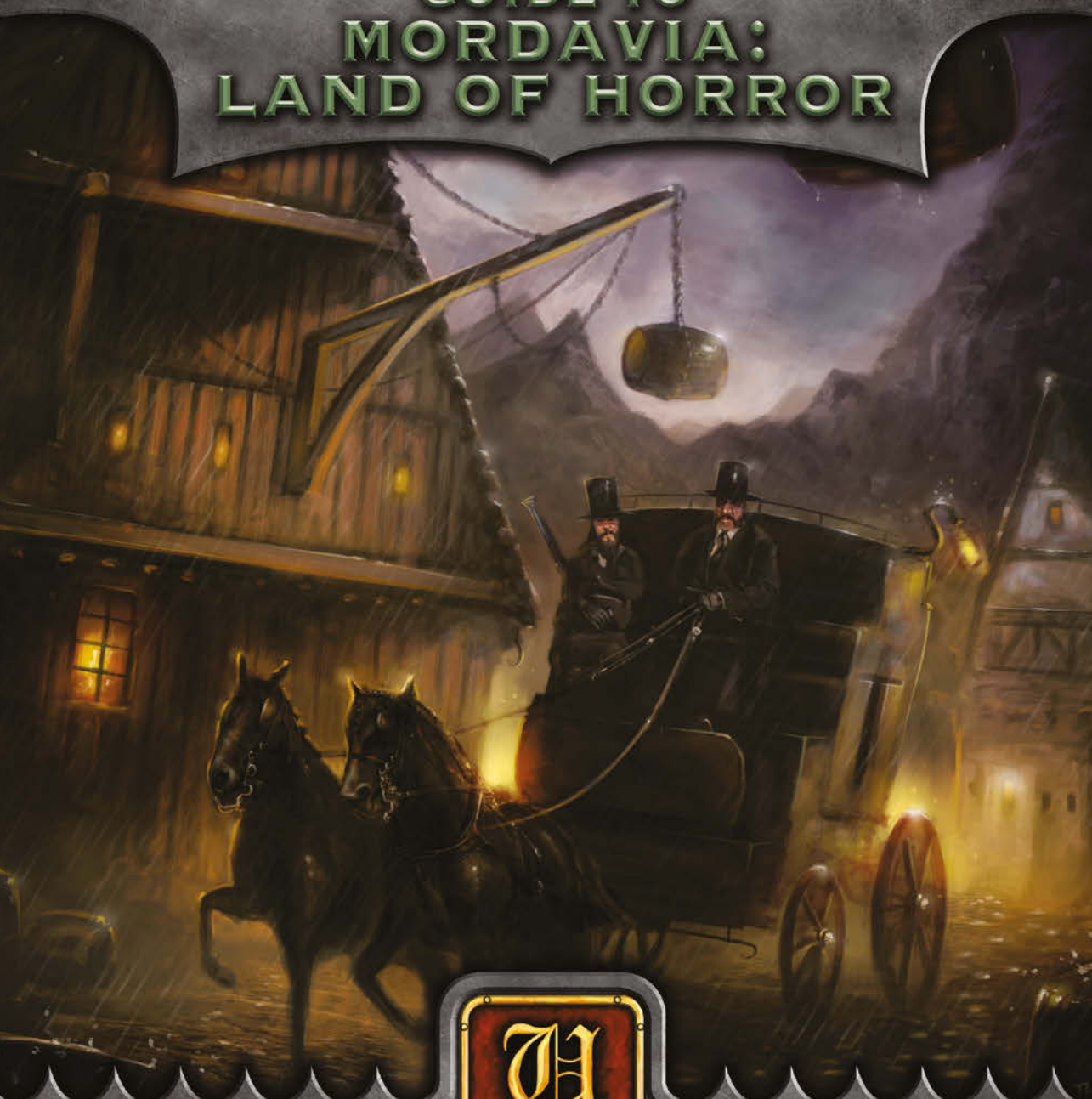


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LEAGUES OF
Gothic Horror

GUIDE TO
**MORDAVIA:
LAND OF HORROR**



Ubiquity
Roleplaying System

Leagues of Gothic Horror Mordavia: Land of Horror

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Leagues of Gothic Horror: Mordavia

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Chapter the First: Introduction

I trust that your journey from London has been a happy one, and that you will enjoy your stay in my beautiful land. —Bram Stoker, *Dracula*

Mordavia. Chances are it is not a name that registers with the modern reader, even those dedicated to historical research. Delving through historical archives or the internet fails to bring up more than a vague mention here and there, and reports are often conflicting.

Entirely surrounded by the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Mordavia was, as far as the wider world was concerned, an insignificant smudge on maps of Victorian eastern Europe otherwise utterly dominated by one of the great superpowers of the age. Indeed, many large-scale period maps ignore the fiercely independent realm altogether, consuming it under one of its more historically important neighbors, such as Bukovina, Hungary proper, or Transylvania.

That we know anything at all about Mordavia is a matter of sheer fortune. What you hold in your hands was pieced together from the charred remains of a weighty volume found in the smoking, skeletal remains of Boyd Manor, home to an eccentric English aristocratic family more noteworthy for the last scion spending a number of years in an asylum after publicly accusing the inhabitants of Whitby of being “fish in men’s skins.”

Do not think, dear reader, that this book is some dry, academic volume concerning crop figures, census records, and carriage timetables—this author is no scholar, by any defini-

tion of the term. If the original manuscript was a work of truth, as this author believes it to be, it is essential that the world hear of Mordavia. No ordinary provincial region, Mordavia was, and may still be, a land of horror.



A Brief History

With time travel not feasible (believe us, the Temporal Society has invested a considerable sum in such research to no avail), there is nothing the globetrotters can do to reshape Mordavia’s past. A brief tour through its long history may, however, provide the Gamemasters with ideas for further adventures.

Gamemasters should be aware that much of the information below, especially that concerning the cult of the worm, serpent, or dragon (all the same thing by different names), should not be made available to the players or their characters. As far as the world at large is concerned, nothing interesting has ever happened in Mordavia.

Prehistory

The fertile valley in which Mordavia sits has been inhabited since the Stone Age. Likely hunter-gather people who dwelled here in the warmer months and resided elsewhere when the grip of winter tightened, these earlier inhabitants are known to anthropologists only by the few physical artifacts they left behind.

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Most notable among these are strange golden coils decorated with dots and lines. With no attachments for wearing as jewelry, it has been supposed they were votive objects used in primitive religious ceremonies.

Given their coiled form, some scholars argue they are representatives of serpents, embodiments of rebirth and the cycle of the seasons in many early faiths. Others claim they symbolize the sun, a feature of many primitive religions. A small few, aware that there exist in the universe formidable alien powers, shudder at the sight of these innocuous looking artifacts.

The Dragon is Born

In truth, the objects represent both a serpent and a creature of unimaginable alien origin. Drawn forth from the limitless void by shamans whose minds transcended their weak

fleshy bodies and travelled into the vastness of time and space through narcotics, the fiend took the form of a monstrous, many-eyed, slime-coated spiny worm or serpent with glistening scales of putrid yellow.

What name these early people gave their god, for such it was to their limited minds, shall never be known. (Its actual name is Zs'marugot.) Only the stylized art of the golden coils and lichen-covered wiggly lines carved into standing stones provide any indication as to the nature of the abomination.

Although the hunter-gatherers were replaced by migrating Indo-European tribes around 2000 BC, knowledge of how to summon the great worm survived. It would be a pattern repeated down the ages.

Only a select few madmen in the current era know of the fiend's existence, and they continue to worship it as members of a terrible and secretive cult. That said, dragon motifs have been a recurring theme in Mordavian folklore and art.

Antiquity

Until the early Bronze Age, Mordavia was inhabited by the Indo-European Thracians, Their rule was ended by the Celts, who spread across Central Europe. By the start of the 1st century BC, the Celts had been driven out, replaced by the Dacians who inhabited the region of the southern Carpathians.

Although each people brought new ideas with them, all adopted the cult of the great worm into their religion. The pieces of this puzzle remain elusive to academics, but the clues are there. The Celts constructed carnyces, a form of trumpet, in the form of finned serpents, while the Dacians forged multi-spiral bracelets of gold and silver and decorated their warrior's helmets with snake motifs.

Despite its remote location, Mordavia at this time was no primitive backwater. Rather, it was a center of technology. Evidence of metalworking exists in silver coins, jewelry, scythes for mowing crops, swords and helmets for fighting neighbors, and even scissors for shearing sheep.

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The Fear of Rome

History records that Rome, the superpower of the age, invaded Dacia partly to quell the expansionistic tribes and partly for the precious metals and salt the Dacians had in plentiful quantities. Certain scrolls unearthed in Rome, hint at a darker truth.

Dismissed by scholars as forgeries or allegories, they tell how the cult of the great serpent insidiously infiltrated all levels of Roman society. Emperor Trajan knew little of the cult, save for what his soothsayers revealed, but it was enough to give him nightmares. Legions were assembled, a cover story of seeking wealth for the empire was concocted (always appealing to the Romans), and the army marched to eradicate the fell cult once and for all.

Although the Dacians were forced into submission, the cult burrowed itself deep within society. Much knowledge was lost as priests were put to the sword and ceremonial sites destroyed, but the seed survived.

Following the collapse of Roman authority, the story of Mordavia is, much like other parts of Europe, one of frequent migrations. Huns, Gepids, Vandals, Burgundians, and Slavs all passed through the area, though none settled in Mordavia in any great numbers.

The Dragon Awakes

The Hungarians arrived in 896 AD. Initially intending to settle the land, the invaders were horrified at the degenerate state of the geographically isolated natives and their perverse worship of a dragon. (This is the first time the great serpent is given that name, but one it continues to appear under.)

With the army fearful of waging war against such debased people, the Hungarians abandoned all thoughts of conquest. Instead, Mordavia was named *res nullis* (no-man's land), a border province that, with little wealth to steal, crops to forage, or population to enslave, existed only to deter invasion. Even as Hungary expanded its borders to surround Mordavia, no king had the stomach to crush its foul denizens.

Despite Hungary and Transylvania being

brutally ravaged by the ferocious Mongols in the mid 13th century, Mordavia escaped untouched. Mordavian folklore states that upon nearing the entrance to the valley, the Mongol vanguard was swallowed whole by a mighty dragon, sent by God to devour the heathens and save the faithful.

A dragon did indeed save Mordavia, but God played no part. For the first time in a hundred generations, the priests of the dragon cult summoned their deity to manifest physically. The Mongol's records are silent on this event.

Talk of the dragon spread like wildfire through the surrounding lands. Terrified by the prospect of the beast rampaging through his lands, King Béla IV of Hungary beseeched Pope Alexander IV to act. In 1259, Alexander requested the Order of Brothers of the German House of Saint Mary in Jerusalem, better known as the Teutonic Knights, to launch a crusade against the "worshippers of Satan, the Great Serpent and Adversary."

As the first snows of winter began to fall, a mighty host abandoned their active crusade in Livonia (modern day Estonia and Latvia) and marched south beneath the sign of the cross.

The Dragon Bound

Faced with an army of devout knights, the cult of the dragon summoned their deity once again. This would prove to be a gross mistake.

The Teutonics were not just an army of warriors. Were that so, then the knights would have been slaughtered to a man, for their puny weapons could not penetrate the beast's hide.

Among their massed ranks were nervous, sunken-eyed priests, recently returned from the Holy Land where they had unwillingly become versed in the knowledge of the accursed eldritch lore. Among their arsenal were potent spells of binding.

History does not record how many knights and men-at-arms were slain or driven insane in the encounter, for the annals of the Order make no mention of their activity in Mordavia. That their losses were many and the morale of the survivors shaken is clearly evident for in 1260 the weakened brotherhood was decisively beaten at the Battle of Durbe.

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Where in the World is Mordavia?

Mordavia does exist. Well, sort of, anyway. In the world of *Leagues of Adventure*, the fictional duchy of Mordavia lies in what is now northern Romania, on the border with Ukraine.

It can be found on a modern map, however. The author has chosen to take a small part of Maramures County in Romania and sculpt for it an alternate history rife with supernatural activity. Aside from the general layout of the real world valley, everything else is fiction—any names of people or places are entirely derived from the author's imagination, and the native culture is a mish-mash from history, Transylvania, and the Hammer House of Horror movies.

Hopefully any readers from Romania will look on this work not as an insult to their great nation, but instead with pride that Triple Ace Games has decided to set this alternate-reality nation there.

At last the dragon was bound to the earth, held in place by the wards of the priests, the self-sacrifice of knights, and esoteric symbols carved deep into stone pillars placed atop the beast's resting place.

Their main task complete, the battered Teutons did not immediately return home. Driven to religious fervor by the battle against the dragon, and determined that the abomination should never again be awakened, the knights turned their attention to the degenerate denizens of the remote valley. Every soul they encountered was put to the sword without trial and every settlement razed to the ground. By the time the army finally withdrew, Mordavia was a desolate wasteland, its soil drenched in gore and its river running red with blood.

Heavily indebted to the Teutonic Order, the Hungarian king invited Saxons (Germans) to repopulate the recently cleansed land, offering them free parcels of land and tax incentives. Thousands answered the call.

Thus, while much of the surrounding lands

remained ethnically and cultural Hungarian or Slavic, German identity dug deep roots in the fertile soil of Mordavia (as the land officially became known). This quickly grew into a fierce national identity that backfired against the Hungarians. Each time Hungary elected to impose new statutes that threatened the status quo, the Mordavians, few in number though they were, openly rebelled.

A Cursed Land

Ethnic cleansing is rarely successful. No matter how hard one tries, someone always survives. So it was in Mordavia. Thousands had been put to the sword, but among the scant survivors was one who knew the ways of the old religion. The cult was sorely wounded, but it had once again survived.

The binding of the dragon was the start of Mordavia's existence as a land of horror. Its fell ichor seeped into the soil, while its warped thoughts, muted but not silenced, began to corrupt the land.

Ever so slowly, all manner of unholy beasts flocked to its profane psychic whispering, while the souls of weak and avaricious men were gradually turned to wickedness.

Independence

Following the defeat of Hungary by the Ottoman Empire at the Battle of Mohács in 1526, the duke of Mordavia declared his small realm independent of any external power.

Quite why he chose to do so at a time of European crisis remains a mystery, for he left no writings concerning his decision. Folklore suggests he dreamt of a mighty dragon, who told the duke that his nation, should it stand alone, would rise to great prosperity in generations to come.

With Hungary's attentions deflected to the worsening political and military situation, not to mention a recent change in dynastic rule, the first Hungarian Hapsburg king, Ferdinand I, hastily wrote a charter confirming the transfer of the rebellious valley to its new ruler.

Hungarian court records of this event are

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few and far between. One surviving document, a letter written by a minor courtier to a relative, suggests the king was visited by a holy man in the weeks before Mordavian secession. Exactly what the hermit revealed is undocumented, but the king apparently dismissed him with a large sack of gold and bade him never to return to the royal court again.

Perhaps distraught at the war with the Ottomans, or maybe horrified by what the hermit had to say, the king retreated to his private chapel and remained there in prayer for three days and nights, neither sleeping nor eating.

Whether or not the hermit had any bearing on the king's decision to grant Mordavia independence, it would be four centuries before the Hungarians turned their eyes to the little valley nation again.

A Land Untouched

Dynasties rose and fell, invaders came and went, borders ebbed and flowed, and lands changed names, yet Mordavia remained free of these external affairs. Isolated by geography, the world had seemingly forgotten it.

The only notable change was a transfer of religion. Until the Reformation, Hungary, and therefore its constituent states, had been Catholic. As The Thirty Years' War raged, it switched allegiance first to Lutheranism and then to Calvinism. Mordavia, seeking to retain ties with its powerful neighbor, followed in its steps. In 1677, the then duke of Mordavia forged an alliance with Rome and Catholicism was reintroduced as the official state religion.

The Future

Scholars will no longer find Mordavia on modern maps. The tiny independent duchy's neutral stance during World War I helped little, for it was swallowed whole by the dying embers of Austria-Hungary in the final year of the conflict. Aside from convincing a small few that the Empire was still capable of enforcing its might, the invasion was of no strategic value.

Unable to reinforce its independence in a rapidly changing Europe, Mordavia reluctantly

followed the rest of Transylvania after the dissolution of Austria-Hungary and joined with Romania. Conquered again by Hungary in 1939, this time with support from the Nazis, Mordavia and the surrounding lands remained crushed under the jackboots of tyranny until 1944, when new tyrants, this time the Russians, invaded.

At the war's end Mordavia returned to Romanian rule, a province on the very northern tip of the country, and one considered of little import. In 1949, with Romania under the thrall of Communism, the name of Mordavia was forcibly changed to something more Romanian, effectively erasing the last traces of the duchy from history.

Why go There?

Globetrotters are more accustomed to wining and dining in the great cities of world, mapping new frontiers, and uncovering ancient ruins. The first step in using the material in this book is getting them to Mordavia. Gamemasters may have their own ideas, but here are two sample ideas to get their digestive juices flowing.

Chasing a Foe

Whether a dastardly thief who has fled with some treasure or horrifying supernatural fiend responsible for grisly murders, the globetrotters are on the trail of a criminal. Perhaps he calls Mordavia home. Maybe he believes he can lose his pursuers in a remote backwater of Eastern Europe. Or maybe he just happens to end up in Mordavia by the whim of fate. However, the foe ends up there, the globetrotters track him down to Mordavia and set off in pursuit.

Invitation

Whether because of their Fame or Status, or through their Allies, Contacts, or Patrons, one or more globetrotters is invited to Mordavia. The exact reason for the invite should be linked to the appropriate characters,

For instance, a scientist may be invited to a small seminar given by one of his peers. A

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Mordavia in Other Settings

Mordavia: Land of Horror may be written for *Leagues of Gothic Horror* and *Leagues of Ctulhu*, but it can easily be transported to other Ubiquity settings.

For *Hollow Earth Expedition*, Hitler's desire to conquer Mordavia had nothing to do with capturing territory—there were many richer targets he could have sighted. Himmler, a student of the Mythos who would go on to oversee terrible atrocities, had learned of the existence of the dragon. The madman hoped not only to awaken it, but to harness its awesome power against Germany's enemies.

Mordavia remains largely untroubled during the chaos of The Thirty Years' War, but the cult of the dragon is more active than history suggests. Characters from *All for One: Regime Diabolique* may catch wind of the cult's activities and come here to thwart their fiendish plans to awaken the dragon.

famous duelist might receive chance to test his mettle against one of Mordavia's finest swordsmen. A weird scientist might be asked to demonstrate his latest gadget. Or maybe the invitation is sent anonymously and mentions only that all travel and lodging arrangements have already been made.

The Leagues of Adventure

It does not automatically follow that Mordavia is known as a land of horror in a *Leagues of Gothic Horror* campaign. It is for the globetrotters, the heroes of your campaign, to learn this. Globetrotters with an occult leaning might, however, be sent there to purchase a rare book or converse with a scholar on a matter related to another investigation. Once in Mordavia, they quickly learn it is not the tranquil place suggested by its majestic scenery.

Of course, there is no requirement for the globetrotters to be members of occult oriented

Leagues even in a Gothic Horror game. Alternatively, you may be using Mordavia as the gateway to Gothic Horror, with the globetrotters utterly unaware of the supernatural as anything but the stuff of legends and penny dreadful stories.

In either instance, Leagues (and if you own all the *Globetrotter's Guides*, then there are dozens to which the globetrotters might belong) may have legitimate reasons to send members to Mordavia. Likewise, the Gamemaster can dangle appropriate carrots in front of the characters and let them take the bait. The actual reason for going can be utterly mundane. In fact, it needn't even be a true adventure seed, but instead serve as a means to an end. Some examples are given below.

The Assassination Bureau has a target that needs sanction. Members of the Bath Club hear of Mordavia's spa resort. Epicurean globetrotters seek to try new foods. The Society of Antiquarians is looking to expand its historical archives. The picturesque valley in which Mordavia sits is perfect material for the Expedition Artists Club.

Using this Book

This book should not be seen as a complete setting, where everything is laid in black and white. Rather, it is a toolbox of places and people, something the Gamemaster can shape to their own needs.

Every location and major character is written up as a place of horror and villain respectively, providing the Gamemaster with dozens of potential adventures. It is not intended that every non-player character actually be a dastardly cur—Mordavia is not inhabited solely by serial killers, deranged scientists, and cultists.

Every major character has a brief, alternate background that presents a non-villainous side. For instance, a lord who has had multiple wives all die suddenly may be a serial killer (his villainous default), or he may be a victim of repeated bad luck (wives have died from disease, in childbirth, etc.). Likewise, locations attributed a sinister reputation may be the victim of superstition rather than home to some foul terror. In both cases, which aspect is the real one is left for the individual Gamemaster to decide.

Chapter the Second:

Overview of Mordavia



The impression I had was that we were leaving the West and entering the East. —Bram Stoker, Dracula

Before we get to the supernatural, we must first take a look at the mundane. This book is a role-playing game supplement rather than an academic discourse, and thus only a brief overview of the important matters is presented. Gamemasters should feel free to add their own details to what we have written to suit their specific campaign needs.

By flavoring adventures with the information in this chapter, the Gamemasters helps convey the players imagine Mordavia as a living, breathing place with its own customs and eccentricities, rather than merely an unimportant back drop to an adventure or two.

How to Get There

It seems to me that the further East you go the more unpunctual are the trains. —Bram Stoker, Dracula

For globetrotters accustomed to first-class travel, or rapid travel in general, reaching Mordavia is likely to be an arduous journey they would sooner forget.

Airship

Airships run fixed routes, with only the wealthiest citizens able to hire them for pri-

ivate charter (Wealth 4) or influence captains to steer to another destination (Status 4). For those with the wealth to fly, but lacking the hard coin or influence necessary to hire an airship, the nearest landing site to Mordavia is Mozart Field, just outside Vienna, Austria.

While this cuts down the distance admirably for globetrotters living in Western Europe, or indeed the United States of America, it still leaves a torturous 270 miles or so to go as the crow flies. Sadly, the roads and trains of Eastern Europe rarely go straight.

Railway

Landing at Vienna allows one to catch the opulent Orient Express. In no time at all one can disembark at Budapest (approximately 225 miles from Mordavia) or Bucharest (some 200 miles distant). Unfortunately, one must then embark on trains whose frequency and reliability are considerably less than advertised in Bradshaws' famous guides.

Travelling from Budapest, the nearest large station to Mordavia, and thus one with at least a semi-regular service, is Huszt, a Hungarian town situated around 35 miles north of the valley mouth. Those heading north from Bucharest can opt to end their rail journey at Bistritz in Transylvania. Closer to Mordavia than Huszt when measured in a straight line, the mountainous terrain forces a wide detour, resulting in a journey of 56 miles.

Unless one has the funds required to transport an automobile across Europe (and possibly

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even further afield), there are only two reliable options for onward travel from either station—a bumpy carriage ride (one day from Huszt and two from Bistritz) or a long, tiring walk.

How Much Does This All Cost?

Many Gamemasters likely ignore money when it comes to travel—either it is covered by expedition funds or donations, or it is assumed the globetrotters can rustle up the necessary money.

For those who prefer to keep track of every last farthing, the total cost of travel from London to Mordavia via the fastest routes and including tips is £18. Cheaper routes are certainly possible, such as flying to Paris and catching the Orient Express there, though the duration increases slightly due to the longer ground journey.

Departing from London, the journey typically takes 3 to 4 days, depending on local connections once reaches the hinterlands.

Geographical Overview

Mordavia is not a large realm. Measured as the bat flies (a local term), it ranges a mere 45 miles east to west, though geography makes for a longer distance when on the ground. At its widest, the valley floor is a mere five miles.

The entirety of the tiny nation lies within the Würmach (“Snake River”) valley. The watercourse lazily winds down from its origin in the eastern mountains, developing more twists and curves as it snakes toward Karnstein, its volume and flow increased by several small tributaries that slice through the mountains to create smaller, narrower valleys.

Once past the capital, the river cuts through a narrow gap over which loom two peaks—the Hexenberg (“Witch Mountain”) to the north, and the Hexerberg (“Warlock Mountain”) to the south. According to folklore, these craggy peaks are the remains of a witch and wizard who once threatened Mordavia, but were turned to stone by the power of a holy man.

Hexerberg is part of the Heidnischeberge (“Heathen Mountains”) range, a spur of the Eastern Carpathians so named because its separates Mordavia from Transylvania. The name, a translation of an old Hungarian one, relates to the age when Hungary feared the accursed degenerates who once dwelt in the valley and who practiced a godless faith.

