings have started again; on the other hand, he is afraid that the PCs will uncover his underground connections and his thriving business as a fence for stolen goods.

This leaves the PCs with two options: they

can secretly follow Charles to his home, or they can try to force Charles to cooperate with them. However they decide to proceed, they must do so cautiously, for the doctor is a wealthy man, and this translates to power in certain areas of Boston. If the PCs anger him unduly, they could find themselves in serious trouble with the law.

If the PCs choose to secretly observe Wither-
spoon's office, they hear evidence of his criminal activities when his last patient of the day arrives. She is a woman of obviously low repute, and seems to be in a hurry. The nurse greets her stiffly, then ushers her into the doctor's office. After a modicum of normal doctor/patient interaction, the PCs overhear the following.

"I got something for you to sell," she says. "It was a snap getting it from the tumbler; he was sleeping and didn't notice a thing."



Chapter III: A VISIT TO THE DOCTOR

"Hmm. Good quality, genuine gold," the doctor says after a moment, "but the monogram here reduces the value. It's difficult to sell. I can offer you two dollars."

The two haggle for a few minutes, then there is the sound of something heavy being shifted, unlocked, and opened. Shortly thereafter, the patient leaves the office.

If the PCs catch up to the woman and question her about the affair, she denies everything. Depending on the PCs' methods of persuasion, she may confess that she steals from her clients to sell goods to the doctor. She is uncertain where he sells them, but suspects that he reaps a healthy profit.

Theresa O'Neill

At some point that the DM deems appropriate, the PCs are confronted outside Witherspoon's clinic by a short, attractive woman of middle age. She introduces herself as Theresa O'Neill, the sister of Detective O'Neill. She asks, "Can we talk someplace private?" She gives a significant glance at the doctor's office. If the PCs agree to meet with Theresa, she guides them to a small cafe on Tremont Street, close to the Common. She doesn't speak at all on the way; she seems remarkably tense.

Once at the cafe, she relaxes a little. She says, "I overheard my brother, David, talking about these murders. He mentioned that you were involved in the investigation. I don't want to seem like a crackpot, but I believe you have had some experiences with the killer that are not, shall we say, completely natural?"

She waits for the party to confirm her words. If the party does not seem interested in verifying this information, she apologizes for wasting their time and rises to leave. If the PCs do confirm her speculations, Theresa continues.

"For some time now, I have felt a great evil growing in Boston. I have had dreams—terrible dreams—and I'm convinced that this murderer is the great evil that I have felt.

"Let me explain something about myself. I dabble in what some people call the occult." She waits to gauge your reaction. "I do not impart this information casually; most people would haul me away to an asylum for the mere mention of it. But few people have the gift to take advantage of this supernatural resource. I hope you don't consider this laughable—I assure you that I am deadly serious.

"I'm convinced that Charles Witherspoon is somehow connected to the murders, despite his protestations of innocence. But I'm also not convinced that he is the murderer. I urge you to go to his house and speak with him further on the matter. As long as you do not accuse him or infer that he has something to do with the killings, you might be able to learn something from him. I would accompany you, but I'm afraid my brother wouldn't approve of me meddling in his investigations. If you need to reach me, you may contact my brother at the precinct house."

Theresa will chat with the PCs for only a few minutes. Before she leaves the table, she presses a slip of paper into one of the PCs' hands. It bears Dr. Witherspoon's Beacon Street address.

Theresa has two theories. She thinks that Charles Witherspoon may have been possessed by the spirit of Jack the Ripper; she also thinks that he may be a werewolf. She doesn't suspect the actual truth, and will be surprised to learn the real story. If asked why she is interested in this case, she simply says that she feels obligated to use her gift to undo some of the evil she has witnessed in her life. Under no circumstances will she accompany the PCs to Witherspoon's house, though she might be persuaded to follow along to judge the situation from the street.

Chapter III: A VISIT TO THE DOCTOR

Like most doctors of his day, Charles Witherspoon operates his practice out of his home. After the confrontation at his Chinatown clinic, the party would be wise to wait until evening to visit him.

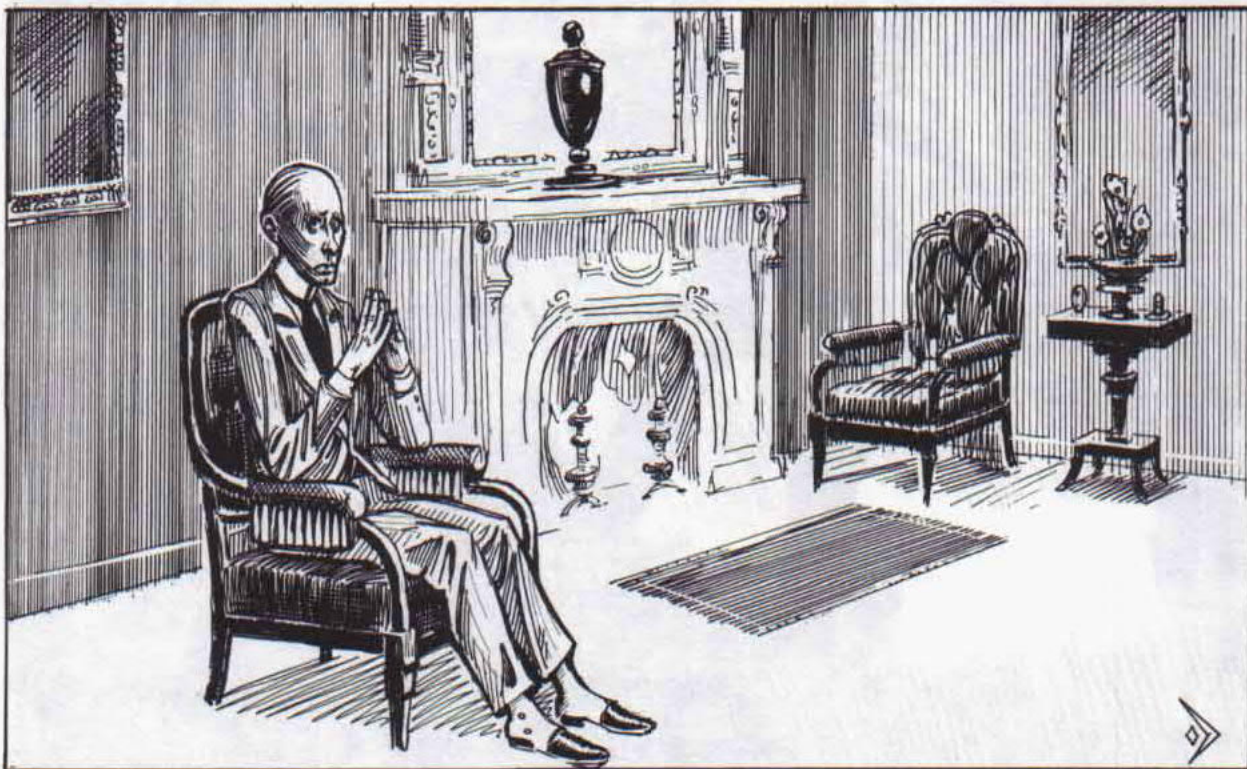
If the PCs go to Witherspoon's home anytime before 6:00 P.M., they are met by his butler, James, who politely informs the group that the master is seeing no more patients today and is currently having his supper. James advises the PCs that the master will be available for social callers after 7:30 P.M. He invites the PCs to return then. If the PCs arrive after 7:30, James invites them in and leaves to announce them.

Charles Witherspoon's home is a model of Victorian elegance. Rich oriental carpets and expensive wallpaper decorate the foyer. A huge, mirrored hall tree stands to one side. An assortment of hats and a rich-looking

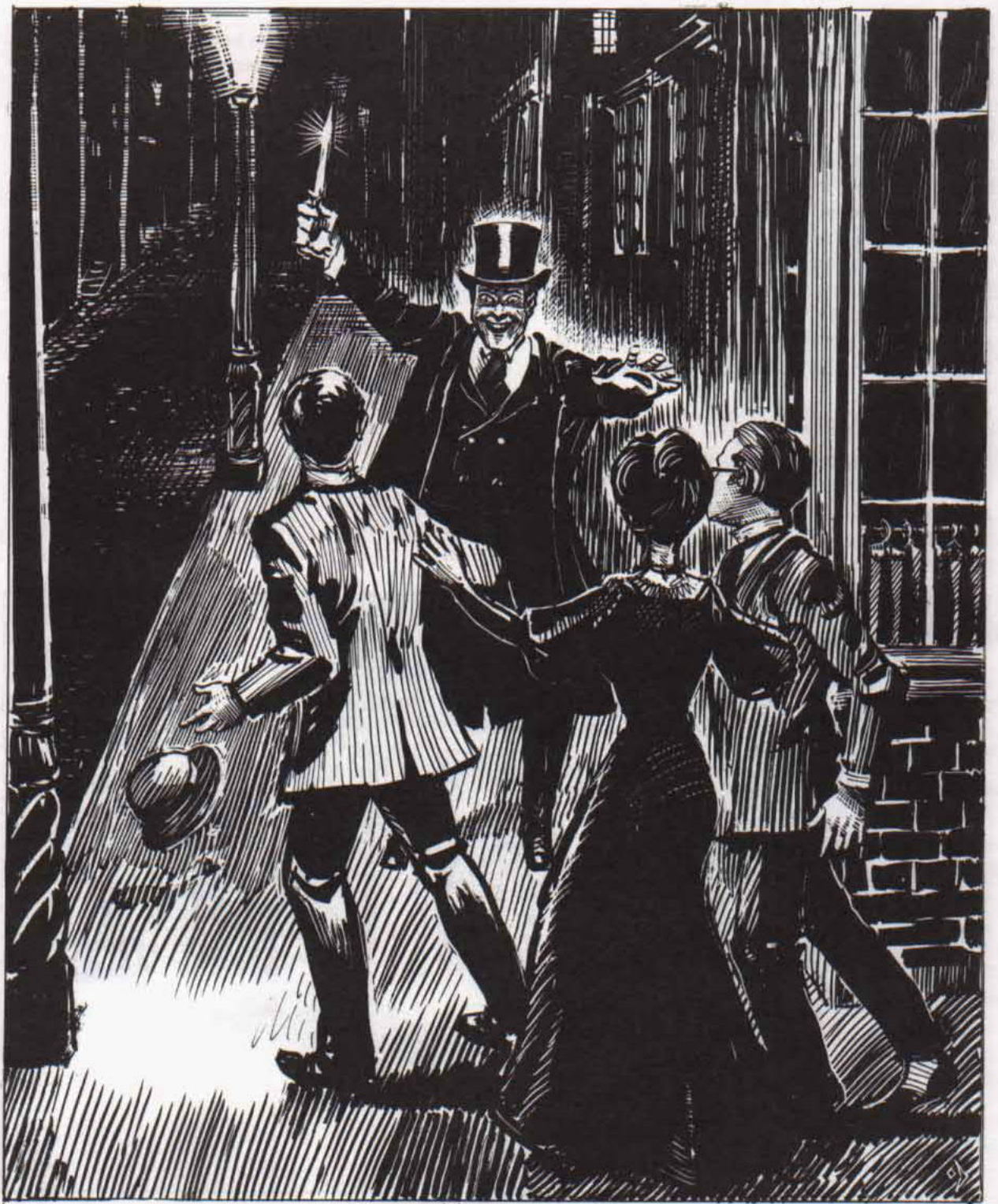
opera cape adorn the hooks. An elephant-foot umbrella stand rests just inside the door, filled with an assortment of walking sticks and umbrellas. A dark mahogany door stands just beyond the hall tree. A wide staircase leads to other parts of the house.

Witherspoon smiles at you as he enters the hallway from a door at the rear. He appears to have completely forgiven the meeting earlier that afternoon, and seems genuinely glad to see you. He ushers you into his sitting room, and sends James out for tea, coffee, and brandy.

In the sitting room, the air seems much cooler than it should be, considering the warmth of the foyer and the fine spring weather. The room contains scattered small items and keepsakes that appear to be Witherspoon's remembrances of his wife. A portrait over the fireplace depicts a happily



Chapter III:
A VISIT TO THE DOCTOR



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smiling young woman whose eyes look as if they have known some pain. Below the portrait is an elaborate funerary urn.

Witherspoon readily admits that this room is a small shrine to the memory of his wife, and that the urn indeed contains her ashes. He says that he has considered scattering her ashes, but he doesn't think he could part with her physical remains—they are all he has left of her.

Witherspoon decides to tell the PCs everything he knows about the murders. This isn't much, despite their proximity to him. He has solid alibis for every event; James can confirm these. "Of course," Witherspoon says, "James's testimony is likely to be suspect, since I have employed him for the past nine years." Witherspoon was at home reading and studying on most nights of the murders; during two of the events, he was working late at the Chinatown clinic and James took supper to him there. Some of his patients can verify his whereabouts on the nights that he stayed late in Chinatown. Witherspoon will answer any of the PCs' questions regarding the murdered women, in the hope of discovering some connection between them.

If asked, the doctor relates the story of Jeanne's murder, but finishes in tears. He excuses himself from the room for a moment, and James takes the opportunity to speak his mind on Jeanne.

"I do hate to speak ill of the dead, but that woman was one of the cruelest creatures I have ever seen. Oh yes, she loved the master, but only for the wealth he could provide her. She schemed her way into his heart, and even in death she doesn't let go, as you can see. If she hadn't died, I wouldn't have been a bit surprised to learn that she was the Ripper." At that moment, Witherspoon returns to the room, and James falls silent.

Charles Witherspoon turns out to be a friendly and engaging fellow, but his eyes keep lingering on the portrait above the mantle. When the PCs take their leave, Witherspoon sees them out personally, and urges them to bring him news of any developments.

Shortly after the PCs leave Witherspoon's house, they are assaulted by a body controlled by the loathsome Jeanne. This time, she dominates a local banker returning from a full day at the office. He had stopped off at his gentlemen's club for a relaxing drink before returning home, never dreaming that this would lead to an event that might well spell his doom.

The stars seem especially bright tonight as you step from Charles Witherspoon's well-appointed house and breathe deeply of the night air. The crisp, clear night is nothing like the fog-bound, murder-filled nights of the past few days. The cool breeze from the ocean is almost enough to make you forget the horrors of the past few days.

The streets are nearly deserted. Down the hill, you see a man walking toward you. You hear a strangled grunt from the man and he stumbles, but recovers in time to keep from being pitched to the sidewalk. Walking unsteadily, he continues up the hill toward you.

As he draws closer, you see that he is dressed in expensive clothing, and has been eating a little too heartily lately. His round face is framed by muttonchops, though his lip and chin are clean-shaven. He walks with his head down, and his top hat sits askew. Just as he reaches you, he looks up with eyes glowing yellow, pulls a pocketknife from his trousers, and with a grunt, attempts to drive it into the nearest of you!

Chapter III: A VISIT TO THE DOCTOR

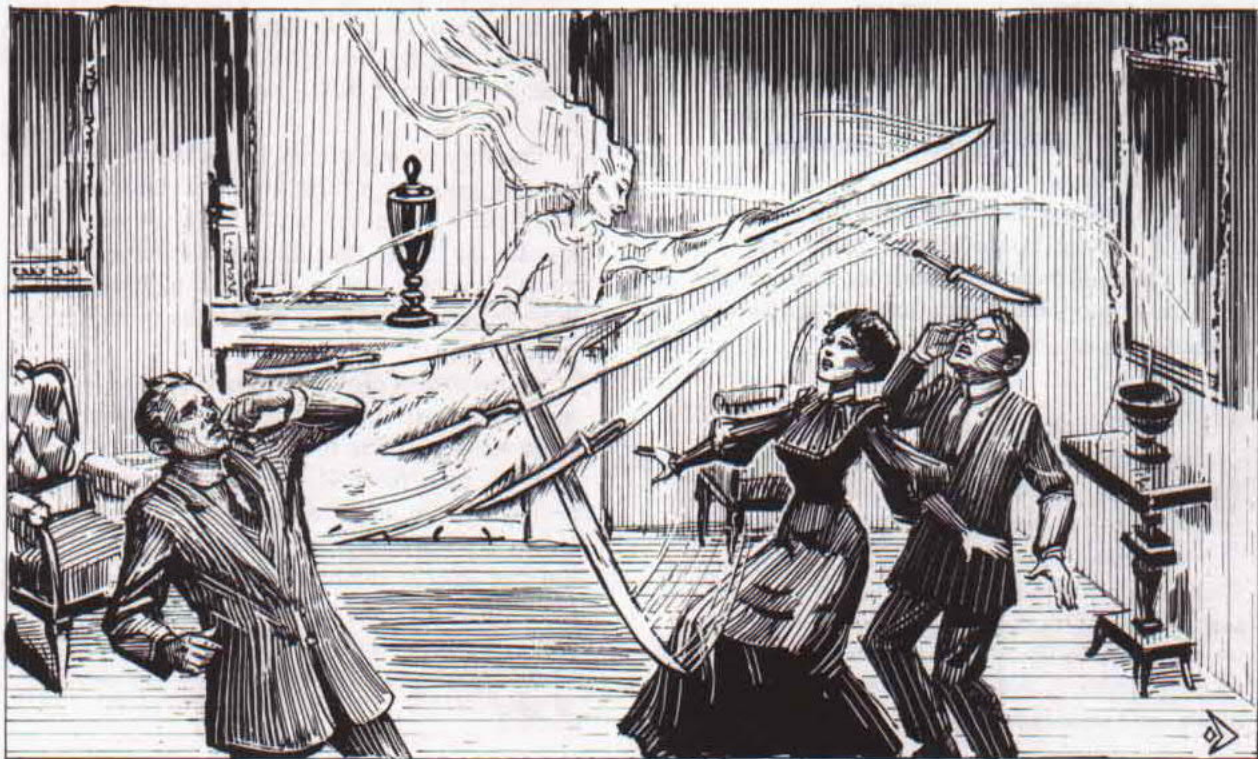
Bernard Thomas (Jeanne-Dominated): Int Very (12); AC 10; MV 12; HD 5+5; hp 24; THACO 15; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1-4+1; SA Knife; SZ M (5'9"); ML 14; XP 270; AL CE.

If the PCs kill this citizen, they will be taken into custody by the police almost immediately. Even if they plead self-defense, the murder of a wealthy citizen is not something the police will take lightly. While the police can release the PCs despite their presence at the deaths of vagrants, they cannot justify anything other than locking up the suspects in this murder. The Beacon Hill families are far too powerful and influential to allow anything else. However, after a night in jail and many consultations with the detectives who tailed the PCs, their innocence will be established and the characters will be released.

If the PCs merely render the man unconscious, he does not press charges

when he awakens. Indeed, the PCs will have earned themselves a benefactor, for although the man does not believe in the supernatural, he remembers the feeling of losing control of his body and the invasion of a strange presence. Whether due to the gin he consumed or something else inexplicable, he realizes that without the intervention of the PCs, he might have committed something far worse than eating and drinking too much, and may have been killed in the commission of those crimes.

Regardless of the method used to drive Jeanne's spirit from Bernard's body, PCs may make a Wisdom check to see if they spot the mist that curls forth from the supine form of Bernard Thomas. The mist drifts directly toward Witherspoon's house. If the PCs chase her into the house, the final encounter can begin; otherwise, the final encounter may take place any time the DM desires.



Chapter IV: IN THE RIPPER'S LAIR



he events in this chapter can occur any time the PCs feel ready to confront Jeanne in her lair, or anytime the DM wishes to throw them into this encounter.

The PCs should be able to determine that the killer is actually the ghost of Dr. Witherspoon's wife.

They have had several inconclusive confrontations with her. For every day that the PCs delay the final confrontation, Jeanne kills another two people—a chosen victim for the night, and the body she uses to perform the deed. By this point, her evil and her jealousy have combined to make her an insane killer, choosing victims with only one criterion: they must be women. The longer the PCs wait, the more people will die, and Boston will edge closer and closer toward slipping into terrified hysteria.

If this situation is not enough to push the PCs into action, a female member of the party or a female acquaintance may be targeted. Eventually, Jeanne may not even care about the sex of her victims. She will wish only to punish the PCs for their involvement in the case. Relatives, friends, and perhaps even Detective O'Neill or his sister may all fall prey to knife-wielding vagrants. If events go this far, the characters should certainly be able to figure out that the vagrants are controlled by the same entity. The pattern of the killings should also tell the PCs that this is a message aimed at them.

If Theresa O'Neill is consulted by the party, she urges them to confront "the restless spirit" in order to stop the killings. Although she would like to be involved in laying the spirit to rest,

she must move cautiously to avoid treading on her brother's investigation. She will help the PCs formulate a plan if they ask for her assistance, but she does not volunteer her services.

Once the PCs make the decision to storm the ghost's lair and they begin their journey toward the doctor's home, they are assaulted by people dominated by Jeanne, one at a time, in an endless flood. Of course, if the PCs approach during the daytime, Jeanne cannot leave her lair, but she senses the approach of the party and is ready for them.

Jeanne-Dominated People (Up to 20):

Int Very (12); AC 9; MV 12; HD 5+5; hp 10 each; THAC0 15; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1-4+1; SA Knife; SZ M (5'); ML 14; XP 270; AL CE.

When the PCs arrive at the doctor's home, they discover the following scene.

Dr. Witherspoon's house is a maelstrom of activity. Jeanne has manifested her full power in the sitting room. Every loose item smaller than a footstool in the room whirls about her. James has collapsed in the corner by the open front door, bleeding from a wound in his forehead. Charles Witherspoon stands in the center of the maelstrom, his clothes whipping about him. His mouth is moving, but Jeanne's unearthly shrieks and the wind she generates drown him out.

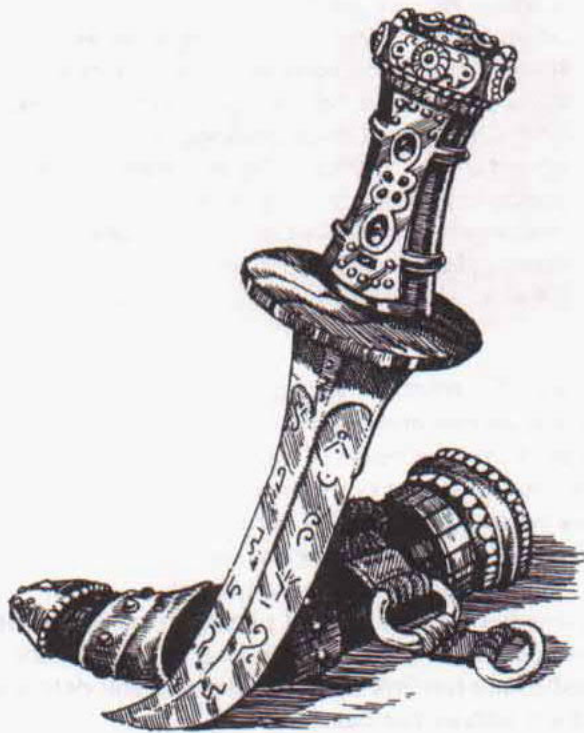
If the PCs enter the sitting room, Jeanne attacks them immediately. Because nothing can be heard over the noise of the wind, characters in the room cannot communicate with one another by normal speech. Any verbal communication must take place outside the room.

If anyone moves toward her ashes, Jeanne turns her full fury on that person, leaving herself vulnerable to other attacks. She knows that the ashes are her link to this world, and she defends them with all her passion.

Chapter IV: IN THE RIPPER'S LAIR

Should the PCs retreat from her fury, Jeanne will do her best to make sure the characters die before they can threaten her again. While she dominates a body outside her lair, she immediately knows if someone threatens her ashes, and can return home in mere seconds to defend them. Thus, a scheme to bait her from her lair probably will be only partially successful.

There are two ways to ensure Jeanne's death. The first is to scatter her ashes, thus destroying her physical anchor (see Jeanne's description at the end of this booklet). The second is to kill Charles Witherspoon. This removes her sole reason for existence; once she quiets from her murderous rage and discovers Charles's death, she will lose all the jealousy that was pent up within her spirit. She will dissipate with a moan of despair. However, the possibility exists that his murder will cause Charles to rise from the dead to seek out his killers and exact revenge.



If Charles is alive when Jeanne is laid to rest, read the following:

Quickly you spill the ashes of the late Jeanne Witherspoon and scatter them so that they can never reunite. The crazed spirit pales (if such a thing is possible for a ghost) as her essence becomes unraveled with the scattering of the ashes.

Charles throws himself at you, begging you to stop. "Please! She's my wife! I still love her!" The ghost seems to gain strength from this declaration, and she flies at you with renewed vigor. But before she can reach you, she succumbs to the inevitable forces of entropy, and her image fades from sight as the light of reason dawns in her eyes, combined with a look of inexpressible horror. The echo of her voice lingers in the still air, and you suspect that it will linger there forever.

"I'm sorry ..."

Upon Jeanne's death, any items she converted into knives revert to their original forms. Any character with a knife stuck in his body might suddenly find himself studded with a teacup, porcelain figure, or other bric-a-brac from the sitting room.

If Dr. Witherspoon also perishes, the players should remember that in Victorian society, their characters will very likely be arrested for burglary as well as murder if the group decides to plunder Witherspoon's mansion.

Note that if the PCs merely reduce Jeanne's hit points to zero and do not scatter her ashes, she plays along as described at the end of this booklet. She lays low for a few days, then begins to hunt the PCs individually, hoping that they have relaxed their guard. Only if they scatter her ashes can they be sure that she is truly laid to rest.

NPCs

This section describes the NPCs in the adventure. The main villain, Jeanne Witherspoon, is described at the end of this booklet.

Charles A. Witherspoon

5th-level Tradesman (Physician)

Strength: 10 **AL:** N
Dexterity: 15 **AC:** 9
Constitution: 8 **hp:** 25
Intelligence: 17 **#AT:** 1
Wisdom: 13 **THACO:** 19
Charisma: 13 **Dmg:** by weapon
MV: 12

Weapon Proficiencies: Knife (x2), breech-loading rifle, shotgun

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Medicine, Chemistry, Zoology, Botany

Description: Charles Witherspoon is the center of this maelstrom, though he is not fully aware of it. He knows that the violence that so dogged him in London seems to have followed him to the United States. He is convinced that this is a coincidence; the alternative (to his rational mind), is that someone is actively seeking to discredit or destroy him, and this thought is too awful for him to consider. The idea that his wife could be behind the murders has never crossed his mind.

Witherspoon stands 5'10" and has receding red hair and alert green eyes. His florid complexion, combined with his slight brogue, have allowed him to fit in easily in Irish-dominated Boston. He is cultured and well-mannered, never raising his voice unless extremely angered. He has a taste for the finer things in life, a habit he acquired from his parents during his childhood in the English countryside.

Many have wondered at his willingness and even eagerness to treat the indigent as readily as those able to pay for his services. His

motives are not, as some have assumed, purely altruistic. Neither, as his wife suspected, does he desire illicit pleasures. In fact, he simply runs a small fencing operation, liquidating merchandise stolen by the poor and selling it to wealthy criminals. He does this partly for the profit, and partly for the sense of adventure it provides him. His criminal friends in London provided his new house in Boston, but Charles is beginning to think that they are now killing his clients as a warning to him not to interfere with their interests.

