

Masque of the Red Death

Red Jack



M.C. BLACK



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Welcome to Gothic Earth

This adventure takes place on Gothic Earth, a RAVENLOFT setting that was introduced in *Masque of the Red Death and Other Tales* by TSR more than 25 years ago.

At first glance, Gothic Earth seems identical to our own nineteenth-century world, but there are some important differences. Monsters such as werewolves, zombies, and vampires all exist and are a menace to humanity, though (as in our world) most dismiss them as legends. Magic is real, although the practice of magic takes a great toll on the magician.

Most importantly, Gothic Earth is home to an ancient, powerful, and malevolent entity known as the Red Death, which seeks to subjugate the entire world and enslave humanity. Only a few great heroes, such as Sherlock Holmes and Van Helsing, know the truth about this creature and its plans.

This adventure takes place in London in 1889. Those who want additional information about this era should consult contemporary travel guides, such as *Baedeker's London*.

ADVENTURERS

This is a level 1 adventure, and there are four pregenerated characters at the back of this book. These characters use classes from the *Player's Handbook*, though there are some differences from regular DUNGEONS & DRAGONS characters. For example, the fighter wields a pistol rather than a sword and wears no armor.

SANITY SAVING THROWS

For those battling the dark powers of Gothic Earth, madness is an ever-present threat. Sometimes you will be required to make a Sanity saving throw. To do this, roll a d20 and

add your proficiency bonus and either your Wisdom bonus or your Charisma bonus (your choice). On a failed save, you immediately take a short-term madness condition.

If you fail two or more Sanity saving throws in a single adventure, you take an indefinite madness condition after the adventure ends. Madness conditions are described in chapter 8 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

MAGIC

Magic is real, though the available spells tend to be more subtle and indirect than in the Forgotten Realms. The visible manifestation of magic can usually only be seen by other magicians. For example, the ghostly hand created by *chill touch* is invisible to everyone except other spellcasters, even though the spell is just as effective.

Magic is tainted by the Red Death, and using it comes at a cost. Any time you cast a spell of 1st level or higher, you must make a Sanity saving throw with the DC equal to 5 plus the spell level. Failing or succeeding on the Sanity saving throw has no impact on the success of the spell.

FIREARMS

Firearms are a type of martial ranged weapon, therefore anyone who is proficient with martial weapons is proficient with firearms. For fighters, the Archery Fighting Style is renamed Shooting, though the mechanics remain identical.

Armor is relatively ineffective against firearms. In the rare instance when your target is a humanoid wearing armor, you add +2 to your attack roll when using a firearm to reflect this advantage.

Backstory

Red Jack is an introductory adventure set on Gothic Earth. It is intended for a party of first level characters and should take 2-3 hours to complete.

Richard Edwards is a talented physician who established a clinic for the poor in Whitechapel many years ago. It was there that he met and married Jane Morgan, a charming girl from the district. Richard and Jane were very happy together for many years, until it became clear that Jane would never bear any children.

They were both devastated by this realisation, and dealt with their grief in different ways.

Richard spent more and more time at the clinic and became distant at home. Jane, after prayers at the local chapel failed her, began to consult spiritualists and attend seances. She also developed a laudanum addiction and became increasingly agitated.

Richard often treated prostitutes at his clinic. Jane, suffering greatly from dysphoria due to the laudanum, grew increasingly jealous of these women and was convinced Richard was having an affair. Richard and Jane, once very much in love, now constantly fought at home.

Matters reached their climax one evening when Jane demanded Richard close his clinic. Richard refused and spoke bitterly and cruelly about his disappointment with Jane.

Jane was stunned and distressed. She fled, wandering the streets of Whitechapel all night in a laudanum-induced haze, before throwing herself into the Thames. Her body was discovered at low tide the next day. Richard was shocked by her death but also secretly relieved. He had Jane's body cremated and kept the ashes above his fireplace.

Jane, however, found no rest. Her spirit remained tethered to her ashes, and in death she was consumed by the jealousy that had hounded her in life. She began to use her ghostly powers to possess innocent vagrants, who then stalked and viciously murdered several of her husband's patients. The press dubbed these the "Whitechapel murders", and the killer became known as "Jack the Ripper" due to the violence done to the victims. The police were baffled.

Jane's most recent victim was a 40-year-old prostitute called Alice McKenzie, who was killed and mutilated in an old alley. Once more, the police were unable to make any headway. This time, however, a rather special investigator has become involved...



