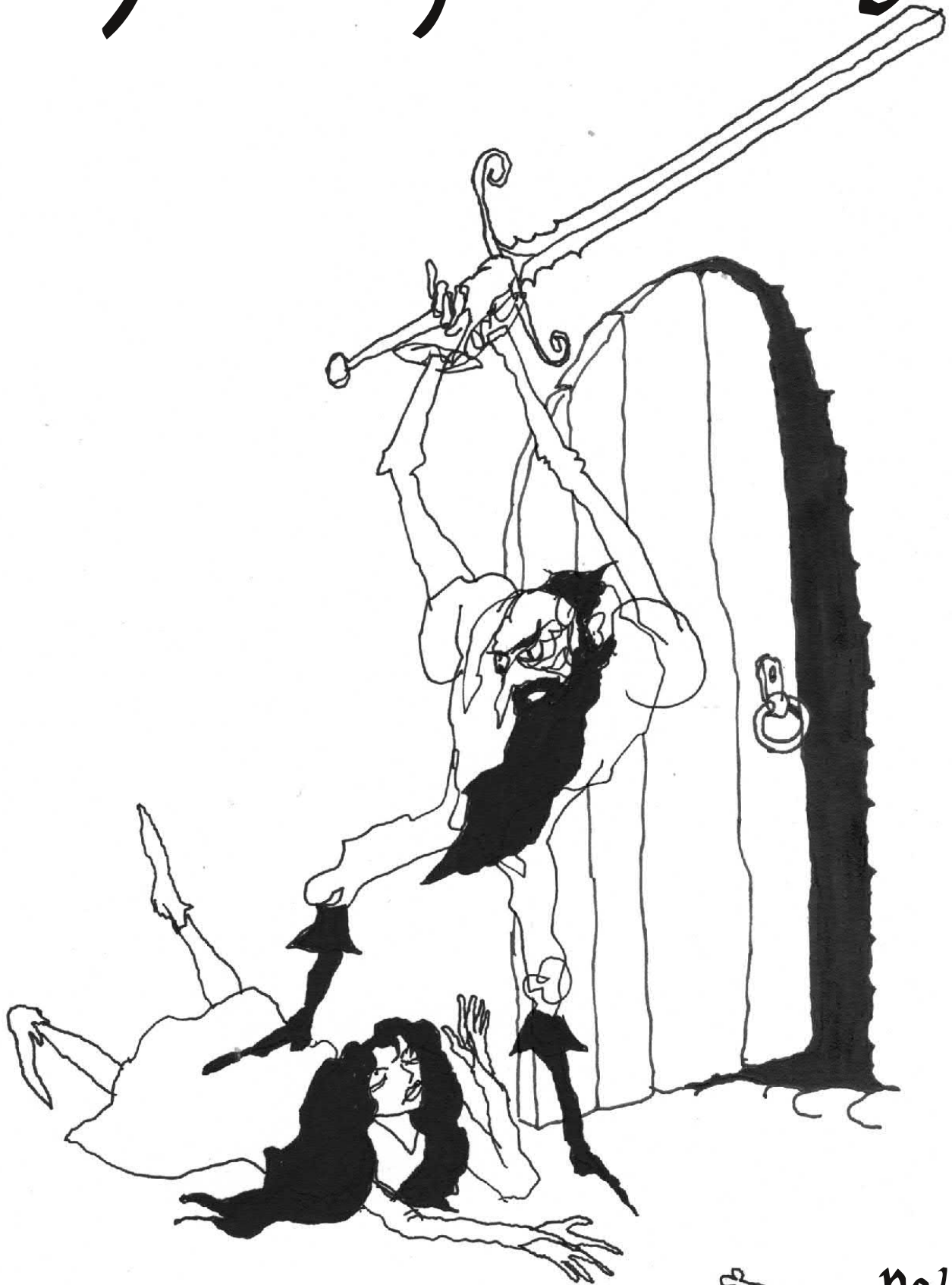


The Undercroft



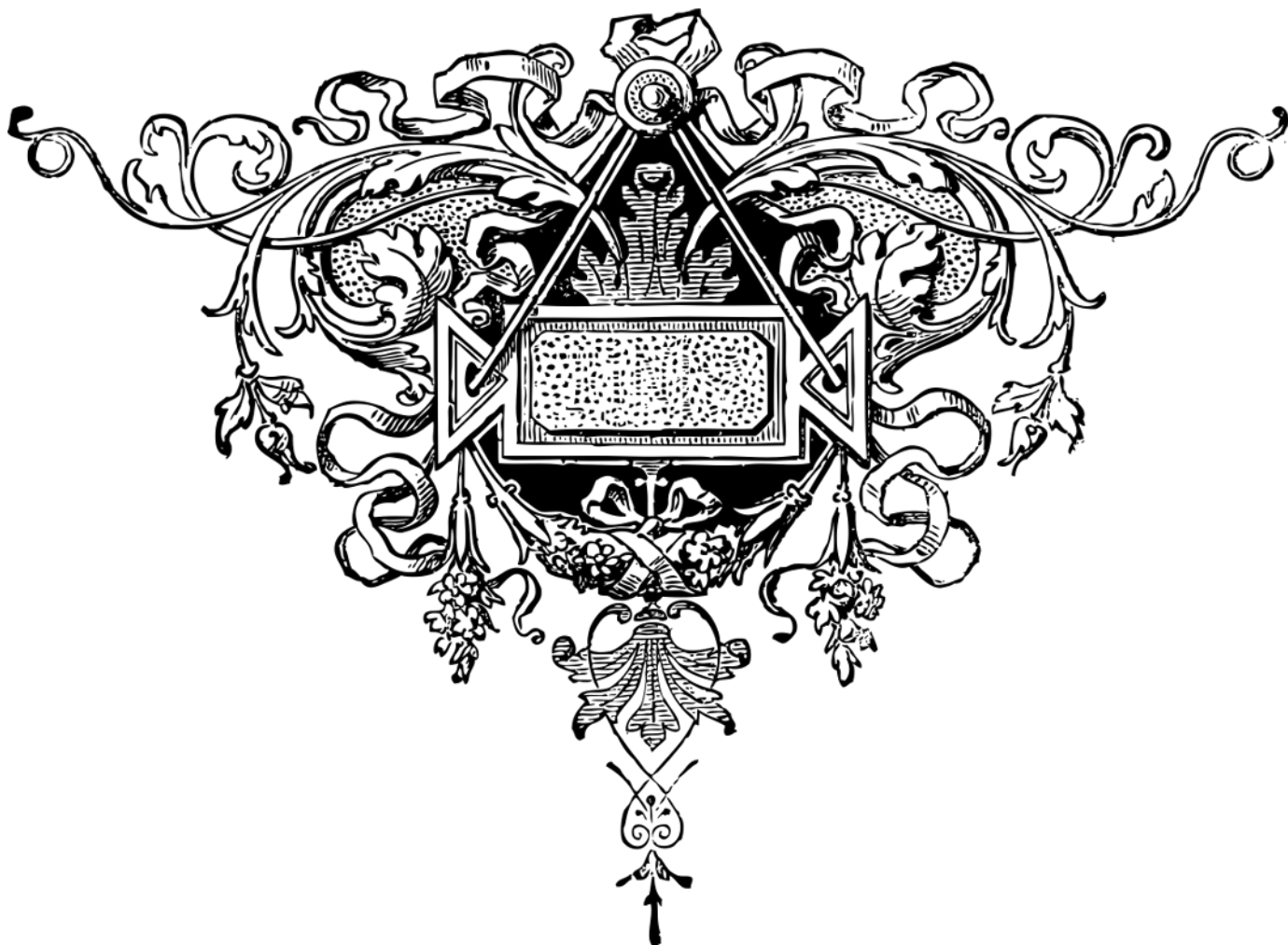
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Melsonian Arts Council, 2015

