

BEDLAM HALL

A Depressing Role-Playing Game About Horrible People

by David Kizzia

“Terribilis Est Locus Iste”



POWERED BY THE
APOCALYPSE

BEDLAM DPT HALL

A Depressing Role-Playing Game
By David Kizzia



The List of Guilty Parties

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Extra Special Thanks to: D. Vincent Baker, Nathan D. Paoletta, Avery Alder, Keith Baker, Derek Tatum - the godfather of "dreadpunk", and of course Julian Fellowes and P.G. Wodehouse

"...It's all about the big laughs and monkeyfun..."



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An Apology from the Author

While recovering from a quite serious bout of Mediterranean Diphtheria, my wife provided me several pieces of reading material from our local library. One of these books was a rare copy of “An Abridged History of the Blackwood Family”, written by Franz Bibfeldt in 1948. As I drifted in and out of a fever daze, I had taken to scrawling notes in the margins of the book pages, usually in ballpoint pen. Of those notes that were legible and relatively coherent, they formed the basis of the game you’re holding today. Due to the condition of the book after my illness, I was forced to purchase it from the library as part of the recompense and fines. This hefty sum was part of the motivation for this depressing game’s publication.

Also as part of its publication, I would like to acknowledge the kindness of the remaining descendents in their authorization for using their family name and history as the basis for this game and would like to stress that the events and activities described should be considered fictional and for entertainment purposes only. All charges that had been brought against the family during the unfortunate village fair incident in 1921 were completely dropped, and no evidence ever fully established they were involved in the series of disappearances near Argleton, Lancashire.

Ultimately, you should take this game in the spirit it was intended—the result of fevered delusions brought on by a serious illness, with no place in your game library. This game is disturbing, morose, and will only jeopardize the friendships of those who would attempt to find amusing diversion in its gameplay. It is fully understood this game may be best served as a warning to others and perhaps a deterrent for visitors to your home, delicately indicating they may have overstayed their welcome. An offer to play this game should be treated as an unspoken hint they should leave the premises immediately.

Thank you for your understanding.





A Foreboding Introduction in the Foyer

Playing **Bedlam Hall** is a terrible decision. There is so little joy and light to this entire experience, you may want to reconsider your options of how you'd prefer to pass the time. Clearing out that closet you've been meaning to get around to, or perhaps catching up on the household finances. Even just spending the next couple of minutes contemplating the poor decisions you've made in the past, regretting your foolish behavior, and wondering if you'll ever learn your lesson while secretly knowing your perpetual recidivism is a foregone conclusion. These sort of options are probably better uses of your time, instead of diving into the dark and miserable world of the Blackwood family and their servants.

And yet, you're still reading. Again, another poor decision you'll regret later. You can't say you weren't properly warned.

Bedlam Hall takes place after the Great War, set in the English countryside at one of the remaining estate homes owned by the British upper class. A more pleasurable experience would be playing a member of that genteel aristocracy, enjoying the light-hearted frivolity that accompanies the well-to-do, where the greatest of impending crises involves who will be wearing what at the next upcoming soiree.

That *would* be a nice game. Good luck finding that.

Instead, you and the other players will be joining the household staff, tasked with maintaining the estate, and performing the expected duties of your position while serving the Blackwood family. It's dreary, back-breaking work, filled with unpleasant chores, meaningless customs, and over-complicated procedures that result in a lifetime of sadness and lower back pain. Contemplate that slow ache in your knees you felt this morning. That really will be the entire experience ahead of you.

In our modern day, it's difficult to imagine the lack of self-sufficiency among the upper class at the time. However, it was not uncommon for the aristocracy to use hired help for assistance in even the most mundane of activities.



In the case of the Blackwood family, there always seems to be a vacant position among the Staff at any given time. The Blackwoods do seem to go through a lot of hired help, who often leave under mysterious, or shall we say...gruesome, circumstances. But your experience will obviously be different. Because you're special. Of course you are.

Unfulfilled Goals and Wishful Thinking

As members of the service staff, the players have a front row seat to the dramatic intrigue that surrounds the Blackwoods and their social circle: cruel disagreements about who flirted with whom at the debutante ball, heartless whispers regarding who showed an inappropriate amount of leg, and the occasional discussion surrounding who will win this year's Derby cup in football at the local university.

When they're not lighting the curtains ablaze, throwing someone in harm's way, or possibly toying with forces beyond their reckoning or control, the Blackwood family have lived delightfully sheltered lives, away from normal experiences and influence. Because of this, they are all slightly touched to an extent-whether it be a predilection for dangerous habits, physical or psychological aberrations that are simply ignored because of their wealth and standing, or perhaps just bad manners that are overlooked in the grand scheme of things. Insanity in the wealthy is considered "colorful", it's been said.

The Staff however have more important concerns than whether the Blackwoods are harboring a sociopathic killer or perhaps unleashing supernatural forces upon an unsuspecting world. There's real work to be done here, their goals are a combination of practical needs as well as certain elements that were not listed in the job description.

- **Maintain the House** - First and foremost, the service staff are required to keep the estate functioning, even during difficult situations often caused by the Family themselves. Bethlehem Hall has stood for over seven generations and no one wants to see it fall to ruin on their watch.
- **Protect the Family** - Whether or not they like them, the servants are there to wait on the Blackwoods and act as caregivers, confidantes, protectors, and occasionally schoolmarms. The Family tends to complicate



this either directly by their own goals and actions or indirectly due to their eccentricities. And gratitude is always scarce.

- **Overcome the Strangeness** - There are many odd things about this household, but it's come to be accepted as "part of the job." The Staff don't need to eliminate or even understand these bizarre elements surrounding their duties, they just need to overcome them to do their work. This could mean investigating and eliminating these peculiarities, or simply temporarily appeasing or forestalling them, allowing the Staff to focus on more important matters like what is to be done about the laundry.
- **Improve their Station** - Like anyone, the Staff have their own dreams and aspirations and want to be considered valuable assets to the overall household. That desire is demonstrated either by hard work and extra effort in their duties, or by mercilessly manipulating their fellow staff whenever possible. Either way, the ladder is climbed one rung at a time.

A Cutthroat World of Secrets, Distinction and Prestige

For the beleaguered staff of Bethlehem Hall (nicknamed "**Bedlam Hall**" by the servants), life is a continual battle of cruel one-upmanship in order to gain favor among the Family in the pursuit of **Prestige**, the gauge of respectability and more importantly, the cornerstone to advancement in one's abilities. Those with higher Prestige are looked upon as more important figures of authority to the Family, heavily relied upon, and usually favored more than others (whether it's deserved or not).

Example:

- Both Mr. Tuckle and Mrs. Crueller work on staff, as Butler and Housekeeper respectively. Currently Mr. Tuckle has a Prestige level of 2. However, Mrs. Crueller is currently at a Prestige level of 3. When the two of them manage to wrestle the family alligator back into his cage, after several hours of chasing him through the grounds, Lord Blackwood nods with approval and thanks Mrs. Crueller for her dependable hard work (but not Mr. Tuckle). While pulling thistle buds and splinters from his trousers, Mr. Tuckle quietly seethes with envy, plotting to embarrass Mrs. Crueller next chance he gets.



In a normal work experience, Prestige can be earned through hard work, consistent diligence to one's duties, and a positive and professional attitude in all matters.

But for the *rest* of us, Prestige is garnered through backstabbing and peer pressure of one's fellow employees. This is done by learning about other people's hidden secrets and using them against one another whenever possible. One can either announce these skeletons hidden away in the closet or use them as leverage in influencing other people's actions. **Secrets** can also be used in sharp witticisms and leading comments dripping with venom that only the recipient truly understands. They are the ammunition in social warfare where there are no winners, merely victims.

Example:

- As the Maid, Miss Santiago irritates the Chauffeur, Mr. Chumley, to no end. She forgets to do the simplest of tasks, takes direction poorly, and has the attention span of a mayfly. However, Miss Santiago also knows Mr. Chumley's secret past as a professional safecracker, even so much as doing a brief stint in Bridewell Prison. Because of this, Mr. Chumley finds a way to overlook Miss Santiago's shortcomings.

We Don't Speak About the Family Troubles

With the beginning of the Twentieth Century, some would suggest a life of service would be relatively routine, perhaps even boring as modern convenience begins to permeate normal lives. That would be nice. But the Blackwoods are anything but normal.

Each family member has eccentricities that make them different from most people (even when compared to an English peer). Those eccentricities can often devolve into what is termed a **Trouble** that makes serving them a challenge at best, and a living nightmare at worst. These Troubles can be as mundane as Lady Blackwood carrying on a torrid affair behind her husband's back, and as dark as cousin Millicent being possessed by a arch-demon of the Third Order of Hell (again). In either event, it is the duty of the Staff to find a way to either contain the situation, work around them, or at the very least avoid being wrapped up in their actions.



Example:

- The youngest Blackwood daughter Mathilda has become obsessed with fairies since the recent newspaper stories of the supposed “Cottingley Fairies” mingling with local children. Her obsession has convinced her that fairies not only exist, but live in the marsh surrounding Bethlehem Hall. Her Trouble causes her obsession and belief to grow more manic and deranged as it worsens.

Something is Wrong with the House

“Be sure to use the dumbwaiter elevator when bringing meals to the Blackwood bedrooms. We’re not allowed to bring the silverware into the stairwell. Since the accident, the stairwell now hates silver.”

It would be nice if at least the working conditions were in your favor; a pleasant atmosphere providing brief respite while one tries to make the best of a difficult situation. Unfortunately, that’s not available either. Yes, even the House is trying to make your day more of a discomfort, and may even try to kill you occasionally. In addition to the Family’s growing Troubles, the House itself has its own quirks and unpleasantries that can make things inconvenient or even dangerous at times. Certain rooms have been long rumored as the locations of ghastly murders, horrible crimes, and other incidents that have been hushed up over the years. Because of this, many rooms and items within the House are understood not to be trifled with, due to their dark history and possibly evil intentions. There’s a reason certain items are never dusted.

Example:

- In 1802, Lord Malthrop Blackwood hanged himself from the chandelier in the great library of the House, discovered two weeks later when the Family and Staff returned from a holiday in Salisbury. Since that time, members of staff have occasionally heard creaking rope sounds from within as well as strange shadows and a whiff of a pungent odor from above. The older members of staff dismiss the observations as “fanciful imagination”, although the library is still locked every evening for safety reasons.





Setting the Table - Preparing to Play

Bedlam Hall requires at least three or more players, hopefully individuals that won't hold it against you that you opted to play this depressing game as opposed to something more lighthearted like Russian Roulette or blind-folded knife-catching. One person will be acting as Master of the House (or gamemaster), while the players take the roles of the household staff. You will also need at least two six-sided dice, some paper, and a writing implement. For the Master of the House, we also recommend index cards or a reasonable facsimile, in order to share private messages with the players, if needed. Apology notes may be required afterward.

Your Duties Wherein - Building Your Character

"Wanted: Live-in Housekeeper at Bethlehem Hall for necessary household duties and management of staff. Written references are required, experience with demonology considered desirable but not expected." - newspaper listing, The London Cordwainer

In addition to the livery uniforms worn by all staff, a **Bedlam Hall** character is built from the following items.

Position on Staff: Every player serves a role in the household service staff, unique to themselves only (e.g. there is only one Butler in the household). Each position has special moves available to only them, which are associated with their role in the household staff.

- **The Butler** - Tasked with the upstairs household, maintaining order, and the appearance of respectability in the House at all times.
- **The Chauffeur** - In charge of the care and maintenance of the Family's automobiles, as well as the driving for the family and occasionally staff.
- **The Cook** - Responsible for the feeding of all family and staff members in the household, as well as any special meals for visitors.
- **The Housekeeper** - The Butler's female counterpart, usually in charge of staff supervision behind the scenes.



- **The Maid** - Tasked with directly serving one of the family members (usually the lady of the house) in always looking proper and kept in order at all times.
- **The Valet** - Specialized in the personal care and grooming of one of the male members of the Family, usually the lord of the manor.

Attributes: In order to perform your functions and survive the day, every staff member also has Attributes which will either improve or impede their ability to do their required tasks within the household.

- **Etiquette** - As part of the Staff, it is your job to know the proper way to set the table, clean furnishings, and maintain the household. Your understanding of Etiquette should drive your approach to all things, and thus when things are not correct, you are quickly aware of the infraction.
- **Persuasion** - The art of being an asset to the household staff is to maintain a velvet-glove approach in making things happen, especially when communicating unpleasant information or political maneuvering in the servants' quarters.
- **Composure** - A good member of staff is unflappable in all things, whether it's an inappropriate mess seen in the drawing room, walking in on an embarrassing rendezvous, or a night demon shrieking from the chandelier threatening to kill everyone in the room.
- **Fortitude** - Whether it's spending all night cooking for tomorrow morning's fox hunt or burying the neighbor's dead cat in the flower garden after an unfortunate episode, one must throw one's back into their work at all times.

Attributes are ranked from -1 to +3:

-1 Dreadfully Below Average - You are at a severe disadvantage in this area and should probably request assistance for such matters.

0 Painfully Average - You're certainly not exceptional nor are you deficient either.

+1 Barely Competent - You've maintained a level of skill in this particular function.

+2 Suspiciously Talented - You are quite experienced in this area of duties.

+3 Annoyingly Exceptional - You excel in this category and even the upstairs family may come to you for advice regarding your area of expertise.



In addition to your Attributes, your character also has the following:

- **Moves** - Moves are specific actions or abilities your character can take, which will affect the outcome or ongoing Fiction of the current story.
- **Prestige** - Prestige describes how well you are doing things throughout the game Session. Your Prestige will go up and down throughout gameplay, so feel free to use counters to save yourself from writing and scribbling things out. Must keep things tidy, of course.
- **Trauma** - Trauma describes the negative wear you have received as part of your duties, whether it is physical trauma in the form of bodily damage, emotional trauma from being berated by the Family, or perhaps psychological trauma in seeing something you shouldn't.
- **Secrets** - Each member of the staff starts with one Secret that they would prefer not become public knowledge. This could be as straightforward as a previous criminal conviction, a hidden physical abnormality, or perhaps something more arcane and bizarre. These can continue to build up as things grow more complicated among your fellow staff.

Joining Staff - Character Creation

"No, I don't want to know your first name. If you manage to last the week, maybe then I'll ask. Until then, grab one of the trays and follow me."

Is this your first experience working in service? Your nervous looking about does betray your naïveté in such matters. Never fear, these days it's unfortunately very simple to join the Staff (and it certainly shows). However, let's walk through the basics.

First - Pick your Position from those available. As noted there is only one person per Position, so in the event of contention between players on who should be allowed a particular role, politely demonstrate why you would be a better choice for it. And if they remain intractable, stab them when they're not looking (no, no, don't do that).

Second - Select your Attributes. For simplicity's sake, we have provided the following arrays for selection. Feel free to distribute the actual point value how you deem appropriate.



1, 1, 1, 1	A balanced structure for each Attribute
2, 1, 1, -1	Excelling in one element at the expense of another
2, 2, 0, -1	Specialized skills but woefully unprepared for others
2, 1, 0, 0	A preference for certain tasks

Next - Select your Position's Character moves. These are listed upon your character sheet, as well as included within your Position's description.

Now - Determine your starting Secret and Cruel move. Secrets are best developed with the Master of the House's guidance, in order to maximize your traumatic experience as greatly as possible. You're certainly not playing this for the giggles.

Well done! - Your character is now created, you deserve a reward for that. Give yourself 1 starting Prestige, as a new member of staff. Consider it a consolation gift once the chaos begins.

The Value of Prestige

"Yes, I can very well see that your garments have caught on fire, Mr. Tuckle, but I do believe you should remember who you are speaking to in that tone. I suggest you step outside to extinguish yourself before you say something you may regret later."

Prestige is considered the in-game currency for doing a good job, furthering the well-being of the Family and, most importantly, obtaining and keeping control over your fellow staff members. You certainly don't want your fellow staff members to gain any either; they don't deserve it like you do.

Members of staff will jockey back and forth on both gaining Prestige for themselves as well as potentially causing their fellow staff members to lose theirs. Prestige can be gained through Basic moves and certain moves available to one's Position.

Example:

- Mrs. Gooch the Cook realizes that Lord Blackwood's request for a Sunday brunch in the topiary will require her to actually accompany them into the cold, rainy outside. Speaking with Lord Blackwood, she successfully Guides His Direction, a Basic move. Not only does she gain a



Prestige for her efforts, Lord Blackwood now believes it would be better to have brunch indoors. Certainly will make eating the soup easier.

Prestige can also be taken away through the actions of your fellow players (either in conjunction with certain Basic moves or moves specific to their Position), as a side effect of a partial success, or taken by a family member as a response to a failed dice roll. Accidents do happen, but there is no mercy when dealing with teacakes.

Example:

- Miss Bluntmore is attempting to Guide Lady Blackwood's Direction in accepting Darjeeling tea instead of her favorite blend. Failing her dice roll, Lady Blackwood becomes incensed and chastises Miss Bluntmore, causing her to lose a Prestige and still go to the Kitchen and get her favorite tea before Mr. Chumley smokes it all.

As already discovered, all players start with at least 1 Prestige as members of staff at the beginning of the game Session. However, like all other Prestige this can be lost.

If your Prestige level drops to zero, your status within the house is at serious risk. Not that it's any comfort, but there's no chance at having less than zero Prestige. When you're at zero, that's as low as you can descend without becoming a scullery maid.

Example:

- Captain Toff's Prestige is currently at 1 when an Expensive Theft (brought about by someone's Cruel move), causes everyone on staff to immediately lose 2 Prestige. This brings Toff's Prestige down to zero (not -1). Although he is treading on thin ice, he still has a chance of improving the situation (obviously at the expense of someone else on staff).

In the event you suffer a loss of another Prestige while at level zero however, either by your failed actions or the deliberate intentions of your fellow staff, you may be immediately dismissed from your position. This might be preferable compared to what the Family may ask you to do in order to reclaim their favor. Trust us, it would be dreadful.



Example:

- Mr. Shrewsbury's Prestige had previously dropped down to zero, when he is accused of stealing the table lighter. Having no other recourse, Lord Blackwood informs Mr. Shrewsbury his services are no longer required in the household and he should leave within the next twenty minutes before the dogs are let out.

At the Expense of Others - Using Prestige

Your Prestige will improve and lessen through gameplay, and will help a player in their tasks and advancement. Gained Prestige can be used in several methods during play:

- Prestige can be added to a roll in order to improve its results (maximum of 3 points).
- Prestige can be used to gain a Suspicion.
- Prestige can be used to plant a Suspicion.
- Accumulated Prestige can be spent to improve the character's Moves or Attributes.

Example:

- While playing Mrs Gooch the Cook, Brian rolls a 6 to Go Outside the Grounds, which would normally be counted as a failure. Because the roll was considered critical, Brian opts to spend a Prestige to change the roll from a 6 to a 7 (a partial success). Not quite what he wanted, but it's better than a total failure. Now to temporarily bury this table lighter until Mrs. Gooch can sell it in town.

Trauma in its Many Horrible Forms

"Dear God, man! Why are you snivelling on the parquet floor? Pull yourself together, we only have an hour before the pheasant hunt! I suggest you change your waistcoat immediately!"

After exposure to the terrible things that occur within the Hall, the household staff slowly acquires **Trauma** that inhibits their ability to function, whether it's in the form of an injured arm, nervous tic, or fear of shadows in the Study.

As Trauma increases, they begin a downward spiral that eventually leads them to become useless in their duties. Who cares if you lose sanity in real



life situations, as long as you can still do your job correctly (in some cases, it even helps).

Example:

- Mr. Moorcock the Butler needs to retrieve the tea tray from the drawing room, despite hearing a rather loud argument occurring through the closed door. Bracing himself, he attempts to Ignore the Strange as he enters the room. Rolling +Etiquette, he gets a 5, a failure. As he picks up the tray, careful to avoid eye contact between the screaming Blackwoods, he fails to notice Lady Blackwood pick up the crystal decanter from the bar set and throw it at her husband. Although Aldicott easily dodges the decanter, Mr. Moorcock unfortunately does not. The decanter smashes against the back of his head, causing 1 Trauma (and a nasty headache).

As Things Get Worse - Traumatic Degrees of Severity

“Now, Mr. Crumb, you don’t really want to stab anyone with that kitchen knife, do you? Think of what it will do to the Persian rug. It will take ages to fully scrub it out.”

When a servant suffers from Trauma, either they or the Master of the House select what type of Trauma they will be suffering, based on the circumstances of the situation. The Master of the House will specify the effects caused by that Trauma, probably in a horrible, ghoulish detail that demonstrates a flair for inflicting pain on others.

1 - Trauma

- You feel slightly light-headed. You’ll be okay in just a moment, just give yourself some time.
- You have been having bad dreams of late. Nothing serious, probably.
- You are rather distracted today, best not to let the Staff see that.
- You are so very tired. You feel tired even when you wake up after a full night of sleep.
- You have developed bruising on your person. Best to keep the sleeves buttoned down.
- The temperature is really bothering you today. Is it too hot? Too cold?
- You need a little nip of the house wine to steady your nerves. Just a little nip, no one will notice.



2 - Trauma

- You are beginning to forget things. Perhaps you should write it down on your shirt cuff.
- Your tension headache is getting the better of you. It seems quite bright in here, as well.
- One of your limbs is rather sore today. It's difficult to lift things.
- You seem to be running a fever today. It will pass, just undo the top button of your garment. My, you are perspiring quite a bit.
- There is a persistent discomfort in your abdomen; the very thought of food is slightly unpleasant. Hope you don't have to serve luncheon today.
- You seem rather nervous today. Here, keep this item in your pocket. It will calm you down.

3 - Trauma

- You have developed a slight tremor in your face that is hard to control.
- You have begun waking up in strange places on the grounds, usually late at night.
- What did you just say? Did you say that out loud? Where on earth did you learn so many filthy expletives as that?
- You've developed a rather unpleasant cough that just won't clear.
- The wound just won't heal, it has begun to seep through your constant bandaging.
- Your paranoia has begun to suggest the rest of the Staff is laughing at you behind your back.
- Your frustration is getting the better to you, causing you to snap at inappropriate times.
- Keep the precious near you. No one shall touch it. This is yours.

4 - Trauma

- Dear God, why do you have this in your hand? What did you do? Why has the past afternoon been a complete blank? What have you been doing?
- One of your limbs has atrophied and grown potentially gangrenous.
- You can't keep anything down. Even consuming water makes you violently ill.
- Your paranoia has convinced you the rest of the Staff is trying to harm you.
- The next person that interrupts you is going to get the back of your hand, no question about it!
- You suffer from uncontrollable laughter/crying. You just can't control it.



5 - Trauma

- You have begun to see and/or hear things no one else can see, horrid things.
- You have begun to hear voices no one else can hear, telling you terrible things.
- Your illness has begun infecting other members of the staff and household.
- You can't walk. You can't stand. You can barely crawl. Your body is shutting down on you.
- Enough of this House, enough of these people, enough of all of it! It needs to go. NOW.
- There is something underneath your skin that you have to get out. Somehow.

Traumatic Repercussions and their Inevitable Downward Spiral

“Why no, Mr. Tuckle. I didn't notice your hands trembling whatsoever. The uncontrollable weeping, on the other hand...”

As Trauma intensifies, its effects begin to manifest more severely in your demeanor. Abilities start to diminish as Secrets begin to weigh upon your soul, and your performance of once simple tasks begins to suffer. One can survive with Trauma for a period of time, but its continued suffering takes a heavy toll upon one's person.

Level 1 - You experience your condition secretly and the Master of the House will privately remind you of your condition.

Level 2 - Your Trauma is slightly noticeable about your person, affecting but not hindering the quality of your service. Upstairs may not notice, but your fellow staff members potentially can.

Level 3 - Your Trauma has shaken your demeanor, causing you to invariably reflect on the Secrets you keep in order to steady your resolve.

Level 4 - Even the oblivious eye of the Family can notice you are not yourself. You wear your Trauma on your face, and roll with Something Less for all actions.

Level 5 - Oh dear. This shan't end well at all. The clock is ticking, you are one step away from the hospital, or sanitorium. Perhaps even the grave.



Example:

- Captain Toff has been dealing with the mental Trauma of serving Lord Blackwood, particularly his constant barrage of insults and demands. As the mental Trauma reaches Level 3, Toff has taken to looking at the photo of his baby daughter, born out of wedlock during his days as a circus performer. Other members of the staff have noticed him quickly stuffing the photo in his jacket pocket after staring at it for a period of time.

Once a member of Staff has reached five levels of Trauma, they are indeed on borrowed time and should be considered on their “final way.” If they don’t find a way to rectify their situation immediately by the end of the Scene, their character will either be dead, insane, or otherwise permanently removed from play. However the Master of the House should always allow an appropriate parting scene that allows dramatic last words and immense overacting from the player in question.

Example:

- As Mr. Tuckle the Butler, Dave has gained his final Trauma which effectively removes his character from play. The Master of the House asks Dave how he wants Tuckle’s final scene to play out. Since Dave has been consistently opting Tuckle’s Trauma into a nervous condition, Dave decides that Mr. Tuckle is finally having a terminal nervous breakdown. In play, Mr. Tuckle rips off his uniform and races down to the basement screaming gibberish as the players chase after to restrain him. Once in front of the furnace, Mr. Tuckle throws open its door and bellows, “I’ll see you all in HELL!” He then jumps into the fire, leaving a speechless Mrs. Crueller and Mr. Chumley to deal with the aftermath. After a few moments of silence around the gaming table, the Master of the House nods and comments, “Well. *That* will have some repercussions.”

The Pointless Task of Removing Trauma

“There now. Don’t we feel better after having a moment to gather one’s thoughts while thinking on other things? Now, let’s return the hunting rifle to the smoking room and say no more about it. Wipe it down, please.”

Trauma can be particularly debilitating in the performance of your duties. Although you can make do for a time while suffering through its effects, it’s best to eventually address the problem before it gets too out of hand.



There are multiple ways of addressing Trauma before it reaches the nadir of perilousness:

Rest and Recuperate - Trauma can be reduced by bed rest, long enough to miss something eventful. Other staff members may also consider you a bit of a layabout while you selfishly spend time recovering from a sucking chest wound.

Example:

- By bribing the Cook to cover for her absence, the housekeeper Mrs. Crueller has retired to the servant's quarters for the afternoon to lie down. After a lengthy nap, her migraine has disappeared and she has lost 1 Trauma. When she returns to her duties, she is confused as to why all the Staff are wearing necklaces made of garlic and carrying crosses. Never fear, she'll learn soon enough as soon as the sun sets.

See a Specialist - It is quite possible to contact the local doctor to pay a call, although this will invariably have a hidden cost associated with it. Taking time off work can potentially cost Prestige and perhaps have certain financial requirements as well.

Example:

- Miss Bluntmore the maid has been having a devil of a time overcoming the physical Trauma (2) she has experienced while working for the Blackwood family and has opted to take the afternoon off to speak with the local physician, Dr. Croup. Although she asked permission for the afternoon off, the youngest daughter Mathilda has chosen this day to require Miss Bluntmore to help her in rebuilding her model of the Salem witch trials. Thanks to her absence, Miss Bluntmore loses 1 Prestige due to Mathilda's incessant whining that she was gone.

Gain a Secret - When Trauma reaches level 3 or more, a member of staff can elect to convert the Trauma into a Secret. Once converted into a Secret, all of the associated Trauma can be removed. The Mistress of the House should be consulted in how the Trauma has transitioned into something appropriately shameful and worthy of ridicule.



Example:

- Captain Toff, Lord Blackwood's Valet, has been suffering from severe Trauma (4) and has decided to erase it by taking a Secret. The Master of the House then informs Toff that drinking a good stiff brandy in the evening (or two) has been calming his mind, but slightly incapacitating him when he's done. Toff adds the Secret "Habitual Drinker" to his growing list of private torments while continually topping up the decanter with water.

Expect No Reference - Cruel Moves

"Oh sir. I'd like to say how sorry I am for that embarrassing incident. I'd like to say that, but..."

Even the lowest and most put-upon member of staff still has an option to strike back at the household through the use of a **Cruel move**. This move is automatic, if the servant so chooses to execute it, and can be performed once per Session. Why one would do such a deplorable thing is beyond understanding, of course. Everyone on staff naturally gets along...don't they?

Example:

- Realizing he was set up by the Housekeeper, Mrs. Faith, Mr. Plouffe decides to enact his Cruel move, *A Turn of the Screw*. By doing so, he has enraged the Blackwoods' grandmother into enacting her Trouble, which she does by stabbing anything and anyone that enters the Library with the fireplace poker. Looks like the household has a new problem to deal with, not to mention the need for a new fireplace poker.

Bring Your Wellingtons - Going Outside

"Are you quite certain we need to leave the house during this fire? I'm very certain the smoke won't keep me from duties, ma'am."

With certain exceptions (such as the Chauffeur), the world of the service staff is primarily indoors. Much like the upstairs Family, the household becomes the all-encompassing environment that shelters the Staff from reality. When Staff do need to leave the figurative "safety" of the household, there are multiple obstacles and adversaries at every turn:



Terrible weather - No matter the time of year, the elements are always against you. Constant rain, dense fog, freezing cold, wet snow, humid heat, and blustering winds. And always mud. Lots and lots of mud.

Lousy ground conditions - Because the Blackwoods refuse to hire a better gardener, the surrounding estate is overrun with overgrown foliage, weeds and wildflowers, muddy treacherous footpaths, and general disrepair.

Things out there - It's not uncommon to see wild animals in the further reaches of the property, whether it be smaller game such as foxes and rabbits or more dangerous animals such as wolves and occasionally bears. However, if you ask certain people in town, there are other creatures out there that defy easy explanation. Such rumors have circulated the local pubs for generations, whether or not they are true is up for debate. However, most of the locals almost never venture out near the Blackwood estate after the sun has gone down.

Knowing this, the question lies as to how far outside of the immediate grounds is considered dangerous, warranting the use of the Go Outside the Grounds move. As a rule of thumb, the immediate area surrounding **Bedlam Hall** and the garage is considered still "part of the house", including the pathway between the House and garage. When traveling beyond that, to the overgrown topiary maze or down the dirt road and over the hill into town, things can become a little more treacherous.

Example:

- Monsieur Béarnaise is bringing Mr. Chumley some hot porridge as he recovers from his broken leg. As the Chauffeur, Mr. Chumley's quarters are attached to the same building as the family garage. Although Monsieur Béarnaise must step outside to bring Mr. Chumley breakfast, the walkway between the main house and the garage are well paved and frequently navigated. Thus, there is no risk in going outside to see Mr. Chumley, outside of Mr. Chumley's grumpy demeanor.
- As Monsieur Béarnaise walks back from the garage, he thinks he sees a small child waving to him from the surrounding marsh. Although it's against his better judgment, Monsieur Béarnaise can't leave a child in such a dangerous location as the marsh. As he takes his first steps off the paved walkway toward the marsh, the Mistress of the House tells him he's about to Go Outside the Grounds. Monsieur Béarnaise mutters "Merde," and acknowledges he's intentionally doing so. Time to roll some dice.





How To Play

“I have a confession, Mr. Moorcock. I have absolutely no idea what I’m doing.”

“Yes, well, the way you fold linen is proof enough of that, Fizzlewig.”

What is all this ‘Role-Playing’ codswallop, anyway?

Chances are you’ve played a role-playing game before, but just to make sure we’re bemoaning the same thing, role-playing is a conversation. In **Bedlam Hall** particularly it’s a terrible, cruel, and punishing conversation that usually ends the evening in an argument that causes family members to stop speaking with one another until a grandmother’s funeral, causing an awkward silence until the wake where you try to find things to talk about while eating a terrible slice of day-old cake.

But despite that, the players work together in creating a story, with each participant taking on the role of one or more of the characters involved. One player will lead the game, playing all the family members, guests to the house, and other non-player characters of the story. This player also adjudicates the rules and guides the overall plot as The Master or Mistress of the House. Their primary responsibility is to determine what happens when there is conflict or uncertainty involved in any events that take place.

Everyone else plays a single character of their own. Player characters (technically) work together within the game, although they don’t necessarily get along or even like one another. They may even actively work against one another and cause delightful hijinks in the form of ruthless backstabbing. Actually, they probably will.

The Fiction

In this text, **Bedlam Hall** will often make references to the Fiction: the combination of the story and any established details that have been created while playing the game. This includes the names and difficult personalities of the characters involved (both player and non-player), the locations within the House and its surrounding area, and any unsavory objects discovered during the game. While playing, players and the Mistress of the House



always need to put the Fiction first. If something doesn't make sense for the fictional situation you've created, then it doesn't work no matter what the rules say.

Proper Functions - The Mechanics

"Why can't things just be simpler, like if we were barbarians fighting monsters with a battle-axe or something?"

"Because you have no pectoral muscles whatsoever, can barely lift a candelabra, and you would die within a moment's notice. Open the door, please."

As a narrative game, **Bedlam Hall** follows very simple mechanics to allow you to expedite the game and focus on more important matters such as removing inhuman scratches from the library brocade and how to avenge yourself upon your friends in a passive-aggressive manner.

In order to do something, do it. Tell the Master of the House what you want to do. If there is something you wish to accomplish and there is no time limit nor an impediment challenging you from success, consider it completed. At least *that* happened.

Example:

- While playing Miss Bluntmore the lady's Maid, Kris discovers the Butler's spectacles were left on the servant's dining table. No one is in the room, and the Butler is upstairs dealing with the Family. Kris informs the Master of the House she breaks the glasses. The Master of the House decides this is easy enough, and now Mr. Tuckle will need to squint while delicately dusting the antique firearm collection. Good thing no one loaded them when he wasn't looking. Because that would be bad.

If there is a time limit or an impediment in completing your goals, roll two six-sided dice:

- If it is a 10 and above, it is considered a full success. Jolly well done.
- If it is a 7-9, it is considered a partial success. Right.
- If it is a 6 or below, it is considered a failure. Oh, dashed luck that.

A **full success** is exactly that- you achieved what you were intending to do. A **partial success** is classified as either a completed portion of your intended goal or a success accompanied with an additional cost or problem arising.



A **failure** means you are unsuccessful, allowing the Master of the House an opportunity to make a move of their own. And you won't like it, not one bit.