Moving further east, the thin ribbon of mountains grows into a wide bulge. Here begins the Elsterberge (“Magpie Mountains”), a reference to robber bands who haunted the forested slopes in times past.

Now turning north, two short spurs, the Neiderteufelszunge (“Lower Devil’s Tongue”) and Höchteufelszunge (“Upper Devil’s Tongue”) stand watch over a series of narrow valleys that mark the eastern extreme of Mordavia.

The northern side of Mordavia is dominated by the main thrust of the Eastern Carpathians. Five distinct ranges, each separated by a river valley, run from west to east.

Furthest east is the Beinberge (“Bone Mountains”), so named because of the noticeable lack of trees even on the lower slopes. According to one legend, it was on these slopes that the deranged worshippers of the dragon made their last stand against the Teutonic Knights. Such was the amount of blood spilled that nothing has grown here since.

Next is the bulk formed by the Grabberge (“Tomb Mountains”), whose upper slopes are dotted with prehistoric burial sites. Locals believe there is little wealth to be found, the cave tombs having been repeatedly plundered. Of course, a tomb previously blocked by a rockfall may be opened after another landslide, and it is fair to say that not every inch of the mountains has been explored.

Past this is the Kirchberg (“Church Mountains”), the tops of which are towering spires similar in form to those of churches.

The long finger of the Kronberge (“Royal Mountains”) was titled in honor of the duke after Mordavia earned its independence from Hungary. It looms large over Karnstein, forming a dramatic backdrop.

Finally, there are the Magierberge (“Mage Mountains”). On these heavily forested slopes, so it is believed, cabals of witches and warlocks

Overview of Mordavia

worked dark enchantments. With Hexenberg considered the last peak in Mordavia, our brief sojourn around the perimeter is now complete.

Two mountains stand isolated from the main ranges, their peaks cut free in distant epochs by gradual water erosion. The largest of these is the Schwarzberg ("Black Mountain"), whose dark rocks stands in contrast to the predominate gray of the Carpathians. Less than a mile south rises the lower Hängeberg ("Hang Mountain"), from where the butchered remains of the warped cultists were left to rot in the wind by the Teutonic Knights.

Climate

In summer, as temperatures in the neighboring Carpathian Basin begin to climb, warm air is drawn into the Mordavian valley. On the wide river plain, temperatures gradually rise, reaching an average high of around 75°F (24°C). As the warm air flows further east into the narrowing valley it begins to rise, sucking down colder air from the mountains. Here, temperatures are a cooler 58°F (14°F).

Rainfall is modest in the west, becoming heavier further east as warm and cold air mix. Thunderstorms occur once or twice a month at the height of summer.

Winter is long and cold. Frigid air flows down off the mountains, gathering in the river valley. During the coldest months, temperatures struggle to rise much above 24°F (-4°C). Snowfall is frequent and prolonged, though rarely does more than half a dozen inches fall in any month of winter.

The most important thing about Mordavia's weather is that it is atmospheric. That is, if the adventure requires a raging thunderstorm, dense fog, or heavy snow, then that is what happens. At least a nod toward realism must be made, of course—snow in summer would certainly raise the players' eyebrows.

Flora

With regard to flora, Mordavia is divided into three areas. The woodlands of the valley

Weather Effects

Atmospheric weather conditions occur frequently in Gothic Horror stories and movies. Instead of using the weather solely as a backdrop against which a scene is set, Gamemasters may wish to assign specific game mechanics. Some examples are given below.

Fog

The obvious effect of fog is reduced visibility (see Visibility in *Leagues of Adventure*). Fog also dampens and distorts sound. As well as applying penalties to attack and sight-based Perception rolls, the Gamemaster may also wish to apply them to hearing-based rolls.

Snow

Snow, much like fog, reduces visibility. During a blizzard, harsh visibility penalties should be applied. Of course, the snow may suddenly swirl to a different direction, providing a brief window in which the penalties are ignored. This is the moment to instigate an attack by some terrifying beast, only to then have the visibility penalties return.

Thunderstorms

A rumble or two of thunder and the occasional fork of lightning make for an ideal backdrop, but they do little to hamper the globetrotters. When a true thunderstorm rages, thunder claps reverberate off the mountains like a fusillade of cannon fire, temporarily overwhelming all other sounds—including approaching monsters and screams for help.

Likewise, darkening skies and heavy rain may mean the globetrotters incur harsh Visibility penalties. When a brilliant flash of lightning illuminates the sky, the penalty is negated for the entire combat round, allowing them to clearly see the ghastly horror rushing toward them before the comfort of darkness draws it veil over the scene once more.

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floor are predominantly oak and alder, interspersed with alpine shrubs, such as juniper and cranberry. Wild nuts, berries, and fruit are bountiful, providing food for humans and animals alike. With a relatively small population, only the land immediately surrounding settlements has been cleared for agriculture. The two main roads east of Karnstein pass through the woodlands. Spruce dominates the lower mountain slopes up to around 5,000 feet. Above this, the mountain tops are covered in grass and lichen.

Fauna

Whether naturalist or hunter, Mordavia has plenty to offer those interested in wildlife. First a warning to British globetrotters—the forested slopes are home to brown bears, wild

boars, and gray wolves, animals extinct in the wilds of Great Britain. Although attacks are rare, travellers are cautioned to be wary.

Fortunately, most of the native fauna is relatively harmless. Rodents such as dormice, mice, rats, and squirrels are plentiful. Karnstein, like most every other town in Europe, has its fair share of rodents. Hares and rabbits live along the valley floor, where they are hunted for their meat and fur, as do moles and shrews.

Chiropterologists will find Mordavia an ideal place to study bats. Great flocks of them inhabit the countless caves and ruins dotted across the mountains. Most every large building has at least a handful of the flying mammals nesting its the eaves. Bats are so common that locals jokingly refer to them as Mordavia's national bird.

Foxes live on the flat lands, ever hungry for rabbits and hares, not to mention chickens and ground nesting birds. They compete for food with stoats, polecats, mink, and weasels, animals prized by trappers for their fur. Otters bask along the many streams, lazily dining on the variety of fish in the cold, clear waters.

Pigs, which form a staple part of the Mordavian diet, snuffle through the forest slopes. They share their home with red and fallow deer. Higher up, on the exposed slopes, hardy sheep graze on tough grass throughout the summer months.

Among the birds native to the region are black and red-throated divers (loons), little grebes, storks, and wood pigeons, not to mention several species of ducks, geese, and swans. The sound of woodpeckers echoes quietly through the forests, the hooting of owls breaks the silence of the night, and the colorful wings of kingfishers catch in the sunlight. High above, their eyes trained downward for prey, circle sparrowhawks, kites, and harriers.

Hunting

Hunting is part of Mordavian culture. Long in tune with the natural cycle of their environment, hunters and trappers are careful never to hunt out of season, thus ensuring there is ample prey for the next year. There are no restrictions on the species that may be hunted for sport or food.

Overview of Mordavia

Demographic

As of the 1890 census, the population of Mordavia stands at 62,387. Germans (85%) and Hungarians (10%) make up the bulk of the population. While the former are found the length and breadth of Mordavia, the latter are mostly confined to the western reaches, with the densest population in Karnstein, the capital and largest settlements. Save that those of Germanic stock tend toward blonde or light brown hair, as opposed to the darker hair of Hungarians, there is little to tell them apart.

Some 3% of the population are of Romanian origin, having migrated here relatively recently. They predominate in the far east.

The remaining 2% comprise a mixture of Jews (who were never persecuted in Mordavia), Slavs (recent migrants or descended from survivors of the 13th century Teutonic massacre), and those of other heritage. Most of the latter hail from Western or Northern Europe.

Gypsies and their evil cousins, the Szgany (see *Leagues of Gothic Horror Expansion*) come and go as they wish and never complete census forms. At best, it is estimated they form 0.05% of the population.

Language

The native language of Mordavia is German, albeit a variant peppered with Romanian and Slavic idiosyncrasies.

A native German speaker, or a globetrotter fluent in the Germanic language group, will have little trouble making himself understood. That said, inhabitants who do not wish to speak with a globetrotter may feign they cannot understand his accent.

Conversing in other languages is possible, though less frequently. Many scholars speak French, the language of knowledge in continental Europe, and churchmen are usually fluent in Latin. Both are Romance languages. Many citizens in the capital know a smattering of Hungarian (Finno-Ugric group) thanks to the frequent interaction with visiting merchants, while in the east, Romanian (another Romance tongue) is spoken by those who trade across the mountains.

Cultural Overview

Like the language and population, German culture is the norm in Mordavia. That said, the land's isolation has not rendered it immune from external influences, especially those of Romania to the south. Native Germans will quickly grasp Mordavia's basic culture, but may be left scratching their heads at times.

The Basics

The following is the most basic of information concerning Mordavia, the sort of things globetrotters can quickly learn from the Leagues, by perusing the foreign travel section of their local library, or talking to appropriate Allies, Contacts, and Patrons.

In the interests of speedily relaying this information, we recommend the Gamemaster print out this page and hand it to the players before their journey to Mordavia begins.

Currency

Two currencies are accepted at their face value by all businesses and citizens in Mordavia. The first is the native *gulden*, which is divided into 100 *kreuzer*. Whereas the *kreuzer* exists only in coin format, the *gulden* has both coin and note forms. The second currency is that of Austria-Hungary—the *forint* until 1892, and the *krone* afterward. This is divided into 100 smaller coins called *krájcár*.

The Mordavian currency is directly linked to that of its economically powerful neighbor. While the look and weight of coins may vary depending on where they were minted, they are considered equal in value.

Leagues of Gothic Horror is a game of supernatural investigation, not playing the currency markets. Hence, no currency conversion rates to British pounds are given. Keep all prices in pounds sterling—if a hero has £2 in his wallet, then you can assume he has the local equivalent of that amount. And remember, even without any local currency, gold opens many doors.

Leagues of Gothic Horror: Mordavia

Accommodation

As with everything in Mordavia, accommodation is divided between what Karnstein has to offer and what can be found elsewhere.

Hotels tend to be attached to railway stations, and since Karnstein lacks that form of transport, it also lacks any hotels. Fortunately for visitors, it boasts a number of guest houses (*gasthäuser*, sing. *gasthaus*).

Smaller than hotels and run by several generations of the same family rather than hired staff, guest houses offer bedrooms, a bar and restaurant, and even banquetting facilities. As is tradition, many have murals depicting local fairy tales or legends.

Prices begin at 6d. per night for a low end guest house offering only bed and breakfast in far from salubrious conditions and rise as far as 6s. per night for higher end accommodation with more varied and better quality services.

Every village in Mordavia boasts an inn. Intended for visiting farmers and merchants rather than globetrotting investigators and explorers, they offer only basic accommodation, food, and drink. Regardless of quality, all offer stabling services, a warm fire, and safety from the many fiends that haunt Mordavia by night. Wary of the many dangers, rural inns are frequently bedecked in wreaths of garlic and wolfsbane, with at least one crucifix affixed to the wall of the main barroom.

Foreigners should not expect a warm welcome at an inn. Rural Mordavians are a close-knit people and naturally wary of strangers, especially those asking about supernatural occurrences. Partly they fear being mocked by so-called enlightened people. Partly they refuse to speak of evil lest they attract its attention.

Easy Accommodation

For ease of play, assume that guest houses and inns are rated from below zero (the lowest quality) to five (highest). The quality of establishment a globetrotter can easily afford to stay is determined by adding together their Fame, Status, and Wealth. A globetrotter with no Levels in these Resources is automatically forced to either accept very poor conditions or

mooch for his comrades. If the total of the three Resources is 5 or higher, then the globetrotter can afford the best Karnstein has to offer. For each point above five, a globetrotter can "loan" one point to a comrade to help improve the accommodation his friend can afford.

Clothing

Traditional national dress (*tracht*) remains commonplace in Mordavia's villages. For women, this means white frounced blouses, white skirts covered with black and red striped panels, and shoes resembling those worn by ballet dancers. Unmarried girls wear headscarves, a practice reversed in Karnstein.

Men wear white woollen trousers, baggy white shirts, sheepskin waistcoats, sheepskin or felt hats, and knee-length leather boots. In winter, they don a knee-length felt coat which is both warm and waterproof.

Karstein's citizens have adopted a more European dress. Women favor the *dirndl*, a costume comprising a bodice, low-cut blouse with short puff sleeves, full length skirt, and a colored apron. Variant materials are used to create summer and winter versions. Although the dress appears very simple, tailor-made dresses designed to fit the wearer's unique form can be very expensive.

Although many middle-class men now wear woollen suits of a style fashionable in Western Europe several decades ago, the traditional outfit remains popular. Favoring the Austrian style above all others, men wear jackets, trousers tied off at the knees, knee-length white socks, and black leather shoes. Headgear is a Tyrolian hat, made of dyed felt.

Outside the ducal family and the wearing of military medals by veterans, ostentatious display of wealth in the form of jewelry is considered vulgar. Simple rings, necklaces, and brooches are most frequently worn.

Communication

Long distance communication to and from the outside world is possible only through a

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single telegraph office located in Karnstein's post office. Outgoing messages must pass through a series of smaller offices before reaching a major city. Communication is much slower than globetrotters may be accustomed to, with delays of as much as two days.

Most citizens rely on the postal service. Within Karnstein, mail is distributed to intended recipients three times per day—early morning (usually letters delivered late the previous evening), noon (local letters posted early), and early evening (urgent mail received by coach that day). Large parcels are retained at the post office and the recipients contacted to come to collect them. Letters intended for elsewhere in Mordavia or for delivery to foreign contacts are carried by coach.

Those who require rapid communication within Mordavia hire messengers. For a measly 1d., a young boy or girl will carry a letter or small package anywhere in Karnstein at a steady jog, guaranteeing arrival in under an hour. Messengers undertaking longer journeys ride horses. They charge 3s. per 10 miles, double that if they are required to ride through the night.

Information

Much of Mordavia is a rural backwater, with news travelling slowly from village to village via word of mouth. Any libraries are housed in monasteries and are largely religious-themed.

Citizens living in Karnstein have greater access to knowledge. The sole public library is open from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. except on Saturdays, when it opens until 5 p.m., and Sunday, when it is closed except by special appointment.

The town boasts only a single native newspaper, the Karnstein Gazette, which is printed twice weekly. Much of the news is confined to events in the town. Foreign newspapers can be ordered from most hotels and the post office. By the time they arrive, they are at least a day out of date, and may be as much as a week late if coming from some distance, such as London, Berlin, or Paris. It is fair to say that once one is in Mordavia, keeping abreast of global affairs is far from easy.

Diet

For all its insular nature, Mordavia has been influenced by foreign tastes. The main source for this variety in diet has been merchants, local and foreign, who have travelled to and from the duchy for many centuries.

Food

Soup is a staple, and is served everywhere from the best guest houses to the poorest farmer's cottage. Typically watery, popular soups are made with chicken, lamb or pork, leeks, meatballs, mushrooms, tripe, or vegetables.

Chicken, lamb, and pork are the most common meats, though rural inhabitants add wild game such as duck, rabbit, and venison to their diet on occasion. Sausages are extremely popular, and are served with every meal. They are available as boiled or braised, and with a varying strength of spices.

Ewe's milk cheese is served with many meals. Each family has its own type, and thus cheeses might be from hard or soft, fresh or smoked, and salted or unsalted. Ewe's milk is also used to churn butter.

Readily available vegetables include beans, cabbage, garlic, leeks, mushrooms, onions, and root vegetables. High-class guest houses serve aubergine (eggplant), courgette (zucchini), rice, and tomatoes. Fresh vegetables are usually mixed into a dish, with brine-pickled vegetables being served as side dishes. Potatoes are rarely consumed, with hard bread serving as the main source of carbohydrates.

Mordavians have a sweet tooth. All manner of pastries and cakes flavored with nuts and fresh or preserved fruit are available. In place of sugar, cooks make use of locally produced honey.

Drink

Beer is virtually unknown outside of Karnstein. Even there, British henchmen and globetrotters find they must forgo their preferred bitters and stouts in favor of lager. Ewe's milk is typically consumed at breakfast by children and adults alike.

The climate of Mordavia has proven ideal

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for growing grapes. Wine can be classified into three types. Poor quality wine is consumed in great quantities by the lower classes, but is typically diluted to make a bottle go further. The middle classes enjoy average quality wines with most meals, and a bottle or two of expensive wine on special occasions. The best wines are the daily reserve of the wealthy. The best vintages, produced only in very small quantities, would not be out of place in the best restaurants of the great European cities.

For those who desire something stronger and sweeter, a variety of fruit-flavored liqueurs and brandies are readily available. Visitors intending to consume spirits in rural areas are advised to be cautious—not only are they made in crude conditions, they are liable to be much stronger.

It is traditional to offer guests entering one's home a slice of bread and tot of brandy.

Economy

Mordavia's economy relies on wool, lumber, and salt.

Wool production is a cottage industry. Each farmer maintains his own flock, the wool from which is woven onto spindles by the women of the house. During warmer months, young and old women alike sit outside their houses, enjoying the sunshine and making small talk with passersby. Their wares are then sold to merchants in Karnstein, who arrange for its export. The women earn a meager living for their hours of work, but it helps put bread on the table.

Located on the very fringes of the Carpathian Basin, a plain formed by the drying of the ancient Pannonian Sea some three million years ago, Mordavia has several rock salt seams. Mined for centuries, and never an expansive resource, the scarce resource is almost spent. Only a single mine now remains open, and even that is under threat due to a series of strange and unexplained events.

Entertainment

From peasant homes to inns to the royal court, music, song, and dance have long been

staples of Mordavian entertainment. So long as the sun shines, Mordavian hearts are filled with joy and laughter. Only in Karnstein, or when celebrating a wedding, do country folk sing and dance after dark.

Community spirit has always been at the core of Mordavian life, and this is reflected in the various forms of entertainment. Many upbeat traditional songs have a repeating chorus to encourage audience participation or are sung in rounds. Visitors attending a traditional singing recital may be in for a shock. The local style is shrill, underpinned by melodic elements of an archaic nature.

Traditional instruments include drums, violins, and the *zongora* (a form of guitar held vertically). The accordion has recently been introduced to the country and is already proving popular with musicians and audiences alike.

Dances are designed for multiple participants, with the exchanging of partners an essential part. It is considered rude to refuse an offer to dance. Those who prefer waltzes and other more gentele dances can do little but hope for an invite to a ball at the duke's castle.

Karnstein boasts a theater. Here, one may see plays performed by local actors or listen to the Mordavian orchestra. On rare occasions, a visiting company of players or musicians, and sometimes even an opera company, visits for a few days as part of a longer tour. This always ensures a full house.

Storytelling remains popular in rural communities. Told around the hearth at night, these tales keep alive old traditions and memories of ancestors, as well as warn younger generations of the many perils that lurk beyond the small pockets of civilization. As mentioned earlier, the names of supernatural threats are rarely ever uttered aloud. Instead, the various bogeymen are given alternate names or titles.

Equipment

Karnstein contains numerous shops and businesses the likes of which can be found in any modern town. At the Gamemaster's discretion, unusual items, such as cameras and watchmaker's tools, may cost more than

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as listed in *Leagues of Adventure*. Villages lack true shops, though goods can be purchased directly from resident craftsmen.

General

The items listed below cannot be purchased in Mordavia for love nor money. Such items can be ordered from afar, but with a lengthy time delay (at least a week) and a hefty surcharge (minimum three times normal cost).

Clothing: Basic diving suit, arctic outfit, desert outfit, explorer outfit; **Survival Gear:** Mosquito netting.

Weapons & Armor

Mordavians require no license in order to possess a firearm—not that many can afford, or indeed need, one. Of course, being permitted to own a gun does not give one *carte blanche* to fire it at will. Similarly, while carrying a rifle or shotgun slung over one's shoulder while out in the wilds will attract little attention, doing so in Karnstein may result in a hue-and-cry. Openly carrying pistols in Karnstein is forbidden by law.

Archaic muzzle-loaders, shotguns, and single shot rifles are the long guns of choice, being used mainly for hunting. Revolvers are the only available sidearm readily available.

Ammunition for these weapons is available in Karnstein, but rounds for others firearms, not to mention other types of guns, must be imported. Not only can this take several days, the standard cost is trebled thanks to the number of middlemen involved.

Commonly available melee weapons include axes, chains, cleavers, clubs, daggers, hammers, nightsticks, pocketknives, and straight razors. As with firearms, globetrotters who break or lose their swords will have to wait many days and pay over the odds to get a replacement.

Unless one plunders the museum or the grand duke's arsenal, no forms of armor are available for purchase.

Government

Mordavia is a sovereign duchy. That is, it is a

nation state and thus may also be referred to as a country in its own right. As ruler of an independent duchy, the incumbent is considered a monarch with the official title grand duke.

The current head of state is Grand Duke Friedrich von Mordavia IX. An elder statesman, he has been married to Duchess Margarete-Frida for six decades.

By hereditary rights, the grand duke is not a figurehead bound by an elected parliament, but the entire government. Of course, like any absolute ruler he has a small army of advisors and courtiers ready to obey his every whim.

The ducal family has grown reclusive in recent years—some say it is gripped by madness—and neither the Grand Duke nor his spouse have appeared in public in the past five years. Even when they once did, they confined their presence to a castle balcony rather than descending into Karnstein.

The effective running of Mordavia has fallen onto the shoulders of Friedrich's chancellor, Maximillian Hoffmann, the scion of an upper-class family who have served the grand duke's for generations. His word is considered to carry the weight of the grand duke's.

Karnstein is governed on a daily basis by an elected *burgomeister*. The title is traditionally translated into English as "mayor," but literally translates as "master of the citizens." An advisor to the Grand Duke subservient to the chancellor, he is typically left to run things without constant interference.

Justice

In days gone by, all criminal and civil cases were heard by the grand duke. For the last century, that duty has been transferred to a judiciary appointed by the monarch. At the same time, the court was moved from the castle into a purpose-built courthouse (*gerichtsgebäude*) close to the mayoral residence.

The court has the authority to confiscate property, and to impose fines and custodial sentences without reference to a higher authority. Capital punishment, carried out by public hanging in Karnstein's main square, must be approved by the Grand Duke (or, in the current era, the Chancellor).

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Policing

Ensuring Mordavia remains free of crime falls to the police (*polizei*). Easily distinguishable by their blue tunics, pants, and peaked caps, they answer to the chief of police, who in turn serves under the auspices of the mayor. Much of their time is spent policing Karnstein. Only when a crime is reported do they venture farther afield.

Standard equipment includes a pair of handcuffs, a wooden nightstick, and a light revolver. Sergeants are notable not only by their rank stripes, but also their blue capes and polished leather *pickelhaube* (a spiked helmet).

Housing

Whether humble cottages, the grand houses of the rich and powerful, or places of worship, buildings are notable for their steep, slightly concave pitched roofs. This prevents potential roof-crushing accumulation of snow during winter and allows for rapid rain run-off.

Urban houses rarely stand higher than two stories. The wealthy can afford to build in stone or brick and tile their roofs with slate. In poorer neighborhoods, only the ground floor is made of stone, with upper floors using the more archaic timber frame and roofs covered in wooden tiles. The latter structures are known as half-timbered. In most instances, exposed beams are stained black and walls covered in whitewash.

Houses outside of Karnstein, regardless of shape and size, are constructed from wood. Windowless gable ends facing the road, a tradition said to prevent passing evil creatures from peering in. Not that moving round the house provides any easy access, for heavy wooden shutters located inside the house are the norm. Inns are a noted exception to this tradition, though any windows are usually very small.

Lighting

Gas and electricity have yet to reach Mordavia. As night draws nearer, lamplighters

equipped with long tapers and wooden ladders take to the streets to ply their trade.

The capital's main thoroughfares are illuminated by oil lights and lesser streets by candle lanterns. Back streets are rarely lit. Homeowners with sufficient wealth hang lanterns above their front doors, as do guest houses, churches, and businesses which remain open after nightfall.

Outside of Karnstein, people fear the coming of night. As the sun begins to set, people light candles or oil lamps in their homes, and stoke their hearths. Aside from lanterns hanging outside churches and monasteries, villages lack street lighting. Those who must travel after dark—usually from the inn to their home—carry small candle lanterns and move with all haste.

Religion

Catholicism has been the predominant religion since the 17th century. Mordavia is a bishopric and thus has a cathedral. The bishop numbers among the grand duke's advisors.

