# DISHONORED®

## ROLEPLAYING GAME



ARKANE

MODIPHIUS® ENTERTAINMENT


OLD WATERFRONT
DRAPERS WARD
DISTILLERY DISTRICT
THE GOLDEN CAT
OFFICE OF THE HIGH OVERSEER
RHOUSE


E3
SE4
CLOCKTOWER
ESTATE DISTRICT
THE BOYLE MANSION
COLDRIDGE PRISON
DUNWALL TOWER
KALDWIN'S BRIDGE
WRENHAVEN RIVER
C8
S9
OLD HOUND PITS
W13
SW14

# DISHONORED®

## ROLEPLAYING GAME

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## INTRODUCTION

Dishonored represented a rare opportunity, giving us the chance to work together with a mix of talented people in a genre we truly love. The game falls into territory we've always striven to reach, a magical blend of crafted storytelling and improvisational gameplay made possible through simulation. We're proud of the resulting game, but working on the project itself was also an experience that marked our lives forever in the best possible ways. Dishonored was a special project, influenced by our favorite stealth games, first-person shooters, and role-playing games. In addition to the combat, stealth and mobility mechanics, the collaborative design of the world will always remain a moving creative milestone for the people involved. We are deeply grateful to the team that made Dishonored and all those who supported our efforts, including our families and friends. Lastly, we'd like to thank the players, who transported themselves to Dunwall and who continue to enrich the place through their participation.

**—Raphael Colantonio and Harvey Smith February, 2014**




Where I'm from, appearances are deceitful
Old Man Philipé forgot that lesson
Time's up, Philipé!
You don't wanna talk ?
We'll make you talk !
KRASH
And we are here to remind him


something's off
Bloody cultists!
SWISH


KLANK


they can handle the rest
CREEEAAK

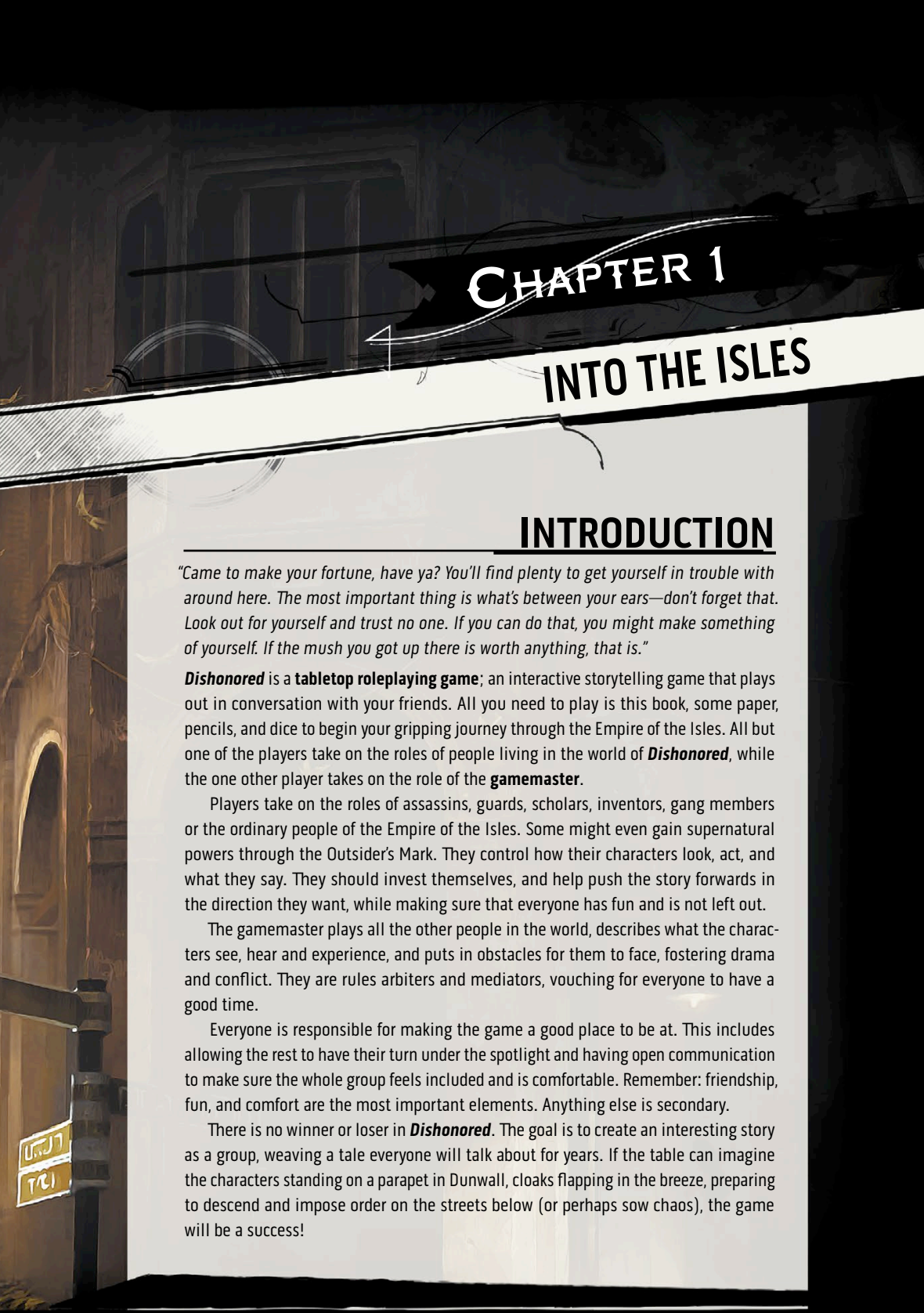

squik
SQUIK
squik
SLAM


SQUIK
Is this what you're looking for, dearie?
Norman, upper floor, QUICK !


SHIT!
SMASH







# Chapter 1

# INTO THE ISLES

## INTRODUCTION

*"Came to make your fortune, have ya? You'll find plenty to get yourself in trouble with around here. The most important thing is what's between your ears—don't forget that. Look out for yourself and trust no one. If you can do that, you might make something of yourself. If the mush you got up there is worth anything, that is."*

***Dishonored*** is a **tabletop roleplaying game**; an interactive storytelling game that plays out in conversation with your friends. All you need to play is this book, some paper, pencils, and dice to begin your gripping journey through the Empire of the Isles. All but one of the players take on the roles of people living in the world of ***Dishonored***, while the one other player takes on the role of the **gamemaster**.

Players take on the roles of assassins, guards, scholars, inventors, gang members or the ordinary people of the Empire of the Isles. Some might even gain supernatural powers through the Outsider's Mark. They control how their characters look, act, and what they say. They should invest themselves, and help push the story forwards in the direction they want, while making sure that everyone has fun and is not left out.

The gamemaster plays all the other people in the world, describes what the characters see, hear and experience, and puts in obstacles for them to face, fostering drama and conflict. They are rules arbiters and mediators, vouching for everyone to have a good time.

Everyone is responsible for making the game a good place to be at. This includes allowing the rest to have their turn under the spotlight and having open communication to make sure the whole group feels included and is comfortable. Remember: friendship, fun, and comfort are the most important elements. Anything else is secondary.

There is no winner or loser in ***Dishonored***. The goal is to create an interesting story as a group, weaving a tale everyone will talk about for years. If the table can imagine the characters standing on a parapet in Dunwall, cloaks flapping in the breeze, preparing to descend and impose order on the streets below (or perhaps sow chaos), the game will be a success!

# WHAT IS *DISHONORED*?

*"You ever hear the tale of Olivia Crabtree? You might know her as Numbers. Started out as nothing more than a brat begging crumbs on the street, but somehow she learned to count and she was good at it. Once Olivia realized she could make numbers dance, the world opened to her. Numbers counted cards, doctored books, hustled on the street, to become who she is today. An inspiring story for one such as yourself. Now which cup has the coin?"*

***Dishonored*** tells stories of exceptional characters working to further their personal agendas. Factions wage religious, ideological, and power-motivated war against each other, while the thousands toil under the watchful eyes of the Lord Regent—clueless to the conspiracies and machinations happening behind the scenes.

While it is set in a gaslamp fantasy alternate universe, the world of ***Dishonored*** is based heavily on the Victorian Era of 1800's Europe. Besides looking at the ***Dishonored*** video game for inspiration, books by Oscar Wilde, Mary Shelley, Jules Verne and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle can provide inspiration for atmosphere and settings.

Knowledge, special skills, the ear and trust of someone in power; all can be just as important as currency, if not more so. Becoming indispensable is the surest way to survive in a world of changing alliances and constant intrigue.

Characters often start at the bottom of the food chain with simple wants. They want to get some boy to marry them, avenge their father's death, cure their aunt's illness, find out what happened to their missing sister, etc. Once they begin their journey they discover conspiracies and betrayal, as new ambitions spring up to replace the old ones.

Character goals may be self-directed or imposed upon them due to fortunate, or misfortunate, circumstances. They might start out trying to save the family business, but with time become the most dangerous crime boss on the Isles.

***Dishonored*** presents a grim, merciless world where you'll be pushed to do anything to survive. These are stories of struggle, inner turmoil, intrigue, heroism, and late-night excursions. Of wandering the seedy parts of town late at night only to stride through the glittering Regency halls during the day.

# INTO THE ISLES

The Empire of the Isles consists of four islands: Gristol, Morley, Serkonos, and Tyvia. Formed at the end of the War of Four Crowns in 1625, the Empire is the foremost constitutional monarchy in the world. It is ruled by a hereditary monarchy, while also employing a legislative Parliament to prevent throne overreach. Each of its four main isles boasts their own unique cultures and societies.

Gristol's air reeks of salt, mildew, and whale fats; permeating the weather-beaten buildings with their thick odor. Most of the populated areas are built along the shore, speaking to the specialties of the island: shipping, whaling, mining, and agriculture. Gristol is also home to the capital of Dunwall and as such serves as the Imperial seat of power.

Morley's intricate buildings, soft textiles, window hangings, and penchant for color, proclaim to the world the island's artistic roots. It is the home of poets, playwrights, scholars, musicians, and artisans of every medium. Looking for strange tales, rumored treasures or a unique vacation? Morley is the place to go.

Serkonos' climate, delicious foods, and unique culture are a treat for the nobility, which travels to the southernmost part of the Empire for retreats. Its signature opulence is propped up by a marginalized lower class, that breaks its back for the aristocracy to advertise the island as a bastion of flavor and comfort.

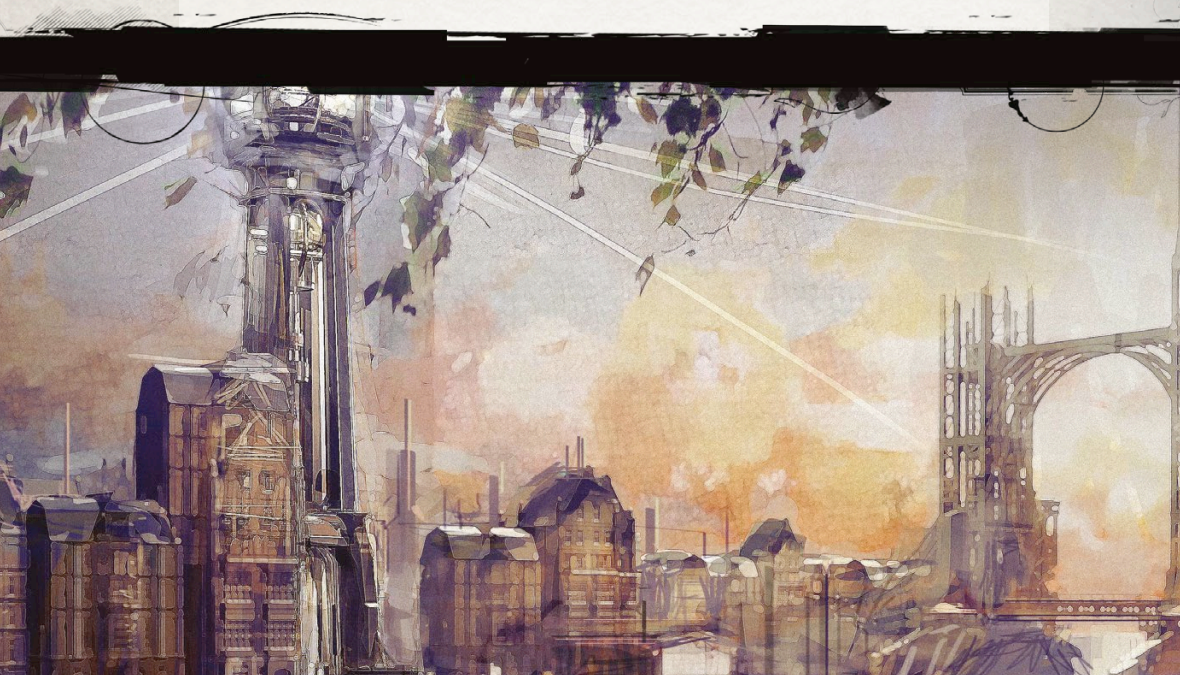
Tyvia's snowy peaks and frozen tundras are seen as something to be feared by most, and as a challenge of endurance for a few. The harsh conditions have left it the least populated of the Isles, with nature being the true ruler of its largely untouched reaches. Its natives are fierce and tough; a country of hunters and troubadours that is seen by the rest of the Empire as a land of legend.

Beyond the seas surrounding the Isles, the Pandyssian continent remains largely unexplored. Strange tales stoke the fires of imagination, motivating many a daring soul to go on expeditions from which they are likely never to return.

## THEME: ORDER AND CHAOS

*"This city is a tricky one, isn't it? There you are, thinking you're doing just fine and then it throws you right on your back, maybe even further back than where you started. The secret is to do what you can with what lies around you. Remember, though; nothing is guaranteed. Prepare for the worst and hope for the best, as my aunt used to say."*

For every action there is a reaction which ripples through the world, creating chaos to varying degrees. The characters' actions are made manifest in the world around them. Apathy sows misery and thus a careless bunch will soon see the consequences of their decisions setting the world ablaze. Simply put; players should always be thinking about the effect of their characters' choices.



Chaos is a determining force in the world, and the more of it the characters create, the more "interesting" things will get. It is due to their exceptional condition that their actions have such consequences. Once they do though, rest assured—chaos will bite back. It does not care who you are, but follows those who embrace it.

The players will have to make a choice. Do they intend to balance the scales or do they tip them towards one side? Each call they make must be weighed against the possible outcomes. These frequent decisions and their fallout are paramount to an engaging roleplaying experience.

Although humanity's actions constantly shift the balance of Chaos and Order, the Outsider's presence is always looming. Those he takes an interest in go on to live tormented, yet remarkable lives - armed with the potential to change the world. Characters chosen to bear the mysterious Mark of the Outsider come to truly understand the burden of power - especially those who aim to wield Chaos in the name of Order.

Chaos is embedded into the Empire's soil, and drives the destinies of its people more than they'd like to think. It makes of it a place where those wishing to test themselves, or be judged on their own merits, persevere to discover who they truly are.

## THEME: THE ABBEY AND THE CULTS

"The universe is unknowably vast and swarming with all manner of dangerous spirits and forces, most of which are hostile to man's existence". This is what the Abbey of the Everyman believes, and their primary purpose is to stand against what they deem strange or unnatural—the prime representation of which is seen in the Outsider. The Abbey is also tasked with officiating marriages, setting the calendar, and organizing celebrations. These civil matters allow them to weave themselves into the fabric of society, which add numbers to their ranks and allows them to spread the fear of all that's different, and all that goes against the norm.

The Abbey holds their Seven Strictures sacred, and pull from their holy text—the Litany on the White Cliff—to practice their religion. These teachings discuss controlling impulses and understanding the severity of reckless action and thought. Those who break these tenets or are seen cavorting with the occult are often dealt horrible punishments. Understandably so, some end up seeing the religious doctrine of the Abbey and its Overseers more as a tool to coerce people, rather than an honest, faith-fueled worldview and moral code.

The clashing between vastly different religious doctrines is a standing conflict within the Empire. Overseers patrol the streets, while occult symbols painted onto walls lurk behind doorways. It's a crime to be caught worshipping anything other than the Strictures, using bonecharms, or any other occult practices. The Abbey has been very successful in convincing the majority that the supernatural is to blame for their misery. They duly enforce their right to arrest and prosecute any who are caught practising, or accused of, occult workings. Despite this, people continue to practice the old ways and hold the unshaken conviction that ignoring or exorcising the supernatural would upset the balance of life. Under the cover of darkness and secrecy, they meet to keep the rituals and customs alive.

Characters can easily become involved in the fight for the souls of the Empire's citizens, whether as an Overseer of the Abbey or as a follower of the occult. Characters who act out of the ordinary or stick out may find themselves in the Abbey's prisons, which have a horrendous reputation.

While sometimes this religious struggle occurs in the background, it can also become an obstacle for the protagonists. If characters are personally involved in it they may be called upon to assist the cause at any time, submerging the entire group under the layers of conflict and politics inherent to it.

## THEME: THE RULERS AND THE MEEK

A large manor with lovingly tended plants in the windowsill holds court on the end of a sunny street, while a hundred paces from its doorstep a room of soot-blackened wood leans against an alley wall. The differences between the rich and the poor in the Empire are stark, and intertwine like smoke trails. They cross paths every day and still remain worlds away from understanding each other.

Upper class, middle class, and working class. Each group has a role and a worldview, as well as struggles of their own—which the characters are bound to explore in their adventures.

The upper class are entitled people who often do not work because their families amassed enough wealth in past generations to keep them in luxury their whole lives. Some of those in the higher echelons also manage large companies, often in the mining and shipping industries.

The middle class are often affluent as well, controlling business ventures of varying sizes. They work, but do not perform manual labor. They are the professionals: doctors, lawyers, teachers, philosophers. While still a relative minority, the middle class has seen steady growth throughout recent years—mainly due to the Empire's booming industrial sector.

The working class are the deprived backbone of the Empire; toiling away in horrible conditions to fuel the ambitions of those above. Fifteen hour work days are common for little or no pay, and families are often forced to send their children to work so that they can eat. They are the factory workers, the delivery people, the miners and the sailors. Unbeknownst to them, they hold the real power—a fact the aristocracy has worked hard to disguise.

A street urchin lives day-to-day searching for food and shelter to make it to tomorrow. An aristocrat's world might crumble down after the failure of a business enterprise. Their differences might be stark, but as everyone, they suffer and struggle, they face conflict—and in conflict lies the opportunity for adventure. Class is reflected in mannerisms and in the way people tackle their problems, and greatly dictates their motivations. Stories about class are inherently about the nigh unwinnable struggle against an inhumane system, about the clash of perspectives that happens in the middle, and of the cruelty and chaos that shapes the society of the Empire of the Isles.


DRAPERS WARD
NE
NE
CLOCK
ESTATE

# Chapter 2

# PLAYING THE GAME: CORE RULES

## OVERVIEW

When you sit down to play ***Dishonored***, you'll sit down with several other players. One of you will be the **gamemaster**—also known as the **GM**, described below—but everyone else will control a single **player character**, also known as **PCs**. These player characters are the protagonists of the game, the heroes, antiheroes, or ne'er-do-wells, that you choose to play as. As a player, you make decisions for your character, roll the dice, and react to the story as it unfolds. Together, you and the other players make up a group, who may have a shared goal or purpose, and whose fortunes are tied together. Your player character has a **character sheet**, which is a record of their abilities, nature, and other important information. Creating a player character and filling out a character sheet is described in *Chapter 5: The Protagonists*.

The player characters aren't the only types of character, however. Non-player characters—also called NPCs—represent everyone else, from the allies you'll work with, to the enemies you'll face, and everyone else in-between. The gamemaster controls the NPCs, and more information on NPCs can be found in *Chapter 11: Of Street Urchins & Masked Aristocrats*.

Throughout these rules, you'll see reference to "characters"; this refers to player characters and non-player characters alike.

### THE GAMEMASTER

One of the players at the table will be the gamemaster. If you're the GM, then you won't have a player character of your own, and you'll have a different job at the table. The gamemaster controls the NPCs and is responsible for coming up with challenging situations and cunning foes that the player characters will face, and they judge how the PCs overcome these problems.

As a GM, you will be equal parts referee, narrator, and director. You'll establish new scenes, building on the actions and choices of the PCs to give them challenges and chances to show off. You'll also judge how the rules apply to different situations, such as setting the difficulty of **skill tests** (see page 22), or ruling when something unusual happens or a disagreement arises. Above all else, the GM is not the players' enemy: the game works all the better when the GM is a fan of the PCs and their exploits, albeit one who seeks to make those characters' lives as dramatic, exciting, and challenging as possible.

If you've taken up the mantle of GM, then you'll want to read *Chapter 4: Running the Game* once you've become familiar with the core rules.

### RESPONSIBILITIES

**The gamemaster's responsibilities** are to create and end scenes, to present problems and obstacles for the player characters to confront and overcome, and adjudicating how the rules apply to a situation.

**The players' responsibilities** are to represent their characters truthfully, determine their actions, confronting problems that the gamemaster introduces, and push their characters in directions that make for an interesting story.

**Everyone is responsible** for ensuring that everyone else is having fun, doing exciting things, celebrating their successes, and offering suggestions while being respectful of others' decisions. The gaming table should be a safe space for everyone, and it's everyone's duty to make the other people at the table feel welcome.

## ROLLING THE DICE

In ***Dishonored***, twenty-sided dice are used to add an element of risk and chance to the game. A single twenty-sided die is called a d20, and multiple dice will have a number in front to indicate how many dice need to be rolled at once; so 2d20 means to roll two twenty-sided dice. Most of the time, you'll be asked to roll more than one die at once, checking the result of each die individually. This is referred to as a **dice pool**, or sometimes simply as a pool.

Some abilities and circumstances allow you to **reroll** dice. The ability that grants a reroll will explain when you can reroll the dice, and how many dice can be rerolled. You may always choose not to reroll a die. To reroll, pick up as many dice as you wish to reroll, and roll them again, ignoring their previous results in favor of the new one. Dice which have already been rerolled during that roll cannot be rerolled again, and the new result stands, even if it's worse than the old result.

## CHARACTERS

Each character has six **skills**, which represent their training, expertise, and their general aptitude for survival in the Empire of the Isles and beyond. These skills are **Fight**, **Move**, **Study**, **Survive**, **Talk**, and **Tinker**. Each skill has a rating, normally from 4 to 8, with 4 representing a lack of training and 8 representing exceptional expertise.

Along with their skills, a character has six **styles**, which describe the character's approach to different situations. Styles describes how a character uses their skills, and you will choose both a skill and a style when you attempt a **skill test** (*see "Skill Test Difficulties" page 23*). The styles are **Boldly**, **Carefully**, **Cleverly**, **Forcefully**, **Quietly** and **Swiftly**. Each style also has a rating from 4-8, with 4 representing a weakness in that area and 8 representing strong emphasis in that approach.

**Focuses** are areas of specific knowledge or training which build upon a character's skills. These may include things like *Brawling*, *Medicine*, *Natural Philosophy*, or *Lock-Picking*. A character with a Brawling focus will be a much better bare-knuckle boxer than one without, even if they have the same **fight**. Each focus has a rating of its own, ranging from 2 to 5.

Additionally, there's **talents**, which are the tricks, techniques, and feats of prowess or knowledge that allow a character to triumph against impossible odds. These are explained in *Chapter 5: The Protagonists*.



# ACTIONS AND TESTS

The things that you want your character to do can be thought of as **actions**: An action is any meaningful activity you perform, which contains a degree of risk or requires significant effort. When you want to do something, like threatening an enemy at sword-point, leaping between rooftops, or stealing a coin pouch from someone's belt, you tell the GM and the GM will tell you if that action is possible, and if you require a skill test to make the attempt (see below). If the action is possible, the GM will describe how it plays out, and what happens next. If the action is impossible, you can try something else, but it's polite to see if any of the other players want to try something while you think about what you want to do, or you could work together as a team.

## SKILL TESTS

If the GM asks you to make a skill test, then there's doubt as to whether you can succeed at an action, or there's something about the outcome which is uncertain. Skill tests use the dice and your character's **skills** and **styles** to determine whether you achieve your goal or not.

When you attempt a skill test...

1. The gamemaster will tell you the difficulty, which will be a number from 0 to 5. They may also choose which skill you should use, or which style, or both, or they may leave those decisions up to you. If you've got a focus which you think might be helpful here, ask the GM if you can use it. Whatever skill and style you use, add them together to get your target number.
2. Pick up two d20s and roll them.
3. Compare the result of each d20 individually with your target number (don't add the results together). Each die that rolls equal to or under your target number scores one success, while any die that rolled a 1 is a critical success, which is worth two successes instead of one. If you're using a focus, then any die that rolls equal to or under that focus's rating is a critical success.
4. If the successes you scored equal the difficulty number the GM gave you, you've passed and achieved your goal. If you got fewer successes than the difficulty number, then you've failed and something else happens instead. If you got more successes than you needed, then you've not only passed the test, but you also generate Momentum (see page 24).
5. Finally, any die which rolled 20 causes a complication. A complication is a problem that arises which adds additional challenges to a scene, like an escape route being blocked, something taking longer than expected, or making a sound by accident. This might come in the form of a Truth (see page 25) that describes how the situation has changed. If the GM can't think of a problem at that moment, they may add two points to Chaos (see page 26) instead. You can ask the GM to do this if you want to avoid an immediate problem, but they still get the final say.
6. If you failed, then the GM might allow you to succeed at a cost—you achieve your goal, but something else (normally an extra complication) happens as well..

### Skill Test Difficulties

| DIFFICULTY | DESCRIPTION | EXAMPLE |
|---|---|---|
| 0 | Simple | Researching a widely known subject |
| 1 | Routine | Picking a simple lock |
| 2 | Average | Shooting an enemy in poor light |
| 3 | Challenging | Knocking down a door without weapons or tools |
| 4 | Difficult | Convincing someone to betray their kin |
| 5 | Daunting | Prevent someone with a severed limb from bleeding out, without the proper tools in the middle of the wild |

*For example, if you were trying to leap between two rooftops, you might use your Move skill, and your Forcefully style, as you hurl yourself across the gap. This will thus inform the GM on how to describe the action as it happens. If your Move is 6, and your Forcefully is 5, then the target number is 11 (adding move and forcefully together), so any d20 which rolls 11 or less gets you a success. If you've also got a focus of Freerunning with a rating of 3, then any die which rolls a 1, 2, or 3 is a critical success, netting you two successes. If you scored a number of successes equal to or greater than the difficulty, then you've passed the skill test and achieved your goal. If you scored fewer successes than the difficulty, you've failed the test.*

*In either case, the GM describes what happens to your character. If you got more successes than the difficulty, then the extra successes each become points of Momentum, which you can spend to improve upon what happens or get other bonuses. Momentum is described in full in the next section, starting on page 24.*

Difficulties cannot be reduced below 0, but they can be increased above 5 in rare cases. If no difficulty is listed for a test, you can assume that the test's difficulty is 1. This represents normal conditions for actions that aren't a guaranteed success. The GM may also spend **Chaos** to increase the difficulty further.

## CONTESTS

At times, you'll not just be trying to beat a challenge or obstacle; instead, you may find yourself trying to overcome an opponent. These situations call for **contests** instead of normal skill test. In a contest, one character is trying to achieve a goal (the **active** character), and the other is trying to resist or avoid that goal (the **reactive** character).

Both players make a skill test, with the active character looking to roll more successes than the reactive character. Both characters might be using the same skill and style, or they might use different skills and different styles. If the active character gets

equal or more successes than their opponent, they achieve their goal, passing the skill test. Failure happens when the reactive character gets more successes than the active character. If the Reactive character wins, they generate Momentum equal to the difference between how many the active character needed and how many they scored.

If either side has extra factors that would affect their difficulty, these are added to or subtracted from the other side's total successes; that is, if something would add +1 difficulty to the active character's action, the reactive character scores +1 successes.

## ASSISTANCE

Assistance allows several characters to contribute to an activity. If the situation, time, and the GM allow, several characters may work together when attempting a skill test.

If you assist another character, then they are considered to be the leader (for the purposes of this test), and you are considered to be the assistant. The GM may set a limit on how many assistants can help on a single test, or apply other limits or costs for assisting.

The leader rolls their skill test normally, and each assistant rolls a single d20, using their own skills and styles. You don't all have to use the same skills or focuses, and it can often be useful for an assistant to help by providing something different, such as one person who **talks boldly** to draw attention from an ally who's trying to **move quietly** nearby. If the leader scores at least one success, then the assistants can add their successes to the leader's total. If the leader scored no successes, then any scored by the assistants are lost.

Assistants can't buy any extra dice for the test—if you're assisting, you're limited to a single d20. Any complications rolled by anyone will affect everyone involved in the test.

# MOMENTUM

You earn Momentum when you score more successes than you needed on a skill test; each success above the difficulty turns into 1 point of Momentum. Momentum can be used for many things, limited only by your imagination and the GM's permission, and it can let you turn meager success into glorious triumph, achieving your goals with style, allowing you to pull off daring stunts and spectacular feats of heroism.

If you get any Momentum, you should note down how many points you've generated; a spare die, or some tokens, are good for tracking how much you've got.

## SAVING MOMENTUM

Once you've acquired Momentum, you can choose to save it for later or spend it immediately. Saved Momentum goes into a pool shared by all the players. **The maximum amount of Momentum that can be saved in this pool is 6.** If the Momentum pool is full, you can't save any more.

You can spend this saved Momentum at any time alongside Momentum you generate during later skill tests. **At the end of each scene, one Momentum is removed from the group's pool** – you need to maintain Momentum, or it'll diminish over time.

## SPENDING MOMENTUM

The following uses for Momentum are always available—you can choose to spend Momentum on one of these three options whenever they're relevant:

### BUYING D20S

You can use Momentum to buy bonus d20s for a skill test. This is done before the dice pool is rolled, but after the gamemaster has set the difficulty. It costs 1 Momentum for the first die bought for that test, 2 Momentum for the second die, and 3 Momentum for the third die. You cannot buy more than 3 bonus d20s for a single test, because you can only ever roll a maximum of 5d20s. In a contest, both sides buy dice before anyone rolls, and you and your opponent should both decide how many dice you're each buying in secret (so that you're not influenced by seeing how many dice your opponent has bought). You may not buy d20s (or use any Momentum whatsoever) if rolling against another player character, whether as part of a contest or under a normal skill test.

### SECRET BIDDING

When in a contest, the easiest way to spend Momentum in secret is for each party to hide their Momentum/Chaos pool, and then grab the desired amount in a clenched fist. Both parties can then reveal the spent amounts, and then continue with play as usual.

### CREATE TRUTH

You can add, remove, or change facts about the scene; called truths, (described in detail on page 25-26). Spending 2 Momentum establishes a new truth, changes a truth, or removes one currently in play. Truths created must relate to the skill test you've just made, and it must be something that could naturally result from your actions, and the GM should agree it can be created or changed.

### ASK A QUESTION

You can spend 1 Momentum to ask the gamemaster a question about the scene. The gamemaster will give you a truthful answer, according to what your character would be able to discover in that situation and from that skill test, and the answer may not be a complete one. You can always spend Momentum to ask a question, wait for the answer, and then spend more for additional questions.

## TRUTHS

People, places, and objects come in all shapes and sizes, and where these differences matter, they are described using truths. A truth is something significant about the scene that makes an action possible, easier, harder or impossible. This helps provide information about the world of ***Dishonored*** in play. Truths can be written down on a piece of paper.

There are two common types of truth, defined by the things they're connected to:

- An **object truth** is a detail about a place or an object. Locations should have at least one truth about it, such as a *quarantined* city street, *dank* tavern, or *rat-filled* sewer.
- A **character truth** describes something about a character. *Wounded, intimidated, plagued by vicious rumors*, or even *accused of a crime*.

A truth can be changed or completely removed from the game, either via the actions of characters or the GM spending Chaos. Truths affect your actions, and those of other characters. They help the gamemaster decide what is and what isn't possible, and how easy or difficult things are to achieve. An action can be modified by more than one truth, and each truth does one of the following things when you attempt an action:

- The truth lets you attempt something that you couldn't do otherwise. *Example:* A *protruding edge* allows you to climb a building.
- The truth makes something easier to do, reducing the difficulty of a skill test by 1. *Example:* A *telescopic lens* lets you see details clearly from much further away.
- The truth makes something harder to do, adding 1 to the difficulty of a skill test or requires a skill test where one isn't normally needed. *Example: Darkness* makes it harder to see enemies approaching.
- The truth means that you cannot do something you would normally be able to attempt. *Example:* An *Overseer's music box* stops you using supernatural powers.

## ADJUDICATING TRUTHS, OR "BECAUSE X, Y"

For ease of use, each truth can be placed into a simple statement, such as one of those below. If that statement makes sense, then it applies. If it doesn't make sense, then it doesn't apply.

- Because I am [character truth], this action is...
- Because of [object truth], this action is...

The end of each of those statements is one of "easier", "harder", "possible", or "impossible". At the simplest level, that's as far as the GM needs to go: if the statement ends with "easier", reduce the difficulty, if the statement ends with "harder", increase the difficulty. If the statement ends with "possible", then the action can be attempted while the truth applies, while if it ends with "impossible", then it can't be attempted while that truth applies.

# CHAOS

The world of ***Dishonored*** responds to your actions and your decisions in subtle ways, and you can never really tell how an action might influence the world. One thing is certain, though: your choices always impact on someone, somewhere, and sooner or later, in ways you might not expect or understand, the consequences always come back to you.

This uncertainty is Chaos. Chaos grows when you take actions which are noisy, messy, or violent, and when you take risks and behave recklessly. In game terms, Chaos is the gamemaster's resource, a counterpart to the Momentum you and your fellow players generate and spend. Strictly speaking, your character doesn't know how much Chaos the gamemaster has, but they will have a sense of the stakes of their situation as they observe the influence that Chaos has upon their surroundings.

## THE CHAOS POOL

Chaos is measured in points, which are added to and taken from a pool that the GM controls, and which should be visible to all the players. The Chaos pool is normally represented by a collection of tokens, with each token representing a single point of Chaos.

The gamemaster begins each adventure with two points of Chaos for each player at the start of the game, though this can vary: if the stakes are high and the world in disarray, the GM may begin with more Chaos, while a calmer, quieter situation may reduce the amount of starting Chaos. This is explained in more detail in *Chapter 4: Running the Game*.

## GAINING CHAOS

Chaos is added to the GM's pool in a few different ways, some of which are options for the players.

### BUYING D20S

You may buy bonus d20s for a skill test by adding to Chaos. As normal, only three dice can be purchased. The first die adds 1 to Chaos, the second die adds 2, and the third adds 3.

### COMPLICATIONS

With the GM's permission, whenever you suffer a complication, you may create 2 Chaos instead of having the GM come up with a negative truth.

### CHAOTIC ACTION OR CIRCUMSTANCES

At times, the gamemaster may state that a specific action risks making the situation more chaotic. This might be using lethal force against innocent bystanders or authority figures, walking into a public place while heavily armed, allowing alarms to be sounded or large numbers of enemies to be alerted, and similar actions. The GM should tell you when an action is chaotic, and how much Chaos the action will create (normally between one and five points, depending on how serious the action's effect will be), and you then have the option of either continuing with that action in spite of the warning, or choosing to do something else. Otherwise, they might just generate Chaos after you've done something chaotic.

### CHAOTIC ACTION - CHAOS POINT REFERENCES:

- Cheating at the betting tables (1 Chaos)
- Extortion (3 Chaos)
- Reckless murder (5 Chaos)

## USING CHAOS

The gamemaster can use Chaos in the same way you use Momentum. This is...

- To buy d20s for NPC rolls.
- To create a truth after an NPC roll.
- To prevent the players from creating a truth as a result of an NPCs complication (requires 2 Chaos to be spent).

# THE VOID

The player characters are special. They have a drive and determination unlike that of those around them, and their dreams touch the edges of the Void, and they are touched by it in turn. Unbeknownst to them, their actions will shape the world, and the fate of those who surround them.

Your character possesses **Void Points**, which you can use to gain an edge in tense situations and achieve the seemingly impossible.

**You may only have a number of Void points equal to your Void point maximum. Any excess points are immediately lost. You begin the game with a Void point maximum of 3.**

You can spend one Void point to do one of the following:

- **Reroll:** Reroll any number of d20s in your dice pool during a skill test, taking the second result. You can't reroll a reroll.
- **Create Truth:** Immediately create, change, or remove a truth in the scene. These kinds of story declarations should make sense for the story—though they can often come in the form of flashbacks or from a supernatural source—and the gamemaster has the final say over whether a suggested detail is valid.
- **Critical Success:** You treat one of your dice as if it had rolled a 1 with a focus (even if you don't have one that applies), giving you 2 automatic successes. In addition, if you possess Void powers, your Void Point maximum determines how much Mana you possess: you have maximum Mana equal to twice your Void Point maximum.

## GAINING VOID POINTS

Aside from gaining 1 Void point at the start of each session, there are a few ways you can gain them during play:

- **Faction Code:** You can earn a Void Point whenever you abide by your Faction Code. This means doing something to perpetrate the worldview of your faction (which is shown in each of the factions' summaries). For example, a character in the Dead Eels gang could gain a Void point after stealing from an enemy gang. A member of the Abbey of the Everyman could do the same by dedicating some time to preach in the streets. These should give small opportunities to roleplay, whilst getting players involved with their faction's philosophy and modus operandi.

- **GM Reward:** You may be given additional Void points by the gamemaster as a reward for good roleplaying, clever plans, or successfully overcoming difficult or important challenges.
- **Voluntary Failure:** You may choose to fail a skill test to gain a Void point. This can only be done when you've got something significant to gain or lose, and you may use **truths** (such as your personal ones) for inspiration. You must make the decision before rolling any dice, and the gamemaster must agree. The skill test fails automatically, and no dice are rolled.

# SCENES AND STAKES

Play in ***Dishonored*** is structured in **scenes**, much as movies or plays tend to be. Each scene covers the events at a specific place and time, and during a scene you will attempt to achieve a goal, overcome a problem, or otherwise do something significant. Once the situation's concluded, the action moves to a new location, or to different characters, or some later time, skipping past the boring parts of the story, and onto a new scene.

## IN THE SCENE

Once a scene has begun, the players have free reign to approach the situation however they please, and the gamemaster will react by describing the outcome of their actions and decisions, controlling the non-player characters, and spending Chaos to trigger changes in the environment. When events in a scene have ended, the GM sets up the next one, often marking out the most important details of a new scene using truths.

There are some rules that directly relate to scenes:

- **Momentum:** The player's Momentum pool decreases by 1 point at the start of a new scene.
- **Framing:** The gamemaster can set up the scene however they like, but once action has begun the only way they can make changes is by spending Chaos or with the actions of NPCs.
- **Void:** Each player can only spend one Void point per scene.
- **Mana:** If you have Void powers, your Mana is restored to its maximum value, equal to twice your Void Point maximum.

## WHAT'S AT STAKE?

With each scene and every action, the gamemaster considers what is at stake, and what could go wrong. This could mean grand and disastrous consequences, or it could mean minor inconveniences. The more there is at stake, the more likely actions will be difficult, have serious consequences, or both. Ideally, this should make things more interesting, and will probably move play in a new direction.

# ACTION, MOVEMENT, AND ACTION ORDER

There are situations where the freedom to act in scenes needs more structure: fast-paced action scenes, intense battles of wits, and similarly tense situations require an **action order**, divided into **rounds**, wherein each character takes a single **action**.

When the scene begins, the GM chooses who takes the first turn. If the order is not obvious, they can refer to the **swiftly** style of the involved parties, starting with those with the highest score. Once this is decided, each character takes their action in that order until the round is over. Then, 1 Momentum is lost from the players' pool, and a new round begins, until the scene ends.

## ACTIONS

In each turn you can attempt a single action. This section lists the most common actions that you're likely to attempt, but there's nothing stopping you coming up with something of your own and asking your GM if you can do that instead:

- **Create Truth:** You try to change the situation in some way. You must succeed at a skill test with a difficulty of 2, using a skill, style, and focus (if any) appropriate to the action. If successful, you create a truth, or change or remove a truth already in play.
- **Skill Test:** You perform any activity that requires a skill test. The limits of this action are left to the gamemaster's discretion.
- **Pass:** You can wait, not performing an action on your turn. You can, during the action order for the rest of the round, decide you want to act next instead of another player character. If you don't act until the end of the round, you have one last chance to do something, or your action is lost and the next round begins.

Some activities are not considered to be important enough to count as an action. These are trivial things such as grabbing something within reach, moving a few paces, saying a few words, and so forth.

### MOVEMENT

During an action scene, it's important to know where everyone is. ***Dishonored*** resolves this using simple, abstract distances:

You are within **reach** of an object or person if you're right next to them, close enough for you to reach out and touch them.

During an action scene, most of the combatants and important features will be **nearby**. It's possible to get to anywhere nearby—including into reach of someone or something—during an action.

Anything which isn't nearby is said to be **distant**. A character won't be distant unless they specifically note it, and it requires significant effort to reach a distant location quickly. Attempting to interact with someone who is distant increases the difficulty of skill tests.




SHAKE
SHAKE
skill + style + focus
CLATTER
CRASH
SUCCESS! you create one momentum
5
I spend one momentum to check out the house
I can tell you...
...there are voices coming from below
I pick myself up and head downstairs then
...you make your way downstairs

Meanwhile, downstairs...

Don't you get it!? THEY DON'T TELL ME NOTHING!

Time's up. I want to intimidate him

I assist her by pulling my knife

Okay then, what do you say?

Your friends have left you, Syd...

You can die alone here, or co-operate and live

Okay, roll 2d20 as you Talk Boldly. Difficulty is...

Two! Since Syd got 2 successes when rolling to resist...

Roll 'em!

I roll a die for assisting with my knife...

SHHH...

One success!

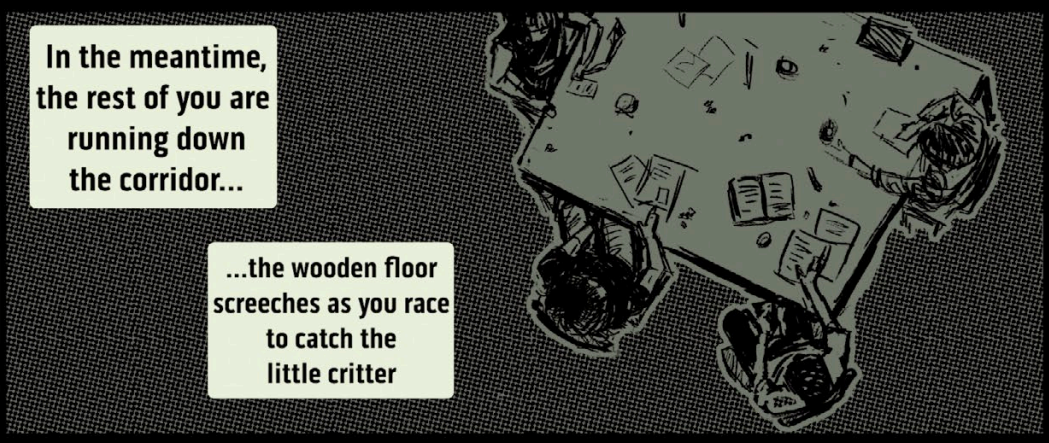
...and another one here!

That's two. Syd gives up!

Fine. It's in the run-down mill next to that Stimson's whale butchery

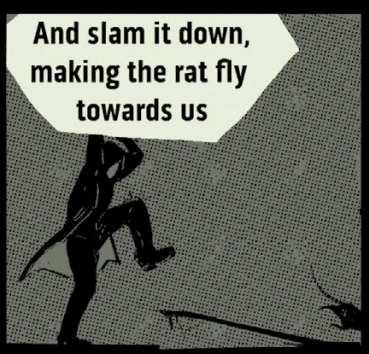

What's up with you, Mina?
So, I'm going down the stairs...
...towards the place with the voices
Okay, so you open the door...
...and find the rest
Guys! Look for a rat NOW!
Now, before anything goes down, I'm spending two Chaos
KNOCK KNOCK
CITY WATCH
OPEN UP!


We look for the rat!
You quickly look around and...
Everyone, roll to Study Quickly, difficulty is two! Focus is Tracking
No successes!
DAMN!
Yes! Three here!
You spot the rat...
And gain one momentum
WE CHASE IT!
You sprint across the hallway...
Trying to catch up with the rat...
Question: How is the house lit?
Uhm... I guess there are torches on the walls?
I want to pull one off
That's difficulty two, Tinker Forcefully, ROLL!
Looking for 13s or less...
Success!
Can I spend momentum?
You don't have any left, but you can add Chaos instead.
Cool, I'll do that...
And I'll add two Chaos to create a Truth...
...to the house.
"On Fire"


In the meantime, the rest of you are running down the corridor...
...the wooden floor screeches as you race to catch the little critter


HA! Got an idea
Ok...?


I spend a Void Point to create a "loose plank" Truth

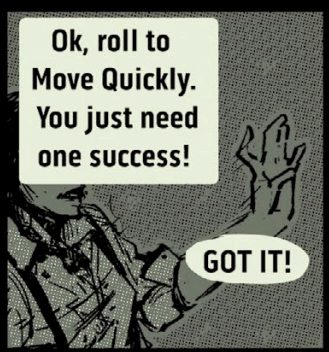

And slam it down, making the rat fly towards us




That's awesome!
Granted!


QUICK Grab it!


I'll try to catch it


Ok, roll to Move Quickly. You just need one success!
GOT IT!


Give me one success
You leap forwards
...trying to catch the rat in your hand
VOID POINTS
I spend a Void Point
1
to turn this die into a 1
Got it!
YEAH!



# Chapter 3

# ACTION AND INTRIGUE

## OVERVIEW

Whether brawling for scraps in a plague district or reaping prestige at courthouses and in the noble quarters, conflict in the Empire of the Isles abounds. This chapter describes the way in which it develops—how to set up scenes, establish the stakes and decide who wins the day.

These rules reference and build upon those you were introduced to in the previous chapter, so it would be useful to be familiar with them first.

## TRACKS

When setting out to complete a goal, win a fight, sneak around or take part in a battle of wits, you want to create a sense of progress. This is done using tracks, helping the players and GM visualize their progress in situations where the stakes are high.

The type of track used will differ between situations, but they all work in the same way. The track has a number of steps or boxes and as you take actions that affect the track, you fill or empty them accordingly.

- **Stress Track:** Some NPCs and all player character have a stress track used to track the damage they take (see page 43).
- **Stealth Track:** When undertaking stealth operations, the GM will track the awareness of those around you, as well as how close you are to being discovered (see page 43).
- **Intrigue Track:** In social conflicts intrigue tracks are used to monitor your progress in the intrigue (see page 44).
- **Reputation Track:** This tracks your reputation and status within a faction (See page 46).
- **Progress Track:** A generic track for keeping note of the progress towards a personal goal, an impending event in the campaign, or anything else not covered by other tracks.

## USING TRACKS

A track measures the progress towards a specific outcome; that outcome might be positive or negative depending on what the track itself represents, and what circumstances fill the spaces along that track. When the GM creates a new track, they need to choose how long that track is—that is, how many spaces it has—and what causes that those spaces to be filled.

Many kinds of common track, discussed elsewhere in this book, will list a standard length. For example, a Stress Track, used in combat, is normally equal to a character's Survive skill, perhaps with an extra space or two if they're wearing armour or especially tough. In general, most tracks will have between 4 and 8 spaces, and if a track directly affects or represents a character, the track can normally be based on one of that character's skills.

Filling the track depends on whether the track is something you're working towards (such as defeating an opponent), or something you're trying to avoid (such as sneaking around somewhere you're not welcome).

- If the track is something you're working towards, then you'll fill spaces when you succeed at relevant actions. Normally, a successful action should fill two spaces on the track, but this may be reduced to one if you suffer complications or increased if you spend Momentum (one Momentum for an extra space). When you fill the track, you achieve your goal.
- If the track is something you're trying to avoid, then you'll fill spaces when you fail at relevant actions, and/or when you suffer complications relating to it. A complication should fill one space on the track, while a failed test fills two spaces. When you fill the track, then you suffer whatever fate or consequence you tried to avoid.

For some tracks that are more persistent—such as a Stress track for combat—the GM should also decide when or if a track resets. Tracks don't reset if they're filled, and while many tracks simply don't matter after the scene they appear in, some tracks like a character's Stress or Reputation can persist from scene to scene. At the GM's discretion, a track which remains in play can reset at the start of a new scene, or it can stay unchanged for several scenes or even sessions depending on what it represents.

## TYPES OF TRACK

Tracks can appear in all kinds of situation, representing a variety of different problems to overcome, goals to pursue, and hazards to avoid. Regardless of what they represent. Below are a few examples of different ways tracks can be used:

- An **objective** or **obstacle** is the most common example: it represents something you're trying to do, or something you're trying to overcome. Spaces are filled by successful actions you perform, and the goal is reached, or the obstacle is beaten, if the track is filled. Your opponents' Stress tracks work this way for you, but Intrigue can also work this way, as can any long-term projects. The shorter the track here, the less effort it needs to complete.

- **Hazards** and **dangers** are the next most common example; they represent something bat that could happen which you're trying to avoid. Spaces are filled by your complications and failed actions (so long as they're appropriate to the hazard), and when the track is filled, disaster strikes and now you have to deal with the problem you wanted to avoid. Stealth tracks work this way, with the enemy being alerted if the track fills, but it could also represent an environmental hazard such as an unstable building on the verge of collapse. The shorter the track here, the riskier the situation is, as fewer failures are needed to fill it.
- Sometimes you might want to combine an obstacle or objective with a hazard, such as when trying to disarm a bomb; in this case, the track becomes a **race**: two equal-sized tracks, where success fills the objective track and failure/complications fill the hazard one. Whichever track fills first determines what happens: either you achieve your goal, or disaster strikes.
- You might also see situations where there are **multiple tracks** in play at once. This is most common in combat, as each important combatant will have their own stress track, but you might also see groups with their own objectives, such as if one side is trying to flee and escape and the other is pursuing them—each side fills spaces on their own track, and whomever fills their track first wins.
- **Surprise** tracks occur when a situation that seemed easy is revealed to be more difficult, and it's a possible result of a complication or the GM spending Chaos. Perhaps you've successfully attacked an ordinary foe, but because you rolled a complication, that foe now has a Stress track instead of being defeated immediately.

# COMBAT

A lot of the struggles across the Empire of the Isles come down to life-or-death battles, whether bare-knuckle brawls, honorable duels with sword and pistol, or the legitimized atrocities of open warfare.

## MAKING ATTACKS

Attacking an enemy is done using either a skill test or a contest, normally using the Fight skill; it is a contest if the target can defend themselves (dodge or block a melee attack, dive into cover from a ranged attack), and a skill test otherwise. If you're attacking in melee, you need to be in reach of them. If you're shooting them, you need to be able to see them. Whether your attack is melee or ranged will depend on your weapon.

The GM sets the difficulty of the skill test, with a base difficulty of 1 for melee attacks, and 2 for ranged attacks; as always other factors may apply, such as visibility. If your attack succeeds, then your opponent is either defeated immediately, or you fill in some of their stress track if they have one.

There are two ways to defeat an opponent in combat.

- Killing an opponent is quick, but messy, and if you attack with the intent to kill, you generate 2 Chaos.
- Subduing an opponent is cleaner but more difficult, and if you attack with the intent to subdue, you increase the difficulty of your attack by 1.

If you're attacking an opponent with a stress track, this choice is only made on attacks you expect to fill the stress track and defeat that opponent... and if you forget to make that choice, then the opponent is killed whether you wanted to kill them or not, generating 2 Chaos as a result.

## COUNTER-ATTACK

There's always a risk of a counter-attack. If you're defending against an attack, and win the contest, you may spend Momentum to counter-attack—normally 2, but the GM may adjust this if there's a good reason to. If you counter-attack, then you inflict damage as if you had made a successful attack.

### TRAPS

It's not uncommon for desperate, dangerous, or paranoid people to make use of traps to overcome their enemies and defend against aggressors and intruders. To set up a trap, you will make a Tinker test with an appropriate style, and you get to choose the difficulty for this skill test.

If an enemy passes by a trap, they must succeed a Study skill test in order to spot it (or avoid the trap's trigger) before it's too late. The difficulty of this skill test is equal to the difficulty you chose when you set the trap. A character who fails to avoid a trap suffers the effects of that trap.

### INFLICTING DAMAGE

You'll see that all weapons we present in ***Dishonored*** have an associated **damage value**. This is used when dealing with antagonists that have a stress track. The damage value indicates how many boxes in that track you'll fill after a successful hit. Your bare hands have a damage value of 1.

### TAKING STRESS

Your player characters, and some NPCs, are tougher than most. When you're the target of a successful attack, it marks off spaces on your Stress track instead of defeating you immediately. Your character has a Stress track equal to their Survival skill rating, which might be increased by armour you're wearing. Once your Stress track is full, you are defeated—dead or subdued, at the attacker's choice. If your character died, you'll need a new one, otherwise, you'll wake up again in the next scene.

When taking damage, you may choose to reduce the damage to 1, at the cost of taking a new personal truth, which reflects some injury or disadvantage you've suffered. You empty your stress track at the start of a new scene, but truths will stay until action is taken to remove them.

## STEALTH

Stealth is not simply a matter of being hidden or moving quietly; it requires cunning, timing, and awareness to succeed. Those who can achieve their goals without others noticing, and who can spot the attempts of others to do likewise, are those who thrive.

Whenever you wish to perform an action which you don't want others to notice, you'll need to make a skill test. The difficulty of any action when you want to act unnoticed is increased by 1, which represents the extra difficulty to conceal the activity while still succeeding. The GM may well ask you to choose—success or stealth—and allow success at cost, so that a failed test either means you succeeded but were noticed, or failed but remained concealed.

### STEALTH CONTESTS

Ordinarily, a skill test is enough to conceal an action—most people have their own business and will only look over if you do something to draw attention. However, some people are specifically looking for signs of trouble. In these cases, an action to avoid notice requires a contest instead of just a skill test, normally with the Study skill. Multiple guards close together may even assist one another on these rolls, making them much harder.

Each side may have factors that affect their total successes, such as lighting, boredom, drunkenness.

### THE STEALTH TRACK

When sneaking through a guarded area, the constant threat of being discovered can be represented using a stealth track, which serves to show how alert those keeping watch over the area are. Each time a character fails a test to avoid notice, they fill two of the track's spaces. Each time they suffer a complication while in the area, they fill one space.

When the track is filled, the alarm is raised and the characters will need to fight, flee, or find a very good hiding spot.

The track's length is based on the area being moved through, and the people guarding it. The base length of the track is equal to 12 minus the highest Study score of the guards present. It can then be increased or decreased further based on how secure it is — hiding spaces and secret tunnels, lengthen the track, while bright lights, security systems, and open spaces shorten the track.

The number of boxes that are filled after every misstep is up to the GM, though for reference they could have failed rolls fill a single box, while complications can fill two (that is, of course, if these affect the alertness of the enemy).

### STYLES OF STEALTH

While it might seem obvious that any action performed stealthily should be done quietly, that's not necessarily the case, as not all stealth is about noise. Any style is possible, depending on what you're trying to conceal and how you're going about it.

- If you act **Boldly**, you're going to draw attention, but you might be able to succeed before anyone else can respond to what you've done, and the mess you cause might be able to conceal another action.
- If you act **Carefully**, you'll probably focus more on waiting for the right moment to act, perhaps waiting for onlookers to be distracted or busy.
- If you act **Cleverly**, you're probably reliant on precise timing, detailed knowledge, and a solid plan to achieve your goal.
- If you act **Forcefully**, you will draw a lot of attention to yourself, but that may be just the distraction you need to conceal a different action.
- If you act **Quietly**, you'll not make much noise, which is great for avoiding attention entirely.
- If you act **Swiftly**, you may be able to achieve success before anyone notices, and even if they do notice something, you may have acted too quickly for them to know what they saw.

## INTRIGUE

At the heart of a social conflict there is a desire or goal, normally in the form of a request: you want something, and someone is either able and willing to grant that request for a cost, or they are unwilling and standing between you and your goal. At the simplest, it comes down to you changing their mind.

Whenever you are faced with a character who has motivations opposed to you, and you want to change their mind, you enter into a social conflict. This is a contest, and you'll normally use Talk, though Survive or Study could be substitutes depending on the contest. The base difficulty for each character is based on how reasonable your request is and how wary, defiant, or suspicious the resisting character is (the more willing they are to help, the lower their difficulty).

Success in these contests usually affects the game in one or both of the following ways: either you establish a new truth, or tick boxes on an **intrigue track**. Truths will generally be helpful to achieving an ultimate goal; for example, if you are trying to spread a rumor, succeeding at several rolls to spread rumors across the city might be represented with truths such as "The rumor runs in the Distillery District" and "The rumor runs in the Courthouse".

## CONTACTS

**Contacts** are people with whom you have a solid relationship. How you know them is up to you—they might be someone you know professionally, or they might be a friend, or a distant family member, or someone else entirely.

With each contact, the relationship will be defined as either great, fair, neutral, poor, or dire:

- A **great** relationship is one where both you and your contact get on well, trust each other, and are helpful to one another, and you've both worked hard to keep it that way.
- A **fair** relationship is one where you and your contact are friendly and you can rely on one another for help from time to time.
- A **neutral** relationship is distant and businesslike. Neither of you expect anything from the other without proper compensation, but it's reliable help.
- A **poor** relationship is cold and stand-offish. They'll help you if they can gain from it, and you've proven the same, or maybe you've called for a few too many favors without repaying them.
- A **dire** relationship is as bad as it gets without being rivals or enemies. They'll help, grudgingly, if the price is right, and you'd probably both be happier if you never saw one another again. There's even a risk that they'll sell you out, and they wouldn't expect any better from you.

A relationship may move between those steps during play. A relationship cannot be better than great, and if it would be reduced to below dire, then you lose the contact permanently.

During an adventure, you can visit a contact for assistance, or they may visit you for help. The kind of help they can provide (and what they might ask of you) is determined by who they are and what they do, at the GM's discretion.

When you visit a contact, you may ask them to provide assistance. This is a Talk skill test, with a difficulty based on the relationship. You can reduce this difficulty by offering something in return, with the difficulty reduced further by the more substantial the compensation (GM's discretion). You may also reduce the difficulty by up to 2 at the cost of reducing the relationship to the next step down after the current adventure. If successful, the contact provides the assistance you've asked for.

You can also visit a contact looking for work—in essence, asking them if they have anything they need doing, and offering to do it. You can offer to help without compensation if you wish; for each job completed, your relationship improves to the next step up (to a maximum of great). When a contact visits you, it's up to you whether or not you'll help them, and you're welcome to request compensation in return. However, if you choose not to help them the relationship worsens, dropping it to the next step down.



## FACTIONS

Groups of people you have a connection with are called **factions**. Factions represent significant groups and social circles that characters move within, from the royal court of the Emperor or Empress and their advisors, to trade guilds and social clubs, neighborhoods and street gangs.

The GM will provide guidance as to the scope and scale of each faction you're connected to—a street gang in Karnaca has less power than one of the old noble houses of Gristol, but the street gang is much more pertinent to daily life in Karnaca than some distant aristocrat in Dunwall. Factions can be found in *Chapter 8: On the Banks of the Wrenhaven* and *Chapter 9: The Jewel of the South*, depending on where they are based.

A faction can work wonders for your story. Although the group might have varying degrees of liberty within the setting, belonging to an organization gives them not just resources, but clear objectives and a code to abide to. When player characters attain victories for their faction, they get to see the fruit of their efforts by using their faction's **reputation track**.

All factions have a reputation track that contemplates the lowest of the low (1) within that organisation's authority structure, to the highest echelons of power (5). The track gives players an overall idea of what they can get away with doing, and what their responsibilities are, as well as establishing a clear goal that they can chose to follow (that is, to climb up the ranks).

The GM will determine when is it that the characters can go up the ladder, or how is it that they may be demoted. Generally, this depends on accomplishing tasks, or causing major issues to the organization, respectively.

There's a set of rules you should have in mind when it comes to mechanics of factions, and how they influence play:

### FACTION CODE

Even the most dreaded gangs of the Wrenhaven have a **code** they abide by. This code binds their ranks and safeguards their assets, as well as being the guiding light that



members follow to further their agendas. This can be a hard-coded set of rules, or it can be an unspoken agreement; the important thing is that, when players take their time to act according to the code, they are rewarded with a Void Point. For example, if a character from the City Guard takes some time to chase a small gang of ne'er-do-wells during a session, that would net them a Void Point. If a character from the Abbey of the Everyman stands for a while preaching in the street against the cults of the Outsider, that would also net them a Void Point. The details of what you do should be discussed with your fellow players and the GM, but generally, the main goal of this is to have the players immersed in their factions' mindset, and involved in the societal themes of the Empire of the Isles.

### THE POWERS THAT BE

Each time you climb up a step in your faction's reputation track, you'll find yourself with a new set of powers to take advantage of. When you were just a grunt in the Bottle Street Gang, your only privilege was to take the boat out for a spin at midnight, so you could quickly get in and get out from that warehouse where you did shady deals. Now that you're a mob lord, you get to send grunts to do that while you look at the dockside maps, planning your next big heist. For each faction in ***Dishonored***, you'll see that we've listed those privileges in each step of the reputation track. That way, you'll know what to expect when you climb the ranks—and you'll be able to plot your plan in advance.

### NAME-DROPPING

When it's time to talk, having a reputation can do wonders for you. Whether it's about negotiation, intimidation, subtle coercion, or any other situation in which you want to get things done, dropping the name of your faction can really get your point across—especially if you are one of the higher ups. When you speak on behalf of your faction, or try to use its name and status to bolster yours, you may add your number on your reputation track to a focus for a test, at the GM's discretion.



# Chapter 4

# RUNNING THE GAME

## OVERVIEW

The role of the gamemaster is equal parts narrator, actor, and referee. If you're the GM, you're still a player in most regards—you're there to enjoy yourself as much as everyone else is—but you'll also have a special responsibility. You'll be describing scenes, adjudicating the rules, and trying to ensure that all the player characters have a chance to shine.

While there are rules in this chapter, a lot of them are flexible, and are presented as options and advice. As the GM, the rules are a tool for you to use, and you shouldn't be afraid to use those tools in unexpected ways or tailor them to your specific preferences.

## GAMEMASTERING 101

As the GM, it's vital to be prepared. While some players are comfortable just turning up to play and getting on with the game, it takes practice for a GM to run a game without much preparation.

You should...

- **Be as familiar as possible with the rules**, especially for situations that might come up a lot. This doesn't mean knowing every single rule, but you should at least know how the game works well enough to make reasonable decisions about the characters' actions.
- **Know the plot**. At the heart of every story there's a conflict; the protagonists being confronted with the schemes of their adversaries. It is essential that you know these plots and schemes, so you can present them to the players for their characters to confront. Roleplaying games are a

group effort, so you should always leave room for the players to make their mark and be ready to adapt to whatever impact their decisions have upon the story.

- **Be prepared**. In every group, you'll be the one responsible for making the game run smoothly. This may include providing pencils and paper, dice, or other useful gaming aids—though some players may provide their own. You might prefer to hold on to character sheets between sessions, ensuring that they're all in one place.
- **Make sure everyone is comfortable.** Given that many of the themes at the core of Dishonored are quite dark in nature, it's always good to know what your players expect of the game, and what they do not expect or want to see. During play, you'll need to pay attention not just to the action and the characters, but also to your players, in order to identify and address any sort of issues that might be making any players uncomfortable.

### X UP!

A common element at many gaming tables nowadays is the X-Card. The X-Card can be anything; a piece of paper with an X written on it, a token, a blank card, whatever you agree on. At any point during the game, if there's something happening that a player is not comfortable with, they can tap the X-Card. When that happens, the GM should identify what's wrong and change course accordingly. No justification should be sought for using the X-Card: part of the reason we have it is so that people do not have to explain why they are uncomfortable. If, however, what triggered the X-Card is not clear, you may want to take a break at some point to talk to the X-Card user (preferably alone, which is less intimidating than having them address the whole group) to make sure that what transpired doesn't happen again.

## PRESENTING PROBLEMS

Problems can manifest in a variety of ways; as overt as a battle, or as subtle as a conspiracy. Problems can range in size from the incidental to the monumental: a broken light bulb can complicate a fight or investigation, while a massive conspiracy could influence and encompass dozens of more immediate challenges.

These problems should be the kicker for a story. Your players can think of the reasons why their characters come together, but it's your job to present a problem that will push them into action. The most common way to start a game is to present a change of circumstances; an event that either motivates player characters to get involved (or that sees them unwillingly involved).

GMing styles vary; some people prefer to prep and pre-determine all the minutiae of every scene, while others gravitate towards improvising most if not all aspects of the story. Until you find your style, the sweet spot will lie in the middle; you'll probably have a clear image of how the story will start, and how it will end, and you'll improvise to lead the player characters towards the finale.

Among the greatest tools in your arsenal for presenting problems are complications and Chaos. Together, these tools allow you to bring into play immediate challenges and difficulties (such as having a character's gun misfire when he's fending off foes) in a way that seems less arbitrary or targeted than if you were simply to decide that those things happened.

## LET THE PLAYERS BE AWESOME

The player characters should be presented in a positive light—they are the heroes (or possibly anti-heroes), and the main focus of the story. Each player should have ample opportunity for their character to shine. It is important to remember that, while you're responsible for setting up the challenges and adversaries the player characters will face, you are not the players' adversary. You can think of yourself as their biggest fan; you want them to face conflict so that they can grow, and you want them to ultimately succeed.

Every problem you present to the players is an opportunity to demonstrate their characters abilities: their strengths, their weaknesses, and their personalities. A bar brawl is an opportunity for the retired soldier to crack some skulls, while an uncooperative informant is a great chance for the persuasive characters to show off their talents.

Problems should not stop the characters; if they stop, then the game may stop too. Instead, a problem gives the characters something to do right now, that could lead to something bigger.

## BRINGING IN THE RULES

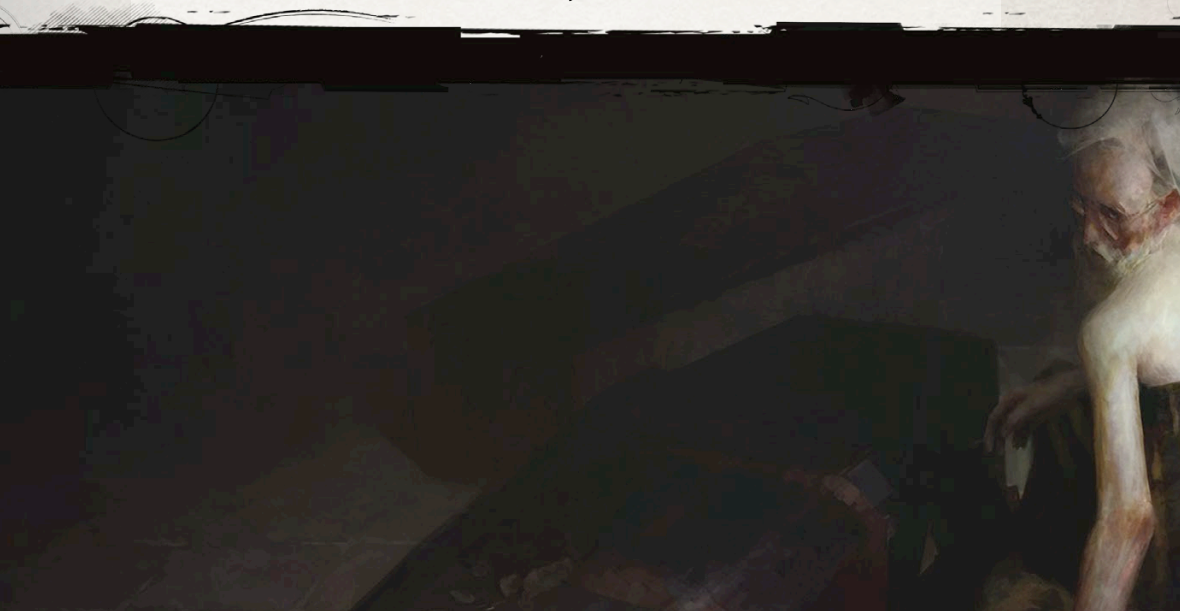
An important part of your responsibilities is deciding when the rules are needed to determine the outcome of a situation. A lot of the time, this will be obvious—once blades are drawn and bullets start flying, it's probably time for the combat rules—but there are occasions when there is a choice to be made. The rules exist as a guide and a framework to give you and the group the means to resolve risky or difficult actions, and they should be able to handle a wide range of circumstances if used with a little common sense and imagination.

Still, the rules of ***Dishonored*** are written more as a toolkit than a set of strict instructions. You can use as little or as much as you feel comfortable with. If you find that a rule is making the game tedious, ignore it! If you are stuck on what the result of a character's described actions are, bring in the rules!

## RUNNING SCENES

Each adventure is composed of several scenes, during which you and your players will all have opportunities to drive the action forward and determine what happens next. As the gamemaster, it's your responsibility to establish each scene, by describing its circumstances. You should give some consideration to five core questions about a scene when establishing it, which shouldn't take long to answer.