Meet Sherlock Holmes

Start the session by handing out the character sheets. Have the players introduce their characters, and then decide what relationships they have with each other, if any. Once this is done, read the following:

You knock on the door of 221B Baker Street and are shown into the drawing room by the landlady, Mrs. Hudson. Sitting before you is perhaps the most famous man in all London. He suddenly looks up and smiles.

“Welcome,” says Sherlock Holmes. “You have been recommended to me by a mutual friend, and I’m glad you could join me today.

“I take it you are aware of the Whitechapel murders, those perpetrated by the person the public call Jack the Ripper? I’m sad to say that there was another victim last week.”

Holmes tells the characters that he believes the killer may be supernatural. He wishes to investigate the matter further but he has other urgent business, and needs the characters to investigate on his behalf.

Holmes asks them what they know about Jack the Ripper. As they talk, he doles out the following information:

- + Jack the Ripper began murdering women over a year ago.
- + The name of the latest victim is Alice McKenzie (Holmes wants them to focus on Alice as the other killings occurred some time ago).
- + Alice was a 40-year-old prostitute living in the Whitechapel district.
- + Alice was killed in an old alley. Her throat was cut and her body mutilated.

- + Police suspect the Ripper is a doctor, due to the precise nature of the mutilations he inflicts.

Holmes suggests they pursue the following leads:

- + Alice McKenzie lived in a lodging-house at 52 Gun Street.
- + Alice was killed in Castle Alley.

When asked how he came about his information, Holmes smiles and say it was mostly sourced from his “Baker Street Irregulars.” He does not elaborate further.

Holmes tells them he has important business during the day, but he is available in Baker Street each evening to discuss their progress. He urges the characters to head to Whitechapel and begin their investigation immediately.



Around Whitechapel

Whitechapel is a district in the East End of London, marked by poverty and overcrowding. Unemployment is high, and there are hundreds of homeless everywhere. Many parts of the district are especially squalid, though there are some more affluent streets. There is a map of Whitechapel at the back of this book.

The adventurers should explore the district, starting with the leads that Holmes gave them.

POLICE

Police officers, known as “bobbies” in London, can be found on various street corners throughout the district. As well as keeping the peace, they can provide the characters with directions to various locations, such as Gun Street or Castle Alley.

Anyone asking about Jack the Ripper or Alice McKenzie is directed to the local police station (see below).

NEWSPAPERS

The characters may wish to search old newspapers for clues. A successful DC 8 Intelligence (History) check reveals that all foreign and local newspapers may be accessed at the nearby City Central News Room, which charges 1 shilling for admittance. An hour of searching and a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals a relevant newspaper article (see the Player Handout at the back of this book).

WE'RE STUCK!

The players may get stuck and be unsure how to progress. If this happens, encourage them to return to Baker Street in the evening and consult with Holmes, who can prod them along. The key person to talk to in this chapter is the bookmaker Leonard Hughes in the Ten Bells pub, a known associate of Alice. This is the clue

that leads them to the clinic and the next chapter.

LODGING HOUSE

The characters might go to 52 Gun Street, as suggested by Holmes. There they find *Mr. Tenpenny's Lodging House*, a drab, two-story brick establishment. The manager is Mrs. Elizabeth Ryder, a thin woman with greasy hair and a button nose. She is warm-hearted and rather gossipy, and invites the characters in for a cup of tea.

POOR MISS ALICE

Mrs. Ryder is very upset about “poor Miss Alice”. Alice had been living at the lodging house for about a year, was always on time with her rent, though she did “have a problem with the drink, and with the horses.” Mrs. Ryder didn’t know how Alice made her living. She assumed she had an honest job, though Alice was often out late at night. She knows that Alice used to visit a bookmaker at a nearby pub called the Ten Bells. If asked, Mrs. Ryder can give them directions.

ALICE'S ROOM

Alice’s room has not yet been let, and Mrs. Ryder permits the adventurers to search it in exchange for a few shillings.

A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check turns up something the police missed in their cursory search—a small calling card pushed between the wall boards, with the name “Dr. Richard Edwards” written on it. Mrs. Ryder does not know who that is, though she does recall Alice mention visiting a clinic.

