

# Neil Gaiman's



**A POSTMORTEM STUDIOS GAME**  
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# A cooperative story game

System and rules © Postmortem Studios [James Desborough] 2002

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The *Neverwhere* game and its content is based on the novel by Neil Gaiman and the B.B.C. series directed by Neil Gaiman and Lenny Henry through Crucial Films.

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## Author's Note

*There are some conflicts between the TV series and the book. Having access to both we have chosen what we believe to be the better option for story in each case. Additionally a great deal has been speculated upon from as little as two word mentions in the book and a lot more made from whole cloth or by looking up street names in the A-Z. Your vision of London Below may be quite different to ours, so feel free to change anything you want.*

## Dedication

This book is dedicated to Postmortem Studios, my on again off again dream for ten years. This book marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of my first forays into published role-playing games and I hope it will represent a new beginning for me and for other people trying to break into the industry for the first time. I would also like to thank my contributors for their enthusiasm and speed in helping me prepare this work for final publication.

## Grim - Christmas 2002.

Permission is granted by the makers of this game for home printing, photocopying or having the book printed and bound provided it is not sold for profit.

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# Falling Through the Cracks

*There was a door shaped hole in the wall, where he had scratched his outline. There was a man standing in the doorway, with his arms folded theatrically. He stood there until he was certain that Richard had seen him. And then he yawned hugely, covering his mouth with a dark hand.*

*The Marquis de Carabas raised an eyebrow.*

*"Well?" he said irritably.*

*"Are you coming?"*

**- The Marquis de Carabas, 'welcoming' Richard back to London Below.**

*Not so long ago everything was normal. I drove my cab around, picked people up, dropped them off, took their money and that was it. All right, so occasionally I'd misuse 'The Knowledge' to take scenic detours so the meter would rack up a bit but who doesn't take advantage of tourists now and again eh?*

*So, anyway, I get a pickup at The Isle Of Dogs and I make my way there, finally pulling up at the address to find the geezer waiting for me by a phone box. He opens the door and hops in pretty quick, like. What you notice first is the smell.*

*I've been around the city for the longest time. I've smelt it all, boozy students and their girlfriends, reeking of cider. Businessmen stinking of guilt, hotel sex and cheap cologne, kids' nappies, blood, you name it it's happened in the back of my bloody cab.*

*This guy smelt of the street. Stale sweat and socks worn all month long, dirty teeth and lingering bad breath. I adjusted the mirror and started rolling, the meter starting to tick over.*

*"Where to, guv?" I ask.*

*The usual taxi banter puts most of the punters at ease. Not this bloke, he's as nervous as a monkey in a lion cage, looking out the back window and peering into this little covered box he's got with him.*

*"Night's Bridge," he says. Just like that, two words. Foreign I figure, Albanian maybe, so I don't argue I just drive on autopilot. 'The Knowledge' takes me where I need to go and no roundabout routes this time. This bloke won't have any money and I want him off the upholstery as soon as possible.*

*Looking in the rear-view mirror I see someone jogging along the pavement after the car as I turn the corner. Great big brute of a bloke dressed in rags and tatters, another homeless I reckoned, his two pikey dogs trotting along beside him, great big Rottweilers, all teeth and attitude. I'm so busy keeping an eye on him I don't see another dog run under the wheels. My feet slam on the brakes and I let out a heartfelt; "Shit."*

*The fare isn't impressed with my stopping, his package has tumbled onto the floor and I hear squeaking and scrabbling. Looking over the back to reason with him I see what he's dropped.*

*An enormous, great, big, fucking rat.*

*Not one of your loveable domesticated rats either, this is a big, dirty, brown bastard that stinks of the sewer and looks like it could take on a terrier single-handed. Not at the moment though, looks like it's already been in the wars, a great big series of nasty teeth marks running down its side and blood getting on my upholstery.*

*"Look mate." I start, "I've hit something and I need to go take a look-see to check whether it's alive or not, you understand right?"*

*"No!" He says. "We have to get out of here! His Lordship is wounded and the dogs pursue us, we have to get away before he gets us!"*



Now, I'm used to dealing with loonies, I get all sorts in the cab after the clubs close, so I smile sweetly like I always do and get out of the cab anyway to check the dog. It's nowhere to be seen. The big bloke with the two Rottweilers though, he's close. Close enough I see his yellow eyes and teeth and the teeth on his dogs. Close enough that I jump back into the cab and start off right away, foot to the floor.

My fare cheers me on as we speed away but I start to see dogs at every traffic light and crossroads. No collar, no lead, just big nasty looking mongrels all over the place. In the back the fare is cooing over his rat, squeaking and wiggling his nose like he can talk to the damn thing. Takes all sorts.

I pull up and stop the meter, reading off the price without even looking at it, before I realise I'm nowhere near Knightsbridge. Not that the fare seems to care, he hops out and drops some money in my palm before he legs it down an alleyway. I look and at first I think he's given me chocolate money like the kids get for Christmas. I'm out of the cab like a shot in hot pursuit, then I hear claws on asphalt behind me. More dogs, chasing him, chasing me. The alley turns dark and misty. The streetlights are gone save for a couple of old Victorian gas lamps. The fare vanishes into the mist on the bridge and I shout after him.

"Oi! You owe me fare!"

I don't like the sound of the dogs so I follow him onto the bridge. The dogs have more intelligence, stopping at the end of it and whining, refusing to chase any more. There is a moment of... Nothing. I feel horror and loneliness, I feel suspended in the dark for the longest moment until my foot hits the boards again and I come off the other end of the bridge.

The fare is there, waiting for me it seems. He grins, showing me the rotting stumps of his teeth.

"They won't follow here, animals have more sense," he says, which fills me with a great feeling of security, I can tell you.

I look at the coins again. Now, I'm no history expert but I know gold when I see it and I can take a guess about big-nosed Romans. I smile to him and back away, taking the long way around back to my cab.

So, things are back to normal now then, sort of.

I kept one of the coins as a keepsake and I keep getting strange fares that want to barter. I'm getting less flag-downs so that suits me, the barter's almost always worth more in any case.

So yeah, if you're after a lift anywhere, just ask or give me a call.

No dogs though eh? Hair gets all over the seats.



# Introduction

*Richard found himself pondering, drunkenly, whether there really was a circus at Oxford Circus: a real circus with clowns and beautiful women and dangerous beasts.*

**- Richard, on the eve of his departure for London.**

Anyone who has ridden on the London Underground or walked its streets has smiled to him or herself and thought punning thoughts about the wonderful place names of parts of the city. Does it really Turnham Green? Can you see clowns at Oxford Circus? Is High Barnet a really tall haircut? These names elicit strong images in our minds and these stay with us even after we go to these places and find just another street of shops filled with honking cars.

London is a city of dreams still. Like Hollywood in the U.S. it attracts the best, the brightest and the most ambitious to its streets, many of whom crash hard and end up living rough, depending on the charity of others for food and shelter. For every rich success there is a poor failure curled in a doorway begging for change.

Immigrants from all over the world also congregate in London, along with teeming hordes of tourists. You can walk down a single street and hear six languages and four regional accents. Each people bring with them their own unique touch, their own stories, food and legends to the city becoming part of it.

London is full of hidden treasures, from the delightful Little Venice, to tucked away, forgotten monuments and gardens, alleyways that suddenly seem removed from the bustle of the city, quiet and still. Pubs that have their own beer and gardens as nice in the evening as any Greek tavern or Italian bistro. Burned, bombed and built over in various parts of its history the city is a hodgepodge of periods and styles, its roads a mess and its streets remembering the old uses they were put to and the old English names for them.

London is full of stories, full of light, glamour, imagination and energy. Bright light casts long shadows and besides the homelessness there is crime and poverty, much of it caused by the sheer expense of living in the capital.

While *Neverwhere* can be played based in any city it is really a game of London. A wonderful city, full of history and character and as much a player of the game as anyone else sat at the table.

## The World of *Neverwhere*

*The Marquis scratched the side of his nose. "Young man," he said, "there are two Londons. There's London Above - that's where you lived - and there's London Below - the Underside - inhabited by the people who fell through the cracks in the world. Now you're one of them. Good night."*

**- The Marquis, being unusually helpful.**

The *Neverwhere* game is based on the world described by Neil Gaiman in the novel and B.B.C. series of the same name. The game expands on the tantalising details that were revealed to us there, expanding on London Below and filling in many of the gaps with the authors' imaginations.

*Neverwhere* describes a world beneath our one. A fairyland of sorts where invisible people and storybook inhabitants of a bygone age survive around us, living in the same areas, eating our food, using our castaway rubbish and daydreams to fashion a living for themselves in the gaps.

In some ways it is an allegory for life on the street. Homeless people are invisible to us, even when boldly asking us for money. Most of the time we will simply ignore them, walking on by as though they don't exist. Many of them do have tales to tell though; those at the bottom as well as those at the top usually have interesting stories about how they got there.

In addition to that *Neverwhere* stirs in myths legends and history. The past has not departed London Below, the invisible world that coexists with us. People from history mix with vampires, elderly nobles, talking rats and fictional characters; all living together in an unknown society, right under our noses.

When playing this game you will take on the role of people from this shadow world and you will explore the stories that this modern wonderland of myth and fairytale will allow you to craft. Guided by your narrator you will follow in the footsteps of Lady Door Portico, Richard Richardmayhewdick and The Marquis de Carabas, carving a destiny for yourself in the underworld.

## Some Basic Rules of London Below

- There is no money in London Below, *everything* is bartered.
- Those from London Above cannot generally see those from London Below, at all, unless underworld dwellers directly impose on them.
- While you may be invisible to those from London Above, thieving, for any reason, is not accepted. You're only supposed to take the things that no one wants any more.
- The set-up is feudal, with Baronies, fiefdoms and all the associated pomp and ceremony.
- Favours *must* be repaid on command. Your word is your absolute bond and can be used to purchase things when you have nothing to barter. If you break your word you have no currency.



## What is Role-Playing?

"You'll just have to make the best of it down here," he said to Richard, "in the sewers and the magic and the dark." And then he smiled hugely: "Well - delightful to see you again. Best of luck. If you can survive for the next day or two you might even make it through a whole month."

### - The Marquis, dropping Richard in at the deep end.

Explaining what a role-playing game is, is one of the most difficult things you can ask of someone involved in the hobby. No two games are entirely alike and it is all too easy for a description to sound like a board game, which role-playing is not.

The best way I have found to explain role-playing is to describe it as interactive storytelling. Think of one of your favourite books, *Neverwhere* for example. Each player is assigned the role of one of the heroes of the story and another player takes the place of the author in describing narrative and directing the direction of the tale as well as taking the part of the villains and incidental characters in the story. The most important thing to remember is that unlike board games, role-playing is not a competitive enterprise. The players and narrator are working together to create an engaging and fun story for all.

When conflict occurs rules come in to determine the winner. Much like battles in *Risk* these conflicts are often resolved with dice and occasionally one side's 'army' is much more effective than the other side's. A strong man will likely win an arm-wrestling contest against a weaker man but on occasion Lady Luck will be with the weaker party and something can go wrong, leading to their victory. This element of chance is present in almost all role-playing games and usually involves dice, though cards, coins and rock-paper-scissors have all also been employed.

Just to complicate matters further *Neverwhere* is a step away from normal role-playing games in that it takes a far more narrative and story based approach than many games. Characters are not a spreadsheet of numbers as they are in most games but rather a descriptive paragraph. It is possible to read off one's character sheet as prose without breaking character or spoiling the mood of the scene.

*"The Raven's bodyguard is a **large and muscular** man, well **practiced** with his sword and **quick** on his feet. He lunges across the table with the blade attempting to strike Jeremy with his steel."*

Everything should become clear after reading through the rest of the rules and the example of play later on. There is more information on role-playing throughout the Internet and if you still have trouble after finishing this book you are almost guaranteed to find something useful out there.

## What You Need to Play

You don't have to have any special equipment at all in order to play the *Neverwhere* role-playing game. All you really need is at least two people and descriptions of your characters. The standard system uses a ten-sided dice to resolve conflicts and this can be found in any hobby shop or can be improvised using two six-sided dice and taking away two (ignoring a result of zero). Otherwise you can play using resolutions that require no dice at all and this shouldn't adversely affect the game.

## Themes and Moods

*Neverwhere* is about existing apart from the world. While the world that the characters live in is fantastic and full of excitement it is also dangerous and dirty, far from glamorous. A place where you survive from the leavings of others and whatever measure of skill you might have, a place where death can come from crossing a bridge or treading on a rat's tail.

This isolation from the real world can be played out in many ways, from being pushed, shoved and brushed against while passing through the crowds of London Above to self doubt and madness, wondering if this fantastic place is really real or whether you've gone insane. Everyone met is strange and different and the only people a character should be able to truly rely on are themselves and the other players. Anyone else could have their own interests and almost everyone in London Below puts their own interests first, they have to for survival.

London Below is divided into fiefdoms between various powers; the Courts, the Seven Sisters and other groups, each of whom command the fealty of other denizens of London Below granting them protection in exchange for their service. These courts vie with one another constantly outside the Floating Market and there is often hostility and brutality. Lord Portico's dream of a united underworld is carried by Lady Door but has little to no chance of success.

The last major thread is that of nightmares and dreams. In London Below the thoughts of those above are created and made real. What is The Gap? Why is it so scary? What lurks on Night's Bridge? How would legionnaires adapt to living in the Underside of modern London? What would modern dwarves look like, how would they survive? These are the scraps of old myths scraping a living in the mystic and the mad that is London Below. Surviving where they can, invisible to normal people. Characters are mythmakers, turning themselves into great stories and embodying epic ideals. This might be a slow process but making myths of your games and characters is a great way to add depth and personal involvement in the game.



# The Rules

"Scare her? We're cut throats, we are assassins not scare crows!" A pause. He took a deep breath. "Yes I understand but I don't like it." But the person at the other end of the phone had hung up. Mr Croup looked down at the telephone. Then he hefted it in one hand and proceeded methodically to smash it to shards of plastic and metal by banging it against the wall.

**- Mr Croup and Mr Vandemar, who would rather hurt people.**

The rules for *Neverwhere* are fairly slender and simple. The most important thing is to understand this simplicity as a strength of the game. Many games strive for realism or exacting determinations of degree of win or loss. Many of them are packed with tables and complicated formulae for the resolution of anything from riding a horse to striking someone with a long sword.

*Neverwhere* has a single table and this should hardly ever be used, as only conflict with other characters or non-player characters controlled by the Narrator should really need resolution through anything more than the Narrator's personal skill at storytelling. Even then the Narrator could choose to waive the use of dice and determine the results for themselves.

This is another important aspect of *Neverwhere* to understand. Aside from the way that characters are written everything else is entirely optional. As will be explained further on, it doesn't particularly matter that you use any of the conflict resolution methods written here, you can use anything, even your own methods.

## Character Creation

Your character in *Neverwhere* is made up of a descriptive passage of text describing your character. Much as a passage in a book might describe a character when they are first introduced. A starting character begins with five adjectives to describe themselves and their capabilities. You may use other words to describe your character's prowess, as will become clear when you read the A-Z but adjectives make the most sense for beginners.

When choosing your adjectives bear in mind the following...

- The more different adjectives you choose the more versatile your character will be, but the weaker they will be.
- The more similar adjectives you choose the better you will be at specific tasks.

- You can double up on a single adjective by adding a word like *very* or *extremely*. In such a case the adjective counts twice in any case where it applies. It also costs you two of your adjectives.

In addition to your adjectives you get to choose three levels of skills. These can be stacked to give you a greater degree of skill, or spread out to give you a wider range.

Skills provide a larger bonus to contests of ability than adjectives alone but are much narrower, only applying to things that directly fall under that skill. The skill levels are Beginner, Practiced, Veteran, Master and Legend.

## Tribes

The Underside contains many different types of folk

### Fiefdoms

The various courts of the Underside to which a character may owe allegiance, and their heads, are as follows...

*Baron's Court – The Baron.*  
*Bravos – Independent.*  
*Cave Painters – Gutter.*  
*The Darklings – Sister Saturday.*  
*Dogs' Parliament – Coldblow.*  
*Duke's Court – The Duke.*  
*Earl's Court – The Earl.*  
*Guides – Independent.*  
*House Portico – The Lady Door.*  
*Ratspeakers – Lord Ratspeaker.*  
*Raven's Court – The Raven.*  
*Sewer Folk – Dunnikin.*  
*The Blackfriars – The Abbot.*  
*The Crouch Enders – Clapton.*  
*The Isle Of Dogs – The Mad Lord.*  
*The Kilburn Legion – Maximus.*  
*The Order Of Isolation – The Abbess.*  
*The Rats – The Golden.*  
*The Royal House Of Cats – King Snaresbrook.*  
*The Seven Sisters – All are equal.*  
*The Shepherds – The Shepherd Queen.*  
*The Velvets – Pinner.*  
*The Wild Court – Herne.*  
*The Witches – All are equal.*  
*Trollstone – Curzon.*  
*Whitefriars – Islington in absentia.*

## Tribes

The Underside contains many different types of folk and many lost peoples, mythic races and the time lost. It is impossible to put a figure on the population of the Underside as it is always changing, always shifting and many of the peoples within it are hard to find or count. The rivalry of the baronies and fiefdoms and their friction with each other further complicates matters and no one has truly attempted a census.

The Various Tribes and their particular knacks and abilities are described below...

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## Birds

"I don't see the point in this," he explained. "I mean, it's not a homing pigeon. It's just a normal London pigeon. The kind that craps on Lord Nelson."

- **Richard's observation on the birds of the Underside.**

### Description

Rooks, crows, ravens, magpies, starlings, sparrows and most of all pigeons all gather in great numbers in London both above and below. Some birds become infused with the same energies that created the rats, cats and dogs of London Below and become a little more intelligent and with it than the creatures above. Many owe fealty to Raven's Court but many others are out for themselves and only themselves. London pigeons, who gather at Trafalgar Square and who have learned how to use the Underground, are almost all London Below pigeons.

### Knacks

Birds are *small* and *fragile*, with one other additional adjective appropriate to the type of bird that they are. All birds can fly.

### Equipment

None. The most a bird could carry would be a small, bird-sized necklace or a ring around their leg.

## The Black Friars

### Description

A great weight has been lifted from the shoulders of the Black Friars. No longer guardians of the key, or guards over the place of Islington's rest, they are free to do as they wish. Without their sacred trust they have been aimless a while but now they walk the Underside offering aid and comfort of a martial or medical nature to those who need them.

The only heavily armed group in the Underside, amongst the only ones with guns, the Black Friars do all they can to keep things that way as firearms could disrupt the delicate balance of power in the Underside and cause great and bloody conflict. They never use their firearms save in self-defence and even then usually go hand to hand first.

### Knacks

Black Friars gain the *firearms* skill at *beginner* and another combat skill of their choice at *beginner*.

### Equipment

Black Friars start play with a cassock, a begging bowl and a pistol with forty rounds of ammunition.

## Bravos and Guards

### Description

Bravos are as varied and individual as snowflakes. Seeking to attract attention from potential clients they dress in distinctive outfits, specialise in certain weapons or forms of fighting and brag, ceaselessly unless they have a little class.

Bravos are mercenaries, working for the highest bidder, and thus live fairly well. Their mercenary attitude makes them less than trustworthy unless their hirer is wealthy and they cannot trust each other since they are all going for the same contracts all the time.

Every Bravo has a special knack, some attribute, skill or special power that gives them an edge and that they hone to an advanced degree.

### Knacks

Bravos begin with an extra adjective, an extra skill and a knack, which can be another adjective or skill level, or can be a special ability such as telekinesis, danger sense, regeneration or some other minor supernatural ability. This power should not be overt or too powerful, it should simply grant the Bravo a certain edge. For example, a pyrokinetic could light candles or make a weapon too hot to hold, but could not immolate someone. Some knacks are just a talent, like being able to leap a long way, and do not have to be bought as skill levels.

### Equipment

Bravos begin with some kind of armour, a single weapon and four or five minor items for barter.





## Cats

### Description

The Underside has gifted many animals with sentience and Cats are no exception, though they claim to have always been smarter than the other animals thus gifted.

The Royal House of Cats resides in Catford and wanders the rooftops and back alleys of the city. Long ago they earned the respect and patronage of The Marquis de Carabas for some favour done to him and as a result it is said that the House of Cats are the only ones who can ask the Marquis for a favour and not expect to have to repay it.

Cats are regal, selfish and aloof, concerned with pedigree and status above all else. Their gatherings are held on the rooftops and they celebrate by feasting on birds, rats and mice and singing until the sun comes up.

There is a long running animosity between the Royal House of Cats, the Parliament of Dogs and The Rats. Ratspeakers especially will go out of their way to kill Cats, Royal or not.

### Knacks

Cats are *small*, *curious* and *quick* and receive these as extra adjectives at no cost. Cats are limited by having no thumbs and their small stature. They have natural claws and teeth, useful for hunting small prey and can usually wind a human around their little paws simply by purring and rubbing against them.

A Cat may ask a single free favour of the Marquis de Carabas during their lifetime which he is honour bound to at least attempt to fulfil. Only the King Of Cats knows why he has this obligation, and isn't telling.

Cats always land on their feet after a fall, have excellent night vision and keen senses of smell and taste.

### Equipment

Cats start with nothing and no Royal Cat would ever tolerate wearing a collar.

## Cave Painter

### Description

The Cave Painters are a rag-tag group of children, mostly orphans, who rampage through the Underside painting murals and graffiti on any surface they can apply pigment to. Scruffy and unkempt they make their way by supplementing their vandalism producing art for the market and selling information.

Once they come of age, usually at around fifteen or sixteen, the Cave Painters are cast out by their own tribe and usually end up becoming a Bravo, Guide or Half-Lifer.

All things bright of colour fascinate Cave Painters; flashing lights, workman's vests, L.E.Ds and anything else of a similar ilk.

### Knacks

Cave painters are *youthful*, *short* and *energetic*, receiving these adjectives for free. They have a good knowledge of the Underside receiving the skill *Underside navigation at beginner* for free.

### Equipment

Cave Painters start with spray paints, chalks or crayons and a patchwork outfit of fluorescent workman's vests, bicycle reflectors and flashing lights.

## Crouch Enders

### Description

The Crouch Enders are dwarves, short and quick, twisted of limb but fast on their feet. The Crouch Enders make formidable Bravos and good messengers all across the Underside. They have a distinct advantage over many other dwellers in the Underside given that they are capable of using smaller tunnels and areas inaccessible to many of their enemies.

### Knacks

Crouch Enders gain the adjectives *short*, *quick* and *tough*.

### Equipment

Crouch Enders begin with tough clothing and boots and a lamp, lantern or torch as well as two minor barter items.

## Dogs

### Description

The Parliament of Dogs sits in Barking holding their debates through howls and barking. The Parliament regards itself as the guardians of humans in the Underside and the world above and many of the Dogs attach themselves to Half Lifers and other weak and needy folk acting as unpaid Bravos.



There is great animosity between the Parliament of Dogs, the Royal House of Cats and The Rats, with the Dogs equally torn between their hatred of Rats and Cats. Occasionally two of the sides will join forces against the others but the three are normally in equilibrium.

Dogs who fail in their duties or question the Parliament are exiled to Barkingside and no longer allowed to participate in the Parliament. Many of these end up working as Guides or Bravos, some go to the Isle Of Dogs and become truly feral and evil, serving the Mad Lord, about whom stories are whispered to newborn puppies. It is said he was a loyal dog who was beaten by his master and turned on him, devouring him and taking on his human shape.

### **Knacks**

Dogs start with two free adjectives depending on their breed. They have natural weapons in their teeth for biting and can run for long distances. Dogs have an excellent sense of smell and receive the skill *tracking* at *beginner* for free.

### **Equipment**

Dogs have no equipment save the occasional collar.

## **Guide**

### **Description**

Guides know every byway and back-alley of the city, every rumour, every threat, and can generally make themselves understood by the peoples of the Underside. Guides make it their business to know the folklore of the Underside and are hired at markets by people seeking to make their way to forgotten or forbidden areas or even out of the city and to another one.

Guides are accorded much of the same respect that Bravos are, their skill is a valuable commodity and they are sought after for their specialist skills and knowledge. Unfortunately that same skill and knowledge makes them a target for the less scrupulous and greedier underdwellers, especially those seeking mythical treasures or lost places.

Anaesthesia was a guide for the Rat-speakers before she met her end helping Richard Mayhew.

### **Knacks**

Guides receive the *Underside navigation* skill at *beginner* as well as an *Underside language* (Dog, Cat, Rat, Pigeon or Sewer Folk) at *beginner* level.

### **Equipment**

Guides usually have a set of fairly practical and resilient clothing, a backpack and a light source, usually an electric torch or lantern. They carry a knife or shank for self-protection and often carry a heavily annotated A-Z of London as well as four or five minor barter items.

## **Half Lifers**

### **Description**

Caught between the world above and the world below, Half-Lifers are not truly part of either. Unaccepted by most under dwellers and shunned by those who live above Half-Lifers have the best and worst of both worlds. Able to be noticed by people in the world above, however fleetingly, allows them to make money begging or busking which can then be traded properly for goods from above that are highly prized below, mostly food, drink and decent metal.

Thus most Half-Lifers work as go-betweens and traders, eking out a living above and below and living on the margin.

### **Knacks**

Half-Lifers start with a single additional adjective and can exert themselves to be noticed by those who live above. *Be noticed* is a skill starting at *beginner* level and requiring a medium difficulty roll to be used.

### **Equipment**

Half-Lifers start with a sleeping bag, a doorway pegged out as their own and two minor barter items.

## **Hermit**

### **Description**

Hermit is a bit of a misnomer as the only place to get what you need in London Below is the Floating Market, attending which requires a certain minimum of socialisation. Hermits do prefer to live alone though, seeking out of the way places on rooftops, in alleys or deep in the tunnels in which to live. Dirty and often quite mad Hermits have a certain obsessive, quality to them, which allows them to develop a highly focussed degree of skill.

Old Bailey is an excellent example of a Hermit

### Knacks

Hermits may develop two *beginner* level skills or a single *practiced* skill in addition to their normal skill levels. One of these is most likely a language skill. Hermits have a safe, hard to find home away from prying eyes, which is known only to them and those they choose to reveal it to.

### Equipment

Hermits hoard useless trinkets, usually of a similar nature and type, which gives them up to ten minor bartering items.

## Newly Fallen

*He remembered the way the girl who called herself Door said goodbye. The way she paused. The way she said she was sorry... "You knew," he said to the empty flat. "You knew this would happen."*

- Richard, falling down to London Below.

### Description

The Newly Fallen are ordinary everyday people from the world above who have somehow been dragged into the world of the Underside for any reason at all. There seems to be little rhyme or reason to which people end up becoming part of the Underside; encounters with underdwellers convert some of them, others just seem to drift into it through homelessness or romantic dreaming.

The Newly Fallen know little or nothing about the Underside and often flail around for a while, hopelessly causing all sorts of mischief and problems. If they survive this period they may become useful and helpful members of the society on the Underside.

### Knacks

Newly fallen may take any one additional adjective to describe their character as well as an extra level of skill. Both of these must be appropriate to the role they had in their life in the world above.

### Equipment

A Newly Fallen begins the game with the clothes and items they had when they fell through the cracks into the world below. Many of these things will become useless as the Newly Fallen loses their identity to the world above. Cash cards won't work, cell phones won't receive and nobody will call anyway. Friends and relatives forget they ever existed. This can be traumatic, causing despair in weaker minds. They may get remembered when they throw themselves in front of a train, if they're lucky.

## Openers

### Description

Members of House Portico, the Openers are all of Royal blood. The Lady Door now runs the household and is the only true-blooded member of the family left alive after the depredations of Croup & Vandemar, however cousins, bastards of former Lords and other obscure family members do reside elsewhere in the Underside and branches of the family exist in other cities.

The House Portico are fast healers whose wounds close fast and whose veins and arteries do not bleed for long. Only the most grievous of wounds will slay them outright. Additionally they have the ability to open any door, bypass any lock. Only magical locks or devices of extreme and cunning artifice give them the slightest pause.

### Knacks

All Openers gain the adjective *tough* and the ability to open any closed door or locked box starting at *beginner* level. This requires but a touch and a medium difficulty roll which is increased by magic or supernatural levels of skill in *locksmith*.

### Equipment

The House of Portico is a wealthy and important one. All Openers begin with five minor barter items.

## Rats

### Description

Small but larger than mice, rats are covered in fur and are usually brown or black with the occasional albino. They have long, furless, whip-like tails and like to regard themselves as the true masters of London Below.

They may be right.

Rats are everywhere; you're never more than a few yards from one, especially in London. They see all and hear all and, while diminutive, there are a great many of them. Along with their servants the Rat-speakers the Rats of London Below are one of the most powerful groups.

### Knacks

Rats gain the adjectives *small* and *fast* and the servitude of the Rat-speakers.

### Equipment

Rats don't have any.



## Ratspeakers

"So. Um. You're a rat, are you?" he said.

She giggled. (...) "I should be so lucky. I wish. Nah. I'm a rat-speaker. We talk to rats."

"What, just chat to them?"

"Oh no, we do stuff for them. I mean," and her tone of voice implied that this was something that might never have occurred to Richard unassisted, "There are some things rats can't do, you know. I mean, not having fingers, and thumbs, an' things. Hang on -"

### - Anaesthesia explains the Rat-speakers

#### Description

Rat-speakers are filthy ragtag humans, living at the very edge of the border between above and below. They mix commonly with Half-Lifers, using them to get things for the Rats from the world above that are hard to come by in the world below.