Example:

- Lady Blackwood has informed Mrs. Gooch the Cook there will be an additional seventeen people at dinner this evening. The Duke of Gloucester has brought his entire family for a midnight croquet party. Mrs. Gooch has to quickly put together an entire meal in the next twenty minutes for twenty-five people. Rolling up her sleeves, she rolls +Fortitude and gets a 12. Not only is the meal fully prepared and ready, she has also prepared the Duke's favorite dessert, iced lardy cake.
- Mr. Tuckle needs to get the Housekeeper Miss Crueller to leave the room so he can replace the illustrated edition of the Kama Sutra in the Library. Rolling +Etiquette to Direct the Staff, he rolls a total of 8, a partial success. She leaves, but notes Mr. Tuckle hovering around the bookcase with something behind his back (gaining a Suspicion).
- After a long evening of drinking, Captain Toff the Valet has passed out in the family Bentley in the garage, napping the morning away. When he hears the bell ring calling for the car, he hops out and attempts to verify Everything is in its Place with no telltale evidence. Rolling a 4, Captain Toff doesn't realize he has left an empty bottle of the private reserve in the backseat, which confirms Mr. Pratt's suspicions when he also finds one of the Captain's cufflinks in a small pool of something unpleasant.

How Attributes Affect Rolls

When you make a move (whether it's Basic or one associated with your duties), the move's description will list which Attribute to apply to the roll (e.g. roll +Fortitude or roll +Composure). Carrying out the move is straightforward: announce your intentions to the Master of the House, then roll the dice and add whatever Attributes or modifiers apply to the roll (which cannot add more than +3 to a dice roll). Then cry, if warranted. We'll understand.

Example:

- Miss Santiago the Maid needs to Ignore the Strange within the hallway as the walls begin to bleed her mother's name. She rolls a 6, which is normally a failure. However, the move Ignore the Strange allows her to



add her Composure to the roll, which is a 2. This makes her roll an 8, a partial success. She manages not to run shrieking into the night, but forgets to bring the bed warmer to the upstairs bedroom. Now she has to go back and get it. Through the hallway. Again.

- Mrs. Gooch wants Mr. Moorcock to take a basket of garlic into the upstairs bedroom. However, Mr. Moorcock wants to sit and enjoy a cigarette before having to polish the silverware. Mrs. Gooch opts to Direct the Staff to tell him what to do. Although she rolls a 10, her Etiquette is at -1. Added to her roll, Mrs. Gooch now has a 9, a partial success. She knows Mr. Moorcock will use this against her at some point but for the moment, he complies.

The Definition of Moves

Moves are specific rules for common (and sometimes uncommon) actions you may want to take as members of staff. Moves can also be rules for special capabilities that are unique to a specific character or situation. They tend to give you the illusion of agency when in actuality you were basically doomed from the start.

Moves are broken down into the following categories:

- **Basic moves** - Basic moves are available to everyone and can be attempted at any time the Fiction allows.
- **Character moves** - Character moves are available when a player selects a specific Position for their character, or when they've been added as part of character advancement. These moves may be either general modifiers or special abilities available to the character in certain situations.
- **Cruel moves** - Cruel moves are actions taken by the Staff that are automatically successful and cause either one person to suffer a great deal or everyone on staff to suffer equally. They are allowed once per game Session and make you an unequivocally horrible person for doing so.
- **Custom moves** - Custom moves are moves tied to an environment, non-player character, item, or other situation that may occur during play. Custom moves are available to anyone that meets the triggering conditions.

As a general point of reference, an individual move is made up of two parts; the **Trigger**, which describes what the character needs to do to activate the



move, and **the Result**, which describes what happens when the move is successfully triggered.

Many moves will also include a roll which determines if the move is successful or not. Additional information regarding each move is included within the Move Index, which includes in-game examples of the move at work.

Given Moves or Chosen Moves?

“Why is Mrs. Gooch driving away in the family car?”

“Not sure really. Say, do you smell something burning?”

Certain moves are inherent to a particular member of staff, and can't be developed as part of their growth. Chauffeurs for example, always have access to the household's Bentley and garage (it would be rather silly to see the Cook always driving the family car, wouldn't it?). For example, when you choose to play the Chauffeur, “Access to the Bentley” is automatically considered a **given move** and is not available to other players in later character advancement.

A **chosen move** is any move that is available as part of further advancement. As you develop more distinction, you can potentially choose moves from other Staff functions provided they're not a given move to a specific staff position.

The Additional Complication of Custom Moves

Custom moves are moves tied to an environment, non-player character, item, or other situation that may come up during gameplay. They can be specific to a single person, place, or thing, or they can be general and applied to common situations. Custom moves are available to anyone that meets the triggering conditions, and the Master of the House will inform the players of any custom moves when they become available.

Example:

- At the annual “Family vs. Staff” cricket game, all of the players have the custom move “Accidents do Happen”, which allow them to attempt to ‘accidentally’ hit one another or even a family member with a cricket ball, causing Trauma in the form of bloody physical harm. All in the name of good sport, of course.



I Say! - Rolling with Something Extra

Some moves will give an advantage in specific circumstances, either temporarily or on a permanent basis. This is called **rolling with Something Extra**. When a move says to “roll with Something Extra,” roll three dice instead of the normal two and drop the lowest die (or roll one die three times and pick the best two). However, do keep in mind that multiple effects that let you roll with Something Extra do not stack. You can only roll a single additional die for a given move.

Example:

- As the Butler Mr. Moorcock, Stephanie is allowed to roll with Something Extra when verifying Everything is in its Place. Checking on the water closet, she rolls three dice and receives a 2, 5, and 4. Stephanie throws away the 2 and keeps the two highest dice rolls: 5 and 4, making 9 (a partial success). This allows her to find the bloody apron stuffed in the commode tank.

Oh Bother! - Rolling with Something Less

There are some situations (such as when you are severely traumatized) that require you to **roll with Something Less**. In such dire circumstances, roll three dice and discard the highest.

If a situation requires rolling with Something Extra *and* with Something Less, then they cancel each other out and the player rolls normally (even if you have multiple effects for Extra or Less). No need to be a damned fool about it.

Example:

- Mr. Pratt the Chauffeur has been suffering from 4 Trauma since the unfortunate driving accident after the Easter Ball, and has yet to remedy the situation. Returning to the garage Mr. Pratt tries to Serve the House with a surprise delivery of flowers from the local florist, but has to roll with Something Less due to his Trauma. He rolls three dice and receives 1, 5, and 2. Taking the lowest two die score (1 and 2), this is a tragic failure even after adding his Attribute. Because of this, Mr. Pratt then passes out on the garage floor surrounded by tulips, not realizing he has also left the car running in the garage. This might prove very unfortunate.



- As the Butler, Mr. Tuckle has the move “A Place for Everything”, which allows him to roll with three dice and choose the best two when verifying Everything is in its Place. However, with the most recent chest wound he has received, Mr. Tuckle’s Trauma has raised to 4, which means his normal moves would be rolled with Something Less. Because of this, when Mr. Tuckle rolls to verify Everything is in its Place, he rolls normally with no special advantage or disadvantage. Except for having a chest wound, of course.

Check the Grandfather Clock - Time and Timekeeping

“Plouffe, that clock has been running three minutes slow ever since that unpleasant gunpowder incident with the children. See what you can do about it.”

Bedlam Hall does not use rounds, turns, or sequences to measure time. Mostly because the clocks in the House are always wrong and chime at inappropriate times. Instead it uses a more abstract system:

Scene - A Scene is the amount of time spent in a single location in the House or outside. Moves that say they last until the end of the Scene end when the characters move on to another room, task, or situation.

Session - A Session is a single real world game session, usually consisting of several Scenes. When the Session ends, Prestige can be spent on character advancement. If the player has earned enough. And they’re still alive.

Story - A Story is a single ongoing narrative which will often consist of several Sessions. At the end of a Story with the approval of the Mistress of the House, players can choose to change to a different character.

Chronicle - A group of linked Stories that include the same group of characters is called a Chronicle. Individual characters may come and go, but the Family and Staff do not change.



The Cruel Currency in the Value of Secrets

“Now, Mr. Tuckle. I don’t believe we need to discuss this little incident at the moment. I’m sure you will find a way to compensate my silence in the near future. In the meantime, let us return Miss Bagatha’s ball gown to her wardrobe, and hope you haven’t stretched out its seams.”

Secrets drive the intrigue among the Staff, both in the acquisition of leverage against your fellow servants as well as hiding your own against prying eyes. Despite best intentions in keeping things private, your fellow staff are going to do their utmost to find any skeletons in your closet, hoping to use them to their advantage when trying to manipulate you in doing their bidding. They may even reveal your hidden secrets to the upstairs family, which could put your position in jeopardy.

Obviously, it’s better to do unto others before they do unto you. With extreme prejudice.

Learning the Secrets of your fellow staff provide an amount of leverage in coercing your co-workers through the use of Innuendo. A cutting word that references something hidden from everyone else can get under the psychological armor of your fellow staff members and allow a certain advantage moving forward—either by gaining Prestige, advantage in your dealings, or even causing harm to their person. A life in service doesn’t have many perks, but the ability to gain the upper hand with your co-worker through the use of psychological cruelty is definitely one of them.

The Dangerous Game of Exposing Secrets

“Mr. Fizzlewig, I fail to see how the destruction of an entire cruise liner in the Gibraltar Straits falls under the classification of ‘a youthful indiscretion.’ You certainly saw the peninsula at some point.”

Sometimes Innuendo isn’t enough, and a civil disagreement between Staff needs to be resolved through public humiliation and potential dismissal. This is best resolved through exposing the Secrets of those who cross you, mercilessly and without regard for tact or discretion.

Exposing a Secret is an easy process: share the Secret with a member of the family. When a Secret is exposed, the Family will sharply rebuke the staff



member, resulting in the immediate loss of all gained Prestige. This may not occur instantaneously, but it will indeed occur within the next Scene. With the loss of all Prestige, a staff member is in serious danger of losing their position unless they find a way to quickly get back in the Family's good graces.

Example:

- Mr. Fizzlewig's secret past as a White Star ship's captain has come out to Lord Blackwood, specifically about how he crashed the HMS Gigantic into a lighthouse. Losing all his Prestige, he immediately throws himself into gaining Prestige by any means necessary, even volunteering to re-attach the weather vane back on the roof during the lightning storm. Good luck, Mr. Fizzlewig.

There are drawbacks to exposing a Secret, however. Once successfully exposed, the Secret is then removed from the staff member's character sheet and is no longer available for use in the act of Innuendo. When Guiding the Direction of a family member, a staff member cannot successfully convince a family member that a false Secret is true. A Secret must be based on truth to be truly effective. This doesn't keep a servant from lying through his teeth or spreading gossip, of course. It just means they won't immediately act upon it. All in good time.

Beginning with Shame, Ending in Tragedy - Starting Secrets

"I don't understand why any of this matters. I stabbed that man long before my employ here in the house began. And the doctors said I'm completely cured, so there you are, sir."

Each player starts with one Secret they'd prefer to keep hidden in their past. These types of Secrets are based on the character's previous background, and can be alluded to in different methods through gameplay.

When selecting a starting Secret the Master of the House should encourage the player to develop a full explanation of why they keep this buried deep in the past, eager to keep others from knowing. "A former criminal past" is not quite as exciting as "Served as the driver for the MacMudder Gang in Glasgow, until witnessing a murder that caused me to go on the run from both the law and my former mates."



Starting Secrets of Inhibition

(There's something that either physically or mentally impairs you.)

You have a physical injury that occasionally impairs your duties.

Additional Considerations:

- *What is the nature of the injury?*
- *How did you gain the injury?*
- *What do you do to keep it secret?*

You are illiterate and have been faking it this entire time.

Additional Considerations:

- *Why did you never have the chance to learn to read?*
- *What do you do to keep it secret?*
- *Does your family know?*

Since the War, you have dark memories of what you saw.

Additional Considerations:

- *What did you do during the War? Were you on the Front?*
- *What was the worst thing you saw during this time?*
- *How does this affect you now: nightmares, slight tremor, melancholia?*

Starting Secrets of the Past

(There is something in your past you'd rather keep quiet.)

Spent time in prison as a conscientious objector in the last war.

Additional Considerations:

- *What was the basis of this moral decision at the time? Religious beliefs, fear of being hurt, etc.*
- *How were you treated during your incarceration?*
- *How do you justify the negative stigma, when confronted with people who served or lost someone in the War?*

You didn't start in service, but that former profession is nothing you wish to discuss.

Additional Considerations:

- *What former profession did you give up?*
- *Why do you keep the former profession a secret?*
- *How do you treat people who knew you from that time in your past?*



A connection with unsavory criminals you've had to dodge for a clean start.

Additional Considerations:

- *How were you involved in their illegal activities?*
- *How did you break away from that life?*
- *How do you treat people who knew you from that time in your past?*

Starting Secrets of Family

(Someone in your family drags you into public scandal.)

A secret child, given up for adoption at an early age.

Additional Considerations:

- *Why did you give them up?*
- *How old are they now? Have you seen them since?*
- *What keeps you from reaching out to them now?*

A ne'er-do-well sibling in and out of the local prison.

Additional Considerations:

- *What was the reason for their last incarceration?*
- *What is your relationship with them? Violent? Co-dependent?*
- *What sort of trouble do they cause you when they return?*

One of your parents was ruined by drink.

Additional Considerations:

- *What is your worst memory from growing up with them?*
- *How often do you remain in contact with them?*
- *What do they do to maintain their livelihood? Do you support them?*

Starting Secrets of Esoterica

(Something about you is hard to explain and even harder to believe.)

You believe yourself to be extremely unlucky, perhaps even cursed.

Additional Considerations:

- *When did this belief begin?*
- *What is your proof this is not just coincidence?*
- *What steps do you take to counteract the curse?*



You were cast from your proper religious family, due to terrible allegations.

Additional Considerations:

- *What was the incident that caused your family exile?*
- *What does the local clergy think or know about this incident?*
- *What are your opinions about religion since this event?*

In the past you have seen (or at least at the time *believed* you had seen) ghosts and visions of the supernatural.

Additional Considerations:

- *What was it that you saw? When did this happen?*
- *How have you dealt with this since?*
- *How do you see them now?*

Starting Secrets of Employment

(Something about your professional history requires glossing over whenever discussed.)

You had an emotional fling with one of the family members at one point.

Additional Considerations:

- *Which member of the family did this involve?*
- *How did the dalliance start and who ended it?*
- *How do they treat you now that it's over?*

You have no experience in what you have been hired for, and have been faking any expertise.

Additional Considerations:

- *Why have you been staying in the position?*
- *How have you been covering this up?*
- *What would you do if it was discovered?*

You were dismissed from your last place of employment under unpleasant circumstances.

Additional Considerations:

- *Where was the last employment?*
- *What happened to cause your dismissal?*
- *How have you hidden this from your current employer?*



Example:

- During character creation, Kris explains to the Master of the House that Miss Bluntmore had once worked for the Venable family over at Boggard Manor, until she accidentally lit the library on fire. The Master of the House suggests Kris starts the game with the Secret, “You were dismissed from your last place of employ under unpleasant circumstances,” and promptly moves the candle away from her on the gaming table.

The Ruthless Pursuit of Planting and Gaining Suspicions

“Frankly, I don’t know where you got the idea that Miss Saffle had succumbed to some sort of vampirism. I, on the other hand, do find your veins quite exquisite.”

When a member of staff decides to spend a Prestige to gain a Suspicion, the Master of House provides a simple description of the circumstances surrounding another person’s Secret or Trouble, either by writing it out in secret or describing the Suspicion to the table. Although the Suspicion’s circumstances are truthful, they do not specifically indicate which staff member or family member is being referenced, or all of the surrounding details. Occasionally, other members of staff will be suspected or the entirety of the Suspicion could be misinterpreted. Luckily, players never jump to illogical conclusions or take actions on incorrect information.

Example:

- While playing the Cook Mrs. Gooch, Brian decides to spend a Prestige to gain a Suspicion. The Master of the House writes down on an index card, “There have been multiple empty bottles found recently within the cloak room.” Brian suspects someone on staff may have a drinking problem, and is determined to figure out who.

A player may know the skeletons in a fellow servant’s closet and want the terrible truth to come out, yet keep their hands entirely clean in the matter. When a player knows a Secret and wants others to be clued in, they may opt to spend a Prestige in order to plant a Suspicion. This Suspicion is described and managed by the Master of the House, who has the option of providing the planted Suspicion at any given time during the game Session.



Example:

- Mr. Chumley knows of Miss Santiago's secret dalliance with Lady Blackwood in the past and has been holding onto that bit of knowledge for quite some time. He sends a private note to the Master of the House that he is spending a Prestige to plant a Suspicion about the illicit rendezvous. The Master of the House notes the Suspicion to be planted for another player to find. Later, during the cleaning of the Servant's Hall, Mr. Moorcock stumbles upon a perfume-smelling scarf and a pair of unmentionables.

Planted Suspicions do not necessarily need to be true, and can potentially backfire against the player. They themselves could be assumed to have the Secret. This could cause an awkward explanation when the accusations fly, especially when trying to explain why you have a drawer filled with Her Ladyship's unmentionables.

Example:

- Mrs. Crueller is convinced Mr. Fizzlewig is the one secretly having an affair with the butcher's wife in town, unaware Mr. Fizzlewig has been planting the Suspicion with the hopes that Mr. Moorcock would be considered the main culprit. Slight miscalculation there, especially when the butcher comes to the servant's quarters with cleaver in hand.

Tell No One About This - Failure and Secrets

"Think anyone will be suspicious?"

"Of course not, people spontaneously combust every day."

A word of warning: certain behaviors and character actions may develop into a Secret, especially as a consequence of failed dice rolls when involved in less than appropriate behavior. A cheeky staff member may think they have gotten away with bad and possibly worse behavior, despite a bad dice roll in trying to cover up the situation. But rest assured, these moments will rear their ugly head at the worst possible times, under the loving guidance of your Mistress of the House. They really do love you, mind you. But love can take strange forms. Strange, *violent* forms.



Example:

- Mrs Faith and Mrs. Gooch accidentally killed the milkman after a terrible misunderstanding, and are desperately trying to cover up the situation. After scrubbing down the scene of the crime, Mrs. Gooch rolls to verify Everything is in its Place and fails. Instead of having the murder's cover up fail, the Master of the House informs both Mrs. Gooch and Mrs Faith that everything looks fine...but where did the bloody murder weapon go? The Master of the House tells them both to add a new Secret to their character sheets and keep on the look out for wayward milk bottles.

Aimless Innuendo - No Secrets, No Problem

The Basic move of Innuendo, where a player uses Secrets about the other character in order to gain social leverage, usually requires knowing a confirmed Secret about the other character. However, this is not always necessary in order to drop Innuendo, merely for the Innuendo to be effective. When attempting to use Innuendo without knowing a Secret about the target, they do so with a -1 penalty.

Example:

- Mr. Pratt wants to drop Innuendo on Mrs. Crueller, but doesn't quite know any of her Secrets (although he has plenty of Suspicions). Regardless, he decides to make an Innuendo about her physical problems with the stairwell, alluding to her being less effective in her job. Due to her old age there is no Secret surrounding this, so Mr. Pratt must roll at a -1.

Staff are not required to immediately use the Secrets they know in order to gain an advantage, either. If a Secret is confirmed but a player chooses not to reveal it to either the target or the company kept, they can merely drop an Innuendo that has no basis on their Secret. Such players are dangerous people, and you should not be left alone with them for your own safety.

Example:

- Captain Toff is aware that Mr. Moorcock has secretly spent time in prison, years before he arrived at **Bedlam Hall**. Despite this, Toff chooses not to tip his hand yet against Mr. Moorcock, and drops Innuendo referencing no specific Secret. He gains no advantage, and Moorcock is still unaware Toff knows about his jail time.



Don't Mind If I Do - Accepting Secrets

"Well, obviously I had an affair with her Ladyship. Look at me."

"Please put your trousers back on."

Players may occasionally be accused of Secrets they hadn't previously considered, but find them so utterly delightful they may wish to confirm they're true. The French call such players "les drama queens". In such situations, the Fiction should win out and become reality. When a player opts to accept a Secret they have been accused of, the Secret is recorded on the player's character sheet. In compensation, the player that accepted the Secret like a champ may roll with Something Extra for the remainder of the Session.

Example:

- Mrs. Faith has decided to confirm her Suspicion that Mr. Pratt the Chauffeur (played by Oscar) is actually the lost twin brother of the local vicar, Father Hellmunt. Oscar hadn't even considered the possibility but thought the idea so delightfully off the wall, he decides to agree to the Secret being true. Because of this, Oscar can roll with Something Extra for the remainder of the Session.

Crafty players may consider this a method to roll with Something Extra in particularly difficult situations, but such attempts would only provide a short-term benefit. The long-term effect of course is a brand new Secret to be exploited by both a fellow player and the Master of the House. But they wouldn't do that, of course.

I Feel Exposed - Too Many Secrets

"Am I the only person here who hasn't accidentally murdered someone?"

"Well I haven't, but it wasn't an accident, I grant you."

Juggling multiple Secrets effectively is nearly impossible to do. As a general rule, a character should never hold more than three Secrets at any given time. When a player has three Secrets, the Master of the House should start to overtly hint at the player's Secrets until one of them starts to leak out. Or perhaps all of them simultaneously, in a swirling morass of scandal that makes them question whether or not their life is held in the hands of a cruel and delusional god. In reality, it's just the Master of the House which may be little comfort all things considered.



Handling Family Troubles and Temporarily Surviving

“Oh dash it all, the old lady’s screaming at the hallway paintings again. Your turn to take her back to her calming closet; I did it yesterday.”

When a family member is experiencing a Trouble, it can cause serious repercussions to the household, Family, and even Staff. Troubles can be rooted in dark, terrible things the family member has been hiding from everyone else or can be accepted “indiscretions” that the Family simply brushes under the rug when company comes. Either way, their revelation will often be loud, destructive, and occasionally bloody. When encountering a family member in the final throes of a Trouble, there are multiple options available to the house staff in order to perform one’s duties:

Wait It Out - Ignore the Strange until you can make a diplomatic exit from the room. Turn your head and think of England, and all that.

Calm Them Down - Guide Their Direction into regaining their composure. If this fails of course, you may become the target of their wrath, madness, or otherwise unpleasant reaction. However, success will yield Prestige and possibly the afternoon off.

Send Someone Else - Hmm, maybe it would be better if another member of staff were to deal with the duties that require interaction with the afflicted family member. Direct the Staff to go deal with it in your place.

Don’t Do Them - Ignore both your duties and situation altogether and hope for the best. Of course, this never works out for long. The Master of the House will undoubtedly see to that.



The Doomed Failure of Romance

“Darling, do you think there’s a problem with our coats? Mrs. Gooch and Mr. Pratt keep rushing into the closet together. And when they come out, they’re positively flushed.”

Working closely with people will prompt a familiarity that occasionally leads to complications. Moist complications. And few things are more complicated than the beginnings of a relationship, its ending, and everywhere in between. Staff members may find one another attractive, charming, or possibly, dare we say it, nice. But once things grow more intimate, they invariably grow more awkward during the normal work day.

The bigger problem of relationships within **Bedlam Hall** is of course the aftermath when romance has run its course and neither party wants to see the other ever again. Resigning one’s position is out of the question of course, so the only options left are finding a way to work together as mature adults in professional and respectful manner... Or to try to arrange the other one to be fired through social treachery.

On the other hand, relationships can provide an additional level of intrigue and treachery when trying to manipulate fellow players, causing people to make foolhardy decisions against their better judgments, simply because they’re obligated to do so after an illicit indiscretion. Luckily, this is indeed just a game and has *no* basis in real life.

Romancing the Staff - Always a Bad Choice

Relationships among the servants is usually frowned upon, and often actively discouraged by either the Butler or Housekeeper acting as heads of staff. Such complications will distract people from performing their duties at top efficiency, not to mention the possibility of secret rendezvous in the linen closet or other hidden locations. In some households, this could even be considered a dismissable offense (mostly because it implies a lack of control over the servant’s lives).





When one or two members of staff start having a relationship during the course of the Fiction, the Master of the House should instruct both players to add this as a Secret to their characters. Their discretion will determine whether other members of the staff grow suspicious of the situation.

Example:

- Mr. Pratt the Chauffeur has been spending some rather intimate time with Mrs. Gooch. Unbeknownst to Mr. Pratt, the youngest daughter Mathilda is aware of the secret rendezvous between the two. Now Mr. Pratt has been tasked with sneaking Mr. Moorcock's set of keys to Mathilda's playroom when no one is looking or else everyone is going to find out.

Romancing an Outsider - An Even Worse Choice

Relationships with people outside of the household is of course possible. People do visit the household from time to time with delivered goods, or visit from the neighboring village as part of their rounds as the local vicar



or constable. But such well-meaning intrusions will only bring poor, unfortunate bystanders into an enclosed world of treachery and strange behavior. It's difficult to explain to an outside perspective why the family's youngest daughter is not allowed to be freed of her straps after dark, especially when she seems so quiet and demure. In addition, an outsider will invariably be dragged into the intrigue and backstabbing behaviors that occur among the Staff. How can they really know that those sweet, friendly co-workers are just waiting for the right moment to strike?

Example:

- Mr. Fizzlewig has been rather sweet on Blanchard the new milkman, offering him a cup of tea during his morning visit and engaging in conversations. During these conversations, Fizzlewig has begun opening up to Blanchard about his experience at the Hall, as well as the Secret that Fizzlewig has actually never been a valet before his employ. On one particular morning however, Fizzlewig was unable to greet Blanchard at the service entry. Luckily, Mrs. Crueller was more than willing to let the poor dear into the kitchen, offering him a cuppa and biscuit with the hope they could be good friends as well. And good friends of course, share secrets.

Romancing the Family - Probably the Worst Choice of All

Relationships with family members are not only more complicated, but far more dangerous in terms of employment. Fraternalization with the lower classes is frowned upon in polite society, after all. Allegations of favoritism (whether or not they prove to be true) will create or intensify rivalries among the Staff, making a quick target to knock down whenever possible. Even worse, if other family members develop a sneaking suspicion of clandestine relations, they will consider the relationship a form of leverage to use against one another. After all, they might not be able to harm the other family member, but their favorite servant is an easy target and fair game.

Example:

- Miss Santiago has been carrying on a secret affair with Lord Blackwood behind his wife's back. When Lady Blackwood discovers evidence of the Maid's relationship with her husband, she opts to make Miss Santiago's life a living hell by constantly ringing the bell and forcing her to climb up the stairs with filled tea trays, only to send them back after



deciding she wasn't in the mood for that blend of tea. After the seventh trip in one hour, Miss Santiago has begun to realize this isn't by accident. Now Lady Blackwood wants the Library re-organized by color. Oof.

My dearest Hans -

Your cruel avoidance continues to tear away at my aching heart, leaving every moment of my hollow existence to be filled with an empty hunger that nothing can truly sate.

By the time you read this note, I am quite sure the arsenic will have performed its fateful task. Know that my final thoughts were solely of you, and I told my husband this in the letter I have written in addition to this final goodbye. I owe him the truth about our torrid affair, and I am sure he will forgive us.

I love you, my darling. - D.





The Simplest of Expectations:

Your Basic Moves

“Very well. I’ll explain it one more time. When it’s the second day of washing, we move the summer coats to the lower peg and sweep their backs using the camel’s brush, after luncheon but not before tea-time. But for the third day of washing, we keep the coats on the upper peg, move the winter coats to the lower peg, sweep the back using the camel’s brush before luncheon along with the linen jackets. Unless of course it’s Monday, and then we move them to the lower peg and we do not use the camel’s brush at all. It’s so simple, you act like you’ve never worked in service before.”

While acting as household staff, each servant has a series of actions that can be executed at any time, called Basic moves. Basic moves allow the staff member to add the appropriate attribute to their roll in order to improve (or impair) their final result.

Confirm Suspicions

When you have reason to believe you know someone’s Secret or Trouble, roll +Persuasion.

- On a 10+, the other person confirms the Suspicion is true or false. Mark that you know one Secret/Trouble of that person if confirmed.
- On a 7-9, the Secret is confirmed as true or false and the other person may choose one of the following:
 - They develop a Suspicion about one of your Secrets.
 - Your prodding is uncalled for, you lose 1 Prestige.
 - They cause 1 Trauma to you.
 - In their next action against you, they roll with Something Extra.

Example:

- Miss Bluntmore the Maid suspects Mr.Chumley was a former guest of Bridewell Prison, so she decides to find out the truth. She corners him privately and rolls +Persuasion, ending with a total of 10. Mr. Chumley sheepishly acknowledges he was briefly jailed for a youthful indiscretion or two. Miss Bluntmore then writes down on her sheet “Chumley is a former jailbird.”



- Captain Toff has been wondering if Mrs. Gooch the Cook has a secret romantic history with the Master's son, based on the strange comments made between the two. Toff decides to indirectly ask about the matter, in order to Confirm His Suspicion. Rolling +Persuasion, Toff gets an 8, a partial success. Mrs. Gooch throws a heavy pan at Toff for suggesting such a thing. Toff now knows the suspicion is false and has the slightest concussion (1 Trauma).
- Mrs. Crueller is convinced the Butler, Mr. Moorcock, has been stealing from the household accounts, and has decided to confront him in the Library. Rolling +Persuasion, she receives a 5, a failure. In the midst of her accusation, she fails to notice the Blackwoods' youngest daughter, Mathilda, enter the room. As Mathilda grows noticeably more upset, books begin flying around on their own. Mathilda begins crying as the books slam against the wall near Mrs. Crueller's head.

Direct the Staff

When you wish to cajole, harass, or harangue others on staff to follow your directions, Roll +Etiquette.

- On a 10+, they must follow your directive immediately or lose 1 Prestige.
- On a 7-9, they must follow your directive (or lose 1 Prestige) but also get to select one of the following:
 - They will automatically succeed in their next attempt to Direct the Staff against you.
 - You lose 1 Prestige.
 - They gain 1 Prestige.
 - They gain a suspicion about one of your Secrets.

There is a definite and occasionally brutal pecking order within the household, both in terms of Prestige and general importance. However, it is not impossible for a lower-ranking servant to order the head Butler out of the room, if done correctly and with proper respect.

Example:

- Mr. Plouffe the Butler knows that Bagatha is having one of her screaming fits again, so he directs Miss Bluntmore to take up some tea to soothe Bagatha's nerves. Miss Bluntmore remembers the last time she did this, Bagatha scalded her by throwing hot tea at her face and would prefer not to. Mr. Plouffe directs her as a required task and rolls +Etiquette.



With a 10, Miss Bluntmore understands this is not a request, takes the silver tea tray, and hopes to dodge any thrown teacups.

- Mrs. Gooch wants the Chauffeur Mr. Pratt to drive her into town to pick up a new girdle. Unfortunately, Mr. Pratt has no desire to get behind the wheel in the terrible rainstorm outside. Rolling +Etiquette, Mrs. Gooch attempts to Direct the Staff with a result of 8, a partial success. Mr. Pratt acquiesces to her request, but grumbles that Mrs. Gooch isn't quite as steadfast as she presents herself, causing Mrs. Gooch to lose one Prestige.
- Captain Toff decides Mrs. Crueller is far too opinionated for being a woman and attempts to order her to bring him some tea like a good subordinate. Rolling +Etiquette, he gets a 4 - not only does Mrs. Crueller laugh in his face but the upstairs bell rings. Lord Blackwood needs his 2 o'clock cleanse, as prescribed by the American physician Dr. Kellogg. This will be unpleasant.

Everything in its Place

When scanning a room, roll +Etiquette. With a full success, you may ask three of the below questions. With a partial success, ask one.

- Is something out of place in this room?
- Has something been added or removed?
- Who has been in here last?
- Has there been an incident in this room?
- Is there another exit in this room?
- Has someone recently left this room?

Verifying whether Everything is in its Place is less about looking about the room and more about noticing the little details that validate everything is simply perfect at all times. Verifying Everything is in its Place isn't needed to count the number of chairs as an example, but the move allows the player to note where the chairs have been moved, which direction it was originally facing, and whether it was a stabbing or blunt force trauma that occurred to the occupant.

Example:

- Miss Bluntmore and Mr. Moorcock are chasing after the late-night prowler they interrupted as he tried stealing from the House. Following the noise, Miss Bluntmore enters the smoking room and verifies Every-



thing is in its Place. Rolling +Etiquette she gets a 10. She is then allowed to ask three questions: “Who has been in here last?”, “Is there another exit in this room?”, and “Has something been added or removed?” The Master of the House informs her the window is slightly ajar, and there is a faint scent of the type of pine rum worn by Digby, Lord Blackwood’s degenerate gambling cousin. She also notes that a large cloth bag has been stuffed behind the curtains.

- Mrs. Crueller the Housekeeper enters the Library to switch out the dying orchids on the table. Upon entering, she notices Bagatha and Mr. Wormsley sitting on opposite ends of the room, acting suspiciously. Quickly reviewing the room to verify Everything is in its Place, she rolls +Etiquette. Mrs. Crueller rolls 7, a partial success. She decides to determine whether “Someone has recently left the room.” As the Master of the House describes the lingering smell of cigars starting to dissipate, Mrs. Crueller realizes Bagatha’s father, Lord Blackwood has recently left the room in quite the state.
- Mr. Tuckle has been sneaking a cigarette in the Conservatory again, when he hears the sound of approaching footsteps. Stubbing out the cigarette, he looks around the room to verify Everything is in its Place. Rolling +Etiquette, he get a 6. In his quick dashes about the room, Mr. Tuckle knocks over and steps on Lady Blackwood’s priceless bassoon, destroying it utterly. The cigarette smell is now the least of his problems.

Guide Their Direction

When you discreetly attempt to guide a non-staff person’s actions, roll +Persuasion.

- On a 10+, they follow your lead implicitly, maybe even thinking your suggestions were their own. Very good, sir. Gain +1 Prestige.
- On a 7-9, they consider your suggestion but will follow it under certain conditions, as selected by the Master of the House.
 - You lose 1 Prestige.
 - They have an errand they’d like you to perform.
 - They require something special.
 - They want to know one of your Secrets.

As a member of staff, the Family and visiting guests quite often need a firm but indirect hand in little matters such as proper dress, daily functions, and whether they should undertake dangerous, life-threatening behaviors.



