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Runes & Punk™

steam & shadow



Sean Preston

Welcome to ScatterPoint!

You've heard the old saying about nothing in life being free?

Well, you're in luck, jobbers! What you're reading right now won't cost you a single Royal. Save your bits for a glass of glee and curl up in a safe corner and take a gander at what awaits you in ScatterPoint.

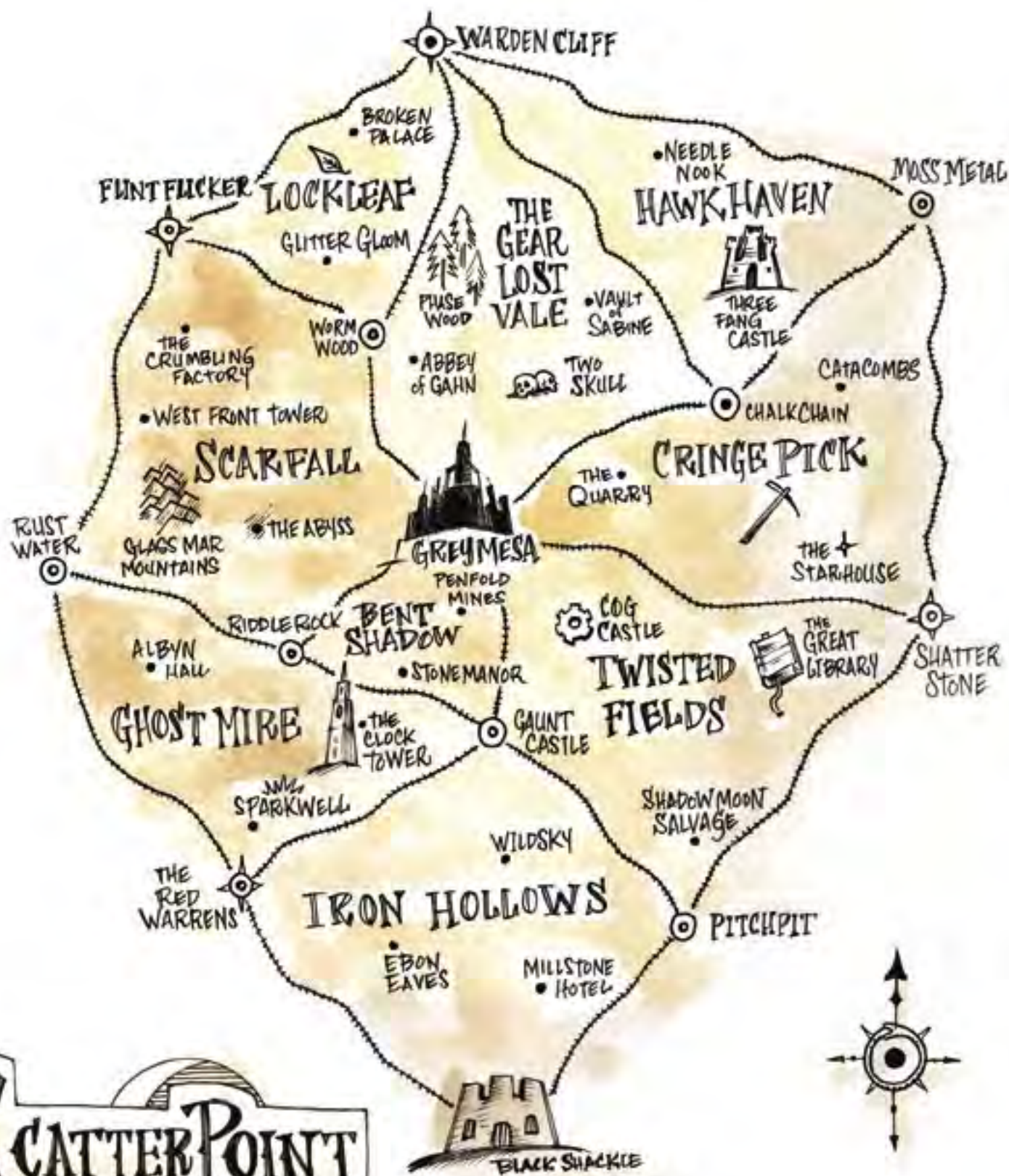
If your appetite is whetted, so much the better.

Check out RunePunk.com for additional support materials, free adventures, and sample characters and more so you can start your journey today. Just be sure to obey the high laws when and where you're able and keep a sharp out eye. The streets are never safe.

Regards,

Sean Preston
President, Reality Blurs





SCATTERPOINT



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Special Thanks to My Friends and Family.



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INTRODUCTIONS

an introduction of sorts

RunePunk was conceived in 2004 after I decided I wanted to write for the Savage Worlds system. I wanted to create something unlike anything that had gone before and I wanted to do it quickly. Let's address those points in turn. RunePunk was going to be a world in which the arcane developed parallel with technology. Wherein there was a viable reason why one did not eclipse the other, a world where factories belched forth filth into the air and slime into the gutters while mere streets away demonologists toiled over ancient rituals to summon forth demons to do their bidding. I wanted high fantasy in an urban environment. I wanted to give my due to works of fiction that had profound effects on my youth. While many pay tribute to Lord of the Rings, my heart ached far more for the exploits of Elric and his black blade. While some loved the epic tales of adventure that stretched across the realms of a mundane landscape, I loved the mystery and wonder, the grime, and the filth of the city spun out by Leiber with the beloved Lankhmar far more. I enjoyed the political intrigues of Mervyn Peake's Gormenghast and was overwhelmed by China Mieville's Perdido Street Station, which brought back a sense of amazement for me and redefined modern fantasy. While I'm giving nods to influences, I cannot leave out Neil Gaiman who unknowingly taught me to challenge myself, to draw upon the myths of the past, pay homage to what has gone before, and try to add a bit for the future.

