

WINTERBLIGHT'S CHALLENGE™

PRESENTS

BLIND

MAN'S

ALLEY

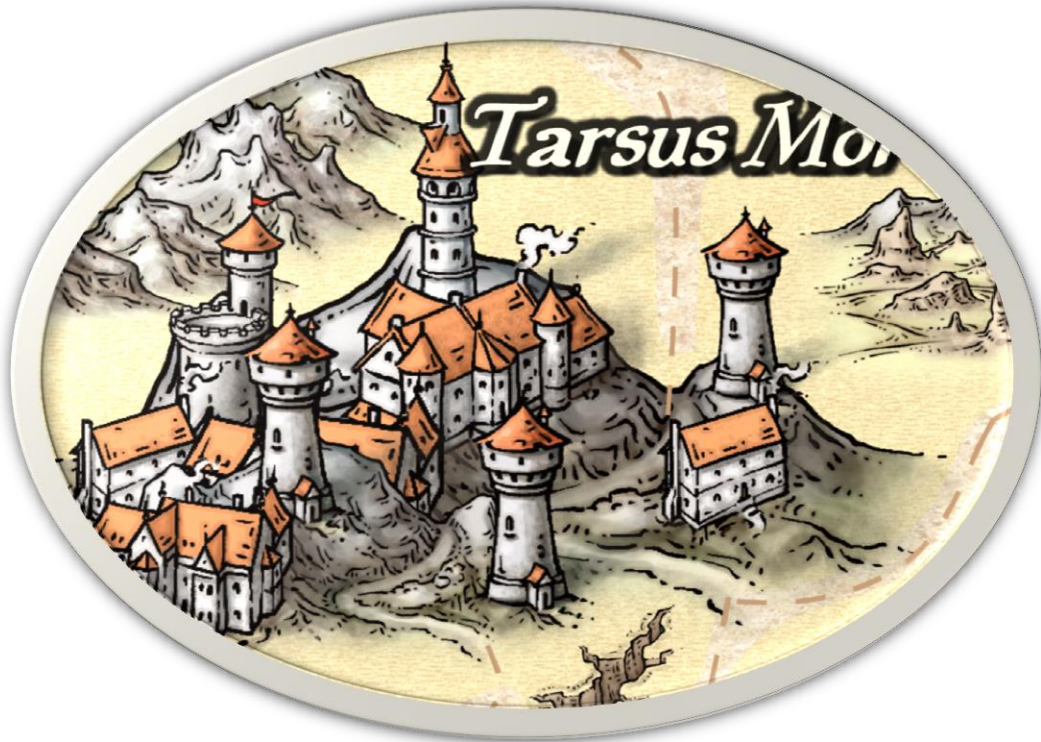
A MINI SETTING

WRITTEN BY ALLEN FARR

WBCMS 01

DESIGNED FOR USE WITH
**OLD-SCHOOL
ESSENTIALS**

THE BEST VIEW IN THE CITY. JUST DON'T LOOK DOWN!



This mini-setting presents a series of locations, personalities, floor plans and adventure hooks. In Blind Man's Alley, the gravity-defying buildings cling as tight to the cliff edge as its residents do to their purse strings. So steep is its winding street that the city watch looks the other way rather than brave its treacherous inclines.

Originally designed as a mini-expansion for the adventure module, *Betrayal at Tarsus Mor*, Blind Man's Alley is completely generic and can be used as a location in almost any fantasy city campaign.

Requires *Old-School Essentials* Core Rules. Old-School Essentials is a trademark of Necrotic Gnome. The trademark and Old-School Essentials logo are used with permission of Necrotic Gnome, under license.



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Commissioned by?

Winterblight's challenge was born in the now distant past when the author was publically challenged to write a sourcebook for a well-known publisher. Having never before put pen to paper, the author of course accepted. After years of toil, the author eventually prevailed, as the hero in any good story should.

Now, Winterblight's Challenge wants to put you in charge. If you have purchased any product bearing the Winterblight's Challenge logo and have an idea you would like to see brought to life, we would love to hear about it. It could be a simple idea for a short adventure or a mini-setting, alternatively, it could be readout detailing an alien homeworld or planetary system – let your imagination run wild. All we need is a few paragraphs or bullet points with the seed of your idea and we will do the rest.

