

ALMANAC OF CARDENFELL

Brinkwood

v0.7.1

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

An Almanac of Cardenfell.....	1
Factions.....	1
Vampires and Their Servants.....	45
Vampire Lords.....	51
Keeps of Cardenfell.....	91
Keep Features.....	99
Lands of Cardenfell.....	101
The Brinkwood.....	131
Towns of Cardenfell.....	136
Villages of Cardenfell.....	163

AN ALMANAC OF CARDENFELL

Cardenfell is the beating heart of our vampiric enemies, the very heart of our oppressors. As it is said, the Blood flows from Cardenfell. If revolution is to come to Orslae, it must begin in Cardenfell. And we must do all we can to see that it does.

-Avan of Myra

This chapter is designed to present additional information about Cardenfell and it's immediate surroundings, including the lands, towns, and villages that lie within it's borders. Within, you will find descriptions, tables, and advice on how to bring Cardenfell to life.

FACTIONS

Many disparate factions call Cardenfell home, and many have been struggling against the Vampires far longer than you. Some of them may become your allies... if you can prove your cause.

Coggers

BACKGROUND

The Coggers are a nascent worker's movement dedicated to alleviating the plight of the working poor in Cardenfell's towns. Centered mostly in the factories of Cardenfell, the Coggers came together over shared

concerns like dangerous working conditions, poor wages, and exploitation by the factory bosses and their vampiric overlords. Early attempts at peaceful organization and collective bargaining were ruthlessly crushed by the vampires, leading the Coggers to develop a more militant spirit and going underground. While their numbers may be small, they have the potential to grow rapidly, as every man, woman, and even child that works in the factories is a potential recruit.

SPOKES

Guen

The Organizer

History: Sold at an early age to a factory as a cogscamper in order pay off some gambling debts, Guen survived the factories by being quick, friendly, and charismatic. He quickly realized that the best way to be safe was to work together with others. As Guen grew, conditions in factories deteriorated, and his friendships were tested and strengthened. He forged these small groups of workers into militant unions, capable of working together to resist the worst deprivations of the bosses and foremen.

Description:

Motivation: Guen prefers bold, daring plans with a high reward for their worthy risks. He isn't necessarily a gloryhound, but he understands the importance of delivering victories of morale and symbol. Most of all, he seeks to bolster the enthusiasm of his constituents and to draw more workers to the cause.

Melaine

The Saboteur

History: A veteran of textile mill strikes, Melaine learned quickly that a spanner in the works was often the surest way to effect change. She quickly became an expert at sabotage, using ingenuity and coordination to disable mills and looms when hours grew long and wages grew thin. She has acquired near-legendary status among certain groups of workers, and “accidents,” both intentional and otherwise, are often blamed upon her.

Description:

Motivation: Melaine sees herself first and foremost as a protector. She took to sabotage because it allowed her the chance to stop the machines that tore off limbs and mauled bodies. She will endorse most plans that lead to a reduction in life lost, and will be quick to suggest the destruction of property over the taking of lives.

Samzun

The Machinist

History: Born to a wealthy family and educated as an apprentice, Samzun was set to become a master smith. However, a fascination with industry and the changing times directed him down a different path. He designed many labor-saving machines and automations, only caring for the challenge of the work. Soon, though, Samzun noticed that no matter the efficiency his inventions introduced, it only ever seemed to benefit the bosses and vampires that controlled the factories. His blood boiled,

as his labors were always meant to aid the many, not the few. Now, he designs and crafts for a higher cause, the cause of liberation.

Description:

Motivation: Samzun loves efficiency and hates waste, and will carefully evaluate plans and schemes based on their likelihood of success. He is incensed by perceived unfairness, and wishes for a world where no one need work harder than they need to.

GOALS

Tier 0 -

Union Drive - The Coggers are a small movement, and the factory bosses are quick to snuff them out wherever they're found. In order to have any hope of success, they must first increase their numbers, and bring more factories into the union.

Strike Fund - Money greases many wheels, and having the funds necessary to keep workers in basic necessities during strikes is a huge boon to any organizing effort. Perhaps some blood sterling can be requisitioned?

Tier I

Spanner in the Works - The working conditions are brutal and unsafe. Jamming the worst, most dangerous machines, causing work slowdowns or outages, should save limbs and lives.

Street Power - If the union is to succeed, they must extend beyond the

factory. Mutual aid, community defense, and building alliances will create a sound foundation of union power.

Tier 2

Seize the Means - The time has come to seize what is rightfully owed to the workers of the world. Aid the coggers in their efforts to seize factories, oust the owners, and give the fruits of labor back to the worker and his community.

LODGES

Tier 0 - Brass and Bolts

Coggers are adept at sifting through the bits and bobs produced by factories, finding those most suited for the harsh realities of forest-living. Increase the maximum supplies your Refuge can hold by 2.

Tier 2 - Union Representatives

The Coggers can grease the wheels of cities, supplying safe-houses and supplies whenever you enter a city. Gain +1d to any engagement roll taking place in a town.

Tier 3 - The Union's Forges

The factories of the union roar to life to fuel the revolution. So long as you control at least one town, you gain one unit of Black Powder or Steel each downtime.

DIGGERS

BACKGROUND

The Diggers are a movement of farmers, peasants, agriculturalists, botanists, and visionaries who have sought to advance the development of agriculture and the interests of those who make their living growing food. Core to the Diggers outlook is the issue of “communal land.” Most fertile land on the Bloody Isles has been divided up into fiefdoms by landlords, who peasants and farmers must pay rent to in order to grow their food. Some small portion of land, usually deemed infertile or otherwise worthless, is reserved as “common land”, and no rent is charged for its use.

It is to the interests of landlords that this “common” land not be farmed, communally or individually. However, the Diggers have recently had great success in tilling and harvesting crops from soil previously thought unsuitable for cultivation, thus acting as a direct challenge to the landlords and their monopoly on productive land.

Also core to the Diggers movement are ideals of communal labor and sharing of bounty. Their farms and fields are tended cooperatively, with all taking a share of what is produced. Furthermore, the Diggers do not hoard their crops or seek to quickly convert it into currency. Instead, they distribute what crops they cannot eat or store to those that are hungry or destitute.

It is agreed by most revolutionary thinkers that The Diggers will play a key role in any successful rebellion and its aftermath, as their model of

agriculture and community living is both antithetical to the vampire's way of life, as well as immensely productive. An army marches on it's stomach, and it is the Diggers who will fill those stomachs.

SPOKES

Clindre

The Farmer

History: Clindre is an older woman, middle-aged with several grown children. She has been a farmer her entire life, running a small parcel of land single-handedly after her husband died. A generous spirit, she took in many on the verge of starvation, offering them fair shares of her crops for their labor, thus forming a small nucleus of Digger activity.

Description: She has sharp, quick eyes under a wrinkled brow, and speaks in a slightly hoarse tone of voice.

Motivation: Clindre is an eminently practical woman, and vouches for goals and tasks that others might view as beneath their notice. She wants stomachs filled, feet shod in boots, and warm blankets over tired bodies.

Yoan

The Researcher

History: Yoan is a young man, and a student of botany and agriculture. Fascinated with plant life from a young age, his talent for coming up with new techniques of crop rotation, tilling, and fertilization made him

both coveted and infamous among the landlords of Cardenfell. Among the Diggers, he found a group of kindred spirits, happy to let him experiment and research to his heart's content.

Description: Yoan's skin is broken up into layers of bright, emerald leaves. Upon his head is a gallant rack of antlers, rakishly sharpened and styled. He often wears simple, but stylish coats, and no shoes upon his cloven hooved feet. He speaks in a high, sometimes lilting tone of voice.

Motivation: Yoan is a voice for progress, always pushing for more experimental techniques and approaches to solving problems. Gaining some new insight or a bit of knowledge is often worth any price, at least according to him.

Brigit

The Quartermaster

History: While they don't speak of it much, a harsh winter and a harsher rent robbed Brigit of nearly everything they held dear. Consumed with a fiery passion to not let others suffer as they had, they threw themselves into devising new methods of storing, transporting, preserving, and distributing food. Among the Diggers, they act as quartermaster, a tireless force for ensuring all have what they need to live.

Description: Auburn scales over dark, blotted skin and flashing yellow eyes that never seem to rest in one spot for too long. Simple, utilitarian clothing in basic colors. Always a bit of parchment close at hand, or a figuring-abacus about their belt. A gruff, passionate voice.

Motivation: Brigit hopes to see hunger eradicated, and will support any goal that leads to that end. They are fond of somewhat complicated solutions, and believe firmly in the value of setting up large-scale solutions to large-scale problems.

GOALS

Tier 0

Secure and Stockpile Supplies – If the Diggers are to expand their operation, they must first have the supplies necessary. Seed, tools, and experienced leaders are all invaluable.

Discourage Harassment – Bailiffs, powdermen, and landlords have been harrassing Digger farms and communes, small and isolated as they are. While they have yet to resort to open violence, something must be done to “discourage” such interference from the Digger’s enemies.

Tier 1

Finding Land – While the Diggers are masters at exploiting land deemed useless by others, keeping such land safe, as well as ensuring continual access to it is more of a challenge.

Spreading the Word – Landlords are loathe to have their peasants and serfs flee to join the Diggers, and conjure up all sorts of propoganda to prevent their subjects from leaving. Counteracting these falsehoods, and aiding those who wish to escape, should be a priority.

Tier 2

Preparing for War – An army marches on its stomach, and the Diggers

will need an army if they are to protect the lands they have secured from the Vampires. Weapons, food, and ammunition must be prepared, as well as militias trained.

LODGES

Tier 1 - Small Grower's Lodge

A few small fields have been cleared in the refuge, enough to sustain basic needs, if they are farmed and worked. Players may spend a downtime action to gain 1 unit of supplies.

Tier 2 - Small Distillery

There's more to life than just bread, their must also be roses. A little liquid courage comes in use. Add 2 ticks to any cohort morale clocks.

Tier 3 - Granary and Logistics

The Diggers are a source of food, food that is sorely needed if the revolution is to march into open warfare. As long as the lanes of supply are kept safe, the Diggers give **supplies** equal to the Refuge's Tier each turn.

FLETCHERS

BACKGROUND

Before the Crimson Crown, the strength of the Bloody Isles was in it's

archers. Longbows forged of yew were in the hands of every child from an early age, and folk were taught to practice the arts of archery and fletching by royal decree.

Whether because they feared a populace capable of putting arrows into their hearts, or because of the more subtle motivation to break local traditions and isolate folk from their heritage, the Crimson Crown banned all bows from their domain.

Those who refused to give up the bow are known as Fletchers, and they are hunted relentlessly by the Crown. They share a close kinship with the forests, and with the Brinkwood in particular, showing reverence to nature and fae. Their numbers are few, but they have survived this long... and no one is better at killing vampires.

SPOKES

Aza

The Bowyer

History: For decades, Aza was a respected master bowyer. He crafted many a masterwork, fine long bows of ashwood, deft crossbows of yew, and fletched many an arrow. But with the rise of the Crimson Crown, his craft was banned, and his fellow masters were hunted to near extinction. He lives quietly now, on the very edge of the Brinkwood, and dreams of reigniting his time-honored craft.

Description: A tired, old man with rough hands and sad eyes. He wears a loose cloak, fraying at the edges, and always seems to have a piece of

wood and a chisel-knife in his hands.

Motivation: Aza just wants to make bows. Preferably in peace. That said, more than anything he wants to pass down the legacy of his craft. He will support plans that bring in young blood, and shuns any plan that might risk seeing his apprentices lose their lives.

Haft

The Hunter

History: Once, haft was a skilled hunter, a master of the bow and the hunt. His skill with arrow and blade were unmatched, and he was a caretaker of the forest. When the vampires seized power, his trade was outlawed, and his fellows abandoned him to join the Huntsmen. Haft, alone with a few others, stayed behind, quietly nursing a grudge.

Description: A huntsmen covered in furs, smudged with dirt and muck.

Motivation: Haft favors a careful, slow approach. He favors assassinations, banditry, robbery, and misdirection. He advocates for a slow, sure approach to carefully stalking the rebellion's prey.

Willow

The Dryad

History: The Dryads do not experience time as mortals do. For centuries, Willow stood as a guardian of the Brinkwood, safeguarding the Fae and the Forest from all dangers.

But, alas, her defense failed. The vampires came, and stole away her

sisters, and maimed Willow in the process. Now, the joy and song which once filled her heart is replaced with fury and fire.

Description: A woman of burned ash and frayed bark, with hot coals for eyes.

Motivation: To see the vampires suffer as she did. She will support any plan that promises violent retribution.

GOALS

Tier 0

Preserve the Craft - The fletcher's art is on the verge of extinction. To survive, they need safe places to practice, apprentices to train, and wood to work with.

Preserve the Talent - Archery is banned on pain of death throughout Cardenfell, though many remember the days when every man, woman and child knew how to string a bow. Recruiting archers out of hiding, teaching youngsters to string a bow, and setting up caches of bows and arrows are essential.

Tier I

Preserve the Wood - The Brinkwood is vital, and tending to its needs has fallen by the wayside for too long. Contracts must be negotiated with the fae and dryads that call it home, and fair trades made for the ashwood it provides.

Mapping the Wood - Trails shift, trees move, and men often become

lost in the Brinkwood. While this keeps prying eyes from your sanctuaries, it also makes it very difficult to gather the Ashwood necessary for the Fletchers to advance their craft. Mapping, navigating, and negotiating with the forest should be a priority.

Tier 2

Expand the Wood - The vampires sought to drive back the Brinkwood with flame and axe. Such insults cannot go unpunished. The Brinkwood must be expanded, with new trees and saplings grown and planted, expanding the wood back to its former glory.

Preserve the Legend - The vampires came so quickly to power because stories of them and their deeds were lost to time, legend, or myth. Knowledge of how to guard against the vampire with Ashwood must be preserved and spread far and wide.

LODGES

Tier 1 - Fine Bowyers

Fine bows of ashwood and yew are made at the humble tents of the Fletcher's lodge. These bows are more intricate, but also more powerful. You may spend an extra point of **load** in order to increase the **tier** of any bow you wield to **fine**.

Tier 2 - Hunter's Lodge

At the hunter's lodge, archers are trained to hunt, spy, and pad silently through the Brinkwood. Unlock and gain an "Archers" cohort or increase the tier of an "Archers" cohort.

Tier 3 - Sapling Nursery

As a sign of defiance, the Fletchers ask that an Ashwood be planted in the center of every village and town liberated from the Vampire presence, preferably watered with blood of vampires themselves. Easy access to Ashwood increases the Tier of defending forces wherever these trees are planted.

EPILOGUE

Planting an ashwood tree where a vampire died. Remembering what was sacrificed, keeping memories / trades alive. Protections of forests, expansion of ashwood, growing it wherever you can. Legal protection for the Brinkwood, forests, regrowing, cultivating. Repaying the fae, legal protection of the fae. Sustainable ashwood planting, sustainable industry. Writing down / recording how to use ashwood, how it works.

THE FIXERS

BACKGROUND

SPOKES

???

The Organizer

History:

Description:

Motivation:

Yoan

The Saboteur

History:

Description:

Motivation:

Brigit

The Machinist

History:

Description:

Motivation:

GOALS

Tier 0

Tier 1

Tier 2

LODGES

Tier 1

Tier 2

Tier 3

THE GUILDERS

BACKGROUND

SPOKES

???

The Accountant

History:

Description:

Motivation:

???

The Guildmaster

History:

Description:

Motivation:

???

The Craftsman

History:

Description:

Motivation:

GOALS

Tier 0

Tier 1

Tier 2

LODGES

Tier 1

Tier 2

Tier 3

THE POISONERS

BACKGROUND

SPOKES

???

The Alchemist

History:

Description:

Motivation:

???

The Academic

History:

Description:

Motivation:

Solena

The Biologist – Botanists, Apiarists, Insectologists, Frogs, blood-sucking insects, Zoologists

History: Fascinated by nature from an early age, Solena grew up on the edges of the Brinkwood, risking danger and driving her parents to distraction. She was well-liked in academic circles, until the Crimson Crown put forth a new ideology: nature must be bent to serve. Solena's research into the natural poisons of various creatures was soon coopted and twisted by the vampires, much to her horror. Now, she puts her skills to use, ironically enough, poisoning the vampires right back.

Description: A sickly, salt-folk woman with a quiet, quaking voice. She carries examination tools and small vials filled with "samples" wherever she goes.

Motivation: Solena loves to observe nature, and will support any plan that leads to greater understanding of the natural world.

GOALS

Tier 0

Corpse Retrieval

Secrecy is paramount to the Poisoners, as is experimental supplies. The top priority is retrieving the corpses of any of their number who died with poison still flowing in their veins, so as to keep the vampires of learning of their plans.

Gathering Poisons

Poisons, especially those lethal to vampires are closely guarded. Obtaining them in significant quantities, be it from stockpiles or directly from natural resources is a priority of the Poisoners.

Tier 1

More Books

The exact nature of blood silver is a closely guarded secret. Securing alchemical texts or experts on the creation of Blood Silver might unlock secrets to how it's powers could be thwarted.

False Silver

While the Poisoners seek to corrupt the blood used in Blood Sterling, there is the possibility that silver itself could be turned against the vampire. Large quantities of silver and other alchemical compounds would be required to do so, of course.

Tier 2

A Poisoned Supply

The formula is nearing perfection, now the challenge is producing the poison, distributing it, and convincing the common folk to mix it in with their taxes. If successful, the vampires will be cut off from the source of their power.

LODGES

Tier 1 - Poisoners Lodge

The poisoners have long experimented in ways to poison, corrupt, and kill vampires. Efforts to poison vampires gain +1 effect.

Tier 2 - Silver Distiller

The poisoners have discovered how to distill Blood Silver back into its

component parts. Whenever you trade blood sterling for essence, gain +1 supply.

Tier 3 - Phlebotomist's Lodge

The poisoners are experimenting with ways to drain more blood from vampires. Gain +2 essence whenever you drain a vampire.

EPILOGUES

If its possible to make blood sterling, what else can be made from silver? What other (less harmful_) magic is there?

THE PRAYERS

BACKGROUND

SPOKES

???

The Accountant

History:

Description:

Motivation:

???

The Guildmaster

History:

Description:

Motivation:

???

The Craftsman

History:

Description:

Motivation:

GOALS

Tier 0

Tier 1

Tier 2

LODGES

Tier 1

Tier 2

Tier 3

THE REAVERS

BACKGROUND

Centuries ago, long before the Crimson Crown, and before even the Old Kingdom, Orslae was defended by the *Reeves*. The peoples of Orslae elected these protectors from among their number, empowering them to carry blade and bow, and to keep the peace between folk.

When the Old Kingdom rose, they all but destroyed the Reeves, but a few scattered members fled, either into the forest, the wilderness, or the sea. They became bandits, raiders, and smugglers, waging a long, slow, guerilla war. As time passed, the line between warfare and petty banditry blurred, and the once-proud Reeves are now denounced as Reavers, preying upon folk and vampire alike.

Still, the Reavers remember some of their past, dividing their loot equally, electing their leadership, and committing as little bloodshed as is necessary. If the Reavers could truly reclaim their once-beneficent

heritage, remember why their ancestors fought so long ago... they would most surely be powerful allies.

SPOKES

Elen

The Smuggler

History: The child of sea-born reavers, with deep-folk blood running in her veins, Elen displayed a precocious curiosity and a talent for hiding things that would serve her well her entire life. Now, she acts as a smuggler, filtering the goods, weapons, and other contraband banned by the Crimson Crown in and out of Orslae.

Description: Deep, wide-set eyes. Seaweed green hair. A cheery smile, some forged writs, and a bag full of drops (useful for bribes) always at the ready.

Motivation: Elen is a practical sort, under her sunny disposition. She will enthusiastically support any plan, but will try to subtly direct towards schemes with the best chance of success.

Rowsong

The Privateer

History: Raised in the comfort of a merchant household, Rowsong's only connection to her Reeve ancestry was from her grandfather, who told stories of daring pirates, noble reeves, romance and adventure.

It was, therefore, no surprise to anyone when she stole her family's

heirloom blade and pistol, kept hidden for decades, and joined the first ship crew that would take her aboard.

The life of a privateer was a bit different from the stories, but Rowsong remained undaunted, finding kinship and admiration among her peers for her talents and hard work, until, at last, she was elected captain.

Description: A classic, ancestral reaver coat, carefully maintained. Etched, blue-ink tattoos and tailoring telling the history of her crew, with a coat depicting the legends of her family. A cutlass engraved with her family's name in the old-tongue, a winning smile, and a shock of wild red hair under a tricorn hat.

Motivation: Rowsong longs to bring the Reavers closer to the tales she heard from her grandfather, and will endorse plans of pageantry, nobility, or that just sound like a hell of a lot of fun.

Guethenoc

The Highwayman

History: As a quiet young student in the academy, Guethenoc studied history, poetry, and the sciences. The third scion of a proud family of land-owners, Guethenoc was, on his thirteenth birthday, kidnapped by a band of Reavers and held for ransom. When his family refused to pay, Guethenoc used his quiet charm, wit, and skill to win the hearts of his kidnappers.

Within a few short months, he had been elected as commander of the Reavers who had abducted him. His crew has amassed fortune with

minimal bloodshed, after all, who best knows how to rob the vampires than a Scion?

Description: A young man with a quiet demeanor. Rail-thin, dressed in simple, yet fashionable clothes. A subtle, faded reaver tattoo on his back. A marked contrast to the two rowdy, heavily-tattooed bodyguards who always travel with him, Heve and Salm.

Motivation: Guethenoc never gave up his love of history and poetry, and would be happy to see the Reavers return to their rightful role as protectors of Orslae... if he can be convinced it's possible.

GOALS

Tier 0

- Go A-Reaving: Reavers, first and foremost, respect those who can amass weapons, resources, or treasures of renown.
- The Old Ways: The Reavers have lost touch with their history, but wish to rekindle it. Finding those who know the old stories, or what little has been written down is a priority.

Tier I

1. The Reaving Parlay: The Reavers are scattered, with each crew answering only to its captain or commander. Respect

and trust must be earned, crew-by-crew.

2. **The Reaving Way:** It is one thing for the Reavers to know their own history, but they are still feared and distrusted by most folk. Some community outreach is in order.

Tier 2

- **The Seconde Moot:** In the histories of the Reeve, there was no event as important as The Grande Moot. It was here that the codes, practices, and rights which governed the Reeve were decided. It is time to call a second moot, and let the Reeve rise once again!
- **Powder and Steel:** The Reavers are isolated cells, but could become a proper army. To become as such, they will need powder, steel, and training.

LODGES

Tier 1 - Reaving Stockpile

The Reavers are happy to store your treasure for you. Gain +4 to the maximum Blood Sterling your Refuge can hold.

Tier 2 - Tattoer's Hut

Tattoo is a vital part of Reaver culture, detailing their history, crew, and accomplishments. The ritualized tattooing tends to strengthen the Resolve of those who undergo it. Once per campaign, brigands may spend one downtime action to gain +1

dot in a Resolve action. For as long as this Lodge remains active, Resolve actions may have up to 4 dots.

Tier 3 - Reaving Moot

The reaving moot is a hub of activity where the various operations and escapades of the Reavers can be organized more effectively.

Gain +1d to any engagement or fortune roll that involves skullduggery, assassination, scouting, or other commando activities.

THE SAPPERS

BACKGROUND

SPOKES

Ilan

The Foreman

History: Ilan has been a miner all his life. A dangerous life, to be sure, but one made only more deadly by the vampire overseer's abuses and demands. He was pressed into rushing a mining crew digging a rich vein, promised riches if he hurried the dig. His greed cost his men and women their lives when a cave-in collapsed the tunnel.

Description: Middle-aged, ram-horned, with a tawny white beard and a balding pate. Hard, worn eyes and hands. A perpetually dirty cover-all

and tools always close at hand.

Motivation: Motivated by grief, guilt, and a slow-boiling fury, Ilan has pledged to see all the Vampires buried, one way or another. He supports violent plans, but is hesitant to support any plan that risks lives.

???

The Surveyor

History:

Description:

Motivation:

???

The Engineer

History:

Description:

Motivation:

GOALS

Tier 0

Assess the Land - While the Sappers are skilled diggers, knowing where to dig can often be another matter entirely. Finding new locations where vampire estates can be sapped or valuable resources pulled from the earth is a top priority.

Protect the Crews – Sappers are vicious in their tunnels, but it can be difficult for them to fight “fair,” so to speak. Defending, guarding, and hiding their tunnels is something they could certainly use help with.

Tier 1

Mirror, Mirror – The Sappers rely on mirrors, complex contraptions of silver, lead, and gears to redirect sunlight down into their tunnels (and into the crypts of the vampires they fight). Finding experts in the creation of mirrors as well as the resources necessary to produce them in bulk would be helpful.

Good Powder – While the mirrors are useful, sometimes the judicious application of blasting powder is more useful. Experts in its use, as well as stockpiles of black powder itself will help the Sappers.

Tier 2

Friends in Many Places – The sappers thrive on their alliances, common folk guarding their tunnel entrances, to Guilders or Scribblers who might have insight to share with them.

LODGES

Tier 1 - Surveying Lodge

The Sappers’ surveying kits and experts are useful in their ability to create maps, quickly survey areas, and better help the rebellion organize against its enemies. Gain +1d to all rolls that involve scouting terrain.

Tier 2 - Smuggler’s Lodge

The tunnels of the sappers are excellent at smuggling goods and people.

Once per downtime, you may spend 2 Blood Sterling to gain 1 unit of steel or 1 unit of black powder. Furthermore, you can freely move 1 cohort per turn.

Tier 3 - Engineer's Lodge

The sappers have turned their talents towards breaking walls and smashing fortifications. Gain +1 effect whenever you fight in a siege.

EPILOGUES

Better conditions for workers, better mining techniques, responsible mining practices. Eco-friendly techniques for mining, digging, responsible use of resources, recycling. Eco-friendly / healthy processing of materials. Control of where silver goes / what it's used for / tighter control of dangerous materials (like silver)

THE SCRIBBLERS

BACKGROUND

SPOKES

???

The Teacher

History:

Description:

Motivation:

???

The Poet

History:

Description:

Motivation:

Aoda

The Historian

History: A sickly child, Aoda spent most of her childhood buried in books. She was thrilled by the historical epics, disdaining the fairy tales and myths. As she grew to adulthood, she found many of her fellow scholars believed history was “ending”, and that the Crimson Crown would reign forever. Her (academic) contempt for such an ahistorical opinion drew the ire of the vampires, but she was welcomed into the ranks of the Scribblers. Now, she seeks to record and document the ebb and flow of her historical moment, for she knows she is blessed to live in such interesting times.

Description: A bespectacled academic in fraying robes, with thin spectacles and a book always in her arms.

Motivation: Aoda isn't particularly moved by passion or spirited pleas. If it were up to her, she would remain on the sidelines, simply recording events as they happened. However, her command of history and strategy enlisted her into leadership roles. She advocates for plans based on logic, reason, and above all, historical precedence.

GOALS

Tier 0

Tier 1

Tier 2

LODGES

Tier 1

Tier 2

Tier 3

THE STOKERS

BACKGROUND

The Stokers are a loose collection of rebels, anarchists, revolutionaries,

and bandits, united only by their hatred of the Vampires and their love of blowing things up. They are a somewhat divisive group in Cardenfell, with some hailing them as freedom fighters and heroes while others decry them as little more than wanton terrorists and arsonists.

Black Powder is at the core of the Stokers identity, as many are veterans of the mines where it is harvested or the factories where it is employed. Many Stokers see black powder as a neutral force, just as capable of ending the Vampire's reign as it is of extending it. The seizure of black powder, it's stockpiling, and it's use are chief among their concerns, though it has been observed that they seem to use it almost as quickly as they obtain it.

The role of the Stokers in any revolutionary movement has yet to be determined. Some fear that they will flame out dramatically, while others believe their talents and verve for mayhem only lack more organization and "constructive" application. Either way, the Stokers are a powderkeg.

SPOKES

Phoenix

The Arsonist

History: No one is quite sure of the Phoenix's history, and they seem to prefer to keep it that way. A folk hero to many, tales of their dashing deeds, heroic heists, and fiendish forays abound in the taverns of Cardenfell. Some say they are a myth, while others argue that they are more than one person, as any Stoker may claim the deeds and identity of

the Phoenix as necessary.

Description: A red scarf pulled over their face, a pair of smudged goggles over their eyes. The smell of brimstone and gunpowder, and an ever-present brace of pistols.

Motivation: Wherever the Phoenix appears, they advocate for direct action. Sabotage, explosives, and propoganda of the deed are their choice in plans, and they will support any goal that promises to go off with a bang.

Alamin

The Revolutionary

History: Alamin is a traveller, arrived to Cardenfell from a distant outpost of the Empire, they bring with them revolutionary ideas and practical teachings. It is no secret that indigenou revolutionaries in the “colonies” of the Crimson Crown have fared much better than those closer to the heart of the Empire, and Alamin seeks to correct that. He is well-respected by the Stokers, and any revolutionary would do well to try and earn his trust.

Description: Fiery red hair wrapped in cloth, somewhat odd clothing. A pistol, some gunpowder, and a lesson always close at hand.

Motivation: Alamin’s aim is to build a revolutionary movement and to try and guide it towards progressive ideals and practical strength. He advocates for democracy, butter, and bullets, and is keen to support efforts to bring in new allies and to bolster those already won to the

movement.

Nolwen

The Engineer

History: A quiet chemist and engineer, Nolwen seemed destined for an ivory tower of academia, until, of course, she blew it up. She helped organize a student rebellion, and led many of her comrades out of the collegia and into a world with desperate need of her skills. She is one of the few among the Stokers with a talent for safety or constructive endeavors, and has taken on an unwilling role as “voice of reason.”

Description: Smudges of soot and sulfurous smells. A messy tangle of black hair and bits of a plague-doctor’s costume.

Motivation: Nolwen wants to build the Stokers beyond a gang of would-be arsonists, and into a capable and fearsome army of bomb-throwers and seige-breakers. Any plan that seems likely to help her meet this ambition will have her approval.

GOALS

Tier 0

A Flow of Powder

The Stokers first and foremost need black powder. They need to steal it, transport it, distribute it, and train new recruits how to use it. Helping them secure a reliable supply of the stuff will go a long way to winning their loyalty.

A Proper Flame

The Stokers are haphazard in their approach, burning targets of opportunity rather than striking at the true heart of vampiric oppression. Learning of viable targets and having help striking a clear blow against a vital engine of the Vampire's reign will bolster their morale and light a fire in their hearts.

Tier 1

Organizing a Bonfire

The Stokers are a diverse rabble that need help knitting themselves into a proper revolutionary movement. Dealing with infighting, setting up ways to deal with disagreement, and means of collective decision-making will be vital. To accomplish this, they will need teachers, advice, and most importantly, practice.

Stoking the Flames

As the Stokers grow, they will need some help rehabilitating their reputation. They wish to be seen as the liberators they are, rather than as the terrorists the Vampires paint them to be. Assist them in this, either by propoganda of the deed or through spreading word of their true motives.

Tier 2

Focus Fire

If the Stokers are to keep their hard-won reputation, they must learn to minimize collateral damage. Learning skills that contain and direct fire

are essential, digging firebreaks, using water, and controlled burns need to be learned and taught.

Fire in the Belly

The Stokers wish to knit themselves into a proper army, or at least an artillery corps. For this, they will need guns. Big guns. The kind of guns that will let them knock down walls and drag the vampires kicking and screaming from their crypts.

LODGES

Tier 1 - Alchemist's Lodge

The Stokers have mastered the art of making portable fire, a 'sticky' flame that can be stored into glass bottles that break when thrown. Add "firebombs" as an optional equipment choice with 1 load.

Tier 2 - Militia Office

The Stokers are keen on organizing people and teaching the best ways to defend against vampires. Gain +1 to any engagement roll at a location with at least 1 sedition clock filled, and you may create a "Militia" Cohort at any village or city, though it may not move from it's starting location.

Tier 3 - Artillery School

Time to wheel out the big guns. Create a special "Artillery" Cohort, which (helps somehow with sieges)

THE WITCHERS

BACKGROUND

Witches were a common sight throughout the Bloody Isles before the Crimson Crown came to power. Wise women, healers, and practitioners of older faiths often benefited their communities, offering healing, wisdom, and education. When the Crimson Crown began to take root, they knew they would have to root out the influence of the Witches in order to claim the land and authority they would need to rule. So, they began a campaign of propaganda, accusing witches of crimes ranging from the grisly to the absurd. Witch hunts were called, and many was the witch or witcher that was put to the stake.

Still, some apprentices, witches, and scholars fled to the forgotten parts of the isles, keeping memory of their craft and faith alive in any way they could. Now, they lurk at the edges of Cardenfell, doing their best to help heal and care for the common folk who were driven to betraying them.

SPOKES

Yaël

The Witch

History: Yaël was struck by a sudden premonition, and so fled to the forest when the witch hunters came for her. Taking what books and herbs she could, she hid in plain sight, moving from village to village. Sometimes she was a beggar, others, a thief. But all along she did her

best to heal and help others. Over her journeys she gathered a few apprentices, “seeds” whose knowledge of the old ways she would see blossom.

Description: An old, bent woman, with a frame of scales lining the edges of her face, and a set of gracefully swept ram’s horns atop her head. She speaks in a hoarse, cracking whisper.

Motivation: Yaël wishes to see her “seeds” grow. She will support plans that support, rescue, or gather more young apprentices to the cause.

