



LONDON 1851

The city is twisted, dirty and threatening. And it evolves. Day by day, it grows, spreading further into the fields and rivers around. Each day, new factories appear, sucking in workers and breathing out smoke, hiding the city within a shifting, toxic fog.

The sewers clog, spilling foul water into the street. Candles and oil lamps sputter, casting pools of yellow light, with dancing shadows beyond. Gaslight, harsh and unnatural, floods the grand streets and bridges. Beyond those streets, London is a twilight city of narrow alleys and tiny courts. Through all this runs the Thames, London's great stinking river.

This city is the corrupt heart of the British Empire, whose tentacles slither across the globe. These tentacles seize one nation, even as another evades them: India falls into the Empire's clutches even

as America escapes. Further beyond, in Africa, Asia and Latin America, the Empire maintains a slippery grasp.

How does London control the Empire? By a web of shipping, commerce and military force, an explosive fist in a velvet glove that shakes your hand and smiles. And how does it power the Empire? By forced labour. Even though slavery has been abolished, the Empire has found subtler ways to make its subjects work.

This is London under Queen Victoria, Victorian London. In London 1851, the power lies in the monarchy, aristocracy and the British Empire. It lies in the Church, the corporations and in commercial enterprise. It lies in banks, country houses and the affluent West End of London. This is where the Mythos lurks. This is where the Investigators find the horror.

THE INVESTIGATORS

In London 1851, the Investigators are ordinary people in the heart of the metropolis. They might be workers, struggling to survive in an uncaring city, or thieves, prostitutes and others, feeding on the city's corruption.

NAMES

Choose old-fashioned names for the Investigators, especially nicknames: Spuddy, Curly, Foreigner, Taffy, Pineapple John, Dirty Sal, Dancing Sue, Lanky Bill, One-Eyed George, Short-Armed Jill.

OCCUPATIONS

Below are suggested occupations for an Investigator in London 1851. Use them or invent your own.

For each occupation, you'll find suggestions of when to roll the Occupation Die. These are just examples: you might roll the Occupation Die for other reasons, not just the ones listed. For example, if your Investigator is a burglar, you might roll the Occupation Die for climbing a drainpipe, even though that isn't mentioned below.

All occupations are open to both women and men. While there wasn't equality in Victorian London, Victorians accepted both women and men in most lines of work.

ARTISTS

Artists make their living through creativity. Some work in studios, where they paint portraits, write novels or compose ballads. Some work on the streets, cutting strangers' silhouettes in paper, taking photographs for sixpence or chalking wistful landscapes that fade in the rain.

Some street artists have a caravan or booth from which to ply their trade. These people are salespeople as well as artists, enticing the public to buy portraits, lithographs or caricatures. Others sell their art in travelling fairs or London's parks. Some are little more than beggars, scratching a living by selling trinkets in the East End streets.

As an artist's Insight increases, their art becomes more twisted, as they channel dark patterns beyond reality. Their warped creations may contain clues to the horrors they are investigating.

When one of the Investigators is an artist, include other artists in your mystery for them to talk to and horrific works of art for them to investigate. Try basing a mystery around a maddening artwork.

Artists might roll the Occupation Die for:

- ▶ Making an artwork.
- ▶ Studying art.
- ▶ Remembering something about the history of art.

BEGGARS

Beggars earn money through pity. Many are honest. Many are not. Most are somewhere in between: even if their story is true, they have learned the right clothes, words and expressions to provoke sympathy.

There are all kinds of beggars on London's streets. Some write their piteous tale on a sign, then sit beside it, giving anguished looks to passers by. Some have deformities, either genuine, exaggerated or fake: for example, a beggar might create blisters by rubbing soap and vinegar on their skin. Some wear costumes, especially a uniform to indicate their former profession: an apron for a ruined tradesman, a helmet for an injured miner, a naval costume for a wounded sailor.

Beggars must choose the right story. If a factory worker loses a limb and turns to begging, they might pretend to be a wounded soldier, posing by a picture of a great battle. If a family turns to begging, they may pose as a "clean family", wearing clean but ragged clothes to show their humility and godliness.

Most beggars frequent poorer and busier streets. Some carry something to sell, such as matches, buttons or bootlaces. Unscrupulous ones knock into passers-by, drop their wares, then ask to be paid for them.

If one of the Investigators is a beggar, fill your mystery with other beggars, from whom they can get information. Try starting a mystery with a beggar Investigator observing something amiss in the street or being given something curious by a stranger.