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Blind Man's Alley

What goes up must come down. No truer word has ever been spoken, but in Blind Man's Alley, it's the manner of the descent that's important.

~ Madame Zune – Fortune Teller ~

Blind Man's Alley

...Steep inclines, treacherous edges and cramped housing. Blind Man's Alley isn't so much built on the edge of a precipice as dangling from it. Without a doubt, the steepest and most treacherous of the city's streets, Blind Man's Alley is notorious for all manner of vertical related accidents. Indeed, its only tavern, the Bouncing Barrel is named after one such incident.

No one is quite sure how the street got its name, but many point to the fact that it's not just animals that need blinkers when climbing the steep winding way. Often pedestrians are forced to the edge of the road, and with loose cobbles and the sheer drop only inches away, those without a head for heights tilt their hats so they can't see the drop. There is little or no fencing along the roadside, and

only where buildings are present is the long drop temporarily hidden from view. It is perhaps fortunate that the higher the climb, the denser the building becomes.

The residents of Blind Man's Alley are a hardy bunch, few choosing to live there for the impressive view at the top. As one of the cheapest places in the city for accommodation, its cheap rents attract the desperate or those just wanting to avoid being seen elsewhere in the city. It's mostly ignored by the city watch, most of whom simply aren't fit to chase anyone up the steep inclines and so it has become a haven for those seeking to avoid the law.

The Hermitage

Before there were streets or houses, the column of rock on which Blind Man's Alley is built was known as Hermit's Rock. As far back as anyone can remember there has always been a hermitage at the top. Situated on the edge of the only sizable piece of level ground, the hermitage is built under the shelter of a large overhang of rock. Consisting of four small rooms, the hermitage is more spacious than many of the cramped gravity-defying buildings that cling precariously along the edges of Blind Man's Alley today.

In front of the hermitage is a stand of ancient trees, their elongated boughs low to the ground, sculpted by the prevailing wind. Many are blackened and twisted by successive lightning strikes, yet stubbornly they refuse to release their grip on the rock beneath. The trees were originally planted for coppicing, but with the construction of a cobbled street, firewood became more accessible and left to nature, the trees grew to maturity. Home to a flock of ravens, the trees are one of the highlights of the trip to the top, many paying the hermit for skewers of small insects to feed them. During celestial events, it can become crowded at the top as people from all across the city flock to it. Many have tried to build there, but because of frequent lightning strikes and objections from the Alley's residents, this has been abandoned, leaving the hermitage as the solitary dwelling.

Murmot Col

Currently, Murmot Col is the resident hermit of Blind Man's Alley. For a small donation of food or coin, Murmot proudly shows visitors around his home. With many of the walls inscribed with unusual artwork, strange runes and quotes in unusual

languages, many are eager to see the philosophising of previous residents, some of their 'wall scrawls' as the locals call them are ancient. Murmot spends less time in isolation as one would expect of a hermit, and he can often be seen talking to just about anyone who climbs to the top.

Murmot is not a hermit, but a spy employed by the city, the ravens his messenger birds. Murmot is in a perfect position to see what goes on in the city and talks to all manner unsuspecting folk. Indeed, a chance conversation has led him to the discovery that there is a slavery ring operating in the area, something he hopes to get to the bottom of.

Murmot's chief charge, however, is deciphering the runes in the hermitage. His superiors believe they have some special significance. Anyone he invites in who shows any sign of comprehension when they view the 'wall scrawls' are marked for surveillance and occasionally abducted.

Having deciphered some of the text himself, he keeps it hidden. The text led him to a set of secret stairs at the back of the hermitage. Vertical for much of the climb, these stairs are dangerous. They are almost impossible to detect, expertly carved to look natural and

hidden by overhangs, crags and outcroppings. They descend into an area prone to rock falls, which is all but avoided. Indeed, they come out close to an old house almost completely buried in fallen stone.

A small but sturdy man in the prime of his life, Murmot's 'hermit act' makes him look much older than he is. His bushy black beard is bleached grey, and both his stoop and limp are only part of the show, only his bright green eyes and full set of teeth give him away as a younger man. He mitigates this by using the shadow of his cowl in combination with his stoop. Always armed with a twin set of daggers beneath his hermit's robes, Mormot's long sword, and bow are hidden in plain view in the hermitage. If asked they are simply reminders of the life he has left behind.

