

The Hampstead Herald, 28 October 1889

SOCIETY SENSATION: MISTMERE TO MARRY!

Reclusive Adventurer and Slayer of the Supernatural Vows to Wed
Enchanting Debutante

By Miss Clemency Parrish, Society Correspondent

In news that has left the drawing rooms and parlors of Hampstead abuzz, it is confirmed that believer in the supernatural and self-styled vampire hunter Lord Quintus Mistmere is to wed the radiant and rarely seen Miss Bianca Wildflower, ward of the enigmatic Count Constantinesco of Bat Hall.

Lord Mistmere, long considered an inveterate bachelor and something of an eccentric, made his intentions known last Thursday in the moonlit grounds of Bat Hall. Miss Wildflower is said to have accepted with grace and quiet delight. She is known for her gentle beauty and her charitable work with the convalescent residents of Greystones Asylum, conveniently located within the grounds of Bat Hall.

“Bianca is pure as the lily,” Lord Mistmere remarked to our correspondent. “And I no longer believe myself safe from enchantment.”

The engagement *fête* shall take place this Friday at Bat Hall, the Count’s infamous gothic pile overlooking the northern edge of the Heath. Invitations, printed on black vellum with gold ink, have already been dispatched to a select list of family and friends, including Quintus’s younger brother, the esteemed City banker the Hon Albert Mistmere, and his glamorous American wife, Viola. Also present will be the Mistmeres’ distant cousin Laurie Laurimar—accompanied, of course, by beloved Labrador, Tarquin.

Count Constantinesco, reclusive scholar on the subject of Romanian folklore and, in a notable departure from his ward’s future husband, a vampire denier, offered his blessing in a brief but florid note: “They are as essential to one another as the rose to the thorn—may their union bloom eternal.”

We offer our heartfelt congratulations to the pair and look forward to what promises to be the most intriguing social event of the season.

THE VAMPIRE VIXEN STRIKES AGAIN

Yet Another Gentleman Drained on the Heath

By Mr. Lionel Sheepshank, Crime & Curiosities Editor

In what has become a seemingly endless black cloud for our weary constabulary, yet another unfortunate gentleman has been found bloodless in the city, this time on Hampstead Heath, his collar torn, his expression frozen in what one eyewitness described as “an ecstasy of dread”.

The victim, one Mr. Archibald Blenkinsop, 32, of Dulwich—an amateur phrenologist and rather poor poet by all accounts was discovered at dawn near the Vale of Health. As with the previous nine cases this quarter, the body bore twin puncture marks at the throat, and not a drop of blood remained.

Despite increased patrols and the generous offer of a £50 reward for the man who can uncover this devilish fiend, police remain baffled. The more imaginative portion of the artistic set now holds candlelit poetry readings at the sites of the attacks in an attempt to dispel the darkness, clearly to little effect.

Inspector Greaves of the Hampstead Division offered this grim understatement: “It would appear, yet again, that someone has gone out walking after dark and come back somewhat... lighter.”

Of course, no one can be certain whether vampires really exist, but this much is certain—evil is afoot. Here at *The Hampstead Herald*, we can only recommend, dear reader, that you do not wander too far from the safety of your drawing rooms after the witching hour.

GREYSTONES MARKS FIVE YEARS OF LUNACY & LIGHT

A Modern Beacon of Psychological Science Shines from the Shadows of Bat Hall

By Dr Jonathan Pemblewick, Medical Correspondent

It was five years ago this week that Dr Sacha Adler first opened the iron-bolted doors of Greystones Asylum—a modest but modern institution nestled on the western grounds of Count Constantinesco’s sprawling estate.

Far removed from the grim reputation of Bedlam and its ilk, Greystones has swiftly established itself as a center of scientific benevolence and humane curiosity. Its approach? A radical blend of analytic philosophy, electro-galvanic calming baths, mesmerism, and what Dr Adler has called “imaginative confrontation therapy.”

“The mind,” says Dr Adler, “is but a haunted house; with the right key, we may unbolt its doors, free the wailing spirit, and perhaps, tidy the parlor.”

