

Wyrd

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ONE SHOT

HEART OF DARKNESS



THROUGH THE BREACH



HEART OF DARKNESS

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Dreadful

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	4
--------------------------	----------

ADVENTURE.....	6
-----------------------	----------

Prologue: The Lucrentino Manor.....	6
Scene 1: The Noth Mine (Day 1).....	7
Scene 2: On the Job (Day 2).....	14
Scene 3: Light and Shadow.....	20
Scene 4: Missing Goats (Day 3).....	22
Scene 5: Darkness Within (Day 4).....	25
Scene 6: Mating Season.....	28
Epilogue.....	29

FATEMASTER CHARACTERS.....	30
-----------------------------------	-----------

Camp Guard.....	31
Miner.....	32
Tide of Darkness.....	33
Bandersnatch.....	34
The Widow-in-Waiting.....	35

FATED CHARACTERS.....	36
------------------------------	-----------

Katema Gabra.....	37
Katema's Creation.....	38
Adriana Lucrentino.....	39
Heidi Ecklund.....	40
Earl Hayden.....	41
Balahadra Raju.....	42



INTRODUCTION

Soulstones are so synonymous with Malifaux that many people forget that many of the more traditional resources - stone, coal, gold, iron, and precious gems - are mined in Malifaux as well. Though not as valuable as Soulstones, they are still an important component of Malifaux's industry.

For some, like the Lucrentino family, a single mine can provide enough of an income to stave off financial ruin. For others, like the ambitious foreman Thomas Figg, a mine is just a stepping stone to personal wealth, no matter the cost to others.

In Malifaux, however, there are things that should stay buried deep in the ground. The recent excavation of so-called "rock pearls" - strange, gleaming stones that appear to be a combination of pearl and diamond - has brought fortune to Figg and his fellow smugglers, but at a terrible cost that they do not yet understand.

In this adventure, the Fated will gradually realize that the true threat to the Noth Mine doesn't involve the smuggling ring that they've been sent to uncover... not directly, at least. Instead, there is an ancient, more sinister threat growing in the camp's midst, a hunger that cannot be reasoned with or bribed into compliance. A hunger that will slowly and methodically start picking off the members of the camp whenever they are isolated, until only its unwitting host is left.

If the Fated stick together and proceed cautiously, they might be able to survive and uncover the truth behind both of the mining camp's mysteries. If they split into pairs, however, they could very well find themselves consumed by the terrible darkness that infests the Noth Mine.

WITHIN THESE PAGES

Here's a list of what you'll find in this adventure!

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This is the section you're reading now!

CHAPTER 2: ADVENTURE

The Fated are asked to investigate the Noth Mine on behalf of its owner, Maude Lucrentino. She believes that one of her employees might be smuggling "rock pearls" out of the mine, and she wants the Fated to find out who, if anyone, is involved in the thievery.

Unfortunately, there are bigger issues at the Noth Mine than simple smuggling. The "rock pearls" that the miners have been digging up are actually the "eggs" of Bandersnatches, dangerous spiders that make their homes in the shadows of their unwitting victims. A large, female Bandersnatch is preparing to feed upon the oblivious miners, and whether or not the Fated can stop her will depend upon how quickly they can unravel the mystery before she sends out a mating call and draws even more Bandersnatches to the mine.

CHAPTER 3: FM CHARACTERS

This chapter contains the stat blocks for the various adversaries the Fated might encounter over the course of the adventure, providing a quick reference to make it easier for the Fatemaster to run the game.

CHAPTER 4: FATED CHARACTERS

This chapter contains pregenerated Fated characters with distinct ties to the Noth Mine and the Lucrentino family. The players can use these characters or create their own when playing through this adventure.

FATED NAME		PLAYER NAME	GUILD SCRIPT		
CURRENT PURSUIT	STATION	DESTINY STEPS FULFILLED	EXP.		
		○ ○ ○ ○ ○			
ASPECTS		SKILLS			
PHYSICAL	MENTAL	SKILL	AV	RATING	ASPECT
MIGHT	INTELLECT				
GRACE	CHARM				
SPEED	CUNNING				
RESILIENCE	TENACITY				
DERIVED ASPECTS					
DEFENSE	WILLPOWER				
WALK	CHARGE				
WISDOM					

CALL OUT BOXES

There are many call out boxes like this one scattered throughout the adventure.

These boxes have two main functions. Boxes like this one highlight rules or special notes for the Fatemaster.

Boxes like the box on the right are used to show dialogue or description. They are intended to be read by the Fatemaster aloud to the players. Be careful, though; some are only intended to be read if the Fated take certain actions or are successful at certain challenges.

"Yeah, I was there." The drifter sighs, his shoulders slumping at the admission. "It only lasted a moment, and I still don't know how I lived through it. There was only the one Ortega, but she was so fast with that gun of hers..." He shakes his head. "Two of the bandits were dead before they even realized she had drawn on them."

His gaze becomes distant as the memory comes back to him. "It was a ballet of death."

HEART OF DARKNESS

PROLOGUE:

THE LUARENTINO MANOR

As the adventure begins, the Fated have been contacted by Maude Luarentino, the owner of the Noth Mine, and invited to her home in the Downtown district. Read the following text:

You've always kept an ear to the ground concerning potential employment, and now, that's finally paid off. From the moment you arrived at the Luarentino manor, you could almost smell the money - and the desperation - in the air.

After a brief chat with a servant in a maid uniform, you're escorted into a sitting room with the elderly Maude Luarentino. She's thin and emaciated in a way that reminds you of a skeleton, but her smile is bright as she invites you in and offers you tea. The entire room smells like mothballs.

After some polite conversation, she opens a small box on the table and turns it so that you can see the contents: an unusual, grape-sized jewel, like something between a pearl and a diamond with a rainbow glow.

"They're calling it a rock pearl," she explains, "but it's really a crystal. You can cut it like a gem, and it makes for beautiful jewelry. They started showing up in town a few months ago, and one of the jewelers informed me that they were coming from an iron mine in the Badlands. There aren't many iron mines down there, though, and I've started to worry that they might be coming from my mine."

She straightens up. "If one of my employees is stealing from me, I would like to know about it. Are you willing to help me?"

If the Fated agree to help her, read the following text:

Maude smiles at your answer and rings a small bell on the table. A moment later, a maid arrives with a fresh pot of tea. "Whatever happens," Maude explains, "the investigation must be as discreet as possible. Since my brother's indiscretions with that prostitute of his, the family reputation simply cannot survive another scandal."


Maude waits until the maid has departed before continuing. "I will hire you on as standard miners, though I could likely hire one or two of you as camp guards or cooking assistants without raising suspicion. The pay will be typical for one of our miners - five scrip per week - but I will add in an additional bonus of fifty scrip if you're able to uncover any evidence of rock pearl smuggling."

The mine wages are non-negotiable, as it will look suspicious if the Fated are being paid more than the other miners. Maude will arrange for the Fated to travel to the mine with the next supply wagon.

SCENE 1:

THE NOTH MINE (DAY 1)

Once the Fated have completed their arrangements, they can jump ahead to their arrival at the Noth Mine. Read the following text:




Eight days later, you've nearly reached the end of your journey. The wagon caravan was bumpy, uncomfortable, and all-around unpleasant. The Badlands are little more than a wasteland of dried rocks and yellow dust, and after the first day on the road, the dust had worked its way into every nook and cranny of your clothing.

Fortunately, that's all behind you now.

The wagon carrying you to the mine is skirting around a large hill, the top of which is littered with fallen pillars and ancient, weather-worn statues. In the light of the setting sun, they look ominous and foreboding.


Gradually, the wagon drifts closer and closer to the hill, until the driver leans over and spits on it. "Neverborn ruins," he explains, glancing back at you. "Used to be a city called Noth, from what they've told me back in town. Nothin' but ghosts there now, but still seems like a damned fool place to build a mine, if'n you ask me."



The driver doesn't know much else about the ruins. If asked about them, he warns that asking too many questions about the ruins is a bad idea, as the workers in the camp - and Ms. Lucrentino - like to pretend as if the ruins don't exist.

In any case, he's not willing to stop his wagon to let the Fated investigate the ruins. He's on a schedule, and he wants to reach the camp before sundown. It's a two hour walk between the mining camp and the Noth Ruins.

When the Fated arrive at the mining camp, read the following text:



A half hour later, the wagons come upon the mining camp. The settlement is primarily just a few rows of canvas tents in a shallow depression, all stretched out in neat rows of uniform beige. A wooden shelter at the camp's center holds an ore-grinding machine, a smelting furnace, and cooking area, and to the west is a simple corral filled with bleating goats.


In the distance, the ground drops toward the unmistakable mouth of a mine. Mine cart tracks stretch from the mine's entrance right up to the smelting furnace, which stands next to a short, stone well.

As the wagon pulls to a stop and you disembark, a stout man in a well-worn coat and bowler hat steps up to meet you, his cigar trailing thick smoke.

"Welcome to the Noth Mine. Thomas Figg, Foreman, at your service," he says as he tips his hat. "Afore we get started, y'all need to know some ground rules we got ourselves here: No fighting. No stealing. No advances on pay. Wouldn't do you any good out here anyways. No going into the mine unless you're working a shift or got permission. No going into the ruins for any reason. You'll have to check your weapons with Sergeant Kenny, too." He puffs on his cigar. "Basically, just behave yourselves and we'll all be best friends."

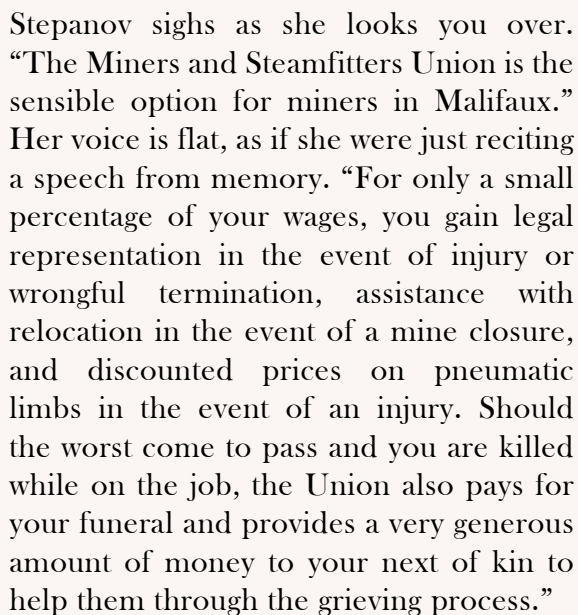
Figg gestures to a scowling woman coming towards you on his right. "This here is Miss Lena Stepanov, your friendly Union representative. Check in with her, get your work and tent assignments. If'n you're not already Union, you'll likely get a speech to that effect as well. See you at breakfast."

He wanders off as Miss Stepanov produces a ledger and impatiently waves you over with a tarnished pneumatic limb.



If the Fated do not arrive with the wagons, they get roughly the same introduction, though Figg informs them that they already have “a mark against” them for poking around in the ruins before they’d even checked in.

Stepanov is distant and abrupt as the workers sign her ledger. She asks which, if any of them, are Union and notes down their names and membership numbers in her ledger. Those who aren’t gain a very brief and unenthusiastic sales pitch. Read the following text:



Stepanov sighs as she looks you over. “The Miners and Steamfitters Union is the sensible option for miners in Malifaux.” Her voice is flat, as if she were just reciting a speech from memory. “For only a small percentage of your wages, you gain legal representation in the event of injury or wrongful termination, assistance with relocation in the event of a mine closure, and discounted prices on pneumatic limbs in the event of an injury. Should the worst come to pass and you are killed while on the job, the Union also pays for your funeral and provides a very generous amount of money to your next of kin to help them through the grieving process.”

She taps her ledger with a pneumatic limb. “If you are interested in joining the Union, please speak with me at a later time, and we will fill out the necessary paperwork.”

With that finished, Stepanov assigns the Fated to tents, in groups of four, separated by gender. Stepanov notes that one of the perks of diligent work is being moved into tents with fewer roommates, and possibly even a tent all to themselves. If any of the Fated have tents of their own, they are not allowed to set them up (“Against regulations,” Stepanov notes).

Once the Fated have been assigned their tents, she gives them the rest of the day to get settled in, with a reminder that they have to turn their weapons over to Sergeant Kenny. She doesn’t watch them do this, but if they haven’t done so by the end of dinner, she comes around to “remind them” again.

Starting on the second day, any reminders to turn in their weapons become official reprimands. There are no second reprimands; Stepanov turns the matter over to Sergeant Kenny, who demands that the weapons be turned over to him. Those who refuse are fired and sent back to the city (either on the wagon or on foot); obstinate people with weapons are a dangerous combination.

If the Fate do turn over their weapons, Sergeant Kenny writes them a receipt for each one and promises that he will keep them safe until their contract ends. He stores the weapons in a lockbox in his tent (Lockpicking TN 12 to open).

Weapons with the Concealable special rule are small and easily hidden, and thus the Fated can keep them hidden on their person without drawing any suspicion (at least, until such a weapon is drawn in combat).



WHAT'S REALLY HAPPENING HERE?

Many millennia ago, Noth was a thriving Neverborn mining settlement. The miners discovered a Bandersnatch nesting ground deep in their mine, but they mistook their eggs for gems and harvested them for jewelry. When the eggs hatched, a horde of hungry Bandersnatch spiderlings infested the settlement. Extermination efforts failed, and Noth was abandoned to the shadow spiders. The Bandersnatches eventually died or moved on, but countless eggs remained in the mine.

Fast forward to the present day. Two months ago, the humans who had taken the Noth mine for their own accidentally blasted into a new network of caverns. Matilda Holt, one of the mine's surveyors, discovered the Bandersnatch eggs in the cavern and showed them to her boss, Thomas Figg. Ever the opportunist, Figg brought in two other surveyors to help Holt secretly collect the "rock pearls" under the excuse of evaluating the unstable mining tunnels. None of them realize that the gems are actually Bandersnatch eggs (nor do they even know what a Bandersnatch is).