Getting to the second part of my design parameters, I wanted to quickly develop my setting. I opted to limit my environment and confine it to a city, but I wanted my city to be able to handle anything I came up with, so it ended up being a huge city. To this, I must give a wink and a nod to all the Judge Dredd comics I read in my youth that have influenced this work as well as the artistic visions of Tim Burton. Fully fleshing out my cultural influences, I must say such movies as Dark City and Labyrinth played with the ideas of what was right and proper in a fantasy work. Finally, the computer game Arcanum fascinated me from the outset with its blending of disparate genres.

So, when I'm asked, "What is RunePunk?" it's difficult to give a hard and fast answer, as it is impacted by so many influences on my life. If pressed, I say that it is dark steampunk fantasy, but it's not solely steampunk in

the traditional sense and the fantasy is not the stereotypical dragons and the like, but wanders farther afield. In effect, RunePunk goes far beyond the fields we know and into a realm of possibility and wonder, which is what any good fantasy should do. Hopefully, I've managed to capture the essence of this to some degree, but a game setting, unlike a story or novel, is not truly alive until a group of people comes together to explore its nooks and crannies.

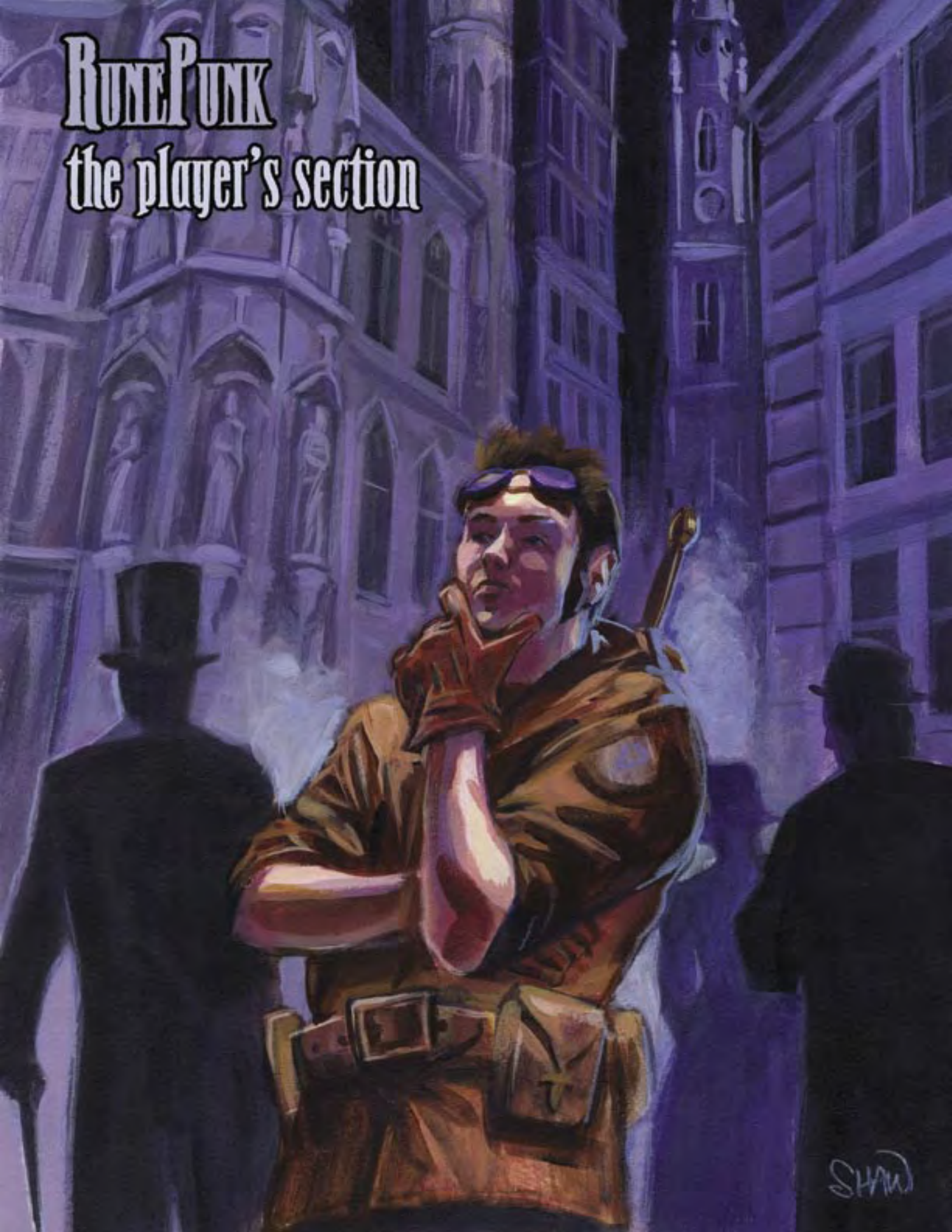
Is it possible to enjoy RunePunk without any of these literary conceits or cultural references tucked away in your memory? Of course it is. ScatterPoint is a city comprised of many people and is an amalgam of many times and cultures. While it is sometimes a waypoint for people slipping between dimensions and dreams, it is far more. Against the backdrop of a thriving industrial age powered by magic and steam, desperate people take desperate measures to ensure their survival. Life is a commodity like any other and the gears of the city grind down hard. Everyone is replaceable and knows this, so some strike out to make their fortunes. Hardbitten mercenaries with runic arms and armor implore passing merchants for employment while chemists leave their labs and take up the mantle of adventurer. Humanity forms the core of the city's populace, but it is not alone. Ghosts and demonspawn are a familiar sight among all levels of society. Mechanized men powered by technology and magic trade their souls to support their families. Ratlike folk go where the others cannot and keep the complex mechanisms of the city running smoothly. The shadows and the steam contain many secrets. Read on through the history and the races of this place. Imagine the grit beneath your feet and the grime pervading the air. Imagine this is your life and - know this- the only way to get ahead is to somehow be extraordinary. With that challenge, I welcome you into the streets of ScatterPoint and encourage you to make ScatterPoint your own. Everywhere there is a story desperate to be told. Tell yours.