Detective David L. O'Neill

2nd-level Tradesman
(Detective—Boston Police Department)

Strength: 14 **AL:** LG
Dexterity: 15 **AC:** 9
Constitution: 8 **hp:** 10
Intelligence: 15 **#AT:** 1
Wisdom: 12 **THACO:** 20
Charisma: 12 **Dmg:** by weapon
MV: 12

Weapon Proficiencies: Army pistol (x2), navy pistol

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Criminology, Chemistry, Marksmanship, Pugilism



Description: David O'Neill is the detective assigned to the mystery into which the PCs are drawn. He is one of the few individuals who sees a pattern in the killings, although he is as yet unable to figure out how dead people are able to collude with one another. He is a supremely rational man, with a logical mind that would make Sherlock Holmes proud. However, like the great detective, O'Neill cannot accept the supernatural as an explanation for anything. His pet theory is that the killer is actually a mesmerist who hypnotizes the tramps into killing the unfortunate women.

He is a purely average-looking man, able to blend into any crowd. He favors neutral-colored clothing, and his suits are usually rumpled. He smokes a horn pipe that his sister Theresa carved for him. He has no idea that the pipe is inscribed with runes that provide a minor aura of *protection from evil* in a 5-foot radius. Though the runes are not strong enough to keep evil creatures entirely at bay, they are strong enough to cause such creatures to attack with a -2 penalty.

David is willing to use the PCs to track the killer, but his conscience twinges at the thought of using civilians. He'll provide the best protection he can for them while keeping in the background, if at all possible.

Theresa A. O'Neill

3rd-level Adept (Qabalist—The Circle)

Strength: 8	AL: LG
Dexterity: 10	AC: 10
Constitution: 12	hp: 10
Intelligence: 15	#AT: 1
Wisdom: 13	THACO: 20
Charisma: 14	Dmg: by weapon
MV: 9	

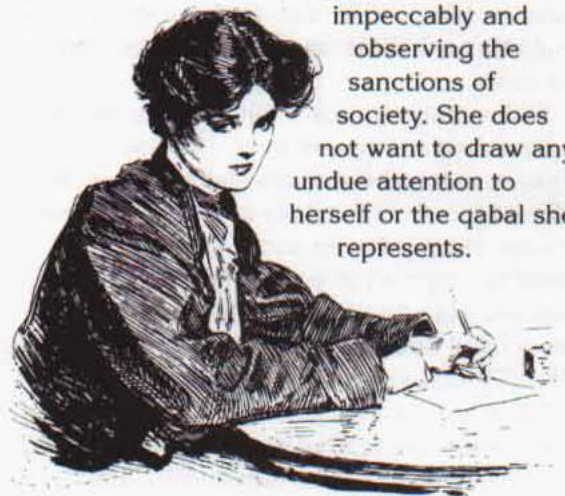
Weapon Proficiencies: Derringer, pocket knife
Nonweapon Proficiencies: Spellcraft, Spiritcraft, Ancient Religion, Forbidden Lore, History
Spells: *Cantrip, detect magic, read magic*

Description: Theresa is Detective David O'Neill's older sister. She is one of the last surviving members of the qabal known as the Circle. Although its influence was almost entirely destroyed during the Salem witch hunts, the Circle's members are still active within New England, carefully tracking the rise of the influence of the Red Death.

Theresa was drawn to Boston in 1889—about the same time that Witherspoon arrived from England. Somehow, Theresa sensed the evil that reached the American shores at that time, and came to try to learn about it and pinpoint it. She has not yet located the source of the evil that nudges her senses, but is certain that it is somewhere in the Beacon Hill area.

She is currently staying with her brother at his home in Back Bay. She walks the streets and alleys of Beacon Hill during the day, hoping to sense or witness anything that might point her toward the evil presence. She is beginning to get a feeling that the Ripper-style murderer and the evil she sensed are one and the same, but she has no clue that this murderer is a ghost. If the DM desires and the PCs invite her, she will aid the party in their quest. The DM must determine the level of her involvement.

Theresa is quietly attractive, with soft black eyes and dark brown hair. She is prim and proper, dressing impeccably and observing the sanctions of society. She does not want to draw any undue attention to herself or the qabal she represents.



CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Boston
FREQUENCY:	Unique
ORGANIZATION:	Solitary
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Nocturnal
DIET:	Special
INTELLIGENCE:	Very (12)
TREASURE:	Nil
ALIGNMENT:	Chaotic evil

NO. APPEARING:	1
ARMOR CLASS:	3/See below
MOVEMENT:	Fl 15 (A)
HIT DICE:	5+5 (35 hp)
THACO:	15
NO. OF ATTACKS:	3/2
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	1-4+1
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	See below
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	See below
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	Nil
SIZE:	M (5')
MORALE:	Elite (14)
XP VALUE:	2,000

The cities of London and Boston have much in common, and they have something new to share: they have both felt the sting of the killer known as Jack the Ripper.

In reality, Jack the Ripper was not some deranged man, but the jealous Jeanne Witherspoon seeking to remove possible rivals for her husband's affections. The murders were designed to drive away those who would trifle with her husband; she never intended to terrify the populace with the seemingly pointless murders. When she died, her spirit lived on, anchored to her ashes. Her husband carried these ashes to America.

In her spirit form, Jeanne appears to be a wisp of mist, a slender bit of fog cut from the night. On closer observation, the fog appears to possess the features of a once-beautiful woman. When encountered on foggy nights, observers must make a successful Wisdom check with a -6 penalty to see her. Even on clear nights, an unmodified Wisdom check must be made to notice her.

Combat: Jeanne's primary weapon is her ability to dominate individuals of lesser spirit; she may enter

a body and use it to carry out her bidding.

Although she is becoming ever more experienced in dominating such bodies, she still has difficulty controlling them with the same level of detail that the owner might. Thus, any body she controls moves unsteadily. Since most of the bodies she borrows belong to drunks and tramps—individuals already perceived as stumbling fools—she almost never attracts notice while inside them.

Jeanne requires one round to enter a body and one round to establish control. She can accomplish this feat *only* in individuals having Wisdom scores of 8 or less. The owner of the body is allowed a save vs. spell to avoid possession. Persons who are intoxicated fall prey to her more readily than those who are sober; drunken individuals suffer a -2 penalty to saving throws. Jeanne cannot dominate animals or objects. She can, however, manipulate objects in her lair.

Each time Jeanne takes control of a body, her first priority is to find a knife with which to kill anyone she feels has wronged her. She has become quite proficient with knives, and this carries over into any body she inhabits. No matter what blade she wields, she causes damage as if from a dagger.

While inhabiting a body, Jeanne's psyche suffers all the same effects inflicted on the host. She is able to use all the senses of the host. She is treated as the same Armor Class as the host and suffers damage accordingly. However, when the host body is incapacitated or killed, or when she chooses to vacate it, she recovers all lost hit points, and is treated as AC 3. To vacate a body, Jeanne must simply pour herself from the nose and mouth, becoming the wispy creature of fog.

Unfortunately for these unwilling servants, the experience of hosting Jeanne's spirit is usually fatal. The only way to prevent a dominated individual from dying is to render that person unconscious before she exits. She can be forced out of a body by casting a *remove curse* spell on the victim.

When attacking in her wispy form, her misty arms transform into sharp knives. These knives cause damage as ordinary daggers. In this form, she can be harmed only by enchanted or silver weapons. Even when she loses all her hit points

(whether inside a host or in her wispy form), she is not destroyed. She is simply forced to retreat to her lair for 1d2 days. There, she must heal her psyche and regain her power.

The only way to utterly destroy Jeanne is to scatter her ashes. The ashes must be spread in an area of at least 100 square yards or onto water (such as a river or lake—a bathtub is not sufficient). If this is not done properly, a wind will swirl the ashes together and Jeanne will come after her attackers with a vengeance.

Habitat/Society: Jeanne grew up the only child of poor French immigrants in London. Her lot was a brutal one; the other children of the neighborhood beat her regularly. Her parents were always busy working, so Jeanne received little guidance or care from them. Though they worried about their daughter, their main concern was in keeping the family fed, and this required that both parents work long hours in the factories. Jeanne therefore learned to take care of herself, believing that no one else could.

When she met Charles Witherspoon, she was working as a singer; although her voice and appearance were first-class, her attitude was not. She had a reputation that made managers and owners reluctant to hire her. Charles, however, was instantly attracted to her tough yet vulnerable facade. At last, she thought, she had found someone to take care of her, someone she could rely on for the first time in her life. His offer of marriage was like a dream come true, and she found herself suddenly surrounded by wealth. She was determined that this would always last.

When Charles opened his practice in Whitechapel, Jeanne hardly gave it a second thought. When she recalled the sorts of women who frequented that area, however, jealousy washed over her. The resulting wave of terror that gripped London in November of 1888 was her doing, and it did not end even with her own gruesome and untimely death. She had left an indelible mark on the collective spirit of the city, and had given the Red Death another servant.

Ecology: Jeanne's lot is a strange one. None can say whether she was actively twisted by the Red

Death to become Jack the Ripper, or if she fell into the role on her own. Whatever the case, the Red Death found a way to manipulate her once she had made the choice to kill.

Tainted by the kiss of the Red Death, Jeanne's spirit cannot venture outdoors during the day. She is immobile, trapped within her urn until nightfall. If she is outside Witherspoon's sitting room when the sun rises, she is instantly transported to her lair. Even if she is underground or hidden indoors where the rays of the sun cannot reach her, she must relinquish control of a body once the sun has risen.

Her lair is Witherspoon's sitting room, where her urn rests atop the mantelpiece. She can manifest herself here at will, but rarely does so, fearing to alert Charles to her presence. Her lair conforms to all the rules found in the Villains of Gothic Earth appendix in *A Guide to Gothic Earth*.

Anyone with hostile intentions who enters the sitting room will find that Jeanne has absolute control of the small items in the room, and can transform them into a flurry of flying knives. This gives her 3 attacks per round for 10 rounds, in addition to her personal attacks. The knife attacks are rolled as if Jeanne were wielding the knives.

Jeanne's curse restricts her to the streets and public places of Boston. Buildings that are regularly inhabited by people, such as those used for legal trade or business, are off-limits to her. She can enter abandoned buildings with impunity, but cannot enter hotels or hovels used as living quarters, no matter how destitute. Jeanne is able to throw rocks and other objects through windows at her enemies, however.





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Campaign Expansion



Red Tide

by Shane Hensley

RED TIDE

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INTRODUCTION



hips rocked gently to and fro in San Francisco Bay as brisk January breezes whispered quietly to the few men who remained on deck, listlessly swabbing decks and landings with dirty brine. One man, a sailor named Hasberth, ceased in his wearisome duties for a moment and gazed off to starboard.

A fire raged on board an ancient clipper grounded on the shoals not a mile

distant. Hasberth could see the shadowy outlines of men passing before the flickering flames, possibly making a valiant effort to defeat the inferno before the ship was consumed. It was as if the sailors were trying to save the last of the sailing ships from the fate the steamers had inflicted on them. Two thousand years of history were dying in fiery symbolism. The men fought on. But Hasberth knew it would be no use. From his vantage point, he could see flames already eating into the vessel's hull.

Now Hasberth could hear screaming; were some men trapped in a burning compartment? No, it wasn't like that—it was worse, somehow. The cries sounded like the wails of cows on their way to slaughter.

Some small part of Hasberth's mind told him to get below, to get the other men and a boat to pull the survivors from the chilly bay. But another part of Hasberth's mind knew there would be no survivors. And if he and his mates rowed out to that doomed ship, they would only add their own flesh to the bloody pyre.

Red Tide is an adventure for use with the RAVENLOFT® *Masque of the Red Death* accessory. You will need those rules, the RAVENLOFT® Campaign Setting, the *Player's Handbook*, and *DUNGEON MASTER*® Guide to play. *Red Tide* is intended for characters who have had some

experience on Gothic Earth. Two to five 5th- to 6th-level player characters (PCs) are recommended, but the Dungeon Master (DM) may adjust the abilities of the creatures within if PCs of other levels are desired.

This adventure includes several player handouts. The DM may wish to photocopy these prior to beginning the adventure.

In *Red Tide*, player characters find themselves pitted against one of the greatest fiends ever to walk the earth: the Prince of Darkness, Count Dracula himself. Dracula's statistics are found in Appendix II of *A Guide to Gothic Earth*. The DM should review this information carefully before beginning this adventure.

After his narrow escape from Abraham Van Helsing and his partners, the Count fled quickly to one of his many sanctuaries in the Carpathians to brood. For weeks the mad vampire hunted the isolated mountain nomads in a frenzied rage of frustration and anger. How could mere mortals come so close to slaying one with such power as he commanded? Dracula's pride could not stomach such a thought. Vlad Tepes, a man who had once turned aside hordes of invading Turks, who had later impaled those same men on gruesome stakes, who had at last become an unholy vampire, was nearly destroyed by a tiny band of *mortals*.

As the Carpathian snows grew more and more bloodstained, the Count eventually calmed and realized that the world had changed again. The dreaded goblins and those who led them had awakened again to grasp at their ever-diminishing hopes for salvation. Though they were not yet a threat to Dracula's crimson master, it would not do to ignore these pitiful but dangerous children.

In a matter of weeks, Dracula traveled from Transylvania to Hong Kong, then on to San Francisco. The Count had devised a plan for the humans' downfall. There would be no better place to execute that plan than the young United States, a land where few recalled the superstitions of their ancestors.

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Dracula's Plan

Vlad's true goal is the same as that of his dark master: to continue to prey on the blood and terror of the mortal world. But the emergence of men like Van Helsing has forced the Count to realize that creatures such as himself need organization to monitor and destroy "enlightened" activity around the world.

To this end, he has begun to recruit human and vampiric minions to form a world-wide network of spies—a supernatural qabal. These spies will then be able to stamp out any humans whose knowledge of forbidden lore could be used against the Count.

The Count has chosen San Francisco as his base of operations. The ports there allow his agents the freedom to travel, and thus the freedom to forge the macabre links of a chain that will someday encircle the earth and shackle it to their dark dominion.

Background

The story begins shortly after the Count arrives in San Francisco Bay aboard the *American Dream*. Between Alcatraz Island, currently an army training ground, and Fisherman's Wharf, Dracula slew the helmsman and personally ran the ship aground on a well-marked shoal. The ship's lanterns broke and quickly set the creaky vessel alight.

The startled crew attempted to fight off the seemingly insane passenger. But Dracula, starved from subsisting on rats while he maintained his secret identity as Bradley Teepes, slew the sailors in a frenzy of bloodlust and bone-rending fury.

The next day, the insurance company responsible for the *American Dream* interviewed a stowaway, the sole survivor of the horrible encounter. Unfortunately, witnessing Dracula's rage turned the sailor into a raving maniac, so



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no one knows why the ship ran aground or why the crew was so horribly savaged. To make matters worse, the stowaway has been misidentified as Bradley Teepes, the alias Dracula is using.

Plot Synopsis

The PCs become involved in the adventure when insurance agent Johnathan Meeker asks for assistance in locating a second possible survivor. The babbling stowaway confided in Meeker that someone else escaped the burning wreckage of the *American Dream*. Meeker has no idea who this additional passenger or crewman might have been. Finding him could reveal information that would help determine whether or not Meeker's company must compensate for the loss of the ship.

The story begins with the adventurers following the insurance company's few leads. They can explore the wreck of the *American Dream*, search the wharves and docks for witnesses to the ship's demise, speak to the misidentified stowaway, or follow one of the vampire's minions to the elite Keeper's Club.

At the wreck, the group will find two clues. The first leads them to the aforementioned Keeper's Club. The second gives them some valuable insight into the true power of their as yet unknown foe.

The men and women of the wharves have little information, but one encounter might give a hint to the nature of the beast that slew the crew of the ship.

The stowaway, "Teepes," can give the detectives some insight into the events that wrecked the *American Dream*, and perhaps even point them toward Dracula's treacherous qabal.

At the Keeper's Club, the heroes will encounter a group of vile power-seekers bent on helping the children of the Red Death. A fierce fight with this cult's minions results in the group learning the extent of Dracula's plans.

All the while, Meeker's sister, a young lady named Mirabella, begins to fall prey to Dracula's infernal curse. With her life in the balance and the future of the mortal world in jeopardy, the PCs will have to return to the wreck of the *American Dream* and fight the vampire's brood in the dark, flooded cargo hold. If they survive the brood's savagery, they'll find themselves confronted with the fury of a foiled vampire lord—Dracula himself!

Timeline

- November 6th:** Dracula is "slain" by Van Helsing's party, but Van Helsing misses one of the Count's sanctuaries. For the rest of the month, Dracula rampages among the Carpathian outlanders. Finally, he settles on a plan and begins his journey to Hong Kong.
- December 2:** Mortimer Toombs is sent ahead to San Francisco where he establishes the Keeper's Club.
- December 16:** Dracula books passage on the *American Dream* and departs for San Francisco Bay.
- January 22:** The *American Dream* wrecks on the shoals with all hands lost, save one.
- January 24:** Several members of a salvage crew are hospitalized after being severely bitten by rats. The wreck is quarantined until further notice.
- January 27:** Johnathan Meeker contacts the player characters and asks for their help.
- January 28, midnight:** Dracula's brood are taken to their coffins in the *American Dream*.
- January 29, midnight:** Toombs and the Keepers are to meet Dracula's progeny and escort them to the club's sanctuary. Within four days, all of the vampires will have left the city for their new homes.

Chapter I: DRAWN INTO THE WEB



ur tale begins with the following setup. On January 27, one of the player characters receives a message from the Benjamin Meeker Insurance Corporation. It is best if Johnathan Meeker, a son of the owner and also the agent on the *American Dream* case, is a friend of

the character. If this is not convenient, perhaps the character has insurance with the firm and Johnathan has heard of the adventurer's exploits. If none of these circumstances fit the group, Meeker and Associates might contact a character who is involved in the investigative business (a reporter or private investigator).

The message reads:

Dear Sir,

The Meeker and Associates Insurance Corporation seeks your assistance in an ongoing investigation. If you are interested in discussing this matter with us, please visit our offices at 1109 Lombard Street.

Sincerely Yours,

Johnathan Meeker
Senior Adjustor

The characters can easily find the address on the northern end of San Francisco's most winding street. The Meeker Building is an aging brownstone with dark ivy creeping up its gothic face. Inside is a small lobby staffed

by a charming woman named Mirabella, another of the Meeker children employed in her father's firm. Mirabella is a beautiful woman of twenty-some years—a true gem that sparkles in this otherwise dreary interior.

Read the following to the player characters as they enter the Meeker building for the first time.

As you enter the front office of the building, you are taken aback by the sight that greets your eyes. Sitting in a leather-backed chair and bathed in the green glow of a ceramic desk lamp is a lovely young woman. Her raven hair is wound in a bun, but the number of twists reveals that its length would reach nearly to her waist. Her wry smile hints that she is no stranger to admiring stares.

"Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Mirabella. May I help you?"

The DM should roll reaction checks for every male in the party with Charisma of 12 or better. If the result is favorable, Mirabella could become romantically interested in the character. As long as he displays a mutual attraction and is not rude to the Meekers, Mirabella will continue her interest in the adventurer as the saga develops. Any relationship they build could add personal tension and risk in later scenes, for Mirabella is destined to become affected by Dracula's evil curse.

For now, the young lady politely escorts the party to the office of her brother, Johnathan.

Johnathan's Plea

The atmosphere shifts quickly once Mirabella has closed the door to Johnathan's office. Read the following as the characters enter the room.

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Senior Claims Adjuster Johnathan Meeker rises out of his seat in shock as the door swings open. Mirabella looks away in embarrassment and quickly closes the door, leaving you in a cluttered office with her brother. His clothes are wrinkled and stained as if he has worn them for days. Beads of sweat stand out on his brow, and his hair hasn't been combed. Dark circles beneath red-rimmed eyes and two days' growth of beard further attest that Meeker has seen little of his home and family in recent days.

Scattered papers shower from the mahogany desk as he stands and extends a quivering hand. As you shake hands, Meeker's fetid breath and unpleasant body odor make you fidget uncomfortably.

"Good evening . . ." he stammers. "Or is it evening yet? I've become rather confused what with all this . . . oh my, I must seem a

nervous wreck to you! I'm sorry, it's just that . . . things have been trying lately, and I haven't had a chance to even run home and properly attire myself. Would you care for coffee?"

Although Meeker tries to act as if he is simply overworked, the DM should make it clear that he is nervous and afraid. A character who makes an Intelligence check with a -2 penalty will spot fade marks and dark streaks in the carpet where his desk was recently dragged to the east wall. Clever players might realize that Meeker has pulled his desk away from the office's only window, so that his back is no longer exposed.

Once the small talk is out of the way, Meeker begins to speak on the matter for which the group was contacted. During the speech outlined below, the DM should role-play Johnathan as continually swabbing perspiration from his fore-

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head, stammering, and occasionally glancing toward the window as if he expects something to come crashing through it at any moment.

"I should begin by thanking you for arriving so quickly. My father only authorized your retainer yesterday and I dispatched the messenger as soon as possible, so I do appreciate your haste.

"The matter I have contacted you about concerns the *American Dream*, a clipper wrecked in the bay five days ago. As you might have guessed, the ship was insured by my father . . . er, our company, and we stand to lose a considerable amount of money. Fortunately, or unfortunately, depending on your point of view, the crew was not killed as a result of the grounding, but rather seems to have—well, *expired* sometime beforehand. The savage nature of their deaths leads us to believe that the ship was carrying live cargo—perhaps some sort of animal destined for sale to a zoo. The transportation of large or dangerous animals is strictly forbidden under the ship's insurance policy, and would relieve us of financial responsibility if we could prove this to be the case. Since the ship came from Hong Kong, it seems possible that Captain Andrews acquired a lion or tiger for one of his clients.

"We have not yet been able to locate the captain's cargo manifest, but we have wired Hong Kong to learn whether the harbor master has an export record. Of course, this could take several months. Our only other lead is the sole survivor of the wreck—a passenger named Bradley Teepes. He's now a patient at the San Francisco Sanitarium. It seems the poor fellow witnessed the deaths of the crew and has gone stark raving mad. Who can blame him? Such carnage must have been. . . .

"At any rate, in one of his more lucid moments, Teepes claimed that another survivor jumped ship and tried to swim to

shore. One crewman is missing, so perhaps his story is valid. I haven't the time to scour the wharves and look for this man myself, and I thought perhaps you and your companions would be interested. Of course, the firm will extend to you a retainer. I've set your price at the highest rate my fa-, *Mr. Meeker* allows—\$25 per person per day. I do hope that will be acceptable."

If the PCs don't agree to the price or the job, Meeker becomes even more nervous.

DM's Note: Something followed Meeker home from the ship a few nights ago, and he doesn't care to work on this case one moment longer. If money is the object of the investigators' dispute, he'll quickly offer a \$200 bonus if they can find the missing passenger. This money comes from Meeker's own pocket—he's that desperate.

When the group agrees on terms, Meeker offers more details on the wreck, including the location of the hulk. Meeker also offers the use of a small boat. The police have already taken the bodies of the crew and some of the salvage away, but the investigators should try their best to locate the missing cargo manifest, although Meeker acknowledges that the log probably burned in the fire.

The group should also find the second alleged survivor and learn whether he has any information about Captain Andrews' cargo.

The police will be of no help in this matter. They're tied up with investigating a series of strange disappearances along Fisherman's Wharf. For now, the authorities seem satisfied that the crew died of some strange malaise, and have quarantined the wreck.

The bodies of the crew and any salvaged personal possessions have already been shipped to the next of kin. The cargo the ship was carrying is several feet underwater and is thought to be ruined and unrecoverable. Furthermore, early salvage attempts were

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quickly dropped after several members of the salvage teams were hospitalized with rat bites. Reports of large swarms of bloodthirsty rats have ruled out further salvage efforts.

The survivor of the wreck is not Bradley Teepes, as everyone assumes, but a stowaway (see **Sole Survivor**, below). The real Teepes is, of course, Dracula. The body that is unaccounted for is a crewman named James Dawson. His corpse was overlooked but can be found in the crow's nest of the wreck.

Meeker's Warning

Meeker knows a little more, but he's reluctant to share his knowledge for fear of scaring the investigators off the case. If a PC can calmly convince him that they'll stand fast, Meeker might reveal a little more.

At your words of encouragement, Johnathan glances nervously at the window. He stares for a long moment and then looks embarrassedly at the marred carpet. "I . . . I suppose I should tell you a bit more. I couldn't sleep if anything untoward happened to you and I . . . of course, I haven't slept in five days anyway. Heh, heh." Meeker's nervous chuckle rings faintly of madness. Then the pale man swallows hard and adjusts some internal mechanism that allows him to continue.

"I don't know what kind of animals could have caused the horror on that ship. I've seen faces death-locked in pain and horror before, but never have I witnessed such stark terror on a man's visage. Many of their throats had been ripped out in the most ghastly fashion, and I'm afraid to say that several were gutted so badly that their entrails . . . well, suffice to say that it was horrible."

Meeker reaches for his coffee and puts it to his lips. The expression on his face reveals that the liquid is obviously many hours old. He manages to swallow and continues.

"But I'm afraid there's more to this story. I began this investigation five days ago. Ever since, I've felt that something has been . . ." Johnathan eyes you expectantly, hoping to catch some clue as to your reaction at his revelations ". . . following me. I know it sounds ludicrous, but just the other night I awoke with my window wide open. And I'm quite sure it had been locked when I retired for the evening. Though she would never admit it, I suspect Mirabella has also seen something that frightened her."

Characters may well ask for additional funding now that the job appears to be more dangerous than first revealed. If they demand it, Meeker will up the group's reward to \$300.

Foreshadowing

When all PCs have finished asking Meeker questions, he'll urge them to get started as soon as possible and hand each PC a check for three days' wages (\$75 each).

On the way out of the office, the party will see Benjamin Meeker speaking to a large and imposing man. Read the following as they exit Johnathan's office.

As you leave Johnathan's office, you see a large, gaunt man dressed in a black silk coat of an Oriental cut and a gray turban.

Speaking with him is an older man dressed in brown pants, vest, and a white shirt with the sleeves rolled up. From the way the latter speaks to the strange man, it is obvious that this is Benjamin Meeker, Johnathan's father.

"This isn't really a good time, Mr. . . . ahhh?"

"Toombs," comes the deep and gravelly voice.

"Yes, Toombs. Perhaps we could schedule an appointment later."

Chapter I: DRAWN INTO THE WEB

The tall figure turns as you exit the office and pierces your souls with a malevolent and stony glare. Something about his long, square features reminds you of a stony monolith. Perhaps it's the bluish tinge beneath his coffee-colored skin, or perhaps the taut flesh reminds you of the headstone of a desolate grave.

Your thoughts are disrupted as Johnathan slams his office door behind you. When you turn around again, the strange man and Benjamin Meeker are walking quietly back toward larger offices.

"I suppose I can make time to greet a customer, eh, Mister . . ."

"Toombs."

"Yes. Toombs."

The player characters should feel as if they've just touched a corpse. The hairs on their arms stand on end and they find themselves nervous and apprehensive.

