

A FIASCO
PLAYSET FEATURING
**BOOKHOUNDS
OF LONDON**

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Pelgrane Press

THE BOOKHOUNDS

CREDITS

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Based on *Bookhounds of London* by Kenneth Hite for *Trail of Cthulhu*

BOILERPLATE

This playset is an accessory for the Fiasco role-playing game by Bully Pulpit Games.

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For more information about Fiasco or to download other playsets and materials, visit www.bullypulpitgames.com.

If you'd like to create your own playset or other Fiasco-related content, we'd like to help. Write us at info@bullypulpitgames.com.

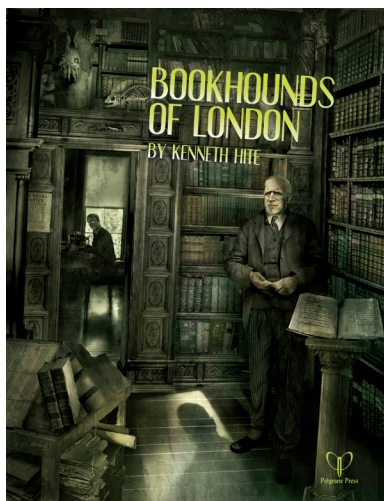


“When you play, play *hard*.” - Theodore Roosevelt

THE SCORE

BLACK BINDINGS

The Depression is hard on everyone, but it's hardest on the bookhounds. Not that there aren't books out there to be had: baronets and bishops alike are selling off whole libraries now that cash is short. Not that there aren't buyers for the specialised volumes: Eton-and-Oxford aristocrats willing to try anything as long as it's vicious; sweaty would-be Great Beasts looking for the shortest path to demonic power ... or at least to devilish orgies. Between those two groups, sellers and buyers, a specialty market has sprung up in black magic and blasphemous tomes, no questions asked.



Maybe someone should ask a few questions. Not questions like "Is this authentic?" or "Isn't that an awful lot of money for a book with all those stains in it?" But questions like "Do we really know who's buying that copy of *Nameless Cults*?" Or "Should we get paid in advance, just in case the ritual actually works?" But questions don't always turn up answers, not kosher ones anyway. Forgeries, thuggeries, and conspiracies abound. London is full of Nazis and Satanists and worse, not always up-front in their dealings. They want those books. You had better get them. Rent is due, and there's a Depression on.

MOVIE NIGHT

The Ninth Gate, Kronos, Lovejoy, From Hell

RELATIONSHIPS...

1 IN THE BOOKSHOP

- Owner & clerk
- ◻ Bookseller & book scout
- ◻ Buyer & seller
- ◻ Collector & catalogue agent
- ◻ Patron & client
- ◻ Rival book scouts

2 OCCULT

- Fellow cultists
- ◻ Satanist & virgin
- ◻ Ghost-breakers
- ◻ Occultist & publisher
- ◻ Charlatans faking it
- ◻ Medium & spirit

3 CRIMINAL

- Forger & appraiser
- ◻ Blackmailer & victim
- ◻ Partners in crime
- ◻ Thief & fence
- ◻ Pimp & whore
- ◻ Former cell-mates

4 FAMILY

- ◻ Siblings
- ◻◦ In-laws
- ◻◦ A common ancestor
- ◻◻ Parent & “orphan”
- ◻◻ Patriarch & heir
- ◻◻◻ “Like a son to me”

5 SOCIETY

- ◻ Fellow clubmen
- ◻◦ Master & servant
- ◻◦ Old Oxonians
- ◻◻ Officer & enlisted
- ◻◻ Servants of the Crown
- ◻◻◻ Party members

6 FRIENDS

- ◻ Friendly rivals
- ◻◦ Friends of a friend
- ◻◦ Clients of the same dealer
- ◻◻ Enemies of an enemy
- ◻◻ Grew up together
- ◻◻◻ Pub mates

...**AMONG BOOKHOUNDS**

NEEDS...

