

The Last City

An RPG Microsetting
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The L^ast City

The Last City stretches in every direction to the horizon, a labyrinth of concrete, steel, and glass. Home to a hundred million people, The Last City is an ever-spinning machine that never sleeps, where people either suffocate in the masses, or eke out an existence in anonymity. Shops, apartments, restaurants, and dens of sin are all crammed into every corner, every alleyway. Bright neon signs illuminate the night like a spotlight, and massive animated billboards blare advertisements for the latest products to intersections through the rush of the morning and the silence of the night.

When you live in The Last City, you learn how to manage: you learn the train schedule like a sixth sense, you know how to duck and weave through the crowds, and more than anything, you learn to avoid the attention of The Society.

Everyone in The Last City has a story about a close call with **The Society**. Its members walk the streets freely, seemingly unencumbered with haste or concern. Clearly identifiable by their pristine white suits, their blood-red ties, and their ivory masks showing a youthful face frozen in laughter. Crowds part, cars slam their brakes, and trains wait in the station for members of The Society, a group which seems to run The Last City without speaking a word.

The Society and its members are strange. Simply being near them brings a fundamental unease, and they move through and react to the world with an almost preternatural awareness and grace. One day, Society members will wordlessly drag a man off the street into the shadows

in plain view, the next some will come into a local business and give them a notice that The Society is investing a million dollars into them.

The Society also controls the influx of **The Smog** into The Last City. You often see canisters of the compressed blue gas lying in the gutter after being used for a strong buzz by addicts, but advanced machines or particularly gifted individuals can use The Smog to warp and shift and change The Last City to suit a given purpose. Such individuals are commonly known as **Shapers**. The price of Smog and the relative difficulty of using it normally limits this power to corporations capable of purchasing Smog technology,

And yet, society marches forward in The Last City. Citizens follow message boards to check whether Shapers have rerouted the train line they take to work every morning. A dive bar throws quarters in the jukebox and tries to ignore the Society member standing silently in the corner. You get to work on time, get paid, and get home.

Unfortunately, while no one ever means to get dragged into the shadowy underworld of The Last City, they frequently aren't the ones in charge of that decision. Whether it be by being handed cryptic instructions by a Society member, being assigned to your company's City Relations department, or just going down the wrong alley at the wrong time, one can easily fall into the deeper machinations of The Last City.

The Last City is a large, dense metropolitan city that exists as a sort of pan-cultural city, imagined as a **blending of New York City, Paris, and Tokyo**. Because of the nature of Shaping, the exact physical layout of this City is constantly changing, although the larger neighborhoods tend to remain relatively constant through it all.

The technology level of The Last City can be considered a sort of “**idealist near-future**”. Imagine a world where all of the currently in-development and researched technological initiatives are completed and released to the market. It’s not quite as far as science fiction, but it’s more advanced than our world.

As the name implies, The Last City is **the only city of its kind in this world**. It is not the only place people live, though; outside of the City’s borders is a large swath of agrarian towns which mostly handle growing food and acquiring raw resources for The Last City. These areas are not focused on in this text, but a story about living in the shadow of an all-consuming megacity, forced into subservience for it, could be interesting.

The tone with which The Last City was written is a sort of **bleak optimism**. In many ways, this place is terrible: the police are oppressive, the government toothless, the Society is tyrannical, the streets are dangerous, and the commutes are hellish. Most citizens of The Last City will agree to these facts, but still ultimately, even if they won’t outright say it, they love their City, for the people, the culture, the fact that they can still survive and thrive through this all.

B^asic F^acts

Does The Last City have robots? Do those robots have human-like AI? Up to you.

Why is The Last City the last city? Is that a thing people in this world know? Have they always known? Do you need to find out?

The Sm^og

A sort of shimmering baby blue color and smelling deeply of gasoline, The Smog is perhaps the single most valuable substance in The Last City. **Typically gaseous in nature**, although it can be made liquid by being put under pressure in extreme cold, The Smog is the force behind the most powerful entities in The Last City, including The Society.

