



CALL of CTHULHU

BERLIN

THE WICKED CITY

UNVEILING THE MYTHOS IN WEIMAR BERLIN

DAVID LARKINS

WITH MIKE MASON AND LYNNE HARDY



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Special Thanks

Special thanks to Alex Drusts and the Esoteric Order of Roleplayers and Friends (Desiree Valdez, Jennifer Pearson, David Schimpff, Sage Morris-Greene, Alexander Marcus, Jade McLellan, Scott White, and Aidan Kallas) for their invaluable feedback and playtesting assistance. Thanks to Jeff Richard for his contributions, and also to Sam Riordan for sensitivity reading.

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All Berber and Droste poems excerpted from *Dances of Vice, Horror, & Ecstasy*, edited and translated by Merrill Cole (Newcastle upon Tyne: Side Real Press, 2012). Used with permission. Cagliostro quote excerpted from *Voluptuous Panic* by Mel Gordon (Los Angeles: Feral House, 2000). Netley Lucas quote excerpted from *Ladies of the Underworld* (New York: J.H. Sears & Co., 1927). All Joseph Hergesheimer quotes excerpted from *Berlin* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1932). Original text of the Tucholsky quote ("Die menschliche Dummheit ist international") excerpted from Kurt Tucholsky: *Gesammelte Werke in zehn Bänden. Band 9* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt Verlag, 1975). Gerald Biss quote excerpted from *The Door of the Unreal* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1920). Rathenau quote excerpted from *In Days to Come*, translated by Eden and Cedar Paul (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1921). Scripture quotations marked (LEB) excerpted from the Lexham English Bible; copyright 2012 Logos Bible Software. Lexham is a registered trademark of Logos Bible Software. The "Descent of the Goddess Ishtar Into the Lower World" was translated by Morris Jastrow, excerpted from *The Civilization of Babylonia and Assyria* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1915). Original German Horst Wessel quote excerpted from Ralf Georg Reuth's *Goebbels* (Munich: Piper, 1990); translated by Jeff Richard/Claudia Loroff. Peter Levenda quote from *Unholy Alliance: A History of Nazi Involvement with the Occult* (London: Bloomsbury, 2002). Used with permission.

Rules for heroin, morphine, opium, and cannabis are adapted from "Narcotics in the Decade" by David Conyers and Richard Watts, appearing in *Secrets of San Francisco* by Cody Goodfellow, et al. Rules for alcohol use and abuse adapted from *Pulp Cthulhu* by Mike Mason, et al. Cat-things were first mentioned in the *Arkham Gazette*, issue 3, in an article entitled "Rat-Things and Worse Horrors" by Chris Huth with Bret Kramer.

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Chaosium Publication 23161 Printed in China

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MATURE CONTENT WARNING

The "Wickedest City on Earth" did not earn its reputation lightly. Although we have endeavored to engage with this place and time in a non-exploitative manner, it remains to be said that much of the material in this book deals with mature themes—primarily, drugs, racism, and sex. The latter, in particular, in terms of sex magic, prostitution, sexual murder, and all manner of sexual practices is, at least, touched on, if not outright highlighted. Keepers are advised to adjust their presentation of this subject matter in accordance with their own and their group's comfort levels.



INTRODUCTION

WELCOME TO BERLIN!

Stepping off the train at Anhalter Station, you are plunged into a cacophony of sounds reverberating from the soaring, cathedral-like roof, crisscrossed with iron girders. All around you swirl fellow travelers from across Europe and around the world. Nearby, a legless veteran of the Great War, propped against the back of a ticket booth, shakes his cap at passersby, jingling the few coins within. His entreaties are ignored.

Dressed in a heavy frock coat and wearing an impressively ostentatious shako helmet, a policeman approaches.

“Auto, Droschke, oder Gepäck?” he asks. He is inquiring which mode of conveyance you require. You ask for a cab, and he hands you a metal ticket with a stamped number. Hefting your luggage, you walk out of the station, clutching your coat collar tight against the cold wind blowing in through the arches of the vast foyer with its ever-swinging doors.

The vista outside is even more bustling than the station within. The streets, still wet with the day's earlier rain, gleam like glass in the darkness of the night, reflecting the neon and electric lights that adorn the gray buildings ringing the square. Cars compete for space with horse-drawn carriages and double-decker omnibuses. Trains and trams rattle by on elevated platforms. Everywhere pedestrian traffic swarms: men and women, young and old. A newspaper vendor seated on a one-legged stool with several different papers hung around his neck shouts the day's latest headlines: the value of the *Reichsmark* continues to fall and there is talk of an economic collapse.

You spot the cab with the number matching yours. Hurrying over, you hand the ticket to the cabbie and slide into the back. You give him the address of your ultimate destination: the Hundegustav, a cabaret of ill repute in north Berlin. Your contact there, a dissolute man known only as “The Anti-Franz,” has tracked down a fascinating old book he thinks might interest you.

“THE WICKEDEST CITY ON EARTH”

With the conclusion of the Great War in November 1918, the city of Berlin undergoes a transformation. After suffering from paroxysms of rebellion led by extremists from both ends of the political spectrum, the city rapidly gains a reputation for licentiousness. It is the place where anything—*anything*—may be had for the right price. It is both a city of sin and a city of *Betrieb* (a word variously translated as “business” or “bustle”). Its streets overflow with prostitutes, disabled veterans, destitute immigrants, and political agitators, all rubbing shoulders with buttoned-down businessmen, working girls, scholars, and artists.

The city also develops a reputation for danger. In just the first three years of the new republic's existence, the gutters run with the blood of dozens of political assassinations. Street violence is not uncommon, as Communists and *völkisch* Nationalists clash with each other and with the police. An overall “moral indifference to violence” develops among the populace.

But the true danger lies with the city's nightlife. Long into the evenings, Berlin's world-famous cabarets offer seemingly unlimited amounts of music, dance, and titillating entertainment, a stark contrast to the lowering gray buildings that run on for endless miles along the sprawling city's byways.

Into this bubbling stew, *Berlin: The Wicked City* introduces the uncanny elements of the Cthulhu Mythos. The city is a hotbed of occult organizations, strange cults, and half-whispered lore. Berlin's population has swollen by a factor of 400 percent over the previous 50 years, and with all these new arrivals come unspeakable secrets and strange new gods. Amid the wicked air of the world's capital of sin, what it means to be human is questioned. And as the city hurtles toward its inevitable dark destiny, the oppressive atmosphere intrudes more and more, pushing the sanity of investigators to its breaking point.

Opposite: *The Wickedest City on Earth*

INTRODUCTION

WHAT'S INSIDE?

Chapter 1: The City, presents an overview of 1920s Berlin as it would be experienced by visitors and residents of the time. Guidelines are provided for creating investigators for a Berlin-centric campaign, as well as advice for bringing in existing player characters. Investigator organizations are provided to help bind the group together, while Experience Packages are designed to add new dimensions to investigators. A brief look at the city's history, as well as its topology, identifies key areas, streets, and squares that best reflect the character of Berlin. Details are provided on travel, communications, housing, crime and punishment, drug use, the city's underworld, and its high culture.

Chapter 2: Uncovering Berlin presents a range of locations of interest for investigators, from libraries and museums to cafés and nightclubs. Due to the city's sheer size, we eschew a block-by-block description, instead highlighting a few locations of likely investigator interest and filling in the blanks with a simple system for generating details of the urban landscape on the fly. Berlin's predilection for hedonism centers on the city's relationship with prostitution,

food and drink, and cabaret. As who you know is often more important than what you know, guidelines are provided for a range of investigator contacts. Finally, the chapter concludes with a series of tables covering neighborhood details and street encounters, providing the Keeper with inspiration for cabarets and clubs, architectural details, and businesses. With the tools provided in this chapter, the Keeper should both glean an understanding of what makes Berlin unique and gain the tools to bring the city to life at the gaming table.

Chapter 3: Oh! You Pretty Things presents notable historical personalities to provide color and insight into the city. Whether Marlene Dietrich or Joseph Goebbels, short biographies highlight the time certain individuals lived or worked in Berlin, providing possible inspiration for encounters and scenarios.

Chapter 4: Strange Berlin considers how the Cthulhu Mythos festers in the dark corners and shadows of the city. Presented here are a range of scenario seed ideas for the Keeper to develop in between the three scenarios presented, setting up the potential for a decade-spanning campaign of horror.



Brandenburg Gate

INTRODUCTION

Chapters 5 to 7 consist of three scenarios spanning the history of Berlin between the end of the Great War and the rise of Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party. Many of the colorful details of Berlin and its inhabitants appear within the events outlined in the scenarios, which may be run as stand-alone episodes or linked together to form a mini-campaign. There is a presumption of continuity between the scenarios—that at least some of the investigators survive from one to the next. Keepers wishing to run one of the scenarios as a one-off may, of course, tinker with the madness and deadliness inherent in each—the tools are there to do so. But be warned: the scenarios are already calibrated to imperil investigators' physical and mental health and push them to their absolute limits.

The Devil Eats Flies is set in the summer of 1922, as Germany teeters on the brink of economic ruin and political chaos. The ghost of a madman stalks the city, turning its citizenry against itself and manifesting the monstrous forces inside us all. In order to stop the demonic spirit and save a Russian princess in exile, the investigators must strike a bargain with other sinister forces and ask who else they are prepared to see die to save the city.

The second scenario, **Dances of Vice, Horror, & Ecstasy**, takes place primarily in 1928 with a short prelude set in 1926. These are the city's golden years, when things have become superficially stable and prosperous again. A bungling sorcerer, a debauched dancer, and a strange cult of gnostic Saturn-worshippers threaten to put all of that to an end and turn Berlin into a veritable pit of madness and depravity.

In **Schreckfilm**, the final scenario of the trio, it is the winter of 1932, and Berlin is racing toward its grim future. The investigators come face to face with a shadowy cabal of the city's movers and shakers who are determined to turn the city's world-famous film industry toward ill ends. Trapped in a labyrinth of their own making and hounded relentlessly by dark forces beyond their ken, the investigators must confront the fundamental question of what is real and what is merely illusion, deciding whether survival is worth the price of becoming someone else entirely.

Concluding the book is a selection of inspirational media, including books, film, or television for those wishing to delve even deeper into the mysteries, history, and geography of Berlin.



Kaiser Wilhelm Monument





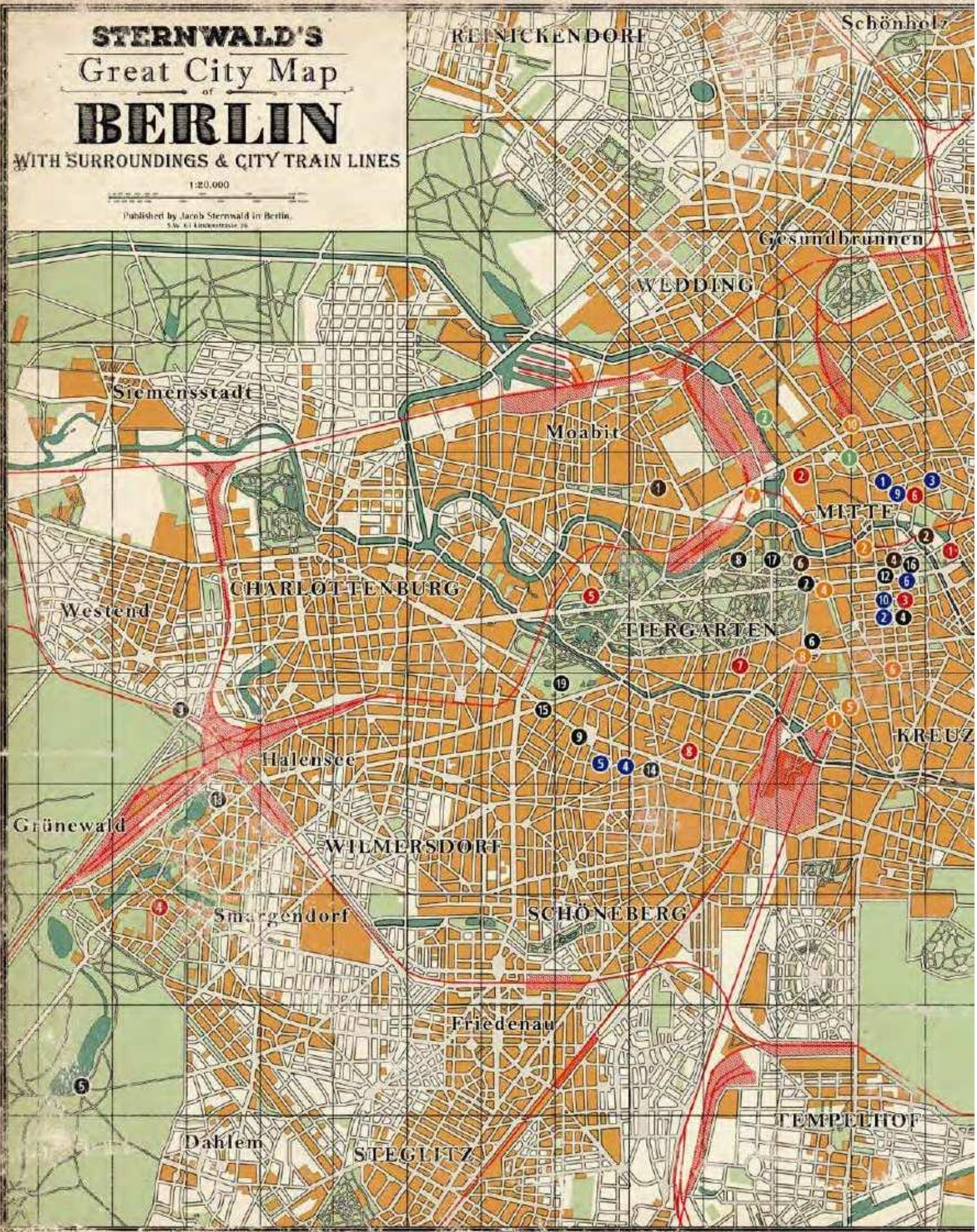
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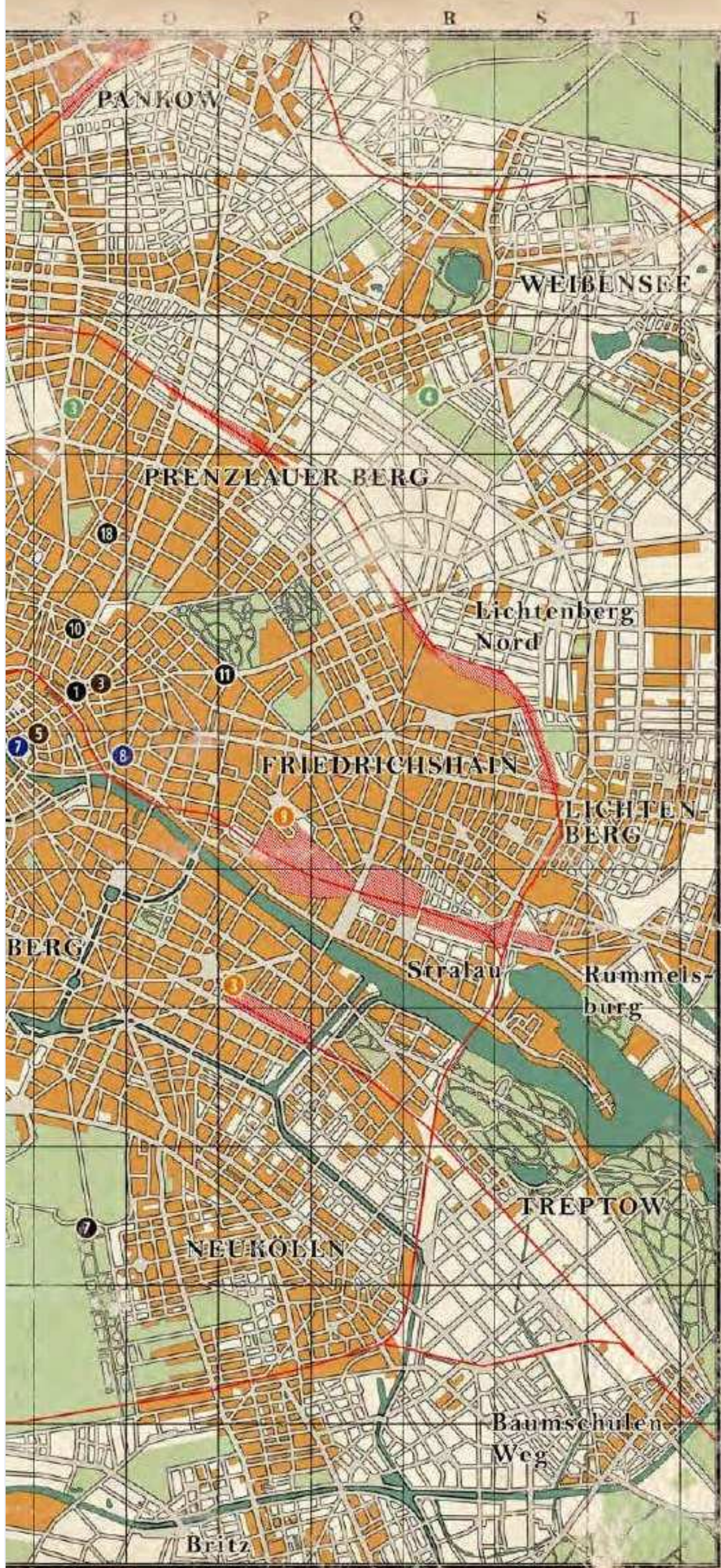
STERNWALD'S
Great City Map
of
BERLIN

WITH SURROUNDINGS & CITY TRAIN LINES

1:20,000

Published by Jacob Sternwald in Berlin,
S.W. 61 Köpenickerstr. 26





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BERLIN'S HISTORY: A BRIEF OVERVIEW

Much of what makes Berlin unique in the Jazz Age becomes apparent through the scenarios presented later in this book. Here, we are concerned with the more prosaic side of the city. This distinction does not, of course, make such information any less valuable. Quite the contrary, *liebchen*!

Histories of Berlin are legion both in print and online, and we shall not linger long on the topic. Presented here is a potted history, suitable to provide to players as a basic primer on the city and how it came to be.

Situated on marshy, heavily wooded plains along the banks of the River Spree, the site that would one day grow to be the mighty metropolis of Berlin was first settled sometime in the 12th century, likely during the reign of Albert the Bear, first Margrave of Brandenburg. By the following century, Berlin was a recognized settlement. The year 1237 is the official date of Berlin's founding. Perhaps because of Albert's nickname, or (perhaps) because the first syllable in the city's name is a homonym with the animal (*Bär*), Berlin has taken the bear as its symbol since these earliest times.

Albert the Bear's line died out in 1320. After a series of interim rulers, in 1415 the Hohenzollern family, under Frederick I, took the reins of the Brandenburg Margraviate and held them for the next 500 years. The ascension of the Hohenzollerns also marked the beginning of Berlin's rise. The center of power in the Margraviate shifted from Brandenburg to Berlin when Frederick I took residence there. His son and successor, "Irontooth," built a royal palace in the town, suppressing a so-called "Indignation" of the populace in the process—even in medieval times, Berliners could not abide pompous authority.

Increasingly, Berlin came into its own as a political power. As Electors of the Holy Roman Empire, the Margraves wielded great influence. Berlin withdrew from the Hanseatic League in 1451. Protestantism came to Berlin in the 1530s, and many church lands and possessions were seized, the money used to pay for the construction of the grand avenue called the Kurfürstendamm (Prince-Elector Way).

To offset massive population loss from the Thirty Years' War, the "Great Elector" Frederick William began to encourage immigration in the 1640s, particularly from displaced French Huguenots, who eventually came to constitute a significant minority population. At the dawn of the 18th century, upward of one in three Berliners were French. Another of Berlin's great avenues, Unter den Linden, was laid down by Frederick William as well, its six rows of titular linden trees making it an instantly recognizable landmark of the city. Around this time, the Margraviate of

Brandenburg, which had been in a personal union with the Duchy of Prussia for nearly a century, combined the two titles and became the Kingdom of Prussia. Despite the name, the state's centers of power and population remained firmly in the state of Brandenburg and Berlin, which absorbed several neighboring towns, pushing its population to over 100,000 by mid-century.

The most famous Prussian ruler, Frederick II (called "the Great" in his own lifetime and forever after) ascended to the throne in 1740. He continued the traditions of the first Prussian king, pushing a political agenda that combined military might with cultural and artistic refinement. Frederick's father was a model Enlightened Monarch, and under his direction universal education was introduced, and the great hospital, the Charité, opened its doors. It was probably around this time that Berlin earned one of its few enduring nicknames, "Athens on the Spree," so-called for its status as a great center of learning and culture. Despite this reputation, the city turned almost all its economic attention to supporting a powerful standing army and producing munitions to drive its war machine.

Frederick the Great made good use of all he inherited and established Prussia as the premiere German state in Europe, a reputation it maintained into the 19th century and all the way up to the birth of the German Empire. Frederick continued promoting policies favorable to immigration, allowed for an uncensored press and free speech, reformed the legal system, and opened government posts to non-aristocrats, who were allowed to rise to positions based on merit and not birth. At the same time, he took his father's already formidable army and expanded it even further. Fully four-fifths of the country's budget went to the military; a huge percentage of Prussia's men served in the army at any given time. All of this led the French intellectual Mirabeau to quip famously, "Prussia is not a state in possession of an army, but an army in possession of a state." Be that as it may, the Prussian army successfully defended the state's scattered holdings, gradually linking them together through a series of wars, the most notable being the Seven Years' War (1756–1763). Shamefully, Frederick, who for all his Enlightenment ideals was both a hard-bitten political realist and no friend of the Poles, also happily participated in the First Partition of Poland, gobbling up a large chunk of northern Poland and linking his western and eastern holdings.

Frederick reigned for 46 years and cast a long, looming shadow over subsequent German history. His legacy was revered by generations of German nationalists; the Nazi party all but worshiped him and even felt they were channeling his will in their rise to power. His reign was a watershed moment not just for Berlin and the Prussian state, but also for all of Europe.

The Tiergarten

Literally "Animal Garden," this region (currently covering 630 acres/255 hectares) was once a hunting preserve for the Kings of Prussia and populated with bounding deer. Nowadays, a different sort of animal, the "Grasshopper," may be found here, peddling her fleshy wares (**Prostitution**, page 53).

The largest public park in the city, the remoter parts are dimly lit and dangerous after dark, but the Siegesallee (Victory Avenue) is a popular spot for promenades. This broad boulevard is adorned with 32 marble statues of kings, margraves, and electors from the history of Prussia and Brandenburg stretching all the way back to Albert the Bear. Behind each statue is a semi-circular marble bench flanked by busts of two of that ruler's advisors.

The park also features a large zoo, the Zoologischer Garten, opened nearly a century ago as the first of its kind in Germany. Over 13,000 animals dwell here, including lions, elephants, and tigers; many are kept in architecturally distinctive animal houses: the main gate is constructed in a Japanese style, the Antelope House is Moorish in fashion, while the Ostrich House recalls ancient Egypt. Fronting on Kurfürstendamm but accessible from the zoo is the city's aquarium, opened in 1913, housing both saltwater and freshwater fish, crocodiles, amphibians of many varieties, and even an "insectarium" on the top floor. Also to be found on a secluded and quiet street within the park is the Institut für Sexualwissenschaft, the **Institute of Sexology** (page 50).

The northern edge of the Tiergarten proper is formed by the winding banks of the Spree, but the district encompasses land to the north of the river as well. For the purposes of this book, the "zone" of the Tiergarten runs along Alt-Moabit and includes the *Kleiner* (Little) Tiergarten and the nearby Criminal Court complex: two massive, stern buildings completed in the late 19th century that serve as a central clearing house for all criminal cases from all levels of Berlin law. Large prison complexes on the property hold male and female defendants awaiting trial, while a labyrinth of offices provides judges and lawyers with cramped working spaces to prepare and review cases. The air quality in these echoing halls and chambers is so bad that lawyers have been known to pass smelling salts to witnesses to keep them alert during testimony.

Walking farther east to the termination of the Alt-Moabit and crossing the Alsen Bridge over Humboldt Harbor one arrives at Berlin's greatest hospital, the Charité. Founded in 1709 by Frederick I to function as a quarantine house for victims of the plague, it has functioned as a teaching hospital associated with Frederick William University since 1810.



TIERGARTEN

Site	Name/Details
House of Worship	Kaiser-Frederick-Memorial Church
Site of Interest, Mundane	Zoological Gardens
Site of Interest, Unusual	Dr. Hirschfeld's Institute of Sexology
Chief Contact	Criminal Court Judge
Gang or Organization	<i>Libelle</i> (Dragonfly)
Nightlife	Picnics and evening strolls
Ongoing Problem	Muggers in the park
Prostitution	Line-Boys, Grasshoppers

Alexanderplatz

One of the city's great public squares, the Alexanderplatz ("the Alex") is located in Berlin's *Mitte* (middle) district. The ten blocks encircling the Alex are home to over 320 warehouses, or at least places to meet up for a quick tryst ("Hour Hotels" and "Transient-Quarters"). Among the most luxurious of the "proper" brothels is one catering exclusively to heterosexual women. Many back-alley businesses in this area do double-duty, as with an ice cream parlor on the Mehnerstraße that gives new meaning to the term "soda jerk" after 10:00 pm.

The most desperate prostitutes walk around the Alex, and in it may be found the most disreputable dives. Yet, it is also a beating heart, constantly alive with vehicular and pedestrian traffic, the Stadtbahn roaring by overhead. Those in search of the most forbidden pleasures and experiences are advised to start here.

As if placed here as a guardian over the square's shifty inhabitants, the *Polizeipräsidium* (Police Headquarters) looks down over the square with its grand neo-Baroque, glass-domed tower. Inside the Headquarters, in a small annex on the ground floor, is a Museum of Crime, open to the public,

in which may be found several small exhibition halls. Each hall contains tables and glass cabinets full of displays of evidence used in successful criminal prosecution: kitchen knives, bits of rope, poisoned nutmegs, old jars, tattered clothing, and so on. There are also copious photographs of criminals, their victims, and crime scenes; examples of criminal identification technology (fingerprints, photos of earlobes); and dusty gewgaws of the forensic science trade (test tubes and assorted laboratory apparatus).

Emphasizing the working-class nature of this area, just off the square sits Karl-Liebknecht-Haus, a five-story former factory that now serves as the headquarters of the Communist Party of Germany. The nerve center of Berlin's powerful Red population, the purpose of this building is unmistakable: it is festooned with massive letters proclaiming various Communist slogans, as well as a large portrait of Vladimir Lenin.

The Alex also encompasses the surrounding neighborhoods of north Berlin. Like the Alexanderplatz itself, these are, as a general rule, the low-rent, seedier mirror images to the glitzier neighborhoods of the **Friedrichstadt** (page 29) or the **Ku'damm** (page 30). Some of the city's roughest underground dives may be found among these streets, nestled in between rambling tenements overflowing with *Ostlanders* (Poles, Roma, and Jews from the east). Indeed, Oranienburger Straße has formed the core of Berlin's Jewish population since the 18th century, when Frederick William I allowed Jewish settlement in this quarter of the city known as the *Scheunenviertel* (Barn Quarter). Here stands the incomparably grand New Synagogue (completed 1866), with its glazed bricks and Moorish-style domes. The interior, lit by innumerable delicate stained-glass windows, seats 3,000 and, in addition to the usual religious functions, hosts musical concerts, including one in 1930 with Albert Einstein on violin!

Oranienburger Straße brings the scuzzy charms of the Alex right up against the gay nightlife of Friedrichstadt, and nowhere is this more obvious than at the Friedrichstraßenpassage. Prior to the Great War, this five-story mall with entrances on both Oranienburger Straße and Friedrichstraße was a consumerist mecca. After the war, the businesses inside failed and the owners abandoned the property, leaving it to stand for a decade as an empty shell inhabited only by prostitutes and drug dealers. In 1928, it is taken over and refurbished by the electrical giant AEG and turned into a massive showroom for new technology, called the Haus der Technik.

THE ALEX

Site	Name/Details
House of Worship	The New Synagogue
Site of Interest, Mundane	Clärchens Ballhaus
Site of Interest, Unusual	The Blue Stocking (page 54)
Chief Contact	Police Inspector
Gang or Organization	Norddeutscher Ring (North German Ring)
Nightlife	Stork's Nest Cabaret (page 66)
Ongoing Problem	Sexual slavery
Prostitution	Grasshoppers, Chontes

Nestled in between the Friedrichstraßenpassage and the Weidendammer Bridge over the Spree is the *Großes Schauspielhaus* (Great Playhouse), the city's most singular performance space. Originally a market hall, then a circus, in 1919 the building is converted into a performance space and playhouse. The stage extends out in to the circular auditorium under a massive dome ringed with stalactite-esque ornaments in a truly breathtaking example of Expressionist architecture. Lights set into the rows between the "stalactites" create night-sky effects by sending constellation patterns across the cavernous dome's interior. The lobby and other areas of the building are lit by a variety of colored bulbs inside recessed and organically shaped pillars. Backstage, cast and crew enjoy their own fine accommodations: a barber, spacious dressing areas, and even a bar.

Finally, amid the general squalor and desperation of the Alex may still be found the occasional jewel of culture. *Clärchens Ballhaus* (Clara's Ballroom) on Auguststraße offers the incongruous pleasure of rough-handed workmen and tough ex-cons taking their wives and molls out for an evening of fine dancing in a large mirrored ballroom—to be followed by a few rounds of bowling in the ballroom's basement.

The Friedrichstadt

Berlin's downtown district stands in stark contrast to the Alexanderplatz. Bisected by the Friedrichstraße, the city's main north-south artery, are luxury hotels, government buildings (the Prussian parliament meets here), churches, museums, business high-rises (chiefly financial and publishing houses), many upscale theaters such as the Konzerthaus, and indoor shopping arcades like the Kaisergalerie. Many of these are centered on the Gendarmenmarkt, the original cultural center of Berlin; Friedrichstraße has sometimes been called "Berlin's Champs-Élysées."

Yet the Friedrichstadt's glory days are behind it. The chief destination for shopping and entertainment prior to the War, it has since lost that crown to the Ku'damm. Now its square-mile area is increasingly home to gay bars, strip clubs, massage parlors, and greasy spoons, as well as the sleazy Linden Passage, an arcade 300 yards (274 m) long. Like the Friedrichstraßenpassage, it was once an upscale shopping and entertainment emporium that nowadays mostly serves as a place for Doll-Boys (young male teenage prostitutes) to strut their stuff. No other spot in Berlin more aptly illustrates the fallen fortunes of the city than this Wilhelmine monument

An illegal transaction in "The Alex"



THE FRIEDRICHSTADT

Site	Name/Details
House of Worship	French Cathedral
Site of Interest, Mundane	Kerkau-Palast
Site of Interest, Unusual	Anatomical Wonder Cabinet
Chief Contact	Well-off Pimp/Theatrical Agent
Gang or Organization	<i>Reichsverein ehemaliger Strafgefangener</i> (Rich Ex-Convicts' Club)
Nightlife	The Chat Noir
Ongoing Problem	Pickpockets and beggars
Prostitution	Doll-Boys

to Neo-Baroque excess and splendor now serving as a pick-up joint for underage prostitutes.

These two sides of the Friedrichstadt operate independently of each other. When the sun comes up, the area is flooded with businessmen and civil servants in hat and tie, going about their daily business; however, after the commuter hordes leave at 5:00 pm, the bars open and the real fun begins, lasting until around 3:00 in the morning. In addition to a profusion of clubs and bars, the swarming hordes of tourists and party-goers might spend some time at the Kerkau-Palast, a massive hall containing 48 pool tables—as well as rooms for chess-playing—founded by the carom billiards champion Hugo Kerkau, or indulge in a bit of titillation at the Anatomical Wonder Cabinet, an all-nude show dedicated to “documenting female beauty—no children allowed!”

The Ku'damm

The city's neon-lit midway for high-end shopping and expensive nightclubs, the Kurfürstendamm is almost universally referred to as “the Ku'damm.” Running through the western boroughs of Charlottenburg and Wilmersdorf, the Ku'damm also boasts some of the finest examples of Berlin nightlife: cabarets featuring cross-dressing performers, cafés catering to lesbian clientele, bars in the American style, and pleasure palaces. The Ku'damm is where most of the semi-professional “Half-Silk” prostitutes come after they knock off their day shifts, and where Boot-Girls stand outside expensive boutiques, offering their own version of merchandise.

Heading east along the boulevard at the Auguste-Viktoria-Platz, the Ku'damm turns into Tauentzienstraße, hunting grounds of the infamously stylish “T-Girls”—mother-daughter prostitute teams that are always on the cutting edge of fashion and ready with a quick quip for journalists (or investigators) looking for the latest street gossip. The Auguste-Viktoria-Platz is also the site of three famous Berlin institutions: the Romanisches Café, the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church, and the Heaven and Hell Club (**Romanisches Forum**, page 49).

Anchoring Tauentzienstraße at its eastern end is the formidable Kaufhaus des Westens (colloquially and affectionately called the “KaDeWe”), one of Berlin's great department stores. Opened in 1907, the sprawling site covers 260,000 square feet (more than 24,150 square meters) spread over five stories. So popular is the store that it single-handedly transforms Tauentzienstraße from a quiet residential street to a bustling commercial extension of the Ku'damm. In 1929, the store is enlarged even more. Within, customers may shop for everything from luxury Paris fashions and exotic foods to everyday items. The store provides a bridal registry, tailor,

hairdressing, hotel and home delivery, money changing, and even buggy and car rentals. The top-floor food court is one of the most popular destinations for casual dining in the city.

The Ku'damm's destination status is strictly a post-war phenomenon. Long a quiet suburban avenue, it is only after the Great War that the Ku'damm supplants Friedrichstraße as the city's premier hotspot; this does not sit well with traditionalists and reactionaries, many of whom see the Ku'damm as emblematic of Berlin's fallen status. The region's large Jewish population only adds fuel to the fire of anti-Semitic Nationalists (Organisation Consul in the early-1920s, Bund Wiking in the mid-1920s, and the National Socialists in the late-1920s and early-1930s) who link Berlin's moral degradation with imagined Jewish conspiracies. As a result, the street and its neighborhoods are subject to increasing civil unrest and turmoil, culminating in 1932 with mass attacks on Jewish-owned businesses and worshippers leaving synagogues on the night of Rosh Hashanah.

THE KU-DAMM

Site	Name/Details
House of Worship	Kaiser-Wilhelm-Memorial Church
Site of Interest, Mundane	KaDeWe
Site of Interest, Unusual	Romanisches Café
Chief Contact	Mother & Daughter T-Girl Team
Gang or Organization	Organisation Consul/ Bund Wiking/National Socialists
Nightlife	Heaven and Hell Club
Ongoing Problem	Agitation and street battles started by right-wing groups
Prostitution	Half-Silks, Boot-Girls

Potsdamer Platz

Located in the geographic heart of the city, at the intersection of five major thoroughfares, this is perhaps the city's most iconic single locale—the Piccadilly Circus or Times Square of Berlin, if you will. The traffic is nonstop; the Platz is said to be one of the first places in the world where traffic lights were installed. In its very center stands an instantly recognizable control tower where a solitary policeman manually switches the lights, monitoring traffic from on high.

Potsdamer Platz and the adjacent Leipziger Platz are homes to shopping venues, restaurants, hotels, and cafés. Just west of the square may be found a number of former foreign embassies (the so-called “Millionaire’s Quarter”); many now converted into multi-unit rentals. In the early part of the 1920s, the most prominent hotel in the area is the Hotel Fürstenhof, situated directly on the Platz, with its neo-Baroque, proto-Art Nouveau architecture.

The massive Wertheim department store towers over the plaza, offering thousands of square feet of consumerist bliss and, with its own bank, theatre, restaurants, laundry, and gardens, is practically a city unto itself.

The Haus Potsdam (after 1928, the **Haus Vaterland**, page 48) is the greatest pleasure palace in the city, encompassing a massive cinema, grand café (the largest in the world), and a number of restaurants, each themed around a particular cuisine of the world. The locale’s slogan is “*die Welt in einem Haus*” (“the world in one house”).

Unlike other major city centers, Potsdamer Platz is relatively free of evident vice. The upper-class neighborhoods around the site would never permit it, at least not overtly. Yet, it is said, many are the seemingly innocuous residences and storefronts that are in actuality covers for high-end brothels and scandalous underage prostitution rings (the so-called “Pharmacies”, see **Prostitution: Medicine**, page 54).

The busiest train station in the city is the Potsdamer Bahnhof, its façade fronting directly onto the square. The main station plus its two wings services both long-haul trains from Paris, Strasbourg, and other points west, as well as the suburban Ringbahn and the Wannsee lines that take Berliners out to the lush woods and sparkling lakes of the western Havelland.

A half-mile (800 m) south of Potsdamer Platz proper sits the great brick-and-glass monument to industry known as Anhalter Bahnhof; the “Gateway to the South,” this is one of Berlin’s five principle train stations and is the largest and grandest station not just in Berlin, but in all of Germany. Completed in 1880, the 100-foot-high (30.5 m) steel and glass roof encompasses six station platforms that accommodate up to 40,000 travelers per day aboard trains that arrive and depart every five minutes. The station’s lines service Munich, Frankfurt-am-Main, Dresden, Vienna, Rome, Athens, and other southerly destinations.

After 1929, travelers arriving via the Anhalter station may take a 300 foot (90 m) long underground tunnel (complete with its own shops) connecting to the Hotel Excelsior, the latest crown jewel of Berlin’s high-end hotels. Expanded over the 1920s from a failing 200-room facility, by 1930 the Excelsior sprawls over 81,000 square feet (more than 7,525 square meters) and 600 rooms, nine restaurants, and a library, making it the largest hotel in Europe at the time. The hotel maintains its own bakery and butcher shop, and its newsstand stocks 200 daily papers from Europe, the Americas, and elsewhere.

Nollendorfplatz

This working-class area, which includes the adjacent neighborhoods of Nollendorfplatz and Wilmersdorf, is located to the south of Berlin’s sparkling west end. It is also a hub of Berlin’s gay and lesbian community and home to Erwin Piscator’s Communist theater, the Neues Schauspielhaus, which seats 1,200 people; on the upper floor is the Mozartsalle, now a major cinema hosting film premieres.

POTSDAMER PLATZ

Site	Name/Details
House of Worship	St. Matthew Church
Site of Interest, Mundane	Hotel Excelsior (from the mid-1920s)
Site of Interest, Unusual	Traffic Light Tower (from 1924)
Chief Contact	Foreign Ambassador
Gang or Organization	<i>Freie Vereinigung</i> (Free Association)
Nightlife	Haus Potsdam/Vaterland
Ongoing Problem	The busiest intersection in Europe
Prostitution	Half-Silks, Pharmacies

VERWALTUNGSBEZIRKE OF BERLIN

Berlin comprises 20 administrative boroughs (*Verwaltungsbezirke*) grouped according to their former administrative status prior to the 1920 unification.

Players creating investigators living in Berlin may simply choose where their characters reside or leave it up to a random roll. For truly random results, roll 1D20 on the **Berlin Boroughs** table. For results distributed more in accordance with population density, roll 1D100. Keepers may, of course, also use this table to determine the borough of origin of minor NPCs.

BERLIN BOROUGHS

1D20	1D100	Borough
1	01–09	Friedrichshain
2	10–19	Kreuzberg
3	20–27	Mitte
4	28–35	Prenzlauer Berg
5	36–42	Tiergarten
6	43–51	Wedding
7	52–60	Charlottenburg
8	61	Köpenick
9	62–66	Lichtenberg
10	67–74	Neukölln
11	75–80	Schöneberg
12	81–83	Spandau
13	84–87	Wilmerdorf
14	88–89	Pankow
15	90–91	Reinickendorf
16	92–95	Steglitz
17	96–97	Tempelhof
18	98	Treptow
19	99	Weißensee
20	00	Zehlendorf

FEATURES OF BERLIN

This section focuses on different aspects of Berlin, including the weather, transportation, communications, and housing.

WEATHER AND CLIMATE

The fact that Berlin was built on a swamp never escapes the mention of those who condemn it as a breeding-ground of immorality and evil. The city possesses its own distinctive, alkaline air (*“Berliner Luft”*), said to stimulate and degrade the central nervous system—leading to an unleashing of long-repressed passions, or so claim the moralists.

Berlin boasts a temperate maritime climate. Winter temperatures hover around the freezing point in general, while summers are mild and not terribly humid. Spring remains chilly until May, and the fall sets in quickly after harvest time. Rainfall is moderate (around 1–2 inches/2.5–5 cm per month) but steady; gray skies and precipitation are encountered year-round, though summer months can be quite sunny and pleasant. Snowfall usually starts in December and lasts through February, but almost never in great heaping amounts—just enough to lend the city a storybook air and rime the windows with frost.

What this amounts to (for the Keeper) is license to drape the city in whatever sort of weather best fits the scenario’s atmosphere. Chill winds and fog? Pouring rain? Eerily quiet snowfall? For much of the year, some—or all—of these meteorological phenomena are perfectly acceptable. As the world-weary reporter Joseph Roth famously observed, “Berlin is freezing even when it’s 60 degrees”—granted he was talking more about the coldness and callousness he saw around him, but there’s no reason this shouldn’t be reflected in the literal climate of the scenario as well.

GETTING AROUND

Despite the city’s sprawling size, it is relatively easy to get around in Berlin. Two urban rail networks, electric tramlines, and a large fleets of cabs and busses serve the city. Getting to the city is best accomplished by rail, but airplanes and automobiles are also an option.

There are daily flights from London’s Croydon airfield to Berlin’s Staaken Aerodrome. The flights are not direct, stopping over in Rotterdam, Amsterdam, Bremen, or Hamburg. Other flights, from Paris or Rome for example, may arrive at Tempelhof Airfield.