When in the throes of a Trouble, Guiding the Family's Direction becomes even more important. Although guiding them will not stop them, it will definitely influence their behavior in another direction until it subsides. This is particularly useful when the Trouble involves physical violence, amorous intentions, or perhaps being volunteered to participate in something undignified.

Example:

- Mrs. Crueller has approached Lord Blackwood, carefully addressing the recent unrest surrounding his decisions about his daughter Bagatha's suitor, Mr. Wormsley. Mrs. Crueller decides to suggest to Lord Blackwood he reconsider his refusal to allow their engagement, rolling +Persuasion. With a 10, Lord Blackwood changes his mind and announces he always knew Mr. Wormsley might make a fine son-in-law.
- Mr. Plouffe is trying to get the Family out of the House for the afternoon for a much-needed rest. Approaching Lady Blackwood, he attempts to Guide Her Direction for a family drive in the countryside. Mr. Plouffe rolls a 7, a partial success. Although Lady Blackwood thinks it's a splendid idea, she has decided to bring Grandmama along, and asks Mr. Plouffe to bring her down from her room. Cautiously, Mr. Plouffe puts on a pith helmet and gloves, ready for the elderly woman to attack him on sight.
- Mr. Pratt the Chauffeur has been tapped by the rest of the Staff to bring down Uncle Balthazar from the weathervane atop the House, especially with the raging storm outside. Pratt attempts to reason with Balthazar and Guide His Direction. Rolling +Persuasion, he gets a 5. As he inches toward the weathervane high atop the roof, lightning darts across the sky, striking Mr. Pratt. The resulting shock causes 2 Trauma to Mr. Pratt and presents a new problem as he starts to tumble down the roof toward the edge.

Ignore the Strange

When you attempt to disregard strange, horrible, or even eldritch happenings, roll +Composure.

- On a 10+, the events have no effect on your person and you continue forward as planned. You may ask a question about the situation as it is unfolding.
- On a 7-9, you may still ask a question about the situation, but you are



also distracted, meaning your actions are somewhat compromised and less successful.

Ignoring the Strange can be used either as a pre-emptive precaution before entering a dangerous or bizarre situation with the House or Family, or it can be attempted as a reactionary defense to occurrences that suddenly present themselves. In either case, the best option is to determine what is needed to resolve the issue and carry on.

Example:

- Miss Bluntmore has brought the tea tray up to Bagatha's room, hearing her shrieking from behind the door with a blood-curdling howl. Miss Bluntmore takes a deep breath and enters, rolling +Composure. With a full success, Miss Bluntmore easily evades Lady Bagatha's notice as she continues her high-pitched screams and pulling at the wallpaper within her room. As she leaves, she notices Lady Bagatha's letters from her gentleman suitor, Mr. Wormsley, strewn on the bed along with a ripped portrait of her fiancé. It would seem there is impending trouble with the scheduled nuptials.
- Mrs. Crueller has answered the teatime bell, calling her into the Library and is stunned to find Lord Blackwood standing in the buff before the open window, allowing the rainstorm to blow cold wind and rain against his bare skin. In order to carry out her duties, she opts to avert her eyes and Ignore the Strange. Rolling +Composure, she receives a 7, a partial success. She realizes Lord Blackwood is "preparing" for his upcoming trip to the Antarctic, but accidentally drops the tray, spilling tea onto the rug. At least she didn't break a cup. Or break eye contact.
- Mr. Chumley has been asked to drive Bagatha and Mr. Wormsley to the train station, but has noticed they have been silent on the car ride since they left the house. He decides not to press the matter and Ignore the Strange. Rolling +Composure, he gets a 5, a failure. The tension is broken when Bagatha leaps at Mr. Wormsley in the backseat, howling as she attempts to rake his eyes out. Startled, Mr. Chumley swerves as he drives, taking the car off the road and into a tree, killing Mr. Wormsley.

Innuendo

When you hint or reference a confirmed Secret in gaining a social advantage over someone, roll +Secret. With a full success, they are knocked down a peg



and you choose two. With a partial success, choose one.

- Roll with Something Extra against them for the next Scene.
- They lose 1 Prestige.
- You cause 1 Trauma.
- You gain 1 Prestige.

What good is knowing a Secret if you can't use it to your advantage? Innuendo doesn't require any additional audience, but definitely requires a biting comment and knowing glance. Make them feel it and be smug about it. They deserve it, after all.

Example:

- The Cook Mrs. Gooch knows she's going to need Mr. Chumley the Chauffeur to take her into town to deal with the annoying letters she has been receiving from the butcher. During the servant's luncheon, Mrs. Gooch casually alludes to the mysterious disappearance and reappearance of the household funds and rolls +Secret. With an 11, Chumley gets the hint that Mrs. Gooch knows he borrows a pound or two after gambling down at the pub. Mrs. Gooch can now roll with Something Extra against Chumley when she asks to be driven into town.
- Mrs. Faith has found Miss Bluntmore chatting with Mr. Fizzlewig again, shirking her duties in changing the bed linen upstairs. Mrs. Crueller knows one of Miss Bluntmore's Secrets and uses it to apply Innuendo. Rolling an 8, she calmly asks if Miss Bluntmore has heard from her husband lately, leaving out he's currently in a nervous asylum. The social embarrassment causes Miss Bluntmore to lose 1 Prestige.
- Captain Toff is hoping to raise himself up in the social order of the household staff, so he decides to make a cutting remark about Mr. Moorcock's war record during the servant's dinner. Rolling a 5, he stammers and gets the words out wrong in front of everyone. "Well Captain, you have certainly proved the value of a military education." Toff loses both 1 Prestige and his pudding for the night.

Go Outside the Grounds

When you travel outside the safety of the manor, roll +Fortitude.

- On a 10 up, you travel through the environment with no impediment or cost.
- On a 7-9, the Master of the House chooses one.



- Your uniform is muddied, requiring a launder before returning to your duties or being seen by the Family.
- You fall and trip, gaining 1 Trauma.
- You are slowed down by your careful steps, traveling at half the speed.
- Someone from the House sees you, or otherwise knows you left.

With certain exceptions, the service staff are more comfortable indoors than out. Risking travel beyond the immediate estate is unpleasant at best and often extremely dangerous. For more guidelines about what constitutes going outside, see the section **Bring Your Wellingtons - Going Outside** and learn what horrible things are waiting for you...*out there*.

Example:

- Captain Toff the Valet knows Mathilda has been using her father's prized cufflinks as part of her "offerings" to Maev, the faerie queen of the forest. In order to find the missing cufflinks, Captain Toff puts on his overcoat and rolls +Fortitude as he steps outside. Despite the terrible weather, Captain Toff rolls an 11, and find Mathilda's outdoor shrine beside a dead oak tree. On the top of the shrine lie the golden cufflinks, circled with bird bones and the remnants of the neighbor's cat. How on earth did she dig that thing up?
- Mrs. Gooch is at her wit's end. It's been over eight hours since Pansy the kitchen maid ran down the road to pick up eggs from Mr. Squab's farm. In frustration, she storms out of the House and marches down the road. Rolling +Fortitude, she gets an 8. By the time she arrives at the farm, she is covered in mud. Pounding on the front door, she mutters Pansy had better be dead in there.
- Miss Santiago has spent a secret evening with Mr. Pratt again in the garage, and has to sneak back into the manor before anyone catches her. Rolling +Fortitude, she gets a 5. As she tiptoes quietly, she hears a shriek behind her. The rumors are true, the Terrible Whatsit is stalking the night once again!

Serve the House

When you successfully take initiative to improve the functions of the house beyond your regular duties, roll +Fortitude.



- On a 10 up, roll with Something Extra for the remainder of the Scene and gain 1 Prestige within the House.
- On a 7-9, you can either roll with Something Extra for the remainder of the Scene or gain 1 Prestige.

Serving the House is not just doing one's regular tasks, nor is it doing what you've been commanded to do. Instead, Serving the House is volunteering to do something well out of your regular duties and succeeding. Although volunteering for additional work and failing is commendable (and obviously humorous to watch), it doesn't earn additional esteem in the eyes of your fellow staff. In fact, it may even prove you to be more incompetent.

Example:

- As the Maid, Miss Bluntmore has never had to set the dining room table. Unfortunately, Mr. Plouffe the Butler and the rest of the Staff are preoccupied with the Cook Miss Gooch, who has passed out while cooking the meal for tonight's dinner party. Still, Miss Bluntmore chooses to Serve the House and set the silver while Mr. Plouffe desperately tries to revive the Cook. Rolling + Fortitude, Miss Bluntmore get a 10. Not only did she set the table correctly, it impresses everyone on Staff with her hidden ability to fold cloth napkins into swans. She gains 1 Prestige.
- Despite just being the Chauffeur, Mr. Chumley knows the Blackwoods' scheduled dinner party is running horribly late in its preparation. While everyone on Staff desperately tries to revive Miss Gooch from fainting, Chumley attempts to put together a fruit cup as an hor-d'oeuvre for the visiting guests. Rolling +Fortitude, he gets an 8. Although it's not quite the special arrangement a Cook would manage, it's enough to keep the German ambassador entertained at the interesting way the fruit was cut. Due to his efforts, Mr. Chumley can now roll with Something Extra for the remainder of the Scene.
- Captain Toff has never had to answer the door for guests like Mr. Plouffe, but really how hard could it be? When the front door bell rings, he sprints over to the entrance, stands stiffly, and opens the heavy oak door for the visiting guests. Rolling +Fortitude he gets a 6. Although he opens the door for the visiting Wormsley family, he forgot to bring in their bags sitting outside in the rain. When they are discovered later that evening, both the bags and their contents are soaking wet. Oh dear, were they bringing their antique sand collection?



Frankly Shameful Behavior - Cruel Moves

“Does this goulash taste off to you?”

“With Mrs. Gooch’s cooking, who could tell?”

Cruel moves are absolutely horrible actions, performed as last minute misdeeds that do nothing but cause terrible problems for everyone involved. Naturally, that makes them a delight. Each member of staff begins with a Cruel move that can be enacted once per game Session. This Cruel move does not require a dice roll, they happen automatically (although not always instantaneously).

- **A Turn of the Screw** - You have the option of intentionally provoking one of the family members into their Trouble’s final, horrific state, causing everyone to deal with the ramifications.
- **A Heightened Tension** - You have the option of shifting all family members up one level in their Troubles.
- **A Terrible Scandal** - You have the option of sending a letter to the local newspaper, detailing all known Secrets in your arsenal simultaneously.
- **A Physical Altercation** - You have the option of choosing one member of the household staff and beating the tar out of them, causing 3 Trauma.
- **An Expensive Theft** - You have the option of taking the heirloom jewels, family silver, or any item of great worth within the House. After this, all of the Staff will be suspected of the malfeasance and lose 1 Prestige, as well as the growing suspicion of the Family.
- **An Uncomfortable Aperitif** - You have the option of having spiked the household staff meal with something extremely unpleasant. Everyone else experiences 2 Trauma and a great deal of discomfort for the remainder of the game Session.

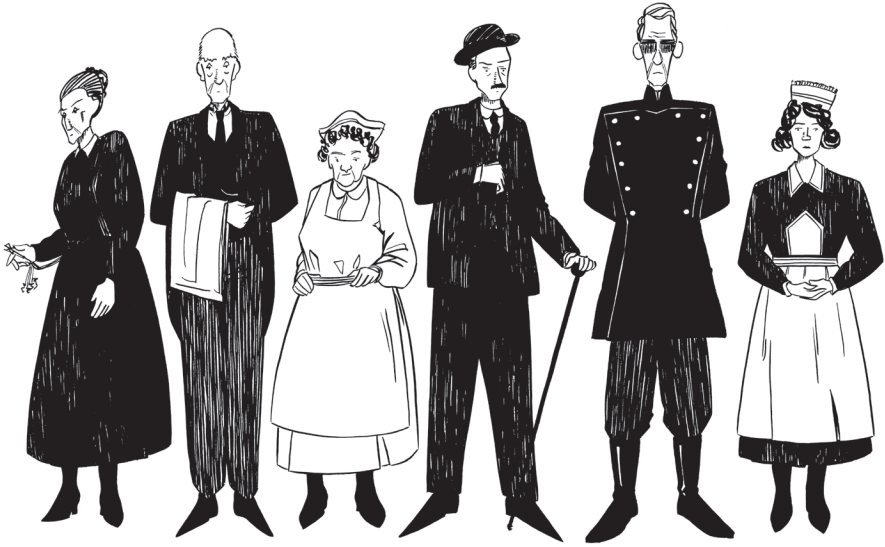
Cruel moves can either be enacted as a public declaration to all the players in the table, or given to the Master of the House in secret (either by note card or other form of private communication). However, players who enact a Cruel move in secret must note on their character sheets their new Secret as the person involved in the Cruel move.



Examples:

- Playing Mrs. Gooch the Cook, Brian is tired of being ignored by everyone and has decided they need to pay more attention to his suggestions. Brian opts to enact Mrs. Gooch's Cruel move in public, telling everyone around the table Mrs. Gooch is Heightening the Tension. By doing so, all the family members begin to react as Mrs. Gooch begins screaming in frustration in game.
- Mrs. Crueller the Housekeeper has had enough of Captain Toff's bad attitude, and opts to enact her Cruel move in secret: A Physical Altercation. After lights out later that night, Mrs. Crueller sneaks up to the Captain's bedroom, puts a pillow over his head and beats the daylight out of him with a bar of soap in a pillow case. The Captain receives 3 Trauma and an unspoken warning to behave himself. Although Mrs. Crueller now has the Secret surrounding her actions, she considers the risk worthwhile.





Positions and Duties

We like to consider ourselves to be individuals, unique with personal characteristics that separate us from the average person. We strive to rise above common labels such as our position of employment and be seen as special. More than just what we do for a living, doomed to a fruitless existence of serving other people's needs or wants until we shuffle from the mortal coil, only to be remembered as a nameless cog, faceless spectator to our own lives without leaving as much as a scratch upon the exterior of time and civilization to prove that we were here, we did exist, and our lives held a deeper meaning.

Good luck with that.

As a member of the staff, everyone has particular duties within the household, which affords certain advantages at convenient moments. Since the recent Armistice of the Great War, fewer people seek a career in Service and even fewer people can afford the large household staffs that were so prevalent in the great houses in the last century. Still, if you were hired at the Hall, it means you're probably one of the best at what you do...or you just saw the advertisement in the paper.



Positions of Staff:

The Butler - As the head of the service staff, it is your responsibility to make sure the Family are being maintained with decorum and propriety at all times... especially when things go straight to hell.

The Chauffeur - Who needs all that house politics and scurrying about the halls. What they do up in the House is none of your business, you're just paid to drive and look the other way. And carry heavy things.

The Cook - Forget the flashy to-do, you know you're the most important member of the staff. A butler can be replaced, a maid can be forgotten, but without you around, everyone starves or even worse, has to cook for themselves.

The Housekeeper - Downstairs, you run the show and keep a close watch on the Staff, making sure no one steps out of line. Sure you could be more tender-hearted and accommodating to their problems. But who would want to do that?

The Maid - Few people are allowed access to the upstairs bedrooms like the Maid, a privilege which you would never use against your fellow staff. Never ever. Unless it was absolutely necessary.

The Valet - The Valet enjoys a direct communication with one of the Family, advising them in the best course of action in appearance, travel, and who should probably be thrown to the wolves at any given moment.

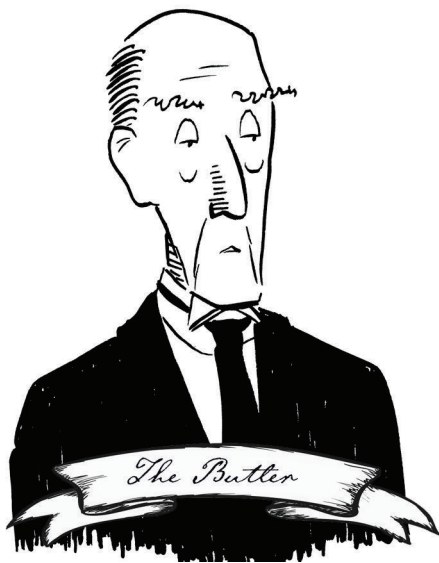
Once you have chosen your Position, it is extremely difficult to change to another station, so pick wisely. Remember that entire scandal when we discovered the Housekeeper was really Mr. Badfire trying to get back into the House? Talk about Secrets waiting to be discovered.



The Butler

“Sir. Although I understand the sarcophagus comes from a rare archaeological dig, are you quite certain there should be shrieking coming from the inside?”

The Butler is considered the highest-ranking servant among the Staff, working in tandem with the Housekeeper to maintain order and control. The Butler oversees the duties of all male servants, including the kitchen staff. When there is a problem upstairs, it is the duty of the Butler to resolve it immediately and quietly and maintain the overall stability of the household.



Suggested Names: Algernon, Merriman, Stevens, Pritchard, Carson

Behavior: (Pick one) demanding, snooty, tired, humorless, secretive, steadfast

Appearance: (Pick one) ancient, broad-shouldered, pristine, voluminous, gnarled, sinister

You get:

Voice of Authority - The Butler starts with an additional Prestige.

And pick two:

Stiff Upper Lip - When attempting to Ignore the Strange, you may roll +Fortitude instead of your +Composure.

Family Favorite - You practically raised one of the household, fully aware of their personal issues and love them regardless. You can ignore any Trauma from their actions.

Employment at Stake - When successfully using Innuendo against another member of staff, you have the option to cause an additional Trauma.

It Wouldn't Be Proper - When attempting to Guide the Direction of the Family, you may roll +Etiquette instead of your +Persuasion.

Keys to the Manor - Due to your trusted position, no room is unavailable to you in the entirety of the House. You have the ability to open any locked door and enter any room via secret entrances.



A Place For Everything - Roll with Something Extra when verifying Everything in its Place.

Questions for the Butler:

Who on staff do you think have been shirking their duties of late?
Who among the Family do you consider most important?
Who among the Staff requires additional supervision?

The Chauffeur

*“A drive in the country, my lady?
Certainly, let me fetch your trunk.
Will your husband be joining us in
today’s travel? Oh, in the trunk? Very
good, my lady.”*

Although the Chauffeur is a part of the household staff, they frequently enjoy a greater level of freedom than the normal staff members. The Chauffeur not only has access to the garage, which is separate from the normal household, but also the family car, which provides a certain amount of freedom and independence from the hierarchy of the Staff. They are responsible for any vehicle’s upkeep and should be ready at a moment’s notice to provide transportation to any family member.



Suggested Names: Spargo, Branson, Bitterman, Graves, Brophy
Behavior: (Pick one) flirtatious, gruff, salty, chipper, obnoxious, calculated
Appearance: (Pick one) burly, lanky, weathered, boyish, unkempt, dreamy

You get:
Access to the Bentley - The Chauffeur has both access to the garage and the family vehicles.
Better Footwear - Roll with Something Extra when you Go Outside the Grounds.



And pick two:

Loveable Scamp - Gain a Prestige when someone incorrectly Confirms a Suspicion about you.

Go into Town - Getting outside can clear the mind. When you ask to take an afternoon off, roll +Persuasion. With a success, you can leave the grounds and remove an additional Trauma with no cost. With a partial success, you may still remove an additional Trauma, but the Master of the House will make a move.

Friends with the Locals - People from the area surrounding the House tend to talk, and luckily you've developed a rapport with them. When talking with them, roll +Etiquette.

- With a full success, ask the Master of the House three questions.
- With a partial success, ask one:
 - How has a member of the staff been acting suspiciously lately?
 - What members of staff are experiencing the most Trauma?
 - What suspicion have the locals been forming about the House?
 - Who recently gained a Secret?
 - Who recently resolved a Secret?

Don't Make This Physical - When successfully Directing the Staff, you have the option of causing 1 Trauma if they choose not to follow your command. For a partial success, you have the option of causing 1 Trauma if they choose not to follow your command, but they also have the option of causing 1 Trauma to you as a possible repercussion.

An Outsider's Perspective - When you stop a moment to reflect on the situation, roll +Composure.

- On a full success, the Master of the House will provide a true and clear answer asked about the situation.
- On a partial success, the Master of the House will provide a true but cryptic answer about the situation.

Rough and Tumble - At the expense of a Prestige, you can cause Physical Trauma to another member of staff. Multiple Prestige may be spent in this manner, up to a maximum of 3.

Questions for the Chauffeur:

Which member of the family do you despise?

Who on staff gives you bedroom eyes?

Who in the household (either Family or Staff) deserves a good thrashing?



The Cook

“Fetch me the potatoes from the cellar and be quick about it. And don’t turn your back on anything you see down there no matter what you think it is.”

Although the Cook’s authority is beneath both the Butler and Housekeeper, the Cook is the ruler of all things gastronomical when in the Kitchen. They are responsible for both the upstairs and downstairs meals, and often considered a point of attraction for visiting guests to any proper English home.



Suggested Names: Patmore, Croft, Thackery, Sugden, Lovett

Behavior: (Pick one) confused, overworked, suspicious, boisterous, fussy, complaining

Appearance: (Pick one) corpulent, ruddy, scarred, androgynous, pale, elaborate

You get:

Callouses and Burn Marks - When in the Kitchen, you can ignore one level of Trauma received.

And pick two:

I’ve Brought Your Favorite - Once per Session, create something special for someone and roll +Persuasion. With a full success, choose two. With a partial success, choose one:

- Gain a Prestige
- Remove 1 level of Trauma
- Roll with Something Extra with that person for the remainder of that day.
- Immediately stop a Trouble

Too Busy to Care - You have far too much work to worry about what the Family is up to. When Ignoring the Strange, roll with Something Extra while in the midst of performing your tasks.



Additional Help - You have an assistant that will follow your basic commands.

Hidden in the Larder - Occasionally you tuck extras in the pantry and other places, some things even the Butler is unaware of. When someone is looking for a special food or drink item, you have it available.

Something They Ate - When you spike someone's food with something that won't agree with them at all, roll +Composure.

- With a full success, choose two.
- With a partial success, choose one.
 - They suffer 1 Trauma
 - They lose 1 Prestige.
 - A Trouble increases in intensity.
 - They are incapacitated for a period of time.
 - No one knows you are responsible.

Consider Strange Requests - During a meal for the Family, examine what they're eating and not eating, and roll +Etiquette.

- With a full success, choose two.
- With a partial success, choose one.
 - Who in the Family is closest to suffering from a Trouble?
 - What sort of Troubles are threatening the Family?
 - What is the general emotional state of the Family?
 - Who in the Family has fallen in love?
 - Who in the Family has been injured?

Questions for the Cook:

Where do you keep finding the kitchen knives in the House?

Who among the Family has the strangest of tastes?

Which staff member have you found creeping about at night?



The Housekeeper

“It’s no different than breaking the neck of a chicken, young lady. You’ll be doing the poor lad a favor, and we haven’t got all day. The Lady Dowager has very specific requests for her afternoon tea.”



The Housekeeper is the highest-ranking female servant among Staff, working in tandem with the Butler to maintain order and control. The Housekeeper oversees the duties of all female servants, and is considered the de facto governor of the downstairs Staff when the Butler is not present (and quite often when he is). The Housekeeper is primarily responsible for maintaining the cleanliness of the House at all times.

Suggested Names: Buck, Hughes, Kenton, Mapes, Reynolds

Behavior: (Pick one) stern, exasperated, aloof, sanguine, determined, frivolous

Appearance: (Pick one) ashen, matronly, shrewish, fragile, rosy, shriveled

You get:

Stern Taskmistress - The Housekeeper rolls with Something Extra when Directing the Staff.

And pick two:

Cooler Head in the Room - Your presence demands respect. You may use your +Composure in the place of +Persuasion.

Keeping Them in Their Place - When successfully dropping Innuendo, you may also add “They stop what they’re doing and get back to work” as an option.

Not in the Ballroom! - When a family member is having a Trouble, roll +Etiquette.

- With a full success, the family member will temporarily regain their faculties and cease having their Trouble.
- With a partial success, the family member will leave the room, still in



the throes of their Trouble, but at least not harming anyone within the household.

Inappropriate but Necessary - At the expense of losing a Prestige, lose 1 Trauma. Multiple Prestige can be spent thus, up to a maximum of 3.

An Experienced Ear - When speaking with Staff, roll +Persuasion.

- With a full success, you can determine if what they're telling is the truth and if not, what is the falsehood.
- With a partial success, you know something sounds strange but you can't figure out what it is.

Didn't Always Work in Service - Pick a hidden skill. When you solve a problem in the household involving that skill, gain an additional Prestige.

Questions for the Housekeeper:

Which staff member fraternizes a little too much with the Family?

Which family member causes the most trouble?

What room in the House concerns you most?

The Maid

"Yes, m'lady. I understand there should be no trace of the Duke's body in the bedroom. Allow me to fetch a damp cloth."

The Maid is tasked with maintaining the personal bedrooms of the Family, usually assigned to a single member such as the Lady of the House or perhaps the eldest daughter. In addition to assisting in the dressing and preparing the family member in appearance, the Maid often develops a close bond with

their assigned family member, providing advice, assisting in discreet matters, or simply acting as a confidential ear for them to speak to.



Suggested Names: O'Brien, Danker, Pettigrew, Moffat, Williams

Behavior: (Pick one) skittish, amorous, naïve, manipulative, gossipy, jaded

Appearance: (Pick one) slight, ravishing, dour, plain, exotic, frumpy



You get:

Trusted Confidante - When people share their Trauma with you, roll +Persuasion.

- On a full success, the person sharing their woes with you loses 1 Trauma, and you gain +1 Prestige.
- On a partial success, the person sharing their woes with you loses 1 Trauma.

And pick two:

Cover Their Tracks - After a family member has experienced a Trouble, hide any evidence and roll +Composure.

- On a 10+, the incident is totally ignored and/or forgotten in the household. Gain a Prestige.
- On a 7-9, you are considered the guilty party, but roll with Something Extra over the family member for the remainder of the Session.

Invasion of Privacy - When searching through one of the family members or servant's rooms, roll +Fortitude in order to scour the room's crevices.

- With a full success, you can gain Suspicion of a potential Secret or Trouble. This Secret will still need to be confirmed.
- With a partial success, you can gain Suspicion, but leave telltale evidence someone has been searching the room.

Can You Lend Us a Hand - When Serving the House, ask someone to help you and roll +Persuasion.

- With a full success, they help you and you may choose two.
- With a partial success, they help you and choose one.
 - The work gets done in half the time or effort.
 - Roll with Something Extra to complete the work.
 - The work lowers a Trouble.
 - You both get a Prestige for the effort.
 - You gain an extra Prestige if successful.

Helpless Victim - When you are about to receive Trauma or lose Prestige, start crying uncontrollably and roll +Persuasion.

- With a full success, you may choose to either redirect the Trauma gained or the Prestige loss to another member of Staff or negate it completely.
- With a partial success, it is negated.

Part of the Furniture - When entering a room either upstairs or downstairs, roll + Etiquette.

- On a 10+, no one even notices your presence.
- On a 7-9, you are seen but unacknowledged.



Dark Foreboding - When you fail to Ignore the Strange, you may use “We’re all going to die” as a Secret the next time you drop Innuendo.

Questions for the Maid:

Who among the Family concerns you most?

Who among Staff do you fear being alone with?

What family heirloom is supposedly cursed?

The Valet

“If I may suggest, my Lord, one should always consider wearing more comfortable trousers if there is an expectation there may be late-night digging required to retrieve certain items.”

A Valet is different than a Butler, in that they are tasked with the care and maintenance of a specific member of the family (usually male). They are tasked with assembling the correct accoutrements from the entire wardrobe so the gentleman always looks properly attired at all times. In addition to maintaining the cleanliness and presentability of the Master’s wardrobe, they are also considered personally responsible for the Master’s accessories including cufflinks, pocket watches, and other finery.



Suggested Names: Bates, Hobson, Jennings, Molesley, Jeeves

Behavior: (Pick one) conniving, loyal, prim, obnoxious, mysterious, sullen

Appearance: (Pick one) dashing, spartan, flamboyant, manicured, disheveled, fraying

You get:

In Their Best Interests - You serve very closely with one of the Family. Roll with Something Extra when you attempt to Guide Their Direction.



And pick two:

A Gentleman's Gentleman - Upon viewing a person in the household, either Family or Staff, roll +Etiquette. With a full success, ask three questions.

With a partial success, ask one.

- What have they been doing in the past hour?
- What are they planning to do in the next hour?
- Have they suffered any recent Trauma?
- When was the last time they experienced a Trouble?
- When was the last time they were exposed to a Trouble?
- Where have they recently been?
- What is their current emotional state?

Behind the Scene Assistance - Gain a Prestige when you successfully protect someone's Secret from being revealed.

Seen Bloody Worse - Whether you were previously in the War or just had a darker upbringing than most, you're hardened to terrible situations. Once per Session when receiving Trauma, roll +Fortitude.

- With a success, you may ignore the Trauma.
- With a partial success, you may ignore the effects for the remainder of the Scene.

If I May Suggest - When you make a suggestion for a course of action and others follow your plan, they may roll with Something Extra when implementing your strategy.

Proper Accoutrement - When you take the time to properly dress either yourself or another member of staff for the outside elements before going Outside the Grounds, you may include "Destroys the Outer Garments" as an option for a partial success.

Master of Understatement - When attempting to drop Innuendo, you may roll +Composure instead of +Secrets.

Questions for the Valet:

Which member of the family do you serve?

Who among the Staff is envious of your position?

What item of clothing or accessory have you lost since you were hired?



...And Then There's the Gardener.

*"We need to go talk to Mr. Cuthwack. Someone was attacked in the topiary."
"Do we have to, sir? I really don't care for how the topiary stares at me."*

When talking about the household staff one should never forget to include the Gardener, who is reserved as an NPC for the Master of the House to play. But there is always something unsettling about the Gardener, in his manner, speech, overall demeanor, and smell. His thick accent often makes it difficult to understand what he's saying, and will often appear from nowhere, glowering with a mud-caked pitchfork in hand and a menacing snarl. Having been with the Family for generations, no one is quite sure of his age or what he actually does around the grounds, considering their decaying and disastrous state. But he always knows *something*.

Where Did Everybody Go? - Limited Staff Resources

*"Why aren't these cufflinks shined? Moorcock, I want you to see to it that Abercrombie is no longer employed in this household!"
"Not a problem, sir. He's been dead for years."*

The number of people in the life of service began to drop considerably after the Great War, due to the casualties of able-bodied men, modern conveniences slowly infiltrating the upper class society, and simply the overwhelming cost of maintaining a twenty or even thirty person staff after the lengthy conflict.

Because of this, it's perfectly acceptable and even realistic to have certain positions left open during gameplay. There is no requirement that one of the players act as Butler, for example. Such vacancies also allow new players to join pre-existing households with little complication. There will be plenty of complications on their own, rest assured.



Clearing the Table - Session's End

"If I had known I would live this long, I would've taken better care of my knees."

"Well, there's always tomorrow, my dear."

Jolly good, you've managed to survive tonight's game Session! Everyone still employed (and alive) at the end of the game Session gains an additional Prestige, just for making it through the night. Well done! Now it's time to convert tonight's Prestige into potential advancement.

Spending Prestige

By spending 5 Prestige, a member of staff can advance their character in their moves or Attributes. Advancement can only be spent at the end of the game Session, and can be spent in one of the following options:

- Permanently remove an additional Secret
- Gain an additional move from your Duties
- Gain an additional move from another servant's Duties
- Gain an additional Cruel move
- Raise an Attribute by 1 (Maximum of 3)

Example:

- Mr. Chumley has finally gained enough Prestige to advance, which he uses to eliminate one of his bothersome Secrets: his good for nothing brother. As he quietly burns his brother's letters and their photo together, Chumley is content in knowing his terrible family will no longer threaten his livelihood and if the truth comes out, no one would believe it anyway.
- Mrs. Faith has gained enough Prestige to gain advancement, so she has decided to add an additional move. Reviewing her options, Mrs. Faith chooses to add the additional Housekeeper move "An Experienced Ear."
- Captain Toff has gained enough Prestige to advance, so he has opted to raise his Etiquette from 0 to 1. About time he learned to stop calling the children "pets."



When a character garners five levels of advancement, the character should be retired for a number of reasons. We could suggest it's because of power balance for the remainder of the players, or perhaps that at such a level of distinction, the character's story arc should be effectively completed after such a lengthy period of time. But ultimately, anyone with that amount of advancement should find themselves a decent place to work, far and away from the madness of the Blackwoods. And no one likes a show-off.



Adding to the Dreadful Decor

The world of **Bedlam Hall** is considerably different than our modern-day experiences, in terms of setting, experience, and time period. We've provided a few helpful details that allow any Mistress of the House to further elaborate on the environment and people, reinforcing the unspoken fact that nothing is right about this place.

It's a Hard Knock Life

Considering the terrible treatment service staff receive (not to mention the terrible conditions), it's difficult to understand why people would want to remain in the world of service. Ironically enough, competition for such positions was often quite fierce, due to the poor living conditions everywhere else at the time, especially for the working class or illiterate. With a promise of regular meals and a roof over their heads, servants tolerated long hours, demeaning tasks, and low pay in order to get by. As modernization began to infiltrate the culture of the time, service positions and grand estates were gradually considered a luxury as opposed to the norm.

Gender and Positions

"Moorcock, do you remember if our last cook was a man or woman?"

"In my experience, my Lord, it isn't proper to ask."

Players may wish to play their characters with a preference to a specific gender, which may not be a conventional choice for a British household at the time. However such distinctions really aren't worth getting worked up about. Female Butlers, male Housekeepers, or a unisex Cook that no one quite has determined either way, all of these characters are perfectly fine if the players wish. Honestly, it should be the least of the Staff's problems whether or not the Chauffeur is a woman, compared to some of the terrible things that may be coming their way. The only exception that may come into play is assuming the identity of another gender as a potential Secret. Use your best judgment and follow Wheaton's Law wherever possible:
Don't be a wanker.



Sexuality and Society Norms of the Day

Same-sex relationships were considered immoral in Post-World War I England, and for men were actually illegal until 1967. For obvious reasons, such forbidden relationships were considered scandalous and would be treated as potential Secrets, if you and your players are so inclined to address these issues during gameplay. However, they certainly don't need to be included and we recommend following the comfort level of your group of players in how such matters would be addressed, if at all. As already stated, in the grander scheme of things, it's probably more important why strange messages appear in the mirror in the Attic.