Donan

The Doctor

History: Donan was a student at an academy on the continent when the Crimson Crown rose to power. He brought knowledge of herbal remedy and distillation native to the Isles to the continent, where their effectiveness was proven with rigorous study and experimentation. Returning home, he was horrified to find his teachers and friends persecuted and their knowledge burned. He stalks the shadows of power now, hiding as a court doctor to a vampire count, all the while seeking to preserve knowledge and pass intelligence to his allies.

Description: Bespectacled, with a long, thin beard that he frequently fiddles with. Dresses in an academic’s robes.

Motivation: The preservation of knowledge and the safety of himself and his allies. Favors low-risk, low-exposure plans and goals that build on earlier work.

Sève

The Apothecary

History: Sève was an apprentice botanist, a monk who practised at refining and cross-pollination of herbs and medicinal plants. Their work produced new, wonderous strains of crops and medicines, but was decried as heresy by the Reformed Faith. So, they fled, taking their research with them into the waiting arms of the Witchers. Now, they continue their research, happy enough to be left alone to brew up a new poultice or carefully note down the results of some new experiment.

Description: Finned, azure skin. Wide, observant eyes. Hands stained with dirt and an ever-present notebook and herb pouch around their waist.

Motivation: Values careful experimentation and new methodologies. Favors plans that are likely to produce new and interesting results.

GOALS

Tier 0

Herbal Remedies

The witches of old were renowned for their skill at producing all manner of herbal remedies and medicines. However, much of the herbs and plants have grown rare and untended to. Gathering medicinal herbs in quantities large enough to be planted elsewhere is a top priority.

Home Medicine

The vampires discourage home remedies and medicine, promoting cure-alls and snake oil. Teaching the common folk how to distinguish good medicine from bad, as well as how to tend to common ailments as their ancestors did would certainly help their resilience.

Tier 1

Hospitals

As the Witchers expand, so too do their hospitals. For those who cannot afford expensive treatments or have ailments that cannot be cured by simpler remedies, these underground hospitals offer hope. Recruiting specialists, stockpiling bandages and medicines, and finding sympathetic locations where they can be set up would all help the Witchers cause.

Plague

Plague is a frequent sight in Cardenfell, sweeping through towns, cities, and villages. Triaging plague, containing it, and treating its symptoms are a high priority for the Witchers, though they will need information, protection, and supplies to do so.

Tier 2

Trauma Medicine

Fighting a war is more than treating disease or sickness. To truly be able to fight, surgeons will need to be found. Anesthetics developed and stockpiled. Blood supplies and plasma reserved, and medics trained. Help the Witchers in these tasks, and they will keep your army

marching healthy.

LODGES

Tier 1 - Witchers Lodge

The Witchers have dispatched one of their best healers to your camp, able to help out and heal. Gain +1 ticks to any healing attempts.

Tier 2 - Health Lodge

As the Witchers expand their operation, the strength of the people they treat returns to them. Townsfolk are more hale and hearty. Gain +1 Hearts, and increase the effect of any townspeople or villagers who aid you.

Tier 3 - Field Hospital

The Witchers have honed their craft, allowing it to be useful at the scale of an army. You may completely heal one cohort per turn.

EPILOGUES

Ending execution / persecution. More permanent hospitals, more holistic healing. Funding medical programs. Freedom of religion / belief / practice. Protections of the brinkwood, associations with the Fae, etc.

VAMPIRES AND THEIR SERVANTS

SERVANT CLASSES

While the servants that serve vampires (as well as the vampires themselves) are diverse, they can be grouped into several unique classes, best suited to certain circumstances. This expresses itself in modifications to a servant's *threat* when they pose an obstacle to the brigands.

- A *courtier* will be at full effect when posing an obstacle during a social scene, perhaps by trying to suss out the brigand's true motives, resist deception, or to manipulate or sow discord among allies. However, they will falter if trying to detect stealthy brigands, and might be near-useless in a straight-up fight.
- An *enforcer* will be at full effect during combat, or when seeking to terrify or brutalize a population. They will be less useful at detecting ambushes or at investigating the brigand's activities, and will typically be rather useless in scenarios that call for subtelety, etiquette, or charm.
- An *investigator* will be at full effect when searching out the brigands or keeping watch for them. They are difficult

to ambush, and will attempt to hunt the brigands down at every opportunity. They are not easily misled, outpaced, or fooled. In a fight, they might be able to hold their own, though they typically prefer to call in more blunt instruments. Likewise, they will be at reduced effect in social scenarios, though they may still be potent at sussing out hidden motives.

- An *officer* will have their full effect, so long as they are attended by an appropriate number of subordinates. They excel at politics, investigation, and combat equally, but if stripped of their subordinates, they will quickly falter

VAMPIRIC CLASSES

Even within the ranks of vampiredom, there is a strict hierarchy. Largely based on the accumulation of blood and silver, the “ladder” of vampiric privilege is held up as a meritocracy, hiding the bloody and vicious truth of “ascending” through the ranks. Each rank both hates and aspires to the rank above, putting on airs or attempting to emulate the fashions and practises of the level above them. In this way, Vampire society is bound together, not through love or loyalty, but through envy and greed.

“**Loan-Fang**” is a derogatory term for an unlanded vampire beholden to another for Blood Sterling. They are addressed as “Niece” or “Nephew” in the polite terminology. They are

occasionally employed as spies, bounty hunters, or found leading groups of more “mundane” muscle or Bit-Bloods. Peasants who wish to stay in their good graces will address them as “Master” or “Mistress.” *Enforcer*

Kith are Vampires with a bit of Red Sterling and land. They control minor fiefs, and are little better than landlords. They are addressed as Sir, Madam, or Squire. *Courtier*

Kine are Vampires of society, a true bourgeoisie above “sully” their hands with the lesser details of extracting blood and rent from the peasantry. To address Kine as anything other than M’Lord or M’Lady will earn a peasant a whipping. *Officer*

The **Pure Lines** are Vampire high nobility, who control other vampires and large vaults of Red Sterling. They are the most powerful, most removed from day-to-day affairs. Their name is a bit of propaganda, as many claim their blood is “purer” than lesser vampires. *Officer*

The **Outcasts** are a rumor, a scary bed-time story told to naughty Scions, of Vampires who have been completely consumed by their lust for blood and power. Depending on who you ask, they are a fairy-tale, a bit of clever propaganda (after all, the Crimson Crown is not as bad as *those* vampires), or a very real threat: the vampires who predated the Crimson Crown, whose stolen blood

made the first Blood Sterling. *Enforcer*

LESSER SERVANTS

Lesser Servants are those that might appear in any campaign, and should be used by GMs to bolster the forces arrayed against the brigands. In general, these servants should be regarded as Tier 0 or Tier 1, but their Tier may be raised, perhaps if led by a Loan-Fang or other vampiric officer.

Huntsmen - Skilled hunters that help vampires out in sporting “hunts” of faeries, track runaway serfs, rebels, etc. They prefer to fight at a distance, ambushing or picking off their foes.

Investigator

Bailiffs - Men with clubs who keep peasants in line, enforcers for Landlords. They prefer to fight in melee, preferably against a weak or defenseless foe. They may quickly route if faced with a “real” fight. *Enforcer*

Powdermen - Gangsters with a bit of vampire backing that use a monopoly on gunpowder weapons to terrorize the underworld. They are versatile, fighting both at a distance with rifles before closing in on prey with their pistols. That said, they are fundamentally motivated by greed, and few is the powderman that will fight to the death. *Enforcer*

Ghouls - People drained of all but a single drop of vampiric blood. Slaves, carrion-eaters, underclass. Literally dehumanized, they are perhaps the fate of those who don't make rent. Mindless and rapid, they are easy to deal with at a distance or in small numbers. Their primary use is as cannon-fodder, or to overwhelm distracted enemies. *Enforcer*

Dramcoats - Soldiers in the service of a vampiric lord, so-named for the dram of blood sterling they are paid weekly. Treated mostly as disposable cannon-fodder in the vendetta wars between vampires, they wield either a pike or a rifle and shortsword depending on their role. Their coats are frequently colored in the livery of their vampire lord, but all seem to bleed to a rust-color at the fringes over time. *Enforcer*

Landlords - Vampiric and Non-Vampiric Squires and Lords who own property, charge rents from peasants. These lords will rarely fight their own battles, and prefer to hire bit-bloods, bailiffs, or powdermen to fight for them *Courtier*

Bit-Blood: A human enforcer who gets a bit of blood from vampiric masters. Stronger, tougher, frequently led by vampires or found leading lesser humans. They are tough, disciplined foes that can be difficult to face down in a one-on-one fight. The best advice is to not fight them fair: ambush them, rally other folk against them, or cut them off from their allies. *Officer*

Wisp – Collaborator humans who aspire to vampirism and rising through the ranks. Spy on their fellows, sow discord, and keep the myth of “ascending” to vampirism alive. Wisps are a cowardly lot, through and through, and will nearly always run rather than stand and fight. *Investigator*

BLOOD MAGIC

The magic used by vampires is left purposely vague, only with the stipulations that it is tied to the blood that they drink, and that greater concentrations of blood produce greater effects. In the “Vampires and their Servants” chapter, we attempt to suggest some abilities that vampires may gain from blood-drinking, but these are not hard rules, and should be adapted to the playstyle and vision of your group.

VAMPIRIC ABILITIES

The exact nature of the blood’s gifts is left purposely vague, so that you can tailor your preferred vision of the vampires. If you want ideas, we suggest looking at the Vampire Generator. Some “basic” powers that nearly all vampires have might include:

Charm – the ability to sway folk to their cause. The brigands are inured to the effects of this by the protection of their masks, but a vampire can stir folk to it’s defense.

Authority – when the carrot fails, the stick will suffice. Vampires can use threats, commanding tones, and raw charisma to inspire the forces they lead to fight harder and longer.

Toughness – Killing a vampire is no easy feat. They heal quickly from mundane injury, with only ashwood dealing lasting harm.

Speed – Vampires are trained, usually, to fight quickly and decisively, emphasizing their inhuman speed to deliver quick, critical blows in rapid succession.

Blood-Drinking – While a vampire will prefer a more “dignified” feeding method, in the heat of battle, it is not unheard of for a vampire to drain their foes (or even their allies) of blood, in an effort to heal themselves or bolster their strength.

Vampire Lords

The Duke

Stern, Foreboding, Ruthless

It is rumored that the Duke was the last to fall to the Crimson Crown. As a general and feudal lord of the Old Kingdom, he held the line against the encroachment of vampirism, hunting the vampire lords of old with ruthless efficiency. Still, even the

strongest of feudal bulwarks crumble eventually.

It is said that he took the Blood Sterling to preserve what he could of the Old Kingdom. Preserve the privileges granted to the aristocracy, the titles and authority his family had held for generations. Truth be told, he hardly needed to worry about such things. His interests and those of the Crimson Crown aligned almost perfectly, and it is with some bitterness that the Duke recalls how long he fought against his new masters.

Now, his power is maintained in much the same way his ancestors did for centuries. With blood, steel, and fear. The Duke embraced gunpowder and steel, seizing their potential for control and rigid authority. He wrote the propaganda of the Crimson Crown, tying the feudal families of the Old Kingdom to the Pure Blood Lines of the Crimson Crown. He rules with an iron grip, carefully choking his peasants for every drop of blood, every sliver of silver, every grain of gunpowder, every ounce of steel. Still, a grip can only tighten so much, a boot can only grind down so many, and in the darkness of the Brinkwood, rebellion stirs.

Motto: *I am the heel that grinds forever.*

Themes: *Industrial fascism, paranoia, feudalism, replaceable cogs, mechanics, billowing smoke, coal, choking dust, gunpowder, soldiers, tactics, a slow grind*

The Duke's Demesne

Air choked with soot. In towns the banging, clanging of industry during the day, the deathly quiet of strict curfew after darkness, punctuated by the occasional scream or sob, quickly silenced. Marching boots on cobblestone. Shuffling peasants, their heads bent low, watched over by towering guard posts and panopticons. Turning gears and the wrenching grind. The taste of oil and gunpowder. Monolithic, imposing architecture, draped with tattered banners and propaganda.

Village Demesne

Six features unique to villages within the Duke's demesne.

1. Ever the modernist, the Duke has seen that his populace is best kept docile by way of what they are fed. Cusk, twice-baked biscuit, and hearty stews which keep long and stay sloshing in the guts of the populace are offered from ration stations. They taste primarily of salt and though only numerous in the Duke's demesne; can last a traveler a fortnight before suffering even the vaguest hint of spoilage.
2. The people of this village make use of superior implements in their daily tasks, such that no boot is worn through and no nail is bent out of its shape. They make use of superior vestments, all the same color; and their hair, too, is cropped short for the sake of utility. This uniformed society functions without individuality, and thus it functions efficiently.
3. The prominent forge within this town makes for toilsome labor and choking smog. Urchin children and the less desirable members of society are forced to burn themselves cleaning the soot from red-hot vents lest they go without their rations. They can seldom keep the food down with all their dreadful hacking coughs.
4. The high walls of this village keep the people safe, that is what they are told and that is what many of them believe. No windows face the outsider world, for fear of burglars or an errant gunshot from the enemy. There is no world more important than that of the village, for a villager dream of another life is to court strife and the

unknown. It'd take great skill for a monster to scale such walls, though they easily walk through the village gate.

5. The village has seen harsh winters and harsher tithings, as such they keep a well-maintained and guarded storehouse. All goods are well documented by the Officiants of the village, and in their judgment they determine when it is fair and what is equal to dole out to the public. Few dare to make note of the vampire's revelry in lean times, fewer still seek to enter the storehouse for fear of exsanguination.
6. The Duke has seen this village a place surrounded by tamed wilderness, fields stripped of trees and stumps in acted aggression against what lurks within the Brinkwood. Dogs and hunting vampires patrol the distant fields, as if to confirm the fairy-stories of the dark things that dwell within.

Village Obstacles

Six obstacles unique to villages within the Duke's demesne

1. The fires of industry consume endlessly without consent or consideration. An industrial fire has gouted choking smoke throughout the village, its point of origin unknown, but it throttles at mortal as though they were trying to swallow a handful of razors. The vampires know someone must be held to account and seek a scapegoat.
2. The local Officiant, envious of the positions held by other servants of the Duke, seeks to make this village more than a mere backwater. The Officiant has taken to emulating the style of the Duke's servant who holds sway over the area, but their fervor could just as easily be seen as a mockery. They follow the orders of their betters with unerring, violent efficiency; and any failure is met with as much obliterating force can be mustered.
3. A shipment of the Duke's Steel is to pass through this village, and as such the village has begun reinforcing themselves for potential attacks from insurgents or the horrors of the Brinkwood. The Forsworn are drilling the people to exhaustion, expecting them to attend military drills while demanding peak efficiency in their labors so as to keep up good optics to the weapon cache's potential entourage of high-ranking officers.
4. The adults of the village have been granted various ranks in a hierarchy by the local Officiant, allowing them a chance to improve their standing in exchange for meticulously detailed reports,

efficiency at work, and performing extra-curricular duties. This false meritocracy exists only for the Official's controlling benefit, as a formal dressing down of a failed villager sees greater productivity.

5. A shipment of necessary supplies never arrived in the village and the locals have taken to bitter rationing and starvation wages on the promise that a new shipment is soon to come. The local leadership is curious to see the maximum output they can receive while granting their people nothing. They want to know when the fighting will start.
6. A naive local has perfected a fighting technique which can allow for greater mastery at arms. This has drawn unwanted attention, both from their rivals and from the vampires who desire to reward such talent, but not at the cost of their personal hegemonic power. The local has no true desire to join the vampires, fearful of their violence, but knows they cannot easily deny such a privilege. The burden of this has led to increased factionalism.

Town Demesne

Six features unique to towns within the Duke's demesne.

- Citizenry within the Duke's demesne is a privilege, of which citizens may improve their standing. In towns of his domain, badges are allotted to those who can prove their worth. Every man, woman, and child knows they should aspire for a higher rank; as if who they must brutalize to get to such heights will grant them a reprieve from their toil.
- The high brick walls of the towns were built to ensure a cramped, controlled state. Buildings were constructed with nary an inch between them, wedged tight to ensure additional defenses. Watch towers built at the optimal locations turn the settlement into a panopticon. All is observed, all is controlled, all is safe.
- Those within the towns of the Duke's demesne know well that enemies may come to claim their vaunted homes. He has seen fit to grant them arming jackets, gambesons, and other forms of paramilitary dress to instill a sense of combat-readiness; though he does not provide to them anything that would withstand a bullet or a blade. Those who wear the uniform know they are on the same team. They cannot say the same of others.
- The Antiquarian's poisoned pen is clearly at hand in the pamphlets slipped in the doors of all citizens on a nigh weekly

basis. They speak of blood, of its worth, of the history of the Cardenfall and the destiny being manifested by the daily toil of the Duke's mortal vassals. They stoke the fires of rage, both in the hearts of the fledgling rebel sick of the lies, and in the hearts of the brutal loyalist who wishes to purge dissidents from the ranks.

- Frescos upon walls depict great willow trees, the names of loyal servants to the Duke's domain engraved upon each strand of leaves. Placards speak the importance of bloodlines and the importance of service to the Duke, even at the cost of one's life. There are almost more trees in the town's of the Duke's domain than in all the Brinkwood; each leaf a life lost for sake of his vile ambitions.
- Those who are noticed for their aberrant deviations from the social norms the Duke seeks to enforce are not merely punished, they are humiliated. Gibbet cages force naked forms too close together on the edge of town where the sewage ditches flow. They are left to endure the elements, their crimes of living as anything other than a cog in the machine carved into their bare skin.

Town Obstacles

1. The local Officiant, ever the lickspittle, has turned the local youth into catspaws and informants for the Duke. The Peerage Youth's Crusade lavishes praise and promise upon the young of this town, offering them tin badges and treats. Vagrants and travelling merchants go missing, and their parents fear any outburst may be heard as sedition within their own homes.
2. The Duke's Forsworn patrol this town with mechanical efficiency. They know who needs to be where on any given street at any given time, and those who break such meticulous calculation through human error or mere misfortune, are subjected to public brutalizations. The populace is easily cowed by such displays.
3. The walls and gates of this town are wrapped in barbed razorous wire, the sort that digs deep into cloth and flesh when met with the slightest resistance. The stains upon the stonework beneath such protective measures tell tales of unimaginable torment, mortal beings rent to ribbons.
4. The Duke's Forsworn Captain was recently awarded with a weapon from the Duke's Steel Cache, forged by the Artificer. The Captain desires to see this steel made loyal to their dark ambitions, and as such seeks any opportunity to commit abuse

upon the populace. Such hubris will see them stripped of this reward, should it cause strife for the Duke's machinations.

5. Laborers, infuriated by the building pressure of the daily violence and the toil they suffer through, eventually snap under the weight of it all. They build their barricades and engage in violence which will beget only a vicious reprisal from the Duke's servants; upon both the disenfranchised laborers and any other who might be caught in the crossfire.
6. Public floggings are all too common, they cow the populace and enforce a mentality against the repugnancy of "the Other." The victim, their crimes embellished or imagined entirely, suffers at the lash while the population is made to watch. The Duke's Forsworn walk the crowds in search for whispers of dissent; while the Officiant appeals to the jingoism of loyalists between slashes of the whip.

Keep Defenses

1. The gates of the Duke's keep are nothing short of technological marvels, the envy of even the mainland. Making use of advanced pneumatic locks and pressurized gasses, the massive iron gates swing open with disturbing grace and slam shut with reckless abandon. Such technology, in the right hands, could lead to new, terrible weaponry...
2. The bails of razor wire atop the high castle walls are meant to be unfurled during times of siege. The blades upon the wire are of a model meant for lacerating flesh and hooking deeply into muscle tissue, such that an invader's errant fall might see them flayed alive.
3. The Duke's own hounds are terrible beasts, gifted to him by the Houndmistress in a failed attempt to win back his favor. Their yellow eyes and serrated fangs speak to some vile breeding program. They are kept nearly starved save for the refuse meat of intruders, unfortunate souls often used in baiting fights. The hounds enjoy the meat of the face more than any other.
4. There is nothing in the Duke's domain that is wasted if it can be helped, and as such the weaponization of pollutants and gas should come as no surprise. Bile-sprayers and gas bombs are kept for times of war, to melt out the lungs and throats of mortal and vampire alike.
5. The Duke's Steel is a treasured collection of arms and armor,

many pieces depicted in portrait by the Patroned Artist in their more useful years. Those who seek to invade the Duke's keep will find themselves against vicious, beautiful weapons of death; the likes that he'd never dare risk leaving the confines of one of his personal fortresses.

6. Steady is the Duke's ambition and his progress is noted well by the mainland. Agents of the Crimson Crown, silent observers well trained in combat arts not known on the Bloody Isles, keep vigil within the keep. Who their loyalty is indebted to is of no concern, they lust for combat and an escape from the doldrums of colonial political posturing.

Vampires

- **The Antiquarian**, a propagandist for the Duke who views the bloodlines and breeding of the mortals and the vampires under the Crimson Crown to be worthy of exploration. The Antiquarian believes the blood of ancestral lines can lead to a profound mandate which will define the fate of the Empire. The Antiquarian sees baleful potential in the phrenological and bone structure of all in their purview, and they will champion those they believe have been chosen by the "will of blood."
 - Schemes: *Extract Samples (6)*, *Study Bloodlines (6)*, *Cull the Lines (8)*
- **The Patroned Artist**, the ideal citizen who was granted wealth, power and opportunity by the Duke who uplifted them from the hoi polloi. The Patroned Artist has languished in misery and bleakest hedonism, each piece they create a presentation in the art of diminishing returns. They will do anything to feel cherished again.
 - Schemes: *Pursue Pleasure (6)*, *Grisly Art (6)*, *Create Masterpiece (8)*
- **The Knight**, so enchanted by the idea of honor within their privileged rank, continues the systemic corruption they claim to hate. To challenge the violence of the status quo would be to risk reprisal, and any realization of their many flaws and crimes leads only to catastrophization. An egotistical savoir who will bring peace to the land on some destined day they know will never come.
 - Schemes: *Bolster the Legend (6)*, *Enforce Status Quo (6)*, *Hunt the Extremists (8)*
- **The Courtier**, an intolerable and debauched noble from the

mainland whose vicious sadism is slowly being challenged by others in the Duke's court. The Courtier is a guest, someone the Duke is forced to entertain for sake of hospitality and appearances. The Courtier would drain anyone if it made for a fun anecdote in the mainland courts of the Crimson Crown, and the Duke would just as soon catspaw rebels into ending this blight upon the colony before another incident occurs.

- Schemes: *Practise Debauchery (6)*, *Sadistic Schemes (6)*, *Go Too Far (8)*
- **The Artificer** has always valued ingenuity more than life, this is what has made them such a precious asset. The creator of the Sacrophages, the Artificer's loyalty to the Duke has allowed for even the most profane acts to go unpunished. The Artificer would work gladly for anyone who provided them resources and opportunity, which is for the moment the Duke. The Artificer would put him in a Sacrophage if given the chance, but no other colonial power is tolerable to the Artificer's limited patience.
 - Schemes: *Plan the Masterwork (6)*, *Find a Fitting Subject (8)*, *Complete the Sacrophage (10)*
- **The Houndmistress** was spared the indignity of a Sacrophage for her many failures, but the Duke saw her withered to a husk all the same. She is a broken thing, but she is cunning. She knows that enemies gather within the Brinkwood, and she has given herself false hope that should she tame the woods, she may once again be respected. She will break the wilds with fire and iron, by blood-addled hound and desperate huntsmen who hate the fae more than any vampire.
 - Schemes: *Study the Woods (6)*, *Break the Dryads (6)*, *Burn Out the Rebels (8)*

Servants

Tier 2

The **Forsworn** are the personal guard and army of the Duke.

Loan-Bloods all, they are equipped with the finest armor and the sharpest swords the Duke can muster. Rumors persist of cruel experimentation, hidden behind black helmets and mechanical

oculars, performed by the Duke's surgeons to make his soldiers loyal, unthinking, and unfeeling.

Enforcer

Officiants are the functionaries of the Duke's rule. They are the tax collectors, the officials, the bishops and bosses that answer to the Duke. They drape themselves in fine raiment and robes, their lips stained with blood. They often serve as officers over lesser, mundane guardsmen, using blood and cunning to augment and order their charges.

Courtier

The Duke's Hands are everywhere, but nowhere. Mixtures of stone and metal, they loom down from the imposing edifices of the duke's fortresses or spring up from the ground of his demesne. They snatch and harry the Duke's foes, a hostile architecture to instill paranoia and dread in Cardenfell's populace. It is rumored that the stone that forms the hands was raided from the sacred places of old, despoiled, quarried, and made to serve the Duke who maimed them.

Enforcer

Tier 3

The **Kidnapped Dryads** are unwilling captives of the Duke, for where others saw the Brinkwood as enemy only to be burned or driven back, the Duke plotted to raid and capture. He took the dryadic heart trees of the Brinkwood, shutting them up in some dark iron greenhouse, and forced the dryads who loved them to work on his behalf. The dryads were once beautiful, but the

corruption of the Duke has seeped into them as it has their trees. Now, their bark skin is marred with barbed wire, long tendrils of which they use to flay the flesh of the Duke's enemies. They are perhaps the Duke's most dangerous hunters, since they know the very heart of the Brinkwood, and travel through it, scouting, searching, and hunting with ease.

Investigator

Tier 4

The **Sacrophages** are the war-engines of the Duke, great beasts of brasswork and metal, at the center of which is a golden sarcophagi, emblazoned with the heroic visage of the elder vampire that dwells within. In actuality, to be encased in a Sacrophage is a cruel fate, visited upon the elder vampires who were supplanted by the Crimson Crown, but whose blood and lineage still serve useful propaganda purposes. So, the poor wretches are encased in their Sacrophage, withered black hearts at the core of golden machines, their vampiric blood powering it's brassworks. Occasionally, a bellow might emanate from the mouth of one of these bronze beasts, or perhaps it is the screaming of the vampire trapped within.

Officer

Withered: An ancient vampire lies at the withered heart of a sacrophage. If it's armor is destroyed, pierced, or otherwise thwarted, even the simplest attack will destroy the creature.

The Lion - A golden lion, emblazoned with the visage of Dur

Antagne, the elder vampire who first brought vampirism to the Bloody Isles from the continent.

The Scorpion - A mechanical, mutli-jointed brass scorpion containing what is left of Val Hashek, a brilliant elder vampire, rumored to be one of the first alchemists.

The Ox - A great bronze ox, whose lowing bellows strike fear into the hearts of the Duke's enemies. The Ox houses Bartre Vellet, the oldest, most dangerous of the Duke's foes, whose fate is rumored to be the most cruel.

The Countess

Narcissistic, Petty, Patronizing

The Countess will spin a tale of sorrow and heartbreak, of forlorn love and filial piety to any who will hear it. The death of her poor father, the late Count, how tragic! And she, forced to assume the mantle of power at such a tender age! The enemies she had to fend off, the hardships she had to endure, to rebuild her ruined house and her name from such a destitute state, using naught but her wits and pluck.

All lies, of course. She murdered her father, a petty baron in the Old Kingdom, and promptly set to work frittering away his gold and influence on any flight of fancy that took her interest. When there was no more gold in the vaults, she squeezed the peasantry. When her serfs fled, she swore herself to the Crimson Crown in exchange for the means to wreak terrible cruelties on those she felt had abandoned her.

Now, she is older by centuries, and wiser. She lusts for perfection, and any weakness, frailty, or infirmity are quickly whisked from her sight. The Countess has established herself as a patron of art, of beauty, of culture. She rules by the pen and the brush, constructing a fanciful, if false image of her reign. To be true, many is the naive artist who seeks patronage at her court, but they all end their careers the same: a tragic “suicide”, corpses

conveniently drained of all blood, dead when their inspiration ran dry, or for some perceived slight, or simple boredom.

Motto: *I, alone, obtain perfection*

Themes: *The Gilded Age, austerity rot, inequality, beauty, misshapen, too-perfect, uncanny valley, forms, dancing, deception, applause, sycophants, disposable things and people, dolls, The Favorite*

The Countess's Demesne

Tattered tapestries depicting pastoral scenes, high vaulted architecture, chipped crimson paint and layers of cheap gilt over grime, the wind carries the scent of perfume over rot, and the faint strains of hauntingly somber music

Village Demesne

Six features unique to villages within the Countess's demesne

- The villages of the Countess's domain are sprawling affairs, bountiful fields where peasants work their fingers to the bone for the meager pittance her vassals will grant them of their toil. Hearty vegetables, floral gardens, and crops bred and grafted for a more appealing aesthetic make this land appear like a work of portraiture; painted sadly by the cruelest of hands.
- Hedge mazes, labyrinthine things that they are, can be frequently found lining the cobblestone roads towards the villages of this land. Sculptures of the Countess and her servants, crafted across generations from master to apprentice, are placed throughout; as if to remind those with the time for leisure wandering, that her rule is eternal.
- The houses of a village are built in the style of the coron; back to back and meant to line the road towards the manse of the local master. Whitewashed stonework and polished timbers would

imply a greater standard of living than elsewhere in the Isle, but the people of this land bare the worn faces of the abused. Everything here is broken and numb on the inside, it just requires a willingness to see the rotted wounds beneath the veneer.

- The manse of a village landlord is a decadent affair, with lavish architecture baroque or rococo in style. Crimson paint and fine brass works are currently in vogue for the Countess's personal tastes, but this will change in time. Vaunted halls of antiquity, the vampires here have inherited the oppression of ancient human regimes, finding the excesses to fit them like an old glove.
- Artists are cherished; in theory, within the domain of the Countess. Those who show talent have a chance to escape a life of rural drudgery; though only at the risk of suffering the most grotesque of mutilations if they fail the Countess. Those compelled by desires for expression must often hinder themselves, lest they draw attention and ultimately fail to live up to impossible expectations thrust upon them by their masters.
- Between villages in the lands of the Countess are many roadside inns, places that exist purely for the services of the wandering merchant and the vampire en route to more important places. Coachmen and skeleton crews of cooks and servants supplicate at the leisure of their vampiric betters.

Village Obstacles

Six obstacles unique to villages within the Countess's demesne.

1. While the master of this village hosts a debauched feast, the villagers starve. The elders who have known many lean years council resilience, but the young and the righteous respond that resilience is a poor alternative to their daily bread. A daring raid may soon take place, but the opposition the villagers face is larger than their reckoning. A bloodbath would only see the vampires further engorged on the toil of the common man.
2. Workers have been brought in from a nearby village to help work the earth. They are considered handsome, beautiful; the paragon of the mortal aesthetic. At night, horrible sounds emerge from their houses, bitter screams and bone-snapping cracks. They seem to take interest in any voice of dissent, pitying them with their gestures and hating them behind their eyes. If seen without their clothes they bare terrible scars and tight stitching; revealing them the victims of a **sculptor** who bound them to this visage.

3. The master of this village has called for a fête to be held. The villagers have gone from working themselves ragged in the field to breaking their backs seeing the village decorated to the preposterous stipulations of their betters. They will drink, they will sing and they will praise; and should anyone act out of accords, they will be punished in methods beyond reproach in their viciousness.
4. Talented young artists were brought before the local master and ever since returning, have acted out of sorts. They seldom blink and carry about them a scent of milk and honey. A tune leaves their lips between monosyllabic responses, conversation is a far gone capacity they've lost. Their artistic works have only increased in potent imagery, but for every item of beauty, many depicting scenes of utmost horror can be found squirreled away in their quarters. To show them such works is to bring them into a rage.
5. The harvest on a field is bountiful, but it is not aesthetically pleasing. The master of the village believes the peasants must have done this intentionally with the hopes of being fed the scraps, like a dog besides the table. The master wants the field burnt, the earth salted; a show of dominance to demoralize and disenfranchise. The peasants even in their lowly lot in life, are unable to comprehend such pointless, cruel destruction. Violence is inevitable.
6. A cadre of **Headhunters** have parked their carriage outside the coron houses of the village. They mutter to one another about awaiting further instructions, but neither the landlord nor the peasants know who they are here for. Both parties fear they may have been found traitorous, with some deed or hushed word heard by unseen **sycophants** who now have sealed their doom. The Headhunters have, it seems, nowhere better to be; though their patience grows thin with the suspicious glances of the people here.

Town Demesne

Six features unique to towns within the Countess's Demesne.

1. They paint the row houses brightly here in the hopes that the gaudy displays might mask the urban despair and destitution of those who dwell within. The cracks in the obfuscation, the lethargy of the townsfolk, the way they look at the red paint and see both

their demise and rebellion they fear to enact; hurt hard. These people are owned and manipulated so deeply that even the base appreciation of color exists to remind them of their own mortality and who holds that in their bitter claws.

2. Of note within the Countess's domain more than any other is the idea of the meritocracy of the vaunted, where those who create items that can help contribute to a more perfect world are granted greater privileges than their fellow humans who harvest the resources for them to do such acts. In the urban areas, the towns, it is not uncommon to see a former villager turn true villein in the hopes of being better able to contribute to the frivolous plots of the vampires. They will make every justification for their turncoat ways, but they are collaborators who care not if the consumption they allow is ethical or not.
3. The follies of the Countess's towns display the extravagance of her wealth through obsolescent use of space. Towers which have no entrance, old buildings left locked but in good repair, and all manner of aesthetically pleasing structures litter the outskirts of town, providing no service to the good folk who dwell besides them.
4. Central roads lead to busking plazas in these towns where artists attempt to win the patronage of their vampiric masters by performing their crafts. Such places are rife with dangers, as one artist's experimental phase could be both the elegant display of emotion that sees another artist rendered obsolete, as well as something that touches upon a nerve and reveals an "imperfection" in need of correction.
5. Boulangeries and cafes are present for those of wealth to treat themselves to the finest cuisine the peasantry in neighboring villages could slave away for them. Human participation in such locales grants a degree of security, relatively speaking, as they are expected only to serve and to go unnoticed. When the meat and wine run out, mortal workers are all too often made to offer up more than they are willing to give.
6. Open theaters exist in the back alleys and garden parks of these towns, lavish affairs where would-be sophists and aspirants put petty twists on ancient tales in the hopes of being able to perform for the Countess and her Janus-Faced Devil. Bloodletting and violence upon the exaggeratedly grotesque wins over the most applause, so such theatrical performances appeal to the sadistic at heart more than any other.