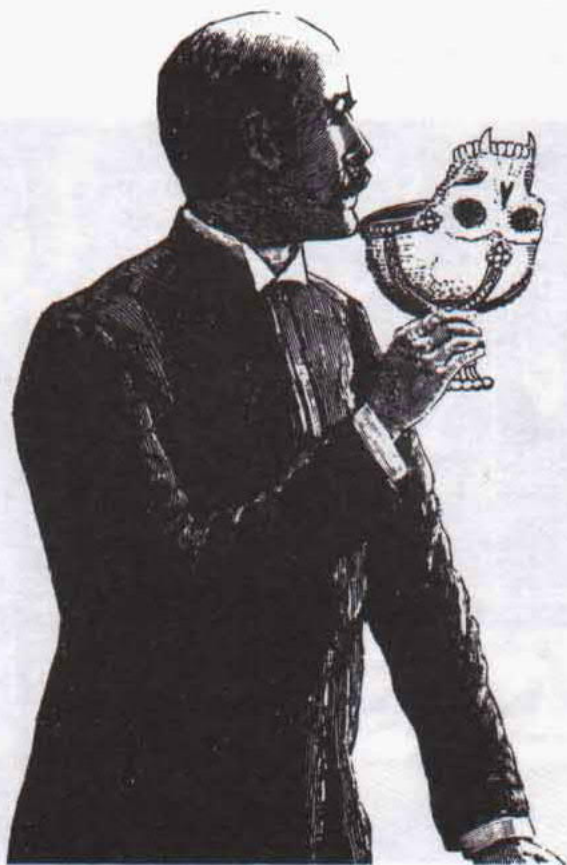
Mirabella is also shaken by the visitor, and seems much less cheerful than before. She quietly smiles and returns to work. She doesn't appear to care for conversation at the moment.

A return to Johnathan's office yields little information. He has no idea who Toombs is. He did not wish to become any more spooked than he already is and kept his distance. Speaking with *that* fellow would not have helped his condition.

A character who manages to eavesdrop on Benjamin's and Toombs's conversation will overhear Meeker talking about ship insurance. Toombs asks about the incident with the *American Dream* and what the company is doing about it.

Mortimer Toombs

Toombs is actually one of Dracula's minions recruited during the vampire's stay in London. The Count sent him to San Francisco several months prior in order to establish the Keeper's Club, a front for a qabal dedicated to serving the minions of darkness. Toombs has thus far done an exemplary job, and Dracula has sent him to find out whether the Meeker company has finished salvage operations on the *American Dream*. The Count requires that the cargo he had shipped aboard the vessel remain on the wreck. He can then recruit his more powerful minions and provide them with sanctuaries in which to incubate.



Chapter II: THE GAME IS AFOOT



he player characters now have several leads to follow. They can go to the docks and begin looking for anyone who saw a survivor swim from the wreck; they can go to the wreck itself; they can seek out "Mr. Teepes"; or they can follow Mortimer Toombs on pure instinct.

Transportation

The characters can take the famous trolley cars to get around town. San Francisco's trolleys are pulled by an ingenious belt system that runs beneath the city streets. When a lever is pulled inside the trolley, a clamp beneath the street grabs onto

the cable and pulls the car along. A similar lever releases the car. The fare to board is 10 cents per person. A passenger may exit by pulling a signal cord or by simply hopping off as the trolley slows to a scheduled stop.

Horse drawn taxis are also available but are slightly more expensive, costing 5 cents per person per mile, with a minimum charge of 30 cents. A common tip is 10% of the total fare.

Most people of wealth have their own horses and carriages. Less fortunate men and women have no place to keep a beast. San Francisco has yet to ban large animals from the streets.

Society

The people of San Francisco are a strange mix of outdated cowboys, immigrants looking for streets of gold, and exploitative businessmen discovering the wonders of cheap labor and mass production.



Chapter II: THE GAME IS AFOOT

Most of the immigrants are Chinese and Italian, though there are also many Irish, Spanish, and German settlers. Strangers are usually welcomed by these wide-eyed newcomers who cling stubbornly to the idea that America is the land of opportunity.

Americans of means are generally polite but distant. Those in less fortunate circumstances often live in despicable squalor which they blame on "foreigners." Dilapidated boarding houses, substandard food, and wage slavery are problems common to men and women of all nationalities.

Events

Throughout the investigation, a series of events will unfold. Since there's no way to predict the characters' course of investigation, events are listed in no particular order. The DM must keep these encounters in mind as the heroes delve into the mystery of the *American Dream*.

Event 1: Mirabella's Peril

On the morning of the second day of investigation, at least one PC receives a message from Johnathan Meeker asking to come to the Meeker home in the Nob Hill District as soon as possible. When the hero arrives, Johnathan looks worse than before, and Mirabella is semi-conscious in her bed.

Mirabella is pale and clammy, a condition brought on by Dracula's infernal kiss. The Count noticed Mirabella on the night he followed Johnathan home, and her beauty instantly captured his attentions. The vampire knows that certain people are wary of his ilk, and so has bitten her on the inside of her arm, where few investigators would look. In two days, Mirabella will die. On the third day, she will rise as Dracula's latest minion.

Beside her bed is a young and worried-looking man. Doctor Buchenveldt is the son of the family's usual physician, who died recently. The

younger Buchenveldt has been in love with Mirabella for some time, though he knows that the feeling is reciprocated only in the most platonic manner. For now though, Buchenveldt desperately needs a volunteer for a blood transfusion. Johnathan has already given all his weakened body can give, as have Mirabella's father, Benjamin, and Buchenveldt himself. The Meekers hope that a PC can supply more of the needed fluid and temporarily halt Mirabella's slide into undeath.

Mirabella's Strength is currently 9. Every morning after Dracula's visitation, she loses 1d4 points, and will die if she ever reaches zero. Donors who supply blood lose 1d4 points of Strength per pint. A character cannot give more than two pints of blood in a single week without becoming incapacitated. Lost Strength points are regained at a rate of 1 per week.

The DM should note that the Mirabella subplot will probably warn the characters that they are dealing with a vampire. The DM should be cautious never to confirm these fears; the lingering doubt will work to feed the PCs' fear of the unknown.

A PC who attempts to watch over Mirabella at night will need to make a Constitution check. Failure indicates that the hero falls asleep during the night. If this happens, Dracula enters in mist form and continues taking his nightly liberties. Otherwise, the Count stays away so as not to jeopardize his larger plan. If Dracula can be kept away from Mirabella for three nights, she will recover completely.

Event 2: The News Vendor

At some point on January 28th, the investigators should pass a paperboy hawking papers on a street corner. Read the following:

"Extra! Extra! Read all about it! Cream of society vanishes in the night! San Francisco police baffled!"

Chapter II: THE GAME IS AFOOT

If a character buys a paper for 5 cents, the group learns that five wealthy individuals went to a mysterious party in the Nob Hill district and did not return home.

San Francisco Chronicle

January 28th

Morning Edition

Five of the brightest lights of San Francisco society vanished last night while they were supposed to be attending a private party in the Nob Hill district. When concerned relatives visited the address with police late that evening, it was discovered to be an abandoned manor that had been put up for sale months ago. None of the victims' relatives could recall the name of the party's host, but all claim the missing had acted strangely for several nights prior. Police are baffled, but reported finding drops of blood spattered around a recently-dusted table in the house.

No ransom has yet been demanded; the *Chronicle* will keep abreast of the situation and will report all new developments. Those reported missing are Miss Valeria Armstrong, Mister Hubert Graham, Miss Samantha Reistock, and Messrs. Frederick Wiffleton and Samuel Wittingsworth.

This incident is Dracula's recruitment of those recommended to him by Toombs and the Keeper's Club. As soon as the new vampires have completed their transformation, Dracula will allow them to return home and tell their relatives that they have decided to begin a chain of philanthropic homes called the Keeper's Clubs. The Count figures this will quell suspicion over the disappearances as well as the forthcoming announcement that they are leaving San Francisco.

If any PC decides to read more of the newspaper, a second article of interest will be found buried on page 12.

LABOR SHORTAGE BLAMED FOR DISAPPEARANCES ON WATERFRONT

A growing shortage of labor in the shipping industry has been blamed for a spate of strange disappearances in and around the Fisherman's Wharf area. A recent boom in the China trade has created an increased demand for labor. Ship captains are hard-pressed to find enough men to fill their crews and are being accused of shanghaiing dock workers. Police have no leads as yet, but are investigating. The *Chronicle* will, of course, keep abreast of this situation.

Searching the Wharves

Event 3: The Docks

Literally hundreds of dockworkers live in the San Francisco Bay region. Only a few of them are likely to have seen the wreck or anyone who escaped it. The PCs would be wise to begin their search at the shore closest to the wreck—the spot a survivor would most likely swim toward.

At the edge of a small peninsula is the Heathmore Fish Processing factory, a degenerate warehouse where fish hauled in from the bay trawlers are cleaned. If the PCs visit the pier by day, they can see into the large roll-up doors that open into the bay side of the building. The floor is a slippery, disgusting mess of fish heads and innards. A few flies still brave the January cold, and in the farther corners, rats seem to ignore humans as they drag fish into dark holes in the walls. Any PC unaccustomed to such a sight should make a Constitution check. Those who fail spend the next few minutes retching over the pier railing.

The workers are mostly Chinese and Italian immigrants, exploited for hard work at low pay.

Chapter II: THE GAME IS AFOOT

As the characters speak with the laborers, it should be painfully obvious that most of these people speak very little English. If the investigators try to explain that they are looking for a survivor and a character specifically points toward the desolate wreck, one of the Chinese women nearby signals that she knows something. She speaks no English, however; the adventurers will have to get one of her fellow workers to translate.

"Was very early, an hour before work. I was trying to catch fish for dinner off pier when I hear terrible crash. Then there was fire and screams, nothing like I ever hear before. I watch for long time, then I hear something below pier, where rocks are. I look down through cracks and see big animal. I don't know what kind. It shake its coat like it come out of water but I no see anything swim from the ship. I thought it might eat me so I stay real still for long time, until others come in to work later.

The creature Cho Lee saw was Dracula. The Count flew from the ship and landed on the beach, then changed into a wolf and headed inland. Fortunately for Cho, Dracula was bloated with the blood of the ship's crew, or he would have slain her as well.

The Ships

The *Southern Miss* was contracted by the Meeker company as the primary salvage vessel. The workers will tell how terrible the carnage was to anyone who asks, but they have little real information.

The PCs might also visit some of the ships moored nearby in the hope of finding someone who witnessed the grounding. If so, after a short search, they find a sailor named Hasberth. Hasberth saw the wreck occur, and has the following to say.

"Aye, I saw the wreck. 'Twas the strangest thing, but I could've sworn that ship was headed straight and true not a moment before it raked the shoals. Seemed to steer right for them rocks, she did. It didn't take long 'afore she caught fire, and then went up like a greasy rag, all smoky and such.

"But the worst part was the screamin'. Like the caterwaulin' of the damned, it was. In all my years o' sailin' I ain't never heard men scream like that.

"Me 'n' some of the boys, we rowed over to see if'n we could help, but by the time we got there, there weren't nothin' left but a charred wreck. But the bodies . . . oh, those was just awful. I ain't never seen men so tore up. Most of 'em were burnt up pretty bad, but we could tell right off that it weren't the fire what killed 'em. Ever' last one of the men on that old hulk had his throat tore out."

The Wreck

Nearly a quarter-mile offshore lies the wreck of the *American Dream*, beached on a narrow, treacherous shoal. Johnathan refuses to join the group, but has rented an eight-man, single sail vessel for the party's use and has left it moored near the fish processing factory described above. If no one in the party knows how to sail, the PCs will have to use the oars or hire someone. The trip takes over an hour by oar, or a quarter that under sail.

Read the following as the PCs approach.

Quietly you make your way to the silhouette of the *American Dream*. The water seems sluggish and still today, almost as if it were afraid of something unseen.

As you approach the wreck, you see that all but the upper deck is sunk beneath the waves. The carcass of the ship is charred and

Chapter II: THE GAME IS AFOOT

shattered from stem to stern. The fire burned a large hole in the ship's side just below the upper deck. It's big enough to peer through, but only darkness is visible within.

From here, you can tell that the fire started below deck and worked its way up. Tattered remnants of sails and rigging still hang from scorched yardarms, and the single above-deck cabin seems ready to collapse from its own weight.

Approaching the shoal requires a Seamanship proficiency check. If a character fails by five points or less, the boat scrapes roughly into the rock but takes no real damage. A roll failed by six or more points indicates that the vessel has been breached and begins to flood. This isn't a real problem at the moment, since the characters can simply jump out onto the rocks and pull it in. To fix the leak, however, a character will need to pull a piece of planking and some nails from the *American Dream* and attempt to make a water-tight patch. This requires a Carpentry proficiency check with a -2 penalty due to poor materials. This also assumes tools are available.

The DM should take note of this hazard for the group's return trip later in the adventure.

The Upper Deck

The *Dream* rocks back and forth with the wind and the waves; PCs will have difficulty standing. Under normal circumstances, this is not a problem, but if combat or another stressful situation should occur, all involved must make a Dexterity check to remain on their feet. Characters who can brace themselves may add a +2 bonus.

Little action occurs during this trip to the *Dream*. Dracula has not yet filled the hull with the victims who will carry out his plan. The purpose of this visit is to gain insight into the nature of the party's foe and to find a few clues.

The entire deck is badly charred and smells of burnt wood and briny rot. Numerous dark stains between the helm and the upper cabin attest to the carnage suffered by the crew. A few of the deck boards are burned nearly through and appear ready to give way from the stress of the fire and subsequent wreck.

Whenever a character steps in one of the gray areas shown on the map, the DM should roll a d6. On a roll of 1 or 2, the deck collapses. Any victims who fail to save versus breath weapon fall to the deck below and sustain 2d6 points of damage.

1. Navigation Room.

A charred doorframe and scorched hinges lead into a small cabin. A large array of maps and charts, mostly charred, lines the west wall. A large chest rests on the deck in the north-east corner. A chart of the San Francisco Bay is still pinned to a desk against the east wall. It is charred but still readable.

A character with the Navigation proficiency can read the map and see that the shoals were clearly visible on it.

2. Lifeboat.

One of the two ropes that had suspended the ship's only lifeboat has been cut, damaging the tiny vessel. A great deal of blood can be seen in and around the lifeboat.

3. Helm.

Hanging from the ship's wheel at the ten o'clock and two o'clock positions are the tattered remains of two slender hemp ropes. Both cords are darkly stained and appear to have been snapped by brute force. The deck surrounding the steering column is also stained a dark brown.

Chapter II: THE GAME IS AFOOT

4. Main Mast.

A casual glance at the rigging reveals nothing unusual. Most of it has been consumed by the fire and hangs in a web of burnt and tangled ropes and sails. Seagulls wheel about in a frenzy, squawking and beating at each other as if over some tender morsel.

Careful observation of the seagulls shows that they do, indeed, seem to be feeding on something in the crow's nest. An investigator who decides to check out this clue will find a grisly and unsettling sight.

Scaling the rigging requires a successful proficiency check by a character with the Climb Walls proficiency. A character without the proficiency must make three consecutive Dexterity checks. Each successful roll allows this climber to ascend 10 feet. Failure sends the adventurer crashing to the deck below for

1d6 points of damage for every ten feet fallen.

The seagulls squawk in protest as you interrupt their meal. Upon reaching the crow's nest, you see a mutilated corpse curled up in the bottom of the crow's nest. The sailor's throat has been savaged by something jagged and sharp, like the claws of a great beast.

If the explorers report the corpse to Johnathan, the Meeker firm will send a work crew to bring the body down the following day.

5. Ladder to Mid Deck.

The charred and tattered remains of a canvas tarpaulin flutter noisily from the edges of the hatch near the ladder.



Chapter II: THE GAME IS AFOOT

Both sets of ladders have been weakened by the fire and may collapse under the weight of more than one character. The DM should roll 1d6 for each character descending the stairs. Any roll of 1 or 2 indicates that the stairs give way, pitching the character to the deck below for 1d6 points of damage.

Mid Deck

Except for the area immediately below the cargo hatch, the crew deck (and the hold, below) is dark. Characters must supply a light to search the ship with any degree of success. If no illumination is available, a character could improvise a torch from the tattered remains of the tarpaulin that once covered the cargo area. Enough canvas remains to make 2d4 such torches, each lasting twenty minutes.

1. Mess Area.

The back wall of the mess area has collapsed, leaving the room exposed to the elements. Sprays of cold wind and water wash through the room and keep the floor slick.

Anyone who walks toward the breach must save versus breath weapon. Failure means a sudden wave knocks the PC off his feet and sends him onto the rocks below, causing 3d6 points of damage.

2. Captain's Cabin.

Two bunks dominate this small cabin. A pair of wall lockers stand open on one wall, and a large desk faces the stern.

The captain and first mate shared this cabin. Their personal effects have been removed, but some small bits and pieces remain. Lying in a pile of wood splinters and other debris is a small, unfinished statuette whittled from a piece of driftwood. The thing seems to have wings, an

obese body, and a score of tentacles hanging from its bulbous head. Obviously, the whittler has seen more than his fair share of horrors in his many travels.

3. Passenger Cabins.

Captain Andrews made extra money by transporting passengers. Three rooms are set up in a tasteful if somewhat spare fashion. Each has a bed, a desk, a wooden wall locker, and a ceramic wash bowl, though the bowls are broken in all but one of the rooms.

A perceptive investigator might notice blood on the shards of a wash bowl in the northern room. Dracula supped off ship rats for most of his voyage; the bowl still bears the awful stains.

4. Crew Quarters.

A gaping hole in the hull allows sea spray to wash through this area, making the deck slick. Hammocks hang in tatters from the shattered beams, and shards of broken crockery lie about.

Most of the crew's personal effects have been removed, but one valuable clue can be found stuck to the floor in the northwest corner. A single journal page lies amid some other debris, clinging to the soaked floor. A character who makes an Intelligence roll with a -4 penalty can just make out the handwriting.

January 20

Should be in SF by noon tomorrow, unless the weather holds us back. Captain says we'll stay home for a solid month this time. I think he needs a rest what with all that's been happening on this trip. I still can't believe poor Edward died like that. I can't imagine being so drunk you wouldn't feel a rat biting you, let alone twenty of the dirty buggers! Sometimes that awful thought keeps me awake at night, wondering if the filthy beggars are waiting beneath my hammock!

Chapter II: THE GAME IS AFOOT

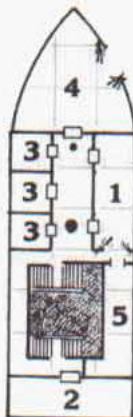
The American Dream

One square = 10 feet

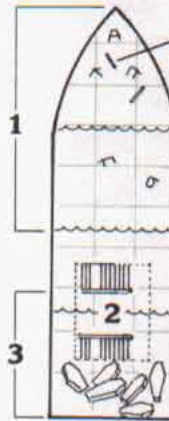
Main Deck



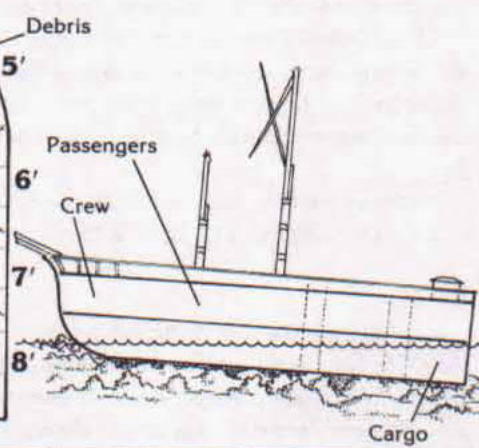
Mid Deck



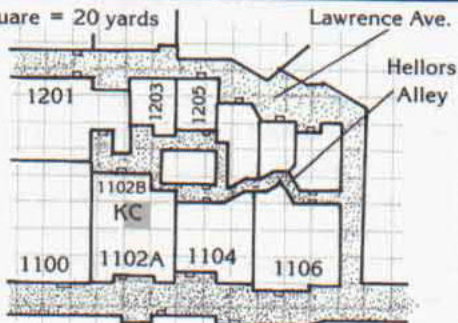
Cargo Hold



Cross Section



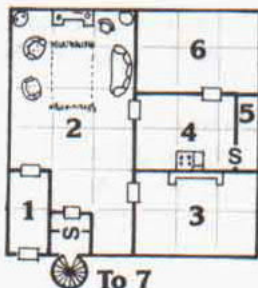
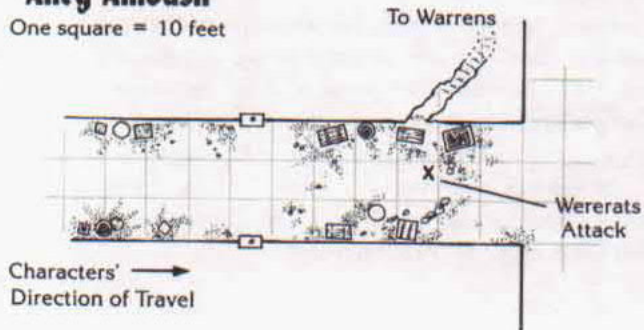
One square = 20 yards



Hellor's Alley

Alley Ambush

One square = 10 feet



Keeper's Club-Interior

One square = 10 feet

To 2



To Warrens

To 7

Ladder to Water



The Pier

One square = 10 feet

Chapter II: THE GAME IS AFOOT

Another strange occurrence on this cursed journey. Mr. Teepes was caught coming out of the cargo hold again. Captain Andrews warned him that there was other cargo down there as well as his own, and that if he wanted to check on things he'd need an escort.

Usually Teepes tries to mock the Captain and laugh it off, but tonight he seems especially tense, as if he's waiting for something to happen. I haven't seen him that angry since he accused us of stealing his bag.

I wonder what he waits for so anxiously? I don't imagine the rest of us will favor it, that's for sure.

January 21

Captain says we'll be another day reaching the Bay. Oh, but I can't wait to see Caroline. And imagine, I can stay home for an entire month! I have enough saved for a ring. But would she accept? With me far across the waves more than 6 months out of the year?

It was my turn to invite the passenger to dinner tonight. I don't see why we must always pay him this courtesy—he doesn't care to eat with us commoners, and frankly, we don't care to eat with him. Maybe a good case of scurvy would cure him of his rudeness.

At any rate, tomorrow I will hold Caroline in my arms. I have decided to ask for her hand in marriage. My life is about to change forever!

5. Stores.

Not much remains of the ship's stores; a few crates of rotting food and leaking barrels of fresh water are scattered about haphazardly. Behind a bag of grain, now ruined by the constant moisture, is a small chest bolted to the wall.

Pulling the chest from the wall requires a bend bars/lift gates roll. A PC with the Open Locks proficiency can open it in 2d6 rounds with a successful roll. During that time, a pack of ship rats will investigate the disturbance.

In addition to a copy of the cargo manifest, the captain kept enough money hidden in this chest to replenish the ship's stores in an emergency (\$250). Andrews did transport illegal merchandise, though not on this trip.

Ship's Manifest

Cargo

12 casks pepper
13 crates machine parts

18 casks port wine
15 casks drygoods
16 crates Oriental rugs

7 caskets

Deliver To

SF Spice Co.
Bernadelli

Automations

Bayside Distributors

F.W. Cottonworth's

Her Majesty's

Furnishings

Bradley Teepes

A pack of stranded rats has taken up residence in the filthy remains of the ship's stores. Dracula lured the creatures into tasting human blood during the voyage, and now the vermin crave it. If any character in the group is bleeding, the rats smell the blood and begin to attack. First, a single rat wanders toward ● character and attempts to gnaw at his feet. Then, at a rate of two per round, the rats continue to arrive, like a cloud of mosquitoes slowly finding the source of the scent that drives them. The DM should play the attack as a growing annoyance, not a frantic or overt attack. This way, the characters suffer nicks and bites gradually as the horror and frustration of the situation grow. This works especially well if a character is attempting to remove or open the captain's hidden chest.

Ship Rats (20): Int Animal; AL N; AC 7; MV 15; HD ¼; hp 2; THACO 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1; SA Disease; SD none; MR nil; SZ T (1' long); ML Unreliable (2); XP 7; Treasure: none.

Cargo Hold

Cargo was lowered through the large hatch at the rear of the ship, then pushed toward the front

Chapter II: THE GAME IS AFOOT

or rear holds. The lowest level of the ship is completely flooded in five to eight feet of cold seawater. The salvage crews gave up on the hold after seeing that most of the cargo had been destroyed and after being attacked by the packs of rats. A large portion of the cargo consisted of crates of pepper, so any adventurer who stirs about will inevitably feel a tickle in the nose. Since the dampness keeps most of the pepper from floating freely and the smell of the sea overwhelms the hold, adventurers aren't likely to recognize this common scent. The DM should play up the constant irritation so that the investigators believe it is some clue to the nature of their foe.

The ship is tilted at an angle such that the bow of the vessel is in shallower water than the stern. Investigators who want to explore these dark areas will have to wade in or patch up the life boat and lower it down.

The lowest part of the ship is flooded in eight feet of water. The front half of the ship holds about four feet of water, leaving four feet of clearance from the water's surface to the ceiling of the hold. Characters who waded into the rear will slide, unable to stop their forward progress unless they are next to a wall. Swimmers will find that their flailing legs continually bump against long boxes lying just below the surface. This inflicts a total of 1d2 points of damage per *turn*. There is a 5% chance that any damage results in a bruised knee or shin that slows movement by 10%.

1. Forward Hold.

Numerous large crates and barrels are scattered pell-mell through this hold. Several barrels stencilled *Pepper* have burst in the impact of the wreck. The black spice permeates the air and darkens the water. Some larger crates have also broken open, showing machine parts and assorted drygoods. A few odds and ends float idly in the mess.



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The floating items are some of the things that Casper (the stowaway mistaken for Teepes) pilfered during the trip, including Dracula's own traveling kit. The watertight bag contains only a scissors, nail clippers, and powders and colognes, plus one valuable clue: a letter.

To:
Mr. Bradley Teepes
18 Hunchu Estates
Hong Kong, China

From:
M. Toombs
1102 Heller's Alley
San Francisco, U.S.A.

Dear Mr. Teepes,
As requested, your properties are all in order, and your family eagerly awaits your arrival.

Yours Eternally,
M.T.

This letter signaled Dracula to begin his journey, and indicated that all his sanctuaries had been prepared. The characters can follow the address to the nefarious Keeper's Club.

If the PCs miss this valuable clue, the DM should remember that the stowaway who hid here can recite the letter word for word and give the group explicit directions.

2. Cargo Hatch.

This is the hatch used to lower cargo into the holds below. The crew then pushed the crates and barrels into the fore and aft holds. Little remains here now save for a few pieces of floating debris.

When the group returns here in a few days, the PCs will see the bodies of the victims Dracula has fed to his new progeny.

3. Aft Hold.

Several large crates fill this hold, spared from crushing damage by their location in the stern of the vessel. Among the crates of oriental rugs and fine furnishings are seven coffins.

The coffins submerged in the aft hold are testament to Dracula's forethought. The wily Count knew that his vampiric creations would be almost invulnerable below water where no mortal could reach them. He insured that the coffins were in the safe rear of the ship where they would not be crushed.

In the next few days, the vampire will fill six of the caskets with the maturing brood. When the creations have risen and gained their senses, Dracula will send them into the world to establish havens for more dark creatures.

Dracula told the Captain that the coffins were filled with the bodies of an American family who died while in the Orient. As the family's "attorney," it was his duty to see the corpses home for burial. Six of these are filled with random Chinese citizens slain by Dracula to fill space. The seventh was used by the vampire on the voyage. Dracula has other coffins scattered about San Francisco should his plans go awry. These were shipped separately some months ago, and moved to discreet locations via Mortimer Toombs and the Keeper's Club.

