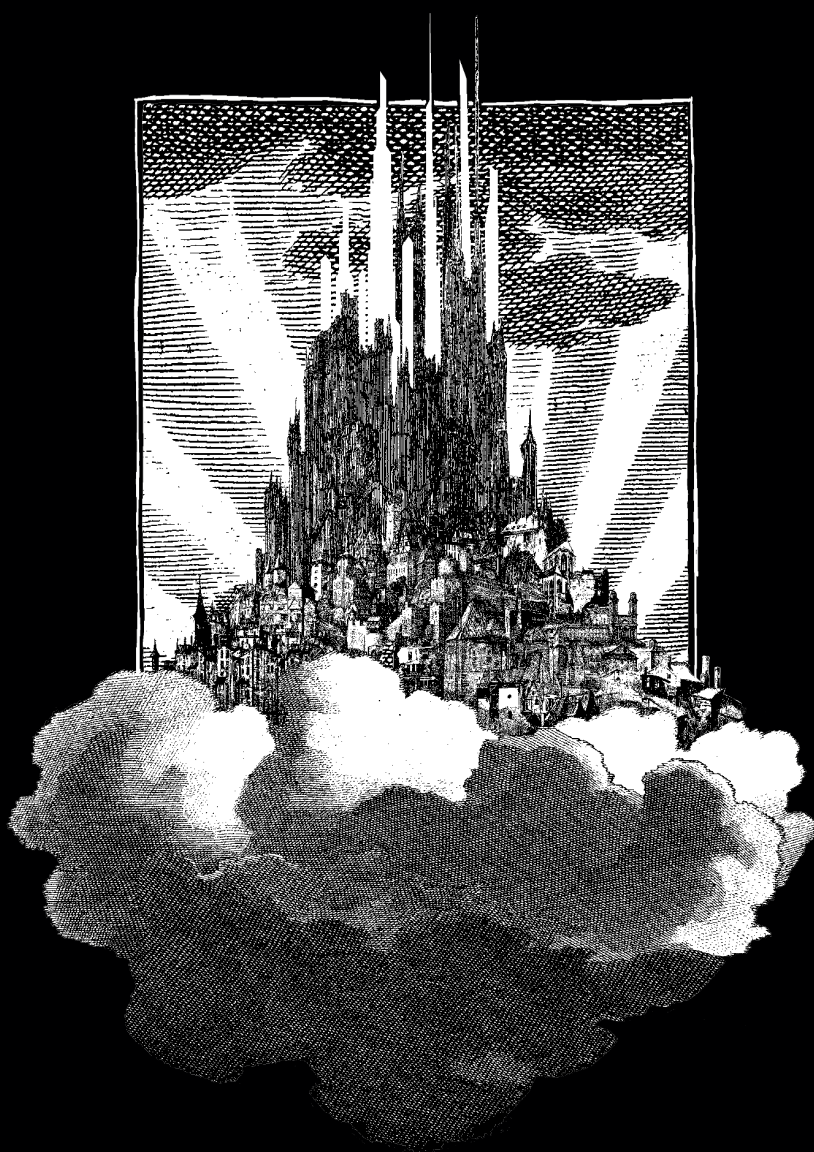




# CloudSurge

campaign setting

By Isaac Bryant  
with Douglas Ellis







# CloudSurge

campaign setting

By Isaac Bryant  
with Douglas Ellis



## How to Use

Welcome to the Cloudsurge campaign setting!

This book is designed with players of TTRPGs in mind, whether they be new or experienced in the hobby. What you will find inside is a campaign setting built to fit any game system you'd like to use (but let's be honest, it's constructed around the big one). It contains very few – if any – game mechanics and is intended to be rules and lore light. Each page is written to be full of flavour text – text to spark your imagination and inspire your own games.

There is no correct or incorrect way to use the book. There is no correct or incorrect lore. There are no maps to tell you exactly where things are. The City, which you are soon to explore, is impossibly old and inconceivably complex. It shifts and grows constantly. Its inhabitants are constantly changing and evolving.

