

The Eleven-Day Empire

'Oh, they cast long shadows, the Parliament buildings. They reach all the way from here to the nineteenth century.'

- Godfather Morlock, Acting Speaker of the House.

It's already been established that the seat of power for Faction Paradox is the mini-continuum known (with some irony) as the Eleven-Day Empire. As with everything connected to the Faction, explanations aren't exactly forthcoming.

Although there are similarities to the 'actual' city of London, the geography is - by its very nature - less than precise...Historically speaking, it's true that England did indeed lose eleven days in 1752, when the calendar was changed from the Julian system to the Gregorian. However, the notion that these days actually went anywhere is, at least in scientific terms, entirely ludicrous. But it has to be remembered that wherever the Great Houses are involved, "science" is a loaded word. So much of the known continuum was created (or, rather, defined) by the Houses that it's difficult to draw the line between the "natural" laws and the laws laid down by the bloodlines for their own convenience. And more than any other House, Faction Paradox understands that the state of the continuum depends on definitions.

Or, to put it simply: the English felt that they were losing eleven days of their lives, so the Faction was quite happy to step in and collect those apparent days.

(Of course, this is exactly the kind of exercise in non-linear time that's considered utterly unacceptable by the rest of the Great Houses. The culture of the Houses is largely technological, their control over time relying on devices which, though astonishingly advanced, are at least straightforward: perhaps this reliance on machines was a conscious decision by the founders of the civilisation, a way of making sure that their reign over history would run along precise, linear lines. By contrast, the time-control techniques of the Faction are far more unpredictable, and tend to rely on ritual rather than technology. Although this shouldn't be interpreted as actual magic, at least not in the human sense, it's true to say that there are strong similarities between the way human voodoo-cults communicate with spirits and the way Faction ritualists communicate with the body of time itself.)

Although the Eleven-Day Empire can be thought of as a kind of private universe, it's obviously a very small one. The limits of the realm are the limits of eighteenth-century England, although the vast majority of this territory is entirely unoccupied. As the Faction's agents in the Eleven-Day Empire can be numbered in mere hundreds, only the shadow-version of London is inhabited, and even then it's generally just the most central parts of the city which are used. The heart of the realm, and the heart of all the Faction's influence, is Parliament - or at least, a shadow of it, as the current Houses of Parliament weren't in existence in 1752 - where the archons of Faction Paradox can often be found sitting in session. Despite the fact that this miniature universe is only eleven days from end to end, the Parliament has been meeting there for the last sixty years, and it's unclear exactly how this works. It's feasible that some of the empty space outside London is being burnt to supply extra time for the capital, but if this is true then the lifespan of the mini-continuum is quite definitely finite.

There are no people in the Eleven-Day Empire, other than the Faction's agents- at least, none that the Mothers and Fathers of the Faction care to acknowledge. The capital's a ghost-city, a city in silhouette, and as a result there are any number of rumours about the things which might haunt the

areas outside the centre of London. It's known that the only creatures to have an independent existence in the city itself are the ravens which, in the real world, would occupy the Tower of London: the ravens themselves may have their own form of "parliament", and they certainly don't feel themselves to be governed by the Faction. Indeed, nobody has ever actually explained how the birds came to take up residence in the Eleven-Day Empire to begin with. It's believed that the ravens have their own ruling elite, three monstrous, black-winged things that can often be seen circling the eastern side of the capital, although the Faction's people have as little contact with them as possible.

It should be pointed out that in the Parliament of Faction Paradox, sessions are only ever held in the House of Commons. Nobody knows what might be inside the House of Lords, as nobody ever seems to want to go there.

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