

LAMENTATIONS
of the
FLAME PRINCESS
ADVENTURES

Reidin Breen

FORGIVE





1625 was a plague year in Norwich. History tells us that it was an outbreak of the Black Death. History is wrong.

An adventure for a party of the 4th level, for use with
LAMENTATIONS OF THE FLAME PRINCESS
WEIRD FANTASY ROLEPLAYING
and other old school adventure roleplaying games.



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LAMENTATIONS
—of the—
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Forgive Us

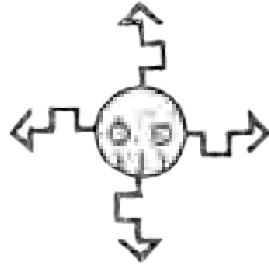
BEING A CHRONICLE OF THE EVENTS SURROUNDING THE MYSTERIOUS
DISAPPEARANCE OF THE NOTORIOUS CRIMINAL GANG KNOWN AS THE
TENEBOUS HAND. AND OTHER STORIES



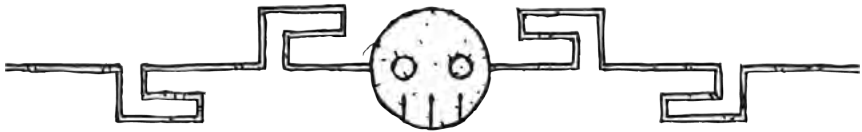
WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY
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Introduction

This book contains three adventures for the *Lamentations of the Flame Princess* role-playing game. All are set in England in 1625, but there is no other connection beyond that; on the other hand, there's nothing stopping a creative Referee devising such connections. The setting too can be changed with relative ease if your home campaign doesn't happen to be set in 17th Century England.

Forgive Us is the main and largest adventure, and is the closest to a classic dungeon crawl. The dungeon in this case is the lair of a gang of thieves, abandoned after an unlucky encounter with mutant shape-changing monsters. Said mutant shape-changing monsters are still there when your players arrive. Although the format was inspired by the Marienburg articles in *White Dwarf*—back when it was good, etcetera—in terms of plot it's more or less John Carpenter's *The Thing* mixed in with John Carpenter's *Escape From New York*; I hope one of your players is Kurt Russell.

In Heaven, Everything is Fine is a shorter adventure set in a village under the control of an alien with the ability to alter reality, except the player-characters will be there looking for a ghost. It started out as a sort of reverse homage to *Silent Hill* but during writing it took on a touch of *The Colour Out of Space*. It's not a combat-heavy adventure; if anything it's more of a puzzle with a moral choice at the end.

Death and Taxes is perhaps the shortest adventure, enough for an evening's worth of play. In it, the player-characters will attend the funeral of an old friend, look for a missing girl, and run into the minions of a serpent-worshipping cult. There's not a lot to this adventure but it's good for kicking off a campaign; I've used it as such numerous times.

I hope you find this book useful, even if it's just to borrow the "Dog and Bastard" for your own adventures or to throw Godfrey Cushing and his faux taxmen at your players as a random encounter. Let me know how you get on; stories of the mutant things in *Forgive Us* getting out and changing the population of your game world into things like them will be most welcome.

Kelvin Green
Brighton
Almost Halloween, 2013.

Forgive Us



In 1625, due to fertile farmland, a large and prosperous market, and a thriving textiles industry, the city of Norwich is an economic powerhouse second only to London. As such, the city has a powerful merchant class, and its relative distance and remoteness from other cities lends it a certain independence.

Rich merchants attract opportunistic criminals, and being wealthy and isolated can lead to boredom and decadence, so it's no surprise that Norwich is home to all sorts of societies and fraternities, some more secretive than others.

Forgive Us is about what happens when one of the city's more cocksure criminal gangs preys on one of the city's more unpleasant cabals, and what happens when player-characters stumble upon the consequences.

The *Tenebrous Hand* is not the only criminal gang in the city, but it is the most powerful. The Hand is wealthy, with its fingers – oh dear – in a lot of pies, and the authorities are reluctant to act against the group, due to a campaign of threats, bribery and blackmail. Life is good for a member of the Tenebrous Hand, but confidence can breed arrogance, and that's what led to the raid on the *Brotherhood of Pus*.

Made up of rich merchants, the Brotherhood sees disease as a divine blessing, although many members lack such devout conviction and are in it because being part of a secret group has its own thrills. As such, only a few of the inner circle were aware that a particular casket in the Brotherhood's possession was anything more than an expensive piece of exotic art.

The Hand became aware of the casket's special nature as soon as one of its members cracked it open for a peek inside, but at that point it was too late for them.



How to Use the Adventure

Forgive Us is based on the idea of a magical disease causing all sorts of trouble, so it will be more of a challenge if the player-characters don't have ready access to *Cure Disease*; as such, the adventure is designed for player-characters around fourth level. That said, mechanics have been kept to a minimum so there's little that can't be adjusted to be more or less dangerous for your players.

There are a number of ways to get the characters involved. During testing, the player-characters were employed by one of Norwich's aldermen to retrieve some documents that he'd rather the Tenebrous Hand not have in their possession, but they could be hired by anyone; perhaps a member of the Brotherhood of Pus has paid them to recover the casket (p. [21](#)).

On the other hand, the player-characters may have a friend in the gang and are concerned for his well-being, or perhaps one of the gang members is a contact from whom they want some information. Perhaps they are in pursuit of an item and have heard that it is in the Tenebrous Hand's vault, or perhaps the player-characters are thieves themselves, following rumours of unattended riches. An unattended vault full of treasure is something that should fit into most campaigns.

What Happened?

About two weeks or so before the player-characters get involved, the Tenebrous Hand identified the home of the merchant William Burnaby as a target for an audacious theft. The thieves knew from their contacts that Burnaby had a secret room in his house and intended to break in to see what the merchant wanted hidden. Break in they did, and discovered a profane temple (p. [32](#)), but not so profane that they didn't grab a souvenir, an odd stone casket (p. [21](#)).

After the gang's return to their headquarters, one of the thieves opened the casket and the contents changed him into some sort of monster (p. [28](#)) with the ability to create more of its kind. Many others were transformed before the gang was able to trap its changed members in their own treasure vault (p. [24](#)); the survivors killed themselves to prevent any further spread of the mysterious contagion.

It is into this happy situation that your players are about to blunder. Have fun!

About Norwich

You could set *Forgive Us* in the City-State of the Psi Lords of Ercolox Seven if you were so inclined, but if you want to use the intended setting of 1625 Norwich, then you may find the following details useful.

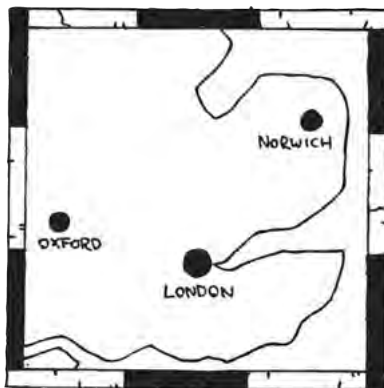
Norwich has a population of about 15,000 and is England's second most prosperous city after London; its wealth is in large part a result of the revival of its once moribund textiles industry by the Strangers, a group of Belgian and Dutch Protestants – and skilled weavers

– fleeing persecution on the European mainland. As one of the more tolerant places in Europe at the time, Norwich welcomed the immigrants and made them part of the community, so much so that their first home, the ominous Strangers' Hall, is now the residence of the city's mayor.

As well as the mayor, the city's government is made up of twenty-four aldermen, sixty councillors, and two sheriffs, all of whom operate from the Guildhall. There is no police force as such; the sheriffs oversee just over a hundred unpaid constables and all able-bodied men are expected to respond to a crime if called.

Norwich Castle was built soon after 1066 as the personal residence of an insignificant noble named William the Conqueror, but has been in use as a gaol since 1220. The city's cathedral and Great Hospital maintain their original intended uses, and the Dragon Hall, despite the excellent name, is a merchant's trading hall.

Persistent rumours tell of a warren of tunnels running through the chalky earth beneath the city; as of 2013 these are considered unfounded, but for the purposes of a role-playing game, rumours are more than good enough.



Legend

A: Duke's Palace

B: Norwich Cathedral

C: The Great Hospital

D: The Dog and Bastard

E: Guildhall

F: Norwich Castle

G: Dragon Hall

The Complex

The Tenebrous Hand has taken over and converted to its use an entire block of buildings in the north-west of the city. The businesses in the block are run by employees of the gang, but are otherwise legitimate enterprises, aside from a little bit of smuggling through the warehouse (p. [12](#)). The shop workers are all aware of who owns their businesses, but are not involved – again aside from the smuggling – and are paid well for their loyalty.

Some of the employees were caught up in the events that destroyed the gang, but others arrived at work to see a blue flag flying from the roof of the warehouse, a sign that it is not safe to enter any of the Hand's buildings. These workers remain at their homes in the city waiting for a signal that whatever the danger, it has passed.

Locals will note how the homes and businesses in the block have been closed and – apparently – empty for the past few days; some may even be aware of the true owners of the buildings, but not much more than that.

Civilian employees have keys to the relevant individual buildings, but the thieves each have a master key that unlocks almost all doors in the complex; the few exceptions are noted at the relevant location, and Tinkering rolls will work on all doors. All windows around the outside of the complex are blocked by strong iron bars, a feature that is not present on nearby buildings, and that marks the complex as unusual; Specialists will realise this on sight, but other characters must make an Architecture roll to notice the unusual feature.