The asylum currently houses eighteen gentlefolk, many of whom were formerly confined in far less salubrious circumstances. A recent visitor described the wards as “more like a gentlemen’s club than an institution of confinement,” replete with walnut-paneled reading rooms, solarium walks, and curious oil paintings donated by the Count himself (subjects often described as *disturbingly allegorical*).

Both Quintus Mistmere and his fiancée, Bianca, have shown a keen interest in Greystones. Indeed, it’s rumored that not only is Quintus the asylum’s main patron but that Bianca, so devoted to the inmates’ wellbeing, visits the asylum almost daily. Her presence, according to Dr Adler, “eases the melancholic mind as lavender calms the pulse”.

FRANCIS TYNE’S GARDEN OF HEALING

In a quiet corner of the Bat Hall estate, nestled behind a tangle of yew and ivy, Francis "Frankie" Tyne, the ever-resourceful assistant to Dr Sacha Adler, has breathed new life into the long-abandoned glasshouse, its panes once dulled by years of dust and disuse.

With sleeves rolled and spade in hand, Frankie has transformed the vine-choked ruin into a thriving apothecary garden, where lavender, valerian, foxglove, and feverfew now flourish in orderly beds. With careful hands, he prepares infusions, poultices, and tinctures for the residents of Greystones Asylum. Dr Adler has praised the initiative as “a union of botany and benevolence”.

THE NIGHTSHADE BLOOMS AGAIN: SERAPHINE’S TOUR ENCHANTS LONDON

Haunting Songs and Moonlit Sorrows from the Voice of Romania

By Mrs. T. Violetta Harkness, Music & Morality Correspondent

If one were to bottle the perfume of twilight and give it voice, it might sound very much like Miss Seraphine Deveraux, the enchantress whose melancholy melodies have returned to enthrall the parlors, opera halls, and shadowed music dens of London.

Miss Deveraux’s current tour of select venues across London has caused quite the stir, with attendance at her performances reaching such a fever pitch that guests were crammed into every inch of the Tattershall Music Hall last Thursday. Her next appearance will be at The Drowned Ship this Saturday at midnight—a curious hour, but entirely in keeping with her moonlit aesthetic.

Often clad in jet-black silk, and only ever appearing after sundown, Miss Deveraux has been accused of cashing in on the “vampire fever”—a mix of fascination and fear—sweeping the city. But whatever you think of her theatrics, Miss Deveraux’s extraordinary talent cannot be denied. Her signature piece, *‘Lament for the Willow Bride’*, is said to leave audiences in visible distress, with one society lady observed to faint into a potted fern during the final refrain. When asked about her inspirations, she merely replied, “I sing what the night whispers. Not all of us sleep when the sun goes down.”

She is presently in residence at Bat Hall, as the guest of her old friend Count Constantinesco, who, it is said, has long cherished her as a sister in soul if not in blood. Their bond, forged in distant Romanian summers, has remained intact across continents and decades. It is whispered that she has her own chamber in the Hall’s eastern wing, where candlelight flickers late into the night and music drifts across the estate.

Whatever truth may lie in the shadows of her songs, one thing is clear: London cannot look away from Miss Seraphine Deveraux, nor cease listening to the sorrowful splendor of her voice.