Every village boasts a church. Dating back centuries, these wooden structures are remarkable for the steepness of their spires (which allow them to be seen over intervening low hills and forests) and the elaborately carved wooden gates. The latter are decorated with images of the sun and twisted rope, these being considered symbols of life and continuity. The latter are, in fact, misrepresentations of the great dragon, whose twisting serpentine form adorns many ancient stones.

Dotted throughout the countryside are several small monasteries. Unlike churches, these are constructed from stone. In times of yore, they served as refuges from potential invaders. The nave end is commonly rounded, a feature adopted from Romanian monasteries.

Karnstein is home to a number of Jewish families and has a small synagogue. While Jews in other lands have, and sadly continue to be, persecuted, Mordavia has always offered them refuge.

When the country switched faith, a Protestant church was constructed both to provide a

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place of worship for locals who retained their ancestor's faith and for visitors outside the sphere of Catholic influence.

Death

Catholic Mordavians personalize Death as a constant companion. Like a shadowy stalker, Death draws closer as a person nears the end of their allotted time. As an agent of the Lord, Death itself is not something to be feared. That said, it is rarely ever welcomed. Strangers to Mordavia quickly learn to close doors to buildings behind them quickly, so as to prevent Death from entering and claiming a soul.

Corpses, except when mangled or scarred by disease, lie in an open casket within the family home. It is considered very unlucky to delay a funeral more than three days, for not being placed in holy ground leaves the corpse susceptible to possession by evil spirits. Except when the deceased died of disease, or a suspected supernatural cause in more superstitious parts, cremation is unusual.

Mordavians are more concerned with what may happen *after* death, for a peaceful repose is not guaranteed in this accursed land. While the poor must place their dead in standard graves, those with sufficient wealth favor stone sarcophagi, or erect stone mausolea fitted with sturdy doors and locks.

Statues are commonplace in graveyards. Mordavian custom holds that evil souls rejected by God return to the earthly domain. Here they are drawn to their statue's likeness, believing it to be their corpse. Once inside, they are bound for eternity (or at least until the statue crumbles with age).

The grand dukes have been interred in the extensive crypts of Castle Karnstein since the nation was formed. Each was laid in a stone sarcophagus topped with an effigy of his (or her in the case of grand duchesses) likeness.

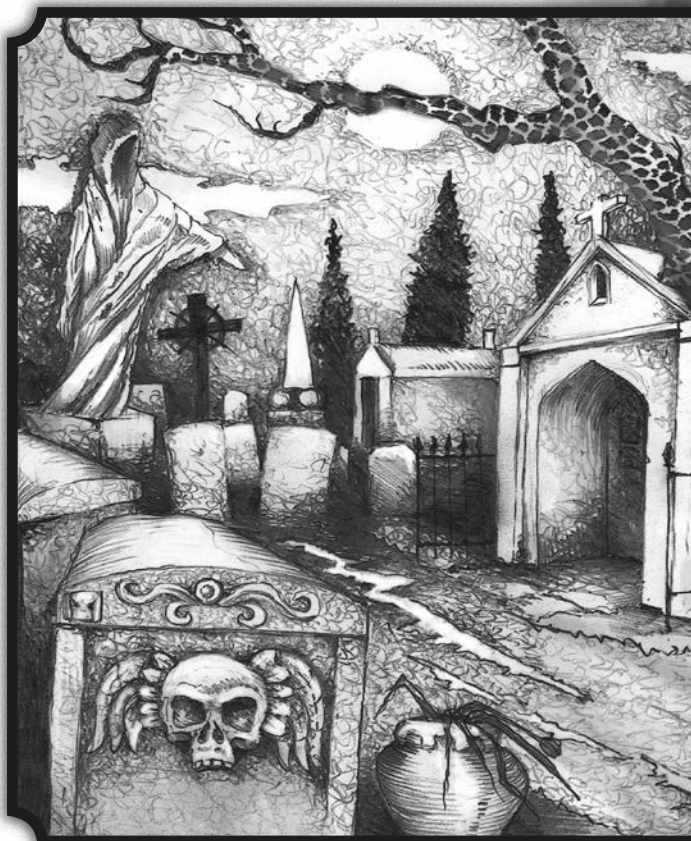
Superstitions

Superstitious beliefs run deep in Mordavia, especially in the outlying communities. The inhabitants of Karnstein consider themselves an

educated people, long separated from peasant superstition. In their eyes, their rural kinsmen are ignorant buffoons, fearful of their own shadows. Conversely, the peasants look upon their town-dwelling kin as idiots who deny the evil that lurks in their midst.

Most peasants know the most basic superstitions and wards concerning vampires, werewolves, and the like. Below are a few unusual superstitions the Gamemaster can insert into interactions with NPCs.

No sensible person lights a cigarette, cigar, or pipe with a candle flame. When one needs a light, matches and sticks from a fire should always be used. Mordavians believe that candles, especially those purchased from a church, draw spirits into their flame, whereupon they are consumed. Using a candle to light a cigarette risks inhaling one of these ephemeral demons. In a similar vein, yawning without covering one's mouth risks demonic possession.



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Wishing someone a happy birthday before the actual day is akin to cursing them, for it tempts the Devil to end their life prematurely.

Toasting someone with water is seen as wishing death upon them. This belief may stem from the fact that drinking water can cause sickness.

The ringing of church bells is believed to scare away demons. Slamming a door has a similar effect, though only on malicious household spirits. These same mischievous imps can be placated by leaving offerings of food.

Never leave a house except by the same way you entered, or bad luck will plague you. Returning to a house because you have forgotten something means bad luck, as does moving into a new home without bringing with you an old broom. If you kill a bee in your home, the next visitor who calls will bring you bad news.

Do not cut a baby's nails before its first birthday, else it will grow up to become a thief. Beating animals while you are pregnant ensures the baby will be very hairy. If a raven lands near a sick person, then death is inevitable.

Transportation

Mordavia's transport network, such as it is, is rarely congested. With only a small population to cater for, and Karnstein being relatively small, the capital lacks both trams and omnibuses. Most denizens opt to walk, with only the wealthy or those on official ducal business able to afford the cost and relative luxury of a carriage ride or horse. Businesses transport goods through the cobbled streets on wagons, often piling goods perilously high to reduce the number of journeys required.

Road

Mordavia boasts only three major roads. Running from Karnstein to Huszt is the Duke's Road, a well-maintained stretch frequently traversed by coaches and wagons.

Leaving Karnstein to explore the rest of the duchy, travellers have the choice of taking two roads. Although they twist and turn to follow

the path of the river, they are known as the North Road and South Road respectively.

These routes are poorly maintained and deeply rutted by the constant stream of heavily-laden wagons transporting goods to and from the capital. After heavy rain or snow, they quickly turn to mud, further hampering travel. Under optimal conditions, a coach can manage a measly 20 miles per day and horses only 30 miles. Paths cut through forested regions, but these are ill-suited for coaches.

Carriages and Coaches

For those who have no wish to walk through Karnstein streets, carriages can be hired either for single journeys (1s. to any one destination with the capital, regardless of distance) or for the entire day (12s. from dawn to dusk, and an additional 2s. per hour thereafter).

Coaches leave Karnstein shortly after dawn each day heading for Huszt and Bistritz carrying passengers and mail. Those awaiting the arrival of a coach from either of these destinations must wait until early evening, the earliest the transportation will arrive.

Travellers who desire to journey deeper into Mordavia have three options.

First, they can walk. Even the least superstitious and fearful citizen will not recommend this option due to the threat of bears and wolves, not to mention gangs of vile Szgany, the latter having a notorious reputation for being thieves and murderers.

Second, they can ride on horseback. Few citizens actually own horses, and those who do are most unlikely to loan or hire them to foreigners not of good reputation or high status.

Third, one may catch a coach. Unlike Karnstein's carriages and the coaches that head west from the capital, these vehicles are heavily fortified, with only narrow slits to allow in air and for travellers to admire the view.

Typically, coaches run only once or twice a week, depending on the season. These journeys cost 1s. per 10 miles or part thereof. Hiring a coach privately costs double the normal amount, and the coachman will not accept a commission unless he can guarantee to reach a roadside inn before nightfall.

Chapter the Third:

Gazetteer of

Mordavia



Sometimes we saw little towns or castles on the top of steep hills such as we see in old missals; sometimes we ran by rivers and streams which seemed from the wide stony margin on each side of them to be subject to great floods. —Bram Stoker, Dracula

Mordavia hosts many secrets. In this chapter, the shroud of darkness is lifted off some of the sites of damnation and misery.

In the same way that the *Globetrotter's Guide to London* explored only select locales, so this work follows the same course. The locations detailed below are considered canonical, but there is ample room for the Gamemaster to add his or her own unique sites.

In a similar vein, any published adventures set in Mordavia, while they may be based in Karnstein or any of the outlying villages, will involve brand new specific sites. Thus, what is written in this chapter will not be conflicted with later information. The Gamemaster is thus safe in the knowledge that nothing below will be contradicted at a later date.

Every location has a Dark Place rating and Eerie Atmosphere modifier. The latter was introduced in the *Leagues of Gothic Horror Expansion* and imposes a modifier to Horror rolls. Both entries are optional, there for Gamemasters who wish to utilize them and easily ignored by Gamemasters who do not.

Finally, many entries have a Notable Inhabitants entry. Statistics for listed individuals can be found in the next chapter. Where a generic monster type is given, such as "Vampire," the

Gamemaster should consult *Leagues of Gothic Horror* or the appropriate monster guide and either select a stock template or create a villain of his or her own design.

Drachentor

Dark Places Style Points: 0

Eerie Atmosphere Penalty: 0

Notable Inhabitants: The dragon statues can be animated as gargoyles, but only by the Order of the Dragon (see Chapter Four).

Straddling the narrow gap at the eastern end of the valley, eternally watched over by the peaks of Hexenberg and Hexerberg, stand the remnants of a tall stone wall.

Folklore states that this is where the dragon consumed the Mongol invaders. No wall stood here until the reign of Grand Duke Maximillian II. Fearful of the Ottomans, whose suzerainty had grown to include much of the lands to the south, not to mention the growing number of bandit gangs given courage by the chaos in Hungary, Maximillian ordered the barrier constructed in 1577.

No money has been spent on maintenance in many generations. Frost has cracked the large stones, wind and rain have weathered them, and Father Time has rubbed his entropic hand across the surfaces. Cracked and pitted, and covered with lichen, the dragon reliefs that once stood proud are not lost to memory.

The fortified wooden gates that once stood in defiance of potential aggressors are long

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rotted, replaced by sturdy iron gates a century ago. These too have succumbed to the ravages of time and nature. Deeply rusted, they perpetually stand open, a sign that Mordavia now welcomes strangers. Atop each towering stone gatepost squats a time-ravaged gargoyle-like dragon with hollow eyes vacantly staring at all who pass between them.

Schloss Karnstein

Dark Places Style Points: 4

Eerie Atmosphere Penalty: -1

Notable Inhabitants: Chancellor Maximilian Hoffmann, Animated Armor, Haultrait (see *Expansion* for both)

Castle Karnstein, ancestral seat of the grand dukes, leers ominously over the town of Karnstein from its elevated position on the western flank of the Kronberge range. As the bat flies, it is only two miles from the capital, but a journey on foot or by carriage must wind its way up precarious roads for more than double that distance.

An impressive fortification in its heyday, its thick gray walls and steep-roofed towers have provided sanctuary for many centuries. The core was constructed by the Teutonic Knights to provide a place where the new lords of Mordavia could keep watch for signs of the dragon's reemergence. Over time, each generation of grand dukes has added to the structure, both above and below ground.

Externally, the fortress shows little signs of its age. Its mighty walls, unmarred by warfare, may be stained, but they remain as strong as when the castle was first built.

Alas, the same cannot be said of the interior. Decadence has cursed the royal family, growing steadily worse with each generation. Tapestries that tell the story of the once proud dukes are faded, furniture once worthy of a king's court is riddled with worms, cobwebs hang like funeral shrouds from the high vaulted ceilings, and rats scurry brazenly beneath the feet of the aged servants.

A seemingly endless warren of tunnels and chambers have been excavated into the living rock beneath the castle. Most are fairly mundane and are little used today. The grandest

chamber, a space that rivals a cathedral in size if not majesty, is devoted to the final resting places of the ducal family. Entombed in stone sarcophagi lie the grand dukes and duchesses of old, their names largely forgotten by all but their descendants and academics.

Notable Features

Animated Armor: Like castles across Europe, Karnstein displays trophies of an old, more warlike age. Swords and shields, none notched by conflict, adorn the walls, while suits of armor never worn in battle stand idly in dusty corners.

Many of the latter are possessed by minor spirits, placed there long ago by a sorcerer at the behest of one of the grand dukes. There they have stood, silent guardians awaiting a call to arms that has never been uttered. At least not until recently. Someone has learned of the armors' true purpose and the arcane words needed to animate them. To what purpose they intend to put their newfound playthings yet remains to be seen.

Haunted Painting: Not every grand duke has been a man of honor. Heinrich III (1714-1789) dabbled in the dark arts, forever seeking a means to achieve immortality. Before his death, he transferred his spirit into a painting of himself. There he slumbered, waking only sporadically when the dragon stirred.

Much of his intellect is lost, dulled by the passage of time. Yet his spirit burns with the desire to be free, to live once more among mortals, to seek true immortality whatever the price. Lacking any corporeal form, he is forced to act through mortal puppets, dominating the mind of those who gaze upon his portrait and meet his piercing eyes.

Heinrich is a haultrait with the following powers: Lure, Paralysis, Possession.

Karnstein

Dark Places Style Points: 1 (night only)

Eerie Atmosphere Penalty: 0

Mordavia's capital since its independence, Karnstein is a town on the banks of the Wur-

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mach. Still out of touch with modern Europe, Karnstein lacks the trappings of the new technological age. As such, it can best be described as quaint.

Beck Manor

Dark Places Style Points: 1

Eerie Atmosphere Penalty: 0

Notable Inhabitants: Baron Otto Beck von Mordavia

Located on the outskirts of town, Beck Manor has a sinister reputation. The grand house is the home of Baron Otto Beck, the last scion of an old and once respected Mordavian family.

Rich, middle-aged, and not unattractive, Beck has had the misfortune of losing three wives—two died shortly after childbirth, along with the newborns, while the third died from causes as yet unknown. Rumor has spread that the house, which is centuries old, is cursed, and that any women who reside there will die young. Such is the fear circulating in Karnstein that Beck's only servants are either male or old women.

Despite his loss, Beck understands that his position in society requires him to perform certain tasks, such as hosting balls for his wealthy peers and being seen to support various good causes with donations and personal appearances. He is also in search of a new wife, preferably a foreigner who does not know his sad history.

The Busch House

Dark Places Style Points: 2

Eerie Atmosphere Penalty: -1

Notable Inhabitants: Child (see *Guide to Apparitions*) with the Shove ability

This large townhouse in an upper-class part of town has been abandoned for several years. The previous three families all fled in terror, claiming they were tormented by an unseen spirit. Despite the bishop performing a blessing, no one has been tempted to take up residence.

None remember the sorry state of affairs of

Is There Another Karnstein?

Globetrotters with an interest in literature and/or the supernatural may have heard the name Karnstein before.

The dark tale *Carmilla*, published by Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu (1814-73), is partly set in a castle boasting the same name. Although presented as a work of vampire fiction, the story holds a grain of truth.

Local history is notoriously vague on the death of Grand Duchess Carmilla (changed to a countess by Le Fanu), who lived between 1745 and 1783. Most citizens claim only that she was a tyrant, driven insane after the death of her husband and all but one of her children during an outbreak of plague, but they reflexively cross themselves when repeating this time-tested falsehood.

How Le Fanu came by knowledge of Grand Duchess Carmilla is unknown, for few Western Europeans ever visited Mordavia, but he had the decency to move the action away from the real Karnstein, setting his tale instead in southeast Austria.

1723. During a terrible storm, Ilse Pohl found her daughter Greta dead at the bottom of the stairs, her neck broken. Ilse was driven insane with grief. Unwilling to commit her to an asylum, Ilse's family locked her away in the attic of the house, where she remained until her premature death of a broken heart.

It is not Ilse's ghost that haunts the townhouse, however, but that of her daughter. Murdered by a relative, Greta's spirit haunts the site where she and her mother died. Scared and alone, the specter instinctively lashes out at intruders.

Greta can make noises, but she is unable to communicate in a meaningful way. The only way her spirit can find rest is for someone to discover the true nature of her death. Greta strives to prompt mortals into discovering this in the only way she can—by shoving them with etheric energy.

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Cathedral

Dark Places Style Points: 0

Eerie Atmosphere Penalty: 0

Notable Inhabitants: Father Axel Sauer

Constructed in 1390, the cathedral is dedicated to Margaret of Hungary. A miniature version of the great Gothic cathedrals of France and Germany, it is the seat of the Bishop of Mordavia, Joseph Brandt.

One legend concerning the defeat of the Mongols attributes the summoning of the dragon to Margaret, daughter of Bela IV. No version of this story exists outside Mordavia, but the locals don't let minor details like that trouble them. Similarly, the fact that Margaret is only beatified (she is canonized in 1943) does not stop them from referring to her as Saint Margaret. This is not unique—Margaret has been venerated as a saint by many people since shortly after her death in 1271.

History records that her physical remains were given to the Poor Clares after the suppression of the monasteries by Emperor Joseph II. Housed in a silver reliquary within the cathedral is a withered limb devout Mordavians swear is Margaret's right hand. Whoever it belonged to, the relic is an object of veneration, attracting pilgrims from across the region. Were anyone to open the casket, they would be shocked to discover it empty.

That revelation may come sooner than the thief desires. The 500th anniversary of the consecration of the cathedral draws ever nearer. Planned celebrations include opening the reliquary and displaying the hand to the faithful.

House of Puppets

Dark Places Style Points: 2

Eerie Atmosphere Penalty: 0

Notable Inhabitants: Werner Lange, Evil Puppets

Beloved by young and old alike, the House of Puppets has kept generations of citizens amused. Bawdy comedies for adults, tales of heroism for children, and famous folktales—all have been performed here using exquisitely handcrafted wooden puppets. The current

proprietor, maker of puppets, and master puppeteer is Werner Lange. Werner stages performances every evening except on Sundays.

In recent months, his neighbors have seen him spending excessive amount of money, far more than his meager earnings would suggest available. With a charming smile, Werner acknowledges this, claiming that he has commenced selling his masterwork puppets to fellow performers across Europe.

Karnstein Academy for Young Ladies

Dark Places Style Points: 0

Eerie Atmosphere Penalty: 0

Notable Inhabitants: Succubus

The standards of the day require that ladies who wish to acquire good husbands, that is, those with wealth and titles, be well-versed in social etiquette and deportment. With options for good matches limited in Mordavia, the academy prepares young women born to higher class families to enter the wider world, where competition for spouses is much more competitive.

Unbeknownst to the tutors and students, one of their number is a lesbian succubus. Its feeding activities have left several girls with malaise, but thus far none recall the encounter save as an erotic dream.

A few days before the globetrotters arrive, the succubus accidentally kills one of its victims. The young lady is found dead in the academy garden. Herr Doktor Kuhn, who also serves as coroner, listed the cause of death as heart failure. That one so young and seemingly healthy should perish from a heart condition has the townsfolk gossiping.

Krähenhaus

Dark Places Style Points: 1

Eerie Atmosphere Penalty: 0

Notable Inhabitants: Man-Raven (use stats for Man-Bat in *Leagues of Gothic Horror*)

The House of Crows is named for the Mordavian Corvinus family, a branch of the familial

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line of John Corvinus (1406-1456), Regent-Governor of Hungary and Voivode of Transylvania. The modern family has slipped from the aristocratic rung of the social ladder to that of wealthy merchants. Their symbol, which adorns a sign hanging over the front door of the family townhouse, takes the form of a crow's head with a coin grasped tightly in its beak.

John Hunyadi, whose surname translates as Corvinus in Latin, was a staunch opponent of the Ottoman Empire. His tactics in battle and victories over the invaders safeguarded Hungary for 60 years. It also incurred the wrath of the Ottoman Emperor, who invoked a terrible curse that plagues the family to this day.

Every few generations, a male child is born with a shock of black hair. Though innocent of any crime, this unfortunate soul is doomed to transform into a man-raven once it reaches puberty. Much like a werewolf, the change is involuntary and occurs only during a specific phase of the moon—in this case, the dark nights of the new moon.

The man-raven, a unholy amalgam of a man's general form but with the features and wings of a corvid, is a vicious hunter, swooping down on its preferred prey—humans—and impaling them repeatedly with its sharp break before consuming their flesh.

Lunatic Asylum

Dark Places Style Points: 1

Eerie Atmosphere Penalty: -1

Notable Inhabitants: Herr Doktor Frederick Feltman

Being ripped limb from limb or transmuted into some vile fiend are not the only dangers facing the natives of Mordavia—merely witnessing these terrors can cost a person their sanity.

A private institution run by Herr Doktor Frederick Feltman, the lunatic asylum caters for those suffering short-term, long-term, or permanent disorders of the brain. Shunning more barbaric therapies for curing insanity, Feltman has openly embraced weird science.

Even native Karnsteiners of good education were initially skeptical about allowing their loved ones to be subjected to technological

treatments—weird science is not commonplace even in major cities—but a practical demonstration of the Electrotherapy Engine and Psychoanalyser (see *Leagues of Gothic Horror Expansion* for both), soon had them convinced Feltman was on the cutting edge of treating the insane.

Visitors are permitted access to incarcerated relatives only with Feltman's personal approval. This usually demands writing a letter of intent at least one month in advance of the planned visit.

A man of independent wealth, Feltman does not charge for caring for the sick of mind, though he does welcome charitable donations from wealthy patrons. Foreigners are accorded no such benefit. Globetrotters seeking to restore lost sanity from Feltman, Mordavia's only alienist, will be charged £2 per session for a conventional session and £5 should they require the use of a weird science device.

Museum of Antiquities

Dark Places Style Points: 1

Eerie Atmosphere Penalty: -1

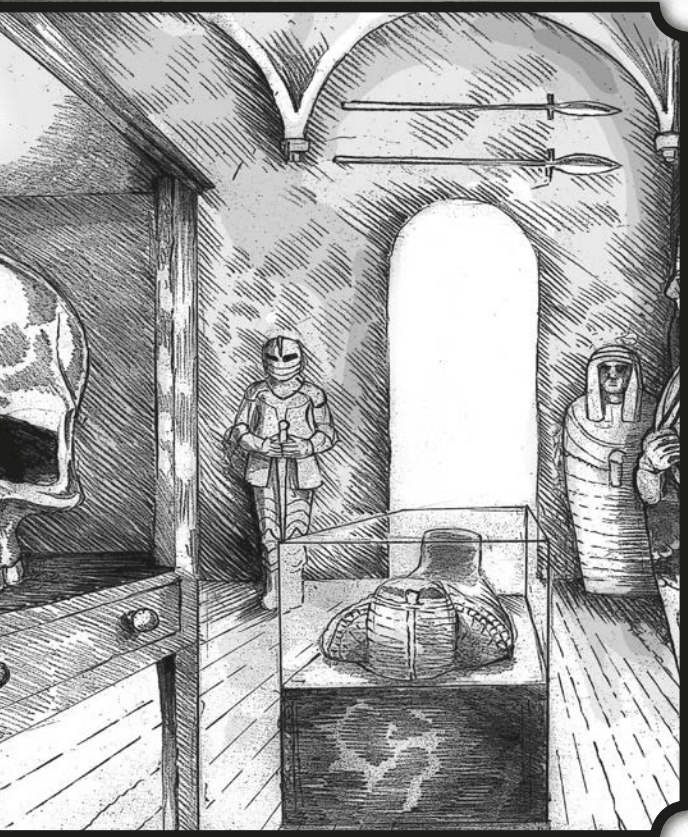
Notable Inhabitants: Gunther Voight, Royal Mummy (add the Phylactery ability from *Guide to Mummies*)

Founded by Grand Duke Friedrich's grandfather, Friedrich VII, as a means to preserve Mordavia's history and educate the nation's inhabitants, the museum is open to the public only on Saturday. For the rest of the time, it is occupied only by Gunther Voight, the elderly and knowledgeable curator, and students and scholars granted special access by the aforementioned Voight.

Among the many foreign historical treasures is a collection of artifacts recently acquired from Egypt. Few come here to admire the potsherds and fragments of papyri. All attention is drawn to the small collection of gold jewelry and the three painted wooden sarcophagi containing the withered remains of Ptolemaic era mummies.