If the characters should find the coffins on their initial trip (and they should), the DM will have to adjust certain details that follow. For example, if the group removes the coffins from the ship, Dracula will have to employ Toombs's lackeys to bring more caskets to the wreck while he and the Keepers slay the interlopers. Also, if any of the coffins are opened, the PCs find the body of a dead Chinese man. What is truly important is that the coffins and their new occupants are present for the climactic finale.

Chapter II: THE GAME IS AFOOT

Sole Survivor

Eventually, the party is likely to visit the San Francisco Sanitarium and its newest inmate, a man mistakenly identified as Bradley Teepes.

The stowaway is really Casper Bartridge, an American sailor left behind in Hong Kong after his captain caught him stealing. Unable to find another American ship to hire him, he stole aboard the *American Dream* and hoped to look for work in San Francisco. His choice of transportation was less than fortunate.

Casper hid in the forward cargo hold for the journey from Hong Kong to America. He often heard late-night activity in the rear hold. One night, he decided to investigate. What he saw was the king of vampires feasting on a squirming rat. The undead's evil eyes glowed a feral red in the darkness, but fortunately for Casper, the Count's voracious hunger kept those eyes from turning toward him. Casper quickly stole back to the fore of the ship and hid, afraid to make a sound lest the *thing* decide to feast on more substantive flesh.

For several weeks, Casper hid in the dark, too terrified even to breathe when he heard midnight movement in the aft hold. Finally, the wreck forced the starving stowaway above deck. He hid in the shadows and watched as Dracula savaged the crew and feasted on their blood. Eventually, he threw himself into the bay and swam to shore, his terror urging his weakened muscles through the raging tides.

Now Casper sits in a straitjacket, babbling at unseen figures. The salvage crew mistook him for the missing Bradley Teepes, and identified him as such to the officials at the sanitarium.

The Sanitarium

The San Francisco Sanitarium is situated several miles south of the city. The sanitarium is a gray, foreboding place built of dark stone. A massive wrought iron gate surrounds the compound, and



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visitors and employees must be checked by a guard before entering.

Not surprisingly, no weapons (including knives) are allowed inside, regardless of permits or licenses. Attempting to sneak one past the guard is a criminal offense punishable by a \$100 fine and two weeks in the county jail. Characters who insist on doing so must succeed an Intelligence check vs. the guard. The DM may assign modifiers depending on how well the character has hidden the weapon. The guards have Intelligence 12.

Inside, the characters must fill out some simple paperwork and sign a register before being taken to a lonely corridor echoing with mad gurgles and the occasional insane scream.

The stowaway's doctor awaits the party outside his cell. The doctor is Chester Ambrose, a psychiatrist who believes in the old methods of dealing with the mentally ill—punishment, isolation, and near-constant sedation. He greets the party calmly and instructs the guard to open the cell.

The man known as Bradley Teepes sits on the floor wrapped in a stained straitjacket. He has a long, thin face framed by reddish hair, much of which was singed by the horrible fire that sank the *American Dream*. Terrible burns mark his face, and his complexion appears sallow, as if he were severely undernourished. He appears to be sleeping, but as you enter, his eyes snap open and he begins to speak.

"Roaches are the best . . . they crack like candy. Spiders sting sometimes—I don't like them as much. Flies chew like raisins but they're hard to catch. Which do you prefer?"

At that, Dr. Ambrose steps forward and smacks the man sharply on the head with his palm. Teepes cringes against the wall and says no more.

To get the man to speak, the PCs will need to convince Dr. Ambrose to step back and leave "Teepes" alone. The cruel doctor has already cowed Casper into the kind of patient he prefers—silent and untroublesome. Obviously, insulting the doctor will only get the party thrown out before they can extract any information from Casper, so a diplomatic approach is necessary. A tactic that might work is to engage Ambrose in a debate on the new philosophies of dealing with the insane. A PC versed in this field could easily draw the eager Ambrose out of the way to debate the subject.

Once the doctor is engaged, another character can attempt to draw some clues from Casper. The terrorized man needs only to be shown a little kindness to become slightly more lucid. When this occurs, read the following.

Teepes suddenly looks at you, as if acknowledging your presence for the first time.

"I am . . . Casper . . . not Teepes. Teepes escaped. I stole his suitcase! Heh-heh. Before I knew, I mean."

Casper is referring to the small traveling bag he pilfered from Dracula's room. Unless the adventurers have already discovered it, the bag is still floating in the forward hold of the *American Dream*.

When Dr. Ambrose notices that "Teepes" is speaking, he'll abruptly end whatever distraction was occupying his attention and terminate the conversation. Otherwise, Casper can recount seeing something tear the crew apart and then swim for shore.

If the PCs have already visited the wrecked *American Dream* but missed the letter to Teepes, Caspar launches into parrotlike babble, repeating the entire message over and over. Dr. Ambrose escorts the PCs out of the cell. Caspar's babbling can be heard all the way down the hall.

Chapter III: THE NET IS CAST



he Keeper's Club is a group of men and near-men who have been seduced by the powers of the Red Death and now work to aid it and its progeny. While in London, Dracula met and befriended one of these men—an imposing qabalist named Mortimer Toombs. Toombs was

honored to serve such a powerful master, and traveled ahead to San Francisco to prepare the way for the vampire's arrival.

With the dark powers of the Red Death on his side, Toombs quickly accumulated a new cult to foment his master's plan. The Keepers are currently in charge of ensuring Dracula's safety as well as nominating suitable recruits to become his new vampiric minions.

Toombs was fortunate to encounter a man named Henry Grimes some months ago. Grimes is a wererat and a resident of the sprawling warrens that reputedly lie beneath the streets of San Francisco. With the help of his human disciples and Grimes's small band of wererats, Toombs is confident he can handle any threat to the security of his supernatural charges. Toombs has no supernatural powers, but his stony face is the perfect image of a cold, calculating killer.

Toombs and his club currently hold a ledger filled with the names of their candidates for Dracula's plans, as well as the updated list of accepted members and their destinations. If the characters can get this list, they'll have a better chance of slaying the newly created vampires before their powers are fully developed. The party probably has no way to gain entrance to the exclusive club; however, fate will provide an entrance if the characters

are alert enough to take advantage of it.

The Keepers maintain a full staff of servants to protect the place by day; Toombs, Grimes, and several other men are usually present at night (60% chance). Neither group will hesitate to call the police if harassed.

Finders Keepers

Finding the club can be extremely difficult. Of course, the easy way would be to follow Toombs after his meeting with Benjamin Meeker (page 8). Otherwise, the PCs should be reminded of the letter found in the forward hold of the *American Dream*. In either case, the characters will have to navigate several city blocks to approach the 1102-B Hellor's Alley address from the rear. No amount of knocking at the door will gain any attention, for the club answers only for a secret rap. If the PCs can observe someone else knocking at the door, they can later try to imitate it with a successful Wisdom roll. Failure means that the characters should wait at least one-half hour before trying again. On a successful attempt, the DM should read the following paragraph aloud, adding the passage in brackets if any women are in the group.

Moments after you complete your staccato rapping, the door creaks open several inches. A large man stands in the crack, completely obscuring whatever lies behind him. The fellow is at least six-and-a-half-feet tall and wears a formal butler's uniform. White hair frames a face with a square jaw and piercing black eyes.

"Can I help you [ladies and] gentlemen?" asks a deep voice.

The butler, Fillmore, refuses to admit anyone he doesn't know or hasn't been introduced to him by Mortimer Toombs. If the characters ask to see Toombs or another member of the club,

Chapter III: THE NET IS CAST

Fillmore replies, "The Keeper's Club is a haven where men can escape the pressures of their businesses and the scathings of their beloved wives. All men invited into these walls know that they will be kept from harm and the toils of the outside world. Hence the name. Now, if you'll excuse me, sirs."

Fillmore closes the door. This is obviously a stock answer that he has used many times.

Unknown to the PCs, Henry Grimes waits quietly inside the parlor of the Keeper's Club. When the characters have been turned away, Grimes leaves through the warrens and gathers his band to ambush the heroes on their way out of Hellor's Alley. See *Alley Rats*, below, for details of the attack.

Should the group somehow force its way inside the club, Grimes will have slunk away moments earlier to gather his band. After the PCs have found the clue in area 5, below,

Grimes and the rest will return to complete their assignment.

1. Antechamber.

Members' coats and hats hang neatly along the walls of this small room. The only light comes from a gas globe hanging in the center of the ceiling. A door in the south wall leads to other parts of the building.

2. Smoking Parlor.

This room is furnished tastefully, with a masculine touch. Dark paneling and red leather chairs dominate the room, with a few small tables scattered about. A large walnut humidor filled with expensive cigars rests on one table. A crystal decanter filled with fine brandy and several brandy snifters occupy



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another. A large oriental rug adorns the center of the floor.

Over the fireplace on the south wall hangs an eerie painting. Although it first appears to be an abstract, closer inspection reveals odd gray beings chasing pink humanoids through the streets of a burning city.

Several coats and hats hang in the closet.

The Keepers make small talk in this room, but rarely discuss specifics of their plans here. Those conversations are generally held in the conference room, described below.

The rug in the center of the floor is special, acquired by Toombs on one of his trips to the Far East. Any nonmember who steps on it becomes *slowed* for 2d4 rounds.

A secret door in the closet leads to the sanctuary, described below.

Due to current preparations for Dracula's plan, the Keepers are present at the club with greater frequency than usual. If the PCs arrive during the day, there is a 15% chance that some of the Keepers will be present. Should the PCs arrive at night, there is a 60% chance that all Keepers will be present. If the Keepers are present, there will be 2–12 (2d6) members, with a 60% chance of Toombs being present as well.

Intruders are rarely attacked by the membership. Instead, Toombs will send one of the Keepers to find the police, who will return within 3d4 rounds. If pressed, or if Toombs becomes especially irritated, this policy may change.

Qabalists, 3rd-Level Soldiers (2–12): Int 14; AL LE; AC 10; MV 12; HD 6; THAC0 14; #AT 1; Dmg 2d6+1 (revolver); SA none; SD none; MR nil; SZ M; ML Steady (12); XP 500.

3. Conference Room.

Paneled in dark wood and lit by gas globes set high along the walls, this large room is dominated by a huge mahogany table and twelve high-backed chairs. A large fireplace occupies the south wall. Crystal decanters and twelve water goblets are arranged in the middle of the table.

4. Kitchen.

Like all kitchens of the day, this one is dominated by a huge wood-burning stove and a large butcher block table. Carving knives hang from racks along the table's edge.

A large wine rack, well-stocked with perhaps four dozen bottles, dominates the west wall; a walk-in icebox takes up most of the east wall. A smaller icebox stands across from the stove.

The club stocks a large array of foods and wines. Some of the wines are very valuable (1d6 bottles worth 5d20 dollars each). Pulling one bottle on the far left triggers a secret door to a small storeroom beyond.

5. Records Room.

This small, unlit room is lined with file cabinets.

Stored here are the club's records, including members' names and addresses, a list of real estate holdings used as havens, and most importantly, a list of Dracula's recruits and their eventual destinations.

Should the investigators find this list, the DM should give the group the following prop.

Valeria Armstrong	New York
Hubert Graham	Vienna
Samantha Reistock	Paris
Frederick Wiffleton	London
Samuel Wittingsworth	Cairo

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Characters familiar with the San Francisco area should make an Intelligence check. Success indicates that the character recognizes several of the names as wealthy elite of the city. Otherwise, the group should probably remember the names from the newspaper they may have seen earlier (see the event *The News Vendor*, above).

Stuck in a ledger is an envelope bearing the second part of this ominous clue.

Toombs,

Our brood will awaken with full faculties at midnight on the 29th. At that time, you and your retainers should greet them at the wreck and escort them back to the club. I will join you thereafter to make final plans for their departure.

Do not fail me.

B. Teepes

The investigators should realize that whatever these men and women have become, the letter implies that they will become much more dangerous at midnight on January 29th. This should lead the party back to the wreck of the *American Dream* for the finale of the adventure.

6. Fillmore's Quarters.

This suite of rooms is tastefully furnished. As in the rest of the building, dark paneling prevails. Chintz-covered chairs and plain curtains lend a modest air. The rooms are neat, almost compulsively so. A canary sings in a small cage in a corner of the living room.

The butler is a full-time resident of the Keeper's Club and is aware of most of the qabal's activities.

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Fillmore is a zero-level human with no special powers. Toombs has given him a noxious potion that explodes into a thick purple smoke on impact and has the same effect as *dust of disappearance*. If Fillmore is forced to use this valuable device, he will then exit the building and seek to contact the police and then Mortimer Toombs.

7. Sanctuary.

This small underground chamber provides a haven for guests who cannot or do not wish to be seen by the outside world. Furnishings here are sparse: a battered desk and chair, a plain table, and a simple cot. Though no one currently occupies the room, investigators feel a strange chill when they pass through.

Alley Rats

As the group leaves the Keeper's Club, Henry Grimes and his band of ratmen set up an ambush in the dark maze of Hellor's Alley. Toombs knows who the characters are after their encounter at the office of Johnathan Meeker, and has told Grimes to kill them if they should somehow trace the case to the Keeper's Club. Grimes was only too happy to comply. The ratmen aren't particularly brave and each will retreat if his hit points drop to 5 or fewer. The



spot marked "A" on the map shows a hole in the wall that leads to the warrens.

Wererats (10): Int Very; AL LE; AC 6; MV 12; HD 3+1; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (knife); SA Surprise; SD none; MR nil; SZ M; ML Steady (12); XP 270.

Should the group capture one of the creatures alive and threaten it, the coward will "rat" out its master and reveal what it knows of Dracula's plan (which isn't much). In this case, read the following aloud.

"Oh, please! Please don't kill me. I can help you, yes. It's Mr. Teepes that you want, yes, Mr. Teepes. He's in charge. I can show you where Toombs keeps his records!"

If the group takes the ratman up on his offer, he leads them through a hole in the wall into the haven of the Keeper's Club (area 7.) From there, the party can sneak into the kitchen and open the secret door into the records room (area 5). If Toombs and the rest of the qabalists are present, the party could have a much greater fight on its hands.

Return to the Wreck

All of the investigations so far should result in leading the PCs to return to the wreck of the *American Dream*. They should now know several things. First, Mr. Teepes, whoever he might be, brought seven caskets with him from London. Second, he is creating or incubating some sort of creatures within the wreck, and their transformation will be complete by midnight on the 29th. These facts should be enough to give the investigators an educated guess as to the nature of things, and thus allow them to prepare wooden stakes, holy water, or perhaps even *blessed* bullets.

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The Hold

The ship's hold is a mess of floating debris and . . . bodies. At least fifteen corpses bob with the small waves that lap at the vessel's interior walls. Noxious fumes emanate from the charnel pit and make your stomach turn. What kind of vile things must live in such a morbid stew?

Viewing this scene calls for a fear check. If characters look closely, they notice that the bodies are pale and desiccated. This condition and the terrible punctures on the throat leave no doubt that this is the work of vampires. Most of the bodies are Chinese immigrants or sailors taken from nearby wharves. These are the men the papers believe were shanghaied by the shipping companies.

The Brood Attacks!

The PCs will have to wade through the flooded hold once again, this time searching for the submerged coffins described in the cargo manifest. Read the following as a character discovers the first casket.

With fear gnawing at every fiber of your being, you push through the chilly waters. Somewhere just below the dark surface lurks a pack of creatures so terrible that just one could kill you and all your friends. Yet you push onward, knowing that if you don't end the horrors's existence, that is exactly what they will do.

A bloated, desiccated corpse blocks your way. Its face is contorted into a rictus of agony; its glazed eyes stare at you as if in



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reproach. Steeling yourself, you push the disgusting thing out of the way and press on. Suddenly your leg brushes a sharp corner. You suppress a cry of pain and wonder if this is one of the caskets. . .

It is indeed a casket. The first coffin encountered is the one Dracula used on the voyage. It is filled only with soil. This could be particularly unsettling if a character reaches inside and feels the oozing mud, but it is not dangerous in any way.

Nearby are the other six coffins. The DM should allow the heroes time to stake one or two of the creatures inside them before the others are aroused and begin to emerge from their violated sanctuaries. When they awaken, the vampires will be in a strange sort of frenzy. Though they remain underwater and attempt to attack with surprise, they attack with such fury that anyone seeing them must make an immediate fear check.

None of the brood have full use of their faculties yet, and so will not attempt to escape, regardless of how much damage they suffer.

Young Vampires (5): Int Very (12); AL LE; AC 4; MV 15 (Sw 3); HD 8; HP 53, 48, 47, 43, 36; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+1; SA Energy drain; SD see below; MR 25%; ML Elite (14); XP 975 each.

Teepes's recruits have yet to gain most of their powers. Normal weapons can harm them. They lack the ability to *charm*, *polymorph*, and become *gaseous*, and they become paralyzed if exposed to sunlight. Their only real abilities are their exceptional strength and speed, and that they do not need to breathe.

The vampires have a special *spring* attack while inside the ship. They may push off from the bottom of their coffins with their powerful legs to rush upward and bite an opponent. If the attack roll for the bite succeeds by 4 points or

more, the vampire can immediately pull the character back under water. After that, the vampire can quickly dispatch the drowning mortal while his friends struggle to help from above.

Fighting in the Water

The waters of San Francisco Bay are cold enough this time of year to stun characters who fail a *system shock* roll the first round in the water. After that, all attack and damage rolls are made with a -2 penalty. Firearms with metal-jacketed rounds still function when fired at a creature underwater, but only at a range of 2 feet or less. Of course, any firearm immersed in water is useless.

The rules on page 122-123 of the *Player's Handbook* address drowning and swimming.

The Prince of Darkness Unveiled!

After the terrible battle with Teepes's brood, the player characters will have a few moments to rest before an even fouler menace shows its pale face—Dracula himself arrives to avenge the death of his children. At first, he will act civilly to discover just why these mortals have worked so hard to foil plans they didn't even understand.

The confrontation begins shortly after the team returns to the pier and moors the boat. As the first characters scale the pier's ladder, the Dungeon Master should read the following:

As the rest of you ascend the ladder, you see a tall man walking gracefully from the shore end of the pier. He stops about twenty feet away and you can see that he wears the clothing of a gentleman. His hair is raven black and slicked back beneath a black silk hat. His long-nailed hands rest on an ebony cane as his coal black eyes observe you.

"Greetings," he rumbles in a thick Slavic accent. "I wondered if you might have found any of my cargo aboard that wreck you just visited?"

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Teepes wants to toy with the investigators for a few moments before tearing them limb from limb. He'll ask questions about the ship first, then use the answers to ask more questions about the group's involvement with Toombs and the misidentified stowaway. The vampire is amazed at the chain of events that has led these mortals to set back his plans, and wants to avoid a repeat performance after he tears their beating hearts from their chests.

At some point, the characters will realize that this man is the real Bradley Teepes. When the moment of truth arrives, read the following speech to the group.

"Friends, calm yourselves. You accuse me of being some sort of monster? A creature who feeds off the fear of others? Bah. You are like the rest of your countrymen. Every night I see

you preying off the poor or the foreign in ways more hideous than any you accuse me of. There are many kinds of monsters in this world, my friends.

"But to speak of fiends who suck the blood of young women in the middle of the night . . . this is madness. You sound like the silly peasant women of my village in Transylvania. Yes, I am from the old country originally; my name was only bastardized by these American tongues that will not bow to the language of others. My true name is not Brad Teepes, it is Vlad Tepes, the Count Dracul."

As soon as the players' eyes widen at this revelation, the DM should announce Dracula's attack. The Prince of Darkness's goal is to slay the party as quickly as possible so he can get on with his scheme and get his new recruits out of



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the city. He will concentrate his attack on the most powerful characters first and then chase down any who seem less likely to cause him trouble.

The Count's statistics are listed in *A Guide to Gothic Earth* in the Villains Appendix.

Fiery Conclusion

Stacked about the dock are several loads of cargo waiting to be loaded onto vessels for transport. Most of the crates are filled with textiles and other drygoods. Several kegs of high-grade gunpowder are stacked neatly in one corner and covered with a tarpaulin. Nearby are several larger casks of rum to be loaded into ships' stores. At the far end of the dock, near two cranes used for hoisting cargo, stand several large boxes of imported spices. A faint aroma of garlic hangs over these. Also nearby are several coils of rope, tool boxes, blocks and tackles, etc. A pair of oil lanterns hanging from posts at the bay end of the dock provide the only light.

The DM should carefully track characters' positions during the battle. Dracula can be defeated by several possible means, but only if the characters employ guile and subtlety. Be creative; allow the characters some leeway. The battle should be fierce, and all involved should take heavy damage; but the confrontation should be ultimately survivable. Cooperation is key.

At some point during the battle, a fire breaks out and the dock becomes engulfed in flames. This could happen in a number of ways. If the PCs are using firearms, a stray shot may ignite the gunpowder. The lanterns hanging from the pier posts could be knocked loose. And the DM should remember that rum burns nicely.

The PCs should be allowed to break open the cases of garlic to hold Dracula at bay if they choose this action.

Just as the vampire lord is defeated, a tremendous explosion destroys the pier and sends everyone into the bay. The characters should feel as if they've defeated the Count, but his death should never be certain. In this way, Dracula can continue to be an active foe in the campaign world.

Suddenly, a tremendous explosion rocks the pier. Before you can react, several more explosions rip the night air. The shockwave deafens you and sends you spinning into delirium. You barely notice yourself falling into the frigid waters below.

Blackness overcomes you. Minutes, or maybe hours later, you find yourself clinging to a piece of wood—a smoking remainder of the pier that stands blasted above you.

It seems as if the world has become silent, or perhaps you are simply deaf from the explosion that put you here.

As you begin to make sense of your surroundings, you remember that you and your companions stood against one of the most powerful foes the world has to offer—and won. Surely the vampire, as weakened as he was from your attacks, must have perished in the blast.

The sounds of the sea quietly lapping against your ears tell you that your hearing will return, as will light to this bleary world.



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Mortimer Toombs

9th-Level Tradesman
Lawful Evil

STRENGTH 17

INTELLIGENCE 16

DEXTERITY 16

WISDOM 16

CONSTITUTION 19

CHARISMA 4

ARMOR CLASS 10 (8)

MOVEMENT 9

HIT DICE 9

HIT POINTS 52

THACO 11

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1

DAMAGE PER ATTACK: per weapon

MAGIC RESISTANCE: Nil

WEAPON PROFICIENCIES: Dagger, navy pistol,
derringer, sword cane

NONWEAPON PROFICIENCIES: Chemistry,
Clockwork, Criminology, Demolition,
Detect Noise, Forbidden Lore, Geology,
Hide in Shadows, History, Mesmerism,
Modern Language (Rumanian), Move Silently,
Read Lips, Sixth Sense

BACKGROUND: No one knows much of Mortimer's background. Though Dracula discovered him in London, his accent seems to change from time to time, as if he had lived in many places for long periods of time. Most often his slow, gravelly voice smacks of lower class England, though occasionally Scottish trills or Slavic undertones seem to creep from some dark place within his swarthy frame.





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Campaign Expansion



— Red Death —

by D.J. Heinrich

RED DEATH

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INTRODUCTION



*ut evil things, in robes of
sorrow,
Assailed the monarch's
high estate.
(Ah, let us mourn!—for
never morrow
Shall dawn upon him
desolate!)
And round about his home
the glory
That blushed and
bloomed,
Is but a dim-remembered
story
Of the old time entombed.*

—Edgar Allan Poe,
“The Haunted Palace”

Red Death is the third adventure in this boxed set designed for characters on Gothic Earth. The action is based on Edgar Allan Poe's classic tale “The Masque of the Red Death”; many RAVENLOFT® game players likely have read the story. The Dungeon Master (DM) is encouraged to reread the tale to get a fresh feel for the ambience and mood presented in the adventure that follows. (For DMs who don't have access to Poe's tale, a synopsis is presented at the end of this book.) Geared toward four to six player characters (PCs) of 7th to 9th level, this adventure can be modified for fewer characters by reducing the number of monsters encountered.

Poe's story is set in no particular country and is given no timeframe. Certainly, the setting feels European. The site chosen for the action of this adventure lies northwest of Bucharest; of the various localities described in *A Guide to Gothic Earth*, this ancient city seems to best fit the mood. (Refer to Chapter VII: An Atlas of Gothic Earth in the rulebook for basic information on the city of Bucharest.)

Time is a different problem. Poe's story feels much older than the 1890's mandated for the Gothic Earth setting (in real life, it was written in the *early* half of the 19th century). A strict adaptation would likely anchor the tale in the

14th or 15th century. But this is a loose retelling, and the liberties taken with the timeframe allow some creativity. In fact, the adventure takes place in January of 1899, on the 50th anniversary of Poe's death.

Despite this “modern” setting, the DM should note that certain luxuries—such as electric lights—have not yet been applied to Prospero's manor house, Prospero Hall (the site of the adventure).

The differences between the *Red Death* adventure (indeed, all Gothic Earth adventures) and standard RAVENLOFT fare are important. As detailed in the rulebook, the most obvious change is that Gothic Earth characters are far less likely to be magically equipped. On Gothic Earth, logic and science can negate many threats against which magic was once the solution of choice. On the other hand, the evil spread by the entity known as the Red Death is far from understood. Furthermore, science is young, and many phenomena are not yet fully explained. Einstein once described knowledge as a candle flame: The darkness of ignorance surrounds it on all sides.

This adventure presents some horrific moments for the PCs; fear and horror checks are appropriate. The DM should follow the guidelines for such checks presented in *A Guide to Gothic Earth* in this boxed set. But remember, even more important than fear and horror checks in this adventure is the actual role-playing of enlightened, intelligent humans on the verge of entering the 20th century—humans who are about to encounter ghosts and other mysterious phenomena that the logical mind can barely grasp.

In addition to reading Poe's story and this entire adventure, the DM is advised to become familiar with the monsters. Ghosts play a significant role at Prospero Hall, and *Van Richten's Guide to Ghosts* (9355) is cited accordingly. The DM is encouraged to refer to that accessory, but can use the ghost entry from the *Monstrous Manual*™ if preferred.

Throughout this booklet, abbreviated statistics for monsters are included at each encounter for ease of reference. Full descriptions can be found

INTRODUCTION

in the above products or in various MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM® appendices.

Adventure Overview

The setup for this adventure is quite straightforward: The PCs are invited to attend a masked ball. Nearly all the action of this story takes place within Prospero Hall, the host's manor house. DMs are free to embellish this rather linear plotline as they see fit.

The characters attend the ball, only to discover that they are among the few "live" guests; Prospero is surrounded by ghosts, all of whom are engaged in the masquerade ball. As the night wears on and the PCs witness the terror that builds with each chiming of the *ebony clock* (the true source of evil at Prospero Hall; see page 9), the PCs discover they must stop the clock before the final chime of midnight. If they do not succeed, the disease referred to as the red death will descend upon the revelers . . . including the PCs.

The DM should carefully track the passage of time and warn the players to do the same. If the PCs do not discover how to stop the *ebony clock*, they should vacate the premises by midnight.

The PCs must discover that the clock is the heart of the evil inside this manor house. The PCs are unlikely to recognize the clock as the key until after they have observed the courtiers' responses upon an hour being struck. After all, there is nothing strange about a grandfather clock in a manor house. Should the PCs tarry in finding the clock, however, they might not have enough time to destroy it. Stopping the *ebony clock* from chiming would seem to be a simple challenge for the PCs, but it is well guarded by automatons created by the clock to service and protect it.

