

# POLYHEDRON<sup>®</sup>



138

VOLUME 19  
NUMBER 05  
MONTH 10/99

02	.....ERIK'S EDITORIAL
03	.....NOTES FROM HQ
08	.....ELMINSTER
26	.....CONVENTIONS
32	.....READER SURVEY

## I AM YOU.

To be more specific, I *think* I understand what you want in POLYHEDRON® Newszine. As I see it, there are two distinct types of POLYHEDRON readers: Those who attend conventions and gamedays and participate in the Network's tournament program, and those who do not. Though both reader-types share several similar interests, I understand that POLYHEDRON needs to cater to both types of RPGA members. I know this from experience.

I've been a member of the RPGA since 1991. For much of that time, my membership meant little more to me than monthly doses of POLYHEDRON Newszine. Sure, I saw pictures of people playing games at conventions and scanned the information on who won what tournament, but my main interest, in the early years, were the articles. I looked to POLYHEDRON as a source of gaming tips and adventures, written by role-playing enthusiasts just like myself. POLYHEDRON was not the slickest, most pro-



programs. I will, however, make every effort to ensure that convention-type content does not dominate every issue. My past experience has shown me that members look to POLYHEDRON for several different types of content. I'll do my best to put something for everyone in each issue.

Part of that effort is looking at everything we do here at POLYHEDRON, and trying to determine if it's the best that it possibly could be. As a new guy around here, I have a certain amount of creative freedom when it comes to the magazine. I'm not 100 percent married to the way we do anything. So far, nothing in POLYHEDRON is "my baby." There are no sacred cows. Though I like a lot of what we do, and think we're on the right path, I promise that I'm not likely to be unnaturally protective of anything (except perhaps the pervasive and important role that monkey clip-art plays in the magazine).

So, I put a call out to all of you. POLYHEDRON is a member-driven magazine. POLYHEDRON is your magazine.



# ERIK'S EDITORIAL

MAKING MEMBER MAGAZINES MATTER MORE

**Publisher**  
TSR, Inc.

**Brand Manager**  
Ryan Dancey

**RPGA Coordinator**  
Robert Wiese

**Editor**  
Erik Mona

**Art Director**  
Mark Painter

**Subscriptions**  
Game Support (800) 324-6496

**Production**  
Donna Woodcock

**Graphic Designer**  
Sean Glenn

fessional magazine in town, but it definitely had the biggest heart.

About five years ago, I took the plunge and attended my first gaming convention. At that con, I played my first RPGA tournament, and met folks who would become some of my best friends. I haven't looked back since. After conventioning became part of my life, I started to focus on that other part of POLYHEDRON. Articles on how to run a convention became interesting to me as I started to work with the local club in my region. Though we never participated, I always looked at the Club Decathlon rankings and contests, thinking "I could do that!" and "Maybe next year." Finally, I had fun searching for friends I'd made across the country on lists of GEN CON® winners and announcements of player and judge achievements.



Though I eventually grew to appreciate both the convention and general content of POLYHEDRON, as an editor I'll always try to remember that many of our members sit firmly on one side of the convention fence.

What does that mean for the magazine? Since POLYHEDRON is the primary point of communication between Network HQ and the membership, I feel that columns like "Table Talk" and "Notes from HQ" are important ones. The Network needs to keep members informed of upcoming changes and new



Send me a letter at [polyhedron@wizards.com](mailto:polyhedron@wizards.com) or address some old-fashioned snail mail to: Improving MY Polyhedron; RPGA Network; P.O. Box 707; Renton, WA 98057-0707 USA. I'd

like your opinions on what we're doing right, what needs improvement, and what we haven't even thought of, yet. In fact, because I'm rash, I'll send some cool free stuff, and I mean a LOT of cool free stuff, to the person who sends me the most helpful letter.

Another important aspect of POLYHEDRON'S status as a member magazine is that members provide all the content. If you have an idea for an article, please send it to the above address, with the words "Article Query" at the top (or, preferably, in the subject line of an email). I won't send you cool free stuff, but I will pay you cold cash if we print your article.