Good English Weather - A Contradiction in Terms

There's nothing like a bright, pleasant day in the countryside surrounding **Bedlam Hall**. Seriously, there isn't. The outside weather surrounding the grounds is always unpleasant even in the best of conditions. When members of staff dare to venture outside, the environmental conditions should always reinforce the notion that staying inside is always a better idea.

- The entire grounds are coated in a thick, dense fog that make visibility non-existent and covers everything in a slimy, wet film.
- Why is it snowing? Isn't it July? It was pretty for the first two days, but now the snow has turned into a blanket of dirty gray slush. Every step takes twice the effort.
- It's still raining. Today's is that different type of rain that usually comes on Wednesdays. The kind where it seems to be raining upwards, directly into the face.
- It's day 32 of the heatwave, and the sweltering humidity transforms even a five-minute walk into a death march battling heat exhaustion and sweat.
- Where did all this wind come from? Just stepping outside feels like the air is slapping you in the face and giving you a quick push backward. But it's not just that the wind is blowing, it's *what* the wind is blowing.



Unusual Names for Unusual People

Family names are often handed down for generations, as an homage and remembrance to ancestors past. But sometimes those names should be forgotten and never spoken of again. When preparing family members in the First Session or improvising a visiting cousin, the following names will encourage the players to remember who they're dealing with at every turn.

Colorful Male Names

- Horace
- Quincy
- Bertrand
- Abercrombie
- Millard
- Wilberforce
- Rutherford
- Chauncey
- Ichabod
- Daffyth
- Talfryn

Colorful Female Names

- Euphrates
- Millicent
- Beatrix
- Winnifred
- Pansy
- Beryl
- Hibiscus
- Prunella
- Myrtle
- Hortence
- Phryne

Something's Cooking. Something Bad.

Among the numerous tasks of the overworked and underappreciated Staff, the servants of **Bedlam Hall** are also responsible for making sure the Family are dining upon their favorite culinary delights, mostly because the Family are incapable of fending for themselves in any sense of the word. Unfortunately, their preferred cuisine is an "acquired taste" that should probably make the players further question the sanity (or at least culinary choices) of the Blackwood Family. When the Cook is preparing a meal, feel free to offer the following suggestions as items on the menu.

Special note: We do not promote the misconception that English cuisine is an oxymoron. Quite the opposite, few things are as deliciously savory as a well-made shepherd's pie or Beef Wellington. Rather, we want to suggest that in whatever instance, the Family will just have lousy taste in food.



Breakfast - Breakfast is probably the least complicated to serve for the Family, usually provided in large tureens buffet-style where the Family serve themselves as they discuss their plans for the day. Occasionally, married women will insist on being served breakfast in bed, depending on their personal preference.

- Kedgeriee (rice, fish, and hardboiled egg)
- Rhubarb puffs
- Cold and runny porridge
- Either weak or bitter coffee, laced with strange flavorings

Luncheon - In the late Victorian and Edwardian eras, lunch would normally be served as a combination of “Russian” and “English” serving styles (called a “compromised serving style”), but for the Blackwoods this could mean all sorts of informal traditions that are simply bizarre and slightly revolting.

- Grapefruit
- Mutton hotpot
- Squab pigeon
- Lukewarm oysters
- Suet pudding
- Fish custard
- Aspic and marmite sandwiches

Afternoon Tea - Teatime is a very serious matter for the English, usually due to the lightness of luncheon courses. There are three levels of tea-time food: scones, sandwiches, and sweets.

Scones:

- Dandelion scones
- Wolfberry scones

Sandwiches:

- Butter sandwiches
- Tomato and marmalade
- Potted meat

Sweets:

- Fruitcake
- Mince cake
- Fig tarts and hard sauce
- Victorian sandwich cake



Tea (obviously):

- Bohea (the cheap stuff, brought out for unwelcome guests)
- Congu (also known as English Breakfast)
- Souchong (rich and expensive, usually three times the cost of Bohea)
- Imperial (a general term for medium tea)
- Gunpowder (a green tea, with each tea rolled into a pellet)

Dinner - Dinner for the Family is a formal affair, requiring white tie and tails for the gentlemen and formal gowns for the ladies. When serving, Staff are often required to wear white gloves in order to not directly touch the Family's plates. The meal itself is a five- to seven-course affair with two soups, five courses, and dessert. The Staff dinner is less formal, either scheduled prior to the upstairs dinner or directly afterward, depending on how charitable the Family choose to be in their customs. The staffers dine in the Servant's Hall.

- Calf's foot jelly
- Boiled calf's heads
- Flour soup
- Soused pig's face
- Kidney soufflé and lamb bladder
- Broiled cheek
- Brain fritters

Bring the Car Around

Although entire volumes could be written about the subject of post-WWI vehicles, we wanted to provide the Master of the House and new members of staff a brief description of what cars would be like at that time.

Automobiles would be best classified as pre-war and post-war, with most manufacturers understandably focused on building tanks and other militarized transports during the Great War. Pre-war autos are of course slower than their newer counterparts (some of which can obtain amazing speeds such as 35 mph), and are often open carriages, with its passengers exposed to the elements.

For the Chauffeur to the Blackwoods, the family vehicle would likely be a limousine or touring car, manufactured by Renault, Rolls Royce, Packard, or even Studebaker. Naturally, the Family would ride in back, with any luggage



or cargo kept in the boot (or trunk). Such a large vehicle would comfortably seat four in the back, with the driver and an additional passenger up front.

Normally considered a luxury item, much of that perception changed when the Ford Motor company brought automobiles to a more affordable price. The Ford Model T was originally introduced in 1908 and was updated in multiple variations throughout the years. One special note is how the Model T brought mechanization to the more rural areas around the world. Often the comparatively lower-priced vehicle would be converted into tractors or portable engines to power other tools. It would not be surprising to find a converted Model T in a particularly handy workman's garage or barn. In the world of **Bedlam Hall** however, such contraptions would enable strange or even dangerous intentions.

Rube Goldberg Variations - Customizing Your Location

Although **Bedlam Hall** is based on life in an English manor, the Mistress of the House can easily transfer the setting to other locations that will allow players to enjoy the experience of working in a new and horrible setting.

Were You Being Served?

Here at Mr. Suffering's Department Store, we take pride in our customer service no matter what our customers may require.

- Store Manager (Butler)
- Chief of Staff (Housekeeper)
- Men's Department (Valet)
- Ladies' Wear (Maid)
- Delivery Driver (Chauffeur)
- Stockroom Manager (Cook)

True Bedlam

Psychiatric care is more than just placating the mentally deranged, it's maintaining your own sanity in the face of insane conditions.

- Administrator (Butler)
- Mother Superior (Housekeeper)
- Psychiatrist (Valet)
- Sister (Maid)



- Driver (Chauffeur)
- Cook (Cook)

Ship of Fools

Welcome aboard the HMS Gigantic, where the ship's staff desperately try to keep the passengers serene and happy, despite the ship's almost certain impending calamity.

- First Mate (Butler)
- Head of Ship's Staff (Housekeeper)
- Pursuer (Valet)
- Maid (Maid)
- Ship's Pilot (Chauffeur)
- Cook (Cook)





The Devil is in the Details - Navigating the House

We would like to apologize in advance for the state of this particular section of our text, we had initially intended to provide a full diagram of Bethlehem Hall as it originally stood. For some inexplicable reason however, the illustrations would continually light itself on fire, as if the House itself was trying to keep itself secret.

to providing
ing them. To
on. Yet.
sewing notions, the Staff have begun to
s that suspiciously look like members of
sewing materials. Their purpose have yet to
nec or i
ted.

was usually served in the Dining Room,
est to be served in their private bedroom. In
table and place settings, servants would serve
called the "servery", then bring the served dish
nber.

est built, the Dining Room was originally in an
the house. Since a remodel performed over a hundred
ing Room and the Kitchen are the furthest distance
er, compared to any other rooms in the house. Food
n, and heaven help the servant requested to retrieve
kitchen pantry.

OPTION - As one of the largest rooms in the house, the Dining Room has historically served as the room used for duels of honor. The walls are decorated with dueling sabers used throughout the years by the Family, some of them still adorned with dried blood. It is not uncommon for arguments between family members to explode into impromptu sword fights in between courses.

- **OPTION** - The third chair from the left is always left vacant since the death of his Lordship's grandfather, who insisted on that placement



Because of this, we must ask both the players and Master of the House to conceive the floor plan of the Hall in the beginning of game play. This can be accomplished either through drawing a floor plan based on group feedback or through setting down index cards to represent the rooms as they are described and added during the First Session. (see **Building the House**).

In certain circumstances, the House itself acts as a character within the game. It has moods, feelings, and can act out through various methods, both mundane and otherworldly. The House has lived longer than anyone else currently residing here, and will be here long after they're gone. Many terrible things have occurred in **Bedlam Hall** over the years, and the residual effects can be disturbing.

As a location, the House has several rooms that can be added or eliminated based on how the Fiction presents itself. The most important detail to always stress is the difference in status between the Family and the Staff, both in terms of quality, space and expense.

Upstairs

Upstairs is not just a physical location, it's the blanket term for the rooms that make up the "family household." When servants enter one of these rooms, it's assumed to be in execution of their duties, and not for any personal use.

The Menacing Main Hall - The Main Hall was the first room entered through the front doors, with multiple entrances to other parts of the House. Family portraits from preceding generations often lined the walls along with other heirlooms, which of course denoted the importance of the family lineage, whether it was accurate or not.

- **OPTION** - All of the portraits within the Main Hall have had their eyes scratched out. Neither his Lordship nor Ladyship have explained why they had requested this done five years ago. Late at night, some of the servants have suggested the scratches bleed from where their eyes should be.
- **OPTION** - Since the construction of the manor, the Main Hall's floor has been decorated with inlay lines made of brass that form strange circles and symbols that have never been fully explained.
- **OPTION** - The rafters above the Main Hall creak and groan due to old



age and neglect. It is feared the roof may simply come crashing down one day, but when is anybody's guess.

The Drafty Drawing Room - The Drawing Room served a dual purpose as a waiting room for the Family before dinner, as well as the ladies' retreat afterward (the men would first retire to the smoking room in order to speak on topics beyond 'a woman's understanding').

- **OPTION** - As a treatment for a rumored outbreak of women's hysteria, his Lordship has acquired the newest scientific breakthrough: an electrical vibrational fainting couch. Since then, the ladies of the house have spent quite a bit of time in the Drawing Room. Strictly for medicinal purposes, of course.
- **OPTION** - As the Family wait for dinner, they have taken to playing a disquieting game involving a revolver and one bullet among them. To date, the game has yet to continue to its obvious conclusion. Yet.
- **OPTION** - Among the ladies' sewing notions, the Staff have begun to find small handcrafted poppets that suspiciously look like members of the servant staff among the sewing materials. Their purpose have yet to be determined or investigated.

The Dismal Dining Room - Meals were usually served in the Dining Room, unless a family member had made a request to be served in their private bedroom. In addition to the lavish seating, table and place settings, servants would serve the Family behind a screen called the "servery", then bring the served dish over to the seated family member.

- **OPTION** - When first built, the Dining Room was originally in another location in the House. Since a remodel performed over a hundred years ago, the Dining Room and the Kitchen are the furthest distance apart from each other, compared to any other rooms in the House. Food will not arrive warm, and heaven help the servant requested to retrieve the salt from the kitchen pantry.
- **OPTION** - As one of the largest rooms in the house, the Dining Room has historically served as the room used for duels of honor. The walls are decorated with dueling sabers used throughout the years by the Family, some of them still adorned with dried blood. It is not uncommon for arguments between family members to explode into impromptu sword fights in between courses.
- **OPTION** - The third chair from the left is always left vacant since the death of his Lordship's grandfather, who insisted on that placement



despite proper etiquette dictating his place at the head of the table. A visiting neighbor once tried sitting in the third chair from the left, being closest to the dining room fireplace. Although it was decided he fell into the flames due to a loose rug, no one has been placed there since.

The Stuffey Smoking Room - After dinner, the male members of the Family would retire to the Smoking Room for a snifter of brandy, a good cigar, and discussion of financial or current events. Perhaps they may even play a game of billiards while they make important decisions (often to disastrous results).

- **OPTION** - The Smoking Room is also the display area for his Lordship's hunting trophies, including a standing bear that has been stuffed and mounted. Its eyes always seem a little too realistic.
- **OPTION** - Someone in the household has been using the Smoking Room for more than just smoking tobacco. The stench of illicit narcotics permeate the room and make it highly unpleasant to enter.
- **OPTION** - His Lordship has begun to dabble in politics, feeling more qualified to weigh in on international affairs than the normal channels. Late hour meetings with foreign dignitaries have been regularly occurring, with gentlemen's agreements slowly molded into ill-advised national policy.

The Laborious Library - The Library would often serve as an informal office for the head of household and Family, complete with writing desk and more casual sitting arrangements. All great houses would have an extensive library of books, of course. More often than not, they were merely wall decorations and barely touched by the Family.

- **OPTION** - There is a special section of books, forbidden to everyone on Staff and even certain members of the Family. Their contents have only been briefly glimpsed, along with horrible imagery as illustrations.
- **OPTION** - The Library is well-known to contain the largest collection of rare ornithological texts ever in print, with several tomes considered to be priceless worldwide. Because of their rarity, the Staff are tasked with the care and maintenance of the collection while keeping would-be thieves from purloining any of the volumes.
- **OPTION** - The oak tree outside has been growing more wild as the years go by, its roots pushing against the foundation of the House and branches scraping against the window. When the wind blows, the oak tree sounds like it's trying to break into the House by any means necessary.



The Putrid Parlor - When guests arrived, they were escorted to the Parlor: the formal entertaining room for visitors to the House. This is different in contrast to the Drawing Room or Smoking Room, which were meant for more informal discussions.

- **OPTION** - The candelabras within the Parlor never go out for long. When the servant staff snuff the candles as the evening concludes, the servants will regularly find them re-lit by something or someone.
- **OPTION** - Quite by accident, the Staff discovered a trap door that drops occupants of a particular chair down the discontinued dumbwaiter to the cellar. When this was installed or by whom, or for even what purpose, is unknown to the Staff. No one dare ask.
- **OPTION** - The Staff dislike attending guests within the Parlor ever since the unfortunate shooting incident with his Lordship's hunting party last year. Luckily, the village constabulary chose not to press charges and Vicar Dibney has regained partial sight in one eye.

The Creepy Conservatory - The Conservatory traditionally hosts musical entertainment, as well as storing any instruments the Family may have fancied themselves to be virtuosos. Their actual musical ability was often an acquired taste. Phonographs may also be kept here as well.

- **OPTION** - No matter how many tuners have come to the House, the harpsichord can never keep its tuning. It always sounds off. Especially when someone is heard playing it at two in the morning.
- **OPTION** - In order to keep Grandmama asleep directly above in the family wing, all of the musical instruments in the conservatory have been muffled with pillows and other materials to make sure they don't make a noise during the children's music practice. Perhaps unsurprisingly, simply moving her bedroom to less noisy environs has never even crossed the Family's mind as an option.
- **OPTION** - Historically speaking, the Blackwood family has used the Conservatory as the location to discipline the children for any mischievous behavior, noted by the echoing of chamber music to cover up any screams. Now the Staff loathe to hear the sound of music coming from the room, while shuddering at what could be happening behind the closed door.

The Beastly Bathroom - Upstairs bathrooms were expected to be kept pristine with white tile and clawfoot tubs. The sterling appearance is always due to the grueling hard work of the Staff.



- **OPTION** - The Staff have been given strict instructions to keep the windows open and the room well ventilated when a bath is taken by the Family. When the mirrors fog up from condensation, strange unpleasant messages appear from nowhere.
- **OPTION** - No one is sure what filled the bathtub every week last October, it certainly wasn't water and probably not blood (despite its appearance). It hasn't reoccurred since, although the autumn leaves are due to start falling, which means it may be occurring again soon.
- **OPTION** - Her Ladyship has taken to including an exotic bath salt when she bathes, claiming it rejuvenates her skin. The Egyptian concoction is known to contain a form of snake venom that causes a slight numbness when touched by the bare hand. This pales in concern when compared to the occasional scales found within the bathtub of late.

The Blase Bedroom - Each private bedroom required daily attention, turning down the bed linen and making sure each family member's personal effects were impeccably cleaned, folded and put away in the wardrobe, along with any private items.

- **OPTION** - Since he was a little child, his Lordship has never wanted the closet door to be closed at night. Every night before retiring, the Staff are instructed to prop the door open. The door was left closed once several years ago, causing his Lordship to wake with his now-signature white streak in his beard.
- **OPTION** - Day or night, no matter the season, the Family demands the fireplace to be burning brightly at all hours. The heat is excruciating during the hottest days of the summer. But the Family is quite insistent. They claim it keeps something at bay.
- **OPTION** - Her Ladyship is quite insistent about where the furniture is located within her private bedroom, with as much open space between her private bed and the window. Along with her strict instructions to the Gardener about the way the outside shrubbery should be trimmed, one would almost think she expects or has received visitors arriving through the window during the night.

The Awful Attic - Used as storage for old furniture, holiday ornaments, and other items that were not rarely used, younger members of the family often used the Attic as a playroom, away from the stuffy supervision of adults.



- **OPTION** - His Lordship's father built a perfect replica of the House and the nearby village in miniature, including the nearby graveyard. Now the children have taken to burying their pets within the graveyard replica, giving a peculiar odor to the room.
- **OPTION** - His Lordship's cousin is a big-game hunter, and has sent one of his prized trophies to the Hall: a live tiger. Not knowing where to keep such a thing, the Attic became a makeshift containment until the household figures out what to do with the animal. That was two years ago.
- **OPTION** - The large mirror that once resided in the main hall was hastily moved to the Attic after a peculiar incident the Family will not discuss. It now sits untouched, covered from view. New members of staff are often hazed by being assigned to "clean" the mirror...ofttimes seeing something strange in the reflection.

Downstairs

Servants quarters were always considered "Downstairs", usually literally located underneath the main house, as to keep interactions with the Staff strictly professional and unseen by visiting guests.

The Horrendous Hall - The Servant's Hall acts as a common area for the Staff, serving as dining room, drawing room and a place to catch up on work such as sewing, polishing, or other chores best not visible to the Family. The Servant's Hall also holds the servants' greatest annoyance: the bell board, where family members can call the Staff at any time by ringing the bell.

- **OPTION** - His Lordship's great grandfather fancied himself a woodworker, and handcrafted all of the furniture decorating the Servant's Hall, even after he started losing his sight. Despite none of the furniture maintaining an even line, the Family consider the horribly misshapen furniture a symbol of honor, uneven legs and all.
- **OPTION** - A decade or so ago, one of the family children thought it a lovely prank to mix up the bells with their corresponding pull ropes throughout the House. Unfortunately it has never been corrected, causing great confusion whenever a bell has been pulled, requesting service.
- **OPTION** - The Servant's Hall is always cold, even in the thick of a warm, muggy summer. The servants often need to bundle up while downstairs, huddling around open candles for warmth.



The Boring Bedrooms - Servants often shared bedrooms, usually two beds per room, a water basin for cleaning, and little to no personal effects. However, depending on a servant's Prestige, certain staff members may be considered important enough to warrant a private room.

- **OPTION** - In order to avoid Lady Blackwood discovering his clandestine relationship with other people, Lord Blackwood often arranges the occasional secret rendezvous in one of the servants' quarters, necessitating the staff member to simply wait in the Servant's Hall until his Lordship has concluded his private meeting. Sometimes this can go all night.
- **OPTION** - The servant's quarters have always suffered from a slight rodent problem, which has necessitated the strict rule about never bringing food into the servants' bedrooms. Sometimes the rats can be heard scratching in the walls late at night, with the gouges along the bedroom doors getting deeper with each occurrence.
- **OPTION** - Due to rot within some of the bedrooms in the servants' wings, the Staff is being forced to bunk together, crammed into the same bedroom. Privacy and space are now precious commodities.

The Appalling Pantry - The Butler's Pantry was more than just the Butler's office, it was where the family silver and wine cabinets were stored under lock and key. Access to the pantry was closely supervised, and some butlers actually slept in them in the name of security.

- **OPTION** - Among the wine racks, there is a special section of glass containers where the dying breaths of the Family have been sealed and stored for centuries.
- **OPTION** - Among the silverware is a silver-headed poleaxe that has been kept in the Family for generations with no explanation to its origin or purpose. However, the poleaxe is bequeathed along with the House to the next male heir, with an insistence it is kept ready and sharp at all times.
- **OPTION** - The Butler's Pantry was hastily added to the downstairs during the original construction of the House, originally intended as storage space. The Pantry is only half as tall as the rest of the downstairs floor, requiring visitors to bend down to enter and exit.

The Terrible Toilet - No frills to the water closets downstairs, not even bathtubs (which were instead usually brought in once a week to a servant's bedroom). Servants were not allowed to use the upstairs lavatories under any circumstance.



- **OPTION** - Decades ago, one of the retaining walls unexpectedly came down, requiring an emergency re-building of the brick and mortar along the servant's lavatory. Afterward, one of the workers was discovered to be missing. Idle speculation muses he may have been accidentally bricked up behind the wall.
- **OPTION** - It was an honest mistake when they tried to rid the local marsh of snakes last year. Honestly, who would've expected them to come up the pipes to the servants' privy? Honest mistake. That couldn't possibly happen a second time, could it?
- **OPTION** - His Lordship has been wondering whether there really is a need for the servant's privy. Chamber pots serve the immediate need quite nicely, in his estimation. He will often enter the toilet unannounced, stand staring at the walls in contemplation and then quickly leave, whether or not it is occupied.

The Slanted Sitting Room - Unlike the upstairs Drawing Room, the downstairs Sitting Room served as an office for housekeeping and accounting, everything from lists of needed items, scheduling of Staff and inventory of household linens.

- **OPTION** - His Lordship insists on keeping all of the used linen in a special armoire never to be thrown away, regardless of their condition. Most of them have seen better days, and a few are even deeply stained with blood. How this happened is never asked.
- **OPTION** - Footsteps overhead are commonplace on the downstairs floor, as the servants' staff can always hear the Family walking about the upstairs of the house. Footsteps can often be heard above the Sitting Room as well, however there is no room directly above. Where are the steps coming from, and from whom?
- **OPTION** - The writing desk still contains scraps of paper from the last housekeeper, who slowly went insane before she was committed. Reading through them is quite unsettling. Among the jibberish and nursery rhyme fragments are listed prophecies of doom within the household. Some of them have come true.

The Killing Kitchen - The Kitchen was the domain of the Cook and a hub of activity as meals were planned, prepared, cooked, and served at all hours of the day. This was before the advent of refrigeration so most (if not all) meals were made from scratch, usually on the day of serving.



- **OPTION** - The Kitchen has historically contained seven cutting knives, no more, nor less. It has been this way for generations. So where did this eighth knife come from? And why does it keep getting found in other places in the House?
- **OPTION** - The thing in the cellar has been known among the Staff for generations. No one speaks about it, no one knows for certain what it is. But it's understood that all items are baked and prepared in a count of thirteen, with the last item left as tribute before locking it up at night.
- **OPTION** - In an effort to control household costs, his Lordship has insisted no food to be wasted. This includes everything from food that has gone spoiled, vegetable scraps that are barely edible, and animals parts that aren't normally eaten. Because of this, the Kitchen has developed a particular odor that is best left undescribed.

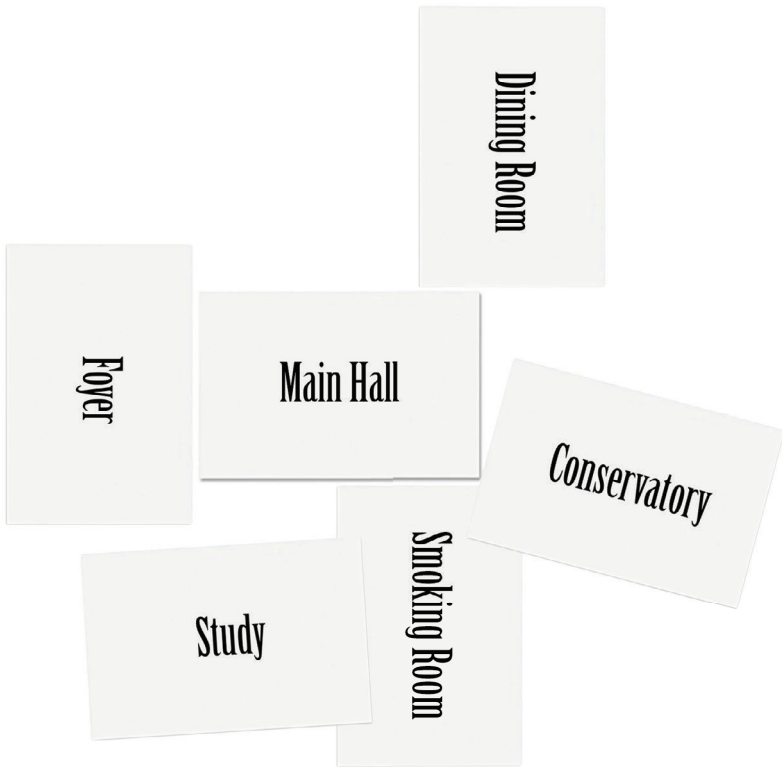
The Ghastly Garage - In addition to be the storage location for the family vehicles, the Garage was also where the Chauffeur slept, and spent most of his off-time. Chauffeurs were expected to not just drive the cars, but maintain and fix them if necessary.

- **OPTION** - There is a private workshop, just outside of the Garage where his Lordship is known to tinker with his contraptions and experiments. Sometimes the smell of gunpowder from behind the locked doors is almost overpowering.
- **OPTION** - The Family purchased its Duesenberg straight off the factory line, unaware one of the workers had been accidentally beheaded as it was being assembled. Now there are unsavory rumors the car has a taste for blood.
- **OPTION** - At some point in the House's history, the Garage was built to be airtight, with sealed windows, tight-fitting moulding around the door frames and no ventilation to the outside world. As a safety precaution, the large garage door is always kept propped open whenever possible, making the Garage quite chilly.



Building the House

As indicated previously, building the House layout is best done with player input. Start with the Main Hall and ask the players which room is the Dining Room for example on the blank map, or where the index card would be placed in conjunction with the Main Hall. Additional rooms can be added through gameplay but we recommend starting with the locations of at least the Main Room, Dining Room and Study selected.



Don't be concerned if the layout of the House becomes convoluted, things will get far more complicated as the game proceeds. At the end of the game session, feel free to note the House layout, or for even greater amusement, have the rooms of the House change with every Session. It certainly would explain why we haven't been able to find the Library all these years.





A Useless Guide for the Master of the House

“He’s throwing up blood again.”

*“Goodness, how much blood did he eat **this** time?”*

In **Bedlam Hall**, the gamemaster or storyteller is referred to as “Master of the House” for a reason; they are responsible for the world the players create through their decisions and their character’s actions. It would also be ill-advised for the players to use any other insulting names they’re considering for this auspicious individual as the game progresses. If you’ve been designated the Master of the House (or have played a story game before), you’re probably familiar with the odious responsibilities involved, but let’s go over the fundamentals just to be sure: Agenda, Principles, and Moves.

As Master (or Mistress) of the House, you should base your cruel and merciless actions on the following **Agenda**:

The Master’s Agenda:

- Keep the players’ characters’ lives interesting.
- Play to find out what happens.
- Encourage the weird and depressing.

Each decision made should further at least one of these Agenda items if not all three.

Principles are things you should seek to accomplish whenever you speak or take actions in game.

The Master’s Principles:

- Sprinkle strange details everywhere.
- Make the world seem surreal but consistent.
- Build a bigger world through play.
- Create interesting dilemmas, not interesting plots.
- Address yourself to the characters, not the players.
- Take actions, but misdirect.
- Make your move, but never speak its name.



- Name everyone, make everyone human.
- Ask provocative questions and build on the answers.
- Respond with challenging circumstances and occasional rewards.
- Be a fan of the players' characters.
- Think offscreen.
- Sometimes, reflect a question back upon the players.

As Master of the House, it is also your responsibility to maintain the action occurring beyond what the players accomplish (or fail to accomplish) at any given moment. The Master of House controls the major elements in **Bedlam Hall**.

The Family - One of the cornerstones that complicate the servants' lives, intentionally or not. No matter the problem, The Mistress of the House should make certain the family members make it worse.

The House - Whether it's a structural, supernatural, or even just a bad memory due to the past, the House can complicate the Staff's lives just as much as the Family and unfortunately, there's no reasoning with a falling chandelier.

The Visitors - Expected or not, guests to the manor bring their own complications. New people to cook for, care after, and deal with whatever Troubles they themselves bring to the fold.

Moves for the Master of the House

Just like the players, the Master of the House has specific moves at any given moment: regular moves and hard moves. You already may know this if you are experienced with games “Powered by the Apocalypse”, in which we recommend skipping ahead to the “**Setting the Tone**” chapter or perhaps the smart-looking illustration of the Terrible Whatsit on page 127.

When the players look at you expectantly, you are encouraged to make a regular move. We'll paraphrase game designer John Harper's excellent definition for this, who in turn was quoted in Avery Alder's “**Simple World**.”



When the Mistress of the House makes a regular move, all three of the following conditions should occur:

1. It follows logically from the Fiction.
2. It gives the player an opportunity to react.
3. It sets up a hard move in the future.

The Mistress of the House describes the situation or actions taking place, then asks the players, “*What do you do?*” This is what’s called a **regular move**, it gives the players an opportunity to take action if they so choose. It’s important to stress that although a regular move follows the internal logic of Fiction, that doesn’t mean it has to be a rational decision (and when speaking for the Family’s actions, it often isn’t).

Example:

- Acting as the Master of the House, Eric explains how the grandmother is demanding they throw her youngest granddaughter into the furnace (“A difficult decision to make”). This has happened because Grandmama is convinced the young girl’s birthmark is proof she is cursed by the devil himself. This isn’t rational by any stretch of the imagination, but it makes perfect sense to the Grandmama.

When a player fails a dice roll (getting 6 or lower) or chooses not to take any action whatsoever, the Mistress of the House should then make a hard move. A **hard move** is the consequences of what was set up in the regular move, the follow through of what has just occurred along with its effects.

When the Mistress opts to make a hard move, both of the following conditions should occur:

- It should follow logically from the Fiction.
- It’s irrevocable (but not unsurmountable).

Example:

- As Miss Bluntmore, Kris attempts to Ignore the Strange as she and Mrs. Gooch investigate the strange noises in the attic but fails. The Master of the House then opts to separate the two of them by having Miss Bluntmore fall through the crumbling floorboards. Luckily, she lands softly on a pile of rats. “Luck” being a subjective concept, of course.
- The Master of the House tells Mr. Fizzlewig the Valet that something seems off with every step as he walks into the master bedroom to



retrieve a book, and asks “What do you do?” Mr Fizzlewig shakes his head and says, “Nothing. I just want my book.” The Master of the House then makes a hard move. As Fizzlewig picks up the book, he realizes he’s sunk to his knees in a thick black tar and he cannot move his feet. With a sigh, he opens the book to read while he waits. Hopefully he won’t sink any further.

Move List for the Master of the House

Separate them - Separation is more than just physical, the Staff can be separated by their motives or directions given to them by the Family, putting them at cross-purposes.

Put them together - The greatest plans can be complicated and even ruined by bringing more people into the plan. Too many cooks and all that.

Cause Trauma - Physical, mental, or simply to one’s ego. Few things cause greater player reactions than a terrible, festering wound.

Take away Prestige - A mistake or bad luck on the part of the Staff is obviously intentional, or at least the Family certainly would think so and react accordingly.

Remind them of their own Secret - Skeletons in the closet have a bad habit of knocking on the door.

Hint at someone else’s Secret - The best kind of hinting should appear glaringly obvious to its owner and either mundane or obfuscated to everyone else.

Give them a difficult decision to make - Doing the right thing, the easy thing and the best thing for them often conflict with one another, hopefully with no easy answer.

Tell them the possible consequences and ask - It’s easy to forget how different the role of service compares to our normal lives. Remind them consequences are much different and could potentially cost them Prestige within the household or even worse.

Use their Secret against them - Even when the Secret is innocuous and well-hidden from others, players should always remember the details of their Secret can make things complicated and possibly even dangerous.

Suggest off-screen weirdness - There is something troubling happening to the Family, but the Staff should only see glimpses at the overall horror, usually at inopportune times.

Accelerate further Troubles - When things don’t go right for the Family, that’s when Troubles tend to get out of control.



Complicate their duties - It's one thing to serve tea, it's another to serve tea while they're enjoying the thunder storm on the roof.

Complicate the Family - Whether it's through their own actions or inactions, the Family can be their own worst enemy and in turn, affect the Staff.

Have the Family complicate the House - The upper class often have no understanding of reality. Unreasonable or even impossible requests may seem simple or even routine. Why can't you do them?

Have the House complicate the household - Things break down, stairs wears out, and the walls never forget. Never.

Ring the bell - Sometimes, the Family are going to actually ask the Staff to do real duties, such as housework, errands, or other mundane tasks. Technically that is what they're there for, of course.

Setting the Tone

Bedlam Hall is best played with a specific tone that focuses on improper behavior and situations, just underneath a veneer of manners and respectability. In ideal situations for the player table, the servants will collaborate with one another to maintain a somewhat united front while dealing with the Family's eccentricities. For the Master of the House however, the ideal situation encourages players to continually one-up each other and provide subtle digs that make sure no one truly succeeds in their efforts. Unlike normal horror-based games, the player characters of **Bedlam Hall** are less concerned about solving problems as they are in temporarily resolving them in order to get their own work done and curry favor with their employers.

Partial Details and too Much Information

As the service staff, players should always be faced with the contrast of possessing too much information about both the House, Family, and fellow staff members while never being fully informed of what's going on behind closed doors. The backstory for many of the greater mysteries or plots that occur are rarely fully explained, and some may never truly be explained at all. Simply put, they shouldn't be. Instead, the players should always have just enough information to know the "how" and occasionally the "what", but rarely the full "why."



Example:

- Everyone on Staff knows there's a problem with the cellar. There's been something lurking in its dark depths well before anyone on Staff first joined the household, possibly for centuries. But what is down there and why it exists has never been explored, partially for safety reasons, but more importantly it doesn't really matter in the course of their duties. It only really matters that the Staff know not to go downstairs into its shadows after nightfall and always carry a handful of salt to throw into the corner in the event of any strange noises. That is how the Staff cope with the strangeness.

