

# LITTLE MIMIC IN THE BIG CITY

A Lightweight RPG of Escape and Pursuit  
by Chris Hopper



## Little Mimic in the Big City

*As a merchant ship arrives in port, a miracle happens belowdecks. Baby mimics have spawned amid the boxes and buckets and barrels being unloaded to the docks. Some bounce across the deck, disguised as the tool no one remembers leaving out. Others transform into little chests and barrels so the crew will haul them ashore. Still others find their way into the belongings of mysterious passengers. Each mimic has a single goal: find the next meal without getting caught.*

Little Mimic in the Big City is a stat-free, 2d6 game of casual storytelling. You and your friends play newborn mimics trying to survive in a bustling port. This game is playable by as few as two people (one mimic, one game master) and up to six. You'll need at least 2 six-sided die, pens, and paper. Tests of skill, combat, and movement are all resolved on a 2d6 roll against a difficulty defined by the gamemaster (GM). You'll find storytelling tips and suggestions at the back of the book.

Your mimic character and your siblings begin on the docks. Work together to find food without getting caught by the city watch, the magical community, or any roaming strays in the area. Though you are small and easy to kill, your cunning and transformative abilities give you an edge. Adventure through the maze-like city in search of your treasured meal, but do so quickly: you only have so many moves before hunger saps your strength!

## Character Creation

Your mimic is defined by a **favorite form**, **hunger** and **traits**.

Your **favorite form** is whatever you first learned to disguise yourself as while on the boat. It should be immobile, approximately the same size as you (as small as 1 cubic foot, up to 5 cubic feet) and made of a firm natural substance like wood, stone, or leather. Common forms include chests, barrels, footlockers, books, or boulders. Take **+1 to your transformation roll** whenever you take this form, in addition to any other bonuses.

Your **hunger** motivates everything you do. You begin the game with 7 move actions, and the only way to gain move actions is to feed. If you cannot move, it's only a matter of time before some adventurer comes along and chops you up or sells you off for alchemical parts.

Roll 2d6 to determine your **hunger**:

Result	Diet
2	coal/ash
3	alcohol
4	iron/steel
5	grain
6-8	flesh
9-10	gold/silver
11	gems
12	magic

Just because you're amorphous blobs doesn't mean there's nothing special about you. Pick **2 Traits** to aid your quest for food.

<b>Trait</b>	<b>Benefit</b>
<b>Ambulatory</b>	+1 to <b>Walk</b>
<b>Camouflaged</b>	+1 to <b>Blend In</b>
<b>Communicative</b>	Mimic brief speech
<b>Dexterous</b>	+1 to climb
<b>Efficient</b>	+1 action after <b>eating</b>
<b>Lanky</b>	Pseudopods extend up to 6 feet
<b>Quick</b>	+1 to follow-up <b>movement</b>
<b>Perceptive</b>	+1 to spot more <b>threats and opportunities</b>
<b>Practiced</b>	+1 to <b>Transformation</b>
<b>Sneaky</b>	+1 to <b>Sneak</b>
<b>Squishy</b>	+1 to <b>Larceny</b>
<b>Stabby</b>	+1 to <b>Fighting</b>
<b>Strong</b>	+1 to lift heavy objects or force entry
<b>Tough</b>	Physical attackers must roll a 6 to hit you
<b>Willful</b>	Magical attackers must roll a 6 to hit you

## Gameplay

Each player begins the game with 7 actions to get from docks to food. For timekeeping, an action takes a few minutes to complete. Each action, the GM describes the area, then the players decide what they want to accomplish in that scene and roll dice to determine the result. Most actions are accomplished with **movement**, **fighting**, or **transformation**. If you've found food, **eating** refills your action meter.

### Threats and Opportunities

Every action involves a change of place (**movement**), state (**transformation**, **eating**), or condition (**fighting**). In order to know the stakes before choosing which action to take the GM will provide you with details of the nearby **threats** and **opportunities**. Threats may include things like a suspicious looking beggar, a hungry alley cat, or a mysteriously smoking box. **Opportunities** could be that nearby vendor cart, a wagon trundling your direction, or a hapless meal alone in an alleyway.

### Position

Your position tracks how likely **threats** are to notice you. Taking action always changes your position, for better or worse.