Rat-speakers do everything they can to help those they owe fealty to, The Rats and The Golden who lead them. After all, there are some things a rat can't do and a Rat-speaker is always happy to provide a little muscle or a set of thumbs.

#### Knacks

Every Rat-speaker is able to speak Rat at practiced level and is on good terms with the Half-Lifers. They must show respect and fealty to any Rat that asks for it and will follow their commands to the letter short of suicide.

#### Equipment

Rat-speakers start with a dagger, knife or shank and three small items for barter.

## Sewer Folk

They wore clothes - brown and green clothes, covered in a thick layer of something that might have been mould and might have been a petrochemical ooze, and might, conceivably, have been something much worse. They wore their hair long and matted. They smelled more or less like what you would imagine.

### - A vision of the Sewer Folk.

#### Description

Most people in London Below are at the very least grubby and many are filthy. The tunnels and back alleys of a notoriously dirty city like London do not lend themselves to good personal hygiene nor is there a great supply of clean fresh water with which to bathe.

Sewer Folk however are another matter. Living in the great Victorian sewers they fish in the filthy water for that which others have lost, dredging it up and bringing it in to the floating market to sell. Nothing is ever truly thrown away.

Sewer Folk dwell in silence, communicating with each other by hand signals, mime and touch. Their stench is the most notable thing to others but their own sense of smell has long since atrophied away to almost nothing though they do appreciate strong perfumes and odours that don't smell like sewers.

Nobody likes to associate with Sewer Folk, especially if they're downwind at the time.

#### Knacks

Sewer Folk start with *handsign* at *practiced* level, an additional adjective of their choice and the adjective *stinky*.

#### Equipment

They begin with two minor barter items and a light source of some kind, usually a miner's lantern or an electric torch.

## The Shepherds of Shepherds Bush

"There are no shepherds in Shepherd's Bush," pointed out Richard flatly.

"There are," said Hunter, from the darkness just next to Richard's ear.

"Pray you never meet them." She sounded perfectly serious.

### - Warnings from Hunter.

#### Description

Large and striking figures, the Shepherds of Shepherd's Bush are feared as slavers across London Below. Completely shaved and devoid of all body hair they capture wayward underdwellers, shaving their heads and selling them into servitude at the Floating Market or at their own markets to those who dare attend them.

The Shepherds are intimidating and their reputation precedes them on that score but they are also canny traders and shrewd businessmen able to meet the sad demand for their produce.

The Shepherds are ruled by their queen and tend to revere women within their own society, but not those who become slaves.

#### Knacks

Shepherds gain the adjectives *big*, *strong* and *intimidating*.



### Equipment

Shepherds begin the game with a personal slave and two minor barter items. They also have manacles, chains and rope.

## Time Relics

### Description

All throughout the Underside are bubbles of old time, pieces of history that get stuck and remain in place in perpetuity. Some of these bring people with them. There is a roman legion at Kilburn, pockets of Victorian smog and stretches of street dating back to Elizabethan times.

Some of these time relics come out of their bubbles and live amongst the rest of the Underside bringing with them unusual skills and beliefs as well as anachronistic clothes and attitudes.

### Knacks

Time relics begin with an extra adjective and a skill at beginner that belongs to their time period.

### Equipment

Time relics start with a set of clothes and two pieces of equipment related to the period from which they come.

## Trader

### Description

What would the Underside be without its traders, without the floating market? The lifeblood of the Underside is barter and exchange. Traders are welcome almost everywhere, a friendly face laden down with goods for trade. Traders are canny folk who know how to fit in with a crowd and to get a good bargain. The Floating Market is their natural place to be and if possible they never miss one. Most traders have a speciality and work all they can to be the best in that field or to find a new niche.

### Knacks

Traders pick a single additional adjective and gain *Underside navigation* and *barter at beginner* for free.

### Equipment

Traders have a large backpack or other means to move goods from one place to another, a knife and ten minor barter items.

## Troll

### Description

Lumbering great brutes, Trolls are often stereotyped as somehow slow or stupid. While they are somewhat lumbering only their bodies are slow. Their minds are as keen as anyone else's. Thick limbed and thick-skinned Trolls are resistant to harm and move slowly and precisely but with great force.

Trolls are amongst the most notable Bravos and the finest craftsmen in London Below. When it comes to masonry or metalworking only place names like Hammersmith can outshine them. Trolls are not made of rock, their skin is leathery rather than rocky, but in colouration and texture it usually resembles soil or rock of a uniform type.

### Knacks

Trolls gain the adjectives *slow*, *large*, *strong* and *precise*. When hurt they should be considered to be fairly resistant and hard to wound.

### Equipment

Trolls start with a large club-like weapon and the basic tools of any trade they may have chosen as a career.

## Velvets

*Five almost identically dressed, extremely pale young women walked past him. They wore dresses made of velvet, each dress so dark it was almost black - respectively dark green, dark chocolate, royal blue, dark blood and pure black. Each had black hair, and wore silver jewellery; each was perfectly coiffed, perfectly made up. They moved silently: Richard was aware only of a swish of heavy velvet as they went past, a swish that sounded almost like a sigh.*

**- The Velvets make their way through The Floating Market.**

### Description

Vampires of heat the Velvets are smooth and cold, seductive creatures who at once fear sunlight and heat and crave it. Unable to bear the sun or the heat of day they walk at night seeking warmth from living bodies to sustain them. Velvets are immortals in terms of aging and disease but are vulnerable to fire, sunlight and die just as easily as anyone else if you cut them.

Velvets are tolerated in the Underside only because everyone there is an outcast of some kind and most underdwellers know to watch out for them. The only place one can be truly safe from them is in the floating market but for the most part they choose to feed in the world above, where they'll soon be forgotten.

Velvets sleep in a great cavern deep within the lower tunnels whose location is known to the Velvets and very few others. Cold as ice and covered in frost it preserves them during the day.

### Knacks

Velvets begin with the extra adjective *seductive*, are immortal and gain the *heat drain* skill at *beginner*, which they must use to feed once per week and which can also be used to freeze enemies and to make items brittle, though draining the heat from objects does not ease their chill.

### Equipment

Velvets dress in fine clothes of velvet, lace and PVC and strike a fine and beautiful sight in great contrast to most of the other scruffy underdwellers.

## Making A Roll

Unlike many role-playing systems *Neverwhere* relies on one simple roll. Everything else is left up to the Narrator; interpretation, wounds, effects, everything. This enables you to craft a true story with the absolute minimum of disruption but it does rely on the narrative ability of the Narrator and the players and a fair amount of goodwill between the players.

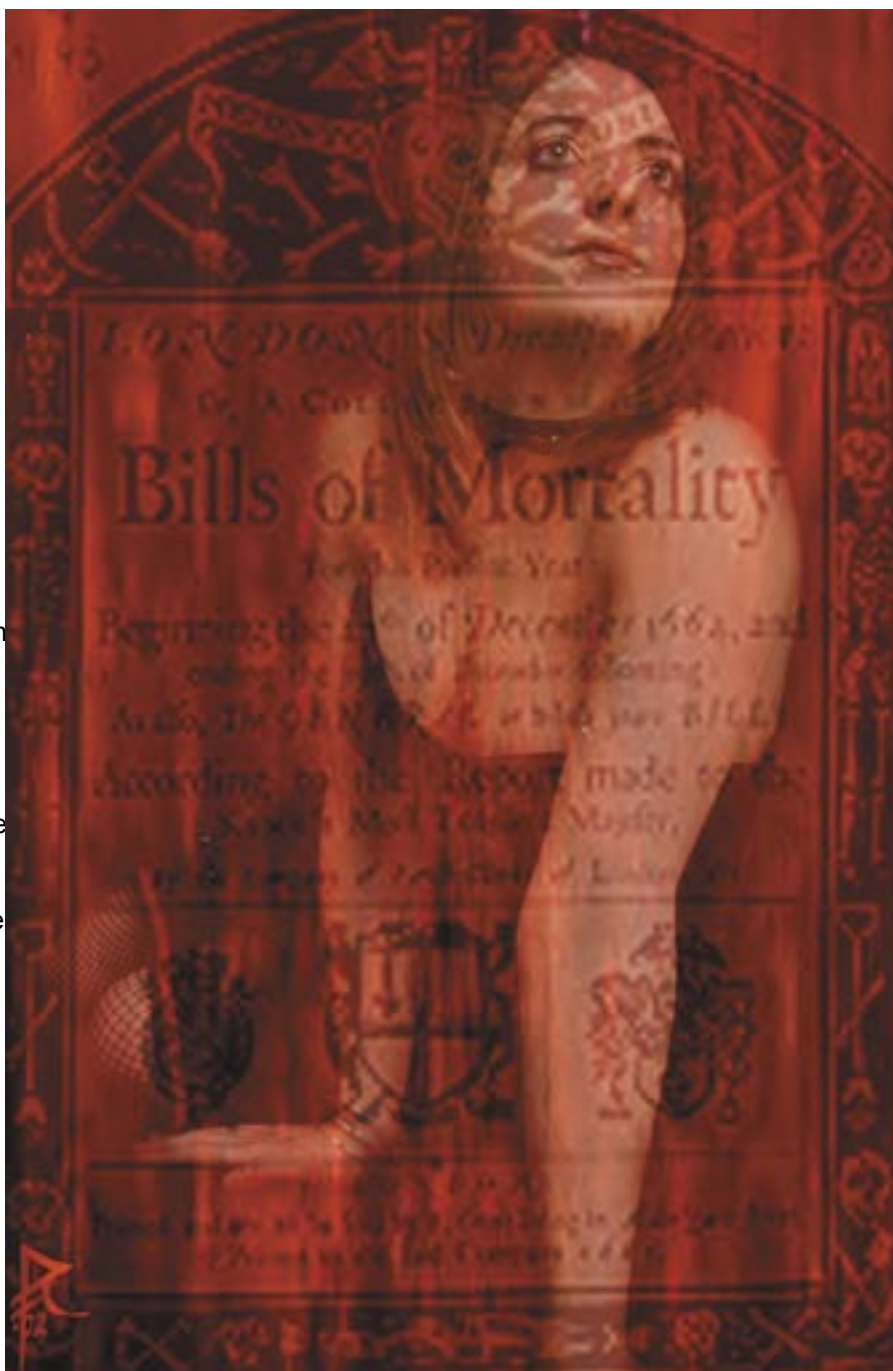
Consequently *Neverwhere* is best played with a trusted gaming group or as one off dramas with preset characters where a death will not mean so much or can even be an integral part of the story.

Everything boils down to a single roll on a ten-sided dice with the result modified by the words in your description and the level of your skills. A more detailed explanation follows.

### 1 - Describe what you're doing

You are confronted with a lock, how do you pick it? The Troll swings down at you with his great hammer, what do you do? You are trying to charm The Raven, the jaded mistress of Ravenscourt while your fellows plunder her treasury. What possible pick up line could penetrate the armour of the Lady Of Crows?

Describe the action you are taking, be dramatic, be exciting. The Narrator has



discretion to award you an extra bonus of one to your roll if you are suitably proficient and to remove one if your description is dull and uninspired.

There will always be players of games who are less able than others and if they are incapable of articulating themselves well they should not be penalised but rather their rolls let unmodified unless they make a real effort.

If the action you are undertaking then requires a roll you should proceed to the next stage.



## 2 - How difficult is it?

Every task has a difficulty of some sort so that only those with appropriate abilities are even close to guaranteed success. The difficulty of the task you are undertaking depends on the nature of that task. Against unresponsive unthinking opponents, such as a lock you are picking or a trap that has been triggered, you make your roll.

It should be noted that if you roll a one you should roll again. If you roll a one on the second roll you automatically fail, otherwise it is just treated as a one. If you roll a ten, roll again. If that is also a ten you automatically succeed, otherwise the roll is treated as a ten. You may discount this rule to speed up the game and to reduce the chance of random mishap.

### a) Against something unresponsive or 'static'.

Static rolls are made against set difficulties. Some suggested levels are listed in the following table. These numbers are only a guide and you can choose any number within these rough ranges. In order to succeed you must roll higher than the target number. Yes some are higher than ten; this isn't a misprint, keep reading.

Static rolls are also made when crafting things such as locks to determine the static difficulty for someone else to pick it.

### b) Against something that can act, or 'active'.

Acting against something active like another player simply requires you both to make a roll and to see who has the highest result. Whoever does is the victor; the other the loser and the action the winner described is carried out, possibly modified by the Narrator's whim.

Difficulty Grade	Target Number
Easy	4
Medium	7
Difficult	10
Impossible	15
Legendary	18

## 3 - How does my character description affect the roll?

Every adjective you have on your sheet is a strength or a weakness in different situations. Some are more typically weaknesses. Every word that applies to an action you are trying to accomplish is totted up and added to the roll. For example...

Drugan is fighting Turmeric on top of a Night bus as it cruises the London streets. Drugan declares his action.

"Diving forward with my blade held in both hands I stab downwards, trying to pin Turmeric's foot to the top of the bus."

Turmeric's action is described.

"Jumping back from him and back again I suddenly throw myself flat as we pass under a bridge and he's knocked flying from the bus."

The Narrator accepts the actions and so a quick adjective and skill tally is done.

Drugan declares...

"I am *quick* and *lithe*, *strong* enough to stab through his foot and *practiced* with my *blade*."

Which makes a tally of +5 to his roll.

Turmeric's description yields...

"I am *very fast* and long years on the street have made me a *veteran* at *dodging* harm."

Which makes a tally of +6.

Both then roll and add their tallies to see who is victorious.

## 4 - What happens when I succeed or fail?

If you succeed, the action you were attempting is successful, subject to the Narrator's whim. A lock may have several sections, a translation may need to be done piece by piece and not everything can be accomplished instantly with a single roll. Some actions, counting rice with chopsticks for example, may take a very long time to complete even once.

If you fail, what you were attempting to do is unsuccessful. The lock defeats you, the trap is sprung or you can't make head or tail of the coded script.

In a confrontational test against an active opponent, if you lose they win and vice versa.

The Raven sees through your seduction, or the Troll strikes you a mighty blow with the hammer. Depending on the Narrator's generosity losing in combat may kill you outright or merely be part of an ongoing scene. Most Narrators will extend the drama. Some wounds might cause the Narrator to assign you new adjectives such as blind or lame, temporarily or permanently.

## 5 - Can I try again?

If you have failed and are still alive, provided the task is something that can be attempted more than once you may try it again, but against a static opponent the difficulty is raised by one for each failed attempt as you become frustrated and angry by its intractability. A single person at a single task without a suitable recuperation period can make no more than three attempts.

### Automatic Success

As an optional rule, useful if you want to streamline the game a character whose bonus tally is equal to double the difficulty may automatically succeed without needing to roll at all. This only applies to tests against static opponents.



## Skills

Here are some suggested skills that you might consider. Although there is no need for standardised skills in *Neverwhere* this should form a handy list and help you to judge the breadth and capacity of the skills you allow in your games.

<b>Acrobatics</b> <b>Acting</b> <b>Appraise</b> <b>Artist</b> <b>Astrology</b> <b>Athletics</b> <b>Barter</b> <b>Begging</b> <b>Bow</b> <b>Computer</b> <b>Cooking</b> <b>Craft (Blacksmith, farrier etc.)</b> <b>Cryptography</b> <b>Dance</b> <b>Disguise</b> <b>Dodge</b> <b>Drive</b> <b>Electronics</b> <b>Etiquette</b> <b>Fast Talking</b> <b>First Aid</b>	<b>Fortune Telling</b> <b>Herbalism</b> <b>Hypnotism</b> <b>Interrogation</b> <b>Intimidation</b> <b>Juggling</b> <b>Knife</b> <b>Leadership</b> <b>Machinegun</b> <b>Magical Lore</b> <b>Mathematics</b> <b>Metalwork</b> <b>Motorcycle</b> <b>Music (Guitar, flute etc.)</b> <b>Pickpocket</b> <b>Pilot</b> <b>Pistol</b> <b>Poetry</b> <b>Poison</b> <b>Polearm</b>	<b>Riding</b> <b>Rifle</b> <b>Sail</b> <b>Seduction</b> <b>Sneak</b> <b>Spot</b> <b>Stealth</b> <b>Sword</b> <b>Throw</b> <b>Torture</b> <b>Tracking</b> <b>Tumble</b> <b>Unarmed Combat</b> <b>Underside Language</b> <b>Underside Language (Rat, Cat, Dog, Pigeon).</b> <b>Underside Lore</b> <b>Underside Navigation</b> <b>Whip</b> <b>Writing</b>
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## Experience

Everyone learns from their experiences, good or ill. Everyone grows and changes and develops as time passes by. Even immortals gain new experiences or change their outlook over the ages of the world.

As you play your character will gain the ability to change and develop in this way. At the end of each session of *Neverwhere* every player should gain one experience point. The group should then vote on which player made the greatest contribution to the session and they then receive a second point.

With your accumulated experience points you can adjust your character description in the following ways...

Change	Cost
Change an adjective	4 xp
Gain a new adjective	The number of adjectives you already have.
Increase a skill or knack	A number of points equal to the skill bonus you will have.
Buy a new skill at beginner	3 xp

## Other Ways To Resolve Conflict

- Work out the difference in adjective totals, the lower one tosses a single coin. The higher one tosses the difference in coins. Whoever gets the most heads, wins.
- Work out who has the higher number of adjectives and play Rock-Paper-Scissors. Whoever has the most adjectives wins if the same symbol is drawn.
- Work out who has the most adjectives. They win.

# Narrator Advice

Creating a convincing and consistent world that engages the players and holds their interest can be a daunting undertaking. The book and the TV series help establish the look, feel and mood for everyone, but the adventures your groups engage in will take you beyond the confines of Gaiman's work and into your own territory of story and whimsy.

Everyone needs a little help now and again and hopefully this section of the book should aid you in creating and depicting your little corners of London Below.

## Depicting The Underside

*"He..." Richard began. "The Marquis. Well, you know, to be honest, he seems a little bit dodgy to me." Door stopped. The steps dead-ended in a rough brick wall. "Mm," she agreed. "He's a little bit dodgy in the same way that rats are a little bit covered in fur."*

**- Door and Richard discussing the various merits of the Marquis.**

The Underside coexists with the real world. London Below and London Above are one and at the same time separate. London Below consists of the history, dreams and nightmares of those who dwell above oblivious at all times to the society that exists around, under and over them.

The Underside is brutal and nasty. People gather into courts, baronies, fiefdoms and other associations for protection. Apart from each other there are monsters and other nasty things wandering the Underside, not least of all The Gap. There are also fates worse than death, slavery at the hands of the shepherds or being transformed by someone's magic. A favourite punishment of Raven's Court is to have someone's eyes put out by the pecking of crows.

The Underside is made up of rejects. Rejected people. Rejected thoughts and dreams. The Underside lives on the waste and rubbish of London Above, be it intellectual, spiritual or physical. When describing the Underside you should keep this in mind, everything is dirty and very few things are clean. Almost everything is faded or tattered or has been worn or used before, old and new sit side by side. Junked computers from the latest dot-com crash may obscure a poster urging

silence from World War Two. A Cyberpunk Bravo all L.E.D.s and neon may wield an authentic Roman gladius. This mish-mash is only made more apparent by the existence of the Time Lost who bring their own cast offs with them and whose time-bubbles are replete with junk and items not seen since their times passed by.

The Underside is not all under the ground although the majority exists in dark back alleys, tunnels, underground lines and the like. Much of it exists in the same places as landmarks or streets in the world above but not at the same 'level'. A busy street may harbour two markets, one above, one below, both occupying the same place.

London Below is largely nocturnal whereas London Above, while a twenty-four hour city, is more active during the day. The quiet time around three to four in the morning is the peak of London Below's activity and the period during which most newly fallen fall through the cracks to become London Belowers or at least catch a glimpse of what goes on behind the scenes.

The places that form London Below do not necessarily sit in the same physical location as the real world streets that have their name. This is especially true for the living ones but is also true of the locations. Space and time are warped by London Below so that one



can walk down a few tunnels and find oneself on the far side of the city or moving backwards and forwards through day and night far too quickly (or slowly) as you emerge from the dark.

Finally, then, the best advice that can be offered is the best advice one can offer to any Narrator in describing the worlds they create. Make them alive to the senses, do not worry about being overly wordy or



or florid, make the world come alive with vivid descriptions that appeal to all the senses.

**Sight:** The tunnels are dark and dank, lined with soot, the shadows concealing anything that might lie within. The troll's skin gleams white as chalk, standing out from the murk. Clouds of brown smoke rise from the woks of the Floating Market. The urchin's face shines through the patches of grime pinkly as you wipe away the filth. The Raven's eyes are blue as the sky of the world above as she smiles looking directly back into yours, hungrily.

**Sound:** There is never any silence. Tunnels drip with water, the sounds of trains echo through the pipes. Feet grind gravel and heels tap, crows caw, conversations ebb and flow, swell and recede. Blades scrape on brick as the dark figures laugh unnervingly. Silks swish and leather creaks. Breathing can be ragged or strong, deep or shallow, wheezing or snorting. Voices can be rough, smooth, grating, hoarse, high, low, resonant, bass or contralto.

**Feel:** The brick is rough under your fingertips, the silk you use to polish your magic knife is the finest softest thing you've ever felt, more welcome than a lover's caress. The blade is smooth as well, but cold and unforgiving, hard where the polisher is smooth. The grip of the velvet is steely and icy, holding you fast. The water soaked package is slick and difficult to grasp, heavy in your hands, straining your muscles and causing an ache.

**Taste:** The meat curry's origin is a mystery but it burns like a vindaloo and has a pungent, gamey flavour. The vegetable curry is not made with the freshest ingredients but despite its doubtful origin tastes as good, if not better than the fare from London above. The acrid fog is bitter, filling your sinuses with acidic foul tasting snot. The wine fills your senses with an explosion of blackberry, honey and spice leaving you reeling from the sheer shock of it.

**Smell:** Rotting rubbish is heaped everywhere making your eyes water as different smells wash across it. The rich fatty smell of Chinese wafts from the takeaway but as a place of London Above you will have to go hungry. The smell of pine brings back the memories of Christmas past, when you were a person, when you weren't lost. The deodorant is old and expired but its fruity scent is strong, strong enough that even the sewer folk can appreciate its bouquet and its stark contrast to their normal assaulting miasma.

**'Sense':** Night's Bridge 'squats' in the path, a brooding evil presence that sets your teeth on edge and makes your hackles rise. You know you can trust this person instinctively, you know that that one can't be let out of your sight. As you go to open the box you are filled with dread and your stomach turns, your hand draws back, should you?



## Handling Rolls

While *Neverwhere* is extremely light on rules it does rely more heavily than almost any other game on the ability of the Narrator to string a story together and to interpret what few dice rolls there are in a fair and even handed manner.

At all times rolls should be interpreted in the manner that makes the best story. In life or death situations this is especially true. No character should be wiped out in a single roll without a chance to save themselves, indeed death should be extremely rare with characters being grievously wounded, captured, tortured, interrogated and anything but death occurring in order to make memorable scenes and to allow dramatic escapes. When deaths do occur they should be the focus of the scene, or used to advance the story in much the same way as the death of the Marquis de Carabas develops the plot in the book.

By way of example imagine a player is having a fight on a narrow causeway above the roiling sewers below. It's been raining so the slow trickle of waste is now a relatively clean torrent. The Troll who guards this area under a geas has denied the player the right to pass, weapons have been drawn and the fight progresses.

The player is woefully outmatched and loses their first roll. Even though the Troll is a massive and skilled opponent the narrator describes the cut and thrust of combat before finally the Troll grasps his opponents sword and snaps it into pieces the shards dropping into the water below.

Unperturbed the player draws his knife and continues the battle, losing his second roll as well. This time the Troll smashes him down to the ground, dazing and concussing him, he is covered with blood, reeling from the effects of the blow and the Troll moves to finish him off.

Rather than imposing a character death the Narrator decides that the Troll will dramatically hurl the player into the rushing waters below which then carry him off, leading to rolls to survive drowning and his emergence in some other part of London



Below, wet and bedraggled, weaponless but alive.

Failure or success you should put some effort into describing their progress to make them feel the world and to suspend disbelief. Describe their advancement and the nature of their failure to give them cues in describing their response or their continuation of effort. The Narrator sets the tone for the effort all the players put in and a halfhearted effort by the Narrator will not encourage the best from the group.

### Barter

Most games follow the usual model of coin of the realm being exchanged for goods and services.

*Neverwhere's* flavour is very much enhanced by its use of barter as the means of exchange. This can be daunting for a Narrator and confusing for players, trying to work out what their barter items are worth.

As a helpful guide here is a rough idea of the relationship of worth between minor, average, major and high cost items and some suggestions as to what constitutes a trade item of that level of worth. An item may be worth twice as much to someone who desperately needs or wants it and a canny trader can extract twice as much for something as it is worth with some clever bartering.

### Other Cities and Towns

London Below has a great deal of scope and depth but sometimes you might want to move beyond the city into other towns and cities or even outside of urban areas entirely. We've introduced the idea of the Shires, which are an underworld for the forgotten parts of the countryside as well as the cities. You can create an underworld for wherever you live whatever size and allow your players to run amuck in an underworld entirely of your own devising.

The following sections are designed to aid you in realising your ideas about places other than London and hopefully they will prove useful to you.

### The Soul Of The City

The first thing to decide on is what the overall character of the city, town or piece of countryside is. Is it historical? Is it new? Is it busy or quiet? What defines it, what images spring to mind when you think of the place? Is it a place of grim terraced houses from the last century? Is it a place of gleaming spire-like skyscrapers? What emotions does it stir, what mood are you in when you visit? Does it evoke magic or science?

## Minor Barter Items (Worth one minor item).

A cotton handkerchief, an antique coin or one made of gold, a broken toy, a dead body belonging to no-one in particular, a half used deodorant, a woollen hat, a piece of hand-crafted jewellery of a non-precious type, a good meal, a few sheets of blank paper, a boring or useless book, a broken watch or toy, a minor favour, rags and sackcloth clothing, the hire of a lesser known Guide or Bravo, per day.

## Average Barter Items (Worth four minor items).

A good pair of boots, a knife, gloves, a working watch, a working toy, batteries, a lamp or torch, semi-precious jewels or average jewellery, an average favour, a slave, leather armour the hire of a renown Guide or Bravo, per day.

## Major Barter Items (Worth eight minor items).

Precious gems or fine jewellery, a sword or axe, a bow or crossbow, a major favour, chainmail or a flak jacket, a musical instrument, a spear or other polearm a minor enchantment or blessing.

## High Cost Barter Items (Worth sixteen minor items).

A firearm, a cygnet egg, a magical item or spell, a life favour or indentured servitude, a complete suit of modern or plate mail armour, a major enchantment or blessing.



lives off rabbits and the scavenging he can do during the markets in the town.

### Places

Every underworld needs exciting and mystical places like Night's Bridge or The Floating Market. The vast majority of these, like the characters, will spring from an examination of a map of the area, the rest coming from the other, similar sources, those being folklore, urban legend, gossip and hearsay.

The places you choose should be designed to fit as much with the soul of the city as possible, to compliment the mood and to provide an interesting and

For my example in this section I will take the town of Basingstoke. Basically a London dormitory town Basingstoke is undergoing redevelopment but is still the butt of a great many jokes and known by the nickname of 'Boringstoke'. Of the town it is said...

"People in Reading wish they were in London, people in Basingstoke wish they were in Reading."

Basingstoke is very sensitive about it's status, has some fairly hefty drug and crime problems, sink estates, a great many roundabouts (it's also known as doughnut city) and in spite of all of this has some very nice and charming areas hidden away within it.

The 'soul' of Basingstoke then is inadequacy and defensiveness, jealousy.

### People

The next thing to do is to populate your city with characters. Lords and Ladies, place names, exotic peoples and tribes. Non-player characters who will move the story forwards and engage with the players to excite and interest them.

You will find many names and characters by looking at a map of the city or town you are developing. Some characters will leap off the page and demand to be written, others may be slower to come. Others will be developed based on the soul of the city and yet more will become apparent when you create the various sites and places. You can also find historical figures and local urban legends or folk tales to supplement your cast of characters.

A principle character for Basingstoke Below will be The Dervish. A man obsessed with the geometry of circles whose influence has made Basingstoke into the 'Doughnut City' it is today. The Dervish never walks in a straight line and inscribes circles everywhere, living in the centre of one of the larger roundabouts he

effective backdrop for the characters you have already thought up. Some can be created whole and some can be taken from your own personal experiences of the place or alleys and back ways that you know of.

For Basingstoke a place of note and ridicule is the grey sculpture on Wote Street that resembles nothing so much as a giant grey phallus. In the Underside this edifice is used in fertility rites and danced around at spring. Rubbing it is said to bring good fortune and an easy birth.

### Things

Artefacts and creatures stem from the same sources as the ideas for people and places. There may be stories of such things locally; Iron Age swords, a buried golden calf, anything. Additionally you should think of special items for your signature characters. Much like Arthur had Excalibur your heroes and villains may have items peculiar to them that enhance their powers.

Creatures come less easily but every area has stories of ghosts or fairies and many others have stories of dragons, trolls or giants. Investing a good book of folklore that covers your area will provide a great deal of useful source material that you can use.