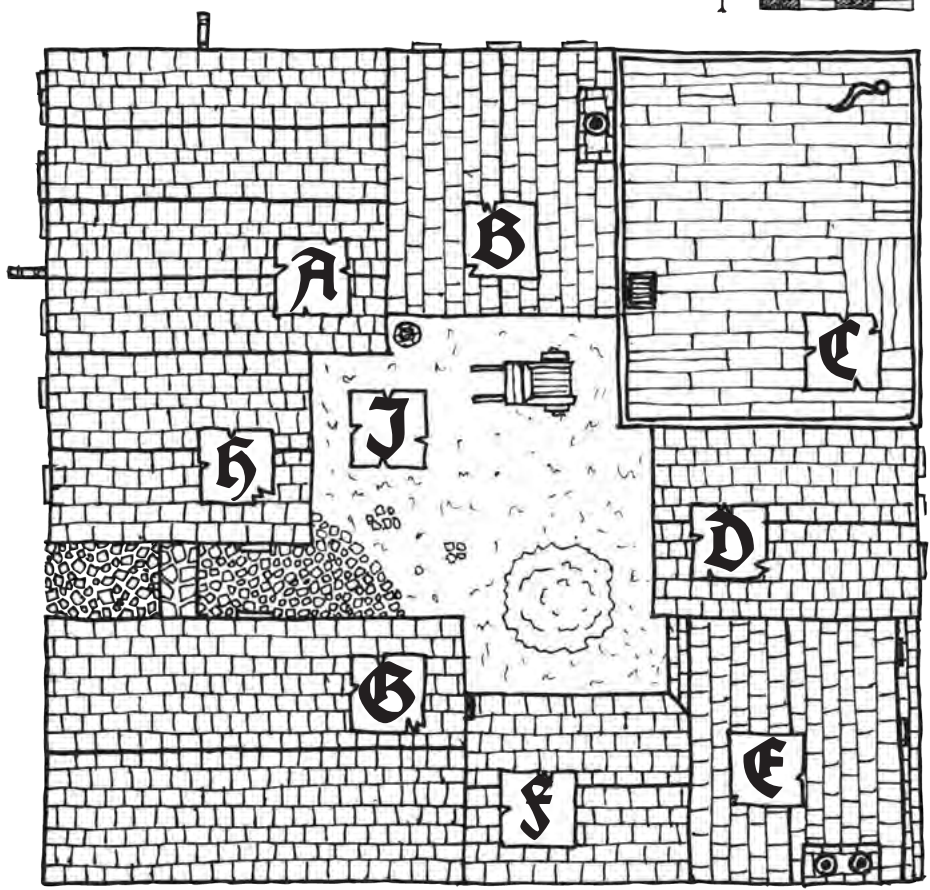
All is quiet during the day, although there will be activity in the surrounding businesses and homes. At night, the area is more quiet, and the lack of lights within the complex is a clear indication that the Hand's members are not home.

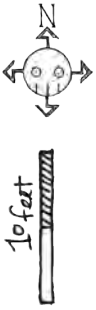
Legend

A: The Dog and Bastard..... 9	G: The Carpenter 18
B: The House on Cow Hill 10	H: The House on Willow Lane.. 20
C: The Warehouse..... 12	I: The Courtyard..... 22
D: The Scribe 14	The Secret Cellar 23
E: The Potter 15	The Vaults 24
F: The Butcher 16	

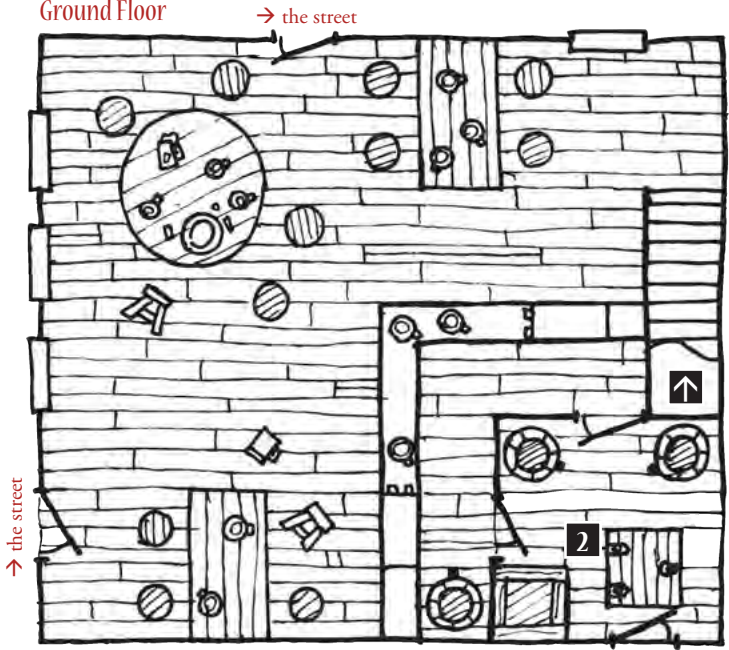


20 Feet

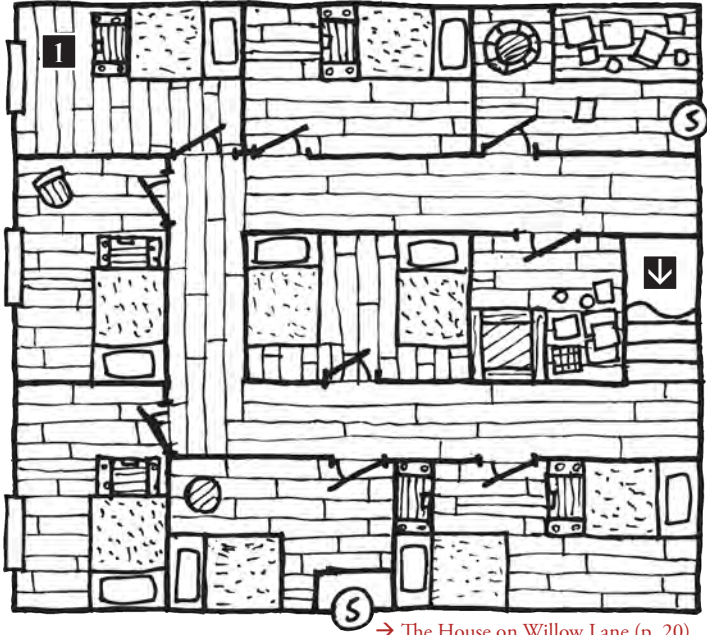




Ground Floor



First Floor



Æ: The Dog & Bastard

The front and back doors are locked, and while a master key will unlock both, they are also barred from the inside.

Unlike the other parts of the complex, the inn has seen recent use. William Hyde, the last surviving and uncorrupted member of the gang, lurks here, living off spoiled food and stale drink.

Hyde has lost his mind as a result of the disaster that has befallen the gang and is not going to make much sense if questioned; he does remember that the cellar is a bad place and that he should stop anyone going in or out.

William Hyde

Armour 14, Move 120', 2 Hit Dice (8hp), Handaxe 1d6, Morale 12, Sneak Attack 2, Stealth 2.

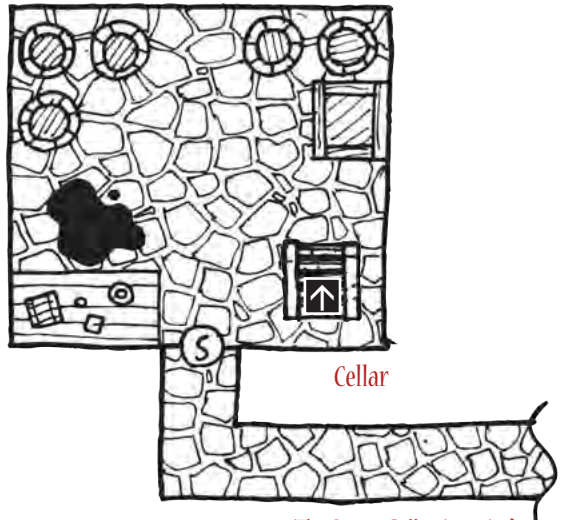
Buff coat, handaxe, master key.

Upstairs, the doors to the individual rooms are locked; a master key will unlock them all, and two keys for each door can be found behind the bar. Both secret doors are locked but can be opened with a master key; the door to the south is hidden behind the false back of a wardrobe.

Not all of the rooms were in use at the time of the incident, so some are pristine, others not so much. Three rooms were occupied when everything went wrong, and the occupants are now staying in the Vaults (p. 24).

1 | In a locked chest – the key is not present – in the north-west room is a copper sculpture of a feral-looking rat, worth 200sp.

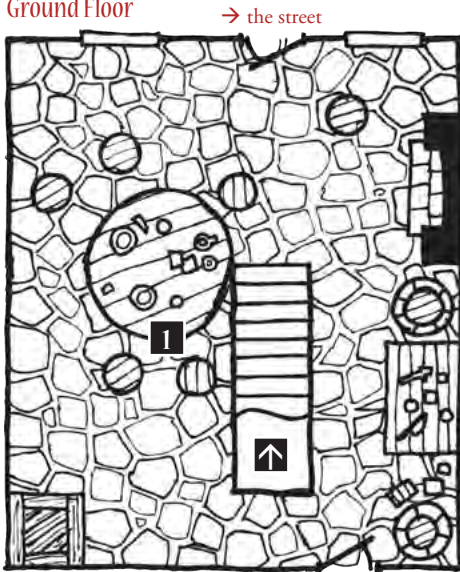
2 | A narrow wooden staircase – so steep that it is almost a ladder – leads to the cellar, from which wafts a nasty smell, caused by a pool of thick, acrid black goo. Aside from the unnatural gunge, the cellar contains barrels and crates of food and drink, most of which has spoiled. The secret door on the south wall is locked, but can be opened with a master key.



The Secret Cellar (p. 23) →

B: The House On Cow Hill

Ground Floor



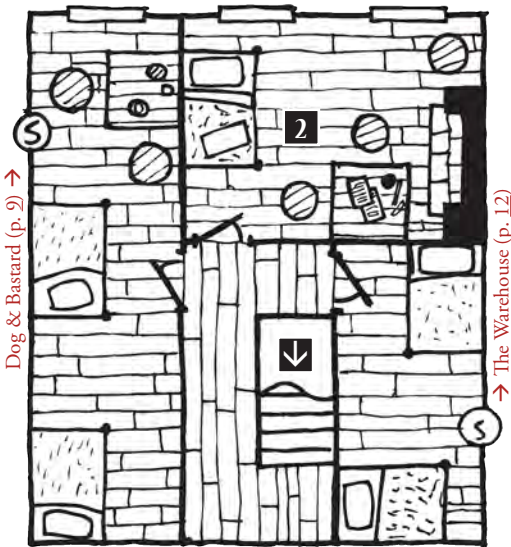
Both the front and back doors to the house are locked, and a master key will unlock both.

It looks like a meal was being prepared before being abandoned. The remains are rotten and the stink fills the room; sensitive sorts will detect the hints of a worse smell seeping down from the first floor.

1 | On the table is a small leather bound book; the first page identifies it as *Fifty Shades of Ulfire*, a popular but quite poor work of erotic fiction, worth perhaps 2sp to some desperate simpleton. Each time the book is read there is a 1% chance that the reader is transported to Carcosa.

Upstairs, a strong smell of decay wafts from the front of the building.

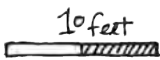
First Floor



2 | The door to the front room is locked and can be opened only with a key held by the gang leader, Kurt MacReady. Alas, MacReady is inside the room but will not be answering the door because he has bashed out his own brains against the stone fireplace.

Pinned to the wall above the desk is a map of the city with various locations marked. On the desk is a rough map of the meeting place of the Brotherhood of Pus (p. 32) and on top of that a letter; see opposite.

On the bed is a ring of keys. It holds the key to this room, keys to the treasurer's office and the safe within (p. 14), a master key, and a key to the Vaults (p. 24).



