More fodder for your 'The Midderlands' OSR campaign setting.

IN THIS ISSUE:

- Meet the Midderlander: Juan Ochoa — The Pixel Wizard
- Rumours from The Haven Gazette.

Tore green for your game

old school

Issue 5 May 2020

- Abbots Bream:
- A merchant town in Staffershire.
- The Town Market: A market in the town of Abbots Bream
- More Slightly Less Shit Tables. A New Class: The Scrottish Immortal
- March Woodkin, Silver Hand Rings,
- Legendary Turnips and more...



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## SUBMISSIONS

Do you want to contribute an article or artwork to the Midderzine?

Why not drop an email to glynn@monkeyblooddesign.co.uk with the title 'Midderzine Article' with a quick overview. It can be really short (a few sentences), or a few pages.

If we use it, you will be credited above in the relevant issue and receive a complimentary softcover copy.

## WHERE CAN I GET MORE STUFF?

Well, here: https://monkeyblooddesign.co.uk/store/

Here: http://www.drivethrurpg.com/browse/pub/7771/MonkeyBlood-Design

## & here: http://glynnseal.redbubble.com

Also follow us on Kickstarter to keep an eye out for future projects.



## INTRODUCTION

## Welcome to Issue 5!

#### Hello Midderfolk,

It seems scandalous. I am working on this issue whilst Issue 4—which is complete and awaiting lockdown to abate before putting up on the website and DriveThruRPG—sits next to me in physical format waiting to be released.

If anything, lockdown has actually increased my availability to work on things; my online social activity, more time to prepare content, and more Internet gaming.

The gaming landscape has changed and if anything, those that shied away from online gaming have been forced to embrace it to get their RPG fix.

Everyone has had time to be creative, and even the creatives have gone into overdrive producing so much gaming content for us. It's been great to see.

There's not a lot that we can thank this pandemic for, but I think, by and large, that our roleplaying games communities have gained.

I'm glad that I get time to explore Abbots Bream a bit more, and provide some slight snippets into what is the home town of The Silver Hand. I love developing the setting and one day I hope to reveal the 'Big Plot' hook that underlies it... but now isn't the time.

I hope that you and your families are safe and well and you are able to look on the brightest of sides in all of this.

Anyway, with luck, this issue will provide some amusement and gamejuice for you!

Remember, stay in the light of the gloombug lanterns. Thank you! Glynn (May 2020).

p.s. Here's a pig-faced orc for your viewing pleasure!

## MEET THE MIDDERLANDER

This article is where we promote the work of another person that has helped us in our journey of self-publishing, and whose work we greatly admire.

In this issue, we welcome...

## JUAN OCHOA

Juan has been involved in providing art for all three Midderlands-related hardcovers to date: *The Midderlands*, *The Midderlands Expanded*, and *The City of Great Lunden*. Juan's style is a joy to behold and I am thrilled everytime he submits stuff... Just wait until you see the *Ryecroft* art later this year. So, without further ado...

WHERE DO YOU LIVE AND IS IT COOL?: I live in Colombia, South America. It is cool but heartrendingly sad sometimes.

WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT FAVOURITE RPG?: Runequest: Roleplaying in Glorantha

WHAT IS YOUR ALL-TIME FAVOURITE RPG?: It's an even split between Fate Core and Transhuman Space

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE MIDDERLANDS-RELATED THING?: Gloomium!

IF YOU LIVED IN THE MIDDERLANDS, WHERE WOULD YOU LIVE?: Great Lunden obviously. Better takeout options.

WHAT IS YOUR BEST PIECE OF RPG WORK TO DATE (EXCLUDING THE MIDDERLANDS, OBVS) AND WHERE CAN WE FIND IT?: People seem to like my work for Monster of the Week a lot.

It can be found here (in PDF format) on DrivethruRPG:

https://www.drivethrurpg.com/product /143518/Monster-of-the-Week

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE FOOD?: Barley and raw fish, impossible to decide.

DO YOU HAVE A WEBSITE?: I do! It's http://juanochoa.co and you can see some of my most recent work there.

How CAN WE COMMISSION YOU?: Drop me a line on twitter, my site's contact link, or to ochoa@gmail.co



# The Haven Gazette

The Latest in Hushed Murmurings from across Havenland

This Month's Gael/Grimm count		
Murders	175	
Hangings	4 <sup>11</sup>	
Burnings	94	
Taken in the night	26	
Possessions	8	

Lost in sewers	40
Drowned	312
Mudcow stampede	іс
Building collapse	67
Lost at sea	447
Executed by witchfinders	164

Lost in the middergloom	. 66
Consumed by neighbours	3
Missing	1,941
Taken by a plague	
Eaten by large snake	2
Choked on vegetables	33

## Ogo Blakemore Found

The fugitive of Blackwych has been found dead in a gutter on the outskirts of Walshale, his head severed clean off.

He was identified by his two distinctive tattoos; a mermaid with a medusa's head, and an ornate shield design on his back.

The mask of pig orc, along with his head have still not been found, and a reward of 25 gold quids has been offered by the militia captain for the safe return of the mask.

## Strange Vessel Washed Ashore in Port Mable

The wreck of a wooden ship has been washed up on the beach at Port Mable on the east coast.

