

DEAD LANDS

NOIR



**HIS BROTHER'S
KEEPER**

PINNACLE
ENTERTAINMENT GROUP





HIS BROTHER'S KEEPER

An Adventure for *Deadlands Noir*

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HIS BROTHER'S KEEPER

His Brother's Keeper is an adventure for *Deadlands Noir*, set in 1930s New Orleans. It takes the heroes from the Garden District's posh mansions to the edge of the bayous and back again. It contains a mix of investigation and combat, and is suitable for characters of all Ranks, although the Marshal may want to toughen up the foes for Veteran or higher characters.

ILL-GOTTEN GAINS

William White is a man with a problem. For years, he believed he could handle that problem by throwing money at it, and up until now, he was right. Unfortunately for him, a new player has entered an old game and changed the rules.

rites of succession

Fifteen years ago, William's father, Alastair, married well, to a wealthy widow. The widow, Penelope Adams had a son of her own, eight-year-old Timothy. William was 15 at the time of the marriage.

Penelope didn't become a wealthy woman by being a fool, though. She suspected Alastair's main interest was more in her money than her, so she crafted her will so that her entire estate would pass to her son, Timothy, in the event of her death. She made no secret of this at the time, and Alastair wasn't particularly distressed. After all, he was several years older than Penelope and content to live out his remaining years as a kept husband.

William, however, was incensed by being effectively cut out of any inheritance, save whatever pittance his father might pass on. Worse, Alastair became enamored of young Timothy, who was both personable and a prodigy in nearly every endeavor he undertook. William's dissatisfaction grew quickly, and when he came of age at 18, he decided to secure his future at the expense of the rest of his family.

The young man contacted members of the Red Sect and cut a deal. In return for a fair chunk of change, they would rub out his father, stepmother, and stepbrother in one fell swoop. This would make William the sole heir to Penelope's estate regardless of her will.

Using their dark rites, the cultists arranged for the family to fall victim to a horrible automobile accident. Their vehicle crashed into a swamp outside the city. William had conveniently remained at home that day. Alastair and Penelope's corpses were found near the wreckage, and the authorities agreed 11-year-old Timothy's body was doubtlessly sunk somewhere into the mire of the swamp.

William settled into his ill-gotten wealth quickly, finding the high life much to his liking. He bought himself the finest education in the city and is now a well-to-do, if somewhat untalented, attorney. To shore up his rapidly dwindling fortune, he married into further money when he walked Eleanor Marchand down the aisle 10 years ago.

The couple also has a son of their own, Malcolm, who coincidentally turned eight this year.

NO BAD DEED

Unfortunately for William, he discovered too late that the Red Sect isn't one to let go of a fish once they've hooked it. Once he graduated law school, the cult reminded William that he was still under their thumb. After all, he had hired them to commit murder.

The Red Sect began extorting him in exchange for their silence. Now he's making nearly monthly payments to ensure he doesn't find himself in a courtroom as a defendant. Combined with his bills from law school, lavish lifestyle, and generally poor performance as an attorney, William would be struggling to make ends meet if not for his wife's own considerable fortune.

Worse, it turns out the Red Sect wasn't entirely straightforward in dealing with William in the first place. Instead of ensuring the entire family drowned, they kept Timothy alive to serve as a sacrifice to one of their dark patrons. Black magic has a price, after all.

Truth be told, William wouldn't have minded had he known — except for the fact that the sacrifice didn't result in Timothy's death. Instead, the boy was given to one of the evil spirits the cult reveres. That being transformed into a horrific mix of human and alligator — a *letiche*.

Now Timothy has found his way back to the Crescent City.

THE HUNT BEGINS

It's possible a private investigator in the group has at one time done business with William and recognizes his name. However, it's Eleanor, not her husband, who contacts the heroes with an urgent job offer. She doesn't care to discuss the details on the phone, but insists the investigators come immediately to her home.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Eleanor meets the group at the White family home in the Garden District, which is also the scene of the crime. Eleanor answers the door herself and leads the investigators to an antechamber just off the main hall. As the investigators enter, pooled bloodstains in the main hall are apparent.

Once they're inside, Eleanor gives the heroes the straight dope. Last night, Malcolm was kidnapped in a particularly brutal attack that left the family butler, Franklin Lucas, dead. She and William had gone out for the night to a social event at another well-to-do family's mansion in the Garden District and weren't home when the crime occurred. No one else was in the house at the time.

- **Eleanor White:** Use the Citizen profile in *Deadlands Noir*, with the Filthy Rich Edge.

THE COVER UP

William is smart enough to know he couldn't keep a murder off the books, so he involved the police as far as Franklin's murder. He convinced his wife to back his story that the butler was killed during a robbery, but omitted the part where it was his child that was stolen.

He told Eleanor he fears the kidnappers may kill Malcolm if they think the authorities are involved. It's also his excuse for not calling the investigators himself. Eleanor, however, isn't one to sit on her hands.

Although Eleanor doesn't know it, William is certain the Red Sect is behind the abduction and plans to use

THE OFFICIAL STORY

Any shamus with Connections in the NOPD can get a look at the police report. The report notes that the intruder forced entry through the rear door to the kitchen. Apparently a crowbar was used to pry the door open, as deep scoring was found on the door and frame.

Franklin was found in the main hall, near the stairway to the second floor. He suffered several incision wounds and lacerations, mostly on his back. The cause of death is uncertain, but assumed to be related to crushing and slashing wounds on and around his head and neck.

If they don't have access to the police records, the heroes have to rely on Eleanor's memory and their own examination of the scene. Their client provides an accurate description of the scene, but can't provide specific medical details.

the boy to pressure him for more money. He's afraid his past crimes will come to light if anyone digs too deeply into the matter. Still, even he is clueless as to the actual culprit.

So far there has been no ransom note or any other contact regarding the kidnapping. Eleanor is unaware of any enemies other than those any rich, successful persons might have. She is willing to pay the investigators any vaguely reasonable amount. Although she presents a very strong front, her son is missing and she's very afraid for his safety.

She gives the detectives unfettered access to the house, the servants, and anything else they ask.

THE SCENE OF THE CRIME

A fair amount of bloodstains and barely coagulated puddles remain in the entry hall as the Whites would normally rely on Franklin to handle such cleaning matters, and Eleanor has only just begun making arrangements.

A search of the house finds the damaged rear door rather easily. The door itself is a hefty oak affair, but whoever forced it eventually cracked the frame at the striker plate. There are a three odd gouges in the door frame, to the right of the knob. Success on a Smarts roll highlights the fact that the gouges are uniformly spaced, more or less. (They resulted from the *letiche*'s claws, before it forced the door with its shoulder).