Beggars might get an Occupation Die for:

- ▶ Asking for money.
- ▶ Discerning whether someone is rich, from the way they are dressed.
- ▶ Knowing the layout of local streets.

BURGLARS

Burglars make their living by breaking into buildings and stealing. It is a skilled profession, involving charm, subterfuge and technical expertise.

Most burglars work in teams, targeting the houses of the middle and upper classes. Their work begins at midnight, when they start watching the house. They enter the property in the early hours and leave before dawn.

The police are the burglar's enemy. Yet, since policemen often walk the streets alone, they can often be overpowered or outrun, especially in London's twisting backstreets. An angry crowd is a greater danger: if a mob catches a housebreaker, they may parade them through the streets before beating them. For this reason, clever burglars target unpopular people.

Burglar are especially suited to mysteries that include buildings to break into, locks to pick or which otherwise reward a stealthy approach. To adapt a mystery to suit a burglar, provide opportunities for housebreaking, lockpicking and hiding. Try starting a mystery with a burglar stealing something horrific and strange. Burglars might roll their Occupation Die for:

- ▶ Guessing the layout of a house.
- ▶ Breaking into a house.
- ▶ Moving silently through a building.

For more on burglars and their methods, see "The thieves of london" on page 75.

CLEANERS

Cleaners keep London running by clearing the detritus of the living city. Without them, sewers would clog, chimneys would block and roads would be impassable, filling with animal manure, coal dust and discarded debris.

They are the invisible people of London, unnoticed by rich and poor alike. They clean the aristocracy's wide streets and grassy squares until they are white and beautiful. They clear the roads leading between the docks and markets, sweeping dust and shovelling dirt, but never quite making them clean.

There are many types of cleaners. Flushermen clean the sewers, clearing blockages and sometimes finding unimaginable half-living things. Waterers use a watering cart to hose the streets and damp the dust down. Chimney sweeps do exactly what their job title says: if they are adults, they use brushes for the sweeping; if they are children, they climb up from the fireplace, risking burial in soot.

Cleaners are never rich, but neither are they poor. Since few ordinary people want a dirty job, there is always work.

There are benefits too: cleaners often find interesting things as they work. Some are things they can use, such as tools, boxes or bottles. Some are things they can sell, such as glass, iron, tobacco or a lost silk handkerchief. And some things, especially in dark or hidden corners, are horrific.

When you have a cleaner in a mystery, expect them to find useful information from dust and debris. Fill your mystery with dirty rooms, detritus and discarded items.

Cleaners might get an Occupation Die for:

- ▶ Finding a useful object in the streets.
- ▶ Discovering clues in the dirt or grease of a room.

CLERKS

Clerks work in offices, either for public services such as the Post Office or for commercial interests such as railways, factories and shipping companies.

They are proficient in shorthand and typing, using the latest technology in their work: the typewriter, the filing cabinet and index cards.

They belong to the new middle classes. Clerks are literate and educated, although probably at a local school rather than the boarding schools attended by the aristocracy. Despite their low salaries, their jobs require them to wear respectable clothes. To save money, many live near work or commute on the cheap trains that run before 8 o'clock in the morning.

With any remaining money, clerks live a modern urban lifestyle. They might go to the theatre, sitting in one of the lower circles, or read popular literature. They might meet in tea houses or eat at supper clubs.

Clerks are especially suited for mysteries where the horror lies within a corporation or other large institution. When one of the Investigators is a clerk, put books and bureaucratic records into your mystery, in which they can find information.

Clerks might get an Occupation Die for:

- ▶ Searching files or bureaucratic records.
- ▶ Knowing something about popular places of entertainment.
- ▶ Passing among the middle or upper classes without attracting attention.

COSTERMONGERS

Costermongers sell their wares in London's markets and streets, specialising in one product, such as fish, tonics or cloth.

Many sell from a wooden barrow, which they wheel around the streets, following their "round": the regular route along they sell their goods. These costermongers know London's hidden places: the mews behind gentlemen's houses, where coachmen buy luxuries; the courts and alleys of the poorer neighbourhoods, where people buy bargains; the crowded and loud markets, where shoppers haggle over prices.

Other costermongers sell food and drink, ready to eat: the ham sandwich seller outside a theatre, the fried fish vendor near the docks, the coffee cart owner near the parks. Poorer costermongers,

especially the young and old, sell from baskets in markets. For some, there is a thin and hazy line between selling and begging: take the watercress girl, who buys watercress in bunches before dawn in Farringdon Market, then scrapes a living by selling them all day for four a penny.