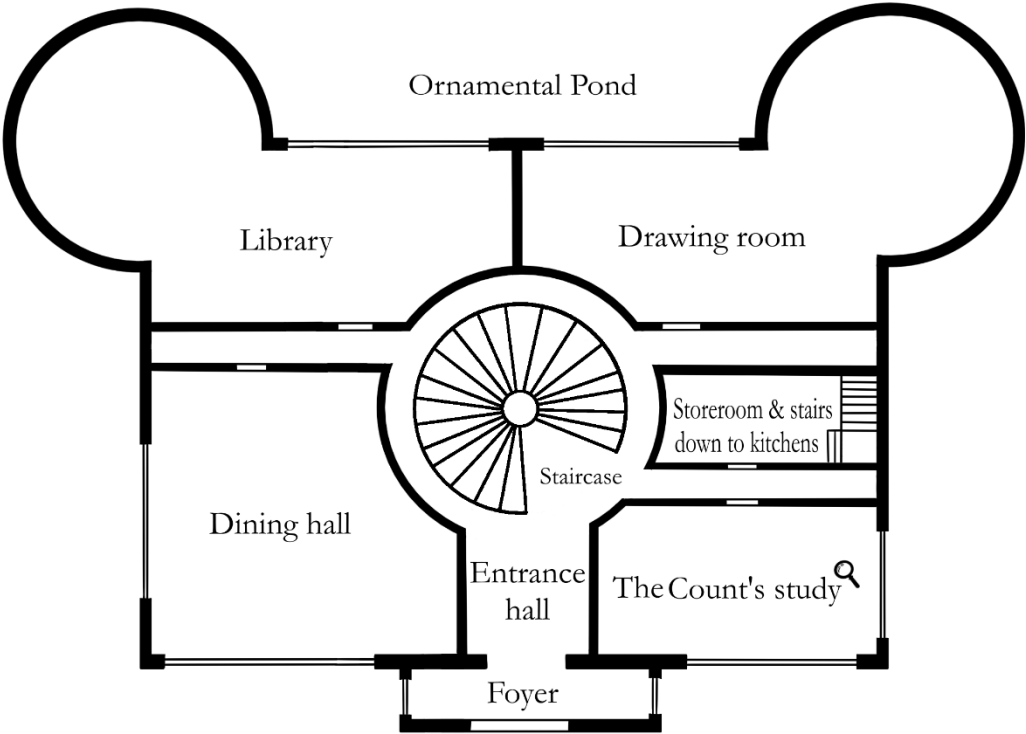
Vampire lore, as it is generally understood

Whether vampires exist or are a figment of people's overactive imaginations is a hotly disputed topic in Victorian London. There are some vocal deniers, but most people are superstitious and somewhat afraid.

The following is believed to be true about
vampires:

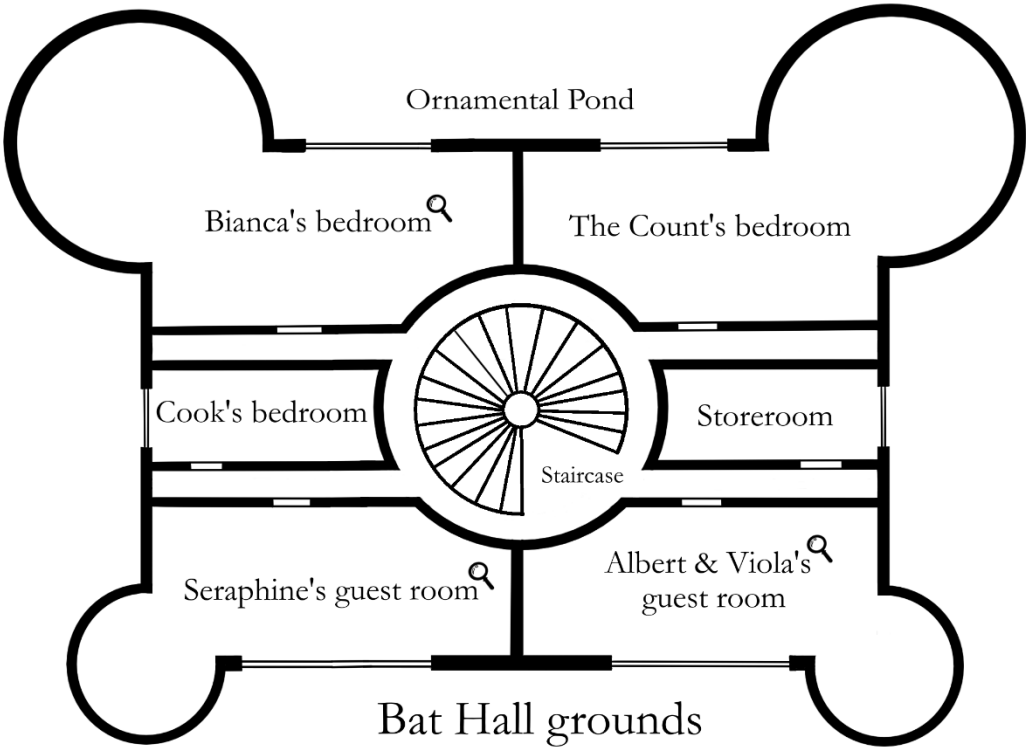
They feed on the blood of humans, not to survive (they cannot die unless punctured through the heart with a wooden stake), but to thrive; feeding increases their health and vitality; they are painfully sensitive to sunlight, garlic, and crucifixes—any of these things could severely injure them, but they are immune to poison; they are invisible in mirrors; they sometimes travel with a box of earth from their homeland.