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most unusual tenor*

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A monster. It kills that which it loves

*Liminal trolls,
who lurk at the threshold*

~

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of the
FLAME PRINCESS

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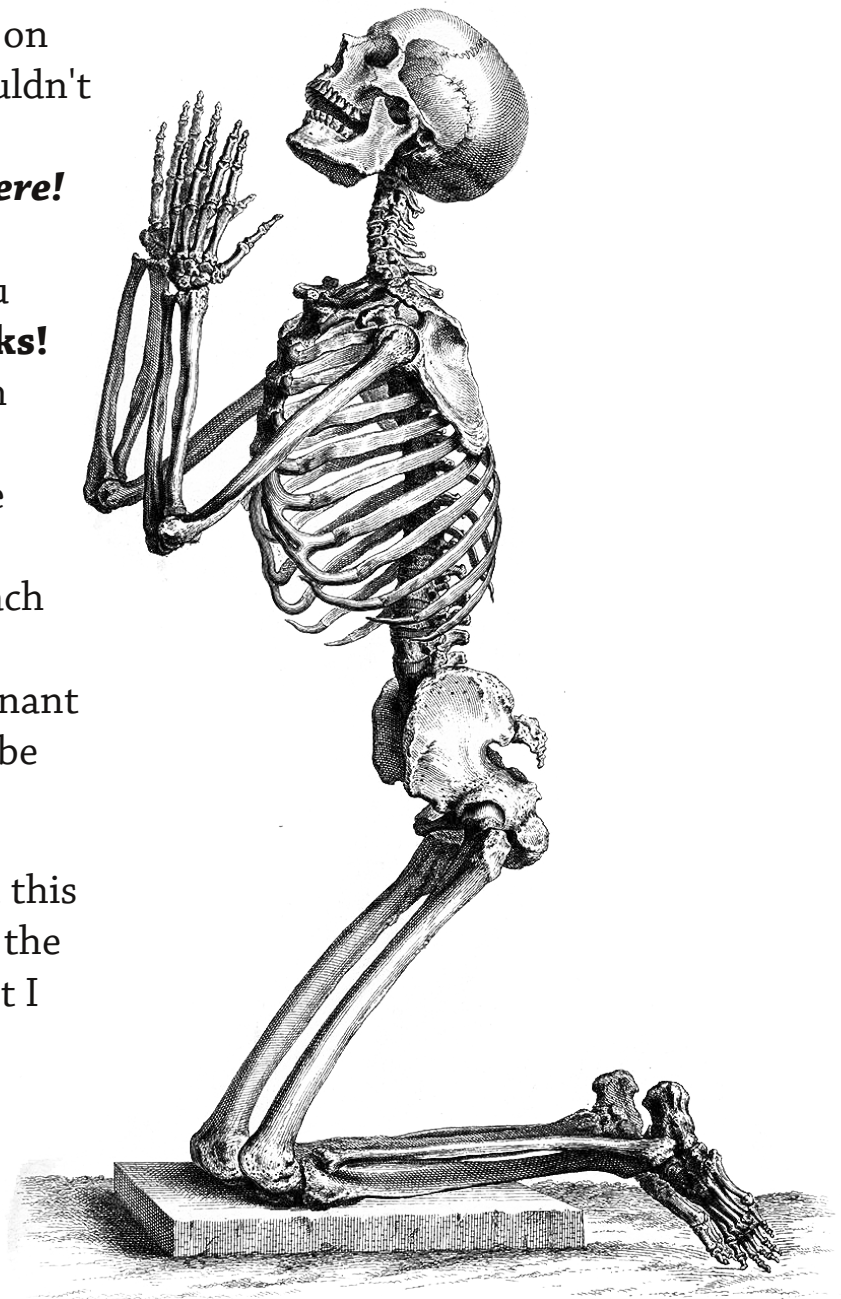
A WOMB WITH A VIEW

an editorial

Watch it slither down mother's leg. Admire the glistening splendour sat squirming on the floor. **Look!** Barry's here, he couldn't stay away and continues to confuse history with his gentle hand. **See here!** We employ rules to impart a paradoxical formlessness, thankyou Lord Inar, or Mr. Gacy to you. **Lawks!** It's Master Gearing come back from the wars with another monstrosity. **Lo!** It's the prettiest Princess, come with another troll he claims to be dreamy but I see it for what it is. Each a precious facet of the creature you hold in your arms, a moribund remnant of an effort spent. It only wants to be loved.

But of this, where am I? Nothing in this slick bairn's countenance speaks of the father. A cuckold and a chimera. But I love her and her fathers anyway, and hope you do to.

-Daniel Sell



THE TREASON OF THE GUITAR

by Barry Blatt

Over the course of the 17th Century the ever popular lute was gradually replaced as the most frequently played plucked instrument by the baroque guitar. Even Stradivarius would make baroque guitars by 1700, but in 1642 the instrument is still a bit exotic. Gentlemen of the King's court play it as it is most associated with fashionable Italy, and Giovanni Copario (actually John Cooper), Charles' music teacher until his death in 1626 was a noted player.

The instrument is smaller than a modern Spanish guitar with only five strings and the sound hole is filled with an elaborately carved and pierced ivory or wooden resonator which amplifies the sound.

A soldier in one of the London trained bands, **James Hendricks**, has somehow got hold of one of these instruments, and with his colleagues **Noel Reading** on viola da gamba and **Michael Mitchell** on tabor is making the rounds of the London taverns playing dances. The Puritans are annoyed and there is a regular band of killjoys demonstrating against them and other musicians and petitioning Parliament to have tavern music banned. Hendricks group in particular are accused of Ranterism and of encouraging all kinds of lewd and unseemly heavy drinking, dancing and smoking of tobacco and their performances.

Watching James in a dimly lit pub on a Saturday night will show that he is incredibly good, his fingers flying over the fretboard and strumming in a blur. They play galliards and canarios, quite formal though energetic courtly dances, as well as some more wild and free wheeling numbers with lyrics sung by Reading and Hendricks that really get the crowd going. Careful observation will show flashes of purple light from within the guitar.

Talking to the band

In 1643 Hendricks and co are living the high life. As members of the Blue regiment of the London Trained bands they know that sooner or later the London Militia Committee will send them out to support the Earl of Essex's army in the field. They are conscripts, not volunteers motivated by religion like the soon to be created New Model Army, and they will express doubts that Parliament's increasingly moralistic regime is really what the country wants. Reading is pretty well informed on what is going on in Leveller circles, and has heard John Lilburne speak.

Hendricks will be cagey as to where exactly he got the guitar. He will claim that it was a gift from a certain lady of the court in return for certain services her husband was unable to provide. She left for Oxford with the King's court, he noodled around with the thing getting better and ran into Noel and Michael on the parade ground and here they are doing very well thank you... He always seems to have a young lady, not often the same one, watching adoringly from nearby, and a couple of scruffy and foul mouthed Ranters keeping him well supplied with pipes of tobacco, glasses of lemon genever and flagons of porter.

Other members of their militia company will tell the same tale. Hendricks was a very quiet and shy young feller from the Parish of St John, Wapping. He is partly African obviously, his father must have been a sailor, they are always coming and going in that part of town, but few have any great problem with that, and those that are are more concerned about his illegitimacy than his race¹.

Talking to the Puritans

Martin Marriott leads those who regard Hendricks as a menace and a subversive. A minor preacher from a church in the east London parishes, he has recently taken up a crusade against theatre, satirical pamphleteers, 'degenerate' modern art like Rubens and Poussin, full of nudes and pagan allusions, morris dancing and maypoles and of course popular music. He has nothing against hymns, if sung plainly with no instrumental accompaniment, but everything else is the work of the Devil.