Sergeant Kenny was also recruited. Although serious about maintaining order, he doesn't see any problem with getting rich off of gems that the Lucrentino family didn't even know were supposed to be there. He brought in two other guards, Oleg Nattensson and Vincent Brand, and together they made sure that nobody else ventured into the caverns to interrupt their work there.

They also informed Lena Stepanov about the rock pearls, but she didn't want to have anything to do with them; she was assigned to the Noth mines as reprimand by the Union and just wants to keep her head down and finish her time. Her deal with Figg is simple: in exchange for not telling the M&SU about the rock pearls, he and Sergeant Kenny leave her alone.

The operation was working well, and every two weeks, they shipped the rock pearls back to Malifaux in a crate labeled "camp mail." There have been a few indiscretions, however; Alina Hansen, one of the surveyors, has been stealing a few of the rock pearls and sending them back to her girlfriend, who in turn sold them to some local jewelers. That jeweler is the source of the rumor that eventually made its way to Maude Lucrentino and resulted in the Fated being hired to investigate the mine.

Hansen wasn't the only one to steal from her partners. About three weeks ago, Figg caught Matilda Holt stealing rock pearls from the mine. They fought, Matilda was stabbed, and when her blood came into contact with the rock pearls, they hatched open and released a swarm of Bandersnatch spiderlings. The spiderlings devoured Holt. Figg had no idea where the spiders came from; he just ran. He later collected her belongings and told the camp that Holt had quit her job and left the mine.

Some of the spiderlings escaped the mine, but most turned on each other, and the survivor of that group, the Widow-in-Waiting, leapt into Oleg Nattensson's shadow during his next trip into the sealed area to steal more rock pearls for his wife. The Bandersnatch has been biding its time and has snatched up two goats in the middle of the night, grabbing them when Nattensson visited the latrine. Recently, the Bandersnatch has been eyeing Nattensson's tent-mate, Vincent Brand, for her next meal. remely resilient and can hatch after centuries of dormancy.

THE CAMP

The camp holds around forty people, around half of which are miners. The rest are surveyors, guards, cooks, and other support personnel.

Once the Fated have finished with Stepanov, groups of miners start filtering out of the mine entrance as their shift comes to an end. Stepanov stands at the entrance, marking each of their names in her ledger as they leave the mine. Once the last one has vacated the mine, she sets her ledger down and closes the entrance by pulling the two wooden doors together and securing them with a padlock.

Read the following text:




As the miners start gathering around the kitchen, Figg steps forward and raises his hands into the air. “Before y’all can eat, we’re gonna have to unload the supplies from the carts and then get them loaded up with all the iron we’ve pulled out of the ground.” The announcement brings groans of frustration, but the miners nevertheless lurch into motion, carrying crates filled with supplies from the carts over to the kitchen and replacing them with stacks of heavy iron bars.

Figg even helps out, carrying a crate labeled “camp mail” to the cart and carefully securing it for its trip back to Malifaux in the morning. He has a few words with one of the wagon drivers, who hands Figg a sack of mail before wandering toward the kitchen.



The Fated can help unload and load the carts if they wish. Doing so doesn’t earn them any acknowledgement or reward, but avoiding the work draws grudging looks from the miners and increases the TN of any Social Skill Challenges those characters try to make with the members of the camp by +2 for the rest of the adventure.

Once the carts are loaded, the miners return to the kitchen to get their meals (consisting of salt pork, beans, and potatoes). Some return to their tents to eat, some sit at the tables near the mess hall, and others just find a spot of ground to sit down at with their friends. Although some of the camp residents are clearly eager for news from the city, nobody seems all that interested in making friends with the Fated.

The Fated can make a TN 10 Notice Challenge, with a  modifier if they’re helping to load up the cart. On a success, they see Figg take a fat envelope from the mail sack, open it, peek inside, and then tuck it into his vest.

Regardless of their success or failure, once the miners are finished with the cart, he calls out their names as he hands out the rest of the mail. The envelope is the payment for the last shipment of rock pearls Figg sent back to Malifaux: sixty scrip, all told.

Mingling with the miners is the best way for the Fated to get caught up on camp gossip and to learn about any potential smuggling operations. Doing so is handled with an Ongoing Challenge:

SEARCHING FOR CLUES

Skills Allowed: Bewitch, Carouse, Deceive, Scrutiny, Stealth

Target Number: 11

Duration: 10 minutes

Success Requirement: 8

Failure Requirement: 3

This Ongoing Challenge only lasts for one hour before the miners finish their meals and retire to their tents. If the Fated have not completed or failed this Ongoing Challenge by then, the Ongoing Challenge simply ends without further effect.

The Fated can use Bewitch and Deceive to start up conversations to befriend or trick miners into talking, Carouse to drink with them, Scrutiny to get a general feel for the camp and who is acting strangely, or Stealth to creep around and eavesdrop on people.

At the end of each Duration, the Fated learn one Clue from the list below for each success they achieved. For every Failure, they learn one Mistake from the list below. If your players can easily separate player knowledge from character knowledge, feel free to give the Clues and Mistakes to them individually, perhaps even written down on small slips of paper they can reveal to the group. This allows them to each have an “Aha!” moment where they reveal their findings (or their false assumptions) to the group.

If your players find it difficult to separate what their characters know from what they know, however, you can just give the Clues and Mistakes to them all at the same time, ensuring that – like their characters – they’re not easily able to separate the truth from their false assumptions.

If the Fated manage to successfully complete the Ongoing Challenge, they learn the Breakthrough, which should give them a solid push in the right direction. If they critically fail the Ongoing Challenge, however, then they learn the Red Herring, which is likely to pull them well off course.

CLUES (IN NO SPECIFIC ORDER):

- The overall mood of the camp is sullen, and morale is pretty low. A few miners have filled out paperwork for transfers and put it in the mail, and they’re looking forward to the next shipment (in two weeks) to see if their transfer went through. They’ve always been a bit nervous about being so close to Neverborn ruins, but things started to get worse a few weeks ago. (The miners have noticed the distraction of their leadership and felt the eyes of the Bandersnatches watching them, and it’s made them uneasy.)
- The Fated see a man in a Guild uniform step out of the camp’s only wooden building and cross to a nearby tent, where Thomas Figg waits with a bottle of whiskey. They disappear inside. (The man in uniform is Sergeant Lewis Kenny; officially, he is the “law” in camp, but he mostly just ensures compliance with Guild regulations.)
- Used to be, Figg was always yelling at Stepanov for this or that. Sometimes it almost got her in

tears, though to her credit, she never cried in front of any of the workers. About two months ago, after they blasted into the sealed off portion of the mine, something changed between them, and now they get along pretty well. Popular theory is that the two of them hooked up, which isn’t helped by the occasional late night meetings between them. (In exchange for keeping the M&SU in the dark about the rock pearls, Figg promised to leave Stepanov alone and now ignores her minor mistakes instead of berating her for them.)

- Two of the camp’s goats have gone missing in as many weeks. The cook, Cookie, suspects some sort of desert predator to be responsible, but thus far, Sergeant Kenny has refused to post guards for the animals. (The sheep are actually being devoured by the Widow-in-Waiting; see page 9.)
- One of the miners mentions that “something about this place isn’t right.” She goes on to talk about feeling like she’s being watched, both in and outside the mine, and of seeing things moving in the corner of her eye that aren’t there when she turns to look. (The miner has caught a few passing glimpses of the Widow-in-Waiting; see page 9.)
- The mine is padlocked at night, but that only started a few weeks ago. Word around the camp is that Figg caught someone messing around with the dynamite in the middle of the night, so he transferred it to a secret location outside camp and got a padlock for the mine. (Figg put a padlock on the mine after Holt was killed to keep the spiderlings getting out of the mine. Moving dynamite was just the cover story.)
- The miners mention that they usually don’t get many new workers out at the mine. The last person that came in was Matilda Holt, who was hired to be a surveyor. After they opened the newest branch, though, she just up and quit her job and left in the middle of the night without another word. (Holt was actually stabbed by Figg and eaten by Bandersnatch spiderlings; Figg made up the story about her leaving the camp.)

MISTAKES (IN NO SPECIFIC ORDER):

- There are whispers that part of the mine got closed off because it opened out into a Neverborn crypt. According to some of the rumors, they've blocked it off until they can get an exorcist to come out to the mine to banish the unquiet ghosts of the long-dead Neverborn. (That portion of the mine was closed off due to the discovery of rock pearls, not Neverborn ruins.)
- As the Fated eat their meals, they find that someone has slipped a dead mouse into their beans. It's fat and bloated, and the skin has started to partially peel away from the muscle. It's clearly intended as a warning of some kind. (It is not a warning of any kind. The mouse had crawled into the beans, and the cooks weren't paying close attention when they accidentally shoveled it into the cooking pot.)

BREAKTHROUGH:

- Figg is really protective of the mail. Two weeks ago, when the last wagon came through, one of the miners missed mail call and tried to shove a last-minute letter to his girl into the mail box after it was already on the cart. Figg became very angry and yelled at the poor miner for the better part of ten minutes before cutting his rations in half in punishment. The poor guy's been waiting two weeks to get his letter out, but he was the first person to in line come when Figg announced mail call yesterday. (Figg became upset because the miner was trying to open the mail crate where he had stashed the rock pearls being shipped back to the city. This information points the Fated toward the mail crate, which is how Figg ships the rock pearls back to Malifaux City.)

RED HERRING:


One of the miners has been having strange dreams about a dark rider stalking out of the abandoned ruins, a tall scythe in its bony hands that reach for her through the shadows. The miner is worried about the ruins and what might be living within them, but she hasn't yet worked up the courage to investigate. (The bad dreams are just that... bad dreams. There's nothing in the ruins except for fallen stone pillars, open mining pits, and a whole lot of rock pearls.)

SUNSET FIGHT

That night, a fight breaks out between two of the camp guards, Oleg Nattensson and Vincent Brand. The Widow-in-Waiting, a large, female Bandersnatch, has taken residence in Oleg's shadow, and Vincent has noticed it moving around their tent at night. He has come to suspect that Oleg is a monster of some time - possible a Neverborn Doppelganger - but has yet to work up the courage to confront the Oleg directly. Instead, he's been trying to keep Oleg's shadow hemmed in with a steadily increasing number of lanterns, which he keeps burning in their tent all night long.

Oleg, who is oblivious to the Bandersnatch's presence, believes that Vincent has succumbed to some sort of fear of the dark. For days now, Vincent has been sleeping with lit lanterns and acting increasingly agitated down in the mine. Tonight, though, Vincent tries to set up six lanterns in their tent, which leads to an argument and a fist fight between the men.


Read the following text when the Fated start their first night in camp:




As the sun sets, shadows bleed from the distant ruins until as the sun sinks below the horizon and night gradually settles in.

The miners, exhausted from another long day of work, turn in early. Or most do, at least: nearby, you can hear a pair of voices arguing about their tent's lamp. The argument grows louder and angrier the longer you listen to it, until it eventually transitions into cursing and shouting on both sides.


Then there's a loud, inarticulate shout of rage that leads to the unmistakable sounds of a fist fight.



If the Fated investigate, read the following text:




A few tents away from your own, two workers half-brawl, half-wrestle in the dirt. Others watch from their tents, but nobody makes any move to stop them. Their casual interest turns to surprise and shock when one of the fighters draws a knife from his pocket.



The knife-wielder is Vincent Brand, and a TN 8 Scrutiny Challenge reveals that he's angry and out of control. The other man is his tent-mate, Oleg Nattensson, who seems very aware of the gravity of the situation.


If the Fated intervene, Brand and Nattensson are 5 yards away from them. Both are Camp Guards (pg. 31). If the Fated choose not to intervene, then Brand eventually stabs Nattensson and drops him unconscious.

Fortunately, the other camp guards show up before Brand can finish Nattensson off (or at the start of the third round, if the Fated get involved). A warning shot snaps Brand back to awareness and he drops the knife. The guards then take him away to spend a night in the Clink. Read the following text:



The camp guards escort the confused knife-wielder away from the tents as some others gather around his tent mate and open up a first aid kit. With the situation defused, the other miners gradually return to their own business.

"Looks like Brand earned a night in the Clink," one of the nearby miners, a brunette with a round face, says in passing. "Damned idiot."



The Clink, if the Fated ask or investigate, is an isolated tent erected over a stone slab that has manacles bolted to it. It's used as punishment by the mining camp and effectively serves as their jail. A TN 12 Lockpicking Challenge is enough to open the locks, but it takes a whopping TN 18 Athletics Challenge to break the chains or the slab.

If the Fated speak with Oleg Nattensson, he says that Brand wouldn't let him put out the lamps so that he could sleep. Nattensson pulls open the flap of his tent to reveal six lit lamps inside. He explains that Brand has become a little skittish around shadows lately. With that, he thanks the Fated if they helped him, goes into his tent, and douses the lamps.

Should the Fated decide to speak with Brand, they find him chained up in the Clink. He's confused and very worried that Oleg with "get him" now that he's not protected by his lanterns and begs the Fated to stay with him. It takes a TN 10 Charm or Convince Challenge to get Brand to elaborate on his problems with his tent mate, but on a success, he confides in the Fated and tells them that Oleg's shadow has been staring at him in the middle night. He shares his suspicions that Oleg is a doppelganger (despite knowing almost nothing about how doppelgangers work) and warns the Fated to be careful around him.

SCENE 2:

ON THE JOB (DAY 2)

This scene covers the Fated's first work shift.