Murmot Col

AC 6, HD 5 (22 hp), Att 1 × Sword (1d8) or Longbow (1d6), THAC0 17, MV 120' (40'), SV D12 W13 P11 B14 S13 (T5), ML 8, AL Neutral, XP 175, NA 1, TT T

Adventure Hook – Feather Fall

Something is eating Murmot Col's ravens. He hasn't time to lay a trap, so he hires the player

characters while he is away on business. The player characters witness a gargoyle taking one of the ravens and when they follow it back to its lair they discover it's quite literally feathering its nest. In the nest, they discover a number of message capsules, which out Murmot as a government agent, but worse, some catastrophe is about to happen and the player characters realise Murmot knows nothing about it.

The Bouncing Barrel

Marking the halfway point of the climb to the top of Blind Man's Alley, The Bouncing Barrel is by far the largest building on the street. 'On the street' is a misnomer, for most of the building, is, in fact, hanging from it, held in place by a series of struts braced against the cliff face. While many buildings overhang the cliff's edge, few so blatantly tempt fate as The Bouncing Barrel. With over one hundred rooms for rent, the halfway point in the climb is the busiest part of the route, and as a consequence, the most dangerous. Crowds of people pushing past one another on the narrow street have not for the first time resulted in a fatality. Excessive drinking has also caused its fair share of falls, not all of them accidental. Large nets are

deployed in the immediate vicinity on either side of the tavern, but beyond that, it's a free fall to the bottom. The nets themselves cause issues as the local children from time to time throw themselves over the edge into the nets for the thrill of it. Unfortunately, the nets are narrow and an overzealous jump can result in a plummet to the bottom.

Both the dining rooms and taprooms of the Bouncing Barrel are lively, the exception being the Sunset Lounge, which has a large western facing window with an incredible view. It is a place to relax or have a hushed conversation. The rooms in the Tavern are tiny and as threadbare as they are cheap. Many find they are unable to sleep in the tavern, the slightest noise coming through the wafer-thin walls, and all through the night the constant creaking of the tavern reminiscent of being on a ship.

Cael and Tarik

The current owners of the Bouncing Barrel are Cael and Tarik, the Fury brothers. Retired soldiers, the brothers are controversial figures in the city. Several years ago, a mining caravan carrying gold and smelted ores was attacked by unknown assailants after it had become lost.

The slaughter was terrible and it was believed at the time that no one had survived. It was almost a year later that Cael and Terik staggered through the city gates dehydrated and muttering unintelligibly. The loot from the caravan was never found, nor were the perpetrators. To some, Cael and Tarik are heroes that survived against all odds, to others they are traitors, some believing they were somehow responsible and believe the Bouncing Barrel merely a tool to allow them to launder their ill-gotten gains. Whatever the truth, the brothers poured everything they had into fixing up the tavern, and to date, their investment appears to be paying off.

Cael is a wiry agile man, with enough scars that he can't possibly hope to cover them all. His eyes constantly sparkle with mischief, and he can be found almost every night mingling and joking with the guests. Cael is a font of knowledge about everything and everyone and is happy to spend the day talking. Tarik is almost the complete opposite in all respects. Squat and muscle-bound, Tarik spends most of his time glaring at people, as if just waiting for someone to step over the line, however, his mere presence is enough to ensure there is little in the way of trouble when he is about.

Cael Fury

AC 6, HD 3 (21 hp), Att 1 × Short Sword (1d6+1), THAC0 19, MV 120' (40'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S15 (F3), ML 7, AL Neutral, XP 35, NA 1, TT T, +1 to attack and damage rolls

Tarik Fury

AC 7, HD 3 (20 hp), Att 1 × Short Sword (1d6+1), THAC0 19, MV 120' (40'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F3), ML 9, AL Neutral, XP 35, NA 1, TT T, +1 to attack and damage rolls

Adventure Hook - Survivor

Cael and Tarik hear reports that someone has arrived in the city claiming to be a survivor of the caravan attack they both survived. The player characters are hired by Cael, who is most definitely on edge. The Fury brothers want to discover who is making these claims and if there is any truth in them. Those behind the rumours are trying to flush Cael and Tarik out, hoping they will make a false move and try to make a run with the fortune in missing gold they believe the brothers have stashed.