CASTLE ALLEY

The characters might investigate Castle Alley, as suggested by Holmes. It is a cramped and dirty thoroughfare, with dilapidated terraces on one side and old workshops and storehouses on the other. Tradesmen's carts, wagons, and barrows jam the alley day and night. There are several homeless people about.

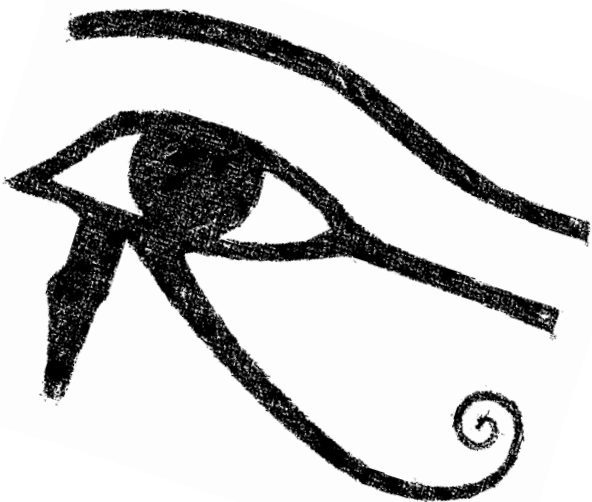
CRIME SCENE

For a penny, one of the homeless points out the site of Alice's murder, which occurred between two old carts just outside the premises of a builder.

Anyone succeeding on a DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check notices a strange mark in chalk near where the body lay. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals it to be an occult symbol, one used to ward away evil spirits.

LOCAL URCHIN

If the characters notice the chalk mark, a local urchin named David tells them it was made by a homeless old woman known as the "Spirit Lady." For a few pennies, David takes them to where she usually sleeps, near the coal depot (see "Coal Depot," below).



TEN BELLS PUB

The characters may have been directed to the Ten Bells by Mrs. Ryder. This public house is on the ground floor at the corner of Commercial and Church Streets. The interior is cramped and grimy, with tiled walls, a heavily marked floor, and a large wooden bar.

THE BOOKMAKER

Leonard Hughes can usually be found at the pub from mid-afternoon onwards, sitting at the back of the room and taking bets. All of the staff know him. He is a stout man with curly hair and a pronounced overbite. He wears a bowler hat and has a disagreeable temperament.

If asked, Leonard initially says he does not know Alice McKenzie, but a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals this to be a lie.

Leonard Talks. Succeeding on a DC 13 Charisma (Persuasion) or Charisma (Intimidation) check compels Leonard to reveal Alice was a regular customer. He knows nothing directly about her murder but mentions that she recently started seeing Dr. Richard Edwards, who runs a clinic.

Leonard warned Alice against seeing Dr. Edwards, as he happens to know that every single one of the Ripper's victims was a patient at the clinic. Leonard, who is superstitious, believes Dr. Edwards is cursed.

Leonard tells the characters that the clinic of Dr. Edwards can be found on Whitechapel Road, near the Salvation Army hostel (see next chapter).

COAL DEPOT

The adventurers may have asked David, the street urchin in Castle Lane, to take them to see the Spirit Lady. He leads them to a dirty lane near an old coal depot. There they find Martha King, a gaunt and slightly cross-eyed old beggar.

SPIRIT LADY

Martha has no wish to talk to anyone and tries to walk away from the adventurers. A successful DC 20 Charisma (Persuasion) or Charisma (Intimidation) check is required to make her talk. However, she can be bribed into co-operating for a mere shilling. She then admits that she is the one who put the chalk mark in Castle Alley. The good spirits told her that the murder was the work of a bad spirit, and she is trying to ward the bad spirit away.

Dark Truth. A successful DC 13 Wisdom (Insight) check shows that Martha knows more than she is sharing. The truth is that Martha used to be a successful spiritualist, and Jane Edwards was one of her clients. Martha partly blames herself for Jane's suicide, and strongly suspects Jane's spirit is involved in the Ripper murders. She has placed the occult symbols in vain over all the Ripper murder sites. A successful DC 22 Charisma (Intimidation) check is required to get Martha to admit any of this.

POLICE STATION

The local police station is on Leaman Street. Anyone asking about the Ripper or Alice McKenzie is interviewed by Detective Inspector Edmund Reid, a solidly built man with a goatee and thinning hair. He demands to know what their interest is in the case, and sternly warns against conducting any "private investigations."