One of the golden objects, a scarab beetle, is a phylactery housing the spirit of Apephotep ("Apep is at peace"), a vile courtier of the 8th Dynasty outlawed for his practise of black

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magic. Brought into contact with a mummy for the first time in millennia, Apephotep's spirit has awoken in a new body.

The museum has developed a bad reputation of late. Passersby have heard strange voices and chanting late at night, strange lights have been seen flickering the windows after dark, and two drunks were found nearby, their skulls cracked open like eggs. No one has bothered alerting the police. Instead, the museum is just another building to shun once night descends.

Other treasures should be assigned by the Gamemaster. A boar spear, wielded by a champion of old in the defeat of some great monster, hangs on a wall. A suit of gilded plate armor belonging to a grand duke of old stands proudly among lesser armors. The skull of Heinrich III sits behind a glass screen. Any of these objects might actually be occult relics, items the globetrotters' can wield in their fight against evil.

The museum also houses a collection of stuffed animals, most notably several wolves and a black bear.

Orphanage

Dark Places Style Points: 1

Eerie Atmosphere Penalty: 0

Notable Inhabitants: Ingrid, Rag Scarecrow (see Chapter Four)

Even a small nation such as Mordavia has orphans and unwanted children. Privately funded, the orphanage is not a happy place for children to grow up. Clothing is minimal, provisions barely adequate to fuel growing bodies, and little heating is available even on the coldest of nights. Globetrotters of charitable heart could do wonders to improve conditions with a modest donation. The Christmas Club especially would raise money were it to hear of the appalling conditions.

The matron, Anna Maier, is a woman in desperate need of help. In the last few months, several children have been viciously attacked by an unknown assailant. All the terrified victims were able to say of their assailant was that it was a "Raggedy Lady." The police have investigated each crime, but have so far drawn a blank.

The attacker is in fact a human-sized rag doll, given unholy life and a hunger for vengeance by one of the orphans, a young girl by the name of Ingrid. Treat the Raggedy Lady as a scarecrow. Instead of farming implements, it has long, wicked claws (7L damage).

Physician's House

Dark Places Style Points: 0

Eerie Atmosphere Penalty: 0

Notable Inhabitants: Herr Doktor Fritz Kuhn

Mordavia's preeminent surgeon and general physician, Herr Doktor Fritz Kuhn accepts patients at his home, which has a room set aside for medical matters, and makes house calls. His rates are higher than the average Mordavian can easily afford, but he is a skilled

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practitioner. An amiable chap, he frequently dines with Mordavia's wealthier citizens.

In recent months he has become sallow of skin and, although he thinks no one has noticed, developed a slight tremble. Being a person good character, the locals attribute these signs to overwork, for he makes frequent visits to Castle Karnstein.

Seamstress, Weaver, and Dyer

Dark Places Style Points: 1

Eerie Atmosphere Penalty: 0

Notable Inhabitants: Sigrid Ziegler

Mordavian women favor brightly colored clothing, and those with even a modest income or stipend spend their coin at Sigrid Ziegler's shop. A spinster, Sigrid has a masterful touch as both a weaver and seamstress. The gloriously colored garments she produces are the envy of other clothes sellers.

The secret to Sigrid's success, or so she says, are special dyes of natural flowers and plants handed down from her mother. She was a talented seamstress in her own right, but did not produce the beautiful dyes her daughter has mastered.

Few doubt her story, for Sigrid is known to be a wise-woman, a healer wise in the ways of natural medicine. Those who cannot afford the high price of modern medicines purchase salves, ointments, and tonics from her. On the rare occasions they cross paths, she and Herr Doktor Kuhn fiercely debate the benefits of "real" medicine over "peasant superstition."

Spa

Dark Places Style Points: 0

Eerie Atmosphere Penalty: 0

Notable Inhabitants: Herr Doktor Diedrich Haas

Spas are popular with the well-heeled, and Eastern Europe is dotted with spa resorts. Far from being mere bath houses, spas are a luxurious retreat, with patrons entertained by concerts and theatrical performances, and enjoying leisurely strolls through the countryside

in between drinking the mineral rich waters and bathing.

Until recently, Karnstein's spa was a decidedly third-class affair. Now, it attracts rich clients from across Europe. The change in fortunes is all down to one man, Herr Doktor Diedrich Haas. A man of science, Haas has installed a number of weird science devices of his own construction to augment the standard "bathing and taking the waters" regime. Among the contraptions are a Full Immersion Accelerated Healing Bath, Heliotherapy Engine, and Pneumatic Massage Chair (see *Weird Science Compendium*). The spa also sells a range of weird science serums and tonics.

A stay at the resort, which typically lasts an entire month, costs £25, a price guaranteed to keep away undesirable elements.

Theater der Raben

Dark Places Style Points: 0

Eerie Atmosphere Penalty: 0

Notable Inhabitants: Ursula Krause

The Ravens Theater, so called because of the carved wooden ravens that leer menacingly down from the roof, also serves as a concert and dance hall, as well as an auditorium.

Designed by Grand Duke Heinrich III and constructed in the Baroque style rather than the style of Karnstein's other buildings, the theater has 13 sides. Rather than forming a regular tridecagon, the exterior walls join at odd angles. Karnsteiners are divided as to whether the building is an architectural wonder or an eyesore.

The main entertainment is the regular plays put on by the Karnstein Players, the resident theatrical company. Attendance is good, but it is the visiting foreign acts that draw the largest crowds, for they provide something different for the discerning Karnsteiner.

University of Karnstein

Dark Places Style Points: 1

Eerie Atmosphere Penalty: 0

Notable Inhabitants: Helga Stein, Professor Franz Klein

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Given its small geographical size, many visitors assume Mordavia is an educational backwater. In early days, young men (and later women) of high status did indeed send their children abroad to gain a higher education. That changed in 1713, when the then Grand Duke founded a university.

Considered a fine center of learning and attracting students from across German speaking countries, the University of Karnstein focuses exclusively on the liberal arts—fine and performing art, literature, languages, mathematics, philosophy, anthropology, and religious studies. Not especially large, the university has facilities for just 100 students.

Few Mordavians can afford to send their children to university. Not that many rural folk deem it necessary—a university education won't help gather the harvest or repair cottages any faster.

Despite the prestige it brings their small town, not every Mordavian is happy with the university. Coming from wealthy families, many students look down on the comparatively backward Mordavians. Far from the watchful eyes of their parents, they dally with the local girls, and, especially around exam time, are prone to drunken revels.

Several students have recently abandoned their education without notice, seemingly returned home. Even their friends are perplexed, for they mentioned nothing of their plans. That their personal belongings have also gone has deflected any notion of foul play.

Library

The university library is well-stocked with books on the liberal arts. Treat the library as having Refuge: Equipment 0 (+1 bonus) with all liberal arts.

There is also a small occult section. Rarely perused, they were donated to the university by a former tutor. Among the many volumes are two books of note—copies of *Gypsies, Being the True Means by Which They Make Pacts with Satan and Malleus Maleficarum*.

Gamemasters with access to *Leagues of Cibulbu* should also add *Unaussprechlichen Kulten*. This copy is badly stained and has

several pages missing. Complexity is lowered to 4 and Mythos to 3. It lacks the Call Shub-Niggurath, Summon Deep One, and Summon Fungus from Yuggoth rituals.



In ages past, the only structure that stood here was a small wooden fort, erected by the Teutonic Knights during their campaign against the heathens. As well as providing an ideal vantage point for watching over the valley width, it guarded a ford across the Wurmach.

The fort was dismantled in the 15th century, replaced with a roadside inn—a welcome refuge for hunters and shepherds working in the eastern valleys, as well as a convenient stopping point for the growing number of merchants heading to and from Quälerburg.

To ease travel, an arched stone bridge was erected across the Wurmach, whose waters rise to become impassable for days on end after heavy rains.

Other people were attracted to the site over the intervening centuries, building their homes close to the guesthouse. Today, it is a hamlet in the British sense of the word—that is, a small settlement without a church (although it does have a small chapel).

The prefix *alt*, meaning “old,” was added in 1788. No one is sure why, as there has only ever been one building of that type here and the current structure dates back before then. The most popular story is that the prefix is an honorific, a nod to the fact the guesthouse was the first one built outside Karnstein and has stood untouched by man or nature for so long.

Abandoned Water Mill

Dark Places Style Points: 0

Eerie Atmosphere Penalty: 0

Notable Inhabitants: Hanged Man (see *Guide to Apparitions*)

A short distance downstream from the settlement stand the decaying remains of a water mill. Time has been cruel to the structure,

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eating away at the stonework and rotting the wooden beams and machinery.

Older locals do not speak of the building. When it is mentioned by outsiders, it has become custom to spit and cross oneself. Parents caution their children never to venture near the mill, promising that those who do will be taken by the Richters.

The Richters were a husband and wife team who ran the mill until 1817. Following the disappearance of several children, unfounded suspicions fell on the millers. Enraged, the villagers formed a mob and dispensed justice before the constables and magistrate could arrive. The couple were hung by the neck and then fed into the mill's machinery. Whether or not they were actually guilty of the crime was never solved—the Richters' death, for which no one ever stood trial, ended any investigation before it began.

The spirits of the millers still haunt the abandoned mill as hanged men. The vile specters have the unearthly power to manipulate the rotting ropes that hang from the beams. These they use to strangle their victims.

Globetrotters may think that destroying the mill will thwart the sinister spirit's activities. Nothing could be further from the truth, in fact. Currently fettered to the structure, their spirits would be free to travel far and wide if the mill was ever demolished.

Local children have long flouted their parents' advice. When settling arguments, it has become commonplace to dare one another to spend an hour alone in the dark and dismal ruin. Most never last that long, succumbing to their young imaginations and fleeing in terror at perceived ghosts. Unfortunately, the last child to enter the mill on a dare, little Gunther Schröder, was found floating in the river, a rope mark around his neck.

The Old Guesthouse

Dark Places Style Points: 2

Eerie Atmosphere Penalty: 0

Notable Inhabitants: Vampire, Vampire Brides

The third structure to sit on this site, the

Old Guesthouse provides rustic comfort for weary travellers. Neither the food nor drink are exceptional in any way, but they are cheap and the heavy meals are guaranteed to fill the hungriest stomach.

Despite being the largest building in the village, the proprietor, Florian Neumann, insists on retaining the old sign that hung outside when the then owner produced wine—a dark grape oozing a single droplet of juice. The sign is so weathered that from a distance the motif more resembles a heart leaking a drop of blood.

Given that a vampire and his two brides inhabit the cellar, the sign is something of a dire warning to strangers. One of the brides is a recent convert, stolen away from her family in Karnstein. The family still seeks help in tracking down the girl.

Neumann and his family have not been mentally dominated by the bloodsuckers. Like their ancestors before them, the family has faithfully served the vampires, asking nothing in return. Merely to serve is enough, though the vampires are prepared to protect the family from harm should need arise.

Neumann is not stupid enough to kidnap locals to sate his master's unholy thirst. That fate is destined to befall lone visitors or strangers in small groups. As the guesthouse owner, it is relatively easy to dispose of their belongings and claim the guests left early.



The village of Beinemsfeld sits just north of the Wurmach, in the widest part of the valley. Its name translates as "Bony Field." This partly refers to the many boulders that lie here, deposits left by retreating glaciers eons ago. Farmers working the heavy soil frequently unearth fragments of human bone, however.

Before the Teutonic Knights' cleansing of the valley, Beinemsfeld was occupied by the old capital. During the crusade, the wooden buildings were put to the torch and the inhabitants slaughtered. As heathens, and thus unworthy of a Christian burial, their corpses were left for the wolves and ravens.

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Today, Beinemfeld is Mordavia's second most populated settlement. Large areas to the north and east are devoid of trees and the land turned over to farming, the primary source of income. Ribbons of forest still cling to the edges of the North Road, almost hiding the village from view when journeying from Karnstein until one is almost upon it.

Considered the breadbasket of Mordavia for the amount of crops it produces, the citizens of Karnstein have learned not to rely entirely on its harvest. Every few years, a plague of rats descends on the town, devouring large portions of the harvest before it can be gathered or gnawing through doors to gain access to the granaries. This devilry is the work of Wolfgang Lorenz (see Chapter Four).

Church of the Blessed Virgin

Dark Places Style Points: 1 (graveyard at night)

Eerie Atmosphere Penalty: 0

Notable Inhabitants: Fritz Gruber

The first church erected here was built by the Teutonic Knights and dedicated to their patron saint, the Virgin Mary, to commemorate their victory over the heathens. The current place of worship dates from the 17th century.

In charge of services in Father Alexandru, a native Mordavian of Romanian descent. Alexandru has no pretensions about his role and does not consider himself to hold superior morals to his flock. Once evening service is finished, he is frequently to be found at the Winkler Gasthaus, drinking wine, singing, and dancing. Warnings from the bishop to curb his behavior and set an example for his congregation have gone unheeded.

The priest is now beginning to wonder whether his antics have drawn the wrath of God. Over the past year, several young women have gone missing, their battered corpses eventually turning up in the fields outside Beinemfeld.

Adjacent to the church is Father Alexandru's modest house. Visitors are assured a warm welcome—Alexandru upholds the old tradition of offering guests bread and plum brandy.

Across the graveyard stands another cottage. Little more than a shack, it is the home of Fritz Gruber, the handyman and gravedigger.

Schloss Wagner

Dark Places Style Points: 1

Eerie Atmosphere Penalty: 0

Notable Inhabitants: Flammegeist (see *Guide to Apparitions*) with Manifestation

A large mansion, Schloss Wagner is considered an unlucky house. Since the late 18th century, the house has burned down and been rebuilt six times. In total, eight people have lost their lives in the conflagrations.

The first house was erected in 1764 by a wealthy wainright (the meaning of the surname Wagner). An abusive drunkard, he suspected his wife was having an affair. When she gave birth to a dark-haired child (both parents had light brown hair), he believed his suspicions vindicated. His face flushed with anger, he threatened to strangle the "bastard" newborn there and then. Acting with a mother's righteous love for her child, his wife, screaming her innocence, grabbed the nearest object, a lit oil lamp, and threw it at her deranged husband. All three souls died in the resultant blaze.

The souls of the mother and daughter passed beyond the mortal veil, but that of the wainright was fettered to the location. Filled with righteous anger, and still believing his wife cheated on him, he became a flammegeist.

The spirit rarely makes its presence felt beyond manifesting an aroma of smoke on the anniversary of its death. When a girl is born in the house, though, it unleashes its full fury, setting fire to its former home as it replays its feelings of betrayal and painful death.

Annelise Koch, the wife of the current owner, is due to give birth in a few days.



Named for its water mill, Mühlendorf (literally "The village with a mill") sits at the convergence of the Aschebach and Würmach. Little farming takes place here, leaving the vil-

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lage surrounded by forest. The loamy soil and shady conditions are ideal for mushrooms, which grow here in abundance.

Given its central location, it is popular with visitors intending on exploring the Mordavian countryside. It boasts three guest houses, all of which have few spare rooms during the summer months.

Observatory

Dark Places Style Points: 0

Eerie Atmosphere Penalty: -1

Notable Inhabitants: Kurt Wiegel

Perched high on the peaks of the Graberge, reached only by a torturous track that hugs the cliff edge a little too closely for most people's liking, is a small stone fortress, a remnant of less civil times.

Long abandoned, the building was purchased and renovated three years ago by Kurt Wiegel, an Austrian national. While the lower floors were transformed into comfortable accommodation, the upper floor was transformed into an observatory.

The astronomer's nocturnal lifestyle, coupled with his reclusive nature, has led some in Mühlendorf to suspect he is a vampire—not that they speak of such things aloud, of course.

Although Wiegel occasionally entertains Karnsteiners of note and students from the university, few Mühlendorfers have seen him in the flesh. His assistant, a hunchback by the name of Udo, delivers requests for food and certain exotic materials (such as lens and glass tubing) once a month. The villagers responsible for delivering the supplies always leave Mühlendorf in the morning, thus guaranteeing they are home before sunset.

Water Mill

Dark Places Style Points: 2

Eerie Atmosphere Penalty: 0

Notable Inhabitants: Christian Hanisch, Ghouls

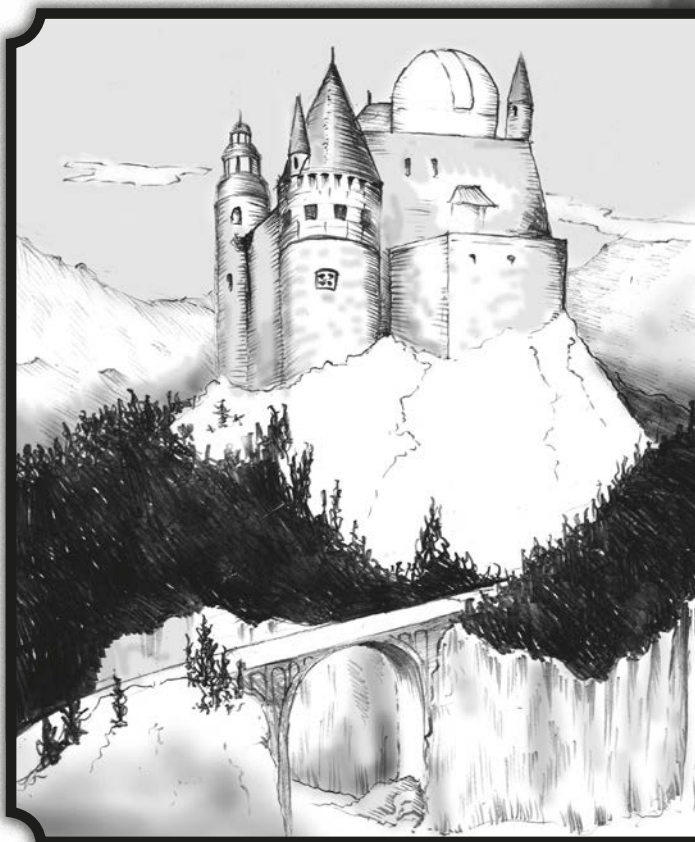
The denizens of Mühlendorf may not produce much in the way of crops, but the bubbling waters of the Aschbach proved an ideal source of

power for a water mill. Since the 16th century, it has ground wheat and barley to make flour, which is then sold to families and bakeries throughout Mordavia.

The Hanisch family is reclusive, with only the younger generation seen out and about. All are slightly disfigured in some minor way. Their neighbors hint that first cousins have married too often in the family.

Quälendorf

Mordavia's most remote community, Quälendorf once was governed by a hereditary baron beholden to the grand duke. A tyrant who ruled from his castle with a fist of iron, he was eventually overthrown. Quälendorf then became part of the grand duke's estate, its governance overseen by an elected burgomeister.



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Living far from Karnstein, the village's modest population is the most superstitious in Mordavia. All firmly believe in the existence of the supernatural, as visitors will note in the gloves of garlic that hang inside each house and the iron horseshoes nailed to doors as a ward against demons and other evil spirits.

Church of St. Elizabeth of Hungary

Dark Places Style Points: 0

Eerie Atmosphere Penalty: 0

Notable Inhabitants: Father Frank Derhake

The village church is dedicated to St. Elizabeth of Hungary (1207-1231). Patron saint of hospitals and nurses, it has become a tradition that incumbent priests know basic first aid. She is also the patron saint of the homeless. A small annex was added to the church, a basic shelter for sightseers or Mordavian visitors who cannot afford, or do not desire the comfort of, the small guesthouse. A simple meal of bread, soup, and watery wine is served each evening.

Father Frank, the resident priest, believes in the God of the Old Testament—a strict parental figure prone to punishing those who transgress his laws. A powerful orator, the priest is forever lecturing his flock on the dangers of not confessing one's sins. Those who do not attend regular confession receive dire warnings that they have placed their mortal souls in peril of eternal damnation.

The villagers hold him in high regard, but many consider him fixated on saving their souls from the fires of hell over other aspects of his calling.

Schloss Quäler

Dark Places Style Points: 2

Eerie Atmosphere Penalty: -1

Notable Inhabitants: Herr Doktor Ulrich Lindner, Necromantic Jelly (see *Leagues of Gothic Horror Expansion*)

The Castle of the Tormentor is hardly a name to attract tourists and scholars of history, yet it is apt. Partially ruined, with large sections of wall still blackened from ancient fire, the an-

cestral seat of the former barons of Quälerdorf stand on a steep hill overlooking the village. None of the barons was particularly pleasant toward their subjects, but the activities of the last scion led to the overthrow of his family and the cursing of the family name.

Whether he suffered from a malady of the brain or was the servant of Satan never troubled the villagers. All they cared about was the children he forced from their families and took to his castle against their will, children who were never seen again.

When word spread he had ritually butchered their offspring (a fact only later proven by the discovery of mutilated corpses), the villagers threw aside their fear, grabbed their pitchforks, lit torches, and marched on the castle. What remained of the baron's body after the villagers sated their righteous fury was burned on the orders of the bishop and buried in unconsecrated ground. What became of his wife, Mircalla, remains a historical mystery.

Recently sold, the castle is inhabited once more. The locals know little of the new occupant, save that he is a scientist who purchased the ruin in order to expand his research into electricity. The metal spire that adorns the tallest tower attracts lightning during the frequent storms that roll up the narrow valley. Being of superstitious nature, the villagers avert their gaze when this occurs, secretly wary that the scientist is performing ungodly experiments.

This belief is not without foundation. Since the doctor took up residence, villagers have had their sleep disturbed by strange scratching at their doors and eerie noises carried on the wind, not to mention the grotesquely mutilated livestock, and shadowy forms seen flitting between buildings after dark.



The nearest village to Karnstein, Wurmkirch (Church of the Serpent) is also the only settlement south of the Wurmach.

Karnstein may be the modern capital and Beinemfeld the largest village, but Wurmkirchers proudly remind their kinsmen that their community is the oldest Germanic settlement. Many

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of the Saxons invited to inhabit the ethnically cleansed valley came here with the express intention of growing grapes and making wine. The northern slopes of the Heidnischeberge, below which the settlement sits, provided ideal conditions. Both red and white grapes are cultivated.

In 1880, Transylvania and Romania were infested with phylloxera, an insect that attacks vine roots. Much of their viticulture was destroyed, with some areas remaining barren for a decade. Isolated by geography, Mordavia avoided the infestation. As Romanian production dropped off, Mordavia's vintners increased production. Today, Mordavian wines are exported across Eastern Europe and are slowly starting to find their way onto the tables of Western European drinkers. As a result, the inhabitants of Wurmkirch are prosperous compared to their farming kin.

Church of St. Urban of Langres

Dark Places Style Points: 2

Eerie Atmosphere Penalty: -1

Popular legend claims the church's altar was consecrated on the site where Saint Margaret of Hungary prayed to God to deliver the inhabitants of Mordavia from the fury of the Mongols. A statue of the saint performing that very act stands proudly in front of the church. This was verified, so the story continues, by the Germanic settlers finding a cross planted in the ground here.

Were the villagers to know the truth, they would burn the church to the ground and salt the earth. The cross was actually erected by the Teutonic Knights to sanctify the ground, for it was here the great dragon was summoned. The taint of the ritual that brought it slithering from the void between the stars still lingers. Whenever the Order of the Dragon performs a ritual, the old magic flares up. Anyone present witnesses the structure of the church warp into impossible angles and the serpent designs adorning its walls appear to writhe. Seeing this requires a Horror roll at Difficulty 2.

Whether or not the roll succeeds, all witnesses are left feeling nauseous for the remain-

der of the scene. During this time, globetrotters suffer from the Sickly Flaw.

Until 1881, the church was dedicated to St. Margaret. With the increase in wine-production, the burgomeister, local priest, and leading vintners petitioned the bishop to have the site reconsecrated to St. Urban of Langres, patron saint of vine-growers and vintners. This was approved in 1883.

To honor the new saint, the carvings on the church's gates and outer walls were worked. The coiling image of the dragon, alleged defender of Mordavia, was given clusters of grapes and vine leaves, blending the old and new saints together.

Father Stephen, the incumbent priest, is a popular fellow. He has a keen interest in wine, especially its consumption, the topic often entering his sermons. Three times a year—at the start of the growing season, at the start of the harvest, and when the latest batch of wine is declared ready to drink, the priest visits the vineyards and vintners, blessing the produce and workers in the name of Saint Urban while gratefully accepting a glass of wine at each place he visits.

Schreiber Winery

Dark Places Style Points: 2

Eerie Atmosphere Penalty: 0

Notable Inhabitants: Vampire

The destruction of Transylvania and Romania's wine production proved a great boon for the Schreiber family. They specialize in growing Feteasca Neagra ("Black Maiden") grapes, a Romanian variant all but wiped out during the blight. It produces a deep red wine with a blackcurrant after taste.