The Smog is **drawn from underground pockets** located deep beneath The Ghost Sea, the sea which lies adjacent to The Last City. Various companies, mostly City Gas and Light, are responsible for building Smog Refinement Platforms out on the sea to collect and refine the Smog before bringing it into The Last City.

The extent of The Smog’s usefulness for most of The Last City comes from its status as **an extremely efficient fuel**, a flammable gas which burns far longer than comparable fuels. Most of The Last City’s public infrastructure is powered by vast Smog generators.

More thrill-seeking citizens will be quick to mention that The Smog is also **a fairly potent drug**, and inhaling a decent amount of it will produce an all-consuming high in the user which will place them in a catatonic, semi-conscious state for hours. **“Cloud Niners”**, as they are known, will shell out large sums of money for pure Smog, although many drug dens will cut it with lesser gases like neon or ammonia.

Who deals Smog to those who can’t buy it normally? Where do they get it? Do they cut a deal with the sailors of the Ghost Sea? Do they have their own refineries?

Some individuals, however, do not experience a high while under the influence of Smog, and instead discover that the gas grants them a **temporary magical strength** that seems deeply tied to the Last City itself. Under the effects of Smog, these individuals report being able to sense their surroundings as though the City itself was an extension of their body, and in extreme cases they can physically manipulate the City with their will. These individuals are known as **Shapers**, although no one knows what makes someone a Shaper.

Smog is **ludicrously expensive**. A spraypaint-sized can of pure Smog, enough to power an average sedan for a month, or about one adventure's worth of heavy Shaping, will run around a hundred dollars. As a result, any shop that sells Smog keeps it heavily protected, usually by Shapers and advanced technology. The city's power stations, famously home to gargantuan Smog tanks, have actually been hid in pocket dimensions within the City by powerful Shapers employed by the City Government.

How do you take Smog? Do you just do whip-its out of the can? Hookah? Inhaler? Vape?

Sh^aping

For many Shapers, discovering that one can Shape is a revelatory experience. To learn you are a Shaper is to learn you are special, and to be able to interact with The Last City on a level completely inaccessible to the average citizen.

The most immediate effect of a Smog high for a Shaper is a sudden **hyperawareness of the literal city around them**. Shapers can feel the steps of pedestrians on the concrete, hear water running through the pipes in the walls, see the patterns of traffic around them like a bird from the sky. The fidelity and range of this sensation depends on the skill of the Shaper and the amount of Smog ingested.

The most potent ability Shapers get, however, the one they derive their name from, is **the ability to manipulate the City itself with sheer force of will**. To a Shaper in a Smog high, the rules of physical reality are merely suggestions, and they are able to create space where it should be physically impossible, connect two distant parts of the city as though they were adjacent, turn steel to glass and glass to steel, strangle water and power lines and render them inoperable, even manipulate foot and vehicle traffic and change the train schedule. Notably, other than influencing their direction as crowds, Shapers' powers do not seem to influence people, merely the City itself.

Other powers are less common, with Shapers commonly finding themselves to fall into broad **"specializations"**.

Film Inspirations for Shaping:

Inception

Dark City

Doctor Strange

Liaisons are particularly perceptive Shapers who say they can **sense the emotion of the City** as though it were a living organism. Liaisons have been known to perceive buildings as “angry” or “friendly”, streets as “vengeful”, sewers as “hungry”.

Roadrunner is the term for Shapers with a particular affinity for **manipulating traffic**, using this ability to hail free taxis whenever they need them, create massive traffic jams to impede a fleeing foe, or even animate parked vehicles to perform simple tasks.

Butterflies are extremely **susceptible to the culture of The Last City**, and their appearance changes to fit whatever neighborhood they’re in. In the bohemian party neighborhoods, they will be a fashionable club-goer dressed to the nines, by the docks they will be a surly union laborer, and in the financial district they will be a sharp-jawed executive in an immaculately tailored suit. Butterflies always fit in.

Stickerheads have an affinity for the street art that covers The Last City, namely posters, **flyers, graffiti, and stickers**. Stickerheads know how long a given piece of art has been up, and who put it up. Stickerheads are also able to extend their consciousness through art they produce; they can look through eyes painted on a building wall, speak to strangers through the words on a flyer, even walk through a poster to the place depicted. Stickerheads commonly keep stacks of stickers (thus the name) they can quickly slap on a surface as the need arises.