Berlin has five great terminal railway stations: Anhalter, Potsdam, Lehrte, Stettiner, and Görlitzer. These stations serve travelers arriving from the southwest, the west, the northwest, the northeast, and the south, respectively. The

THE CITY

Stadtbahn stations of Charlottenburg, Friedrichstraße, Alexanderplatz, Silesian, and Zoo also serve cross-country trains. The Stadtbahn (it will not earn its moniker of “S-Bahn” until 1930) comprises two steam-locomotive metro rail lines: the Stadtbahn itself, which runs over 8 miles (13 km) of track around the north side of the city, and the Ringbahn, which connects the northern suburbs with the southern districts over 24 miles (39 km) of tracks. Trains run nearly 24 hours a day (from 4:30 am to 1:00 am), with cars arriving every 2–5 minutes (for the Stadtbahn) or 6–15 minutes (for the Ringbahn). Rarified passengers may purchase second-class tickets (in contrast to the general third-class ticket), but even the second-class cars are packed at rush hour.

The U-bahn (short for *Untergrundbahn*, or underground railway) is an electric metro rail line. Despite its name, some sections travel on elevated platforms or through railway cuttings. There are seven lines in all, each providing access to the city center. Trains running between Alexanderplatz and Wittenburgplatz (at the terminal point of Tauentzienstraße in the Ku’damm) run every 5 minutes; wait times on other lines and at other stations are more typically 10–20 minutes. Like the Stadtbahn, tickets may be purchased in second- or third-class. The U-Bahn is extremely popular, and cars are nearly always crowded; during rush hour and on holidays, they are crammed full.

The city is crisscrossed with electric tramway routes (the *Straßenbahn*): 103 in all, with the last cars departing Mitte at 1:45 am. Fares and services are extremely variable. The tramlines serve mostly the central city districts, but there are three lines running out to the suburbs of Spandau, Köpenick, and the southwest districts.

Where trams or urban rail won’t suffice, a bus or cab is almost always close at hand. Buses are double-decker designs of the type familiar to any Londoner. In the evenings, horse-drawn buses are available to ferry theatergoers back to their home districts. Cabs proliferate and may be hailed from the curbside or called for (at an extra charge). Police only guarantee passengers’ safety within a radius defined by Pankow in the north, Friedrichsfelde in the east, Britz and Friedenau in the south, and Grunewald in the west. Beyond this radius, cab drivers are also free to charge whatever fares they like.

One of Berlin’s more unusual features is the Cyclonette Cab, a three-wheeled, open-air vehicle, offering a less costly alternative to an automobile cab (around 25% cheaper), for the obvious tradeoff of a less salubrious ride. What’s more, they cannot accommodate any luggage beyond a valise and seat, at most, two passengers.



Getting around town in style!

MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION

Berlin, being a world capital, boasts every form of media and communication available, from the telegraph to radio, and from the cinema to newspapers. It is in this last regard that Berlin is particularly notable. This is a golden age of journalism in Germany, and Berlin is the unquestioned giant for those who wish to work in the industry. The city boasts a staggering 60 daily newspapers, along with 630 weekly or monthly periodicals. Newspapers (*Zeitungen*) are far and away the most common form of mass-media communication in Berlin, outstripping even radio, and many a Berliner may be seen walking with a paper tucked under an arm or reading in cafés or on trams.

AVIATION

Tempelhof Airport

One of the first airports in Berlin, Tempelhof is designated an airport in 1923, with its first route being between Berlin and Munich. By 1925, routes include Moscow, Peking (taking over a month to arrive!), and Zürich. Transatlantic flights begin in 1928. Tempelhof also services flights between London and Berlin. The airport's name stems from the site on which it was built, which was formerly land owned by the Knights Templar in medieval Berlin.

Johannisthal Airfield

Situated southeast of central Berlin, Johannisthal was Germany's first commercial airfield, opening in 1909. From 1910, the site was the home of several well-known aviation companies, like Fokker Aeroplanbau, Albatros Werke AG, and Luft-Verkehrs-Gesellschaft AG. The first airship hangar was erected in April 1910, with a second following in 1911. With the opening of Tempelhof Airport in 1923, the use of the airfield diminishes.

Berlin-Staaken Aerodrome

An airfield on the west side of Berlin, Berlin-Staaken is situated close to what was a Zeppelin construction plant, now, one of the large hangars is rented out as a sound stage for epic-scale film projects. The site is a hub for people traveling across the Atlantic by airship, as well as those heading to London.

Popular papers include the conservative *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger*, the centrist *Vossische Zeitung* (founded in 1722, it is Berlin's oldest periodical), the Socialist *Vorwärts*, the Communist *Rote Fahne*, and the nationalistic and anti-Semitic *Deutsche Zeitung*. English-language papers are also widely available at stalls and kiosks. The *Chicago Tribune* maintains an office and reading room at the Hotel Adlon, while the *Chicago Daily News* has an office on Unter den Linden. The *Manchester Guardian* has offices in Berlin, on Potsdamer Straße. Lastly, a locally produced paper called *The Daily Berlin American* prints stories of local interest in English.

Berlin's innumerable post offices are divided into nine districts, each office designated with a letter (for the district) and number. *Poste Restante* (general delivery) letters and parcels may be picked up at Office C2 on Heiligegeist Straße in Alt-Berlin, just a short walk from Marienkirche. Letters may be delivered to any office, but parcels may be sent only to the larger distribution centers. Airmail letters may be dispatched from the red letterbox at the Hotel Bristol on Unter den Linden.

Post offices, regardless of size, are open from 8:00 am to 7:00 pm Monday through Saturday, but just from 8:00 am to 9:45 am on Sundays and holidays. Nearly all offices also offer telegraph, telephone, and pneumatic mail services for a nominal fee. Telegraphs may be sent via one of 113 branch offices attached to post offices (or sometimes found on their own), which are open 24 hours a day.

Public telephone booths can be found in post offices, some government and public buildings, and the larger city squares (Alexanderplatz, Wilhelmplatz). Local calls are charged in increments of three minutes. Trunk calls (long-distance calls booked in advance) may be made from one of 63 post offices.

The whole city of Berlin is connected by a spider's web of 250 miles (402 km) of underground pneumatic tubes. Called the Rohrpost, this system enables letters, cards, telegrams, and small parcels to be sent from any of 90 offices around the city to their intended recipient within two hours of sending. Post offices offering this service have a red lamp hanging outside the door.

HOUSING

Some three-quarters of Berlin's buildings are relatively modern, the results of the construction boom in the 19th century. Travelers from other parts of Europe, particularly Londoners and Parisians, have been known to criticize Berlin for its drab, uniform architectural style, citing a sort of gray sameness on street after street. The predominant architectural styles are a mix of Neo-Baroque and Italian Renaissance Revival, but more and more Modernist buildings are appearing,

particularly in the city's peripheries. Residential buildings nearly always boast balconies and terraces that inevitably sport potted flowers and plants in the warmer months.

The city's avenues are broad; even in the old parts of town there are very few dank, winding alleys of the sort you might encounter in Paris or London. In the busiest parts of the city, traffic (human, animal, and motorized) is near constant regardless of the time of day or night and is often overwhelming.

New arrivals in the city may seek accommodation at a variety of hotels and hostels. The best hotels in Berlin, located in or near Unter den Linden, Potsdamer Platz, and the Zoological Garden, boast central heating, electric light fixtures, private baths, and elevators, as well as their own bar-and-grill restaurants. Breakfasts are included in the fee, and guests are expected to eat their morning meal there.

In the city, there are a dozen hospices ("especially recommended for ladies traveling alone," according to Baedeker); some provide meals in addition to lodging. There are also *hôtels garni*, equivalent to the English "bed and breakfasts," some of which also serve hot or cold lunches and suppers. *Pensionate* (boarding houses) are available for those with more long-term plans for staying in the city.

Mietskaserne

Beginning around 1860 and lasting until the Great War, Berlin underwent an ambitious construction boom that left the city nearly unrecognizable. Many of the buildings that went up in the new Reich's capital were housing blocks called *Mietskaserne* (tenements). These massive housing blocks take up every available square inch of real estate on their lots, cramming in as many tenants as possible. Collectively, they squat in a large ring around the old city, comprising their own district of sorts: the Wilhemine Ring. Universally five stories high, with stucco-fronted facades that come right up to the sidewalk, the tenement blocks famously boast interconnected corridors of tiny courtyards, each a mere 300 square feet (28 square meters) in area: the legal minimum to allow fire truck access.

Floor plans and amenities serve considerations of space first, while tenants' comfort comes second. The flats facing the street are the most luxurious, with wooden molding, fine parquet floors, and other thoughtful architectural touches, not to mention plenty of natural light from the windows. Most flats in a *Mietskaserne*, however, are best described as resembling a shoebox: a long rectangle with bedrooms at the front and back, and a common area and kitchen in the middle. The farther back one goes in the tenement block, the grimmer and smaller the flats become, with some lacking windows entirely. Overall, only about one in seven have their own toilet and bath, while two-thirds cannot claim any bathroom facilities at all, relying instead on water closets installed at the staircase landings.

Population in a *Mietskaserne* skews toward the working class, with middle-class residents taking the street-side flats. Many flats are sub-let, housing "shifts" of tenants who occupy the flat at different times of the day and night. Nearly one in five tenants, the so-called "sleepers-in," are too poor to afford even this, and instead rent bed space by the hour. Tenancy in these blocks can reach as high as 2,000 people, necessitating their own beat cops to patrol the premises.

One final note for Anglophone investigators: it is standard practice in Germany (even to this day) not to number apartments; mail is delivered by surname, not apartment number.

BEINLS AND BULLS: CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

Much like America in the 1930s, Jazz Age Germans are fascinated with crime, criminals, and gangsterism. The financial and political turmoil of the post-war years has proven ripe for the rise of criminality. Berlin is, for the first time, a world city and a major metropolis, and its residents are just waking up to the fact that with such status comes a certain anonymity that emboldens thieves and murderers. Berlin's citizens track daily newspaper reports of crime with a certain fascinated avidity; after all, *anyone* could be the next victim. There is a widespread sense that security is a rapidly disappearing memory and that the rule of law is disintegrating.

UNDERGROUND BERLIN

The pneumatic tubes of the Rohrpost run through hundreds of miles of service tunnels. The U-Bahn traverses more than 70 miles (113 km) of subterranean tubes. Five thousand miles (8,050 km) of sewer tunnels crisscross the entirety of the city. There are even numerous private tunnels, like that connecting the Anhalter Bahnhof and Excelsior Hotel, to say nothing of "unofficial" connections between ancient cellars and basements. For those who know how to navigate this system, they can travel great distances beneath the city streets, safe from the prying eyes of those above ground.

spreads beyond Austria and Germany, opening lodges in France, Britain, the United States, Switzerland, and other European countries.

In 1912, Reuss meets the British occultist and sorcerer Aleister Crowley, and the two quickly form a mutual understanding resulting in Reuss putting Crowley in charge of all OTO lodges in Britain and Ireland. Crowley's influence within the order continues to grow, and in 1922 he takes over as its head in the wake of Reuss' suffering a stroke. Crowley subsequently introduces the rituals and rites of his own religious system, Thelema, into those of the OTO, causing a major splintering of the group in Germany. Although Crowley's name becomes intimately associated with the OTO, there are many German sects that maintain a "pure" version of the group's rituals, while others forge unique paths.

One such splinter group is the *Fraternitas Saturni* ("Brotherhood of Saturn"), founded by the occultist Gregor A. Gregorius (**Dances of Vice, Horror, and Ecstasy**, page 147). The Brotherhood, in taking the sex-magic rituals of the OTO and Crowley's Thelema and blending them with Freemasonry, devil-worship, and alchemy, produces something that could only come out of Weimar Berlin.

Countless more societies exist, from the remnants of the Theosophical Society to its offshoot, the increasingly secular Anthroposophical Society; the Orion-Bund to the United Old Order of the Druids; the Hermetic Brotherhood of Light to the New Gnostic Church; the General Pansophical School to the Pansophical Society; from the Order of the Grail to the Order of the Knights of the Holy Grail. Yet even these esoteric orders are relatively well known when compared to those that are spoken of only in whispers.

Once such example, cloaked in shadow, is the so-called Vril Society. Founded in 1925, the Society's mission is to expound on and master the mysterious energy source known as vril, first described in the 1871 novel *The Coming Race* by English author Edward Bulwer-Lytton. Despite the concept's clearly fictional origins, many prominent European Theosophists maintain that the Rosicrucian Bulwer-Lytton had simply channeled a long-suppressed truth in the form of a made-up narrative, and, thus, take vril seriously. The membership roster of the Vril Society is highly exclusive and consists of wealthy German occultists, all of them of a Nationalistic bent. Rumors swirl that the founder of the society is General Karl Haushofer, said to be a student of the famous transcendental mystic George Gurdjieff and close associate of the high-ranking Nazi official (and occultist) Rudolf Hess. Through Hess, Haushofer's ideas on *Lebensraum* ("living space") prove hugely influential on Adolf Hitler and the development of

Nazi Party ideology. The members of the Vril Society are even rumored to form the inner sanctum of the NSDAP's "occult wing," the Thule Society.

Contacts within an occult society have obvious utility for investigations: a contact may have personal knowledge of rituals or lore relevant to uncovering the Mythos nature of a mystery, or they may be able to provide access to various tomes and other hidden information. What's more, membership in these societies tends to be those with the time and money to devote to such seeming fripperies—an occult society member is bound to be well-connected!

CRIMINAL ORGANIZATIONS

The *Ringvereine* and other criminal groups in Berlin are discussed in greater detail in the **Beinls and Bulls** section (page 37). Here, we merely consider the pervasiveness of such groups and the utility of contacts associated with them.

There are two types of *Ringverein*: the official groups, formed to run underworld clubs and bars, and the unofficial organizations, who merely borrow the name and concept but go their own way. The official *Ringvereine* are called "the Great Ring," "the Free Band," and "the Free Union." Of the unofficial groups, police estimate there are no fewer than 85 operating in the city at any given time. Membership estimates vary wildly, from as few as 1,000 to as many as "the overwhelming majority of all criminals in Berlin." Keepers may decide for themselves just how much the *Ringvereine* constitute an "empire of crime" within Berlin society—see Fritz Lang's various *Dr. Mabuse* movies for ideas.

The smaller, unofficial clubs often adopt names invoking a sporting club or else a sort of middle-class sentimentality: "the Always-True," "the Echoes of Home," and "the Hand-in-Hand." Beneath such maudlin epithets are groups of hardened ex-cons who run protection rackets, facilitate burglaries and robberies, and help get their brothers out of legal hot water.

A criminal contact belonging to one of these rings could do the same for investigators who, doubtless through no fault of their own, find themselves on the wrong side of the law. *Ringverein* members will happily bear false witness to police in order to bolster an alibi, or post bail to get a friendly asset out of jail. Naturally, favors will be expected in return. And, of course, if it is indeed true that every doorman, shoe-shine boy, vendor, and prostitute is in the employ of the *Ringvereine*, a well-placed contact in such a group could function not unlike Holmes' Baker Street Irregulars, providing on-the-ground feedback and information, tracking the movement of individuals, and reporting back with the latest word from the streets.

NEIGHBORHOOD DETAILS AND STREET ENCOUNTERS

Although the scenarios presented in this book provide plenty of interesting locales for the investigators to visit and interact with, a certain level of player-driven exploration of the city is both expected and to be welcomed. Whether it's establishing the details of their local neighborhood or canvassing the back streets of an unfamiliar section of town while chasing down an errant clue, the investigators will want to know what's around them, and the Keeper should be prepared to answer such questions.

If the investigators decide to forget their troubles for the evening, consult the table of **Random Cabarets and Clubs** (page 63), which provides names and thumbnail sketches of various venues around town. Turning onto a random street, a few rolls on the **Architectural Details** and **Random Business** tables (pages 67 and 68, respectively) provide a quick and easy way to give the area a bit of its own flavor.

The Keeper should not be too concerned with consistency. One of the central themes of a Berlin-based campaign is chaos and mutability. Don't worry about using the same name for a business located in a wholly different neighborhood. Indeed, use the duplication to play up a sense of unease and coming loose from one's moorings. ("Wait, I thought S. Schropp was in the Ku'damm?" "No, no. We've been at this location for 30 years!")

The architecture of Berlin in the 1920s is an interesting clash between the fin-de-siècle excesses of the Wilhelmian construction boom and boldly provocative modernist designs. Although Berlin still boasts some neighborhoods with architectural styles dating back to the Renaissance and Early Modern eras (particularly in the Nikolaiviertel of the Old City), the majority of its buildings date from the 19th century. Great buildings of cultural importance tend to fall under the usual Neo-classical umbrella, while many other buildings—both official and residential—display an Italian Renaissance revival look, with towering edifices of Romanesque arches and colorful brickwork.

The building boom that followed the birth of the German Empire brought in Neo-Baroque styles, with a love of colonnades and decorative excess and domes on top of everything, from atriums to cupolas. The wake of the Great War brings an interest in a totally new style: Modernism. Like so many other things in post-war Germany, this soon becomes a political topic, with right-wing traditionalists decrying the brutal simplicity of Modernist architecture, while left-wing socialists hail it as the look of a communal future.

The first Modernist housing estate (Garden City Falkenberg) is built during the war, southeast of the city in the small district of Bohnsdorf (the "Paintbox Estate," so-called for the brightly painted stucco that fronts every house), but the great Modernist building boom doesn't get going until the mid- to late-1920s, with estates going up around the city's periphery, from Wedding to Reinickendorf to Charlottenburg. These estates are built as part of a government housing plan, in keeping with a provision in the Weimar constitution that declares that every German has a right to, "a humane dwelling place." A special rental tax pays for the construction projects.



Left: The Babylon Theater
Right: The Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum

RANDOM CABARETS AND CLUBS

ID20	Name (Original Location)	Atmosphere	Clientele	Décor	Entertainment	Unusual
1	Alexander-Palast (The Alex)	Upscale	Quaint, conservative gay couples in top hats and tails	Massive American-style ballroom	A stage for cabaret performances; a large orchestra provides music for dancing	Monthly "Transvestite Balls;" weekly "Lesbian Nights"
2	Auluka-Lounge (Nollendorfplatz)	Weird and loud	Chic lesbians, Japanese and Chinese tourists with their <i>Nutte</i> escorts, and male voyeurs	"Japanese Cherry Blossom"— paper lanterns, overhanging cherry branches, red sofas	Dance music performed by a former Russian prince	The female <i>maitre d'</i> wears a short skirt and a blue sport coat, open to reveal her breasts
3	Cabaret of the Spider (Unter den Linden)	Wacky	Mature, middle-class gay men	A large mural depicting a spider and her web	Floor shows on Saturdays and Sundays: a male twin song & dance team, Liselott from the Mikado, and so on	No cover charge, but women and straight men are not admitted
4	Café Braun (The Alex)	"American"	Bohemian	Standard dance club	Dancing and live music; "love porticos" out back	Wait staff hired on resemblance to world leaders, serve appropriate cuisine to "their" nationality; band wears masks of famous celebrities
5	Café Dorian Gray (Potsdamer Platz)	Uncasily hot	Lesbian couples, cross-dressing couples on Wednesdays; "gentlemen" are allowed, but must pay double the cover	Artistic café serving high-quality Viennese cuisine	Live tango music; a violinist who plays table- to-table and won't leave until tipped	Theme nights like "Three Days in the Wild West" or "Rhineland Wine-Growers' Holiday;" gay and lesbian clientele tend to dress in leather blouses or sailor uniforms

RANDOM CABARETS AND CLUBS - CONTINUED

1D20	Name (Original Location)	Atmosphere	Clientele	Décor	Entertainment	Unusual
6	Cosy Corner (Kreuzberg)	Hard- drinking	Working-class, rough trade in lederhosen, British writers, and poets	A leather curtain grants entrance to a dim, homely interior festooned with photos of boxers and cyclists	Drinking and card games	The lavatory has no partitions between toilets
7	Eldorado (Nollendorfplatz)	Glamorous, ostentatious, and titillating	Cross-dressers, transgender people, high society, high-class prostitutes, and foreign tourists lured by hotel ads	Large banner outside reads: "Here it is right!" Oriental interior	An orchestra in unisex clothing playing haunting French and Argentinian tunes; midnight drag revue in six acts; the beautiful cross-dressing showgirl, Muguette	One of Berlin's most (in)famous clubs, many come here simply to gawp; the American-style bar features a disturbing assortment of S&M photos mounted above the all-female staffs' heads
8	Hundegustav Bar (The Alex)	Mischievous and friendly	Beinls and bulls freely mixing, gangsters, and tourists	Coal cellar	A guitarist, banjoist, and piano player try (and fail) to play the Charleston	"Dog-Gustav," the owner, reputed to have a taste for dog flesh
9	Kakadu Bar (The Ku'damm)	Exclusive	Artists and foreigners	Mock Tahitian; "longest bar in the city"	Vegetarian restaurant; five-act cabaret; cocktail bar	A caged parrot over every table; tapping the glass signals the bird to literally call for the bill!
10	Karls-Lounge (Tiergarten)	Crowded, depressed, oddly smoke- free	Line-Boys and waiters both dressed in sailor uniforms, coke dealers, and male bisexual university students	Jeweled walls and lampshades; massive bar and dusty liquor cabinet; porcelain tchotchkes	A pianist and fiddler provide music for dancing couples	No alcohol is served here— only Hungarian pastries and lemonade; drugs are openly traded and used at tables

RANDOM CABARETS AND CLUBS - CONTINUED

ID20	Name (Original Location)	Atmosphere	Clientele	Décor	Entertainment	Unusual
11	Mali & Ingel (The Ku'damm)	Very selective and always packed	Exclusively, defiantly lesbian; artists, intellectuals, stars of stage and film; men admitted only by invitation, and then ignored	Permanent sign outside: "Closed for Private Party;" inside is small and stylish, with comfortable chairs and a red traffic light over the dance floor	Male pianist plays hot jazz and tear-jerking love songs; Mali & Ingel, the owners, are vivacious and refined (if promiscuous) hosts	Front desk manned by two <i>Bubi</i> (butch) attendants in thick makeup, each fondling a giggling femme on their lap
12	Mikado Bar (Friedrichstadt)	Comically aggressive	Drag queens and curious tourists	Tacky Oriental	A full "Transvestite Revue" on weekends; "the Baroness" on piano playing tango duets	Drag divas going table to table, demanding dances from straight men
13	Monte-Casino (Kreuzberg)	Unorthodox	Bourgeois couples, British and Dutch tourists, gay men, transgender people, and cross-dressers	Run-down bar with elevated stage	Amateurish drag show featuring malnourished adolescent Line-Boys; emceed by a teenager called "Pretty Adolf"	Number-one tourist destination in the city for those interested in Berlin's "gay nightlife"
14	Rio Rita Bar (The Ku'damm)	Chic and intimate	Playboys, diplomats, and industrialists	Warm and simple: cream and gold panels plus murals	Tangos from 9 pm; exotic- looking "table ladies"	Well-known supplier of high- grade cocaine and opium
15	Silhouette (The Ku'damm)	Calm and smoky	Film stars like Berber, Veidt, and Dietrich, male and female impersonators, and "butch" lesbians	Long narrow room lit by red Japanese paper lanterns; twin bars facing each other and manned by youths in white shirts	Dancing on a red carpet to the tunes of a dapper orchestra; drag queens singing rhapsodies	A dozen partitioned, recessed booths on second-floor balcony provide plenty of privacy

RANDOM CABARETS AND CLUBS - CONTINUED

1D20	Name (Original Location)	Atmosphere	Clientele	Décor	Entertainment	Unusual
16	Sing-Sing (The Alex)	Rough and bizarre	Gangsters, pimps, Kontroll-Girls, and ex-cons	Based on the dining hall at Plötzensee Prison—bars on the windows, waiters in striped convict uniforms, electric chair	Open from 1 am–6 am; each night a customer is selected to be “executed” in the electric chair and is expected to put on a good performance	Food is served in tins and is of prison-kitchen quality; anyone without a year’s hard time in the pen is suspect
17	Stork’s Nest Cabaret (The Alex)	Sordid dive	Working-class, students, and criminals	Well-worn; photos of performers displayed outside	Classic cabaret stage show (said to be the inspiration for the movie <i>The Blue Angel</i>)	Customers send up beer steins to performers; may purchase seats on stage
18	Toppkeller (Nollendorfplatz)	Dangerous and sexy	“Bohemian” lesbians, Dominas and masochistic straight men, curious couples, tourists, and famous entertainers	Beer-hall tables and dim lights; paper herons hang from the ceiling; erotic murals in the back	“Prettiest Female Calves” competition; a four-piece brass band provides music for line dances; at midnight, the Black Mass dance is led by a statuesque woman in a black sombrero	Despite being a lesbian club, a prime pick- up place for heterosexual prostitutes; straight men lured here by flyers advertising titillating contests
19	Weißer Maus (Friedrichstadt)	Wicked	Gentlemen lechers, lesbian groupies, and intellectuals	Classy cabaret with a curtained stage	Close-up naked dances performed after midnight; Anita Berber’s favorite venue	Audience members don black half-masks
20	Zauberflöte (Friedrichstadt)	Wild, aggressive, and fun	Gay men and lesbians on separate floors	Two massive dance halls: “the American Dance Palace” and “the Florida Dance Hall”	Each dance hall accommodates up to 1,500 dancers; live orchestra playing jazz and German folk tunes	Gay and lesbian floors strictly segregated; lesbian floor holds “Silver Spider” costume ball on New Year’s, names “Princess of the Moon”

ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

1D10	Exterior	Interior
1	Gables	Paper lanterns
2	Oriels	Mural/wallpaper of geometric patterns
3	Elaborate scrollwork	Modernist steel & glass furniture
4	Baroque statuary	Mongolian tapestries
5	Domed turret	Persian rugs
6	Neon signage	Peeling wallpaper
7	Large plate-glass windows	Expressionist paintings
8	Peeling stucco	Checkered linoleum floors
9	Rococo spires	Orientalist statuary
10	Neo-Classical colonnades	Water-stained ceiling

BERLIN'S CEMETERIES

As befits a great European capital, Berlin boasts a host of eerie cemeteries. Particularly startling to foreigners is finding tags on certain headstones reading *"stelle abgelaufen"* ("time's up"). These tags are placed on graves due to be dug up and reused, as gravesites in Germany are leased for a fee; in Berlin, leases generally run for 20 years. Descendants or benefactors may renew leases, and some wills even set aside funds for extended gravesite leases. But once "time is up," if no one comes forward to renew the lease, the headstone is taken away and a new body is laid in the grave. Graves of famous persons are leased through government dispensation and thus tend to be more permanent than mere civilian graves.

Dorotheenstadt: founded in the late 18th century, this cemetery lies just north of Oranienburger Tor and its neighboring plot, the French Cemetery, which dates from the same period and was intended for descendants of French Huguenots. Due to its proximity to Berlin University, Dorotheenstadt hosts the graves of many prominent

intellectuals and academics, including the philosophers Solger, Fichte, and Hegel. The cemetery is noted for its many elaborate tombs and headstones, carved and cast alike.

Friedhof Grunewald-Forst: out on the periphery of the city is the "Greenwood Forest Cemetery." As the name implies, this cemetery is set among the pines and spruces of the Grunewald, the River Havel flowing by not far away. It's this river that gives the cemetery its grim origins. Due to quirks in the river's flow, many suicides who drown themselves in the Havel and its tributary, the Spree, wash up here, and it is here, in an overgrown and rural district of the city, that the bodies are quickly buried in unhallowed graves with only a simple wooden cross to mark the burial. Because of this, the cemetery is usually called by a different name: "the Suicides' Cemetery." During the Great War, many Russian prisoners of war were also buried here. Now, with hard times returned to Germany, suicides are on the rise again and many more bodies are washing up from the Havel within hailing distance of the Grunewald.

CHAPTER 2

RANDOM BUSINESSES

1D10	Bookshop	Café	Restaurant	Boarding House	Theatre
1	Amelang	Bauer	Ratskeller	Barbe	Deutsches Opernhaus
2	Gsellius	Victoria-Café	Gourmania	Bavaria	Komsiche Oper
3	Akademische	Kaiser-Café	Atelier	Bismarck	Komödien-Haus
4	Nikolaische	Palast-Café	Peltzer's	Fortuna	Küntzler-Theater
5	Speyer & Peters	Café Austria	Kempinski & Co.	Gretsel-Behr	Lessing
6	S. Schropp	Café Woerz (billiards)	The Jockey	Korfu	Metropol
7	Eisenschmidt	Englisches Café	Rheingold	Ludwig	Opera House
8	Martin Breslauer	Luisen-Café	Höhn's Oyster Saloon	Stinde-Cranz	Schiller
9	Paul Graupe	Café Josty (terrace)	The Continental Bodega Company (Spanish)	Von Lützow	Volksbühne
10	Invcha* (occult bookshop)	Konditorei	Kämmerer (Vegetarian)	Von Saucken	Des Westens

*See **Dances of Vice, Horror, and Ecstasy**, page 175, for details on Invcha.

what comes to be called "Epic Theatre." By 1927, he has also become a committed Marxist with Bolshevik sympathies, and his intense political views are reflected not just in his writing but also in his productions.

Epic Theatre is confrontational, aiming to reinforce the artificiality of the theatrical experience as a way of reminding the audience of the artificiality of their own realities. In Brecht's hands, it is also a propagandistic tool, communicating his views on social justice, the class system, religion, and Marxism. Brecht's *Threepenny Opera*, with music by **Kurt Weill** (page 87), premieres in 1928 and quickly becomes the greatest theatrical hit in Weimar Germany. Over the next five years, it is translated into 18 languages and performed more than 10,000 times across Europe.

Much like his plays, Brecht the man is confrontational, provocative, and chaotic. He is an inveterate womanizer and an apologist for Bolshevik excess. In short, he is a colorful character sure to liven up any party or social gathering, though not always for the better.

Lya de Putti (1920–26)

Born in present-day Slovakia to a Hungarian family in what was then the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the dancer and actress Lya de Putti comes to Berlin after divorcing her magistrate husband and leaving her two daughters behind, setting off in search of a more adventurous life.

Once in Berlin, she dances in music hall revues, including those at the famous Wintergarten. She begins appearing in movies in 1921 and, by 1922, her smoldering looks, heavily lidded eyes, and short, black bobbed hair have caught the imagination of the public, leading her to a career of being typecast as a vamp.

De Putti reaches the height of her popularity in 1925 when she appears in the film *Variété* (dir. E. A. Dupont) with Emil Jannings. This leads to an invitation from Hollywood, and she sails for America in February 1926.

During her residence in Berlin, de Putti is a frequent sight at nightclubs and parties in the Friedrichstadt and Ku'damm. She is also a popular subject for Telephone-Girl prostitutes to model their appearances.

Marlene Dietrich (1901–30)

"I am, thank God, a Berliner."

—Marlene Dietrich

Born in the Schöneberg district at the end of 1901, Dietrich grows up in Berlin with dreams of becoming a concert violinist. A wrist injury ends these ambitions, and she instead begins finding work in 1922 as a chorus girl in various **Max Reinhardt** (page 81) productions, despite being rejected from his drama academy.



Lya de Putti



Marlene Dietrich

Over the course of the 1920s, Dietrich works steadily in film and theater, gradually moving up into increasingly important roles as the decade wears on. She makes her first big splash in the revue *Es Liege in der Luft* (It's in the Air), where she sings a duet with Margo Lion (*Wenn die beste Freundin*) that becomes an instant anthem for Berlin's lesbian community. However, it is the role of cabaret singer Lola Lola in Josef von Sternberg's *The Blue Angel* (1930) that catapults her to stardom. The advance publicity surrounding the movie is enough to secure her a ticket to Hollywood before the movie is even released. Dietrich attends *The Blue Angel's* Berlin premiere, takes her bows at the end of the film, then boards a train to start her journey to America.

Dietrich marries assistant director Rudolf Sieber in 1923 and she gives birth to her only child, a daughter named Maria, the following year. Although Dietrich remains married her whole life, she is famously promiscuous, carrying on affairs with a cavalcade of men and women well into her 70s.

For many, Dietrich embodies the earthy, sensual, transgressive qualities of Weimar Berlin. She is a fashion icon who mixes male and female dress, and who doesn't blink in the face of crossing gender lines. During her time in Berlin, she trains with Turkish prizefighter Sabri Mahir, one of only a handful of women to join his boxing studio. Although her Berlin years come prior to her international stardom, she is a fixture of the city's nightlife and the German film industry prior to her departure for American shores.

Otto Dix, George Grosz, and Käthe Kollwitz

Berlin in the 1920s is a vibrant hub for art. The first half of the decade is dominated by the continuing influence of the German Expressionist movement (most visible in the worlds of dance and film), but around 1925 a new movement that had hitherto been bubbling under the surface bursts forth. Called *Neue Sachlichkeit*, the term is most often translated into English as "New Objectivity" but may also be rendered as "New Matter-of-Factness" or "New Dispassion." Like Expressionism, this new movement is represented across a wide field of the arts, from architecture to literature to film, but it is the pieces produced by a small school of fine artists that most clearly define the look, both of New Objectivity and of Weimar Berlin. Otto Dix and Georg Grosz, both Berlin residents, are the most famous artists to arise from the New Objectivity movement.

When the Great War breaks out, Otto Dix (1891–1961) enthusiastically enlists. His patriotic zeal does not last long as he witnesses horror after horror on the battlefields of the Western and Eastern Fronts. He survives the war and is awarded the Iron Cross, Second Class. His experiences haunt him for the rest of his life. In 1924, he produces a portfolio of 50 etchings entitled *Der Krieg* (The War)

depicting the brutality of modern warfare, this following a series of etchings and paintings depicting *lustmord* (sexual murder) in 1922. His style then evolves to one of tempera paint and oil glazes in the style of the Old Masters but used to depict the bizarre realities of post-war Berlin; his portraits of Sylvia von Harden and Anita Berber are startlingly grotesque, while his 1928 triptych *Metropolis* perfectly sums up the city's non-stop party in the face of grim realities of the past and worry about the future. Despite being branded a "degenerate artist" by the Nazis, Dix remains in Germany and survives the Second World War.

George Grosz (1893–1961) also serves during the Great War but does not see combat, being hospitalized for a sinusitis infection in 1915. In 1919, he participates in the Spartacist uprising, which marks the high point of his direct involvement in radical politics. Over time he grows disillusioned with Communism, though he retains his left-wing political sensibilities even after leaving the party. His caricatures and oil paintings from this period portray a Berlin of mutilated war veterans, prostitutes, debased capitalists, and wild parties—in short, much of what we associate with Weimar Berlin today. His early 1920s work is heavily influenced by the Dada movement and depicts grotesque humans and robotic automatons. Grosz departs Berlin just before Hitler becomes Chancellor, moving to the United States, for which he has long harbored a fascination.



Otto Dix

EXPRESSIONISM

This artistic movement originated in Germany before the Great War and encompassed painting, theater, film, dance, music, and literature. Essentially a Modernist movement, Expressionism aimed to present the world from a subjective viewpoint, distorting the natural to evoke a specific mood, theme, or idea in reaction to the dehumanizing effects of mass industrialization and the move from rural to urban life. One could say Expressionism rejected the ideology of realism. Expressionistic art tends to be intense, non-naturalistic, and emotional. Such pieces were envisioned as coming from “within” the artist and not as a depiction of the world around them. Thus, the art produced often revolved around social criticism and alienation.

Although not formally associated with the New Objectivity movement, and being of an older generation than either Dix or Grosz, the post-war woodcuts of Käthe Kollwitz (1867–1945) derive from the same impulse to strip away all sentimentality and portray only the brutal, naked truth. Her cycle of “War” woodcuts (1921–23) and her 1924 posters *Germany’s Children Starving, Bread, and Never Again War* show the human toll of loss and suffering, and the dark side of war and its aftermath in such unflinching terms that she is put on the Gestapo’s watch list in the 1930s. Fortunately, her worldwide fame prevents any further action, and she continues to reside in Berlin until 1943.

Friedrich Ebert (1905–25)

The first President of the German Republic, Ebert is often a leader without any allies. Although he is the leader of the Social Democratic Party (SPD) and an avowed socialist, his centrist policies anger other leftist leaders—both the Independent Social Democrats and the German Communist Party form as splinter groups of the SPD in reaction to Ebert’s policy decisions during the Great War.

Ebert tries desperately to salvage the monarchy during the final days of the war, but, once he accepts the inevitability of that institution’s demise, he devotes his energies full-time to building a democratic republic.

In January 1919, Ebert is elected president. Over the next two years, he spends much of his time quelling violent uprisings from the right and the left. It is his decision to enlist the aid of the nationalistic Freikorps in putting down



Friedrich Ebert

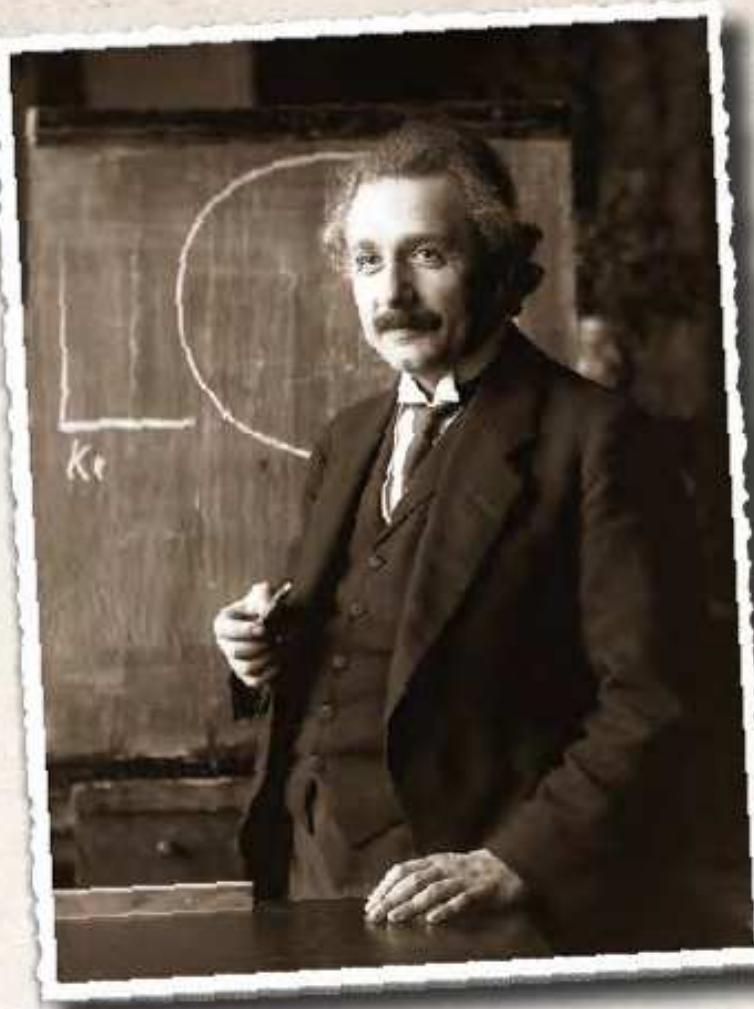
the 1919 Spartacist uprising, an action that earns him the undying enmity of the Communists and other radical left-wing parties. Even political moderates criticize this decision, as it leaves an unfortunate stain on Weimar-era politics that is never quite washed away. As the diplomat Count Kessler writes, “The paradox of a republican-social-democratic government allowing itself and the capitalists’ safes to be defended by hired unemployed and royalist officers, is simply too insane.” Right-wing groups, meanwhile, put Ebert up as a representative of the “November criminals” who, in their view, sold out Germany’s military by agreeing to an armistice and later signing the ruinous Treaty of Versailles.

Under constant attack from the right and left, Ebert’s health quickly begins to deteriorate. After a judge rules that Ebert technically committed treason when supporting a workers’ strike during the Great War, Ebert’s health takes a turn for the worse, and he dies while still in office in 1925.

Albert Einstein (1914–32)

Albert Einstein, one of the world’s foremost scientific minds, is brought to Berlin in 1914 from his home in Zurich, Switzerland, attracted by offers from Max Planck and Walther Nernst. Once in the city, he is given membership of the Prussian Academy of Sciences and a non-teaching professorship at the University of Berlin. He sets up a home office at his flat in Schöneberg

Albert Einstein



and completes his work on his General Theory of Relativity, winning the Nobel Prize for Physics in 1921.

Over the next two decades, Einstein maintains his primary residence in Berlin. His work on relativity has made him a scientific superstar. From this point on, he focuses much of his attention on unsuccessfully disproving quantum theory, but he also engages in research on wormholes, gravitational waves, superconductivity, and a unified field theory, none of which bear fruit.

A great music lover, he frequently attends concerts when in the city and is even known to sit in on performances with his violin. He also performs chamber music with Max Planck and his son in private.

An ardent Zionist, Einstein is well aware of the rising tide of anti-Semitism in Germany. He visits the United States several times between 1930–32, and is traveling in California when the Nazis seize power in January 1933. Knowing he can never return, Einstein settles permanently in America. The Nazi regime confiscates all the belongings in his Berlin residence and puts a price on his head.

As a world-famous scientist, Einstein is often abroad for months at a time, although he is frequently to be found in Berlin during the summer months. Investigators wishing to meet him have their best chances to do so in attending lectures and functions at the University, or at orchestral music performances.

Ruth Fischer



Ruth Fischer (1919–33)

An ultra-leftist gadfly for proletarian revolution, Austrian-born Ruth Fischer arrives in Berlin in 1919. By 1921, she is appointed chair of the KPD (German Communist Party) in Berlin. Fischer's politics are described by her opponents as "infantile radicalism." She refuses to kowtow to Lenin when she meets him on a trip to Moscow, and she rails against the KPD's policies as overly timid and ineffectual. *Time* magazine calls her "a bundle of sex appeal and intellectual fire." Her star is rising.

With the ascension of Stalin in the Soviet Union, Fischer is summoned to Moscow in 1925, where she becomes a virtual prisoner at her room at the Hotel Lux. After 10 months, she feigns a nervous breakdown and returns to Berlin but, thanks to Stalin's influence, is expelled from the KPD in August 1926.