Until next time,

Erik



**Name:** Lotus  
**Nickname:** The Fire Blossom  
**Alignment:** Chaotic Good  
**Gender:** Female  
**Weight:** 96 lbs  
**AC:** 5 (leather + Dex)  
**HP:** 6

1st level thief  
**Race:** Half-Elf  
**Height:** 4'8"  
**Age:** 40  
**THACO:** 20 (+bonuses)

**Str:** 10      **Dex:** 17      **Con:** 7  
**Int:** 15      **Wis:** 8      **Cha:** 16

**Thief abilities (with leather armor):**

**Pick Pockets:** 25

**Open Locks:** 30

**Find/Remove Traps:** 10

**Move Silently:** 30

**Hide in Shadows:** 50

**Detect Noise:** 20

**Climb Walls:** 60

**Read Languages:** 0

**Backstab:** x 2

**Weapon proficiencies:** shuriken, dagger,

**Nonweapon proficiencies:** observation, direction sense, seamstress/tailor, disguise, tumbling, weaving, artistic ability (tapestries), speak Kozakura, speak Common

**Background:** Lotus knows very little about her past. Her adoptive parents, traveling cloth merchants from the island nation of Wa, raised Lotus with an eye toward traditional human values and dedication to fine Kara-Turan craftwork. They seldom spoke of her true parents, telling Lotus that her father had dishonored her mother, who had committed ritual suicide in her grief when Lotus was but an infant. To her adoptive parents, Lotus seemed to brim with the fire of life. They nicknamed her "The Fire Blossom."

As a child, Lotus was a quick study, learning the weaving trade from her adoptive mother. She spent most of her life traveling throughout Kara-Tur, through the hordelands, and finally to the Vast. Last year, one of Lotus' tapestries caught the attention of Lady Niune De Sheers, a noble of Ravens Bluff. She purchased some of Lotus' artwork, promising to tell her noble friends about the brilliant craftwork of the merchant couple.

The next day, however, Lady De Sheers reported that the Wa family were frauds, and that she had been cheated of considerable wealth by their cunning salesmanship and shoddy product. With supposed proof provided by House De Sheers, the constabulary of Ravens Bluff imprisoned the merchant and his wife, sentencing them indefinitely to a horrible life in the Nevin Street Compter. Lotus herself managed to escape the guards, and has resorted to thievery to survive.

Her skills are slowly improving. Thanks

to her distinctive appearance (a half-elven girl from Wa attracts much attention in the Vast), she has had to resort to the art of disguise. Resorting to violence only when necessary, her usual recourse is to run away from trouble, even if at the expense of leaving witnesses behind. If absolutely necessary, she uses her dagger to injure (but seldom to kill). She also employs shuriken in her self-defense.

Lotus' shuriken appear to be very old and extremely well crafted in the tradition of the assassins of the east. Allegedly a gift from her birth father, Lotus received them from her adoptive parents ten years ago. In the interim, she has learned more than a few tricks with the missiles, usually using them to distract her opponents, allowing for a clean

get away. Originally 100 in number, she has lost fewer than a

dozen in her exploits.

As far as Lotus knows, her family is still imprisoned. She knows they are not guilty of fraud, and her primary goal is to confront Lady De Sheers, discovering why she would have her family locked away. She fears that she may have to employ violence to achieve this goal, but this is one circumstance in which she feels it may be necessary. The entire situation already has insulted her honor. For the past several months, Lotus has engaged in daring forays into Uptown, liberating jewels and gems from wealthy merchants and adventurers. As her adoptive parents always told her, cities are corruptive influences. Those who enforce the law are often the most corrupt. Lotus hopes to fence her bounty, using the proceeds to bribe the Compter guards.

While casing the market district recently, she saw an opportunity she couldn't pass up. Vurtin, the dim-witted proprietor of Ye Olde Bluff Jewelers, had left a veritable treasure unguarded while counting the day's take in the back room. Though Lotus was not disguised, she knew when she had been blessed by Tymora. As she gathered the treasure — a jumble of pearls, bracelets, and a diamond the size of her fist — Vurtin heard her steps on the wooden floor. Instead of fighting, "Fire Blossom" burst from the store, escaping into the night of Ravens Bluff. ■

# Lotus the fire blossom

## poly 136 contest winner

BY MASON PORTER



In Polyhedron 136, we asked our readers to tell us the story of the young female thief pictured on that issue's cover by artist Hannibal King. Seen beating a hasty retreat from "Ye Olde Bluff Jeweler," the miscreant begged for further development. Thanks to member Mason Porter, the story of Lotus, the Fire Blossom, now can be told! For his efforts, Mason will receive a copy of *The City of Ravens Bluff*, by Ed Greenwood.