My Dear Christina

I hope that one day you will read this and know that in my final hours my only thoughts are of you and the boys. After what has happened here I cannot allow anyone to leave, even to deliver a letter, and that may be the one thing that saves the rest of the world from the Hell we now face.

Please know that we had no inkling of what it was we did and that my men have sacrificed themselves to contain the Evil. I can do no less myself.

Pray for me if you must, but from what I have seen here, I cannot believe that this world is the creation of any loving God.

Goodbye, my love,

Kurt

€: The Warehouse

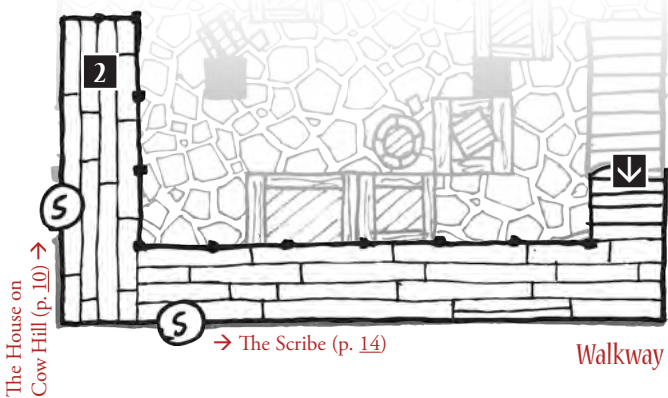
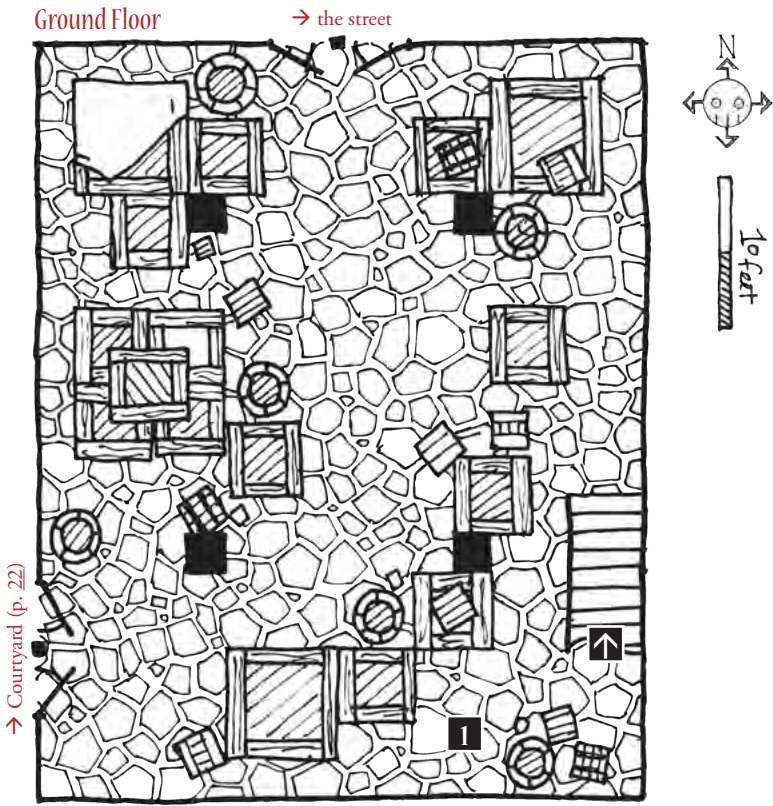
The double doors at the front of the warehouse are secured with a heavy chain and a padlock; the warehouse foreman has a key, and a master key will also work. The back doors do not lock, but are secured with a thick wooden bar.

Like all of the Hand's holdings – ho ho – the warehouse is a legitimate business, although it is sometimes used to smuggle a small amount of contraband. Right now it contains legal goods worth about 5000sp; I would not recommend letting your players earn experience for these goods, even if they beg. Especially if they beg. Also, if they half-inch this stuff, the owners and perhaps the law will soon be after them; maybe give them experience if they survive that.

1 | A wooden walkway runs around part of the building at a height of about ten feet. Hanging from a noose tied to this walkway is Roger Cooke, a member of the gang. He has not changed into a mutant thing, but fearing that he might do so he took his own life. Attached to Cooke's belt is a master key and a scabbard containing a dagger.

2 | At the far end of the walkway is a ladder allowing access to the roof and the gang's signal flagpole.





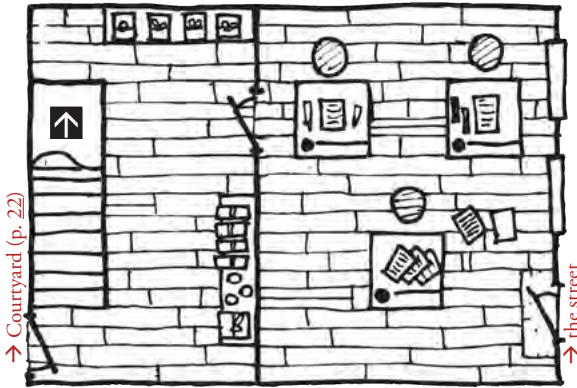
D: The Scribe

The front and back doors are locked and can be opened with a master key or the keys held by the two junior scribes, if they can be found.

The shop contains plenty of ink, paper, quills and other such equipment, should your players be odd, bookish looters.

The two secret doors on the first floor can be unlocked with a master key, while the door to the office can only be unlocked by a key held by the gang leader Kurtis MacReady (The House on Cow Hill, p. 10) or the treasurer, Thomas Clay. Clay is now a mutant thing in the Vaults (p. 24), so good luck getting his key.

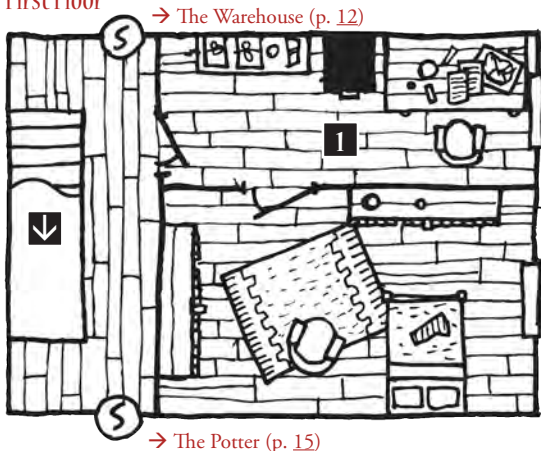
Ground Floor



1 | The safe in the office is locked. Only the gang leader and the treasurer – mutant, good luck, etcetera – have keys. It may come as no surprise that the safe is also trapped, and unless opened in a particular way, a needle will prick the hand of the reckless thief; they must save versus Poison or fall unconscious for 2d4 hours.

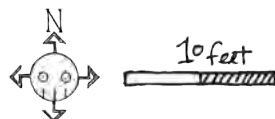
Inside the safe is a bag containing 118sp, a bundle of sketched and annotated floor plans of local buildings, business accounts both legitimate and not so much, and a key to the Tenebrous Hand's hidden Vaults (p. 24).

First Floor



→ The Warehouse (p. 12)

→ The Potter (p. 15)



§: The Butcher

Both the front and back doors are locked; the butcher himself has a key, and the gang's master keys will also work. Once inside, the player-characters may wish they had left the door locked, as all the cheese and meat within is starting to rot away. The buzzing of flies and stench of rotting food fills the air, and saves versus Poison may be appropriate if the player-characters don't want to lose their lunch.

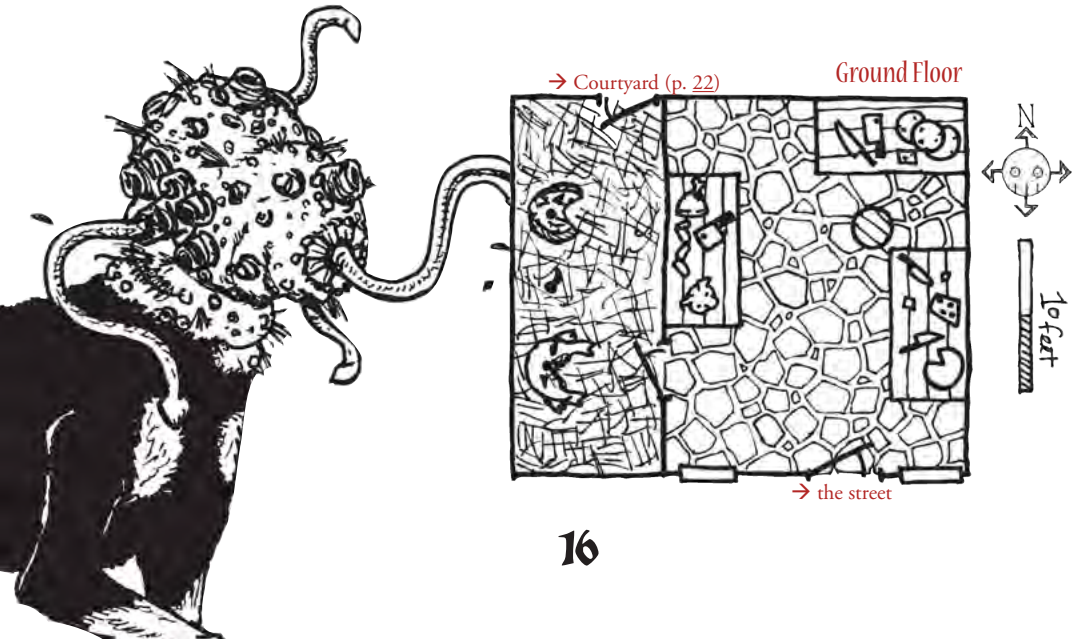
Oh, and there's a mutant dog thing here.

Mutant Dog Thing

Armour 14, Move 180', 2 Hit Dice, Blood-Red Tentacle 1d4 plus infection, Morale 12.

If the dog thing hits with its tentacle attack, the victim must save versus Poison or become infected. Thereafter, the victim must save versus Poison once per hour until either they fail a number of times equal to their Hit Dice or *Cure Disease* is cast on them. With each failure the victim becomes more and more mutated, until on the final failed roll they turn into a mutant thing (p. 28).

The mutant things are creatures of instinct and act only to spread their corruption to others. They are not too intelligent and when trapped or restrained tend to go into a sort of hibernation after a few hours of captivity.



21
07
13



6: The Carpenter

The front doors are chained and padlocked; a master key or the carpenter's key will unlock it. The back doors are barred from the inside but not locked.