The ship is of a design never before seen in the Haven Isles, being of an enclosed hull design which looks to be capable of sailing beneath the waves whilst keeping its occupants relatively dry.

The vessel was decorated in serpent designs and motifs, and although no screw were found onboard, snakes wriggled from broken barrels in its hold.

## Branchspite Golem Seen in Oldfeld Woods

The mad wizard, Demetrius Gruber, has informed the De Wesselings of the sighting of a branchspite golem in the northern reaches of Oldfeld Woods.

He saw the frightening creature whilst out collecting spell components specifically baneberries—in the dusk hours.

Lord Kurn De Wesseling has offered a reward of 50 gold quids to anyone that finds and kills the beast, and provides proof of the ordeal.

## Nether Fern Needed in Netherseal

William of Greyfort is looking for brave souls to descend into the Middergloom, find and gather a cartload of nether fern, and return it to him at his tower in western Netherseal.

He needs the fern before the next full moon and is willing to pay 10 gold quids per cart load up to a maximum of five cartloads.

He can temporarily loan equipment that might assist would-be explorers.

## THE TOWN OF ABBOTS BREAM

The Midderlands Map Hex 2104

## INTRODUCTION

There is a lord of Abbots Bream, Lord Howald

Grimmershaw, but he has Lord Howald Grimmershaw no real power. He often

appears forlorn, as if a great weight bears down on him. And indeed it does. For he is a puppet of the merchant's guilds of the town, with The Silver Hand seemingly having more control over his strings than any other. Many believe that his life would be forfeit if he was to upset the guilds, and that his hands are tied. Whilst that may be the case, he lives in luxury and finery within Abbot Keep in the centre of town, paid for by the wealth of the merchants.



They do say that "gold quids and a store full of turnips can't buy you happiness.!"

There are a cluster of influential merchant guilds in the town and outlying areas. From here, trade is controlled across most of the centre of Havenland. Supply routes stretch as far north as

Great Lunden. Some of the merchant companies are listed in the table below.

The town has a number of notable locations as follows:

#### I) BLETHIN'S CARTWRIGHT

Herman Blethin is the first person in town to go to if you need work done on your wagon or cart. He makes a good living, with fleet deals for almost all the merchants in town. He has recently been taking bribes from The Silver

Merchants of Abbots Bream			
Company Name	Head	Commodities/Services	
The Silver Hand	The Silver One	Anything and everything	
Forty Barrels Trading	Kirk Carling	Beer, mead, ale, and spirits	
QUIDLAND COMMODITIES	Daisy Dodds	Small items at low costs. Anything from produce per item to iron nails	
Goblin Head	Master Rufus Yarreth	Quarried stone and marble	
Hasten's	Sybil Hasten	Herbs, spices, flora, and fungi	
Cobblepot Antiques	Ebenezer Grout	Antiques and curiosities	
Trutter's Trading	Trutter Brothers, Ernest and Ernold.	Glass and pottery	
BIG BASTARDS	Owen Barrow	Timber	
Simple Slaughter	Merk Darlow	Meat	
GRINNING TURNIPS	Rafik Alhambra	Produce (fruits and vegetables)	



Hand to work defects into other merchant's wagons to ensure delays of shipments.

#### 2) FORTY BARRELS WAREHOUSE

One of a clutch of Forty Barrels' warehouses dotted around the town and outlying area. This one stores the more expensive products that Kirk Carling's company trades in—typically muchsought-after wines and spirits. He has good ties with Willigar the Red at the Fullmead Brewery in Burnton.

This warehouse is heavily-protected with discreet manned-guarding and inner warning systems of *lockwork constructs, magic mouths*, and snare and pit traps. Anyone breaking in is not usually heard from again.

#### 3) THE GREEN TOADSTOOL INN

Run by the aged, ex-wagon guard Seth Rampton. The structure is painted in a gaudy green, and decorated with paintings of green toadstools. It is a three-storey, timber-framed building with thirteen rooms and a seperate stable behind.

The ground floor taproom is often filled with travelling merchants or wagon guards. Every Wednesday, the voluptuous local singer, Maverice from The Redhouse Villa performs to wolfwhistles and drunken hollering.

## 4) MASTER YARRETH'S VILLA

The owner of the Goblin Head trading company lives in this well-appointed red-roofed villa on the west edge of the town. Built from the best quarried stone in Havenland, the structure is awash with ornate carved details. The atrium is lined with elaborate, lifesized, white marble statues of naked men and women. The statues come to life and attack any intruders who do not state the phrase *"Hold Thy Stone, Brothers and Sisters of Tarreth"* when entering the atrium.

#### 5) The Silver Hand Headquarters

The operations of The Silver Hand are coordinated from this building. As no one has even seen The Silver One, it is not clear if he visits this location personally.

Three stories tall and covered in freshly-painted whitewash, the edifice gleams in the drab. High-ups in The Silver Hand come and go daily, receiving their instructions and tasks. These black-cloaked managers tend to arrive with bodyguards, stay a few hours, then leave. Two of the more wellknown high-ups are; Hallam 'Fingers' Briscoe—known for his like of bending the fingers of others back until they break, and 'Brick' Wessing-no one knows his first name but this brute of a man finds a sadistic joy in bashing two palm-sized stones together between the nether regions of folks that get in his way.

