



# BLACK SKIES OVER PRIXTON

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Characters, locations and incidents are portrayed from the metaphorical viewpoint of the *KULT: Divinity Lost* setting.



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# BLACK SKIES OVER BRIXTON

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ASILY INTO THE VEINS IT SLITH-  
ers; a pleasure. Shadows melt  
and merge, growing larger by  
the second. Breathe in, ecstasy.  
Breathe out, serenity. My heavy  
body, the weight of a feather.  
I sink. Vague shapes twitch in  
the darkness, extending their  
arms for an embrace. For a  
minute, here in the dark, we are  
one. God knows how much I've  
longed for this, I've been saved.

# THE CURSE OF GOOD INTENTIONS

Brixton is in turmoil. Increasing social and economic tensions turn this district in southern London into the main stage of desperate battles for freedom, power and safety. The residents fight back against police brutality and systemic social prejudice. A creature known as Toohaternoat fights both Time and his own urges to escape the Death Angel Golab and its servants. Gangs wage war against each other for control.

The background of this war is a tangled mess of otherworldly and mundane influences, each affected by the other, knowingly or not. Below is the full history, divided into sections. What happens in the present is up to the group. More details can be found throughout and may be presented to the players at will by the gamemaster.

## The Movement

A large number of Caribbean families emigrated to Great Britain in the 1950s, as workers were urgently needed. They fused their culture and customs to the British, establishing a blend where they embraced the new while still cherishing their roots. During the '60s and '70s in particular, reggae and Rastafarian culture grew to heavily influence the British of Caribbean origin. Many were proud of their heritage and sought ways to explore their traditions. As a result, a number of societies, organizations and associations were founded to support the community, one of which was The Movement. The creator and first leader, Jade Bailey, created the organization with the intent of preserving and nourishing a selection of Afro-Caribbean artistic, culinary, social, and cultural expressions. Under her direction, The Movement thrived.

Following Bailey's death in 1982, The Movement dissolved as a formal organization. However, it did not disappear entirely; instead, it transformed into a grassroots social movement driven by the people, for the people. It became a cultural scene, a safety net, a reflection of public desires, and a representation of shared convictions.

In 1985, The Movement took a stand against police brutality, but without a visionary leader it started to fragment. There were too many different thoughts on what The Movement was and what it should be. Its members formed clusters that addressed various needs, such as providing access to education, offering spiritual guidance, facilitating fair opportunities in the music industry, resisting the police, and more. Naturally, different clusters disagreed on many topics, putting them at odds with each other.

## Marvin Frontier

By 1983, the 32-year-old Brixton resident Marvin Frontier, a charismatic and ambitious man who worked closely with allies of The Movement, emerged as one of the important faces within the scene. He used his sway to convince people of The Movement into joining his own organization, The New Path, a cluster dedicated to occult practices. Together, the group explored elements of modern European black magic in combination with African witchcraft. To them, the purpose was noble: all knowledge would be used to aid the community's battle for a better life.

In the final throes of 1989, Marvin Frontier's psyche was heavily beset by nightmares and twisted revelations caused by years of continuous exposure to the mysteries of Inferno. He was at this time heavily addicted to heroin, and engaging in psychedelics to aid in his search for enlightenment. He claimed to commune with a power from "the other side," a being he could see and hear calling from "beyond human perception." However twisted his methods and questionable his sanity, Frontier met little opposition to his plans of summoning the entity, given his lifelong dedication to helping others. The demon, as it was called by the group, vowed to help and to provide people with the strength to break free from oppression and forge their own happiness.

Frontier's cult gathered in December of 1990 to perform the ritual to summon the demon. From dusk till dawn, everyone actively engaged in debauchery, magic rituals, drugs, and trance dances. Near the end, a participant naively agreed to be the vessel for the entity. Once this offering consented, Frontier uttered the final lines of the spell.

Brixton welcomed the day, with the first sun rays appearing on the horizon, as the young man shrieked in agony. The entire cult watched in abject horror as the offering's rib cage exploded. An enormous humanoid form wriggled its way out of the corpse's chest.

Drenched in blood and entangled in the sacrificial lamb's mortal remains, the demon turned his hideous gaze to Frontier. His deep, inhuman voice sent shivers down the witnesses' spines.

"I am Toohaternoat. I am here."

## Toohaternoat

Toohaternoat seeks out traumatized and damaged minds desperate for an easy escape from reality. When human consciousness changes as a result of substance abuse, pathways within and around the Illusion show themselves to the user. The affected minds may briefly perceive the world in its true form, inadvertently giving those on the other side of the veil a window back as well. Toohaternoat seizes these opportunities to push through and attach itself to their minds, trapping them inside tailor-made hellscapes woven within their own madness.

From deep inside the victims, he calls to them. If they reach out and answer the call, they are given a rush of pleasure and comfort. They feel safe, happy, euphoric. For a time, they are allowed to live in a comfortable, warm dream where nothing else matters — until the hellish terrors start again. Each time the victims call upon the demon, they sink deeper and deeper into his clutches. When control over their souls belongs to none other than Toohaternoat, he consumes them.

Golab's clergy subjugated Toohaternoat long ago and enslaved the creature to their collective will as an instrument of torture. When the demon made contact with Marvin Frontier, he forged a mask most congruent with Frontier's idea of a mighty cult leader: a powerful black man, heavy and strong, and intimidatingly tall. Along his entire body, multiple ritualistic scars can be seen from under his occult trappings and massive dreadlocks.

Toohernoat knew that the infernal forces would not simply accept his escape. Golab's clergy had reduced him to a near-mindless weapon, and he needed to get his power back. He needed enough time to heal and fight off his captors once and for all.

Despite the initial promises, the demon made a puppet out of Frontier, focusing the activities of The New Path on assuming power over the south London drug trade. By weakening human minds, forcing them deeper into addiction, Toohernoat sought to spread his influence and rebuild his power to such a degree that Golab's clergy would think twice about coming after him.

## The New Path and Black Skies

Under the influence of its new master, the cult became ruthless and rapidly cut out a large piece of the drug trade in London for themselves. They attracted a slew of angry young people who they offered money and purpose to take control of the streets. Repeatedly kicked down and beaten up, these youth had no qualms about using violence to get what they wanted. Conflict with other gangs led to escalating wars. When the police stepped up, fighting violence with greater violence, the community began to drown in hopelessness.

In numbers, The New Path was a small gang compared to the others. They lacked both contacts and regular suppliers, but they had an ace up their sleeve: a new drug called Black Skies.

Black Skies is a fast-acting injection, widely compared to extremely potent heroin. It looks like watered down black paint and emits a smell users compare to a mixture of blood and caramel. Once injected, the liquid is quickly absorbed by the body and sends the user into a near-catatonic state of tranquility. In truth, the veil over their souls' eyes slowly frays as Toohernoat begins to take hold.

Toohernoat, with the help of the cultists and their syncretic dark magic, distills this powerful drug using the remains of deceased humans infused with a shard of Toohernoat's own spirit. The gang locates addicts, drifters, and other "undesirables" and brings them to Angel Road 2. There the demon directly feeds them its own wicked essence and shatters their minds. The victims' bodies are drained of fluids with crude syringes and rubber hoses. The extracted sludge is boiled and strained through coffee filters before being tapped into small vials and left to rest in old fridges.

Black Skies is, quite literally, part of Toohernoat himself. Now that the drug is being widely spread through the veins and souls of addicts, Toohernoat's influence grows wider and stronger at a bitter cost. Soon, his physical manifestation won't exist anymore; he aims to live on within the souls of the people in an unreachable, decentralized realm of his own.

## Hul

The sudden absence of Toohernoat sent shockwaves throughout Inferno, and Golab's structure and influence suffered now that a vital source of power went missing. Nephrites riding the minds of the stricken felt piercing shivers down their spines. One thing was clear: the demon must be returned to his captivity.

Hul, a faithful razide under Golab, volunteered to find and return the demon. With the help of Horrid and Foul, two purgatides working under her since time immemorial, Hul performed multiple rituals to locate Toohernoat in Elysium. This has brought the three of them to Brixton, where an investigation of the creature's exact whereabouts could commence.

She arrived in Brixton possessing the body of Helen Smith, a criminal psychologist from Manchester University. She is presently involved in the police operation as an experienced advisor.

While Hul manages the investigation, she has sent her purgatides to stalk the streets of Brixton at night. They search for any signs of the demon's presence and, with great eagerness, torture and interrogate anyone that may have information.

## Terence Bell and the Joyboys

Around the end of the '80s, Terence Bell's Joyboys, a local gang, controlled a significant part of the amphetamine business in south London. Bell is a man well known in Brixton, in part for his stunning good looks and otherwise for his ruthlessness. Despite the modest 28 years of age, he has managed to make quite a name for himself in the neighborhood. His main base of operations, a nightclub named The Vibe, is the go-to establishment for a variety of social circuits from all over the greater London area. As the drug war escalates, the Joyboys have become Toohernoat's main target.

While the demon also benefits from the drugs sold by the Joyboys, they have crossed Toohernoat's path one too many times, and more importantly, they actively resist the sales of Black Skies. Terence Bell is convinced "that the people pushing Black Skies are agents of Satan." He has made every effort to keep Black Skies off the Joyboys' turf. However, Bell now realizes that The New Path will continue to expand their operation until there's no one left but them.

## BRIXTON, 1991

Brixton is a melting pot of different cultures. Many who live in the area are of Afro-Caribbean heritage, giving Brixton venues a particularly wide range of reggae, soca, calypso and ska, among other music styles. The neighborhood has seen its fair share of troubles, however. In 1981 and 1985 there were a number of violent clashes between Metropolitan Police and residents. The events of '81 were mainly due to police utilizing unprovoked "stop-and-searches" exclusively on local youth. Those in '85 were in response to the wrongful police shooting of a local mother. High unemployment rates have given rise to crime, particularly in the narcotics trade.

When the player characters get involved, the battleground is not only already set, but the warring factions clash quickly and violently. There are many agents in the story handling the main problems from different angles, with different convictions, and working towards different goals.

## Themes

**Corruption of Ideology:** In Black Skies Over Brixton, players explore how ideology becomes corrupted. What may have started as good intentions takes a troublesome turn, with more moderate crowds remaining silent as extreme views gain traction. The police, once tasked with upholding law and order, now oppress the innocent. The organization that was meant to support local groups summoned a demon. The Joyboys claim to have good intentions, but the introduction of the new drug and the allure of substantial profits propel everything toward violence. The journalists wish to make a difference, but are also pushed to create more sensational stories that feed the fires and increase polarization.

**The Shadow of Oppression:** Oppression is pervasive — structural oppression, racism, police brutality, and economic oppression, to name a few. The violence, hardships, and struggles make people search for ways to cope. Some lose themselves in creativity, such as art and music, but many turn to drugs or alcohol. Even the demon is trying to escape the oppression of Inferno and is now, in turn, oppressing the people in Brixton. The Joyboys see themselves as rebels living a life outside the law, but their very nature oppresses the people around them. In many ways, Brixton is ruled by the law of the jungle, and with the introduction of Black Skies, people literally consume those who didn't make it.

## Foreword

Black Skies Over Brixton is written as a sleeper-to-aware mystery campaign framework and toolbox. In it you will find no fixed scenes, but a collection of ideas and hooks that can be used to build your own mystery. There are many sides to Brixton's conflicts, all of which are explored separately through each of the power's descriptions and backstory.

As the gamemaster, you should make sure to get an overview of the whole picture before setting out to play. Then, choose which side of the story piques your interest and arrange your game from there, guiding the players in the process.

Below is a summary of what to expect from each of the chapters:

**Chapter One — Black Skies Over Brixton** tells the tale of Brixton as it happened and serves as the foundation for the next chapters.

**Chapter Two — The Setup** goes over character creation and the three suggested setups for this scenario: law enforcement, journalists, or criminals.

**Chapter Three — Starting the Game** features the opening scenes of each suggested setup, with a full blown murder scene left by Hul's purgatides. This kick-starts the story by throwing the player characters head first into the problem.

**Chapter Four — Elements of the Story** features a more detailed description of each faction acting in Brixton, as well as ideas on how to get them involved in your story.

**Chapter Five — A Game of Revelations** offers insight on how to run an investigation from a gamemaster perspective. There are also bombs that serve as guidance and inspiration for you to shape the story.

## THE 1991 EDITION

This all took place a long time ago.

My journey with KULT began at an Adventure Games convention at the end of the 80s. Nils Gulliksson, Target Game's amazing creative director, and I met over a coffee, in the midst of an uproar over our Swedish version of the role-playing game Star Wars. I showed Nils some drawings, sketches and drafts of game ideas and illustrations that I was working on at the time. Nils was not at all interested in it that day, his mind was in another place. But he turned over my sketchpad and started flipping from the last page onwards.

"Ah you like Clive Barker I see!" He said when he got to see my interpretations of demons, torn realities, hopelessly twisted creatures, demons and bizarre fates, often in leather and bondage, that I had drawn there.

"Come! I have an idea I want to share with you. You will like this," Nils said and we left the convention, walked across the street and had a beer each. We never went back to the congress, we had more beers and that afternoon Nils painted in words and with his pencil, his vision of Kult.

Nils was right, We really loved the same books, movies and series that sprung from this Clive Barker-esque genre of fantasy and horror.

Together we brainstormed ideas until late that evening and from that moment on I was the sounding board for Kult. Personally, I think that the Kult that Nils painted in words That time was and remains better than everything that was subsequently created in the official printed versions of the game, its expansions and adventures. Everything we created after that can be seen as a tribute to the version of KULT that Nils carried in his head at that time, all those years ago. When I later sketched out and wrote the episode that takes place in Brixton, it was because I was fascinated by London, its long history and the many subcultures existing in parallel at the time.

I had visited Brixton and was captivated by the culture and the bustle there, the contradictions, the riots and the injustices. I loved Ska, Reggae and Soundsystems and sought out the music to experience it live. Somewhere I probably thought that I should try to capture that environment and make it a part of Kult's universe. Probably because I knew that back home in Sweden this was an unknown world that few even knew existed and even fewer would choose to write about and place an rpg adventure in. Brixton's colorful and sometimes very harsh reality had all the conditions to house Nils ideas of a universal order in dissolution where protective barriers dissolve and create portals between planes of existence.

Brixton in the late 80's and early 90's was a fascinating place to put a KULT scenario. A Brixton where demons materialize in dark alleyways and roam its streets and where angels and guardians drink tea in run-down cafes on Electric Avenue fascinates me to this day.

Michael Stenmark

# THE SETUP

The scenario introduces three different approaches to Brixton's problem, each linked to an element of the story. Feel free to experiment with your own variants; perhaps the player characters are part of different factions (one is from law enforcement, others work for the Brixtonian, and one is part of the gang). Maybe they are Aware Occultists and Prophets of The New Path serving Toohteroat, or perhaps they are **Broken** civilians addicted to Black Skies. If you wish to push things further, your player characters may be the purgatides under Hul, Enlightened tied to Marvin Frontier or Toohteroat, or something else entirely. As written, in *Black Skies Over Brixton*, the player characters start as sleepers. By the end of the scenario, however, they realize that there is a far darker reality hidden by the Illusion.

## CHARACTER CREATION

When using the suggested setups, all player characters are created using the Sleeper Archetype with slight scenario-specific edits. Here is a quick rundown.

- ◊ **Dark Secret:** No one picks a Dark Secret. This scenario becomes one of their Dark Secrets if you wish to expand the story after the scenario ends.
- ◊ **Player Moves:** Each player character begins play with a single Advantage and Disadvantage. Each setup has four concepts with suggestions.
- ◊ **Attributes and Distractions:** Same as the Sleeper Archetype (KDL, p. 86).
- ◊ **Relations:** Same as an Aware Archetype that most closely aligns with the PC's backstory.
- ◊ Everyone starts out at the Composed **Stability** level.
- ◊ **Becoming Aware:** The **Experience** and **Advancement** tracks are ignored. Player characters become Aware when the gamemaster deems fitting. The same rule applies to gaining or losing Advantages and Disadvantages.

## GROUP SETUPS

### The Law Enforcement

Player characters are members of the LDIU (London Drug Intelligence Unit), a specialized city branch of the Britain wide NDIU (National Drug Intelligence Unit). The LDIU Brixton team was recently formed in order to battle the rising narcotics trade in the area. It consists of the player characters, who work alongside, but independently of, the Metropolitan Police.

The Law Enforcement setup approaches this scenario as an investigative federal force, deployed in response to the new dangerous drug and the escalating gang wars. They also have to deal with the growing social turmoil caused by police incompetence, disorganization, and deliberate misconduct.

Player characters have access to police records and databases, informants, wiretaps, armor, walkie-talkies, and firearms, and they have the opportunity to call in strike teams. When not acting undercover, they need all the available resources to gather more information about the case, since the community usually refuses to cooperate.

### Team Lead

You are dedicated and empathetic. The Team is vital and context is key – you understand and sympathize with the residents, but violence and drug abuse is not the solution. Neither is police brutality. Juggling truths is your specialty, and hopefully it will come to some good. You take care of yourself, mind and body, and expect no less from your team mates.