So with that in mind, take what you want to, and leave the rest. Read one page and discard the rest if you'd like to! Tear it apart and reconstruct it to your own tastes! It is up to you and your gaming group to decide what The City looks like. No rules. No restrictions. We just hope that whatever you do, you have fun!

*This is a prototype of an in-development campaign setting. It's here to demonstrate the design style of a final product which is currently being worked on.*







## - CONTENTS -

How To Use ..... iv

INTRODUCTION  
to the  
Apocalypse ..... 2



CITY DISTRICTS ..... 4

*The Warrens* ..... 6  
*The Cauldrons* ..... 8  
*The Engines* ..... 10  
*The Arteries* ..... 12  
*The Spires* ..... 14



FACTIONS ..... 14

The Corporations ..... 16

*The Mana Co.* ..... 18  
*The Workshop* ..... 20  
*Biblio* ..... 22  
*Me&Me* ..... 24

The Syndicates ..... 26

*Orc Cultists* ..... 28  
*Demonic Priests* ..... 30  
*Fey Drug Runners* ..... 32  
*Necromancers* ..... 34  
*Blood Mages* ..... 36



MORTALKIND ..... 38

*Aasimar* ..... 40  
*Dragonborn* ..... 42  
*Dwarves* ..... 44  
*Elves* ..... 46  
*Gnomes* ..... 48  
*Goliaths* ..... 50  
*Halflings* ..... 52  
*Humans* ..... 54  
*Orcs* ..... 56  
*Tieflings* ..... 58

ADVENTURES ..... 60





## INTRODUCTION TO the Apocalypse

The sky god is dead. Upon his throne sits a pretender. The sun, pulled from its orbit, rests on the surface of the world. Days no longer pass and night is eternal. War rages, the dead walk, and hell's gates have been battered open. Apocalypse: again and again and again. All at once the world ended a thousand times, and then it ended again. It keeps ending. The Fey abandoned their children and the giants died. Dragons were enslaved and the kraken unleashed. Dark mages rule kingdoms of unholy devastation, while the inferno ever spreads.

In the skies above this desolate wasteland, sat atop a cloud, flies the last bastion of mortalkind. The City. Raised into the sky by the High Elves of old, The City soldiers onward, a raft struggling to stay afloat in a storm. What was once a dream for the future has become the nightmare of the present. Squalid, overcrowded, with dense layers of buildings stacked atop each other. If The City has allowed mortalkind to survive, then it has also allowed their worst excesses to continue. Crime and violence are part of the flesh and blood of The City. People seek escape from the

horrors around them in a haze of drugs and potions. And all the while, the Elves that raised the city sit atop their ivory towers seemingly uninterested in events beneath them as long as it does not break their splendid isolation.

The City is under siege from within and without. Dark and terrible forces plot to claim this last bastion of mortalkind for themselves and they are prepared to use any means necessary to achieve that goal. Only time will tell if the City is to survive, or join the rest of the world in armageddon.





## The WARRENS

Deep within the city, as far from the luxury of the Spires as can be, lies the Warrens. It is a twisting labyrinth of tangled streets and buildings carved from stone all piled on top of each other in complicated and seemingly ever growing patterns. It is more like the intestines of a living thing than any mortal construction. It is the belly of the beast where all the horrors of the City are on most open

display.

It is an underworld of gangs, cults and any other group that wishes to thrive in the shadows. Far from the iron fist of the Enforcers, violence and a twisted version of the arcane are mundane activities for those who try to eke out a desperate existence within this web of tunnels and corridors. It is more like a rat's nest than a place for people.