The Silver Hand trade in anything, and are not beyond subterfuge, false information, and murder to get things done.

Some informed minds have started to question if this is the same 'The Silver One' that advises the Queen.

#### б) Аввот Кеер

Lord Howald Grimmershaw resides in this black stone keep with his wife and two daughters. He rarely leaves the keep other than to make tightly-controlled public appearances outside the Town Market, addressing matters of importance affecting the town. The townsfolk refer to him as 'He who doesn't rule' or 'Lard Grimmershaw' likening him to an ineffective lump of animal fat.

The keep is well-guarded, mainly because of its inner opulence when compared to the rest of the town at large.

The tithes he receives from the populace are matched by the merchant guild's bribes and kickbacks, which are not passed onwards to the Queen.

Lord Grimmershaw's tax collector, Seth Mulesworth, is secretly ensconced in the employ of The Silver Hand. It is unclear if Grimmershaw is aware.

7) THE TOWN MARKET

See page 9 (New Location) for more details.

## 8) Workshop of Javier the Cooper

Javier Degas is an olive-skinned foreigner who makes and repairs barrels. He works the wood and makes the hoops for all manner of barrels, casks, tuns, vats, and troughs. He is kept busy with outsourced work from the breweries in Burnton, and also dribs and drabs of work from Forty Barrels Trading. Javier makes special barrels, inside which an adult can hide. They have false tops and bottoms to allow inspection without revealing their true nature. The false areas are filled with the relevant contents such as produce or liquids, but also have spaces for adding lead weights to aid in deception. These are sought after by assassins looking to dispose of bodies, thieves needing to sneak into protected places, wanted folk needing to escape the authorities, and all manner of other inventive uses.

## 9) THE BLITHEN TAVERN

A sprawling tavern run by Eallis Broom, a likeable woman in her forties. She as spy for Lord acts а the Grimmershaw, reporting on movements and loose-lipped gossip of the higher-ups in the various merchant guilds. She lures them in with 'Half Price Drinks for Merchant Guild Members'.

#### 10) The Redhouse Villa

This disorderly house known as the Redhouse Villa is where Madam Lucinda Synder and her retinue of ladies and men provide a relaxing environment for those seeking pleasures of the flesh. The lithe yet bosomy singer, Maverice is popular with the clientele. Maverice, like Eallis at the The Blithen Tavern is in the covert employ of Lord Grimmershaw sharing any and all secrets revealed.

#### 11) GOLDEN MYCENA GENERAL

Store

Unusually, this store is run by a largenosed garden goblin known as Slug Shroom. Wearing his trademark capotain hat, Slug is very amiable and holds a good stock of goods. He offers gossip about the locals for one gold quid.

#### 12) BARTLETT FARM

There are about a hundred pig farms in the Midderlands and they have all been used to get rid of murdered bodies at some point, some more than others.

Joseph Bartlett's pig farm is different. His pigs are only ever fed on truffles mixed with old carrots and turnips, giving his pig's meat a unique flavour. Truffles are abundant in and around March Woods but finding them is not easy.

Luckily for Bartlett, he has a secret weapon, Gertrude. Gertrude is an old sow that can smell a truffle from 30 feet away, even if buried a foot deep. Consequently, the old sow is worth a lot of money and Joseph is very protective.

## NEW LOCATION

## The Town Market

See inner front cover illustration, and page 10 for market plan and vendor table. Also refer to Abbots Bream map location 7.

The Town Market is where small businesses and common Abbotfolk sell their wares. The stalls within are booked daily by 'random' allocation, and having a regular table is not guaranteed unless you can bribe the Town Market official and tax collector, Gregor Seelith. Gregor is technically in the employ of Lord Grimmershaw, but answers mostly to The Silver Hand behind the scenes.

Gregor charges a 10% tax on profits, which he gives to his masters.

Gregor also controls 'The Bell', which is a brass bell located on the side of the Town Market structure and when rung causes purchasers to pay an additional 50% for their goods without their knowing or recollection.

This extra revenue is handed over to Gregor by the sellers at the end of the day, again without their knowledge or recollection.

The bells effects last for 1 hour, and can be used once per day. Anyone stealing or defacing the bell is locked up in the cells beneath Abbot Keep never to be seen again.

Gregor struts around the market clad in black staring at Abbotfolk with contempt under his leather bycocket hat. He helps himself to produce, taking a lone bite and placing it back on the stalls, sometimes spitting it out onto the floor. Whilst the vendors tend to hate him, they also know that it is wise to keep on his right side and feign respect.

Sometimes, Gregor brings his pet terrier with him for company. Rex is a meanspirited, yapping, snarling asshole of a dog that nips and bites anyone reaching out to stroke it. Rex tends to urinate against the stalls of the market, while Gregor laughs.