02 .....ERIK'S EDITORIAL  
03 .....NOTES FROM HQ  
08 .....ELMINSTER  
26 .....CONVENTIONS  
32 .....READER SURVEY

It's October, so we'll be talking about horror and Halloween this issue. The obvious place to start is <http://www.halloween.com>. This site has links to a wide variety of Halloween-related sites organized by topic (vampires, witches & werewolves, ghosts & cemeteries, scary tales, costumes, and humor). One interesting site is "Terror by Design," at <http://www.btprod.com>. This site offers a variety of books and supplies to construct your own haunted house. Your local costume shop may have make-up and theatrical blood, but does it have a corpse kit? Think of how impressed your gaming group will be when you lead them into the basement to examine a fake corpse for clues (\$190, some assembly required). If the corpse is a bit too much, you can always go for the rotten skull (\$18.95). These are all found under the "plots" heading (the site uses frames and is awkward to navigate).

If your budget is higher and you are a stickler for realism, point your browser to <http://www.bonerroom.com>. Select bones, then click on human bones and start loading your shopping cart with genuine human skulls, ribs, ver-

were kept in a dungeon and denied a proper diet. The poor living conditions and malnutrition led to premature births. Healthy babies were then sold to residents of the town. Women are believed to have gone insane and in some cases died due to their treatment. The ghosts of the women who suffered through this are said to haunt the nunnery. This offers not only the opportunity for a ghost story, but much more. Perhaps a man who was one of the children sold to the townspeople is having nightmares as an adult due to the torment of his birth mother. If the man wasn't aware he was adopted, it's going to require a great deal of investigation for the PCs to determine the source of his problem. Check out the Haunted America web site: you'll be glad you did.

That's all for this issue; if you have any questions or suggested sites for this column, send them to [polyhedron@wizards.com](mailto:polyhedron@wizards.com). ■

02 .....ERIK'S EDITORIAL  
03 .....NOTES FROM HQ  
08 .....ELMINSTER  
26 .....CONVENTIONS  
32 .....READER SURVEY

# internet 101

SPOOKY COBWEB-SITES BY ED GIBSON



tebra or even a complete skeleton (\$2000-2500). If your significant other complains about your purchases, back up a couple of levels and buy her something from the jewelry page. Wouldn't she look gorgeous in a pair of genuine rat skull earrings (\$55 a pair)?

If your ambitions don't include building your own haunted house, maybe you'd like to get your gaming group to visit a haunted house together. A list of haunted houses across the United States can be accessed at <http://www.hauntedamerica.com>. The haunted house web sites vary in quality from amateurish to professional, but you should be able to find one located in your area. If you're looking for an actual haunting (as opposed to a commercial one), check out the ghost story section of the Haunted America site. It's full of brief stories that can be fleshed out as adventures for Chill and ALTERNITY: DARK • MATTER campaigns.

For example, check out the New Mexico stories. The Pet Cemetery story deals with a woman who was thrown by her horse while riding on her property. She was then mauled to death by her two dogs. Later the woman and her animals were buried together. A research facility is later built on the same property near the gravesite. A variety of ghost sightings and other strange activities are reported in the area. This story could easily be worked into a campaign as the player characters are asked to investigate mysterious occurrences at a research facility. The animals are acting strangely, and lab equipment has been damaged. Is this the work of ghosts, or animal rights activists? It's up to the heroes to investigate and find out.

The Santa Fe story, on the same page, also makes for a chilling adventure. An ancient nunnery was once used to house unwed mothers until they gave birth. The women



02	ERIK'S EDITORIAL
03	NOTES FROM HQ
08	ELMINSTER
26	CONVENTIONS
32	READER SURVEY



According to medieval legend, the first subway was the work of a Roman sorcerer. One midnight, under a moonless sky, the poet Virgil was said to have summoned eighty thousand devils before a mountain in southern Italy, and by means of incantations and devices of supernatural power set the unholy horde to tunneling through the mountain's base. When the sun rose, the devils were nowhere to be seen, but from one side of the mountain to the other was a tunnel as wide as a road.