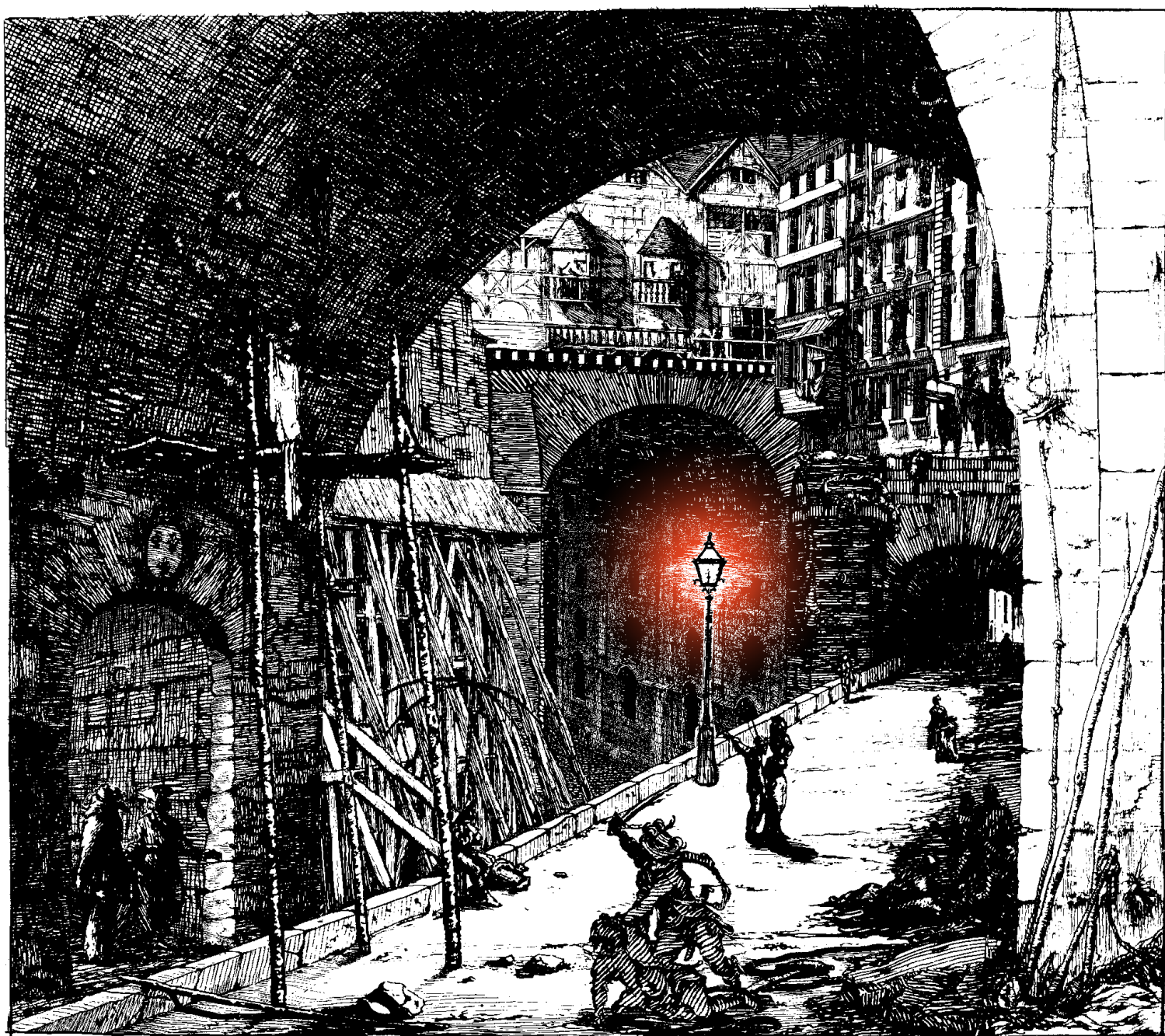
As for those who do wish to make an honest life for themselves within the Warrens, they must contend with all manner of strange and terrible forces. They must battle with Orcish Cults determined to keep their ancestry pure by any means necessary, even if that means at the point of a warblade. They must face drug runners who flood the streets not just with all manner of dangerous potions

and elixirs, but also with Pixie Dust and Nectar, harvested from any unfortunate Aasimar that finds themselves alone at night. There are Spellstitchers who practice in their dank and tiny clinics, offering any conceivable kind of arcane body modifications you might think of, all for the right price of course. And for every honest soul in the Warrens, there is a dishonest one prepared to do anything to make their life a little easier, including selling their soul to the nearest demon in exchange for a contract of magical power that they hope will raise them just a little from their destitution.