In contrast, because the servants are considered part of the household, as opposed to people with standing, the Family and visitors will tend to overshare information that would not be considered appropriate to discuss with a regular person (even strangers). The reason being the Family don't quite grasp they're talking to actual people, they're just *servants*.

Example:

- As Captain Toff helps Lord Blackwood dress for dinner, Lord Blackwood begins to tell Captain Toff that he is thinking about taking on a mistress behind Lady Blackwood's back. Toff nods noncommittally, "Very good sir," hoping not to get involved in a conversation about Blackwood's affairs. Lord Blackwood then details how his desire for a mistress is based on the size of Lady Blackwood's feet, and a particular peccadillo he once experienced. Toff wants to hear *none* of this conversation, but is forced to remain and listen as he prepares Lord Blackwood. After a long, one-way conversation about an experience Lord Blackwood once had at university with a women's slipper and a bowl of porridge, Captain Toff excuses himself when he is finished and heads downstairs immediately to change his regular breakfast choice with Mrs. Gooch.

Different Stylings, Same Dreadful Problems

As a game, **Bedlam Hall** can be played stylistically different, based on how the Master of the House feels the Fiction best presents itself.

Dark Whimsy - The Family aren't bad people, they're just...*odd*. After years of separation from the average person they have lost touch with both reality and the modern world. Because of this, their eccentricities and behavior



require constant negotiation and correction so they can continue on their merry way without hurting themselves or others.

Unspoken Dread - The Family is broken and knows it. Yet a strict adherence to propriety and outdated custom have reinforced a constant denial of the very real problems facing them. Survival of the family name trumps personal survival and happiness, at a very dear cost to their sanity and even lives. The household staff are caught up in this predicament, honoring and furthering the household dynamic while trying to protect their own safety.

Impending Doom - For whatever reason, something terrible is trying to invade into the Family's lives, and the Family is unaware of or underestimating the real threat at their doorstep. The Staff are savvy enough to recognize the real danger at hand, and are faced with either protecting the Family or at least staying out of the way when things explode.

Example:

- As Mistress of the House, Jadine has questioned the players during the First Session, and determines the Fiction will best be served with a light-hearted sort of morbid humor. For their first story, Jadine starts with the Family eager to contribute to the local village fair with an ill-advised re-enactment of the French Reign of Terror as a theatrical production.
- Throughout the First Session's question and answer period, the players have referenced the works of **The Fall of the House of Usher**, **Flowers in the Attic**, and other gothic horror novels as the kind of setting they'd prefer. As Master of the House, Michael has determined a unspoken dread within the household best serves the players' interests. The Family will definitely share terrible secrets among one another.

Behind Closed Doors: Private vs. Public and Tone

Before starting a game Session of **Bedlam Hall**, the Master of the House needs to determine whether private information like Suspicions and Secrets will be shared with the players verbally or privately through the use of note cards. Both methods are perfectly fine, but will influence the players' actions and overall game tone.

If private information is shared verbally, be sure to remind players of the difference between in-game information and out-of-game information, if accidental meta-gaming occurs. Gameplay will often be more light-spirited



as players wrestle with unspoken contrasts between public and private information, with the dramatic tension based on characters taking actions the players *know* to be ill-advised.

If private information is shared with index cards, gameplay will lean toward scheming and quiet backstabbing, which will be delightful to witness as Mistress of the House. A steady poker face is always recommended when providing or receiving information, despite how badly things have been misconstrued. Be sure to pass innocuous information written on an index card from time to time as well. Both the recipient and the others surrounding the table will think you're up to something (which of course, you are).

Attending the Family

The Family represents the “Upstairs” world at **Bedlam Hall**, they are the most recent generation of the lineage that has owned, maintained, and cared for the House and grounds for over a hundred years or more. Each member of the family has enjoyed the luxury of the upper class since their births, and have little to no understanding of the great deal of work the household staff perform every day to provide for their comfortable lives. This will often result in outlandish or unreasonable requests to the Staff without grasping the herculean efforts involved to fulfill them, or little to no appreciation should those requests be fulfilled.

Example:

- Lady Blackwood has decided she wants to surprise her husband by bathing in fresh rose petals and pearls, rising in exposed splendor as he enters their bedroom. The fact that it's the middle of December in the worst snowstorm for the past twenty years isn't even considered, when Lady Blackwood asks Miss Santiago to simply fetch some blossoms from the rose garden.

In addition, each member of the family suffers from a Trouble, that slowly intensifies as the game Session progresses. As things continue to grow more complicated, the family member's Trouble takes over their actions causing even greater problems. If the players are unable to curtail the growing Trouble, it leads to a result that will have repercussions to the players in the form of Trauma, loss of Prestige, or both.



The Duchess of Cornwell (An example)

Description: The eighty-seven year old Duchess has been living alone for the past decade, since the death of her husband. After fifty-five years of marriage together, the Duchess is still having difficulty reconciling with the idea that her husband is actually gone.

Quote: *“Have you seen my dukey? Please, help me find my dukey.”*

Trouble: Long ago, the Duke made a sacred vow that not even death would keep him from her side. Now with the anniversary of his death coming close, the Duke is coming back to keep that promise.

Normal: The Duchess is despondent over the loss of her one true love, reminiscing over their past, his fondness for smoking a pipe, and even his tuneless whistling

- **Level 1** - The Duchess has forgotten the Duke is dead. She will continually ask where he is, confused when people try to correct her.
- **Level 2** - The Duchess is suddenly pacified, believing she has now spoken with her late husband, and he plans to take her away from the House. Strange tobacco smells and echoes of tuneless whistling permeate her room, and Staff will occasionally think they see someone moving just beyond their field of vision.
- **Level 3** - The ghost of the Duke is seen in strange glimpses surrounding the Duchess, attempting to push anyone else out of the room.

Result: The Duchess disappears without a trace, leaving the Staff to concoct an explanation for the Family.

Part of the Family... But Not

Quite often, members of the staff have been with the Family for generations, often raising children well into adulthood and perhaps even tending to the children's children as well. Because of this closeness, the Staff can share an intimacy with family members that can appear as friendship or affection in the best of circumstances. However, that intimacy can be dropped quickly if the family member feels the Staff is acting outside of their place or taking advantage of that familiarity. It's a fine line between the two, often erased and redrawn by the family member's fancy at the time.

Example:

- The oldest daughter Bagatha has known Miss Santiago for most of her adult life, and often confesses her deepest secrets to Miss Santiago that she would dare not share with her immediate family. After an eventful



visit from the Earl of Bumford, Bagatha reveals to Miss Santiago that she wants to marry the handsome Tommy Uweston and will await his offer in marriage. Miss Santiago is aware that Mr. Uweston is already engaged and is rumored to making idle promises to women to have his way with them. Miss Santiago tries to warn her that this is a bad idea, even attempting to Guide her Direction away from the idea. Miss Santiago however fails in her attempts, causing Bagatha to coldly dismiss Miss Santiago from her presence, declaring she should mind her own business in the future.

Entertainment or Death. Sometimes Both.

The benefits of being raised in a rich and entitled lifestyle could potentially be used for the betterment of society and mankind, championing reform in horrible working conditions, or perhaps the pursuit of knowledge and bettering one's mind. Not surprisingly, such thoughts never cross the minds of the Blackwood family. As a general rule, the Blackwoods will engage in frivolous and possibly dangerous behavior, usually within the confines of the household (even activities best performed outdoors with safety equipment). In these pursuits, the Family will either drag the service staff into participating as well, or at the very least leave them to clean up the aftermath.

- Collecting antique torture devices, eager to see them used on an actual person.
- Growing poisonous and possibly carnivorous plants.
- The manufacture of explosives and pyrotechnics.
- Camouflage, complete with special outfits to blend into the rug, walls, and furniture.
- Indoor archery, with makeshift targets made from priceless family heirlooms.
- Terrible attempts at the arts including household performances of musical compositions, self-written plays, or poetry recitals.
- Exploration of biology, complete with poorly executed anatomical dissections on the dining room table.
- A study of military history that inspire re-enactments of famous battles within the Main Hall and household.
- The construction of miniature dioramas of unsettling or bizarre scenes such as the plagues of Egypt or the Black Death.



Providing for Visitors

Heaven knows why, but occasionally people do travel to **Bedlam Hall** from outside of the immediate Family and Staff. Whether they have been invited for personal reasons, business, or simply by chance, their introduction into the household dynamic should always complicate matters simply by their very presence.

- **Deliveries** - The most obvious visitors are the delivery men bringing food and other items for the Cook, not to mention the postal carrier and any telegrams delivered to the House.
- **Workmen** - When things break around the Hall (and invariably they will), repairmen will eventually be needed after the Family stop expecting the servant staff to fix items well beyond their capabilities. Often they're also needed to repair the initial repair attempt.
- **Relatives** - Distant relations will often arrive in surprise visits that usually last several weeks, whether they were invited or not. Just like the regular family members, visiting relatives will also bring their own Troubles to the mix. Oh what fun.
- **Associates** - Whether it's old school chums looking to stay for the weekend unexpectedly, the family lawyer trying to make sense of the most recent will, or would-be suitors and their family elders trying to make a match, all sorts of people will drop in unexpectedly with the actual desire to visit the place. God help them.
- **The Establishment** - Constables conducting inquiries of the locals due to recent crimes or reported strangeness (which could be connected to a member of the family), a bicycle-riding vicar checking on what he considers to be "part of his flock", or even city aldermen and town mayors looking to gain influence and possibly some contributions to their campaign. All of these inopportune visits will complicate the household's equilibrium.

...And Still There's the Gardener.

Occasionally players may find them stuck in situations that require a gentle kick in the right direction. The Gardener allows the Master of the House to provide cryptic but potentially useful information to the players in the guise of gruff and unpleasant mutterings. The Gardener should never be an excuse to solve the players' problems for them, but simply a guide when the Staff have run out of ideas and need additional information from somewhere. This should always require the Staff to leave the safety of the House



and Go Outside the Grounds of course, and the Gardener should never provide information without a bizarre cost.

Example:

- Mrs. Faith and Mr. Moorcock are at their wit's end, trying to figure out why someone would be framing Lord Blackwood's brother Augustus for murders he didn't commit. Mr. Moorcock knows the Gardener, Mr. Cuthwach, might provide some guidance, after all he's been with the Family for an astonishing 87 years. After treading out to the back acres of the estate, barely surviving the muck that's been permeating the grounds since the recent rain storms, they find Cuthwach out beating a dying bush with a rake for some reason. After plying the Gardener with biscuits and scotch, Cuthwach growls, "*Do ye thinnnnnk the blood means family, do ye? LOYALTY TO YE KITH AND KIN, DO YE???* WHAT ABOUT THOSE THAT MARRY IN, DO YE THINK *THEY* MAKE VOWS TO THE BLOODLINE???" As Mr. Cuthwach returns to beating the dying bush with a rake, Mrs. Faith and Mr. Moorcock decide they'll leave him to it... but also decide Lady Blackwood may be involved somehow.

What a Tangled Web We Weave - Intertwining Secrets

When a smaller group of players are acting as the service staff the player dynamic will occasionally lean toward mutual cooperation, or at least a general desire to provide a unified front when faced with problems from the Family or House. This will lessen the likelihood of the players directly competing for Prestige with one another (although it still may happen). In such circumstances, don't feel obligated to enforce competition between them and instead focus on the possibilities of their Secrets which could conflict or possibly share certain elements without the players' foreknowledge.

Example:

- As his starting Secret for the Butler Mr. Plouffe, Frank has opted for a former relationship with a member of the Family, Lady Blackwood's sister Abstinence. When Claudia informs the Mistress of the House that her Secret was being involved in dealing with a child born out of wedlock in the Family, the Mistress of the House offers that Claudia's character helped spirit away the illegitimate child, knowing the child was really the offspring of Mr. Plouffe (but failing to inform either player of



the connection). Luckily, they'll find out soon enough when Abstinence returns to the House with her new husband, who has apparently killed several men in duels of honor.

Even Less of a Help - NPC-Driven Staff Members

A small player's group may also drive the Fiction to include several NPC's to act as supplemental members of the Staff, either to fill certain necessary roles in the household (such as the Cook), or simply to have an extra set of hands for chores (or even someone else to blame when things go wrong). In these circumstances, it's best to let the Fiction continue to drive the narrative and allow the players to define why the additional help is no help at all.

Example:

- After the Master of the House has described how the family dog was found slain by a large wild animal (despite Lord Blackwood's strict instructions to keep the dog out of harm's way before the kennel show), he asks Mr. Plouffe how they plan to dispose of the dog's remains. Mr. Plouffe then declares he will order Benjamin the footman to bury the animal out in the marsh. Previously there had been no footman on staff but the Master of the House has opted to go with this as part of the Fiction. The Master of the House then turns to Claudia as Mrs. Faith and asks, "When was the last time Benjamin screwed up instructions he was given?" Mrs. Faith then adds "Well, he tends to faint at the sight of blood." Frank laughs, knowing that Benjamin is definitely going to make this situation worse.

Unlike having an assistant provided through an additional move, additional NPC staff members that are created as part of the Fiction are less capable than a normal assistant, and come with their own agendas (and problems). Compelling them to follow an order could potentially require Directing the Staff in order to keep them on target and relatively useful. Additional NPC's however should never be direct assistants to the players, but strictly used to compliment any fundamental roles on Staff.

Example:

- After an exhausting day of baking, Mrs. Gooch just needs to sit down for a moment. Unfortunately, Mr Moorcock rushes down to the kitchen, indicating Lady Blackwood has requested a plate of biscuits. Because



Mrs. Gooch has Additional Help by way of her scullery maid Pansy, she commands her to put a plate together with a fresh pot of Earl Grey. Although Pansy is about as sharp as a bag of wet ferrets, the task is straightforward enough such that Pansy can do it with no risk of error and without question.

- Mr. Fizzlewig needs to go into town to pick up the replacement spats he purchased, in order to cover up the loss of the original pair owned by Lord Blackwood. Although no one is playing as the Chauffeur, Toby and Stephanie (through gameplay) have indicated there is a Chauffeur in the household. When Fizzlewig approaches the Chauffeur (named Beadle), Mr. Beadle is not interested in going into town. Fizzlewig has to Direct the Staff to get what he wants him to do.
- Through gameplay, Kris has determined there is a Cook named Mr. Chao. As Miss Bluntmore, Kris asks Mr. Chao to prepare a special dessert for the Family: prune pudding. Mr. Chao shrugs and agrees. When dinner is served, Mr. Chao has prepared the special dessert per Miss Bluntmore's request... and it's disgusting. Just because he's the Cook doesn't mean he's particularly good at it.

The Obligatory Section About Players Who Just Have to Punch Things

"Here. Walk into this."

There may be a point when the players will feel the need to throw decorum to the wind and attempt to solve their problems with the application of physical harm. This is not unexpected. We all have moments in life where we feel enough frustration in our current predicament where we desire an altercation in some fashion with either the responsible party or perhaps a stand-in for these frustrations.

Of course, to actually attempt these sorts of physical actions tend to make things worse. Much, much worse. This should naturally translate to gameplay as well.

In these scenarios, the average non-Family NPC should be expected to maintain four levels of Trauma and probably snivel. However, feel free to let the Fiction drive serious repercussions for the attempted damage in the form of a hard move, whether it's successful or not.



In short, let them hit things if they have to, but always have a heavy cost afterward. If they opt to use an additional item as a makeshift weapon, such as a rolling pin or an iron candlestick, a “successful” blow would cause an additional two Trauma. If by chance one of his Lordship’s firearms is used, such as his hunting rifle, add an additional four Trauma, bringing it to 5 total. This is why it’s bad to be shot, and a good idea to hide the ammunition whenever Lord Blackwood is considering indoor target practice.

Example:

- Mr. Chumley is unsuccessfully trying to push the family motor car out of a ditch, when the local postal carrier rides up on his bicycle. Watching Mr. Chumley, the postal carrier offers many annoying suggestions, finally causing Chumley to strike him in anger. Although the Mistress of the House feels the Fiction warrants success for Mr. Chumley’s attempt, she also adds the repercussions of having the bicycle fly into the car window as the postal carrier flies backward. Now Chumley needs to deal with the mud, the dead postal carrier, soiled correspondence on its way to the Hall, and a broken car window.

There are indeed methods where a violent action may be covered by an actual move, which is perfectly acceptable as a response to the situation (The Cruel Move of “A Physical Altercation”, as an example). In these scenarios, the move not only represents the ability to cause harm but also the ability to get away with it with little to no ramifications. Some people you just expect to be violent, so therefore it’s no surprise when it happens (except for what sort of serving implement should be used to assist in the matter).

Violence Toward the Family is Always a Bad Idea. Unless it Isn’t.

Who hasn’t fantasized about giving a good thrashing to their employer? However, such romantic notions will always result in terrible repercussions when actually attempted. Not only will it usually result in immediate dismissal, but can also enable a family member’s Trouble if the Fiction finds it applicable. There is one exception, however: if a player opts to enact a physical altercation against a family member in order to Serve the House, the Fiction may warrant the servant be lauded by their quick thinking (provided they’re successful).



Unlike normal NPC's, family members have six levels of Trauma, and suffer any penalties that the Master of the House feel appropriate as part of the Fiction. Family members are capable of dying just like anyone else, but given the nature of the household, it's not impossible for them to simply come back. And my, won't they be *cross*.

The Beginning of the End - Your First Session

The First Session should start simply enough with the everyone picking a Position and creating a character. Once that has been completed, the House and Staff should be developed with the following series of questions:

Introduction: Members of the Staff - These are the first questions for the Staff, all of which should be answered truthfully.

- What is your name here in the Hall? Masters of the House, please note, this is not a question that asks their character's real name, but rather what they have been using while on Staff.
- What is your position on the Staff?
- How long have you been here at the Hall?
- Describe your general appearance.

Introduction: Members of the Family - These are the first questions about the Family the Staff serves. Feel free to start with these preliminary questions or use your own, the purpose is to provide the Mistress of the House with the beginning information about the Family in order to develop further.

- What is the name of the owner of the House? (if they choose not to use the Blackwood name).
- Are they married? If so what is the name of the spouse? Are they alive? Describe them. What is their married life like?
- Do they have children? If so, how many and what are their names?
- Are their parents alive? Do they live in the House? What are their names?
- Does either the owner or their spouse have any siblings? Do they live in the House?

Feel free to encourage the players with certain elements such as names or external relations, this is merely laying the foundation of the family structure. As they describe the Family, we recommend writing out a simple diagram as you begin filling out the details of the family dynamics.



*James
(Father)*

*Theadora
(Mother)*

*Agnes
(Theadora's sister)*

*Edsel
(son)*

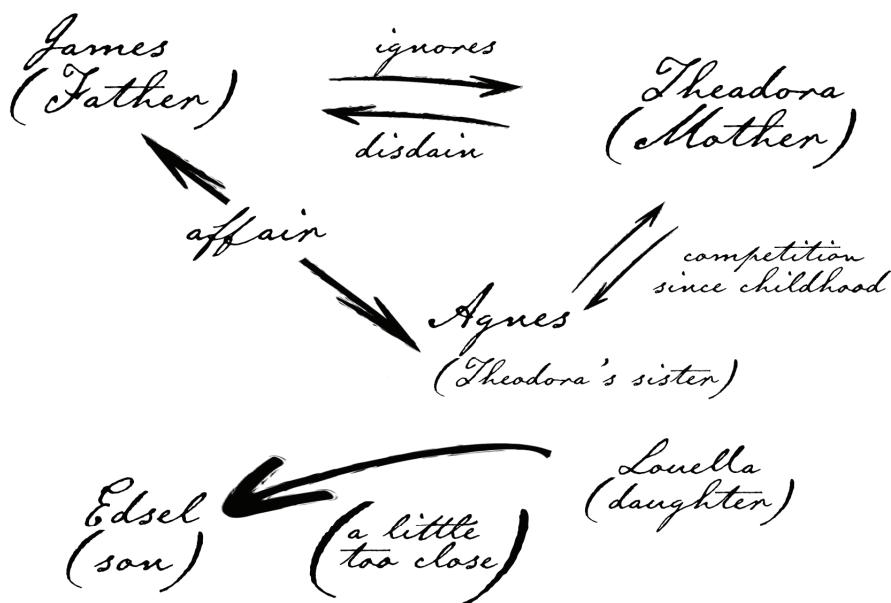
*Louella
(daughter)*

Follow-up: Members of the Family - With the initial foundation set, start filling in the family dynamics with questions to the Staff. The secondary round of questioning should be pointed, in order to develop the Fiction. Not every one of these questions need to be asked, instead encourage the players to build upon the foundation laid by each other during this discussion.

- Why does the spouse distrust the owner's sibling?
- Why does the owner and spouse keep one child locked in the attic?
- Which child is seeing things?
- Which family member should not be left alone?
- What happened to the last family pet and who discovered the body?
- Who might be having an affair?
- Who is plotting to kill someone?
- Which family member might be going insane?
- Who needs to receive an investigation by the local priest?
- Which family member is most destructive?

Whether or not these are accurate observations is up to the Mistress of the House, servants often misinterpret things said or done by the Family upstairs. However, this will provide a guideline on how the Family dynamic should be developed.





Questions About The House - The Staff should definitely have opinions about the House as well. This can be developed as part of the building of the House layout with the players (See **Building the House**).

- Which room has the most unsettling cold spots?
- Which room was once a crime scene?
- Where do the children hide in times of great crisis?
- Which room deserves a good fire to cleanse it?
- What room has the best hiding spots for objects?
- What room has a secret passage and to where?
- What room is considered the most dangerous?
- What happened in the wine cellar?
- What object do you wish the Family would just throw away?

Follow-Up: Members of the Staff - Now it's time to conclude with some unsavory elements about the house staff members themselves. This is less of a reveal of personal secrets and more of a development of inhouse rumors and working dynamic. Several preliminary questions have been provided within each position, but feel free to expand with additional questions.

- Who has been seen leaving a family member's bedchambers at night?
- Who is always involved when something goes "missing"?
- What's the problem with the gardener?
- Who has been on Staff the longest?
- Who is the most flirtatious member of staff?



- Which staff member has seen a ghost and where?
- Who has almost been dismissed?
- Who is considered the Family's "favorite"?
- Who spends the most time with the children?

Based on the information gathered during the First Session, the Mistress of the House now has plenty of options in ruining the game experience for everyone. Have at.

Creating Troubles for the Family

Oh, the upper class. Sheltered away from normal life in their palatial manors, following their own codes of propriety and morality while having romantic dalliance with first cousins or, ahem, other individuals. Because of this shielded existence, members of the family exhibit Troubles that confront the Staff at every turn. Troubles should drive a family member's actions, either directly or indirectly.

Mundane

Mundane Troubles are irksome at the very least, problematic at worst, but should never come across as unbelievable in their culmination.

Sample Mundane Troubles

- Severe case of tuberculosis, cholera, or polio that worsens as things continue or the family member gets agitated.
- A secret affair that slowly culminates into an obsession, or at the very least, a messy confrontation and split.
- An eagerness to leave home and move to the city, with the intent of joining show business. This results in either a family blow out or possibly just a hasty disappearance throwing the Family into rancor.

Psychological

Psychological Troubles can be both easier for the players to control and more dangerous to experience.

Sample Psychological Troubles

- One family member is convinced they are a former US President, and require everyone to address them as such. Threats to this delusion can cause an emotional or possibly a violent breakdown.



- An obsession with death and dead things reveal a morose outlook on life, along with a disturbing collection of skeletal remains and headstones in one of the bedrooms. Eventually, the obsession leads to a desire to witness the real thing.
- The guilt of being a twin that survived a difficult birth has caused them to believe their dead sibling is still alive, unaware they have developed a split-personality and mentally become that person. Eventually however, one sibling's personality has decided to take control.

Supernatural

Supernatural Troubles should always be beyond the understanding of the Staff and wildly uncontrollable.

Sample Supernatural Troubles

- Ever since that holiday abroad in Eastern Europe, the family member seems to spend more time in bed during the day, only going out on the grounds at night. Their pallid complexion and occasional fits of violence are rather troubling, as are their new eating preferences.
- The family member has been a staple of the household for years, one hundred and twenty-seven of them in fact. It's really best to keep small children out of their bedroom, as they remain tightly strapped to the bedposts while they keep repeating unintelligible mutterings.
- As this young family member gets older, curious small fires seem to start whenever they grow agitated. Did this have anything to do with the last butler burning to death in the Dining Room?

Creating Troubles for the House

Just like the Family, the House is prone to Troubles that cause the Staff their own problems when having to deal with their aftermath. Although Troubles within certain rooms of the House are best designated by the Fiction, the Master of the House may want to highlight certain eccentricities or further designate what's wrong with certain rooms.

Mundane

Mundane Troubles for a room in the House are reasonable in their explanation but no less problematic, and possibly dangerous for the Staff.



Sample Mundane Troubles

- Since a major storm, the roof has yet to be repaired, leaving a gaping hole in the ceiling. Birds have begun nesting in sections of the room, while shingles hang precariously above everyone's head.
- Of course the Staff are thankful for the new London train line that connects them with the outside world. However, its thunderous racket shakes the entire House every time it passes by, knocking down paintings and other curios from the shelves.
- The master has developed a new interest in reptiles and has turned a room into an exhibition chamber, filled with caged snakes in every corner. *Angry* snakes.

Psychological

Psychological Troubles for a room in the House are based on what the Staff know about the room that never fully escapes their mind when entering. The room itself is fine, but its history or other elements can be overwhelming.

Sample Psychological Troubles

- A member of the family was found hanging by the neck from the chandelier. Now the Staff can't enter without thinking about that swaying body.
- For years, the Family has kept their big game accomplishments stuffed and mounted in the Library. Now the Staff can't help but feel the dead animals stare when they enter the room, still posed as if ready to strike.
- Every year, the Staff try to get the large bloodstain off the Persian rug. Every year it fades just a touch more, but never completely. The Staff have never asked how the stain originally occurred, but it happened the night the former lady's maid disappeared.

Supernatural

Like the Family's supernatural Troubles, when the House exhibits something extraordinary, it should always be beyond the understanding of the Staff and out of their control. It's just something they have to endure.

Sample Supernatural Troubles

- No one likes cleaning the cobwebs from the dark corners of the Library, ever since the former maid fell into a shadow and was never seen again.



Even threescore candles with the windows open at midday seem unable to dispel its shadows. Sometimes, something appears to be moving within them.

- The stories of the bleeding wall get passed down from staff member to staff member. Everyone's seen it happen at least once (or at least, they claim they have). But the bloody wall has never spelled something out before.
- Slow ticking echoes through the household walls, from a clock that has never been found. Each time it has rung something terrible has happened, growing worse with each hour struck. What will happen when it reaches twelve?

A Troubling Sort of Balance

With each member of the family and potentially the House itself, it's tempting to ratchet up the craziness with the number and severity of Troubles plaguing everyone simultaneously. However, we recommend balancing the strangeness as regular beats, allowing the players an opportunity to fully react to what is occurring around them before bringing a new Trouble to the forefront.

Example:

- As Mistress of the House, Jadine is developing the Family with three young daughters in the Blackwood Family: Heather, Laurel, and Violet. Based on the feedback from the players gathered during the First Session, Jadine is having the youngest daughter Violet have the most violent and disturbing Trouble: an alternate personality endowed with unnatural strength and speed when in fits of anger. Because Violet is so extraordinary in comparison, Jadine has decided the older daughter's Trouble will be more social in nature: Heather is having an illicit relationship with her much older music teacher that borders on obsession. Between these two, Jadine makes Laurel the epitome of the "jealous middle sister", who doesn't understand the danger of emulating the other two sisters.



The End of the Beginning - Your Second Session

With characters made and the household ready, it's time to start actual play.

Step 1 - Start the Routine

Feel free to bypass the normal drudgery by asking each member what task or chore they're currently doing (or avoiding). No need to go into too much detail, just enough to get a sense of where they are in the household.

Step 2 - Disrupt the Status Quo

Things become interesting when the normal routine is disrupted, either by external events or by a member of the family proposing something that goes against the status quo. No matter what, it should effectively complicate the tranquility of their daily routine.

Step 3 - Complicate Things Utterly

As the players try to work through their challenge, other factors should begin to make a simple problem extremely complicated and a complicated problem borderline impossible. The Family should maintain an aloof distance from any actual work, or should interfere with their personal incompetence, and insist their direction is the correct one.

Step 4 - Every Man for Himself

Everything is going to blazes and chaos is starting to take over. Jolly well done. Either by reminding them about their own Secrets or by pointing out previous slights and social putdowns, the players should feel motivated to resolve the terrible predicament unfolding, even if that means sacrificing one of their fellow staff members, passing the problem onto someone or something else, or heaven forbid, solving the problems as they unfold.

Step 5 - Stealing Credit and Assigning Blame

However things resolve, there should always be someone responsible in some fashion (whether they were really involved or not). The players should now be provided the opportunity to promote themselves in any fashion, while implicating their fellow players for being incompetent at their professions.

Step 6 - Raise the Stakes and Repeat

Now that the initial challenge has been addressed, tension and complications should now continue, building on what the Staff believed to be resolved. Whether this stems from the Family, the House, or an outside influence, neither good nor bad deeds should go unpunished.



The Cruel Game of Prestige

Prestige should always remain elusive, annoying, and somewhat unfair... and yet still encourage a battle to the death to obtain it. Prestige equals importance in the service staff. Servants are considered secondary citizens at best, and sometimes not even considered as actual people at all. Thus, the internal pecking order is one of the cornerstones of the Staff, who should be encouraged to be as socially bloodthirsty as possible.

Senseless Treachery for Worthless Drivel

As employers, the Family will often provide meaningless rewards in the name of “special efforts.”

- Use of the “top coat peg” in the Servant’s Hall.
- Preferential treatment in selecting bed linen.
- The right to carry the master’s bat during family cricket games.

In hindsight, such rewards wouldn’t seem worth the trouble in their pursuit. However, in the heat of the moment, players should be reminded that such accolades set them apart from their fellow staff and provide a sense of importance, despite the lack of any real value. Of course, this never happens in our modern professions.

Example:

- As the service staff member with the highest amount of Prestige, Mr. Moorock the Butler is allowed to privately take tea with Lord Blackwood upstairs once a month. During this time neither of them speak, having little to discuss with one another. However, the rest of the Staff are envious of the special allowance Mr. Moorcock is given as part of his distinction, and continually plot together in order to disgrace Mr. Moorcock in the eyes of Lord Blackwood. All for a monthly cup of watery tea and uncomfortable silence.

Unfair Assumptions at Every Turn

The Family is always clueless as to who really works the hardest in the household staff, usually expressing gratitude to the highest ranking servant regardless of whether they were actually responsible for the situation. They simply look around the room for the person with the highest Prestige and consider them to be the ones responsible for any accomplishments.



Example:

- Mr. Fizzlewig and Mrs. Gooch have finally successfully eliminated the crazed maniac that had escaped from the local asylum, as well as hiding his remains out in the moors. Returning to the house, Lord Blackwood asks the two if they have any idea what happened to cousin Balfour, the alias being used by the asylum patient. “He’s taken care of, sir,” Fizzlewig responds, as both he and Gooch catch their breath after the harrowing situation. As Moorcock enters the room, oblivious to the situation, Blackwood pats him on the shoulder. “Good job, Moorcock. Take the afternoon off.” Immediately Fizzlewig and Gooch realize a retaliation is in order.

Terrible Alternatives to Dismissal

When players dwindle to zero Prestige, they should rightly fear they are about to be dismissed. This should also play into any Secret they’ve been keeping. A terrible Secret about former criminal associations should make them consider the possible future of having to return to them, as an example. As Master of the House, this can provide an opportunity to raise the stakes with illogical and possibly life-threatening requests in order to Serve the House.

Example:

- While playing Mr. Chumley the Chauffeur, Scott has dwindled down to zero Prestige, after a disastrous attempt to gain the upper hand within the Staff social pecking order. The Master of the House helpfully reminds Scott of Chumley’s Secret: he’s still wanted by the police. Being thrown out of the House will definitely get him thrown back into Bridewell Prison. When Lord Blackwood asks for someone in the Staff to bring back his hunting dogs from the local marsh, Chumley volunteers despite the late hour of the evening and terrible storm raging outside. He may be killed but at least he won’t be dismissed.



Secrets and Trauma

When players rise in Trauma, things should become more difficult. Carrying out simple tasks should require more effort, and difficult tasks should prove impossible to complete correctly. Once the player's Trauma level rises to three, the Mistress of the House should indirectly remind them of their Secrets, encouraging them to weigh upon the player's mind without directly revealing their Secret to the table.

Example:

- While playing the Valet Mr. Fizzlewig, Toby acquires three Trauma. The next time Toby attempts to verify Everything is in its Place, the Master of House nods and adds, "Just like you used to do on the HMS Gigantic." Although the other players are unaware of the reference, Toby is reminded that one of his Secrets is how he accidentally steered the ship into an iceberg.
- Stephanie is playing the Butler Mr. Moorcock, when she receives three Trauma. The next time she enters the Library to check all the windows are locked for the evening, the Mistress of the House hands her an index card to remind her of Moorcock's Secret, an irrational fear of complete darkness. When Stephanie reads that the shadows seemed to be slithering toward her, she immediately reconsiders whether Moorcock should be doing this task alone.

Converting Secrets into Traumatic Situations

Players should always be encouraged to keep Secrets from coming out, due to the repercussions of the Family knowing too much about their personal lives. When revealed to the Family, the revelation can be presented in a number of ways:

Public Berating

When the family member discovers they are the last to know about a servant's Secret, they will be morally outraged. Whether or not the discovery truly offends them, they will rightfully expect the servants to act in a proper fashion at all times. Such a revelation only reveals the servant to be human... and that's just not acceptable.



Example:

- Grandmama has discovered that Mr. Plouffe was dishonorably discharged from the military, which goes against her pride in her late husband's service during the First Boer War. When Mr. Plouffe offers to take the elderly woman into the village for her yearly doctor's visit, Grandmama throws a tea cup and saucer at him, preferring to walk rather than letting such a despicable and shiftless man like himself anywhere near her. Grandmama continues to berate poor Mr. Plouffe at the top of her lungs, as the Housekeeper opts to send for the doctor to pay a house call instead.