If the characters can come up with a plausible excuse for their curiosity, a successful DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check convinces Reid to share the following information:

- + Reid was called to Castle Alley at five minutes past one on July 17th.
- + The body of the deceased was on the pavement in a pool of blood.
- + The police transported the body to the local mortuary for examination.

- + She had a cut throat, several deep wounds on her torso, and a missing thumb.

If asked what happened to the body, Reid checks his notes and says she was buried in Plaistow Cemetery, East London, on July 24th.

HOSPITAL

The Royal London Hospital is a large, brown-bricked structure on Whitechapel Road. No one there knows anything about Alice McKenzie, since she was not brought there. A few of the staff there know Dr. Richard Edwards. They can confirm he is a reputable medical practitioner, and runs the nearby Whitechapel Road Clinic (see next chapter).

PLAISTOW CEMETERY

Ghoulish characters may wish to examine Alice's body for themselves. Plaistow Cemetery is about a mile east of Whitechapel. It is patrolled at night by a watchman with a whistle to summon the police. If the characters are caught they are imprisoned, tried, and ultimately fined 5 pounds each.

If the characters manage to dig up Alice's body without being caught, they see the wounds described in the Player Handout, but find nothing else of note.



Whitechapel Road Clinic

The adventurers have most likely been guided to the Whitechapel Road Clinic by Leonard Hughes, the bookmaker, though they might also have learned about it from the hospital staff. This part of Whitechapel is very busy, the wide streets filled with pedestrians and horse-drawn carts all day and into the evening. There are homeless everywhere.

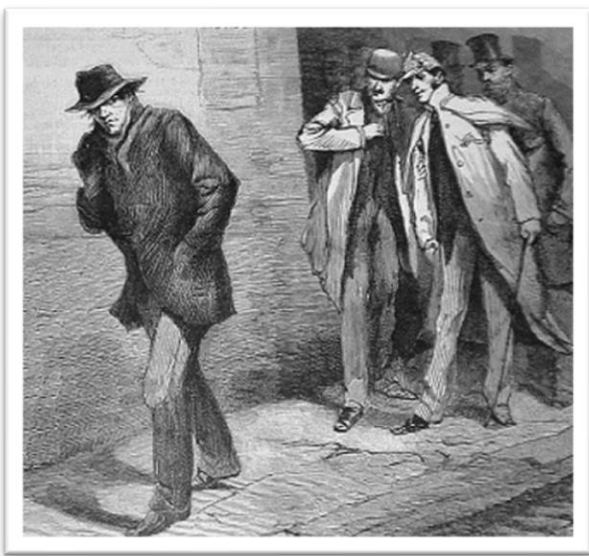
CLOSED DOOR

The clinic occupies the bottom floor of a cramped, three-story terrace. The door is locked, and a sign on the door says, "The Whitechapel Road Clinic is closed until further notice. Dr. Richard Edwards."

A Salvation Army hostel is right next door, and one of their officers is collecting donations outside.

A HELPING HAND

The Salvation Army officer is named Ida Johnson, and she is a middle-aged woman with a cherubic face and graying hair. She calls the characters over, first asking them to make a donation for the poor. Assuming they do so, and are generally polite, she tells them that Dr Edwards shut the clinic last week, and probably won't be back at work for some time.



She tells them that he became very upset last week when he found out that one of his patients was murdered "not far from here, apparently". She also says that this is not the first time that one of his patients was murdered, from what she has heard.

Ida happens to have Richard Edwards' address—17 Prescott Street. She shares it with the characters if she is convinced they have a good reason to see him.

INSIDE THE CLINIC

The adventurers may decide to break into the clinic. Doing so via the front door is a bad idea—there are many people about, including a police officer on a nearby corner. The PCs can force the back door open with a successful DC 10 Strength check, or they can pick the front or back door locks with a successful DC 12 Dexterity check with thieves' tools.

Once inside, a successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check locates Dr Richard Edwards' address—17 Prescott Street. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that every single one of the Ripper's victims was also a patient at the clinic.

TRAMP ATTACK

The spirit of Jane Edwards is aware of the characters by this time and is determined to stop them. At some point after they leave the clinic, when they are passing down a quiet lane, she possesses a tramp and causes him to attack the characters. Jane has possessed this particular tramp many times, which has caused a deadening of his nervous system. Use the statistics of a **zombie**. If the poor wretch is killed, the characters see a faint mist escape from the body.