Fischer is also a member of the Reichstag from 1924–28, representing the more radical, Trotskyite wing of German Communism. By this point, *Time* magazine, feeling much less generous, describes her presence in parliamentary meetings thusly: "She's a sneerer and a snarler. She sits on the far left of the house, interrupting Stresemann, Ludendorff, and Tirpitz with cries of Phooey. She is fat... and addresses the house with a vaudevillian shimmy that is unique."

After 1928, Fischer's political power in Berlin is minimal. She flees the country in 1933 ahead of Hitler's seizure of power. Later in life, she becomes an avowed anti-Stalinist and anti-Communist, testifying against her brother and other associates at House Unamerican Activities Committee meetings.

In short, Fischer is a captivating, contradictory, passionate individual who inspires great devotion or passionate opposition, with little middle ground. She makes an ideal contact for leftist investigators; prior to 1928, she wields considerable political influence as well.

Joseph Goebbels (1926–45)

"What the man showed of oratorical and organisational talent, is unique. There was nothing he could not rise up to. The party members were attached to him with great love. The S.A. would have allowed themselves to get torn into shreds for him. Goebbels, that was like Hitler himself. Goebbels, that was just our Goebbels."

—Horst Wessel

The arrival of the "Marat of Red Berlin, a nightmare and goblin of history" in 1926 marks a dark day in the city's history. A committed Nazi and master of propaganda, Goebbels transforms the party in Berlin; previously a marginalized, fractious group, it quickly becomes a machine for promoting National Socialist interests and the Führer myth.



Joseph Goebbels

Joseph Goebbels is born into a strict Catholic family in 1897. A childhood case of polio leaves him with a deformed foot, a physical malady that keeps him out of the Great War but also forms the core of his spiteful inferiority complex.

An opportunist first and foremost, Goebbels, after joining the NSDAP in 1922, accomplishes a remarkable pivot in 1926, going from co-authoring a pamphlet calling for the expulsion of "petty-bourgeois" Hitler from the party earlier in the year, to being named district leader of Berlin-Brandenburg by Hitler before the year is out.

A frustrated poet and author, Goebbels turns his creative energies toward organizing, myth-making, and rabble-rousing. He founds and runs a paper, *Der Angriff* (*The Attack*), designs posters, stages parades, and deploys his Stormtroopers at politically opportune moments to instigate street battles, stir up trouble in beer halls, and perpetrate drive-by shootings, all the better to sow chaos and disorder—which, of course, only the deific Hitler, acting as brave shield-bearer against the agents of collapse, can tame.

Goebbels openly talks about destroying the system from within. Upon becoming a Reichstag member in 1928, he is quoted as saying "We are entering the Reichstag, in order that we may arm ourselves with the weapons of democracy from its arsenal. We shall become Reichstag deputies in order that the Weimar ideology should itself help us to destroy it."

Despite his best efforts, the popularity of the Nazi Party in Berlin remains low. But with the global economic collapse of 1929, things turn around as desperate voters begin looking for a savior, leading to his appointment as Reich Propaganda Leader of the NSDAP. Over the next three years, Goebbels helps steer the party first to greater representation in the Reichstag and then a total takeover of the government in January 1933. In May of that year, Goebbels organizes one of the most infamous acts of Nazi propaganda, the mass burning in Berlin of books deemed to be "un-German" in spirit. This includes Communist and Marxist works, pacifist literature, Jewish literature, "degenerate art" books, writings by liberal Weimar politicians and thinkers, such as Walther Rathenau, and much of **Dr. Hirschfeld's** (page 77) library on human sexuality.

Goebbels is utterly cynical and amoral. He is deeply hateful toward himself and turns this hate against the human race, and Jewish people in particular. He is one of the most virulently anti-Semitic members of the Nazi leadership and openly expresses his feelings without reservation.

Valeska Gert (1892–1933)

Valeska Gert is born to a Berlin Jewish family in 1892 and from an early age expresses an interest in dance. She trains with Maria Moissi and is a contemporary student to Anita Berber when the latter is just starting out.

Much like Berber, Gert is interested in revolutionary dance; her routines often verge into the realm of performance art, though that term has not yet been coined. A famous example is her piece "Pause," in which she takes the stage in between film showings at cinemas and simply stands still for the duration of the piece. She creates dances that replicate boxing matches, traffic accidents, and orgasms.

She also designs her own dance costumes and street fashion to be as transgressive as possible. Her anarchic style is very much in keeping with the Dada philosophy, and she is a fixture at Berlin cabarets and dance halls. In addition, she works as an artist's model and acts in several films, most prominently in G. W. Pabst's *Diary of a Lost Girl* (1929).

She is fearless in her artistic expression, and a great lover of life. Unlike Berber, she does not burn out, instead fading to obscurity after being forced to leave the country by Nazi prohibition on her dancing.

Max Hermann-Neiße (1917–33)

A writer and journalist, Hermann-Neiße and his wife, Helene "Leni" Gebek, are fixtures on the Berlin cabaret scene for the entirety of their 16-year residence in the city. Out of a professed deep and abiding love for the art form, Hermann-Neiße spends much of his time writing about how post-war cabaret in Berlin has fallen from its lofty

Wilhelmian heights, going for cheap sensation and empty-headed entertainment in place of what was once a vehicle for smart, in-depth social critique. The following passage from 1925 is typical of his rantings: "A decisively independent, purposefully intellectual and fighting cabaret no longer exists, only amusement locales on approximately the same level, each of which has its own method of acceding to the wishes of the public."

Hermann-Neiße is an early and enthusiastic supporter of the transgressive dancer Anita Berber and, later, the lyricist Friedrich Holländer, who, in his estimation, are the only figures in cabaret maintaining the form's old emphasis on parodic deconstruction of Berlin society.

Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld (1896–1933)

A controversial and polarizing figure, Dr. Hirschfeld is called "the Einstein of Sex" by his admirers and openly disparaged by his detractors, chief among them the Nazi Party. Hirschfeld is both gay and Jewish, making him a double target for right-wing reactionaries. The fact that he openly discusses sex and vigorously advocates for legal recognition for gay men ensures his stature among certain groups. To many, he is a hero, opening up his **Institute of Sexology** (page 50) as a font of research and medical treatment for people from all spectrums of human sexuality.



Max Hermann-Neiße



Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld

Hirschfeld is active in Berlin's queer community, and considered as something of a father figure. He is a frequent target of harassment from **Joseph Goebbels** (page 76) and his Stormtroopers. Hirschfeld is on a worldwide speaking tour when the Nazis seize power and never returns to Berlin after 1933. He dies in Nice, France just two years later.

Christopher Isherwood (1929–33)

It is through the writings of British author Christopher Isherwood that the Anglophone world has developed its impressions of Weimar Berlin. In addition to his *Berlin Stories*, a play (*I Am a Camera*), the musical *Cabaret*, and the film of the same name are all based on his works and the characters he developed therein.

As much as Isherwood attempts in his writings to maintain a sense of narrative remove (his famous line, "I am a camera with its shutter open, quite passive, recording, not thinking," opens the first of his Berlin books, *Goodbye to Berlin*), he is very much a part of the city, particularly its gay scene.

Invited to visit Berlin at the age of 25 by his old chum and sometime lover, the poet W. H. Auden, Isherwood sets his mind on taking up residence in the city after witnessing its open attitude toward queer people. Auden and mutual friend Stephen Spender drift in and out of Berlin, but Isherwood remains for four years, departing when he sees the winds of history shifting.



Christopher Isherwood

After taking a room at Dr. Hirschfeld's Institute of Sexology, Isherwood eventually moves to a room in Nollendorfplatz, where he writes much of what becomes his *Berlin Stories*. He also meets a flat mate, **Jean Ross** (page 81), who informs the characterization of his most famous creation, Sally Bowles.

Isherwood's favorite haunt during his time in Berlin is the Cosy Corner, a den of Line-Boys, rough trade, and expatriates like Isherwood. He also spends time at the New Eldorado, situated not far from his Nollendorfplatz residence. Investigators moving around Berlin in the late 1920s and early 1930s may well catch a glimpse of a handsome young British man absorbing the scenes around him, silently cataloging all he sees for later consignment to the page.

Fritz Lang and Thea von Harbou (1920–33)

One of the great visionary auteurs of silent cinema, Fritz Lang is born in Vienna in 1890 to a Jewish mother and Catholic father. After serving in the Austro-Hungarian army during the Great War (over the course of which he is hospitalized three times and eventually attains the rank of Lieutenant), he is hired by Berlin film studio Ufa to write screenplays. It doesn't take long for him to start directing as well.

Lang marries Thea von Harbou in 1922, inaugurating a decade of productive collaboration. Harbou, born in 1888 to a wealthy Bavarian family, comes to Berlin in 1917 with her husband, the actor Rudolf Klein-Rogge, and immediately makes an impact as a screenwriter. She and Lang meet and fall in love while collaborating on a project for Ufa. Following the death of Lang's first wife (under mysterious circumstances) and Harbou's divorce from Klein-Rogge, they are free to wed.

Lang and Harbou are collaborators on every film he produces for the remainder of the decade. From the crime thriller *Dr. Mabuse: the Gambler* (1922) to the five-hour epic *Die Niebelungen* (1924) to the ground-breaking sci-fi spectacular *Metropolis* (1927) and, finally, to Lang's first "talkie" feature, *M* (1931), he and Harbou produce one classic after another.

For most movies, Harbou also writes a novelization of her script and serves on set in a variety of roles, even peeling potatoes and preparing food for the crew. Lang, for his part, is the model of the classic dictatorial director, pacing the film lot with a monocle clenched over one eye, shouting commands and maintaining an iron grip on production, arranging the actors in his shots like delicate pieces of a visual puzzle. It is even rumored that he throws Peter Lorre down a flight of stairs prior to shooting the final scene in *M*, in which Lorre's character has been severely beaten—all the better to give the actor a properly bloody appearance.

Lang's films tend to dwell on themes of individual will being crushed under the uncaring boot-heel of corrupt institutions. This, along with his Jewish heritage, puts him at odds with the new Nazi regime, and he flees Germany for Paris (and ultimately Hollywood) in 1933.

Harbou, an open admirer of Hitler, remains behind, eventually joining the Nazi Party and making films for the state-run movie industry. She and Lang are divorced the year he leaves.

During the golden years of their marriage, Lang and Harbou are two of Berlin's most luminous stars. Their home in Berlin is a virtual museum of exotic artifacts collected from Asia and the Pacific Islands, and their films and books often make them the toast of the town. Encountered in person, Lang is difficult if he doesn't get his way, while Harbou is quietly self-effacing but possesses a sharp intelligence and genuine passion about Nationalist politics.

Vladimir Nabokov (1922–37)

Just one man amid the sea of 300,000 Russian émigrés that pour into Berlin in the years after the Bolshevik Revolution, during his 15-year residence in the city Vladimir Nabokov is not yet the towering literary giant he one day becomes, though over the course of this time he begins to earn that reputation.



He comes to Berlin shortly after graduating Cambridge University to join his family, who've been living in the city since 1920. Tragedy strikes not soon after, when Nabokov's father (also named Vladimir) is gunned down while successfully preventing the assassination of the liberal politician Pavel Milyukov. Nabokov's remaining family leaves the city after this, but Vladimir stays. While he never fully integrates with the German community, picking up only a bit of the language and remaining within the large Russian expatriate population on the west side of the city, Berlin touches him deeply and informs his writing for the rest of his career.

With his keen observer's eye, he notes small details that others miss. In particular, he describes the state of affairs among the émigré community—once comfortable bourgeois and aristocratic folk (like himself), now forced to live an uncertain lifestyle in a foreign land, “urban vagabond[s] with an early evening thirst,” as he puts it in his 1925 work *The Fight*. Despite being tri-lingual, speaking French and English as well as Russian, during this time he writes almost exclusively in the latter tongue under the pen name “Sirin.”

Although his prolific writing output is well received among the Russian community, it still is not enough to pay the bills, and Nabokov devotes much of his time to language tutoring, as well as teaching tennis and boxing and appearing as a film extra. In 1921, at a masquerade ball, he meets a woman wearing a “black mask with a wolf's profile”—this is Vera Slonim, a Russian Jew and soon to be Nabokov's wife.

Although Vladimir loves his peculiar life in Berlin, he is eventually forced to give it up. His own family's left-wing political history combined with his Jewish wife makes life increasingly tenuous under the Nazi regime, and he and Vera (along with their three-year-old son Dmitri) leave everything behind to start anew in France.

Lola Niedlich

The star of the Stork's Nest evening cabaret shows, with her cascading blonde coiffure, bedroom eyes, and smoky voice, the chair-straddling Lola Niedlich (“Lola Cute”) is the prototypical underground chanteuse. Much as the Stork's Nest is the model for the eponymous Blue Angel cabaret in the movie of the same name, Niedlich is the model for Dietrich's Lola Lola. An inveterate self-promoter, Niedlich is known to circulate among the Stork's Nest patrons in between her numbers, peddling racy photo-postcards of herself in a variety of scintillating poses. She bills herself as “the Prize-Winning Torch-Singer, Three Times Engaged at Marienbad” and does indeed fly from the nest for periodic touring engagements around Germany and Austria.

Fritz Lang and Thea von Harbou

participants, artist Ricki Hallgarten, shoots himself on the eve before their departure.

Schwarzenbach finances her wild lifestyle and travels across Europe with journalistic and fictive writing, as well as photography, building a reputation as a multi-talented creative force. One of her many admirers, Marianne Breslauer, later writes of Schwarzenbach, "She was neither a man nor a woman but an angel, an archangel."

Encountered during her heyday in Berlin, Schwarzenbach is the prototypical dissipated dilettante-cum-genius. She lives dangerously and expects those around her to keep up. Her drugs of choice are hard liquor and morphine, and she is never in bed before dawn.

Kurt Tucholsky (1899–1924)

"Human stupidity is international."

—Kurt Tucholsky

A native of the city, Tucholsky spends some childhood years abroad in Poland before returning to Berlin. With the exception of three years spent serving on the Eastern Front in the Great War, he spends the next quarter-century of his life in the city he loves, trying, in the words of one admirer, to stop catastrophes with his typewriter.



Annemarie Schwarzenbach

Tucholsky's writing output is truly awe-inspiring. Working primarily as a journalist and satirist, he produces so much material that he is obliged to adopt four pennames—Ignaz Wrobel, Theobald Tiger, Peter Panter, and Kaspar Hauser—simply to avoid his name showing up under every single by-line in the papers *Ulk* (Prank) and *Die Weltbühne*. At the latter paper, he forms a close working relationship with Carl von Ossietzky.

But Tucholsky is not simply a reporter. He is also a poet and lyricist, penning some of the most acidic and hilarious cabaret songs of his age—his most popular tune is *Die Rote Melodie* (The Red Melody), an anti-war anthem written specifically for the famous cabaret singer Rosa Valetti. His ultimate cause is the health and success of the Republic (he is a committed member of the SPD, although often its most vocal critic also), and he sees as much danger in radical leftism as in right-wing Nationalism.

He lives and breathes the politics of the day, condemning the spate of assassinations and lynchings that ravage Germany in the five years following the Armistice, and the tacit support given by the ultra-conservative judiciary, which he summarizes as, "The German political murder of the past four years is schematically and tightly organized. Everything is certain from the outset: incentives from anonymous financial backers, the deed (always from behind), sloppy investigation, lazy excuses, a few phrases, pitiful skiving, lenient punishments, suspension of sentences, privileges—'Carry on!' That is not bad justice. That is not poor justice. That is not justice at all. Even the Balkans and South America will refuse to be compared with this Germany."

His writing is marked by a satirical cynicism; it is he and not Stalin who first coins the phrase, "The death of one man: that is a catastrophe. One hundred thousand deaths: that is a statistic!" He often speaks at public events, particularly SPD rallies and at lectures given by the German League for Human Rights.

A committed pacifist, Tucholsky writes his most controversial article in 1931, when reminiscing on the Great War, "For four years, there were whole square miles of land where murder was obligatory, while it was strictly forbidden half an hour away. Did I say: murder? Of course murder. Soldiers are murderers."

He also assists Ossietzky in investigative reporting uncovering the Republic's secret re-armament program in violation of the Treaty of Versailles, work that confronts him and Ossietzky with treason charges.

By the time Tucholsky writes these controversial articles, he is long gone from Germany, decamping first to Paris in the spring of 1924, then to Sweden in 1929. These changes are the result of a restless spirit looking for new outlets, but they also accompany significant changes in

Tucholsky's personal life, each being marked by a divorce and a new love.

Encountered, Tucholsky is utterly charming in a completely unexpected way. Despite his short stature, pudgy build, and hangdog expression, he makes friends easily and woos women with aplomb. Women in particular are Tucholsky's great non-political obsession, and they in turn fall hard for him, leaving behind their husbands and children to accompany him on his wild adventures. Female investigators of above-average APP will certainly find themselves objects of his dangerous charms.

Like his fellow journalist and social observer **Joseph Roth** (page 82), Tucholsky dies far too young in exile. His friend Ossietzky does not make it out of Germany before the Nazis come for him in 1933 (he dies a slow and agonizing death in a concentration camp); Tucholsky never forgives himself for not traveling back to Germany to defend his friend, though under no illusions that he would have escaped the same fate. Tucholsky, long a savage foe of the Nazi Party, is declared a "degenerate artist" and has his German citizenship revoked once Hitler is in power—his books are among those burned by **Joseph Goebbels** (page 76) in Berlin in 1933.



Kurt Tucholsky

Francis Turville-Petre (1928–31)

The British archaeologist Francis Turville-Petre, in addition to playing a crucial role in bringing W.H. Auden and **Christopher Isherwood** (page 78) out to the city, is a fascinating character in his own right.

Turville-Petre is born in 1901 to a wealthy Catholic family in Leicestershire, England. He attends Exeter College, Oxford, taking a Diploma in Physical Anthropology in 1924. The following year, while digging near the Sea of Galilee in Mandatory Palestine, Turville-Petre makes a remarkable find: the skull of an ancient hominid, the first ever discovered in Western Asia. The skull is later identified as that of an *H. heidelbergensis* man and is dubbed Galilee Man. All of this would come as a surprise to Isherwood and his literary associates. After Francis (whom his friends call "Fronny") moves to Berlin, he completely shifts his career focus. An openly gay man, Fronny takes up residence at the **Institute of Sexology** (page 50), giving lectures and joining the Scientific Humanitarian Committee, where he lobbies tirelessly for legalization of homosexuality and tolerance of queer people. As a rule, he does not share his archaeological past with his friends.

Fronny makes the most of his time in Berlin, shocking his friend Isherwood with his promiscuity. In 1931, Fronny leaves the city for life on a private Greek island (Agios Nikolaos), surrounded by strapping Greek youths. Isherwood later parodies Fronny's time on the island in his 1962 novel *Down There on a Visit*, in which Turville-Petre is re-cast as a mad Greek king. Fronny ultimately moves on to Egypt, where he dies under mysterious circumstances at the age of 40 in 1941.

Conrad Veidt (1893–1933)

Berlin-born Conrad Veidt is one of Germany's greatest actors during its Golden Age of silent cinema. Veidt gets his start in the acting trade while recuperating from jaundice and pneumonia while serving on the Eastern Front during the Great War. There, the army grants him leave to perform for troops serving on the front lines in the Baltics.

After being discharged from the army for medical reasons, Veidt returns to Berlin and makes a name for himself treading the boards in **Max Reinhardt's** (page 81) Deutsches Theater. "God save him from the cinema!" a theatre critic declares, but Veidt, like so many others, follows the money to the silver screen.

He first makes his mark playing the lead in the 1919 picture *Different from the Others* (dir. Oswald). Co-written by **Dr. Hirschfeld** (page 77), it is the first movie in history to explicitly portray queer characters and does so in a compassionate way. The following year, Veidt's popularity explodes when he plays Cesare, a sleepwalking murderer, in

the Expressionist-horror classic *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (Wiene, 1920).

Veidt also stars in a string of pictures with the fiery dancer Anita Berber, including the horror anthology *Eerie Tales* (Oswald, 1919), and becomes a fixture of Berlin nightlife—some wags even claim that Veidt works the streets as a cross-dressing prostitute, though these are never more than scurrilous rumors. Becoming something of a genre pioneer, Veidt stars in three other highly influential and well-received horror/thriller pictures, *Waxworks* (Leni and Berinski, 1924), *The Hands of Dr. Orlac* (Wiene, 1924), and *The Student of Prague* (Galeen, 1926).

Ultimately, Veidt makes 119 films. While most of these are shot in Berlin, he does, rather uniquely, enjoy a two-part Hollywood career. The first comes when John Barrymore sees Veidt's performance in *Waxworks* and insists on bringing him out to Hollywood to co-star in Barrymore's historical epic *The Beloved Rogue* (Crosland, 1927). Although initially planning to just shoot the one movie and return to Germany, Veidt is warmly welcomed by the German filmmaker émigré community in Los Angeles and stays on for two more years, starring in several more pictures, the most notable being 1928's *The Man Who Laughs* (dir. Leni)—Veidt's chilling makeup depicting a man with a permanent smile carved into his face eventually inspires the creation of comic book villain The Joker.



Conrad Veidt

With the advent of talkies, the thickly accented Veidt is obliged to return to Berlin. By this point, Hitler and his Nazis are beginning their ascent to power, and Veidt uses his celebrity to criticize them as much, and as publicly, as possible. Matters become even more personal for Veidt when he marries his third wife, Ilona "Lily" Prager, a German Jew.

In 1933, when laws are passed requiring all members of the movie industry to fill out "racial questionnaires," Veidt marks his "race" down as *Jude* despite having been born and raised Lutheran. This act of defiance spells the end of Veidt's acting career in Germany, and soon he, Lily, and their daughter flee to Britain.

Veidt's previous two wives were the cabaret performer Augusta "Gussy" Holl (the marriage lasted from 1918–22) and the dilettante Felizitas Radke (1923–29).

During the silent era, there are few male actors in Europe who can match Veidt for popularity. He is quietly devoted to socially progressive causes and believes in using his fame and fortune as capital to advance his beliefs. During the Second World War, he donates his life savings and nearly all of his earnings to helping the British war effort. For many, Veidt will be remembered for appearing in *The Thief of Bagdad* (dir. Powell, Berger, Whelan, 1940) and playing the role of Major Strasser in *Casablanca* (dir. Curtiz, 1942).

Investigators encountering him during his time in Berlin will find an intensely passionate individual who, nonetheless, understands the importance of having a bit of fun from time to time.

Paul von Hindenburg (1925–33)

Second President of the Republic, and one of the chief architects of its demise, Paul von Hindenburg is a former general in the Imperial German military and one of Germany's greatest war heroes. An archconservative in the old mold of tough-as-boot-leather Prussian military nobility and a committed monarchist, Hindenburg seems an odd choice for leader of a constitutional republic. Certainly, he thinks as much himself, but, upon the death of **Friedrich Ebert** (page 74) in 1925, Hindenburg is convinced by friends and advisors that he must come out of retirement and lead the country.

After the war, Hindenburg was one of the chief architects of the "stab in the back" theory (that Germany had been on the verge of winning the war but was sold out by self-serving politicians and Communists), and he deeply dislikes the Weimar constitution and its government. Nevertheless, he takes his oath to uphold the constitution seriously, at least at first.

He is deeply influenced by a coterie of unofficial advisors (including his son Oskar), called the Kamarilla, who push him toward a "soft coup" within the government. By invoking a

MYTHOS BERLIN

The scenarios in the latter part of this book present examples of the presence of the Mythos in Berlin; however, a city does not earn its reputation as the “Wickedest Place on Earth” and not also attract the perfidious, pervasive influence of the Mythos, and Keepers may rest assured that it may be found nearly anywhere one cares to look.

Sorcerers studying suppressed tomes at the Prussian State Library worship Yog-Sothoth and Azathoth, calling upon these unknowable Old Ones for keys to transcendent power. Some wish it for themselves, others to advance their political causes, but all represent an existential threat to every citizen of Berlin. Meanwhile, the cultists of the Fraternitas Saturni enact mirror-magic rituals to contact Tsathoggua and his spawn on far-distant Saturn, while Shub-Niggurath exalts in the hedonistic abandon and rampant fornication of the Friedrichstadt and Ku’damm. Initiated priestess-prostitutes make obeisance to the Black Goat of the Woods with a Thousand Young, asking for her protection from the polenta, oilers, and fleas (police, pimps, and johns, respectively) that present constant on-the-job hazards.

Drugs and sex and general debasement, meanwhile, draw other cults and worshippers here, as well as other horrors beyond human ken, lurking just on the other side of human consciousness, feeding lies and temptations to the desperate and the depraved, and finding many an unwitting worshipper—and vessel.

Lastly, Nyarlathotep, that great tempter of mankind, walks unnoticed among the throngs in the Alex, or whispers to worshippers among the bracken and brambles of the Grunewald and Tiergarten. Whether a nightclub artiste, emcee, or a knowledgeable gent or lady, the Crawling Chaos and those who serve him can certainly be found in the smoke-filled, hazy, corridors of Berlin.

BERLIN’S CULTS

Nyarlathep’s Emcee

Rumors are swirling through Berlin’s shadiest cabarets and *Nachtklubs* of a strange emcee who appears unannounced in the midst of wild parties and turns the evening into something truly unforgettable. Calling herself Nefertiti, she does indeed bear a striking resemblance to the famous bust housed at the Neues Museum, albeit with a rather androgynous figure. Regardless, Nefertiti tends to appear only in the most obscure and exclusive clubs, and only once the party is fully underway.

Once Nefertiti starts leading the ceremonies, things tend to take uncanny turns. Servers start pouring glasses of strangely colored cocktails instead of champagne; unscheduled acts appear on stage—comedians who veer from exuberant comedy to nihilistic rapture, launching into extended monologues about the joke of life and the farce of existence; singers who perform popular standards in Aramaic or who just seem to dart about screaming into the audience’s faces; stage magicians who make people disappear and *not* return; and naked revues that are far more unsettling than titillating for reasons no one can quite put their finger on.

Simply attending a party hosted by Nefertiti is likely to provoke a **Sanity** roll (1/1D3 loss or more, depending on the acts witnessed). Those who fail succumb to the madness of an evening’s revels, falling into temporary or indefinite insanity, becoming obsessed with Nefertiti, being able to think of little else than finding the next event where she’ll be hosting and seeking to gain her favor. When not in her presence, those affected sink into a lethargic malaise that can be offset only through the use of stimulating drugs or the promise of seeing Nefertiti soon.

The strange emcee knows her biggest fans well and rewards them with personal attention at her shows and free drugs

(usually cocaine) at highly exclusive and private after-show parties held in secret places. Nefertiti seems particularly delighted whenever she manages to hook an influential or well-respected member of the community, going out of her way to offer such people “a little something extra” as she calls it—what this phrase means is anyone’s guess, but some suspect it may involve some form of initiation or membership to a clandestine group with Nefertiti at its head. It seems Nefertiti is well informed about her audience, as she knows just what to say to have everyone hanging on her words. Whatever her patron’s desire, she seems able to supply it, encouraging and preying on humanity’s worst impulses, be they desire, greed, lust, or hate.

Y’gononac

In the heart of Alt-Berlin, amid the medieval byways of Nikolaiviertel and within sight of the twin spires of St. Nicholas’ Church, there sits a congenial café called the Kirchenklause. Open from 11 am to midnight, the Kirchenklause serves up several varieties of beer (Bavarian, Pilsen, and local Weisse-Bier) alongside hearty plates of sauerkraut and pig knuckles. The restaurant is closed on Sundays, holidays, and, without exception, on the first day of every month.

The locals who regularly frequent the Kirchenklause may all be distinguished by their outsized physiques; men and women alike are universally of ample proportion. Their eyes shine brightly, their cheeks perpetually flushed, their brows dappled with sweat, as if they have just finished polishing off an especially hearty meal—as most likely they have.

The proprietor of the café, one Gustaf Roth, is even more corpulent than his most loyal customers. Old pictures of Roth from before the Great War show a slim and muscular man, hardly recognizable as the man who now serves the beer and meat at the Kirchenklause. Indeed, Roth is much changed, as it was during the Turnip Winter of 1916–1917 when he first encountered the unwholesome entity called Y’gononac and, quite literally, took the god into himself.

Shortly afterward, Kirchenklause opened up. Roth attracted a loyal following of customers who were similarly dedicated to the many pleasures offered by the Defiler. In monthly rituals, they gather in the ancient brick cellar of the café, where they worship the god as it manifests through Roth’s body and offer a living sacrifice (usually taken from the teeming, unregistered immigrant masses around Alexanderplatz) to be consumed by their lord. Then the feast of depravity begins.

Seemingly, the cult holds no particular ambitions outside of feeding its insatiable hungers, but as those appetites continue to grow, the number of missing persons in Berlin grows as well.

Die Schwarze Ziege

Among the wild youth of Berlin, there is one gang that takes their strange lifestyle seriously indeed. Calling themselves “Lost Boys,” they self-consciously adopt the costumes and personae of the characters from the English-language Peter Pan tales written by J. M. Barrie.

Somewhere along the way, influenced by a battered and abridged translation of Frazer’s *The Golden Bough* stolen from a bookshop, they began to actually worship Pan as a god, little suspecting they were actually communing with an avatar of Shub-Niggurath, the Black Goat of a Thousand Young.

Deep in the Grunewald is an ancient glade where the Lost Boys make their home; those who sleep in the glade under a cloudless sky during the new moon are transported to “somewhere else,” where they meet the Great God Pan in its aspect as a handsome, goat-hoofed youth, and listen to its hypnotic piping.

Although the gang is eccentric even by Wild Boy standards, it is relatively harmless—for now. Unfortunately, in their latest venture to Pan’s domain, the Lost Boys’ god imparted knowledge of the spell Summon Dark Young (see *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook*, page 263) to the gang’s leader, Nibs. While Nibs has yet to try the spell out, he knows that it promises him great power and the ability to visit retribution upon his enemies. It is only a matter of time before the Lost Boys acquire the required sacrifice and unleash a horror in the Grunewald.

Kosmische Ballette

Inspired by the “Triadic Ballets” of Oskar Schlemmer, a dance troupe recently began rehearsals in an abandoned warehouse near the Havel in the district of Spandau. Like the Triadic Ballets, these so-called “Cosmic Ballets” are highly structured—ritualistic, even—and feature a cavalcade of strange and unsettling costumes representing a variety of odd concepts: the Render of Veils, the Hydra, the Unclean, Illimitable Androgynous Desire, Darkness, the Nameless Mist, the Flautist, and the Unbegotten Source.

The costumed dancers move to the strains of wild piping performed by a small flute orchestra of musicians who are always found dressed in hooded black robes that concealing all but the outsized bone flutes they play with waxen, flabby fingers that seem to move about the instruments in distinctly unnatural ways. The music they perform does not seem to conform to any Earthly scales (costing 1/1D4 Sanity points to hear).

In fact, the “orchestra” consists of five human musicians who have been driven utterly insane by contact with the company’s chief composer and choreographer: a Servitor of the Outer Gods (see *Call of Cthulhu Rulebook*, page 304), summoned by the company’s former director (now a

catatonic patient of Dalldorf asylum) in a desperate attempt to gain new creative insights. Needless to say, he got far more than he bargained for.

The company's 13 human members (seven men and six women) are fervent in their desire to bring what they call "clear vision" to the stage. For now at least, no theater in Berlin is willing to grant this, as every producer and promoter who attends a rehearsal has left feeling somewhat unsettled, if not outright reduced to tears or visceral anger.

The company's chief composer, who resides out of sight in the warehouse, is growing bored with this latest distraction, and thinks more and more of returning to its place at Azathoth's side. The company is desperate to prevent this, for they cannot imagine a life now without the servitor as their visionary leader, and they are attempting any number of schemes to ensure their master remains with them. As a result, they are likely to take matters a step too far, resorting to blackmail, bribery, and even murder to find a suitable venue so that their visionary ballet can be performed in public.

SCENARIO SEEDS

Die Weiße Frau (The White Lady)

Location: Unter den Linden.

Discovery: the White Lady of the City Palace has returned! Not seen in over a century, the ghost of a lady dressed in white is once again roaming the halls of the Stadtschloß, ancient residence of Prussian kings and now a museum (**Museum Island**, page 46).

Research: looking up the history of the White Lady reveals a multitude of sightings between 1625–1790. Who the White Lady is and why her visitations stopped are unknown. Three sightings have been reported in the last month, two by members of the Palace Museum staff and one by a member of the public—a cameraman with the small production company, Hilde-film (**Investigator Organizations**, page 16), who has the footage on celluloid.

Keeper Notes: the White Lady is none other than Countess Kunigunda of Orlamünde (d. 1382), who fell in love with Albrecht the Beautiful and murdered her two children with a sewing needle because she believed they stood in the way of winning his hand. (He told her that "two pairs of eyes" prevented him from marrying her; he actually meant his own parents.) Exactly why the Countess has chosen this precise moment in history to reappear is for the Keeper to decide. Use this seed to develop a connection to Berlin's medieval

past, as a note of quiet pathos in the middle of a bustling metropolis, or as a good old-fashioned ghost hunt.

A Pox on Your House

Location: the Tiergarten.

Discovery: patients admitted to the Charité (**The Tiergarten**, page 27) are suffering from a strange malady unknown to modern medicine. The whole of the hospital is suffused by a charnel smell that even the most powerful disinfectants cannot overcome.

Research: a cursory investigation of the history of the Charité notes that it was originally a quarantine house, and the grounds upon which it sits are filled with the remains of plague victims. Further research correlates the symptoms of the current pandemic to the 1709 plague that prompted the Charité's construction.

Keeper Notes: this may be a case of ghostly infection carried out by the spirits of the restless dead buried beneath the hospital. Exhumation and reburial of the unhallowed dead may be in order. Alternately, a crazed doctor on the hospital staff may have unleashed a Mythos force, whose presence amplifies or imparts disease, as part of a misguided research project. The entity spreads its malign influence through a long-dormant disease, now brought back to life. How do the investigators combat something that can't even be seen, particularly after they begin to feel the symptoms of the pox themselves?

Der Ring

Location: the Alex.

Discovery: something positively unwholesome is being served up at the automat located in the lobby of the Babylon Cinema on Kaiser-Wilhelm-Straße: suspicions of what exactly is in the bratwurst are aroused when a gold ring is found inside the sausage. For maximum effect, this discovery should come at the expense of a poor investigator biting into the meat and discovering the ring with their teeth! (1/1D4 Sanity loss.)

Research: finding out details about the automat's owners and operators is surprisingly difficult. The establishment rents space from the cinema but is owned by a mysterious consortium that has ties to the local criminal syndicate, the *Norddeutscher* ("North German") Ring. Indeed, the ring the investigators found in the sausage is that typically worn by members of the Norddeutscher Gang.

Manfred Freiherr von Killinger, 36, assassin on a mission

As the leader of Organisation Consul, the appropriately named Killinger is in charge of planning assassinations and heading up the group's system of *vehme* (vigilante) courts, which arrest "traitors" and "November criminals" and pass death sentences in illegal, underground proceedings. Since Consul's formation two years ago, Killinger has, directly or indirectly, been a part of more than 350 political killings across Germany. He has come to Berlin to oversee the group's greatest planned assassination: that of Walther Rathenau, Minister of Finance, and to enact a magical ritual that uses Rathenau as a blood sacrifice.

- **Description:** a pudgy man of middling height and appearance, Killinger is always smartly dressed (whether in the Consul's paramilitary uniform or his own civilian garb). He wears a broom-handle mustache and carefully coiffed hair. His button eyes only reflect back the observer and reveal nothing of the man inside.
- **Traits:** Killinger is fond of his leather riding crop and carries it wherever he goes. He is not shy about using to it lash his "inferiors" (particularly any underlings he considers insubordinate, as well as his nightly prostitutes).

- **Roleplaying hooks:** despite his strutting martinet exterior, Killinger prefers to have others do the dirty work whenever possible. He doesn't hesitate to use extreme violence to restore order, however.

Police Inspector Krieg, 54, hardboiled cop

The chief detective on the Großmann case, Inspector Krieg is perhaps the best link to the deceased murderer's motivations and personality.

- **Description:** Krieg's dark hair is shot through with white and gray thanks to the daily stresses of his work. His baggy eyes, though bloodshot, are keen and always observant. Wears a shabby suit.
- **Traits:** a chain smoker, Krieg reeks of tobacco smoke even when he doesn't have a cigarette dangling from his chapped lips.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** Krieg is a busy man and keeps his conversations brief; however, if presented with new evidence of a past crime or with the potential of more murders, he will take as much time as necessary to ascertain the validity of the claims.



Pyotr Shabelsky-Bork



Manfred Freiherr von Killinger

THE DEVIL EATS FLIES

Baron Arthur von Kleist, 67, *scheming monarchist*

A Baltic German and former Chief of Police for Russian Poland, Kleist remains a committed counterrevolutionary, much more devoted to the Russian monarchist cause than to Germany's. He takes in Anna Tchaikovsky after her release from the asylum but immediately begins to manipulate her claims to royalty for his own ends, believing that if he can help confirm her lineage and restore the Romanov dynasty, he will be richly rewarded.

- **Description:** a pencil-thin man with pince-nez glasses and an old-fashioned manner of dress. He has a livid dueling scar running along his left cheek. His hair is thin and snowy white, and he sports an impressive goatee and waxed mustache, also white.
- **Traits:** the baron uses his pocket watch as a social weapon, pointedly checking it if he feels that an interaction is going on too long or leading nowhere.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** normally officious, Kleist turns instantly sycophantic in the presence of Russian nobility or anyone else he thinks may be of assistance in his rise to fame and power.

Anita Berber, 23, *Berlin's naked goddess*

Currently one of the city's most famous (and infamous) personalities. Star of stage and screen, she is mostly known for her transgressive and transformative dances, and for her wild and unpredictable persona.

- **Description:** Berber commands attention wherever she goes. Her flaming red hair is cut short in a fashionable bob, and she is never seen in public without copious makeup: drawn-on eyebrows, plenty of kohl around the eyes, cherry red lips, and white face powder. Her body is thin and lithe, almost androgynous, and she dresses to accentuate this look.
- **Traits:** Berber is a rock star ahead of her time. She is loud and brash, coked-up, professionally outrageous, and increasingly disconnected from reality.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** when dealing with the investigators, she responds positively to anyone who presents an unusual or striking appearance or personality, or who offers her drugs (particularly cocaine). Investigators are advised to mind her violent mood swings and profane outbursts. She does not shy away from physical attacks, often at the slightest provocations.



Police Inspector Krieg



Baron Arthur von Kleist

DREAM VISIONS

At the outset of the scenario, the Keeper should determine whether any of the investigators in the group are artistically sensitive. This may include professional artists, of course, but also those with traits like “dreamer” or “hedonist.” If in doubt, ask any investigators with POW 65 or above to make a **POW** roll; success means they are affected. Such investigators, like many other sensitive souls in the city, are plagued by disturbing images in their dreams. Each morning of the investigation, affected investigators must make an **INT** roll to remember their disturbing dreams. Those who succeed receive one of the following visions (and the associated Sanity loss) in the following order:

1. **First-person vision:** entering a crowded nightclub (the Red Mill Cabaret, though investigators won’t know this unless they’ve been there before). The air is filled with cigarette smoke, the atmosphere lively. A prostitute approaches, smiling and cooing. The dreamer looks around and spots a pretty Slavic girl in simple garb. Chasing off the prostitute, the dreamer heads over to talk to the girl.

Keeper note: once the dreaming investigators meet Anna Tchaikovsky, they recognize her as the girl from this dream. Dreamers lose 0/1 Sanity point for the Red Mill Cabaret vision and 1/1D3 Sanity points for seeing Anna Tchaikovsky; if the investigators have yet to visit the café or meet Anna (or both), defer the Sanity loss until those events transpire.

2. **First-person vision:** a sexual liaison with a prostitute in an apartment (Großmann’s). The image quickly dissolves to the dreamer lying naked in bed while the woman stands in a dormer window, also naked, smoking. The dreamer’s body is not their own; it is a middle-aged man’s, underweight, flabby, and venous.

Keeper note: the dreamer loses 0/1 Sanity point. If the investigator has visited Großmann’s apartment and recognizes their surroundings, they lose one further point of Sanity; otherwise, the point is lost once the apartment is visited.



Anita Berber

TIMELINE

Wednesday, June 21: Großmann commits suicide. Investigators hired to look into Großmann/“Sasnovski” case.

Thursday, June 22: first reports of violent murders across the city (**The Murders**, page 127). In the evening, Baron von Kleist puts out the word about his “special guest” (**Anna in the Paper**, page 126). Anna Tchaikovsky is attacked this evening (**The First Attack**, page 124).

Friday, June 23: the *lustmorde* increase. Anna Tchaikovsky runs away to hide in the Berlin Zoo. Manfred von Killinger offers his Devil’s bargain.

Saturday, June 24: Walther Rathenau is assassinated.

simply indicates that solving this mystery is of the utmost importance to the parties he represents. Questions about the connection between the murder of the Romanovs and the murder of “Sasnovski” are likewise ducked.

The Prince informs the investigators that Schamzkovska was known to frequent the cafés around Andreasplatz and suggests they might start there by asking around. Sadly, he doesn’t have a photo of the girl, but he provides a description: back then, she would have been around 19 years of age, petite, with strawberry blonde hair, piercing blue eyes, and attractive features. *“If she is who we think she may be, then anyone who knew her will remember her,”* he insists.

THREADS OF THE INVESTIGATION

There are two threads investigators may pursue in their inquiries: trying to find more information about Schamzkovska/Sasnovski or looking into Carl Großmann and his history of crime.

RESEARCHING SCHAMZKOVSKA/SASNOVSKI

The following clue trail presents the steps the investigators can take following this thread through the scenario.

- Following the Prince’s direction to check out Andreasplatz and its surrounding neighborhoods (**The Kietz**, page 113), the investigators can learn of Großmann’s **Garden Colony** “cottage” (page 121) and of the **Red Mill Cabaret** (page 114).
- Checking out the Red Mill Cabaret, the investigators can turn up a lead about a young ingénue matching Schamzkovska’s description being committed to the **Dalldorf Asylum** (page 120).
- Snooping around at the Dalldorf Asylum reveals that this young woman was just recently remanded into the care of one Baron Kleist.
- Locating Kleist, investigators get a chance to interview the young lady, possibly revealing her true origins (**Meeting Anna Tchaikovsky**, page 122). If they take too long in their investigations, they are scooped by Kleist when he leaks news

of her identity to the media (**Anna in the Paper**, page 126).