Other things a Shaper might be able to do include:

Sense the flow of money through The Last City

Revive dead storefronts as a necromancer does a corpse

Access the secret dimension of local access television

Raise a cult of megaphone-wielding street preachers

Silence and amplify the ambient sound of the city

Create, interact with, and destroy the sentient manifestations of rumors

Operators can **perceive communication** in the city like no one else can. As soon as an Operator enters a Smog high, they’re able to hear all of the phone calls, IM conversations, and texts flying through the air around them, though it takes practice to parse anything useful from the noise. By merely touching a payphone or a cell tower, an Operator can exert a more direct control over these conversations, changing the message mid-flight.

A common expression in The Last City is “**there’s a mile between you and your neighbor**”, literally referring to the copious pocket dimensions throughout the city, invisible to the common observer but accessible to Shapers, as well as the vague sense of distrust many citizens feel towards even those in the same building as them. Shapers are generally not welcome neighbors, as their presence tends to bring trouble, although most Shapers eventually carve out their own homes with their abilities rather than paying for a physically possible apartment.

There are many possibilities for a Shaper in The Last City, few good. A scant few Shapers are able to eke out a relatively normal existence, reserving their Shaping abilities to special occasions. Some attempt to use their powers to commit crimes, although both LCPD and The Society have their own Shapers that will usually catch them. Many companies in The Last City will pay for the services of Shapers, including the City itself. Of course, The Society also takes special interest in Shapers, either hiring them for contract work, recruiting them, or just kidnapping them in the dead of night, never to be seen again.



Ask any citizen who runs The Last City, and they won't say the Metropolitan Government, they won't say elected officials, they won't say the people, they'll say **The Society**.

Easily spotted with their spotless **white suits, their blood-red ties, and their ivory masks**, contorted in a variety of emotions, Society members walk the streets of The Last City with confidence and an ethereal elegance. They never trip, never stumble, never get lost, never get distracted, and perhaps most interestingly, never speak. Any time a Society member needs to communicate with a citizen, they do so through writing, or by instructing a citizen to be their mouthpiece.

Society members, occasionally referred to as "**Socialites**", use titles that tend to refer to time, such as Mr. February, or Mrs. Jubilee. They usually come off as quite aloof, although with something of a dry, polite sense of humor. They are unlikely to break a businesslike demeanor, even in the face of violence, but when they do, observers describe a sort of animalistic fury which usually results in massive collateral damage.

The Society is **everywhere**, their presence ubiquitous and unexplainable. They're in the streets, in your office, in the neighborhood bar, down the darkest alleys, in every meeting of the Metropolitan Government, and if you've really gotten into something bad, in your home. Always they are either still, observing the world around them, or wordlessly performing some unexplainable work towards whatever their goal is.

The S^ociety

A completely non-canonical list of things The Society might be, all or none of which might be actually true:

They are the immune system of The Last City itself, which regulate the city as though it were an organism

They are the phantoms of those who have died in The Last City's long history, still manifesting to exert their individual beliefs as to what the city "should be"

They are the angels of an omnipotent god, one whose will is completely indecipherable to mortals

They grew from an order of scientists who sought to understand Shaping. They learned the secrets of the power, but in the process grew so mad as to be rendered mute

MetroGov created a powerful AI called The Aggregate, designed to maintain civic order. The masks Socialites wear links them directly to the machine's hivemind

Like the kuroko of kabuki theater, they are the stagehands for the great "performance" of The Last City, for which they have one of the few scripts

The Society is **essentially untouchable**. Cars screech to a halt when they enter the streets, they can attack and kidnap and kill whomever they want, and the police will refuse to raise a finger. Locks slip open in their hands, and even the subway will wait patiently in the station for a Society member to calmly saunter on, where many a citizen will gladly offer them a seat instead of potentially drawing ire.

The goals of The Society, as well as the nature of its leadership (if there is one) are **unknown** to the citizens of The Last City, although their reach and variety of interests are enormous. They influence local elections, reconfigure entire neighborhoods to suit some baroque taste, invest heavily in some businesses, torch others to the ground, evict people from their own homes and shuffle the population of the city around, and they will also recruit (either willingly or forcefully) skilled individuals around The Last City for strange contract work and odd jobs.