And if you manage to survive all that and you listen closely at the gaps between the walls, you'll hear whispers of an old temple somewhere deep within the Warrens and of an old throne enclosed

within where an old god sits and refuses to die.

Even at this moment, the Warrens are ablaze. The Fallen and the Ten Horns fight a brutal and bloody war over small patches of territory, dozens dead for a house here and a street there. In their ever growing hunger for arcane power to fuel their occult modifications, the Tarrasque Syndicate grows increasingly bold in their attacks on the Enforcers and the Elemental Engines which they protect. And despite their claims to be superior, the Golden Legion are proving themselves no more capable of rising above the quagmire than any other gang. They assert to be bringing peace to the Warrens, but it has become apparent that that peace has only one form and they will not tolerate any dissent.





# The Cauldrons

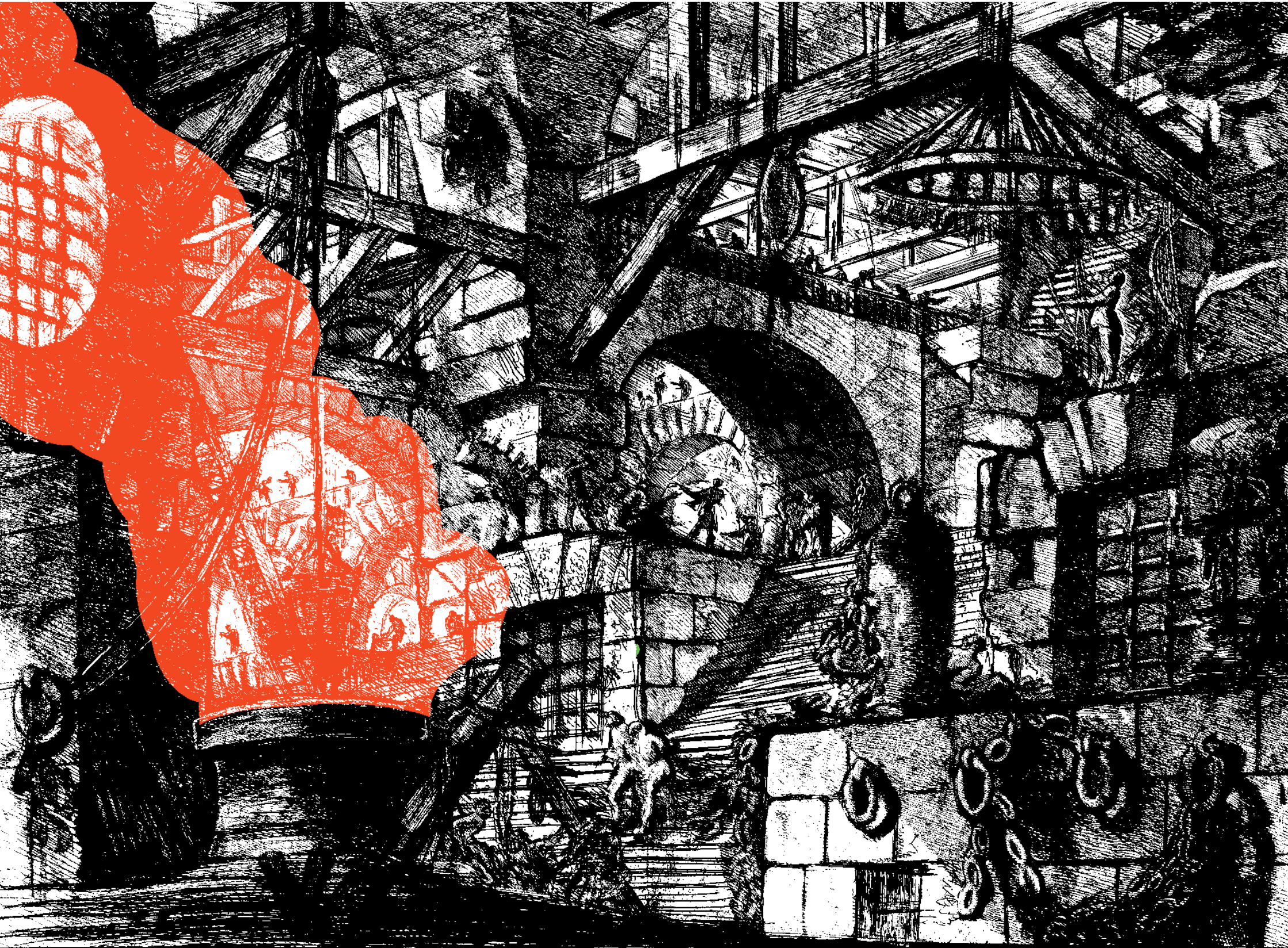


Plumes of smoke and steam, pollutants of arcane origin, and eldritch toxins leak out from within the city. It is here, in the district which has come to be known as the Cauldrons, that the Corporations enact their will most harshly on the people. Few denizens of The City earn a wage, so the workforce is plentiful and, more importantly, expendable. There is always more manpower. Long hours of dangerous manual labour on projects which no one fully understands. The job is the job. The outcome is

unknown. It keeps The City running, they say. It runs them into the ground.

Once worked to the bone and broken in spirit, the only respite comes from their captors. Food has become scarce, the world can no longer sustain farmland, and The City hasn't the space to grow crops or keep livestock. Only the most privileged eat food. For the rest of the populace the

Cauldrons produce their only sustenance. Potions are now the cheapest and easiest ways to stay alive. The people have grown used to the pain of hunger in their stomachs. Elixirs and tonics to heal their starving bodies and stave off death.