**Advantages:** *Awe-Inspiring, Network of Contacts, Field Agent.*

**Disadvantage:** *Guilt* (decide why).

### Analyst

Through years of criminology and intelligence work in the service, you have bathed in the worst of humanity. Cleaning up this rising tide of bile is futile, and the drugs you vowed never to touch have become your escape route. When expert Dr. Helen Smith offered to secretly share intel with you, you agreed, but it won't make a difference either way.

**Advantages:** *Analyst, Data Retrieval, Manhunter.*

**Disadvantage:** *Drug Addict.*

### Surveillance Specialist

Early on in your stakeout career you were called on to investigate a child abuse ring. The cold satisfaction on the perpetrators' faces still haunts your nights. To cope with the trauma, you've shut off your emotions entirely, and now you live for the perfect technical solution to any given problem. Knitting helps you through slow hours of surveillance.

**Advantages:** *Eye for Detail, Prepared, Jaded.*

**Disadvantage:** *Nightmares.*

### Secret Agent

You have never been close to anyone, including yourself. You're always looking in from the outside, looking for that "Other:" in a sexual encounter, in a different persona, in a screaming nightmare. At last, your expertise is required by the Metropolitan Police to find if Satanism is the cause of the sudden rise of violence in Brixton. Although you doubt the "Otherness" will truly manifest in a rampant gang war, despair springs eternal.

**Advantages:** *Character Actor, Occult Studies, Enhanced Awareness.*

**Disadvantage:** *Marked* (decide how).

## The Brixtonian

The Brixtonian — a local magazine known for family news and lifestyle pieces — shifts its attention to the social issues that have yet to be properly addressed. The chaos creates an opportunity for your boss, a greedy vulture, to increase sales by milking the “gang violence drama.”

Motivated by ambition, genuine curiosity, a will to change Brixton for the better, or something else, the reporters rely on their guts and creativity to successfully implement The Brixtonian’s new agenda. Perhaps they can even get ahead of the police and solve the whole thing. However, when time comes to write, how will they weaponize the information? Is it in their interests to aid the community or the police? Will they falter under the Boss’ pressure to sensationalize everything and build on Brixton’s suffering, or are they genuinely interested in serious investigative journalism?

The Brixtonian setup is a tale of pushing the limits of body, mind, and soul to explore, know more, and live up to your convictions. Under the thumb of an authoritative and hungry-for-more boss, the player characters are pressured into dangerous situations to keep their jobs.

### Reporter

This is it! The British Press Award awaits. Being an “employee with benefits” finally paid off and the Boss lets you do something besides shitty lifestyle pieces. You’d endure many “benefits” and sleepless nights for this chance. You don’t sleep well anyway; uppers and antidepressants are taking their toll. At least you escaped those low-life, narcissistic parents. You’ll show them all.

**Advantages:** *Fast Talk, Eye for Detail, Analyst.*

**Disadvantage:** *Obsession.*

### Photographer

This story is so juicy it’s practically a tsunami. You might even surpass the filth already in your secret folders! When their misery is your money, that’s when you thrive. Yeah, you have no heart, and while you wouldn’t brag about that, you don’t deny it either. People suffer whether you photograph it or not, right? Besides, you know your boss loves it.

**Advantages:** *Sneak, Daredevil, Artifact* (old film camera).

**Disadvantage:** *Greedy.*

### Intern

You’re from there. Your cousin overdosed just a week ago on that new stuff, Dark Skies or something, and her boyfriend is in the Joyboys. People know you, love you, and you them. And what do these idiots have you do? Drive, make phonecalls, take notes, and get the fucking coffee. You’ll just write your own piece and hand it to The Boss on the side.

**Advantages:** *Improviser, Prepared, Stubborn.*

**Disadvantage:** *Harassed.*

### Social Worker

You hum Bryan Adams’ “Everything I Do” when working lately. Loudly, so that everyone hears you caring, since you’re not sure you can anymore. The misery never ends and it’s so exhausting. You’re aiding The Brixtonian because you had to get away from all those poor, exposed people you couldn’t help. They’re suffering and you’re sure they’re coming for you.

**Advantages:** *Observant, Street Contacts, Jaded.*

**Disadvantage:** *Bad Reputation.*

## THE 2023 EDITION

“Svart himmel över Brixton” was published in the Swedish RPG magazine Sindakus in July 1991. The original Swedish version by Michael Stenmark is slightly old-fashioned and flavorful, a pleasure to work with and highly evocative. It began as a translation project by Jen, who was later joined by Gabriel and Petter.

Brixton is such a diverse setting; you get a being’s escape from hell and the pursuit by three “cenobite” figures, which resonates strongly with the atmosphere of Clive Barker’s Hellraiser. However, it was more of a “setting article:” it offered an intricate backstory to KULT’s 1991 Brixton and few pointers as to where the story could be taken. It was a hard beast to tame.

For 2023’s edition, we strived to play to the original concept’s strongest points and transform it into “campaign framework” with more tools to the gamemaster. The scenario is written to support both short or long campaigns, a wider range of characters, and multiple ways to deal with the conflicts. Although the three core setups aim for the traditional Sleeper-to-Aware approach to KULT, there are many moving gears at play waiting to be unveiled and messed with. Some are mundane in nature, some are magical, and others are left open for gamemasters to interpret and implement in the story as they see fit.

In this version, Toobternoat was brought to the forefront of the conflict and transformed into a time bomb that pushes all other factions into motion. The creature may be tackled from two angles: a more traditional physical presence that could be shot dead, or a cosmical horror that demands attention to thoughtful use of symbolism and rituals. Hul, Helen, and the purgatides are all new to this edition. Marvin Frontier remains a great example of a Madness Magician that has lost his grip (but not his power). Black Skies, which is also new to this edition, adds kultesque elements to an otherwise un-magical drug war.

Although there is little the PCs can do to “save” Brixton entirely, the beauty of the story lies in what they deem most important and why. When the horror escalates rapidly and the many evils of Brixton collide against one another, the characters are forced to pick a side and deal with the consequences.

Jenny, Gabe, and Petter

## The Joyboys

What started out as a group of childhood Yardie friends trying to make the best of unfortunate circumstances evolved into a criminal gang stopping at nothing to control the local narcotics trade. The player characters are members of this gang, the Joyboys. As such they are expected to put the gang's well-being before their own.

Their leader is Terence Bell, a charismatic man who is like unto a God in the Brixton Underworld. Lately, the Joyboys have come under increasing pressure from The New Path, a ruthless up-and-coming gang. They're selling a new drug, Black Skies, which is a threat to the business as well as to the Joyboys who find themselves under its sway.

The Joyboys setup focuses on gang life under pressure. How will the Joyboys handle the escalating conflict with The New Path: through manipulation, contacts and street smarts or by blunt use of deadly force? Will they go at it by themselves or try to acquire new allies in the process? The temperature in Brixton is close to boiling, and the player characters' lives are on the line, whether they fail or succeed.

### Captain

Your sister was brutally slaughtered by The New Path, and whoever the killer is, they are going to pay for it. You make sure shit gets done (and done right) in your neighborhood. They should listen, you're a personal friend to T-Bell. The camaraderie, the violence, the drugs, the sex — you love it. The childhood teaching dreams have been put on hold indefinitely.

**Advantages:** *Awe-inspiring, Street Contacts, Streetfighter.*

**Disadvantage:** *Oath of Revenge.*

### Enforcer

You've threatened, beaten, tortured, maimed, and killed. It's not too bad, you just picture them as Margaret Thatcher. Prison was okay; you recently came out, and you had friends in there. Now that you're back on the street, well, you have enemies. But you also have a family to take care of, needy little ones and unemployed siblings. Leaving is not an option - JBs for life!

**Advantages:** *Enforcer, Daredevil, Weapon Master.*

**Disadvantage:** *Nemesis.*

### Soldier

"You outshine the angels," nani says. And you are quick, witty, bright — the eyes and ears on the street. JBs call you the Falcon. So far you've steered clear of drug use and violence, but the police want you for dealing. They recently approached you seeking to trade information for a clean slate, but you haven't answered yet. JBs are your friends and snitches get stitches.

**Advantages:** *Instinct, Sneak, Sixth Sense.*

**Disadvantage:** *Wanted.*

### Mule

Run drugs, take the money, give money to Cap. Buy drugs, go home, do drugs yourself. Nothing compares to Black Skies. You've been running with The Peckham Boys for a few years now and they have something on you. They sent you here undercover to find out what you can about Black Skies. You could care less about these JB Yardies - you just want your next sip.

**Advantages:** *Improviser, Streetwise, Fast Talk.*

**Disadvantage:** *Drug Addict.*

## ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

Here are sample questions you can use to help flesh out the player characters and create ties to Brixton.

- ❖ What is your nickname? How did you get it?
- ❖ How are you dressed?
- ❖ How have you been coping with the stress?
- ❖ Who is a friend that you fear might not be coping well?
- ❖ Which friend or relative of yours do you fear for the most?
- ❖ Have you been victimized by the police or the gangs before?
- ❖ Have you used any illegal drugs recently? Which ones and why?
- ❖ What object or memento is always by your side, and what or who does it remind you of? Why is it important to keep this memory?



# STARTING THE GAME

The scenario begins with a short opening scene unique to each setup. This scene always takes place in Crisp Works — Tyrone Jaffe's record shop and the crime scene. You may wish to draw inspiration from the Exposition ideas and explore the setting before triggering the opening scene proper.

**Important:** When *The Night In Question* scene starts, the player characters go to the first investigation scene. Decide before the game begins which clues you want to reveal and how you could lead the group to investigate them afterwards. There are some suggested clues already placed there that serve all of the setups. Ignore the ones that would alter your preferred pacing for the game.

## EXPOSITION

These are suggested scenes you can use before or after the opening scene to build more atmosphere and give the feeling of Brixton in 1990. If you're aiming for a shorter game, feel free to ignore the exposition.

### Law Enforcement

- ◊ Listening to the news of yet another murder while dining with the family. The player character's spouse gets increasingly upset about the dangers of the job and starts a heated argument.
- ◊ Hiding in a back alley, gossiping with an undercover informant about the new drug Black Skies, the gangs, and office affairs within the department.
- ◊ In the department's kitchen, a sergeant surrounded by officers compares the people of Brixton to animals and cavemen. His racist remarks go unchallenged by his peers.
- ◊ While patrolling, a player character encounters a couple. They show signs of fresh drug injection, likely to be Black Skies. They are crying and mumbling and thanking an invisible entity in the dark for saving them.
- ◊ An officer patrolling the area stops a child, barely eight years old, suspected to be used as a mule by a local gang. After searching her for drugs, the officer mocks the kid, threatening to beat her if she doesn't run quickly enough.

### Brixtonian

- ◊ Working overnight on a boring piece with a colleague. Chatting, drinking lukewarm coffee, smoking, and talking about the collapse of the Soviet Union.
- ◊ Sorting photographs for the first piece about recent protests. A colleague makes a statement that greatly opposes the player character's beliefs.
- ◊ Dealing with the boss on one of the bad days. There is shouting, breaking objects, insults, and even threats to an intern's physical wellbeing.
- ◊ A Black Skies addict appears out of nowhere pressuring the player character to spare some cash. If his attempts are ignored or refused, he assaults the player character and tries to steal something of value (shoes, suitcase, wrist watch, camera, or something else).

- ◊ Slow day inside the news van. Waiting for the chief of police to leave the department's building so they can confront him with questions about the recent protests.

### Joyboys

- ◊ Watching the kids play in the street and talking about recent murders with other members of the Joyboys. Kids ask for gruesome details.
- ◊ Squeezing money from an addict that paid with counterfeit cash. An example needs to be made. You don't fool the Joyboys and get away with it.
- ◊ A friend or relative arrives home out of breath and deeply scared after witnessing someone get robbed and beaten outside. He asks the player character to check what's up.
- ◊ Bumping into a former childhood friend late at night after turning a corner. She tightens the grip on her purse and walks fast while avoiding eye contact. If a player Character attempts to communicate with her, she begs not to be robbed.
- ◊ The police stop the player character late at night to question what they are doing outside. If resisted, they use excessive force to search for drugs and weapons.

## THE OPENING SCENE

*Black Skies Over Brixton* begins with a scene that leads the player characters to Tyrone Jaffe's murder. Each setup has a different reason to be interested in him. Opening scenes are written independently of each other and should be used as is unless there is a wish to mix events.

The players might have questions about the setting: who is Helen Smith? What is Black Skies? What do we know about Tyrone Jaffe? What happened today in Brixton? To answer these questions, you may simply manage important information or rely on your preferred storytelling techniques; perhaps they play through a quick flashback where they talk to Helen Smith, or they see a breaking news report of the first appearance of Black Skies a couple of weeks ago, or you just give them straight up answers out-of-character.

All italicized text is meant to be read to the players. If something contradicts their player character concepts, make the necessary changes prior to the game. Make sure to read the next chapters, as the information therein will clear things up in this very chapter and make it easier for you to understand what exactly happened in the upcoming murder scene.

## Law Enforcement

*"Brixton is in flames – there is only so much you can do for an understaffed police department amidst an ongoing gang war. Every other day someone winds up dead with children stumbling over the corpses on their way to school. To top that, addicts in the grip of a new and stronger drug, Black Skies, walk the streets oblivious to the hell around them."*

*It is Tuesday at night, sometime around 1am. You have set up camp in a dingy hotel following a lead: a local figure, Tyrone Jaffe, is supposedly using his record shop to sell Black Skies. You need to figure out who is supplying Jaffe with the drugs and, if possible, learn something that could be used to get him to work as an informant."*

The agents have been watching Tyrone Jaffe's record shop for a couple of nights, staying in a hotel across the street, taking notes of potential drug deals, valuable connections, and the people he knows. Unfortunately, not much has come up.

The only information they have gathered is that drug usage in or around the record shop is forbidden, there are no signs of affiliation to any particular gang, and he has mostly been selling Black Skies.

At one point in the dead of night, a young man displaying clear allegiance to the Joyboys (bright yellow handkerchief tied around the wrist or neck) approaches the record shop and is welcomed in by Jaffe himself. Both are very relaxed and friendly, except for paranoid glances to see if anyone noticed the arrival.

The agents might feel compelled to get out of the hotel and snoop around the record shop to eavesdrop on their conversation, or they might sit near a window with binoculars and try to observe it from afar. Despite of what they do, the purgatides' arrival and torment messes with Time, and after some snooping around with little to find, they get the following message either through radio or a call made to the hotel.

*"I don't have much time – a call for help from Crisp Works just rolled in. Police and paramedics should arrive in a moment. See if there's something that you can do about it!"*



## The Brixtonian

*"Brixton is tearing itself apart. People are dying in the streets, and when they don't kill each other, they kill themselves. Protests pop up every other day, no one from the police department has stepped up about the many cases of police brutality, and the gang war races towards a violent end. The streets are dirty, the cops are dirty, the dead are forgotten, and your boss demands that you write "pieces that sell" or you are out of a job."*

*After bribing a cop, pulling strings here and there, and poking around the community, you've got a lead: Tyrone Jaffe. He's an unaligned force who has turned his record shop into a selling spot for a variety of drugs – and he's agreed to do an anonymous interview with you for the Brixtonian.*

*The interview should happen in the dead of night, at 2am precisely, and away from prying eyes. You sit in the office way past closing time to lay out a plan, drinking bad coffee and eating cheap microwave meals."*

Use the introduction scene to expose the player characters to their unglamorous jobs.

They are out way past bedtime because of a tenuous lead, they won't receive extra pay, and the boss will definitely make a fuss if tonight's events keep them from showing up early tomorrow.

Then, when things couldn't get any worse than this, they are thrown head first into a murder scene.

## The Joyboys

*"Truth is, if it weren't for the money, maybe you wouldn't be a member of the Joyboys. You're still young and already neck deep in shit that you can't simply abandon. Or that won't abandon you."*

*It's now late at night and you're working the usual rounds around the block and inside The Vibe – everything looks calm enough tonight. Almost too calm. You and the rest of the crew overheard that your boss, Terence Bell, is working out more spots to sell drugs, so these are possibly the last few nights that you get some comfort and safety before battling in the streets again."*

Allow the player characters to enjoy some serenity and power, as this will greatly contrast with what they are about to witness. At some point in the night, Bell calls them into his office inside the venue. There he will explain that Deedee, a veteran and old-time friend of Tyrone Jaffe, was sent to work out the final details of an ongoing negotiation to supply drugs to Crisp Works, Jaffe's record shop. While Terence is sure that Deedee hasn't messed this up, Deedee said that he would call in with results.

It has been at least thirty minutes past the scheduled time and Terence needs to make sure that Deedee isn't in any sort of trouble. He sends the player characters to check if everything is okay. They are expected to get answers – getting back to The Vibe without meaningful information will certainly result in some sort of punishment. If any problems arise, they are the ones to solve them.

# THE JAFFE MURDER

Tyrone Jaffe's business, Crisp Works, is a hole-in-the-wall record shop. Worn down white paint spelling the shop's name contrasts against the building's peeling black facade with bricks poking out here and there. Late at night, steel shutters block the store windows displaying Pet Shop Boys, Xpansions, Public Enemy and Blur vinyls. Several months of difficulties made a mess of the record shop. Jaffe turned to selling drugs over the counter to pay the bills. When Black Skies got some traction on the streets, Jaffe dedicated his operation exclusively to it. The profit margin was insanely high compared to the other drugs, and The New Path resupplied it discreetly and quickly enough that police attention was never a problem.