More upsetting yet, The Society's goals seem **internally inconsistent**. It is not uncommon to see Society members undoing the work done by their kin, performing redundant work, or sponsoring competing companies or projects. Society members never engage in outright direct combat or aggression, instead engaging in sort of proxy wars with one another, using The Last City as a pawn.

Society members are, generally, **extremely potent Shapers**. While they are never seen using Smog (some people hypothesize that the masks the Society wears conceals some sort of Smog apparatus), their Shaping abilities vastly outmatch most Shapers in the City, granting them a preternatural perception of the world around them, the ability to shift and manipulate The Last City to their exact liking, and allowing them the use of vast pocket dimensions scattered throughout the streets.

The Society is **not to be trifled with**. They are untouchable by the law, and should anyone interfere with their plans (something that frequently occurs by complete accident), they are summarily executed or, if they're truly unlucky, whisked away to somewhere else, for some unknowable punishment. Better still to avoid them, lay low, and hope their changes to The Last City don't destroy your life, as though they were a hurricane.

Metr°G°v

While The Society is absolutely the most powerful presence in The Last City, **the Metropolitan Government** (sometimes just called MetroGov) is a respectable second. Controlled by The City Board, a group of very powerful elected officials, MetroGov sets and enforces the laws of The Last City, maintains emergency services as well as municipal utilities, and generally handles the bureaucracy of the greater city.

At the head of MetroGov is the **Mayor Valentine, the elected leader of the city** for the last twenty five years. Seemingly having not aged a day since taking office, Mayor Valentine is a cold, calculating, imposing figure who nevertheless does seem to have the citizenry's best interests at heart, even if years of dealing with The Last City's labyrinthine bureaucracy has forced him into a pragmatism resembling cynicism. Mayor Valentine's public appearances are rare, usually signaling the start of a major initiative by MetroGov.

Mayor Valentine sits at the head of **The City Board, a body with 17 seats** which handles the day to day governance of the City. Alongside Valentine on the Board sits Comptroller Rose, head of the city finances, Police Chief Winter, Hayden Roulette, the CEO of City Gas and Light, the company that controls all utilities in The Last City, and the 12 elected councilors representing the various districts of The Last City. The 17th seat is reserved for The Society, but is usually vacant during votes, as The Society simply does whatever it wants.

Elections for who sit on the City Board are a cutthroat affair, due to the power they wield. 50% or less mortality rate for candidates is considered "surprisingly good"

The **Last City Police Department**, under the leadership of Chief Winter for the last 30 years, has undergone something of a shift, changing from the brutal, totalitarian brutes from before Valentine's administration, to something of a Big Brother, relying on mass surveillance networks to keep track of everyone in the City. While LCPD has more than its fair share of baton-wielding grunts on the streets, more numerous are the massive numbers of detectives, data analysts, and AI programmers attempting to wield vast collections of private information, maintained by a single AI in LCPD headquarters called Oculus.

City Gas and Light is the city-owned corporation responsible for water, gas, internet, and most importantly, power all throughout The Last City. While most of the City's infrastructure is relatively new, constant Shaping results in frequent outages across the city, one which leaves CGL's small, exhausted fleet of repairmen straining to resolve. CGL also maintains the City's vast reservoirs of Smog, concealed in power stations Shaped away into pocket dimensions and protected by CGL's substantial private security force.

L-C^aM

The Last City Area Metro, commonly shortened to **L-CAM**, is a labyrinthine subway system with dozens of criss-crossing lines underneath the city, which ferry tens of millions of citizens across the city every day. The common consensus of the L-CAM is clear: it's confusing, borderline baroque, unreliable, frequently dangerous, and absolutely essential to living in The Last City.

The L-CAM is run by **the Transit Authority**, a sector of the Metropolitan Government that is especially byzantine and inaccessible, even to other branches of the government. It is one of the most powerful entities in the City, subservient only to The Society and the City Board, and in train stations and on trains, their word is law. It is commonly believed that LCTA employees actually live in a sort of secret undercity beneath the city streets, accessible only via secret passages in subway stations, and a private line on the L-CAM called Midnight Line, although even Shapers who have attempted to find this undercity have been unsuccessful.