Winch Houses

Given the steepness of some sections of Blind Man's Alley, it can be difficult for all but the most sure-footed beasts of burden to

carry cargo. There are several winch houses along the route, each run by a gang of hauliers.

Constantly feuding with each other, the hauliers have become expert saboteurs as they wage their own private little war of attrition on the competition as they even the score for slights imagined or otherwise.

With space storage space at a premium, the winch houses jut out precariously over the cliff's edge, giving the impression they are liable to pitch forward into the abyss at any time. Many of the hauliers' bunk in the winch houses and given different locations and space constraints, each winch house is unique in its layout.

The largest winch house is run by Mercen Dral, a former guardsman that travelled with a trading outfit called the Caravan of Fools.

Known as the Jilted Sunrise, a reference to the crew's working hours, Mercen's winch house is unique in that its treadwheel hangs out over the cliff's edge. The wheel runners as they are known, seem unconcerned that should one rung of the wheel break they would likely fall to their death.

Not having the wheel in the building leaves more room for cargo storage, giving Mercen an advantage over the competition. The competition, however, earns

their money in other ways, and Hergman Skyfrost, the owner of the Razor's Edge winch house, is in league with a slaving ring operating out of the area.

Mercen Dral

Despite most of his muscle having now turned to paunch, Mercen Dral is still a formidable figure and few would have any desire to tussle with him. Unlike most of the residents of Blind Man's Alley, Mercen Dral has seen the world beyond the city. He has fought monsters few would believe existed and seen the world turn on itself, its people persecuting one another in the name of religion and inflicting terrible cruelty for the amusement of others. Of all the terrible things he has witnessed, it's slavery that brings Mercen Dral's blood to the boil, which is ironic, for the very outfit Mercen Dral worked for, the Caravan of Fools, is working with one of Mercen Dral's greatest rivals, Hergman Skyfrost, owner of the Razor's Edge.

Mercen Dral

AC 7, HD 5 (47 hp), Att 1 × Short Sword (1d6+1), THAC0 17, MV 90' (30'), SV D10 W11 P12 B13 S14 (F5), ML 9, AL Neutral, XP 175, NA 1, TT T, Note: +1 to attack and damage rolls

The most unique of the winch houses is the Gibbet's Fall, run by Stansen Mehn. The Gibbet's Fall handles little in the way of cargo but specialises in passengers and the occasional live animal. There are three lifts in all, one nothing more than sling net, the other two are actual sets of gibbets that have been reworked to provide a comfortable journey. The Gibbet's Fall is simply a small building holding a fearsome set of vicious-looking gears and a series of counterweights. The gibbets are the fastest way to the top, rising as fast as the passenger is brave enough to travel.

Stansen Mehn

Tall, well-built and well-dressed, Stansen Mehn oversees the day to day operations of the Gibbet's Fall. Unlike the other hauliers, Stansen is a businessman and has a hand in many ventures. Stansen has a secret, however, for he is also the royal executioner. Stansen just happened to be in the right place in the right frame of mind when he was offered the executioner's axe, and he took it up willingly. However, he soon regretted that decision. Despite the lucrative terms and conditions he wants free of the burden but has unfortunately become a favourite of the royal family, who refuse to

release him from his pledge. He can't unmask himself, for that would be treason, but if someone was to discover his identity he would likely be released from the position. He doesn't care about the danger of being uncovered, only that he gets free of the job with his honour intact. The Gibbet's Fall is his idea of a clue to his true occupation, but as yet no one is any the wiser.

Referred to as to the puppeteer by his crew, Stansen is well respected in the community, but given the higher than average density of the criminal element in Blind Man's Alley, it's likely that if his true identity is uncovered this is unlikely to remain the case.