Well-Meant Humiliation

Because the Family often have no clue about the proper method of dealing with social situations, they will blunder with the best of intentions in trying to assist the staff member, usually causing an even worse situation.

Example:

- When Lady Blackwood finds out about Mrs. Faith's Secret past as a lady of the evening, Lady Blackwood wants to demonstrate her support for her personal maid for many years. Calling all of the Staff together, she informs them all that no one should treat Mrs. Faith with disrespect, just because she's been a delinquent whore in her past and despite her shameful and deplorable experience of serving sailors for little more than tuppence. She continues by indicating Mrs. Faith should be still treated with dignity by her fellow Staff and expects no one to treat her differently, even if she might have a communicable social disease that may cause her blindness and excruciating death. After this little announcement to the rest of the Staff, Lady Blackwood is quite pleased with herself in coming to Mrs. Faith's rescue, not realizing Mrs. Faith is absolutely mortified.

Absolute Confusion

It is also possible that the Family simply don't understand what they're being told about the staff member and require clarification in excruciating detail, asking questions that are distinctly uncomfortable over and over.



Example:

- His Lordship has been secretly informed that Miss Bluntmore believes she can hear the whispers of the dead members of the Blackwood family when she sleeps. Lord Blackwood doesn't believe in the supernatural however, so he asks everyone if Miss Bluntmore has been hit on the head with something heavy or had experienced a serious brain injury in her youth he was unaware of. Finally he confronts Miss Bluntmore to explain what she hears, causing Miss Bluntmore to attempt explaining to Lord Blackwood what it is she thinks she hears, all the while the ghost of Lord Blackwood's brother stands behind him making faces only she can see.

Converting Trauma into Secrets

Eventually, Trauma does take over the mind and bodies of even the best of us. When a player reaches 3 or more Trauma, the Master of the House should indicate this to the player, and ask how the player wants to address the growing problem, if at all. A player may opt to resolve the situation by converting the Trauma into a Secret. In doing so, the player needs to define what actions they will be taking to reduce the Trauma, whether it's finding temporary solace in alcohol or a narcotic, or determining their safety is dependent on an elaborate ritual of faith. Once the player has indicated what their character will be doing in order to remove the Trauma, the Master of the House will eliminate the Trauma but be expecting the player to maintain this new Secret as time progresses.

Example:

- The Master of the House informs Mario that his character, Mr. Pratt, has gained 4 Trauma, and asks what he plans to do about it, if anything. Mario decides he doesn't want to risk any further harm and opts to turn Mr. Pratt's Trauma into a Secret. Within the Fiction, Mr. Pratt has decided that liberal amounts of laudanum help him deal with the pain, making the Trauma a blissful gray memory. Mario adds "Addicted to laudanum" to his character sheet.



Converting Trauma into Dead Characters

Players will occasionally run the gambit of gathering copious amounts of Trauma as the game progresses, hoping their luck will hold out until a miracle occurs. However, once a player reaches 5 Trauma that miracle probably isn't arriving in the post. Other members of staff may of course rally to their aid in order to keep them from having to train a new person in their position. However, given the garnered Prestige by the dying character (or lack thereof), they may assist in helping their fellow service staff member shuffle off to their great reward. The Master of the House should always remain neutral in these matters, but if the character does fail to run out the clock of the game Session, the following is recommended for maximum game value:

Allow for a dramatic dying action - Whether it's through the use of dying words, a final parting act, or whether it's going out while clutching another player in the death throes of mortality, always encourage the player to have their character go out with flair.

Aim for something hideous in the final moments - If they're about to die, let them go out with a horrible disturbing culmination of blood and agony. If they're about to have an emotional breakdown, it should be fit-inducing, with wailing sobs that will shake the heavens. If they're about to mentally collapse, provide them an opportunity worthy of immediate incarceration and sedation. This is their final moment, make it as big as you can.

Keep the Family as no help at all - Remember, the Family never register the Staff's details even in the best of times. When a servant is obviously suffering, they are more often too self-absorbed, clueless, or just plain useless in a real emergency.

Converting Dead Characters into Playable Ones

There's a more than good chance your player characters are going to die in a horrible and gut-wrenching fashion. However, there's also a good chance that the Fiction has developed to where death is merely an annoying inconvenience. That's perfectly understandable (in a **Bedlam Hall** sort of way, of course). In such grisly situations, the following is recommended:

Add an Additional Secret - This can manifest as either the character knowing he's deceased, the player being aware but the character himself not knowing, or a delightful Secret kept from the player by the Mistress of the



House that is continually hinted upon. This sort of Secret cannot be removed through Advancement, by the way. Death is funny in that regard.

Return with Certain Disadvantages - As previously indicated, death should complicate things. How this complication manifests can be developed in a number of ways.

- **Start with Automatic Levels of Trauma** - Depending on the nature of their demise, members of staff brought back to life may begin with a minimum of two Trauma at the very least, in addition to the additional Secret they've accrued. This could be raised to even three Trauma, depending how nasty their expiration proved to be.
- **Automatically Something Less** - Moving forward, any move beyond a Basic move is rolled with Something Less. They are dead, after all. Certainly not at the top of one's game.

Suspicious Everywhere - Death is a terribly kept Secret. People just seem to sense you're not right. The Master of the House should take extra effort in implying things are just wrong about the returned staff member: something sensed by animals, spiritual sensitives, and perhaps those with a keen sense of smell.

Determine the Ongoing Cost - Cheating death completely rarely happens, there's always a compensation required in some fashion or another whether it's a daily requirement of fresh blood, an inability to enter certain rooms, or the occasional sacrifice of someone else to feed Death's hungry maw. No matter what, it should always be ghoulish and woefully unpleasant and failure to provide that requirement should cause daily Trauma to the character.



The Terrible Whatsit



It's best if we don't explain.





A Simply Dreadful Birthday Party

This is the introductory adventure to acquaint you with the Blackwood Family, and frankly you shouldn't play it. This will not be a pleasant experience for anyone, and will probably end in dissatisfaction and mutual alienation for all involved. Consider yourself properly warned by the author and upon future recollection on where so many hours were wasted on futile and ultimately unsatisfying endeavors, we hope this exhortation will be remembered.

Again, we warned you.

The Proper Use of This Terrible Tale

This material provides the Master of the House with multiple characters and story complications that can be used in conjunction with the player direction and input. Although additional options are provided, these are intended strictly as suggestions for the Master of the House and can be revised or ignored altogether based on the game's direction. In the end, it won't matter anyway. The lucky ones will die first, and the rest will just carry on their suffering as they normally do.

A Preliminary Orientation

Our terrible tale begins with the Staff being informed that today is the birthday of the youngest Blackwood daughter: Mathilda. As is customary, the Mistress of the House should ask the following questions to the Staff, taking note of their answers as the inquiries grow more unsettling.

Questions for the Staff:

- How old is little Mathilda turning this year?
- What special birthday confectionary is being served for her special day?
- Who on the Staff has been feeding Mathilda since she has been locked up in the Attic for the past year?
- Who did she attack to cause her household incarceration?
- And before that?
- And before *that*?
- Has she ever broken loose? How did that happen?
- Who on the Staff does she hate the most? To that staff member: what's happened between you?



Members and Guests of the Household:

Lord Aldicott Blackwood

Quote: *“Death curse? Nonsense! Adds spirit to the blood and a spring to the step, what!”*

Description: Lord Blackwood frequently goes on safari, enjoying big game hunting, and the subjugation of other cultures in the name of British civilization.

Trouble: Since his recent safari, Lord Blackwood has become obsessed with the idea of resurrecting a demigod. He’s not really concerned which, really. But this seems quite an intriguing experiment.

Normal: Aldicott is reading rather questionable books in the Library, chuckling about their contents, and wondering how best to enact this experiment, in the name of King and Country.

- **Level 1** - Aldicott is starting to experiment, trying to do a ritual but without the proper ingredients. He will make do with substitutions wherever possible.
- **Level 2** - Aldicott wants the Staff to help him with his ritual. That’s what they’re hired for, aren’t they!
- **Level 3** - Aldicott is convinced the old god requires blood. Well someone needs to tuck in here, we haven’t got all day!

Result: In his mad experiment Aldicott has managed to get someone killed. Don’t worry, no one important. But now the Staff needs to clean up the situation.

Lady Daffodil Blackwood

Quote: *“How dare you look at me with that tone of voice! You know something!”*

Description: Daffodil is the second wife of Lord Blackwood, after his first wife Buellah perished in a horrid badminton accident.

Trouble: Daffodil harbors the nagging thought that someone actually did away with Lord Blackwood’s first wife, and she may indeed be next.

Normal: Lady Blackwood continues to ask where the rest of the Family may be at any given time, keeping a discreet eye on everyone’s whereabouts.

- **Level 1** - Daffodil is constantly asking leading questions on whether the Family has been “talking to someone”, or asking if the Staff are “in on it”. On what, she won’t say.



- **Level 2** - Daffodil has started making accusations of the Staff.
- **Level 3** - Daffodil is convinced they're all in it together and her life is threatened. She will take every precaution necessary to protect herself, even if it means striking first.

Result: Daffodil refuses to be taken alive, without taking them all with her. This turns violent and awful with blood. Lots and lots of blood.

Mathilda Blackwood (Daughter)

Quote: *"I can do whatever I want. It's my birthday."*

Description: Mathilda is the youngest of the Blackwood children, who has been kept locked in the Attic for the past year.

Problems: Mathilda is an extremely powerful psychic, able to utilize her abilities to create tangible physical manifestations.

Move:

- **Thank You Mister Widow** - Mathilda has manifested her psychic power into an imaginary friend called "Mr. Widow". In times of great trouble, Mathilda can call on Mr. Widow to save her, who appears as a giant spider. As her trouble manifests in greater levels, Mr. Widow will become more real and less imaginary.

Normal: Despite being locked in the Attic for the past year, Mathilda seems quite well-adjusted. She is very pleased today is her birthday.

Trouble:

- **Level 1** - Mathilda begins making references to Mr. Widow, relaying precocious things that Mr. Widow just said before he disappeared.
- **Level 2** - The household and Staff can hear the loud scratches echo throughout the House through the walls.
- **Level 3** - There is movement in the shadows, the scratching is coming closer with strange hisses.

Result: Mr. Widow is fully manifested, taking form, and attacking whatever seems a threat to Mathilda.

Piewacket (Housepet)

Quote: *"Heh, heh. Meow."*

Description: Piewacket is the jet black cat of Lady Blackwood. The cat always seems to be quietly laughing at everyone, perched at the top of whatever furniture is nearby the players. Its silent, knowing expression is both irritating and unsettling.



Erobus Lecurgus

Quote: “...”

Description: Erobus is Mathilda’s eight-year-old, borderline mute cousin, who is quite sickly and prone to catching cold at any given time. His pale skin and extreme blonde hair gives him the appearance of being on death’s door, ready to pass this mortal coil with one sturdy gust of wind.

Trouble: Erobus has recently discovered his invulnerability, and has begun testing its limitations. This continually places him in greater danger.

Move:

- Light as a Feather, Stiff as a Board - Despite his appearance, Erobus is actually physically unbreakable. He still is prone to illness and other issues, but physical Trauma does not affect him whatsoever. He has just begun to learn this about himself.

Normal: Erobus is very curious in different ways, opening windows and leaning out of them, investigating the downstairs kitchen and basement (including stoves and furnaces).

- **Level 1** - Erobus has begun taking small chances. Leaning out of windows, getting too close to danger, and investigating the Lord’s gun rack in the study.
- **Level 2** - Erobus is now openly playing with dangerous things: stepping onto ledges, taking rifles out of their cabinets, etc.
- **Level 3** - Erobus is actively trying to hurt himself and others in the worst possible way.

Result: Erobus has taken steps that will cause serious Trauma and/or death to everyone in the household, either through the boiler exploding, poisoning the food, or perhaps something worse.

Abstinence Lecurgus

Quote: “*Oh don’t go too far, dear. I’m sure I have a need for you in some fashion.*”

Description: Abstinence is the older sister of Daffodil, mother of Erobus.

Problem: Since the death of her husband five years ago, Abstinence is quite starved for attention, and will turn to one of the staff members in order to meet her needs. There’s a very good chance she was responsible for her husband’s untimely demise, but that’s not talked about.

Move:

- Why Hello, Poppet - Abstinence has an uncanny ability to catch a member of the staff on their own.

Normal: Abstinence is making subtle flirtations, although acting as if she’s unaware of the double entendres she has made.



- **Level 1** - Abstinence has cornered someone and is making decidedly unladylike innuendo.
- **Level 2** - Abstinence is making absolutely undignified and suggestive requests of the Staff, which would normally be crossing the line in normal circumstances.
- **Level 3** - Abstinence is convinced that she is having a secret affair with someone in the household staff, and will attempt to convince others of the same.

Result: Abstinence has an announcement to make: she and a member of staff are getting married. There may be a baby involved, however that may have happened.

Angus Bitterwit

Quote: *“That looks it’s worth a bit of dosh, innit?”*

Description: Angus is the one of the local villagers’ children, brought to the House for the birthday party because Mathilda has no friends whatsoever and they think she needs additional playmates. He’s never been in the House before.

Problem: Angus rightfully believes he will never have an opportunity like this again and is stealing anything possible: food, silverware, anything. He really is a right little bastard.

Move:

- The Artful Dodger - Despite the Staff’s attempts, no one believes Angus is actually stealing and if they do, awwwww...he’s so precious. It’s not at all a big thing.

Normal: Angus is looking around the House, amazed at the size and opulence of the House.

- **Level 1** - Angus is stealing extra helpings of food and sweets.
- **Level 2** - Angus has moved up to smaller items of worth.
- **Level 3** - Angus is up for a really big score, something that’s hard to believe he could steal.

Result: Angus gets away in the family car with the valuables, and the Staff are left holding the bag.

Reverend Tuckett

Quote: *“Blessed are the meek, for they shall...oh the meek can sod off.”*

Description: Reverend Tuckett has spent the past three days and nights trying to calm down Mrs. Habersham and convince her that her cow is not



possessed by a demon. Prior to that, he recently concluded an unsuccessful charity drive to raise funds for the local orphanage that burnt down in a mysterious fire. He is also being reprimanded by the village aldermen who are critical of his lack of regular parishioners and non-existent tithes to the church.

Problem: Reverend Tuckett is having a crisis of faith and is considering leaving the ministry altogether. He doesn't know what he will do.

Normal: Reverend Tuckett is very tired, he has so much to do for the local parish. There's a lot of work and not a lot of faith.

- **Level 1** - Tuckett is muttering to himself, questions about faith and the nature of good and evil. These are not things a good Anglican should be saying. Catholic, maybe. But not Anglican.
- **Level 2** - Tuckett starts making wild accusations about God and religion. They definitely aren't what you would expect for a children's party, nor would you consider it appropriate.
- **Level 3** - Tuckett has decided to demand God step in and take action, blaspheming in such a way that God either will show himself or it will prove he doesn't exist.

Result: Whether through unrelated coincidence due to his rantings and actions, or through an actual act of spiritual retaliation, Reverend Tuckett has managed to cause himself and those immediately around him to be struck by lightning (or at least from an unprotected electrical current in the household).

Additions to the House

The House is fairly bad as it is, however the following additional locations will make the overall narrative even worse, so feel free to include them where you see fit.

The Awful Attic

Description: The Attic is where Mathilda has been locked for the past year, only allowed brief visitations from the Family and Staff. It has been somewhat decorated as a children's room, contrasting against the sparse and rotting interior walls and roof.

Options:

- **One Nasty Option** - The entirety of the walls have been covered with drawings Mathilda has made of Mr. Widow, with deep gouges and scratches above them which lead to the ceiling.



- **Another Unpleasant Option** - There is a large mirror that has been kept in the Attic for decades. Mathilda will swear this is how Mr. Widow enters our world, and looking into the mirror will sometimes expose strange movements behind the viewer.
- **Yet Another Unseemly Option** - The Attic has been struck by lightning three times in the past five years.

Strange Detail for No Apparent Reason: The Attic permeates a sickly sweet odor, like Turkish Delight or spun sugar.

The Dreadful Drawing Room

Description: Usually birthday parties would be held in the Drawing Room, but this time the party must be held outside by special request of the birthday girl.

Options:

- **One Nasty Option** - The large picture window within the Drawing Room has been smashed, temporarily covered with nailed boards until the workmen arrive to repair it. Hopefully, it was the large tree outside the window that smashed it during last week's windstorm and not something...entering.
- **Another Unpleasant Option** - The table has begun to slowly move itself across the floor at unexpected times, by its own ability. Similarly, it's not surprising to find the couch halfway out the door frame into the Hall.
- **Yet Another Unseemly Option** - No one in the household ever speaks about it, but the Drawing Room occasionally flips its location to the other side of the House, its door from the Main Hall inexplicable appearing on the opposite side of the room.

Strange Detail for No Apparent Reason: Throughout the years, the Drawing Room has been slowly furnished with furniture and curios in an unseemly shade of orange. No one can remember exactly why everything in the room is orange, because it was not by conscious design. Nevertheless, most things in the drawing room are a variant of this ugly color that remains unpleasant to the eye.

The Ghastly Gazebo

Description: For some reason, Mathilda has requested the Gazebo as the place for her birthday party despite the terrible weather outside. This is her day, so she wants to enjoy being outside the Attic as much as possible.



Options:

- **One Nasty Option** - After being blown down in last year's storm, the Gazebo was haphazardly rebuilt by the Gardener. Its roof now creaks and shakes, implying it's only a matter of time before it comes crashing down on someone.
- **Another Unpleasant Option** - In order to build the Gazebo, the original architect of the Hall cleared away an extremely old stone circle, leaving the area to still resonate with an unknown power.
- **Yet Another Unseemly Option** - The Gazebo was built from the wood of a nearby tree that was considered cursed after serving for years as the local gallows. There is a rumor the Gazebo itself weeps, or perhaps it's just moisture that collects from the morning air.

Strange Detail for No Apparent Reason: A large murder of crows sits in the barren willow tree nearby. They seem to be waiting for something as they silently watch everything occurring.

The Terrible Conclusion

By now, the players have probably had unsettling situations surrounding Mathilda, Erobus, and the entire Family. Now's the time to wrap things up with a dramatic culmination that involves the players in a terrible finale, with multiple options for its setting:

You've Got a Friend in Me - Mr. Widow is out of control, threatening the players, the household, and possibly all of reality if an answer isn't found.

- **One Nasty Option** - Mathilda needs to be convinced to influence her imaginary friend's behavior, or possibly simply told to leave. Whether that is through influence, logic, or flat-out bribery is up to the Fiction.
- **Another Unpleasant Option** - Mr. Widow is out of control, leaving the players to determine how to bring the powerful psychic creation under heel, through some sort of weakness that can bring the creature down. Of course, maybe if something happened to Mathilda...
- **Yet Another Unseemly Option** - Mathilda isn't the only member of the household with this kind of secret "imaginary friend." Whether it's Erobus, Angus, or even her father himself, how will Mr. Widow react to another creature like himself?



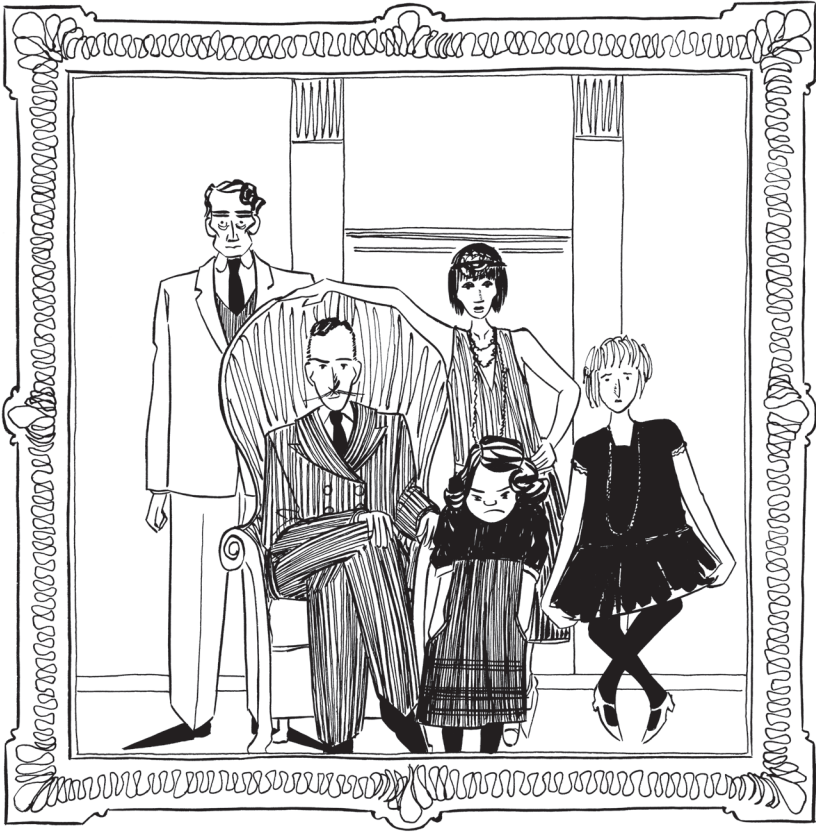
Give Me That Old Time Religion - Lord Blackwood's dabbling into the occult has created a complicated situation.

- **One Nasty Option** - Lord Blackwood's little resurrection scheme involves something absolutely unspeakable to be done with either his wife or one of the guests (within proper good taste, of course), that requires the players to make some terrible decisions based on his request.
- **Another Unpleasant Option** - Unbeknownst to Lord Blackwood, he's actually successful in calling forth an ancient Babylonian god that craves blood and sacrifice. Only one thing can truly stand in its way: Mr. Widow, provided both he and Mathilda can be persuaded to do so.
- **Yet Another Unseemly Option** - This isn't Lord Blackwood's first attempt, the last time he did this was a previous birthday of Mathilda's, right when Mr. Widow first appeared. Is that what Mr. Widow truly is?

Life and Death of the Party - The Staff have managed to survive multiple tribulations to have the birthday party occur. Now the real problems begin.

- **One Nasty Option** - Mathilda wants the birthday party outside so she can make a break for it. If she escapes, who knows what horrible things she and Mr. Widow might do.
- **Another Unpleasant Option** - During the party, Lady Daffodil has decided to stage one of her overdramatic scenes involving leaving her husband, making him pay, or possibly threatening to take her life (although with no true inclination on carrying out any of it).
- **Yet Another Unseemly Option** - For Mathilda's party, Lord Blackwood had hired several circus animals to amuse the children, including horses, trained dogs and...my God, where did that *panther* come from?





Household Standards (or Lack Thereof)

The Blackwood family are equally the antagonists, victims, allies, and overlords to the players, quickly transitioning from wielding merciless authority to hopeless subservience in a moment's notice. Although we recommend creating the Family as part of the Fiction through discussion with the players and overall gameplay, it still can be a challenge.

Feel free to use the following descriptions for the family members in your game, adding or eliminating personages as the Fiction dictates (including specifics such as names, relations, and even their problems).



Lord Aldicott Blackwood

Description: Lord Blackwood is the patriarch of the house, the 27th Earl of Shurwich. He has lived in the Hall all his life, as had his father, and father before him. His older brother Agamemnon was originally the Earl before a tragic hunting accident took his life. Since then, Aldicott has been enjoying the title and prestige as well as the control of the family fortune, which has encouraged rather...eccentric behavior.

Quote: *“Dash it man, put a quick step to that! England’s future waits for no man, what!”*

Trouble: Aldicott’s current Trouble is listed within the introductory **Terrible Tale of the Dreadful Birthday Party**, although this Trouble can often change between game Sessions and/or chronicles.

Twists:

- Despite his eager attempts to volunteer, Aldicott did not participate in the recent Great War (rumored to be squashed by his mother’s connections). Since the Armistice, Aldicott is highly interested in exploring military history and re-enactments (sometimes inside the House). He has even begun dabbling in international politics, a subject he knows nothing about.
- Lord Blackwood has decided to become a world-famous inventor, despite having no understanding of basic scientific fundamentals. He is continuing to experiment with dangerous elements (e.g. electricity, gunpowder, poisonous chemicals), leaving the Staff to clean up the often disastrous results.
- Lord Blackwood often speaks about a future date where he and his late brother Agamemnon will be reunited. Previously, the Staff believed he was speaking figuratively about that future date when he should pass on, but recently the Staff has realized Aldicott is expecting his brother to return from the dead very soon.

Lady Daffodil Blackwood

Description: Lord Blackwood met his second wife at a summer ball where she was considered the most beautiful of all the young ladies. Now many years later, Lady Blackwood has started to see the passing of time in her appearance. This has caused no end of distress to her Ladyship, eager to find a way to regain her youth and prominence as the envied beauty she once was.



Quote: *“Do I look my age? Go ahead and guess how old I am. But you had better guess correctly.”*

Trouble: Daffodil’s current Trouble is listed within the introductory **Terrible Tale of the Dreadful Birthday Party**, although this Trouble will often change between game Sessions and/or chronicles.

Twists:

- Daffodil is convinced she should not appear old in public, and is eager to embrace any new fad or craze that has swept the upper class. This includes bathtub gin, flapper chic, and a sudden expertise in jazz. But this also extends to strange flash-in-the-pan fads of dubious value, the more outlandish conceived by the Master of the House, the better.
- In her search for maintaining eternal beauty, Daffodil has stumbled upon a biography on the so-called “Blood Countess”, Elizabeth Bathory. This has given her some rather unsavory ideas.
- Daffodil has been in a secret correspondence with a man named Cadwallader, who has promised her a path to eternal youth and beauty for an unnamed price. As she considers her options, she is also weighing the idea of dragging in one of the Staff as well.

Violetta Nance Blackwood (grandmother)

Description: As Lord Blackwood’s mother, Violetta (or Grandmama) once held a position of respect and power within the household, maintaining unspoken control over the previous Earl of Shurwich and her oldest son, Agamemnon (her favorite).

Quote: *“Oh I do hope I’m interrupting something...”*

Trouble: Since Aldicott assumed the title, Violetta has seen her control of the household slip away to Aldicott’s wife, Daffodil. Some of the previous Staff believed the old Dowager has been waiting for the opportunity to take control again.

Normal:

- **Level 1** - Violetta has begun making not-so-subtle directives on how the Staff should be doing their duties, referencing how she would’ve wanted it done in the past. When confronted, she will demur to whatever Aldicott thinks is best, of course.
- **Level 2** - Violetta has begun causing small “accidents” around the House, to prove the it is not being properly maintained and how much better it would be if she were making the decisions for the household.
- **Level 3** - Violetta’s little accidents have become more destructive and



harmful, if not more accurate in their targeting. The Staff need to tread lightly through the household or they may accidentally stumble upon one of Violetta's traps.

Result: Violetta has decided to take charge of the Family by force, and the Staff will either assist her in eliminating these interlopers or they're part of the enemy to be destroyed. There is no in-between.

Twists:

- After her husband, Eustace Blackwood, died, Violetta had the body embalmed and covered in wax, preserved in a sitting position in her bedroom. Sometimes late at night, the Staff can hear Violetta arguing with the wax figure.
- Violetta is a fanatically religious person, requiring the Staff to take into account her observations of every commemoration of sainthood, rare religious holidays no one has heard of, and intricate, confusing rites to honor the occasion.
- Violetta has made references to a hidden treasure somewhere in the household, but never gives any details. Having recently survived a stroke, her comments have become more cryptic and nonsensical. But there is a possibility she's giving additional clues to the so-called treasure.

Ruprick Blackwood (son)

Description: Ruprick is Lord Blackwood's eldest son, poised to take on the family title, and the family holdings with the passing of his father.

Quote: *"You're not like the others. They're all dead."*

Trouble: Ruprick is obsessed with the afterlife. His heavy stare and morbid personality bring a chill to whatever conversation he participates, and his sense of humor is dark at best.

Normal:

- **Level 1** - Ruprick has insisted his bedroom be set up as a viewing parlor, sleeping in a coffin, with funeral wreaths, and candles burning at all times.
- **Level 2** - Ruprick has been in the family crypt, digging up his descendants, and bringing them into the House.
- **Level 3** - Ruprick has begun bringing fresh animal kills into the House in order to study them. Whether he himself is responsible for their deaths or not is up to the Mistress of the House.

Result: Ruprick really wants to see the passing between life and death in someone's eyes. The Staff should be very concerned.



Twists:

- The Staff are required to follow a strict schedule of tying Ruprick to the bedposts on evenings when the moon will be full. For his own good. Whether or not he really transforms into anything is unconfirmed by the Staff, but strange animal noises and howls are often heard from his bedroom during such nights.
- Ruprick has begun building a little shrine to one of the Staff in his bedroom wardrobe, including little pieces of cloth that have been stolen from their livery uniform, drawn portraits, wilted flowers and written poems. There is also a sharpened hatchet on the mantle as well.
- While tidying up Ruprick's room, stranger and stranger items have been found stuffed underneath the bed: a horse's bit, saddle, riding crop, equestrian boots. This wouldn't be considered strange if the Blackwoods actually owned horses or a stable.

Bagatha Blackwood (older daughter)

Description: Bagatha is Lord Blackwood's oldest daughter from his first marriage. As she grows closer to her 18th year, her father and stepmother would be considering proposals from suitable bachelors, if any were still alive.

Quote: *"Tell me I'm pretty. Again."*

Trouble: Bagatha is neither feminine nor graceful, awkward in most social situations and would be considered plain-looking at best.

Normal:

- **Level 1** - Bagatha is reaching out to the Staff on how to seem more ladylike, with consistently disastrous results in her every attempt to take their advice.
- **Level 2** - Bagatha has taken to spying on the members of Staff. For the female Staff, she is trying to imitate them in order to be more ladylike. For the male Staff, she is trying to figure out what they find attractive.
- **Level 3** - Bagatha is occasionally being found wearing items of clothing from her mother or members of Staff.

Result: After years of feeling uncomfortable in her skin, Bagatha has determined she'd feel best in someone else's. She is now setting forth in creating a suit to do just that. The Staff can either help or become a part of this effort.

Twists:

- Animals seem to congregate outside of Bagatha's bedroom window. Previously they just sat and stared inside although lately they've been



dropping dead.

- Bagatha has been making weird references to her anatomy and functions that sound very odd and more akin to a giant insect, rather than human anatomy. No one on Staff wants to further investigate, or hear anything about it.
- Bagatha has lately begun to give off a strange odor. Although each member of the Staff describe something different, all of them can agree it's highly unpleasant. Strangely none of the Family notice anything unusual about her.

Mathilda Blackwood (younger daughter)

Description: Mathilda is the youngest of the Blackwood children, who has been kept locked in the Attic for the past year.

Quote: *"I've got a secret... Don't you want to know? DON'T YOU???"*

Trouble: Mathilda's current Trouble is listed within the introductory **Terrible Tale of the Dreadful Birthday Party**.

Twists:

- Mathilda is actually Grandmama Violetta, having found a way to switch bodies with her granddaughter. Now she just needs to remain inconspicuous, and hope the real Mathilda doesn't warn anyone in her 94-year old body.
- Mathilda has begun developing secret tunnels within the walls of the House, allowing her to escape the Attic and travel to any room. At least that's the hope, otherwise her toys are simply appearing in other rooms on their own volition.
- Recently, she's started drawing disturbing images of what appears to be giant temples with sacrificial victims on the top of the pyramids. She has begun naming them after members of the Staff.

Balthazar Nance (uncle)

Description: A former captain in Her Majesty's Rifle Corps, the barrel-chested Uncle Balthazar cuts quite the impressive figure, with square shoulders and thick mustache.

Quote: *"Every man is capable of being someone else. Sometimes twice in the same day."*

Trouble: Ever since the Battle of Verdun, Uncle Balthazar has been slowly convincing himself he's actually someone else.



Normal: Uncle Balthazar remains in his normal jolly demeanor, occasionally forgetting his name or that people are addressing him specifically when they call his name out.

- **Level 1** - Balthazar is confiding in different members of the staff that he is incognito, but is playing along for the good of the other family members. He believes them to be charming people but slightly deranged.
- **Level 2** - Balthazar has begun to outwardly dress as whomever he mistakenly believes himself to be, asking the servants to assist him in whatever duties he believe his other personality should be accomplishing.
- **Level 3** - Balthazar is quite agitated by everyone calling him by the incorrect name, claiming everyone is trying to convince him against something he knows to be so. This could become violent.

Result: Balthazar is burning all remnants of his former identity, including his former wardrobe, photographs, and identification. This may be problematic if he chooses to do so while still in his bedroom which has no fireplace.

Twists:

- Uncle Balthazar will occasionally think he's a member of the Staff, and set himself upon doing some of the Staff's chores. Despite the temptation to let him do their work, Balthazar performs his duties atrociously, making things worse than if he had never done them at all.
- Uncle Balthazar will occasionally think he's a character from the Old Testament, affecting long robes and a false beard, loudly prophesying about the plagues of Egypt terrorizing the land. This is even more troublesome in the occasional instances these prophecies have come true.
- Uncle Balthazar suspects he was once Jack the Ripper, which is absolutely ludicrous given his mental condition. Right? That couldn't be possible at all...could it? Despite what we keep finding in his bedroom. And the missing cutlery.





A Horrible Compendium of Moves (Move Index)

Access to the Bentley - The Chauffeur has both access to the garage and the family vehicles.

Access is more than just knowing the location of the car keys, it's an understanding of what may be required to use the vehicle, including petrol, how to turn crank the motor or, ahem, how to take the emergency brake off.

Example:

- As the household Chauffeur, Mr. Pratt is often called upon by the rest of the Staff when an emergency trip is needed into the village, or perhaps just the surrounding woods, when something needs to be disposed of right quick. Before it escapes.

Additional Help - You have an assistant that will follow your basic commands.

Whether it's a scullery maid, a footman, or possibly an underbutler, you have an additional person you can send out to do your commands. They may not do them very well, and are probably a little slow on the uptake. But at least they're there to lend a hand. If the additional help dies during the course of the game Session, a new employee can be brought on to assist the player. Their first task will probably be removing the previous one.

Example:

- In order to help around the Kitchen, Mrs. Gooch relies heavily on Pansy, her scullery maid. She's not very smart of course, and often makes mistakes, but she peels a potato as good as anyone and that's really what's most important.

Better Footwear - Roll with Something Extra when you Go Outside the Grounds.