Marriott points out that after every performance given by Hendricks and his merry crew 'virgins are deflowered' and there is inevitably violence in the nearby streets and alleyways. He hints darkly that Hendricks himself is responsible for at least some of it; his tuck never spends all night in its sheath says Marriott, though this might be the dour and dimwitted Puritan's idea of a double entendre.

Marriott has a number of followers in his crusade against entertainment, mainly older women of vaguely gentle birth whose daughters are fans of the band.

Further investigation will show that Marriott, prig though he is, might have a point. Most of the long rowdy evenings the band play at end in a mugging or a bar-room brawl between gangs of crop headed apprentices and long haired gentlemen rakes. Coincidence? But such incidents are par for the course on any Saturday night in east London, then as now, aren't the Puritans getting over excited as usual?

The Truth

James stole the guitar from a ship on the docks. He doesn't know the name of the boat, just that there was a load of luggage on a pallet on the quayside and that this funny shaped velvet covered box was poking out just asking to be liberated, so he took it and ran off.

The guitar belonged to **Frank Corbett**, an English Catholic who had been a musician in court circles five years or so ago, playing in the increasingly extravagant and expensive masques enjoyed by the King and Queen under the stage name of Francisco Corbetti. He fled to the continent with the Queen's entourage and has been recruited by the Jesuits in an elaborate treason. They carved a magical witchmark into the guitar's resonator and trapped a demon in it.

Frank is unaware of this, his mission is merely to ingratiate himself with Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex or Henry Rush, Earl of Holland, noblemen of liberal tastes who currently side with Parliament and install himself as a house musician and spy. They might be aware of his former connection with the Queen, but he will tell them he converted to Calvinism while in Den Haag in the United Provinces.

The Jesuit plan was for Corbett to send secret missives to his handler in London encoded in musical notation, and for his handler to send messages back hidden in pamphlets of ballads. At a key point they would send him an updated guitar version of the 'The Earl of Essex Galliard', a lute classic written by the great John Dowland in 1597 and dedicated to the current Earl's rebellious father. The lyrics for this would include the True Name of the demon trapped in the guitar. Thus, Corbett excitedly tells Essex that he has a new version of his favourite old tune, plays it and – squelch! Too bad for Corbett, but the Society of Jesus are sure God has a place in heaven for such a dedicated follower of the Lord.

Except that now Corbett is guitarless and Essex and Holland are too busy chasing round the country from one muddy army camp to another to be holding any soirees. Corbett is trying to lie low on diminishing funds while hanging round with Marriott's miserablists hoping that someone will take him up on the suggestion to steal the wretched guitar to silence the band. This will enable him to fulfil his mission. He still has his flute and is also surreptitiously seeking out a Jesuit contact he can blag more funds from; it may only be a matter of time before Marriott realises he has a ringer in his organisation.

Edward Floyd is the Jesuit spy who supposed to be keeping this operation together. He is working part time as a pamphleteer in Cheapside

printing all kinds of subversive and satirical material including ballads and selling them on street corners. He has a couple of the 'demon-name' versions of the Galliard stashed away ready for Corbett when he is in place, but the silly bastard has just disappeared. Father Floyd has not yet made the connection between Hendricks and the plot, and he doesn't realise that Corbett is trying to break protocol and contact him directly. He may kill Corbett to keep his operation secret and try and unleash the demon on whoever where-ever, anything to cause panic in the Protestant ranks. He may even try and insinuate himself as Hendricks manager and impel him in the direction the plot requires.

Dramatis Personae

James Hendricks, *amiable virtuoso guitarist*

Level 2 Specialist **Alignment:** Cavalier Neutral **Religion:** Ranter

Cha 13/+1 **Con** 6/-1 **Dex** 18/+3 **Int** 12 **Str** 11 **Wis** 11

AC 13 **HP** 7 **Melee AB** +1 **Missile AB** +4

Languages: English

Skills: Sleight of Hand 3, Stealth 2, Tinker 2, Climb 3

Possessions

Extravagant hat

Buff coat with elaborate frogging

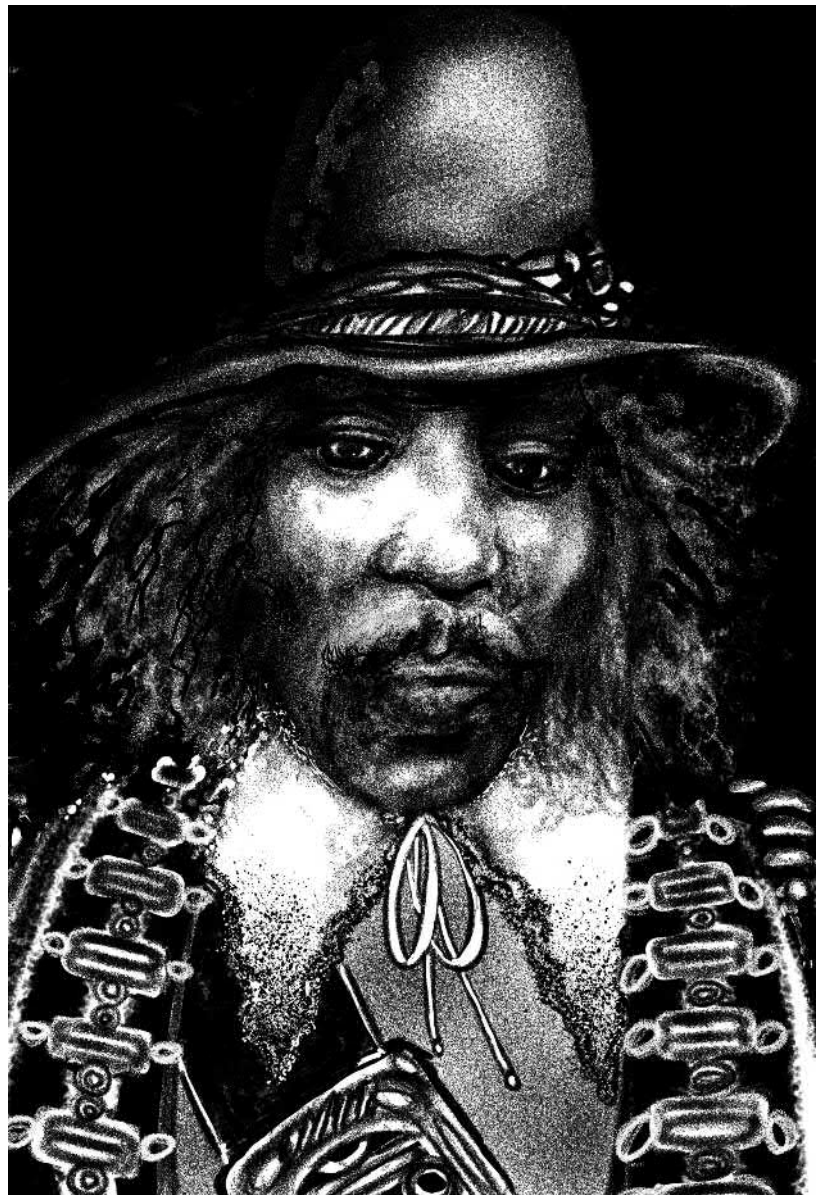
Demon-haunted baroque guitar

Tuck

Purse with 1d8 shillings and 2d12 pence

James is a young man of partly African descent with black curly hair and a pleasant guileless demeanour. He seems to be only interested in having a good time and playing guitar, he spends most of his fees for playing on the night on drinks for his friends and gifts for his ladies.

There is a hint of a darker side to his nature. He will not spend the whole night with a girl, throwing them out of his room before dawn or escaping from them through a window. He has nightmares he



wants no one to witness, dreams in which he tosses and turns muttering curses in strange languages, and he under his fine linen shirt he has many scars from self-inflicted shallow cuts on his forearm possibly forming letters in some foreign alphabet.