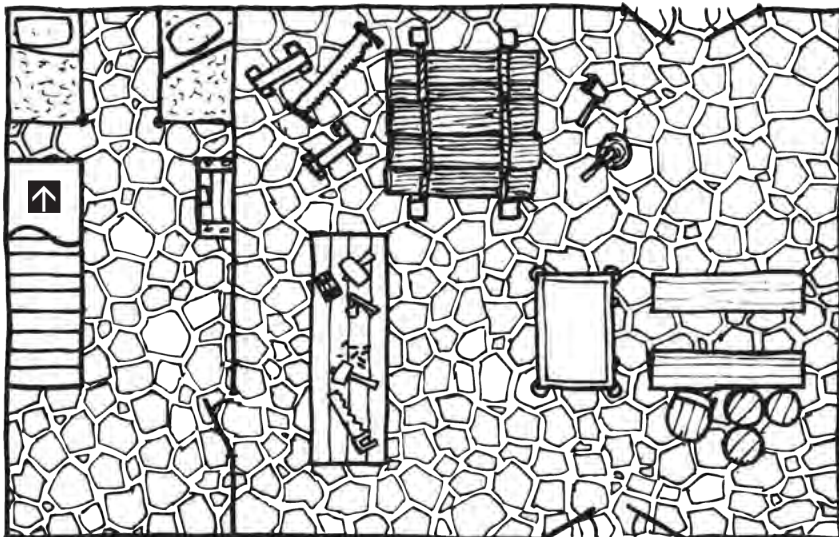
The workshop contains a number of furniture pieces in various states of completion; the finished items are worth 1000sp, but as with the stock in the warehouse (p. 12), I wouldn't suggest awarding experience for acquiring a table and some chairs. Also in the workshop are woodworking tools that could be used as weapons in a pinch.

The side door is locked and can be opened with a master key.

- 1 | A whiff of decay greets those who venture upstairs. A member of the gang, Richard Ashton, slit his throat rather than let himself become one of the things, and his rotting, half-mutated corpse sits propped up against one wall, beneath a message written in his own blood (see front cover).
- 2 | The chests here are used for training purposes and are locked but empty. Some games and Referees might award experience points for unlocking them, but you're made of sterner stuff.
- 3 | The weapons rack contains a selection of swords, clubs, daggers and so on, all blunted or otherwise modified for sparring.
- 4 | On the table are the remnants of a card game in progress – the fourth player seems to have been winning – and 38sp.
- 5 | Near to the window in the north wall is a ladder long enough to reach across the alley to the house on Willow Lane (p. 20).
- 6 | The window in the east wall opens on to the roof of the butcher (p. 16); hidden footholds leading to the first floor of the potter (p. 15) can be spotted with a successful Search roll.

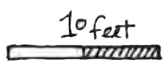
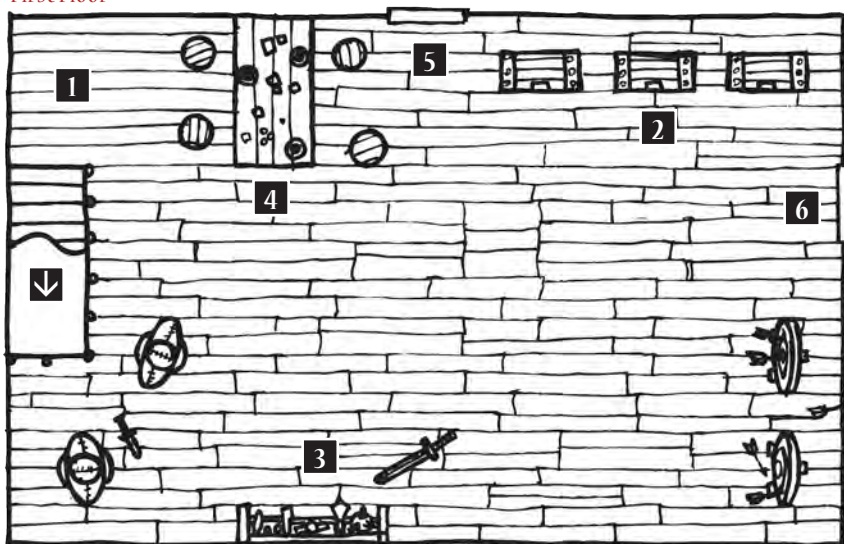
Ground Floor

→ Courtyard (p. 22)



→ the street

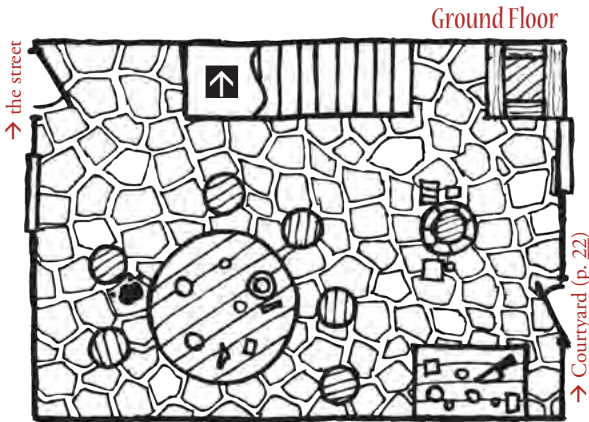
First Floor



5: The House on Willow Lane

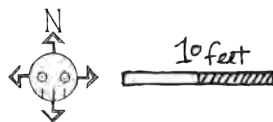
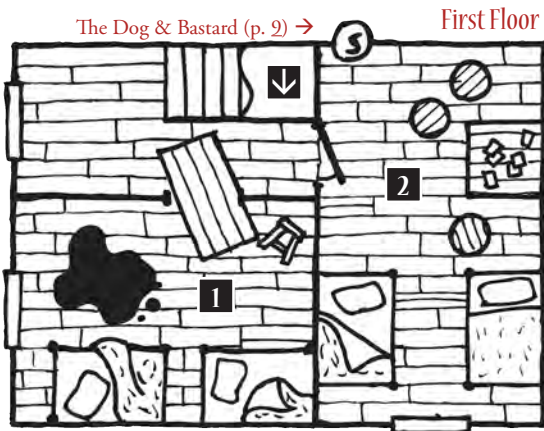
A master key will unlock both the front and back doors. A faint and bitter smell, like burned hair, drifts from upstairs and from a dark stain in the ceiling drips a thick, black treacle-like substance. It does not taste like treacle; in fact anyone giving it a taste should make a save versus Poison or suffer 1d6 damage.

The smell is stronger upstairs; sensitive souls, elves, and those with low Constitution scores may find their eyes watering. Signs of a struggle are apparent and the door to the front room has been smashed off its hinges.



1 | The front room is a mess. The bunks have been smashed and the bed clothes strewn across the room. A large puddle of noxious black stuff dominates the room; in it can be glimpsed half-dissolved human bones. Under one of the beds is the Casket; see opposite.

2 | The back room is also disturbed, although not to the same extent. The secret door is locked and can be opened with a master key. Propped up in one corner is a strong ladder long enough to cross the alleyway to the carpenter (p. 18).

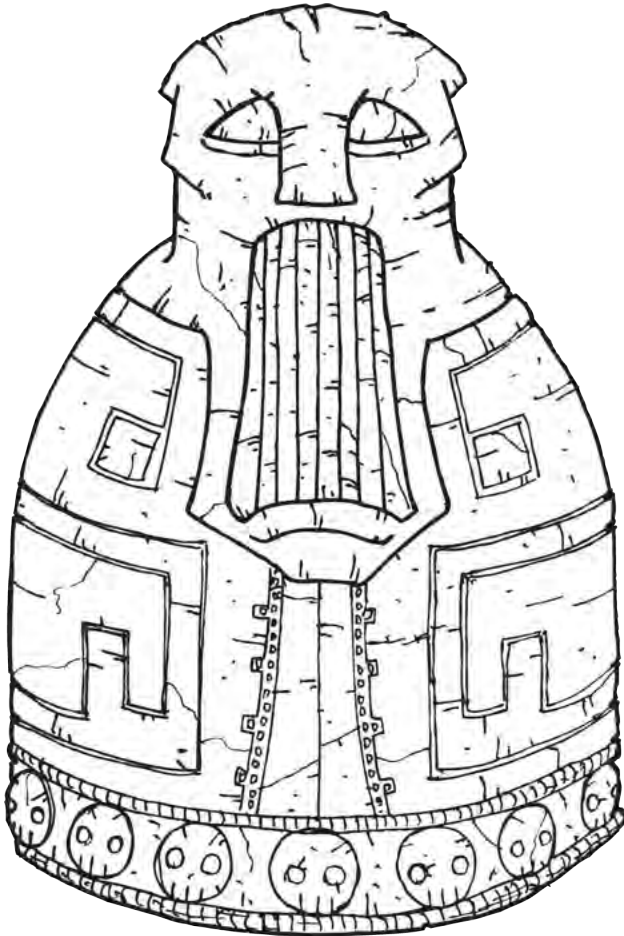


The Casket

This carved stone object is about the size of a pineapple and feels hollow. It can be opened with a successful Tinkering roll or suitable magic, but is quite empty, its contents having already done their horrific work.

A Cleric will recognise the casket as a sacred item associated with one of the less pleasant deities; if the Cleric can roll their level or less on a d20, they identify the item as being dedicated to **Bubonica**, a minor goddess of plague and disease.

The casket counts as a holy symbol for Clerics of Bubonica and is worth 20sp to a depraved enough collector.

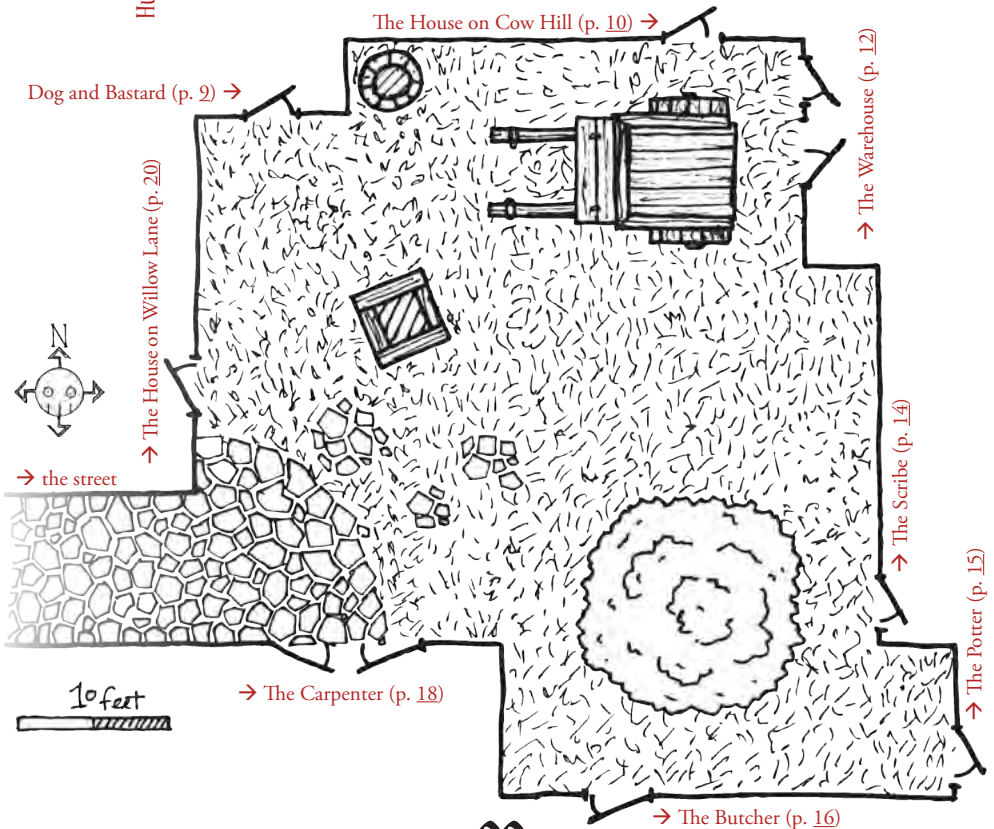


J: The Courtyard

The courtyard is entered through an alley on Willow Lane. Thick, wooden double doors block entry and are secured with a chain and padlock; the warehouse foreman and the carpenter hold keys, and a Tenebrous Hand master key also works.