Stansen Mehn

AC 9, HD 2 (8 hp), Att 1 × Executioner's Axe (1d8+3), THAC0 19, MV 120' (40'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F2), ML 8, AL Neutral, XP 25, NA 1, TT T, Note: +3 to attack and damage rolls, two-handed weapon

Hag & bone

Every street has it's larger than life character, and in Blind Man's Alley that title belongs to Arle Forn, the self-proclaimed Hag and Bone woman. Along with a mule called Cinder, Arle travels the city with her small cart gathering all

manner of junk and unwanted belongings. Most evenings she can be seen with her mule struggling up the steep inclines, her arrival announced by jeers, the trading of insults and the heckling of the haulier crews. Anyone witnessing these scenes can expect to hear all manner of colourful insults and gestures. Arle is as stubborn as her mule and refuses to use the haulier's services, claiming she wouldn't trust them if she reared them. They, in turn, regard her as an accident waiting to happen and wait the day that her 'clapped out donkey' collapses under the strain. Once a week Arle leaves Blind Man's Alley with a cart bulging with repaired clothing, bags of buttons, sorted metals, powered bone and other materials for sale to customers across the city. Known for her conspiracy theories, Arle has an opinion of just about everything. Arle's home is also her business, Hag & Bone. The tall narrow building has four floors, and is one of the tallest in the alley and is instantly recognisable as it teeters over the alley as opposed to most other buildings that teeter over the cliff edge.

Arle Forn

The daughter of rich parents she can barely remember, Arle was separated from her family during a

riot, along with her sister, Cerule. Left to fend for themselves, Arle and Cerule scrounged for food and shelter wherever they could find it. Arle awoke one morning to discover Cerule missing. Whether Cerule simply wandered off or was kidnapped remains a mystery, but to this day Arle walks the city streets hoping to catch a glimpse of her sister. Over the years of searching, Arle has discovered several lost children. Some she has managed to reunite with their family, and those she has not she has taken pity, smuggling them home in her cart and giving them a roof over their head. With her middle years passing her by, Arle's unkempt, wild-haired look gives the impression of just another crazy old lady wandering the city. She is anything but. Everything she does is the result of careful consideration. She has never given up hope of finding her sister and in the process has found a true calling in life.

Arle Forn

AC 8, HD 2 (7hp), Att 1 × Dagger (1d4), THAC0 19, MV 120' (40'), SV D13 W14 P13 B16 S15 (T2), ML 6, AL Neutral, XP 20, NA 1, TT T

Adventure Hook – Little Sister

Arle befriends the player characters, possibly by pulling them out of a tight spot. Shortly after she befriends them, the player characters get word that Arle has been arrested for kidnapping some noble's child. Getting to talk to Arle isn't easy, but eventually, the player characters are granted permission for a short visit. Arle explains the child looked exactly like her lost sister, the resemblance uncanny. Arle only tried to talk to her, grabbing the child's arm when she tried to run off. Arle confides in the player characters, telling them about the orphans and is worried the kidnapping charge will stick if anyone finds out. She begs the player characters to look in on the orphans to see if they need anything and if possible find out about the noble lord that is pressing charges. Arle had a brother that she was separated from along with her parents. Is it possible that the child she had seen could have been his? Could it be her lost sister's child? Could it actually be her sister, perhaps kidnapped by some cult that has possessed her with a demon or some other spirit, the possession preserving her age and the noble, the cult's leader, wants Arle out of the way?

The Safe House

From the outside, this building looks about as normal as a building on Blind Man's Alley gets, yet it's anything but. Run by Balder Mason, the building sits among a cluster of houses close to the top of the alley and is just one of many safe houses Balder Mason operates across the city. In short, Balder Mason is the go-to landlord for those with a price on their heads or who just don't want to be found.

If you need a bolt hole, have enough cash and know the right people, it's likely you will end up in one of Balder Mason's safe houses. The safe house in Blind Man's Alley has six rooms, each one self-contained and well-stocked. Each of the rooms is designed for one person, two at a squeeze. Although it doesn't appear to be, the building is constructed on stilts allowing a generous space under the building to accommodate crawlspaces, which can be accessed via a trapdoor located under the bed in each room. On top of this, each room has a small panic room, which is a ladder that leads to a hatch in the roof. As the safe house is taller than the houses downslope, it is possible for the surefooted to leap from building to

building should the need to escape arise. Currently, the entire safe house is being used by the Brotherhood of the Black Dune Sea, a gang of slavers who operate chapters in almost every major city. The Brotherhood are in league with Lafaddius Eversweet, the owner of the Caravan of Fools, a retired arena gladiator who cons young men and women into leaving the safety of their small towns and villages for a chance to see the city, only to sell them into slavery, with those they left behind none the wiser.