1 TO GET EVEN

- ...with your ex-partner
- ◻◻ ...with Hathaway & Co. Fine Booksellers
- ◻◻◻ ...more leverage over your underlings
- ◻◻◻ ...with Lord Ancherley
- ◻◻◻◻ ...or at least get square with your gambling debts
- ◻◻◻◻ ...with that shite, Aleister Crowley

2 TO GET OUT FROM UNDER

- ...the Sabini mob
- ◻◻ ...your crushing mortgage
- ◻◻◻ ...the senior partner at the bookshop
- ◻◻◻ ...your reputation
- ◻◻◻◻ ...Hastur's curse
- ◻◻◻◻ ...that blackmailing swine

3 TO GET IN

- ...to the *Times* society page
- ◻◻ ...to the Pimander Club
- ◻◻◻ ...with Lord Ancherley's set
- ◻◻◻ ...to the British Museum library after hours
- ◻◻◻ ...with a proper looker for once
- ◻◻◻◻ ...with an unsuspecting mark

4 TO GET RESPECT

- ...from the leading bookman
- ◻ ...as the one who can find anything
- ◻ ...for being too dangerous for the cult to kill
- ◻ ...through wealth
- ◻ ...for keeping your clients' secrets
- ◻ ...through society

5 TO LEARN

- ...the ropes before they choke you
- ◻ ...what happened to Augustus Darcy
- ◻ ...who has the damned book
- ◻ ...why so many people die suddenly in Crouch End
- ◻ ...where the real levers of power are in London
- ◻ ...how to summon demons

6 TO SCORE

- ...the *Necronomicon*
- ◻ ...off your rival
- ◻ ...enough to tide you over until your next fix
- ◻ ...the deal that lets you retire to the country
- ◻ ...a deal that Hathaway can't
- ◻ ...even though no one can know

...OF BOOKHOUNDS

LOCATIONS...

1 BOOK WORLD

- British Museum library
- ◻ Hathaway & Co. Fine Booksellers
- ◻ Sotheby's Auction House
- ◻ Bermondsey open-air book market, before dawn
- ◻ Lord Ancherley's library
- ◻ Back room of the shop

2 EAST END

- Jack the Ripper's Whitechapel
- ◻ Opium den in Limehouse
- ◻ Hawksmoor church, sadly neglected
- ◻ Unlicensed boxing ring in Bethnal Green
- ◻ West India Docks
- ◻ Music hall with a sideline

3 WEST END

- Piccadilly Circus
- ◻ The Kit-Cat Club
- ◻ The Palace
- ◻ St. James' Park
- ◻ Paddington Station
- ◻ Carlton House, the German Embassy

4 SECRET

- The ritual site
- ◻ The ley line
- ◻ The safe house
- ◻ The love nest
- ◻ The hidden stash
- ◻ Where it lies buried

5 DANGEROUS

- Sabini mob's turf
- ◻ Highgate Cemetery on St. John's Eve
- ◻ The premiere of *The King in Yellow*
- ◻ Between Lord Ancherley and the book he craves
- ◻ Crouch End, a seemingly peaceful suburb
- ◻ Bethlem Royal Hospital for the Insane (aka Bedlam)

6 SORDID

- The Hellfire Club
- ◻ Brothel, specialised
- ◻ Pornographer's studio
- ◻ Sound-proof room
- ◻ Drug den in Soho
- ◻ A bookshop for... *discerning* clientele

...FOR BOOKHOUNDS

4 RARE

- ◻ A truly unique specimen
- ◻ Dead man's autograph
- ◻◻ *Necronomicon* (German black-letter, 1472)
- ◻◻◻ Antique desk with hidden compartment
- ◻◻◻ John Dee's shewstone
- ◻◻◻ The Thames Serpent