The Town Market V	Vendors Tables
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Table	Vendor	Qualities Wares		
Α	Catherine	Apprehensive and	pprehensive and Turnips and parsnips	
	Montague	industrious		
В	Dunstan Sharpe	Intelligent and	Carrots and cabbages	
		impressionable		
С	Richard King	Sentimental and slothful	Onions and leeks	
D	Beatrice Johnson	Ardent and talented	Potatoes	
E	Mildred Morris	Dirty and irresponsible	Almost-stale bread	
F	Carissa Potter	Candid and ribald	Jams and preserves	
G	Obediah Smith	Timid and picky	Antiques and curiosities	
Η	Ivy Squires	Efficient and stern	Pottery	
Ι	Dunstan Hamnett	t Methodical and impatient Nails and ironmonger		
J	Dexter Goldsworth	Cautious and dextrous	Fungi and molds	
K	Agatha Fairbairn	Callous and selfish	Small, edible dead animals	
L	Ivy Elliot	Hot-headed and cooperative	Pickled eyeballs	
М	Benedict Abbott	Intolerant and lame Religious idols, mantras,		
			and prayer books	
N	Cuthbert Harris	Peaceful and even-tempered Medicines and herbs		
0	Alfred Cooper	Discreet and grouchy Reasonably fresh meat		

## SLIGHTLY LESS SHIT ...

More slightly less shit stuff tables.

## SLIGHTLY LESS SHIT CURIOSITIES

1030	Result		
I	A silver coin with a concealed compartment for hiding secret notes.		
2	A fake poop made of fired clay and painted to look realistic.		
3	A parchment map of Oldenwale marked with "Buried here, by the White Tree".		
4	A gloombug lantern casing engraved underneath with 'Property of Lord Mung'.		
5	A leather gauntlet with an iron plate across the knuckles set with animal teeth.		
б	A 6 inch long silver clockwork gloombug that lights up at the back and flies		
	around for 2 Rounds per operation.		
7	A dusty leather book titled 'A Treatise on the Sewers of Great Lunden'.		
8	A leather pouch filled with whispering voices "Murderer!"		
9	An old severed goat head, eyes replaced with green swirling emeralds.		
10	A white mouse that talks. Actually an old, <i>polymorphed</i> magic-user with amnesia.		
11	An enchanted cart wheel that increases the weight of a cart by 20%.		
12	A 20ft square tarpaulin that makes any living creature beneath it invisible.		
13	An iron hedgehog doorstop. Emits a permanent <i>hold portal</i> spell, instead keeping		
	doors open.		
<sup>1</sup> 4	A desiccated bat with outstretched wings that glides up to 100 feet when thrown.		
١٢	A large and spiky conch shell. Recites nursery rhymes when offered up to an ear.		
16	A huge crab shell fashioned into a shield and painted with offensive words.		
17	A pot of green paint, which starts off green and changes colours as it empties.		
18	A large branch from a silver birch tree that's impossible to break.		
19	A shard of quartz that hums when touched to anyone on less that half Hit Points.		
20	A red fez hat that makes 4 hours of sleep as effective as 8 hours of sleep.		
21	A 1-inch tall lead figurine of a painted-badly, horned creature.		
22	A set of 6 six-sided gaming dice that never roll ones or sixes.		
23	A palm-sized, carved ivory mudcow. Turns into a real mudcow 1/day for 1 hour.		
24	A 36 gallon empty barrel with a 56 gallon capacity.		
25	A quill that writes invisible messages which appear when rubbed over with mucus.		
26	A human skeleton for anatomical teaching. Animates at midnight and does chores.		
27	An elaborate white wig which allows its wearer to safely ride a mudcow.		
28	A leather jerkin which provides the benefits of leather armour, but the Armour		
	Class benefits of plate armour, and also makes the wearer fail all Saving Throws.		
29	A white ruff which allows its wearer to win all eating competitions.		
30	A 3-foot long woollen oorgthrax draught excluder.		

1D30	Animal	Traits	When
I	Aardvark	Urinates	At loud noises
2	Aye-aye	Makes hissing sound	When hungry
3	Badger	Bites owner	When tired
4	Bird, Albatross	Does a shit	When thirsty
5	Bird, Crow	Squawks or growls	When a combat starts
б	Bird, Pigeon	Shed its skin	When entering a town/city
7	Bird, Raven	Startles	When it smells beer
8	Bird, Seagull	Becomes torpid	When it smells bread
9	Bumblebee	Becomes rigid	When it smells mud cow dung
10	Chameleon	Drools	When a bell tolls
11	Crab	Vomits	When it's dark
12	Fish, Perch	Sneezes a hail of mucus	When it sees the royal heraldry
13	Fish, Pike	Falls asleep	When it hears a dog barking
14	Fish, Salmon	Mimics a human voice	When it sees a cat
١٢	Gerbil	Cries	When it sees a mouse
16	Grass Snake	Eats clothing	When a sword is drawn
17	Hedgehog	Eats rations	When it sees blood
18	Jellyfish	Dry humps	When it hears thunder
19	Lamb	Chases nearest child	When it rains
20	Lobster	Runs off waiting for	When it sees a [insert hair
		someone to chase it	colour]-haired woman
21	Moth	Trembles/shakes	When it sees a fat man
22	Pangolin	Farts	When it hears the word, "Walk"
23	Piglet	Rolls over to have its belly/stomach/abdomen rubbed	When it hears the phrase, "What's your business here?"
24.	Rat	Becomes ravenous	When it gets stroked
25	Sloth	Runs off and hides	When it gets hurt
20 20	Slow Loris	Hides, scared	During a solar eclipse
27	Spider	Sneezes	During a new moon
28	Spider Monkey	Jumps up and down on the spot	During a lunar eclipse
29	Stoat	Turns into a stone statue	On the stroke of noon
30	Terrapin	Turns into a wooden statue	During a storm

