

DUST & BLOOD

TWO SCENARIOS OF GASLIGHT LONDON

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CHAPTER 1: ASHES TO ASHES

HANDOUT: ASHES 1

“How am I supposed to know where it came from? We just did our usual round, didn’t we? Brought it back here just like always. Nothing different from normal...”

“Hold on. There was this one thing... up on Clayle Avenue. Number 19 if I recall. The posh end of town—you know it? We was doing our rounds and this servant came out to us with that there burlap sack. Not a housemaid—a footman or valet or something, all dressed up proper in his tailcoat. I thought it was odd, him carrying out the dust like that. But I didn’t pay it no mind at the time. Saved us the work, that was all. He even tipped me sixpence.

“Come to think of it, he did look a bit green around the gills, like.”

HANDOUT: ASHES 2

from Zosimos—Concerning Palingenesis:

Hence it is evident that stupendous secrets lie hidden in Nature and in the different creations of Nature or of God; and it would be much more to our credit if we looked into these and investigated them instead of indulging in revelry and debauchery. The resuscitation and restoration of form is difficult and arduous; possible, indeed, but not to be accomplished without exceptional skill and industry.

The following is the method of its revival: take the body of that which has died, and let it be whole in all its parts. Make it to ash over a fire of sandalwood, and calcify with it white pitch and myrrh and gum Arabic, one *uqiyyah* for each *ratl*, with flowers of sulphur, lapis solaris, and sal ammoniac one *uqiyyah*. Let them be mixed and cooled.

Then there will be produced an ash ground finely, and when the name of the creature is spoken it will rise up to take that form which its spirit recalls, and it will by name do as you command. Yet you must put it down again when need is satisfied, for it frets and grows weary. And in this way any beast or plant may be recalled from death into a semblance of life.

This is really flesh, and is called resuscitated, renewed, and restored flesh. It was from the beginning flesh, but mortified, destroyed, and reduced to coals, to ashes—to nothingness; and yet from that nothingness it is made something, and is reborn. Truly in the light of Nature this is a great mystery, that a thing which had altogether lost its form, and had been reduced to nothingness, recovers that form and becomes something from nothing.

Note: in the margins (in the same handwriting but in a different ink color) reads: “Egyptian *uqiyyah* = 1 ½ oz approx. or 40 *dirham*. *Ratl* = 128 *dirham*.”

Another marginal note, next to “the name of the creature is spoken” reads: “NEBUSEMEKH.”

HANDOUT: ASHES 3 (KEEPER EYES ONLY)

ASHEN REVENANT HANDY COUNTER

MP	HP
14 (MAX)	
13	
12	
11	
10	10 (MAX)
9	9 Whirling Dust 1D3 rounds
8	8
7	7
6	6 Possessing Dust
5	5
4	4
3	3
2	2
1	1
0: Permanent Death	0: Collapses*

*0 HP – falls to ground, regenerates 1 HP per hour until it rises at maximum after 10 hours.

Possessing Dust: takes 1 round, needs a successful opposed POW roll. Costs 2 MP + 1 MP per hour + 1 MP per hour from the living host..

Whirling Dust: takes 1 round, costs 1 MP per round to do area attack (automatic 2D4 unless Dodge roll is successful), 5 yard/m radius.

CHAPTER 2: SIGNS WRIT IN SCARLET

HANDOUT: SIGNS 1

The five murders commonly attributed to Jack the Ripper took place between August 31 and November 9, 1888.

- Mary Ann (Polly) Nichols, age 43, murdered Friday, August 31, 1888, on Bucks Row.
- Annie Chapman (Dark Annie), age 47, murdered Saturday, September 8, 1888, on Hanbury Street.
- Elizabeth Stride (Long Liz), age 44, murdered Sunday, September 30, 1888, in Dutfield's Yard.
- Catharine Eddowes (Kate Kelly), age 46, also murdered Sunday, September 30, in Mitre Square.
- Mary Jane (Marie Jeanette) Kelly, age 25, murdered Friday, November 9, 1888, in her lodgings at Miller's Court.

The victims were impoverished working-class women, who drank heavily and worked the streets part-time as sex workers to make rent. One murder took place inside the City of London's boundaries, the rest in Whitechapel and Spitalfields just to the north, resulting in widespread fear and panic among local people. The victims were generally strangled unconscious before their throats were cut and their bodies mutilated, with organs such as kidneys being removed. No one was ever caught or charged for this heinous crime wave.

The wider Victorian public was aghast, frightened, and caught up in a prurient moral panic about the state of the East End poor, while the reputation of the London police took a sharp nosedive due to their inability to catch the killer.

HANDOUT: SIGNS 2

VICIOUS DOCKYARD MURDER

Sailor Slain

October 20th The body of an as-yet unidentified man was discovered in an alley off Upper East Smithfield, near the St. Katherine Docks, at five o'clock this morning. A docker on his way to work found the corpse concealed in a tumble of crates.

Details are still forthcoming, but our correspondent has learned that the victim was a small man, aged 40 years or thereabouts, and believed to be a sailor. The victim's throat was cut, and his money and belongings stolen by the killer. Though unconfirmed, some reports say that the body was also mutilated. The coroner's inquest is scheduled to take place on the 23rd of this month.

HANDOUT: SIGNS 3

SECOND MURDER Baffles POLICE

Horrible Mutilations

October 23rd Stepney Police report a second grisly East End murder in the space of four days. PC George Wardley discovered the body of a large man in an alley off Exmouth Street. The unidentified man was stout, and an overturned cart nearby indicated the dead man was a fruit seller. As with the earlier victim, now identified as Andrew Clark, a merchant seaman, this second victim's throat had been slashed.