Town Obstacles

Six obstacles within the Countess's demesne.

1. A pair of the Countess's **sculptors** have engaged one another in a horrifying competition in the busking plaza of town. Undesirables, people who have failed the Countess or merely revealed some flaw in their being that her impeccable taste cannot permit; are being carved into more "perfect forms" in a brutal display of gore and stitchery. The victims in queue scream for aid, but such pleas are drowned out by the howls of pain. Once one victim is sculpted to purpose, they are discarded and the violence begins anew.
2. A well-to-do merchant is offering finely crafted objet d'art at a low price, claiming a desire to spread the glorious work of the Countess to the poor and foreign souls who will only ever behold her grace at a distance. The merchant could be a burglar, brazen to hide in plain sight; or more likely an agent of the Countess spreading **mimics** into the populace so as to further extend her reach and eliminate those without capital enough to belong in her world.
3. A collective of **Organists** have been ejected from the manse of the nearby majordomo and been forced to busk their terrible tunes to the public. In their mutilated agony they have hit upon a new sound that evokes sorrow whilst robbing mortal listeners of their joie de vivre; modest as it may be. As the organists find themselves slowly attracting larger crowds, the powers that be seek to correct their mistakes before rival powers or the Countess find out.
4. **Headhunters** roam the street at the behest of chattering **sycophants**, following tips on a supposed traitor to the Countess in need of their violent correction. The wretched sycophants name names and cast accusations upon anyone wearing a certain color or looking askance at the situation. The Headhunters, unable to comprehend being lead astray by such feckless creatures, will make an example of some unfortunate soul if a true victim is not found.
5. A **Malefactor** is being carted through this town, meant for some battlefield upon a borderland with a rival power, but due to some bureaucratic foolishness, it is now forced to remain within its cage in this urban environ. The sick smell of its hypnotic honeyed form is slowly wafting through its prison, and the soldiers carting it are

more than willing to welcome further meat to throw at the enemy; even if they are merely rabble who will die without thought or sense in their heads.

6. The **Majordomo**, on behalf of their master, has proposed a competition to the local mortals. Whomsoever best represents the pursuit of perfection will be granted a phial of blood sterling and right of ascension. Those who fail will be scourged and shamed to the public for their icarian grasp towards a higher station. This has brought out the worst in people; with treachery and bloodshed abounding; which given the toothy grin of the vampires, was likely the true ambition of this contest.

Keep Defenses

Six defenses or obstacles unique to keeps within the Countess's demesne.

- Aesthetic is everything to the Countess, and the windows of her castle are massive stained glass affairs depicting her in various embellished acts of her rise to glory. Baleful sorcery upon scores of **mimics** and the blood of martyrs used as an enriching pigment in their creation allows the images to leave their caged frames and stalk the castle as razor-edged hunters; should intruders be unfortunate enough to breach her sanctum.
- The **organists** in service here have weaponized their sound, finding hidden notes of discordance which cause the mortal mind to hemorrhage and seizure. Ears bleed, gums burst under the pressure of grinding teeth, and eyes become shot when under the influence of the sound.
- Importing foreign unguents and the ambergris of great predatory whales, the Countess has seen fit that each of her chosen host is granted a single amphora of potent flesh-melding perfume with which they may apply to themselves so as to appear more to her liking. If the clay cask containing it is damaged in any way, the vapors will burst forth into the room, causing unprotected flesh to come undone; sloughing off in soggy mounds of drooping forsaken meat.
- The efforts of countless sculptors and the Fleshwarper's personal ambitions has created these perfect soldiers to man the garrisons of this keep. They are disconcerting in their symmetry, completely perfect yet incorrect in that perfection. The mortal psyche beneath such beatified flesh has long since collapsed, leaving only the

hallowed desire to fulfill a purpose and a misplaced devotion to the Countess who allows all that has wronged them to feel so right.

- The **porcelain** must be kept somewhere, and this keep is where. They sit in mockery of mortal life, blank slates at empty tables, in empty theaters, reading blank books and sitting before empty hearths. Hollow laughter and faint cries emerge from their dollhouse corridors, echoes of psyche which portray a life that could've been but isn't. The murderous cretins hold a vicious energy to them in this place, and to rend a mortal asunder and wear their skin would bring them some slight reprieve from their damnable station.
- The Countess squandered no expense in the menagerie kept within this keep. Horrors from the mainland and their growing colonial territories, creatures from the darkest corners of the earth which mankind had previously thought to leave in such shadowed places. They are seldom fed but often abused, and to release them upon an intruder would provide delightful entertainment to the sadistic minds of the Countess's court.

Vampires

Six vampire lords that live within the Countess's demesne.

- **The Fleshwarper** is no bootlick to the Countess, it is only the mutual desire for a more perfect world which unites the two in bleakest unity. Making use of foreign unguents which make flesh as malleable as loam, as well as the usual cutting tools of the sculptor's trade, the Fleshwarper carves their victims into more perfect forms meant to accentuate a singular purpose. The abattoir beneath their manse is filled with the mournful moans and discordant shrieking of derelict parts, damned eternally to an unlife of imperfection.
 - *Schemes: Study the Flesh (6), Warp the Flesh (8), Perfect the Craft (10)*
- **The Masked Hunter** is no profligate, unlike his betters and peers. A minimalist and a utilitarian at heart, he takes in the beauty of the void where others would lavish themselves in extravagant plenty. The Masked Hunter dresses simply, no ostentation beyond an obfuscating iron mask. When the Countess cries out for aid, the Masked Hunter answers first among his peers. What has earned such loyalty of him is an unknown curiosity, the sort the Countess

delights in.

- Schemes: *Hunt the Disloyal (6)*, *Enact Purges (8)*, *Hunt the Factions (10)*
- **The Conductor's** haunting music laces the evening winds of the Countess's domain like poison in a wine goblet, promising comfort but seeding only strife. In a decade's long experimental phase, the Countess values the Conductor's pursuit of perfection within such a mercurial field. Those who dare play a discordant note or fail to live up to their place within the Conductor's orchestra are damned to the brutal form of an **Organist** and cast out into the wilds until they have lived their art.
 - Schemes: *Compose Beauty (6)*, *Practice the Concerto (8)*, *The Greatest Symphony (10)*
- **The Master of Ceremonies** maintains the realm's petty matters on behalf of the Countess, enacting laws, arranging the many frivolous fêted events, and ordering the purges of undesirables who might dare blight the perfection of the realm with their presence. Despite the social obligations of their position, the Master of Ceremonies enjoys only the company of the **Porcelain**; favoring them for the grace the Countess once granted them and enjoying her greatness by their proximity.
 - Schemes: *Discover Inconsistencies (6)*, *Purge Undesirables (8)*, *Embezzle Sterling (10)*
- **The Janus-Faced Devil** is a true horror of the Countess's delight. A towering, rail-thin vampire who wears a gilded theatrical mask of three faces, the Janus-Faced Devil operates the various upscale stage productions desired by the Countess. Such displays are as baroque as they are abstract, with copious razor-wire and vicious, vile deeds performed to the fervor of a lustful crowd.
 - Schemes: *First Performance: A Dazzling Regatta (6)*, *Second Performance: A Queen of Crimson (8)*, *The Final Encore (10)*
- **The Rat-King** is an amalgamation of a dozen sycophants, false-spies who suffered this indignity for the honor of the Countess. Bound by their spines in wretched knots and mangled, melded flesh, they can assume a partially human silhouette; a disconcerting sight to behold. The Rat-King desires for the destruction of all the Countess's rivals, such that they might be returned to their original forms; their long service completed.
 - Schemes: *Seek Secrets (6)*, *Seek Redemption (8)*, *Reveal All (10)*

Servants

Tier 2

Sculptors are the crude muscle of the Countess's forces. They are lumbering, hulking things that use adze, chisel, and hammer to shape and form flesh, rending it piece by piece into forms more pleasing to the Countess.

Enforcer

Sycophants are pitiful, chittering creatures that appear as emaciated skulls and spinal cords, leathery wings sewn to their vertebrae. They are rumored to be the Countess's spies, and are the horrible fate of those deemed "unworthy" of living in her "more perfect" demesne.

Investigator

Porcelain are strangely beautiful creatures of marble skin, cracked and worn. Rumored to be "dolls" the countess has grown weary of, they hunt the Countess's enemies relentlessly, eager to earn some small measure of her grace once again. They fight with slender throwing knives of silver, or, if damaged, with pieces of their own jagged limbs and flesh.

Investigator

Mimics tend to drive their enemies to paranoia, appearing often as common household objects until the time to strike draws nigh. Smashed cups, lanterns, or brooms are common sights in the homes of those who defy the Countess. When they do strike, they

transform into horrifying things of gnashing metal teeth and fiery smoke. Some say a mimic can be spotted by its quality and makesmanship, as the Countess would loathe to allow anything of base quality to serve her.

Enforcer

Hidden: Mimics hide in plain sight, and must first be discovered before they can be attacked.

Tier 3

Headhunters are creatures of twisted metal and golden filigree, who wear long coats and tricorne hats to hide the gears, smoke, and coalworks that drive them. Unthinkingly loyal, it is they that snatch up those deemed “unworthy” to live in the Countess’s domain and render them into Sycophants with raw, brutal, steam-powered might. They have been known to use powder-driven rifles to wear down foes before closing in to collect their grisly trophies.

Enforcer

Formerly musicians of the Countess who lost her favor, **Organists** are melded together with their instruments, so they might “better practice at their craft.” Their agonized bellowing is amplified by the great organs sewn into their backs. They appear frequently in the Countess’s armies, and their haunting “music” seems to direct the efforts of “lesser” creations.

Officer

So enamored is the Countess with certain talents, that she will force herself to enjoy them slowly. Such is the fate of a **Malefactor**, suspended and mellified in honey, their physical and spiritual tissues congealed into a psycho-pheromonal miasma, the opium of a dream. They walk the Countess's demesne as strange, ethereal messengers, able to put down a riot with a waft of their sticky-sweet smell. It is said that the Countess will occasionally dab the fruit of a Malefactor behind her ears, to enhance her beauty and keep her favorites with her forever.

Courtier

Miasma: As a consequence, the Malefactor may start or tick up a 4-tick "Miasma" clock, which, when filled, prevents the brigands from attacking the Malefactor until the Miasma is dispersed.

The Countess outsources the sorting and evaluation of the artists she patronizes to her **Majordomos**. The Majordomos are students of failure, seeking to drain it, sublimate it, or otherwise excise it from the flesh of those that might someday be worthy of the Countess's attention. It is they that sew the Organists, mellify the Malefactors, but offer crueler fates to those that disappoint. They have been known to "juice" the failure from disappointing artists, and run the liquified "failure" through byzantine calculating brassworks in their chests. By starting at a false premise, their mad calculations and studies have changed them, allowing them to "glitch" through reality, teleporting through walls, melding and changing their form as they hunt for more

“failures” to excise.

Tier 4

Favorites are the chosen of the Countess, those “fortunate” few that have, through flattery, sycophancy, and unwavering devotion, earned some small portion of the Countess’s power. They are as twisted as they are beautiful, appearing in artful gowns, masks of gold filigree, and the latest silk fashions. Lesser vampires all, they wield the Countess’s blood and powers as their own.

The Tailor is favored for his dresses that are known to kill. He is the Countesses chief executioner and hunter of her enemies.

Enforcer

The Oracle is a mystic and fortune-teller, always carefully coding her predictions so as to not upset the Countess’s temperament.

Investigator

The **Cosmetologist** is an expert of their craft, able to alter both the faces of her victims as well as their fates.

Investigator

Hidden - The Cosmetologist is impossible to pick out of a crowd, and may even disguise the forces of the Countess, making them excellent at setting ambushes.

The **Sommelier** is always close at hand, devising and

administering the ideal cocktails, poultices, and wines to keep the Countess in her ‘ideal’ mood.

Courtier

The Reflection was once an unlucky peasant girl, born with the misfortune of resembling the Countess. But rather than jealousy, her features earned her the Countess’s love. The Countess was never content with crude looking-glasses of silver, and longed to gaze upon her own face. And so she molded her Reflection, slowly but surely, until none could tell which was which.

Officer

Double: The Reflection has all the powers of the Countess.

Uncertainty: If nearing defeat, the Reflection will plead for mercy, claiming that her identity as the Reflection, and not the Countess. However, unless The Flaw is revealed, she may look for a later opportunity to betray the party.

The Flaw: The flaw, paradoxically, is the Reflection’s lack of flaws, as the Countess wished to gaze upon a “perfected” reflection, absent her own imperfections. If this flaw is discerned and revealed to the Reflection, she will recover her old identity and turn against the Countess.

The Baron

Agonized, Bitter, All-Consuming

Pity the Baron. None have seen it's wretched form for centuries. Biliious, skeletal, horrid, oozing, words such as these trickle from the madmen who have caught glimpses as it stalks, lonely and wretched, through the ruined halls of it's keep. And yet everywhere are signs of it's terrible appetites: offal and sweetmeats, halls of bloody remains and torn flesh, the squealing of pigs drowned out only by the wretched groans and screams of the Baron itself.

They say it was once a man, or perhaps a woman. It does not make a difference. A noble, to be certain, driven by lust: for power, for wine, for flesh, for excess and orgy, it threw in its lot with the Crimson Crown as the Old Kindgom fell. And still, it's greed and gluttony were its downfall. It's thirst for power grew too great, and so the Crimson Crown cursed it for looking above it's station. It would forevermore thirst, hunger, and gnaw, but no longer would anything bring it saetity, every bite like ashes in it's mouth, no drop of blood quenching it's thirst.

But still it rules, in quiet damnation, unable to stop hungering, stop eating, stop crunching and snapping and breaking those poor peasants damned to live in it's demesne.

Motto: *We feast, we drink, but it is sand upon our throat*

Themes: *Late capitalism, hunger, excess, eating, crunching, snapping, thirst, insatiable, hollowness, sunkenness, ravenous, bestial, howling, meat-horror*

The Baron's Demesne

The squeal of pigs, cries of terror, lonely sobs. Blood, blood everywhere. Messy piles of gore and intestine, gutters choked with bile and filth. The stains of blood and ichor in the cracks of nearly everything. A foul, rotting stench, clinging to the air.

Village Demesne

Six features unique to villages within the Baron's demesne.

- Animal cullings are all too common in the villages of the Baron's demesne. They serve as offerings to the wandering ghouls and fouler things, left a ways outside the village though there is no escaping the lingering scent of fresh blood and trusts betrayed. **Starving vines** sometimes overtake these offerings, though the carcasses will be exsanguinated one way or another; as if the cursed earth ravenously thirsts for blood.
- The structures of the village are ramshackle in construction; bits of wood hammered deep into crumbling bricks of filth and mud. Hair from mules, from generations who dwelled in such condition, are plastered into the walls in the hope of insulation and stability. The floors creak when they are wooden, but more often they are raw earth; bitter, hard, and thieving of any warmth that touches them.
- In the villages of this forsaken land a small allotment of pasture is left to "the Neighbors" by decree of the Baron in their more lucid days. Small stone walls cordine off such areas, and the ground here seems softer, the grass here a bit greener. Crickets chirp in those fields. Entrance is forbidden by ancient law, but shadowy figures can be seen there on moonless nights. Occasionally an animal is found skinned and disemboweled upon the border rocks.

- Mounds are a common sight in and around the villages here, earthenworks raised long before the Baron staked their claim here. They are troublesome obstacles, roots and stones seem to trip at the heels of those who seek to climb them; their soil comes down loose and muddy so as to break the footing of any who make it to their tops. Nothing grows here in abundance, even the Starvling vines can only creep about their bases; unable to gain any sustenance from their incline. Some say there are bones beneath them, but of whom or rather what; none are brave enough to discover.
- Every village in the Baron's domain has a butcher's block; for those who dwell here are just as much meat as any livestock which grazes in the field. A great smooth grindstone, often in the center of the village or by a trench at the periphery. Slaughter is performed upon the rock, like an altar to blood and offal. In pareidolia in the shades of grey that tarnish the black of the rock; some claim to see the screaming visages of those who have been culled here; forever trapped.
- As filth gathers in the back of the village, in troughs and trenches; filth pits; so to is there an offering ground for the choice cuts located towards the entrance to the misbegotten hamlet. Often constructed of stone, a guard's box watches the roads for the horrors which serve the Baron. The miserable souls who work the offering grounds provide tithings to the heralds of the Baron; in a misplaced bid of hope that such monsters need not enter the village proper.

Village Obstacles

Six obstacles unique to villages within the Baron's demesne.

1. Great and corpulent **swine** stumble upon the dirt roads of the village, stabbing their swollen hooves into the mud in search of tubers and truffles. The hogs obstruct foot traffic with their heft and size, and their wretched gurgling snorts accompany a drone of flies which blot out all but that which is shouted.
2. Putrescent **globbs of rendered fat**, enough to drown a man alive, have sloshed off a detritus heap and into the village proper. It holds a bitter cold to it that clings to naked flesh. Its stench, sickly sweet in these depraved lands, leads the desperate to consider debasing themselves to nourish upon the slop.
3. A pond of blotting blood has arisen here, perhaps residue left by

the **roaming goremass**--perhaps merely the groundwater, utterly tainted by such waste and carrion, bleeding out as the land dies ever more. Flies gather in black clouds, supping upon the foul swill at its edges. It sticks to whatever touches it, like the film of infection upon a wound impossible to heal.

4. An **Emaciant** has been stripped and thrown in a gibbet cage, hung high above the road in-and-out of the village. The ghoul screams loudly for the praise of the Baron, loudly shrieking any crimes it witnesses; real or imagined. It is a craven thing, easily bribed if it could be reached before it unleashes its cacophony.
5. **Starving vines** have overgrown the fields and slithered their way beneath the loose walkways and fences of the village. To cut it back and tame it to the fields would risk destroying it, a crime of great severity given the cost of the wine that can be produced. Blood spilled, several person's worth, could perhaps draw it back; but only by a matter of inches. Day by day it intrudes further into the village, and those who do not treat softly will be bled to feed it.
6. **Gristlegobs** are collecting in a filth pit on the edge of the village, and though their bestial intellect would deny them proper tactics, their innate cunning is exacerbated by their endless hunger. They've collected sharp things, errant nails, rusty saws, misplaced knives and bent hooks; they seem intent to use them for sinister purposes. None shall sleep easily until they are displaced.

Town Demesne

Six features unique to towns within the Baron's demesne

- Though there are sizable settlements, many buildings in the Baron's towns are empty, left forsaken and abandoned. Doors hang limply upon their hinges and shutters clacker about with the wind; creaking and slamming with a sound akin to the breaking of a child's bones. Ghosts, the locals say, is all that is left in such places. Memories of better times left to linger like a corpse upon a battlefield now forgotten.
- In the dark of these towns there is an infection, a creeping fungal blight of blood red color which grows in the shadows like a film of festering rot. It slithers into homes and corrupts water, meat, minds. It causes an itch that does not cease until flesh is rent, it causes a hunger that cannot be slaked save for raw, warm meat. Pest houses exist to quarantine the worst, but this merely concentrates the blight.

- The people of the Baron's demesne are the most broken of souls to be found on the isles. Their faces are unflinching death masks, their eyes shot and jaundiced by the lethargy of their meager lives, and their morale shattered beyond repair. In these towns, only those who have become so accustomed to butchery and life as prey animals can last; and even then only for so long. These people know only cruelties to suffer, morale is but an illusion they cannot comprehend to dream.
- Much as anywhere else in the Baron's lands, the ground within the towns are notably cold and hard, even in the balmiest of summer months. Without a firm hand upon a mattock, the earth will not yield an inch. Trenches are hard to dig in the towns as a result; and as such, filth piles nearly as high as the houses that expel it.
- The water in these towns are hard won, the spoils of war against the bitter earth which gives little to those who seek such basic comforts as hydration. Even still, it is a brackish and coppery drink, the sort that slowly kills the capacity for taste and stains the teeth a brumous, phlegmatic yellow. There are few alternatives to this swill, and despite all its looks; it is clean enough.
- The Reformed Faith thought it could save this land and its people from their wayward belief in pagan curses; but the hostility of the land and the bitterness of those who dwell within it shattered the faithful. Churches were built, towering monuments to hubris of man's infliction of the divine upon the natural; but now they remain hardly occupied, waylaid by the ravages of time and the ignorance of a cold, godless, populace.

Town Obstacles

Six obstacles within the Baron's demesne.

1. **Butchers** prowl the streets of this town, clanging their knives like a hue-and-crier would ring a bell. They demand the tithe be paid, and the first townsfolk to claim the tithe had already been paid was flayed alive in the town center. They want more bodies, more blood; they're not going to leave without it. Any who dare leave their homes will be culled.
2. Lesser Alchemists, servants of the Warlock, have arrived in town and seek to discern a greater truth to the curse that plagues these lands. Rather than offering panacea or cures, they seek out the bitterest earth and fungal blight with the hopes of seeing the true destruction it can bring. They've thrown more than a few healthy

bodies in the pest house, just to chart the spread of the red rotting fungal strain.

3. Mortals of low integrity, poisoned as they are by greed and despair, ply the resurrectionist trade here. Ghouls must be fed, masticators given their due; lest they turn upon the living. These grim folk are willing to make bodies when corpses are not in ready supply; mercy is not within their set of skills and any corpse is better than their own. If they had spine enough to challenge their masters, such dark traits could serve humanity rather than stab it in the back.
4. **Emaciants** and ghouls, beggar princes swayed to the words of **the Holy Fool** wander through this town like voracious waisslers, chanting psalms of the Reformed Faith and begging for alms. They claim the Baron will favor those who offer up their wrists to bitter blades with a feast when the Faith once again shines through the land. Those foolish enough to give such dregs attention or be caught alone by their mob, are inevitably ripped asunder and viciously consumed.
5. An attempted digging project for sake of public infrastructure discovered something in the hard and bitter earth. Some say it looked like an eye, raw and red and riddled with tumorous growths. Leadership worries such discovery may spread the curse, or merely be a sign that the curse is clawing its way up from the depths of the dark corners of the earth. The laborers, those strong enough to rend this ground, must be sacrificed in fire, their charred corpses placed in the same pit. An offering to dark powers, heresy, or mere panic; it matters not. A ritual must be performed to purify this revelation..
6. Itinerant weather is unpleasant, but in a town with such fragile infrastructure and rampant rot, it is a death sentence. A storm is on the horizon, within a day it will bring forth rime, freezing rain, and bitter winds. The streets will flood, the filth will flow from its heaps and spread across the settlement. Fires will burn low and foul within the hearths of homes, until the waters rise enough to seep through every crack. When the storm clouds clear and the waters pass, countless dozens will be dead, and more will be sickened. All the easier for them to suffer predation, by vampire or fouler thing in this darkened land.

Keep Defenses

Six defenses or obstacles unique to keeps within the Baron's demesne.

1. The Baron, having long lost any semblance of humanity, has seen fit that all those who have ever waged conquest against them lay rotting outside the grounds of this keep. Their corpses never decomposed, they bloat and rot; havens for the worms, comely homes for the botflies. The foul, acrid stench of nearly liquified meat held back by only a thin film of flesh, wafts across this domain; causing all but those native to these lands to go bleary-eyed and vomit up their bile.
2. A pikeman's technique can win many a war, but such noble acumen must be brought low when used in this land. Filth spikes, hidden in pits, attached to trip wires, and in the hands of retainers serve the same purpose at this keep. Like the pins of a sea urchin, even the tiniest prick will release necrotic viruses and all manner of filth-born parasites to ravage those who are not immediately impaled.
3. Boiling cauldrons of pitch are a brutal weapon for more antiquated times of savage siege warfare, and as such they are held in high regard by the Baron. Interior gates and venting portholes exist in the courtyards of this keep to ensure those who enter can be sprayed and drowned in the burning black ichor; skin melting to meat and bone.
4. Loyal retainers to the Baron and their minions are rewarded with the cruelest iron weapons to be found outside the Mainland. Such weapons are not vaunted achievements of ingenuity or elegant pieces of art; they are blackened, brittle things. Forged cold in the swamps of old, used in bloody conquest of this domain so long ago. They serve as marks of rank, but against a servant of the Fae, they cut like ash against a vampire. The Baron knows this, but their minions do not; nor can they discern it through the maddened shrieks and rambles of their master.
5. Hungering masses are kept shackled within the keep, addled by agony and riddled with all manner of disease. They are ghouls save only for their mortal distinction; they are humanity pushed beyond the veil of torment and lost forever to consumption. They will rip and gnash with their yellowed, broken teeth; desiring anything that might fill their bellies and bring them solace from the pain.
6. When pitch is not readily available, the Baron sees their keep

stocked with the components for a blood sluice. Using the coagulating refuse blood of culled animals and those who could not grant the Baron an end from their hunger, it is sprayed and tossed; boiling, upon intruders. Those who survive the scalding will find themselves easily tracked by any ghoul, emaciant, or lesser vampire within a league of their location.

Vampires

Six vampire lords that live within the Baron's demesne.

1. **The Warlock** hates the Baron, of this no secret is made. The Warlock however desires no dominion over this land, nor would he ever desire to attend to the petty problems of those who dwell upon it. The curse is the Warlock's concern, he can taste it in the air; it ripples out from people and places here, and such items of concern are subjected to terrible experimentation. The Warlock enjoys immolating that which concerns him in a terrible apparatus and imbibing upon the fumes. He seeks to weaponize the curse, and the insight to do so without succumbing to it himself.
 - a. Schemes: *Study the Curse (6)*, *Contain the Curse (8)*, *Spread the Curse (10)*
2. **The Bell-Ringer** was blessed once, a campanologist well versed in the study of their trade as much as she was in the pulling of ropes for sake of calamitous din. The Baron once held them as a boon companion, and of all the servants the Baron holds, it is the Bell-Ringer who serves unceasingly. When the feast is called, the bells are rung; when war is sounded, the bells doth clang. Mad and wild and with reckless abandon, the bells are rung ragged by this desperate, pathetic soul.
 - a. Schemes: *Signal the Feast (6)*, *Ring in the Terror (8)*, *Unceasing Noise (10)*
3. **The Immolated One** was a trained scholar, an alchemist who thought the curse of this domain could be treated like any illness or frailty. It was a challenge, it could be overcome. Whatever it was they imbibed, it brought them low. Their body withered to the bone, muscle and organ sweating from the skin in tar-like ichor. When they speak, fire gouts forth; as though whatever soul a vampire has is dying a horrible death. They hunger for warmth that will not come, and those marred by the tarry ichor find themselves blighted to ghoulish mien in a matter of days.
 - a. Schemes: *Scourge the Sickness (6)*, *Burn the Weak (8)*

4. **The Holy Fool** was emaciated in recent memory, yet a flicker of the flame imperishable and raw ego lingered within. The Holy Fool found solace and purpose in its hunger. It praised the Baron for such clarity. Naked and disjointed, with elongated jaws and carrying always with it a banner in praise of the Baron, the Holy Fool seeks to slake its thirst by consuming what it claims to be the souls of cowards, traitors, and the weak. It eats in ritualized ways, and the truth of how it has retained its mind is lost in the gnashing of teeth and the rending of flesh.
 - a. Schemes: *Study the Rituals (6), Obtain the Flesh (8), Order the Feast (10)*
5. **The Wormhost** is among the most vile of the Baron's minions. His human chattel turned on him many years ago. They cut him to ribbons and bound him in irons. They threw his wretched frame into a cesspit, they thought the maggots would finish him off. But this land is cursed and it is unkind. He arose a year later, a host for ten thousand burrowing worms; they leak from every orifice and they know the blood of those who buried him. He hunts their lines still, and his new chattel suffer for the transgressions of old.
 - a. Schemes: *Rise, Reborn (6), Punish the Treacherous (8), Spread the Host (10)*
6. **The Hieromancer** came from the mainland in ages past, she spoke the words of the Reformed Faith and the world seemed to cling to her heels in awe of it. She would be that which saved the Baron from the cursed calamity of this land. She lost whatever grace she had when she came to this land. She became the sort to cackle and devour the raw earth, slather poison upon her breast, and stab wildly at nothing. Part of her returns to stability when she gazes upon items of the Faith, and it is then she demands fresh bodies; fresh entrails to read which will grant all those cursed, their dismal release. Countless dead have yet to prove her auspices fruitful.
 - a. Schemes: *Study the Entrails (6), Spread the Sickness (8), Devour the Land (10)*

Servants

Tier 2

Emaciants are said to be those unlucky ghouls who died of hunger

within the Baron's demesne. Cursed with a fraction of the Baron's blood, they hunger as the Baron hungers, beings of gnashing teeth and gaunt, emaciated frames. Their strength over other ghuls lies in their all-consuming hunger, as they will fight unto the death for even a single scrap of flesh, whereas ghouls can be cowed by displays of overwhelming force.

Enforcer

The **Roaming Goremass** resulted from attempts to quench the Baron's hunger through raw quantity. It is said that these lumps of meat, raw scraps and flesh cannot die, are always growing, metastasizing, cancerous in the way they spread throughout the Baron's demesne. Unsettlingly, they always seem to be emitting an impossible shriek, like that of a squealing pig.

Enforcer

Gristlegobs are nasty little creatures, spat up gobs of dead tissue and undigestible bits from the gullet of the Baron and their Masticators. Made up of connective tissue, bone shards, prosthetic limbs, and other indigestible bits, these goblin-like creatures seem to be held together principally by bad attitude.

Investigator

Tier 3

The **Butchers** are willing servants of the Baron, lesser vampires who devote themselves to feeding, creating, and marshalling the Baron's forces. They are the lieutenants, more "hands on" than most vampires, they are marked out by their bloody smocks and

cruel hooks, butcher blades, and ravenous hunger.

Officer

The **Starvling Vine** sought to solve the problem of the Baron's hunger by investing in quality over quantity. An invasive species, it quickly spread throughout the Baron's Demesne, drinking blood and nutrients from the soil. It refines the blood into a sort of vampiric "wine", potent in the power it offers vampires, though it still does not sate the Baron. It is only held back by its massive waste, even as it tries to choke soil and man alike, as even a single drop of wine requires acres of land be ruined and gallons of blood be spilled.

Enforcer

Masticators are frankensteined bits of ham scraps sewn together to produce a simple, heavy "shock-troop" of the Baron's armies. Its principle feature is a distended jaw, made up of four wheels of teeth arranged in a rough diamond shape, each made from the jawbone of a different creature. Horrifyingly, a Masticator cannot swallow what passes through its maw, it may only chew it, and they must be kept alive intravenously via blood transfusion, lest they burn out, be left for dead, or tear themselves apart, trying to create some opening for food to nourish them.

Enforcer

Tier 4

The **Ferals** are the Baron's mightiest enforcers, and perhaps only true companions. It is said that they were once a traveling troupe

of acrobats, performers, and charmers. They entertained the Baron, day after day, ignoring the suffering of the peasantry around them as their pockets filled with gold and their bellies with meat. When the curse fell upon the Baron's castle, it fell in the middle of one of their performances, and so too did it fall upon their heads.

They are locked, forever, in grisly pantomime, entertaining their patron with screams, blood, and havoc, mummer's animal masks permanently affixed to their faces.

The **Rabbit** is the swiftest, an assassin capable of dashing forth to slay the Baron's enemies, almost impossibly difficult to catch.

Enforcer

The **Fox** is the cleverest, their madness tinged with method. They organize the festivals of flesh and blood, putting script to the torments of the peasantry, and directing it's companions.

Courtier

The **Boar** is general of the baron's armies, marshalling forces on impossibly long marches, burning whole villages for even the slightest hint of sedition, and taking, taxing, and pillaging more silver, more blood, more feed for the unquenchable maw that is the Baron.

Officer

The **Wolf** is the hunter of the pack, sniffing out rebellion before

dragging peasants, screaming, off into the night.

Investigator

KEEPS OF CARDENFELL

WROUGHT FORTRESS

The Prize, the Final Redoubt

BLOODMINT

Imports: Blood, Silver

Exports: Blood Sterling

Carefully guarded are the alchemical secrets that produce blood sterling. The mints of the vampire lords are great, imposing structures of towering stone and gothic beauty. Patrolled by the best guards of the ever-watchful vampire's coterie, wary of even a single wayward drop of blood. The workers are carefully monitored, their pockets and clothing inspected for stolen drams. Inside, great vats of blood pass through filters and tubes of glass and brass, carefully heated and tempered before being mixed with molten silver, poured from wrought-iron crucibles into the mixing cairns where blood and silver meet and change. From there the blood sterling is milled and burnished into various denominations of currency, each stamped with the likeness of their vampire lord.

Vast, twinkling beakers and glass tubules. Bottles of raw blood, taken as tax, poured out carefully and precisely. Alchemists in studious robes inspecting, measuring, and adjusting the flames that heat and the beakers that cool the blood before it is mixed with molten silver. Great silver-works and crucibles, where raw silver is melted, purified, and finally brought to the center of the structure where the two substances join to become one. Accountants and ledgers, carefully tracking the drams, drops, and ingots of blood sterling that flow into the stores of the vampire lords. Guards clad in the best armor, loan-bloods sniffing the air and patrolling and inspecting, ever watchful.

Defenses

(2-4 unique defenses used to keep this keep defended.)