One night ago Horrid and Foul jumped a Black Skies addict who bought the drug at Crisp Works earlier on the same day. They followed and found the dealer, Tyrone Jaffe, and then prepared for tonight's attack.

When the purgatides arrive at the record shop, they meet Jaffe and Deedee (a known Joyboy) doing business. The purgatides attack and subdue the men, subjecting them to their extreme torture methods. The torture takes countless hours beyond the veil, but in Elysium it all happens in the span of a few minutes. The murder goes unnoticed by residents living near the shop.

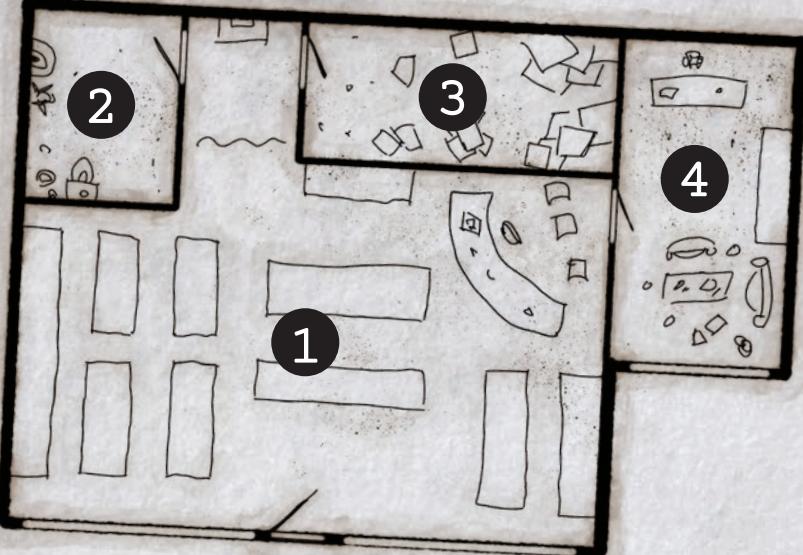
When the group walks into Crisp Works, they are met with the result of the purgatides' ritualistic flailing, skinning, stabbing, hooking, choking, chaining, slashing, and dismembering of the two victims. Macabre occult signs are scribbled everywhere in blood, and carved in flesh, wood, and vinyls.

## The Night In Question

Use the Opening description to start the scene. As the characters explore the location, choose what to reveal from the prompts of each area and from the *Beyond the Veil* section. Remember to give them breathable room to explore the location for a while before the scene ends, discovering vital clues that lead the story forward.

The scenario assumes that this specific type of brutality isn't common in the player character's lives, and they might have to **Keep it Together** or straight up lower their **Stability** by -1 at certain moments. Consider doing this on the first horrible sight, and then again at the end when Jaffe's body crawls up to them. At your discretion, shocking moments might trigger **See Through the Illusion**.

Crisp Works



### OPENING

"You enter the record shop and are immediately overwhelmed by a wet coppery stench. A light fixture swings back and forth, revealing different patches of the shop with each arc. Shards of glass rest on top of smashed records and broken furniture. The scene is painted in red — there is blood all over the floor, up the walls and even on the ceiling."

### EXPLORATION

[1] **Main area:** Chalkboard sign advertising new releases. Turntables buried in dust. Stacks of outdated music magazines on the counter. A toppled metal cabinet. Haphazardly organized shelves filled with vinyls. Tattered flyers glued on the walls. Crates full of second hand oldies.

**Tyrone Jaffe's lower body:** "You stumble over the lower half of a man's body beside a toppled metal cabinet. It is crumpled in a heap of shattered bones, smeared organs, and blood. You cannot see where the rest of him is."

**Infernal carvings:** "The walls are plastered with occult scrawlings — sigils, words, pictographs — all of which are carved on wood, flesh, glass, vinyls, and tapes. From floor to ceiling, over and under the furniture, not an inch of the record shop was spared."

**The Skin Blanket:** "You see a meter long slab of human skin, carefully cut and placed on top of the cashier's counter."

[2] **Bathroom:** Someone kicked the door down, breaking the hinges. Old blue tiles sprayed with blood. Used syringes in the trashcan and sink. No windows. Dried mold clinging to the walls. Broken and bloodied mirrors reflect blurred images. Faint yellow light flickers twice before going out. A dying plant hangs near the sink.

**Deedee's head:** "On the floor next to the bathroom door you see a decapitated head that has been stabbed through and through with many knives, up the neck and down the top of the head. Its bloodshot eyes bulge and dart around the room in confusion."

**The toilet:** "Multiple drugs were shoved down the dirty toilet, further clogging it. Musky water slowly fills it up to the top. Someone's face was likely forced down inside it — you can see blood marks where the head may have been beaten, creating cracks in the hardware."

**The blood trail:** "A long trail of blood suggests that one of the bodies got dragged up the walls and ceiling and out the bathroom, leading to elsewhere in the record shop." [GM note: The trail leads to Deedee's Headless Body in the storage room].

[3] **Storage:** Crates with unsellable vinyls and cardboard boxes are stacked from wall to wall. Damp air due to the blood. Ceiling light blocked by a body. Claustrophobic.

**Black Skies:** "A gray-black swirling liquid oozes from the cracks of a tattered cardboard box held together by duct tape. The box appears to have been smashed by something large and heavy – likely one of the victims. Inside you see small glass vials of what appears to be diluted black paint." [GM note: player characters aware of what Black Skies is may quickly recognize it].

**Deedee's Headless Body:** "A viscous liquid drips from the ceiling; you look up. You're greeted by the sight of a naked body, headless and completely skinned, limbs splayed and fastened to the ceiling by thick nails. The body seems to twitch and shiver and bleed still, coating the crates below with a glossy sheen of fresh blood."

[4] **Office:** Unused office turned into a lounge. Black leather couches. Spray painted walls. Tattered band posters. Cigarettes in the ashtray. Old music equipment. Liquor and drugs scattered everywhere. Blood splashes suggest that they were stabbed here before running towards the main area.

**Joyboy samples:** "A shoe box with samples of amphetamine, pills, and weed lies in the middle of the room next to the couches. A yellow piece of cloth conceals the drugs."

**The photograph:** "Faint photographs of Jaffe and a bunch of old friends still hang on the walls. Jaffe's face appears to be distorted due to a glitch in the film. Some of the other faces have suffered the same fate."

**The napkin:** "A white napkin with a name and a number rests gently against a bunch of drugs. It says 'call me when things get ugly', with the name Maria and what appears to be her number."

### BEYOND THE VEIL

The infernal sights below are triggered when player characters **See Through the Illusion** — some of these may also be used as they flee in horror after Jaffe's corpse crawls up to one of them. Whatever's left unused may show up later in the game as memories the player characters experience when in the grip of insanity, drugs, nightmares, or are made to recall in a moment of shock or through a creature's magic.

◆ "The victims' blood slithers up the walls, slowly climbing its way towards hypnotic swirls around each of the lights hanging from the ceiling. Droplets rain down, pooling on the floor below and forming a deep crimson lake with strange humanoid figures swimming inside."

◆ "Maniacal cackling is heard from beneath the ground, fingers and tongues are poking through the cracks in the floorboards, desperately trying to get a taste of the victim's mortal remains."

◆ "Jarring music bangs loudly from the speakers in deafening intensity – a painful cacophony of discordant noises mixed with agonizing screams that sing profanities. Some beg for salvation, others cry in desperate agony, some chant Tyrone Jaffe's name one letter at a time."

◆ "A web of wires resembling a spider's nest cuts through the room, spanning from wall to wall, from floor to ceiling. The wiry strands twist and turn into and out of the cabinets and stands, blasting through the furniture and corpses."

◆ "Portals to a dark otherworld hide inside the shelves, beneath the vinyls. Screams of ecstatic agony hail from within, sending shockwaves throughout the room. Slowly, it's getting darker and darker. A soothing voice whispers from inside the portal: welcome."

### ENDING

Trigger the prompt below when the player characters have explored enough. After that, proceed as you see fit.

"A long, agonizing whimper coming from beneath you breaks the silence.

You look down.

Tyrone Jaffe, now only a torso, has dragged himself to your feet. His visage is almost completely shredded. He is an abomination of muscles, fat, and bones. Fine metal wires hold everything tight, circling in and out of what is left of the man's upper body – protruding out the nipples, in through the nose, out in the back of the head, and twisted down the shoulders and arms only to find a way in where the nails should be.

The only thing that is human is his eyes, and he stares at you in panic.

A wet and drooling moan, filled with pain and anguish, issues from his broken mouth. Metal wires that have pierced his lips and tongue sprout like the legs of a great spider. He holds on to your legs, using whatever remaining strength to pull you toward him.

All of the lights go out with a bang and the record shop is finally, completely submerged in darkness. You feel the corpse weighing you down, moaning quietly just below your waistline."

# CONTINUING THE STORY

After the scene ends, each setup approaches the problem from their own standpoint. Always refer back to the *Elements of the Story* and *A Game of Revelations* for insight. Below are some ideas of what may happen next. If the players themselves don't initiate the investigations, kindly remind them of the clues and give them clear directions to follow.

**The photograph:** Could be used to reveal Jaffe's unexpected ties to The Movement back in the day, leading the players to investigate the early days of The New Path and even Frontier himself.

**The napkin:** The napkin suggests that Maria Devonshire knew something bad was about to happen. However, information about this elusive figure isn't enough to get the group to her, and even if they do, there are no guarantees she will work with them. The first few calls may even go unanswered. When player characters have enough information about Maria's legend, make it a point that they could attempt contact again, or she might notice their investigation and approach the group.

**Black Skies:** Experimentation is one of the possible outcomes if the player characters take a bunch of vials with them on the way out. The drug could also be used as a bargaining chip to get information on other sellers, which may eventually lead to Toohernoaf's gang or a confrontation with the purgatides. Player characters interested in Black Skies might furthermore attempt to form an alliance with the Joyboys (unless they are Joyboys themselves). To speed the plot you may allow the player characters to find the contact information of a member of The New Path inside Jaffe's office.

**The drug samples:** The Law Enforcement and Brixtonian groups may wish to investigate Jaffe's relationship with the Joyboys. This further confirms that he had no affiliation with the gang, possibly raising questions about the dead Joyboy as well. At some point later in the story, it should be clear that the Joyboy weren't the intended target of the purgatides, he just happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. A casual, if not joyful, coincidence for the purgatides.

**The occult symbols:** Player characters who investigate the sigils will discover them at other crime scenes where the purgatides left their marks. Each of these locations are covered with these sigils and symbols. Investigating them reveals that these are part of some strange ceremony and that they seem to be made by two different individuals since they are slightly different in style. A recurring symbol among all the pictures and sigils is a cruel meat hook. Further investigation within the occult underground may reveal the name of a dark entity named Golachab and that the sigils are meant to create a temple to his honor.

**The Joyboy:** Deedee's death clearly sets forth that whoever murdered Jaffe does not care about crossing the Joyboys' path. The sheer brutality would suggest that there could be an affiliation to The New Path, but this is not typical gang violence.



# ELEMENTS OF THE STORY

This chapter sheds light on the backstory of each set piece, explores their goals and modus operandi, and features some ideas to be used in-game, such as locations, NPCs and events.

## BRIXTON

Brixton is a predominantly black district in South London with a population of around 70,000, many of which are immigrants of Afro-Caribbean heritage. The neighborhood has seen its fair share of troubles. In 1981 and 1985 there were a number of violent clashes between the Metropolitan Police and Brixton's residents.

In 1991 Brixton is a place of high unemployment rates, increasing poverty and poor housing. There has been a surge in crime, particularly in the narcotics trade, and a violent gang war has flared up amidst everything else.

### Elysium

Brixton contains a variety of extensive housing estates, comprising 1940s low-rise structures and '60s and '70s tower blocks and houses. These stand alongside aging Victorian brick houses and expansive railway bridges. The entire area exhibits signs of neglect, with cracked concrete, rusted corrugated steel, overgrown vacant lots, and residences featuring boarded-up windows. Pollution and graffiti have marred the commissioned mural paintings intended to infuse life and hope into the district. The parks suffer from neglect, with overgrown greenery and broken swings in desolate concrete playgrounds. Trash cans and containers overflow on most streets, with numerous back alleys serving as dumping grounds for the waste. Broken glass bottles, discarded needles, rats, used diapers, garbage heaps, and cockroach nests are common sights throughout the area.

In spite of Brixton's dilapidated appearance, it remains vibrant and teeming with life. The substantial influence of Afro-Caribbean immigrants is evident in the diverse music scene, featuring reggae, soca, jazz, calypso and ska. Amidst this, emerging punk and rock bands are commonplace. Rebels and outcasts from wealthier London areas migrate to Brixton in search of a liberated lifestyle distinct from conservative British society. They repurpose vacant structures into free housing, establish art collectives, and transform old buildings into new storefronts for small businesses.

Across Brixton there are small stores that huddle beneath the railway bridges or are squeezed between highrises. Here you find food shops, cafés, jazz bars, antique bazaars that always have their blinds down, shoemakers, keymakers, butchers, hairdressers and an assortment of other craftsmen.

### Locations in Brixton

- [1] **The Police Station:** This three-story building contains a number of cells, interview rooms, locker rooms, control rooms, and offices, as well as forensic facilities. It has become a point of turmoil and disorder, and protesters often gather outside.
- [2] **The Brixtonian:** The newspaper is located on the top floor of an old factory. In the open office landscape, the clatter of typewriters mingles with the persistent ringing of rotary phones. Papers and previous editions are scattered everywhere, and the ashtrays are overflowing. Several desks are empty since the newspaper has cut costs.
- [3] **The Vibe:** A popular nightclub housed in what was formerly a movie theater. It is known to be the home of the gang The Joyboys, and they run a large part of their drug operations here.
- [4] **Brixton Tube Station:** The station is the southern terminus of the Victoria line. From here people commute to the central parts of London. This is also a popular meeting place.
- [5] **St. Matthew's Church:** Constructed on a stone plinth, the church is built of yellow brick, enhanced with embellishments in stone and Roman cement. It is heavily discolored by pollution. It was built in 1821 to celebrate Britain's victory at the Battle of Waterloo.
- [6] **Masjid ibn Taymeeyah:** This is the Brixton Mosque, and Islamic Cultural Centre. It opened in 1990.
- [7] **The Brixton Market:** A huge indoor/outdoor market-place that is open every day. Here you find fruit and vegetable stands, newsstands, Afro-Caribbean shops as well as Indian, Vietnamese and South American stores.
- [8] **The Brixton Academy:** A concert hall where several up and coming bands perform. At these times people from other areas flock to Brixton.
- [9] **The Fridge:** A popular nightclub.
- [10] **The Ritzy Cinema:** A popular movie theater.
- [11] **Crisp Works:** Record shop owned by Tyrone Jaffe
- [12] **Angel Road:** Known hangout for homeless and vagrants.
- [13] **Brockwell Park:** Large, unkempt, park set within a hilly landscape and comprising a network of ponds.
- [14] **Ruskin Park:** Unkempt park with children's playgrounds.
- [15] **Windmill Gardens:** A green park with an almost 200 year old Windmill.



## The People of Brixton

- ◆ *Jamal Johnson*: A respected Rastafarian and bassist known as Jam-jo. He once led a life of crime but has since left it behind, now playing bass in local bands and jamming for tips in bars that will have him.
- ◆ *Ebony Wright*: Owner of a small soul food restaurant, focused on creating a welcoming space for locals to gather, eat, and share stories. Holds a special interest for the weird and strange stories told late at night.
- ◆ *Leroy King*: A taxi driver well-acquainted with every corner of Brixton. He knows the ins and outs of each gang's territory and keeps an old rusty revolver under his seat for protection.
- ◆ *Jasmine Mojekwu*: A young woman aspiring to be an actress, yearning to escape Brixton. However, both her brothers are involved in the gangs, and she finds herself taking care of her sick mother.

## The Crime

Brixton is known to be the territory of the Yardies, a place where the Jamaican mafia prospered undisturbed. The 1980s saw the rise of several notorious gangs in Brixton, often linked to burglary, drug trafficking, and acts of violence. The drug trade, particularly the rise of crack cocaine and the recent fad, "Black Skies," plays a significant role in fueling criminal enterprises. Many see that lifestyle as the most viable option, given current economic conditions, to acquire money, security, and status. These individuals are young, often still in their early teens, and they are largely from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The gang culture in Brixton is fueled by territorial disputes that often result in violent clashes between rival groups. Turf wars over control of drug distribution points and other criminal enterprises are common. With the recent police brutality and racial profiling, protests have escalated further.

Besides the Joyboys and The New Path, some others are the upcoming PDC (Poverty Driven Children/Peel Dem Crew) gang, the Younger 28s, the Junction Boys and the Peckham Boys.