Best Regards,

sean preston

RUNE PUNK

the player's section



In this section, you'll be able to find information commonly known to most citizens of ScatterPoint.

The City Guide

ScatterPoint consists of two major geographical regions: districts and barrens. The districts are those civilized areas that have built up around the ancient runetowers over the centuries. The barrens are those unprotected areas that were once teeming with buildings and people, but now consist chiefly of runestorms and ruin, rubble and tanglevine.

The Thirteen City Districts in Brief

BlackShackle is known far and wide as the Prison District. In addition to its massive prison facility of Ahriman's Tower, it also boasts the Academy of Zurvan where select candidates undergo the rigorous training required to become Sequitors.

ChalkChain is known as the Dead District. The Hall of Records is found here along with the Tombs, the central processing area for the dead from all districts. ChalkChain is famously known for the Well of Mourning, an enormous amphitheater where people congregate to grieve their losses.

FlintFlicker is subjected to an inexplicably large number of constant runestorms that play havoc with their far doors, making rail travel here nearly a mandate. The exclusive manufacturers of the F50, the FlintFlicker Fifty, can be found here as well as many fine manufacturers of runic arms and armor.

GauntWhistle is the central transportation hub of ScatterPoint and is chiefly responsible for the repair and maintenance of the rail lines. Palganar Trainworks, headquartered here, maintains the trains themselves.

GreyMesa is commonly called the District of Dark Hope. This central, ruling district is home to both the most massive of all the runetowers and the Autarch.

MossMetal is known as Salvage City by its residents and those sifters who come to the place in hopes of recruiting new talent.

PitchPit is a rapidly growing district going through a period of great prosperity, though it still keeps its moni-

ker of "the Shambles" among the lower levels of society. The district's governor, Zorad, is an Oddfellow human known for his great wealth and his partnership with Halmaan Kane, a Malakar, founder of the BloodCircle Arenas.

The RedWarrens, often called the Nest, boasts a Ferren population of nearly eighty percent as compared to the thirty percent typically found in other districts. It operates under Ferren rule as its governorship was gifted over to the Ferren long ago.

RiddleRock is a university district in decline. It boasts the StarCastle, the last freestanding observatory, the Maxwell-Heath Foundation, an excellent research center, and University Towers which is the finest college in all of ScatterPoint, attracting the finest candidates.

ShatterStone has grown into a haven for bounty hunters and tourists alike.

RustWater is a place where most everything is run on steam and technology and very little magic. Most suspect it is due to the strange lack of runestorms in the area. The runetower sits still and imposing over the city, the common glow of runes upon its starmetal exterior disturbingly absent. RustWater is coveted for their vast artesian wells, essential for the nurturing of glassgardens and meat vats.

ShatterStone has grown into a haven for bounty hunters and tourists alike. This is due to two reasons: the Governor and White Hall. The Governor sees to it that ShatterStone pays greater bounties than other districts. White Hall, the oldest forum in ScatterPoint, administers swift justice, and their executioners make a point of playing to the crowds.

WardenCliff is often called Cloudbreather Central, for the wealthiest members of society reside here. The presence of Sequitors is conspicuous and the crime rate is noticeably lower than in most districts. Many restaurants in this district pride themselves on serving actual fresh meats and vegetables, chief among them The Guillotine. The difficulty in procuring such rare and exotic ingredients has led to many newsworthy conflicts between rival chefs.



WormWood is thought to be the strangest district to those visiting from elsewhere. This district somehow became fused with an immense forest of petrified trees when the stabilizers first went into effect. Tourists often come to stare wide-eyed to see how forests must have looked long ago.

The Nine Barrens

BentShadow, commonly called the Scrap Heap, is perhaps the most salvaged of all regions. Penfold Mines, the oldest mining operation in ScatterPoint, is found here. Stone Manor is found here as well and is owned by the Estate. Little is known about the Estate, other than it once saved the Autarch's life many ages ago, and it looks haunted.

*They say the dead don't rest easy
in GhostMire, and haunted souls
and rust puppets often challenge
any who try to rob them
of trinkets of the past.*

CringePick is best known for the Quarry, the greatest source of stone to be found for the last hundred years. The Catacombs to the east are said to be an ancient, holy place dating back from before the Tempest. Pilgrims make the long trek here to show their piety.

The GearLost Vale is rumored to be haunted by demons and ghosts. PhaseWood stretches across the ruined land and the Abbey of Gahn is found here. The Vault of Sabine is fabled to be a silk castle here created by Sabine, one of the Talus, but none have been able to accurately confirm its origins.

GhostMire is a harsh land subject to many swift runestorms and often blanketed in fields of witchgrass. They say the dead don't rest easy in GhostMire and haunted souls and rust puppets often challenge any who try to rob them of trinkets of the past.

HawkHaven is best known for NeedleNook, a haven to the gearhawks in the area, and a well developed community, proof that humanity can survive anywhere.

Wide berth is given to Three Fang Castle for one of the Talus allegedly dwells within. No one is certain nor dare draw close enough to check the immense fortress built atop a great mound of metal and glass.