He manages to get to drill sessions and hasn't missed one yet, but has been demoted from musketeer to pikeman as some in his unit think he must be too out of it to handle the complex and dangerous operations of a gun.

Frank Corbett (Francisco Corbetti), musician and failed spy

Level 3 Specialist Alignment: Cavalier Royalist **Religion:** Catholic (claims to be Puritan)

Cha 15/+2 **Con** 10 **Dex** 15/+2 **Int** 11 **Str** 8/-1 **Wis** 6/-2

AC 12 **HP** 13 **Melee AB** +0 **Missile** +3

Languages: English, Italian

Skills: Stealth 5, Sleight of Hand 2, Search 3, Climb 2

Possessions

Puritan hat

Black coat

Bible and stack of anti-music tracts

Dagger

Purse with 2 shillings and 6 pence

One gold sovereign hidden in his sock

Flute

Hidden rosary beads

Frank Corbett calls himself Francisco Corbetti on stage and is a reasonably talented guitarist and lutist and gets by on the flute, and sings with an affected Italian accent. A tall thin fellow with a persistent five o'clock shadow and an increasingly worried air as he goes about his business in London. He is staying with a number of refugees at the sign of the Three Roses in Southwark and is doing his best to fit in with the unfamiliar language and rituals of Puritanism. Being a spy was supposed to be a romantic and exciting venture, but he is scared out of his wits, expecting the Roundheads to batter his door down and drag him off to the Tower at any moment, or, even worse, a fellow



being a spy was supposed to be a romantic and exciting venture, but he is scared out of his wits, expecting the Roundheads to batter his door down and drag him off to the Tower at any moment, or, even worse, a fellow

Catholic spy to stick a stiletto in his ribs for having become a liability. He has a single golden sovereign left from his operational funds which isn't going to last forever.

Edward 'Pink' Floyd, Jesuit spymaster

Level 3 Cleric **Alignment:** Neutral Royalist **Religion:** Catholic (claims to be Puritan)

Cha 14/+1 **Con** 7/-1 **Dex** 13/+1 **Int** 17/+2 **Str** 10 **Wis** 13/+1

AC 12 **HP** 10 **Melee AB** +1, **Missile AB** +2

Languages: English, Latin, Spanish, French

Typical spells: 1 Command, 1 Sanctuary, 2 Enthrall



Possessions

Fashionable velvet coat

Bloom for buttonhole

Cavalier hat

Rapier

Hidden stiletto

Flintlock pistol

Hidden crucifix

Purse with 1 shilling and sixpence

25% chance of 2d6 broadsides and pamphlets, fresh off the press.

Bible with secret cipher keys marked by pinpricks in the paper

Edward Floyd has a small print shop where he lives with his 'wife' Hettie (actually a nun and cipher clerk), his 'brother' Josiah (a magic user sworn to holy orders) and his mute apprentice Tobias (a Spanish assassin of some skill with the garotte).

His most cunning trick is his flower code. He wears a pink carnation in his buttonhole when parading around the

streets crying his wares, signalling to his contacts that he has messages to pass on and that all they have to do is approach him and buy a pamphlet into which the message has been inserted. If he wears a white carnation he is worried about being followed by counter-spies, and if he wears a red one then an agent in his ring has been taken and all the others must beware of their

own security. This has led to his nickname of 'Pink' Floyd in the London street markets.

Floyd is no one's idea of a priest let alone a spy, a cheery cockney with an extravagant cavalier moustache, printed French silk scarf and an ink stained apron worn over a braided waistcoat. His fingers are suitably inkstained, but the truly cunning and observant may detect that they not as calloused as a journeyman printers ought to be after years of working a press. Floyd has consumption which is wasting him slowly away, and he always wears a sailors pea jacket against even the mildest cold. This also serves to conceal the stiletto he wears up his sleeve when on the streets, a nice bit of steel an expert will tell you was made in Toledo in Spain and which bears a tiny engraving on the blade, 'Ave Maria'; this has +1 to hit vs AC 15 or better.

Floyd's Jesuit masters in Calais have sent him a message to expect musical codes to be sent from Corbett to a safe house address once he is in place and to send him the special version of the Earl of Essex Galliard when a man with two red feathers in his hat shakes his hand in the street and says 'Cousin Mary asks after you, Eddie.' He does not know Corbett by sight and Corbett does not know him or his methods of signalling. Floyd is getting worried, he has heard nothing, and if Corbett has been taken he may have let the address of the safe house loose, and that is a possible link back to him and his ring of agents.

The Demon Guitar

This is a nicely made Italian instrument with an elaborately carved boxwood resonator in the soundbox with numerous flowing motifs that conceal an entrapping spell written in a cursive script in Latin. Removing the resonator will reveal the rather crude looking pentagram burnt into the wood of the back of the soundbox where the demon is trapped, and will also release the demon.

The demon can be released by damage to the guitar or by naming it truly, in which case it will emerge and if the namer cannot control it using the usual summon spell procedure it will run amok.

Playing the guitar will add +3 to a characters Charisma, but the demon will read the player's mind and drop all kinds of self-destructive and violent hints in their dreams. The person will not be aware of the origins of these dreams and will suffer spasms of angst that can only be exorcised by self harm. Line by line the victim will cut the word YTHRAX into their forearm. Hendricks is mostly there already, but can't fathom what is going on as he is illiterate.

The demon is a floating red eyeball wreathed in purple smoke, and its

attack is to draw people into the complex maze of the resonator – carved from wood harvested in the valley of the Monolith from Beyond Time and Space – and to devour them at its leisure.

If the demon does attack, wisps of purple smoke resembling insubstantial tentacles will emerge from the guitar and all within 30 feet of the guitar must make three saves vs magic. If they fail the first they become enraged and will attack the nearest person, though some people will become paranoid and flee. If they fail the second they are overcome by purple fumes, lose consciousness and suffer 1d10 damage and the loss of 1d6 CON (regained at 1 point per day). If they fail the third they lose consciousness and awake inside the maze.

The maze is cylindrical and it has an infinite number of levels. It's inhabitants are a variety of hapless creatures from across space and time wandering in search of an exit.

Roll d100 per hour exploring, 1 in 10 chance of an encounter.

01-10 Ythrax. HD 4 HP 32 Attack; Choking poison gas cloud for 1d10 damage per round

11-20 Stairs up or down; will not actually help the party get anywhere nearer escaping.

21 Exit to planet Earth, 1643, at the guitar's current location.

22-25 Exit to some other place or time of the GM's choosing.

26-35 Maze filled with a tide of darkness filled with murky pale lights seen as through smoke, walls, floor and ceiling fade to nothing and the PC floats weightless, but can move by thought. Moving towards a light removes the PC from play and they are reborn on Earth 1d10x1d100 years later.

36-40 1d6 Ixixachitl, demonic manta rays that levitate and cast clerical magic at level 1; 1 in 10 are leaders of cleric level 1d4. (see the AD&D Monster Manual, Gary Gygax, TSR 1977)

41-50 2d4 Shunned Ones, hostile chlorine breathing aliens from Tekumel led by a level 2d3 magic user. (See Empire of the Petal Throne, MAR Barker, TSR 1975)

51-52 Both of the above, trying to kill each other in a pitched battle in the corridors.

53-55 Contemporary Londoners who were listening to the band in a tavern when they suddenly passed out and woke up here.