1. **Where is the scene set?** Where a scene occurs defines the layout, terrain, and the likely occupants.
2. **When is the scene set?** Time is as important as place in a lot of ways. This can be absolute, with locations changing at different points in time (for example, doors are more likely to be locked at night), but it could also be relative, with the amount of time passed since the previous scene affecting its circumstances.
3. **Who is in the scene?** This might be allies, adversaries, bystanders, or a mixture of all three.
4. **What's the objective?** The characters always have a goal in mind, whether vague or clear, when they go into a scene. Knowing this will allow you to put in place the appropriate obstacles and challenges they need to overcome. Even scenes in which the characters might just find themselves chatting at a bar have an implied goal, be it to flesh out their characters' personalities even more, or to connect with other members of the group. It's up to you to discern what the goals are. You'll find that the most involved players will sometimes create drama themselves without even needing you to intercede—which is always a great sign!
5. **What's the big picture?** Although you may keep this secret from the player characters, determining what the scene's place is in the grand scheme of story is crucial because it provides context and a reason for those events to be happening. This will often link into the wider storyline that spans the whole adventure, but that doesn't always have to be the case.



## SCENE FRAMING TRICKS

There are a few tried and tested ways to open a scene to produce different effects, feelings, or styles. Using them separately, or in combination with one another, can give you a wider range of ways to present new scenes.

- **Why are you here?** Sometimes a scene will begin without a clear idea of why the player characters are there. This is common at the start of adventures, especially when framing the opening scene. Feel free to ask this question to your players; thus inviting them to have a say in the story's setup.
- **Framing after arrival**. Often, what the characters want to achieve is already known when the scene is established, so it's sometimes useful to skip the 'empty space' of the scene. Instead of describing the characters arriving, describe them already there (they arrived a while ago, and are in the middle of their business).
- **In medias res**. This is a Latin phrase meaning "in the middle of things". Occasionally starting a scene in the middle of the action – during a chase, a fight, an intense interrogation, or similar – is an interesting way to shake things up. Used at the start of an adventure, it can also be referred to as a "cold open".

### PLAYING THINGS OUT

Once the scene begins, players take the lead and you can step back a little. While setting scenes is where you have the most power, it is during those scenes that the characters have an opportunity to shine, and it's part of your job to give the players space and opportunities to show off their characters, especially where that means confronting those characters with challenging obstacles to overcome and deadly perils to survive.

One way of adding challenges to a scene is by allowing **success at a cost**. This entails that, when a player asks if they can do something, you can say "yes, but..."—meaning success is achieved but there's a negative consequence, which transmits a more gritty feel that ties in well with the darker themes of ***Dishonored***. Similarly, "no, but" results



can also prompt skill tests, as characters seek to engineer the circumstances that make an action possible (find the right tools, get the right information, etc.).

### WRAPPING THINGS UP, AND MOVING ON

Concluding a scene is as important as starting a new one; indeed, the two are linked, because how you end one scene will feed into the start of subsequent scenes. This often starts with a brief description of the state things are in as the scene ends, especially if the scene is dramatic or action-packed, perhaps describing the last fleeing enemy, bystanders emerging in the aftermath, or the sounds of the watch drawing near.

You'll then ask the players what they want to do next. This, more than anything else, should provide a direction to take the adventure, even if things don't turn out quite how the players expect. Alongside this, attend to minor rules "upkeep": remind the players to end any effects that last until the end of the scene, and to remove a point from their Momentum pool if they have any left. If the scene was important or especially significant, consider awarding the players a Void point each.

## EXPANDING GAMEPLAY

The ***Dishonored*** rules can be used in more nuanced ways than those presented throughout *Chapter 2: Playing the Game* and *Chapter 3: Action & Intrigue*. Because one of the tenets of good GMing is the ability to break and bend rules to service your game, it's always recommended that (once you get a feel for the kind of game your players like) you think about how those rules should work for you and not the other way around.

For example, if you see that your players are really enjoying the more tense moments in the story, use Chaos to your advantage. Add Chaos if the characters take too long on making a decision. Spend Chaos in the middle of a conversation without immediately specifying what the effects are. The use of the game's resources always has a subtle psychological effect that you can harness; identify your players' reactions and seek to replicate them at the right times!

### CHAOS

Chaos being spent means problems arising immediately. Chaos being added means whatever just happened will lead to problems later. All in all, Chaos is problematic, and it's a great resource to tap into when trying to build tension and call for the players' attention. Most examples seen in *Chapter 2: Playing the Game* list punctual, immediate ways to gain and spend Chaos, but one thing we haven't addressed is the total Chaos you have. Taking note of this number at the end of every session (and reminding your players about it) could escalate things up a notch, making them more wary of using Chaos to their advantage. You could have a short retelling of how events in the streets played out as a result of Chaos accumulation, either at the beginning or at the end of each session, so as to showcase the consequences of the characters' actions.

When Chaos is used against the players, it tends to be seen as part of a feedback loop that serves to balance the expenditure of Momentum. However, when Chaos bleeds into the world beyond the player character's, affecting the millions who inhabit the Empire of the Isles, the flow of Momentum and Chaos looks more like a chain reaction than a loop. If player characters employ Momentum to better their odds, and then see Chaos starting to affect their district, their loved ones, their leaders, and the world in general, the effect it has differs greatly. It serves as a measure of how much the characters' actions affect their surroundings, as well as the people that surround them.

The above defines the two uses for Chaos: as a counter to Momentum when used against player characters, and as a measurement of consequence when used to change the world. Groups that tend to get more fun out of the mechanics of the game and the ebb and flow of Chaos and Momentum would be better served by you with the first use, while groups that see more fun in the narrative side of the game by witnessing the consequences of their actions in the world would be better served with the second use.

### OPTIONAL RULE — CHAOS TRACKS

Sometimes you want some specific threat to loom over your players' choices and decisions. In these cases, you may try spending Chaos to create a track. Decide what major event will happen when the track fills, and then spend four or more Chaos to create the track: the track's length is equal to twelve minus the amount of Chaos spent. At the end of each scene or session, fill one, two, or three spaces on the track depending on how the player characters acted—the noisier, messier, and more chaotic they were, the more spaces they fill. When the track's full, everyone feels the consequences.

## MOMENTUM

Momentum is energy. It's the difference between a character landing from a fall and stopping to catch their breath, and them landing from a fall and immediately dodging an arrow while pulling out their knife. Momentum should inform the way you describe action, since (like the other resources we present in this game) it's supposed to represent a concrete idea: the flow of action—the kind you get to see when you watch a high-octane action film, a choreographed dance, or a flawless display of rhetoric skills.

Granted, using Momentum to dictate the way things play out is sometimes less straightforward than we'd like it to be. It's easy to see how it would play a part in the above example, with all the falling and leaping. In social scenarios, Momentum would obviously paint a different picture, though the theme of uninterrupted action would continue. Maybe a roll results in a PC presenting a nigh-irrefutable statement, one that moves the crowd in such a way that, when their opponent struggles and opens their mouth to reply, they find themselves interrupted by booing, as people throw vegetables at them.

### OPTIONAL RULE - CATCHING THE WIND

When a player generates Momentum, they themselves get to narrate how their character executes their action. This is especially favorable for flashy sessions, and for groups that really want to see their characters shine (since players will tend to use the opportunity for narrative input to exalt their characters' performance).

## VOID

Void points represent the connection of the player characters with the dreamlike landscapes of the Void: a strange place that has both sentience and an agenda. In a way, the strangeness of the Void signifies one thing: the weird, mysterious, occult side of the ***Dishonored*** world.

For this reason, you could start to think about some specific situations for which the characters may gain Void Points (aside from those listed in the rules).

If the player characters made an effort to find the Shrine of the Outsider, it would be interesting to reward them with a Void point, and to describe the feeling they experience during the encounter. What about the discovery of a rune? Giving them a Void point and then going through a description of its finish, the feeling of the spellbound relic in their hands; it all comes together to evoke the momentous discovery. All the better if you pair it up with an eerie soundtrack!

### OPTIONAL RULE - CALL OF THE VOID

Spending Void points gives you even more possibilities to toy around with the events of the story. The blanket rule which could make this manifest is that of the Call of the Void. This entails the player characters having another way of using Void points. Once per session, they may spend 2 Void points to make it so that, at some point during this or the following session, they'll have an encounter with the supernatural. This could be a lucid dream, a short individual scene in which the dreamer can see the Void reaching out to influence certain future events. It could be a reflection in a puddle, showing a vision of how your character will look in an uncertain amount of time. Whatever it is, the result should be cryptic, but in some way useful to resolve the issues the group will face in the future (as well as alerting them of possible dangers to come).

## EXPERIENCE POINTS

Handing over **experience points** (also called **XPs**) is the most direct way of rewarding your players. You'll see that we have codified a series of rules regarding their use in *Chapter 5: The Protagonists*, with the intention of fostering the kind of play that would bring the themes of ***Dishonored*** into your game.

Now, of course, there's much more to a game's narrative than its inherent theme and mood. We've stated before that it's good practice, before starting a new adventure, to have a chat with your group about the kind of game that they want. They may agree on

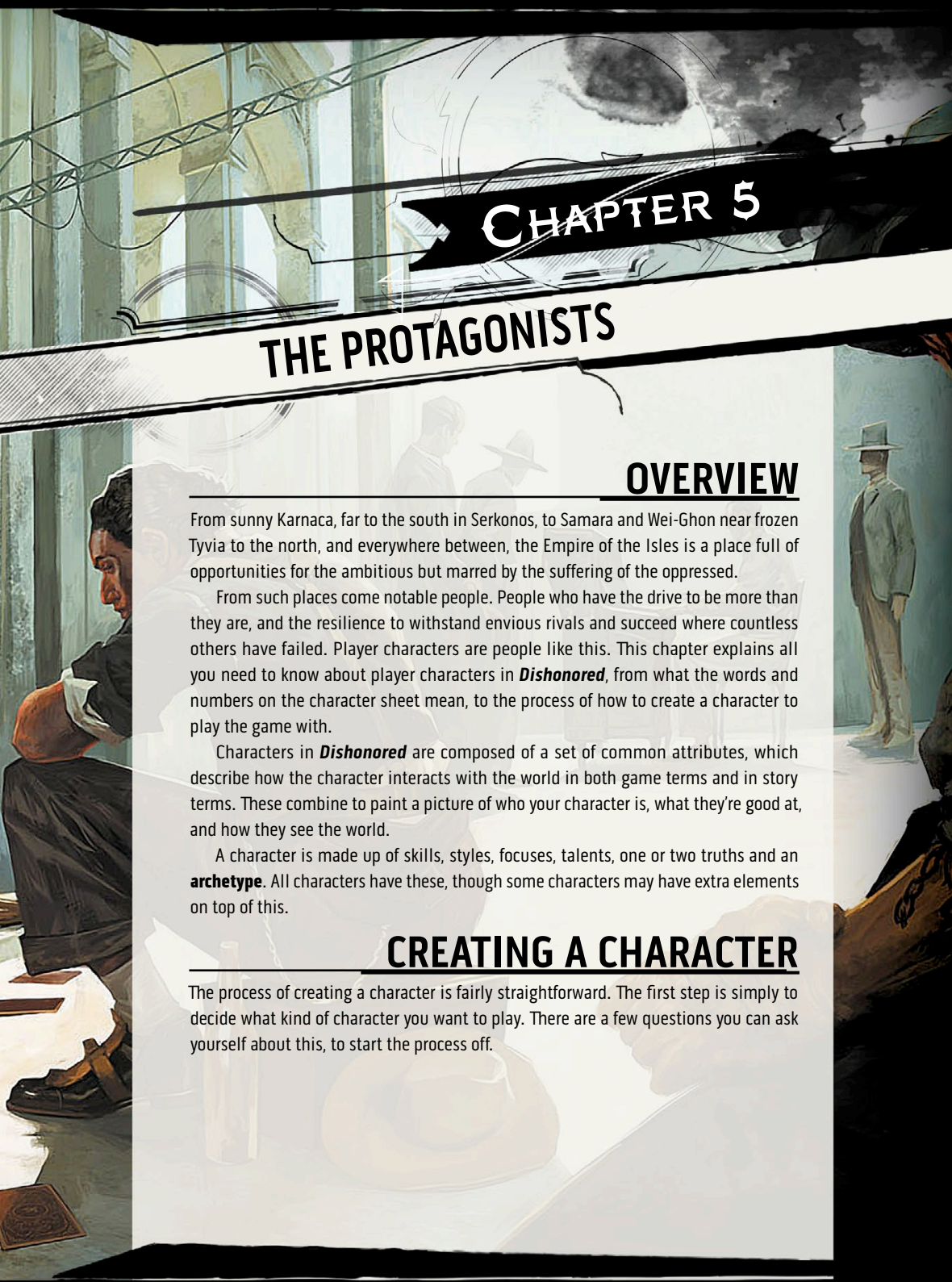
wanting to play a spy thriller game, or an action-packed story, or even a folk horror tale set in the countryside. All these different genres bring in something of their own, and you can most certainly push the players to contribute to those narratives by rewarding on-theme play with experience points!

### OPTIONAL RULE - WEAPONIZING XP

Say you want to put a detective-noir spin to your game. If, for example, one of your players gives an evocative description of their character's attitude when looking at a crime scene, rewarding them with an XP could be a great way of incentivizing this kind of play. If you are trying to give the game a more "personal drama" take, and you have one of your players describe their thoughts and worries about last night's warehouse raid, reward them with an XP point! Always make sure that the reason why you reward them is clear to everyone, so that the players can be on the same page—and so that they all get a chance to shine. Once everyone is on track, playing to the tune you've set, make sure you up the ante by rewarding only the most exceptional achievements—XP should still be something that takes effort to gain!




EXPLOSION



# Chapter 5

# THE PROTAGONISTS

## OVERVIEW

From sunny Karnaca, far to the south in Serkonos, to Samara and Wei-Ghon near frozen Tyvia to the north, and everywhere between, the Empire of the Isles is a place full of opportunities for the ambitious but marred by the suffering of the oppressed.

From such places come notable people. People who have the drive to be more than they are, and the resilience to withstand envious rivals and succeed where countless others have failed. Player characters are people like this. This chapter explains all you need to know about player characters in ***Dishonored***, from what the words and numbers on the character sheet mean, to the process of how to create a character to play the game with.

Characters in ***Dishonored*** are composed of a set of common attributes, which describe how the character interacts with the world in both game terms and in story terms. These combine to paint a picture of who your character is, what they're good at, and how they see the world.

A character is made up of skills, styles, focuses, talents, one or two truths and an **archetype**. All characters have these, though some characters may have extra elements on top of this.

## CREATING A CHARACTER

The process of creating a character is fairly straightforward. The first step is simply to decide what kind of character you want to play. There are a few questions you can ask yourself about this, to start the process off.

## QUESTIONS FOR THE PLAYERS

**Who are they?** Is the character a scion of aristocracy, or are they lowborn? Are they living up to the expectations of their birth and station, or have they broken free of that to find their own path?.

**What do they do?** What profession or vocation do they call their own? What things do they excel at? What do they struggle with? Are they a fighter, comfortable with a blade in their hand, or are they a natural philosopher, studying the deeper mysteries of the world?.

**Where are they from, and where are they going?** The Empire of the Isles is a big place, with dozens of cities and huge expanses of rural land between. Are you from frozen Tyvia, or sunny Serkonos? Did you witness the rebellion in Morley, or are you Dunwall born-and-bred, from the beating heart of Gristol? Just as important, where are you going? You might be content to stay where you are and seek opportunities in the familiar streets of home, or you might go afield to find your way in a place where nobody knows your past or your family?.

You might leave part of this process until later, maybe looking for inspiration into the more rules-driven parts later in this chapter.

## PERSONAL TRUTHS

In game terms, a character's innate nature is defined in part by a pair of **personal truths**. Truths—described in full in *Chapter 2: Playing the Game*—describe the important parts of the character in a single word or short phrase. This may include a character's heritage, or some other description of their origin, encapsulating all manner of differences big and small..

You'll have two personal truths at the start of play: one describing an innate, core trait of your character, and one describing an irredeemable problem that the character struggles with. You'll want to discuss the concept with your gamemaster so that you can both have a solid idea of what the truths represent.

- The first truth could refer to their moral code, such as *never do to others what you wouldn't want them to do to you*. It could also be a virtue by which they guide their lives, such as *charity*. It also could be someone, such as their daughter (it would be someone so close as to justify the fact that your character practically lives for them).

- The second truth is that certain something which has brought you hardship throughout your life. It could be a physical disability, such as the truth *blindness*. It could be a vice, such as *greed*. It could also be a more complex event or revelation about them, such as a *terrible secret* or the fact that they suffer from an *immense feeling of guilt* for some reason.

These are far from the only ways to build personal truths, but they're a good starting point. It's often useful to discuss these with the rest of the group, as they might have ideas that you've not considered. At this point, you could leave your character with those

two truths, and carry on to the rest of the process, or you could create one or two more with your GM's permission. These should be interesting, detailed **flaws** of your character which will help you tell an interesting story—perhaps the character *speaks with a lisp*, *reeks of fish*, or is *illiterate*. You can create up to two other truths in this way, and each one will give you an additional 5 XP later on.

## SKILLS

All characters have six skills: Fight, Move, Study, Survive, Talk, and Tinker. Broadly, these cover the kinds of activities a character is likely to attempt during the game. Each character has a rating in each of these skills ranging from 4 to 8, and what each rating represents is explained on the table below.

### Skills and Proficiency

| IF A SKILL IS RATED... | THEN YOU ARE... |
|---|---|
| 4 | Lacking in training or knowledge. |
| 5 | Trained to a basic level. |
| 6 | Trained and have some experience. |
| 7 | An expert in the field. |
| 8 | A master of the field. |

- **Fight** covers your ability to use, and defend against, violence. It's most often used when making attacks, but it can also be used to judge threatening situations, and it covers a knowledge of weapons, combat styles, and strategy.
- **Move** covers your ability to navigate your environment. It is most often used to travel over difficult terrain or move in dangerous situations.
- **Study** covers your education and knowledge, but also your ability to do research, and your general perceptiveness. It's useful when trying to gain or study information, or when discerning facts about a person, place, or object.
- **Survive** covers your resistance to danger and pressure, and your ability to handle and navigate the perils of the world.
- **Talk** covers your ability to relate to and interact with other people. This skill covers both talking to people, but also an understanding of how people communicate.
- **Tinker** covers your ability to use and understand complex or specialized tools and techniques, such as vehicles and machinery.



## STYLES

A character has six styles—Boldly, Carefully, Cleverly, Forcefully, Quietly and Swiftly—and like skills, they all have a rating which ranges from 4 to 8. What each rating represents is explained on the table below.

### Styles and Tendencies

| IF A STYLE IS RATED... | THEN YOU... |
|---|---|
| 4 | Have almost no tendency towards that style. |
| 5 | Rarely do things according to that style. |
| 6 | Often do things according to that style. |
| 7 | Tend to do things according to that style. |
| 8 | Excel at doing things according to that style. |

- If you do something **Boldly**, you're drawing attention to yourself, utilizing all the flair and personality you can muster.
- If you do something **Carefully**, you're paying close attention to detail and take extra time to avoid mistakes.
- If you do something **Cleverly**, you approach problems from multiple angles and plan several steps ahead.

- If you do something **Forcefully**, you're direct, unsubtle, and rely on raw strength and brute force.
- If you do something **Quietly**, you try to avoid notice or attention.
- If you do something **Swiftly**, you're quick to respond to problems, and likely quick to achieve your goals.

## FOCUSES

A character's skills are broad, but focuses allow you to demonstrate specialties and the kinds of advanced expertise that comes with specialized training or hard-won experience. Focuses are not tied to any specific skill, and they can be applied to any skill test you attempt, so long as the focus would logically apply to that action.

Focuses increase the chances of scoring a critical success on a skill test, and each focus has a rating to determine how much specialization they represent. The rating is from 2 to 5, and what each rating represents is explained on the table below.

### Focuses and Expertise

| IF A FOCUS IS RATED... | THEN YOU HAVE... |
|---|---|
| 1 (no focus) | Minimal special knowledge about the subject. |
| 2 | A grasp of the nuances of the subject. |
| 3 | Considerable experience with the subject. |
| 4 | Enough knowledge to be considered an expert. |
| 5 | A reputation as a master in the field. |

A starting player character will normally have two focuses. A list of focuses can be found here, but you may, with your GM's approval, create your own focuses. Lacking a focus doesn't mean that you cannot attempt a thing, only that you have no specific training or knowledge of that field beyond that covered by your skills.

- **Acrobatics:** a discipline of motion involving feats of balance, agility, and fine motor control.
- **Archery:** a study of the use and upkeep of bows, crossbows, and similar projectile throwers.
- **Boats:** operation and maintenance of small watercraft that can be operated by one person.
- **Brawling:** a study of fighting with the fists and improvised weapons.
- **Carriages:** operation and maintenance of vehicles which travel across the ground or on powered rails.
- **Concentrate:** the ability to focus one's attention and efforts on a single object or activity.

- **Counsel:** the ability to provide reasoned and useful advice to others, especially during times of hardship.
- **Deceive:** the ability to convince others of things which are untrue.
- **Engineering:** a study of machinery, the use of electricity, and the means of designing, constructing, and inventing new technologies.
- **Etiquette:** the knowledge of the customs, social mores, and taboos of society.
- **Explosives:** a study of flammable and explosive substances, and the best ways to use or disarm explosive devices.
- **Fencing:** a study of fighting using various forms of sword, including fencing and other styles.
- **Firearms:** a study of the use and maintenance of pistols, rifles, and other guns.
- **Freerunning:** a discipline of motion which involves traversing obstacles and complex environments as quickly and efficiently as possible.
- **History:** a study of the past, its intricacies, and its implications on the present and future.
- **Innuendo:** the ability to convey information using implication and inference rather than direct statements.
- **Intimidate:** the ability to coerce others using threats.
- **Locks:** an understanding of various locking mechanisms, and how to disable them.
- **Medicine:** the study of illnesses and the methods to treat or cure them.
- **Natural Philosophy:** the philosophical study of nature and the physical universe.
- **Negotiate:** the ability to bargain and haggle with others effectively.
- **Persuade:** the ability to convince others to do things for you or on your behalf.
- **Poison:** the study of and practical experience with dangerous poisons, their origins, and their effects.
- **Resilience:** the ability to withstand physical hardships, including the effects of disease, poison, and other lingering ailments.
- **Resolve:** the ability to withstand mental hardships, including fear, doubt, torture, interrogation, and similar problems.
- **Ride:** the practice of traveling on a beast of burden, and techniques for controlling a mount.
- **Ships:** operation, crew management, and maintenance of large watercraft which require crews to operate.
- **Society:** knowledge of, and the ability to navigate, the wealthier sides of urban life.
- **Stealth:** techniques for moving unseen and unheard, or otherwise avoiding attention.
- **Streetwise:** the ability to survive without comforts or shelter in an urban environment, knowledge of the seedier side of urban life.
- **Surgery:** the study of physical injury and the methods required to treat or cure them.

- **Swimming:** a discipline of motion involving moving through the water.
- **Theology:** the study of cults and religions, with particular focus on the Abbey of the Everyman.
- **Tracking:** the ability to locate and follow the trails left by the passage of other creatures.
- **Void Lore:** the study of the formless infinite realm that is said to exist alongside reality, and the deific entity known as the Outsider who dwells within.
- **Wilderness:** the ability to survive in a rural or natural environment, knowledge of dangerous animals and plants.

## TALENTS

Player characters are the protagonists of their own stories, and it is their natural talent that sets them apart. They always have a couple of aces up their sleeves, generally related to their occupation and what they've done in life. These are what we call talents.

Talents take the form of a mechanical bonus—rerolls, bonus Momentum, the ability to use a different skill in a situation, etc.—or exception to the normal rules that applies within set circumstances. Talents can be found alongside the archetype you choose.

Each talent has a condition and a benefit. The condition is the circumstance under which the talent can be used, and the benefit is what the character gains from meeting that condition. No talent may be selected more than once unless otherwise noted.

### THE OUTSIDER'S MARK (SUPERNATURAL TALENT)

You may select this talent instead of choosing a talent from your archetype, with the GM's permission. This may be done during character creation, or later in play as part of character advancement.

You met the Outsider in a dream, and he branded you with his mark—a jagged symbol on the back of your left hand. You gain an additional personal truth, marked by the Outsider. In addition, you gain a selection of supernatural powers and enhancements which you are able to learn and use, as described in *Chapter 7: Into the Void*.

## ARCHETYPES

Once talents are done, it is time to look into archetypes. A character's archetype represents a character's place in the world, their profession or career, or how they see themselves. Some archetypes are about a character's background or origin, while others are more about what the character wants to become. More than anything else, a character's archetype defines their skills.

**Before creating a character by selecting any of the options below, note that your character's skills and styles are all rated 4, and they have no focuses or talents.**

There are thirteen archetypes in total: **Assassin, Commander**, **Courier**, **Duelist**, **Entrepreneur**, **Explorer**, **Guide**, **Hunter**, **Inventor**, **Sharpshooter**, **Scholar**, **Scout**, and **Miscreant**. You'll select one of those archetypes, and apply the benefits it provides. Each archetype provides both a distinct set of abilities that define the character's expertise, and also a path for how the character is likely to grow and advance.

Each archetype provides the following benefits:

- **Skills:** each archetype increases two of the character's skills by +2 each, and another one by +1; each archetype gives a choice for this third skill.
- **Styles**: each archetype increases two of the character's styles by +1, and all archetypes give a choice of different styles.
- **Focuses**: each archetype provides two focuses, and provides a list of fitting suggestions. Feel free to choose others if they fit your character concept better. You receive eight points to divide between your focuses to decide upon their ratings; each focus must have a rating of at least two, and no more than five.
- **Talents**: each archetype grants the character a talent. Each archetype has a distinct set of talents which they can select from.
- **Belongings**: each archetype grants the character one or more pieces of equipment.
- **Contacts**: each archetype may or may not grant contacts to the character.

## ASSASSIN

You're a professional killer, an expert in covert operations, and proficient with a varied arsenal of tools. From poisons to mechanical traps, you aim to deliver death in the most quick and efficient ways, and whether you infiltrate an underground den of criminals or a high etiquette gala, you understand how to blend in and approach your prey. Though assassins usually operate within the moral framework of an organization with core tenets and ideas, there are those who only follow the flow of coin; freeroamers that sell their services to the highest bidder, unrepentant of the chaos they sow in their path.

Selecting Assassin provides the following benefits:

- **Skills**: you gain +2 to Fight, +2 to Talk, and +1 to either Move or Study.
- **Styles**: you gain +1 to any two of Carefully, Cleverly, or Quietly.
- **Focuses**: you gain four focuses. You have eleven points to split between those four focuses. Appropriate options include: Archery, Locks, Poisons, Resolve, Stealth and Streetwise.
- **Talents**: you may select a single talent from the list below.
- **Belongings**: you gain a *switchblade* (use knife stats, page 85).
- **Contacts**: you have one contact with a neutral relationship.

### BESPOKE BLOODLETTING (ASSASSIN TALENT)

Once per session, whenever you source and shop for tools (whether they be weapons, chemical compounds, clothes, etc.) that will be used to carry out an assassination, you can add two extra d20 to a single roll to either find or haggle for the required tools.

### THE GREAT EQUALIZER (ASSASSIN TALENT)

Once per session, whenever you roll to attack someone with murderous intent, you can spend any number of Momentum. The GM loses that same number of Chaos.
Then, reduce the result of each die rolled by that same number.

### INHUMANE DETERMINATION (ASSASSIN TALENT)

Whenever you kill someone, reduce the Chaos you generate by 1.

### OUTSIDER'S GRIN (ASSASSIN TALENT)

Once per session, if you are in the same room as your current assassination target, you can add up to 4 Chaos to the pool. Roll a d20. If the result is equal to or lower than the amount of Chaos you added, your target dies due to natural causes (you are free to specify the details).

## COMMANDER

You're a leader, skilled in rallying those around you during the clamor of battle, or getting the best from the fighters under your care. You might be a military officer, a gang boss, a drill sergeant or instructor.

Selecting Commander provides the following benefits:

- **Skills**: you gain +2 to Fight, +2 to Talk, and +1 to either Move or Study.
- **Styles**: you gain +1 to any two of Boldly, Forcefully, or Swiftly.
- **Focuses**: you gain four focuses. You have eleven points to split between those four focuses. Appropriate options include: Archery, Counsel, Intimidate, Fencing, Firearms and Resolve.
- **Talents**: you may select a single talent from the list below.
- **Belongings**: you gain a *sturdy sword*.
- **Contacts**: you have one contact with a neutral relationship.

### WHISKEY AND CIGARS (COMMANDER TALENT)

When you need to persuade or negotiate with an officer or member of the aristocracy, you may add an extra d20 to any related rolls, so long as you are, or appear to be, of similar standing or rank.

### GET BACK TO IT! (COMMANDER TALENT)

Once per scene, when an ally or subordinate would see their stress track filled, you may add 2 to Chaos as an action in order to berate and shame them into recovering immediately. After adding all stress, they may take one out (leaving them with one blank box in the track).

### PULL RANK (COMMANDER TALENT)

When you attempt to persuade or intimidate someone, and their rank or status is lower than yours, the difficulty of any skill test is reduced by one so long as they believe in, or have proof of, your higher rank and status.

### RALLY (COMMANDER TALENT)

Once per scene, as an action, you may attempt to **Talk Forcefully** (difficulty 1) to bolster your allies' morale and determination. If you succeed, then each of your allies nearby may remove 1 stress from their stress tracks immediately.

## COURIER

You transport information, goods, or even people from place to place. This comes with knowledge of and connections to all sorts of people and places. You might be a legitimate trader, a boatman ferrying passengers, a messenger, or you might be a smuggler, carrying those things secretly and illicitly.

Selecting Courier provides the following benefits:

- **Skills**: you gain +2 to Move, +2 to Talk, and +1 to either Tinker or Survive.
- **Styles**: you gain +1 to any two of Carefully, Cleverly, or Quietly.
- **Focuses**: you gain four focuses. You have eleven points to split between those four focuses. Appropriate options include: Boats, Carriages, Etiquette, Freerunning, Innuendo, Negotiate, Stealth and Streetwise.
- **Talents**: you may select a single talent from the list below.
- **Belongings**: you gain a *boat*, a *cart*, or a *carriage*.
- **Contacts**: you have two contacts with a neutral relationship.



### CITY OF WHISPERS (COURIER TALENT)
At the start of the scene, you may spend two Momentum or add two points to Chaos to ask the GM about one additional detail about the situation or location; the information the GM gives you will have come from the rumors you've heard from various sources.

### FRIENDS EVERYWHERE (COURIER TALENT)
You gain one additional contact, with a neutral relationship. This talent may be selected up to three times.

### SMUGGLER'S SECRETS (COURIER TALENT)
When someone searches you, or a vehicle you own, for a hidden item, increase the difficulty of their skill test by +1.

### SUPPLY AND DEMAND (COURIER TALENT)
When you attempt to purchase or sell an item, you may reduce the difficulty of a skill test to locate a buyer or seller by 2.

## DUELIST

You're light on your feet and quick with a weapon, and you're building a reputation for deadliness. You might be a formally-trained swordsman, a member of the guard, a bodyguard, or some other kind of hired blade.

Selecting Duelist provides the following benefits:

- **Skills**: you gain +2 to Fight, +2 to Move, and +1 to either Study or Talk.
- **Styles**: you gain +1 to any two of Boldly, Quietly, or Swiftly.
- **Focuses**: you gain four focuses. You have eleven points to split between those four focuses. Appropriate options include: Acrobatics, Fencing, Firearms, Intimidate, Resilience and Stealth.
- **Talents**: you may select a single talent from the list below.
- **Belongings**: you have a *fine sword*, or a *pistol* with 6 shots.
- **Contacts**: you have one contact with a neutral relationship.

### BRAVURA BLADE (DUELIST TALENT)
When you **Fight Boldly** and succeed on an attack, you may spend one Momentum to create a truth on your target to represent their fear, awe, or hesitation.

### FLASHING STEEL (DUELIST TALENT)
When you **Fight Swiftly** and succeed on an attack, you may spend one Momentum to make a second attack at +1 difficulty. You may only gain one additional attack per round in this manner.

### FOOTWORK (DUELIST TALENT)
When you attempt a skill test to create a truth that represents positioning or maneuvering for advantage, the difficulty is reduced by one, to a minimum of zero.

### MEASURED STRIKE (DUELIST TALENT)
When you attempt a skill test to remove an equipment piece from an enemy—in essence, disarming them—you may add an extra d20.

## ENTREPRENEUR

You've got ideas, you've got the skills to turn those ideas into a product, and you've got the words and the wit to turn that product into coin. Your product might not be entirely legitimate or legal, it might not be entirely safe, but it's something you can sell, and that's all that matters.

Selecting Entrepreneur provides the following benefits:

- **Skills**: you gain +2 to Talk, +2 to Tinker, and +1 to either Move or Study.
- **Styles**: you gain +1 to any two of Boldly, Cleverly, or Quietly.
- **Focuses**: you gain four focuses. You have eleven points to split between those four focuses. Appropriate options include: Deceive, Engineering, Innuendo, Locks, Medicine, Natural Philosophy, Negotiate, and Streetwise.
- **Talents**: you may select a single talent from the list below.
- **Belongings**: you gain *tinker's tools* and *royal seal contracts*.
- **Contacts**: you have two contacts with a neutral relationship. You may improve the relationship with one by one step, at the cost of reducing the relationship with the other by one step.

### BLACK MARKETEER (ENTREPRENEUR TALENT)

When you attempt a skill test to negotiate with criminals or attempt to buy or sell illegal or illicit goods, you may add an extra d20.

### INVESTORS (ENTREPRENEUR TALENT)

You may go to a contact to gain coin when you seek assistance from them. You may gain up to 100 coin from a contact, or up to 100 coin per point of Reputation from a faction. When you gain coin in this way, the contact will typically expect to be repaid in future with a cut of your profits or similar recompense.

### SALES PITCH (ENTREPRENEUR TALENT)

When you **Talk Boldly** to persuade someone to buy something you're selling, or to persuade them that you have something that they want, you can either reduce the difficulty of your test by one, or, if you're in a contest, you may increase your opponent's difficulty by one instead.

### SELF-MADE (ENTREPRENEUR TALENT)

When you make a skill test to negotiate with or persuade someone of higher social status than you, you may reroll a single d20 so long as you maintain an outward appearance of pedigree.

## EXPLORER

You venture into wild, untamed, or dangerous places, watchful for both danger and the valuable things to be discovered there. You might be a surveyor or prospector, seeking resources to exploit, or one of the daring few who has ventured into the Pandyssian continent. You might instead be someone who studies the natural world, but have no interest in studying it in a laboratory.

Selecting **Explorer** provides the following benefits:

- **Skills**: you gain +2 to Study, +2 to Survive, and +1 to either Fight or Tinker.
- **Styles**: you gain +1 to any two of Carefully, Forcefully, or Swiftly.
- **Focuses**: you gain four focuses. You have eleven points to split between those four focuses. Appropriate options include: Boats, Medicine, Natural Philosophy, Resilience, Resolve, Ships, Swimming, Tracking and Wilderness.
- **Talents**: you may select a single talent from the list below.
- **Belongings**: you gain a collection of *maps and charts*, and a *writing kit*.
- **Contacts**: you have one contact with a neutral relationship.

### EXPERT CARTOGRAPHER (EXPLORER TALENT)

Any skill test you attempt to create a map of an area, or produce detailed directions to navigate through an area, is reduced in difficulty by 2, to a minimum of 0.

### FIRST GLANCE (EXPLORER TALENT)

When you first enter a location you've never been to before, or encounter a type of creature you've never seen before, you may make a **Study Swiftly** test with a difficulty of 0; any Momentum you generate must be spent to ask the GM questions about the location or creature (as appropriate), as per the *ask a question* Momentum option.

### HARDY TRAVELER (EXPLORER TALENT)

Your stress track is one step higher than normal.

### SURVEYOR (EXPLORER TALENT)

When you make a **Study Carefully** test to find something that's hidden or rare, you may reroll a single d20.

## GUIDE

You know the lay of the land, and you make a living leading others safely through familiar territories. You might be a pilot, guiding larger ships into and out of port. You might know the ins and outs of a city's districts, directing others to where they need to go, for a few coin. You might be hired to lead expeditions or military forces through the places you know so well.

Selecting **Guide** provides the following benefits:

- **Skills**: you gain +2 to Move, +2 to Survive, and +1 to either Talk or Tinker.
- **Styles**: you gain +1 to any two of Carefully, Forcefully, or Swiftly.

- **Focuses**: you gain four focuses. You have eleven points to split between those four focuses. Appropriate options include: Etiquette, Resilience, Resolve, Streetwise, Tracking and Wilderness.
- **Talents**: you may select a single talent from the list below.
- **Belongings**: you gain a collection of *maps and charts*.
- **Contacts**: you have one contact with a neutral relationship.

### COMPANION (GUIDE TALENT)

You have a companion, typically a wolfhound, but the GM may allow you to have another animal instead. The wolfhound has the profile shown on page 257, and it is treated as an allied NPC under your command, following the rules laid out in *Chapter 11: Of Street Urchins & Masked Aristocrats*. If your companion dies, you immediately gain a Void point, and you have a choice between retraining the talent or getting a replacement companion.

### FIELDCRAFT (GUIDE TALENT)

When you attempt to **Move Quietly** in a place you're familiar with, you may reroll a single d20.

### FORAGER (GUIDE TALENT)

When you set out to find food, water, or shelter for yourself and a group of others, you may make a difficulty 1 Survive test to find enough resources for a single day, for a number of people equal to your Survive skill. You may increase the number of people or days you provide for by spending Momentum, adding people equal to half your Survive skill per Momentum spent.

### SAGE ADVICE (GUIDE TALENT)

When an ally attempts a Survive test, you may spend 2 Momentum to allow them to use your Survive score. If one of your focuses also applies to that test, they may use that as well.

## HUNTER

You know the dangerous places of the world, and you know how to turn those dangers to your advantage. You might hunt game for sport, for pelts, or for food; or you eliminate vermin, or you track down people who prefer to hide. Whatever your prey, you're good at what you do.

Selecting **Hunter** provides the following benefits:

- **Skills**: you gain +2 to Survive, +2 to Tinker, and +1 to either Fight or Study.
- **Styles**: you gain +1 to any two of Carefully, Cleverly, or Quietly.
- **Focuses**: you gain four focuses. You have eleven points to split between those four focuses. Appropriate options include: Archery, Explosives, Firearms, Stealth, Streetwise, Tracking and Wilderness.
- **Talents**: you may select a single talent from the list below.
- **Belongings**: you gain three *springrazors* or *stun mines*.
- **Contacts**: you have one contact with a neutral relationship.

### AMBUSH EXPERTISE (HUNTER TALENT)
When you make a ranged attack against an enemy who is not aware of you, and you spend one or more Momentum to buy bonus d20s, the stress inflicted by the attack is increased by +1.

### FAMILIAR TACTICS (HUNTER TALENT)
Because you know the best ways to approach unseen, when a nearby enemy attempts to avoid being noticed, you may use Survive instead of Study in the contest.

### PREDATOR'S PATIENCE (HUNTER TALENT)
When you hide yourself, and remain stationary, the difficulty for other creatures to detect you is increased by 1. The difficulty increase becomes +2 if you have remained hidden and stationary for longer than half an hour.

### TRAPPER (HUNTER TALENT)
When you set a trap, the difficulty for enemy tests to avoid springing that trap is one higher than the difficulty you choose, rather than equal to as is normally the case.

## INVENTOR

You are a creator, aspiring to the kind of fame and notoriety as Esmond Roseburrow, Anton Sokolov, Piero Joplin, or Kirin Jindosh. You might create machinery driven by clockwork and whale oil, or new and exotic forms of weapon, or elixirs that restore or enhance the body or mind.

Selecting **Inventor** provides the following benefits:

- **Skills**: you gain +2 to Study, +2 to Tinker, and +1 to either Survive or Talk.
- **Styles**: you gain +1 to any two of Boldly, Carefully, or Cleverly.
- **Focuses**: you gain four focuses. You have eleven points to split between those four focuses. Appropriate options include: Carriages, Engineering, Explosives, Firearms, Locks, Medicine, Natural Philosophy and Surgery.
- **Talents**: you may select a single talent from the list below.
- **Belongings**: you gain a *Tinkering Tools*, and a folio of *experimental blueprints*.
- **Contacts**: you have one contact with a neutral relationship.

### CONTROLLED DETONATION (INVENTOR TALENT)
When you attempt a **Tinker Carefully** test to use a grenade, explosives, or some other volatile substance (such as a canister of whale oil) to damage or destroy an object or structure, and you buy one or more d20s by spending Momentum, you may reroll a single d20 and ignore the first complication suffered.

### PERSONAL NOTES (INVENTOR TALENT)
Your notes, designs, and all documents and schematics you produce, are written in a unique shorthand or cipher that only you know. Other characters require a S**tudy Carefully** test with a difficulty of 4 in order to decipher your works. When you work with schematics or blueprints you have created yourself (or which you have transcribed into your style), you reduce the difficulty of Tinker tests by 1, to a minimum of 0.

### PUSHING THE BOUNDARIES OF PROGRESS (INVENTOR TALENT)
When you attempt to **Tinker Cleverly** to design or construct a new device or machine, and you buy one or more d20s by adding to Chaos, you may also reduce the difficulty of the test by 1, to a minimum of 0.

### SALVAGE FOR PARTS (INVENTOR TALENT)
You may attempt a Tinker test with a difficulty of 1 to erase an existing piece of equipment, transforming them into spare parts, which can be used to help construct other items and devices.

## MISCREANT
You're a fighter, tough and brutal. You might be a soldier, or part of the watch, or a prison guard, or personal security, or a back-alley goon, or a bare-knuckle prize-fighter. Whatever your battlefield, you can take punishment as much as you deal it out.

Selecting **Miscreant** provides the following benefits:
- **Skills**: you gain +2 to Fight, +2 to Survive, and +1 to either Move or Talk.
- **Styles**: you gain +1 to any two of Boldly, Carefully, or Forcefully.
- **Focuses**: you gain four focuses. You have eleven points to split between those four focuses. Appropriate options include: Brawling, Intimidate, Fencing, Resilience and Resolve.
- **Talents**: you may select a single talent from the list below.
- **Belongings**: you gain a *sturdy sword*, plus either *brass knuckles* or a *helmet*.
- **Contacts**: you have one contact with a neutral relationship.

### DAUNTLESS (MISCREANT TALENT)
When you **Survive Forcefully** as part of a contest to resist being threatened or intimidated, you reduce the difficulty of your test by 1, to a minimum of 0.

### FIGHT DIRTY (MISCREANT TALENT)
When you attempt a Fight test to make an attack, and you buy one or more dice by adding to Chaos, you may inflict +1 stress for each die you bought by adding to Chaos.

### PUT YOUR BACK INTO IT! (MISCREANT TALENT)
When you attempt a skill test Forcefully, you may choose to put in extra effort. If you do so, you gain two bonus Momentum on the skill test, but after the test has been resolved, you automatically gain the truth fatigued.

### SHOULDER CHARGE (MISCREANT TALENT)
When you succeed at a **Fight Forcefully** test to make an attack, and you moved into reach of your enemy as part of this action, then you may spend 1 Momentum to impose a Knocked Prone truth on your opponent in addition to the attack's normal effects.

## SCHOLAR

You are an expert, and everyone knows it. You have studied the deeper secrets of existence, and you frequently draft extensive treatises on your theories and discoveries, or speak at length to your peers on your chosen subject, because scholarly expertise is only worthwhile if it has peer recognition. You might even hire out your services to the wealthy, taking their patronage to direct your research in particular directions, or teaching others.

Selecting **Scholar** provides the following benefits:

- **Skills:** you gain +2 to Talk, +2 to Study, and +1 to either Survive or Tinker.
- **Styles:** you gain +1 to any two of Boldly, Cleverly, or Forcefully.
- **Focuses:** you gain four focuses. You have eleven points to split between those four focuses. Appropriate options include: Counsel, Etiquette, History, Medicine, Natural Philosophy, Persuade, Society, Theology and Void Lore.
- **Talents:** you may select a single talent from the list below.
- **Belongings:** you gain *collected treatises* on your chosen subjects.
- **Contacts:** you have two contacts with a neutral relationship. You may improve the relationship with one by one step, at the cost of reducing the relationship with the other by one step.

### DEEP EXPERTISE (SCHOLAR TALENT)

When you succeed at a skill test which uses one of your focuses, you may ask a question once without spending Momentum

### DID THE RESEARCH (SCHOLAR TALENT)

Once per scene when you attempt a skill test, you may spend 1 Momentum to use Study instead of another skill. You count as having an applicable focus with a rating of 4 for that test.

### ERUDITE EXPOSITION (SCHOLAR TALENT)

Whenever you spend any Momentum to *ask a question* during a scene, you may reduce the Momentum cost of one bonus d20 you purchase later that scene by 1, to a minimum of 0.

### LIBRARIAN (SCHOLAR TALENT)

Whenever you attempt a Study test to research a subject, you may add an extra d20.

## SCOUT

You venture forth into the unknown, and into dangerous places, to learn the enemy's disposition. You might be a military scout, used to studying enemy forces and mapping routes of advancement and withdrawal. You might be a spy, moving subtly amongst rivals or enemies to learn their secrets while avoiding their notice. Regardless, you're observant and agile.

Selecting **Scout** provides the following benefits:

- **Skills**: you gain +2 to Move, +2 to Study, and +1 to either Fight or Talk.
- **Styles**: you gain +1 to any two of Carefully, Cleverly, or Quietly.

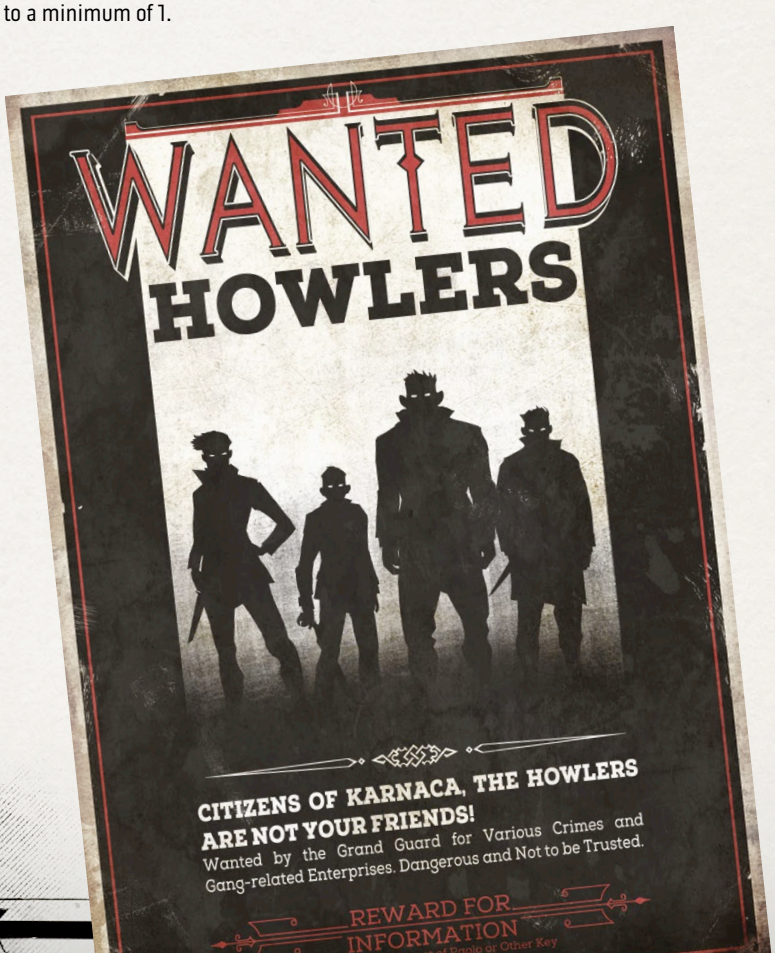
- **Focuses**: you gain four focuses. You have eleven points to split between those four focuses. Appropriate options include: Concentrate, Etiquette, Freerunning, Innuendo, Resolve, Society, Stealth, Streetwise and Tracking.
- **Talents**: you may select a single talent from the list below.
- **Belongings**: you gain a *spyglass*.
- **Contacts**: you have one contact with a neutral relationship.

### CONSTANTLY ALERT (SCOUT TALENT)
Whenever you attempt a skill test to detect danger or hidden threats, reduce the difficulty by 1, to a minimum of 0.

### FIGHTING FIT (SCOUT TALENT)
Whenever you attempt a Move test, you may ignore the first complication you would suffer.

### HIT AND RUN (SCOUT TALENT)
When you succeed at an attack against an unaware opponent, you may spend 1 Momentum to move to anywhere nearby.

### LIKE A SHADOW (SCOUT TALENT)
Whenever you would inflict stress on an opponent's stealth track, you inflict 1 less stress, to a minimum of 1.



## SHARPSHOOTER

You're a crack shot, and an expert with your chosen weaponry. Whether you use a pistol, a rifle, a crossbow, or any other ranged weapon, you have undergone strict training—and are perfectly capable of earning your living by making use of your special skills.

Selecting **Sharpshooter** provides the following benefits:

- **Skills**: you gain +2 to Fight, +2 to Tinker, and +1 to either Move or Study.
- **Styles**: you gain +1 to any two of Boldly, Carefully, or Swiftly.
- **Focuses**: you gain four focuses. You have eleven points to split between those four focuses. Appropriate options include: Archery, Engineering, Explosives, Firearms, Resolve and Stealth.
- **Talents**: you may select a single talent from the list below.
- **Belongings**: you gain a *crossbow*, a *pistol*, or a *rifle*, with 10 shots.
- **Contacts**: you have one contact with a neutral relationship.

### CRACK SHOT (SHARPSHOOTER TALENT)

You may spend one Momentum to take careful aim before making a ranged attack, reducing the difficulty of the attack by 1.

### EXPLOIT WEAKNESS (SHARPSHOOTER TALENT)

When you attack an enemy who is suffering from a truth which represents a weak spot or vulnerability, you may choose to increase the difficulty of your attack by +1. If you succeed, then the target is killed immediately, rather than suffering stress.

### PRIZED WEAPON (SHARPSHOOTER TALENT)

When you make an attack with a ranged weapon that you own, you ignore the first complication suffered. In addition, you reduce the difficulty of any skill test to obtain or make ammunition for your ranged weapon by 1, to a minimum of 0.

### SABOTEUR (SHARPSHOOTER TALENT)

When you attack an object, structure, machine, or stationary vehicle, you may use Tinker instead of Fight, and you inflict +2 stress.

# PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Once you've decided your concept, and selected an archetype, consider these last details:

- **Stress Track:** your stress track (used for physical health, particularly in combat situation) is equal to your Survival skill.
- **Void:** you have 1 Void point available to spend.
- **Focuses:** you may gain an additional focus with a rating of 2, or add +1 to each of two of your existing focuses. You may not increase any focus above 5.
- **Equipment:** In addition to the equipment listed in the character's archetype, you gain appropriate clothing for day-to-day wear, lodgings appropriate to the character's status, whether a room above an inn, a small

dwelling in the slums, a townhouse, etc. as well as 150 coin to spend on additional starting equipment. No more than 50 coin may be saved—any more than that remaining is lost..

- After determining all that on the previous page, you'll be ready to make a few finishing touches.

## NAME

Everyone needs a name. This can be anything, though it's probably best to pick something that fits the mood and the style of ***Dishonored***. A character's name reflects their origins—names differ between the isles, and by social class, and a character from Karnaca high society may be very different to one descended from the working poor of Tyvia.

The world of ***Dishonored*** is close enough to our own that real-world names can be entirely fitting, though selecting obscure or archaic ones—the kinds of name common in the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries, especially in Eurpoe during that time—rather than more modern ones can be a useful way to help your character fit, especially if you tweak the spelling a little.

## APPEARANCE

What does your character look like? A character's concept and archetype will provide a starting point, but the finer points, such as build, height, distinguishing features like skin color, hair color, eye color, scars, and similar are all useful to think about, and can help you create a mental picture of your character. Do they look distinctive or unusual, or are they average-looking? Do they have any habits or quirks which affect their mannerisms and body language? How do they normally dress?

It's often a useful trick to think of an actor or actress who you could imagine portraying the character. This can help with appearance, but also with details like voice and mannerisms, which can all help bring a character to life.

## PERSONALITY

While a character's styles will give a vague glimpse into the kind of personality they have, it's up to you to portray your character's philosophy when you get your chance. Styles can work as a basis for how you want your character to act and, as you get to know your character through play, you can figure out how to add nuance and depth to that broad baseline.

While personality might be thought of as something innate or fundamental to a person, it shifts and evolves over time. As a character experiences triumph and misfortune, their perspective on the world will adapt to encompass those new experiences.

## RELATIONSHIPS

A character doesn't exist in a vacuum. While your character has at least one contact, and they obviously interact with the other player characters, they'll probably know plenty of people beyond that.

Where is the rest of the character's family? Do they keep regular contact with them, or are they somewhat estranged and distant? Do they have a spouse, a partner, or a long-lost lover (or more than one)?

What about other people around the character? How does your character view the other player characters, or their contacts? Are they friends with anyone else? Do they have rivals or enemies?

These details can help make interactions between characters more interesting, and add more depth to the character and the world around them. Like a character's personality, a character's relationships can—and should—evolve over time, and some relationships, whether friendly or adversarial, may become so strong that they can become new truths for the character.

# CHARACTER ADVANCEMENT

One of the enjoyable aspects of a roleplaying game is watching your character grow and develop over the course of their adventures. Characters in ***Dishonored*** have a number of options available to them to develop and change after character creation.

## EXPERIENCE

Characters learn from their experiences, becoming more capable as they face challenges. Both success and failure are important teachers – someone who learns only from their successes will struggle to deal with failure, and someone who only learns from their failures may never find the opportunity to succeed. In play, the fruits of these lessons are experience points—also referred to as **XP**—which you'll gain from each adventure.

## GAINING EXPERIENCE

During each adventure, you'll have plenty of opportunities to gain XP. Some of these will come from circumstances that occur naturally during play, while others will come from events in the adventures themselves, awarded by the GM.

### ADVERSITY

You'll typically gain XP from facing difficult situations, from making mistakes, and from suffering the consequences of your actions and decisions. You gain XP from each of the following situations:

- **Pain:** Once per session, you gain 1 XP if you take stress.
- **Failure:** Once per session, after failing a skill roll, you may introduce a complication in order to gain 1 XP.
- **Opposition:** Once per session, you gain 1 XP if the GM spends three or more Chaos on a single effect or event.

### ACHIEVEMENT

You'll also gain XP from achieving goals and accomplishing significant feats. Periodically, the GM should award one XP to each player (individually, or all at once) after the completion of a key scene or at the end of some important event. In total you should get two to four XP per adventure from these achievements.

## SPENDING EXPERIENCE

Between adventures, you may spend the XP you've earned to advance your character. Any improvement you make to your character is called an advancement, and the advancements available are below. You may only buy a single advancement after each adventure.

- **Skills:** You improve one of your skills by 1. No skill may be increased to more than 8. This advancement costs 10 XP.
- **Styles:** You improve one of your styles by 1. No style may be increased to more than 8. This advancement costs 10 XP.
- **Focus:** You may increase the rating of one Focus by 1. This advancement costs 5 XP. Alternatively, add a new Focus with a rating of 2, for 10 XP
- **Talents:** You may gain a single talent from your archetype. This advancement costs 10 XP. Alternatively, you may gain a single talent which is not from your archetype. This advancement costs 15 XP.
- **Void:** You may increase the maximum Void points you can have by 1. This advancement costs 10 XP.

### CHARMS AND RUNES

You may be inclined to seek supernatural advantages, in the form of bonecharms. You can benefit from up to 3 bonecharms at a time. *Chapter 7: The Void* describes the effects of bonecharms on characters, and the methods by which a character might obtain them. It also describes how characters can become marked by the Outsider (gaining the talent described on page 65) and gaining supernatural abilities.

# HEROIC CHARACTER CREATION

The basics of character creation already explained allow you to create characters extremely quickly, so that you can get on with playing the game. However, there are times when you may want additional options for character creation, to create a more capable, more developed character from the outset. The following option is provided to create those characters. This option may only be used with the GM's permission, and only if all players in the game are using it.

If you use this option, you select an **Outlook** in addition to the other choices made during character creation.

## OUTLOOK

A character's outlook is how they see the world, how they approach the problems and opportunities they face.

There are twelve outlooks in total: **bilious**, **choleric**, **circumspect**, **decisive**, **demonstrative**, **fixed**, **manipulative**, **maverick**, **melancholic**, **phlegmatic**, **sanguine**, **supine**. Select one of these outlooks and apply the benefits it provides.

The descriptions included with each outlook serve as examples and stereotypes more than anything else, and they're intended to give you a clear idea of the kinds of personalities they represent. You can be as subtle or as overt with how you roleplay your character's personality as you wish.

Each archetype provides the following benefits:

- **Skills:** each outlook increases two of the character's skills by +1 each, and each outlook gives a choice of different skills.
- **Styles:** each outlook increases two of the character's styles by +2 each, and another one by +1.
- **Talents:** each outlook grants the character a talent. Each outlook has a distinct set of talents which they can select from.

## BILIOUS

You're ill-at-ease and paranoid, perpetually suspicious of others' betrayals, and watchful of friend and foe alike. You regard vigilance as your greatest virtue, for it is how you have survived this long.

Selecting **bilious** provides the following benefits:

- **Skills:** you gain +1 to any two of Study, Survive, or Tinker.
- **Styles:** you gain +2 to Carefully, +2 to Quietly, and +1 to Cleverly.
- **Talents:** you may select a single talent from the list below.

### PARANOIA (BILIOUS TALENT)

Whenever the GM spends Chaos to create an ambush or introduce additional foes, the GM must spend one additional Chaos.

### PLAN FOR THE WORST (BILIOUS TALENT)

At the start of a scene, roll 1d20. If you roll equal to or under the number of Chaos points in the GM's pool, add up to 2 Momentum to the group pool. The pool may still only contain six Momentum.

### SELF-RELIANT (BILIOUS TALENT)

Whenever you succeed at a skill test and do not purchase additional dice, you generate one bonus Momentum to spend on improving the result. Remember that bonus Momentum cannot be saved.

## CHOLERIC

You're decisive and results-oriented, quick-thinking, active, and practical. You're also overbearing and easily frustrated when things don't go to plan, and more inclined to action than preparation.

Selecting choleric provides the following benefits:

- **Skills:** you gain +1 to any two of Fight, Move, or Talk.
- **Styles:** you gain +2 to Forcefully, +2 to Swiftly, and +1 to Boldly.
- **Talents:** you may select a single talent from the list below.

### DIRECTNESS (CHOLERIC TALENT)

Whenever you attempt a skill test which uses any style other than forcefully, you may add 1 to Chaos to attempt that test forcefully.

### NO HESITATION (CHOLERIC TALENT)
During any round in an action scene, you may add 1 to Chaos to act first, regardless of who would otherwise act first.

### THE EARLY HOUND CATCHES THE RAT (BILIOUS TALENT)
When you attempt a skill test swiftly when time is a factor, you may spend 1 Momentum or add 1 to Chaos to halve the time the skill test takes.

## CIRCUMSPECT
You're careful in your decision-making, though a little over-cautious. You consider all the angles, form back-up plans, and make exhaustive preparations, never acting before you're ready.

Selecting circumspect provides the following benefits:

- **Skills:** you gain +1 to any two of Study, Survive, or Talk.
- **Styles:** you gain +2 to Carefully, +2 to Cleverly, and +1 to Quietly.
- **Talents:** you may select a single talent from the list below.

### HASTE MAKES WASTE (CIRCUMSPECT TALENT)
When you attempt a skill test carefully, you may re-roll any d20 which rolled 20.

### PLANS B, C, D, AND E (CIRCUMSPECT TALENT)
Whenever you or an ally fails a skill test, you may add 1 point to the group's Momentum pool to represent your back-up plans.

### WELL-PREPARED (CIRCUMSPECT TALENT)
When you attempt a skill test, and there are one or more truths which affect the test positively (making the test possible, or reducing the difficulty), you may re-roll a single d20.

## CONSPICUOUS
You live life fast, hard, and for all to see. You're quick to anger, quick to laugh, and take to life with vigor. Others may find you amusing, inspiring, or exhausting, but you are always the center of attention.

Selecting conspicuous provides the following benefits:

- **Skills:** you gain +1 to any two of Fight, Move, or Talk.
- **Styles:** you gain +2 to Boldly, +2 to Swiftly, and +1 to Forcefully.
- **Talents:** you may select a single talent from the list below.

### HOG THE SPOTLIGHT (CONSPICUOUS TALENT)
When you succeed at a skill test which you attempted boldly, you may spend 2 Momentum to increase the difficulty of the next study tests made by each enemy nearby by +1.

### LAUGH IT OFF (CONSPICUOUS TALENT)
When you intimidate someone, you may attempt to laugh off your threat by returning to some happier subject or generally acting cheerful and merry; if you do this, you may spend 2 Momentum to prevent the threatened person from treating your threat as a hostile action.

### MERCURIAL (CONSPICUOUS TALENT)
When you take an action, before you attempt a skill test or resolve the action's effects, you may spend 2 Momentum to remove a single truth from yourself which represents fear, doubt, panic, or other negative emotions.

## DEMONSTRATIVE
You're extraordinary, and it isn't enough that you know it. Your brilliance needs to be known to all the world. You don't care whether others are awestruck or jealous, merely that they know what you're capable of.

Selecting demonstrative provides the following benefits:

- **Skills:** you gain +1 to any two of Fight, Study or Talk.
- **Styles:** you gain +2 to Boldly, +2 to Cleverly, and +1 to Swiftly.
- **Talents:** you may select a single talent from the list below.

### ASTOUND (DEMONSTRATIVE TALENT)
When you succeed a skill test boldly or cleverly which was difficulty 3 or higher, you may spend Momentum to astound onlookers. Each Momentum you spend adds a truth to one onlooker to represent being awestruck, impressed, or intimidated by you.

### GRANDILOQUENT (DEMONSTRATIVE TALENT)
When you talk cleverly during a contest, your opponent suffers a complication on an 18, 19, or 20, rather than just a 20, as your extensive vocabulary and grandiose manner causes confusion and frustration.

### YES, I AM THAT GOOD (DEMONSTRATIVE TALENT)
Whenever you attempt a skill test boldly or cleverly, you may choose to increase the difficulty by +1. If the test succeeds, you gain two bonus Momentum. This bonus Momentum cannot be saved.

## FIXED
Once you've made a decision, nothing changes your mind. Your resolve may see you through many hardships, but your inflexibility may lead you to disaster.

Selecting fixed provides the following benefits:

- **Skills:** you gain +1 to any two of Fight, Move, or Survive.
- **Styles:** you gain +2 to Carefully, +2 to Forcefully, and +1 to Swiftly.
- **Talents:** you may select a single talent from the list below.

### KEEP CALM, CARRY ON (FIXED TALENT)
Whenever an enemy, or the GM, attempts to remove or change a truth which represents part of your plan or strategy, the difficulty of the skill test, or the amount of Momentum or Chaos required is increased by one.

### PUSH AHEAD (FIXED TALENT)
When you attempt a skill test carefully or forcefully, you may always succeed at cost.

### UNYIELDING (FIXED TALENT)
When you fail a skill test, and attempt that action again during the same scene, reduce the difficulty by 1.

## MANIPULATIVE

You are a schemer and a plotter. So are lots of people, but you're good at it. You like to think of yourself as a strategist. Others use terms which are less flattering.

Selecting manipulative provides the following benefits:

- **Skills:** you gain +1 to any two of Study, Survive, or Talk.
- **Styles:** you gain +2 to Cleverly, +2 to Quietly, and +1 to Carefully.
- **Talents:** you may select a single talent from the list below.

### JUST AS PLANNED (MANIPULATIVE TALENT)

When an ally takes an action, you may spend a Void point to declare that their action is part of your plan; you automatically assist the ally's action, even if you aren't actually present, and your assistance die considered to have automatically rolled a 1. Additionally, once per adventure, when you or an ally are defeated (but not killed), you can claim that the defeat is something you planned for; you gain one Void point immediately.

### MAGNIFICENT BASTARD (MANIPULATIVE TALENT)

When you inflict a negative truth on an enemy using intrigue, you may immediately attempt a talk cleverly test with a difficulty of 4. If you succeed, the enemy does not know that you are responsible for their downfall, and they may even still consider you an ally or friend.

### CHESS MASTER (MANIPULATIVE TALENT)

You may spend one Void point to grant one of your allies a Void point.

## MAVERICK

You're daring and undisciplined, always preferring to handle things your way. You're unpredictable, even rebellious, but your way works... even if your allies may not approve of your methods.

Selecting maverick provides the following benefits:

**Skills:** you gain +1 to any two of Fight, Move, or Talk.
**Styles:** you gain +2 to Boldly, +2 to Forcefully, and +1 to Swiftly.
**Talents:** you may select a single talent from the list below.

### GO MY OWN WAY (MAVERICK TALENT)

Once per scene, when you attempt a skill test without assistance and without buying additional dice by spending Momentum, you may re-roll a single d20.

### MAKE MY OWN LUCK (MAVERICK TALENT)

Once per adventure, when you spend a Void point, you may spend 3 Momentum or add 3 points to Chaos to immediately regain the Void point you spent.

### TAKE A RISK (MAVERICK TALENT)

When you attempt a skill test boldly, forcefully, or swiftly, you may reduce the difficulty of the test by 1, to a minimum of 1. If you do so, however, you suffer a complication for any dice that rolls 19 or 20, rather than just 20.

## MELANCHOLIC

You're cautious and introspective, and often hampered by doubt that comes from past pain. Yet, you often see things that bolder allies overlook, and your caution is wise when the foolish rush heedless into danger.

Selecting melancholic provides the following benefits:

**Skills:** you gain +1 to any two of Move, Study, or Survive.
**Styles:** you gain +2 to Carefully, +2 to Quietly, and +1 to Swiftly.
**Talents:** you may select a single talent from the list below.

### CAUTIOUS (MELANCHOLIC TALENT)

When you or an ally suffers a complication, you may immediately spend one Momentum to prevent that complication.

### NEVER AGAIN (MELANCHOLIC TALENT)

When you choose to reduce damage by suffering a negative truth, you reduce the damage by 2, rather than 1.

### WAIT FOR IT (MELANCHOLIC TALENT)

When you attempt a skill test, if the amount of Momentum in the group pool is equal to or higher than the test's difficulty (check before you buy any bonus d20s), you generate one bonus Momentum on the skill test. This bonus Momentum cannot be saved.

## PHLEGMATIC

You're quiet and thoughtful, but when you do act, you act with certainty. You are practical, with little time for showy theatrics, and you expect your actions to speak more loudly than words.

Selecting phlegmatic provides the following benefits:

**Skills:** you gain +1 to any two of Study, Survive, or Tinker.
**Styles:** you gain +2 to Cleverly, +2 to Forcefully, and +1 to Swiftly.
**Talents:** you may select a single talent from the list below.

### LEAD BY EXAMPLE (PHLEGMATIC TALENT)

When you succeed at a skill test, you may spend a Void point to bolster an ally; the next time that ally attempts a skill test, you automatically assist that action.

### STOIC (PHLEGMATIC TALENT)

When you gain a truth which represents a mood or emotion, roll 1d20; if you roll equal to or under your Forcefully style, the truth is removed immediately.

### WHEN THE TIME IS RIGHT (PHLEGMATIC TALENT)

At the end of any round during an action scene, if the amount of Momentum in the group pool is lower than the number of rounds that have elapsed during that scene, add one Momentum to the group pool.

## SANGUINE

You're active, confident, impulsive, and driven, often to your own detriment. Your ambition might leave you facing impossible odds, but you face them with a smile and thoughts of triumph.

Selecting sanguine provides the following benefits:

**Skills:** you gain +1 to any two of Fight, Move, or Talk.
**Styles:** you gain +2 to Boldly, +2 to Swiftly, and +1 to Forcefully.
**Talents:** you may select a single talent from the list below.

### DANGEROUS AMBITION (SANGUINE TALENT)

Once per scene, when you attempt a skill test with a difficulty of 1 or higher, you may choose to increase the difficulty of the test by +2 before you roll. If the test succeeds, instead of generating any Momentum, you gain one Void point. You may only gain one Void point from this Talent in any one adventure.

### HOT-HEADED (SANGUINE TALENT)

When you succeed at a skill test boldly or swiftly, you gain one bonus Momentum for each bonus dice you bought by adding to Chaos.

### RECKLESS DRIVE (SANGUINE TALENT)

You may spend a Void point to add +3d20 to a skill test. This counts towards the normal maximum number of bonus dice that may be added to a test, and as normal, any bonus dice bought must be bought before any dice are rolled.

## SUPINE

You're even-tempered, dependable, and loyal to friends and allies, but you often lack the drive to act on your own terms. To those who trust you, there is nobody more diligent or trustworthy.

Selecting supine provides the following benefits:

**Skills:** you gain +1 to any two of Study, Talk, or Tinker.
**Styles:** you gain +2 to Quietly, +2 to Swiftly, and +1 to Carefully.
**Talents:** you may select a single talent from the list below.