This tunnel exists. According to history it was the work of the engineer Cocceius Auctus under the supervision of Marcus Agrippa, Caesar Augustus's most capable advisor. This road tunnel was one of three that were dug by the Romans during Augustus's rule. The tunnels marked an exceptional development in engineering; nothing like them had been built before and nothing like them would be built again for nearly two thousand years.

During the 19th Century, with the advent of the Industrial Revolution, the populations of cities were growing beyond anyone's expectations. Perhaps the most

behind it to shore up the area that had already been dug. This invention gained him the patronage of the Duke of Wellington, and in June of 1824 the project for a new Thames tunnel had royal consent.

But Brunel was plagued by dire omens. The first stroke of iron to the gravel produced a thunderous sound which seemed to Brunel "like the rattling of multitudinous chains." The first strike with picks caused water to spurt into the frame of the shield. Workers found themselves digging through silt, gravel, and sand so fine and waterlogged "as to have become absolutely fluid" — quicksand.

The worst was yet to come. A black mud that made workers ill often leaked through the walls and at one point a "shower of bones" rained down into the tunnel along with broken pieces of china and glass. After floodings, cave-ins, pockets of exploding gas, a dozen deaths, two nervous break downs, a strike, and nineteen years, the 400 yard tunnel was opened to the public.

Within fifteen weeks one million people would pass through. Although intended for vehicles, it was used

# city stories

STEEL DUNGEONS AND IRON DRAGONS; THE SUBWAYS OF GOTHIC EARTH BY MATTHEW SERNETT

obvious sign of this was the trouble of heavy traffic on the roads. It was said that you could travel from New York City halfway to Philadelphia in less time than took to traverse the length of Broadway.

To many, the answer seemed to lay underground. A system of roads or train tunnels beneath the earth would alleviate the traffic problems caused by overpopulation. To others, the idea of underground travel presented greater danger than the trouble with traffic. Some clergymen called subways a "flirtation with the underworld" and a "trespass in the realms of the devil."

In the world of Gothic Earth this is certainly so. But, trespassing or not, by 1900 subways had opened under six of the world's cities: London, New York, Glasgow, Budapest, Boston, and Paris.

## LONDON, ENGLAND

After 1800 it became obvious that population growth and mercantile pressures necessitated a tunnel beneath the Thames River. It was attempted in 1802 but the work was plagued by cave-ins and in 1808 water burst into the tunnel, filling it and destroying all that was done. Tunneling through the watery ground beneath the Thames was deemed impractical and the idea was abandoned.

Yet one man did not give up. The French emigré Marc Isambard Brunel observed a shipworm boring through a fragment of wood he picked up in a dockyard. He noted that the hard, shield-like head ground through the wood while the body coated the passageway with a shell-like secretion of slime. It was this observation that gave Brunel the inspiration for his tunneling shield. The shield would serve as a mobile backbone for the digging, holding up the earth around the tunnelers while brick layers worked

mainly as a pedestrian tunnel with a charge of a penny a head. According to the American writer Nathaniel Hawthorne, by day it was filled with stalls like an underground street market and sometimes there would be an exhibition of paintings, or a fair with games of chance, "mysterious ladies" and "American wizards." Then, when darkness cloaked the riverside streets, the tunnel became a home for the "temporarily embarrassed and the chronically down-and-out." These people, "mindful of the flaring gaslights, named it the Hades Hotel."

This ended in 1865 when the East London Railway Company bought the "Hades Hotel" in order to incorporate it into the growing network of the London Underground. These tunnels were dug through much more stable ground and closer to the surface than the Thames tunnel, so the work was less of an ordeal. The workers dug through the deposit of bygone generations of Celts, Romans, Saxons, Danes, and Normans.

The London Underground was run by steam engines with names like Mars, Mercury, Medusa, Pluto, Cyclops, and Cerberus. The trains had a first, second, and third class car. The smoke and steam of the engines made the air in the tunnels smell sulfurous and gave frequent passengers a dry, hacking cough. Some medical reports claimed the smoke caused asphyxiation, and several deaths were attributed to poor air quality.

Another tunnel was dug under the Thames with greater ease and no casualties using a shield of a new design. At first used as a cable car passage, by 1870 it was used only by pedestrians, and when the London Bridge was completed in 1894, it was closed to traffic and threaded with water mains.