Depending on whether the Fated are working in camp or in the mine, this scene could play out in multiple ways. If the Fated are split between these groups, it is recommended that the Fatemaster run them through in the order presented; nothing all that special happens on the first day, so this is primarily intended to get the Fated accustomed to their schedules and give them a bit of time to explore and look around before things start to get too weird.

COOK STAFF: BREAKFAST, LUNCH, AND DINNER

Fated working as cooks get to wake up early in the morning, while it's still dark, in order to get breakfast prepared for the camp. This primarily consists of peeling potatoes, milking the goats, churning butter, and preparing hashbrowns.

Once everyone starts waking up, the cooks are tasked with serving breakfast to everyone via a long table that the miners visit to receive their food in assembly line fashion.

When breakfast is over, the cooks spend the rest of the morning cleaning the dishes, which segues in lunch preparation (which in turn leads to lunch cleanup and dinner preparation).


THE DARK BELOW

In the mine, characters who cannot see in the dark are considered to be **Blind** (☐☐ to any action that requires sight) unless they have a light source.

MINERS: ENDLESS TOIL

Fated working as miners get to head down into the mine with the rest of the miners. As they enter the mine, Stepanov records each person's name in her log book, ensuring that in the event of a collapse or cave-in, they know exactly who is down there ("and whose family gets reimbursed, assuming you work for the Union" she adds in a non-humorous manner).


When the Fated head down into the mine, read the following text:



The miners head down to the mine in a steady line. There's little laughter or joking between them, just a somber march into the darkness that seems more fitting for a funeral than a day of work. Old, crumbling stonework peaks out from behind the newer wooden beams supporting the mine, hinting that this place may have been used by the Neverborn long before humans started digging it out. In places, you can see faint pictograms of spider-web patterns carved into the ancient stone.

Light is provided by lanterns which hang overhead from every other support beam, casting the procession of miners in eerie, flickering shadows. After around five minutes of steady descent, you eventually come to a large, low-ceilinged chamber with a vein of iron running along one wall.

The miners start breaking off into smaller groups as they head down a series of smaller tunnels branching off from the main chamber.



The first two Fated on miner duty are tasked with loading the mine cart in the central chamber with loose ore, pushing it all the way back up to the smelting furnace, unloading it by hand, and then pushing it back down to the central area to start the process over again.


The third Fated on miner duty (ideally the one with the slightest frame) has the unenviable job of scurrying around between the various dig sites, gathering up the fallen pieces of rock that have been mined out from the walls, and separating it into two piles: those rocks that contain ore and those that do not. When the cart returns, they get to help the pushers load the ore into the cart, and at the end of their shift, they will help those same workers carry the non-ore rock out to dump it outside camp.

GUARDS: PATROLLING THE CAMP

One of the Fated scheduled to work as a guard is brought into the mine to replace Vincent Brand, on account of his fight the previous night. Any additional guards are left topside to patrol the borders of the camp for Neverborn (which, the other guards assure them, have never been spotted in the area).

Each guard is assigned a Chesterfield 1897 rifle (*Core Rules*, pg. 232), which they have to check out from Sergeant Kenny at the start of their shift and return at the end of their shift.


Read the following text to the character tapped for guard duty:



As you prepare to take your place on the outskirts of camp, Thomas Figg whistles and motions for you to come talk to him.


“Brand is still in the Clink for nearly killing Nattensson last night, so we’re short a guard. You’re the replacement. Let’s go.”

Once the last of the miners has headed down into the mine, you’re approached by a bruised and slightly pale Oleg Nattensson, who nods in greeting. The two of you are soon joined by two miners laden with surveying tools.



If the Fated ask, they’re told that the two miners, Ludolf Orellana and Alina Hansen, are surveying unsafe tunnels in a closed-off section of the mine in an attempt to learn how to shore them up. With a successful TN 9 Scrutiny Challenge, the Fated also realize that the miners and Nattensson are all lying about what they’re doing down in the mine. If the Fated push this or don’t seem to believe the story, Nattensson motions to Figg, who sends the Fated back to guard duty and pulls a different (non-Fated) guard off of rotation to head down into the mine with them.


Assuming that the character doesn’t get kicked off of the assignment, read the following text:



Oleg Nattensson leads you and the two surveyors down into the mine and through a long, sharply sloped tunnel cut directly into the rock. Beneath the new wooden beams shoring up the mine, you see much older, crumbling stonework. This place has been a mine for a very long time, and in places, you can see places where the stonework has been defaced with ancient spider-web pictograms carved directly into the rock, now so eroded that they’re barely visible.

The air is damp, and the light produced by the lanterns that hang from every other support beam is eerie and shadowy. Every so often, you’re forced to step aside as a miner pushes a heavy mine cart up the tracks toward the smelter or an empty cart back down into the depths.

After five minutes of walking, you eventually come to an open, low-ceilinged chamber with a vein of iron running along one wall. Nattensson stops you just before you reach the room, however, instead directing you to a large iron grate that is bolted over the entrance to a side passage. A door in the grate is secured with a solid, modern lock, and a sign reads: “Unsafe - Cave-Ins - Do Not Enter.”



Nattensson pulls a key on a chain from his pocket, unlocks the grate, and allows the surveyors to enter the tunnel before locking it behind them. As the miners head deeper into the unstable tunnel, Nattensson stands at ease; that is his job for the next ten hours.

During his shift, he makes small talk with the Fated, noting that it's a two-person job so that, in case of an accident, one of them can run back up to the top of the mine to warn Figg while the other attempts to rescue the surveyors. It also means that they can take bathroom or cigarette breaks without leaving the gate unguarded. A TN 9 Scrutiny Challenge reveals that Nattensson doesn't really believe this to be the truth; in his mind, they're there to keep anyone from stumbling upon the rock mining operation. In actuality, though, Figg stationed the two guards at the gate in case the Bandersnatch spiderlings that devoured Holt decide to return.

LUNCH, DINNER, AND SUBTERFUGE

Around noon, Figg descends into the mine and announces an hour-long lunch break. Everyone is required to leave the mine, first the miners, then the guards and surveyors (the latter of whom Figg personally fetches once Nattensson unlocks the grate). Stepanov remains at the mine entrance, noting down the names of each miner in her log as they leave.

The exact same thing happens at the end of the afternoon shift when the mine clears out for dinner.

Figg does a quick visual check of the mine to ensure that everyone has left before coming out at the end of the group. Characters wishing to avoid his attention must succeed on a TN 12 Stealth Challenge, which earns them around ten to fifteen minutes of alone time in the mine before Figg heads back down into the mine to retrieve them.

Not leaving with the other miners earns the character a reprimand from Stepanov once they are found. Repeatedly failing to leave the mine gets the character transferred to unpleasant non-mine duties (such as digging latrines or night watch duty).

EXPLORING THE MINES

If the Fated choose to explore the unstable portion of the mine, they will either have to hide away in the mines until everyone leaves (as noted above) or try to sneak past Nattensson. He typically takes a single restroom and/or cigarette break per shift, during which time he leaves his key with his fellow guard. He's only gone about fifteen minutes.

Sneaking past Nattensson requires a TN 9 Stealth Challenge; if the Fated attempt to open the grating and enter the unstable portion of the mine without him noticing, they suffer a \square on this Challenge due to the grate's size and squeaky hinges. Lifting the key from his pocket (it's on a chain) requires a TN 12 Pick Pocket Challenge, or the Fated can attempt a TN 12 Lockpicking Challenge to open the lock on the metal grate without the key.

If the Fated are caught trying to steal from or sneak past Nattensson, he marches them right up to Figg, who tosses them in the Clink for the rest of the day. From that point on, Figg posts a guard at the front of the mine once it has been locked up for the night. Any further transgressions result in Figg arranging for a "mining accident" to befall the group... possibly by transferring them to the unstable portion of the mine to help the surveyors, only for him and Nattensson to turn on the Fated and ambush them. If this leads to a fight, Figg has the stats of a Camp Guard (pg. 31).

THE UNSTABLE MINE

When the players enter the unstable mine, read the following text:

The passageway quickly branches into a maze of narrow, high-ceilinged tunnels. There are no wooden support beams or lanterns here, and the tunnels are instead supported by ancient stonework. Small bits of rock and dirt occasionally fall from the ceiling, and you have the general sense that any portion of the tunnels might collapse at any moment.

If the Fated attempt to follow the surveyors, it is handled with an Ongoing Challenge:

EXPLORING THE TUNNELS

Skills Allowed: Notice, Track, Wilderness

Target Number: 10

Duration: 5 minutes

Success Requirement: 6

Failure Requirement: 2

If the Fated do not have an appropriate light source with them (or some way to see in the dark), they suffer ☐☐ to all Challenges made as part of this Ongoing Challenge.

If the Fated succeed on this Ongoing Challenge, they find their way to the Bone Chamber (see pg. 18). Additionally, they can now travel to the Bone Chamber from the main tunnel without repeating this Ongoing Challenge. The trip takes an amount of time equal to the amount of time the Fated spend on this Ongoing Challenge.

On a catastrophic failure, one of the Fated bumps into a particularly unstable piece of rock and triggers a cave-in. Everyone in the area must succeed at a TN 14 Evade Challenge or suffer 3/4/5 damage and become Prone.

If a character suffers Severe damage from this attack, they are buried under a great deal of rock and gains the **Suffocating +3** Condition. At the end of every minute, the character gains another **Suffocating +3**. Another non-buried character can dig her free with one minute of work and a successful TN 10 Athletics Challenge, or the character can attempt to dig herself free with the same Challenge, albeit with a ☐ to her flip.

If the surveyors are in the unstable tunnels or the Bone Chamber at the time of the collapse, they show up in five minutes to investigate the collapse.



THE BONE CHAMBER

The Bone Chamber was once the Bandersnatch nesting ground. Their prey was suspended in a massive web, and when they were of no further use, the Bandersnatches allowed their corpses to fall to the chamber's floor. The webs have long since decayed to nothing.

When the Fated enter the Bone Chamber, read the following text:



The tunnel opens into a recessed cavern with wide walls and a tall ceiling. A stack of tools and a barrel of clean water rest near the door, along with a covered chamber pot. Next to those are a small iron safe. The floor of the chamber is staked out with iron spikes and twine, creating a massive grid of squares across the uneven floor.

After a moment, you realize just why the floor is so uneven: bones lay everywhere, in some places stacked two or three feet tall. They are ancient and calcified, and in some places they are encrusted in minerals from centuries of trickling water. Here and there, the bones sparkle with small groupings of rock pearls.



If the surveyors are present, read the following additional text:



Hunched over the ancient bones are the two surveyors with small hammers and chisels in their hands. Cloth satchels and lanterns rest on the ground in front of them, and as you watch, one of them chips a small rock pearl from the ground, examines it, and places it into their satchel.



If the surveyors, Ludolf Orellana and Alina Hansen, are present, the Fated have to make TN 6 Stealth Challenges to avoid being seen. If they have a lantern or other source of light that is not hidden or otherwise obscured, they suffer a \square to this Challenge.

If the Fated make themselves known to the surveyors, they immediately snatch up their satchels and demand to know what the Fated are doing in that section of the mine. If pressed, they try to explain that they're surveying the area for stress lines, but a TN 8 Scrutiny Challenge reveals that they're lying (if the Fated need to confirm their suspicions).

Bringing up the rock pearls makes the surveyors nervous. They confirm that they're mining the pearls but claim that they aren't harming anyone; the Lucrentino family wasn't expecting the mine to produce any gems, and in any case, they're the ones working in the middle of nowhere for less pay than they would get at a Soulstone mine. In their minds, the rock pearls are just evening the score.

Either way, the surveyors point the Fated toward Figg if they have any further questions. He's the one running the mine, and ultimately, he's the one that makes the call about what they pull out of it. What he does with the pearls isn't any of their business. A TN 6 Scrutiny Challenge (with a \square due to their Gruff Ability) confirms that both miners know they're stealing, despite how they attempt to justify it.

The surveyors report their discovery to Figg as soon as they leave the mine that night. He takes his time trying to decide just how to handle things, and if the Fated approach him directly about the rock pearls, he tells them that they'll talk about it in the morning. He's not expecting them to leave the camp in the middle of the night, so he spends his evening discussing their options with Sergeant Kenny. In either case, the Fated are not punished for their snooping.

Regardless, things reach a head that night; proceed to Scene 3: Light and Shadow

SEARCHING THE CHAMBER

There are plenty of rock pearls in this chamber – dozens upon dozens of them, hidden among the petrified bones.

If the Fated attempt to investigate the petrified bones, a TN 8 Doctor Challenge is enough to determine that the growths on the bones are not simply the result of calcified rocks; the bones belong to Neverborn, not humans. If a character achieves a Margin of Success on this Challenge, she finds a single set of adult human bones mixed in with the rest; they've been scoured clean but have likely been there no longer than a month, judging from the lack of calcification. (These are Matilda Holt's bones.)

The safe is where the surveyors store the rock pearls that they dig up during their shifts. It's open during their shift but locked at all other times. Opening the safe requires a TN 14 Lockpicking Challenge. Since a shipment just went out with the wagon, there are only two rock pearls inside at the moment, in a leather satchel.



ROCK PEARLS

Bandersnatch eggs are extremely resilient and can hatch after centuries of dormancy. Even cutting the eggs may not kill the spiderlings, for they do not grow within the eggs themselves. Instead, they gestate within a Shadow Lair anchored to the eggs. They remain dormant until warm, fresh blood comes into contact with an egg, at which point it turns midnight black and releases the swarm of ravenous Bandersnatch spiderlings. Once they have “hatched,” the eggs turn grey and look just like normal stones.

If a Living character carrying rock pearls takes any damage or gains the **Bleeding Out** Condition, after 30 seconds (5 rounds), all of the rock pearls they are carrying hatch. A Tide of Darkness (pg. 33) appears and makes an immediate attack against the character.