### A QUIET WORD (SUPINE TALENT)

When you attempt a talk quietly skill test to persuade someone, you reduce the difficulty of your test by 1, to a minimum of 0.

### DEPENDABLE HELP (SUPINE TALENT)

When you assist an ally, the ally you assist may re-roll a single d20.

### UNREMARKABLE (SUPINE TALENT)

When you attempt a skill test to act unnoticed as part of a contest, you may spend 2 Momentum to turn the contest into a normal test, as your opponent pays you little attention. You must spend this Momentum before rolling.


THE
CROWNKILLER
IS WATCHING


The Golden Cat

# Chapter 6

# DRESSED TO THE NINES

## OVERVIEW

A hunter's crossbow, and a surgeon's kit; a mysterious rune, and Corvo's blade. Objects play many different roles within the world of ***Dishonored***. They might be as inconsequential as that small handkerchief you use to clear your sweat on the way to the gala; they might be as crucial as the ritual dagger all of the underground cults are looking for. This section presents you with an arsenal of tools that you may dispose of to boost immersion and to fuel a character's personality, to create tension, or add drama and drive a story home.

### PERSONAL TRUTHS

Characters in ***Dishonored*** can keep track of their possessions under the Equipment header, found in their character sheets. Ideally, you'd just write down whatever it is that could be relevant to the story. For example; there's no need to write down what clothes you are wearing, unless they are particularly important for the adventure (if you're infiltrating a City Watch outpost, noting that you'll wear a uniform would probably be a good idea).

#### WILL IT FIT?

Whenever you jot down a new acquisition in your character sheet, consider how much stuff you are carrying. If you've strapped on two handguns and a sword while carrying an unconscious man on your right shoulder and a black cat in your left hand, maybe you shouldn't be able to snatch that ornamented box from the cellar. Keep tabs on what you are carrying and leave stuff in your safe spot. It's easy to forget about this and realize, at the worst of times, that sneaking around a fortress while carrying 10 rifles might not be the best idea ever.

Almost all relevant items you encounter in your adventures will have a straightforward use; a grappling hook you employ to sneak into a mansion, a book on the history of Dunwall you read to learn about hidden, forgotten passages and waterways, etc. Most of these need no special rules or mechanics—their application, and the skills that are required for their use can be freely determined by the players and the Gamemaster.

Rather than use items to create an advantage of some sort, some can be thought of as part of the "personality package" of your character. You could articulate this with their preferred style: for example, a character with a high Swiftly score might be constantly looking at their pocket watch (a sign of their impatience), while one with high a Boldly score might always be carrying a hammer around, making people aware of their no-nonsense "the boldest measures are the safest" approach. These items can make your character more memorable, while at the same time providing a constant reminder of their philosophy and modus operandi—helping you answer the recurring question of "what would my character do?".

The GM should take note of these objects, and the way they help the players bring out their characters' personalities. They might even fuel this kind of play by giving some sort of mechanical boost (for example, if you use the previously described hammer for a skill test, they could provide you with 1 Momentum if you use it Boldly). This is just one of the many ways GMs can channel their power to help flesh out the player characters' image.

Objects can drive entire storylines. The Empire of the Isles is chock full of greedy people, immensely strong artifacts, and treasures waiting to be discovered. It might be that you set your players off on a quest to gather a set of pieces needed to build the next technological marvel, or that you push them to seek for that strange rune that is whispered to induce lucid dreaming, and passage into the Void. Whatever it is you come up with, know that objects can be a great asset to steer your group towards action; a most potent fuel to stoke the fires of adventure.

## THE VALUE OF COIN

Money keeps the Empire of the Isles moving. It is at the heart of trade, and it can be substituted for influence and renown in the eyes of many. Coin cannot buy the right family or bloodline, but it can buy its own kind of status, and the wealthy often rub shoulders with those of aristocratic birth, to the point where it is often difficult to tell the difference between the two.

Across the Isles, the word "coin" means both the physical currency—made of iron, copper, silver, or gold—and their abstract value. Coins of more valuable materials are deemed to be worth a greater number of "coin" (in the abstract sense)—with copper coins of 2, silver coins of 5, and golden coins of 10 in circulation. Each nation mints their own coinage, though the standards for each are close enough that it's never a hassle to use Gristol coin in Serkonos, or Morleyan coin in Tyvia, for example.

In play, characters don't need to track the coins they've found, or the worth of the valuables they've acquired during their adventures; all money, treasures, and valuables are collectively described as coin, and should be noted as such on the character sheet.

## GOING TO THE MARKET

Even if you've got coin to spare, there's a step that comes between wanting to buy something and actually buying it, and that's finding somewhere that sells the item.

When you attempt to purchase an item or buy a service, the GM will determine a rarity, which defines how hard it is to acquire something:

- **Abundant:** Difficulty 0. The item or service can be found anywhere with almost no effort.
- **Plentiful:** Difficulty 1. The item or service is relatively common, and you'll rarely have to go far to find one.
- **Scarce:** Difficulty 2. The item or service can be found with some effort.
- **Rare:** Difficulty 3. The item or service takes time and effort to find, and there may only be just a few available.
- **Unique:** Difficulty 4. There might only be a single item of that sort in the area, and it may not be for sale.
- **Unknown:** Difficulty 5. If there is an item of this sort, or a purveyor of this service in the area, then almost nobody knows about it... but if you're lucky you might find someone who knows where to find it.

The GM should judge this based on where you are at the time, and where you intend to search. The larger the area you want to search for an item, the longer it'll take, but the easier it'll be. The GM will ask you to attempt a Talk or Study test, with a style dependent on how you're going about your search. If the test is a failure, then you've failed to find the item, and the time spent is wasted. The GM may allow this to succeed at cost—perhaps you've found a seller with a bad reputation, or it's taken you even longer than anticipated, or some other mishap. If the test succeeded, then you've found somewhere that can provide what you seek to buy.

If you're selling an item, you'll go through the same procedure as above to find a buyer for the item you want to sell. Typically speaking, unless the item is of particular worth (either in general, or to that buyer in particular) or doesn't depreciate in value when sold and resold (like works of art), you'll get about half the item's cost in coin when selling.

## WEAPONS

The two types of items that do have special rules (besides the mysterious relics seen in *Chapter 7: Into the Void*) are weapons and armor. Weapons, for their part, have a specific damage value (which determines how much stress a successful attack inflicts to the target's stress track) and qualities, describing specific details about a weapon, which are listed below:

- **Armor piercing:** The weapon can overcome armor effectively, and targets do not benefit from any truths/benefits that come from armor.
- **Awkward:** The weapon is unwieldy, adding +1 to the difficulty of any attacks made with it.
- **Blast:** The weapon can affect multiple targets. The GM will determine how many targets you can hit, and whether or not trying to hit multiple targets will increase the difficulty of the attack.



- **Block:** the weapon is potent in defence, allowing the wielder to reroll 1d20 when defending in a contest.
- **Burn:** The weapon sets targets alight; the target gains a new situation truth, *ablaze*, and they will die at the end of their next turn if they cannot extinguish themselves quickly.
- **Concealed:** the weapon is easy to hide, and when hidden requires a skill test to locate.
- **Melee:** The weapon is used to make melee attacks against enemies within reach.
- **Messy:** The weapon is noisy, extremely destructive, or otherwise leaves a lot of mess in its wake, and you must add 1 Chaos whenever you attack with it.
- **Mine:** The weapon is a trap, placed on a surface and triggered by proximity.
- **Ranged (distant):** The weapon can be used to shoot at any visible target nearby, or at distant targets at +1 difficulty.
- **Ranged (nearby):** The weapon can be used to shoot at any visible target nearby, but not at targets that are distant.



SWORD
**Damage:** 3 (4 for high quality swords)
**Qualities:** Block, Melee.
**Cost:** 50 coin. Higher quality swords may cost much more.

The majority of trained fighters in the Empire wield swords, whether as a primary weapon or as a sidearm. Soldiers, City Watch, and other professional fighters tend to carry sturdy, mass-produced blades of industrial steel, while officers and others wealthy enough to afford the swordsmith's craft can get blades with better balance, a keener edge, or simply a finer finish. Even street gangs and criminals use something sword-like, often making them out of repurposed cleavers or shears reinforced for fighting, or picking up military surplus. A sword is a potent tool for offense and defense, and a decent blade is good for cutting, stabbing, and parrying. A good quality sword is also a sign of status and discernment, while a particular style of sword may signify membership in an organization.

### CUDGEL

**Damage:** 2
**Qualities:** Awkward, melee.
**Cost:** 10 coin.

Cudgels are seldom balanced for combat, but brute force makes them quite capable of breaking bones and overpowering the unwary. A solid blow from a cudgel is no less deadly than a sword, and while they're awkward to use, it is still possible to batter through an enemy's defenses, and it can still block a sword strike if the wielder is quick enough. A character who carries a cudgel of some kind is clearly ready for trouble, and often looking for it. Purpose-made cudgels are often used by prison guards and animal trainers to discipline their charges.

### KNIFE

**Damage:** 2
**Qualities:** Concealed, Melee.
**Cost:** 20 coin.

Knives can be found anywhere, but more often as tools than as weapons. Still, if it cuts, it can be put to use in a fight. Most knives are relatively small, and easy to conceal within clothing, making them an ideal choice for assassins and other murderers seeking to avoid detection, or as a backup tool for those who don't wish to blunt a sword on routine tasks. Folding pocket knives are common in rural parts of the Empire as tools for this kind of purpose. Cults and worshipers of the Outsider often use oddly-shaped daggers as ritual implements, with animal sacrifice and bloodletting being common parts of their rites. Wielding a knife often suggests ill intent, unless there's a good reason to be holding one.

### KNUCKLEDUSTERS

**Damage:** 2
**Qualities:** Melee.
**Cost:** 10 coin.

Knuckledusters cover a range of items that reinforce the fist, particularly the knuckles, to make punches hit harder than normal, while also protecting the puncher's hand from the impact. They're a common street weapon, and while purpose-made versions exist, most are improvised tools, modified work gloves, handwraps with metal studs or coins folded into the cloth, or roughly-shaped metal that fits around the hand. While they make for effective weapons—when used by someone who knows how to punch—they have no real place outside of street gangs and other low-born fights.

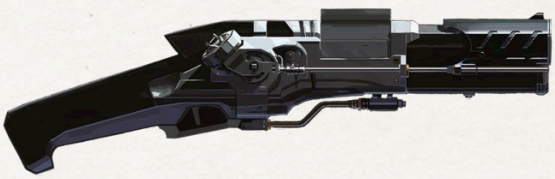
### PISTOL

**Damage:** 4

**Qualities:** Messy, ranged (nearby).

**Cost:** 150 coin. Higher quality pistols may cost more. Bullets cost 3 coin apiece.

The contemporary pistol uses a mechanism which pierces and ignites a small reservoir of whale oil at the base of each bullet, propelling the bullet forwards with explosive force, often shattering the metal cap of the bullet into a cloud of shrapnel. Pistols are loud but highly effective weapons at relatively close ranges, though the expense of manufacturing them and their ammunition means that they are reserved for the wealthy. Though fairly reliable, pistols do have a small chance of misfiring, typically destroying the pistol, and even when they work perfectly, they need to be reloaded between shots. Many inventors dabble in new pistol designs as a sideline to their main works, so custom pistols are occasionally found amongst wealthy gun aficionados, more often as a conversation piece than a practical weapon.



### RIFLE

**Damage:** 5

**Qualities:** Messy, ranged (distant).

**Cost:** 300 coin. Higher quality rifles may cost more. Bullets cost 5 coin apiece.

Using the same oil-fired mechanism as pistols, rifles provide the same firepower in a long-ranged, stable form. While the only mass-produced rifles are reserved almost exclusively for military use, a number of custom-made hunting rifles—sometimes referred to as jezails—are used by big game hunters and explorers venturing into the Pandyssian continent, to fend off whatever monstrous beasts they find there. Their longer barrels and larger ammunition allows them to be deadlier and more effective at longer ranges than a pistol, but they still need to be reloaded after each shot, and they also possess a small chance of destroying themselves with a misfire.

### CROSSBOW, WRISTBOW AND VOLTAIC GUN

**Damage:** 3

**Qualities:** Ranged (nearby). Sleep darts inflict the *fast asleep* truth instead of dealing damage. Incendiary bolts add the *burn* quality.

**Cost:** 100 coin. Standard bolts cost 4 coin apiece. Sleep darts cost 20 coin each. Incendiary bolts cost 30 coin each.

Though not especially common anymore, crossbows were once a widespread form of weapon across the isles. Today, their quiet operation and versatility has them used by highly-skilled specialists rather than soldiers. The ability to operate almost silently makes them valuable when stealth is essential, and they can employ a wide variety of different projectiles for differing effects. Other crossbow-like weapons also exist, from the compact wristbow to the electrically-powered voltaic gun.

### GRENADE

**Damage:** 4
**Qualities:** Awkward, blast, messy, ranged (nearby).
**Cost:** Each grenade costs 70 coin.

A metal shell, packed with a volatile tar made from whale oil. When detonated, the tar shatters the casing, sending hot shrapnel in every direction. An unsubtle, indiscriminate weapon, grenades are used when care and precision are unnecessary. The Abbey's Warfare Overseers often carry them, to flush foes out from hiding places. Grenades detonate a few seconds after being triggered.

### CHOKEDUST GRENADE

**Damage:** None. A chokedust grenade is used to inflict the truth *choking and disoriented* upon enemies instead of defeating them.
**Qualities:** Awkward, blast, ranged (nearby).
**Cost:** Each grenade costs 70 coin.

Containing unrefined whale oil, these grenades produce an oily, choking cloud upon detonation, stunning the targets and leaving them disoriented and choking. Prison guards often use chokedust grenades as a riot suppression device, subduing groups of prisoners quickly and safely. Assassins and thieves who can get hold of them often use chokedust grenades to escape when cornered.

### SPRINGRAZOR

**Damage:** 8
**Qualities:** Blast, mine, messy.
**Cost:** Each spring razor costs 50 coin.

A spring-loaded contraption of steel wires, shrapnel, and razor blades, springrazors are designed to be placed on a solid surface as a trap. They are triggered by nearby vibrations, expelling a cloud of sharp metal and whipping wires that lacerates anything within a couple of feet of the device. Very few people can withstand the deadly effect of a springrazor, and those that do will bear the scars for the rest of their lives.

### ARC MINE AND STUN MINE

**Damage:** 8
**Qualities:** Blast, mine.
**Cost:** Each arc mine costs 70 coin.

A refinement of the arc pylon concept, made smaller and more portable, arc mines were devised by Anton Sokolov to help the Watch deal with rioters and other malcontents, but fell out of use due to the expense, the risk of accidental detonation, and the availability of the cheaper springrazor. An arc mine generates a bolt of electricity that obliterates the target in a similar manner to an arc pylon, though the charge is somewhat smaller and the mine's whale oil supply is emptied after one or two discharges. They take a few seconds to arm after being placed, but once armed, they will discharge at the first creature who steps too close. With a little adjustment, the discharge from an Arc Mine can be made to incapacitate rather than kill, creating a stun mine that renders foes unconscious.

## ARMOR

Armor pieces are simple in that they have a **protection** value that adds boxes to your stress track.

### TREATED CLOTH

**Protection:** 1
**Cost:** 60 coin.

There are a number of processes used in treating cloth and leather to make them more durable, each with their own advantages and disadvantages. Some make the fabric stiffer and less comfortable, while others become uncomfortably warm and sweat-soaked during prolonged wear, or cause irritation in the skin. Nevertheless, treated cloth can turn a garment into simple protective gear, able to absorb impacts and withstand the cut of a sword to an extent. It's not as durable as proper armor, and also lacks the appearance, weight, and inflexibility of armor that is purpose made.

### ARMORED MANTLE COAT

**Protection:** 2
**Cost:** 120 coin.

A mantle of thick leather and thin metal plates riveted together, protecting the neck, shoulders, upper chest, and upper back. This armor is light enough to be worn for prolonged periods, and doesn't significantly impede mobility, making it ideal for use by the Dunwall City Watch and other gendarmes across the Isles. It does nothing to protect the limbs or abdomen, however, and it is still quite obviously armor.

### HELMET

**Protection:** 1. A helmet's protection stacks with protection from other armor.
**Cost:** 20 coin.

A metal cap, normally lined with leather or other padding, for protecting the head. Found in a variety of styles and designs to denote organization, rank, or status. The unnerving masks used by the Abbey's Warfare Overseers can also be thought of as a type of helmet, though providing more protection to the face.

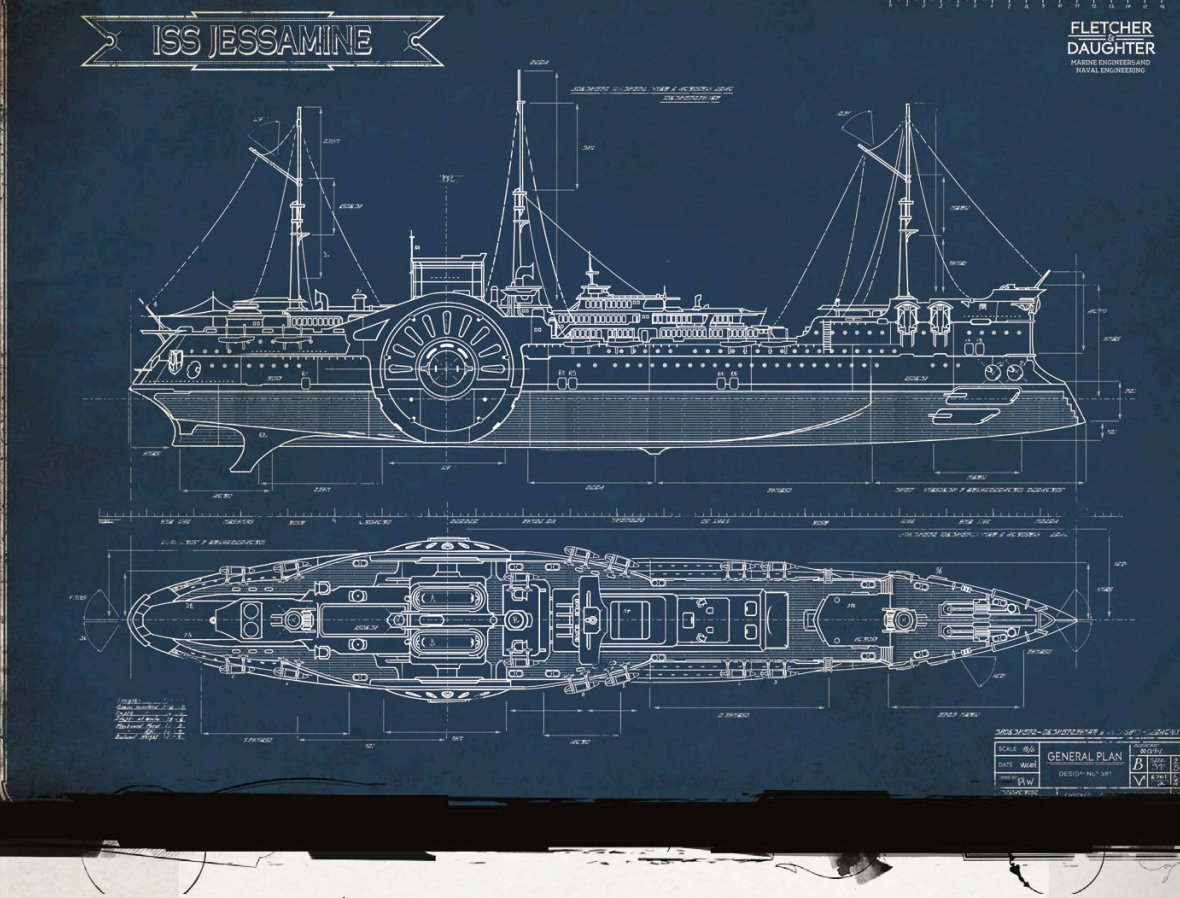
## OTHER ITEMS

Below is a list of items of note, that you might find useful having for reference purposes, and which tend to aid the ways of subterfuge, stealth and intrigue.

### BLUEPRINTS AND SCHEMATICS

**Cost:** 100 coin. Original schematics, especially for rare items or secure places may cost far more—multiply the cost by the rarity of the item.

The industrial age has swept across the Empire, designed upon reams and reams of blueprints and schematics. These designs are often copied using a chemical process that creates the familiar blueprint—white lines on a blue background, a negative imprint of the original—and sent to those who are responsible for constructing the new building, or assembling the new device. Inventors and engineers often seek out blueprints designed by their rivals, and they're a valuable resource for criminals looking for secret ways into secure buildings or the means to bypass the latest security device.




### BURGLAR'S TOOLS

**Cost:** 50 coin.

A burglar needs a decent set of tools to do their "job", and they'll construct their own toolkits from readily-available tools. This normally includes a set of lockpicks for dealing with common locks, a pry bar for forcing open windows and hatches, and a few small measures of oil or grease to silence noisy hinges or ease a stiff mechanism. Most kits contain a few other small, cheap items, added based on the experiences and needs of each burglar.

### CHEATER'S TOOLS

**Cost:** 30 coin.

These seemingly ordinary gambling items have been subtly altered to favor particular results, or make it easier to gain an unfair advantage. Weighted dice that tend to roll a particular number are a common example, as are playing cards which are marked in a way only their owner can detect or which allow them to shuffle or deal in a particular way. The latter are also favored by self-proclaimed fortune tellers, who can use a rigged deck of tarot cards to falsify the fortunes they tell. Regardless, it's not a good idea to be caught using the tools of a cheater.

### CLIMBING GEAR

**Cost:** 50 coin. Better kits may cost twice this.

This is normally a sturdy bag containing a few useful tools: one or two coils of rope, grappling hooks, and a pouch of chalk dust to improve grip and mark safe handholds. Better climbing gear may add a harness, a set of pitons and a small mallet to create extra anchor points.

### CONCEALING CLOTHING

**Cost:** 50 coin. Concealing clothing that works in any environment is much more expensive.

Concealing clothing is typically worn over other clothes, as a cloak, overcoat, or similar item. Clothing of this sort is designed to match the approximate colors of the environment, break up the wearer's outline, and generally make the wearer harder to spot. They're normally made of lightweight, fine materials that don't impede the wearer or slow them down. Some concealing clothing is made only by specialized tailors out of unusual or exotic materials, and can help conceal the wearer in almost any condition.

### DISGUISE KIT

**Cost:** 50 coin. Better kits may cost twice this.

These bags are used as often by actors and other performers as by those seeking to disguise their appearance for illicit purposes. They contain a collection of cosmetics to color the skin, as well as prosthetics that can add or conceal details such as scars, a differently-shaped nose, and similar. Better ones contain a wider range of prosthetics and cosmetics, and may also include several wigs and dyes that can be used to change hair color. When skillfully used, a disguise kit can make a person unrecognizable, or even make them appear as someone else entirely.

### FINE CLOTHING AND ACCESSORIES

**Cost:** No less than 150 coin for a single outfit. Not less than 1000 coin for a modest wardrobe of fine clothing.

The rich and powerful are sure to dress the part, wearing the finest clothing made of the finest materials. It wouldn't do to be mistaken for poor, after all. This can be an expensive endeavor, with few outfits worn more than a handful of times, and the fashionable styles changing with the seasons and whatever is novel and exciting at court. Appearing in such clothing can make a person appear wealthy, though they will still need to act appropriately to maintain the guise.

### FORGED PAPERS

**Cost:** 50 coin. The better quality the forgery or the rarer the document being forged, the higher the cost.

At a glance, these papers provide the same powers and opportunities as official documents would. However, they're illegitimate fakes, made by someone other than the rightful people. The better the forgery, the harder it is to tell fake from legitimate, but even the best fake cannot withstand scrutiny forever.

### PIERO'S SPIRITUAL REMEDY

**Cost:** 100 coin. Bootleg elixirs may cost significantly less, with a chance they may be entirely fake.

One of two anti-plague elixirs created, Piero's Spiritual Remedy has the ability to revitalize the mind, according to its claims. It has the ability to aid those with supernatural abilities, though this is less well known side effect of its use. Due to its high demand, genuine sources of the elixir are expensive, and there are many who sell bootleg versions of it to varying effect.

A genuine elixir restores the drinker's Mana to full; if they do not have powers, the elixir has no effect. Some bootleg elixirs may also have the same effect, some do nothing and at worst some may inflict 2 stress upon its user due to its ingredients being mildly toxic. The gamemaster has discretion over how common genuine elixir is, and characters can detect a fake elixir by making a Study Carefully test. The difficulty of the test is set by the gamemaster, based on how (if at all) effective the bootleg elixir is and how well its appearance has been replicated. Dangerous fakes are easier to spot, with those producing benign or real results being more difficult.

### SABOTEUR'S TOOLS

**Cost:** 100 coin. Better kits may cost much more.

A collection of tools and substances ideal for sabotage and controlled (or not-so-controlled) destruction. This typically includes a drill—either hand-cranked, or powered by an oil reservoir—a mallet, a collection of steel spikes, a pry bar, a small tank of whale oil, and an assortment of clamps and other fixtures. More extensive kits may also include vials of acid, or a cutting torch (fueled by an oil reservoir). These are as useful for deliberate and legitimate demolitions operations—clearing out old or derelict buildings to allow new ones to be built—as they are for industrial sabotage and other illicit acts.

### SOKOLOV'S ELIXIR

**Cost:** 100 coin. Bootleg elixirs cost less but may have little or no effect.

The more popular of the anti-plague elixirs produced during the Rat Plague, Sokolov's elixir was produced by Royal Physician Anton Sokolov, and is claimed to "promote robust health and fitness". The elixir is widespread across Dunwall, but supplies are strictly rationed—indeed, the Watch remain loyal to the Lord Regent in part because they are guaranteed a decent ration.

A genuine elixir clears all filled-in spaces on the drinker's stress track. Diluted or bootleg versions may have a lesser effect, no effect, or even a harmful effect, as described above for Piero's Spiritual Remedy.

### SPYGLASS

**Cost:** 100 coin. More specialized spyglasses will cost at least double this.

A collection of lenses and prisms that magnify an image, allowing clear observation at a distance. Valuable in all kinds of work, spyglasses are a simple, reliable technology, that has been adapted to a variety of purposes. Military marksmen and sailors alike often have versions with markings etched on the outer lens, using these marks for finding ranges and preparing to fire on distant targets. Natural philosophers often prize a good spyglass for observing phenomena at a safe distance, and commonly use the most powerful spyglasses to observe the stars in the night sky.

### TINKERING TOOLS

**Cost:** 200 coin. Better toolkits may cost far more, or require custom parts which must be hand-made or commissioned separately.

A common accompaniment to any inventor, engineer, or enterprising natural philosopher, a set of tinkering tools provide a basis for performing detailed work. The tools will all be of fine and delicate quality, for maximum precision. Most toolkits include a loupe—a magnifying eyepiece for seeing small details more closely—and slim sets of screwdrivers, tweezers, and pliers for manipulating small objects carefully.

# Chapter 7

# INTO THE VOID

## OVERVIEW

Outside the world you know is a world beyond. It is a place with a will, a will without a body, an infinite nowhere that shifts and changes erratically. It hungers for a shape, for the concrete, and so it latches on to events and locales that echo across the world, recreating images of the earthly, and yearning to morph into something more real.

In the dreams of the exceptional, the Void plants a seed. It grows to manifest as a sprinkling of floating isles set against a sea of nothingness. Each island is molded after something from the material world, often linked to significant events. With the passing of the centuries, the Void has bled into our reality via dreams and visions, its patterns etched into charms and artifacts, but none of these manifestations is as well known as that of the Outsider

Four thousand years ago, a dark ritual ripped a boy of his name. Severed from the world, the emptiness inside him was filled by the Void, which transformed him into a divine being. The Outsider is depicted as a pallid, unassuming young man with eyes as black as the night; an entity beyond human morality that observes the world and (from time to time) appears and influences the lives of those that spark his interest.

The Void is the source of all that's unnatural in ***Dishonored***, and thus it is the focus of this chapter. The powers granted by the Void allow player characters to bend or break the rules of the world in various interesting ways, though sometimes at a price.

## BONECHARMS

Before the Empire was founded, charms and trinkets made of bone or ivory—most commonly whalebone—were a common sight. Most of these were worthless, but a small minority seemed to have subtle effects in the environment. Due to commonly being made from whalebone, the practice of using bonecharms is often said to have originated amongst sailors and whalers.

The foundation of the Empire of the Isles spread ideas of reason and progress and, as the Empire's state religion, the Abbey of the Everyman condemned bonecharms and similar items of superstition as witchcraft.

This didn't stop the use of bonecharms, or belief in their power, though it did drive it into relative obscurity, for few could discuss such things openly any more. Bonecharms can be found hidden across the Empire, some deliberately placed in secret places, others discarded by those who don't know what they've found, or who do know and are fearful of being caught. Those who know the power to be had in a bonecharm can often gain a valuable edge over their rivals and enemies.

All bonecharms are made of one or more small pieces of bone or ivory, fastened together by metal and leather, and etched with strange sigils. The bone or ivory is treated with mixtures of rare herbs and other substances, prepared according to obscure recipes, for lumps of scrimshawed bone alone hold no power. A true bonecharm hums with power, creating a faint but distinctive 'song' that the perceptive can hear.

Not all bonecharms are the same. They come in a wide range of designs, and many are artfully carved into the likenesses of animals or other shapes. More than that, there are several types of bonecharm, crafted from different kinds of recipe and presenting different kinds of power.

## TYPES OF BONECHARMS

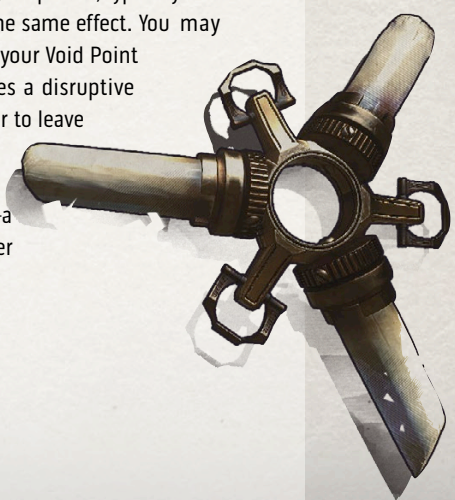
**Common bonecharms** represent the majority of these items, and match the descriptions above. A common bonecharm has a single common power.

**Corrupted bonecharms** are crude, clumsy, or mistaken attempts to augment a bonecharm's powers. They are more potent than common bonecharms, but all of them have some unpleasant drawback. Each corrupted bonecharm has a single enhanced power, and a drawback.

**Black bonecharms** are normally made from rare and complex recipes, and they are more potent than a common bonecharm. Each black bonecharm has a single enhanced power.

To tap into their power, bonecharms must be worn on your person, typically hidden under clothing. Simply carrying a charm doesn't have the same effect. You may gain the power from a number of bonecharms equal to your Void Point maximum at any time—too many charms worn creates a disruptive sound that can draw unwanted attention. It's often better to leave bonecharms somewhere safe when you're not using them.

You gain no benefit from having the same power more than once. Also, some powers conflict with one another—a power will not function if you're also using a different power that conflicts with it.



## ACQUIRING BONECHARMS

Bonecharms are scattered across the Isles. They're cast into the sea by those who fear them, and they wash up on the shore or get caught in the nets of fishermen and whalers. They're lost by their owners for reasons only the Void knows, and find themselves in new hands soon after. Many bonecharms begin life or find themselves in Wyrmwood Way. A small street between the districts in Dunwall, it is known as the home of fringe magic practitioners, alchemists and crafters of bonecharms. Despite the Overseers' attempts to burn the street to the ground and clear it out, it always recovers and the practices of magic and bonecharm carving continue. The song of a bonecharm is louder to some than to others, as if they call to those who most need them.

During play, the gamemaster may place bonecharms in your adventures for you to find, or grant them as rewards at the end of a successful adventure. In addition to that, you can use your contacts to try and find them for you. Regardless, when you gain a bonecharm during the course of an adventure, the GM determines the kind of bonecharm received—common, corrupted, or black—as well as its powers, as they see fit.

Of course, it's also possible to create your own bonecharms. Witches, occultists, and other dabblers in the mysteries of the Void have been known to craft their own. This process involves experimentation, researching obscure (and often inaccurate) lore, and pure luck.

Creating a bonecharm requires time and dedication, which can be represented with a progress track. The track could have one box for each of the tasks the GM feels the character should complete, such as getting a particular ingredient or striking a bargain with an occultist. Black bonecharms are, of course, more complex than common bonecharms. Consider, too, that nobody ever intends to create a corrupted bonecharm: these happen by accident.

### COMMON BONECHARMS

These powers are found on common or corrupted bonecharms.

**March of the Brave:** The bonecharm's song entices you to take the initiative, to be more daring and decisive. When you attempt a skill test Boldly, you may reroll a single d20 in your dice pool. Conflicts with *Cautious Tune*.

**Cautious Tune:** The bonecharm's melody invites patience and observation in the face of trouble. When you attempt a skill test Carefully, you may reroll a single d20 in your dice pool. Conflicts with *March of the Brave*.

**Nil Whispers:** The bonecharm progressively chokes the surrounding sounds as you draw closer to an Outsider Shrine. Once per session, you may spend a Void point to create the *nearby Outsider Shrine* truth.

**Stinging Whistle:** The bonecharm makes your enemies' ears ring after every hit. Any unarmed melee attacks you make apply the *ringing ears* personal truth to your enemies.

**Swift Arpeggio:** The bonecharm's melody accompanies you, increasing your speed. When you attempt a skill test Quickly, you may reroll a single d20 in your dice pool. Conflicts with *Song of Inspiration*.

**Rhyme of Remembrance:** The bonecharm's strange shape entraps the sounds around it, which are echoed for many moons until fading out. If you put your ear close to it, you can hear everything said near the bonecharm during the last three months.

**Serenade of the Rested Mind:** The bonecharm's soothing melody gives you extraordinary focus. You may spend 1 Momentum before attempting a skill test where you have an applicable focus. If you do so, you may count that focus as having +2 to its normal rating.

**Elusive Melody:** The bonecharm's note rings when about to be hit, prompting you to dodge. While wearing this charm, gain the *evasive footwork* personal truth.

**Soothing Call:** The bonecharm's voice soothes, restoring your wits and your vitality when facing adversity. You may spend a Void point on your turn to remove up to 2 stress from your stress track.

**Rock's Rumble:** The bonecharm's deep rumbling toughens you, making you hardier and more resistant to pain and injury. Your stress track is increased by 1.

**Void Step:** The bonecharm's grasp mutes your walk. This bonecharm counts as a personal truth that reads *silent footsteps*.



## ENHANCED BONECHARMS

The following powers can be found on black or corrupted bonecharms.

**Feral Cacophony:** The bonecharm sings an otherworldly tune that reshapes reality. When a ranged attack would inflict you with stress, you may pay 1 Momentum per stress point received to deny it, transforming each spent Momentum into a vermin creature (a rat, a bloodfly, or similar) moments before it hits you. Creatures spawned in this way flee the scene immediately.

**Fragment of Elmira:** The bonecharm, when worn, whispers to the wearer in the voice of a woman. It entices them to follow her directions, which always lead to places where silver can be found.

**Void's Seedling:** This unique bonecharm holds within a proto-sentience, a failed attempt from the Void to take form. It inhales and exhales light, and when in enclosed spaces you can see it dim all light sources, just to see them flicker into full force for a few seconds. This is repeated constantly, with a breathing sound echoing subtly in the air. Aside from this strange effect, it gives the wearer 1 Void Point at the start of every game session.

**Wrathful Scream:** The bonecharm's scream empowers you when you push your limit, weaponizing your anger. When you attempt a skill test Forcefully, you may add one d20.

**Song of Inspiration:** The bonecharm's song adapts to your circumstances, like a muse, evoking ideas at the most convenient times. It seems to give you the opportunities that make your plans pay off. When you attempt a skill test Cleverly, you may double one of your applied focuses. Conflicts with *Swift Arpeggio*.



**Hunter's Hum:** The bonecharm's hum becomes louder in your mind as you focus on the target. Any ranged attacks you make gains +1 stress.

**Chameleon's Call:** The bonecharm imitates the calling of nearby beasts, confusing them. Animals increase the difficulty of all tests to detect or attack you by +2.

**Blood-starved Crescendo:** The bonecharm produces a drumming sound that becomes louder when blood is spilled. Your heart rate increases alongside it, and you feel energized by the rhythm. When you succeed at an attack, you may add 1 Momentum to the pool.

**Yearning of the Leviathan:** The bonecharm resonates with the singing of whales, and attracts them when submerged in a large body of water. If kept within one's mouth, it allows the bearer to breathe underwater.

**Choir of Silence:** The bonecharm drinks the sounds that surround it, making your actions all the more discreet. When you attempt a skill test Quietly, you may add one d20.

**Ellison's Creature:** This unique bonecharm holds within a primeval sentience, which yearns to speak. You may avoid death using this charm, miraculously avoiding the attack (and any damage it dealt) which would have killed you. While doing so, the charm sinks beneath the skin of your neck, stealing your voice. You gain the personal truth *mute*, and the charm becomes unusable.

## DRAWBACKS

The following drawbacks are found on corrupted bonecharms.

**Crude Carving:** The bonecharm's carvings are irregular, and seem to have been made without much care. The bonecharm's power only works after dusk, and before dawn.

**Darkened Edges:** The bonecharm's power spreads doubt and discord. Whenever you spend a Void point, you also add 1 Chaos.

**Splintered Bone:** The bonecharm's key material hasn't been treated properly, and so it tends to subtly alter the wearer's fate as a form of revenge. The wearer suffers complications on a roll of 19 as well as 20.

**Scarred Surface:** The bonecharm is cracked, probably due to damage suffered during the creation process. At midnight, for about an hour, it bleeds a black, ink-like liquid that stains clothes and any surfaces it touches.

**Overcharged:** The bonecharm is unnaturally heavy, most likely due to excess amount of ingredients when being created. It weighs about six pounds. This is represented by the *extra load* truth, which affects the wearer.

**Kinseeker:** The bonecharm has a series of tiny, sharp dents in its base. When worn, the dents sink in your flesh, yearning to fuse with your bones. You gain the *stinging pain* personal truth. Removing the charm deals 1 stress to you.

**Stained Bone:** The bonecharm was stained, showcasing a strange tint as a result of the creation process. Wearing it for a couple hours makes it so that you start to look pale—even sick—which in turn restores the charm of its natural bone white tint.

**Life's Miracle:** When created, the bonecharm was covered with flesh, veins and cartilage. Every night, if left unchecked, the tissue grows rapidly. After three sessions, the bonecharm will have morphed into an embryo of the bone's species (a wolf, dog, bear or a whale depending on its precedent), in which case the bonecharm will be no more.

## THE OUTSIDER'S MARK

The Outsider watches many people, people whose lives and decisions catch his interest. None but the Outsider himself can say what criteria he judges these people by, or why they interest him.

In a rare handful of cases, the Outsider's interest goes further. He visits them in a dream, and offers them his mark. Those who accept find a sigil branded upon their flesh—often on the back of their hand—and uncanny new abilities that allow them to know things they shouldn't, go places they could not reach, and do things that no mortal can do.

During the midst of the Rat Plague, there were only eight people alive in the world who bore the Outsider's Mark. This number rises and falls as some of the marked die and new people catch the Outsider's gaze, but there are rarely more than eight marked in every generation.

In ***Dishonored***, you can bear the Outsider's Mark, and gain access to unnatural powers into the bargain. With the GM's permission you may select the talent The Outsider's Mark (see Chapter 5, page 63) instead of selecting one of the talents from your character's archetype or approach.

When you select this talent, you and the GM will determine a selection of abilities—six powers, and six enhancements—as each person who bears the Outsider's Mark gains different boons. You will then receive one of those powers immediately as part of the talent—this power must have a cost to learn of no more than 2 runes. Other powers are not available yet, and must be learned.

### LEARNING POWERS AND ENHANCEMENTS

Those who bear the Outsider's Mark commonly seek out runes—chunks of whalebone, similar to large bonecharms, marked with the Outsider's sigil. These runes have little significance by themselves, but devotees of the Void often seek them out, building shrines around them as loci for their worship. In the possession of those who are marked, however, they strengthen the connection to the Void, causing the marked to grow in power.

Runes are rare, often washing up on beaches and riverbanks, supposed by some to be relics of an ancient empire. Whatever their true origin, their effect is the same. Every power and enhancement in Dishonored can be acquired by aligning your mark with the rune's inscription, a process that takes a few minutes and results in the rune consuming itself. Where it goes, nobody knows.

## POWERS

The following is a list of the outlandish abilities you may learn when using runes. You use Mana to employ these powers. You possess a Mana pool, which contains an amount of Mana equal to twice your Void Point maximum. When you use a power, it spends Mana. Your Mana resets at the start of a new scene.

### BEND TIME

**Cost to Use:** 4 Mana
**Rune Cost to Learn:** 2
You have the ability to manipulate time, slowing its passage while leaving your actions unhindered. When you use *bend time*, you may take two actions instead of one, resolving them one after the other. While time is slowed, other characters' actions are slowed, adding +2 to the difficulty of any tests they attempt as part of a contest against you. This lasts for one round, or approximately ten seconds.

### BLINK

**Cost to Use:** 1 Mana
**Rune Cost to Learn:** 1
You can traverse short distances in an instant, vanishing from one spot and appearing in another in the blink of an eye. This ability doesn't take an action to use (it can be triggered at any time). When you use *blink*, you may select any point nearby which you can see—even if you could not reach that place by walking, jumping, or climbing normally—and you instantly appear there. You do physically cross the space between your starting point and your destination, so if you would pass through an obstacle such as a window, an opponent, or a wall of light, you'll interact with that obstacle as if traveling at high speed.

### BLOOD BRIAR

**Cost to Use:** 3 Mana
**Rune Cost to Learn:** 2
You conjure a savage mass of tendrils and vines. It takes an action to conjure the blood briar, after which it will lash out at anyone who gets within reach who doesn't have this power, imposing the *immobilized* truth. Getting out of the blood briar's grasp is a difficulty 3 skill test.

### DARK VISION

**Cost to Use:** 1 Mana
**Rune Cost to Learn:** 2
You shift your perceptions, giving yourself greater clarity of sight for a short while. When you activate *dark vision*, you can see other characters and creatures nearby more clearly, even through the walls. It also allows you to see valuables, dangers and hazards such as security systems. This effect lasts until the end of the scene.



### DEVOURING SWARM

**Cost to Use:** 3 Mana
**Rune Cost to Learn:** 3
You call forth a swarm of verminous creatures that attacks those nearby. This power takes an action to use. When you use *devouring swarm*, a swarm of creatures (rats, bloodflies, or something else appropriate chosen when the power is learned) emerges to attack the nearest enemy. The swarm will dissipate once there are no other targets nearby, or if the swarm is defeated. The swarms you summon will not attack you or anyone else who can summon the same kind of swarm, nor will they attack kindred creatures—rats will not attack Weepers, bloodflies won't attack Nest Keepers, and so forth.

### EYE WITHIN

**Cost to Use:** 1 Mana
**Rune Cost to Learn:** 2
You see the souls of those around you laid bare, with their fears and their intentions revealed to you. Using this power requires an action. When you activate *eye within*, you can ask the GM about the personal truths of those around you, clear as the day for you to see. This effect lasts for a scene.

### FAR REACH

**Cost to Use:** 1 Mana
**Rune Cost to Learn:** 1
You shoot out a long tendril of shadow, which then grabs onto the target surface and pulls. It can act as a sort of grappling hook that reels you in, and it can also be used to pull objects and other living beings towards you. The tendrils have nearby range.

### FOG CALLER

**Cost to Use:** 2 Mana
**Rune Cost to Learn:** 1

A thick fog rises from the ground around you, baffling foes and concealing your actions. Using *fog caller* creates the truth *thick fog* which obscures the vision of any characters nearby. The fog remains for the rest of the scene, until strong winds disperse it, or until you choose to end it, whichever comes first.

### MESMERIZE

**Cost to Use:** 3 Mana
**Rune Cost to Learn:** 3

You call a spirit from the Void to seize the attention of others. As an action, you summon the spirit and target it at up to two nearby enemies. Those enemies are immediately sent into a dream-like hypnotic state, unable to perceive their surroundings. The spirit remains until the end of the next round, at which point, the affected enemies forget being mesmerized (and what happened immediately before being mesmerized) and return to what they were doing before.

Enemies not affected by the spirit cannot see it, but they can see other people acting strangely, and will respond accordingly, often becoming more alert and suspicious.

### POSSESSION

**Cost to Use:** 4 Mana
**Rune Cost to Learn:** 3

You can enter the body of an animal, controlling its movements for a short while. As an action, you select an animal nearby which you can see clearly. Your body vanishes, and you take control of the animal. Using *possession*, you cannot make any attacks or use any other powers, but you can otherwise act freely, and people will respond to you as if you were the animal you possess. If the animal you are possessing is harmed, you are harmed as well; if not dead, you'll then instantly reappear within reach of the animal.

*Possession* lasts for a number of rounds/minutes equal to your Forcefully rating. When it ends, you reappear within reach, typically behind the creature. If you had possessed a small animal (rats, bloodflies, fish, and similar), it is killed, while larger animals (such as wolfhounds) gain the truth *dazed and nauseous* until the end of their next turn.

### THORNS

**Cost to Use:** 2 Mana
**Rune Cost to Learn:** 1

With a gesture, you hurl a shower of dart-like projectiles. These count as a stress 3 ranged attack, which requires no ammunition.

## ENHANCEMENTS

Unlike powers, enhancements are always active, and they do not have a Void point cost associated. They are acquired in the same way abilities are, by consuming runes.

### AGILITY

**Rune Cost to Learn:** 2

You move more quickly and surely than others, and can jump and leap far greater distances. You gain one automatic successes on any Move test you attempt.

### BEAST WHISPERS

**Rune Cost to Learn:** 2

You can communicate with beasts. When this power is learned, select a single type of animal—commonly rats, bloodflies, or similar vermin. You can communicate with an animal of that type within reach, learning what they know about the nearby area or the movements of other creatures. As beasts have a different perspective on the world, the information they provide can often be cryptic or difficult to understand.

### DARK INSPIRATION

**Rune Cost to Learn:** 1

You have an extraordinary talent for craft or artistry, heightened by the Void's touch upon your mind. Select a single one of your focuses with a creative application in mind. When you make a skill test which uses that focus, you gain one automatic success.

### DARK SCRIMSHAW

**Rune Cost to Learn:** 3

You have peculiar insights into the ways of bonecharms and runes, allowing you to craft ones yourself. You reduce the difficulty of all skill tests to research bonecharm recipes or to craft bonecharms by 2, and roll an extra die when performing a skill test to craft a bonecharm.

### ESCAPE

**Rune Cost to Learn:** 3

You have a peculiar way of cheating death. To benefit from this power, you must have a shrine or other sanctuary you can return to. The first time in a scene you are killed, you avoid death automatically. You transform into a swarm of animals, typically rats or bloodflies (chosen when you learn this enhancement) which attack whomever killed you on your next action, and then disperse (refer to the corresponding NPC profile). After the swarm disperses, you reappear at your shrine or sanctuary with the same number of empty stress track boxes you had before suffering the killing blow.

Once you have avoided death and reformed in this way, you cannot use *escape* again until after the next full moon.

### GLIMPSE HOLLOWS

**Rune Cost to Learn:** 1

You can see places in the world which are cracked, where the Void leaks through. Through these cracks, you can see other times, other places, and other possible versions of reality. What exactly you see is up to the GM, and what you do with that knowledge is up to you.

### SHADOW KILL

**Rune Cost to Learn:** 1

Those you slay dissolve into ashes and smoke, leaving no trace of your kill but the absence of your victim. Whenever you kill an enemy, you generate only one Chaos, rather than two, as the body turns to ash and disappears into the Void.

### STRENGTH

**Rune Cost to Learn:** 2

Your strength is prodigious, allowing you to perform feats of might that others can only dream of. You gain one automatic success on all **Fight Forcefully** tests, and may throw objects (including grenades and other thrown weapons) at distant targets as if they had the Range (distant) quality.

### VITALITY

**Rune Cost to Learn:** 1

Your body is fueled by the Void, giving you greater durability and resistance to harm. Your stress track is increased by 2.

## ARTIFACTS OF THE VOID

Bonecharms and runes are far from the only items touched by the Void that exist in the world. A scattered assortment of artifacts and mystical objects can be found across the Isles. They are highly sought-after by those who crave power, whether found or stolen. Some lie within secure vaults, or are hidden upon their owner's person. Others drift within the Void, in the Outsider's possession, gifted to those who might use them in interesting ways.

Artifacts typically contain a single power or enhancement which it bestows upon whomever carries it, though some rare ones carry several powers or enhancements, or a unique power not found anywhere else.

Below are a couple of example artifacts, which can be used as inspiration for artifacts the GM wishes to introduce to the game.

### RUNE

Made of carved whalebone, runes are used to acquire supernatural abilities. The more powerful the ability, the greater the number of runes needed. They can sometimes be found at shrines to the outsider, but also rarely (and oddly) washed up on the banks of rivers, hidden among artifacts within a aristocrats personal collection, and sometimes even available for sale in less than reputable markets, with prices differing depending on seller and buyer savvy.

Runes should be found by players more often than bought, and gamemasters may consider using them as a reward for players achieving a goal, or working them into the story for players with Void powers to acquire. If a player wishes to purchase a rune, they are treated as Unique or Unknown items according to the rules on page 83, and may be priced as the gamemaster desires. Runes may be consumed by characters with the Outsiders Mark to learn an ability or saved for a later date if the character wishes to learn an ability with a higher rune cost. Runes that are consumed mysteriously disappear without a trace.

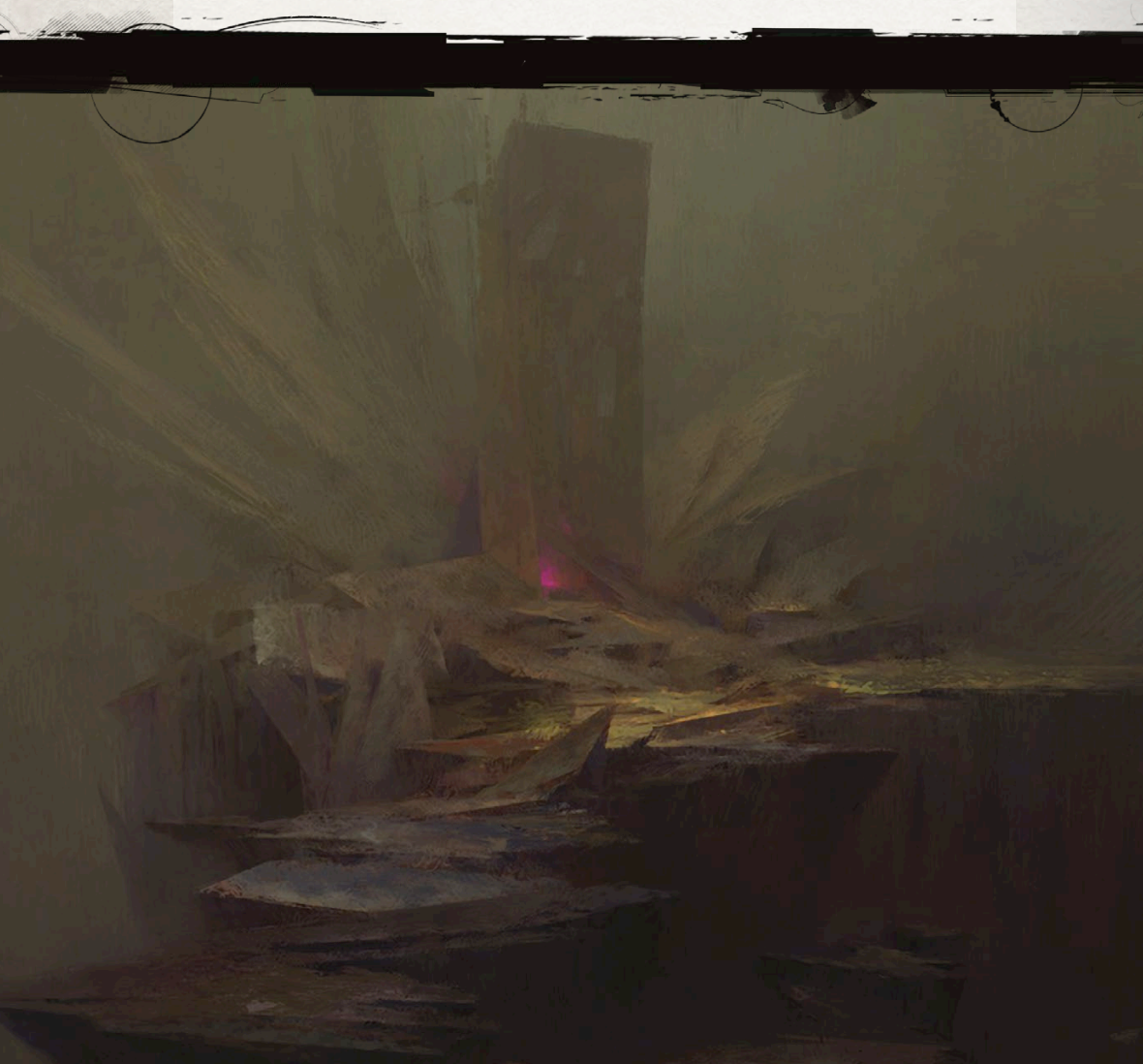
### TWIN-BLADED KNIFE

An ancient and powerful relic, thousands of years old, the twin-bladed knife is believed to have been used to sacrifice the young man who would become the Outsider. It has surfaced a handful of times in the Empire's history, often passing from one owner to another before vanishing into obscurity again.

The twin-bladed knife bestows the *shadow kill* power and the *dark scrimshaw* enhancement upon its possessor. It may have other abilities beyond that, as the true depths of the knife's power are unknown.

### WITCH'S HAND

The hand of someone marked by the Outsider, mummified and preserved, can bestow a small fragment of that person's power. These objects are rare, as those who bear the Outsider's Mark are few. One such object, carried by a gang leader in Karnaca, is rumored to have been the hand of Vera Moray (Dunwall's "Granny Rags"), which granted the owner the *escape* enhancement—allowing him to turn into a swarm of rats when attacked.





# Chapter 8

# ON THE BANKS OF THE WRENHAVEN

It's the Watch that haunts us, worse even than the Bottle Streeters coming to claim their "protection" money every week as regular as sunrise. But those lads are just after the coin. The Watch want something more, as if they grow themselves by making the rest of us feel small. They swagger in and take what they like, then break things for no reason but to watch young Ichabod weep.

Had they not taken away Sally Blackmoor and closed her shop, I don't believe we could shoulder the load of the Watch's looting of our wares. But with Rebecca's shop empty, her customers come to us or to Gray Isaac two lanes over. I hate feeling thankful for the misfortune of others, but that's life in Dunwall for everybody. It's a city of mixed blessings.

I worry most about the new recruit, a pock-faced Morleyan who won't give his name. The way he looks at little Icky is not the way any father wants a man with power to look at his child. Mark me, he will one day try to put his hands on him. When that day comes, it may be our shop closed and me taken to Coldridge. Perhaps Gray Isaac will use some of what profits he gets from my custom to help whoever the Watch leaves behind.

Maybe the Bottle Streeters can help me with the new man. They take their money for protection after all.

Dear Sirs,

My Client, Olivia Rockhill, has sufficiently proven the legitimacy of her claim to the property at the corners of Sycamore and Everlast streets. Despite this proof, word has reached our offices that your work crews continue to tear down the building at that address. Moreover, it is alleged they threatened violence against the legitimate agents of Madame Rockhill when they arrived to serve legal notice of her claim.

We will be vigorously pursuing recompense for the damage to the property, and possible criminal proceedings against the thuggery of certain members of your work crew. As of now, you are instructed to desist all operations on Olivia Rockhill's property is resolved in a proper court of law.

Yours Obediently, Etc,

Barrister Joshua Rivershead

Dear Mum,

You willn't buleve my luck, tho I do not wish to temp fate by caling it such too often. With the Navy but three weeks, I have reseeved an officer's commision. The Dead Eels set upon a merchant vessel, and we of the good Empress's Vessel Catherine's Revenge saved her. Reel heros we was, even your own little son, tho I won't truble you with the details of what risks I took to life and lim while we were at sord's point and musket's end.

Sad to say my boss Ensign Corwin Orsloff was struck by a splinter long as a tall man's les during the fray. It took him in the middles, and thoush he hanged on for three days, the injury proved greater than the man. Captain Stella herself choose me as his replacement, so you are the Proud Mother of a Navy Officer now.

I have enclosed my share of the prize money from the capture of the Dead Eel's vessel. I hope it is all right with you that I have kept all of my first Officer's pay packet, as I am in need of a more suitable uniform as fits my stashon.

Love,

Your Billy

(Called "Big Bill" by my men and women, now).

# HISTORY OF THE CAPITAL

To those who call it home, it feels like Dunwall must have existed forever. Eternity feels a short time for any place to accumulate so many stories, so much wealth, such entrenched crime, and such ever-present squalor. And yet there was a time when the banks of the Wrenhaven held not a single building, belched not a puff of smoke, saw neither murder nor profit. This is not that time, friends, but let us speak of the years between that time and this day.

## FOUNDING OF A MODERN METROPOLIS

Nobody can say the exact year in which the Capital of the Empire turned from a few shacks serving local fishermen into the whaling town called Dunwall. It is known that the city existed during the War of Four Crowns, meaning it predates the Empire of the Isles. The Academy of Natural Philosophy was founded there nearly a century before Emperor Morgengaard I was crowned and Parliament held its first session in 1626.

By this time, Dunwall was already a thriving city, trading center, and fishing port. Its streets did not exactly run with gold, but they teemed with citizens from all over the empire, all giving their labor and lives to the economic lifeblood that kept the city running. People from throughout the Isles came in search of better lives. Some of them found one.

## THE HEART OF THE EMPIRE

Though the sea always fed the Empire, it was not until Esmond Roseburrow developed new uses for processed whale oil that whaling became the absolute center of Dunwall industry and life. New technologies lit its streets, defended its people, granted new entertainments, and eased many burdens. This light spread outward across Gristol, through the Isles, and into the outer world... and every new light meant a glut of coins into the coffers of Dunwall.

As more wealth was driven toward the capital, the Isle of Morley's jealousy spilled into a half-year-long rebellion during which Empress Larisa Olaskir was assassinated and a Regency was established to continue the government. Though Emperor Euhorn Jacob Kaldwin was crowned little more than a year later in 1803, this precedent would have far-reaching consequences.

In 1820, Roseburrow met Anton Sokolov, who built on his work to push the advances of technology at a fever pace. Life in Dunwall grew even more advanced, convenient, and wealthy, and the light of natural philosophy shone further than it had at any other time in history.

## THE RAT PLAGUE

In 1835, during the Month of Clans, the Rat Plague struck Dunwall. A fatal disease that lived in the lungs and spread as fast as a salacious rumor, it killed thousands, destroyed entire families, and left nothing but chaos in its wake. Houses emptied, businesses closed, and entire city wards were abandoned as the population dwindled.

What happens to a city where half the people are dying, and the other half can't find work because there are not enough healthy people to buy anything? They begin to

starve. They begin to riot. Sick people panic and run to places where they infect the healthy. Healthy people hoard what food they can, and steal the rest. Fear rules the day, and gangs wage war for control of the ruins.

Lord Regent Burrows, who came to power after the sudden, shocking assassination of the empress Jessamine Kaldwin in 1837, instituted a series of responses to the plague and the problems it had caused. He limited movement, closed districts, and granted officials previously unprecedented powers. These solutions were harsh, many came to say, in the weeks and months that followed, tyrannical. But they did improve the quarantine and help to stop the movement of infected Dunwallers. The plague did not immediately end, but the spread slowed.

## DESPAIR AND RESTORATION

Near the end of the Month of Seeds of 1837, the application of Anton Sokolov and Piero Joplin's elixirs beat back the worst of the plague. Those who took the elixir regularly were immune, and soon able to return to something like normal lives. The many who could not afford the treatments sickened and died.

Even as the plague ravaged much of the city, gossip and conjecture, always driving forces in Dunwall, continued to flourish. The population turned their attention to the tyranny of the Lord Regent. Rumors that he had betrayed his position, impaired his Empress, and possibly even caused the plague itself began to circulate. He died during the Month of Hearths, though whether this was at an assassin's hand or in a quiet execution none know for certain. Empress Emily Drexel Lela Kaldwin was crowned two months later, ending the usurper's rule.

# THE PEOPLES OF DUNWALL

At its height, Dunwall had a population of just over 2,000,000 souls. After the Rat Plague, that population is at most half that number, and likely quite lower than that. Though each Dunwaller is different from the next, they share some similarities of character and experience that sometimes makes the city feel like a living, breathing being.

## CLASS AND SOCIETY

Society in Dunwall is rigidly structured, with each person knowing their place in the great economic pyramid of the city. At the top is the royalty: the Empress and her court, and the various nobles and hereditary officials who serve her. At the next rung of social order are those who are not born to power, but can afford to buy it.

Below them is an effective tie between the most successful entrepreneurs and the servants of the royal tier. Entrepreneurs are more generally respected, but servants of the highest classes carry a borrowed power of their own. Woe be it to even a famed whaling ship captain who offends a clerk in the house of the Empress.

Unlike much of the Empire of the Isles, Dunwall has a robust middle class. Skilled tradespeople and professionals use their knack and knowledge to earn money for a comfortable life, while enjoying a somewhat decent status.

Beneath the middle class are several strata of the poor, serving as fuel for the great engine that is Dunwall. They range from working folk who live in decent apartments and eat as well as the farmers in rural Gristol, to bootblacks and chimney sweeps struggling to afford a single room, to crippled urchins begging for scraps.

## OUTSIDERS AND THE OUTSIDER

The average Dunwaller can't pronounce "xenophobia" or tell you what it means, but they will show it to you at least three times during a casual conversation—if they're willing to talk to you without knowing where your family comes from. Whether the difference comes from class, city of origin, or even occupation, Dunwallers are suspicious of those different from them.

The Tyvian population illustrates just how deep this suspicion of outsiders runs. There are about 15,000 in the city, a small enough population to be at the mercy of the city's better-established nationalities. One might think that various Tyvians would run together, helping each other out against a metropolis packed with those who put them down day after day. But that's not the case. Tyvians whose families have been in Dunwall for generations look down on newly arrived countrymen, whom they call "Snowclads". In turn, the Snowclads consider the "Citybreds" traitors for having taken on too many Imperial and Dunwallish ways. "They've forgotten the faces of their mothers" they say, while sucking their teeth and slinging even fouler Tyvian insults. Further, both groups hate the "Millgrists", Tyvians who have taken employ with the Imperial government itself, and are loathed in turn by them.

When you take a moment to think that this kind of division and animosity exists within every group of people at every level in Dunwall, it makes sense that the state religion calls their adversary "The Outsider." In Dunwall, you must belong to something, otherwise you'll quickly become nothing at all.

## THE LONG LEGS OF THE LAW

The teeming masses, abject poverty next to opulent wealth, jingoism, and class divisions within Dunwall make it a powder keg ready to explode at any moment. That explosion is kept from happening in part due to the ever-present and sometimes brutal efforts of the city's law enforcement.

Throughout the city, three tiers of police keep their thumbs firmly on the impoverished and the powerless. Citizens rarely go an hour without seeing the Watch on patrol, and even more rarely go a week without some kind of harassment from them.

Don't be fooled. The "legitimate" law enforcement is only part of what maintains the social order in Dunwall. Gangs keep their own structure in place with members and leg-breakers throughout the slums they control. In the worst neighborhoods, they patrol as boldly as the City Watch would were it safe for them to be there. Private security keep personal estates safe, and of course the Imperial family is guarded by far better than the City Watch.

# LOCALES OF NOTE

Dunwall is a city of contrasts. Gangs in one neighborhood vs. City Watch in others. The filthy, desperate masses of the poor vs. the privileged, fancy aristocrats and royalty. Nowhere are these contrasts more evident than in the differences between the city's varied districts.

## ERAS OF PLAY

The Empire of the Isles is a tumultuous place. The fortunes of the great and the good, and of entire districts, can turn as easily as that of the lowliest PCs. The information set out below and in *Chapter 9: The Jewel of the South* detail the factions and locales of Dunwall and Karnaca respectively. This chapter largely assumes that you are playing during the years of the plague for a Dishonored campaign. Campaigns set at other times will require some changes. For example, the Loyalist Conspiracy was a very different faction during the Lord Regent's reign, and the Outsider's followers enjoyed far more freedom in the early years of the Rat Plague than before or after. Similarly, the Whalers during the time of Daud's presence in Dunwall are almost unrecognizable in their post-plague state. Some of the story hooks for locales, factions, and notable people are tied to certain events. For example, the Whaler faction hooks in this chapter are set after Daud leaves, while Daud's story hooks (in *Chapter 11: Of Street Urchins & Masked Aristocrats*) are set during his time leading that faction.

*Chapter 9: The Jewel of the South* assumes that you're playing during the Bloodfly Fever epidemic and the height of Duke Luca Abele's tyranny, about fifteen years after the Rat Plague of Dunwall. A GM wishing to set a Karnacan campaign at a different time will have to make changes. Similarly, if a GM wishes for parties to travel between these two locations, they must take account of this time difference. For example, a party that leaves plague-ridden Dunwall for sunny Karnaca shouldn't run into any Clockwork Soldiers as they weren't invented until several years after the Rat Plague.

Some of the descriptions and story hooks for 'the Notorious' in *Chapter 11: Of Street Urchins & Masked Aristocrats* are also pegged to different points in time, according to which period of the character's life may provide the most stimulating material for a campaign. Meanwhile, other locations in the game, such as those in *Chapter 10: Beyond these Shores* are far less influenced by the currents that buffet the populations of these major centers and don't have a suggested time period.

To help keep track of the major developments in the Empire, a detailed timeline is set out below. This will help the GM integrate factions, locales, and notable NPCs into a coherent adventure. It should also be remembered that while this is to help the GM, and perhaps the players, to familiarise themselves with the Empire; the PCs themselves wouldn't be privy to much of this information. For example, your average gang member in Dunwall wouldn't know more about the Loyalists' and Corvo's part in putting Emily on the throne, other than the rumors they hear, and a party in Tyvia might not either know or care about the political machinations at the centers of power and prestige.

## TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Firstly, the calendar in ***Dishonored*** is made up of thirteen months.