## FORBIDDEN LORE

The Red Death initially opposed intrusions beneath London soil, its minions caused much of the trouble that plagued the first two efforts at making a tunnel beneath the Thames. Once the "Hades Hotel" was finished, however, the Red Death saw the advantage of allowing London's citizens "a flirtation with the underworld."

Digging the subways through the deposits of history disturbed many spirits that should have been left to rest, and the subways are used as thoroughfares by creatures that would be unwelcome on the surface or endangered by the light of the sun. Because of subways, the Red Death has gained more minions and a dark world it can easily control.

One of the more recent additions to the forces of darkness is a ghost named Mikael Kazinski, an immigrant from Poland who worked on Brunel's tunnel beneath the Thames. He was the leader of the labor strike that occurred about halfway to the tunnel's completion. The laborers went on strike for more pay, and an end to payment by the distance excavated. The directors of the project asked Kazinski to meet them in the tunnel to talk. The directors chained him to a wall, intending only to frighten him by leaving him for a while in the damp darkness of the tunnel, but a cave-in suddenly flooded the tunnel with water. The directors fled, ignoring Kazinski's screams for help as the fetid and murky water rose above his shoulders. Without their leader, the strikers gave in. Kazinski's body and the chains which bound him to the wall were never found.

A flood of rain water in the tunnel awakened Mikael Kazinski's spirit, and now he haunts the "Hades Hotel" as a poltergeist. Usually his manifestations are the frightening but harmless sounds of chains rattling or a scream for help in Polish from some distant abyss. More recently, however, the poltergeist has become agitated. Kazinski has been making hot coals shoot out of the engine stoves and has been snuffing the gas lamps that light the tunnels. Sometimes an engineer working the night shift stops and abandons his train in the middle of the tunnel. When

found, the delirious engineer claims that he witnessed a cave-in and nearly drowned in a flood. These claims are attributed to hallucinations due to fatigue and the bad air in the tunnel.

## NEW YORK, NEW YORK

In the 1800's, New York City was experiencing the same kind of growing pains as London, but attempts to introduce legislature for rapid transit were blocked. A man named William Marcy "Boss" Tweed stood in the way. Tweed controlled much of the government through his political allies, known as the "Black Horse Cavalry." He blocked the moves for a subway in order to press his own plans for omnibuses and elevated trains.

His opponent, and the major proponent for subways, was Alfred Ely Beach, co-publisher of the *New York Sun*, editor of *Scientific American*, patent attorney, and inventor. Beach was a nexus of new technology, and reputedly never turned an inventor from his door. Alexander Graham Bell, Samuel F. B. Morse, and John Ericson (the designer of the Civil War ironclad called the Monitor) were among those who sought him out. Thomas Edison first demonstrated his phonograph in Beach's office. Beach spun the crank and it warbled, "Good morning, sir. How are you? How do you like my talking box?"

Beach was a small and delicate man, who went to bed early, got up early, exercised daily, attended church every Sunday, and worked very hard. Tweed on the other hand was a large and loud man who preferred the company of "big-handed, red faced, boisterous men" like himself. It seemed the two were natural enemies.

Beach could not succeed in passing a charter to start a subway. Instead he pressed a charter to dig two four-foot-wide mail tunnels along a long stretch of Broadway. These tunnels were designed for a pneumatic system of propulsion that would suck the mail through the tunnels using huge fans. Delighted that Beach was no longer attempting to build a subway, Tweed allowed the bill to pass. But

02 .....ERIK'S EDITORIAL

03 .....NOTES FROM HQ

08 .....ELMINSTER

26 .....CONVENTIONS

32 .....READER SURVEY



02	ERIK'S EDITORIAL
03	NOTES FROM HQ
08	ELMINSTER
26	CONVENTIONS
32	READER SURVEY

Beach was clever. He asked the legislature for an amendment to his charter. He wanted one Eight foot tube instead, to simplify work and save money. The amendment passed.

Beach worked fast. The tunnel was dug from the basement of a clothing store by night and the dirt carted away in covered wagons on muffled wheels. In just two months he had a tunnel dug from Warren Street to Murray Street. The only real obstacle to the digging was a complete surprise: the foundations of an old Dutch fort from the colonial era. One by one, the stones were loosened and taken away. The completed tunnel was 312 feet long, cylindrical, painted white, and furnished with a single car. The stations at either end were brightly lit and furnished with chandeliers, statues, fountains, and pools with goldfish. Beach opened the subway on February 28, 1870.