In the yard are five large guard dogs. They are well trained, but have not been fed since the unfortunate events surrounding the Tenebrous Hand's final adventure, so may respond well to food-related bribery, or may just attempt to eat the slowest member of the party. At one time, there were seven dogs; the gnawed remains of one can be found near the tree, while another has had a genetic makeover and is trapped in the butcher's shop (p. 16).

Hungry Dogs | **Armour 14, Move 180', 2 Hit Dice, Bite 1d4, Morale 9.**



The Secret Cellar

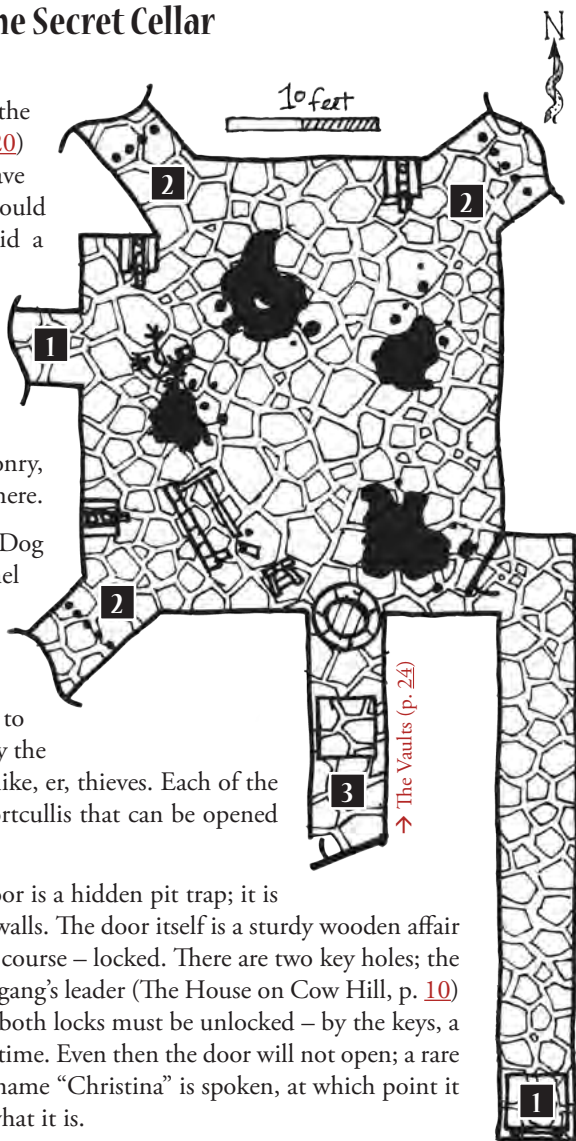
If the player-characters thought that the smell in the house on Willow Lane (p. 20) was bad, then the stench here will have them weeping like babies; they should all make saves versus Poison to avoid a hilarious vomit montage.

The cellar is where the Tenebrous Hand made its final stand and big push to trap its mutated members in the Vaults (p. 24). The chamber is a mess and signs of frantic and bitter combat – blood stains, broken weaponry, the odd severed body part – are everywhere.

1 | The western tunnel leads to the Dog & Bastard (p. 9), while the tunnel in the south-east ends at a ladder leading up to the pottery (p. 15).

2 | The tunnels to the north-west, north-east, and south-west lead to other parts of the city and were used by the thieves to sneak around town unseen like, er, thieves. Each of the latter three tunnels is blocked by a portcullis that can be opened using the nearby winches.

3 | Just in front of the southern door is a hidden pit trap; it is ten feet deep and has polished walls. The door itself is a sturdy wooden affair with even sturdier iron bars. It is – of course – locked. There are two key holes; the keys can be found in the rooms of the gang’s leader (The House on Cow Hill, p. 10) and treasurer (The Scribe, p. 14), and both locks must be unlocked – by the keys, a Tinkering roll, or a spell – at the same time. Even then the door will not open; a rare enchantment holds it shut unless the name “Christina” is spoken, at which point it pops open like magic, because that’s what it is.



The Vaults

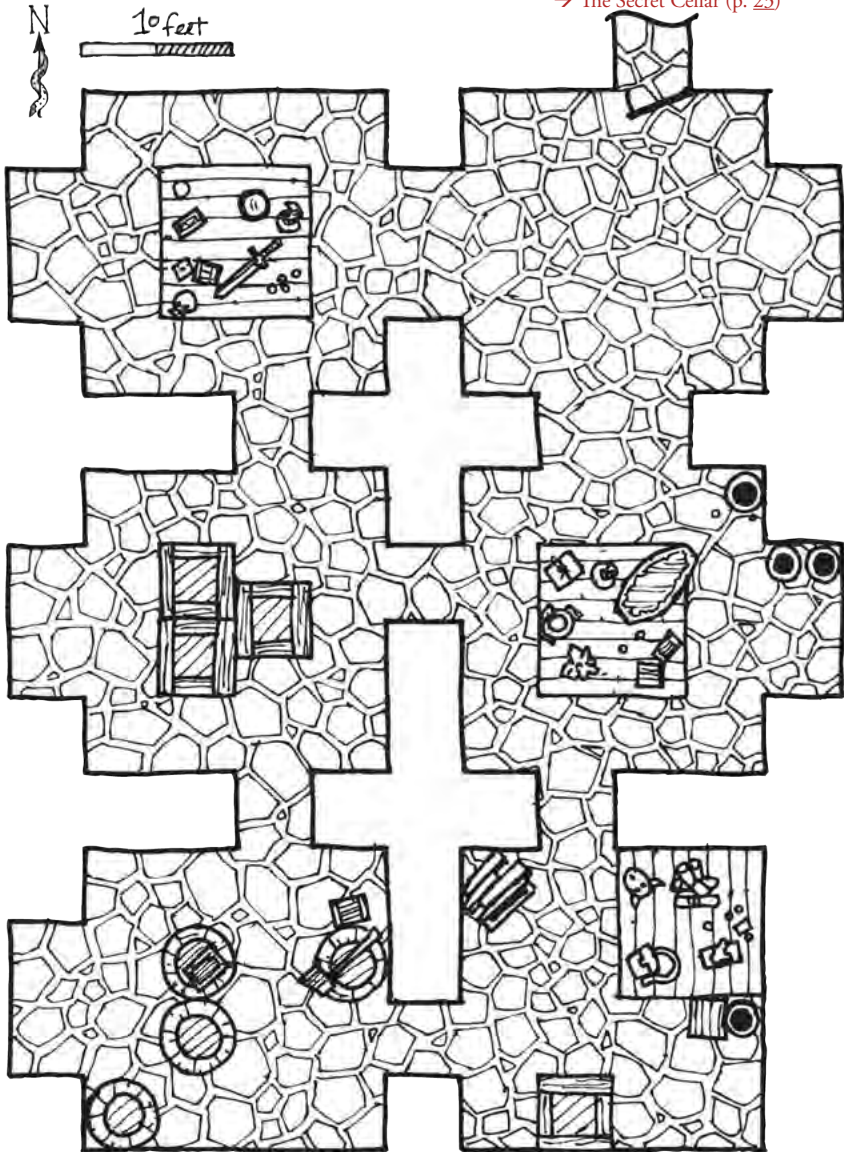
The vaults are full of the objects that make up the Tenebrous Hand's hoard. As the most secure location in their base, it is also where they imprisoned those members who had been changed into horrible gribbly mutant things. With no way to escape, the things went into a sort of hibernation, but wake up soon after the vault door is opened.

Remember the bit in *Aliens* in which the Marines enter the tunnels under the atmospheric processor and get deep into the hive, before the aliens come out of the walls and start eating them? That's how you want to play this area; the player-characters should be well inside the room before things jump out of the darkness and eat their faces.

The inventory of the valuables in the vaults in the form of a random table, and details on the things, the monsters, are on the following pages. The player-characters will have a short amount of time in which to grab treasure before the things awaken: allow each adventurer a random roll off the inventory before the things get to them, to see what they find. Any player wanting to make a second roll can do so, but will be subject to a single free attack from a horrible mutant thing. If a player wants to stay and grab any more without being overrun, they will have to defeat the nasty gribbly things first.

If the player-characters are looking for a specific item – perhaps something related to a plot hook – then treat it as if they had made two rolls on the table; they will discover one random item as they search, then they will find what they are looking for, but will also be attacked once.

It is also worth noting that some of the items may encumber the player-characters, making escape more difficult. Such is the price of greed.



Grab the Loot and Run!

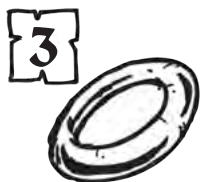
Oversized items are marked with **Ⓞ**, while non-encumbering items are marked with **Ⓩ**.



A green porcelain mask depicting the face of a terrifying and malevolent devil, worth 100sp.



Ⓩ An ancient medallion from a distant land, carved with strange piscine images and worth 1200sp.



Ⓩ A ring of clear glass. It is magical; when worn, the wearer comes under the effect of the *Invisibility* spell, with an unlimited duration. Alas, the wearer also comes under the effect of *Sleep*, with no limits on duration or Hit Dice affected.



A bundle of documents detailing the various secret shames of prominent members of the city council. The bundle is either worthless or priceless, depending on the alignments of the player-characters.



A small leather satchel containing four doses of purple lotus powder. See *Death Frost Doom* for effects, or apply the effects of a random Magic-User spell of second, third, or fourth level.



A carved wooden box containing ten small ampoules of exotic perfume, each worth 10sp.



A polished skull with a hinged top. Rattling around inside is a black pearl worth 500sp.