**Undetected** - You are one with your surroundings, do as you please.

**Exposed** - You're out in the open. If you don't make a move or transformation, you'll be noticed!

**Noticed** - Attention has been drawn and unless you move quickly, you'll be attacked.

**Threatened** - You're under attack! (see **fighting**)

### Movement

The type of movement you take determines how likely you are to be noticed by those around you.

**Blend In** - move as a semitransparent liquid across flat surfaces.

**Larceny** - slide under doors, through cracks in windows, or bust open locks.

**Sneak** - keep to the shadows, staying out of sight.

**Walk** - amble through the crowd like a normal biped, hoping no one notices your pseudopods.

The GM will tell you the difficulty of these movements based on your surroundings.. Failing a movement exposes you, threatening a fight and preventing the next meal.

You may always choose not to move, in which case the GM will describe the changes in your surroundings and position at the start of the next action.



## Transformations

Transformation protects your position and may trick a meal into coming to you. When not moving about unseen, a good mimic is busy maintaining a transformation. Changing shape comes naturally, but only to things your same size and texture. The larger, smaller, or more organic it is, the tougher it is to pull off.

To change your shape, decide the form you'd like to take and roll 2d6:

### DC Examples

- |    |  |
|----|--|
| 5  | Box, crate, barrel, chest, stone blocks                    |
| 7  | Furniture, sections of walls, metals                       |
| 10 | Plants, clothing, weaponry, jewelry, anything tiny or huge |
| 12 | People, animals, complex machines                          |

Success may improve your position from **exposed** to **undetected**, but cannot remove **noticed** or **threatened**. Failure **exposes** you, and if anyone was already wary you'll be **noticed**.

Because you're young, maintaining a transformation is tough. Roll again each action you choose to maintain your transformation!



writer," by illustrator Claude E. Millard, Public Domain

## Fighting

If you're **undetected**, you can take out a normal human with a successful attack (typically 7+). If you succeed, you've killed the opponent. If you fail, the opponent is still killed, but you've been **noticed** in the process. You can still fight anything nearby, but you'll be immediately **threatened** by other surrounding enemies.

**Threatened** mimics are in melee or under fire. The GM rolls one die per attacker. A result of five or six kills your baby mimic!

If you're being **threatened** but the opponents miss, you can escape by describing your **movement** or to **fight** your way to a new position (and back to the **noticed** position, if successful).

## Helping

You may spend a move action aiding a fellow sibling. Describe how your mimic renders aid. If your sibling is **fighting, moving, or transforming**: both mimics roll, keep the highest!

## Eating

When you find a source of food, take an action to eat. Discard any mutations and replace your remaining action count with 2d6 fresh actions. A particularly large resource (the town granary, a bank vault, a wizard's tower) may be eaten from multiple times, but still replaces the number of actions and mutations rather than adding to it.

If you have food, but no actions, another player may choose to use the help action to feed you. Their 2d6 roll becomes your new action total.

## Mutations

For every 1 rolled on your 2d6 eating move, you'll gain a mutation until your next meal. Roll an additional 2d6 on the table below to determine which mutation you'll gain. Describe what you ate and why it grants you this power!

result	mutation	description
2	<b>clairvoyance</b>	Use an action to see anywhere you've been or anything you've touched
3	<b>controlled transformation</b>	Maintain transformation without rerolling (still uses an action)
4	<b>illusionary cantrip</b>	use magic to make the surroundings appear differently (roll vs GM difficulty)
5	<b>omnivorous</b>	Eat any "food" from the character creation table for your next meal
6	<b>perfect transformation</b>	Auto success on easy and moderate transformation, hard success on 5+
7	<b>protective shell</b>	Ignore the first successful hit when fighting (once only)
8	<b>sixth sense</b>	Use an action to learn a beneficial secret about this area
9	<b>slick</b>	+2 to movement (blend in, larceny, sneak, walk. Combines with traits)
10	<b>smarter</b>	Gain a new trait (until the next meal)
11	<b>telekinesis</b>	Move small objects with your mind (roll vs GM difficulty)
12	<b>telepathy</b>	Read the thoughts of any humans near you (roll vs GM difficulty)

## GM NOTES

Little Mimic in the Big City is ultimately a game of cat and mouse. Keep the pressure mounting and the stakes high. Don't be afraid to put your babies in danger, the world is large and full of danger, and there's always another mimic around the corner.