Rock Pearls also hatch 30 seconds after a character within 1 yard of them gains the **Bleeding Out** Condition or suffers the **Bloody Mess! Severe Critical Effect**.


SCENE 3:

LIGHT AND SHADOW

Once the afternoon shift has ended, Sergeant Kenny releases Vincent Brand from the Clink. The Fated can see him return to camp, rubbing his wrists. He eyes Oleg a few times but doesn't approach his tent mate, which most people in camp consider to be a good thing.


Right around sunset, Vincent Brand finally snaps and decides that Oleg Nattensson is a monster. He clubs Nattensson in the head, knocking him unconscious, and then wraps him in bailing wire, douses him in lamp oil, and sets him on fire. Nattensson's death forces the Widow-in-Waiting to abandon her collapsing Shadow Lair and find a new home.

Read the following text:



As you're heading toward your tent, you overhear a few muffled sounds coming from Oleg Nattensson's tent, almost like someone struggling in their sleep.

If the Fated investigate, the noise is coming from the tent shared by Nattensson and Brand. Before they draw too close, however, read the following text:



Suddenly, a shirtless Vincent Brand bursts out of his tent and sprints westward. A moment later, his tent erupts into flame!

Fated who attempt to pursue the fleeing Brand must make TN 10 Athletics Challenges to catch up with him. On a failure, they fall too far behind. On a success, they catch up with him just as he knocks out one of the confused guards, steals his rifle, and turns around to shoot at them. Vincent Brand has the stats of a Camp Guard (pg. 31). He fights to the death.

During the fight, Brand uses at least one of his AP each turn to keep moving westward. He shouts out nonsense such as "I won't go back!" "The shadows won't take me!" and "I'm staying with the sun!" as he moves.

Because he has the sunset at his back, any characters attacking Brand suffer \square to their attack flips unless they can somehow get to his side or behind him (in which case he will suffer a similar penalty when attacking them).

If the Fated don't stop Brand, he disappears into the Badlands, ranting as he chases the sunset. That night, he's eaten by hoar... er, Bandersnatches.

SWAPPED TENTS

If Nattensson was moved to another tent (perhaps one of the Fated traded tents with him), then Brand still seeks him out and tries to ambush Nattensson in his new tent, possibly while his new roommate is visiting the latrine.

If it isn't possible for him to get Nattensson alone, then Brand simply opens the flap of a tent, points his rifle at his former tent-mate, and blows his brains across the inside of the tent (and the Fated) before making his desperate escape.

It's not necessary for Oleg to perish; if the Fated are suspicious of Brand and take sufficient precautions to protect Oleg, then the assassination attempt should fail. If this happens, Brand still flees into the Badlands in the hopes of escaping the "monster" he believes Oleg to be.

A HITCHHIKER

While the Fated are putting out the fire (or when they are fighting Brand, if none of them remained with the fire), the Widow-in-Waiting leaps into the shadow of one of the Fated. From that point onward, the character is referred to as the “Host.”

When this happens, the character may attempt a TN 15 Notice Challenge. On a failure, read the following text:

Out of the corner of your eye, you see one of the flickering shadows move in an odd way. You turn to see... nothing. Everything is still except for a tiny whorl of dust stirred by a breeze.

On a success, read the following text:

Out of the corner of your eye, you see one of the flickering shadows move in an odd way. You turn just in time to see a large, spider-like creature the size of a mule lunging toward you. You pull back, raising your arm in instinctive shock as you shout in surprise, but the attack never comes, and when you lower your arm, there’s no sign of the giant spider.

The people around you are giving you strange looks; it doesn’t look like they noticed anything out of the ordinary.

Either way, the character’s shadow is now home to a hungry, predatory spider. Fun times!

See the Widow-in-Waiting’s stats on page 35 for more information.




SCENE 4:

MISSING GOATS (DAY 3)


By the morning of the third day, the Widow-in-Waiting is fully grown and ready to mate. When her Host gets up in the middle of the night, she scuttles out, grabs another goat, and drags it back to her Shadow Lair.

Read the following text:



You wake up in the middle of the night with a full bladder and the need to empty it. It's a hassle, but after making yourself decent, you wander out to the latrines to answer the call of the business. The goats in the nearby corral are quiet for once, and they barely even look up as you approach them.

As you pass, however, the goats suddenly release startled bleats of terror and bolt to their feet as they dart away from you in a blind panic. One of the camp guards, attracted by the noise, wanders over towards you with a look of confusion. "Everything alright over here? You're not harassing the goats, are you?"




The Camp Guard isn't overly hostile and lets the Host get back to their business once it's clear that nothing is amiss.

MORNING WEBS


To attract males, the Widow-in-Waiting trails musky, black webs from the Host's shadow. These resemble sticky, fine threads with a sharp chemical smell. These threads can be seen on a successful TN 12 Notice Challenge. Male Bandersnatches catch the scent on the wind and come for the Widow-in-Waiting at sunset.

When the Host wakes up in the morning, they are covered in these threads. Read the following text:



You awaken in the morning and reach up to brush something off your face, only to find your entire arm covered in thin, sticky threads. A strong chemical scent, reminiscent of chlorine and bleach, fills the tent, and you can hear your roommates grumbling as they begin to wake and notice the stench as well.

As you open your eyes and the fog of sleep begins to clear, you realize that you're entirely covered with fine black thread. The sticky fibers are all over your clothes, bed, and belongings, and to a lesser extent, some of your roommates. The chemical scent seems to be coming from the black threads.



A TN 12 Alchemy or Husbandry Challenge reveals that the chemicals coating the webs are some sort of animal pheromone.

DISAPPEARANCES

As the Host continues with her day, the Widow-in-Waiting snatches up unsuspecting prey from around her as she starts building a larder for her future children. For the rest of the day, these disappearances should be somewhat perplexing for the Host. Fatemaster characters left alone with the Host simply disappear, perhaps vanishing just as they walk past the Host. This could even be helpful, such as a Camp Guard disappearing just as they discover the Host somewhere she shouldn't be.

Victims are pulled in the Bandersnatch's Shadow Lair with blinding speed. If the Host succeeds on a TN 15 Notice Challenge, she hears a skittering sound, perhaps a gasp of breath as the victim prepares to scream, and then a wet crunch. When she looks, though, nobody is there.

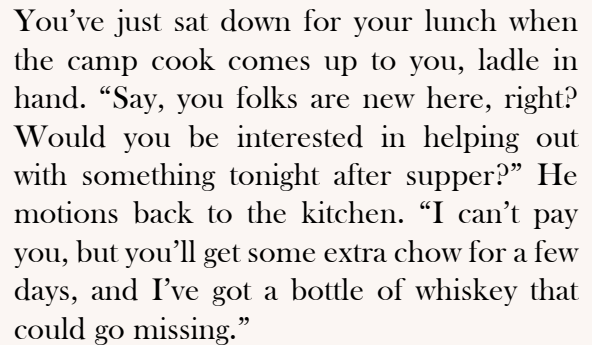
If the ground is soft enough, a TN 10 Track Challenge discovers footprints that end abruptly amidst a dozen other small marks, as if poles had been poked into the ground. There might also be some fine blood spray on the ground or on the back of the Host's clothes, though this spray isn't enough to hatch any rock pearls unless they are exposed (such as in the character's hand).

Once Figg, Stepanov, or Sergeant Kenny realizes that someone is missing, a search is organized. Unfortunately, these searches are doomed to fail, as the victim is no longer in reality.

The rest of the Fated's day progresses much like the day before.

GOAT PROBLEMS

Around lunch, the camp cook asks the Fated for help once they've had their food. Read the following text:

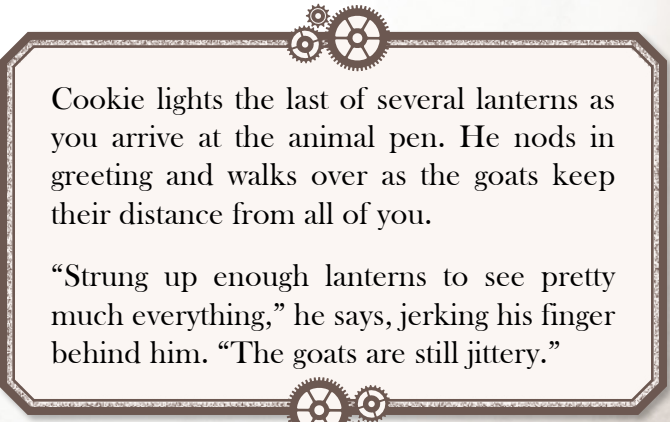


You've just sat down for your lunch when the camp cook comes up to you, ladle in hand. "Say, you folks are new here, right? Would you be interested in helping out with something tonight after supper?" He motions back to the kitchen. "I can't pay you, but you'll get some extra chow for a few days, and I've got a bottle of whiskey that could go missing."

If the Fated accept, the cook introduces himself as David Lester ("but call me Cookie"). He goes on to explain that one of his goats went missing last night. It's the third one in two weeks, and he'd like the Fated to help him keep watch tonight to make sure that nothing happens. Sergeant Kenny won't spare a guard, and since the previous two disappearances happened before the Fated arrived at camp, he knows that they're not involved.

GOAT WATCH

If the Fated agreed to help Cookie, they can find him in the corral after supper. Read the following text:



Cookie lights the last of several lanterns as you arrive at the animal pen. He nods in greeting and walks over as the goats keep their distance from all of you.

"Strung up enough lanterns to see pretty much everything," he says, jerking his finger behind him. "The goats are still jittery."

There is little to do for the next several hours except watch the pens and talk to Cookie. Unfortunately, he knows little about the mines and nothing about rock pearls. At midnight, he heads back to the kitchen for ten minutes and returns with cups of hot coffee and bowls of thick beef broth.

Around 2:00 am, the Fated can make a TN 10 Husbandry or Notice Challenge. On a Husbandry success, they realize that the animals are getting restless. With a Notice success, they see something about the size of a watermelon moving low to the ground in the shadows beyond the pens. If they investigate further, they find nothing out of the ordinary.

Soon after, the Fated should make a TN 12 Notice Challenge. On a success, read the following text:

The goats back away from the edges of the pen, looking around wildly as if sensing something they can't see. Suddenly, a goat cries out, a wretched wail that is suddenly cut off as something like a giant, misshapen hand reaches out of the ground, grabs the beast, and pulls it under.

Fated who fail their Notice Challenge still hear the goat's wail but do not see the shadow-hand. If any of the Fated achieve a Margin of Success, they observe two additional things: the goat was pulled into the shadow of another goat, and the fingers of the shadow-hand looked more like spider legs.

The "hand" is a male Bandersnatch (pg. 34) that is using one of the goats as its Shadow Lair. It was drawn to the camp by the Widow-in-Waiting's pheromones and is seeking to obtain a delicious goat that it can offer her as a mating gift.

If the Fated try to isolate the Shadow Lair goat, the Bandersnatch uses the Dart Out and Crawl into Shadow actions to jump into another character's shadow. Unless it targets a Fated, the new victim's shadow automatically becomes a Shadow Lair. Otherwise, it bides its time and tries to slip away once the goats (and Fated) have calmed down.

The spider wants to escape, and if it has a clear shot at the shadows outside the pens, it will scuttle out of whatever shadow it occupies and make a break for it. Once in the shadows, the Fated each gain a single action before the spider disappears into the night.

If the Bandersnatch comes within 3 yards of the Host with the Widow-in-Waiting in her shadow, it attempts to use its Crawl into Shadow Action to leap into that character's shadow and mate with the Widow-in-Waiting. Afterwards, the Widow-in-Waiting devours him. See Birthing Darkness on page 29 for more information.


If the Fated kill the Bandersnatch and present it to Figg, it is enough to make the mine boss flee from the camp. See Bugging Out on page 27.



SCENE 5:


DARKNESS WITHIN (DAY 4)

For the most part, the fourth day is relatively uneventful... right up until the end of the afternoon shift. If any of the Fated are guarding the metal grate, read the following text:




The surveyors come to the metal grate as normal and patiently wait for you to open it. As they pass through, the female surveyor places her hand on the gate to push it open a bit further, only to suddenly pull her hand back and curse as she cuts it on a piece of sharp metal. "Son of a..."

She pulls a bandana out from her pocket, wraps it around the wound, and shoves it into her pocket. "C'mon," she says, his face screwed up in pain. "Let's get out of this damned hole."




The female surveyor, Alina Hansen, sometimes steals rock pearls from the dig site and sends them back to Malifaux City to her girlfriend. Today is, unfortunately, one of the days that she decided to sneak some rock pearls out of the mine.

The pocket that Alina shoves her hand into is the same one that holds her stolen rock pearls. When she returns to the surface - regardless of whether or not any of the Fated were on guard duty - the rock pearls "hatch" and swarm over her body, devouring her. Read the following text:



As the surveyors leave the mine, one of them, Alina Hansen pulls an injured hand that is wrapped in a bandanna out of her pocket. At first, she doesn't seem to notice the small, quarter-sized blots of darkness swarming over its surface, but when they start crawling up her arm, she yells and starts frantically flailing and screaming.



If the Fated attempt to save Alina, the scene shifts into Dramatic Time. The battle here is against a swarm of Bandersnatch spiderlings, which is called a Tide of Shadow (pg. 33). Alina begins the battle having suffered one damage.

If Alina survives the attack, she reaches into her pocket to confirm that the rock pearls are still there, only to find four small, perfectly round but otherwise ordinary stones that are splattered with her blood. She seems surprised and mutters "those should be rock pearls" before passing out.

If Alina perishes, then a search of her body turns up the round, blood-splattered stones. The blots of darkness scurry away into the lengthening shadows, leaving her corpse behind.


Either way, Sergeant Kenny arrives shortly after the attack and either has Alina carried to her tent or outside of town to be buried, depending upon whether she survived or perished.