As a GM, it is beneficial to keep at least a vague idea of what the subway lines and stops are. Mapping the L-CAM can be a fun activity for players of a mapmaking sort, although they should do so in something erasable.

The L-CAM is **an incredibly confusing subway system**. The metro map is borderline unreadable, to the point where some people offer service for hire as Subway Guides. Adding to the problem is the constant manipulation of the L-CAM by Shapers, moving stops around, changing arrival and departure times, and linking and disconnecting lines at their whim. A subway map printed on Monday will usually be completely useless by Friday. LCTA is very unwelcoming to these changes, and will use its authority to hunt down Shapers who grievously alter L-CAM operations, usually violently.

To the average rider, an L-CAM trip is usually **some variety of uncomfortable**. The cars are dirty and old, many screeching their way down the tunnels or rattling as though they will fall to bits at any moment. The lines are filled with drunks, buskers, and catatonic Cloud Niners coming off a Smog high. Cars are usually packed full, the seats are wildly uncomfortable, and most stations have an aroma best described as “stale piss”.

Due to the ever-sprawling nature of The Last City, as well as the constant reconfigurations of its layout by Shapers, there are a variety of L-CAM stations which are **not actually connected to any line**, and not accessible via any aboveground entrance. These stations, known as Ghost Stations, are an obsession of many an urban explorer, who are often driven to try and Shape their way into Ghost Stations. Bafflingly, these Ghost Stations are always staffed by LCTA despite not actually serving any trains, and have exits to the City above, although those who take them report finding something other than the City they know at the top of the stairs.

One could frame an entire The Last City campaign around using Ghost Stations to hop to strange parallel universes, allowing a high amount of variety from session to session.

Neighb^orh^oods

Babylon

There’s an expression in The Last City: **“Money starts the day in the Financial District and ends it in Babylon”**. This glamorous social hub of the city is beloved by many as the hip, cool place to be, jam-packed with bars, concept restaurants, clubs, pop-up art exhibits, and all of the other things rich people like to do in their free time. If you can stomach the high covers and the higher sugar content in the cocktails, Babylon’s a good time.

Babylon is a constantly changing neighborhood, and not just due to the shaping. Out of a necessity to stand out among the hypercompetitive landscape, businesses in Babylon are constantly **trying out new ideas to stand out**. A cocktail bar where nanobots in the drinks cling to your taste buds and ensure each sip is perfect? Trite. An art exhibit which uses brain scanning technology to tell today’s attendees the secrets of yesterday’s? So last week. Today we’re all going to the nightclub where a Shaper is constantly reconfiguring the dance floor.

Among the most iconic residents of Babylon are **“Setters”**, the fashion icons who exist to be seen out on the town, constantly breaking new style horizons and creating the fashion trends which will emanate across The Last City for weeks. Setters are frequently sponsored (secretly) by corporations hoping to use their social influence to slowly influence the City’s markets, and who help finance Setters’ aggressive searches for new materials and tools to help them craft the most cutting edge, and blindingly expensive, outfits.

Some Babylon bars that get really popular for a month before going instantly out of business:

VGE, the cocktail bar where your prices are determined by your placement on a leaderboard of which patrons are the best at voguing

??? (pronounced “Questions”), a bar where every employee speaks a language invented by the bar owner and will only respect orders made in that language

Three Cubed, a bar which uses ice made from flash frozen Smog (mixed with other agents)

Midnight Rail, a bar located on a rogue train car on the L-CAM. Transit Authority hates this bar with a passion

Poison Pulse, a bar packed to the brim with the most venomous animals in the world, whose venom is extracted and diluted into the drinks

Financial District

The monetary center of The Last City and **the seat of the most powerful businesses in the city**, the Financial District is like a black hole sucking in the City's megalomaniacs, would-be billionaires, and cutthroat capitalist sociopaths, all fighting over every last cent in every last citizen's pocket.