Iron Hollows looks particularly spartan as most buildings still stand, but are bare skeletons of what they once were. Tanglevine is thick and lush here, giving it a greener, almost pastoral look in some instances. Ebon Eaves, a great witchgrass tower, is said to be a center for black market activity by bounty hunters. MillStone Hotel is said to be a paradise in the middle of nowhere, and WildSky is a refuge for runecasters seeking to expand their knowledge without the City's prying eyes.

LockLeaf is the region known for the great GlitterGloom Forest. Glittervine is an exotic variant of tanglevine that grows exclusively among the petrified trees of this forest. Strangely, the trees look real - green leaves and brown bark - but as hard as stone. Rumors say the forest has protectors. Broken Palace is said to be a cursed place where monsters congregate.

ScarFall is rumored to be the first part of the city struck by runestorms. Whether it is truth or fancy, the storms have left their mark. The GlassMar Mountains, a range of twisted glass and steel, cuts across the land while not far away the Abyss, a deep, long running chasm, creases the land. WestFront Tower is home to the Traders, a mixed community that thrives despite the fact they don't recognize the sovereignty of ScatterPoint. The Crumbling Factory, legends say, built machines during the war, but is now an abandoned landmark used only for navigation by sifters.

Twisted Fields is best known for CogCastle, a thriving community built by Overwrought, though they do welcome others into their city. Rumors have it they have managed to unlock the ancient secrets of runetower construction. The curiously impenetrable Great Library stands far to the east, while to the south, ShadowMoon Salvage is known to everyone far and wide as a success built upon a dream by the Andari Terridar Shadowmoon who refused a seat among the regents.



Daily Life and Strata

On the basic level, every citizen shares the same common experiences of work, but the quality of work varies dramatically based upon strata. Strata are often used to refer to one's social status. People of lower socio-economic standing tend to dwell downtown in the physically lower levels of the city where they work long hours in poor factory conditions with the most dangerous jobs being taken by the ever-increasing number of Overwrought. This forced displacement of the poor has caused crime to grow rampant and the streets dangerous with pickpockets and beggars. Outright violence, though, is restricted to the darkest alleys in the daylight and throughout the fogs that fall with the blanket of night. Each and every day is a struggle for the factory grade worker who rarely leaves their block and migrates from work to the fly-wheel to bed and back again in an endless spiral. This comprises the bulk of those that become sifters, hawks, and wanderers of the city at large.

Boyers, the middle class, live in midtown - the levels of the city physically between the lower levels of downtown and the upper levels of uptown- where the bulk of the bureaucracies tend to congregate. They are office staff, clerks, and merchants who cater to any with coin, be they poor or rich. This class is steadily shrinking as the opportunities to grow into this position are diminishing; more and more of the lower class population are fleeing into the barrens. Some workers grow dissatisfied with this grey, monotonous lifestyle and seek a life where the horizon extends beyond the edge of their desk or laboratory.

Cloudbreathers most commonly live uptown in conditions of wealth and splendor by the average citizen's standards. They are typically self-employed and comprised of successful adventurers, self-styled moguls, and captains of industry. Rather than be cold and insular, they are usually amused and entertained by the lower classes and enjoy chatting with fogs, as they call the poor. Money is of little concern to them as they can afford most anything. So extreme is their leisure time, however, that their greatest risk is boredom and they often resort to outlandish means to avoid it.

Education

ScatterPoint stresses a need for literacy among all strata, but beyond that, there can be a dichotomy of education. Most factories have a host of gear mothers: women that provide education for the children of employees. This frees up the mother to return to work as well as indoctrinates the child into the factory's ways. These women are typically older or lame women incapable of working in the factory in any other capacity and generally take their positions very seriously. No one can afford to be a layabout in ScatterPoint.

No one can afford to be a layabout in ScatterPoint.

The midtown set has no such free educational system. Parents are required to pay tuition to enroll their children in the system, though some frugal bureaucrats instead bribe gear mothers of the local factories to provide their children with enough education until they are old enough to intern in an office, usually by 14.

Those uptown do not attend school. They rely upon private tutors to provide the educational needs of their family. As few such privileged individuals need to work, the motivation is not often with the student, despite the quality of the teachers.

Universities, trade schools, and continual education courses at the local libraries provide a wealth of opportunities for individuals to learn even beyond their formative years. Despite the quality and abundance of schools, most citizens do not have the luxury of time nor the energy to pursue additional education, faced as they are with the necessities of survival.

Law & Order

So many laws are on the books that it is hard to know when you're not violating one. Luckily for you, there are so many serious crimes committed on a day-to-day basis that the city guards can only manage to handle so much.



The High Laws

The three high laws, so called as they are posted on the high walls of every district, are simple. No bloodshed. No theft. No unlicensed magic. These laws are violated every single day. City guards, it should be noted, are not above corruption.

The Cloaks

The city guard, referred to collectively as the cloaks, is comprised of three major divisions: whitecloaks, red-cloaks, and captains of the guard for each borough. The borough captains report directly to the city governor.

The Silverchains

An adjunct to the Sequitors, the Silverchains are comprised nearly exclusively of pureblooded runecasters, human and Andari, and are brought into serious situations where magic is the root trouble.

The Sequitors

The Sequitors are the elite protectors of the city and step in when situations demand. Their presence alone is often enough to defuse dangerous situations. They wear dark purple cloaks and flowmetal armor. Flowmetal armor is black, glimmering, and supple like leather and the hardest substance constructed. They move with a precision and catlike grace. They carry runeguns upon their person and hidden away in the recesses of their clothing. Their identities are unknown, but their death head masks make them unmistakable. Though no one has tried it in centuries, the penalty for impersonating a Sequitor is death. Officially, Sequitors are universally human, though rumors abound about two Andari Sequitors who go by the names of Null and Void. This is unsubstantiated, though the story has persisted for centuries. It is enough, however, to give some wicked children pause.

