

Modern Backdrops

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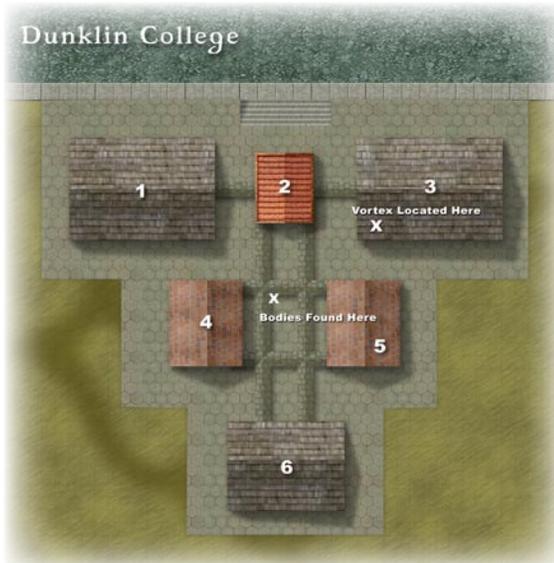
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Introduction

Created with the modern system GM in mind, Modern Backdrops is a collection of developed towns and cities for use in your modern campaign. While this book was designed using d20 Modern, it should be compatible with just about any modern-era game.

Modern Backdrops is a collection of well-developed cities to be used by you, the GM, as settings for your own adventures. Each of the five cities, from the very small to the fairly large, has its own history, important people and places, maps, and plot hooks to help get your players involved.

Each city has a touch of monsters and magic, but still has enough information about the “normal” aspects of the city to use it as a more mundane setting.

How To Use This Book

Each city is laid out in a similar fashion; offering solid information, character details, and a collection of common and more obscure knowledge.

When using cities in this book as settings for your campaigns, it is important to remember that there are three main sections of information for each city. The first section is common knowledge. Everything is fairly well-known and easy to find out from just about any source. Through research and/or questioning, this information should be made available with the completion of a successful Knowledge (History), Knowledge (Local), or Research check (DC 10).

Introduction: Each city section begins with its name, and a few sentences that sum up the outside opinion of the town. Even if the characters have never been there, they still know at least this much.

Character Suitability: A summary of the suggested character levels for example plot hooks and interaction with major NPCs and monsters.

What Every School Kid Knows: Is exactly that – a collection of the most common information about the town. Information such as the population, geographical location, and important areas are included.

Rumors: The whispers in and around town. Of course, they’re rumors... not everything is true.

Important People: Some of the people that everyone knows – or at least knows about. These may be public figures or simply those who have become known for some reason. If any of these people have specific information that might be useful to the PCs, check information will be found with their descriptions.

Other Information: Miscellaneous economic and social information.

Community Calendar: The reasons for the community to get together, as well as the times and places.

The second section is a little more advanced level of knowledge. Any local kid will have a chance at knowing this stuff (a successful Knowledge (History) or Knowledge (Local) check (DC 15) should be required), but it’s far more likely if he’s the class brain. Out-of-towners will have less of a chance (DC 20) of knowing this information, unless they have family or friends from the area.

Time Line of Important Events: Things to make the smart heroes and history buffs cringe. There may be some items on the timeline with a higher Knowledge DC.

More Important People: Perhaps less well known than the entries in the “Important People” section, these are major players in the day-to-day life of the city, even if they’re not as publicly recognizable. If any of these people have specific information that might be useful to the PCs, check information will be found with their descriptions.

Places To Go: A sampling of the restaurants, stores, homes, and businesses that make up the economic backbone of the city. Maps are included for some of these establishments.

Introduction

Organizations: The groups that make the city tick. Sometimes, these are the mundane entities like the city council and the local church groups. Other times, they are darker and more shifty in origin.

Official Reports: The official word on whatever plagues the town. Usually, like the words of most politicians, these reports are vague and somewhat noncommittal.

The third section for the GM only. This is where all the information about the strange happenings is found. Bizarre and supernatural residents, items, and places are spelled out here in detail.