5 MAGICAL

- ◻ Tarot deck, found or inherited
- ◻ The statuette
- ◻◻ *Book of Shadows* in a recognisable hand
- ◻◻◻ Enough powder for one more working
- ◻◻◻ Star vampire
- ◻◻◻◻ *Necronomicon* (English trans. John Dee, 1590)

6 SORDID

- ◻ Annotated manual of dissection, out of place
- ◻◻ *Revelations of Glaaki* (with engravings)
- ◻◻◻ Hollowed-out Bible
- ◻◻◻ Photographs from behind the mirror
- ◻◻◻◻ Finally, enough heroin
- ◻◻◻◻◻ What the orderlies did to you there

...OF BOOKHOUNDS

A BOOKHOUND'S INSTA-SETUP

RELATIONSHIPS AMONG BOOKHOUNDS

For three players...

- * Collector & catalogue agent
- * Fellow cultists
- * Forger & appraiser

For four players, add...

- * Patriarch & heir

For five players, add...

- * Bookseller & book scout

NEEDS OF BOOKHOUNDS

For three players...

- * To learn who has the damned book

For four or five players, add...

- * To score, even though no one can know

LOCATIONS FOR BOOKHOUNDS

For three or four players...

- * The ley line

For five players, add...

- * Bermondsey open-air book market, before dawn

OBJECTS OF BOOKHOUNDS

For three, four or five players...

- * The *Necronomicon* (any)

NOTES

Like many Fiasco playsets, this one presents plenty of evocative, under-explained Details for you to run with. Much of the delight of repeated Fiasco play is seeing how different groups at different times riff on “Lord Anchery” or “Hathaway & Co.” or their equivalents in other playsets. That said, this playset plays just a wee bit better if more of the players are in on the bit. So here are a few hints:

Bermondsey Book Market: One of the largest open-air book markets in London. Books get sold from stalls, carts, and off the backs of trucks or out of car boots, with very little concern for their origins.

Book of Shadows: The book a practising witch or warlock writes his or her spells in.

Book Scout: A low-rent bottom-feeder who haunts Bermondsey and other book markets, rubbish tips, back alleys, and anywhere else they might find a book worth a little more to someone else.

Catalogue Agent: A private eye of books, a middleman for deniable book deals.

Hawksmoor Church: The architect Nicholas Hawksmoor designed six London churches between 1711 and 1733, according to pagan (and, some say, sorcerous) architectural principles.

The King in Yellow: A play, originally in French, that drives its readers -- or viewers -- into madness and/or the arms of Hastur. Banned in every civilised nation.

Revelations of Glaaki: Sacred text of the debauched and lubricious worshippers of Y’gonolac.

The R’lyeh Text: One of the sacred texts of the Cthulhu cult.

Shewstone: Crystal ball for scrying. John Dee’s was made of obsidian taken from an Aztec temple. No, really. It really was.

On *Bookhounds of London*

Bookhounds of London is a critically acclaimed campaign setting for *Trail of Cthulhu* where the Investigators seek out books about horror and strangeness and become, seemingly inevitably, drawn into the horror themselves. It provides in-depth material on London in the 1930s, carefully slanted towards Mythos investigators.

Bookhounds of London includes:

- New abilities, occupations, and drives, plus a host of new and horrible Mythos creatures to pit against the Bookhounds
- “Whitechapel Black-Letter,” a brand-new adventure which takes Bookhounds through the bleak East End of London on the trail of a powerful 15th century grimoire.
- With *Bookhounds*, Kenneth Hite creates a rich sandbox full of dusty tomes, crooked dealers and dark alleys, a perfect setting for any Mythos investigation.

A Detailed Guide to London in the 1930s

Bookhounds of London also features a complete, indexed street map of London, recreated and adapted from original sources, packed with over 200 locations essential to Investigators. Whatever system you play, this is an essential resource for Mythos roleplayers. The PDF version is fully cross-referenced.

Available from finer game stores, IPR, and www.pelgranepress.com