*Month of Earth*
*Month of Harvest*
*Month of Nets*
*Month of Rain*
*Month of Wind*
*Month of Darkness*
*Month of High Cold*
*Month of Ice*
*Month of Hearths*
*Month of Seeds*
*Month of Timber*
*Month of Clans*
*Month of Songs*
*The Fugue Feast*

This period, of 364 days, is followed by the Fugue Feast, during which normal laws do not apply.

| YEAR | EVENTS |
|---|---|
| 1801-2 | The Morley Insurrection. Although periodic bouts of conflict occur before and after, this is by far the most serious. |
| 1809 (1st Day, Month of Timber) | The City Watch of Dunwall is established. |
| 1811 | Daud arrives in Dunwall from Serkonos and forms the Whalers. |
| 1814-5 | Vera Moray, aristocrat of Dunwall, having explored the Pandyssian Continent and been marked by the Outsider, kills her husband and begins her descent into the persona Granny Rags. |
| 1816 | Corvo Attano arrives in Dunwall from Serkonos, a gift of the Serkonan Duke to the Kaldwins. |
| 1817 | Corvo Attano becomes Royal Protector. |
| 1818 | Thaddeus Campbell becomes High Overseer of the Abbey of the Everyman. |
| 1820 | Daud, the leader of the Whalers, is marked by the Outsider. |

| YEAR | EVENTS |
|---|---|
| 1825 (1st Day, Month of High Cold) | Coronation of Empress Jessamine Kaldwin. This year also sees the start of an industrial boom for the city of Dunwall powered by whale oil, which saw the growth of several industries, followed by the creation of the city's first railway in 1828. |
| 1831 | The illegitimate half-sister of Empress Jessamine Kaldwin named Delilah, disillusioned with her treatment, is marked by the Outsider and begins to hone her magical abilities. |
| 1833 | The invention of Arc Pylons and Walls of Light by Anton Sokolov. |
| 1835 (Month of Clans) | The Rat Plague first appears in Dunwall and begins to spread through the city. |
| 1835 (Month of Songs) | Delilah founds her coven of witches. Draper's Ward in Dunwall crashes. |
| 1836 | Rudshore Financial District in Dunwall is flooded as a consequence of the plague's devastation, becoming the Flooded District. The invention of Tallboys by Anton Sokolov. |
| 1837 (18th Day, Month of Earth) | Empress Jessamine Kaldwin is assassinated by Daud, at the instruction of her Royal Spymaster Hiram Burrows. This leaves him as Lord Regent to her daughter Emily, still a child at the time. Corvo, framed for her murder, is taken to Coldridge Prison. The plague continues to spread. Although elixirs developed by Anton Sokolov and Piero Joplin prevent infection, they are not available to all nor can they cure those already infected. |
| 1837 (19th day, Month of Earth, to 1st day, Month of Timber) | The regency of Lord Regent Hiram Burrows, a period of terror and turmoil for Dunwall. Several important events occur during this period, although the exact dates of many of them are lost to the general chaos and devastation of that period:<br>• Corvo aids the Loyalists by rescuing Emily and removing Burrows' most powerful supporters.<br>• Daud uncovers and thwarts Delilah's plot to take over the Empire. Soon after, he leaves Dunwall.<br>• The Loyalist Faction betrays Corvo. He defeats them, leaving all its leaders dead.<br>• Emily Kaldwin is crowned as Empress.<br>• Yul Khulan becomes the High Overseer. |

| YEAR | EVENTS |
|---|---|
| 1838 | Piero Joplin and Anton Sokolov devise a cure for the plague, finally bringing Dunwall's terror to an end — for the most part. |
| 1845 | Dr Alexandria Hypatia transforms the Addermire Institute into a disease research center. |
| 1847 | The succession of Luca Abele as Duke of Serkonos. Soon afterwards, the Howlers gang emerge from the displeasure many Karnacans feel at the new duke's oppressive regime. |
| 1849 | Duke Abele, contacted by Delilah from the Void, holds a séance and rescues her, helped by Kirin Jindosh, Breanna Ashworth, and others. They begin to plot against Empress Emily Kaldwin, now a young woman of 22 ruling in her own right. Mortimer Ramsey, a middling officer in the Dunwall City Watch, begins a conspiracy within his organization to garner support for Delilah. |
| 1850 (Month of Timber) | The Crown Killer strikes in Karnaca for the first time, soon developing a reputation for targeting outspoken critics of Empress Emily Kaldwin, making her a target of general gossip and accusation. Around this time, Duke Abele closes off the Addermire Institute and fortifies it. |
| 1851 | The famed Royal Conservatory in Karnaca is shut by its curator, Breanna Ashworth, in order to allow Delilah and her new coven of witches to use it as a base. Duke Abele aids this by having guards patrol the surrounding area. |
| 1852 | Swarms of bloodflies render several areas in the Karnaca unlivable. Kirin Jindosh invents the Clockwork Soldier (at some point between 1847 and 1852) in Karnaca. |
| 1852 (18th Day, Month of Earth, to the Month of Nets) | The Empire of the Isles is once again in crisis.<br>• Luca Abele aids Delilah, who usurps the throne. Emily manages to escape and travels to Karnaca.<br>• Daud returns briefly to Dunwall on the day of the coup but does not reunite with the Whalers.<br>• Emily neutralizes Duke Abele and the Crown Killer, returning to Dunwall to defeat the usurper Delilah.<br>• High Overseer Yul Khulan, loyal to Empress Emily, fails to take over Dunwall Tower.<br>• Emily overthrows Delilah. Soon afterwards she dissolves what remains of the Abbey of the Everyman.<br>• Billie Lurk, former protégé of Daud, severs the Outsider's link to the Void, with as-yet unknown ramifications for the Empire and its inhabitants. |

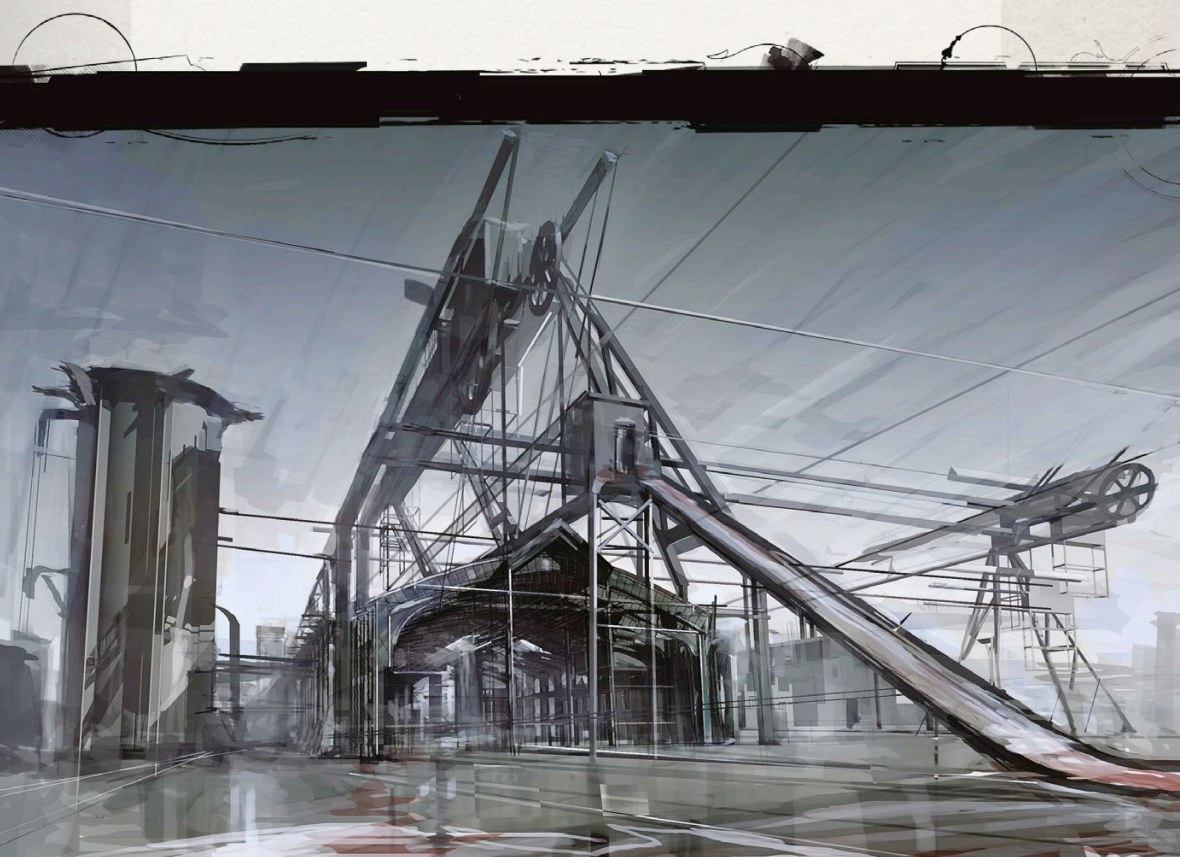
## DISTILLERY DISTRICT

Don't let the famous Dunwall Whiskey Distillery at its center give you the wrong idea. The rotgut might be world-renowned, sipped in captains' quarters and over the finest linen tablecloths, but the district is infamous as one of the worst slums in the Empire. It grew around the distillery, accreting at first the workshops and manufacturing necessary to keep the liquor flowing. It is one of the oldest neighborhoods in the city, and its buildings show the wear.

As other industries moved into the growing city, many landed here. Between and around the factories and work spaces are warrens of residences for the people who work in them. They house thousands, living cheek-by-jowl in filthy tenements controlled by local gangs. The Watch ignore these hives, though they did place checkpoints between them and the wealthier districts of Dunwall.

The Rat Plague did little to change the nature of the district, simply culling some of the population and driving the least hardy business out. It was one of the first areas to see its population rebound, as workers from Tyvia, Morley and Serkonos made their homes in briefly abandoned, squalid row houses.

The largest change since those years is the installment of a new Watchtower, where police monitor the entire area. Their eyes are sharp, and their rifles ready. Rumors that Watchmen stationed there sometimes bet on their ability to shoot random passersby below have never been confirmed.



### THE TRUTH ABOUT THE DISTILLERY DISTRICT

The Distillery District is *mazelike*, confusing and confounding even natives. Visitors, especially the law, must take special care to not get lost. It is *Bottle Street territory,* with all residents knowing who to support and who to never bear witness against. The Watch tower looms with *eyes in the sky*, making travel in the open at best plainly marked, and at worst subject to carefully aimed fire.

### DISTILLERY DISTRICT STORY HOOKS

- Somebody has been selling counterfeit bottles of Dunwall Whiskey, and the player characters must find out who and why. If it's just bootleggers after profit, that's one kind of adventure. But what if it's somebody testing new elixirs? Or a madman on a poisoning spree? What if the culprit turns out to be the Distillery itself, testing a cheaper process to see who notices?
- Violence between the newly arrived immigrants is fierce, as Morleyans and Serkonans clash over food, jobs, housing, and simple general garrulousness. The Watch Officer in charge of the district needs somebody to speak with leaders in each community and broker a peace before true riots threaten the fragile restoration efforts. Naturally, his own troops would be slaughtered for stepping foot into the gang's territories...

## CIVIL SERVICES DISTRICT

If the Tower District is Dunwall's head, and the industrial centers are her beating heart, the Civil Services District is her hands. Here are the offices, meeting rooms, courts, cells, and records rooms of the army of bureaucrats, functionaries, judges, clerks, and pages who keep the city running. Established when the city was officially named capital of the Empire of the Isles, it has grown from a collection of rented buildings to a large town in its own right.

The outer neighborhoods of the district are tidy warrens of tall town homes where the employees of the Empire live and sleep. Simple laborers and clerks live in small apartments, one on top of another for story after story. Middle management can often afford a home of their own here, while the truly powerful ride in from more affluent districts in horse-drawn carriages.

As the epicenter of information and supply management, the district was among the least harmed by the logistic and economic impacts of the Rat Plague. Here was where grain was stored for rationing as civilization broke down, and those who worked here helped themselves first. Such working-class bureaucrats still died by the thousands, but those who remained did not want for supplies.

Visitors find themselves in a bustle of ordered activity among office buildings and the shops and restaurants that serve the government workers who crowd the streets. Since the City Watch has frequent business here, the area is reasonably free of trash and street crime, though corruption runs rampant.

### THE TRUTH ABOUT THE CIVIL SERVICES DISTRICT

Much of the coin and goods driving the Empire runs through this district, making it a *treasure trove* for those who know the routes of its movement. It *runs on gossip*, with prying eyes and keen ears providing a currency better than coin for those who can loosen the right pair of lips.

### CIVIL SERVICES DISTRICT STORY HOOKS

- A lower-level functionary was always rumored to hold the keys to blackmail anybody in the city, and did so whenever the price was right. Upon the night of their murder, parties from all over Dunwall race to their home in an attempt to find their records and keep or destroy them as opportunity allows. Whether the PCs have their own secrets to keep, or are hired by others, is up to the GM to decide.
- A high-ranking administrator approaches the PCs with a proposition. If they help them prove their immediate superior is siphoning off supplies to equip a Morleyan insurrection in the city, they will help further their career in whatever ways are possible. As they build a web of evidence, the PCs discover the job is a frame-up, but the siphoning and the incipient insurrection are very real. More confusing still, their employer is not involved.

## TAILORS DISTRICT

Much like Drapers Ward (seen on page 132), this district formed around a single industry: the tailors who served as an intermediary step between the textile factories and the clothiers of that district. These were not sweatshops where children and unskilled adults toiled to mass-produce bolts of cloth, but the storefronts and homes of those skilled enough to turn cloth into the latest fashion (or at least durable working uniforms for the city's poor).

As the city grew, jewelry makers, clockmakers, metalsmiths, and similarly skilled tradespeople gravitated to these streets. What resulted was not so garish and posh as what Drapers Ward became, but was an enclave of working men and women who valued quiet, value, and safety. When Sokolov's technologies changed everything, the nimble hands of the Tailor's District were among the first to find ways to apply those wonders toward improving daily life.

Tradespeople are closer to the rougher side of life, unafraid to defend what is theirs from both the criminal elements and the weaker species of corrupt officials. To this day, gangs and City Watch alike walk with less arrogance, and do only what trade they can easily get away with.

During the Rat Plague, those same tradespeople revolted to get their fair share of food, elixir, and other supplies. The insurrection was put down quickly and violently. Survivors in the now less populous but still functioning district have not forgotten the brutal measures taken on the Night of the Tallboys, and many have yet to forgive.



### THE TRUTH ABOUT THE TAILORS DISTRICT

A *tradespeople's enclave*, the district is where anyone with money to spend can find useful, custom-made, and even illegal items up for sale. Anyone with enough skill can earn a decent living, or at least grudging respect, among the people here. The *scars of revolution* run deep here, leading to suspicion of those from other rungs on the social ladder, and a general unwillingness to help the Watch or the Empire do their work.

### TAILORS DISTRICT STORY HOOKS

- Each year in the Month of Timber, the various tradespeople of the district hold a Festival of Hands, where the best of each trade show their best wares for prestige and prizes. This year, an eccentric newcomer demonstrates strange technologies that surpass even Sokolov's finest works. The player characters happen to be nearby when masked men grab him off the street and force him into a black carriage...
- Weapons of almost supernatural quality have appeared throughout the city's markets, each bearing a maker's mark nobody recognizes. The Royal Spymaster wants a talk with whomever is making these weapons, and has tasked the PCs with investigating the Tailor's District for clues.

## WATER DISTRICT

Dunwall lacks indoor plumbing except in the most extravagantly wealthy of homes, and those run from their own cisterns, pumps, and wells. The Dunwall Water District instead manages the flow of flood, rain, and river water to keep the streets of the city as dry as possible.

This "district" is less a cohesive collection of streets and buildings, and more of a collection of authorities and responsibilities. Its offices are housed in a narrow, tall brownstone in the Civil Services District, but it maintains gates, barriers, sluices, canals, drains, and cisterns throughout the city.

Those under Water District employ, whether permanent technicians and bureaucrats or temporarily hired laborers, can be found everywhere but are rarely noticed. The Royal Spymaster has privately expressed concerns about this potentially powerful information network, but has so far not moved (overtly) against it.

The years of the Rat Plague were particularly hard on this invisible but far from imaginary jurisdiction. Their work took them to the most infected areas of the city, and brought them into the rat-filled Dunwall Sewers even as other citizens hid in their homes. When the barriers protecting the Rudshore Financial District broke, a colder bloodletting reduced their manpower as scapegoats were sought and produced.

Those seeking the Water District on a map will come away frustrated, but look for somebody working for the Water District and you're likely to find one. Search for a location under Water District control, and you rarely need to walk more than a few hundred steps.

### THE TRUTH ABOUT THE WATER DISTRICT

*Unseen and ubiquitous*, the Water District hides a web of information and access to anybody who can find the right leverage to wrest it free. Its widespread presence and location in the lower strata makes it a *canary in the coal mine*, where the first impacts of impending disasters are felt early. Its properties are *well maintained*, more resistant to breakage and tampering than the vast majority of structures in Dunwall.

### WATER DISTRICT STORY HOOKS

- New cases of a particularly stubborn strain of the Rat Plague have been popping up around a sewage nexus beneath the Estate District. Tasked with eradicating its source, Water District officials must send somebody but are unwilling to use their own people. A group of adventurous locals are just dumb, desperate, and expendable enough to take on the job.
- When an aqueduct crossing the Flooded District breaks, it leaves the Tower District without fresh water. The repair duty is dangerous, and the PCs are hired to provide protection while the masons and plumbers ply their trade.

## HOLGER SQUARE

Holger Square was once the site of Dunwall's most infamous tenement, a single sprawling block of apartments so crowded and vile only those with truly no other choice would call it home. It was a place of chaos and darkness. When the Abbey of the Everyman came to bring enlightenment to all, it began its work in Dunwall by knocking the cesspool down brick by brick, and erecting its own headquarters on the very same ground.

Now the site of the Office of the High Overseer, the square forms the de facto religious center of Dunwall. Named after Benjamin Holger, the man who founded the Abbey, it sees traffic every day as adherents approach on religious duties and church officials embark on missions of mercy, power, and retribution. Heretics are held imprisoned here, in stocks or cells designed to encourage them to recant, and to name their fellow unbelievers.

Of all the neighborhoods in Dunwall, Holger Square was perhaps hit the least by the Rat Plague. The powerful Abbey protected its leaders from famine and other shortages, and to some extent from the physical contact which spread the disease so swiftly among the less fortunate. As in all times of great distress, the poor flocked to the church for comfort and guidance, which they received (from a safe distance).

### THE TRUTH ABOUT THE HOLGER SQUARE

Buildings here are tall, clean, and severe. Among these hallowed spaces, *the walls have eyes*. Informers and ambitious clerics abound, eager to sell secrets for an extra piece of the Abbey's substantial power. Despite the occasional devout exception, this lust for self-advancement leaves clerks, guards, and "holy" men susceptible to bribery. *Everything has a price* for those willing to pay it.

### HOLGER SQUARE STORY HOOKS

- Several of the PCs' friends have disappeared, and it seems the Abbey has taken them. Rescuing those victims from the stocks of the High Overseer is the only way to console their families, and to find out why people are being taken from their beds at night.
- Like most other organizations, the Abbey runs on coin. Getting hold of the information needed to raid an Abbey tithe shipment is a story unto itself, and the heist pulled once that story ends would be the talk of the underworld for years to come.

## FLOODED DISTRICT

The wealthy and prestigious Rudshore Financial District (referred to as the Flooded District during the years of the plague) was once the monetary center of Dunwall. All the silver flowing into the city from its trade made its way through the banks, company headquarters, lenders, and clerks of the fine buildings and fancy offices here. Times were fat, and the city's newest captains of industry grew fat here with them.

But wealth is no guarantee of permanence or even safety in Dunwall. One year into the Rat Plague, as maintenance for public works fell apart, the water barriers protecting this district from the Wrenhaven broke. The catastrophic flood killed hundreds and rendered the area uninhabitable. In the mad rush to escape, many treasures were left behind. Looters ran in almost as quickly as residents ran out. The Lord Regent condemned the entire district, closing it off with walls of light and declaring it off-limits to all.

Throughout the rest of the plague years, it became a dumping ground for corpses and Weepers alike. The former were thrown off the elevated train as it passed over the streets-turned-filthy-canals. The latter were herded through Rudshore Gate, the only official means of entry. Tallboys patrolled the district, using their metal stilts to move easily through the flooded streets.

Post-plague restoration has begun to re-open the district, though efforts are currently restrained to clean-up efforts and patrols to assess how many Weepers still survive in the abandoned buildings. The Whalers have set up their base of operations in the empty buildings, playing cat to the City Watch's understaffed mouse.

### THE TRUTH ABOUT THE FLOODED DISTRICT

The entire district remains a *flooded ruin*, treacherous even where it feels safe. It is *full of weepers* and *patrolled by tallboys*, offering hazards by the fistful for anybody venturing within. *Hastily abandoned*, its buildings are still filled with useful items and even valuable treasures, despite being picked over by dying plague victims for several years.

### FLOODED DISTRICT STORY HOOKS

- Nobody sane goes into the Flooded District for general looting anymore. Between the Weepers and the Tallboys, it's a fool's game. But rumor of a locked safe filled with treasures has recently been linked to copies of a map left at the Golden Cat last week. Multiple parties are racing to an abandoned apartment building with three stories yet above water.
- A single operating elevated rail line allows quick transport of people and supplies across the dangerous district. The Dunwall Water District has discovered two of its support stanchions are rotting to the point of instability. The PCs get hired to protect the repair crews while the work is underway.

## OLD PORT DISTRICT

In times long past, the Old Port District was home to wealthy merchants, the owners of the ships that plied the piers and filled the warehouses along the south shore of the Wrenhaven. As the city grew, those merchants moved to more exclusive neighborhoods, splitting up their stately homes into warrens of apartments for dockworkers, factory hands, and similar members of the lower classes. What resulted was a sick joke of contrasts: impoverished families cramming together in once opulent mansions, watching the fine constructions crumble before their eyes.

When the Rat Plague hit, the entire district was closed. The population didn't even warrant the installation of walls of light. Instead the Lord Regent sent men to erect physical barriers across the streets and canals. The easiest access is via the river, but



human presence here is not tolerated. City Watch patrols, already in a foul mood from drawing the assignment, deal roughly with anybody they catch.

But not all is empty and lifeless among the abandoned boats and buildings. Rats, corpses, and Weepers may be entirely absent, but the desperate and the criminal still scuttle through the quiet maze. The Hound Pits Pub, once an infamous drinking and gambling establishment, is reputed to have headquartered the Loyalist rebellion during the last days of the Lord Regent's rule. Smoke still rises from the Daiger & Dial factory, though nobody is certain who lights the fires or what they're making there. The Roaring Boys gang runs salvage and looting operations, and keep their base of operations somewhere in the otherwise empty neighborhood.

### THE TRUTH ABOUT THE OLD PORT DISTRICT

*Scoured clean*, the district is free of nuisances, hazards, and opportunities found in most other parts of Dunwall. There is little here to harm or entice most people. The area remains *quarantined*, with severe penalties for anybody caught here by the City Watch. Despite this, the buildings above and sewers below provide *secret ways* where those who must travel can do so undetected. It has become a thoroughfare for illicit trade, or at least a leg on such a journey.

### OLD PORT STORY HOOKS

- Somebody with the money or power to put teeth into a casual request needs a favor. Their young son has run off with an older woman, disappearing into the Old Port District for reasons known only to them. This powerful potential patron needs somebody to slip into the abandoned zone, move through it undetected, and bring the son back unharmed.
- Somewhere in the Civil Services District, an idea is circulating to open the Old Port District for restoration, much as in happening in The Flooded District. One week ago, the nameless bureaucrat behind the idea was murdered. The PCs are hired to find out what's happening there, why somebody wants such total privacy, and what should be done about it.

## SLAUGHTERHOUSE ROW

The district began life as a few slaughterhouses kept apart from the wealthier wards so the rich wouldn't have to abide the smell of the beasts they fed on at their fancy tables, wore as leather on their pedicured feet, greased the machines of the factories they owned, and used to power their magnificent technologies. The city's industrial hub, it grew as Sokolov's devices turned Dunwall into the Empire's technological epicenter. Workers flooded in, living in slums surrounding enormous buildings which took in man and beast alike, spitting out trade goods and comestibles for consumption by all.

The Rat Plague decimated the population of the district, its people and its economy. No workers remained to grind the gears, and precious little commerce came to justify their employ. As the city is restored, the commerce and workers return to The Row. It still runs, the engine of much that drives Dunwall's economy, but the district remains a rotten-toothed smile. Much of what made it great is still missing, empty, and closed.

Ever growing, the encroaching violence electrifies the air, and the law looks the other way. As long as nobody bothers the factories or handful of manors in the area (and the proper palms are greased at the proper times) they're content to live and let kill.

### THE TRUTH ABOUT SLAUGHTERHOUSE ROW

Slaughterhouse Row is a district of *ever present violence*, which can erupt at any time and in unpredictable ways. The *noise and reek* of the place can cover a multitude of activities, from the creak of smuggled cargo to a victim's dying scream. The *industrial squalor* makes any location within a potential hazard, littered with broken tools and dripping with noxious chemicals.

### SLAUGHTERHOUSE ROW STORY HOOKS

- A wealthy industrialist from an outer isle has reopened a whale oil refinery, bringing with them dozens of jobs for local strong backs. However, the smell from the place is not that of whale oil, and the workers spend their off-hours quiet and grim. The adventurers become compelled to discover what's going on.
- Two petty thieves die in a filthy brothel, each holding an ingot of silver they swear came from a pile the size of a wagon. They claim to have seen it in the strongroom of a closed sausage factory, and that they were attacked as they tried to leave with the booty.

## DRAPERS WARD

In a way, the early history of Drapers Ward reflects the aspirations of many who came to Dunwall from parts throughout the Empire and beyond. It began as a rough, dirty collection of textile mills, dyeing plants, and docks for their raw materials and finished products. As the city grew, the inland streets began to host clothing shops. Once the industrial boom hit and the rail line was installed, Drapers Ward had become the finest shopping district in the city. Clothiers and haberdashers occupied the bulk of the shops, but jewellers, furniture makers, and similar boutiques also offered their wares to an increasingly wealthy clientele. Prostitution never stops, but the vulgar brothels gave way to burlesque shows and call services who delivered men and women of the night in polished, private carriages. Gala events, openings, banquets, and festivals lit the streets almost nightly with sights and sounds of affluent merriment.

The Rat Plague hit hard, first decimating the workforce for the docks and what mills hadn't moved to less rarified districts. Soon after, it choked the life out of the fine shops and eateries. Those who didn't die closed their shops, and sometimes their homes. The once prestigious district lay empty.

Although the restoration has seen the return of some business to the mills, and a handful of hardy and unscrupulous shop owners have remained in business, what's left is a skeleton of the district's former glory. That skeleton is fought over viciously by the Hatters and Dead Eels, who hold their territories against one another at all costs.

### THE TRUTH ABOUT DRAPERS WARD

A *gang war* rages constantly here, with the Hatters occupying the north side of Millenary Canal and the Dead Eels on the south. Both sides are paranoid and hungry, forcing all present for even a few hours to pick a side. The old markets form a *black market haven* where nearly anything can be bought or sold for the right value of coin or services rendered.

### DRAPERS WARD STORY HOOKS

- As with any war, the conflict between the Hatters and the Dead Eels has created an opportunity for profiteering. The PCs become embroiled in this bad business, which delivers supplies to both sides via a barge on the Millanery Canal. It's easy money until both gangs discover the double-dealing, then their own lives become the only profit they need.
- Once each month, an otherwise empty shop opens business at dusk, lit by eerie lights burning neither with fire nor whale oil lamps. The shopkeeper's wares are strange, beautiful, and of excellent quality. One of the Ward's merchant guilds tasks the PCs with investigating the shopkeeper. Who is he? Where does he get his goods? Why is he so secretive?

## TOWER DISTRICT

The Tower district of Dunwall is dominated by two buildings: The infamous Coldridge Prison with its Heretic Cells and the beacon of hope and empirical power that is Dunwall Tower. While Coldridge is cold and imposing, Dunwall Tower's edifice rises above the surrounding buildings as a symbol of the Empire's power.

The Empress lives there, along with her bodyguards and servants. Elite City Watch, private security, and servants of the Royal Spymaster keep the streets free of crime, but the district is far from free of corruption.

Radiating out from the Tower are circles of neighborhoods in decreasing levels of status. Nearest to the tower are the townhomes and offices of those closest to power. Wealthy merchants, landed aristocrats, and high officials occupy these spaces. Further out are the tradespeople who serve the Imperial House and the shops and eateries giving custom to Dunwall's wealthiest.

Before the Rat Plague, every building within these circles was full. The District was a bustling city in its own right. Today, more than half of it lies empty. Some rumors claim this is purposeful—a security measure by the Royal Spymaster to keep the area surrounding the Tower as simple and easy to defend as possible. Most consider this rumor only idle gossip, but a rumor is never entirely true or false

### THE TRUTH ABOUT TOWER DISTRICT

In Dunwall's *seat of power*, every action is watched and analyzed. The slightest perceived insult can result in crushing revenge, often served very cold. *Signs of status* are coveted currency here, ranging from fashions similar those worn by elite, to seating order at a banquet, to converting words in a speech by the Empress into a passing slang. *Patronage and enmity* are hard currency in this district, and both can be traded for nearly anything.



### TOWER DISTRICT STORY HOOKS

- In a simple job gone very wrong, the PCs are hired to assassinate the eldest scion of an aristocratic household so the younger sibling can inherit control. They arrive at the place where they were told they could "seal the deal" only to find the body of their employer beside the sobbing, well-armed, intended victim.
- Three prisoners have escaped from the harrowing private dungeons of the Royal Spymaster. The reward for their recapture is immense, and the PCs happen to know one person who might have been willing to help them slip their bonds.

## DUNWALL HARBOR

There was a time when the entirety of Dunwall was nothing but this harbor: a collection of piers and buildings where fishermen knew they could sell their catch. Brothels, bars, and stores to help them spend that money followed soon after until both banks of the Wrenhaven were lined with the hard-living, hard-working neighborhoods of a growing commercial center.

Here one can visit The Hag's Tooth, a bar that some say is built on the ruins of a tavern from the ancient civilization that abandoned the Wrenhaven over 1,000 years ago. Locals will tell the tale of how Weeping Jenny was hanged as a heretic and danced a complex Driscol jig with her feet as she swung from her neck. Low tide reveals the wreck of the Brockhampton, where its fancy-handed rich owner grounded her while drunk. It's a district of wild stories, rolling brawls, and fortunes easy gained and easier lost.

Although the Harbor was not immune to the Rat Plague, it has recovered more quickly than most other districts. It was not hit as hard as one would expect, leaving many of the gangs, unions, and businesses still operating while others further inland collapsed. As the city rebuilds, new immigrants come to the Harbor first, and more have stayed than went further into the collapsing city.

### THE TRUTH ABOUT DUNWALL HARBOR

*Truly cosmopolitan*, Dunwall Harbor is where one can find people and goods of all kinds. Even the universal Dunwall jingoism is less pervasive here. *Faceless crowds* fill the streets, piers, and corners at all hours. One can get lost in them, and the police will hear no tales told. It's a *working dock* where seven paths exist to any destination, but every one of them is littered with nets, bales, boxes, and other equipment.

### DUNWALL HARBOR STORY HOOKS

- During a labor strike on the docks of Dunwall, the PCs are approached by two parties. Their peers want them to help support the strike with some well-placed violence. A patron wishes them to do the same, but against the striking laborers. Which side do the PCs choose, and what are the consequences of that choice?
- The Serkonans of Dunwall Harbor play a game called "Liar's Brag", wherein participants take turns telling tales of their exploits, true or not. If a participant's tale is called out and proven to be false, that participant is honor-bound to immediately attempt to make the story true. More than one great adventure has begun with the wrong drunken brag.

## WRENHAVEN RIVER

Every known major city in the world rests upon a lake, ocean, or river. Dunwall is no exception, lying on the banks of the mighty Wrenhaven and serving as Gristol's gateway to the sea. Thus it was for the forgotten empire that used its banks before modern civilization was imagined, and so it is today. Whalers, fishers, and trade ships ply its waters en route to and from the warehouses, slaughterhouses, and markets of Dunwall.

At its height, the Wrenhaven was crowded with ships, and grand bridges arched over its waters. Raw goods from inland Gristol met with whale oil from the depths, transformed by the hands and brains of the city into technological wonders sold the world around. Wealth made the city grand, and the river grew grand with it.

The Rat Plague meant less money, fewer goods, and nobody to care for the river. Worse, its waters became a dumping ground for the city's dead, bearing the plague to shores unknown even as people strove to quell the contagion. The river became an abandoned, polluted ghost of its former self.

Decay still shows everywhere. Fewer ships sit at dock. Warehouses rot empty but for squatting gangs and swarms of rats. The water is a froth of sewage, refuse, and hagfish schools. Bridges crumble, with moss and their timbers dangling in the air below. Only Kaldwin's Bridge remains intact, a promise of further restoration that has yet to be filled.

### THE TRUTH ABOUT WRENHAVEN RIVER

*Treasures of the depths* have and always will turn up on the shores of the Wrenhaven. These include coin or other valuables brought up from wrecked ships, curious artifacts from other times, and mysterious items whose use might be magical or profane. Its *storied waters* have turned the tide of many a tale, seeming to sometimes have a will and malice of their own.

### WRENHAVEN RIVER STORY HOOKS

- Most men and women on a whaler crew are there voluntarily, after the money and prestige a good catch can bring. However, the occasional captain will round out a light manifest by press ganging an unlucky local. This time, the local happens to be a friend of the PCs, or the scion of a family wealthy enough to buy a rescue operation. The story begins as the player characters put out to sea with passage booked on another ship, hoping to catch up to the captured crewman.
- When a whaling ship is no longer fit for sea, it is towed to a specific bank on the north shore and scuttled, sinking to the bed of the Wrenhaven with its masts sometimes visible at the lowest tides. The PCs encounter a journal suggesting that one such hulk sank with its captain's safe still intact.

## DUNWALL SEWERS

This winding network of tunnels, canals, aqueducts, and cisterns snakes through the earth beneath the city, leading almost everywhere. It was originally constructed to connect canals and improve drainage of the Wrenhaven, but in the 1700s it became fashionable to attach them to estates. As they expanded, criminals built warrens, passages, and connections to make transit via this underground byway easier and more secure.

As if that didn't make the Dunwall sewers enough of a maze, older tunnels began collapsing on themselves in the early 19th century. This created dead ends, opened sinkholes in the poorer districts, buried buildings, and uncovered ruined sewers or cellars from the ancient city which once occupied Dunwall's ground. Renovations repaired the damage and reinforced troubled areas, but between all the damage, modifications, and unofficial growth nothing exists that even resembles a complete map of this subterranean labyrinth.

Of all the districts in the cities, the sewers remain the least physically changed by the Rat Plague. The reinforcements put in only a few decades before let it withstand the



neglect of those years. Its inhabitants have changed, however. Weepers took shelter in its relative warmth when chased out of other potential homes, and packs of them still roam the tunnels and chambers. Swarms of rats also thrive in these deep places, striking terror in those who see them, whether those particular rats are plaguebearers or not.

Among the more established gangs of the city, there exists an uneasy agreement about passage through the sewers. These spaces are a no-man's land, too valuable to cede to anybody but too unprofitable to actively fight over. When gangs spot rivals underground, they ignore one another's presence and go about their business.

## THE TRUTH ABOUT DUNWALL SEWERS

The passages of the Dunwall Sewers are an *unnavigable labyrinth*. Nobody knows the entire thing, and without local guides one can become lost on even a short journey. The *foul air* is a curse and a hindrance, sickening even those hardy of stomach. *Disused equipment* can be found in the most surprising places, some useful, others simply another hazard of the place.

## DUNWALL SEWERS STORY HOOKS

- A private guard company has been hired to secure an estate in the Muchterhaven district, and needs a likely crew of men and women desperate enough to explore, map, and clear the sewers beneath the manor. What resistance and challenges they will meet, only time can tell.
- Although the problem of sinkhole collapse is long past, its legacy lives on from time to time. For example, when rumor surfaces that a bank was lost to one back in the 1790s, and a note with the vault's combination has turns up at an estate sale.
- Stories are told that in the sewers near the Hound Pits Pub is another kind of fighting pit, where kidnapped slaves fight dogs, rats, and each other. The betting is as fierce as the combat. Whether the player characters encounter this as visiting gamblers, as captured participants, or as part of a rescue mission is a matter of luck and luck alone.




a
b
c
d
e
K
NE 1
NE 2
OLD WATERFRONT
CLOCK
DRAPERS WARD
ESTATE
N 6
N 7
DISTILLERY DISTRICT
THE GOLDEN CAT
OFFICE OF THE HIGH OVERSEER
SLAUGHTERHOUSE ROW
NW 11
NW 12


f
g
h
i
j
SE 4
SE 5
SW 13
SW 14
SW 15
S 9
S 10
COLDRIDGE PRISON
THE BOYLE MANSION
DUNWALL TOWER
KINGSPARROW ISLAND (4 Mi)
KALDWIN'S BRIDGE
WRENHAVEN RIVER
OLD HOUND PITS
RUDSHORE FINANCIAL DISTRICT
DUNWALL

# FROM THE CHAPEL TO THE BROTHEL

## FACTIONS OF DUNWALL

In a city like Dunwall, nobody thrives alone. In truth, nobody survives alone. From the magistrate at Tower District to the lowliest beggar on Slaughterhouse Row, every spirit is only as good as the men and women who have their back.

Faction membership is a core part of the identity of every player character, NPC, adversary, ally, and even building and neighborhood in Dunwall. It enhances background, sets up opportunities for adventure, establishes connections, and is often the razor-thin line between living to see the next smoggy sunrise and ending up in a ditch.

It's not what you know that determines success in Dunwall. It's not even who you know. It's what you know about them, and how much they know about you.

## THE IMPERIAL FAMILY

Arguably the most powerful faction in Dunwall, the Imperial Family extends far beyond the blood relations of Empress Emily Kaldwin. It includes lesser royalty, the trusted staff and advisors to those rulers, and assorted functionaries, clerks, cooks, cleaners, and guards. Everybody in the city is bound to feel their influence.

Of course, with such great power comes serious problems. The Empress and her retinue remember the usurpation of her mother by the Lord Regent in the not too distant past. Lesser grabs for power, and internal conflict, plague daily operations. It's not lonely at the top, far from it—at times the halls of power feel entirely too crowded.

Adventures involving the Imperial Family are usually more subtle than others. They have the wealth and manpower, not to mention the legitimate authority, to crush enemies in contests of naked force. The truth about the Imperial Family is its complexity. *Wheels turn within wheels*, and no strength, ambition, weakness, or gambit is what it appears.

### "THE EMPIRE REMEMBERS"

A member of the Imperial family always remembers the price their ancestors paid in blood, toil, and sacrifice to maintain their birthright. They are bound to hold grudges, and to make offenders suffer—lest they lose respect. That duty comes above everything else, including one's own life.

### RANKS OF POWER

Rank within the Imperial Family's servants are highly regimented, with everybody having and knowing their place in the great engine that drives the Empire. The family itself is equally hierarchical, but more fluid as an individual's influence waxes and wanes according to their relationship with the Empress and her most trusted advisors.

1. **Monarch**: Currently occupied by Empress Emily Kaldwin. Virtually all-powerful, this hopefully benevolent despot rules over not only the Imperial Family, but every human being in the Empire.

2. **Royals**: This tier includes the most trusted advisors, protectors, and servants of the Empress, both those of Royal blood and those who have earned the position through decades of loyal service. They operate largely independently, with power limited only by the Empress' office.
3. **Champions of the Empire**: Individuals within this rank command dozens of functionaries, and are charged with either a governmental department, or a single, complex task. As long as their requests and orders fall within their charge, they can act more or less as they will.
4. **Clerks**: Clerks represent the working men and women of the Empire's bureaucracy. They hold little power of their own, but their status as Imperial representatives gives them some bullying power by those without that title.
5. **Imperial Pages**: Pages are usually young, but sometimes older people are given an opportunity. They hold little power and have exhausting duties. They, however, know that their next step will truly be into the halls of power. Smart people realize that too, and are slower to ignore or insult them than many others.

### IMPERIAL FAMILY STORY HOOKS

- Rumor has surfaced of a bastard child of Emperor Euhorn Jacob Kaldwin, old enough to hold a stronger claim on the throne than Empress Emily Kaldwin. Imperial agents are sent to assess the veracity of these rumors, and to take "appropriate" action based on those findings. Whether the player characters represent the Imperials, or an enemy like the Regenters or the Brigmore Witches, or the bastard in question, will depend on the campaign.
- Conflicts between bureaucrats within the Imperial Family can be fierce, as the powers that come with an elevated position are impressive. Three different individuals of great influence are vying for an even loftier station, with the player characters in the middle. Which will they back? Who will they be asked to blackmail or frame? Can they play different sides against one another and profit?
- A nearly perfect frame job has set a character up to be executed, or cast into Dunwall Tower with no protection (which amounts to the same thing). The frame is nearly perfect. Somewhere within the Tower is the paper full of evidence, the bribed clerk, and the hungry information broker. But can it be found in time?

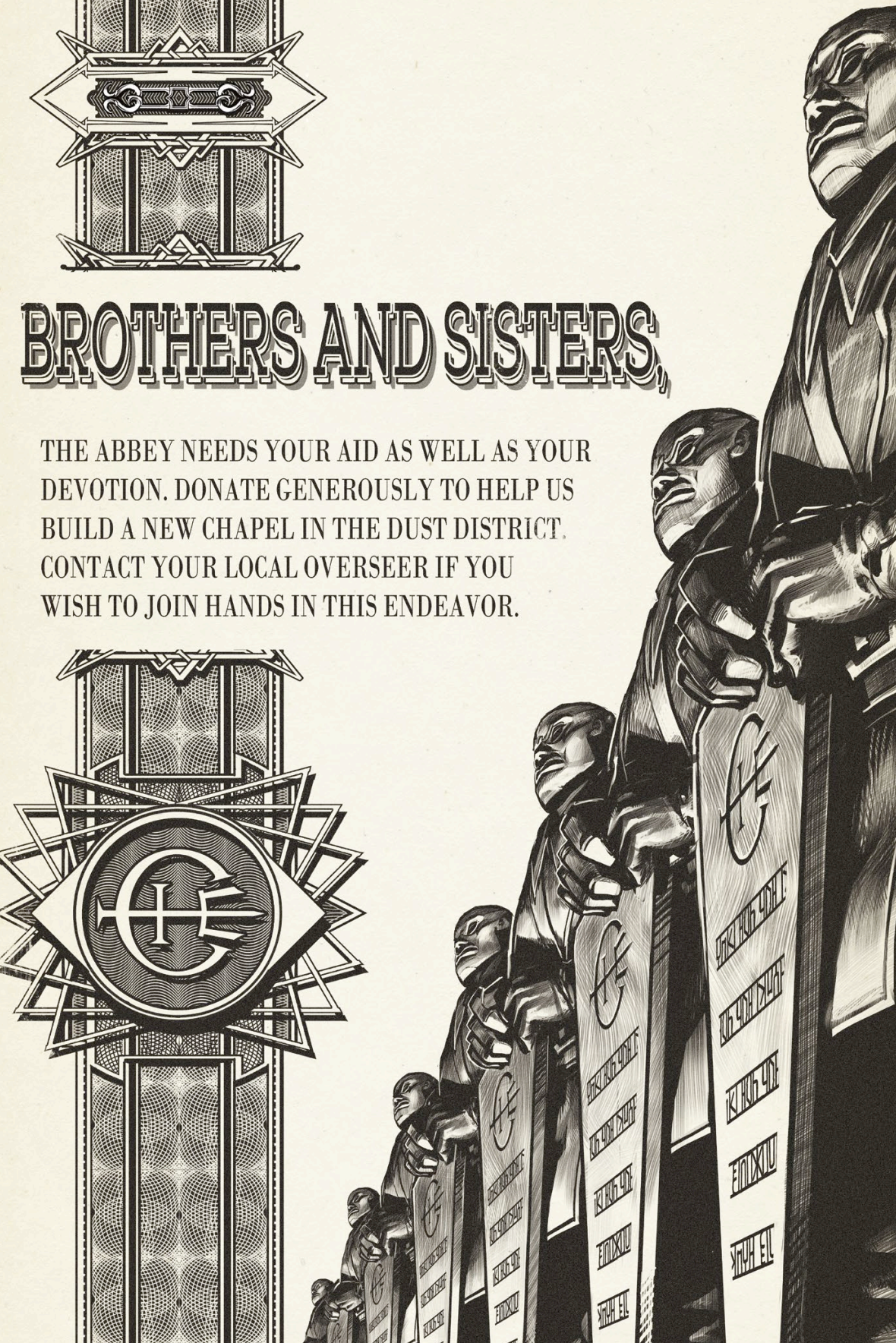
## THE ABBEY OF THE EVERYMAN

"The universe is unknowably vast and swarming with all manner of dangerous spirits and forces, most of which are hostile to man's existence."

So says the credo of the Abbey of the Everyman, which exists to oppose those forces, especially the Outsider. This opposition takes the form of brutal suppression of heresy, raids in the night of suspected unbelievers, and the occasional public execution. However, the Abbey also holds authority over more pedestrian and civil matters like

# BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

THE ABBEY NEEDS YOUR AID AS WELL AS YOUR DEVOTION. DONATE GENEROUSLY TO HELP US BUILD A NEW CHAPEL IN THE DUST DISTRICT. CONTACT YOUR LOCAL OVERSEER IF YOU WISH TO JOIN HANDS IN THIS ENDEAVOR.



marriages and holidays. It is an important thread in the fabric of life throughout the Empire; its official religion with an army to back it up.

Those of the Abbey have power in their hands, and more than a little looming at their backs, but they are threatened from within and without. The Outsider's worshipers are everywhere, as are less dangerous pagans, and must be fought with every resource available. Among the faithful, competition is fierce—as every soldier of the Abbey watches every other for signs of wavering faith, spiritual torpor, or other signs of weakness.

The Abbey's largest headquarters is in Whitecliff, but within Dunwall it maintains a stronghold at Holger Square. The truth about the Abbey of the Everyman is *religion is inseparable from power*. Stories involving this faction will center around, or at least involve, the flexing of, seeking after, or running from it.

### "PREACH, PRAY AND PRAY"

Hunt the nonbelievers. Say your prayers. Spread the word. Absolute loyalty to the Abbey, to its cause, and to its leadership is the duty and joy of every single member. Those who embrace this call are duly rewarded. Those who fail are quick to fall.

## ORDERS OF AUDACITY

The Abbey is rigidly organized and controlled, even more militarily than the Navy or the Watch. That doesn't mean schemes to rise at the expense of superiors aren't common. Just that they are either well-hidden, or extremely short-lived.

1. **High Oracle/Overseer**: Pelagia Themis held the title of High Oracle during the Rat Plague. The position of High Overseer was a mantle passed around quickly during the plague years. Until 1837, Thaddeus Campbell held the position, followed briefly by Teague Martin. Soon after the coronation of Empress Emily later the same year, it passed to Yul Khulan. In theory, these personages wield power second only to the Empress herself. In practice, they have more influence on the common people and a more fanatical army at their call.
2. **Oracles and Overseers**: They each command a congregation of lesser Abbey members. This could be an actual building where people meet to worship, or a conceptual responsibility like the spiritual defense of a city. Their word and whim are absolute law among members of their command, so long as the High Overseer or High Oracle approves of their decisions.
3. **Abbots**: Serving an Overseer or Oracle, abbots carry out the details of their orders. How much power and independence anyone has depends largely on the personality and priorities of their direct report. Some are strict, demanding, and detail-oriented. Others grant wide power and latitude as long as the results continue to justify the lenience.
4. **Laypeople**: Though they have no official status within the Abbey, laypeople are known to Abbots as individuals of great faith and loyalty. If they serve well enough, and with little enough hesitation, they will be called up to the ranks of Abbots in due time.

## ABBEY OF THE EVERYMAN STORY HOOKS

- The word has come from above that somebody working close to the player characters is a mole; a heretical Outsider worshipper infiltrating the Abbey. The hunt for this traitor, who may or may not exist, twists and turns and will almost certainly result in at least one unnecessary death.

- A land convoy that collected donations for the Abbey throughout Gristol never made its destination. Its disappearance, along the northwestern paths that lead to Dunwall, seems to be shrouded in mystery. The player characters are tasked with investigating, and traveling to the countryside in search for answers.

## CULTS OF THE OUTSIDER

For those that worship him, the Outsider may be a single being bent on increasing humanity's already prodigious misery, or it could be a collection of entities with similar aims and appearance. Nobody knows. The Cults of the Outsider are similarly chimerical. They are not a cohesive order like the Abbey, instead congregating in groups of a handful to several dozen in their worship and servitude to this faceless symbol of chaos. And yet, their separate actions sometimes seem as coordinated as both feet of a skilled dancer.

It should not take much imagination to conjure up troubles for groups worshipping an outlawed faith in a nation where the official religion has an army and a reputation for overwhelming violence. Even so, cultists often commune with powers that defy the understandings of natural philosophers. Adventures for Cultists will often focus on the weird. Weird bedfellows command weird powers while seeking weird objectives in weird locations, all under the shadow of the Abbey's threat. The truth about Cults of the Outsider is *they know more than they wish*, and that truth applies to friend and foe alike.

### "OUR TIME WILL COME AGAIN"

To worship and work for the goals of an invisible, insane force inimical to human life would be madness, were it not for the fact that humanity did so before. Cultists long for the life before the Abbey, and work in the shadows to hasten its return.

### RANKS OF CHAOS

Few individual cults are highly organized, and status within them ebbs and flows as individual members rise and fall while their leaders succumb to madness.

1. **High Priest**: This leader of an individual cult is the absolute master of its membership, commanding the actions and loyalty of all adherents. Only the need for secrecy and the threat of the Abbey limit their power.
2. **The Touched**: The Touched hold special places within the ranks of a cult because they exhibit visible signs of the Outsider's favor. These could be physical disabilities or blemishes, arcane powers, or simply a drive and loyalty that makes them stand out. The Touched are feared by their fellow worshipers, granted wide latitude by their priests, and are often the first tasked with important or dangerous missions and tasks.
3. **Congregants**: Individual worshipers within a cult, each congregant has responsibilities to attend services, participate in rituals, and provide coin for the cult's coffers. In return, they know the secrets of their sect, and can call on a certain loyalty from their fellow members.
4. **Initiates**: Knowledgeable about the cult, though not yet invited to participate in its rituals, initiates do not know the identities of the cult's members nor the location of their meetings. They have the responsibilities of a Congregant, with none of the knowledge or privileges.

### CULTS OF THE OUTSIDER STORY HOOKS

- Campbell's rise to power over the Abbey of the Everyman was not without controversy. If that controversy were to spill into open conflict, those the Abbey calls "Heretics" could gain at least some breathing room while the Abbey focused on internal battles. It's simply a matter of getting the right information into the right hands at the right time...
- Sterrenoct is said to be the highest holy day of the Outsider-worshipping people who occupied the ground of Dunwall long before the Empire was a despot's dream. Dozens of otherwise separate cults gather in a forgotten, deep part of the Dunwall Sewers to carry out their strange rituals. The player characters are among them the year the Abbey stages a raid.

## THE CITY WATCH

In theory, Dunwall's City Watch exists to enforce the city's laws and to protect its citizenry from internal and external threats. Some members of the Watch, and even some of its leadership make a heartfelt effort to live up to that charter. Most City Watch members just want to earn enough coin to buy their next meal, and survive their dangerous jobs long enough to eat it.

The Watch has their headquarters in the Tower District, but has guard stations throughout Dunwall. Their duties take them to every corner of the city. This often includes areas that are actively hostile to any sort of law enforcement, where the Watch take the role of an occupying army rather than keepers of the peace. The truth about being in the City Watch is *it's a dirty job*, putting them in sketchy situations, and forcing Guards to make sticky decisions every hour of their waking lives.

About the only easy part of a Watch member's job is the demand for coppers far outstrips the supply of people willing to fill the boots. Some politics mar the upper echelons, but for most their fellow officers are a trustworthy line of comrades at their back.

### "WE ALL GO HOME"

Though you won't find this inscribed on any Watch building, or taught in any official training, every Guard knows this motto by heart. Brother and Sister members of the watch go home to their families or their drink at the end of each tour, no matter what amount of violence must be enforced to ensure this.

### OFFICIALS IN UNIFORM

The City Watch is organized like any paramilitary organization, with absolute obedience required toward those above and expected from those below. Political machinations are surprisingly rare within the Watch, however. Enough die each year for openings to be common enough without interference.

1. **Chief of the Watch**: Currently occupied by Samantha Nathaniels, the office of chief reports to staff of the Imperial Family and is given impressive resources and authority. Almost enough of both to do her job to her satisfaction.
2. **Generals of the Watch**: Generals are responsible for an entire District of the city, commanding all police within that area. They ostensibly must act within the law, but Nathaniels doesn't watch too carefully so long as the wealthy under a General's aegis don't complain too loudly.

3. **Majors**: Majors are in charge of watching over a specific neighborhood within a District. They report directly to a General, and give their orders to Captains.
4. **Special Forces**: Watch Guards with extra training, equipment, and responsibility including Tallboys, Dead Counters, Estate Officers, and Bodyguards on special assignment. They don't have official command status like others, but are accorded a level of respect above Captains. Most squads report to a Major on special assignment to oversee that group of forces. Most such squads enjoy surprising independence and powers, provided they continue to successfully complete their duties.
5. **Captain**: The highest rank you're likely to encounter on a Dunwall street. Each is in charge of 4 to 6 Guards, leading them on patrol and teaching them how to survive. They report to their Majors, and rule their beats with iron fists, wooden truncheons, and solidly built boots.
6. **Guards**: Guards do the dirty work of the Watch. They walk the streets, arrest the criminals, stomp the heads, and shake down the businesses. Though often severely restricted by their commanders, they act with impunity and absolute authority among regular citizens.



## CITY WATCH STORY HOOKS

- The Watch is raiding a bootleg elixir operation with enough force to do the job, and the raid itself goes smoothly. There's only one problem. One squad of Guards has orders from their Captain to destroy the elixir on site. Another has orders from a different Captain to bring all the elixir back to headquarters. To make matters more confusing, a captured Bottle Gang captain offers a month's wages to every Guard to simply fail to find any elixir at all.
- Though the Flooded District is supposed to be fast on its way to restoration, it's still a dangerous swamp of Weepers, rats, and fouler things. It becomes the player characters' job to perform a week-long patrol through the dripping, rotting, dangerous buildings to "pacify" it in advance of a work crew coming in.



# THE LOYALIST CONSPIRACY

During the regency of Hiram Burrows, most of Dunwall's population simply kept moving forward as best they could. After all, the Rat Plague reigned more despotically and concerns over justice loomed smaller than fears of disease and starvation. But some resisted, at least internally. Whether from doubts about the legitimacy of Hiram's assumption of power, or chafing under his many tyrannies, the seeds of rebellion were born.

Based in the ruins of the Hound Pits Pub in the Old Port District, a small cadre of those loyal to the crown (or at least hostile to Hiram Burrows) met and coordinated. Their efforts culminated in 1837, when the Lord Regent was cast from his position and the Empress Emily Kaldwin was restored to her rightful power. But while this faction started out with noble intentions, its leaders were corrupted by the possibility of ruling through her like Hiram Burrows, and were destroyed by Corvo Attano. However, the faction's informal set up was its savior, and the Loyalists continue to operate in some form or another to this day.

The truth about the Loyalist Conspiracy is that they are *watchers from the shadows*, alert for threats to themselves and the Empress as they continue to gather information and secure loyalties. Of course, others in the shadows watch them just as carefully...

## "FOR THE EMPIRE"

The Loyalist Conspiracy exists to further the good of the Empire and her people. If the individual on the throne serves that goal, they have absolute loyalty to that individual. If not, they become single-mindedly dedicated to changing who occupies the seat of power.

## DEGREES OF LOYALTY

The Loyalist Conspiracy relies on influence rather than authority. It lacks official ranks and structure, but the exploits, abilities, and social position of each member sets them in an informal but well-understood set of tiers.

1. **The Leadership**: Though it lacks official title, the Loyalists' leadership is generally considered to consist of the founders: Admiral Farley Havelock, Lord Treavor Pendleton, and Overseer Teague Martin. Since their deaths, the leadership has remained informal and open to change. They don't command those beneath them, but rather ask members to do what must be done.
2. **Mistresses and Masters**: Those who've proven their loyalty and ability, trusted with coordinating full missions for the Conspiracy. These missions could be single assignments, or an ongoing tasks such as gathering information on a particular individual or organization.
3. **Journeymen**: Journeymen lead small groups of Loyalists to further the ends of their Master or Mistress. They rely on their own resources to accomplish their assignments, and trade on their reputation within the Conspiracy to secure cooperation of their team.
4. **Apprentices**: Having been accepted within the ranks of the Loyalists, but have not yet earned much loyalty or respect, Apprentices are given simple tasks by Journeymen to see if they are promising enough to gain more responsibility, and they are left to perform those tasks with little outside support.

### LOYALIST CONSPIRACY STORY HOOKS

- The greatest threat to the legitimate power within Dunwall is the lack of a clear heir to Empress Emily Kaldwin. Although multiple factions work to protect her from assassination, the risk if they fail is grave. One of the chief goals of the Loyalists is to find somebody with enough Imperial blood to be crowned without serious contest, who can also be trusted (or molded) to rule in the way the Loyalists wish to be ruled.
- What if the rise of Hiram Burrows and the reinstatement of Empress Emily Kaldwin were both parts of a longer, more subtle game played by somebody yet to be revealed? What if the player characters committed heinous acts in the name of this faction, only to slowly discover who was pulling the strings? Could they even reach somebody powerful and intelligent enough to do that? And what would they do if they could?

## THE WHALERS

Although the actual whalers of the Empire have but a loose camaraderie, The Whalers gang is an organization of highly trained, supernaturally empowered assassins. The infamous Daud formed them in 1811, taking mercenaries, urchins, and refugees and turning them into a feared force within the city. When "on duty", members wear a specific uniform, including industrial gas masks like those worn in whale oil processing plants.

Daud ran the gang until he chose to leave Dunwall in late 1837, a mysterious choice, the causes of which are known only to a few. The gang is now a shadow of their former glory, and though individual members are still feared fighters, assassination contracts are few and far between. Most make their livings as bouncers, bodyguards, or those hired to get through bouncers and bodyguards to the softer targets behind them.

Though the gang is far from as centralized as it once was, they still take orders from within the faction and work towards Whaler goals first, and employer needs second. The truth about the Whalers is they are *lost in the storm*, and either looking hard for somebody to become a compass, or for an island that will make abandoning ship a safe option.

### "THE PROOF IS IN THE BLOODLETTING"

Whalers prove their worth, maintain their status, and gather their wealth through the shedding of blood. Sometimes this is the blood of those in their path. At other times, it's simply surviving having one's own blood copiously shed. Either way, violence is the ultimate authority within the Whalers, and the currency in which they trade.

### RANKS OF WHALERS

When Daud was present, the Whalers were a highly organized force with strict adherence to position, orders, and hierarchy. In his absence, things have become far more lax. Positions are respected as a courtesy, and it remains to be seen what will happen as the frictions of life erode those courtesies a little every day.

1. **Second In Command**: The one to order the Whalers during Daud's absence. A select few have held this title, Billie Lurk before her betrayal, and later Thomas, the title currently belongs to Galia Fleet, who holds the most authority of anybody involved with the faction. This amounts to very little, but her combat prowess and the respect of other senior members keeps her in the position.
2. **The Favored**: A collective, unofficial name for those closest to Daud at the Whalers' height. Their word isn't law, but their knives still are. They can command lesser Whalers with little resistance, so long as they at least hint that the orders came from above, or that their own personal power demands similar obedience.
3. **Master Assassin**: Once a coveted and earned rank within the Whalers, requiring a rigorous test to earn. Now, it applies to any Whaler who was part of the organization when Daud was still present. The title carries no official duties or power, but generates respect from the newer members. When new contracts do come in, Master Assassins get right of first refusal on the commission.
4. **Novice Assassins**: Joined the Whalers after Daud's disappearance. They lack the experience and arcane abilities of the older members, and are accorded far less respect. Many senior Whalers regard them as poseurs, fit only as fodder for missions too dangerous to attempt alone. Still, a very few have earned enough respect that they may soon become the first novices elevated in rank.

### WHALERS STORY HOOKS

- A masked man with arcane powers and the right build and mannerisms has returned to Dunwall claiming to be Daud. He will not remove his trademark mask, even in front of his most trusted associates. The ripples of doubt, and the conflict that comes of it, course through the entire gang. How will the player characters ride those waves?
- One of the largest commissions for an assassination in Whaler history has just come in. The target is none other than Corvo Attano, and the client is hiding behind layer after layer of intermediaries. Will any of the Whalers dare take up such a hazardous assignment? Who is the client behind the multiple masks? Will his or her identity impact the decision?

## THE BRIGMORE WITCHES

The Witches were founded by Delilah Copperspoon in 1835. A practitioner of heretical magics, she called women to her from throughout the isles, giving them a portion of her knowledge and power in return for their loyalty. It's difficult to say what Delilah's final plans are, but her actions have brought the Witches into conflict with the Royal Family, the Whalers, and The Abbey over the decades.

Of all the established gangs and factions of Dunwall, the Witches are the most open about throwing magic around to reach their ends. The fear this causes is a double-edged sword. Being dreaded by those one wishes to defeat or prey upon is a boon, but fear breeds resentment, enmity, and powers moving against one in the dark.

Only Delilah knows why her hatred of the Empire is so strong, but it burns behind much of what the Witches do. After an attempted coup during the height of the plague, Delilah found herself trapped in the Void for a decade, leaving the witches in a temporary crisis. Their base of operations is in the Tower District, to keep her enemy as close as possible. The truth about the Brigmore Witches is a web of *eldritch compacts*. It joins the witches together, and to Delilah. It informs their alliances and their rivalries, and some kind of oath or bargain is behind why they are a sword ever pointed at the throat of whomever sits on the throne.

### "WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW CAN KILL YOU"

The Brigmore Witches value information above all else, whether that takes the form of arcane knowledge, eldritch secrets, schedules of a rival's bodyguards, or a juicy bit of blackmail. The more important and obscure the knowledge, the more value it has.

## ORDERS OF MAGIC

The Witches are a personality-driven organization, with Delilah at the top and all lower tiers occupied by those who have earned enough respect of their fellow Witches to hold and maintain a position of command. Despite this organic flow of status, obedience is quick and absolute. There are few ways to lose status among the Witches faster than to show disrespect to those who have earned their rank.

1. **Delilah Copperspoon**: The undisputed mother and leader of the Witches. Her word is obeyed without question, and enemies of the Witches both target and watch over their shoulders for her. Should Delilah fall, it's likely the Witches would dissolve into a fragmented confederacy of arcane practitioners.
2. **Void Chosen**: Those who have been with Delilah for years, some from the beginning. With few exceptions, they are the only ones to have regular direct contact with their leader. They interpret her instructions and teachings, then disseminate them out to the rest of the Witches. They are respected, feared, and obeyed by their underlings, but earn that status through obligations to Delilah signed in much more than words.
3. **Night Called**: Each of the Night Called command a coven of three to five witches, and are responsible for carrying out the instructions of the Chosen to whom they report. Each commands a small repertoire of useful and dangerous spells, and is held to account by the esteem (or lack thereof) their behavior and accomplishments merit.
4. **Briar-Touched**: Apprentices, given simpler and often mundane tasks requiring little or no actual magic. They are still learning basic spells, and rely on their superiors for instruction.

## BRIGMORE WITCHES STORY HOOKS

- The Chosen of the order are gathering to assist Delilah in a ritual that will bring something into closer contact with the world, and bring immense power to the Witches and those like them. Delilah views this as a potential

turning point in her war against the Empire and the Abbey. Others within the Witches wonder if inviting something so unknown so close is... wise. Which side will the player characters back, and can the Witches survive any such internal rift?

- Those closest to Delilah have recently learned a terrible secret: a history of the early days of the Empire during which the Abbey tortured and executed witches with a systematic and brutal approach far beyond anything imagined today. Worse, some within the Abbey have recently become aware of this history, and are moving to meet or even exceed the brutalities of those times. The Brigmore Witches are both the focal point of that push and the first line of defense against it.

## THE BOTTLE STREET GANG

Based in the Distillery District, the gang (which started off from Bottle Street) brew bootleg elixirs and sell them to those who can't afford doses of Sokolov's or Piero's official stuff. They use the same equipment and knowledge of chemistry to brew bottles of fire, which they throw like grenades or use to give themselves a terrifying fire breath.

As the most reliable bootleggers in the city, the Bottle Street Gang has many allies. They don't much comete for the gambling, prostitution, protection money, and similar income streams of the other major gangs. They just take a share of those earnings in exchange for regular shipments. Still, other gangs look at their operation with naked jealousy and lust, and a good scrap is never far in any Bottle Streeter's future.

The truth about the Bottle Street Gang is they are *in ascendancy*, poised to become a strata above the regular street crime of Dunwall. This accords a level of respect and cooperation among many other criminals, but also means unwanted extra attention from the Watch, rival gangs, and even the Abbey.

### "LET IT FLOW"

The Bottle Street Gang believes in getting out of the way. Information wants to pass from mouth to ear. Elixir wants to move from distillery to body. Armed opposition wants to march through an area unopposed. The gang lets this happen, then profits however possible when that flow creates opportunities.

### RANKS OF BOTTLERS

Though they may seem chaotic from the outside, every Bottle Street Gang member knows their place, and lives in abject terror of incurring the wrath of a superior. One moves up the ranks only through official sanction, or in a swift coup with no possibility of failure. The consequences of a stopped coup are too terrible to contemplate.

1. **Crime Lords**: Having proven their guile and cunning to all other gang members, Crime Lords use their skill to rise to the top and put the gang's muscle to their service. The current position is held by Slackjaw, a notorious criminal with a large bounty on his head, known for holding charges such as Assault, Murder, Disobedience of Public Ordinance, Mendacity, Unlawful Management of Prostitutes, and Public Urination.

2. **Brewers**: Slackjaw's lieutenants and commanders, many of them being natural philosophers specializing in chemistry and biology. They do as they please, so long as they please Slackjaw with what they do.
3. **Technicians**: Technicians tend to run an individual piece of the Bottle Street Gang's operations. One might oversee a brewing facility. Another might run a crew of bodyguards. Another would be tasked with gathering intelligence on another faction. They are given resources commensurate with their needs, and left alone to fulfill their responsibilities.
4. **Bottlejacks**: Bottlejacks are to Technicians as Technicians are to the Brewers. They handle a subsection of the Technician's responsibilities, and command Vapors to fulfill those demands.
5. **Vapors**: The gang's unskilled, entry-level laborers. Many are runners, and foot soldiers. Many more have more "normal" jobs as bottle scrubbers in distilleries, clerks in a counting house, or gardeners in the gang's herb farms.

## BOTTLE STREET GANG STORY HOOKS

- When your bootleg counterfeit elixir is as good as the Bottle Street Gang's, some bootleggers try to counterfeit the counterfeits. Remarkably good knock-off elixir has started turning up, with excellently forged labels and high-quality effects. The player characters are tasked with uncovering its source. What they must do next will depend on who's doing the counterfeiting, and how Slackjaw thinks that person can advance his plans.
- The Bottle Street Gang is in ascendancy largely because of their recently-won war against the Hatter gang from Slaughterhouse Row. The player characters discover the Hatter surrender was a ruse, and the gang has been gathering members, mercenaries, and support from other gangs to stage a single, massive counterattack...



## THE DEAD EELS GANG

Pirates and smugglers, the Dead Eels are notorious predators on the waters anywhere near Dunwall. Their operations aren't limited to the high seas and the Wrenhaven, however. Throughout the riverfront districts, they run prostitution, provide muscle, and take a cut of every gambling profit made. Those in their territory who deny them their protection money have a habit of having just their clothing ever seen again.

When met with direct force, the Dead Eels flow away like water being punched. Individual crews return to their ships and scatter, only to reconvene when and where their enemy is weakest. Even the Imperial Navy plans carefully before engaging in open conflict in the Eels' home waters.

But that same decentralized structure is their greatest weakness. With their leader Lizzy Stride in failing (some say failed) health, the lesser captains are more or less operating independently. The gang is less cohesive, less able to organize, and less able to protect their own. The truth about The Dead Eels is they are *coming apart at the seams*, with all the danger and opportunity that represents..

### "AS COLD AND MIGHTY AS THE SEA"

Any Dead Eel is only as good as their willingness to enforce their will upon the world. This requires a cold heart and deadly hands. Advancement and respect among peers is won by overt shows of cold, murderous resolve... when that resolve and flinty spirit align with the goals of the gang.

### ORDERS ON DECK

Within any given ship, a Dead Eels crew is as tightly maintained and rigidly structured as the best Imperial Naval vessel. Even the Captains are held to the rules of the order. Between individual Captains, status and rank is chimerical to say the least. They all report to the Admiral, but jockey ruthlessly for position and influence.

1. **The Admiral**: The mastermind behind all of the Dead Eels' operations. The position, held by the gang's founder Lizzy Stride, demands from her to dispense with compassion and kindness in order to carve the gang's image out of hatred and ruthlessness.
2. **Captains**: Each Captain commands a vessel, setting their own way as to what they do with it. Those who bring the most coin as tribute to Lizzy, and who provide the best verifiable tales of glory and icy derring-do, rise in status and can influence lesser captains.
3. **Midshipmen**: The equivalent to senior officers on a naval vessel. Each is responsible for overseeing the ship in general at a given time, and are given broad authority to perform their duties.
4. **Ensigns**: A ship's junior officers. If a Midshipman orders a particular speed, an Ensign on duty figures out how to make the engine produce it, then commands crew in the engine room to make it happen. They are judged on their results, not their methods, though some Midshipmen will balk at wanton cruelty to loyal men and women.



5. **Crew**: The workers, raiders, and general staff of a given ship. They follow the orders of the Ensigns with as little hesitation as they can manage, and hope for the day they will be given their own small command.
6. **Valets**: Probationary members of a Dead Eels crew. They have the same responsibilities of a full Crewmember, but accept their lot as the lowest member of the ship's society. Practical jokes and painful hazing are their lot for a first voyage, after which those who earn trust become full members of the crew.

### DEAD EELS GANG STORY HOOKS

- While smuggling a mysterious cargo bound for the New Mercantile District, the player characters' ship is boarded by not only City Watch, but the Abbey, the Navy, and representatives of the Bottle Street Gang. What could possibly bring so much attention, and how the Dead Eels can make their contracted delivery, is a matter of much speculation and worry.
- Traditionally, the Harbormasters of Dunwall receive and accept an offer to be bribed or murdered by the Eels. However, their newly appointed Chief isn't afraid of the fragmented gang's threats... and he has the security to prove him right. How can the player characters help the Eels find the leverage to force some kind of arrangement?

## THE NAVY

Tasked with policing and protecting trade ships and routes on Imperial Seas, the Navy rose to prominence during the Morley Insurrection. Already respected, their show of force and expertise left none unimpressed. Few members of the Imperial Navy call Dunwall home, but the Navy itself exerts a powerful influence throughout Dunwall. After all, they control the veins that bring blood to the Empire's beating heart.

Joining the Navy is a better deal than joining the City Watch. Crews spend the day surrounded by their friends and comrades, aboard the most powerful and best equipped vessels on the ocean. Of course, competition for these billets is fierce. More than one Watch Guard tried and failed to join the Navy before embarking on that dirtier, more dangerous career.