The Phoenix and the Black Flame

The Phoenix is the symbol of the city districts and is prominent on official documents and goods as well as weapons issued to the city guards and various other bureaucratic personnel.

The Black Flame is the symbol of the Abandoned Lands and is used by the emissaries of the Storm Lords, though such emissaries have not been seen in ages.



Travel and Transportation

ScatterPoint is a huge city sprawling over 600 miles in diameter. Getting around within the districts is easy as elevators, walkways, steam carriages, and the mass transport of the rail spirals - literally corkscrew sections of track with lots of zigzags, spurs, and convoluted pathways - connect boroughs with one another as well as to other districts. Journeying into the barrens is either done on foot or by haggling with the bazaars in the fringes for skirr or newts.



Skirr are large, long-lived cockroaches that are raised for travel among the barrens and are quite adept at making rapid time across the rocky terrain. They are placid creatures capable of carrying large loads. Two people can easily ride on a skirr without slowing their pace. They are herbivores that live predominately on tanglevine.

Newts, on the other hand, have a bit more personality and can be quite temperamental. They are surefooted bipedal lizards that come in a broad spectrum of colors. They cannot carry large loads, but if properly cared for are relatively easy to maintain.

More advanced personal transports are unreliable outside of the districts chiefly due to the frequency of runestorms among other reasons. Far doors are portals that actually bend space enabling people to instantly move from one point to another. The government maintains a careful watch on all far doors and, while far doors are the quickest and most expensive mode of transport, they are not always the best to use in many circumstances.

Magic & Technology

Most modern people take the daily workings of magic in their stride and few ever request to see a runecaster's license, except in certain instances. Strange happenstances are commonplace in a city where the very fabric of reality is constantly shifting. For example, Star barges, ancient technologies preserved and powered now by magics, float through the skies, carrying cargo from point to point. New scientific breakthroughs are not unheard of but many are not repeatable for one reason or another. Thus technology has reached a standstill and certain processes that were found to be stable long ago have been maintained and not challenged.

Medical Care

Though properly trained doctors and surgeons exist, they are typically in the employ of factories to perform the conversions of civilians into the factory workers known as Overwrought.

Medical care is generally sought by the average adventurer in the Temples of Twilight throughout the city, as the shadowpriests' healing magic is greater than that of the traditional magics of the runecaster and more rapid than what science can currently offer.

Chemists can also administer healing tonics of their own concoction. There is even a formula purported to bring the dead back to life, but no one is known to have successfully brewed it in a long time.

One thing doctors are capable of doing is replacing lost limbs and making modifications to perfectly healthy people as well. As this must be done in factory facilities, the process is entirely illegal, though possessing the modifications are not.



Food & Drink

For the average citizen of the districts, decisions about food are few and far between. Processed meats, harvested from immense meat vats, provide the bulk of an average citizen's meals, and are created through a careful combination of natural proteins, chemical synthesis, and an accelerated growth cycle energized by runic energies. These meats offer cheap, adequate nutrition and most citizens go through their life without knowing any differently. In fact, if presented with an opportunity for real meats, many would decline. Glassgardens, large hydroponic facilities, are located throughout the city and provide costly and exotic fruits, vegetables, and spices. Some hunters manage to make a living looking for stormtorn animals, creatures that have been pulled through from elsewhere. Such real meats can go for a premium in some areas, though many folks wind up eating it themselves.

Witchgrass spontaneously springs up in areas suffering the greatest runestorm activity.

Alcoholic beverages, on the other hand, come in three distinct flavours: glee, gloom, and ransom. Glee is distilled from tanglevine and despite its harsh, coppery taste, is quite popular for three main reasons - it is cheap, potent, and easily available. Nicknamed "factory fuel," glee is sold in metal cans and is the beverage of choice among the common man. Gloom is a step up from glee and is a brackish brown whiskey produced from a combination of witchgrass and thornfruit, the latter giving it a rich, sweet flavour. It, too, is sold by the can. Ransom, on the other hand, is a rich, black cherry wine produced in various vineyards throughout the barrens as the districts are not commonly thought to be good for the growing of plant life. Tanglevine tea is a bitter, grey-green tea commonly enjoyed downtown as a respite from the sometimes brackish waters found there.

Flora & Fauna

The most common plant in ScatterPoint is the ubiquitous tanglevine. It is a fast-growing vine that covers various

ruins throughout the barrens and is constantly harvested for its multiple uses in industry. Tanglevine leaves can be pulped into paper, the juices can be used to make glee, and the vines themselves can be used to make clothing and ropes. Dried leaves can also be brewed into rejuvenating teas or rolled into smokes. The vine grows so well that less traveled parts of the districts are covered with the stuff. Clot is a variation of tanglevine usually found in areas of great bloodshed and is easily recognizable for its bright red leaves.

Witchgrass forests are a common sight in the barrens. Consisting of tall, fast-growing reeds, a stand of witchgrass can grow to a height of over forty feet, but is generally harvested well before reaching maturity as it is a valuable commodity in the city. Witchgrass spontaneously springs up in areas suffering the greatest runestorm activity. Witchgrass is strong and durable and varies in color from light green to deep black, and fills the niche once occupied by more conventional trees.


Skirr are any of the half-dozen or so variations of greater beetle that wander wild in the barrens. Depending on their breed, they vary in size from a horse to an elephant and are able to easily navigate the harsh, rocky terrain of the Abandoned Lands. They are easily domesticated if caught. Colors run the gamut, but most commonly are green, brown, and bluish-black. They feed primarily off of the abundant tanglevine.

The main predator of the barrens is the slag rat. Appearing to be a strange cross between rat and alligator, they can be found throughout the barrens. They are ferocious, fearless hunters.