All are experts at persuading people to buy. Some use charm, some use pity. Some illuminate their stalls brightly. Others shout loudly: many costermongers have hoarse voices from years of selling.

Not all costermongers are honest. Some mix sweet apples with sour ones or living fish with dead. Some boil their oranges to make them bigger: these fruit have little taste and go black within a day. Even an honest fishmonger knows that herrings look fresher when sprayed with water and lit by candlelight.

Costermongers might get an Occupation Die for:

- ▶ Selling something.
- ▶ Knowing about the thing they sell.
- ▶ Knowing about the locations on their round.

FACTORY WORKERS

London's factories are multiplying rapidly. They stand several storeys high, powered by steam, belching smoke. They make silk in Spitalfields, textiles in Kings Cross and matches in Bow.

For the employees, the work is always dangerous and often unhealthy: workers in textile factories, for example, are constantly wet, sprayed by the water that soaks the cotton. Hours are long and work is seasonal: in winter, workers often find themselves without jobs.

Women, in particular, fight constantly for work. When heavier machinery is introduced, requiring greater physical force, factory foremen often prefer male employees. Trade unions frequently close ranks to exclude women.

For many, though, factory work is modern and exciting. Workers receive good wages and enjoy the camaraderie of fellow workers. Many enjoy their independence, spending their earnings on trinkets and city life.

When an Investigator is a factory worker, put factories or machinery in your mystery. Try a mystery set in a factory, in which the workers investigate the factory owners and the horror at the heart of what they do.

Factory workers might roll their Occupation Die for:

- ▶ Understanding the workings of a factory.
- ▶ Understanding what machinery does.
- ▶ Working machinery.

FARM WORKERS

Farm workers learned their trade outside London. Some came to the city to sell their goods, others for a new life.

Most grew up on a family farm. If the farm grew vegetables, such as potatoes and turnips, they ploughed, planted and harvested. If the farm contained a dairy, they milked cows and made cheese and butter.

Farm workers understand nature, weather and the changing of seasons. Their honesty, strength and reputation for hard work makes them popular with employers in London: indeed, farm girls have a reputation of being the best domestic servants.

Farm workers are especially suited for mysteries set in the countryside, especially, of course, those that include a farm. When they take part in mysteries in London, it helps if they encounter things they might encounter in the countryside, such as crops, animals or bad weather.

Farm workers might roll their Occupation Die for:

- ▶ Understanding the weather.
- ▶ Knowing about the workings of a farm.
- ▶ Examining agricultural crops.

HOUSEWIVES

Housewives keep houses running, whether that house is a farmhouse, townhouse or slum dwelling.

Keeping house is hard work. Housewives shop, clean and launder. They lift heavy loads, cook food and budget so that the money lasts until the end of the week. They know their house and their

neighbourhood better than anyone: they know the smells, the sounds and the location of everything. They especially know if something is wrong.

Many housewives are mothers: they nurse babies, raise children and try to instill values into young people as they grow. These Investigators understand children better than anyone else.

On top of this, many housewives support themselves by working from home. Some take in laundry or mend clothes, while others make toys, pegs or trinkets.

Mysteries with housewives work especially well if they are located in the housewife's neighbourhood or even their house itself. If they have children, ensure they are threatened by the horror. You can also ensure your mystery contains houses, which are obviously lived in, with laundry, dirt and provisions from which housewives can deduce information about the occupants.

Housewives might roll their Occupation Die for:

- ▶ Understanding something about a house's occupants, by looking around the house.
- ▶ Knowing the layout of their local neighbourhood.
- ▶ Deducing whether their child is lying to them.

MUDLARKS

Mudlarks wade through the stinking mud of the Thames, searching for anything they can sell. They are young boys, old women and anything in between.

Their work begins when the tide goes out. As the Thames recedes, mudlarks venture into the silt, collecting whatever they find in hats or tin kettles. They wade waist- or chest-deep, risking death if the mud gives way into a sudden hole.

The greatest prize is copper, especially copper nails dropped by sailors repairing boats. Iron, brass and other metals are equally prized, as are rope, bones and cloth. Chips of wood or coal are valuable, too: a mudlark collects these until they have enough to sell. When the tide comes in, the mudlarks' work finishes, and they sell what have gathered to rag-and-bone collectors, shopkeepers, pawnbrokers or whoever else will buy.