Not that life is easy on the water. Within Dunwall alone, the Hatters, Dead Eels, and Watch bear them more than a little ill will. On the ocean, pirates, privateers, smugglers, and the occasional Morleyan who forgot the rebellion failed will set upon them without hesitation or quarter. And then there's the ocean herself, the most powerful and implacable enemy the world has ever known.

The truth about the Navy is they are *a breed apart*, elite men and women who know their status. This creates opportunities for profit and glory, but breeds festering resentment that can prop up at the worst possible times.

## "TO BIND THE MAIN"

Every member of the Imperial Navy knows their duty is to rule the sea herself, and believes they are part of a group capable of doing exactly that. From commanding a mighty warship in a terrible battle, to furling a sail correctly, to storing ammunition safely as per protocol, every task of every crew member serves that single, cohesive purpose.

## MANIFEST ORDERS

The Navy is organized along military lines, and is largely fanatical about maintaining that order. Every member from the Admiral to a crewmember stepping off land for the first time knows their place, fills their role, and respects the chain of command.

1. **The Admiral**: Commands every Naval vessel in the Empire from an office in the Tower. They are at least as powerful as the High Overseer, as they hold command over the most important military branch of the Empire of the Isles.
2. **The Sea Masters**: A collection of one dozen experienced Captains, given orders from the Admiral and authority to command other Captains. They coordinate the efforts of a fleet each, furthering the strategic goals of the Navy and the Empire.
3. **Captains**: They hold absolute authority over the ships they command, though they are subject to the conditions of their charters. Captains who fail in missions, or succeed in violations of the Navy's rules, are subject to sanctions up to and including losing their ships and lives.
4. **Senior Officers**: SOs carry out a Captain's orders on ship just as a Captain carries out the orders of a Sea Master. Each rules a department on board, or a contingent of crew, and demands quick obedience without hesitation.
5. **Junior Officers**: They manage the crews of any Navy vessel, coordinating the efforts of teams of ten to twelve into a specialized task on board.
6. **Navy Crew**: Navy Crew members provide the sharp eyes, busy hands, and swift feet of every ship. They have command over naught but themselves, and obey the officers directly above them quickly and with a will.



### NAVY STORY HOOKS

- Tasked with escorting and bodyguarding a Sea Master during his time in Dunwall, the player characters soon find themselves responsible for an insensate drunk in the corner of a gambling hall. A group of Dead Eels spot the tempting and easy target, closing in to perpetrate at least a kidnapping for ransom. What will the crew do with this particular drunken sailor, and how will they get him safely back to his ship?
- The player characters find themselves on a naval vessel where the crew discovers their senior officers worship the Outsider and plan to kill the Captain in a savage ritual meant to bring some kind of ancient sea power against the Empire. Can they convince their fellow crew members to counter-mutiny quickly enough to stop this arcane rite?

# OF POWER AND DESIRE

## DUNWALL STORIES

Look at one hundred citizens of Dunwall, and you will see ten thousand stories. Some of them are true. Some are false. Many fall somewhere in between. As you guide your players through adventures in the capital of the Empire of the Isles, one of the greatest challenges and joys will be maintaining the city herself as a character.

Although Dunwall was inspired by London, Edinburgh, and Prague; Dunwall is not any of those cities. It's not Greyhawk. Nor is it New York City, Babylon 5, Minas Tirith, or Hobbiton. The more you make her a character in her own right, the better your players' experience will be. What follows is some ideas for doing exactly that. Use some. Ignore others. Just add enough Dunwall Gray to how you paint your setting to keep everybody aware of where they are.

### USING ARCHITECTURE

When describing or designing locations in Dunwall, consider a few key points of Dunwall architecture. Structures of the time...

- are narrow and tall, conforming to the space of the densely-packed city
- have grand (or once-grand) entries, built to impress visitors even if the interior is shabby
- sport towers, turrets, and similar features. In lower-class areas, these can be apartments of their own.
- are highly decorated inside and out, with gargoyles, fancy trim, crenellations, carvings, and molding
- have large windows, sometimes with stained glass, and frequently with complex, ornate casements
- are built asymmetrically, even idiosyncratically, to differentiate them from their neighbors

Imperial buildings stand in stark contrast, with symmetrical, unadorned facades and simple, spacious interiors. Similarly, you can use the decor within these styles to differentiate between inhabitants from different regions, of different professions, or with different backgrounds.

Don't overdo it. A detail or two in each scene is enough to firmly immerse your players in the feel of Dunwall's spaces.

## SQUALOR, SQUALOR EVERYWHERE

Imagine the worst scenes of Dickensian London and soak it with a sooty, smoggy, constant drizzle. Now, add to that an appalling level of governmental oppression and religious and supernatural dread. Multiply that by two, and you'll come close to imagining just how bad things are in Dunwall.

Every scene should have a detail or two that illustrate and underline the misery and despair of most of the city. Player Characters never meet in a bar. They meet in a previously abandoned building, still missing half its roof, where a woman missing one eye serves hooch from a homemade still. A fight never knocks a combatant prone. It knocks him on his belly in a pile of what he hopes is just somebody's sick, sending rats scurrying in every direction.

Even the posh neighborhoods suffer from a patina of this truth of the human condition. The streets might be cleaner and the buildings actually intact, but you can literally smell the desperation coming off the servants. Corruption among the wealthy is obvious and intractable, and every ounce of the good there comes at the cost of corresponding bad in the other districts.

## RACE AND CLASS

Where you're from and how you earn your money is a core part of every Dunwaller's identity. Everyone is aware of these two factors, all the time. The upper classes native to the city look down their noses at the poor and middle class, and to the wealthy who are newer to town. Those from Gristol distrust Tyvians and the Morleyans, and within their ranks a Potterstead native would never trust a deal offered by an Old Lamprow man.

Generally speaking, consider any social interaction with somebody of either the same social status or from the same region as neutral. They will have enough in common to get along. Those of the same social status and from the same region will be natural allies, and the GM should consider some kind of benefit to working with such folk.

For each step away from similar status or class, a GM would be justified in using Chaos or establishing a truth to reflect the distrust and prejudice inherent in the exchange. Two bankers from Baleton would get along like a house afire, while a Banker and a laborer from Baleton would get on about as well from a banker from Baleton and a banker from Whitecliff. That Baleton banker would be deeply suspicious of a laborer from Whitecliff, and both would refuse to drink with a whaler from Caulkenny.

One easy way for GMs to reflect this consistent awareness is to describe otherwise faceless NPCs with tags for both origin and profession. You have a Tyvian barkeep, a laborer from Redmoor, and a hulking Morleyan gang member from Wynnewood. This serves the twin purposes of making each character more memorable while underscoring the ubiquitous importance of both race and class.



*It's true that Dunwallers are aware and judgmental about social status and area of origin, much like Victorian-era Londoners. However, they are far more egalitarian about gender and sexual identity than the people of that city. As long as she can pull her weight, nobody blinks at a woman on a whaling ship. Men are prostitutes as often as women, and nobody cares what gender they prefer to service. All in all, Dunwallers have enough to worry about without caring what fishing tackle somebody carries between their legs.*

## HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

Dunwall is a nest of eels, with any given individual's web of connections, allegiances, and enemies as important as any number on a character sheet. Who they care about and why matters here. Further, betrayal is simply a part of life in the city. Multiple allegiances pull people in multiple directions, and eventually something has to give.

For the PCs to have connections to factions outside the party more colorful and better realized than their connections to each other is a recipe for trouble. First of all, it's a missed opportunity. Why should one PC have a rich history with The Hatters or the Bottle Street Gang, but only a glossed-over reason to work with her own crew? Second and worst, betrayal between PCs is a quick way to wreck most campaigns. The GM should take care to make certain each PC has good reasons to value their crew over their loyalty to other factions.

How best to create that web of loyalty, indebtedness, and trust between the PCs at your table will depend on myriad factors. You'll need to custom-build yours. But for inspiration and education, here are a few hooks that can work well for many play groups.

- The PCs all work for the same employer, be that a wealthy merchant, a gang boss, or the head of a governmental department.
- The PCs have started a new gang in a small neighborhood, initially operating under the permission, protection, and "taxation" of a major gang.
- The PCs are survivors of a wrecked whaling ship, arrived in Dunwall to find work that keeps them on dry land.
- Each PC is being blackmailed by a mysterious figure, who forces them all to work together toward some unsaid end.
- The PCs all hail from the same village in Gristol, or an outer island. They came to Dunwall together to seek their fortunes.
- The PCs are all members of the same wealthy family, at once cooperating to preserve their fortune and competing to acquire the lion's share of same.

Use these ideas wholesale, or mine them for inspiration that perfectly suits your play group and plans for your campaign. The important part is you give all dramatis personae deep reasons to work together despite the dangers and temptations all around them.

## YEARS OF CHAOS: ROLEPLAYING THE RAT PLAGUE

The first signs of what would become the Rat Plague showed up in 1835, during the Month of Clans. It was known as a time of widespread panic, lurking dangers, and extreme oppression even by Imperial standards. If you wish to play during these chaotic and terrifying years, here's what you need to know about the period. They were years where...

### ...THE SOCIAL ORDER BROKE DOWN

After the first quarter of the population died, or wandered into the sewers and abandoned wards with blood weeping from their eyes, Dunwall reached a critical mass. Not enough people were working to fuel the engines of the economy. Police presence failed, food supplies dwindled, and employment dried up when factories and shops closed at a catastrophic rate.

### ...FOOD WAS SCARCE AND PRECIOUS

Cities may drive the commerce of nations, but they don't produce enough of their own food to sustain the population. As the plague eroded the businesses, distribution routes, and labor force necessary to keep the river of nourishment flowing, people grew hungry. Then they began to starve.

The Lord Regent established rationing, which was supposed to help the situation. In most cases, it led to rumors of food hoarding, and to riots for access to those hoards. Worse, any natural philosopher will tell you that malnourished people are more susceptible to disease. As hunger stalked the streets of Dunwall, it took with it more victims of the plague that started the famine.

### ...THE LORD REGENT REIGNED SUPREME

As the chaos reached its peak, Hiram Burrows rose to the power for which he is now infamous. He hired more City Watch, established curfews and travel restrictions, and shut down entire districts of the city. Tallboys marched on their mechanized stilts above the contagious mobs, keeping an order many thought would never return.

It is absolutely true that the excesses of the Lord Regent caused untold suffering and death. It is equally true that the plague would have run longer, and killed more, had he not instituted his quarantines and similar measures with such ruthless determination. His is a mixed history in the minds and mouths of the people. Of course, if the rumors of his involvement are proven true, popular opinion could turn in a hurry.

### THE PLAGUE ITSELF

The Rat Plague, as its name implies, entered Dunwall through infected rats. It also passes between humans, especially as the coughing and weeping symptoms make its transmission vectors harder to avoid.

Early symptoms include discolored facial skin and similar discolorations on the flesh of the chest. The victim will soon begin losing weight and hair, becoming a shadow of their former selves. In a city where the poor are already emaciated, the sight of a suffering victim resembled something out of a penny dreadful tale more than that of a still-living human being.



As the disease progresses, it attacks the lungs and the brain. The infected develop chronic, vaporous coughs and begin to lose their minds. Some simply wander, undirected by human thought. In others, their compromised minds respond to hunger by becoming aggressive. They chase any healthy being they see, clawing and biting in search of a meal. This symptom did much to further spread the plague as it took hold in the streets of Dunwall. In the final stage, damage to the brain causes the tissues behind the eyes to break down. Victims bleed from their eyes, giving them the name they are known by: Weepers. Weepers can remain alive for a surprising amount of time, haunting areas near where they once lived or gathering in sewers and other forsaken places.

There is no cure for the Rat Plague. Once a body catches it, the only hope is for its natural constitution to be stronger than the virus. If it is, the full course of the disease is its only possible future.

However, natural philosophers noticed that once a person caught the plague and survived it, they never again experienced the sickness. Not even after close contact with the most infectious of victims. Following that lead, Sokolov and Piero both developed elixirs to protect the populace from the disease. These draughts, taken regularly, prevent a body from catching the Plague.

## ABOUT GRISTOL

Gristol is the largest, wealthiest, and most famous of the Isles in the Empire. A land of rolling green hills, foggy meadows, lush farms, and craggy grazelands, it may seem a paradise to those from harsher places like Upper Tyvia. But it's not without its hardships. Even before the Rat Plague hit, food was scarce, as farms' production became outstripped by the island's growing population. In Gristol, short summers give way to harsh winters, and life is hard even for the reasonably comfortable.

### GEOGRAPHY

Gristol isn't just the bastion of the Empire's economy. It sits at the geographic center of the Isles, south of Tyvia and Morley, and north of Serkonos. The southern third of the island consists of low, rolling hills and foggy plains full of orchards and farmers' fields.

As the island runs northward, the land grows increasingly rough. Orchards turn to thick forests and the low hills become rougher, home to more herdsman and hunters

than farmers. Cliffs, crags, and clefts dominate the northernmost landscape, and the people there are as hardy as the land they wrest their living from.

Gristol's seacoast follows a similar pattern. Wide sand and stone beaches dominate the southern shore—with the notable exception of the towering precipices of Whitecliff. The northern coast is fjords and cliffs as far as the eye can see.

## THE MORLEY INSURRECTION

The Morley people are physically imposing and inclined toward philosophy. Even the meanest Morleyan peasant and or filthiest chimney sweep knows a song to break a heart, and has a body to break an arm as needs be. Perhaps this was what led the island to become the only nation to attempt a break from the Empire of the Isles in recorded history.

Although minor strikes and riots had come prior to 1801, and not just from the Morleyan population, it was in that year armed conflict opened. The stated reason was harsh exploitation of the Morleyan working class, as observed by wealthy mercantile families who visited Dunwall and other parts of Gristol. The war was conducted primarily via sea, with privateers raiding supplies and clashes between naval vessels from both islands. A handful of land strikes from Morley involved stealth missions through the Dunwall sewers, but no land was ever officially taken or held.

Though the Insurrection culminated in the assassination of Empress Larisa Olaskir, Morley eventually crumbled in the face of the Empire's superior economic base and Gristol's famed navy. However, most Morleyans harbor independent leanings, and you won't see a food riot or labor strike without somebody flying the old banner.

## THE EIGHT CITIES OF GRISTOL

Though Dunwallers might tell you otherwise, more than one city sits on the lands of Gristol Isle. Besides the capital, the most important include:

### BALETON

A timber and fishing town on the west coast, it has a reputation for hard drinking and surprisingly touching poetry. The people are slighter than most Gristollers, but packed with hard, wiry muscle. Baleton is also known as a source for exotic potions and medicines, made from the trees her people farms. The poison Hemlock Essence is milled there for those who can find and afford the lethal draught.

### DRISCOL

The folk of Driscol have a reputations for being large and quiet. This has led to people from all other points in the Isles to making fun of them. "Driscolt" jokes can be heard in a bar at every port, and their bland fish stews and sheep pies wrinkle noses of more sophisticated palates. However, nobody is more loyal and steadfast a friend as a Driscoller, nor is any combatant as fierce as one whose anger has finally been stoked.

### OLD LAMPROW

One of two major Gristol cities that doesn't sit on the coast, Old Lamprow is a trading town. It formed on the crossroads of three highways leading between dozens of smaller farming hamlets, and makes its daily bread by serving as middleman for them all. People from Old Lamprow are thought to be canny and unscrupulous traders, able to get you anything but not to be trusted.

### POOLWICK

Wrapped around the entire coast of a middling lake, Poolwick receives the waterborne products of ranches and farms throughout the surrounding countryside. Nearly all of it continues onward toward Dunwall, but enough stays that craftspeople of all kinds make fine goods from the material. The city is renowned for its cheeses, wines, musical instruments, and knives.

### POTTERSTEAD

The town is known for sheep, ale, and barley. The people are known for taciturn honesty, superstitious ways, and an almost inhuman capacity for holding their liquor. During the Month of Winds, the entire county gathers for the famed Pennant Festival, a series of land and sea races in which local youth compete for prizes meant to help set up a lifestake for the winning teams.

### REDMOOR

The men and women of Redmoor are often frustrated with the city's booming trade in marble from her world-renowned quarry. Aside from their stone and stoneworkers, the population is immensely proud of their quiltmaking, paint pigments, and scrimshaw... not that anybody from elsewhere in the Isles knows anything about them. "As secret as a scrimshander from the 'Moor" is a common local expression, meant both to poke fun at and rail against their common predicament.

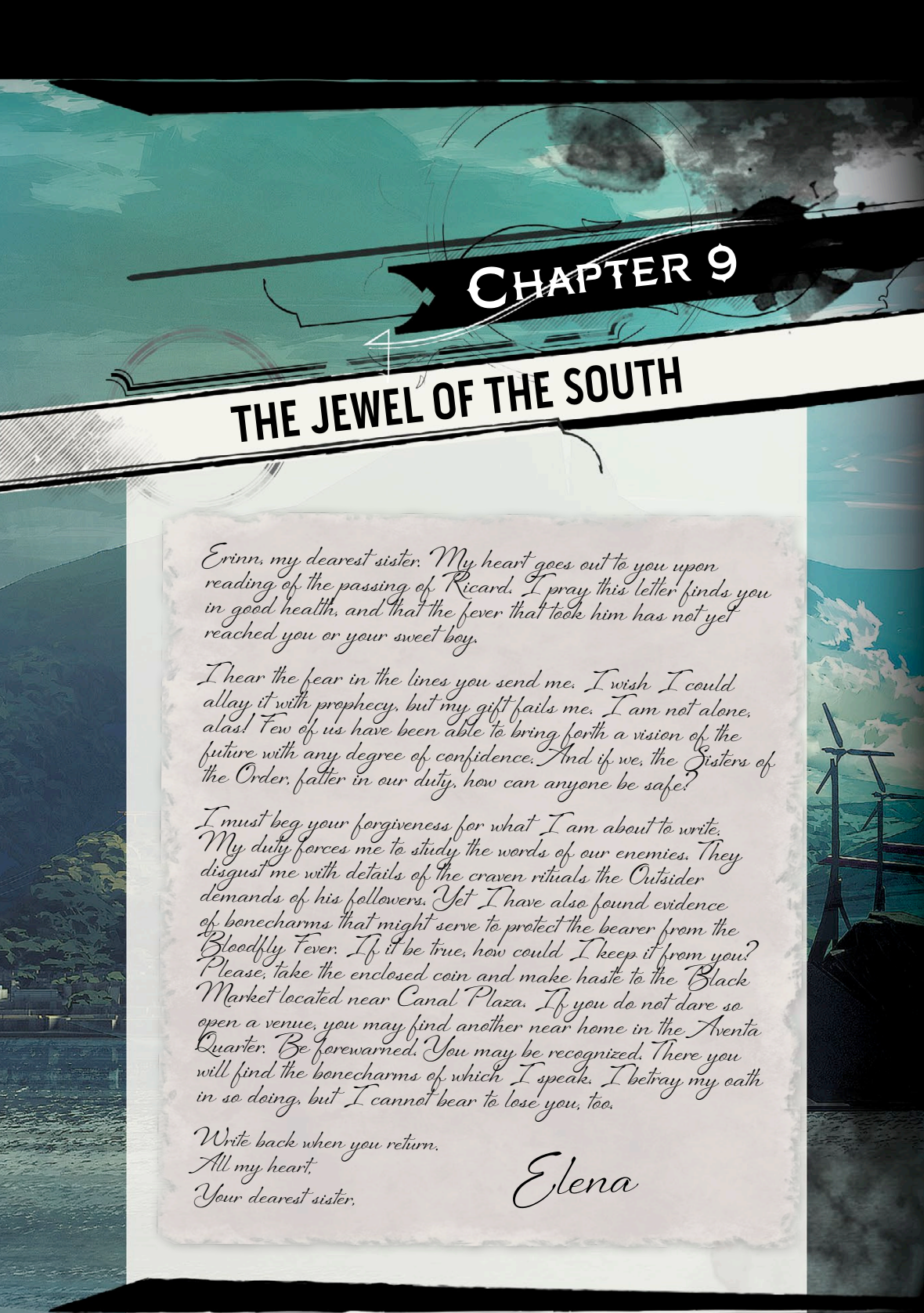
### WHITECLIFF

A town on the white cliffs of the southeasternmost corner of Gristol, Whitecliff is famous for three things. The first two are its whaling and the white stone of her iconic, namesake ocean cliffs. The third is the Siege of Whitecliff, in which armies of the Abbey of the Everyman raided the city, slaughtering heretics and establishing a major Abbey at the center of the city. The location remains a point of pilgrimage for devout followers throughout the Empire, and a sore reminder to some Whitecliffers who lost family during the violence.

## GRISTOL STORY HOOKS

- Shipments of silver, crystal, and other mined goods run by caravan through the Gristol countryside en route to refineries and factories in Dunwall. There's wealth to be gained as guards for the precious cargo, or by being the reason those guards are hired.
- Contract for grain shipments can mean wealth or stark seasons for the smaller hamlets and larger farms. One farmer with ambitions of aristocracy wants his neighbors to lose long-held deals, and approaches the PCs to have them break those contracts by any means necessary.
- Whispers of rebellion are sounding in certain Whitehall taverns, with a call for men and women to meet at a specified warehouse in the middle of the night. Those who answer the call aren't heard from again. When somebody valued by the PCs joins this mysterious movement, they must go to the warehouse themselves to see where these volunteers actually go.





# Chapter 9

# THE JEWEL OF THE SOUTH

*Erinn, my dearest sister. My heart goes out to you upon reading of the passing of Ricard. I pray this letter finds you in good health, and that the fever that took him has not yet reached you or your sweet boy.*

*I hear the fear in the lines you send me. I wish I could allay it with prophecy, but my gift fails me. I am not alone, alas! Few of us have been able to bring forth a vision of the future with any degree of confidence. And if we, the Sisters of the Order, falter in our duty, how can anyone be safe?*

*I must beg your forgiveness for what I am about to write. My duty forces me to study the words of our enemies. They disgust me with details of the craven rituals the Outsider demands of his followers. Yet I have also found evidence of bonecharms that might serve to protect the bearer from the Bloodfly Fever. If it be true, how could I keep it from you? Please, take the enclosed coin and make haste to the Black Market located near Canal Plaza. If you do not dare so open a venue, you may find another near home in the Aventa Quarter. Be forewarned. You may be recognized. There you will find the bonecharms of which I speak. I betray my oath in so doing, but I cannot bear to lose you, too.*

*Write back when you return.*
*All my heart,*
*Your dearest sister,*

*Elena*

Bixby,

Yes, yes, I swore I'd never speak to your wretched face again. Spare me your feigned surprise and shock. I write with a warning and a request. The former should more than pay for the latter.

The so-called Grand Guard grows bolder. My assistant had the temerity to suggest their taxes lacked the backing of law. They promptly raised the price they demand to keep my shop open, calling me a filthy black marketeer! My line of goods are the best in the business—spare me once again your denials—and even my finest upgrade was not enough to buy them off. That is my warning. Take heed.

I heard you have dealings with the Howlers as well. They offer a service to keep the Guards busy, but their price is little better. I doubt their ability to prevent the Guard from taking their due. We must avoid sinking our trade by paying both parties. Sadly, in this we must stand together.

As for the other matter, my assistant has since left my employ. I am seeking a trustworthy sort, familiar with the work and goods we traffic in. Perhaps you have another rich boy in suspenders you can spare until I train a new one. That is the request. I would ask another shopkeeper, but I find you the least useless of them all.

No need to respond. Simply send your clerk round in the morning.

Horatio

WHOEVER FINDS THIS,

NOT MUCH TIME. BLOODFLIES CIRCLE. CAN'T BREATHE. HIDING FROM OVERSEERS AND GUARDSMAN. NO ONE EVER WARNED ME ABOUT THOSE WITHOUT EYES. THEY THE ONES I'M SCARED OF.

WANNA COME CLEAN NOW. STRICTURES TELL ME I SHOULD'VE AGES AGO. NEVER FIGURED IT'D END LIKE THIS. COUPLE LADS CAME ROUND WHEN I WAS HEADED OUT TO THE MINES. TOUGH WORK, BUT WE NEEDED TO EAT. THEY HAD A BETTER IDEA.

I TOOK THE BAIT. BROUGHT ME TO THE BATHS. FANCY ONE. NOW FULL OF FIGHTING AND HORROR. DIDN'T CARE AT FIRST. WON A BIT. A BIT MORE. SAID I'D MAKE MORE IF I FOUGHT DIRTY. JUST A LITTLE. FACES OF THE PEOPLE I BEAT, CAN'T GET OUT OF MY HEAD. FELT LIKE I WAS SLEEPWALKING. GAVE ME THE INK. CALLED ME UNSTOPPABLE. TILL I HAD THAT ONE POOR SOD, UNDER MY FIST... WOULDN'T LET ME STOP. IT WASN'T THEM, THEN. IT WAS ME. WHAT THEY'D DONE TO ME. THEM WITH NO EYES.

I RAN. BACK TO THE DUST AND GRIME. CAN'T BREATHE. CAN'T GO BACK TO WHO I WAS. CAME BACK TO BURY MYSELF WHERE IT STARTED. WHOEVER FINDS THIS DON'T TAKE THE INK. THE VOID WILL COM

Dear Alexandra,
How delighted I am to have taken your advice to summer in Karnaca. A far cry from the hubbub of Dunwall. Their carriages go about without a conductor, can you imagine? The incessant wind powers them through curious windmills that pop up everywhere. I get ahead of myself.

I am loathe to mention the journey here. Sailing down the Grand Serkanan Canal gave me aches in the stomach and head. These blasted sailors barely know their job! You may deem me pompous for thinking so. Imagine my horror in discovering that I was more than right. The Guard had impressed them for failure to pay the Gate toll!

I am now firmly ensconced within Cyria Gardens. Or Upper Cyria–the precise name escapes me. So quaint this little district with its canals and night lamps. Their finest buildings sit among ancient trees. A pity so much has closed. A mite infestation at the Royal Conservatory? I'm left to wonder whether this a capital or a backwoods.

You will laugh at me. I did manage to seduce a singer into joining me for a cocktail. No, not Shan Yun. Mama will be so cross if I spend the whole summer here without hearing his voice. They say he frequents the Proctor Club, open only to private members and elite clientele. Wait till they meet me. I shall endeavor to secure an invitation.

All very exciting!

Suffice it to say, I have been on an adventure ever since leaving Dunwall. I'll endeavor to write back with all the secrets I unearth in Karnaca. I am determined never to succumb to boredom.

Your friend as ever,
Sela

# HISTORY OF KARNACA

Karnacan legend claims that owls first carried people to Karnaca from the islands to the north. Neighboring legends insist the sea brought them, emerging on the backs of whales. In truth, nomads from the north followed the Serkonan shore down to find the perfect bay, full of fish and plants. They also found other people had gotten there first and settled in what is now the Old Quarter. The two groups lived peacefully, intermarrying, though their different traditions persisted.

With time, Karnaca opened its port—a unique solution to piracy, ushering in a period of peace. At this point, it offered little more than a place to refuel with wine, weapons, and food, far from the lucrative trade between Serkonos and Gristol.

Miners in Batista, hoping to find more iron, uncovered rich veins of silver instead. The First Silver Age ushered in a period of abundance in Karnaca around 1100. The miners themselves enjoyed the benefits of the silver trade, building wooden homes in the mountains or in abandoned tunnels, far from any danger brought in by sea. Arts and music which had been the purview of low class pirates enjoyed a period of elevation as the miners guild organized performances.

This silver age came to an abrupt end around 1300 due to two separate, but equally disastrous causes. The deep veins of silver had given up all they could, leaving behind dust that they could not refine further. The far greater problem came by sea: the Peste.

At first, the color on miners' skin coupled with incessant coughing presented as some sort of irritation from diving deep into the mines. As those afflicted proved unstable and prone to attack their fellows, the true nature of the disease revealed itself. As the bodies piled up, the usual protections proved useless. Ultimately, the military seized control and burned the entire city to the ground.

Eventually, Karnaca's population rebounded. The beauty of the area along with curiosity regarding how it survived the dark times began to lure visitors from within Serkonos and beyond. The rise of influence spurred additional innovations in Serkonos.

Soon, the War of Four Crowns in Gristol provided the opportunity that many of the nobility had been waiting for. Mila and Matias, of the Duchy of Aventa, led a cabal of nobles and merchants to make their move. They bribed and inspired the Grand Guard to join them in saving Karnaca. With the Grand Guard behind them, they mobilized the entire island of Serkonos against the Serkonan king, ousting him and his family. The Dukes have protected the empty throne of the Kingdom of Karnaca ever since, representing the entire island in the Empire of the Isles. They led Karnaca toward closer ties with the rest of the isles.

The mines long thought empty in Upper Cyria coughed up the last of their iron with new advances in refining. Encouraged by this outcome, speculators turned to the long-abandoned silver mines in the Batista range. Profitable silver emerged from the existing tunnels, and the city entered its Second Silver Age.

The present day finds Duke Luca Abele handing the Batista Mines over to the Bayles Company, which would drive the mine—and the miners—twice as hard. He has also ramped up enforcement by the Grand Guard and set up surveillance throughout the city. His policies have pushed Karnaca to the edge, as factions fight each other for dominance and the souls of its people.

## THE PEOPLES OF KARNACA

Karnacans take pride in their heritage. The First Silver Age boomed due to the tireless toil of miners and merchants. Though few know the details of the Peste that killed so many people, legends tell of a new nobility who tilled the land as readily as the peasants in an effort to keep the community alive. To this day, Karnacans have a reputation for hard work.

While many now follow the Abbey, the influence of the age of piracy still lives on in regional music and dancing. Visitors claim the traditional dances have a sensual flavor to them. Many of these dances have become the purview of the lower classes, while the upper classes subscribe to more refined entertainments.

Native Karnacans are not the only people to call the city home. Immigrants who fled the Morley famine built a village on the east side of town. They brought their brandy and roasted meats and tried to prove they could earn their place in Karnacan society. They served in the mines and fisheries, slowly paving the way for other Karnacan institutions to open to them. Yet after nearly half a century in Karnaca, Duke Luca Abele directs his Grand Guard to keep a stern eye—and sometimes fist—on the immigrants from Morley.

The people of Morley are but the first of many. Long called the Jewel of the South, Karnaca proved too enticing for the nobles of Gristol to ignore. The sunny climes brought them, but the lucrative opportunities kept them. Seeing the bounty coming out of the mines and the coin left on the table due to poor infrastructure, investors poured everything they could into the city. New buildings sprung up along rebuilt canals. The Grand Serkonan Canal made it possible to move goods throughout Serkonos. Gristolian and Karnacan natural philosophers together harnessed the wind that barrels down the mountain from the Shindaerey Peak, pumping the city with energy.

The Gristol settlers' demand for the high life spurred further development in arts and music. Karnaca supplied the well-heeled audiences for an increasing number of world-class performers. For example, Shan Yun, the famous opera singer, settled in Karnaca's Upper Cyria District. Gristol interests thus take credit for these refined offerings. Their sense of superiority can cause tension with the native nobility.

## ERAS OF PLAY

This chapter assumes that you will be playing during the height of the Bloodfly Fever epidemic and the tumultuous years of the reign of Duke Luca Abele, the late 1840s and very early 1850s. If you wish to play at a different time, adjustments must be made – for example, the Howlers gang, a significant faction during the epidemic, did not exist before the late 1840s. The timeline in *Chapter 8: On the Banks of the Wrenhaven* page 121-122 will help the GM to make these adjustments.

## KEY EVENTS, VENUES, AND PERSONAGES

### THE BLOODFLY CONCERN

Bloodflies have always been an issue in Karnaca, But since the late 1840s, the pest has become a downright menace, and by 1852, they are threatening to cause problems in Karnaca almost on the scale of Dunwall's own Rat Plague of earlier years. These flying creatures hunt in groups and nest inside the dead and decaying bodies of their victims. Bloodflies have overtaken apartments, driving out their occupants if they can flee, or nesting in their corpses if they cannot.

The bloodflies also spread a disease known as Bloodfly Fever. In its later stages, sufferers feel compelled to protect the nests of bloodflies, only to become a nest themselves once they pass away. Alexandria Hypatia of the Addermire Institute is developing a cure for the fever, though rumors abound that the Duke has actually confined her there.

The Duke has assigned the task of smoking out and burning these nests to the Grand Guard, but their duties enforcing the Duke's other edicts mean the flies are getting out of control. Even if Hypatia is able to develop a cure for the fever, bloodflies have established themselves as an endemic problem in Karnaca.



## THE ADDERMIRE INSTITUTE AND ALEXANDRIA HYPATIA

Alexandria Hypatia would love to pour her soul into researching and disseminating a cure for Bloodfly Fever, but she has lost her focus locked away in the Addermire Institute in Karnaca Harbor. The Duke only permits her to emerge from her prison under the guise of Grim Alex, the person she unknowingly becomes when under the influence of a toxic compound. As Grim Alex, she has killed a number of enemies of Empress Emily Kaldwin, earning her the name the Crown Killer. A counter-serum could cure Hypatia of her ailment and banish Grim Alex for good, if only her plight were known. The Addermire Institute has been closed down by order of the Duke.

## THE CLOCKWORK MANSION, KIRIN JINDOSH, AND ANTON SOKOLOV

Grand Inventor to Duke Luca Abele, Kirin Jindosh participated in the séance that brought Empress Delilah Kaldwin back from the Void in 1849. He also invented the Clockwork Soldiers that protect the Duke. He has deployed them in his own home, the Clockwork Mansion in the Aventa District, as well as at the Grand Palace. Jindosh loves to flaunt



his intelligence and would taunt any interlopers in his home through loudspeakers. His arrogance would never permit him to admit publicly he cannot perfect and mass produce his Clockwork Soldiers. Privately, however, Jindosh has captured his former mentor, Anton Sokolov, so that he can do so for him. Unfortunately for Jindosh, Sokolov refuses to help, and Jindosh has subjected him to electrotherapy to force his hand. Should the same fate befall Jindosh, however, he might lose his intellect altogether.

## THE ROYAL CONSERVATORY, BREANNA ASHWORTH, AND DELILAH COPPERSPOON/KALDWIN

Breanna Ashworth, the Royal Conservatory's Curator, has collected rare artifacts to display in the conservatory all the while she is rebuilding a coven of witches for her mentor and friend Delilah Copperspoon. She, along with the other conspirators, took part in the séance that brought Delilah Copperspoon back from the Void, permitting her to seize the imperial throne as Delilah Kaldwin. Ashworth also conspired with Kirin Jindosh to create the Oraculum. This device thwarts the prophecies of the Oracular Sisters and connects Ashworth with her supernatural abilities. Disabling this device may disempower Ashworth, but it will also empower the Oracular Sisters, an emancipation which may bring its own host of problems. Knowing full well what goes on within, the Duke has sealed off the Royal Conservatory under the pretext of a mite infestation.

## BLADE VERBENA

For the island of Serkonos, the Blade Verbena tournament acts as a tourist attraction, cultural tradition, and Grand Serkonan Guard recruitment tool. An entire festival surrounds the annual event. Wooden stalls go up around the arena weeks ahead of time. Merchants hawk Serkonan grapes, Razina Rosewater Jelly, and local rum to the spectators. For every night of the contest, dances and feasts are organized all around the city.

Every year, under the warm Serkonan sun, people from all over the Empire's southernmost island flock to Karnaca to watch men and women battle each other in one-on-one combat. The Blade Verbena competition attracts masters of the sword from every corner of the Empire of the Isles.

Participants in this brutal contest compete in a series of grueling duels until only the victor remains. Many covet the silver trophy awarded to the champion and the fame that comes with it. Blade Verbena winners often go on to join the Grand Serkonan Guard or other prestigious units throughout the Empire of the Isles.

Many who received the Blade Verbena trophy have incredible legends attached to their names. Warriors, royalty, naval commanders, and even renowned brigands make up the world-class ranks of tournament champions. Elite fighters from military families with generations of service make a point to enter the Blade Verbena at least once in their lives. Those who come from nothing but have big dreams and a talent for the sword also make their way across the Empire to the beautiful island to take part in the bloody festivities.

In 1814, as a cool, ocean breeze carried the aroma of Serkonan spiced cakes over the audience, a young Corvo Attano captivated the entirety of Karnaca as he bested opponent after opponent. He won the Blade Verbena that year at the tender age of 16 and became a working-class hero for the entirety of the Empire of the Isles.

### BLADE VERBENA STORY HOOKS

- The Blade Verbena is a prestigious event that attracts visitors from all over the Empire of the Isles. Many would pay a high price to ensure they have every chance to make it to the end of the competition, and some are willing to pay for more than just good steel in order to better their chances. During the week before the tournament, the player characters are approached by the benefactor of a fighter enlisting in the Blade Verbena. They ask the characters to ensure a victory by any means possible. If discovered, the price for cheating might be more than the player characters can afford.
- A fighter taking part in the tournament begins to earn a reputation. They've won every duel, with fights lasting no longer than a few mere minutes. They keep their face covered and so far, no one has seen them outside of the dueling area. The player characters might take an interest in this mysterious sword master because of rumors that the fighter possesses supernatural abilities granted by the Outsider, and that their interest in winning the competition is the start of a terrible chain of events.

## LOCALES OF NOTE

Exploring Karnaca can lead to adventure anywhere, from intrigue among the exquisite residences of the wealthy in Cyria Gardens or at the Grand Palace, to back alley brawls amidst the piles of dirt in the Dust District. Since Serkonan society is heavily stratified, a grouping of working class and noble people could provide a source of conflict and curiosity, as they do not typically mix. Serkonans whose family have lived in the isle for generations might find themselves allied with an elite merchant from Gristol, or a fishmonger whose parents hail from Morley. Each will bring different resources and knowledge to the table, creating an eclectic, and quite possibly formidable, party.

An adventure in Serkonos does not need to include residents of Karnaca. The trading companies may hire a group from Gristol to escort trading ships through the Grand Serkonan Canal or to pilfer goods or technology from Karnacan institutions. In a sophisticated, cosmopolitan city such as Karnaca, anything goes, and the excesses of the Duke will continue to hide a multitude of sins long after his rule.

### KARNACA HARBOR

Karnaca owes its existence to the bounty brought in via its harbor. The Santiago Fisheries on the western shores help supply the populace with food while the Campo Seta Dockyards bring in goods from all over the island and beyond. The Batista Mining District in the east overlooks the docks, and its produce often finds its way out of Karnaca via the Grand Serkonan Canal.

The harbor encompasses a broad area, including the Campo Seta Dockyards and parts of the Palace District. Usually a lively, busy harbor, the bloodfly concern has sent many regular whalers and fishers to other ports of call. Denizens slink quickly through the narrow alleys, hoping to avoid an encounter with the devilish creatures or the Overseers. With fewer people braving the harbor, businesses have suffered, forcing some to shut down or dramatically cut back on their wares and employees.

Into this void have moved two opposing interests. On the west side of town, Howlers have taken advantage of former workers at the Santiago Fisheries, luring them into the gang with the promise of easy income. On the other side of the coin, members of the upper class have taken to frequenting the harbor, this time under the influence of the Eyeless Gang, who promise answers the Abbey cannot provide. Nobles from the Palace District alight on ships in the night that ferry them to hidden coves. Their mysterious meetings must take place far from Overseer eyes.

Both the Howlers and a number of smaller, local gangs find a common enemy in the surveillance towers that dot the harbor. Even so, Howlers are delighting in the bounty of fat pockets the Eyeless have inadvertently sent their way. Innocents caught in the middle may not be innocent for long.

### THE TRUTH ABOUT KARNACA HARBOR

The down feathers of seagulls float throughout the harbor, stirred up by the slightest movement of animals or people. The *open docks* provide almost no place to hide from the sun. At night, the loading and unloading of goods keeps going—*the harbor never really sleeps*.

### KARNACA HARBOR STORY HOOKS

- Noble teens sneak out each night to the harbor. Some board the vessels destined for the secret meetings of the Eyeless Gang. One of them, however, joins the Howlers to rendezvous with her lover, rob her compatriots, and unmask her father's occult affiliations.
- An abandoned fishing boat in the harbor contains the bloodfly-infested remains of a troop of Overseers. The remains reveal that they are pirates in disguise, unveiling a conspiracy between pirates and Howlers to undermine faith in the Overseers.

## CAMPO SETA DOCKYARDS

Campo Seta Dockyards at first served only to field fishing boats, but as the fishing industry moved to the west harbor, the docks expanded to include a number of other businesses. The Fletcher and Daughter company, which builds ships, the Bandera Beechum Sawmill Company, and a small-scale whale and fishing processing operation all call the Dockyards home. Noble vacationers from around the empire once poured into Karnaca through these docks, often seeking to find curatives and enjoyment in the Albarca Baths or treatment at the Addermire Institute.

Though still a lively place full of merchants, smugglers, and musicians, the heyday of the docks has largely passed. Many businesses have shuttered due to the Duke's high taxes. The Albarca Baths have closed and now house a secret fighting ring run by the Eyeless Gang. There brave souls risk their lives on a daily basis, just for a few coins.

A wall of light, monitored by a surveillance tower, cuts off the docks from Canal Plaza. The Abbey of the Everyman runs its mission from a five-story building at its center. Woe to suspected heretics caught within their sights.

The market near the plaza continues to function as usual, though rising taxes has increased the number of thieves and Howlers watching for aristocrats with heavy pouches

### THE TRUTH ABOUT CAMPO SETA DOCKYARDS

As a meeting point for the *criminal underworld*, the dockyards' neutral status makes it an *outlaws' forum*, ideal for those wishing to conduct business away from the prying eyes of the City Watch.

### CAMPO SETA DOCKYARDS STORY HOOKS

- Lena Smeyu, a local smuggler and social chameleon of renown, wishes to expand her network of contacts. Whatever faction the players are in, she will pay for information related to the comings and goings of the faction's members, and their plans, serving as a last ditch resort if the PCs need resources.
- A young fighter is trapped in the fighting ring, as their handler claims they owe staggering sums for the bonecharms they use in the fights. They can pay it all off if they throw their next fight, or if the PCs enter the ring themselves and earn the respect of the higher ups.

## AVENTA QUARTERS

The Aventa Quarter houses some of the wealthiest people in Karnaca, long driven from the center by businesses and crowds. Many of the families living here hailed from Dunwall or Gristol, joining an immigration wave that coincided with the building of the Grand Canal. Many now identify as Karnacan, though they still have familial and financial ties elsewhere. The quarter always harboured residents with a more elitist bent. They support keeping out the riffraff and securing riches for themselves. The arrival of the Aventa Station, designed to make it easier for the wealthy to reach their homes, had in many ways the opposite effect. The station brought in more of the elements the residents hoped to avoid.

Rising taxes and oppression have driven the poor to populate the streets, begging for coin from their so-called betters. The wealthy, feeling like the poor have besieged them in their homes, are demanding more enforcement from the Grand Guard. Besides the innocent poor, Howlers have set up shop, literally and metaphorically, near the carriage station. Tensions could overflow with protests on either side. Unbeknownst to many, a pocket of Regenters, those who prefer the draconian practices of the former Imperial Regent Hiram Burrows, are also trying to influence public sentiment.

The Eyeless Gang has found fertile ground for its cult of decadence among the well-to-do. They are trying to lure more into their circle by secretly riling up the Howlers. Eyeless spies within the Howlers encourage the gang to take on bigger and bigger targets, including Kirin Jindosh himself and his Clockwork Mansion. The Howlers may be walking right into danger.

### THE TRUTH ABOUT AVENTA QUARTERS

The quarter is a *beggars' paradise*, with the dispossessed flocking to the area near the station in hopes they get something out of the nobles. *Civic unrest* is likely to come to a boiling point at any minute.

### AVENTA QUARTERS STORY HOOKS

- A damaged Clockwork Soldier has escaped the Jindosh Mansion. Several factions are trying to stop it from wreaking havoc, while one individual intends to capture the homicidal machine and auction it off to the highest bidder.
- Posters have popped up announcing a protest against the wealthy. The Regenters are secretly behind it, trying to bring matters to a head. Howlers hope to use the protest as cover for theft. Will it be possible to stop the protest before the Grand Guard arrives, or worse, the Clockworks?

## CYRIA GARDENS

Cyria Gardens sits in an old grown forest, where once only the empire's poor tried to make a home underneath giant umberwood trees. These trees were old when Karnaca was young. They remember a time before the Abbey, when the original Karnacans dabbled in rituals underneath their arbors. The Empire and the people of Karnaca have no memory of these times.

When interests from Gristol poured their investments into the city, buildings sprang up even among the trees, which proved too large and complicated to cut down. The sleepy neighborhood, serviced by the small Seta Canal, proved to be the ideal location for the Royal Conservatory, opened in 1819. The Conservatory and the Canal served to cement the neighborhood as a home for the well-to-do.

The closing of the Royal Conservatory in 1851 forced the neighborhood into a depression. Soirees hosted at the center for studies in Natural Philosophy kept the neighborhood lively and well-funded. The Duke closed the Conservatory, allegedly for a mite infestation. Now the Grand Guard fiercely patrol the area and secure it behind walls of light. The security doesn't stem the activities of the Howlers, nor the rumors of disappearances in the neighborhood. Even if the Conservatory opens, it may take awhile to demilitarize and reinvigorate the district.

The greatest secret of the quarter, however, lies deep within the Royal Conservatory, where witches hold sway. They kidnap innocents to use in their rituals while revelling in their dark power. They control an Oraculum which hampers the Oracular Sisters prophecies. Eventually, one will come to break the witches' power, defeat them, and restore the Conservatory. Even so, the after effects of their actions will linger still.

### THE TRUTH ABOUT CYRIA GARDENS

*Taken by nature*, the gardens are now barely livable. An *otherworldly atmosphere* stirs in the locale, becoming a *pagan worshipers' haven.*

### CYRIA GARDENS STORY HOOKS

- Kahelo Lebenz was last seen near the Conservatory, having said to his brother that "he'd be out scavenging for a while". Now, Milo Lebenz is asking for someone to help him find Kahelo. The trail will lead the group to the tunnels underneath the Conservatory, and the finding of a small fortune Kahelo won't share (willingly) with anyone else.
- Owls have escalated their attacks from rats to people. Attempts to bring them down reveal they are the stuffed mechanical contraptions from the Conservatory. Are the attacks targeted, or is it natural philosophy gone wild?

## DUST DISTRICT

The Dust District earned the name of the Batista Mining District, from the nearby mountain overlook. The people of Karnaca have long understood that the hills hid veins of silver, and before the empire, miners dug deep—the silver funding the old settlement. After a series of tunnels collapsed, the price to extract and refine the silver discouraged further mining. Not until the late 1700s and advances in technology did they discover new ways to turn a profit. The rebirth of the Mining District lured settlers from Morley and eventually additional investments from Gristol as well. Its silver led to the rebuilding of the center and the Grand Canal, creating a new golden age for the city.

Unfortunately, no amount of silver could slake the greed of the new Duke. After the disappearance of the mine's owner, Luca Abele handed over the rights to the mines to the Bayles Trading Company. Bayles runs the mines at double speed. The mines spit out dust that settles throughout the district. Some say the new moniker of the neighborhood comes not from the constant billowing of smoke, but from the fact that he is driving his workers into dust.

Dust storms rage in the Dust district, further exacerbating workers' already lingering health issues. The Grand Guard secretly enforces the rules of the mine, detaining workers who try to leave, and then sending them back to the mines. A secret cohort is at work, trying to smuggle out people desperate to flee, though most remain working in order to make ends meets.

The Overseers refuse to relinquish the district, once populated with devout followers of the Abbey, to a band of Howler miscreants who care nothing for the Seven Strictures. Battles between the two groups escalate, which only serves to benefit the Duke and not the people. If the dust from the mines ever settles and the miners return to their regular work schedules, it may still take intervention to bring peace to the district.

The Stilton Manor still houses the former head of the mines, though Aramis Stilton has lost his senses and is locked away within. After a séance here brought Delilah Kaldwin back from the Void, the place became an interstice between the natural world and the Void, creating strange reality-bending effects.

### THE TRUTH ABOUT THE DUST DISTRICT

Constant *dust storms* swirl through the district, diminishing visibility and affecting the locals' health. *Silver dust* tends to pile up against buildings and accumulate in some hidden corners—tempting opportunists and beggars..

### DUST DISTRICT STORY HOOKS

- A massive dust storm has torn down a series of old buildings, as well as burying an underground warehouse and its workers inside. The PCs are approached to assist with the rescue operation. What will happen once they find that one of their antagonists is trapped in there as well?
- The Grand Guard hopes to put an end to a silver smuggling operation and must turn to informants in the troubled district. They say they'll pay for any information that can be collected from the locals (though in truth, they'll deny payment once the information is provided, giving the PCs an excuse to do something).

## CLEMENTE LANDING

Clemente Landing earned its name from an early Karnacan ship captain, who was more likely an early pirate. He found in the natural vegetation and cliffs on the east side of Karnaca an excellent staging point for his operations. As the locals began to favor the more protected western harbor, they largely abandoned the Landing, its buildings falling into disrepair.

When the promise of jobs in the silver mines and fisheries brought settlers from Morley, they built their village on Clemente Landing. Many worked in the mines or earned a living on the harbor, but the location proved too far from most of Karnaca to entice anyone else to join them there. When settlers from Gristol came to Karnaca, they bypassed the Morley settlement altogether. They invested in the town center and the Grand Canal, but left Clemente Landing alone. For this reason, people refer to place as the Old Quarter, though many of the homes date from only 1803.

The struggles in the mines have reached Clemente Landing, though the dust does not affect the air on this side of the Batista mountains and the Wind Corridor. The Howlers patrol the streets out in the open, as the Grand Guard has little reason to bother with this poorer section of town. Despite the presence of the Howlers, the Overseers feel somewhat secure in the Morleyans' faith and choose instead to battle for souls in the Dust District. Some of those souls may in fact live in the Old Quarter.

Because much of the factions' energies are invested elsewhere, Clemente Landing has proven the perfect locale for smuggling people and goods. Like its founding citizen, pirates have been known to land in the village to impress new crew or pilfer treasure. The Howlers who could protect the Morley immigrants are outmatched on the sea, but to call for help would require calling in the Grand Guard.



### THE TRUTH ABOUT CLEMENTE LANDING

The landing is *isolated* from the rest of Karnaca, with Point Batista being the only place with a view of the city. The wooden buildings, rotted and *poorly maintained*, point to the state of decay of the area

### CLEMENTE LANDING STORY HOOKS

- Pirates have moved in and appear to be searching Clemente Landing. Many believe they're looking for Clemente's treasure, spurring a treasure hunt that pits neighbor against neighbor. If no one puts a stop to it, they may turn up something far darker than buried gold.
- A rash of missing girls leads families to point fingers at a group of local pirates. Investigation reveals the girls haven't gone to sea, but to the Woodlands, where they are being persuaded by witches into joining a coven.

## PALACE DISTRICT

A lighthouse once stood on Point Abele to protect ships from crashing onto its rocky shores. Over time, the lighthouse also served as a military vantage point, where guards could monitor pirates and runners and take quick action. They would capture prisoners and hold them for ransom here, or force them to work their debt off to the city. Many convicts hailed from elsewhere, bringing foreign beliefs and customs that, if they were lucky, spread through the city. The less lucky died of scurvy and other ills while in custody.

Judgment took place on the spot, requiring the sitting Duke to stay nearby. Eventually, the Duke built a palace in lieu of a prison, moving much of the judicial branch elsewhere in the city. The nobility flocked around him, giving the Palace District a distinct upper class feel. Although the Grand Palace still doubles as a fortification, its new role has seen it reshaped into an ostentatious monster - showcasing the Duke's appetite for power whilst hinting at the seething decadence of his regime.

The Grand Guard should protect the residents, but they are occupied with commandeering the balconies along Ravina Boulevard to protect the comings and goings of the Duke. An aura of fear blankets the neighborhood. All seem aware that Clockwork Soldiers protect the Duke and care little who stands in their way.

Many wealthy who have not fled the neighborhood entirely have begun to take part in the dark ceremonies of the Eyeless Gang, some even within the Palace itself. The bones of convicts may still lie beneath the palace grounds, adding to their dark rituals.

### THE TRUTH ABOUT THE PALACE DISTRICT

The *Ravina Boulevard lockdown* has been staged by the Grand Guard, in order to protect the Duke. The Grand Palace, towering over the manses that dot the district, is a *nigh-impregnable fortress*.

### PALACE DISTRICT STORY HOOKS

- An activist wants to confront the Duke about the plight of the miners. The Eyeless Gang suspiciously dispenses invitations to a party at the palace, and the activist snaps it up. Unfortunately, the party may prove more dangerous than the mines when invited guests are stalked through the grounds that are being excavated for bonecharms.

- A wealthy resident has not been seen for days, but the Grand Guard prohibits anyone from checking his apartment overlooking Ravina Boulevard. Ultimately, evidence of dark rituals raises the question whether he has joined the Eyeless Gang, or become a victim of it

# FROM THE BAY TO SHINDAEREY

## FACTIONS OF KARNACA

Although not a requirement to play, joining a faction unlocks access to skills as well as a network that can provide resources and backup in sticky situations. On the other hand, joining may also embroil a character in intrigue within the faction. Membership requires opening oneself up to the machinations of supposed comrades who may see them as a threat to advancement within the faction. Initiation also makes them an immediate target of opposed factions, regardless of their own personal actions.

## THE SERKONAN OVERSEERS

The Serkonan Overseers follow the example set by the High Overseer in far off Dunwall—with some key differences. The Abbey of the Everyman's arrival in Serkonos predates its establishment as state religion. Missionaries brought the Seven Strictures to Karnaca under guise of visiting nobility. In elite vacation "compounds," nobles made easy prey for early Overseers, charged with winning over converts and subsequently enforcing their new beliefs. New converts subsequently went home to their nations to spread the religion even further.

Thus, many followers of the Strictures held key positions in Karnaca, paving the way for a fast and complete conversion of Serkonos after the Siege of White Cliff. The Serkonan Overseers' role in spreading the faith led to their demanding a higher position within the hierarchy of the Abbey. The High Overseer struck back, accusing them of the dual sins of the Wandering Gaze and the Errant Mind. The Serkonans were more focused on flashy position than the ideals of the Abbey. As a result, the Serkonan Overseers wear drab costumes and gray masks covering most of their faces, a constant reminder to subsume the self in service to the Abbey. Their truth is that of *sisters' hatred*; the constant power struggle between the Serkonan Overseers and the Oracular Order is always prevalent. If you seek to undermine the Sisters' plans, you are likely to get the Overseers to back you up.

### "THE STRICTURES, MY HAVEN"

The Serkonan Overseers need not fear the future, nor the consequences of their actions, as long as they know in their hearts that the strictures guide their path. They are particularly fanatical when it comes to this, fully submitting their will to the designs of their creed.

### RANKS OF POWER

1. **Vice Overseer**: The highest rank a Serkonan Overseer can achieve. Each city has its own Vice Overseer, decided by jockeying for position and approval by the High Overseer. The Karnacan Vice Overseer has unofficial authority over the rest of Serkonos. He wields the authority to direct the Overseers in Karnaca, order music boxes from Gristol, and communicate directly with the High Overseer.

2. **Initiate:** Those who pass the Trials begin their training in earnest with sabre, gun, and grenade. They must also face the hounds and learn the Litany on the White Cliff. At this stage, they rarely leave their enclaves, but recent turmoil has put them out on the streets alongside veteran handlers.
3. **Preparant:** Once Overseers have deemed a prospect sufficiently righteous, the Trials of Aptitude officially begin. They are taken from their homes to an outpost for ritual testing and preparation. Preparants learn the Seven Strictures as well as undergoing physical trials designed to test endurance and strength. Participants must journey to Whitecliff in Gristol to complete the ritual that will either see them become an Initiate, or be put down.
4. **Prospect:** Typically Overseers mark those who show a proclivity toward the views of the Abbey. Overseers observe them, often without their knowledge, for up to a year to ensure they align with cosmological signs and portents.

### SERKONAN OVERSEERS STORY HOOKS

- The Vice Overseer seeks to carry out a slander campaign to sabotage the Oracular Order's reputation. This would entail infiltrating the order, learning about their predictions, and manipulating circumstances to make those predictions untrue. Will the characters be up to the task?
- Food supplies from the Empire have stopped coming, thanks to a raging storm. The Duke calls for the dwindling reserves to be transported to Karnaca at once, though many villages seem to be refusing to comply. As the characters are mobilized to enforce law in these communities, their charity will come into conflict with their orders. What will be the consequences of their actions, and how will they be affected by them?

## ORACULAR ORDER

Gwen Horncroft founded the Oracular Order after her predictions in the Rectification War ensured the victory of the Abbey of the Everyman. The secretive Order recruits followers who are not men and show an aptitude for the often grueling study required of its members. Ever since its foundation, the Oracular Order has provided critical predictions that have kept the Abbey in power while keeping the Order firmly subordinate to the High Overseer. Except in Karnaca.

Due to Karnaca's hubris, the High Overseer punished the Serkonan Overseers and placed the Oracular Order in Karnaca in a somewhat supervisory role. In here, the High Oracle moves from convent to convent, going wherever she is needed, leaving the Karnacan Order relatively independent. At the same time, the Order must watch their Overseer counterparts not just to ensure they follow the Seven Strictures, but to make sure they are not undermining their authority and their predictions.

The Order's close relationship with the previous Duke has also put them in the crosshairs of the current one. The Order must rely on its predictions to remain one step ahead of the Duke's forces as they try to undermine his debauched lifestyle and attempt to return the ducal house to more moderate hands.

The Order often provides predictions to people outside their enclave as a favor and to further influence politics. Their truth is that they are a *cloister of secrets*; the Order guards their talents jealously, and any attempt to get a prediction will fail unless one has a reliable contact inside.

### "KEEP IT SECRET"

When you subscribe to the ways of the Order, you do it for life. Their study methods and the insight they provide may lead to a life of reclusiveness and secrecy, but in exchange you are granted with access to the vastest knowledge sources in the world.

## ORACULAR HIERARCHY

1. **Vice Oracle:** Like her counterpart in the Overseers, the Vice Oracle runs the Oracular Order in Karnaca and has leeway to communicate directly with the High Overseer or Oracle. Vice Oracles serve a limited term and must spend at least a year between terms focused on study to improve their prophecies.
2. **Keeper:** Keepers undergo intensive study in history, politics, and religion. They all are proficient with a small hidden blade they carry with them at all times. They make predictions based on facts and their study of history and politics. Some of them, Weavers, focus on guarding the secrets of their sisters by tracking down rogue elements within the Order, as well as rumormongers, and dispatching them efficiently.
3. **Sister:** Like the Overseers, the Oracular Order marks a child or adult for observation if they show a proclivity toward the ideals of the Abbey and intense study. Sisters typically favor the Cleverly style and Study skill. Those who pass muster undergo a month-long ceremony similar to the Trials of Aptitude. Success leads to initiation. What happens to the failures is a well-guarded secret.

## ORACULAR ORDER STORY HOOKS

- An Oracular Sister has developed the unique talent for detecting Void artifacts. The Order must now decide whether to keep this secret from all, including the Abbey itself, or make strange alliances to escape Karnaca and reach the High Oracle before the Overseers, the Howlers, or the Duke reach her.
- The Vice Oracle is facing the end of her term, while the heir apparent proves to be a hothead who could ignite a conflict among the factions in Karnaca and beyond. An assassination, however, could be worse. Playing queenmaker may require bringing in help from outside Karnaca.

## HOWLERS GANG

The Howlers coalesced under the leader Paolo due to the oppressive regime of the current Duke. They fight to bring down the Duke and his Grand Guard, both in the streets, as well as by attacking anyone who supports the Duke's regime, including the elite classes. This is all done in the name of equality, with the Howlers thinking of themselves as "the weaponized arm of the working classes".

With this in mind, they execute their operations far and wide across Karnaca. Black Marketeers pay the Howlers for protection, even though they are starting to grate against extortion. Smaller gangs pay tribute to them, hoping to garner their favor. A small minority of members of the high society even ally themselves with the Howlers, in hopes to bring justice to society. Still, the gang is not bereft of inner turmoil. Several within the ranks are looking to move up, and care little for Paolo's vision. When the time comes, both Paolo and the faithful Howlers may find enemies both inside and outside.

The Howlers are also clashing with the Overseers, thanks to their recruitment drives along the Dust District. Paolo fears the District will become a stronghold of opposition. Members train with the wristbow and the sword. Even if they are in an unfamiliar location in town, Howlers can also identify fellow members and safe houses through secret signs on walls and signals. Their truth is in *Paolo's values*, which compels Howlers to think, ultimately, about how their actions will end up benefiting the less fortunate.

### "WE TILT THE SCALES"

Howlers might squabble amongst themselves from time to time, but they'll always come together to enforce their view of justice. They'll slowly drain high society in their effort to give back to the impoverished masses.

### PAOLO'S FAITHFUL

1. **Lead Dog:** The leader of the Howlers, the one and only, Paolo.
2. **Huer:** Howlers who show commitment to the cause through extreme action get permission to take the ink.
3. **Howler:** Full-fledged Howlers gain training and access to hidden ways through the city, as well as being encouraged to command squealers to do the gang's bidding.
4. **Squealer:** The gang calls new recruits squealers, as they are prone to making mistakes. These have some of the most thankless, bottom-of-the-barrel jobs, and they are expected to give their life if needed for justice's sake.

### HOWLERS GANG STORY HOOKS

- The Black Marketeers have collectively refused to pay their protection money. The Howlers are slowly escalating the threats until the fees are paid, but some suspect there's a ringleader trying to rouse up the people against the Howlers for their own gain.
- Howlers have collected a number of bonecharms, but they have their eyes set on a particular one, said to curse nearby households with economic difficulties (and seemingly held by the Overseers). Will the Howlers strike, risking all-out war? If they are successful, how will they use this power?


I BROKE MY BAC
IN
THE SILVER
MINES

## GRAND SERKONAN GUARD

At the dawn of the empire, the King of Karnaca saw fit to bring the people into armed conflict again and again with Gristol. The Duke and Duchess of Aventa saw an opportunity to gain power, and secretly commandeered the Grand Guard, at that time only the City Watch. With the guard behind them, they seized control of the city.

The Grand Guard has served as both city watch and military force ever since. Though they focus on policing the streets, they also patrol the waters beyond the harbor and often clash with pirates, both on the seas and in the city. They also connect to the Greater Serkonan Guard and the Stewards of Cullero, which protect Serkonos.

The Guards enforce the Duke's law, targeting, among others, black market operations, unlicensed doctors, and tax evaders, as well as fighting pirates off the coast. At the same time, many accept a bribe to allow these practices to continue. They target Howlers, who are criminals of the first order. They also find themselves occasional allies, as Howlers might pay off a guard rather than fight. In addition, the Howlers want to seize control of Karnaca. Forward thinkers within the Howlers are angling to replace the Duke and will need the Guard's support to do so. The Duke hopes to replace much of the domestic Guard with automatons, leaving some guards wondering if there's a role for them at all in the future envisioned by the Duke. Their truth is that of the *cult of personality*; the Guard knows their obligation is first to the Duke, and so they willingly accept a spoon-fed mystification of the Duke's figure to justify the horrible things they do.

### "THE DUKE'S WORD, THE LAND'S LAW"

The Guard's pledge of allegiance is simple enough; the Duke's word is the law of the land, and thus they are expected to carry it out no matter the cost nor the consequences.

### THE DUKE'S LOYAL

1. **Duke's Select:** The Duke has chosen several guards for his personal security. They keep his location and debauchery secret. The Select may have even been involved with securing attendees for the Duke's orgies. At the same time, they have somewhat fallen out of favor due to the brutal reliability of the Clockwork Soldiers.
2. **Veterans/Veteran Marines:** Veterans, also called Cabos, plan larger attacks, command the guards, and monitor surveillance across the island.
3. **Lieutenant:** Lieutenants have proven themselves more effective in the field and lead small missions and patrols as designated by Cabos. They are commonly addressed as Tenientes.
4. **Guards/Marines:** Soldiers enlisted in the Grand Guard serve within the city, enforcing the law and ensuring the surveillance systems continue to function. Increasing numbers of soldiers also serve as marines on Serkonan military and merchant vessels.

### GRAND SERKONAN GUARD STORY HOOKS

- A Cabo has been replaced with a Clockwork Soldier and is willing to betray the Duke. The price for their secrets? Saving their son from a loan shark, who's got him working day and night at a whale oil refinery to pay off a debt.
- A group of elderly guards are planning to rob the Duke and get a pension, one way or another. Their clumsy planning has put them on the Howlers' radar, who intend to use the retirees as cannon fodder for their own plot against the Duke.

## EYELESS GANG

In the late 1700s the Duchess struggled with her grief after the death of her first child. She realized that a practitioner of the occult arts was able to help her in understanding his death. She kept her dalliance with this practitioner secret and started hosting séances with others at her estate. Functional to this was a small group of messenger kids who would then be known as the Eyeless Gang.

Most of the gang associates with occult factions to earn coin via the smuggling and trade of ingredients, specimens, artifacts, etc. The higher ranks of the gang can travel into the Void, reaching out to take hold of the strangest bounties. The Cult dispenses parcels of knowledge in exchange for extortionate sums, controlling the trade of both fake and real amulets and charms. Wherever there's a folk tale, there's an opportunity to profit (and if there ain't, they'll come up with one). Some gang members develop more sophisticated trades, as upper class nobles buy experiences and rituals with no real power to help or harm.

Even with all of that, it's important to have in mind that the most powerful gang members are legitimately interested in the Void. To them, the bulk of the gang serves the double purpose of funding the higher-ups' experiments and escapades, and spreading a web of lies that hides the true nature of the Void. Either for money or for curiosity's sake, the Truth of the gang is that they all *wield people's ignorance* with masterful prowess.

### "THE PRICE OF CURIOSITY"

The Eyeless are a conflictive bunch—coming together only under the promise of supernatural insight and coin. They might be divisive, but they are all hell-bent on achieving their goals, and they won't hesitate on stepping on each other to do so.

### THE SUPERNATURAL LADDER

1. **Spellbinder:** Spellbinders command the gang, though few have actually met one. They cultivate the feeling of a decentralized gang to mask their very clear focus on recruiting people for experiments, gathering funds, and exploring the Void.




2. **Scholars:** Scholars act as mentors, researchers, and even mediums capable of running séances. A desire for status motivates some scholars, while others truly want to grow in knowledge. Unbeknownst to many, scholars are expected to pay into the Cult and may be tempted to participate in the darker practices to do so.
3. **Acolyte:** Once a runner impresses the gang, a mentor begins to oversee their operations. Talented acolytes can find themselves in a comfortable position if willing to exploit their knowledge of local folklore. They know how the tales are woven, and they carry a reputation in the occult community.
4. **Runner:** New members of the gang craft fake amulets and are mostly active in the black market, hunting for rumors and folk tales, spreading misinformation and cashing in thanks to the gullible and the superstitious.




## THE EYELESS GANG STORY HOOKS

- The Eyeless Gang has kidnapped a noble's mother for ransom. They must decide whether to give up their hold on a recently acquired rune, or to see their mother perish. Unless the noble is willing to pay the player characters to intercede...
- As of late, rumors circulating the taverns at Campo Seta Dockyards have revolved around a pale skinned leviathan living off the coast of Karnaca. The sailors say that the creature came from the "depths above", a place beyond the natural world, and that whoever kills it will reap an amazing reward—generously doled out by the Eyeless Gang..


QUINTANA GATES
PRIETO RESERVE
AVENTA QUARTER
JINDOSH MANSION
AVENTA STATION
GRAND SERKONAN CANAL
SERKONAN CANAL
5D
6H
3V
4C
GRAND PALACE
POINT ABELE
SANTIAGO FISHERIES
K A R N A C A


SHINDAEREY PEAK
LEYENDA STEPPES
ROBLEDO WOODLANDS
SIRHROCCO CURRENTS
ROYAL CONSERVATORY
CYRIA GARDENS
BATISTA OVERLOOK
BATISTA MINING DISTRICT
CLEMENTE LANDING (OLD QUARTER)
POINT BATISTA
DOCHERTY'S ROCK
8N
2P
4N
7T
B A Y
NACA
CAPORET PAPERWORKS
SERKONA CARTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

# KARNACA

Karnaca plays a vital role in the economy and politics of the Empire, continuing a long tradition of influence in the isles. The city's military might aids to protect the Empire's southern seas from pirates, while silver from the Batista Mines makes the city an economic power of its own. From inventor Kirin Jindosh in the Aventa Quarter to Doctor Alexandria Hypatia of the Addermire Institute, the innovations of Karnaca also make their mark both in the city and beyond.

The Empire has long relied on Karnaca's contributions, but given considerably less in return. Little wonder, then, that the coup that overthrew the Empire's rightful leader, Empress Emily Kaldwin, sprang out of Karnaca. As a result, the new duke, Luca Abele, instituted a succession of changes that have plunged Karnaca into a period of upheaval and turmoil. Dust from the mines permeates the streets, while walls of light and surveillance keep everyday citizens living in fear. A new faction known as the Howlers has emerged to fight the excesses of the Duke, causing problems of their own. In the midst of it all, the perennial battle between the Abbey of the Everyman and the followers of the Outsider pits dark against light. At this point it may be impossible to tell which is which.