## The Criminals

- ◆ *Emil*: An ex-addict lifted into a life of crime, profoundly entranced by the promises of easy riches and outlets for violence. Works as a bouncer at a nightclub, always itching for the thrill of a fight.
- ◆ *Spark*: Born into a life of prostitution, Spark turned into an abusive pimp in her 30s and now owns a dingy back alley brothel. She forces the girls working for her to also deal drugs.
- ◆ *Wicked Fitz*: A gun-for-hire who almost died in a shootout against the police and another gang; now he and half a dozen boys burgle local jewelry stores.
- ◆ *Gigi*: An undercover informant who got too attached to a local crime lord and immediately rolled over to the cops once caught. Focuses all efforts into turning other informants into allies as well.

## The Borderlands of Brixton

Violence, poverty, and despair, further enhanced by the presence of Toohteroat and Hul, weaken the veil around Brixton. At night, the labyrinthine alleys take wanderers to unfamiliar streets bordering Metropolis where the nachtkäfer crawl in the shadows, escaping any lights that shine upon them.

As economic pressure and drug wars escalate, heightening the community's many anxieties, newly spawned nachtschreck seep through the Illusion's cracks hoping to find a way into Elysium. Many band together with the Children of the Night and borderliners that hide in forlorn buildings, forgotten parks, and dark alleyways. Their presence, though pushed to the outskirts of Brixton, threatens even the strongest gangs.

## Those that dwell in the Borderlands

- ◆ *Winston*: A wayfinder (and soon-to-become a Child of Madness) hooked on amphetamines and dabbling with heroin to soothe his soul. Winston is an unconventional guide who uses Madness magic to move through Brixton's hidden alleyways.
- ◆ *Freda*: A morbid initiate Death Magician who has begun experimenting with her own mortality and altered states of consciousness. Currently considering engaging with Black Skies after hearing a rumor that it might be magical.
- ◆ *Slumber Jack*: A nachtschreck believed to be the spirit (or taking on his shape, anyway) of a dead addict. It is said that he haunts people suffering from sleep paralysis due to severe withdrawal.
- ◆ *Caroline DeVecchis*: A local artist who is (unbeknownst to her) a Malakhim. She is completely lost to despair. The police are hunting her down due to public property damage — works of art that the jailers would rather lock beyond human sight.

# SIGNS AND HOOKS

Below are a number of events relating to Brixton's people and problems; both the good and the bad. You may use these to add depth and contrast to the setting. These can be triggered as visions, experiences, or even hooks that expand your story further (as an introduction to NPCs or places).

## Hope and Welcoming

- ◆ There is the sound of jazz music, and behind a seemingly ordinary door is a small club. A woman in a colorful dress asks you to step in.
- ◆ A homeless man is feeding stray dogs scraps of bread. They greet him with happy barks and wagging tails.
- ◆ A gang of joyful and slightly intoxicated goths is making their way to the Brixton Academy to see Fields of the Nephilim. They pause to ask for a cigarette; though pale, they exude vitality and enthusiasm.
- ◆ Two old men sit out in the sun with a chessboard between them. They drink coffee from thermoses and laugh and wave to those that walk by.
- ◆ A group of volunteers organizes a clean-up initiative, picking up litter and beautifying public spaces to instill a sense of pride in their community.
- ◆ A grassroots art exhibition showcases the talents of local artists, drawing attention to the creative spirit within the community and fostering a sense of cultural pride.

- ◆ A small library, set up in a repurposed storefront, invites locals to borrow and exchange books.
- ◆ Samwell, a street artist, transforms a drab, graffiti-covered wall into a vibrant mural, bringing a splash of color and creativity to the otherwise neglected surroundings.
- ◆ The Jubilee Primary School school organizes a mentor-led after-school program, offering educational support and extracurricular activities.
- ◆ A group of young people are having a party on the rooftop on one of the blocks of flats. They are playing music on boomboxes and inviting people to join them.
- ◆ The memory of Jade Bailey, creator of The Movement, is celebrated with a joyful parade through town. People dance and sing and carry placards sporting her face and The Movement's tagline: "For the people, by the people."
- ◆ A laughing family browse the Brixton Market vegetable stands, fencing with celery stalks and playing catch with cabbage heads.

## Despair and Brutality

- ◆ A street gang of aggressive teenagers has dragged a drifter in a black suit into an alley where they try to force him to drink his own piss.
- ◆ A black kid is being beaten up by a group of white men. These are plainclothes police officers. They are arrogant, violent, and they know they will get away with it.
- ◆ A junkie, high on Black Skies and Crack, lies in the streets and sings nonsense words.
- ◆ A mother high on crack stands in a street corner begging for money. On her arm is an infant with a leaking diaper.
- ◆ Flowers, candles and photos are placed in a corner where a young member of the Peckham Boys was shot to death the night before.

- ◆ A police van stops, and police in uniforms jump out with batons raised and start beating on some young black men, then drag them into the van and drive away.
- ◆ A group of children plays in a dilapidated playground with rusty swings and broken slides.
- ◆ A pawn shop displays rows of stolen bicycles, electronics, wedding rings, and TV sets.
- ◆ Unattended children play and pretend to be gang members near open, overflowing dumpsters.
- ◆ Sirens are heard just a street away. An ambulance and police car stop. A man has been stabbed and is screaming out in pain and fear.

# THE SERVANTS OF GOLĀP

Below you will find information about Hul, Helen Smith, and the purgatides.

## Hul (disguised as Helen Smith)

When damned legionnaires roam out of place, when the myriad tormented escape their purgatories, even when demons break free, Hul is there to force them back to their places. She is a guide and a guardian of how things should be. The very core of her being yearns for order.

Hul as Helen is a strict machine: a formal black pencil skirt suit, white blouse and needle sharp heels. Make-up is sparse but impeccable behind black rimmed glasses. Her hair is neatly combed, and she always carries a black briefcase. It is full of books, binders, folders and papers on criminal psychology, none of which matter to Hul. In a zippered pocket she keeps a few instruments of torture.

Half machine, half human, Hul's true nature is incomprehensible to the human mind: an alien body made of insectoid mandibles and metal, intertwined with mangled tissue and muscle. Spiky, spidery metal legs sprawl beneath an upper body of putrid flesh. Dusky smoke and a stench of motor oil and charred pus ooze from various sores. Her melody is a series of squeaks and squelches, and picking up the baseline a low vibration hums, as if from hidden machinery.

In order to walk the lands of Elysium, Hul must possess a human being by suppressing the victim's mind and taking temporary control of their body. As time goes by, her corruptive essence taints and withers the body, and with the added pressure of the victim fighting back for control, this has her pressed to act quickly and leave Elysium or find another vessel. When

longer missions call for the necessity of inhabiting the same body for longer periods of time, she resorts to a ritual that heals the withered body at the cost of someone else's life.

The ritual requires another living human being and a place where nobody will hear. The purgatides remove whatever organs Hul's possessed body needs repaired, and replace the damaged with the fresh. They skin the victim and stitch the patches onto Hul's body in a similar manner. She needs a few hours of undisturbed focus in order to successfully merge the tissue, then her body will yet again be made pristine.

**Roleplaying Hul as Helen:** You don't talk much, and when you do, it is to state facts or demand answers. You behave as if you were above the chief of police in rank and can often demand personal information and question anyone in the vicinity. Ask them to do things for you. The ones that bother you are seen as insolent children in need of a beating, something that you refrain from doing so as not to risk your cover.

**Roleplaying Hul's true nature:** You enjoy every second of their agony, and you would enjoy it even more if it weren't for this filthy human skin that restrains your full power. You readily pounce at the chance of engaging in overt violence, gorging on the thrill of murderous lust. When you talk, you belittle and mock others to remind them of their powerlessness.

## Hooks

Hul is a hidden force in the setting. With one hand she manipulates the police to gather information on the Black Skies drug. With the other, she sends her purgatides to do more brutal investigations at street level. Hul's nature is a mystery of its own, and it could be investigated by the player characters when they doubt her humanity.

Hul is also the simplest answer to the "Toohternoat problem," and thus could wind up becoming an ally – if the player characters are willing to work with a being that is, in many ways, equal to or worse than Toohternoat himself.

## The Story of Helen Smith

Helen was born in Didsbury, South Manchester, in 1958. She was a bright child, breezing through school with top marks and going straight on to Manchester University. She studied psychology, sociology, and criminology, earning a doctorate in criminal psychology at the age of 28. Since then, she has assisted the Manchester Police on several cases and gradually developed an affinity for gang psychology.

Criminal Inspector Tenant of the Metropolitan Police in Brixton requested Dr. Helen Smith's expertise when gang wars spiraled out of control in the spring of 1991. However, the person who arrived in Brixton was not Helen Smith.

The razide Hul visited the Smith household in Manchester. While Horrid and Foul held Helen down, Hul possessed her body, enabling the razide to partake of her knowledge and expertise while trapping her personality and will. As a cruel enjoyment for the infernal trio, Helen was forced to watch as her own body tortured and skinned her husband Mark and her young son Ewan before burying them in the garden. Helen herself is buried in the backyard of her own mind, screaming and trying to break free.

## UNRAVELING THE HELEN PROBLEM

Helen Smith is a cunning woman, even in her trapped and broken state. Although Hul has banished her to the back of her mind, Hul still needs to partake of her knowledge. Helen has learned that there are ways for her to reach out and momentarily take control of her own body. It may be either a slow process, making her own hand write a message, or abrupt, such as shouting out. Whether to fellow police or people on the street, including but not limited to the player characters, she will try to tell people what is going on whenever she has the chance.

*Hul*



## The Purgatides

Hul brings two purgatides to help her find Toohteroat: Horrid and Foul. Butchered by Hul herself after managing to flee Inferno post-death, they sealed a pact with Hul to help her throughout eternity given their release from their purgatories. Hul is not a kind master, and made sure that they understood the ins and outs of human suffering by personally (and intimately) walking them through all of her methods. The purgatides hold no grudges against Hul. In fact, they eagerly fulfill their role of tortured torturers.

Horrid and Foul stalk the streets and alleys of Brixton at night. During the day, they remain hidden in a strange, death-like sleep within a vacant building. They dress in filthy long coats and torn clothes. They keep their feet bare and smile unsettlingly at all times. The Illusion cloaks their hellish appearances, but they are so twisted that their infernal natures often bleed through. Even the deepest of sleepers are disturbed by their presence, and they terrify animals and children. The purgatides exude a coppery stench of blood and mothballs so strong that it induces gagging. When the Illusion falters, they are revealed to be bleeding from multiple deep gashes, leaving a crimson trail behind them.

Horrid has a thin male figure with crude metal clamps holding together deep wounds on his abdomen. Thin steel wire is tightly wrapped around his chest and arms, cutting deep into the muscles. His fingernails have been replaced by rusted scalpel blades, and several nine inch nails have been hammered into his spine, causing him to walk slightly bent.

Foul has a female figure with mangled muscles under crudely stitched skin. Pus and blood leak out from the stitches in a long trail behind her. Her larynx has been replaced with a metal tube, resulting in rustling and gurgling breaths. She is surrounded by flies who lay their eggs in her open wounds. Several cruel hooks and chains rip open her abdomen exposing her intestines.

The duo's only method of interacting with the world is torture. They pick victims that seem related to the hunt, single them out, and drag them to the Borderlands of Inferno where the torture sessions take place outside of Time. In Elysium, the murder scene is a grotesque masterwork that defies human imagination. The site remains forever tainted by their passage, and those able to see through the Illusion quickly pick up on the marks of their presence: occult scribbling, impossible stretching of skin, and victims that remain alive long after their bodies have been ripped apart.

### Hooks

The purgatides lash out at the player characters whenever they cross paths. Player characters who seem important or clever become targets unless murdering them would create problems for Hul. Horrid and Foul are less likely to murder cops, but will happily go after Joyboys.

## THE NEW PATH

This section features a more detailed description of Toohteroat, his temple, Black Skies, and Angel Road.

### Toohteroat

Nobody knows exactly who or what Toohteroat is — least of all his captors or the demon himself — Toohteroat's true form appears as a shapeless and ethereal aura, a living shade, an obscure force, or black mass of energy. Toohteroat is immensely sensitive to light and sound, especially when outside of Inferno. In Elysium, it has assumed the appearance of a male cult leader.

Toohteroat is one with the Black Skies drug and spreads himself through the minds of intoxicated victims. This bond with multiple users, coupled with the demon's nature, makes him chaotic and unpredictable. One night he screams and laughs in ecstatic fervor. Another, he falls prey to the overwhelming paranoia of being caught and enslaved again, hunching in a dark corner while being consumed with agonizing whispers. He dwells on a throne in his temple at Angel Road, waiting for the cultists to bring another victim.

**Roleplaying Toohteroat:** Toohteroat cycles through many personalities: the powerful, the weakened, the paranoid, the abuser, and the tempter to name a few. He could frenzy after murdering someone in order to concoct more Black Skies, only to be demand to be left alone by the cultists as he succumbs to a fit of paranoia. Below are his two most common moods:

- ❖ **The Powerful:** You have never tasted this much power before. You can feel the world bending to you in helpless compliance. Your very essence runs through everyone, pulsating within their veins and corroding their thoughts. Your realm grows wider, stronger. You are capable of anything.
- ❖ **The Paranoid:** You don't have enough power and you can already smell the infernal clergies coming after you. There is nothing you can do about it except beg for mercy. You cannot bear the idea of having your power drained by them; you would do anything to escape this fate.

### Hooks

Toohteroat remains a hidden set piece until the mysteries surrounding The New Path and the origin of Black Skies are unveiled, possibly coming in contact with the player characters only during the grand finale.

### Angel Road 2

Somewhere on Angel Road, at the epicenter of Black Skies addiction, is a three-story, weathered, gray building. Graffiti covers the walls, the windows have all been boarded up, and a large crowd of homeless and addicts gather inside and around it in search of shelter, drugs, and company. Inside, naked light bulbs and candles cast crooked shadows. Occasionally, one of the addicts suffering from withdrawal or drug-induced psychosis breaks the silence with agonizing screams and cries. Mattresses lie next to all manner of trash, and tarps and curtains divide the corridors and apartments into smaller personal spaces. The place is overwhelmed with grime and a sour stench of urine, feces, and sweat.

Black Skies addicts naturally find their way to the area as their minds are brought closer to Toohternoat. This further erodes the veil and allows Toohternoat to spread his presence more easily among his victims. At night, the entirety of Angel Road borders Toohternoat's realm, a place that exists only within the souls of those that engage with the drug.

### Events at Angel Road

- ◆ Two addicts fight for the last vial while the others watch in silence.
- ◆ A player character steps over a bunch of used syringes still stained with remains of the drug.
- ◆ A dealer approaches them with questions, since they clearly don't belong.
- ◆ The player characters notice later in the day that one of them has been pickpocketed.
- ◆ The player characters talk to someone who is later revealed to be one of the more violent members of The New Path.
- ◆ Members of The New Path are seen spray painting "meet me at the crossroads" over a large X on the cracked asphalt. They dash into an alley after that.

### THE TEMPLE IN THE BASEMENT

An ominous stairwell leads down into the basement. The addicts avoid it. It is well known that only members of The New Path are allowed to go down there. The basement is a small labyrinth of storage rooms filled with old furniture and crates, a laundry room with broken washing machines, and so on. At the end of the longest corridor, there is a metal door with cracked and peeling blue paint. This door is accessible

only to people with a certain artifact (See *The Blue Door at Angel Road* 2, p. 26). The police, journalists, or a group of Joyboy soldiers would walk right past it without the artifact in hands. Behind the door, stairs lead further down to Toohternoat's temple: an underground room submerged in darkness and silence.

Crates full of Black Skies ready for consumption are stacked on top of each other along the walls. In the middle of the main room a haphazard throne has been built, consisting of stacked car tyres and a legless red velvet sofa. The sofa, as well as the tyres and floor, are soaked in blood and other body fluids.

Beyond the veil the basement expands into the dark and unto Toohternoat's realm, stretching endlessly into a collective fever dream shared by his addicts.

### The Cult

The New Path began as an occult cluster formed by allies of The Movement and led by Marvin Frontier. Many of the original members went their separate ways before Toohternoat took full control of the group. Awestruck at the sight of a real demon, the few that remained transformed The New Path into a cult to Toohternoat.

Continuing to follow his own agenda, Toohternoat pushed the cult into the narcotics trade, which led to the inevitable downfall of Frontier. The magician was consumed by guilt and madness when the group started to infiltrate the criminal underworld, and he had no real control anymore.