1. The Minted Peers, aspirant champions made loan-fang under auspicious conditions; patrol the halls of the Bloodmint. They are kept desperate for further doses of blood sterling, receiving only the barest of tithings, and even then only receiving enough for true power when intruders are detected within the fortress. Only by hunting criminals and would-be burglars can find passage to a higher station, and lickspittle that they are, they are eternally desperate for a chance to prove their worth.
2. It is unknown whether it is the strange braided truncheons they carry or an art of combat they know; what is certain is that the Exsanguination Factotums possess a terrible skill in bloodletting. They bash and bludgeon like a whirlwind reaped, such that bruising and internal bleeding collects in terrible welts. A single pin prick upon these pools of internal bleeding can drain a grown man in mere seconds.
3. Not all blood is worthy, in truth; much is wasted. In misbegotten vats, such imperfection coagulates into a slurry of acids, fats and slime. It desires to be made perfect with a hateful intelligence. When poured upon a mortal, it drains at them like hot tar upon bare flesh. It asserts control over the body in its dying throes, jealously attacking anything more purer than itself.
4. The importance of the Bloodmint sees it garrisoned always by officers of the Crimson Crown's Corp of Knights Satisfiers; sommeliers of blood sterling who embody the malignant apex of the vampiric condition. A taste of any blood spilt grants them insight into the quality and vintage they've supped upon. Like hounds, they will never forget the scent of those tasted, smelling it in hints upon the wind.

Obstacles

Six obstacles you might find at the Bloodmint, no matter who's demesne it's in.

1. The walls of Wrought Fortress are a lattice work of stone and iron, reinforced and hewn to fall upon one another in air tight formation. They are sheer surfaces, smooth when going with the grain and cruelly coarse when falling against it. Siege weaponry would be hard pressed to breach the walls with even the finest of powdershot from a bombard.
2. Military units patrol both the Wrought Fortress and the Bloodmint

on randomly sequenced intervals, changed every other day so as to ensure that even the guards are unable to fall into pattern or complacency. Code phrases and ciphers befuddle the newest recruits, while experienced patrol soldiers are quick to brutalize any who don't speak the right clearance codes.

3. Sewage moats beneath the Wrought Fortress are choked by a sluice of refuse, detritus, sea water and the occasional drippings of blood from the Bloodmint. Ghouls and all manner of vermin congregate here, occasionally striking boldly into the open out depraved hunger. Reprisals are swift, and entry-points are watched by trigger happy powdermen.
4. The doors of the Bloodmint itself are nigh impenetrable, with unwanted entry needing to come from either the sewer trenches of the fortress or from the forge vents of the mint itself. The passages for the vents are maliciously inviting in size, but the fires temper them with flesh-melting heat, and even if one were to enter through them and survive, they'd be out on an open work floor.
5. Four times a day, smoke is released from every orifice upon the Bloodmint, corroding the metal as it slithers its way through iron grates. If the wind is not present it falls into the grounds of the fortress, obscuring and choking those not properly equipped. All those garrisoned within the fortress will not be stationed outside when conditions like this are to occur.
6. Of concern to both mortal and vampire alike is the extreme presence of silver within the Bloodmint and trafficked too and from the Wrought Fortress. Over exposure, either by physical contact of bare flesh or inhaling the miasmatic mist of silver sheddings or filaments, causes a quickening argyria to take root. Mortals marked by silver are foul to the taste, and vampires dress in heavy robes to avoid whatever such contamination might do to their vile anatomy.

Garrison - Baron

The Gullet, a tyrannical bootlick whose devotion to the Baron borders well into the realm of fetishism, holds a large force of **wisps** and **bit-blood** who are as disposable as they are undisciplined. In truth **the Gullet's** dominion here as an officer is meant merely to obfuscate her own private research into spiritism and ectoplasmic feasting. Allied with more than a few **Alchemists** within the Bloodmint, she ensures they are

provided with ample fodder for their officers to fire upon in the hopes that these fallen souls might make, someday, a cure for the curse which her master suffers under. Her name comes from her disturbing appearance, her neck is distended and her jaw hangs limply; as though she were some great and terrible lamprey wearing a tattered suit of meat.

Garrison - Countess

The Sommelier commands only the best of the Countess's forces here, with **sculptors** and **kith** working around the clock to ensure the **powdermen** employed as elite marksmen are perfect of body and aesthetic. The Sommelier himself is of curiosity to the elite forces within the Bloodmint, as they view him a disdainful masochist who would best be left in the rank of a bit-blood. He enjoys too deeply the vintage of blood, consuming only the finest and allowing himself to suffer the withdrawals in power rather than consume anything less than a perfect phial. The Countess, it seems, must admire his loyalty to her philosophy.

Garrison - Duke

The Crowner considers his position at the garrison here to be his just reward for an existence spent enforcing taxation and bureaucracy on behalf of the Duke. Formerly an officiant, the Crowner has gone out of his way to forge powerful ties with officers at the Bloodmint, serving to increase his master's reach with the mainland. Progressive and savvy in the art of demoralization and warfare, he keeps two companies of **Forsworn** at the ready, backed up by a score of **powdermen** armed with finely-crafted guns and grapeshot. His ledgerwork and petty politics has seen him the service of a **Sacrophage** and a dozen of the **Duke's Hand** to keep watch upon the parapets. Nothing here goes unnoticed and unreported.

THE STONE TONGUES

Controls trade to the west

Defenses

(2-4 unique defenses used to keep this keep defended)

- The rocky crags of these western barrier mountains protect the

fortress, and they are infested with all manner of perfidious serpent. Some rattle their tails in mockery before a strike, others have serrated fangs which rend flesh into necrotic ribbons. Their venoms, universally, turn the blood of victims sluggish, grey and thick; and upon reaching the throat; bloats up the tongue and suffocates the unfortunate soul.

- Burning oil is easily pitched and slung from the fortress towers, rending those who walk the mountain path into agonized piles of immolated flesh. Sepulchral remnants of previous invaders or fleeing prisoners can be found affixed to the jagged rocks off the beaten path, their bones broken and fused with the cruel stones, a terrible warning of the oil's potency.

Obstacles

Six obstacles you might find in this keep, no matter who's demesne it's in.

1. Mercenaries from the western reach of the island, vampire and human alike, find refuge in the outer bailey of the Stone Tongues. Bitter and malevolent, these cold souls care only for lining their pockets and seem to enjoy doing so by way of violence. Even when at rest their latent bloodlust makes the mortal sellswords almost indistinguishable from the vampires.
2. It is unclear which ancient master of the Stone Tongues created the Hagsmen, but they were certainly among the worst of vampirekind's paragons. These wretches are an advanced form of ghoul, kept kenneled in the oubliettes beneath the fortress. All but their mouths are masked by bronze masks, nailed deep into their flesh. A jagged kiss of metal around their mouth prevents them from taking proper bites, allowing them only to carve a hole in flesh and drink away at the blood. Though named for this emulation of a hagfish, the Hagsmen have more in common with a serpent; as with their vision and hearing dulled, they've come to be able to track by sense of taste.
3. Serpents are milked by well-gloved servitors, their poison and its destructive qualities to blood making it a tool the vampires seek to control. A blade slathered with the venom can inflict grievous wounds, and bullets bathed in it can inflict sepsis upon entry. Such poison is well-guarded and better wielded in times of strife.
4. Approaching the fortress of the Stone Tongues means reaching the top of a mountain, and it is here where the air is thin and the

mists are thick. If one does not stick to the path it is all too easy to catch an ankle on a jagged rock, shatter bones, topple into a crag, or otherwise find yourself impaled.

5. The crags of the mountain hold the ever-rotting corpses of those who have fallen into them, their flesh bloated from moisture but preserved by either serpent's venom coagulating the liquified organs or by the sheer malice of the mountain itself. Maggots and beetles exist in preponderances here, yet never seem to decompose these mangled corpses.
6. Of note also is how well-patrolled the trade roads to and from the Stone Tongues are. In an effort to control all trade to the west, soldiers are always coming and going from the fortress; actively seeking out smuggler routes, and sharing notices when two companies pass upon the road. Pilgrims and wanderers cannot be trusted, for even mortal wayfarer's may be in service to the master of the fortress.

Garrison - Baron

The Gorgon was named for a monster of antiquity, as he enjoys a most specific form of torment. A former headhunter, the Gorgon was disowned by the Countess for his crude displays, only to find company with the Baron who would make use of his viciousness and knowledge of appraisal. Supported by a league of **mercenaries** with poisoned blades, the Gorgon supplements his garrison with **sycophants** born of victims of the mountain's many venomous serpents.

Garrison - Countess

The Venturer is the Countess's favorite capitalist, a bourgeoisie debutante with a taste for the finer things in life and the means to attain them. Employing **huntsmen** and many a **bailiff** to enforce tolls and taxes upon those passing through the mountains, she has a penchant for imprisoning merchants and traders to better ensure scarcity and the cost of certain necessary goods throughout the rest of the isle.

Garrison - Duke

The Jailer has been loyal to the Duke since she was a child, spared the lash by the Duke's orders and left enamored with the prospects of power

and legal authority. She treats the Stone Tongues as a private prison to hold enemies and hostages of her master. Of late she has begun extracting the knowledge of creating **Hagsmen** to better supplement her contingent of **powdermen** and **bailiffs** who man the fortress. Unfortunate travelers who cannot pay their tolls have become her favored subjects to experiment with, considering their “refusal to pay” a direct slight against the Duke and the rule of law.

FELL’S HOLLOW (ISLE)

Controls trade to the south

Defenses

(2-4 unique defenses used to keep this keep defended)

1. Fell’s Hollow is built atop a bitter calcified skerry, connected to the mainland through a long and treacherous shoal of brackish waters and splintered trees drowned to the nape of their trunks. This bitter marsh conceals ravenous sharks as one approaches the fortress and innumerable crocodiles as one approaches the shore. Crabs and other bottom feeders lurk deep beneath the water, stripping what is left behind by other predators; ensuring no trace of the uninvited are ever seen again.
2. The Deadman’s Candles light the tallest tower of Fell’s Hollow, strange flickering lanterns of a baleful green. The master of the garrison attends to them, their purpose is not known in earnest but their placement seems to indicate what sort of reinforcements may be sent from the rest of Cardenfell. What is certain is that ships at sea, were they to follow them, would find themselves run aground.

Obstacles

Six obstacles you might find in this keep, no matter who’s demesne it’s in.

1. It is not known why the guards who man Fell’s Hollow are as paranoid as they seem to be; their words guarded, their eyes darting, their posture betraying a serious fear of something not yet deciphered. They shoot first and swarm like rats upon anything

they deem out of place.

2. The advent of powder weaponry saw with it the creation of new traps, in this case an explosive known as the bitter urchin. Weighed to the sea floor, these semi-hollow spheres of metal are filled to the brim with explosive potential and lined with wretched hooks and spikes so as to pierce vessels before exploding.
3. The skerry has a single pathway carved into the rocks which lead to Fell's Hollow, and once a force is garrisoned within, trip-wires are laid down to ensure no entry by land nor escape from the rock. Beside the pain of razor-wire cutting into flesh, the wrong sort of pressure upon these traps can lead to rockfalls and death by stone's brutalization.
4. The Will o'the'Wisps are what the soldiers have named the strange lights which appear upon the horizon and in the marshy shoal in the evening. They perplex and deceive, leading wanderers into traps, the maws of predators, or deep waters from which one can never surface.
5. Upon the bare rock of the skerry exist a dozen statues, though more can be found drowned beneath the drink of the sea. They depict mortal visages, half-consumed by whales, sharks, and all manner of ocean life. Their eyes are open, their smiles bitter white. They are the Duppy Idols, their pedigree is unknown; but they whisper to those weak of will; at night they make you dream of chains slowly dragging you beneath the waves. None who yet live remember whose ghosts they are, and so long as misery is had upon Fell's Hollow, they grow in strength.
6. The Low-Drakes are the bestial masters of Fell's Hollow, large crocodilian creatures with many rows of teeth like a shark, and a malevolent intellect built only for spite and predation. They linger in the waters, attack lesser vessels, and belch forth a chum-like bile so as to better direct their lesser cousins. They view man as prey and vampire as competition over the sweat flesh of terrified humanity.

Garrison - Baron

The garrisoned forces if controlled by the Baron.

The Drowner serves the Baron for no other will have him, wretch that he is. Formerly a peer, so hungry for more power, he betrayed the Crimson Crown and was dragged upon and under the bow of a mainland ship. His

ragged form, tattered and bloated by drownings that would not end his suffering, proved him resilient. The Baron provides him with **emacians** and a single **masticator**, to man the fortress and see none take it who do not suffer the gnashing of teeth. The Drowner, craven and starved as he is, is prisoner here as much as master; for the Low-Drakes have tasted him before and seek his demise ever yet.

Garrison - Countess

The garrisoned forces if controlled by the Countess.

The Privateer serves the Countess and holds Fell's Hollow as a port for her naval patrols. She commands a small fleet of corsair ships and often overextends her reach, sailing the coast of Cardenfell and extorting ships long before they make land. When in Fell's Hollow she is backed primarily by **officiants** and **huntsmen**, who keep track of her plundered goods within the keep and prevent the wildlife from overtaking the rock.

Garrison - Duke

The garrisoned forces if controlled by the Duke.

The one they call **the Albatross**, knew the Duke when both were mortal and the world was kinder. Ancient, withered, and exhausted by the toll of time, the Albatross maintains Fell's Hollow and the Deadman's Candles out of belief that the Duke will one day lead Cardenfell to independence against the cruelties of the mainland. As such he is supported by the most loyal of the **Forsworn** and many a **powderman** who have come to see their troubles as the fault of the Crimson Crown rather than the hegemonic politics of vampirism alone. In the Albatross's nationalist ideology that the island belongs to the islanders, he will excuse any atrocity he sees; caring only for a bigger picture that may never come to pass.

Keep Features

Guard Towers

Stables

Dungeon

Oubliette

Barracks

Armory

Strongroom

Lands of Cardenfell

ROADS

Land Scene

- A distant grove within eyeline of this road, unnaturally bare of branch and blackened of wood compared to their neighboring contemporaries. Coldness seems to emanate forth from it, as if beckoning with a ravenous hunger for warm bodies to enter.
- Ancient standing stones, road markers from a long lost age, line the edges of the road here. Carved deep in the rock, an ancient tongue, hard to decipher but stinging to the touch.
- Rolling fields of farmland expand beyond your line of sight. Various shades of brown and amber, vague greens and comforting yellows; like a quilted tapestry of domestic toil's bounty.
- Dense pine forests crowd the road, looming over it as if to blot out what meager sun might be had. The air is rich with their sticky scent, and the errant fall of branches in the distance carries an uneasy sense of dread.
- The smell of distant carnage wafts over these gentle fields and rolling hills. No fire on the horizon or ringing of steel can be heard from the road. It is hard to know what violence is truly at play, or if these are merely the ghosts of something long past in need of attention.
- The road here is shrouded in mist, thick enough to choke on if one were so inclined. It is hard to make out more than a few yards ahead of yourself in all this grey, and the sound here has begun to echo in distorted, disconcerting ways.

Unique Detail - Baron

- The roads of the Baron's domain are dirt, lined at best with ditchways or fence posts wrapped in iron wires. The fields here are dead and the earth is hard as iron. The occasional squared off area of green field is surrounded by blood-slickened stones. Malice, the stench of rot, and the drone of flies hang in the air;

miasmatic.

Unique Detail - Countess (Cobblestone roads, gardens)

1. The Countess has seen the roads of her domain paved with cobblestone in emulation of the antiquated villas and rues of the mainland. Sound carries on these roads and wheels creak with an intended hint of elegance. Gardens and trimmed trees line the roads, as do the occasional roadside bust of her visage. Honey, sickly-sweet, and the overwhelming aroma of uncomplimentary flowers choke the air here.

Unique Detail - Duke

- The Duke, ever efficient, has seen even these backwater roads paved with interlocking brick so as to ensure whatever travel need be done is done with expedience. Nature is fought back from the road as best it can, a no-man's-land of grass between the road and any hill or wood. Maintenance is not uncommon. The scent of toil, sweat, freshly hewn stone, and a sense of disharmony permeate the area.

Obstacles

Six environmental or other obstacles you might find in this location, no matter who's demesne it's in

1. Fallen trees block the road, though only a careful eye can determine if they were felled by weather or a hateful hand. It is easy to travel around them if on foot, but in a cart or with a wagon it may take hours to hew the timbers to an easily movable size.
2. A toll booth has been placed upon this road, and though the **bailiff** inside seems isolated, they would be noticed if they went missing. The fee is not overly unreasonable, assuming it will contribute to the upkeep.
3. A small gang of lesser vampiric dandies, playing at being highwaymen. They wear scarves over their mouths and masks over their eyes, brandishing forth powdergun and steel with reckless abandon. They want money and they want blood; and if not given both they'll take it through force of arms.
4. The road before you is flooded out. One could traverse it, risking parasites and disease, as well as water up to their knees; but it would take only slightly less time and far more effort than waiting it out or seeking passage off the beaten path.
5. In the distance, upon the side of the road you can find the charred

out remains of a roadside coachman's inn. What misfortune saw it put to the torch is a mystery, and is unknown if the authority of this land will come to investigate it, and if so, when they will arrive.

6. With a turn upon the road, you find yourself looking upon a charnel field of corpses. Small fires yet burn, flies gather over the dead and wild dogs rip at whatever desperate meat they can come across. The battle was not long ago, and it is uncertain if all forces were devastated or routed; and it is all but a certainty that ghouls will be here soon to feast upon the dead. Bonepickers and vultures pilfer armaments from the dead and seem suspicious of anyone walking by; as such desecration is a high crime.

Opportunities

Six opportunities, be it to spread the revolution, secure supplies, or aid allies you might find in this location

1. Displaced villagers walk the road, destitute and in need of someone to blame for this misfortunes in life. They cannot conceive of blaming their former master, so deep is their fear.
2. An abandoned orchard and a bit of farmland lingers on the edge of the road. The building here is derelict, and the fields are bloated with the rotten, fallen crops. There may yet be resources enough here to resupply.
3. A herd of deer crosses the road not far ahead. Some graze on the edges. They pause and wait, one locks eyes with your company. It would be an easy target to take, with food enough to eat heartily.
4. There was a barricade here, meant to enforce a toll. It has been recently broken, still smoldering and freshly toppled. Whoever attacked it is no long here and whoever worked it has long since fled; leaving behind ample supplies and pilfered goods ripe for the taking.
5. A trader's wagon has toppled on the side of the road, produce and other necessary goods for villages to keep up their productions lay spilled out. Their mule is terrified of something and it will take effort to both collect all the goods and to fix a newly dislodged wheel.
6. Vampires, newly slain and desecrated upon pikes on the edge of the road; their faces scarified and mutilated. The work of a rebellion cell or a fae entity; possibly even a nearby hamlet seek

of being treated like livestock. In lieu of collaborators, there may be glory to steal here.

Caravans / Travelers

Six random caravans or travellers.

- A pair of **bailiffs** and a mortal tax collector who, despite their glibness, seems far more pleasant than their associates. They anticipate an unpleasant welcome and are armed to deal with such.
- A wayward teenager and a scarred up old hound dog, wandering the road with a long knife and a bindlestick. The youth is searching for a purpose away from the master's domain, they can't go back home and are traumatized to the idea of engaging in further violence.
- This caravan of strange and exotic food was purchased at great cost and destined for the Baron's table. An **alchemist** and two **powdermen**, as well as a half-dozen mortal chefs of some capacity, march with trepidation.
- Refugees from a border conflict, soot-stained and injured, walk the road with a coldness to their demeanor. They claim ghouls and the enemy are not far behind. They care for nothing anymore, they desire retribution but know it will only come with their dying breath.
- A military company for a distant lord is marching upon the road, their officers bickering about the map and where it is they are meant to go. Travelers they encounter are potential food or plundering fodder. Dissention is growing in the ranks, and the dark ambitions of lesser officers may lead to mutiny if properly pressed.
- Barmy and half-dead from exposure, an injured elder stumbles from the wood seemingly drunk. They speak in hoarse riddles, mumbling about faces within faces, whorls within swirls, and no hope. No hope, old masters or new masters; only suffering.

HIGHWAY

Land Scene

(six elements / details of the location describing random details you might

see /hear / smell nearby.)

1. From a vantage point upon this upkept road you are able to see as far as your eyes allow. It gives perspective to the importance of your cause, as much as it reinforces your infinitesimal size in this conflict. The domain of these vampires are readily apparent, like festering boils upon a canvas of flesh.
2. The natural world is tamed back from the road here, walled off beyond small fences so as to keep the road clear of animals or fallen timbers. The heavy hand of civilization seeking to control the natural world is palpable, and so far between towns, it seems as though it could easily be overrun.
3. The road here has been freshly laid out and travel goes by smoother than you've experienced prior. Clouds gather in the distance, but what detriment they bring is a matter for later. Birds sing to one another trees, and there is a sense of casual calm as you make your way.
4. Passing by farmland upon this highway you can see the rolling tapestry of agriculture spread out over hills and dells, like a blanket covering sleeping giants of the earth. Wheat grain and hearty cereals waft their gentle scent about the air, beckoning for gentle showers to nourish them.
5. The road here has been carved through woodland, viciously like the keratin scars upon a prisoner's hide. Trees buckle away from the road, bent out of shape by biting axes and the cruel hands of the civilized world. The air smells of fresh earth and old ozone.
6. The highway curves here around a small lake, deep enough to fish in or to pause a wagon to get a drink of freshwater. So far from the influences of civilization, it seems unnaturally clean. Frogs croak and fish swim beneath the water, oblivious to the greater conflicts of humanity.

Unique Detail - Baron

- The Baron, unable and unwilling to spare resources for sake of infrastructure merely has wooden planks raised above but nailed down into a wide dirt road. These highways offer little benefit when compared to even the backroads of the Duke or the Countess; but to those who know well the bitter earth of the Baron's cursed domain, they do provide some small comfort and a better means to expedite one's travels.

Unique Detail - Countess

- The Countess invests well into her highways, such that her carriage rides always take just enough time for her leisurely

enjoyment. Upon embankments and hills she has installed wrought-iron fences depicting forest scenes in their filigree, and the roads themselves are paved with the smoothest of stones, interlocking to depict beautiful fresco patterns. It is frivolous work, decadent in its expenses.

Unique Detail - Duke

- The highways through the Duke's land are some of the best maintained roads outside the mainland, raised above the ground but dug in to allow for fitted stones to make the bulk of the road and bitumen to fill in any cracks. Road markers and stones are provided at every quarter mile and at every five mile mark is a trough and a set of hitching posts so that beasts of burden may regain their strength. Multiple lanes are marked by small divider stones, so as to mitigate back-up. The Duke maintains strong control here with his road wardens, but in doing so, travel is swift right until there is cause to stop.

Obstacles

Six environmental or other obstacles you might find in this location, no matter who's demesne it's in.

1. Road wardens serve any master willing to pay them to enforce tolls and live in the obscurity of the wild. They make use of violence with casual indifference, and a toll paid is no guarantee of protection for mortal travelers. Their horses are bitter things, used to being run roughshod and whipped into a frenzy; combat from horseback allows them a chance for a quick death.
2. The occasional tollbooth used to finance the upkeep of these highways are far more of a bureaucratic nightmare than the backroads. Caravan trains can become held up by overly-suspicious bailiffs and officials who wish to impress their masters by cracking down on contraband. Those who seek to turn back from these crowded bottlenecks are often pursued, assumed to be running from the hand of the law.
3. Smugglers often seek to hide their contraband among the unaware, such that accidental discovery may land others in the firing line while still allowing for the flow of goods. Caches and wagons might find themselves heavier upon the highway after a night on the road.
4. A carriage is parked on the edge of the highway, its wheels

undergoing repairs. The coachman is in arguments with armed guards and their vampiric master sits in a stewing rancor, their travel plans stalled. The vampire has an urgent missive and will seek to bribe if they are unable to intimidate, any passerbyers into assisting with the carriage, commandeering their own vehicle or mounts if such things are worthy of their station.

5. Distant clouds roll in quickly, booming out thunder and drowning the land in torrential rain. Trimmed and clean as the highway is, there is little in the way for shelter from this storm. Floodwaters may not reach the road, but it will make it deathly slick to go beyond a snail's pace.
6. Though the road seemed bare and free, a turn around the bend reveals a line of caravans and a sizable work crew performing unexpected construction upon the road. The laborers are tired, clearly overworked; and the petty abuses slung from the mouths of travelers delayed only make the situation more unpleasant. It seems only a matter of time before the weight of these indignities drive a laborer to violence.

Opportunities

Six opportunities, be it to spread the revolution, secure supplies, or aid ailles you might find in this location

- A collective of prisoners work the edge of the highway in a chain gang, splitting stones and performing maintenance while being left to the cruel whims of the elements. They bare the wounds of a life hard lived, as if in addition to this laboring toil they are meant also to serve the blood-hungering whims of their taskmaster.
- An unscrupulous merchant, more than fed-up with playing lackey to their betters and the vampiric lords, is suffering every woe of travel. The mule is stubborn, the wheels keep coming off their axles, and the goods are already beginning to spoil. Things might "fall off the back of the wagon" in exchange for a modest price.
- A smuggler's company pegs you for their kindred, which is to say, folk who are up to no good but might be amenable to profit. In exchange for carrying some goods or paying a minor fee, they're willing to help you enter the nearest settlement; their destination, without notice.
- A vampire waits with a coachman and only a single guard, apparently early for a changing of the horses which might allow for

their trip to go on without issue. Looking down the way it is clear no one is coming, not for awhile. The vampire is unable to accept how utterly vulnerable they are.

- The road is swallowed up here by a mob of the disenfranchised, humans who have lost their homes and loved ones in a recent skirmish. They are marching, crude implements at the ready, seeking violence; reprisal, retribution for their fallen. Their rage is directionless, but powerful. It could be easily focused.
- An errant beast of burden, still bridled and road ready, is grazing on the edge of the road. It is skittish to any approach, fearing any loud noise and shuddering away from any speaking parties. It is uncertain what abuses it may have faced under its old owner, or where that owner is. Theft of such creatures, however, is often a capital offense; and rescuing this beast may lead to further harm down the road.

Caravans / Travelers

Six random caravans or travellers.

1. Lesser courtiers from the Crimson Crown, on a tour of these middling territories seeking to expand their own holdings. They are bold and assume any and all humans upon the road are utterly loyal. They ask questions about the senses of loyalty and pride mortals must feel serving in the empire, and any words that might disillusion them will be met with violence from their armed guards.
2. Merchants out from Innisfirth seeking to capitalize on markets far from their home. They are of a casual kindness, happy to be away even if in more uncertain or dangerous territory.
3. Pilgrims of the Reformed Faith proselytize loudly from atop the back of a wagon, much to the agony of their coachman who would just as soon stuff a bullet in his ears as he would drive the horses a moment more. The faithful sing their songs and clang their bells, and the driver grinds his teeth through the leather reins.
4. A mainland scholar performing a deed to which she believes will lead her to be vaunted and gifted vampirism. She rides on a gentle old mule and presses flowers in a large leather tome. She believes there is more to the fairy-stories of Cardenfell than her fellow academics are willing to consider and will pay handsomely for insight on the subject.
5. A group of children, all dressed in the garb of the Reformed Faith

and looking utterly miserable, sit lashed to one another in the back of a covered wagon. Victims of a border conflict which saw their parents gone, they are being carted off to an orphanage convent so they might still be made useful.

6. A mangled and mutilated husband and wife, dressed to the nines in disturbing leathers made from humanoid flesh. They wear necklaces of teeth and proclaim loudly their trade as ghouls-hunters of note, with letters of recommendation from many a vampire lord. They are heinous and can hardly mutter a tone that is not either bitterly grim or a gallows's humor. They could be allies, but a mercenary's heart is a treacherous thing.

CARDENFELL RIVER

Land Scene

(six elements / details of the location describing random details you might see /hear / smell nearby.

1. The banks of the Cardenfell river are steep and rocky here and the water below flows at a deceptively quick speed. The air is rich with the scent of old stone and lichen, and the erosion of the water upon the rock seems to cut ever more deeply each day.
2. The water here is dreary and drifting by a leisurely pace, with shallow muddy banks showing the tracks of mules, horses, and small animals stopping by the edge of the water to sup upon it. Tiny bubbles in the submerged muck reveal the hiding holes of frogs, clams, and snapping turtles.
3. Smooth rocks line the edges of the river, which glides by at a dizzying speed that causes small whirlpools and white waters. The din of the water drowns out most sound, and save for the occasional fish leaping from the river it is hard to see much life within it.
4. The rocks here are jagged and slick with the tepid wet of the river, which flows by slower than sap leaking from a tree. Flies buzz, tiny crabs scuttle about, and frogs croak in abundance. If not for the stink of the water, it would be an otherwise pleasant stretch of the river.
5. The river was in need of being controlled here, and thus it flows through a deeply carved ditchway at a plodding speed. The

ground beside the ditchway is rich with loam, sediment, and all the telltale signs of having once been the natural course of the river. Plants sway here indecisive of which way they ought to grow.

6. Fallen trees and gentle sediment run this length of the river, with animal-crafted dams causing the water to flow at a calm pace dictated by the whims of the marmots who crafted them. Birds chirp and sing at all hours of the day and crickets play their cries for attention when the sun gets low.

Unique Detail - Baron

- The most common detritus put upon the Cardenfell river by the Baron's hateful hands are the many corpses which choke the waterways like a clogged artery. The meat bloats and rots until it eventually breaks, causing the water within miles of the dump site to have a greasy soup-like film upon its surface.

Unique Detail - Countess

- The river flows through the Countess's land as another natural resource she wishes to carve to her own delight. Lazily gondolas where painters congregate despite overcrowding are common, as are the scathing boats where mellified corpses excreted by the **Malefactors** are left to drift and beguile those who catch their sickly sweet smell.

Unique Detail - Duke

- Pollution run-off from settlements within the Duke's domain is an unpleasant side-effect of his progress. The river is just another body to be exploited for capital and labor, with only degradation and disease to reward it. Abandoned mills, death strandings of river life, and overfishing of what life yet remains are all too common sights upon the river in this land.

Obstacles

Six environmental or other obstacles you might find in this location, no matter who's demesne it's in.

1. The river basin has flooded far beyond what could be anticipated, saturating the land and dragging it down river with the flow. Vermin scramble up trees, and river-side dwellings are all but swept away.
2. The river flooded sometime in the not so distant past, turning the lands beside it into a muddy bog that seeks to consume boots and travelers alike. Great efforts must be taken to remain standing,

- lest one become settled into the mud and unable to break free.
3. Vicious river wildlife seldom bothers humanity, but desperation or a misbegotten step can cause such conflicts to emerge. Alligator snapping turtles angry at the world, bears who hunger to fill their bellies, the ripping predatory teeth of seals which hide so easily behind their kindly eyes, or even crocodiles proper in certain areas of the isle.
 4. Much as a highway has its road wardens, the vampires employ well-paid river patrolmen to maintain order upon the Cardenfell River. Their vessels are slow, but secure, things; often pulled along the edge of the bank by donkeys upon a trail. It can take weeks for a patrol to file their reports, but they maintain a system of coded bell calls to communicate with one another in urgent situations.
 5. A broken lock or break in the river has seen its waters grow shallow, scraping the bottoms of boats and causing some fish to drown upon the air. Old bones and slick rocks, leeches and all other manner of detritus pollute the now revealed ground here. It is unclear when the water levels will be remedied, or for how long down the river this problem persists.
 6. Wreckers are perhaps some of the most successful types of criminals to be found in Cardenfell, masters of the river that they are. By making use of skiffs and the terrain, they are able to perform hit-and-run raids upon both vampire and human boater alike; making off with plundered goods and stealing lives.

Opportunities

Six opportunities, be it to spread the revolution, secure supplies, or aid ailles you might find in this location

1. A fine cranberry bog exists off the edge of the riverbank here, which means there is plenty to eat so long as one is willing to risk dirtying themselves upon the water and besting any creatures who might be dwelling in the reddened waters.
2. Easily seen from the shore, there are a plentiful amount of bloated bottom-dweller fish, grown fat on rot and detritus. With a net, a bucket, or just a well-placed stab a person could find themselves with hearty, albeit questionable, meal.
3. A traveller upon the muddy shoreline finds both their horse and cart stuck, slowly being dragged down into the earth. Saving their

cart will leave them stranded with too many goods, and saving their horse will leave them free but with no means to fulfill their duties. They are desperate, screaming, and time is running out.

4. Upon a jagged rock in the middle of the river is the wreck of a vessel, its hull torn open. There is no obvious sign of life, nor much indication on how long it has been there. If one were willing to brave the waters, any supplies left aboard could be scavenged without much hassle.
5. Prisoners chained into pained positions, slashed about and slathered in filth and worms, scream for freedom and aid. They will pledge their soul to whoever will grant them a quick death or their revenge for this undignified fate.
6. A bargewoman, a bit lost of grip but wise of water, plies the river on a long flat barge she's made her home. She offers news and ferrying for a slightly heavier than needed fee. She has too many stories, hardly any of them make much sense, and she will tell them regardless of your desires to hear them.

Ships

Six random ships that may be travelling on the river.