# SERKONOS

The island of Serkonos enjoys warm weather, especially in its southern reaches. Mountainous and lush, it attracts visitors from all over the isles. The bounty of Serkonan grapes and Serkonan blood sausage have conversely made their way to tables well beyond its shores. As for the people, Serkonans share a reputation for friendliness, though that actually varies depending on where they live and on their status. From Bastillian to Saggunto, Serkonos varies much more than its capital in Karnaca would have you believe.

## BASTILLIAN

The northernmost outpost of Serkonos, the city of Bastillian occupies a peninsula that has the dubious honor of also lying closest to the island of Gristol. While Bastillians strongly hold to their Serkonan heritage, they bear more cultural and ethnic ties to Gristol than they may care to admit.

A center for commercial and cultural exchange, the city also acts as the capital of a region owing as much to its farmlands as to the sea. In addition to the regular staples, the farmers produce peaches and figs, the latter of which make up the Rivera fig wine beloved everywhere in Serkonos.



## HISTORY

Long ago, only isolated groups of peaceful shepherds and nomads called Bastillian home. The modest size of its population protected it from the Great Burning. Their biggest threat came from the sea; marauders, likely from Gristol, began to raid the coasts, driving many of the people inland. These raiders added insult to injury, settling along the coast and mixing with the locals, creating a new culture. Over the centuries, Bastillian's proximity to Gristol put the region at the mercy of a number of such invasions, creating a people accustomed to hardship and violence. They learned to capture moments of joy where they could find it.

In the 700s, Bastillian faced invasion yet again, this time from a civilization based in Dunwall. A layer of foreign overlords arrived, enforcing new customs designed to send wealth to a distant capital. The Dunwall elites consolidated a number of villages into the town of Bastillian and built a fortress to defend it from "marauders." In fact, these marauders had lived on the coast seasonally and came to free their fellows, many of whom counted them as kin. The fortress ended up not protecting the people, but imprisoning them.

The Dunwall domains, stretched too far, eventually collapsed from within. The people drove out some of its nobles, but most simply remained, mixing with the locals like the raiders had before them. Bastillian fell into a period of decline, and eventually entered into a tributary relationship with the civilization out of Saggunto.

After Saggunto's decline, Bastillian served largely as a source for mercenaries and conscripted pirates as well as a base to resupply before continuing further into Serkonos. The people earned their rowdy reputation, aided by leaders from Gristol. They had a tendency to exile criminals and ne'er-do-wells by sending them on ships to Bastillian's fortress.

As Gristol grew in prominence, Bastillian fell even further under its orbit, eventually becoming part of a duchy in Gristol. Only the War of the Four Crowns decided Bastillian's true allegiance. Its central location between two crowns made it subject to intrigue and central to military strategy. When the Duke and Duchess of Karnaca inspired the mayor of Bastillian to join their side, the rest of Serkonos fell in line. Bastillian became its own region within Serkonos, and the mayor became the Marquess of Bastillian.

History repeated itself in the 1700s. When tensions between the various regions in Serkonos once again came to a head, Bastillian's decision to swear fealty to Duke Theodanis Abele inspired the rest of Serkonos to follow suit.

## CURRENT ISSUES

Today, a large working class manages shipping in the bustling harbor. The City Watch polices the city through building relationships with the denizens of the docks, tending not to confront criminals except over extreme, violent behavior. As a result, violence is low, but it has permitted the rise of an organization of smugglers, the Channel Reapers.

Named after the channel between Serkonos and Gristol, they largely smuggle people, gold, and bonecharms. The lower classes live in fear of them, and the City Watch has proven ineffective against the Reapers—or even collusive with them.

The Reapers and the Watch are not the only factions active. The Abbey of the Everyman has taken to proselytizing in the seedy sections of town, leading to tension between them and the lower classes and underworld. The Overseers clunk about, oblivious to the damage they do by their mere presence among the beleaguered workers. They are largely unaware that some of their supposed greatest adherents are scheming to attack the institution's center of power.

For their part, the noble and merchant classes project the image of a unified front. Underneath, the same old counter-currents of native versus foreign power linger. The new nobility derived from the Marquess and the Serkonan Duke hold sway in politics, while the old money from the era of Gristolian domination puts those nobles ahead of their Serkonan counterparts. A tug of war over shipping, politics, and status strains relationships in the high end quarters of town. It could be some of them have allied with the Reapers to gain an edge.

### STORY HOOKS

- The disappearance of an Overseer plunges the City Watch into chaos. Investigation pulls back the veil on the Channel Reapers, and the noble family that is paying to keep the crime syndicate's activities quiet. Revealing the family's identity, however, could shake the city to its core.
- The Channel Reapers are smuggling a hoard of bonecharms they believe to be cursed. Therefore, no one in or out of their organization wants to touch them. Smuggling the charms before the Overseers can call in the Abbey's big guns could end up a comedy of errors. Especially when it becomes evident who spread the rumors of it being cursed.

## CULLERO

Karnaca may be the capital of Serkonos, but Cullero is its face. More people have visited Cullero, drunk its wine, and smoked its cigars than have interacted with the other cities of Serkonos combined. The city sits upon the eastern shores of Serkonos, where it welcomes visitors from all over the isles. Its pleasing warm summer months, the winds that power much of the town, and the spicy foods and sweet-smelling cigars make Cullero a can't-miss destination.

Cliffs dominate the west side of the city. From there, several large windmills pipe energy down to the downtown and the tourist district at sea level. Few realize that the city rests on shaky foundations: a marsh that is slowly seeking to reclaim it.

### HISTORY

Cullero was a bog. The marshlands once welcomed nothing more than foulness among its reeds. Creatures with an endless array of teeth stalked whatever dared venture onto its shores. Only the brave or foolish would settle here. And so they did.

The Cullero Gap protected the area from the vagaries of the weather as well as the greatest plague of the eastern seas: pirates. Early traders set up outposts, eventually building piers to meet the ships far from shore. The seas often turned, eviscerating the boards and washing away the settlement. The people would then start again.

With time, Cullero became known for its military prowess. The Culleros earned a mean reputation on the seas, as mercantile bullies and smugglers, and many believed that they were not victims of piracy, but perpetrators of it. They traded heavily for iron, using it to shovel fill into the swamps and build a proper harbor.

Eventually, they decided not to rely on trade alone. They gathered their allies and sailed to Karnaca. There they lay siege, hoping for access to its iron resources. Unbeknownst to them, spies managed to slip through the blockades and appeal to the Lady of Saggunto for aid. Her forces came and drove out the Culleros. When she tried to pursue, however, she found the guerrilla war along the seas to Cullero too costly for her ships. She left a weakened Cullero to its own devices. When the Ximenan civilization collapsed, the raids on Karnaca and Cullero from pirates continued, with neither settlement gaining prominence.

In the centuries that followed, Gristol grew in power. Sailors from its navy deserted to Cullero, bringing with them new military tactics as well as further innovations. The town took on a military character, policed by stewards and led by its Chief. When a king rose in Karnaca, he won Cullero's loyalty with promises of iron and soldiers. Unfortunately, that meant Cullero bore much of the brunt of the War of the Four Crowns. They welcomed the Duke and Duchess's coup that brought them into the Empire and saved Culleran lives.

The Empire brought a flourishing of arts and culture, attracting more visitors, which in turn encouraged more arts and culture for those visitors. By the time the Abbey grew in prominence, the hidden arts fell into legend in favor of hard steel. Even today, a stint in the Stewards of Cullero serves as a right of passage for many Serkonans, including members of the ducal House Abele. Cullero now sits as a premiere destination for visitors around the empire, as well as a premiere target for marauders from the Serkonan isles to the east.

## CURRENT ISSUES

The waves of visitors to Cullero bring their own set of problems. Many come looking for fun, caring little for the city they leave behind. The black market supplies the requirements for every vice, even counterfeit Cullero cigars. Outposts of the Eyeless Gang in Karnaca and similar gangs in Gristol meet on neutral ground in Cullero, sometimes clashing in violence, or worse, collaborating on some plot. The Stewards have their hands full as it is. Overseers offer little aid as they instead judge and damn these excesses on street corners, sometimes with threats of physical violence. Their behavior breeds tension between them and the residents, who depend on the income from these visitors.

Rather than overburden the Stewards, the Chief Steward has created a new organization, the Steward Engineers, to focus on the hidden secret of Cullero. From the marsh it came, to the marsh it may return. Sinkholes have opened up even inside buildings, which the engineers must hastily close using the excuse of an infestation. Unfortunately, followers of the Outsider have seized upon these abandoned locations for use in their rituals.

### STORY HOOKS

- A raid on a black market turns into a struggle to escape as a sinkhole opens up and traps enemy camps together inside. Whether the group survives or not will depend on their ability to cooperate with their rivals in order to get out.
- The Chief Steward sends the Stewards to police the visitors district, where they discover that an Overseer has been murdered during an apparent ritual. Unearthing the culprit reveals there may be something rotten within the Overseers organization itself

## SAGGUNTO

The city of Saggunto lies in Serkonos' western mountains. The smaller Isle of Serkos protects it from calamities both natural and man-made, while the Serkos Channel furnishes all its water needs. Unlike its larger siblings, Karnaca and Bastillian, Saggunto presents as a sleepy town known more for its flatbread than the spicy foods typical of Serkonos. While Cullero and Karnaca both attract nobility visiting on holiday, Saggunto has largely escaped this fate. Some blame the failing wine industry, which produces wine that vintners in Karnaca have long since surpassed.

With its wooden bridges connecting quaint neighborhoods, Saggunto comes across as a throwback to a time before industrialization. In fact, in the outskirts of town lies a center of industry, which helps support a noble class that traces its lineage all the way back to ancient times.

### HISTORY

Saggunto largely avoided the fate of other Serkonan towns. While Bastillian bore the brunt of mauraders to the north, pirates favored the many hidden coves of eastern Serkonos and its islands.

Left relatively unmolested, the people of Saggunto had to eke out an existence on the mountainsides. They relied on ingenuity to plant grapes and subsistence foods as well as care for goats that could navigate the terrain. They developed irrigation under the direction of a growing elite. The mountains yielded their greatest treasure: iron, with which farmers created tools to improve their yield.

Their sophistication put them far ahead of their neighbors. When marauders finally dared the Serkos Channel, they found impenetrable natural defenses and armed combatants. After the people of Saggunto expelled the raiders, their victims sought refuge in Saggunto.

The Lord of Saggunto, Ximena, showed little kindness to the refugees. She created an underclass of workers who toiled in mines, cut down forests, built stone monuments and, eventually, filled the infantry. With no second thoughts devoted to that, historians have regarded the Ximenan dynasty as a golden age, lasting for almost a century, where fine arts flourished, leading to the production of intricate carvings of bone, iron, and wood.



The Ximenan dynasty ended abruptly, and the successor proved ineffectual, with the underclass rising up against their oppressors. They sacked the capital, destroying symbols—and people—who represented the old ways. The people started a collective to rule the town. Many nobles went into hiding. Others joined in. Saggunto immediately lost control of the rest of Serkonos as pirates regained prominence, falling into decline.

Eventually, a traditionalist group gained control of the ruling collective. They believed Saggunto could only grow strong with centralized leadership. They reached out to Karnaca's king and negotiated joining the kingdom. They asked the king to appoint a leader over them. In a show of wisdom, the king appointed a Saggunto noble with lineage back to Ximena's days, who retained the ancient title of Lord of Saggunto. The Lords have served the King, and later the Duke, ever since.

Saggunto might have continued peaceably had it not been for the rise of the Abbey of the Everyman. They found in Saggunto blasphemous altars to dark forces. The spread of the religion created a new iconoclasm, reminiscent of the overthrow of Ximena's line. The Oracular Sisters in Karnaca saw a way out, connecting the old altars to concepts familiar to followers of the Abbey. They then consecrated them to the Abbey as new sites of pilgrimage. To this day, few know of their ancient origins.

The cooperation between Karnaca and Saggunto benefited both sides. In return for their fealty, the Duke of Karnaca sent Rabinos Abele to construct beautifully wrought wooden bridges. Likewise, Saggunto's ingenuity led to improvements in iron refining. This innovation in turn yielded the production of furnaces in Saggunto to feed the fires of industrialization. Saggunto remains largely an elite town of well-to-do nobles and merchants, while the working class focuses on furnace development and farming.

## CURRENT ISSUES

The Overseers have only a moderate presence in Saggunto, as the Abbey perceives the city to be completely converted. Followers of the Outsider have long lived and worshiped in secret in Saggunto, but someone has been forcing them out into the light.

The rise of wind power in Karnaca has led to some unrest in Saggunto, which has relied on more traditional, labor-intensive fuels for its furnaces. A growing number of unemployed have either left for Karnaca, or are agitated for the comfortable nobility to share the wealth.

Saggunto has taken steps to tap into the market of visitors who come to holiday in Serkonos. They have begun to play up their former civilization. As a result, some of the unemployed have taken to breaking the law by digging up ancient relics and selling them on the collectibles market to make ends meet. Not all of these relics are safe.

## STORY HOOKS

- A rash of vandalizations on the historic Abbey altars prove to be an attempt to restore the altars to their original purposes. The party must choose whether to track down these worshipers or risk bringing the enforcement arm of the Overseers to Saggunto.
- Trinkets from the Ximenan civilization begin to turn up for sale, but no one knows the source. Tracking them down reveals an unemployed group of diggers have found ancient ruins... and may have caused a fissure into the Void.



# Chapter 10

# BEYOND THESE SHORES

## MORLEY

To the northeast of Gristol lies the island of Morley, a beautiful, verdant place as long as one can ignore the persistent, dreary damp. Sheep and cattle roam the lush hills, the ringing of their bells, bleating, drifting across the landscape. The heady aroma of rich soil and ripening crops comes from the fields that cover the shallow valleys, contrasting with dark moors and mires. Even though the land flourishes, the sky presses down from above with an ever-present shroud of dark clouds and frequent storms.

The fiercely independent Morleyans rail against the unrelenting gloom by devoting themselves to creative pursuits. Despite the beauty and seeming pastoral quality of Morley, there is a rumbling, sometimes violent, frustration with the Empire: a monarchy vying for power using whatever means necessary, an incessant famine, and a plague of pirates raiding its shores. Like a rose, Morley has its thorns.

### HAVEN FOR THE INVENTIVE

Fish and agriculture make up the backbone of Morley's economy, making its people a critical member in the Empire and a target for brigands. Perpetually rough seas and frequent storms make life challenging, but the hard working Morleyans provide the majority of the food for Tyvia and export a large portion to Gristol and Serkonos. The famous Morley apple has a sweet fragrance and a delicate flavor. Legend has it that the fruit can heal common ailments, and the locals eat them every day, whether for the taste or the health benefits depends on who one asks. Regardless, this delicacy is not to be missed.

High on a cliff overlooking the capital city of Wynnedown, the king and queen of Morley rule the island from their beautiful palace. Though they are monarchs in name, and retain some autonomy within the Empire, the king and queen answer to the whims

of the Gristol Parliament. After the Morley Insurrection—a violent bid for independence—Dunwall dismantled Morley's ability to self-govern. Many Morleyan citizens continue to resent the Empire's meddling and power. The severe constraints on the Morleyan navy, making them ineffective in defense from pirates, adds to the disillusionment. The atmosphere is particularly tense around the anniversary of the Insurrection.

The Morleyans encourage artistic endeavors and value education above all else. In every home, one can find amateur academics, artists, musicians, philosophers, and poets. Dotting the island are galleries and museums dedicated to scholarly and creative pursuits. The people of Morley shine with life, almost out of defiance of the miserable weather and their political situation. Perched next to the water amid the docks and fish markets, one can find the Caulkenny Museum of the Arts. The curator displays stunning arts and crafts reaching all the way back to before the War of Four Crowns. There's even an area dedicated to the famous, or infamous, local dish jellied ox tongue.

In the rolling hills just outside of Wynnedown sits a sprawling series of buildings with spiraling towers and graceful spires. Bells ring a merry melody on the hour every hour. As a point of pride, every Morleyan knows the tune the bells play at the University of Wynnedown. Because of the cultural emphasis on learning, the university is one of the best institutions in the Empire, attracting many of the top minds across the islands and students from only the most elite families. Unfortunately, most Morleyans can't afford to attend the prestigious institution. Though they're still proud of their university, many are angry that more Morleyans can't enroll in their national treasure and blame the aristocrats from Gristol and Tyvia.

## FOLKLORE

### FESTIVAL OF CHURNERS

Along the southern coast of Morley, in the city of Alba, it's not unusual to hear a large splash in the middle of the night. The locals say that the sound means that their deceased relatives are near.

The creature thrashing in the water is one of the massive Morleyan eels that inhabit the seas around the island. They slide through the ocean, on the hunt. They smash their prey against the rocks, then disappear back down into the depths.

In Alba, the myth goes that eels are the messengers of the dead.

Once a year, the Morleyans don red robes, shuck off their shoes, and make their way to the water. There, they erect banners for the dead, messages for the messengers. Once at the shore, families cook feasts together and toss parts of it to the waves to feed their lost loved ones. This is the famed Festival of Churners in Alba, a celebration of both the dead and the living.

Even though fishing is one of the main occupations in Morley, a hooked or netted eel is always, always thrown back into the water by Alban fishermen, as dead eels are considered the worst of luck. Some think that this superstition is why Lizzy Stride, originally from Morley, named her gang the Dead Eels.



## ASCENDANCY OF THE KING AND QUEEN

According to the stories, many, many years ago, long before the War of Four Crowns, civil war for power and resources tore apart the southern half of Morley. Outside what is now the city of Arran, a terrible battle drenched the fields in blood. Many Morleyans died.

As the battle raged, two witches waded through the bodies, no weapon able to touch them. With a gesture, they forced both armies to their knees. They chose a girl from one army and a boy from the other. The witches led them up onto a huge boulder that erupted from the earth.

There, they crowned the king and queen of Morley, the first monarchs of the island, ending the war. Every king or queen since then has held their coronation at the rock outside of Arran.

They say that on a quiet night, one can hear orders from long dead soldiers echo across the ancient battlefield. On stormy nights, the ghost of a warrior from times of old might accompany travelers through the fields and whisper secrets known only to the Void.

In the beginning, Morley belonged to the witches and hags. When you hear whispers in the fog or songs in the raindrops, it's those who have touched the Void communing with us, or so the myths say.

The most powerful coven held what is now Wynnedown.

When the people begged to let them stay, the witches asked, "What have you to offer?"

"Bread and fish."

The witches frowned.

A little girl came up to them. "A song?" And, she sang.

The witches turned to each other. "Show us more."

And, so the people did, dancing, philosophizing, performing...

The witches nodded. "Keep creating. Keep learning. This is the price of Wynnedown. This land is yours until you can no longer pay for it."

The legends claim that the witches didn't leave. They lived nearby, so that they could watch the people of Wynnedown thrive.

That is why we call this city the haven for the inventive. We will never stop creating. It's the price we agreed to.

Sosanna Driscoll, Amateur Archaeologist, Poet, Morleyan

## CONFLICTS

Inside warm pubs and at boisterous dining tables all around Morley, one hears talk of independence. Many Morleyans struggle with their place in the Empire, and many of them support the idea of independence—both in private and in public. After the Morley Insurrection of 1801, the subsequent restrictions in autonomy, and the exorbitant cost of whale oil, it's not uncommon for Morleyans to resent Gristol and the Empire. Some Morleyans go so far as to join gangs to undermine the Empire or groups like the Ox Tongues whose goal is to evict the Empire from their island by any means necessary. Violence isn't uncommon.

The depth of the water right off Morley's coast allows for easy transport at no risk to the hulls of large ships. But, that also makes the ports an easy target for pirates and smuggling operations. The Empire strictly regulates the size and operation of the Morleyan navy as one of the stipulations after their surrender after the Morley Insurrection. As a result, Morley is left with a small navy that cannot react with the speed needed to eradicate the pirate problem. And, so the problem persists, and the people of Morley suffer.

The famine that has ravaged a big part of the island is still claiming lives to this day. A whole generation of ruined youths are left to pick up the pieces, as family members attempt to reconnect to the ever growing diaspora of Morleyans living far from home. The social fabric of Morley, deeply damaged by war and famine, looks south for solutions to their issue, as they attempt to bring new crops that might save the population from starvation.

Railcars rattle through Wynnedown on only a handful of tracks. The distinct buzz and hum of whale oil technology isn't ever-present like it is in Dunwall. It makes Morley feel stuck in the past. None of this sits well with the Morleyans, who love technology and its potential. Gristol, and Dunwall in particular, require vast amounts of whale oil to function. This means that what little processed whale oil Morley receives is reserved for the wealthiest residents, as the average Morleyan cannot afford it. The extortionate pricing of whale oil means that even more Morleyans are leaving the island to settle in Karnaca, where a large Morleyan population established itself after the Morley Insurrection.

## THE MORLEYAN ADVENTURE

Where can an adventurer find an undertaking that will lead them to the lush but waterlogged island of Morley?

Slip down to the docks and see what the fishmongers have to say in any port. They receive much of their catch from the sailors of Morleyan fishing vessels or those that know them.

While searching for weapons, a meal, or elixirs, merchants often have tidbits of information from the farmers who provided the food, the craftspeople who created the merchandise, or even family and friends from their home island of Morley.

Occasionally, agents of the Morleyan crown find themselves in the various cities searching for adventurers who can take a job and keep a secret.

Sometimes, it pays to have a gang in one's debt. It's not unheard of for the Tallboys to hold a member of the Ox Tongue gang with the plan of getting intelligence out of them.

Around institutes of higher learning all throughout the Empire, one can hear gossip about the research going on at the University of Wynnedown. What's particularly interesting is finding out who is sponsoring the various research projects... and why.

## CONTACTS

### A HATTER HEIST

In the less savory areas of the Empire, one can hear about jobs that require less-than-moral conduct. There are some who sell this kind of information, as well. **Berk Wisby**, a man of indeterminate age with a socially invisible sort of quality to him, is one such merchant. His one distinguishing characteristic is the brown bowler hat he's never seen without. On the right side of his hat is a small pin representing a small, round clockwork gear.

With enough coin or compensation, Wisby might just mention a rumor he heard about the Hatters. In a bid to regain their lost territories, the Hatter gang is looking to line their coffers and change the balance of power in the Dunwall underworld. The Historical Museum of Alba holds many rare artifacts, including a life-size sculpture of a Morleyan eel cast in gold with gems for eyes and markings. It's said that the eel was a gift from one of the witches who saved the island in the past, and that it has mystical powers. The Hatters, however, don't care a whit about that. They're targeting the precious metal and jewels.

Whether the listener wants to join the Hatters, stop them, or even beat them to the heist isn't Wisby's concern. Just know, he has a blade for anyone who tries to cross him.

### INVENTOR LOST

Sometimes, desperate people put out ads looking for adventurers, such as one **Evin Thornock** on the island of Morley. She's plastered posters all over Wynnedown looking for help, but to no avail. She's even taken out ads in the local periodicals.

If someone were to reach out to her, she would tell them about her brilliant sister, Innis. Innis was one of the few Morleyans to secure a position at Wynnedown University. She's a genius inventor, fascinated with chemistry and improving agriculture. However, Innis's last letter to Evin simply said that she'd stumbled across a strange reaction that attracted the attention of a number of people she didn't trust. And, then, she vanished.

Evin just wants to find her sister. She suspects that the Ox Tongues, a militant Morleyan independence group, might have her. But, perhaps her kidnappers are government agents. Worried and exhausted, Evin has concerns that some in the Empire might not want Innis to come home alive.

Evin wants to hire someone to rescue her sister, but there might be others with bigger purses who want Innis assassinated... or want her knowledge for themselves.

### BATTLE OF FRAEPORT

To hear news of the world, stop by the docks of any port. Look for a captain named **Enerstina Grimstead**. She's tall with a scar across her cheek and a hook for a left hand. No one knows the world's goings on like the fearless Captain Grimstead.

Buy her a drink and she'll complain about the siege, and how it complicates getting into Fraeport. Officially, the port is closed, but she won't let that stop her from chasing her contracts. Those goose-saddling pirates aren't making things easy for her, though.

She doesn't much care who ends up in control of Fraeport, pirates or citizens. If someone, say an adventurer, rescues the town from the pirates, however, she won't have to renegotiate her shipping rates. If the pirates get the help they need to take over, well, she can handle herself around pirates... But, if it goes on much longer, she's apt to storm in there and start swinging her hook around without caring who's in the way.

### REBELS OF MORLEY

Whispers around the finer places in Wynnedown say that some of the packing and shipping moguls are searching for something and hiring adventurers to acquire it. Their representative is one **Keene Allford**, a tall fellow with a thin mouth, shifty eyes, and a top hat perched on his thinning hair. One can find him lurking about the back offices of the warehouse district in Wynnedown.

Get him talking to find out that the powerful want designs for war machines. They're open to hiring someone to create their desired technology, steal it, or kill for it.

The assumption is that they will use it to win their independence from Gristol... however with fierce business competition, pirates on every shore, and dissatisfaction with the status quo, who knows how the new technology will be put to work.

Granted, Dunwall would love to hear about this, considering how many restrictions they've put on the Morleyan military and navy. The king and queen of Morley might pay to know what's happening on their island, as well.

### WITCHES OF WYNNEDOWN

In the Whale & Kitten, a pub beloved by the locals in the outskirts of Wynnedown, one might find **Sosanna Driscoll**, an amateur archaeologist and folklore enthusiast. She always carries with her a huge collection of local legends, maps, and journals.

Whenever she meets the adventuring type, she sees if they're interested in helping out with a project. She can't pay now, but if her hunch proves fruitful, they'll both be rich.

Some of the papers in her bag are the culmination of years of research. She thinks she knows where the Witches of Wynnedown, the hags who ruled this part of the island originally, went to live after they ceded the land to the Morleyans. Most adventurers leave when they realize that she's chasing a myth.

However, those who stay will hear that she thinks that the Witches lived in a cave down the coast in a cove that is now full of pirates...

So, she just needs someone to fight a bunch of pirates, protect her from any traps left by the Witches, and help her find all they left behind, which might include gifts from the ancient Morleyans. "Hopefully", she'll add cheerfully, "no one will die".



## MOTIVATIONS

There's always a sense of peril, mystery and excitement on Morley, just the thing adventurers crave.

With the high number of academics, scholars have delved deep into every subject imaginable. Tomes containing clues about ancient treasures rest, waiting, in dusty attics. Bound journals describing a never-before-seen technology hide away on a forgotten shelf in a library. In a musty bookstore, one might even find secrets of the Void itself in a ratty codex long abandoned by its owner. There are also famous texts detailing strange chemical experiments or recording the history of the Outsider, but those are held in museums, galleries, or even the royal palace in Wynnedown, but that shouldn't be a problem for the more intrepid adventurer... or thief.

If an adventurer has less-than-legal interests or an aromatic sense of justice, the grimy, smelly underworld of whale oil smuggling on Morley is a lively one. Due to cost and scarcity, the whale oil black market thrives. More than a little blood has been spilled over this resource. The whale oil dealers tend to stay near the docks where the fishing vessels bob in Wynnedown and Caulkenny, the biggest cities with the populations that can afford illicit whale oil.



With the king and queen of Morley so bound to the whims of Dunwall, rumor has it that the Morleyan monarchs worry about holding onto the power they retain. And, they are looking for ways to gain more influence in the Empire. This means that they often quietly hire adventurers. Rumor has it that they pay good coin for those who will spy for them in Dunwall, those who will find inventors who want to defect to Morley, those who will kidnap inventors who can't be persuaded, and assassinate Morleyan detractors.

Those who are fighting for independence welcome any help they can get, and the rewards can be great. Some of the gangs who oppose the Empire have underworld connections on every island and may even know some very elusive people others are trying to find. When aristocrats support independence, they do so quietly, but with very large purses. Thanks to the independence fighter's search for weapons, supplies, information, or other bloody business, an adventurer might just end up a national hero or a wealthy bandit. There is a lot of intrigue and adventure to be found under Morley's gray skies.

# TYVIA

To the far north of Gristol is Tyvia, a cold, bleak island of harsh climes and deadly creatures. Craggy, snow-encased mountains dominate the view from anywhere on the island. The frequent howls of the wild hounds and the roars of roaming bears mean that something or someone has become prey. Very little grows here, and the people rely on imports of agricultural goods. The iron ores and metalwork that comes from Tyvia are unparalleled, however, and are one of the main sources of income for the island. Survival here isn't easy, but the people are stubborn and hardy

## THE LAND OF COLD

This frozen, mountainous world produces luxurious furs, superior metal ores, and the best wine in the Empire. Hunters and trappers face incredible peril and a frigid death as they track down elusive prey for the pelts and hides that adorn the fashionable attire of the Empire's aristocrats and royalty. Seal, fox, and ermine furs command the greatest prices. The furs used in Tyvian greatcoats and the like are from more common animals, like bears, hounds, and rabbits, that don't sell as well outside of Tyvia.

Established deep in the mountains, mining towns extract and process the famed Tyvian ore. From weapons to jewelry, this metal, when worked properly, can withstand incredible abuse or shine like a gem. The mining companies ship the raw ore out across the Empire, but no one can work the metal like a Tyvian smith. Inventors, businessmen, and militaries all across the Empire often commission work from the smiths on Tyvia. It's no exaggeration to say that secret designs for weapons, manufacturing, ships, and more fill workshops all around the island.

Small, delicate vineyards inhabit the rare plots of fertile land next to the southern coasts. The red grapes grown there are a surprising pop of color against the chilly, white landscape. Allowing the grapes to freeze gives the wine created from them a mild, elegant sweetness. Keeping the grapes alive is a battle against the elements themselves, and very few vintners possess the knowledge to do so. Only those with refined tastes and enormous purses get the chance to try this delicacy.

Tyvians greet visitors to their islands with a chilly politeness. Culturally, they are a proud, but aloof, people with a practical, survivalist nature. Because their environment is dark for half the year and has a stark appearance, they value beauty and color. They favor fabrics with complex patterns. Their architecture is almost whimsical in appearance. With such talented metalsmiths throughout the island, intricate metal jewelry laced with bright stones is also popular throughout. Through sheer will, they've carved out life on their unrelenting island.

Because they joined the Empire early on, and helped to quash the Morley Insurrection, Tyvia enjoys more self-governing autonomy than their sister island. A group of sixteen men and women who represent the different island districts make up the Presidium, the Tyvian ruling body. Voting by the citizens is mandatory, strictly enforced,

and monitored, creating no doubt that each member of the Presidium joined legitimately. The Presidium makes most of the major decisions and judgements regarding governance, however, they do answer to the High Judges, a group of three people who go by code names. Who they are and how they become High Judges is a mystery that only a select few know.

## FOLKLORE

### BONECHARMS

In the isolated town of Pradym, bears prowl the edges of the city. With fangs the length of a man's arm, claws that can puncture metal, and a roar that can deafen, the bears are respected. Pradym sees the bears almost as a part of the town.

For generations, they've told stories about the bears and where they come from. The myth goes that the fierce bears of Tyvia are a manifestation of the environment itself, always dangerous and untrustworthy. When it's time for the ice and the winds to wander the land, they transform into the bears. Their fangs, in particular, represent the threat these people face every day from the nature right outside their doors.

They believe that by using the fangs and turning them into something useful, the people of Pradym prove that they belong on the land and that they can thrive despite the elements. It's almost as though they're challenging death itself.

From the teeth and claws, the townspeople of Pradym make jewelry and decorative items. They also create tools and climbing shoes using the hard, sharp pieces. Most interestingly, the people of Pradym still secretly practice the ancient craft of carving bonecharms from bear fangs. These bonecharms retain the traditional carving styles but incorporate sophisticated metalwork that gives these bonecharms a uniquely delicate appearance.

Because of the Abbey of the Everyman, the people of Pradym hide their bonecharms and don't share them with strangers. Persuading a craftsperson to part with their bonecharm will take a lot of compensation or a lot of trust.

Also, be warned. Hunting a Tyvian bear is no easy task. It takes a lot of bravery and perhaps a little foolishness.

### PRINCE KALLISARR

From theater plays to collections of tales to legend upon legend, every district has its own folktales of the renowned Prince Kallisarr, a figure from before the War of Four Crowns. Every city claims him for their own, saying that he came from there. What's the truth? It seems that he belongs to all of Tyvia.

In the city of Alexin, they say that the charming, affable rakehell, Prince Kallisarr, was also an incredible strategist. None could beat him at chess. And, he commanded troops and navies with the same prowess.

He marched through the icy plains and peaks of Tyvia, easily defeating the other princes. He even took over the island of Gristol. As his unstoppable military began to descend upon Morley, a jealous lover poisoned him. As he lay dying in agony, his last words were, "Tyvia and the Isles will be one."

The myth goes on to suggest that Prince Kallisarr almost created the Empire long before the War of Four Crowns, something the Alexins take pride in. Because of this legend, they also feel that the Empire was inevitable. They supported joining the Empire early on and were some of the most fervent fighters trying to subdue the Morley Insurrection.

Some Alexins even believe that it will eventually fall to them to rule the Empire as heirs to Prince Kallisarr, but, for now, they are content to wait... or so they claim.

It's possible that all the different tales about the beloved prince refer to different men or no men at all, but one thing is certain. The legend of Prince Kallisarr won't die anytime soon.

*I am from Meya. There, the howls of the hounds start as soon as the sun dips below the horizon.*

*We can't stay in the safety of the city. Hunters must hunt. Miners must mine. We lose people to the storms, the cold, and the animals every year.*

*In our city, our parents tell our children that the people who vanish into the wilderness become the hounds: hungry for warmth and human flesh, trapped in fur and wildness. They no longer remember what it is to be human. So, for us, it's a kindness to kill a hound and release the person it was.*

*We hunt them only when they start roaming close to the city. They are formidable beasts and difficult to outsmart. It truly is as if they once had a person's mind. It takes a coordinated group of the most talented to kill them... and even then, it's dangerous.*

*The scars on my face and my missing eye are testament to that, to them, I suppose.*

*It reminds me to always respect the hounds of Tyvia.*

*Dasha Katko, Hunter, Fur Trader, Tyvian*

## CONFLICTS

Even though the citizens vote for the Presidium members, the candidates and the outcomes are predetermined by the government and the High Judges. In addition, the Presidium has a penchant for arresting dissenters and detractors for even minor offenses, sending them to one of the notorious prison camps for months if not years. As a result, many citizens feel disillusioned with their government. As a society, there's an unspoken agreement to make sure that the Presidium never catches wind of anything

that they could consider a "problem." Bribery and corruption are rampant in Tyvia. As long as something can be kept quiet, no one ever need hear about it. Snitches are not looked upon kindly. Take heed, the wilderness isn't the only dangerous part of this island.

The severe climate and bitter cold of Tyvia aren't conducive to agriculture of any kind. Even the famed Tyvian red vintners fight a desperate battle against the elements. Most of Tyvia's food comes from Morley. Some of the more luxury goods for those with the coin for it come from Serkonos. Everything else that isn't a local resource comes from Gristol. Those with the connections and power to ship goods and those with the money to buy large quantities of commodities have managed to create a stranglehold over the economy, leaving entire communities in Tyvia in dire straits and severe debt, leading many to rely on crime to survive. Outside those populations, high prices have led to a vibrant underworld of smugglers.

Finally, just traveling through Tyvia is no easy task. With deadly animals and even deadlier cold to contend with, one must hire a guide. Unfortunately, brigands also wait along the roads, ready to attack a party and leave them to freeze.

## THE TYVIAN ADVENTURE

Rumors about Tyvia run rampant through pubs and the underworld. Everyone wants their hands on an unseen piece of technology or a bottle of precious Tyvian red.
Inmates in the prison camps tend to make friends in all the wrong places. Finding someone who paid their dues and earned their freedom could easily result in a job that will test any adventurer's mettle.

When the highborn need to go low, they reach out to adventurers who can't be traced back to them. People who claim to be High Judges or even current Presidium members might show up in the seedy underbelly of society or send a trusted agent in their place looking for adventurers to do their dirty work.

Recently, the local papers announced that Hedwig Claridge, smuggler extraordinaire for the Roaring Boys gang, is waiting on a ship in Dabokva's port to be transferred to a temporary jail cell in WinterTree. Claridge has all the connections, loot, and money anyone could want—as long as you can get to her and smuggle her out.

Ask any merchant of wine and one might just hear about the ups and downs, both legal and illegal, of the Tyvian wine industry. Sabotage, artificial production limits, low quality wine from other regions being passed off as the prized Tyvian red... good wine is big business in the Empire.

## CONTACTS

### JAILBIRDS

Because of the close ties the Presidium has with the powers in Dunwall, their reach is far. It's not unusual for them to find and imprison people on the other islands. It's also not unusual for Dunwall to request imprisonments for certain, "troublesome" individuals.
Framed for a crime? Falsely accused by the Empire? That often ends in a ship ride to a Tyvian prison.

On rare occasions, prisoners, with help from the outside, have cleared their names and lived to return to civilized life. The only known escapees disappeared before they reached the prison camps, like **Lizzy Stride** of the Dead Eels.

In the dark alleys between buildings in the warehouse district of Dabokva, one might run into **Orrel Kravec**, a slender, wiry man with a wily intellect. He's been in several Tyvian prisons for short stints because of his affiliation with the Bladesmiths, a Tyvian gang. Their top forger is in the Nesha Labor Camp, and he needs her out for a job.

Because of Tyvia's reputation for having incredibly secure prisons, there's room for some firsts. Will Orrel's colleague, Kiska Burdin, be the first to escape from a Tyvian prison? Will someone be the first to take over one of the brutal prison camps from the inside?

## TECHNOLOGY THIEVES

Visiting pubs around the University of Wynnedown or even Dunwall, one might run into a bitter, bespectacled young man named **Lander Deering**. He dresses like an aristocrat but doesn't have the air of one. As he's downing drink after drink, he might just bemoan the fact that his scientific rival, Gilmer Gripp, received an official sponsorship from the University of Wynnedown for his invention even though "his invention is stupid, and his name is even stupider. Gilmer is no Innis Thornock, that's for sure."

All Lander knows is that the manufacturing contract for Gilmer's prototype went to one of the metalworking factories in Yaro. He'd love it if someone stole the designs or



sabotaged the factory. Begrudgingly, and with plenty of drinks in him, he might even reveal that a competitor might pay some serious coin for the designs or the prototype itself.

As he becomes drunker and drunker, he might even reveal some of his own plans for his own inventions involving whale oil.

### THE FUR HEIRESS

In the Tyvian capital city of Dabokva, adventurers may run into **Stesha Ekomov**, heiress to the Ekomov Luxuries fur empire. She wears expensive fabrics in stunning colors and always carries a voltaic gun. She frequents the finest restaurants, theaters, and lounges in the city in the evenings. During the day, Stesha runs the warehouse and shipping part of the business. With her remarkable sense of intuition and uncanny knack for survival, it takes more than a little courage to cross her.

This heiress often hires adventurers looking for coin to protect her goods as they travel overland from the landlocked city of Pradym to her warehouse in Dabokva. She requires smarts, muscle, and a powerful will to live out of those she contracts with, as they'll be facing hounds, bears, bandits, and the elements.

While Stesha wants adventurers to guard her caravans of furs, others want to steal her merchandise, and yet others want to smuggle people and goods around Tyvia hidden in her shipments.



### BEREZIN'S BONECHARMS

With the stained knees of his trousers, the dirt under his fingernails, and his shock of wild, red hair, **Wilfryd Hardaway** doesn't look like the kind of man who could command a meeting with the wealthiest individuals in the Empire of the Isles. But, as one of the top antiques dealers in all the islands, he has the reputation and the wealth to talk to whomever he pleases.

He tends to frequent jewelry stores, antique stores, and bookstores all across the Empire.

Find him and ask him what he's looking for right now. He might mention some Tyvian jewelry made of precious ore or a bottle of red from 1786. Win his trust, and he might just bring up a buyer of his who is on the hunt for a cache of rare bear fang bonecharms. Illegal goods are more lucrative, he'll point out.

He picked up a journal from an unknown archaeologist in Morley. It mentions Elga Berezin, the most well known bonecharm craftsperson of her time. Just as Berezin started to become famous, the Abbey of the Everyman was rising to power, murdering heretics and destroying any artifacts they didn't approve of. This journal hints at a secret collection of powerful bonecharms Berezin hid just before the Abbey killed her.

Wilfryd has a buyer and he has the coin to pay adventurers. However, stealing his journal could mean cutting out the middleman. Taking the bonecharms for oneself could also be appealing.

### THE MYSTERIOUS BOX

A young man named **Gav Tyurin** works in a small jewelry shop in the city of Dunwall. The shop specializes in imported Tyvian metalwork.

Gav seems distracted. If pressed, and if he is feeling talkative, he might reveal that his brother, a jeweler's apprentice in Tyvia, sent him a strange package several weeks ago. From behind the counter, he'll pull out a heavy metal box with sliding panels, gears, and buttons on every side. He hasn't heard from his brother since. And, he hasn't figured out how to open the box.

Gav would like to hire someone to either figure out what's inside the box or to find out what happened to his brother, Jurg.

## MOTIVATIONS

Money, revenge, and power are all waiting for intrepid adventurers in Tyvia.

Imports. Exports. Sensitive information. Luxury goods. The possibilities for a creative party of adventurers are endless. Wine, furs, and weapons using the latest technology are always leaving Tyvia. Food, whale oil, and fancy inventors with their new technical schematics are always coming in. Monitoring the ports and main roads of Tyvia can make a person very rich or very valuable. Espionage? Doable. Choose from corporate, scientific, or governmental. Thievery? Make some coin on an arms race or the black market. Competition is fierce, though, and danger ever-present.

For those awaiting trial or transfer to one of the prison camps, the WinterTree building in Dabokva is home. A high metal fence blocks the view inside. Dark towers rise up like sentinels within the walls. Guards patrol outside and inside. It's not safe. It's not easy. But, the rewards for breaching those defenses are many. Interesting individuals, both guilty and innocent, anxiously await their sentences there. What these enemies

of state, rebels, and brilliant criminals know could change the course of history. In addition, there are those who are always searching for ways to smuggle things into the prison camps through WinterTree.

Searching for unusual bonecharms? Tyvia has a variety unheard of elsewhere. Spoken of in hushed whispers and practiced in secret, crafters around the island create the common whale bonecharms, but also the incredibly rare bear fang and seal tusk bonecharms. An adventurer might just find a charm with an effect they weren't expecting. It's not easy to find the crafters, though. And, those looking have been known to vanish without a trace.

If someone finds themselves in need of some quick coin, the Presidium makes for an attractive employer. They're always looking for bounty hunters. They pay well, and they pay quickly. On the other hand, people with bounties on their heads or their families will pay quite a bit to have themselves or their loved ones smuggled off the island. There's always someone in need and someone willing to pay.

There is no shortage of opportunity in Tyvia.

## HIGH SEAS

Wild and untamed, the seas of this world aren't for the faint of heart. Roiling oceans, thundering storms, the unpredictability of nature, and the capriciousness of humanity face those who brave the waters around the Empire. Here, the sound of waves slapping the hull of a ship is a comfort because it means the ship still floats. The very air tastes of salt and everything, hair and clothing and ropes, become stiff with the white crystals. There's a strange dichotomy of lawlessness and order among the pirates, smugglers, and whalers. On the water it's a perilous life, but one that's never boring.

### A WHALER'S LIFE

The whalers and fishermen have the leathery skin and crow's feet of those who have squinted against the sun reflecting off the water for a lifetime. The shipping crews have narrow gazes and a gun in hand for anyone they don't recognize. These are the only legitimate enterprises on these seas, except for the occasional explorer, but the line between explorer and pirate often blurs. The tough, wary people making a legal living off the water are always ready to defend their livelihoods.

Pirates, smugglers, and those dealing with black market goods are the ones who truly rule the oceans, making the high seas a tricky place to navigate. Organized fleets, like the High Cold Corsairs, control territories that are constantly shifting. They run their domains however they see fit, leading to vastly differing codes and laws from one region to another. Allegiances between crews materialize and vanish depending on the job or the direction the wind is blowing. The only thing a person can rely on is money. They say that the world runs on whale oil and coin, that's truer nowhere than out on the open ocean.

Even though the high seas are cruel and the people even crueler, there is an unwritten rule that most abide by: help those in need. Friend or foe is something to be sorted out after a crisis on the water. A lone, stalled ship. A sinking fishing boat. Those are the things someone can expect help with. A sinking vessel in a battle? That's a whole



other matter. Anyone not involved stays away from active conflict if possible... unless they have a death wish.

There is one place considered neutral ground by all seafarers. Off the eastern coast of Serkonos is a secret island that doesn't appear on any official maps, known only as The Den. One-Eyed Belle runs the place and enforces the neutrality there... with bloodshed if necessary.

## LEGENDS

### ONE-EYED BELLE

The Den became The Den 150 years ago. A pirate fleet calling itself Coyle's Armada claimed the island as their own at the time, naming it Coyle's Cay. These pirates raided the coasts of Serkonos and accepted secret contracts from various governments to attack and loot ships.

The original One-Eyed Belle sailed in with her own ships, far fewer than those Coyle's Armada had. She challenged them to a battle, and to the winner would go the island. They laughed at her one eye, at the scars that she didn't try to hide. She laughed, too, because she knew they'd regret it.

With a cunning plan, One-Eyed Belle swept in and sank the Armada before they could even turn to attack her swift, small ships. She got the island. The Armada was rewarded with a view of the bottom of the ocean.

As she stepped onto the sand, she declared that The Den would be a place of refuge for all those with unseemly business.

For 150 years, The Den has remained the only location where different pirates, fleets, and gangs can meet, do business, and acquire supplies. The first One-Eyed Belle was not the last. It became a title, passed down from matriarch to matriarch. They don't all have one eye, but they all have the wily intelligence that keeps The Den safe from conflict and from the Empire.

The saying goes, "never cross a Belle." That One-Eyed Belle from 150 years ago is why.

### SOMETHING IN THE DEEP

Between The Isles and Pandyssia, in the open ocean, lives a creature larger than the largest ship built by humans. It slides through the water, its back parting the waves. Some say it's a whale, though no known whale has ever come close to its size. Others claim that it's a sea monster with tentacles.

When it is seen, very little survives its destruction. Witnesses clinging to the floating debris of their ships and the occasional explorer in a fast boat with the winds and the tides in their favor are the only ones to come back with the tales of it. No one knows how many ships, lost at sea, fell victim to it.

Records going back to the beginning of the Empire mention a creature like it. Some of the ancient ruins seem to have depictions of it carved into the stone. Fishermen and whalers have story after story of seeing it in the distance, enormous splashes of water that shouldn't exist, whirlpools that appear and then vanish. Sailors attribute all sorts of maritime phenomena to it.

It's had many names throughout history. Behemoth. Titan. Outsider's Messenger. Today, they call it the Devourer.

Perhaps, the Devourer is just a figment of humanity's collective imagination, a way to explain away the unknown or inexplicable. A shared memory, going back generations. Perhaps it's real, though. What then?

## SOMBER JACK

In 1822, Roseburrow Industries and several whaling companies, like Greaves Lightning Oil, were working on a new type of whaling trawler that used whale oil as fuel. A man they called Somber Jack decided that he wanted the new ship.

With only a wooden sailboat and a small group of compatriots, they stole onto the three naval ships accompanying the prototype whaling trawler and tossed their crews overboard. Somber Jack, himself, took the whaling trawler himself.

Right after the War of Four Crowns, this was a fledgling Empire, still trying to find its way. Admiral Diamante Brownwell whispered in the Emperor's ear that controlling the seas and eradicating the pirates would help ensure his legacy. Emperor Morgengaard I gave her a fleet of ships. She pointed her fleet toward the open ocean and began to capture brigands and sink ships. Nellie Trivett took issue with this. She rallied the pirates and orchestrated attack after attack on Brownwell's fleet. The fighting was fierce, but Nellie kept at it, chipping away at Brownwell's ships. Finally, Captain Trivett broke through Admiral Brownwell's fleet and marched her army toward the capital.

The fight was bloody, but the pirates were winning. The outcasts and rogues were about to bring the young Empire to its knees.

But, then a cry rang out across the battlefield. An assassin had killed Nellie Trivett. The tides turned. The pirates retreated.

After that, Gristol made sure their navy was the strongest. But, they learned that the high seas would always belong to us. And, it's all thanks to Nellie Trivett.

Myrtle Chisnell, Former One-Eyed Belle, Retired Pirate, Keeper of Tales

Within a year, he'd refitted the ships into a piratical fleet. He called them the Squadron Somber. Instead of hunting whales, they began to hunt other ships. And, are now known throughout the Empire, striking fear into the hearts of anyone who sees a flag with two crossed clubs on it.

By the way, they call him Somber Jack precisely because he was anything but somber. He's been known to laugh as he's slitting throats. Anyone doing business with him should watch their backs.

## NAVIES OF THE WORLD

### GRISTOL

No navy is as feared as the Gristol navy. With their advanced whale oil technology and weaponry, their ships dominate the seas. Their imposing metal vessels cut through the waves, straight for their targets.

They can easily take on the navies of the other islands if conflict arises, as it did during the Morley Insurrection. And, their more decorated admirals have destroyed some of the more infamous pirate fleets, however they've been unable to completely clear the oceans of pirates and other ne'er-do-wells.

What's not clear is if that's the fault of the navy and its leadership or if this failure is due to the shrewd and slippery strategies of the pirates.

A coordinated naval attack by the Gristol fleet is a thing of beauty to behold and a fearsome behemoth to those who see it appear on the horizon.

### MORLEY

The island of Morley has a small navy with strict rules is must follow. During the Morley Insurrection, the combined might of the Gristol and Tyvian navies sank most of Morley's naval vessels. The subsequent peace treaty demanded that Morley's naval force not exceed a dozen ships, and they cannot use the latest technology. Also, all exercises and maneuvers must receive approval from Dunwall before they can take any actions.

This has sufficiently hamstrung the Morleyan navy and its outdated ships from becoming a threat to the Empire, but it also means that they cannot protect their own shores in an effective manner. Taking advantage of Morley's inability to act, pirates continue to prey on the island, its cities, and its shipping lanes. This is another point of contention between Morley and the Empire that could lead to another conflict one day.

While the Morleyan navy isn't much of a threat, the pirates are. Beware the waters off Morley.

### TYVIA

Small, but powerful, the Tyvian navy has a steel and iron fleet. They have few ships, but they use the latest technology and even experimental weaponry. A formation of Tyvian ships is a formidable sight.

Because the island was an early member of the Empire, and they helped stop the Morley Insurrection, Dunwall gives them much more freedom in how they govern them-



selves and their military. With their talented metalworkers prototyping the newest technology for inventors and scientists all around the Empire, they also have access to novel designs that they put to use in creative ways. One never knows what they'll encounter when confronting a Tyvian warship.

Pirates and smugglers still manage to sneak around the island but need to continually update their strategies as they work to avoid the Tyvian navy. Getting between a Tyvian warship and its prey never ends well.

### SERKONOS

Sailing the Serkonos coast is a varied navy of older wooden-hulled ships with some iron-and-steel ones. Because so many pirates travel the seas near here, particularly hiding out in the tiny islands just to the east, the local government chooses to employ swift ships for chasing buccaneers. Their navy doesn't have any heavy, highly armed vessels. As Serkonos was another island that joined the Empire early, they have fewer restrictions on their navy than Morley does.



In the tropical waters off Serkonos, the pirates and the island's navy are in a constant state of warfare. Despite their preoccupation with pirates, the Serkonos navy can respond with lightning speed to any new threat to their island or trade. As the pirates discovered, it's best to work in groups when antagonizing this navy.

## PANDYSSIA

Far to the east of the Empire of the Isles, one can find the Pandyssian Continent. It's believed that humans once inhabited Pandyssia centuries, if not millennia, ago. Some ruins hint at such civilization. Today, the current state of civilization on the Far Continent is unknown to most, though many believe that humans survive yet in that wild place.

While the continent has no navy to speak of, sailing near its shores is still a daunting task that few captains, legitimate or not, dare try. The creatures that surround the Far Continent are menacing and dreadful. Aggressive, venomous fish with the ability to leap out of the water live side by side with enormous monstrosities that can sink even the most heavily armored warship.

Those who have come back insist that visiting this place ends in a tortured soul or death.

### ONE-EYED BELLE

One-Eyed Belle controls a small navy that defends The Den. She doesn't have the most recent whale oil technology or the fanciest ship designs, but she makes up for it with strategy and cunning.

Her ships lead away the unwelcome Empire vessels searching for The Den, sinking them all around the Empire to throw off those hunting her and to keep her haven secret.

Anyone who disturbs the relative sanctity of The Den, beyond the typical drunken brawl, sees their ship sunk in port.

Belles are not worth crossing.

## THE SEABORN ADVENTURE

A brave adventurer can find all the treasure, peril, and boorish behavior they're looking for on the high seas.

- The Rothwild Slaughterhouse has heard rumors that someone is looking to sabotage their operations somehow. They've sent a representative out to find adventurers to help them.
- With uncharted islands dotting the ocean, it's unsurprising that some enterprising soul hid a treasure or two on them. It's possible that someone might have a map... or claim to, anyway.
- Near Slaughterhouse Row one might just hear some news about oceanic goings on. Sailors and slaughterhouse workers are talking about escalating tensions between the Serkonos navy and the High Cold Corsairs.
- On the passenger ships sailing between the islands, it pays to listen to what the crew is saying. They may have information about power shifts in the oceans, which pirate fleets are paying good coin for able bodies, or which smugglers are now blackmailing the people they've "helped".

## CONTACTS

### SOMBER JACK

In the pubs around Serkonos, in The Den's tavern, and around the ports on the other islands, the Somber Squadron has put out the call for adventurers. Middlemen or middlewomen, like **Bobbi Spafford**, are helping the Somber Squadron with their recruiting. With a glare and her naturally intimidating manner, Bobbi will ask for proof that potential hires aren't undercover naval officers. Be ready to do some dirty work first. It may also take a few drinks before she's willing to send a new adventurer or group of adventurers to meet with a member of the Somber Squadron themselves.

As it happens, **Somber Jack** is looking to expand his territory. He wants sailors and even those with less maritime inclinations, but a willingness to do some harm, to help.

**Cornel Saxan** has a small island off the coast of Morley that he controls. He's built a fortified stronghold that Somber Jack wants. Cornel Saxan, on the other hand, is also hiring adventurers... for defense.

Adventurers are in for a wild ride whether they decide to help Somber Jack on the attack, hinder him, aid in Cornel Saxan's defense, or betray them both.

### THE DEN

Every island wants to know where The Den is and eradicate it. Near the port in Dunwall, or other the areas the whalers and sailors frequent, adventurers may encounter one **Branston Winship**. He's a captain with the Gristol navy, has a straight posture, bowed legs, and a moustache he cherishes. As a point of pride, he's taken on the mission of finding The Den, and is looking for adventurers to help him out.

He wants a group that looks a bit unsavory, with the type of speech that could fit in with pirates. He's offering a fat purse of coin for this group to infiltrate The Den, bring him intelligence on its defenses, and mark its location on a map.

The current One-Eyed Belle is willing to pay anyone to betray their government sponsors and bring her their names. She'd love to get her hands on Branston Winship, for instance.

It's a chance to go undercover, to sell out One-Eyed Belle, take over The Den... or get in Belle's good graces. This mission is a dangerous gambit either way.

### THE MISSING TRAWLER

With a wide smile and a cheerful glint in her eye, **Madelene Chestnut** doesn't seem like a pirate. But, she has ambition. Hoping that the current One-Eyed Belle will name her as The Den's successor, Madelene is out to make a name for herself... no matter how illegal or bloody the path is. This potential Belle has quite the plan.

She wants to steal Rothwild Slaughterhouse's flagship, The Bundry Best, a combination of a whaling trawler and warship. Having that monstrosity at her disposal will certainly put her name in the running when the current Belle decides to retire.

Chestnut has the coin... or she will as soon as she can start pillaging with her new ship, and she's hiring.

The reward for turning someone like Chestnut in, especially after she steals the ship, might be substantial. The other possibility is stealing the stolen ship from her after the heist but beware, Madelene is also the type to hold a grudge and enjoy gory revenge.

### KID FROM KARNACA

Wandering among the stalls in Karnaca's main market, where the aroma of spiced food wafts on the warm breeze, one might run into a boy on the verge of becoming a man. He's at that stage where his knees and elbows seem to be everywhere, as though he doesn't quite know how his body is put together yet. His name is **Kyran Akeley**, and he's asking anyone in the market who looks even remotely like a sailor for help.

His family was on a ship headed to Karnaca from Morley, but they sheltered in a strait to the east of Gristol during a storm. And now they're missing.

If pressed, he'll admit that the strait they were forced into was the Strait of the Outsider, or, as the Abbey of the Everyman insists on calling it, the Strait of Storms. The Strait of the Outsider has a nasty reputation. Every ship that sails down it sinks. And, no one knows why. Rumors abound. Some say that there's a witch who lives there, others that there's a doorway to the Void, and some folk claim that there's a sea monster there that eats boats.

Kyran Akeley is desperate to find his family. He doesn't have much money, but his father is a renowned jewelry maker. Kyran is willing to part with any jewels or riches his father is carrying in exchange for help.

If an adventurer can win his trust, Kyran might just admit that his father is also a talented bonecharm crafter... and the bonecharms he has could also be considered compensation. It's a dangerous quest but finding out what's causing the shipwrecks in the Strait of the Outsider might be a reward in itself.

### AN INVITATION TO EXPLORATION!

In the city of Whitecliff, an enthusiastic young woman with a pair of spectacles perched on the bridge of her nose and a pistol on her hip is searching for adventurers to help crew her ship, The Exploration. **Professor Lisabet Fairless** from the University of Wynnedown intends to sail to Pandyssia, catalog the wildlife along the coasts, and explore the interior.

She'll only accept applications from those who love adventure and will waive her and the University of Wynnedown of any responsibility should the worst, or even just really bad, happen.

However, she doesn't want that to dissuade anyone. The pay is good. Well, decent. And, if the crew is lucky enough to come across some ruins, which she hopes is the case, everyone on the ship will split the selling price of any valuable artifacts found. Also, every sample of a new species they bring back will fetch a fat purse of coins from the University... or collectors.

When plied with drink, Professor Lisabet Fairless might also admit that she's escaping a bit of drama back home by running to the Pandyssian Continent and that there might be a little bit of a bounty on her head for some of the research she did on seabirds that happened to expose a smuggling ring—which was using the cave the birds use for breeding to hide their goods. With an uncomfortable laugh, she'll add that the smuggling ring was run by a well-loved Admiral in the Gristol navy, who is now in a Tyvian prison camp thanks to her. That admiral also has a powerful brother who is influential with the aristocracy.

It seems any adventurers who join Professor Fairless will have options.

### THE ART OF SABOTAGE

Around the Empire, it's no secret that the High Cold Corsairs have a habit of antagonizing the Serkonos navy. One of the Corsair captains, **Arty Hache**, would like to make that relationship a little more explosive.

If one becomes a confidante of one of the other High Cold Corsair captains or happens upon one of Hache's crewmembers around The Den, an invitation from Captain Hache might be forthcoming. He's looking for someone to blow up either some of the Serkonos navy ships or the Bastillian Watchtower before a particularly big smuggling job he has arranged for the near future. It involves Tyvian wine and Morleyan bacon.

However, the Serkonos navy would also like any information that would lead to the capture of the very obnoxious thorn in their side, Captain Arty Hache.

## MOTIVATIONS

Fickle and capricious, the ocean rewards the brave with power and renown, if it doesn't kill them first.

Looking for a trinket, a weapon, or a job? The Den has anything anyone could want... for a price. Also, getting there alive is a challenge in and of itself. Endearing oneself with pirates and proving one's allegiance to the law of the high seas might just lead to an invitation and an escort ship from One-Eyed Belle.

It's said that there are ship graveyards around certain, uninhabited islands. Whaling trawlers and cargo ships full of valuable goods all lie broken in the water. Is it just luck that sank all those ships or something more nefarious? A curious adventurer could make a fortune by looting what's there or finding the cause behind the lost ships. A foolhardy adventurer could also lose their head on such a quest.

With territories changing hands all the time in the waters around the Empire, an ambitious group of adventurers might be able to take advantage of the situation and carve out a little area for themselves if they wanted to try the life of a pirate. Pirates, however, don't take kindly to landlubbers trying to move in on their waters. Expect a nasty fight and a lot of bloodshed.

There's a lot of danger on the high seas and that means money. Ships need adventurers who will face down pirates. Wealthy aristocrats need bodyguards. Whaling trawlers need to protect their catches. Cargo ships have goods to safeguard. Anyone can get hired on to a crew, but that doesn't mean the job is easy.

Spill some blood, earn some coin. That's life on the high seas.


PAY
WHAT
YOU
OWE!
DEATH
TO THE

# Chapter 11

# OF STREET URCHINS & MASKED ARISTOCRATS

## OVERVIEW

This chapter covers the ways in which non-player characters—NPCs—function in game, as well as providing guidance for how the GM can structure encounters and opposition.

## TYPES OF NPCS

Non-player characters are categorized by importance to the adventure—major, minor, notable or incidental—and then by allegiance, such as **adversary**, **ally**, or **bystander**.

### MINOR NPCS

Minor NPCs can still be thought of as the 'background characters' of a story—they're present, but they're not particularly important. They are the most common type of NPC present in a scene.

- **Truth**: A minor NPC has a single truth, providing a brief description of who the NPC is and/or what they do. As with incidental NPCs, this should be brief and not too detailed.
- **Skills and Styles**: For both skills and styles, use the following ratings: one at 7, two at 6, two at 5, and one at 4.
- **Focuses**: Minor NPCs can have up to two focuses that relate to their role in the scene. They have 5 points to divide between those focuses, and a focus must have a rating of at least 2 and no higher than 5.
- **Stress Tracks**: Minor NPCs do not have stress tracks. They are defeated immediately by a successful attack. However, at your discretion, a minor NPC may avoid defeat once per scene by spending 2 Chaos and accepting a truth (representing an injury or similar problem). This is common to do when an attack against a minor NPC suffers a complication.

## NOTABLE NPCS

Notable NPCs are more dedicated and resourceful characters, often with extra training or useful abilities. They are leaders and specialists alongside groups of minor NPCs, or they are the trusted lieutenants of a major NPC.

- **Truth:** A notable NPC has a single truth, providing a brief description of who the NPC is and/or what they do, and may have additional truths to provide extra detail or description.
- **Skills and Styles:** For both skills and styles, use the following ratings: two at 7, two at 6, two at 5.
- **Focuses:** Notable NPCs have two, three, or four focuses that relate to their role in the scene. They have 8 points to divide between those focuses, and a focus must have a rating of at least 2 and no higher than 5.
- **Stress Tracks:** A notable NPC has a stress track equal to their Fight rating. They may also have reputation tracks for the organisations they are part of.

## MAJOR NPCS

Major NPCs are the most important individuals, with a wide range of capabilities. They have established backstories, and may be a recurring presence in several adventures. As they will appear more often, they are treated like player characters in a lot of ways.

- **Truths**: A major NPC has at least two truths, providing a description of who the NPC is and what they do, and may have additional truths to provide extra detail or description.
- **Skills and Styles**: For both skills and styles, use the following ratings: one at 8, two at 7, two at 6, and one at 5.
- **Focuses**: Major NPCs have up to six focuses that relate to their role in the game. They have 15 points to divide between those focuses, and a focus must have a rating of at least 2 and no higher than 5.
- **Stress Tracks**: A major NPC has a stress track equal to the highest of their Fight or Survive rating.

## INCIDENTAL NPCS

An incidental NPC also has a single truth, describing in brief who they are or what they do. This shouldn't be too detailed, a word or short description is fine, but serves as the baseline for what the NPC is there to achieve.

Incidental NPC does not have talents or other special abilities. They do not have defeat tracks, reputation tracks, and they are immediately defeated by successful attacks.

## GROUPS WITH LEADERS

Whether it's a logistical convoy, a City Watch force, a diplomatic mission, or a gang, a group of minor NPCs can be accompanied by a notable or major NPC—or even a PC—as a leader. If this is the case, the leader always attempts the group's skill tests, with the rest of the group assisting. Attacks against the group can either target the minor NPCs, in which case they are defeated instantly by individual attacks, or they can target the leader to break the group's morale and cause them to scatter.

### QUICK NPCS

Most NPCs in the game won't have attributes, skills, focuses, and so forth, because they're incidental to the story. However, there will come times when the GM needs to roll for one of these incidental NPCs due to some tangent the players have pursued. When this happens, you can use the following table to quickly come up with an NPC's skill, style, and focus (depending on how competent they are) on the fly.

| NPC QUALITY | SKILL | STYLE | FOCUS |
|---|---|---|---|
| Poor | 4 | 4 | None |
| Basic | 5 | 5 | 2 |
| Proficient | 6 | 6 | 3 |
| Talented | 7 | 7 | 4 |
| Exceptional | 8 | 8 | 5 |

### NPC ALLEGIANCE

NPCs aren't always working against the players, they could be friends, allies, or even innocent civilians. NPCs fall into one of three groups: allies, adversaries, and bystanders. An NPC's allegiance is determined at the start of a scene, and some may change as scenes and circumstances change. A security guard may be an adversary during a social conflict scene, but when violence breaks out, they may become a bystander or even fight alongside the PCs.

**Adversaries** are NPCs who oppose the player characters. They are not necessarily evil, but they are something to be avoided or overcome by the player characters. Most of the rules in this chapter assume that an NPC will be an adversary.

**Allies** are NPCs who support the actions of the player characters, as well as those who the PCs may be charged to protect. They're not necessarily good, or even friendly, but they are aligned with the player characters, at least for the moment. Allied NPCs can do the following:

- Spend and bank Momentum, at the players' and GM's discretion.
- Add points to the Chaos pool instead of spending them for any Chaos spends.
- Remove points of Chaos if the rules would make the NPC add to Chaos.

**Bystanders** are everyone else, a neutral people within the scene. Bystanders don't normally require individual rules, as they aren't often required to make skill tests, and they aren't typically the target of attacks. Where bystander NPCs have rules, they will normally be abstracted into other elements of the system, such as a dense crowd acting as difficult terrain and cover within a zone, or they will be regarded as incidental.

### CHANGING ALLEGIANCE:

In any given scene, an NPC is either an adversary or an ally. The GM determines which is the case for each NPC. This is most likely to be the case where an NPC is regarded as an adversary for some purposes (such as social conflict), and an ally for others (physical challenges, combat). The Gamemaster should try and avoid situations where the NPC must be both adversary and ally simultaneously, to minimize confusion; if an NPC betrays the player characters (going from ally to adversary), maybe have this as a Chaos spend to emphasize it, while an adversary becoming an ally might be a reward for the players' successes.

## COMMANDING AN NPC

In combat, allied NPCs may take any action that you determines for them, or they may be placed under the PCs' command. When under the command of the PCs, an allied NPC may only be able to perform a limited range of actions, as follows:

- Commanded NPCs do not receive a turn in a conflict; instead their actions (per the limitations below) are resolved as part of their actions of the PCs commanding them.
- A commanded NPC will perform whatever actions are needed to keep up with the PCs, as well as any necessary to follow the orders of the PCs. In general, the GM should simply assume that the NPC remains nearby one of the PCs (unless otherwise ordered), though complications or Chaos spends may alter this.
- A commanded NPC cannot attempt an action that requires a skill test, unless that test has a difficulty of 0; in such cases, they do not roll any dice for the test. They may, however, use the Assist action to benefit PCs, though each commanded NPC can only aid one PC per round in combat.
- A player character may use their action to direct a commanded NPC to make them perform an action. This is the only circumstance in which a commanded NPC may make a skill test.

# SPECIAL RULES

The following are special rules and abilities are the most common possessed by NPCs. These abilities will be referred to in NPC profiles by name only and require the GM to refer here for the specifics of each rule. They reflect exceptional, or even supernatural capabilities, or NPCs that may not fit a conventional definition of "character".

## FERAL

The NPC is a wild animal, or a person driven to unreasoning savagery in the last stages of a fatal disease, and slaying such creatures is often a necessity. Using lethal force on a bestial NPC does not count as escalation, and thus does not add to Chaos.

## FEED UPON FEAR

The NPC relishes the fear of others, becoming bolder and more dangerous in the presence of panic. Whenever a character suffers a truth that represents fear when this NPC is nearby, add 1 Chaos to the pool.

## IMMUNE TO X

The NPC isn't affected by one, or more, of the conditions below:

- **Cold:** The NPC is unaffected by effects derived from extreme cold.
- **Disease:** The NPC is immune to the effects of diseases, and will never suffer their symptoms, infections, or viruses. But if the NPC is exposed to a disease, it may become a carrier: able to spread the disease if it is contagious, while remaining unaffected.
- **Fear:** The NPC is incapable of feeling fear. The creature cannot be intimidated or threatened.
- **Pain:** The NPC does not feel pain. The creature is unaffected by any penalties or hindrances caused by pain, and suffers no penalties caused by injury.
- **Poison:** The NPC is unaffected by all forms of poison, venom, or toxin.
- **Heat:** The NPC is unaffected by effects derived from extreme heat, including stress or injury caused by fire.

## SPECIFIC WEAKNESS

The NPC has a specific weakness — a weak spot, a certain material, a specific type of energy, or something similar — which can overcome its invulnerability. If this weakness is discovered and employed, then the NPC can suffer wounds which exploit that weakness (this also bypasses the effects of other Invulnerable options). The GMs discretion applies as to how the weakness may be discovered.