In the districts, mongrels are infrequently seen, as they often fall victim to the poor and hungry. Owning a dog is a luxury few can afford, though packs of wild dogs are sometimes seen in the barrens. Cats, on the other hand, can be seen throughout the entire city strata, most wild and feral.

The Calendar

The calendar of ScatterPoint is as arbitrary as it is exacting. As there are no evident seasons or shortening of days, the Council long ago implemented a new calendar for the new world. Each month consists of 30 days with 5 day work weeks and each sixth day off. The sixth day is



called the free-day, when workers earn their meager pay for doing no work. There are 12 months in the year, adding up to a total ScatterPoint year of 360 days. Historians reckon history as soon as order was restored as 1107 p.t. (Post Tempest)

Seasons and Weather

As mentioned above, ScatterPoint has no real variance in its weather patterns. Chaos reigns. Tremendous storms of rain and runic energy, most commonly called runestorms, frequently lash the barrens unchecked. Traveling the barrens becomes a risky proposition at best, though some regions of the barrens have more frequent and terrible runestorms than others. Seasoned travelers caution those venturing into the barrens that strange weather conditions sometimes follow in a runestorm's wake, such as blinding snows, powerful hail, or tornadoes. Thanks to the runetowers, city districts usually experience little worse than fogs and gentle rains, with only the occasional thunderstorm.

Criminal Organizations

Countless organizations exist throughout the breadth and width of ScatterPoint. A few of the better known ones are listed below:

Bluecoats: These Ferren gave into their basest natures in the Time of Madness and offered protection and aid to those around them at a price. They wore blue-dyed coats to better identify themselves from their victims and became commonly known as the bluecoats, the first crime organization in ScatterPoint, and forever the strongest. No one knows how deep their activities may go, but they are well-appointed and not afraid to embrace their notoriety. Loyalty among the factions has been maintained since the blood feuds that threatened their elimination by the Sequitors twenty years ago. They still wear their trademark bluecoats to this day.

The Freeze: Not all Andari embrace a genteel lifestyle. Some keep their dreams alive even after they leave their mortal coil behind. A few of these more enterprising criminal souls form a Freeze, a street gang, and work to control criminal activity in and out of a borough. Often at odds with both the bluecoats and the law, a

Freeze often gets their rush not only from the crime but the danger.

An Assortment of Oddfellows

People of celebrity, called Oddfellows, are those that through fate or fortune have acquired fame. Here is a handful known throughout the districts.

Heretic: A Malakar of great political power in GreyMesa, he is said to be priest and prophet as well as principal owner of the Vertigo Club.

Callister Piersworth: Noted Ferren playwright who has spent his career making noteworthy vehicles for actress Tabitha Summerlee. His most popular works include *The Crumbling Chapel* and *The Silent Whispers of Becoming*, both poignant tales of horror and heart-break.

The Penfold Family: Never referred to in a singular sense, the members of this family have old money through their operations and holdings of the Penfold Mines and various other properties.

Tabitha Summerlee: An Andari actress of renowned beauty whose performances in the plays of Callister Piersworth are legendary.


Zorad Zenn: Governor of ShatterStone, the richest human alive, and founder of the modern BloodCircle Circuit.

Helmaan Kane: Chief overseer of the BloodCircles and Zenn's partner, he is a robust Malakar with a keen business sense belying his brutish looks.

Tremendous storms of rain and runic energy, most commonly called runestorms, frequently lash the barrens unchecked.

Entertainment

BloodCircles: Long ago banished to the barrens, the BloodCircles were brought again into the public awareness by Governor Zorad Zenn of ShatterStone. He knew the people longed for the spectacle of gladiatorial combats and has set up various arenas throughout the Abandoned Lands.



Flywheels: Located throughout the city, flywheels are bars where the working stiff goes to grab some glee and a bite to eat after his shift ends.

Forum: Located near the market square in each city district, the Forum is the opportunity for the common man to be heard. A speaking post on a raised platform is present with guards posted every day on either side. Long lines form on each free day when the local borough magistrate is present to hear local grievances.

Libraries: Little is free in the districts and the libraries are no exception. Each visit costs 5 Royals and each book taken requires a deposit of 20 Royals returned when the book is brought back.

Little is free in the districts and the libraries are no exception.

Metal Burning: Some Overwrought enjoy the euphoria of steeping themselves in runic energy. This occurs whenever an Overwrought recovers two or more levels of fatigue within a twenty-four hour period from runic energy sources rather than natural sleep or attempts to charge up when not fatigued at all. The benefit to overcharging when not fatigued is the character's innate melee attacks and armor is considered runic for three rounds. The downside is the character immediately suffers a level of fatigue after the three round runic rush which takes an hour to recover from. Needless to say, this can become highly addictive and expensive.

Mystical Mechanika: Rare performances of ancient automatons command the highest fees and are spoken about by the lower classes, but only witnessed by the wealthiest. Tales abound about the Mute Mannequins of MossMetal and the Black Steel Plays of Rustwater Chapel.

Theater: Live performances are often held in the midtown areas of ancient plays and to celebrate the latest works of modern playwrights. Free performances are subsidized quarterly for the lower classes benefit.

The Vertigo Club: Most famous club in all the districts, the Vertigo Club in GreyMesa, is famous for live music, excellent food, and a dangerous mix of people from all walks of life.

Opportunities for Employment

Bounty Boards: Posted in every market square throughout the districts with flyers and photographs of individuals being hunted for various reasons.

Hubs: Specialized wayfinders, a hub often knows who is looking for work and agrees to arrange meetings between clients and customers for a fee.

Junkyard: Every district has a junkyard on its fringe, located just within its walls. These are good places to pick up a bit of news and see what the junkmaster is looking for. They are always looking for something and are willing to pay for it.