By stopping the clock, the PCs break Prospero's curse and prevent the arrival of the red death. If the PCs are successful, the prince's few "live" guests who manage to avoid being scared witless continue their revelry until they collapse, unaware of the fate they might have faced. The ghostly courtiers disappear, finally laid to rest. Prospero and his devoted servants

live out the rest of their days naturally.

But what if things don't go smoothly? As in the Poe story, the PCs will see the physical form of the red death begin to manifest if they do not prevent the *ebony clock* from chiming the twelfth stroke of midnight. The adventure becomes a cliffhanger and a race against time. The PCs must dismantle, destroy, or silence the clock, or flee before midnight finishes chiming. Any other outcome incurs death. No saving throws are allowed against the disease the Red Death bestows when the bells at last fall silent.

Notes to the DM

A comment should be made regarding Prospero Hall, the manor house detailed on the map on pages 20–21. This building is typical of large estate houses built in the 1800's, and can be adapted by DMs for Gothic Earth adventures of their own. Although *Red Death* uses only a portion of the ground floor, the second and third floors are mapped for the DM in the event that the PCs stray from the plot—and the ball!

Furthermore, with extra research into the late 19th century, the DM can expand on this setting to capture the mood of the time. Any good encyclopedia or history text can deliver an accurate representation of the 1890's, but for added realism, an authentic late 1800's volume would be ideal. Victorian photographs and essays written in the vernacular of the time capture the true flavor of Gothic Earth far more readily than a modern version or recreation. And the Dungeon Master who wants to go all out might search for old newspapers, playbills, and the like (or facsimiles thereof) to give to players as a final touch.

The DM and players should also note that the red death encountered in this adventure is merely a disease sent by the larger evil known as the Red Death. The PCs will not be facing the great evil described in *A Guide to Gothic Earth*; however, if the PCs succeed in their mission, no doubt exists that they will attract the attention of the Red Death itself.

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*dwelt alone
In a world of moan,
And my soul was a
stagnant tide,
Till the fair and gentle
Eulalie became my
blushing bride—
Till the yellow-haired young
Eulalie became my
smiling bride.*

—Edgar Allan Poe,
"Eulalie"

The year is 1899, the
advent of a new century.

Prince Prospero, the host of the masquerade ball in this adventure, is a man haunted by his past—literally. For more than 400 years, he has lived his life surrounded by ghosts: the spirits of victims of a plague known as the red death. Although he cannot physically transmit disease, Prince Prospero is cursed to be a conduit by which the Red Death may cause physical manifestations on Gothic Earth.

Along with a handful of servants, Prince Prospero lives in a manor house that he built 25 years ago on the site of his ancestral home. His retainers are fiercely devoted to their master, so much so that they remained with him even after the nature of his curse became apparent. Perhaps such loyalty aroused sympathy in the powers of good. Whatever the reason, Prospero's servants, like the prince, are virtually immune to the red plague.

The inhabitants of Prospero Hall live in a strange netherworld that can best be described as the twilight between life and death. They are physically alive, though they have not aged in the 400 years of their cursed existence. They need no food or drink, though they have learned to eat and drink so as not to arouse suspicion in visitors from the outside world. The servants do not mingle with the help from other estates, and every so often, Prince Prospero "dies" and a "distant relative" comes to take over the ancestral home and title.

Although the manor's formal name is Wyldecote, the house is referred to as Prospero Hall by the locals. For the most part, the name Prospero Hall is used in this adventure.

Prince Prospero (10th-Level Soldier)

STRENGTH:	12
DEXTERITY:	8
CONSTITUTION:	13
INTELLIGENCE:	16
WISDOM:	12
CHARISMA:	17
ALIGNMENT:	Lawful neutral
ARMOR CLASS:	10
MOVEMENT:	12
HIT DICE:	9+3
HIT POINTS:	21
THACO:	11
NO. OF ATTACKS:	1 (due to physical condition)
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	1-2 or by weapon
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Nil
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	Nil
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	Nil
SIZE:	M (6'2" tall)

The prince has the look of a middle-aged man who was once hale and hearty. He tops 6 feet in height, though he stoops slightly. His skin, once ruddy with health, has become pale and pasty over time. His hair, once thick and black, is now thin and gray. Prospero sports a stylish Vandyke beard and moustache shot with gray. His eyes are his most lively feature, for they retain a spark of interest in life—a spark that not even the passing centuries have quenched.

Prospero is a man of power, charm, and persuasion. Though he knows that the *ebony clock* binds him and his servants to a cursed shadow life, he is unable to affect the clock. Whenever he or his retainers attempt to touch the clock, their physical form changes into an ethereal form.

Prospero fears that these long years of existence are turning him and his servants into ghosts. He especially fears the next masquerade, for it will be the twelfth time the clock has chimed

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midnight. He has invited the PCs in hope and desperation, knowing this might be his last chance to break the curse. If he cannot, he and the PCs will become victims of the red death, doomed to be ghosts forever.

Prospero's Past

Prospero was born in the western foothills of Rumania (in the region known as Transylvania) in the year 1427, a few years before the birth of his distant kinsman, Vlad Tepes (see Appendix II: Villains of Gothic Earth in *A Guide to Gothic Earth* for more on Tepes). The two young men met occasionally, and a friendly rivalry grew between them as the years passed. But while Prospero was content to let their competitiveness remain on the practice field, Tepes was not.

The two first met the summer before Tepes would start down the path toward becoming a creature of the undead. They were practicing sparring with new polearms each had made. Prospero's had the greater length and balance, but Tepes's was short enough that he could use it as a spear if pressed. Courtiers of the two nobles, family members, and fellow knights gathered around to watch the contestants, for they were well matched and the rivalry between them was common knowledge.

Now, it so happened that Prospero had fallen in love with a Saxon maid named Frytha, a girl who had been captured and traded to the Rumanians a year or two earlier. She was a comely thing, with flaxen hair that fell to her knees when unbound, and eyes the color of cornflowers. She served in the household of Vlad Tepes, and her charms had not gone unnoticed by that young prince. Thus far Frytha had managed to avoid Tepes's attentions, but her luck did not hold.

Tepes lost the sparring match against his kinsman, though only just. The onlookers gently heckled him, for they loved both young princes, but Tepes's pride turned black with bitterness. He heard no gentleness, only derision. Filled with wrath, he sought out Frytha and cornered her in a dark corridor between the kitchens and the

stables. In his rage at the incessant jeers and catcalls he seemed to hear, he assaulted Frytha savagely.

Prospero came upon Tepes as his cousin finished with the girl. Prospero's anger was terrible, and he cried aloud as he swung his polearm at Tepes. But the other prince was quick to react; he leapt aside to avoid Prospero's blow and fled into the dark.

All of Prospero's might was in that stroke, driven by his love, his anguish, his rage. Too late did he realize his cowardly cousin's retreat. Prospero could not halt his swing once begun, and the blade bit into Frytha's already-bruised face. A scream issued from the girl, but it was a short, truncated sound—a sound that would haunt Prospero all of his life.

Frytha did not die from her gruesome injury. Prospero had managed to check the full force of his swing. In the days and months that followed, however, the prince came to realize that a true blow, bringing true death, would have been far kinder to his love. Though the girl's injury healed, the right side of her face was crumpled from missing bone, and badly scarred. Prospero might have endured his own guilt had Frytha remained whole of mind.

But the poor girl withdrew from life. Whether from the force of the prince's blow or from the trauma inflicted by Tepes, none could say. She would not speak or allow anyone to touch her. Still, Prospero attended her daily. He made her his bride, giving her the shelter of his name and status, hoping one day she might show a spark of recognition. Frytha, however, remained in the same state for 37 years until she passed away. Unbeknownst to the prince, Frytha called his name once, softly, right before her death.

A Curse Upon Prospero

Prospero's grief and rage had smoldered bitterly within him all the years he spent tending Frytha. He had kept his thirst for revenge at bay for Frytha's sake, giving her every ounce of his emotion and strength. Upon her death, however, his pent-up rage came to the fore. He set out to

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confront Vlad Tepes in his home in Transylvania.

The years had been long ones, too, for Tepes. He brooded upon how he had been bested by his kinsman, and about how, in his fear and cowardice, he had run from Prospero. The seeds of bitterness and envy found fertile ground in Tepes's spirit. Still, he did not move to confront the prince, for while Tepes was yet human, he feared Prospero.

The outcome of their long-delayed confrontation, sadly, was inevitable. While Prospero was now an aging knight, his combat skills long unused, his kinsman had become "Vlad the Impaler," and ultimately "Dracula." The years of self-imposed humiliation had festered in Tepes. He refused to kill Prospero outright. Better to prolong his enemy's misery and pain!

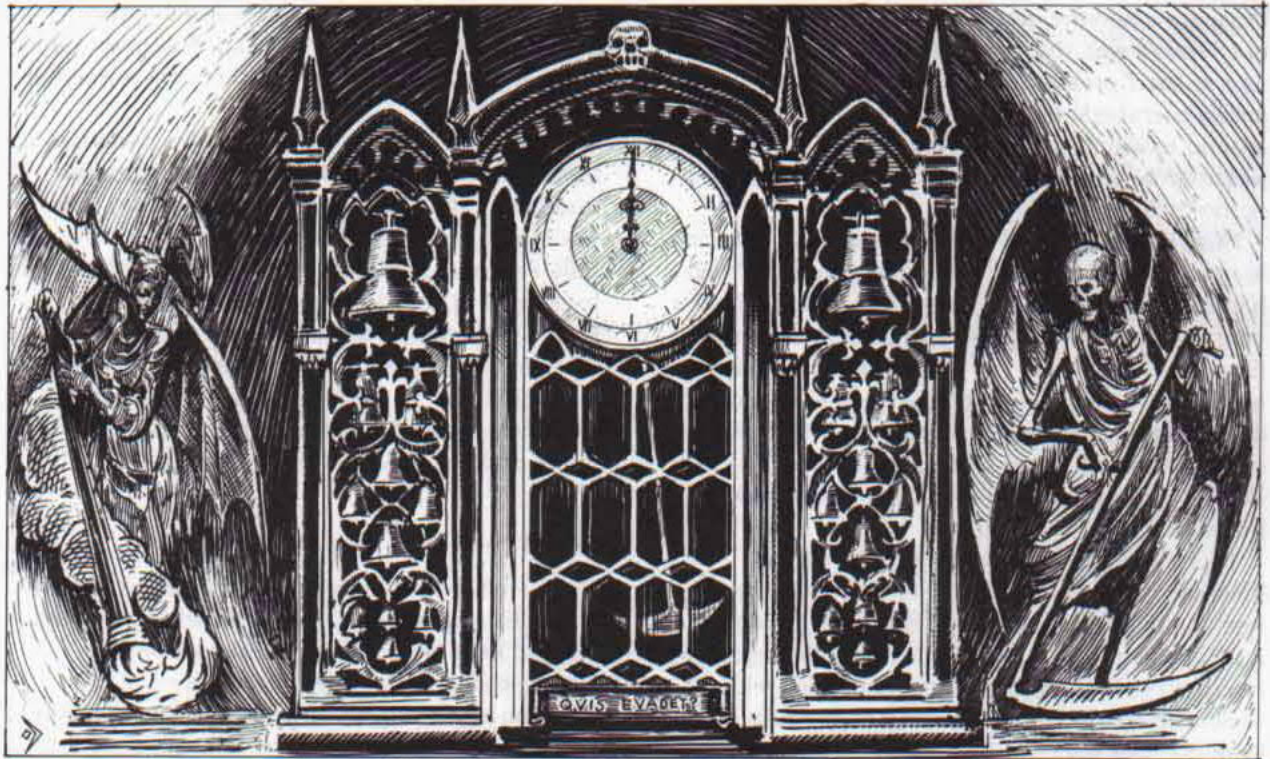
Inside his ancient hall, Dracula blocked his kinsman's feeble blows and laughed. With a single swipe of his hand, he knocked the prince to the granite floor. Dracula's bellow echoed through the drafty castle, as he cried aloud:

*"Twelve are the hours of midnight,
And twelve shall toll thy doom—
Ague shall shake thee, spirits break thee,
Blood shall smear thy tomb!"*

Prospero was struck down instantly, writhing in pain. His body shook with convulsions and he sweated blood. His retainers were rightly frightened, and some of them fled Dracula's castle. But loyal Edgerton and a few others carried their fallen prince away, returning his racked body to the dignity of his own home.

Tepes had intended that Prospero suffer in horrible physical and mental agony before he died—namely, until midnight. But the entity known as the Red Death was alerted by Dracula's hate, and saw a way to twist his death-curse. It deflected the curse, guiding that malevolent energy toward the confines of a giant clock in Prospero's ancestral home.

Prospero did not die. But his life became very, very different. . . .



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Prospero's Cursed Life

The most salient aspect of Prospero's curse is that he exists in a sort of stasis, for he is neither dead nor undead. In all respects, he seems to be a man in his fifties; but he has been so for more than 400 years! He can move about by day or night, see and speak with strangers, and conduct his daily affairs as an ordinary human.

His existence has only one condition: He cannot leave his grounds for more than half a day. If the prince leaves Prospero Hall for a longer time, his retainers begin to suffer the effects of the red death plague. As soon as he returns to the grounds, their suffering ends.

Prospero's servants are free to come and go. At first, they stayed with Prospero out of loyalty. Now, 400 years later, they have seen the deaths of all their relatives and friends. In their unnatural state between life and death, they have no real place in the outside world. The manor is now the only home they know.

Prospero's curse is tied to the erratic chiming of his *ebony clock*. When the Red Death corrupted Dracula's curse upon Prospero and sheltered its vile energy within the casing of the *ebony clock*, the timepiece took on a life of its own. Further, the evil generated by the clock is a magnet for things strange and macabre in the netherworld—and Prospero Hall has become the site of some unusual paranormal activity.

Prospero can deal with the odd vampire or werewolf or two, but the increasing number of ghosts around the manor wears at his spirit. These are ghosts for whom he feels responsible. In a way, he is.

In the past 400 years, the clock has struck midnight eleven times. At those times, Prospero and his retainers suffered the horrible physical effects of the red death plague for a full hour, though they did not die. Other humans inside the manor contracted the disease and perished.

The first time the clock tolled midnight, Prospero had been throwing a gala party to celebrate his escape from Dracula. One hundred of his closest friends and family were struck

down that night. The villagers who were not at the party panicked at the evidence of plague, and Prospero's principality was virtually abandoned. The area was never fully resettled, though eventually, those willing to brave the bad luck, unaware of it, or escaping something worse occupied some of the vacant properties.

Prospero and his servants were destined for an even greater shock: At a celebration hosted by the prince years later, the ghosts of the guests at his first party appeared as the clock began to chime. Again, the clock struck the hours up to and including midnight. The Red Death sent its vile disease and the living guests died. Recovering from his agonies to find his house once again littered with corpses, Prospero recognized the true nature of his curse. He tried to destroy the *ebony clock*—but neither he nor his servants could touch it.

In the wake of the second plague outbreak, Prospero determined to live in absolute seclusion. This would not seem difficult, as once again, tales of a plague outbreak made outsiders shun the region—for a time. But the clock had other plans. Through the centuries, at odd intervals, it chose to begin tolling . . . and Prospero knew the red death would strike. Whenever the clock began to chime, shortly thereafter, guests would gather at his door. They would enter his home, die, and subsequently become ghosts to haunt him.

The prince tried to prevent the doomed strangers from crossing the threshold, but the clock constructed automatons (nonliving, mechanical servants) to carry out its bidding. Prospero urged guests to leave early, but whatever he did was thwarted by the machines.

The prince also attempted to warn his unwary guests about the *ebony clock*, in the hope that they could destroy it. However, this effort was doomed as well—speaking explicitly about the clock triggered the red death's arrival; guests died before they could even reach the gallery where the clock stood.

Prospero's secretive ways have naturally drawn gossip from townspeople, but over the centuries, memories lapse and horrors fade. The locals now

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accept the oddities of Prospero.

At the time of this adventure, the clock has chimed midnight eleven times. The prince believes (rightly so) that the next occasion will be the end of him. Twenty years ago, he deliberately held a party and tried to give clues to some of the guests. None realized what he was intimating, and all died as a result. Prospero fears for his guests tonight, but he is driven by the dread that this is his last chance.

The prince has found what he believes to be an ideal situation: the 50th anniversary of the death of one of his favorite authors, Edgar Allan Poe. Astonished by the uncanny similarity between his life and a tale written by an American he never met, Prospero is hoping for salvation. By inviting literate, intelligent guests (some of whose exploits he has heard of—that is, the PCs), he intends to discuss Poe's works and somehow intimate what must be done about the clock. He prays that discussing a literary work (as opposed to his real life) will not invoke the wrath of the *ebony clock*.

A Note on Prospero Hall

The current manor is only 25 years old, built on the site of Prospero's ancestral home. The prince once tried to burn the clock in an attempt to destroy it. The clock survived, but the previous manor house did not.

The house contains no electrical fixtures—only gaslights, which tend to produce bad odors and be fickle. The manor is equipped with running water. Despite the newness of the building, an air of emptiness and neglect hangs about it. Prospero Hall should be filled with servants bustling to keep such a massive structure clean and in order. Instead, Prospero's few retainers have done their best to clean and furnish the rooms allotted to the masquerade. If the PCs wander elsewhere, they find the manor dirty and seemingly forgotten.

The Masque of the Red Death

*Some sepulchre, remote, alone,
Against whose portal she hath thrown,
In childhood, many an idle stone—
Some tomb from out whose sounding door
She ne'er shall force an echo more,
Thrilling to think, poor child of sin!
It was the dead who groaned within.*

—Edgar Allan Poe,
"The Sleeper"

Over the centuries, the red death has claimed many victims during Prospero's masquerades. All return to subsequent masquerades in the forms of apparitions, or ghosts. Those who have been dead more than 25 years are faint of form and substance (semicorporeal, in game terms), while those killed only 20 years ago, during the last ball, are merely strangely transparent (incorporeal, in game terms).

Regardless of form, these ghosts are always visible to Prospero and his servants. While the incorporeal ghosts are invisible unless the viewer is a mystic, has the Sixth Sense or Psychometry proficiency, or is otherwise gifted with a version of *true seeing*, the semicorporeal ghosts are barely discernible to any PC if he or she actively looks for them. At the chiming of each hour, however, all the revelers become visible for the exact interval that the clock sounds. At eight o'clock, for example, for the interval of eight chimes, visitors can see the images of revelers from the past 400 years.

As the night wears on, PCs will have opportunities, however brief, to consult with the apparitions. The ghosts grow progressively more agitated as midnight draws near. Prospero, feeling remorse and guilt at his part in all these deaths, is stricken dumb upon each chiming of the hour. He can, however, see and converse with the ghosts at other times. If the PCs' party contains a mystic, that person may attempt to do the same.

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The Ebony Clock

And the people—ah, the people—
They that dwell up in the steeple,
All alone,
And who, tolling, tolling, tolling,
In that muffled monotone,
Feel a glory in so rolling
On the human heart a stone—
They are neither man nor woman—
They are neither brute nor human—
They are Ghouls.

—Edgar Allan Poe,
“The Bells”

The heart of evil in Prospero Hall is the *ebony clock*, a monstrous construction of ancient origins. Resting in Room #15 (the picture gallery) in an alcove along the west wall, the clock is shaped much like a giant grandfather clock, save that it is some 13 feet high and 10 feet wide. Elaborate panels of impervious ironwood flank its sides, concealing the assortment of bells it uses to toll the hour.

Between these panels stands the clock's inner mechanism. Behind a leaded-glass door (which is impervious to breakage as if enchanted with a *glassteel* spell), the multiple gears, pulleys, and pendulums are clearly visible. The case that houses the mechanism is large enough for two full-grown men to stand side by side within. The door provides access for maintenance by the clock's automatons.

The glass door is locked, but characters with the Open Locks proficiency have a chance to open it. A penalty modifier of -5 should be applied to the PC's chance. Further, the lock is trapped with a needle bearing poison (Type D). This poison is a less potent version of the red death and is not necessarily fatal. If a character detects the poison trap without triggering it, he or she can avoid it. Failure, however, results in contraction of a mild, noncontagious form of the red death plague.

A PC so infected begins complaining of dizziness and sharp pains within 10 minutes.

Shortly thereafter, he or she begins to sweat blood. Obviously, this is cause for great alarm among the other PCs, Prospero, and his servants. Prospero will confirm that the PC has the red death, then ignore the character, as will the servants. They are, after all, immune to the plague. Fellow PCs, however, should believe that they have been exposed to the highly contagious disease. They may attempt whatever curative measures are at their disposal. Regardless of any actions taken, the PC recovers at the end of half an hour. The player characters may believe that their efforts cured the character. If so, they may further believe they have nothing to fear once midnight strikes and the plague arrives in full force.

Nothing could be further from the truth.

Opposing the Ebony Clock

The crux of this adventure hinges upon destroying the clock or somehow hampering it from striking midnight. A PC might try to enter via the leaded door of the clock case; however, if he or she is successful in picking the lock and avoiding the trap, another surprise awaits: electricity. All metal components (which is to say, *all* components) inside the clock case seem rigged to an interior electrical source—though the manor is not wired for electricity.

In fact, the warped curse and the malevolent energy the Red Death deflected into the clock caused this piece of furniture to become almost sentient, and allowed it to develop defenses and minions as if it were a lord of evil (see the rulebook, Villains of Gothic Earth Appendix). One defense is the magical *electricity* (similar in effect to a *shocking grasp* spell, but more powerful) that courses through the clock mechanism. The PC who touches the interior mechanism suffers 4d10 points of damage; the lack of electric lights in the building will likely lull the PCs into not looking for such a trap.

Once “burned,” the player characters might start looking for a physical source for the electricity—cords, outlets, generators, and the like—before they suspect the magical nature of

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the shock. After all, electricity is science; and it is known to exist. Magic is, at best, a myth based on ignorance. . . .

No logical explanation exists for the electricity in the clock. PCs should be allowed to role-play their consternation when they cannot supply scientific answers to this puzzle.

Hacking at the internal mechanism results in more electrical damage, as noted above. Furthermore, the clock then produces automatons as a second line of defense. The PCs are likely to be overwhelmed by the automatons, for the clock can create two every minute. (For details on automatons, see Rooms #7 and #15.)

Were this a standard RAVENLOFT adventure, the PCs would likely use magic against these magic-wielding foes. But this is Gothic Earth. It is here that the PCs have a chance of using their most ingenious, modern-day devices, such as dynamite. If the PCs can somehow overcome or distract the automatons and detonate ten or more



sticks of dynamite (or equivalent other explosive) inside the clock's casing, the clock loses some of its function: It can no longer produce automatons. The mechanism connected to the bells has a 50% chance of surviving such an attack. DMs who opt for a kinder ending can tell players they have destroyed the clock; DMs who want to test their players can tell them they hear silence . . . then an unmistakable "tick, tock" as the hands move toward midnight.

The simplest (though not the most obvious) method of opposing the *ebony clock* is to physically prevent its chimes from sounding. Although the ironwood panels concealing the bells are impervious to destruction (including dynamite), they *are* the clock's weak point. The panels are decorative and ornately carved; they screen but do not entirely enclose the bells. And these panels have no electrical defense.

By studying the pulley system that operates the bells, the PCs may figure a way to either disconnect the pulleys or disable the bells. A series of rods might prevent the pulleys from moving; muffling the bells with fabric or paper could silence the clappers. Of course, all this takes time—a minimum of one hour for a 90% chance of success. Each 10-minute reduction of time decreases that chance by 10%. For attempts of less than 10 minutes, the DM should assign a percentage chance based on the PCs' efforts.

If the PCs run short of time, they may opt to take the butler's advice and flee. The clock uses its minions to prevent guests from leaving the manor house prematurely—that is, before midnight—so as to keep the victim count high. The PCs may be able to defeat these minions, but if they attempt to leave too early, the DM can delay them by planting some terrified live guests (see Rooms #6 and #9) to be rescued, reassured, and escorted around the manor.

DM's Note: The clock has the ability to advance time in 20-minute increments. The DM may use this ability as often as necessary to maintain a sense of suspense and urgency around the adventure.

AN INVITATION TO THE BALL



*ould God I could
awaken!
For I dream I know
not how!
And my soul is
sorely shaken
Lest an evil step be
taken,—
Lest the dead who is
forsaken
May not be happy
now.*

—Edgar Allan Poe,
“Bridal Ballad”

Although the PCs can enter this adventure in a number of ways, the text below assumes they accept Prince Prospero’s invitation (see the following page). Since Prospero lives in the foothills near Bucharest, he sends invitations only to that city. However, if all the PCs are based elsewhere, the DM must devise a plan for them to visit southeastern Europe. Perhaps they must call on a noble, and the invitation is extended to that individual’s guests. The invitation method also works to introduce new PCs into a party, or to gather a group of new players together.

Ideally, the DM should photocopy (or, depending on his or her calligraphic skills, hand-letter) an invitation for each player character. (If the DM chooses, a calligraphy book might be found at the library; the script called “Copperplate” provides a truly Victorian style.) Rolling the invitations and tying them with colored ribbon will make an elegant handout. Or, if the DM has candle wax and something that can form a “P” as a signet or another type of seal, folding the invitations and sealing them with wax will give an authentic feel.

To add to the festive nature (and ultimately to the macabre mood) of this adventure, players might attend the gaming session wearing masks or even costumes. The DM should assume the guise of Prince Prospero.

Unexpected News

Another frosty morning has dawned, though the snow seems to have stopped. A gentle tap upon your chamber door catches your attention, then the door slowly swings open to admit Baines, the butler. You look at him in surprise, for you had not yet bid him entrance. He carries a message scribed on heavy paper, resting atop a silver salver.

“[Sir/Madame]! An invitation from the prince!” Baines cries as he steps forward.

The DM should pass out invitations to the players, with the explanation that winter storms have kept most travel and festivities at bay in the city of Bucharest, and that residents are all suffering from cabin fever. However, the snow has stopped for a time. Let the players read their invitations, then take up the role of Baines again.

“The boy is waiting, [Sir/Madame]. Is there a reply now, or shall I send one later?” Baines inclines his head slightly toward you. “I took the liberty of procuring your writing materials and lapdesk.” He extends a wooden box, its bottom padded and lined with silk.

Baines coughs lightly, and you recognize it as his warning that he is about to step outside his social station. “They are a bit . . . ‘odd’ up there at Prospero Hall, [Sir/Madame]. Perhaps you are otherwise engaged?” The butler’s brows rise slightly in suggestion.

The masquerade probably seems an ideal way to celebrate the pause in winter. The PCs should be excited at the opportunity. If they question Baines’ comment, read the following.

A look of contrition crosses Baines’ face, and he gives a short bow in your direction. “Forgive me, [Sir/Madame]. My . . . zeal in preserving the station of my employer[s] overrode my manners. It shall not happen again.”

AN INVITATION TO THE BALL

*His Royal Highness
Prospero, Hereditary Prince of Walachia,
Lord of the Transylvanian Alps,
Serene Ambassador of Good Will,*

*Requests the Pleasure of your Company
at a Masquerade
to honor the 50th Anniversary of the passing of that
Great Author,*

Edgar Allan Poe

*with a reenactment of his famous Tale,
"The Masque of the Red Death."*

*Seven o' the clock at Wyldecote
Evening of the Full Moon*

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AN INVITATION TO THE BALL

If asked about Prospero Hall, Baines corrects his utterance to Wyldecote, apologizing for the use of the local nickname. Of course, the PCs should be clamoring to learn what Baines is alluding to. Read or paraphrase the following.