Balder Mason

Morals and ideals are for the fools that simply don't know better, and Balder Mason knows better. Balder Mason has seen the world at its worst, stared it in the face and survived everything it threw and him. Indentured to the architect and master mason, Ohadi Builder, Balder worked happily for years on a prestigious building project for one of the largest fortifications ever built. Feeling like he had a purpose in life, Balder threw himself into his work, soon becoming Ohadi's foreman. It was too late when they realised the passages they were building were intended to be their tombs, for so secret was the project that they had been

condemned to death even before construction had started, thus, preserving the secret. As his comrades were slaughtered, Balder destroyed a keystone collapsing a large section of the fortification. Luck was on Balder's side that day. The fortress was on the banks of a river and somehow Balder survived not only the fall and the avalanche of rock, but the raging river that swept him to safety. Now Balder uses his skills building tunnels, passageways and secret doors to hide those others want to kill. It matters not what the reason is.

Balder's unusually pale skin contrasts sharply with his long black hair, something that makes him instantly recognisable. His pale skin is a result of the trauma of his escape from the fortress. His eyes remain haunted by the experience and the intensesness of his gaze makes most people nervous. Balder builds all his safe houses by himself, that way, all the secrets are his. Though Balder is no longer a young man, he labours hard maintaining the physique of a man twenty years younger. Balder knows nothing of blades and bows, but give him a hammer and he can create or destroy in equal measure.

Balder Mason

AC 8, HD 2 (10 hp), Att 1 × Hammer (1d6+2), THAC0 19, MV 120' (40'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F2), ML 9, AL Chaotic, XP 20, NA 1, TT T, +2 to attack and damage rolls, two-handed weapon

Fortune's Favour

Located at the very foot of Blind Man's Alley, Fortune's Favour is a fortune-telling service run by Cera Zune, or Madame Zune as she prefers to be known.

Ostentatiously painted and featuring an awning bedecked with all manner of pseudo magical symbols, Fortune's Favour would be the perfect landmark for Blind Man's Alley if it weren't for the fact that Blind Man's Alley is already a landmark in its own right.

The shop is a small affair with an upstairs living area, with some additional storage space in the rear. Outside the shopfront is what the locals affectionately call the 'bone beast.' A bulbous installation constructed from thousands of pieces of intricately connected pieces of bone. Sticking out at seemingly random points are the skulls of various creatures, their jaws open wide. Passers-by are encouraged to place their arms through a set of jaws of their choice and rummage around

inside. It's especially popular with children, whose screams of terror and delight can be heard on most days. Some find small pieces of vellum with personalised prophecies, or cryptic messages, while others report feeling something 'alive' brushing against their arms. How the device works is known only to Madame Zune, but it's simply a gimmick to attract custom.

The shop sells unusual candles, odd jewellery, good luck charms and herbal remedies for almost any ailment, but behind the shopfront is the reading room where Madame Zune holds her séances and readings. The room is specifically designed to instil a sense of awe and just a little fear. Behind Madame Zune's chair is a beaded curtain, each bead made from the skull of some tiny creature. During her séances, the curtains whip about wildly around her, as if agitated by the presence of the dead or as if a spirit has passed through them to possess Madame Zune.

Adventure Hook – Bone Beast

One of Madame Zune's customers puts their arm into the jaws of the 'Bone Beast' only to have them snap shut, trapping them there. Madame Zune is nowhere to be found, and her shop assistants

know nothing about how the beast works. The player characters witness the event and must help free the customer. Is there something special about the customer that has caused this to happen? Is there some other power in play? No one actually knows what manner of creature the skull belongs to, but soon after the incident, the victim starts having visions, visions of Madame Zune who appears to be missing.

Madam Zune

Cera Zune is a young, independent woman whose street smarts come from the bleak experience of growing up on the city's streets. Despite the fact that she is a total fraudster, she has an almost magical ability to read people. This instinctive gift is enhanced by the 'Larks' a small, all-girl street gang whose services Cera makes use of. Cera works by appointment only, and when a customer leaves the shop having booked an appointment, they pick up a tail from the Larks.