Numerous reports have come in of cuts and mutilations like those found on the body of the unfortunate Clark. Police seek information regarding both cases. The coroner's inquest is scheduled for tomorrow.

HANDOUT: SIGNS 4-8

Are illustrations—see the scenario booklet.

HANDOUT: SIGNS 9

Note: article from a German newspaper dated 11 years ago.

PRISON DOCTOR VON DRAFFEN SOUGHT

Awful Experiments Performed in the Name of Science

Authorities are searching for Dr. Arnst von Draffen, director of the Sturnsbad Prison for the Criminally Insane. Doctor von Draffen is accused of murdering several Sturnsbad prisoners whose deaths were previously believed to be accidents. Guards and prisoners reported Dr. von Draffen's alleged activities last week after discovering the mutilated body of inmate Kurt Frieburg.

Doctor von Draffen allegedly performed extreme experimental therapy and surgery using prisoners as test subjects. His controversial theories have previously gained the medical world's attention, but now serious questions are being raised as the doctor's standing. If these allegations are true, Dr. von Draffen shall soon know the executioner's blade.

Doctor von Draffen, 62, was reported missing not long after the discovery of Frieburg's body, and authorities are seeking information regarding his whereabouts. The doctor is of small build. He is balding and wears pince-nez spectacles. He is believed to be traveling alone, but despite his age, he should be considered dangerous. Anyone knowing his whereabouts is asked to come forward.

HANDOUT: SIGNS 10

Hermes Trismegistus

This powder is most useful to the Magus, for it brings painful doom to those daemons not native to this world. Cast upon these frightful elder spirits, the baneful dust causes a great suffering sufficient to repel these enemies or bend them to one's will. [A recipe follows.]

HANDOUT: SIGNS 11

Transylvanian Superstitions by Emily Gerard, 1885

...I may as well here mention the Scholomance, or school supposed to exist somewhere in the heart of the mountains, and where all the secrets of nature, the language of animals, and all imaginable charms and spells are taught by the devil in person. Only ten scholars are admitted at a time, and when the course of learning has expired and nine of them are released to return to their homes, the tenth scholar is detained by the devil as payment...

HANDOUT: SIGNS 12

Patient: Billy Ashworth

...Ashworth's family have placed him here because they have grown afraid of his frequent epileptic seizures. He is a normal enough lad, but the Ashworths fear the seizures have affected his mental development, and I would concur. He should be easily attended to, morphine seeming most efficacious...

September 21: Ashworth is the subject of my first experiment with mesmeric regression. After sedating him, I made the passes and the Sign of Voor. I told him to go back as far as he could. Several minutes later, he began to speak quickly despite the effects of the morphine, reeling off scenes of a farm, a woodland battle, a shipwreck, still more battles—an endless array of such scenes described so quickly I could not hope to keep up. He continued, describing ape-things and ancient mammals, then great thundering lizards, even snakes that spoke. I allowed him to continue, faster and faster, muttering of great fish and tentacled creatures dozens of feet long.

I now applied restraints lest he fall out of the chair and break the trance. Next, he described steaming fens, viscid water, and the first tiniest inklings of life. I had no idea the boy knew so much about the theories of prehistory. Then his body went even more slack, his mouth gaped open, drooling, his eyes still wide. Fearing something had gone wrong, I administered a mild stimulant hoping to break the trance—to no avail. He is otherwise unresponsive. I will keep him in the attic cell until he recovers. I must consult my old notes to see what I have done wrong...

September 23: Indeed, something has gone horribly awry with the experiment on Ashworth. He becomes steadily worse. Some sort of physiological change is overtaking him: his bones have softened so that one arm slipped out of the strait-jacket yet remained unbroken. He no longer seems aware of his surroundings, only slobbering and hissing at intervals. His muscles appear to be deteriorating as well. He is becoming a mere sack of flesh.

HANDOUT: SIGNS 13

Patient: : Joan Bayldon

October 2: I have discovered my mistake in Ashworth's regression: I let him identify with those ancestral personae that he recovered from his past lives. I have decided to use a patient of stable mental bearing, in case Ashworth's condition had additional effects on the experiment. I have proceeded more cautiously with Bayldon, who has a strong and practical mental constitution.

Today, I attempted the first regression, ordering her to forget all memory of these treatments and what she sees therein. I was fortunate to have done so; for today, her visions revealed not only her childhood in the union workhouse, but also her mother's vicious streak before they took up their abode in that institution. The scenes clearly distressed her, and without hypnotism, I doubt she would agree to undergo further sessions.

October 4: I have sent Bayldon farther back for today's session. She spoke with her mother's voice again, but briefly. Then, she quickly became a soldier during the Napoleonic Wars, then a London barber—one who seemed quite barbarously murderous—a Welsh shepherdess, a medieval lady's handmaid. The closing suggestion has worked thus far, as she remembers nothing of these sessions...

October 16: I have sent her back too far, though thankfully not with the same results as Ashworth. This time, she described for me her transformation into creatures made of single cells. Then she began shrieking, and though I immediately administered a sedative, her delirium persisted. I managed to calm her down and wipe all memory of the session through mesmeric command, but nevertheless I must be watchful of her for a while. She should not remember this experiment, I think. I wish to Hell I knew what it was she saw there at the end—there should have been nothing in Mr. Darwin's primordial "warm little pond" aside from ammonia and phosphoric salts if she were truly witnessing that time. Certainly, nothing to threaten her. Yet, she screamed that something "fearful thin and hungry" was emerging from the angles of the rocks and "coming for" her.