Baines clears his throat and fixes his gaze at a point politely beyond your head. "I, of course, do not *know* the prince, but I have heard some rather odd things. . . ."

He clears his throat again, and the butler continues. "He is a strange man, as witnessed by this fixation on an *American* author. I simply question the propriety of a Rumanian putting on an American party. Perhaps he is, er, 'democratic' in his tastes and has invited guests not quite . . . suitable?"

The PCs should realize that Baines' concern is purely one of social standing. After all, a butler's position in the hierarchy of servants' lives is a reflection of the status of his master. By suggesting the PCs not attend a ball that might be beneath their social station, he is only looking to preserve his own.

Of course, this introduction to the adventure assumes the PCs are of the titled class. If the PCs are middle class—say, shopkeepers or teachers—modify Baines' role to one of support and encouragement. After all, it would be a social coup for a butler's master to be invited to a prince's masked ball.

If the PCs all know each other, they may opt to journey to Prospero Hall in a single carriage. If the PCs are strangers, the DM can force them together by stating that only one rental carriage is available (everyone else in town has seized the opportunity to go out as well).

As is customary in the 19th century, the event is held on the evening of a full moon, to allow easy travel into the countryside after dark.

The Night of the Masquerade

Your carriage rolls along the snow-cushioned roads leading northwest from Bucharest. Your

companions are all in costume, some fantastically so. The miles speed by, then the carriage turns up a lane leading to Prospero Hall—that is, Wyldecote. You round the final bend and, towering above ancient spruces, the manor comes into view.

Reaching four stories in height and spanning a width of more than 100 yards, Prospero Hall has towers and crenellations that seem sinister and strangely outdated. The building strikes you as a singular monstrosity, for although it was built earlier this century, it reflects a heavy, outmoded style.

The carriage rolls to a stop at the entrance beneath the stone canopy, and a single footman from the manor house hurries forward to help you alight. Oddly, you see no other servants, or even other carriages, though you are fashionably late by half an hour.

After the PCs step from the carriage, the coachman whips up the horses, obviously eager to be away. If the PCs stop him and question him, he only shrugs and mutters in Rumanian. Any PC who has that language proficiency hears the words *ghost* and *ghoul* slip from the man's tongue.

The PCs should be rightly puzzled that the prince has but one footman attending to the arriving coaches. A manor of this size and a masquerade of this magnitude should have many servants about. If the PCs fail to notice this, the DM may point it out, perhaps after a successful proficiency or Intelligence check.

If the PCs question the footman, he gives his name as Antonio. However, they soon discover that Antonio is a tightlipped young man. Despite their best attempts, he reveals little information. Read or paraphrase the following.

"Please to enter the hall, gentlefolk," Antonio says, his voice laced with an accent that seems oddly out of date. "The master is waiting for you."

AN INVITATION TO THE BALL

If the PCs question the apparent lack of other guests, read the following.

"The party is a small one tonight, sire. The others have all arrived. The master awaits you; please to enter," Antonio insists, gesturing toward the entrance.

If the subject of ghosts comes up, Antonio blanches under his dark skin but resolutely says nothing. If hounded, he emphatically ushers the party indoors.

"If it pleases, good folk, enter the hall now. The master awaits you, and he will tell you there are no ghosts—only old tales attached to an old house."

The PCs get nothing more from Antonio.

A Note to the DM

The PCs could potentially choose to enter the house by clandestine means, should they prefer not to announce themselves at the front door. Four other entrances are possible: the kitchen or luggage entrance (on this side of the building, in the servants' wing) or one of two doors on the opposite side of the building (one is for tradesmen, and the other leads in from the garden). Note that the PCs could break a window under cover of darkness and enter that way. However, they are likely to be noticed entering any door other than the main one.

The DM should also note that the PCs arrive at the manor house at 7:30, leaving them half an hour to investigate before the clock chimes.



PROSPERO HALL



*ut see, amid the
mimic rout
A crawling shape
intrude!
A blood-red thing that
writhes from out
the scenic solitude!
It writhes!—it
writhes!—with
mortal pangs
the mimes become
its food,
And seraphs sob at
vermin fangs
in human gore
imbued.*

—Edgar Allan Poe,
“The Conqueror Worm”

This section details the rooms inside Prospero Hall that are pertinent to the adventure. A map showing Prospero Hall's floor plan spans pages 20–21, and an illustration of the house is found on pages 16–17.

The DM should show the players the illustration of Prospero Hall to give them a feel for the structure. Further, the Dungeon Master is encouraged to locate books on period architecture to show the players interiors of old manor houses. Such details of authenticity, accompanied by the descriptions below, will add to the feel and excitement of actually being at Prospero Hall for the gala masquerade.

Rooms are described in the order that the PCs are likely to encounter them, assuming they enter the house via the main doors.

Information presented in boxed text should be read or paraphrased to the players. Some areas are given descriptions only, and the DM may excerpt that information as necessary for smooth game play.

The seven rooms Prince Prospero has outfitted according to Poe's tale and the style in which they have been decorated are as follows:

- Entrance hall (#5); blue theme.
- Gentlemen's room (#10); purple theme.
- Garden entrance (#11); green theme.
- Library (#12); orange theme.
- Morning room (#13); white theme.
- Drawing room (#14); violet theme.
- Picture gallery (#15); black-and-red theme.

Note that the prince has selected these rooms so that guests are forced to flow from the first room (the entrance hall) through the transverse corridor and into the second room, then through the third, and so on—which is exactly the arrangement in Poe's story.

In Prospero's house, most of the rooms open into each other; to restrict movement and to further mimic the tale, he has cordoned off certain entryways with leaded panes of appropriately colored glass. Braziers of gaslight glow behind the panes to enhance the color schemes of the rooms. Furthermore, semicorporeal ghosts linger at these areas—the clock has ordered them to stand guard. Short of attacking these ghosts and crashing through the glass partitions, the PCs will find themselves forced to follow the intended route through the rooms. Doorways that are blocked in this manner are marked in red on the map.

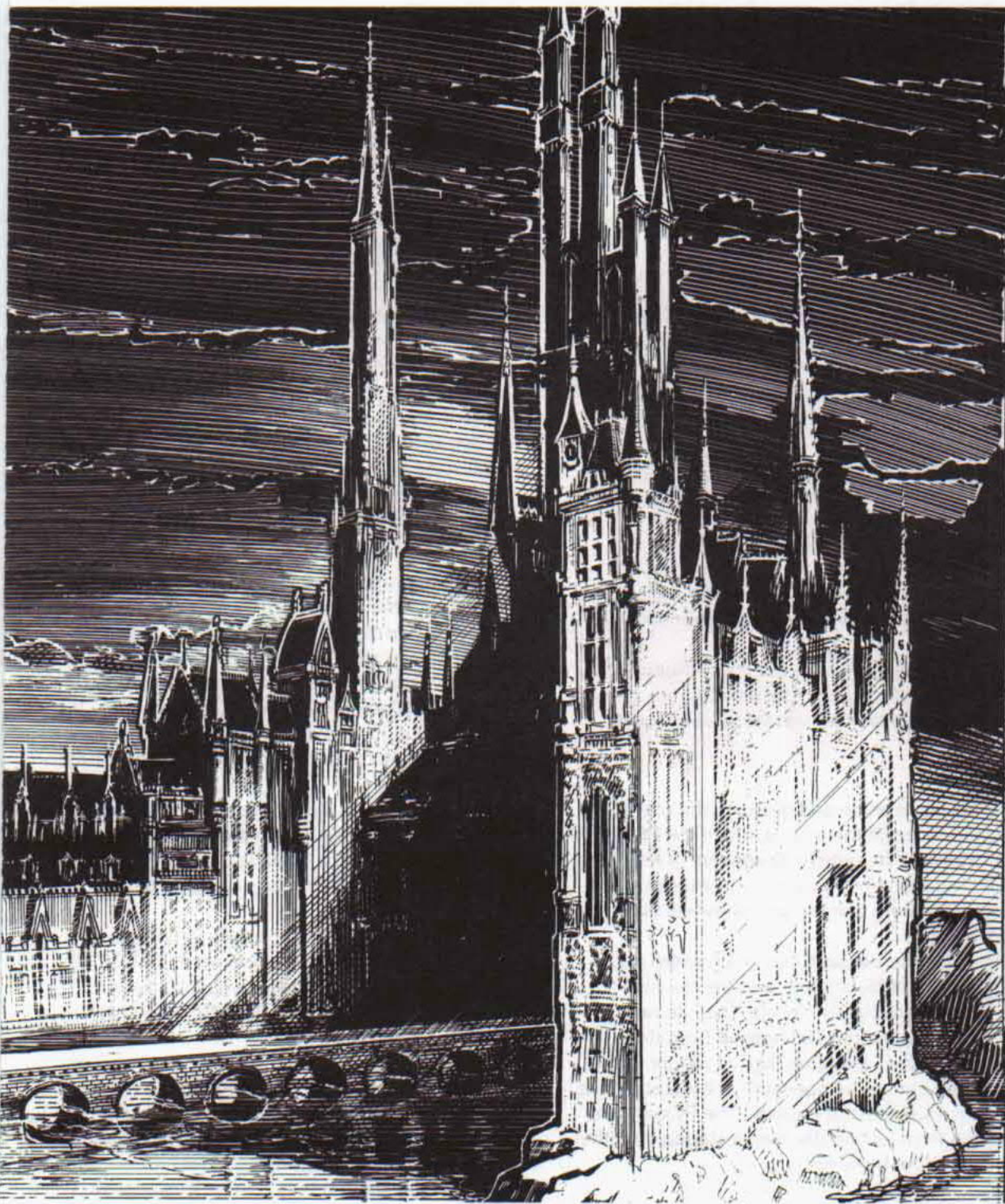
As they travel from room to room, the PCs should observe the effect the hourly chiming of the *ebony clock* has upon the other guests. Ideally, the PCs will not let themselves be sidetracked to the point where they haven't the time to reach the picture gallery and dismantle the clock. If they wander too far, the DM should remind the players of the passage of time.

Prince Prospero's masquerade takes place *only* on the ground (or first) floor. (PCs found on the second and third floors are likely to be escorted back to the first floor, though fast-thinking characters might state they were searching for friends staying with the prince, or that they needed a moment's quiet respite from the festivities.) Accordingly, this adventure describes only the rooms on the ground floor.

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Although European custom refers to the ground floor of a structure as the *ground floor* and the next level up as the *first floor*, this adventure refers to the *ground floor*, *second floor*, and *third floor*. This is done in an effort to cause less confusion in American audiences.

1. Entrance Court/Carriage Porch & 2. Porch

Antonio escorts your party across the granite paving stones leading into the manor. The columned carriage porch, open to the sky above, gives way to a covered portico. The air inside the porch is damp and cloying. Farther on, the massive doors that are the glory of Prospero Hall await.

Emblazoned with the prince's family crest, the doors that stand before you are unlike any you have ever seen before. They are fully 12 feet high, and the breadth of both doors appears to be close to 8 feet. In the faint light of the full moon, the carved surfaces appear to be *marble* and not wood; closer inspection reveals this to be true.

At Antonio's approach, the doors swing inward without a sound. The hair on your neck prickles suddenly; surely stone doors should grind!

Antonio steps aside and gestures the player characters through the wide doors. If the PCs go in, as expected, he quietly disappears. If the PCs pause to discuss their next move, he urges them to enter, repeating that the prince awaits his guests eagerly.

If the PCs later decide to leave Prospero Hall, Antonio is not at his station, and the massive marble doors are tightly closed. They do not seem to be locked, but disengaged from their silent hinges and resting on the full weight of the stone. They cannot be opened by physical means unless the PCs defeat the clock. The PCs are not prevented from exiting the manor through another door or window, however.

3. Entry

You stand in an entry that is truly grand. The entire east wall is fashioned of intricately carved walnut. From the floor to about waist height, the wall is solid; above that point, arched openings allow a view into the next room. The arches have been hastily fitted with shimmering panes of blue leaded glass. A doorway in the center of the east wall is covered by fluttering pale blue curtains.

Tiny gas braziers, arranged in front of the panes of glass, give off the bitter odor of gaslight. Your nose wrinkles in disgust. Brass deflectors direct the light toward the panes and away from your eyes.

You blink as another gaslight on the opposite wall suddenly springs to light. The flame flickers to a cool white glow, courtesy of an aged man fiddling with the jet valves.

Using appropriate proficiency checks, the DM should determine whether any PCs are familiar with "The Masque of the Red Death." Any PCs who know the story should recognize that the first room described in Poe's tale—the blue room—is just beyond this entry. Those who don't know the tale may find the glass and braziers odd, but will likely chalk them up as fancy decorations for the masquerade.

The manservant turns toward the PCs and strides forward slowly and with some stiffness. A rigid smile is fixed on his face. His name is Edgerton, and he is Prince Prospero's butler.

Edgerton (butler): AL LN; Int Very; AC 10; MV 10 (due to arthritis); HD 1; hp 4; THACO 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d3 (makeshift weapon); SA nil; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M (5'6" tall); ML elite (14); XP 15.

Edgerton is absolutely devoted to the prince, but he is also an intelligent and enlightened man. At this point in the adventure, he reveals nothing to the characters. Should they seek him out later, he might decide that they can be trusted with

PROSPERO HALL

some of the many secrets he possesses. For this encounter, read or paraphrase the following.

"Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. May I congratulate you on the excellence of your costumes? The prince will be delighted." Edgerton's lips crinkle, as if his face would crack if he laughed. The butler continues. "I trust you had a pleasant journey? The festivities await you in the blue room."

He gestures toward the pale blue curtains breaking the expanse of wood and blue glass. "The prince has requested that no one be announced, as that would spoil the pleantry of being masked. You will recognize him, of course, as the prince of Mr. Poe's tale.

"But first, allow me to take your accoutrements," Edgerton continues. While he waits for the gentlemen to remove the ladies' capes, he coughs delicately and says, "As we may be due for more unseemly weather this evening, may I suggest that you retire earlier than your usual wont—say, by eleven o' the clock? I believe that should allow you time enough for safe passage home." Edgerton nods toward an entrance to the west. "Your cloaks will be in there, gentlefolk. I bid you good evening." The man turns and moves slowly into the cloak room with your wraps.

In the distance, the PCs can hear faint strains of music and the murmur of people talking. They can move on to Room #5, the entrance hall; follow Edgerton into Room #4, the cloak room; or try the door leading south into the picture gallery. This door is locked, however. Should the PCs attempt to break the door down now, Edgerton sternly chastises them and plays upon the PCs' (most likely) proper manners.

Edgerton, unlike his master, has lost all hope. He believes that at midnight, the clock will chime a twelfth time and he will die. He wants to pass on with dignity and with the knowledge that he served his master well. He considers himself to have done his duty in warning the PCs to leave before midnight.

4. Cloak Room/Water Closet

Edgerton remains in the cloak room, ostensibly to await more guests. In reality, he merely loiters here, waiting until the PCs have begun to move about the rooms. When they are beyond the entrance hall, he follows and observes them, in preparation for giving advice and aid, should the time seem appropriate.

5. Entrance Hall (Blue Room)

The entrance hall is a spacious room, or it would seem so were it not for all the filmy netting draped on the walls and dangling from the ceiling. The blue gauze obscures your view, and you catch only fleeting glimpses of people moving.

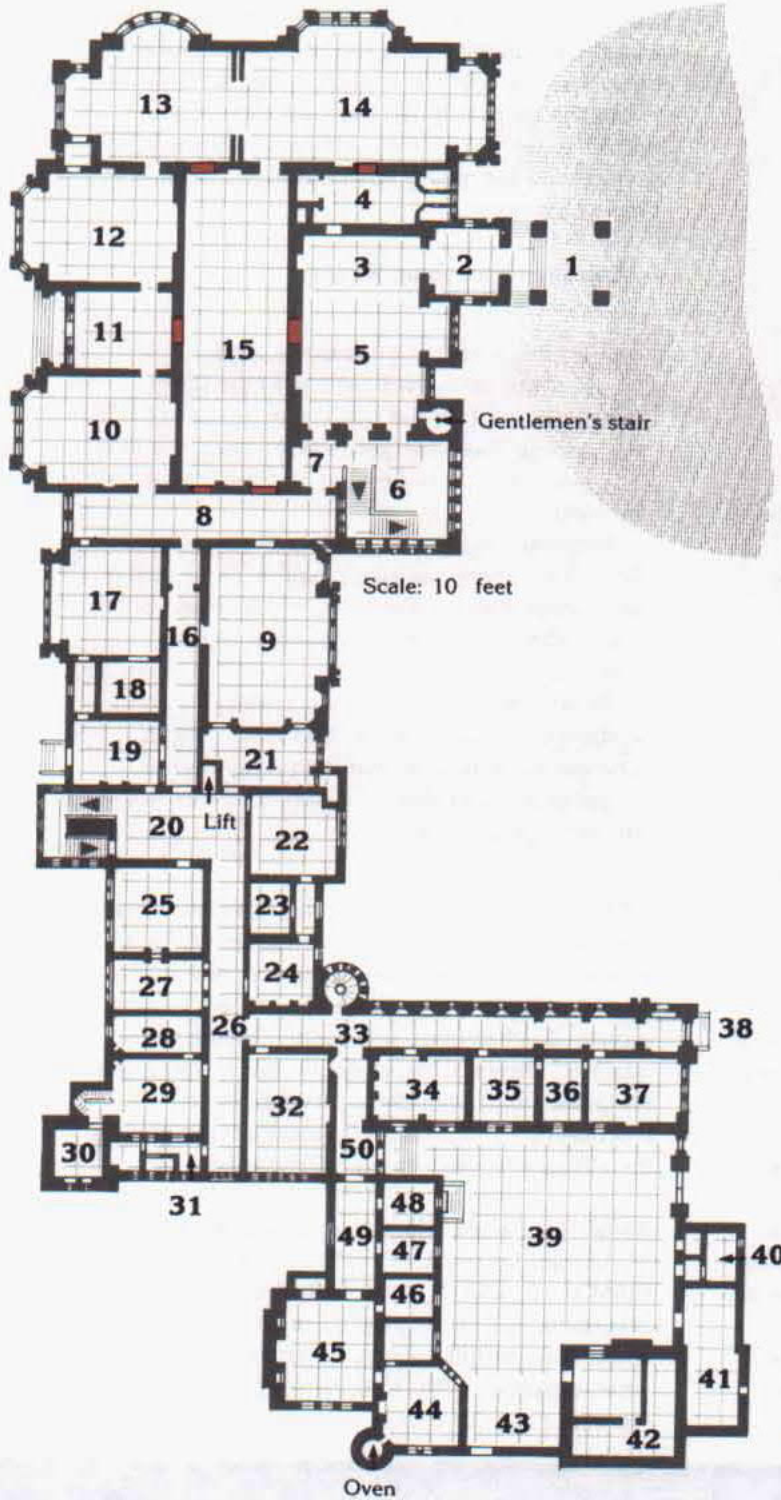
Freestanding leaded panels of blue glass, backlit by more gaslight braziers, provide the only weak illumination. The whole effect is somewhat disorienting, but you are at a masquerade, after all.

Music and laughter rise and fall in the distance. A gossamer curtain blows aside, seemingly from a breeze, and a gentleman approaches you, his form barely visible in the distorting blue light.

The man is Arold van Feryld, a nobleman who died at Prospero's very first masquerade and who is now a ghost. He is dressed in the finery of a medieval lord, with gold and pearls encrusting his ermine-lined sleeves and collar. Once a "fair-weather" friend of Prospero, he has come to hate the prince with boundless passion. He is thoroughly evil and eagerly awaits midnight, for then Prospero will belong to *his* world.

Arold van Feryld (third-magnitude ghost):
AL CE; Int Very; AC -2/4; MV 12; HD 8; hp 58; THAC0 13; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; SA cause revulsion; SD hit only by +2 or better weapons when ethereal/hit only by +1 or better weapons when corporeal; MR 30%; SZ M (5'6" tall); ML elite (14); XP 6,000.

Prospero Hall
Ground Floor



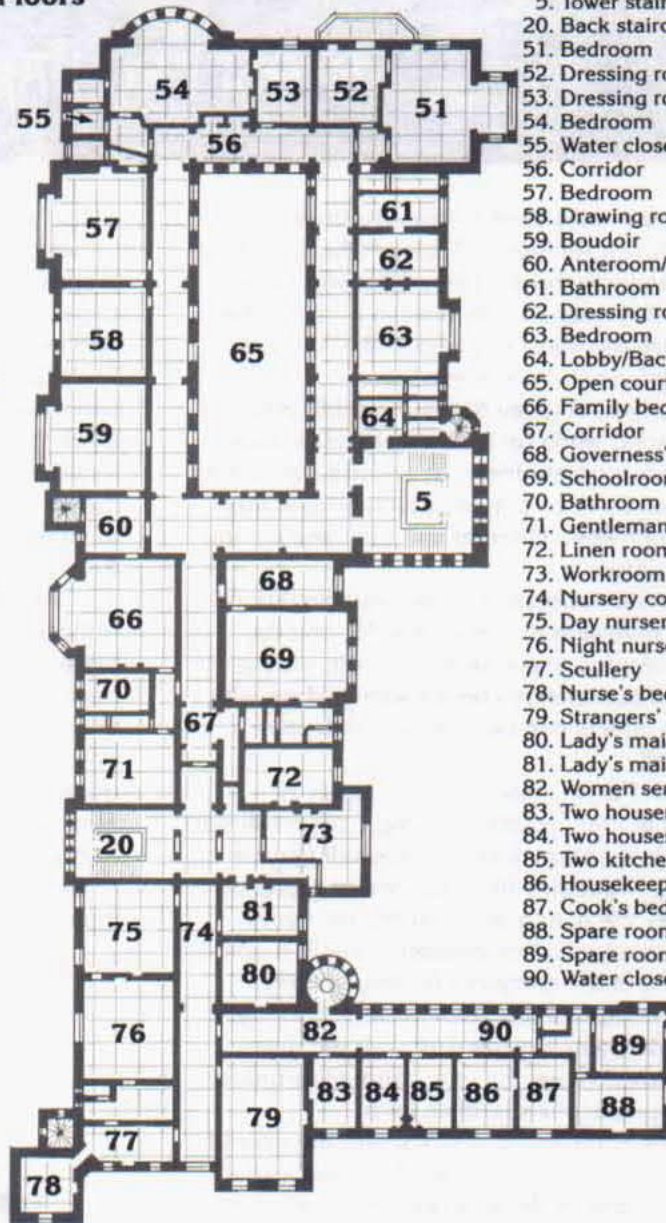
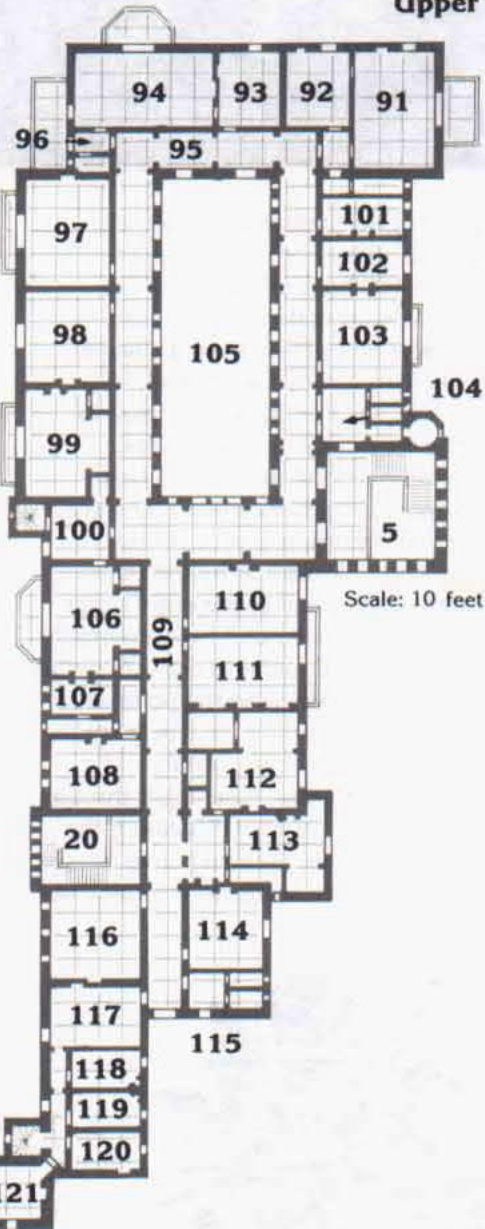
Ground Floor Key

1. Entrance court/Carriage porch
2. Porch
3. Entry
4. Cloak room and water closet
5. Entrance hall
6. Tower staircase
7. Antechamber
8. Transverse corridor
9. Dining room
10. Gentlemen's room
11. Garden entrance
12. Library
13. Morning room
14. Drawing room
15. Picture gallery
16. Butler's corridor
17. Billiard room
18. Deed room
19. Waiting room/Tradesman's entrance
20. Back staircase/Cellar stairs
21. Servery/water closet
22. Butler's pantry
23. Plate safe
24. Butler's bedroom
25. Odd room
26. Men's corridor
27. Gun room
28. Footman's room
29. Brushing room
30. Cleaning room
31. Water closet
32. Servants' hall
33. Housekeeper's corridor/Women's stair
34. Women's workroom
35. Still room
36. Store room
37. Housekeeper's room
38. Luggage entrance
39. Kitchen court
40. Dustbin/water closet
41. Coal house
42. Engine house/Boiler
43. Shed
44. Scullery and Fuel closet
45. Kitchen/Cook's closet
46. Pastry room
47. Pantry
48. Larder
49. Kitchen lobby and servery
50. Kitchen entrance

Prospero Hall Upper Floors

Second Floor Key

- 5. Tower staircase
- 20. Back staircase
- 51. Bedroom
- 52. Dressing room
- 53. Dressing room
- 54. Bedroom
- 55. Water closet
- 56. Corridor
- 57. Bedroom
- 58. Drawing room
- 59. Boudoir
- 60. Anteroom/Young ladies' staircase
- 61. Bathroom
- 62. Dressing room
- 63. Bedroom
- 64. Lobby/Bachelors' staircase
- 65. Open court
- 66. Family bedroom
- 67. Corridor
- 68. Governess's bedroom
- 69. Schoolroom/Washroom
- 70. Bathroom
- 71. Gentleman's dressing room
- 72. Linen room
- 73. Workroom
- 74. Nursery corridor
- 75. Day nursery
- 76. Night nursery/Bathroom
- 77. Scullery
- 78. Nurse's bedroom
- 79. Strangers' nursery or sick room
- 80. Lady's maid's bedroom
- 81. Lady's maid's bedroom
- 82. Women servants' corridor/Women's staircase
- 83. Two housemaids' bedroom
- 84. Two housemaids' bedroom
- 85. Two kitchen maids' bedroom
- 86. Housekeeper's bedroom
- 87. Cook's bedroom
- 88. Spare room
- 89. Spare room
- 90. Water closet



Third Floor Key

- 5. Tower staircase
- 20. Back staircase
- 91. Bedroom
- 92. Dressing room
- 93. Dressing room
- 94. Bedroom
- 95. Corridor
- 96. Water closet
- 97. Bedroom
- 98. Bedroom
- 99. Young lady's bedroom
- 100. Anteroom/Young ladies' staircase
- 101. Bathroom
- 102. Bedroom
- 103. Bedroom
- 104. Lobby/Water closet/Bachelors' staircase
- 105. Open court
- 106. Young lady's bedroom
- 107. Bathroom
- 108. Young lady's bedroom
- 109. Corridor
- 110. Bachelor's bedroom
- 111. Bachelor's bedroom
- 112. Bachelor's bedroom
- 113. Man's bedroom/Valet's room
- 114. Bedroom
- 115. Water closet
- 116. Bedroom
- 117. Luggage
- 118. Strangers' Manservants' room
- 119. Strangers' Manservants' room
- 120. Strangers' Manservants' room
- 121. Strangers' Manservants' room

PROSPERO HALL

Some of the rules used in this adventure are drawn from *Van Richten's Guide to Ghosts* (9355) and are listed only briefly here. DMs who have that accessory may wish to refer to it; otherwise, DMs can use the ghost outlined in the *Monstrous Manual* if information is needed.