56 Londoners fighting Ixixachitl

- 57 Londoners fighting Shunned Ones
- 58-60 A party of Londoners/Shunned Ones/Ixixachitl slain by demons or each other.
- 61-70 A random demon from the Summon table in LotFP
- 71-80 Mi-Go, Old Ones, Shoggoths, Hounds of Tindalos etc.
- 81-90 Gigantic woodworm (as D&D Purple Worm) eating through the boxwood walls of the maze
- 91-92 Party are summoned from the maze to an unknown plane as Demons and are forced to serve some alien magician in some nefarious plan.
- 93-94 Maze filled with hideous inescapable heat and light – some wretch (probably a music hating Puritan) has set fire to the bloody guitar!
- 95 Tide of beer fills the corridor – someone has spilled their pint on the guitar.
- 96-97 Faint audible echoes of real life going on out there beyond the closed universe of the resonator, may be from 17th century Earth, may be from some alien time or place. Most probably music being played on the instrument.
- 98-00 Split the party in two as a rift occurs in space and time and the internal reality of the resonator bifurcates, each gets a separate roll. If there is only one person left treat as encounter 26-35 above.

How did the adventurers get involved in this mess?

- One of the PCs takes the place of James Hendricks. The party is in London, they wander around the streets doing whatever business they have in town, a Specialist in the party spots the ideal opportunity for a quick theft and comes away with the guitar, which, miraculously, turns out is magically helping him play it.
- The party are recruited by "Pink" Floyd to recover the guitar. One at least must be a Catholic agent already or be recruited as such by another NPC. They get messages from Floyd in his pamphlets and have to find Corbett and the guitar for a suitable reward from the Jesuits. If they go on to execute the plan and take out one of the prominent Parliamentary aristocrats then the rewards will be immense, but of course that may mean being sucked into the demonic labyrinth themselves.
- The party are drinking in a London tavern during the downtime after an adventure when Hendricks and his band turn up and play. If any are Ranters

they will be directed towards this pub by their co-religionists as having a sympathetic landlord. It is clear that Hendricks is no ordinary musician, and any magic users in the party feel a definite air of powerful magic about the performance that may be worth investigating further.

- The party are caught up in a demonstration by Martin Marriott and his 'moral majority'. Puritans in the party might be tempted to join him and earn some extra XP for stamping out 'sin', other may be inclined to tell these killjoys where to poke it, but either way they get to hear rumours about Hendricks and possibly meet Corbett hanging around the fringes of the group.
- The party are Parliamentary agents or at least Republican sympathisers. They hear about this character Pink Floyd and start a counter-intelligence operation. They get a tip off from an agent in France that the Jesuits have developed a code involving musical notation – what are they up to?
- One of the PCs has lost his lady love to Hendricks or another member of the band, or has a relative who has suffered such a loss. They hear the odd stories surrounding Hendricks and investigate.
- An NPC contact has gone missing. The last known location was a certain tavern; Hendricks played that tavern and the landlord is unsure quite what occurred on that wild night, but it ended in a brawl. The NPC, and several others who were lost that night, is trapped in the guitar's labyrinth, but to work that out will require some magical divination and speaking to the Hendricks and his acquaintances.
- An Ixixachitl or Shunned One has managed to escape from the guitar into 17th century London. It lurks in the alleys or hides in the river, people are being murdered in horrible ways by the bloody thing (the Shunned One might even have an 'Eye', a ray gun of peculiar effects). Hendricks is well aware of what has happened and is terrified, he pays a PC Magic User or Cleric to investigate. He does not disclose the fact that it climbed out of his guitar; he is addicted to the fame, wealth and pleasures the thing brings him, he just wants someone else to deal with the horrible consequences.

¹At this period in English history race is nowhere near as big a cause of prejudice and bigotry as religion and there is no great animus against blacks, as there was in the 18th and 19th century, though this is growing as a result of slavery; blacks had to be seen as somehow inferior by the proudly 'godly' English in order to justify the increasingly awful conditions they were subjected to on the ever growing plantations in the colonies.

At this period there were white slaves in the Caribbean too – some of the prisoners taken in the later stages of the Civil War ended up that way – but by the end of the 17th century this had faded away to the onerous but theoretically alterable state of indentured labour, while blacks were chattel slaves with no clear route to freedom.

There was probably more racial prejudice at the time against the Irish, long depicted in English literature as barbarians for resisting English feudalism and laws, and more recently for refusing to adopt Protestantism.

Classless Lamentations of the Flame Princess

by Marc "Lord Inar" Gacy

For those of you who like LotFP but don't want to give up the wide range of player choice options when leveling up in a classless system, here is a method that provides such choice, but keeps the character power structure similar to regular LotFP characters.

In actuality, this method makes slightly weaker characters, but the versatility and synergy of mixing abilities makes up for it.

Character Generation and Advancement

Characters get 10 points to start and 4 points per level to spend on Character Features.

One point may be saved and carried over into the next level.

Experience point progression is the same as that of the fighter and halfling, since it is somewhat mid-range and is a nice even number (2,000 XP base).

Every character starts off with the following set of saving throws:
Pa: 14, Po: 13, BW: 16, MD: 14, Ma: 15

Character Features

The following are the various features of the given classes in LotFP, separated into logical groupings for quick reference.

Players may choose from any of these during character generation and advancement for their character, with the only limitations being those listed for each grouping since there are no class restrictions.

1) Hit Points

Every character will get d4 hit points per level (1 hp after 9th level) unless one of the following is taken:

Must be taken each level to have effect, may only be taken once per level

1 pt: *d6 hit points (2 hp after 9th level)*

2 pt: *d8 hit points (3 hp after 9th level)*

3 pt: *d10 hit points (4 hp after 9th level)*

4 pt: *d12 hit points (5 hp after 9th level)*

2) Bonus to hit

May only be taken once during character generation, and only once per level

2 pt: *+1 to hit*

5 pt: *+2 to hit, may only be taken during char. gen.*

3) Saving Throws

May only be taken up to twice during char. gen., and only once every other level (char. gen. counts as 1st level)

2 pt: *+1 to each*

2 pt: *+2 to two of the five saving throws*

1 pt: *+1 to two of the five saving throws*

4) Skill Points

May only be taken up to twice during char. gen., and twice per level.

May not be used on the same skill in one level

1 pt: *+1 point in one skill*

3 pt: *+2 point in one skill*

5) Bonus to Attribute

May only be taken once during char. gen., only once every four levels (char. gen. counts as 1st level) and never on the same attribute

2 pt: *+1 to a given attribute*

6) Spellcasting

Choosing to cast Magic User or Cleric spells makes you Chaotic or Lawful respectively by definition

May only be taken once during char. gen., and only once per level

Cleric Spellcaster: 3 pt: Move up a level in Cleric spellcasting

MU Spellcaster: 4 pt: Move up a level in MU spellcasting

7) Special Abilities

Only need to do each once to get effect
Any number may be taken each level

Combat Techniques

These are the “Fighter” combat techniques

Defend:1 pt: Increase Defense/Parry to a +4 bonus

Press: 1 pt: Gain the Press ability

Spellcasting while wearing armor

By default a character can't cast MU or Cleric spells while more than lightly encumbered.

Heavy Encumbrance Spellcasting: 1 pt: Cast spells while heavily encumbered (like an elf)

Any Encumbrance Spellcasting: 2 pt: May cast spells with any encumbrance (must have taken Heavy Encumbrance Spellcasting)

If able to cast both Cleric and MU spells, must take for each kind of spellcasting individually.

“Racial” and “Class” Effects

These effects are normally associated with a certain race or class, but don't need to be, unless the GM specifies otherwise.

Agile: 2 pt: add +1 to Dex mod and +1 to AC when not surprised; may only take if character is Small (see below)

Aware: 2 pt: only surprised on 1 in d6

Brawny: 2 pt: to increase encumbrance (like a dwarf)

Encumbered Climbing: 2 pt: character may climb while encumbered

Fey-touched: 2 pt: You are considered a member of a Fey race either by birth or through other means (i.e., affected as an Elf in the core rules); you become Chaotic by definition; may only take at char. gen. or at GM discretion; may or may not be able to cast Cleric spells at GM discretion (see Spellcasters and Alignment)

Resilient:2pt: for 1 pt, may increase one additional saving throw by +2 when choosing +1 to each

Skill Expert: 2 pt: with a 6 in a skill, attempt only fails with roll of 6 on two dice

Small: -2 pt: Use medium weapons two-handed and may not use large weapons

Spell Versatility: 2 pt: to memorize an additional spell per level (doesn't affect number of spells that can be cast) NOTE: Memorizing an additional spell is a houserule of mine.