The Doctor's House

Dr. Richard Edwards lives in a pleasant two-story terrace at 17 Prescott Street, in one of the nicer parts of Whitechapel. The adventurers probably got his address from Ida Johnson, the Salvation Army officer, or from breaking into the clinic.

When the characters arrive at the house, the sky is very overcast and a strong wind is blowing.

DEEPLY DEPRESSED

Richard eventually answers his door after persistent knocking. He is a handsome man with thick, blonde hair, though his eyes are dark from sleeplessness and he is dressed slovenly. With a small amount of persuasion, he lets the adventurers in and leads them to a handsome sitting room. Above the mantelpiece sits an elaborate funerary urn.

WHAT RICHARD KNOWS

Richard speaks in a slow and depressed manner, sighing often and sometimes lapsing into silence. With some gentle prodding, he reluctantly shares the following:

- + Alice McKenzie was his patient, and he was very sad to learn of her death.
- + The other victims of the Ripper were also patients of his. He denies having anything to do with their deaths, though he lacks a strong alibi.
- + The urn contains the ashes of his late wife, Jane, who died about a year ago by suicide. He may even admit that she was jealous of his patients.

When Richard speaks about Jane, the wind outside picks up, the lamps flicker, and the house creaks terribly. As Richard goes on,

lightning begins cracking across the sky, the wind rises to a shriek, and the urn begins rattling.

JANE APPEARS

Richard eventually demands the characters leave. If they refuse to do so, Jane manifests. She is a **ghost** (22 hp), and the characters may be affected by her Horrifying Visage. Richard screams when he sees her, calling out, "Jane! Jane! I'm sorry!"

Jane first tries to Possess one of the characters and use that person to attack the others. If that fails, she hovers near the fireplace, protecting her funerary urn until her Possession recharges.

The funerary urn rattles more and more as the battle progresses. Smashing the urn causes Jane to scream in agony and dissipate, never to return to the mortal world. Killing Richard also causes her to dissipate, moaning in despair.