The Schreibers have worked the land for as long as anyone can remember, and it is quite possible their ancestors were among the first wave of settlers. Never rich, they were prosperous enough that their dead could be buried in a family mausoleum. Rather than constructing it on hallowed ground, the family tomb stands in the hills above the vineyards.

Four years ago, Ulrike, the eldest daughter, was killed by a vampire. Placed in the mausoleum, she rose from the dead three nights

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later as a bloodsucker. A mewling newborn by the standards of her kind, she nonetheless has great plans for the future.

Season after season, she has returned to the winery to pour her accursed blood into the vats of liquid awaiting bottling. As each bottle is consumed, her tainted blood makes mortals ever so slightly susceptible to her commands. In due course, once enough people are infected, she plans to become Mordavia's secret queen.

Her presence has not gone unnoticed, though. Workers out for late night strolls have caught glimpses of her moving around the winery. Word has spread that the place is haunted, enforcing a voluntary curfew by the family and its workforce.

Smithy

Dark Places Style Points: 0

Eerie Atmosphere Penalty: 0

Notable Inhabitants: Werewolf

Adolf Schmid is the village blacksmith. He lives with his wife, Ortrud, in a comfortable house a short walk from the smithy.

Wurmkirch is currently plagued by wolves, or so the locals believe. Certainly something is taking their livestock. Were the locals to put their heads together, they might realize that their animals go missing only around the full moon.

Several months ago, Ortrud was out late rounding up sheep when a werewolf attacked her. That she survived the mauling was both a blessing and a curse. Adolf convinced his neighbors the beast was a wild dog—had they even suspected a wolf was involved their fear of werewolves may have prompted them to hack off Ortrud's head and burn her corpse.

Adolf always suspected the beast was more than an ordinary wolf, and it did not take long for his fears to be proven true—her injuries healed with supernatural quickness and he discovered her feet caked in mud on mornings after the full moon.

Love has prevented the smith from killing his wife. As the full moon draws near, he takes her into a ruined cottage in the woods, where he chains her up. To sate her ravenous appetite, Adolf has taken to stealing livestock.

Wracked by guilt, he is afraid that Ortrud may be discovered in werewolf form or, worse, may escape her bonds and kill a human. For now, he has no solution to the problem.



Dark Places Style Points: 0

Eerie Atmosphere Penalty: 0

Notable Inhabitants: Andrei, Madame Mariana

Each year, when the air warms and the snows melt, Romanian Gypsies return to Mordavia, as they have done for time immemorial.

After spending a few days camped outside Karnstein, an event marked by a large fair, their brightly painted *vardos* trundle slowly along the North Road past Beinemfeld, whereupon they turn north up the valley. At the base of the waterfall that marks the start of the Zigeunerbach ("The Gypsies' Stream"), they form their homes into three circles, one for each of the tribes who make up their number.

Throughout the summer months, they ply their trades, foretell fortunes (rarely using true powers of divination) for young men who seek wealth and young girls who seek good husbands, provide entertainment (dancing, musical performances, bear dancing and wrestling, and such like), and hunt and forage in the wilds. Their young men frequently travel in search of maidens to seduce with their roguish charms, while the fathers of young Gypsy women keep an eye on amorous Mordavian lads who may overstep the bounds of hospitality and accepted interaction.

While the Gypsies are generally well-behaved, committing no more than petty acts of larceny, not every Mordavian welcomes their presence. The more rural folk especially confuse them with the evil Szgany (who never announce their arrival and who visit only for sinister purposes). Even those who can tell the difference keep a wary eye on the visitors, for Gypsies are known to possess strange powers and dabble in things god-fearing folk avoid.

The location of the camp has nothing to do with access to water or good foraging. Not only is it remote, it lies on a ley line nexus.

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The Three Tribes

Each tribe has a specialty. The *Kalderash* are tinkers, metalworkers who repair household utensils. Rather than accept coin, they barter their services. The *Ursari* train bears. Each year, the Gypsies scour the forests for orphaned cubs, which they train to dance and wrestle. The *Aurari* work as goldsmiths, selling their beautifully crafted good in return for hard coin. Several young men and women of the tribes are members of the Golden Circle, a Leagues of Gypsies devoted to protecting their kind against supernatural threats.

Other Locations

The following locations, while some may be situated close to settlements detailed above, are not considered part of those communities. Hence, they receive their own entries.

Blutbrunn

Dark Places Style Points: 2

Eerie Atmosphere Penalty: -1

Notable Inhabitants: Vampires, Werewolves

The streams and rivers of Mordavia flow crystal clear, at least as far as Karnstein, where the pollutants that come with civilization seep into the water. On nights of the full moon, no water trickles from the Blood Spring. When the moon is fat and bright, thick blood oozes from the wellspring, its coppery tang wafting far on the night winds.

Few Mordavians have the courage to drink the water here at the best of times (despite it being harmless), but none have the strength of heart to visit the spring while it bubbles forth blood. On these nights, so Mordavians believe, werewolves and vampires come here to slake their thirst for blood.

Despite considering the site accursed, Mordavians are secretly glad it exists. For three nights at least, they are relatively safe from vampires. Werewolves, of course, need to consume flesh to survive, so it is less helpful in thwarting their bloody hunts.

According to folklore, a thirsty peasant out hunting called on God to provide him with water. Instead, he received a visit from the Devil. Never one to hand out favors for free, Satan challenged the peasant to a fiddle contest—if the mortal won, he would have water; if he lost, his soul would be forfeit. Much to the horned one's annoyance, he lost. Angered, he struck his hoof on the ground, causing the spring to bubble up. As he departed to the infernal realm, he cursed the waters to attract wickedness, thus causing their transformation.

The Dragon's Tooth

Dark Places Style Points: 8

Eerie Atmosphere Penalty: -2

Notable Inhabitants: Order of the Dragon cultists



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Standing 18 feet high and carved with spirals, wavy lines, and squared crosses, this solitary monolith dominates the clearing in which it stands. Its origin depends on whom one asks.

Discuss the topic with scholars at the University of Karnstein and they will tell you it was raised and inscribed by the ancient Dacians, a focal point of worship for their solar beliefs. The crosses are a later addition, cut into the rock by superstitious Christians. Ask a peasant, and he will reply that it is a tooth from the great dragon that saved the country from the Mongols, a gift given to warn other invaders to stay away. Neither story is true.

The stone was erected on the site where the elder fiend Zs'marugot was bound to the earth by the Teutonic Knights, a site which, by no coincidence, sits on the nexus of three ley lines. It remains a focal point for ceremonies,

but only those enacted by the Order of the Dragon, who gather here when the moon is dark to worship their blasphemous deity. The crosses were carved by the Teutonics, the spirals and waves by later cultists seeking to weaken the binding ritual.

An unholy site steeped in the profane taint of the monstrosity buried beneath it, it is not for the faint-hearted. When viewed from the corner of one's eye, the patterns on the stone appear to move, only ceasing when one turns one's full attention to them. There are no birds or animals beyond bloated, pale worms that burst through the soil and slither around the menhir before burrowing down again. The shadows cast by the surrounding trees appear to reach toward unwelcome guests with grasping hands.

It is no mere superstition that those who deign to sleep near the stone will awaken mad. Tortured dreams of a colossal worm from which madness is the only escape await such fools. In game terms, sleeping here demands a Horror roll at Difficulty 5.

Forests, Generic

Dark Places Style Points: 2

Eerie Atmosphere Penalty: -1 (-2 at night)

Notable Inhabitants: Werewolves, Witches

Even on the brightest days, Mordavians rarely venture far into the forests that cover the valley floor and lower mountain slopes. Except in clearings, the forest floor is shrouded in deep shadows. By day, Mordavians fear bears and wolves. Once the sun sets, their fear becomes one of ravenous werewolves and diabolical witches. The Mordavians are right to fear the forests, for they provide shelter to all manner of supernatural terrors.

The forests are dotted with ruins. Most are relatively recent and utterly mundane, small crofts abandoned by farmers or old shepherds' huts no longer in use. Some are of historical interest. Standing stones, solitary or forming circles and avenues, erected by the prehistoric tribes as totems, or fragments of walls left behind by Dacian and Roman settlers. Several of these archaic constructions stand on the three ley lines that run through Mordavia.



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Monastery

Dark Places Style Points: 0

Eerie Atmosphere Penalty: 0

Notable Inhabitants: Brother Lothar

Located on the forest slopes of the Magierberge, the holy site is occupied by the Brothers of Gottschalk, a very minor monastic order dedicated to St. Gottschalk (?-1066), patron saint of linguistics and translators. Granted permission to construct a monastery in 1660, the monks have devoted their lives to copying and translating books into a variety of languages. These are then sold to libraries to fund the upkeep of their home.

Although the monks rarely visit Karnstein, save the occasional visit to the cathedral, the monastery is open to visitors. Curious sightseers are given a brief tour, while those who bring books they require translated receive a warmer welcome from Abbot Othmar.

Once he has assured himself the work to be translated is not heretical, Othmar assigns a monk to begin work. No fee is demanded, but patrons are expected to make a donation. The time it takes to translate a book depends on its size, ranging from a few hours for a pamphlet in a core tongue to many weeks or months for a weighty tome in some obscure language.

Only 25 monks live in the monastery. That three of them have gone missing over the past two years has Abbot Othmar gravely concerned for the well-being of the others. Any assistance in resolving the matter would be paid for in translation work rather than hard coin.

Use the stats for a clergyman (see Chapter Five) for the monks, but swap their Skills for the following: Academics: Religion 5 (*Texts* 6), Empathy 4, Linguistics 6 (*Translation* 7).

The South Road

Dark Places Style Points: 2

Eerie Atmosphere Penalty: -1 (at night)

Notable Inhabitants: Headless Horseman

Stretching from Karnstein to Quälerdorf, the South Road sees little traffic. With every community save for Wurmkirch on the northern side, the only shelters from the night are

old cottages and the occasional ruin—no protection against storm or beast.

Brave travelers have reported hearing the thundering steps of a galloping horse late at night, though only the bravest or most foolhardy have witnessed its cause. While others hid in the undergrowth and prayed for salvation, they bore witness to the ride of the Headless Knight. Clad in archaic armor, wielding a sword of ancient design, and riding a midnight-black steed with burning eyes, the fiend stalks the night in search of its head.

The Headless Knight is a fallen Teutonic Knight, captured and decapitated by the fell cultists he came to Mordavia to destroy. Unlike a standard headless horseman, this version is bound to no mortal master. Instead, he seeks to find his missing head, for without it he refuses to enter the afterlife, fearing that God will not recognize him and the deeds he performed in His name.

Most times it ignores mortals. Those unfortunates whose facial features vaguely resemble those of the knight may be chased down and decapitated, their severed heads casually discarded once the knight realizes its mistake.

Teufelsstuhl

Dark Places Style Points: 0

Eerie Atmosphere Penalty: -1

Notable Inhabitants: Fungi from Yuggoth (see *Leagues of Cthulhu*)

Teufelsstuhl ("The Devil's Chair") is a barren, windswept peak high in the Elsterberge. No tracks or trails lead to it, and few Mordavians have ever seen reason to venture near. Foreigners who mention a bid to scale the peak are hastily warned off. Tales of sudden storms, crumbling rocks, and high winds are given as reasons to seek other peaks to conquer.

As any folklorist worth his salt might suspect, the peak is said to be where the Devil once sat and watched over Mordavia, his eyes scanning the valley for sinners to drag screaming into hell. When storms rage over the mountains, Mordavians believe the Devil returns to his seat to continue his search.

Many have heard stories from elderly

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More Locations?

So you've read through this section and part of you is still clamoring for more locations. Truth is, we could have filled a book twice this size, but there wasn't any need.

Between them, *Leagues of Gothic Horror* and its *Expansion* contains dozens of supernatural sites. In most instances you just need to change their name to something more suitable and drop them into Mordavia wherever you want, instantly expanding the number of interesting sites globetrotters can explore and horrors they can face.

Even the more unusual sites, such as the Mexican Pyramid of Vines can be transplanted. Instead of being a pyramid, the structure is a Dacian ruin or the former stronghold of a witches' coven.

relatives of a winged demons, bloated flies in bondage to Beelzebub that sing to Satan in buzzing voices in mockery of the Seraphim who praise God. On rare nights, when lightning transforms night into brief day with its ferocity and thunder threatens to knock down houses, Satan sends the bloated flies to take mortals, whatever their sins.

Satan has actually never ventured near the peak, though the buzzing, winged beasts are very real. The mountain's interior is home to a small colony of Fungi from Yuggoth.

Long isolated on Earth from their kin, the Fungi have become degenerate and decadent. During the most fierce storms, they take to the air in search of victims for their grotesque experiments.

The Watchtower

Dark Places Style Points: 2

Eerie Atmosphere Penalty: 0

Notable Inhabitants: Cultists, Wolves

Until 100 years ago, the stretch of the North Road between Mühldorf and the bridge over the Kronbach was a toll road. The tollhouses

are long gone, their bricks plundered to build houses. The sole evidence of the toll road's existence is a watchtower located on the lower slopes of the Hängeberg.

The stonework remains as strong as ever, but the wooden floors have rotted away, leaving the three-storey tower hollow. As with most abandoned buildings in Mordavia, the locals keep a safe distance from it. Talk of ghosts is commonplace.

Stories of apparitions were deliberately started by the Brotherhood of the Wolf to ensure privacy. While the upper tower is abandoned, a trapdoor leads to a stone spiral staircase that descends into what was the old storage cellar. The Brotherhood has excavated a pit in the cellar floor. Here it keeps a number of wolves in a state of near-perpetual hunger. On nights of the full moon, the cult gathers here to throw human sacrifices to the ravenous beasts, an offering to their dark god.

Widow's Leap

Dark Places Style Points: 2

Eerie Atmosphere Penalty: -1

Notable Inhabitants: Grief (see *Guide to Apparitions*)

Long ago, the wife of a Mordavian nobleman summoned to war by the King of Hungary, took up residence on this high promontory of the Schwarzberg overlooking the Kronbach. Here, she vowed, she would stand and watch for her husband's return from battle. Years later, long after the other soldiers had returned home, she threw herself to her death far below. Denied entrance to Heaven as a suicide, her anguished spirit became fettered to the promontory, here to spend eternity as a grief.

Mordavians have no doubt the site is haunted—the widow's ghost has been seen standing her silent vigil many times. Young girls, whose hearts may be broken young by callous young men, are warned to stay clear of Widow's Leap if they value their immortal soul.

Ending the grief's existence requires more than a simple Banish ritual. Only by returning her husband's mortal remains can her sorrow end and her soul be set free.

Chapter the Fourth: Notable Denizens

What sort of place had I come to, and among what kind of people? —Bram Stoker, Dracula

This chapter is concerned with the denizens of Mordavia. It is broken down into four sections. The first concerns notable persons, be they people of power or citizens with dark secrets and motives. As with other products, any levels in Rank, Status, or Wealth are additional to those of the character's Ally, Followers, or Patron level. Where a character has a Sanity rating in parenthesis, that person is immune to Horror rolls *unless* his or her alternate, non-villainous version is used, in which case the number applies as normal.

Next are a series of stock characters, generic inhabitants left for the Gamemaster to flesh out as and when required by the scenario. Inhuman fiends either unique to Mordavia or not previously detailed form the third section. Finally, there are a handful of nefarious cults.

Important Persons

Andrei

Andrei, the only name he uses outside his immediate family, is a swarthy man. Keen-eyed visitors to the camp by day may notice his close scrutiny of their every move while he taps his hammer lightly on whatever golden object he

is supposedly working. At night, they may notice he is rarely present around the campfires.

Distrustful of strangers, even fellow Gypsies, he a senior member of the Golden Circle, sworn protector of his tribe, and a renowned werewolf hunter among the League. He places little faith in firearms—impractical against fast-moving targets and useless in melee. Where others who share his beliefs might wield a silvered blade, Andrei puts his faith in spiked silver knuckles he wears on his right hand when out hunting.

Werewolves haunt the forests of Mordavia, and while Andrei takes great delight in ending their unholy existence, he abhors having to deal with the ignorant citizens of Mordavia, who hang garlands of wolfsbane, a deterrent only against the few lycanthropes allergic to their odor, and whisper useless prayers in the vain hope the bogeyman will stay away from their homes.

Andrei

Patron 2

Archetype: *Gypsy*; **Motivation:** *Preservation*; **Style:** 2

Primary Attributes: Body 4, Dexterity 3, Strength 4, Charisma 2, Intelligence 2, Willpower 2

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 7, Perception 5, Initiative 6, Defense 7, Stun 4, Health 6, Sanity 4

Skills: Academics: Occult 5, Animal Handling 4 (*Dogs* 5), Athletics 6, Brawl 8, Craft: Gold-

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smith 5, Linguistics 4, Stealth 6, Survival 6 (*Tracking* 7)

Talents: Block (Perform Block as a reflexive action), Counterstrike (Damage attacker with a successful Block), Werewolf Hunter (+2 bonus when interacting with werewolves; see *Leagues of Gothic Horror Expansion*)

Resources: Artifact 2 (Spiked silver knuckles; see *Guide to Shapeshifters*)*, Rank 4 (Golden Circle; +4 Social bonus)

Flaws: Distrustful (+1 Style point whenever his distrustful nature prevents him from achieving a major goal or causes him or his friends trouble)

Weapons: Punch 8N, Spiked silver knuckles 10L

* *Bonus Resource from his Rank.*

Axel Sauer, Father

Custodian of the hand of Saint Margaret, Father Axel has served at the cathedral in one guise or another since he was a choir boy. Having lost his own right hand in a childhood accident, Sauer felt a natural affinity toward the relic. A man of certain vanity, the priest eventually had a wooden hand attached to his wrist, over which he wears a black glove.

Since the hand of Saint Margaret was donated to the cathedral, no one had gazed upon the holy relic. Sauer, however, felt a compulsion to do so, a constant nagging that gnawed at his soul. In the end, he could resist temptation no longer.

Inside the reliquary lay not the mummified hand of a beloved saint, but a blackened, withered limb into whose leathery flesh were inscribed runes that hurt the eye to gaze upon and made his stomach churn. Horrified, Sauer slammed closed the lid. Sickened to his core, the priest set about learning more about the relic's donator, Grand Duke Heinrich III.

This research led him into the shrouded world of the arcane, into studies which no sane man, let alone a man of the cloth, should deign to venture. Heinrich, a warlock of some potency, feared witch-hunters had caught his scent, for he revelled in the black arts and made frequent commune with Satan, the great

dragon (actually Zs'marugot). Gathering up his many occult relics and accursed tomes of eldritch lore, he ensured their survival by donating them to churches as relics or concealing them in Castle Karnstein.

With each story he unearthed, his soul grew more twisted. The final revelation—that holding the blackened hand to his own stump would grant him arcane power—cast his soul from the light into eternal darkness. Now utterly corrupt, Sauer is seeking out Heinrich's remaining relics. He is not prepared to let something as trivial as human life get in his way.

Formerly a popular figure around town, Sauer has grown more aloof the longer the accursed hand remains grafted to his flesh. He has plentiful excuses for his apparent change in behavior, none of which venture anywhere near the truth. Note that although the arcane hand acts like a normal limb, he is careful to act as if he still retained his wooden prosthetic.

Alternate Backstory: Father Axel is ignorant of the nature of the hand, having never felt the urge to peer inside the reliquary. He does, however, have an interest in the occult, believing that something sinister and arcane lies at the heart of Mordavia's troubles. That he has grown aloof is because he in investing more and more time trying to unravel the secrets of Mordavia's occult past.

Statistic Changes: Lower his Physical Attributes by one point each, recalculating his Secondary Attributes as normal. Add the One Hand Flaw.

Axel Sauer, Father

Ally 2

Archetype: *Clergyman*; **Motivation:** *Preservation*; **Style:** 1

Primary Attributes: Body 4, Dexterity 3, Strength 4, Charisma 3, Intelligence 3, Willpower 2

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 7, Perception 5, Initiative 6, Defense 7, Stun 4, Health 6, Sanity (5)

Skills: Academics: Occult 5, Academics: Religion 5, Athletics 5, Brawl 5, Con 5, Diplomacy 5, Investigation 5, Linguistics 4

Talents: Charismatic (+1 Charisma rating),

Notable Demizens

Rabble-Rouser (Can boost Followers as if it were a Talent)

Resources: Status 1 (Priest; +2 Social bonus)

Flaws: Aloof (+1 Style point whenever his business-like attitude causes him trouble)

Weapons: Punch 5N

Black Hand: The hand grants the priest a +1 bonus to each of his Physical Attributes. This has already been factored in to his statistics. The foul creation also allows him to cast the rituals Channel Dead (he must touch the corpse with the limb), Fear (he must reveal the hand to the intended victim), Harm, and Raise Dead (he must touch the corpse). For these purposes only, Sauer has an effective Magic: Black Magic 8.

Finally, anyone gazing on the withered, sigil-inscribed flesh limb grafted onto the priest's healthy living tissue for the first time must make a Horror roll (Difficulty 2).

Christian Hanisch

Gamemasters will require Guide to Walking Dead to fully utilize this villain.

Winter came early in 1712. Harvests were ruined by sharp frosts and snow isolated Mordavia. As conditions grew more desperate, the Hanisch family resorted to cannibalism. Better times did not detract them from their newfound love of human flesh, and lone travellers were kidnapped by the villains, their flesh roasted, their blood turned into sausages, and their bones ground to make flour.

Hanisch, the head of his family, is over 170 years old, sustained by the human flesh on which he dines. The centuries have warped his body into a monstrous parody of humanity. His flesh has withered, yet his muscles have inhuman strength. He is utterly hairless, his parchment skin revealing the network of veins beneath. His gnarled fingers end in wicked claws and his teeth are enlarged.

Although he has shunned daylight for decades, he stalks the North Road at night with members of his monstrous family in search of fresh meat. An ambush predator, he tries to grapple opponents, whereupon he gnaws at their necks with his powerful jaws and sharp teeth.



Alternate Backstory: Hanisch is an old man of 70 years and is quite human in appearance. Of robust health after years of hard toil, he is a poacher, quite content to trap wild game or snatch one of his neighbors' livestock. None of his kinsfolk are ghouls, although they are heavily inbred.

Statistic Changes: Change Motivation to Everyman. Remove his powers entry and Pained by Sunlight weakness.

Christian Hanisch

Patron 2

Archetype: *Monster*; **Motivation:** *Survival*; **Style:** 2

Primary Attributes: Body 4, Dexterity 2, Strength 5, Charisma 1, Intelligence 2, Willpower 4

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 7, Percep-

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tion 6, Initiative 4, Defense 6, Stun 4, Health 8, Horror 3 (4 if feeding)

Skills: Athletics 8, Brawl 8, Intimidation 6, Stealth 9, Survival 8

Talents: Keen Sense (+4 scent-based Perception rating), Skill Aptitude (+2 Stealth rating), Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)

Resources: None

Powers: Gnaw (+4 bonus to Bite attacks against grappled opponent), Iron Grip (+4 bonus to maintain grapples), Iron Teeth (Ignores one point of Passive Defense from armor)

Flaws: Glutton (+1 Style point whenever his appetite causes him problems)

Weapons: Claws 8L, Bite 8L

Pained by Sunlight: Hanisch has not seen the sun in over 70 years. He suffers a -4 penalty to all rolls when in sunlight.

Diedrich Haas, Herr Doktor

There is no other way to say it—Haas is a technological genius. He holds degrees in chemistry, engineering, and medicine from Heidelberg University, and has numerous patents to his name. Haas is also a criminal mastermind of the highest order, the sort of cur whose nefarious activities are notoriously hard for ordinary detectives to track down.

Among the many weird science devices at his spa is a Hypnotron. Patients are placed in a state of deep hypnosis, during which time they reveal all their dirty little secrets. Haas, whose photographic memory means he never has to record his sessions in writing, later blackmails his victims anonymously for exorbitant sums. A network of agents, all hypnotized to never recall meeting the cur, act as his proxies.

As far as his patients are concerned, the Hypnotron is a “mental massager,” an innocent device that soothes away mental stress and leaves them feeling deeply relaxed afterward.

Alternate Backstory: Haas is a man of science dedicated to helping others, and making a small fortune for himself. His lust for wealth is satisfied through the high fees he charges patrons. This also drives him to construct new healthcare machines.