Spell Book: 2 pt: the character starts with a Spell book as described in the rules for a Magic-User. A spellbook is only needed to cast MU spells.

Tough: 2 pt: to allow con bonus to hit points after 9th level

Note about Spellcasters and Alignment

One approach with spellcasters is to simply not allow characters to be both Cleric and MU/Fey (this would be in line with the current LotFP world view).

If you wanted to allow characters to be able to cast both kinds of spells (effectively being both Chaotic and Lawful), you could simply say that whenever a game effect is determined by the character's alignment, you use whichever alignment would have a WORSE effect on the character.

First Level "Class" Builds

These don't correlate 1:1 with the classes in LotFP, but the spirit is there.

Cleric

1d6 hit points: 1 pt
+1 to hit: 2 pt
Saves: +2 Po and MD:
2 pt
Skill: +1 Languages 1
pt
Cleric Spellcaster: 3 pt
Heavy enc.
spellcasting: 1 pt

Fighter

1d8 hit points: 2 pt
+2 to hit: 5 pt
Saves: +1 to all: 2 pt
Press: 1 pt

Magic User

+1 to hit: 2 pt
Saves: +2 Pa and MD:
2 pt
MU Spellcaster: 4 pt
Spell Book: 2 pt

Specialist

1d6 hit points: 1 pt
+1 to hit: 2 pt
Saves: +1 to all: 2 pt
Skill: +1 in one skill: 1
pt
Skill: +2 in one skill: 3
pt
Defend: 1pt

Dwarf

1d10 hit points: 3 pt
+1 to hit: 2 pt
Saves: +1 to all: 2 pt
Skill: +1 Architecture 1
pt
Brawny: 2 pt

Elf

1d6 hit points: 1 pt
+1 to hit: 2 pt
Skill: +1 Search: 1 pt
MU Spellcaster: 4 pt
Heavy enc.
spellcasting: 1 pt
Fey: 1 pt

Halfling

1d6 hit points: 1 pt
Saves +1 to all: 2 pt
Saves +1 to all: 2 pt
Skill: +2 Stealth: 3 pt
Attribute: Dex +1: 2 pt
Small: -2 pt
Agile: 2pt

Assassin

1d6 hit points: 1 pt
+1 to hit: 2 pt
Saves: +2 Po and MD:
2 pt
Skill: +1 Sneak attack:
1 pt
Skill: +2 Stealth: 3 pt

Barbarian

1d10 hit points: 3 pt
+1 to hit: 2 pt
Saves: +1 to all: 2 pt
Attribute: Str +1: 2 pt
Press: 1 pt

Bard

1d6 hit points: 1 pt
+1 to hit: 2 pt
Saves: +1 to all: 2 pt
Skill: +1 Languages: 1
pt
MU Spellcaster: 4 pt

Blademaster

1d6 hit points: 1 pt
+2 to hit: 5 pt
Saves: +2 Pa and
BW: 2 pt
Press: 1 pt
Defend: 1pt

Druid

1d8 hit points: 2 pt
+1 to hit: 2 pt
Saves: +1 to all: 2 pt
Skill: +1 Bushcraft 1
pt
Cleric Spellcaster: 3 pt

Healer

1d6 hit points: 1 pt
Saves: +2 Pa and Po: 2
pt
Attribute: Wis +1: 2 pt
Cleric Spellcaster: 3 pt
Spell Versatility: 2 pt

Leader

1d8 hit points: 2 pt
+1 to hit: 2 pt
Saves: +1 to all: 2 pt
Skill: +1 Languages 1
pt
Attribute: Cha +1: 2
pt
Defend: 1 pt

Monk

1d8 hit points: 2 pt
+1 to hit: 2 pt
Saves: +1 to all: 2 pt
Cleric Spellcaster: 3 pt
Defend: 1 pt

Paladin

1d8 hit points: 2 pt
+1 to hit: 2 pt
Saves: +2 Po and
BW: 2 pt
Cleric Spellcaster: 3 pt
Heavy enc.
spellcasting: 1 pt

Ranger

1d8 hit points: 2 pt
+1 to hit: 2 pt
Saves: +1 to all: 2 pt
Skill: +2 Bushcraft: 3
pt
Defend: 1 pt

Thief

1d6 hit points: 1 pt
Saves: +1 to all: 2 pt
Skill: +2 Stealth: 3 pt
Skill: +1 Climb: 3 pt
Encumbered Climber:
2pt

Sorcerer

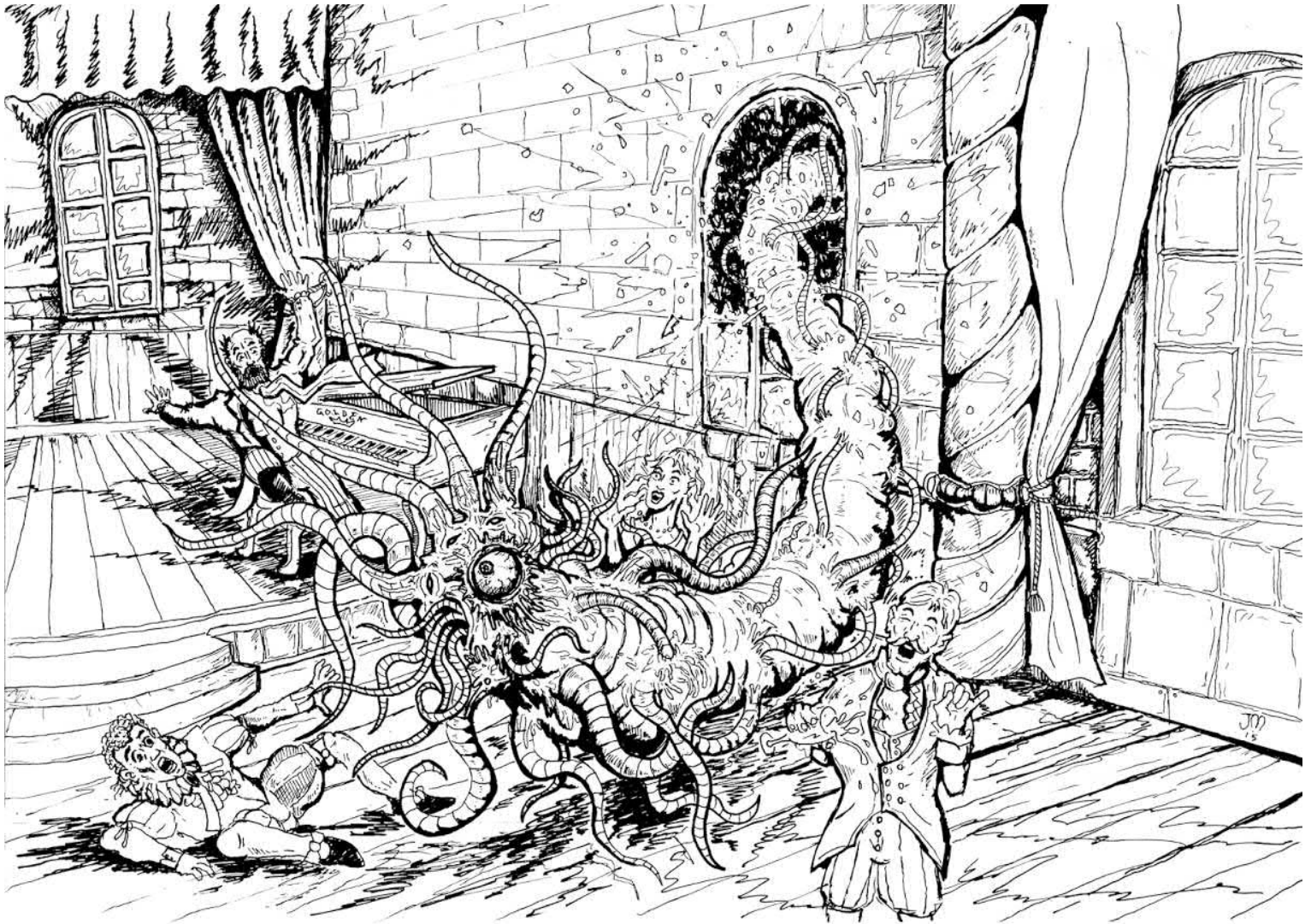
+1 to hit: 2 pt
Saves: +2 BW and Ma:
2 pt
MU Spellcaster: 4 pt
Spell Versatility: 2 pt