- The Baron’s leak alerts Demon-Großmann to the location of the woman he suspects to be “Sasnovski,” and he soon undertakes a rather violent investigation of its own (**The First Attack**, page 124). If the investigators are present for the attack, they expose themselves to potential possession from the malevolent spirit.
- Whether they solve the mystery or are scooped, the investigators are paid by Constantinovich (**An Unusual Check**, page 125).

RESEARCHING GROßMANN

If following the thread concerning Großmann, the following clue trail may be used.

- **Handout: Devil 1** lists Großmann’s old address (**Lange Straße 88/89**, page 117), and the investigators may think to check this out.
- While poking around the apartment, they run into one or more of Großmann’s neighbors, all of whom have rather shady pasts themselves. Investigators may also learn of Großmann’s shed (**The Garden Colony**, page 121).
- Großmann’s old files are under the care of Inspector Krieg and **The Police** (page 119), and some important insights into the killer’s methods and goals may be gleaned from them. Particularly persuasive investigators may even lay their hands on Großmann’s journal, much to their peril.
- A trip out to the **Garden Colony** (page 121) reveals more about the killer’s personality and may turn up a strange doll that could prove useful in the scenario’s climactic scene.

Following the Threads

As investigators pursue either of these threads, violent murders break out around the city and monstrosities roam around in broad daylight (**Lustmord: The Killings Take Hold**, page 127). If the investigators have concluded their inquiry into the fate of the Schamzkovska girl by this point, they are pulled back in when she goes missing (**The Runaway**, page 129).

As the principals involved realize the true magnitude of the problem, the scenario moves to its thrilling climax (**Baldur’s Sacrifice**, page 131), in which the investigators’ collected knowledge about Großmann may save or doom them.

THE KIETZ

Kietz is criminal slang for the underworld lifestyle. In taking on this case, the investigators are in for an eyeful of the Kietz as they visit seedy cabarets and rundown tenements.

Although Prince Constantinovich holds his meeting late in the evening, it is by no means too late to begin the investigation right away—this is Berlin, after all! Indeed, some avenues of investigation will offer up different opportunities and information depending on the time of day they are visited.

THE FRIEDRICHSHAIN

This district of the city, running parallel to the Spree east of **The Alex** (page 28), is one of its poorest and most run-down. It is a hotbed for the KPD (German Communist Party) and criminal *Ringvereine* organizations. Indeed, the district is known to some as “Berlin’s Chicago” for its combination of working-class immigrants, leftist politics, and organized crime.

Central to the district is the massive Silesian Station, which brings in daily trainloads of Poles, Russians, and Jews from the east, along with itinerant German workers hoping to find employment, desperate runaways with dreams of

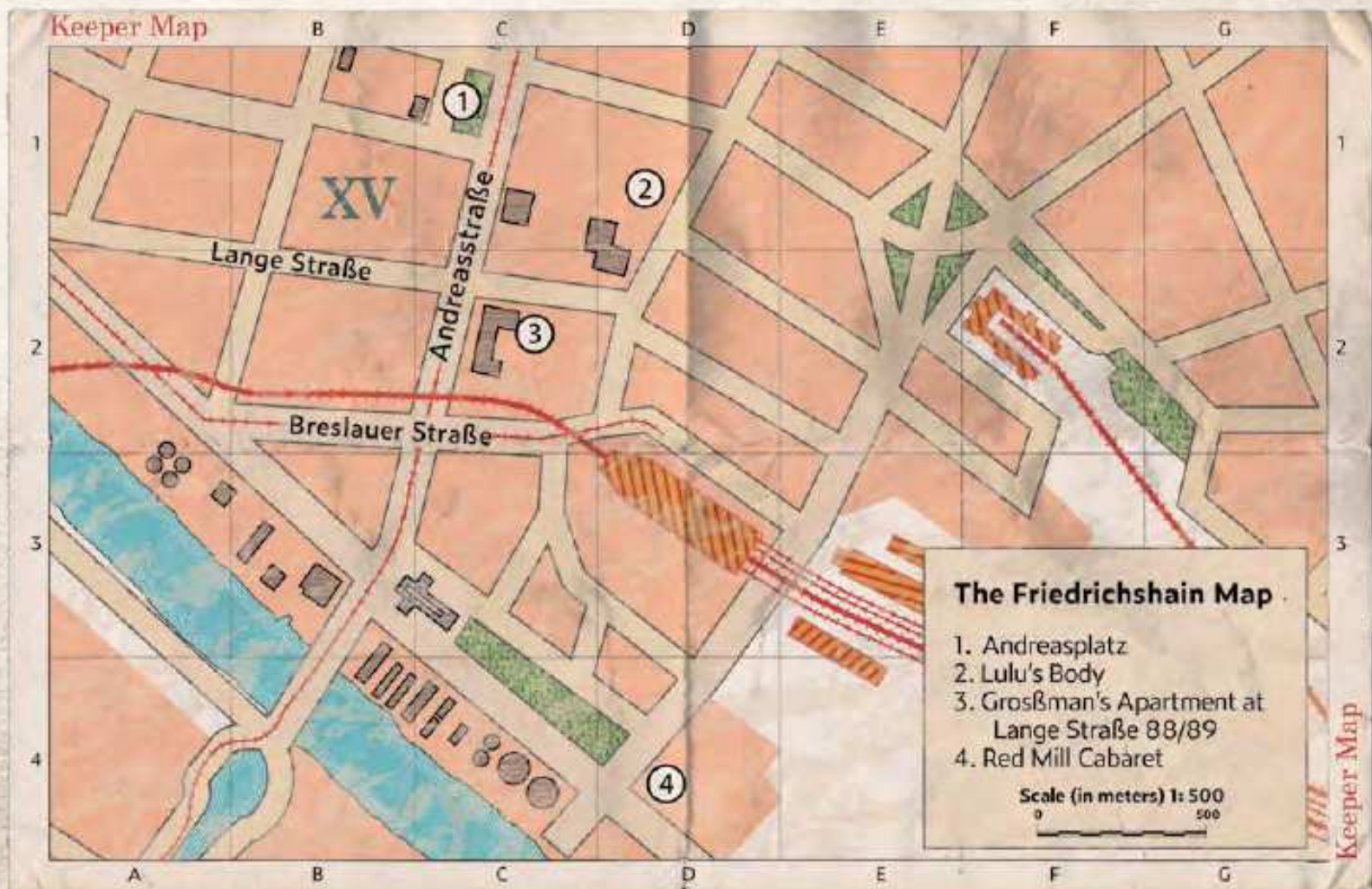
stardom, and migrant day laborers. The smoke from the trains gives the surrounding buildings a sooty coating that is never fully washed away, even after the heaviest rains.

Andreasplatz

Just a block north of Großmann’s apartment is a busy little square called Andreasplatz. Many of the strays and foundlings who come rolling off the Silesian Station trains wash up here, and Großmann favored this spot for picking up women. Night or day, the square is strewn with litter and pigeons; a blind veteran, missing his left arm, sits on a bench, shaking a tin cup for spare change.

Night: the square swarms with prostitutes. If it’s a weeknight, the majority of the women are “Half-Silks”—*hausfraus* and office girls looking to pick up a bit of extra money (**Prostitution**, page 53). Some of the Half-Silks haven’t even bothered to hang up their blue aprons! Others, particularly on a Friday or Saturday, are of a more professional bent, including Class-C Kontroll-Girls (registered prostitutes) and Chontes (Polish Jews).

Asking around about “Sasnovski” brings up nothing, but questions about Großmann elicit testimony from the handful of Kontroll-Girls and Chontes who were working the square back in 1920 and are still here. They respond well



The Friedrichshain map

to offers of money (5,000 marks or nearly any amount of foreign currency gets them to open up), as well as a **Charm** or **Fast Talk** roll.

- One Kontroll-Girl (pickup line: “*So, sweetheart?*”), a heavily made-up Class-C peroxide blonde called Lulu, remembers Großmann cruising for ladies quite often here. She went with him once, and he took her back to his place (at **Lange Straße 88/89**, page 117) and then the next morning drove her out to a “garden shed” on Landsberger Chausee (**The Garden Colony**, page 121). “*I still have the scars from that one, but he paid well,*” she says with a wry smile. “*First time I’ve gotten a lay in a sausage storeroom.*” She can provide directions out to the shed if asked.
- A Chonte named Zvia recalls drinking with Großmann down at the **Red Mill Cabaret** (following). “*He liked to take girls fresh off the train and get them drunk down there,*” she says.

Day: investigators visiting Andreasplatz during daylight hours are far less likely to find any real leads. At the Keeper’s discretion, they’ll need a successful group **Luck** roll to find either Lulu or Zvia (see above).

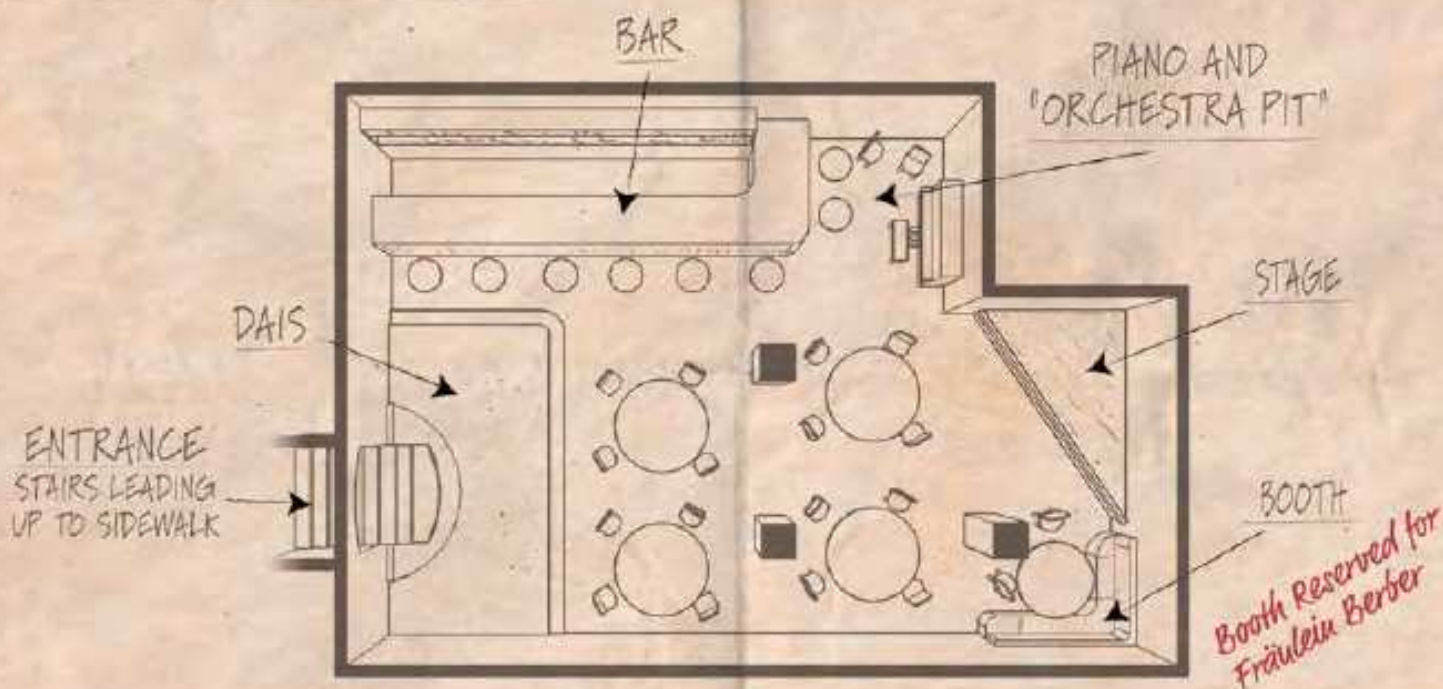
Red Mill Cabaret

Located two short blocks south of Großmann’s apartment, the Red Mill Cabaret sits in the cellar of a former restaurant. Access is via a side door in a rubbish-strewn alleyway that smells of vomit and urine. A short flight of stairs leads to a low-ceilinged, plaster-walled basement. After 9 pm, the cramped little joint is packed with screeching whores, drunken proles, criminals, and deadbeats. The air is positively thick with cigarette smoke, reducing clear visibility to about 10 feet (3 m). A small stage area is nominally reserved for the entertainment, but performers often do their thing out among the crowd.

As the investigators enter and are led to their table by the broad-shouldered *maitre d’*, Erich, they see a sweaty and bespectacled man up on stage, seated on a rickety chair, a rather beaten-up ventriloquist’s dummy on his lap. His querulous voice is drowned out by shouts from the drunken crowd: “*Get off the stage, fart-gas!*” “*You’re garbage!*” “*Ya lousy bull!*” And so forth. The ventriloquist quickly exits the stage amid jeers as the club’s “Armchair Orchestra” strikes up a jaunty tune.

Keeper Map

RED MILL CABARET



RED MILL CABARET BERLIN

FISCHER & LANGE
ARCHITEKTEN
LYCHENHE 15 BERLIN

GARBE
ARCHITECT

EINRICHTUNG MIT DETAILS

A 3

Keeper Map

evidence locker. The contents are a combination of quotidian, poorly spelled entries, sausage recipes, rules for some sort of board game he was working on, and oddly scrawled names, mixed with incomprehensible symbols and what looks like coded writing.

Krieg points out all the names, nearly 100 in all. *“Names of his victims, if you ask me. I think he had each figured out in advance. He rarely killed the first time he saw a woman. He learned about her, learned her name. Wrote it down, then went after her.”* He points to some names that have an “x” marked next to them. *“I think these are the ones that got away somehow.”* If investigators think to ask, a successful **Spot Hidden** roll locates “Sasnovski” in the book; adjacent to the name is an “x.”

The Secret of the Journal

What neither Krieg nor anyone else could guess is that Großmann’s journal is actually a Mythos tome (**Tomes and Spells**, page 145). It begins with an automatic-writing version of the Consume Likeness spell (*Call of Cthulhu Rulebook*, page 250), based on an incantation that came to Großmann in his dreams as he was wrapping up his prison sentence for child molestation in 1914. It further contains details of Großmann’s “game” and the “strategy” he means to employ to “win” it—his transcendence through suicide into an all-powerful demon of hunger and lust via his own experiments with the spell and his developments of the ritual into something more far-reaching. These details become apparent only after a full study of the contents is completed, which takes 10 weeks—well outside the scope of this scenario.

Obtaining the Journal

As the case is now closed, Krieg is amenable to loaning the journal to the investigators, but only if one of their number works in law enforcement. Even then, a successful **Fast Talk** or **Persuade** roll is necessary. The Keeper can, at their discretion, permit other strategies to get hold of the journal through verbal sweet talk, but any such skill rolls require an Extreme success.

Großmann’s Corpse

If the investigators think to ask, Krieg reveals that Großmann’s body is down in cold storage in the basement morgue, adjacent to the evidence room. Krieg can show the body to the curious, if they’ve made a good impression or provide a compelling reason to look. What they see is a man in his mid-50s who looks at least 10 years older, spindly and rangy, with large gnarled hands and a body with lots of mileage on it. Even in death, his eyes remain hateful and pig-like.

Inspector Krieg

Assuming the investigators don’t completely embarrass themselves, Inspector Krieg may remain a valuable contact as the Demon-Großmann begins its killing spree.

DALLDORF ASYLUM

Investigators asking around at the Red Mill Cabaret may get a lead to the State Insane and Idiot Asylum of Dalldorf, located in Reinickendorf on the northwest edge of the city, in the middle of a massive, park-like forest that lends the institution a distinctly rural feel despite being situated in the middle of an urban landscape. The best way to reach it is by the elevated Stadtbahn railway, getting off at Wittenau station, and walking to the grounds from there.

The asylum is open to the public between the hours of 9 am and 7 pm. A successful **Credit Rating** or **Charm, Fast Talk, Intimidate**, or **Persuade** roll is necessary to get past the front desk receptionist and talk to a staff member about patients admitted to the asylum. Even then, only a fellow psychologist or medical doctor can rightly expect access to patient records. Creative players may, of course, come up with other schemes: the receptionist is certainly open to a small bribe, while a bit of flirtation may turn a doctor’s head, and so forth.

Breaking In?

Another option is to break in after hours. This is certainly a viable tactic, if perhaps a bit desperate. The asylum does not employ a dedicated security staff, and the institution is large enough that an isolated and decrepit side door can be located with little difficulty. A successful **Locksmith** roll or a shattered pane of glass (along with a successful **Stealth** roll to make sure no one hears the break-in) grants access. The medical records are in a basement office behind a locked door (requiring another successful **Locksmith** roll or breaking through the window pane in the door). A successful **Library Use** roll locates the pertinent records (see following). Each roll represents an interval of 30 minutes and requires a group **Luck** roll to avoid discovery by the night staff.

Patient Records

Whether through fair means or foul, the asylum’s records don’t turn up any patient admitted under the name of Schamzkovska, Sasnovski, or anything of the sort in the period under examination. There was, however, an attempted suicide admitted in February 1920—a “Fräulein Unbekannt” (“Miss Unknown”) was fished out of the Landwehr Canal and brought in. A successful **Medicine** roll decodes the doctor’s notes: patient suffering from amnesia and hysterics upon admittance; patient displays extensive wounding and

THE DEVIL EATS FLIES

scarring on arms, hands, legs, feet, neck, and scalp; most wounds are fresh and appear to be human bite marks.

The notes are clear on one point: her true name was never ascertained at the time of her admittance. Last year she began referring to herself as Anna Tchaikovsky, and it was under that name that she was discharged in May of this year, remanded into the custody of one Baron Arthur von Kleist. A check in local phone directories turns up the Baron at an apartment residence on Savignyplatz (**Meeting Anna Tchaikovsky**, page 122).

Keeper note: investigators with a background in law enforcement or who regularly check the social pages will recognize Kleist's name with a successful **Know** roll: a Baltic German, he served as Chief of Police for Russian Poland prior to the Revolution.

THE GARDEN COLONY

Clues gathered at Andreasplatz or Lange Straße 88/89 lead to Großmann's shed in a "garden colony" on Landsberger Chaussee. Schreber-gardens (*Schrebergärten*) are popular throughout Germany, but particularly in urban Berlin. Also

called "garden colonies," these are adjacent allotments of land set aside for gardening and rural relaxation. Hundreds of acres of these gardens surround Berlin on its outer fringes.

With the directions provided by either Lulu or the Böhms, the investigators may travel out to Hellersdorf, at the eastern edge of the city. A Straßenbahn tramline runs out to the Landsberger Allee station, where the street changes its name to Landsberger Chaussee. A pleasant ten-minute walk along the tree-lined avenue then takes the investigators to Großmann's old colony.

The allotments here ring a large ornamental pond. Großmann's shed is discernable by its tumbledown appearance—it has clearly lacked care since his arrest, and (from the looks of it) even some time before that.

The shed is a small timber structure, about 10 feet (3 m) square, with a pitched roof and one window on each wall. The paint, once a pleasant blue-green, has faded and chipped to such an extent that the shed is mostly exposed natural wood, now weathered to a dreary gray, with rust running down from every nail and screw. The land around the shed is overgrown and choked with weeds, much in contrast to the carefully tended lawns and gardens of the other allotments. A gravel drive leads up to the cabin from the street and shows sign of frequent passage by heavy vehicles over the years.



The Garden Colony

The shed door is unlocked and slightly ajar. Entering, investigators find the interior to be musty and extensively cobwebbed. The floor is covered in dead leaves and the bones of small animals. Disconcertingly, rows of smoke-stained garden gnomes stare down impassively from the rafters and crossbeams—Großmann systematically stole these from neighboring plots over many years, perhaps his pettiest act of malice.

The shed is emptier even than Großmann's apartment. There is only a single, small wood-burning stove, which when opened reveals the mummified remains of a bird that flew down the chimney and couldn't get back out. Dozens of small hooks are screwed into the rafters and beams, and the walls are lined with empty storage shelves. Even now, the lingering odor of smoked sausage is just discernable.

The Gnomes

If an investigator thinks to examine one of the gnomes, allow a **Spot Hidden** roll, with success finding a handmade cloth dolly stuffed inside the hollow interior of a gnome when taken down from its rafter. Systematically looking at every single gnome nets the same find without a roll. The doll's button eyes shine strangely in the half-light of the interior. Investigators who decide to hold onto it may find the doll useful in a later phase of the scenario (**Baldur's Sacrifice**, page 131).

Johanna Pagenkopf

Regardless of what time of day or night the investigators visit, and of how stealthy they are being, Johanna Pagenkopf notes their trespass. A reedy woman in her mid-50s, Frau Pagenkopf lives at the colony year-round and makes it her business to know who comes and goes. She's happy to answer questions about Großmann, whom she despised. Here are her salient points, distributed amid much pointless gossip and speculation.

- Großmann seemed to use the shed as a place to get up to all sorts of shenanigans; he often came out here for the weekend with anywhere from 1 to 4 women at a time.
- Whenever Großmann had women at the cabin, it wouldn't be long before the sounds of violence and beatings could be heard. Pagenkopf claims (truthfully) that she offered shelter to these women sometimes, but a successful **Psychology** roll reveals that she had mixed feelings about these acts of charity because the women were clearly prostitutes.
- When Großmann was out at the cabin by himself, he always seemed to take a perennial interest in the neighbors' children. He liberally handed out sweets, chocolate, preserved meats, and even clothing. These acts of apparent charity were roundly rejected by the colonists, who warned their children to stay away from Großmann. Nothing further

ever happened, but Pagenkopf clearly thinks Großmann was up to no good.

- Pagenkopf also provides details about Großmann's business dealings. Delivery lorries from a variety of local food distributors often came out to his shed, where she would see them loading up crates of wurst and canned meat. When he wasn't using the shed as a love nest, it was clearly some sort of processing and distribution point for his black-market meat. She once asked Großmann about it, and he said that it was part of his work as a butcher, claiming that he was selling pork and beef, though he remained cagey about where he acquired the meat. He seemed to make quite a tidy profit off the sales. If asked, she recalls that his last such sale was just a week before his arrest six months ago.

Keeper note: investigators succeeding with an **INT** roll realize that many of those canned meats could very well still be in pantries across the city. The Sanity loss to realize that human meat is circulating through the Berlin food network is 0/1D4 points.

MEETING ANNA TCHAIKOVSKY

Investigators may learn of Baron Arthur von Kleist in one of two ways, either acquiring Anna Tchaikovsky's medical records from the **Dalldorf Asylum** (page 120), or seeing a notice in the paper on the evening of June 22 (**Anna in the Paper**, page 126). The language of the newspaper report may lead investigators to expect a tough time gaining admittance to the Baron's apartment and an audience with Tchaikovsky. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The apartment is located just a few blocks west of the Eden Hotel, in the heart of the Russian émigré community of Charlottenburg that Berliners cheekily call "Charlottengrad." Even by the standards of the neighborhood, however, the Baron's apartment has become a hub of Russian activity. The flat takes up an entire floor of the building, with its own private elevator granting direct access. After the news story about Anna's existence breaks (**Anna in the Paper**, page 126), and practically regardless of the time of day or night, the Baron's spacious, "tony" (expensive and stylish) living quarters are host to a chattering assemblage of White Russian exiles, monarchists, and distant Romanov relations. In the evenings, the apartment has the distinct air of a cocktail party. The first time the investigators visit, allow **Spot Hidden** rolls to see Manfred von Killinger (**Incident at Romanisches Square**, page 106) mixing with the crowd. He slips out as the investigators are introduced to the Baron.

THE DEVIL EATS FLIES

Anna keeps to herself in her private suite. Anyone wishing to see her must go through the Baron, and his time is much occupied with the horde of visitors coming in and out at all hours. Although this would seemingly be a great bother for him, he is perfectly at ease with being the center of attention.

The Baron is more than happy to introduce the investigators to Anna *if and only if* he feels that they may be of some assistance in proving her heritage or increasing his fame, or if they have Prince Constantinovich present to provide an introduction. Without the Prince, flattery and false promises are the key to the Baron's heart. Faked credentials (**Fast Talk**) or an aristocratic disguise (**Art (Acting)** or **Disguise**) will not be scrutinized to any great degree. An investigator with a **Credit Rating** of 75% or higher gets in automatically; otherwise, if all else fails, roll against the lowest **Credit Rating** of the investigators present.

Keeper note: if the meeting takes place on the evening of June 22 or later, an attack interrupts the investigators' initial interview (**The First Attack**, page 124).

Ushered into the inner sanctum, the investigators find a well-furnished bedroom suite and a bedraggled young woman who matches the Prince's description of Anna Tchaikovsky precisely. Dressed in a nightgown and robe, her pretty face is marred by what is obviously a chronic lack of sleep and persistent anxiety. Anna's manner, too, is guarded almost to the point of paranoia. Curiously, attempts to communicate with her in Russian are met with stony silence.

"Anna prefers not to speak in her native tongue," the Baron explains. *"She says it brings back painful memories."*

Indeed, even attempting to speak to her in one of the other languages she knows (German, French, or English) is likely to be ignored. Anna is exhausted by the constant parade of visitors now swarming the Baron's apartment and is worried about "Bolshevik assassins" coming after her. Even without speaking, Anna betrays some clues about her past.

- A successful **Spot Hidden** roll notices extensive scars on her neck and hands.
- A successful **INT** roll reveals that many of these scars look like human bite marks.
- A second **Spot Hidden** roll notes a large triangular scar on her bare right foot that appears to have been made by a bayonet.

It will take a clever and empathetic investigator to get her to open up: a **Persuade**, **Charm**, or **Psychoanalysis** roll is required to break down Anna's wall. To make such a roll, the investigator must have an "in"—a relic or other call-back

to the Romanov court; mentioning the Tsarina's personal symbol (shown to them by the Prince; **Handout: Devil 3**, page 110) is one such example. Another would be to recall that the Grand Duchess Anastasia was said to be a great animal lover, with a menagerie of pets to her name; such a recollection requires a successful **Know** roll or a personal connection to the Romanov court. Finally, investigators may think to put Anna under sedation and/or hypnosis. She will, of course, be highly resistant to this tactic, and physical force is required to administer morphine or a similar sedative (roll **Medicine** to gauge whether any further harm is done; see **Morphine**, page 41). A **Hypnosis** roll is opposed by Anna's Psychology of 45%.

Regardless of the skill employed, only one attempt (plus a pushed roll) may be made per day. If one investigator fails, another cannot make an attempt until the next day; with the exception of the pushed roll, Anna will not subject herself to repeated attempts by the same investigator. A failed push attempt results in Anna exploding into a furious tirade, kicking out all the investigators and the Baron, and locking herself in her suite. Under no circumstances will she entertain a visit from the investigators again.

A successful skill roll (**Hypnosis**, **Medicine**, **Persuade**, **Charm**, or **Psychoanalysis**) reveals the following information.

- **Regular success:** Anna recalls being pulled from the Landwehr Canal but does not remember what motivated her to jump from the bridge. If presented with the name Franziska Schamzkovska, she draws a blank.
- **Hard success:** as Regular, but Anna remembers the name Franziska Schamzkovska—she used it as an alias. Anna admits that she is indeed the Grand Duchess Anastasia. *"I tell you this in strictest confidence,"* she says with a deadly serious stare.
- **Extreme success:** as Hard, plus Anna tearfully recounts the details of her escape and life on the run: of being knocked unconscious by a grazing bullet from the Bolshevik firing squad; of waking up under the dead bodies of her family; of a soldier by the name of Alexander Tchaikovsky finding her and spiriting her away; of her falling in love with Alex, marrying him, and bearing his child, only to give it up for adoption; of Alex dying in Budapest (which she refuses to discuss further) and her subsequent flight, alone, to Berlin.
- **Critical success:** as Extreme, plus Anna's long-buried memory of Großmann's attack comes flooding back. She begins screaming, seeing the attack play out again in front of her eyes. She lashes out, screaming and babbling in Russian: *"The eyes! The eyes that see through my very soul and condemn me to Hell!"*

Keeper note: the following event—**The First Attack**—only occurs in front of the investigators if their interview with Tchaikovsky takes place on the evening of June 22, after her existence has been revealed in the press (**Anna in the Paper**, page 126). If the investigators reach Anna before the papers break the story, then they are not witness to Demon-Großmann's attack, which instead takes place off-screen (**What if the Investigators Move Too Quickly**, page 126).

THE FIRST ATTACK

As Anna is sharing her story (or stonewalling, as the case may be), the Baron's trusted maid, Traudl, enters the room bearing a tea service. While Anna talks, the delicate sound of tinkling china provides a most refined backdrop. If investigators state that they are watching the maid, they may attempt **Spot Hidden** rolls to note that the shadow she casts upon the wall is that of a spindly, somewhat hunched man, rather than that of a short, plump maid preparing tea, provoking a **Sanity** roll (0/1 loss).

Assuming nobody notices anything amiss, just as Anna is wrapping up her answer to the investigators' query there comes the sound of shattering china. Turning, everyone sees Traudl has dropped the teapot. She stands there, apparently

unconcerned by the broken tea service, with a strange grin on her face. Her eyes look odd—small and porcine, glittering with malicious intent, and wholly inhuman. Anna screams, "*Those eyes! I have seen them before!*" Call for a **Sanity** roll for witnessing the strange transformation and Anna's reaction (1/1D2 loss).

Keeper note: Traudl has been possessed by a POW 100 spirit-fragment of the **Demon-Großmann** (**Characters and Monsters**, page 140). This is a mere reconnaissance mission on the demon's part, but it will not pass up an opportunity to cause a bit of mayhem.

In a voice not her own, Traudl growls, "*So, if it isn't Miss Sasnovski. We have unfinished business, whore.*" Snatching up a butter knife, the possessed maid lunges at Anna. Investigators may attempt a **DEX** roll to interpose themselves, if they wish. Traudl is not the most powerful physical specimen (see her profile in the **Characters and Monsters** section, page 142), so overpowering her should not be too difficult. Nor will the demon stick around if it can't get in an effective attack on Anna. Before departing, however, the spirit-fragment attempts to possess a vulnerable investigator, if there any are present. Any investigator who failed their Luck roll at



The possessed Traudl attacks Anna and the investigators

the start of the scenario is at risk (**Incident at Romanisches Square**, page 106). If more than one investigator failed, the spirit-fragment targets men ahead of women and prioritizes those with high STR scores. The spirit-fragment uses 75 of its POW in its possession attempt; this is an opposed **POW** roll. If the investigator loses, they are possessed—see **Possessed Investigators**, nearby, for more details—the spirit-fragment immediately goes dormant, not wanting to tip its hand. If it sees what seems like a sure chance to kill Anna, it will take it; otherwise, it bides its time until the finale of the scenario (**Baldur's Sacrifice**, page 131). Also, if possession does occur, make a note that from here on out the Demon-Großmann has 75 fewer points of POW to distribute among its other victims.

As soon as the spirit-fragment flees or inhabits an investigator, if still alive and conscious, Traudl collapses onto the room's fine Persian rug, sobbing. Apart from any physical injury she may have suffered in the scuffle, the experience has left her raving and drooling, her mind broken for the time being. A successful **Psychoanalysis** roll calms her down and gets her to say a few words to the effect of "*A demon took over my body!*" Beyond that, she cannot be coaxed, at least not today. Anna, for her part, casts everyone out and locks herself into her suite, where she immediately begins planning her escape from the Baron's apartment.

Investigators returning to interview Traudl later find that she has, naturally, been given the sack by the Baron. He provides her home address if asked (a tenement walkup off Oranienburger Straße). Those who seek her out may, with a successful **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, or **Persuade** roll, get a more complete description of what happened. Traudl explains how she felt an "evil presence" enter her body as she was pouring the tea. Suddenly, she was at the mercy of this presence, which used her body while she "watched" helplessly from behind her own eyes. Then, as suddenly as it came, the demon left.

Keeper note: Handout: Devil 6 concerns the attack on Anna, and should be given to the investigators on the morning of June 23, whether they witnessed the attack or not. Due to the actions of the investigators, the Keeper may need to adjust the newspaper story to align better with the events of the maid's attack.

An Unusual Check

Once the investigators have located Anna Tchaikovsky—whether through their own efforts or by getting scooped—they have every right to contact Prince Constantinovich and request payment for services rendered. If they have also wrung a confession from Anna, the Prince includes a bonus of £50!



POSSESSED INVESTIGATORS

There are several points in this scenario where unlucky investigators may put themselves in danger of possession by **The Demon-Großmann**—see his profile (page 140) for full details of how to handle such incidents. The Keeper should use this possibility to maximum effect, sowing paranoia among the group.

When a host is possessed by a dormant fragment of the Demon-Großmann, the victim should make an opposed **POW** roll once per day versus the demon's POW (as divided evenly among the number of hosts currently possessed, plus the current target), with the Keeper secretly noting the results (including mutations), but not applying them yet.

The Demon-Großmann can lie dormant within a host for as long as it likes, waiting for the right moment to strike. When an investigator is possessed, pass the player a note informing them of what has happened and telling them to await further instructions. If possible, take the player aside and explain what has happened and encourage them to add sinister touches to their roleplaying, particularly if the demon is succeeding in fully taking over their body. When the demon is ready to act, inform the player that they have temporarily lost control of their character, or, with some guidance, the Keeper may prefer to allow the player to continue roleplaying their now possessed investigator.



The check presented to the investigators, strangely, is not in the Prince's name but rather drawn from a business account: Aufbau Vereinigung (Construction Union). The investigators are most likely to note this when they go to cash the check, as the Prince hands them the payment in an envelope, and scrutinizing it in front of him would be surpassingly rude.

Curious investigators may turn up information on Aufbau Vereinigung with a visit to the Neues Stadthaus (the city's administration building) in Alt-Berlin. A successful **Library Use** roll and an hour's research uncover the public records on the so-called Construction Union—it is a private holding corporation registered to one Pyotr Shabelsky-Bork. The address given for the group is none other than Prince Constantinovich's quarters at the Eden Hotel.

WHAT IF THE INVESTIGATORS MOVE TOO QUICKLY?

It is conceivable that investigators working with great speed and diligence may find and interview Anna Tchaikovsky prior to the evening of the 22; thus, confirming her identity—this is before the Demon-Großmann becomes aware of Anna’s location and comes after her through the vessel of Traudl, thus alerting the investigators to the greater danger at play.

If this is the case, Prince Constantinovich happily pays the investigators and thanks them for their services. They then read about the rise in savage murders (**Handout: Devil 5**), as well as a news item about a disturbance at Baron Kleist’s apartment (**Handout: Devil 6**); however, these events alone may not be enough to motivate investigator action. Thus, Prince Constantinovich comes back into the picture when Anna goes missing on June 23, offering the investigators the double rate of £6 (\$30) per day, plus expenses, if they will help him find the missing Grand Duchess—with events picking up from **The Runaway** (page 129).

ANNA IN THE PAPER

Baron Kleist, after hosting several private visitations over the last six weeks without getting the sort of support he seeks, lets slip to the media—on the afternoon of June 22—that he is hosting a woman who claims to be the Grand Duchess Anastasia Romanov. The evening editions of June 22 are abuzz with the sensational story; a sample article is presented in **Handout: Devil 4**. This is the next stage in the Baron’s plan to exploit Anna for his own fame, but it is due to backfire spectacularly. This article accomplishes two things:

- If the investigators have been to **Dalldorf Asylum** (page 120) but were unsuccessful in deciphering the notes and, therefore, her name and that of her current guardian, the mention of the fall into the Landwehr Canal in 1920 is sure to be a tipoff that this may well be their “Fraulein Unbekannt/Sasnovski.”
- The Demon-Großmann, having murdered several of his quarry already (see **Lustmord: the Killings Take Hold**, page 127), now knows where to look to find “Sasnovski” and begins plotting an attack on the Baron’s estate.

Grand Duchess Anastasia Alive and Well in Berlin?

The city’s White Russian community is humming with the news that a woman claiming to be the Grand Duchess Anastasia Romanov is living here in Berlin. The woman, who calls herself Anna Tchaikovsky, was recently released from the Dalldorf Asylum and remanded into the care of Baron Arthur von Kleist, who served the Tsar honorably as Chief of Police of Russian Poland until the Revolutions of 1917 forced him to flee, like many of his compatriots, to Germany.

Miss Tchaikovsky, who is said to resemble the Grand Duchess in appearance and bearing, was admitted to Dalldorf in 1920, having lost her wits in a fall into the Landwehr Canal in February of that year. She claims that her memory is slowly returning to her, although many details remain unclear.

The Baron, who resides in a spacious third-floor apartment off Savignyplatz at Carmerstraße 11, asks that the public respect Miss Tchaikovsky’s privacy at this time as he attempts to help sort out the truth of the matter.

Prince Constantinovich (Pyotr Shabelsky-Bork) sees the article and hurries to Kleist’s apartment. Subsequently, investigators find him there rather than at his hotel room. The Prince is only too happy to see them, even if they have been “scooped” by the Baron’s leak to the press. Indeed, the Prince would now like the investigators’ help in confirming the supposed identity of Miss Tchaikovsky. She is standoffish and often contradictory. Perhaps the investigators might draw her out of her shell?

If the investigators have been to Dalldorf Asylum already, they may wish to confirm the veracity of the newspaper story before contacting the Prince.

LUSTMORD: THE KILLINGS TAKE HOLD

With his suicide, Großmann enacted the final stage of his ritual of transcendence, becoming a demon of hunger and lust. Able to possess anyone who has previously consumed his black-market human meat, he sets out on the final act of his “game”—killing all those who escaped his clutches in life. This, of course, includes Anna Tchaikovsky/Franziska Schamzkovska.

Those actively possessed by Großmann begin deteriorating and transforming into demons of mutable flesh, subject to his will. The killings begin the night of his suicide—the same night the investigators are hired to look into the case of the missing Grand Duchess.

THE POSSESSED

Thanks to his time peddling human meat, both at the Silesian Station and to unscrupulous food distributors, over the course of four years, Großmann has managed to contaminate thousands of Berliners. Anyone who has *ever* consumed human flesh from Großmann is susceptible to possession following his suicide.

Großmann’s spirit can project a fragment of itself into multiple vessels at once—see **The Demon-Großmann** (page 140) for more information on how he does this and what becomes of his victims. Because Großmann sold his preserved meats and sausages to local distributors as well as through street vending, everyone is vulnerable. Investigators who failed their Luck rolls at the beginning of the session (**Incident at Romanisches Square**, page 106) have, at some point, unknowingly consumed Großmann’s human meat, leaving themselves open to possession. If everyone made a successful Luck roll, a cruel Keeper may still choose one or more investigators as suitable targets, ignoring the Luck roll’s results.

THE MURDERS

It doesn’t take long for the Demon-Großmann to get to work. Beginning in the early morning hours of June 21, it possesses various Berliners in the Friedrichshain and stalks three of the prostitutes that, through a combination of luck and daring, managed to avoid his murderous intentions while he was still alive. Their luck has finally run out.

The late morning papers of June 22 carry news of their demise (**Handout: Devil 5**). Unless the investigators were quick off the mark and managed to speak to Lulu before the Demon-Großmann reaches her (his final victim in the early hours of June 22), then that avenue of inquiry is now closed to them (**Andreasplatz**, page 113).

A SLIDING SCALE OF GROTESQUERIES

The real-life Carl Friedrich Wilhelm Großmann was not just a serial killer. He was a cannibal, a rapist, and a child molester. The idea of his unrestrained id unleashed upon the population of Berlin, to possess and bend them to his bloody and inhuman will, is the core element of the horror in this scenario.

That being said, the exact details of what the Großmann-controlled possessed individuals actually *do* to their victims have here been left purposely vague. Every group’s definition of horror is different, particularly when it intersects with sexual violence and crimes against children.

The Keeper may evoke more than enough horror simply with descriptions of bodies torn apart and partially consumed. Although one of the recurring themes in this scenario is *lustmord*, introducing overt elements of sexual violence is left up to individual Keeper discretion, taking into account their players’ (and their own) views of such matters.

If the investigators detect a rather dismissive attitude in the reporter’s tone, they are quite right: few in Berlin care about a trio of prostitutes turning up dead—hazards of the profession, after all. This flippant attitude soon changes to one of panic as the murders spread and begin to affect more than just the lower classes.

If the investigators have been to Großmann’s neighborhood already (**Lange Straße 88/89**, page 117), they know that the Andreas-Gymnasium is located one block over and up the street from the killer’s old apartment building, and one block east of Andreasplatz.

Interviewing the students who found the bodies reveals a trio of highly traumatized 13-year-old girls, too upset to offer much information. Getting access to Inspector Krieg or his report reveals that Lulu was indeed found up a tree, though rather spread out: limbs and organs dangling, her skull cracked open with half the brains scooped out and “probably consumed.” Krieg has added a marginal note of his own: “Großmann copy-cat?” The remaining murders pan out as follows.

- The afternoon papers on June 22 carry reports of a *Scheusal* (monstrosity, beast, or ogre) seen running down Unter den Linden in broad daylight. Witness reports are conflicting, but several mention that the thing seemed to have long, birdlike talons as well as inhuman eyes. An hour later, police find a Kontroll-Girl savagely ripped apart in the Tiergarten.

CHAPTER 5

Handout: Devil 5

DISTURBANCE IN CHARLOTTENBURG

Readers of this paper may recall our report of one Anna Tchaikovsky, currently in residence at the home of Baron Arthur von Kleist, Carmerstraße 11, Charlottenburg. Scandalous as it is, it is our sad duty to report that Fräulein Tchaikovsky was this past evening attacked in her residence by a servant of the Baron's household. The maid, who has subsequently been dismissed, came at Fräulein Tchaikovsky with a knife, but was fended off by friendlier hands present at the time. Fräulein Tchaikovsky is reported to be uninjured but quite rattled, as is understandable given the circumstances.