Places of Power: The places where strange things can and do happen.

Things to See: Items of interest to PCs of all classes. Some items are magical/supernatural in origin, but others are simply incredibly valuable. A few even possess both of these traits.

Supernatural Residents: Ghosts, vampires, bigfoot, and dragons... all are found in or around these cities in some form or another. Not all are easily recognizable, however.

Dark Secrets: Otherwise known as the stuff the city council never ever wants to come out. Dark and vastly denied proof that the things that haunt these cities are not always supernatural in origin.

Plot Hooks

Remember that these “levels” have to do with the amount of FX in your game. Refer to the beginning of each city section or the plot hooks themselves for suitable character levels.

Level 1: Mundane story lines for a no-FX/low-FX campaign

Level 2:—A touch on the strange side, these adventure ideas move into the supernatural but still remain at a relatively normal level on the insanity-meter.

Level 3: These plot hooks fly past bizarre and never look back. They are something like an X-Files or Twilight Zone episode, only there’s no narrator to tell your PCs that it’s all make-believe.

Characters, Creatures & Items – People and things of interest that might be necessary for your game to run smoothly. They are included simply for your convenience.

Chasing Shadows ...

JJ stood beside the Harley, his eyes focused somewhere a bit further than the decaying buildings that were easily visible from the highway. Next to him, Liberty sighed, pulling off her helmet.

“Are you sure about this?”

She sounded especially nervous, he noted. He put his arm around her, hoping to calm her a bit, but feeling the way her body shook had the completely opposite effect. His anxiety level grew the longer they stood there.

He looked up the road, hoping that Josh and Staci would find their way here before Liberty lost too much of her composure.

“You okay, babe?” he asked quietly.

Liberty leaned into his chest, fighting to keep herself calm.

“Yeah,” she answered. “It’s just that... after all that’s happened... this...”

Her voice trailed off as she looked back into the ruins that made up Old Town.

“This place just trips me out...”

GM Notes

Text contained within boxes of this color is gamemastering tips and notes.

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Old Town

1. Highway 198
2. A worn area used as a parking lot by police
3. Hunstel's ranch house
4. A small house
5. The public stables
6. The blacksmith's shop
7. The original post office
8. A small house
9. The general store
10. The saloon and hotel
11. The sheriff's office and jail
12. The school house
13. The church

Entrances to the underground tunnel system are hidden within the small house, the saloon, and the church.



(including D'Mato), some instructors at the high school, a few doctors and other staff at the hospital, and one member of the town council. Sister Amanda Catherine, upon her arrival in Rio Hevriir, quickly joined the ranks of Onyx – much to the chagrin of her superiors at St. Michael's. Between Amanda, Kevin and Maria, Onyx has unofficially adopted JJ and his friends, but the teens do not have any details regarding the organization... or even substantial proof that an organization exists.

Official Reports

Officially, there is a minor problem with crime in Rio Hevriir.

Officially, all the missing persons and murders are actually not connected with the town.

Officially, Rio Hevriir is a quiet community and a great place to live.

Officially, the government of Rio Hevriir answers to Isaiah and performs exactly as they are instructed. While Isaiah is merely relaying Aaron's orders, there are few in town who remember Aaron in a hands-on command position. The police and town council continually turn the other way: ignoring crimes, hushing up major issues, and even going so far as to frame innocent individuals for crimes that could not be covered up any other way. Aaron, Isaiah, and their underlings control the town, and officials are happy that way.

Places of Power

Old Town

Many of the original Old Town buildings house entrances to the underground network of tunnels used by the vampires and the rats that make Rio Hevriir their home.

In addition, the Old Town church harbors a terrible force. The demon, Avaradda, arrived in the area shortly before any of the mortal settlers, choosing a home with particular potential for supernatural power. When Aaron Jordan arrived, however, Avaradda's plans began to revolve around this new and unexpected resource. The demon recruited Aaron, who had already lived three lifetimes as a vampire, to protect his new home. In return for power and wealth, Aaron was happy to oblige.

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