CAUGHT IN THE ACT


At some point in the evening, once the excitement of Alina's attack has ebbed, the Widow-in-Waiting makes another attempt at snatching up some food.

The character that disappears could be a Fatemaster character, but this scene works best if the Widow-in-Waiting decides to attack one of the Fated while the Host's back is turned.

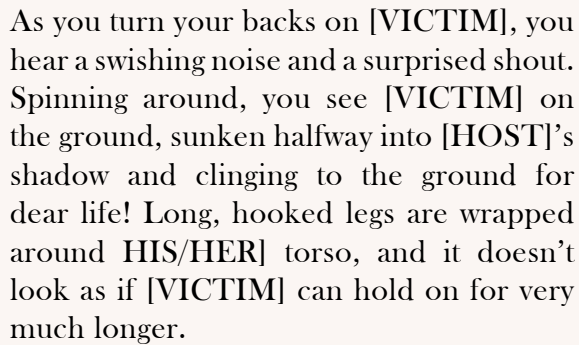
If the target is a Fated, the Widow-in-Waiting makes a Grab attack against them. On a failure, read the following text to that character:



As [HOST] turns [HIS/HER] back, a massive shape climbs out from [HIS/HER] shadow as if it were a darkened pit. You have the impression of hooked legs as a glistening spider the size of a mule lunges forward, trying to grab you! You manage to fight it off, but the nightmarish spider doesn't relent!



If the victim is not a Fated, or if the Widow-in-Waiting's attack succeeds, read the following text:



As you turn your backs on [VICTIM], you hear a swishing noise and a surprised shout. Spinning around, you see [VICTIM] on the ground, sunken halfway into [HOST]'s shadow and clinging to the ground for dear life! Long, hooked legs are wrapped around HIS/HER] torso, and it doesn't look as if [VICTIM] can hold on for very much longer.

Regardless of what happens, the scene shifts into Dramatic Time. The Widow-in-Waiting tries to drag the victim down into its Shadow Lair as quickly as possible. If its victim is a Fated, then this is handled much like a standard battle, save that the Widow-in-Waiting attempts to grab its target and flee back to its Shadow Lair as quickly as possible.

If the victim is partially pulled down into the Shadow Lair, a character can attempt to grab the victim and pull her to safety with a (1) AP Action and a successful TN 10 Athletics Challenge. On a failure, if the victim is a Fated character, she gets pulled down into the Shadow Lair per the Widow-in-Waiting's Snatch Trigger. If the victim is a Fatemaster character, she is torn in half and the character only pulls her upper half free of the shadow.

On a success, the victim is pulled out of the Shadow Lair, but the Widow-in-Waiting remains hidden inside her nest.

SPIDER IN A SHADOW

If the Fated are unable to defeat the Widow-in-Waiting in combat (which is likely, given how difficult it is to trap her in place), they will be faced with the puzzle of trying to figure out just how to deal with her. Entering her Shadow Lair is impossible unless the Widow-in-Waiting is holding onto the character, but she can be lured out with live bait placed within 3 yards of the Host.

If the Widow Weaver doesn't think she's being watched (TN 11 Stealth Challenges to feign inattention or just waiting further than the 3 yards she can see from her Shadow Lair), then she will dart out to grab the easy meal. The Fated can use the Wait Action to catch her between her Dart Out and Grab Actions.

Killing the Shadow Lair Host immediately forces the Widow-in-Waiting out into the open, though the Host will most likely object to this tactic. The Widow-in-Waiting will also flee if she believes the Host to be in grave danger (which likely requires a TN 11 Deceive Challenge to make her believe a character is being threatened for real). If the Widow-in-Waiting abandons her Host, the Shadow Lair collapses, and any characters still trapped within it are ejected and appear next to the Host.

The Fatemaster should give any clever ideas a chance of success.

BLOWING UP THE MINE

If the Fated realize that the rock pearls are actually Bandersnatch eggs (either via deduction or after watching them hatch), they may decide to do something about it. Taking all of the camp's rock pearls is certainly one option, but Figg and his surveyors will only dig up more. Even if the Fated bring an end to the smuggling operation, it's likely that the next foreman (or even Maude Lucrentino) will attempt to excavate the gems and sell them for profit.

Fated with the Explosives Skill (and explosives) could attempt to destroy the unstable tunnels or the Bone Chamber. The camp's dynamite is currently stored in a small cave about fifty yards from the camp. The cave is really just a shady hole in a small outcropping of rock, and even without the dynamite, it has barely enough room to hold two hunching people at the same time. A metal grate with a padlock secures the cavern from intruders, but the lock can be picked with a TN 12 Lockpicking Challenge, or the grate can be pulled free with a TN 14 Athletics Challenge. Inside are four crates of dynamite, twenty sticks per crate. A stick of dynamite can be tossed using the Thrown Weapons Skill, and it deals 3/4🔫🔫/5🔫🔫🔫 damage that ignores Armor.

It takes a full crate of dynamite and a TN 12 Explosives Challenge to destroy either room, though the Fated gain a + to this Challenge in the unstable tunnels, given their propensity for collapse. On a success, the explosives go off without a hitch and destroy the relevant area. On a failure, the explosives bring down some rock, but not enough to fully block off the area in question. If the Fated generate a Margin of Failure, the explosion also partially collapses the main mining area, killing about half the miners there if they're currently on shift.

Needless to say, setting off any sort of explosive in the mine quickly draws the attention of everyone in camp.

APPEALS TO SANITY

The Fated might talk directly to Figg, Sergeant Kenny, or Stepanov about the rock pearls.

If Figg sees a Bandersnatch corpse, anyone who makes a successful TN 10 Scrutiny Challenge catches a brief flicker of recognition cross his face. He denies recognizing the creature, but if the Fated press him and make a successful TN 10 Bewitch, Convince, or Intimidate Challenge, he admits to seeing much smaller versions of the creature in the ruins. With a Margin of Success, Figg blurts out that he saw them attack Matilda Holt, and from there the whole story of Matilda's demise comes

to light. Most likely, he attempts to flee from the camp at that point; see Bugging Out below.

Sergeant Kenny and Stepanov are more difficult to convince. They considers stories of monsters coming out of gems to be nonsense and focus more upon the fact that the Fated know about the rock pearls than upon any danger they might represent. If the Fated succeed on a TN 10 Bewitch or Convince Challenge, however, they can get the character to admit that the gems might be dangerous. If Alina was already devoured by the Tide of Darkness, the Fated gain a + to this Challenge.

From that point on, the character will assist the Fated in whatever way they can. Sergeant Kenny has the key to the Clink and can release Fated that have been locked up, and he can give them the keys to the dynamite cache. Stepanov doesn't have these keys, but she's able to inform the Fated about the dynamite and assist them in setting it up, which gives them a + to their Explosives Challenge.

BUGGING OUT


Should Figg feel as if he's losing control of his smuggling operation (e.g., both Kenny and Stepanov support the Fated), or if he learns about the Bandersnatches and just how much of a threat they pose to his operation, he leaves the camp.

He travels into the mine and empties out the safe in the bone chamber. He then returns to camp to gather up additional supplies from his tent and heads out into the desert on his way back towards the city. The Fated can intercept him if they notice his behavior (requiring a TN 10 Notice or Scrutiny Challenge), but otherwise, he simply disappears.

SCENE 6:


MATING SEASON

At the sunset after the fourth day, a group of male Bandersnatches come looking for the Widow-in-Waiting. Read the following text:




The shadows grow long as the sun sinks low into the horizon, but there's still time before nightfall. Or is there? A guard stationed on the northern end of camp shouts out a warning, and when you look, two of the guards are standing together, their hands raised to shield their eyes against the setting sun.


"Something moving out there," one of them says, his voice loud enough to carry halfway across camp.



The Fated can attempt TN 12 Notice Challenges. On a success, read the following text:




Things move in the twilight. Black shapes the size of a man's torso dart between the shadows, low to the ground and frighteningly fast. You catch only glimpses, but their silhouettes are unmistakable: giant spiders.




There are a total of three Bandersnatches moving through the shadows toward the camp. They head directly toward the Widow-in-Waiting's current Host and will either go around the guards or leap into their shadows, moving in short jumps from one shadow to the next to limit their exposure.

Once in range, the Bandersnatches attempt to use the Crawl into Shadow action on the Host to enter her shadow. The Bandersnatch then mates with the Widow-in-Waiting, who devours him.

If the Widow-in-Waiting has already mated when a male Bandersnatch leaps into her shadow lair, read the following text:



A few moments later, a spider's severed head flies out of [HOST]'s shadow and lands with a thud, rolling unevenly and trailing inky blood across the ground until it finally wobbles to a stop.



The other male Bandersnatches take the unsubtle hint and cease attempting to mate with the Widow-in-Waiting at this point. They attempt to flee from the battle and return to Noth as quickly as possible.

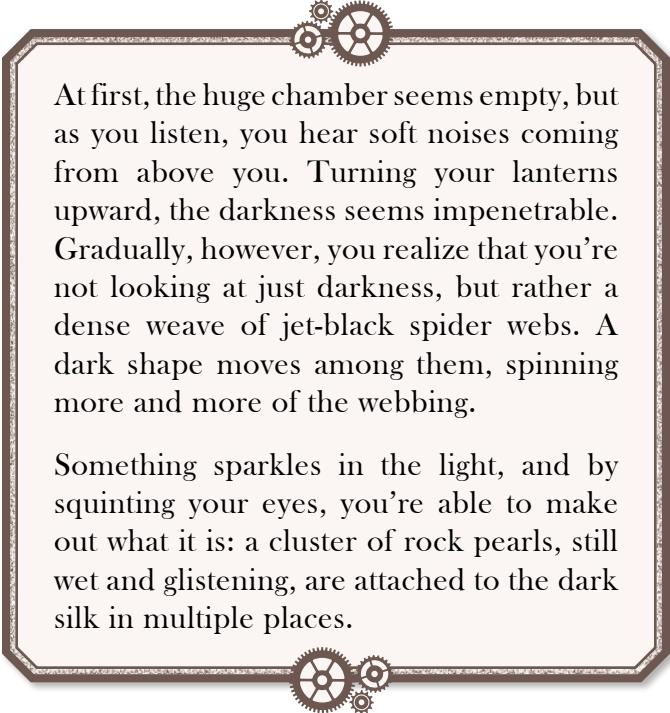
If the Widow-in-Waiting is already dead by the time the males arrive, they still track down the former Shadow Lair Host and enter her shadow. If they succeed, on their next turn, they realize that the Widow-in-Waiting is missing, become confused, and leap out of the shadow to attack anything nearby.

Stats for the Bandersnatches can be found on page 34.

BIRTHING DARKNESS

Once the Widow-in-Waiting has mated, she attempts to skitter down to the Bone Chamber to start laying eggs. She darts between shadows if possible but will move openly across the ground if she has no further choice.

If the Fated follow her down into the Bone Chamber (a TN 10 Track Challenge, if they can't guess her destination), read the following text when they arrive, adjusting as appropriate if the Fated don't have lanterns or haven't yet been to the Bone Chamber:



At first, the huge chamber seems empty, but as you listen, you hear soft noises coming from above you. Turning your lanterns upward, the darkness seems impenetrable. Gradually, however, you realize that you're not looking at just darkness, but rather a dense weave of jet-black spider webs. A dark shape moves among them, spinning more and more of the webbing.

Something sparkles in the light, and by squinting your eyes, you're able to make out what it is: a cluster of rock pearls, still wet and glistening, are attached to the dark silk in multiple places.

If the Fated attack the Widow-in-Waiting, she defends herself until she is lowered to negative Wounds, at which point she attempts to leap into one of the Fated's shadows, where she remains until she heals up, only grabbing food sporadically when the Fated falls asleep (or pretends to fall asleep, if they succeed at a TN 11 Deceive Challenge).

EPILOGUE

If Sergeant Kenny knows that the rock pearls are Bandersnatch eggs, he orders that the Bone Cavern be dynamited after the Widow-in-Waiting is killed. He is genuinely repentant about his role in the smuggling operation and confesses his role and the roles of his confederates to the Fated. He makes the Fated an offer: Maude Lucrentino needs to keep the mine operational, and he and Stepanov can keep it running. If they are willing to keep the scandal quiet, he will ensure that nobody else pulls any rock pearls out of the mine.

If Figg is still around and the Fated seem trustworthy, he offers them a single bribe of thirty scrip to keep things quiet.

If the Fated tell Maude Lucrentino that the rock pearls are Bandersnatch eggs, she's initially dubious of their claim. If they show her definitive proof or force Figg to confess, she is devastated. She had hoped that the rock pearls would finance some much-needed upgrades for the mine, but with this knowledge, she doesn't see any choice but to close the mine. In either case, if they disrupted the smuggling operation, she thanks the Fated and pays them.

The Fated may also realize that there are bigger problems ahead: rock pearl jewelry is a growing fashion, and Figg shipped pearls back to Malifaux for weeks before the Fated arrived. It is likely that a number of socialites in the city are wearing very pretty, spider-filled time bombs.



FATEMASTER CHARACTERS

The following pages contain the stat blocks for the Fatemaster characters that the Fated are likely to encounter over the course of the adventure. They have been created with an eye toward ease of use by the Fatemaster and include everything needed to run these characters in a combat situation.

Depending on the situation, Fatemasters more familiar with *Through the Breach* may want to adjust some of these characters' Rank Values ahead of time to create more or less of a challenge for their players. In general, Fatemasters are cautioned against increasing the Rank Values of the characters in this adventure by more than a few points.

The only real adversaries the Fated are likely to face in this adventure are the Bandersnatches, both of the normal variety, swarms of their young, and the large and very dangerous Widow-in-Waiting. These creatures are careful and stealthy, and they function more as ambush predators than rampaging beasts.