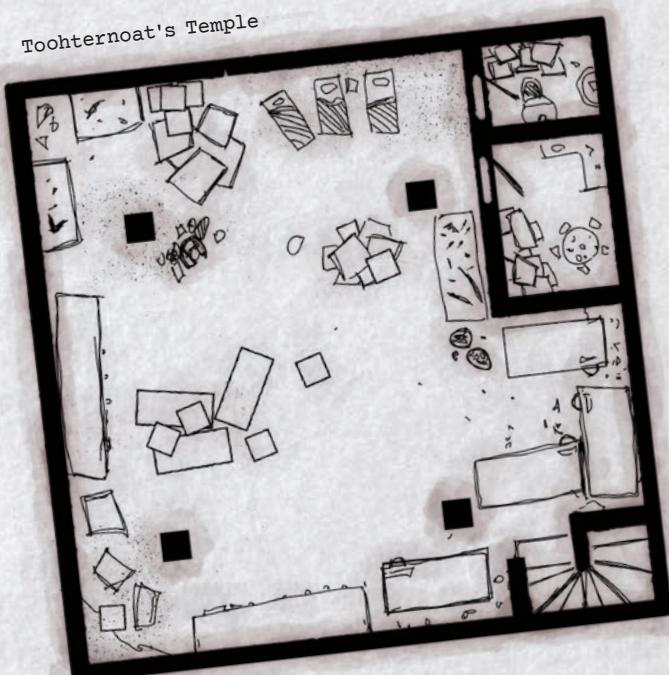
At this point, knowledge about The New Path's backstory and the origin of Black Skies is restricted only to the remaining original members, who have isolated themselves in service of the demon. New recruits, often flaky and violent, openly identify as part of "The New Path," and join because there is money to be had. They have their own slang and symbols, none of which even vaguely relate to Frontier's initial agenda.

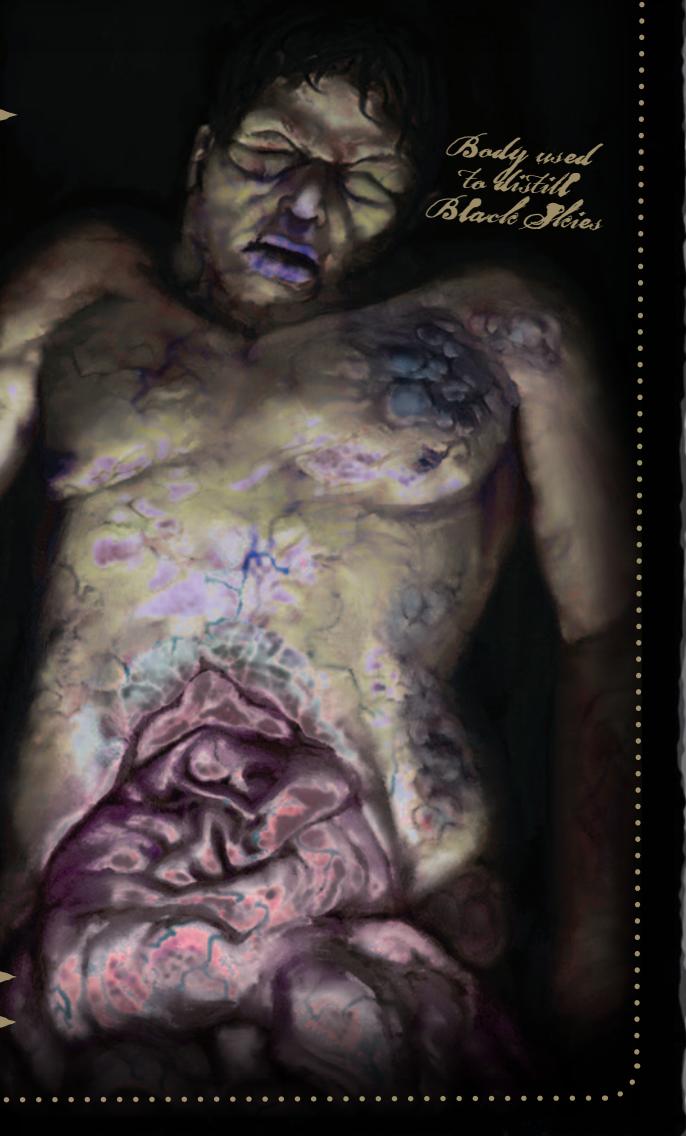
The two biggest symbols of The New Path are crossed fingers and the letter X. X is often tattooed or burned on their skin, and said to represent a crossroads where they met the devil (a life of crime) and decided to follow the new path (into a wealthy lifestyle). The letter is also represented by crossed arms, X painted on top of other gang tags, and elaborate lettering carved in their weapons' handles. The crossed fingers loosely represent "intertwined paths," and are left to newer recruits that have yet to prove their loyalty.

Dark red, black, and brown clothing is also part of the gang's core identity. They prefer to wear inconspicuous clothes, unlike other gangs that proudly display their affiliations – such as the Joyboys' vibrant yellow.

#### Hooks

At the start of the game, The New Path gangsters are known to be violently pushing their way into new territories. Production of Black Skies is reserved for the inner circle.





### The Cultists

- ◆ **Yasiel Marsh - Voice of the New Path:** An old man who regards Toohternoat as his son, as the demon was born from his son's body. Formerly an accountant, he has now fully embraced his new role as the demon's Herald. Yasiel can be seen strolling the streets in his white linen suit, hat, and cane, often accompanied by members of the New Path. He frequently selects individuals to be killed for the production of Black Skies. Flaunting expensive watches and carrying large sums of cash, he is always on the lookout for new prospects. He is openly pushing the war against the Joyboys and many of the young recruits love him. Despite his advanced age, it is rumored that he is nearly impossible to kill (able to withstand **7** Wounds before dying).
- ◆ **Marlin Vedine:** An old friend of Frontier turned into a Black Skies addict, now lost to Toohternoat's control. Currently hangs around Angel Road, actively promoting the cult's interests and serving the demon as an act of self-harm. Marlin is a ritual magician and has been assigned by Yasiel Marsh to investigate the murders committed by Hul, Horrid, and Foul. If that addition can be tempered, Marlin might switch sides and join Frontier.

◆ **Claudette Casas - Matron of the Vials:** A former chemistry teacher and friend of Frontier. She sought Toohternoat's help to save her newborn daughter's life. The demon assisted in his own way, and her daughter is now neither dead nor alive. The infant, trapped in a rotting body, still moves, crawls, and hungrily wants her mother's breast. Claudette is often seen pampering the child, who she's named Violet. Claudette handles the alchemical process of creating Black Skies, draining people with hoses and syringes. Her hands are blackened from the fluid, and she lives on a constant mild high. She seldom leaves the temple.

### The Gangsters

- ◆ **Slick:** Shady-looking guy, often deployed to search-and-stab minor criminals that disobey the gang's rulings.
- ◆ **Burp:** Young blood trying to prove his loyalty by peddling Black Skies on rival territory, always scared of being caught.
- ◆ **Trick:** Keeps an eye out for rival and police activity and buys time by distracting them.
- ◆ **Zap:** Straight out of jail after the Joyboys abandoned and betrayed him years ago, dreaming of revenge.

## Black Skies

Nobody knows where it came from, but if asked, almost everyone has a friend or relative who tried it over the last couple of weeks. That is when it suddenly, almost overnight, became the new sensation in town. Most commonly, the dark, musky liquid known as Black Skies is injected. Supply seems endless and it is surprisingly affordable at £10 per gram (roughly one milliliter), which yields approximately two "sips."

On first injection the user will experience the world as if from inside a dark cloud of serene ecstasy. They may struggle to breathe as a result of the unimaginable pleasure, elevated well-being throbbing like waves before their eyes. Sound noticeably fades to a soft murmur and conversation is nigh impossible. They feel like this is right, that they have come Home.

The hollow emptiness when it wears off hits like the death of a loved one. However, the perfect pleasure changes shape with repeated use, gradually shifting into numbness, anxiety, and violence. The process takes several months, and even the most addicted in Brixton have yet to plunge that far, but some are showing early signs: clawing up sores on themselves and impatiently sucking on them.

Should the drug reign unhindered the effects would be devastating: abusers desperately trying to reinvent the ecstasy by inflicting more pain while feeling less of it, seriously harming themselves and others. Within a year they would shuffle through alleys tearing themselves to shreds, sores and stumps from ripped-off limbs festering into oozing septic flesh.

None survive the next year, but Toohternoat doesn't need that long. Black Skies is infused with his flesh and blood, and the increased usage, while slowly depleting him, spreads his realm one vial at a time.

### Hooks

Player characters can easily procure the drug in Brixton, but it could also find its way to them. The cops plant it on them, a friend has become an addict, or they start out the game addicted to it.

## Users

- ◆ **Tanisha Morrison:** A doctor who works at the King's College Hospital, using Black Skies to cope with the stress. She also has a street clinic dedicated to providing healthcare services to the underserved residents of Brixton.
- ◆ **Xavi:** A police informant secretly and severely hooked on Black Skies, desperately trying (and failing) to get out of both the cops' and the drug's clutches.
- ◆ **Lance O'Ryan:** Once an admired local figure, now a hopeless addict thrown aside and forgotten by relatives and friends. Has recently become "the face of Black Skies" and talk of the town.
- ◆ **Aymee White:** Mother of three who turned to Black Skies after losing her job. Unable to evade Toohternoat's claws, she lives mostly in anticipation of entering his realm again.

# THE ENLIGHTENED

This section features information about Marvin Frontier, a Madness magician tied to the summoning of Toohternoat, and Maria Devonshire, an urban legend who once aided him in his path of enlightenment.

## Marvin Frontier

A magician who sought to change Brixton for the better, Marvin formed The New Path and summoned Toohternoat with the best of intentions. The demon turned on him and transformed The New Path into something extreme and horrific. Frontier is now an anguished man with a mind shattered from regret. He is heavily addicted to several drugs, and now he senses Toohternoat within him as well.

Locked away in his apartment he finds himself living in a haze. When he is not heavily sedated with the drugs that once granted him insight into Reality, he is at the mercy of one psychotic episode after the other. He shouts himself hoarse, talking to his wicked reflection, which he believes to be a creature, and to the living spirits spawned by his Madness. He has manically scraped the faces off old photographs for fear that the souls of these people, old friends of his, would seek out and punish him after their physical deaths.

**Roleplaying Marvin Frontier:** You are not dumb and quirky, you are intelligent and Mad. You see hidden messages in odd things like coffee stains, numbers on a pizza box, and the combined colors of people's clothes. These messages are, most of the time, true and worrisome. You stumble on your own words when not sedated, often over-elaborating weird ideas or changing topics without noticing. You only fight when cornered, and you would rather stay in the dark. You don't care about staying clean, eating healthy, or tidying up your home. When it comes to strangers, until proven otherwise, everyone could be Toohternoat in disguise or someone seeking to punish you for releasing him into the world.

### Hooks

The player characters may find out about Frontier after investigating The New Path, or be directed to him by Maria Devonshire. Redeeming Frontier to get him into action again is a necessary step for groups that want to deal with Toohternoat magically.

## THE APARTMENT AT PATIENCE STREET

The magician's apartment is located on Patience Street, a bohemian strip currently being fought over by small-time drug dealers. For a place replete with cheap housing and bars, it is eerily quiet even during the busiest hours. Passersby walk directly to where they should be, staring straight ahead at all times.

Once in a while, cries are heard in between screamed insults and the harsh slam of doors. The police rarely set foot inside the area. Gunshots occasionally punctuate the night, triggering local dogs to either flee or bark in response.

Frontier lives at the very center of the street in a rundown, half-burnt, and abandoned apartment building. Despite shutting himself away from the world, his Madness continues to spread through the area, consuming everything it touches. Web-like cracks in a window reflect distorted faces, and graffiti-covered walls tell terrifying, barely-comprehensible tales.

The entrance, kicked down ages ago, is permanently open. Inside is a mess of cobwebs and dirt, and the only way up or down is through a narrow wooden staircase. Humidity has left damp patches in walls now weeping yellow grease from behind peeling wallpaper.

### Events at Patience Street

- ◆ When turning a corner, the player character bumps a local dealer who immediately turns aggressive.
- ◆ A shadowed bent figure barks and growls at a player character. This vagrant is not violent, but infused by Frontier's Madness.
- ◆ A group of punks are finishing spray painting a decapitated monstrous Thatcher.
- ◆ A couple fights, one shouting over the other while their baby cries.
- ◆ A battered junkie crawls out of an alley begging for help.
- ◆ A single warm gust of wind suddenly breaks the cold; it whispers a player character's name.

## FRONTIER'S HIDEOUT

The barricaded windows trap hot moldy air and an army of buzzing flies within the apartment, allowing only a few beams of light to pierce through. Everything reeks of waste, mildew, and stale food. The furniture is worn and beaten. The floor is littered with unwashed clothes, food containers, shoes, dirty dishes, scribbled pages from notebooks, photos with scraped-off faces, news clippings, and strange knick-knacks. The walls have been stained with blood, chalk, oils, and other materials the magician used to cast spells of protection. A thin layer of dust has settled on the mirrors; the only pieces of furniture he interacts with frequently but refuses to touch.

## Frontier's Assistance

Here is how Frontier may help the player characters once they are able to communicate with him and prove they are on his side.

**The Backstory:** Frontier recounts his tragic tale. He reveals Toohernoat's name and betrayal, and includes all the gruesome details behind the summoning ritual. Frontier may also elucidate the mystery behind The New Path.

**Black Skies:** Given time to study the drug, Frontier discovers that Black Skies is, in fact, Toohernoat. He may also divulge that "souls of innocents" reside inside the drug.

**The Blue Door at Angel Road 2:** He reveals that the place used to summon Toohernoat also became the demon's temple, but a powerful ritual hides the entrance from the world. Frontier still has the key to the door inside of him, which he will throw up and give to the group if they agree to stop Toohernoat. The key is a round stone of blue amber taken from a dream world. It houses a live Ichtyria larva (KDL, p. 269). The blue door can be seen and opened by those holding the stone.

**Protective Sigils:** He covers the player characters in occult ink sigils while performing a protective ritual between sundown and sunrise. They must chant and engage in hallucinogenic drugs with Frontier for the ritual to work. The sigils last for a few hours and add +2 to rolls when resisting Toohernoat's mental assault.

**Bind Toohernoat:** Frontier has a way to bind Toohernoat, but there is no guarantee it will work. If the ritual is successful, the demon will be drawn into a person and trapped there until death. The long, drawn-out process involves carving an intricate pattern in the skin, starting on the back, then going up the neck and down the arms. Two eye-sized wounds in the palms of the hands will be flayed open. Then the person must grab the demon, utter his true name (Toohernoat), and be able to resist whatever methods he has to fight back. Should someone volunteer, it takes 24 hours to perform the ritual, and the subject suffers **2 Serious Wounds** [Frontier's occult carvings] as well as the loss of **2 Stability**. These wounds can be stabilized once Toohernoat is trapped.

**Join in the Fight:** Frontier is utterly terrified to leave the apartment and face the demon. If the player characters nevertheless convince him to do so (speaking about the greater good, that he is the cause of the evil, or just by offering friendship and support), Frontier may even volunteer to be the one that binds the creature.

## Maria Devonshire

Maria Devonshire is a mysterious being who followed Caribbean immigrants from across the sea and has dwelt among them since the 1940s. In Brixton, she has become an urban legend called The White Lady of Brixton. She is a dark-skinned woman, dressed in white multi-layered dresses full of intricate patterns and textures. Her long dark hair is wrapped in a white shawl. Her agenda is unclear, but she seems to care for Brixton, although not enough to step directly into a conflict with either a demon or servants of Inferno. She may, however, push suitable pawns (the player characters) in certain directions.

**Roleplaying Maria:** You are warm and caring, yet distant and elusive. You know too much, such as names, events in peoples' past, and their secrets.

### Hooks

Maria serves as a source of exposition. She becomes a valuable tool for the GM when the players are stuck, providing guidance and direction. She finds the player characters, or asks them to come to some place in Brixton and appears there. If Maria believes the player characters oppose the demon, she points them towards Frontier to seek assistance from the broken magician, or encourage them to delve into the demon's origin. Additionally, she may disclose the location of the vacant house where Horrid and Foul dwell, or drop hints about the hidden temple on Angel Road.

## THE SLEEPERS

Here is an overview of the three human factions caught in the crossfire and with problems of their own.

### The Movement

The Movement was created by Jade Bailey with the intent of preserving African and Caribbean cultural expressions. It once held great sway in Brixton and it was within the Movement that Frontier created The New Path, the cult that summoned the demon. Jade Bailey is dead, but the Movement still exists. Now it can be seen as the collective voice of the people of Brixton who want change for themselves and their children.

While the youngest form groups to work with the community in rebuilding Brixton, the oldest reminisce on the good memories and continue to live up to Bailey's teachings. Some actions are spontaneous, others are organized. There are the firebrands standing up to the police, there are the academics teaching the community for free, and there are those who house and feed children of parents who cannot. Not all of them fully support each other's actions, yet all of them agree that The Movement must live on.

### Hooks

The Movement shows how the community feels about events in Brixton. They protest against police brutality, demand change, and start activities that prevent youth from joining the gangs (e.g. art, sports, or education). The Movement is

one of the best options to get to know Brixton. They know the ins and outs of the community and how to connect to each other; they exchange secrets and bring attention to topics ignored and unreported by the media.

The player characters are met with distrust and caution if they are aligned with the police or a gang; both are greatly feared by the people. At the start of the game, The Movement is an antagonistic force to Law Enforcement and Joyboys setups, but open to talking to journalists working for the Brixtonian.