The girls make a note of everything the customer does, who they speak to, snippets of conversation and even purchases made. This allows Cera to personalise her readings and give the impression that she is truly gifted. Madame Zune plays her

part well, her stunning makeup as tailored as her reading. Sometimes she may have a third eye expertly painted on her forehead or her dark purple eye shadow painted to look smudged, the tear streaks glittered as if crying diamonds or her exposed shoulders painted to look like they have been freshly cut with exotic runes, yet hiding something more terrible beneath her clothing. From time to time, Cera works with the local thieves as an advisor when they are planning something big. Cera is a protégé of Arle Forn, and while Arle doesn't approve of how Cera uses her talents, she respects the grown independent woman she has become. Much of the odd jewellery sold in her shop is crafted by Arle's orphans.

Madam Zune

AC 7, HD 1 (4 hp), Att 1 × Dagger (1d4), THAC0 19, MV 120' (40'), SV D13 W14 P13 B16 S15 (T1), ML 5, AL Chaotic, XP 10, NA 1, TT T

The Counterweight

The awning outside the Counterweight boldly declares 'The Very Thing.' Run by Albenider Catchpole, the Counterweight is a pawnshop and a moneylender. If you have something to sell and can prove

you own it, Albenider will offer you a fair deal. If you need money, Albenider is ready to listen. He will never offer anyone more than they can afford to repay and is considered an honest broker, something that speaks volumes given the occupations of many of the other residents of Blind Man's Alley. The shop is coming down with all manner of bric-a-brac, but it's not just things of physical value that Albenider pedals, he is also an information broker. He rarely pays upfront for information, but if it turns out to be valuable, Albenider guarantees anyone a fair cut of anything he can make from it.

Albenider Catchpole

Born to rich parents, Albenider didn't really understand when the family suddenly became poor and were forced to move into ramshackle accommodation devoid of servants, bodyguards, stables and treehouses. All Albenider knew was that the family home had been broken into and a number of heirlooms stolen. Shortly after the burglary, his father began spending long periods of time away from home, until one-day Albenider realised he would never return. Shortly after his father's disappearance, Albenider's mother died, and on

her death bed, she entrusted to him the secret of the family heirlooms, and how they had been the source of the family's power and wealth. Albenider vowed to recover the heirlooms. It had always been his father's belief that the stolen items were taken by common thieves and not by the family's enemies. Recovery of his family heirlooms is what drives Albenider and the reason for the existence of the Counterweight. As a pawnbroker, Albenider is constantly approached by thieves who want him to fence stolen items. He always refuses, but makes it clear if they ever come across items matching what he is looking for, he will reward them handsomely. With half the thieves in the city hoping to come across something Albenider is looking for in the course of their nefarious activities, Albenider believes it's only a matter of time until he gets the lead he is looking for. Albenider believes himself to be a fair man in an unfair world and he is always willing to give those that come up short a second chance, but if anyone tries to run out on a debt, Albenider relentlessly pursues them. With his contacts in other cities, it is often a fatal mistake to pull a disappearing act. Albenider comes across as a bookish man, but looks can be

deceptive. Most of the day Albenider can be found hunched over a desk marking items on a ledger or examining some strange artefact, but when he stands up straight and removes his glasses it is clear that Albenider is a man who means business.

Albenider Catchpole

AC 8, HD 1 (6 hp), Att 1 × Dagger (1d4), THAC0 19, MV 120' (40'), SV D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (F1), ML 6, AL Lawful, XP 10, NA 1, TT T

The High Rise

This small bakery is run by the plain-speaking and often caustic Gurdey Bloom. Things are simple in the High Rise. There are no fancy breads or pastries, just plain wholesome bread loaves and deep filled pies. Occasionally, during auspicious occasions, customers can expect a diversion from the norm, but for the most part, Gurdey's maxim holds true – if you want fancy, bugger off and find it elsewhere. Like many folk in the alley, Gurdey rents out her spare room, but few stay more than a few days, the cheap rent not cheap enough to have to endure her abrasive personality.