The first number given for van Feryld's Armor Class is his AC when he is ethereal and is under attack by nonethereal foes; the second number is his AC when he is corporeal (which he is in this encounter) or when ethereal and attacked by an ethereal creature.

If van Feryld successfully touches a victim, he can cause revulsion in that person for one day. Those so affected make all attack rolls, saving throws, and proficiency checks with a -4 penalty, though the effects can be canceled with any healing spell.

Arold van Feryld's goal is to scare any of Prospero's human guests who might pose a threat to the clock chiming midnight. Accordingly, he has already frightened the most recent group of guests; they are hiding in Room #6, the tower stairway. He attacks immediately if the PCs come within 5 feet of the entryway leading into the gallery. Although no door blocks access to that room, the doorway is sealed off with red glass. Blue curtains conceal the entry from view unless someone specifically searches for it.

The ghost approaches the PCs with the intent to badger them into hysterics, and he is malicious enough to attack at the slightest provocation. He attacks in his corporeal form, though if hard-pressed, he turns ethereal and leaves.

"Ah—more guests of the prince, I see!" A man dressed as a medieval nobleman and wearing an elaborate feathered mask approaches you, sarcasm heavy in his voice. He waves his hand expansively and says, "What? Are these really your costumes? Tell me, are you posing as *servants*? I'm quite sure Prospero had something a little more—what shall we say?—*sophisticated* in mind." The man smirks at you, his insolent gesture visible despite the weak lighting.

This is a good opportunity for role-playing, for van Feryld has clearly broken the strict proprieties of the 1890's. Truly proper PCs might be so offended that they simply sniff, turn around, and leave without saying a word. The PCs are likely to have an altercation with him, however, and van Feryld will continue to insult them. The PCs, if role-playing proper Victorians, should overlook this guest's bad manners and head through the open archways to either Room #6, the tower stair, or Room #7, an antechamber. (Arold van Feryld does not follow, as he is anchored to the entry hall.)

More than likely, however, a PC will attempt to tap the ghost's arm or shoulder in order to get the man's attention or to emphasize the point of etiquette they are "discussing." This is likely the point at which the PCs discover van Feryld's ghostly state, for any touch passes right through him. Should a battle occur, turn directly to the encounter at Room #8, for time will have passed to the point at which the *ebony clock* begins to chime the hour.



6. Tower Staircase

A magnificently carved stair rises many feet upward, but your attention is drawn to a man and the two women he seems to be escorting, who are in costume and crying bitterly. The fellow is trying to calm them, but without success.

This is the grand staircase of the manor house. It is a structure of heavy, ponderous beauty. Each line of the stair is in perfect geometric harmony

PROSPERO HALL

with the whole; no curving lines alleviate its stark regularity.

The most striking feature of the stair is apparent when the PCs gaze upward past the angled flights. The ceiling of the tower, 80-some feet above, is somehow lit with a dim golden light, and is painted dark blue and sprinkled with gold stars. It is an example of brilliant craftsmanship, complete with a coved gallery and a gilded cast-iron balustrade.

The three people taking refuge here are human guests of Prince Prospero. The women were badly frightened by Arold van Feryld, who, in an ethereal state, caressed them. If the PCs meet them, read the following.

"I say," a youngish man dressed as a red devil calls to you, "the name's Ellesley, and these are my sisters, Katherine and Berenice. They've had a bit of a fright. Would you be so good as to pull the bellrope? Prospero's recreation of that Poe story seems to have been a bit much for my sisters, poor darlings." He continues to hug the two crying women, who are dressed as crows.

If the PCs comply with Lord Ellesley's request, Edgerton arrives three rounds later and escorts the Ellesleys to the cloakroom, where they remain the rest of the evening. If the PCs converse with these guests, they learn nothing from the girls. However, Ellesley responds as follows, after which Edgerton arrives and escorts the trio away.

The man frowns, his lips just barely visible beneath his red mask. "I don't know why my sisters are so affected, though they are sensitive things, poor dears. Prospero's idea to hold a masquerade celebrating the 50th anniversary of that writer Poe's death seemed fun, certainly the sort of thing Katherine and Berenice would enjoy. Maybe he's just taken it a bit too far—why, I tell you, I almost think the red death itself will appear tonight!"

7. Antechamber

This small room serves merely as a connection between the entrance hall, the tower staircase, and the transverse corridor. The alcove that backs the picture gallery houses a peculiar statue. It looks rather like a mannequin of a servant. It is an automaton, one of the clock's mechanical creations. The PCs will likely think little of it and pass on to the next room. Should they attempt to move the statue or otherwise tinker with it, however, the automaton attacks.

Automaton (1): AL CE; Int Avg; AC -2; MV 18; HD 5+5; hp 35; THAC0 15; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d8+1; SA first attack, never surprised; SD nil; MR nil; SZ M (5' tall); ML fearless (19); XP 650.

8. Transverse Corridor

The PCs will soon encounter some of the ghosts of the manor. Unless otherwise indicated, individuals who died at Prospero's last party 20 years ago are first-magnitude ghosts and are incorporeal; they are invisible unless a character has an ability akin to *true seeing* or can see invisible objects.

Ghosts that are more than 20 years old are second- or third-magnitude ghosts and are semicorporeal; they are faintly visible to any character who actively concentrates on looking for them.

The corridor before you is long and wide, with exquisite fretwork every 10 feet. Gaslight sconces provide dim lighting; no flowing draperies dangle from the ceiling.

To the east is an archway through which you can see an elegant dining room with a buffet set upon brilliant white Irish linen. Seven people in full costume stand near the hors d'oeuvres, smiling nervously.

To the west, two archways are sealed off by panes of glass—glass as scarlet as blood, with the ubiquitous gas braziers along their bases.

PROSPERO HALL

From somewhere in the manor house, a bell begins to toll the hour in deep, penetrating tones. It is an ancient sound, dark and menacing. Its reverberating timbre fills Prospero Hall, echoing throughout the mansion.

Unless the PCs become embroiled in a fight with the ghost Arold van Feryld, they will most likely be in this room by the time the *ebony clock* begins to chime 8:00. The scene described below takes place every time the clock chimes the hour (the DM should stage the subsequent scenarios). This is an opportunity for true horror, and it should be role-played appropriately, adding fear and horror checks if needed.

All around you, the empty rooms suddenly come alive with sound and color—guests materialize, seemingly out of thin air. A young woman appears less than 5 feet from you, and falls to her knees as if wracked with pain. Behind her, other guests come nearer, their faces wincing in pain at each toll of the bell.

The girl is one of numerous incorporeal ghosts that inhabit Prospero Hall. She, like all the others, can materialize only at the chiming of the *ebony clock*. These ghosts are all first-magnitude ghosts. They are typical spirits, wishing only to rest in peace. Their stats follow; Armor Class and Special Defenses are as described under van Feryld's entry given earlier. These first-magnitude ghosts have no special attacks.

When the clock strikes, if the PCs are still in Room #5 embroiled in combat with Arold van Feryld, he grows rigid with the first chime, his face blanching in fear. He disappears at the third chime.

Spirit guests (first-magnitude ghosts) (250 throughout manor): AL varies; Int varies; AC 0/8; MV 12; HD 1, 2, or 3; hp varies; THAC0 20, 19, or 18; #AT 0; Dmg nil; SA none; SD hit only by

+1 or better weapons when ethereal/hit by mundane weapons when corporeal; MR 10%; SZ M (5'6" tall); ML steady (12); XP 270, 420, or 650 each.

The girl in the corridor, Arabella, pleads with the PCs to end her existence. The other ghosts behind her add their voices to hers. But they have only as much time as the tolling of eight bells, and the first chime or two are wasted by the act of materialization and the PCs' shock. Read or paraphrase the following.

"Help us! Please help us!" A young woman, dressed in a gown of azure silk similar to what your mother might have worn in her youth, kneels at your feet. Her voice is filled with urgent fear. "There's not much time! You must help us! Stop the clock—for pity's sake, stop the—"

The girl looks up at you, her bright eyes beseeching. Her lovely features are distorted in pain. Then, unbelievably, she wavers into nothingness.

If any PC can see invisible objects, he or she can still see Arabella and the other first-magnitude ghosts even after the bells fall silent. Such a PC can also converse with the ghosts. This is likely to be the first time the PCs notice the crowd of ghosts at Prospero's ball, especially if they brushed past Arold without "encountering" him. However, suspicious PCs, alerted by the coachman's mutterings or even by natural caution, may have already noticed the "invisible" crowd. Modify this encounter as needed.

Arabella knows no more and no less than any other ghost. She knows the clock must be prevented from chiming, but does not know where the clock is. Like all the ghosts in this adventure, she is anchored to the room in which she appears. If asked about her death, she recalls only being at a gala ball hosted by Prince Prospero in 1820 and suddenly experiencing dizziness and pain.

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The PCs now have several options, including:

1. They can enter the dining room and talk to the human guests they saw there.
2. They can go down the butler's corridor (#16) or into the billiard room (#17).
3. They can enter Room #10, the gentlemen's room, and see the next colored room.
4. They can attempt to break through the red panes of glass and enter the picture gallery.

If the PCs investigate Rooms #16 or #17, they find emptiness and neglect (these rooms are not cleaned or decorated). A servant quickly arrives to shoo them back to the ball.

Players who are acquainted with Poe's tale may find the fourth option to be the most logical. If they choose it, two third-magnitude ghosts become corporeal and attack the PCs.

Selarud (third-magnitude ghost): AL CE; Int Very; AC -2/4; MV 12; HD 8; hp 60; THACO 13; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; SA none; SD hit only by +2 or better weapons when ethereal/hit only by +1 or better weapons when corporeal; MR 30%; SZ M (5'10" tall); ML elite (14); XP 4,000.

Trelia (third-magnitude ghost): AL CE; Int Very; AC -2/4; MV 12; HD 9; hp 69; THACO 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; SA cause fear; SD hit only by +2 or better weapons when ethereal/hit only by +1 or better weapons when corporeal; MR 30%; SZ M (6' tall); ML elite (14); XP 6,000.

Selarud has no special attacks; his Armor Class and special defenses are the same as Arold van Feryld's. Trelia is similar, though she also has the ability to cause fear in all who see her. Victims must immediately make a fear check with a -2 penalty. The two ghosts defend the entries into the picture gallery at all costs.



9. Dining Room

This room is paneled in dark burl walnut, the complicated convolutions in the wood grain lending a strange character to the room. Half a dozen tables bear sparkling white Irish linens, polished silver, and trays of food.

Seven people in costume stand about, idly sipping drinks and eating sweetmeats.

Because of the clock's fickle nature, regardless of when (or if) the PCs enter this room, it is shortly after the *ebony clock* has struck. The guests here are live, and they are trying to preserve some semblance of sanity. Each is mustering the courage to leave. If the PCs enter, they can hear any of the following quips (DM's discretion):

- "An incredible feat, eh? Prospero's really outdone himself, making *ghosts* . . ."
- "They're actors, really, or magicians, aren't they? How else could they pull that sudden appearance/disappearance act?"
- "Some of the outfits reminded me of Mr. Poe's story; you know, the one about the 'Red Death.' I swear I saw him earlier. . . ."
- "I say, do you suppose all the strange things happening here are paranormal, and not just magicians' tricks? Maybe Poe's come back to haunt the place. . . ."
- "Actually, John, I'd prefer to leave. I've a . . . a headache. I know it's bad form to leave without saying goodbye to our host, but after all, it *is* a masked ball; who's to know when we left?"
- "Good idea! What say we all leave together? A bit less impolite, that."

If the PCs talk to these guests, the seven people resolutely deny any suggestions that real ghosts are about. If informed that the front doors are fixed so no one can leave the manor house, they look askance, clearly disbelieving. If specifically asked about Poe's tale, one of them relates it to the PCs.

PROSPERO HALL

"It's not much of a tale, really: There's a masquerade to while away the time as a plague runs its course. There's the seven rooms, all colored differently, of course, as the prince has duplicated here. Come to think of it, his name's Prospero, just like in the story. Anyway, the ball is lovely until midnight strikes and then, well, everyone dies. Hmmmm, think I will take the butler's advice; my rheumatism tells me more snow is on the way."

10. Gentlemen's Room (Purple Room)

This room is draped in purple. The sliding doors at the north wall, leading into Room #15, are securely bolted. An automaton is present; its statistics are listed under Room #7.

11. Garden Entrance (Green Room)

The third room devoted to reconstructing Poe's tale is draped all in green. Live plants, ivies, and ferns abound here amid flowing green curtains. An open entryway is in the west wall. A man dressed in an exquisite costume reminiscent of the 14th century stands at the north wall, where a pane of scarlet glass covers an archway. A brazier directs light onto the panel and away from this room. He sees you, removes his feathered mask, and slowly moves toward you, holding out his arm as if in escort.

"Felicitations to you all, my friends. I am Prince Prospero, your host. I bid you welcome to my home. I trust you are enjoying the . . . masque?" His voice sounds tense and agitated.

Suddenly the prince bows to his right and murmurs, "Of course, my dear. It is time." Apparently from the room just beyond the glass panel, you hear the deep resonating tones of the clock chiming the hour. Guests shimmer into view all about the room. Your host blanches, then doubles over in pain. Beside him, a woman appears. She is middle-

aged and dressed much like the prince. The right side of her face is crushed in, a broad scar puckering the skin.

The man is Prince Prospero. He is clothed elegantly, though in better lighting, one would say *shabbily*. He wears a mask encrusted with rare feathers and jewels. Prospero has owned this mask since his youth, and it is antiquated compared to the PCs' masks. Prospero's stats are listed in the section "A Pattern of Evil."

The woman with Prospero is Frytha. Unlike all the other ghosts in the hall, she was not formed by the evil synergy between Dracula's curse and the Red Death. Like the other ghosts, she is visible only when the clock chimes. Read or paraphrase the following.

Without even glancing at her companion's convulsions, the woman steps closer and attempts to speak. Her right eye is missing and her mouth is horribly misshapen. Her voice is weak, perhaps from lack of use or the injury she sustained years before.

"Listen well. There's not much time. You must stop the clock or my love will not survive." She gestures toward the glass panel.

The clock chimes the last bell of the hour, and the woman's face fades, her one eye fixed on you pleadingly.

Because of her gruesome features, Frytha is cause for a fear check.

Frytha (first-magnitude ghost): AL LN; Int Very; AC 0/8; MV 12; HD 3; hp 24; THAC0 7; #AT 0; Dmg nil; SA none; SD hit only by +1 or better weapons when ethereal/hit by mundane weapons when corporeal; MR 10%; SZ M (5'3" tall); ML elite (14); XP 975.

If the PCs listened closely to Frytha, they might try to go through the glass panel. The clock has stationed another ghost here, and it attacks two

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rounds after the clock has stopped chiming, regardless of the PCs' actions. (If the PCs are not in this room, he does not seek them out.)

If the PCs have somehow magically viewed Frytha ahead of time, or if they researched Prospero's life and were aware of Frytha's deformity, they have the opportunity to break through the arch *before* the ghost attacks. Its stats follow.

Meron (third-magnitude ghost): AL CE; Int Very; AC -2/4; MV 12; HD 9; hp 71; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; SA charm plants; SD hit only by +2 or better weapons when ethereal/hit only by +1 or better weapons when corporeal; MR 30%; SZ M (6' tall); ML elite (14); XP 6,000.

Meron has the ability to charm plants; his first action is to use that power. In a single round, each PC who does not succeed a Dexterity check becomes entangled by two vines. Each subsequent round, every PC must fend off twice as many vines, requiring double the number of Dexterity checks. Meron can invoke this power for only 4 rounds, after which he abandons his post and turns ethereal.

12. Library (Orange Room)

This room is easily identified as the library, for under the orange drapes, many books line the walls. The morning room is entered via a small antechamber beyond the west wall. The sliding doors in the north wall, leading into the picture gallery, are securely bolted. A third-magnitude ghost guards these doors and will attack only if a character attempts to open them. If the ghost touches a PC, that character loses the memory of the most recent 1d10x10 weeks of his or her life. A successful saving throw vs. spell indicates a temporary memory loss; failure means the memory loss is permanent.

Frellig (third-magnitude ghost): AL CE; Int Very; AC -2/4; MV 12; HD 9; hp 64; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8; SA drain memories; SD hit only by +2 or better weapons when ethereal/hit only

by +1 or better weapons when corporeal; MR 30%; SZ M (5'6" tall); ML elite (14); XP 6,000.

13. Morning Room (White Room)

Draped all in white, the beauty of this room is reminiscent of a recent snowfall. To the north, a broad entry opens into the next room, and you can see violet curtains swaying beyond. On the east wall is an arch blocked by a panel of scarlet glass. A grotesquely costumed man, wearing what appears to be a cape of flayed skin, stands idly before the glass. One long, clawed hand removes his mask to display empty eyesockets.

"Welcome to the 'mourning room,' gentle folk," the man murmurs. He bows in irony. "I'm here as the red death. Who might you be?"

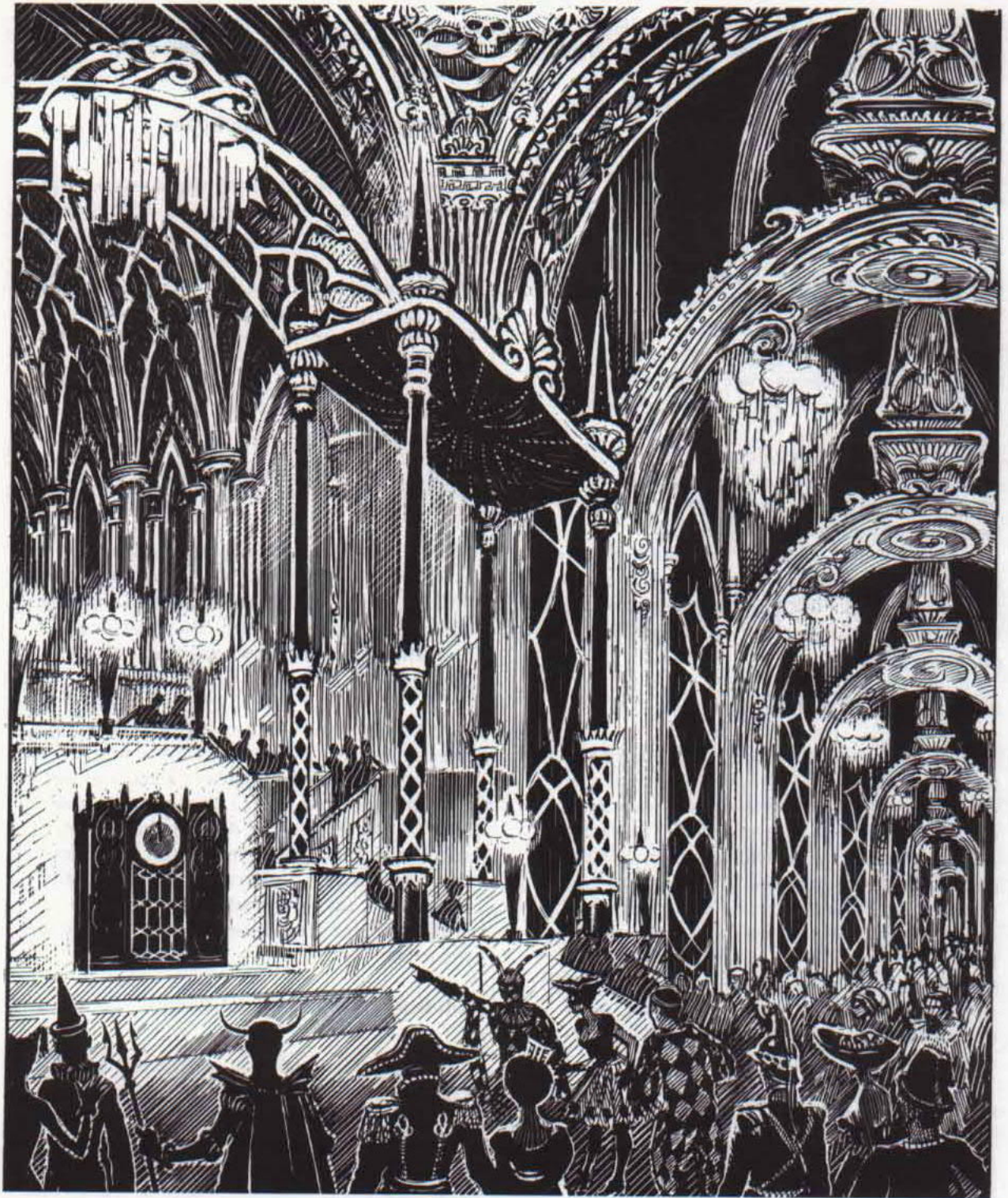
Mather Tuck (second-magnitude ghost): AL CE; Int Very; AC -1/6; MV 12; HD 6; hp 44; THAC0 9; #AT 0; Dmg nil; SA cause despair; SD hit only by +1 or better weapons when ethereal/hit by mundane weapons when corporeal; MR 20%; SZ M (6' tall); ML elite (14); XP 3,000.

Although Mather Tuck can make no physical attacks, he is cause for a fear check and he can cause despair in all characters within 100 feet of him (anyone in the room). PCs must save vs. spell or be overcome by despair. If a save is successful, a PC suffers no effects. If a saving throw fails, that PC suffers a -1 penalty to all attack rolls, saving throws, and proficiency checks. The effect is canceled when a PC leaves the room.

14. Drawing Room (Violet Room)

This large, elegant room is filled with billowing, gossamer curtains of violet, blown about by some unseen source. Along the east wall is an open archway into the picture gallery. A narrow door farther down the same wall is

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partially covered by a violet pane of glass. A man dressed in the latest French fashion, his skin unnaturally pale, stands idly before the glass. One finger examines a sharp, protruding canine. A costumed body lies crumpled on the floor at his feet.

Suddenly the clock begins to toll the hour. Strangely, no invisible "guests" emerge in this room. The man before you smiles, showing his toothy grin. Oddly, the clock chimes eleven times. Surely it isn't that late. Could it be misfiring? Or is something . . . evil at work?

The monster is a nosferatu vampire, attracted to Prospero Hall by the excessive paranormal activity that occurs here. He has made this room his own, destroying the ghosts once anchored to it. He has recently fed on a hapless human, but is still hungry. If faced with overwhelming odds, he merely speaks to the PCs, telling them that what they want is in the gallery. He also points out the pane of violet glass and says snidely, "Or perhaps what you *really* want is through here?" This door leads to Room #4, the cloak room. The moment the PCs turn their backs to him, the vampire attacks them.

Vampire, Nosferatu (1): AL LE; Int Avg; AC 1; MV 12, FI 18(C); HD 8+3; hp 64; THAC0 13/11 with weapon; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+4 (Strength bonus); SA drains Constitution; SD hit only by +1 or better weapons; MR nil; SZ M (6' tall); ML champion (16); XP 2,000.

15. Picture Gallery (Black-and-Red Room)

At last you reach the heart of Prospero Hall—the picture gallery. This long, spacious room, open all the way to the ceiling three stories above, is lined with black, filmy draperies and glass panels of darkest red. All around you, the panels are backlit by the gaslight braziers, and the scintillating light seems to reflect back and forth across the room. The delicate hangings wave around you, obscuring your

view. Thanks to the brightness of the braziers, however, you see a number of arched openings lit in scarlet behind each glass panel.

On the west wall, a clock dominates the view, for it is not hampered by black draperies. It looms twice your height and nearly as wide. In the center is a colorless, leaded-glass casing through which you see the inner workings of a monstrous clock. Massive panels, banded in what appears to be decorative wrought iron, flank the central core of the clock. Bells of various metals glimmer faintly behind the casing in the red light.

This is the climactic scene and the lair of the villain. Refer to the Villains of Gothic Earth Appendix in the rulebook for lair effects, and turn to the section called "A Pattern of Evil" in this booklet for information on the *ebony clock*, its weaknesses, and its automatons.

The clock has an evil sentience. It cannot command its ghost minions within this room, but instead, must rely on its automatons. It can create these at a rate of two per round, although if forced into such rapid production, their quality deteriorates, and the machines attack only once per round. Statistics for automatons are listed under Room #7.

The automatons are not living creatures, though they are sentient. They are basically humanoid in form, and seem constructed of a curious blend of stone and metal, which explains their exceptionally high Armor Class. They are single-minded and do not speak to the PCs, though they understand human speech.

The *ebony clock* relies upon its traps (poison and magical) should anyone attempt to tinker with its central housing. If the PCs are smart enough *not* to tinker with the housing, the clock constructs no automatons, even if the PCs sabotage the bells. If the casing door is opened, the clock issues forth automatons to stop the PCs until it has created 25 machines or is somehow incapacitated—such as by dynamite. Explosives also work on the

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“The Masque of the Red Death”—Synopsis

Poe’s “The Masque of the Red Death” is a short tale. But it is so stark and brilliant in its imagery that visions of it remain with the reader long after the initial reading. For DMs who don’t have Poe’s story available, a short synopsis is presented here.

The “Red Death,” in Poe’s tale, is a disease that devastates the countryside. (In this adventure, the disease called the red death is sent by the entity identified in the rulebook as the Red Death.) Poe sets the stage for this plague in the very first paragraph:

“The ‘Red Death’ had long devastated the country. No pestilence had ever been so fatal, or so hideous. Blood was its Avatar and its seal—the redness and the horror of blood. There were sharp pains, and sudden dizziness, and then profuse bleeding at the pores, with dissolution. . . . And the whole seizure, progress, and termination of the disease were the incidents of half an hour.”

Small wonder that people in Poe’s unnamed country were stricken with fear and panic. Prince Prospero invited “a thousand hale and lighthearted friends” to his castellated abbey to retreat from the pestilence. (For this adventure, Prospero has a Victorian manor house, just outside Bucharest. And his guest list is considerably smaller!) Amply provisioned, the prince and his comrades sought to ride out the plague. To keep boredom at bay, the prince hosted gala events to entertain his friends.

Toward the fifth or sixth month of this self-imposed seclusion, Prospero held a masked ball of unusual voluptuousness. He arranged seven of his most magnificent rooms to be set aside for the ball, and these he decorated with extreme care, if bizarre taste. An excerpt serves best to describe these rooms; the macabre nature of their decor has been preserved in the adventure.

“There were seven—an imperial suite. . . . The apartments were so irregularly disposed that the vision embraced but little more than one at a time. There was a sharp turn at every twenty or thirty yards, and at each a novel effect. To the right and left, in the middle of each wall, a tall and narrow gothic window looked out upon a closed corridor which pursued the windings of the suite. These windows were of stained glass whose color varied in accordance with the prevailing hue of the decorations of the chamber into which it opened. That at the eastern

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automatons; a stick placed within 5 feet of an automaton causes 1d6 points of damage when it explodes (remember, explosives have area effects—see the rulebook under the Combat chapter for details).