### Faces of the Movement

- ◆ *Leila Green*: A preschool teacher who organizes demonstrations against police brutality, writes letters to local politicians, and guides other aspiring teachers to help the young.
- ◆ *Margaret Robertsson*: Social worker committed to providing support and resources for at-risk youth, striving to break the cycle of poverty and addiction.
- ◆ *Klaxxon*: A local punk band led by vocalist Shade that controls an occupied house as headquarters for the anti-fascist clusters of The Movement. There, they organize protests, host reading groups, and create art.
- ◆ *Malik Thompson*: Former small-time hustler now running a local boxing gym, offering troubled youth an outlet for their aggression and a chance at redemption. Among the police it is said (falsely) that gangs pick promising recruits from his gym.

## The Police

The police, led by Detective Inspector John Tennant, have no clue what is really going on in Brixton besides the drug war. Attempting to crack down on the gangs, they have initiated aggressive surveillance operations promoting stop-and-search routines of individuals and vehicles. Occasionally, they successfully apprehend minor offenders, but the searches disproportionately target impoverished people of color, escalating the violence even further. When police misconduct is reported or reaches the media, the cops quickly blame victims' (supposed) involvement with the criminal underworld. Not only are the police unaware of The New Path's existence, they have no idea that the murders are connected to the creation of Black Skies; bodies are showing up left and right, and they do not know how long the department will be able to keep it quiet. On top of that, corruption inside the police buries any investigative attempts to crack down on the Joyboys or other gangs.

Hul, masked as Helen Smith, has recently arrived and aims to continuously push the police into investigating Black Skies and its manufacturing process. She uses her position to divert attention from Horrid and Foul's murders. Once it is revealed to Hul how Black Skies is created (by connecting the murders to the drug), she will rapidly piece together the occult origin of The New Path and find Toohaternoat.

### Hooks

Depending on how the group is set up, the police are either an enemy or obstacle, with the faint possibility of a razide-led police force being an ally. The player characters working for the police might find themselves thrown into dead ends while

trying to solve multiple mystery threads, only to wake up to the fact that Helen Smith is one of the powers behind the plot. The Brixtonian journalists are unlikely to befriend the officers without large bribes or useful information. The Joyboys see the cops as antagonists, unless they turn informant.

The player characters will have greater success tapping into the police's informants and undercover agents, who are likely to be more disillusioned with the police force and aligned with the interests of the community.

### The Police Officers

- ◆ *Glen Pritchard*: Feared on the streets, Officer Pritchard needs no excuse to resort to violence. He takes sadistic pleasure in stop-and-search routines especially, and enjoys humiliating and belittling the black youths of Brixton. Fiercely loyal to his colleagues within the force, he always has their backs.
- ◆ *Richard Harrington*: An old-timer within the force, Richard mentors newcomers and guides them through Brixton. He is an honest man but the pressure and stress lead him to drinking on duty, and despite others trying to cover for him, he is gradually slipping.
- ◆ *BJ Pavelin*: A skinny, vulture-like man, he is corrupt and ruthless, viewing his role as a means to earn extra cash. He pressures dealers for protection money, provides tips about police raids, and has even made evidence disappear.

### The Informants

- ◆ *Ska-Kim*: A well-known and respected street performer and saxophonist appreciated for lively tunes that bring joy to the bustling Brixton streets. Secretly on the police' payroll to provide information about local drug dealers.
- ◆ *Virgo*: Local hustler who lost two family members to gang-on-gang conflict, now tasked to discover secret clubs and new dealers.
- ◆ *Mima Brass*: Properly trained by an intelligence unit to run a fake storefront and gather intel about criminal activity. Also has a loving family completely unaware of her actual job.

## The Joyboys

### TERENCE BELL

Bell is the leader of the Joyboys: a black man with squared jaw, numerous battle scars, and sharply trimmed hair. He sports (with great pride) a mustache. Taller than most and built like a boulder, he walks about Brixton like he has nothing to fear. His habit of maintaining eye contact for far too long is unnerving to many.

Bell's attempt to claw his way out of poverty with some of his friends proved to be quite effective. Soon the small group evolved into a larger gang, the Joyboys, who, by the end of the '80s, established control over a significant portion of the narcotics trade in Brixton.

For all the talk of being ruthless and cold, the Joyboys know Bell to be a strong, fair, and honorable leader. He has seen more than enough violence while defending his small empire and caused many deaths himself, but he is tired of it all. If there was a way to step down from this life, Bell would take it, but he

knows it is impossible to get out alive - the grave he has dug for himself is too deep. Until it comes time to rest peacefully, he will continue to fight.

**Roleplaying Bell:** Let others waste their precious time, you only speak when you have something useful to say. You know how powerful you are: guns, people willing to die for you, cash flowing. Your very presence demands respect. You don't dwell on chit-chat except with close friends and family, but you do know how to have fun. You remain clear-headed even after a lot of drinking and you aren't dumb enough to get wasted on the job. Although you prefer earning respect out of love rather than fear, you have no qualms making public examples of younger ones to speed up their learning process.

### Hooks

Terence Bell enters the story when the player characters attempt to either help or hinder the Joyboys. He is unwilling to openly cooperate with the police department or any media outlet without good cause, and there are very few arguments other than "stopping Black Skies, permanently" that would qualify. Should the player characters approach him with solid reasons why (and preferably a plan how) they should work together, they have a fair shot provided everything is kept off the record.

Joyboy player characters have no trouble getting the man to be an active voice in the story — at the start of the Joyboy setup, Bell is already preoccupied with The New Path and Black Skies.

### THE GANG

The gang consists mainly of people of color. Groups of members in their late teens to mid-twenties are included in "safety rotations" around protected areas, where they patrol to watch out for rivals and ensure the community remains safe. The oldest work finances and logistics, shape connections with the rotten apples of law enforcement, and ensure the operation runs smoothly.

Women, often girlfriends or relatives, are restricted to working at The Vibe out of a shared fear of being harassed by cops or rival gangs. They organize a fair schedule for safety rotations, tend bar behind the counter, and help keep The Vibe alive by negotiating the presence of local icons.

While "on the clock," Joyboys proudly wear yellow as their distinctive color. Although it comes down to preference, most wear a yellow handkerchief tied around the wrist or neck. The young and inventive use yellow shoelaces, ribbons, or wristbands, while fashionable women craft vibrant yellow outfits. The Joyboys are a close-knit gang united by camaraderie, family, and loyalty. As a rule, they are highly intelligent and cunning, and Bell makes sure that everyone understands to "not bring disrespect back home."

As readily as they pounce in defense of each other when a threat is revealed, they also know how to pick their fights. The older members keep the hot-headed youths in check. As Bell tirelessly tells them, "staining yellow with red" without good reasons merely serves to taint the gang's image and bring unnecessary heat from the police.

**Roleplaying a Joyboy:** You don't act alone. You would take a bullet for

them. You are meticulous about the yellow symbols, choosing a particular item that best fits your vibe. You adhere to slang that few others understand, and you know which parts of Brixton to avoid without Bell's explicit order.

### Hooks

Unless the player characters are set up to be aligned with the Joyboys from the start, or engage with them from a "consumer angle," the gang is likely to be an antagonistic force. Setting up connections with the Joyboys is a sure step towards changing that and approaching Bell himself.

### The Gangsters

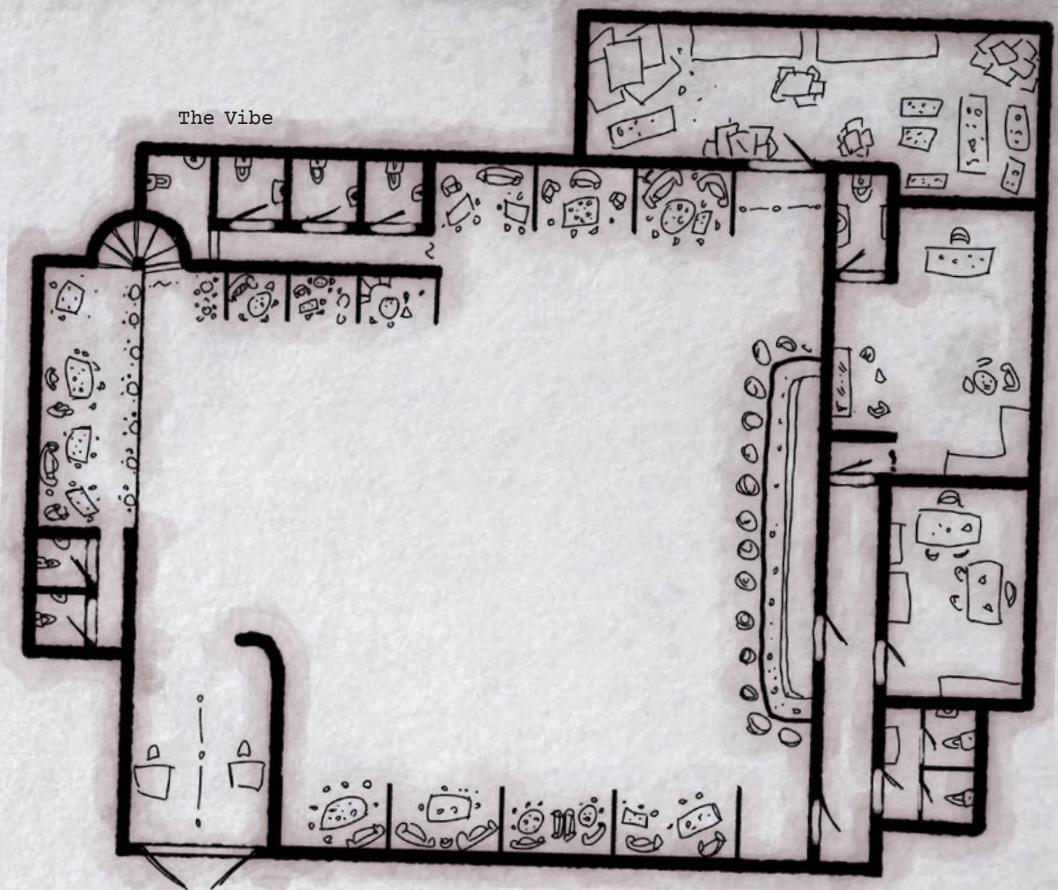
- ◆ **Pipe:** A teen trying to solve his family's problems — caused by an alcoholic father and a narcissistic mother — with the money he earns on the streets.
- ◆ **Bun-Bun:** One of the girls running The Vibe, skilled at connecting with local musicians and signing them for shows. Has charm and a knack for finances that few others have.
- ◆ **Dog-o:** A man tasked with running smuggling operations in the greater London area. Joined the Joyboys in the late '70s when it was a small operation and has since proved his loyalty countless times.
- ◆ **Cricket:** One of the kids tirelessly transporting amphetamine and cocaine back and forth through Brixton on his bicycle. Likes to run away from the cops by pedaling into narrow alleys where their cars cannot enter.
- ◆ **Duck:** One of the few Joyboys that still deal on the streets. Heavily addicted to sex, he has endangered the operation time and again by opening up to local sex workers.
- ◆ **Clip:** Joined the Joyboys when the death of his father left a vacant spot, now (in his opinion) wrongfully filled by other older Joyboys.

### THE VIBE

The infamous Joyboy nightclub and main base of operations attracts a diversified crowd from all over the greater London area. The Vibe has got a certain charm; regulars are nicknamed "vibers" while others are called "vibe-curious." People go there to flirt, drink, dance, make friends, and meet local icons.

The club, formerly an old cinema auditorium, is located along one of the district's busiest streets. The building remained closed for nearly a decade before Terence Bell stepped in. Bell refurbished the entire place into a modern dance hall while striving to keep its old charm. Apart from the main area, there are VIP rooms located on an upper floor, and the rest of the structure is restricted to Joyboys only. Guns and drugs are stashed safely away from prying eyes in the private rooms.

There are no windows besides through the double door entrance. The interior is all black, with walls of ebony panels. Mounted gnu, eland, and gazelle horns share the wall space with crystal sconces and mirrors. Brass rails run along each wall, including the bar counter. A gigantic crystal chandelier hangs over the main area, and individual alcoves furnished with overstuffed chairs and leather sofas provide privacy for small groups. At the center, a rainbow dance floor glows bright from beneath the club-goers, and whatever light beams escape shine against the chandelier. There is no air conditioning;



instead the ceiling hums with several large, slowly rotating fans that fail to dissipate the dizzying scent of hairspray, sweat, cigarette smoke, and cheap cologne.

### Hooks

Introduce the venue to the player characters as a generally safe space to handle public appearances and contact important people. It helps to take advantage of The Vibe's renown when bribing someone; local figures are often found there, and if a meeting goes wrong inside the venue, fewer problems arise than if they were elsewhere.

### The Vibers

- ◆ **D'Andre:** A cocaine-addicted conman, known for his smooth voice and weird tastes. He "haunts" the lounge looking for men and women willing to share a snort or two with him in the bathroom stalls.
- ◆ **Ashanti:** A well regarded regular who often freelances as hostess of the venue's biggest events. Her smile is wide and everyone has fallen in love once or twice with her contagious laugh.
- ◆ **Lawrence:** Sole survivor of a drive-by shooting that targeted his family a decade ago. He now masks his deep sorrow behind a fake smile and nonchalant flirting at the bar.
- ◆ **Martina:** Wannabe "Joygirl" suffering from unreciprocated love. Her heart is taken by one of the Joyboys, but both of her brothers are part of a rival gang.

### Events at The Vibe

- ◆ Someone corners a player character just outside the bathroom in a scary attempt at flirting.
- ◆ A local figure invites the player characters to sit with their friends at one of the tables. There, everyone is taking turns at a steel plate full of cocaine lines.
- ◆ The lights brighten up by the second, the music is too loud, and soon the headache sets in. The world spins. Someone spiked a player character's drink.
- ◆ "Vibers" showing early signs of Black Skies addiction sit in the bathroom stalls. Entranced, they speak in tongues and thank an invisible entity for saving them.
- ◆ The player character catches a brief sight of a phantom that has taken an interest in them; the mangled creature stands still while others dance around it.
- ◆ After an anonymous tip from a regular, two Joyboys close in on the player characters warning them to stay out of trouble and stop snitching around. If they don't, they risk being kicked out with extreme prejudice.
- ◆ Five Joyboys take turns on a Black Skies dealer that attempted to push the drug inside the venue. Between kicks and curbstomps, the dealer cries for forgiveness while choking on their own blood.
- ◆ Two teenagers who snuck inside the venue ask the player characters to help them buy liquor at the bar. They giggle in anticipation.

# A GAME OF REVELATIONS

Black Skies Over Brixton is a sandbox scenario focused on the player character's investigations. The sandbox offers multiple characters, locations and leads, but no fixed order of events or strict rules to deal with any of its mysteries. It is the gamemaster's responsibility to handle the clues and hooks presented earlier in *Chapter 4: Elements of the Story*. Below are some tips on how to handle the mystery from a gamemaster perspective.

## GAMEMASTER TIPS

### 1. Play to Find Out

Any single lead may reveal a lot. When choosing whether you should reveal something or not, go with the flow and do what makes sense. If the story is in desperate need of a revelation, throw it at them. If you need to halt one investigation so players focus on another, have them hit a temporary dead end while you escalate another threat. Kick them back into motion by revealing another body, a new suspect, or a lead. Bother less with realism and more with keeping the investigation dangerous and rewarding.

### 2. Keep it Dynamic

Don't restrict the investigation to a single Move. When time comes to reveal something, mix the methods: apart from simply discovering something, player characters may trigger *Investigate*, *Observe a Situation*, and/or *Read a Person*.

Instead of depriving the player characters of clues whenever they roll badly, use partial successes and failures to showcase the costs of discovering a new lead. If a clue is vital to the investigation but they miss it due to a bad roll, guide them to another method of attaining the lead, perhaps at a greater cost.

There are Player Moves that "cut corners," such as *Crime Scene Investigator* and *Analyst* (information-gathering based on investigation), *Enhanced Awareness* and *Magical Intuition* (perceiving the supernatural), and *Street Contacts* and *Network of Contacts* (through contacts).

When a player character has access to Moves such as these, make sure to think beforehand about the pacing you want for the investigation and do not be afraid to drip-feed them the clues. Otherwise, you risk speeding things up by giving them answers right out of the gate.

### 3. Be Mindful of the Pace

You control the pace of the scenario. An investigation could play out over a few days, weeks, or even months. If you want a longer scenario, make space for personal scenes and let the escalating violence drag out. If the players get stuck, drop the necessary pointers to continue the plot.

### 4. Guide the Players

**Give them a clear direction:** Assume that players will miss details and sometimes forget what happened in the story. To play out a smooth investigation and keep everyone on the same page, game masters can remind the player characters of what they know and what they are trying to find out. This could be achieved through varying means: keep a list of the events that are worth investigating, or ask your player characters to collaborate on keeping notes. This can even be done in character!

**Avoid walking in circles:** Oftentimes there are no more clues, or the clues in question do not have anything more to reveal. If that is the case, be upfront and tell the players that there is nothing more to be discovered. For example, the investigator might realize that interviewing the witnesses has proven itself fruitless enough to move on to another method. Maybe they should be analyzing the crime scene, or tapping into alternative and dangerous methods to find answers.