### Adventure Hooks

A group of hungry monsters loose in the city may be more chaos than fun. If you want a little more structure in your tale, try one of these hooks. Begin with the block text on page one, then add any of these events.

#### Poisoned Sea

*...The sea boils with a blue-black ichor. Up and down the docks people and animals flee the rising tide. Sailors who moved too slowly break out in boils and hives, and you spot a sibling lose their shape when the water strikes them. Storm clouds churn above and the sea continues to rise. You have to escape inland before the poison ocean burns you alive!*

#### Rescue

*...A black-robed man gestures your direction and you feel the world shift. Several nearby siblings revert to their natural forms. One by one they're plucked into the air by an invisible force. You concentrate with all your might to hold on to your shape, but know you have to escape soon or risk the same fate. Your brothers and sisters float in a neat row to the man who, with a satisfied nod, walks towards a wizard's tower at the top of the hill.*

#### Stopping Off

*You taste the cobblestones and realize this isn't the ancient port of Lierli. This is some*

*disgusting backwater human settlement. Find your way onto a boat bound for the ancient necropolis, before one of these would-be adventurers catches you!*

#### Visiting Cousins

*...During the long journey your parent warned you of many dangers. You were taught how to escape, hide, and fight. But most importantly you were told to Find Big Al, your house-sized cousin. He'll mentor you in the ways of the city. Looking at the sprawling mass of houses, you have no idea which one might be your relative.*

#### Hard Mode: I'm on a boat

SKIP the opening paragraph entirely. The boat never makes it to port. Try to survive undetected as long as you can on the open sea, or capture the boat and become the dread pirate mimics.

### Navigating the City

Bring the city to life with a few concrete details and a whole lot of imagination. Bring the city to life with key details. Use the senses to describe what your player's mimics see, hear, smell, feel and taste.

#### Sight

Gray skies  
Huddled buildings  
Busy people  
Notable statues  
Flickering torches  
Bright banners

#### Sound

Hammering  
Cart wheels  
Distant music  
Marching boots  
Squishing mud  
Hawkers selling

#### Smell

Cooking meat  
Chamber pots  
The sea  
Alcohol  
Perfumes  
Sweet fruit

#### Touch

Wet  
Cold  
Sandy  
Uneven  
Smooth  
Scorching

#### Taste

Brine  
Charcoal  
Fresh bread  
Blood  
Offal  
Alchemy

## Docks

Docks may be the center of activity, but they're at the edge of the city. The hustle and bustle of sailors, guardsmen, travelers, and shadier sorts give fledgling mimics plenty of options right off the boat.

Near to the docks you'll find warehouses, private storage, and nautical merchant houses. These buildings will have few people hanging around, but breaking in will attract the local constabulary.

Dry docks and nautical industry are likely the next closest structures. These busy assemblies will be much more densely crowded with both authorities and workmen. Other near-the-dock places may include military barracks and shipyards (close enough to the public docks to get there, but far enough away to be out of immediate danger of surprise attack). Nearby will also be all the vices a sailor may require, and only past that will the inns, slums, and ultimately lower-class berger housing begin.

## Town

Typically a defensive wall or at least a guarded checkpoint keeps the docks apart from the rest of the city. Either one may have back-alley ways to avoid, should the perceptive player seek them out. Then they're within the town proper: narrow streets, busy people, yapping dogs and rattling carts. Medieval towns huddle in tight, so any reasonable set decoration can be found a dash away from the next one.

Merchant halls and guild centers will be as close to that point of entry as possible to entice travelers and offer convenience for captains rushing through. Inns and brothels will be either just inside or outside the urban perimeter, depending on legality. A place of

worship specific to sailors or travelers may also be nearby.

Further into town, residences divide into tightly packed buildings between wide open plazas. Crossing these plazas may be a challenge for the particularly bold (or hungry) mimic. Typically there should be one every few blocks, topped with a statue or accented with a fountain or in front of a particularly welcoming cathedral. A plaza may host pop-up markets and jugglers and stalls, or serve as places for the destitute to beg, depending on your town.

## Town Center

The seats of governance and religion huddle in the proverbial center, if not always the literal one. Use this area to showcase whatever makes your city famous; the wizard's tower, the richest vault, the ducal palaces. Expect it to be heavily patrolled, heavily guarded, and very, very profitable.