He still has a secret that would threaten

his livelihood were it to become public knowledge—he is a homosexual (still a crime in the unenlightened Victorian era).

Diedrich Haas, Herr Doktor

Patron 2

Archetype: *Inventor/Criminal Mastermind*;

Motivation: *Greed*; **Style:** 2

Primary Attributes: Body 3, Dexterity 3, Strength 2, Charisma 2, Intelligence 5, Willpower 3

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 5, Perception 8, Initiative 8, Defense 6, Stun 3, Health 6, Sanity (5)

Skills: Craft 8, Diplomacy 5, Empathy 6, Linguistics 7, Medicine 7, Performance 5, Science: Chemistry 8, Science: Engineering 8

Talents: Total Recall (Never forgets anything), Weird Science (Can create gadgets), Well-Educated (Treats Craft as a general Skill)

Resources: Status 1 (Respected citizen; +2 Social bonus)

Flaws: Secret (+1 Style point whenever he is confronted with the truth or goes out of his way to protect the secret)

Weapons: Punch 0N

Frank Derhake, Father

Father Frank is a pious man. Perhaps too pious for his own good. In his eyes, any sin, no matter how trivial it might be, is a stain on his soul and an affront to God. When the church is closed, he flagellates his back with a leather strap to purge himself of his ungodly thoughts.

Rather than suppressing his darker thoughts, the years of flogging have given them an unholy life of their own. Within an hour of his eyes lingering too long on a beautiful woman, overindulging in food or drink, tapping his feet in tune to a bawdy song, or similar thoughts hardly representative of wickedness, Father Frank undergoes a physical transformation in a manner redolent of Doctor Jekyll.

Where as the priest is a good man at heart, his alter ego, which calls itself Herr Duster (Mister Sinister), is a monstrous brute. This darker aspect of the clergyman does not seek

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to revel in power or accumulate riches. Using information gleaned from Derhake's memories, the vicious brute physically punishes those who have revealed sins in confession.

Alternate Backstory: Derhake hears voices without auditory stimulus. He believes the voice is that of God, who chastises him for his wicked ways. In fact he suffers from paracusia brought on by his belief that he is a repeat sinner. Psychoanalysis would likely cure him of his condition, should it be successfully diagnosed as a mental disorder.

Franz Derhake, Father

Patron 1

Archetype: *Clergyman*; **Motivation:** *Hope*; **Style:** 1

Primary Attributes: Body 3, Dexterity 3, Strength 2, Charisma 3, Intelligence 2, Willpower 2

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 5, Perception 4, Initiative 5, Defense 6, Stun 3, Health 5, Sanity (5)

Skills: Academics: Religion 6 (*Sins* 7), Athletics 4, Diplomacy 4, Empathy 5, Linguistics 4, Medicine 4, Performance 6 (*Oratory* 7)

Talents: Skill Aptitude (+2 Academics: Religion rating), Skill aptitude (+2 Performance rating)

Resources: Status 1 (Priest; +2 Social bonus)

Flaws: Multiple Personalities (+1 Style point whenever his alter ego interferes with his life)

Weapons: Punch 0N

Herr Düster

Patron 1

Archetype: *Monster*; **Motivation:** *Revenge*; **Style:** 1

Primary Attributes: Body 4, Dexterity 2, Strength 5, Charisma 1, Intelligence 1, Willpower 2

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 7, Perception 3, Initiative 3, Defense 6, Stun 4, Health 6, Horror —

Skills: Athletics 10, Brawl 10, Intimidation 6

Talents: Knockout Blow (+1 bonus to stun opponents), Lethal Hands (Brawl attacks do lethal damage)

Resources: None

Flaws: Sadism (+1 Style point whenever he is needlessly cruel to his friends or enemies)

Weapons: Punch 10N

Franz Klein, Professor

Professor of Eastern European History at the University of Karnstein, Professor Klein is leading expert on the Dacian peoples. He frequently lectures on the topic in Transylvania and Romania, and has published two books, one concerning Dacian culture and the other Dacian religious practices.

After graduating from the University of Karnstein, Klein took up a teaching post at the recently opened University of Bucharest (est. 1864). While perusing the library, he stumbled across a copy of *The Prehistoric Cults of the Carpathian Mountains*, a scholarly work detailing the wolf cult of ancient Dacia (see sidebar below).

Finding the arguments compelling, Klein began a decades long quest for further information. He travelled extensively through the Carpathians, recording snippets of nearly forgotten folklore, studying Dacian ruins, and combing libraries for any information.

Klein's investigations, which he never made secret, attracted the attention of the Brotherhood of the Wolf. Initiated into its ancient ranks, the scholar returned to Mordavia to found a new branch.

Condescending by nature, Klein is entirely dismissive of talk of werewolves and wolf cults. Peering down his long nose and talking to questioners as if they were imbeciles, he explains that such topics as nothing more than remnants of folklore combined with fevered imaginations of peasants fearful of wolves.

Alternate Backstory (Mythos): Rather than being a faceless entity offered sacrifices through mundane wolves by a bunch of deranged Mordavians, the cult Klein leads honors the Great Wolf, an avatar of Nyarlathotep.

Statistic Changes: Using Klein in a *Leagues of Cthulhu* game requires multiple changes to his statistics.

Skills: Replace his Magic Skill with Academ-

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Culte Preistorice din Muntii Carpati

Language: Romanian; **Author:** Adrian Craciun; **Published:** 1799; **Complexity:** 2; **Horror:** 1; **Mythos:** 2; **Contents:** Call Nyarlathotep (Great Wolf avatar), Control Animal (wolves only), Form of the Beast (wolf only), Summon Hound of Tindalos

As yet not translated into other languages, this scholarly work, whose name translates into English as "The Prehistoric Cults of the Carpathian Mountains", espouses the theory that a barbaric cult existed among the peoples of the Carpathian Mountains.

Beginning in prehistory, the cult remained small and confined to remote valleys. During the rise of the Dacians it came out of the shadows to emerge as the state religion. It was allegedly purged in 106 AD, when the Romans under Trajan conquered the region, though Craciun hints remnants may still exist today in the remote mountains.

Cult activities focused around worship of a great wolf, a monstrous entity who granted his most devout followers the magical ability to transform themselves into wolf form. A gluttonous deity, it demanded frequent human sacrifice lest it turn on and devour its worshippers.

ics: Occult 5 and Elder Lore: Great Old Ones 5;

Talents: Swap Magical Aptitude for Robust (+2 Health rating). Add Block (Perform Block as a reflexive action); **Resources:** Remove both Artifacts. Replace with Artifact 1 (Wolf statue; +4 Casting dice when invoking Control Animal, Form of the Beast, and Summon Hound of Tindalos)* and Contacts 1 (Cultists; +2 Social bonus)*; **Rituals:** Replace Empower with Call Nyarlathotep (Great Wolf avatar) and remove Beast Speech.

Alternate Backstory: Klein knows nothing about the Brotherhood of the Wolf. His research is entirely theoretical. A pragmatic man, he dismisses any talk of werewolves and weird cults out of hand, not because he seeks

to cover anything up, but because his rational mind cannot conceive such things truly exist.

Statistic Changes: Remove Magical Aptitude, Rank, all Artifacts, and all rituals. Replace with Robust (+2 Health) and Skill Aptitude (+2 Academics History rating). Remove Magic for Investigation 7 and Survival 7.

Franz Klein, Professor

Patron 2

Archetype: Academic; **Motivation:** Faith; **Style:** 2

Primary Attributes: Body 4, Dexterity 2, Strength 4, Charisma 2, Intelligence 3, Willpower 4

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 6, Perception 6, Initiative 5, Defense 6, Stun 4, Health 7, Sanity (5)

Skills: Academics: History 6 (*Dacia* 7), Athletics 6 (*Running* 7), Brawl 6, Intimidation 4, Investigation 5, Linguistics 5, Magic: Black Magic 7, Survival 5

Talents: Magical Aptitude (Can cast rituals), Run (Doubles running speed)

Resources: Artifact 1 (Magician's Wand; +2 Magic rating when used), Artifact 2 (Moonstone Amulet; see *Guide to Shapeshifters*)*, Rank 4 (Brotherhood of the Wolf; +4 Social bonus), Status 1 (Professor; +2 Social bonus)

Rituals: Beast: Speech: Wolf, Control Animal (wolves only), Empower, Form of the Beast: Wolf, Harm, Lesser Hex, Spirit Binding, Summon Beast: Wolf

Flaws: Condescending (+1 Style point whenever he proves someone else wrong or establishes his superiority), Fanatical (+1 Style point whenever his devotion causes harm or he converts someone else to his way of thinking)

Weapons: Punch 6N

* Bonus Resource from his Rank.

Frederick Feltman, Herr Doktor

Throughout his long career, Herr Doktor Feltman has heard several patients discuss the Dreamlands. While his peers discuss such talk as the ravings of lunatics, Feltman accepts that there are dimensions beyond our own. It is his

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misguided professional opinion that only the mad can access these realms, and then only in their fevered dreams.

In a bid to witness the Dreamlands without himself going mad, Feltman torments his patients, fueling their insanities rather than curing them. While his victims toss and turn and mutter in their sleep, the mad scientist uses a Mark II Dream Recorder to record the images in their dreams.

Alternate Backstory: Feltman is devoted to unlocking the deepest secrets of the mind and curing all forms of mental disease. Talk of other dimensions is utter nonsense worthy of having believers incarcerated in his opinion.

Frederick Feltman, Herr Doktor

Patron 2

Archetype: *Alienist*; **Motivation:** *Wisdom*;
Style: 2

Primary Attributes: Body 3, Dexterity 3, Strength 3, Charisma 3, Intelligence 3, Willpower 3

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 6, Perception 6, Initiative 6, Defense 6, Stun 3, Health 6, Sanity (6)

Skills: Academics 4, Alienism 8, Brawl 6, Bureaucracy 5, Diplomacy 5, Empathy 6, Investigation 4, Linguistics 4, Medicine 5

Talents: Psychic Resistance 2 (+4 bonus to resist supernatural abilities), Well-Educated (Treats Academics as a general Skill)

Resources: Status 1 (Respected Alienist; +2 Social bonus)

Flaws: Fanatical (+1 Style point whenever his devotion causes harm or he converts someone else to his way of thinking)

Weapons: Punch 0N

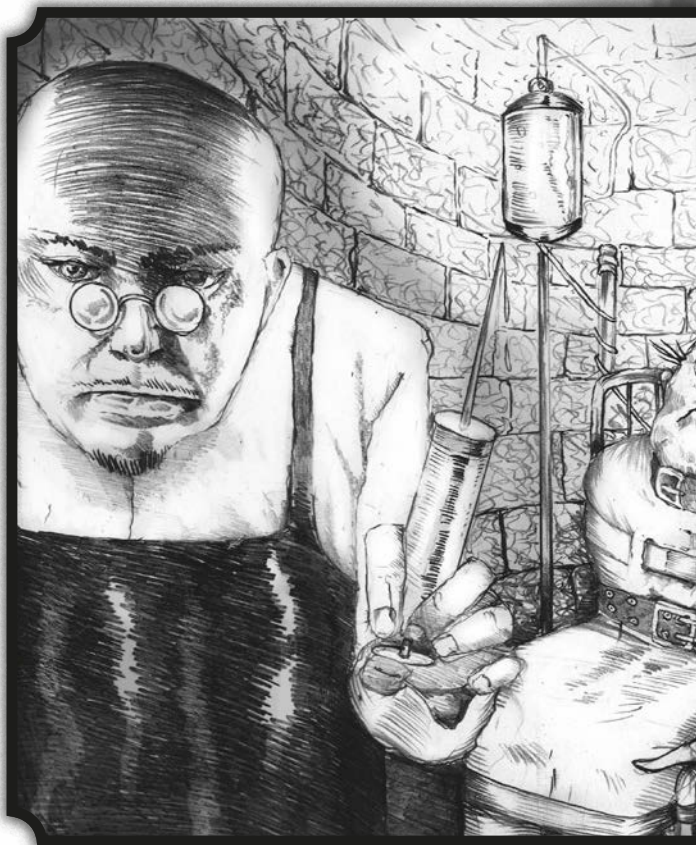
Friedrich, Grand Duke of Mordavia

An empathic soul frequently troubled by nightmares, the Grand Duke has been in a coma for the past five years. This fact is known only to his wife, who has become a total recluse, the Chancellor, the duke's private physician, and a handful of servants whose loyalty is above reproach.

Friedrich's coma is not natural. Five years ago, the Order of the Dragon performed a potent ritual in an attempt to awaken their deity. The ritual failed, but it did cause the abomination to stir. A psychic wave, unnoticed by all but the most sensitive, washed across Mordavia. The Grand Duke awoke screaming and then collapsed into a torpor from which no medicine has been able to rouse him.

Most times he lies utterly dormant. On occasion, he stirs, mumbling incoherently and reaching out to claw at the air with gnarled hands. During these brief spells, his tortured mind dreams unholy thoughts. Each time he dreams, some terrible beast (of the Gamemaster's choosing) manifests in the real world, only to vanish into thin air as the dream subsides.

Alternate Backstory: While Friedrich remains in a coma, he bears no responsibility for any of the horrors plaguing his homeland.



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Fritz Gruber

The handyman and gravedigger at the Church of the Blessed Virgin in Beinemfeld, Gruber is a hulking figure, with bulging muscles and a shock of blonde hair. Were it not for the dark birthmark that covers half his face, he would be considered a good mate for any farmer's daughter. Instead, he finds himself unable to attract a girlfriend.

Constant rejection and mockery has twisted the youth's mind. While cleaning out the house of a recently deceased parishioner as a favor to the family, Gruber found a scrap of parchment of obvious antiquity at the bottom of a trunk. Written in archaic German, Gruber struggled to make sense of it for several weeks. When he finally deciphered the text, his dreams appeared to have been answered. The parchment—actually human skin—held the means to return the dead to life, albeit in a crude form.

Over the past year, Gruber has made advances to several women. All rejected him, sealing their fate. The luckless girls were bludgeoned to death, their corpses reanimated for his sexual gratification.

Alternate Backstory: Gruber still seeks a woman who will see his inner beauty, but he has avoided necrophilia. He spends a lot of time in the graveyard, especially at night, where he ponders the cruelty of life and weeps over his disfigurement. Several villagers have reported seeing a shadowy figure stalking through the graveyard at night, causing some to believe a supernatural terror is abroad.

Statistic Changes: Remove Artifact and Magical Aptitude and replace them with Iron Jaw (+1 Stun rating) and Robust (+2 Health rating).

Fritz Gruber

Ally 2

Archetype: *Everyman*; **Motivation:** *Warped Love*; **Style:** 1

Primary Attributes: Body 5, Dexterity 2, Strength 5, Charisma 1, Intelligence 2, Willpower 3

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 7, Perception 5, Initiative 4, Defense 7, Stun 5, Health 8, Sanity (4)

Skills: Athletics 7, Brawl 7, Intimidation 6, Magic: Black Magic 7, Melee 8, Stealth 6

Talents: Magical Aptitude (Can cast rituals)

Resources: Artifact 1 (Parchment with Raise Dead ritual)

Rituals: Raise Dead

Flaws: Disfigured (+1 Style point whenever he is rejected because of his appearance)

Weapons: Punch 7N, Shovel 9L

Fritz Kuhn, Herr Doktor

Slightly rotund, balding, and ruddy of cheek, Herr Doktor Kuhn is Mordavia's top physician. As befits his status, he is also the Grand Duke's personal doctor and knows of his lord's malady.

Kuhn is the servant of a vampire. No thrall ensnared by the beast's iron will, he is a willingly devotee of darkness. In return for blood, easily acquired from patients given that the doctor still favors bleeding as a medical practice, the fiend has promised him immortality and a return to the vigor of his faded youth.

The doctor has few qualms about his deal. True, the vampire is a creature of darkness, but by supplying it with blood he is at least saving lives the beast would otherwise take to satisfy its hunger. That said, fear of being caught has led to sleepless nights. The doctor has sought solace in dream-inducing opium, to which he has become addicted. His health is further affected by his undead master's frequent demands for blood—when Kuhn cannot acquire it from patients, he is forced to drain his own veins.

What Kuhn does not know is that the creature has recently awakened from a long torpor as the arcane chains that bind Zs'marugot weaken. Once back to full health, the vampire will devour his puppet and then turn its attentions to the citizens of Karnstein.

Alternate Backstory: Doktor Kuhn's preference for bleeding is for a noble cause. Unable to cure the Grand Duke through common treatments, the good doctor is conducting a series of tests using the blood of the duke and ordinary patients. Since the duke's illness is not common knowledge, Kuhn has been unable to seek outside assistance from physicians with a

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better understanding of biology and diseases. Kuhn's opium addiction and sickness share the same origin—too many late nights working on his experiments.

Statistic Changes: Swap his Motivation for Duty.

Fritz Kuhn, Herr Doktor

Patron 2

Archetype: *Physician*; **Motivation:** *Power*; **Style:** 2

Primary Attributes: Body 3, Dexterity 4, Strength 3, Charisma 2, Intelligence 3, Willpower 3

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 7, Perception 6, Initiative 7, Defense 7, Stun 3, Health 6, Sanity (5)

Skills: Athletics 5, Diplomacy 5, Empathy 5, Linguistics 5, Medicine 6 (*Diagnosis 7, Surgery 7*), Melee 5, Performance 5, Science: Biology 5

Talents: Lucky (+2 bonus to any one roll per game session), Skill Aptitude (+2 Medicine rating)

Resources: Refuge: Equipment 1 (+2 Medicine rating), Status 1 (Physician; +2 Social bonus)

Flaws: Addiction (Opium: +1 Style point whenever his addiction hurts him or one of his patients), Sickly (+1 Style point whenever he suffers from his illness)

Weapons: Punch 0N, Scalpel 6L

Gunther Voight

Curator and custodian of the Karnstein Museum of Antiquities, Gunther has long been enraptured of the culture of Ancient Egypt. In full control of the museum's small budget for acquiring new artifacts, he recently funded and led an expedition to what Egyptologists assumed was a barren stretch of desert. There, the workers unearthed the phylactery of Apephotep.

Blind luck played no part in the expedition's success. Also a student of the occult, Gunther had heard dark stories concerning the exiled priest, snippets of lore, but enough when combined to deduce the location of his tomb.

While sleeping outside the tomb, the spirit of Apephotep appeared to Gunther in his dreams. Free his spirit, the sorcerer said, and he would give Gunther what he most desired—knowledge.

It was only once back in Karnstein that the curator accidentally stumbled upon the means to awaken Apephotep. Enthralled at the sight of the living mummy, Gunther has become a devoted student. He cares little while the undead requests him to purchase certain exotic oils or demands animal sacrifices. He has even blackened his soul to the knowledge that Apephotep has murdered at least two citizens and conducted several rituals of an unholy nature within the museum. So long as he learns more about Ancient Egypt, Gunther is a willing disciple of the monster.

Alternate Backstory: Gunther, while he has studied a little concerning the occult and is fascinated by Ancient Egypt, is utterly ignorant of the existence of Apephotep.

Gunther Voight

Ally 2

Archetype: *Academic*; **Motivation:** *Truth*; **Style:** 1

Primary Attributes: Body 3, Dexterity 3, Strength 2, Charisma 2, Intelligence 3, Willpower 2

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 5, Perception 5, Initiative 6, Defense 6, Stun 3, Health 5, Sanity (4)

Skills: Academics: History 7, Academics: Occult 5, Anthropology 5, Bureaucracy 5, Diplomacy 4, Expeditions 4, Investigation 5, Linguistics 5

Talents: Skill Aptitude (+2 Academics: History rating)

Resources: Contacts 1 (Museums; +2 bonus), Status 1 (Respected scholar; +2 Social bonus)

Flaws: Elderly (+1 Style point whenever age slows him down or he is taken advantage of because of it)

Weapons: Punch 0N

Helga Stein

Blonde haired, blue eyed, and beautiful, Helga is the target for many boys' romantic af-

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fections. She could have any boy she wanted as a paramour, but Helga is entirely devoted to her father, Professor Werner Stein, a lecturer in philosophy at the University of Karnstein.

Pretty looks can hide a dark heart, as the Mordavian saying goes, and Helga certainly fits that description.

Her father, a man of brilliant mind and only in his middle years, has succumbed to a form of dementia that leaves him stricken with amnesia for long periods. Driven by filial love, and keen to keep her father's illness secret lest he lose his position, Helga began scouring the university library for possible cures. It was while searching a little used section that she discovered a tome penned by Heinrich III, an accursed volume that gave her the answer she sought—if she was prepared to take drastic action.

Helga can now stave off her father's loss of

memory for short periods, but only by feeding him fresh human brains. Fortunately the university provides her with a ready source. After seducing a young man, Helga, a talented fencer, kills him and scoops out his brains. She then arranges for one of the porters, a simpleton with a crush on the girl, to dispose of her victim's belongings.

Alternate Backstory: Professor Stein does have dementia, but Helga dotes on him using conventional medicine.

Helga Stein

Ally 2

Archetype: *Everyman*; **Motivation:** *Preservation*; **Style:** 2

Primary Attributes: Body 2, Dexterity 3, Strength 2, Charisma 4, Intelligence 3, Willpower 3

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 5, Perception 5, Initiative 6, Defense 5, Stun 2, Health 4, Sanity (6)

Skills: Academics: Philosophy 4, Athletics 5, Con 6 (*Seduction* 7), Linguistics 5, Medicine 5, Melee 7 (*Swords* 8), Performance 5

Talents: Attractive (+1 Charisma when dealing with people; already included in stats), Bold Attack (Uses Charisma with Melee)

Resources: None

Flaws: Loyal: Father (+1 Style point whenever her unswerving loyalty causes trouble)

Weapons: Punch 0N, Arming sword 10L

Ingrid

Ingrid is a foundling, left on the steps of the orphanage when just a babe. It was readily apparent why she was abandoned—she has a club left foot, a deformity that would make her a poor farmer's daughter or an unattractive future marriage prospect.

Despite being only 8 years old, Ingrid has an astute mind, natural empathy, and a gift with animals. Were she raised by a wealthy family, or sponsored by a patron of sufficient means, she would perhaps go on to university to study veterinary medicine.

As it is, her club foot makes her an easy



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target for bullies. Ruthlessly teased, and occasionally beaten, Ingrid cries herself to sleep, dreaming of having a protector to keep her safe. Although she is blissfully unaware, the dark powers have answered her pleas.

Ingrid's only personal possession, a scruffy rag doll, has become the focus for a monster—the Raggedy Lady. Each night she dreamed of revenge against her persecutors, a human-sized construct took form to enact her dark thoughts. At first unaware of her power, Ingrid has now worked out the truth. No more a mindless tool, the Raggedy Lady materializes and acts on Ingrid's specific commands.

Note that killing the Raggedy Lady has absolutely no effect. Each time it is slain, it reforms the next time Ingrid summons it healed of all injuries. Only by destroying the innocuous rag doll never out of the orphan's grasp can the Raggedy Lady be dispatched for good.

Alternate Backstory: The Raggedy Lady is a myth, a story conducted by rival gangs of boys prone to fighting. Ingrid does have a rag doll, but it is entirely mundane. In place of seeking vengeance, she is determined to find out who her parents are and why they abandoned her.

Statistic Changes: Change her Motivation to Truth.

Ingrid

Ally 1

Archetype: *Everyman*; **Motivation:** *Vengeance*; **Style:** 1

Primary Attributes: Body 2, Dexterity 2, Strength 1, Charisma 2 (3), Intelligence 3, Willpower 2

Secondary Attributes: Size -1, Move 1, Perception 5, Initiative 5, Defense 5, Stun 2, Health 3, Sanity (4)

Skills: Animal Handling 4, Empathy 4, Linguistics 4, Stealth 4

Talents: Animal Affinity (+1 Charisma when dealing with animals)

Resources: None

Flaws: *Lame* (+1 Style point whenever she is unable to outrun danger, or if her bad leg gets her into trouble)

Weapons: Punch 0N

* *Ingrid has a +1 Size bonus to Stealth rolls*

Kurt Wiegel

Wiegel came to Mordavia because of the clean air and its remoteness—he was never one for social interaction.

Shortly after his arrival, while gazing through his telescope at the dark between the stars in search of nebulae, he caught a glimpse of Azathoth, the gibbering Daemon Sultan that resides at the heart of the universe. That he witnessed the abomination was a fluke, for Azathoth was returning to his rightful place after answering a summoning.