1. An ironclad ship, *the Ashes of Ambition*, chugs about through the water, slow and grumbling. A prison ship, it hauls human chattel too and from various forts on behalf of local lords; and is well known among those who trade in hostages. Powdermen and well-trained brutes make sure the ship remains secure.
2. This trader's barge seems to emerge from fog, as if by design. It moves about without any grace, bumping and scuttling into other crafts as often as it does into the riverbed. Ghouls stay aboard it, using it as a meandering means of travel from which they can hunt without attracting too much attention.
3. A smuggler's trawler ship, its name always new and freshly painted and its paperwork always a few stops out of date. The crew know how to grease palms and traffick primarily in recreational goods that even the staunchest bailiff knows is more trouble writing up than allowing into a town.
4. Corpse ships, usually of a shallow model, are reasonably uncommon but routine enough that anyone who spends time enough upon the river will come across them. Whatever foul necromantic purpose behind these ships is a well-kept secret

known only to the Duke, Countess and Baron. If one ventures close enough to the ghastly vessels, one can occasionally make out the uniforms of Crimson Crown officers in a burn pile.

5. *The Loan-Duck* is a well-maintained fishing wherry that has been in the same family of Shepforth fishermen for seven generations. The folk aboard are oddly friendly and seem to have a charm about them that makes vampires find them too simple and unimportant to be worthy of harvest. Their secret is a bloody one, of old compacts, and the river sees them safe so long as they maintain their rites and act as stewards.
6. A grim and well-painted pleasure barge will occasionally slink its way on the river, holding important dignitaries from the Crimson Crown, or an operative of the Countess on holiday. Meetings that cannot be held for political reasons in any one territory are often held on such vessels.

THE VEINS

The Veins are the rich farmland that lie to the south of Cardenfell River and the Three Sisters. They are fed by a vein-like series of off-shoots from Cardenfell River, which terminate in the floodplains and marshlands that make up the southern border of the county. Control of The Veins is split between an assembly of feudal lords who answer only to the Vampire Lord of Cardenfell. Even now, their squabbles, bickering, and mismanagement quietly grind the rural poor of Cardenfell into poverty and immiseration.

Land Scene

- Upon the banks of the Veins sits a few small fishing hovels, with nets in the water and a leisurely air about it. Children run about laughing in hushed tones, pelting one another with mud and the occasional leech. Watchers pay close attention to the borders of this hamlet, clearly aware that any intrusion could end the peace

they've gathered.

- A young company of soldiers and men-at-arms, practicing a murder-stroke technique by awkwardly gripping the blades of their weapons. They laugh when a youngblood is thrown to the mud or has their helmet splintered. They catcall and hoot at those who pass by, eager for a proper scrap and uncaring of who they'll fight with; be it fisherman, stranger, or water-bearer.
- An antiquated fort upon a distant hill in grave disrepair from some sacking in ancient times. This has not stopped habitation, as old defensive mounds have been converted into fields and people work the land here as though it were any other. At night they crowd within the husk of the fort's old walls, cramped but safer from the elements.
- Rolling hills of tall grass obscure dolmens to their nape and many a grave marker from wars of old. A low fog rolls over the wild here; war songs are chirped by the black birds, the field mice see that no name goes obscured by moss or by dirt. There is stillness to this place, despite an ever present wind from the east.
- Upon a hill sits an old church, thunderstruck and soot-encrusted, from a time before the faith was reformed. Black birds and grackle collect upon its old stone as if they were members of some dour parliament, calling and singing in tones recognized to the devout. What strange portent this is, only those versed in the heresies of the ancient faith may know.
- On the edge of an old ruddy trail sits a wooden pole with placards and arrow-signs nailed crudely upon it. The names are written poorly in some dialect not common to the northern bight of the Isle; at least not common any longer. They indicate civilization nearby, or at the very least where civilization once stood.

Unique Detail - Baron

- The Veins which flow through the Baron's lands run sallow and thick, with silt accumulation enough to choke the waters and see the cursed earth drink the way dry. Grasses grow tall and grey here, falling ashy at the touch. The feuding lords wage petty war with another, this land was not always cursed but now it grows more blighted by the hour. To a wayfarer, the terrible song of shrieks and slaughter hangs darkly in the distance.

Unique Detail - Countess

- Promises of the Countess's grace has won over many a feuding lord who seek to win her favor. They build their manors ever higher, cultivate their fields so that the grains grow tall and in

strange patterns, and they plant wildflowers along the Veins. But the dark copses of forest in this land grow ever more bitter as the farmers here suffer for this false beauty.

Unique Detail - Duke

1. The lords here now battle in secret, shadow wars that lack much subtlety but do not rankle the feigned courtesy granted to them by the Duke. The Veins are drying here, and when not dessicated, they are fracked to loose vicious oils for the Duke's ceaseless bloody march of progress. The fields often lay derelict and overgrown, settlements little more than ghost towns. Civilization in the Veins moves where the Duke demands it.

Obstacles

Six environmental or other obstacles you might find in this location, no matter who's demesne it's in.

1. The ripped up corpses of a family found in an irrigation ditch would normally warn of ghouls, but the banner which is spiked through the lot of them speaks of a war between the feuding lords. The banner of an old house, long derelict; and paranoia suggests that outsiders are just as likely the butchers as anyone else.
2. Fields have grown sodden due to flooding from both the southern marshlands and poor upkeep of the Cardenfell River. The Veins have grown swollen and stagnant, birthing forth parasites of all shape and spade from the deep places of the earth. Now in bloom, blood-sucking larvae and all manner of pestilent worm slither about these lands, infesting who they can.
3. A bountiful harvest has come early to the fields among the Veins, and despite the toil the folk who work these fields know they will have food enough to last them the winter. Armed guards walk the borders and patrol, knowing well their lord's many enemies might strike now. Strangers are noted and considered to be thieves at the best of times.
4. Rumors are about of strange horrors slithering forth from the southern marshlands, stealing away children and blighting the land. The locals of the Veins are up in arms about this, their hospitalities diminished and viewing any stranger may be some skin-changer lying in wait to strike.
5. Due to malfunctions of some lock or canal gate, the farmlands here have suffered a drought. Plants suck up what water remains,

turning the earth to a crumbling, stinking mess of clay and mud. Without fish or proper fields to till, a famine is all but certain.

6. A border skirmish between local lords has seen the Veins choked with the damned and the dying, and much of the harvest lost to fire and strife. Soldiers languish in agony for what was lost and for their neighbors turned enemy. Peasants gather fire and pitchfork, hoping to gain retribution as they have no hope for justice nor for peace.

Opportunities

Six opportunities, be it to spread the revolution, secure supplies, or aid ailles you might find in this location

1. An isolated homestead upon this borderland, well guarded and well-respected by the folk who know of it. Those who dwell within care not for any of the feuding lords, but know well if not for their bickering their land might be swallowed up into their petty politics. They'd just as soon be free to be left alone, and talk of sedition is welcomed; albeit cautiously.
2. A moot market is being held where the people of the Veins can trade freely with one another. Bad blood is everywhere, and it seems every family holds some grudge against another. Goods come cheaper when they undercut another family, and theft would be simple to commit for the blame is easily diverted.
3. The people of this part of the Veins hold grudges against the greater lords to the north, and could be easily rallied into a force for the revolution under the auspices of enforcing ancient reprisals against their enemies. It may even be possible to stoke the fires of revenge in their vampiric overlord, using them until it is too late for them to realize they've been played.
4. By appealing to ancient rites of hospitality and oaths of friendship, the folk here can quickly become amicable. Given the distance from the holds of greater vampiric lords, even the bloodsucking filth know to tread carefully with their power, as they have not the resources to raise up a host to cull their dissidents; at least not without making themselves vulnerable to a rival.
5. The Reformed Faith is attempting to make inroads here and supplant the heresy of the old church, though these pilgrims realize quickly the folk of this land cannot easily relate to the content of their rhetoric. They must subvert their own teachings to

gain any ground here, and with orthodoxy being manipulated, an insurgent could easily twist the words to their benefit.

6. The feuding lords have never trusted one another, nor the lords to the north who they know will eventually come for them. On the southern border between the Veins and the marsh, they've kept a copse of ash trees grown for the purposes of kinslaying. They do not place a guard upon such lands for fear of betrayal, watching it only when they venture from their homes. If it is abandoned at the moment, it could provide powerful weapons for the revolution to come.

DRANCASTER BRIDGE

Positioned over the Cardenfell River between Drancaster and Grismont, Drancaster Bridge is a natural choke-point for the flow of trade and people between the north and south of Cardenfell. A harsh toll is levied on any who wish to cross it, and many merchants (and smugglers) choose to instead ply the waters of Cardenfell River instead of crossing over the Bridge.

Land Scene

(six elements / details of the location describing random details you might see /hear / smell nearby.

- The Drancaster Bridge is a monument to humanity, only in recent memory darkened and transcribed to the Crimson Crown's ambitions. Ancient stonework, timbers from when the old forests were young, and iron forged first in bogs and later in foundries lay the framework of this bridge. The embellishments and embossments of the vampire's regime steal the glory of what Cardenfell was.
- Upon the bridge and leading up to it from either side march doomsayers and pilgrims, radicals of the Reformed Faith who preach of a coming calamity to the Isle. Only those who pay the indulgences and serve loyally to the Crimson Crown will be spared the fate of dust and doom.
- The hustle and flow of trade and people makes the Drancaster Bridge a colorful blend of the cultures upon the Cardenfell Isle. Though only merchants and the richest of mortals may find easy

passage and freedom to travel, it is clear to see where the pride of each vampire's domain is founded. They dress the party and make idle conversation as they seek to pass across the bridge, sounding almost akin to the vampire's they serve with this disregard for those they consider lesser.

- On either side of the bridge coachmen stables can be found, as travel by carriage is less demeaning and risky than the personal inspection of a traveller by foot. The line for service is always long and the cost a bit too high; but the coachmen are professionals. They hear plenty, though gossip often costs more than the ride for inquiring parties.
- Roadside shrines to the Reformed Faith line the way up and from the Drancaster Bridge, basins for coin offerings and candles to be lit by those who believe their fortunes may be found on the other side. The occasional patrolman or bailiff is just as soon to leave a coin as they are to fill their pockets with the offerings.
- Engineers, finely dressed, often lead work crews. They seek to strip more of what the bridge once was away and erect more monuments to the Crimson Crown. They are loud and unpleasant, acting like cruel taskmasters to their crew when they feel the chance of doing so might grant them further clout.

Unique Detail - Baron

- Upon the riverbanks of the Cardenfell, servants of the Baron purchase jars of soil from the mainland and preachers of the Reformed Faith bless pilgrims with ashen marks upon their lips, wishing them well in this trial of faith. The water is an acrid yellow when it touches the shore, as if this departing point is sickened by the ground it touches.

Unique Detail - Countess

1. On the edge of the river, beside the bridge, stewards and gondolowers offer lavish boating experiences to distinguished guests. Rafts carrying crates of wine too and fro glance up at the bridge and make playful mockery. Urchins and vagrants ply the water for dumped goods, hoping to find their windfall.

Unique Detail - Duke

- Uniformed officers with vicious dogs patrol the Drancaster Bridge and its underbelly, scourging and maiming any would-be criminal unable to grease their palms or offer up worthy sacrifice. Smugglers hang in gibbet cages, their bodies picked raw to bloody bones. The price of tolls is listed openly and changes with the tides and whims of the officer in charge.

Obstacles

Six environmental or other obstacles you might find in this location, no matter who's demesne it's in.

1. Bailiffs accompanied by armed guards are performing an inspection on customs, making sure all tithes and tariffs are paid. Trumped up on a feeling of self-importance they will fine and brutalize the poorer travelers upon the bridge knowing full well they cannot afford additional fees. Such unfortunate souls are dragged to a back office to offer up their blood in lieu of coin, and always more is spent than can be afforded.
2. Bans upon various goods are common, often causing merchants who wish to avoid potential harm to toss their newly proclaimed contraband over the side of the bridge. In addition to these bans, occasionally the guards will proclaim a type of good to be proof of harm against the state; going so far as to perform public executions over the possession of knitting needles or fish hooks, if they think they can get away with it.
3. Those exiting either side of the bridge who have not formed the appropriate contacts to bribe will be forced to swear loyalty oaths in blood, spilling open their palms and bleeding into a basin whilst reciting a jingoistic chant. If one refuses to do so in the presence of a mortal or vampiric officer, they will have the traveler do so in front of a ghoul.
4. Heavy traffic upon the bridge sees it crammed shoulder to shoulder with nary an inch to move without bumping into another person or cart. Rumors abound that a carriage toppled over or a horse got loose and started kicking. Nobody knows, nobody can move, and not a single soul upon the bridge has patience enough for this.
5. The Reformed Faith is celebrating one of their pointless fetes, crowding the bridge with bright costumed folk in red and yellows, terrible masks, and bog quality wine. The guard are unhappy but fear reprisal from greater officials than they if they step in. It is a dizzying display of terrible smells, cacophonous chanting, and flagellants rending their backs raw only to be lapped upon by lesser vampires in a lewdly carnal display.

The bridge is on lockdown with powdermen on either side, claims of escaped criminals and the danger they bring have halted travel. Vampires in their coaches make vague threats of killing the 'miscreants' themselves for this inconvenience. Given the many needless laws and punitive fines upon the Drancaster Bridge, it is unlikely the criminal is of any true threat should they exist at all. This may simply be security theatre so as to justify further invasive policies.

Opportunities

Six opportunities, be it to spread the revolution, secure supplies, or aid ailles you might find in this location.

1. Merchants from various domains commiserate on the state of the economy and the growing realization that their margins grow thinner while the purses of their masters grow fatter. They despair for their fortunes and come to admit the human cost that they've been cruel to ignore in the past. In their darkened hearts there is an anger, a desire to do better; but they know not how and cowardice keeps them complacent.
2. A ferryman beneath the bridge wears a seal of each Vampiric master, shuffling between them for which force he thinks he might need to impress. The paleness to his flesh is more akin to a fish dipped in flour than the progressions of vampirism, but he plays the act well. His services are cheaper than others smuggling humans across the river, as he expects whoever is upon his boat to have knives at the ready. He owes no loyalty to any rebellion or master, his heart is in the thrill of his foolishness.
3. Beggars and buskers plead and perform on the outskirts of the bridge, hoping for a kindly coin or a bit of bread. Their health and general malaise keeps them from being easily preyed upon by desperate vampires, but they know to flee when a call for workmen is had. They keep a keen eye on the bridge, knowing many secret comings-and-goings.
4. A mortal, newly recruited by the guard, is quickly realizing the task is not what was promised and that the violence so often engaged in is from a one-sided source. They are disillusioned but fear being made a target by speaking out. With proper leverage they could be a source to exploit.
5. Recent construction upon the bridge has revealed a vulnerable spot, which if attacked, could sever the realm and prevent the

bridge from servicing any forces. None expect such a heartless and debilitating act to occur, and thus it is guarded only as much as any other spot upon the bridge. Toppling the Drancaster would change the flow of trade and troops across the Isle.

6. Exploited for their labor and subjected to no small amount of dehumanizing abuse, the workmen upon the bridge are waiting for an excuse to butcher their superiors and anyone else who has put them down in the past. Armed with hammers and mattocks all they'd need is a reason to hope in a victory.

WROUGHT BRIDGE

Part bridge, part gate-house, part fortress, the Wrought Bridge is an imposing construct of brick, stone, and wrought iron. Three wrought-iron portcullises hang from the bridge, ready to bar entry to any invading fleet.

Land Scene

(six elements / details of the location describing random details you might see /hear / smell nearby.)

1. A crew of fine metalworkers are busy at work polishing the wrought-iron portcullises, ensuring that all who pass by can glean their fates should the gates be dropped upon them. Seagulls cry in the distance and the sea breeze wafts a gentle scent upon the winds which has an almost wistful quality to it.
2. A fishing vessel, rich to the brim with crabs, hauls loudly their wares to laborers busy sweeping up the bridge of seaweed and debris accumulated from the waves at high tide. A dog is barking somewhere in the distance, but all this noise is nearly drowned out by the crashing of waves; a bit rough for the time of day.
3. A **bailiff** sarcastically applauds some human laborers who are busy fishing his badge of office and sword out of the drink. Whenever they pull up a weapon that is not his, he berates them. The air has a wretched fishy stink to it today, which has attracted more than a few feral cats to lounge about the roof of the gatehouse.
4. A group of officers shouting as best they can, attempt to direct a foreign vessel that this is not the correct port of entry. Their mortal underlings have joined in with the hooting and hollering, but the ship responds only with further shouting of their own. A slight fog

further complicates the matter.

5. The water is rough and choppy today, which has not seen those stationed here any reprieve from their duty. Grey, blackening skies, indicate a storm liable to roll in at any minute. An albatross cries like a klaxon at odd intervals, and there is a general sense of malaise about the station.
6. Gentle rolling waves lap at the bridge and the surrounding environs, though the ocean as far as the eye can see is mirror still. Wagons cross the bridge, slowly but without any dire urgency to their passage. The wind carries a mournful song to it, though none can tell from where it originates.

Unique Detail - Baron

- Servants of the Baron desperately attend to the cleaning of the fences and making sure the gates remain slick and ready to drop. They affix themselves with harnesses and sturdy rope, always muttering about something in the waters beneath which seeks to melt their flesh and consume it.

Unique Detail - Countess

- The Countess has hired the finest architects and engineers in her domain to debate the merits of aesthetic at the Wrought Bridge to representatives of the Crimson Crown who have their own questions to the gate's purposes. They remain more annoyed than suspicious by the Countess's minions.

Unique Detail - Duke

1. The Duke overworks his maintenance crews, but the bridge has never been safer nor more secure. At each of the gates all papers are checked in triplicate, reasons for travel put under heavy scrutiny, and all vessels checked for smuggler's hatches or contraband.

Obstacles

Six environmental or other obstacles you might find in this location, no matter who's demesne it's in.

- A broken fall gate bars travel and the crew suspects it may be an act of sabotage. Those who speak of it say it fell loudly, like a scream meant to deafen another act, and this has caused extreme security measures to be put into effect. This has further delayed repairs and the chance of traveling unnoticed.
- A wind storm has seen a large chain come unhitched from its

place, falling to the bridge proper and pulverizing it. A work crew alone does not have strength enough to haul the metal from its newly embedded home.

- A thick fog obscures shadows upon the sea, and though none present are willing to admit to the possibility of an enemy fleet; all official missives would indicate no ships should be so fast approaching. No one is sure how to act, for fear of the conflict it might create if their fears are in vain.
- All are surprised by the amount of barnacles and rust which have brought havoc to Wrought Bridge over a single night of higher-than-average tide. The crews are scraping and cleaning as best they can, but the need for travel across the bridge has created numerous stop-gaps in patrols and oversight.
- Disputes between the Baron, Countess and Duke has seen the officer at the Wrought Bridge forced into a delicate situation; as one force refuses to move from the bridge and is openly blocking the other two. Combat is all but assured to break out.
- The gates of Wrought Bridge have been found bound open by many locks and chains, their mechanisms unable to give an inch. None are willing to speak openly of what fears this confirms, but they know that if they act too quickly to repair it, it might send the wrong message.

Opportunities

Six opportunities, be it to spread the revolution, secure supplies, or aid allies you might find in this location.

1. In hushed tones, it becomes clear that there is no small amount of friction between the mainland Crimson Crown and the factions upon the Bloody Isles. No one will name names, but to someone who is believed to have witnessed the subtle aggressions, commiseration is not uncommon. None will admit it of course.
2. The crew that works the bridge is overworked and underpaid, with much of their labors being rewarded with bland meals of fish and tepid beer to dull their senses. Friendship, news, stories, a proper meal or alcohol of any true potency would make their daily toil more tolerable.
3. A travelling blacksmith helps service the mechanics of the bridge when called, often attempting to better train an already overburdened crew so as to lessen their own labors. There have

been harsh words thrown about between both parties, and improving said relationships could win loyalty here.

4. The mortals who guard and toil upon the bridge are notably corruptible; allowing for lesser contraband to pass through the gates in exchange for favors, coinage, and potential blackmail. They use a complicated system of knocks and hand signals, though it is hard to tell if that's mere performative or of actual use.
5. In the guardhouses, under strict lock and key, one can find weapons of silver and ashwood. Such items remain fiercely hidden when agents of the Crimson Crown are known to be about, and excused as being contraband recovered from flensed-to-death criminals. More than a few garrisoned here seem to gaze upon the weapons with a knowing comfort.
6. Diving into the drink beneath the bridge one can find any number of displaced goods or illicit materials kept in the sea's salty embrace. Weapons lost in training or in conflicts long forgotten and scrubbed from the records, can be found encrusted with coral and barnacles.

THE MARSHLANDS

Land Scene

(six elements / details of the location describing random details you might see /hear / smell nearby.

- Birds haunt this waterlogged carr, hanging from each branch like a judgmental bouquet of wildflowers. They do not chirp or sing while mortals traverse the muddy banks, they seem to be waiting for treachery to reveal itself. The frogs sing though, loud and haughty.
- Formed upon a dead river, the waters here are ruddy, stagnant, and go up to the neck at their deepest. The ground is black clay, saturated and infested with all manner of worms who tunnel about seeking any bit of dry to rest their heads. The air is an acrid combination of sulfur and iron, enough to make one sick until they've acclimated.
- A wide spread of vernal pools, ankle-high at the best of times, and so disturbingly still. Corpses, bloated with water to the point of being strangely smooth and slick. Lily pads and duckweed congregate over their faces, obscuring their death masks from the

world. Herons stalk about, eating small speckled frogs and watching mortal trespassers from thickets of reeds.

- The marshlands spread out into a reed-choked wetlands. Deep water conceals countless predators and the tall stalks carry and direct sound strangely here. Paths and landmarks shift here, as though the marsh was of a mischevious mien. The air carries the scent of wildflowers, though very few can be found.
- What would appear to be rolling hills conceals a peat bog submerged beneath a sea of moss. The mud beneath is slick and hungry, devouring boots and whole beings should they not remain in constant movement. Salamanders and newts sometimes crawl from the muck when disturbed, waddling grumpily until they can find a new place to rest.
- A buttonbush fen of numerous scrub plants, vaguely traversable without too much worry of wet until a wrong step is taken. Turtles are in abundance wherever ponds have formed; painted, striped, and snapping all make their homes here and bask on errant logs. The odd elk can be found lurking in the bush, eating the odd berry and seeking to be left alone.

Unique Detail - Baron

- Where the marshlands touch the cursed lands of the Baron, many a blight is excruciated in their deadliness. The waters run red and foul, host to a neigh primordial font of disease and parasites. Slime mold and deadly fungi choke the bark of every tree, slowly squeezing away the life of the marsh, replacing it with something new and foul.

Unique Detail - Countess

- The Countess tried to hide her lies in the muck here. Items that would speak the truth of her origins, distant relatives who might have a hidden claim, mere witnesses who knew the truth or those she just assumed capable of telling a good lie. She bound them in chains and saw them drowned in filth. If ever the stench of the mud of the marshlands reaches her nose, she will believe someone knows her terrible truths.

Unique Detail - Duke

1. The Duke cares not for the bounty of nature here, he never has. The waters of the marsh are rich with nutrients for plants; irrigation trenches will drain the marshlands and see his own domain grown richer. Until such a time that construction is finished, his forsworn man patrol boats, seeking out those who think the Duke incapable of finding them in such deep wilderness.

Obstacles

Six environmental or other obstacles you might find in this location, no matter who's demesne it's in.

1. The flies here swarm, an endless blackened sky that seeks warmth and blood to keep itself whole. They seek to lay their eggs within warm flesh and are unrelenting in their greed and thirst. The drone is almost hypnotic, inviting, as if you might find purpose in being consumed entirely.
2. There is a stillness, a silence, that has come about. As if you are prey animals, walked too close to the predator in your midst, entirely unknowing. Frogs, birds, deer and such all look upon you with panic in their eyes; expecting blood to be spilt and life to be snuffed away.
3. Bloated ghouls, their bodies waterlogged and carved with strange whorls and sigils. They struggle with every movement, every gnashing of teeth. They swat and claw at unseen enemies. Blood might give them a moment's reprieve, and many of them are dressed in tatters enough to show they once held importance.
4. Serpents skate through the water and frogs dart about the trees; each colorful and patterned to hide in plain sight while revealing their noxious capacities. Humanity is uncommon here, they do not fear it; they find it curious.
5. Parasites hunger up from the depths, finding the soft flesh of the living mortal traveler to be a perfect vessel from which to propagate. Burrowing worms seek out bare places upon the body, compelled by warmth and a malign desire. If properly accommodated they will seek a means to control, to bloat, to bloom, and to burst forth elsewhere to further bring about their kind.
6. There is a mist in the distance of this swamp and a silhouette within. It gazes back and mirrors movements with slight delay. It is clearly intelligent, but it is unclear what it is. If called to it will not respond, but if bothered by the sound it will let out an unearthly shriek and flee with profane speed.

Opportunities

Six opportunities, be it to spread the revolution, secure supplies, or aid ailles you might find in this location.

1. Hanging limply from the treeline is a horrifying sight; a derelict mask that sways in the breeze. It covers the jaw and a single eye and is constructed from some baleful wood. It seems to watch and to wait, swaying subtly. Offering itself. The interior, that which would be pressed against the flesh; is a faded red. Bloodstained, deeply saturated.
2. In the depths of the marsh, ash trees congregate and swell; fed rich by the minerals in the soil and left untouched due to the obscurity of their location. It would be a risk to take them to be processed into weapons proper, but carving such implements here is not ideal either.
3. In a hollowed out oak sits a water-tight chest, well locked. Within are lists and numbers, penned in the elegant script of the unreformed Faith, yet the ink and paper are of recent make. Translation is crude at best for a layman, but it speaks of chokepoints and locations to attack in the event of an invasion from the mainland. It seems penned by the hand of a vampire.
4. A buoy half-sunk in the drink, likely some smuggler's hatch for the hiding of contraband that dare not be found anywhere in civilization. Inside, three vials of the blood sterling; enough to see one transformed and fit for action. A note lingers inside as well, but any script upon it has faded away from the humidity.
5. On occasion one might feel a clink or a clank when they step in the marsh. Sunken treasures, gold of old that marsh does not give up without some terrible purpose. The coins have a weight to them which malevolent spirits are drawn to. They bring out the worst in a person, and they do so very easily.
6. A spear of pumice stone sits atop the mud, belted in iron as if to prevent it from being touched; yet the irons are not barbed nor do they hold the stone beneath the filth. The cutting edge is strangely sharp and the whole of it weighs less than a feather. If unbound a dark cunning comes to mind, as if a divine intelligence spoke in dreams: "Feed me that which feasts on thee." A cackle, and it speaks it no more.

THE WESTERLY MOUNTAINS

Land Scene

(six elements / details of the location describing random details you might see /hear / smell nearby.)

- A great cliff face of jagged stones, like the scales of a pinecone. Ropes have ample place to hold to, but too much weight will see them cut as though they were as flimsy as joss paper. Eagles nest in the unreachable places, and the winds howl strangely as they drift between the jagged rocks.
- Long and winding vales overcast by a bitter gloom, with ranges of pine which cut across the rock like deep shadows. Every loose stone echoes when shifted even slightly, clattering until they carry across the wind as little more than a whisper.
- The pass here was cruelly hewn by hateful hands who found only resistance. Areas to walk here are narrow, the walls are abrasive, and snow accumulates quickly; toppling into crevices and blocking out the way. Goats congregate, great and whimsical shaggy ones who walk about the walls with disconcerting comfort.
- This snow-capped mountain dell obscures pitfalls and deadly drops under a sea of brittle frozen white. Foxes leap about, vanishing in and out of the snow, hunting marmots or other low born things. The sheen of light reflecting off the snow makes it blinding when one tries to gain their barings. There is a rumbling in the deep.
- The trees here grow brittle and narrow, with many a tripping root that seems malevolent, as if desiring to trip a hiker and send them teetering over a cliff or into the biting mouth of a crag. It smells of old dirt and the rough fatty smell of great mammals in hibernation. The air is still more often than not, but inclement weather rattles the dead wood like a whirlwind of whipping limbs.
- The barrier mountains give way here to deep valleys and great towering buttes. The stone runs grey-white towards the heavens and a bloody, ruddy red towards the earth. Plant life is scarce, save for ashy flowers which fade at the touch. Wolves howl in the distance and horse hooves rumble in echo, from some far off place.

Unique Detail - Baron

- In the hopes of finding clemency here, the Baron has seen road

shrines to the Reformed Faith carved deep into the stone, upon any place a pilgrim might be able to tread. Flagellants make their homes here from time to time, subsisting grimly upon ash. Hunters under the Baron's lash build road markers from the skulls of animals and the occasional human they encounter. Despite all the effort, it is a godless place.

Unique Detail - Countess

- The Countess keeps a winter retreat in the Westerlies, a baroque tower that gazes upon a valley of heavy snows; a blank canvas for her to envision her works. Her favorite subjects are occasionally granted dominion over it during the less favorable seasons, some go mad, some find clarity in the isolation. Traders and provisioners venture there often to see her stores are always supplied; many are broken by the thirst-maddened whims of her guests.

Unique Detail - Duke

- The Duke views the territories beyond the Westerly Mountains as land rightly his, cut off only by petty rocks. Mines and logging encampments are frequently constructed to strip and burn all that can be extracted from these mountains; manned by undesirables so as to make some use of them. Shipments of resources, ever dwindling, head towards his domain from here; and soon will come a time where explosives will render him passage to lands beyond to conquer.

Obstacles

Six environmental or other obstacles you might find in this location, no matter who's demesne it's in.

- Without warning a rockslide comes crashing down. The rumbling calamity rends the earth asunder from on high, brutalizing the path and destroying all that which gets in its way. Trees are battered out of place, cliffs become ever more precarious, and the pulverized corpses of pilgrim or lay beast reveal the uncaring cruelty nature can inflict.
- The path here is treacherous and winding, too narrow for any movement beyond single file order. Stepping out of place risks biting abrasion from the rough faces of rocks, or possibly plummeting off the edge of a cliff. Running is not an option for those who wish to live to see tomorrow, and a melee here would

be as insidious in its dangers as it is quick to end.

- Ancient waymarkers carved by inhuman hands lead to sheer walls of smooth stone. Finding ones way back from such points becomes a matter of riddles, as the sun sets strangely on the path back and the stars themselves seem different. Knocking comes from within the rocks, hypnotic and strange.
- A derelict camp and caravan is found nearby, battered and left to the wilds. Old worn clothes are strung up and thrown about, tattered as if caught by a mischievous and sneering gust of wind. No sign of blood or recent struggle is about, but embers in the firepit still glow. There is a disquiet to this place.
- Corpses, nude and dead by exposure, are found on the edge of the wild here. They must have succumb to some madness, some desire for the cold to make them warm. Their mouths are reddened, their teeth are gone, their eyes are black. Further away are other corpses, mangled, mutilated, half-devoured down to blackened bones. There is a rasping laughter in the distance that makes ones own stomach churn and rumble.
- Bitter winds, fierce and flaying to exposed skin, sap away warmth like a leech bloats itself on blood. They whip up dust and snow and thin the already desperate airs of the mountain. In the corner of the eye one might catch a figure, a strange light, and a sensual laugh; bidding a walk into the unknown and off a cliff into a waiting embrace.

Opportunities

Six opportunities, be it to spread the revolution, secure supplies, or aid ailles you might find in this location.

1. On the edge of a misbegotten crag there is a glint in the stone. Silver, a vein of it that runs deep into the maw of this mountain. It would take great effort to mine it, let alone to do so in secrecy to such an extent to be useful; but the mountains here are not well-walked. It could be done.
2. Over the next height looms a watchtower, well-weathered by time and the elements. A tattered banner, one not known since the Crimson Crown's regime, waves wildly in the mountain winds. There is no recent sign of habitation, and little resources immediately around it to grant it use.
3. Carved deep into the stone is a washing basin, around it strange

filigree run smooth and defaced by the ravages of time. In the bottom of the basin is a crude face, staring up at whoever might take a sip or wash their hands. The face seems oddly familiar, almost familial, and those who drink deep of these waters will have their dreams be one of deep roads and hidden locks, guarded by runes which if they only knew how to say, would see them opened.

4. In an icy cave mouth grow small curling flowers of deepest azure, which gleam like a twilight sky in the morning dew as it slowly freezes upon their petals. Ancient tomes of alchemy know their worth, a cure for a starving soul when properly rendered. Ancient tomes of necromancy also cite such an herb, a means to feast upon the souls that hunger. Only scholars long dead would know its truth.
5. An anchorite of the Reformed Faith dwells here in a long abandoned chapel, hard to approach but easy to find by hearthlight in the evening. They have found many heresies within the reformation, enough to form questions and to pen a text in the dim candlelight. They fear for humanity, for this is not how the world was meant to be. They wonder, darkly, when the usurpation truly came; and how much it was welcomed for preying upon our best natures.
6. An abandoned mine runs deep beneath the mountains here, stripped clean of resources but left standing with little more than a bulwark of old timbers to block it off from the world. It is a cold place, the walls knock in strange ciphers; and were it all to be blown up, it'd topple and destroy a great deal of the roads and paths towards the Stone Tongues and the west.

THE BRINKWOOD

Land Scene

(six elements / details of the location describing random details you might see /hear / smell nearby.)

1. The leafy canopies of this darkened wood blot out the sky, revealing its own dark tapestry where constellations are crafted from spider's silk and bioluminescent fungi held aloft by clawing branches. Foxes and shadows peek out from behind the great

gnarled trunks of trees, giving a glimpse of their shape before fading into the dark.