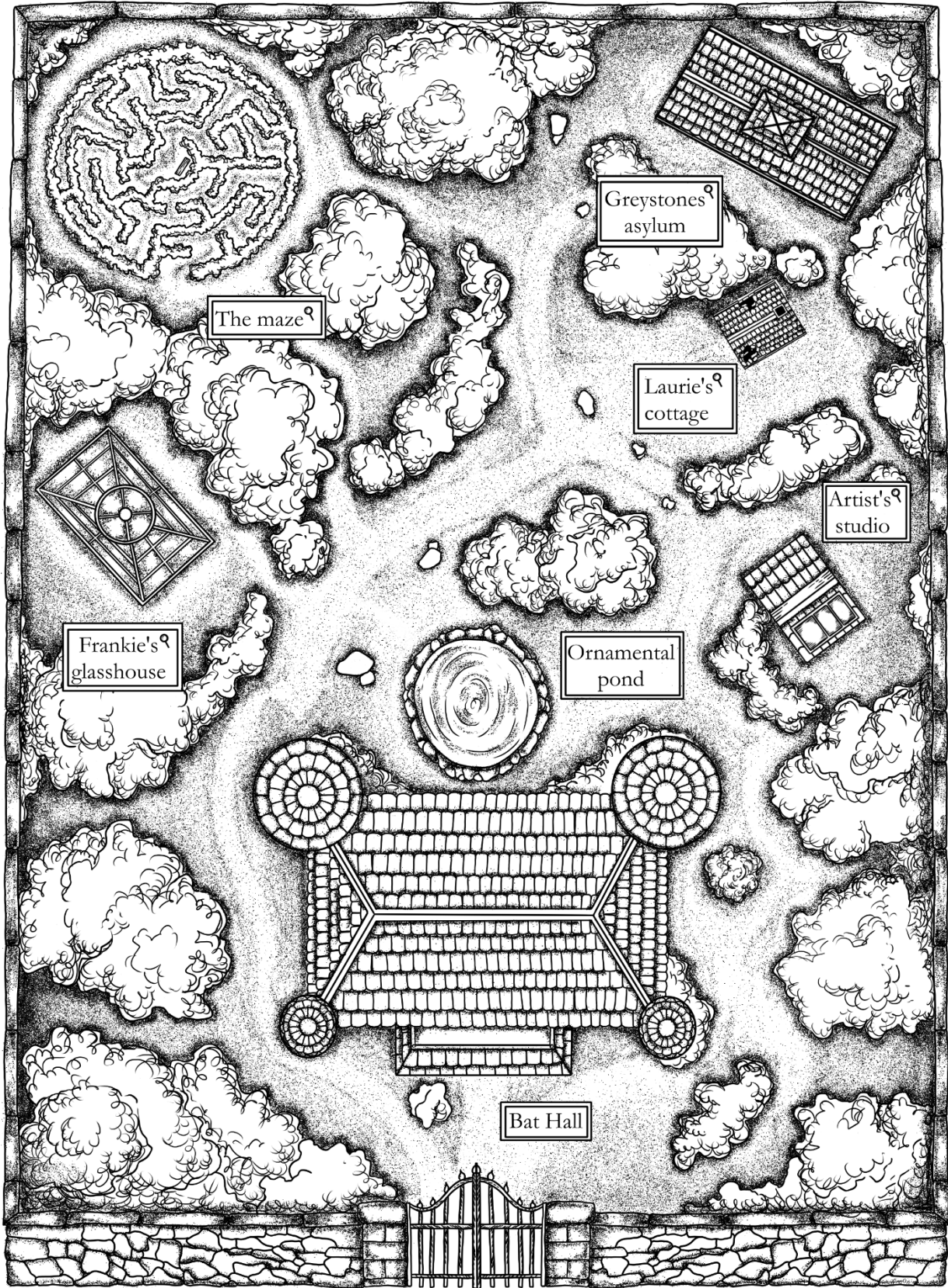
Bat Hall-Ground floor



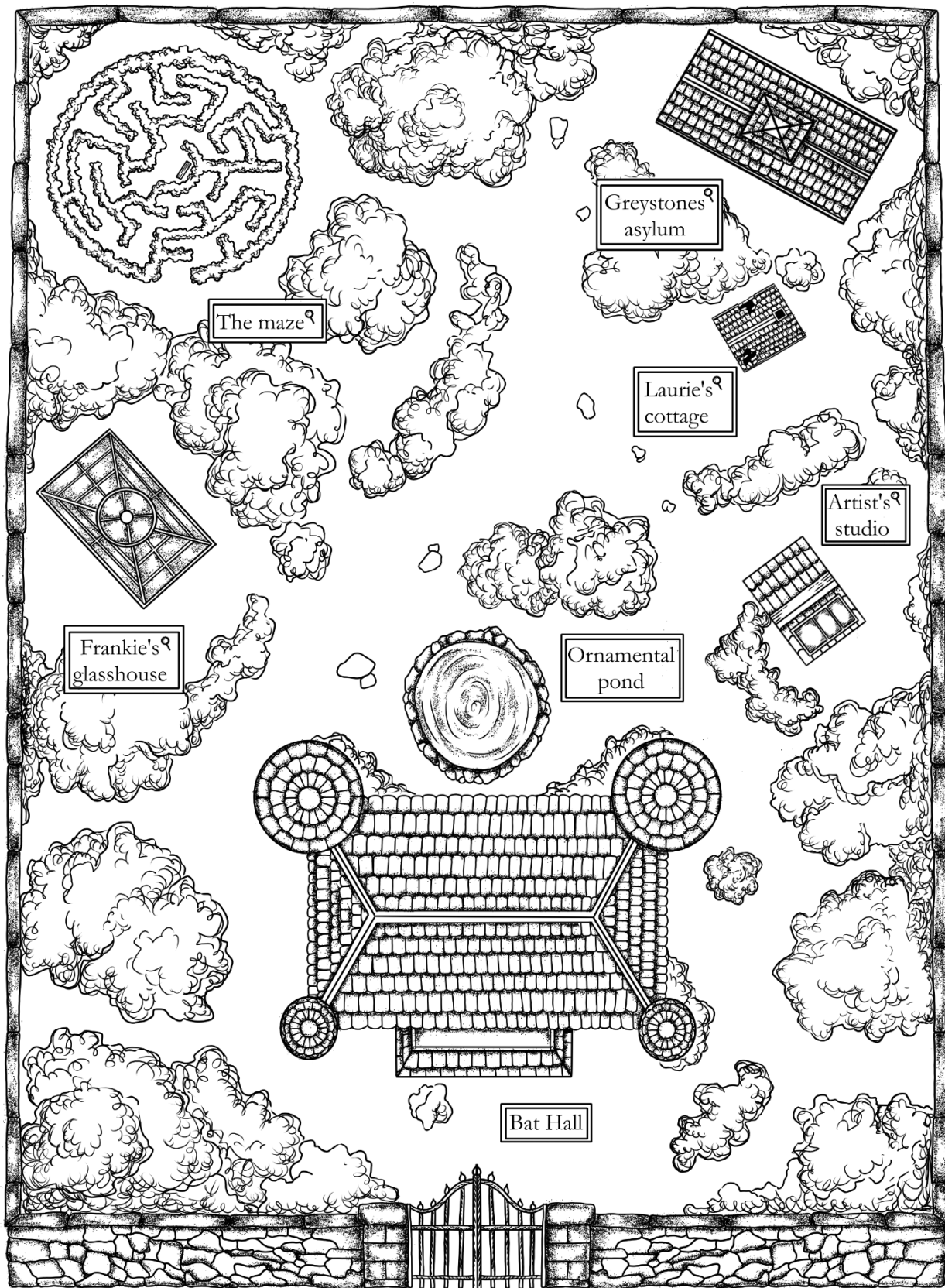
Bat Hall-First floor

Bat Hall grounds





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