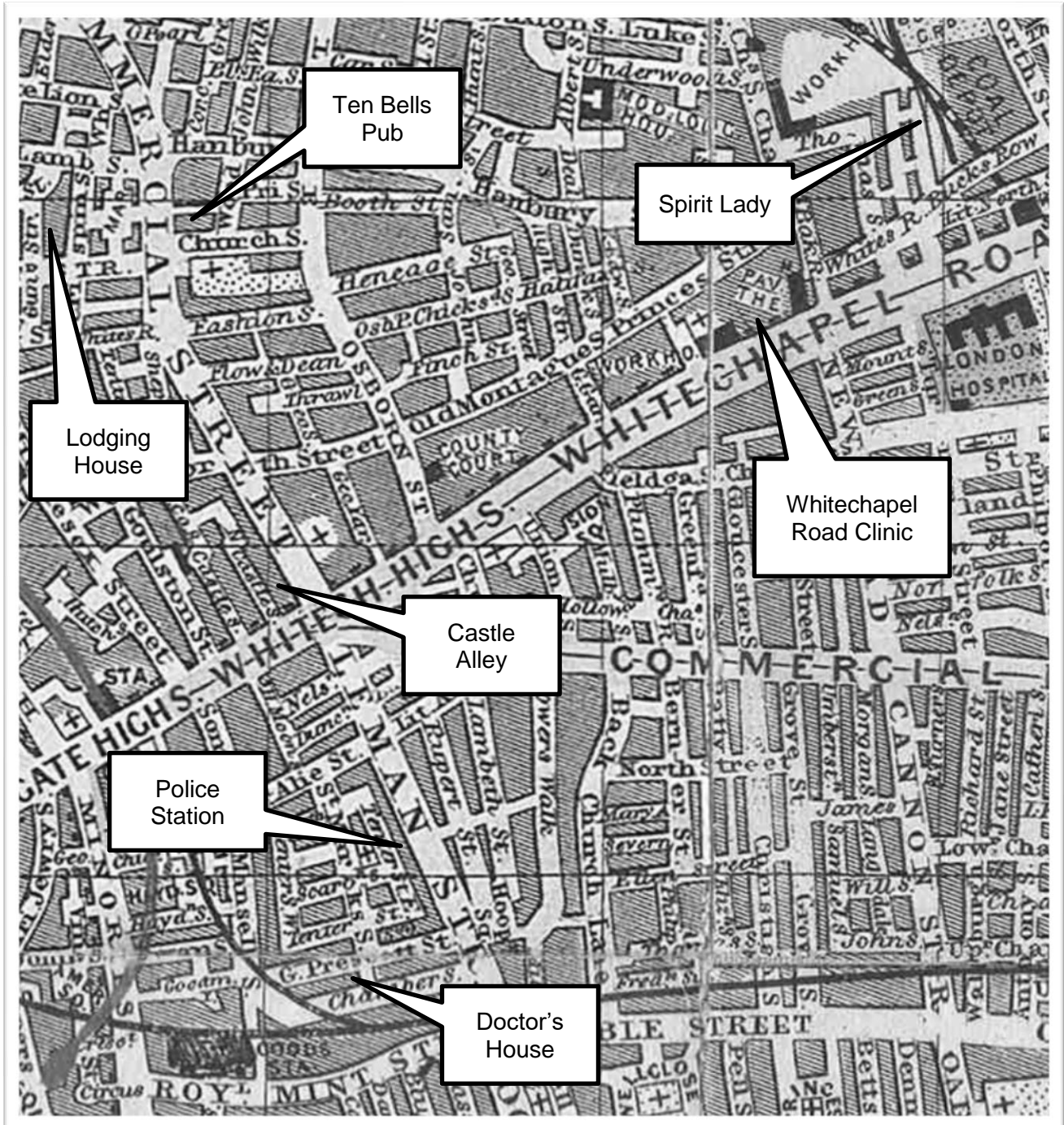
CONCLUSION

Assuming Richard survives the confrontation, he is very shaken but also relieved that Jane is gone. He fills in any missing parts of the story, and also offer the adventurers a gratuity of 50 pounds for their trouble.

When the characters report back to 221B Baker Street, they find that Holmes has conveniently just returned from his other business. He takes careful notes as they describe what happened, and says, "Yes, I suspected it might be a jealous spirit."

Holmes commends the characters on their fine effort and compensates them for any expenses they incurred. As they leave, he says, "You have done very well indeed, and you will no doubt be hearing from me again soon."

Whitechapel Map





The London Times

DAILY NEWSPAPER

Est. 1869

Friday, July 19, 1889

Price 6d

MURDER IN WHITECHAPEL!

Inquest Resumed

The inquest on the body of Alice McKenzie, who was murdered early on Wednesday morning in Castle Alley, was resumed yesterday. Detective Inspector Reid stated he was called to Castle Alley at five minute past one. On arriving he saw the body of the deceased on the pavement. There was a cut on the side of the throat, and blood flowed from the wound. The body was conveyed on an ambulance to the mortuary. The Inspector then described the position and surroundings of Castle Alley, which, he said, was lighted by five lamps.

There was no doubt as to the name of the deceased. He found her clothing in very dirty condition, and that she belonged to the very lowest class. He had no doubt the deceased was murdered exactly where she was found.

There was a superficial wound seven inches long, commencing at the right breast and trailing off from this were scored wounds extending across the middle of the body and other scored wounds extending from the large wound, but only skin deep. The right thumb was missing.

The wound on the neck was fourteen inches long and almost divided part of the muscles. It extended to the front part of the neck below the chin. There was an incision joining the first over the carotid artery, which was severed down to the membrane covering the vertebrae. He had not the slightest doubt that the cause of death was syncope, arising from loss of blood through the carotid vessels, and that death was almost instantaneous. The proceedings were adjourned until August 14th.



Detective Inspector Edmund Reid

Pregenerated Characters

The characters on the following pages have been pregenerated for use in this adventure. Players can assign their character a name or generate one using the following table of common names from nineteenth-century England.

d20	Male	Female	Surname
1	Albert	Ada	Allen
2	Alfred	Alice	Clarke
3	Arthur	Annie	Cook
4	Charles	Doris	Davis
5	Edward	Dorothy	Edwards
6	Ernest	Edith	Green
7	Frank	Elizabeth	Harrison
8	Frederick	Ellen	Jackson
9	George	Elsie	Jones
10	Harold	Ethel	Lewis
11	Harry	Florence	Martin
12	Henry	Gladys	Moore
13	Herbert	Hilda	Phillips
14	James	Lilian	Shaw
15	John	Lily	Smith
16	Joseph	Margaret	Taylor
17	Robert	Mary	Turner
18	Thomas	Sarah	Watson
19	Walter	Violet	White
20	William	Winifred	Wood