2. The trees here clutch toward the sky with bare and vengeful branches, draped among their wooden fingers are long dried strands of meat; entrails strewn about in warning from times none dare remember. The ground here is slick with fallen leaves and all manner of beetle slink about under the rot.
3. The foliage here grows strangely; from any angle, they fit perfectly together in continuing patterns of whorls and swirls, knots and filigree designed by some hand of nature's own innate divinity. Light pierces through the canopy above, touching floral vines and bidding them bloom so as to strike onlookers with awe of what the world once was.
4. The space between trees is filled with ever darkening foliage, making the places between places all the easier to see. These are the hidden paths, secreted ways to places known only in folktale and existing solely for bargains made in desperation. The sounds of the forest cease here, save for the mimicry of magpies; saying any little thing that might see you tread deeper.
5. From the treeline it is easy to make out ancient stonework, collapsed and overgrown. The walls of a manor perhaps, certainly a fountain; occasionally a statue long since defaced. Creeper roots and thorned vines choke away at this encroachment as tight as they ever have. A seductive chuckle comes on the breeze, as if the Brinkwood is amused by you; as if you might give it more to throttle and break.
6. The Brinkwood here runs fat and tall, with clutching roots thicker than the grandest of pythons. Sticky sap binds insects in amber, trapping them as they glut themselves to bloating. Bones, bestial and mannish, lay crushed among the boughs; as if the trees themselves had the capacity to bash and batter those that displeased them. Cicada drone their haunting songs, their brief moments of life above ground wasted here.

Unique Detail - Baron

- The Baron gazes upon the Brinkwood with trepidation, fearfully gnashing their teeth and plotting how to bargain with what lies within. Offerings, ritually decapitated and left to bleed out upon the treeline are left in the hopes that what neighbors here are as easily bargained with as those behind the stone borders of the fields.

Unique Detail - Countess

- The Countess finds herself enrapt by the beauty of the Brinkwood, the flowers that bloom and the trees that flourish. It is perfection, but it is beyond her control. Entering it she finds it denying her, tarnishing its beauty, rotting away the only thing she wants of it. At the borders she has begun construction of iron wrought fences, designed with filigree and embossment of the perfection she hungers for. She will have the Brinkwood once she finds a way to keep it, perfect, static, and unflinching.

Unique Detail - Duke

- The Duke knows well what lurks within the Brinkwood, and he will not allow it to stand. His servants engage in logging upon its borders, slashing and burning so as to tame the wilderness back; a daily task which should result in easy victory instead finds itself a war of attrition. His retainers seek to bend the Brinkwood to the Duke's will, but only by fire and iron will the insult of those within it be truly scourged from the annals of history.

Obstacles

Six environmental or other obstacles you might find in this location, no matter who's demesne it's in.

1. Huntsmen, servants of the vampires, wander this wildwood in the hopes of preying upon poachers or slaying fabled enemies of the realm. Most are vile and depraved, unwilling to parley lest they give up the element of surprise. Some though look to outsiders with ghoulish desperation, having been long displaced here; imprisoned and brought to the brink of sanity.
2. In every tree and bit of shadow there lies a hidden face, pareidolic or otherwise. Eyes appear in the whorls of the bark, teeth in splintered branches; a cackle comes from the rustling of leaves; silence comes across the Brinkwood with such stillness all one can hear is the beating of their own hearts. These faces seem to judge, and always are they found wanting.
3. Mushrooms can make a fine meal, but the Brinkwood reviles outsiders who tarry within its boundaries. Those who do not come with offerings will find any fungi that seems fit to feast upon to be a poisonous mockery of near-identical appearance to one found when nature is kind and bountiful.
4. Wolves of profound intelligence stalk the woods, singing low their songs in the night and through some strange ventriloquism,

wandering one way while their footfalls walk another path. Some are wise enough to speak, but seldom do they have kind words to say. They know the names of that which holds dominion over this land, and in the wars to come they will feast upon the carrion; as no folk is deserving their teeth in kindness.

5. Deep within the wood can be found ponds of preternatural darkness, reflecting skies long unseen by mortal eyes. They shimmer with a violet tinge, their reflections revealing lies, terrors and mortal hubris with a malevolent joy. The waters will steal the reflections of those who drink from them, and with a stolen form, they will make dark bargains with fouler things for freedom from their mirrored realm.
6. The singing of the Brinkwood starts slow and churning, the roots and the trees have voices hard to discern. If one hears the song it will only grow louder, more rambunctious and profane; the leaves sing out every sin, the earth howls of every injustice, and the chorus on the wind will dizzy and lead a listener only to tables upon which dark bargains are conjured in fear of never again leaving this wild place.

Opportunities

Six opportunities, be it to spread the revolution, secure supplies, or aid ailles you might find in this location.

1. An alcove, deeply carved by nature and elder entities, exists within this patch of wood. Impossible to see from the outside by those who are not bid to enter it, with scent masked by sickening spore and bilesome mollassus. A hiding place, a comforting place; easy to lose track of time within, but safe from intrusion.
2. Mortal folk left bound by barbed wire to the trees, offerings to the entities within the woods or merely left to die by the elements in a place where help is hard to come by. Starved and cut deep, they'll swear themselves to whatever cause might grant them another day of life beyond their painful conditions.
3. A vampire is dead here, impaled on a spear of jagged birch which runs through their hip and out their mouth. Their entrails are strewn about with mocking intent, like festive banners. Whoever did this did so quickly, and be they mortal folk they could be of worth to the revolution.

4. Arrows of ancient make embedded in the sap of an ancient, bloated tree. Their fletching is simple, their shafts are sturdy, and their arrowheads are barbed in silver and carved of ash wood. There are only a few here, left almost as if fate or something desiring violence, wished you to find them.
5. There is a fox on the middle of the forest clearing, it looks upon you as if it knows your purpose; your game, your reason for being. It looks up a mask-holder like a foolish old friend, offering through body language a desire to be followed by such a folk into places safer, deeper, darker, and more of a purpose for the entity the mask represents. It will offer to buy away your mask and your debt in such a place, its words biting but true. It will offer far harsher terms.
6. A circle of mushrooms is present here, a gateway; a meeting place between the fae and the mortal world where terms of hospitality and arrangements must be honored. Stepping into such a place requires gifts, invitations, and knowledge of the seasons and compacts of fae politics. If properly observed, safe passage and good fortune can be had. Even the most minor of mistakes will lead to treachery and damnation.

Towns of Cardenfell

(language here about towns, their importance, geography, etc.)

INNISFIRTH

POWDER MILLS

Imports: Saltpeter, Coal

Exports: Black Powder

The powder mills are crucial to the manufacture of black powder, which arms the vampire's lackeys and digs their mines deeper than ever before. It is made in water mill-driven factories, where great runner-mills of limestone grind charcoal and sulfur together, before boiling it with dissolved salt-peter in great kettles. The charcoal is produced on-site in separate kilns, kept away from the main building to avoid risk of the fire from the kilns catching and exploding the milled gunpowder.

Grinding cacophony of shining limestone runner-mills. Workers dressed carefully in static-resistant aprons and gloves, crude masks of vinegar-soaked linen and goggles. Faintly steaming charcoal-kilns, bubbling brass kettles of saltpeter. Great barrels of black powder, kept under careful watch separate from the main facility, a great brass water-wheel providing turning-power to the runner-mills.

TEXTILE MILLS

Imports: Sheep wool, flax

Exports: Textiles, linen

Textile mills were some of the first factories to be built, along rivers that could drive their great water-wheels which in turn drove their great, swinging looms. Textile mills are dangerous places to work, and the workers who staff them risk being mangled by turning gears, getting limbs or stray bits of clothing caught in the swinging looms, or receiving a blow from a loose or wayward shuttle as it swings back and forth across a loom. Some mills produce linen from flax, while others produce wool textiles from sheep's wool. Some produce a mix of the two. Most of these

textiles and linens end up shipped to Flaypool, a nearby village where they are dyed in great vats before being shipped off to clothiers across the Bloody Isles.

Rhythmic tapping and clattering as shuttles swing back and forth. Rows and rows of looms, each attended by a worker dressed carefully to avoid loose bits of thread or clothing. Sharp eyes and quick hands, great focus on the task at hand. An oppressive heat and stink from human bodies clutched closely together.

Street Scene

(six elements / details of the town describing random details you might see on the “streets” of this town under the vampire lord).

1. Workers go about wheeling barrels and carting around large wheelbarrows of coal. They are tired folk, soot-stained and often bearing the scars of their industries. Many are missing a finger, some a bit of foot. All cough and hack and groan at the miserable heat of their outfit and toil.
2. Traders and specialists perform inventory on a special order of textiles, something for someone struggling to be of importance; as surely a truly important lord could find better clothes than those made here. They bicker and grumble about quality and cost.
3. Crimson Crown alchemists are visiting, inspecting the saltpeter and the black powder. They are dreary and combative with the local landlords and taskmasters who go out of their way to preach the quality of their product. There are rumblings of a new formulae, and this is not what they expected.
4. A local kiln is undergoing repairs, slower than desired by the landlords but the damage on the item shows a need for patience. The laborers seeing it back to burning shape bare brutal manglements, the consequences of having been rushed in the past.
5. The folk here, many injured; missing an eye, missing a hand, limping from a shattered ankle or leaning upon a crutch, do their best to perform their labors whilst being observed by hungry landlords who desire the means to justify taking more from those they've abused in their industries.
6. The highest ranking landlord gives a tour to lesser types from out of town, explaining the processes in vague and incorrect terms, in

the hopes of reaping more capital. When the populace and their many pains are noted, the landlord comments crassly of their expendability.

NPCs

Six brief npc descriptions that live in this town

1. **The Deaf Overseer** has worked the kilns and the powder mills longer than most of their employees have been alive. They lost their hearing in one of the many explosions they've witnessed over a long and laboring life. Though broad and burly, they move with surprising deftness and dexterity; speaking with hand gestures and reading lips. They shout only when appearances are needed to be kept up, assured that if their master knew it'd be taken as an insult and lead to their disposal.
2. **The Chemical Genius** is merely a mortal folk destined for vampirism and further training, as they are possessing a mental acumen second to none with regards to black powder. They can tell the quality of a load by touch, and have come up with many ideas concerning delayed explosions and false loads that could be manufactured; should one have need for such things.
3. **The Melted One** was caught in an accident involving a boiling lime compound which saw them rendered into a melted thing, features displaced and limbs made malformed. They are of good spirits, but the biting comments from travellers and the vampires strike a nasty chord. Violence grows deep in their heart and they blame their master for the pain of living, though they'd never voice that aloud.
4. **The Loomweaver** is skilled despite her six missing fingers, working the clattering machines of the Textile Mills. Her mother taught her the trade at home and things were kinder there, less about efficiency, more about quality. She yearns to make things of beauty again, but also knows she's only one finger loss away from being dinner for the landlords.
5. **The Flaypool Runner** is young and lucky for it, having always been swift of foot and charming enough to work as a messenger rather than a laborer proper. They make the run between Innisfirth and Flaypool, keeping a tight ledger and ensuring everything arrives on time. They're often encountered on the road betwixt such places, occasionally lazing about.

6. **The Repairman** doesn't want to hear about your troubles or your dream, the Repairman wants only to fix whatever machinery is broken. Disillusioned after his family was culled, the Repairman has found clemency by focusing on cogs and metal bits, things that fit into place and have a reason to do so. He carries a hammer, the head of which comes off to reveal a stake. He's hunting for the one who gave the order. He'll keep fixing things until he is given cause to break.

Features / Districts

2-4 unique features or districts for this town.

- **The Old Gunneryworks** are built behind tall, thick reinforced walls of stacked sandbags and clay; so as to ensure no errant shot might make its way towards the neighboring Powder Mill and cause an ensuing calamity. Powderguns, bombasts, and the occasional new bit of weaponry is manufactured here for the military applications of the vampiric lords. Production has slowed over the past few years due to the Duke's private investments causing him to withdraw support for armaments which might benefit his rivals. The manufacturing buildings and powder stores exist now mostly abandoned save for a skeleton crew unappreciated by the Countess for their lack of artistry, and unhandled by the Baron who has seemingly forgotten of the investments made here.
- **The Blasting Pit** is all that remains of the first Powder Mill in Innisfirth, having burnt down due to explosive concentrates in the soil which turned a single kiln explosion into a calamity which nearly burnt down the whole of Innisfirth. The grounds here are meager, littered with shrapnel, and populated primarily by itinerant workers in tents who have not yet earned enough to afford even the most destitute of housing. There is no safety living in this district, and proper citizens look down upon the less fortunate here.
- **The Mangling Mill** is the most automated of all the Textile Mills in Innisfirth, and for this it is readily reviled by those who work the looms and great stitching machines. There is not a day where a limb is not severed, a digit removed, or a body broken by the cruel

machinations of industry. Lost appendages are confiscated by the ghoulish landlord who runs the mill, as he is said to both feast upon and fetishize the severed fleshy bits in his back office.

- **The Hostel Row** exists on the edge of town, catering to new arrivals to Cardenfell with coin enough to afford a wooden slab in a run down tenement house where the rent is too high and privacy is a luxury few can afford. The landlord and their bailiffs often pilfer mementos and rummage through belongings, robbing blind any tenant who has overstayed their scant welcome; seeing them forced out to the streets or forced into the subjugation of their petty, vile demands.

Obstacles

Six environmental or other obstacles you might find in this town, no matter who's demesne it's in.

1. Industrial fires are common, as despite the best safety efforts the vampires might enforce, their workers are overtired, underpaid, and provided with the cheapest equipment needed to ensure profitability at the risk of destruction. Fire consumes all, and with black powder in abundance; a fire destroys what it does not easily kill.
2. Broken machinery be it hauled across town on flimsy wagons, or in its proper place, scourges and maims with reckless abandon. Touching the wrong gear, getting liquid upon it, or simply bumping up against it can cause mechanisms to churn and rip, blast and burst; with no regard for life. Limbs are easily split and bones easily broken by such machines; and given their expense, anger is often directed at the injured more than at the infernal contraption.
3. Cramped spaces are in abundance within Innisfirth; the roads are narrow and labor always sees them crowded and dangerously so. Homes for mortal folk are built side to side, crushing like a vice those who live within while expecting of them exorbitant rent. Personal space is a luxury and as a result of this, the teeming masses of the city are eternally locked in a bad mood.
4. Chemical spills happen more than should, but with the crowdings in Innisfirth and the hustle-and-bustle of industry, they are an inevitability and those caught up in them must pray for death; for the alternative is to continue in an agonized state. Lime sloughs of

flesh with heat that deadens nerves to a chill, and certain lubricants to the textile machines can burn skin in a rash that blisters and pops for weeks on end.

5. Pickpockets and urchins run the streets, ducking and weaving within the crowds, filching whatever it is they can from passerbyers in the hopes of getting enough to fill their bellies; albeit not enough to prevent them from moving as they do. It is a vicious cycle of starvation wages, often funded by lesser landlords who seek to upend their richer rivals and make use of children to do so.
6. Gang wars have happened in Innisfirth, culminating in conflict when the lords of Cardenfell are occupied with their own petty wars. The Textile Mill owners compete with the Powder Mill owners, while tenement house owners and the old gunnerywork founders make double-crosses and sell out their mortal chattel in exchange for a chance to draw knives against those a step above them.

Opportunities

Six opportunities, be it to spread the revolution, secure supplies, or aid ailles you might find in this town

1. To a tactical mind, Innisfirth is as much a political powderkeg as it is a literal one. Set violence against one area of the town, blow up one building, lesser vampires will seek out the chance to fill the power vacuum; which will in turn set their enemies against them. A well placed bombing could hobble the Lords of Cardenfell's industrial ambitions and set the city upon itself for weeks on end; a pragmatic move that would cost many folk their lives, but could also offer a chance to weaken multiple lords and their holdings.
2. Distracting noises never cease in the city, the machinery, explosions, kiln firings, and the muttering of the crowds ensures that nobody can get a good grasp on where a sound might be originating from. Crowds ignore that which does not immediately panic them, and they are used to the sounds of powdershot as much they are of any other calamitous booming.
3. It does not take much to drive a crowd to anger here, most of the folk are at their wits end already and once the fuse is lit; it cannot be easily snuffed. Desperation, despair and rage can drive a crowd to loot, murder, or burn; such is the way Innisfirth has

conditioned its people. Strife from the factions at play has seen darker deeds done at a moment's notice, and a revolution could make use of this unrest.

4. Child beggars and urchins are good at finding a mark, and if properly paid could work well as a network of lesser spies and informants. Trust is hard to earn, and giving them what they deserve might see them preyed upon by their own. One might need to take part in the dire circumstances of their situation to make their employment reliable.
5. Smugglers from the Veins and other lesser territories to the south are always desiring black powder to help fund private wars and profiteer. Many are backed by various vampires who wish to usurp those in control of the Powder Mill; and if one is willing to darken their morals, the smugglers might offer up supplies in exchange for useful distractions that better allow them to do their deed.
6. Before Innisfirth's textile industry fell to wretched machinery it was notable across the mainland proper. The loom workers and seamstresses made use of silver needles which flowed through fabric like mercury, creating works of splendor which would bring a tear to your eye. These needles still exist, hidden and passed through family lines. They can win morale among the textile workers, or they could be used in weaponry if gathered in abundance.

GRISMONT

LEATHERWORKS

Imports: Animal skins

Exports: Leather

By law, leatherworks are kept to the outskirts of town, so powerful is the stink and acrid pollution they bellow from their fetid pits. Here, animal skins are stretched and dried before being tanned in great wooden barrels stuffed full of various pungent odorants and chemicals. They belch run-off in great, rivuleting streams, poisoning and sickening the ground beneath them.

An overpowering stink. Great lanes of drying racks. Vast pools of chemical stink, and large cask barrels and tubs filled to the brim with all

manner of foulness.

ALE BREWERY

Imports: Grain

Exports: Ale

Tall, stilt-like structures arranged into multiple floors, to allow gravity and brass pipeworks to easily transfer each phase of brew to the next. Grain is mixed with water in vast tubs before being lautered and filtered down to produce wort, which is funneled into great brass kettles. These kettles boil the wort, and bitters and sometimes other ingredients is added in this step. Finally, on the bottom floor, the proto-beer is filtered into great oak barrels and mixed with active yeast to begin fermentation. After about two weeks, the warm-fermented ale is poured into smaller casks ready for export.

The sweet scent of brewing grain and sugars, great tubs and brassworks snaking down through multiple floors, ladders, stairs, and scurrying workers between floors. Warm brewing and fermenting floors, and the creak and rustle of settling barrels.

Street Scene

(six elements / details of the town describing random details you might see on the “streets” of this town under the vampire lord).

1. Vampires offboard from a stagecoach and are immediately beset by the terrible wafting stench of the nearby leatherworks. When they wretch, cringe, and begin to complain to their coachman the powerful bitter stink of fermentation from the famed ale breweries causes them further discomfort. They cast hateful glances at anyone noticing their display, compose themselves, and move on to their business.
2. A young **powderman** engages in conversation with a town **bailiff**, discussing the specific bouquet of flavor to be found locally. The powderman fires a fancy pistol at empty bottles while commenting on an appreciation for the sickly blood of leatherworkers. The bailiff prefers the drunks, adds a little something to it. Any onlooker is chastized as dropping eaves and screamed at to go back to work, weapons brandished.

3. There is a cacophony of shouts followed by a terrible liquid rolling; the fetid pits of the leatherworkers have flooded and begun spilling into town. Those who can flee the streets before the stink gets upon them. Some in their homes toss out their chamberpots through windows; such filth will be negligible in stench for at least a few hours.
4. Newly minted peers stumble forth from a fine ale-house, carrying one of their comrades who is in a mad panic. The carried peer shouts obscenities, claims assassins in the ale-house dosed them with poison, and that all those within must pay. The ones carrying comment on their friend drinking themselves blind and how they just need to find something to eat to cure the ailment. They are all, clearly, inebriated.
5. Caravans departing for elsewhere on the Isle, overburdened with palettes of fine leather or barrels of alcohol belted tightly together. Coachmen and teamsters discuss the state of the roads and the various bickering of the lords. Barristers make sure travelling papers are in order, making last minute demands on pay when an oversight is found.
6. Some **huntsmen** cart a great and strange beast through town, bidding cautious questions and bold boasting. They loudly demand the finest of leatherworkers come to flay and make mighty works for the creature, such that it might impress the lords under which they all serve,

NPCs

Six brief npc descriptions that live in this town.

1. **The Brewer** who works the Stills has long been a master at her craft; the acrid scent of her surrounds have long since faded from her taste, allowing her to truly appreciate that which she works on. She has been worried about the vintage of her equipment, knowing it to be tested and to provide the finest alcohols--but also noting that with every production the chance of it bursting grow all the more possible.
2. **The Siblings** have labored for the Lords of Cardenfell, making use of their petty inherited fortunes to try to win over the approval of their betters and be made into vampires for their efforts. Though originally of Drancaster, they have been slowly expanding their ventures in Grismont, seeking to make bolder names for

themselves. Their power-grasping has not gone unnoticed, both peasants and lesser vampires look upon them with contempt.

3. **The Gristleman** is but a boogeyman, not a true creature as that would be wretched beyond comprehension. They say it has a single horn and teeth that splay out like knives. It lurks in the fetid pools and fat pits, in dark congress with the **gristlegobs**. So long as it is given respect and sacrifice, it will bleakly aid those it considers to be its servants. If such a creature existed.
4. **The Poacher** knows the people of Grismont would starve or be put to the lash if they dared to consume more than what is allotted to them; and she has no desire to numb her rage on the swill liquors the folk are bid to consume. She hungers for meat, for stag, elk, bear and pheasant. She is a skilled huntress, her bows hidden up a tree she has to climb under the veil of darkness. She eats well and sees others eat well too, but she is distraught as she wishes she could do more.
5. **The Teamsters** at the coachmen companies haul goods too and fro, their backs aching, their limbs taut as tree trunks. They deal in cards and drink rotgut or the occasional bit of good alcohol that has been “misplaced.” They know the roads, they know their threats, and they know to carve strange runes to indicate secret signs of hospitality only other teamsters can discern.
6. **The Coachmaster**, a landlord in charge of the various coachmen companies in Grismont; views his work like that of a beating heart. He controls the flow of supplies, goods and services, for he owns the coachmen who drive such things across the isle. An egoist and self-important tactician, he thinks himself better than his lord and is in need of a humbling before he brings their wrath upon Grismont.

Features / Districts

2-4 unique features or districts for this town.

1. **The Fat Pits** outside of town, beneath a hill ridge beside the leatherworker’s encampment; are without a doubt, some of the most vile cesspits outside the Baron’s innermost territories. They flood and spill far out of their bounds, sluicing about the lower roads in Grismont more often than anyone would like. Children sing songs of the Gristleman who dwells beneath the rot, but those who work near it don’t abide such petty chants; considering

- them a mockery not needed in an already dangerous profession.
2. **The Tap Houses** of Grismont are some of the finest on the Isle, and touring noblemen from the mainland are as likely to stop in as any soldier on leave from their master. They serve powerful brews and seek to provide comfort to those who can pay their coin. Most who live in Grismont, among mortal folk, are unable to afford entry into these places.
 3. **The Stills** will burst, sooner rather than later. They are ancient, they churn out fine beers, but they are coming undone. Some believe accidents that occur within the Stills are the work of saboteurs from the lands of rival lords, seeking to destroy the local economy and devastate Grismont.
 4. **The Coachmaster's Company Hall** holds the various maps and ledgers regarding the roads and highways of the Isle, their upkeep, and their patrol schedules. Coachmen and carriage drivers from across the isle return here once a year to pay tithing to the Coachmaster, submit reports, and swear oaths of loyalty which grow more concerning with each passing of the seasons.

Obstacles

Six environmental or other obstacles you might find in this town, no matter who's demesne it's in.

1. One of the outer stills has burst, flooding volatile alcohols into the streets. Boiling hot, overwhelming to smell upon the air, and a sign of potential troubles to come; such an explosion attracts the wrong sort of attention on many levels. **Bailiffs** are out in full, seeking out saboteurs and looking for anyone to blame.
2. The nauseating stench of the nearby leatherworks is in pique condition today, either due to ghastly heat or an unfortunate turning of the breeze. The stink chokes those who travel the streets of Grismont, thick as a miasma and blinding to the eyes as much as it is an irritant to the nose. Navigation is cumbersome and unpleasant.
3. **Gristlegobs** have emerged from the fat pit and other refuse heaps, though unlike elsewhere on the Isle; they act in a strange unity here. Their tactics are vicious, and if not for their gnawing misplaced teeth and vile weapons, could be mistaken for surgical in their effectiveness. They seek to flee back to the fat pit with anything they cleave, cut, or steal; taking fresh meat and any

shiny bits they cast a milky eye upon.

4. Fat-slavering **ghouls** have slunk out from the wilderness and begun bloating themselves on the refuse of the fat pit. They seek more bestial than most of their kin, possessed of a desire to bloat themselves to the point of seizing and ripping their flesh apart. They will gladly consume blood and raw meat if they catch its scent.
5. Drunken nobility stumbling out of the tap houses are a frequent problem for the locals, as such dandies; be they vampire or merely wealthy, often seek to prove their dominance by shows of violence, vicious name-calling, and other threats that come only with privilege. Any action taken against them will at the very least result in admonishment and a brutal lashing.
6. Due to poor accounting by the Coachmaster, traffic clogs the roads in and out of Grismont. As the Coachmaster believes he is beyond making such errors, this is clearly the work of agents who suspect his motives. His brute agents, **bailiffs** and road wardens mostly, are seeking anyone who entered town recently who are surely the enemy he needs to beat to death for order to be restored.

Opportunities

Six opportunities, be it to spread the revolution, secure supplies, or aid ailles you might find in this town.

1. **The Poacher** has killed a colossal feral hog, so immense in size she knows too well that none will believe she killed it with a knife or woodworker's axe. She has taken to cleaning the beast in the nearby wilderness; those willing to lend a hand in the butchery will be rewarded with meat enough to glut their aching bellies for a week.
2. The many terrible stench of Grismont could serve well as chemical weaponry if properly harnessed. A vampire can be easily overwhelmed by sensory overload if bathed in the volatile alcohols and rippling offal of the pits here. How one could bottle and conceal the smell until desired is another question entirely.
3. The fat pit is often water-logged, but if one were to skim the surface they'd have access to globs of flammable grease; the sort that burn hot, fast, and deep into the flesh. The pit itself could serve as a large fire source if one could see it dried out.

4. Despair and horror can sap at the morale of any venture, let alone one as arduous and hard fought as a revolution. Alcohol has long been a cause and solution of many of life's problems, and a steady supply of good quality beer could see the revolution's morale more secure.
5. **The Coachmaster's** petty ambitions will eventually see him put to the wrack and exsanguinated, but until such a time as that comes he serves as a convenient way to engage in long distance wars. Changing his ledgers, sneaking contraband on coaches, changing patrol logs; all such things could allow for easy movement of revolutionaries--or as a means to engage in proxy warfare by framing up conflicts between the Lords of Cardenfell.
6. The children here sing horrid nursery rhymes about the **Gristleman**, who dwells in the meat-soaked ground and offers up boons for flesh. If such a creature exists, and rites to summon it can be discerned from folktale, it could be a dark ally against the vampires. The Fae make dealings, and this creature could be one of them.

DRANCASTER

BRASSWORKS

Imports: Copper, Coal

Exports: Brass

If the Bloody Isles is shielded by steel and powder, it runs on brass. Resilient, cheap, and perfect for the manufacture of everything from doorknobs to gears, it is brass that makes the wheels of bloody industry turn. Brass is manufactured in great, bellowing brassworks, where Copper and Zinc are melted together in great crucibles. The molten brass is poured and cooled in molds to form “cakes”, which are then rolled out using great moving metal “rollers” driven by water wheels. The rolled brass is then cut, twisted, shaped, and packed into all manner of bits and bobs necessary to keep the Bloody Isles humming along.

Fiery crucibles carefully wheeled along steel cross-beams, poured into molds with chains and hooks. Great rollers pressing and rolling white-hot brass into thin plates. Bellowing smokestacks from the great coal ovens that heat and fire the crucibles.

Street Scene

(six elements / details of the town describing random details you might see on the “streets” of this town under the vampire lord).

1. Alchemists grade the quality of brass odds-and-ends, commenting on purity levels and the lack thereof to overseers who nod like sycophantic lickspittle. Once berated, the overseers then go on to yell at whoever they can for quality issues. The meticulous tedium sees that tempers flare up quickly.
2. Workers in all manner of injury wait in queue to a medicant’s tent where they seek some balm to soothe them of their pains. They commiserate in hushed grumbles as the occasional bailiff or taskmaster perform inspections to ensure such injuries are in need of attention.
3. Workers on a break sit outside and drink mugs of a thick muddy beer, occasionally mixing in bits of vegetable or dipping in dried

bread. They speak to one another about the latest batch of metal; wondering aloud who is going to face the lash for impurities in it that aren't their fault. Bells are rung too soon, forcing them to swallow down all they can at a manic pace.

4. From a corner soap box a proselytizer of the Reformed Faith preaches the value of the work done here. They ring a handbell manufactured en masse here in Drancaster, but treat it as though it is an object handcrafted by an artisan. It is clear they don't know the true workings of this town, and the folk here do their best to let the preaching fade into the rest of the sounds of industry.
5. Struggling mules risk breaking their backs pulling carts of ingots from one foundry to the next. When wheels inevitably break, workers do their best to prevent further stopgaps in production. All parties cough and hack from the smoke and oppressive heat on the streets.
6. The great water wheels of Drancaster churn slowly, creaking low like an ancient tree slowly being unrooted from the earth. Urchins strain through the murky waters, collecting the odd bits and bobs to pawn off. Great, grumpy looking toads slowly boil to death in the runoff waters.

NPCs

Six brief npc descriptions that live in this town.

1. **The Crowned** is a known criminal element, tolerated by the least of the vampires in Drancaster for the blackmail he can so easily get his grimy hands on. Someone tried to kill him once by dipping his head in molten bronze, but he managed to shank the assailant after suffering horrible burns to his scalp and brow. The Crowned could be a vampire if he plied his influence right, but he doesn't care for it; he blames the Reformed Church for making it sound like he'd have his mind warped by taking up the Blood Sterling.
2. **The Lord of the Lash** is sciron to the chief landlords of Drancaster, denied true power by his family who linger in hedonistic deploys. With little way to gain power in their shadow he seeks instead to perfect himself and his craft. The Lord of the Lash hates perceived laziness as much as he hates vice, it reminds him too much of family; and as such he vents his frustration by way of a brass-scourged cat-of-nine-tails on any worker he finds not carrying what he believes to be their weight.

3. **The Muleskinner** hates her work, for it is thankless and often puts her in a position where she has to turncoat on other workers lest she be punished for their failings. She drives the mules, it isn't her fault if the metal is impure or someone broke a wagon. Nobody cares that it isn't her fault, when she mitigates blame to those at fault, she's seen as a traitor. She's lonely, nobody to share a drink with or kind words. She spends time with the mules, treats them right; somebody has to. They try their best for her.
4. **The Brass Devil** is a vampiric knight of unknowable age, encased within antiquated armor and masked behind a helmet shaped like a hateful crescent moon. He maintains an archival tower in the Court of the Brazen, searching for some ancient alchemical remedy half-remembered and lost to ciphers and the ages. He rarely leaves his tower, save for meetings with other important lordlings which require him to find neutral ground for conversation.
5. **The Smoker** has a laugh, it's a deep rumbling thing like an alcoholic hacking up broken glass. He's not a vampire, though he was once; served the Baron and can only laugh when asked about it. Smoke pours out from his eyes and between his teeth unless he's drinking his rotgut. He knows all the hidden ways in Drancaster, some say he can talk to rats. He thinks he could take this town, he'd just have to crucify a few vampires of station on pikes of brass. He helps a lot with smuggling from the Drancaster Bridge; but no one can easily tell who he's playing for.
6. **The Wheelwrights** are sisters who just have a way with wood and water, a specific combination of materials that they can just seemingly sing into cooperation. The larger water wheels of Drancaster are still mostly wood, though newer ones are brass for sake of simplicity. The Wheelwrights don't care for that. Metal doesn't belong in water like that, it should sink. No one knows why they hold such an erudite philosophy, but rumor among workers is that they're descended from some strange sea-folk, or possibly some sort of river witches stuck working in this capitalist hellscape.

Features / Districts

2-4 unique features or districts for this town.

1. **The Furnaces** are ever burning, ever churning out the latest bit of brass to fulfill its purpose on the island. The symbolism is not lost

on those who work here, for they are put through crucibles of fire and injury, bent and broken to see their master's pettiest works made manifest; scalded and slashed for sake of a nail or button. It is a dreary area of sinister embers and boundless smoke, inhabited by the weary and distraught.

2. **The Wheelwards** run by the river and the great industrial water wheels which assist in the manufacturing process. Houses are crammed next to one another on narrow streets; as main fareways exist only for the sake of industry. The groaning of the wheels and the rushing of the water, combined with the stench of runoff, make it a poor place to live for those who have yet to acclimate.
3. **The Court of the Brazen** greets those entering from the Drancaster Bridge, a veritable marketplace where any vampire worth their blood sterling can find what it is they desire. The courtyards and plazas are laid with intricate brasswork designs which in the heat of the day is enough to burn through the shoddy soles of mortal folk's footwear. Fountains and historic buildings from times before the Crimson Crown are still here, albeit constructed upon to erase any idea of independence no matter how far in the past.
4. **The Court of the Manifest** is a district of banks, vaults, storehouses and artisan craftspeople who work to ensure purity and purpose to whatever items are leaving Drancaster while bearing the mark of the city upon their crates. Such goods represent the upper echelons of the city and the Lords of Cardenfell to the wider world. Those who work here are shot of eye and bent of back, their anguish coming from scrutiny and punishment for imperfections.

Obstacles

Six environmental or other obstacles you might find in this town, no matter who's demesne it's in.