Generally speaking, the Bandersnatches in this adventure (and especially the Widow-in-Waiting) should wait until their prey is alone and isolated before attacking. They try not to kill their host, lest they lose their comfortable shadow lair, but everyone else is fair game.

The Tide of Darkness can be almost as dangerous as the Widow-in-Waiting, albeit for different reasons. Since the young Bandersnatches only appear after blood has been shed, it is quite possible that their first appearance will come as quite a surprise for a wounded character carrying rock pearls, particularly one who had thought themselves safe on the back lines of combat.

Needless to say, this makes any sort of combat in the bone chamber particularly dangerous, as there are all sorts of spiderling swarms just waiting for a few drops of blood to wake them up...

CAMP GUARD

While many of the mines in the Northern Hills get by without any sort of armed patrols (other than a few of the more productive Soulstone mines), it is a different matter entirely in the Badlands. The threat of Neverborn attacks, sparse though they may be, makes the employment of armed guards a necessity.

The men and women hired to protect the mines of the Badlands tends to be relatively competent gunfighters and bounty hunters who have either grown tired of chasing dangerous people across Malifaux or who have decided that a steady paycheck is more valuable than the typical feast-or-famine lifestyle of a mercenary.

The Camp Guards of the Noth Mine all fall into this category. A few of them, such as Oleg Nattensson, washed out of the Guild Guard and found employment with the Lucrentino family, while others are simply people who prefer spending their days walking a slow patrol around the camp than toiling around in the mine.



CAMP GUARD

Minion (5), Living

<i>Might</i> 1	<i>Grace</i> -1	<i>Speed</i> 0	<i>Resilience</i> 1
<i>Charm</i> -1	<i>Intellect</i> 2	<i>Cunning</i> 2	<i>Tenacity</i> 2
<i>Defense</i> 4 (9)	<i>Walk</i> 4	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> 2 (7)
<i>Willpower</i> 4 (9)	<i>Charge</i> 4	<i>Wounds</i> 6	

Skills: Deceive 2, Evade 2, Intimidate 2, Long Arms 3, Notice 2, Pistol 2, Pugilism 2, Scrutiny 2, Toughness 1.

Df (☞) Glancing Blow: When suffering damage, reduce the amount of damage suffered by 1, to a minimum of 0.

Lasting Challenge: When this character succeeds on the Impose Action, the effects last until the end of Dramatic Time or until this character takes the Impose Action again (in which case the previous Impose Action lasts until the start of this character's next turn).

(1) Hard Punch (Pugilism)

AV: 3 (8) ===== Rg: ☞ 1 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 1/2/4 damage.

(1) Collier Navy (Pistol)

AV: 1 (6) ===== Rg: ☞ 12 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 2/4/5 damage. Capacity 6, Reload 2.

(1) Chesterfield 1879 (Long Arms)

AV: 5 (10) ===== Rg: ☞ 18 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 2/3/5 damage. The Range of this weapon is increased by +10 for each ☞ it gains from the Focused Condition. Capacity 10, Reload 3.

☞ *Sight In:* After resolving, this character may discard a Twist Card to gain the **Focused +1** Condition.

(1) Impose (Intimidate)

This character makes an Intimidate Challenge opposed by the Centering Skill of a target this character can hear or see. On a success, the target suffers a ☐, plus an additional ☐ per Margin of Success, to any attack that doesn't include an Imposing character as a target. This penalty lasts until the start of this character's next turn.

MINER

For most people, being a miner is more than just a job. Every morning, they descend into the ground to wrest minerals and Soulstones from solid stone, risking life and limb to toil away for hours for very little monetary gain. This constant toil, day after day, shapes a person over time until they're just as strong and unyielding as the rock they work.

The job is long and tiring, and that's double true in the Badlands, where the isolation and constant threat of Neverborn attacks provides additional stress for anyone whose mind wanders for more than a few moments. The workers at the Noth Mine have it even worse: not only must they concern themselves with the threat of a Neverborn hunting party coming upon them in the middle of the night, they have to deal with the sinister silhouette of Noth in the distance, ensuring that they never forget about the potential dangers lurking nearby.

Of course, it's impossible to talk about miners without discussing the Miners and Steamfitters Union. Like a shadow, the Union's influence is always there, right on the heels of everyone who works in or draws their livelihood from a mine. Members pay a portion of their wages to the Union in exchange for special benefits and protection, while non-members are constantly reminded of the benefits that they aren't receiving and how their lack of membership is somehow "hurting" the people they work with.

Most miners eventually cave and sign up to join the Union, if only to stop their peers from harassing them about it. The cost of Union dues can be an annoyance, but the added security and comradery more than make up for the loss... or at least, that's what the Union representatives like to tell people.




MINER

Peon (4), Living

<i>Might</i> 2	<i>Grace</i> -1	<i>Speed</i> 0	<i>Resilience</i> 2
<i>Charm</i> -1	<i>Intellect</i> -1	<i>Cunning</i> 1	<i>Tenacity</i> 2
<i>Defense</i> 2 (6)	<i>Walk</i> 5	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> 5 (13)
<i>Willpower</i> 4 (8)	<i>Charge</i> 6	<i>Wounds</i> 6	

Skills: Athletics 2, Carouse 1, Deceive 1, Heavy Melee 2, Notice 1, Toughness 1.

Gruff: This character gains  to Deceive and Intimidate Challenges.

(1) Mining Tools (Heavy Melee)

AV: 4 (8) ----- Rg:  2 ----- Resist: Df
Target suffers 2/3/4 damage.

TIDE OF DARKNESS

Bandersnatches don't technically lay eggs so much as they birth their young into a pocket of shadow-stuff bound to small rocks. The "eggs" glisten and sparkle in the light, an evolutionary trick designed to convince creatures into picking up a valuable "gem." When red blood falls onto one of these gemstones, the shadow pocket empties its contents - a swarm of hungry spiderlings - into reality (and often onto an unsuspecting victim).

The so-called Tide of Darkness feeds upon anything they catch before turning on each other once food becomes scarce. Though each shadow pocket contains hundreds of young Bandersnatches, only a handful of the shadow spiders will ever reach adulthood, the others having already been devoured by their more vicious (or lucky) kin.



TIDE OF DARKNESS

Peon (Variable Rank Value), Living, Nightmare, Swarm

<i>Might</i> -3	<i>Grace</i> 2	<i>Speed</i> 1	<i>Resilience</i> -2
<i>Charm</i> -3	<i>Intellect</i> -3	<i>Cunning</i> 1	<i>Tenacity</i> 1
<i>Defense</i> 3	<i>Walk</i> 5	<i>Height</i> 1	<i>Initiative</i> 2 (varies)
<i>Willpower</i> 3 (varies)	<i>Charge</i> 5	<i>Wounds</i> Special	

Skills: Acrobatics 1, Athletics 1, Grappling 2, Notice 1, Prestidigitation 1☛, Stealth 3, Track 1.

Collective Focus: This character has the following Condition: "**Rank Value +7:** Treat this character's Rank Value as equal to the value of this Condition. This character does not add its Rank Value to its Defense."

Multiple Bodies: This character does not have Wounds; when this character would suffer damage, instead reduce its **Rank Value** Condition by 1, unless the attack dealt ☛ or (X) damage, in which case its Rank Value Condition is reduced by the full amount of damage dealt. When the **Rank Value** Condition reaches 0, the last remaining spiderling is slain.

Shadowlings: Any Spell or Manifested Power with the Light Immuto is considered to deal ☛ damage to this character for the purposes of its Multiple Bodies ability. This character suffers no damage from Spells or Manifested Powers with the Darkness Immuto.

(1) Bleeding Darkness (Grappling)

AV: 3 (varies) ----- Rg: ☛ 1 ----- Resist: Df
Target suffers 1/2/3 damage and gains the following Condition: "**Engulfed:** This character receives -1 Walk, -2 Charge, and suffers damage equal to half this character's Rank Value at the end of its turn. The character that applied this Condition is carried along if this character moves, and if it suffers damage, this character suffers an equal amount of damage. If the character that applied this Condition is killed, knocked unconscious, moves, or takes an Actions, end this Condition."

☛ **Voracious:** After damaging, the target gains the **Bleeding Out +1** Condition. The **Bleeding Out** Condition cannot be treated if the target also has the **Engulfed** Condition.

BANDERSNATCH

Minion (6), Living, Nightmare

<i>Might</i> 3	<i>Grace</i> 2	<i>Speed</i> 4	<i>Resilience</i> 1
<i>Charm</i> -3	<i>Intellect</i> -2	<i>Cunning</i> 3	<i>Tenacity</i> 3
<i>Defense</i> 6 (12)	<i>Walk</i> 6	<i>Height</i> 1	<i>Initiative</i> 7 (13)
<i>Willpower</i> 5 (11)	<i>Charge</i> 8	<i>Wounds</i> 6	

Skills: Acrobatics 2, Athletics 2, Evade 2, Grappling 2☞, Notice 3, Prestidigitation 3☞, Stealth 4, Toughness 1, Track 2.

Shadow Spirit: This character acts on its Initiative while not in reality, but it may only take the **Dart Out** Action.

(1) Grab (Grappling)

AV: 6☞ (12☞) ===== Rg: ☞ 2 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 1/2/3 damage.

☞ **Snatch:** After succeeding, if a different character within (X)3 has the **Shadow Lair** Condition, this character and the target are removed from reality. At the beginning of this character's next turn, it must pass an opposed Willpower Challenge with the target or the target is freed and appears next to the character with the **Shadow Lair** Condition. If this character succeeds, the target suffers 2 damage; characters that fall Unconscious from this attack are never seen again.

(1) Crawl Into Shadow (Prestidigitation/Cunning)

AV: 6☞ (12☞) ===== Rg: 4 ===== Resist: Wp
After succeeding, this character disappears from reality, and the target gains the following Condition until this character takes this Action again: **Shadow Lair:** The character that applied this Condition may see within (1)3 of this character."

(1) Dart Out

This action can only be taken if this character is currently not in reality. This character appears next to a character with its Shadow Lair Condition. This character gains the following Condition until the end of its turn: **Moving Shadow:** This character cannot be targeted by disengaging strikes and gains ☞ to its attack flips."

BANDERSNATCH

Despite being living creatures with the appearance of a spider, Bandersnatches are actually nightmares that escaped the realm of dreams in the centuries leading up to the Tyrant War. They quickly made a home for themselves in Malifaux and became an elusive and dangerous threat. Their ability to hide in the shadows of other creatures makes them annoyingly difficult to catch and kill, and millennia later, the descendants of those first Bandersnatches to pull themselves free of the nightmares that spawned them are still creeping about in the dark corners of the world.

Bandersnatches are ambush predators of the highest tier. They are patient and clever and will spend hours peering out of their host's shadow, waiting until they are within striking distance of a tasty meal. The shadow spider then lunges out, grabs their victim with their hooked claws, and drags them into their host's shadow to be devoured. They prefer to only target creatures of their own size or smaller, such as pets and small children, but they are still quite capable of making a meal out of sleeping or otherwise incapacitated prey.



THE WIDOW-IN-WAITING

Female Bandersnatches tend to be larger and more patient than their male counterparts. Once she reaches maturity, a female will begin over-feeding in preparation for her brood. Once she's devoured enough food to become fat and bloated, the female Bandersnatch sprays pheromone-covered webbing across her host to let the males of her species know her location.

The scent of Bandersnatch pheromones in the wind is enough to draw male Bandersnatches from miles in every direction. Mating is a death sentence for these unfortunate males - she devours them midway through the coupling process - but they cannot help but race toward the scent of a potential mate and their own deaths. Only the first male is allowed to mate with the female; any others who enter her shadow lair are pounced upon and devoured, even if she has not yet finished mating.

Once her eggs have been fertilized, the female Bandersnatch skulks away to a dark location and gives live birth to her young, which are anchored into small pockets of shadow-stuff and attached to rocks and pebbles. The anchored rocks take on a glittering, shimmering appearance, and if there are corpses nearby, the female will sometimes hide these glittering "rock pearls" upon them to simulate a valuable or gemstone.



THE WIDOW-IN-WAITING

Enforcer (8), Living, Nightmare

<i>Might</i> 3	<i>Grace</i> 1	<i>Speed</i> 4	<i>Resilience</i> 2
<i>Charm</i> -3	<i>Intellect</i> -2	<i>Cunning</i> 3	<i>Tenacity</i> 3
<i>Defense</i> 6 (14)	<i>Walk</i> 6	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> 7 (15)
<i>Willpower</i> 5 (13)	<i>Charge</i> 8	<i>Wounds</i> 8	

Skills: Acrobatics 2, Athletics 2, Evade 2, Grappling 3☞, Notice 3, Prestidigitation 3☞, Stealth 4, Toughness 3, Track 2.

Shadow Spirit: This character acts on its Initiative while not in reality, but it may only take the **Dart Out** Action.

(1) Grabbing Legs (Grappling)

AV: 7☞ (15☞) ----- Rg: // 2 ----- Resist: **Df**
Target suffers 2/2/4 damage.

☞ *Snatch:* After succeeding, if a different character within (0)3 has the **Shadow Lair** Condition, this character and the target are removed from reality. At the beginning of this character's next turn, it must pass an opposed Willpower Challenge with the target or the target is freed and appears next to the character with the **Shadow Lair** Condition. If this character succeeds, the target suffers 2 damage; characters that fall Unconscious from this attack are never seen again.

☞ *Sticky Webbing:* After succeeding, the target gains the following Condition: "**Wrapped in Webs:** This character has -2 **Wk** and -2 **Cg** and generates 1 less AP at the start of her turn. Any character within 1 yard of this character (including this character) may end this Condition as a 2 AP Action."