It was an immediate success. Here was a subway that seemed to have appeared overnight. It was beautifully decorated, and best of all, there was no steam or smoke. This subway was pneumatic. The car was pushed and pulled by the air itself. One reporter found it so wondrous that he dubbed it "Aladdin's Cave."

Tweed could scarcely believe it. He attempted to punish Beach upon the grounds that Beach had breached his charter. Inexplicably, he failed. He pressed legislation for his elevated train lines, and this too failed. Soon, Tweed found himself accused of forgery and grand larceny. He was able to delay the trial until 1873 but was convicted for his political corruption and sentenced to life in prison.

Despite his initial success, Beach's plans for a system of



subways went nowhere. Curiosity and novelty wore off, and by the end of 1874, no one took his tunnel seriously. Scientists and engineers were increasingly vocal about the limitations of pneumatically driven trains. Attention shifted to elevated train lines and other above ground transit systems. Beach rented out his tunnel for a shooting gallery and later as a storage vault for wines, but at length these proceeds could no longer cover the upkeep. He closed the tunnel and bricked it up.

By 1890, few people even remembered the ill-fated subway. Beach remained as editor of *Scientific American* but kept out of the public eye. In 1896, he died of pneumonia, reportedly the only serious illness of his life.

## FORBIDDEN LORE

Alfred Ely Beach is a member of a qabal known as the Brotherhood of Alchemae. He was inducted into its ranks by none other than Thomas Alva Edison. As a patent attorney and editor of the *Scientific American*, Beach was the perfect candidate for membership.

When Beach came into conflict with Tweed, there was more at stake than the traffic troubles of New York. Tweed, along with his "Black Horse Cavalry," were secretly members of the Society of the Keepers, a qabal dedicated to preserving the dangerous secrets of the world. Though politically corrupt, Tweed and his fellows labored valiantly to do just that. The secret they were assigned to guard was an artifact known as the *Fenris Heart*.

The *Fenris Heart* is black stone in the shape of a human heart. It seems to be obsidian, but it is unbreakable and pulses with warmth. Legend has it that the *Fenris Heart* has many dark powers, but that its greatest power is to act as a key to the destruction of the world. Supposedly, certain arcane rituals involving the *Fenris Heart* will bring about the Ragnarok of Norse myth.

The *Fenris Heart* was brought to America by the Viking, Lief Ericson. He buried it and left America, hoping the evil item would never again fall into the hands of man. But later Dutch settlers discovered the item and brought it to the Dutch fort. Fearing its dark power, the soldiers buried the *Fenris Heart* and vowed never to reveal its location.

The Society of the Keepers knew the remains of the fort lay somewhere under New York City, so Tweed was assigned to assure that the remains and the *Fenris Heart* were never found. Tweed erred in allowing Beach to dig his "mail tunnels," and when it was learned that Beach had found the fort, Tweed's allies turned against him and had him put in jail.

Beach had not discovered the *Fenris Heart*, but he learned from a diary buried in the fort that the artifact was buried somewhere nearby. His scientific curiosity piqued, Beach scuttled plans for any subway system by encouraging members of the Brotherhood of Alchemae to discourage it. Having prevented further excavation, Beach began his search beneath New York with the resources of the Brotherhood behind him.