1. **Huntsmen** from across the demesne of various lords come to Drancaster seeking new firearms. Iron guns are efficient, but a firearm customized with artisan brass components sings with the cruelty of a personal touch. They could be ordering in bulk or merely looking to try out their weapons on the riff-raff. No one will hold them to account for a few dead folk.
2. The waterwheels upon the river have slowed to a stop, choked

with pollutants and debris. Industry does not stop so easily, and unless the components can be cooled by water or manually moved to their next step; fire, injury, and loss of productivity will see further pain inflicted upon the people here.

3. Displaced nobles from the mainland have wandered from the Court districts, decked to the nines in elaborate clothing; festooned with riches. They are proud, they know they will find their way back; this is just a shortcut after all. If something were to happen to them here, it would be noticed; it would draw further painful attention. They need to be moved before someone gives into desperation.
4. A brawl between laborers has spilled out on to the streets, the mob devouring itself in the hopes of finding clemency from their overseers and taskmasters. There was a flaw in their labors, and rather than waiting for someone to be punished they will enact such violence for themselves while their masters watch, laughing; as they'd have only hurt one soul. The collateral damage is notable, innocents are dragged in, and the brawl will only be stopped when it begins to cut into productivity. This will count as their reprieve for the day.
5. Those who cannot afford their meager lot subsisting on the scraps granted to them in wages by their overlords will find themselves preyed upon by moneylenders who make their money off the toil of debtors. Those who cannot repay the heavy loans are bound into indentured service, working for even less than they once had, and easily drained of all blood by vampires who seek to absolve debts by the purchase of chattel. Every family in Drancaster knows more than a few unfortunate souls who will be culled at a moment's notice.
6. Old world grudges come to the island where such conflicts can be waged without dragging too many resources or reputations into account. Drancaster, much like any urban environment, is where such violence can come to fruition; agents waging proxy war and terrorism against their rivals while the common folk cower and the local vampires seek to serve both sides.

Opportunities

Six opportunities, be it to spread the revolution, secure supplies, or aid ailles you might find in this village

1. Misplaced shipments and orders can lead to resources sitting idle in the Court of Manifest for years on end, with no true accounting for them save for what is written of in ledgers. Knowing what to steal which will go unnoticed can see supplies of brass easily secured for the revolution; though none can know when the misplaced items will be rediscovered and desired, or who will suffer for their theft.
2. Moulds and schemata for nearly every component used in artifice on Cardenfell can be found in Drancaster if one has the luck and time enough to search for it. Infiltrating archives or the back vaults of banks and factories could allow a clever insurgent to know the flaws of any brass product on the island. For an even craftier rebel, it could allow them to create new flaws to exploit.
3. Gang politics and dastardly loans can see a soul broken after a game of cards in a back alley; but those who can cheat and win their way to victory might find themselves holding assets, favors, and living beings in bondage. Hold enough debts against a crew of thugs, gamblers, and workers and you can sway them to all sorts of violent action on promise of forgiveness; should they survive.
4. Though few would care to admit it for sake of how humbling it is, brass is what truly keeps Cardenfell in a place of importance. It is rich in the resource and it manufactures parts which allow the Crimson Crown to focus their attention on other pursuits. Destroying a factory and pinning the act on an upstart lord could direct the Lords of Cardenfell against their own, forcing them to act in weakness and with haste lest the mainland be forced to remedy this delay.
5. Dark hearts and parentless youths fill the streets of Drancaster, young minds easy to fill with propaganda and violence against their oppressors. Everyone knows a kid who lost their parents, their siblings, their loves to debt and back alley payments in Drancaster. Everyone knows a kid who is already broken by knowing their future is to be spent toiling and forging brass. If you can accept putting a youth in the line of fire, they're more than plentiful to recruit for revolution.
6. **The Smoker, the Crowner**, and any number of lesser criminal entities are always looking for new talent to help them in their heists and schemes. They'll never give you enough information, they don't trust easy, but they promise a fair cut and enjoy the company of those with hands violent enough to see their dark

works done.

STAMLEIGH

IRONWORKS

Imports: Coal, Iron

Exports: Steel

Ironworks are great factories of ash and iron, whose products and secrets are guarded jealously by the vampire lords. Outside, peat-earth mounds are used to compress raw coal into more powerful coke fuel, capable of reaching the enormous temperatures needed to produce steel. Inside, the great heat of blast furnaces melts raw iron into pig iron, which in turn is placed into vast puddling furnaces where, fired with coke, pig iron is converted into raw steel. The steel is finally cast into bars and plates suitable for the manufacture of weapons and armor.

Ever-present, overpowering heat. Workers clad in heavy leather mitts and aprons sweating as they haul and maneuver great crucibles of molten iron and steel. Brick-work, circular puddling furnaces. Chains, beams, and hooks. Great, clattering noise, the ringing of metal on metal, and the roar of the blast furnace. Careful guardsmen patrolling the catwalks above.

Street Scene

(six elements / details of the town describing random details you might see on the “streets” of this town under the vampire lord).

1. Workers pile on to a fleeing man, tackling him to the ground before hauling him up as he struggles. A vampiric overseer, rippling in muscle and with a face as kind as a rock, wraps a chain three-times around a fat fist. A word is uttered, "Thief", and as if that is all that needs be said, the vampire brutalizes the man into raw and mangled meat; breaking jaw and skull; leaving him twitching and twisting on the ground, choking on his own bit-through tongue. Everyone returns to work, as if this is not uncommon.
2. The furnaces burn red hot, hauntingly so; as if they take pleasure in devouring man's ambition. Through insulated uniforms, the workers toil; their faces as red as the fires and drenched in sweat which stings the eyes and dessicate the lips. Their boots clatter as they march through the streets; occasionally one falls and does not get up.
3. Guardsmen in fine uniform and polished rifles upon their shoulders march through the streets of Stamleigh as though they were on parade. As a weapon of oppression against the common folk, these still mortal operatives have learned fast to either bow to the viciousness of their masters or be subjected to it. Those who do not salute them at a glance are liable to have their teeth knocked in with the butt of a gun.
4. Folk in heavy leather jumpsuits carry a length of gigantic chain, each link nearly as broad as they are tall. They march in unison, their eyes focused only on their destination. Other civilians and carriages do their best to stand aside of their labors.
5. Young folk cart around fresh, albeit imperfect, coke fuel; barking their value to wayward workers who might be enticed to further feed their fires so productivity might improve. Fights break out when two of such ventures occupy the same street, the youths becoming as vicious as any cutthroat; screaming vitriol and accusations to one another.
6. Clerics and aspirants of the Reformed Faith march down the street, ringing heavy hand-bells of iron, their limbs shackled to one another, calling out prophecies of doom if mankind does not submit to the whims of the world. Dragged behind them are the weakest and most zealous of their order, flagellants brutalizing themselves with barbed chain whips.

NPCs

Six brief npc descriptions that live in this town.

- **The Chain Gang** are a collective of folk from across Cardenfell, criminals who could not be so easily killed, turned, or made vanished without turning them into martyrs. Encased in heavy leather blasting suits, chained to one another; and stripped of all identity save for numbered designation. They toil on the construction of war machines and components made to further crush mortals under the bootheel of the Crimson Crown.
- **The Cleric in Chains** is the heresiarch of an exceptionally zealous interpretation of the Reformed Faith; the holy preacher of the cult which claims one cannot buy their way into paradise, they can only suffer in glory with a vain hope for clemency. Bound in chains and locks, their flesh mangled by self-inflicted lashes, the Cleric in Chains has found favoritism with the vampires, for this interpretation of text demands any weakness be brutalized and made known.
- **The Shovel Boys** have avoided proper punishment by making sure to only steal additional fuel from lesser landlords who were already falling out of favor. They bark on the street corners, offering up fuel for the home; fuel for the fire and the forge, all at a price one can afford---albeit their product is often of terrible quality. They're responsible for a few burnt buildings, both from inferior product and alleged arson meant to take out competition or fake their deaths.
- **The Forgesmith** is a kine who would rise further in the ranks if not for their obsession with fire and perfection of the craft. The Countess allegedly courted him for power, only to be attacked when she put aesthetic over functionality--or at least this is the gossip she has used to keep him in his place. The Forgesmith desires to make every piece fit in its place, and to destroy that which does not follow this coda.
- **The Overseer** does not leave her carriage, a baroque affair of rivets and sharp edges. She speaks through a tiny slit window, and only in a curt dry voice. Those who have been invited within the confines of her carriage, mortal or vampire alike, leave it with a sickly pallor and a distance in their gaze. She is, to anyone's

knowledge, ostensibly in charge of many operations in the city; and she always seems to know who it is she speaks to.

- **The Industrial Spy** knows that by creating small flaws in Stamleigh he may be able to reveal insurrectionists and other rebels that his masters would like to have exposed. It is unclear if he serves the Duke, the Countess, the Baron or the Crimson Crown personally; all that can be certain is that he has a talent for sabotaging schemata, breaking ciphers, and making sure the industrial accidents that follow in his wake devastate all the Lords of Cardenfell in a unique way.

Features / Districts

2-4 unique features or districts for this town.

1. The Company Town is a cramped set of streets, industrial sites, and claustrophobia-inducing living quarters; all crumpled upon one another to the point that if it could be unfurled like a bit of cloth, it might be the size of seven cities. If you are of little consequence or even less power, the Company Town is your home. Toil and labor barely pays to keep a broom closet of a living situation, the heat never ceases, and the stench of too many people in close quarters mixes with the scent of industrial slop.
2. The Ironworks tower around the Company Town, a cage of brick and billowing chimneys that blot out the sun with their ever-choking smoke. Catwalks and narrow alleys see that trespass between the two places is abrasive and observed by armed powdermen from above.

Obstacles

Six environmental or other obstacles you might find in this town, no matter who's demesne it's in.

1. Heavy security from catwalks and high towers ensure that any bit of strife or violence which doesn't entertain the sentries are quickly put down. Watchmen and tower sentries make use of shuttering lanterns to signal one another, holding them aloft on tall poles so as to be visible even from the depths of a mob.
2. The Reformed Faith's presence in Stamleigh is enforced by zealots and flagellants who delight in the suffering of those they consider weak. They will emerge from dark corner shrines and

proselytization soap boxes to beat and lash at any who dare show even the smallest bit of vulnerability. They will expect praise, they are hardening the weak and breaking those unfit for the world.

3. Maneuverability in Stamleigh, even beyond the Company Town, is cramped and unpalatable. The rich, the vampiric masters, can afford carriages that grind to paste those who would dare impede their movement in such spaces; but the poor are left to squeeze and sidle.
4. Spies ply their craft in this city, seeking to route supplies and stifle production of weapons which might be used against their masters in border conflicts. Mortal folk are pawns, catspaws to be battered about and played with; planted with false evidence to distract potential enemies so true crimes can be committed. Those suspected of espionage are carted off for torture and termination, often naming innocent names in a bid to survive which never proves fruitful.
5. Fire is controlled, if left to the hands of the masses it would burn a vampire as well as anyone else. In Stamleigh it is used to prove a point to those who have crossed a line too far or have simply outlived their usefulness by age or injury. Brass maidens are wheeled out into public spaces, cramped as they are; and the battered frames of victims are forced inside. Fires are lit, and only screams and smoke exit the grimacing visage carved into the execution device. Only ash remains when the deed is done, more filth to be trod upon; a reminder to the common folk of what space they occupy in this world.
6. Politics at their worst stoke the dark ambitions of Stamleigh's worst, promising them a brighter future in exchange for their integrity. Zealots, preachers, overseers and gangers offer up protection and wealth; all they want are the names of anyone causing trouble so they can be taken care of. Anyone foolish or desperate enough to fall in line will quickly find they're little more than a bootlick who will receive a pittance of a finder's fee for their loyalty; and when the time comes they'll be ground beneath the heel of their masters all the same.

Opportunities

Six opportunities, be it to spread the revolution, secure supplies, or aid ailles you might find in this town.

1. If the revolution could seize the means of production they'd be able to outfit their soldiers with armor and weapons, strong enough to rouse morale and save lives against the vampiric menace. Outright taking a factory would be a fool's errand, but manipulating shipments to go to the wrong locations could work just the same, albeit at a sluggish pace.
2. Steel and iron, when used in such mass production, will always suffer some small amount of spillage or spoilage. Making allies of factory workers willing to skim a bit of resources out of their production would be more useful than merely collecting the slag quality detritus; but either would serve the revolution well if done in abundance.
3. There are always collaborators and traitors to humanity making their position loud and well known upon the streets of Stamleigh. Butchering those who proudly bow to those who would see humanity enslaved could send a message of hope as easily as a message of terror.
4. The leather jumpers worn by the factory workers are dehumanizing, but provide insulation against the damages of an open flame. Though burdensome to wear, when reinforced with iron, they're damn near shootproof; to say nothing of how a vampire's fangs would be rebuffed.
5. The populace in Stamleigh is oppressed physically as much as they are in any other way. A little hope for a better tomorrow can go a long way, provided it can penetrate the deep cynicism and despair. Winning over the heart of a Stamleigh citizen would seem them easily converted to the cause and radicalized to most actions.
6. The terrible truth is that, much like anywhere else where industry is present; accidents happen. Arranging an accident is a matter of money and risk, and the shadier elements of Stamleigh would just as soon put a few cruel overseers to the torch as they would anyone else. Knowing who arranges such troubles can help avoid falling into "accidents" or allow one to make payments towards causing one.

TOWN FEATURES

STATS

Wealth

Security

Influence (Revolutionary? Vampiric?)

DISTRICTS

Merchant Quarter - The merchant quarter of a town in Cardenfell houses that town's middle class; the merchants, guildsmen, or petite bourgeoisie that control the flow of goods and what few trades are still practised by skilled laborers. Houses are stately; reasonable affairs, and are patrolled frequently by private guards. Given the relative independent power of the guilds, the vampire lord's influence is relatively low, though spies in service to the crimson crown are common.

Wealth 2, Security 2, Influence 1

Slums - The working poor of each town in Cardenfell are crammed together into dangerous slums, presided over by exacting landlords. They are oftentimes hotbeds of crime and misery, but sometimes the light of communal solidarity pokes through. They are ripe for revolutionary activity, given their hatred for the landlords and their seldomly patrolled streets.

Wealth 1, Security 0, Influence 0

Castyltown - While most vampires prefer to live in country estates, when they do venture into town they live within the lavishly appointed manors of Castyltown. Gated off from the rest of the town, these well-patrolled, well-guarded districts are the heart of vampiric influence within a town.

Wealth 3, Security 2, Influence 3

Markets - The market district usually lays on a main thoroughfare towards the center of town. Here, travelling merchants set up stalls to sell goods. Alongside the market square, more permanent shops and businesses can be found, most selling cheaper, industry-manufactured goods and necessities. Commerce is the lifeblood of each town, and the market is usually well-guarded against thievery and sedition alike.

Wealth 2, Security 2, Influence 2

Industrial Quarter - Located depending on the needs of the industry in question, industrial quarters are new arrivals to the towns of Cardenfell. Here, factories belch acrid smoke into the sky while legions of peasant laborers are ushered, hurriedly into sprawling workhouses. Within the factories themselves, security is often tight, but on the streets outside crime, disease, and brigandry run rampant.

Wealth 2, Security 0, Influence 3

Docks

Stronghold

Villages of Cardenfell

HOGSWICK

Export: Meat, Animal Skins, Milk

Thinning pastures and carefully placed fences carve up Hogswick, the source of most of Cardenfells meat.

Scene: The stink of cow and pig dung. Unhappy looking livestock. Mud, gods, I hope it's mud everywhere. Dirty peasants raking muck. Wealthy merchants and landlords with perfumed handkerchiefs clutched close to their noses. Wary bailiffs sneering and watching.

NPCs

Six brief npc descriptions that live in this town.

- **The Claviger** learned as a youth that if an animal is stressed before it dies, the meat tastes poorer. He's taken great efforts to ensure the livestock don't see their butchery coming. He wears a mask, poorly painted and made of papier-mache when he visits the animal he wishes to kill; and then he bashes its brains out with a metal club. He would love to speak on the subject, but most find him off-putting and strange; and many spread rumors he's bashed a few poor sods who've spoken ill of him.
- **The Burghermeister** rules over Hogswick from his hunting lodge which looms in a nearby hill. He is a cruel miser, a **hunter** who has grown strong and robust by his successes and tolerance for filth. He lords his power over the landlords and wealthy merchants in the village, taking gleeful delight in forcing them into indignity. He's never cared for those who enjoy wealth frivolously, and if he did not consider his subjects as mere chattel this attribute could've been seen as favorable.
- **The Carver** has been experimenting with new ways to perform butchery, it is a skill she perfected elsewhere, though it has only been accepted since moving to Hogswick. She knows how to peel a living creature alive, how to boil the skin off with a proper application of steam and thin razors. It brings her delight to see how many ways something can be cleaned and the tastes that come from proper application of her skill. She'll be a vampire someday, perhaps someday soon; her talents have not gone

unnoticed and many wonder what she could do to the humanoid form with her fancy cutlery.

- **The Harvestmaster** is a stern old goat of a man, placed out here in Hogswick after an industrial fire killed his ability to both taste and smell. He hates the petty complaints of the merchants who tell him “you’re lucky”, he hates the peasants who toil the field who help support that idea; but mostly he hates living in a village. He desires so greatly to return to Drancaster, but he knows he’ll never get the chance. Thus he toils, overseeing the thinning pastures, pig farms, and dung fuel; with ever growing contempt.
- **The Salumist** deserves more, or so she says to any passing coachman she attempts to hire. She’s inherited a fine sausage business, and in truth she knows how to make sausage better than anyone on the isle---but she can’t stand the stink of Hogswick. She knows she has wealth enough to leave but **the Burghermeister** and the lord over him refuse her pleas to serve anywhere else on Cardenfell. No amount of perfume can prevent her from smelling hog’s blood and pig feces when she opens her front door, and this brings her daily; to tears.
- **The Lickspittle** is a vampire and he’s become very aware he’s been sent here as punishment for not being humble enough to his previous masters. **The Burghermeister** loves to throw bottles at him and sicc the hounds on him; because the Lickspittle will always squirm and cringe and weep. A deep rage, the sort that throttles lovers and burns down orphanages, grows within the blackest cockles of his heart. Had he been made a ghoul, this would be different; but having been “spared” that fate he is left with a deeper hunger for what he believes he is deserved.

Features / Districts

Six unique features or districts for this town.

1. The Pastures have seen better days; in ancient days they were thoroughly flowered with sunflowers and daisies; looking like a glorious sunrise in the summer sun. Such beauty lives on now only in paintings, for the pastures run thin, the earth hard, and with only deep burrowing tubers growing with any degree of reliability.
2. The Field Housing keeps the poor laborers carted up in stall-like bunk housing, with notably less room than those used in the barns which house the livestock. The walls are thin, loud noises and cold

air drift in as easily as the myriad stench of Hogswick.

3. The Long Drop is built atop a muck heap, a tall scaffold of old wood which houses the local gallows. **The Burghermeister** thought it efficient to allow the pigs to feast on criminals executed here, simply cutting the noose rope and letting them drop high on 30 feet to the stone below and the hungry mouths awaiting the corpseflesh.
4. Hogswick Township is what remains of a once fine settlement, houses of brick and wood; room to walk about, and small comforts that can now only be afforded by the landlords. Stone walls don't keep out the smell, but they do keep out the sights of the pastures and the swine.
5. Merchant Row runs the road into Hogswick Township, with either side of the street lined with painted signs and narrow buildings built atop the half-collapsed ruins of their forebearers. Fine crafts, mainly candles and various forms of meat or dairy preserves can be purchased here; albeit at great cost.
6. The Hunting Lodge on a nearby hill overlooks all of Hogswick and its pastures. It is a towering structure of blackened, ancient timbers, and rough stones hewn into place. Protected by a tall iron wrought fence, one can easily view recent taxidermy projects lingering outside the **Burghermeister's** home, often being tended to by the **Lickspittle**.

Obstacles

Six environmental or other obstacles you might find in this town, no matter who's demesne it's in.

1. The animals have engaged in shrill cacophony, as if beckoned by some terrible maestro. They scream and howl, as if they are all now presently aware that they are to be put to slaughter. It is a chilling tone which raises the hairs on the back of the neck, and any farmer attempting to put the beasts at ease is pushed down and away; viewed complicit in their doom to come.
2. The abuses of station and privilege are hardly obfuscated here, as if the class divide between the poor, the rich, and the vampiric is openly encouraged. An accidental step in a puddle which stains the periphery of a merchant's boot sees them violently caning the peasant, which sees the merchant held accountable for daring inconvenience the vampire's view with such a vulgar display.

Minor aggressions stoke feuds and hatred, and the poor are often broken for sake of appeasing their betters; clinging to selfless acts which end in brutality in order to protect the truly innocent.

3. The local **bailiffs** have begun enforcing the “stink law” which comes with heavy fines to those who are deemed unpalatable to the noses of authority. Surely this is **the Lickspittle’s** handiwork, and certainly he’s not thought that the powerful perfumes used by the merchants might also fall under this new law. Many torts and frivolous wastes of legal resources are sure to come of this, much to the rage of **the Burghermeister**.
4. A crowd gathers on the edge of Merchant’s Row, a shop on fire. **Bailiffs** guard the door, letting it burn and those within it perish. He shouts “Tainted meat!” as if that explains things. Some in the crowd cringe at the statement. The shrill howl of ghouls in the borderlands can be heard faintly behind the crackling fire, as if being drawn here from a great distance.
5. Some of the locals have a pallor to their flesh and a milkiness to their eyes, almost like cataracts. Herbalists and religious sorts know this as “the Cold-Eyed Curse” an affliction of the mind where an individual detaches from humanity and from reality, viewing others as mere beasts who can be harmed with consequence. Life near such endless slaughter of animals, knowing oneself can also be taken at any time, leads to many more afflicted here in Hogswick than one can find comfortable.

Opportunities

Six opportunities, be it to spread the revolution, secure supplies, or aid ailles you might find in this village.

- Among the poor laborer here, there are many who dream of a better; kinder, world. They do not believe themselves lucky enough to live to see it, but they strive everyday that it might be something the next generation can see. For too long they have thought this can be achieved by being effective in their labors and by acting in kindness to those who hold them in bondage. They could be swayed to violent revolution if they can work past their conditioning.
- A steady supply of excess meat could be requisitioned for the revolution if the proper bribes and friendships are made among the farmers and the merchants. Those who produce fine, artisan

meat products often have much left over to spare. It usually goes to waste, burnt or thrown to the hogs in an act of cannibalism.

- **The Lickspittle** is disenfranchised and hateful, often overstepping his bounds to the anger of **the Burghermeister**. Better stoking the animosity between the pair could lead to a coup, and from that coup, weakness in authority which could be seized upon. It will, sadly, have a human cost.
- With ample meat, cheese, and candles produced in Hogswick, there are many opportunities to poison or smuggle goods. Inspection agents are unlikely to carve apart a wheel of cheese or a candle when looking for contraband; especially if it appears sealed and well-made. The fine meats of Hogswick, especially those from notable shops, are likely to be excused by gourmands for having a “unique” taste, which is all the better to hide poisons in.
- The poor of Hogswick are in need of champions to see them fed proper and defended from the cruelty of their fellow man. Their loyalty is easily won by any stranger who can stand up for them, even if they worry of a punishment to come when that stranger inevitably leaves.
- **The Burghermeister** and his many vampire **huntsmen** and **bailiffs**, are well known to leave Hogswick to go boar hunting when the weather permits it. With **the Lickspittle** possessing only a skeleton crew to enforce order, this would be an ideal time to infiltrate the Hunting Lodge, assassinate lesser agents of the vampires, or perform any number of crimes. There is even a good chance that should **the Burghermeister** return and have such deeds reported to him, that he will blame and torment **the Lickspittle** for his ineptitude rather than actually attempt justice.

SHEPFORTH (ISLE)

Export: Meat, Wool

A loose assembly of homes built around communal grazing pastures. A rare bright spot in Cardenfell, the villagers survive through their monopoly on the rich wool of their flocks.

Scene: Pastoral fields full of peacefully grazing sheep. Villagers suspicious of outsiders. Leaning homes of wood and cobblestone. The soft singing of birds. The scent of grass and wool. A skeleton in a gibbet at the gate, with the words scrawled underneath “BAILIFFS KEEP OUT.”

NPCs

Six brief npc descriptions that live in this town.

- **The Shepherd** cares for her flock, and though she is a wrinkled fig of a woman whose eyes can barely see the blue of the sky, she maintains considerable power in the community. She speaks of **The Duke** like she knew of him when he was young and mortal, and of **The Countess** as though she was always a petulant child. She hums slowly when she speaks of **the Baron**. She is bold, but slow to act; and like any shepherd worth their salt, she has many a vicious dog to keep her flock safe and in line.
- **The Ramsworn** is middle-aged but robust, with a beard thick enough to hide a wine bottle in and a smile flecked with gold and silver. He wears grey robes, well knit by lovers from better days; and around his neck is a great torc of horn bones. He is bound to the spirit of the island, and despite his middling age he fights with the strength of a half dozen men; particularly brutal when such power is being used to propel a mere knife.
- **The Reeve** is a narrow-nosed and bulge-eyed peeker of a woman, built like some bloated arctic bird forced into humanoid form. She dresses in fine leathers and spins a simple club on the end of a leather thong. She asks questions, always probing, always needing to know the who, the why and the when; and always saying that you should “never mind why I’m asking.” Her nose rubbing and odd mannerisms are clearly coded messages that other villagers can easily take note in.
- **The Gravedigger** has a hoarse laugh, like someone strangling a ferret. He’s not a pickpocket but he has all the mannerisms of a malevolent child who recently learned you can just take things from people. He’s very open about his work; he digs holes in the earth and is unofficially charged with any headbashings required of him or his many fancy shovels. He looks forward to strangers, inventing stories about them based on what treasures he pulls from their corpses.
- **The Dyer** moved here from Flaypool after a few merchant trips saw them understanding the true worth of Shepforth wool. The locals are “eclectic” and their general freedom compared to elsewhere on the archipelago is curious. They’re not worried for their safety here, but the way their suggestions are occasionally denounced as being “not traditional” rankles them. More than a few expensive orders of dyes have gone missing from their house,

as if the pigments for wool should come only from Shepforth isle.

- **The Inspector** was a bailiff once, but the bureaucracy that it took to be assigned to investigate Shepforth Isle took far longer than it ought to and all vampirism faded from him by the time he'd been granted permission to board a vessel. Lethargic, exhausted, and unnerved, the Inspector believes there may be existential horrors at play on Shepforth. Though some empathy for mortality has crept back into his rough tenor, he is still an agent who seeks vampirism, station, and to protect capital by removing those he finds problematic from the situation at hand.

Features / Districts

Six unique features or districts for this town.

1. The Cage sits just outside of town, and those who know their metallurgy or manufacturing would easily notice this model of gibbet cage is a favorite of the Queen of Crimson herself. There is usually a body in it, something that will be buried once it ceases to serve a purpose or bakes in the sun wrong and stinks up the edge of town. A sign, "BAILIFF'S KEEP OUT" is laid at the edge of the metal bars.
2. The Meeting Hall is of antiquated design, though newly white-washed; resembling a facsimile of the ancestral lodges found near the Sisters upon Cardenfell. Old folk sit outside it smoking pipes and casting displeasing gazes across the town. They don't care for conversation, and if you're not of Shepforth they'll barr entry with unkind words and threats of fisticuffs.
3. The Grazing Pastures run much of this island, surrounding the settlement and expanding towards the rocky cliffs. Sheep and goats graze at a leisurely pasture. Loyal and vicious hounds stalk between them, like sharks in a sea of wool. The livestock have an unpleasant habit of staring, making eye contact, always watching from every angle.
4. The Barns on the edge of town are seemingly seldom used, the dirt paths to their heavy doors overgrown with wild grass. The villagers seem to know when someone might be snooping around them, watching from their porches or peeking out from windows. The interiors are painted in heavy whites and lined with red-washed runes of some long forgotten faith.
5. The Meadows on the way into town are a beautiful cornucopia of

wildflowers, dizzying in their colorful displays. Children from Shepforth frolic here on balmy days, and the occasional errant sheep gnaws calmly upon a stalk of sunflower. Burnt mounds of ash and stones dot the meadow, possibly sites of some festival.

6. The Caves bored into the back base of the island's cliffs are a place of strange, ancient rites. The smooth white stones of the beach could be confused for skulls by the craven or superstitious. A whispering voice bids the foolish to enter, to know love, to know unity. Light does not permeate this dark place easily.

Obstacles

Six environmental or other obstacles you might find in this town, no matter who's demesne it's in.

- Whispering locals speak every terrible thing they could assume about brigands from a glance. Bigoted and seeking to make their inhospitality palatable but noted, they will lie to one another, crafting a narrative of misgivings that prevent any headway or momentum with the folk of the isle.
- The bleating of the sheep has a hypnotic quality, not mesmerism like the glance of a vampire; but a reverberation that radiates through the bones of those not acclimated to it. It loosens the grip and staggers the gait, slowing and disorienting those caught within the din.
- In silhouettes, upon buttons and toggles, on the shadow of the moon at night; one cannot help but see in pareidolia the gnarled horns of a ram. There is a foreign oppression to Shepforth, as though a long forgotten deity of dark strange places glares down upon this rock, unceasingly. It lessens the morale of the faithful, and the words of those versed in scripture are treated as venomous by the locals.
- The folk of Shepforth do not seem to suffer like those elsewhere on the Bloody Isles; they eat well, they sleep soundly, they keep most entities of vampiric power far from their shores. What need do they have for revolution or freedom? They'd just as soon as let the world rot into oblivion so long as it left them to their lonesome joys.
- Voices of dissent are silenced by shunning, and those who continue to speak are inevitably tossed into the cage on the way into town. The townsfolk will cram as many as they can into the

gibbet cage, they care not for the prisoner's comfort. Crimes will be read out to the imprisoned, followed by humiliations; being pelted with filth, stripped of wealth through the bars, and being left to the elements.

- Something on your person has caught the eye of the locals, who will see you departed from it by hook or by crook. They'll start asking too many questions, shifting a stranger from a nobody to the toast of the town, stripping them of privacy and implicating them in all manner of crime until the time comes when **the Reeve** makes her judgments and life is taken for want of a bauble.

Opportunities

Six opportunities, be it to spread the revolution, secure supplies, or aid ailles you might find in this village.

1. Isolationists at heart, the people of Shepforth could be swayed to assist in the revolution if properly supplicated and praised for their "traditionalist liberties" which might sate their egos. So long as trouble is not brought easily to their doors, they might make a useful refuge for a proper rebellion.
2. The wool harvested from Shepforth breathes easily and is of a borderline obscene comfort. Outfitting a revolution in uniforms from this resource could see them cool in the summer, warm in the winter, and unified in dress and purpose.
3. Glittering treasures are accumulated by the Gravedigger and the Reeve, such to the point that they have little in the way of accounting for what they've pilfered over the years. If one can recover such goods, they're probably worth some money to grieving families or to a fence.
4. **The Inspector** knows well the inside operations of vampirism and has a level of disillusionment with the predatory bureaucracy and culture of favors which has prevented him from his job. Reintroducing him to the many unfair cruelties of the Crimson Crown; to the back room dealings that have seen him brought now, could flip him as an asset to the cause.
5. The Old Faith has roots here, albeit they seem performative. The locals will just as soon stone a Reformed Faith preacher as they would any heretic, but to those who know the Old Faiths they'll offer small comforts and lip service. It is not much, but it could be enough to save religious items or those seeking to flee the

Reformed Faith's agents.

6. The jawbone of a Ram is kept enshrined in the barn, ensorcelled with dread magic and scrimshawed with strange red markings. **The Ramsworn** presses it to his lips each night, it directs him; it gives him purpose. It is clearly a magical weapon of some sort, and the few who know its true origins can speak of it cutting deeper than any blade or mechanism; as if it were driven through an enemy by the hands of enraged deity.

FLETCHGROVE

Export: Flax, Wheat

Formerly a village that exported yew and ashwood bows and arrows. With the ban on bowyers and fletchers alike, the struggling village turned to growing flax and wheat.

Fields of gently swaying flax and wheat. Grim-faced peasant laborers. Strange symbols carved into wooden posts, whispers in the night, hidden caches. Occasional guardsmen patrols.

NPCs

Six brief npc descriptions that live in this town

1. **The Laborer's Foreman** suffers thanklessly for his people, for he must serve the vampires loyally lest they take more from this tiny village. He seeks compromises that come at too heavy a cost, always acquiescing to those in power for fear of what more they might take. He hates himself for this, because no matter how much he tries to convince himself he is a fair man who loves his people, he is always the one to deliver them ill-tidings.
2. **The Thresher** enjoys toiling in the fields; so much so that it is clearly unhealthy. Sun up to the early morning twilight he lingers among the wheat, slashing about with his scythe, tilling the earth, humming strange little songs. He found a red bandana in the dirt here several months ago, and that's what has seen this change in attitude. No one has complained, he is very productive after all; but in his heart boils a fey-twisted urge to murder many and water his wheat with blood. The idea of vampires stealing away blood has caused him to pause such plans; he needs to consider how to deal with them before he can murder in earnest.
3. **The Peeker** is a hobbled old road warden turned **bailiff**,

essentially retired and left to her own devices on the edge of Fletchgrove. Enforcing the bowyer ban is hardly an issue, so she mostly gets herself involved in idle gossip. Once something has caught her interest, she'll stalk it and pursue it like a starved cat after a fat rat. She has many friends among coachmen and bailiffs to whom she'd discuss any potential ne'er-do-wells, so as to appear interesting.