## Sample Adventure Ideas

*"I am called Hunter," said Hunter to the jester.*

*The courtiers were silent then. The jester opened his mouth, as if he were going to say something, and then he looked at her, and closed his mouth again. A hint of a smile played at the corner of Hunter's perfect lips.*

*"Go on," she said. "Say something funny."*

*The jester stared at the trailing toes of his shoes. Then he muttered, "My hound hath no nose."*

**- Hunter and Tooley, the jester.**

### A New Beast For The Labyrinth

The Labyrinth lies empty, the beast defeated by Hunter and The Warrior. Islington's sanctuary lies open and unguarded and while the fallen one has gone, along with Croup and Vandemar into the limbo void beyond the door, this place in the deepest parts of down street is sacred to the White Friars and is the closest point to hell in London Below. Many of the darkest and most evil of underdwellers have come here seeking Islington's treasures, seeking to bring him back, seeking the darkness and so the forces of good represented by House Portico, Earl's Court and the Black Friars have hatched a plan. A new beast shall be created to replace the old, to guard the Labyrinth and to ensure that Islington's resting place is no longer disturbed. To this end our heroes are commissioned the task of creating the new beast. From London Above and London Below they are to secure beasts and creatures and with the blessing of the fiefs and the Friars are to take them before Serpentine and enlist her aid to meld them into the new defender of the maze before they receive their just rewards. Of course the task won't be easy and the White Friars and other dark forces wish to keep their easy access or pervert The Beast to their own devices...

### Quoth The Raven

Heartened by the 'death' of Vandemar and also saddened by the loss of the rings the Raven has offered great favour to any and all who return the original treasures of her family's gift to her. Bravos, thieves and fortune seekers are turning London Below upside down in their search for the items and the sanctity of the market has even been disturbed by fighting over the scraps. Of all the players in this little drama the Marquis de Carabas is perhaps the most prominent. For whatever reason he is trading his hard won favours cheaply in pursuit of the treasures, perhaps to have a hold over the Raven, perhaps just to rub her nose in the dirt or perhaps he knows of the true treasures amongst the hoard. The players can seek the treasures for themselves, for The Raven or for de Carabas but will earn the ire of one party or

another as they seek the treasures.

### Mornington Crescent

Word at market is that Mornington Crescent has had another one of his dreams. Something important to all of London Below, something that will shake the very foundations of the Baronies and fiefdoms, something of such terrible meaning that people will kill to see it kept quiet. Whatever the truth every power in the Underside has examined their latest schemes and plans and has been overcome with acute paranoia, convinced that Mornington Crescent's vision relates to them or their plans. Every house has hired Bravos and despatched their best people to find Mornington who has fled deep into the Underside to avoid his pursuers. Some have been sent to silence him, others to capture him those he counts as friends have sent people to find him and protect him. The players could work for any of these powers that are scouring for Mornington but finding someone with precognition who doesn't want to be found is a difficult prospect. What was his vision? That many people would be after him and trying to kill him, so he left. Circular prophesy...

### A Stitch In Time

Time and space move in strange ways in the Underside and they are largely unpredictable. It is said however that the map of the Underground can chart a way through the eddies and distortions and a properly charted route can lead one back and forth through time. At market there is a distraught man who has brought all his worldly goods and an etching of his son who died the previous day. He offers all he has if the players will but chart a course and return to the past by a single day to save his son from his death. Quite what the defenders of the map and temporal causality have to say about this is another matter entirely...

### Bow Bell Dash

The marriage of Sir Magpie of Raven's Court and Lady Pearl of the Half-Lifers was seen as a great step forward for the trading power of Raven's Court and the prestige of Half-Lifers across the Underside. The marriage was celebrated and forgotten but now it has born fruit, a son and heir is due any moment and in the throes of labour Lady Pearl has demanded that her son be born a cockney like her or she will disown her husband. To be a cockney one must be born within the sound of the Bow Bells and since the Lady cannot be moved to the right part of London the bells must be brought to her and sounded as the child is born. So begins a mad dash across London to steal the bells and manhandle them clear across London before the child decides to emerge. This is no easy task at the best of times but many will wish to see Raven's Court diminish in power or Half-Lifers to be put back in their place...



# Raven's Mourning

*The young woman's eyes flashed a deranged blue and her look was thunderous. Her guest froze in mid-sentence, all too mindful of the crow cages he had seen at the gates. In a surprisingly quiet voice made all the more chilling for its calm Raven said:*

*"I will not have that name spoken here. Your bard's tongue may have won you the questionable favour of Sister Saturday along with the pity and lenience of the Underside..." her pale eyes bore into his, "but I for my part do not believe you're as mad as all that and I do not forgive trespass easily." Her anger departed in the face of his wide, dark eyes as swiftly as it had come and she dipped her head in apology.*

*"I have so few guests at court who are truly welcome here. My manner is perhaps sharper than need be. You came to me with the promise of news. Please, say on."*

*He noticed the slightest of frowns on her brow, the only outward sign of her suspicion and her curiosity. After all, what news could Mornington Crescent bring to Raven's Court that the lady herself did not know of? A little nervous now, he tugged at the panels of his dark velvet coat. Temple and Arch! What had possessed him? It had been a dream, his affliction, his secret, he never spoke of what truths he witnessed while he slept. Yet this time before first light he had found himself in front of the black rusted gates, being eyed suspiciously by Crowthorne as he asked leave to speak to The Raven.*

*He swallowed his ever-growing anxiety - it was too late for uncertainty - and continued to deliver his message, forbidden names and all. He spoke softly in doggerel verse, the very rhyme that had awoken him in a cold sweat and set his feet on the path to Raven's Court.*

*"Door and her companions three,"  
"Won for Islington white the Key,"  
"But she refused to set the angel free,"  
"So his will it was denied."  
"Devils Croup and Vandemar,"  
"Flung to the void deep and far,"  
"With them the silver of Ravenscar,"  
"So your blood it was denied."*

*She stared at him; her thin fingers reaching up to touch the shining pendent that nested at the nape of her neck.*

*"Gone then, beyond my reach whether dead or no." Her hand clutched convulsively at the heavy trinket and she closed her eyes with a grimace.*

*"I swore on my brother's corpse I'd slice that poxy morsal-bastard's throat and his weasily arsenic-breathing brother too."*

*A fault line of bitterness had underscored her words as she used her anger to steady herself. The bard wondered what a 'morsal' was even as he marvelled at her expression. He'd never known a lady so well presented to use such language. Had he spoken his thoughts aloud she would have laughed at him long and harsh, telling him that for all her authority and fine dress she was no lady.*

*Raven had always known her oath to be a hollow one: the likeliness of Croup and Vandemar falling by her hand was on a par with the unification of the entire Underside.*

*"It seems the vengeance I seek as well as the rings which are rightfully mine is lost to me." She looked at Mornington Crescent as if noticing his presence for the first time but having no idea what he was doing there.*

*"In all the old stories," she told him suddenly, "always there were crowns and corvids. Never the one without the other. An ancestor of mine, Melchior Ravenscar, made a deal with the king of Upworld. Our kith and kin would guard the heart of the land, ensuring that the Sceptred Isle never fell. In return Melchior was gifted jewels of silver and precious stones. A casketful by all accounts – the pride of my family." Slowly her fingers uncurled from the pendent.*

*"Over time they were lost and stolen, hidden, bartered and gifted away... When Rook..." She stopped,*

unable to force out the words.

"After..." She halted again, the name of 'Vandemar' lodging like a caltrop in her mouth.

"My brother wore the rings," she said at last. Her fingertips lingered at the silver by her throat.

"This is all that's left of the treasures of Ravenscar." She blinked her kohl-heavy eyes, forcing a smile to her lips.

"Beak!" she called. "Fetch wine for our guest; the 1812 from the Tower vineyard if you please. After all, his news calls for a celebration of sorts."

Mornington Crescent looked up at the silent man who bowed and left to fulfil his lady's request. Beak was gaunt with skin the colour of fresh milk and hair almost as pale. The only colour in him came from his ash-grey eyes that always looked faintly mocking, laughing at the world and deriding all they beheld there. In his worn suit of lace and ivory he looked antiquated, an ageless enamel portrait brought to life. Watching him step neatly across the chequered floor the bard was suddenly put in mind of a chess piece. Yes, Beak was a white bishop in the court of the black queen...

He realised she had asked him a question.

"I'm sorry?"

With a soft rustle of ragged silk sounding like a thousand feathers, Raven stood up.

"I asked how it was that you could bring me this news when my subjects could not." She walked over to the edge of the hall as she spoke to where a small forest of polished and sculpted wooden branches reached into the room, the bows home to innumerable roosting shadows. She turned to look at him, her hair falling past her shoulder in a straight-cut wing, as sable as the bird whose name she took.

Mornington Crescent winced inwardly and studied his shoes on the marbled floor; the leather was polished but the right shoe was missing its buckle.

"I... I dream." He admitted quietly, glancing up at her once more, his treacle dark eyes sincere and frantic.

"I swear to you, if what I speak of has not already come to pass then it shall. Before moonrise, three nights hence."

Her cool look unnerved him, seeming to doubt his every word.

"I swear by my blood, by the old kings, by the city wall, by the Thames, by the crow cages that hang at your gates!"

"And so you are bound," she replied with almost mocking gravitas, her head askance as she regarded him with interest.

"Why do you honour me with these tidings of your vision?"

He looked down again, tugging distractedly at his buttoned cuffs.

"I don't know," he muttered. "But... But I know soon I'll need your help."

Raven arched one eyebrow and her lips curved into a slight smile.

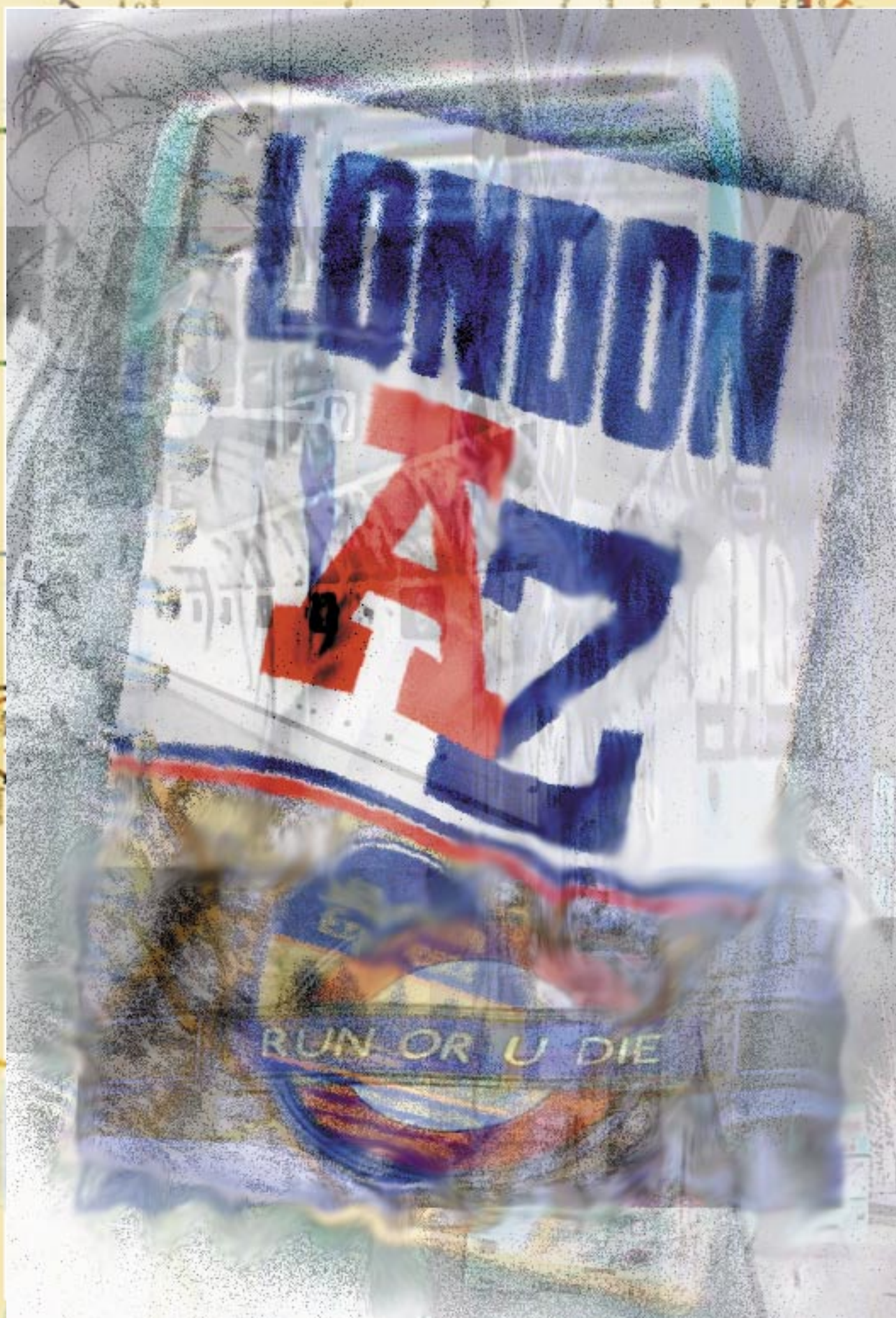
"Hm! So long as you're not picking up habits from De Carabas... When the time comes you may rely on the aid of myself and my house."

The bard closed his eyes in relief, opening them a moment later as Beak returned with two crystal goblets of dark wine. He handed one first to Raven and then to her guest. The syrupy liquid smelt of blackberries and cloves. Mornington Crescent raised his glass in a modest and silent toast.

"Your health."

"Your health," he echoed. "And to that of the House of Corvid."







# A

## Abbess Close

Through a hidden door in this part of town you come into a garden overlooked by a dilapidated but serviceable Nunnery. The Abbess's rooms overlook the garden and allow her to keep a close eye on the nuns who maintain the garden.

The garden itself is pleasingly aesthetic but is a working garden for fruits, vegetables, chickens and the odd pig in a pen.

The Nuns of the Order of Isolation fled to the Underside in the time of Henry VIII and are still somewhat reluctant to take visitors; they support themselves with the healing arts and selling vegetables at the floating market for the things that they need.

### **Nun Of The Order Of Isolation**

A typical nun of The Order is *chaste and pure, demure and self-effacing*. While *strong and tough* from working in the gardens they are unused to outsiders, which makes them *shy*. The nuns are well *practiced at medicine and gardening*.

### **The Abbot**

The head of the Black Friars, the Abbot is an amiable and friendly man and the duty of being a Black Friar weighed heavily upon him until Richard liberated the key **from**

their possession. A good man, the Abbot is a polite and ingratiating host with a deep and comforting voice. Given to making little humorous jokes a little at other peoples expense the Abbot is nonetheless wise and knowledgeable in the ways of the Underside. The Abbot is a *veteran at making tea* and his brew is considered one of the better ones in London Below. He is also a *veteran at healing and Underside lore*. The Abbot is blind with cataracts though he never lets it get him down.

## Abel House

A three storey Edwardian house at the edge of Hyde Park, Abel House is a dark and dismal affair. Every surface of the wall and ceiling is covered with paintings, sketches and other portraits of everyone ever to have been murdered in London be it above or below. Where the pictures come from is not known, all that is known is that however hidden or covered up no murder escapes the eye of the mysterious artist. Many visitors have been shocked to see pictures of relatives or friends who have disappeared or died of 'natural causes'. This is not such an aid to justice and revenge as one might think as the house has likenesses of everyone ever to have been murdered within Greater London dating back as long as humans have settled here. Spotting the new pictures, let alone finding one of someone you know, is difficult at best.



## Accommodation Road

When you have nowhere else to stay in London Below there is always Accommodation Road. This narrow street is filled with flophouses and filthy rooms, which are ridiculously overpriced at a minor barter item for a single night, just for floor space. They don't ask any questions though and a roof over your head is important in the depths of winter, more important than the risk of picking up lice or fleas.

## Achilles Way

**A winding alley carving its way through a twisted knot of lost time Achilles way is a confusing jumble and assortment of images and time periods. The shadows are long and the darkness whispers to all who traverse its length. While it provides a fast shortcut to almost any part of London Below much like Night's Bridge it extracts its toll. In this case by exposing those who wander**

through it to their greatest weakness in a way they cannot ignore.



### Acorn Gardens

A rusted gate in a high brick wall leads to a small patch of greenery, overgrown with moss, thick with cobwebs and home to seven great oaks that tower into the sky and cut out almost every trace of light leaving only a deep green murk. The acorns gathered here never fail to germinate and grow tall and swift. It is said these are the ancestors of the English oak, which loaned its strength to the navy and the buildings of old.

### Acton Green

Scraping a living and merely surviving in London Below takes a great deal of effort and leaves little time for gaiety and frivolity. Entertainers usually scrape a bare living as Half-Lifers or by performing their arts at The Floating Market where people are more relaxed and inclined to give generously. This small park houses those entertainers; their tents and shacks and day and night they practice here. In good weather Acton Green hosts open air performances on the grass. Acton Green is watched over and maintained by Bill, also known as Play Bill.

### Adam and Eve Court

An early Romano-Christian mosaic depicting the progenitors of mankind, this tiled floor lies deep within the darkest parts of London Below. It is said that when one stands upon it one's voice cannot utter anything but the whole and absolute truth and that anything said while stood upon it can be believed entirely.

### Addle Hill

Here the mad ones gather when the moon is full, Half-Lifers and insane inhabitants of the Underside as well to howl at the sky, feeding on each other's madness. The impression is left upon the hill and those who come here often feel ill at ease and paranoid. On the night of the moonlit revel a spring bubbles from the crest of the hill whose waters are said to twist the most stable of minds to gibbering insanity but the mad ones guard it with their very lives.

### Admiral Mews

Admiral Mews sits resplendent in his uniform, threadbare though it might be. He is prideful of his appearance and always tries to look his best. Filigree shines on his eye patch and he spends his days watching the river from his house attended by his servant Shaka. A just and honourable man the Admiral is often run rings around by more unscrupulous and dishonourable folk and this wounds him deeply though he would never sacrifice his honour. He has an instinctual dislike for the Marquis.

The Admiral is a *staunch* and *very honourable* man with *impeccable* dress sense and a strong *moral* code. The Admiral is *intolerant* of anyone who doesn't fit his views and while *quick* enough on his feet and *wiry* with it he's starting to feel his years in his bones and wonders if age is finally starting to catch up with him as the Royal Navy becomes a shadow of its former self. The Admiral is a *veteran* with the *sword* and *pistol* and a *legendary* sailor even if he is stuck on land at present. He is still a *master* of *cannonry* and *tactics* often consulted by the houses of the Underside.

### Admiral House

The abode of Admiral Mews, Admiral House is a rounded four storey building right on the banks of the Thames surrounded by a thin bar of stinking mud and connected to the shore by a rickety rope bridge. Here the admiral stays, surrounded by mementos of past naval glories, flags, figureheads, Spanish gold muskets, pistols and sabres as well as chests full of spices and tea. The Admiral is a very rich man in terms of barter. Attended by his servant Shaka the Admiral watches the river, the third floor of his home bristling with cannon, ever vigilant for trouble coming up the river.

### Adys'S Lawn

Lady Adys takes fine care of the grounds of her house along with her small army of expert gardeners. Her lawn is a rich green, as flat and smooth as the pitch at Lord's Cricket Ground, an inspiring swathe of green uninterrupted by trees, flower borders or anything but the walls around the garden. Here Lady Adys hosts tea on the lawn for the finest and most noble denizens of the Underside, playing lawn games until late. The lawn is the ideal that every English



gardener aspires to in his heart. Pure, flat green and perfect but also boring and conservative.

### Lady Adys

Lady Adys is a brown skinned and dark haired *beauty* of half-Indian descent, who dresses in the manner of English ladies of the Raj. She is unfailingly *polite* and *circumspect*, *tactful* to a fault and she refuses to see anything but the best in people. Her *delicate* and *meek* demeanour hide an *iron will* and the *patience of Job* in waiting for the right time to exact revenge for slights made to her. Lady Adys is a *master of etiquette* and *diplomacy* and her *gardening* skills are *legendary*. She's also very well *practiced at cooking*, at least in regard to tea, biscuits and cucumber sandwiches with the crusts cut off. She also makes mean kedgeree and delightful vegetable samosas with homemade brinjal pickle.

### Aeroville

**High above the tunnels, high above the streets is the rooftop world, still part of London Above but loftier and lighter. Here amongst the rooftops bridges and ropeways span the gaps and cats prowl from rooftop to rooftop. Higher still is Aeroville, brightly coloured balloons and baskets strung together with ropes and nets floating higher and higher into the sky to the very clouds. At the solstice one can step from Aeroville to walk amongst the clouds and watch the sun or moon rise. The Underside's intelligent pigeons roost here.**

### Agnes's Gardens

**Agnes, or Black Agnes, is a dodderly old lady whose tiny garden is one big improvised greenhouse, all brown-stained plastic, whitewashed glass and rotting wooden framework. Every window of her modest terraced house has a great big window box overflowing with what, to the untrained eye, would appear to be weeds. What they actually are, is herbs; rosemary, basil, thyme, chives, onion grass and the more esoteric mandrake and belladonna. Herbs and plants used in potions and witchery all arranged in little rows like a conventional allotment. Agnes is too old to make it to the Floating Market and so operates from her house, which by quiet agreement is generally considered to be truce-ground. Agnes is popular with the Cats and has a great many of them as semi-permanent houseguests.**

### Agnes

Agnes is a failed witch and one of many 'mad old cat ladies' who live within London Below doting on their charges. Agnes is very *old* and *frail* and she is slowly becoming more *weak-minded* and *dotty* in her dotage but when it comes to her garden she is as *sharp* and *knowledgeable* as she has ever been dispensing advice and herbs with *quiet* expertise and occasionally giving them away for free. Agnes isn't well regarded by the Seven Sisters or the Four Witches but to many Undersiders she's a godsend with her *mastery of herbalism* and her *practiced* hand in the art of *urban gardening*. While an unsuccessful witch she's still able to toss off a *practiced curse* or *blessing* if pressed.

### Air Street

To make the trip from the rooftops to Aeroville one must travel up Air Street, an invisible set of steps climbing into thin air that leads up to the bright and airy balloon town of Aeroville.

### Albion Gate

This stone gate sits deep in the Underside carved with Lions, Unicorns and crowns. The doors are firmly shut and not even the most powerful of Openers has been able to unlock its secrets. What lies beyond is unknown but the door opened the tiniest crack during World War Two and remained open until the end of the Cold War and the pulling down of the Berlin Wall. All that could be seen beyond were mists and there was an abiding scent of apples.

### Alliance Court

Back in the deep and almost unknown past of the Underside the city was united under a single Lord.



This King Of The Underside formed a powerful Baron's alliance and the fiefs existed side-by-side pulling together in a common direction. Alas the King was eventually slain by unknown assassins and the Baronies and Fiefdoms reverted to their former behaviour and set upon each other with a new degree of ferocity and jealousy. Their meeting place, The Alliance Court is overgrown and thick with dust now, full of broken statues and rotting finery. An unwelcome reminder of a bright past. Lord Portico was known to come here to think and the Marquis appears to have an affection for the place in as much as he shows loyalty or



consideration to anything.

### All Souls Place

Part of Jack Ketch's domain and the one time home of the Sanctuary Keeper, Hayes Murphy. Although his reasons remain obscure, Ketch ordered his lieutenant, Sable, to dispose of the Keeper. Sable's assassination attempt failed and Hayes called upon the Temple to witness a duel.

### Ambassador Square

A cobbled square in the courtyard of an old coaching inn, Ambassador Square is open to the sky and its wooden barrels are overflowing with flowers. It is here that peace is made between warring houses of the Underside, all four sides of the inn filling with observers to watch the parties make their peace and swear their oaths upon their treaties. The last agreement made here was to bring a close to the White City debacle, an ill considered venture on the part of the Earl at the encouragement of de Carabas who at least seems to have got what he wanted from the whole affair.

### Ambergate

A street of merchants and artisans whose wares run to the more exotic and semi-magical in nature. Their trinkets are well crafted and many of the noble houses commission them for statuary to guard and bring luck to their families. Those in Ambergate tend to be close friends with the Seers of Seers Green.

### Anaesthesia

*"Now, why don't you put that away and - excuse me, that's my bag," this last to a thin, bedraggled girl in her late teens, who had taken Richard's bag, and was roughly tipping his possessions out onto the ground.*

**- Anaesthesia surviving at Richard's expense.**

One of the Rat-speakers who took Richard to the Floating Market she was taken by Night's Bridge in toll but was still able to help Richard in the Black Friars Ordeal. Anaesthesia is *thin* and *bedraggled*, a girl in her late teens although her badge proclaims her to be eleven. She is also *forthright*, *helpful* and possesses a quiet *inner strength* that occasionally shines through as unexpected *bravery*. Anaesthesia is a *veteran Rat-speaker* and *practiced at Underside navigation and lore*. She remembers her past and is still as good a *thief* as any *beginner* can be.

Anaesthesia's story is typical of many Undersiders. Her family dead or mad she was taken in by an aunt who didn't want her, whose partner abused her. She

ran away to the streets of London on her eleventh birthday and lived rough for a couple of years before growing ill. Found by the rats and valued she was brought across to London Below and gained a new lease of life with the Rat-speakers before being taken by the bridge.



### The Angelus

*It looked like it had once been the door to a cathedral. It was the height of two men, and wide enough for a pony to walk through. Carved into the wood of the door, and painted with red and gold-leaf, was an extraordinary angel. It stared out at the world with blank, mediaeval eyes.*

**- The Angelus is displayed.**

An entrance to Islington's abode, the Angelus is the quickest and easiest route to the bottom of Down Street. Only accessible to an Opener the Angelus is a tall, gilt work of art from medieval times that opens like a doorway to the right hands, leading directly to Islington's sanctum.

### Apothecary Road

An entrance to the monastery of the Black Friars, Apothecary Road is a place of healing replete with quacks, barbers, snake oil salesmen and others who take advantage of those unable to be seen and tended to by the Friars. At the end of the road is the entrance to the monastery; a hidden gate in a high stone wall protected at all times by two stern shotgun wielding friars who will only admit people if there is space or they were summoned by the abbot.

### Arcadian Gardens

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle believed in fairies. He

believed in them so strongly he was taken in by a hoax perpetrated by two young girls and a primitive camera. Indeed he and they both professed to still believe long after the hoax was exposed. Here in a forgotten corner of London a derelict house filled with cobwebs and faded photographs backs on to a wild and overgrown garden that contains much of what remains of England's fairy courts. Sprites play in the weeds and goblins leer from overgrown bushes. Sometimes the fae leave the confines of their gardens to seek their fortune in the wider world but it is harsh and unforgiving to them. Those who drink fairy mead or eat fairy food may lose weeks or even years here in the revels of the fae who still enjoy tormenting and playing with mortal men.

### Fairies

A typical fairy is *tiny* and *frail*, *very fast* and *very nimble* with a *wicked streak* and a *keen eye*. Fairies can fly at a fair speed and can make themselves invisible. They are *practiced* with their *fairy darts* and at *flying*.

### Arch

An ancient and crumbling stone arch this place is said to be the first gateway in the first gateway in the wall

around the very first city on the site of London, the birthplace of the city and of London Below. An aura of sanctity and respect permeates the area. This is one of the 'holiest' sites in the Underside and its name is invoked in oaths and as a swearword.



### The Arches

A community made up of Half-Lifers, the Arches is a rag-tag community of box-dwellers, drunks and madmen huddled in their blankets and rags, burning cardboard in oil drums for heat and living off what they can scavenge from bins or barter for with their spoils from London above. They live here in the shelter of old red-brick viaduct arches deafened by trains and harbouring any new Half-Lifers who come amongst them, always glad to see another body to add their warmth to the community.

### Arch Portico

Door's brother. Arch met his grisly end at the hands of Croup and Vandemar, cut at groin and throat and tossed into a pool of water to drown and bleed to death.

### Arena

When Bravos have a disagreement it generally ends with one of them face down and bleeding in the gutter having been attacked suddenly from behind. When it is a matter of public insult or honour, or a point needs to be made then they will bring their disagreement to the Arena. The Arena itself is a round chamber in the Underside, lit by dripping torches when there is any light at all. The ring is filled with grey Cornish sand stained here and there with blood and rat pizzle. The walls are hollowed here and there with half finished statues residing in the alcoves.

### Arsenal

The Arsenal was once the weapon store for the united London Below of old. Long since looted and picked clean of everything worth taking it is now nothing but an empty chamber, dusty and smelling of wet stone a testament to past glories. Varney kept a hidden cache of weapons here for reasons of simple-minded sentimentality and they are likely still here somewhere.

### Associative Houses

An Associative House is a building where all the rooms are housed in many different locations around a city, or even the world. The rooms are accessed through pictures of them hung in an entrance hall that appears as a clear white room. Only Openers can create an Associative House and access its rooms. The rooms exist outside time and space and can even be historical, frozen in the moment of the picture.



# B

## Bagley's Spring

Clean fresh water is a hard won commodity in London Below and was even harder to come across in the past. Disease that ravaged the above world was always two or three times as bad below, especially in the case of waterborne diseases. In great thirst Bagley the guide stumbled across this spring and drank his fill, swearing that he'd never go thirsty again. Jealously Bagley guarded his spring killing all encroachers until he finally died of hunger. Bagley's spring bubbles still, cool and clear but to drink from it is said to be bad luck and Bagley is used as a cautionary tale.

