

Forgive Us

BEING A CHRONICLE OF THE EVENTS SURROUNDING THE MYSTERIOUS
DISAPPEARANCE OF THE NOTORIOUS CRIMINAL GANG KNOWN AS THE
TENEBROUS HAND. AND OTHER STORIES



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BY Sir James Edward Raggi IV FROM HIS SHOPPE IN HELSINKI, FINLAND

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Introduction

This book contains three adventures for the *Lamentations of the Flame Princess* role-playing game. All are set in England in 1625, but there is no other connection beyond that; on the other hand, there's nothing stopping a creative Referee devising such connections. The setting too can be changed with relative ease if your home campaign doesn't happen to be set in 17th Century England.

Forgive Us is the main and largest adventure, and is the closest to a classic dungeon crawl. The dungeon in this case is the lair of a gang of thieves, abandoned after an unlucky encounter with mutant shape-changing monsters. Said mutant shape-changing monsters are still there when your players arrive. Although the format was inspired by the Marienburg articles in *White Dwarf*—back when it was good, etcetera—in terms of plot it's more or less John Carpenter's *The Thing* mixed in with John Carpenter's *Escape From New York*; I hope one of your players is Kurt Russell.

In Heaven, Everything is Fine is a shorter adventure set in a village under the control of an alien with the ability to alter reality, except the player-characters will be there looking for a ghost. It started out as a sort of reverse homage to *Silent Hill* but during writing it took on a touch of *The Colour Out of Space*. It's not a combat-heavy adventure; if anything it's more of a puzzle with a moral choice at the end.

Death and Taxes is perhaps the shortest adventure, enough for an evening's worth of play. In it, the player-characters will attend the funeral of an old friend, look for a missing girl, and run into the minions of a serpent-worshipping cult. There's not a lot to this adventure but it's good for kicking off a campaign; I've used it as such numerous times.

I hope you find this book useful, even if it's just to borrow the "Dog and Bastard" for your own adventures or to throw Godfrey Cushing and his faux taxmen at your players as a random encounter. Let me know how you get on; stories of the mutant things in *Forgive Us* getting out and changing the population of your game world into things like them will be most welcome.

Kelvin Green
Brighton
Almost Halloween, 2013.

Forgive Us



In 1625, due to fertile farmland, a large and prosperous market, and a thriving textiles industry, the city of Norwich is an economic powerhouse second only to London. As such, the city has a powerful merchant class, and its relative distance and remoteness from other cities lends it a certain independence.

Rich merchants attract opportunistic criminals, and being wealthy and isolated can lead to boredom and decadence, so it's no surprise that Norwich is home to all sorts of societies and fraternities, some more secretive than others.

Forgive Us is about what happens when one of the city's more cocksure criminal gangs preys on one of the city's more unpleasant cabals, and what happens when player-characters stumble upon the consequences.

The *Tenebrous Hand* is not the only criminal gang in the city, but it is the most powerful. The Hand is wealthy, with its fingers – oh dear – in a lot of pies, and the authorities are reluctant to act against the group, due to a campaign of threats, bribery and blackmail. Life is good for a member of the *Tenebrous Hand*, but confidence can breed arrogance, and that's what led to the raid on the *Brotherhood of Pus*.

Made up of rich merchants, the *Brotherhood* sees disease as a divine blessing, although many members lack such devout conviction and are in it because being part of a secret group has its own thrills. As such, only a few of the inner circle were aware that a particular casket in the *Brotherhood's* possession was anything more than an expensive piece of exotic art.

The Hand became aware of the casket's special nature as soon as one of its members cracked it open for a peek inside, but at that point it was too late for them.



How to Use the Adventure

Forgive Us is based on the idea of a magical disease causing all sorts of trouble, so it will be more of a challenge if the player-characters don't have ready access to *Cure Disease*; as such, the adventure is designed for player-characters around fourth level. That said, mechanics have been kept to a minimum so there's little that can't be adjusted to be more or less dangerous for your players.

There are a number of ways to get the characters involved. During testing, the player-characters were employed by one of Norwich's aldermen to retrieve some documents that he'd rather the Tenebrous Hand not have in their possession, but they could be hired by anyone; perhaps a member of the Brotherhood of Pus has paid them to recover the casket (p. 21).

On the other hand, the player-characters may have a friend in the gang and are concerned for his well-being, or perhaps one of the gang members is a contact from whom they want some information. Perhaps they are in pursuit of an item and have heard that it is in the Tenebrous Hand's vault, or perhaps the player-characters are thieves themselves, following rumours of unattended riches. An unattended vault full of treasure is something that should fit into most campaigns.

What Happened?

About two weeks or so before the player-characters get involved, the Tenebrous Hand identified the home of the merchant William Burnaby as a target for an audacious theft. The thieves knew from their contacts that Burnaby had a secret room in his house and intended to break in to see what the merchant wanted hidden. Break in they did, and discovered a profane temple (p. 32), but not so profane that they didn't grab a souvenir, an odd stone casket (p. 21).

After the gang's return to their headquarters, one of the thieves opened the casket and the contents changed him into some sort of monster (p. 28) with the ability to create more of its kind. Many others were transformed before the gang was able to trap its changed members in their own treasure vault (p. 24); the survivors killed themselves to prevent any further spread of the mysterious contagion.

It is into this happy situation that your players are about to blunder. Have fun!

About Norwich

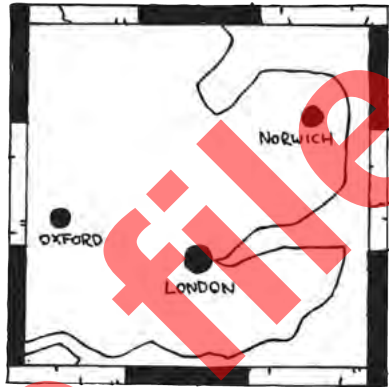
You could set *Forgive Us* in the City-State of the Psi Lords of Ercolox Seven if you were so inclined, but if you want to use the intended setting of 1625 Norwich, then you may find the following details useful.

Norwich has a population of about 15,000 and is England's second most prosperous city after London; its wealth is in large part a result of the revival of its once moribund textiles industry by the Strangers, a group of Belgian and Dutch Protestants – and skilled weavers – fleeing persecution on the European mainland. As one of the more tolerant places in Europe at the time, Norwich welcomed the immigrants and made them part of the community, so much so that their first home, the ominous Strangers' Hall, is now the residence of the city's mayor.

As well as the mayor, the city's government is made up of twenty-four aldermen, sixty councillors, and two sheriffs, all of whom operate from the Guildhall. There is no police force as such; the sheriffs oversee just over a hundred unpaid constables and all able-bodied men are expected to respond to a crime if called.

Norwich Castle was built soon after 1066 as the personal residence of an insignificant noble named William the Conqueror, but has been in use as a gaol since 1220. The city's cathedral and Great Hospital maintain their original intended uses, and the Dragon Hall, despite the excellent name, is a merchant's trading hall.

Persistent rumours tell of a warren of tunnels running through the chalky earth beneath the city; as of 2013 these are considered unfounded, but for the purposes of a role-playing game, rumours are more than good enough.



Legend

A: Duke's Palace

B: Norwich Cathedral

C: The Great Hospital

D: The Dog and Bastard

E: Guildhall

F: Norwich Castle

G: Dragon Hall