Ⓞ A large mirror, its silver frame carved with scenes of woodland animals, worth 100sp.

9



A blue velvet bag of 103sp.



Amethyst worth 100sp.

11



⌘ A silver crown worth 400sp.



A fine jade statue of some sort of dragon, worth 100sp.



⌘ Two fine gold necklaces worth 600sp each.



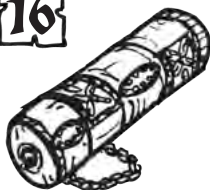
⓪ A mahogany coffer containing 511cp.

15



A jade statue of an eagle, perched upon a silver branch; the statue is magical and is worth 400sp.

16

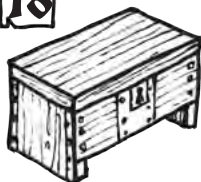


A wooden tube containing a scroll of *Cure Disease*. The tube is worth 10sp.



⌘ A map showing the location of some great treasure.

18



⓪ An oak coffer containing 500cp.



⌘ Two ornate silver clasps worth 100sp each.

20



⌘ A bronze key with "#99" carved into the bow.

The Things in the Vaults

Twenty of the members of the Tenebrous Hand and four unlucky others have mutated into these horrible, gribbly things. Those that were once members of the Hand will still have their belongings – including master keys – on them; one was the treasurer Clay and will be carrying his safe key (The Potter, p. 15) in a coat pocket.

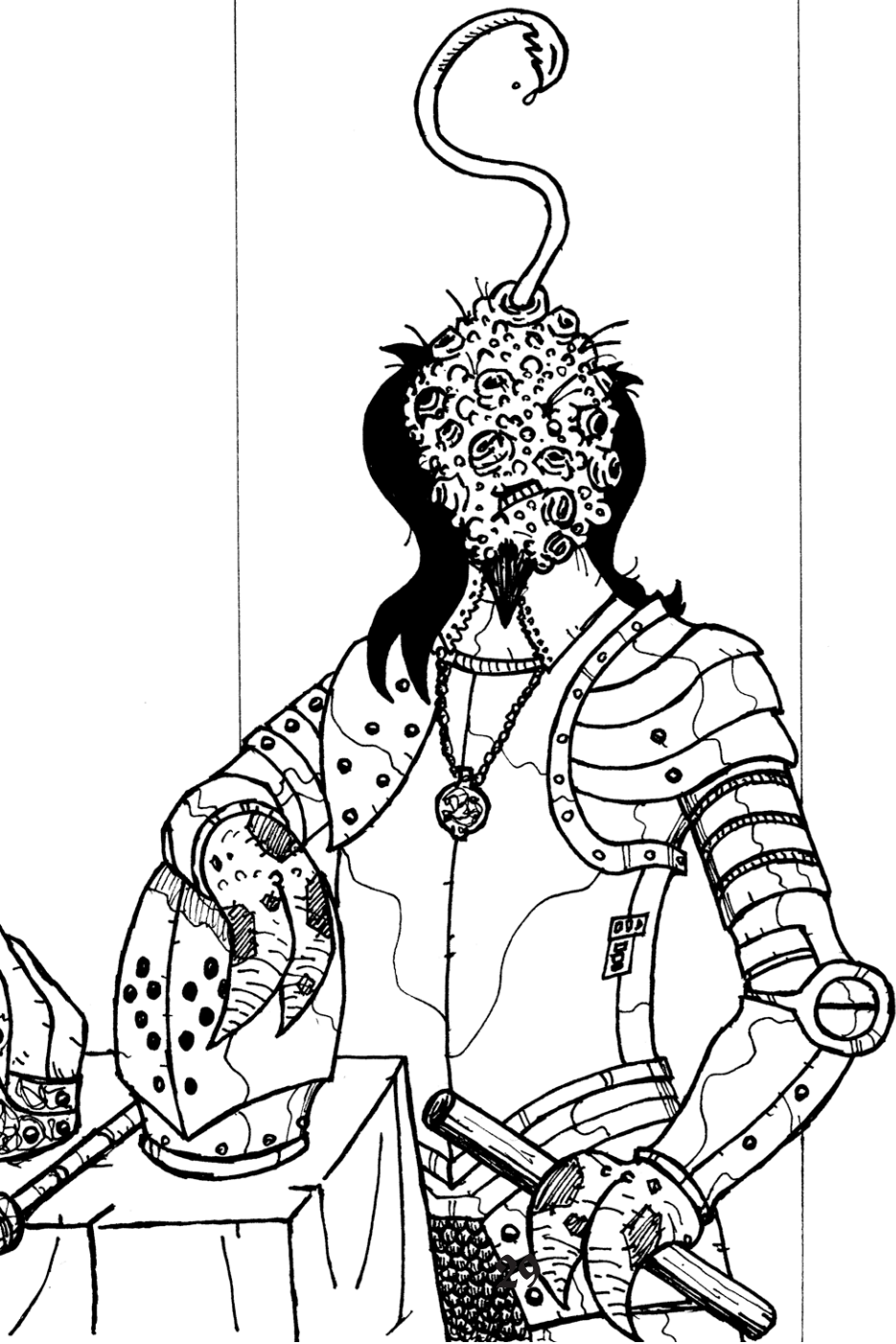
The Things in the Vaults

Armour 14, Move 120', 4 Hit Dice, Grab or Blood-Red Tentacles 1d4/1d4/1d4 plus infection, Morale 12.

The things in the vaults each have a cluster of tentacles bursting from their cone-like heads and can attack with up to three of them per round. The things sometimes also grapple their victims, gaining a +2 bonus to attacks with their tentacles on subsequent rounds.

If a tentacle hits the victim, they must save versus Poison or become infected. Thereafter, the victim must save versus Poison once per hour until either they fail a number of times equal to their Hit Dice or *Cure Disease* is cast on them. With each failure the victim becomes more and more mutated, until on the final failed roll they – in a Carpenteresque explosion of gore – turn into a mutant thing.

The mutant things are creatures of instinct and act only to spread their corruption to others. They are not too intelligent and when trapped or restrained tend to go into a sort of hibernation after a few hours of captivity.



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26
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Unexpected Visitors

As if the situation wasn't complicated enough, the player-characters are not the only ones interested in the Tenebrous Hand's base. Another group enters the complex through a random building – rolling a d8 is an apt way to decide – and begins exploring at around the same time as the player-characters. In playtests, this other group was employed by the Brotherhood of Pus (p. 32) to recover the casket (p. 21) – although they were chopped to pieces before their motives could be determined – but they could be employed by a third party, or they could be members of a rival gang, opportunistic thieves or even employees of the sheriff, although why the sheriff would be employing someone like Ferguson is a question you'd have to answer. Amongst their belongings is an excellent place to plant a hook for another adventure.

Aggarwal

Aggarwal has a knack for analysing situations, is possessed of a sharp tactical mind, and has a taste for victory. As long as he is able to give instructions, his allies receive a +2 bonus to all rolls, including damage.

Armour 14, Move 120', 4 Hit Dice 4 (22hp), Rapier 1d8/Dagger 1d4, Morale 10.

Buff coat, daggers (2), rapier, crowbar, rations (2), rope (50') 25sp.

Fieldhouse

Fieldhouse has travelled far and wide, learning many languages and combat styles. Although he looks tired, he is able to keep alert through the application of alcohol; he treats a swig of an alcoholic drink as a *Cure Light Wounds* potion, restoring 1d6+4 Hit Points, and can also fight on for one round past death.

Armour 14, Move 120', 4 Hit Dice (21hp), Zweihander 1d10, Morale 8.

Buff coat, breastplate, dagger, zweihander of fine make, bottled rum (3), lantern, oil, rations (2), 50sp.

Ross

Ross is an amiable Northern fellow. He is an artist of some repute and an actor most well known for taking female roles. He is also a magician with the following spells at the ready: *Faerie Fire*, *Stinking Cloud*, *Unseen Servant*, and *Web*.

Armour 12, Move 120', 4 Hit Dice (11hp), Rapier 1d8, Morale 9.

Large colourful coat with hood, dagger, rapier, paint tubes, rations (2) 20sp plus 30sp in a hidden pocket.

Ferguson

Ferguson was killed on a previous adventure, but the rest of the group clubbed together to pay a disreputable wizard to raise him as a revenant. As a result, he is a bit ripe, and opponents must save versus Breath Weapon before they can engage him in combat.

Armour 14, Move 120', 2 Hit Dice (12hp), Axe 1d8, Morale 12.

Rags, rusty axe.



The Brotherhood of Pus

The Brotherhood of Pus consists of eight members and meets every other Thursday in the home of the merchant William Burnaby in a good part of town. Burnaby himself is present from six in the evening to six in the morning most days; otherwise he is out and about in the city, looking after his holdings. Burnaby is well-known and well-liked in both Norwich and London.

Almost always present is his cook and manservant Croke, also a cult member. Since the robbery, Burnaby has employed a guard – and cult member – to watch over the building.

William Cox,
cultist and thug

Armour 14, Move 120', 2 Hit Dice (8hp), Club 1d4, Morale 9.

Buff coat, club.

The house is full of bundles of pungent herbs and burning incense; sensitive characters may be able to detect a faint hint of something organic and foetid coming from somewhere on the ground floor.

The secret door leading to the cult temple is locked, but each cult member holds a key. The pits within the temple are barred and are about ten feet deep; each contains one or more victims of various diseases. Some are alive, some are not; some are volunteers, some are not. This is where you can have fun describing pustulent yellow blisters, weeping sores, blood dribbling from places it shouldn't, horrible wet coughing and so on.

Glass jars and blasphemous idols line the walls. Some jars contain blood and other bodily fluids, others contain body parts and parasites floating in a greenish liquid, and some seem empty, but in fact contain air captured at plague sites. The Brotherhood is not one of those nice, cuddly cults.

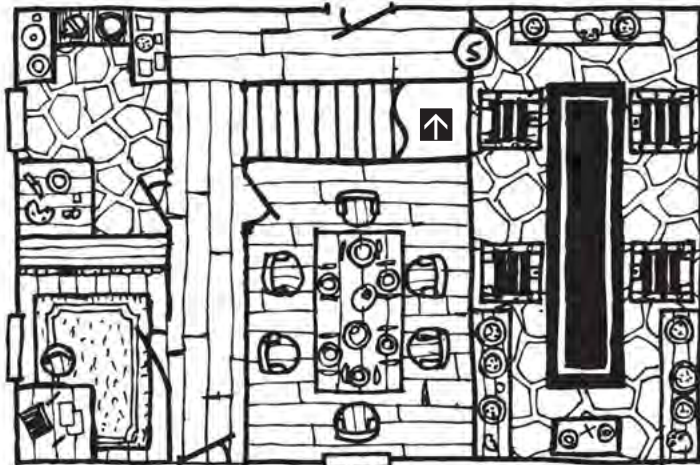
The altar is stone, blackened by fire and stained by unknown liquids.