Retrieval Offices: In all strata of ScatterPoint, these small nooks allow licensed retrievers to look in the ledgers to see who has outstanding papers. Often, these offices sign conditionals cutting them in for a share of the bounty with new talent.

Temples of Twilight: Many deals are brokered through the shadowpriests as long as proper donations are made. Offering such discrete services has enabled the Church to grow and flourish.

Cults and Organized Religion

The chief deity of ScatterPoint is Umbriel, the Lady of Shadow. Following her are the three secondary gods, known as the lost gods, who are Zurvan, Ahriman, and Paranor. Zurvan is the god of time and space, Ahriman is the dark god of suffering, and Paranor is the god of peace and light.

The Church of Twilight

The leading organized religion in ScatterPoint, it is city-sanctioned with its temples located throughout the breadth of the city and even in some remoter places in the barrens. Here people come to worship Umbriel, the Lady of Twilight, under the direction of her servants, the shadowpriests. Commonly referred to as the Temple of Twilight, its greatest temple is located in GreyMesa where the Church's spiritual leader, the Maegas, resides. Shadowpriests and their acolytes typically dress in soft greys and blacks and wear hoods that conceal their faces. The Maegas, however, traditionally dresses in severe robes of black fringed with white.



The Hall of the Four

There are many who refuse to forget the ancient gods who once shaped the fate of man before the Tempest. They were called the Four. People gather together to pay homage to them all, Ahirman, Paranor, Umbriel, and Zurvan. Umbriel has risen to ascendance in the eyes of ScatterPoint and the other three are usually given little more than lip service for the proven power is in the hands of Umbriel's devout. The ancient laws forbid the spilling of blood within the Hall of the Four, so they are often used by businessmen of various types to hammer out contract arrangements and other deals. Such halls are located in each district, typically near the chief market square. The Temple of Twilight maintains a presence in each hall to provide balance and insight about the Church to people that stop through and to keep a watchful eye on the happenings of the City. They do not view it as contrary to the Temple's wishes, but a step toward restoring balance in the cosmos.



The First Church of the Converted

With its seat in Cog Castle, the First Church aggressively recruits followers and welcomes all comers. The leader, Lord Ashmoore, promises immortality to those who embrace their spiritual link to their machine brethren and transform themselves into his vision of the future of humanity, the Converted. Small branches of this church are beginning to spring up within the districts in factory-dominated boroughs.

Politics

The Autarch: Commonly referred to as the Eternal, the Autarch is the supreme ruler of ScatterPoint. His word is absolute law. Succeeding Tanryn during the closing years of the Time of Madness, a far door accident transformed him into an Andari. Prior to that time, the potential of an Andari was never fully explored or appreciated.

All political positions at the district level and above are direct appointments made by the Autarch himself with recommendations from the Grand Council.

The Grand Council: A committee of 13 regents, each regent representing an individual district. They serve the Autarch as advisors and are his primary contacts with the outside world. As such, they pass on the Autarch's rulings to each district's governor.

Governors: Elected by the popular vote within each district, the position of governorship is unique in the political structure of ScatterPoint as it is the only opportunity for people to express their collective will. Once elected, however, a governor holds his post for life or until deemed unfit to govern by a majority vote of the regents. All positions above and below are appointed. They handle the day-to-day issues of particular concern to their individual districts and are chiefly responsible for appointing and managing the magistrates.

Magistrates: Lowest on the political chain, the magistrates wield tremendous power as they deal with the citizens of the boroughs directly. Few ever see more than a photograph of their governor, but many have at least seen the local magistrate in passing or have appealed to him in the forum. As can be imagined, they are closely monitored by the governor as they can mean the difference between his success and failure.

Armor, Clothing, and Weaponry

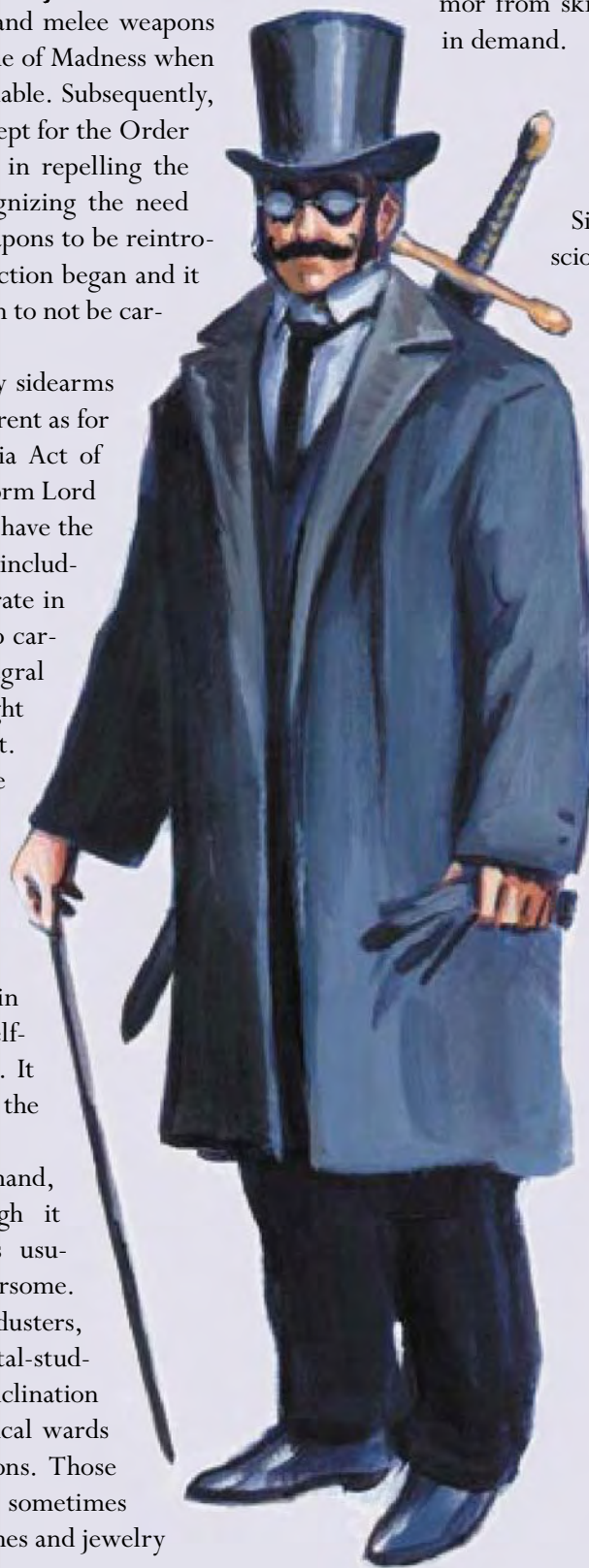
Once thought archaic, armors and melee weapons came to the fore during the Time of Madness when sidearms were scarce and unreliable. Subsequently, they were put aside by most except for the Order of the Blade who were pivotal in repelling the Storm Lords in 501 p.t. Recognizing the need once again for more archaic weapons to be reintroduced into the city, mass production began and it is a rare thing for a common man to not be carrying some sort of protection.