(1) Crawl Into Shadow (Prestidigitation/Cunning)

AV: 6☞ (14☞) ----- Rg: 4 ----- Resist: **Wp**

After succeeding, this character disappears from reality, and the target gains the following Condition until this character takes this Action again: "**Shadow Lair:** The character that applied this Condition may see within (0)3 of this character."

(1) Dart Out

This action can only be taken if this character is currently not in reality. This character appears next to a character with its **Shadow Lair** Condition. This character gains the following Condition until the end of its turn: "**Moving Shadow:** This character cannot be targeted by disengaging strikes and gains ☞ to its attack flips."



FATED CHARACTERS

The following five characters have been specially designed to work well with the events that unfold in this adventure. Each of them has ties to the Lucrentino family, some stronger than others, which should make it easy for players to jump right into the action.

If you wish to continue playing these characters past this first adventure, go right ahead! We've provided each character with their Destiny to make this process a bit easier. Just transfer them to full character sheets and you should be good to go!

Each of these characters has advanced a single step along their chosen Pursuit, as noted directly beneath their name. There are no restrictions on how these characters advance beyond that; their player can continue down that same path, or they can branch off into entirely new Pursuits!

THE CAST AT A GLANCE

Katema Gabra: Katema is a Tinkerer with a subordinate construct that obeys his every command.

Adriana Lucrentino: Adriana is a Criminal with a focus on social skills, larceny, and stabbing people with shivs.

Heidi Ecklund: Heidi is a loveable Drudge who can easily shrug off serious injuries.

Earl Hayden: Earl is a big-talking Gunfighter with two pistols and the skills to make the most of them.

Balahadra Raju: Balahadra is a Dabbler and a cultist. He has augmented his natural talent for deception with strange and terrifying magics.

KATEMA GABRA

Katema's parents were Abyssinian politicians who were banished from the nation for speaking out against their Emperor's isolationist policies. Rather than leave Abyssinia, they took up residence in the mountains, where they raised goats, had two children (Katema and his sister), and endlessly complained about their lot in life.

Despite his family's isolation, Katema had a knack for machines, and when he was old enough, he left the mountains and traveled into the city. There he learned that the former Emperor had passed away, allowing his son to take the throne. The new Emperor's philosophies mirrored those of his parents: he believed in expanding Abyssinia's borders, even if doing so led to conflict with their neighbors.

With the stigma against his family removed, Katema was able to apply for a position in one of Abyssinia's many academies. He studied hard and graduated with respectable marks, which was enough to earn him an engineering position at Geissel Metalworks, one of the largest manufacturers in Malifaux. It was a long way from his home (in more ways than one), but Katema was eager for the opportunity. After so much time spend languishing in the mountains, he finally felt as if his time had come.

It was at Geissel Metalworks that Katema met Adriana Lucrentino, a resourceful woman who immediately caught his attention. He's developed something of a crush on her, and when she asked him to help her family out with a sensitive problem, he leapt at the opportunity to help her out (and, perhaps, to ask her out for a cup of coffee, if the opportunity arises).

Gear: Club, Katema's Creation, 1 scrip.

Destiny: "After the echoes of your laughter die, your eyes will be open unto the abyss, and time waits for no man but you. All of the screams will lead you home, and the noose will snap like thunder."

Twist Deck: Rams (1, 5, 9, 13), Tomes (4, 8, 12), Masks (3, 7, 11), Crows (2, 6, 10)

KATEMA GABRA

Fated, Living, Tinkerer 1

<i>Might</i> 1	<i>Grace</i> -1	<i>Speed</i> 0	<i>Resilience</i> 0
<i>Charm</i> 1	<i>Intellect</i> 2	<i>Cunning</i> 0	<i>Tenacity</i> -1
<i>Defense</i> 3	<i>Walk</i> 4	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> +1
<i>Willpower</i> 3	<i>Charge</i> 4	<i>Wounds</i> 7	

Skills: Artefacting 3, Athletics 1, Centering 1, Convince 1, Doctor 1, Enchanting 3, Engineering 1, Evade 1, Explosives 1, Literacy 1, Melee 2, Notice 1, Scrutiny 1, Toughness 1, Wilderness 1.

Gear Head (Tinkerer): When one of Katema's subordinate Constructs fails a Pneumatic duel during Dramatic Time, he may draw a card.

The Oxford Method (Magical Theory): Katema's Spells have had their AP cost increased by +1. When he casts a Spell, however, he may add a suit of his choice to his final duel total.

Loyal Protector: When Katema is within 2 yards of one or more of his subordinate Constructs, he may add the Height of the largest such Construct to his Defense.

Sturdy: Katema's Wounds have been increased by +2.

Artefacting Trigger: Katema has the following Artefacting Trigger:

☛ *Extra Scrap:* If you are Repairing a Construct, it heals +1 damage and gains Armor +1 until the end of the scene. You may only declare this Trigger once per scene.

Languages: English, Amharic, Italian.

(1) Club (Melee)

AV: +3 ===== Rg: // 2 ===== Resist: Df
Target suffers 2/2/4 damage.

(2) Animate Construct (Enchanting/Charm)

AV: +4 ===== TN: 10☛ ===== Rg: 1 yard
Target inanimate construct becomes a Minion (5) subordinate character under Katema's control for 1 hour.

☛ *Strengthen Muscles:* After succeeding, a friendly target within 3 yards of you gains +1 Might until the start of your next turn.

KATEMA'S CREATION

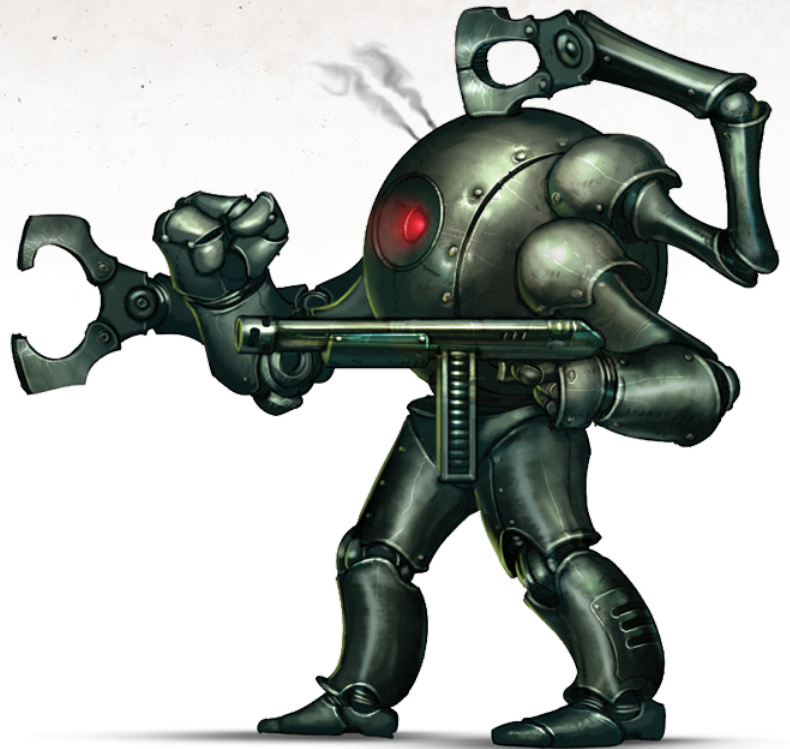
Katema Gabra hadn't intended to build any constructs when he first started working at Geissel Metalworks. Originally it started as a bit of tinkering with spare parts over his lunch break, something enjoyable to keep him distracted from the daily grind of his employment.

A few pieces of scrap metal and some bolts turned into a gripping claw, which in turn became a metallic arm, which he attached to the chassis of a damaged mechanical toolbox. Eventually, it all came together into the form of a tiny little helper.

Keeping the construct animated is, admittedly, a bit of a chore. The largest constructs at the metalworks are kept animated by powerful Soulstones, but those are far too expensive (and illegal) to be any sort of feasible option for Katema. Instead, he just uses what few scraps of magic he's learned to animate it for short bursts of time.

When Adriana Lucrentino asked Katema to help investigate a situation at her family's mine, he retrofitted the little construct into a passable combatant. The more the merrier, right?

Gear: Solberg Inertia Shotgun, 15 slugs.



KATEMA'S CREATION

Minion (5), Construct

<i>Might</i> 0	<i>Grace</i> 1	<i>Speed</i> 1	<i>Resilience</i> 0
<i>Charm</i> -5	<i>Intellect</i> -5	<i>Cunning</i> -5	<i>Tenacity</i> -5
<i>Defense</i> 3	<i>Walk</i> 5	<i>Height</i> 1	<i>Initiative</i> N/A
<i>Willpower</i> 2	<i>Charge</i> 5	<i>Wounds</i> 5	

Skills: Pneumatics 2, Shotgun 3, Toughness 1.

Armor +1: Reduce all damage suffered by this character by +1, to a minimum of 1.

(1) Grasping Claw (Pneumatics)

AV: +2 ----- Rg: ∞ 1 ----- Resist: Df
Target suffers 1/2/3 damage.

(1) Solberg Inertia (Shotgun)

AV: +4 ----- Rg: ∞ 12 ----- Resist: Df
Target suffers 2/3/4 damage. This weapon gains \blacktriangle to its damage flips. Capacity 6, Reload 3.

SUBORDINATE CHARACTERS

Subordinate characters do not generate an Initiative value during Dramatic Time and cannot act unless they receive the (1) Order Action from their controller. A subordinate character may only take one turn per round.

The ordering character controls the subordinate character on its turn. During its turn, the subordinate character may flip (but not cheat) cards as if it were a Fated character; at all other times, it uses its Rank Value in place of card flips.

(1) Order: The character commands a subordinate character under his control. After this character completes his turn, the ordered subordinate character immediately takes its turn.

ADRIANA LUARENTINO

Adriana is the youngest member of the Luarentino family, a noble family that has recently fallen upon hard times. Many of those hard times are the direct result of her father, who siphoned a significant portion of the family's wealth into creating functioning tsunami machine. Surprisingly, the machine worked, and Adriana had a front row seat as her father used the machine to hold the island nation of Taiwan hostage.

Unfortunately, her father was assassinated by a British spy just before he could set his plan in motion. Adriana escaped her father's stronghold as the machine was destroyed and spent the next few years slowly working her way westward across China, stealing whatever food and money she could to survive.

By the time she had finally made her way back home to Italy, Adriana learned that her family (which now consisted of her grandmother and a few aunts and uncles) had packed everything up and moved to Malifaux. It took over two years, but Adriana eventually managed to make her way across the ocean and through the Breach to meet up with the rest of her family. Much to Adriana's surprise, her grandmother, Maude Luarentino, wasn't all that thrilled to see her.

With her dreams of living happily on the family fortune dashed to ruin, Adriana took a job at Geissel Metalworks, one of Malifaux's largest manufacturers. It was a difficult and unpleasant job, and when her grandmother begrudgingly reached out and asked Adriana for her help with a situation at the family mine, Adriana leapt at the opportunity (and dragged her coworker Katema Gabra along to make sure that she would succeed and, in doing so, worm her way back into her grandmother's good graces).

Gear: B&D Pocket, 20 bullets, Lockpicks (🔑 to Lockpicking Challenges), 3 scrip.

Destiny: "After the reaper has come for innocence, an empty grave will fill with melody, as the witless man fears the child. You will watch as they fall one by one to the ground, and it is the Emperor who will bring the gift."

Twist Deck: Rams (1, 5, 9, 13), Masks (4, 8, 12), Tomes (3, 7, 11), Crows (2, 6, 10)

ADRIANA LUARENTINO

Fated, Living, Criminal 1

<i>Might</i> 0	<i>Grace</i> 2	<i>Speed</i> -1	<i>Resilience</i> -1
<i>Charm</i> -1	<i>Intellect</i> 0	<i>Cunning</i> 2	<i>Tenacity</i> -1
<i>Defense</i> 4	<i>Walk</i> 5	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> +3
<i>Willpower</i> 3	<i>Charge</i> 6	<i>Wounds</i> 5	

Skills: Artefacting 1, Evade 2, Literacy 1, Lockpicking 3, Melee 3, Notice 1, Pick Pocket 2, Pistol 1, Scrutiny 1, Stealth 2, Thrown Weapons 2, Toughness 1.

Opportunist (Criminal): When Adriana fails a Training duel (such as Carouse, Evade, Pick Pocket, Stealth, or Toughness), she may draw a card.

Improvise: Adriana may discard a card to create a shiv. The shiv lasts indefinitely until it is used, at which point it breaks at the end of Dramatic Time.

Scoundrel: Adriana has the following Trigger on all Social Skill Challenges:

🗨 *Fast Talk:* After resolving, take a Pick Pocket Action against a target within 1 yard. The Pick Pocket Action gains 🎲.

Lockpicking Trigger: Adriana has the following Lockpicking Trigger:

🔑 *Copy:* After succeeding, gain a copy of the key that opens whatever lock you just picked.

Languages: English, Italian, Mandarin.

(1) Shiv (Melee or Thrown Weapons)

AV: +3 (Melee) ----- Rg: 🗡 1 ----- Resist: Df

AV: +4 (Thrown) --- Rg: 🗡 9 ----- Resist: Df

Target suffers 1/2/4 damage, +1 if the target is engaged with at least one other friendly character. Concealable.

🎯 *Critical Strike (Melee only):* When damaging, deal 1 additional damage for each 🎯 in the final duel total.

📖 *Impromptu Parry (Melee only):* After failing, gain +1 Defense against Close Combat attacks made by the target until the start of your next turn.

🩸 *In the Neck:* After damaging, the target gains the **Bleeding Out** Condition.

(1) B&D Pocket (Pistol)

AV: +3 ----- Rg: 🗡 6 ----- Resist: Df

Target suffers 2/2/3 damage. Concealable. Capacity 4, Reload 2.