## LEADING THE INVESTIGATION

Here is a sample list of clues and leads the player characters may come across. As "clues," these can be general descriptions or information that must be cross-checked to be validated. As "leads," these are a revelation (of a name, of a person, place, or else). Usually, "leads" are the result of combining multiple clues.

- ◊ **Suspect's physical appearance:** Reveals alliance to a group. Insinuates the supernatural. Implies where they might be from.
- ◊ **Vehicle:** Could be tracked and take the group to a hideout or another murder site, for example.
- ◊ **Time:** Reveals or estimates when the murder happened. How long the suspect remained on the scene. How much time it takes to shift the body to the dump site.
- ◊ **Victim profile:** Helps differentiate purgatide (addicts and dealers) from New Path killings (homeless and other "undesirables"). Could be used to anticipate the next victim.
- ◊ **Place:** A clue that indicates connection to another area, such as a hideout or somewhere beyond the Illusion.
- ◊ **Pattern:** Reveals information about the suspect (strong, agile, meticulous, etc). Helps to prepare for a future confrontation. Insinuates the supernatural. Helps differentiate purgatides from The New Path.
- ◊ **Occult:** Reveals the supernatural nature of the crime.

# BOMBS

Here you will find bombs for each of the powers behind the plot. Some are revelations or clues, others can be used to escalate threats, showcase the dangers of the setting, or simply bring attention to a specific mystery. Each set of bombs is tied to a faction or event. The bombs do not have to be used in order, but they all become increasingly extreme.

Several of these go directly against each other, either by strengthening or weakening the related factions. It is your responsibility to evaluate the consequences of triggering certain events. Always ask yourself how the bomb affects the story, the factions, and the player characters, and what it says about the mystery and the setting. Based on that, make your choices and improvise your own bombs.

## The Police

- ◆ Police patrols and vans monitor a key location. Their presence alone intimidates locals.
- ◆ The police announce stop-and-search operations to combat the commercialization of drugs, targeting Black Skies specifically. They begin with “random” people on the streets, then cars, then venues.
- ◆ The police show up unannounced at one of the locations after an anonymous tip. Everyone is instructed to remain calm as they search for drugs and weapons. Several people are taken in for interrogation by Helen Smith. Some of these people may later end up in the hands of Horrid and Foul.
- ◆ Angel Road is stormed; people are aggressively driven away as the cops enter. Large quantities of Black Skies are seized but they do not find the temple or any of the cultists. Some gang members of The New Path are arrested. Soon after, the junkies and drifters are back at Angel Road.
- ◆ Detective Inspector Tennant holds a TV press conference with Helen Smith to talk about the escalating violence in Brixton. Rather than defusing the situation, they fuel it. They describe Brixton as an out-of-control warzone, stating that the inhabitants are slaves to the new drug Black Skies and at the complete mercy of the gang bosses. They blame failed immigration policies and argue that the police must act now, and harder than ever before, or this will spread to the rest of London.
- ◆ The Vibe is stormed, leading to the arrest of several Joyboys, and the confiscation of weapons and drugs. While most of the Joyboys are released due to lack of evidence, several undergo interrogation by Helen Smith.
- ◆ The military is called in, and martial law is declared. Brixton is overwhelmed by violent riots, the neighborhood engulfed in chaos.

## The Servants of Golab

- ◆ A civilian describes being stalked by two vagrants — a man and a woman with dirty long coats. They cornered and threatened her in an alley. They also inquired about a man named Frontier. She managed to escape without injury. If

## Optional Rule: The Soul of an Investigation

To avoid turning **Reason** into the single most important Attribute for an investigative scenario, experiment with allowing player characters to roll other Attributes when triggering **Investigate**.

**Reason** is used when making sense of clues, researching old tomes and newspaper articles, reading police reports, and other situations where analysis is the primary method of investigation.

**Perception** is used when awareness helps the player character quickly discern the important details of a scene, find hidden evidence, and perceive patterns.

**Intuition** and **Soul** are used when the player characters rely on gut feeling or supernatural attunement to make sense of something or someone.

**Intuition** and **Soul** alone aren't enough to result in hard evidence that would hold up in court, but both are a good way to insinuate the supernatural and keep the story moving forward.

asked for details, she mentions that they had bare feet, and that they emitted a disgusting abattoir stench.

- ◆ Horrid and Foul grab a person the player characters have talked to. They torture and murder the victim, creating yet another grotesque crime scene.
- ◆ Hul/Helen Smith murders a police officer by breaking his neck in an alleyway because he sensed her true nature. She places a yellow handkerchief in his hand to frame the Joyboys. Hul will later use this incident to push the department into increasing pressure on the streets. The only witness is a homeless person, but he keeps his mouth shut. If talked to in a kind and caring way, he claims that a well-dressed woman lifted the cop up and then snapped his neck with a twist of her wrist.
- ◆ Hul/Helen Smith meets up with Horrid and Foul in an industrial area outside of Brixton. There, they perform a ritual that heals Helen Smith's form, which is starting to dissolve. The ritual involves the sacrifice of a young woman.
- ◆ Horrid and Foul stalk one of the player characters, appearing outside of their home at night. They may try to break in and torture the player character.
- ◆ Hul, Horrid, and Foul have discovered Frontier's apartment. They force their way inside and mutilate the magician, gaining knowledge about the temple at Angel Road. They also steal the key to the blue door.
- ◆ Hul, Horrid, and Foul go to Angel Road and enter the Temple. They murder the cult and several members of the gang. There, they open a portal to Inferno and proceed to capture Toohterooat.

### The New Path

- ◆ Students seduced with wealth by Yasiel Marsh distribute free samples of Black Skies inside their schools.
- ◆ The New Path manages to push the Joyboys away from an area after a violent fight. Civilians living nearby fear what will happen if the Joyboys retaliate.
- ◆ Several members of the gang are seen rounding up homeless people below a bridge and throwing them inside a van. The same people show up dead soon after. They were used to create Black Skies.
- ◆ Members of The New Path are on the lookout for Horrid and Foul, who are wanted dead or alive by the cult. People living on Angel Road who help with the search are rewarded generously.
- ◆ The gang targets family members of the Joyboys to force Terence Bell to come out of hiding, taking hostages and burning down their properties. Some hostages will be used to create Black Skies.
- ◆ Horrid and Foul are captured and killed by members of the gang after a gruesome battle that left everyone injured and mentally scarred. Their bodies are left somewhere in the open as a message to Hul.
- ◆ The gang storms the Vibe shortly after closing hours. Many die on both sides, but The New Path successfully shuts down the Joyboys' main base of operations.

### The Joyboys

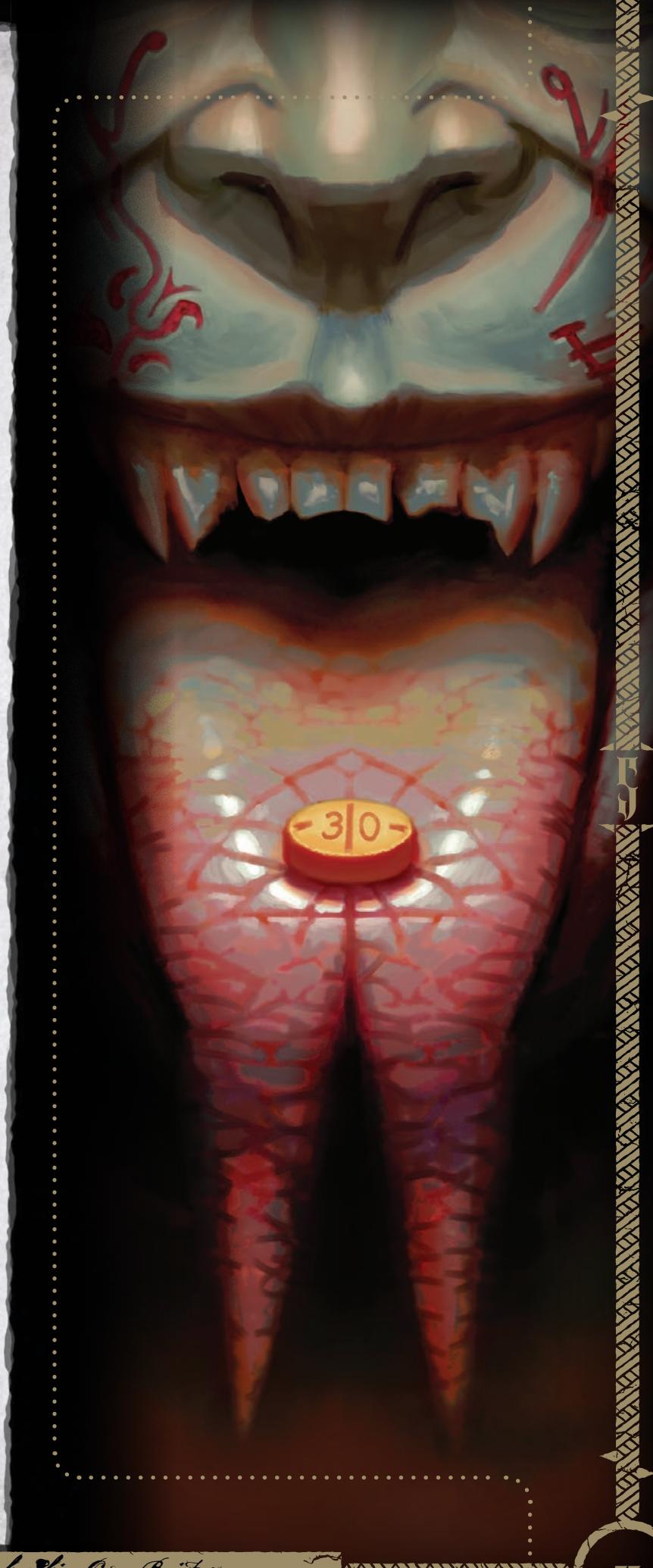
- ◆ Terence Bell uses his contacts to buy more weapons, knowing that a war is coming. He also puts out a call to attract new recruits to the gang.
- ◆ Joyboys actively seek out Black Skies addicts to push them out of the territory, sometimes employing aggressive tactics if they are selling the drug near the Vibe. Anti-Black-Skies notices are painted everywhere, prohibiting people from using it on Joyboy turf.
- ◆ Terence Bell sends people he can trust with cash to a meeting with a corrupt police officer. In return, they obtain whatever information the police have on the ongoing cases in Brixton.
- ◆ The Vibe is closed for "pest control" while new recruits are trained for an upcoming attack against a rival gang. Secretly, Bell expected the venue to be attacked too.
- ◆ Joyboys vandalize cars belonging to members of The New Path. From one of the vans they set on fire with a Molotov cocktail, they hear screams. Inside are three homeless men, all tied up. The Joyboys drag them out, and the men reveal they were drugged and kidnapped by members of The New Path.
- ◆ Some of the new Joyboy prospects grab Marlin Vedine, a cultist from The New Path, when he and two others were driving around the Joyboys' turf (they were looking for Horrid and Foul).
- ◆ Terence Bell survives an assassination attempt. This could happen multiple times: Joyboys were infiltrated by The New Path, The Vibe was attacked, they used his family as bait, etc. With enough attempts, they succeed and he dies.

### The Media

- ◆ If the Player Characters are members of the Brixtonian, these can be articles they are assigned to write or that their colleagues are working on. Otherwise, they appear in the newspapers, radio or TV.
- ◆ *The End of Times*: Several spreads contain an article about the occult nature of Jaffe's murder, tying his death to Satanism and the new wave of occultism. "Experts" are called in to profile the murderers: stodgy Catholic psychologists, managers of heavy metal bands, and wild-eyed Evangelical preachers.
- ◆ *The Forgotten Ones*: An article about all the people reported missing in Brixton, featuring portraits and interviews with relatives. The article either blames the police or makes excuses for their slow resolution of missing people cases.
- ◆ *Built for War*: An interview with Helen Smith, the criminology expert sent from Manchester to help the Brixton police, including a biography that mentions her family.
- ◆ *Black Skies Over Brixton*: An article about the new, dangerous drug Black Skies hitting the streets of Brixton. The article features information about the drug's damage.
  - ◆ **Early signs of addiction:** Blackened veins around injected areas, bloodshot eyes, mild anxiety, loss of memory, low blood pressure.
  - ◆ **Frequent usage:** Necrotic tissue around injected areas, rotting gum, swollen feet, self-inflicted wounds that refuse to heal or keep reopening, psychosis, loss of consciousness, slowed pulse.
  - ◆ **Withdrawal effects:** Frequent nightmares, psychotic paranoia, clinging to dark ambients, agoraphobia.
  - ◆ **Abuse and overdose:** Respiratory or cardiac arrest, aggressive psychotic episodes with suicidal behaviour.
- ◆ *The Unwanted Dead*: An article about the decaying bodies discovered in vacant lots around Brixton. The journalist draws parallels to the missing people, as well as the new and dangerous drug, insinuating that these people were abandoned by society and probably died of overdoses. In truth, The New Path has used them to distill more vials of Black Skies.
- ◆ *Tidal Wave*: An article about The Movement and Jade Bailey's importance to Brixton, featuring a biography and an old photo of hers. The photo, as well as the names written in the byline, includes Marvin Frontier and possibly other members of The New Path's early days.
- ◆ *The Dead Family*: Helen Smith's husband and son are found dead and buried in the backyard of their home in south Manchester. This is on the national news. They have been tortured and murdered in a manner similar to Mr. Jaffe. Helen Smith is interviewed, claiming to have no idea what has happened or why. She seems cold and does not plan on leaving Brixton. Shortly after media attention intensifies, she goes missing.

### Helen's Attempts to Escape

- ❖ Helen is seen writing or doodling strange symbols and phrases. Alternatively, these might be found on papers she has handled. She could also be caught saying or whispering the phrases. If confronted, Helen (now Hul) will lie and appear mildly irritated. Here are some ideas of what could be found:
  - ◆ "Help me."
  - ◆ "Inside me."
  - ◆ "Not Helen."
  - ◆ "This is not me."
  - ◆ "I'm dying."
  - ◆ "I'm in hell."
  - ◆ "Bodies in Garden, 20 Brayton Ave, Didsbury, Manchester M20 5LP." *[GM note: this is the location where her family was murdered and buried. See The Dead Family on "The Media"]*.
- ❖ A symbol similar to those found in Jaffe's record shop and purgatide killings: hook, head with knives, occult scribbling, barbed wire around heart.
- ❖ [See Through the Illusion] Hul is seen in reflections where Helen should be. Player characters must **Keep it Together**.
- ❖ Helen, the real one, gathers enough strength to act for a few minutes. Extremely distressed, crying her eyes out, she finds the player characters and begs for help. Hul regains control before any explanations can be given.
- ❖ A witness that Helen Smith interrogated will start babbling about how she suddenly grabbed him and screamed that she was not Helen Smith before becoming stone cold again. "She must be some sort of psycho." Later, that witness will be found torn to pieces.
- ❖ Helen Smith is seen meeting up with Horrid and Foul on the outskirts of Brixton at night.
- ❖ Rumor has it that Helen has multiple gashes on her body, all of them strangely devoid of blood. If Hul had time to ritually heal Helen's body, the wounds are not there anymore. The officer that started the rumor swears that it is true, but is put on leave for medical reasons. Later in the story, Horrid and Foul murder him.
- ❖ She grabs hold of a player character and with desperation says "*Follow me, don't let me see you. I am going out tonight.*" She then goes back to her normal cold self and seems not to remember anything she said. If followed, the player characters may witness (or interrupt) one of the rituals to heal Helen's body. At that moment, Hul is weakened by the withering body, but Horrid and Foul act as strong guards.



## The Angel Road Massacre

For no discernable reason, the glasses on the table gradually started to vibrate and clink. As the armature lost voltage, the lights slowly dimmed in the blood spattered hall. Fans came to a halt and the sound system sputtered with distortion as the fuses blew in cascades of blue lightning, leaving ringlets of smoke in the air. The dusky aftermath made nigh indistinguishable arm from leg among the eviscerated bodies; the floor was carpeted with blood and guts from an innumerable mass. Occasional groans and movements escaped the ones yet living.

In contrast, the creatures who had performed the massacre were now quiet and calm. They stood firm amidst the blood, the battered bodies, the trashed furniture, and the still-warm reeking guts, staring intently towards the middle of the room. The vibrations came to a halt, and the room was enveloped in an eerie silence.

Then, a heap of bodies were casually thrown aside as a crooked figure stepped out of the clearing black smog. Entangled in the mortal remains of a myriad fallen gangsters, Helen's frail body failed to contain Hul. Steaming hot tubes extended outwards from her guts and into the darkness, vaporizing the blood and filling the area with an acrid stench.

Her gaze downcast, she studied herself and what lay around her. She was half transformed into a machine and contrasted darkly against the surrounding brilliance; the masterwork she had long awaited. A twisted smile played on what was left of her lips, through bones formed like insectoid mandibles. Stepping over the dead bodies, she welcomed closer Horrid and Foul, the creatures encircling her. Nodding in approval, a hoarse whisper could be perceived from beneath the intense humming and clanking of her internal machinery:

"Well done, my dears. Now, take me to Toohternoat. I so wish to meet him."

Fiction based on *The Servant's of Golab* last bomb.