Sensing it was being viewed, Azathoth glanced briefly at the insignificant mortal, shattering the astronomer's mind and forming a psychic link. Since that fateful night, Wiegel, now a lone cultist of the profane entity, has worked tirelessly to create a device that will not only summon Azathoth to Earth, but allow it to remain here indefinitely. The complex artifact, the design of which is imparted by his master through dreams, comprises multiple mirrors and glass tubes designed to harness starlight when the celestial orbs are in the correct alignment. That night is not far off.

Wiegel's infrequent visitors are a mix of impressionable minds he has turned to the worship of Azathoth and wealthy citizens from whom he seeks patronage to fund his great work. With regard the former, there is no cult as such—his fellow worshippers use their money and influence to help supply the components he requires.

Wiegel's faithful assistant, the hunchback Udo, should be treated as a Loyal Henchman (see *Leagues of Gothic Horror*). His two Skill points are assigned to Science: Astronomy 4.

Alternate Backstory: As well as being an astronomer who enjoys his own company over that of other people, Wiegel has developed an interest in chemistry. Having acquired an alchemist's tract, he is beginning to experiment with transforming lead into gold.

Statistic Changes: Change Elder Lore for Craft: Chemistry 4 and Science: Chemistry 4.

Kurt Wiegel

Patron 2

Leagues of Gothic Horror: Mordavia

Incense Cones

Artifact 0

The burning of incense is commonplace in many religions. Sometimes it is burnt because the aroma is pleasing to the deity, while in others it aids meditation.

Created from rare herbs and minerals, some of which do not originate on earth, these small, colored cones, once ignited, burn for one minute (10 combat turns). During that time they release a cloud of pungent smoke. The smoke alters the inhaler's state of mind, making it easier to commune with one of the Great Old Ones.

The cones can be extinguished before burning to a pile of gray ash, but cannot then be reignited—each cone is good for one use. Burning multiple cones does not produce a cumulative effect (though it does produce more smoke).

Enhancements: Skill: +4 dice Casting roll (+2 Enhancements)*

Limitations: Reduced Duration: One minute (-2 Enhancements)

* Applies only when casting *Commune (Deity)*.

Archetype: *Academic*; **Motivation:** *Faith*;
Style: 2

Primary Attributes: Body 3, Dexterity 3, Strength 3, Charisma 2, Intelligence 4, Willpower 3

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 6, Perception 7, Initiative 7, Defense 6, Stun 3, Health 6, Sanity (5)

Skills: Academics: History 5, Anthropology 5, Brawl 5, Diplomacy 5, Firearms 6, Elder Lore: Great Old Ones 5 (*Azatboth* 6), Investigation 6, Linguistics 6 (*Translation* 7), Science: Astronomy 8

Talents: Dodge (Perform Dodge as reflexive action), Light Sleeper (Needs half as much sleep as normal)

Resources: Refuge: Equipment 1 (+2 Science: Astronomy bonus), Status 1 (Notable astronomer; +2 Social bonus)

Flaws: Aloof (+1 Style point whenever his

business-like attitude causes him trouble), Bad Reputation (In Mühldorf only; -2 to social rolls; +1 Style point when his bad reputation causes problems)

Weapons: Punch 5N, Heavy revolver 9L

Lothar, Brother

The quest for knowledge is laudable, though one should never forget that the road to hell is paved with good intentions. Possessed of keen mind and a talent for languages, Lothar's decision to join the monastery was as much to indulge himself in his passions as it was to honor God.

While delving through the piles of moldy tomes stored in the monastery's cellars, Lothar discovered a small tome, its leather cover marked with a strange symbol—a five pronged, leafless branch. The monk's curiosity got the better of him and he began to read the text. Disgusted and fascinated in equal measure, Lothar learned of a cult that had worshipped a being known as Shub-Niggurath since prehistory. The more he read, his curiosity overriding his common sense and moral outrage at the abhorrent practises of Shub-Niggurath's cult, the more eroded his sanity became.

Desperate to see whether the book spoke truth, Lothar secretly conducted a ritual contained within the accursed book. Shub-Niggurath answered the call, shattering what little sanity remained and converting the monk to her calling.

Eager to please his dark mistress, Lothar has murdered three of his brethren, committing their souls to Shub-Niggurath as a sign of his faith. Lothar is desperate to learn another ritual, one that will summon the deity to earth and permit him to worship at her metaphorical feet. When time permits, he scours both the monastery cellars and the university library for the dread invocation.

Alternate Backstory: Brother Lothar is blissfully ignorant to the existence of the Mythos, but he knows something of the supernatural. He lacks the stomach to actually hunt these horrors, but is prepared to lend tacit aid to those of stouter heart by translating texts

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and passing on information he has gleaned from the old library.

Statistic Changes: Swap Elder Lore for Academics: Occult 5 (*Vampires* 6), and Artifact for Fame 0 (Translator; +1 Social bonus). Remove his ritual.

Lothar, Brother

Patron 1

Archetype: *Clergyman*; **Motivation:** *Faith*; **Style:** 1

Primary Attributes: Body 2, Dexterity 2, Strength 2, Charisma 2, Intelligence 4, Willpower 3

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 4, Perception 7, Initiative 6, Defense 4, Stun 2, Health 5, Sanity (5)

Skills: Academics: Religion 5, Athletics 4, Brawl 4, Craft: Bookbinding 5, Elder Lore: Great Old Ones 5 (*Shub-Niggurath* 6), Investigation 6, Linguistics 7 (*Translation* 8), Stealth 4

Talents: Skill Aptitude (+2 Linguistics rating)

Resources: Artifact 0 (Incense Cones of Shub-Niggurath; see sidebar), Status 0 (Monk; +1 Social bonus)

Rituals: Commune Shub-Niggurath

Flaws: Curious (+1 Style point whenever his curiosity gets him or his friends into trouble)

Weapons: Punch 4N

Mariana, Madame

Leader of the Aurari Gypsies, and wisest among the three tribes that visit Mordavia, Madame Mariana is a powerful occultist. Not only can she foretell the future in her crystal ball, she can commune with the dead and detect psychic energy.

Madame Mariana, learned in occult lore and the secret history of the world, has gazed deep into the crystal ball, but the entities that lurk beyond the veil of reality have done more than stare back. Several years ago, the frail Gypsy found her mind drawn into a dimension of utter blackness. There, a supernatural entity known only as the Dark, took possession of her mind—a battle not easily won.

Malicious and spiteful, the Dark has used

Madame Mariana to lead fools to their deaths. The fortunes she tells are mostly the usual dross customers expect to hear, but every now and then a soul desired by the Dark crosses her palms with silver. Rather than revealing any truth, Madame Mariana spins a tale of deceit intended to ensure the Dark's chosen victim stumbles across a deadly supernatural threat. Globetrotters seeking her advice may come to the attention of the Dark.

Alternate Backstory: Madama Mariana has seen much darkness, both through her visions and in real life, but she has not succumbed to its insidious touch. She is reluctant to reveal too much of the future to monster hunters, lest the horrors opt to seek revenge.

Mariana, Madame

Patron 2

Archetype: *Gypsy Occultist*; **Motivation:** *Mystery*; **Style:** 2

Primary Attributes: Body 3, Dexterity 2, Strength 1, Charisma 4, Intelligence 4, Willpower 4

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 3, Perception 8, Initiative 6, Defense 5, Stun 3, Health 7, Sanity (8)

Skills: Academics: Occult 7, Con 7, Empathy 6 (*Body Language* 7), Intimidation 7, Investigation 8 (*Enigmas* 9), Linguistics 6, Streetwise 6

Talents: Fortune-Telling (Can foresee the future), Medium, Second Sight

Resources: Artifact 1 (Enchanted Crystal Ball; +2 bonus to Investigation rolls)*, Status 3 (Gypsy elder; +4 Social bonus)

Flaws: Elderly (+1 Style point whenever her age slows her down or she is taken advantage of because of it)

Weapons: Punch 0N

* Bonus Resource from her Status.

Maximilian Hoffmann, Chancellor

Hoffmann's family, once wealthy merchants, have loyally served the grand dukes for many generations. When Maximilian retires, it is assumed one of his children will rise to the ancestral calling.

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No longer content to be a servant, albeit one of high class and authority, Hoffmann desires power. Killing the grand duke would not sate his appetite for Mordavia is an insignificant realm on the world scale.

Having uncovered arcane books belonging to Grand Duke Heinrich III, Hoffmann has begun to walk a dark path. Heinrich's books were a convenient starting place, but the information they contained was sorely lacking. Using his master's wealth, the Chancellor has developed a network of occult contacts. Each month, he receives a number of small packages (something that has not escaped the postmaster's notice) containing tomes of forbidden lore and arcane trinkets. Through them, he hopes to be able to summon a demonic prince, an entity that can satisfy his hunger for true power.

Hoffmann's collection of occult paraphernalia is stored in an upper room in one of the castle's many towers. Only he has a key for this private chamber.

Alternate Backstory (Mythos): Hoffmann is a student of the Mythos and the secret leader of the Order of the Dragon. He considers the rest of the cult to be expendable, tools merely to help him awaken his blasphemous master. Once the dragon is roused, they will be offered up as sacrifices, while Hoffmann becomes the dragon's mortal disciple and, he hopes, ruler of the world.

Statistic Changes: Remove his Magic Skill and add Elder Lore: Artifacts 4 and Elder Lore: Tomes 4. Increase his Academics: Occult to 5. Remove Summon Horror from his rituals and add Commune Zs'marugot and Summon Black Winged One.

Alternate Backstory: The Chancellor collects butterflies. Harmless enough, but he is still committing a crime but using the grand duke's money to finance his hobby. The packages he receives are filled not with profane texts and tainted objects, but specimens from across the world. His collection is housed in the top turret room.

Statistic Changes: Exchange his Magical Aptitude for Skill Aptitude: Hobby (Lepidoptery) and Magic: Black Magic 6 for Hobby: Lepidoptery 8 (including the Skill Aptitude bonus). His Contacts become Lepidopterists

and his Refuge provides a Lepidoptery bonus. Remove all rituals.

Maximilian Hoffmann, Chancellor

Patron 2

Archetype: Aristocrat; **Motivation:** Power; **Style:** 2

Primary Attributes: Body 3, Dexterity 2, Strength 3, Charisma 4, Intelligence 3, Willpower 4

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 5, Perception 7, Initiative 5, Defense 5, Stun 3, Health 7, Sanity (8)

Skills: Academics: History 4, Academics: Occult 4, Bureaucracy 6, Con 6, Diplomacy 6, Intimidation 6, Investigation 5, Linguistics 6, Magic: Black Magic 7, Streetwise 5

Talents: Charismatic (+1 Charisma rating), Magical Aptitude (Can cast rituals)

Resources: Contacts 1 (Occultists; +2 bonus)*, Refuge: Equipment 1 (+2 Academics: Occult bonus), Status 3 (Chancellor of Mordavia; +4 Social bonus)

Rituals: Channel Dead, Empower, Harm, Spirit Binding, Track

Flaws: Distrustful (+1 Style point whenever his distrustful nature prevents him from achieving a major goal or causes him or his friends trouble)

Weapons: Punch 0N

* Bonus Resource from his Status.

Otto Beck, Baron

Last male in his family line, Beck is desperate to sire a male heir lest the noble lineage end with his death. The loss of three wives and two female children is no callous act of fate. Upon their giving birth to girls, Beck poisoned two of his wives and the children. The third was poisoned after failing to fall pregnant after two years of marriage. None of the circumstances were considered suspicious by the attending physician, and no autopsies were performed.

Alternate Backstory: Beck has suffered a cruel hand by an uncaring universe. A man who deeply loved all three of his wives and both his children, he was distraught when

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they died of natural causes. The nobleman is still desperate to ensure the continuation of his family line (he has no problems with his heir being female), but no Mordavian woman considers him a good marriage prospect.

Otto Beck, Baron

Patron 3

Archetype: *Aristocrat*; **Motivation:** *Preservation*; **Style:** 3

Primary Attributes: Body 3, Dexterity 4, Strength 4, Charisma 3, Intelligence 3, Willpower 4

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 8, Perception 7, Initiative 7, Defense 7, Stun 3, Health 9, Sanity (7)

Skills: Academics: Literature 5, Athletics 5, Brawl 5, Bureaucracy 5 (*Government* 6), Connoisseur 6, Diplomacy 6, Firearms 5, Intimidation 5 (*Orders* 6), Linguistics 5, Melee 7, Performance 6, Ride 5

Talents: Combat Aptitude (Exchange attack and Defense dice), Parry (Perform Parry as reflexive action), Robust (+2 Health rating)

Resources: Status 1 (Baron; +2 Social bonus), Status 1 (Philanthropist; +2 Social bonus)

Flaws: Lovelorn (+1 Style point whenever he is rejected or he suffers hardship in the name of love)

Weapons: Punch 5N, Arming sword 9L, Heavy revolver 8L

Sigrid Fiegler

Like her mother and grandmother before her, Sigrid is a witch. A practitioner of natural magic, she harnesses the darker side of nature, cavorting with wild beasts in animal form under the light of the full moon and plucking poisonous plants.

Ten years after her mother's death, Sigrid summoned her shade. Or so she thought. The dark spirit that had assumed the woman's form taught her a potent charm, one that would make her name famous and bring great wealth. The offer was too tempting to resist, especially since the price seemed so slight.

Through the ritual, Sigrid can drain a single



emotion from a victim. The stronger and more positive the emotion, the more vibrant the color. The emotion flows from the mouth of a sleeping victim, a thin thread of colored spiritual energy invisible to the naked eye. This Sigrid captures and spins in with her wool and linen to produce her famous garments.

The price for this magic is paid by the victim. Once the emotion is drawn out, that person can never feel it again. Drain someone's happiness, for instance, and nothing can bring joy to their heart again.

Sigrid is also a member of the Brotherhood of the Wolf (see below).

Alternate Backstory: Sigrid is a witch, albeit one who practices benevolent magic, and hedge wizard.

With regard to her dyes, here the Gamemaster has two options (which may be combined). First, the brilliant colors are completely natural,

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being made from dye recipes handed down through Sigrid's maternal line for many generations. Second, she harvests emotions, but takes only negative ones. These produce dull colors and are thus only used in workaday garments.

Statistic Changes: Change her Motivation to Mystery—Sigrid dislikes people sticking their noses into her private affairs.

Sigrid Jiegler

Ally 3

Archetype: *Occultist*; **Motivation:** *Glory*;
Style: 2

Primary Attributes: Body 3, Dexterity 3, Strength 2, Charisma 3, Intelligence 3, Willpower 4

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 5, Perception 7, Initiative 6, Defense 6, Stun 3, Health 7, Sanity (7)

Skills: Animal Handling 5, Athletics 4, Craft: Pharmacology 5, Craft: Seamstress 6, Magic: Natural Magic 8, Medicine 5, Stealth 4, Streetwise 4, Survival 6

Talents: Herb Lore (Use natural supplies for medicine), Magical Aptitude (Can cast rituals), Weird Science (Can create gadgets)

Resources: Rank 1 (Brotherhood of the Wolf; +2 Social bonus)

Rituals: Beast Speech: Wolf, Channel Dead, Empower, Form of the Beast: Wolf, Nature's Embrace, Summon Animal: Wolf

Flaws: Secret (+1 Style point whenever she is confronted with the truth or goes out of her way to protect the secret)

Weapons: Punch 0N

Ulrich Lindner, Herr Doktor

Herr Doktor Lindner is a biologist weird scientist. Merely animating corpses is beneath his self-proclaimed genius—he wants to create life from scratch by empowering it with powerful jolts of electricity.

While he has successfully created a machine to harness electricity, his experiments have resulted only in grotesque abominations, foul monsters more ooze than flesh, yet ones possessed of eyes (in multiples) and teeth.

Unwilling to dispose of his creations lest they later prove useful, he deposits them in the castle dungeon to feed off rats.

The dungeon is far from escape proof, at least for a jelly-like entity that can contort its form. A number of the blasphemous horrors are now loose in the countryside.

Alternate Backstory: Lindner is a weird scientist striving to create mechanical artificial intelligent artifacts powered by electricity. These, he holds, are the future for the human race. With constructs everywhere, man will have no need to labor, and can instead turn his attention to higher pursuits.

The strange scratchings and sightings in the village may be nothing more than wolves or a supernatural horror entirely unrelated to the good doctor's work. Alternatively, one of his constructs may have developed psychotic tendencies. The *Weird Science Compendium* contains a number of intelligent artifacts.

Statistic Changes: Swap Science: Biology for Craft: Mechanics. His Refuge: Equipment bonus is applied to Craft: Mechanics.

Ulrich Lindner, Herr Doktor

Patron 2

Archetype: *Scientist*; **Motivation:** *Wisdom*;
Style: 2

Primary Attributes: Body 3, Dexterity 3, Strength 2, Charisma 3, Intelligence 4, Willpower 3

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 5, Perception 7, Initiative 7, Defense 6, Stun 3, Health 6, Sanity (6)

Skills: Academics: Philosophy 6, Athletics 4, Craft: Electrics 6, Firearms 5, Investigation 6, Linguistics 6, Medicine 6, Science: Biology 7, Science: Engineering 7

Talents: Refuge: Equipment 1 (+2 Science: Biology bonus), Spark of Life (Can create living artifacts), Weird Science: Biology (Can create artifacts)

Resources: Status (Scientist; +2 Social bonus)

Flaws: Fanatical (+1 Style point whenever his devotion causes harm or he converts someone else to his way of thinking)

Weapons: Punch 0N, Light revolver 7L

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Ursula Kraus

Kraus, formerly an actress famed for her athletic roles but now Karnstein's premier playwright, is cursed. Many years ago, she violently struck a Gypsy woman who interrupted one of her performances. Spitting blood, the Gypsy made the mark of the evil eye and vowed that all Kraus' dreams would one day come true. It seemed a strange comment at the time, and the playwright thought nothing more of it.

Kraus' plays focus on the struggle between good and evil. Brave knights, men of faith, and attractive maidens threatened by evil rise to the fore, battling bravely against the odds before triumphing to applause from the audience.

The Gypsy's curse remained dormant until the actress began writing plays. It causes Kraus' vile villains to manifest as corporeal entities. Utterly one dimensional in their motivations, they seek only bloodshed and mayhem. Each remains on the earthly plane only until slain or the commencement of Kraus' next play, whichever comes first. The entity then fades away, leaving no trace of its existence.

Her current play, the first performance of which was a mere three nights ago, features the Red Knight as the villain (use the reaper entry from *Leagues of Gothic Horror Expansion* but the fiend wields a longsword), a brutal warlord who sold his soul to the Devil.

Kraus is innocent of any crime, though ultimately it was her vanity that gave rise to the curse. With the Gypsy woman's identity unknown, stopping the manifestations will prove a challenge for any globetrotters.

Alternate Backstory (Mythos): While at university in Budapest, Kraus purchased a book of plays from an antique bookstore. Inscribed on one of the pages was the Yellow Sign, an arcane glyph of inhuman origin. Tracing its outline with her hand, Kraus fell under the sway of the King in Yellow, a malevolent, otherworldly entity.

The stars are aligning and the King in Yellow has set forth a plan through his puppet. When the blood of thirteen human sacrifices has been acquired and smeared on the walls of the Theater of Ravens, a 14th sacrifice murdered on the stage will sunder the walls

of reality and allow the King in Yellow to step forth into the earthly dimension.

Statistic Changes: Swap Bureaucracy for Elder Lore: Tomes.

Alternate Backstory: Kraus is cursed, but only in the form of a deranged serial killer fascinated by her plays. Each time she stages a new play, the psychopath adopts the guise of the main villain and commits at least one grisly murder. In his twisted mind, he is honoring Kraus by bringing her creations to life.

Ursula Kraus

Patron 2

Archetype: *Artist*; **Motivation:** *Glory*; **Style:** 2

Primary Attributes: Body 3, Dexterity 3, Strength 3, Charisma 3, Intelligence 3, Willpower 3

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 6, Perception 6, Initiative 6, Defense 6, Stun 3, Health 6, Sanity (6)

Skills: Academics: Literature 5 (*Plays* 6), Art: Playwright 6, Athletics 5, Bureaucracy 5, Linguistics 5, Melee 6, Performance 6 (*Acting* 7), Streetwise 5

Talents: Captivate (Temporarily entrance targets), Dodge (Perform Dodge as a reflexive action), Mobile Attack (Move and attack simultaneously)

Resources: Fame 1 (Playwright & actress; +2 Social bonus)

Flaws: Vain (+1 Style point whenever she steals the spotlight or is forced to confront her shortcomings)

Weapons: Punch 0N

Werner Lange

Bent of back from hunching over his work, his fingers gnarled through decades of manipulating his creations, and with a shock of white hair, Werner is affectionately known as Mr. Puppet.

A true master of his craft, Werner hoped to make his fortune amusing the European crown heads. While he did perform for a king and several counts, they were as stingy as they were flattering. Entering Mordavia by happenstance 35 years ago, Werner soon took up residence as

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a puppeteer, beloved by his audiences yet still forever poor.

At night, he would dream dark thoughts of how to acquire wealth and what he would do with his riches. Unbeknownst to him, the dark powers of the universe caught wind of his Morphean fantasies and began to pay attention. Gently, they tugged at his dreams, warping his imagination to ever darker plots, reveling as the stain of avarice spread to his mortal soul. At last they chose to tempt the greedy mortal, eager to see how far he would fall.

Gunther has never learned who sent him the dark tome that would consign his soul to Satan's grasp. As he read the archaic text, the noble part of him rebelled at the charms revealed inside. Yet it was to no avail, for each night he dreamed of the book's forbidden lore and what it could gain him. In the end, he succumbed, as the dark powers hoped he would.

The ancient book contained a ritual that could ensnare a soul into an inanimate object and allow the sorcerer to command it. At first, the puppeteer invoked the profane enchantment whenever a child died in Karnstein, transferring it to one of his puppets. These he commanded to break into houses and steal precious objects and coins.

The more wealth he gained, the more he desired. When children would not die naturally, the fiend took to kidnapping and murder to bolster the ranks of his wooden army of thieves. Individually, each puppet can carry precious little, but with so many available, the totals quickly add up. Since each steals only a few objects of value, no one has yet deduced there is a thief at work in Karnstein.

Alternate Backstory: Werner is a Mordavian Scrooge, avaricious for sure, but with no knowledge of the dark arts. He uses his Con to wheedle a few extra coins from acquaintances and audience members, claiming business has been poor and he has no money for food, and the like.

Werner Lange

Ally 2

Archetype: *Artist*; **Motivation:** *Greed*; **Style:** 1

Primary Attributes: Body 2, Dexterity 4, Strength 2, Charisma 3, Intelligence 2, Willpower 2

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 6, Perception 4, Initiative 6, Defense 6, Stun 2, Health 4, Sanity (5)

Skills: Con 8, Craft: Carpentry 5 (*Puppets* 6), Empathy 4, Melee 4, Performance 6 (*Puppetry* 7), Streetwise 5

Talents: Skill Aptitude (+2 Con rating), Tinker (Ignores penalty for having no tools)

Resources: None

Flaws: Poor Vision (+1 Style point whenever his poor vision gets him into trouble or causes him to make a critical mistake)

Weapons: Punch 0N, Craft knife 4L

Wolfgang Lorenz

Mordavians have a saying—be careful what

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you wish for, for you never know who is listening. In Wolfgang Lorenz's case, his it was the Devil.

Lorenz's family have farmed the land around Beinemfeld since their ancestors settled here in the 14th century. Latecomers to the village, the only land left was poor by the standards of other farms. Envious of his neighbors, and always dreaming of ways to improve his standing of living, Lorenz's unvoiced thoughts reached the ears of Satan.

When a stranger came calling and spoke quietly of a means to better his lot, Lorenz was all ears. When asked the price of any bargain, the visitor waved his hand dismissively, stating that he only desire was to see a hard-working man prosper. With no obvious strings attached, Lorenz accepted the gift of being able to summon and control swarms of rats simply by whistling.

Lorenz uses his supernatural power only every few years, calling forth a plague of rats to devour and despoil his rivals' crops while leaving his relatively untouched. This "good fortune" allows him to inflate his prices.

No gift from the Devil is ever without some sort of price. In the case of Lorenz, he has become a wererat (see *Guide to Shapeshifters*).

Alternate Backstory: Lorenz is a bitter man. While he bemoans his lot in life and curses the good fortunes of his neighbors, he has taken no action to spoil their harvests. The rat invasion is a natural occurrence, the vermin forced to seek food when their natural numbers grow too many to otherwise sustain.

Statistic Changes: Remove his special ability.