Gurdey Bloom

Mouthpiece and gossipmonger, Gurdey has been called it all and worse. Insults just don't appear to register with Gurdey. She never seems offended and often finds it odd that others are taken aback by her words. Like the goods in her shop, Gurdey keeps things simple, and says what she thinks and rarely thinks what she says. It's as well few people listen to Gurdey, for some of the things she gossips about could land her in trouble. Gurdey is up in the mornings before what most people would describe as a godforsaken hour. In those early hours, Gurdey sees and hears things that nobody else does. She's not stupid and can put two and two together. She has a greater insight into the coming and goings of the alley's residents than anyone else. Gurdey is a tall, broad woman who can carry two sacks of flour on her shoulder. Few get to see what Gurdey truly looks like, her flour streaked face matched only by the fine dusting in her hair.

Gurdy Bloom

AC 9, HD 2 (9 hp), Att 1 × Club (1d4), THAC0 19, MV 80' (25'), SV D11 W12 P14 B16 S15 (C1), ML 8, AL Neutral, XP 20, NA 1, TT T

Undercut Fleshers

Run by the amiable Bicen Quicer, Undercut Fleshers has one of the largest shopfronts on the alley. Doubling as a grocery store and with plenty of additional space, Bicen hires out stall space inside and outside the shop. As such, Undercut's has become the de facto market in the alley. Busy throughout the day, Undercuts is the social hub of the alley, it's where its residents catch up on gossip, do most of their shopping, and in some cases leave their children. Fruit, meat, veg, tea, firewood, whether you need to stock up on supplies or simply catch up with your neighbours, Undercut's is that place.

Bicen Quicer

Industrious and artistic, Bicen's display of hanging meats would look more at home in one of the more upmarket streets of the city. Unlike Gurdey Bloom, Bicen takes meticulous pride in his constantly changing meat products. Despite his friendly demeanour Bicen has a darker side. Bicen's skill with a knife didn't come from serving his time with a butcher, but with his father. An enforcer in a powerful crime syndicate within the city, Bicen's father knew how to make people talk. Expecting Bicen to

take his place in the organisation one day, his father first taught him to butcher animals, and then his fellow man. Before Bicen could be totally corrupted by torturing living people, the crime syndicate was torn apart by infighting and Bicen escaped with enough money to start over. There are still some within the city that know of Bicen's father, and in return for keeping their mouths shut they expect certain favours. Every so often there is a corpse that needs neatly dissected for disposal, and when that happens Bicen gets a call.

Bicen Quicer

AC 6, HD 5 (17 hp), Att 1 × Dagger (1d4) or Short Sword (1D6), THAC0 17, MV 120' (40'), SV D12 W13 P11 B14 S13 (T1), ML 6, AL Chaotic, XP 175, NA 1, TT T

Adventure Hook – Dicing With Death

Bicen is in a bit of a jam. He's been hired to make a corpse vanish. Unfortunately, the body belongs to a high profile individual, and worse, it's not as dead as the perpetrators think. Bicen wants nothing to do with it, and through a middle man hires the player characters to investigate a disturbance, which leads them to

the victim. The player characters are likely to help the victim, allowing Bicen to claim the body was gone when he arrived.

Vuggen's Descent

Everywhere has a backdoor and in the case of Blind Man's Alley that backdoor is Vuggen's Descent. At regular intervals along the street, hidden by a half-empty water barrels, is a hole cut into the rock. Originally the fixing points for the treadwheel cranes used in the construction of the street, these holes are sheer drops to the streets below. Over many years, the industry of thieves and the downright crazy have carved handholds into the sheer rock below the holes allowing a skilled climber to avail of a grand entrance or simply vanish behind a stack of barrels. Vuggen's Descent is generally a last resort, for even skilled climbers underestimate the difficulty of the descent.

Tools of the Trade

Game's Master's Map ~ Valley of Long Shadows



Each dash on the map is equivalent to three days' travel by caravan. As such it takes many weeks for the Caravan of Fools to travel the length of the Valley of Long Shadows. Below are floorplans for The Hermitage, The Bouncing Barrel, Fortunes Favour and the Jilted Sunrise Winch House. Each comes in A4 and 4 piece A2 version.