## Slightly Less Shit Animal Companions/Familiars/Pets

Advantages
Can talk.
Has telepathy.
Can sniff out bread.
Can sniff out expensive wine.
Can sniff out cheese.
Can assume a green, gaseous form.
Can turn invisible.
Urinates honeyed mead.
Can turn into another similar-sized animal.
Stools are edible.
Can pick pockets.
Excretes a poison, that causes those poisoned to be -1 on saving throws.
Has a breath weapon that deals 1 HP damage per round.
Gaze turns cheese into ham.
Moves at twice normal speed.
Can cause silence centred on itself.
Can fetch suitably-sized objects.
Can increase its size by double.
Can decrease its size by half.
Can sniff out middium or other precious metals.
Can surround itself in wreath of flames. Attackers suffer 1 HP damage per round.
Can sniff out emeralds or other precious stones.
Can release a stinking fart that causes everyone in 20 ft to be -1 on all attacks and saving throws.
Can find traps 3 in 6, when searching.
Plays an instrument, very well.
Can find secret doors 3 in 6, when searching.
Can play <i>WitchPig</i> or other gambling game, very well.
Can vomit a <i>Cure Light Wounds</i> potion once per week.
Can smell a witch from 1 mile away.
Can smell a witchfinder from 1 mile away.
Page 13

The following is a table of artifacts that can be found if you scratch beneath the surface of the earth in the Haven Isles.

They are most often found buried in the ground near ditches, turned up by

ploughing fields, or deliberate excavation. These items are often worn, rusted, smashed, or with several missing pieces, but sometimes (2% chance) it's something special—at the Game Master's discretion.

	Old Goman Artifacts
1030	Result
I	Some silver coins from the reign of Emperor Radicus worth 1d20 gold quids
2	Some gold coins from the reign of Emperor Plonicius worth 1d100 gold quids
3	Ivory gaming pieces shaped into woodland animals and goblins
4	Some six and twenty-sided, stone and bone gaming dice
5	A well-made iron gladius (short sword)
б	A silver, bronze, and steel centurion's helmet with white plumage
7	An ornate silver filigree mirror
8	Iron fishhooks
9	A gold signet ring with engraved message on inside of band worth 1d10 gold quids
10	A bronze belt buckle formed into a wolf's head
II	An iron stylus for writing in wax
12	A golden hoop earring set with a piece of jade worth 1d10 gold quids
13	Am ornate silver pugio (dagger) with scabbard
14	Several iron pilum (throwing spear) tips
١٢	An iron cassis (legionnaire's helmet)
16	An ornate centurion's breastplate decorated with a stag's head in bronze detailing
17	A red and gold decorated scutum (legionnaire's shield)
18	An oval cavalry shield decorated in turquoise and grey lacquer
19	A pair of leather caligae (boots/sandals)
20	A wooden ballista
21	Silver legionnaire medals worth 1d20 gold quids
22	Shards of pottery from cooking utensils
23	Shards of red roof tile from a large nearby villa
24	Carved stone figures that once adorned the cornices of a luxurious villa
25	Colourful mosaic tiles
26	A silver and steel optio's (centurion's chosen man) helmet
27	Lead from and old water pipe system
28	A silver and iron cavalry helmet, with full face visor shaped into a human face
29	A bronze docedahedron with holes in each face
30	A painted amphora depicting a bathing scene

## Old Goman Artifacts

## "HONOUR AMONG THIEVES"

#### by Gary Dawkins

The large town of Broom, with its narrow roads and pointy, steep-pitched roofs, soon fell quiet in the darkening hours. A heavy mist beleaguered the night, slowly drowning the town with lime wisps.

On the rooftops above, the brute known as Gilgo —no last name, but with more than a degree of ogre-ancestry shuffled nervously within the shadowy confines of a tall and narrow window archway. His movements under the watchful scrutiny of a pair of stone grotesques.

Kalmus, his more human-looking counterpart, fished in his belt pouch for a large skeleton key, looking back at his companion with a nod and a wink. The key slid into the door lock with nary a scrape, and he turned it apprehensively. To his obvious relief, the lock gave an audible 'click'.

"No traps?" grumbled Gilgo facetiously.

"Oh!" Kalmus winced, having forgotten to check for them, "Ah, err no, none to speak of."

Gilgo let out a low chuckle, "Professional!" He said condescendingly. Kalmus looked back at his friend with a chesternshire-cat grin; then placing an index finger to his lips whispered, "Shhh..." slowly entering the space beyond.

Gilgo stepped in behind his friend with a low groan of relief for the spatial increase in which he could stretch. Both men stood for several moments, the only sounds their breaths and beating hearts.

The interior was a massive tiled room, "This is expensive, or I'm no judge of wealth." Said Kalmus, inspecting a tile with a sweep of the hand. "Clean too. No dust."

