

Street People – 2

The inhabitants of Crossten Alley, a dingy side street near the main market.

Haakon – Haakon is an old man now, well into his 50's. When he was younger he made his living wrestling his bear Angron, but the bear died of old age two years ago. Since then he has made ends meet as a beggar and day laborer, spending his few coins on cheap ale. His frame is still broad, but his skin hangs loose on his frame. At night, he has dreams of Angron, his best friend for two decades, and wakes up crying. During the day he wanders into the market looking for work, or to beg.

Ol Jet – This wrinkled old woman the 'queen' of Crossten, having been a denizen longer than anyone can remember. She has a small lean to that she used to brew small, noxious potions. Most are used by the cities sex workers to prevent or end a pregnancy, but she also has a few other small cures in her repertoire. She also earns a little money telling fortunes, a surprising number of which come true. At night she dreams about a lurking horror that lives beneath the streets, and it whispers secrets to her.

Twos and her ladies – A squat, brutal woman, Twos acts as a madam/pimp to a trio of women. Together they all live in the biggest structure in the alley, which really isn't saying much. Little more than a one room shack with a few rag bogs, its where the ladies conduct their business at night. Erin, Lack, and Haddie, the sex workers, are all past their prime, but the kind of person who wanders into Crossten at night isn't likely to be too concerting. Twos herself is a terribly violent woman, and often drunk. Those who try and cross her almost always end up dead.

Tom and Jack – Tom is an orphan, Jack is his pet terrier. Tom has had the dog for a trio of years, since he was ten, and he has trained his pet to be an expert ratcatcher. He's also taught the dog

how to steal certain items from the market. In truth, the dog is worth more than the boy these days, and if you think the inhabitants of Crossten haven't noticed, then you're as big a fool as Tom. One day Tom is going to wake up with a slit throat, and short a dog.

The Beggars – over a dozen homeless men and women call Crossten home. Beggars all, they wander out into the city, those able, and beg all day. They return at night with their prizes, few as they are, and often fight over the choicest bits left. Most beggars have learned to devour anything you really want before you get back to the alley, and none are foolish enough to bring back any money they can't hide. Lar, Bella, Tommo, Hagen, Jernigan, and Lester are some of the longest term beggars. Being beggars, they often notice and learn things about the city that others might not.

Charlie – Operating from the mouth of the alley, nearest to the market, is Charlie and his stall. The best rat cook in the city, he serves up rat skewers all day and into the night long as folks are traveling by. Most of the rats he gets from Tom and Jack, though some he gets from his traps.

Knife – No one knows what this woman's name actually is. She never speaks, letting her twin daggers do the talking for her as needed. She's a lethal cutthroat, but mostly leaves the Alley dwellers alone. In return they give her a wide berth and let her linger in the alley unmolested. She spends her day reading the same book over and over, and occasionally leaving to get food.

The Secret of Crossten – Crossten Alley resides above...something. Some ancient, vile being is entombed a score of feet below the ground. Its aura of misery infects anyone who stays too long in Crossten, while also calling out to broken people, drawing them into its embrace. It feeds on misery, and one day, when it has fed enough, it will break free. And when it does, it will probably take the whole city with it.