- On the night of June 22, after the attack on Anna Tchaikovsky, two more prostitutes are killed in Friedrichshain. A cyclonette driver witnesses one of the murders and is possessed by a spirit-fragment. He returns to his home in Wilmersdorf and murders his wife and two daughters in an unspeakable fashion. The tone of newspaper reports shifts from gauche to panicked.
- On the morning of June 23, rumors are flying around the cafés and public squares of more *Scheusal* sightings across the city, and of more murders—the police, they say, are covering up the true extent of the murders to prevent public panic.
- By the evening of June 23, the city is in a state of alarm. Mothers call their children home and forbid them to play on the streets and in the parks. Doors are locked and barred; windows are closed despite the summer heat. The papers are full of unsubstantiated rumors of murders from across the city.

Keeper note: in reality, the Demon-Großmann is responsible for only a handful of killings; the rest are a combination of “regular” murders blamed on the *Scheusal* and wild, unfounded rumor. Sightings of the deformed, possessed monstrosities are all too real and serve to heighten the panic even more.

See **Sample Hosts** (page 142) for examples of some of these *Scheusal*—with the exception of Schröder and Traudl. Feel free to drop one in the investigators' path as they move around the city conducting their own investigations. There will be five more Demon-Großmann murders during the night of June 23, bringing the total body count to 13.

Handout: Devil 6

DEATH STAIRS BECKON!

Police have reported three separate murders in and around the Friedrichshain neighborhood in the last 24 hours. One body, that of a woman known only to locals as “Lulu,” was found by students of the Andreas-Gymnasium school (Koppenstraße 76), up among the branches of a tree. “If we didn't know better, we

would say she climbed the tree to escape a wild animal, but was pursued and torn apart up there,” one of the officers informed our reporter. We now must ask: is there a bear in Berlin?

Two other bodies were pulled from the Spree River. Inspector Krieg of the Criminal Police has refused to comment on the ongoing case but notes that

both women were far too mangled to make a positive identification at this time. Reports of missing persons in the Friedrichshain district will be forwarded to Inspector Krieg while the case remains open, but many of the residents are unregistered immigrants and there seems little hope that these “Ladies Unknown” will be identified anytime soon.

THE RUNAWAY

Rattled by Traudl's attack and convinced it's all part of some sort of Bolshevik plot to assassinate her, Anna hatches an escape plan. At 9:30 pm on the night of Friday, June 23, as the sun sets over the city, she escapes from Baron Kleist's apartment and slips away into the hot summer night.

At first, she does not know where to go, walking along Kant Straße before turning onto Budapester Straße. Then, she spots the famous Elephant Gate of the Berlin Zoo. Using some of the spare change she managed to scrounge prior to her escape, she purchases an admission ticket and slips in.

Anna has always been a great animal lover, and she happily wanders among the various houses and pavilions before her reverie is interrupted by the announcement of the zoo's closure. Not wanting to return to the outside world, she quickly hides herself inside the Egyptian-themed Ostrich House and settles in for the night.

By 10 pm, Anna has been missed. Baron Kleist puts out a call to his Aufbau allies notifying them of the development. At 10:15 pm, the investigators receive a frantic summons from Prince Constantinovich, asking them to meet at Baron Kleist's apartment at once.

Despite the late hour, the Baron's apartment is (again) full of visitors. White Russians mingle with members of Organisation Consul, summoned here at the behest of their Aufbau masters. Investigators recognize Manfred von Killinger from their encounter with him at Romanisches Forum three days ago (if they haven't seen him since).

Prince Constantinovich emerges from a back room, the Baron at his side, and delivers the shocking news that Anna has gone missing. *"I don't need to tell you that with all these recent murders, and already an attack on the Grand Duchess, we gravely fear for her safety. I hope I can trust all of you to assist in searching for her."*

Killinger announces that, fortunately, his contacts with the Criminal Police have yet to report any new victims matching Tchaikovsky's description. Search parties begin to form, with discussions on where to look and where she may have gone. If the investigators don't think of it, call for a **Know** roll to recall Anastasia Romanov's close connection to animals and that the Zoological Gardens are only a couple of blocks away. If none of the investigators think of this insight, Killinger (who has visited Anna on two occasions) does so instead. Regardless, Killinger organizes the zoo search party, which consists of the investigators, three of his own



Anna on the run

CHAPTER 5

Consul members, and three Russians. Unfortunately, and unbeknownst to anyone, one of Killinger's men, **Sigfried Schröder** (see **Characters and Monsters**, page 142), has been possessed by the Demon-Großmann.

SEARCHING THE ZOO

The Zoological Gardens are closed, but, by the time the investigators arrive at the Elephant Gate, someone is there to unlock the gates. Clearly, Killinger has called in a favor to grant them access. "*Spread out!*" Killinger orders. The search party starts canvassing the grounds.

The zoo is dark, lit only by the moonlight and occasional street lamps. An elephant trumpets in the night, answered by the roar of a lion. The sound of traffic from the Auguste-Viktoria-Platz is completely muffled by the trees—this is a tranquil island in the middle of a bustling metropolis.

Eventually, the investigators come to the Ostrich House. It is constructed in a manner reminiscent of an ancient Egyptian temple, its entrance flanked by a mural depicting the Memnon colossi of the Theban Necropolis.

Having heard the sound of the search party, Anna has crept to the entrance of the Ostrich House, peering out through its barred gate. A successful Hard **Spot Hidden** roll

spots her amid the shadows. If the investigators fail to see her, she is spotted by Killinger, who approaches the Ostrich House from a different direction with Schröder in tow. Killinger rashly gives a shout of recognition when he sees her. Anna, startled, retreats further within.

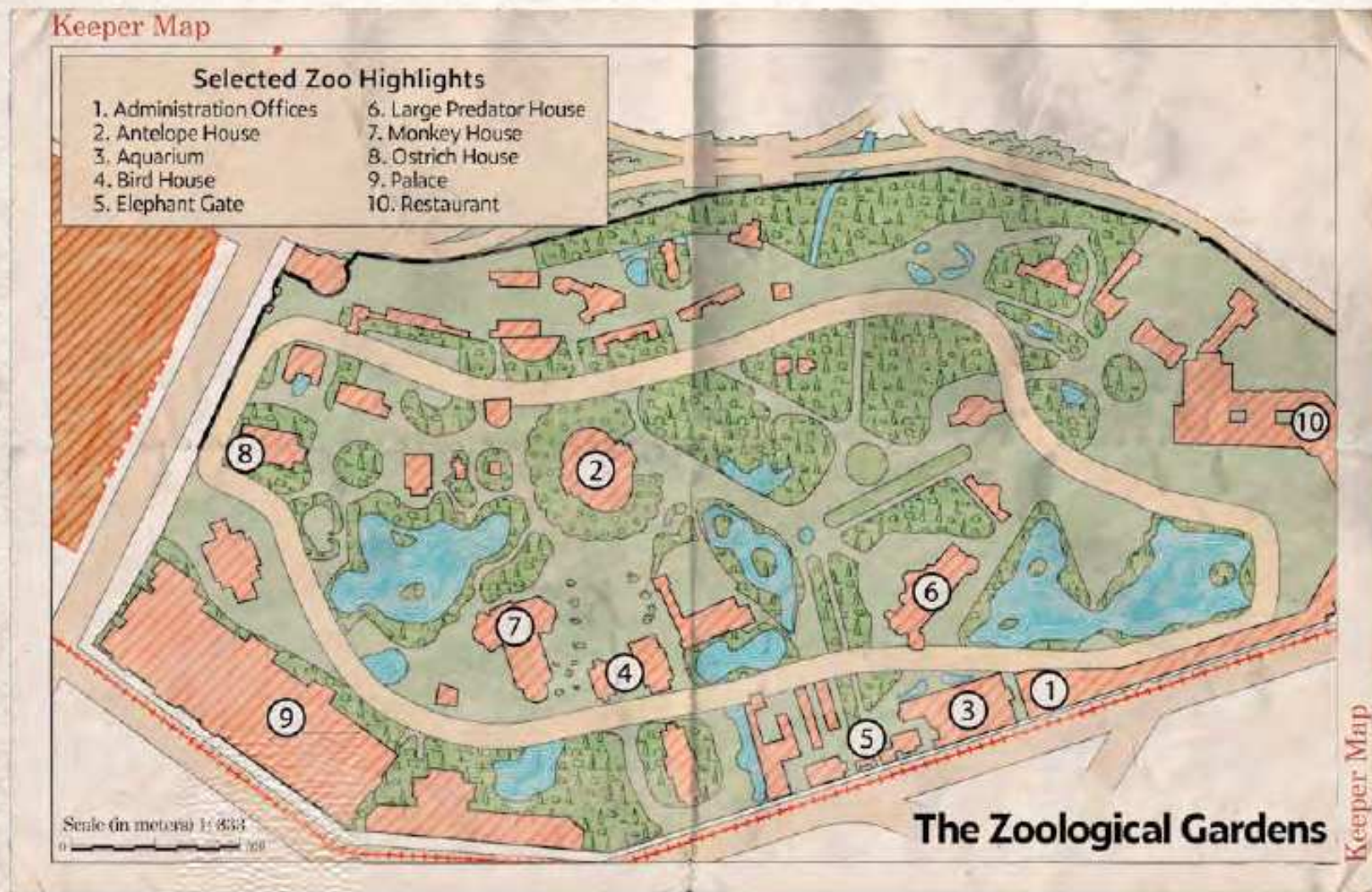
Getting through the locked gate requires a successful **Locksmith** roll. Failing that, someone may simply shoot the lock; Schröder is happy to do so if no one else is armed or thinks to take such a course of action.

The Cassowary Enclosure

The Ostrich House contains an enclosure of cassowaries, large flightless birds from New Guinea and northern Australia, second only to the ostrich in size. Anna's footsteps can be heard receding in the direction of that enclosure.

Black of plumage and with a vibrant blue and red wattle, the cassowary stands over six feet (1.8 m) tall and weighs 180 pounds (82 kg); more worrisome is the talon—as large and sharp as a spearhead, one on each of its feet—that is easily capable of spilling a person's guts all over the ground if provoked; a successful **Science (Biology or Zoology)** or **Natural World** roll recalls this chilling fact.

Arriving at the jungle-like accommodations, the investigators see massive shapes moving around in the



darkness, the animals alarmed and on guard thanks to all this nighttime commotion. Anna, in a panic, has ventured into the cassowary enclosure and is hiding among the vegetation.

This is the time for the Demon-Großmann to strike, and it will do so through its puppet Schröder. If more than one investigator is also possessed, it will use some of them as well; however, it is cunning enough to leave an ace up its sleeve, keeping at least one possessed investigator unrevealed for the time being.

As Schröder's monstrous side bursts forth (**Sigfried Schröder**, page 142), a fight erupts. Killinger, to his credit, unhesitatingly shoots to kill in the name of protecting Anna. A complicating factor is, of course, the cassowaries. Gunfire is more than sufficient to rile them up, and the Keeper should feel free to introduce one or more of the marauding birds as an additional threat, or as a *deus ex animalia* to save Anna from rampaging monsters (**Cassowary**, page 144).

Assuming all goes well, Anna is "rescued" and taken back to von Kleist's apartment. Any bloodshed is enough to convince her to go quietly—it was never her intention for anyone else to get hurt on her account. While it is possible that Anna is killed during the encounter—with both the Prince and the Baron determined to have their revenge on the creature who caused her death, they enlist the investigators as described in the following sections—this outcome should be avoided by the Keeper if at all possible.

BALDUR'S SACRIFICE

By now, the city's clocks have chimed the eleventh hour. Back at Kleist's apartment, the mood is subdued. Anna (if still alive) retires to her suite, exhausted and inconsolable. Killinger looks thoughtful. Prince Constantinovich stands at a window, brow creased, his monocle reflecting the lights of the city. Only a few of the Baron's guests remain.

What do the investigators make of all this? By this point, the connections between their employer and a shadowy conspiracy of assassins may be clear; perhaps they've figured out even more.

If they confront the Prince or Killinger, the co-conspirators see that there is no longer any need for pretense and confess (to a certain degree) to the truth of their relationship. They will, of course, paint it in the most positive light possible, calling Aufbau Vereinigung a mutual-defense association, which has the best interests of both Germany and Russia at heart.

If Shabelsky-Bork reveals his true name, any members of the Russian émigré community or Communist party members in the group immediately recognize him as the man who gunned down Vladimir Nabokov, Sr. If ugly epithets

ensue, Shabelsky-Bork defends his actions by invoking the Sacred Order of St. John, claiming with somewhat wild eyes that he is a descendent of the *true* defenders of the Hospital and so forth.

Do harsh words lead to rash action? Allow a round or two of fisticuffs or even a single shot to be fired. If Shabelsky-Bork is injured, so much the better, though he should not die. (Not yet, at any rate.)

Quite suddenly, one and then two of the Russian courtiers begins laughing uproariously. They have both been possessed by spirit-fragments (maximum POW 100 each), and, as their laughter rises in pitch and insane fervor until it is a hideous, throat-tearing shriek, they turn on the other guests at the flat. Use the **Russian Monarchists** profile (page 140), rolling once on the **Demon Mutation Table** (page 143) for each possessed victim and apply the effects immediately as the demon manifests.

Keeper note: this chaos is exactly what the Demon-Großmann wants; during the confusion, it sends one of the possessed Russians to Anna's chambers while the other continues to cause a distraction. In the melee, ensure Shabelsky-Bork suffers a debilitating injury: he falls and sprains his ankle or is stabbed in a non-vital area. Although still cogent, he is physically compromised.

It shouldn't be too difficult for the investigators, along with Shabelsky-Bork and Killinger, to shut down this incursion by the possessed hosts, but it serves to underline how no place in the city is safe and how the demon is determined to continue pursuing poor Anna. Shabelsky-Bork makes the point explicitly clear in the aftermath of the fight if no one else does.

"Yes, but there is one thing this demonic entity did not calculate," says Killinger with a wry grin. "Tomorrow morning, as the sun rises on the solstice, my operatives are to enact a blood sacrifice. A man of light and goodness, taking the place of the ancient Teutonic sun god Baldur, will give his life for the future fortune of the Fatherland. Am I right in remembering, my good Pyotr, that Saturn's day is held to be particularly appropriate for rituals of banishment?" Shabelsky-Bork nods. *"Then I propose we kill two flies with one strike: we enact a banishment ritual and use the magical power unlocked by Baldur's sacrifice to rid ourselves—and the rest of the city, of course—of this terrible spirit once and for all! What say you?"*

Writing the Ritual

Shabelsky-Bork is tremendously excited by this plan, for he possesses a ritual of banishment used by his order for centuries. *"It is given in the pages of De Vermis Mysteriis, but I believe I can remember it off by heart, if you give me a few*

minutes to concentrate. We will need at least three to take part. Now let me think."

Groaning from his wound, he takes pen and paper and seats himself at a glass-topped coffee table, rubbing his brow in thought and jotting down notes. As he does so, the investigators may talk among themselves. If there is any equivocation, a secretly possessed investigator will be adamant about participating in the ritual—slip a note to the player concerned, informing them that they desire to take part in the ritual.

If any of the investigators have had the dream where they are gunned down in their car, they realize that they have seen a vision of the future—and that this is how the “sacrifice” will play out. A successful **INT** roll realizes the victim is to be Walther Rathenau, Germany’s Foreign Minister, a most unwilling victim! If Killinger is confronted with this fact, he nods his head sadly, “Yes, it must be so for the ritual to have its full efficacy. Is the loss of one life too much to ask for saving the city? The country? We do not know how many more monstrous acts this demon may undertake before it is sated, after all.”

Keeper note: unfortunately, Killinger is quite mistaken in his assumption. The assassination of Walther Rathenau as a reenactment of Baldur’s sacrifice will do nothing but plunge the country into chaos, initiating the *annus horribilis* of 1923 and the Great Inflation.

The Fetish

“Ah! Done!” Shabelsky-Bork has written out the ritual and now takes everyone through it (**Handout: Devil 7**). The ritual is in a language completely unfamiliar to any of the investigators—Shabelsky-Bork has written it out phonetically—and involves odd gestures, which he teaches them as quickly as possible. “We need an object—a fetish, if you will—with a significant magical charge on it. Anything that has been invested with powerful emotion. The more dramatic, the better,” he says. Two objects in particular are ideal for this purpose:

- **Großmann’s Doll:** the doll from Großmann’s garden shed (**The Garden Colony**, page 121) was one he had used many times to lure children into his private quarters. It is imbued with deep emotions of sadness, anger, fear, and indignation, and it is ideal for the ritual.
- **The Tsarina’s Journal:** if the investigators don’t have the doll, they might think (perhaps with a successful **INT** roll) to suggest the use of Tsarina Alexandra’s journal. Shabelsky-Bork still has it in his possession (**The Case of the Wayward Princess**, page 109).

Keeper note: the investigators may have something to offer up themselves, of course, and the Keeper should use the above

items as a point of reference in judging the appropriateness of any other artifacts to the task in hand. In the unlikely event that investigators have Großmann’s journal and one of the investigators is possessed, that investigator *will* vocally advocate for using it as a fetish—again, slip a note to the possessed investigator, indicating their feelings on this matter. Even non-possessed investigators may think to use it—if that is the case, then so be it, and refer to **A Very Bad Idea** (page 136) for details on what happens in such an instance.

The Location

Once the group has agreed on which fetish to use, there remains one last complication. Shabelsky-Bork explains, “We must enact this ritual beginning precisely at midnight, under the open sky.” The Russian is in no condition to travel, and so, rather reluctantly, passes the task on to the investigators.

Baron Kleist looks at his pocket watch, “That’s only a half-hour from now!”

Shabelsky-Bork nods, “Ideally, we need a location that is of importance to the demon. Any ideas?” The investigators may well have some thoughts for a location; here are some possibilities:

- **Andreasplatz:** Großmann’s frequent haunt is, conveniently, located under open skies and makes an ideal spot for a ritual—if one doesn’t mind a few onlookers.



The fetish

The Ritual Performance

First, prepare the area. Inscribe a summoning circle using chalk, or may be traced in dust or soot on the floor. At minimum, three are required throughout the ritual. They must all stand within the circle, with the fetish sitting in the center of the inscribed space. More may participate but the number of participants must be divisible by three. Others may stand by, guarding the sacred area, ready to step in and replace those unable to continue.

- i. Facing East, assume the Wand Posture. Declare: "GEH."
 - ii. Raise the arms at the sides. Declare: "LONDOH."
 - iii. Touch right shoulder with left hand. Declare: "OD MICALZO."
 - iv. Touch left shoulder with right hand. Declare: "OD BUSD."
 - v. Keeping arms crossed, bow head and declare: "GOHED."
 - vi. Make the Gesture Cervus: at the first point, declare "EXARP;" at the second point declare "ORO IBAH AOZPI."
 - vii. Turn to face North: make the Gesture, declaring "NANTA" at the first point, "MOR DIAL HCTGA" at the second.
 - viii. Turn to face West: make the Gesture, declaring "HCOMA" at the first point, "MPH ARSL GAIOL" at the second.
 - ix. Turn to face South: make the Gesture, declaring "BITOM" at the first point, and "OIP TEAA PDOCE" at the second.
- Repeat these steps until the sun rises in the East.

DEMONIC MUTATION TABLE

Roll 1D20	Mutation	Sanity Loss
1	Multi-hinged mandibular jaw (+1 biting damage)	1/1D4
2	Long, craning neck (extended reach; 1D4 feet* long)	1/1D6
3	Clawed hands (+1 brawling damage)	1/1D2
4	Needle-like teeth (+1 bite damage)	1/1D2
5	Extra-long tongue (1D6 feet* long)	1/1D2
6	Spikes (roll 1D6: 1–2 shoulder; 3–4 head; 5 chest; 6 legs)	1/D4
7	Prehensile tail (1D6 feet* long)	1/1D6
8	Eye stalks (360 degree vision)	1/1D6
9	Multiple arms (1D3) (one extra attack per arm)	1/1D6
10	Multiple legs (1D4) (add +1 to Movement per extra leg)	1/1D6
11	Multiple eyes (1D20) (scattered across head and upper torso; impossible to blind)	1/1D6
12	Bubbling skin (flesh ripples, bulges, and pulsates)	1/1D4
13	Sucker-pads on hands and feet (+1 Build when grappling; bonus die to Climb rolls)	1/1D4
14	Second face (a smaller version of Großmann's face manifests on the back of the head)	1/1D6
15	Covered in suppurating sores (pulsating sores, weeping sores)	1/1D2
16	Smells of rotting meat (opponent must make a successful CON roll when in melee or lose the first round of combat to retching)	1/1D2
17	Extra-long fingers (+1D6 inches**)	1/1D2
18	Tentacle-like fingers (combines Extra-long fingers and Sucker-pads)	1/1D4
19	Bloody projectile vomit (may target up to 5 feet away with 50% accuracy; those hit suffer 1/1D2 Sanity point loss and must make a successful CON roll or spend next round retching; those hit are vulnerable to possession)	1/1D2
20	Screaming faces (the faces of some of Großmann's previous victims press out against the flesh of the body from within; Stealth rolls impossible)	1/1D6

Note: Sanity loss may be increased a step for multiple mutations.

*1 foot = 30 cm

**1 inch = 2.5 cm

CHAPTER 5

Mutations: bloody projectile vomit (may target up to 5 feet away with 50% accuracy; those hit suffer 1/1D2 Sanity loss and must make a successful CON roll or spend next round retching; those hit are vulnerable to possession).

Sanity loss: none, 1/1D2 Sanity points when witnessing projectile vomit.

Karlheinz Haas, *dockworker*

Possession: 15 hours.

STR 75 CON 70 SIZ 85 DEX 60 INT 50
APP 20 POW 00* EDU 35 SAN 00 HP 15
DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 10 MP: 0

*100 POW for spirit-fragment

Combat

Attacks per round: 1

Brawl 70% (35/14), damage 1D3+1D4
Dodge 30% (15/6)

Skills

Climb 45%, Intimidate 40%, Language (German) 35%, Mechanical Repair 65%, Operate Heavy Machine 75%, Stealth 60%.

Mutations: long neck, suppurating sores, smells of rotting meat, three extra legs.

Sanity loss: 1/1D6 Sanity points to see the mutated dockworker.

Johann Caspersohn, *librarian*

Possession: 10 hours.

STR 50 CON 40 SIZ 60 DEX 55 INT 75
APP 30 POW 00* EDU 80 SAN 00 HP 10
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 7 MP: 0

Combat

Attacks per round: 1

Brawl 70% (35/14), damage 1D3
Dodge 27% (12/5)

Skills

History 45%, Language (Ancient Greek) 25%, Language (English) 45%, Language (French) 65%, Language (German) 80%, Language (Hebrew) 40%, Language (Latin) 35%, Language (Yiddish) 65%, Library Use 85%, Listen 55%, Occult 25%, Persuade 40%, Psychology 40%, Spot Hidden 45%, Stealth 35%.

Mutations: 12 extra eyes, screaming faces, prehensile tail (2 feet long), extra-long fingers (5 inches longer than normal), second face.

Sanity loss: 1/1D6 Sanity points to see the mutated librarian.

OTHER

Cassowary

STR 75 CON 50 SIZ 80 DEX 70 INT—
APP — POW 50 EDU — SAN — HP 13
DB: +1D4 Build: 1 Move: 12 MP: —

Combat

Attacks per round: 1 (claw, peck)

Fighting 60% (30/12), damage 1D6+1D4
Dodge 35% (17/7)

Skills

Listen 50%, Spot Hidden 30%, Stealth 50%.



TOME

Großmann's Journal

German, Carl Friedrich Wilhelm Großmann, 1917–1921

Großmann's journal not only contains a variety of sausage recipes and a record of his victims' names, but it also describes in unnerving detail the transformative power of consuming human flesh and of consuming the "necessary essence to transcend." Throughout, there are numerous notes and entries regarding some sort of "game" that only he seems to know how to play, along with strange charts in the style of chess diagrams, but clearly not referring to chess.

- **Sanity Loss:** 1D10
- **Cthulhu Mythos:** +2/+6 percentiles
- **Mythos Rating:** 30
- **Study:** 10 weeks
- **Spells:** Pawn Takes Whore (Consume Likeness), Pawn Promotion (Possess Corpse*), Endgame (Possession*)

*See **Spells**, below.

SPELLS

Pawn Promotion (Possess Corpse)

- **Cost:** 1 magic point; 1D8+2 Sanity points
- **Casting time:** 2 rounds

Enables the possession and animation of a dead thing for a period of up to 10 minutes. Dead things may include skeletons, animal corpses (including those that have undergone taxidermy or preserved in formaldehyde), animal skins, and human corpses. The caster's mind is transferred to the corpse for the duration of the spell and can command mobility in the corpse appropriate to its condition.

While the caster possesses the dead thing, their own body lies motionless and they no longer breathe (their heart stops pumping). When the caster returns to their own body, they must attempt a **CON** roll:

- If returning within 1–4 rounds: a bonus die is granted at Regular difficulty.
- If returning within 5–7 rounds: Regular difficulty.
- If returning within 8–9 rounds: Hard difficulty.
- If returning in 10+ rounds: Extreme difficulty.

If the **CON** roll is failed, the caster's body does not return to life; the caster's mind is entombed within their own (now dead) body. Another person may perform a successful **Medicine** or a **First Aid** roll to resuscitate the caster's body—the window of time in which resuscitation is possible is left to the discretion of the Keeper.

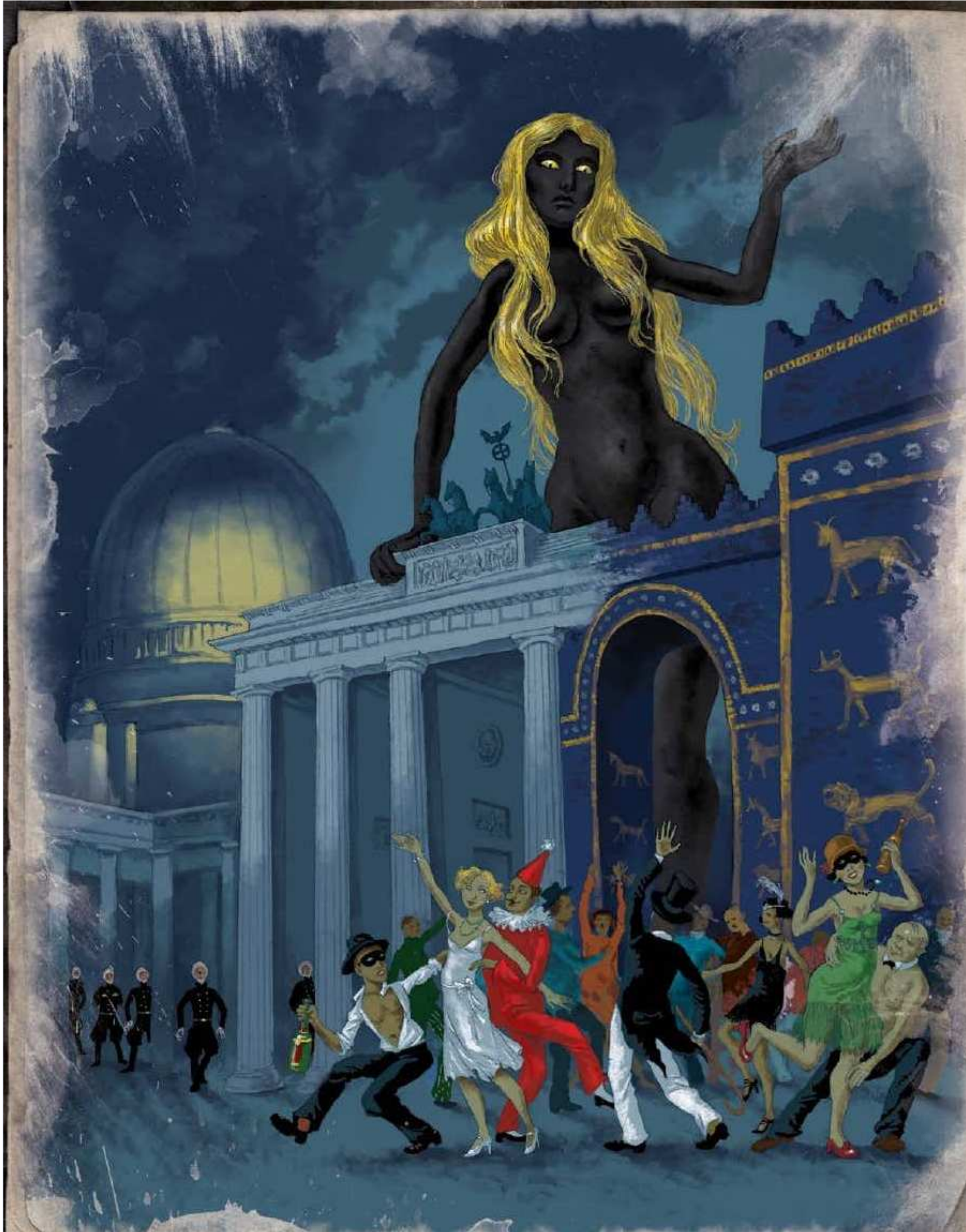
Note that if the corpse possessed is one of the living dead (a vampire, animated mummy, zombie, and so on) then an opposed **POW** roll should be made each round for the caster to remain in control of the body. If the caster loses an opposed roll, their mind is sent back to their own body (triggering a **CON** roll as detailed above). Generally, only one corpse can be possessed at any one time, although deeper magic (variant) versions may exist that allow for multiple or easier possessions.

Endgame (Possession)

- **Cost:** 15 magic points; 1D8 Sanity points
- **Casting time:** 4 rounds

Enables the possession of living human beings. By jumping from one body to the next, the caster can potentially ensure a very long lifespan. The high cost, however, means that it is used sparingly, with sorcerers preferring to stay in one body as long as possible.

The caster must be able to see their intended target with their naked eye. Words of possession are then spoken aloud to instigate the possession; the caster must win an opposed **POW** roll with the target to successfully transfer their consciousness. The possessor is unable to access any of their victim's memories while inhabiting their body. When the possessor leaves a body, the former victim has no recollection of the time when they were possessed—just a dark void in their memory.



DANCES OF VICE, HORROR, AND ECSTASY

The infamous Anita Berber is back in town with her latest husband, but she is not long for this world. The mysterious Brotherhood of Saturn and an amateur sorcerer conspire to use the notorious dancer for their own blasphemous purposes. As a cold wind whips the streets of Berlin, death stalks the cradles and nurseries of the city, inhibitions fall away, and abominations and vermin clog its streets and clubs. The investigators must find a way to restore balance to the world before a new Babylon rises on the banks of the Spree.

KEEPER SUMMARY

Dances of Vice, Horror, and Ecstasy picks up, thematically speaking, where **The Devil Eats Flies** left off, delving deeper into Berlin's seedy underground, both occult and mundane. Split between two time periods (1926 and 1928), the bulk of the scenario presents a smorgasbord of threads the investigators may follow to one of several potential outcomes. The Keeper is provided with helpful non-player characters (NPCs) to assist with keeping the investigation on track. Be warned that this is a potentially complex scenario with extremely high stakes and should be handled appropriately.

In 1926, at a dance exhibition in the Friedrichstraße, the investigators encounter Anita Berber, deep into her self-destructive death spiral. She performs three numbers, culminating with "Astarte," a piece dedicated to the goddess of the same name with whom Berber strongly identifies—see **Astarte**, page 156, for another of Berber's *homages* to the goddess. This time, however, her performance seems to manifest something godlike on stage, much to the bemusement (or chagrin) of the audience.

The investigators, in attendance with noted occultist Albin Grau, are tasked by Grau to help unravel what occurred during the performance. Berber proves as difficult

AUTHOR NOTE

The theme of this scenario is *Überschreitung* ("transgression"). A coterie of mortals, attempting to create a god, get much more than they bargained for, leaving it up to the investigators to sort out the mess. The investigators themselves transgress to a shadowy reflection of Berlin and may transgress further still. In Stephen King's three-part analysis of horror, the primary type in this scenario is the Horror, which King defines as "the unnatural, spiders the size of bears, the dead waking up and walking around, it's when the lights go out and something with claws grabs you by the arm." In other words, plenty of visceral, supernatural thrills.

and drug-addled as always and seems genuinely unaware of any strange events caused by the exhibition.

The fact of the matter is that Berber's newest husband, Henri Châtin-Hofmann, is a wizard (albeit of the amateur variety), who is using his wife's considerable powers to fuel his castings. Unable to control his workings, he inadvertently sends the investigators into a parallel dimension filled with hordes of flesh-eating monsters.

The scenario then flashes forward two years to 1928. Berber has returned to Berlin, a used-up husk on the verge of death. Albin Grau, meanwhile, has been busy: after witnessing Berber's magical powers on the cabaret stage, he got in touch with his brethren in the *Fraternitas Satumi*, a powerful group of sex-magicians, with a plan to harness that energy into a working of tremendous power. Conspiring with Châtin-Hofmann prior to his departure, the pieces are put in place

Opposite: Abyzou watches over the reverie

for a great sacrifice. With Berber's passing, the ritual is carried out, and a newborn goddess walks the streets of Berlin—with disastrous consequences for the people of the city.

The investigators are pulled back into the scenario through a mysterious ally with connections to the conspirators, who feeds them clues via telephone. Over the course of the scenario, the investigators meet the new goddess, discover the sinister details of the ritual that brought her to Berlin, and uncover the means to send her back from whence she

came. There's only one problem: the investigators must go with her to the Shadow City and save thousands of crazed Berliners from themselves, or else discover a way to destroy her corporeal body here on Earth. If they are successful, they will have banished a monstrous spirit and laid Anita Berber's soul to rest. If they fail—or, if they pay the ultimate sacrifice to succeed—then it is highly likely they are never seen again, at least not in the form they currently occupy...

INVOLVING INVESTIGATOR ORGANIZATIONS

If the investigators belong to one of the organizations described earlier in this book (**Investigator Organizations**, page 16), please see the following suggestions for involving them in this scenario.

The Independent Order of Owls: it is only natural that a group of occult investigators would know Albin Grau, who has asked them to attend a show at the *Weisse Maus* tonight for more than mere fun and games. Grau suspects Anita Berber may be something other than a simple entertainer and wishes the opinion of a clutch of erudite Owls on the matter. He promises to get them backstage to interview her after the show.

Hilde-Film: another obvious connection, owing to Grau's history in the film industry. He and Hilde go way back, and, in lieu of pay this week, she has offered the tickets to some of her staff (i.e., the investigators) as compensation.

Landsberger Tenants' Association: the owner of the Landsberg tenement block, one Baron Grunau, is also one of Grau's old pals. It was the Baron who acquired the event tickets in the first place and gave them to Grau, who has decided to repay the Baron's largesse by holding a lottery for the tenants of his building; the investigators are the winners of that lottery.

The Apache Pathfinders: Albin Grau, finding himself with extra event tickets, decided to hold a radio contest to give away the extras. Too bad he didn't think to place an age limit on the winners! Decide which among the Pathfinders won the contest (perhaps the investigator with the highest Luck); the rest attend as guests of the winner.

INTRODUCING THE INVESTIGATORS

This scenario kicks off with an invitation from Albin Grau to one or more of the investigators to attend a dance performance at the *Weisse Maus* (White Mouse) club. Grau has enough free tickets for all the investigators to attend, either as direct invitees or as plus-ones.

If the investigators played through **The Devil Eats Flies** and ended on good terms with Baron Kleist, then it is he who recommends the investigators to Grau when the Baron is unable to attend. Alternatively, an investigator who is involved in the worlds of the fine arts, the movie industry, and Berlin's occult societies knows Grau via a mutual contact, in which case the tickets are simply a token of good will from an old friend.

If this is the investigators' first Berlin scenario, or if they are expatriates without any connection to the city, assume that they arrive at the *Weisse Maus* independently and are simply seated with Grau through the expedience of his table being the only one with places still available. The investigators may have come as part of a tour package, or they are simply looking for some fun in the Friedrichstraße this evening. They will, of course, find much more than that.

SEXUAL CONTENT AND YOUR GROUP

This scenario involves a debased cult of Gnostic sex-magicians, teenage prostitutes, naked dancing, pregnancy as body horror, and a protean substance of alien fecundity.

As with the levels of violence and gore in **The Devil Eats Flies**, it is up to each Keeper and their players to determine their level of comfort with this type of content. We have endeavored to deal with these scenes in a way that allows Keepers to adjust the dial to what works best for them and their group, from "drawing a veil" up to "explicit content," but in all possible cases we have erred on the side of the former.

DANCES OF VICE, HORROR, AND ECSTASY

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Albin Grau, 42, artist-occultist

Visionary artist and producer of the 1922 Expressionist horror film *Nosferatu*, Albin Grau is the initial entry point for this scenario, providing the investigators with tickets to one of Anita Berber's shows and later enlisting them to help him find out more about the enigmatic performer. Grau also plays a major role in the ritual that transforms the dying Berber into the goddess Abyzou (...and Rebirth, page 164).

- **Description:** a bespectacled, mousy man, Grau does not look the part of the typical occultist. His buttoned-down exterior belies both his expansive artistic vision and his rather wild personal life.
- **Traits:** prior to his mind shattering as a result of Abyzou's incarnation, Grau is perfectly likeable in person, and he radiates the calm assurance of one who is well versed in a variety of disciplines. After he becomes a devoted member of Abyzou's cult, Grau has the bearing and mannerisms of a zealot, keen to recruit new members to the cause.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** unlike many of his fellow occultists, Grau does not put great stock in secrecy. Indeed, his past career as a filmmaker was built on his desire to promulgate occult information to the public (*Nosferatu* is sprinkled with esoteric Easter eggs throughout). He is always eager to talk on the topic of magic, the supernatural, and the unexplained.

Anita Berber, 27, priestess of depravity

The central figure of this scenario, though her star has long since faded in the public's imagination. In the first part of the scenario (1926), Berber leaves a lasting impression on the investigators when one of her performances transcends this earthly plane. In the second part, her dying body is used as part of a ritual to create a living goddess on Earth, and it is through her influence even after death that a means of banishing said goddess presents itself.

- **Description:** after years of fast living and near-constant drug abuse, Anita Berber is beginning to show the effects of her reckless life. She is puffier around the face and now wears her theatrical makeup as much to cover the lines and wrinkles as for showy effect. Otherwise, she is still the same gap-toothed, androgynous, flaming-haired beauty she always was.
- **Traits:** still prone to outrageous behavior, Anita's cocaine and cognac habits ensure that the only thing predictable about her behavior is its unpredictability. Subject to fantastic mood swings, ill-considered soliloquies, and outbursts of violence, she is a tremendously difficult person to be around by this point in her life.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** increasingly banned from venues across Europe due to her violent outbursts and refusal to play by the rules, Berber is ever concerned with money. She has no qualms about selling her body and will do so at the drop of a hat. Investigators offering her cash or drugs will quickly find themselves her closest friend and will be treated to long digressions on the moon goddess, Astarte, and the beauty of white roses.



Albin Grau



Anita Berber

Henri Châtin-Hofmann, 26, dancer and dabbler

Anita Berber's third and final husband (and amateur sorcerer), Henri Châtin-Hofmann is a man in over his head. Born Heinrich Hofmann in Baltimore, Maryland in 1900, the only son of a pastor at the Zion Lutheran Church there, Châtin-Hofmann changed the spelling of his name and added his mother's maiden name upon his confirmation at age 15. A few years later, despite speaking almost no German, he left home and took a ship to Berlin. There, in 1924, he met and married Berber.

- **Description:** possesses a boyish face, which only serves to accentuate his natural naïveté. He is handsome and slightly built, albeit extremely physically fit.
- **Traits:** generally quiet and retiring, Châtin-Hofmann is content to allow his wife to take the spotlight (both onstage and off). This is partly what comes naturally to him and partly due to not wanting to draw attention to his covert activities. Investigators talking to Châtin-Hofmann in 1926 find him to be an earnest, if somewhat clueless, young man. By 1928, two years of hard living and further explorations of unspeakable magical rites have left him easily rattled and suspicious.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** on the outside, he appears a devoted husband and artistic partner, constantly promoting his wife's career and attempting to minimize her bad press. In reality he is merely grooming her to take part in a great magical

working. Albin Grau, the occultist and cultist, draws Henri into a deadly plan to incarnate a goddess upon the Earth, beginning in 1926—one that is finally brought to fruition in 1928. Although Châtin-Hofmann pulls off the working, it leaves him a broken man, fleeing from that which he created.

Erma Kore, appears 17, telephone-girl with a secret

The adolescent Kore is a Telephone-Girl; a specialized sort of prostitute, she books clients only over the phone. These are clients who desire not only the illicit thrill of a pedophilic sexual encounter (some Telephone-Girls are as young as 14*) but who also wish to fulfill their modernistic obsessions with the cults of technology and celebrity; like all Telephone-Girls, Kore has adopted the looks and persona of a famous film actress—in her case, Marlene Dietrich.

*See *Age of Consent*, page 53.

- **Description:** the soulful eyes and carved features of Dietrich, accentuated with a wig, makeup, and gender-bending sartorial choices. She also bears an uncomfortable resemblance to someone the investigators may have met in the past (*Meeting Erma*, page 181).
- **Traits:** although appearing to be only 17 years old, Kore, due to the nature of her work, possesses a world-weariness far beyond her years. Besides which, she is, in fact, an artificial creation of **Belshazzar the Doll Maker** (page 151; also



Henri Châtin-Hofmann



Erma Kore

DANCES OF VICE, HORROR, AND ECSTASY

Meeting Erma, page 181). Kore knows how to play off the sympathies of others, putting on a childlike voice for maximum effect when necessary. At other times, especially when meeting in person, she is cool and detached. Whatever mask she dons, her true personality is buried beneath so many layers that it is possible even she does not know what her “genuine” self looks like any longer.

- **Roleplaying hooks:** Kore works for a certain Baron Grunau, an associate of Albin Grau and is thus privy to much that the Borborite cultists would rather kept secret (**The Borborite Cult**, page 164). The accumulation of secrets has grown too much for her, and she turns to the investigators for help (see **Erma Kore: Telephone-Girl**, page 150, and **Erma's Connection**, page 168).