## WRATHFUL

The NPC grows angry when challenged; the first time in a combat that it chooses to reduce any stress it receives by taking a negative truth, it also adds 2 to Chaos.

## KEEN SENSES

One of the NPC's senses is especially keen. Choose one of the following: sight, hearing, or scent. The NPC reduces the difficulty of skill tests made to sense or detect creatures or objects using that sense by 2, and the NPC can sense things which other characters cannot.

## MENACING

The NPC is dangerous, heralding a greater problem for those who confront it. When an NPC with this ability enters a scene, immediately add 1 to Chaos. This functions this way even if the NPC is an ally: regardless of what side they're on, the NPC's arrival is a sign of something getting worse.

### MINDLESS

The NPC is an unintelligent being, driven purely by instinct or rudimentary programming. Unless it is commanded to do something specific, the NPC will mindlessly move towards, and attack the nearest enemy with any weapons it possesses. If it cannot detect an enemy, it will move towards the nearest source of bright light or loud noise, or otherwise move around randomly if no such source exists. A Mindless NPC cannot attempt reactions, cannot be affected by any mind-influencing effect, and cannot be persuaded or influenced.

### NATURAL ARMOR X

The NPC has some innate resistance to physical damage. The NPC's stress track is increased by X. This stacks with the protection from armor.

### NIGHT VISION

The NPC can perceive their environment in complete darkness. Skill tests the NPC attempts ignore any penalties (difficulty increases) caused by darkness, and it may attempt any skill tests that would normally be made impossible by darkness.

### UNLIVING X

The NPC is not a living being, but some form of mechanical creation, or something not made of living flesh and blood. If an unliving NPC is also mindless or immune to pain, then it will have the corresponding abilities as well. The difficulty of skill tests to resist extremes of heat or cold by two, and they are immune to the effects of suffocation, starvation, and thirst. Further, the NPC's solid construction (or unfeeling, unliving substance) increases its stress track by X.

## WEIRD NPCS

Most NPCs encountered during an adventure will be people: individual characters similar to the player characters in form and nature. However, this is not always the case, and special rules are used to represent wild animals, supernatural entities, and stranger things besides.

The special abilities and options presented in this chapter can, with a little creativity, be used to represent all manner of opponents and adversaries. An NPC doesn't have to be a person; the same ruleset used to represent a deadly assassin can also represent the deadly machinery of a factory, or the devastating effects of an out-of-control fire blazing through a building.

It may also be necessary to model a swarm of small creatures using a single NPC profile. While the creatures themselves are individually too small to be more than a nuisance, collectively they pose a threat to the player characters. In this instance, the normal rules can apply: a single minor NPC may represent a portion of the swarm, which fights in a group.

# THE COMMON FOLK



## STREET PEDDLER

MINOR ADVERSARY

Street peddlers are the unofficial heart of the city. They sell the tools, clothing, and the food everyone needs to survive. They also act as the eyes and ears of their community. People often dismiss the humble street peddlers, which means that they overhear illicit gang deals, aristocratic drama, and all manner of secrets. Unfortunately, they are also the first to succumb to plague or other ills. It's not unheard of for them to save their best wares for their favorite customers. Those who treat them poorly end up paying more or being completely unable to find the items they need throughout the city...

| FIGHT | MOVE | STUDY | SURVIVE | TALK | TINKER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 4 | 6 | 4 | 6 | 6 |

| BOLDLY | CAREFULLY | CLEVERLY | FORCEFULLY | QUIETLY | SWIFTLY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 4 |

**Truth:** *Street Peddler, Persuasive, Rumormonger*
**Focuses:** *Negotiate 4, Streetwise 4*
**Gear:** *Cart, knife* (damage 2, concealed, melee), and *paper and pen*.
**Story Hooks:**

- Rumors swirl through the market district. Fever. Illness. Plague. Charly Boxer, a local street peddler, is looking for someone who can see what's really going on in the unofficial quarantine zone they've set up. The local guard wants to set fire to the entire area and wash their hands of it.
- Several of Jaryl Risden's wealthier customers have complained about getting mugged after buying his wares. It seems that he's working with a local gang to find marks. Is he doing all of this willingly... or not?

## WATCH LOWER GUARD

### MINOR ADVERSARY

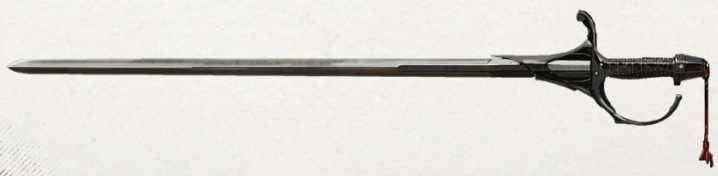
As the lowest ranking soldiers in the Dunwall City Watch, Watch Lower Guards, commonly called Rowdies, receive the worst assignments. Due to their status as former prisoners, the other soldiers of the City Watch look down on them. Rowdies receive only a uniform and a sword when they sign up despite the dangerous situations they often find themselves in. Some work hard to keep the peace, and become beloved members of their community, while others abuse their positions of power and make it clear that they should still be in prison.

| FIGHT | MOVE | STUDY | SURVIVE | TALK | TINKER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 4 | 4 |

| BOLDLY | CAREFULLY | CLEVERLY | FORCEFULLY | QUIETLY | SWIFTLY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 4 |

**Truth:** *Watch Lower Guard, Felon*
**Gear:** *Sword* (damage 3, block, melee) and *lower guard uniform*.
**Story Hooks:**

- Derrica Zachary's superiors have ordered her rowdy crew to end the Parliament Street Cutters' newest operation with just their wits and swords. She's looking for help from any willing adventurers. However, the City Watch prohibits Lower Guards from seeking outside aid, and could send her to prison again if anyone found out.
- The adventurers find a man beaten in an alley. Lifton Root, a local street peddler, couldn't afford the neighborhood Rowdies' violently enforced protection fees. The residents would turn anyone who runs the goons out of town into a hero. As an alternative, they'd also welcome a new criminal faction that charged less.





## CITY WATCH GUARD

NOTABLE ADVERSARY

Unlike the criminals that make up the lower ranks of the Watch, "Regulars" come from the hardworking low-to-middle classes of the Empire. They sign up for the salary and hope to make connections that can lift them out of poverty. The City Watch will call in their Guard members when they want an organized and committed body of soldiers ready to respond. Though some Guards see their duty as a calling and strive to uphold law and order within the city, others become fanatical and brutal in their efforts to create some impossible utopia where anyone who doesn't fit vanishes.

| FIGHT | MOVE | STUDY | SURVIVE | TALK | TINKER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 5 | 4 |

| BOLDLY | CAREFULLY | CLEVERLY | FORCEFULLY | QUIETLY | SWIFTLY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 5 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 4 |

**Truth:** *City Watch Guard, Enforcer*

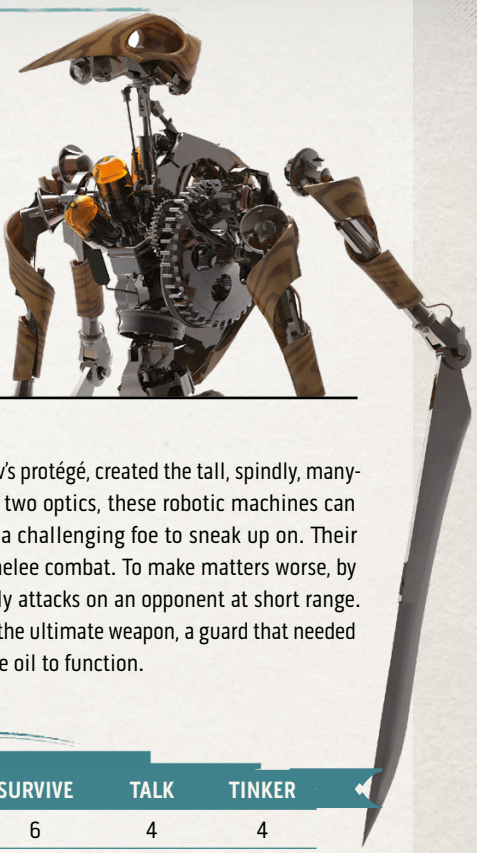
**Focuses:** *Brawling 4, Fencing 4*

**Stress Track:** 9

**Gear:** *Sword* (damage 3, block, melee), *guard uniform, treated cloth coat,* and *helmet*.

**Story Hooks:**

- The adventurers find a drunk Hew Pelai in a pub. The City Watch jailed his brother, a Regular. Hew has his brother's journal that details corruption within the Watch and wants someone to prove his brother's innocence. The Watch would love to have that journal, however.
- "You look like you can hold your own against those Regulars". Meri Codling hisses. She overheard some City Watch Guards planning to burn down an encampment in the slums, to "cleanse" the city. The residents plan to fight back and could use an extra sword or gun.



## CLOCKWORK SOLDIER

### NOTABLE ADVERSARY

Kirin Jindosh, a Serkonan inventor and Sokolov's protégé, created the tall, spindly, many-limbed mechanical clockwork soldiers. With two optics, these robotic machines can see both in front and behind, making them a challenging foe to sneak up on. Their bladed arms are nigh impossible to face in melee combat. To make matters worse, by discharging electricity, they can launch deadly attacks on an opponent at short range. Jindosh aimed to make his clockwork soldiers the ultimate weapon, a guard that needed to neither sleep nor eat—requiring only whale oil to function.

| FIGHT | MOVE | STUDY | SURVIVE | TALK | TINKER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | 8 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 4 |

| BOLDLY | CAREFULLY | CLEVERLY | FORCEFULLY | QUIETLY | SWIFTLY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 7 | 4 | 6 | 4 | 8 |

**Truth:** *Jindosh Clockwork Soldier, Deadly Automaton, Fast Reflexes, Headless Berserk*

**Focuses:** *Fencing 4, Intimidate 4*

**Stress Track:** 12

**Gear:** *Multiple sword-arms* (damage 3, melee), *electro-shock discharge* (damage 3, ranged [nearby], blast).

**Special Rules:**

- Unliving 5
- Immune to Pain and Fear

**Story Hooks:**

- An inventor from the University of Wynnedown has offered a job to the more criminally-minded of society. Zoya Dobtcheff wants to craft one of Kirin Jindosh's Clockwork for herself. However, making and selling weapons without the express approval of the Empire is generally frowned upon.

## GANG MEMBER

### MINOR ADVERSARY

Every city has its gangs. The members control the black markets, smuggling, and heist operations in the Empire of the Isles. For them, gangs provide the support, network, and resources to survive in the underbelly of society. These groups aren't afraid to turn to violence when necessary. Territories and gang rosters are constantly shifting as gangs fight other gangs or even splinter off into new organizations. Some crews are in it to sow chaos across the Empire. Others want to stick it to the aristocracy. And some can't see any other way to live in this despair-filled world.

| FIGHT | MOVE | STUDY | SURVIVE | TALK | TINKER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 6 | 4 | 6 | 4 | 4 |

| BOLDLY | CAREFULLY | CLEVERLY | FORCEFULLY | QUIETLY | SWIFTLY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 5 |

**Truth:** *Gang Member, Suspicious*

**Focuses:** *Brawling 4, Intimidate 4*

**Gear:** *Knife* (damage 2, concealed, melee), and *bottle of acid* (damage 2, messy, ranged).

**Story Hooks:**

- In Karnaca, the Howlers and the Eyeless Gang continue to war over territory. Mindy Blanchard, a ruthless Howler, is recruiting new members. The Eyeless Gang will pay for bonecharms that will help them prevail. The Grand Serkonan Guard wants both groups eliminated..
- In the dead of night, adventurers might meet a captain named Caulkenny Crom. Huge, unmarked crates make their way onto his boat with no official paperwork in sight. Some of his crew got picked up by the City Watch earlier that day. He's got a job. The City Watch wants him weapons without the express approval of the Empire is generally frowned upon.



## CULTIST

### MINOR ADVERSARY

Members of the Cult of the Outsider do not acknowledge the life they led before they joined. Since they worship the Void and the Outsider, they make their home on Karnaca's Shindaerey Peak, where one can touch the Void itself. The Cult has influenced the world for thousands of years... and has no intention of stopping now. Each Cultist works toward what they believe are the goals of the Void, hoping to one day turn into a sentient stone being known as an Envisioned (described on page 263).

| FIGHT | MOVE | STUDY | SURVIVE | TALK | TINKER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | 8 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 4 |

| BOLDLY | CAREFULLY | CLEVERLY | FORCEFULLY | QUIETLY | SWIFTLY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 7 | 4 | 6 | 4 | 8 |

**Truth:** *Cult of the Outsider, Turning to Stone*

**Focuses:** *Fencing 4, Firearms 3, History 3*

**Gear:** *Sword* (damage 3, block, melee), *pistol* (damage 4, ranged [nearby], messy), *white cultist uniform, and possibly a useful bonecharm*.

**Story Hooks:**

- Grigori Bulygina is looking for help at the docks. Stop to listen and he'll talk about his brother, Evgenii, who left home to join the Cult of the Outsider. Grigori needs someone to bring Evgenii home. However, the Cult doesn't look kindly on someone bringing too much attention to their activities.
- Blair Glaspie combs antique shops and bookstores across the Empire. Win her trust and she'll explain that she's a Cultist looking for artifacts with a connection to the Void. Bring her magic-infused things and she'll pay in bonecharms. The Abbey would love to catch her.

## WITCH

### NOTABLE ADVERSARY

Witches have inherited powers (as those seen in Chapter 7) from someone marked by the Outsider—sometimes from the Outsider himself. A witch can be a powerful ally or a dangerous enemy. Because the Abbey of the Everyman hunts those who practice magic and burns them alive, witches are understandably wary and secretive as a matter of survival. As a result, they may attack without warning.

| FIGHT | MOVE | STUDY | SURVIVE | TALK | TINKER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 4 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 5 |

| BOLDLY | CAREFULLY | CLEVERLY | FORCEFULLY | QUIETLY | SWIFTLY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 4 |

**Truth:** *Magic User, Hated by the Abbey of the Everyman*
**Focuses:** *Concentrate 3, Void Lore 4, Medicine 3*
**Stress Track:** 7 *(with Rock's Rumble bonecharm)*
**Gear:** *Knife* (damage 2, concealed, melee).
**Story Hooks:**

- The Abbey of the Everyman is holding Ethna Drewe, a witch, in a cell somewhere. Her coven fears that the Abbey will burn Ethna soon, and her sister witches want to break her out of prison before the Abbey can kill her. The Abbey will be grateful to anyone who can bring them the entire coven, however.
- Ember Brassfield, a kind, helpful street peddler who has a soft spot for adventurers, is searching for help finding a witch. Her brother went to the Far Continent and is now acting very strange. She knows where the witch lives and believes the woman can help (having mind that it's illegal to do magic in the Empire).



# WHALER

## MINOR ADVERSARY

These sailors work the huge whaling trawlers in the waters off the Empire for weeks or months at a time. They know how to find whales and butcher them. It isn't a glamorous life but pays well enough and can lead to opportunities in the slaughterhouses, other whale-oriented industries, or even the various navies across the Empire. Boys, girls, and young people often join up with big dreams. Not all of them make it back home. The perils of life on the open ocean are compounded by rampant piracy.

| FIGHT | MOVE | STUDY | SURVIVE | TALK | TINKER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 6 |

| BOLDLY | CAREFULLY | CLEVERLY | FORCEFULLY | QUIETLY | SWIFTLY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 5 |

**Truth:** *Sailor, Butcher*
**Focuses:** *Ships 4, Tracking 4*
**Gear:** *Knife* (damage 2, concealed, melee) and *compass*
**Story Hooks:**

- Keep an eye out for Kristabelle Massey. This whaler is always on the search for a good fence or someone willing to take care of any authorities who are sniffing around too closely. She works with the Dead Eels and the Howlers, meaning the City Watch in Dunwall and the Grand Serkonan Guard in Karnaca want to get their hands on her.
- Any new recruits to the Dead Eels gang might meet Deveral Ober. He's organizing a crew to steal a whaling trawler right off the high seas. The slaughterhouses and whaling companies would be grateful to anyone who lets them in on his plans, though.

## DOCKHAND

### MINOR ADVERSARY

A dockhand works for the port, a shipping company, or a whaling operation. They are tough individuals who help anchor the ships and load or unload goods. In addition, they act as unofficial security for the docks they work on. They often talk among themselves and tend to hear about everything that's going on in their own city and the other port cities. However, they know that knowledge is both power and a liability. It will take a lot of coin or a lot of convincing to get them to chat with outsiders.

| FIGHT | MOVE | STUDY | SURVIVE | TALK | TINKER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 4 | 4 | 6 | 6 | 4 |

| BOLDLY | CAREFULLY | CLEVERLY | FORCEFULLY | QUIETLY | SWIFTLY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 4 |

**Truth:** *Dockhand, Unusually Big and Strong*
**Focuses:** *Ships 3*
**Gear:** *Cudgel* (damage 2, awkward, melee) and *knife* (damage 2, concealed, melee).
**Story Hooks:**

- Tearlach Milner is a tall, burly fellow who tends to know what's coming in and going out on all the ships. Paying client looking for a painting they lost at auction? Need a bonecharm to boost a skill? Make friends with Tearlach. One could also sell him out to the local guard...
- With her face in her hands, Lida Khohklov makes for a sad picture. One of the local gangs stole from her warehouse and chased off her dockhands. She's losing money by the day and looking to pay anyone willing to confront the gang. Then again, with things so dire, one could go ahead and take over her struggling company.



# TALLBOY

## NOTABLE ADVERSARY

The famous inventor Anton Sokolov created these towering, armored suits for the City Watch. Designed to protect the wearer during the early days of the Rat Plague, the long-legged stilt walker harness keeps its operator far above ground-level threats while on patrol. With the armored paneling and incendiary bolts they use, the Tallboys are both dangerous and hard to stop. Their eerie silence, unerring accuracy, and ability to push through intense pain is the result of some experimental drug used on the operators.

| FIGHT | MOVE | STUDY | SURVIVE | TALK | TINKER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | 5 | 4 | 7 | 4 | 4 |

| BOLDLY | CAREFULLY | CLEVERLY | FORCEFULLY | QUIETLY | SWIFTLY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 4 | 4 | 6 | 4 | 4 |

**Truth:** *Tallboy, Drugged*

**Focuses:** *Archery 4, Resolve 4*

**Stress Track:** 12

**Gear:** *Compound bow with incendiary bolts* (damage 3, ranged [distant], blast, burn, messy), *armored stilt-walker harness* (protection 4, included above), *searchlight,* and *collapsible wooden shield* (protection 1).

**Special Rules:**

- Feed Upon Fear
- Immune to Pain
- Immune to Sleep poisons
- Menacing

**Story Hooks:**

- In one of the seedier pubs in Dunwall, one might run into a nervous man named Guilbert Manchester. As an officer with the City Watch, his job is to watch over crews of Tallboys, but one of his operators went rogue. He needs a blood sample from the operator and wants to keep this whole thing quiet!

# THE GENTRY



## CITY WATCH OFFICER

NOTABLE ADVERSARY

These highly-trained soldiers command the guards of the City Watch. When requested, they also act as bodyguards for aristocrats and high-ranking officials in Gristol. Very few Guards ever become Officers, as there is a strong bias for Officers to come from aristocratic or wealthy families. As such, they tend to socialize among themselves and avoid mingling with the lower ranked soldiers whenever possible. Educated, entitled, and elite, the City Watch Officers are formidable in groups, where their training and strategy shine.

| FIGHT | MOVE | STUDY | SURVIVE | TALK | TINKER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | 5 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 |

| BOLDLY | CAREFULLY | CLEVERLY | FORCEFULLY | QUIETLY | SWIFTLY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 4 |

**Truth:** *City Watch Officer, Ambitious and Determined, Well Trained*

**Focuses:** *Fencing 4, Firearms 4*

**Stress Track:** 10 (includes protection from gear below)

**Gear:** *High-quality sword* (damage 4, block, melee), *pistol* (damage 3, ranged [nearby], messy), *armored mantle coat* (protection 1), and *helmet* (protection 2)

**Story Hooks:**

- Officer Aesclin Worland believes that supervising a Lower Guard patrol is beneath him. He wants some adventurers to create a fictional crime that he can stop to get himself promoted. Risky, yet lucrative. Outsmarting Worland and completing the crime might be even more profitable, however.
- In a dockside pub, one might encounter Officer Cerelia Willock. She intends to eliminate pirates who are using a bay between Dunwall and Potterstead. But she needs more intelligence first and is recruiting adventurers to infiltrate the pirates. Selling Willock out to the pirates would also pay well.



# OVERSEER

## NOTABLE ADVERSARY

Warfare Overseers act as soldiers for the Abbey of the Everyman. Dedicated to eradicating heresy in the Empire through any means necessary, they are famous for their brutality and combat skill. Civilians fear them, and even Dunwall's City Watch detests working with the overzealous acolytes. Some work with wolfhounds, training the canines to hunt and attack on command. Others carry a bulky, heavy "Overseer Music Box," a piece of equipment that nullifies any supernatural powers in the direct vicinity. Because of their fanatical devotion, it's unlikely any will show empathy or mercy to anyone they judge unworthy.

| FIGHT | MOVE | STUDY | SURVIVE | TALK | TINKER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | 4 | 7 | 7 | 4 | 5 |

| BOLDLY | CAREFULLY | CLEVERLY | FORCEFULLY | QUIETLY | SWIFTLY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 4 | 3 |

**Truth:** *Overseer, Abbey of the Everyman Zealot*

**Focuses:** *Fencing 4, Firearms 4, Theology 4*

**Stress Track:** 10

**Gear:** *Sword* (damage 3, block, melee), *pistol* (damage 4, ranged [nearby], messy), *grenade* (damage 4, awkward, blast, messy, ranged [nearby]), *armored mask* (protection 2), *Overseer Music Box* (nullifies supernatural powers, move -1), and *abbey uniform*.

**Story Hooks:**

- Dreena Mayorga is a witch who knows where the Overseers are keeping all the artifacts they've confiscated throughout the Empire. Dreena just needs another couple bodies to help her retrieve them. The Overseers would love to see her burn.
- In Whitecliff, a man named Kester Trout is searching for adventurers willing to oppose the Abbey and help him kidnap his daughter from the Trials of Aptitude. If they found out about his plan, the Abbey would prosecute Kester as a heretic.

## MERCHANT

### MINOR ADVERSARY

By shipping Morley's harvests to Tyvia, Tyvian ore to Gristol, and whale oil all over the Empire, merchants keep the Empire of the Isles functioning. Merchants run large operations that span islands. They're quick to spot new economic trends, and their ability to find a profit is almost supernatural. Merchants ensure that the islands have what they need to survive, however, many of them can and will charge as much as possible, leaving some of the poorer residents in dire straits.

| FIGHT | MOVE | STUDY | SURVIVE | TALK | TINKER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 4 | 7 | 4 | 7 | 5 |

| BOLDLY | CAREFULLY | CLEVERLY | FORCEFULLY | QUIETLY | SWIFTLY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 6 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 4 |

**Truth:** *Merchant, Accountant, Shrewd*
**Focuses:** *Negotiate 5, Society 4*
**Gear:** *Abacus, pen and paper,* and *nice suit*.
**Story Hooks:**

- Any adventurer who wants to become a pirate should seek out Ranalt Coveney. With her fleet targeting cargo ships, she is a particular thorn in many merchants' sides, and she's always hiring. Merchants, however, are willing to pay any adventurers who can stop her.
- Lost cargo can command a high price from the right buyer. And Ignacy Korneev is that buyer. He has a map with the location of a shipwreck. He wants the crates and containers before the shipping company can reclaim them. Ignacy will pay well. The shipping company is offering a hefty reward for the return of their goods, though.



# DOCTOR

## MINOR ALLY

The doctors of the Empire experienced the terrifying surge of the Rat Plague and the incredible rise of Bloodfly Fever. With their keen educations, many from the University of Wynnedown or the exclusive Academy of Natural Philosophy, doctors diagnose illnesses, treat injuries, and tend to the citizens of the Isles. They've been instrumental in limiting epidemics or even curing them. However, sometimes their professional curiosity can take them too far and, when accompanied by a lack of common sense, can lead to dangerous experiments that result in the very outbreaks they should be curing.

| FIGHT | MOVE | STUDY | SURVIVE | TALK | TINKER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 4 | 8 | 4 | 6 | 7 |

| BOLDLY | CAREFULLY | CLEVERLY | FORCEFULLY | QUIETLY | SWIFTLY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 8 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 4 |

**Truth:** *Doctor, Observant, Scientific Approach, Curious*
**Focuses:** *Medicine 5, Surgery 5*
**Gear:** *Medical kit* and *elixirs*.
**Story Hooks:**

- "I want to go to Pandyssia!" Doctor Melville Smylie is ready to go to the Far Continent and needs a crew and a ship... and supplies. He feels he's close to curing the Bloodfly Fever by combining bloodflies with the Pandyssian Bull Rat. The Academy of Natural Philosophy wants to stop his experiments, though.
- In a Fraeport slum, Doctor Tegan Brunswick treats the less fortunate, but is running out of supplies and has no funding. She will treat anyone who brings her the medical supplies and elixirs she needs. No questions asked. The local authorities want to arrest her, but they need to catch her harboring criminals first...

# INVENTOR

## NOTABLE ADVERSARY

All around the Empire, inventors fancy themselves the next Esmond Roseburrow or Anton Sokolov. They toy with weapons, machines, elixirs, and new ways to use refined whale oil. Many want to improve the lives of those living in the Isles. Others want the fame and fortune that comes with a successful creation, morality and ethics be damned. And a select few want to sow as much destruction as they can. A good inventor, however, is worth their weight in Tyvian red.

| FIGHT | MOVE | STUDY | SURVIVE | TALK | TINKER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 4 | 8 | 5 | 6 | 8 |

| BOLDLY | CAREFULLY | CLEVERLY | FORCEFULLY | QUIETLY | SWIFTLY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 6 | 8 | 4 | 4 | 4 |

**Truth:** *Inventor, Scientific Approach, Experimental, Ignores Consequences*
**Focuses:** *Concentrate 4, Engineering 5, Natural Philosophy 4*
**Stress Track:** 4
**Gear:** *Tinkering Tools, magnifying goggles, rewire tool,* and *voltaic gun* (damage 3, ranged [nearby]).
**Story Hooks:**

- Up and coming inventor, Sinovia Kopul, wants to be the next Anton Sokolov. She's offering new blueprints to adventurers who bring her designs or prototypes, especially those belonging to Anton Sokolov. Several other inventors see her as a rival and will pay good coin to sabotage her work.
- Just outside of Cullero, Veto Cordero has created a lanky, mechanical monstrosity that he's lost all control over. It's begun to terrorize the residents of his small town. He wants to try to fix his automaton, but just needs an adventurer to bring him the parts. The people who live there want him out!

## SCHOLAR

### NOTABLE ADVERSARY

Scholars pursue knowledge. Despite the oppressive presence of the Abbey of the Everyman, a handful still study the Void, the Outsider, and any relics they can get their hands on. Others brave the Pandyssian continent for a glimpse at the crumbling, ancient temples there. They are studious, clever, and noticeably daring. Many want to discover truths about humanity's past to inform the future. A search for power drives some into unhealthy situations. An irrepressible curiosity pushes other scholars to risk life and limb as they gather facts and evidence about the surrounding world..

| FIGHT | MOVE | STUDY | SURVIVE | TALK | TINKER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 4 | 8 | 4 | 8 | 5 |

| BOLDLY | CAREFULLY | CLEVERLY | FORCEFULLY | QUIETLY | SWIFTLY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | 4 | 8 | 4 | 4 | 4 |

**Truth:** *Scholar, Studious, Curious Without Regard to Safety*
**Focuses:** *History 5, Void Lore 4*
**Stress Track:** 4
**Gear:** *Journal, pen, books,* and *magnifying glass*.
**Story Hooks:**

- Montrel Mondragón, a scholar from the University of Wynnedown, is determined to meet a witch. He wants to know how their powers work. However, witches are reclusive. Mondragón is willing to pay a lot and gamble his life to get the answers he's looking for. The Abbey would like an adventurer to kill every witch Mondragón can find.
- Patience Curtice coordinates the discovery and punishment of academic heresy for the Abbey of the Everyman. For adventurers who bring her information about scholars who seek the Outsider, she will agree to overlook a certain number of religious transgressions.



## PARLAMENTARIAN

### MAJOR ADVERSARY

The Gristol Parliament's duty is to keep the Emperor or Empress in check. The parliament also elects a regent should the Empire need a temporary ruler. Who becomes a member of parliament comes down to a combination of money, power, and status. Aristocrats, generational landholders, wealthy merchants, and influential figures fill the seats. They may rule, but most do not understand the common folk and what they suffer. Those with empathy for the lower classes are mocked as sentimental fools and have trouble soliciting the votes they need for their proposals.

| FIGHT | MOVE | STUDY | SURVIVE | TALK | TINKER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 4 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 4 |

| BOLDLY | CAREFULLY | CLEVERLY | FORCEFULLY | QUIETLY | SWIFTLY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 4 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 5 |

**Truth:** *Parliamentarian, Politician, Aristocrat, Wealthy, Land Owner*
**Focuses:** *Counsel 4, Firearms 3, Persuade 5, Society 5,*
**Stress Track:** 7
**Gear:** *Pen and paper, wax seal,* and *pistol* (damage 4, ranged [nearby], messy).
**Story Hooks:**

- Stealthy, clever adventurers may receive a summons from Parliamentarian Attheaeldre Whitford. She needs partners who can keep a secret, steal information, and spread lies about her political enemies. As Attheaeldre knows, success in parliament is a direct result of knowledge and rumor-mongering. Betraying Attheaeldre may be lucrative, but she makes a dangerous adversary.
- Dempsey Lathan, a Dunwall citizen, desperately wants a proposal passed in the parliament. And he's not above hiring adventurers to blackmail Parliamentarians so that they'll vote the way he wants them to. The Parliamentarians will pay to have him removed from Dunwall.



# ARISTOCRAT

## MAJOR ADVERSARY

Lavish gatherings, grotesque displays of wealth, and absolute ruthlessness are what it takes to make it to the top of the Empire's society. Turning a former friend or colleague into a social pariah in order to move up is acceptable and even expected. Rumors, scandals, and slander are the currencies of the upper echelons. The aristocrats love spectacular rises among their ranks but hunger even more for dramatic falls. Never trust an aristocrat. They got to where they are through their moral failings.

| FIGHT | MOVE | STUDY | SURVIVE | TALK | TINKER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 6 | 5 | 5 | 8 | 4 |

| BOLDLY | CAREFULLY | CLEVERLY | FORCEFULLY | QUIETLY | SWIFTLY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | 4 | 4 | 6 | 4 | 4 |

**Truth:** *Aristocrat, Wealthy, Land Owner*
**Focuses:** *Society 5, Fencing 4, History 4*
**Stress Track:** 5
**Gear:** *Sword* (damage 3, block, melee), *official wax seal,* and *well-tailored clothes.*
**Story Hooks:**

- Aristocrat Royden Trone will approach adventurers with a proposal. His rival Garnell Mullens is rising a bit too quickly for Royden's likes. He wants someone to attack his own pleasure ship and blame the violence on Garnell. Anyone who accepts the offer will have a powerful patron... or a nasty betrayer.
- Many aristocrats have illegitimate children, including Vivianna Orcutt. Vivianna wants to ensure that the child can't ever cause a scandal for her. In her opinion, a permanent solution is best. Yule Waide, her former lover and father of her illegitimate son, can't pay much, but wants help protecting his son from Vivianna's schemes.

# FLEET CAPTAIN

## MAJOR ADVERSARY

Fleet captains command several ships at a time on the open ocean. Gristol fleet captains have the largest fleets and execute complex naval maneuvers. Tyvian fleet captains are known for their expertise with experimental technology. Serkonan fleet captains have a specific expertise in fighting pirates. The Morleyan navy is too small, as a punishment for the Morley Insurrection, to have fleet captains. The navy is one of the few places in the Empire where someone from a humble background can rise to prominence. However, those without high society connections will run into many more barriers than those who come from the aristocracy.

| FIGHT | MOVE | STUDY | SURVIVE | TALK | TINKER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | 6 | 6 | 7 | 4 | 4 |

| BOLDLY | CAREFULLY | CLEVERLY | FORCEFULLY | QUIETLY | SWIFTLY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 5 | 7 | 6 | 4 | 4 |

**Truth:** *Captain, Sailor, Commander, Overbearing*

**Focuses:** *Boats 5, Fencing 4, Firearms 3, Resolve 4, Ships 5*

**Stress Track:** 9

**Gear:** *Sword* (damage 3, block, melee), *pistol* (damage 4, ranged [nearby], messy), *captain's uniform (protection 2, included above), armored mantle coat, compass,* and *spyglass.*

**Story Hooks:**

- Captain Elfie Dill is definitely interested in what the fleet captains are up to. As a pirate, she will pay good money for plans, strategies, and sabotage. The fleet captains would prefer to see her hang.
- Under consideration for fleet captain, Cordero Ruvalcaba feels he needs to fight a little harder to compete with the aristocrats. He intends to hire tutors to learn to speak, write, and behave like them. His opponents would like Cordero to disappear until the decision has been made... or forever.

# ARTIST

## NOTABLE ADVERSARY

From painting to metalwork to silvergraphs, artists create beauty for others to enjoy. Artists patronized by the gentry enjoy a life of luxury. But not all artists sell to the wealthy. Creating jewelry or books of art for the average person provides a different type of fulfillment to the creator. There is, however, a very competitive market and that contributes to intense rivalries between artists. Exquisite genius can sometimes hide true viciousness.

| FIGHT | MOVE | STUDY | SURVIVE | TALK | TINKER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 6 | 8 | 4 | 5 | 8 |

| BOLDLY | CAREFULLY | CLEVERLY | FORCEFULLY | QUIETLY | SWIFTLY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | 8 | 7 | 4 | 4 | 4 |

**Truth:** *Artist, Creative, Eccentric*
**Focuses:** *Etiquette 4, Art 5, Engineering 4*
**Stress Track:** 4
**Gear:** *Artists' tools, journal, pen,* and *smock.*
**Story Hooks:**

- The stories say that the mythical moonglimmer gem glows at night. Convinced that the stone will grant him with divine inspiration, Dal Rankin, sculptor of fame, desires one. And he'll pay. However, an aristocratic collector wants Rankin's work to remain free of eldritch influences. She'll do whatever it takes to keep Rankin from acquiring a stone.
- The famous singer, Brinleigh Ida, has disappeared. Some believe that she's in hiding, avoiding an overly enthusiastic admirer. Others suspect kidnapping... a deranged individual with enough wealth might just try to coerce her into recording audiographs. What really happened to Brinleigh Ida?

# THE SAVAGE



## WOLFHOUND

MINOR ADVERSARY

Wolfhounds are the domesticated version of the Tyvian hound. Despite their training and close proximity to people, they still possess many feral qualities. Their powerful jaws and ground-eating lope give them a distinct advantage in hunting and attacking. Overseers often handle wolfhounds, training them to kill any individuals they deem too heretical. Raising them from puppyhood, Overseers put down any puppies who do not meet their strict standards after a year. Wolfhounds, abandoned by overwhelmed owners, also roam the cities as strays.

| FIGHT | MOVE | STUDY | SURVIVE | TALK | TINKER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 7 | 5 | 8 | 4 | 4 |

| BOLDLY | CAREFULLY | CLEVERLY | FORCEFULLY | QUIETLY | SWIFTLY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

**Truth:** *Wolfhound, Heightened Smell, Heightened Hearing, Unrelenting Jaws*

**Attacks:** *Paralyzing Bite* (damage 3, can't defend from other attacks), *Charge Attack* (damage 1, adds knocked down truth to target).

**Special Rules:**

- Keen Senses (Smell)

**Story Hooks:**

- As a wolfhound trainer and breeder, Kiska Vydrina is an intimidating woman. Her trained wolfhounds command high prices as guard dogs and hunting companions. However, she has several requests from powerful aristocrats for wild puppies and needs someone to help her go into the Tyvian wilderness to bring some back. That is, however, neither recommended nor legal...
- Near the Overseer kennels, one might find Cleary Lydon skulking around. He wants to free the wolfhounds that fail the Overseer tests before they can be put down. "They're sweet-tempered animals," he insists. But he can't do it alone. The Overseers consider Cleary a menace.



## RAT SWARM

MINOR ADVERSARY

In small groups or by themselves, the rats of the Empire are timid and wary. Once a large group comes together in a swarm, they become hostile and deadly. Rat swarms can kill a full-grown person in moments and devour a dead or unconscious body just as quickly. Sticking to the shadows, the rats spread throughout the cities, carrying disease with them. One can spot them in almost every dark nook and cranny. It's suspected that the rats that transmitted the Rat Plague were larger and of a different or hybrid species. Some researchers believe the massive Pandyssian Bull Rat is the source of both the strange plague rats and the plague itself.

| FIGHT | MOVE | STUDY | SURVIVE | TALK | TINKER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 6 | 5 | 7 | 4 | 4 |

| BOLDLY | CAREFULLY | CLEVERLY | FORCEFULLY | QUIETLY | SWIFTLY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 4 | 6 | 7 | 5 | 6 |

**Truth:** *Swarm of Infected Rats, Infected, Bold*
**Attacks:** *Countless Biting Mouths* (damage 1, 3 times per round).
**Special Rules:**

- Keen Senses (Smell)
- Feral

**Story Hooks:**

- At the Academy of Natural Philosophy in Karnaca, Doctor Delcine Arevalo believes that Rat Plague and the plague rats are somehow related to Pandyssian Bull Rats. She wants to prevent another plague and is hiring crews to travel to the Far Continent and bring back specimens. Other scientists want to recreate the plague and will also pay for the Bull Rats.



## WHALE

### MAJOR ADVERSARY

These enormous leviathans populate the seas around the Empire. Powerful and intelligent, whales will attack when provoked, making whaling a hazardous but profitable career. Many businesses purchase whale bones for different uses and underground crafters use them to create the Abbey of the Everyman-condemned bonecharms. The blubber, however, is the true value of a whale. Used to power the cities and technology of the Empire, inventors and aristocrats covet the whale oil extracted from blubber. The reason for the whale oil's unique properties is the supernatural state of the whales themselves. They are physical beings that also inhabit the Void, living in both places at once.

| FIGHT | MOVE | STUDY | SURVIVE | TALK | TINKER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | 6 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 4 |

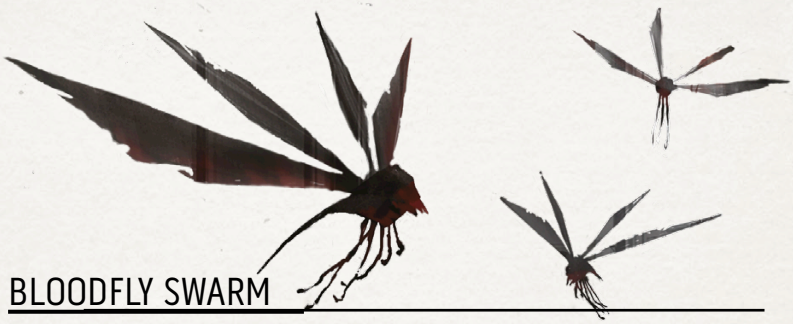
| BOLDLY | CAREFULLY | CLEVERLY | FORCEFULLY | QUIETLY | SWIFTLY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | 5 | 8 | 7 | 4 | 6 |

**Truth:** *Whale, Void Creature, Aggressive*
**Stress Track:** 15
**Attacks:** *Whale Bite* (damage 10, melee), *Charge Attack* (damage 5), *Breach* (damage 8).
**Special Rules:**

- Natural Armor 7
- Menacing

**Story Hooks:**

- They call it Misery Mal, an aggressive whale who sinks every whaling trawler it encounters. The slaughterhouses and whaling companies are offering a substantial reward for killing it. Brammel Shove, a Cultist, wants to save Misery Mal and commune with the creature.



## BLOODFLY SWARM

MINOR ADVERSARY

Bloodflies, an insect native to Serkonos, aggressively protect their nests in flying swarms. They create their nests on walls and in hosts, either a corpse or a living creature. A person infected with the parasitic bloodfly eggs can contract Bloodfly Fever, a terrible affliction that turns a person into a Nest Keeper, someone who becomes a new nest upon death (description on page 261). Fire is the best-known way to deal with a bloodfly swarm or nest. Take note, the nests sometimes contain blood amber, a material worth quite a lot of money.

| FIGHT | MOVE | STUDY | SURVIVE | TALK | TINKER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 6 | 5 | 5 | 8 | 4 |

| BOLDLY | CAREFULLY | CLEVERLY | FORCEFULLY | QUIETLY | SWIFTLY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | 4 | 4 | 6 | 4 | 4 |

**Truth:** *Swarm of Bloodflies, Flammable, Parasitical Nesting, Territorial*
**Attacks:** *Countless Stings* (damage 1, 2 times per round, blast).
**Special Rules:**

- Feral
- Menacing

**Story Hooks:**

- Ercole Melara's employer, a famous sculptor, needs more blood amber to fulfill her orders, and every adventurer Ercole sent to harvest it hasn't returned. He's getting desperate and would even consider buying blood amber from someone who farmed it by intentionally infecting people with the larvae... not that he would ever suggest such a thing.



# NEST KEEPER

## NOTABLE ADVERSARY

If bloodflies lay eggs inside a living host, the host will lose any semblance of free will and become protector of the bloodfly colony, a Nest Keeper. Nest Keepers have a distinct sickly, pale appearance. Though they can still talk and move on their own, all actions they take are in service to the living bloodflies and their nests. These hosts can ignore significant damage, including losing limbs, and still fight. Upon death, mature bloodflies erupt from the Nest Keeper's corpse. Fire is the most reliable tactic.

| FIGHT | MOVE | STUDY | SURVIVE | TALK | TINKER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 7 | 4 | 8 | 5 | 4 |

| BOLDLY | CAREFULLY | CLEVERLY | FORCEFULLY | QUIETLY | SWIFTLY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 4 | 4 | 8 | 4 | 4 |

**Truth:** *Nest Keeper, Bloodfly Host, Flammable, Resistant to Damage*

**Stress Track:** 10

**Attacks:** *Flail (damage 3, melee), Horrifying Shriek (damage 1, ranged [nearby] adds Enraged Swarm truth to all nearby Bloodflies*

.

**Special Rules:**

- Immune to Fear and Pain
- Mindless
- Natural Armor 4

**Story Hooks:**

- On the island of Serkonos, Tiberio Masullo pleads with adventurers to help him find his brother. Days ago, Enea Masullo came down with Bloodfly Fever. Tiberio knows that Enea is dead, but it will help him find peace to have his body. Others may want to desecrate the dead Nest Keeper for blood amber.

## WEEPER

### NOTABLE ADVERSARY

Those who suffer from the Rat Plague are called Weepers due to the blood that drips from their eyes. In the later stages, Weepers become combative and lash out at any non-infected creature nearby. They lose their ability to speak. They are easy to locate thanks to their constant moaning and grunting. Weepers focus only on what's in front of them, making them easy to sneak past. In large numbers they are dangerous.

| FIGHT | MOVE | STUDY | SURVIVE | TALK | TINKER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 6 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 4 |

| BOLDLY | CAREFULLY | CLEVERLY | FORCEFULLY | QUIETLY | SWIFTLY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 4 |

**Truth:** *Weeper, Afflicted by the Rat Plague, Infected by Flies*
**Stress Track:** 6
**Attacks:** *Parasitic Infestation* (damage 1, melee), *Bite* (damage 1, melee), *Vomit* (damage 3, melee).
**Story Hooks:**

- "I haven't heard from Tower Rock in weeks." Lyndall Malin, a rural doctor who tends to the tiny town on Gristol every few months, is looking for adventurers who can accompany her to Tower Rock, where she fears the Rat Plague may have reared its ugly head again. Whatever is there is dangerous; that's for sure.
- Truitestall Heape, a street peddler, has heard about Weepers appearing in the city despite the cure's development. He doesn't know what's causing it, but he wants it taken care of before it spreads. Some doctors and scientists may, instead, want to quarantine the area and observe what happens to these new victims.



## ENVISIONED

### MINOR ADVERSARY

Envisioned are powerful stone creatures who were once human. Members of the Cult of the Outsider transform into these strange supernatural beings after years of exposure to the Void. They can no longer speak and focus only on guarding the Ritual Hold, the place where the barrier between the world and the Void is thinnest. They have senses beyond that of most animals and can detect the stealthiest adventurer.

| FIGHT | MOVE | STUDY | SURVIVE | TALK | TINKER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | 5 | 7 | 8 | 4 | 4 |

| BOLDLY | CAREFULLY | CLEVERLY | FORCEFULLY | QUIETLY | SWIFTLY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 7 | 7 | 5 | 4 | 8 |

**Truth:** *Envisioned, Former Cultist, Turned to Stone*

**Stress Track:** 15

**Attacks:** *Stab* (damage 7, melee, twice per round) and *Harpoon* (damage 1, range, draws harpooned enemy within melee range).

**Powers:** *Blink, Summon Void Effigy* (creates a smaller version of itself with weeper stats - see page 262), *Regenerate* (if stress track drops to 3, Envisioned heals 2 boxes every the end of every round thereafter).

**Special Rules:**

- Immune to Fear and Poison
- Unliving 3
- Natural Armor 4

**Story Hooks:**

- In Karnaca, one may encounter Xabat Corrales. He watched an Envisioned fly into a rage and leave the Ritual Hold. Xabat doesn't want the rogue creature to hurt anyone. The Cultists, however, don't want Xabat talking to strangers about their secrets.



# BLOOD BRIAR

## NOTABLE ADVERSARY

These plants possess a connection with the Void itself. Blood briars appear dormant and dried out, a single fibrous spike protruding from the ground. However, these organisms will attack any living being that gets too close by wrapping their vines around their victim and sending out a barrage of thorns. Those with Void powers can summon blood briars and control them to an extent. Though they rarely appear naturally, blood briars can thrive after being summoned if they're not eliminated.

**Truth:** *Blood Briar, Sentient Plant, Void Creature*

| FIGHT | MOVE | STUDY | SURVIVE | TALK | TINKER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 6 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 4 |

| BOLDLY | CAREFULLY | CLEVERLY | FORCEFULLY | QUIETLY | SWIFTLY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 5 |

**Stress Track:** 5

**Attacks:** *Furious Vine Lash* (damage 4, melee, adds immobilized truth to target, difficulty 3 test to free themselves).

**Powers:** *Thorns*.

**Story Hooks:**

- Kadienne Inge, a witch living in rural Morley, is growing blood briars. The fruits sell for an incredible price because watering and fertilizing the blood briars over the months it takes to fruit is a dangerous pastime. She's hiring brave adventurers to tend her plants for her and keep news of her new garden from getting to the Abbey and the local government.
- Overseer Elden Buntain is hunting a coven of witches on Gristol. The women have summoned a large patch of blood briars around their home. Buntain is recruiting adventurers to get rid of the weeds and flush out the witches. The witches would like to hire some guards to protect them from Buntain.

# THE NOTORIOUS



## EMILY KALDWIN

MAJOR ADVERSARY

Empress Emily Drexel Leila Kaldwin I, only child to Empress Jessamine Kaldwin, experienced many struggles in her young life. Her mother's assassination and her own kidnapping when she was a young girl continues to haunt her. Despite her grief and the difficulties that came with her royal title, she grew into a strong, resolute young woman. As a child and the heir apparent, those who hungered for power and those who hated the Empire targeted her and her family. Her mother died as a result of a political coup. A pretender to the crown captured her father in another attempt to take her throne. Emily Kaldwin has endured challenge after challenge throughout her young life.

In addition to studying about ruling an empire, Emily learned about stealth, combat, and deception from her father, the Royal Protector Corvo Attano (description on page 267). Her skills with a sword and pistol are formidable and rival even Corvo's. As she worked to take back her throne after her alleged aunt overthrew her, the Outsider (description on page 273), interested in her actions, gave her his Mark, granting her Void powers.

Empress Emily Kaldwin feels strongly about a just rule and fair laws. And she makes her decisions based on the morals and principles she holds. As a royal, aristocrats and the wealthy surround her and fawn over her, constantly trying to curry favor, something she disdains with the core of her being. She is a pragmatist and much prefers sincerity and honesty. Though she governs an Empire, she often disappears from Dunwall Tower, the royal residence, and wanders the rooftops of the city, observing the common folk and making sure her decisions as Empress are having the effect she intended.

Emily Drexel Lela Kaldwin isn't a carefully sheltered princess. She can hold her own when it comes to both political intrigue and a life-or-death skirmish. Authoritative and dangerous, Emily is a great friend to have and a savage foe to face.

| FIGHT | MOVE | STUDY | SURVIVE | TALK | TINKER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | 8 | 6 | 6 | 8 | 4 |

| BOLDLY | CAREFULLY | CLEVERLY | FORCEFULLY | QUIETLY | SWIFTLY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 6 | 8 |

**Truth:** *Kaldwin Lineage, Royalty, Marked by the Outsider, Empress, Corvo's Daughter*
**Focuses:** *Fencing 5, History 5, Society 4, Firearms 5, Freerunning 5*.
**Stress Track:** 8
**Gear:** *High-quality Sword* (damage 4, block, melee), *pistol* (damage 4, range [nearby], messy), *crossbow* (damage 3, range [nearby]), and *empress ring*.
**Powers:** *(Mana 10) Far Reach, Dark Vision, Mesmerize*
**Story Hooks:**

- After one of your contacts is made privy to your knowledge of the Void, they refer you to Empress Kaldwin, who requests for your aid in tracking down a group of occult researchers. These people, who seem to have splintered from Delilah's crumbling following, have been tracking down a strange relic - said to be linked to a series of folktales from Redmoor, in Gristol.





## CORVO ATTANO

MAJOR ADVERSARY

Serkonan-born Corvo Attano grew up in a poor, working class family in Karnaca's mining district. After winning the Blade Verbena sword duel competition at sixteen, the Grand Serkonan Guard recruited him into their ranks. It wasn't long before his renowned skills had him posted in Dunwall and eventually assigned as Royal Protector, the first ever not to be born on Gristol. In time, he guarded Jessamine Kaldwin, the Empress of the Isles and mother of Emily Kaldwin (description on page 265).

After the beginning of the Rat Plague, a traitor orchestrated the assassination of Empress Jessamine Kaldwin and the kidnapping of her daughter, Emily Kaldwin, framing Corvo for the crimes. Unknown to most, Emily Kaldwin was not only the heir to the throne, but also Corvo's daughter. At this time of anguish for the Royal Protector, the Outsider (description on page 273) approached Corvo, marking him. A talented fighter and now Void power user, Corvo risked his life to save his daughter and put Emily back on the throne.

Always composed, he has no concerns about his own reputation and will kill without compunction when necessary. Corvo Attano feels it's his duty to make sure the Empire of the Isles doesn't fall into the wrong hands and outside the Kaldwin family's rule. He has spent countless hours over the years training Emily Kaldwin in swordsmanship, marksmanship, and freerunning until he was satisfied with her abilities and confident that she could win the Blade Verbena herself.

From commoner to one of the most powerful people in the entire Empire, Corvo Attano has the will and the skills to ensure the safety of the Isles. And he won't hesitate to spill some blood to do so. It's hard to win his trust, but he is an unrivaled ally for those that do.

| FIGHT | MOVE | STUDY | SURVIVE | TALK | TINKER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | 6 | 8 | 8 | 4 | 6 |

| BOLDLY | CAREFULLY | CLEVERLY | FORCEFULLY | QUIETLY | SWIFTLY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 8 | 5 | 5 | 8 | 6 |

**Truth:** *Royal Protector, Spymaster, Marked by the Outsider, Emily's Father*

**Focuses:** *Fencing 5, Firearms 5, Freerunning 5, Stealth 5, Locks 4*.

**Stress Track:** 8

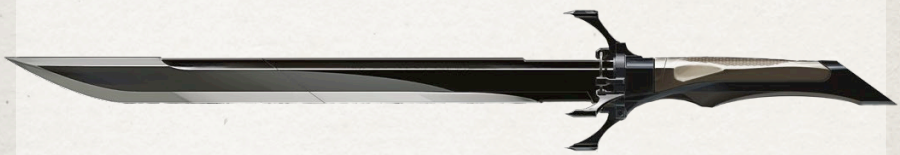
**Gear:** *High-quality Sword* (damage 3, melee), *pistol* (damage 4, range [nearby], messy), *crossbow* (damage 3, range [nearby]), and *Treated clith armor & cowl, imperial signet ring*.

**Powers:** *(Mana 10) Bend Time, Blink, Possession.*

**Enhancements:** *Agility, Shadow Kill, Strength.*

**Story Hooks:**

- Rumors about a Tyvian prison forcing witches to summon blood briars and painting creatures have reached Corvo Attano in Dunwall. He must stay by Emily's side, but will reach out to adventurers to act as his eyes and ears. His enemies will pay those he hires to feed him false information.
- Convinced that Corvo ruined his exploitative silvergraph company, Jagger Keay is holding a grudge. He wants to create a scandal that will destroy Corvo's reputation, force him to lose his position as Royal Protector, and sever his relationship with his daughter, Emily. Jagger has a lot of money and is willing to pay. Corvo might just use his considerable power to grant a favor for an adventurer who warns him of Jagger's plans





## DELILAH COPPERSPOON

MAJOR ADVERSARY

Empress. Witch. Immortal. Delilah Copperspoon shares a father with Empress Jessamine Kaldwin and grew up in Dunwall Tower with her. However, her status as illegitimate daughter forced her out onto the streets with her mother when she was young. Her mother died an agonizing death in a debtor's prison.

Her talent for painting caught the attention of the brilliant Anton Sokolov (description on page 276), who took her under his wing. Eventually, their visions diverged, their relationship deteriorated, and the two ended up parting ways. Delilah suffered, as yet another person in her life left her behind.

After living in a world that hurt her over and over, Delilah began to fantasize about repairing society and even reality itself. Her intense charisma drew people to her. Her shrewd intellect allowed her to manipulate them. Searching for a way to enact the change she longed for, she pursued arcane knowledge, ultimately piquing the interest of the Outsider and receiving his mark.

As a powerful witch, she formed her own coven. Using her mark to give the women who joined her Void powers. Those witches who survive still work toward Delilah's goals of deposing the Kaldwins.

Delilah's past with the royal Kaldwins, her fear of abandonment, and her fierce need for power and control led to her obsession with the throne of the Isles. As Jessamine Kaldwin's older sister, she sees the title of Empress as her rightful title. With her new Void powers, she began attempt after attempt to usurp the throne from her niece.

When Emily Kaldwin was young, Delilah tried to possess her body, taking over her mind so she could rule in her stead. Daud, the assassin, thwarted her plans. Years later, Delilah returned, now immortal, to overthrow her niece and have herself crowned as Empress Delilah Kaldwin I, but Emily Kaldwin rose up and fought for her title.

Ruthless and exacting, Delilah will do whatever it takes to "fix" the world as she sees fit.

| FIGHT | MOVE | STUDY | SURVIVE | TALK | TINKER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 6 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 4 |

| BOLDLY | CAREFULLY | CLEVERLY | FORCEFULLY | QUIETLY | SWIFTLY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | 6 | 8 | 5 | 5 | 5 |

**Truth:** *Kaldwin Lineage, Marked by the Outsider, Painter, Resurrected from the Void*
**Focuses:** *Persuade 5, Resolve 5, Deceive 5, Fencing 4, Void Lore 4*.
**Stress Track:** 8
**Gear:** *Whalebone sword* (damage 3, melee).
**Powers:** *(Mana 10) Blink, Blood Briar, Thorns.*
**Enhancements:** *Arcane Bond, Dark Insiration, Escape.*
**Story Hooks:**

- Delilah, still enraged by her mother's untimely death in debtor's prison, offers to grant Void powers in exchange for the murder of Fenton Looker, the guard who killed her mother. After receiving threats from Delilah, Fenton is desperately searching for adventurers to protect him from whomever—or whatever—Delilah sends.
- "I must find her!" Tarin Wingrove's sister, Cwen, vanished after meeting Delilah Copperspoon. Tarin knows that she's joined her coven and is determined to get her back. As a merchant, she can trade goods, money, or travel. Delilah, however, considers Tarin a pest that needs exterminating. The witch will trade in valuable blood briar fruits.





## BILLIE LURK

### MAJOR ADVERSARY

Raised by an abusive, alcoholic mother, Billie left home at a young age to escape her horrifying reality. She soon discovered that, in such a desperate situation, thievery and assassination can put food on the table faster than anything else.

After killing the aristocrat who murdered her lover, Billie ended up an outcast with nowhere to turn. Her mother's condition and the city's refusal to see justice for her dead lover left Billie disillusioned and disdainful of those who let fear control them. After watching the Knife of Dunwall, Daud, assassinate targets right in front of her (including the guards who stood by as her lover, Deirdre, was killed), Billie was in awe. She followed him without a second thought as to the danger she was putting herself in. Daud caught her and because of her courage and conviction became her mentor, gifted her Void powers thanks to his Mark of the Outsider.

Through determination and perseverance, Billie became an adept assassin. It wasn't long before Billie Lurk was second only to Daud in the assassin's organization known as the Whalers.

After Emily Kaldwin's kidnapping, Daud's priorities changed. Sensing what she perceived as weakness, Billie denounced her teacher and planned to take over the Whalers herself. Working with Delilah Copperspoon (description on page 269), she betrayed Daud only to be defeated by him, forcing her to leave the Whalers and change her name.

For a time, she lived out her childhood dream of captaining a small boat of her own. However, when Daud came back into her life, she picked up her weapons without hesitation.

After betraying Daud, Billie's powers waned and faded, leaving her with only her own underworld skills. Later, Billie began to collect relics tied to the Void that provided her with more and more magic, which she used to hunt the Outsider, going so far as to meet the deity in the Void.

Billie Lurk won't shy away from any task. She doesn't abide weakness and has a curt, undiplomatic way of speaking, favoring efficiency, directness, and deadliness.

| FIGHT | MOVE | STUDY | SURVIVE | TALK | TINKER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 4 | 4 |

| BOLDLY | CAREFULLY | CLEVERLY | FORCEFULLY | QUIETLY | SWIFTLY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 5 | 5 | 6 | 8 | 8 |

**Truth:** *Whaler, Assassin, Blunt*

**Focuses:** *Fencing 5, Streetwise 5, Tracking 5, Stealth 5, Boats 4.*

**Stress Track:** 8

**Gear:** *Sword* (damage 3, block, melee), *knife* (damage 2, concealed, melee) and *voltaic gun* (damage 3 ranged [nearby]).

**Powers:** *(Mana 6) Blink, Dark Vision, Beast Whisperer (Rats).*

**Story Hooks:**

- In the far reaches of Tyvia, it's said that a father and daughter create powerful bonecharms and that they have a relic to sell. Billie Lurk wants it. No one knows the names of the bonecharm crafters. No one knows exactly where they live. It won't be easy. She's willing to pay adventurers with coin or a pro bono assassination if they bring it to her.
- Callas Abele still wants justice for her son's death. And Billie was the woman who killed him. Callas will leverage all her power and wealth as one of Karnaca's aristocrats to make it happen. Billie thinks Callas doesn't have enough empathy for the family of the girl that her son murdered... and would like to see the woman suffer a bit, too.





# THE OUTSIDER

## MAJOR ADVERSARY

An ancient cult sacrificed a 15-year-old boy in the Ritual Hold area of Karnaca's Shindaerey Peak 4,000 years ago. That boy bonded with the Void and transformed into the Outsider.

Though he was once human, the Outsider is now a powerful deity. He has no physical body, and can appear anywhere in the world, though he seems to prefer to materialize near the small shrines built to worship him. He can also enter dreams, an ability the Abbey of the Everyman fears and uses as excuses for persecuting citizens for behaviors they don't approve of.

He doesn't favor any one group and intentionally ignores the Abbey of the Everyman and the Cult of the Outsider, both of which he believes are ridiculous and full of zealots.

He chooses to communicate with those he finds interesting, who may transform the world itself. He has no ambitions or ultimate plan but seems fascinated with the choices people make. When the Outsider meets with individuals, he looks like the young man he once was, but his eyes are a dark, inky black lacking any sclera.

Those who have true Void powers receive them from his mark, which usually shows up as a type of rune on the back of the marked individual's hand. The mark burns or itches and glows when used. There are no strings attached to the Outsider's Mark or a person's access to their Void powers. The farthest he'll go in nudging a marked individual is a hint or clue that can put them on a path the Outsider is curious about.

Those known to have carried the Outsider's Mark are: an unnamed refugee mother, Vera Moray, Daud, Delilah Copperspoon, "Lonely Rat Boy," Corvo Attano, and Emily Kaldwin.

Dispassionate, neutral, and unbiased, the Outsider observes humanity, waiting for them to send ripples of change throughout the Empire. As an entity, he is almost invincible. Hurting him is near impossible. Making an enemy of him is inadvisable.

| FIGHT | MOVE | STUDY | SURVIVE | TALK | TINKER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 |

| BOLDLY | CAREFULLY | CLEVERLY | FORCEFULLY | QUIETLY | SWIFTLY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 |

**Truth:** *One with the Void, Curious, Neutral, Deity*
**Focuses:** *All 5.*
**Stress Track:** *Can only be defeated by a strike of the Twin-bladed Knife.*
**Powers:** *(Infinite Mana) All*
**Story Hooks:**

- Years ago, the Outsider took an interest in Neva Lach, a woman who runs a small black market stall selling sea shells. After that, she carved strange symbols onto the shells until the day when the Overseers came for her. She escaped, and now wishes for the group to assist her stay out of sight, and contact the Outsider to seek for answers.
- Warfare Overseer Elwold Arne, zealot of the Abbey of the Everyman, is intent on stopping anyone and anything associated with the Outsider. He will provide political power, social prestige, or money to adventurers who can give him leads on Outsider worshipers or the Outsider himself. The Outsider finds Elwold boring, and the deity would appreciate any attempts to stymie the determined overseer and convince Elwold to leave him alone.





# DAUD

## MAJOR ADVERSARY

Also known as the Knife of Dunwall, Daud is the leader of the Whalers; an infamous gang that operated in Dunwall during the Rat Plague. Conceived aboard a pirate ship, born in Serkonos, and abducted during his teenage years, Daud eventually found his way to the Empire's capital, where he forged a reputation for skullduggery.

At some point, Daud sparked an interest in the Outsider, who marked him—thus granting powers Daud put to deadly use, becoming one of the most feared assassins in Dunwall. Daud and his Whalers have been hired many a time in the past to perform high profile assassinations, with the most prominent one being that of Empress Jessamine Kaldwin—at the request of the then Royal Spymaster, Hiram Burrows.

| FIGHT | MOVE | STUDY | SURVIVE | TALK | TINKER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | 8 | 5 | 7 | 6 | 4 |

| BOLDLY | CAREFULLY | CLEVERLY | FORCEFULLY | QUIETLY | SWIFTLY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 4 | 6 | 8 |

**Truth:** *Orphaned Prodigy, Marked by the Outsider*
**Focuses:** *Fencing 5, Firearms 3, Freerunning 5*.
**Stress Track:** 7
**Gear:** *Sword* (damage 3, block, melee) and *pistol* (damage 4, range [nearby], messy).
**Powers:** *(Mana 8) Blink, Bend Time, Dark Vision*

- After a failed attempt on the life of Luke Garrison (a local smuggler), Daud returns to his hideout injured, and asks the group to carry out the assassination for him. However, he wishes to make sure that his followers do not see him in the current state, and requests for them to dress up as himself—which also ensures that Luke's smuggling ring knows Daud is after them.



# ANTON SOKOLOV

## MAJOR ADVERSARY

A renowned painter, sculptor, inventor, scholar, and doctor, Anton Sokolov is an eccentric genius from the island of Tyvia.

He rose to fame by becoming the most sought-after portrait painter for the aristocracy of the Isles. Though he detested the innumerable advantages the aristocracy received in life, never having to work for their fortunes, he continued to take their coin and painted whatever they wished. Pragmatic to a fault, Anton Sokolov never had a problem pandering to the upper class for wealth, prestige, and power, despite his personal feelings on their failings.

Anton Sokolov's morally ambiguous nature and ambitious interest in pushing technology forward has both helped the world and born heinous creations.

| FIGHT | MOVE | STUDY | SURVIVE | TALK | TINKER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 5 | 8 | 6 | 4 | 8 |

| BOLDLY | CAREFULLY | CLEVERLY | FORCEFULLY | QUIETLY | SWIFTLY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 8 | 8 | 5 | 4 | 5 |

**Truth:** *Scientific Pursuit, Inventor, Royal Physician, Obsessed with the Outsider*
**Focuses:** *Engineering 5, Medicine 5, Natural Philosophy 5, Surgery 5*.
**Stress Track:** 6
**Gear:** *Medical kit, engineering tools, paints and brushes,* and *pocket watch*.

- Sinovia Kopul, a talented and promising inventor, claims to be the illegitimate child of Anton Sokolov. Sokolov has never shown any interest in her or her pursuits. In a final effort to get him to notice her and bequeath his legacy to her, she is looking for adventurers willing to kidnap her father. Unfortunately, Anton's own personality has made him no end of enemies. Sinovia is not the only person with the intent to kidnap him... or worse.



## GRANNY RAGS

MAJOR ADVERSARY

Once an aristocrat of renown with a deep interest in the occult, Vera Moray is a practitioner of black magic who saw her life completely changed after she and her husband took part in a disastrous expedition to the Pandyssian Continent.

Upon her return to civilization, she was taken to the Addermire Institute, where she stayed until discharged after healing from a strange Pandyssian disease.

With her reputation ruined beyond recovery, her name sullied and her worldview shaken, she returned to Dunwall. She committed murder against her husband, thereby erasing most of aspects of her previous life, and donned the name Granny Rags—settling in a small, crumbling apartment in the Estate District, carrying out who-knows-what rituals under the damp, wooden beams of her wrecked abode.

| FIGHT | MOVE | STUDY | SURVIVE | TALK | TINKER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 4 | 8 | 6 | 6 | 6 |

| BOLDLY | CAREFULLY | CLEVERLY | FORCEFULLY | QUIETLY | SWIFTLY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 8 | 7 | 5 | 5 | 4 |

**Truth:** *Occult Scholar, From Riches to Rags, Marked by the Outsider*
**Focuses:** *History 3, Society 4, Natural Philosophy 3, Void Lore 5, Theology 2.*
**Stress Track:** 6
**Gear:** *Strange looking necklace.*
**Powers:** *(Mana 8) Blink, Devouring Swarm (Rats), Fog Caller.*
**Enhancements:** *Beast Whispers (Rats), Dark Scrimshaw.*

- A group of squatters from a nearby rundown building have come to Granny Rags' house to make an offering at the Outsider Shrine. However, a lone member of the Watch has been investigating their movements. She asks the group to track them and make sure they stop meddling in her affairs.
- Granny's house has been broken into, and a few of her bonecharms have been taken to the black market. She asks the group to find the vendors, and retrieve them. She is, most certainly, not willing to pay for them.

# MINDY BLANCHARD

## MAJOR ADVERSARY

Hailing from the northern isle of Morley, Mindy Blanchard embodies the tough, passionate Morleyan spirit. Like many born under those dreary, overcast skies, Mindy has a finely honed talent for art. Her chosen canvas is skin, her own and others'. She now lives and works in Karnaca's Dust District, where she owns Mindy's Ink, her tattoo shop, and is second-in-command of the local Howlers Gang.

This artist and gang leader has an unwavering confidence in herself. And for good reason. She is as good with a knife as she is with her tattoo needles. She also enjoys getting silvergraph images done of herself, reveling in the beautiful work of art she's created of her skin.

Mindy has caught a glimpse of the Outsider's Mark on the strange, desiccated hand the leader of the Howlers possesses. Though she doesn't know what it is or what it means, she knows that it allows Paolo, the Howlers' leader, to shrug off mortal wounds. By using whale blood and other experimental fluids in her tattoo inks, she is trying to replicate the Mark and duplicate Paolo's powers..

**Truth:** *Morleyan, Tattoo Artist, Howler Lieutenant, Transgender Woman, Wanted by the Grand Guard.*

| FIGHT | MOVE | STUDY | SURVIVE | TALK | TINKER |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | 6 | 6 | 7 | 5 | 7 |

| BOLDLY | CAREFULLY | CLEVERLY | FORCEFULLY | QUIETLY | SWIFTLY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | 6 | 7 | 7 | 5 | 6 |

**Defeat Track:** 8

**Focuses:** Brawling 4, Resilience 4, Stealth 3, Streetwise 5

**Gear:** Survival knife (damage 2, melee), rifle (damage 5, ranged [distant], messy), tattooing gear, and shovel.

- In an effort to recreate the Outsider's Mark, Mindy is willing to barter her tattooing skills or Howler Gang contacts for any information on the mysterious Mark or whale parts to experiment with. She's especially interested in whale brains and other organs to incorporate into her tattoo inks. On the other hand, there are those who are trying to suppress any rumors about the Outsider and any attempts to gain supernatural powers. And those people have a lot of money.
- The Warfare Overseers tortured and murdered Mindy's friend, Amadeo Monte. She's itching to get revenge. She can offer information, tattoos, black market goods, or access to different parts of the Dust District in exchange. However, when Amadeo was in custody, he blurted out Mindy's name during his interrogation. Now, not only are the Grand Guard after her but the Overseers are, too. These two groups have vast resources that they're willing to trade for Mindy's head.





