

The Parallel Elephants Hotel

One of the few remaining old City buildings that has yet to have any considerable work done in the new Kineto Moderne architectural style, the Parallel Elephants sits in the shadow of the larger Maison D'Étre to its rear. A two-story red-brick with shuttered windows holds an open plan ground floor with numerous couches, tables, and boasts a circular open bar and kitchen with a central swing grill. Gone are the flaming sconces of old, as the building's one recent renovation connected it to the Kinetic matrix: crystal bulbs turning slowly behind frosted glass seashell wall fixtures. On the first floor, a balcony hung from the ceiling rafters snakes its way around the edges of the L-shaped building, leading into 18 slightly cramped twin bedrooms. A series of large, bolted metal sliding doors connect every room in a circuit, allowing for larger parties to have them unlocked and convert the living quarters as needed. Each room is dressed similarly as lavishly as the rest of the hotel in deep blue-green tiling, dark wood panelling, and luxurious Double Alpaca Co. bedlinens. A rototelecomnigramophone sits embedded in each room's shared bedside table, allowing them to make calls to the concierge or the kitchen.

The Skeleton Key Tavern

Truly untouched by the progress coasting through the city: The Skeleton Key tavern. A squat, one-story building that sits about 4 feet below street level everywhere but the patio and farm. This is due to the fact that the building was erected in the City's first sewer catchment pit after it was closed over, though the smell has mostly left the premises in the many decades following its creation. The reason for this odd placement is to get around the City laws: you can't be fined, jailed or even looked at funny for committing crimes in the sewer where it's your Gods given right to do so and, by a contractual technicality, the tavern places itself firmly away from the eyes of the law. As a result brawls, gambling and the odd assassination attempt are permitted – sometimes encouraged. Inside, sheer, white plaster steps lead onto the original catchment area tiling and peeling white plaster walls support flaming torches mounted in iron holds, with thin windows around 12 feet up adding to the dwindling quantity of light illuminating the smoky air. Slowly decaying wooden logs prop up a thatched roof above, where portions of whale ribs are used as support braces. Along the back wall, casks and bottles lay behind a tall wooden bar, whose top surface is fashioned from the smoothed and polished lower jaw bone of a whale.

Pietro Cimmi's Fantastical Store of Innumerable, Quality Goods:

Cimmi's Store is a cacophonous assault on every sense – fireworks bang into magical displays of smoky orange wyverns charge from the windows, the air is heavy with the bitter tang of alchemical and medicinal components, burning and kinetic lanterns hang from the door canopy and sway gently in the breeze, clattering into one another. Cimmi himself gives off a pleasant appearance in his permanent Pierrot get-up, but few people can stop themselves thinking there's something... off about him – the ravenous greed behind his eyes whenever gold is on the table practically causing a frothing at the mouth. The products inside comprise almost every necessity and frivolity, both – with name-brand and store-brand items on offer. Cimmi has something new in store almost every day, his white garb constantly spattered in dubious stains from some alchemical mix or brew. On close inspection, a lot of the products on offer in Cimmi's Store display manufacturing mistakes, have metal seals stamped incorrectly, or are made of inferior stock. Additionally, he gets very frequent cart deliveries from out-of-town suppliers, particularly from those who hunt in the gas-field wastes where the mimics breed copiously in and around the refuse tips. That umbrella you're holding might only be stunned, so watch your fingers when it next rains...

Our Motherboard, the Trailing Zero Chapel

Balleborough City tends to be largely free from organised religion – partly because most Gods and Goddesses tend to frown upon a place where blood literally runs through the streets on a daily basis out of sheer necessity – but mostly because nobody in Balleborough is safe from the tax man, and most of the large churches got repossessed by the City during the Kinetic Revolution. An oversight of the City government, and a relatively forgivable one at that, was that nobody could have foreseen the growing Warforged populace establishing their own religion and refusing to demolish their place of worship to allow a cough drop factory to be erected in its place. The City conceded – it is therefore lucky that the Warforged have little in the way of artistic expression, and so the new chapel looked almost identically sterile and clean-cut as the surrounding buildings, following the Kineto Moderne architectural style that's in vogue right now. Devotees of the Trailing Zero believe that errors in the fabric of causality cause some level of overlap between the pocket dimensions where Warforged data is stored. On the whole, when a Warforged is built and brought to life, its chest cavity contains a small, letterbox-sized portal into a vast pocket dimension where reams upon reams of punchcard tape is to be stored. The basics of life are bestowed onto the newcomer: ("Hello World!" and, of course, Azathoth's 3 Laws: Do Not Kill [Unless You Really, Really Have To]; Do Not Betray Your Master [Unless He is a Complete Tit]; Do Not Correct Humanoids on Their Mental Arithmetic Errors [Ever]). This data is fed through the CPU (Card Punching Unit) in the chest, read and/or written for data, then returned back into the pocket dimension, as most people have a rudimentary understanding of, and from this continuous ticking-over of data and experience of the world, the Warforged individual develops more and more. However, sometimes, a Kinectrician will place the final piece of the casing together, turn around to reach for the boot-up cards, and the Warforged will be halfway across the room reaching for the door handle waving goodbye! These individuals are known as the Trailing Zeroes: Warforged whose pocket dimensions awoke already full of another, presumably, long deceased or inactive other's data. Congregations of these entities come together, believed to be granted wisdom by some higher power ("The Motherboard") or themselves being the living reincarnations of fallen brothers, destined to maintain the information bestowed unto them.