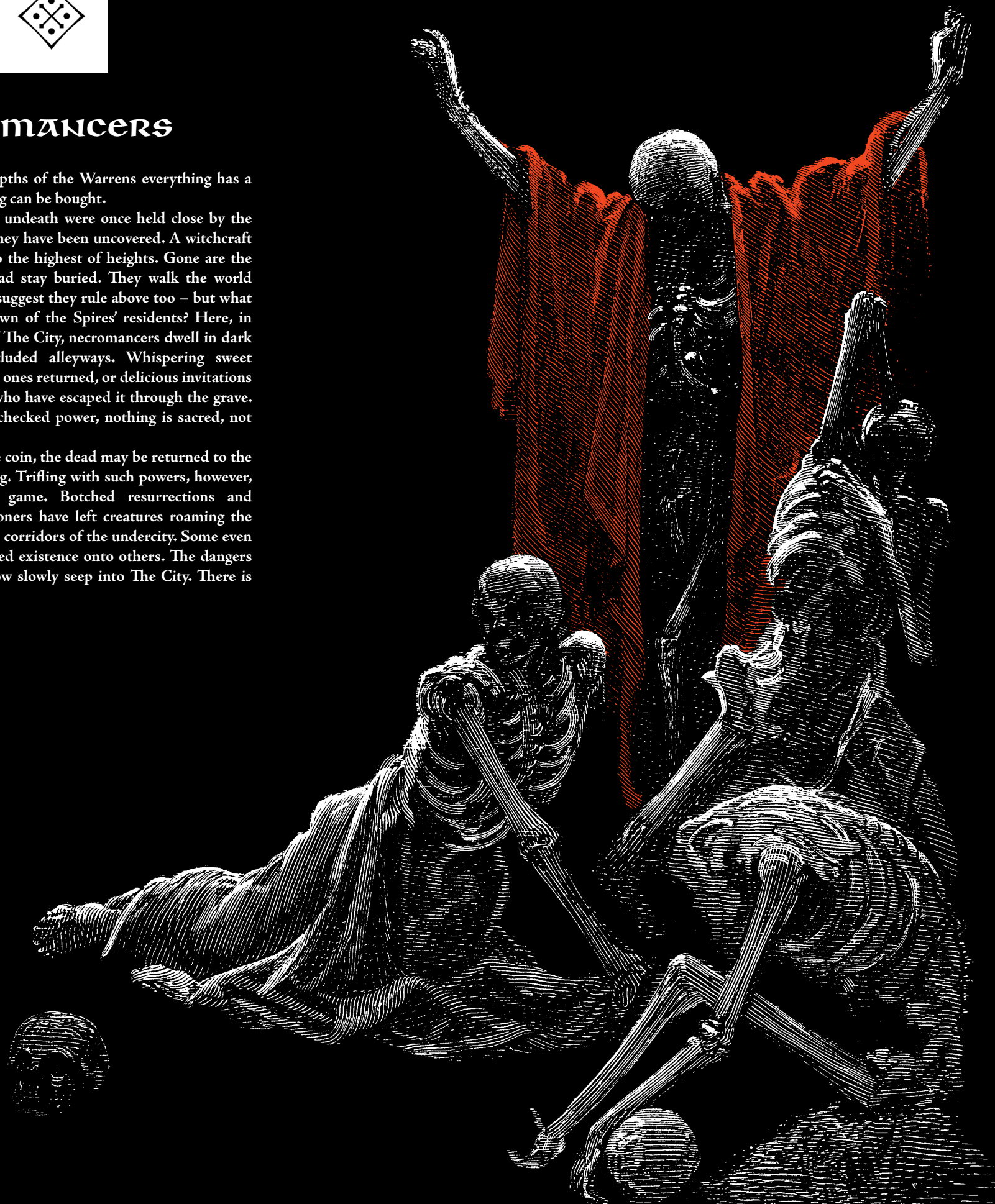


## Necromancers

Within the depths of the Warrens everything has a price and anything can be bought.

The secrets to undeath were once held close by the gods of old but they have been uncovered. A witchcraft of old elevated to the highest of heights. Gone are the days that the dead stay buried. They walk the world below. Rumours suggest they rule above too – but what can be truly known of the Spires' residents? Here, in the underbelly of The City, necromancers dwell in dark corners and secluded alleyways. Whispering sweet promises of loved ones returned, or delicious invitations to punish those who have escaped it through the grave. In a world of unchecked power, nothing is sacred, not least death.

If you have the coin, the dead may be returned to the world of the living. Trifling with such powers, however, is a dangerous game. Botched resurrections and deceitful practitioners have left creatures roaming the dark labyrinthine corridors of the undercity. Some even spread their cursed existence onto others. The dangers of the world below slowly seep into The City. There is no escape.







## Elves

To many, Elves are ancient and inscrutable. They are the eldest of the mortal races and carry with them some of their greatest sins. Their sharp and willowy features can be found at the highest, most gilded parts of the city. It is by and large they who occupy the towers that rise so far above the rest of the city's denizens and they are unlikely to ever let anyone challenge that fact.

When magic was unleashed upon the world, Elves discovered that among all the mortal races they were perhaps the most gifted in this new era of the arcane. Even the Fey, the elves' own divine creators, found themselves threatened by their power. Elven mages were quickly coming to rival them in strength. Many worried that it would not be long before they were surpassed. So instead of staying to face them, they fled. They created a new plane of existence a new world where they could start anew, away from Mortalkind.

With their gods fled, Elves severed their bond to any afterlife that might claim their souls. It is immortality by any other name. Some would say that this has twisted the elves, stretched and pulled them in a way that they were never meant to be. It has detached them from the world and to the other mortal races they can appear at times as alien as the divines themselves. Particularly powerful elves have used these near endless lives to pursue all manner of strange and bizarre experiments. Within the city there are whispers that many practice strange necromancies or birth clones from vats of mana.

But it is important to remember that while it was a society of elven mages that raised the sanctuary that is The City in the first place, it cannot be forgotten that it their ilk that brought the never-ending apocalypse onto the world. To be an elf is to reckon with that legacy. To decide whether to reject it for something new, or to embrace it and continue the cycle.