## Baker Street

Home to a large gang of waifs, strays and street urchins who call themselves 'the Baker Street Irregulars', Baker Street is known to most from the stories of Sherlock Holmes. The Irregulars can be hired for odd jobs; most often they are called upon to track down anything missing or lost. As a consequence the gang has a (mostly) good-natured and long running feud with Earl's Court who also claim dominion over the lost.

### A Typical Irregular

A typical Irregular is *young* and *scrawny*, all *wiry* muscle and *tough* sinew. Ever *alert* for trouble and with a *keen eye* for a good deal they are *shrewd* wheelers and dealers. They are well *practiced* at *Underside navigation*, *scouting* and *hiding*.

### Banner Street

**In times past, for tailor-made clothes those with wealth and influence in London went to Piccadilly. Those in London Below went and still go to Banner Street**

where the odds, ends and scraps of cloth from London Above and Below wend their way to the tailors and seamstresses who do their best to restore fading cloth to its former glory.

## Banqueting House

When the market is closed and nothing can be found to scavenge above or below the house will provide for the hungry. The fare is simple and uninspired - thin soup, potatoes and meat of doubtful provenance - but the long tables are heavily weighed with it and a little simple trade will give you a full belly. Mealtimes are raucous but a pair of Bravos on retainer ensures that the rivals who sit down to dinner do not cause problems with each other. The proprietor, John Bull, takes great and perverse pleasure in eating well in front of the desperate that gather in his house, tossing his scraps to his bulldogs or the beggars, whichever will give him the most amusement.



## Barking

Home of the Dogs' Parliament a great debating society of dogs whose howls, barks and growls argue into the small hours. The Dogs' Parliament spends its time chewing over important matters such as territorial demarcation, the admittance of new breeds to the great roll, division of duties and the ongoing debate over the worthiness of man as companion to hound.

## Barkingside

This place is home to dogs that are outcast from Barking due to their controversial views on companionship with man. Most believe dogs are destined to be man's best friend and this orthodoxy is close to religion. Many dogs have suffered at the hands of man and choose to take



a different view that man is unworthy of the companionship and protection a loyal hound provides. While debate is tolerated at Parliament many dogs take the argument too far and are outcast, living on the streets away from their mistresses and masters in Barkingside, denied the comforts of other dogs but fiercely proud. Those who go further and take the step of hating man for all he has done move to the Isle Of Dogs and serve its feral master.

### Barnet

In a world of unwashed homeless and grubby matted hair Barnet is a beautiful jewel of tonsorial magnificence. From her patent leather booties to her checked plastic dress she is the most perfect model of a 'groovy chick' straight out of the sixties. Topped with the most perfect and gleaming beehive 'do' in the history of hairdressing she totters on her heels moving through London Below with the moves of a dance floor diva. Perpetually chewing bubblegum and occasionally with a plum coloured biba hat perched atop her towering hairstyle Barnet is a force to be reckoned with and a whiz with scissors and brush, able to turn the most tangled mop into an impossibly beautiful crown of curls within minutes. Barnet is *tall* and *beautiful*, painfully *sarcastic* and *strong willed* to a fault. Her tongue is extremely *sharp* and she is completely *tactless*, able to destroy someone's self image with a single ill thought out remark. Her fingers are *slender* and *extremely nimble* and she is a *master of hairdressing* and *fashion*, albeit with a tendency to the kitsch.

### Baron's Court

Once a force to be reckoned with, the Baron Chambers stood with Earl's Court against White City. Since the defeat in that battle he has never regained his former glory, suffering worse losses than the Earl, and prefers to remain a recluse, observing rather than participating in the politics of the Undercity. The Baron and his few men-at-arms stay within his house, the doors barred and receiving very few visitors. The Baron loathes the Marquis, blaming him for the fall of his house and expends what little resources he has left in pursuing vengeance.

#### The Baron

The Baron is *tired* of life and battle, tired of London Below. The machinations of the fiefs have brought him nothing but pain and now he is a *grim* and *embittered* figure. *Lean* and *strong* still, his malaise is mental, his *vengeful* nature conflicting with his lack of power and eating a dark hole inside him. Once *inspired*, a *leader* of men, he is now a spent figure spending what remains of his *wealthy* treasury and his loyal men on his vendetta against the Marquis. A *veteran* of the *blade* and *bow* as well as a *tactician* of similar level the Baron once claimed dominion over the streets and back alleys, the hidden. Unable to protect his domain the court is losing more and more power to the other houses, the rot unstoppable.

### Beak

The *sardonic*, *albino* fool at Raven's Court. Beak cuts a *pale*, *gaunt* figure in his lace and ivory suit, his clothing as white as his skin. Rather than tomfoolery and antics Beak's humour comes from his deeply *cynical* and *sarcastic* outlook on the world. The slightest glance from his ashen eyes can be enough to instil in those they look upon a deep understanding of Beak's *contemptuous* view of them. *Neat* to a fault and *precise* in his movements Beak is *loyal* and never questions Raven. A *master* of the *put down* and a *veteran* in matters of *courtly etiquette* Beak is equally *practiced* in being *intimidating* or being a *gracious host*.

### The Beast of London

Legend has it the beast was a pig, a pig that back in the past of hazy memory someone was fattening up for Christmas or some other feast day. The pig escaped (if it were a pig and the tales differ) into the sewers, feasting on the foulness there and growing huge and ill tempered. Every man that went to search for it came back without it or not at all. It grew larger and fouler as the years passed, growing ill tempered and vicious. As it killed and maimed it's legend grew and hunters came to seek it and Bravos went to kill it, still returning fruitlessly or not at all, their broken weapons bristling in its hide and only aggravating its temper more. Eventually the Beast came to the Labyrinth, bound into place to guard Islington's prison from foolish visitors.

The Beast was finally slain by Richard Mayhew marking the final stage of his transformation from bumbling fool into the Warrior.

The beast was *truly enormous*, a thing of *foulness* and *great toughness*. *Unstoppable* and possessed of *extreme strength* the Beast was *fast*, despite its size, and *armoured* from the broken blades stuck in it's skin. *Belligerent* to the last it's *foul tempered* nature was its undoing as it focussed on finishing off Hunter and disregarded Richard. It was a *legendary fighter* and that was all that was known of its abilities.

### The Bench

In Alexandra Park is a plain wooden bench, bolted together with green-painted iron bolts. The Bench was laid here to commemorate someone or something but time and constant vandalism have robbed both memory and the Bench itself of the knowledge of who or what it commemorates. The Bench is an island of calm in the city, benign and restive. A night on the Bench under a sheet of paper is as restorative as a stay at The Ritz though no-one may use its hospitality for more than a single night. Many Half-Lifers come here to die in a final night of peace.



## Bethlehem Alice

Often called 'Poor Beth', she is a saviour and saint to those unfortunates with whom the Underside has dealt most harshly. She resides in St Bethlehem Hospital in Cheapside and aids all those who come to her door. It is thought that amongst those in her care are the celebrated Miss Liddle and the notorious gentleman known only as 'Albert' whose true station in life and connection to the royal family is still cause of great speculation.

Poor Beth is a *mild mannered* and *gentle* woman of *saintly* disposition and *endless patience*. She takes care of her charges with *diligence* and *duty* that would shame Mother Theresa though she is *fierce* and *indomitable* in their defence. A *master of psychiatric care* despite her many outdated and quackish methods Beth is also a *practiced healer* and has the knack of alleviating her charges' madness by drawing it into herself or making it manifest and able to be overcome.

## Big Ben

A *very imposing* figure Ben is as *large*, as *inhumanly strong*, as *supremely tough* and as gifted with beard and hair as Hammersmith. With his *truly deafening* voice and his *charismatic* and *undeniable presence* he brings news to the Underside by the time-honoured method of screaming it at the top of his lungs. Dressed in the manner of a town crier Ben is festooned with clocks, watches and other assorted timepieces all attached by chain, pin or string to his enormous, thick leather waistcoat. In his hand he carries a great bell which doubles as both club and ringer to draw heed to his announcements. Ben is a guardian of time and looks after the Time Lost while at the same time dealing harshly with those who play 'silly buggers' with space and time too often. As such he is a *veteran tracker* and *club user* knowing his *Underside navigation* equally well. Ben has the knack of moving through time and space at will, though he has to follow rules nobody else quite understands. At this he is *legendary*.

## The Black Friars

**The Black Friars** are a holy order of monks who have been dedicated through time to the protection of the Key. A mystical artefact that could open the door to Islington's prison and allow him to ascend once more to heaven. The Friars are just the latest incarnation of the order, which has changed and adapted through time. A martial and medical order, the Friars live within their Abbey, which is linked, to various parts of London Below. Within the Abbey is their shrine to all those who, under their guardianship, undertook the ordeal in their quest for the Key. It is a great wooden cross and a triptych wall, covered in photographs, paintings, etchings and



miniatures depicting all those who tried and failed. Once Richard Mayhew had used the Key it was returned to the possession of the Black Friars and they protect it once more, but no more ordeals are had. The Friars now mostly concern themselves with healing the sick and protecting the newly fallen.

#### A Typical Black Friar

A typical Friar is *fit* and *strong*, *fast* on his feet and *resolute* in his duty. *Quiet* and *meditative* they keep their own counsel. A Friar is a *veteran* with one kind of weapon and *practiced* with another. They are also *practiced* at *healing*. All Black Friars are of African descent.

**Blackheath**  
Spoken of in chilled  
whispers of horror,  
**Blackheath** is a very  
creepy place. Under  
the heath is an  
ancient system of

primitive earthworks and tunnels, which are filled with a pervasive green-black mist and old, stinking, midge infested water. It is almost impossible to not get lost in there and most who have gone in have never come out. Some say the Green Witch herself made it this way so that she could hide things best left unseen. At various times Blackheath has filled with the evil and the corrupt creatures and things of the Underside, who have made it their home. The last time in recent memory that this happened on any grand scale was in 1768 when Lord Rayner led a crusade against the army of shadows and beasts that was gathering there. It was in this battle that Black Keziah disappeared.

#### Black Keziah

Black Keziah is one of the many denizens of London Below who have fallen to myth more than legend. She is a fierce warrior who was once captain of the guard in Lord Rayner's domain. She disappeared on the battlefield of Blackheath in 1768, although there have been many supposed sightings of her, not to mention rumours of her present deeds and whereabouts. Since her dread sword Malidor was never recovered from the field, it is safe to suppose that it rests still in her hand and Keziah is very much alive. There is an intriguing stained glass window in the White Chapel depicting her slaying a shadow beast. In her time Keziah was known to be a *strong* and *tall* woman, *noble*, *terrible* and *beautiful* in aspect and a *most relentless* foe. As *fast* and as *powerful* as any man only Hunter came close to a similar reputation, though Keziah's was as a foe of the darkness rather than as a slayer of beasts. As *enduring* and *eternal* as stone Keziah's disappearance was a surprise to all. She was a *legend* in her use of the *blade* and in her ability to inspire and *lead* troops. She was also a *master* of *tracking* beings of evil and darkness. Well *practiced* at *Underside navigation* and *lore* it is possible she lies still under Blackheath, whether dead or alive.

#### Blacknest

An outpost of Raven's court near Cheapside, Blacknest is a fragment of Dickensian time, a rookery, a rough and tumble tangle of lodging, gambling and prostitution that serves as a garrison for Raven's less endearing vassals.





## Blackwall

Brunel built the Rotherhithe Tunnel for the convenience of London's citizens. London Below however already had the Blackwall. Nicknamed with little affection 'Night's brother', the tunnel spans a stretch of perpetual twilight that is not always kind to those who traverse it. It should be noted that the price occasionally extracted from travellers is nowhere near as dire as that of Night's Bridge. There have been documented cases on separate occasions of Blackwall taking a traveller's hearing, left boot, eye colour, ability to count, childhood memories and shadow. More usually Blackwall satisfies itself with some small trinket such as jewellery, keys, keepsakes and spectacles.

## Blade

Like many of the residents of London Below, Blade is significantly older than she looks. She is to be found at the Floating Market selling pastries and pies – the finest in the Underside. Originally a slave in White City, she was purchased by a master butcher who in time freed and married her. Blade took over the business from her late husband Mr Todd, after his sudden and baffling disappearance. Blade is a *tall and broad shouldered* woman with a *very muscular* build. Her hair is short having never properly grown back and her smile is somewhat *sinister* and her eyes *broken* in some unidentifiable way. She is *reticent* and does not like to talk about her late husband, also *shy*, not liking to discuss her pies or to take credit for their goodness and flavour, assuring people that it's nothing to do with her. She is a *veteran* at *cooking* but she is right, it's far more to do with ingredients than anything else. She is also a *veteran* at using her *knives* for fighting having had to defend herself and her wares many times.



## Bloomsbury

Manning a fruit and flowers cart that can be found almost anywhere at any time in London Below Bloomsbury is a lifesaver, for the right price. While his fruit and flowers are wilting and maggoty at best, and truly rotten at worst, Bloomsbury also carries other things and always seems to have what you need. Alleged to be one of the few people the Marquis actually owes a favour to, Bloomsbury likes to build on that reputation with lies and half-truths. Whether useful or not, he's expensive. Bloomsbury is a *short, greasy, oily* stain of a human being. *Tousled* and ever *happy* he grins the stumps of his rotting teeth constantly and drinks home-brewed cider from a tin. Bloomsbury is a *veteran* at *barter* and *practiced* at *Underside lore* and *navigation*. He has the knack of always knowing what you need.





## Bond Street

In London Above Bond Street is one of the most exclusive and expensive streets there is, lined with glittering shops filled with hand crafted and imported treasures beyond the reach of most, where those who have sold their souls for the favour of mammon exchange that currency for material possessions. In the Underside the metaphor is a lot less complex. Here tanners, rope makers and artisans toil to create bonds and chains of the finest quality and strongest materials. Whether for leisure or restraint the gear made here is known to be the best though most shy away from it due to the ever present Shepherds browsing for chains for their slaves.

## Both-Worlders

"Nobody gets both," they say. You can belong to London Above, only ever seeing London Below out of the corner of one eye, or you can belong to the Underside, only ever able to make the most fleeting of contacts with the Upworld. Nobody gets them both at once. And indeed nobody does. The Both-Worlders, who are rare and immediately recognisable by their mismatched eyes, are the exception that proves this well-known rule. Caught between the two cities they are by day wholly and entirely creatures of the Upworld, but by night they are part of London Below. These unfortunates find themselves flitting between Upworld and Underside with the rising and setting of the sun, barely sleeping and completely unaware that they are living a double life. For when in London Above they believe that other city to have been no more than a dream, and when abroad in the Underside, they lose all memory of their daily identities, jobs and friends. The strain, of course, is terrible and few Both-Worlders live very long.

## Bow Church

The Underside does not have a religion as such and most of its denizens have little time for faith of any sort. There are some exceptions however. The crypt of Bow Church is held as sacred and there is an effigy and shrine to St Beckworth of the Knots, patron saint of the Underside. Who he was and why he is revered remains a mystery to even the most knowledgeable of Undersiders and those who do hazard a guess point to his mystery and obscurity as reason enough for him to be the patron saint.

## The Briars

A sprawling growth of thorny bushes, the Briars can sprout up anywhere in the Underside in minutes reducing a passable tunnel to a mess of razor sharp thorns and tangled brush. The Briars are quickly cleared but can trap and even kill unwary travellers. They exist permanently in very few places, the tunnels of Blackheath being one.



## Brixton

A *large* and *craggy* Troll of obsidian-black skin, Brixton speaks with a deep Jamaican accent and dresses in a porkpie hat, grey suit and slip on shoes. Brixton is a *colourful* character given to the telling of tall tales and is *fiercely loyal* to his friends, exerting his *great strength* in their defence but if crossed he is *brutal* and *violent* which makes him seem almost schizophrenic in character. When he grins his gold-capped teeth shine like a miniature sun in his dark face. Brixton has a deep and abiding love for Ska, even that "watered down chart crap that Suggs does."

## Burke's Emporium

Burke specialises in those hard to find items, things that perhaps are no longer available in this benighted day and age. There are pockets of old time in London, trapped like bubbles in amber, and Burke mines them for all they are worth. If it's lost, forgotten and definitely past its sell-by date, then Burke's your man. Burke's showrooms are visited by appointment only, but the man himself attends most sessions of the Floating Market. If you haven't the means to buy his wares, Burke might be willing to hire you to find a choice trinket for him. Time-bubbles can be dangerous things, and Burke isn't getting any younger.

## Burke

Burke himself is a *pinched* and *wizened* old man, bald as a cue ball and in appearance and aspect much like a vulture, looking at everyone who crosses his path over his grimy pince-nez as if sizing up their possessions for their worth and resigning himself to wait until they perish to collect them. Burke has all the taste and discretion of a magpie seizing upon anything and everything from the ages of man that he likes. Thus his clothing is a hodge-podge of styles and periods. His long and *dextrous*, nicotine stained fingers wriggle like worms and his *keen senses*, especially his *sensitive touch* are notorious across London Below. His knowledge of *history* and *Underside lore* are as *masterful* as his interpersonal skills aren't.

## Burnt Oak

This blackened and half fossilised tree serves as one of London Below's gibbets. Jack Ketch performs many of his hangings here and those bodies that haven't been scavenged yet hang slowly rotting from the topmost branches attended by crows and the morbidly curious.

## Butcher Row

Not much meat makes it down to the Underside and though the houses of Dog,

## Caledonia

One of the Seven Sisters, Caledonia is a powerful and immortal sorceress. Of middle age she is white haired and *very regal*, looking like nothing so much as an airbrushed Oil Of Ulay advert sprung to life. Clad in a simple black shapeless dress Caledonia is the least effusive and most *reserved* of the Sisters. Her power lies in her *legendary* ability to *traverse time and space*, so much so that she derides the Underground Map as a 'useless piece of frippery' on the few occasions she does say anything. Like all the Seven Sisters Caledonia is *feared* and Undersiders tell their children stories in which Caledonia steals away naughty children to her palace far away and works them until they die so she can live in luxury and feast upon their youth. Caledonia is *extremely prideful* and takes great exception to anything that damages that pride. *Eternal* and *undying* she knows as much as the other Sisters, her mind containing a *mastery* of *Underside lore* and *history* that very few other Undersiders can match or exceed.

Cat, Rat and Bird are always at each others' throats it can be impolitic to eat any of them, not that that stops many people including those that count themselves as a friend to those houses. Nonetheless vermin are pretty much the only thing on the menu and given that dogs, cats, rats and birds are not averse to eating the occasional dead body a sort of uneasy balance has been maintained where neither side really asks questions. Butcher Row is where the meat is brought to be prepared, cured and cooked into pies, pastries and stews. Its smokehouses, salters and picklers are always busy either with the produce of the Underside or the spoils and waste of the world above.

# C

## Cadogan

Cadogan is an architect, if you can truly call demolishing walls with your fists and carving pillars with your teeth and talons architecture. Cadogan is commissioned by various parties to extend the tunnel network of London Below and to lend his artisan's skill to stonework and carving. Cadogan is *massive*, even for a troll and possessed of *enormous strength* as well as an *accurate* and *delicate* touch that enables him to produce his finely wrought stonework. As *impenetrable* and *hard* as the stone he works Cadogan is grey of flesh and wears nought but a heavy waist-mat of triple-layered chain mail. Cadogan's *stonework* and *tunnel building* is *masterful* and his skill with his *fists* that of a veteran boxer.





## Camden Town

Ruled by Sister Saturday and inhabited by the Darkling Children Camden is a place where the gap between the two Londons is very small. Here almost any Undersider can attract a little more attention from the Upworlders, as a Half-Lifer can normally. Camden is a great centre of alternative culture within the capital, familiar with dark thoughts, dreams, tribalism and the use of shamanic drugs. It is perhaps this that weakens the walls along with the chaotic bustle of the nearby streets which resembles nothing so much as the Floating Market. Camden's Underside is barely distinguishable from the world above at night with drinking holes and improvised clubs blaring loud music in celebration every night seeking to gain Sister Saturday's blessing and patronage.



## Canary Wharf

This towering sleek building topped with a great pyramid is a physical representation of modern, efficient, dreamless, soulless London. When it was first erected it was physically painful for those who dwell in the Underside to go near the place, let alone enter it. As time has passed the inhabitants of the building have lessened its starkness and stories about the pyramid at it's peak have spread humanising the structure and slowly bringing it into the structure of London Below. While it is no longer painful to Undersiders, plans to hold a floating market in the Pyramid and the top floors are thought to be premature.

## Candy Street

Every indulgence known to man or beast can be gluttonously engaged in on Candy Street. This tiny winding passage is thick with every pleasure known to any sense and a few new ones. While there is a sweet shop selling old fashioned sweets not seen in decades

there are also prostitutes male, female and in between, tattooists, purveyors of pain and even a Velvet taking a little heat to give her clients the thrill of a cold gamble with their lives.

## Cash

Trade in London Below is always a matter of boon and barter. Few in London Below can find a use for money. Since the mundane Upworlders are blindly unaware of their presence it is useless to them as a trade bridge between the two cities. Coins are occasionally collected to make a variety of things including jewellery and scale mail. Money belongs to London Above, and will always find its way home in short order; only currency that is no longer legal tender

has the ability to remain and only that of gold or silver is worth anything in and of itself.

## Castlegate

Castlegate is the location of a subterranean entrance to the Pagoda in Kew, private watchtower of Emilia Lockehart, the Lady of the Gardens. Castlegate is a clean cut stone gate, the doors of red oak and grown over with flowering creepers and roses.

## Catch-points

Catch-points form the heart of the life of Sewer Folk and other scavengers, being a place where the flotsam and jetsam of London's network of rivers and sewers wash

up. This might be a poorly maintained area of sewer, a sandbar across the Thames or even an artificial barrier or net placed by the scavengers themselves. Needless to say, each scavenger community depends on its catch-points as surely as a desert community depends upon its oases. Conflicts over ripe catch-points are usually brief but bloody and rewarding to the victor.

## Catford

Home to the Royal house of Cats, Catford's rooftop Kingdom belongs entirely to them. Catford is a monarchy and is currently ruled by King Snaresbrook. Royal blood is determined by pedigree or by deed with alley cats, strays and moggies able to earn their titles in battle against the rats, their servants the Rat-speakers, dogs or birds. The Cats have a long alliance with the Witches and the Seven Sisters whose magic helps protect their rooftop realm in exchange for the servitude of a tithe of cats as familiars. Snaresbrook has yet to produce an heir, which has prompted sniggering speculation amongst courtiers that he's been 'snipped'. This is yet to

produce open revolt but the Dukes and Barons of the Cat dominion are manoeuvring for power.

### The Causeway

When the tide is out this bar of thick grey mud provides a foot crossing clear across the Thames for those of London Below, though it does not exist to the above world. The mud is thick, cloying and cannot be crossed in normal footwear. The Causeway is the last catch point before rubbish and detritus is washed away out to sea and sewer folk, mudlarks and other scavengers gather here for whatever pickings they can find.

### Chalk Farm

Part of Sister Saturday's domain and bordering on Camden Chalk Farm is home to the Wights, the male counterparts to the Velvets.

### Chase Side

Of the many punishments meted out to transgressors of Underside or House law the Chase is one of the fairest. The lawbreaker is publicly marched to this place and stripped before being flogged out of it and allowed to run for seven minutes before pursuit may begin. If they can escape London they are free to go but may never return. If the punishing Lord wishes them to live he will offer no reward for their slaying.

### Cheapside

Part of the territory of the Shepherds of Shepherds Bush, the first site of the Floating Market is now theirs and here they occasionally hold their own markets. Vengeful or morally outraged Undersiders have often tried to shut it down but none have ever succeeded in doing so. The flesh markets of the Shepherds are successful despite the fear that so many have of them.

### Clapton

The Leader of the Crouch Enders, Clapton is a dwarf's dwarf. Hard drinking, *lecherous*, *hardy* and a *tough* scrapper Clapton's halls are always filled with laughter and song and he sprawls on his stone throne overseeing his people with a ready smile and a *quick wit* as *fast* as his fists. Clapton is all of three and a half feet high, *well proportioned* for a dwarf. He is shaved bald with a short dark beard and many heavy gold rings hanging from his ears. He dresses in leather armour and gauntlets and carries a rusted and filthy punch-dagger at his side. Clapton is ever *restless*, unable to settle to any single thing and bores easily. He craves excitement to fulfil his *mischievous* nature and is liable to get his people involved in unwise ventures just to ease his boredom. In spite of this he is well *loved* by his people and *respected* across the

Underside. He is a *master* with his *blade* and a *veteran* of many a *wrestling* match with an equal skill at *evading* the blows of his enemies. A *practiced* leader he is held back only by his impatience.



### Clarence

*Jessica was convinced that Clarence had only got his job because he was a) openly gay, and b) just as openly black; and thus it was a source of general irritation to her that he was by far the most efficient, competent and best assistant she had had to date.*

#### - Jessica's opinion on Clarence.

Very much the yuppie Clarence is a *smooth operator*. *Efficient* and *decisive* Clarence cuts a *stylish* figure and feeds off the media expectations of a well-dressed young black man to his advantage. Always groomed Clarence is *ambitious*, *competent* and takes opportunities that present themselves to upstage his bosses and make himself look good. Utterly *selfish* he is *practiced* at *management* and the *organisation* of events.

### Clipstone

A craftsman, Clipstone is one of very few people who still knows how to flint-knap properly, producing stone knives, axes and arrowheads of wonderful quality for any who feel the need for such. He makes his home in Chislehurst caves working away on fine quality flint brought to him from The Shires. Dressed in rabbit skins he mainly trades for food, his only nod towards modernity being a pair of swimming goggles he wears whilst working. Clipstone is a *filthy* man, a mass of unkempt beard and hair. His hands are *sure*, *steady* and *dextrous* and he has a *fine eye* for detail. His body is *rangy* and *wiry* and he is able to move agilely through the caves. He's not seen light in a while and is quite pallid. His *flint-knapping* is *masterful* in quality and he has a *legendary knowledge* of *Chislehurst caves*.



## Clock House

One of Big Ben's abodes, Clock House is filled with clocks of all descriptions. Digital, clockwork, water, grandfather, alarm, carriage the only common denominator between them all is that they are all stopped and that time does not pass outside when time is spent in the house. When Ben is feeling hospitable this is where he takes his guests, treating them to tea and cakes.

## Coldblow

Prime Minister of Dogs Coldblow is a *regal* looking Alsatian of greying fur who is slowly going *deaf* and *myopic*. A traditionalist, he regards the Dogs' duty to their human masters as the pillar around which dog society stands. Coldblow is a *large* and *heavy* dog and served as a sniffer for the police before being retired. He is *traditional* and *moral* with a *weighty* personality given to long and *emotional* speeches. While he is *respected* by older dogs many younger ones rebel against his attitude saying that humans have changed, and more puppies have gone to Barkingside and The Isle Of Dogs during his leadership than at any other time this century. Coldblow is *experienced* and *knowledgeable* but is starting to go a bit *senile*, nonetheless he is a *masterful orator* and a *veteran leader* of dogs.

## Coin Street

In Southwark by the Thames, Coin Street is one of the few trading spots that deals with those from outside London Below. It has erratic trading links with other Undercities around the globe and takes its name from the traders' preference to trade using antique gold and silver coin rather than barter goods which may not maintain their value in other cultures. Most notable are Paris, Berlin, New York, and Hy Brasail. (The exact location of Hy Brasail has confused cartographers on both sides of London. The two most popular theories at present are that it is the Undercity of Sao Paolo or Tokyo.)

## Compass Point

The very centre of London Below, a properly prepared needle will always point to this place in the Underside. A small round chamber at a crossroads of tunnels, the point is indicated with a simple stone marker and is otherwise unremarkable.

## Constable Close

Law and order, such as it is in London Below, is enforced by the Baronies and fiefdoms and their Lords and guards. Elsewhere it is the rule of convention and of the mob. Only Constable Close and Constable Crescent take a wider view of law and order and seek to bring any kind of uniform justice to the Underside. Constable Close is a *plump* and *short* man dressed in the kind of police uniform an American tourist

would expect to see on a bobby. Close is always red-faced and *sweaty*, as though he has been running a marathon. He is *slow* and *unhealthy*. What he is, is *friendly*, *approachable* and *charming*, *easygoing* and easy to talk to. Most people take an instant liking to Constable Close and feel able to confide in him. *Practiced* with his *truncheon* he is equally good at *convincing* people of his good intentions and using his *charm* to get what he wants to know.

## Constable Crescent

Constable Close's partner Constable Crescent couldn't be more different. *Thin* and *pinched*, bent over, his body shaped like a hook, his hair is *greasy* and he wears an ill-fitting suit of a seventies cut. He carries a cosh in his pocket and is *cruel* and *unforgiving* with it to any 'villain' who gives him short thrift. Despite his thin appearance Crescent is *extremely strong* and given to breaking fingers to make a point. Crescent is a *veteran* at *interrogations* and *practiced* with his *cosh*, especially good at helping suspects to 'fall down the stairs'. Close and Crescent put a lot of people in mind of a sort of law-abiding and much nicer Croup and Vandemar.