Belshazzar the Doll Maker, **90(?), Kabbalistic artisan**

An ancient doll maker residing in Berlin's Jewish quarter, Belshazzar is also a master of Kabbalistic magic. These two fields of expertise intersect when he is commissioned by Albin Grau and his associates to make a series of *manikins* (living dolls) as part of their sinister summoning ritual. Although he agreed to do so, he now regrets the decision and may prove to be an ally to the investigators if treated sympathetically.

- **Description:** Belshazzar is a stooped old man of indeterminate antiquity. His spidery white hair sticks out in great puffs around the rim of his yarmulke, and a scraggly white beard dangles off the end of his chin. He wears a heavy cassock typical of those from the East but speaks fluent German.
- **Traits:** another sign of Belshazzar's exceeding age is his language: he speaks both German and Yiddish in an archaic dialect, full of outmoded grammatical constructions. He also displays a certain contempt for, and mystification with, modern technology (i.e., anything invented since the Napoleonic Wars). Investigators expecting a sly or dangerous sorcerer instead encounter an amiable, grandfatherly type who tends to ramble on about the old days while making winking jokes about how he is older than Methuselah.
- **Roleplaying hooks:** the creator of the *manikins* longs for death or oblivion as a result of the horror he helped inflict on the city, although he can be of great use to the investigators if they can convince him to share his secrets.

Gregor Gregorius, 38, occult bookstore owner

Also known as Eugen Grosche, Gregorius is the owner of the **Occult Bookshop Inveha** (page 175), as well as the founder of the Fraternitas Saturni (FS; **Occult Societies**, page 60). Besides running his bookshop and attempting to disseminate esoteric knowledge to Berlin's masses, Gregorius is also present in Belshazzar's basement when the so-called “Berbelo Working” goes terribly wrong.



Belshazzar the Doll Maker



Gregor Gregorius

CHAPTER 6

- **Days 6–7 (November 15–17):** by this point, the uptick in child deaths and illnesses has become noticeable and is reported on in the papers (**Handout: Dances 2**). Riots and street battles, public sex acts, hordes of rats, and packs of roving wild dogs. A minority of Kripo and Sipo units (**Beins and Bulls**, page 37) still fight the good fight but are little better than vigilantes at this point, receiving no guidance or support from the thoroughly corrupted upper echelons.
- **Week Two and beyond:** parades of Bacchanalian revelers, drunk and fornicating, tearing apart the weak and helpless, who are unable to outrun them. Massive blood-sucking leeches oozing down the main boulevards. Men and women with the heads of dogs, bulls, and lions. Bodies of children and infants being dumped into mass graves. By this point, those police and jurists who haven't been corrupted by Abyzou's influence are at their wits' end and unable to cope with the flood of crime and strange stories—the rule of law has completely broken down.

The Culling of the Young

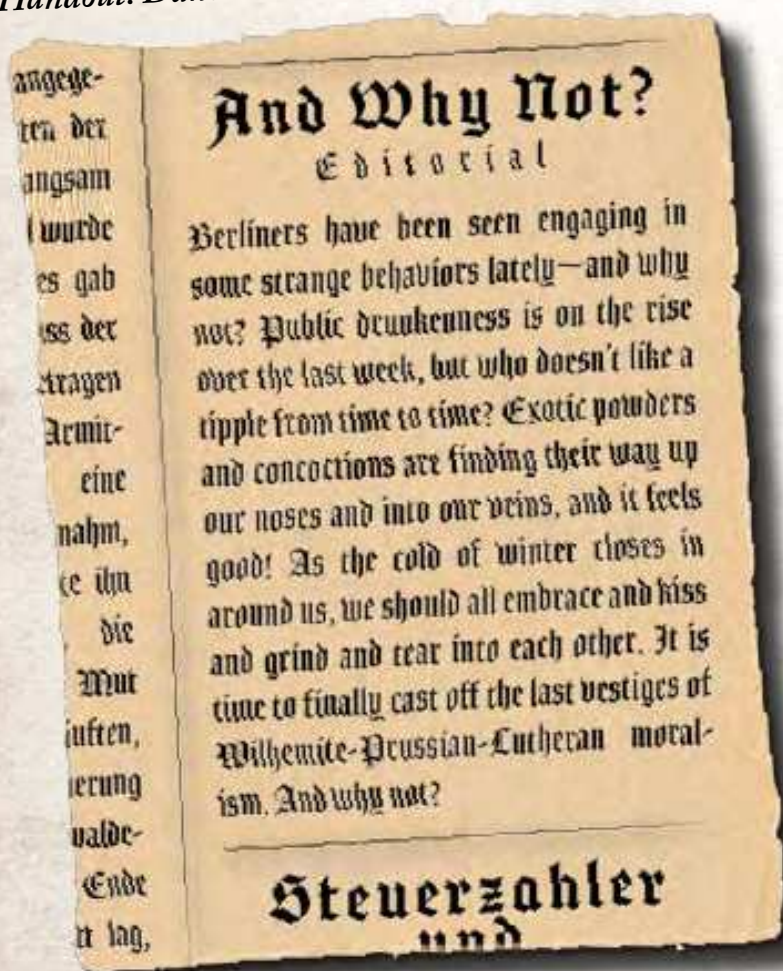
The arrival of Abyzou on Earth, unnatural and out of place, has a catastrophic effect. The winds, already cold and steady, now increase in intensity and do not let up; they blow and blow, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The effect is to put the whole city on edge and leave tempers close to the breaking point. What's more, the winds blow a strange

fog through the streets. Moving in great, cottony, billowing puffs, the mist is likely to remind more than a few veterans of poison gas. It is an apt comparison.

After Abyzou's arrival on the anniversary eve of the war's end, obstetricians at the city's hospitals start to report an increase in miscarriages. Priests and doctors are summoned to home after home, tending to panicked parents of young children suddenly fallen gravely ill. And always the wind blows and the fog creeps in through cracks in windows and doorways.

Keeper note: the mist is not actually causing the deaths, which are in fact caused by insubstantial creatures known as fog-spawn—see **Creatures and Monsters**, page 196, for more details. Though the fog-spawn may target anyone, they primarily go after the young. Do any of the investigators have a significant person who is vulnerable? Younger siblings, children of their own perhaps? Wives or sisters heavy with child? All may suffer at the hands of this new evil wind. Use the threat of death of a loved one as leverage and to increase tension—there is a palpable sense of danger that any night may be their last. Ultimately, the death of a child or infant closely related to one or more of the investigators should be contemplated only if the investigators tarry too long in dealing with Abyzou's threat.

Handout: Dances 1



Erma Kore: Telephone-Girl

"I am the daughter of Fortitude, and ravished every hour from my youth. For behold I am Understanding, and science dwelleth in me; and the heavens oppress me. They cover and desire me with infinite appetite; for none that are earthly have embraced me, for I am shadowed with the Circle of the Stars and covered with the morning clouds.... I am deflowered, yet a virgin; I sanctify and am not sanctified.... I am a harlot for such as ravish me, and a virgin with such as know me not."

—Excerpt from a letter received by Sir Edward Kelley and Dr. John Dee, May 23, 1587

Three blocks west of Potsdamer Platz, along a quiet stretch of Viktoria Straße, is a former ambassador's house, now remodeled into high-end apartments. One of these apartments, owned by Baron Grunau, is the residence of a 17-year-old "girl" (actually a *manikin*) called Erma Kore.

Baron Grunau, in addition to running a Telephone-Girl agency out of his Viktoria Straße apartments, is also a patron of the arts and something of an amateur archaeologist. It was on a dig at the Siwa Oasis in Egypt some 20 years ago that he discovered a set of moldering papyri, themselves copies of ancient clay tablets, which contained blasphemous rituals for incarnating a goddess upon the Earth.

DANCES OF VICE, HORROR, AND ECSTASY

Grunau, in his capacity as a movie-lover, goes way back with Herr Albin Grau. It was mostly Grunau's money that funded Grau's Prana Films, and the two remain close to this day.

Erma Kore knows all of this. Like her filmic alter ego, Marlene Dietrich, she is wise and world-weary beyond her years, and she listens well to conversations that filter up from the downstairs parlor or that take place on telephone party lines. She knows about the Berbelo Working. She knows who funneled knowledge of the ritual and its methods to that naïve dancer-magician. She also knows of the "doll-people" that roam the streets of the city in great numbers (... **and Rebirth**, page 164), and that she is one of them. And she wishes to share all this information with the investigators.

Keeper note: although Grau's use of the rituals was sanctioned, encouraged, and secretly bankrolled by Grunau, the Baron was absent from the final working due to pressing business matters elsewhere—a narrow escape indeed.

It is Erma who phones the investigators' table at the Residenz-Casino—she is seated at a table set farther back in the recesses of the club, well out of sight—and who sneaks a small porcelain doll full of the *gestohlene Blitz* elixir into the tube system (see **Restart: At the Resi**, page 168, for these incidents).

Through her extensive network of clients (many of whom are also members of Berlin's occult underground), she keeps tabs on the investigators' progress. Although she initially she contacts them only via telephone, when the time is right she summons them for an eerie face-to-face interview (**Meeting Erma**, page 181).

Erma is the Keeper's secret weapon in this scenario. She is on hand to provide clues but cannot say too much—at least, not until they all meet in person—for fear of being overheard by unsympathetic ears on the telephone party line. Use her phone calls sparingly, particularly when the investigators are struggling; if they are racing along under their own steam, consider not using Erma at all until their meeting. Use the following cryptic clues for her to communicate over the phone.

- "The memory of Berber lives on."
- "Remember your old friend Grau."
- "The goddess of the moon is alive and well in Berlin."
- "Walter Andrae is a good man to know."
- "It's always a good time at the Hundegustav."

Handout: Dances 2

Plague in the City!

For the past week, Berlin has been bedeviled by unseasonable winds and blowing fog. As if carried on this foul miasma, a new epidemic is sweeping our neighborhoods. Tragically, it seems to be hitting our children and infants the hardest. Odds are that if you have not personally suffered a visitation in your

own household, dear reader, you know someone who has. Doctors at the Charité and other hospitals around the city have reported a distinct rise in infant mortality and serious illnesses among Berlin's youth. Symptoms so far have yet to manifest a distinct pattern: some suffer

from fever, others from fits, still others from crippling intestinal complaints.

When contacted for comment, government hygiene and sanitation officials assured us that they are working as quickly as science allows in ascertaining and eliminating the source of the maladies.

RESTART: AT THE RESI

It is autumn in Berlin. The weather outside is clear but chilly, with periodic gusts of wind rattling the windows and sending unguarded hats flying. It is November 10, the same day as Berber's death.

ERMA'S CONNECTION

How does Erma Kore come to rely on the investigators for help in undoing the Berbelo plot? The investigators are sure to wonder that themselves.

Erma is a quietly mysterious figure. Her role in the scenario is to impress a sense of uncanny unease on the investigators, starting with the bizarre, unwholesome nature of her vocation. Play up the mystery of how she found out about them, but be ready with an answer, all the same.

If one or more of the investigators took part in **The Devil Eats Flies**, they will note an unmistakable resemblance between little Erma and the handsome assassin Erwin Kern, whom they encountered during the **Incident at Romanisches Square** (page 106) and possibly later in the scenario. Kern was the ringleader of the plot to assassinate Walther Rathenau and was ultimately caught and gunned down a month after the murder, unless the investigators killed him themselves during the scenario.

Erma is not a literal reincarnation of Kern, although her facial features were modeled from his (**The Doll Maker's Shop**, page 172); however, unlike Kern, she is a pitiable figure.

If the investigators did indeed encounter Kern in the past, Erma, due to the sympathetic magic inherent in the nature of her creation, has instinctively felt the urge to get in touch with these investigators, knowing that they could help her. Even *she* is at a loss to explain why this should be so.

If this scenario is being run as a one-off, or if no investigators present participated in **The Devil Eats Flies**, then Erma has heard of them while eavesdropping on Albin Grau discussing their unusual experiences at the Weiße Maus and the Clärchens Ballhaus two years ago. Realizing that they passed over to the Shadow City, domain of Abyzou, she sees in a flash that these are people with the necessary experience to help her cause.

The investigators are passing the time in their usual fashion. A small article in the back pages of the paper today (**Handout: Dances 3**), wedged in between large ads for theatrical revues with names like *Take It Off!*, *Houses of Love*, and *Goddammit—1,000 Naked Women!*, notes the return of Anita Berber, Berlin's own original naked dancer, to the city, which perhaps gives the investigators some pause as they no doubt recall their last interaction with her two years ago.

But such melancholy considerations are swiftly swept aside, for tonight the group has plans to meet up for drinks and entertainment at the Residenz-Casino, more commonly called simply "the Resi." Although it opened only last year, the Resi is already recognized as one of Berlin's premiere pleasure palaces, second only to **Haus Vaterland** (page 48).

The investigators arrive at the Blumenstraße address just south of Alexanderplatz around 10 pm. The wind is now blowing steadily and heavily, sending icy tendrils between coat buttons and up stockinged legs.

The building itself doesn't look terribly promising, being another of Berlin's *fin-de-siècle* Neo-Baroque excesses, but upon hustling in out of the cold night the investigators are struck by a surprisingly modern tableau: a multi-tiered club that gradually descends in stages toward a parquet dance floor with nearly 100 tables spread across all levels, each one surmounted by a small rotating mirror ball. Two orchestras, one all-male, the other all-female (both consisting entirely of remarkably attractive folk hired more for their looks than any actual musical talent) play foxtrots and American jazz at either end of the club; the mirror balls rotate and split open in time to the music. Elsewhere, small fountains throw lighted streams of colored water in graceful arcs and columns.

Craning their necks, the investigators see that the ceiling, too, is multi-tiered, the centerpiece being a motorized glass dome painted with Japanese-style cranes and orchids. The whole space is filled with laughing, happy people.

A *maitre d'* appears and, after checking hats and coats, escorts the party to the tier just above dance-floor level, where they are seated at a table bearing a large placard, mounted just below the mirror ball and showing the number 58. From this vantage point, they have a good view of not only the dance floor but of most of the other tables and three of its four bars. Like every other table in this part of the club, this one features its own telephone mounted on the pole that holds up the spinning mirror ball, as well as a woven basket situated under what looks like a Rohrpost tube (**Media and Communication**, page 26). The phone may be used to call any other table in the club and initiate a conversation.

A waiter comes by with food and drink menus as well as a "gift menu"—this contains 135 little *tchotchkes* (small trinkets) that can be purchased and sent anonymously to any of the other numbered tables in the room via its system of pneumatic tubes.

DANCES OF VICE, HORROR, AND ECSTASY

The food on offer here is heavy and very Prussian: roasted pig knuckles on a bed of sauerkraut, and other dishes of a similar ilk. The drinks menu, however, is extensive, with a variety of beers, wines, liqueurs, and cocktails.

After drink orders are placed, the investigators settle in. Looking around, they note that there are approximately five women for every man in the club. What's more, most of these women look thoroughly middle-class—hardly the sort of ladies one would normally expect to see at a club this close to the Alex. Nothing is amiss; this is simply the kind of crowd the Resi draws most evenings. Allow whatever level of flirting, fun, and general revelry the investigators desire. They may place calls or send gifts to other tables, dance, drink and eat, or explore the club as they see fit before Erma Kore decides to call them.

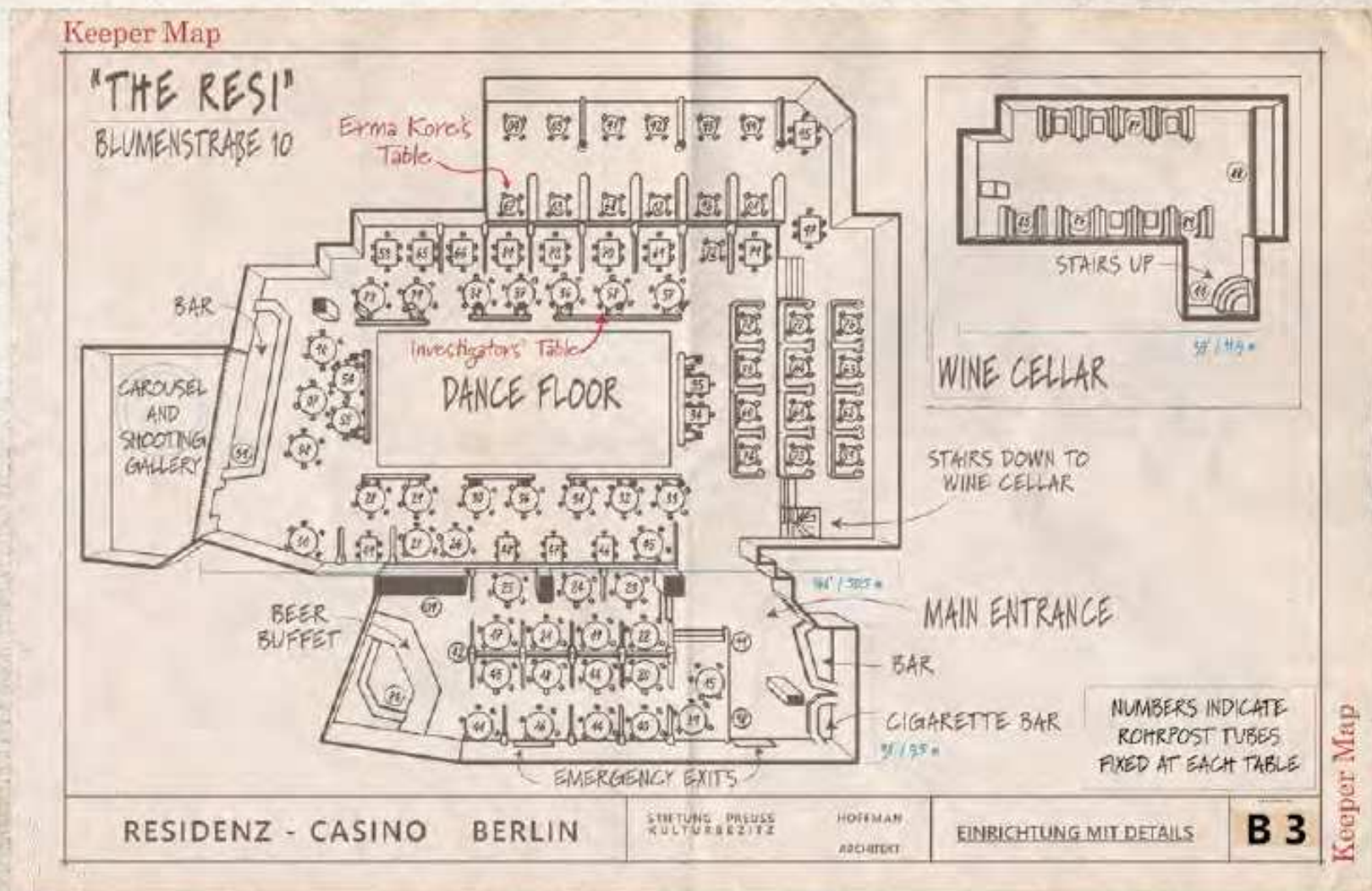
In addition to the main dance floor area, which accommodates up to 1,000 dancers at a time, those poking around find two other sections of the club: the Carousel and Shooting Gallery, and the Wine Cellar. The latter is precisely what it says: a basement room with a few booths and tables where patrons may sample any of the Resi's many fine Rhinish wines, plus vintages imported from Austria, France, and Italy. The room is quite different in tone from

the rest of the club, being quiet and private—a fine place to conduct clandestine meetings. Only half the tables down here have phones.

The Carousel and Shooting Gallery is a large room modeled on Luna Park in the Grunewald. Investigators who grew up in Berlin may have fond childhood memories of summer days spent at the now-crumbling water park, and this room does its best to recreate those memories in miniature. Drunken, giggling revelers try their skill at various small, water-powered shooting galleries. Others whoop and holler on the undersized eight-horse carousel that rotates gaily in the center of the space.

Ring Ring!

Once the players seem to have had their fill of frivolity, move the narrative forward. It's getting late—past 2 am—and the party is losing a bit of steam. Perhaps the investigators are starting to think of going home, or at least going somewhere a little less boisterous. Everyone has gathered back at Table #58 to check in and see how everyone else is doing. It's that uncomfortable part of the evening where no one wants to be the first to suggest going home, but everyone would very much like to do so.



Suddenly, the table phone rings. Who picks it up? Answering, the voice on the other end sounds like no other this evening. There is no giggling, no clumsy drunken flirtation. Just a voice—that of a girl, saying, “She is coming. The Mother of Abominations. She brings death on black wings. All will suffer, but the young will suffer the most.” The phone clicks off.

No sooner has this happened than the pneumatic tube roars to life and a small packet drops into the hanging net at the investigators’ table. The packet opened, the investigators find a small, porcelain baby doll inside. It feels heavy, like its hollow interior is filled with something.

If the head or torso is smashed open, the investigators discover (to their disgust) that the doll is filled with a swirling mixture of a crimson and milky off-white substance that smells like congealed milk and looks like bloody pus—call for a **Sanity** roll (0/1 loss). If the investigator cracking the doll open fails a **Luck** roll, some of the substance splashes on their hand, causing 1 point of damage and instantly raising angry welts on their skin.

Examining the Doll

Examining the doll notes a maker’s symbol just below the hairline at the nape of the neck (**Handout: Dances 4**). Investigators with **Language (Hebrew)** or those succeeding at a Hard **Know** roll recognize the symbols immediately: they spell the word *emet*, meaning “truth.” Jewish investigators making a subsequent successful **History** or **Occult** roll recall that this is the word supposedly written on the forehead of the legendary Golem of Prague—non-Jewish investigators may make this roll as well, but they require a Hard success to recall such a fact.

If the Resi staff is alerted to this bizarre gift, they apologize abjectly, comping the investigators’ bill for the evening. They are at quite a loss to explain how this could have happened; the doll isn’t even on the gift menu, and none of the Resi’s staff admit to sending it. If the investigators wish to trace the location of the doll’s manufacturer, see **The Doll Maker’s Shop**, page 172.



Examining the doll

DANCES OF VICE, HORROR, AND ECSTASY

DEAD ENDS

After their visit to the Resi and Erma's unnerving phone call and gift, the investigators may wish to seek out some of their old comrades from their visit to the Weiße Maus.

Contacting Grau

Albin Grau, their old occultist friend, is listed (number and address) in the telephone directory, but calls to his residence go unanswered. A personal visit finds no one home, his nosy landlady telling investigators that she hasn't seen Herr Grau for some days.

Visiting Berber

Investigators may wish to seek out Berber at her hospital bedside in Kreuzberg. Of course, by the time they read the notice in the paper (**Handout: Dances 3**), she is already dead.

Her body is held in the hospital morgue for four days prior to burial (a pauper's grave at St. Thomas Cemetery in Neukölln). Investigators with an occupation in the medical or police field, or those with **Credit Rating** 50% or higher, may arrange a viewing of the body.

Handout: Dances 4



Handout: Dances 3

Berber back in Berlin!



Notorious dancer and actress Anita Berber, once called "the Dresden Madonna" but now largely forgotten in this city, has at last made her way back to Berlin, where she began her career nearly ten years ago.

For some time now, Berber has been traveling abroad with her husband, Henri Châtin-Hofmann, performing in Egypt, the Levant, and even in the shadows of once-mighty Babylon itself.

Reports have reached this writer that Berber has returned via the Orient Express in ill health and has been hospitalized for a week at the Bethanien Hospital. Although this is distressing news, we are sure that, at 29 years old and still in the prime of her life, she will recover swiftly and be back on the dancing stage in short order!

THE DOLL MAKER'S SHOP

One of the investigators' first leads is the marking on the doll's head from the Resi. Using this symbol, it is possible to trace the location of the manufacturer, though it requires a bit of footwork.

Referencing the Doll Maker's Mark

The library of the Museum of Industrial Art (**Berlin's Libraries and Museums**, page 45) houses several reference volumes collating marks of doll makers going all the way back to the 17th century. Investigators with an arts background can think of this automatically; others may be aware of the resource with a successful **Know** roll. Investigators may also come to the doll maker's shop via leads from interviewing Henri Châtin-Hofmann (**Regarding Henri**, page 180), snooping around the **Inveha Bookshop** (page 175), by visiting a more commercial doll shop and inquiring about the mark, or—if all else fails—through a direct prompt from **Erma Kore: Telephone-Girl** (page 166).

Finding the mark in the catalogs at the Industrial Art library requires a successful **Library Use** roll and one hour of searching. Once located in the index, the mark gives an address but no name: Rosenthaler Straße 39—just north of Hackescher Markt, deep in the city's "Barn Quarter"

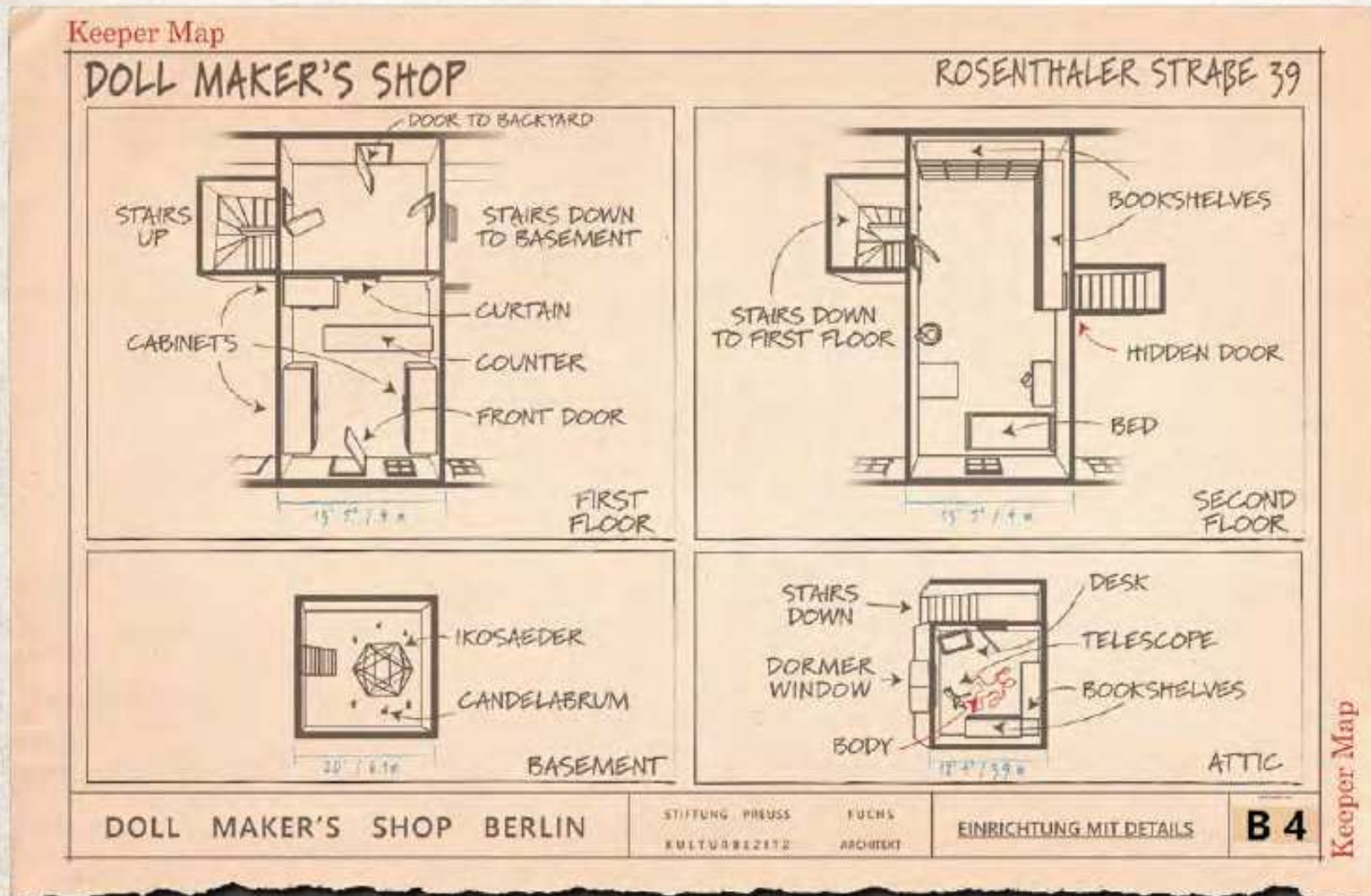
(*Scheuenviertel*); a down-at-heel neighborhood in the Alex that's home both to *Ringvereine* criminals and most of Berlin's Jewish population, both native and immigrant.

Rosenthaler Straße

At nearly any time of the day or night, Rosenthaler Straße is a typically broad and bustling avenue, with three- and four-story buildings looming over both sides of the street. Currently, the talk of the neighborhood seems to revolve around what happened at the **Hundegustav** (page 183) the other night. If asked, the locals—mostly Eastern European Jews—happily volunteer the information about the dive bar on Linienstraße that seems to have taken a dive all its own. "Some sort of riot, they say. All sorts of strange rumors! A black-skinned lady shows up and the whole place gets turned upside-down, or so they tell it. I might stroll over later and have a look myself, but I won't get too close. A pretty rough crowd usually hangs around there. Ach, this wind! When is it going to let up?"

Number 39

As for the doll shop, Number 39 is located down a damp alley that provides some relief from the steady wind, offset by the eerie whistling of the breeze as it blows over the courtyard within. Blank windows stare down at the investigators; dead ivy climbs up crumbling stucco and exposed brickwork.



DANCES OF VICE, HORROR, AND ECSTASY

Several doors promise access to spaces beyond, but one grabs the investigators' attention, or rather the sign hanging above it does: the doll maker's symbol and the word (repeated twice, once in Roman and then again in Hebrew letters): *Belshazzar*. Regardless of the time of day or night the investigators visit, they find the door unlocked. Entering the shop, the interior is unlit and chilly. Perhaps no one is home?

A dirty window is the only source of outside light, with no electrical or gas lights inside. If the investigators lack light sources of their own, a quick search turns up three candles in various wax-encrusted candleholders.

The investigators can see that they are in a tiny shop front. Porcelain dolls of various sizes sit upon shelves in the numerous open-fronted cabinets dotted around the premises, staring down on the visitors with their dead eyes. Other ceramic pieces may be seen here and there, including a garden gnome or two. A successful **Spot Hidden** roll notices a doll that has fallen from one of the shelves, its once-pretty face now cracked open.

Keeper note: Châtin-Hofmann, in his rush to flee from the Berbelo ritual, smashed into the cabinet and sent the doll tumbling.

Calling out brings no response. A curtained door provides access to the rear of the shop; stepping through, the investigators find themselves in a hallway. To their left, a stairway ascends and quickly turns out of sight. To their right is a small door, only about 5 feet high and 2 feet wide (1.5 m by 0.6 m). Directly ahead is a normal-sized door, its small window of colored glass indicating that this one leads outside.

The outside door opens onto a small, quaint courtyard, the sky overhead nothing more than a small gray patch just visible beyond the surrounding walls. Here may be found a large kiln, suitable for firing porcelain and other ceramics. If an investigator possesses **Art/Craft (Ceramics)** or **Mechanical Repair**, they can tell that the kiln has been fired within the past week.

Back in the hall, the small door across from the base of the stairs is unlocked. Opening it reveals a steep set of steps disappearing into pitch darkness. If the investigators have been relying on ambient light up until this point, they have no choice but to find a light source or risk falling and breaking their necks on the steep descent.

Down in the Basement

The basement below smells of moist earth and mildew. The walls are of fitted granite, quite ancient, perhaps of medieval vintage; the floor is unfinished packed dirt. The space, barely 100 square feet (9 square meters), is unfurnished save for half a dozen wrought iron candelabra and an odd, metal frame-like structure in the center of the room. It is obvious from their remains that the candles in the candelabra were allowed to burn all the way down, their blood-red wax now dried in copious rivulets along the stands and in large puddles on the ground.

The frame-like structure is a 6 foot (1.8 m) tall polyhedron made up of 20 equilateral triangles (i.e., identical in appearance to a hollow 20-sided die). Those with **Art/Craft (Dance)** recognize the frame at once as a creation of the iconoclastic dance theorist Rudolf von Laban. It is called an *Ikosaeder* (icosahedron) and is used in some of Laban's dance exercises. What it is doing in the basement of a doll maker's shop is anybody's guess. It must be completely disassembled (a task requiring a blowtorch and lots of time) to move it out of the basement's narrow exit.

Keeper note: should the investigators wish to look into the *Ikosaeder* and its maker, see **Rudolf Von Laban**, page 179.



There are signs of recent activity, with many fresh footprints on the earthen floor—a successful **Hard Track** roll estimates that as many as half a dozen people were in here at one time. The tracks are all of men's shoes with one exception: a set of slim, bare footprints, likely of a woman or a youth, that lead from the center of the room to the staircase.

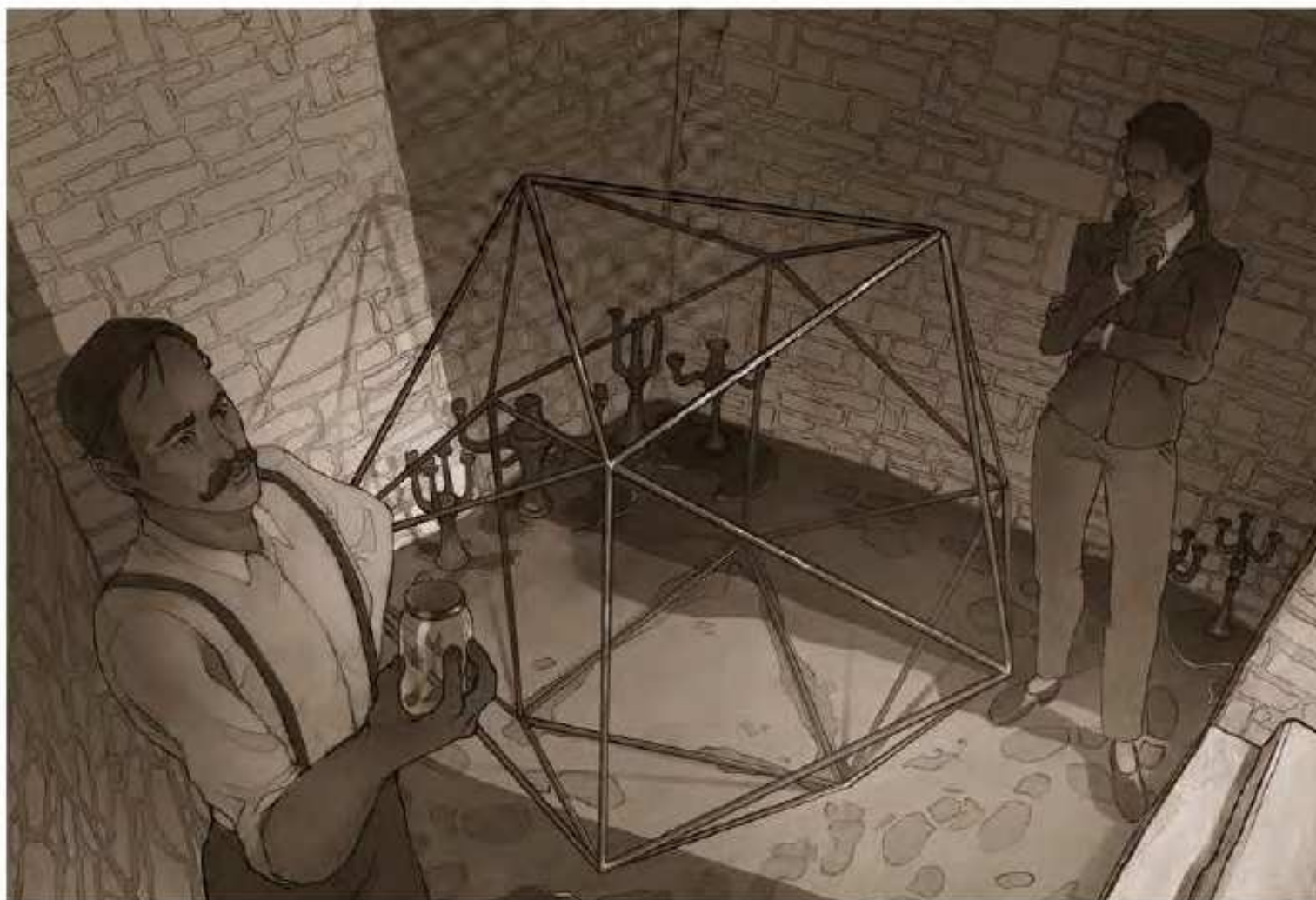
There is one other (easily spotted) odd artifact in the room: a glass jar with a screw-on cap. Although the jar is empty, the interior is streaked with what is unmistakably a viscous organic substance, not unlike bloody mucous. A successful **Medicine** roll surmises the goo is at least partially made of lung tissue. There is otherwise nothing else to find in the room.

Upstairs

Investigators who follow the stairs leading up from the hallway reach a modest bedroom and living quarters. Here the investigators find a rumpled bed, a small vanity, and a makeshift dining area set up next to a wood-burning stove. A window next to the bed looks out over the front courtyard. Most of the wall space in this room is given over to bookshelves. The subject matter ranges over a wide variety

of topics, from mathematics to history to geography to books on ceramic-firing techniques, in languages including Latin, Greek, German, and Hebrew. If any of the investigators know the latter, they note that many of the tomes in that language appear to be on extremely esoteric subjects having to do with the study of the Kabbalah.

One of the few bits of art on the wall is an unframed, slightly curled 17th-century print depicting an old man, seated on a chair, holding a 10-pointed symbol inscribed with various Hebrew letters. A successful **Occult** roll identifies this symbol as the Sephirah, the ten “emanations” in Kabbalah. A successful **Spot Hidden** roll, or if studying the print closely, reveals that it flutters from time to time, as if a draft is blowing through the room. Alerted to this, the investigators may determine (using candle flames or simply their own sense of touch) the direction the draft is blowing from. It seems to originate along the edge of one of the bookcases opposite the entrance to the room. Sure enough, this portion of the bookcase is a narrow false door. Pushing hard on the side nearest the wall sets the case moving on its counterbalanced pivot, uncovering another set of stairs leading still farther up.



Down in the basement

DANCES OF VICE, HORROR, AND ECSTASY

spawn locates him. Schelda is killed in the ensuing attack, but Châtin-Hofmann makes it out alive. For the next 24 hours, he is a man on the run, subject to repeated close calls with Abyzou's "pets." The only reason he survives is that the fog-spawn are sent to capture rather than kill him, but they aren't quite intelligent enough to pull off the job. Eventually, insensate and raving, he finds his way to Erma Kore's apartment (**Erma's Guest**, page 183), where investigators may encounter him again.

Investigators may, no doubt, find Châtin-Hofmann to be something of a sad specimen, but his role in bringing doom to Berlin should not be overlooked. Later in the scenario, the investigators find Châtin-Hofmann to be a potential key to banishing Abyzou from our world for good.

MEETING ERMA

The time the investigators meet Erma Kore face to face is left to the Keeper. Ideally, they have used her clues and their own inquiries to put together an idea of the peril that now stalks Berlin's streets and are trying to figure out a way to put a stop to it. Under no circumstances should the meeting take place earlier than the evening of November 12, giving Châtin-Hofmann time to show up at her apartment first

(**Erma's Guest**, page 183). Furthermore, the meeting most likely takes place after dark.

When the time comes, a dark Ford sedan pulls up as the investigators are setting off for some destination or another. One of the tough, scarred men in the front passenger seats rolls down the window, greeting them with, "*If you oppose the evil that festers in this city, you will get in.*"

It's clear both men are criminals of some sort, likely members of a local *Ringverein*. It's up to the investigators whether they take the risk and get in the car. If they do, they are whisked away to a quiet, tree-lined stretch of Viktoria Straße (located off Potsdamer Platz) filled with upscale row houses.

The car's chauffeur remains in the vehicle, but the other man escorts the investigators inside, up a lushly carpeted flight of stairs to a second-floor landing. He gives a discrete knock; from within, a youthful, familiar voice calls, "*Enter.*"

Keeper note: the key to the following scene is to emphasize the beyond-her-years maturity and *Weltschmerz* (melancholy and world-weariness) of the girl behind the door. While Erma Kore is a victim of a supernatural plot, she is equally a victim of a depraved society that trades so willingly in adolescent flesh.



"If you oppose the evil that festers in this city, you will get in."

CHAPTER 6

The investigators find themselves in a sumptuously decorated living room, laid out with fine French antiques (mostly Louis XIV- and XV-era). Standing at a window overlooking the street, gazing down through diaphanous curtains, is a petite girl dressed in a flowing robe and negligee. She cannot be more than 17 years old. Her golden-blond hair is cut shoulder-length, and her makeup is expertly applied. She resembles nothing so much as a teenaged Marlene Dietrich. She simultaneously looks eerily familiar to certain investigators—those who met Erwin Kern during the events of **The Devil Eats Flies** might even swear that she is his little sister.

Their escort bows his way out. He waits on the landing for Erma's signal to escort the investigators away.

"Please, have a seat," says the girl. Her childlike voice contrasts harshly with her sophisticated bedroom attire. As the investigators seat themselves on the couch and chairs near the marble fireplace, she crosses the room and picks up an old box, flips it open, and takes out a pre-rolled cigarette, fitting it into a cigarette holder. She then waits for an investigator (preferably male) to light it for her. "Please, help yourselves," she adds, and then positions herself next to the fireplace.

"It's a pleasure finally to meet you all in the flesh," she says, exhaling smoke. "I know all of you already, but I should introduce myself. My clients call me Marlene, but my real name is Erma. Erma Kore."

By now it should be obvious to any investigator with even passing familiarity with Berlin's sex industry that Erma is a prostitute, a particular type known as a "Telephone-Girl"—always young (14–18 years of age) and made up to look like a famous movie star, their engagements are arranged exclusively over the telephone.