Name**Class** Fighter**Level** 1**Armor Class** 13**Hit Points** 12**Speed** 30**Strength** 14 (+2)**Dexterity** 16 (+3)**Constitution** 15 (+2)**Intelligence** 11 (+0)**Wisdom** 13 (+1)**Charisma** 9 (-1)**Proficiencies****Proficiency Bonus** +2**Weapons** simple weapons, martial weapons**Tools** gaming dice**Skills** Athletics, Insight, Intimidation, Perception**Saving Throws** Strength, Constitution

Weapon	Atk Bonus	Damage	Range
Revolver	+7	2d6+3piercing	40/120
Bayonet	+4	1d6+2 piercing	-

Equipment

Enfield Mk I Revolver (6 shots, reload), 25 bullets, sword bayonet, plain clothing, money (£4), lantern

Class Features

Fighting Style (Shootist)

Second Wind

Background (soldier)

As a member of the Queen's (Royal West Surrey) Regiment, you are a veteran of the Third Burma War. After retiring from the military, you returned to London to make your living on the coal barges. While in Burma, you encountered the occult for the first time, and you've been fascinated by it ever since.

Name**Class** Barbarian**Level** 1**Armor Class** 14**Hit Points** 14**Speed** 30**Strength** 16 (+3)**Dexterity** 14 (+2)**Constitution** 15 (+2)**Intelligence** 9 (-1)**Wisdom** 13 (+1)**Charisma** 11 (+0)**Proficiencies****Proficiency Bonus** +2**Weapons** simple weapons, martial weapons**Tools** bagpipes**Skills** Athletics, Nature, Perception, Survival**Saving Throws** Strength, Constitution

Weapon	Atk Bonus	Damage	Range
Revolver	+4	2d6+2 piercing	40/120
Greatsword	+5	2d6+3 piercing	-

Equipment

Webley Mk I Revolver (6 shots, reload), 25 bullets, claymore (greatsword), rustic clothing, bagpipes, money (£1)

Class Features

Rage

Unarmored Defense

Background (outlander)

You hail from an isolated part of Scotland and came to London to find work. Your ma had a touch of the second sight, so you've always been aware of supernatural goings on, and the danger they pose to humanity.

Name

Class Rogue

Level 1

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 10

Speed 30

Strength 9 (-1)**Dexterity** 16 (+3)**Constitution** 14 (+2)**Intelligence** 15 (+2)**Wisdom** 13 (+1)**Charisma** 11 (+0)**Proficiencies****Proficiency Bonus** +2**Weapons** simple weapons, handguns**Skills** Acrobatics, Deception, Investigation, Perception, Sleight of Hand, Stealth**Tools** thieves' tools**Saving Throws** Dexterity, Intelligence

Weapon	Atk Bonus	Damage	Range
Revolver	+5	2d4+3 piercing	30/90
Dagger	+5	1d4+3 piercing	-

Equipment

Colt Pocket Revolver (5 shots, reload), 25 bullets, dagger, thieves' tools, plain clothing, money (£12)

Class Features

Sneak Attack

Background (criminal)

You grew up in London's East End, always impoverished and forced to make your living via shady means. You are doing all right for yourself these days, but you've seen some strange things in the dark of night, things that can't be easily explained. You are frightened but curious and have vowed to discover more.

Name

Class Wizard

Level 1

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 6

Speed 30

Strength 9 (-1)**Dexterity** 13 (+1)**Constitution** 11 (+0)**Intelligence** 16 (+3)**Wisdom** 15 (+2)**Charisma** 14 (+2)**Proficiencies****Proficiency Bonus** +2**Weapons** daggers, quarterstaves**Skills** Arcana, History, Investigation, Perception, Persuasion**Tools** playing cards**Saving Throws** Intelligence, Wisdom**Equipment**

Fine clothing, spellbook, money (£25)

Class Features

Spellcasting Ability

*Cantrips: chill touch, friends, message, mage hand**1st-level spells: detect magic, find familiar, mage armor, protection from evil and good, sleep*

Arcane Recovery

Background (noble)

Descended from a famous though disreputable family, you encountered the occult while studying at Cambridge. Back in London, you joined the *Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn* and began learning magic. From your studies, you know that sinister creatures lurk in the shadows, and you are determined to learn more about them.