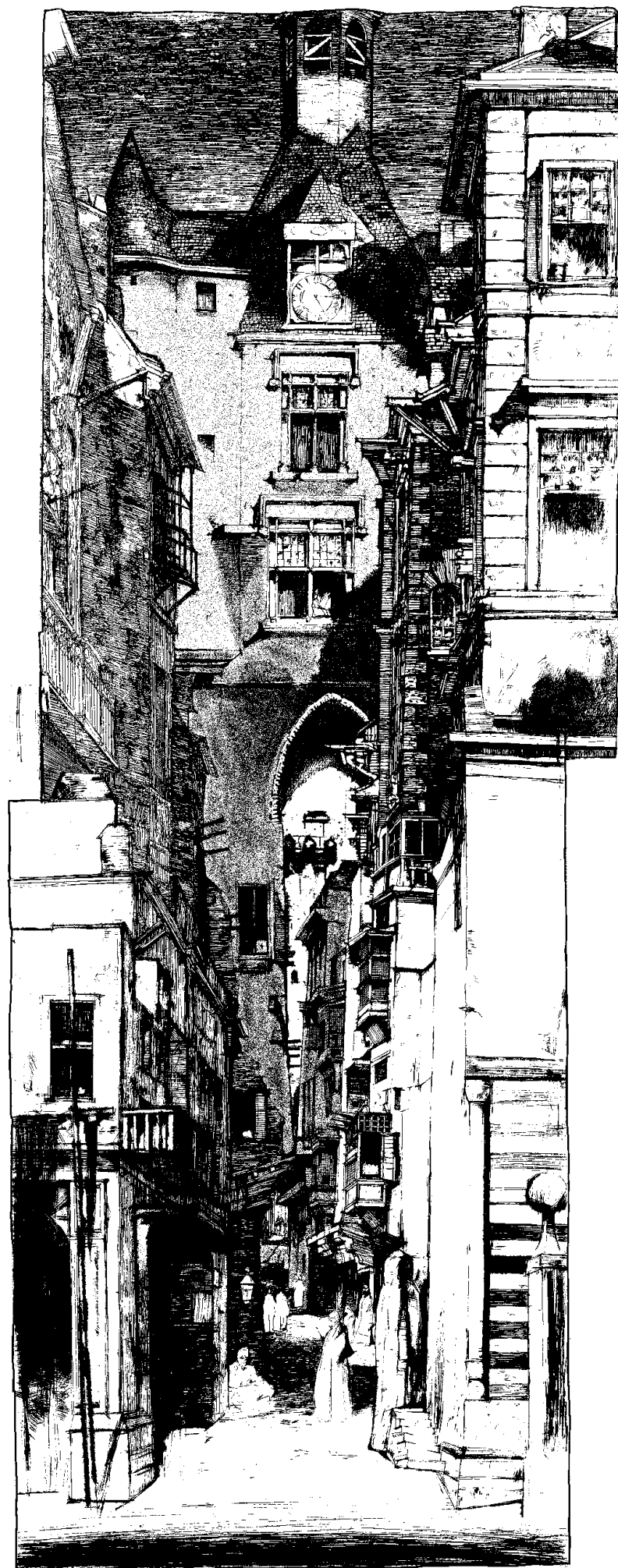


## Halflings

If you weren't paying attention then you might not even realise that Halflings had made it aboard The City. They keep to the quiet corners and out of sight, a shadow next to civilisation rather than a part of it. These smallfolk survive almost purely on their inexplicable ability to be in the right place at the right time. Arrows miss, spells fail in the nick of time, chasers stumble while in pursuit. Some call it luck, but others say it's something more ancient and mysterious. These days however, there are increasingly few right places to be and very many wrong ones.



# Notes













The sky god is dead. Upon his throne sits a pretender. The sun, pulled from its orbit, rests on the surface of the world. Days no longer pass and night is eternal. War rages, the dead walk, and hell's gates have been battered open. Apocalypse: again and again and again. All at once the world ended a thousand times, and then it ended again. It keeps ending. The Fey abandoned their children and the giants died. Dragons were enslaved and the kraken unleashed. Dark mages rule kingdoms of unholy devastation, while the inferno ever spreads.

In the skies above this desolate wasteland, sat atop a cloud, flies the last bastion of mortalkind.

## The City.

**5e**  
*compatible*