## Black Skies

- ◆ More people flock to Angel Road. This bomb may be repeated multiple times.
- ◆ A teacher overdoses on Black Skies and is found dead inside her car in a parking lot near her school. Player characters catch a glimpse of her phantom stalking Angel Road or The Vibe at night.
- ◆ Black Skies users are seen throughout Brixton. Whenever they lie prone on the ground, their heads always face in the direction of Angel Road.
- ◆ A reported missing person is found living on Angel Road, close to death. She may be a friend or relative of one of the player characters.
- ◆ A player character is called by someone they trust. A dear friend, relative, or acquaintance has been rushed to the hospital after overdosing on Black Skies. This person dies from the overdose, and when it happens, the lights flicker as a shadow leaves the body.
- ◆ Toohternoat's presence can be sensed in Black Skies addicts and where they gather. If traumatic and resulting in **Stability** loss, these visions become a recurring sight, finally enabling the player characters to identify users Black Skies. Below are some prompts to inspire you:
  - ◆ The addicts' shadows merge together, shaped like a face.
  - ◆ Shadowy tendrils creep inside the addict's nostrils and ears.
  - ◆ Eyes go completely black or have two or three pupils. Black veins sprout outwards through the face.
  - ◆ A face hides in a shadowed space: inside a sleeping addict's mouth, beneath their jacket, under their pillow, inside their bag.
  - ◆ Addicts mumble what appears to be a dark mantra in unintelligible hoarse whispers. Toohternoat's name can be picked up if the player characters pay close attention.
- ◆ Black Skies addicts are now all over Brixton, and it spreads even further. Toohternoat disappears to live on inside the network of users.

## Brixton/The Movement

- ◆ These Bombs focus on Brixton as a community and the escalating frustration, despair and violence.
- ◆ Flyers and posters about the upcoming protest march show up around Brixton. The organizers call themselves "The Brixton Movement."
- ◆ A peaceful protest march is held one evening. People with candles and signs gather in a square where speeches are delivered by people within the Movement. The police have sent a representative, but that person is booed off the stage.
- ◆ A community meeting is held in St Matthew's Church where the escalating gang wars, Black Skies, and police brutality are discussed. There are a lot of angry and scared people.

- ◆ Protesters gather outside the police stations with signs protesting police brutality. They display photos of people who have been victimized by the police.
- ◆ A protest march turns into a mob, leading to a night of looting where several small businesses have their store windows smashed and items stolen. After this, many board up their stores.
- ◆ The protests make it to national news with live coverage. The media picks someone to be the face of the movement. Maybe it is the family of the police's first victim, or perhaps it is an NPC that showed up in the game before.
- ◆ Protests motivated by The Movement's speeches happen all around London and minor ones show support in other areas of the UK. The media paints a great divide between the people, trying to pick out "nice" and "violent" protesters to follow or blame.

### **The Criminal Underworld**

- ◆ One of the local gangs starts to scout the area where the player characters live, heightening local anxiety.
- ◆ Brixton wakes up to new missing persons flyers spread through the district; the missing may be victims of a gang.
- ◆ Local businesses are beset by violent robberies every other night. Fear is widespread and some start closing long before the usual time.
- ◆ Two gangs clash with murderous intent, each carrying small knives. Local news calls it "The Red Night" as at least two youths wind up dead.
- ◆ A shootout erupts in broad daylight between two gangs or a gang and the police. Innocents are shot.

- ◆ Officers are arrested after allegations that they have been aiding local gangs.
- ◆ A building is set on fire by one of the gangs as a message to the community, police, or rivals.

### **Maria Devonshire**

- ◆ Kids scare each other talking about the Lady in White, a ghost seen near a key location.
- ◆ The player characters catch a glimpse of Maria at a murder scene. She swiftly disappears into the night.
- ◆ Maria occasionally follows the player characters around, trying to decipher whether they oppose Toohteroat and will help Marvin. She may be spotted once in a while by stressed out player characters.
- ◆ A player character wakes up sweating after dreaming of a metal door painted a crackling blue. For a second, sleep paralysis hits them and Maria briefly appears next to their bed.
- ◆ Maria calls a player character way past midnight. Once the phone is picked up, she says "Marvin Frontier" before abruptly ending the call.
- ◆ The player characters follow Maria. She pretends to not notice them, but leads them to a key location or character. She disappears before they manage to contact her.
- ◆ Maria decides to talk with the group after their intentions are revealed to align with hers and Frontier's. She shows up unannounced when they need guidance and exchanges a few words, pointing them towards a moment of revelation (discovering Frontier's past, seeing Hul or the purgative's true nature, etc.).



# APPENDIX

## Toohternoat (Human form)

**Home:** Unknown.

**Creature Type:** Unknown.

### Abilities

- ◆ **Being of Darkness:** This creature is extremely powerful in their native environment (silent darkness). All Harm inflicted is reduced by 1, and all attacks against the creature or attempts to affect it with other abilities are at -2 to the roll.
- ◆ **Adored:** Servants act fearlessly and with fanaticism when they are in this being's vicinity.
- ◆ **Snake-tongue:** Regardless of what the truth is, this being can freely reply either 'yes' or 'no' to the question "Are you lying?"
- ◆ **Pact-weaver:** This being can seal pacts with humans.

**Combat [3], Influence [2], Magic [3].**

### Combat [Considerable]

- ◆ Enter a shadow and step out of another.
- ◆ Summon spirits of madness to fight for him (Black Skies addicts trapped in his realm).
- ◆ Perform a feat of supernatural strength.

### Influence [Novice]

- ◆ Command cultists and the gang.
- ◆ Turn someone into an addict.

### Magic [Considerable]

- ◆ Reveal or conceal true form.
- ◆ Become one with the shadows and vanish temporarily.
- ◆ Spill secrets about Life and Death.

### Attacks

Even disguised as human, Toohternoat is mighty and fearsome. He moves with precision and unbelievable strength, runs through obstacles, punches holes through walls, and makes a show of force by lifting people and things and throwing them across the room. Being one with the shadows, he may quickly relocate even to areas outside his perception. While weakened, the spirits of Madness trapped in his realm step forward from the shadows to fight for him.

**Supernatural strength:** **Storm** [2] [Distance: room, dashes towards the target and delivers quick successive blows]; **Crush** [Serious Wound] [Distance: arm, grabs and wrecks a limb] **Destroy** [-] [Distance: arm, an object is torn to pieces]

**Spirits of Madness:** **Screamer** [2] [Distance: room, PCs must **Keep it Together**, otherwise they break and become temporarily deaf]; **Grappler** [-] [Distance: arm, PCs must **Act Under Pressure** to avoid being restrained or knocked over]

## Wounds & Harm Moves

**Wounds:** OOOOOOOOO ☠

- ◆ The attack goes through Toohternoat like smoke or water.
- ◆ Open wounds bleed a steaming black sludge that quickly dissolves into more shadows.
- ◆ Toohternoat hisses and spirits of Madness appear to be trapped inside of him; they push their faces through the creature's skin. PCs that attack the faces do so at a -1 penalty but deal +1 Harm.
- ◆ Toohternoat is knocked into the shadows and vanishes briefly. Comes back with a surprise attack. PC must **Avoid Harm**.
- ◆ Toohternoat falls to his knees while darkness floods around him. Spirits of Madness join the fight [use the Human Opponents template with unarmed attack].
- ◆ Toohternoat's body breaks apart and the gaps reveal a shadowy mass held tight by flesh and bones.
- ◆ Toohternoat dies or his true nature is revealed [refer to Darkness Itself].

## Darkness Itself

Some gamemasters may prefer to keep Toohternoat's presence mostly human during a conflict. This helps to handle the confrontation in a more traditional way: player characters get in, murder the being, and escape the scene if they haven't died in the process. If Frontier is in the picture, it is much easier to tackle and bind a humanoid form.

However, those looking for a more esoteric approach reminiscent of cosmic horror tales might go the second route. At the very start of the conflict or just after Toohternoat's human façade is completely dissolved, his essence fills the temple and submerges the entire room in darkness.

One with the shadows and mostly ethereal, the only means of dealing with Toohternoat are mixing loud sounds and harsh lights (jarring music blasting from boomboxes, torches, strong flashlights, etc) with magic. Natural weapons won't work, and even Frontier himself might have a problem grappling a shade. Protective circles, runes, sigils, and chants and mantras become paramount to a successful encounter.

## PORTRAYING TOOHTERNOAT'S TRUE FORM

As Toohternoat's essence consumes the room, a whirlwind pushes the player characters around. They can hear electricity buzzing and crackling and even see rays exploding in the distance. When pushed close to his realm, whispers and noise are loud and maddening; the addicts desperately push through the veil to escape his clutches upon noticing the opportunity to do so.

Monstrous faces and silhouettes reach out from the dark, some of them tangible and ready to fight. They attempt to grab the characters to restrain, grapple and strangle them, or even drag them into Toohternoat's realm.

Pathways into his dark realm open up. The temple becomes much wider and taller, and player characters may find themselves completely disoriented. There are moments when gravity becomes non-existent, and player characters may find themselves walking on walls or floating in the middle of the room, completely deprived of their senses.

## TO KILL A SHADE

Fighting Toohteroat's true form is a series of trade-offs. You may tackle it by presenting costly opportunities to deal damage, and managing Toohteroat's actions through one of the following Moves:

- ◆ **Warp:** Toohteroat's essence expands or shrinks, either submerging an area in darkness or dissolving away. Light and sound may be muffled or isolated in the process. Follow-up Moves: **Separate Them, Capture Someone, Take Their Stuff.**
- ◆ **Overwhelm:** Toohteroat and/or spirits overwhelm a target. The creatures attempt to slither inside the human through their nostrils and mouth, suffocating them or provoking their Madness. Follow-up Moves: **Put Someone in a Bad Spot, Deal Damage, Decrease Stability.**

### Offer an Opportunity At A Cost

Here are some opportunities and prices to offer during the conflict.

#### Opportunities

- ◆ Shed a light on an ally to stop Toohteroat from overwhelming them.
- ◆ Boost the sound in an area to open room for a protective circle to be drawn on the ground or wall.
- ◆ Find and help someone escape the darkness.
- ◆ Corner Toohteroat's essence, weakening him.
- ◆ Defend an ally or equipment from Toohteroat's attack.
- ◆ Get a friend back on their feet (A knocked out PC gets back into action).
- ◆ Navigate the temple (towards Toohteroat's "epicenter" or the exit).
- ◆ Bind Toohteroat as per Frontier's ritual.

#### Prices

- ◆ Exposed to an attack; must **Endure Injury** or mark a **Wound**.
- ◆ Must act alone or be separated; walk into the darkness, leave others behind.
- ◆ Lose something important: busts a boombox in the process, kills the flashlight's batteries, breaks a protective circle.
- ◆ **Keep it Together** to avoid fight/flight/freeze response before doing something dangerous.
- ◆ Choose between two important tasks; finish the protective circle or save an ally from the darkness.
- ◆ Die: bind Toohteroat, dies in the process of trapping Toohteroat into a corner.

## Horrid & Foul

**Home:** Inferno.

**Creature Type:** Slave to Hul.

#### Abilities

- ◆ [Both] **Fanatical:** Cannot be reasoned with.
- ◆ [Both] **Natural weapons:** The creature has weapons embedded in its body, either implanted or natural.
- ◆ [Horrid] **Lethal armor:** The creature deals **1 Harm** to enemies that grapple or attack unarmed and unarmored.
- ◆ [Foul] **Putrid secretions:** Open wounds that have come in contact with the creature's secretions become infected.

**Combat [3], Influence [-], Magic [1].**

#### Combat [Considerable]

- ◆ Prepare an ambush.
- ◆ Surround someone.
- ◆ Torture.

#### Magic [Novice]

- ◆ Contact master.

#### Attacks

Horrid and Foul bask in melee and especially unarmed combat, where they are at their strongest. They throw themselves at their enemies aiming for the eyes, guts, and other sensitive areas, always looking to cripple the target before killing.

**Both:** **Cut up [2]** [Distance: arm]; **Grapple [-]** [Distance: arm, victim is pinned and must **Act Under Pressure** to get free]; **Gang up on them [Serious Wound]** [Distance: arm]; **Grapple [-]** [Distance: arm, the purgafides take turns on a pinned victim]

**Horrid:** **Cut up [2]** [Distance: arm]; **Grapple [-]** [Distance: arm, victim is pinned and must **Act Under Pressure** to get free]; **Gang up on them [Serious Wound]** [Distance: arm]; **Grapple [-]** [Distance: arm, the purgafides take turns on a pinned victim]

**Horrid:** **Swing wildly [2]** [Distance: arm]; **Brutal slashing [3]** [Distance: arm]; **Barbed Wire [-]** [Distance: arm, victim gets entangled in barbed wire and must **Endure Injury** against **2 Harm** when breaking free].

**Foul:** **Vicious Swarm [1]** [Distance: arm, **Keep it Together** to refrain from running away or breaking down]; **Dash attack [2]** [Distance: arm, can target two opponents within Distance]; **Dirty fighting [1]** [Distance: arm, hits to the eye, groin, or throat – temporarily dazing the victim]

#### Wounds & Harm Moves

**Wounds:** OOOOO ☠ [Each]

- ◆ Ignore the injuries.
- ◆ Lose control of something.
- ◆ Appear defeated.
- ◆ Die.

## Hul

**Home:** Inferno.

**Creature Type:** Razide serving the Death Angel Golab.

### Abilities

- ◊ **Monstrous form:** Those who see the razide's true form must **Keep it Together**.
- ◊ **Built for war:** Cannot be grappled or knocked over in close combat.
- ◊ **Natural weapons:** The creature has weapons embedded in its body, either implanted or natural.
- ◊ **Body of metal and machinery:** All Harm taken is reduced by 1.

**Combat [5], Influence [4], Magic [4].**

### Combat [Exceptional]

- ◊ Attack two opponents at once.
- ◊ Impale on claws [**Act Under Pressure** to get away].
- ◊ Move a considerable distance in a single leap.
- ◊ Rip someone apart [+2 Harm].
- ◊ Dodge firearm attack.

### Influence [Powerful]

- ◊ Lead Brixton's police.
- ◊ Find someone's whereabouts.
- ◊ Find a place hidden from prying eyes.
- ◊ Command law enforcement to target someone.

### Magic [Powerful]

- ◊ Reveal a gate to Inferno.
- ◊ Steal someone's vitality [Ritual].
- ◊ Possess humans.
- ◊ Gain insight from pain.

### Attacks

As Helen Smith, Hul only targets lone victims with extreme force. In her true form she dashes around at great speeds, tearing people apart in the process.

**Supernatural speed:** **Slash two opponents [2]** [Distance: arm]; **Dash In For The Kill [Serious Wound]** [Distance: room, target must **Act Under Pressure** or suffer a **Wound**]

**Supernatural strength:** **Impale [2]** [Distance: arm, **Act Under Pressure** to get loose]; **Rip apart [4]** [Distance: arm, target must be impaled]; **Destroy weapon [-]** [Distance: arm, target's weapon is torn to pieces].

## Wounds & Harm Moves

**Wounds:** ○○○○○○○○○ 

- ◊ The attack reflects off the creature's metal hide.
- ◊ Turns her focus on the most recent attacker and ignores the others until she's defeated.
- ◊ In an uncontrollable rage, dashes at the nearest attacker with her claws (**Avoid Harm**).
- ◊ A tube cuts open, splashing a red-black, slippery fluid over the floor (**Act Under Pressure** to move around).
- ◊ The attack destroys one of the razide's eyes (+1 on next roll).
- ◊ One of the razide's arms is broken, shot off, or severed (unable to attack multiple opponents anymore).
- ◊ The razide's leg is maimed (unable to move fast or leap anymore).
- ◊ A big wriggling larva is exposed in the razide's chest (**Act Under Pressure:** -2 to hit, +2 Harm).
- ◊ The razide dies with an inhuman scream.

## Human Opponents

**Home:** Elysium.

**Creature Type:** Civilians, cultists, addicts, Borderliners, gangsters, or law enforcement officers.

This template features the average human Opponent the player characters may encounter. Be mindful of the possible equipment the Opponent in question is equipped with, such as a blade or a pistol. "Weak" Opponents such as these are likely to show up in Gangs (KDL, p. 158) instead of fighting alone.

### Attacks

**Unarmed:** **Punch & kick [1]** [Distance: arm]; **Knock over [0]** [Distance: arm, victim is knocked over]; **Kick them when they're down [2]** [Distance: arm, victim must be knocked over].

**Edged weapon:** **Cut up [2]** [Distance: arm]; **Knife at the throat/Grapple [0/2]** [Distance: arm, victims who fail to **Act Under Pressure** to break free take 2 Harm].

**Automatic pistol/revolver:** **Combat shooting [2]** [Distance: room]. **Overkill [Serious Wound]** [Distance: room, one of the victim's limbs is mangled].

## Wounds & Harm Moves

**Wounds:** ○○ 

- ◊ Tries to flee.
- ◊ Counterattacks in panic or desperation: swings wildly, screams in fear, rages.
- ◊ Briefly knocked out or winded.
- ◊ Badly injured: severe bleeding, mauled, dying. Begs for mercy.
- ◊ Dead.