Ever wonder why the Chauffeur's uniform usually includes high boots, despite the need for ankle stability when driving a motor vehicle? Imagine having to push a broken-down motorcar for an English mile on a black-muddied road until a village cottage can be reached. The boots tend to make more sense in such a context, which only stands to reason why the Chauffeur has more experience in enduring the terrible outside conditions when compared to the other Staff. And the boots do look smart.

Example:

- In order to satisfy Lady Blackwood's request, Mr. Chumley needs to go into the nearby Blackwood Marsh for tannis root. Because Mr. Chumley is the Chauffeur, he is considered to have Better Footwear and can roll with Something Extra as he Goes Outside the Grounds.

Behind the Scene Assistance- Gain a Prestige when you successfully protect someone's Secret from being revealed.

This move requires both the knowledge of another person's Secret and the baffling desire to not use this to one's advantage. Not to say it won't be exploited at another time, but for now it can be in one's best interest to protect the Secrets of others and certainly raise one's station.

Example:

- Mr. Fizzlewig is aware that Mrs. Gooch is secretly maintaining an affair with Silas Moody, owner of the Haunch and Pillock Tavern in town. Before heading into town for a special visit, Mrs. Gooch accidentally drops a pair of silk bloomers in front of the other service staff. Before anyone can ask, Mr. Fizzlewig grabs the pair and thanks Mrs. Gooch for mending his clothing, modeling them against the waist. Slightly confused but not really surprised, the rest of the Staff go about their duties as Mrs. Gooch nods a silent debt of gratitude toward Mr. Fizzlewig's actions.

Callouses and Burn Marks - When in the Kitchen, you can ignore one level of Trauma received.

The Cook is the master of the Kitchen, without question. Within this environment, the Cook knows how to tolerate the hot flames of the oven, frosty exposure from the icebox, and the nicks and cuts that result from the daily use of razor sharp cutlery.



Example:

- While preparing Lady Blackwood's breakfast, Mrs. Gooch hears the walls begin trembling from the upstairs cannonfire, and the heavy stove is thrust onto her bare arms. Normally someone would be burned by such an occurrence, but Mrs. Gooch has many Callouses and Burn Marks and simply rubs a pat of butter against the burn, and then places the butter back beside her Ladyship's toast.

Can You Lend Us a Hand - When Serving the House, ask someone to help you and roll +Persuasion. With a full success, they help you and you may choose two. With a partial success, they help you and you may choose one:

- The work gets done in half the time or effort.
- Roll with Something Extra to complete the work.
- The work lessens a Trouble.
- You both get a Prestige for the effort.
- You gain an extra Prestige if successful.

An extra pair of hands always makes things easier, unless of course they're an unfortunate birth defect. Asking someone to Lend a Hand is different than Directing the Staff, because it's less of a command and more of a bargaining to get assistance. Whether that assistance is reciprocated or appreciated is another matter entirely once the job itself is done, let alone whether the assistance was actually helpful.

Example:

- Miss Santiago has decided the best way to satisfy whatever is in the cellar is to bring it something to eat. Scared for her life, she asks Mr. Pratt to Lend Her a Hand in bringing down last night's dinner scraps. Rolling +Persuasion, she gains an 11, a full success. She opts to have the work satisfy the House's Trouble (or at least whatever's down there).
- Miss Bluntmore wants to do something special for the youngest daughter Mathilda's birthday party, so she's decided to prepare the Library with special decorations. Asking Mr. Fizzlewig to help decorate, she rolls +Persuasion to get him to Lend a Hand. She rolls an 8, a partial success. Miss Bluntmore opts to gain an additional Prestige when they are successful. Mr. Fizzlewig is quite irritated when Miss Bluntmore takes all the credit for the decorations, after all he spent the whole afternoon cutting those flowers out of colored tissue paper.



Consider Strange Requests - During a meal for the Family, examine what they're eating and not eating, and roll +Etiquette. With a full success, choose two. With a partial success, choose one:

- Who in the Family is closest to suffering from a Trouble?
- What sort of Troubles are threatening the Family?
- What is the general emotional state of the Family?
- Who in the Family has fallen in love?
- Who in the Family has been injured?

Although the Family may be hiding things from the Staff, each other, or even themselves, the proof is in the proverbial pudding when examining how and what they're eating. Strange aversions or sudden cravings can indicate greater things at work, while a lack of appetite or perhaps a change of behavior can hint at the emotions at play. If they're requesting human blood, this could be a sign of something more complicated.

Example:

- As the serving Staff bring down the dishes from the Dining Hall, Miss Gooch looks across the remnants of the dinner and Considers Strange Requests, rolling +Etiquette. With a full success of 10, she chooses two questions to consider: "Who in the Family has fallen in love?" and "What is the general emotional state of the Family?" The Mistress of the House explains that it would appear the oldest son has barely touched his dinner, a sure sign he's infatuated with someone again. By the general stabbing and violent cuts in the remains of the served squab, it's clear the rest of the Family did not care for whatever revelation may have come up over dinner.
- As Monsieur Béarnaise prepares the afternoon luncheon, he takes a moment to Consider Strange Requests after all the commotion that has been going on recently upstairs. Rolling +Etiquette, he gets a 9, a partial success. He asks the Mistress of the House "Who in the Family has recently been injured?" Considering the request for cold celery soup, the Master of House indicates it's an easy deduction that Lady Blackwood has been drinking herself into catatonia again and requires hangover relief. And please, keep the noise down.



Cooler Head in the Room - Your presence demands respect. You may use your +Composure in the place of +Persuasion.

A chilly and foreboding countenance can occasionally work in one's favor, particularly as a replacement for trying to persuade others about things. No one wants to cross someone so calm and collected in the face of adversity. Conversely, it's quite practical to believe the person with the most relaxed demeanor knows what they're doing (even if they have no idea whatsoever).

Example:

- Mrs. Crueller has little time for being a pleasant person. When she feels the need to influence those around her, she needs little more than to maintain her steely stare and cold silence. People quickly realize she is not to be trifled with, her Composure saying everything she needs.

Cover their Tracks - After a family member has experienced a Trouble, hide any evidence and roll +Composure.

- On a 10+, the incident is totally ignored and/or forgotten in the household. Gain a Prestige.
- On a 7-9, you are considered the guilty party, but roll with Something Extra over the family member for the remainder of the session.

The role of the service Staff is not to combat or even solve the Troubles of the Family themselves, per se. Merely, they are tasked with maintaining the decorum of the household and the status quo. As such, it's a valuable skill to be able to brush such incidents under the proverbial rug and maintain a proper appearance. The law may call it being an "accessory after the fact", but we would call it being attentive to appropriate responses.

Example:

- Miss Santiago walks into Lady Blackwood's bedroom to find her in flagrante delicto with the visiting Duke of Bunbury, growling rather loud and primal exclamations. Later that afternoon, she brings the family dog, Nimrod to Lord Blackwood, indicating Nimrod had cornered another stoat in the House and tried to attack it. Rolling +Composure, she gets a 10, a full success. Lord Blackwood grunts in agreement and makes a verbal note to speak with the Gardener. Lady Blackwood is thankful for Miss Santiago's actions and praises her loudly to all present, gaining a Prestige for Miss Santiago.



- While taking out a pail of rubbish to the incinerator early one morning, Miss Bluntmore discovered Lord Blackwood's younger brother Augustus, sleeping naked outside in the bushes. He's covered in blood and chicken feathers. Miss Bluntmore wakes Augustus and rolls +Composure to Cover His Tracks. With a partial success of 8, Miss Bluntmore is able to wake him and bring him inside before the rest of the Family wakes up. Although the Family is quite disturbed that one of the local dogs had gotten into the hen house, Miss Bluntmore and Augustus know the truth. Throughout the day, Augustus is far more amenable to Miss Bluntmore in their interactions (allowing her to roll with Something Extra when dealing with him).

Dark Foreboding - When you fail to Ignore the Strange, you may use "We're All Going to Die" as a Secret the next time you drop Innuendo.

When exposed to something absolutely dreadful and life-threatening, a certain clarity is developed on how hopeless and pointless life really is at the Hall, despite best efforts to succeed or at least survive the inevitable failure at hand. Once armed with this terrible knowledge, it does provide a leg up in trying to gain social advantage over the other staff members. Still, you won't be particularly cheerful company over tea.

Example:

- Miss Bluntmore was accidentally locked in the cellar when she saw something horrible. Failing to Ignore the Strange, she was visibly shaken when they finally let her out. Soon afterward, while Mr. Tuckle was speaking with Miss Gooch about next week's meal requirements, Miss Bluntmore casually drops Innuendo by saying, "Unless of course, we're all dead by next week if that abomination in the cellar gets out." By using this as a Secret, Miss Bluntmore gains +1 as she drops Innuendo.

Didn't Always Work in Service - Pick a hidden skill. When you solve a problem in the household involving that skill, gain an additional Prestige.

The upside to certain Secrets is they inherently refer to a hidden skill that has never truly been forgotten, whether it's a former experience with lock-picking, knowledge of strange religious rites, or possibly something as mundane as being a former Vaudeville song-and-dance-man. These skills can be quite useful in a pinch, especially for after-dinner entertainment.



Example:

- As the service Staff try to determine what to do about the body of the dead ambassador, Mrs. Crueller directs Miss Santiago and Mr. Fizzlewig to bring the body downstairs while Mrs. Gooch sharpens her kitchen knives. Mrs. Crueller then reveals she once worked in a butcher's shop in Kensington and knows how to dispose of the body more quickly. The rest of the Staff are impressed at this revelation, as well as growing more frightened of invoking Mrs. Crueller's wrath.

Don't Make this Physical - When successfully Directing the Staff, you have the option of causing 1 Trauma if they choose not to follow your command. For a partial success, you have the option of causing 1 Trauma if they choose not to follow your command, but they also have the option of causing 1 Trauma to you as a possible repercussion.

Violence is rarely the answer, but it's always an option. Whether or not the threat is acted upon, the very act of threatening another's person's well-being can often encourage people not to take foolish actions without your consent.

Example:

- Mr. Fizzlewig wants nothing to do with this growing catastrophe regarding the dead ambassador's body, so Mr. Pratt Directs Mr. Fizzlewig to go downstairs and help Miss Santiago with the body or else they'll be cutting up two bodies. Rolling +Persuasion, Mr. Pratt gains a 12 a full success. With this successful threat, Mr. Pratt has declared he will be inflicting Trauma as part of Directing the Staff, instead of the normal loss of Prestige.
- Mr. Chumley and Mr. Moorcock are arguing over the best approach to dealing with Augustus, when Mr. Chumley Directs Mr. Moorcock to bring him the heavy chains and collar from the dog kennel outside. Mr. Moorcock indicates he's against where Chumley is leading when Chumley indicates to Not Make this Physical. Rolling a 7, Chumley gains a partial success. Mr. Moorcock agrees to do Chumley's direction, but takes a swing at him before he leaves, blackening his eye (and causing 1 Trauma).

Employment at Stake - When successfully using Innuendo against another member of Staff, you have the option to cause an additional Trauma.



It's probably unfair to use the threat of losing one's position as leverage over your fellow staff member. But it is still extremely effective. Through the use of this move, Innuendo can either provide one of the options as well as a level of Trauma, or potentially two Trauma in total.

Example:

- Mr. Moorcock is simply not happy with Mrs. Faith's efforts and off-handedly mentions that perhaps the next Housekeeper will do a better job. Successfully dropping the Innuendo against Mrs. Faith, Moorcock opts that his cutting remark both causes Mrs. Faith to lose a Prestige due to her poor job performance, and cause a Trauma as she worries she'll get the sack, now that she realizes her Employment is at Stake.

An Experienced Ear - When speaking with Staff, roll +Persuasion.

- With a full success, you can determine if what they're telling is the truth and if not, what is the falsehood.
- With a partial success, you know something sounds strange but you can't be sure what it is.

Having been around the block once or twice provides a certain level of clarity when sifting through bollocks. Often it simply requires a stern or knowing look and the right terse response to set them on edge and prove they're taking the piss. A partial success will indicate that something they have said isn't true, but not specifically what. Further investigation would be rightfully warranted.

Example:

- Mrs. Crueller looks up from arranging the flowers on the dining table to notice Miss Bluntmore and Mr. Fizzlewig carrying a tray of raw liver upstairs to the family bedrooms. When asked what they're doing, Mr. Fizzlewig offers they're taking it to the youngest daughter, Mathilda as an afternoon snack. Mrs. Crueller has an Experienced Ear, however, and rolls +Persuasion. With a full success of 11, she knows they're lying. Mathilda only eats raw liver during a full moon.
- While putting away a coat, Mrs. Faith has walked in on Mr. Pratt quietly standing in the closet. "What are you doing?" she asks him. "I was playing hide and seek with the children," he answers as he steps out, making his way back to the garage. With an Experienced Ear, Mrs. Faith rolls +Persuasion and gains an 8, a partial success. That seems very unlikely to her, but she can't determine why. Nor why his trousers are on backwards.



Family Favorite - You practically raised one of the household, fully aware of their personal issues and love them regardless. You can ignore any Trauma from their actions.

Whether it's one of the Family or even their prized terrier, you have spent enough time with this family member to grow accustomed to their eccentricities and behaviors. Whether or not they intentionally give you an easier time (and in fact, they may even be more difficult toward you than other people), it tends to roll off your back as "just one of those things with them."

Example:

- Mr. Moorcock has been with the Blackwood's household staff for over fifteen years, and has tended their youngest daughter Mathilda since she was a toddler. As she reaches her thirteenth year, Mathilda has begun speaking in low guttural noises in her sleep, and has occasionally attacked people while sleepwalking. Whenever one of her fits occurs, Mr. Moorcock lovingly picks her up and put her back to bed, even as Mathilda tries to claw his eyes out in her sleep. Mr. Moorcock knows she doesn't really mean it.

Friends with the Locals - People from the area surrounding the House tend to talk, and luckily you've developed a rapport with them. When talking with them, roll +Etiquette. With a success, ask the Master of the House three questions. With a partial success, ask one:

- How has a member of the staff has been acting suspiciously lately?
- What members of staff are experiencing the most Trauma?
- What suspicion have the locals been forming about the House lately?
- Who recently gained a Secret?
- Who recently resolved a Secret?

Despite being outsiders to the House and Family, the locals surrounding the Hall keep a very close eye on the comings and goings within the Manor. Most of the time they keep their observations and opinions to themselves, but with a little coaxing and perhaps a lager at the local inn they'd love to share what they've seen. Do keep in mind that not all the information provided will be about the same person, and is open to interpretation by the player (and could be potentially interpreted incorrectly). However it will indeed be the truth as the local character sees it.



Example:

- Mr. Chumley has been wondering why Mrs. Gooch has been making so many trips into town of late, so he stops into the Haunch and Pillock Tavern in town to chat up one of the barmaids. Being Friends with the Locals, he rolls +Etiquette. Rolling a 11, he asks “How has Mrs. Gooch been acting suspiciously lately?”, “Who recently gained a Secret?”, and “What suspicion have the locals been forming about the House lately?” Acting as the barmaid, the Master of the House informs Mr. Chumley that Mrs. Gooch has been visiting the tavern’s owner quite frequently (the answer to the first question), and is definitely acting oddly since that terrible incident out on the marsh last winter (the answer to the second question). They think the Terrible Whatsit may be back (the answer to the third question). Mr. Chumley leaves thinking Mrs. Gooch may be hiding the Secret of a drinking problem, not realizing she’s actually conspiring with the tavern owner for a staged robbery.
- The next time Mr. Pratt goes into town he asks one of the local shopkeepers if he’s heard anything lately being a Friend of the Locals. Rolling +Etiquette, he gets a 7, a partial success. Mr. Pratt asks, “Who has recently resolved a Secret?” One of the local clerks knows Miss Santiago was recently offering to sell some jewelry to one of the local shop owners. Mr. Pratt is surprised, he never knew Miss Santiago to own any jewelry and wonders whether she was resolving money issues (perhaps by stealing from the House). He is unaware that Miss Santiago was in fact selling an engagement ring, having finally rid herself of the arranged marriage her parents had planned for her back in Chile.

A Gentleman’s Gentleman - Upon viewing a person in the household, either Family or Staff, roll +Etiquette. With a full success, ask three questions. With a partial success, ask one.

- What have they been doing in the past hour?
- What are they planning to do in the next hour?
- Have they suffered any recent Trauma?
- When was the last time they experienced a Trouble?
- When was the last time they were exposed to a Trouble?
- Where have they recently been?
- What is their current emotional state?

The role of a Valet is to continually be one step ahead of their gentleman, preparing the appropriate accoutrement before they’re fully aware of the need themselves. As such, a proper “Gentleman’s Gentleman” is always



observing their charge, taking note of their needs and plans (both spoken and unspoken) and preparing accordingly. When players are questioned by the Valet, they are expected to answer truthfully, however these are to be considered observations by the Valet, unspoken but still accurate.

Example:

- Captain Toff is downstairs, busy shining Lord Blackwood's shoes when he watches Mr. Moorcock quietly walk into the Servant's Hall. As a Gentleman's Gentleman, he rolls +Etiquette to observe Mr. Moorcock. With a full success of a 10, Captain Toff asks the Master of the House, "What has Mr. Moorcock been doing in the past hour?", "What is his current emotional state?", and "What is he planning to do in the next hour?" Stefanie then explains that Mr. Moorcock has been recently down in the wine cellar, and had an unexpected encounter with "The Thing Downstairs." Being somewhat shaken, Mr. Moorcock plans to open one of the Bave du Chien '75 and make it all go away.
- Mr. Fizzlewig has found Lord Blackwood's brother, Augustus, sitting quietly on the floor of the Main Hall as he stares at the portrait of his great-great-grandfather. As a Gentleman's Gentleman, Mr. Fizzlewig rolls +Etiquette, receiving a partial success of an 8. Asking "When was the last time Augustus experienced a Trouble?", the Master of House informs him that Augustus had another one of his episodes last night. Understanding the situation, Fizzlewig heads to the Kitchen to ask Monsieur Béarnaise to prepare a cold luncheon of roast beef today.

Go into Town - Getting outside can clear the mind. When you ask to take an afternoon off, roll +Persuasion. With a success, you can leave the grounds and remove an additional Trauma with no cost. With a partial success, you may still remove an additional Trauma, but the Master of the House will make a move.

Few things are better for one's health than getting away from this mad-house. Although the actual travel away from the House requires either a favor from the Chauffeur, making arrangements with a local taxi service, or perhaps even risking Going Out on the Grounds by foot, at least there will be Trauma removed during your constitutional. A partial success will still allow for the Trauma to be removed, but will allow the Master of the House to make a move in response. And they are crafty.



Example:

- Mr. Chumley needs to just get away from the House for a few moments to deal with the recent migraine headache he's developed while dealing with Lady Blackwood's demands. When Mrs. Gooch mentions she doesn't think she'll have enough shallots for the family's dinner this evening, Mr. Chumley uses this as a prime opportunity to volunteer to leave the House. Before anyone can argue, he rolls +Persuasion. With a full success of 11, he easily hustles off and enjoys a comfortable afternoon, driving from farm to farm in search of shallots while his headache clears.
- Mr. Pratt has decided to Go into Town in order to get some fresh air and walk off the injury he had received during Lord Blackwood's recent attempt at duck hunting. With a partial success of 8, Mr. Pratt still manages to lose 1 Trauma for his efforts. However, when he comes back, he learns that Lord Blackwood had such a good time in the recent hunt, he wants to go again. This time at midnight to "surprise the ducks."

Helpless Victim - When you are about to receive Trauma or lose Prestige, start crying uncontrollably and roll +Persuasion.

- With a full success, you may choose to either redirect the Trauma gain/Prestige loss to another member of Staff or negate it completely.
- With a partial success, the Trauma gain or Prestige loss is negated.

It's shameless, manipulative and works every time. It doesn't matter if it's done by the Maid, Butler, or even the Chauffeur, no one wants to take candy from a crying baby...most of the time. This is particularly useful as a reaction to having someone threaten to remove Prestige as a result of Directing the Staff or threatening violence. It may also encourage them to bring you a beverage of your choice from the Kitchen.

Example:

- Lady Blackwood has called Miss Bluntmore to sharply criticize her recent behavior and poor work performance. As Lady Blackwood prepares to remove some of Miss Bluntmore's Prestige, Miss Bluntmore begins sobbing uncontrollably as a Helpless Victim. Rolling +Persuasion, Miss Bluntmore gets a 10, a full success. Lady Blackwood forgets what she was saying, and immediately goes to chastise Mrs. Crueller for acting so harshly to Miss Bluntmore.
- Mr. Tuckle has successfully Directed the Staff against Miss Santiago to go upstairs and handle Mathilda's tantrum or else she will suffer the loss of Prestige. Instead of carrying out Mr. Tuckle's wishes, Miss Santiago



opts to play the Helpless Victim and start uncontrollably crying. Rolling +Persuasion, she gets a 7, a partial success. Mr. Tuckle sighs in exasperation and decides to just do it himself, saving Miss Santiago from the loss of Prestige or having to do the act.

Hidden in the Larder - Occasionally you hide extras in the pantry and other places, some things even the Butler is unaware of. When someone is looking for a special food or drink item, you have it available.

It never hurts to have a hidden stash of sweets, alcohol, or perhaps even cigarettes stored somewhere in the House. This can prove extremely useful when trying to mollify angry children or potentially bribe others into certain arrangements. Children do love cigarettes, you know.

Example:

- Monsieur Béarnaise is known among his fellow Staff as extremely temperamental, and prone to tirades if he doesn't have his way. He has also maintained a secret cache of the rare Château Lafite 1787, which allows him immense leeway with occasional outbursts of immaturity.

I've Brought Your Favorite - Once per Session, create something special for someone and roll +Persuasion. With a full success, choose two. With a partial success, choose one:

- Gain a Prestige
- Remove 1 level of Trauma
- Roll with Something Extra with that person for the remainder of that day.
- Immediately stop a Trouble

Bribery often works. Although the move originates with the Cook making special sweets and savories for the household, the rest of the Staff are more than capable of finding either beloved toys, rare books, favorite tobacco blends, and a host of other temptations to raise them above the rank and file.

Example:

- Mathilda is in the violent throes of her tantrum, as her screams shake the entirety of the House. As she pounds on the wooden floor, she glances over at the Lady Dowager's knitting needles and madly dashes for them. Before she can reach for them however, Monsieur Béarnaise appears with a plate of freshly baked lavender biscuits, her favorite. Rolling +Persuasion, Béarnaise gets an 11, opting to both stop Mathilda's



Trouble as well as gaining Prestige within the household for his quick thinking.

- Mrs. Gooch doesn't fancy Miss Bluntmore at all, however she certainly doesn't want to see the poor dear in needless pain. As Miss Bluntmore fights her onset of pneumonia, Mrs. Gooch brings a bowl of her grandmother's goulash. Rolling +Persuasion, she gains a 8, allowing Miss Bluntmore to lower her Trauma by 1 and finally get some rest. That poor dear will need it after the burglary Mrs. Gooch is arranging.

If I May Suggest - When you make a suggestion for a course of action and others follow your plan, they roll with Something Extra when implementing your strategy.

A good servant (particularly a Valet) has the ability to provide guidance in a number of situations, whether it's choosing a suit for a particular social gathering, or perhaps the best method of breaking up an impending engagement that could cause harm to all parties involved. Perhaps they're not offering a perfect plan, but a good plan today is always better than a great plan tomorrow. Tomorrow may not even happen, all things considered.

Example:

- Miss Santiago is overwhelmed: the Duchess of Bunbury is set to arrive within the hour, and her husband the Duke is still out on a picnic with Lady Blackwood, probably involved in some scandalous behavior. Although the Lady Blackwood instructed Miss Santiago to keep the Duchess from learning her husband is out with her, Miss Santiago has no idea what to do. Hearing her problem, Mr. Fizzlewig suggests Miss Santiago create the illusion of a long cribbage game taking place in the smoking room, keeping the Duke occupied. With the heavy cigar smoke coming from the room (a particular pet peeve of the Duchess), she will be less apt to enter the room and greet her husband. It seems like a poor plan, but Miss Santiago has run out of options. She rushes to the smoking room to light as many cigars as possible and create the illusion the Duke is playing cards in the locked room. As she does this, she may roll with Something Extra in her attempts.

In Their Best Interests - You serve very closely with one of the Family. Roll with Something Extra when you attempt to Guide their Direction.



Because of a family member's close relationship with a servant, they tend to pay attention to their directives more closely than others. This may even be a stronger bond than with actual family members.

Example:

- Captain Toff has been hastily summoned to pick up Lord Blackwood's niece Emilia from the Spring Cotillion only to find her crying on the front stairs. In her tears, Emilia wants to head to Bitswitch Manor, so she can burn the place to the ground. Captain Toff calmly asks her if that's wise to do this evening and not another time. Because of Captain Toff's closeness with Emilia, he gets to roll with Something Extra in order to Guide Her Direction.

Inappropriate but Necessary - At the expense of losing a Prestige, lose 1 Trauma. Multiple Prestige can be spent thus, up to a maximum of 3.

Everyone has bad days from time to time, and the Housekeeper is usually expected to handle them without showing even the slightest of unprofessional decorum. However, when stressful circumstances require a break from propriety, it can do wonders for one's mood and well-being (temporarily).

Example:

- Monsieur Béarnaise is arguing with Mr. Fizzlewig again, while Mr. Moorcock continues to make that horrible noise with his lips, just to show everyone he can still do so after forty-some odd years. The noise is too much for Mrs. Faith to take, as she struggles with the Trauma of a migraine headache until finally she's at her wit's end and shouts, "EVERYONE JUST KEEP QUIET!" The rest grow silent, taken aback by Mrs. Faith's outburst. Although her screaming was utterly undignified (costing her 1 Prestige), it has certainly made her feel better, causing her Trauma to drop by 1.

Invasion of Privacy - When searching through one of the family members or servant's rooms, roll +Fortitude in order to scour the room's crevices.

- With a full success, you can gain a Suspicion of a potential Secret or Trouble. This Secret will still need to be confirmed.
- With a partial success, you can gain a Suspicion, but leave telltale evidence someone has been searching the room.



Access to private effects is a symbol of trust and solemn responsibility, which should obviously be used to one's advantage at all costs. Of course, a specific Suspicion does not always mean the result is associated with the person themselves. In fact, it could be evidence of the person's own suspicions about someone else. But it definitely suggests a connection of some sort.

Evidence left behind as a result of partial success can potentially manifest in two ways: either by found evidence being left out, showing someone has been in the room, but not specifically naming who is responsible, or by direct evidence of the guilty party that has not been discovered yet. Either situation could lead to an unpleasant outcome.

Example:

- Miss Santiago has crept upstairs while the rest of the Family and Staff were pre-occupied, in order to go through a private room to see if she could learn something about the visiting Inspector Fidgett. Rolling +Fortitude, her Invasion of Privacy yields an 11, a full success. In his satchel, she finds a strange half-burnt book written in a language that doesn't look like anything she's seen before. Whether or not it means the good inspector is a student of darker arts, or whether the book is even his, remains to be seen. But as she leaves the inspector's room, Miss Santiago crosses herself just to be safe.
- Miss Bluntmore has snuck into Mr. Pratt's living quarters within the family garage in order to go through his possessions. Rolling +Fortitude, her Invasion of Privacy yields an 8. She finds torn-up trousers, covered in dried blood. She assumes the trousers belong to Mr. Pratt, unaware they had been found by Mr. Pratt himself earlier that day. However, it isn't until later she realizes she dropped her rosary in Mr. Pratt's room. She needs to get it back before he finds it.

It Wouldn't be Proper - When attempting to Guide the Direction of the Family, you may roll +Etiquette instead of your +Persuasion.

Despite whatever Troubles may inflict them, love of misadventures, or otherwise bad behavior, every family member has been raised as part of the upper class with an inherent understanding of what is and what is not acceptable in terms of propriety. Morality may not always be their strong point, however never accuse them of bad manners.



Example:

- When Mr. Tuckle enters the smoking room, he finds Lord Blackwood dressed in an orangutan costume, planning to wear the ensemble to his wife's birthday party in order to irritate his mother. Mr. Tuckle reminds Lord Blackwood that It Wouldn't be Proper to be seen wearing the same outfit twice, and reminds him he had previously worn the costume at a fancy dress party last month. Thus, Mr. Tuckle's Etiquette is far more effective than his Persuasion.

Keeping Them in Their Place - When successfully dropping Innuendo, you may also add "They stop what they're doing and get back to work" as an option.

Unlike the Basic move of Guiding Their Direction, this move does not specifically direct the target's actions outside of getting them back to doing what they should be doing in the first place. This does not imply they need to leave the room go back to their normal duties, if there is work to be done in the current location.

Example:

- Mrs. Crueller walks into the Servant's Hall to find Miss Bluntmore enjoying a laugh with Mr. Fizzlewig as they relax over a cup of tea. Annoyed by Miss Bluntmore's irritating laugh, Mrs. Crueller successfully drops the Innuendo that the Family is considering eliminating certain members of staff that are not quite up to snuff. Miss Bluntmore takes the hint and goes to iron the linen.

Keys to the Manor - Due to your trusted position, no room is unavailable to you in the entirety of the House. You have the ability to open any locked door and enter any room via secret entrances.

The keys to every room in the House shows the amount of trust the Family has in your loyalties. Or perhaps you've simply stolen them over the years. In any event, you know the House like the back of your white-gloved hand and all the ways and means of getting through the House without any normal impediments. Abnormal impediments, on the other hand, are another matter entirely.



Example:

- Mr. Moorcock is taking a lunch tray to Mathilda in the Attic, when he realizes the door is locked from the inside, a rarity given Mathilda's excitable nature. Knowing that the floorboard surrounding the hinges of the door is loose, Mr. Moorcock knocks the floorboard with his shoe, causing the hinges to pop off and allowing him entrance through the locked door.

Loveable Scamp - Gain a Prestige when someone incorrectly Confirms a Suspicion about you.

No one can help having affection for the ne'er-do-well antics you always seemed to be mixed up in, which just makes you more beloved by everyone. When it is proven that such suspicions are untrue, it makes you more endearing to the rest of the Staff and Family.

Example:

- Mrs. Faith has never liked Mr. Pratt the Chauffeur and armed with her Suspicion that Mr. Pratt has been dipping into the household wine, she confronts him regarding the fact. After listening to her accusation, Mr. Pratt admits that as a former Quaker, he has taken many dalliances away from the church teachings, but still remains a teetotaller to this day. As Mrs. Faith slinks away, Mr. Pratt whistles as he heads back to the garage, gaining a Prestige. He mentioned nothing about inhaling petrol vapors.

Master of Understatement - When attempting to drop Innuendo, you may roll +Composure instead of +Secrets.

Dry wit is everything, and far more cutting when used sparingly with little to no facial expression. This move allows you to cut deeply while maintaining a cool demeanor.

Example:

- As Captain Toff overhears Mr. Tuckle reprimand everyone on how poorly the Staff has been cleaning up after Lord Blackwood's brother Augustus had another episode of his Trouble, Captain Toff stares at Mr. Tuckle and flatly states, "Oh yes. Everyone is simply being dreadful." Mr. Tuckle realizes Captain Toff is alluding to him, which allows the good Captain, as a Master of Understatement, the opportunity to drop Innuendo by rolling +Composure.



Not in the Ballroom! - When a family member is having a Trouble, roll +Etiquette.

- With a full success, the family member will temporarily regain their faculties and cease having their Trouble.
- With a partial success, the family member will leave the room, still in the throes of their Trouble, but at least not harming anyone within the household.

Even a servant can occasionally caution, remind, and control one of the Family, provided it's done in the name of propriety and good manners. This is different than Guiding Their Direction in that it directly applies to the Trouble they're experiencing. Guiding a member of the family out of a Trouble isn't possible, merely changing their direction in the best of circumstances. And at least *you're* no longer in harm's way.

Example:

- Lord Blackwood's younger brother, Augustus, is having one of his late night fits after dinner. He begins howling at the full moon. As his teeth begin extending and his eyes begin to burn a bright red, Mrs. Crueller clears her throat and rolls +Etiquette, receiving a 10, a full success. "Sir," she addresses Augustus. "At this hour I believe you should consider a nightcap to ease your tensions. Sir." Her sharp rebuke snaps Augustus from his transformation as his eyes grow normal. "Yes," he responds. "Yes, quite right."
- Mrs. Faith enters the Library to hear Lord Blackwood furious with his oldest son attempting to strangle a tenant farmer's daughter. As he continues his tirade, throwing books across the room and breaking a vase, Mrs. Faith calmly requests Lord Blackwood to not break the family china. Rolling +Etiquette, she gets an 8, a partial success. Although Lord Blackwood is still fuming, he grunts and leaves the room before any more damage is done.

An Outsider's Perspective - When you stop a moment to reflect on the situation, roll +Composure.

- On a full success, the Master of the House will provide a true and clear answer asked about the situation.
- On a partial success, the Master of the House will provide a true but cryptic answer about the situation.



In the midst of chaos, people will often get worked up over nothing: an assumed slight, a pause that lasts a moment too long, a bloody footprint. An Outsider's Perspective allows one to think clearly about the situation at hand and appeal to reason when reason has long gone out the window. This cannot be used to determine another player's Secret or a family member's Trouble, but does provide guidance in just what is going on in the household. In the event of a partial success, the Master of the House will still answer the question truthfully but will be intentionally vague in the results.

Example:

- Mr. Chumley knows he's missing something as the Staff discovers the mutilated body of the farmer's daughter. Although the Staff are convinced this is the work of Lord Blackwood's brother, Augustus, in the midst of one of his Troubles, Mr. Chumley isn't quite convinced. Looking at the situation with an Outsider's Perspective, Chumley rolls +Composure. Getting an 11, a full success, Mr. Chumley asks the Mistress of the House, "Did Augustus kill this woman in one of his fits?" The Mistress says "No, the limbs have been hacked off, not ripped off. Someone is trying to make this look like Augustus had done the terrible deed." He uneasily wonders what Lord Blackwood's son has done.
- The Staff are in a panic looking for Mathilda who has disappeared from her bedroom in the Attic. Despite the door being locked, there is no evidence of her leaving nor have the bars on her window been disturbed. Even after an exhausting search, no one has been able to find her in the entire House or surrounding grounds. As the Staff start to form search parties to go deeper into the marsh, Mr. Pratt takes a moment to consider the situation using an Outsider's Perspective. Rolling +Composure, he gets a 7 and asks the Master of the House, "How could a little girl leave this locked room?" The Master of the House responds, "What makes you think she left?" Mr. Pratt thinks for a moment, not sure how to take the information when he calls out in her bedroom, "Mathilda? Are you still here?" Three soft knocks from inside the wall respond. How she got in there or what pulled her in remain a mystery.