The Financial District is ostensibly **one of the safest neighborhoods in the city**, with the corps headquartered there employing vast private security firms, plus lining the pocketbooks of most of LCPD, to ensure their most valuable assets remain safe. However, there is a tension in the air, as the corps are desperate to claw into each others' bottom line. No corp is above some corporate espionage, bribing their competitor's employees to break NDAs, or flat-out violence, but they all ensure a clean paper trail by acting by proxy, either through shell companies or nameless underworld hirelings.

Among the most powerful and shady institutions in The Last City is **Centurion Bank**, the largest financial institution in the City. Giving out millions of dollars in personal and business loans a year, few personal or private ventures in The Last City aren't in some way funded from Centurion's coffers. Debtors who find themselves missing payments will have bounties placed on them by Centurion, bounties with sizable sums which the City's more desperate folk (usually themselves at the risk of defaulting to Centurion) will happily take up.



City Center Station

The largest station in the entire L-CAM network, City Center is a neighborhood unto itself, with shopping and residences emanating from the epicenter of the station itself, a 15-story monstrosity of a structure through which every train line in the city passes. City Center is a major shopping hub, home to great food, and one of the few buildings in the City that isn't Shaped into unrecognizability.

City Center is certainly **the seat of Transit Authority power**. LCPD will generally avoid City Center with Transit Authority security patrolling the corridors instead. While they are quick to punish anyone committing vandalism or trying to get a free ride, a lot of their attention is spent trying to root out any Shapers who think they're clever enough to create a hidey hole under L-CAM's nose. They never can, and are usually caught and arrested, but the dream of living in City Center without being caught by L-CAM is something of a challenge for adventurous urban explorers and Shapers.

A surprisingly **complex culture of buskers** has emerged in City Center, competing for the money and attention of the station's millions of commuters. Buskers of similar arts will occasionally engage in artistic battles in order to claim certain lines or parts of the station as their "turf", leading to dramatic battles of singing, painting, guitar, theremin, miming, whatever the medium of choice for the artists is. Many of these fights are staged, as the commuters love to watch these battles and they tend to make their change a little more slippery. There is no limit to the sorts

Strange folk to meet on the subway and, let's be honest, probably just try to ignore:

A man in a suit with his head in his hands, constantly mumbling a string of seemingly random numbers

A guy in a whole suit of plate mail with a broadsword he probably bought at the mall, yelling in a bad fake English accent that he is "Sir Trainman the Honorable"

Exact duplicates of yourselves on another train, with whom you lock eyes for a moment before their train departs the opposite direction

Three very unfriendly looking gentlemen in heavy coats, guarding an equally unfriendly looking woman holding a big steel suitcase

An L-CAM crew with some very sophisticated looking equipment who seem to be taking some sort of readings in the station

A very friendly seven foot tall man named Sven who asks everyone if they've seen a man with two left hands



of art being performed in City Center; the station is home to no fewer than three theater companies, and on Wednesdays you can catch a whole circus by the C Line.

Pink Square

The high fashion and trendiness of Babylon is matched in kind by the **gritty earnestness and close-knit circles** of Pink Square. To the ritzier citizens of The Last City, Pink Square is a hive of criminal activity, sketchy characters, and an omnipresent sense of danger. They're not 100% wrong, but for the locals and regulars of Pink Square that's just the spiky outer layer of Pink Square, on some level both the shadow consuming it and the armor protecting it, both from outside threats and the creeping yuppie monoculture that would love to open a specialty tea shop there.

Pink Square is absolutely rife with the bars, clubs, shops, and homes of **the counterculture of The Last City**, its punks and deviants and junkies and weirdos who coagulate with each other into full-fledged scenes in these streets. Many of these subcultures prefer to stay out of the limelight, but if you know the right guy, can say the right words, or just have the right kind of face, you can be whisked away into any number of other worlds on Pink Square, from the most luxurious Niner dens where cognitive explorers indulge in multi-day Smog highs, to the City's burgeoning Vamp scene, where people engage in ritualistic bloodletting, to the crews of the City's various pirate radio stations, transmitting revolutionary music and messages via radio towers hidden in Shaped spaces.