HEIDI ECKLUND

Fated, Living, Drudge 1

<i>Might</i> 1	<i>Grace</i> -1	<i>Speed</i> -2	<i>Resilience</i> 2
<i>Charm</i> 1	<i>Intellect</i> -2	<i>Cunning</i> 0	<i>Tenacity</i> 2
<i>Defense</i> 3	<i>Walk</i> 3	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> -1
<i>Willpower</i> 4	<i>Charge</i> 3	<i>Wounds</i> 8	

Skills: Athletics 2, Barter 1, Bewitch 3, Carouse 1, Culinary 1, Evade 1, Heavy Melee 3, Music 1, Notice 1, Pugilism 1, Toughness 3.

Long Days (Drudge): When Heidi fails a Training duel (such as Athletics, Carouse, Evade, or Toughness), she may draw a card.

Back to the Wall: When within 1 yard of a wall or other solid object at least as tall as she is, Heidi gains +1 Defense.

Hard Worker: Heidi gains a ♠ on Athletics Challenges. If she succeeds on an Athletics Challenge, she gains a Margin of Success.

Keep Standing: Heidi may discard a card to automatically pass an Unconsciousness Challenge. In addition, she may discard a card when she suffers a Critical Effect to mitigate its effects. If the Critical Effect is an Instant Critical Effect, its effects are ignored. If it is a Lasting Critical Effect, it has no effect until the start of this character's next turn (during Dramatic Time) or for one minute (during Narrative Time).

Bewitch Trigger: Heidi has the following Bewitch Trigger:

☞ *Flirtatious Wink:* After succeeding, the target develops a crush on you for one week. They will offer you small favors and speak favorably about you during this time.

Toughness Trigger: Heidi has the following Toughness Trigger:

♣ *Tough as Nails:* After succeeding, heal 1 damage.

Languages: English, Swedish.

(1) Rail Hammer (Heavy Melee)

AV: +4 ----- Rg: ♣ 2 ----- Resist: Df

Target suffers 2/4/6 damage.

♣ *Knock Back:* After damaging, push the target 3 yards away from this character.

(1) Swedish Sucker Punch (Pugilism)

AV: +2 ----- Rg: ♣ 1 ----- Resist: Df

Target suffers 1/2/3 damage.

HEIDI ECKLUND

Heidi is a strapping young lass who came to Malifaux with the hopes of joining the cast at the infamous Star Theater. Her audition didn't go very well, however; she tripped in the middle of a high kick and ended up bringing down the entire chorus line, and her singing skills, which she had considered to be one of her best traits, were dismissed as being ordinary and unimpressive.

With her dream more or less in flames, Heidi had to find some way to support herself. Working in a brothel didn't appeal to her in the slightest, but the Miners and Steamfitters Union was looking for miners. It wasn't Heidi's dream job (or even something she would have imagined herself doing when she first came to Malifaux), but it ended up being a surprisingly good fit for her. She enjoyed the comradery among the miners, and the days passed quickly down in the mine.

She lived and worked in Contract Town #12 for three months before the Soulstone vein dried up and the Union decided to shut the mine down. Heidi returned to Malifaux City with the promise that the Union would soon transfer her to another mine. At first, she enjoyed the vacation, but after a few long days of seeing the sights, she realized that she was growing bored with just sitting around and waiting for something interesting to happen.

When Earl Hayden, one of her newfound drinking buddies, mentioned that her mining background would be useful on his latest mercenary job, Heidi jumped at the chance to try her hand at a bit of freelance investigation. It promised to pay reasonably well, but more importantly, it would give her something to do other than drinking her savings away.

Gear: Rail Hammer, Embarrassing Glasses (♣ to Notice Challenges), 10 scrip.

Destiny: "If you open the gate of wonder in the wall of lies, you will wait when you should act, and the living shall wither from your grasp. The reflection in the water shows the truth, and you will forget yourself."

Twist Deck: Masks (1, 5, 9, 13), Tomes (4, 8, 12), Rams (3, 7, 11), Crows (2, 6, 10)

EARL HAYDEN

Fated, Living, Gunfighter 1

<i>Might</i> -2	<i>Grace</i> 2	<i>Speed</i> 2	<i>Resilience</i> -1
<i>Charm</i> 0	<i>Intellect</i> 1	<i>Cunning</i> 1	<i>Tenacity</i> -1
<i>Defense</i> 4	<i>Walk</i> 5	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> +4
<i>Willpower</i> 4	<i>Charge</i> 6	<i>Wounds</i> 6	

Skills: Centering 2, Deceive 2, Husbandry 1, Lockpicking 1, Martial Arts 2, Notice 2, Pistol 3, Stealth 1, Toughness 2, Track 1, Wilderness 1.

High Noon (Gunfighter): When Earl fails a Ranged Combat duel during Dramatic Time, he may draw a card.

Callout: When Earl takes the Impose Action, he may add his ranks in the Pistol Skill (+3) to his final duel total.

Paired Weapons (Pistol): When Earl is wielding two pistols, one in each hand, he gains **+** to any attacks made with either weapon. Despite fighting with two weapons, he only makes a single attack flip and only deals damage with one of his wielded pistols; the second merely gives him a bonus to hit. Both pistols must expend a bullet to use this Talent.

Quick Draw: Earl may treat the (1) Ready Weapon Action as if it were a (0) Action when drawing a Pistol, and he may draw two Pistols instead of one.

Languages: English.

(1) Ranger Takedown (Martial Arts)

AV: +3 ----- Rg: **///** 1 ----- Resist: **Df**
Target suffers 1/2/4 damage.

(1) Collier "Rough Rider" (Pistol)

AV: +5 ----- Rg: **☛** 10 ----- Resist: **Df**
Target suffers 2/3/4 damage. Capacity 6, Reload 2.

☛ Unload: When damaging, if you have two or more bullets remaining in your weapon, deal +2 damage to the target. Your weapon is now empty.

EARL HAYDEN

Earl Hayden is a Texan, through and through. He's got the big hat, he's got the flowing duster, he's got the giant belt buckle, and he's got the drawl in his voice. Earl even served for a time as a Texas Ranger, a fact that he somehow manages to drop into just about every conversation he has. He's even fond of telling stories about life "back home on the ranch" whenever he wants to make a point about something.

Despite appearances, Earl's history is somewhat... inflated. It's true that he grew up with animals, but only because his parents were relatively poor veterinarians for the cattle barons that he's since taken to emulating. In Earl's mind, he was probably adopted anyways.

It's true that he was a member of the Texas Rangers, though his stint only lasted about two weeks before he was kicked out for taking bribes. Never one to let life get him down, he decided to dodge his sullied reputation by traveling to Malifaux and billing himself and his drinking buddy, Heidi Ecklund, as experienced mercenaries.

Gear: Collier "Rough Rider" Pistols x2, Duster (Protected **☛**), Cowboy Hat, 5 scrip.

Destiny: "As you walk the lonely road, you will invite him in, but welcome the song of frozen winter. Love knows not the heart but the bosom, and the crime that you hide will destroy you."

Twist Deck: Rams (1, 5, 9, 13), Crows (4, 8, 12), Masks (3, 7, 11), Tomes (2, 6, 10)

THE IMPOSE ACTION

(1) Impose: The character draws attention to herself, forcing an opponent that can hear or see her to favor her over other targets. The character makes an Intimidate Challenge that is resisted by the target's Centering Skill.

If the Imposing character succeeds, the target suffers a **☐**, plus an additional **☐** per Margin of Success, to any attack that doesn't include an Imposing character as a target. This penalty lasts until the start of the Imposing character's next turn.

BALAHADRA RAJU

Fated, Living, Dabblers 1

BALAHADRA RAJU

Balahadra was raised in occupied India. He spent his youth with his head down, working in his father's blacksmith shop as he tried to avoid drawing the attention of the Guild's abusive and petty soldiers. As he grew older, he fell in with protestors and dissidents who were attempting to destabilize the Guild and reclaim their nation. Gradually, he came to realize that his allies were not just protestors... they were also members of some strange cult.

He found himself drawn deeper and deeper into the cult, which was trying to bring a terrible entity through the dimensions to drive out the Guild once and for all. Balahadra was never quite a true believer, but after watching a woman get murdered for trying to leave the cult, he realized that he had found himself in a precarious position.

After one particular ritual, Balahadra found his dreams haunted by feverish visions of ancient ruins. Gradually, a name began to drift through the veil of sleep to torment his waking mind: Lucrentino.

The dreams drew Balahadra to Italy, but the Lucrentino family had already left the country for Malifaux. With the dreams spurring him onward, Balahadra traveled to Malifaux and found, almost by accident, Adriana Lucrentino, the youngest scion of the Lucrentino family.

Balahadra has secretly been following her since. The dreams keep growing more intense, and he knows that the only hope he has of ending them lies in the destiny of the young woman and her family. He's still unsure whether he is meant to be Adriana's murderer or savior, and until he decides which, he intends to keep her close at hand.

Gear: Sacrificial Knife, the Murderer's Skull (Grimoire: Elemental Engulf, Divination, Increased Damage, Pulse, Terror), 8 scrip.

Destiny: "After the echoes of your laughter die, your journey will never begin, and upon wings of fear you will approach the tower. Burlap and steel are bound in darkness, and she will turn from you, forever."

Twist Deck: Tomes (1, 5, 9, 13), Masks (4, 8, 12), Crows (3, 7, 11), Rams (2, 6, 10)

<i>Might</i> -1	<i>Grace</i> -1	<i>Speed</i> 2	<i>Resilience</i> -1
<i>Charm</i> -2	<i>Intellect</i> -1	<i>Cunning</i> 3	<i>Tenacity</i> 2
<i>Defense</i> 4	<i>Walk</i> 5	<i>Height</i> 2	<i>Initiative</i> +2
<i>Willpower</i> 4	<i>Charge</i> 5	<i>Wounds</i> 5	

Skills: Alchemy 1, Blacksmithing 1, Counter-Spelling 1, Deceive 3, Intimidate 1, Melee 3, Notice 1, Prestidigitation 3, Sorcery 3, Stealth 1, Toughness 1.

Epiphany (Dabblers): When Balahadra fails a Magical duel during Dramatic Time, he may draw a card.

Hedge Magic (Magical Theory): When Balahadra casts a Spell or Manifested Power, a single instance of the Terror Immuto is applied to the spell for free. This Immuto affects the target regardless of whether they suffered any damage from the magical effect.

Gruff: Balahadra gains **+** to all Deceive and Intimidate Challenges.

Deceive Trigger: Balahadra has the following Deceive Trigger:
Revelation: After succeeding, the target abandons their previous beliefs on the topic and adopts your beliefs as their own.

Languages: English, Hindi.

(1) Sacrificial Knife (Melee)
 AV: +2 ===== Rg: **1** ===== Resist: **Df**
 Target suffers 1/3/4 damage.
Bloody Mess: After killing the target, draw a card.

(0) Imbue Protection
 Target a friendly character within 1 yard and discard a card. The target gains the following Condition for five minutes: **Imbued Protection +1:** When this character suffers damage, reduce the damage by +1 (to a minimum of 0), then reduce the value of this Condition by the same amount." Increase the value of this Condition by +1 if the discarded card was 6-10, or by +2 if it was 11 or greater.


(0) Counter Magic
 Target a character within 10 yards and line of sight. Until the start of Balahadra's next turn, the next time the target attempts to cast a Spell or Manifested Power, this character may make a Counter-Spelling + Tenacity duel against the TN of the Spell or Manifested Power being cast. On a success, the Spell or Manifested Power is countered and has no effect.

THE MURDERER'S SKULL

The Murderer's Skull grants Balahadra Raju (or any attuned character) the following Spells:

ELDRITCH TENTACLES


Grasping tentacles of pure fear reach down for the target.

ACTING VALUE	AP	TN	RESIST	RANGE
Sorcery + Tenacity (+5)	1	7 	Wp	5 yards

Effect: Target suffers 1/2/3 damage and must then make a TN 6 Horror Duel.

ELDRITCH DIVINATION

Balahadra surrenders his soul to the void and sends his consciousness... elsewhere.

AV	AP	TN	RESIST	RANGE
Prestidigitation + Cunning (+6)	2	10 	-	100 yards

Effect: Balahadra must make a TN 6 Horror Duel. On a success, he enters into a trance for one hour. During this time, his body goes limp (he is considered to flip the Black Joker on any Defense duels), but he gains the ability to see and hear at the target location as if he were there. He may end this spell prematurely with a 1 AP Action.

INCREASED DAMAGE (ALTERATION IMMUTO)

Any number of times per spell, Balahadra may increase the AP required to cast it by +2. Each time he does so, the spell's damage increases by one step:

1/2/3 --> 1/3/4 --> 2/3/4 --> 2/4/5 --> 3/4/5 --> 3/5/6.

PULSE (ALTERATION IMMUTO)

Balahadra may increase the TN of a spell by +4. If he does so, every character within 1 yard of the target must attempt a TN 10 Df duel or suffer the spell's Weak damage.

TERROR (ELEMENTAL IMMUTO)

Any number of times per spell, Balahadra may increase its TN by +1. Each time he does so, increase the TN of any Horror Duel caused by that Spell by +1.

IT MOVES IN THE SHADOWS

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Maude Lucrentino has a problem. She believes that the people she employs to work in her iron mine might be smuggling rocks pearls - glittering gems like a cross between diamonds and pearls - out of the mine and selling them to disreputable jewelers.

To investigate the suspected smugglers, the Fated will have to go undercover at the Noth Mine, posing as miners, camp guards, and cooks. As they begin to uncover the identities of the smugglers, however, they will gradually realize that something terrible stalks the shadows of the isolated mining camp...

...

Heart of Darkness is a fun One Shot adventure for the *Through the Breach* roleplaying game. It requires the *Fated Almanac* to play.



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