Weird Scientist

1d6 hit points: 1 pt
Skill: +2 Tinker: 3 pt
Saves: +1 to all: 2 pt
MU Spellcaster: 4 pt

SMOTHER

by Luke Gearing

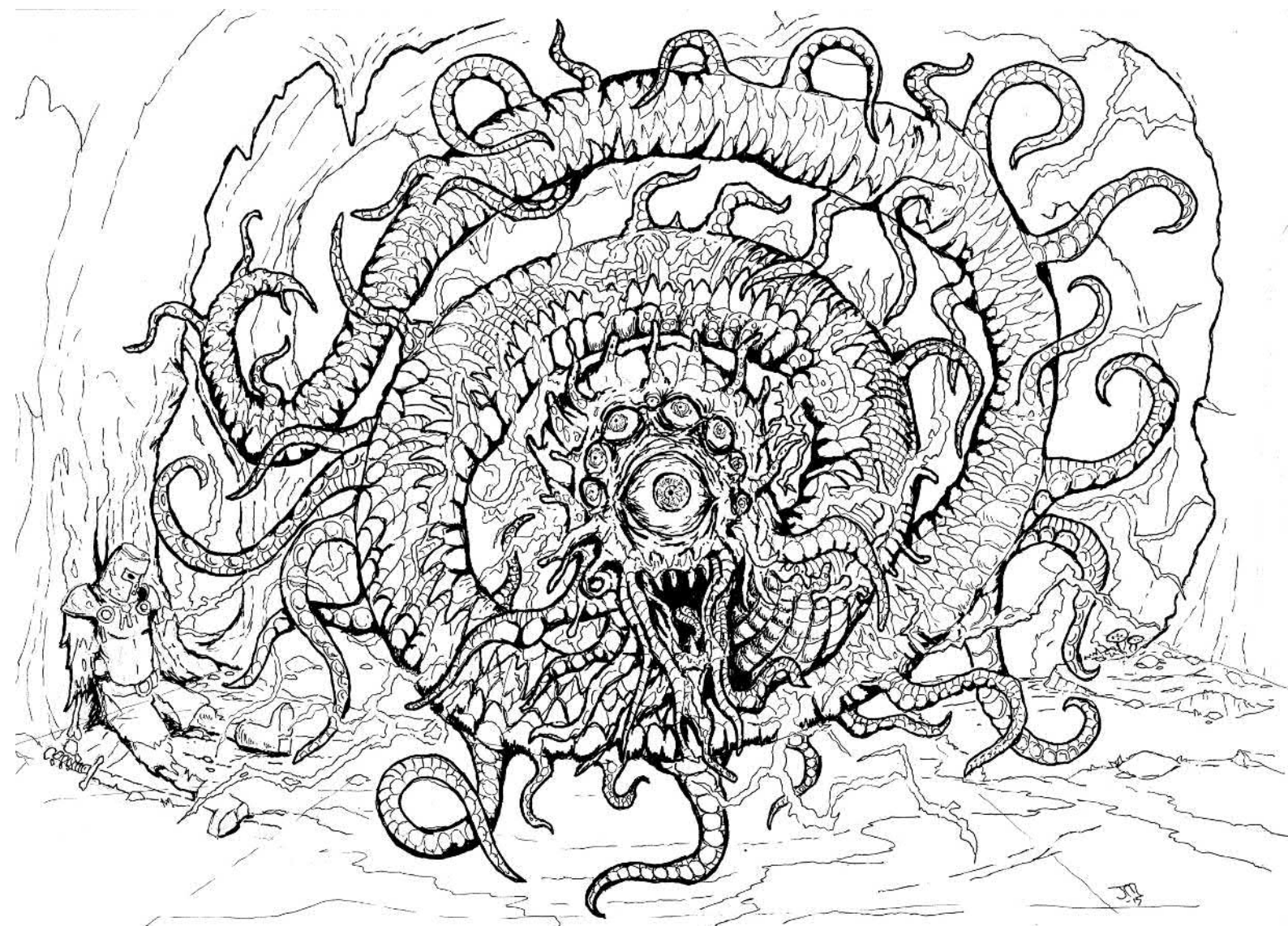


Not so much an intelligence as a force, a reaction. Like the passing of the years, tectonic plates and glaciers. Inevitable. It forms like a fetid mold, growing in sites stained with the premeditated negation of life. Killing fields. The lairs of sacrificial cults. The hanging tree. The bleak hopelessness of these slices in time impregnate the area with the seed of something terrible. Smother is the result.

Silence and shadow bound together and eternally hungry for its own antithesis, bright lights and riotous noise. As it drains the sound around it, it grows, and so too does its funnel, the area around it which is so cruelly robbed of all sound. Tasting the area around it, the unknowable centre of the localised calamity will roll over the landscape towards the loudest sounds, drinking them down all the way. Though a zone of silence, spells requiring verbal components still operate as they should – only the sound is consumed, the action itself still occurs.

It also reacts to light, becoming agitated and hastened in its presence. Flailing pseudopods emerge from the inky centre twice as often in the presence of torchlight, and four times as often in sunlight. In direct contrast to this, the darker the surroundings the slower it moves, with complete darkness (magical or conventional) paralysing it entirely.

Smother kills those it needs most: creatures capable of sustained noise. This seems to be entirely by accident, the flailing, grasping pseudopods merely a method of getting closer to the beloved noisemaker rather than a true strike. The shadowy tendrils teem with incredibly powerful vibrations from the distilled sound, and some of this is discharged on contact. Characters hit by a tendril should take 1d8 damage and roll under their constitution. On failure, a bone has been painfully fractured a thousand times over, making it functionally useless. Table 1 gives a method of choosing the bone and the effect of such an injury.



The only real manner of dealing with Smother is to either starve it or to entrap it in darkness. Just as light makes it active, the lack thereof renders it immobile, although it can and does continue to feed on sound around it, slowly growing via the consumption. Isolating it from all sources of sound cause it to slowly wither, the bulk of it reducing as it consumes its own vital energies to sustain its existence. Finally, the remaining shred will snuff itself out, and the Smother will be no more. Magically creating these effects is just as, if not more effective than naturally inducing them.

Table 1

<i>Arm, Left</i> 1	Whilst whole, the limb is incredibly painful and use is awkward – all actions using this limb are taken at a penalty of 2, and deal a point of damage as the fractures worsen from stress. Items held in this hand will be dropped, as will two-handed oversized items.
<i>Arm, Right</i> 2	
<i>Leg, Left</i> 3	Putting any degree of weight on the leg is nigh-unbearable. Movement is halved unless the character is willing to take a point of damage to move normally. Characters who are heavily encumbered take the point of damage when moving at all, as well as an additional point to move at normal speeds. Jumping is impossible. If both legs are shattered, the characters crawls at quarter speed or else takes 3 points of damage per round for normal movement. Heavily encumbered characters pass out if they attempt to move from pain alone, unless they make a constitution save, which simply leaves them exhausted and about 1 foot further along.
<i>Leg, Right</i> 4	
<i>Ribs</i> 5,6,7	Each shattered rib causes a cumulative -1 penalty on actions. Each time this result is rolled, 1d3 ribs are shattered. If more than 7 are shattered, the character is unable to utilize their upper body, and packs must be discarded or else cause the character to pass out from pain without continuous constitution checks.
<i>Skull</i> 8	The skull is riddled with thousands of fractures as the brain is vibrated at such frequencies to render the character unconscious unless two constitution saves can be made. In either case, any violent motion has a 70% chance of killing the character as the structure of the skull fails. The fall from a standing character falling unconscious is easily enough to trigger this.