"Humphff..." Gilgo snorted, "Who cares about dust?"

Kalmus stepped forward, turning full circle. His eyes flashed over two lit bronze braziers. Little fuel remained, the flames were low and soon to extinguish. A high, painted ceiling depicted a mural with a pack of wolves hunting a demonic boar through a dark wood. A wide staircase, easily thirty-feet across, led upwards towards a high balcony. A crimson, lead-glass window some forty-feet in diameter all but reached the ceiling. The window depicted a foul green dragon sitting upon a hoard of gloomium.

Kalmus chuckled aloud, "I've got a good feeling about this, Gilgo, my old pal."

Gilgo raised an eyebrow. "Too quiet for me," he warned.

"What are you babbling about? We're in, we're out," Kalmus nodded his head back and forth for emphasis, "...nobody's the wiser. Bob's you're uncle."

"Hmm, yeh" Gilgo half-heartedly agreed. "You're probably right."

"Hell-yeah I'm right!" Kalmus beamed at his friend, "Bugger 'em if they can't take a joke." Kalmus grinned.

"Yeah..." Gilgo agreed wholeheartedly, "Fook 'em!" "What do we have here..." A feminine voice suddenly broke through their moment of joy, "What's all this then eh? Some sort of guild reunion? Are you boys having a party?"

"It's fancy-dress actually..." Kalmus mocked, twirling around to find a lone figure standing at the top of the stairs. She was wearing a green bowler hat low on her brow, and clad in a tight black cat suit which left little to the imagination.

"You two miscreants are loud enough to wake the hounds of Hell. You should be ashamed of yourselves. What game are you playing?"

"Pin the tail..." Kalmus started sarcastically.

"If you two thieving bastards do as I say," she started, "I might just include you in on a piece of the action. Otherwise, things could become extremely difficult for the pair of you."

Kalmus laughed, "What do you have in mind love?" looking back at his friend, with the usual 'what the hell is going on?' look on his countenance.

"I scout around. I check for traps," she replied, "and you two animals do the grunt work."

Kalmus cricked his neck, "Yeah, well maybe I tell my large and muscular friend here to rip off those pretty legs and beat you to death with them?" He beamed at his clever repartee.

"Yeah?" She retorted. "He'll be the one walking funny. If he wants a permanent limp and to sing soprano for the rest of his days." She softened up suddenly and changed the subject, "You think my legs are pretty?" "Alright fine, what's the split?" Kalmus inquired in an 'I'm all ears' fashion.

"We divvy up after we get out of here. I get first pick since I was here first. You got any problems with that?" She smiled.

"Fine! Whatever you say," Kalmus groaned, "You got yourself a deal, but double cross us and there will be hell to pay."

She nodded and like a cat quickly disappeared up the stairs.

"Alright Gilgo, I'm going up stairs to take a look-see." Said Kalmus turning back to his friend, "You stay down here and look around—keep an eye on things. I don't want to get caught with my pants down," he winked with a wry grin, "...again." Kalmus started up the stairwell, "Be good and keep it quiet."

Gilgo shook his head in incredulity as his friend disappeared, then walked slowly across the room towards a set of massive double doors. They slid open with relative ease into a room filled with ornate columns. Gilgo leaned inside, peering deep for any lurking horrorswhen suddenly a flash lit up the entire room! Two bare-chested, muscular guards had lit dying braziers which blazed to life. Eight more guards quickly revealed themselves from the flickering shadows with flashing scimitars, attempting to keep the blinking man-ogre at bay. Only moments later, Kalmus and the blackclad female stood together with Gilgo in the entrance to the structure's great hall.

Page 16

"Isn't this a glorious thing?" the Mukdhim leader paced back and forth in front of them, "That I captured you thieves instead of our Lord?". He looked sternly at the trio. "If you do exactly as I say, you might just make it out of this alive. I am Shadi, but you may call me master!"

"Oh, really? What do you want Master Shadi?" Kalmus asked with a hint of belligerence, and hoping for the quick version.

"You do something for me and I will do something for you." Shadi smiled, "If you complete one little task for me, I will forget we ever met."

"Okaaay." Gilgo answered looking at Kalmus for acceptance.

"I want you to do a prison job!" Shadi explained, "I need you to investigate that ancient Goman ruin that lies outside of town. Maybe you've heard of Dovecote Prison?" "Dovecote Prison is cursed." Kalmus narrowed his eyes.

"Who in their right mind wants to go to prison?" the female thief quizzed.

"You do, if you expect to live!" Shadi shouted, his eyes blazed with anger, "By all rights, you thieves should be there now!" he motioned his guards forward, "Take them!"

"Wait a minute, Master Shadi," Kalmus fell to his knees in obedience, "I just checked my schedule, and it appears we're free to go!"

"I'm in!" Gilgo grinned without really knowing why he was grinning.

Shadi held up a hand and his meatheads stood down, "Very well then, consider this a verbal contract between us. If you break faith with me, I will take everything you hold most dear and tear it into a million pieces."