Once the PCs have bypassed the automatons, they must still devise a method of preventing the bells from chiming. Prospero cannot be found to ask his opinion; he is in hiding, perhaps unable to bear the anxiety of the next hour. The servants, too, have disappeared. Only Frytha hovers nearby. If the PCs can communicate with her, she can say only that the bells must be stopped, that they must not be allowed to chime.

This portion of the adventure works best if the DM is able to minimize the time available to stop the clock. If the PCs took their time interviewing guests, engaging in melee, and investigating the rooms, this may not be a problem. On the other hand, if the PCs got to the picture gallery quickly, they may believe that they have plenty of time to accomplish their goal. However, time is subject to the DM’s discretion; the clock is fickle and can advance the time whenever it likes. This works best if PCs are allowed to see the clock’s hands suddenly advancing, and if the jumps in time are no more than 20 minutes.

If the PCs cannot stop the clock before the first bell of midnight chimes, the clock hands tick up to two minutes to midnight. It pauses, then the low groan of the pulley system beginning to crank is heard. (A clock this old has lost some of its accuracy, and, of course, it runs fast.) All throughout the manor house, the ghosts become visible. Each begins wailing in pain and horror. Furthermore, something distinctly heavy can be heard moving about from one room to the next. On the fourth chime, that something enters the picture gallery: It is the red death in its physical manifestation. Read or paraphrase the following.

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A strange and fearsome humanoid enters the gallery. It is fully 10 feet tall and is wrapped in gray robes streaked with some dark color, a color that closer inspection reveals is wet, gleaming blood.

The clock, that hideous clock, continues its ponderous chimes. You look up at the cowed figure, perhaps seeking some glimpse of mercy, but there is none—only a hooded shape wrapped in rags of gray. Slowly, an agonizing pain begins to build in your stomach, and the room begins to swirl with bright scarlet lights. You crumple to the ground and hold out your hands. Blood oozes from your pores. A shriek builds in your throat, only to be drowned out by the sudden, disembodied sound of laughter issuing from the formless shroud before you.

The PCs still have a slim chance of escaping or stopping the clock if they can do so before the twelfth chime. They can try to break out of the picture gallery; if they shatter the scarlet panels into Rooms #5, #8, #11, or #13 or head into the water-closets through Room #4, they can try breaking an outside window to escape the manor. If they burst into the transverse corridor, they can flee through empty rooms to #19, the tradesman's entrance. In Room #11, they can escape through the garden doors. As they run, they suffer the growing effects of the plague (as described above), but if they reach the frigid outside air before the last bell tolls, they live.

Of course, fleeing the adventure is not considered a success. The DM is encouraged to make escape as skin-of-the-teeth as possible by throwing any left-over monsters at the PCs or hampering their speed with cowering or catatonic NPCs if their flight is too smooth.

If the PCs manage to prevent the clock from chiming (whether they prevent all 12 chimes or only the final bell), the ebony clock's hands tick all the way through midnight . . . but the final bell does not toll. (If they have blown it to splinters

extremity was hung, for example, in blue—and vividly blue were its windows. The second chamber was purple in its ornaments and tapestries, and here the panes were purple. The third was green throughout, and so were the casements. The fourth was furnished and lighted with orange—the fifth with white—the sixth with violet. The seventh apartment was closely shrouded in black velvet tapestries that hung all over the ceiling and down the walls, falling in heavy folds upon a carpet of the same material and hue. But in this chamber only, the color of the windows failed to correspond with the decorations. The panes here were scarlet—a deep blood color."

Poe describes the lighting accorded to the rooms:

"There was no light of any kind emanating from lamp or candle within the suite of chambers. But in the corridors that followed the suite, there stood, opposite to each window, a heavy tripod, bearing a brazier of fire that projected its rays through the tinted glass and so glaringly illuminated the room. . . . But in the western or black chamber the effect of the firelight that streamed upon the dark hangings through the blood-tinted panes was ghastly in the extreme, and produced so wild a look upon the countenances of those who entered that there were few of the company bold enough to set foot within its precincts at all."

Of all the rooms, only the seventh has anything inside it beyond the draperies described above. Against the west wall in the black room stands a gigantic clock of ebony:

" . . . the hour was to be stricken, there came from the brazen lungs of the clock a sound which was clear and loud and deep and exceedingly musical, but of so peculiar a note and emphasis that, at each lapse of an hour, the musicians of the orchestra were constrained to pause, momentarily, in their performance to hearken to the sound; and thus the waltzers perforce ceased their evolutions; and there was a brief disconcert of the whole gay company; and, while the chimes of the clock yet rang, it was observed that the giddiest grew pale, and the more aged and sedate passed their hands over their brows as if in confused reverie or meditation."

In Poe's story, of course, there were no heroes to interfere with the passage of time—or with the coming of the red death. At the stroke of midnight, the musicians fell silent and the revelers stopped:

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“... before the last echoes of the last chime had utterly sunk into silence, there were many individuals who became aware of the presence of a masked figure which had arrested the attention of no single individual before. . . . there arose at length from the whole company a buzz, or murmur, expressive of disapprobation and surprise—then, finally, of terror, of horror, and of disgust. . . . Even with the utterly lost, to whom life and death are equally jests, there are matters of which no jest can be made. . . . The figure was tall and gaunt, and shrouded from head to foot in the habiliments of the grave. The mask which concealed the visage was made so nearly to resemble the countenance of a stiffened corpse that the closest scrutiny must have difficulty detecting the cheat. . . . the mummer had gone so far as to assume the type of the red death. His vesture was dabbled in *blood*—and his broad brow, with all the features of the face, was besprinkled with the scarlet horror.”

Prince Prospero, along with the others, was struck dumb with terror as the apparition began to move about the seven chambers. But Prospero regained his courage and called out:

“Who dares?” he demanded hoarsely of the courtiers who stood near him—“who dares insult us with this blasphemous mockery? Seize him and unmask him—that we may know whom we have to hang at sunrise, from the battlements!”

No courtier would move, however, and Prospero, shamed at his momentary cowardice, strode after the morbid vision:

“[Prospero] bore aloft a drawn dagger, and had approached, in rapid impetuosity, to within three or four feet of the retreating figure, when the latter, having attained the extremity of the velvet apartment, turned suddenly and confronted his pursuer. There was a sharp cry—and the dagger dropped gleaming upon the sable carpet, upon which, instantly afterwards, fell prostrate in death the Prince Prospero. . . . And one by one dropped the revelers in the blood-bedewed halls of their revel. . . . And the life of the ebony clock went out with that of the last of the gay. And the flames of the tripods expired. And Darkness and Decay and the Red Death held illimitable dominion over all.”

Thus ends “The Masque of the Red Death,” a grim, chilling ending particularly appropriate to RAVENLOFT adventures. Whether the PCs go the way of Poe’s courtiers is for the DM and the players to discover.

with explosives, of course, this result happens at the moment the clock is destroyed.) Read or paraphrase the following.

A sudden, palpable relief sweeps through the manor house. A roar of wind rushes through the room, pulling down all the colored curtains and shattering the glass panels. A joyful cry rises in the air, and for a moment, you can see all the ghosts. They look at you with eyes shining in peace and gratitude, then slowly, one by one, they disappear.

Prince Prospero, followed by his servants, hurries into the room and holds out his hands to you. He is crying unabashedly. “How can I thank you, dear friends? There are no words, no words at all, for what you have done for us.”

Prospero Hall’s Far Reaches

The remaining rooms on this floor are barren chambers that are not used in Prospero’s masquerade. No encounters have been planned for these rooms, nor are the rooms detailed. Enterprising DMs wishing to expand on this adventure can use any good reference book on old houses for details of decor and function. The Victorian era was very rigidly defined, both by social station and by sex, which accounts for the stairwells, corridors, and rooms being so divided as well. An enterprising DM can opt to work within these confines or disregard them.

Like most large manor houses, Prospero Hall has an attic and various cellars for wine, coal, and food storage. Due to space limitations, these areas are left to the DM’s imagination.





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Ravenloft®

Campaign Expansion



Masque *of the* Red Death

— And Other Tales —



Firearms

Name	Cost	Wt	Size	Type	Spd	ROF	S	M	L	Rnds	Dmg ¹
Carbine	\$3.50	7	M	P	7 ²	1	10	25	30	1	2d6-1
Carbine, Repeating	\$12.50	7	M	P	4 ²	4	10	25	30	12	2d6+1
Pistol, Army	\$3.50	3	S	P	3 ³	6	6	15	25	6	2d6+1
Pistol, Navy	\$2.50	3	S	P	3 ³	6	6	15	20	6	2d6-1
Pistol, Derringer	\$5.00	1	S	P	2 ³	1	1	—	—	1	1d6
Rifle	\$5.00	9	M	P	8 ²	1	12	30	40	1	3d6-1
Rifle, Repeating	\$15.00	9	M	P	5 ²	4	12	30	40	15	3d6+1
Scattergun	\$2.50	7	M	P	4 ²	2	1	2	3	2	3d6-2
Shotgun	\$3.00	8	M	P	5 ²	2	1	4	10	2	3d6

¹ Add and reroll any die roll of 6

² If loaded and ready, Speed Factor is 2

³ If loaded and ready, Speed Factor is 1

Missile Weapons

Name	Cost	Wt	Size	Type	Spd	ROF	S	M	L	Dmg S/M	Dmg L
Blowgun	\$5.00	2	L	—	5	2	1	2	3	—	—
• Barbed Dart	\$0.10	0.1	S	P	—	—	—	—	—	1d3	1d2
• Needle	\$0.02	0.1	S	P	—	—	—	—	—	1	1
Long Bow	\$75.00	3	L	—	8	2	1	1	1	—	—
• Flight Arrow (12)	\$0.30	0.1	M	P	—	—	7	14	21	1d6	1d6
• Sheaf Arrow (6)	\$0.30	0.1	M	P	—	—	5	10	17	1d8	1d8
Long Bow, Composite	\$100.00	3	L	—	7	2	1	1	1	—	—
• Flight Arrow (12)	\$0.30	0.1	M	P	—	—	6	12	21	1d6	1d6
• Sheaf Arrow (6)	\$0.30	0.1	M	P	—	—	4	8	17	1d8	1d8
Short Bow	\$30.00	2	M	—	7	2	5	10	15	—	—
• Flight Arrow (12)	\$0.30	0.1	M	P	—	—	—	—	—	1d6	1d6
Short Bow, Composite	\$75.00	2	M	—	6	2	5	10	18	—	—
• Flight Arrow (12)	\$0.30	0.1	M	P	—	—	—	—	—	1d6	1d6
Sling or Slingshot	\$0.50	0.1	S	—	6	1	1	1	1	—	—
• Bullet	\$0.01	0.5	S	B	—	—	5	10	20	1d4+1	1d6+1
• Stone	—	0.5	S	B	—	—	4	8	16	1d4	1d4

¹ Range is based upon ammunition type

Thrown Weapons

Name	Cost	Wt	Size	Type	Spd	ROF	S	M	L	Dmg S/M	Dmg L
Dagger	\$2.00	1	S	P	2	2	1	2	3	1d4	1d3
Hand Axe	\$1.00	5	M	S	4	1	1	2	3	1d6	1d4
Harpoon	\$20.00	6	L	P	7	1	1	2	3	2d4	2d6
Javelin	\$0.50	2	L	P	4	1	2	4	6	1d6	1d6
Knife	\$0.75	0.5	S	P/S	2	2	1	2	3	1d3	1d2
Rock	—	1	S	B	2	1	1	2	4	1d2	1
Spear	\$0.80	5	M	P	6	1	1	2	3	1d6	1d8

Melee Weapons

Name	Cost	Wt	Size	Type	Spd	S/M	L
Baton or Cane	\$0.75	2	S	B	3	1d4	1d2
Blackjack or Sap	\$0.25	1	S	B	2	1d2	Nil
Brass Knuckles	\$1.50	1	S	B	1	*	**
Club or Cudgel	—	3	M	B	4	1d6	1d3
Cutlass	\$12.00	4	M	S	5	1d6	1d8
Dagger or Hunting Knife	\$2.00	1	S	P	2	1d4	1d3
Hand Axe	\$1.00	5	M	S	4	1d6	1d4
Knife	\$0.75	0.5	S	P/S	2	1d3	1d2
Machete	\$2.50	4	M	S	5	1d4	1d6
Rapier or Foil	\$15.00	4	M	P	4	1d6+1	1d8+1
Sabre	\$17.00	5	M	S	4	1d6+1	1d8+1
Sword Cane	\$25.00	4	M	P	3	1d4	1d6
Whip	\$0.25	1	M	—	8	1d2	1

* +2 to unarmed melee damage

**+1 to unarmed melee damage

Explosives

Type	Cost	Wt	Dmg/Rad
Dynamite	\$1.50	0.5	1d6/5 ft
Gunpowder	\$2.50	6	Special
Nitroglycerine	\$2.00	0.1	1d6/5 ft

Demolition Accessories

Type	Cost	Wt
Detonator	\$10.00	10
Fuse (50')	\$5.00	5
Wire (50')	\$2.50	5

Turning Undead

Type or HD of Undead	Level of Mystic													
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10-11	12-13	14+		
Skeleton or 1 HD	13	10	7	4	1	1	1*	1*	1*	1*	1*	1*	1*	
Zombie	16	13	10	7	4	1	1	1*	1*	1*	1*	1*	1*	
Ghoul or 2 HD	19	16	13	10	7	4	1	1	1*	1*	1*	1*	1*	
Shadow or 3-4 HD	20	19	16	13	10	7	4	1	1	1*	1*	1*	1*	
Wight or 5 HD	—	20	19	16	13	10	7	4	1	1	1*	1*	1*	
Ghast	—	—	20	19	16	13	10	7	4	1	1	1*	1*	
Wraith or 6 HD	—	—	—	20	19	16	13	10	7	4	1	1	1	
Mummy or 7 HD	—	—	—	—	20	19	16	13	10	7	4	1	1	
Spectre or 8 HD	—	—	—	—	—	20	19	16	13	10	7	4	1	
Vampire or 9 HD	—	—	—	—	—	—	20	19	16	13	10	7	4	
Ghost or 10 HD	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	20	19	16	13	10	7	
Lich or 11+ HD	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	20	19	16	13	10	
Special	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	20	19	16	13	

Adj Conditions

- 2 Within the lair of a supernatural creature
- 4 If master of the lair attempts to thwart the turning

* The undead creature is destroyed if it cannot flee at its current maximum rate of movement or escape the mystic's line of sight.

Item Saving Throws

Item	Cr. Blow	Dis.	Fall	Mag. Fire	Norm. Fire	Cold	Lght.	Elec.	
Bone/Ivory	11	16	19	6	9	3	2	8	2
Cloth	12	—	19	—	16	13	2	18	2
Glass	5	20	19	14	7	4	6	17	2
Leather	10	3	19	2	6	4	3	13	2
Metal	13	7	17	3	6	2	2	12	2
Oils ¹	16 ²	—	19	—	19	17	5	19	16
Paper, etc.	16	7	19	—	19	19	2	19	2
Potions ¹	15 ²	—	19	—	17	14	13	18	15
Pottery	4	18	19	11	3	2	4	2	2
Rock/Crystal	3	17	18	8	3	2	2	14	2
Rope	12	2	19	—	10	6	2	9	2
Wood, thick	8	10	19	2	7	5	2	12	2
Wood, thin	9	13	19	2	11	9	2	10	2

¹ This does not apply to the container of the oil or potion.

² The oil or potion is probably mixed inseparably with the acid.

Modifiers to Saving Throws

- +5 vs. Falls onto soft surface.
- 1 vs. Falls for every 5 feet beyond the first.
- +2 vs. Cold if the temperature change is gradual.

Bonuses to Saves vs. Spells Causing Physical Damage

- 1 Target is 25% concealed
- 2 Target is 50% concealed
- 3 Target is 75% concealed
- 4 Target is 90% concealed
- 2 Target is 25% covered
- 4 Target is 50% covered
- 7 Target is 75% covered
- 10 Target is 90% covered

Explosives vs. Physical Structures

Target Material	Minimum Charge ¹	Saving Throw
Soft wood	1	20
Hard wood	1	18
Earth	2	15
Soft stone	2	10
Hard stone	3	8
Metal	4	5

¹ Charge may be halved with Demolition proficiency check.

Suggested Powers Checks

Criminal/Violent Act	Check ¹
Assault, unprovoked	*1/2/3
Assault, grievous	1/2/4/6
Betrayal, major	1/3/6/9
Betrayal, minor	*1/3/6
Extortion	*2/5/8
Lying	**/*/*1
Murder, brutal	3/6/10/†
Murder, premeditated	2/3/6/10
Theft, grave robbing	*1/5/7
Theft, major	*1/4/7
Theft, minor	**/*3/6
Threat of violence	**/*1/2
Torture, routine	4/7/†/†
Torture, sadistic	10/†/†/†

Unholy Acts	Check ²
Breaking a tenet	*1/2/5
Breaking an oath	*2/5/10
Breaking a vow	*5/10/†
Desecration	*4/8/†

Curses	Check ³
Embarrassing	2%
Frustrating	4%
Troublesome	8%
Dangerous	16%
Lethal	32%

Spellcasting	Check
Casting spell for good	1% per level
Casting spell for evil	2% per level
Necromancy spell	2x normal chance

¹ Numbers indicate percentage chance for acts against: evil NPCs or Monsters / neutral NPCs or strangers / good NPCs or friends / PCs, family, or innocents.

² Numbers indicate percentage chance for acts against: evil faiths / neutral faiths / good faiths / a character's own faith.

³ Check is made whether curse succeeds or fails.

* No check required.

† Act of Ultimate Darkness; automatic failure or chance greater than 10% as DM desires.



Character THACOs

Character Class	Character Level																			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Adept	20	20	20	19	19	19	18	18	18	17	17	17	16	16	16	15	15	15	14	14
Mystic	20	20	20	18	18	18	16	16	16	14	14	14	12	12	12	10	10	10	8	8
Soldier	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Tradesman	20	20	19	19	18	18	17	17	16	16	15	15	14	14	13	13	12	12	11	11

Creature THACOs

Hit Dice	½	1-1	1+	2+	3+	4+	5+	6+	7+	8+	9+	10+	11+	12+	13+	14+	15+	16+
	20	20	19	19	17	17	15	15	13	13	11	11	9	9	7	7	5	5

Attack Roll Modifiers

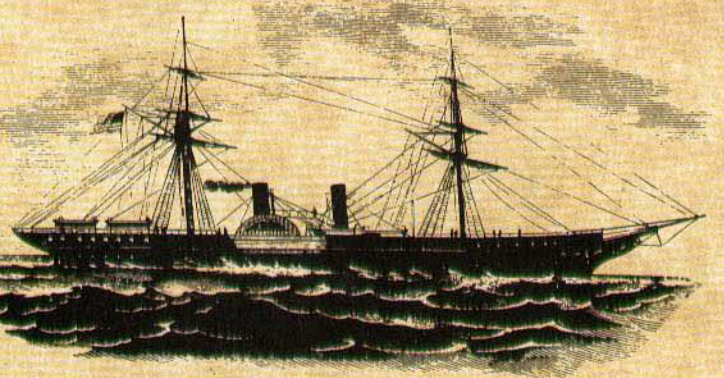
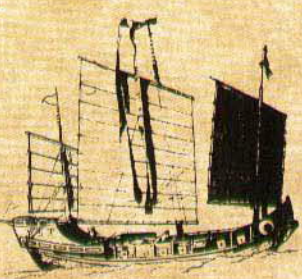
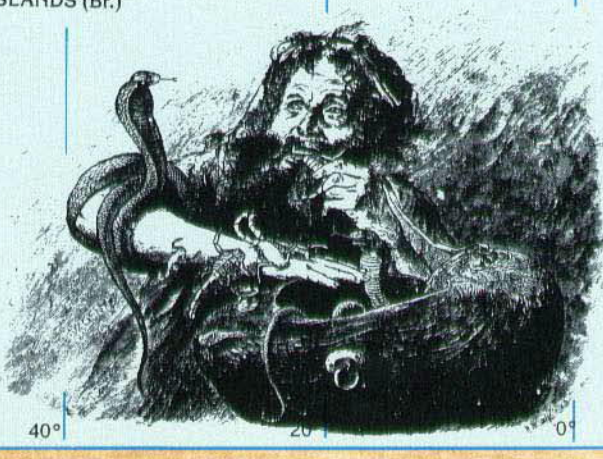
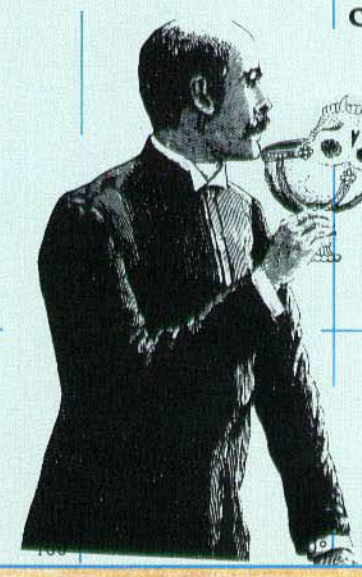
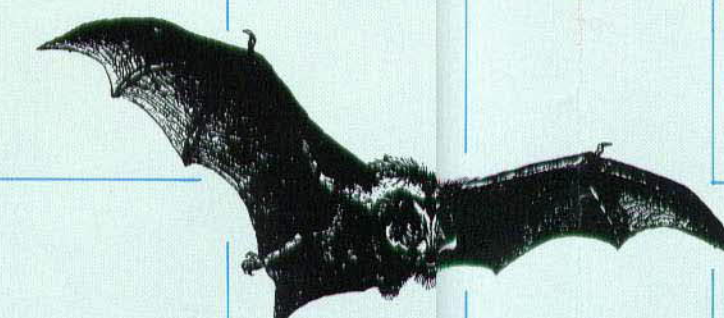
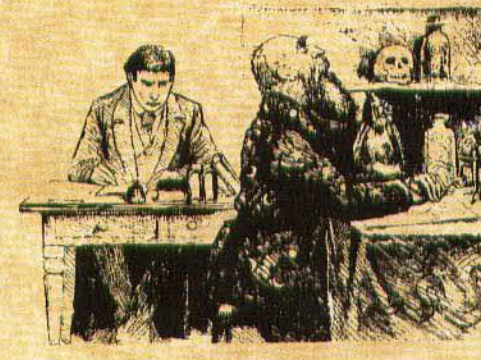
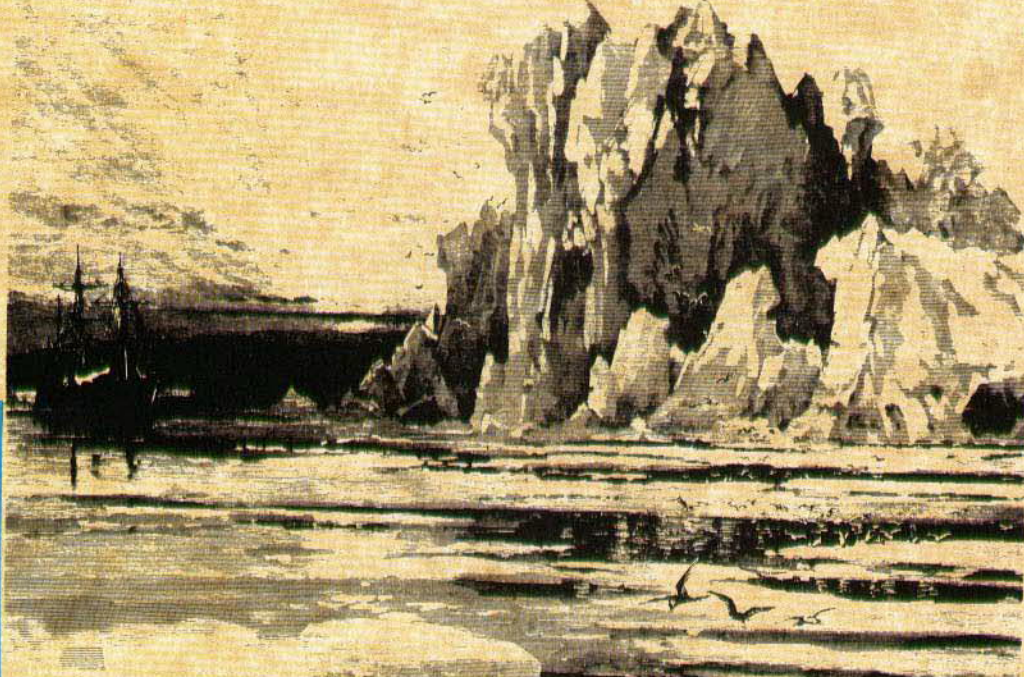
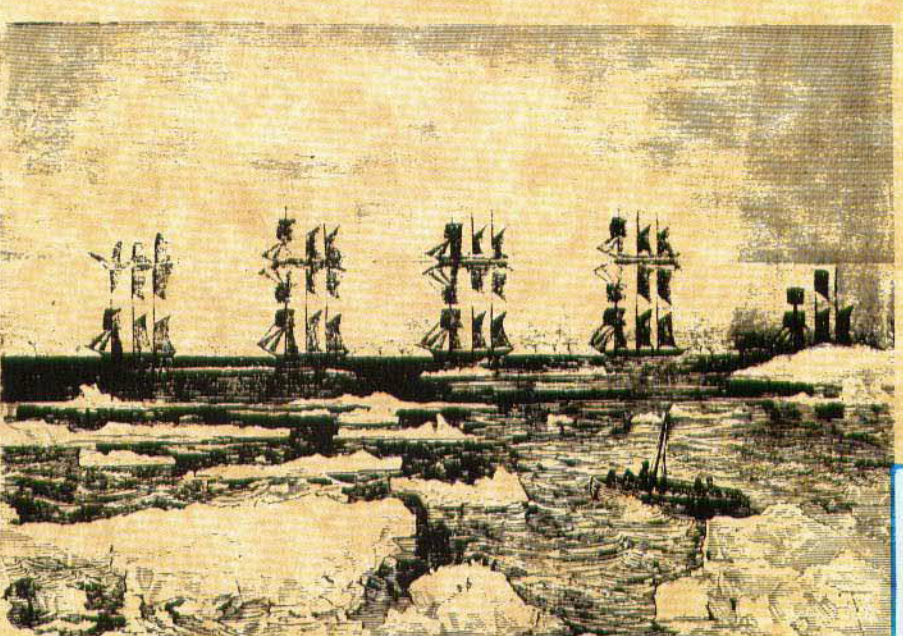
Adj	Condition
+4	Defender stunned or prone
+4	Firearms, aimed fire
+2	Defender off-balance
+2	Attack from rear
+1	Attacker on higher ground
+1	Defender surprised
*	Defender sleeping or held
**	Firearms, Blind fire
-1	Defender 25% concealed
-2	Defender 25% covered

Ravenloft

Campaign Setting

Masque of the Red Death

Map of the World



100XXXX001

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons[®]
2nd Edition

Ravenloft[®]

Campaign Expansion

Masque OF THE Red Death

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By William W. Connors, D.J. Heinrich, Shane Hensley, and Colin McComb

SCANNED BY: JACK D. KNIGHT

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