DREAM TROLLS

Anxious P.

(The Dröm Antastare, Molester of Dreams)

A Dream Troll is either a Troll who has exceeded its constraints of earthly animalism and slid into a nap that woke itself up, or it isn't a Troll at all. This is of little concern, for once the creature has been encountered and left, it becomes difficult to fully recall the experience.

It could be said that a Dream Troll was sitting on a short stool with crumbling soil for flesh, whispering (maybe yelling, who knows?) or perhaps it was seen beneath a bed that was impossibly small for the Troll's size, dripping hot black rubber into puddles containing small bits of coral. It sang a childhood melody but got all the words wrong.

Truth be told, it is the senseless prerogative of a Dream Troll to manipulate the memory of itself in the minds of those subconsciouses to which it has laid taste. Some leave its presence having been thoroughly traumatized but without recollection as to why. Forever sleepless, until the Dream Troll returns to claim their fragile eyes. It lives on bloodshot and the dust from floors. It finds its victims at their weakest of moments. For an individual may only see a Dream Troll either during their most tired state, just before falling unconscious, or at the point in waking where the dream has faded and reality emerges. In any case, the victim remains in such a transitional state until the encounter is resolved.

It is also said that drunks often find themselves entertaining Dream Trolls after especially harsh binges.

The face that is seen, but not always remembered, is to be considered 'painfully goofy', with eyes (sometimes many) that stare blankly and tell of a confused guilt. Inciting a response somewhere between motherly concern and murderous disgust. Its bulk, reaching no less than 10 feet in height, is shrouded in a hooded robe of obsidian shards and black water that seem to house a constant state of shifting geometric and languid forms.



A victim of the Troll's companionship may travel anywhere within the space between wakefulness and slumber, perhaps believing themselves to already be awake or even lucid dreaming. But the Troll will follow you, stalk you, sometimes carrying cakes or farming equipment, parcels filled with written lies or the flayed remains of a Dwarven child. One may quicken their stride and attempt to cut a street corner only to find that the angle straightens out as you grow closer, until the road merges with its other side becoming just another wall on a linear block. And yeah, it's still following you. And you know it. But you don't see it at first. You've lost something. You see what might be a huge, lumbering creature filled with phantasmal substances. Horribly innocent eyes staring you down from some significant distance. But that five-legged prostitute with the blood of your first dog in its mouth has finally disappeared. Wait, when did you remember this? "Was I in town yesterday?" The creature looks to be growing closer. You better climb the rest of that ladder if you want to cross the stream. "How did I get here?"

HD 10 HP 40 Speed 1/2 Human

Armor as chain

Immune to Ranged Weapons and Fire/Sleep spells

Attack/Special

A Dream Troll may employ a number of effects while stalking its hypnopompic victim. Roll a d10 every other round that a PC is in the dream-state, in the case that an effect isn't already in play and only when a character fails a Save versus Magic at the beginning of said round. If the Save is successful, something in the immediate environment noticeably changes. i.e. PC turns around to see the Dream Troll on a city street, turns back around and finds herself descending an enormous staircase covered in water.

1. The Troll carries some sort of pungent food. The smell causes the target to either rapidly gain or lose weight depending on whether or not they can see the Troll.

(Save versus Breath Weapon or gain/lose d100 plus 50 lbs.)

2. The Troll may reach out from an impossible distance and touch the target, causing them to relive a near-exact moment from the party's last session. Only, it takes twice as long to make an attack and speech comes out in the form of guttural drips. Scenario lasts until resolved.

(Save versus Paralyze. May attack Trolls extended arm if successful.)

3. Target is returned to the place and moment that they first fell victim to the Troll. The Troll is not present. It feels as if the PC is finally waking up, but they aren't. The Dream Troll will be waiting for them in a nearby, unseen place. Reset.

4. The target's consciousness is swapped with the nearest object in view. They must take the perspective of this object/entity for two rounds while watching their body from a spectator's position. This is difficult on the mind. If the first thing seen is the Troll itself, the target loses d4 points of intelligence. One of these points is permanent.

(Save versus Magic when returning to the PC's original body or PC shares its mind-space with that of the object/entity she just switched with. If the object/entity was a cherry pie then PC persistently thinks about pie for d4 days. This stacks until Intelligence is full spent and death/insanity occurs.)

5. Troll engages in basic melee combat. For every successful attack made against the Troll, the PC somehow kills a small animal that wasn't there before. If the attack was critical, it kills a previously unseen elderly person but the PC takes damage. A failed attack roll counts as a successful hit against the Troll. A critical fail means that combat is now capable of being engaged normally. The Dream Troll will retreat to stalking if it loses half of its hit points.

Dream Troll Melee Attack: The Dream Trolls arm transforms into an obsidian cleaver, black water spilling from its edges. Obsidian Arm-Cleaver: +4 To-Hit / d10 Damage

6. Activity begins looping itself and speeding up. PC must Save versus Poison or vomit and fever occurs. -2 to all rolls until water is consumed.

7. PC weeps uncontrollably for two rounds. At which point blood will begin to violently pour from the tear ducts for d4 damage.

8. Troll rushes target and attempts to grapple its victim, stuffing them into its robe. For each subsequent round entrapped inside the Troll, the PC must switch an ability score with another. Never the same twice. Magic does not work in the robe but water will hurt the troll, causing it to urinate violently for d10 +5 points of damage, spitting you out. All the while it's as though an earthquake is occurring but the PC isn't moving.

9. The troll melts into a pool of Other Feelings. If submerged, the target loses ability to manifest proper affect. The pool can be injured by non-magical melee weapons only.

(Save versus Poison or reduce half your Charisma score for number of weeks half the total of the new Charisma score.)

10. The Troll may craft an intensely traumatic event of its own design and via touch will attempt to implant said memory into the targets mind. PC makes a Save versus Magic. If successful, the target may make an immediate to hit roll causing the Troll to incur the memory instead. At which point it will become obviously aroused, as if paralyzed by ecstasy and is considered prone for a free subsequent attack. If unsuccessful, PC suffers d4 traumatic episodes per week. Episodes are treated as failed paralyze saves. If all saves are failed, the Dream Troll will come during the PC's next period of sleep and take their eyes for consumption.

Eye of the Bad Child

The Dream Troll's gaze may effect a target in the following ways:

- 1) Hair greys completely and PC becomes incontinent (d4 weeks).
- 2) Left leg atrophies (-2 Dexterity until healed).
- 3) Blindness in one eye, remaining eye constantly sees brightly colored auras (d4 weeks).
- 4) Nightmares for d4 days (heal at half the normal rate for sleeping). May only be employed during close combat/interaction or if the PC stares at the Dream Troll for a full two rounds.

Also, staring into the eye will cause the Troll to involuntarily move into close proximity to the PC, at risk of amnesia. It is one of two ways to force it into melee combat. The other being that the PC must close their eyes for a duration of time equal to feet of distance.

The only way to leave this liminal state is to either kill the Dream Troll, or to remove oneself from the Troll's sight for four full rounds. Player must relay the experience to another individual within two minutes upon waking/returning or else the entire memory is lost forever.