## Lord Corvid

The deceased father of the Raven, Lord Corvid met his end in battle at the siege of Crossharbour, killed, like his son Rook, by Croup and Vandemar. Lord Corvid was a powerful and honourable man, but given to dark appetites that he struggled with his whole life. His end was not swift and his loss, along with that of Rook, has affected the Raven deeply.

## Convent Garden

The name is a corruption of 'Convent Garden'. There used to be a convent whose sisterhood was similar in form and function to the Black Friars. The convent itself was destroyed in the Great Flood of 1737, now only the ruins and the rose garden remain, overgrown and flowering fitfully. The Floating Market comes here frequently, and Bloomsbury claims a home in this area.

## Craven

Craven is a dark brown troll who produces the tiniest, most delicate miniature watercolours using his craggy hand as a palette for his paints. Craven is as *huge* and *strong* as any Troll but is *nervous* of his own shadow, *jumpy* and always *on edge*. An *abject coward* Craven's flight from any threat has earned him the scorn of other Trolls which only makes him more *reticent* and *shy* and even more nervous. Because of this he retreats into a *quiet* introspection, speaking only at market where he sells his little paintings. His *watercolours* are *masterworks* and he is well *practiced* at *barter* using his long empty silences to make the other party nervous and keen to part with more goods if only to get away.

## Crouch End

The Crouch Enders are dwarves and are preternaturally fast. They know most of the ins and outs, tunnels and byways of London Below. Lambeth is the name of the premier Crouch End Bravo at the market and they have some of the best guides in London Below. Their leader, Clapton, is renowned across the Underside as a carouser and brawler.

### Mr Croup

Mr Croup is *short* and *plump*, a *greasy* little man with eyes of faded china blue and a *fox-like* aspect. He is short of temper with too many teeth and *sharp*, piggy little eyes. He has a fondness for destroying unique and irreplaceable art, particularly T'ang dynasty sculpture. Mr Croup is extremely *verbose*, padding every sentence with unneeded complexity. While *eloquent* he has a tendency to overdo it making him seem *comical* in an *evil*, *cruel*, *petty* little way. Croup is *extremely cunning* and his *great strength* is hidden by his short stature. *Hardy* and *nigh on invulnerable* Mr Croup is possessed of a *legendary* ability with his *hands* and 'claws' and a *masterful* degree of *intimidation*, *torture* and *knifework*. Mr Croup has the knack of shifting through time and space and can use this ability to teleport short distances with a fading flash of shadow.

### Mr Vandemar

By contrast to Mr Croup, Mr Vandemar is *very tall* and perpetually *hungry* with brown eyes that make him look more than a little *wolfish*. Possessed of a lower *cunning* than Mr Croup Mr Vandemar is *enormously strong* and *extremely tough*, as *invulnerable* as his partner. Mr Vandemar has *keen senses* especially his sense of smell. Vandemar is *vicious* and *brutal* but it is in the *childlike* fashion of one who likes tearing the wings off insects, just scaled up. Mr Vandemar takes *perverse* delight in killing and is rather *simple* and *straightforward* in his approach, much less sophisticated than Mr Croup, *monosyllabic* and very *literal*. Of *legendary* ability with his *knife* and *masterful* at *kicking* and *torture* he is an equally good *tracker* and shares Mr Croup's knack of shifting through space and time but cannot teleport in the same way.

Mr Vandemar's rings are silver, fashioned from Crow skulls. He claims to have made them himself but in fact they were looted from Rook's corpse and are part of the Ravenscar treasure.

## Croup and Vandemar

"Croup and Vandemar," he said, smoothly, "the Old Firm. Obstacles obliterated, nuisances eradicated, bothersome limbs removed and tutelary dentistry."

- An example of Mr Croup's telephone manner.

Mr Croup and Mr Vandemar, the fox and the wolf, are the elite assassins of the Underside. They are expensive to hire, but fulfil their contracts with relish, moving around through time and space to fulfil different contracts. Many of these tasks bring them to London Below working for the more disreputable Baronies and Fiefdoms. Their last task saw them working for Islington before they were sucked through the door to god-knows-where. Still, given their talent for slipping through time and space and their tenacity it is unlikely that this will hold them for long though it may well have stranded Islington.



## Crossharbour

Site of a siege battle between House Corvid and The Isle Of Dogs. The feral master of the Isle Of Dogs committed his forces to stalling the invading force from House Corvid at the docks while the agents Croup and Vandemar, working on his behalf, killed the leader and heir of House Corvid breaking the morale of the invading force and saving the Isle Of Dogs from defeat. It is now much more well-defended and the Raven is not yet placed to seek revenge.

## Crowthorne

The Man-At-Arms of Ravenscourt, Crowthorne was as much a friend to Lord Corvid as he was his guard and he now takes a fatherly interest and concern in the Raven. Crowthorne appears to be a *very fit* man in his early forties, a streak of white runs through his hair and beard and his eyes are bright gold. Dressed in black leather and a dark feathered cloak he wears a silver chain at his neck and carries a pair of shortswords. *Stylish*, *efficient* and *feared* by the enemies of Ravenscourt Crowthorne is *stern* and *intimidating*, *utterly professional* and *extremely deadly*. *Wiry* and *agile* he moves well for a man of his age and his fatherly concern for the Raven hides a deep and abiding love for her that is anything but fatherly. A *master* of the *blade* and a *veteran* at *spotting* troublemakers Crowthorne possesses the knack of leaping long and high distances and perching on the tiniest purchase.



## Crystal Palace

After the Great Exhibition of 1851, much of the show found its way to London Below. This was thanks to the eccentricity of Colonel Flemming who had an unquenchable passion for the achievements of the Empire. It is also thanks to London's reluctance to relinquish the treasures that had graced its streets; instead pulling them down to clasp to its secret heart in the Underside.

## Curzon

Curzon is the leader of the Trolls of Trollstone. Pale grey and green in colour Curzon is more of a warlord than anything else. *Truly enormous* his *massive* and *ponderous* bulk provides him with *fantastic strength* and makes him nigh *unstoppable*. Curzon's mind is as *sharp* as the weapons he crafts and his *insightful* leadership has earned the Trolls a better reputation than that of monsters to be *feared* and loathed. Curzon is reluctant to involve the Trolls in the battles of the Underside fearing that they will still be thought expendable and used cheaply in such conflicts. He is a *master weaponsmith* and a *veteran leader*, equally skilled in *assessing* those he talks to.

## Cutty Sark

An old tea clipper sailing ship that rests in the docks at Greenwich. The ship is home to a curious pale-eyed barefooted ragamuffin who calls herself 'the Pirate Girl'. Oft running afoul of Admiral Mews the girl lives up to her name in most regards.

## The Cygnets

The Cygnets are three faerie swan-maidens who live on a barge in little Venice. As Swans they take mates and nest, producing a single egg each and every year. Each of these eggs can store someone's life force and soul, enabling them to be restored after their body 'dies'. Convincing one of the Cygnets to part with her child, or stealing it from her, is a daunting prospect.

The Cygnets are *lithe* and *graceful*, *utterly beautiful* and possessed of *otherworldly charm*. As faerie beings they are *immortal* and *incorruptible*, preferring to keep to themselves. In place of hair they have fine white feathers. Each of the Cygnets has a *masterful singing* voice and has a *practiced* ability to do minor *illusory glammers*. They also possess the knack of changing into the form of a swan.



# D

## Darkling Children

Subjects of Sister Saturday and a tribe unto themselves they live in Camden Town and deal in petty magics and parlour tricks. When creative they tend towards the musical, when destructive they tend towards the most vicious of acts. In look they appear to be well-heeled pallbearers of the Victorian era. They worship the Wights and the Velvets.

## Deepdale

Empty vaults forgotten when fire engulfed the old Westminster Cathedral, Deepdale is now home to those Undersiders unable or unwilling to face the surface world any more in either night, or day. Some of those here look like death and smell suspiciously of formaldehyde. These are amongst the most regular customers of the Shepherds though precisely what they do with all the slaves they buy isn't exactly clear...

### Typical Darkling Child

*Pale and wan, Darkling Children are at great pains to look **dour** and **serious** though in their own element they party hard and can be **raucous** and **rowdy**. Usually **graceful** and always **stylish** they are **practiced** in a **creative art** of some kind and in **hand to hand combat**.*

## Door

"So is it short for Doreen?" He asked.  
"What?"  
"Your name."  
"No."  
"How do you spell it?"  
"D-o-o-r. Like something you walk through."  
"Oh." He had to say something, so he said: "What kind of a name is Door, then?"  
"My name."

### - Richard and Door get acquainted.

Door is from an aristocratic family in London Below who has just found her family killed by Croup and Vandemar. She is an Opener, which means she can open locks, and also open things that cannot usually be opened, such as walls and people's rib cages. Door is a *small, thin, pale, elfin* looking girl with odd coloured eyes. She is a born *leader* with an *aristocratic aura*. *Playful* and slightly *sarcastic* this is largely a cover for her *emotional* nature and *inexperience*. She is *beginner* at *leadership* and *practiced* at *Underside navigation*, *Underside lore*, *bird* and *rat* languages. She is also a *practiced Opener*.



## Down Street

A street that descends straight down into the earth. The street starts in a house. The house has a plaque beside its door that reads...

"The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Houses. Down Street. Please knock."

The street is looked after by a liveried footman who mans the lift (which says it's out of order) which itself is at the bottom of four flights of stairs (posh, threadbare, sacking, boards). At the bottom of the lift shaft is a bottomless pit crossed by a board and beyond that the road spirals down and down and down until it reaches the Labyrinth. Beyond the Labyrinth is Islington's prison and door to heaven.

## The Duke

The Duke is a *healthy* man in his early fifties with salt-and-pepper hair and a thin beard that is little more than stubble. His eyes are a *piercing* steely grey and his gaze seems to penetrate the soul granting him deep *insightful* knowledge of those he looks upon. *Extremely intelligent* and *very knowledgeable* the Duke is *sophisticated* and *devout* thanks to his upbringing with the Black Friars. The Duke's wife died some years back which has rendered him somewhat *hard* and *introspective* but his children live and his heir, Camberley, now fifteen, is his pride and joy. The Duke has a *legendary* knowledge of *Underside lore* and *secret history* and is *practiced* with the *blade* and at the *etiquette* of court. He has the knack of never forgetting as do all his line.



## Duke's Court

The Duke's court claims dominion over the forgotten, whereas the Earl claims the lost and Raven claims the taken. The Duke was tutored by the Black Friars and remains devout and ascetic. All that is forgotten by others winds up in the Duke's home in the vaults of the Natural History Museum. Languages, knowledge, peoples, and places, the lore that has faded from memory comes here to its final resting place. The Duke's role in the politics and machinations of the Underside is limited but effective, lending his weight to the side of good or the preservation of knowledge, whichever has the strongest pull at the time. Duke's court is not especially wealthy and not especially powerful but his men-at-arms are well trained and faithful to the Duke and his family.

## The Dull Witch

One of the Four Witches the Dull Witch has the *legendary* magical ability to *erode* anything. Blades dull in her presence, stone wears down, everything becomes too much bother to concentrate on and the most exciting activity begins to induce boredom and yawning. The Dull Witch herself is everything you would expect of someone with this power. Grey of skin, grey of hair, grey of personality and grey of dress the Dull Witch is *rounded* and *flabby*. Always sighing and yawning she must be cajoled by her sisters to do the tiniest thing. Dulling and eroding everything around her comes as little more than a reflex. *Limp* and slumped she is nonetheless *immortal* and *inviolable*. If ever roused her *steely* muscles and indomitable *toughness* ensure that she will be able to *endure* any battle. *Lazy* and constantly bored the Dull Witch can only ever be engaged, however briefly, by something entirely new, which will usually occupy her for all of five minutes before being rendered dull and lifeless. As well as her powers of erosion the Dull Witch has a *masterful* knowledge of *Underside* lore and *cursing magics*.

## Dunnikin.

He was the chief of the Sewer Folk, the wisest and the oldest. He knew the sewers better than their original builders.

**- Dunnikin, leader of the Sewer Folk.**

The Leader of the Sewer Folk Dunnikin is as rich in odours as he'll never be in trading goods. Dunnikin is a *tall* and *stooped* raggedy man with a *fantastically* *odorous* stench. *Expressive* and *magnanimous* Dunnikin makes a fine leader for his people, *concerned* and *watchful* as he is for their well-being. Dunnikin is a *veteran* trader and a *masterful* fisherman able to pull treasures of all kinds from the filthy sewer water. He is also a *veteran* at finding his way around in the dark with his *Underside* navigation.



## E

### The Earl

The huge man was larger than life in every way. He wore an eye-patch over one eye, which had the effect of making him look slightly helpless, and unbalanced, like a one-eyed bird. He had fragments of food in his red-grey beard, and what appeared to be pyjama bottoms were visible at the bottom of his shabby fur gown.

**- Richard's summation of The Earl.**

The Earl of Earl's court was once a *respected*, *hawkish* warrior and ladies man but time has not been kind to the old fellow. Pottering about in his dressing gown and slippers and increasingly *senile* in his dotage, the final blow to the Earl was the loss of his eye repaying a debt to the Marquis by involving himself in the most recent revolt at the White City. The loss of his eye and a great deal of his men brought age crashing down on the Earl and he has collapsed inwardly. Still a *broad* and *strong* man of great *endurance* the Earl is nonetheless *doddering* and *unsure* of himself. *Genial* and *friendly* he compensates for his teetering health and lapsed mind by being a fine host and doing all he can to

help the forces of good within the Underside. The Earl claims dominion over the lost and the underground he is a *veteran swordsman* and has a *veteran's* knowledge of the *lore of the Underside*. He is a *practiced leader* who was once greater than he is now but those times have passed.

## Earl's Court

*There was straw scattered on the floor over a layer of rushes. There was an open log fire, sputtering and blazing in a large fireplace. There were a few chickens strutting and pecking on the floor. There were seats with hand embroidered cushions on them, and there were tapestries covering the windows and the doors.*

### - Earl's Court.

Earl's Court claims dominion over the lost and the London underground. Everything on and in the underground owes fealty to him from the ticket machines and gateways to the vending machines that keep his court supplied with coke and chocolate. The court itself takes up a train made up of six cars. The first is the Earl's private quarters, the second the hall where he receives guests and holds court. The third and fourth are lined with stone and piled high with lost property and knowledge. The fifth serves as a barracks for his men-at-arms and the sixth is split into two guest chambers providing accommodation for the Lords and Ladies of his domain. The Earl keeps two of his men as personal guards, Halvard and Dagvard. Tooley is his jester and Buffer is his falconer. The Earl keeps an elderly wolfhound as his faithful companion and has no heir, nor is he likely to produce one at this late stage in his life.

## East End

Down an alley and up some steps in the easternmost parts of London you will find this wooden doorway. Through it only mists can be seen but the scent of spices and the sound of chanting can sometimes be made out drifting through the opening.

## Elephant and Castle

A small band of Bravos has mounted a small wood and rubber castle on the top of an aging bull elephant 'liberated' from London's Zoo. Three or four of them at a time can mount the elephant, taking cover in their castle (constructed from driftwood and old tyres) and taking pot shots with crossbows or slings at anyone who comes into range. The elephant also wears armour, fashioned from old car tyres, and seems remarkably happy with its lot as a war mount. Things have been fairly peaceful of late and so the band hires out their mount's muscle for transportation and construction work as much as conflict.



## F

### Mr Figgis

*He guarded the doors with a diligence that bordered upon madness, never quite having lived down the evening when an entire floor's worth of computer equipment upped and left, along with two potted palms and the managing director's Axminster carpet.*

### - Figgis the security guard and the reason for his jobsworth attitude.

Mr Figgis is the security guard stationed on reception at Richard's place of work. He is flabby, made *corpulent* and *unhealthy* by sitting all day watching people go to and fro, and smells of linctus. Despite his *diligent* watchfulness he is an *inefficient* paper pusher. A *stickler* for the rules (every rule) he is a *stubborn* little Napoleon. Figgis enjoys his pornography a little too much and doesn't particularly like himself for it. Figgis is a *beginner* at *alertness*, a *veteran* in his scope of *pornographic knowledge* and a *veteran* at *building rules*. Figgis has an encyclopaedic collection of soft porn, which he reads, ironically enough, disguised behind a copy of the Sun.

### Colonel Flemming

A Victorian collector of Imperial memorabilia Flemming's career matches the progress of the Victorian age. Twelve when Victoria ascended the throne he participated in many of the shaping moments of that era, serving with distinction in the military as well as being involved in the sciences. The Colonel saved a great deal of memorabilia all through his life and stopped aging when Victoria died leaving him permanently at the age of



seventy-six.

Flemming is a *spry* and *gentlemanly* man possessed of extremely *conservative* views and an enormous, bushy white moustache. *Very experienced* and *very knowledgeable* he is a little *slow* but his mind remains *keen* and *sharp*. Always animated when talking about his collection, the Colonel is a *veteran* in his knowledge of *science* and *history* though time has dulled his military skills to that of a *beginner* with the *sword*, *pistol*, *rifle* and *horse*.

## The Floating Market

*Richard stood there, alone in the throng, drinking it in.*

*It was pure madness. Of that there was no doubt at all.*

*It was loud (...) People argued, haggled, shouted, sang. They hawked and touted their wares, and loudly declaimed the superiority of their merchandise. Music was playing - a dozen different ways on a score of different instruments, most of the improvised, improved, improbable. Richard could smell food. All kinds of food (...)*

*Stalls had been set up all through the shop. Next to, or even on, counters that, during the day, had sold perfume, or watches, or amber, or silk scarves, people had erected their own improvised stalls.*

*Everybody was buying. Everybody was selling.*

**- The Floating Market makes its impression on Richard.**

The Floating Market is called that because it floats from place to place, not because it is on water, though sometimes it is. Anything can be bought or sold at market and the whole place is under truce. No violence is allowed there, all may come and ply their trade. It is also considered bad form to jump people on their way to and from the market. All the various sub-classes of underdweller be represented by stalls here. Everything is bought by barter and money has no meaning here. It is also bad form to steal things from London above to barter; they should be discarded or freely given to you. Older underdwellers will be able to tell if something is stolen, though minor transgressions are ignored and Half-Lifers sometimes are able to purchase goods from London Above to bring below. Good locations for the Floating Market include the Cutty Sark, the Natural History Museum, the British Museum, HMS Belfast, Harrods, Tower Bridge, Parliament, Trafalgar Square and the courtyard of Buckingham Palace.

## London Fog

A 'pea-souper' or London Particular fog like this hasn't been seen in London Above since the 1950's, which is a source of great disappointment to tourists but of great joy to anyone old enough to remember them. Caused by mist rising from the Thames meeting sewage miasma, industrial waste and the smoke from thousands of houses and factories London fog had a 'taste' and consistency all of its own. Romantic looking as it may have been London fog was a cover for crime including the murders of the Ripper and even without the criminal element the worst fogs were responsible for thousands of deaths from illnesses and respiratory conditions. Remnants of the fog still exist in London Below in foul patches blocking sight and choking Undersiders.

## The Fop With No Name

An *effeminate* bravo, the Fop With No Name tries very hard to project the image of an eighteenth century rake while only having access to jumble sale clothes and face powder made from grinding up chalk. The Fop is as *thin* as a broom and of *delicate* mannerism and constitution. His strength lies in his *extremely fast* reactions and his *lithe* and *fluid* movement. The Fop is



*practiced* with the *blade* but his real strength lies in his *hand-to-hand* skills, which are those of a *veteran*.

## The Four Witches

The Old Witch, mistress of decay, the Green Witch, mistress of growth, the Dull Witch, mistress of erosion and the Wool Witch, mistress of creation, are some of the most potent conjurers in London Below and deal with most of the undesirables of below, including the Shepherds, without reservation or a second thought. It is dangerous to bargain with them but it can be very, very useful, if you're willing to pay the price.

## Fox Corner

Owned by the Wild Court, Fox Corner is a tangled, green and hidden plot of land left abandoned since the second world war when it was bombed. Once a furriers it is now a jumble of collapsed red brick, grass and tangled plants. In amongst the wreckage a couple of families of urban foxes make their home untouched by the Underside for fear of invoking the wrath of Herne. The foxes grow sleek and healthy on London's refuse and produce healthy cubs each year who migrate through the city out to the greenbelt bringing magic and city cunning to the foxes of the Shires.

## Brother Fulginious

One of The Black Friars Brother Fulginious works as the Abbot's main aide-de-camp and helper leading him along in his blindness and caring for him. Brother Fulginious is *brisk*, *brusque* and *organised*. *Devoted* to the abbot he does all he can to be *helpful*. Despite his less martial role Brother Fulginious retains the trained physique, the *strong* muscles and *tough* body that all the brothers maintain through their martial exercises. Brother Fulginious is a *practiced* *quarterstaff* fighter and a *beginner* level *boxer* as well as a *veteran* *aide*, well-trained by meeting the Abbot's sometimes eccentric requirements.

# G

## The Gap

*It was diaphanous, dream-like, a ghost thing, the colour of black smoke, and it welled up like silk under water, and, moving astonishingly fast while seeming to drift almost in slow motion, it wrapped itself tight around Richard's ankle. It stung, even through the fabric of his Levi's. The thing pulled him towards the edge of the platform and he staggered.*

- Richard falls afoul of The Gap.

A mist-like and tentacled force that exists along the train tracks and in the tunnels, the Gap are rumoured to make their homes in the Underside line and Blackheath. Wispy looking, like shadows, they are solid enough when they grab you, burning your skin and trying to drag you down onto the track to feast on you. The Gap is *endlessly patient* and *extremely powerful*, able to drag even strong Bravos down onto the tracks. It is *greatly feared* by all Undersiders and is one of the chief reasons so few use the Underground trains save in emergencies or to get an audience with the Earl. The Gap is *sinister*, *dark* and *cold*, its wispy form *extremely resistant* to harm. The Gap is *practiced* at *grabbing* people off the platform to feed its hunger.

## Gary Pœnnu

"Me? I think you're a tosser."

- The dream Gary.

A colleague of Richard's at his place of work in London Above, Gary is a bit of a 'lad'. *Laid back* he appears to be *friendly* but is actually a bit *duplicitous*. He's a *joker*, usually at other people's expense, *outgoing*, *confident* and completely *tactless* he is a *veteran* at *office work* and a *practised seducer*. Gary appeared to Richard as part of a manifestation of his madness and lack of confidence at Blackfriars station during the Ordeal.

## The Globe

Underneath the rebuilt and restored theatre lies the Underside reflection of the original which harks back in its audience as much as its structure to Elizabethan times. The Players of Acton Green play here fairly regularly to an audience of jeering or cheering Undersiders craving a little entertainment. At other times The Globe plays host to less savoury entertainments such as gladiatorial bouts, dog fights and gambling.

## The Golden

"Mutant" rats with golden coats, their long stay in London Below has changed them far beyond normal recognition. Rats have always been able to eat anything that they come across and some of them say that the Golden just managed to adapt to eating the weirdness that occurs everywhere in London Below. They rule London's rats from deep down in the city, never appearing to others. Their agendas are anyone's guess. The Golden are *supremely intelligent* and *large* for rats. They make their nest in the bones of a long dead mammoth. *Immortal* they are no less than living gods to the Rats and Rat-speakers possessed of *great cunning* and *great ferocity*. The Golden have a *masterful* knowledge of *Underside lore* and *history* (from a rat's perspective). Long pampered the skills in *combat* that once felled that mammoth have atrophied to a mere *practiced* level and they





route as it has been often proven to be their undoing.

### Green Witch

One of the Four Witches the Green Witch is the most *powerful* of them and has *legendary* power over all *living and growing things* as well as a *masterful* skill with *potions and curses*. The Green Witch appears as a wrinkled old woman whose skin appears to be bark and is certainly as *tough* as bark. Her hair and the highlights of her skin are greenish and her nails long and black. She dresses in sackcloth and her cackle can cut glass. While she has power over all living things she prefers to create thorns and twisted trees, mushrooms and all manner of unpleasant and dark vegetation. She herself reflects her creations, *twisted* and *very unpleasant*. Perpetually *sneering* and *condescending* she is as *brawny* as the roots of the trees and as *hard* as oak, not to mention seemingly *immortal*.

### Sir Grenville Hackbridge

Sir Grenville Hackbridge is a minor and barely noteworthy noble of the Underside and of interest only through his son's unfortunate demise at the blades of Harrow and Wealdstone.

### The Greyling

A spy. A loathsome creature whose knacks keep him unseen to almost everyone, those of Raven's Court and very few others know of him. The Greyling is a *thin* and *emaciated* creature, *silent* in movement and *slippery* as a silverfish. Milky white eyes peer out of a pale grey face, its limbs long and *loose*, its fingers *dextrous*. The Greyling is *very alert* and *very sneaky* able to pass unseen in all places. Those few who have seen him, and only Raven's Court and The Marquis are certain to have, have power over him. He is a *legendary sneak* and has the knacks of becoming invisible, silent and odourless.

### Gutter

The leader of the Cave Painters, inasmuch as they have a leader, Gutter is a *cheeky* and *bullying* lad on the verge of his teens at which point the tribe will cast him out. For now however he is the big cheese on this smorgasbord and intends to enjoy it. Gutter is a *wily* brat, *fast* on his feet and *quick* with his hands. *Practiced* with the *switchblade* he is able to dash off *quick* wall paintings to a similar standard.

### Gutter Lane

In the right circumstances anyone may chance to find themselves newly fallen to the Underside, having slipped through the cracks of London above. It seems true, however, that in some places the cracks are considerably wider than in others.

rely on their people to protect them.

### Gray's Inn

A stop-along-the-way for many travellers Gray's Inn sits neatly at the heart of London Below, straddling many of the most travelled routes through it. The same treaty that covers the Floating Market covers this place. The ale is cheap, the beds are straw and the food is simple and of suspect providence but the hearth is always warm and the welcome always hearty. Provided you can pay your way.

### Green Dragon Yard

A narrow street in Aldgate and the second entrance to the White Chapel. Its name comes from the two large sconces that stand sentry either side of the door. Crafted of heavy copper they form an arch of two great dragons, each with a torch clasped in their talons. There are many popular stories of the dragons coming to life and eating wrongdoers though these are likely 'bollocks.' Which is how Old Bailey ends his tales about the place.

### Greenwich

Providence of the Witches, best approached by river boat, though there is the tunnel that also provides access. Undersiders are advised not to take the tunnel

Gutter Lane by St Paul's Cathedral is one such place.

# H

## Halfmoon Passage

A small alleyway in Aldgate. Halfway down - if you know how to look - is the first entrance to the White Chapel.

## Halvard

One of the Earl's two bodyguards, the other being Dagvard. Halvard is an *elderly* man dressed in a chain mail hauberk and a pot helmet. While getting on in years Halvard is still *strong* and *steady*, his *steadfast* grip and *accurate* aim as good as it ever was. Halvard may be a bit *slow* in his later years but he's *loyal* to the Earl in spite of his grumbling comments. Basically *good-natured* he tends to be the most welcoming face in the Earl's court. A *veteran* with the crossbow and the *halberd* Halvard minimises his involvement in court to following the Earl's instructions.

## The Hall

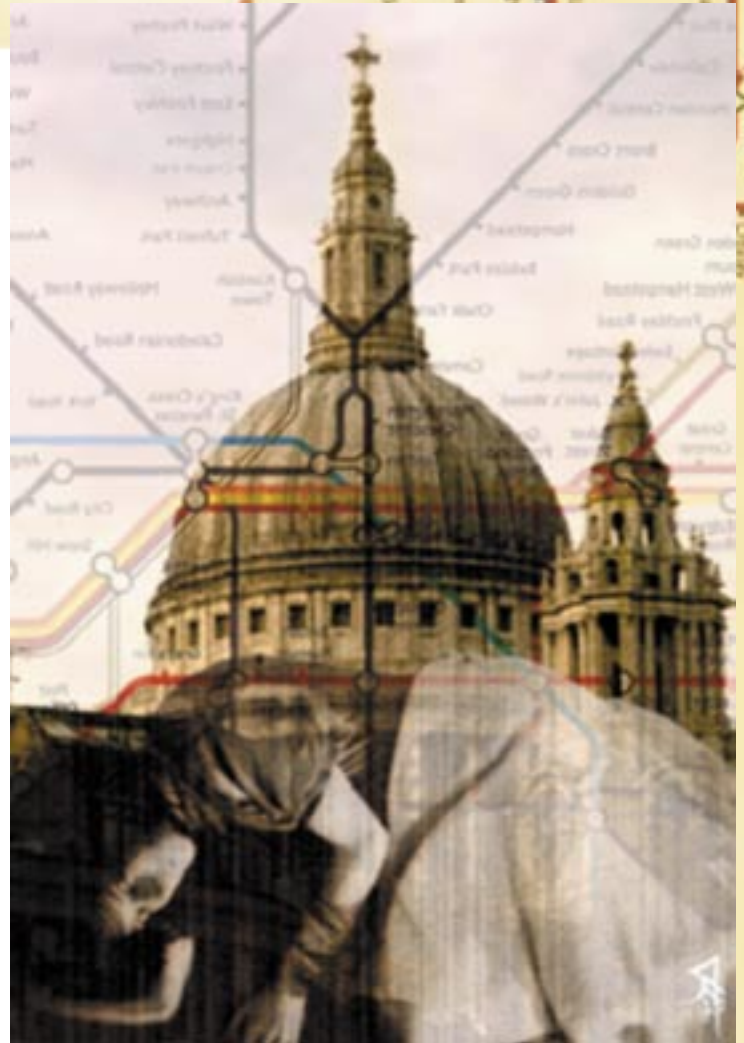
Rumoured to be the home of the Greyling. Of course, since it concerns him and is also dangerously close to Blackheath, no one has yet seen fit to go and find out for certain. The Hall is little but a long straight stone passage, lined with dim, guttering torches. Here and there the stone panels can be moved, revealing tiny stone chambers behind.

