

EX LIBRIS FOR THE DEE SANCTION

A Short Adventure in Deptford, early 1593

THE DILEMMA

Dee sends the Agents to **DEPTFORD** in search of a lost volume from the sacking of **MORTLAKE**. The paper trail kept by **NICHOLAS FROMOND**—Dee's feckless brother-in-law—points to a house on the village's remote edge. The owner acquired Dee's annotated copy of the infamous **BOOK OF DEAD NAMES**.

THE TASK AT HAND

The **GRAVEL HOUSE**, Deptford Village, is cared for by **EDGAR BULL** in the owner's absence. For a small sum, he provides the Agents with a **KEY**. The owner, **HUMPHREY GILBERT**, has not returned to the property for some time—an explorer known in court circles and said to have died at sea aboard the **HMS SQUIRREL**.

DEEP BACKGROUND

GILBERT returned from his fateful voyage in 1583, a shadow of a man. He traded his soul for the extension of his life beyond the grave. He lives in old **SMUGGLERS' CAVES** beneath his property. With the aid of his loyal servant **CLEMENT**, he eked out an existence in absolute secrecy. He scoured **HERETICAL TEXTS**—including Dee's text on necromancy—seeking his release.

Alas, Gilbert paid for Clement's loyalty in a terrible currency (see **COUNTING ROOM**). Now, Gilbert's experiments have gone awry and a **BLOOD GOBLIN** sets to wreak vengeance on him. Desperate, he has sent word to the **SCHOOL OF NIGHT**—having part funded the **SOCIETY OF THE NEW ART** that served as the roots of that agency. The **SCHOOL** has dispatched **KIT MARLOWE** to acquire the **BOOK** and silence **GILBERT**.

DEPTFORD BY CANDLELIGHT

Far from the hustle of **DEPTFORD DOCKS**, the village of **LOWER DEPTFORD** is a rural idyll. The **GRAVEL HOUSE** sits amidst twilight fields of maturing crops. The **KEY** offers access to a grand house, the interior obscured by **DUST COVERS**. Beneath, **GRAND FURNISHINGS**, suggestive of a well-travelled owner, and niches decorated with **STATUARY** and **KEEPSAKES** from **DISTANT SHORES**.

BOOKSHELVES groan with **TEDIOUS LOGS** of voyages from the 1570s, **ESOTERIC TEXTS ON NAVIGATION**, and ill-informed **TRAVELOGUES** by affluent stay-at-homes.

After a few minutes, the Agents become aware of people outside, a dozen **CLOAKED FIGURES**—stats as **SOLDIER** [Core, p66]—and **BULL, THE CARETAKER**. If the Agents pause and observe, the gathered visitors share sharp words about a promise of money, a reference to the Agents, of demands half-kept. Then the

LEADER—**KIT MARLOWE** disguised—shoves **Bull** sharply, who then crumples with a **BLOOD BLOSSOM** on his belly.

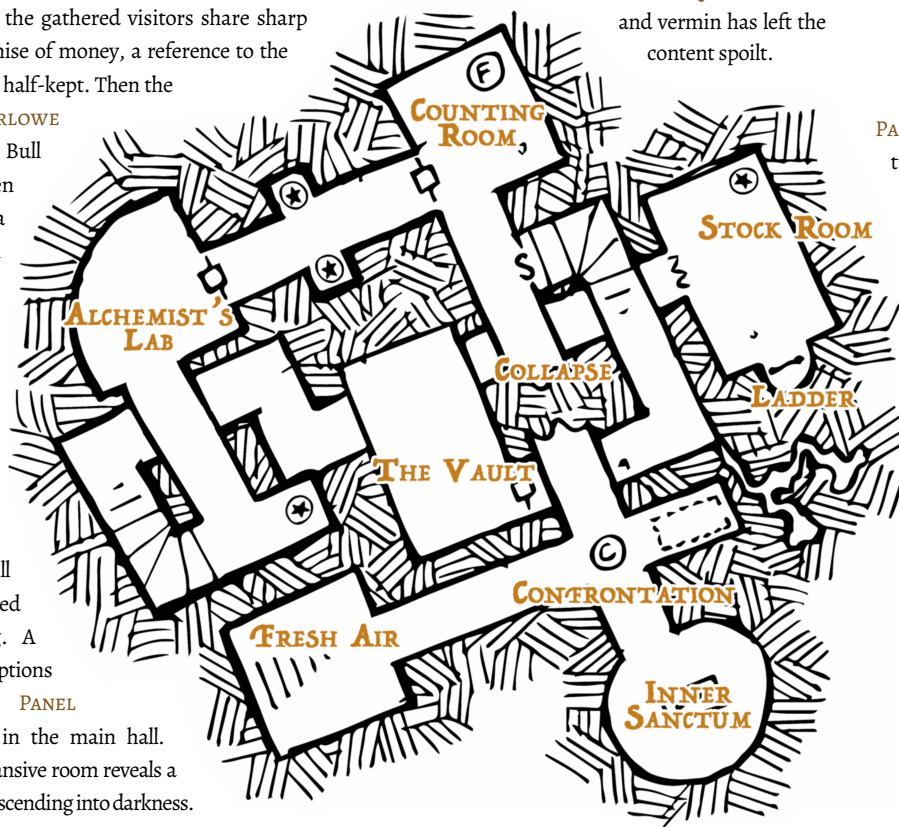
The **LEADER** orders the others to acquire the **BOOK**, and kill any who stand in their way.