Wolfgang Lorenz

Ally 0

Archetype: *Everyman*; **Motivation:** *Greed*; **Style:** 0

Primary Attributes: Body 2, Dexterity 2, Strength 2, Charisma 2, Intelligence 2, Willpower 2

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 4, Perception 4, Initiative 4, Defense 4, Stun 2, Health 4, Sanity (4)

Skills: Animal Handling 6, Athletics 4, Brawl 4, Melee 4, Survival 4

Talents: Skill Aptitude (+2 Animal Handling rating)

Resources: None

Flaws: Envious (+1 Style point whenever his envy causes trouble for him or his peers)

Weapons: Punch 5N, Dagger 5L, Scythe 8L

The Devil's Gift: Once per scene, the Lorenz can summon rats. He makes an Animal Handling roll. Each successes brings forth one swarm. The creatures needn't be present—they seem to appear from every possible hiding place. The creatures are completely beholden to the greedy farmer.

Wolfgang Lorenz, Wererat Hybrid Form

Ally 1

Archetype: *Monster*; **Motivation:** *Survival*; **Style:** 0

Primary Attributes: Body 3, Dexterity 5, Strength 3, Charisma 0, Intelligence 2, Willpower 2

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 8 (16)*, Perception 4 (8), Initiative 7, Defense 8, Stun 3, Health 5, Horror 4

Skills: Athletics 6, Brawl 6, Stealth 6, Survival 5

Talents: Keen Sense (+4 to hearing-based Perception rolls)

Powers: Call of the Wild (Can summon swarms of normal rats)

Resources: None

Flaws: Bestial (Can't communicate or use tools)

Weapons: Bite 6L

* Doubles his Move rating when running on all fours.



I must say they were not cheering to me, for amongst them were "Ordog"—Satan, "pokol"—hell, "stregoica"—witch, "vrolok" and "vlkoslak"—both of which mean the same thing, one being Slovak and the other Servian for something that is either were-wolf or vampire. —Bram Stoker, Dracula

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The Schwarzemann

Also known as the Omul Negru by Romanian speakers, the Black Man is a Mordavian bogeyman. He is named for his garb—a heavy black cloak that conceals his body and a black cowl that hides his face. The supernatural fiend thrives on the fear it generates in its victims. The Black Man owes his origins to the people of Mordavia. Generations of warning wayward children to be good or become a victim of the Black Man unwittingly gave birth to the until-then fictional entity. So long as Mordavians continue to believe in him, the Black Man cannot truly be destroyed. If “killed,” it disappears, only to return on the next new moon healed of all injuries.

The Schwarzemann

Patron 2

Archetype: *Monster*; **Motivation:** *Duty*;
Style: 2

Primary Attributes: Body 3, Dexterity 3, Strength 3, Charisma 3, Intelligence 2, Willpower 4

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 6, Perception 6, Initiative 5, Defense 6, Stun N/A, Health 7*, Horror —/5

Skills: Brawl 8, Empathy 7, Intimidation 8, Stealth 10

Talents: Fearsome (Can temporarily frighten foes), Shadow Walker (100 feet; see *Guide to Vampires*), Skill Aptitude (+2 Stealth rating)

Resources: None

Flaws: Primitive (Cannot use tools)

Weapons: Claws 9L

* *Immune to nonlethal damage and cannot be stunned.*

Nightmare: An as attack action, the Black Man can remove his cowl and stare at one target within 10 feet. This causes the viewer to live out his worst nightmares in his mind. The Horror roll difficulty is equal to the creature's current wounds, to a minimum of 1. For each point of Sanity the victim loses, the Black Man recovers one wound level.

Shadow Stuff: The Black Man is only partially corporeal. Weapons cause a maximum number of wounds equal to their damage rating. Any excess successes are lost. For instance,

scoring 6 successes (after taking Defense into account) on a Firearms roll using a light revolver results in just 2 wounds.

The White Lady

Rural Mordavians, long accustomed to preparing in advance for winter, have few reasons to venture far from their doors once the snow begins to settle. Guaranteed to have them huddling around their hearths is talk that the White Lady (Weiße Dame) is abroad.

According to local folklore, the White Lady is the ghost of a young woman. Instead of accepting her father's choice of husband, she elected to become a nun. Chased out into a fierce storm by her father, she succumbed to the freezing temperatures. Her body was never found. Filled with anger, and envious of warm bodies and fires, she haunts Mordavia throughout the cold, dark winter months.

The White Lady manifests as a weak old woman struggling with a heavy burden. She calls out to nearby mortals, pleading with them to lend her a hand. Once they draw close, she reveals her true appearance—a withered corpse black with frostbite—before subjecting her victims to her paralyzing touch or passing a frigid hand through their flesh and bones.

In her ephemeral form, she has been known to douse hearths before plunging the temperature in a cottage well below freezing.

The White Lady

Ally 2

Archetype: *Spirit*; **Motivation:** *Duty*; **Style:** 1

Primary Attributes: Body 0, Dexterity 3, Strength 2, Charisma 2, Intelligence 2, Willpower 6

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 5, Perception 8, Initiative 5, Defense 9, Stun N/A, Health 8, Horror —

Skills: Con 7, Empathy 7, Intimidation 9

Talents: Fearsome (Can temporarily frighten foes), Skill Aptitude (+2 Intimidation rating)

Resources: None

Powers: Blackout, Chill Touch, Cold, Manifestation, Paralysis, Speech

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Flaws: Ephemeral (Cannot communicate or use tools except through applicable special powers)

Weapons: None



Whether they are faceless extras or named individuals, stock characters are neither heroes nor major villains. They are the coach drivers who'll take the globetrotters into the wilds at night and the people who sell them bread.

These characters differ from henchmen of the same name in that they are better trained.

Burgomeister

Mordavia's rural burgomeisters are typically bumbling fools—officious, proud of their position in society and quick to remind others of their station, but ultimately of little help to globetrotters without being intimidated or cajoled into meaningful action.

One sort knows full well that the supernatural exists, but they are too scared to act. The other scoffs at the notion of the supernatural, believing such talk to be nonsense spread by superstitious peasants. Both types are usually full of bluster but are cowards at heart.

Follower 1

Archetype: *Government Official*; **Motivation:** *Duty*; **Style:** 1

Primary Attributes: Body 2, Dexterity 2, Strength 2, Charisma 2, Intelligence 2, Willpower 2

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 4, Perception 4, Initiative 4, Defense 4, Stun 2, Health 4, Sanity 4

Skills: Academics: Law 4, Bureaucracy 4, Diplomacy 4, Intimidation 4, Linguistics 4

Talents: None

Resources: Status 1 (+2 Social bonus)

Flaws: Coward (+1 Style point whenever he gives up without a fight or abandons his friends to save his own skin), Disbeliever (+1 Style point whenever he manages to find a plausible, mundane explanation for a supernatural event or convinces someone else to think his way)

Weapons: Punch 0N

Carriage Driver

Carriages and coaches are the quickest way to travel around Mordavia. Those drivers who restrict their activities to Karnstein are usually up on the latest gossip, having overheard numerous conversations, though it requires the jangle of coins to loosen their tongues.

For coachmen who ferry passengers east of Karnstein, replace Streetwise with Firearms 4 (*Rifles 5*) and add Rifle 8L to their weapons.

Ally 1

Archetype: *Everyman*; **Motivation:** *Duty*; **Style:** 0

Primary Attributes: Body 2, Dexterity 2, Strength 2, Charisma 2, Intelligence 2, Willpower 2

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 4, Perception 4, Initiative 4, Defense 4, Stun 2, Health 4, Sanity 4

Skills: Animal Handling 4, Brawl 4, Ride 5 (*Vehicles 6*), Streetwise 4 (*Rumors 5*)

Talents: Callous Rider (Can exert his mount to gain a Ride bonus)

Resources: None

Flaws: Aloof (+1 Style point whenever his business-like attitude causes him trouble)

Weapons: Punch 4N

Clergyman

Mordavia's clergy are predominantly Roman Catholic, though Karnstein has a rabbi and an Anglican vicar. These statistics can be used for everyone from a humble monk to a senior priest. Most know the stories of the monsters that haunt the night, but very few are prepared to take such things seriously.

Ally 1

Archetype: *Clergyman*; **Motivation:** *Hope*; **Style:** 1

Primary Attributes: Body 2, Dexterity 2, Strength 2, Charisma 2, Intelligence 2, Willpower 2

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 4, Perception 4, Initiative 4, Defense 4, Stun 2, Health 4, Sanity 4

Skills: Academics: Religion 5, Bureaucracy 4, Diplomacy 5, Empathy 4

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Talents: None

Resources: Contacts 0 (Church; +1 bonus), Status 0 (Clergyman; +1 Social bonus)

Flaws: Merciful (+1 Style point whenever he shows compassion to an enemy or refuses to retaliate when wronged)

Weapons: Punch 0N

Doctor

Injury, privation, and disease are part and parcel of a globetrotter's life, especially in the wilds of Eastern Europe. While doctors are quick to tend to wounds and treat infections, they are just as quick to present a bill for their services.

Ally 1

Archetype: *Physician*; **Motivation:** *Hope*; **Style:** 0

Primary Attributes: Body 2, Dexterity 2, Strength 2, Charisma 2, Intelligence 2, Willpower 2

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 4, Perception 4, Initiative 4, Defense 4, Stun 2, Health 4, Sanity 4

Skills: Craft: Pharmacology 4, Empathy 4 (*Body Language* 5), Medicine 4 (*First Aid* 5), Science: Biology 4

Talents: Lifesaver (Improved healing ability)

Resources: None

Flaws: Pacifist (+1 Style point whenever he shows compassion to an enemy)

Weapons: Punch 0N

Inn or Guesthouse Keeper

Innkeepers and guesthouse owners in Karnstein are usually pleasant enough, keen to please guests to ensure repeat custom. Outside the town, they are far less agreeable, especially to strangers, and more so to strangers who come calling after dark.

Ally 1

Archetype: *Everyman*; **Motivation:** *Duty*; **Style:** 0

Primary Attributes: Body 2, Dexterity 2, Strength 2, Charisma 2, Intelligence 2, Willpower 2

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 4, Perception 4, Initiative 4, Defense 4, Stun 2, Health 4, Sanity 4

4, Initiative 4, Defense 4, Stun 2, Health 4, Sanity 4

Skills: Brawl 4, Craft: Innkeeper 4, Diplomacy 4, Empathy 4, Streetwise 6

Talents: Skill Aptitude (+2 Streetwise rating)

Resources: None

Flaws: Gossip (In Karnstein; +1 Style point whenever she spreads gossip that inadvertently causes trouble for her or her friends), Aloof (Outside Karnstein; +1 Style point whenever his business-like attitude causes him trouble)

Weapons: Punch 4N

Messenger

The quickest way to contact Allies, Contacts, and Patrons outside Mordavia, or friends within the nation, is to hire a messenger. Whether they restrict their route to the town or are prepared to brave the dangers of the wild, they strive to ensure their messages are delivered swiftly.

Ally 1

Archetype: *Everyman*; **Motivation:** *Duty*; **Style:** 0

Primary Attributes: Body 2, Dexterity 2, Strength 2, Charisma 2, Intelligence 2, Willpower 2

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 4, Perception 4, Initiative 4, Defense 4, Stun 2, Health 4, Sanity 4

Skills: Athletics 4, Firearms 4, Ride 4, Stealth 4, Survival 4

Talents: Run (Doubles running speed)

Resources: None

Flaws: Code of Conduct (+1 Style point whenever his code forces him to make something much more difficult than is necessary)

Weapons: Punch 0N, Heavy revolver 7L

Police Constable

Mordavia's police are mostly diligent, but they have nothing but scorn for stories of supernatural killers and deranged warlocks. That said, few enjoy been sent to investigate alleged crimes outside of Karnstein. Globetrotters have no special protection from the

Notable Demizens

law. Those who gun down or run through suspected (or actual) villains, even those of unholy origin and wicked nature, will quickly find themselves subjected to the long arm and full weight of the law.

Ally 1

Archetype: *Policeman*; **Motivation:** *Duty*;
Style: 0

Primary Attributes: Body 2, Dexterity 2, Strength 2, Charisma 2, Intelligence 2, Willpower 2

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 4, Perception 4, Initiative 4, Defense 4, Stun 2, Health 4, Sanity 4

Skills: Brawl 4, Empathy 4, Intimidation 4, Melee 4, Streetwise 4

Talents: None

Resources: Rank 1 (Constable; +2 Social bonus)

Flaw: Loyal (+1 Style point whenever his unswerving loyalty causes trouble for himself or others)

Weapons: Punch 4N, Truncheon 6N

Torch-Wielding Peasant

The average Mordavian isn't one to go looking for trouble. Save in words spoken in company while the sun shines brightly, few are prepared to act openly even when supernatural terror has taken one of their number—at least not without a generous helping of encouragement.

Given courage by a true leader, though, and they are quick to take up arms against the monsters that terrorize that land, just as their ancestors have in times past. Their passions inflamed, they are even prepared to take on vampires and werewolves, at least until their casualties start to mount.

Depending on where they live, peasants might be armed with a farming implement (pitchforks are the stereotypical weapon of choice), an industrial tool (such as a hammer or wrench), a knife, or just a length of wood.

Follower 1

Archetype: *Everyman*; **Motivation:** *Justice*;
Style: 0

Primary Attributes: Body 2, Dexterity 2,



Strength 2, Charisma 2, Intelligence 2, Willpower 2

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 4, Perception 4, Initiative 4, Defense 4, Stun 2, Health 6, Sanity 4

Skills: Athletics 4, Brawl 4, Craft (pick one) 4, Melee 4, Survival 4

Talents: Robust (+2 Health rating)

Resources: None

Flaw: Superstitious (+1 Style point whenever one of their eccentricities causes them trouble, or if one of their beliefs turns out to be true)

Weapons: Punch 4N, Improvised weapon 5L

Tradesman

These statistics cover everything from tradesmen to craftsmen to farmers, and thus represent the average Mordavian citizen.

Leagues of Gothic Horror: Mordavia

Fearful Peasants

Mordavia has long been troubled by strange apparitions and supernatural horrors. The denizens of Karnstein may scoff at such nonsense (at least in public), but superstitious fears run deep among their rural cousins.

Few have any true knowledge of monsters or the occult, though many know the most basic lore, such as garlic warding off vampires, werewolves running abroad on nights of the full moon, and witches being ugly hags who turn people in toads.

At the Gamemaster's discretion, any common Mordavian (that is, one with a stock template) may also have the Superstitious Flaw. It is repeated here for convenience.

Superstitious: +1 Style point whenever one of their eccentricities causes them trouble, or if one of their beliefs turns out to be true.

Two Skill points have been left unassigned. The Gamemaster should use these on a Skill a particular individual might logically have. For instance, a student at the university likely has Academics or Art, a tavern patron Gambling, a solicitor's clerk Academics: Law, a bully Intimidation, a government official Bureaucracy, and a criminal Larceny.

Ally 1

Archetype: *Everyman*; **Motivation:** *Duty*; **Style:** 0

Primary Attributes: Body 2, Dexterity 2, Strength 2, Charisma 2, Intelligence 2, Willpower 2

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 4, Perception 4, Initiative 4, Defense 4, Stun 2, Health 4, Sanity 4

Skills: Athletics 4, Brawl 4, Craft: Pick one 4, Streetwise 4

Talents: Robust (+2 Health rating)

Resources: None

Flaws: Loyal (+1 Style point whenever their unswerving loyalty causes trouble for themselves or their friends)

Weapons: Punch 4N



Sinister Cults

Brotherhood of the Wolf

Modern scholars are aware that the ancient Dacians who once called Mordavia home were closely tied to wolves. The name Dacians translates loosely as "ones the same with wolves," and was taken from a legendary ancestor or god who took the guise of a wolf. Clad in wolf skins, worshippers would enact ceremonies to either give them the spiritual strength of a wolf or physically transform them, depending on how one interprets the old records.

The cult actually existed long before it was adopted by the Dacians, who removed many of the less savory aspects, such as human sacrifice, before making it part of the state religion. While the modified cult was abolished during Roman rule, the old ways of worship continued unabated in remote valleys.

Cult worship in Mordavia is very recent, dating back only a few decades. Still small, it boasts only a few dozen devout members. Not wishing to attract attention to their cult status, members wear a simple silver ring on the little finger of their left hand. When attending ceremonies, they don wolf skins.

The cult honors a monstrous beast, an entity known only as the Great Wolf. Ever hungry, it must be appeased with human sacrifices on the nights of the full moon to prevent it from manifesting and devouring its followers. In return for supplication and offerings, the Great Wolf teaches its most faithful worshippers how to transform themselves into wolves, as well as summon and converse with ordinary wolves.

Mythos Version

The *Leagues of Cthulhu* version also honors the Great Wolf. An avatar of Nyarlathotep, the Great Wolf takes the form of a huge wolf with black fur and glowing green eyes. In place of a tongue, it has a long, sickly tentacle which lashes around in search of prey to draw into its fanged maw. It has Horror rating 6.

Notable Demizens

Timo Roth, Sergeant

A long-serving member of the Mordavian constabulary, Roth is a forceful character, never one to take a back seat, even when working on a case with his superiors. It is this alpha-male temperament that has stalled his opportunity for promotion.

Drawn into the cult by its leader (whoever that is in the individual Gamemaster's campaign), who sensed the sergeant's yearning for greater power and promised him such in return for absolute loyalty, Roth has proven a very useful and capable addition to the ranks.

Not only does he keep the weaker members in line, as a police sergeant he is frequently entrusted to lead investigations. This enables him to conceal the cult's activities from Mordavia's higher authorities. His status as an officer of the law also means he can cause trouble for pesky globetrotters, such as arresting them on suspicions of committing a crime, sticking their unwanted noses into cult affairs.

Patron 2

Archetype: *Police Officer*; **Motivation:** *Power*; **Style:** 2

Primary Attributes: Body 3, Dexterity 2, Strength 4, Charisma 2, Intelligence 3, Willpower 4

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 6, Perception 7, Initiative 5, Defense 5, Stun 3, Health 7, Horror —

Skills: Academics: Occult 5 Athletics 5, Brawl 5, Firearms 5, Intimidation 7, Investigation 5, Melee 7, Ride 4, Stealth 5, Survival 5

Talents: Fearsome (Can temporarily frighten foes), Skill Aptitude (+2 Intimidation rating), Skill Aptitude (+2 Melee rating)

Resources: Rank 1 (Brotherhood of the Wolf; +2 Social bonus), Rank 1 (Police Sergeant; +2 Social bonus)

Flaws: Dominant (+1 Style point whenever his need to dominate brings unnecessary strife)

Weapons: Punch 5N, Heavy revolver 8L, Truncheon 8N

Typical Member

The cult's mortal membership is primarily made up of superstitious farmers who believe

their faith will protect them and their livestock from wolf attacks. A few cultists are actually werewolves, though they hide their true nature from their peers. Use the Tradesman statistics to represent common members, but swap Streetwise for Melee and add One-Handed Tool 5L.

Order of the Dragon

History tells that the Order of the Dragon was a chivalric order founded in 1408 to safeguard the Kingdom of Hungary from enemies domestic and foreign. Of these, the greatest was the expanding Ottoman Empire. Disbanded in 1437, the Order's name was kept alive by corrupted cultists, whose allegiance lay not with Christ, but the blasphemous worm, Zs'marugot.

How the abominable worm first came to mankind's attention shall never be known. Although not a Great Old One, the powerful entity has been worshipped by madmen for many millennia in many guises.

Imprisoned deep beneath the soil of Mordavia and chained there by powerful rituals cast by the Teutonic Knights, Zs'marugot slumbers, patiently awaiting the day it is released. Like any beast, it stirs fitfully in its sleep. When Zs'marugot twitches, waves of psychic energy radiate outward, poisoning the dreams of artists, psychics, and others possessed of sensitive minds. Even those not attuned to the psychic world sleep poorly when the worm stirs.

Such is the power of the wards, that no summoning ritual can break them. Zs'marugot is not entirely helpless, though, for it can converse with the priests of its insane cult through a Commune ritual. Having touched mortal minds, Zs'marugot has adopted the guise of a dragon. Even the leader of the Mordavian cult is ignorant of its true nature and origin.

The Order of the Dragon exists openly in Mordavia, albeit behind a false front. It is a private social club for citizens of high standing who have sworn to defend Mordavian culture from excessive outside influences and who share a deep interest in its history. Of the members, only a small few are actually cultists—the others are nothing more than a convenient cover.

Leagues of Gothic Horror: Mordavia

The cult strives ceaselessly to break the chains that hold their master captive. While their rituals gradually erode at the ancient charms, they seek to unlock artifacts and rituals that may hasten the great work.

Non-Mythos Version

Rather than being an alien monstrosity of unimaginable horror, Zs'marugot is an actual dragon, possibly the last of his kind. Its cult still strives to release it from its bindings. Members replace Elder Lore with Academics: Occult.

Astrid Engel

A scion of an aristocratic family of old, Engel holds the position of Herald of Mordavia, a mostly honorary position that comes with a small stipend. Aside from being proficient in the coats of arms of Europe's noble families, her duties include public reading of public proclamations issued by the grand duke (at present, those of the chancellor) and introducing important guests at Schloss Karnstein.

In order that the Register of Arms is kept up to date, Engel must frequently travel across Europe. Making use of her position, she has been able to acquire access to the private libraries of some of Europe's most important families—libraries she has relieved of any works concerning the Mythos.

Unbeknownst to the cult's upper echelons, Engel has taught herself several rituals. Now able to communicate with Zs'marugot directly, she is making her own plans for when the beast is released from its bondage.

Alternate Backstory (Non-Mythos): Swap Elder Lore for Academics: Occult 7. Remove all rituals.

Patron 2

Archetype: *Academic*; **Motivation:** *Faith*; **Style:** 2

Primary Attributes: Body 3, Dexterity 2, Strength 2, Charisma 3, Intelligence 4, Willpower 4

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 4, Perception 8, Initiative 6, Defense 5, Stun 3, Health 7, Horror —

Skills: Academics 5, Bureaucracy 6 (*Academia*

7), Diplomacy 5, Elder Lore: Tomes 7, Firearms 6, Hobby: Heraldry 5, Investigation 6 (*Research* 7), Linguistics 6

Talents: Calculated Attack (Uses Intelligence with Firearms), Well-Educated (Treats Academics as a general Skill)

Resources: Contacts 1 (Aristocrats; +2 bonus), Rank 1 (Order of the Dragon; +2 Social bonus), Status 1 (Respected citizen; +2 Social bonus)

Rituals: Commune Zs'marugot, Lesser Hex, Summon Black Winged One, Summon Fungi from Yuggoth

Flaws: Fanatical (+1 Style point whenever her devotion causes harm or she converts someone else to his way of thinking)

Weapons: Punch 0N, Light revolver 8L

Typical Member

Whereas many cults are made up of the lower echelons of society, the Order of the Dragon recruits only citizens of high standing. Its ranks are filled with academics, government officials, clergymen, rich landowners, and the like. All have been attracted by the promise of power once the dragon is awoken from centuries long slumber.

The example below is an upper class young lady, the scion of an old noble house desperate to revive its faded fortunes.

Ally 1

Archetype: *Aristocrat*; **Motivation:** *Power*; **Style:** 1

Primary Attributes: Body 2, Dexterity 2, Strength 2, Charisma 2, Intelligence 2, Willpower 2

Secondary Attributes: Size 0, Move 4, Perception 4, Initiative 4, Defense 4, Stun 2, Health 4, Horror —

Skills: Diplomacy 4, Elder Lore: Creatures 4, Melee 4, Performance 4, Ride 4

Talents: None

Resources: Rank 0 (Order of the Dragon; +1 Social Status), Status 0 (Aristocrat; +1 Social bonus)

Flaws: Fanatical (+1 Style point whenever her devotion causes harm or she converts someone else to his way of thinking)

Weapons: Punch 0N, Dagger 5L

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Welcome to Mordavia, a land blighted by vampires and werewolves, insane cultists, and mad scientists.



Nestled in the mountains of Eastern Europe, Mordavia is a land where the supernatural is very real. From foreboding forests to crumbling castles, remote hamlets to the gas-lit capital itself, every nook and cranny holds a dark secret, as do the people who dwell in this accursed land.

The book details the natives and customs of Mordavia, provides dozens of spookty locales, includes profiles for some of the more notable inhabitants and wicked cults, and gives the GM dozens of adventure seeds.

Leagues of Gothic Horror is a roleplaying game from Triple Ace Games.



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