Confusing insults used by people in Pink Square that you're not cool enough to get but judging by crowd reaction must be very mean:

Three-hatter

Fake fake punk

Seein' baseballs ("hey, you seein' baseballs over there?")

A regular Johnny Two-Hands

Taxi boy

Big Empty

Ketchup King

1080p, 30 frames per second

From the 13th floor

The guy with the marbles

Of all of the institutions of Pink Square, few are so beloved by all as **Shen's**. A shop that sells tofu dumplings (and only tofu dumplings) and booze 24 hours a day, and has for sixty years, Shen's is somewhat of a social nexus for the Square. There is an unspoken rule of Shen's: no one sits alone. Anyone who enters Shen's alone will quickly be descended upon by friendly strangers, who tradition dictates will drink with you 'til sunrise, and who will usually end up dragging their new friend into any manner of nonsense.

Portside

The Last City has a **sizeable coastline** separating it from The Ghost Sea, a vast, choppy body of water which nonetheless serves as a critical source of resources for The Last City, namely a sizeable supply of seafood brought in every morning, and the Smog pumped out of vast pockets drilled into deep beneath the sea floor. Because of this, Portside, the neighborhood lining the coast, is filled with independent companies with a crew and a boat hoping to make a living collecting the Sea's bounties.

Of note to many is that most **people's ability to Shape ends at the coast**. Despite the efforts of some to produce skyscrapers from the sea floor or sense pockets of Smog beneath the waves, it seems that Shapers' abilities are completely nullified by the waters of The Ghost Sea. The caveat to this are some veteran sailors who have the ability to manipulate their sailing vessels while in a Smog high as Shapers do The Last City, This variety of Shaping is commonly referred to as **Jerrying**.

Those of a discerning palate also know Portside as a **culinary hub of The Last City**, as many of the best chefs opt to set up shop right next to the bustling fish and farmer's markets for maximum freshness. Less flashy and trend-chasing than restaurants in Babylon and less hostile and cloistered than those in Pink Square, the eateries of Portside serve as a throughline through the City's history, with many restaurants being institutions that have been running for decades. Training up to become a chef in one of these places requires up to a decade-long apprenticeship, oftentimes requiring almost quest-like stints of ingredient gathering, equipment collection, and meditative research.

The Old Airport

The Last City hasn't had need for an airport in decades, and as a result **the old airport** largely goes unused, except for a few rich hobbyists who like to fly planes in their free time. Many of the terminals of the Old Airport have turned into small communities of people who seek to live outside the influence of MetroGov and The Society, both of whom tend to ignore the Old Airport.

One Terminal, **Terminal D**, is generally unoccupied. Rumors are always circulating that Terminal D guards some sort of incredible secret, but anyone who tries to go there inevitably vanishes or barely escapes with their life.



Other Factions

Friends of the Last City are a community outreach program who help to home the homeless, feed the hungry, and teach the untaught all throughout the City, running mostly on donations to run their community centers through the City. Every year, the Friends get a sizable donation from an anonymous source that basically keeps the entire organization running. Recently, people have begun to suspect that this donation comes from The Society, but only the heads of the Friends actually know who the donor is.

The Gargoyles are a biker gang that runs rampant through The Last City, mugging people who wander down the wrong street, committing robberies, and generally being something of a menace. They are, however, decently good at what they do, with a sizable Shaper constituency, and their combination of undiscerning taste in employers with their notoriety for lying makes them perfect lackeys for Last City institutions hoping to hire muscle.

The Spartans are the student body of The University of the Last City, located in between Babylon and Pink Square. A somewhat unruly student body, the school's notoriously rigorous engineering and law programs have inspired a "work hard, play hard" mentality in these students. The surrounding area knows to prepare itself for Spring Break, Pledge Week, and the night after finals, when the student body descends upon the nightlife with the voracious appetites of lifelong hedonists and the stupidity of, well, college students. Most dangerous of all is the ever-escalating prank war between the Spartans and their rival school, LC Tech ("The Rowdy Red Devils").



^a dventure Seeds

A PC, or one of their friends, takes an **innocuous-looking backpack** left in a park that turns out to have been intended as a Society dead-drop. The Society tracks them down, and offers to waive punishment if the PCs will perform a larger heist on their behalf.