The door has a **STRONG LOCK**, but will not keep the cloaked mob out for long. A search for escape options finds a **SPRUNG PANEL** beneath the stairs in the main hall. Behind it, a low expansive room reveals a **WOODEN LADDER** descending into darkness.

LADDER / STOCK ROOM

Musty, wheaty smell; dark; hammering sound from upstairs, sound of trickling grit from behind rough tapestry curtain.

- ▶ **Ladder.** A 30-foot descent on **AGING WOODEN RUNGS**, constructed from ship timbers.
- ▶ **Table for dinner.** On the left, the dusty settings for a meal, with **CANDLESTICK HOLDER**, cruet set and **SILVER KNIFE** and spoon.
- ▶ **Portraits and Statue.** A full-sized statue of a dashing sailor-type, recognisable as **GILBERT** by any with suitable background. Portraits of Gilbert, too; adventurous and heroic in gilt frame.
- ▶ **Boxes and Sacks.** Ship's supplies; boxes branded with **HMS SQUIRREL**. Time and vermin has left the content spoilt.



Scraps of salted meats and fragments of hardtack remain. If searched, **RAT DROPPINGS** at the bottom.

TAPESTRY: The hanging depicts a scene of the **SQUIRREL** at sea in the midst of a storm. An opening behind.

STONE PASSAGE: COLLAPSE (PART I)

Choking masonry dust, mixed with a sulphurous smell; weak light seeps through a hole in the ceiling; raised voices from above, rendered unintelligible by distance.

- ▶ **Collapse.** A knee-high pile of **FALLEN MASONRY** and earth. Not an obstacle to moving along the passage.
- ▶ **Trail of Blood.** Beyond the **COLLAPSE**, a continuous trickle of **WARM BLOOD** runs along the floor.
- ▶ **Slender Fae Silver Bird Cage.** Twisted and melted remains amongst the **FALLEN MASONRY**. A few **SCRATCHED GLYPHS** on the interior; **INT. CH.** a form of **WARD**, cast to contain a supernatural entity.

PASSAGEWAY: After 40 feet, the passage snakes then turns into a steep stair. At the top, a **STATUE OF GILBERT**, with a 15-foot passage on the left into the next room.

HOLE IN THE CEILING: The passageway is 10-feet high, the rubble 2-feet high. The small opening is tight. A head can squeeze through, but a chest and shoulders need the gap widening. Such work attracts the **GOBLIN**'s attention.

Peeking through, the Agent sees the **PASSAGE ABOVE** (see below) and a **POOL OF WARM BLOOD**. The **RAISED VOICES** come from here.

ALCHEMIST'S LAB

Acrid smoky odour; flickering candle light; chittering sound; distant tinkling sound of clockwork.

- ▶ **A large table.** Scattered with tools, **SHATTERED GLASS** and the remains of a melted **ALCHEMICAL DEVICE**.

- ▶ **A Pack of Rats.** The **TRAIL OF BLOOD** passes through the room and the **PACK OF RATS** lap greedily at the crimson trickle. Note how many questions or activities the Players make after entering the Lab. When they reach the fourth, a Rat begins to writhe and contort, its scabrous flesh distending. Each **Moment** thereafter, another Rat begins to transform and any **CONTORTED RATS** attack the Agents

CONTORTED RAT, 1 Hit, roll on **SOLDIER** table [Core, p66], **Special:** inflicts a **LESSER TOXIN**; dying rats explode.

- ▶ **Bookshelves.** Texts on alchemy, dissection, and surgery. The **BOOK OF DEAD NAMES** is not here.

OPEN DOOR: An heavy wood door with a **BROKEN LOCK**.

COUNTING ROOM

Rotting flesh; flickering candle light; sound of clockwork; distant sound of clipped exchange between two individuals.

- ▶ **Door Ajar.** A 15-foot passage adorned with two statues of **GILBERT**, leads to a slightly open wooden door.
- ▶ **A Table and the body of Clement Bewley.** A well-dressed man (**F**) plays a game of **Knave Noddy**, sat, with back to the door, at a table with opposing chairs. He plays two hands; he pushes counters back and forth based on the winning hand. The rank smell and clockwork sounds come from him.