Part of the Furniture - When entering a room either upstairs or downstairs, roll +Etiquette.

- On a 10+, no one even notices your presence.
- On a 7-9, you are seen but unacknowledged.



The mark of a good servant is when entering a room it should feel more empty. Remaining inconspicuous allows a player to witness situations and overhear conversations that were intended as private. Even if seen, an unacknowledged servant is less likely to be targeted by a family member's wrath or Trouble flaring up. However, being unacknowledged doesn't protect the player from a disturbance that wildly affects everyone in the room.

Example:

- Miss Santiago has been volunteered to learn if the rumors about Staff dismissals are true. Quietly she makes her way into the Library, rolling +Etiquette. With a full success of 12, none of the Family notice Miss Santiago as she comes to collect the dishes after tea. As she quietly picks up the tea tray, she silently notes who Lord Blackwood indicates should "be leaving the household."
- Miss Bluntmore is quietly walking through the Parlor when she hears a loud shriek and trampling coming her way. Remaining still against the wall, she rolls +Etiquette. With a partial success of 8, the Terrible Whatsit tears across the floor to the Dining Hall, squawking madly with blood dripping from its beak. Although it glances over at Miss Bluntmore as it flies by, it doesn't slow its murderous pace as it makes its way.

A Place for Everything - Roll with Something Extra when verifying Everything in its Place.

As a member of the service staff, it's important to have organizational skills bordering on obsessive-compulsive behavior. Nine of ten times people laugh at your insistence in counting every piece of silverware by hand, but that tenth time it will be horribly important to realize one of the sharp knives have disappeared...again.

Example:

- Mr. Moorcock has heard noises coming from the wine cellar. Hustling downstairs, he is surprised by Mr. Fizzlewig coming up the stairs while whistling to himself. Mr. Moorcock decides to check that Everything is in its Place, rolling with Something Extra. This proves extremely useful when discovering Mr. Fizzlewig has managed to hide a rotting, severed head in the cellar for some reason.

Proper Accoutrement - When you take the time to properly dress either yourself or another member of Staff for the outside elements before going



Out on the Grounds, you may include “Destroys the Outer Garments” as an option for a partial success.

Not everyone remembers to wear a coat when they go outside, despite the terrible weather conditions and other hazards. By maintaining the proper accoutrement, it allows the player to dress appropriately for the outdoors and have an additional level of protection in the midst of bad conditions. However, this doesn't guarantee that there couldn't be repercussions of some sort for the destruction of your outer coat. But at least you will be presentable when you re-enter the household.

Example:

- Captain Toff needs to get to the Haunch and Pillock Tavern in town, despite the atrocious weather conditions outside. Having the Proper Accoutrement, Toff throws a Macintosh overcoat over his shoulders and braves the elements to Go Out on the Grounds. Although he rolls a partial success, Toff chooses to “Destroy the Outer Garments”, utterly destroying the overcoat but arrives at the Haunch and Pillock with no adverse effects to his person.

Rough and Tumble - At the expense of a Prestige, you can cause 1 Trauma to another member of staff. Multiple Prestige may be spent in this manner, up to a maximum of 3.

A boxing of the ears, slap to the face, or even a punch to the jaw. Sometimes there's no other way to get your point across. Doing such an activity to a family member is also possible, however extremely risky in terms of employment. But the person sitting next to you? Oh yes, he deserves it. And so does his character.

Example:

- Mr. Pratt walks into the Servant's Hall as Mr. Fizzlewig repeats his story of how he met the Queen of England when vacationing in Cheswick. Having heard this story at least a dozen times already (and severely doubting its veracity), Mr. Pratt finally walks over and slaps Mr. Fizzlewig across the face. Everyone who had been listening to Mr. Fizzlewig's story are shocked at Mr. Pratt's behavior and thought it uncalled for, but Mr. Pratt walks away feeling it was worth it.



Seen Bloody Worse - Whether you were previously in the War or just had a darker upbringing than most, you are hardened to terrible situations. Once per Session when receiving Trauma, roll +Fortitude.

- With a full success, you may ignore the Trauma.
- With a partial success, you may ignore the effects for the remainder of the Scene.

It's hard to believe there are worse places than **Bedlam Hall**, but they do exist. From the Black Hole of Calcutta, the squalid streets of Whitechapel, or perhaps even another great house that has fallen to ruin and terrible conditions, servants can be sufficiently exposed to where normal Trauma simply no longer has an effect. It's just another lousy day in a series of them.

Example:

- Quite by accident, Mrs. Gooch slammed Captain Toff in the head with a cast-iron skillet in the dead of night. Normally this would cause Trauma, but Toff has previously served in the 4th Army in the Battle of the Somme and has Seen Bloody Worse. Rolling +Fortitude, he gets a 10, a full success. Although his head smarts a bit, Toff is uninjured as he turns on the lights to show Mrs. Gooch he was not an intruder at all.
- Mr. Fizzlewig rarely speaks about his turbulent upbringing in the streets of Whitechapel. Trying to escape an armed intruder, Fizzlewig is already at 2 Trauma when he is cut with a straight razor by the assailant. Having Seen Bloody Worse in his childhood, Fizzlewig rolls +Fortitude. With an 8 (partial success), Mr. Fizzlewig still takes the Trauma but is not restricted to rolling with Something Less as he continues to make his escape from the intruder. However after he escapes, he will definitely need medical attention.

Something They Ate - When you spike someone's food with something that won't agree with them at all, roll +Composure. With a full success, choose two. With a partial success, choose one:

- They suffer 1 Trauma.
- They lose 1 Prestige.
- A Trouble increases in intensity.
- They are incapacitated for a period of time.
- No one knows you are responsible.



This move is not just the providence of the Cook, anyone with access to the Kitchen can potentially drop an added splash of something unpleasant for the household, before a meal has been served. This can also be used against family members, but obviously runs the risk of backfiring horribly.

Example:

- Mr. Fizzlewig is not at all happy with how Mr. Pratt slapped him in the midst of his favorite story of the time he met Queen of England while on holiday in Cheswick. As Mr. Pratt finishes his morning coffee in the Servant's Hall while reading yesterday's paper, Mr. Fizzlewig chooses to teach Mr. Pratt a lesson by dropping a little something into his cup. Rolling +Composure, Fizzlewig gets an 11, a full success. He opts that Mr. Pratt lose one Prestige without anyone knowing it was him. After Mr. Pratt finishes his coffee, his stomach starts to turn as he feels the need to race the lavatory before something unfortunate happens. Unfortunately, he doesn't quite make it.
- Mrs. Gooch is hoping to keep Lady Blackwood from interfering with the Staff's plans to hide the body of the visiting ambassador so she decides to lace her tea with something to put her to sleep. Rolling +Composure, Mrs. Gooch gets a 8, a partial success. Although Lady Blackwood remains incapacitated (and thus out of the Staff's way), she realizes there was something wrong with the tea when she awakens. Mrs. Gooch is going to have some explaining to do, to put it mildly.

Stern Taskmistress - The Housekeeper rolls with Something Extra when Directing the Staff.

Although the Butler is considered the more prestigious of the Staff, the Housekeeper is considered to be the disciplinarian among the other servants. As such, they are well equipped in keeping the other Staff in line and focused on their duties.

Example:

- Mrs. Crueller comes across Mr. Fizzlewig enjoying a brief smoke when he should be preparing Lord Blackwood for dinner. As a Stern Taskmistress, she is allowed to roll with Something Extra when directing him to go upstairs. After he leaves, she then lights a cigarette.

Stiff Upper Lip - When attempting to Ignore the Strange, you may roll +Fortitude instead of your +Composure.



Keep calm and soldier through it, that's the proper way to handle certain things. For situations that seem out of control, sometimes the best solution is to power through it using pluck and grit and move on.

Example:

- Mr. Tuckle enters the Library to find the letters and text slowly dripping from the book pages on the shelf. Normally, someone would need to roll +Composure when confronted with such an unsettling sight, however Mr. Tuckle has a Stiff Upper Lip and chooses to roll +Composure in order to Ignore the Strange.

Too Busy to Care - You have far too much work to worry about what the Family is up to. When Ignoring the Strange, roll with Something Extra while in the midst of performing your tasks.

It's probably the only good thing about being up to your ears in things you need to do, distractions like the youngest daughter crawling backwards up the wall or the mirrors rippling like water just don't rank as noteworthy. After all, you have parsnips to boil.

Example:

- Monsieur Béarnaise needs to prepare three dozen macarons for her Ladyship's bridge club gathering in less than two hours. As he enters the pantry, he hears a mysterious voice growling, "Get oooooooooout...." He sets down the sugar and exclaims, "Non! Allez ailleurs, je suis occupé!" Monsieur Béarnaise is far Too Busy to Care. The *nerve* of some people.

Trusted Confidante - When people share their Trauma with you, roll +Persuasion.

- On a full success, the person sharing their woes with you loses 1 Trauma, and you gain +1 Prestige.
- On a partial success, the person sharing their woes with you loses 1 Trauma.

Although gaining Trauma is invariably unpleasant, hiding that Trauma from the rest of the Staff makes things worse. No one wants to admit they are not as physically resilient as they'd like others to believe. By allowing people the opportunity to confess their shortcomings, you allow them to unburden themselves and ultimately feel better afterward. Of course, you're under no



obligation to keep anything you learn to yourself, mind you. After all, it's just what you *heard*.

Example:

- After a terrible run-in with Mrs. Crueller, Mrs. Gooch takes Miss Bluntmore aside to talk about how she wasn't responsible for the kidney pies exploding during luncheon. Miss Bluntmore agrees and adds that Mrs. Crueller is just being spiteful for no reason, rolling +Persuasion. Rolling 12, Mrs. Gooch feels immensely better, losing the level of Trauma she had gained along with Miss Bluntmore receiving a Prestige for her efforts. Naturally, Miss Bluntmore notes this in her diary for future reference.
- Miss Santiago is brushing off her Ladyship's coats when she notes Mr. Chumley struggling to carry the luggage to the Bentley. Although he is hesitant to answer, Miss Santiago presses him to tell her what's wrong. When Mr. Chumley finally admits he had injured his shoulder when attempting to arm wrestle with Monsieur Béarnaise, Miss Santiago rolls +Persuasion. With a partial success of 8, Miss Santiago tells him not to hide the injury but to acknowledge the Cook is stronger than he looks and not worry about it. Although she gains no Prestige for the matter, Mr. Chumley takes her suggestion and favors the other arm to carry the heavy luggage. This allows his arm an opportunity to rest for a bit, healing 1 Trauma to Mr. Chumley.

Voice of Authority - The Butler starts with an additional Prestige.

Traditionally, the Butler is assumed to be the highest ranking member of the staff, often acting as the primary interface between the Family and servants. Because of this, they are often held in more esteem (whether it's warranted or not). Although each staff member starts with one Prestige at each game Session, the Butler will start with two.

Example:

- As Butler, Mr. Moorcock is held in a higher regard than the other servants, often the first person called by Lord Blackwood and the first to receive praise when things go well, regardless of whether he was involved. Because of this, Mr. Moorcock starts the game with an additional Prestige.



Suggested Inspirations

Still trying to capture the overall flavor of a glorious life of service in the midst of the upper class undermining their best efforts? The following resources will help guide the overall mood, and give both players and Masters of the House a good start in experiencing a terrible life working for horrible people. It's all in good fun.

Downton Abbey (TV) - The life of the household staff is perfectly on display with this Julian Fellowes series, showing the ups and downs, intrigue and camaraderie that happen behind the scenes of the "perfect English manor." Should be considered required viewing.

Addams Family (TV and film) - There are few more appropriate examples of a family where everyone is slightly off and blissfully ignorant they don't fit in with the normal world (nor do they care). No one will probably be playing Lurch but it's a definite possibility.

Dark Shadows (TV) - In contrast to the Addams Family, the Collins family are a perfect example of a family plagued by Trouble after Trouble. The patriarch is a vampire, a daughter is a practicing witch, another family member is a shapeshifter. At one point the entire family was transported to the 17th Century. Never a dull moment for the Collins family, and certainly never a dull moment for their staff.

Upstairs Downstairs (TV) - Before Downton, there was this 1970's BBC series, the first to introduce the life of service to modern society. The 2010 sequel isn't quite as strong, but is still interesting as a follow-up to the original.

Crimson Peak (film) - Guillermo del Toro is a master of visual representation, especially the terrible conditions of the household where the film's plot unfolds. Few films describe a household with Troubles better, both in terms of the mundane, psychological, and supernatural.

Remains of the Day (book and film) - Servants can be so obsessed with perfecting the household they can miss the world around them, whether it's a lost attempt at love or their employers making dreadful mistakes in judgment by trying to reason with the 1930's Nazi Party.

Gosford Park (film) - Murder, intrigue, and highly polished silverware. Gosford Park was Julian Fellowes' first depiction of the dichotomy between the servants and family, while both still living under the same roof. Director Robert Altman's style of overlapping dialogue, multiple storylines, and



"everything at once" narration will remind anyone of a role-playing game's chatter after a few minutes.

Jeeves and Wooster (book and TV) - Thankfully British socialite Bertie Wooster played brilliantly by Hugh Laurie, isn't terribly troubled in this hilarious BBC series, but he does have consistently bad luck and even worse hare-brained schemes that cause nothing but trouble. Luckily his valet Jeeves, immortalized by Stephen Fry, is there to save the day with an elegant solution every time. Definitely worth viewing to understand the dynamic of the servants being smarter than their employers.

An Unfortunate Series of Events (book, TV, and film) - The overall writing style of its narrator, the mysterious "Lemony Snicket", provides a dramatic tone that always reminds the audience that even in the best of situations, everything is terrible (or soon will be). As such, it's a great example in how to present an adventure to the players.

The Ruling Class (film) - A little-known 70's film satire of a newly anointed member to the House of Peers who just happens to believe he's Jesus Christ. Peter O'Toole's performance exhibits all the characteristics of a serious Trouble gone amok, only to conclude in an even worse predicament once things have "improved."

Arsenic and Old Lace (play and film) - Just how do multiple family members handle each other's idiosyncrasies? Try two sweet old ladies with a penchant for murdering their tenants, a cousin who believes he's Teddy Roosevelt, and a criminal with a striking similarity to Boris Karloff. Played for laughs, the craziness of the household proves that even Troubles can warrant a hilarious time.

Servants: A Downstairs History of Britain from the Nineteenth Century to Modern Times by Lucy Lethbridge (book) - This excellent book serves as a great primer for the lifestyle of service, and provides real world examples of the difference between our modern day and their daily lives.



Our Helpless Victims

Our sincerest sympathies to those who backed us on Kickstarter.

- Our Hero Andy
- Schubacca
- Eric Ausley at OpenlyGamer.com
- Dead Gamers Society
- Dan uxenberg
- Fearlight Games
- Gordon D. Duke
- Jody Kline
- Morbidly Mortaine
- Candi Norwood
- Mark Edwards
- Dame Tracey Michienzi
- Mr. Michael Cantin, deceased under mysterious circumstances.
- Daniel Poulin
- Fredrik “Lamentations be upon his name” Lyngfalk
- Chris “Yes, my lord” Czerniak
- Jim Jacobson
- Geoffrey M Allen
- Laurie J Rich
- Seth Hartley
- Mark Phillippi
- Bob Richardson, lost somewhere in the Bermuda Triangle
- Jason Whitney
- Brandon Metcalf
- Melinda Smith
- Ed Matuskey
- Chuck Dee
- Al Billings
- Cynthia Swartwood
- Jason Pasch
- Robert Ferency-Viars
- Karl Scheer
- John Rogers
- Wade Geer
- Hon. Col. Chris Workman
- Megan Knouff
- Dave “Wintergreen” Harrison
- Jack Gulick
- Kat Baker
- Karl Keesler
- Gary Anastasio
- BSD
- Ollie Gross
- Bryant Durrell
- Robert and Amanda Daley
- Damon C Bradshaw
- Stephen White
- Jp LaFond, deceased
- Betsy “Avatar of Chaos” Jorgensen
- Jesse Means
- Robert J Schwalb
- Matthew X. Gomez
- Marguerite Alice LaMothe
- Zack Norwig
- Shoshana Kessock
- Kellen Harkins
- Sandra Denmon
- Jeffrey Bo Doon
- Andrew 'lowkeyoh' Lawton
- John Marron
- Richard Starr
- Adam Ultraberg
- Maarten “if anyone asks I was with you all day” Roex
- Stras “The Butler” Acimovic
- Zardul, King of the Britons
- Gretchen Y. Lum
- JC Hay
- Josh Riggins
- M'lissa Wetherell
- Vincent Baker
- Christopher Grey
- Brandon A. Dempe
- Brendan Allison
- Mark Morrison
- Steve Dempsey
- Seth Harris
- Xavier Aubuchon-Mendoza
- Philip “xipehuz” Espi
- H. M. 'Dain' Lybarger
- Jeff “Hans” Combos
- Chris An
- John Whitaker Luther
- Michael Bowman
- Geek Girls Rule!
- Herman Duyker
- Casey Moore
- Barac Wiley
- Jayle Enn
- Brandon Urey
- Siobhan Morris
- Matt Nixon, whose name shall be etched with a bone handled dagger.



- Darren Davis
- Gareth Adams
- Basil Lisk
- Karl A. Schmidt
- Trey Mercer
- 108th Victim
- Kwyndig
- Jason Mical
- Role Playing Public Radio
- Hsieh, Wei-Hua
- Genevieve Cogman
- Kraken
- A tree
- Daimadoshi
- David Wellington
- Mark N. Ziff
- Jeremy Scott
- Judd M. Goswick
- Lester Ward
- Slig
- Jonathan Lee
- Donovan Mays
- Svend Andersen
- Spudcon
- Anna Gold
- The Misfortune of Being John
- Chris Westbrook
- Tomer Gurantz
- That bastard, William Trekell
- Cody Hatcher
- The Elsewhere Philatelic Society
- Henry “PandaDad“ de Veuve
- Horris Borris, a man of questionable taste
- Mara Marzocchi
- Cole Warburton
- Marc Margelli
- Tom Van de Sande
- Davin Valkri
- Patrick Knowles & Tyler Lominack
- Patrick Fjeld
- Dave Agnew
- Tomi Sarkkinen
- Daniel Ley
- Owlglass
- Elinor “deadly“ Jones
- Morgan Da
- Matthew Edwards
- Patrice Mermoud
- Jeff H
- The Freelancing Roleplayer
- Michael Sandlin
- Dan Byrne
- mx. mark argent
- Ewen Cluney
- Simon Bastian
- Christopher P. Crossley
- Sean M Smith
- Grant Chen
- Charlotte Boucher
- Nicholas Peterson
- Pauliina Härkönen
- Remo di Sconzi
- Kate Bullock
- John Roberts
- Wright S. Johnson
- Antoine Néllisse
- Amanda M.
- Adam T Alexander
- William Lamming
- David Pernin
- Pierre Palatin
- Merry Crystal
- Ian Donald
- Gavin Carr
- Chris Noessel
- Nicola Urbinati
- Isaac Alexander
- Robert Burson
- Professor Violet Baldwin
- L Kertz
- Jessica Rose
- Jerry L Meyer Jr
- William Scott Palmer II
- Cole M Sorensen
- Gretchen
- Christine Hayes
- Baron Eyepatch von Cowboyhat
- Natalie
- Joshua Ramsey
- Jean-Olivier “Volsung“ Ferrer
- Ryan Towers—born a genius, died a genius, lives on as a genius “Alex Blue“
- Randy Killmer
- Edward Contesse
- Richard Q. Delacroix
- Mark Anthony Markham
- Mike “I’m a sucker for Monkeyfun“ Leader
- Jim Waters
- Mendel Schmiedekamp
- M Stuff
- Darwin Rillon
- Niall O'Donnell
- D KC Ho
- Mr. Christopher Aschoff and his axe
- Zillah Patterson



- Robert G. Male
- Shaula
- Lucy Guillen
- Paul Lukianchuk
- Tom Hughes
- Sir Melvin Smif of Geekery
- Einar V. Másson
- Drew W
- Dennine Dudley
- Jason Joyce
- Leslie A. Wilson
- Robert Taylor
- Heather Barlow
- James Dillane
- Jennifer Coffin
- Rylai
- Barry S.
- Luke Bentley
- Wesley Estep
- Zhaeradan
- Jonathan Korman
- Mark Fenlon
- Matt “Devilboy“ Murray
- Edward MacGregor
- Tommy Rayburn
- Lord Dawan
- Chase Street
- C. Michael Hall
- The Woebegotten Wormelys
- Doug Hurst
- Anna Pedroso
- Brian Allred
- Cursed Grey Wanderer
- Brian Poe
- Ryan B. Hull
- Gallaty Designs
- Katherine Sproull
- Timothy Brunner
- Eric Iacono
- Master Turner
- Captain William “Bill” Roper
- Patrick & Samantha Harris
- Jeff Sweet
- Rob Nadeau
- Chris Huddleston
- Jim Sephton
- Jordan Bodewell
- Chris Mennell
- Matthew Haulman
- Chad Stevens
- Maurizio Locusti
- adumbratus
- 3D6 Mafia of OKC is out for filthy lucre
- Victoria E.S. Pullen
- Amy Ashton
- Lachlan Jones
- Chris Tulach
- The lovely Gina Ricker
- Thomas Piekarski
- Patricia Arce
- Sven “DOC“ Berglowe
- Brandi McKinstry
- Lucian Ferast
- Mike Addison
- Lisa “Dr. Cthulhupunk“ Padol
- Steve Price
- Alman
- Jörn Kiwitt
- Jonathan George
- The Bones of Adam Drew
- Wes Otis
- Javier Joaquin Palenzuela
- James Dunbier
- Tessa Ingram and a handful of confetti
- Petri Leinonen
- John Copper
- Andrew Turbott
- Marcus “Chaosmeister“ Burggraf
- Dr. Donald A. Turner
- Sabrina Klevenow
- Lady Clara Helene Kessler von Sprengseysen
- Paul McBride
- John William Carroll
- Shyldd and Aisling
- Sandra H. Bruel aka SLN
- Guinevere the Skilamalink
- W.D. Prescott
- Jason “JiB“ Tryon
- Logan Ratica
- Kurt & Katie Potts
- Charles F. Hayes
- Spencer and Piper Zito
- Etienne T.Harvey
- Gnome Archivist
- Edvard Blumentanz
- Su'ad Shoukri (Allyenna)
- Christian R Leonhard
- Jesse Mungle
- Ben Gunderson
- Jim Causey
- Joe Geary
- Rob 2.0
- William Lee
- Chad Patterson
- Austin Lehrer
- Austin “I myself AM strange and unusual“ Loomis
- Master Chubtoe



- Carrie-Anne Ferrie
- Jonathan Westhaven
- Shiloh Fuscello
- The dashing Oscar Simmons
- Colin Urbina
- Malcolm Harbrow
- Scott Hillier
- C. Slattery
- Artifice Maryam
- Cotton Mashlin
- Michel Frijns
- John DeAngelis
- Robert Carnel
- L Ron Roberts
- Evera Rayne
- Matt Underwood
- Blechpirat
- Sir Marcus Flores
- Ironchicken
- Kelly Brown
- Rethumy Gethis
- Joe Craig
- Bryan C. Smith
- Protagonist Industries
- Beachfox
- Nathan Dolby
- A&B Haggerty
- Jared Rascher
- Eric M
- Captain Grey Wulfe
- John Wick
- Robert Smith
- Diana Clark
- Lord Barre of Lysander-at-the-Guthrie
- Carl Schnurr
- Robert kim
- w. david lewis
- Joolz “The Crypt Keeper” Hayley
- Ed
- Mikailos
- Thomas Ladegard
- Eversong
- B. Ernesto Johnson
- Dawid “Dievas” Wojcieszynski
- Isabel Evangeline Raby Perry
- Lord Andrew Clark III
- Ruthie Dickinson
- Nicholas Farley
- CADave, the legend.
- Steven Fujisaka
- Brian “Weaselcreature” Mansfield
- Lily Mansfield
- JR Cillian Green
- Matthew Muth
- Christopher J. Todd Esq.
- Shannon Steele
- Gingerly Awkward Maizy Bursell
- Amber Leedham
- Kyra Blue
- Lisa Nunez
- Brandon Smith
- Mr. Daniel L Pierson
- Robert Wood
- Neil Coles
- Alp Aziz Torun
- Iona
- John Snee
- Roger Haxton
- tbeaton
- Tommy Friberg
- Henrik Hellbom
- Christopher and Claudia Dievendorf
- Tangent Venture Games
- Mr. Kailus
- Derek the Bard
- Stephen Yturalde II
- Monique Mooney
- Ghastly Games
- Tenby L.
- Johnny-Mac Willcox-Beney
- Zak Kendrick
- Allen Varney
- Tara J. Kavanagh
- Neal Tanner
- James Lloyd
- Steven Bartalamay
- Menthor T. Korrigan III
- Jacques DuRand
- Andy and Suzanne
- David Havelka
- feltk
- The Waffles
- June & Mike Garcia
- Ethan W Callahan
- Marianne Vadney
- Rose Meyer
- Stu “Happy Jacks” Venable
- Mary Ann Phillips
- Erin C
- BBR LeDe
- David Sundrud
- Lord and Lady Ruff
- Justin S. Davis
- Regina Head
- Jack Flynn
- Jordan Lee MacCarthy
- Michael James Wheeler
- Bley Luc



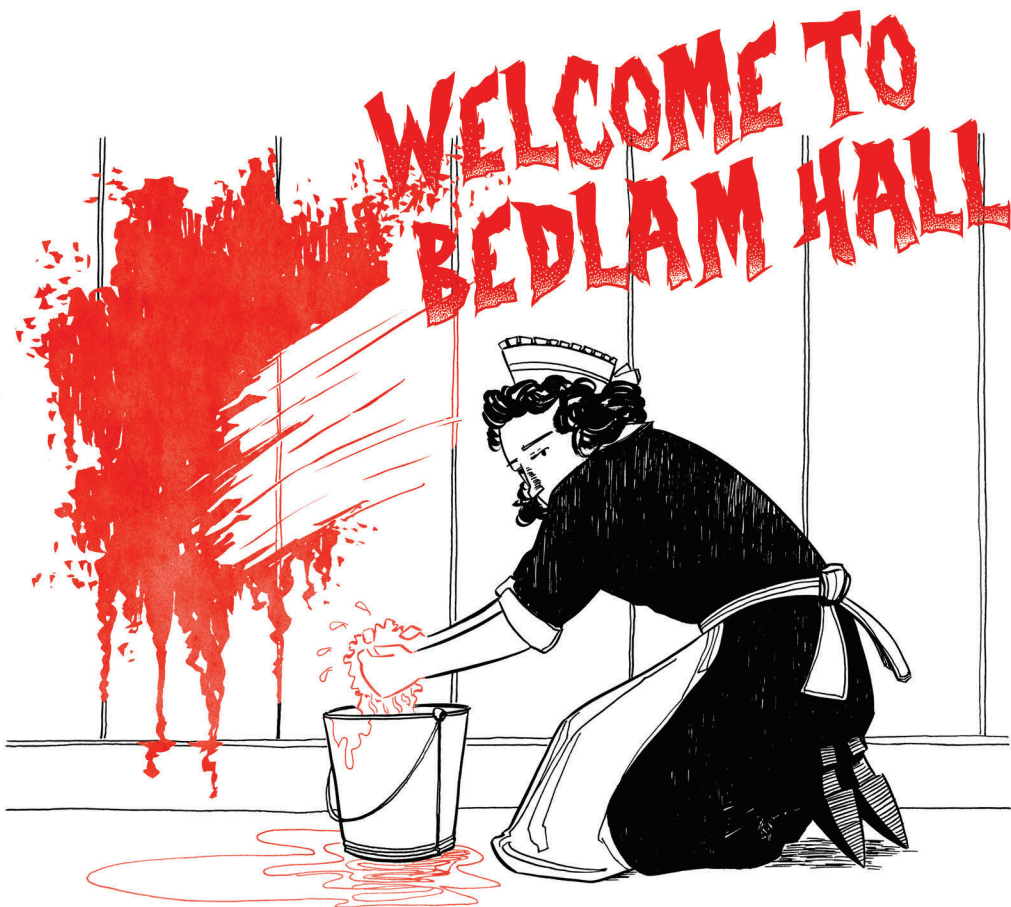
- Andrew Nichols
- Lorraine
- Angelo Pileggi
- Lauren Plakhovna
- Joshua Winans
- Mark Plemmons
- Andrew J. Pine
- Noralie
- Alex Gu
- Jaime Bertuchi
- Eric Liebl
- Redpaintedblack
- Michael Murray & Heather Reid-Murray
- Stephan Family
- Les & Dashiell Simpson
- Madame C.E.W.
- Landon Knoblock
- Jacob Thompson
- Bastien 'Acritarche' Wauthoz
- Emily Jeanne Caine
- Kalysto
- Frank "Bippo Jr" Bustamante
- Becky Baldwin
- Troels Bording
- Karol "CellarDorr" Klucznik
- Chad Andrew Bale
- Ian M Ward
- Derek Mayne
- Adie
- Devin & Linny Saverline
- Sentient Cow Games
- Andrew Jensen
- Catherine Haines
- Xylemicarious
- Nicholas "Doomed To Die Alone And Afraid" Arroyo
- Margaret Norris
- David Bremer
- James Manalac
- Dave's pal, Tim Huntley
- Becky Topol
- Dustin Wollam
- Mr. Sir Benjamin Jeatran
- Reverance Pavane
- Jim Ryan - Yes, THAT Jim Ryan
- Dávid Csobay
- Ben Petersen
- Lorenzo Bandieri
- Tia T.
- Madam Jenna Stokesberry-Harrington the Third
- Jonathan Weismann
- Zachary Norton
- Grant Greene
- Mark Merrell
- Katie Shuter Rompala
- Scott E. Vigil
- Karen and Brandon Ryan
- Jman
- Richard Ruane
- Morgan Weeks
- Bill Ayakatubby
- Stuart James Watts Taylor
- Petter Wäss
- Mike Teuscher
- Matthew McFarland
- Simon Brake
- Daniele Di Rubbo
- Patrick McGeachie
- Ville K
- Erika Eby
- Phillip Ames
- Andrew Peregrine
- Jeff Dreher
- Gareth Crees
- Harald Eckmüller
- Lissa Taylor
- Steven D Warble
- Markus Viklund
- alpal
- David Harrison
- Ralf "Sandfox" Sandfuchs
- María Pequeño
- Zed Lopez
- Sofie Renström
- Mackenzie S. Wickham
- JW Binns
- Big Aal
- Daniel Gregory
- Todd Miller
- jf weber
- Griffin D. Morgan
- Adrienne Compton
- Rourke Bywater
- Ed Kowalczewski
- pookie
- Steven Nelson
- gnapo
- Madelyn C
- Shawn Murphy
- Abner Rodrigues
- Ashley Cummings (yes, mom, I finally did it!)
- Alyssa L.
- Michael Richards
- Randy Mosiondz
- The lovely Amanda Owens
- John Ball
- Mike Shema



- Gaming Geare
- Jamie and Jonathan Gilmour
- James Husum
- Jon Terry
- flyaturtle
- Lakshman Godbole
- The Macabre Hybridartifacts
- Ramiz
- Veronikis Spyros
- Sarah Borg Bonnici
- Brian Wright
- Tom Beaumont
- Sean Foy
- Philip “I merely did this as the voices told me to” Metcalfe
- Page Arlt
- Matthew Edmiston
- Mattias “The Viking” Vajda
- Alexander R. Corbett
- Ruth Lillian Newman
- Paul Popernack
- Debbie Crookston
- Borgus Weems
- Barak Blackburn
- Stingle
- J. Harmon
- Damon Wilson
- J. Kyle Massey
- Megan Barbara Scharlau
- Zeilenrausch
- Shawn Shultz
- Ekaterina Ryabko
- Michele Gelli
- Jenn Martin
- Rach Shelkey
- M. Poirier
- James Welsh
- Bryce Duzan
- Silvio Herrera Gea
- Quasi Mortuus
- malifer
- Travis Berg
- Jordan Baranowski
- David Quick
- Mercedes Draffin
- goodideafactory
- Philippe “Sildoenfein” D.
- Torrie Rhiannon Smith
- Timothy Walsh
- Panu “Possessed” Laukkanen
- Crystal Groves
- Steven Robert Bates
- Tim Ellis
- Stefan Kreimeier
- Aaron Enskat
- Steven K. Watkins
- Steven C Swan
- Erica Cartmill & Jacob Foster
- Ignatius Montenegro
- Erin Harker
- Mistress Lori Fuller
- Toby Strauss
- Frédéric “Volk Kommissar Friedrich” POCHARD
- Robert E Gallasch
- Zeon Santos
- Catherine Dizon
- Martina W.
- Sarah Kimberly
- Richard Forster
- Simon Ward
- Eggs
- Jeremy Adams
- Jennifer Fuss
- weefreeme
- John Oram, that body that keeps turning up in the armoire
- Heinrich Krebs
- Erobus Lycurgus - TRF
- Ryan McWilliams
- Brad Munn
- Nadia Heller
- The Wrong Dishonourable Lee Rosenbaum
- Ian McFarlin
- C. Grange
- Zachariah Foster
- Alexandre Pestana
- Kelly J Taylor
- OhlookitsMatty
- Steve Runyan
- Jeremy Bibey
- Bryan ‘Darnivar’ Bailey
- Katon Gerky
- Team Mechacon
- The Despicably Dreadful Lord Farfhocel - Tom Kapel
- Jae Lerer
- Benjamin “BlackLotos” Welke
- Jessica Figas
- Kelsey Fuhro
- Jonathan Evans
- Carine Hamel
- Nick “PolarBruski” Ruedig
- Brice Coolen
- Dillon J. O’Brien
- Nattie B



The family is strange. The house is cursed.
The weather is dreadful.



The macabre role-playing game from Monkeyfun Studios

Can you manage to survive the strange happenings and the family's bizarre behavior while still keeping the house under control and your references in order? Play to find out. (But don't count on it).



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