- 1 | The library upstairs is of good quality and has a clear focus on medicine, both modern and folkloric.

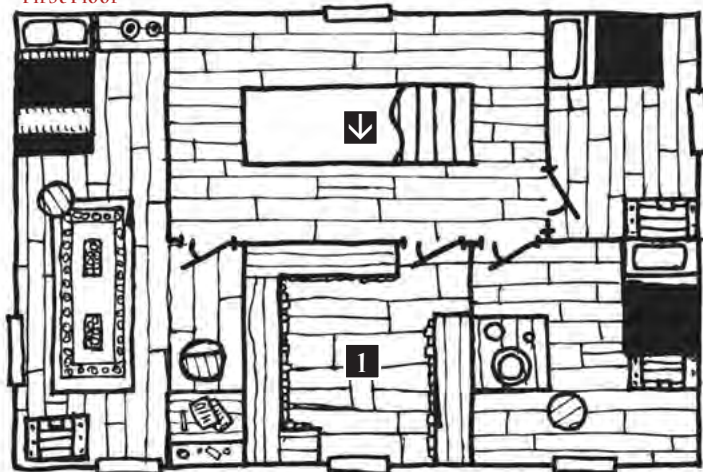
The chest in Burnaby's bedroom contains 100sp and the rest of the house contains art, furs and textiles worth another 400sp.

Ground Floor

→ outside

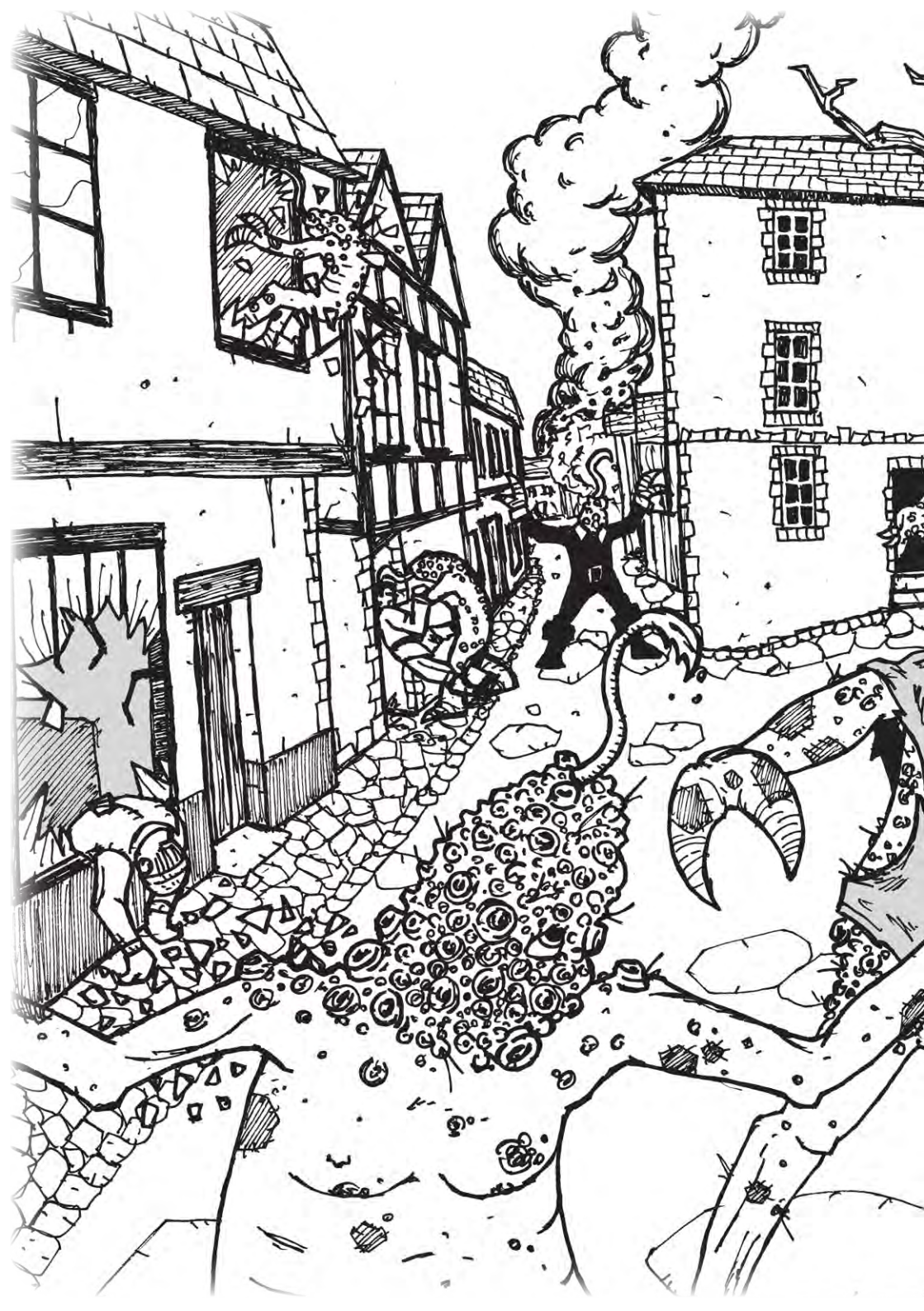


First Floor



10 feet

A horizontal scale bar with diagonal hatching underneath, representing a length of 10 feet.





Appendix A: What's in a Name?

It is more than possible that your players will want to name the members of the Tenebrous Hand or the Brotherhood of Pus, or will demand the name of some hapless shopkeeper that they're interrogating. Here is a table to generate authentic seventeenth century Norwich inhabitants, drawn from court documents of the day. Roll a d20 to determine the first name, then again for the surname.

d20	Forename (female)	Forename (male)	Surname
1	Anne	Edward	Williamson
2	Christina	Christopher	Hide
3	Elizabeth	Digorie	Keighley
4	Catherine	Roger	Ashton
5	Esther	Thomas	Harris
6	Marie	Randolff	Nutley
7	Grace	Fabian	Boteler
8	Tamesine	Richard	Fanshawe
9	Lucy	Ralph	Southworth
10	Samantha	Samuel	Crewe
11	Joan	Theophilus	Lytton
12	Agathie	John	Phillips
13	Ellen	Robert	Sherfield
14	Nerine	Joseph	Cox
15	Jane	Henry	Crooke
16	Francis	Francis	Stillingfleet
17	Rose	Tobias	Howard
18	Anne	William	Deere
19	Hester	Roelant	Van Gordum
20	Margareta	Jan	Boeckhout

In Heaven, Everything is Fine

In which an alien space baby enslaves some peasants.



The village of Ashmanhaugh, about twelve miles north east of Norwich, is haunted. Sort of.

On the morning of the 23rd of March 1624 Helen Cox's son Anthony drowned in the village pond; the death of her son drove Helen to the brink of madness, and she took to wandering around the countryside at night. One of these nights – the 3rd of November 1624 – Helen was witness to a spectacular meteor shower; she also saw something else, as one shooting star seemed to fall to earth.

It was no ball of space rock, but instead some sort of being from the void, all barbs and tentacles; it was also confused and hurt, and its plaintive psychic cries awoke something in Helen. As far as she was concerned Anthony had returned to her.

Anthony has the power to shape the perceptions and experiences of others, but this power is not without a cost, and it must feed off the life force of those around it to survive. As of 1625, the population of Ashmanhaugh is down to five living humans and Anthony itself; everyone else is an illusion created by the alien. All except for Benjamin Willis.

Willis is somehow immune to Anthony's illusions and has been trying to alert the other villagers and any passers-by to the truth of the situation. Anthony's power is such that Willis is more or less imperceivable, but now and then something he does pokes through the illusion: a mysterious noise here, a glimpse of a blurry figure there, and so stories have spread of "the Ashmanhaugh Ghost".

The player-characters may be drawn to the village by stories of the ghost, or perhaps they know of someone who travelled to Ashmanhaugh but has not returned, or perhaps they are just passing through on their way somewhere else; however they arrive in the village, as soon as they do, they fall under Anthony's spell.

No, they don't get a saving throw. That would be too easy.

The Good (and Fictional) People of Ashmanhaugh

Ashmanhaugh is full of people, all content with their lot. Alas, most of them don't exist; the player-characters can talk to them, touch them, even kill them, but they're interacting with nothing. A kind Referee may have these illusory villagers appear stilted, detached, and distant as a clue to their true origins.

Five of the villagers are real, although perhaps not for long; should anyone expire – through alien space baby life-draining or player-character violence – they will be replaced by Anthony the next day. This too may be a clue, as their personality may change or they may act as if they haven't met the player-characters before; in a way they haven't.

William Larch is the vicar. He has a fine church and a full, attentive congregation, and believes this to be a natural consequence of his devotion to God; he will be aghast should he discover the truth and as a result will lose his faith.

James Frost is a farmer in the prime of his youth. He is strong and agile, and his enthusiasm and vitality is quite charming. He claims to have been born in 1570 (55 years ago) and doesn't see why that might be odd; in reality he is quite frail and the shock of the truth will kill him.

John Hatcher has a huge house packed with loyal servants and lives a life of luxury; in truth his home is a grubby hovel full of rats, and should he be made aware of this, he will be overcome with anger and will attack whoever makes the revelation.

Joseph Riley is a former adventurer who has found his fortune and has retired to a comfortable farmhouse with his wife, children and dogs. He will be distraught if the truth is revealed to him, but will bounce back in time. If the player-characters have come to Ashmanhaugh searching for a friend or colleague, then the friend can either be Joseph, or can replace him. Joseph is the only one of these villagers who should have levels in a class.

Helen Cox lives with her son Anthony on her farm on the edge of the village. She couldn't be happier. Revealing the truth to Helen will have no effect as all she cares about is keeping her son safe; the fact that her son is a gribbly cosmic horror is irrelevant.

All living people in Ashmanhaugh are comfortable and joyous, having everything they need. The truth is that the village is falling to pieces and the withered husks of the former villagers could be found inside most of the decaying houses, were it not for Anthony's illusion.

The Fatal Fantasy

Each day the player-characters spend in the village they will each lose a point of Constitution until they are dead; you could keep track of this yourself, but it seems fair to let the players know of the damage without pinpointing its origin. Anthony can shield select individuals – Helen is one such beneficiary – and vigorous NPCs sometimes shrivel slower, but on the whole it is an indiscriminate effect.

It is possible that the player-characters will decide that the loss of Constitution is too much of a price to pay, will leave Ashmanhaugh and won't look back. This is why we are going to bribe them; see "The Implausible Tower" later on.