The states

## NEW CLASS

## Immortal

PRIME ATTRIBUTE:

Wisdom, 15+ (10% experience bonus) HIT DICE: 1d8/Level (Gains 2hp/Level after 9th.) ARMOUR/SHIELD PERMITTED: None. They are immortal after all. WEAPONS PERMITTED: Any RACE: Human, Scrottish only.

No one knows why a tiny proportion of Scrottish children are born immortal. It's possible that other nations and peoples have their own immortals, they just don't talk about it.

In the early days, Scrottish Immortals believed it was their destiny to duel each other to the death until only a single one remained. This survivor, they thought, would attain immense power and rule Scrotland until the end of time. After a century or two of slaughter in which Immortals tended to have a shorter life span than ordinary Scrots, the Immortals realised that the possibility of future kingship was far outweighed by the loss of all their friends and drinking buddies. After all, what's the point of talking about the good old days over a pint with someone who's too young to remember the good old days? And mortals just don't appreciate the wisdom of the ages the way Immortals do, such as the trick of writing decent poetry or the method for making really, really good whiskey. Not to mention the fact that it's difficult to really enjoy immortality when dick-heads keep running up to you in the middle of dinner, screaming

"Draw yer blade McAngus and fight me! There can be aenly one! There can be aenly one.!!!"

The surviving Immortals held a great council where they agreed to give up the whole 'there can be aenly one' idea as a bad job and concentrate on their own lives. This council is called the 'Auld Agreement' as it laid out the rules of conduct for living an immortal life and is treated as sacred law by the majority of surviving Immortals.

A few bad apples still believe the old tales about killing another Immortal to steal their power. These murderous individuals make life very difficult for the saner Immortals.

An Immortal attacks and saves like a Fighter and has all the abilities of a Fighter, though they will never build a stronghold as it looks a bit too much like making a play for kingship, which would break the 'Auld Agreement'.

Immortals also have the following abilities and drawbacks.

## Immortal Class Abilities

ALIGNMENT: Immortals must generally be of Lawful alignment, although can be Chaotic at the Game Master's discretion.

#### Sacred Ground

The Auld Agreement prohibits Immortals from fighting on ground that has been consecrated to any deity. This includes temples to demons, evil gods and hideous Lovecraftian entities from beyond space and time.

Immortals can still enter sacred ground and do useful things like blundering into traps, looting treasure, freeing lovely maidens and comely youths from dark altars and so on. They can also Parry attacks from enemies.

But if an Immortal attacks an enemy while on sacred ground, she is cursed by the ancestors, losing the ability to Parry, (if she has it), and fighting like a numpty, (aka a Magic User of the same level), until she leaves the temple and makes a verbal apology to its deity. Other Immortals that hear about this scandalous behaviour will treat the Immortal with scorn for an indeterminate number of years afterwards.

		Immort	al Levei	. Table
Level	XP Required for Level	Hit Dice (d8)	Saving Throw	Abilities
I	0	I	I4.	Sacred Ground, Immortal Flesh, Fellowship of Immortals, Wisdom of Ages, Head Hunters, Multiple Attacks, Parry, Strength Bonuses.
2	2,000	2	13	
3	4,000	3	12	Signature Technique 1 (1/day).
4	8,000	4	II	
5	16,000	5	10	
б	32,000	б	9	Signature Technique 2 (1/day).
7	64,000	7	8	
8	128,000	8	7	
9	256,000	9	б	Signature Technique 3 (1/day).
10	350,000	9 +2 hp	5	
II	450,000	9 +4 hp	4	
12	550,000	9 +6 hp	4	Signature Technique 4 (1/day).
13	650,000	9 +8 hp	4	
<sup>1</sup> 4	750,000	9 +10 hp	4	
١٢	850,000	9 +12 hp	4	Signature Technique 5 (1/day).
ıq	9 <b>50,000</b>	9 +14 hp	4	
17	1,050,000	9 +16 hp	4	
18	1,150,000	9 +18 hp	4	Signature Technique 6 (1/day).
19	1,250,000	9 +20 hp	4	
20	1,350,000	9 +22 hp	4	
21+	+100,000 per Level	+2 hp/Level	4	

#### Immortal Flesh

Immortals can only be killed by decapitation or by destroying their heads. For example, being eaten by a giant or troll would destroy the Immortal's head, sooner or later. Disintegration, lava pools and sharpness or vorpal swords are also effective tactics. (In fact, the first vorpal swords were created for use by Immortals against each other.)

This power isn't as useful as it sounds. An Immortal who is reduced to 0 or less Hit Points is incapacitated, though he may still be conscious and capable of talking, especially if something funny is happening to his mangled body. The Immortal regenerates 1 Hit Point per hour until he reaches 1 HP again and can move around once more or until his head is removed or destroyed, killing him. Healing spells, potions etc still work on the Immortal when he is regenerating.

#### WISDOM OF AGES

Immortals know a lot, either from their own memories or from talking to older Immortals.

Whenever encountering a new creature, place or reasonably famous NPC the Immortal can roll to see if she remembers a useful or important fact about them. Roll 1d20, if the number rolled is equal to or less than the Immortal's Level, she succeeds.

If she does succeed, the Immortal recalls something useful but must then make a Saving Throw to avoid either (Player's choice);

a) spending an hour reminiscing and wittering on about the good old days to anyone who'll listen or, b) falling into a deep depression about how the world has changed and suffering -1 to all Attack Rolls until the end of the day.