Many who can afford it carry sidearms as well to act as much as a deterrent as for actual use. The Standing Militia Act of 504 issued in the wake of the Storm Lord Accord allows for any citizen to have the right to carry personal weapons including side arms. In 542, a magistrate in BlackShackle upheld the right to carry weapons extended to the integral weapon systems of Overwrought in the Chainsaw Amendment. It was not until 602 when the Longclaw Corollary made it into the books, further extending these rights to Malakar and any other sentient beings entering from beyond the void. Now using said weapons within the districts, other than in self-defense, is a punishable offense. It is a different story altogether in the barrens.

Metal armor, on the other hand, has always been legal, though it is not generally worn and is usually quite expensive and cumbersome. Typically, people wear leather dusters, LeatherJack, or ChainJack, metal-studded dusters. Those with the inclination and can afford it invest in magical wards or other lower profile protections. Those without the necessary funds sometimes paint fake patterns on their clothes and jewelry

to deter would-be attackers. Malakar often fashion armor from skirr chitin and such armor is always in demand.

Clothing is most commonly made from cheap, synthetic fabrics; a practice preserved and carried over from the pre-Tempest days by the Silk Guild. The more fashion-conscious seek out the handcrafted clothing found in the market squares made from the natural hides of slag rats, newts, and the furs of exotic creatures from beyond the void. The wealthiest of all are purported to wear true silk suits and carry on with all the proper accoutrements of a gentleman including top hat, long coat, and runeblade. The styles of most other folks often are simple and practical: a tunic, trousers, and street boots. Goggles are always in vogue among all the classes with many venturing into the barrens getting tinted lenses to accommodate for leaving the safe shadows of the city districts.



ScatterPoint Specifics

city slang & lexicon

Whether you breathe clouds, gladhand, or sleep steam, you better learn the lingo or you'll be doomed to work the spiral forever.

BlackShackle: Slang for Sequitor.

Bluecoat: A member of the Bluecoats, the Ferren organized crime syndicate.

Boyar: A member of the diminishing middle class.

Breathe Clouds: To live rich.

Cloudbreather: Term to refer to a rich man; a noble; or an Andari.

Cog: An Overwrought.

Cotter: Factory worker; menial laborer; also used to insult anyone of a higher caste as in "fool" (ex. "You stupid cotter!")

Crush: Scab beetle poison. Name is derived from crushing down the chitinous shell into powder form for long term storage.

Demonspawn: Slang for Malakar.

Dipped: A human who has flesh-bonded with body armor.

Fogs: The poor.

Freeze: An Andari street gang.

Fringes: Civilized area immediately surrounding the city districts.

Gladhand: To be diplomatic.

Glassgarden: A hydroponic garden; any place with poor security.

Ghost: Andari.

Glee: Fermented tanglevine juice.

Gloom: Whiskey

Gunmetal: Armored cog.

Hawk: Thief; bandit; scrounger.

High walls: Boundary of a district.

Meat Vat: Large chemical tubs that grow the synthetic meats which support most of the populace.

Metal Burner: A rune well that has its safety overrides turned off or an overwrought addicted to overcharging.

Passer: A Malakar with shapechanging abilities.

Put on an Outbound Train: To kill.

Ransom: Black cherry wine. So named for its expense, since some people are actually kidnapped and ransomed to purchase it.

Rat: Derogatory nickname for Ferren.

Reaper: Derogatory term for sifter.

Remade: Any human or cog who has replaced their human parts as much as possible with machine parts.

Retrieval Papers: A polite term for a bounty, especially referring to mid and upper tier employment contracts.

Roach rider: Slang for people who live in the barrens, especially the Malakar.

Rub the Hub: To pay a finder's fee.

Sifter: Any person hunting salvage in the barrens.

Sleep Steam: To live poorly.

The Spiral: Literally, any train or trains that are found running from one building, factory, or warehouse to the next (so named for the typical "looping" pattern about a building and/or buildings.) Figuratively speaking, anyone who finds themselves in a deep state of suicidal depression, especially cotters.

Sprawl: A place to sleep; usually safe.

Stormtorn: Someone or something brought in from a dimensional rift, usually through a runestorm.

ZU: Zone Underground. The sewage system and old constructions buried beneath present-day ScatterPoint.