For extra difficulty, your local castle may have a secondary wall that surrounds the old town center, or natural fortifications that present unique obstacles.



<sup>2</sup> "Art Deco Bavaria" pixabay.c



## More Places of Note:

### **Craftsmen**

Armories, Blacksmithies,  
Carpentries, Cobblers,  
Clothiers, Glaziers,  
Leatherworkers,  
Stonemasonries,  
Shipyards

### **Professionals**

Alchemists, Guildhalls,  
Hospitals, Schools,  
Training Grounds

### **Tradesmen**

Apothecaries, Breweries,  
Butchers, Dry Goods,  
Lumber Mills, Quarries,  
Tanneries

### **Events**

Arenas, Carnivals,  
Dueling Grounds,  
Menageries, Museums,  
Parks, Race Tracks,  
Theatres

### **Religious**

Cemeteries, Convents,  
Memorials, Monasteries,  
Niches, Patrons, Shrines,  
Temples

### **Transit**

Apiaries, Canals,  
Carriage Houses, Docks,  
Rails, Stables, Taxis

### **Government**

Audience Chambers,  
Barracks, Courthouses,  
Guardhouses, Harbor  
Offices, Jails, Palaces,  
Prisons, Residences,  
Work Houses

### **Scholars**

Academies, Libraries,  
Oracles, Scriptoriums,  
Wizard's Towers,  
Workshops,

### **Supernatural**

Ancient ruins, Cold  
Spots, Gallows,  
Gateways, Graveyards,  
Hauntings, Lairs, Occult  
Symbols, Ritual Stones,

### **Merchants**

Banks, Brokerages,  
General Stores,  
Marketplaces,  
Moneychangers, Pawn  
Shops, Trading Posts

### **Services**

Alehouses, Bakeries,  
Barbers, Bathhouses,  
Hostels, Icehouses, Inns,  
Kitchens, Restaurants,  
Rooming, Taverns

### **Underworld**

Assassin's Guilds,  
Brothels, Drug-dens,  
Hideouts, Pit-fighting  
Rings, Speak-Easies,  
Smuggler's Tunnels,  
Sewers, Thieves' Guilds

## Threats and Opportunities

Every action begins with **threats** and **opportunities**. These give the GM a chance to introduce hooks and complications for the players to use to shape the scene.

A **threat** is anything which may expose your baby mimic to the world at large. Obviously, nearby observers represent threat, but natural occurrences like a sudden rain shower or nearby fire may also increase risk for the tiny adventurer. A threat doesn't have to be directly hostile, only an impediment to the mimic's goal.

When providing information for a player's initial action, you may choose to tell them as much or little about where the threat comes from, but be sure they're clear on the difficulty before making a movement decision. They're going to be rolling their movement against the threat DC of the area!

### Threat DCs

#### DC Examples

- 5 Child, domestic animals
- 7 Average human, stray animals
- 10 Patrols, adventurers, monsters
- 12 Supernatural creatures, other mimics

You may use more than one threat to graduate the consequences of a move. It's possible for the players to avoid that stray cat only to run right into a group of adventurers reveling in their latest victory.

Roll 1d6 against the right column for sample threats by area.

### Dock Threats

- 1 Sailor
- 2 Customs Inspector
- 3 Smuggler
- 4 Wizard's Familiar
- 5 Hungry Stray
- 6 Nosey Wizard

### Town Threats

- 1 Beggar
- 2 Guardsman
- 3 Hungry stray
- 4 Adventurer
- 5 Spooked Carriage
- 6 Priest or other religious authority

### Town Center Threats

- 1 Elite Guardsmen
- 2 Court Wizard
- 3 Guild Alchemist
- 4 Adventurer
- 5 Long dead monarch (ghost)
- 6 doppelganger

### Underworld/Sewer threats

- 1 Sudden change in water
- 2 Extremely large lizard
- 3 Toxic waste
- 4 Secret Cultists
- 5 Goblin Sappers
- 6 Criminals fleeing the city

Anything the mimic may use as a tool or chance to get closer to food or further from danger is an **opportunity**. It may be an open window, an unattended wagon, or a precarious clothesline connecting two rooftops.

The **opportunities** you present help the player determine what kind of movement they'll prioritize. As GM, this is your chance for concrete detail and scene flavor. If you want to ramp up difficulty, combine your opportunity with exposure to a threat ("the watchman is blocking the door!") In doing so, the difficulty of the roll is determined by the **threat**, never the reward.