Erma has summoned the investigators here to lay everything out, to the best of her knowledge. She may be able to fill in some gaps in the investigators' understanding, but she mainly functions as a means to communicate to the group just what they're up against, if they haven't figured it out already.

Moving around the room, Erma greets each of the investigators by name. "I must apologize; I have been watching you from afar," she explains. She asks them what they know of the *Manikinmenschen*. As the investigators are unlikely to be familiar with this term, she explains further.

"Belshazzar the Doll Maker. He made these... creatures. They begin as human-sized porcelain dolls, but he uses sorcery to infuse them with life. They take on the appearance of people—flesh and blood people, I mean."

If asked how she knows this, she only smiles grimly before carrying on. "The manikins, after being given life—or the semblance of it—were sent out into the city to collect ritual ingredients, which they call 'gestohlener Blitz'—'stolen lightning'—that the Baron's cult needed for the great working. Who is the Baron? Never mind that for now. The cult needed great quantities of these ingredients

to make their elixir. You have seen some of this already, perhaps?" Investigators who broke open the doll at the Resi sense recognize she is referring to this substance. "The manikins, they work the streets or the brothels, do you follow? These ingredients... are best collected by prostitutes. This was crucial to their magical rites, and to the working."

She crosses to and kneels before the investigator with the highest **POW**. Looking up with searching eyes, outlined in false lashes and painted-on eyebrows, she broadcasts a stomach-turning impression of someone who has seen far more than a child her age should have.

"You wonder how I know all this, yes?"

She turns around on her knees and reaches back, lifting her hair and baring her neck. Visible just at the hairline is the familiar maker's mark of Belshazzar the Doll Maker (**Handout: Dances 4**). Seeing this unmistakable mark in this context provokes a **Sanity** roll (0/1D2 loss).

"I was one of the ones who worked for the past two years to collect the gestohlener Blitz," she continues. "I am a Telephone-Girl and I work for Baron Grunau, leader of the Borborite cult. Now that I know what my work has wrought, I turn to outsiders—you—to help set it right." Erma stands again and resumes her place near the fireplace. She flings her half-smoked cigarette into the fire. "So, what do you want to know?"

Like all the other *Manikinmenschen*, Erma feels an intrinsic connection to Abyzou. While most of the doll-people have happily fallen under the goddess' sway, Erma holds out, tortured by a sense of conscience—this would come as quite a surprise to Belshazzar and the Borborites, as they assume the *manikins* lack consciences.

Because of her connection to the goddess, Erma can provide some useful details.

- Abyzou possesses an otherworldly charm. Those who are apt to fall in love with a beautiful woman will almost certainly come under her spell upon seeing her.
- She brings with her a great pestilence that causes sickness and death. It begins by afflicting the youngest and most vulnerable members of the community, but eventually it lays all to waste. The longer she is in one place, the deadlier the epidemic becomes.
- She was summoned from another place, a dimension darkly reflecting our own, and ultimately wishes to make our world look like hers.
- The best chance for ridding the world of her curse is to travel to her home dimension and, once there, find a way to draw her back. There are no banishing rituals here on Earth that could send her back.
- How may this be accomplished? "You must drink of the sacred milk that is in her chalice then pass through the Seven Gates of Heaven, though what those gates may be is unknown to me."

DANCES OF VICE, HORROR, AND ECSTASY

Erma's Guest

Whether or not the investigators have already sought out and interviewed Châtin-Hofmann, he is now here, sheltering in Erma's bedchamber. He has been attacked three times by fog-spawn, barely escaping with his life, and now suffers from agoraphobia as a result.

Upon concluding her initial interview with the investigators, Erma excuses herself and disappears into the bedroom. The investigators hear a man's voice, quavering and fearful, and Erma's soothing voice in reply. Then, leading him by his hand like a child, Erma escorts Châtin-Hofmann into the main apartment.

"Henri, these are the people I was telling you about," Erma says consolingly in accented English. If the investigators interviewed Châtin-Hofmann prior to the attacks, he scarcely looks like the same man: his eyes are bloodshot and red-rimmed, his face unshaven. He wears trousers, suspenders, and an undershirt, but his bare feet and hands are caked with dirt, the knees of his pants torn up and revealing bloody abrasions beneath. Erma turns to the investigators, speaking German. *"He showed up here this afternoon, ranting about 'monsters in the fog.' I think he's too scared to venture back outside, but he mustn't remain here."*

Investigators may attempt a **Charm**, **Fast Talk**, **Intimidate**, or **Persuade** roll to get Châtin-Hofmann to come with them, but they only get one chance per skill (including a pushed attempt); failure results in his adamant refusal to leave. He may, of course, be bodily carried out—Erma summons Pesch the gungel to help if the investigators wish to resort to physical means.

If the investigators cannot entice him or choose to leave without Châtin-Hofmann, he disappears from the scenario, a victim of the Baron's wrath along with Erma (**A Tearful Farewell**, following). Their task of banishing Abyzou from this world is now markedly more difficult and will require considerable sacrifice on one or more of the investigators' parts.

A Tearful Farewell

Once she has answered the investigators' questions to the best of her abilities and re-introduced them to Châtin-Hofmann, Erma calls out to her man, *"Pesch! These kind people are ready to depart."*

Pesch takes the investigators back to the car. As the car drives off, they notice Pesch and the chauffeur (a man named Georg) weeping quietly. If asked why they cry, Georg speaks up, *"That is the last we shall ever see of that saintly girl. Baron Grunau has eyes all up and down this street and is bound to find out about your visit. It won't take him long to put the pieces together. And then..."* An icy silence descends over the vehicle.

From this point on, the investigators are on their own. Within hours, Erma Kore is no more, her shattered porcelain

body dumped into a rubbish bin behind her former Viktoria Straße residence. If Châtin-Hofmann remained behind, his body turns up floating in the Havel River later that night, dead through suffocation.

ABYZOU'S EMPIRE

When Abyzou awoke in the basement of Belshazzar's doll shop, she knew little of the world around her. An evening spent in the underground clubs and cabarets of Berlin changed all that. Whatever Abyzou was at her inception, she has become a beacon of vice, criminality, and depravity, her very presence creating a feedback loop that serves only to amplify the city's indulgences.

Beginning on the first day of her existence, Abyzou gathers around her a coterie of worshippers from across Berlin's upper and lower castes: petty thugs and *Ringverein* crime bosses, judges and lawyers, vice cops and prostitutes. Overnight, Abyzou becomes the most powerful underworld figure in the city.

THE HUNDEGUSTAV

After her incarnation on the night of November 10, Abyzou walked out into the chill Berlin night and, following some desultory walking about the cramped streets of the Scheuenviertel, found herself outside the sturdy iron door of the Hundegustav, one of the city's most notorious underground dives (**Food and Drink**, page 56).

Heading in, the nude goddess, with her black skin and blonde hair, naturally attracted the attention of the bar's drunken patrons, a mix of *beinls* and bulls, many of whom fell over themselves in immediate prostration. This was Abyzou's first victory and the seed from which she grew her increasingly extensive criminal network. And, although Abyzou is now gone from this place, sitting instead in residence at the **Großes Schauspielhaus** (following), the wake of her disruption remains.

Investigators may have been directed to the Hundegustav by a telephone clue from Erma (**Erma Kore: Telephone-Girl**, page 166); alternatively, as detailed in the **Doll Maker's Shop** (page 172), snooping around the neighborhoods adjacent to Belshazzar's home leads them here as well.

The door to the club hangs open, its doorman nowhere to be seen. Heading down into the old coal cellar, the investigators find the space in total disarray. Chairs and tables are overturned, while several men and women lie passed out, or possibly dead, in the corners. The bar is empty and untended, all the drinks bottles looted or smashed. The air is uncomfortably stuffy and hangs thick with smoke and

an unwholesome mist. A few rather dissipated men and women sit around, holding their heads in their hands or quietly puffing on cigarettes. The investigators are met with universally hostile looks from these patrons.

Each passing moment spent in the bar risks physical violence. Only one patron is the least bit sympathetic to the investigators, a Cameroonian called Emil, and even he tries his best to usher the investigators out before things turn ugly. “*Bar’s closed, mates. Best keep moving,*” he says in his thick West African accent. “*No, seriously. Nothing to see or do here. Move on. Now!*”



FINDING THE THEATER

Initially, the changes Abyzou exerts are not immediately obvious to an outsider passing by the Großes Schauspielhaus’ rather drab exterior, which still resembles the brick marketplace it originally was. Thus, Abyzou’s presence is likely to go unnoticed, at least at first.

Fast-moving investigators may gain clues to the goddess’s whereabouts from several sources: **Attending the Lecture** (page 178) results in an encounter with the mad Albin Grau, who raves about the theater; he even offers to take the investigators there directly. Visiting the **Hundegustav** (page 183) also provides a lead, either in the form of Emil’s warning or the *Immertreu* thugs’ capturing the investigators and dragging them there.

Even without these clues, the theater gradually begins to show its new character. By Day 3 (“**The Center Cannot Hold...**,” page 165), it is obvious that *something* is going on at the theater: people go in but hardly ever leave, cars are abandoned on the street outside, drunken wretches lie splayed out, half-naked, in the gutter. After a week, Abyzou’s influence is clear to all, as the non-stop party spills out of the theater and turns the blocks around it into a 24-hour revel of Bacchanalian proportions.

Of course, investigators with an eye out for strange happenings receive indications of the happenings at the Great Playhouse well before that. An investigator prone to being invited to parties (dilettantes, artists, and the like) is sure to receive a call from a *very* excited friend within 24 hours of Abyzou taking residence (which she does at 3 am on the morning of November 11), inviting them to come to, “The best party you’ll ever see.”



A successful **Fast Talk**, **Charm**, or **Intimidate** roll garners a bit of information from Emil, whispered through gritted teeth, “*She’s not here. She’s at the Großes Schauspielhaus over near the Passage. Stay away, if you can.*”

Investigators who insist on lingering are at serious risk of a beating. Unless someone succeeds with a **Listen** or **Spot Hidden** roll, the investigators remain oblivious to the fact that several pock-marked, beefy gentlemen, each wearing a large pinkie ring that reads *Immertreu* (Always Faithful), have stood up and moved into position, forming a circle around them, while another one moves to block the stairs. Any investigator who succeeds on their roll sees (or hears) this happening with enough time to make a quick exit before being cut off. There are a number of these **Ringverein Thugs** (see profile, page 195) equal to the number of investigators plus two.

During any ensuing tumult, one of the *beinls* cheering on the thugs gets violently knocked aside. She smashes into the corner of the bar, cracking her skull—and then some! Half her head shatters open like a porcelain doll. But, instead of brains, only a flow of blood-flecked *gestoblener Blitz* elixir oozes out: a *manikin*! Call for a **Sanity** roll (1/1D6 loss) and a group **Luck** roll to see whether the thugs are also affected; if so, they momentarily pause, providing the investigators with an opportunity to make a run for it (the thugs do not give chase). Otherwise, the thugs won’t stop until they’ve beaten all of the investigators unconscious or at least captured them, at which point they are brought to the Großes Schauspielhaus and dumped in the main theater, within sight of Abyzou (**The Großes Schauspielhaus**, following).

THE GROßES SCHAUSPIELHAUS

*And desert creatures shall meet with hyenas,
and a goat-demon shall call to his neighbor;
surely there Lilith shall repose,
and she shall find a resting place for herself.*

—Isaiah 34:14 (LEB)

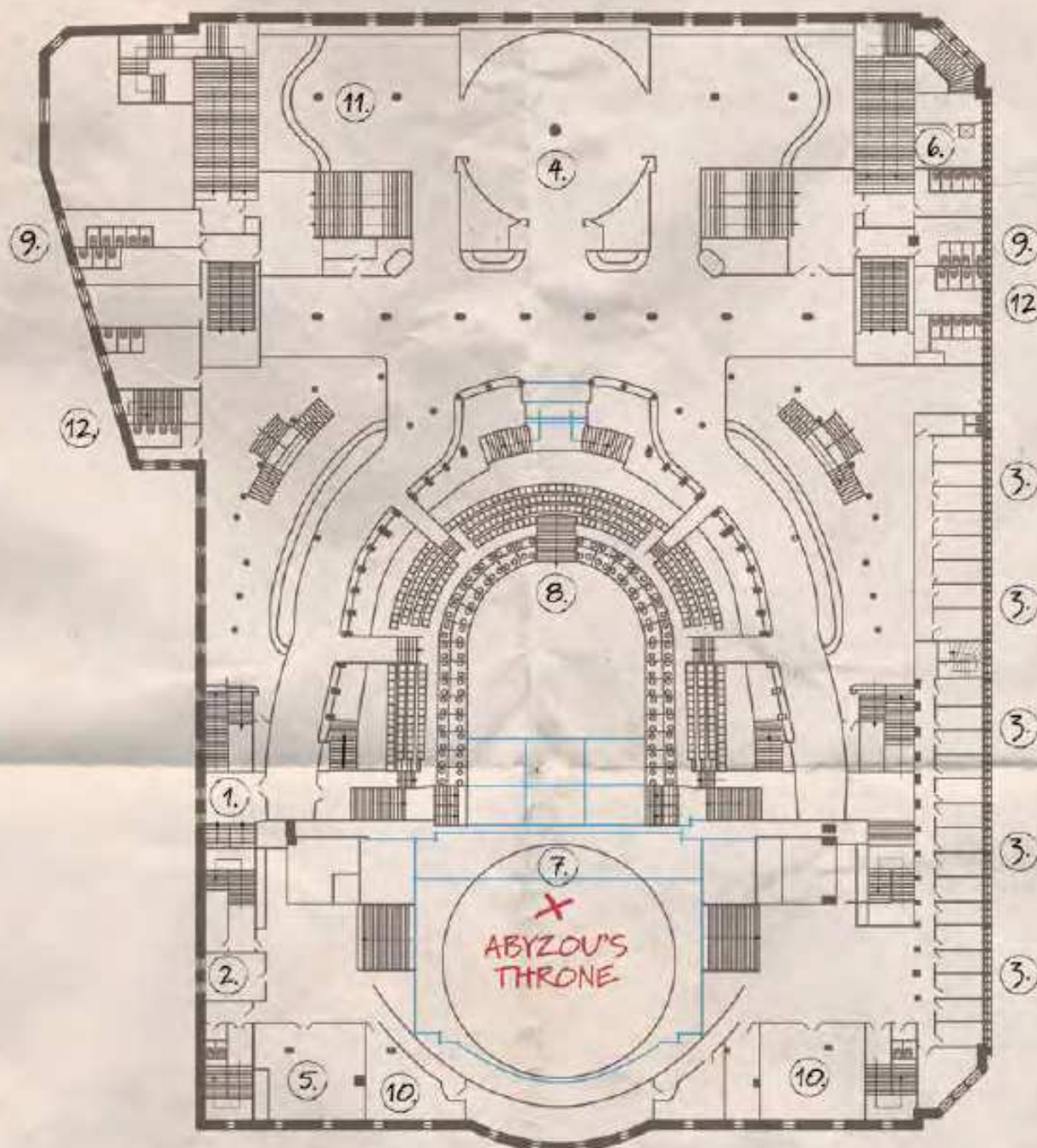
The locus of Abyzou’s empire is the Großes Schauspielhaus (**The Alex**, page 28). Here, beneath the soaring, stalactite dome of the theater, Abyzou reigns supreme. Her most debased worshipers, the **Maenads** (page 196), swarm around her, engaged in a constant orgy of debased revelry.

All are welcome at Abyzou’s temple; they need only show a willingness to give into the vice that surrounds them as soon as they pass through the theater’s doors. Drinks are proffered, while bumps of cocaine and lit hash pipes are thrust into the

DANCES OF VICE, HORROR, AND ECSTASY

Keeper Map

GROßES SCHAUSPIELHAUS



- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. BACKDROPS STORAGE | 7. MAIN STAGE |
| 2. DIRECTOR'S OFFICE | 8. MAIN THEATRE |
| 3. DRESSING ROOMS | 9. MEN'S W. C. |
| 4. FOYER | 10. PROPS |
| 5. FURNITURE STORAGE | 11. RESTAURANT |
| 6. KITCHEN | 12. WOMEN'S W. C. |



GROßES SCHAUSPIELHAUS BERLIN

RICHARD SCHÖPKE
ARCHITECT

EINRICHTUNG MIT DETAILS

B 6

Keeper Map

The Großes Schauspielhaus map

investigators' faces. Men and women, overcome with lustful joy, throw their arms around the newcomers, laughing and kissing them, unbuttoning shirts and blouses.

The hot, humid air reeks of sweat and sex. The atmosphere is a billowing swamp of condensed perspiration, cigarette and opium smoke, and Abyzou's own strange, intoxicating, deadly fog. War veterans are reminded of clouds of mustard gas in No Man's Land, clinging like vaporous oil to skin and clothing.

Pressing through to the main theater, the investigators witness a breathtaking vista. The theater itself, with its expressionistic, cave-like décor, now enfolds a roiling, squirming, rutting orgy, like a nightmare vision from a Bosch painting. Quite a few of the maenads wear masquerade garb, even in states of half-dress or undress, lending the scene an even more surreal edge: Pierrot masks, towering powdered wigs, turbans, oversized and grotesque papier-mâché masks, domino masks, and feathered headdresses decorate many of the revelers.

The stage, which projects out into the center of the round theatrical space, is Abyzou's throne room. There she sits, one leg hooked over the arm of the gold-embossed throne provided for her from the basement, laughing and caressing the heads of those who swarm around her, naked and sweaty, crawling about like animals.

She is clothed only in a scarlet wrap that enfolds her voluptuous hips. A trickle of milk oozes from her nipples, forming glistening, blood-flecked rivulets that run from her bare breasts to her belly and thighs. Honey-golden hair cascades down over her shoulders. Upon her head is a ten-pointed crown, a prop from the theater's costume department. In one hand she holds another prop, a "gold" goblet, from which she occasionally sips, wiping its opalescent fluid from her lips each time she does so. From time to time, she refills the goblet with her breast milk. The whole scene is so striking, so revolting, that it calls for a **Sanity** roll (0/1D4 loss).

Abyzou was incarnated from the flesh of Anita Berber, and so some of Berber's consciousness lives on within the goddess. This is most obvious when Abyzou smiles, for she has the same gap-toothed grin as Berber. This is immediately apparent to any investigator who encounters Abyzou up close and sups from her goblet, for she always smiles when she brings another supplicant under her sway. Those who knew Berber in life see that there is something of the Dresden Madonna within this Whore of Babylon.

Keeper note: see **Abyzou's** profile (page 196); all investigators who are sexually attracted to women must make an Extreme **POW** roll as soon as they see her or else fall under her soporific spell, staring slack-jawed at her beauty. They are

now easy prey for the swarming masses around them and their many temptations, but Abyzou has greater plans for them.

- If they have brought Châtin-Hofmann with them, refer to **Through the Seven Gates** (page 187).
- If they have come without Châtin-Hofmann, Abyzou picks the ensorcelled investigators, seemingly at random, from the crowd. In a silken, purring voice not unlike the susurrus of a wind whistling through the ruins of hoary Babylon, she commands them to seek out and find "her no-good husband Henri," and bring him before her. An image of Châtin-Hofmann's face forms in the mind of each afflicted investigator. "But first," she coos, "*come forth and sup of my goblet...*"

Only overt physical removal from the premises or a good, solid punch to the face or other source of intense pain (enough to cause the loss of 1 hit point) breaks the goddess' hold on an investigator. Should such an intervention fail, once Abyzou issues a command to an afflicted investigator, only being the subject of a successful **Psychoanalysis** roll brings them back to their rational mind prior to their completion of the task. Until such time, they risk all to carry out the goddess' wishes, though they are still otherwise in command of their mental faculties. Attempting an action that contravenes an order from Abyzou triggers a Hard **POW** roll; if successful, the investigator may act as desired but loses 1D3 Sanity points from the ensuing stress and mental strain.

What happens now greatly depends on why the investigators came here.

- If they have come to sup the "milk of Shub-Niggurath" from Abyzou's grail, either voluntarily or at her command, they may do so: she beckons supplicants to come before her and kneel, and she tips the contents of the goblet into their mouths. Those who drink are immediately impregnated with a clutch of Abyzou's abominations, which they feel writhing and kicking inside their abdomens (**Sanity** roll; 1/1D6 loss); should the investigator die, their corpse bursts open, releasing the larvae within. See the nearby box, **The Milk of Abyzou**, for more details.
- More militantly minded investigators may have come with the intention of killing Abyzou. If their trip to **The Shadow City** (page 188) ended in failure, this may be their only remaining option. This is, of course, much easier said than done. First, between dusk and dawn Abyzou is normally invulnerable to physical attacks. Second, the moment she senses danger (from physical or magical attacks), she commands her faithful maenads to rise up and protect her. Assume that there are 100+3D100 maenads in the theater at any one time. Lastly, if she is reduced to zero hit

DANCES OF VICE, HORROR, AND ECSTASY

points, she crumples to the ground—only to split apart, unleashing her monstrous form, that of a massive gug-like creature (**Abyzou**, page 196). The horrifying beast sends Abyzou's maenads into a frenzied flight as it sweeps forward, devouring all it can snatch up in its claws (including any unfortunate investigators that might get in its way) for 1D6+1 rounds before winking out of existence (see **Abyzou Returns**, page 191, for more details).

Abyzou's Reach

Although Abyzou spends her nights and days holding court at the Großes Schauspielhaus, she projects her will across Berlin at all times. Her chief instruments for doing so are her fog-spawn, loathsome invisible entities Abyzou births at will, rising from her skin like vapor. These creatures, which exist within the mists also conjured by Abyzou, obey her direct wishes and, when not directly commanded, go about their own malicious ends, choking infants and small children in the night while they slumber in their cribs.

Once Abyzou becomes cognizant of the investigators' threat to her, she will not hesitate to send her "children" against them—see the **Fog-Spawn** profile, page 196.

THROUGH THE SEVEN GATES

*If thou openest not the gate to let me enter,
I will break the door, I will wrench the lock,
I will smash the door-posts, I will force the doors.
I will bring up the dead to eat the living.
And the dead will outnumber the living.*

—*Descent of the Goddess Ishtar Into the Lower World*
(translated by M. Jastrow, 1915)

All roads eventually lead to Abyzou and her court of madness at the Großes Schauspielhaus. Although all may seem lost in the presence of such a mighty supernatural force, there is one weakness within the Mother of Abominations the investigators may exploit.

As described, Abyzou was incarnated from the flesh of Anita Berber, manifested in her gap-toothed grin. Berber's will manifests also in Abyzou's strange obsession with Châtin-Hofmann. Were it up to the goddess, she wouldn't be bothered with just another flea-speck mortal, but the part of her that is Berber, however muted and suppressed, still wishes to see her old husband again.

Châtin-Hofmann, for his part, is terrified of such a reunion and does everything in his power to prevent it: if the



THE MILK OF ABYZOU

Abyzou's ambrosia, a version of the milk of Shub-Niggurath, is possessed of remarkably fecund life-giving properties; Belshazzar and Grau's *gestohlener Blitz* is but a pale imitation. Plants watered with the milk grow to quadruple their normal size but also begin to develop their own, wholly alien (and not altogether friendly) intelligences.

The milk is both highly addictive and terrifically toxic to mortal drinkers. Its substance is corrosive, causing 1 point of damage each time it is touched or swallowed. Those who consume the milk more than 1D3 times become addicted to it with the same intensity as a heroin addiction (**Drugs**, page 40). Over time and with repeated use, the milk works both as an aphrodisiac and soporific, reducing its users to an animal-like cycle of sleeping, eating, and copulating, with little thought for anything else.

Worst of all, however, is that the milk, once ingested, begins transforming the very biology of the subject, literally creating monstrosities within. After 1D10+1 days, those who have supped the milk of Abyzou die in screaming agony as their body bursts open, spilling forth countless larval abominations. These vary from subject to subject, but typical examples include massive, foot-long leeches or maggots, black rats, oversized tarantulas, swarms of horseflies, slimy owls, and so forth. Seeing someone give "birth" to Abyzou's larvae calls for a **Sanity** roll (1/1D6 loss; if the subject was known to the viewer, the loss increases to 2/1D8+1).

Larva inside a living body require periodic "feeding" from more doses of milk but will eventually die naturally to be reabsorbed into the subject's tissues if they go more than a week between feedings—assuming, of course, that the host manages to live that long.



investigators speak openly of their plans to visit Abyzou and do not guard him closely, he attempts to flee. If allowed to get away from the investigators, he is as good as dead.

Assuming Châtin-Hofmann can be tricked, cajoled, or physically conveyed to the Großes Schauspielhaus, he is brought, screaming, before the goddess, although he falls silent as soon as Abyzou presses his lips to her breast, forcing him to suckle her milk direct from its source. After staring intently into his eyes, her brow furrowing, she turns to the investigators, "*Tell me: did this man mourn the death of his wife?*"

If they answer “yes,” she replies, “*In what ways did he mourn?*” Allow a single Hard **Persuade** or **Art/Craft (Acting)** roll to evoke the depths of Châtin-Hofmann’s heartbreak and regret over his wife’s death.

- Investigators able to convince Abyzou of Châtin-Hofmann’s grief defuse the situation: she rises, taking Châtin-Hofmann by the hands. “*My dear husband, I know you acted out of sympathy for my condition. But as you see, I have transcended the mortal realm and its petty sufferings. Come, I wish to introduce you to my mistress in her realm.*”
- Failing the roll, or simply answering “no,” enrages Abyzou. A pushed roll is allowed, but a failure here indicates the investigator lets slip Châtin-Hofmann’s part in Anita’s death and her transformation (to the extent the investigators are aware of it).

In either event, she rises from her throne. “*I know not the way to the lower world, but I wish to journey thence. I must pass through the Seven Gates. Tell me where they are to be found.*”

Investigators who have talked to Walter Andrae (**The Pergamon Museum**, page 179), or who remember their dream vision of the transformed Brandenburg Gate (**Totentanz**, page 235), recall that the structure had seven gates. Indeed, the Brandenburg Gate contains five routes through it, plus one on either side—seven gates! The Keeper may allow an **INT** roll to make this connection from the old dream visions if none of the investigators think of it. Failing this, if the investigators are still drawing a blank, the Keeper may have a nearby reveler provide the connection the Brandenburg Gate.

Once provided with this information, Abyzou announces to the whole assembly, “*Come, my faithful! We journey to the City of Shadows.*” She then walks regally from the Schauspielhaus, regardless of time of day, pulling a cowed and compliant Châtin-Hofmann behind her.

What follows is a truly remarkable spectacle, as the naked goddess emerges for the first time onto Friedrichstraße and walks openly down the middle of the street, bringing traffic to a standstill. Her faithful followers pour out after her, cheering and hollering and carrying on. Many on the street immediately fall under Abyzou’s spell and fall in with the crowd, while others flee screaming.

Do the investigators follow? Those under the goddess’ spell have no choice but to do so. If none of the investigators are afflicted, they may choose to remain behind, of course. The Keeper should make it clear to the investigators that hundreds, if not thousands, of Berliners are traipsing off to what could very well be their doom.

Abyzou’s procession moves down the Friedrichstraße and across the grand 200-foot (61 m) wrought-iron expanse of the Weidendammer Bridge, bedecked with imperial eagles

and ornate lamps, spanning the Spree. At Unter den Linden, the procession turns right. By now, thousands of Berliners follow in Abyzou’s wake as the wind howls and great gouts of foul mists blow down the avenue. The whole tableau is like something out of a nightmare.

Ahead sits the Brandenburg Gate. Only those who have supped from Abyzou’s grail may pass through with her—everyone understands this on an instinctual level. Have any investigators not partaken? Now is their last chance. Likewise, if the investigators wish to try and stop Abyzou with physical force, now is their last chance before she reaches the Gate.

Abyzou stands before the Brandenburg Gate, beckoning her followers to pass through the seven passageways, offering her goblet to those who need to sup. Investigators who pause to look note that the revelers seem to disappear before they reach the far side, provoking a **Sanity** roll (0/1D3 loss). Investigators who have not taken any milk from Abyzou’s goblet may do so now. Those that do not must remain behind, for good or ill.

Finally passing through the portal, each investigator loses 1D6 magic points and sees before them a massive cedar gate at the far end of the passageway. It stands open, admitting the flow of revelers, but beyond lies only shadow and mist.

THE SHADOW CITY

Emerging through the cedar gate brings the investigators back to the Shadow City of their old nightmares. This automatically costs 1 point of Sanity, as memories of the last trip come bubbling back.

Although they should be standing on the far side of the Brandenburg Gate, looking back over their shoulders, the investigators see that it now resembles the Ishtar Gate from the Pergamon, albeit how it must have looked when it was brand new in the days of ancient Babylon.

Ahead of them stretches Charlottenburger Chaussee, the main east-west road through the Tiergarten. On the north side of the street, however, massive Futurist façades rise, just as in their old nightmares. From the buildings’ rooflines, blood-red banners hang limply in the eerily still air. Niches set periodically at ground level depict idealized nude sculptures, their faces featureless.

The thousands of revelers accompanying Abyzou look around in wonder, hardly knowing what to think. “*Come, my children!*” the goddess cries as she leads them through a canyon-like passage between two of the outsized buildings.

Assuming the investigators follow, they enter a staggeringly massive plaza square some 3.7 million square feet (85 acres) in size (34,400 square meters/34.4 hectares). Even with its great numbers of revelers, the sheer scale of this space dwarfs the crowd’s size.



With a start, the investigators see that, every 30 yards/meters around the square's perimeter, lamprey-mouthed rabisu stand guard in their black uniforms. Fortunately, they remain standing at attention and seem uninterested in Abyzou or her party.

On the other side of the huge square is a building that matches it in sheer scale. Towering to a height of nearly 1,000 feet (around 300 m) is a great dome, immediately recognizable to the investigators from their prior visit to the Shadow City; glimpsed only from afar until now, it is overwhelming in its sheer size.

Beneath the dome is a colonnaded entrance flanked by two huge statues, both depicting a woman with three faces, garbed in Grecian-style robes. Abyzou leads the assembly across the square and up the stairs to the temple beyond. Entering, the investigators see an enclosed space so huge in dimension that clouds hover up near the top of the dome. The oculus at the dome's apex seems tiny from 1,000 feet (300 m) below but is in fact 150 feet (46 m) across. Silvery moonlight shines in, though no such light source was visible outside.

There is little in the way of a floor under the dome; at the chamber's center lies only a dark abyss. Floating above the abyss, rotating slowly, is a monumental tree in full leaf, complete with a dangling root system, blackened and lifeless, that descends some ways into the pit.

As their eyes adjust to the dim half-light, the investigators can see that the tree is composed of a fleshy, organic substance. The "leaves" are lobe-like flaps; the dead roots are desiccated, mummified flesh.

The tree stops spinning. At the point where the trunk turns into the root system, a massive three-lobed eye opens, flooding the hall with orange light. Other smaller, single-lobed eyes, nine above and nine below, also open now, adding their feeble light to the overall glow. Movement may be discerned among the tree's branches, where a serpentine shape larger than the greatest anaconda slithers, oozing among the tree's soft, pulsating limbs. One end of the enormous, undulating worm splits into seven heads, each of which ends in a gaping, lamprey-like mouth reminiscent of the rabisu.

The final shock comes as the three-lobed eye seems to focus and intensify its light, blinding the investigators. The glare diminishes, and, as their vision returns, the investigators see floating before them, above the tree, a most singular apparition: a woman's head, colossal in scale, with three faces, each pointing in a different direction. The faces each share an eye, meaning there are only three eyes in total—a most eerie sight. The head, in the manner of the tree, rotates slowly but in the opposite direction. Call for a **Sanity** roll for witnessing this bizarre vision (1D3/1D8+2 loss).

Many of those present cannot cope with what they see and go mad. Some flee screaming, others faint dead away, and still others hurl themselves laughing towards the tree, plummeting instead into the blackness of the abyss. As they fall screaming into the pit, a great chorus of eerie wails rises from below. Investigators who dare to look into the abyss are in for quite a sight.

The Pit of the Dead

Measuring 300 feet (91 m) in diameter, the abyss is a massive pit, whose sides gradually incline to form a long cone, seemingly bottomless. The walls of the pit give it its name, composed as they are of 11 million corpses, all dressed in a variety of military uniforms. Stacked and pressed together by the weight of their decaying comrades, the cadavers' arms reach out from the walls of the pit, their rotting throats giving voice to a mournful moan. These are the dead of the Great War, and they hunger for the flesh of the living.

Those looking into the pit must make a **Sanity** roll (1/1D10 loss). Anyone falling into the pit eventually hits the sloping wall, where they are grabbed by the hands of the dead, pulled in, and devoured. Even Abyzou is vulnerable to this fate.

The Three-Lobed Eye

A successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll recognizes the three-lobed burning eye at the center of the great tree as a possible aspect of Nyarlathotep, the tree as some form of the Dark Mother, Shub-Niggurath.

Abyzou raises her arms imploringly. "*Mother! Mistress! I beseech thee! Give me the power and I shall bring the two worlds together. I have brought with me the blood sacrifice thou desirest.*"

Abyzou is speaking, of course, of the thousands of Berliners who now crowd the hall around the Pit of the Dead. With a word, she may order them all to plunge headfirst into the abyss, along with any investigators who are under her power. There are several possible outcomes in this moment.

- Abyzou is standing near the edge of the pit, and the investigators may attempt to push her in. This is a **Fighting (Brawl)** maneuver opposed by Abyzou's Dodge of 50%. The investigators may try to rush her all at once: determine which investigator has the best **Fighting (Brawl)** skill and apply a bonus die for each investigator in beyond the first (up to a maximum of two bonus dice). Investigators who are under Abyzou's influence must succeed at a Hard **POW** roll to attempt this action or else shrink back, unable to act. Although this approach is probably the best option overall, there is one catch: to hit Abyzou hard enough to pitch her over the edge, the investigator(s) must go over with her. Allow each falling investigator a **DEX** roll to grab the edge of the pit, as well as an opposed **STR**

DANCES OF VICE, HORROR, AND ECSTASY

roll against the grasping hands inside the pit (STR 65). If either roll fails, the investigator tumbles to their doom. Should Abyzou fall, there comes a tremendous shriek from the triple-headed goddess above the tree. The whole temple begins to implode, only to be interrupted by a sudden howling noise and the sensation of a malign intelligence clutching at the investigators' minds; moments later, those who did not go into the pit each wake up in their beds (see **Conclusion**, page 192).

- If the investigators prefer to save their own skins and have gathered enough information about Châtin-Hofmann's role in the Berbelo Working, then simply notifying Abyzou (and the tiny fragment of Berber-consciousness within) about his role in Anita's death and "resurrection" is enough to turn the goddess's wrath wholly upon the poor wretch trembling at her feet. She unceremoniously casts him into the pit. Consigning someone, no matter how despicable, to such a fate requires a **Sanity** roll by all investigators present (0/1D3 loss). While this saves thousands of lives, it leaves Abyzou willing and able to return to Berlin to continue her evil work (see **Abyzou Returns**, nearby); however, the death of Châtin-Hofmann in the Pit of the Dead weakens the magic connecting Abyzou to our world and she loses her magical nighttime invulnerability, although she does not know this. She also forgets about her plan to sacrifice her followers, consumed with anger over Châtin-Hofmann's betrayal. She returns to Berlin, along with the citizens who came with her.
- Driven by madness or craven self-preservation, the investigators may try to flee from the temple. When they do so, the rabisu guards outside spring into action and give chase in a terrifying recreation of their old nightmare—almost. This time, if the creatures catch them, there will be no waking up safe in their beds. The rabisu chase the investigators out of the massive square and toward the Ishtar/Brandenburg Gate. Passing through, the investigators reemerge into 1928 Berlin—but with the rabisu hot on their heels! Keepers may wish to use the chase rules (**Chapter Seven, Call of Cthulhu Rulebook**) to determine the outcome of this pursuit or else simply describe the rabisu falling upon the local citizenry, tearing their throats out and howling with unholy pleasure while the investigators get away. Meanwhile, those maenads who followed Abyzou to the Shadow City now willingly march over the edge of the abyss and to their doom, constituting a blood sacrifice on a massive scale. The offering complete, a permanent Gate opens, allowing more monstrosities to spill through into an unsuspecting Berlin.
- Investigators who fled due to madness suffer no further Sanity loss, but those who ran due to self-motivated cowardice should now make a **Sanity** roll, with 1D8/2D10 loss as they realize what they have allowed to happen. See **Abyzou Returns** (nearby) for the continuing effects.

What If Henri Is Dead?

Investigators who failed to save Henri Châtin-Hofmann from Baron Grunau's wrath (**A Tearful Farewell**, page 183) or who allowed him to escape their custody (**Through the Seven Gates**, page 187) must deal with an angry goddess. Abyzou, in speaking with investigators at the **Großes Schauspielhaus** (page 184), can sense their failure to protect Châtin-Hofmann and wishes to see them pay for their sin.

Proceed through the events described in the sections above, but any references to Châtin-Hofmann are instead applied to the investigators—including Abyzou's insistence that they hurl themselves into the Pit of the Dead.

Fortunately for the others, Abyzou's anger is sated after the first investigator jumps in—but how to choose the unlucky one? That is for the investigators to work out among themselves.

If none of the investigators are willing to sacrifice themselves, they may of course choose to flee instead, with grave consequences for the city (**Abyzou Returns**, following).

ABYZOU RETURNS

If the investigators fail to destroy Abyzou in the Shadow City, then they have no choice but to try and destroy her back in Berlin.

Upon her return, Abyzou rules openly from her throne at the Großes Schauspielhaus. If Châtin-Hofmann died, her Berber-fragment has been banished for good, and with it any traces of mortal sympathy. If it hasn't happened already, she begins working toward opening a permanent connection between the Shadow City and Berlin via the Brandenburg Gate, a task she completes in 1D6 days.

The investigators should bring everything they can to bear against Abyzou. This may include contacts in the military or law enforcement who remain independent of the goddess' influence, or even paramilitary forces. Consulting with Belshazzar is an excellent way to find out details about Abyzou's strengths and weaknesses, including her nocturnal invulnerability—remember that if Châtin-Hofmann died in the Pit of the Dead, Abyzou has lost this valuable protection.

As noted previously, Abyzou does not die when she reaches zero hit points. Instead, she spawns an abomination of her own, a terrifying monstrous giant similar to the gugs of the Dreamlands. This creature has only two hands instead of four, but it possesses a massive, fanged mouth that originates in the crotch between its stumpy legs and proceeds vertically up the middle of the torso. Rampaging, it scoops victims up with its claw attacks and stuffs them into its gaping maw. The monstrous abomination cannot last long in our world, however. After 1D6+1 rounds, it blinks out of existence, effectively ending Abyzou's presence on Earth.

Abyzou's Victory?

If the investigators fail to stop Abyzou, other forces eventually do the job, albeit at great cost. Akin to the raid that takes place in Lovecraft's story "The Shadow Over Innsmouth," the Reichswehr is called in to put an end to the grotesque chaos, and after much fighting against crazed maenads and unholy monstrosities, Abyzou's empire is crushed, leaving thousands dead or mentally broken. Berlin's buildings acquire a new set of bullet scars as well—although not for the last time. Officially, the whole incident is recorded as one more political uprising. The Republic traipses further toward collapse as the Nazi Party seizes upon this unprecedented level of unrest to gain yet more seats in the next round of elections.

Closing the Gate for Good

If Abyzou manages to open a Gate between Berlin and the Shadow City, she may be stymied in her plans by closing off the connection, although this option is probably available only to seasoned investigators by dint of their greater occult (and Mythos) knowledge and experience. A successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll divines that the connection between the Shadow City and Berlin may be severed by placing an Elder Sign at each of the seven passageways of the Brandenburg Gate. The Sign must be inscribed and set permanently; allow the players to be creative in coming up with a plan to do so. This act also has the benefit of ending the investigators' nightmares of the events of August 1926 for good.

CONCLUSION

Investigators defeating Abyzou, either in the Shadow City or our own realm, are left with something of a mess on their hands. The goddess' spell is broken immediately, which makes for hundreds of shocked and ashamed former maenads. Many lose their minds, broken by the depths of excess to which they sank. Others run screaming into the streets, covering their face in shame. The strange incident of Abyzou's tenure on Earth is quietly swept under the rug by an embarrassed citizenry. At least there aren't any more flocks of owls or swarms of hissing cockroaches to contend with.