A **pirate radio station**, helmed by someone calling themselves “DJ Oracle” has been broadcasting the precise activities of LCPD officers to an unsettling degree of detail, sometimes down to when they wake up and what they eat for lunch. Everyone, particularly LCPD, wants to find this guy and learn how he knows so much about the city’s police.

Every restaurant is preparing for **Restaurant Week**, when the local papers and reviewers come together to re-rank all of the eateries in the City. Tensions rise even higher when Chef Petrovich, head chef of esteemed Portside restaurant Nautilus, is found vivisected in the dish pit. Each of the six apprentices in the kitchen thinks one of their peers did it.

A string of **particularly aggressive Society kidnappings** in Babylon draws concern from a friend of the PCs hoping to open a new bar in the area. Hoping to put an end to these attacks, they offer the PCs the only lead they have: every kidnapping victim has been a Setter, and for some reason, all eleven kidnapping victims have been named Andrew.

Some irresponsible Shapers looking for Ghost Stations accidentally **trap the early morning R Train** in a tiny cave deep beneath the City, with the PCs on board. The commuters on the train try their best to manage with being trapped in the subway tunnel waiting for L-CAM to find them, and something weird is lurking in the tunnel with them.

A film crew has descended onto Financial District streets to shoot “**The Only Cowboy In The Last City**”, an action movie about a vigilante hunting the criminals who killed their love. Everyone who lives and works in the Financial District absolutely goddamn hates this crew, and they will pay the PCs to try and sabotage this shoot without letting the blame go back to them.

The PCs need to find **Gary the Snake**, an old fence who screwed them over on a bad deal. Upon getting to Gary’s apartment building, though, they find it has been Shaped into a labyrinth of impossible spaces, seemingly swarming with people violently hostile to intruders.

A PC is coerced into a limo by some Society members and given a strange job: somewhere in The Last City there is a man with a **bumblebee tattoo** on his left hand. The Society will pay the PC a ludicrous amount of money if they can bring this man to them. This man isn’t a Shaper, nor a cop, nor anyone of status, but the last four freelancers the Society has sent have all died in the process.

The **entire sixth floor** of the Ambrosia Luxury Apartments has just vanished overnight, along with everyone who lives there. One of the few remaining residents, saved from this fate thanks to a late night at the bar, hires the PCs to figure out where the hell his apartment, his neighbors, and his girlfriend ended up. Perhaps the increase in sightings of vans for the West and Smith Elevator Company, which ostensibly doesn't exist, has something to do with it.

City Gas and Light is hiring freelancers to head out onto the **Ghost Sea** with a veteran crew to investigate the disappearance of the Silver-Tipped Arrow, a survey ship CGL uses to find new Smog veins beneath the sea. Things get increasingly strange as the ship goes further out to sea, with some members of the crew mentioning seeing ghosts from their past.

Much to the disappointment of The Last City's light sleepers, **street racing** has become extremely popular in recent weeks, as Shapers hop behind the wheel to leverage their powers to win death-defying races through the densest City streets. A friend of the PCs lost their ride racing for pinks (that is, for the title of the loser's car), and the only way to win it back is to enter the no-holds-barred racing scene themselves.

Stories begin to spread across The Last City as people report getting black-out drunk and waking up in a neighborhood they've never heard of called **Opposite World**. Supposedly, Opposite World is filled with weird, unsettling, hostile people who try to attack the wayward drunk, but people, including the PCs, still try to get there after one such drunk mentions finding the best ramen they've ever had at a hole-in-the-wall shop while wandering Opposite World.

Mayor Valentine announces that the City is creating a **new park** near City Center miles long, a feat that will require the City to amass massive amounts of Smog to perform a Shaping of that magnitude. Various factions within the City are tripping over themselves to find the Smog stash.

An assortment of subcultures and gangs in Pink Square which normally hate each other are temporarily united under a common cause: something on the corner of 17th and Montrose **absolutely stinks**, and the smell is leaking into everyone's apartments, bars, and cult meetings. No one is owning up to it, but everyone wants the smell gone.

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