The fantasy Anthony creates is almost indistinguishable from reality, although its concentration slips on occasion, and it is these gaps that allow Benjamin Willis ("The Ghost" on the next page) to make his presence known.

Spells such as *True Seeing* will break through the illusion for their duration, and any condition that causes a character to lose their mind will also allow them to see the truth.

If a player declares that they want to disbelieve the illusion, then they are allowed a saving throw; a success grants permanent immunity to Anthony's fabrications.

Should Anthony be killed, the illusion dissipates.



The Ghost

As the player-characters explore the village, Benjamin Willis will recognise them as newcomers and attempt to get their attention; roll 1d10 to see how he does so. Should it be obvious that they are there to communicate with the “ghost”, or that they suspect that all is not as it seems, Willis will try even harder; roll twice and use both results.

d10 Ghostly apparition

- 1 One of the player-characters spots a blurry figure in the corner of their eye; the figure disappears as soon as they attempt to get a better look.
- 2 A nearby animal reacts to something unseen. For example, a dog growls or wags its tail, a cat hisses, or some chickens flee, squawking as they go.
- 3 A player-character hears a faint whispering but cannot make out the words.
- 4 A door or window opens or slams shut for no reason.
- 5 One of the player-characters is jostled by someone or something brushing past.
- 6 An object is thrown at the player-characters.
- 7 A nearby object is smashed or broken.
- 8 A small and quite spontaneous fire starts in the player-characters' vicinity.
- 9 The words “get out” appear on a wall, piece of parchment, a player-character's spellbook, and so on.
- 10 An unattended object goes missing; a search reveals it to have been left at the edge of the village.

Willis suffered a head injury as a child and his intellectual development was stunted as a result; the same injury has somehow made him immune to the illusion, but he lacks the ability to discover the source. Instead he spends his time trying to warn visitors to the village, with some success, hence the stories. As Willis is not a ghost, spells that affect the undead will not work on him; this may alert the player-characters that there is more going on than a haunting.

The Implausible Tower

Anthony will recognise the player-characters as a new source of sustenance, and so will attempt to get them to stay in the village. Anthony is quite capable of elaborate tricks like having every road out of the village lead straight back to it, but it prefers a more subtle approach. Soon after their arrival, perhaps on their second day in the village, one of the player-characters will spot – or an illusory villager will point it out to them – a squat stone tower hidden in a copse of trees a short distance outside the village.

The villagers will tell the player-characters that the tower has always been there, and that it is an abandoned place to which no one goes. It probably belonged to a witch, or a corrupt lord; it is, of course, rumoured to be haunted and packed to the brim with treasure.

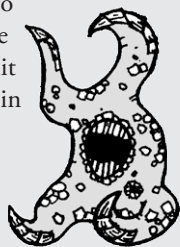
Your players may well hate you – and me! – for this bit. The tower should be full of tricks and traps and a handful of monsters, but everything should be overcome with relative ease, and no player-character should be in any danger; this is because nothing in the tower is real. This includes any treasure or experience earned. Let the player-characters enjoy the fruits of their success, but as soon as the illusion dissipates so too does anything the player-characters have earned.

Be careful here. The idea is to bribe the player-characters into staying in the village without letting them know it's a bribe, but on the other hand you don't want to anger your players by taking away everything they've earned. If they're the sort of people who are going to flip the table over, then a decent compromise may be to let them keep any experience points earned; do what's right for your group.

Space, Space Baby

Despite its great powers, Anthony is a weak and pathetic thing and relies upon Helen for protection; killing Anthony is a trivial matter, but getting past its adopted mother may not be.

Anthony will use all sorts of tricks to protect itself, from creating areas of pitch black darkness to generating decoys. If the player-characters have discovered a way to combat its illusions, Anthony is quite powerless to defend itself, as its energy draining ability is too slow to be of any use in a fight. For the purposes of gaining experience, Anthony has two Hit Dice, but can be slain with a single blow; upon its death the illusions in the village melt away.



Death and Taxes

James Blake is dead!



Blake is an old friend of the player-characters – if you can, it's a good idea to slip him in as a supporting character in an earlier adventure – and they have been invited to attend his funeral; a letter to this effect from the local vicar reaches them in time (see opposite).

Blake, a successful military man, retired from active service in 1615 to live a quiet life in the countryside with his wife Grace and daughter Rebecca. The village can be anywhere, but it should be a day or so away from any major settlements; Blake enjoyed the quiet life.

Funeral For a Friend

The funeral is not well-attended; aside from the player-characters and the vicar Brennard, the only other people present are two slovenly gravediggers, one of whom looks like he has contracted some sort of pox. It is, of course, raining. The service is quick but respectful, and Brennard's eulogy is full of praise for Blake.

The vicar apologises for the tone of his letter, claiming that he's not very good at writing. If asked, Brennard knows little about the circumstances of Blake's death, only that he died in his sleep.

Two significant hooks come up in Brennard's awkward attempts at conversation:

- 1 | The vicar admits that it is odd that few have turned up for the funeral, as the old soldier was well-liked; he wonders if it has anything to do with the tax collectors who arrived soon after Blake's death and have been investigating his affairs.
- 2 | Blake's daughter Rebecca hasn't been seen since her father's death, and Brennard is quite worried about her. She's a precocious 11-year old girl with a stubborn streak.

If specifically questioned about it, the vicar also knows a third important fact that won't come up by itself:

- 3 | Blake left instructions to bury a locked wooden coffer with him. Brennard recovered the box from Blake's house and made sure it ended up in the coffin with Blake. Personal memorabilia, the vicar assumes.

Dear

It is my sad and solemn duty to inform you that your friend James Blake has passed away. It has come as a great shock to all of us in the village but his death was a painless one at least. His funeral will be held at my church next Tuesday and you are invited to attend.

Should you need accommodation I am told that the Wheatsheaf Inn is a good place for travellers to rest their weary heads.

I am sorry to be the bearer of bad tidings but I hope you will join me in celebrating the life of this most modest and charming man.

Olivier Brennan

One of Our Daughters is Missing!

Although only eleven, Rebecca is skilled at surviving in the wilderness thanks to her father's teaching, so while she hasn't gone far, she has managed to avoid being found by hiding in a concealed clearing in the nearby woods. In game terms, while Rebecca is a standard Level 0 character, she has effective Bushcraft and Stealth skills of 3 each. She wears a muddy brown cloak and carries a crossbow and a dagger. She has returned to the village now and then, and may be spotted by an alert player-character watching her father's funeral from the trees at the edge of the graveyard.

Rebecca ran away because she was upset about her father's death, but stayed away when she noticed the tax collectors hanging around the village, and in particular her home. Rebecca knows nothing about her father's finances, other than that they led a modest life and he wasn't the type to hide money away or refuse to pay what he owed. As such she is suspicious of the taxmen's interest in her father.

Rebecca has heard about the player-characters from her father, thanks to their prior acquaintance, so if they can convince her of their identities she will talk to them. It is also possible that she has met them at some point in the past, in which case she will be much easier to convince.

Rebecca knows of the coffer buried with Blake, as it was she who prepared and locked the box, and threw away the key, all according to her father's instructions.



Yeah I'm the Taxman

Godfrey Cushing leads a small band of tax collectors. He can provide forged documents confirming his position as a royal revenue collector, and explains that the other men are in his employ; in fact, all are cultists dedicated to the Conqueror Worm, as indicated by the serpentine tattoo spiralling around each of their left forearms. Cushing is a thin, severe-looking man but is in fact quite warm and charismatic; he understands that his – alleged – occupation is quite unpopular, so does his best to make others feel at ease.

The tax collectors are staying at the Wheatsheaf Inn; they share two or three rooms depending on how many of them there are. In Cushing's room, hidden under his bed, is a locked leather case. Inside is a collection of small, concealable weapons such as daggers and garrottes, as well as a number of vials of poison; even the thickest of player-characters will know that this is not standard equipment for a tax collector.

Cushing explains that he is investigating claims that Blake – or men serving under Blake – stole money and items while on a mission and that the treasure has been hidden somewhere in the village. He is almost telling the truth.

If it becomes necessary, Cushing will attempt to get rid of the player-characters while attempting to maintain his cover. If his deception is revealed, he will leave his henchmen to cover his escape.

Godfrey Cushing

Cushing is a cleric of the Conqueror Worm and has the following spells prepared: *Bless*, *Command*, *Detect Evil*, *Turn Undead*, *Augury*, *Delay Poison*, *Heroism*, *Silence 15' Radius*, *Dispel Magic*, and *Divination*.

Armour 14, Move 120', 7 Hit Dice (24hp), Rapier 1d8, Flintlock Pistol 1d8, Morale 10.

Leather armour, hooded cape, cockel hat, rapier, flintlock pistols (2), wooden serpentine holy symbol, 30sp.

Note: rules for firearms appear in the 2013 edition of the LotFP *Rules & Magic* core rule book.

The Fake Taxmen

One for each of the player-characters, plus one for luck. They are thuggish sorts to a man.

Armour 14, Move 120', 1 Hit Die, Clubs and Swords (1d8), Morale 9.

Leather armour, clubs, swords.

Buried Treasure

Blake and his men did indeed steal something. In 1612 he was garrisoned in Portsmouth and led a raid on a group accused of conspiring against the crown. He discovered that the men were not simple political dissidents, but part of a blasphemous cult; the men were arrested, and in most cases executed, and their belongings destroyed. All except for a book that Blake spirited away in the confusion; he had a feeling that the threat of the cult was not ended and that the book could help him find out more about them. It turned out to be useless for that purpose, and so Blake hid it away; he left instructions for it to be buried with him upon his death, and so it has been.

Blake has been buried with a sturdy locked oak box; it is locked and the key has been thrown in a nearby river. Rebecca prepared the box according to her father's wishes, and Brennard is aware of the instruction to bury it, though he is ignorant of the contents. Inside is a silver locket containing a strand of golden hair, a battered dagger in a scruffy scabbard, and an oilskin parcel secured with string; the hair is from Blake's wife Grace, and the locket itself is worth 20sp, if the player-characters are the sort of people who dig up old friends and sell their stuff, which of course they probably are. The parcel contains the book.

The book is small and has a battered leather cover with no titles or markings. The pages inside are brittle, and the text is a handwritten and disorganised mess; a few hours of study reveals it to be a rambling treatise concerning an entity called the "Conqueror Worm" or "the Great Devourer", a serpentine creature destined to arise at the end of days to consume the world. Alongside the text are many rough sketches of various snake-like symbols and glyphs, including some similar to the tattoos on the bodies of the taxmen.

The book is sacred to the Cult of the Worm and is what they have been searching for. If they discover that the player-characters have the book, they will stop at nothing to retrieve it; they are willing to pay up to 100sp to any unscrupulous player-characters who try to sell the book. Left to his own devices Cushing will think of exhuming Blake three days after the funeral.