## Hammersmith

*They were approaching a smith's stall, where a man who could easily have passed for a small mountain, if one were to overlook the shaggy brown beard, tossed a lump of red-molten metal from a brazier onto an anvil. Richard had never seen a real anvil before. He could feel the heat from the molten metal and the brazier from a dozen feet away.*

**- Richard encounters Hammersmith at the Floating Market.**

The best blacksmith and metalworker by far in London Below, he knew Door as a child. Hammersmith is a great, *big, giant* of a man. Spectacularly bearded and *extremely imposing* in his *towering* eight foot frame, clad in his leather overall and wielding his hammer with *amazing dexterity*. Hammersmith never misses a market and his price is high but his goods are of fantastic quality. *Amazingly nimble* with his fingers and



*supernaturally accurate* in his work Hammersmith turns out the most *detailed* and *perfectionist* metalwork seen in the Underside. Hammersmith is a *legendary smith* and a *master* with his *hammer* and with *wrestling*. While a bit *simple* he is as *honest* as the day is long and a *diligent* worker

## Harrow AMD Wealdstone

The twins. They possess an almost *preternatural speed* and *fantastic grace* that has been the undoing of many petty felons and larcenists as well as rivals and challengers of the more ambitious variety. They are weapon masters extraordinaire, specialising in the art of the sword to the exclusion of most other interests and *deadly* in every duel they have fought to date. The most famous, perhaps, being their quarrel with the son of Sir Grenville Hackbridge in 1807 and the subsequent duel on Hampstead Heath, the outcome of which is well documented. The monument in Sudarium Hackbridge's memory can be seen on the Heath itself. Identical in every regard the twins finish each other's sentences and mirror each other's moves. *Acrobatic, athletic* and *balletic* they are *legends* across the Underside for their *swordplay* and their insistence on fighting to the death.



## Hayes Murphy

The Keeper of the Sanctuary possesses a special knack. Able to sense danger and trustworthiness in others, able to project to see if they will harm him, Hayes looked all through the Underside for the safest place but saw nothing but death and harm that would come to him. Hayes eventually found his safety behind a locked door in Parliament Square and made his home in the chambers beyond. Water, light and heat were his. Food could be brought to him and there was room, room for others who needed safety and whose safety he could grant in exchange for service. Hayes is *extremely nervous, timid and paranoid*. Slim and quick he is ever *alert* for trouble. Hayes dresses all in black and stutters when under stress. He is a *practiced cook* and *practiced at healing*, providing what care he can for those guests who pass muster.

## Headstone

Headstone is the most commonly seen of the inhabitants of Deepdale. He is the one who is sent out to purchase the slaves. Headstone is *tall* and bald. Often mistaken for one of the Shepherds he strikes an *extremely intimidating* figure. Gaunt and *steadfast* his body is *strong* and *extremely tough*, able to shrug off otherwise fatal looking wounds. Headstone is *monosyllabic*, never saying more words than absolutely required in the execution of his business and he never stays out of the crypts any longer than absolutely necessary. A *veteran* with his *fists* and a *practiced* tracker, few slaves manage to get away from him. Headstone is to all intents and purposes a zombie and cannot be killed by conventional means unless hacked to pieces.

## Herne

The head of the Wild Court Herne is a mythic figure, only ever glimpsed. Those who owe fealty to the Wild Court do not follow his lead so much as worship him



and the nature he represents. Herne rides alongside the Wild Hunt, which rides out twice a year to take those who have most offended the court. Herne appears as a tall man, hooded and cloaked with antlers protruding from his head.

## Herne Hill

Owned by the Wild Court, Herne Hill is said to be Herne's resting place and it is kept clear and sacrosanct by his followers.

## Highgate

In theory Highgate is still Sister Saturday's dominion, but in practice no one owns it. This is largely due to the cemetery that serves as the final resting place of many members of the noble houses. An unspoken truce is kept in the cemetery, allowing any resident of London Below to pay their respects to the dead that lie there.

## Hither Green

A smallish patch of well tended grass and trees the Green has a mystical quality known only to those resident in London Below and then only a few. Standing in the centre of the green and burning an image of the person you wish to see you can compel them to come to Hither Green and to present



themselves to you. Those who do know the knack try to keep it quiet, not wanting to be summoned away themselves.

### Honeysuckle Gardens

A beautiful garden of night blooming flowers this quiet spot of reflection is a favourite of the Velvets who come here to bask in and enjoy the scents after having fed to their satisfaction on the cattle of London Above.

### House of the Arch

Lord Portico's household. Before Croup and Vandemar thinned the numbers there was Lord Portico, Ingress, Door, Portia and Arch. All were killed save Door, though Ingress may still be alive and hidden somewhere below if Islington spoke the truth. The family has many offshoots however and Door is far from the only Opener below. Lord Portico was trying to unite the Underside again as it was in history, to pull together rather than apart. The Lady Door has undertaken to follow in his footsteps which has made her dreadfully unpopular in some quarters.

### The House Without Doors

Lord Portico's residence, the House Without Doors, is an associative house.

### Hugh and Cry

London Below's premier animal breeders. Operating out of Battersea, Hugh and Cry, a pair of down at heel gentlefolk, can supply guard-dogs the size of pit ponies (if that is what you require). The Seven Sisters are known to speak highly of their work as is the Green Witch. Which is a ringing endorsement of effectiveness if not safety.

Hugh is an *urbane* and *well-mannered* gentleman right up until the point alcohol enters his system. Then he's a *rampaging, insulting* bastard, cajoling anyone who will listen with his wandering tales of former glories and riches and what an absolute bitch Cry is. *Uncoordinated* and *utterly tactless* Hugh is a *master of animal breeding* and of the *put down*, only happy when he's drunk.

Cry is as *posh* and *rakish* as Hugh but barely touches a drop of drink. *Caring* and even *motherly* Cry is prone to the *hysterical* turn or two but means well. His animals are his substitute family and he has to rely on Hugh to sell them since he's far too *emotional* to part with them. Cry is a *master of animal training* and of *animal medicine*, only happy when taking care of Hugh.

### Hunt Street

A large barracks here houses the Shepherd's slaves until they are sold. Occasionally slaves escape and the search for them always begins here, hence the street's name. Still cobbled in sections the uneven surface makes escape for barefoot slaves rather difficult.

### Hunter

*Richard was never able to place her accent. At the time he thought she might be Canadian, or American. Later he suspected she might have been African, or Australian, or even Indian. He was never able to tell.*

#### - Richard meets Hunter.

Hunter was a legendary warrior who travelled around the world killing the monsters below cities from the alligators below New York to the Great Weasel of Bangkok. She returned to London Below in search of the greatest prize of the Underside: the Beast. She became Door's bodyguard, but betrayed her to Islington in her quest to find and slay the Beast of London, at which she failed and died leaving Richard to finish off the Beast.

Hunter was *extremely beautiful* with caramel skin and a soft mouth that gave little clue to her skill and *ruthless* mind. She was *deadly, lithe* and *wiry, quick* of hand, *precise* and *accurate*, *extremely tough* and *enduring* of wounds done to her. She was a *legendary* warrior with the *spear* and a *master* of the *knife*, the art of *hand-to-hand* and of the *tracking* of beasts. Her *knowledge* of the *Underside* was that of a *veteran* in large part because she was cursed never to be able to leave the Underside for the world above. This curse may have been levelled on her by Serpentine but the two appeared to get on and may have even been lovers at some point. Certainly Serpentine treated Hunter as a near equal, something she rarely does.

### Baron Octavius Hyde

The Baron is a *hearty* man, *stocky* and *full-bellied* with big mutton chop sideburns, red cheeks and nose. His teeth are filed into points and he dresses in the style of the twenties, always with a cigarette holder, which he uses to pick his teeth in an *uncouth* manner. The Baron is *cruel* and *vicious* but is also possessed of a *cutting wit*, which, were he more conventional and not a flesh-eating monster, would make him quite popular. The Baron is a *powerful* man and is attended by servants who share his appetites. A *masterful wit* and a *veteran chef* the Baron was also trained by the military and a life of privilege and retains *practiced hunting* and *wrestling* skills.

### Hyde Park

The park is lorded over by the Baron who shares its name. It is advisable not to go there after dark. Baron Octavius Hyde is to be avoided at all cost. Never accept an invitation to dine with him, as one has a lamentable tendency to become the main course. The luckier 'guests' awake with a sore and shaved head, standing in shackles at Leather Market



## Icabard Mordaunt Dickensien

A self-styled 'expert and everyman' on all matters, he is most readily to be found at the Floating Market. There he offers his aid and advice on all subjects from alabaster vases to the zoology of fabulous creatures. How sound his teachings are is a matter of personal opinion, but no one has yet thought themselves so cheated as to employ a Bravo and make their grievances felt. Icabard is a *grovelling* little *toady*, *eager* to please and desperate for attention and adulation. While *knowledgeable* he lacks expertise and is merely a gifted amateur at most things. *Convincing* and a great *liar* he makes up for his ropery and partial information with conjecture and supposition. Icabard is a *beginner at everything*.

## Iliaster

"He's from the Upside," said the guide.  
(Iliaster? thought Richard.)

"Was asking about the Lady Door. And the Floating Market. Brought him to you, Lord Rat-speaker. Figured you'd know what to do with him."

- **Iliaster showing his usual treachery.**

A Half-Lifer allied to the Rat-Speakers Iliaster is a typical homeless man from the streets of London. *Wiry* and *ragged* he's a *tough* survivor, always *nervous* and using his *devious* mind and *obsequious* praise of his 'betters' to see him through. He is a *practiced beggar* and is equally skilled in his *knowledge of the streets*.

## Ingress Portico

Door's sister. Ingress was younger than Door and was thought killed, though her body was missing from the Portico residence. She may have been taken by Croup and Vandemar and hidden away somewhere as insurance for Islington in case anything happened to Door. Her final fate remains unknown.

## Inner Temple

Duels, being a usually public way of airing private grievances, can be held anywhere. Hampstead Heath has always been popular, but in the Upworld at least, duels went out of fashion. In London Below, Inner Temple is still the place to hold a duel if one wishes it to be officially presided over and documented. It was here that Hayes Murphy defeated Sable and won himself leave to reside in Jack Ketch's domain without owing the Hangman fealty.

## Isle of Dogs

Add it to the list of things you don't want to know about. If you really do want to know about it keep your voice down. The place is full of degenerates, "goblins", and creatures best not spoken of, or at least that's what the rumours say. They also say that the place is ruled over by a mad lord with yellow eyes whose hounds constantly patrol the island keeping out of sight until Underside prey comes across their path. Like all rumours it probably has a grain of truth to it, but some people think that someone is trying to hide something there and is using word of mouth to discourage others from looking around. Those people are generally not brave enough to go and have a look for themselves. But the stories do seem a little too terrible to believe.

## Islington

*Its feet were bare on the cold rock floor of the Great Hall. Its face was pale and wise, and gentle; and perhaps a little lonely.*

- **Islington awaits its visitors.**

Islington was the only angel in London Below and remained in his candle lit chambers, viewing the world with a magic pool while it revolved around him. Once the guardian angel of Atlantis Islington somehow failed in his duty resulting in the destruction of that fabled land and its sinking beneath the waves. Islington still had a few artefacts remaining from his time as the guardian there including some powerful wine, which he shared with Door and Richard. Islington grew mad in his isolation, the aggravation made worse by having the door to heaven, the key to the door and the Opener of the door all present in his prison in London Below, awaiting the day he would repent and be cleansed of sin. Lacking patience, likely the cause of the demise of Atlantis, he set about enlisting Croup and Vandemar as well as Hunter to get everything into place for his unplanned return to heaven against the will of God. Islington was thwarted by Door at the last moment by her opening the door to heaven to somewhere else entirely, somewhere further and worse.

Islington was *impatient* and prone to *raging* though most of the time he managed to project a *calm* and *serene* façade to keep up the image of the good angel. *Androgynous* and *slender* he was nonetheless *powerful*, *immortal* and *involute* and it is doubtful he is actually dead, rather exiled to whatever limbo Door sent him to. *Devious* and *cunning* Islington had the knack of scrying and of seeing into people's hearts to offer them what they most desired. *Masterful* at *subterfuge* Islington was able to fool everyone.

## Ivory House

Appearing to be a three storey terraced house in Mayfair, Ivory House always has its curtains closed and its doors only open for those of London

Below. Inside, every surface, every interior wall, every fixture is carved from or lined with human bone. The entire exterior is a bleached white necropolis of painstaking craftsmanship though its architect is unknown. On Halloween the walls bleed and the spirits of the dead may be called up and talked to inside though they may not be happy to be called from where they are.

## Ivy Walk

A long and straight back alley in Greenwich the paving stones and the walls are overgrown with thick dark green ivy forming a blanket of leaves. Healthy and green at the end furthest from the dominion of the witches the ivy grows darker and more twisted until at the closest end it is brown and dead, crawling with vermin.

J

## Jack Ketch

'The Hangman' is the undisputed and unofficial overlord of Tyburn and Marble Arch. His daughter Ophelia is much sought after in marriage, but her suitors and lovers have a habit of falling foul of Mr. Ketch and his hempen rope. Jack is *cruel* and *impudent* in equal measure given to falling into a jealous *rage*. Never wealthy he's fought and killed for all he has and defends it with a *ferocious* tenacity, including his daughter. Jack took Tyburn through his *strong* arm and his pitbull *endurance* defending it against all comers and providing a safe haven for many thugs and less desirable Bravos. In opposition to this action lies the fact that he is still London Below's hangman. Those who transgress the few terrible laws of the Underworld meet their end most often doing the Tyburn jig at the end of his rope. *Stern, steady* and *careful* in the execution of his job he is much valued for his professionalism and devotion to getting the job done right first time to avoid embarrassment and difficulty. Jack is a *master hangman* and a *veteran wrestler*, using his rope to catch and hold his victims. Jack builds and maintains London Below's gibbets with a *practiced* hand at *carpentry*. His rope is said to be magical and has never failed to snap a neck and cannot be escaped. Jack has the knack of those of Knotting Hill, able to bind creatures and spirits of ill omen into knots made from strands of his hempen rope.



## Jessica Bartram

*Richard had been awed by Jessica, who was beautiful, and often quite funny, and was certainly going somewhere. And Jessica saw in Richard an enormous amount of potential, which, properly harnessed by the right woman, would have made him the perfect matrimonial accessory.*

- **Richard's view of Jessica.**

Jessica is Richard's fiancée at the start of things, though he later comes to his senses. She is an up-and-coming businesswoman and everything for her is to do with her career first, including her choice of potential husband. *Regal, ambitious, very English* and totally *self-possessed* her *domineering* attitude mars her *beauty* and makes her seem *callous* and *scary*. A *veteran manager, practiced in deceit, etiquette* and the *critique* of art she is also *beginning* to learn how to *intimidate* despite her unimposing stature. Jessica's selfishness is proven by the way she broke off her engagement with Richard when he broke a date with her and her boss, Mr Stockton, to save Door's life.



## John Bull

The *round* and *bullish* proprietor of Banqueting House, John Bull is a great tree-trunk of a man with a deep booming laugh and a shaking belly usually restrained by a Union Jack waistcoat. Bull is a gluttonous *pig* but in spite of his size his fat is backed by a *very muscular* strength. *Firm-gripped* and *resolute* Bull makes an *intimidating* opponent, his *tenacity* ensuring he sees every conflict and petty vengeance through to its fullest. Combining the worst excesses and best traits of the conservative Bull is defensive of his friends and respectful of tradition but *cruel* to those worse off than him, giving of his own good fortune only grudgingly. Bull is a *practiced* and hearty *cook*, a *veteran* boxer and bully and a *masterful orator* able to stir emotions in others with his speeches.

## K

### Kew Gardens

The Floating Market has been held here on several occasions. Emelia Lockhart, usually called the Lady of the Gardens, resides in unofficial court here. She is eminently more interested in the botanical gardens than she is in people, so has little care for politics. Her knowledge of flora and fauna is astounding and her private collection of plants and orchids is almost entirely original.

### The Key

The Black Friars protected the Key until Door and her companions took it, unwittingly, for Islington. Now it resides under their care once more, though without the Ordeal being undertaken any more there are few ways anyone could claim the Key. The Key opens the door in Islington's chambers which supposedly leads to heaven, though it has other powers and is able to open opportunities and restore people to London Above as well.

### Kilburn Riv er

An encampment of Roman soldiers caught in a bubble of Old Time live down by the Kilburn River and have been there for ages. They are pleasant to outsiders; making the best of things, hiring out their services en masse at times due to their guilt at deserting the nineteenth legion and their need for survival. They are lead by Maximus and there are roughly forty of them.

### Knotting hill

Rope of every kind is made here; hemp, silk, hair. This is one of the few places The Shepherds trade in items other than slaves, selling the longer hair of their shorn slaves for use in the rope-making business.

The rope-makers will teach all manner of knot work but their greatest ability, the ability to bind entities and monsters within complex woven knots, they keep to themselves.

## L

### The Labyrinth

The Labyrinth protects the way to the Angel Islington and once housed the Beast within its twist and turns to dissuade visitors. Made up of a tangle of bubbles of old time and always changing and moving the only sure-fire way to make it safely across the Labyrinth was with an obsidian token representing The Beast. Now only the most expert guides can find a way across, although if The Beast were replaced...

### Lambeth

A Bravo from Crouch End Lambeth is one of the best Bravos in the Underside. *Short* and *very quick* he uses his *fast* movements to avoid harm while laying about his enemies with a series of *powerful* blows in quick succession. *Stubborn* to a fault Lambeth is so *confident* in himself he will try to do anything, even if it is clearly beyond his capabilities. A *veteran* at *hand-to-hand* and *melee* combat Lambeth also is *practiced* at finding his way around with *Underside navigation* and at *hiding* his small frame in the shadows, attacking from surprise.

### Lamia

*She fixed him with her violet eyes, and said, in mock Bela Lugosi, "I do not eat...curry." And then she laughed, a lavish delighted laugh, and Richard found himself realising how long it had been since he had shared a joke with a woman.*

- **Lamia, looking for food.**

One of the Velvets, the *pale, beautiful* girls who drift in London Below she knows every inch of London Below and thus makes an excellent guide. She demands a chilling price, though, the very heat from your body and if she's too hungry that can prove fatal. *Graceful* and *seductive*, Lamia dresses entirely in *stylish* black velvet that sets off her pale

### Typical Legionnaire

The Kilburn legion are deserters and are bound together by *loyal* feelings for each other rather than a rank structure. They follow Maximus because he has not done them wrong so far. *Fit* and *able* the legion still practices daily and follows their regime of exercises. Led out of their time bubble they've found that their *tactical* minds and *steadfastness* make them valued in London Below as mercenaries and so they fight for their survival and *honour* for the highest bidder. Outfitted in leather armour and carrying shields, spears and short swords they are amongst the best-equipped fighters in the Underside. *Practiced* with their *weaponry* and with classical *tactics* their weapons speak for them when their Latin no longer suffices.

complexion nicely. As *cool* of exterior as she is on the inside she only warms up when trying to seduce or cajole someone of his or her heat at which point she can become quite *flirtatious*. Possessed of a wicked sense of humour Lamia is fairly *witty* in a *sarcastic* sort of way. A *veteran* at *Underside navigation* she is also a *practiced seductress*, preferring to get her heat that way, or through trade. As a Velvet she is *immortal* but her true age is unknown.

### Laud Street

Situated in Vauxhall it boasts the city's only opium garden in London Above or Below. Also here is Laud House, a stylish den of iniquity and to date the only provider and purveyor of opium and laudanum, indeed any drug, in the Underside. As a rule it seems London Below does not have time for narcotics or their thralls at least not in the harder more soul-destroying capacity.

### Lear

A busker who stole a piece of T'ang Dynasty sculpture for the Marquis in exchange for a reel 'so beguiling it could charm the money from any pocket'. It worked a little too well and Lear was forced to accept an unfavourable deal from the Marquis, namely stealing the aforementioned sculpture. Lear is a *grubby* and *opportunistic* Half-Lifer cursed by *greed* and yet unable to make a true living, above or below, from his music. Dressed in the manner of a medieval minstrel he presents a *raggedy* look and is nominally part of Earl's Court which explains his knack of creating real and accurate timetables for any train on the Underground, above or below. It's this talent that could make him wealthy but he can't exploit it above and below he can only trade for barter. *Dextrous* and *nimble* with his fingers Lear can play almost anything to some degree. Lear is a *veteran* player of *stringed instruments* and *practiced* with *all others*. He knows two magical reels, one to charm money from pockets and the other a counter to that charm. Traumatized by his near death after the over use of the first reel he has never used it again.

### Leather Market

Part of the territory of the Shepherds of Shepherds Bush it is better not to ask the providence of the soft and supple leather that they sell here.

### Life Eggs

The small silver box was sitting on the top of Old Bailey's treasures. He reached down one gnarly hand and picked it up. A red light rhythmically pulsed and glowed inside it, like a heartbeat, and shone out through the silver filigree, and through the cracks and fastenings.

"He's in trouble," said Old Bailey.

**- A Life Egg senses the fatal wounds done to the Marquis.**

An egg from one of the Cygnets, which can be used to store one's life essence and to release it back into your body. The eggs restore life and (slowly) fitness after one has been killed. Very few people manage to gather one of these eggs (which can resemble any bird egg) or trade for it.

### Lock Road

Where goods are rare and every commodity is desperately needed, where survival and theft are a way of life, it makes sense to secure your belongings. Not every Undersider is an Opener or has access to a house without doors so it makes sense either to carry everything with you, take turns guarding a store with someone you trust, or to secure your belongings some other way. Lock Road has the goods to satisfy those who take the last route. Makers of locks, safes and puzzle boxes that can give all but a pureblood Opener pause the locksmiths of Lock Road view their skill as an art, constantly trying to outdo one another with finely wrought security devices of all kinds. A legendary craftsman long ago constructed the most complex and beautiful lock ever known and is said to have placed a great treasure behind it. It is proof to all magic, even that of the Lady Door, and it has never been opened. The challenge remains.

### London Below

"Whose Barony is this?" asked the girl.

"Whose fiefdom?"

"Um. Sorry?"

**- Richard and Door, wrong London.**

London Below is an alternate London coexisting with the real one. It is made up of all the sewers, tunnels, rooftops, back alleys and history that have been left in the shadow of the 'real' London. Its inhabitants are the freaks, oddities and historical remnants that have collected and bred in the dark. Denizens of London Below are usually invisible to those from London Above, but can see and interact with 'real' London. People from London Above can be dragged down to disappear into London Below by denizens of London Below. This will happen if they involve them too much in their own affairs.



## Lonesome

Occasionally the denizens of the Underside feel as though they are being watched, or something briefly is visible to them. They can never remember quite who or what it is they've seen and most are of a mind to blame the Greyling for these incidents but some theorise that just as London Above has an Underside, so does London Below and that someone or something has fallen through the cracks further than most, into the dark reflection of the Underside. The name Lonesome has come about for this feeling, presumably based on the thought that this can't be a regular occurrence and anyone that deep into the substrata of reality must be lonely.

## Master Longtail of the Clan Grey

"Hello Ratty," he said. "Good to see you again. Do you know where Door is?"  
"Ratty!" said the girl in something between a squeak and a horrified swallow.

- Richard, *Anaesthesia and a rat.*

A high up & *important* grey rat Master Longtail bore Door's message to the Marquis de Carabas and got Richard out of deadly trouble with Lord Ratspeaker. *Small* in size as all rats are Master Longtail is a *cheeky* rat, fond of teasing and tormenting the Rat-speakers. *Good-humoured* in his approach to life he can nonetheless switch to an *imperious* tone to get the things he wants done. *Very fast* Master Longtail darts through the sewers acting as a messenger and go-between between other rats and the Rat-speakers. *Alert* for trouble Master Longtail is as *smart* as any rat in London Below. A *veteran* at *stealth* Master Longtail is also a *master* of *Underside navigation*.

# M

## Macavity

Almost nothing is known of the form behind this name; those that purport to know otherwise are usually lying. According to popular fancy Macavity resides in Maze Hill. He has a knack for speaking to and understanding felines and plots to bring about the downfall of the rat lords. This is pure conjecture, of course. Macavity could just be an old man who is fond of a cat's company rather than their taste. At any rate he's not been seen and would seem to be a male counterpart to Agnes.

## The Mad Lord

Of all the stories of the origin of the Mad Lord or the Isle Of Dogs it is the one told to puppies in the Dogs' Parliament that is the most likely, although the thought

that he might be a werewolf has a great many adherents. At any rate he gathers the disaffected and rabid to his banner, mostly those outcast from the Dogs' Parliament though he has humans dedicated to him as well. The Mad Lord is an *imposing* figure, yellow of eye and tooth, *tall* and *muscular* and *very intimidating*. His howl turns men's bowels to jelly and his *great strength* and *preternatural speed* are legendary. Enjoying the hunt he leaves the running down of most enemies to his hounds. A *master tracker* and fighter in *hand-to-hand* the Mad Lord never leaves his island, which is just as well as he could be a greater force for evil than he already is. Despite his *rabid* reputation he has shown *cunning*. Enough cunning to hire Croup and Vandemar to dispose of the greatest threat to his rule at any rate.

## Madame Tussauds

The greatest waxwork museum in the country and possibly the world. The retired mannequins and forgotten icons find their way, often mutilated, into the Underside and turn up at market more often than not. Madame Tussauds has also been used as a location for the Floating Market.

## Magpie and Stump

One of the oldest public houses in London, its many layers of sunken and fallen cellars make up a large and popular pub for those of the Underside. Situated north of the Black Friars' abbey and close to Snow Hill, popular and unfounded rumour holds that the Ranger often frequents the house.

## Maida

One of the Seven Sisters, Maida is a *pinched* and *thin* looking woman with a permanent look of disapproval on her face. Dressed in layers of black and white lace and veiled, leaving only her thin-lipped mouth on show, Maida looks poorly upon anyone who might rival her power and has been known to cull those Underside magicians on the rise but yet too weak to resist her power. Maida is *immortal* and *involute*, *deadly* and consumed by *jealous* and *spiteful* thoughts. *Incredibly intelligent*, beyond the levels of normal mortals, her plans and machinations can only be understood by someone of a similarly *scheming* bent. Maida has a *legendary* ability with the magic of *necromancy* and a *mastery* of *potions* and *curses*. She is attended by the raised corpses of her victims who serve her as soldiers and attendants.

## Malidor

The fabled sword owned by Black Keziah. Whether the weapon itself possessed any power or whether it was simply the skill of the woman who wielded it is up to opinion, but what was never in dispute was the deadly fighting ability of Keziah when the blade

was in her hand. Intriguingly, when asked whence the sword came Keziah always maintained that it was given to her when she crossed the 'dark bridge'. She refused to say if this was Night's Bridge, Blackwall or some other structure. If she is to be believed it is the only instance ever heard of where a bridge gave a boon instead of taking a toll. Her sponsor prefers to deny the supernatural and does his best to quash the stories about the sword and to promote the idea that it was purely Keziah's skill.

## Marquis de Carabas

*He wore a (...) trenchcoat, and high black boots, and, beneath his coat, raggedy clothes. His eyes burned white in a dark face. And he grinned white teeth, momentarily, as if at a private joke of his own, and bowed to Richard, and said, "De Carabas, at your service, and you are...?"*

### - Richard encounters the Marquis for the first time.

The Marquis de Carabas is *known* and *hated* across the Underside but is grudgingly and resignedly accepted by most as being the best fixer in London Below, able to get just about anything done, for a price. That price is invariably a promise, secret or boon that will add to the Marquis' leverage. He collects favours as other people collect coins or stamps. *Utterly irreverent* the Marquis borders on the sociopathic while maintaining a *humorous* manner that helps him still seem human. Moving with *catlike grace* and always with *style* the Marquis is *confident* and *sure* of himself, *laid back* and debonair whatever situation he is thrust into. *Sardonic* and *sarcastic* he is *impatient* with fools and prone to settling into a sort of *smug, self-satisfied* state like the cat with the cream. *Legendary at barter* the Marquis has a *masterful* knowledge of *Underside lore* and *navigation*. He always carries a few light trading goods upon him and knows many secrets including the reels taught to Lear, the location of the Velvets' cavern and the power of the Cygnet eggs which he was forced to use in his confrontation with Croup and Vandemar.

## The May Fair

Like the Floating Market only more huge and exaggerated, the May Fair is held once a year on Mayday and brings together every single trader and performer in London Below as well as visitors and traders from the Shires and even further afield.

## Maximus

The leader of the Kilburn Legion it is Maximus who led them in their desertion. Maximus is a *strong* and *experienced* leader who saw the hopelessness of the battle that had been ahead of his troops. Leading



them out of the city before getting lost in what was then wild country they turned up in London Below as a curiosity before committing themselves to their new life. Maximus is *grizzled* and *jaded* but wants the best for his men. At present all they have to sell are their combat abilities but Maximus plans to trade off the wealth they win together and to invest it in a villa and gladiatorial arena in the Roman style to provide him and his men with a healthy and comfortable retirement. Maximus is as *tough* as old boots and strikes a *very commanding* presence in his Roman armour. This is backed up by his *mastery* of the *short sword* and his *veteran's* ability in *tactics* and *command* that enabled him to lead the desertion in the first place.