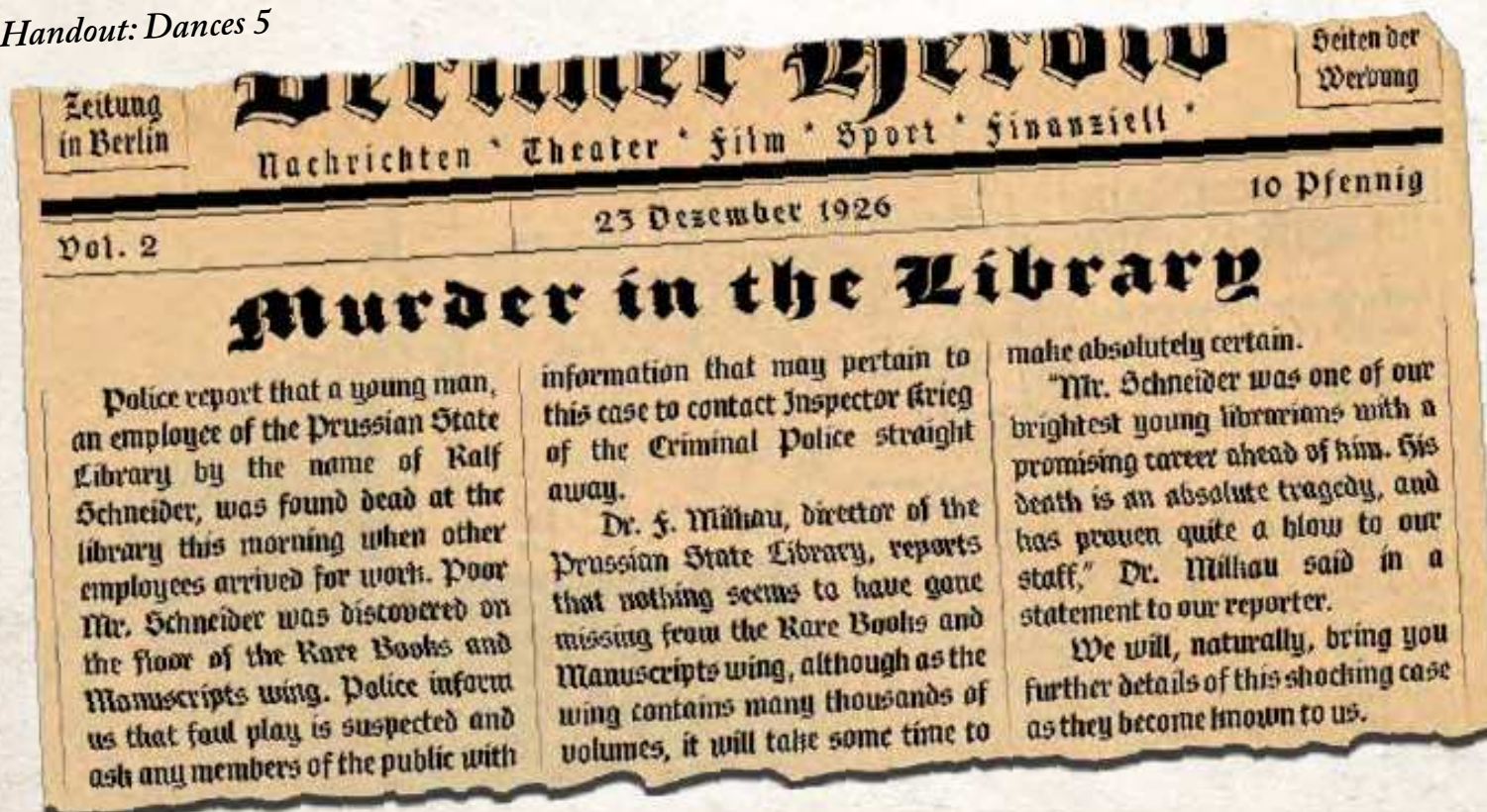
Investigators who destroyed Abyzou in the Shadow City wake in their beds at home, an eerie parallel to the waking nightmare that started this part of the scenario. A month has passed. Did all that really happen? Are their jobs in jeopardy? After all, no one has seen or heard from them in all this time. The wind no longer rattles the windows, and—although Berlin remains a city of sin—things seem to be back to normal. The Großes Schauspielhaus has returned to showing plays and light opera with nary a word of its brief tenure as a locus for criminal vice and murder.

Investigators asking after Erma Kore discover that she has no records on file, being apparently an unregistered resident. Going to her apartment finds an old retired couple who have just moved in; they know nothing of the previous occupant.

As a final postscript, describe the following scene to one of the investigators.

Two days before Christmas, they are riding a tram or bus line back home after doing some Christmas shopping. The big article in the paper today relates to a strange death at

Handout: Dances 5



DANCES OF VICE, HORROR, AND ECSTASY

the Prussian State Library (**Handout: Dances 5**; the report foreshadows the events of the final scenario in this book, **Schreckfilm** (page 201), although the investigator is not to know this). Outside the steamy windows, fat flakes of snow are beginning to fall, presaging a big winter storm due to blow in tonight. Most of the folks on the bus are doing their holiday shopping and getting ready for Christmas. The vehicle pulls to a stop. Idly, the investigator notices a man getting up out of his seat a few rows up. Something catches the investigator's eye: right at the hairline on the back of his neck, the man bears a mark—that of Belshazzar the Doll Maker! As the man stands up, he looks back at the investigator—he has their face! Winking at the investigator, their *doppelgänger* alights from the conveyance. The car is too crowded with holiday shoppers to pursue, and now the conveyance is on its way again. Could it have simply been the investigator's imagination? Surely that must be it...

REWARDS

Grant the players an investigator development phase when they have completed this scenario and apply the following awards to each surviving investigator.

- Defeating/destroying Abyzou: +1D10+2 Sanity points.
- Permanently closing the gate to the Shadow City: +1D6+1 Sanity points.
- For each week that passed while Abyzou remained on Earth: -1D2 Sanity points.
- Failing entirely to stop Abyzou: -2D10 Sanity points.

For Investigators Who Fell into the Abyss

This section is presented as an option for characters sacrificing themselves in the Pit of the Dead. The Keeper may decide whether those deaths should remain permanent or if the characters deserve redemption of a sort.

If any investigators ended the scenario on good terms with the doll maker, Belshazzar does his best to repay their heroism. Unfortunately, the best he can manage is to craft a *manikin* in the image of the deceased investigator(s). After the surviving characters complete their investigator development phases and receive their final Sanity rewards, relate the following to those who fell into the pit.

You wake up with a jolt. You are back in your bed at home! Your time in the Shadow City seems an ever-dimming memory. Indeed, you can scarcely recall it even now, as it quickly fades like a half-remembered dream. Sitting up, you can see that your bedroom is a little dusty, the air stuffy, as if you have been away for a while.

The investigators find they have been gone for a month. They are possibly out of a job and have many other logistical headaches to sort out, far too many to worry about how

MANIKIN-INVESTIGATORS

Manikins are, as a general rule, unaware of their status, thinking themselves regular flesh-and-blood creatures. For all intents and purposes, they are. Characters “re-born” as *manikins* have their original Sanity points (equal to one-fifth POW) restored, regardless of what they were at the time of their living counterpart's death. Any skill checks acquired over the course of the scenario are, however, erased.

Clues to the character's true nature are few but significant. First, they experience frequent episodes of *déjà vu*, as Belshazzar has filled in gaps in their personalities with his own day-to-day experiences. Secondly, they don't ever remember their dreams—in truth, they are incapable of dreaming now. In campaigns featuring trips to the Dreamlands, *manikin*-investigators may only cross over physically, never through dreams. *Manikin*-investigators otherwise function mechanically exactly as per their flesh-and-blood fellows—they sweat, bleed, eat, and excrete just like normal—with one important exception.

If a *manikin*-investigator ever takes a major wound, their true nature is revealed for all to see. Keepers may wish to use the **Optional Hit Locations** rule (*Call of Cthulhu Rulebook*, pages 126) when a *manikin*-investigator takes such an injury. The result indicates where the hit took place and where there is now a massive gaping hole in the ceramic of the doll's body, which leaks a milky-white substance shot through with blood. Eerily, the investigator is still able to move, walk, and talk as normal. Although minor wounds heal normally, a major wound requires Belshazzar's skills of to fix; until that happens, the investigator may never heal more than half their total hit points, and has a rather obvious hole in their body, limb, or head! The Sanity loss to witness a *manikin*-investigator take this sort of wound is 1/1D6 points. To experience this type of wound is, no pun intended, a potentially shattering moment as the *manikin* realizes their true nature, incurring 2/2D10+1 Sanity loss.

One final note: if this scenario is being run as a one-shot, or one or more of the players needs to generate a replacement character at the start or during the course of the scenario, it may be a fun idea to have them play a *Manikinmensch*.

exactly they made it back after their fall into that dreadful pit. See the nearby box **Manikin-Investigators** for further details relating to their new state.

CHARACTERS AND MONSTERS

NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

Assume that all statistics provided refer to the 1926 version of the non-player character (NPC), unless that person is first (or only) encountered in 1928.

Albin Grau, 42, *artist-occultist*

STR 55 CON 50 SIZ 50 DEX 60 INT 85
APP 55 POW 80 EDU 85 SAN 73 HP 10
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 8 MP: 16

Combat

Brawl 30% (15/6), damage 1D3
Dodge 30% (15/6)

Skills

Art/Craft (Painting) 75%, Cthulhu Mythos 12%, Electrical Repair 45%, Fast Talk 55%, History 40%, Language (English) 20%, Language (French) 50%, Language (German) 85%, Library Use 55%, Mechanical Repair 55%, Occult 85%, Psychology 50%, Stealth 50%.

Spells: Chant of Thoth, Elder Sign, Prinn's Crux Ansata, plus 1D4 other spells of the Keeper's choosing.

Anita Berber, 27, *priestess of depravity*

STR 60 CON 40 SIZ 40 DEX 85 INT 75
APP 70 POW 90 EDU 55 SAN 80 HP 8
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 9 MP: 32*

*Berber's magic points have been artificially inflated through magical rituals enacted by Châtin-Hofmann, turning her into a living battery of magical energy.

Combat

Brawl 30% (15/6), damage 1D3
Dodge 42% (21/8)

Skills

Art/Craft (Acting) 35%, Art/Craft (Dance) 80%, Art/Craft (Poetry) 55%, Charm 60%, Fast Talk 65%, History 30%, Language (English) 20%, Language (French) 45%, Language (German) 55%, Language (Russian) 20%, Occult 35%, Psychology 40%, Sleight of Hand 30%, Stealth 40%, Throw 45%.

Henri Châtin-Hofmann, 26, *dancer and dabbler*

STR 60 CON 70 SIZ 55 DEX 75 INT 50
APP 60 POW 55 EDU 60 SAN 45 HP 12
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 9 MP: 11

Combat

Brawl 30% (15/6), damage 1D3
Dodge 37% (18/7)

Skills

Art/Craft (Dance) 70%, Art/Craft (Piano) 75%, Cthulhu Mythos 5%, Fast Talk 65%, Language (English) 60%, Language (German) 15%, Medicine 15%, Occult 40%, Persuade 50%, Psychology 35%, Sleight of Hand 30%, Stealth 35%.

Spells: The Unending Revelry (Dionysian Revels)*, Enthrall Victim.

*See *Spells* (page 199).

Erma Kore, 17, *telephone-girl with a secret*

STR 35 CON 65 SIZ 35 DEX 60 INT 65
APP 90 POW 60 EDU 50 SAN 54 HP 10
DB: -1 Build: -1 Move: 8 MP: 12

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3-1
Dodge 30% (15/6)

Skills

Art/Craft (Acting) 75%, Charm 75%, Disguise 50%, Fast Talk 55%, Language (Dutch) 20%, Language (English) 20%, Language (German) 50%, Listen 60%, Occult 25%, Persuade 65%, Psychology 80%, Sleight of Hand 35%, Stealth 55%, Throw 50%.

Belshazzar the Doll Maker, 90(?), *Kabbalistic artisan*

STR 40 CON 45 SIZ 50 DEX 65 INT 75
APP 40 POW 80 EDU 80 SAN 70 HP 9
DB: 0 Build: 0 Move: 2 MP: 16

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3
Dodge 32% (16/6)

DANCES OF VICE, HORROR, AND ECSTASY

Skills

Art/Craft (Doll Making) 95%, Cthulhu Mythos 8%, History 70%, Language (Ancient Greek) 35%, Language (Akkadian) 20%, Language (German) 75%, Language (Hebrew) 75%, Language (Latin) 45%, Language (Yiddish) 80%, Library Use 65%, Occult 85%, Psychoanalysis 30%, Psychology 45%.

Spells: Create Living Doll*, Elder Sign.

*See *Spells* (page 199).

Gregor Gregorius, 38, occult bookstore owner

STR 50 **CON** 70 **SIZ** 55 **DEX** 50 **INT** 65
APP 45 **POW** 90 **EDU** 75 **SAN** 63 **HP** 12
DB: 0 **Build:** 0 **Move:** 7 **MP:** 18

Combat

Brawl 25% (12/5), damage 1D3
Dodge 25% (12/5)

Skills

Appraise 35%, Archaeology 40%, Fast Talk 50%, Intimidate 65%, Language (English) 15%, Language (Enochian) 15%, Language (German) 75%, Language (Italian) 25%, Library Use 70%, Natural World 45%, Occult 85%, Psychology 65%, Spot Hidden 45%.

Spells: Contact Deity (Tsathoggua), Dominate, Elder Sign, Enthrall Victim, Implant Fear, Mental Suggestion, Mirror of Tarkhun Atep, Shrivelling.

Walter Andrae, 53, architect and archaeologist

STR 60 **CON** 65 **SIZ** 60 **DEX** 60 **INT** 65
APP 60 **POW** 55 **EDU** 80 **SAN** 55 **HP** 12
DB: 0 **Build:** 0 **Move:** 6 **MP:** 11

Combat

Brawl 45% (22/9), damage 1D3
Dodge 30% (15/6)

Skills

Anthropology 25%, Archaeology 75%, First Aid 45%, History 60%, Language (Akkadian) 40%, Language (Arabic) 45%, Language (English) 15%, Language (French) 65%, Language (German) 80%, Language (Sumerian) 40%, Library Use 70%, Navigate 35%, Occult 20%, Persuade 55%, Survival (Desert) 40%.

Ringverein Thug

Use this profile for any thugs, guards, and general hoodlums as needed.

STR 70 **CON** 65 **SIZ** 85 **DEX** 55 **INT** 45
APP 45 **POW** 50 **EDU** 40 **SAN** 50 **HP** 15
DB: +1D4 **Build:** 1 **Move:** 7 **MP:** 10

Combat

Brawl 70% (35/14), damage 1D3+1D4
Dodge 40% (20/8)

Skills

Climb 50%, Fast Talk 35%, Intimidate 50%, Language (German) 40%, Look Menacing 65%, Psychology 30%, Stealth 40%, Throw 50%.

CREATURES AND MONSTERS

Rabisu,

famished cannibal residents of the Shadow City

Use this profile for all rabisu. Their skin is a pallid gray and they are without eyes or ears; their faces are little more than gaping, lamprey-like maws ringed with jagged teeth. They sense prey by smell and vibration.

STR 35 **CON** 55 **SIZ** 50 **DEX** 55 **INT** 35
APP — **POW** 50 **EDU** — **SAN** — **HP** 10
DB: 0 **Build:** 0 **Move:** 8 **MP:** 10

Combat

Attacks per round: 1 (bite, claw, kick, kiss)

Kiss: with a successful kiss attack, the rabisu latches onto the target, draining 1D10 magic points in the following round unless the target can succeed in an opposed **POW** roll (roll each round). If magic points are drained to zero, the rabisu detaches from the unconscious target. Breaking free of a rabisu's kiss requires a successful **STR** roll.

Kiss 80% (40/16), damage 1D10 MP drain
Claws 85% (42/17), damage 1D6
Dodge 50% (25/10)

Skills

Stealth 55%, Track by Scent 95%.

Armor: none.

Sanity loss: 0/1D3 Sanity points to see a single rabisu; 1/1D6 points to see a whole swarm.

Fog-Spawn, instruments of Abyzou's dark will

Near invisible and shrouded in fog, these monsters are comprised of other-dimensional matter and are insubstantial in earthly terms. Though insubstantial, they might be seen momentarily in bright light as a sparkling gray cloud with thin, whip-like tentacles. Fog-spawn give off a strange odor of burning hair (noticeable when within 25 feet; 8 m) and rarely venture forth out of darkness, as they are averse to bright light.

STR 150 **CON** 150 **SIZ** 150 **DEX** 90 **INT** 5
APP — **POW** 125 **EDU** — **SAN** — **HP** n/a
DB: n/a **Build:** n/a **Move:** 10 **MP:** 25

Combat

Attacks per round: 6 tentacles of mist, each with a reach of 35 feet (10.5 m)

Fighting: the fog-spawn inserts pliable tentacles into the nostrils and mouth of the target—up to six victims simultaneously—inflicting choking damage, which increases each round: 1 point of damage in first round, 2 points of damage in second round, 3 points of damage in third round, and so on. If the target can win an opposed **STR** roll versus the **STR** of the tentacles, they may break free and escape. Each tentacle has **STR** 25, multiplied by the number of tentacles attacking the individual; thus, if the fog-spawn performs three successful attacks on one target, the opposed roll is versus **STR** 75, and so on.

Investigators suffer a penalty die to all attempts to hit the monster (they must essentially make wild attacks), with fumbles meaning they have hit an ally or the fog-spawn's victim instead.

Insubstantial: immune to physical attacks. Direct sunlight dispels the fog-spawn back to its native dimension (transition takes ten minutes), from whence it cannot return. Strong beams of light may cause a fog-spawn to retreat. If it can find a perpetually dark place, such as a deep sewer or a cave, the fog-spawn might stay on Earth for some time.

Fighting	50% (25/10), treat as surprise attack, see Fighting for damage details
Dodge	n/a

Skills

Hunt for Victim 65%, Stealth 95%.

Armor: none—the fog-spawn is insubstantial, and nothing material can harm it. Bright light can drive it away but does not actually harm it.

Sanity loss: 1/1D10 Sanity points to see a fog-spawn. Automatically lose 1D8 Sanity points upon the fog-spawn's first successful attack.

Maenads, crazed mortal followers of Abyzou

STR 75* **CON** 75 **SIZ** 60 **DEX** 55 **INT** 25*
APP — **POW** 50 **EDU** — **SAN** — **HP** 13*
DB: +1D4 **Build:** 1 **Move:** 8 **MP:** 10

**Attributes are artificially altered due to constant adrenaline rush caused by Abyzou's influence.*

Combat

Attacks per round: 2 (claw, or grab and bite)

Fighting: may attack twice with their bare hands, attempting to claw the flesh from opponents' bones, or alternatively may attempt a grab and bite fighting maneuver—roll to grab; if successful, roll to bite with a bonus die (bite bonus is applicable for each round following if target is still held). Target may break free of grab with opposed **STR** or **DEX** roll.

Claw	50% (25/10), damage 1D3+1D4
Grab (mnvr)	50% (25/10), roll to bite with bonus die
Bite	35% (17/7), damage 1D3+1D4
Dodge	27% (13/5)

Skills

Gibber and Rut 85%, Listen 40%, Spot Hidden 50%.

Armor: none.

Sanity loss: none, or 1/1D4 Sanity points if pursued by a large horde of maenads out for blood.

Abyzou, Whore of Babylon, Mother of Abominations

STR 150 **CON** 265 **SIZ** 45 **DEX** 100 **INT** 125
APP 125 **POW** 175 **EDU** — **SAN** — **HP** 31
DB: +1D6 **Build:** 2 **Move:** 9 **MP:** 35

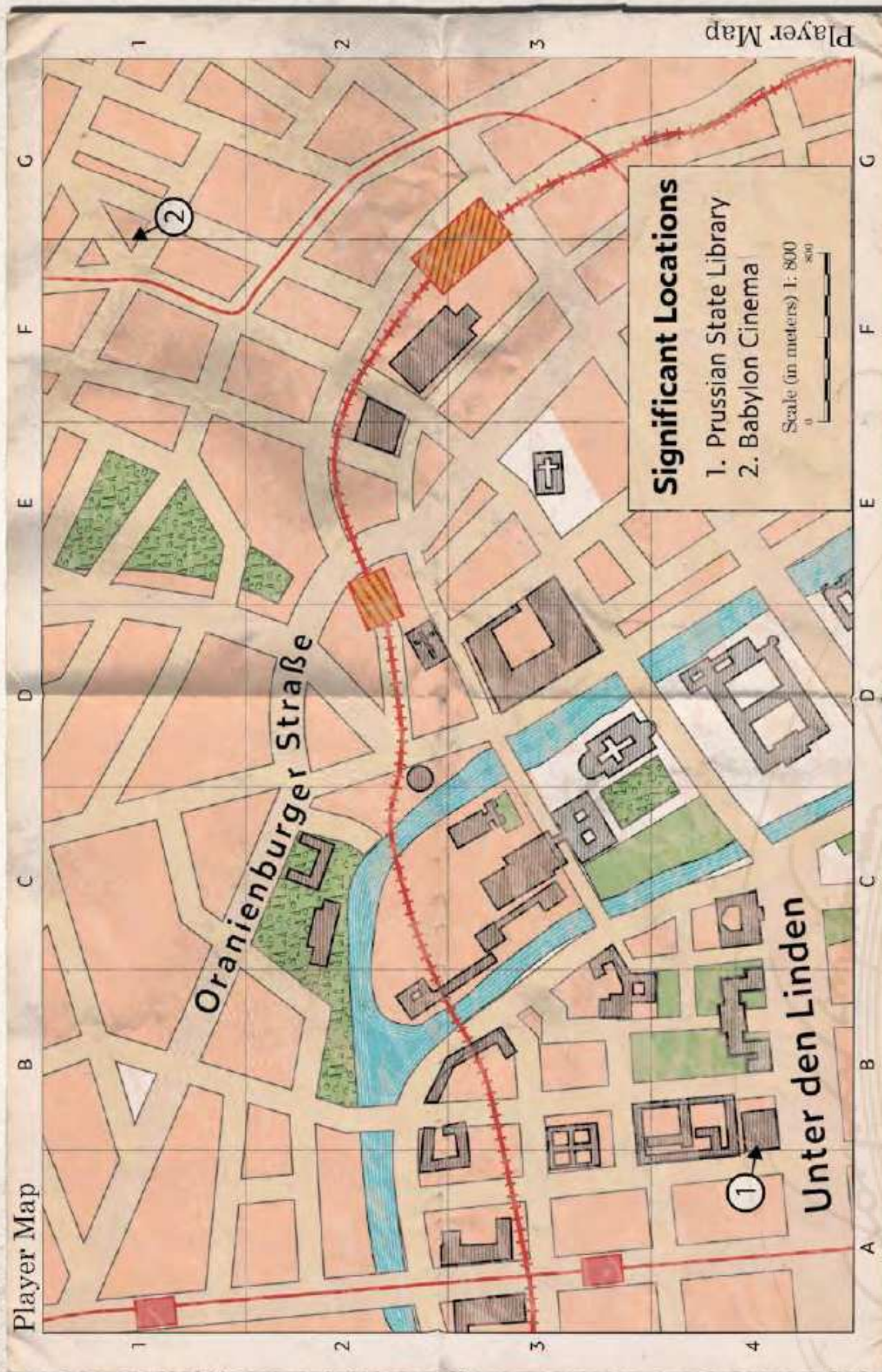
Combat

Attacks per round: 1 (claw, kiss)

Fighting: may attempt to kiss one helpless or willing victim per round; alternatively, she attacks with her preternaturally sharp fingernails, clawing for the softest and most vulnerable parts of her target.

Enthrall: all who are sexually aroused by the female form (i.e. straight men, lesbian women, bisexual men or women) must make an opposed **POW** roll when they see Abyzou; those failing may do nothing more than stare in dumbfounded stupefaction, overcome by Abyzou's beauty (those who succeed are free to act). Abyzou may then command anyone under her sway to do her bidding; such commands are executed eagerly,

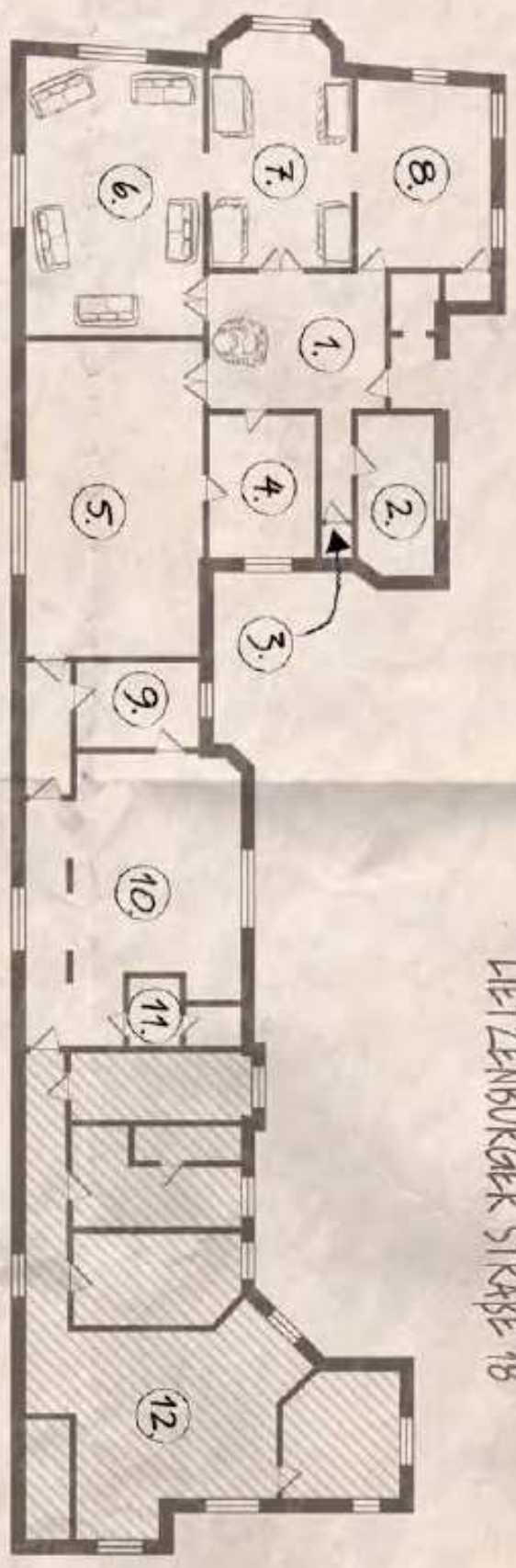




Player Map

THE PALACE OF THE OCCULT

LITZENBURGER STRASSE 18



- | | |
|----------------|------------------------|
| 1. ENTRY HALL | 7. ANIMAL MENAGERIE |
| 2. OFFICE | 8. LOUNGE |
| 3. W. C. | 9. PANTRY |
| 4. CLOAK ROOM | 10. KITCHEN |
| 5. BALLROOM | 11. BATHROOM |
| 6. SEANCE ROOM | 12. PRIVATE APARTMENTS |

PALACE OF THE OCCULT BERLIN

FISCHER & LANGE
ARCHITEKTEN
LINCHER 15 BERLIN

KÖNIG
ARCHITECT

EINRICHTUNG MIT DETAILS

C 3

Player Map

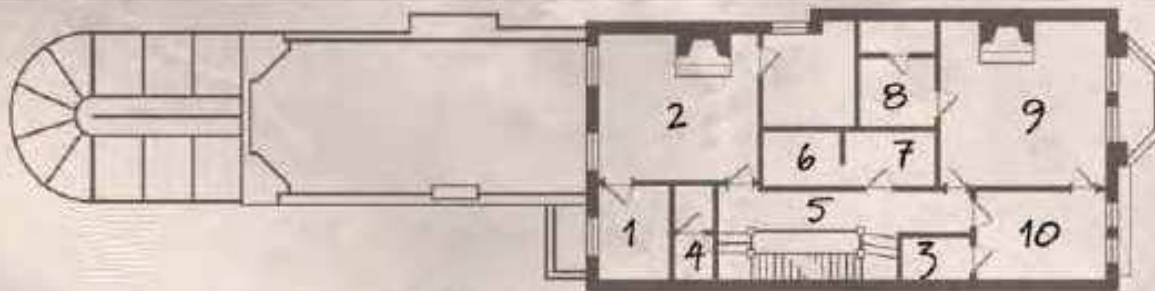
Left page: Schreckfilm map 3
Opposite: Schreckfilm map 4



FIFTH FLOOR

- | | |
|----------------|-------------------------|
| 1. SEWING ROOM | 5. BATHROOM |
| 2. ELEVATOR | 6. STAIR A / STAIR HALL |
| 3. BEDROOM | 7. MASTER SUITE |
| 4. VESTIBULE | 8. BOILER ROOM |

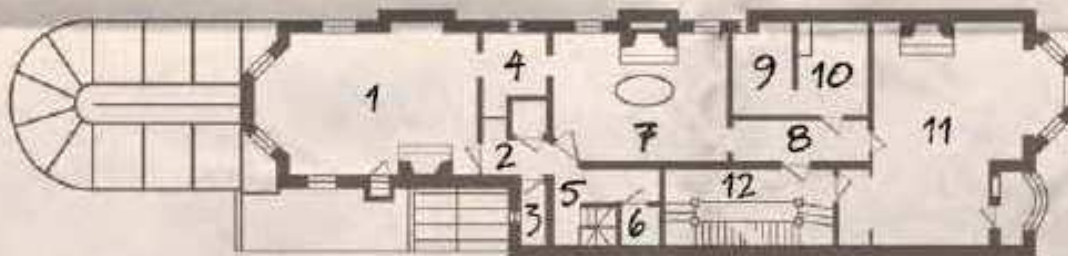
SALON KITTY
GIESEBRECHTSTRASSE 11



Scale (in feet) 1:25
Scale (in meters) 1:73

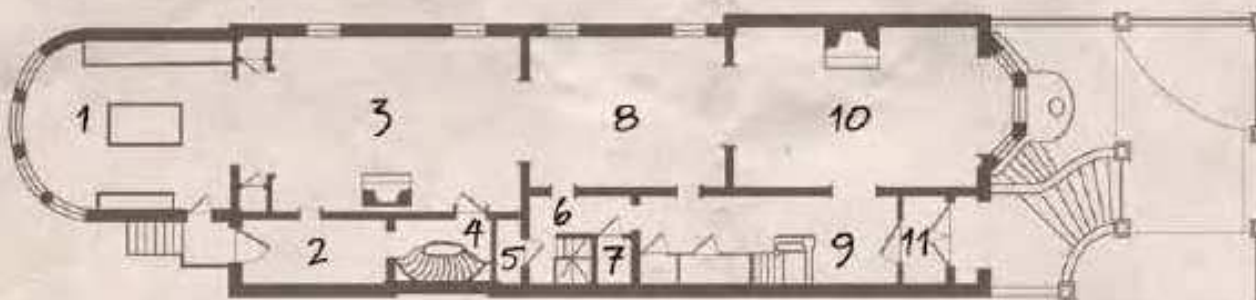
THIRD AND FOURTH FLOORS

- | | | |
|------------------|--------------------------|-------------|
| 1. DRESSING ROOM | 5. STAIRS A / STAIR HALL | 9. BEDROOM |
| 2. BEDROOM | 6. LINEN CLOSET | 10. BEDROOM |
| 3. BATHROOM | 7. LAUNDRY ROOM | |
| 4. ELEVATOR | 8. BATHROOM | |



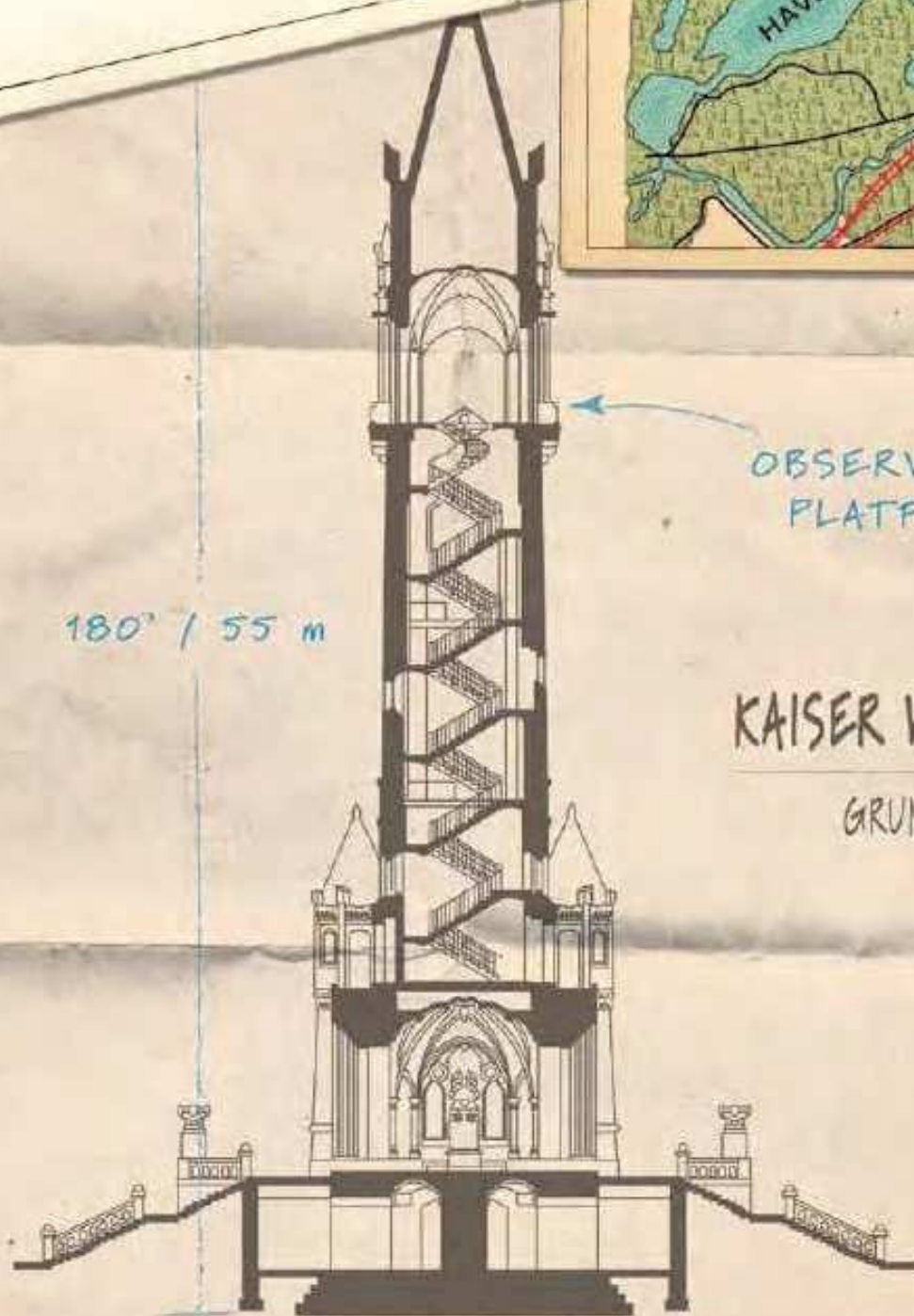
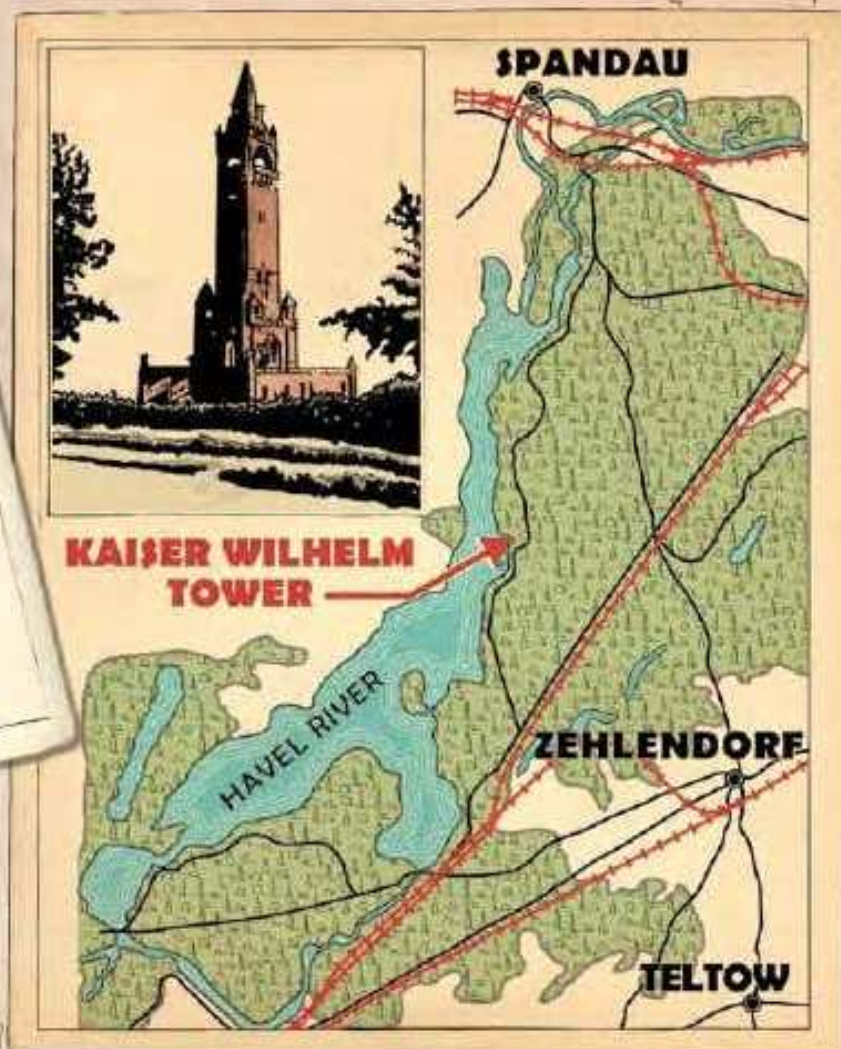
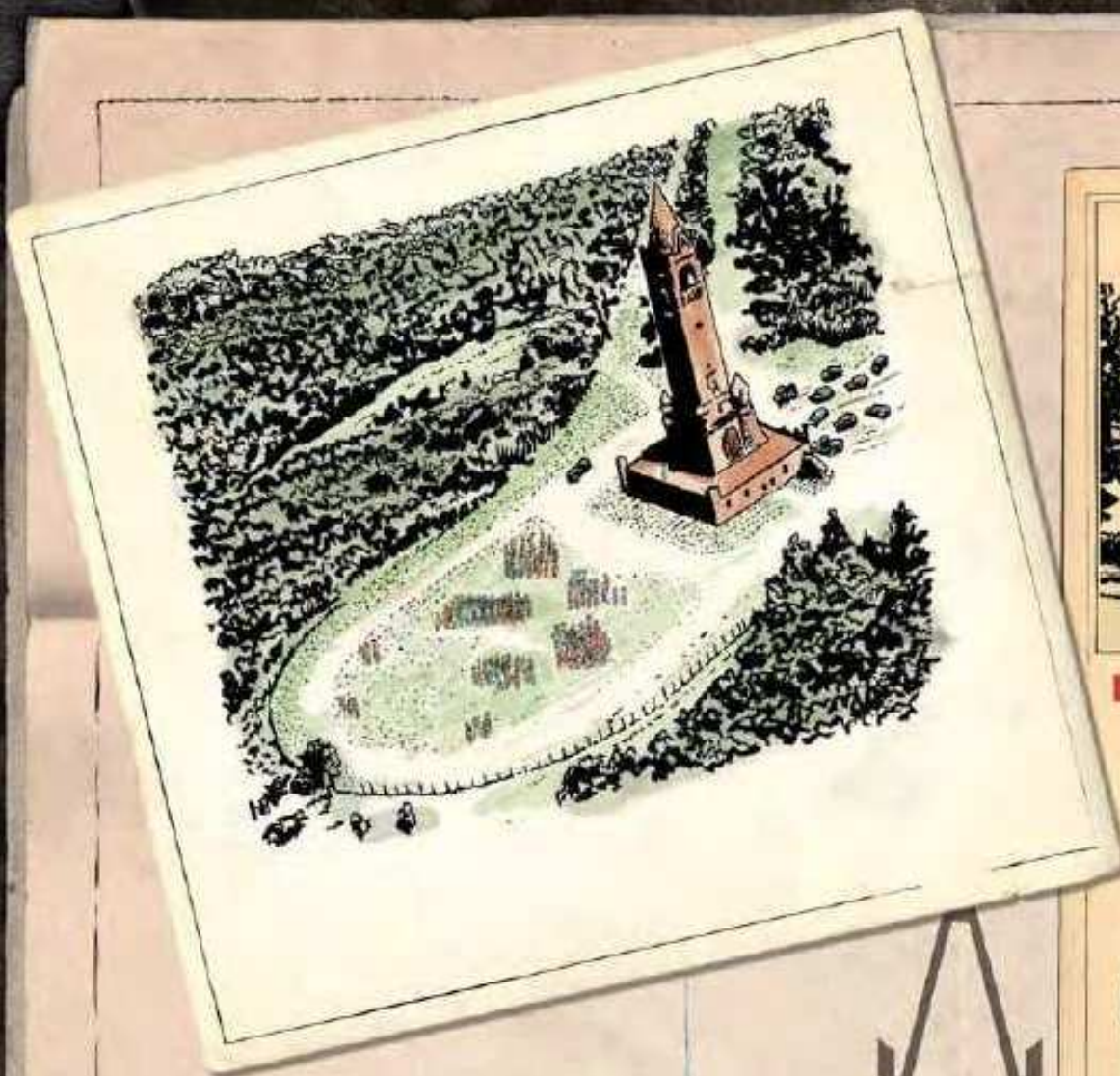
SECOND FLOOR

- | | | |
|------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. KITTY'S ROOM | 5. STAIRS B / STAIR HALL | 9. DRESSING ROOM |
| 2. VANITY | 6. ELEVATOR | 10. MASTER BATHROOM |
| 3. WATER CLOSET | 7. BATHING ROOM | 11. BEDROOM |
| 4. DRESSING ROOM | 8. MASTER SUITE VESTIBULE | 12. STAIR A / STAIR HALL |



PARLOR FLOOR

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. KITCHEN | 5. POWDER ROOM | 9. STAIR A / ENTRY HALL |
| 2. MUDROOM | 6. STAIRS B / STAIR HALL | 10. FRONT PARLOR |
| 3. DINING ROOM | 7. ELEVATOR | 11. ENTRY VESTIBULE |
| 4. STAIRS C / STAIR HALL | 8. BACK PARLOR | |



180' / 55 m

OBSERVATION
PLATFORM

KAISER WILHELM TOWER
GRUNEWALD FOREST



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CALL of CTHULHU

BERLIN

THE WICKED CITY

UNVEILING THE MYTHOS IN WEIMAR BERLIN

THE WICKEDEST CITY ON EARTH

In the aftermath of the Great War, Berlin has a reputation for decadence. A place where anything may be had for the right price. It is both a city of hedonism and a city of hedonists; its streets overflow with disabled veterans, prostitutes, drunken hangers-on, and political agitators—all adding decadence with hedonism-driven hedonism, violence, and crime. The games run with the blood of political assassination, where Communists and vilified Nationalists clash with each other, as well as with the police. Long into the evenings, Berlin's wealth-fueled salons offer music, dance, and thrilling entertainment in stark contrast to the gray buildings that rise on for endless miles along the sprawling city's boulevards.

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CHA23161-H \$44.99

ISBN-13: 978-1-56882-417-8

5 4499



9 781568 824178

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Printed in China