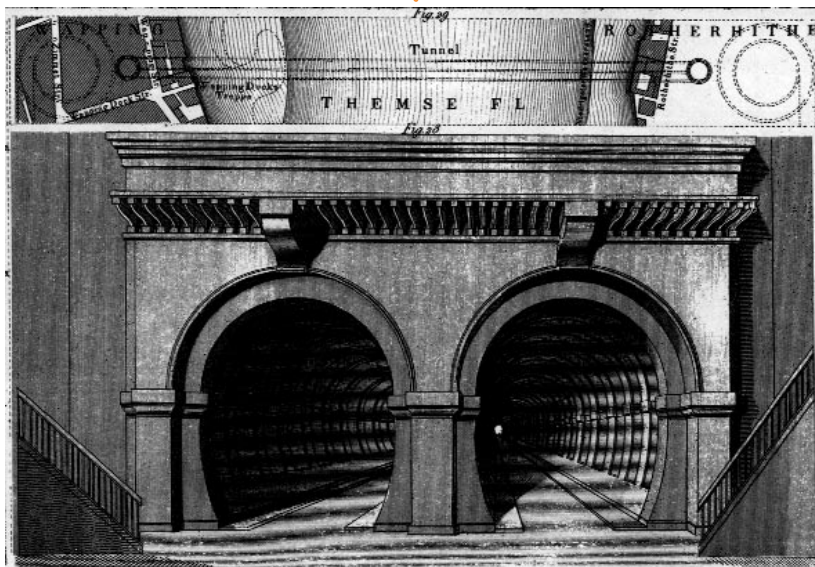
Soon after, two other qabals learned of the *Fenris Heart*: Die Watchtern, and the Six-Fingered Hand. A secret war began beneath the streets of New York between the four qabals; a war that will be won by the qabal that finds the

*Fenris Heart*. By the 1890's the secret war has raged for almost twenty years. Alliances have been made and broken and within the qabals bitter feuds have risen and subsided. The participants in this conflict are weary but relentless and the battle will continue until the *Fenris Heart* is found. The Society of Keepers will hide it. The Brotherhood of Alchemae want to study it. Die Watchtern seeks to destroy it. The members of the Six-Fingered Hand will use it.

In 1896, Beach does not die of pneumonia. He remains as healthy and sharp of wit as ever. Beach fakes his death to make his opponents in the secret war complacent while the Brotherhood of Alchemae acts upon a new clue to the whereabouts of the *Fenris Heart*. "Aladdin's Cave" is converted into a secret lab and base of operations for the Brotherhood of Alchemae.

have been broken.

8. A person the player characters pursue runs into the subway and leaps in front of an oncoming train. When the train passes, no trace of the person is found. The driver of the train saw nothing.
9. The subways are closed for a few weeks because something is warping the tracks. If the player characters investigate, they see the tracks moving like snakes, as though the metal is alive.
10. The player characters are riding a train when it suddenly takes an unexpected turn into a strange tunnel. Soon the train is hurtling through darkness and no one knows where it is going.
11. While the characters are exploring the subway on foot, they hear a rumble and the ceiling caves in just ahead of them. Moments later, a train rounds the corner, bearing



## MYSTERIOUS SUBWAY OCCURRENCES

1. The passengers disappear but the driver sees nothing unusual.
2. A train or subway car vanishes while *en route*.
3. The train roars through the station at top speed and passengers are glimpsed struggling with . . . something.
4. The station is deserted except for the player characters. The train or trolley pulls up and all the passengers inside are dead.
5. The player characters are riding through the subway when suddenly all the lights go out. There are a few screams and sounds of scuffling and when the train reaches the station a member of the party is missing.
6. When the characters explore a subway on foot, an unscheduled train bears down on them. Just when it is about to run them down it derails and crashes into the wall. The player characters barely escape with their lives. When the unscheduled train is checked out, they find it empty. Later they learn that the train was retired from service after a previous accident.
7. The player characters find themselves riding in a runaway train. The driver has disappeared and the controls

down on them at full speed. Just before they are crushed in the inevitable crash, one character finds a secret passage. They escape unscathed but the subway is now blocked by the wreckage. The strange secret tunnel is the only way out.

12. One of the subway trains starts to have mechanical problems. The gas lamps flicker on and off. Doors seem to open and close for no reason. The brakes don't always work when needed. The train has become host to a greater animator whose ward is a depressed and overworked accountant who rides the subway to work everyday like clockwork. The animator uses it's influence to make sure the ward gets to work on time and to eliminate individuals who it feels endanger the accountant's need to ride the subway.

For more lore on the subways of the gothic age look for these book at your local library:

- Labyrinths of Iron* by Benson Bobrick
- The Story of London's Underground* by John R. Day
- Adventure Underground* by Joseph Gries
- Atmospheric Railways* by Charles Hadfield
- Famous Underground Railways of the World* by A. J. F. Wrottesley ■

- 02 . . . . .ERIK'S EDITORIAL
- 03 . . . . .NOTES FROM HQ
- 08 . . . . .ELMINSTER
- 26 . . . . .CONVENTIONS
- 32 . . . . .READER SURVEY