## Maze Hill

The alleged home of Macavity this slight rise is covered in the most complex and dense maze ever devised and no one (save perhaps Macavity) has ever reached the centre, though a roof can be seen there along with a wisp of smoke on occasion. Cats do prowl the maze but they do not speak of what is within, a mystical ban bringing harm to any who so much as think of letting slip the secret.

## Melchior Ravenscar

The founder of House Corvid Melchior struck a deal with the king of the above world and became a guardian of the monarchy, rewarded for his duty and his loyalty with the wealth and wonder of the Ravenscar treasure.



## Miss Whiskers

A brown rat in the service of the Golden, her name sounds much better in the rat tongue and doesn't translate well.

## Morden

One of the Seven Sisters Morden is a *dowdy* and *plump* figure with yellowy parchment-like skin and a permanent *sleepy* and *tired* expression. Utterly *lazy* Morden has not left her abode since the last time the Sisters convened, using her servants and her magic to provide everything for her. *Weak* and *listless* Morden is nonetheless as *immortal* and *inviolable* as the other sisters and just as *sharp* and *intelligent* when she can be bothered to put her mind into action. *Mysterious* rather than intimidating her long absence from view is making younger underdwellers question her existence. Reclining on her chaise-longue and dressed in the same loose gown as she wore the last time she went out Morden uses her *legendary* powers of *conjunction* to provide for herself though she also has a *masterful* skill with *curses* and *potions*.

## Mornington Crescent

Felix Mornington Crescent is both poet and musician; some would argue the best in all London. He is equally at home entertaining the Earl and Baron in their courts as he is playing to the Darkling Children of Camden. It is noteworthy that he is one of the few outsiders welcome in Sister Saturday's domain, although it has been commented that his visits there have not left him unscathed. By all accounts he has become somewhat... particular. Yet all are in agreement that his mania has not lessened his musical or poetic talent in the least. Mornington is somewhat *effete* and *nervous* dressing in the manner of a rumpled seventeenth century *gentleman*. *Cautious* and *careful* he is able to ingratiate himself with others thanks to his *humble* and *honest* nature. Truly *talented* and *creative*, most of the enemies he has made have vowed not to kill him, not wishing to destroy such an irreplaceable artist. Were they to think he truly knew of their secrets there would be hell to pay. Mornington is a *legendary poet* and *musician* and a *master of Underside lore*. He has the unwanted knack of receiving visions in the form of dreams that tell him of great story-worthy events or villainies and he is compelled to chronicle them in song or doggerel.

## Mudlarks

For a great many years the Thames was London's sewer and London water almost as deadly as its footpads. Thus the Sewer Folk see no contradiction in trawling the river and combing its banks for goods to sell. Those who have smelt Thames mud are unlikely to disagree with them. Sewer Folk who specialise in combing the mud banks are known as mudlarks.

# N

## Natural History Museum

A grandiose and magnificent building set within a square of green and attached to the Science Museum the Natural History Museum is a triumph of design, its massive rooms containing amazing displays and its cellars and back rooms replete with wonders of the natural world. Some of these rooms and chambers belong to the Underside and contain more outlandish examples of creatures and secrets from myth and history. The large hall as you enter is a valued location for the Floating Market.

## Night's Bridge

Night's Bridge squats menacingly across what would otherwise be a thriving and busy route across the Underside. Those crossing the bridge are plunged into a deep, cold darkness where things brush by in the shadows. It is cold and terribly lonely there. Those who emerge from the other side feel only relief but occasionally the bridge takes its toll. A person crossing the bridge vanishes and is unlikely to ever be seen again though some have been known to escape its clutches.



# O

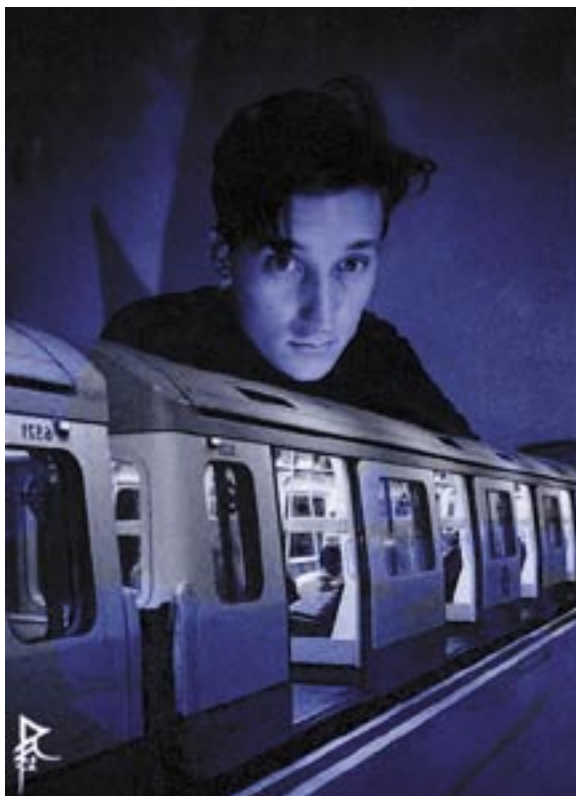
## Old Bailey

*And then footsteps shuffled toward him, and a finger prodded him gently in the ribs.*

*"You all right, laddie? I've got some stew cookin' back there. You want some? It's rook."*

**- Richard experiences Old Bailey's hospitality.**

Old Bailey is a rooftop hermit who makes a living selling rooks and starlings for the stew pot or for use as pets as well as trading information. *Old Bailey* is an *eccentric*, *kind* and *friendly* old man who dresses in heavy woollen clothes and a cloak of bird feathers. Very *hospitable* in his home he is forever offering his guests a bit of stew. In spite of his habit of eating birds he is not actively hated or disliked by them or by Raven's Court, many birds regard him as a *philosopher* of the human condition and will risk the stew pot in an attempt to get more information. *Absent-minded* Old Bailey is fond of long shaggy dog stories ending in terrible puns though he tells them poorly. *Claustrophobic* he only ventures below with his birds for market time. A *veteran* at the language of the *birds* and *practiced* in the tongue of *rats* Old Bailey is a mine of information with his *veteran's* knowledge of *Underside Lore* and *navigation*. Since running his stall he has become *practiced* at *barter*. His true claim to fame is his *legendary* knowledge of *London's rooftops*.



## Old Bexley

As Old Bailey is the hermit of the rooftops, Old Bexley is the hermit of the streets. Dressed in rags and wearing an unzipped sleeping bag like a cloak Old Bexley wraps his head in foil and wears a folded tricorne hat made of newspaper. *Raving mad* Old Bexley occupies a tiny dead end passage at the end of which he has constructed a cardboard and plastic fort, which is much bigger on the inside than it appears on the outside. Old Bexley is an *eccentric* and *lonely* old man but has a fear of crowds that keeps him away from the main streets and from crowds. Any who are granted an audience with him are subjected to tirades about lizard men and mind control though his ravings do often contain nuggets of truth. *Insightful*, perhaps as a result of his madness, Old Bexley can be very *empathetic* and *sensitive*, often turning up in the dead of night to offer aid, comfort and advice to Half-Lifers. Old Bexley has a *legendary knowledge* of the *streets of London* and *veteran* level knowledge of *Underside lore*. He is *practiced* at medicine and a *veteran* of *street survival*.

## Old Brentford

Bailey claims the rooftop world. Bexley claims the streets. The third famous hermit of the 'three B's' is Brentford. *Old Brentford* lives below the ground in the tunnels and the dark and suffers from *acute agoraphobia*. *Pale* as milk he dresses in a moleskin suit that has seen better days and has been patched with cat fur. Milky eyes peer from behind thick glasses at the world trying to compensate for his *myopic* vision. Gifted with *acute smell* and *fine hearing* to compensate for his lack of sight Old Brentford makes his hovels on the abandoned tube stations, nesting with his friends the tube mice and living on the bounty that they both cull from the platforms and tunnels. Many people lose things over the side of the platforms and it is Brentford, *brave* enough to risk electrocution and the Gap, who gains these rich spoils. *Hardy* and with good *strong* hands Brentford is allied to the Earl and helps maintain the security of the tube lines that form the Earl's domain.

## Old Time

Bubbles of past times of London exist in places such as Kilburn River where the Kilburn legion resides and are also responsible for the presence of many of London Below's figures and their seeming immortality.

## The Old Witch

One of the Four Witches the Old Witch is the mistress of decay. A long standing enemy of The House Of Arch the Old Witch has access to a gate which she can use to go anywhere in London Below making nowhere safe from her should she seek to cause problems. Almost bald the Old Witch is so deeply wrinkled and saggy of flesh that her body flaps as she walks. Going naked apart from a loincloth she





leans heavily on a staff of fossilised wood, about the only thing that isn't affected by her aura of decay. *Truly ancient and very wise* the Old Witch takes an *evil and heartless* joy in the destruction and rot of any and every living thing, death by slow painful degrees seeming to give her joy and to lend energy to her *powerful* magics. *Immortal* the Old Witch bides her time watching the world around her rot, knowing she will be here to see the last survivors dying of old age. The Old Witch is a *hateful* creature, causing death but undying herself, loving the jealousy this creates in people's eyes. She has the *legendary* power to *cause decay* and a *masterful* understanding of *curses*.

## Olympia

The *terrible* warrior of the Seven Sisters Olympia is *grandiose* and *statuesque*, proportioned like a Greek goddess, her hair kept in control by a golden circlet her dress and boots of white and a thick cloak of raven feathers adorning her shoulders. In her right hand lies a sword and in her left a shield. She is *extremely quick* and *very fit*, *immortal* and *invulnerable*, *powerful* both physically and magically. Quick to anger she takes horrible, bloody vengeance on any who cross her and their families and communities. Some Bravos actively worship her as a warrior goddess and she is yet to stop them, finding it flattering and appropriate. She has a *legendary* ability to *create energy*, creating fires and lightning storms and raining down burning sulphur on those who have earned her wrath. A *masterful* understanding of *curses* and a *veteran's* skill with *sword* and *shield* bolster her abilities.

## Ophelia Ketch

The raven haired and *buxom* daughter of Jack Ketch Ophelia is *beautiful* in a *rugged* peasant sort of way. Her hair is glossy and long, her breasts full and her eye wandering. Her father's jealousy and protectiveness leads to the death of any who show favour to her, let alone lovers and she takes a *perverse* and sexual kick out of seeing them hang. To love her is to love the noose and like the noose she chokes the life from her suitors. A *wicked* vixen she uses her *practiced wiles* to lead men on, straight to the gibbet like a Judas goat.

## The Ordeal

A descent into madness the Ordeal was made up of three stages and was the prescribed test that the Black Friars had to put any pilgrims through before they would be granted the Key. The first part of the test was strength and courage. The subject, or one of their companions, would have to defeat one of the Friars in a fair fight. The second part of the test was a riddle, set by the abbot and changed after being told each time. The third and final part was the worst. The pilgrim was taken within the abbey and, after a nice cup of tea, would be lead out into a room where they would suffer tormenting nightmares and visions of their worst feats, trying to tempt them to suicide. Most did die, some lived as vegetables. It was not until Richard took the Ordeal that the key was finally won. Though the ordeal is no longer undertaken the room remains, tempting those foolish enough to think they need to prove their mettle.



## Orme Passage

*The Mandeer; that was the restaurant. He passed the brightly lit front door, the restaurant's steps leading invitingly down into the underground, and then he turned right.*

*He had been wrong. There was an Orme Passage. He could see the sign for it, high on the wall.*

### - Richard, searching for the Marquis.

Orme Passage is a kind of 'wormhole'; at its end one can perform a small ritual and the Marquis de Carabas will appear to you, provided he is not already busy and you're willing to trade.

## The Outer Baronies

The Far Fiefdoms (to give them their other name) ring London Below proper. Some of the Outer Baronies are known to trade with the Shires via a group known as the Tinkers, although contact is sporadic at best. Nobody from London Below has ever been able to pass through the ring of Outer Baronies, and, indeed, many Londoners are hard-pressed to even get as far as that, as they find their passage impeded by tube-stoppages, twisting paths and unseasonable – even unnatural – fogs and storms. It follows then that passage between the London Undercity and its counterparts elsewhere in the world must be accomplished by other means, one of these being the week of the May Fair.

## Oxford Circus

Of the two great circuses of London Below, Oxford Circus is the one that specialises in animals, many of them long extinct in the world above. Some curiosities and some performers the animals are all magnificent if somewhat tired and dishevelled looking. The circus is reached through a wooden door, which opens out into a great patchwork pavilion, lined with sawdust. There are elephants and tigers, dancing bears and performing dogs, trick horses and curiosities like the dodo or the two-headed cat. The circus is poor and threadbare and supplements its income by hiring out its trained animals and training the pets of Undersiders.

# P

## Pagoda Gardens

The watchtower, in Kew, of Emilia Lockeheart, the Lady of The Gardens. The Pagoda is a wooden latticed structure growing thick with plants. From the top the Lady can observe her whole domain of Kew and keep a watchful eye open for trouble.

## Paragon City

Also called 'The Sleeping City'. A supposition first aired by Mordaunt Dickensien when asked to consider the puzzle of travel between London Below and other Undercities of the globe. Dickensien came up with a, he claimed, well-researched and justified theory. He speculated that there existed a city that in its every atom embodied the epitome of 'cityness'. Of course, since in a way all other cities were merely a shadow of this paragon, he reasoned that it must be possible to reach any city from said realm. When asked how one might reach Paragon City, Dickensien offered up the following thought; Night's Bridge. There are very few who share this proposition, that Night's Bridge is actually a portal to a 'Sleeping City', and none at all who are keen to try it. It must be added that in the unlikely event Dickensien is correct, Night's Bridge is a portal that opens one way save on the rarest of occasions. More conventional travel routes are far preferred.

## Phoenix Place

Owned by the Wild Court the walls of this area are brilliant with red and gold murals and flickering torches light every corner, bathing the whole place in heat and fiery glow. A place of restoration and repair, those who rest here, with Herne's blessing and with an appropriate offering, awaken the next day whole and rested.

## Piccadilly Circus

The second of the great circuses of London Below, Piccadilly specialises in human entertainment. Clowns and freaks, acrobats and magicians, fire-eaters and unicyclists, jugglers and sword swallowers all gather here to hone their skills and to perform. Similar in physical regard and access to Oxford, Piccadilly's acts also hire themselves out to supplement the circus, performing deeds for the houses in exchange for patronage.

## Pinner

The leader of the Velvets Pinner forsakes her name preferring to dress head to toe in leather. Her hair is scraped back harshly on her head and held in place with wickedly sharp needles and she has a *savage* and *very domineering* beauty that some find *seductive*. *Strong* and *tough* of body, *graceful* in movement and *iron willed* she rules the Velvets with *complete ruthlessness* brooking no argument of challenge from any up and coming harpy that might try to seize her position. She likes to collect moths, freezing them with a touch and adding them to her collection of pinned specimens. She regards all other life in a similar way. *Legendary* in her *heat draining ability* and her appetite Pinner is also a *master* of *torture*, feeding well and indulging her taste for cruelty on the all too willing attendees of BDSM clubs in the above world. Also a *master* of *intimidation* the only person she's never managed to sway with a harsh look is the Marquis, which infuriates her.





### The Pirate Girl

Living aboard the Cutty Sark the Pirate Girl is a rampant *kleptomaniac* and highly *particular*; why the Green Witch tolerates her presence is subject to speculation but there are rumours that she carries a letter of marque from that witch and supplies her with the things she steals that she does not want herself. The Pirate Girl knows detailed legends and lore concerning London Below; she also possesses an uncanny knowledge of the Thames, its ways, tides and secrets. She has close ties to both Bethlehem Alice and Raven's Court. A *young* and *raggedy* girl of perhaps fourteen or fifteen, the Pirate Girl is a confirmed *tomboy* in spite of her blossoming into womanhood. *Intense* eyes and *arrogant* confidence allow her to consternate those who make assumptions about her and her *intellect* and *cunning* are that of those much older than her. Up and down the river she travels on her own boat The Ryder plundering from the other Undersiders who make their living on the river. With *amazing balance* and a *steady* hand she springs around her boat, never missing a step and never taking a dip in the filthy waters. The only place she really steers clear of is Admiral House, staying just out of cannon range to deliberately torment Admiral Mews. She is a *master swordsmistress* with her cutlass and has a *legendary knowledge of the Thames* and a *practiced* level of skill at *acrobatics*.

### Play Bill

London Below's only playwright William is a *thin* and *reedy* man with a balding pate and a *nervous* and *agitated* disposition. *Talented* as a writer Bill finds himself straightjacketed by circumstance and the violent demands of his audience into producing bawdy, farcical and pun-laden Elizabethan plays forever and ever. Swallowing his *pride* he does his best and looks after his troupe and the other performers who do not make it into the more successful circuses. *Sensitive* and filled with resentment at his lot Bill gives off a sense of fatalistic *resignation*, which many find *annoying*. He is a *master playwright* and a *veteran stager of events*.

### Ponders End

A bleak and depressing spot with a bench, surrounded by bleak and depressing modernist concrete art from the nineteen seventies. The view of the Thames is dull, bleak and depressing as well and those sitting here cannot help but be filled with a sense of cosmological dread and ennui, their minds contemplating their own eventual death and that of the universe. Darkling Children abuse this metaphysical conjunction by gathering here with drink and cigarettes to get into the proper mood before hitting the clubs.

### Lady Portia

Door's mother and the Lady Portico, she met her end with her throat slit by Croup in the House Without Doors.

### Lord Portico

Door's father Lord Portico was a gentleman belonging to another, gentler age. A historian and peacemaker he attempted to unite the Underside in the way it was in history but, betrayed by Islington, he and his family were killed by Croup and Vandemar. Something many people apart from the Porticos saw coming from a long way away.

## Q

### Quick Road

London Below has many shortcuts but most of these are dark places in which one would not wish to wander. Occasionally Quick Road, with its bright lights and bustle, appears at random in front of a traveller and a two minute walk down it will take them where they need to go.

# R

## Ranger

Ranger is to Guides what Hunter is to Bravos, a legendary figure thought of by as a myth. Ranger is supposed to have been around since before any other Underdweller and knows the byways of London Below better than he knows his own mind. Cloaked in dark grey Ranger has *piercing* green eyes and a thick beard with curly dark hair falling to his shoulders. He carries a crossbow and a knife always at the ready and moves with *supreme confidence* along the paths of London Below. Blackwall won't touch him; Night's Bridge holds no fear for him. No door is barred to his passage and no power in London Below will trouble him or his charges as he guides them on their journey. Ranger moves *very quickly*, never staying still for long. His *great strength* is said to be enough to wrestle the Gap. His *great toughness* is what taught Night's Bridge not to devour him. Ever *alert* and *very observant* nothing escapes Ranger's notice. He is a *legendary* shot with his *crossbow* and a *master* of the *knife*. He has a *legendary* knowledge of *Underside navigation*, *London's streets* and the *Thames* and while his knowledge of *Underside lore* is of a similar level he never gives out information or secrets, saying that to be valued it must be learned.

## Rats

"It's a rat," said Richard, feeling that there were some times a man could be forgiven for saying the obvious.

"Yes, it is. Are you going to apologise?"

"What?"

"Apologise."

Maybe he hadn't heard her properly.

Maybe he was the one that was going mad.

"To a rat?"

## - Richard, Door, and Master Longtail

Intelligent rodents of brown, black, grey, white or Golden castes the Rats are ruled over by the Golden, a leader caste. Underneath them are the white rats, then the grey, then the black and then the brown. Underside rats are intelligent and carry much of the information through the Underside. They have the respect and fealty of many dwellers in London Below and are worshipped by the Rat-speakers who are counted as a caste below brown but above other humans.

## Lord Rat-speaker

"A man scuttled towards them. He had long hair, a patchy brown beard, and his ragged clothes were trimmed with fur - orange-and-white-and-black fur, like the coat of a calico cat. He would have been taller than Richard, but walked with a pronounced stoop, his hands held up at his chest."

## - Richard sees the Lord Rat-speaker for the first time.

The master of the human Rat-speakers Lord Rat-speaker is *ragged* and *scruffy*, *suspicious* of everyone and deeply *paranoid*. Imitating a rat in his movements he is *stooped* low, always fidgeting, his actions *quick* his mind *sharp* and his senses always *alert*. His paranoia makes him *dangerous* and he is *vicious* in the defence of his home deferring only to rats. A *veteran* in the use of his *glass shiv* he is also a *veteran leader* and a *practiced fortuneteller* adept at reading information in entrails. *Legendary* in his ability to *speak with rats* he is held in such high regard by his betters that he almost equals a brown rat.

## The Raven

The undisputed ruler of Raven's Court she is the eldest daughter of the late Lord Corvid who died, along with her brother Rook, in the siege of Crossharbour. The battle was lost due to the treachery of Rotherhithe, but Raven has long known it was Croup and Vandemar who were ultimately responsible. *Young* to be holding such power she has allayed her dominion's fears by proving to be a *canny* and *ruthless* leader. *Pale* and *striking* in appearance she is *calm* and *patient* most times, only showing a crack in her façade when her familial loss is mentioned. While *vengeful* she knows how to wait and will wait as long as necessary. Raven dreams of reuniting the lost Ravenscar treasures and goes to great pains to find the resting places of what once made up that hoard. *Slender* and *graceful* the Raven knows how to be *charming*, how to be *regal* and what buttons to push to get what she wants. A *practiced leader* she is equally skilled with the *knife*, at *intimidation*, at *thievery* and at *seduction*. It is said she and all her line can transform into corvids. At her neck she wears a silver pendant, the very last item of the Ravenscar treasure that remains with the family. She has a *legendary* ability to *talk to the birds*, a reflection of her upbringing and house.

## Ravenscar Treasure

The Ravenscar Treasure was given to Lord Melchior Ravenscar when his family undertook their oath. As well as a great weight of silver that established the house in the Underside there were several items that had power.

The Eye Of The Magpie is a silver circlet whose location is long since forgotten and lost. The



circlet has a pearl of amber set at the centre and the wearer knows the value of all that they see utterly and to the finest detail.

The Beak Of The Jackdaw was a velvet choker, a sparkling silver beak depending from the throat. Those who wore it understood and spoke the language of birds perfectly in every regard and nuance.

The Feather Of The Crow is the last remaining treasure in the hands of Raven's Court. Set within Raven's pendant is a silver feather. The pendant is used to bless those born into the direct line of Corvid granting them the ability to become crows.

Rook wore the Raven Rings and they were plucked from his fingers by Mr Vandemar who now claims that he crafted them himself, an unlikely story given his bent for destruction. The rings granted the wearer the ability to see the deaths of those around them, something Mr Vandemar abused by seeing the quickest, or shortest ways to kill people.

The Claw Of The Morrigan was a dagger, black as pitch and made of shadow that always flew true when thrown and always struck a fatal blow. Its loss lessened the strength of the house considerably and led to its decline in fortune.

### Raven's Court

Raven's Court, ruled over by the Raven herself, is a court of rogues and information barterers; as the Earl has dominion over all that is lost Raven has possession of all that is taken, if only in principle. Raven's people (Crowthorne the man at arms, Beak the fool) have the knack of understanding all languages and forms of communication and own much of the rooftops contesting them with the cats. Old Bailey has been given free roam through Raven's domain. The rooks he captures hear much before escaping. Some say that Raven's chosen can skin-shift. This rumour has been unproven and is denied by the court.

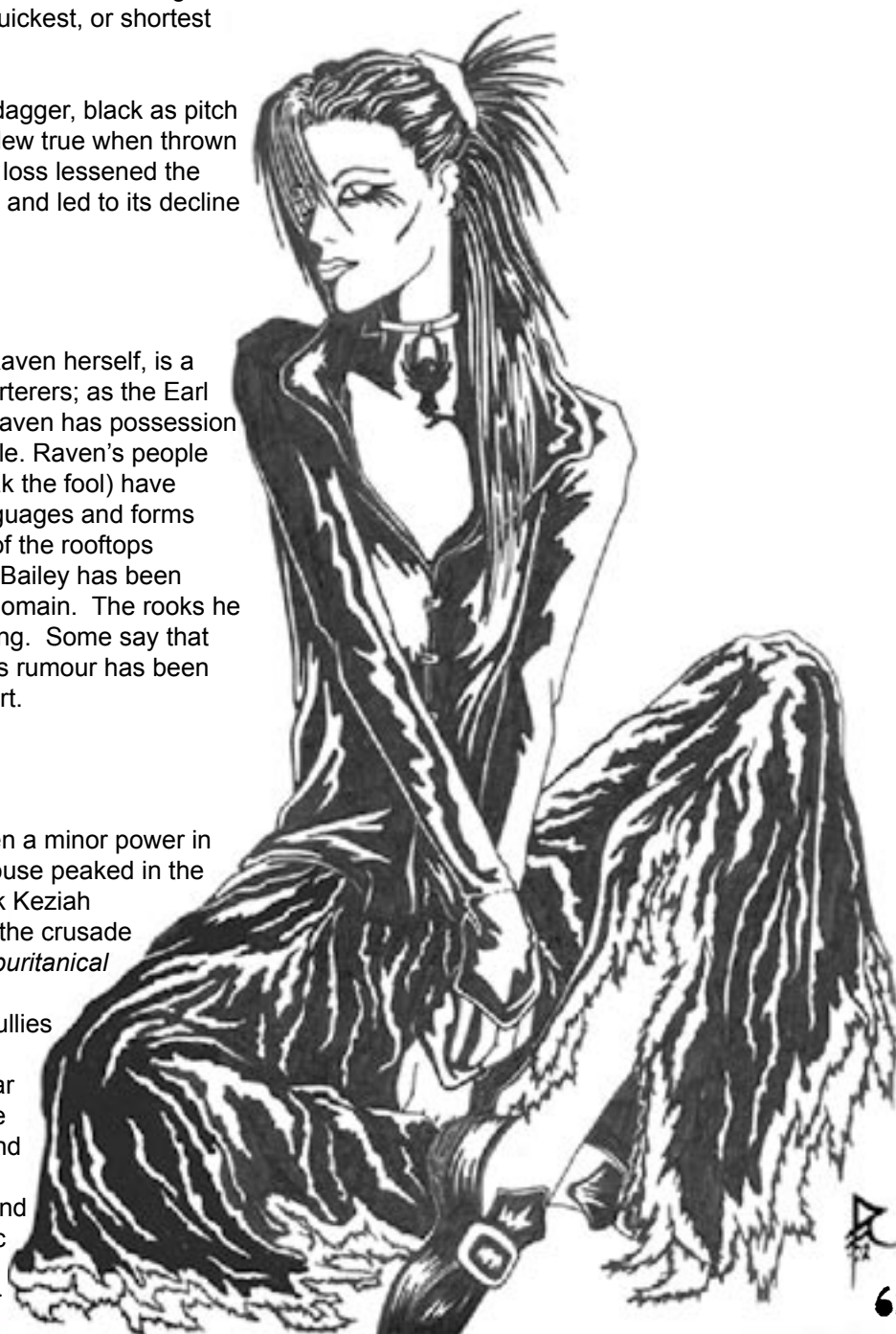
### Lord Rayner

Despite his title he has always been a minor power in London Below. The fame of his house peaked in the mid eighteenth century when Black Keziah was in his employ and he ordered the crusade against Blackheath. *Austere* and *puritanical* in his outlook, Rayner despises 'superstitious frivolity that allows bullies to hide behind a veneer of fearful 'smoke and mirrors'. It is a singular view to hold given the nature of the Underside. Rayner is *very strict* and *completely cheerless, intolerant* of anything supernatural or strange and counter to the biblical and scientific knowledge of his century that he chooses to put his *faith* in. Rayner

never welcomes strange visitors and has been known to imprison them on nothing more than a whim. *Masterful* in his *biblical and scientific knowledge* he is *practiced* with *sword and pistol*, Lord Rayner is a *veteran* of many crusades and campaigns in the Underside, which is where he learned to *lead* men.

### Red Lion Street

Owned by the Wild Court this street is prowled by a pair of *massive* and *magnificent* red-coated lions. *Regal* and *powerful* the lions are *sleek, healthy* and *fast*, able to move *quickly* on the hunt and ever *alert* for their next meal. *Resilient* and *intimidating* those who do muster the courage to attack them find them *resistant* to attack and quick to heal. They are *masters* with their claws and teeth and at *tracking*, preferring to feed on those who have displeased Herne.



Richard Oliv & Mayhew at the end of the story

Now become the Warrior, since the slaying of The Beast. Richard had lived in London for about three years before he fell into London Below and undertook his adventure. He describes himself as normal, boring and a good laugh. He dislikes blood, rats and heights, which was very hard on him during his adventures. He entered London Below by finding and helping Door and spent most of his time wanting to go home and feeling superfluous. A *naïve* man in many ways he is nonetheless *kind hearted* and *polite*, *very thoughtful*, slightly *forgetful*, horribly *disorganised*, and of the *sensible* and normal mindset usually so ill-equipped to deal with London Below. After his adventures Richard tried to use the Key to return to his normal life but found it no longer satisfying and returned. After his ordeals and his slaying of the Beast Richard is a *mature* and *confident* person who has gained greatly in *strength*. A *veteran* at *making reports* and a *beginner* at *French* Richard is now also a *beginner* at *knife fighting* and occasionally has prophetic dreams.