#### Signature Technique

At Level 3 the Immortal learns, (or recalls), a brilliant signature attack or martial technique. The player should come up with a name and brief back story for this technique e.g. "Ah yes, The Coffin-Splitter, I learnt that from a noble Mukhdim warrior in the Holy Land almosttwo hundred years gone." All techniques function exactly the same way; the player declares that her character is using his signature technique before making her attack roll. If the attack succeeds, the player can add 1d8 to the damage roll. If the attack fails, the Immortal looks really stupid. While the player can attempt a Signature Technique attack as many times a day as they like, the damage bonus can only be applied once per day.

At 6th level, and every 3 levels after that, the Immortal learns or remembers a new Technique with a different name and back story. Each Signature Technique can be used once per day to inflict 1d8 extra damage on a successful strike.

If asked why he can only use each of his Signature Techniques successfully once per day, the Immortal will shake his head and say, "Ye've a lot to learn about the way of the sword young laddybuck." Or words to that effect.

#### HEAD-HUNTERS

Immortals are hunted by the evil members of their own kind, who believe that taking another Immortal's head grants them power, (perhaps it does, that's up to the Game Master).

Once per session, (or once per Adventure, if the Game Master prefers), there is a 1 in 6 chance that head-hunters will turn up and attack the Immortal, usually at the worst possible moment. This group will either be another Immortal of the same Level (or lower) than the player character's Immortal or the equivalent number of Hit Dice of Assassins, hired thugs or mercenary monsters. Evil Immortals will try to decapitate the Immortal straightaway, hirelings will try to incapacitate him and take him back to their Immortal master to be decapitated their at leisure.

Fellowship of Immortals Whenever an Immortal meets another, non-hostile Immortal they will always arrange to go on a massive bender together, often with disastrous and amusing results.



## NEW MONSTERS

## March Woodkin

HIT DICE: 6 ARMOUR CLASS: 3 [16] ATTACKS: 2 fists (1d8+2), spear (1d6+2), or spore release SAVING THROW: 11 SPECIAL: Spore release MOVE: 12 ALIGNMENT: Neutral CHALLENGE LEVEL/XP: 6/400

DESCRIPTION: March Woodkin are human-sized anthropomorphic fungi that roam the March Woods and protect the fungi that grow there.

They are under the command of the protector of March Woods, Gloomcap, and aid him in ensuring the golden mycena never end up leaving the confines of the most dark, dank and secluded parts of the wood.

Once per day as an attack, the March Woodkin can release spores causing all non-March Woodkin in a 10 foot radius from the releaser to take a Saving Throw. Failure causes paralysis for 2d6 rounds whilst the spores take hold. At the end of the paralysis, the target takes another Saving Throw, if that fails, their actions are commanded by the March Woodkin.

To rid someone of this affliction, they must first be sedated, and a druid of Level 5 or higher will need to spend 1 day tending the victim. Alternatively, casting anti-plant ward will reverse the control in 1d6 rounds. This spell will also prevent the spores from taking hold in the first place.

Page 22

## PRETTY SHINY

Pretty shinies take the form of a valuable-looking item such as a gemencrusted necklace, bejewelled dagger, ornately-carved golden ring, huge faceted jewel, or the like.

The items radiates magic if *Detect Magic* is cast, and even glows with a faint green aura in darkness. These items are often weighty adding to the feeling of value and worth.

The pretty shiny is a useless, nonmagical piece of tat. Some items are so well-crafted that they fool even experts in artifacts and heirlooms.

VALUE: 1-10 gold quids.

## Legendary Turnip

These turnips are said to turn the ground in which they are buried—and up to 100 feet radius around it—into a plot of greatly fertile ground.

Other produce grown in this ground provides up to a 200% yield, with most produce being twice the usual size.

Turnips grown in this ground are particularly affected. Yields of up to 300% and the biggest turnips in the county.

There are violent and clandestine activities surrounding these items, especially in the dark underworld of competitive crop growing.

VALUE: 100 gold quids.

## Silver Hand Ring

These silver rings are engraved with an upright hand, palm outwards. They also have a symbol engraved on the inside of the band.

These rings identify someone as a member of The Silver Hand hierarchy, and as such, lesser members are sworn to obey and serves these ring-wearers.

It is said that a special ritual takes places before a Silver Hand member is gifted one of these rings.

Anyone putting on a ring without having been subjected to the ritual must take a saving throw or be affected as if by a *Hold Person (Magic-User)* spell with a permanent duration whilst the ring is worn. They must take this Saving Throw once per day unless already *held*.

Anyone found wearing a ring becomes a 'Taken in the night' statistic.

VALUE: 50 gold quids.

## Merchant's Haggle

A *merchant's haggle* is a black fez hat much sought after by merchants in the know.

A merchant wearing this very valuable fez is capable of striking great deals with suppliers and customers alike.

When wearing the *merchant's baggle*, the merchant can make a Saving Throw once per deal and successfully negotiate an additional 20% discount from suppliers, and a further 20% sale price from customers.

VALUE: 10,000 gold quids.

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