Roll 1d6 on any of the following tables for a sample of opportunities by area.

#### Dock Opportunities

- 1 Cargo hauling
- 2 A passing cart
- 3 A sewer hatch opening to the sea
- 4 An abandoned dinghy
- 5 Piles of rigging
- 6 An unobservant food vendor

#### Town Opportunities

- 1 An abandoned chamber pot
- 2 A wandering group of musicians
- 3 A low rooftop
- 4 An open window or door
- 5 A poorly constructed door
- 6 An empty storefront

#### Town Center Opportunities

- 1 An overly ornate statue
- 2 A moat
- 3 Unattended sewer access
- 4 Ongoing setup for an upcoming event
- 5 Tourists
- 6 Gallows

#### Underworld/Sewer Opportunities

- 1 Deep running water
- 2 Abandoned boxes and stone
- 3 An old basement entrance
- 4 Help from a local monster
- 5 Ocean access pipe
- 6 Street-level drainage



<sup>3</sup> "Ocre Jelly" by LadyofHats, Wikimedia, public domain

\_\_\_\_\_ *name*  
is a  
\_\_\_\_\_ *trait* , \_\_\_\_\_ *trait* Mimic  
whose favorite form is \_\_\_\_\_  
and who must consume \_\_\_\_\_  
and who has \_\_\_\_\_ *mutation*

**POSITION**  
**Undetected** Do as you please.

**Exposed** Move, Transform, or be noticed!

**Noticed** Move quickly to escape the threat.

**Threatened** You're under attack!

**ACTIONS**

**Eat** gain 2d6 actions and possible mutation

**Move** use Blend In, Larceny, Sneak, or Walk to a better position

**Transform** change your shape to avoid detection

REMAINING  
ACTIONS

12

11

10

9

8

7

6

5

4

3

2

1

\_\_\_\_\_ *name*  
is a  
\_\_\_\_\_ *trait* , \_\_\_\_\_ *trait* Mimic  
whose favorite form is \_\_\_\_\_  
and who must consume \_\_\_\_\_  
and who has \_\_\_\_\_ *mutation*

**POSITION**  
**Undetected** Do as you please.

**Exposed** Move, Transform, or be noticed!

**Noticed** Move quickly to escape the threat.

**Threatened** You're under attack!

**ACTIONS**

**Eat** Gain 2d6 actions and possible mutation

**Move** Use Blend In, Larceny, Sneak, or Walk to a better position

**Transform** Use Blend In, Larceny, Sneak, or Walk to a better position

REMAINING  
ACTIONS

12

11

10

9

8

7

6

5

4

3

2

1

\_\_\_\_\_ *name*  
is a  
\_\_\_\_\_ *trait* , \_\_\_\_\_ *trait* Mimic  
whose favorite form is \_\_\_\_\_  
and who must consume \_\_\_\_\_  
and who has \_\_\_\_\_ *mutation*

**POSITION**  
**Undetected** Do as you please.

**Exposed** Move, Transform, or be noticed!

**Noticed** Move quickly to escape the threat.

**Threatened** You're under attack!

**ACTIONS**

**Eat** Gain 2d6 actions and possible mutation

**Move** Use Blend In, Larceny, Sneak, or Walk to a better position

**Transform** Use Blend In, Larceny, Sneak, or Walk to a better position

REMAINING  
ACTIONS

12

11

10

9

8

7

6

5

4

3

2

1

\_\_\_\_\_ *name*  
is a  
\_\_\_\_\_ *trait* , \_\_\_\_\_ *trait* Mimic  
whose favorite form is \_\_\_\_\_  
and who must consume \_\_\_\_\_  
and who has \_\_\_\_\_ *mutation*

**POSITION**  
**Undetected** Do as you please.

**Exposed** Move, Transform, or be noticed!

**Noticed** Move quickly to escape the threat.

**Threatened** You're under attack!

**ACTIONS**

**Eat** Gain 2d6 actions and possible mutation

**Move** Use Blend In, Larceny, Sneak, or Walk to a better position

**Transform** Use Blend In, Larceny, Sneak, or Walk to a better position

REMAINING  
ACTIONS

12

11

10

9

8

7

6

5

4

3

2

1