# Chapter 12

# THE OIL TRAIL

Focused on themes of class struggle, *The Oil Trail* is an adventure set after the events of the Morleyan Insurrection, in the year 1827, in the city of Dunwall.

## SESSION 1: VOICE OF THE VOICELESS

*The PCs arrive at Coldridge Prison aboard a whaler ship. Locked in a cell together, they plan their escape. One night, greeted by a strange vision, one of them is transformed into a rat and given the chance to help everyone break free.*

## SESSION 2: WAR WITHIN A BREATH

*After escaping the prison, the PCs take an offer to work at the Greaves Lighting Oil Company. In there, they find rivalries harkening back to the Insurrection, with old grudges fueling anger and confrontation. The PCs are approached by Mikael Haugen, who'll try to convince them of reaching out to the leaders among the workyard to unite and fight against the inhumane work conditions at the Company.*

## SESSION 3: ASHES OF THE FALL

*The PCs join forces with their allies to march on Greaves' mansion, preparing and setting off to fight to better their work conditions.*

## SESSION 4: SLEEP NOW IN THE FIRE

*Decided to strike at the heart of injustice, the group prepares to assassinate Julie Coldridge, setting up an ambush during the Fugue Feast*

## BEFORE WE START

During this adventure, you'll use the profiles of **City Guard**, **City Guard Officer**, and **Gang Member** as seen in *Chapter 11: Of Street Urchins & Masked Aristocrats*.

Character creation for *The Oil Trail* will feature a single truth that ties the party together; that of *forged in rebellion*. All player characters took part in the Morley Insurrection, which was violently quashed by the Empire of the Isles. They are currently being transported to a prison in Dunwall.

There's a series of questions that you can ask your players, which will help them during the process of creating their character. Have them talk to each other and as a group about these questions, their answers, and motivate them to establish a relationship from the get go:

- Who were you before the Insurrection? Did you have a family? A profession?
- Did you know about the rest? If so, what was your relationship with them?
- Why did you join the Morley Insurrection?
- During the Insurrection, you did something notorious. What was it?



# I

# VOICE OF THE VOICELESS

## SCENE 1: GRIM PROSPECTS

*Scene Rundown: The group arrives at the confinement center, are introduced to the owner of the prison, and are then taken to their cell.*

***After character creation, read aloud:*** *Metal joints and wooden planks screech as the tired old ship crashes against the waves, once more, lights flickering and revealing a hundred malnourished silhouettes, feet against the cold, wet floor. The stench of sweat, blood, and salt sticks to your skin. You've been sitting in this position for what seems like a lifetime. It feels like the slightest movement will break you. An old song comes to mind and shakes you wake, reminding you that Sleep is the cousin of Death. You look around, and this is what you see:*

Have each player tell the others how their characters look. After that, a successful **Study Swiftly** check will tell see them catch a glimpse of a pair of bright, red eyes watching from the pitch black.

Use this chance to let the PCs chat to each other. If they suggest escaping their shackles, let them know that (unless they find a way to return to them) they won't have anywhere to run, since they on the high seas. Describe how they later fall asleep, and at some point after, from a dark opening above, a piece of bread is dropped, waking them up. They probably will ask themselves where it came from, and they'll probably be somewhat confused. Whatever the case, do invite them to try to reach out to take it (since their shackles will hinder them). This can be done with a **Move Forcefully** check.

With time, they'll arrive at the prison complex. From a series of small holes to the side of the ship, they'll see red light flowing in, as well as an intermittent, loud buzz that makes the metal plating of the ship vibrate relentlessly.

### COLDRIDGE DOCKYARDS CONFINEMENT CENTER

*An oil factory masquerading as prison complex.*

Though not as hopeless as the infamous Coldridge Prison, this place is still a highly secure fortress, built during the later years of the Morley Insurrection to imprison war captives. Masquerading as a confinement center, the interior features a whale oil processing facility that is manned by the inmates, effectively turning the Coldridge prison system into an industrial assembly line.

The warden and the private watch employed in the confinement center use the profiles of the City Watch Officer and City Watch Guard respectively (page 247 & page 239).

***Read aloud**: Large steel gates open up as water falls to the sides of the ship's bow. A group of guards stand to the sides, giving way to their commander (who signals everyone to march out in a line). You are taken to a large patio, surrounded by solid concrete walls so high that they make you feel like trapped ants. A silhouette observes the collective from above, peering down. You are ordered to stand still as this figure starts talking. She stands ten meters above you, draped in the visage of royalty. She is dressed in a stylish yet practical gray outfit, and as your eyes rise, partly blinded by the sun, you see a pet snake wrapped around her neck. She speaks as if she was talking down to a dog, intermittently taking bites out of a green apple she's holding in her left hand:*

"Look alive, inmates. This is the first day of the rest of your lives. Seize it. You survived your own messy insurrection, which proves to me that there's still some value to your existence. This place is designed to press that value out of you. Now, don't kid yourselves. The only chance to escape you'll find here ends up with your brains splattered over the floor. Don't give your kinfolk more work than what they already have."

She then goes over a chilling report of the many ways in which the Morleyan Insurrection has been crushed. Everyone should roll **Survive Boldly**, though this time they'll need two successes instead of one, thanks to the *Forged in Rebellion* truth. Those who get no successes will be affected by the truth *Grim Prospects* (which will mostly apply to tests of courage and will as the PCs attempt to escape the facility).

Eventually, the PCs are taken to their shared cell. The interior seems to replicate the same intimidating, dehumanizing architecture found in the patio, with concrete walls reaching high into an open ceiling.

## SCENE 2: FAMILY

*Scene Rundown: The group reunites with many of the inmates, and gets a glimpse at what life in the confinement center will be like.*

***As the characters enter their cell, read aloud:** The same menacing concrete walls that made an appearance earlier tower over the your heads, with the cell's ceiling being twenty meters above. A circular hole allows you to see a small chunk of sky, and (with the exception of the solid steel bars in front of you) the concrete they're surrounded by has been treated to prevent people from chiseling the surface.*

The first ten days of the group's stay will be spent in their cell, as they are fed a normal diet, expected to regain strength for the eleventh day. These days can be used as downtime for the player characters to chat with each other and exchange opinions on what's happening.

During the first ten days of their imprisonment, the watch provides food so that the inmates recover their strength after the long journey. On the eleventh day, they will be taken to the patio to exercise, where they'll get a chance to chat with the other inmates.

Those with the *Grim Prospects* truth will find it hard to sleep at night. Have them roll **Study Quietly** and let those who achieved two successes that they'll feel a presence watching them.

On the eleventh day, they'll be taken out to the first patio. The place is full of weights for lifting, and there's several guards in there. Most inmates use the Gang Member profile (page 241). This provides a chance for people to revive old friendships from the war, begin rivalries and find some of the PCs' contacts that might have been among the captured, and inquiry about what's supposed to happen in the place (particularly after they hear rumors about inmates walking around with their clothes covered in blood). They also have the chance to meet...

### CLARISSA HIIRGAARD

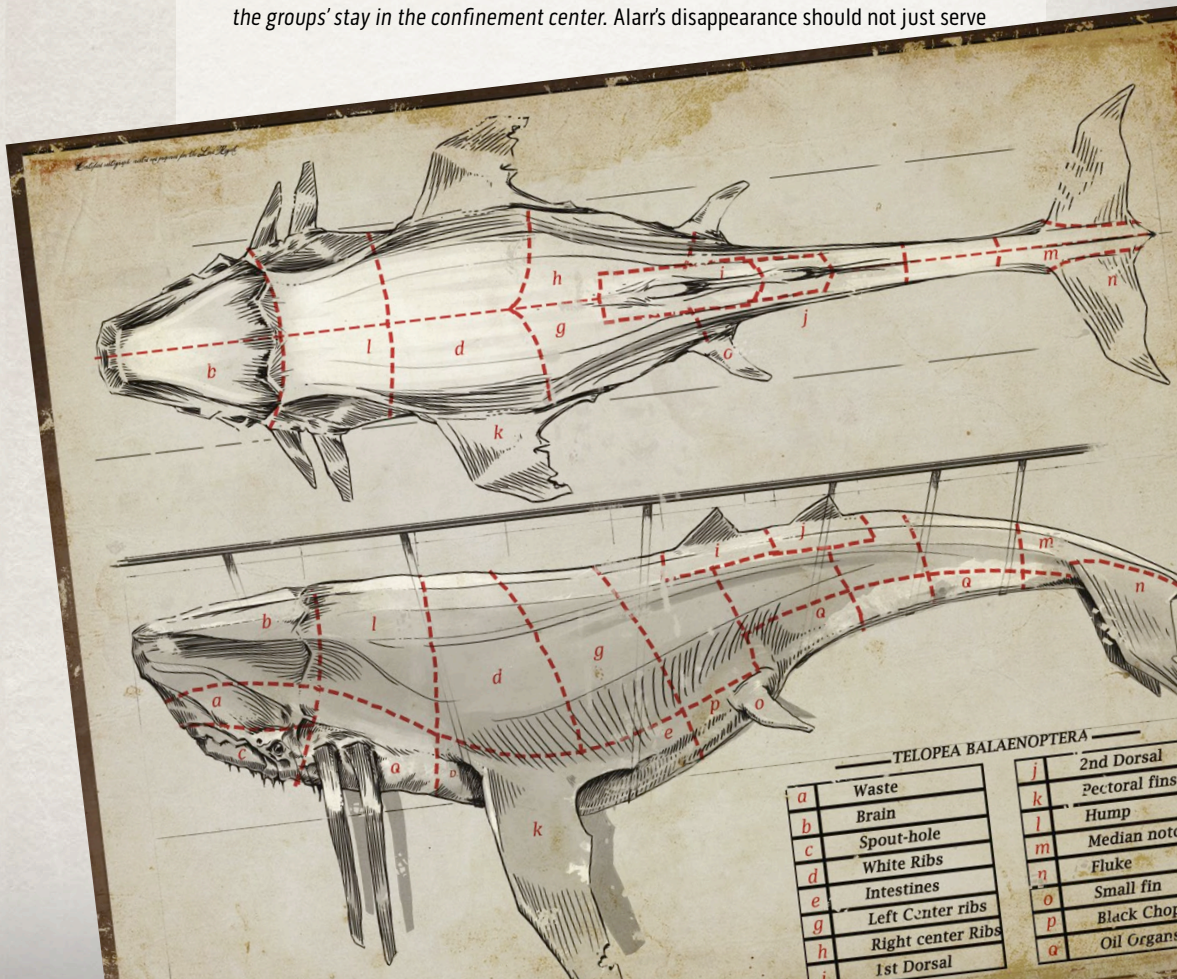
*She is in charge of overseeing the oil extraction process, helping keep the house in order while secretly planning an escape.* Clarissa won't reveal her plan unless directly approached by someone who clearly knows what she is thinking.

### LARS NJELMAR

*The ex-captain of a Morleyan ship that lost all its crew. He is quite patient, and oversees the yard, trying to keep the inmates from killing each other.* You can use him to try to break up fights in order to prevent scenes from going out of control.

### ALARR HANSON

*Walking onto the patio with a broken leg, this inmate is not seen after that night of the groups' stay in the confinement center.* Alarr's disappearance should not just serve



as a warning for players to take the place seriously, but also as a sign of the degree of mercilessness exercised in here.

The PCs will find out that they'll be expected to work, thus the reason why they were fed and given the chance to exercise. After a few hours, they'll be ordered to form a line and walk to the yard.

As they march into the hallway, they'll be hit with the pungent smell of whale viscera, leaking gas, and washing soap. Inmates run up and down cleaning the yard—much longer in comparison to the exercise patio. Once everyone is formed up there, a loud buzz alerts the inmates, who clear the center of the yard. In a matter of seconds, the sunlight is blocked by a monstrous silhouette hovering above head; a whale, being lowered into the yard.

The inmates start running again, quickly working on the dead hulk. Clarissa orders people around and asks for the new inmates to just observe and ask questions for now. Some of the most likely questions are...

### WHY DO WE DO THIS?

As far as Clarissa goes, she has been told that the Coldridge family is helping the war effort by providing meat to the population.

### WHAT HAPPENS AFTER WE FINISH?

The whale's body is taken to the next patio using the platform on the ground, and the guards make an inspection. It's mostly just routine; they don't care that much about how the inmates do the work as long as they extract the whale oil.

### DO WE GET PAID?

No. Also, that speech from before? It's for real; you'll never leave this place.

### WHY ARE PEOPLE BEING SO CAREFUL WITH THAT PARTICULAR ORGAN?

Whale bladders tend to fill with gases after death, and they can explode violently, so they take them out and store them so that the gas escapes over time.

At some point during the process, a man removes the whale bladder, puts it on a cart, and runs to Clarissa. Those paying attention roll **Study Swiftly**, and if they get two successes, they hear the following:

**Inmate:** "Where do you want it?"

**Clarissa:** "As planned; it goes in the cold room. That hasn't changed."

**Inmate:** "Got it."

During the hours that the characters are here, give them a chance to overhear or discover the fact that Clarissa has a plan to escape. They might find this out by overhearing a conversation or from making **Study Carefully** rolls to work out something is going on.

**Read aloud:** *Six hours later, you and the other inmates form up to move to the next patio. The platform moves too, the engines screaming under the weight of the colossal creature. Once there, about fifty guards make their way to the platforms above. An officer commands two random inmates to go inside the belly of the beast to poke around and*

*make sure it's safe to enter. The officer goes in, examines the interior for about thirty seconds, and gets out. He tells everyone they can return to their cells.*

## SCENE 3: OUTSIDERS

*Scene Rundown: A strange encounter at night hints at supernatural forces at work, looking for a way in to influence the fates of the inmates.*

### CLARISSA'S PLAN

*A horribly violent reaction that is bound to take everyone by surprise.*

Clarissa's plan is simple; gain access to the cold room (where the bladders are stored under a safe, located a couple meters away from the cell), and place them inside the carcass of a new whale, to blow it up during the inspection on the following day. The one thing she needs now, is a key....

The PCs get a chance to talk to each other before going to sleep. Let them know that it'd be good to chat about how they'll get out, considering how secure the confinement center seems to be.

At night, everyone is asleep except for one character of your players of choice. Try to make it be the player who has been involved the least so far, though if it's hard to decide, use whomever has been affected by the *Grim Prospects* truth (since they'd probably have a harder time sleeping). They'll start hearing voices whispering to them, calling them to look up.

When they do, they'll see a pair of red eyes glowing near the edge of the hole. The creepy voice will incite them to think about what they'd do if they were a rat, trying to tangle them up with Clarissa's plan, whatever it is. The entity could hint at Clarissa having a plan if they have not already discovered something is going on, and will tell them that they can be a rat if they want to, and that they should come back again later once they've decided what to do. We suggest you put on a whispered, slow voice when playing the part. And make sure that, when the PC asks who the entity is, the reply goes:

"I'm an Outsider, just like you."

The next morning, at the exercise yard, the inmates form a circle to talk about their time during the war and their accomplishments. At some point, one of them will shout out to the group:

"I remember you in the Alba dockyard. That your crew?"

This is a good time to entice players into brainstorming part of their shared past, building a stronger foundation to their collective tale. At the end of the narration, let them roll **Talk Boldly** to see how impactful their tale is. If they reach three successes, they'll gain the *Respect* truth for the duration of the session.

After their time in the exercise yard, they move to work on the whaling platform. During their time there, their objective will most likely be to reach out to Clarissa about

her plan, saying they want in. If they do, they'll have to make it clear that they know about the plan by dropping a hint based on what they know (for example, mentioning the bladders being stashed) or by convincing Clarissa they can be trusted.

If they don't, make it a bit harder for them to get in, but don't fall back on a roll—since you don't want to leave this to fate. Instead, raise tension before telling them: "OK, you're in. If you can get me the keys in the next three days, we can make a run for it. The plan is simple; the whale bladders are full of highly compressed gas, and if we can slip in several into the body of one of the specimens that's lined up for processing, we can make it explode during the inspection. The bladders are in the cold room, which is quite close to your cell; you've probably seen the green metal door already. Don't talk to anyone about this."

**During the following days, the same routine will repeat.** The day is devoted to work, and interaction with other inmates. Telling others about the plan is going to be a bad idea since it'll leave them vulnerable to betrayal. At some point, make one of the characters roll **Study Swiftly**, as one success will allow them to estimate the number of guards working in the confinement center (about 70). At night, one of the inmates will be approached by the Outsider in the same manner as before. This will help make the whole idea of "having otherworldly experiences" at night more palatable to the rest, once more members of the group start hearing the voice too.

Once they are ready, whomever is awake at night will be approached and offered to turn into a rat. They'll see the eyes above blink and disappear, and a rat will fall from the ceiling, bouncing to the floor. The dead rat will lie there for a few seconds, and then the chosen inmate will lose consciousness and open their eyes in the rat's body. **Add 2 Chaos**.

## SCENE 4: BODYSNATCHERS

*Scene Rundown: The escape plan is set in motion, with the group stealing the keys and setting up the bomb.*

Whoever takes the rat's body will feel quite disoriented at the start. Take a little time describing how it all feels; the fur on your skin, the plethora of odors you can sense, how they are shaped by the tall walls of the confinement center, and how perspective is felt differently in this body.

The rat player can't really talk, though they'll obviously understand people talking. They will then most likely head to the cold room to steal the keys and do some recon. They'll be able to squeeze in through a ventilation tube, which leads into a small room where a guard sits, writing a letter, with the keys lying to the side. Remind them that **they can use Void Points to add truths to the scene** here (they might want to have the guard fall asleep, or for the keys to be lying on the floor, or for a particular door to be open).

Once they manage to get the keys, they'll be able to leave the cell to move the bladders . Whenever the rat player is ready, they can choose to leave their body—leaving behind the dead rat and waking up in their original body.

The keys can open pretty much any lock along the cell block. Ideally, the operation would happen at night. Make a progress track with whatever name you deem appropriate for a bomb made out of whale bladders. The progress track will have ten spaces, each representing one of the bladders you'll insert in the whale.

**There's two main obstacles for this operation:** First, there's the guard in the cold room, who you've seen before writing at his desk. The characters will have to disable him somehow, though if he wakes up and goes free, he'll alert the rest. He could be killed, but that would result in Chaos. Second, there's the actual act of moving bladders. The players will have to make a **Move Carefully** test for each trip taken from the cold room to the whale. In each trip, the cart can carry up to three bladders (with each bladder setting the difficulty of the task). Once each trip is over, tick off the boxes in the progress track. **You can only make up to seven trips in a night.**

**This is, to put it simply, the most dangerous moment in the adventure; if a bladder explodes, it's basically game over. Make sure the players have Momentum and Void Points available, and suggest them to use Momentum and Void points to their advantage. This will teach them how to manage Momentum and Void Points intelligently, which will serve the rest of the campaign. If the players manage to cause an explosion, you could allow them to attempt to make an escape, though injured and take this adventure in a whole new direction as they try to outrun the guards who will come to investigate. After all, they still have the keys to nearly every cell on the block...**



## SCENE 5: HORROR SHOW

*Scene Rundown: The next day finishes with a gruesome explosion, and the inmates making a blood-drenched getaway.*

On the following morning, the inmates will see Clarissa reaching out to them (or to the group's leader). She'll say:

*"I suppose you know how to say "Duck!" in Morleyan?"*

This means that she'll expect one of them to shout *kom nor* right before they poke the whale. During the processing part of the day, Clarissa will be diving in, requesting for some of the player characters' help to make it look like they are working on it. One bladder will be taken, and ten will remain.

Once the time for the inspection arrives, the officer of the guard will request for two inmates to go in, with one being one of the player characters. Once that player character pokes the bladder, signal whomever is supposed to shout *kom nor* to do so.

### HOW BIG DO YOU WANT THE EXPLOSION TO BE?

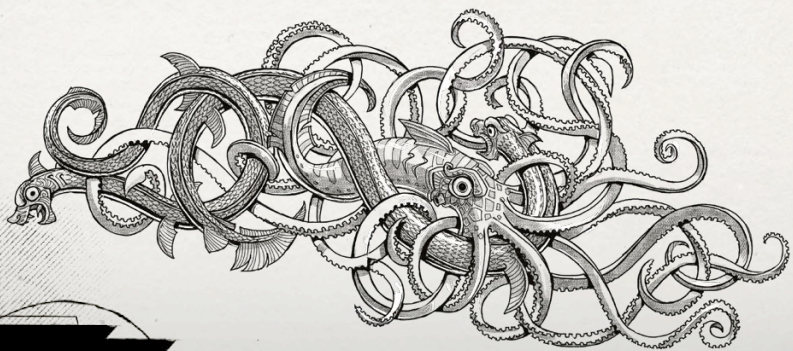
Tell the player characters that you'll add Chaos until told to stop. Each Chaos added kills 10 guards, and deals one stress to the player characters. Those who duck (with the exception of the player character that's inside the whale) are shielded from 2 stress. Once the damage is done, have the players roll a d20 to determine how many inmates ducked and survived. If they have the respect truth, they can choose to have 15 survivors instead of rolling.

Make sure you paint a picture of how gruesome the scene is. You can also opt to read the following aloud:

*The whale's insides burst with an earth-shattering noise that leaves your ears ringing. You instinctively open your eyes as you push yourself off the ground, only to witness the horrifying vision of viscera raining from above, with gunshots and screams echoing across the yard, as the directionless crowd of inmates and guards stumbles, terrified, amidst the shower of blood.*

Clarissa and the surviving inmates signal the player characters to follow her, taking a left, a right, and then another left throughout the hallways of the prison. They kick open a metal door and head down a spiral staircase to reach an underground waterway. Two boats are docked there, as well as three guards. Once they are defeated, the inmates jump into the boats and pull the starter cords.

With the roar of the engine drowning the faraway screams of despair, the boats delve into the darkness of Dunwall's sewer system, disappearing from sight...



# II
# WAR WITHIN A BREATH

## SCENE 1: OTHER HOME

*Scene Rundown: The group travels along the sewers of Dunwall, looking to reach the distillery district.*

At the end of the last session, the group entered the Dunwall Sewers to escape the Coldridge Prison Confinement Center. They are now following Clarissa's lead; and you can have an opening dialogue between her, the group, and the other inmates about what to do. They'll probably squabble and bicker—making it clear that everyone is on edge. A **Talk Carefully** test with a difficulty of 1 will help calm them down, and Clarissa will explain that the best place to go is the Distillery District (page 124). There, a small community of Morleyan refugees has gathered, and are taking care of each other.

The trip along the waterway might see the group encountering a patrol of Bottle Street Gang members. They'll be asked questions about who they are and where they're goin, and the encounter can be solved either violently or with some diplomacy.

The group is likely to spend the night in the sewers. A **Survive Cleverly** test with a difficulty of 1 will reveal a hidden hole that leads into a caved in section of the sewers, where they can rest without being spotted. If they don't find such a place, they'll probably be ambushed by the city guard at midnight.

However it is that they deal with this, they'll eventually reach a manhole leading to a narrow network of tunnels, and up into a barn. In this barn, they'll encounter Marika Moller.

### MARIKA MOLLER

*A community leader that's resentful about the Morley Insurrection, yet gives her full effort to help her kinfolk survive the war.* Marika will let them know that there's potatoes and bread for them, and that they can crash at the barn, but that they'll need to get a job if they wish to stay (since they need to be able to contribute to the cooperative).

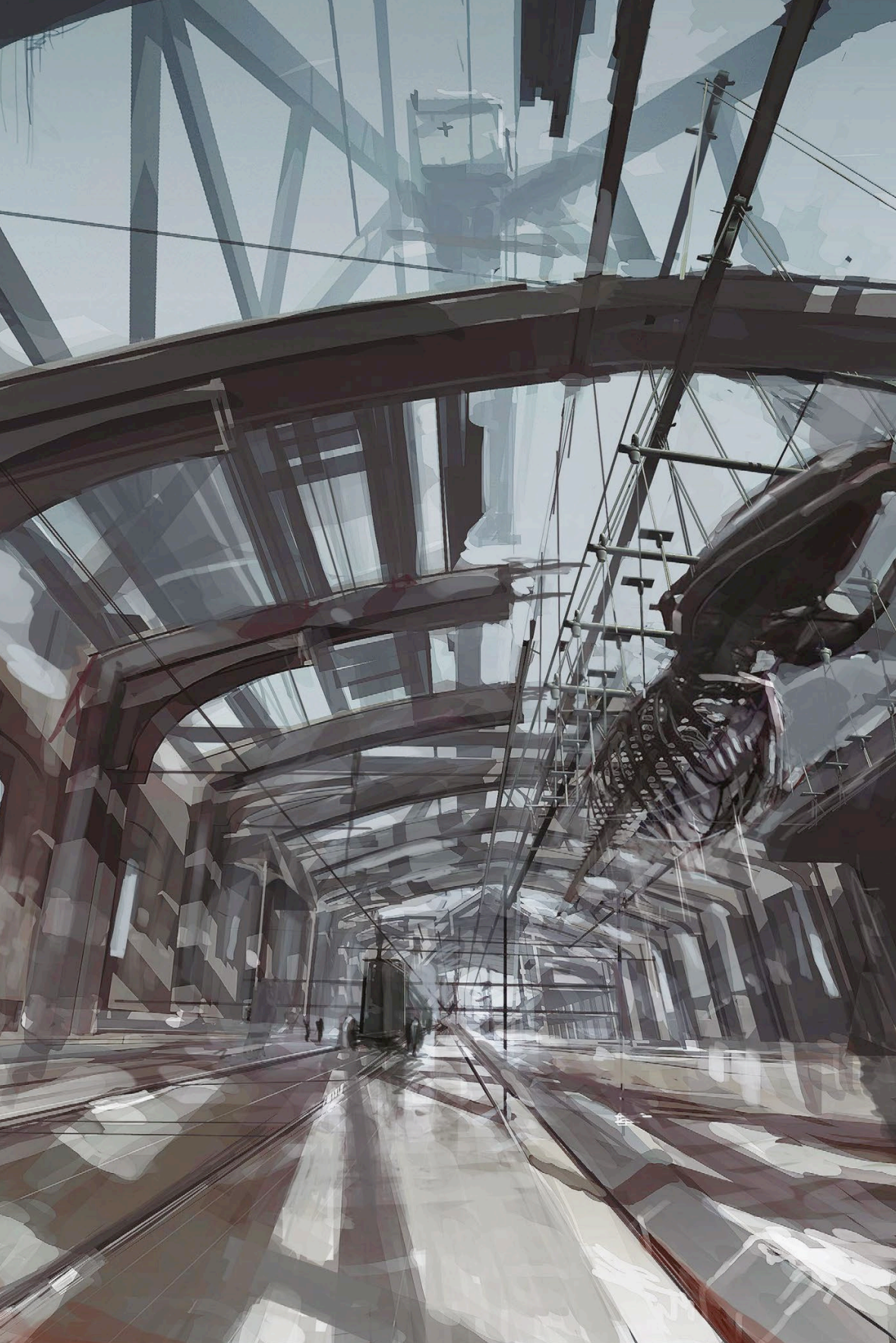
Marika will suggest asking for work at the Greaves Lighting Oil Company. This is what you want your players to do at the end of the day. They can try and seek for other opportunities, but they'll generally be rejected due to them being Morleyans.

## SCENE 2: OILBLOODS

*Scene Rundown: The group joins the Greaves Lighting Oil Company, and gets a taste of what it means to work under the yoke of Mr Greaves. Mikael offers asks them for help.*

The group will travel along the streets of Dunwall to reach the site of Greaves Lighting Oil Company, in the Rudshore Financial District. Read aloud:

*Workers shout and run up and down along a workyard, flanked by scaffolding with ceilings improvised out of noisy metal plates. The whole place seems like it was built*



*in a rush, a sign of the growing pains brought by the rapid advancement of whale oil technology—and the need for the entrepreneurial class to adapt on the march. Here, the blood and sweat of whatever is left of your countryfolk melds with the spilled oil and whale bile, and the cries of the suffering and the famished are drowned by the noise of machinery.*

The group is met by a small, bald man with a worried face, who sweats a lot—constantly pulling out a small handkerchief to dry his head. He goes through records and nervously shouts "Next!" to the group. He moves one record to the side and opens another, frantically looking for an empty space in his log to scribble down the group's names.

The bald man gives them murderous look, and points at a tall man drinking next to a pile of boxes.

This one is the supervisor, a Morleyan who has lived in Dunwall for a couple of years now, going by the name of **Mikael Haugen**. He tells them how the process works, though it's mostly like the work at the confinement center. Their day of work gives them an opportunity to talk to other workers, mostly Morleyans. For the most part, they seem annoyed at how their lives have been affected by the Insurrection. Those who still support it are a minority, and a **Study Cleverly** test with a difficulty of 1 will reveal that there's two gangs who seem to conflict with one another, avoiding working together, and even getting into fights: the **Bottle Street Gang** and the **Hatters**.

The **Bottle Street Gang** (page 152) is mostly formed by the native Morleyans who came to the Distillery District. They do not like the idea of having paved the way for the Morleyan refugees to come to Dunwall and enjoy the benefits reaped through years of sacrifice.

The **Hatters**, on the other hand, are mostly trying to preserve their traditions away from home. Some of them are even children who work at the Greaves Lighting Oil Company to make sure their families can eat or to buy medicine for their parents.

Within the hierarchy of the workyard, it'll be clear to the group that the Bottle Street Gang is in a place of power, and that they go the extra mile to make the newly arrivals' life miserable. There's a tiny chance the group will feel compelled to join them; if they do, instead of just saying that they can't, add 2 Chaos to signal what taking that path will mean. Ideally, they'll attempt to join the Hatters or go on their own, but be open to the chance that they might go with the high chaos option.

During the course of the day, the PCs will see themselves approached by four gang members. The leader looks like he has gone to hell and back, and seems pretty angry. His name is Thomas Reynard, and he says he fought against the Morleyan Insurrection for two years. You can present him with a line like the following:

*"I used to crush worms like you every morning back in the bay of Alba. If you think you'll just get out scot-free from what's coming for you, you have no idea. Just ask your countrymen. I'm the man in this yard."*

The gang will try to surround and beat down the group. They use the Gang Member profile (see page 241,), though they might be reasoned with by rolling three successes while **Talking Boldly**. Losing the exchange will leave the PCs quite wounded, with the *Disheartened* truth. Winning, however, will see them get the *Yard Notoriety*

truth, symbolizing that they've gained a certain degree of respect from the Morleyan workers at the factory.

After the workday, Mikael will approach them, saying he saw the fight, and invites them to get a few drinks at the White Clove Inn, where most Morleyans get together. He wants to talk to the group about something important. The PCs can use this as a chance to familiarize themselves with two sides in conflict within the community. Most people in this joint are Hatters, and Mikael will at some point reach out to the group and ask them about their opinion on the whole situation. Mikael will speak with sincerity, giving his opinion on it:

*"Streeters, Hatters... truth is, at the end of the day, this gang war is preventing us to focus on who the true enemy is. The colors we wear are there because Old Man Greaves allowed them to. If we could just put that aside for a moment and fucking bust that old man's ass, rectify this shit... I know it's hard, particularly because of the war and shit."*

They might exchange a few thoughts, but all in all, Mikael will get to the following point:

*"Listen. I know you got out of Coldridge. I told Clarissa about the escape. I don't know the details, but let me just say—I'm impressed. War might be over back home, but it ain't over here, and your enemies are right in front of you. It's them oligarchs; Greaves, and even worse, Coldridge. Their industry bleeds people out. I see them dropping bodies off the concrete walls when their slave labour expires. I see them kinfolk, people I knew, floating at the mouth of the Wrenhaven. They've been doing for ages now, treating us like animals. Wanna shake things up? Wanna win the war? Help me bring justice here in the only way possible; by making Coldridge & Greaves' heads roll on the mud."*

**This is one of the most important choices the players will make in this adventure. Your objective is to make it so that they join Mikael. When they do, give them two Chaos. This doesn't mean that they chose wrong; it's signifies that Chaos is something that comes naturally when change is necessary.**

If they do not join in, make it so that the inhumane work conditions are shown during the next few days. Older workers falling unconscious after excruciating workdays, violence from the Bottle Street gang, hungry kids being taken to work at the company, all the while Chaos increases with each passing day through their inaction. If the decision to change doesn't come from them, make the suggestion; at the end of the day, Mikael will always be there to be spoken to.

## SCENE 3: LOOSE ENDS

*Scene Rundown: The group attempts to gain the respect of both Hatters and Bottle Street Gang members.*

Once the group is in, Mikael will tell them about the Hatters, who came from a small fleet of seized Imperial whalers. Although their presence here is minimal, they ferociously seek social justice, and are trying to **improve living conditions for Morleyans**. The Bottle Street gang, on the other hand, is looking to **get leads on the current situation of the whale oil industry** in order to improve their position. They harbour the most violent side of the Morleyan community.

Mikael will ask them about their plan to make both gangs come together. The best way to go about this is to see what the players come up with (knowing that, if they need guidance, they can refer back to Mikael). Of course, just walking up and getting the gangs to join in hatred for the oligarchy will be a nigh-impossible task: a **Talk Boldly/ Cleverly** test of difficulty 4, which has its difficulty reduced by 1 for each of the below tasks you complete:

### FOR THE BOTTLE STREET GANG

- The gang runs an underground fighting ring in a series of abandoned storage tunnels in the Distillery District. If one of the PCs signs up and defeats hree of the gang's toughest fighters on a one-on-one melee, they'll get the respect they seek for and a chance to convince the leader of the gang of teaming up with the Hatters.
- The gang is looking to steal Doctor Warren's oil extractor design, which could be worth a fortune if presented to the right entrepreneur. Stealing it and handing it over to the Hatters would be seen as a great way to ease them to the idea of working alongside the Hatters.
- A weapons dealer in the Civil Services district has stopped supplying the Bottle Street Gang ever since they were kicked out by the City Watch. Since the group is not wearing their colours, they could pay this dealer a visit to get one last shipment out of them for the Bottle Streeters.

### FOR THE HATTERS

- Lately, the Hatters have been having issues with the Dead Eels gang, as they've been patrolling the sewers under the Distillery District. Deal with them by talking to their local Midshipman or getting rid of three or four patrols around the area.
- Marika Moller's grain reserves are running out. If the group could manage to steal some supplies from the local granary, they could help further their agenda with the Hatters.
- The community at the Distillery District needs help. Although the Hatters are making an effort, the truth is that the influx of captives from Morley (and the many escaped refugees hiding in the District) need assistance. If the group spends a couple of days doing community service, it will be appreciated.

Once the player characters are ready to address the leaders, they'll meet them at Marika's granary.

## SCENE 4: THE SAME COLORS

*Scene Rundown: The group sets out to unite the gangs, and hatch a plan to replace Greaves with someone of the community, and to assassinate Coldridge.*

The gathering at the granary sees a senior lieutenant of the Hatters (Marika Moller) and the leader of the Bottle Street gang (Greg Falkenheimer) arriving along with Mikael and some gang members.

This is a chance to play through the scene, by exposing the clashing views of each leader and giving the player characters an opportunity to roleplay, earn some Momentum as they step forward and push for a truce, and finally make the roll.

Players will roll a **Talk Boldly/Cleverly** test as described previously. Failing to unite the gangs will result in 3 Chaos. If one of the parties declines, the granary will become a fighting ground in which, ultimately, only one of the leaders will survive. Do bear in mind that, ideally, the player characters should be able to convince both leaders. Do suggest spending Void Points or Momentum for it.

If a fight does break out, the sides are:

**Hatters:** *Ten Gang Members and Marika (all using the Gang Member profile, page 241)*

**Bottle Streeters:** *Fifteen Gang Members and Greg (all using the Gang Member profile)*

Whatever the outcome, the survivors will plan their moves. People will start talking and proposing courses of action. Most people will agree that the best way to deal with Coldridge would be during the Fugue Feast, when they know there will be no legal repercussions to their actions (although, granted, Julie Coldridge is surely going to take precautions about this). The group will need to get an in on what her plans for the Feast will be, so that they can track her down and plan the assassination.

With regards to Greaves, some people are pushing for a manifestation at the dockyards or at his house. Some others are, however, clamoring for blood. The player characters might pick sides and make a couple of tests to influence the crowd. If the desire to kill him is too strong, the gangs will decide to end his life, generating 2 Chaos.

Whatever it is that everyone decides, the meeting will be interrupted by a kid barging into the granary in charred clothes and smelling of burnt linen, saying "the city guard! they're burning the inn!"

## SCENE 5: BURNING HATRED

*Scene Rundown: The group finds out what happened at the inn.*

The final scene of the session sees everyone running at the inn to find the charred remains of several Morleyans. The innkeeper, who was out during the event, is seen crying amidst the ashes. His husband explains to the group that the city guard patrol that did this came from Coldridge Prison. This is where the session ends.



# III
# ASHES OF THE FALL

## SCENE 1: THE RETREAT

*Scene Rundown: The group is aided by the Hatters and the Bottle Streeters to relocate the innkeeper.*

At the end of the past session, the group found themselves amidst the ruins of the burnt down White Clove Inn. As the locals converge, the leadership of the Hatters and the Bottle Streeters voices their concerns. The PCs might want to talk to them, and this is the idea they'll get (depending on who they speak with).

*The Hatters are furious. They want retribution for the burning of the inn, and you can see that most members seem ready to march on the local City Watch outpost. Their leadership, however, looks mostly worried. They had no reason to expect a sudden attack, unless someone snitched during the meeting at the granary. This makes it so that, quickly, the seed of distrust towards Bottle Streeters grows.*

*The Bottle Streeters are mostly scared. The leadership is hesitant about their involvement with what was established in the granary. Their members, particularly, do not seem very inclined to carry on with what was decided during the meeting.*

The PCs can roll **Study Carefully** and a success will see them notice these feelings going about in the crowd. After that, they might willingly try and rally the groups by rolling **Talk Boldly**, for which they'll need two successes. If not, they'll be approached by one of the leaders and prompted to do something.

Failing to rally the gangs will see them disperse after a while. You'll get to add 1 Chaos, and the consequences of it will affect the player characters when the time comes to take a stand against Luke Greaves.

The PCs might find themselves lost at the time. They need to coordinate action quickly or the rebellion might wither away before it even starts. Let them know that this is an opportunity to talk through things, remind them that they can still contact the leadership of both gangs for advice (the main leaders will still have the plan in mind) and, if they do not mention it during their conversation, raise the issue of the "apparent existence of a snitch".

## SCENE 2: THE TRAITOR

*Scene Rundown: The group searches for the traitor, finds them, and decides what to do.*

Before they tackle the traitor, do bear in mind that the player characters might want to go out and explore the city themselves. There's plenty of places to go and people to meet in Dunwall (which you can weave into the story by using the story hooks in *Chapter 8: On the Banks of the Wrenhaven*). Do make sure that the pacing of the story doesn't come to a stop if the player characters' decide to take time to go on some random escapade—and try to get them to stick together!

There's several ways in which the player characters can tackle the problem of finding the traitor. The first thing they'll probably try to notice is; who knew about it?

The answer to this question will point to two absent leaders (one from the Hatters, Wylla Jaroslav, and one from the Bottle Street Gang, Isiah Carey), two or three members of each gang, and **Lars Njelmar**. Make sure you give the player characters space to talk about their hypothesis and (although they'll be suspicious of everyone) weave in veiled threats to the opposing gang for all of these people (with the exception of Lars). Have the players roll **Talk Cleverly** or **Study Carefully** to ensure that the right questions are asked, and that the characters manage to interpret the responses accurately.

## THE SNITCH

*A escapee's betrayal*

A while after the escape, Lars was approached by an agent of Julie Coldridge, and was told that "in the wake of the oil revolution, there will be no voice for the voiceless, none that shan't be squandered under the victorious cry of industry and progress". He was told that, if he served as a spy to the Coldridge complex, he'd be allowed back in prison, restored to his previous position, and his rightful punishment (death) would be voided.

When going to Lars, who is staying in a wood cabin close to the edge of the city, the player characters will see that his demeanor changes. It won't be very hard to convince him to confess that **he is the snitch**. The problem lies within the consequences of what the player characters will do.

He will fall on his knees to plead for mercy. This is an opportunity to **bump dramatism to eleven**; make sure you really put an effort in conveying his desperation, as he tries to grab onto his last hope to stay alive amidst breathless, harrowing cries. Then, before the characters reply, read aloud (preferably while playing some eerie music):

*The wood above you creaks, as the rain finds its way in through a couple of crevices in the thatched roofs. The oil lantern titillates and a voice whispers to your ear.*

This is only heard by a player character of your choice, who didn't speak with the Outsider during the first adventure:

*"The traitor at your feet. Like how it feels? See to your responsibility. See to Duty. Pity can be easily dispensed when there's no consequences. However, killing him now would cement your reputation among the people you are trying to reel in. A bit of chaos now can bring greater order in the future."*

*Red eyes vanish in the dark of the cabin's roof.*

Lars is another victim of the system. He had been in prison for what would seem like a lifetime, and barely knew how to live outside of it. Killing him will add 5 Chaos and establish a personal truth for all player characters; *Old Justice*. This truth will help with rolls used to bring together the Hatters and Bottle Streeters. Sparing him and giving him a chance to run away from the city will not generate Chaos.

The next time the PCs go to the Greaves dockyard, they'll see the bald man pushing some kids around to get them to work scrubbing the floors. The tired faces of many a worker turn as they see the PCs walking along the factory, and the people there start standing up and heading to their encounter.

## SCENE 3: THE CALL TO JUSTICE

*Scene Rundown: The group comes together with the factory workers to decide how to address the Greaves company.*

As they are surrounded by the other workers, the group is addressed by the crowd, who seem to be arguing for different approaches. Chants for blood mix with whispers of retribution and the voices grow ever louder, until the PCs call for their attention or someone shouts to quiet everyone down.

Have them **Talk Boldly** to the crowd, with three successes (two if they have the *Old Justice* truth) needed to get their attention. Make sure you bring forth different voices when representing the crowd, and encourage players to answer the following questions:

1. What will you do? Does Luke Greaves deserve to die? Is the main point to get vengeance, or to try to secure better working conditions?
2. How will you do it? Will you march to Greaves' house in protest, sabotage the factory, assassinate him?

For every choice, there will be a consequence. Think about this briefly; death might be swift and clean, yet its consequences might further Chaos. On the other hand, you might argue that an assassination that sends a clear message could help bring other members of the higher classes into line. Then again, it could also completely backfire, as the powerful make a move to violently suppress the uprising. A protest, however, is also likely to prompt a violent response, but if the group manages to pull it off, it might inspire others to also stand up and fight for their rights.

There's one thing that will happen for sure; whatever the course the group picks, there'll be violence—lots of it. Class is deeply embedded in the societies of the Empire, and any change to the established order will mostly result in very ugly clashes at the beginning.

If the group wants to continue playing after this adventure, think about the kind of place that the group will be left in at the end, since it'll set the initial conditions for how the story will continue.

## ABOUT THE GROUP'S CONTACTS

Whatever the group decides, they'll probably need information about the comings and going of Luke Greaves. This means that they'll probably want to do some recon on the area. However, before doing that, feel free to suggest the group ask their contacts for information.

Some of the contacts the PCs will probably have are **Clarissa Hiirgaard**, **Mikael Haugen**, **Marika Moller** and **Greg Falkenheimer** (in descending order from oldest/higher relationship score to newest/lower relationship score). Do bear in mind that, if between scenes the group interacted with any of them, the above might vary. Particularly if the previous events saw the group antagonizing one of the two gangs instead of bringing them together.

**The group will have varying degrees of success getting information, but whatever course of action they take, make it so that it's obvious that a recon run would be important. Either by suggesting it via the contacts, by not providing enough info, or even offering Void Points! Though the following scene is not strictly necessary, it's quite different from what has come before, and so it makes for a cool change of pace. Mention that the best time to do this would be at night!**

### SCENE 4: EYES IN THE NIGHT

*Scene Rundown: The group makes a night escapade to gather information on the surroundings of the Greaves Estate.*

When the group is ready, they'll set out to gather any equipment they need. Sleeping darts, as well as any tools that might make it easier to infiltrate are of great use.

The Greaves' mansion is located in the Water District, at the crossing of two dark roads. Light from the adjacent lanterns reveals what seems to be a barbershop, one or two office buildings, and a run down theatre. A small group of people gather under one of the lamps, smoking cigars and talking business. A magister walks their mutt, avoiding a puddle of water. Two members of the City Watch attempt to wake up a vagrant who lies fast asleep next to a pile of boxes.

The surroundings have plenty of alleyways and passages, which might be used to hide or make a quick escape. Even with that, bear in mind that the area sees several City Watch patrols, even at this time, which might make things more difficult. Two successes on a roll to **Move Quietly** allow them to move closer to the wall. The water-stained windows blur what seems to be a gathering of silhouettes delineated by the incandescent glow of the gaslight.

To get a chance to hear what's being discussed, the players can try and open one of the windows slightly. This can be done by getting two successes, as they **Tinker Carefully** with the steel arm mechanism of the window. Inside, four voices exchange ideas on business plans, though the conversation quickly turns into a discussion about war and the whale oil industry. The voices disappear behind the sound of a door closing. The

PCs will need to go and **Tinker Carefully** with another window using the previous difficulty to follow on the conversation. They can also aim for three successes as they **Tinke Quietly** to dismount the mechanism and open the window enough so they can sneak in.

For a bit, they'll listen to a voice talking:

*"I'm tired of living amidst bureaucrats and entitled government workers. I tell you, as soon as the next shipment is paid for, I'll get us out of this hellhole, Greta"*

Whatever it is that they do, accomplishing it will allow them to hear the rest of the conversation. Read aloud, though let the players know that they can plan and make actions while they listen, and that they can interrupt the reading at any point if they so desire:

**Voice 1**: *"...now we are not doubting the fact that pouring more resources into new technology is the way to go. In the long run, it's impossible to compete with Coldridge without that, since she has an insane workforce advantage."*

**Voice 2**: *"Yes. Especially now that the war is coming to a close, once those prisoner ships get here, she'll just flood the market."*

**Voice 3**: *"That's all fine and good but it doesn't solve the problem. The only dirt I have on her relates to the incident a few weeks back. And that ain't enough to steer them boats away from Coldridge dockyards."*

**Voice 1**: *"And that's where I was going, Will. We should get in touch with one of those escapees. I'm sure anyone would jump to the chance of getting retribution against her. You did that before, Luke."*

**Voice 4**: *"Actually that wasn't me, that was Coldridge herself. I'm not sure what she offered in exchange, but it worked for her. Granted, these people have lived under her sights for a while now, so she knows what they want. We'd probably be better off playing the revenge card."*

**Voice 3**: *"Agreed."*

**Voice 4**: *"Let's drink and ponder on these thoughts."*

There ain't much more the PCs can learn from this. They can, of course, attempt to close the chapter and assassinate Luke/corner him now. A good **Move Quietly** roll will allow them to do this. This is, however, not as planned with the other leaders (since this was supposed to be just a recon mission). Doing so will net them 2 Chaos, and affect their standing with some of their contacts.

If they retreat, they'll need to get two successes as they **Move Quietly** to leave the house and its perimeter.

## SCENE 5: OILBLOODS MARCHING

*Scene Rundown: The group sets their plan in motion.*

It's possible that the PCs might have done something between the last scene and this one. In summary, they'll be converging into a meeting point so they can report on what they heard/saw to the Hatters and the Bottle Street Gang.

This may or may not change their plans regarding what they'll do with Greaves, but the fact of the matter is that—whatever they choose—the PCs will end up going to the Greaves Estate. This opens up two possible scenarios, which are described below, of how the session will end.

### THE BREAK IN

Infiltrating the Greaves Estate at night will seem like the more sensible option. Make a stealth track, which signifies the degree of alertness of Luke Greaves and the City Watch around the area, with 5 empty boxes. Every failed roll during the infiltration will check a box. If the fifth box is checked, the City Watch or servants will be alerted of something wrong going on in the Estate. Feel free to use 2 Chaos to make a new truth about the locale or incident which has translated into an increased City Watch presence. The PCs will only realize this as they look around the area, ready to close in.

Getting to the walls of the Estate might be done with a **Survive Quietly** roll (three successes needed, four if they manage to alert anyone). Make sure to let the PCs know of the difficulty, which gives them the chance to try a different approach. If they want to enter through the ceiling, they can do so by rolling **Survive Boldly** (needing three successes to climb to the top of a building close to the Estate). Once up there, the PCs will need to **Move Boldly** (two successes needed), jumping onto the Estate roof.

The truth *Glass Ceiling* stands in the way of the PCs entering. Below, the PCs can see Greaves' greenhouse. They'll be able to remove one of the ceiling panels, getting rid of the truth, by **Tinkering Carefully** and getting two successes.

Once inside, the PCs will have to look for Greaves. There's two servants doing the rounds on this floor, the third floor of the Estate. **Moving Quietly** past them and getting to the studio, where Greaves is sitting, will require several successes. With two successes, they'll manage to enter the studio and close the door behind them. With three, they'll do that and manage to creep up behind him. If more than one PC enters the room, the difficulty goes up by one each person, so let them know that it's better to just go in with one or two people at first.

Once there, the PCs will most likely threaten Luke Greaves so that he doesn't give away his situation. This is a crucial moment for the PCs, so let them speak to him and fight to get whatever outcome they want. There should be almost no rolling here, unless the PCs try to convince him to do something in particular, which will take a very simple **Talk Boldly** test (only one success needed).

Whatever the result, the session will end there, as the PCs leave the estate under the moonlight.

### STAND YOUR GROUND

As the workers gather around the Estate, the City Watch that was present in the area will start to retreat. If the PCs lead on, two successes will see them **Talk Boldly**, scaring off the watch. Remove one Chaos for each success in that roll. You may then spend any number of Chaos tokens. Create a progress track, called "March of the Oilbloods", with a number of boxes equal to the number of Chaos tokens spent.

As time goes by during the march, City Watch patrols will converge on the location. Each patrol consists of four City Watch Guards (page 239). You can have them come into contact with the PCs all at the same time, or as time goes by. This might be the

better choice, since it allows for PCs to plan how they'll defend, make a barricade, surround the building, etc. (all things that can be represented via truths).

As the last guard falls, the crowd cheers and starts to throw rocks at the windows of the estate, demanding an answer. A couple of workers bring a wooden ladder and set it up to go into the house. It seems like they've decided to make him talk. The PCs can opt to stop them or do nothing. The former will necessitate a **Talk Cleverly** test (three successes). The latter will see Luke Greaves thrown out the window, breaking his neck against the pavement. The noise as his spine shatters bring the entire mob to silence, marking the end of the session.

### THE MELEE

Fighting off the guards should be an exciting moment; make sure to ask the players how is it that their characters team up to fend off the City Watch. Reward cool descriptions with Momentum, and try to make the process as fluid as possible. Drawing a quick sketch of the crossroads and the positions of everyone helps give the players a mental image of the scene.

If the crowd decides to take down the ladder, they'll soon start to hear a commotion as three City Watch Officers and four City Watch Guards surround the march, shooting indiscriminately. These will be brought down only by a concerted effort.

Once they are defeated, Luke Greaves will look out the window and surrender. Amidst the smoke of burning oil, the screeching of dying machinery and the fires of burnt down barricades, the Greaves Oil Company's fate will be decided. Let the PCs and Luke Greaves talk the terms, and close the session.



# IV
# SLEEP NOW IN THE FIRE

## SCENE 1: JUMPING THE SHIP

*Scene Rundown: Two days after the events of the last session, the PCs come together to strike down Coldridge.*

Speak to your players about the last two days. Try to brainstorm and answer, together, the following questions:

- What do the gangs believe reason why the City Watch stopped coming is?
- What happened to the others once the march disbanded?
- Why are so many workers being attacked, killed, and taken prisoner now?
- What's the overall feeling of the community during the days after the march?
- What's being said about the Greaves Oil Company in bars, parties and other gatherings?
- How's the company running—if it is running at all?

The scene kicks off at the Meyer Staple, a bar near the granary where the gangs of the Distillery District have regrouped. There, the PCs will meet up with one of their contacts (probably the one with whom they have the best relationship). Here, they'll talk about the way in which the whole Greaves operation was carried out, and how to ensure that Coldridge is taken out without losing so many lives.

One thing that their contact will tell them is that the reason why the City Watch didn't clamp down on the march was that they received orders from the Empress to let it carry on. The PCs might arrive to the conclusion, during this conversation, that Coldridge was trying to use the situation to get rid of her competition. If they do not arrive to the conclusion, the contact should mention this.

The other thing they'll be told is that Coldridge's security measures have been intensified. That they'll need inside info to carry out their assassination attempt. The City Watch has been on the lookout for Morleyans, supposedly to track down the escapees (though seizing basically anyone they deem suspect indiscriminately). The group's contact gives the name of someone who might be able to help; **Ethan Finchley**, a member of the watch at Coldridge Prison Confinement Center. He seems to have been involved with one of the escapees from the first session, and wishes to ensure their safety in exchange for information. He can be contacted by the Seers' Fountain in Drapers Ward at midnight.

## SCENE 2: THE INFORMANT

*Scene Rundown: The group meets Ethan Finchley and enters a pact to help his sweetheart flee the city in exchange for information.*

Getting to the fountain is easier said than done. The group will have to **Move Quietly** as they close in, avoiding the City Watch patrols along the way. Upon reaching the location, they'll see **Ethan Finchley** leaning into the fountain, its look seemingly bewitched by the reflection of the moon. He'll rise, turn his head and gesture to the PCs.

He'll explain that he has a respectable position within the City Watch, but that he has family in Morley and his sweetheart Leonard was captured and brought to Coldridge Prison Confinement Center. The months Leonard was kept there were horrifying for both of them, as they felt like prisoners to the cruelty of war and the slavery perpetuated by the prison enterprise. Once Leonard escaped along with the group, he deviated and turned to his cousin's home in the Tailors District.

According to Ethan, Leonard wants to make an escape by reaching the mouth of the Wrenhaven, but is terrified of the City Watch, particularly after they started cracking down on the Morleyan population. Anybody could stop him due to his accent. Ethan will then request for the PCs to help escort his beloved to the mouth of the Wrenhaven, where Ethan's father Dominic will leave with Leonard on a boat. If they manage to do that for him, he'll get them as much information as he can get on Coldridge's movements.

After the PCs accept this, they'll be given the details of Leonard's location. If the PCs need recommendations about making this escape, they should chat with Ethan about the details. A night run is favoured, as well as using the sewer system to their advantage. Do bear in mind that some of the districts that are less frequented by the City Watch are run by gangs that might have a problem with the group's allegiances.

## SCENE 3: MOONLIT ESCAPE

*Scene Rundown: The group assists Leonard escaping the city.*

Leonard will meet the group at an abandoned mill in the Water District. Scruffy-looking from all the running he's been doing, he is also there with a couple of Morleyan friends, who hand him over a pair of handguns, and wish him farewell.

The first leg of the trip has them boarding a riverboat. The current is quite strong here, and handling the boat can be kinda tricky. Whomever takes the helm should roll **Tinker Carefully** and get two successes. Failing will see them dangerously banging against a series of wooden beams that have been discarded along the river, dealing some damage to the boat (no need to track it, a truth will suffice).

After exiting the Water District, have those who are not driving the boat **Study Quietly** the surrounding area. A single success will let them know that there's a City Watch checkpoint nearby. The PCs can hunker down to remain unseen as the boat passes by the side of the checkpoint's dock. If not, they'll have to bribe or fight the City Watch (since Leonard will tell them that rushing for an escape would be a terrible idea).

Once they're past the checkpoint, the boat will enter a dark tunnel leading into the Tower District sewage. This a very labyrinthine area, though some of these canals are the ones they traversed when escaping Coldridge Prison Confinement Center at the start of the adventure. They can roll **Survive Cleverly** needing two successes to attempt to remember the way out. A failure will see them losing some time, giving you a window to spend Chaos and bring in an enemy or two.

Past the Tower District, the group will row past a few building blocks before turning and docking the boat below a bridge. The lantern's light reveals Dominic's face. As they

say goodbye, Leonard gives the players a sealed letter for Ethan, and waves while the boat leaves.

**Now one of the players gets a choice, depending on how many Chaos tokens you have. You can use this to push player that's been the quietest to influence the story. They will then start seeing a distortion of the tunnel ahead, a mind-bending instant that makes them dizzy. Give them the choice of having Dominic leave with zero, one, or two Chaos tokens. These are spent immediately.**

The vision takes on darker hues the more Chaos they decide to spend. It only lasts for a couple of seconds. If they chose to let go of 1 Chaos, they will hear soon that Dominic was captured on the way back and executed. If they chose 2 Chaos, they will hear Dominic was executed and that Ethan was captured while going after Leonard.

After this, they'll reconvene with Ethan (if the previous Chaos result ended with his capture, that happens after he passes on this information), and he'll tell them the following about Coldridge:

*"Lady Coldridge is aware, and probably responsible, of most of the current persecution of Morleyans in the Capital. Although your march on Greaves' estate did rid her of one of her competitors, she knows that the current popular sentiment is a double edged blade—one that is more likely to strike her than to spare her. With this in mind, she is now doing travel preparations to head over to Poolwick and wait out the "cleansing" that the City Watch is doing. She'll be hitting the northern roads alongside a discreet but well prepared caravan, I've counted around six carts and fifteen or so guards."*

If the PCs ask for advice, you can give them the following information:

*"An attack from the treelines is going to be tough, but it'll probably be the best way to do it. I'd recommend doing this during the second day of their journey, since they'll be past the more open forests near Dunwall, giving you a better chance at hiding. What I think is truly important is to conduct this during the Fugue Feast, so that there are no legal consequences for whatever goes down at the road..."*

However the conversation ends, the PCs probably won't see Ethan again.

After the 28th day of the Month of Songs, there's a period (often lasting one to two days) that is said by the Overseers to "exist outside the calendar".

During the Fugue Feast, people are free to act without any sort of legal repercussions, resulting in the temporary breakdown of social order. Nobles tend to plan in advance for it, leaving the urban centers or walling themselves off, often setting out to practise their own brand of debauchery while the lower classes experience true chaos, as it ravages the streets of the Empire

## SCENE 4: FIELD TRIP

*Scene Rundown: The group gathers their allies, prepares all required supplies and tools for the ambush, and sets off.*

Soon after the events of the previous scene, the closest contact to the group reaches out to them and asks about the plan to kill Coldridge. They'll probably have a chat and decide how to communicate this to the Hatters and the Bottle Streeters.

When the time is right, the PCs will have to go and **Talk Boldly** to them. Bear in mind that at the moment the community is still being persecuted by the City Watch. Still, they'll remember their oath. For each success in the test, they'll give you one of their members to assist. Do let the group know of that before they roll. Each of those uses the Gang Member profile (page 241).

When the moment is right, after the talks, the group will be introduced to an inventor from the Bottle Street gang, named **Aretha**, who can build and prepare a trap as required by the PCs.

Aretha will tell them about the place of the ambush...

*"With us being in the midst of the Month of Harvest, expect the road to be quite muddy, specially as you get closer to Poolwick. The townsfolk there are quite neglectful of the surrounding area, and many of the old southern vineyards that I used to visit when I was a child were reclaimed by nature in just a couple of years. The thicket is dense now, and the encroaching trees have seen the trail slim down to just a couple of yards wide, just enough for a passenger cart to fit. Most likely, the lady's escort will march ahead and behind the convoy, not to the sides. That helps reduce their awareness."*

She will then discuss setting up traps with the PCs. This is a cool moment to have everyone design a trap mechanism they could get made. The more complicated the design, the more expensive it'll get. If it gets too wild, make sure that you factor in the consequences from the gang's side after the campaign ends (if you are still playing, since the Bottle Streeters will be paying for it).

Once everything is set, let the PCs go to the market and get any sort of supplies, weapons, and tools they might need. Then, they'll see one of the gang members come to their location and ask them to go to the granary at midnight.

This will be the end of the scene, when they'll all go over the whole plan. They'll need a full day of travel to get to the location, and then they'll set up the ambush at the time they deem best.

## SCENE 5: WHERE ENDS MEET

*Scene Rundown: The group sets off to assassinate Lady Coldridge.*

In preparation for the scene, make sure to set up three to five truths about the scene. These could be used by players in smart ways to gain an upper hand of the situation. As a suggestion, *Setting Sun* along the road could be used to blind the patrol at just the right time, while *Shadow of the Forest* can help cover up the PCs steps. A *Muddy Road* can be used to mess with the carts, while you could also invite players to spend

Void Points to create their own truths, such as *Exhausted Watchmen* to indicate that the patrol is particularly tired, *Weapon Stash* to indicate that one of the carts carries weapons the group could use or even *Infiltrated Element* to state that one of the gang members actually is part of the convoy's patrol.

This is probably the best moment to make a quick sketch of the surrounding area. A few lines here and there will help your group picture the convoy and the ways to tackle it. A progress track will also go a long way towards helping them stay unnoticed (if they plan is particularly complicated).

Once everything is set, set the scene by narrating...

*Along the muddy road, the patrol marches with grim, tired faces. The light rays print a strange pattern on the surface of the passing caravan, wherein two armored carts mark the start and the end of the column. At the center, three carts with the carved emblem of the Coldridge family struggle through the damp terrain, the noises of complaint leaking out from the insides.*

About sixteen guards accompany the caravan, which can be represented by using the Watch Lower Guard profile (page 238). Lady Coldridge herself isn't entirely defenseless; she can be represented by the Aristocrat profile (page 254).

As this is the ending of the campaign, this could go either way for the players. Have that in mind as the action carries on. Make it quite the challenge, and if things don't go perfectly, give one of them the following choice (read aloud)...

*As you creep along the thicket, a voice whispers to you from behind. The cold hiss makes you close your eyes for a second, as you immediately try to come to terms with it.*

*"Hello, Outsider"*

*The rat looks at you from atop a willow branch, red eyes bright in the dark.*

*"Would you like to get in there? I can make that happen. It won't be free though... I'm not handing samples anymore. What say you?"*

If the PC accepts, add three Chaos.

*The rat says "Stay low once you're done. It's going to get nasty out there.*

*You instantly faint, and open your eyes to reveal what seems to be a strange, square shaped enclosure. The light coming through the woven linen seems to indicate that you're inside of a basket, and as you taste the air, your forked tongue feels the nervousness in the air.*

If it isn't clear yet, the PC is now inhabiting the body of Lady Coldridge's pet snake. They can choose to **Survive Boldly** and a single success will net them a deadly bite against Coldridge's neck. At the same time however, things outside will become quite violent, as the guards start to feel like something is wrong (you can tick a few boxes in the stealth track if you're using one). If the PC refuses the whole thing, the rat will just leave the scene, whispering...

*"Very well then..."*

The characters will then hear someone shouting about being bitten by a rat.

The solution above won't give much of a chance for talking to Lady Coldridge, and the same can be said with most assassination attempts. The players might, however, press on and manage to get an audience with her (most likely to happen while surrounded by a pile of bodies). If they actually get to do that, Coldridge is not likely going to just let go of her aristocratic upbringing to be a champion of the people. She will probably prefer to be let go, though in truth that will probably result in her returning and using her reputation to ascend again. Mercy will result in Chaos gain, but—surprisingly for your players—killing her won't.

Once the dust settles, the PCs will find a letter that Coldridge was fiercely holding on to. The letter reads...

*Lady Coldridge,*

*As arranged, we are set to sort out LO. Once he is in power, Kaldwin has agreed to pass your motion along with the many concessions we've required, with special care to carry it out as soon as the war is over.*

*The people of Morley will see the war prisoners as patriots, now dedicated to the honorable cause of paying for reparations. This doesn't just mean you'll get to continue with the current methodology, but that most of the maintenance of the main correctional facilities (as well as those currently in construction) will be funded at a rate of 80% by the Empire.*

*Kaldwin sees you as a great contributor to the Empire's cause, an honourable member of the ruling class who has taken to the arduous task of reforming tens of thousands of insurrects.*

*It's only fitting that you choose to do with them whatever you like.*

*Salutes,*
*Bx*

## WHERE TO GO FROM THERE?

The PCs are likely to disappear in the night, then setting off in their own individual directions, or grouping up to head to wherever they deem best. The others will suggest burning the caravan to erase any proof, bringing a couple of torches and using some of Coldridge's own oil stash in her belongings to set it alight.

Once that's done, the scene will be over, and so will the adventure. Here are a couple of story hooks that could bring them back to Dunwall:

- One of the guards manages to escape from the ambush, and sets off on horseback to get to Dunwall. The PCs will have no choice but to escape to Poolwick and think about how they'll move on from there. Upon arriving, they'll may meet Leonard/Dominic, who will ask them to stay in for the night. They'll be asked for help dealing with a local gangster who seems to be in control of the waterway, which they need to help Ethan escape Dunwall. How will they tackle this challenge?
- Right before entering the city, the group is met by a worried member of the Hatters, who tells them that the City Watch is looking for them. It seems like someone told them about their participation in the march against Greaves. Who's suspicious? Who is innocent? Who benefits from this?
- After the assassination, the PCs hear about one of the surviving gang members being lost. They are asked to help find out their whereabouts, and it turns out they were the ones bitten by the strange rat. They are showing signs of turning into one of the weepers, and living in the sewers. As people around the area start getting sick, how will the PCs help tackle this rising epidemic?
- The assassination of Coldridge leaves a power void that is soon filled by a guild of aristocrats, who are connected with the underworld of Dunwall. They act with even less regard for Morleyan lives, and the fact that they are a small circle of trust makes it so that attacking them is harder. The PCs will have to sow discord to bring them down first, trying to remain in the shadows to avoid suspicion.
- Mr Greaves (if still alive) is a lingering risk factor, which will come back to haunt the group when they realize that he has hired a group of Whalers to retake control of the factory, coercing the leaders and reestablishing the previous working conditions. The Whalers present a larger-than-ever-before problem, since their supernatural powers will make it impossible for the PCs to deal with them in the same way they've dealt with Greaves before.

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# DISHONORED
ROLEPLAYING GAME

NAME

AGE

FIRST TRUTH

SECOND TRUTH

OUTLOOK

ARCHETYPE

## SKILLS

FIGHT
MOVE
STUDY
SURVIVE
TALK
TINKER

## STRESS

## STYLES

BOLDLY
CAREFULLY
CLEVERLY
FORCEFULLY
QUIETLY
SWIFTLY

## VOID POINTS

## CONTACTS

## FOCUSES

## TALENTS

## POWERS

## NOTES

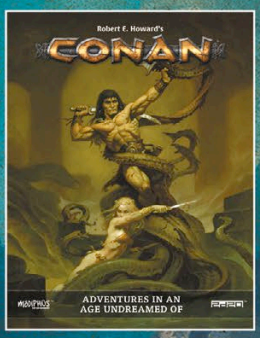
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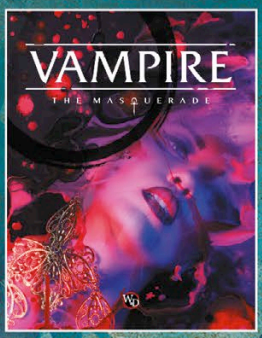
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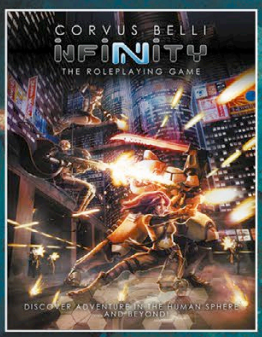








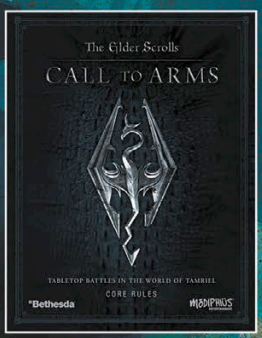






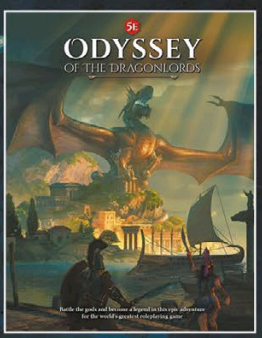













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# Welcome to Dunwall

"How you use what I have given you falls upon you, as it has to the others before you. And now, I return you to your world, but know that I will be watching with great interest."

**The *Dishonored* tabletop roleplaying game transports you to the Empire of the Isles and beyond, to the conspiracies and machinations of its political class, religious sects, and populist factions. Creating original characters and playing a story of assassins, duelists, explorers, and scholars, you can forge your destiny and even touch the Void. *Dishonored* presents a grim, merciless world, of toil and working-class strife, and glistening regency halls.**

- **A complete set of streamlined rules, including character creation, combat, and equipment, that enable you to roleplay and explore the world of *Dishonored* using a fast-paced version of the 2d20 System.**
- **Extensive chapters describing the setting of *Dishonored*: the city of Dunwall, the port city of Karnaca, as well as the islands of Gristol, Morley, Serkonos, and Tyvia.**
- **Information and rules for channeling the power of the Void and the mark of the Outsider, utilizing bonecharms, and powers gifted to you by the Outsider.**
- **Developed in close consultation with the original designers at Arkane Studios, and the 2d20 rules development team.**

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