4. **The Anthropologist** from the Crimson Crown has come to Fletchgrove to open old wounds and humiliate its people; as well as to pen a text about adventuring in a backwater colonial outpost. They want to know everything about bows and fletching, how it feels to be mere farmers now, and about the strange signs and sounds of small villages like this one. They are pompous, insufferable, and utterly unqualified to write a book.
5. **The Forester** tends to the edge of the forest beyond the fields, distant woods that ripple like a cast off mote of the Brinkwood's shaded boughs. None relish her charge, for each week when she comes into the village proper for her supplies she is of a deathly pallor and some new scar upon her flesh. She is a soul in isolation, seldom speaking, having forgotten how to form a kind word or to accept such things from others. They sound too much like the whispers upon an evening breeze for her comfort.
6. **The Heir of Nothing** is the town fool, a drunk kept alive by the mockery of the Lords of Cardenfell; a claim he'll scream to the heavens but none will ever believe. He is but one in a long line of those who are an heir to nothing; a scion of bowyers and fletchers, a dull arrow in a legacy of archers. In truth he is only alive for the importance of his line; noted in some folktale of slaying some dread entity in a dire time. Best to keep him alive so destiny might achieve its purpose, and better still to keep his line impotent and weak, in case that fiend he is to slay is meant to represent a vampire.

Features / Districts

Six unique features or districts for this town.

- The Old Fletcher's Workshop was burnt down ages ago, and living in the foundation of the wreckage is **the Heir of Nothing**, who waddles in filth; drunk and screaming at all hours of the day. He says the place is haunted, that he's haunted; that the whole town

is haunted for what they did here. It is a blight upon to the town to look at, and why the vampires let it remain; let alone allow the fool to occupy it, is a mystery the locals don't care to investigate.

- The Sallow Fields grow a sickly jaundiced wheat, and though maintained by all who labor in Fletchgrove, it is **the Thresher** who is granted dominion over the sickliest looking acres of earth here. The wheat tastes all the same; perhaps a bit rich in iron if one consumes too much of it; but regardless it is unpalatable to look at.
- The Border Marks lay upon the edge of each farm, the road into Fletchgrove, and even towards the Encroachment of the Brink which has subsumed some of the painted stones. The color of the paint establishes what purpose the land within is meant for, though time and weather has seen the methodology flawed. Still it is used to settle zoning disputes and claims of ownership.
- The Roadhouse is popular with visiting bailiffs and the occasional coachman who has found their way this far afield of civilization. Though seldom receiving a true brew of vintage, the locals make a decent drink of fermented wheat which goes down smooth and has a warmth to it. Horses are free to graze to their contentment, and those running the establishment are as kind as they are unintrusive; tending that thin line between cowardice and professionalism.
- The Quiet Farms on the edge of the road into Fletchgrove are occupied by dreary farmers who tend to their flax and wheat, daring not to make a fuss let alone a noise. In the evening they can be observed listening to something upon the breeze; it can be hard to tell if it is what they hear or the chill of the meager wind which brings a rattle to their bones.
- The Encroachment of the Brink is far from the village, left in the care of the Forester to see it kept from spreading beyond the borderlands. It is a darkened copse of bleak boughs and jagged creeper vines, hidden behind a treeline one could easily confuse for a cultivated grove. Strange things lurk within, entities the Brinkwood cast out or which escaped to form their own dark pacts with mortals. The Forester keeps a home up on a hill overlooking the Encroachment, a pitiful cabin of conquered lumber.

Obstacles

Six environmental or other obstacles you might find in this town, no matter who's demesne it's in.

1. Bodies have been found strewn about the Sallow Fields, empty of blood, tattered and cut apart; yet laid in such a way that each piece is only an inch or so from where it ought to be. **The Laborer's Foreman** believes it to be the work of the vampires and is trying to waylay the fears and discontent of the people who think it may be a killer in their own ranks or something that slipped from the Brinkwood.
2. There is a disquieted presence to Fletchgrove, as though the village itself knows its purpose has been perverted by outside influences. It is hard to get comfortable in the village proper, conversations seem hushed so as to cause confusion, and the creaking of bent wood seems louder than it ought to; as if the land itself misses the very concept of archery.
3. **The Forester** has heard whispers of a revolution, but she knows nothing of the masks; and any truth about them will likely invoke past traumas to fruition. **The Thresher** knows nothing about a revolution, but desires to know everything about the masks. If knowledge of both subjects reaches either of them, it will surely reach **the Peeker**, who will then certainly make things known to any of her former associates in oppression.
4. A visiting **bailiff** has come to town to ensure the ban on bowyers and fletchers is still in effect, claiming to **the Peeker** that she had forgotten to send a report when last called in. Now that another bailiff is here, they're going to make sure everything in town is as it "should be" and enforce any violence they see fit upon the populace that even the Peeker wouldn't think to do.
5. Servants of the local lord have stopped at the nearby Roadhouse and been sighted near the Encroachment of the Brink. They're following up on a lead, and they're taking their time to do so. It won't be long now before they kill a few locals to feed their hungers. They know they can get away with it too.
6. Heavy rain turns the fields into muddy steppes and makes travel utterly unpleasant. Rains near Fletchgrove have a habit of staying on for days, coming down as a mist when the grounds would otherwise flood; and then pouring in sheets just as soon as there's a chance for travellers to escape.

Opportunities

Six opportunities, be it to spread the revolution, secure supplies, or aid ailles you might find in this village.

1. **The Forester** is reluctant to bring it up, but she found arrows on an old stump within the Encroachment the other day; and this is not the first time either. The arrows are of sublime craftsmanship and otherworldly sharpness. She suspects it the work of some vile creature, but it could just as easily be something planted by spies seeking to see Fletchgrove suffer further oppression for this breaking of the ban.
2. **The Heir of Nothing** has been screaming in his sleep about “the dread fang” being nascent. No one believes him of course, he’s always drunk and has long been subjected to enough cruelty to make him a mockery to his fellow villagers. He seems deadly serious though, if asked about it. He doesn’t know what it is, but he knows he has to kill it; he always knows he doesn’t know how to kill it and whatever it is, it must die by an arrow to the throat.
3. The farmers in Fletchgrove are exhausted in their work, such that anyone able to lend a hand can easily win their thankful hospitality. Friendship, once won, will make them feel comfortable speaking of how the town itself seems to dislike what it has become, a feeling they can easily sense once they step out beyond the border marks.
4. **The Peeker** is a nuisance at best, only truly a threat due to her correspondence and contacts elsewhere on the Isle. Finding a way to eliminate her ability to contact these sources would see Fletchgrove grow increasingly isolated from the affairs of the Lords of Cardenfell, better allowing it to serve as a base of operations.
5. The Encroachment of the Brink is likely home to entities who know the masks worn by brigands and the entities who created them. Such patrons may even be able to manifest within the Encroachment, albeit with a strange cruelty to them accentuated by their distance from the woods proper. Certainly it is safer for a revolutionary to hide out here, as only **the Forester** proper enters this cospe; though what she’d think of trespassers within is anyone’s guess.
6. **The Laborer’s Foreman** is slowly but surely losing his grip on the people of Fletchgrove, and so consumed with worry he might be manipulated to turn heel upon them and better serve the

vampires. He is vulnerable, and if properly assuaged he could just as easily be flipped to win over his people and serve the revolution.

FLAYPOOL

Import: Textiles and Linens

Great vats of dye litter the village of Flaypool, giving off a terrible acrid stink and staining the skin and clothing of it's villagers alike.

Terrible, acrid stink. Vivid colors everywhere, staining dirt, homes, clothing and people. Bubbling vats of dye, emerald green, shining crimson, deep azure blue. Goggles and thick, ragged clothing. Bored guardsmen and the occasional smuggler. Foul-tasting meat.

NPCs

Six brief npc descriptions that live in this town.

- **The Captain of the Guard** has long tried to bring proper order to Flaypool, but has recently succumbed to the fruitlessness of the task. Addicted to laudanum and bored beyond dreaming, he lingers in near catatonia at his post. If given the chance to wage order against a criminal element in town, he'd make an easy asset to manipulate; provided he was given reason to believe there was a chance "true justice" would be done.
- **Old Greenteeth** is not old, and in truth it is her gums that are green--not her teeth. She made an enemy of **the Master in Emerald** and was tossed in a vat of boiling green dye; which unbeknownst to both parties at the time, was only at a tepid heat due to lucky scheduling. She survived, albeit she has had a guttural cough ever since that day. The locals think her some bog hag when she is not laden with cloaks and goggles. She wishes to murder the Master and flee Cardenfell; noble aspirations, but she has little care for her fellow mortal.
- **The Azure Smugglers** wear tattered cloaks of blue and fine welding masks over their faces. They're always looking for a useful criminal to help them smuggle goods, doubly so if that criminal can prove themselves not to be easily expendable. They had a poor run-in with Ghouls a few months prior near the Stone Tongues, and will grant kindness to those who enjoy butchering

such wretches or have information on who runs the garrison at the trade fortress. Their motives are mercantile, skewed heavily by desires for personal vengeance and safety.

- **The Master in Emerald** rules over Flaypool, and he has long grown accustomed to leaving the town to its criminal nature. None dare challenge him when he comes to steal away young adults and drain them empty; his mesmerism makes all parties “willing.” He wears only the most garish shades of green, claiming it to be the color of intelligence; something his underlings would understand were they “born with the correct skull shape.”
- **Bonethrower** is the unluckiest gambler in Flaypool, alive only because he has considerable skill in dismembering those who come for their winnings. A local tough, he truly just wishes to properly win a game or two, earn some respect, and maybe see that the rumors of him beating a bailiff to death with a severed arm doesn’t go challenged.
- **The Corrupt Patrolman** is something of a misnomer, as almost all guards in Flaypool are corrupt on a notable level. This one however, puts them to shame. A grotesque sleaze of a vampire, he enjoys getting involved so he can extort, bribe, and generally upset the balance of power in the village. His reasonings may have to do with boredom or a general hatred for his fellows; he’ll lie about whatever it is he’s doing if asked; then ticket the one asking him for getting in the way of his duties.

Features / Districts

Six unique features or districts for this town.

1. The Vats occupy the most space in Flaypool, great metal vessels crafted by the finest metalworkers in Drancaster and Stamleigh; left in ill-repair and crudely patched up for the past few decades in lieu of replacement. Various colors bubble up thickly in the vats, their smoke choking the air, occasionally dribbling through busted rivets.
2. The Redflow is stained by runoff pigments from the Vats, tarnished more than any other district due to the desire for dying in the national colors of the mainland. The homes look dappled by bloodshed, and the air is miasmatic--thick with red that chokes and dizzies those who breathe it.

3. The Dripmarket, thusly named for having been constructed under the drying lines of recently dyed fabrics. On cloudless days, it is a place of shade; with any humidity caught upon the hanging cloth and dripping down in a multi-colored rain. Merchants and smugglers ply their trade here, speaking in obtuse cant to help obscure their dealings.
4. The Emerald Court, a luxurious manor a way down the road from Flaypool proper, is where the Master makes his home. Vaunted architecture, painted in a miserable pea green and consumed by ivy coating the poorly painted stone; it looks almost in mockery of something found in the courts of the Countess. Unkempt gardens and a cultivated grove further separate it from Flaypool itself, and often a half-naked victim can be found stumbling out through the grove.
5. The Old Jail has long since turned into a clubhouse for the local **bailiffs**, who spend their time here playing games of dice and occasionally bringing in “criminals” to feed upon out of sheer boredom and unrestrained abuse of authority.
6. The Backdraft is by virtue of sloping ground and wind patterns, where the bitter fumes of the Vats inevitably end up; pooling in a miasmatic fog that is viewed as scintillating from above but of ruddy muddled browns from within. Combat that ensues near the backdraft often ends when one or both parties topple into the cloud, choking in agony; never to be seen again. The occasional well-garbed bonepicker makes a decent score when scavenging within.

Obstacles

Six environmental or other obstacles you might find in this town, no matter who's demesne it's in.

1. A desire for law and order will occasionally see the local guardsmen acting with trumped up authority and a casual capacity for violence. Most still know better than to beat down a local during such time, as this will stoke reprisals when sloth inevitably retakes authority; but foreigners, be they merchant or mendicant, are open season for such viciousness.
2. Combat near the Vats always runs the risk of being scalded by boiling, acrid dyes; which stain whatever flesh they do not boil off in such hostile situations. Security which work that area, be they

criminals or guardsmen, know this risk well and will use it to their advantage.

3. Clouds of blinding mist choke and blind those who do not wear goggles or thick scarves over their mouths. Opportunistic enemies will make use of this miasma to mislead, escape, avoid, or ambush outsiders. Some might even attempt to lead prey through the mists and toppling down into the Backdraft.
4. Flaypool is run ragged with all manner of criminality who exist in a cautious position of power; any knowledge of a revolution might lead to undesired heat which might upset their freedom. Outsiders are already considered prey, ripe for the mugging; but those who might cause attention from the powers that be risk being made a violent example of.
5. Escaped prey from the Emerald Court always make a commotion when they stumble back into Flaypool; people know them, and yet they are unwilling to aid them for fear of earning the Master's disapproval. A screaming, half-naked victim being ignored by friends and family always draws attention, and cuts the morale of the populace's already hardened hearts.
6. **Ghouls** occasionally congregate in the miasmatic cloud of the Backdraft, stained brown and all manner of other colors as they feast upon the corpses of the unlucky. When food runs scarce they will slither their way into the Dripmarket, butchering and ripping at unfortunate workers; dragging them back into the mists with rending claws.

Opportunities

Six opportunities, be it to spread the revolution, secure supplies, or aid ailles you might find in this village.

1. The red dye which flows sluggishly down the Redflow has a consistency and quality like blood. It stains like blood, it smells rich of iron, but it most certainly does not taste like blood. One could, in theory, attempt to counterfeit drams of Blood Sterling with it; perhaps drive a vampire to think they're being poisoned, or to deny them sustenance and make them seem undone by their masters.
2. Those who work with dyes in Flaypool are irrevocably stained. Though years of such work is the most common explanation; the potency of a dye is also of note. Properly bottled, a blinding bomb

of bright colors could be constructed; one that would itch the skin raw, stain it gaudily, blind the eyes, and utterly humiliate the victim.

3. Flaypool is a hive of thieves, corrupt guards, smuggler scum, and other such assorted villainy; often aimless in their violence. Everyone in Flaypool needs something, the **bailiffs** need their tithing and often revert to mortality given how rarely they receive it; the smugglers need the work; and the rest of those with cruel intent need victims to extort. It would not be hard to engineer violence by properly bribing, promising, and pitting the factions that be against one another. They would not be honest revolutionaries, but they would be pragmatic ones.
4. Though few among the vampiric ranks would admit it to a mortal, there is an adage about Flaypool; if you die here, you deserve it. Some have taken this to mean the vampires accept the predations of criminality upon all manner of being here; or that anyone who needs to work and feed in Flaypool must have earned the ire of their masters. It is far more likely though, that it has to do with how easy it is to disguise a body here; with the dyes removing implications of vampirism upon a corpse. This must have some advantage.
5. Escapees and families who have suffered under **the Master in Emerald**, fear his gaslighting gaze and mesmerizing powers. They could easily be positioned to aid or join up with any outfit seeking to kill that vampire or prevent others from falling under a similar fate. One must be wary though, of such victims being deeply mesmerized sleeper agents.
6. Flaypool is not where you go when you want to dress nice, but it is where you can easily find a new look. Old clothes are made new again by a quick dye job and careful stitchery, basic skills that anyone villager knows how to do. There are seldom quicker ways to change ones appearance.

CLIFFSBLACK (ISLE)

Export: Saltpeter

A small village, near to a series of caves, that has been completely enveloped in the mining of saltpeter.

Bat wings fluttering overhead, the rushing sound of wind. Barrels of chalky white saltpeter, hastily assembled, ramshackle buildings, black cliffs, with a looming, winding series of ladders and platforms leading up

to the caves.

NPCs

Six brief npc descriptions that live in this town

1. **The Longshoreman** has worked Cliffsblack alongside many a port on the archipelago, and long has he been stranded on this rock, damned to ferry saltpeter back and forth. He hates with every fiber of his being the work he does. He saw his world go down in cannonfire when he was young. He hopes someday that Cliffsblack will run dry of saltpeter and that the vampires who brought him low will die in fire and agony.
2. **The Bomber** has been hiding away bits of saltpeter and quicklime, so tormented she is by the Bitter Lord of the isle. She labors and spurns the vampire's advances as best she can, but she knows her time is coming. She can refuse him only once more before he ceases flirtations and becomes viler still. She'll liberate the island then, for a moment at the least. It'll only cost her life and that of anyone around her when she pulls a ripcord.
3. **The Bitter Lord** did not want this island, he was promised paradise by his betters on the mainland. He did not consider how little he was loved by them, how much of a burden his antics were. He is sickened by the scent of the sea and the rough folk he rules over. He seeks to find a bride here to spite his parents in the vain hope it might see them relocate him before further embarrassment is brought upon their home.
4. **The Drunks** have taken advantage of their lord's desire for quotas to be met, drinking themselves into oblivion whenever they've filled enough barrels with chalky white saltpeter. They hear things, but they don't want anyone to ruin their fun. Many knew life elsewhere on Cardenfell before they ended up here; and the alcohol numbs their scars as much as it makes the isolation bearable.
5. **The Patriot** was placed here by the Crimson Crown, a mortal agent in search of sedition. A rakish young scoundrel, he falls easily into intolerable screeds of jingoistic loyalty which generally sees him spit upon by the Drunks and mocked by anyone else. He is eager to prove his worth to the Bitter Lord and any other noble vampire; believing that should he catch traitors to the regime, he will be rewarded and made a peer.

6. **The Ancient Mariner** is a crinkled old husk, possibly of the Salt-folk but aged to such a point that their origins are utterly obscured. They know every dark tale of what lurks down in the drink and bare the scrimshaw upon their flesh to show it to anyone curious. They hear whispers from the tides and mutter on about duppies and the ghosts of whales seeking blood to replace the oil pilfered from their bodies.

Features / Districts

Six unique features or districts for this town.

1. The Hollows are caves that have been mined thoroughly of saltpeter, enough that they run like deep hollows which will likely see the isle collapse in a few decades when taken in tandem with the erosion from the sea. New laborers, often prisoners, who are brought to the isle make their homes here until they have pay enough to move into the Ramshackles or drink themselves to oblivion in the Dirty Anchor.
2. The ocean beneath is often referred to as the Killing Drink by those who dwell on Cliffsblack, for it is a brackish swill from the detritus of the mining operation. Dead fish float up from it on the daily, and tall tales speak of true horrors unknowable to all but those who dwell beneath the waves that lurk deep below it all.
3. The Dirty Anchor had a proper name once, the sign however has been caked with enough gull feces that all one can see is an anchor embossment. It is the drinking hole for the workers, a place where they can rouse their morale, fill themselves with rotgut, and pass out all over the floor before waking up to toil again the next day.
4. The New Harvests are how the Bitter Lord refers to the latest mines put into operation, they're undercutting the isle and might see a shelf of it collapse into the sea; but they are also ripe with saltpeter. The mines themselves will soon tunnel beneath the Bitter Lord's chateau, a failure in planning by the rank amateur that he dares not speak aloud.
5. The Ramshackles are bolted into the side of the island, stacked atop one another and accessible mainly by ladders of rusty iron. Those who live long enough on Cliffsblack eventually have a home here, albeit a cramped and dingy one that mildews slickly and rots due to the frequent battering of the sea.

6. The Bitter Lord's Chateau sits atop the isle, a reclaimed lighthouse now expanded upon for sake of ostentation. The tower which once served a purpose is now a private study where the foolish fop plots out how to be asked to leave Cardenfell and return to the luxuries of the mainland.

Obstacles

Six environmental or other obstacles you might find in this town, no matter who's demesne it's in.

- Haphazard construction has seen more than a few of the Ramshackle hovels crash down upon the docks and ratways, killing whoever is inside and causing further navigational woes to those working the island.
- Sharp rocks jut out from the Killing Drink, slick with wet and gashing any flesh that touch it with almost cruel intention. The waves seem to knock people and things upon the rocks, ensuring anyone who falls into the sea is further injured and battered about.
- Storms roll across Cliffsblack worse than elsewhere, as if the sea seeks to topple the isle and drag all who dwell upon it down beneath the waves. The walkways become wind tunnels, slick with wet and ready to send any unfortunate soul still out and toiling to their doom.
- The Bitter Lord has seldom had to force his hand upon Cliffsblack, but a visit from agents of the Lords of Cardenfell saw him fearful of being usurped in a territory grab. Thus came the cruelest display of power the young vampire could conceive. Gibbet cages hung low enough to see a body all but drown with the tides, lowered link by link upon a chain until the mortal flesh began bloating and being consumed by ocean life. So long as the occasional undesirable dies such a death, the Bitter Lord will be seen capable of his charge.
- Songs upon the water ensorcell the sober and the unwitting, daring them to perform acts of tribute and supplication to entities unseen beneath the waves. Few can be certain what it is they say; and in truth the Bitter Lord and his servants are curious if the song itself is what drives the folk here to drink so deeply. It is an intoxicating spell of hopelessness that can be numbed when fluid is imbibed, be it salt water or rotgut.
- Bitter ambitions plague many upon Cliffsblack, regrets color their

decisions and often force them to act in ways that would endanger them elsewhere on Cardenfell. Everyone has a gripe and a grudge on some level, and newcomers will be judged quickly on their alliances and how they can be leveraged.

Opportunities

Six opportunities, be it to spread the revolution, secure supplies, or aid allies you might find in this village.

1. **The Patriot** is easily deluded and misled, and if the weakness of the **Bitter Lord** were made obvious, he'd seek to have him replaced or assassinated for bringing shame upon the Crimson Crown. He'd just need reason to think the brigands to be fellow patriots, and to feel as though his actions could be justified in cipher-written reports he ships out with tithings of saltpeter.
2. The rotgut consumed here in such large quantities has made the blood of the workers unpalatable to the Bitter Lord; such that there might be reason to think this specific brew might be effective to all vampires rather than just ones with gentle predilections. Perhaps the song upon the sea plays a role, or the brackish water of the Killing Drink that is used to make a supply last longer.
3. Smugglers operate out of Cliffsblack with relative ease, so long as their barrels display markings for Saltpeter, they are seldom checked by the Bitter Lord's authorities. Securing an alliance with smugglers here could help establish a base of operations, and the Hollows surely have a few crevices in which supplies could be squirreled away.
4. **The Bomber** recognizes those who could assist her as an asset, but she is radicalized and broken in morale; to the point that innocent bystanders are of no concern. She could make a staunch ally if she had any hope; though were she to find a mask there is no telling what dark bargains she would make to kill those who would prey upon her.
5. Accidents happen here on Cliffsblack, such that none can be surprised when life is lost; vampiric or otherwise. News does not travel quickly from here, and even then it is heavily biased and often from sources none on the greater Cardenfell island truly care for. Cliffsblack would be an ideal spot to stage an assassination.
6. Whatever it is that lurks beneath the waves seems to hold a special hatred for what is being done to the island as well as those

who live upon it. Mask-bearers well versed in conversing with the fae, as well as Salt-folk, might be able to discern the entity's identity and purpose and make an ally of it against the vampires.

THE SISTERS

The Sisters are the collective appellation given to the mines of Cardenfell, carved from the hills, mountains, and quarries that dot the county. Consider placing them vaguely together on your map, and linking them with roads.

NPCs

Six brief npc descriptions that live in this town.

1. **The Chief Foreman** oversees all mining operations in the Sisters, a loan-fang at the best of times, he's been left to revert back to his humanity on multiple occasions so as to ensure his loyalty and desperation. He is strained by his withdrawals and the stress of managing three settlements and their many mines. He desires a fix, to be respected, and for the burden of years to fade back into numbness.
2. **“Deep Delver”** is a thief and if anyone knew who he truly was, he'd have been strung up by now. He wears a mask of muddied cloth over his head, but his smile is rakish and proud. He robs the mines, makes off with shiny things, hides them and places them in blameful places. Some think him a demon or possibly some grimalkin out of faerie tales.
3. **The Porter** and her three nephews haul goods between the Sisters, sharpening knives, repairing tools, and ensuring the settlements are properly attended to with regards to knowing what orders and supplies are needed. They've begun talking to the servants for lords of the Veins, cutting deals that benefit the Sisters but undercuts the Lords of Cardenfell as a whole.
4. **An upstart vampire**, freshly titled and given dominion in the Sisters, seeks to expand their holdings and impress the Lords of Cardenfell so she might posture herself a worthy vassal who might take the neighboring Veins. Her ambitions, bold as they are, go unnoticed and she seeks to perform an act of utter hubris rather than continue on as she does.
5. **The Old Prospector** has the respect of most in the Sisters, for he

can taste on his tongue when a vein is running dry. Metal has a smell to him even when it's sixty feet below the dirt. He's worried about border wars and skirmishes, riddles the nose with the scent of "wrong iron." He'd have been turned by now if not for concern that he'd lose the scent in a similar way, a fact he's been made aware of and is bitter for knowing.

6. **The Cook** goes between the Sisters, working wherever the most mouths need to be fed. Originally from the Marshlands, they know how to make a lot out of a little, and make it filling and tasty to boot. Makes a decent living but exists in terror of ghouls for something witnessed in the Marshlands that they only murmur about when drunk and weepy.

Features / Districts

Six unique features or districts for this town.

1. The mess halls of the Sisters are ramshackle affairs, constructed nearest to the quarry or mine on a seasonal basis. They provide little warmth during times of rain or cold, being built only to ensure that workers have little respite or time away from their labors. The scent of stewing meat and earthy tubers is common, often thick enough to tarnish the errant timbers of the building.
2. The slurry, the run-off, is to be found in every town in the Sisters, flooding ditches and causing the stink of old abandoned earth to permeate the area. Falling into the slurry is a death sentence equivalent to being left alone in quicksand. Undesirables unfit to toil in the mines are often disposed of here, ingloriously swallowed up.
3. The upper workway of a quarry or mine are occupied by tents and guard posts surrounding the precious resources to be found within. Workers will travel between towns and live apart from society here, becoming more isolated and insular, driven by their masters to labor and only know of home for a few days a year.
4. The ancestral lodges of the folk in the Sisters sit atop hills as they have since long before the Crimson Crown conquered this land. Any who can claim birthright in the Sisters can dwell within such a lodge and be treated to communal food; meager as they may be. Tapestries depicting hunts of old still hang in each hall, deemed petty art for petty people rather than the tales of ancient folk that they are.

5. The villages of the Sisters are often smaller than the worksites they serve. The families of those who work the earth, be it in the mines or in the quarries, exist in these small settlements. They till the land as best they can, caring for hogs and steer to feed the workers. The landlords take from them what blood they need, unwilling to waste a worker if they can help it.
6. A Master's Hall exists within each village, a fortified manse for the landlord in charge where the resources are stored until such a time comes for tithing and transportation elsewhere on the island. Soldiers are garrisoned here, though they are often complacent and more often mortal for ease of control.

Obstacles

Six environmental or other obstacles you might find in this town, no matter who's demesne it's in.

1. Tremors and sinkholes run rampant through the territory, punishment for stealing too much from the depths of the earth. Vessels are shattered when the earth shakes, mines collapse, stones fall and crush laborers, and the lash of the landlord will come cracking if productivity is not resumed immediately once such calamity ceases.
2. Tommyknockers bedraggle operations deep into the earth, cracking support timbers and causing cave-ins. Those who know of them can prepare, flee before the collapses come; but such folk are of older generations and the newer laborers are ordered to delve deeper past once established boundaries. Even after a collapse, an unspent vein will be mined for again intime.
3. As elsewhere in Cardenfell, the earth here is said to be haunted. The bones of giants, of other things from ancient times, linger within the soils; deeper down than mortal folk were meant to delve. Spirits rise from time to time; black hounds upon the hills, strange lights; inhuman shades that cry out in tongues no longer spoken or honored.
4. If a mine is fully spent, it must be collapsed, not merely shuttered. Beyond the spirits of the earth, tommyknockers and tremor-makers, are darker things that dwell. Old legends tell of a mythic underworld, of pacts made with devils far crueller than any vampire of the Crimson Crown. Old maid's tales, but horned kings can be found in the elder lodge tapestries; feasting on far worse than

mere mortal blood. Lesser spells about the Sisters may speak of pacts renewed, and were a vampire to make such a deal; what horror would ensue is dark and dire to dream upon.

5. The slurry pit will flood when the rains come, spilling out into the village, seeping into the mines, and blighting whatever it touches. Crops, feeble as they are where they grow here, will be ruined and productions will either cease or the laborers will toil with little to rattle about in their bellies.
6. Posturing from lordlings in the Veins will see border conflicts brought to the Sisters. Tithings will be desired to appease the feudal lords of the southern reaches or they will begin carting off chattel and putting heads upon pikes. The protestations of the vampiric landlords will be cowardly at best and met with vicious mockery. Death will take its toll until egoes are appeased.

Opportunities

Six opportunities, be it to spread the revolution, secure supplies, or aid ailles you might find in this village.

1. An abandoned mine on the edge of the territory; it would be disputed if it had not run dry decades ago. Records claim it collapsed, shuttered up, but it is open. If one could make a compact of sorts with whatever darkness dwells within, it might harbor them safely as a base of operations.
2. Raiders from the south strike out here on occasion, mercenary sorts trumped up on misplaced heroic ideals. Some believe they'll take Blood Sterling if they impress their lords and masters well enough. They could assist in sieging a master's hall, or serve as a distraction or even a party worth double-crossing once they've secured heavy losses and plundered supplies.
3. The folk of the Sisters were a once proud people, united in culture and in tradition now long since broken and kept around as curiosity rather than heritage. All those who know the legacy of their ancestors' halls would see them honored if they had the morale and capacity for hope. Uniting them in cause against their enemies would see them a powerful force for the revolution.
4. Silver shavings are hard to come by, but any miner who has worked under the lash of the masters has endeared the thought of scourging their face with the stuff. A few tiny shavings, here or there, kept under the tongue, pocketed away in wounds. Argyria is

an inevitability with poor equipment and little care. Earn a blue-tinted miner's loyalty, they'll give you shards enough to mutilate their master.

5. The landlords receive their Blood Sterling less often than they'd like, and the Lords of Cardenfell are cruel enough to send only that which they believe will keep their servants desperate and loyal. Such caravans look the same as any other, hijacking one or despoiling the phials could challenge loyalties in the region.
6. Metals of false purity can sometimes be mined from the earth, any who have toiled alongside a master prospector can tell the difference and discard of such waste in the slurry pits. Those elsewhere in Cardenfell lack such sophisticated knowledge of minerals, and though it will likely not fool an Alchemist; it would easily fool lesser vampires seeking to mint their own Blood Sterling.

Oldleigh

Export: Silver, Copper

The largest of the Sisters, Oldleigh is a mining company town stretching over networks of mined-out hill and dale. Exports silver and copper into the coffers of the vampire lords.

Old, worn down company house buildings and leaning bunkhouses. Vast stretches of tents. The constant sound of picks, the shrill call of the work whistle. Watchful guards in towers. Counting houses carefully tracking the flow of silver and copper.

Flinford

Export: Coal

A coal-mining village, one of the Sisters. Exports coal used to make steel and heat the homes of many throughout the Bloody Isles.

Dirty, soot-caked chimneys. Faces covered in soot, masks of fabric and rags permanently over mouths. The sound of arguing, children crying. Occasional raucous laughter from a tavern.

Ironholme

Export: Iron

Home to an old, ancient mine of iron, newly deepened and widened, it stretches into the very ground itself.

Cramped, enclosed spaces. Hodge-podge construction, things built on

top of one another. The tinny sound of pick striking earth and metal. Watchful bailiffs, on the lookout for any wayward iron.

VILLAGE FEATURES

Villages are more than just the resources they produce. If you're looking for locations the players may visit within a village, consult this list of **Features**.

Millner - Bread, made from wheat, barley, or other staple crops is the foundation of most diets in Cardenfell. While most peasants bake their own bread, the threshed grains must first be ground into flour. Windmills are common enough in well-to-do villages, and most towns have a watermill set up along the river. Poorer villages or those without access to wind-power rely on turning-mills, usually powered by livestock such as a mule or donkey.

Blacksmith - While the advent of machine manufacture has reduced the call for the village blacksmith's services, there is still some demand in the poorer, more isolated villages. While the vampire counts extol their subjects to replace damaged or broken implements, many still prefer the hardier, repairable tools of blacksmiths than the cheaper ones made in factories.

Church - The village Church forms a cornerstone of the communities they occupy, and unfortunately, many also form a cornerstone of the vampire's influence over the village. The Reformed Faith is the official religion of the land, and it's ministers extol the virtues of hoarding wealth and preach that entrance into eternal life can be bought only with sweat, silver, and blood.

Meeting Hall - In villages where the Reformed Faith holds less sway, a Meeting Hall is a common sight. They are buildings set aside for villagefolk to meet, discuss their common interests, and make decisions as to the direction of their community. Meeting halls are marked as dangerous and seditious by many a vampire lord, and many is the meeting hall that has been destroyed on suspicion of "seditious influence."

Well - Of less suspicion is the well of a village. When villagers come

together to draw water, they often laugh, gossip, and plot with one another. Most vampires consider such behavior a nuisance below their concern.

Guard Post - While not every village is worthy of “protection” by the vampire’s soldiers, most are at least worthy of observation. Guard posts are usually towers, built to intimidate and provide a vantage point for the vampire’s lackeys to keep an eye on their fellows.

Gallows - A hallmark of nearly every village in Cardenfell, a gallows is a brutal reminder of the cost of rebellion or sedition. Crime, particularly against property, is dealt with harshly, and many a starving thief or beggar has met their end on the steps of a gallows. Their bodies are often left to rot until vultures or other scavenging beasts tear them apart, a chilling display of power meant to intimidate the populace.