### Rook

The slain brother of Raven, Rook is sorely missed by her and met his end at the battle of Crossharbour along with his father, both dying at the hands of Croup and Vandemar. Rook once wore part of the Ravenscar treasure but this was taken from his body.

### Ross

"Think of him," he told Mr Vandemar, "as a canary."

"Sings?" asked Mr Vandemar.

"I doubt it; I sincerely and utterly doubt it."

**- Croup and Vandemar discussing the ultimate fate of their unfortunate hireling.**

The unfortunate soul hired as a 'canary' by Croup and Vandemar. Door opened him, rather messily, so he's now dead. He was a portly chap of extreme ugliness given to the use of punch knives. Far from an effective Bravo or assassin he was never truly hired for his ability.

### Ruislip

Ruislip, the Fop's opponent, looked like the kind of dream you might have if you fell asleep watching sumo wrestling on the television with a Bob Marley record playing in the background: a huge Rastafarian who looked like nothing so much as an obese and enormous baby.

**- Richard watches Ruislip try out to be Door's bodyguard.**

Varney's opponent in the bodyguard auditions Door held at the Floating Market, Ruislip defeated the Fop With No Name before being knocked out of the running. Ruislip is a *massive* Jamaican fellow with the build of a scaled up baby. A mass of greasy dreadlocks hangs down his back and his head is topped with a colourful woollen hat. When fighting he strips to his pants for battle. *Very fat* but also *very strong* he uses his *powerful* body and *superior weight* to overwhelm his opponents. A *veteran sumo wrestler* and *practiced* in *Underside navigation* and *lore* he makes a good choice of Bravo for protection.

## S

### Brother Sable

One of the Black Friars, Brother Sable officiated over part of the Ordeal as well as guarding the swamp entrance to the abbey. *Fit* and *strong* and *fast*, *able bodied* and as *quick* of mind as of body Brother Sable was chosen from amongst the *tougher* and *hardier* monks to administer the part of the Ordeal related to a fair battle. A *master* of the *quarterstaff* and a *veteran* at hand-to-hand combat Brother Sable is *fair* to those he fights and away from battle is *very caring*, *practiced* at medicine.

### Science Museum

*There was a large brass horn, like an ear-trumpet, coming out of the side, the kind you could find on an antique gramophone. The whole mechanism looked rather like a combined television and video player might look, if it had been invented and built three hundred years earlier by Sir Isaac Newton. Which was more or less exactly what it was.*

**- Lord Portico's journal machine.**

The Science Museum adjoins the Natural History Museum and is filled with displays and devices of all sorts. Another popular location for The Floating Market the vaults of the museum also house many forgotten and wonderful devices belonging to discredited theories or inventors whose inspiration came from the imagination rather than reality. Needless to say many of these theories and devices operate just perfectly in London Below.

### The Sanctuary

Behind a locked door near Parliament Square is the Sanctuary. As its name suggests, it is a haven for those in dire need. The keeper of that place is an enigmatic young man called Hayes Murphy. It should be noted however that the door does not



always open, no matter how frenzied the hammering upon it. Whether the criterion for this avenue of salvation is mystical or arbitrary no one has yet been able to ascertain.

## Scala

Wormwood's aide Scala is unable to speak on his master, being reduced to writhing agony if he even mentions Wormwood's name. Scala is a *fool* and *easily led*, but a *dangerous* fool. His will completely subsumed to Wormwood's, Scala does whatever his master dictates. Bald and *slim*, *quick* on his feet and *extremely wiry* Scala throws himself into everything he does in Wormwood's service. Covered in ritual scars and brands Scala strikes an *intimidating* figure and is widely *hated*. Wormwood has granted him some power to protect himself against people he regards as jealous of him. He has the knack of igniting his fists, setting fire to all he touches. Scala is a *veteran at fist fighting*, *intimidation* and *Underside navigation*.

## Seething Wells

On the riverbank by Hampton Court and also close to some sewage works, Seething Wells is where the 'high born' Sewer Folk live. Why there appears to be a class divide in this tribe and how the Wells Folk can even attempt to be supercilious and lordly when they're covered in excrement is an unfathomable mystery to the rest of London Below but where there's muck, there's brass.



## Serpentine

*Serpentine stood in the doorway. She was wearing a white leather corset, and high white leather boots, and the remains of what looked like it had once, long ago, been a silk-and-lace confection of a white wedding dress, now shredded and dirt-stained and torn. She towered above them all: her shock of greying hair brushed the door lintel. Her eyes were sharp, and her mouth was a cruel slash in an imperious face.*

**- Serpentine. Not the best person to wake up to when you have a hangover.**

The most *feared* of the Seven Sisters Serpentine has the *legendary* ability to *transform* things. People, objects, all are mutable to her will. She is also a *master* of the arts of *cursing* and *potions*. Serpentine is the most feared because she is the most *active* and uses her power to punish anyone who does so much as get in her way. The Underside is littered with toads, bats and other unsavoury creatures all sporting a mournful or surprised expression. Serpentine is also known to take children from Underside families, binding them into her service as servants for their lifespan, keeping them under her control with potions and subtle magics. Serpentine is a *stolid* and *stocky* woman of the hockey playing and horse-riding build. She is *very strong* in body and *solid* in stature, *immortal* and *immutable*. *Curt* and short she is *honourable* in her own twisted way, *imperious* in manner and *cruel* in action. Always *hungry* she has a taste for delicacies not generally enjoyed in Britain any more; calves foot jelly, jellied eels and other fare that would give modern stomachs a queasy turn. Her eternal feasting is much of the reason for the existence of her servants and for her stocky build. Serpentine once knew Hunter and had her bound into her service. Serpentine also looks after many artefacts, amongst them the spear Hunter used to attack the Beast. *Extremely intelligent* Serpentine sees through plots and deceptions like most people see through glass.

## Seven Kings

As there are Seven Sisters there were according to legend once seven brothers who were the Lords of London Below. How this relates to the Sisters or who they were remains forgotten.

## Seven Sisters

Including Olympia, Serpentine, Victoria, Maida, Stepney, Morden and Caledonia. Sorcerers and enchantresses all they have not been talking to each other for some time. Most of London Below have heard of them, are afraid of them, particularly Serpentine, and dread to think of them ever acting together.

## Sewer Folk

Sewer Folk trawl London's magnificent and cathedral-like sewers for valuables. They count anything as valuable and either put it to use or sell it at the floating market. Everything from flushed stashes of drugs to dead bodies. Sewer Folk do not speak, they use dumb-sign. They are only allowed to trade at Floating Markets in the open air.

### Typical Sewer Folk

A typical sewer person is *very smelly*, always *alert* for floating treasure, *filthy* with sewage and *slippery* with oil. Their hard work and the nature of their homes makes them *wiry* and *quick* and gives them a *veteran* level of *alertness* and a *practised* skill at *brawling* from defending their finds.

## Shadow Beast

Nightmare creatures formed from the stuff of dream, Shadow Beasts lurk in Night's Bridge and under Blackheath where they are drawn to roost and gather. No two alike all are formed from someone's fears and terrors.

in dark leather and a long robe. Carried everywhere by liveried slaves and defended by a phalanx of bodyguards she nonetheless rarely ever leaves the Shepherds' area of control. The Shepherd Queen rarely speaks but every word that does leave her mouth is carefully *considered* and usually an order or an *insightful* comment. She is sole and only leader of the Shepherds and her word is law. Somewhat *haughty* and *very privileged* she is *pampered* and *spoiled* by her huge retinue of guards and slaves but seems *fit* and *capable* herself. When an assassination attempt got past her guard she moved with sudden *speed* and managed to disarm and kill her attacker without any need for aid. The Shepherd Queen is a *master of rule* and has the knack of dominating minds at the same level.

## Shaka

Manservant to Admiral Mews Shaka was one of the first slaves freed by the change in British law. Treated well by Mews he agreed to stay on as a fully waged manservant in the same capacity he was in before. Shaka is a *huge* and *proud* man of *great brawn*, *solid* and *unflinching* in the face of danger he is *loyal* to the Admiral and assists him in all things. The Admiral never leaves his house so Shaka travels to market for him these days, bartering for items Admiral House needs with items from its extensive stock of memorabilia. Shaka is a *practiced fist fighter*, *barters* with equal skill and is a *veteran servant* who knows all of Admiral Mews's preferences.

## Shepherds Bush

Shepherds of Shepherds Bush, slavers, are the skin trade of London Below. Their territory is Shepherds bush, Cheapside and the Leather Market and they have an agent called Skinner who has a very nasty knack indeed. They are led by a queen and are some of the worst degenerates of London Below. They are also almost all *big* in stature and build, look very alike and have little to no body hair; outside of the Shepherds no-one knows why. They often shave the heads of those they own to make finding them again easier if they escape. This practise is taken from London Above, where in the 18th Century convicted prostitutes would have their heads shaved after serving any sentence. Shepherd society sees women as more powerful than men.

## The Shepherd Queen

The ruler of the Shepherd's Bush slavers their queen is masked on all public occasions and is worshipped as a living goddess by her people. *Tall* and *statuesque* she towers over most of her followers resplendent in



## Sister Saturday

Wreathed as she is in permanent *mystery* and cigarette smoke, there are many rumours of Sister Saturday who holds dominion over the Darkling Children of Camden Town. If anyone knew how many of those tales were true and how far her *insane* influence truly reached they would storm her court in fear and flames, putting her and her subjects to the torch. If she didn't kill them first, that is.



Sister Saturday has dominion over drunkenness and folly. Anything you do while drunk, angry or high is known to her, her life is one constant *hedonistic* whirl that drags others along with it. Everyone loses control at some point and Sister Saturday views it as a *liberating* and life-changing experience for people to just go with their urges and see what happens. As such she is *very impulsive* and *changeable* in mood going from *furiously* to *coquettish* in the space of a single sentence. Sister Saturday is a *popular* leader despite her *imperious* and *selfish* attitude since she demands so little from her followers other than that they have a good time. *Quick* and *sharp*, *cruel* and *beautiful*, *funny* and *scary*, time with Sister Saturday is spent in a tsunami of activity and she will do nothing for people unless they follow their urges and loosen up while they speak to her. Always moving her shiny fetish heels eat up the streets of Camden, Soho and Chinatown seeking new diversions constantly. Every day is Saturday to her, a free day without a care in the world but her power waxes and wanes with the week. She is strongest on Saturdays and weakest on Mondays. She has the knack of knowing when the truth is spoken for she knows how people act when they are without conscience or fear. She is a *legendary party animal*, never needing to rest or sleep and has a *legendary knowledge of the nightlife* of both cities. She is only a *beginner at leadership* since she so rarely needs to call on her people for anything. Sister Saturday is so powerful because just about everyone from sixteen to forty indulges themselves on a Saturday night without fear of tomorrow sending her offerings of drink, drugs and one night only sex to keep that smile on her face and the party going on.

## Skinner

An agent of the Shepherds of Shepherds Bush Skinner is used to put the fear of god into runaway slaves. If one is not captured within a week Skinner is unleashed to look for them. Skinner hardly ever fails. A *loose limbed* and *very fast* man Skinner spends so long away from the Shepherds that his body hair starts to grow back in giving him a constant stubbly and unkempt appearance during the pursuit. His suit is made up of the tanned skins of those he has recaptured and all who are recaptured are dealt with in this way so that they might serve as a warning to others. *Deadly* and *grim faced* Skinner seeks only to kill those he tracks with *deadly* force. Always *alert* for their presence it's said he doesn't sleep while in pursuit. *Extremely intimidating* with his *cold* eyes and thousand-yard stare the presence of Skinner can be *terrifying* even to those who aren't being pursued and has been known to punish those who harbour runaways. A *master tracker* and a *master* with the *spear* and *knife* Skinner has a *veteran's* knowledge of *Underside Navigation* that allows him to catch up to or head off most of his prey.

## Snaresbrook

The King of the cats Snaresbrook is a Siamese, a born *aristocrat* with a pedigree as long as your arm. Slightly *batty* and more than a little *inbred* the court chooses to ignore Snaresbrook's *eccentricity* which includes eating only fresh fish and playing with a catnip mouse while court is in session. *Regal* when he's behaving Snaresbrook is as *small* and *agile* as any housecat with a *masterful knowledge* of the *rooftops* and *streets* of London and a *hunting* skill, which has lapsed to a merely *practiced* level.

## Snow Hill

Owned by no-one Snow Hill is a very strange place. It appears to be an old part of London Above that has sunk in to London Below and been built over. Walking through tunnels that get progressively colder, approaching Undersiders will eventually get to a small underground lake, which is totally frozen over. The air is full of ice crystals, much like hot breath in cold weather and it is difficult to see. In the middle of this whiteness is a small hill, covered in frost-ridden grass, and home to a few trees from which icicles hang. It is impossible to see any kind of roof and any noise thrown objects might make against such a thing is muffled by the 'fog'. Snow Hill is a haven for the enigmatic and supposedly fictional Ranger.

## Solomon Rotherhithe

Extremely and unquestionably dead, he betrayed Raven's Court to the creatures on the Isle of Dogs. It was not long after that Raven found him gainful employ within her court, as a hanging ornament within one of the crow cages at her gates.

## Stag Place

Owned by the Wild Court, along with Phoenix Place, White Lion Street, Red Lion Street, Herne Hill and Fox Corner. Stag Place is supposedly Herne's home, a stand of thick trees in an open roofed cave with a tunnel leading down into the dark. A stag is often seen slipping amongst the trees but only ever fleetingly.

## Stepney

One of the Seven Sisters Stepney, who is also known as the Old Lady of Threadneedle Street, has a *legendary* ability to cast *wards* and *protection magics* and a *masterful* ability to lay *curses* and *brew potions*. Festooned with jewellery Stepney is a *gaudy* bauble of a woman, *short* and *disarming* in appearance but no less *dangerous* for all that, she drips with gold, silver and jewels and always craves more *wealth*, more riches and more goods to fill her abode, a secret set of Greek style chambers beneath the Bank of England. Endlessly *greedy* and *paranoid* of the safety of her acquisitions she lays spell upon spell over her chambers to protect them from unwary thieves and sends her servants out into the Underside to procure more unique and valuable things for her. Possessed of a *keen eye* for value and a *knowledgeable* mind no fake can escape her notice.

## Mr Stockton

*"Now, when you're talking to Mr Stockton, you must make sure you don't interrupt him. Or disagree with him. He doesn't like to be disagreed with."*

**- Jessica and Richard, on the way to dinner.**

Jessica's boss and a great *fat* caricature of a man Arnold Stockton made his *wealth* the hard way, from the ground up, and still has very little respect for those who came by their money by other means. *Extremely bossy* he runs a *powerful* newspaper based media empire in his patented *brash, loud* and *intimidating* way. A *straightforward* man not fond of evasion he is nonetheless *very canny* in the running of his business and not to be trifled with. A *veteran at business*, and *finance*, a *beginner* at *art critique* he collects images of Angels having been inspired by the Angelus as a child.

## Sumner Place

In the Underside, law is usually a personal matter. If one has been wronged, one can always hire a Bravo or seek retribution through similar means. It is rare for anyone to go through 'official' channels, but those channels do exist. In Sumner Place is the office of Melton, Onslow and Cranley, solicitors, lawyers and champions of the statutes of the Underside, such as they are.

## Sylvia

*"Richard?" said Sylvia, "The MD's waiting."*

*"Do you think," asked Richard, "they'd give me a table if I phoned back and offered them extra money?"*

**- Richard and Sylvia, cross-purposes.**

A slightly *distant* woman Sylvia is *brisk, efficient* and *aloof* with a *cold* demeanour while working, only loosening up at the pub after work with a few drinks in her. *Confident, self-assured* and *focused* Sylvia is a *veteran supervisor*, a *practised secretary* and a *beginner manager*. A general organiser at Richard's place of work Sylvia is extremely efficient and has no time to say much more than the barest of professional comments to anyone.

## T

## Tanner's End

Leather is a much-used commodity in London Below being warm, durable and extremely useful in all manner of ways. Made in the traditional way at Tanner's End the stink permeates the area for hundreds of yards

in all direction. A mixture of the piss, dog shit and chemicals the tanners use to cure and preserve the skins. Those Sewer Folk who seek a better life outside the sewers most often end up apprenticing to a Tanner, as handling crap and the heady stench do not worry them.

## Temple

One of the earliest places of worship in London Below, the Temple is built over a holy pool into which offerings were once cast to various gods and goddesses. Build over and over again the Temple is a mish mash of different religions and architectures but no less holy for it. Temple has become one half of a common oath used in London Below, 'Temple and Arch!' Is a minor blasphemy akin to shouting 'Jesus Christ!' when hitting oneself on the thumb with a hammer.

## Time And Space Distortion

*It was daylight (how was it daylight? a tiny voice asked, in the back of his head. It had been almost night when he entered the alley, what, an hour ago?)*

**- Richard's first experience of Underside Time.**

Blamed on the power of the Underground Map, the disorienting effects of the tube and the meaninglessness of time underground out of the sun, time and space subtly warp and shift around London causing all manner of travel problems, benefits and sudden and inexplicable changes between night and day.

## The Tinkers

The Tinkers, as one Underside saying has it, 'Go where they will.' In many ways these wandering salesmen are the lifeblood of trade in the Underside, carrying great packs of sale-goods both wondrous and mundane. Although the Tinkers, unlike their customers, are free to enter or leave London Below as they wish, they cannot remain in the Underside for more than a few days at a stretch. It is believed that they can leave London for the Shires, or even visit the Undercities of Europe if they desire, but only so long as they travel along the ancient and meandering trade paths that wind their laborious way through the countryside. It is not known how one joins this loose brotherhood of mercantile wanderers, and their numbers seem to dwindle with each passing year.

## Token

To guide you through the Labyrinth you must carry an obsidian representation of the Beast that guards it. Since the death of the Beast you have not needed a token for protection, but merely to find the way through the confusing system of tunnels.



## Toohey

The jester at Earl's Court, Toohey's jokes leave a lot to be desired being as *old* and *tired* as he is. He makes some effort though when it comes to being *derisive* to others, which allows his *savage* wit to come to the fore. He does hold himself back if the person at court is noteworthy or dangerous but also delights in reminding the forgetful Earl if someone who comes before him has displeased him. *Thin lipped* and of *pinched* expression, Toohey is a *joyless* Jester and one wonders how he keeps his job. *Practiced* at the *telling of jokes* and with a *veteran's* memory for the *history and deeds of Earl's Court* Toohey is as much a personal assistant to the doddering Earl as a jester.

## Totteridge and Whetstone

A pair of fine craftsmen Totteridge and Whetstone are London Below blade smiths. Those who can afford their *expensive* rates are blessed with some of the finest and most professionally made weapons in the Underside. Twins, the pair have straw blond hair and are of *attractive* mien and personality, *joking* with their customers while they work with an impressive degree of *diligence* and *attention*. *Perfectionists* to the finest detail they cannot resist a challenge and may even cut down the price if their *master* level ability in *weaponsmithing* is properly challenged by a difficult task. *Veterans* in the use of the *blade* themselves, they have grown *strong* before the forge and are capable of *amazing accuracy* and detail in their work.

## The Tower

The Tower of London is under the protection of Raven's Court and site of many horrible battles. The Tower has many ghosts and many secrets belonging to the nobility both above and below, all of which are the providence of Raven's Court.

## Trollstone

Home of the Trolls the caves of Trollstone are giant caverns twice as high as a normal man's head. The Trolls are huge folk, easily seven feet in height at their smallest and nine feet at their tallest. They are generally a good natured and easygoing people who have many amazing smiths and craftsmen. Totteridge and Whetstone, Clipstone and Hammersmith are all friends of the Trolls who are led by Curzon. Other trolls include Craven, Cadogan and Brixton.

## The Tube Map

*When he had first arrived, he had found London huge, odd, fundamentally incomprehensible, with only the Tube map giving it any semblance of order. Gradually he came to the realisation that the Tube map was a handy fiction that made life easier, but bore no resemblance to reality.*

### - Richard's realisation.

Attempting to map the tube accurately was an impossible task. The stations were close together in the centre and far apart further away making any kind of accurate map almost impossible to draw and certainly impossible to use. Then a designer stumbled across the lateral thought that the map didn't need to be a true representation of the distance between the stations and simplified the whole of the underground into a graphical and neat diagram, elegant in its simplicity. The first of these maps has power; distance truly doesn't matter in the underground and the Tube Map can be used to chart a course through the underground system that can move one forward or backward in time and space by almost as much as a week.

## Tube Mice

Down in the railway tunnels, lurking near the third rail and under the sides out of sight, are the Tube Mice. Living on scraps of food that fall onto the tracks, there are many thousands of Tube Mice infesting the tunnels, almost as many as there are rats. While officially owing no fealty to the Golden and treated as though they are below notice, the Tube Mice harbour respect and resentment in equal measure towards their rodent brothers.

## Turnham Green

A hollow threat of magical punishment threatened by the mothers of the Underside since time immemorial. 'If they don't behave Serpentine will turn 'em green'.

# U

## Undercities

London Below is not the only Undercity in the world. Although travel from one Underside to another is obviously possible, the specifics of such travel arrangements remain unclear. Thankfully there are few that wish to broaden their horizons in this way, reasoning that London Below has wonders and dangers enough without actively searching for more.

## The Underwood

When the woods were cleared away to make room for the city above many of the roots remained and in caverns under the earth, lit by glowing crystals and fungi, the roots still descend from the roof like upside down trees, blossoming and bearing fruit and filling the caverns with the scent of pollen and the sound of pale woodland animals adapted to the dark.

## V

### Vale Of Health

Although the place exists, its powers are believed by most to be nothing more than a fairytale. The Vale of Health is a petty Avalon for any thief or rake at death's door. If they can find their way to the Vale they will be healed of all ills and returned to the world again.

### Varney

*Varney looked like a bull, if a bull was to be shaved, dehorned, covered in tattoos and had suffered from complete dental breakdown. Also he snored.*

**- Varney, not the most pleasant of folk.**

A Bravo who failed Croup and Vandemar by being defeated by Hunter, until she arrived he was the greatest Bravo and guard in London Below. A *veteran telekinetic* he used his knack to tip the balance of combat in his favour. Varney was *very unpleasant* but quite *talented* at causing pain. He made his own *weapons* with *practiced* skill, stashing them and food in various places about London Below. His *caution* and *brutality* served him not so well against Croup and Vandemar however, who took care of him in their usual unpleasant way without leaving so much as a stain. Varney was a *vicious* and *stupid* thug possessed of *unusual strength*, pitbull *tenacity* and *toughness*, unable to know when to give up. A *veteran* with all manner of *weaponry* and *practiced* in *Underside navigation* Varney had worked for almost all the major factions in the Underside and had handled security for the May Fair several years running.

### Victoria

One of the Seven Sisters, Victoria is consumed by carnal *lust*. Dressed in red satin she prowls the Underside when her hunger grows too strong, seeking a consort and using her *legendary* powers of *mind control* as well as her *masterful curses and potions*. Able to bend any will to her own agenda, Victoria is a *mature beauty* seeming to be in her late thirties. Her body is *firm* and *pleasing* to the eye and her eyes are *captivating*, capturing many a man's soul within them.

Those she sleeps with die, their life energy drained to feed her craving for sensation and their souls joining the others trapped within the walls of her bedchamber. *Immortal* and *inviolable* Victoria is treated as a natural force by the men of the Underside, many of whom don't consider it such an awful way to die given many of the alternatives. The womenfolk don't see things quite the same way and are jealous of Victoria's *seductive* and *beautiful* appearance, fearing that their men will be the next ones to be stolen away.

## W

### The Watcher

*Competent* and of a *mercenary* sensibility, the Watcher is believed to be Macavity's left-hand man by rumourmongers and gossips. In manner and mien he is *polite*, but he has a *formidable temper* and is not averse to displaying his displeasure. No one knows for whom or what he watches so in this, as in so many matters, caution is advised. It could be so simple a thing as he reports on the outside world to Macavity to fulfil some age-old obligation. At any rate the Watcher is *professional* in what he does, *extremely observant* and *very alert*, never missing a detail and with a *fantastic memory* that allows him to recall every detail. A *master at observation* he has a *veteran's* knowledge of *Underside lore* and *navigation* and a *practiced* ability in *almost every language* spoken on the Underside.





## Wolf Morgan

Every city has its secrets and history, London more so than most. For anyone wishing to know of the past and particulars of the Underside, from when the Floating Market was first held to what really happened to the exiled Earl of Stamford Brook, their first port of call should be the British Library and the head librarian there, Wolf Morgan. In the knowledge of history none can compare, and for a fee she will research any question you care to ask. For secrets there is a special price, which is rarely affordable. Wolf is a *slight* woman, *quiet* and *reserved*, *pretty* in an *elfin* and *girlish* sort of fashion. *Deeply serious* and *committed* to her work she is somewhat *humourless*. Dressed in a loose gown covered in the letters of lost languages she moves *silently* through the shelves, reading, writing, *organising* and collating. Wolf has a *legendary* knowledge of *Underside* lore and a *masterful* grasp of the *secrets* of the Underside. She is a *veteran librarian* and *writer*, chronicling the history of London Below.

## Wormwood

The very name sets a shiver up the spine of most and the sight of his (its? her?) aide, Scala is a sure sign that things are about to go to hell. No one has ever seen Wormwood but there has been much speculation about the nature of it, its motivations and its origins. A common thread, until recently, was that Wormwood was the flip side to Islington but now no one is sure, save Scala, who isn't telling.

## Y

## Young Street

At one time there was a fashion for officially naming newly 'fallen' streets in the Underside. This one was the last named before the fad died out. Of course the Underside continues to change and grow, whether its geography is named or not.

## POSTMORTEM STUDIOS

What is Postmortem Studios all about?

Why are we producing material for no profit?

What do we hope to get out of all this?

Roleplaying games are becoming a commercial hobby. This has been going on for some time but three main events serve as the best examples. Firstly, *Games Workshop* cutting away everything bar their miniatures. Secondly the explosive success and then collapse of *Magic: The Gathering*. Thirdly, the resultant gaming titan that is *Wizards Of The Coast* along with *D&D3e* and the Open Gaming Licence.

With nothing but *D20* supplements being released and a nagging sensation that it's all going to collapse like comic book speculation we want to encourage a new generation of writers and artists, get them noticed and get them into the business to secure a future in an uncertain industry.

While we will use *D20* where appropriate, due to the convenience of the OGL, we do not feel that it is suited to many gaming styles and the loss of diversity in gaming systems is something we feel very strongly about.

Postmortem Studios then is a community for freelancers, gamers and artists to come together and to produce material. The games they've always wanted to make but couldn't. The games that will get them noticed. The games that could possibly lead to a career in gaming or, in my case, the games that aren't comedy games.



## Egotism

GRIM is the award-winning author of *The Munchkin's Guide To Powergaming & heads up Postmortem Studios*.

# Permission slip

22nd November 1996



James Desborough &  
Stephen Mortimer  
Post Mortem Studios  
Jubilee Villa  
St. Mary Bourne  
Andover  
Hants.  
SP11 6AY

Dear James Desborough & Steven Mortimer

Thank you for your letter of 1st November in which you declared an interest in developing a role playing game around 'NEVERWHERE'.

The rights and merchandising elements for "NEVERWHERE" are tied up and so I am afraid we cannot grant you permission to develop a game in any commercial way. However, we have had several approaches of this kind and Neil Gaiman and Lenny Henry (the creators of the idea) are very happy for individuals to develop games and play them for their own pleasure.

I am sorry not to write with better news, but we were, of course, very happy to learn that you had enjoyed the programme.

With all good wishes

**POLLY McDONALD**  
**Managing Director**

cc Neil Gaiman  
Lenny Henry

The original version of the *Neverwhere* RPG was produced not-for-profit based upon the permission given in the above letter. It was available from early 1997 online and was available constantly until the Postmortem Studios website was more recently updated. Now the second edition is finally available.

The letter above clearly grants permission to produce the game in a not-for-profit capacity and while this is a more professional quality product it is still available for free. If anyone tries to sell it to you, hit them.

Six years if more than adequate time for any complaint of infringement to be raised and no such objection has been forthcoming.

Please enjoy the game and support Postmortem Studios by making donations and assisting with our projects at...

**WWW.POSTMORT.DEMON.CO.UK**





# NEVERWHERE

Neil Gaiman's Neverwhere comes to life for you and your gaming group in this Role-Playing-Game by  
**POSTMORTEM STUDIOS**

Explore London Below and fall through the cracks to the dark wonderland beneath. Meet the Earl of Earl's Court, the Lady Door, The Marquis de Carabas, Bravos, Guards, Rats, Rat-speakers and more.

The innovative freeform system uses descriptive paragraphs to determine characters capabilities and encourages role-playing and characterisation.

Contains the Neverwhere A-Z a comprehensive guide to London Below from the book, Television Series and imagination of the authors.

Written by Origins award winner James 'Grim' Desborough & Raven Morrison.

Art by James 'Grim' Desborough, Raven Morrison and Virginia Wynn-Jones.

Editing by James 'Grim' Desborough & Sarah Bouchier

Neverwhere and derivative works © Neil Gaiman & Crucial Films 1996.

[www.postmort.demon.co.uk](http://www.postmort.demon.co.uk)