INTERACT WITH THE CARD PLAYER: This is **CLEMENT**, Gilbert's loyal servant. A monstrous construct of clockwork and flesh, preserved by chemicals and animated by magic—check **Unravelling**. Clement cannot speak, but seeing anyone brings a tear to his eye—he seeks blessed release.

PASSAGE: An open hallway to the right.

PASSAGE ABOVE: COLLAPSE (PART II)

A sulferous smell tinged with a tang of iron; guttering oil braziers; two voices raised in a clipped exchange.

- ▶ **Weak Floor.** Fire-scarred and shattered floor; a hole surrounded by a spider web of cracks.
- ▶ **Unconcealed Door.** A secret door, slightly ajar. It leads down into **GILBERT**'s vault. The **BOOK** was there, but no more.

- ▶ **Pool of Warm Blood.** The **TRAIL OF BLOOD** pools near the hole in the floor and then continues onward. From the **POOL** onward, the **BLOOD GOBLIN** can attack, leap and harrass.

THE CONFRONTATION

Sweat and blood; guttering oil braziers; two voices raised in argument.

- ▶ **Blood Goblin.** A spindly imp made of glistening rivulets of blood, dancing around **GILBERT** like a spiteful monkey.
- ▶ **Humphrey Gilbert.** A dandified corpse, framed by an exquisite **GILDED EXO-SKELETON** with a **GLYPH-COVERED RING** over the heart. The Goblin's trail terminates in that ring.
- ▶ **Kit Marlowe.** Cloaked, armed and in possession of the **BOOK OF DEAD NAMES**.
- ▶ **Weak Floor.** An area of weak ground (dashed)—a tunnel lies beneath—that might collapse under weight or stress.

ASCENDING SHAFT: The passage rises around a right turn. At the end, a shallow stair leads into the edge of the quarry, some distance from **GRAVEL HOUSE**.

ARGUMENT: An exchange between two figures (**C**), the first voice cracking with pain and emotion:

"I sought the Infinite, but this torture is for nought. I seek assistance, for any price; I must find release from these shackles."

In response, the other says: "Hell is just a frame of mind, Gilbert. You have tasted the joys of the eternal, and yet you torment yourself with trivialities. Release? Here, allow me to unburden you of the knowledge that torments you so and, perhaps, my blade might serve as broker in negotiation for your freedom?"

The second voice is **MARLOWE**; the twisted mockery of flesh and metal is what remains of **GILBERT**. Kit has the **BOOK**; given the chance, on seeing the Agents, he makes a dash to escape. He has multiple **Tradecraft** markers (**ACS**) that make him an enemy impossible to defeat in this adventure.

LIKE AN ANGRY BEAR: Between **MARLOWE**'s treachery and the **GOBLIN**'s torment, **GILBERT** acts like a wild animal driven mad

by pain. The **GOBLIN** is **BOUND BY RITUAL** to him and while either persist, neither can die — unless the binding is broken.

HUMPHREY GILBERT, 4 Hit (♥1, 1d8, **special**); ♥[1,2] **Slam**: 0 Hits, *Winded*; ♣[3,4] **Gouge**: 1 Hit; ♦[5,6] **Tear**: 1 Hit, *Bleed*; ♠[7,8] **Engorge**: 1 Hit, *Regenerate*. **Abilities**—**ENGORGE**: Gilbert recovers health from the blood of his enemy (per the **GOBLIN** *Regenerate* Ability). **MINDLESS FURY**: immune to fatigue, charm; **PHYLACTERY**: bound to the Goblin, Gilbert cannot be killed.

INNER SANCTUM

Wax and incense; blazing light of blood-coloured candles; stifling heat.

- ▶ **Defiled Altar.** A black cloth sewn with occult symbols in fine silver thread. Gilbert's hand-written grimoire containing notes on his experiments to summon and bind **FAE BLOOD** to extend his existence beyond death.

GRIMOIRE: Stained and ink-smear pages stocked with the ravings of a mad man, the babble obscures the means to break a binding.

FRESH AIR

Fresh chill air, loamy soil; moon-lit sky, silhouettes shifting around the abandoned house; exchanges between the anguished cloaked figures.

- ▶ **Cloaked Figures.** If **KIT** escapes or is attacked, he can holla for support from his lackeys searching the house and grounds.
- ▶ **Scrubby Garden.** The tunnels emerges amongst trees and brambles on the lip of the **GRAVEL PIT** at the end of the garden behind the Gilbert's House.

EXIT: Freedom to go wherever one will, pursued or otherwise.

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